Ethos

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Abstract

Ethos – meaning the characteristic spirit of a culture, era, or community as manifested in its beliefs and aspirations – is a piece that explores Greek music from the 3rd Millennium B.C.E. to the folk tunes and dances of the 16th century C.E. Ethos incorporates multiphonics, quarter tones, ancient tonal systems and folk scales to show the differences and similarities between ancient and folk styles. The piece also features the traditional Greek drum ‘Daouli’ and mimics ancient instruments with those in a traditional orchestra. As the piece develops, ancient musical fragments can be heard thought the orchestra, chiefly in string and woodwind passages. The violin, harp, flute and clarinet depict the kithara, lyre, floyera and aulos, respectively. The ever present increase in tempo drives both virtuosic and drone like characters to develop and transform.

Keywords:

Ethos, Canadian music, ancient Greek music, Greek folk music, composition.
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William Nicolaou

Ethos

(2016)

An exploration into the music of the Greeks
Ancient and Folk

Referencing Ancient Greek fragments of:

Athenaeus' 2 Delphic paeans
Song of Seikilos

Referencing Ancient/Folk Greek instruments:

Aulos
Lyre
Kithara
Floyera
Daouli
Toumbi Kythnos
Defi
Tsabouna
Gaida Kavala

Referencing Greek Folk Dances:

Pentozali: Folk Melody
Kalamatiano (Dance); Mantili Kalamatiano (Folk Song)
Pentozali: Male Cretan War Dance

Transposed Score

Duration: 10 minutes 30 seconds
Symphonic Orchestra: 2221 | 4221 | 2 pere. + Harp | Strings
Instrumentation

Flute 1,2  
Oboe 1,2  
Clarinet in B♭ 1,2  
Bassoon  
Horn in F 1,2,3,4  
Trumpet in C 1,2  
Trombone 1,2  
Tuba  
Percussion 1: Timpani/Tambourine/Suspended Cymbal  
Percussion 2: Bass Drum/ Daouli/ Roto-toms/ xylophone  
Harp  
Violin I,II  
Viola  
Violoncello  
Contrabass  

Performance Notes

Flute quartertones: Each quarter tone is to be played with the fingerings given. Quarter tone symbols are as follows:

- Quarter tone flat – ♭
- Quarter tone sharp – ♭
- Three quarter tone sharp – #

Clarinet Multiphonics: Each multiphonic trill and tremolo has a fingering above the given passage. If the performer cannot achieve the given multiphonic, then use existing fingering to produce another multiphonic or figure out a different fingering to achieve said multiphonic.

Notation: The base note is always the fundamental. White notes represent the most audibly prominent pitches while black notes are generally considered to be of secondary prominence. A plus (+) or minus (-) in front of certain notes indicates that the pitch tends to be microtonally sharper or flatter respectively.

General Technique: Relaxation of the embouchure and oral cavity along with slightly less lip pressure (especially that of the bottom lip) will often allow greater sensitivity to reed vibration.

Specific Technique:
- Bar 4 and 24: sustain lowest pitch; trill loudly but focus on lowest pitch; move bottom lip away from the reed; play all pitches equally.
- Bar 56: sustain first pitch; trill loudly and focus on highest pitch; move bottom lip away from the reed; play all pitches equally.
- Bar 101: Multiple timbre trill; similar to producing a multiphonic trill but does not involve an actual change in pitch of a chordal sonority. Executed in the same fashion as a multiphonic trill.

Percussion 2: If high and low Roto-toms are not available then use high and low tom-toms. If Daouli is not available then use Tenor drum (for the right side) and (for the left side) snare drum, using cross stick on the head of the drum, do not hit the rim.

Left side of Daouli
Right side of Daouli
Hit close to rim (on right side)
Bass drum

Roto-toms:
- High tom
- Low tom

Xylophone range
Conductors Notes

**Beginning – Rehearsal B**

During the 3rd and 2nd millennium BCE the Minoans were heavily influenced by instruments from Egypt like the sistrum and artifacts recovered which depict the double aulos and harp (oriental arched harp). Greece underwent many cultural changes in its development, to mirror their economic and/or musical development Ethos has an element of experimentation at the beginning. To emulate the beginnings of Greece’s music there is snap pizzicato in the strings which depict hitting sticks on wood but also rhythmical imbalances as they try to find their ‘Ethos’

**Bar 25**

Flute 1: referencing the 1st Delphic Paean. Composed in 127 BCE the lyrics in the fragment reads, “and on the sacred alters Hephaestus is burning the thighs of young bulls”. The fragment sounds Asiatic in origin from its more chromatic, more emotional and elaborate writing usually played by the Asiatic Flute.

**Bar 28**

Flute 2, Clarinets 1,2, Horn 1,2: referencing the 2nd Delphic Paean. Additionally composed in 127 BCE the vocal melody’s in the original fragment reads, “at the same time Arabian incense-smoke speeds up to heaven, and as the clear braying pipe weaves shimmering tunes into the singing”. The 5 chromatic note passage references the words, ‘pipe weaves simmering tunes’ or in ancient greek, ‘ai-o-lois’

**Rehearsal B-C**

Ancient Greece’s repertoire was mostly vocal based, rhythm, melody and pitch accent of a melody was depicted entirely by the rhythm of the words, which made purely instrumental music scarce. Instrumental music gained prominence in the latter half the 7th Century BCE to the end of the 5th Century BCE. During this time the great pipers’ competition at the Pythian Games in 586 BCE was the genre’s main event. The games, which happened every 4 years developed a set programme which each piper used. This was as follows:

1. **Peira**, ‘trying out’, in which Apollo surveys the ground to see if it is suitable for the struggle.
   a. Elements of playing which auletes learn at the elementary stage. (The basics)

2. **Katakeleusmos**, ‘call of command’, in which he challenges the serpent.

3. **Iambikon**, in which he fights, this part includes trumpet-like notes and ‘tooth action’ to represent the shot of the serpent gnashing its teeth.
   a. The reed is pushed up against the tooth

4. **Spondeion**, the stately libation music symbolizing the god’s victory.

5. **Katachoreusis**, a joyful dance of celebration.

Rehearsal mark B and D illustrate Peira and Katakeleusmos, the others however are not references as directly but are written in conjunction with the others.

**Bar 48**

The horns depict the writing on an urn retrieved from the Ancient Greek civilization dated back to the 5th Century BCE which said, “TOTE – TOTOTE”. In addition I reference the great trumpeter games of the 4th Century BCE was believed to be a competition of who could play the loudest.

**Rehearsal C-F**

Mainly in the Harp and accompanied by the Viola and cello, Song of Seikilos is considered to be the oldest complete musical composition ever found, dated between 200 BCE-100 CE. Seikilos was a lyric poet and musician during the Hellenistic period and his song is dedicated to his wife Euterpe. Traditionally this would be sung at the end of a symposium usually accompanied by a lyre or Cithara. Bars 75-83 in the Harp is a direct transcription of the love song which includes the ancient Greek lyrics.
**Rehearsal F-H: Greek folk bagpipes**

*Tsabouna*: which dates back 2000 years, is a bagpipe usually made of goat skin. The musician plays 2 chanter pipes at the same time which produces a slightly out of tune sound. Because there are no drone pipes it produces a movable drone sound for example bar 115-120. Traditionally the tsabouna would be accompanied by the tourni krython: a small hand drum played under ones arm to cut through the heavy bagpipe sound. A high roto-tom or high tom-tom produces a comparable sound.

*Gaida*: this bagpipe is made up of a single chanter pipe like the highland bagpipes but only one drone pipe which can be tuned depending on the piece being played. In my depiction of the Gaida, the orchestra fills the roll of the drone pipe at letter 'G'. Traditionally accompanied by the Laouto (guitar), daouli/toumbi, Defi/daires, I depict these from the open strings pizzicato, roto-toms, and the tambourine paired with roto-toms.

**General characteristics**: Folk tunes frequently use grace figures to embellish the melodic outline and establish tonality. Other folk tunes including kalamatino could last up to 20 minutes long depending on how many repetitions/ variations the band plays. Each time the original is repeated it gets more and more embellished and stretched.

**Rehearsal H-J: Pentozali folk melody**

The difference between the folk melody and the war dance is just that of tempo. Where the folk melody isn’t meant to be played with great haste, the War dance however is. It quotes the folk melody but does not repeat it ad. lib. like the previous section.

**Rehearsal J-M: Kalamatiano (dance); Mantili Kalamatiano (folk song)**

Kalamatiano is a 7/8 time dance made up of twelve steps which a group of people join their hands together and dance to the right in a semicircle. The leader of the circle/line usually sets the pace for the groups and most often does the most elaborate embellishments of the basic 12 step pattern. The leaders of this ensemble are the clarinet and violin or the Greek instruments Klarino and lyra.

**Rehearsal M-End: Pentozali; Male Cretan War Dance**

It is said that the dance was invented by Daskalogiannis (the hero of the Cretan Revolution of 1770) and his chieftains who decided to create a new and warlike dance – to symbolize the revolution, the fifth to date. The fifth ‘leap’ against the Turks, so to speak. At length the revolution failed, Daskalogiannis met a most tragic end but the Pentozali remains as a remembrance of his attempt.
All quarter-tone notes use given quarter-tone fingerings for the remainder of the piece.
Syrinx esque: play with an airy sound

Very rigid

Tambourine only:
Play tambourine like you would a sistrum
(Egyptian shaker/tambourine)

Timp. st. mute

Cym. with stick

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

Hn. 4

C Tpt.

C Tpt.

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tba

Perc.

Hn.

Ob.

Cl.

Fl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.
Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
Ob. 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Bsn.
Hn. 1
Hn. 2
Hn. 3
Hn. 4
C Tpt.
C Tpt.
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tba.
Timp.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.

586 B.C.E. Pythian Games

q. = 54 Deliberately

586 B.C.E. Pythian Games

q. = 54 Deliberately
Song of Seikilos (Love song)
200 B.C.E. - 100 C.E.

*Hô - son zês, Plai - nou; me - dên hô - los*
If Roto-Toms not available then use high and low Tom-Tom

Greek Bagpipes: Tsabouna

Roto-toms (pitch height R.tom at B flat if possible)
octave lower than high R.tom
pitch low Tom at B if possible
Kalamatiano (folk dance)

Mantili Kalamatino (folk song)
Flip tambourine on top of Timp. (A Timp.) with tambourine (for the remainder of the piece)
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