

Marco Stroppa  
*... of silence*  
2007

Of Silence 2019  
2019



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The setup and the execution of the electroacoustic part  
of this work requires a Computer Music Designer (Max expert).

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## Table of Contents

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Table of Contents                  | 2  |
| Work related information           | 3  |
| Performance details                | 3  |
| Detailed staff                     | 3  |
| Realisation                        | 3  |
| Useful links on Brahms             | 3  |
| Version related information        | 4  |
| Documentalist                      | 4  |
| Realisation                        | 4  |
| Upgrade Motivation                 | 4  |
| Comment                            | 4  |
| Other version(s)                   | 4  |
| Electronic equipment list          | 5  |
| Computer Music Equipment           | 5  |
| Audio Equipment                    | 5  |
| Files                              | 6  |
| Instructions                       | 7  |
| Audio setup                        | 7  |
| Loudspeaker setup                  | 7  |
| Midi setup                         | 7  |
| Software installation              | 7  |
| Initialization routine             | 8  |
| System calibration and tests       | 8  |
| Performance notes                  | 9  |
| Movement 1                         | 9  |
| Movement 2                         | 9  |
| Movement 3                         | 9  |
| Training with the simulation files | 9  |
| Packages for MAX                   | 9  |
| Program note                       | 10 |

## Work related information

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### Performance details

- Nov. 23, 2007, Japon, Shizuoka

Publisher : Ricordi

### Detailed staff

- saxophone

### Realisation

- Arshia Cont

### Useful links on Brahms

- [... \*of silence\*](#) for saxophone and chamber electronics (2007), 21mn
- [Marco Stroppa](#)

## Version related information

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Documentation date: Sept. 30, 2019

Version state: valid, validation date : Nov. 22, 2019, update : May 6, 2021, 3:09 p.m.

### Documentalist

Carlo Laurenzi (Carlo.Laurenzi@ircam.fr)

You noticed a mistake in this documentation or you were really happy to use it? Send us feedback!

### Realisation

- Arshia Cont (Computer Music Designer)
- Marco Stroppa (Composer)

Default work length: 21 mn

### Upgrade Motivation

Updated to Max8 - 64bits

### Comment

A max object, pgbank.mxo by Gilbert Nouno, is not working, because it's an old 32 bits object, but this issue is not a problem, since actually it's just used inside a display interface and it's not necessary to run the patch correctly and properly perform the piece.

### Other version(s)

- [Marco Stroppa - ... of silence - Of Silence 2020 \(Oct. 21, 2020\)](#)
- [Marco Stroppa - ... of silence - 2015-01 \(Jan. 30, 2015\)](#)
- [Marco Stroppa - ... of silence - Parma 2014 \(Oct. 24, 2014\)](#)
- [Marco Stroppa - ... of silence - 2014-01 \(Feb. 19, 2014\)](#)
- [Marco Stroppa - ... of silence - max6-2012 \(May 29, 2012\)](#)
- [Marco Stroppa - ... of silence - max5\\_2012 \(May 29, 2011\)](#)

## Electronic equipment list

### Computer Music Equipment

- 1 antescofo~ - *External objects* (Ircam)  
antescofo~ release develop2 - 1.0-168, Compiled on Feb 8 2019 20:31:25
- 1 Fireface 400 - *Sound Board* (RME)  
or similar
- 1 BCF 2000 - *MIDI Mixer* (Behringer)  
for level control during performance

### Audio Equipment

- 5 PM 200 - *Stage Monitors* (Amadeus)  
or similar, mounted as specified.

Files

| File   | Type  | Author(s)                           | Comment   |
|--|-------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <a href="#">packages_01</a>                  | Patch |                                     | Antescofo~ release develop2 - 1.0-168, Compiled on Feb 8 2019 |
| <a href="#">Concert_PATCH</a>                | Patch | Arshia Cont - Carlo Laurenzi        | for Max 8.1.0   |
| <a href="#">packages_02</a>                  | Patch |                                     | MaxSoundBox_3-2018  |
| <a href="#">OfSilence-ScoreWcues2012.pdf</a> | Score | M. Stroppa (annotations by A. Cont) | PDF Score with electronic cues                                |
| <a href="#">packages_03</a>                  | Patch |                                     | SuperVPMMax2.18.3   |

## Instructions

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### Audio setup

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... of *Silence* employs a multiple-source speaker centered on stage called the “Simplified Timée” consisting of 5 speakers mounted in a specific manner (see Loudspeaker setup). The saxophone player will be changing position around the speaker setup during the piece.

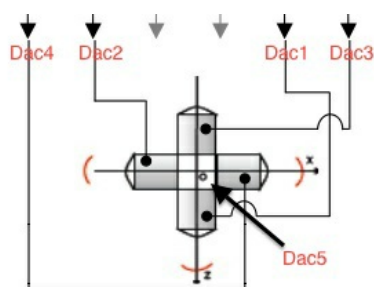
The Audio setup requires 1 input from the saxophone on stage to the console, and 5 outputs from the console to the stage.

The Saxophone input to the console is splitted into two separate DACs for the sound-card (into the computer), with DAC1 for the effects (possibly compressed, no gates) and DAC2 for the Score Follower Antescofo (non-compressed, no gates, raw audio).



### Loudspeaker setup

The “Simplified Timée” is centered on stage and possibly elevated so as to hide the saxophonist if performing behind the material. The following figures show an actual setup and the connection diagram:



### Midi setup

Computer Music Designer mainly interacts with the Max Patch and a BCF2000 type MIDI controller for input/output levels. In case of using a BCF2000 through USB or other MIDI Controller, refer to the patch for the control mapping of parameters.

### Software installation

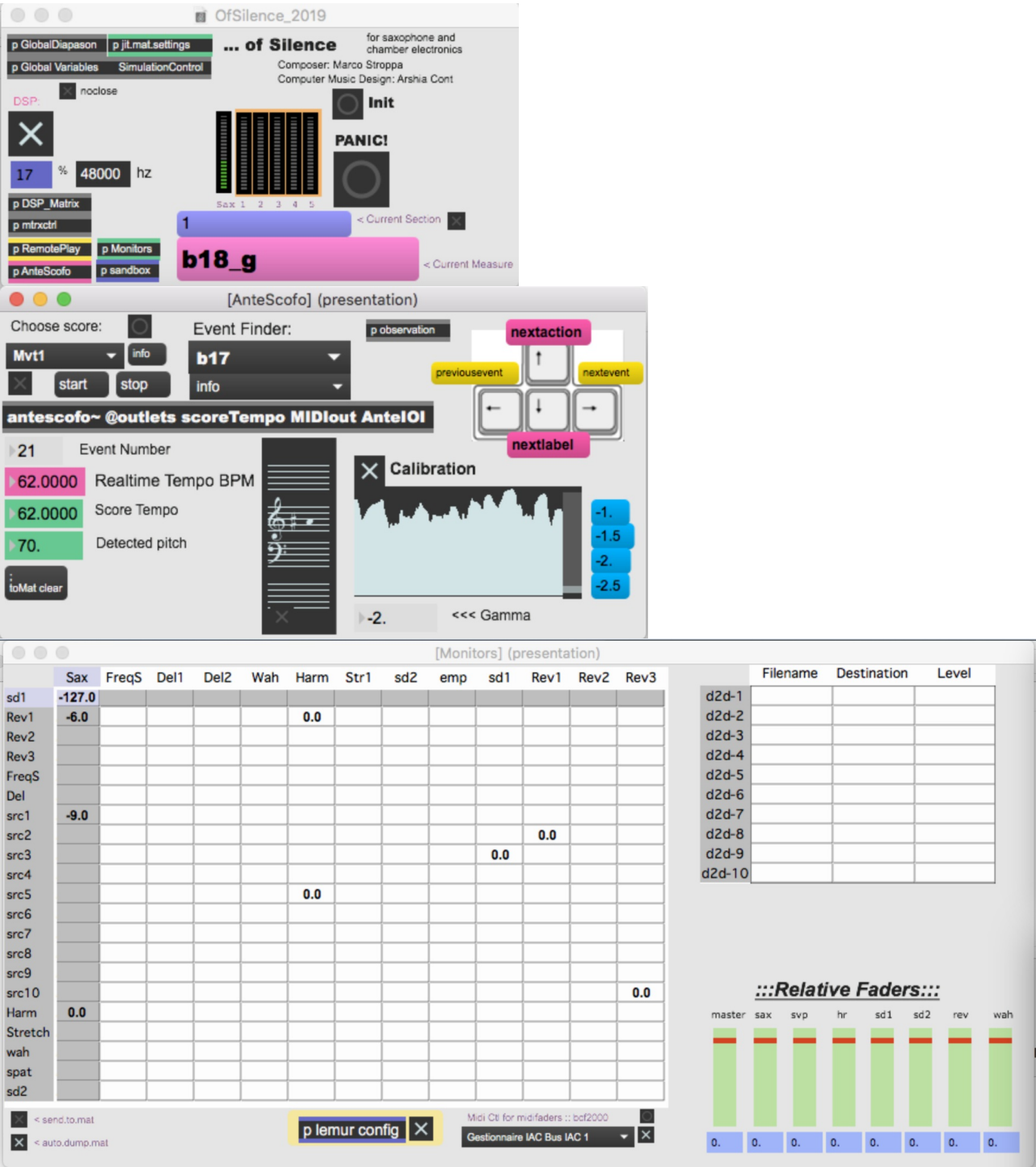
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- Download the patch to a safe place on your hard-drive and unzip. This will create a “OfSilence\_\_2019\_” folder.
- Start Max8 and add that folder to your File Preferences.
- Set proper AUDIO SETUP (Sound Card and INPUT/OUTPUT map):
- Sampling rate for this piece is 48Khz
- We recommend using an *IO Vector Size* of 512 and *Signal Vector Size* of 256
- Quit and restart Max.

- Launch the “OfSilence\_2019” patch.

## Initialization routine

From the main patcher (figure on the left), click on **Init** bang. Turn the **DSP ON** by clicking on the the proper Toggle in the Main Patcher. Go to Antescofo Patcher, and from the *Choose Score* menu select **Reset**. The order of these three steps is mandatory. Then, always from the *Choose Score* menu, select **Mvt1**. The piece is ready to start.



## System calibration and tests

The main control patch is the Antescofo patcher that controls event and queueing dispatch through all modules. The main Calibration routine is visible there. The calibration process requires the Saxophone player to play parts from the first and second mouvement. The calibration diagram should go above the mid-level when instrument is performing and go below the mid-level when not playing. Computer Music Performer should try this scheme on several nuances (beginning and ending of Mouvement 2 for example) to make sure calibration covers the entire piece.

Additionally, the HPTest patcher in the MainPatcher allows a raw control of output speakers for the Simplified Timée.



## Performance notes

Movements in *of Silence* are triggered by choosing the right score from the *Choose score menu* in the Antescofo patcher. During live performance, movements are advanced automatically. Computer Music Performer can advance between electronic actions by the **Upper Arrow button** on the keyboard. Each electronic action has a Label that corresponds to the annotated labels on the attached PDF score and also what is seen during live performance in the Main patcher.

### Movement 1

Movement 1 of the piece is mainly based on *Spectral Delays* (faders SD1 and SD2), soundfiles that are played by *SuperVP* (fader SVP), and *Harmonizers* (fader Harm). It does not need to use score following.

### Movement 2

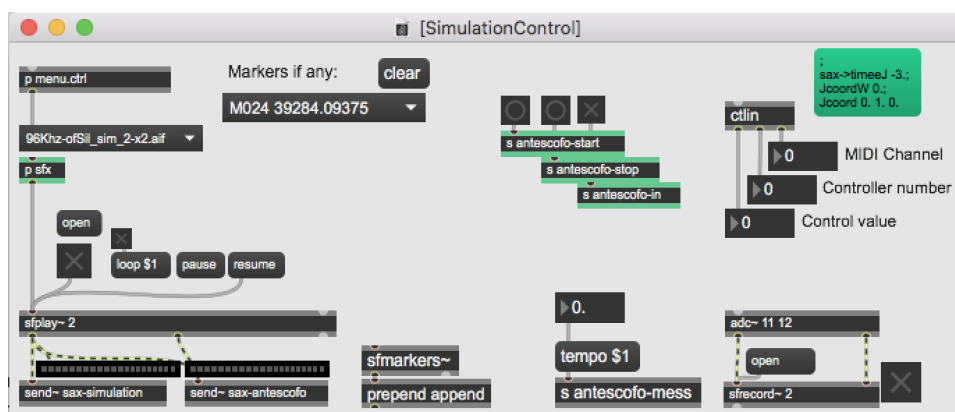
Movement 2 makes extensive use of Antescofo Score Following. It is upon the electronic musician to turn on the *machine listening* by pressing the ‘c’ key on the keyboard (which triggers a Toggle right above Antescofo). This same key can be used in times of panic to advance manually.

### Movement 3

Movement 3 does not use score following. Triggering is done by the Upper Arrow (nextaction) and following the annotated score. The electronic level control should be focused on SVP (for soundfiles), SD1 and SD2 (for live Spectral Delays).

## Training with the simulation files

It is very recommended, prior to any rehearsal / performance of the pièce, to spend some time training with the simulation files of the saxophone player, which can be sent both to antescofo input and direct signal input (for real-time treatments), through the “SimulationControl.maxpat” patcher, to be found in the same directory as the main patch.



On the umenu on the left top, just select the audiofile for the simulation you want to use, and then click on the toggle to start the saxophone recording.

## Packages for MAX

To run the patch correctly, the following packages for max must be installed:

1. SuperVP for MaxMSP v2.18.3-2017-11-OSX
2. Antescofo release develop2 - 1.0-168, Compiled on Feb 8 2019
3. MaxSoundBox 0.3-2018 package (for the SDChromax Spectral Delay)

N.B. -> Make sure you don't have in the search path any version of the old object loadbanger.mxo.

## Program note

*...of Silence* est la quatrième pièce d'un cycle d'œuvres pour instrument soliste et électronique de chambre commencé en 1995. Ce terme de mon invention, « électronique de chambre », a une double signification : sur le plan esthétique, je cherche une relation plus intime entre le soliste et d'autres présences invisibles (l'électronique), constituant ses partenaires musicaux. Sur le plan technologique, c'est le choix d'une diffusion du son uniquement frontale : tout se passe et provient de la scène.

Pour cette œuvre, nous avons utilisé un haut-parleur spécial, placé au centre de la scène, constitué de cinq petits haut-parleurs, autour desquels se place le soliste. Cet haut-parleur multiple, dérivé de recherches faites à l'Ircam depuis plusieurs années, nous permet de composer le rayonnement du son dans l'espace avec une précision infiniment supérieure à celle d'un haut-parleur classique, et donc de réaliser une polyphonie de rayonnements multiples.

Comme les autres œuvres du cycle, *... of Silence* est inspirée d'un poème de E. E. Cummings, le grand poète américain du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, dont la poésie comporte une écriture « spatialisée » sur le papier. Ce poème, extrait du recueil « XLI Poems » (1925) et dont le titre exact est *Lady of Silence*, décrit le passage de la nuit (la dame du silence) vers la « cinglante beauté de l'aube » (*the smarting beauty of dawn*) à travers une panoplie d'images saisissantes. Cela correspond également à la structure de la pièce, qui commence avec le soliste caché derrière les haut-parleurs, et qui se termine avec le soliste devant dans une couleur brillante et lumineuse.

Quatre étapes (*winsome* [séduisant], *sensible and quick* [concret et rapide], *scattering* [en s'éparpillant] et *smarting* [cinglant]) accompagnent la forme, chaque étape étant associée à une position différente du soliste autour des haut-parleurs.

Sur le plan technologique, cette œuvre utilise pour la première fois Antescofo, un système développé par Arshia Cont, qui permet à l'ordinateur de suivre minutieusement ce que fait le soliste – y compris la vélocité instantanée à laquelle il joue – et, donc, d'adapter la réponse de la machine à chaque instant du jeu instrumental. L'ordinateur devient ainsi un véritable musicien. Je tiens à remercier l'exceptionnelle qualité du travail d'Arshia Cont, sans laquelle cette production n'aurait pas eu lieu, ainsi que son engagement sans limites. Je remercie également Serge Lemouton, Gilbert Nouno et Olivier Pasquet pour les modules de traitement du signal que nous avons utilisés et Nicolas Misdariis qui est à l'origine du concept du haut-parleur multiple. Leur aide a été précieuse. Un grand merci, enfin, à Claude Delangle, dont le jeu m'a beaucoup inspiré dans la recherche d'une couleur instrumentale poétique et captivante.

Je voudrais également exprimer ma plus sincère gratitude à [Ichiro Nodaïra](#) ainsi qu'au Concert Hall de Shizuoka et à la Fondation pour la promotion culturelle de Shizuoka pour avoir eu confiance en moi.

Marco Stroppa.

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*Lady of Silence*  
*from the winsome cage of*  
*thy body*  
*rose*  
     *through the sensible*  
*night*  
*a*  
*quick bird*

*(tenderly upon*  
*the dark's prodigious face*  
*thy*  
*voice*  
     *scattering perfume-gifted*  
*wings*  
*suddenly escorts*  
*with feet*  
*sun-sheer*

*the smarting beauty of dawn)*

**E. E. Cummings**

Extrait de « XLI Poems », 1925.

Version documentation creation date: Sept. 30, 2019, 8:58 p.m., update date: May 6, 2021, 3:09 p.m.