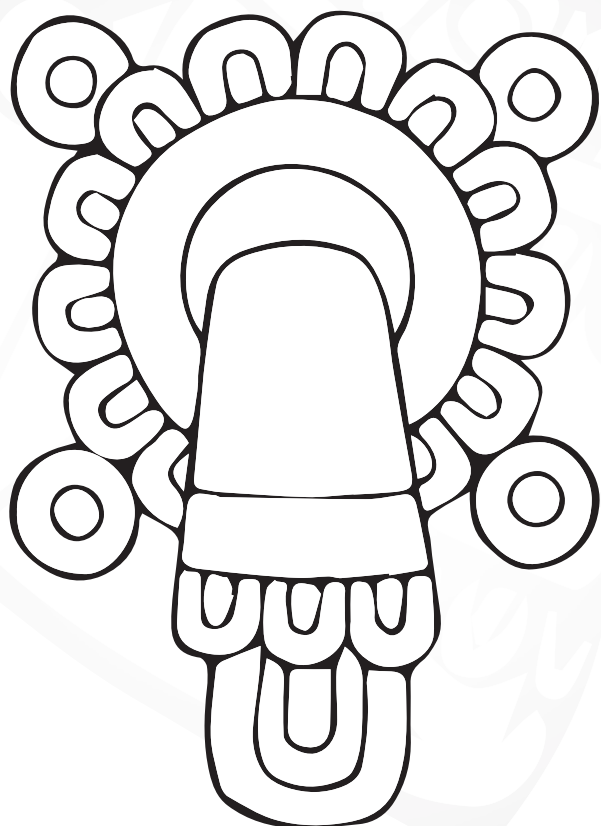




Miggy Torres

Difrasismos

for chamber ensemble



I. Chalchihuitl

II. Quetzalli

Instrumentation:

Piccolo, Flute, Alto flute

Clarinet in Bb, Bass Clarinet in Bb

Percussion 1:

5 Temple Blocks

Guiro

Splash Cymbal

Crotales (high octave: D7-Bb7)

Tam-tam

Bass Drum

Vibraphone

Triangle

Xylophone

1 Bow

Percussion 2:

5 Temple Blocks*

Guiro*

Sizzle Cymbal

2 Bongos

Tam-Tam*

Bass Drum*

Waterphone

Marimba

1 Bow

* denotes instruments shared with Percussion 1

Piano

Guitar (only in II. Quetzalli)

Violin

Violoncello

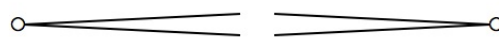
Performance Notes:

I. Chalchihuitl

- All trills are semitone trills.
- “m.s.p.” = molto sul ponticello
- The cluster in the left hand of the piano in mm. 67 (denoted by squares on lines) should be played by depressing the sustain pedal, reaching inside the piano, and hitting the lowest strings repeatedly with the palm of the hand to create a bass-drum-like sound.
- At mm. 74, the pianist should switch from using the palm of his/her hand to using soft percussion mallets to strike the strings in the piano’s lowest register. Which strings he/she hits should be random, but no pitch should predominate above any others. It should just be a blurry mass of low sound.
- Triangular noteheads in the string parts denote an indeterminate highest-possible pitch.
- The cello at mm. 73 should bow the wrapping of the two lowest strings behind the bridge to produce a kind of guttural sound.
- The splash cymbal should have a very quick decay. If a splash cymbal is not available, use a suspended cymbal and choke it quickly.

II. Quetzalli

- The guitar part will require light amplification.
- The following notations denote crescendo from silence (*niente*) and diminuendo to silence respectively.



- All trills are semitone trills.
- In m. 72 of the string parts the violin and cello should continue to trill a touch-fourth artificial harmonic whilst sliding upward to an indeterminate pitch.
- “m.s.p.” = molto sul ponticello
- The following notation in the piano part denotes a note played on the keys while muting the corresponding string with the hand or finger. Mute the string close to the edge of the string behind the dampers, not in the middle of the string.



- The cluster in the left hand of the piano in mm. 2, 9, & 18 (denoted by squares on spaces) should be played by mashing a bunch of keys with the palm of the hand at the lowest register of the piano.
- The cluster in the left hand of the piano in mm. 65 & 70 (denoted by squares on lines) should be played by depressing the sustain pedal, reaching inside the piano, and hitting the lowest strings repeatedly with the palm of the hand to create a bass-drum-like sound (this is the same as the effect used in I. Chalchihuitl).
- The dynamics in the marimba part in m. 66 correspond to each hand.
- Blow into the instruments to produce the “breath sound” in m. 72.
- The division of the beat remains constant throughout all meter changes.

Composer's Note:

The chamber work *Difrasismos* is based upon the Nahuatl linguistic structure of the same name. In Nahuatl—the language of the Aztecs, one that is still spoken today—parallel linguistic structures abound. In many Nahuatl texts one finds examples of a single concept expressed in two ways through the use of paired synonymic or paraphrased lines. These parallelisms are used for emphasis according to Fr. Ángel María Garibay, who says “the same thought expressed twice, clothed in two different images, is like a double stroke of the hammer which drives in the nail.” An example of such a couplet might be something like, “may we not die; may we not perish.” These couplets illustrate the Aztecs’ obsession with duality, and oftentimes one finds nested dualities within Nahuatl speech, forming large binary hierarchies—sometimes reaching as many as five nested tiers.

A subcategory of the couplet described above is a linguistic structure called the *difrasismo*. According to Nahuatl scholar Miguel León Portilla, when the Aztecs “wanted to endow an idea with maximum clarity and precision, they always isolated two of its qualities,” and used those qualities to describe the idea through eloquent and succinct metaphor. It is the metaphorical aspect of the *difrasismo* that qualifies it as such. These “couplet kennings” could also be part of nested hierarchies, creating even richer metaphors.

The *difrasismo* upon which this piece is based is *in chalchihuitl, in quetzalli*, which translates literally as “the jade, the quetzal feather,” but when said as one conveys the idea of beauty and preciousness. In the piece, these meanings—both literal and metaphorical—as well as the Aztec obsession with dual structures, couplets, and nested hierarchies are explored through musical metaphor that attempts to be as eloquent and succinct as its linguistic counterpart.

—MT

Difrasismos

I. Chalchihuitl

Transposed Score

MIGGY TORRES

Quickly, schizophrenically, and precise ♩ = 120

Musical score for the first system of 'Difrasismos I. Chalchihuitl'. The score is in 4/4 time and features the following parts:

- Piccolo:** Treble clef, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic and playing a complex rhythmic pattern.
- Clarinet in B♭:** Treble clef, mirroring the Piccolo's pattern.
- Percussion 1:** Two staves. Includes Temple Blocks, Guiro, and Splash Cymbal. Dynamics range from *f* to *mp*.
- Percussion 2 (Marimba):** Treble and Bass clefs. Starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes a *p subito* marking.
- Piano:** Treble and Bass clefs. Starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic.
- Violin:** Treble clef, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic and playing a pizzicato (*pizz.*) line.
- Violoncello:** Bass clef, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic and playing a pizzicato (*pizz.*) line.

A double bar line is present at the end of the system.

Musical score for the second system of 'Difrasismos I. Chalchihuitl'. The score is in 4/4 time and features the following parts:

- Picc.:** Treble clef, starting at measure 6 with a section marker 'A'. Includes a Flute part with a piano (*p*) dynamic.
- Cl.:** Treble clef, playing a melodic line.
- Crot.:** Treble clef, includes a Guiro part with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic.
- Mar.:** Treble and Bass clefs, playing a complex rhythmic pattern with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic.
- Pno.:** Treble and Bass clefs, playing a melodic line with piano (*p*) dynamics.
- Vln.:** Treble clef, starting at measure 6 with a section marker 'A'. Includes a Violin part with a piano (*p*) dynamic.
- Vc.:** Bass clef, playing a melodic line with piano (*p*) dynamics.

10

Fl.

Cl.

Gro.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Tam-tam
l.v.

ppp *p* *pp* *ppp*

arco sul tasto *tr* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*
molto sul ponticello (m.s.p.)

8^{va}

14

Fl.

Cl.

B. D.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Bass Drum

p *p* *mp* *p*

p *ppp* *ppp*

ord. *p* *pizz.* *arco* *ppp*
ppp

B

8^{va}

18

Fl. *mf*

Cl. *p* *mp* *mf*

B. D. *p*

Mar. *mf* *f*

Pno. *mp* *mf*

Vln. *p* *ppp* *mf*

Vc. *p* *ppp* *mf*

Tam-tam soft mallets

m.s.p. *tr* *ord.* *gliss.*

22

Fl. *f*

Cl. *f* To B. Cl.

T-t. *mf* *f*

Mar. *mf*

Pno. *f*

Vln. *f* pizz.

Vc. *f* pizz.

Splash Cymbal

Crotales

Or highest possible pitch *8va-1* pizz.

D

27

Fl.

Cl.

Bass Clarinet in B \flat
slap-tongue
f

Clarinet in B \flat
p

Tempo Blocks

Vibraphone
mf
f > mf

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

f

arco sul tasto
tr
ppp

arco sul tasto
tr
ppp

D

32

Fl.

Cl.

Triangle

Vib.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

mp

p

mp

p

mf

f

mp

p

mp

p

mp

p

mp

p

mp

ppp

ppp

mp

p

mp

ppp

ppp

mp

ppp

36

Fl. *mf*

Cl. *mf*

Tri. Temple Blocks

Vib. *mp*

Mar. *mf* bright

Pno. *p*

Vln. *mf* *ppp* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *ppp* *mf*

(sul tasto) *tr* *m.s.p.* *gliss.* *ord. pizz.*

40

Fl. *fpp*

Cl. *p* *mp*

T. Bl. *mf*

Vib. *f* *pp*

Mar. *fpp*

Pno. *f* *pp*

Vln. *pp* arco non vib.

Vc. *pp* arco non vib.

E

Bass Clarinet in B \flat

8va

44

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vib.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Xylophone

pp

mf

p

pp

pp

secco mp p

mf

p

pp

gliss.

Highest possible pitch

pizz.

mf

mp

mf

p

pp

48

Fl.

B. Cl.

Xyl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

mf

p

To B. D.

mf

p

mf

p

59

Fl.

B. Cl.

T. Bl.

Xyl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Splash Cymbal

f

(ord.)

m.s.p.

ord.

62

Fl.

B. Cl.

Cym.

Xyl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

To Alto Fl.

Alto Flute

ppp

p

p

mp

p

Crotales

Guiro

p

mp

p

p

mp

pp

loco

arco, ord.

mf

gliss.

f

pizz.

G

66

A. Fl. *pp* *p*

B. Cl. *f* *mf*

Gro. *f* *mf* *mf*

Xyl. *pp*

Mar. *f* *fp* *mf*

Pno. *ppp* *Red.*

Vln. *ppp* *p*

Vc. *mf* *pp*

Depress sustain pedal, reach inside piano and hit lowest strings with open hand to create bass drum effect.

sul tasto → m.s.p.

arco, sul tasto

69

A. Fl. *pp* *p* *p*

B. Cl. *pp* *p*

Xyl. *p* *p secco* *p*

Mar. *p* *mp*

Pno. *pp* *p*

Vln. *ppp* *pp*

Vc. *mf* *ppp*

→ sul tasto

(sul tasto)

(tr) → m.s.p.

Vibraphone

II. Quetzalli

Calmo ♩ = 52

Piccolo

Clarinet in B♭

Percussion 1 (Vib.)

Percussion 2

Piano

Guitar

Violin

Violoncello

medium soft mallets

Tam-tam, scrape

Waterphone, bowed

Sizzle Cymbal

senza ♩

sul tasto, con sord.

(ord.) → m.s.p.

gliss.

pp *p* *pp* *mf* *pp* *p* *pp* *mf* *f* *pp* *ppp* *mf* *f* *ppp* *p* *ppp*



Picc.

Cl.

Vib.

T.-t.

Pno.

Gtr.

Vln.

Vc.

bowed

ppp *p* *mf* *pp* *p* *ppp* *p* *ppp*

5

Picc. *ppp*

Cl. *p*

Vib.

T.-t. Tam-tam, struck
l.v.
p

Pno.

Gtr.

Vln. *ppp*

Vc. *p* *ppp*



8 **A**

Picc. *pp* *p*

Cl. *pp* *p* *pp* *mf*

Vib. *mf*
medium soft mallets

T.-t. Tam-tam, scrape
pp *mf*
Sizzle Cymbal

Pno. normale *pp* *mp*
5

Gtr. *f*

Vln. **A** ord., senza sord. *ppp* *mf* *f* gliss. m.s.p. sul tasto, con sord. *ppp*

Vc. ancora sul tasto *pp* *mp* m.s.p.

10

Picc. *ppp* *p*

Cl. *mp*

Vib. bowed *mp*

T.-t. Waterphone, bowed *mf*

Pno. *mf* *p*

Gtr. *mf* *p*

Vln. *mp* *ppp* m.s.p. sul tasto

Vc. *ppp* *mp* sul tasto m.s.p.



12

Picc. *ppp* To Fl. **B** c. 5" Flute *f* To Picc. *pp*

Cl. *f* *pp*

Vib.

T.-t. Bongos, sticks Temple Blocks Tam-tam, scrape *pp*

Pno. *f* *mp* *pp*

Gtr.

Vln. *mp* *ppp* **B** senza sord. *ppp* m.s.p. sul tasto

Vc. *ppp* sul tasto

17

Piccolo

Fl.

Cl.

Vib.

T.-t.

Pno.

Gtr.

Vln.

Vc.

mf *ppp* *mp*

medium soft mallets

Sizzle Cymbal

Waterphone, bowed

molto *mf* *f*

Sounding harmonics

con sord. sul tasto

II I

ppp

molto *mf* *f* *m.s.p.*

Sounding harmonics

ancora sul tasto

III II

mp



19

Picc.

Cl.

Vib.

T.-t.

Pno.

Gtr.

Vln.

Vc.

mp *ppp*

bowed

Bongos

Temple Blocks

mf *f*

mp *mf* *p* *f*

mp *ppp*

m.s.p. *sul tasto*

ppp

sul tasto

III II

C
Double Time ♩ = 104

21

Picc. *p*

Cl. *mp*

Vib. m.s. mallet *mf*

T. Bl. Guiro

Pno. *mf*

Gtr. *mf*

C
Double Time ♩ = 104

Vln. *mp* → *ppp* (m.s.p. → sul tasto)

Vcl. *mp* → *ppp* → *mp* (m.s.p. → sul tasto → m.s.p.)

Flute

24

Picc.

Cl. *f*

Vib. medium hard mallets *mf* *così secco come un osso*

Gro. *f* *insistently*

Pno. *mp* — *così secco come un osso* — *mf*

Gtr.

Vln.

Vcl. *ppp* (sul tasto)

28

Fl. *ff*

Cl. *ff* *pp sub.* *mf*

Vib. *ff* *p sub.*

Gro. Temple Blocks, sticks *ff* *pp sub.* Bongos, sticks

Pno. *ff*

Gtr. *ff* *pp* *mp*

Vln. *pp* *mf* *pp*

Vc. *ff* senza sord. pizz.

D

senza sord. sul tasto *tr* *m.s.p.* sul tasto

32

Fl. *f* *pp*

Cl. *pp* *f* *mf*

Vib. *f*

Bongos Tam-tam, scrape with stick *f sub.* Sizzle Cymbal *mf* Waterphone, bowed *mf*

Pno. *f* *pp sub.* *ppp*

Gtr. *f* *p sub.* *ppp*

Vln. *pp* *mf*

Vc. arco *mf* *m.s.p.* *ppp* sul tasto

L.H. loco

8^{va}

8^{va}

(b) A^b

(b) A^b

E

36

Fl. *mf* *f* *p quasi sotto voce*

Cl. *pp* *f*

Vib. *p secco, sotto voce*

T.-t. Bongos, hands slap *f* *p sotto voce*

Pno. *f*

Gtr. *f* *p sotto voce*

Vln. *pp* *mf* *f* *pizz.* *p*

Vc. *mf* *f* *pizz.*

8^{va}

F

41

Fl. *f* *f* *relentless*

Cl. *pp* *mf* *pp* *f* *relentless*

Vib. *f* *relentless*

Bongos slap *f* *p* *f* *f* *relentless* Marimba, hard mallets

Pno. *f* *f* *relentless*

Gtr. *f* *f* *relentless*

Vln. arco sul tasto *pp* *mf* *f* *relentless* ord.

Vc. arco sul tasto *pp* *mf* *pp* *f* *relentless* ord.

Più lento, pesante ♩ = 63

Picc.
 Cl.
 Vib.
 Mar.
 Pno.
 Gtr.
 Vln.
 Vc.



Tempo primo ♩ = 52

Picc.
 Cl.
 Vib.
 T.-t.
 Pno.
 Gtr.
 Vln.
 Vc.

ff **f** **ppp** **ppp** *

Tam-tam, hard mallets **mp** **f**

ff **ppp**

ff **ppp**

f possibile
Play notes in random order as fast as possible

Tempo primo ♩ = 52
This is a double stop.
Play Bb on II, touch G# on I. → m.s.p. → sul tasto **ppp**

61

Alto Flute **H**

Picc. *tr*

Cl. *tr* *mf*

Vib. *ped. liberally* *mp* *5* *mf*

T.-t. *Tam-tam mallet* *mp*

Pno. *una corda* *p* ** Ped.*

Gtr. *5* *mf*

Vln. **H** *con sord. II* *pp*

Vc. *tr* *sul tasto* *m.s.p.* *sul tasto* *pp* *mf*



65

A. Fl. *tr* *ppp* *mp*

Cl. *tr* *ppp* **Bass Clarinet in B \flat**

Vib. *m.s. mallets* *3* *mp*

T.-t. *Marimba, soft mallets* *ppp* *ppp*

Pno. *tre corde* *ppp* *p* ** Ped.*

Gtr. *3* *p* *mf* *3* *mf* *p*

Vln. *m.s.p.* *mp*

Vc. *ord. con sord.* *pp* *mp* *pp* *sul tasto*

67 (tr)

A. Fl. *ppp*

B. Cl. *mp* *tr*

Vib. *p*

Mar. *mp*

Pno. *ppp* una corda *p*
* Red. sempre

Gtr. *p* *mf*

Vln. *ppp* sul tasto

Vc. *mp* m.s.p.



68

A. Fl. *mp*

B. Cl. (tr) *ppp*

Vib. Crotales, bowed

Mar. *ppp*

Pno.

Gtr.

Vln. *mp* m.s.p.

Vc. *ppp* sul tasto

69

A. Fl. *ppp*

B. Cl. *mp*

Crot. *mp*

Mar. *mp* *ppp*

Pno. *ppp* tre corde

Gtr.

Vln. *ppp* sempre sul tasto

Vc. *mp* *ppp* m.s.p. sempre sul tasto



71

A. Fl. *p*

B. Cl. *ppp*

Crot. *p*

Mar. *ppp* *p*

Pno. *p*

Gtr.

Vln. *p*

Vc.

72 (tr)

A. Fl. *ppp* *p* breath sound

B. Cl. *p* breath sound

Crot.

Mar. *ppp*

Pno. *ppp* *

Gtr.

Vln. *ppp* gliss. continue to trill a touch-fourth artificial harmonic whilst sliding upward to an indeterminate pitch

Vc. *p* *ppp* gliss. continue to trill a touch-fourth artificial harmonic whilst sliding upward to an indeterminate pitch