

Piece for Large Ensemble and Piano

for solo piano and large ensemble (flute, oboe, english horn, clarinets in Bb and Eb, bass clarinet in Bb, bassoon, contrabassoon, two horns in F and string quintet)

Program text

Piece for Large Ensemble and Piano explores the relationship and interactions between free improvisation and written composition. The piece was written as part of an investigation into the two forms of musical creation and my personal approach to the subject as a composer and improvising musician.

There are two main 'entities' in the piece – the ensemble, which interprets the written and completely defined music, and the soloist, who takes on a very specific role by (re-)acting freely within a closed compositional form. In order to make adequate decisions that correspond to the essence of the work, the soloist requires a thorough understanding not only of the musical material, but also of the nature of improvisation itself. Here, the conductor fulfils the demanding task of intermediating between the two entities.

The dynamic that results from this combination of written music and improvisation, of soloist, ensemble and conductor, is complex and challenging, but also means an enriching and stimulating experience for everyone involved.

- *Lisbon, November 2023*