Score

Arsenic & Old Lace

for

Microtonally tuned Harpsichord and String Quartet

Jukka Tiensuu 1990

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Arsenic & Old Lace (1990)

for Microtonally tuned Harpsichord and String Quartet

Performance note:

. *staccato*, about half of the written note length

' *staccatissimo*, always very short regardless of written note length

— *tenuto*, play the note to the full written length (only, no accent is intended).

The *glissandi* are played continuously at even speed during the indicated time (*not* portamento). Note-stems without head in the middle of a glissando are for orientation only, they are not to be articulated.

a quick glissando downwards.

very slow fluctuations (ca. a quarter-tone above and below the main note).

Accidentals apply to the remainder of the measure, but are sometimes repeated for easier reading.

Quarter-tone sharp and flat, respectively. However, the strings should adapt to the tuning of the harpsichord as much as possible. Special care should be taken when playing in unison with the harpsichord (e.g. bars 20-21 and 47).

tr All trills and other ornaments are semintonal and start on the main note. They trill continues till the end of the note even when this is tied over several bars.

b.220-226: Each player will do an individual *calando*. The 1/16-notes must not be synchronised and the players will arrive to bar 225 (and fade out) at different times.

Balance: The strings should adapt their dynamics to that of the harpsichord. Amplification of the harpsichord is recommended.

Harpsichord: diamond-shaped note-heads indicate keys to be played on the upper keyboard.

Although not indicated, a *let vibrate* is recommended throughout the piece, especially in slow sections (excluding naturally the *staccato* notes and notes separate by rests).

Cadenza: The harpsichordist can start his *cadenza* (a free improvisation) on B^b as soon as the string players have reached their final unison. The *cadenza* should finish with thirds D-F/D-F# (with optional microtonal variations) and preferably overlap (ad lib.) with the entrance of the violins in bars 227-228.

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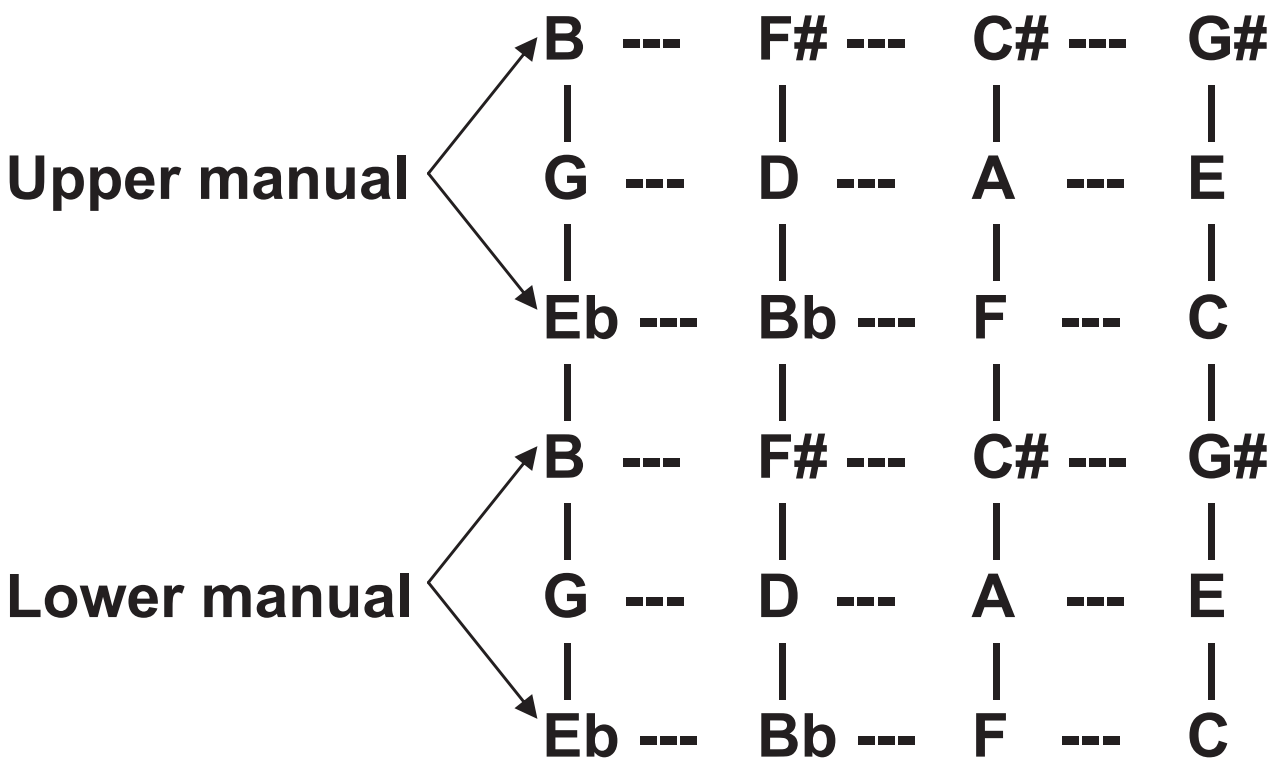
Tuning of the harpsichord used in: *Fantango, M, Arsenic and Old Lace, Prélude mesuré*...

(Note: ”---” indicates a perfect fifth, ”|” indicates a perfect major third):



Note, that the interval from the lower manual B natural to the upper manual E flat is also a perfect major third. Same for lower F# to upper Bb etc. Thus a key on the upper manual sounds always 41 cents lower than the corresponding (”unison”) key on the lower manual.

***For checking:* Deviations from equal temperament in cents (if A is taken as reference):**

lower keyboard: C +16, C# -14, D –2, D# +10, E +2, F +14, F# -16, G –4, G# -12, A = 0, A# +12, B –18

upper keyboard: C -25, C# -55, D –43, D# -31, E -39, F -27, F# -57, G –45, G# -53, A -41, A# -29, B –59

You can also check that the following triads are perfect (fifth AND third perfect, no beat):

Major triads on: **D, Eb, F, G, A, Bb**

Minor triads on: **C#, D, F#, G, A, B(natural)**

Cembalo

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1

~ 42

v.1 pizz. *mp* *f* *p*

v.2 pizz. *mp* *f* *p*

va pizz. *mp* *f* *p*

vc *pizz* *mp* *f* *p*

~ 42

CMB +8' +8'

15

arco

tr

arco

arco

arco

24

tr

32

~ 36

41

48

53

p

p

6

1 2 3 4

6

1 2 3 4

3

58

poco rit.

poco rit.

poco rit.

poco rit.

pp

pp

pp

pp

~ 54

mp

mp

mp

mp

~ 54

poco rit.

3

3

3

64

tr

tr

pp

pp

pp

pp

mf pp

mf pp

mf pp

mf pp

mf

mf

mf

3

3

3

3

3

3

6

3

70

pizz.

f

~ 72

arco

p

pizz.

f

arco

p 3

pizz.

f

arco

p

pizz.

f

arco

~ 72

77

3

3

3

3

3

3

p

3

3

82

3

3

3

3

pizz.

3

3

3

3

3

3

86

arco

pizz.

92

arco

pizz.

98

pp

pp

pp

104

arco

("forte")

110

p

3

113

pp

118

f pp

+4

1 2 3 4

1 2 3 4

124

129

p p p

3 3 3 3 3

133

pp

pp

pp

mp

sul pont.

f

p

3

137

3

3

3

142

3

3

3

3

3

3

145

149

153

157

pizz.

161

167

172

178

182

187

tr

ff

ff

ff

ff

190

193

s.pont.

pp

s.pont.

pp

s.pont.

pp

s.pont.

pp sub.

f

+K

198

ord.

ff

f

ff

pp

pp sub.

Tutti

tr

203

210

-K

-4

216

pochiss. rall.

pochiss. rall.

pochiss. rall.

pochiss. rall.

220 *molto calando*

molto calando

molto calando

molto calando

~ 42

p con calore

[Cadenza]

~ 42

(8', 8')

(improvisando)

228

p con calore

p con calore

p *con calore*

+4' +K .

241

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

249

257

264

"ff"

"ff"

"ff"

"ff"

Tutti .

270

8va

8va

(chromatic clusters)

274

trillando sempre

trillando sempre

ff

ff

-4 -K .

283

poco a poco dim. al (pp)

poco a poco dim. al (pp)

287

291

(pp)

(pp)

(loco e senza trillo)

p

(loco e senza trillo)

p

pp

p

pp

p

tr molto rall.

tr molto rall.

298

306

312

320

325

328

336

-8' +4'

342

348