

Karlheinz Essl

# ***Trois Cent Drones***

for toy piano and live-electronics  
2019-2021

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## PLAYING INSTRUCTIONS

Written for a three-octave toy piano (range: F – f<sup>''</sup>), this piece sounds best on a Michelsonne instrument. However, it can also be performed on a Schoenhut Baby Grand or any other toy piano with the appropriate range of three octaves.

Although notated solely in quavers, the tempo encompasses a wide range from very slow to extremely fast. Starting with a speed of MM = 50, it gradually accelerates to MM = 400 which equals three “time octaves”, speaking with Karlheinz Stockhausen (cf. his famous article *...how time passes...* from 1957). A similar transition also happens in the harmonic domain where the full range of the toy piano – 3 octaves from F to f<sup>''</sup> – finally collapses into a single pitch. And also in the dynamics, where a permanent process of *crescendo* and *diminuendo* takes place. Needless to mention, all these processes happen simultaneously at the same time. Despite its strict structure, the piece should be played in a fluent *rubato* attitude with lots of *espressivo*.

Please listen to the computer simulation of this piece in order to understand its harmonic, temporal and dynamic development:

<https://www.essl.at/works/TCD.html#snd>

## LIVE ELECTRONICS

This piece requires a special macOS software written in MaxMSP that can be requested from the author by [e-mail](#). It creates artificial resonance of the toy piano sounds that are transmitted via a (contact) microphone to a computer. The intensity of these spectral drones (which are generated in realtime by an audio plug-in developed by Michael Norris) will be controlled by a second musician on the computer.

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*Molto rubato e espressivo*

♩ = 50 *acc...*

Karlheinz Essl (\* 1960)

*p cresc...*

*mp cresc...*

♩ = 100 *acc...*

5

*mf cresc...*

♩ = 200 *acc...*

9

*f cresc...*

♩ = 400 *rit...*

♩ = 200 *rit...*

♩ = 100 *rit...*

♩ = 50 *rit...*

13

*ff dim...*

*f dim...*

*mf dim...*

*mp dim...*

17  $\text{♩} = 50 \text{ acc...}$   $\text{♩} = 100 \text{ acc...}$

*p cresc...* *mf cresc...*

21  $\text{♩} = 200 \text{ acc...}$   $\text{♩} = 400 \text{ rit...}$

*f cresc...* *ff dim...*

24  $\text{♩} = 200 \text{ rit...}$

*f dim...* *f dim...*

27  $\text{♩} = 100 \text{ rit...}$   $\text{♩} = 50 \text{ rit...}$

*mf dim...* *mp dim...*

30

♪ = 25 *acc...*      ♪ = 50 *acc...*      ♪ = 100 *acc...*      ♪ = 200 *acc...*

*p cresc...*      *mp cresc...*      *mf cresc...*      *f cresc...*

34

♪ = 400 *rit...*

*ff dim...*

38

♪ = 200 *rit...*

*f dim...*

42

♪ = 100 *rit...*      ♪ = 50 *rit...*

*mf dim...*      *p dim...*