

Act Without Words I

(A piano accompaniment for Samuel Beckett's play.)

William Osborne

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Scene: Desert. Dazzling light.

Ephemerat and rubato (♩ = ca. 40)

mp (hard accents on right hand)
8va
Ped.
15^{ma}

A man is flung backwards on stage from right wing.

Tempo II; piu mosso (♩ = ca. 50)

He falls, gets up immediately,

(clusters)

5
8va
mp
f
sfz
4/8

dusts himself, turns aside, reflects.

Tempo I

8
rallantando
mp (hard accents on right hand)
8va
Ped.
4/8

Whistle from right wing.

He reflects,

goes out right.
Tempo II

13
mp
f
sfz
8va
Ped.
4/16

Immediately flung back on stage,

He falls,

gets up immediately,

dusts himself, reflects.

Tempo III (♩. = ca. 60)

16 *mp*

Whistle from left wing. He reflects, **Tempo I** goes out left.

16 *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.*

20 *mf*

he falls, gets up immediately, *8va* Immediately flung back on stage, *f* aside, reflects.

20 *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.*

24

Whistle from above. He reflects, goes toward left wing, hesitates, thinks better of it, halts, turns aside, reflects.

24 *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.*

A little tree descends from the flies, lands. It has a single bough some three yards from the ground and at its summit a meager tuft of plams casting at its foot a circle of shadow.

29 *poco rall.*

Whistle from above. He continues to reflect. He turns, sees tree, reflects, goes to it, sits down in its shadow, looks at hands. **Tempo III**

29 *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.*

A pair of tailor's scissors descends from flies, comes to rest before tree, a yard from ground. He continues to look at his hands. Whistle from above. He looks up, sees scissors, takes them and starts to trim his nails.

The palms close like a parasol, the shadow disappears. He drops the scissors, reflects. A tiny carafe, to which is attached a huge label inscribed water, descends from flies, comes to rest some three yards from ground. Whistle from above. He continues to reflect.

He looks up, sees carafe, reflects, gets up, goes and stands under it, tries in vain to reach it,

renounces, turns aside, reflects.

A big cube descends from flies, lands. He continues to reflect.

Whistle from above. He turns, sees cube, looks at it, at carafe, reflects,

50 goes to cube, takes it up, carries it over and sets it down under carafe, tests its stability, gets up on it, tries in vain to reach carafe,

mp

ped. *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* * *senza pedale*

56 remounces, gets down, carries cube back to its place, turns aside, reflects. A second smaller cube descends from flies, lands. He continues to reflect. Whistle from above.

mp

ped. *ped.* *ped.* *ped.*

rall. e dim.

63 He turns, sees second cube, looks at it, carafe, goes to second cube, takes it up, carries it over and sets it down under carafe, **Come sopra**

p *p* *mp*

* *senza pedale*

68 tests its stability, gets up on it, tries in vain to reach carafe, renounces, gets down, takes up second cube to carry it back to its place, thinks better of it, sets it down, goes to big cube, takes it up, carries it over and **Come sopra**

Reflective (lo stesso tempo)

mp *mp*

ped. *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* * *senza pedale*

76

puts it on small one, tests their stability, gets up on them,

Tempo II

(♩ = ca. 50)

80
80
8vb
Ped.
6
6
5
12
sfz
f
rall. e dim.
6
5

the cubes collapse,

he falls,

gets up immediately,

Poco meno mosso (♩ = ca. 90) brushes himself, reflects.

83
83
rall. e dim.
mp
6/16
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
mp
senza pedale

puts it on big one, tests their stability, gets up on them and is about to reach for carafe when

He takes up small cube, **Tempo II** (♩ = ca. 50)

89
89
mf
crescendo
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.

it is pulled up a little way and comes to rest beyond his reach.

He gets down, reflects,

(single 8th note triplet = 16th)

carries cubes back to their place, one by one, turns aside, reflects.

Tempo IV (♩ = ca. 60)

95
95
mf
mp
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.

A third still smaller cube descends from flies, lands.

He continues to reflect.

whistle from above

He turns, sees third cube, looks at it, reflects, turns aside, reflects.

105
105
mp
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.

The third cube is pulled up and disappears in flies.

Beside carafe a rope descends from flies, with knots to facilitate ascent. He continues to reflect.

112

112

mp

Led.

Whistle from above. He turns, sees rope, reflects,

goes to it, climbs up it and **Ecitato; molto ritmico (presto)**

117

117

(whistle)

mp

mp

Led.

(trill half step above note)

130

130

Led.

(trill half step above note)

138

138

Led.

He reflects, looks around for scissors, sees them, goes and picks them up,

Reflective; non meno mosso

is about to reach it when

rope is let out and deposits him back on ground.

143

143

mp

Led.

returns to rope and starts to cut it with scissors.

150

(trill half step above note)

Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo.

157

(trill half step above note)

Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo.

The rope is pulled up, lifting him off the ground, he ang on,

164

(trill whole step above note)

Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo.

molto crescendo

168

(trill half step above note)

ff sfz f

Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo.

177

Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo. Leo.

184

(trill half step above note)

succeeds in cutting rope, falls back on ground,

P II -

189

drops scissors, falls,

(clusters)

gets up again immediately, burshes himself

reflects. The rope is pulled up quickly and disappears in flies.
Reflective; non meno mosso

195

With the length of rope in his possession he makes a lasso with which he

treis to lasso carafe. The carafe is pulled up quickly and disappears in flies.

200

He turns aside, reflects.

He goes with lasso in his hand to tree, looks at bough,

tums and looks at cubes,

looks again at bough,

207

drops lasso, goes to cubes, takes up small one,

rall. e dim.

carries it over and sets it down under bough, goes back for big one, takes it up and carries it over under bough, makes to put it on small one, hesitates, thinks better of it, sets it down, takes up small one and puts it on big one, tests their stability,

213 *8va* *crescendo* *f* *(trill half step above note)*

turns aside and stoops to pick up lasso. The bough folds down against the trunk. He straightens up with lasso in his hand, turns and sees what has happened. He drops lasso, turns aside, reflects. He carries back cubes to their place, one by one, **Come sopra**

218 *ff* *mp* *8vb*

goes back for lasso, carries it over to cubes and lays it in a neat coil on small one. He turns aside, reflects.

225

Whistle from right wing. **Tempo II** He reflects, goes out right. Immediately flung back on stage

231 *mp* *f*

he falls, *8va* gets up immediately, brushes himself, turns aside, reflects. Whistle from left wing. He does not move. He looks at his hands, looks around for scissors, **Chorale; tranquil** sees them, goes and picks them up, starts to trim his nails, stops, reflects,

235 *sfz* *mp* *(chords broken from bottom)*

runs his finger along blade of scissors, goes and lays them on small cube, turns aside, opens his collar, frees his neck and fingers it.

244

mp

8va

8vb

Led.

The small cube is pulled up and disappears in flies, carrying away rope and scissors. He turns to take scissors, sees what has happened.

247

8va

8vb

accelerando e crescendo

p

Led.

He turns aside, reflects.

(To skip the instrumental section go to the coda sign on page 14.) D.S. al Coda

He goes and sits down on big cube.

250

Led.

8va

8vb

Cantabile

A trombone (or other instrument) descends from the flies.

He takes the trombone and plays.

255

mp

8va

8vb

Led.

262

8va

8va

Ped.

Ped.

268

8va

8va

8va

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

274

The trombone is pulled from his hands and disappears in flies.

8va

8va

8va

f

Ped.

Ped.

The cube is pulled from under him.

He falls.

The big cube is pulled up and disappears in flies. He remains lying on his side, his face toward auditorium,

staring before him.

280

Ped. *8va* *sfz* *mp* *mp*

The carafe descends from flies and comes to rest a few feet from his body.

He does not move. The carafe descends further, dangles and plays about his face. He does not move.

The carafe is

284

8va *sfz* *mp* *mp* *8va*

pulled up and disappears in flies.

The bough returns to horizontal, the palms open, the shade returns.

Whistle from above. He does not move.

291

8va *sfz* *mp* *mp* *8va*

(8va)

The tree is pulled up and disappears in the flies.

297

8va *p* *8va*

302 He looks at his hands.

8va

morendo poco a poco

306

8va

Frühling 1986, Kleinhöhenrain