

Maiko is what Freud describes as a “Mischwortbildung mit Modifikation”¹. The word Maiko is a mixture of the words micro and macro (or in German “mikro” and “makro”, which is reduced by omitting the “r”. Although the techniques described are borrowed from the those, which Freud has extracted through the analysis of jokes, the result in this context is not humorous, but rather abstract. Maiko, for solo viola was inspired and makes use of these techniques, as well as reordering, double meanings, and repeating similar material “full and empty”,² without attempting to achieve humorous results.

The piece also deals with perceptions of space interpreted as time or pitch. This idea stems from thoughts pertaining to the instrument itself: the physical space between two notes does not always correspond to the distance between tempered pitches, and the higher up one plays upon a string, the closer the distance between the fingers become. The low microtonal glissandi found when one fingers the highest position on a string, and allows the other side of the string vibrate (the technique of playing between the scroll and the fingered note, or on the “wrong” side of the string) is projected as curves to other areas of pitch, and parameters such as bow movement and tempi. The tempi and pitches are displayed in different sizes of windows in which the performer interprets the notated curves. Similar to a window in which one works in digital sound, the larger the window is, the lower the resolution is, and the performer is thus left with differing degrees of freedom and detail when working with tempi and pitch glissandi. The application on these curves to different parameters, and the reappearing curve formations create double meanings and ambiguities which are explored throughout the piece.

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