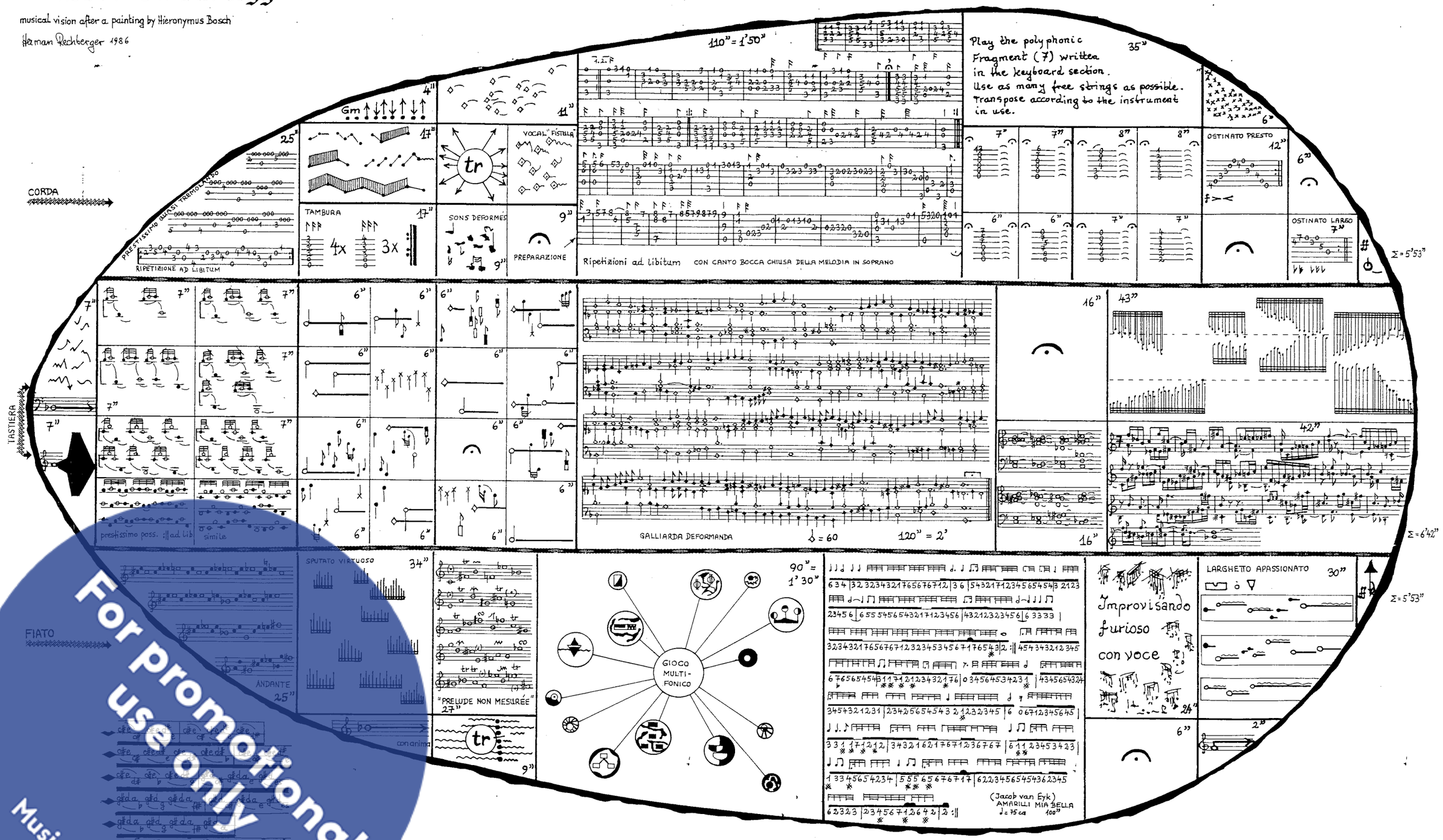
Consort On An Egg

musical vision after a painting by Hieronymus Bosch

Herman Rechberger 1986



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EXPLANATIONS:

The composition is scored for a plucked string instrument with a minimum of six strings, tuned into the intervall proportions of the classical guitar (e.g. E -A-d-g-♮-e, G-C-b-d-g, A-D-g-c-e-a etc.), a keyboard (except piano) and a woodwind (with multiphonic possibilities). Possible instruments are: guitar, lute, opharion, theorbe, chitarrone, 6-course cittern, bandora, regal, positive organ, small organ, harpsichord, spinet, virginal, unfretted clavichord, all kinds of recorders, crumhorns, flutes, rackets, schryari, sordunes, curtals and shams.

The consort may also be orchestrated. In this case there would be several different or equal instruments performing in a predetermined way "SOLI & TUTTI".

In principle the parts are supposed to be red from left to right. If encountering a thick line, proceed vertically. The specific notations are always serving the purpose of getting as close as possible to the expected final sounding result.

In addition to the Trio-version and Orchestral version there is a possibility of using an ad libitum vocal/action group. In this case they should hum a perfect fifth (B-F) from the beginning of the piece up to the entry of the "GALLIARDA". After that section the auxiliary group joins again with small bells, birdwhistles, hand drums etc. to create a soundscape around the egg. Anyway, this should never rise above the level of the CONSORT.

TIMING:

Each performer (or a group of performers in a section) needs a stop watch. The keyboard starts and after 14 seconds the rest of the musicians is joining in. The piece ends with an approximativ 35 seconds solo of the keyboard. The other musicians must end as synchronously as possible.

STRING(S):

The polyphonic fragment can, according to the instrument used, be played with guitar fingering. The deformed sounds are produced by means of slapping/pulling or beating the strings with metal or wooden objects. (◇) harmonics, (◇) whistling, (X) knockles, ( ) between the end of the fingerboard and the bridge. Use a slide. (PREPARAZIONE) Perstrip or tiny chain over the strings near the bridge. This operation must not affect the sonority of the instrument. Hum along with the S-part. ( ) slap(Bartók pizzicato). The rhythmic values in the TABULATURA are: ♩= 𝅗𝅥 ♩= ♩ ♩= ♩ ♩= ♪ ♩= ♪)

KEYBOARD:

(◇) birdwhistle. ( ) proportional length, pitch according to the vertical dimension. ( ) short sounds ( ) black, white and chromatic clusters. ( ) "Neums" like melodic figurations. Relative notation of the pitches: do re♭ re mi♭ fa fa# sol la♭ la si♭ si. A syllabic version is written out for studying purpose. This kind of notation makes it possible to play the texture in any octave or transposition. (DEFORMANDA) e.g. force the bellows of the regal/paperstrip or objects on the harpsichord strings etc.

WOODWIND:

( ) short sound. (o) sustained sound). ( ) free pitch. ( ) triller randomly. Graphic section: Create a texture with all kinds of multiphonic sounds/trillers/effects (unpredictable results). ( ) on the mouthpiece/reed only. Relative notation: The numbers are refering to the 1. 2. 3. etc. sound of the basic major scale of the chosen instrument (e. g. 1=c 2=d 3=e 4=f..... or 1=f 2=g 3=a.....). Thin line low compass (e. g. c-♮) thick line (c' -♮') and =high compass (c'' →).

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