

monodie IV

(chamber) organ

eva-maria houben

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2025

For Carson Cooman.

The musical practice of “Ison” is known for example from Byzantine music: a chant that could be described as a vocal drone, also as a tone repetition. “Ison” can also appear as a tonal center that creates a special form of polyphony.

Originally, the Ison invited contemplation and prayer. Although vocal in nature, the Ison was transferred to instrumental music.

Its character may be described in the words of Mircea Eliade (Romanian religious philosopher and writer, 1907-86) as the idea of the “Eternal Recurrence”.

the drone C is sounding already before the actual beginning of the piece.

it will be sounding all the time, will be going on for a while even after the last sound of the last chant.

the chord appears giving the first drone a certain shape and color. it stays a bit until the chant begins.

during the chant this second drone may lose one tone after the other until its full disappearance, but it may also be sustained in its full shape until the end of the chant; at latest here it disappears.

playing the chants floatingly, irregularly.

molto rubato may mean here: even very strong differences between the durations of the sounds.

senza tempo, senza misura
molto rubato

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Musical score for exercise 1. It consists of three staves: a treble clef staff with a melodic line of quarter notes, a middle treble clef staff with a sustained chord, and a bass clef staff with a sustained bass note. The notes in the treble staff are: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, Bb5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, Bb6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, Bb7, C8, D8, E8, F8, G8, A8, Bb8, C9, D9, E9, F9, G9, A9, Bb9, C10, D10, E10, F10, G10, A10, Bb10, C11, D11, E11, F11, G11, A11, Bb11, C12, D12, E12, F12, G12, A12, Bb12, C13, D13, E13, F13, G13, A13, Bb13, C14, D14, E14, F14, G14, A14, Bb14, C15, D15, E15, F15, G15, A15, Bb15, C16, D16, E16, F16, G16, A16, Bb16, C17, D17, E17, F17, G17, A17, Bb17, C18, D18, E18, F18, G18, A18, Bb18, C19, D19, E19, F19, G19, A19, Bb19, C20, D20, E20, F20, G20, A20, Bb20, C21, D21, E21, F21, G21, A21, Bb21, C22, D22, E22, F22, G22, A22, Bb22, C23, D23, E23, F23, G23, A23, Bb23, C24, D24, E24, F24, G24, A24, Bb24, C25, D25, E25, F25, G25, A25, Bb25, C26, D26, E26, F26, G26, A26, Bb26, C27, D27, E27, F27, G27, A27, Bb27, C28, D28, E28, F28, G28, A28, Bb28, C29, D29, E29, F29, G29, A29, Bb29, C30, D30, E30, F30, G30, A30, Bb30, C31, D31, E31, F31, G31, A31, Bb31, C32, D32, E32, 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