

Symphony No. 212, “The Nitschean”

John-Luke Mark Matthews

Instrumentation: Piccolo, pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets in A, bassoons; four horns in F, three trumpets in C, eight vuvuzelas, five air horns, two tenor trombones, bass trombone, tuba; Turkish percussion, whip, brake drum, long drum, tambourine, tree, xylophone, marimba, timpani in low F and high E-flat; electric guitar, harp, piano, strings. Duration: 3 ½ hours. This page constitutes the complete score and parts.

I. Gewaltige

First oboist gives the tuning A, the other wind instruments (except vuvuzelas) and strings try to tune softly. Then, on the conductor's cue, all instruments except unpitched percussion are to start playing as loudly as they can, making sure not to play the same pitch as their neighbors. This will go on for an hour. Feel free to take breaks at your discretion or as cued by the conductor.

II. Scherzo

Unaccompanied flutes will play this melody a few times:



Then oboes, then first clarinet will treat it as if it was already transposed, second clarinet will treat it as if it was not. Bassoonists may either imagine a bass clef instead of the treble clef and play accordingly, or transpose down, whatever is easier. Brass may just play whatever notes they want. Vuvuzelas will only play the rhythm, but lead vuvuzelists may attempt to play the melody. Then strings, transposing as needed. Timpani will attempt to play this melody but using only the F-natural and E-flat drums. Repeat a few times for about 15 minutes. Then, on the conductor's cue, play about thirty seconds from the first movement. Then “da capo” the Scherzo for 10 to 15 minutes, but the unpitched percussion will improvise as if attempting to disrupt the performance. It might not be a bad thing if they actually succeeded.

III. Meditation

Each of the violinists is to play a different pitch-class. If there are more than 12 violinists total, then the surplus violinists are to play quarter-tone pitch-classes (e.g., G ½ flat, C ½ sharp). This is to be sustained for an hour. The other instruments are to play random soft mutterings at their discretion.

IV. Tragic or Positive Conclusion

First oboist will once again give the tuning A. Then, on the conductor's cue, all winds (except vuvuzelas and air horns) will play As, strings will play C-sharps, and pitched percussion will play E-naturals or E-flats. This will go on for about 20 minutes. Then random reminiscences, at players' discretions, from prior movements, for 20 minutes. Then strings will play As, brass E (vuvuzelas and air horns will do what they can manage), woodwinds C-sharp, for about twenty minutes. Then piccolo will play D-sharp, E, F-sharp, G-sharp, A. That's it. It's over. Go home.