

Ian Munro

Dear atom
for the BACK Duo

2011

Dear atom was written at the request of my good friends, the BACK Duo (Amirtha Kidambi and Cory Bracken). My sincerest thanks go out to them and to Cort Day for his continued willingness to let me set his fantastic texts.

Dear atom, dear pitch-point

buzzing in my ear, pour out
 your tar-song to stain
 the abyss – *ought not, ought not,*

ought not, ought not, ought not. Be pulse,
 be plume, be thick black blade awake
 in history, be just

like this, be kill-zone deep, be this
 real, be all this realism
 clotting the ovaries,

in the reeds and rushes.
 Be our father, his voice gone,
 washing up as visceral as lymph

from a flatscreen, from a flat brown
 extraction-plane, be the staggering
 myth: feathers, shells, scales –

whatever. The promise
 of the light-making corporation
 is dead, and the body we dreamed

was drained – the vital body
 in its tar-shroud
 if-if-if-if awake would become

a province of fire, and could wake, dear
 atom, buzzing in my ear
 could wake

Cort Day, 2010

Performance Notes

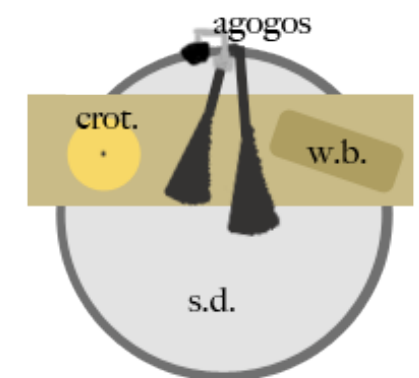
The melodic line may be freely transposed in order to lie better in the singer’s voice. The pitch of the crotale should reflect the fundamental (C in the written score) or one whole step up. The suggestive notes in the score are part inside joke, part absurdism, part actual suggestion.

Voice –

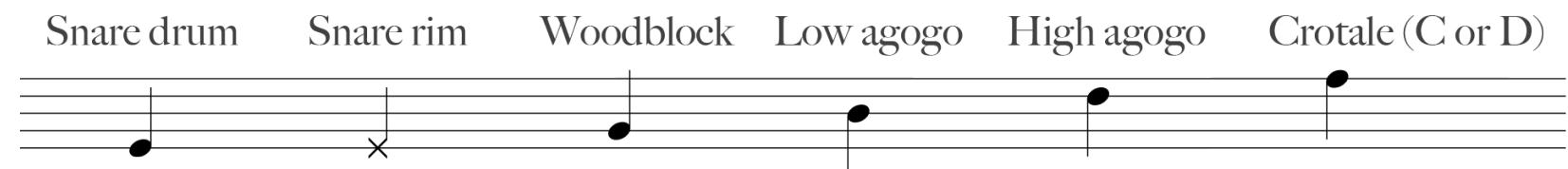
In general, *Dear atom* should be performed with a not-so-classical tone. At heart, I think the piece wants to be more of a pop song than an art song, and the vocal tone should reflect that.

Percussion –

The percussion setup is designed to fit on top of a single snare drum and stand. Other arrangements can, of course, be used at the discretion of the percussionist. The arrangement used in the first performance is pictured here:



Drum key-



The drumsticks should be affixed with thin, threaded metal rods in order to obtain a rasping sound on the rim of the snare drum:



Rasping is indicated by a mordent  sign in contrast to the regular roll 

Dear atom

for the BACK Duo

Text - Cort Day

Ian Munro

Heavy Funky Bass (♩ = 72 more or less)

Mezzo-Soprano: (hi Amirtha) (you'd better sing soon) **f** *fp* **f**
Dear a - tom dear pitch - point buzz* - ing in my ear — pour

Percussion: *snare off* **mf** **f** **mf** **sf** **mf** **f** **mp**

Mezzo: **gl.** **fp** **mf** *leggiero **gl.**
out — your — tar song to stain — the a - byss ought not — ought not ought not ought not —*

Perc.: **pp** **p sub.** **f**

Mezzo: **ff** (tell 'im now) **gl.** **f**
be pulse — be — plume — be thick black blade —

Perc.: (the final frontier) **p** **f** (BASS) **mp** **p**

Mezzo: **sfp** **f** **mf**
a - wake — in his - to - ry be just — like this be kill zone deep (p) be — this real be — all — this real - is - m —

Perc.: **mp** **irrationalize this**

Mezzo: (mah) **f** **gl.** **mf**
clot - ting — the o - va - ries — be our fa - ther his voice gone

Perc.: **f** *deliberately* **fff** (rock the rock) **mf** **p** *sotto voce* (maybe notto voce?)

* close immediately to "zzz"

Mezzo **f** *pesante* *(quasi screamando)* **mf** *deliberately* **mf** **f**
 walk - ing up as vis - cer - al as lymph (ff) from a flat - screen from a flat brown ex-traction plane

Perc. **mp** *(dans l'oreille)* **f** **mp** **p** **mf** *(hi Cory)* *(you're doin great)*

Mezzo **f** **mp** **f** *(with lots of Sizzling Sibilantsssss)* **ff** *(come "teenager")* **f** *(like a singer)*
 be the stag - ger - ing myth: feathers shells scales what-ev-er The prom - is of the light-mak-ing

Perc. **p** **ff** **pp** **f** **ff** *(kill em, brah)* **mf** *(sprech)* *(joue)* what-ev-er

Mezzo **ff** *(are you Henry Rollins?)* *(yes you are)* **ff**
 cor - po - ra - tion is dead and the bod-y we dreamed was drained drained drained

Perc. **f** **ff** *(hit it)* *(motherfucker)* *(loud and proud)*

Mezzo **mf** **mp** **f** *(if if if if if if)* **f**
 the vi-tal bod - y in its tar - shroud if - if - if - if awake would be - come a prov-ince of fire,

Perc. **mf** **mp** **f** **mp sub.** **mf** **p** **mf**

Mezzo **mf** **f** *(legggeriooo)* **mf** (...) (...) **mf** *(wake)*
 and could wake, dear a - tom buzz - ing in my ear could wake (K)

Perc. **f** **mf** **f** **mf** **mf** *(swell on each note)* **p** **mf** *(well don't be a dick about it)* **p** **mf** *let* *vibrate*