

Richard Ratner

# Todesfuge

a setting of the poem by  
Paul Celan

for

Chamber Orchestra  
and Male Voice

Text used by permission:

Paul Celan, Mohn und Gedächtnis. Gedichte  
© 1952 by Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Munich  
a member of Verlagsgruppe Random House GmbH

# Todestuge

♩=60 (Adagio)

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet in Bb

Tenor

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

*f* sempre molto sostenuto

*p*

*pp*

10

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*f*

*p*

19

Fl. Ob. Cl. T. Vln. I Vln. II Vla. Vc. Cb.

*p* *f* *f* *f* *f*

Detailed description: This system of musical notation covers measures 19 through 26. It includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Trumpet (T.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The Flute part begins with a rest and then plays a melodic line starting in measure 25, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Oboe part starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a melodic line, then joins the flute in measure 25 with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Clarinet part also begins with a rest and joins the flute and oboe in measure 25 with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The strings (Violins, Viola, Cello, and Contrabass) play a rhythmic accompaniment throughout, with dynamics increasing from piano to forte (*f*) by measure 25.

27

Fl. Ob. Cl. T. Vln. I Vln. II Vla. Vc. Cb.

*ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

Detailed description: This system of musical notation covers measures 27 through 34. It includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Trumpet (T.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The woodwinds (Flute, Oboe, and Clarinet) play a melodic line starting in measure 27, marked with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The strings (Violins, Viola, Cello, and Contrabass) play a rhythmic accompaniment throughout, also marked with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. The system concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.

33 ← ♩ = ♩ →

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl.

T.

Vln. I ← ♩ = ♩ →

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

41

Fl. *mf* *pp*

Ob. *mf* *p* *pp*

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

51

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T. *p*  
Black milk of day-break we drink it at eve-ning

Vln. I *p*  
*sempre molto sostenuto*

Vln. II *p*  
*sempre molto sostenuto*

Vla. *p*  
*sempre molto sostenuto*

Vc. *p*  
*sempre molto sostenuto*

Cb. *p*  
*sempre molto sostenuto*

59

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T. we drink it at mid-day and mor-ning we drink it at night we drink and we drink... we sho-vel a grave in the air where you won't lie too cramped

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

64

Fl. *mf* *pp*

Ob. *mf* *pp*

Cl. *mf* *pp*

T.

Vln. I *p* *ppp*

Vln. II *p* *ppp*

Vla. *p* *ppp*

Vc. *p* *ppp*

Cb. *p* *ppp*

72

Fl. *mp*

Ob. *mp*

Cl. *mp*

T. *mf*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Cb. *mf*

A man lives in the house he plays with his vi-pers he writes

81

Fl. *p*

Ob. *p*

Cl. *p*

T. he writes when it grows dark to Deut-schland your *p*

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

Cb. *p*





102

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

← ♩ = ♩ →

← ♩ = ♩ →

he whis-tles his Jews in-to rows has them sho-vel a grave in the ground he com-mands us play

109

← ♩ = ♩ →

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*mf*

*f*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

up for the dance

116

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*f*

*p*

Black milk of day-break we drink you at night

*p sempre sost.*

*sempre sost.*

*sempre sost.*

*p sempre sost.*

*p sempre sost.*

← ♩ = ♩ →

122

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

we drink you at mor-ning and mid day we drink you at eve-ning we drink and we drink\_\_

*mf*



Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl. *mf*

T. *f*

sho-vel a grave in the air where youwon't lie too cramped He

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Detailed description: This page of a musical score covers measures 138 to 141. The top section features woodwinds: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), and Clarinet (Cl.), all playing a melodic line starting in measure 138 with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The Trombone (T.) part begins in measure 138 with a vocal line, starting with the lyrics "sho-vel a grave in the air where youwon't lie too cramped" and ending in measure 141 with the word "He" and a forte (*f*) dynamic. The bottom section features the string ensemble: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Cello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Cb.), all playing a rhythmic accompaniment of quarter notes with a consistent interval of a second.

144

Fl. *f*

Ob. *f* *mf*

Cl. *f* *ff* *f* 3

T. *ff*

8 shouts dig dig this earth dee-per you lot there you o-thers sing up and play

Vln. I *f* *p* *mf*

Vln. II *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *f* *p* *mf*

Cb. *f* *p* *mf*

← ♩ = ♩ →

150

*mf*

*f*

he grabs for\_ the rod in\_ his belt\_ he swings it\_ his eyes are so

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Detailed description: This page of a musical score covers measures 150 to 153. The score is for a full orchestra and includes a vocal line. The instruments are arranged in a standard orchestral layout from top to bottom: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Trombone (T.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). Measure 150 begins with a dynamic marking of *mf* for the Flute. The vocal line starts in measure 151 with the lyrics "he grabs for\_ the rod in\_ his belt\_ he swings it\_ his eyes are so". The Trombone part has a dynamic marking of *f* at the start of measure 151. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and triplets (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.



155

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.  
8 blue stick your spades dee-per you for there you

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

← ♩ = ♩. →

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T. *p*

← ♩ = ♩. →

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

168

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.  
drink you at night we drink you at mid-day and mor-ning we drink you at eve-ning we drink and we drink\_\_

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

173

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.  
a man lives in the house\_\_ your gol-den - es Haar\_\_ Mar-ga - re - te your

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Meno mosso

Meno mosso

179 **A tempo**

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.

a-sche-nes Haar Su - la - mit he plays with his vi - pers

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*mf* *mf*

*p* *p* *p* *mf* *p* *p* *mf*

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 179-182. It features a vocal line with German and English lyrics. The instrumental parts include woodwinds (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet), brass (Trumpet), and strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Contrabass). The tempo is marked 'A tempo'. Dynamics include mezzo-forte (mf) and piano (p). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line starts with a fermata in measure 179. The German lyrics are 'a-sche-nes Haar Su - la - mit' and the English lyrics are 'he plays with his vi - pers'. The instrumental parts provide accompaniment, with the strings playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

186

← ♩ = ♩ →

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl. *mf* *f* *f* *ff*

T. He shouts play

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *mf*

Cb. *mf*

192

Fl. *mf*

Ob.

Cl.

T. *spoken harshly, ad lib.*

play death more sweet-ly this Death is a mas-ter from Deut-schland he shouts scrape scrape your strings dar-ker

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

198

← ♩ = ♩. →

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T. *p*

you'll rise up as smoke to the sky

you'll then have a grave in the clouds where you won't lie too cramped

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

Cb. *p*

203

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl. *mf*

T. *pp*

Black milk of day-break we\_

Vln. I *pp*

Vln. II *pp*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

Cb. *pp*

209

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T. *spoken, ad lib.*  
*mf* *p*  
 drink you at night we drink you at mid-day Death is a mas-ter aus Deut shcland we drink you at eve-ning and

Vln. I *ppp mp p*

Vln. II *ppp mp p*

Vla. *ppp mp p*

Vc. *ppp mp p*

Cb. *ppp mp p*



215

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl. *mf*

T. *spoken sotto voce, ad lib.*  
*p*  
 mor-ning we drink and we drink This

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.



221

Fl. *f* 4:3 4:3

Ob. *f*

Cl. *f*

T. *pp* *f* *ff*

8 Death is ein Meis-ter aus Deut-schland his eye it is blue he shoots you with

Vln. I *ppp* *f*

Vln. II *ppp* *f*

Vla. *ppp* *f*

Vc. *ppp* *f*

Cb. *ppp* *f*

227

Fl. 4:3 4:3 4:3 4:3 4:3 4:3 *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl. *mf*

T. *mf*

8 shot made of lead shoots you le - vel and true

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

Cb. *p*

232

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*p*

*pp*

a man lives in the house\_ your gol-den-es Haar\_\_Mar-ga - re - te he loos-es his hounds on us grants us a

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

3

3

3

238

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*mf*

*mf*

whispered, ad lib. *pp*

grave in the air he plays with\_\_ his vi - pers\_ he day dreams der

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

244

Fl. -

Ob. -

Cl. *pp*

T. *pp*  
 Tod ist ein Mei-ster aus Deut-schland dein gol-den-es Haar—Mar-ga - re - te

Vln. I *pp* *mp*

Vln. II *pp* *mp*

Vla. *pp* *mp*

Vc. *pp* *mp*

Cb. *pp* *mp*

251

Meno mosso A tempo

Fl. -

Ob. -

Cl. -

T. *ppp*  
 dein a - shen-es Haar— Su - la mit

Vln. I *ppp*

Vln. II *ppp*

Vla. *ppp*

Vc. *ppp*

Cb. *ppp*

258

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 258 through 263. The Flute part (Fl.) is the primary melodic line, starting with a *mf* dynamic and featuring a series of eighth notes with slurs. The Oboe part (Ob.) enters in measure 261 with a *mf* dynamic, playing a similar melodic line. The Clarinet (Cl.), Trombone (T.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.) parts are mostly silent, indicated by rests. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C).

264

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl.

T.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 264 through 269, separated from the previous block by a double bar line. The Flute (Fl.) and Oboe (Ob.) parts continue their melodic lines, both marked with *mf*. The Flute part has a *mf* dynamic starting in measure 264. The Oboe part enters in measure 265 with a *mf* dynamic. The other instruments (Cl., T., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Cb.) remain silent with rests. The key signature changes to two sharps (F# and C#) in measure 264, and the time signature remains common time (C).

The image shows a page of a musical score for a symphony orchestra. The score is written for nine instruments: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Trumpet (T.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The Flute and Oboe parts are active, while the other instruments are mostly silent. The Flute part begins with a long note, followed by a series of eighth notes and a final quarter note. The Oboe part begins with a long note, followed by a series of eighth notes and a final quarter note. The Flute part has a dynamic marking of *pp* and the Oboe part has a dynamic marking of *p*. The tempo marking *Meno mosso* is written above the Flute part. The page number 269 is in the top left corner and 27 is in the top right corner.