

from **FINAL SKIN**

THE TRAGEDY OF HIKIKOMORI LOVELESS

FOR MIDI KEYBOARD

COMMISSIONED BY BANG ON A CAN WITH SUPPORT FROM MARIA & ROBERT A. SKIRNICK

ROHAN CHANDER / BAKUDI SCREAM

2021 (REV. 2022)

DURATION: 9' 00"

PROGRAM NOTES:

HIKIKOMORI LOVELESS is the alias of the Architect Prince from the FINAL SKIN universe. The Architect Prince is a master craftsman and sole wielder of the ANCIENT RELIC known as THE KEYBOARD, which they use to craft the unique digital exosuit called the HIKIKOMORI LOVELESS. The Prince suffers from an ailment that prevents them from leaving home and can only work on LOVELESS in complete solitude. The locale claims to have never seen the Architect Prince and do not understand why they never leave the castle. The Prince can only leave the castle wearing the exosuit, however its limited battery runs on and destroys the wearer's id. The Architect Prince has been exploring the ANCIENT RELIC for decades in hope to create a new form of HIKIKOMORI LOVELESS that can sustain his id, hopefully so he could leave the castle and fall in love.

FINAL SKIN is defines the body as a constellation of reference, signs and signifiers whose assembly is rendered possible through a digital vehicle. In the full work, the nature of these signifiers is commented on by a collection of text to speech voices, some Indian-accented and others not. These voices not only tell stories about the objects constellated, but about the Architect Prince - the nature of his motives, his past, and possible future. The full project can be listened to here: <https://bakudi-scream.bandcamp.com/album/final-skin>

The Tragedy of Hikikomori Loveless situates the keyboard player as the Prince himself. This is done by configuring the keyboard as less and piano and more an interactive object. Assumptions of the keyboard's technique are replaced by a collection of hieroglyphs - sequenced micro gestures that the performer plays throughout the piece. Akin to a video game combo, sound only triggers when a sequence of gestures is accurately played. Failure to play even one of the gestures within a combo results in a soundless performance.

The Tragedy of Hikikomori Loveless was commissioned by Bang on a Can with support from Maria & Robert A. Skirnick to be performed by Vicky Chow at the 2021 Bang on a Can Marathon February 2021. This work, along with the rest of *FINAL SKIN*, won the 2022 Gaudeamus Award for Music Composition.

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

This piece is part theater. It is important to note that to play this piece is to play as the character of the Architect Prince and the process of assembling the HIKKIKOMORI LOVELESS.

While not shared with the audience, the character suffers from a form of body dysmorphia.

Theatrical and performative indications are written in bold italics above the staff. There are also poetic and narrative clues that relate to other characters in the FINAL SKIN universe. These are intended to help you engage with the intentionality of the music, performance practice, and prose.

This piece is performed using **Max MSP**. The patch with appropriate audio files and directions can be obtained by contacting me.

This piece is designed to challenge our conceptions of performance and how are bodies are intended to interact with the instrument. **As such, gestures do not trigger sounds in a direct 1:1 way.** *The full extent of how the gestures create sound may not be clear upon a first listen or play through, however it is important that gestures are observed exactly in order for the patch to function correctly.*

*For the performer, gestural sequences are designed like a video game combo, wherein the notated sequences must be hit exactly in order for sound to be triggered. **Failure to play all sequences correctly results in a soundless performance.***

The following are notable notational schema. **NOTE THAT EACH EFFECT IS APPLIED TO ANYTHING BEAMED TO THE NOTE FIRST ATTACHED ON, SO NOTE THE BEAMING TO SEE DURATION OF EFFECT APPLIED:**



Forearm Smash- Use both your forearms to smash down in this general range of notes. White keys only.



Spatial Positioning- Describes where you should be standing and facing relative to the keyboard



Glue Technique- Press both hands down in the relative vicinity of the block. Then, lightly undulate your pressure as though gluing an object to a wall for the duration of the thick black line.



Karate Chop- Using the edge of your hand, play the indicated note like you would if you were doing a karate chop



Cat Scratch- Quickly scratch/claw at notes and pull away like a cat

R/L denotes which corresponding hand to use

Note on glissandos: Pitches demarcating the begins and ends of glissando gestures are not to be articulated/ rearticulated. They provide immediate starting and end points. The glissandos must begin immediately– starting note duration is to be ignored.

from **FINAL SKIN**
THE TRAGEDY OF HIKIKOMORI LOVELESS
 for Vicky Chow

♩ = 179.7

ROHAN CHANDER/BAKUDI SCREAM (2021)

*apathy, hands on lap, observe the conditions of your room,
 you're exhausted from existing*

*slowly raise your hands in preparation to play
 think deliberately and critically of your motion*

Electronic
Cues

♩ = 179.7

click track starts

*do not panic, this is second nature to you
 look at the keyboard only, like you've done
 this a million times*

*move chair out of the way, stand up, get hyped, get
 ready to move, bounce, keep your brow furrowed,
 you are about to wear the mask of pleasure, you had
 a bunch of lexapro*

nasty hardstyle

12.0"

13.3"

14.6"

16.0"

17.3"

18.6"

lightly embellish melody at will, mildly legato
you're dancing but in your head, do not emote,
some things stilted

16

f

beat drops!

20.0" 21.3" 22.7" 23.7" 25.1"

21

26.4" 27.7" 29.1" 30.4"

25

31.8" 33.1" 34.4" 35.8"

29

37.1" 38.4" 39.8" 41.1"

33

$\text{♩} = 137$

freeze in place

42.4" 43.8" 45.1" 46.9" 48.6"

A

38 *return to apathy, very controlled and centered, bring your chair back and sit down, collecting the suit components*

A
drone

50.8" 52.6" 54.3" 56.1" 57.8" 59.6" 1'01.3" 1'03.1" 1'04.8" 1'06.6"

4

stay tight to the body, not a movement is wasted

48

Musical score for measures 48-53. The score is written for piano in treble and bass clefs. Measure 48 starts with a whole rest in both hands. Measure 49 features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. Measure 50 has a quarter note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. Measure 51 contains a quarter note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. Measure 52 has a quarter note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. Measure 53 features a quarter note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

1'08.3"

1'10.1"

1'11.8"

1'13.6"

1'15.3"

1'17.1"

54

Musical score for measures 54-62. The score is written for piano in treble and bass clefs. Measure 54 starts with a quarter note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. Measures 55-62 consist of whole rests in both hands.

explosion!

1'18.8"

1'20.6"

1'22.3"

1'24.1"

1'25.8"

1'27.6"

1'29.3"

1'31.1"

1'32.8"

63

Musical score for measures 63-67. The score is written for piano in treble and bass clefs. Measure 63 features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. Measure 64 has a quarter note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. Measure 65 contains a quarter note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. Measure 66 has a quarter note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. Measure 67 features a quarter note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

explosion!

1'34.6"

1'36.3"

1'38.1"

1'39.9"

1'41.6"

68

5

5

1'43.4" 1'45.1" 1'46.9" 1'48.6" 1'50.4" 1'52.1" 1'53.9" 1'55.6"

76

3

explosion!

1'57.4" 1'59.1" 2'00.9" 2'02.6" 2'04.4" 2'06.1" 2'07.9"

83

5

5

3

2'09.6" 2'11.4" 2'13.1" 2'14.9" 2'16.6" 2'18.4"

89

explosion!

2'20.1" 2'21.9" 2'23.6" 2'25.4" 2'27.2" 2'28.9" 2'30.7"

96

move chair, stand up, start walking towards right side of piano

explosion!

2'32.4" 2'34.2" 2'35.9" 2'37.7" 2'39.4" 2'41.2" 2'42.9" 2'44.7"

*like an archaeologist-- what lies under the keys?
peel the mask you once wore, breaking the suit components*



104 *prepare...*

B

vocal arpeggiation

2'46.4" 2'48.2" 2'49.9" 2'51.7" 2'53.4" 2'55.2"

110 *prepare...*



Musical notation for measures 110-115, including treble and bass staves with various notes and rests.

2'56.9"

2'58.7"

3'00.4"

3'02.2"

3'03.9"

3'05.7"

116



Musical notation for measures 116-121, including treble and bass staves with various notes and rests.

3'07.4"

3'09.2"

3'10.9"

3'12.7"

3'14.5"

3'16.2"

122



Musical notation for measures 122-126, including treble and bass staves with various notes and rests.

3'18.0"

3'19.7"

3'21.5"

3'23.2"

3'25.0"

127

L

R

R

R

R

R

3'26.7" 3'28.5" 3'30.2" 3'32.0" 3'33.7" 3'35.5"

133

L

R

R

R

L

3'37.2" 3'39.0" 3'40.7" 3'42.5" 3'44.2"

138

R

L

R

R

R

gradually shift your speculative disposition to a kind of body euphoric elation, you're drunk on your own ability to synthesize yourself

monologue begins, big blasts

3

3'46.0" 3'47.7" 3'49.5" 3'51.2" 3'53.0"

143

left arm only

3'54.7"

3'56.5"

3'58.2"

146

happier...

blast!

4'00.0"

4'01.8"

4'03.5"

4'05.3"

150

right arm only

blast!

4'07.0"

4'08.8"

4'10.5"

4'12.3"

10 *happier... you move more excitedly, like a child with candy*

154

4'14.0" 4'15.8" 4'17.5" 4'19.3"

158

4'21.0" 4'22.8" 4'24.5" 4'26.3"

162 *shake like you're letting out energy*

jump *growing ecstasy...*

4'28.0" 4'29.8" 4'31.5"

*shit i'm in love with ripping off my skin and replacing it with yours
crazed excitement*

11

165

R R L R L L R L R

L L right arm only

blast!

4'33.3"

4'35.0"

4'36.8"

4'38.5"

169

R L R L R L R L R

L right arm only

blast!

4'40.3"

4'42.0"

4'43.8"

4'45.5"

4'47.3"

C *you come to a tragic realization that your assemblage is imaginary
you are not the real, the illusory authentic
your smile and energy fades, you're alone, the suit is...flawed*

*pull your chair back in front of the
piano, and sit, your body turned
into itself*

174

C string chorale

4'48.2"

4'49.9"

4'51.7"

4'53.4"

178 *sit* *slowly lift hands up from lap with palms faced upward* *place hands on keyboard, palms up look at the whiteness of that skin*

4'55.2" 4'56.9" 4'58.7" 5'00.4" 5'02.2" 5'03.9"

184 *slowly bring your face to your palms* *rest face in palms till you hear the 718 bar, then slowly pull up i'm crying*

5'05.7" 5'07.4" 5'09.2" 5'10.9" 5'12.7" 5'14.5" 5'16.2" 5'18.0"

you can't see me when you perform, you can't see this when you perform, yet i choose to write this-- it is not for you but for the parts that play your name in the performer's image - a message from HINDOO WARRIOR

192

5'19.7" 5'21.5" 5'23.2" 5'25.0" 5'26.7" 5'28.5" 5'30.2" 5'32.0" 5'33.7" 5'35.5"

202

D stand, prepare...

D if you love him...

5'37.2" 5'39.0" 5'40.7" 5'42.5" 5'44.2" 5'46.0" 5'47.7" 5'49.3" 5'51.0"



you are standing, playing not the keys, but the surface on the opposite side of it maintain this for the duration of the presence of this clef unless otherwise stated you are the hacker, not the performer, not a movement is wasted you are letting the ANCIENT RELIC imprint on you than you on it, perhaps this is where love may-

211

5'52.8" 5'54.5" 5'56.3" 5'58.0"

215

5'59.8" 6'01.5" 6'03.3" 6'05.0" 6'06.8"

220 on keys

6'08.5" 6'10.3" 6'12.0" 6'13.8" 6'15.5" 6'17.3"

226

6'19.1" 6'20.8" 6'22.6" 6'24.3" 6'26.1" 6'27.8"

232

6'29.6" 6'31.3" 6'33.1" 6'34.8" 6'36.6" 6'38.3"

on keys

238

Hand icons above the staff.

beat cue in sync!

6'40.1"

6'41.8"

6'43.6"

6'45.3"

6'47.1"

243

on keys

Paw print icons above the staff.

beat cue in sync!

6'48.8"

6'50.6"

6'52.3"

6'54.1"

247

Paw print icon above the staff.

beat cue in sync!

6'55.8"

6'57.6"

6'59.3"

7'01.1"

7'02.8"

252 on keys

7'04.6" 7'06.3" 7'08.1" 7'09.9" 7'11.6"

257

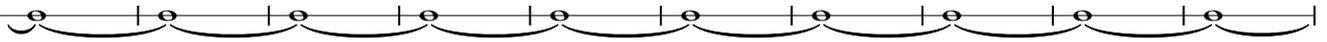
7'13.4" 7'15.1" 7'16.9" 7'18.6" 7'20.4"

262

7'22.1" 7'23.9" 7'25.6" 7'27.4" 7'28.2" 7'30.0" 7'31.8"

*completely stretched out, hugging the piano with your face turned to the side, ear against the keys
you're smiling, the object breathes like you, perhaps it too assembles itself the way you do, your love is somewhere here*

286



8'02.4" 8'04.2" 8'05.9" 8'07.7" 8'09.4" 8'11.2" 8'12.9" 8'14.7" 8'16.4" 8'18.2"

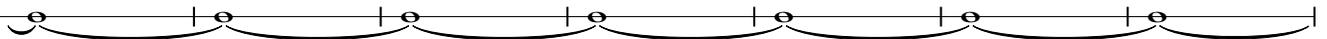
296

we are nothing but the synthesis of



8'19.9" 8'21.7" 8'23.4" 8'25.2" 8'26.9" 8'28.7" 8'30.4" 8'32.2" 8'33.9" 8'35.7" 8'37.4"

307



8'39.2" 8'40.9" 8'42.7" 8'44.5" 8'46.2" 8'48.0" 8'49.7"

linger till fade out

314

8'51.5" 8'53.2" 8'55.0" 8'56.7" 8'58.5" 9'00.2"