

Gregor A. Mayrhofer

Sleepless

For accordion and live electronic

2024

Dedicated to

Kai Wangler

Werkkommentar zu „Sleepless“

Am Komponieren mit Live Elektronik fasziniert mich, dass man zwei unterschiedliche Welten hörbar machen kann: die „reale“ Klangwelt eines physischen Instruments, gespielt im Jetzt von einem echten Menschen im echten Raum und die „artifizielle“ Klangwelt der Elektronik, die virtuelle, surreale Klänge und Räume entstehen lassen kann, welche jedoch im echten Raum real werden.

„Sleepless“ beschreibt den Übergang zwischen Schlaf und Wachheit, wenn man schlaflos daliegt und die Gedanken kreisen: Man meint noch alles mit Bewusstsein wahrzunehmen, registriert einige echte Geräusche (wie das eigene Atmen), aber gleitet schon unmerklich in einen Zustand in dem sich logische Realität und absurde Traumwelt mischen, bis man vollständig die Kontrolle über den Traum bzw. die Gedanken verliert.

So wie alle Klänge in diesem Stück eine Verformung des ursprünglichen realen Klangs sind (nichts wurde voraufgenommen oder hinzugefügt, alles entwickelt sich aus dem Moment!), so speisen sich all unsere Träume - so absurd sie auch erscheinen mögen - aus vorher wahrgenommener Realität. Was also ist Wahr-Nehmung?

Commentary to „Sleepless“

What fascinates me about composing with live electronics is that you can make audible two different worlds: the "real" sound world of a physical instrument, played in the present by a real person in the real space, and the "artificial" sound world of electronics, which can create virtual, surreal sounds and spaces that nevertheless become real in the actual space.

My piece describes this transition between sleeping and being awake, when you lie there sleepless with your thoughts racing: You think you're still consciously perceiving everything, registering some real sounds (like your own breath) and thinking logical, but then you slip imperceptibly into a state where reality and the absurd dream world blend until you completely lose control of the dream and your thoughts.

Just as all the sounds in this piece are a deformation of the real sound (nothing was prerecorded or added, it all comes out of the moment!), all our dreams—however absurd they may seem—are fed by previously perceived reality. So what is perception and reality?

Setup for Live Electronic:

- Ableton Live (min. Version 12 with the possibility to use MaxforLive-Patches)
- A Footpedal (Footswitch) with 10 keys – original composed with Softstep 2
- An expression pedal

The buttons of the pedal have to be routed in Ableton Live like the following instruction:

Connect Buttons 1-5 to the inlets in the MaxforLive-patch “Pedal Gate”
(Audio effects Rack of Track 1):

- 1: Volume of Looper
- 2: Feedback of Looper
- 3: Snipper
- 4: Octave Delay
- 5: Metronome

Expression Pedal: Connect to the “Pedal IN”

The other keys have to be connected to the following buttons:

- 6: Record/Overdub Button of the Looper
- 7: Stop Button of the Looper
- 8: Clear Recording Button of the Looper
- 9: Arm Effect Track (Track 1)
- 0: Arm Clean Track (Track 2)

Setup of loudspeakers:

PLAYER (at the very back of the stage)
Mic R/L
(very close to accordion)

RIGHT



LEFT



AUDIENCE

Premiere: 05.06.2025 Schwere Reiter, München – Accordion: Kai Wangler

Sleepless

for accordion and live electronics

dedicated to Kai Wangler

Gregor A. Mayrhofer

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(corrected 03.12.25)

Preparation:

- 1 - Looper Volume: ca. 127
- 2 - Looper Feedback: ca. 80 (= 60%)
- 3,4 - Octave Down + Snipper: 0
- 5 - Metronome Volume ad lib. (ca. 75?)
- (switch on top left METRONOME ON!)
- All Pedal inlets switched OFF
- 9 - EFFECT Channel Armed!

For easier visibility and for starting in rehearsal somewhere in the middle of the piece these boxes show you the settings of the pedal/electronics (O = Off / X = ON)

LpV1	1 - O = 127
LpFdb	2 - O = 80
Snip	3 - O = 0
Oct	4 - O = 0
EfftCh	9 - X

 **Moderato** ♩ = 72

When everything is ready:

- Make sure, the looper is cleared (press pedal 8)
- Press PLAY on the top (or hit spacebar)
- in order to start the metronome

(repetition signs just mean that these bars will be looped, do not play them several times!)

Accordion

Air noise (open bellow) (close bellow)

pp *mp* *p* *mp*

⑥ REC ⑥ Start Loop

FootSwitch

6

p *mp* *p* *mf* *mf*

cresc.

(do not stop, keep recording!)

12

mf *f* *piú f* *fz* *f*

18

mf

2

Sleepless



21

ppp *pp*

⑥ Rec Stop

27

mp *fz* *pp* *mfz* *f* *p*

30

pp
(bellow air)

33

f

36

f *ff* *p* *pp*

⑥ REC

39

p *fz* 3 *fz*

41

p *fz* 6 *fz* 5 7

(if top voice is not audible enough
maybe leave out bellow air noise until bar 48)

43

5 7 7 7

45

5 5 5 6 6 6

47

7 7 6

⑥ Rec Stop ③ Snipper ON

Sleepless

LpVl	1 - 0 = 127
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80
Snr	3 - X = 0
Oct	4 - 0 = 0
Looper	6 - 0 (3 bar loop)
EftCh	9 - X

all accent notes with a lot of
key noise ("clack")

49

[ExpD.] Snipper (0 -> 80)

(20)

51

(30)

(40)

53

(60)

(70)

55

(combine freely)

(80)

[FtSw.]

[ExpD.]

(80 -> 127)

[FtSw.]

③ Snipper OFF

gliss.

① Vol. Looper ON

LpVl	1 - X = 127	Looper	6 - 0 (3 bar loop)
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80	EftCh	9 - X
Snr	3 - 0 = 80		
Oct	4 - 0 = 0		

(click stays 5/4! but you can start whenever you want ;)

57

[ExpD.] Looper Volume (127 -> 0)

60

(100)

63

(60)

66

(throw fingers lightly on keys,
but without pressing (no tone!)
only key click ("tchk tchk tchk"))

69

(40)

72

(20)

75

always play with a lot of
"attack" noise on the keys

gradually reduce pitch
(less air from left hand)

(half pitch, half noise)

(0)

ExPd. Lpr Vol. FtSw. ExPd. FtSw.

⑦ Looper STOP ⑧ Looper CLEAR (0-> 127) ① Vol. Looper OFF (127-> 80) ⑥ REC Loop

LpVI	1 - 0 = 127
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80
Snp	3 - 0 = 80
Oct	4 - 0 = 0
Lpr clear!	6 - 0
EffctCh	9 - X

Sleepless

(make sure to **start with clicktrack!**)

(no pitch/air any more, only key noise)

79

ff (only key noise!)

simile

p mf pp f

Left Hand: single finger snap into left mic.
(irregular rhythm (can be varied!)
always different dynamics and colors)

⑥ Start Loop

83

single finger snaps
with right hand

key clicks

etc.

f pp ("ff" noise)

mp pp

mf pp

f pp

mp pp

p mf pp mp f

85

(only snaps, more dense than before)

p mf mp pp mp ff mf mp f pp mp ff

p

air noise (bellow)

mf

air noise

⑥ Rec Stop

pp

pp mf p pp

pp

air noise

93

pp

f

f

f

96

f *f* *f*

100

f *ff*

LpVl	1 - 0 = 127
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80
SnP	3 - 0 = 80
Oct	4 - 0 = 0
Lpr(2 bars)6 - 0	
E/ctCh	9 - X

Whisper loudly (into the middle between both microphones)
as if you want to make something stop

102

ff *f* *mf*

"schschsch..." "schschsch..." "schschsch..." (brighter) "schschsch..." (darker)

⑥ REC Loop

(do not stop REC!
through changing the channel
"silence" will be recorded...!)

106

mp *f*

"schschsch..." (brighter) "ahhh..." (darker)

(continue 2 bar pattern)

(continue pattern)

(ca. 10-15 sec.)

ExPd. Snipper
(80 -> 0) in ca. 10-15 sec.

⑩ Arm CLEAN Track

③ Snipper ON

f

LpVt	1 - 0 = 127
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80
Snip	3 - X = 0
Oct	4 - 0 = 0
Lpr (12 bars)	6 - X (1)
EjctCh	9 - 0
CleanCh	0 - X

Molto lontano misterioso(make sure to enter exactly with click and right Looper period!)Whispered very (!) close into microphones
(low note = left mic., high note = right mic.)(move head from left mic. to right mic.
very smooth transition between "sch" and "ss")(make sure to start the recording exactly where the
looper period starts! if necessary just wait one bar)

110

schschsch... ssssss... schsch... sss... schsch... - sss... - sch... schlaahh... ssleehh...

ppp *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

pp *ppp* *ppp*

FtSw. ⑨ Arm EFFECT Track

(has to enter in absolute silence!)

116

schlaahhff ssleehh.. schlaaaffhhh slee... - - b schlaf slee... p schlaahh - - ff "ssleehh."

pp (always spoken very slowly and with lots of air) *p* *mp* *mp* *pp* (always spoken very slowly and with lots of air)

ExpD.
Snip. (0 -> 70)

⑥ Rec Stop

120

Schlaf ein - fach! slee... - p schlaaahh - ff Just sleep! schlaaahh - ff Schlaf jetzt!

mf *p* *mp* *f*

(40)

122

schlaaahh - ff slee... - p Schlaf doch ein - fach! slee... - p calme...

p *f* *p* *f* *mf*

always with sudden stop!
(imitate "sleep"-gesture)

p *fz* (70)

FtSw. ⑥ REC Loop

LpVl	1 - 0 = 127
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80
Snp	3 - 0 = 70
Oct	4 - 0 = 0
Lpr (2 bars)	6 - 0
EftCh	9 - X
CleanCh	0 - 0

(ca. 5 Sek.)

schlahf! schlahf! sleeep - Schlaf ein-fach! Just sleeep - p! Just sleeep - p! schlahf! sleeep - p

Speak freely
("Schlaf jetzt! / Sleep now / Schlaaaaaf! / Just sleep!")

continue freely

⑥ Rec Stop

⑥ REC Loop

Move between microphones
left -> right right -> left (r -> l) (l -> r) (r -> l)

Schlah - f schlah - f sleeep sleeep schlah - ahh - f

⑥ Rec Stop

③ Snipper OFF

ExPd. (80 -> 0)

FtSw.

④ Octave ON

LpVl	1 - 0 = 127
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80
Snp	3 - 0 = 70
Oct	4 - X = 0
Lpr (2 bars)	6 - 0
EftCh	9 - X
CleanCh	0 - 0

Restart exactly with click and **Looper period!**
(inhale / exhale)

(l) (r) (l) (r) (l) (r) (l) (r)

"ihhh" "uhhh" "ihhh" "uhhh" "ihhh" "uhhh" "ihhh" "uhhh" "Thu - kä - tschiiuuhh"

pp < > mf

mf fz

ExPd. Octave effect (0 -> 127)

gliss.

(continue to inhale/exhale in the middle, but gradually change from pure air noise to more and more pitch (Note D/Eb))

pp mf

"Thu - kä - tschiiuuhh" "Thu - kä - tschiiuuhh"

mf fz

(ca. 30)

gliss.

LpV1	1 - 0 = 127
LpVdb	2 - 0 = 80
Sn	3 - 0 = 70
Oct	4 - X = 127
Lpr (2 bars)	6 - 0
EqCh	9 - X
CleanCh	0 - 0

(make sure, that a very precise 16th groove is established with whistling and the whistling echo.)

(whistled with half pitch half air)

LpV1	1 - 0 = 127
LpVdb	2 - 0 = 80
Sn	3 - 0 = 70
Oct	4 - X = 127
Lpr (2 bars)	6 - 0
EqCh	9 - X
CleanCh	0 - 0

Make sure to start the 5/8 bar exactly with click and Looper period.
In case you lost the click in the bars before,
just improvise a few beats, to start the 5/8 bar correctly.

cresc. poco a poco

FtSw.

⑥ REC

⑥ Rec Stop

154

① Arm CLEAN Track

LpV1	1 - 0 = 127
LpFib	2 - 0 = 80
Shp	3 - 0 = 70
Oct	4 - X = 127
Lpr (2 bars)	6 - 0
ExpCh	9 - 0
CleanCh	0 - X!

160

④ Octave OFF

168

③ Snipper ON ⑨ Arm EFFECT Track

175

ExpPd. Snipper (70 -> 0) gliss

LpVl 1 - 0 = 127 Lpr(2 bars)6 - 0
 LpFdb 2 - 0 = 80 EftCh 9 - X
 Snp 3 - X = 0 CleanCh 0 - 0
 Oct 4 - 0 = 127

Sleepless

(at target note remove fingers overly active so that one can hear the noise of the key clicks)

fz *pp* *fz* *pp* *fz*

FtSw. ③ Snipper OFF Expd. (0 -> 127)

(key clicks without pitch)

fz *fz* *fz* *fz*

< pp *pp < fz* *pp < fz* *pp < fz* *pp < fz* *pp < fz* *<*

fz *fz* *fz* *fz*

hit keys with left hand (high key click sound)

fz *fz* *fp* *fp <*

(without pitch!) (cluster with flat hand on highest keys)

fz *fp* *fz* *fp* *fz*

hit front of the closed bellows with (fingers 2-5!) (low beat)

fz *fz* *fz* *fz*

(impulsively slide away hand to the top)

LpVl	1 - 0 = 127	Lpr(2 bars)6 - 0
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80	EftCh 9 - X
Snp	3 - 0 = 0	CleanCh 0 - 0
Oct	4 - 0 = 127	(Exp Ped = 127)

Sleepless

13

210

f (hit bellow with thumb)

FtSw. ⑥ REC Loop

⑥ Rec Stop

216

mf Thu - kä - tsiuh Thu - kä -

very close to mics (always with extremely compact cresc.-stop)

fz

220 - tshii - üü - uuhh Thu - kä - tsiuh Thu - kä - tsiuh Thu - kä - tshii - üü - uu Thu - kä - tsiuh

f

fz

whistle (airy sound)

224 *f*

mf *f* *pp*

molto fz

(breathe if (use fermata freely (<>)) necessary) to recalibrate to Looper Period!

⑥ REC

Restart exactly with Looper Period!

232

p *f* *p* *f* *ff* *ff*

⑥ Rec Stop

LpVl	1 - 0 = 127	Lpr(2 bars)6 - 0
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80	EftCh 9 - X
Snp	3 - 0 = 0	CleanCh 0 - 0
Oct	4 - 0 = 127	

236

f *mf* *sub.*

242

mf

248

f

253

mf

258

fp *fp* *fp* *fp*

263

fp

ExPd. Looper (127-> 0)

① Vol. Looper ON

LpVl	1 - X = 0	Lpr(2 bars)/6 - 0
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80	EfctCh 9 - X
Snr	3 - 0 = 0	CleanCh 0 - 0
Oct	4 - 0 = 127	

Sleepless

15

268 *ff* *p* *ff* *pp*

272 *pp*

276 *p* *f* *p* *f*

280 *mf* *mp*

284 *f*

288

290

293 *ff!*

FtSw. ③ Snipper ON
① Vol. Looper OFF

The musical score is written for piano and features a variety of dynamic markings and articulations. The piece begins at measure 268 with a forte (ff) dynamic, followed by a piano (p) section, and then returns to forte (ff) and piano (pp). The score includes a variety of note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also some special markings like 'FtSw.' and 'Snipper ON' at the end of the piece. The score is divided into systems, with measures 268-271, 272-275, 276-279, 280-283, 284-287, 288-291, 292-295, and 296-299. The final measure is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

LpVl	1 - 0 = 0
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80
Snr	3 - X = 0
Oct	4 - 0 = 127
Lpr(2 bars)/6	- 0
E/ctCh	9 - X
CleanCh	0 - 0

298

ff

ExPd.

(Snipper always
0 -> 127)

gliss.

300

gliss.

302

gliss.

304

(Snipper 127)

gliss.

307

ff

fff

(Snr
127->0)

FtSw.

③ Snipper OFF

LpVl	1 - 0 = 0	Lpr(2 bars)6 - 0
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80	EftCh 9 - X
Snp	3 - 0 = 0	CleanCh 0 - 0
Oct	4 - 0 = 127	

Sleepless

17

Restart exactly with Looper-Period!

309 *ppp leggierissimo*

① Vol. Looper ON

313 *mp* *mf* *f*

[ExPd.] (0-127) (30) (50) (60) *gliss.* *molto*

317 *fz* *f*

(127) [FtSw.] ① Vol. Looper OFF ⑨ Arm CLEAN Track

324 *p* *molto*

⑥ Rec Loop ⑨ Arm EFFECT Track

329 *mf* *f*

LpVl	1 - 0 = 127	Lpr(2 bars)6 - 0
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80	EftCh 9 - X
Snp	3 - 0 = 0	CleanCh 0 - 0
Oct	4 - 0 = 127	

⑥ LoopRec STOP

LpVl	1 - 0 = 127 Lpr(2 bars)6 - 0
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80 E/cctCh 9 - X
Snr	3 - 0 = 0 CleanCh 0 - 0
Oct	4 - 0 = 127

333 *ff*

337

341

③ Snipper ON

345

349

fz <

ExPd. Snipper 0 -> 80)

(-> max.80) make sure
that its not higher!!

(black key and white key clusters
very precise groovy rhythm listening to loop-groove)

354

f *ff* *f* *ff*

LpVI	1 - 0 = 127	Lpr(2 bars)6 - 0
LpFdb	2 - 0 = 80	EfctCh 9 - X
SnP	3 - X = 0	CleanCh 0 - 0
Oct	4 - 0 = 127	

Sleepless

19

356

mf

(very loudly whispered)
f

359 "Thu - kä - tschiiuuhh"

(clusters with whole hand)

whistled

361

FtSw. ⑥ Rec Loop (always keep recording!)

Repeat each bar several times to transform sound slowly

add more and more air noise

only loud "sss" (high -> low)
ff

364 "siüüuuhh"

Air noise (open/close bellow)
f

368 "siüüuuhh"

ff

fff

repeat and rit. + dim. al niente until loop faded away completely

① Arm CLEAN Track

② Feedback ON

⑤ Metronome ON

ExPd. Snipper + Feedback + Metronome very slowly (50 -> ca. 0)

gliss.