Andromache’s Recitativo, Aria and Subtext
for quarter-tone alto flute

as part of the thesis:
The Composition of New Music Inspired by Music Philosophy and Musical Theoretical Writings from Ancient Greece

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About the work:

Andromache's Recitativo, Aria and Subtext is a "song" for quarter-tone alto flute where the words are played rather than sung. The recitativo follows the example of anicent Greek music using the text as a base for the notes and rhythm.

The Aria moves away from direct use of speech-rhythm but still uses the number of syllables as a means of ordering the phrases. The text is then reflected by the music. The subtext is where the characters get to play out their "real" emotions. These are the thoughts of Andromache, Hermione and the goddess Thetis who are the main female characters of Euripides "Andromache". Andromache and Hermione are the victims of society and war, frustrated and hoping for something better in life. Thetis is the cold goddess looking disdainfully at the situation.

The English translation of the text used is that of Philip Vellacott because his work shows the real universal emotional elements in all the characters. His translations also follow very closely to the original ancient Greek which I have written in the opening phrase to give an example. As much as possible, the flautist must try to be each character: to play the role as would an actor/actress on stage.

The actual notes follow the modal genera from ancient Greece, using quarter-tones and thirds of tones as well as semi-tones and whole tones which were all a part of music in approximately 5th-2nd century BC. The equivalent in cents (1/3 of a tone equalling 66.6 cents) has been included in the score if the flautist wishes to play in numeric value. Well tempered tuning otherwise is to be used with a quarter-tone equalling half the size of a semi-tone.

Glossary and notes:
- accidental only affect the note they precede
- Ancient Greek genera have been mentioned in brackets
  w.t. with diamond note head = whistle tone d.s. = dark sound
  h.s. = hollow sound a.s. = airy sound
  f.s. = full sound flz. = flutter tongue ord. = end of flutter tonguing
  x note = key slap
  diamond note = sing note / = thick slash means to stomp one's foot or feet while playing
  (a bit like a temper tantrum)
Andromache's Recititivo, Aria and Subtext for Quarter-tone Alto Flute

written for and with Carla Rees

Coreen Morsink

Recitativo

\( \text{recitativo} \)

\( \text{written for and with Carla Rees} \)

Coreen Morsink

Piano

My home! Thoeb, the lov-liest city in all Asia.

I left my home; and with me came a gold-en hord of treasures

a tempo

for my dow-ry. Then we reached the roy al pa-lace of Pri-

There I be-came He-ctor's wife, to bear him true sons.

My name is Andro-mache.

It was an en-vied name in those days; now, there is no wo-man living whose life holds such

(nosy trill)

I saw my hus-band He-ctor killed by Aeh-il-les' sword;

And on the day the Greeks took Troy I saw my son

A-my-a-max thrown to death from the high bat-tlements.

And I, the fa-mous daugh-ter of a noble house, was brought to Hel-las as a slave a cho-son prize

from the spoils of Troy, a-ward-ed to the is-land prince

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Subtext of Andromache
(hemiolic chromatic 3/8, 3/8, 1 1/4
75-75-350 cents)

(like you're spitting at someone)

Subtext of Hermione
(soft diatonic: 1/2, 3/4, 1 1/4: 100-150-250 cents)

aggressive sound (Hz.) (ord.) (1) (1)

very agitated
Subtext of Goddess Thetis
(soft chromatic, 1/3, L3, 1 5/6: 66.6°, 66.6°, 366.6°, 499.8° cents)