

# CARDIOVASCULAR CHOPIN

## Ending at the Beginning with Guido Van der Werve

**Michael Maizels and Jenny Johnson**

*“Know how sublime a thing it is to suffer and be strong.”*  
—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “The Light of the Stars”

As the camera slowly pans down the richly engraved walls, the rising, euphonious sounds of the Warsaw Chamber Opera Choir and Orchestra fill the baroque space of the seventeenth-century Church of the Holy Cross. The plaintive, modal piano lullaby that initially accompanies this purview gently gives way first to the muted sounds of strings, and then the reverent, echoing voices of a small choir resonating from the organ loft above. While the chamber orchestra is impressively arrayed in the church’s imposing central apse, the camera fixates on the figure of the pianist (also the composer) hunched over an impressive grand piano shoehorned into the transept. The pianist himself also cuts an incongruous figure. Though the oneiric logic that led the pianist to perform clad in a hooded wetsuit is far from clear, the unusual attire appears not to hinder his performance.

Following his elegant opening solo, the pianist appears to wait, with hands folded, for a *clausula vera*, a moment of tonal rest. Anticipating such a pause—which elides deceptively with the introduction of a new theme in the choir—he silently stands up from the piano, walks stiffly out of the church, and runs through the city center onto the banks of the nearby Wisla river. (In music-theory parlance, this is an example of *enjambment*, or the ending of one musical idea overlapping with the introduction of another.) He dons goggles, zips his wetsuit, then leaps into the placid water, embarking on the first leg of a triathlon that will cover 1703.85 kilometers, the equivalent of seven-and-a-half consecutive Ironman distances.

So opens *Nummer veertien, home* (“Number fourteen, home”), the most recent and ambitious production from artist, filmmaker, composer, and endurance enthusiast Guido van der Werve. Following the artist in elegantly shot panoramas as he swims, pedals, and runs along the historic route between Warsaw and Paris, *home* was conceived as van der Werve’s homage to the Romantic composer and virtuoso pianist Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849). Chopin—born Fryderykowi Chopinowi—died in Paris, where he had spent the majority of his life in exile from his native Warsaw. Though

he was buried in the renowned Père Lachaise cemetery, he requested that his heart be returned to his native Poland. His sister Ludwika ferried the organ, preserved in a jar filled with alcohol, back to Warsaw. The heart now rests immured in a pillar in the Church of the Holy Cross in which *home* opens. The film is animated by van der Werve's attempt at a reciprocal gesture: carrying a cup full of Polish soil on his journey, which he eventually places, at the film's conclusion, on the composer's tomb in Paris.

Although *home* elegantly builds upon many of the themes that are most significant within the artist's *oeuvre*—physical and emotional endurance, virtuosic performance, and a sense of smallness within the natural world—our interest in this film lies less in the window it provides into van der Werve's work than in way it seems to encapsulate an important thread of contemporary investigation that has received insufficient scholarly attention. While our own moment is experiencing a resurgence of explorations that cut across the traditional art/music divide, the more highly visible concerns of “sound art”—with an emphasis on sculptural installation and the sonification of space—provide just one example of the kind of work being done in the artistic and musical borderlands. Another, less well-analyzed thread of exploration can be found in the productions of artists such as van der Werve, Ragnar Kjartansson, and Luke Fowler, who produce long-form film, video, and performance works that are underpinned by both themes and structures integral to the history of music. As such, interpretation and historicization of these works require an analytic lens that bridges gaps between art history, musicology, and musical analysis.

Nowhere is this need more apparent than in van der Werve's productions, especially *home*. While the central concern of this piece—the unfulfillable desire to return to one's origins—is legible in the film's imagery, it is only through a joint consideration of the aesthetic and musical devices at play that the artist's nuanced meditation on the impossibility of such returns comes into focus. This search for origins is at the heart of the film's music, which is framed within what the artist identifies as a “classical Requiem: three movements and twelve acts.” A requiem suggests mourning; a mourning for Chopin, perhaps, but also a mourning for the idea of “home” as an extant place to which one can in fact return. Mourning for the loss of one's home is further reflected in the harmonic language of van der Werve's score. The twelve acts comprising the requiem are each composed in a different key, a choice that alludes to the dodecaphonic or twelve-tone methods of pioneering twentieth-century composers such as Arnold Schoenberg and Pierre Boulez. With their new system that utilized all chromatic pitches equally, these composers sought to destabilize centuries-old musical ideologies that placed a stable tonic “home” pitch at the center of compositional praxis.

Thus, van der Werve's musical language, while seemingly reliant upon the syntax of tonality and its inherent pitch hierarchies, is formally assembled in ways that call the idea of “home” into discomfiting question. Van der Werve structures his musical language less around solid, conventional establishments of each section's key than around a series of circular peregrinations—episodic and repetitious minor-mode chord progressions—that reflect his own physical, reciprocal journey in the film: a

journey that returns *from*, rather than *to*, Chopin's native Warsaw.<sup>1</sup> No one pitch or key determines the identity of this requiem—there is, tonally speaking, no real “home” to which one could return.

**NUMMER VEERTIEN: HOME:  
REQUIEM IN THREE MOVEMENTS AND TWELVE ACTS**

Van der Werve's *home* is cast in three overarching movements, each of which corresponds to the component distances he runs, bikes, and swims on his *über*-triathlon.<sup>2</sup> These three movements are subdivided into four component acts that interweave lush, hypnotic shots of the artist on his journey with other poetic reflections on exile and return. These other acts—which read very much as the artist's daydreams during his prolonged, arduous exertion—cut from van der Werve's own native city of Papendrecht in the Netherlands to the sites of episodes in the peripatetic life of Alexander the Great, another wanderer whose importance to the film seems largely to rest in his role as a boyhood hero of van der Werve's. The film is both accompanied and framed by its soundtrack, whose twelve sections adhere to the liturgy of the Christian Requiem Mass.

The first movement, “26.6 km,” illustrates the multi-part structure of *home*. After the first act, “I Found Sadness,” which contains the opening of the piece in the Church of the Holy Cross, the audience is transported in the second act (titled “Home”) to Pella, the birthplace of Alexander the Great in what is today northern Greece. Over the patient, almost languid sounds of strings and voiced harmony, subtitled text introduces viewers to the origins of Alexander's first campaign. We learn at the conclusion of the act that, like Chopin, “he is never to return home.” The third act, “1988,” takes viewers back to the Netherlands, where the local chamber groups Promenade Orkest and Vocoza perform in front of the artist's alma mater, the Prins Constanijn school. This act includes one of the most striking moments in the film. After the musicians have been relocated to the banks of a small river, van der Werve enters the scene from the right. His casual stroll belies the urgency of the enormous flames shooting from his jacket and pants, and, in a gesture that reprises his initial plunge into the Wisla, he submerges himself beneath the dark grey waters.

This plunge takes us to the fourth act, “Mother of Pearl,” the first filmic chapter that focuses on the film's main subject: the triathlon. Accompanied by luxurious choral suspensions, delicate string sustains, and stratospheric vocal arches in the score, van der Werve seems to glide effortlessly down the path of the Wisla. The tiny figure of the artist, clad all in black, is dwarfed by the expansive landscape of fog-shrouded forests, endless rolling hills, and, of course, the ceaselessly rushing river. The title of the act refers to van der Werve's mother, Louise, who, at the end of the 26.6 km swim, is patiently waiting for the artist. She stands at the banks of the river, holding van der Werve's matte-black bicycle and sweeping racing helmet, which she wordlessly exchanges for his dripping wetsuit. After receiving the bicycle, van der Werve awkwardly jogs up the embankment to begin the second movement, “1388.12 km,” on his bicycle.



Guido van der Werve, *Nummer Veertien, home*, 2013. Photo: © Guido van der Werve. Courtesy the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York.

The second and third movements follow the artist on the remainder of his journey to Paris. One of the most striking developments is the increasing rapidity with which the landscape shifts beneath van der Werve's pedals. While the foggy banks of the Wisla provide a captivating but nonetheless fairly consistent backdrop, the road along which van der Werve travels is soon slicing through open, sunny vistas and then plunging into verdant, shaded forests. These roads speak of historical as well as ecological transformations; the artist's passage in front of a sign demarcating the Franco-German border subtly recalls the legions that have passed through the same cartographic corridor. These evocative changes in landscape provide a charged visual counterpoint to the relative uniformity of the musical score. Despite the subtle changes afforded by the chromatic shifts in key between each act, the score remains otherwise rooted in cyclical, medium-tempo consonances in the strings and choir that episodically drift between moments of plaintive, semi-cadential rest. Indeed, the musical conclusions of most of the acts are elided with the wistful continuation of the ambient environmental soundscape—the whirr of bike gears, the licking of the water against the banks, or the whispered roar of faraway vehicle traffic. These elisions contribute to an overall sense of sonic inconclusiveness, as though the music could never itself have the last word.

Act three, “289.13 km,” a staggering run of well over one hundred miles, carries the artist to his final destination in the heart of Paris. Upon his arrival in the metropolis, a distinctively Parisian siren slices dramatically through the otherwise seamless musical accompaniment. For the final act, “I Don't Feel the Pain Anymore” —a title that refers to Chopin's final words—the visibly exhausted artist enters the church of La Madeline, the site of Chopin's funeral, and sits to listen to the conclusion of his mass. It is a conclusion that, much like the rest of the score, seems inconclusive; it does not definitively close so much as it simply ceases to exist. In the wake of his music's diegetic disappearance, van der Werve walks back out of the cathedral and over to the nearby Père Lachaise cemetery. Accompanied by what now seems like palpable silence, the artist removes his silver cup of soil from its zipped pocket, bestows it on Chopin's gravestone amidst the welter of flowers left by other admirers, and walks away without a word.

### THE ART OF GUIDO VAN DER WERVE

The epic *home* represents an apotheosis in the direction that van der Werve's *oeuvre* has taken up to this point. Building on his training in music as well as topics ranging from archaeology and industrial design to Russian literature and chess strategy, van der Werve began the present series of films—all titled with numbers, based on the traditional naming convention for musical opuses—in the year 2000. Film—or, at first, video—presented itself as an ideal means not only to condense a heterogeneous set of influences into a single production, but also to overcome his fear of performing his compositions in front of an audience.<sup>4</sup> Notably, the numbered compositions start with “Number Two (Nummer twee),” a small sketch of a film in which van der Werve, after staring morosely into the camera for nearly a full minute, is struck by a car. When the ambulance arrives on the scene, its doors open to the delicate strains

of Arcangelo Corelli's 1714 *Christmas Concerto*. In place of uniformed paramedics, a quintet of young ballerinas in full regalia slides elegantly from the ambulance vehicle, aligns in formation, and performs a symmetrical dance to the music, while the artist lies inert on the pavement in the background.

Van der Werve's further explorations of classical composition and absurdist performance include his fourth numbered composition, *I don't want to get involved in this. I don't want to be part of this. Talk me out of it*. The film opens with a blank screen and the solipsistic phrase "I woke up early and watched the sun rise. I felt it came up just for me," then cuts to the artist walking, solitary and somber, on a mist-shrouded pier extending into the North Sea. From there, *I don't want* makes several moves that will be reprised in the subsequent *home*. First among these is van der Werve's invocation of Chopin. The diegetic score for *I don't want* is Chopin's Nocturne Op. 9 No. 1 in B-flat minor, which we see van der Werve performing on a wooden raft that floats languidly down the fog-laden Twente canal. The artist's dreamlike, reflective solitude is soon interrupted by the imposition of a much larger craft. The multi-decked boat is lined with a full orchestra performing Mozart's Requiem in D minor—a piece that, not coincidentally, Chopin selected for his own funeral at La Madeline—which steadily grows louder as the orchestra approaches van der Werve and his small raft. As the camera begins to focus on the orchestra and its soundscape begins to dominate, we momentarily lose track of van der Werve, who reappears in dramatic fashion by plunging from the sky into the river just as the piece ends.<sup>5</sup>

While van der Werve's trope of epic endurance is broached by a pair of works he executed near the North Pole—including a time-lapse piece in which the artist slowly turns against the rotation of the earth for a full twenty-four hours—the most significant predecessor to *home* is *Nummer Twaalf: Variations on a theme: The King's Gambit accepted, the number of stars in the sky and why a piano can't be tuned or waiting for an earthquake*. The film meditates on the infinite mathematics of chess games, astronomy, earthquakes, and resonant frequencies, revealing analogous forms of sublimity within each. Van der Werve composed his own music for *The King's Gambit*, which, while orchestrated for nineteenth-century classical instruments, more directly refers to contemporary cinematic tropes: long, modal-minor swaths of repetitious, medium-tempo lyricism whose affect is largely melancholic and contemplative. In a subtle blend of the sublime and the absurd, this gravely serious music is performed in the first section of the film by musicians that are squeezed next to chess players crouching over games inside the cramped Marshall Chess Club of New York. The small string orchestra provides a humorously austere soundtrack to the otherwise silent drama of chess-playing, and is also accompanied by one of the chess boards itself, which has been fashioned into a slightly detuned piano that plays a muted tone each time a player moves a piece. The harmonic language of *The King's Gambit* is similar to the one that van der Werve eventually revisits in *home* with less humor. The repetitious, circular nature of this music is transformed from surreal hyperbole and repurposed in *home* to assume the much weightier valence of one's inability to find a way back home.

## THE FIGURE OF THE ROMANTIC: THE ART HISTORY

In both *home* and *The King's Gambit*, van der Werve draws heavily on the lyricism, grandiosity, and melancholy that characterize the art, music, and literature of nineteenth-century Romanticism. Indeed, the “character” that van der Werve plays in his films—the solitary figure, clad all in black, suffering in isolation to give birth to a direct expression of raw, sublime experience—seems a directly appropriated archetype of the Romantic creator. A visual comparison between van der Werve’s self-presentation in his films—with his black clothing, slim build, and blustering, unkempt hair—and Caspar David Friedrich’s *The Wanderer above the Mists* (1817–18), an icon of High Romantic painting, demonstrates the importance of this visual language in van der Werve’s work. Similarly, van der Werve’s most prominent themes—the yearning for a lost homeland, the journey to the extremes of nature, the meditation on the infinite sublime—find similar corollaries in the writings of Goethe, Fichte, Schiller and Novalis. But as numerous critics have noted, the Romantic sweep in van der Werve’s work is nearly always complicated by a nagging sense of futility or absurdity. In turning against the rotation of the earth, or completing seven consecutive Ironmans, van der Werve metastasizes the Romantic gesture into something beyond itself, something that seems unable to hold as its own justifiable end.<sup>6</sup>

While this ambivalent, even ironic cast comes partly from the reticent personality of the composer, it must also be understood as the product of translating these Romantic motifs into the space of contemporary artistic practice. In this vein, one of the most significant predecessors for van der Werve’s films can be found in the explorations of early performance artists, particularly those of Chris Burden and van der Werve’s fellow Dutch artist Bas Jan Ader. These figures both sought to reinterpret the image of artistic creation forged by suffering; their work centered on performing and documenting arduous trials or acts of extreme danger.<sup>7</sup>

Many of their performances have marked similarities to van der Werve’s subsequent productions. Van der Werve’s first filmed performance—a somewhat clumsy staging of an artistic suicide by gunshot—bears more than a passing resemblance to Burden’s famed *Shoot*—in which the artist instructed a friend to shoot him at a distance of fifteen feet with a .22 caliber rifle. However, the most striking parallel is with Ader’s work, particularly his final, baroque production *In Search of the Miraculous*, which is perhaps the grandest example of a piece like *home*: a seemingly impossible voyage resituated as an aesthetic act. As the second part of an imagined three-part epic, Ader commissioned a choir to sing traditional sailing songs while he set off on a small craft, which he planned to sail from Cape Cod across the Atlantic. Ader himself was subsequently lost at sea; his craft was discovered six months later off of the coast of Ireland, but the artist’s body was never recovered.

It is striking, then, that van der Werve claims to only have investigated the work of Friedrich and Ader after peers and critics began making these comparisons.<sup>8</sup> Undoubtedly, some awareness of the doomed *In Search of the Miraculous* must have informed *home*, but any thematic similarities to Ader’s work belie important

differences in the structure and meaning of the respective productions. Ader and Burden were a part of a generation of performance artists that, as art historian Howard Singerman has emphasized, are “working in the tradition of sculpture as actual, painting as illusional.”<sup>9</sup> For these figures, the performed gesture became a way to extend the Romantic tradition of the spatialized artwork as precisely *not* an illusion. Just as the nineteenth-century critic and theorist Johann Herder explained that “sculpture is truth, whereas painting is a dream,” Burden and Ader exposed themselves to real danger as a means of producing fundamentally truthful art.<sup>10</sup>

This is not to suggest that van der Werve’s films are somehow dissembling, but rather that the stakes of the real-ness of his arduous journey are fundamentally different. The meaning of aesthetic literalness, especially for Burden, was inextricably linked to a larger politics of authenticity, and by extension, to the cultural and social upheaval of the late 1960s. For van der Werve, the genuinely grueling nature of his journey becomes not a way of exposing his body to the natural (Ader) or industrial (Burden) sublime, but rather functions as a more retrospective gesture. In van der Werve’s art, the endurance of arduous trials is a performance of a kind of pre-scripted score, with his extreme endurance taking the place of a more traditional demonstration of an unusually refined artistic skill—a performance that showcases virtuosity.

#### THE MUSICOLOGICAL FIGURE OF THE ROMANTIC

Van der Werve’s imaginative engagement with notions of virtuosity, and his awareness of a historical condition of afterward-ness, reveals how his most important artistic interlocutors are not only Ader and Burden but also his imagined versions of canonized musical performers and composers, such as Mozart, Beethoven, and most of all, Chopin. Van der Werve’s aesthetic engagement with figures of classical and especially Romantic music reveals his awareness of classical music’s profound connections to the aforementioned themes that populate so much of his work: sublimity and the *Sturm und Drang* solipsism of the Romantic artist, to be sure, but also absurdity, futility, and danger. His Friedrich-esque comportment has its own set of (interrelated) references to the history of music. Van der Werve’s unkempt hair reprises the wildly mussed tresses of the famously depressed and heartbroken Beethoven; his slim, black-clad figure is resonant with the wiry, black-tailed body of Mahler, who would die young from the cardiovascular stresses of conducting. His pianistic presence on various physical precipices of danger (such as playing a piano atop a raft floating precariously in water) brings to mind the physical fragilities of Chopin, Mozart, and Schubert, all of whom died young after months of illness, languishing over unfinished pieces at pianos.

Van der Werve’s use of music-historical tropes in the context of artwork that explores physical danger and endurance also brings to mind aesthetic dangers that face the contemporary classical composer, who assumes the perilous role of attempting to compose music in the wake of musical figures whom we now consider, perhaps in a continuation of Romantic hyperbole, to have been towering geniuses. By scoring his own films with accessibly consonant, lyrical, and modal music, van der Werve



Guido van der Werve, *Nummer Veertien, home*, 2013. Photos: © Guido van der Werve. Courtesy the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York.

arguably “endangers” himself by subjecting his score to the probability of intense twenty-first-century criticism. One imagines this criticism to come especially from academically trained composers, many of whom tend to avoid such language or dismiss it as “movie music,” a bygone hybrid of sentimental Romanticism and austere Renaissance piety that no longer seems relevant to today’s post-Industrial, cosmopolitan milieu.

Yet the experience of van der Werve’s soundworld in the visual context of his works suggests that the artist is distinctly aware of his own music’s connection to obsolescence, its misplacement in time, and its semiotic capability to evoke themes of history and an imagined past. Van der Werve’s yearning lyricism, especially in *home*, seems animated beyond the simplistic expression of sadness or melancholy, as might characterize similar musical choices made in the soundtracks of commercial films or television. The use of modal harmony in *home* seems bracingly indicative of the dangers of nostalgia, of the circularity of memory, and of the simultaneous absurdity and sublimity of looking back over one’s shoulder to the storied past of cultural history and our own inaccessible places of origin.

### **TONIC OR HOME KEY**

While *home* ends with van der Werve depositing a cup of Polish soil on Chopin’s Parisian grave, our first clue that the film is about the impossibility of accessing the past lies in its complex, ambivalent engagement with the music of Chopin. For a work that ostensibly pays homage to the Polish composer, the Requiem Mass decidedly avoids any Chopin-esque musical tropes, including virtuosic piano writing and extensive chromaticism. Instead, van der Werve’s score (composed with guidance from Benjamin C.S. Boyle) is written for string orchestra and choir, with only a spare piano solo at the film’s opening, and is characterized by an almost eerie stillness, an austere continuity that resonates with the visual immensity of the film’s natural landscapes. Chopin’s own musical sensibilities are nowhere to be found. Despite van der Werve’s exploration of instrumental timbres and emotive intensities that are directly analogous to those of nineteenth century, his own harmonic language almost seems to confirm Chopin’s death, both physically and sonically.

The harmonic language in question is cast in modal minor, a scale often understood to denote a dark or melancholic affect. While Chopin’s language was no stranger to similarly melancholic keys, the far more dynamic and volatile nature of Chopin’s formal pacing is conspicuously absent in van der Werve’s much more static and unchanging score. All twelve acts oscillate dreamily between lengthy moments of haunting, straight-toned Renaissance vocal polyphony and undulating, elegiac strings. Despite van der Werve’s musical reliance on key signatures and extensive tonic prolongations, his frequent refusal to make use of what is called a “leading tone,” or a note that strongly establishes the tonic or “home key” of a piece, lends the music a floating, non-urgent quality. In contrast to Chopin’s goal-oriented phrasing, van der Werve’s music contains little sense of a vector or goal.

Like the landscape it underscores, the music is itself an environment, a physical space that van der Werve's athletic efforts occupy. This music never seems to "cadence" or rest fully; the harmonic memory of one movement is quickly recapitulated when the next movement begins. This endlessness reflects the physical endurance of van der Werve's *über*-triathlon, the repetitious breathing and physiological gestures required to complete it, and the ceaseless rhythms of the body: the heart, the lungs, and the entire cardiovascular system. One does not listen to this music so much as embody it, becoming immersed in its vastness, and matching one's own breathing to its continuous, meditative undulations. These cardiovascular dimensions of van der Werve's music also bring to mind Chopin's heart, the organ that was removed posthumously and returned, without its body, to the place where Chopin was born.

Although the format has deeply historical overtones, the actual musical structure of van der Werve's Requiem—twelve movements in twelve different keys—is connected with the mid-twentieth-century development of dodecaphony. Music composed using this system is based not upon the singular supremacy of a single pitch or key, but instead upon a tone row, or an ordered set of all twelve chromatic pitch classes. This tone row, in place of a single note or key, allows all twelve pitches to be equally vital to a composition's identity, and also permits other musical parameters to emerge as central to the music's formal design, such as instrumental timbre. Van der Werve's music sounds nothing like the harsh, cacophonous sonorities that populate many twelve-tone pieces, yet his decision to *structure* his more traditional music according to what effectively amounts to a massive tone row is a clear reference to the bracing aesthetic philosophy that drove Arnold Schoenberg to devise this system in the first place: a belief that music should be emancipated from the hegemony of one singular "home" key or pitch.<sup>11</sup>

The impossibility of going home is thus reflected not only in the music's covertly dodecaphonic structure, but also in the way that this system scaffolds a series of peregrinations within a delimited musical space. Such a system by definition cannot begin or conclude, merely cycle back on itself. The cyclicity of the twelve musical acts of van der Werve's Requiem, which proceed through an ordered cycle of the twelve chromatic keys, poetically mimics the circular yet circuitous journey of van der Werve from Chopin's birthplace to his grave. These journeys are ongoing and incomplete, like the music itself; they bring us full circle, but only to reveal that a search for home will simply bring you back to where you began, longing without fulfillment. It cannot be accidental that this most musical, most arduous, of journeys ends not with one of the twelve chromatic pitches, but with no pitch at all. With characteristically flat affect, van der Werve departs Chopin's grave in silence.

*"Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent."*  
—Ludwig Wittgenstein

## NOTES

1. A more technical explanation of the music's inherent circularity is as follows: by being cast in twelve movements that are each in a different key, the piece necessarily ambulates (albeit circuitously) around the circle of fifths. The circle of fifths is a chart used in Western musical theory to demonstrate how the twelve equal-tempered pitch classes are related by fifths in terms of their key signatures. The circle always begins with the key of C major (or A minor). G major (or E minor), a fifth up from C (or A), has one sharp; D major (or B minor), a fifth up from G (or E), has two sharps; and so forth. This is a useful chart for students of music theory, as it illustrates why tonic-dominant, or fifth-based, relationships are so important for tonal music: the key signatures are closely related, and the dominant chord of a given tonic chord contains that tonic chord's leading tone, or the pitch directly below the tonic, which naturally wants to resolve up to the tonic and establish its supremacy.

2. Van der Werve numbers all of his films in the tradition of opus numbers. Though the artist customarily translates the non-numerical titles of his work (in this case, "home"), he typically leaves the number in the original Dutch. We have followed this convention, as well as the Dutch standard to leave the subtitle capitalized, in this article.

3. In music-theory parlance, a "cadence" is a conclusive moment, or a place of resolved tension. In classical music, cadences almost always occur at the end of a composition, and are also found at the ends of phrases or sections. The word "cadential" can denote both a specific musical cadence and a general feeling of musical conclusion.

4. Ciara Moloney, "Guido van der Werve: Minor Pieces, The Model, Sligo, 16 April–12 June, 2011," *Paper Visual Art Journal*, May 1, 2011, <http://papervisualart.com/?p=4964>.

5. Raul Martinez, "Following Cortazar: Guido Van der Werve," *Art in America*, July 10, 2009, <http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/news/everything-is-going-to-be-alright-/>.

6. Ibid.

7. Howard Singerman, "Chris Burden's Pragmatism," in *Chris Burden: A Twenty Year Survey* (Newport Beach, CA: Newport Harbor Art Museum, 1988), 19–28; Alexander Dumbadze, *Bas Jan Ader: Death Is Elsewhere* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 103–26.

8. Martinez, "Following Cortazar."

9. Singerman, "Chris Burden's Pragmatism," 19.

10. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sculpture: Some Observations on Shape and Form from Pygmalion's Creative Dream*, Jason Gaiger, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 45.

11. The order of the keys of the twelve movements creates a 12-note scale, or tone row: D – E flat – E – F sharp – B – C sharp – G sharp – F – B flat – G – C – A).

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