

124 Milton St. Extract: a movement

for five crystal glasses played by five performers, one marimba played by one performer, one drum set (one bass drum, two snares) played by two performers, and white noise

This piece is fifteen minutes in duration and contains four general elements of sound: crystal glass, drum set, marimba, and white noise. On a macroscopic structural level, these elements function in one of two ways. They either change (consist of multiple sections) or remain the same (consist of one section).

unchanging elements:

The marimba and white noise elements each contain a single section beginning at 0'00" and ending at 15'00".

marimba- The E-flat octave tremolo as notated on the "Crystal Glass and Marimba" page is to be played with very soft mallets.

white noise- This element of sound is to be determined by one or more of the musicians. The white noise may be produced by any number of sources and positioned at any number of points in the performance space. The performer(s) may physically produce sounds themselves, enroll other people to produce sounds, use sounds produced by mechanical or electronic devices, and/or include aspects of their audible environment(s). One rule:

- Each sound must be sustained and without obvious pitch.

changing elements:

The crystal glass and drum set elements each contain three sections. The duration, repetition, and sequential position of each section are unspecified. Three rules:

- The crystal glass and drum set elements must change sections at the same time.
- Each section of each element must be played at least once.
- Each element's sections must combine to a duration of fifteen minutes.

The performers must predetermine (in advance of the performance) at what points in time the sections will change within the fifteen minute duration of the piece. The performers are required only to predetermine when the sections change (resulting in a specified duration for each section) and are not required to predetermine which of the elements' sections will be played. The repetition and sequential position of each of the elements' sections may be either predetermined (recommended for the drum set part) or left to improvisation (recommended for the crystal glass part). The performers may use any means in determining the structure of this piece, whether it be through chance procedures, opinion-based individual/group decision, or any other process.

crystal glass- Five glasses are to be tuned to (if upper case C = middle C) the pitches G, A, B-flat, c, and d-flat. Five performers are necessary as each will play only one pitch. **IMPORTANT:** Each performer should appear to always be playing his/her glass, even when a note is not being sounded.

Section @:

- B-flat is to be played, with the use of silence.

Section \$:

- The duration, ordering, and repetition of the cells are unspecified; Cells may last any amount of time, be performed in any order, and repeated as much or little as the performers wish.
- The duration of individual pitches within a cell is unspecified.
- The amount of overlapping of melodic pitches within a cell is unspecified (no overlap, excessive overlap, and everything in between are possibilities). NOTE: If a cell is melodic, the first pitch of the cell must enter before the second. Once the second has entered, the first pitch may continue (creating a harmony) or stop.
- As much as two seconds of overlap may occur between cells.
- Silence may occur between cells.

Section %:

- same as Section \$ (third rule does not apply)

For Sections @, \$, and % the performers should not use verbal or visual communication, but instead should rely solely on their ability to react to what they hear. Due to limited pitch material, for every new sounding pitch there are *usually* two or more possible interpretations regarding both the cell to which that pitch may belong, as well as the pitch to which it may move.

SUGGESTION: Don't focus on where you think you are, but instead think of the possibilities of where you may be, and where that could lead.

drum set- One bass drum is to be played (with foot pedals) by two performers, sitting on opposite sides of the drum. Both heads of the bass drum must be solid in order for this positioning to work. Each performer is also to play an open snare drum. The snare drums are to be played with brushes. **NOTE:** If this positioning and instrumentation is not possible, two separate drums sets (each with bass drum and snare) may be used. The tempo of the drum set part is quarter note = 60 to 115.

Section &:

- Rhythms stemmed down are to be played on the bass drum.
- Rhythms stemmed up are to be played on the open snare drum.
- The last measure is to be repeated for the remaining duration of the section.

Section +:

- Only the open snare drum is to be used.
- Each performer is to decide, spontaneously or premeditatedly, which cell to begin with as well as which cell to continue with upon each repetition (cells may be played in any order and with any amount of repetition).
- Percussionist #2 is to begin every cell an eighth note after Percussionist #1 begins. As a result their cells are to always be staggered by an eighth note (see example on Drum Set: Section + page).

Section =:

- The first two rules from Section + also apply here.
- Percussionist #1 may only play the top three cells on the page. Percussionist #2 may only play the bottom three cells on the page.
- Both players are to begin their chosen cells at the same time. Therefore the cells are never staggered.

The challenge of transitioning from one section to the next is left to the performers. One or both percussionists may likely be in the middle of a phrase when the predetermined time arrives to change sections. Some options:

- One percussionist drops out while the other plays the first phrase of the new section. When the resting percussionist is able to align him/herself with the other percussionist, he/she begins playing the new section.
- While one percussionist begins the new section, the other percussionist either improvises freely or continues to play the previous section until he/she is able to align him/herself with the first.
- etc...

balance:

The dynamic level of the marimba and drum set parts should first be determined relative to that of the crystal glass (the glass is relatively fixed in its dynamic range). Next, the dynamic level of the white noise should be determined relative to the drum set part.

The marimba part should be slightly louder than the crystal glass. The desired effect is to make the crystal glass resemble soft overtones to the marimba's E-flat octave tremolo.

The drum set part, when balanced with the crystal glass part, should place the crystal glass part at the threshold of audible perception. **NOTE:** When both bass and snare drums are used, special effort should be made to play them at the same dynamic level.

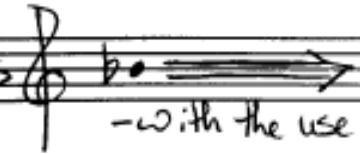
The white noise part should be softer than the drum set part but loud enough to make the two sounds associate. The desired effect is to make the drum set part sound like an articulation of the white noise.


positioning:

The performers may position themselves anywhere within the performance space. When deciding this aspect of the performance, balance should always be the governing factor.

Crystal Glass and Marimba

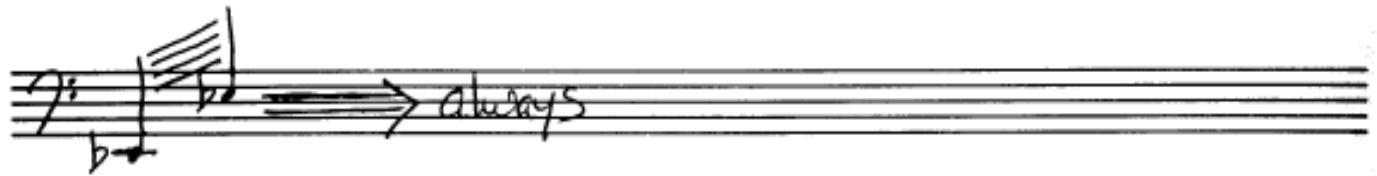
@
Section)

Crystal Glass 
-with the use of silence

Marimba  always

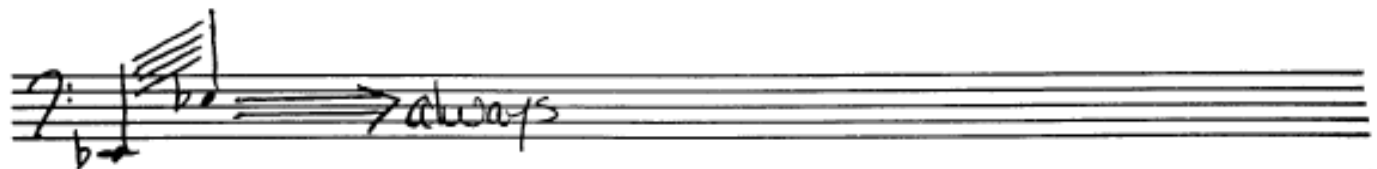
\$
Section)



 always

%
Section)



 always

Empty musical staves.

Drum Set

& Section)

Perc. #1

Perc. #2

(4 + 4 + 4 + 5)

Drum Set

+ Section)

Handwritten musical notation for a drum set section, consisting of four staves in 4/4 time. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns such as triplets and quintuplets of eighth notes, and quarter notes.

Example:

Handwritten musical notation for two percussionists. Percussionist #1 has a quarter note, a triplet of eighth notes, a triplet of eighth notes, and a quarter note. Percussionist #2 has a quarter note, a triplet of eighth notes, a triplet of eighth notes, and a quarter note. Vertical lines connect the notes of the two parts, showing they are staggered by an eighth note.

- cells are staggered by an eighth note

Drum Set

= Section)

Handwritten musical notation for Percussionist #1, consisting of three staves of music in 3/4 time. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes with stems, and some notes have '7' written below them. A large bracket on the right groups the three staves and is labeled "Percussionist #1".

Handwritten musical notation for Percussionist #2, consisting of three staves of music in 3/4 time. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes with stems, and some notes have '7' written below them. A large bracket on the right groups the three staves and is labeled "Percussionist #2".