

Marcel Zaes

Parallel Prints

Series of works
for multiple performers and a single, interchangeable sound-producing body
with heavy amplification

2020

For Yarn/Wire



General Notes

Duration

open, ideally durational

Technology Required

- Max patch (provided by composer) which generates the click track
- headphones for all performers
- headphone amplifier and extension chords
- Amplification for all instruments

Composed

by Marcel Zaes in Providence in 2020 for Yarn/Wire
Contact the composer at mz@marcelzaes.com

Instrumentation & Sound

General Rules

- All performers use the same sound-producing body. This might literally be one single instrument, like a grand piano, which is played by all performers at the same time. In the case of smaller instruments, it might be one instrument per performer, but all instruments must be the same (e.g. a snare drum for each performer).
- Instrumentation is open.

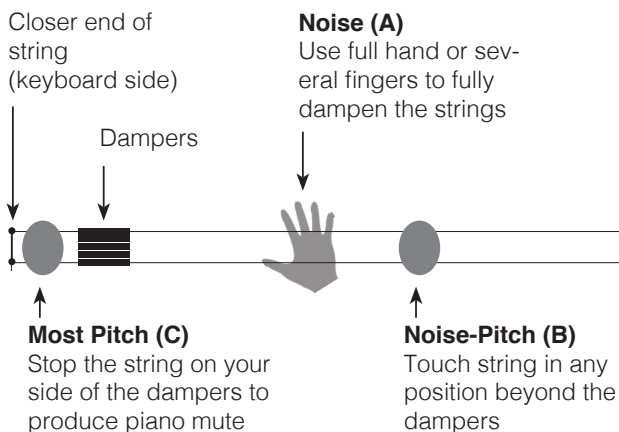
Sound requirements

- Whatever sound-producing body is used, the sound desired is rather percussive with a little bit of pitch and as much resonance as possible, and it must also be possible to play it in three slightly different ways:
A percussive noise with some resonance,
B percussive noise with a tiny bit of pitch and resonance,
C percussive with most pitch and resonance.
- Any instrument which fulfills these requirements may be used.
- In case the instrument does not produce a satisfying amount of resonance, artificial reverb might be used.
- The whole piece occurs in the uttermost degree of stillness. Be sure to perfectly balance the four voices. Everything is between ***p*** and ***pppp*** as it is played, and is elevated to ***mf*** by means of amplification using close-up microphones.
- Ideally, there will not be any conventionally played sound in this piece. Any unconventional, extended playing technique is welcome in order to defamiliarize familiar instruments sound-wise.

Example instruments and playing techniques

- Piano
A: fully dampen string and press key
B: partially dampen string (random harmonics), press key
C: piano mute ("stoppato," dampen at closer end of string)
For ABC, keep the sustain pedal pressed throughout to allow for a maximum of resonance.
- Crotales
A: dampen crotale and hit with mallet, however, allow for a tiny bit of resonance
B: partially dampen crotale so that it is percussive yet produces some resonance
C: dampen crotale a tiny bit
- Electric organ/keyboard/synthesizer
A: find a preset which is noisy and use sustain pedal
B: find a preset which is between noise and pitch and use sustain pedal
C: find a preset which is clear in sound and use sustain pedal
For ABC, use an amplitude envelope which is percussive in the attack, and resonating in the release
- On other instruments, find similar techniques/sounds.
- The three sound types should be variations of each other rather than totally different timbres.

Example Instrument: Piano

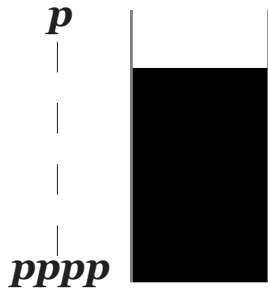


Structure/Form of Piece

- The piece consists of two sections which alternate, “pattern” and “waiting.”
- For the alteration between “pattern” and “waiting” sections, simply follow the click track which provides announcements and count-ins for each new section.

Patterns

- “Pattern” sections consist of each performer playing one rhythm pattern repeatedly on one pitch.
- These patterns are notated as dynamics patterns (the higher the black rectangle, the louder the sound, see sketch underneath) and in relation to one 4/4 measure. E.g. if you choose a pattern in 9, then you will place 9 notes against the four quarter notes you hear in the click track.
- Before each “pattern” section, each performer individually and spontaneously chooses a new pattern and a new pitch from the pool given.
- After each “pattern” section, be sure to let resonate the last note; do not stop it.
- Think each “pattern” section as its own sound texture, consisting of an ever changing polyrhythmic pulsing. Thus, be sure to perform the rhythmic pulses as regular as possible (machine-like), and be sure not to accentuate the first beat of each measure. The listener shall not perceive the single measure, but rather a continuous texture.



Waiting

There are three different possible waiting modes, one of which must be chosen for each performance. They must not be combined within the same performance:

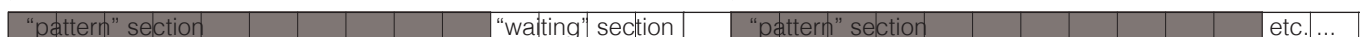
- Pause and let ring, while silently preparing for the next pattern section
- One player (decide who or alternate among players) plays a loud and rather low downbeat at the beginning of the waiting section and lets ring as long as possible
- One player (decide who or alternate) softly and regularly plays eighth notes throughout the waiting section until the next pattern section starts. Sound/pitch/timbre of these eighth notes should be made of the vocabulary of the piece.

Explanation of Alternation

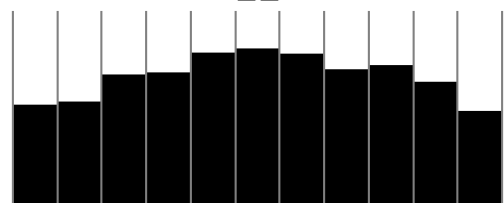
(This structure is provided to the performers via the click track)

Choose new pitch
Choose new pattern
↓

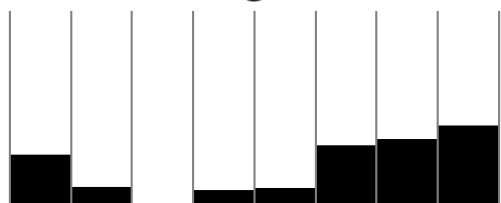
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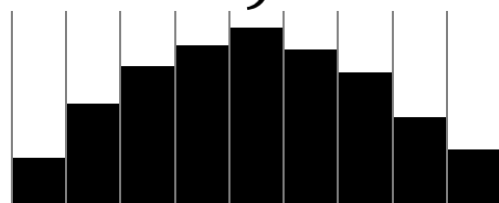
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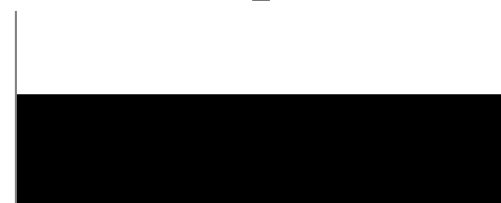
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9



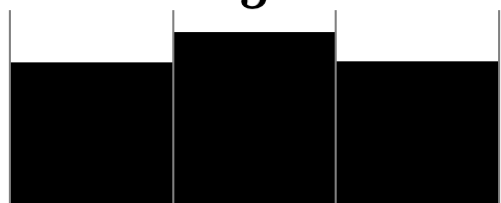
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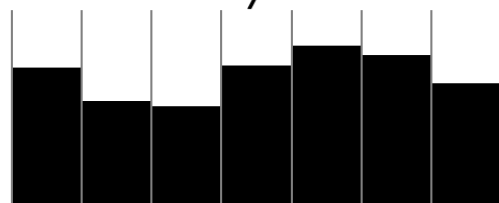
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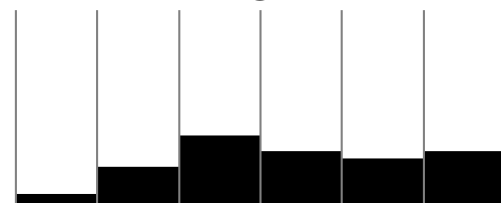
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7



6



Bb

Bb

A

A

Ab

Ab

G

G

D

D

Db

Db

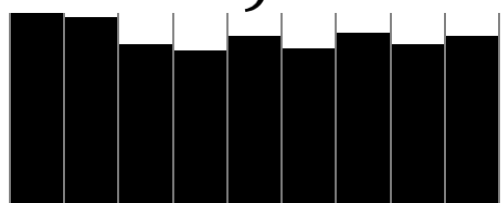
C

C

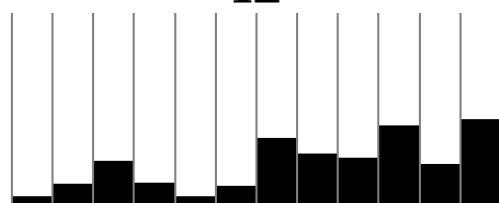
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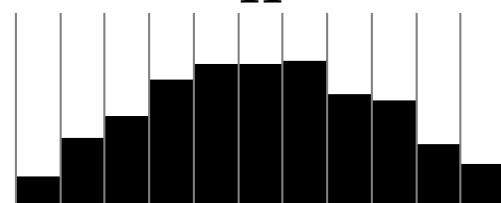
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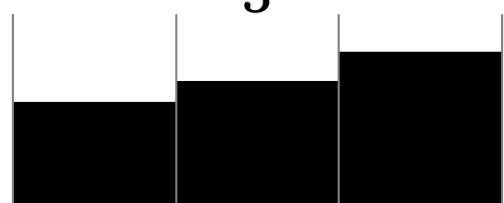
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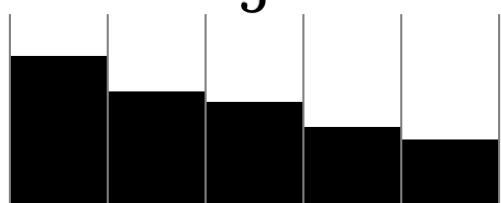
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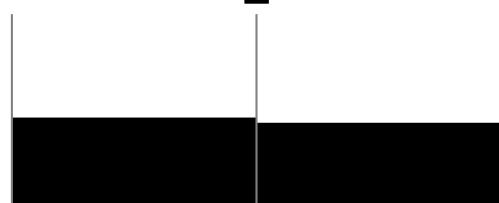
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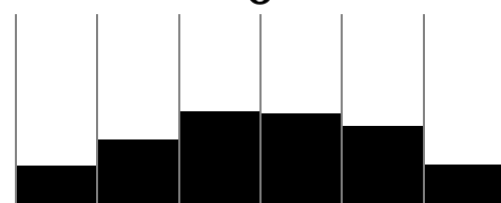
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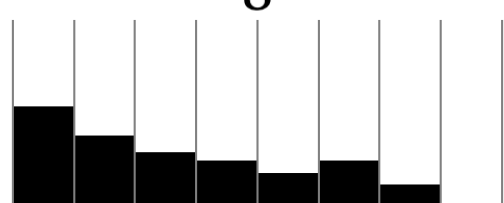
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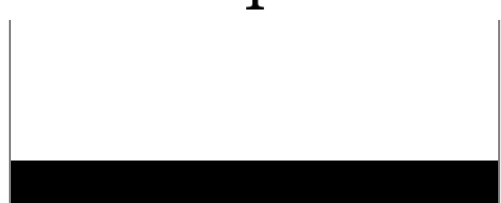
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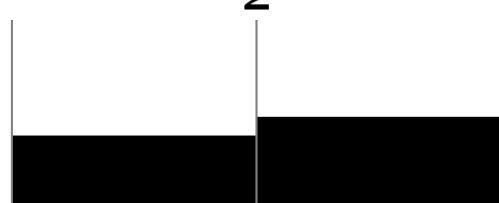
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1



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3

