

Alex Christie

Quiet Music for Ensemble

(simple switches cause hits and misses)

for SPLICE

2017

Program Notes

An important goal of this piece is the creation of a cross-disciplinary performance environment that allows the audience to engage from multiple perspectives. This piece is adaptable to many performance spaces. Depending on the architectural space, the performers can be placed in the audience or other non-stage locations. These variable aspects allow for site-specific performances that account for different spaces, audiences, and environments and yield performances tuned to space, place, and time. The light and sound of the performance is simultaneously shaped by the architectural space and used to reveal unique aspects of that space.

Any synchronicity of light, sound, or performer gesture is merely coincidental. *Quiet Music* presents an environment of collisions and disconnections through which new details and perspectives are revealed.

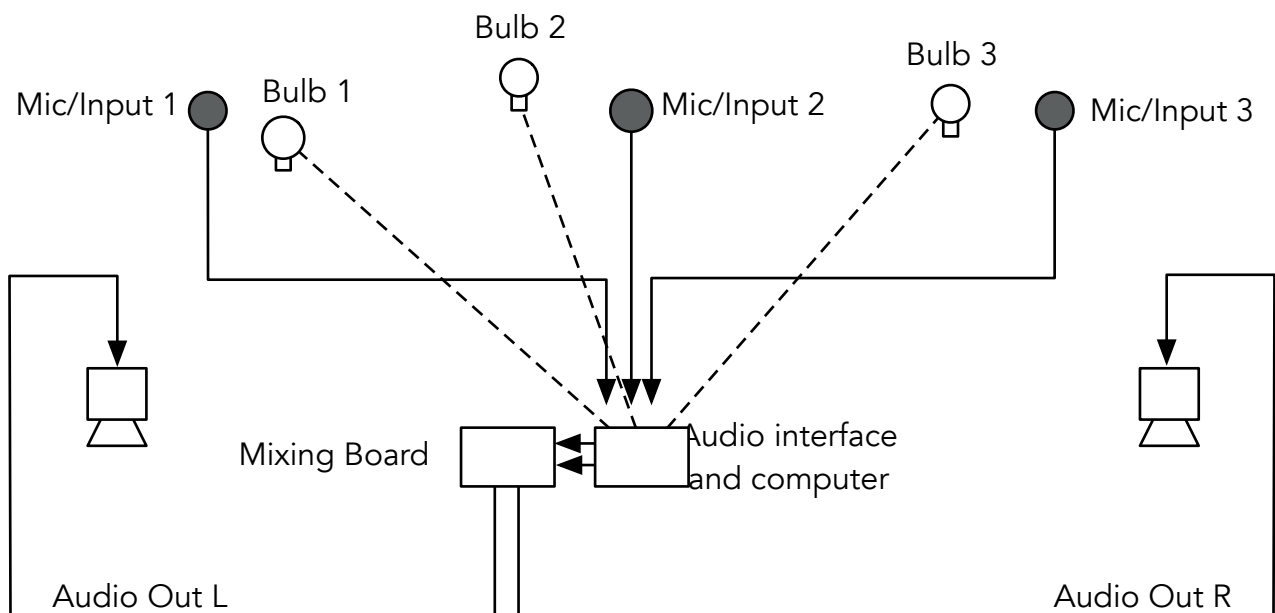
Technical Notes

Audio:

- That Max patch for this piece turns on and off heavy amplification of the individual instruments and initiates timbral processing based on probabilities that can be set in the patch.
 - Use a contact microphone or air microphone to amplify each instrument separately.
 - Run each microphone to its own individual input on the audio interface.
- The Max patch inputs are set to 1, 2, and 3.
- Amplification should be very high and bordering on feedback.

Light:

- A computer/Arduino-controlled light bulb is positioned by each player. When the light is on it should illuminate the player, accent their physical gestures, and cast shadows. The on/off state of each lightbulb is determined by a similar, yet independent, probability-based system.



Equipment needed: microphone (clip-on or air mic will work), plunger, straight mute

Continue indicated material and/or instructions.



Gradually transition between indicated materials and/or instructions.

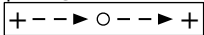


"Dead air" (unpitched playing) on specific pitches. The valve motion in this material is important to the physical and visual aspects of the piece.



Combine or alternate (not necessarily evenly) between the two sets of material.

plunger



Gradual opening and closing of plunger.

x

Tongue ram. Number of "x"s indicates density and their vertical placement indicates relative pitch space.

*****Note: performer-realized variations of these techniques are welcome and encouraged, keeping in mind that all sounds should be very quiet.*****

Percussion Performance Key

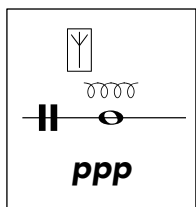
Percussion setup: single snare drum
Beaters: brushes, drum sticks



Continue indicated material and/or instructions.



Gradually transition between indicated materials and/or instructions.



Move brush in circular motion on the snare head.



Location brush on snare head.



"Pull-off". Press palm or fingers firmly against the snare head. Quickly pull palm or fingers off. This should produce a very quiet sound.



"Scrape". Scrape the snare head with finger tips or fingers nails for a louder dynamic.

*****Note: performer-realized variations of these techniques are welcome and encouraged, keeping in mind that all sounds should be very quiet.*****

Piano Performance Key

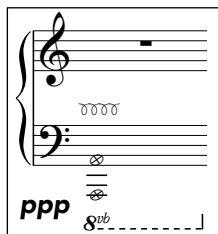
Note: all sounds are generated "inside" the piano with no traditional keyboard playing.



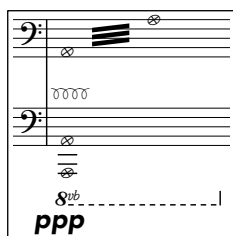
Continue indicated material and/or instructions.



Gradually transition between indicated materials and/or instructions.



Move left hand in circular motion on the piano strings in the indicated range. Use palms and finger nails for variation.



Move left hand in circular motion on the piano strings in the indicated range. "Tremelo" in the indicated pitch range by striking the strings with the right hand fingers. Vary the speed as indicated, explore the pitch range freely.



"Pull-off". Press palm or fingers firmly against piano strings. Quickly pull palm or fingers off. This should produce a very quiet sound. Use pedal when indicated.



"Scrape". Scrape the strings in the indicated tremelo range with finger nails or guitar pick. Keep scrapes short. The performer's nails or pick should pass over as few windings as possible.



Pluck indicated string with fingernail. Transpose up by octaves if string is unreachable.

*****Note: performer-realized variations of these techniques are welcome and encouraged, keeping in mind that all sounds should be very quiet.*****

Quiet Music for Ensemble
(simple switches cause hits and misses)

0:00 ————— **0:45** ————— **1:30**

breathe naturally through trumpet

Tpt

plunger
+ - - -> o - - -> +

Perc

brush placement

Vary rate of circular motion

Pno

trem speed: med.

Vary rate of circular motion

Elec

1:30 ————— **2:15** ————— **3:00**

Tpt

plunger
+ - - -> o - - -> +

End air sound. Continue fingerings with tongue rams.

plunger
+ - - -> o - - -> +

Perc

(begin pull-offs)

Pno

Vary rate of circular motion and R.H. tremolo

Elec

3:00 3:45 4:30

Tpt

Continue fingerings with tongue rams.

plunger: free

increase tongue ram density, allow moments of pitch. Pitch is free/open.

ppp *p*

Perc

begin scrapes (with finger)

ppp *pp*

Pno

begin scrapes and pull-offs (R.H.)

pedal freely but do not sustain for more than 2"

pp *p*

Elec

4:30 5:15 6:00

Tpt

End tongue rams.

Alternate between playing with straight mute, singing through trumpet, and dead air. Breathe as needed.

pp

Perc

End circular motion. Continue scrapes.

snare off

drag drum stick around shell of snare drum

pp

Pno

End trem. Continue scrapes and pull-offs.

Ped *p* **L.V.**

Elec