

**Text, movement and music: an
annotated catalogue of (selected)
percussion works 1950 – 2006**

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the requirements for the degree of

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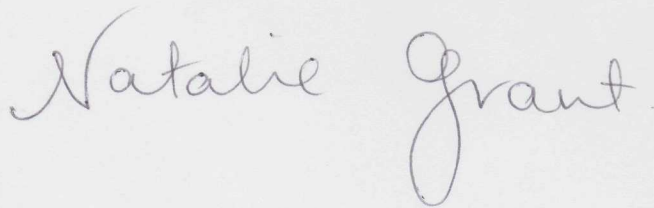
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Declaration of Authenticity

This is to certify that:

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University, and is between 8,000 and 10,000 words in length.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Natalie Grant". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned in the lower half of the page.

N. Grant

Musick and Poetry have ever been acknowledg'd Sisters, which walking hand in hand, support each other; As Poetry is the harmony of Words, so Musick is that of notes; and as Poetry is a Rise above Prose and Oratory, so is Musick the exaltation of Poetry. Both of them may excel apart, but sure they are most excellent when they are joyn'd, because nothing is then wanting to either of their Perfections for thus they appear like Wit and Beauty in the same Person.¹

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

The percussion acts as a central heating system²

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

¹ Josiah Fisk (ed.), *Composers on Music – Eight Centuries of Writings*, Northeastern University Press, 1997, p. 23

² Max Wade-Matthews, Wendy Thompson *The Encyclopedia of Music*, Hermes House, 2003, p. 188

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I thank all the composers whose works feature in this dissertation, as their pieces inspired my research. In particular I would like to mention **Graeme Leak**, for igniting my interest in ‘performance pieces’ through his own wonderful works.

Timothy Phillips, Erik Griswold, Paul Sarcich, Jerome Kitzke, Veronika Krausas, Michael Askill, Russel Hartenberger and **Bill Cahn** have also been very helpful when approached for information regarding their pieces. Their willingness to discuss their works has provided invaluable first hand information.

Percussionists **Guy du Blet** and **Ron Colbers** were also forthcoming with information about repertoire they’d come across, and I thank them for their time.

My parents have always supported my musical dreams and aspirations. Words aren’t enough to thank them for all they’ve done and continue to do for me.

1. Introduction

This dissertation takes the form of an annotated catalogue of percussion works incorporating text and/or movement. The topic has grown out of my personal experience in performance of percussion repertoire with prescribed motion, spoken word, dance and/or singing. As a student and performer with a particular interest in such works I have found it difficult to access comprehensive sources of information regarding this literature. The purpose of the study is to produce a resource that provides better access to information on this kind of repertoire for both percussion students and professionals.

The research I have undertaken includes: a review of literature, scores, articles and recordings documenting the history of this genre; a search for music featuring voice and/or movement with percussion, composed or published from 1950-2006; and analyses of such works.

Over fifty musical scores and examples were located from major libraries, music publishers, and selected composers. Of these, thirty-three works were analysed and categorised by the type of extra-musical elements they include. The results show the following characteristics in the studied works: movement (7), theatrical elements (6), text and movement (3), political text (4), text from literary sources (7), text imitating instrument sounds (3), text from non-western cultures (4), works with narrative (1), works with imaginary set ups or instruments (2).

The body of the dissertation is in accordance with the above categories. I have found very little written on the subject, and many of the works themselves are relatively new (some having been performed only once or twice). Much of my research has by necessity made use of the internet as the newer works have yet to be discussed in any percussion anthologies. This has been both a problem and an inspiration for further research: gathering detailed information for percussionists of like mind so that they may have better access to this repertoire.

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Throughout the research process I came across a number of works that for varying reasons did not completely fulfill my requirements. Generally these were works that may have featured only one prescribed action or flourish, or a single (token) spoken word or line. I could not identify these as works that truly incorporated text and/or movement, and consequently omitted them. There are, however, three works listed in the catalogue that are not strictly 'percussion' works: *As Quiet As...* (p.12) and *Clogwork Orange* by Timothy Phillips (p.14), as well as Hazel Smith's *Serpent Ex Spearhead* (p.34). After much deliberation over the nature of these works, and whether they are more rhythm-based performance pieces than percussion works, I have included them as prime examples of what may be achieved when the composer is not restricted by conventional instruments or themes. I have also included some works that feature instruments other than percussion, but where percussion is the main focus.

My hope is for my research to provide an important addition to twentieth century percussion literature. I aim for it to better acquaint percussionists with a greater variety of works involving text and/or movement, and therefore make possible the inclusion of more of these works in performance programs.

2, Background

“In no section of the orchestra has there been a greater change in the design of instruments than in the realm of percussion” comments James Blades in his book *Percussion Instruments and Their History*.¹ Music for percussion evolved significantly throughout the 20th century, and as the instruments themselves have advanced, the number of new solo and chamber compositions has increased dramatically. Percussion is finally being seen as a viable medium for composition.

In addition to the growing use of the ‘normal’ percussion instruments (for example: snare drum, timpani), composers have increasingly looked to “explore the possibilities of unusual devices and novel instruments”.² The 20th century also saw the development of another element, more closely associated with the composition and performance of percussion works than with the instruments themselves – theatre.

Percussionists in the 1920s were seen as ‘one-man bands’ and ‘jack of all trades’, providing the innumerable sound effects required for silent cinema or variety theatre (in addition to being able to cope with all the orchestral drum parts). Blades recounts that “most knockabout comedians and comedic theatre performers required bumps and bangs calling for varying effects – snare drum rolls, cymbal crashes and so on – intermingled with the inevitable siren or motor horn”.³

Numerous effects required for the screen demanded such equipment as:

wind machine, rain machine, thunder sheet, a tray of broken glass, dog bark, bull roar, cylinder of compressed air for the imitation of rushing water, blowing of tug boat whistles and fog-horns etc. Plus a variety of imitation produced from the more standard instruments: roll on a Chinese cymbal for a

¹ James Blades, *Percussion Instruments and Their History*, The Bold Strummer, Ltd. 2005, p. 458

² Ibid, p. 412

³ Ibid, p. 463

rough sea or, combined with a ratchet, for a forest fire; rifle fire from the side drum; a rim shot for the crack of the sheriff's revolver. A substitute for the rain machine was affected by placing a length of fine chain on the timpani head, and playing a close tremolo with snare drum sticks. Horses galloping over the prairie involved 'timpani coperti', or snare drum without snares. Coconut shells suggested a horse trotting on the cobblestones, with the addition of a loop of sleigh bells affixed to the wrist if the effect of a harness was required". "Playing the timpani part of an excerpt from a symphony with one hand, and winding a ratchet, rolling on a cymbal, or catching a pistol shot with the other was no mean feat."⁴

These kind of effects were also integrated into more 'serious' orchestral music. The orchestration of Erik Satie's ballet *Parade* (1915), for example, included gunfire, typewriters, sirens and whips.⁵ Shortly thereafter, theatre itself made its way into solo percussion repertoire: Adolph Schreiner's *The Worried Drummer* from the 1930s is a humoresque solo percussion piece that highlights the dexterity required to negotiate complex multi percussion set-ups. Scored for snare drum, bass drum, xylophone, timpani, cymbal, triangle, castanets, sleigh bells and chimes, the piece appears to ridicule the 'jack-of-all-trades' percussionist, who at times seems to have trouble traveling between and playing all of the instruments in his/her set-up. The initial purpose of the work was humour and mockery, as the soloist rushed from instrument to instrument in order to keep up with the music (piano or orchestral/band accompaniment), almost 'dancing' around the set-up.⁶

In the second half of the 20th century there emerged a substantial and growing body of repertoire for percussion incorporating theatrical elements: text, movement, song and dance. One of the significant pioneers of this genre include John Cage, whose 1940 work *Living Room Music* included text; "The World is Round" by Gertrude Stein (1939).

⁴ Blades op cit, p. 464

⁵ <http://www.angelfire.com/biz/musicclassical/satie.html>

⁶ <http://www.alte-noten.de/index.php?link=http%3A/www.alte-noten.de/cgi-bin/search2a.cgi%3Fpnum%3D3082>

“Once upon a time the world was round and you could go on it around and around”.⁷

Players were instructed to speak and strike anything in the room: magazines, newspapers, tables, books, floors and door frames. Cage made a special note for performers not to use conventional beaters.

Other pioneers of this genre include Slovenian born composer Vinko Globokar (b. 1934), who's vision of uniting music, song and speech came to fruition in the late 1960s.⁸

Argentinian-born Mauricio Kagel (b. 1931) is most famous for his interest in developing the theatrical side of musical performance.⁹ Renowned Italian composer Luciano Berio (1925 – 2003) composed many theatrical works for stage, and in 1960 scored a set of e e cummings' poems for harp, two percussionists and soprano (the percussionists and harpist also have spoken parts).¹⁰

⁷ Renewed 1967, a Young Scott Book (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.)

⁸ <http://www.counterinduction.com/bio.php?personID=000004>

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mauricio_Kagel

¹⁰ <http://home.swipnet.se/sonoloco6/Mode/berio.html>

3. Australian percussion: text, movement and music

“The distinctive clapstick-playing heard in Aboriginal traditional music and some Aboriginal rock music is a reminder that there was a percussion tradition here long before European colonization” state Graeme Leak and John Whiteoak in the *Currency Companion to Music and Dance in Australia*.¹¹ Western percussion first made its way to Australia in the drum-and-fife music of the first fleet in 1788. In the past century Australian percussion playing has come to greater prominence through the influences of immigration, liberal music education and ‘world’ music, as well as new-age music and the growing Asian and Pacific region.¹²

As in Europe, America and elsewhere in the western world, percussionists in Australia were often employed to carry out less traditional (and more theatrical) musical roles.

*Early Australian band compositions show that amateur band drummers were called upon to play other percussion devices (other than snare and bass). In Alex Lithgow’s Le Cirque (1907), for example, there are novelty percussion effects, including bird warbler, sleigh bells, triangle, cymbal, tambourine and castanets.*¹³

The theatre percussionist played an integral role in Australian circus music and variety theatre – later called vaudeville. Precursors to silent movie accompaniment in Australia included musical accompaniment to ballet, pantomime, unscripted variety acts and “tableaux vivants” (posing to create striking scenes).¹⁴

¹¹ John Whiteoak et al, *Currency Companion to Music and Dance in Australia*, Currency House, 2003, p. 504

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ John Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, Currency Press, 1999, p. 60

The Australian percussion music of more modern times extends beyond the general contemporary classical and popular traditions. Multiculturalism since the early 1970s has increasingly revealed a wealth of diverse traditions of percussion-playing. Immigrants from the Middle East, South Asia and the South Pacific have brought refined percussion sounds and techniques as well as different concepts of time, rhythm, improvisation and musical language.

Australian compositions, primarily those of Graeme Leak and Timothy Phillips, were my introduction to percussion works with text and/or movement, and formed an important part of my initial interest in this research topic. From the current professional ranks of Australian composers for percussion the following are particularly noteworthy:

Michael Askill is one percussionist/composer who has embraced the music and traditions of non-Western cultures in his music. He is a founding member and Artistic Director of Australia's premier contemporary ensemble Synergy, a composer, producer, and the former Head of the Percussion Department at the Canberra School of Music.¹⁵ He has collaborated with many master musicians including Turkish virtuoso Omar Faruk Tekbilek, who has lent key musical and vocal elements to many of Michael Askill's recordings and performances. His work *Spirals* can be found on page 24 of this catalogue.

Graeme Leak is an acclaimed Australian performer and composer with a distinguished background in percussion and drumming. He has been a founding member of a number of Australia's leading contemporary music groups, and is now an innovative independent artist committed to living and performing in Australia. His diverse range of solo works include performance pieces for amplified paracetamol¹⁶, amplified cactus, as well as works for one or more 'string cans': an easily-constructed, home-made instrument based

¹⁵ <http://www.blacksun.com/releases/15031.htm>

¹⁶ A performance piece with the aid of a pre-recorded backing track, giving the perception that the performer has swallowed the tablet and tracing its journey around the body.

on the model of a single string, a stick and a resonator.¹⁷ His piece *Yo Yo Man* can be found on page 17.

Percussionist Timothy Phillips is well-known in the Melbourne music scene. He has performed with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Astra Chamber Music, and the Australian Art Orchestra amongst other large ensembles. Occasionally, however, he takes centre stage in his own (independently produced) concerts, which gives him the chance to showcase his own compositions. Many of these incorporate theatrical elements, including his composition *Hand Dance*, which can be found on page 14.

Australian-American musician and composer Erik Griswold fuses experimental, jazz and world music traditions in his works, specializing in prepared piano, percussion and toy instruments. His percussion sextet *Strings Attached* and subsequent duet *Rope Bridges* deal with kinetic energy and movement and can be found on page 10 of this catalogue.

¹⁷ Graeme Leak, *Performance Making: A Manual for Music Workshops*, Currency Press, 2003, p. 136

4. Catalogue of music for percussion with extra-musical elements 1950 – 2006:

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Notes on the catalogue

- Despite the enormous developments in orchestral percussion in the 20th century, this dissertation will be focusing primarily on works for solo percussion and small ensemble.
- For each work in the catalogue I have endeavored to provide information regarding the availability of scores and recordings, as well as any useful or interesting program notes.
- For several works, especially those by composer-performers, there are not always full scores in existence. This is the case for the work of Graeme Leak, Timothy Phillips, Bill Cahn, Frederic Rzewski and Veronika Krausas. In these instances I have provided email addresses for the composer so that they may be contacted regarding hard copies of their works.
- The works are listed in chronological order, by date of composition, starting with the most recent

i. Movement

Movement is inherent in all musical performance – in particular to percussion playing – and many works require at least some level of choreography in order to simply get around complicated set-ups. The following works extend such movement to include specific dance-type motions and gestures integral to communicating the purpose of each work to the audience.

Timothy Phillips (b. 1967 Canberra, Australia)

As Quiet As... 2004

Solo

The performer makes mouse-like movements between musical moments: creeping around like a mouse, along the walls darting in and out of the entrance and then breaking into a whistled and danced version of the *Mouse in Amsterdam*.

Instrumentation: 3 woodblocks

Duration: 4'

Score: available from composer¹⁸

Recording: not available

Additional Information: premiered at the Mechanics Institute, Brunswick (Victoria, Australia) Dec. 2003

¹⁸ Timothy Phillips email: timothyphillips@gmx.net

Erik Griswold (b. 1969 California, USA)

***Rope Bridge* 2003**

Duo with drums, shakers and choreography

An adaptation of Erik Griswold's sextet *Strings Attached*, the purpose of this work is for the percussion duo to be transformed into a live kinetic sculpture. Bright white nylon ropes attach the performers' sticks to each other, causing their physical gestures to be visually exaggerated on a massive scale.

Minute shifts of stick position produce palpable shifts in the tension of the ropes, while large gestures give rise to a dramatic rising and falling choreography. Gently swelling tremolos suggest breathing or gusts of wind, pulsating rhythms produce sound wave patterns and quick single strokes imitate the action of a whip. "At times the choreography of the ropes emphasizes spiraling movement around the stage, while at other times the ropes seem to become magically frozen in a three-dimensional abstraction".¹⁹

Instrumentation: 4 tom toms, 2 seed pod shakers, 2 ropes.

Duration: 6-7'

Score: *Suspensions: Australian Percussion Works* by Red House. AMC²⁰ Library number 786.8/SUS 1

Recording: not available

Additional Information: the ropes are secured by drilling a small hole in each stick about 7cm from the tip; one is attached from player 1 right hand stick to player 2 left hand stick. The other is attached from player 1 left hand stick to player 2 right hand stick. Ropes should be almost taut when both sets of sticks are at the near edges of the drums.²¹

¹⁹ Erik Griswold in *Suspensions: Australian Percussion Works* 2003, p.28

²⁰ Refers to the Australian Music Centre <http://www.amcoz.com.au>

²¹ Griswold, 2003, p.28

Timothy Phillips (b. 1967 Canberra)

***Clogwork Orange* 2001**

Solo

For percussionist (wearing clogs on their hands and feet) and one orange. It starts out with the players moving their hands in circles like a big clock. They speed up and then break into a Spanish flavoured dance culminating in them stomping on the orange as they shout "Ole".

Instrumentation/directions: Spanish dancing with clogs and orange

Duration: 5'

Score: available from composer

Recording: not available

Additional Information: premiered April 2001, Theatreworks St Kilda (Victoria, Australia)

Rupert Kettle (1940-2005 Michigan, USA)

***Traps* 1994**

Duo for two players on one drum set

This work begins with one of the players kneeling in front of the drum set, playing the kick drum with beaters instead of the usual kick pedal. Players rotate around the set up in a tag team formation; each getting out of the way in just enough time for the other to continue playing/sit down on the drum stool/stand up and so on as they trade places with each other.

Instrumentation: two drumset players playing one drumset: snare drum, bass drum, tom-toms(4), suspended cymbals(2), hi-hat

Duration: 7'

Score: Studio 4 Music <http://www.mostlymarimba.com>

Recording: not available

Additional Information: dedicated to Pete Siers and Dan Merkel; Premiered November 1995, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Aquinas College

Paul Sarcich (b.1951 Wellington, NZ)

Concert Pieces for Timpani, III "Fandango" 1990

Timpani solo with piano accompaniment

The first two movements of this work exploit traditional timpani techniques in with the emphasis on sensitive ensemble playing with the pianist. In the third movement, both pianist and timpanist add sections of hand clapping and Flamenco style heel stomping. The movement finishes with the performers shouting "O-lé!"

Instrumentation: 4 timpani with piano accompaniment

Duration: 15' (entire work)

Score: Studio 4 Music. AMC Library Number 786.93/SAR 1

Recording: not available

Additional Information: calls for:

Heels: shoes with hard heels (preferable plated or nailed) stomped on a wooden surface

Claps-cupped: the low flamenco hand clap, with the hands crossed palm-to-palm

Claps-slapped: the high flamenco hand clap, with the fingers of one hand slapped into the palm of the other.

Thierry De Mey (b. 1956 Brussels, Belgium)

Musique de Tables 1987

Trio for percussionists playing amplified tables

Thierry De Mey's work explores the boundaries between music and the movements that produce it and makes it audible. A "ballet for six hands"²², *Musique de Tables* is for three

²² <http://www.nehrlich.com/blog/2006/05/07/ultimate-culture/>

percussionists who each use an amplified table as their musical instrument. The diversity of tones in this piece is produced by striking the tables in different ways. The position of fingers and hands and the rhythmic figures are coded in a repertoire of original symbols introduced into the score. *Musique de Tables* refers to the historical form of 'Tafelmusik,' its structure essentially that of a baroque suite²³ - but for fists, fingertips, knuckles and nails.

Instrumentation: three amplified tables

Duration: 8'

Score: Percussion Music Europe, Belgium

Recording: short film: direction and music by Thierry De Mey, Performers: Gery Cambier, Georges-Elie Octors, Dirk Descheemaker (35mm color - 8 min. Belgium, 1999)

Additional Information: the idea of *Musique de Tables* is to examine the relationship between music and movement; to search the boundaries between music and the movement that produces it and makes it audible²⁴

Donald Martino (1931 – 2005 New Jersey, USA)

***Augenmusik: A Mixed Mediocritique* 1972**

Multi-percussion solo

Augenmusik roughly translates to "Eye Music" and as Donald Martino comments in his score, "it is more *Augen* than *Musik*". This piece is scored for Actress, Danseuse or Uninhibited female Percussionist (and electronic tape). The performer wears a very scant bikini with a long gown (easily and quickly discarded, provocative, but not overly inappropriate to the concert stage), moderately spiked high heel shoes and a second pair with taps. She (the piece is written specifically for female performers) is given instructions as to how to move around the rather large multi-percussion set up (for example, *with dignity, tart-ly, funkily, with trepidation*), gradually removing both shoes and then the gown in the process.

²³ http://www.33faintingspells.org/ndcinema2003_printable.html

²⁴ <http://www.grame.fr/Productions/Mixtes/homeEnglish.htm>

Instrumentation: multi-percussion: tubular chimes, crotales, marimba, vibraphone, rototoms, timpani (4), bass drum, tam tams, suspended cymbals, thunder sheet, plus miscellaneous non-pitched percussion

Duration: 7-10'

Score: Dantalian, Inc. (DSE519, DSE519t)

Recording: not available

Additional Information: commission: Sheri Dorn

ii. Theatrical elements

Timothy Phillips (b.1967 Canberra, Australia)

Hand Dance 2005

Solo for drum with gestures

Inspired by the works of such experimental drummers as Switzerland's Fritz Hauser, "Hand Dance" takes the performer's hands on an animated journey. This work explores all the different timbres that can be produced with just one drum.

Instrumentation: conga and a series of hand and arm gestures

Duration: 6'

Score: not available

Recording: available from composer

Additional Information: premiered June 5, 2005 by Timothy Phillips at Richmond Uniting Church, Melbourne

Mauricio Kagel (b. 1931 Buenos Aires, Argentina)

L'art Bruit (Solo for Two) 1994/5

Solo percussion with assistant

Movement piece. While the percussionist plays, the assistant runs to and from a work bench, bringing the percussionist new instruments to interact with.

Instrumentation: castanets, bass drum, snare drum, upside down snare drum, triangle, tam tam, bells, tambourine, rice in Japanese temple bowls

Duration: 23'

Score: C.F. Peters. (P08889)

Recording: not available

Rupert Kettle (1940-2005 Michigan, USA)

***Rudimental Rascals* 1983/4**

Snare drum duet

Rudimental Rascals is a work comprised mainly of snare drum rudiments and musical jokes. The tempo marking is "a shaky 108"; the piece begins with an audible count-off in the wrong rhythm. The players are instructed to "accidentally" strike their hands, fingers or knuckles, play on each others sticks, and eventually a stick is dropped.

Instrumentation: two snare drums

Duration: 2'30"

Score: Studio4 Music

Recording: not available

Additional Information: dedication: to Solo and Ensemble Adjudicators Everywhere

Mauricio Kagel (b. 1931 Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Rrrrr... 1982

Two percussionists with electronic tape

Rrrrr... consists of 41 autonomous pieces of music, beginning with the letter "R" and all performable independently. The respective instrumental setting (organ; choir and piano; **percussion duo**; wind instruments, double basses and percussion; solo voices; jazz combo) are published in separate volumes. A performance of all 41 pieces constitutes the *Radio Phantasy 'Rrrrr...'*

The six percussion duos are titled:

- Railroad drama
- Ranz des vaches

- Rigaudon
- Rim shot
- Ruff
- Rutscher

Instrumentation: police whistle, sheet of paper, 2 switches, friction drum (cuica), 6 alpine cowbells, reco-reco on stand (preferably with spiral spring), 3 wood blocs, tenor drum, side drum, sleigh bells, ratchet, tubular chimes, glass marbles, rubber balls, dish of water, bottles filled with sand grains. For duet number 2 you also need a pre-recorded tape that the players should prepare themselves, following the instructions given in the score.

Duration: 12'

Score: CF Peters (EP8531)

Recording: *Mauricio Kagel 2 CD*

Additional Information: the duos may be performed separately or in any combination. The order in the score is not necessarily the order in which the duos have to be played.

Mauricio Kagel (b. 1931 Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Dressur 1976

Percussion Trio

In this work the three percussionists dance and perform prescribed movements in a mock circus ring, playing all wooden instruments. *Dressur*, is an example of what Kagel calls "instrumental theater".²⁵ In such works, the spectacle of the performance, usually incorporating purely dramatic gestures, is just as important, if not more so, than the music itself. In *Dressur* these dramatic actions include slamming chairs on the floor, and beating bare chests and stomachs with coconut shells.

²⁵ http://www.sequenza21.com/2005_12_11_s21archives.html

Instrumentation: marimba, claves, cricket caller, maracas, bamboo wind chimes, wood blocks, wooden shoes(2 pr.), temple blocks, anklung, special hand made wooden instruments

Duration: 25'

Score: CF Peters (EP8889)

Recording: not available

Additional Information: dedication: to Cercle de Percussion; premiere: 18 November 1977

Mauricio Kagel (b. 1931 Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Match 1964

Multi-percussion with two cellists

Set up like a sports contest with the percussionist as referee the piece is more like a musical pantomime than anything else. The cellists enter from opposite sides of the stage, like tennis players, readying their gear (instruments) for the match. An elaborate series of episodes follows, with each player trying to outdo the other, scowling competitively and assuming defiant postures while scratching, tapping, snapping strings, and so on. As referee, the percussionist tries to direct the cellists but does so in vain as they've reached the end of their scores and have finished playing the piece. The work features such obscurities as throwing dice and a wind up alarm bell on the bass drum, and shouting "NO!" at one of the cellists for playing at the 'wrong' time.

Instrumentation: hand cymbals, suspended cymbal, sizzle cymbal, marimba, snare drum, bass drum, 2 handle-castanets, 2 ratchets, wind up alarm bell, 2 jingle bells, flexatone, dog bark, 2 police whistles, Chinese clatter-drum, 5 dice, 2 dice cases (for shaking), with 2 celli

Duration: 18'

Score: Universal Publishing, London

Recording: *Match für Drei Spieler* Deutsche Grammophon

Additional Information: Mauricio Kagel is famous for his interest in developing the theatrical side of musical performance. Many of his pieces give specific theatrical instructions to the performers, such as to adopt certain facial expressions while playing, to make their stage entrances in a particular way, to physically interact with other performers and so on.²⁶

²⁶ <http://www.compositiontoday.com/composers/137.asp>

iii. Text and movement

Stephen Montague (b. 1943 New York, USA)

Chew Chow Chatterbox 1998

Four percussionists at dinner

This work develops and exploits the unnoticed musical elements and gestures common to dinner parties where musicians gather. Setting is a dinner table: three invited guests and the host. The theatrical gestures are a subtle blend of a lively and absurd dinner party and a more traditional percussion piece.

Features of this work include drumming on tables, chairs and different parts of the body. Performers play rice bowls and wine glasses with chopsticks, and use napkins (as well as clothing and table cloth) to make a rhythmical 'rubbing' effect. For dinner talk, performers select (mostly nonsense) words and phrases from a list provided which are used as 'conversation' material bouncing rhythmically back and forth across the table.

Instrumentation: four percussionists at dinnertime

Duration: 10-12'

Score: studio4 music

Recording: not available

Additional Information: commissioned in 1998 by Bromsgrove Concerts, Worchestershire, UK, for Ensemble Bash. Premiered in the Guestern Hall at the Avoncroft Museum of Buildings, Bromsgrove, England on the 18th November, 1998

Graeme Leak (b. 1960 Victoria, Australia)

Yo Yo Man 1991

Marimba, feet and voice

Yo Yo Man is inspired by a record Graeme Leak particularly liked listening to as a child, *Music and Musicians of the Angolan Border*. The rhythm is placed in the performer's feet: stepping with the heels then with the toes, and shuffling. The bass part is in the marimba, and the performer sings or whistles the melody. *Yo Yo Man* also includes improvised solo marimba section with continuing foot pattern.

Instrumentation: marimba, feet and voice/whistling

Duration: 5'

Score: available from composer²⁷

Recording: available from composer

Additional Information: first performed as a solo percussion work for Graeme Leak's first solo percussion show 'From Africa to the Kitchen Sink' (commissioned by Astra) in Melbourne in 1991

Vinko Globokar (b. 1934 Anderny, France)

Corporel (Of the Body) 1984/5

Body percussion

In this work the performer wears canvas pants, is bare-chested and barefoot; seated on the ground, facing the audience. They strike the "soft" parts of the body (cheeks, abdomen, thighs etc) with the flat of the hand, and the "bony" parts (skull, collarbone, breastbone, knee, shin etc) with the fingertip. Avoiding vowel sounds,

²⁷ Graeme Leak email: graemeleak@iinet.net.au

only breathing sounds are used (as well as kisses, clucking tongue, inhaling and exhaling, clapping etc). Renowned Texan percussionist Steve Schick comments that "this piece is shocking on a fundamental level, because the body of the human performer is so often a nonentity component of classical music".²⁸

Instrumentation: body percussion

Duration: 10'

Score: CF Peters (PO8673)

Recording: not available

Additional Information: premiere: 14 October 1984, Paris Art Center (composer as soloist)

²⁸ <http://www.bangonacan.org/pgnotes.html#globokar>

iv. Political text

The inclusion of political text in musical works puts a different slant on the works. It can allow composers and performers alike to take their music beyond the world of the arts and to comment on political and social situations in the world at certain points in time.

Jerome Kitzke (b. 1955 Wisconsin, USA)

The Earth Only Endures 2003

Multi-percussion and vocals

Jerome Kitzke, who lives in New York City, grew up along the southwestern shore of Lake Michigan in Milwaukee. Since his first artistic work in 1970, he has thought himself to be as much a storyteller as he is a composer.²⁹ *The Earth Only Endures* is an anti-war work for solo multi-percussionist with singing, dialogue and harmonica.

Kitzke wrote *The Earth Only Endures* in response to America's invasion of Iraq in 2003. Seeking to add words referential to the young women and men losing their lives, Kitzke added Walt Whitman's *Reconciliation* from the *Drum Taps* section of *Leaves of Grass*. The vocals "should be performed with great theatrical verve". Also body movement "replete with foot stomping and hopping", and ad lib "crisply rapid clicks, pops, whistles, grunts, laughs, groans, stick clicks".³⁰

²⁹ <http://www.peermusicclassical.com/composer/composerdetail.cfm?detail=kitzke>

³⁰ Composer's note from score

Instrumentation: multi-percussion: E Harmonica/Vocals, 4 chimes (b, e, f sharp, d), 3 splash cymbals, bass drum, 4 toms, bongos, large flexitone, frying pan cover pitched at G below middle C, Marimba

Duration: 22'

Score: Peer Music NY

Recording: not available (currently being recorded)³¹

Additional Information: commissioned by Tom Kolor and underwritten by the American Composers Forum with funds provided by the Jerome Foundation. Text by the Tews, Allen Ginsberg (1971), Walt Whitman, the Lakota

Jerome Kitzke (b. 1955 Wisconsin, USA)

The Character of American Sunlight 1996

Piano, percussion quartet, hands, feet and voice

The epigraph running through the scores of this work reads:

A ghost comes to catch a train to the place where it can see the character of American sunlight. That light, which "long ago gave up its claim on innocence", now searches, as it must, to illuminate the darkness of the American human nature. Recognizing this, the spirit is pleased and catches the train back home to everywhere.

The essence of these words comes from words spoken by historian Patricia Nelson Limerick, writer Henry James, and Drex Brooks' *Sweet Medecine*, a photographic essay of Indian massacre, battlefield, and treaty sights.

³¹ Reference correspondence with composer

In 1995, Ms. Limerick spoke of the light that "illuminated the events of the Indian/White wars", saying that "the sun came to know quite a few of the most unsettling 'secrets' of human nature. To try and forget those secrets diminishes the human spirit..."

There is a vocal ad-lib section in which players are instructed to use a historical text-poem-story of their choosing (American) or "the ever popular language of nonsense", "make this a dance, put whole body into it".³² They then add feet and vocal sounds: wolf-like howling, singing.

Instrumentation: piano, percussion (4 players, each with: flexatone, waterpot (different sizes), splash cymbal, triangle (different sizes), maracas, harmonica, hands, feet, voice

Duration: 12'

Score: Peer Music NY

Recording: *The Character of the American Sunlight* CD available from Koch International Classics (3-7456-2 H1)

Additional Information: premiered May 15 1996; Essential Music; Washington Square Churce; New York City, Lyric for song at end of Kitzke's work by Jack Kerouac from *On the Road* © 1955, 1957³³

³² Composer's note from score

³³http://www.peermusicclassical.com/catalog/catalog_detail.cfm?composer_ID=609&ensemble_type_id=&ensemble_detail_ID=&Theme_id=&title=&totalcount=21

Jerome Kitzke (b. 1955 Wisconsin, USA)

***The Paha Sapa Give-Back* 1993**

Piano, percussion quartet

The epigraph running through the score reads:

A ghost comes to catch a train to the place where it can see the character of American sunlight. The light, which long ago gave up its claim on innocence, now searches, as it must, to illuminate the darkness of the American human nature. Recognizing this, the spirit is pleased and catches the train back home to everywhere.

This work is an exhortation for all of us to pay attention to and act upon the sovereignty and sacred land claim issues of the world's indigenous peoples. Paha Sapa is Lakota for Black Hills. They call them "the heart of everything that is". Since the 1870s, the Lakota have been struggling on the battlefield and in the courtroom to protect and reclaim the Black Hills, which had been declared legally theirs by the 1868 Ft. Laramie Treaty.

Soon after the 1874 discovery of gold in the Black Hills came a series of illegal land deals that robbed the Lakota of their holy land.

In 1975 the US Court of Claims called the government's conduct toward the Lakota in all probability "the most ripe and rand case of dishonorable dealings" in US history. The government's response was to offer money as compensation, which the Lakota refused then and continue to refuse now³⁴. In spirit-opposition to the traditional Indian 'give-away', *The Paha Sapa Give-Back* suggests we do just that. Give the land back and attend the flower that blooms from the act.

³⁴ Composer's notes from score

Vocal sounds made by the performers range from spoken whispers to singing (“ah” at given pitches), speaking and shouting. The composer insists that “spoken parts must all be emotionally intense no matter what the volume” and that “singing should be raw and intense...let it wail”

Instrumentation: amplified piano, percussion (4 players, all with the same set-up)

1. concert bass drum
2. kick drum
3. two tom-toms
4. snare drum
5. sleighbells

Duration: 15’

Score: Peer Music, NY

Recording: *The Character of the American Sunlight* CD is available from Koch International Classics (3-7456-2 H1)

Additional Information: the work forms part of a quartet of works by Kitzke that deal with the Black Hills land issues. *The Paha Sapa Give-Back* was written for Essential music and is dedicated to all people still fighting for the rights to their sacred lands.

Frederic Rzewski (b.1938 Massachusetts, USA)

Coming Together and Attica 1971

Narrator and flexible ensemble

Rzewski’s piece, written for narrator and instruments, though not strictly a percussion work, has been performed as such. It makes use of improvisation and repetition, and has strong social and political connotations. The eight sentences

from a letter by 60s activist Sam Melville (a political prisoner killed in the 1971 Attica prison riots) are first narrated in an additive then in a deductive progression.

The title of the piece is a reference to a sentence of the letter and to the technique of musical improvisation. The text – a prison letter by Melville written shortly before his death during the prison uprising – is integrated with the music; the detached, minimalist compositional method of reciting key phrases and fragments from Melville's defiant but upbeat letter repeatedly, as through a tape loop, allows the listener to appreciate the sad irony of his death.³⁵

The beginning of Melville's text:

I think the combination of age and a greater coming together is responsible for the speed of the passing time. It's six months now, and I can tell you truthfully few periods in my life have passed so quickly. I am in excellent physical and emotional health. There are doubtless subtle surprises ahead, but I feel secure and ready...

Instrumentation: flexible instrumentation

Duration: 18'

Score: available from composer³⁶

Recording: eighth blackbird's *fred*³⁷

Additional Information: Sam Melville's original name was Samuel Grossman and he was convicted of the 1969 Manhattan bombings, which were politically inspired.

³⁵ <http://www.newmusicbox.org/article.nmbx?id=4428>

³⁶ E-mail address (c/o Esther Freifeld): esther.freifeld@systech.be
(<http://composers21.com/compdocs/rzewskif.htm>)

³⁷ <http://www.eighthblackbird.com/fred/index.html>

v. Text from literature

Czech nationalist composer Leos Janacek wrote that “when, during a conversation, we quote the words of someone else, we are halfway to a theatrical performance”.

Text and music have frequently gone hand in hand, as composers and authors alike strive to find different ways to communicate with their audiences.

Veronika Krausas (b. 1963 Sydney, Australia)

***Five Intermezzi for Snare Drum* 2002**

Snare drum and voice

This work comprises five solo pieces with simultaneous text performance (ie. percussionist speaks and plays) of poems by Wassily Kandinsky, e e cummings, Gwendolyn MacEwan, and Robert Lax. The middle movement uses nonsense sounds imitating drum noises and the percussionist performs an “air drum” solo.

Instrumentation: snare drum and voice

Duration: 10'

Score: available from composer³⁸

Recording: *Mnemosyne* -chamber works of Veronika Krausas recorded by Motion Ensemble (perMUTATION records) with texts by Andre Alexis³⁹

Additional Information: written for Brian Bartel

³⁸ Veronika Krausas email: krausas@yahoo.com

³⁹ <http://www.veronikakrausas.com/recordings/>

James Rolfe (b. 1961 Ontario, Canada)

The Connection 2001

Marimba and voice

In this work the marimbist speaks text by Daniil Kharms (English translation). James Rolfe's score contains performance notes: "The marimba part is deliberately unidiomatic at times, to match the convoluted logic of the text". The text can be performed in many different ways: affectionately, ironically, deadpan, childlike, for example, or combinations of the above.

The only requirements are that the marimbist read the text while playing (not using a second person to read), and that the audience understands it clearly. (The numbers, one to twenty, should not be read exactly on downbeats, to emphasize how they stand apart from the text proper.) Amplification may be useful, depending on the nature of the venue. There can be some degree of staging if desired (lighting, set design, etc.).⁴⁰

Instrumentation: solo marimba (five octave) and voice

Duration: 12'

Score: original held at Canadian Music Centre: Library Number MI 7110 R746con

Recording: Not available

Additional Information: premiered November 11, 2001 at The Knitting Factory, New York; Nancy Zeltsman, marimba

⁴⁰http://www.musiccentre.ca/apps/index.cfm?fuseaction=score.FA_dsp_details&bibliographyid=51729&dsp_page=1

Michael Askill (b. 1952 Sydney, Australia)

Spirals 2001

Percussion quartet

Much of the inspiration for spirals comes from 'The Power of Limits: Proportional Harmonies in Nature, Art and Architecture' by the Hungarian architect Gyorgy Doczi (Boulder, 1981). There is spoken text used in the second of three movements 'Inward spiral' is from 'Mr Palomar' by Italo Calvino, whose work Michael Askill "returns to often and finds constantly fascinating".

Instrumentation: vibraphone, crotales, marimba, tom toms, bongos, voice (and improvising voice)

Duration: 15'

Score: 2001 Celestial Harmonies (BMI)

Recording: not available

Additional Information: commissioned by synergy percussion

(www.synergypercussion.com) with funding from the Australia Council.

Premiered by the Amadinda Percussion Group at the 2003 Autumn Festival in Budapest. Music setting by Philip South

Adam Silverman (b. 1973 Georgia, USA)

Stars, Cars, Bars 1999

Marimba and voice

From a composer whose music often incorporates theatrical elements, *Stars, Cars, Bars* (with text based Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*) has been performed recently on tour throughout Australia, and in New York as the closing piece of the "Say What" Festival by Music Journeys, Inc.

Instrumentation: marimba and voice

Duration: 10'

Score: Adam B. Silverman Music Publications (BMI)

not available

Additional Information: composed for and premiered by Paul Fadoul. Australian premiere performed by John Dewhurst. Also performed by Samuel Z. Solomon, Daniel Pate, and others⁴¹

Hazel Smith

Serpent Ex Spearhead 1988

Voice and metronome

This work is a performance text for voice and metronome. The metronome sets a pulse and the voice performs the words in notated rhythms. These rhythms are partly dictated by the words themselves, and partly superimposed, but there is complete interdependence between the linguistic and musical elements. The piece consists of six cycles of fourteen bars. All the words are derived by sound or sense from the words of the title.

The piece involves a titanic struggle between opposites: between good and evil, between male and female, between the hidden and visible, the ancient and modern, dream and reality. The meaning is not constant or continuous, rather it keeps disrupting itself and changing direction, but the sound binds the meaning together.

⁴¹ <http://www.adamsilverman.com>

Instrumentation: voice and metronome

Duration: 3'

Score: Soma Publishing

Recording: *Poet without Language* Rufus Records, 1994⁴²

Additional Information: the term 'sound poet' has been used to define poets and musicians who creatively explore connections between spoken text and music. English/Australian experimental poet/performer/composer Hazel Smith is one such poet/composer

Frederic Rzewski (b.1938 Massachusetts, USA)

To The Earth 1985

Speaking percussionist and flower pots

The text in this work is a Homeric hymn, whose words are spoken more or less together with the music in rhythmic phrases. The words themselves celebrate the Earth as the mother of life – giving the piece a particularly ritualistic aspect.

American born Rzewski now lives in Belgium.

Instrumentation: knitting needles on four clay flower-pots, voice

Duration: 10'

Score: Studio4 music

Recording: *Drumming* Evelyn Glennie (1996 BMG Classics)

⁴² <http://www.australysis.com/hsmith.htm>

Rupert Kettle (1940-2005 Michigan, USA)

***Dining Room Music* 1983/4**

Four percussionists and tableware

This is based on John Cage's *Living Room Music*. As the composer explains, *Dining Room Music* uses Cage's rhythmic structures, but in reverse order....The talking movement here is a rebuttal to the Gertrude Stein text used by Cage and was written by a distant relative of Gertrude's, Phyllis Stein: "Happily ever after the world is flat Don't you fall off and go ker-splat."

Instrumentation: four percussionists and tableware: objects found on any dining room table, hammered dulcimer (or vibraphone)

Duration: 7'

Score: studio4 music

Recording: not available

Additional Information: dedication: to Maria Singer

vi. Onomatopoeic text (vocally simulated percussion effects)

Nicolas Martynciow (b. St Etienne, France)

Tchik 2003

Snare drum

Tchik is a rhythmical and swinging solo snare drum work incorporating vocal sounds. The spoken rhythms are to be delivered "in a normal tone of voice, or mumbling at periods, at other times articulating as clearly as possible".⁴³ The performer is instructed to play at different distances towards and away from the rim of the snare drum, as well as 'bossa nova' style with the stick across the rim.

Instrumentation: snare drum (with drum sticks, brushes and mallets), voice

Duration: 9'

Score: Billaudot

Recording: not available

Additional Information: The word 'tchik' is meant to sound like an open hi hat being closed

⁴³ Notes from the score

Vanessa Lann (b. 1968 New York, USA)

American Accents 1995

Multi-percussion duo

This work is a multi percussion duo with vocalisations using American vowel sounds. "Oo" is like the "U" in "Utrecht". "Ee" is like the "ee" in "weekend".⁴⁴ The vocal sounds (for example "bada, bada, bada doo da") are based on scat-singing. Standing with hands on hips, the performers begin on opposite sides of the set-up and gradually move in towards the centre as they change instruments. Most of the set-up is covered with a cloth (the composer suggests red, white and blue to tie in with the American theme). This is removed slowly throughout the performance as indicated in score.

Instrumentation: multi-percussion duet – 2 snare drums, 2 toms, kick drum, 3 triangles, 3 cymbals, 2 wood blocks, glockenspiel, vibraphone, finger clicking

Duration: 10'

Score: Donemus

Recording: not available

Vinko Globokar (b. 1934 Anderny, France)

Toucher (to touch v.) 1973

Multi-percussion solo

"Playing as if speaking, speaking as if playing, playing and speaking, playing and singing..."⁴⁵ - these are the guiding principles behind Globokar's work and he

⁴⁴ Notes from the score

⁴⁵ <http://pages.interlog.com/~nmc/2001-2002.pdf>.

encourages performers to always keep speech very much in mind. In *Toucher*, Globokar chose fragments from Bertold Brecht's "Galileo", translated into French. The percussionist then chooses seven instruments or objects and produces sounds on them which are analogues to the vowels; for the consonants they devise sounds which are produced exclusively with the hands.

During the course of the piece he/she switches from one developmental stage to another. The performer speaks while producing sounds on the instruments and then continues with the sounds alone, without words: the listener can then understand what the fingers are saying. The individual scenes are separated by rhythmic interludes, like the scenes of a play.

Instrumentation: multi-percussion: free choice of 7 instruments or objects (text Bertolt Brecht- in French)

Duration: 8'30"

Score: C.F. Peters (PO8286)

Recording: *Accord* 1966 (Koch Schwann Aulos)

Additional Information: along with *Corporel*, *Toucher* is from a larger ensemble work called "Laboratory". dedication: to Jean-Pierre Drouet; premiere: 23 November 1973, Neheim Hⁿsten, Germany, J. P. Drouet, soloist

vii. Text influenced by non-western cultures

Improvements in travel and communication have made it increasingly easier for Western composers to seek influence from non-Western musical cultures. The following works have drawn on the language, drumming and vocal melodies from Africa, the Caribbean, the Balkans, India and Indonesia.

Nebojsa Jovan Zivkovic (b.1962 Serbia)

To the Gods of Rhythm 1994

Djembe and voice

If there is a rhythm section in Heaven, the realm of the Gods, then surely the people of Africa and the Balkans have the say there. "To the Gods of Rhythm" is a mixture of the music tradition of those two cultures. The sound of rhythm and chant from the Balkans, whose melody is based on a Serbian Orthodox Church song, are the essence of this piece. The extreme energy comes from probably the most fascinating African drum, djembe.⁴⁶

The piece can be performed on any hand drum; the aim is to use the many different sounds of the drum – bass sound

- high pitched sound
- speaking voice: high, medium, low

⁴⁶ Notes from the score

- hit with fingers near edge, other hand is lying on drum head
- silent strokes with all stretched fingers while palm are lying (slightly damping) on the drum head
- open bass
- closed bass and high pitch
- slap
- ghost strokes

The performer makes loud shouting and screaming sounds, glissing up and down. In one section, seven indicated rhythms should be first spoken only and then spoken and played together with the drum, leaving 3-4 seconds between each rhythm. The performer also sings a notated melody with the "C" pitch being the bass tone of the drum, over an improvised drum solo.

Instrumentation: drum (djembe) and voice

Duration: 5'

Score: Musica Europea

Recording: *Uneven Souls*

Additional Information: premiered: 23.11.1994 Kornwestheim, Germany

Russell Hartenberger (b.1944)

Rhagavan

Drum kit solo with optional text

Ramnad V. Raghavan is a master of the mrdangam, the principal percussion instrument in the Carnatic music tradition of South India. *Raghavan* is based on mrdangam music taught to Russel Hartenberger at Wesleyan University in

Middletown, Connecticut. The solo is for snare drum and two tom toms. The tom toms should be tuned a perfect fourth apart. Accompanying the solo part is an ostinato which begins 8 bars before the solo part begins, and continues throughout the piece. The ostinato can be played by the solo performer on kick drum and hi hat. It can also be played by a second person on either kick drum and hi hat or bass drum and cymbals together. The ostinato can also be played by two other people on bass drum and cymbals.⁴⁷

The text comes from the adi-tala associated with each different section of the work (South Indian vocal sounds imitating those of the mrdangam), and may be arranged and performed at the percussionists discretion.

Instrumentation: high hat, kick drum, snare drum, hi and low toms, voice

Duration: 10-12'

Score: Honeyrock (USA)

Recording: not available

Roberto Sierra (b. 1953 Puerto Rico)

***Bongo-0* 1982**

Bongo solo

Percussion instruments have been used by many contemporary composers almost exclusively as a medium to convey certain coloristic effects. When listening to Afro-Caribbean folk music, one becomes aware that in this genre, rhythm is the most important factor. The articulations and modes of their functions are mainly to help in the shaping of the rhythmic figures.

⁴⁷ Notes from the score

Bongo-0 follows the same line of Afro-Caribbean music, in the sense that rhythm is the foremost parameter. The bongos are used in the traditional manner, with the exception of several unorthodox striking techniques, such as scratching heads with fingernails.

As in Caribbean folk music, the articulations and modes of attack form an integral part of the rhythmic patterns. Rhythm and other parameters are treated in such a way that the form of the piece is in continuous transformation. During this process of change, the voice of the percussionist is utilized as a quasi-percussive element.

Instrumentation: bongos and voice

Duration: 5'

Score: Subito

Recording: *Drumming* Evelyn Glennie (1996 BMG)

Akira Nishimura (b. 1953 Osaka, Japan)

Kecak 1979

Percussion sextet

This is an ensemble work based on Indonesian rhythmic patterns and dance drama with vocal sounds. This piece is based on four types of rhythm patterns extracted by analyzing the rhythm of Kecak: a Balinese dance usually performed at night, surrounding a bonfire. The westerners called this dance The Monkey Dance, for the movements are similar to that of a monkey.

In the dance bare-chested men, sitting down on the ground surrounding the bonfire, led by a priest in the middle.

The only music to accompany them is the beats of their palms hitting their chests, their thighs, or other parts of their bodies, or their claps, rhythmically accompanied by shouting and chanting.⁴⁸ The four rhythmic patterns used in *Kecak* make up a hocket of rhythm that flows over throughout the piece like a belt of rhythmic movement. The four in charge of the rhythmic patterns perform with the utterance of "tjak, tjak, tjak...", and from behind, the timpani and the tubular bells develop a dramatic dialogue in the mode similar to one of Indian Raga.

Instrumentation: bongos, congas, maracas, claves, tubular bells, tam-tams, sleigh bells, timpani (6), suspended cymbals, sizzle cymbal

Duration: 11'

Score: Ongaku

Recording: *Ketiak* – Works of Akira Nishimura/Percussion Group 72 1995

Additional Information: premiere: 1979, Tokyo, Japan

⁴⁸ http://www.indo.com/culture/dance_music.html

viii. Communicative text

Bill Cahn (b.1946 Philadelphia, USA)

***Recital Piece* 1975/6**

Xylophone solo

This piece is for solo xylophone with pre-recorded voice-over communicating with the audience. Originally written for radio, the *Recital Piece* provided a way for (Canadian percussion ensemble) Nexus member Bill Cahn to give a narrative/explanation for the new music Nexus was creating, and to bring performance art to recorded medium. In this work, the performer must read a text and record text on tape in their own voice. In performance, the xylophonist accompanies the pre-recorded tape.

Instrumentation: xylophone with tape

Duration: 13'

Score: HoneyRock

Recording: *The Solo Percussionist* (Music for Percussion by William L. Cahn) Nexus Records 10339

Additional Information: dedication: to Robin Engleman; premiere: 1977, Walter Hall, Toronto, Canada, Robin Engelman, soloist

ix. Imaginary instruments or set-ups

Michael Van Der Aa (b.1970, Netherlands)

Wake 1997

Multi-percussion duo

Wake is a Commedia dell'arte for a percussionist and a percussionist who mimes. Michael Van der Aa examined to what degree visual and audible parts could interfere in a virtual canon. Both percussionists 'play' the same material after each other.

The instrumentation of the two players is almost identical; their function within the piece however differs greatly. One of the percussionists mimes the entire piece, he only makes the striking movements, and the instruments aren't touched. The other player does touch the instruments. The material is exposed audible and visually. The connection of the two players becomes clear by combining the inner hearing (translating the pretend movement to a sound) and the acoustic hearing. It's not important that the player mimes but what he mimes, an imitation of the material of the other player. Halfway through the piece these remembrances develop into an autonomous form and the mime player starts to influence the other player more and more.⁴⁹

Instrumentation: 2 percussionists with identical set-ups: vibraphone, 5 chinese tom toms, chimes, whip, log drums, metal

⁴⁹ <http://www.doublea.net>

Duration: 8'

Score: Boosey & Hawkes

Recording: not available

Additional Information: first performance: 12 December 1997, Percussion Group The Hague at the Ysbreker in Amsterdam. Commissioned by: Fonds voor de Scheppende Toonkunst. Written for Arnold Marinissen and Ron Colbers. There is also a version for one player called *Solo for percussion*, published by Donemus

Bill Cahn (b.1946 Philadelphia, USA)

Perplexis 1970

Multi-percussion solo

This work communicates musical ideas without sound (also orchestral version).
There is a short tape segment at the end

Instrumentation: tape recorder, xylophone, B chime, 1 timpani, vibraphone, tam tam, suspended cymbal, triangle, tenor drum and two imaginary groups of instruments

Duration: 10'

Score: Honeyrock (USA)

Recording: from the composer⁵⁰

Additional Information: premiere: 1970; Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY, Bob Becker, soloist

⁵⁰ Bill Cahn email: billcahn@aol.com

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