

little toys

timothy arliss obrien

This collection of soundscapes was written for a score call by the Cascadia chapter of the National Association of Composers, USA. The chapter had just hosted a percussion workshop the previous year and wanted to show the wide range of percussive techniques. This piece was premiered in the spring of 2015 by Florian Conzetti, and Ian Kerr for the concert Cascadia Hits on the World.

I was reading through the collected works and diaries of Virginia Woolf at the time and was struggling to get my own writing published. Virginia's life has been found an inspiration to me. Her struggle with urban dwelling and making it in the world as a writer struck a nerve in my ethos. Through these three short movements, I explore mood and soundscape, giving the percussionist a technical challenge along with an emotion one. The piece haunts the audience and perplexes them through a use of unconventional percussive techniques.

I hope my music can come alive for you under the mallets and with your help we can entrance and haunt an audience together. The same way Virginia's writing still haunts our society today.

Tim.

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i. water

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$\text{♩} = 80$
soft mallets

Xylophone *mp*

Marimba *mp*
soft mallets

4 *rit.* $\text{♩} = 40$ Freely *f* *Fine* $\text{♩} = 75$ *p*

Xylo. *mf*

Mar. *p* *f* *p*

8 *accel.* *mf*

Xylo. *mf*

Mar. *mf*

11 *rit.* *f* 3

Xylo. *f*

Mar. *f*

13

Xylo. *p* *f*

Mar. *mp* *mf*

3

15 $\bullet = 40$ $\bullet = 80$

Xylo. *mf* *f* *mp*

Mar. *f* *mp*

Freely

18

Xylo. *f* *mf* *p* *rit.*

Mar. *f* *mp* 3 3 3 3

21 $\bullet = 60$ *D.C. al Fine*

Xylo. *mf* *f*

Mar. *f*

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ii. happenings

perc 1: vibraphone, suspended cymbal, woodblocks

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perc 2: marimba, glockenspiel, bongos

$\bullet = 80$

percussion 1

percussion 2

perc. 1

perc. 2

perc. 1

perc. 2

The musical score is written for two percussionists, Percussion 1 and Percussion 2, in 4/4 time. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 80. Percussion 1's part includes wood blocks (triplets), suspended cymbal (sticks), and glockenspiel (mf, f). Percussion 2's part includes marimba (bowed, ff), glockenspiel (mf), and vibraphone (soft mallets, mf; hard mallets, f). The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-5) features wood blocks and glockenspiel in Perc 1, and marimba in Perc 2. The second system (measures 6-11) features vibraphone and glockenspiel in Perc 1, and marimba and glockenspiel in Perc 2. The third system (measures 12-15) features bongos and hands in Perc 1, and marimba in Perc 2. Dynamics range from mf to ff. The key signature changes from one flat to two flats between measures 11 and 12.

16

perc. 1

perc. 2

p

p

mp

19

perc. 1

perc. 2

sticks *mf*

mf

mf

mp

bowed *f*

mp

bowed *f*

25

perc. 1

perc. 2

motor fast *mp*

mf

hard mallets *f*

28

perc. 1

perc. 2

sticks *mf*

hard mallets *mp*

mf

mp

bowed

34

perc. 1

perc. 2

mf

f

motor fast

bowed

f

chorale mallets

mf

37

perc. 1

perc. 2

sticks

mf

motor fast

f

hard mallets

f

f

bowed

f

percussion duet

iii. exit

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$\text{♩} = 80$

Glockenspiel *mf* *f* *mf*

Vibraphone *mp* *f* *f*

8
Glock. *f*

Vib. *mf*

13
Glock. *mf*

Vib. *mp*

18
Glock. *ff* *rit.* *f*

Vib. *f* *3* *3* *f*

24 *a tempo* *rit.* to 50 bpm

Glock. *mp* *f*

Vib. *mp* *mf* *f*