

CORY BRACKEN

WE DON'T LISTEN TO THE WORLD BECAUSE OUR GOD CONTROLS THE UNIVERSE

FOR VARIABLE AMPLIFIED ENSEMBLE OF PERCUSSION AND LOW STRINGS

(2017)

full score/performance score

09.23.17

GENERAL NOTES

Instrumentation

This piece is scored for a variable instrumentation of percussion, cello, and double bass. The ratio of players between percussion and strings should remain relatively equal. Any combination of cellos and double basses is acceptable. It can also be performed as a duo, utilizing either string instrument.

Ensemble performance

If there is more than one player to a part, the ensemble should delegate cues to specific players, or elect a leading player who will be responsible for each cue (“cue” in this context meaning the introduction of the next event). When a cue is engaged, the other players gradually and individually move forward. Vertical dashed lines indicate a relative proportion between events in either part.



shorter



longer



intermediate



shortest

Duration

Fermatas above an event or series of events are outlines of a general proportion: the ensemble can determine the overall duration of the piece, which will determine the relative durations of each fermata.

INVENTORY & PERFORMANCE NOTES

Percussion



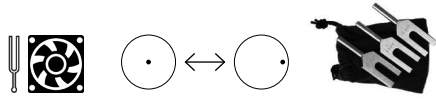
Fans and fan speed

AC-powered axial cooling fans with variable speed control are required for each percussionist. Size can vary, ranging from 80mm to 120mm. The AC Infinity® axial fan series is suggested, which offers a speed control dial.



Fan volume

A piezo disc contact microphone is placed beneath the fan near its center to amplify the motor. Each player requires a line mixer to control the contact mic volume.



Fan surface and tuning forks

The protective shield must be removed to allow for direct contact with the tuning fork and center surface of the fan. “Angel” tuning forks are preferred that produce a very high piercing pitch (over 1000 Hz); however, standard tuning forks can be used as well. Circles with black dots indicate the placement position of the tuning fork.



Transducer

A guitar pickup transducer must be placed beside the fan to capture its electromagnetic frequencies. Volume is also controlled via the player’s line mixer. The HDE Guitar Pickup® is recommended.



Energy chimes (or glockenspiels) and bullet vibrators

The Woodstock Chimes® “Zenergy Chime Quintet” model is preferred. If this is not available, glockenspiel(s) can be used. A hard plastic lipstick-sized capsule “bullet” vibrator, such as the Babeland® “Buzz Vibe” or Jimmyjane® “Iconic Bullet”, is required.



Wand vibrators and metal beads

Any wand body massager or “Hitachi”-style sex toy vibrator with vibration control is required (“mini” vibrators are usable, provided the vibration is powerful enough). The vibrator ideally should be capable of matching the frequency of the fans – if this is not possible, tune to a perfect interval (4th or 5th). Metal beads vary in size and weight; an approximately 4mm-8mm bead with a heavier weight is preferred. Players are encouraged to experiment with different combinations.



Shoe brushes and nail files

Bristles vary in density from soft to hard; any combination can be used at the discretion of players. Metal or emery board nail files can be used.



Bird callers

The Audubon Bird Call® is recommended.

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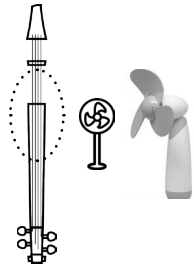
Strings

Scordatura

Cello tuning:



Bass tuning:



Electric hand fan

A hand-held electric fan with foam blades is required. The drone at sections G through K is achieved by placing the fan at the center of the strings at a distance that allows for maximum stimulation, resulting in a sustained oscillation. It is imperative to keep the fan as steady as possible to maintain the drone, though wavering in the string will inevitably occur and can be allowed. The fingerboard diagram indicates the region where the fan can be placed or moved.

AMPLIFICATION



Percussion

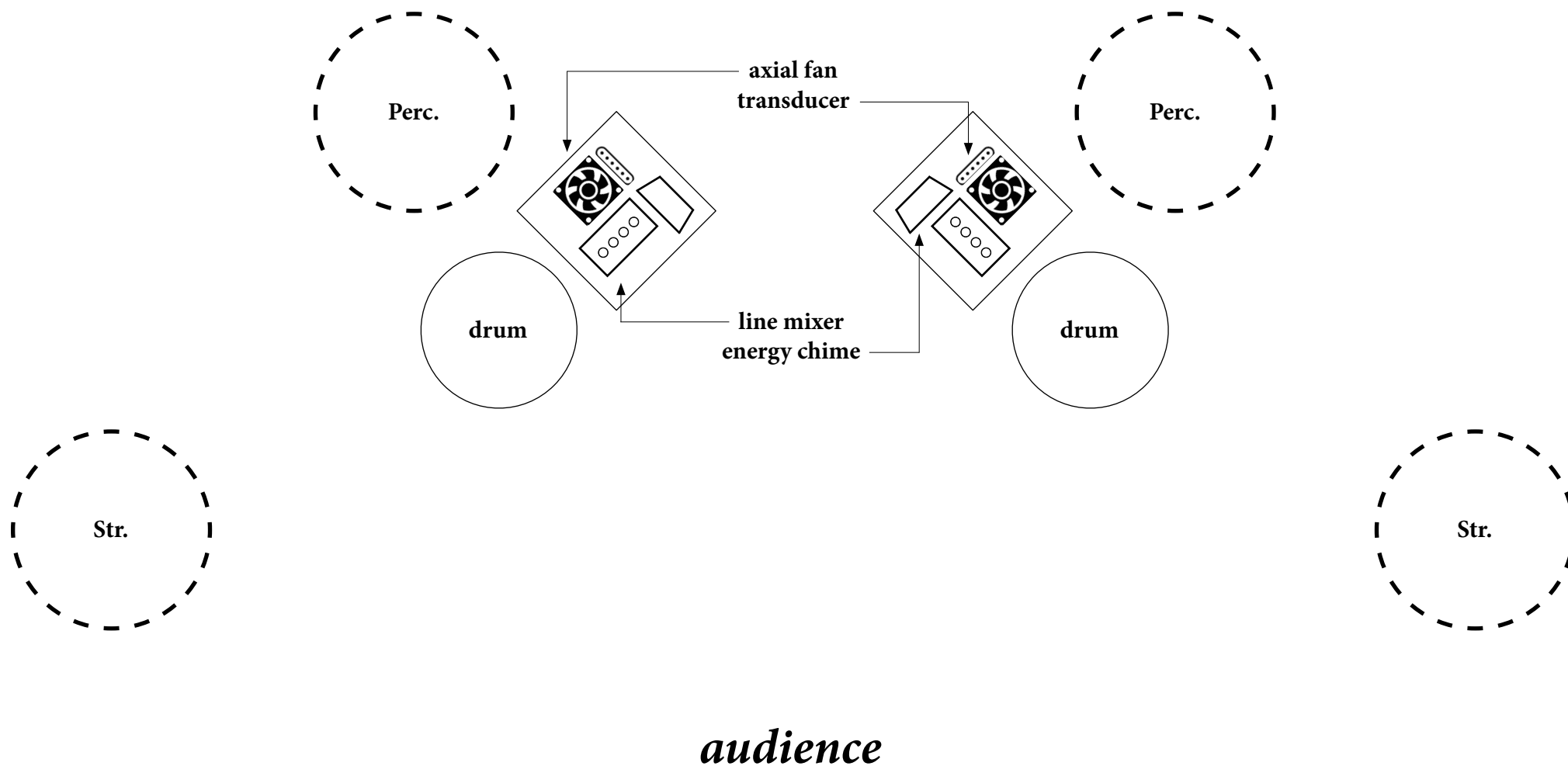
Fans are amplified with piezo disc contact microphones (see inventory section); drums are amplified with clip-on contact microphones on the rim. The drum contact microphone can also be controlled with the player's line mixer. A graphic EQ module is strongly recommended for controlling feedback issues with the contact mics.

Strings

The use of a bridge pickup, contact microphone(s), or any combination of the two is required (as opposed to any kind of externalized microphone) for the purpose of amplifying nuanced sounds from the bridge, strings, and fingerboard. A volume pedal can be utilized to further control the amplitude in performance.

This piece should be performed using the maximum allowable amplification.

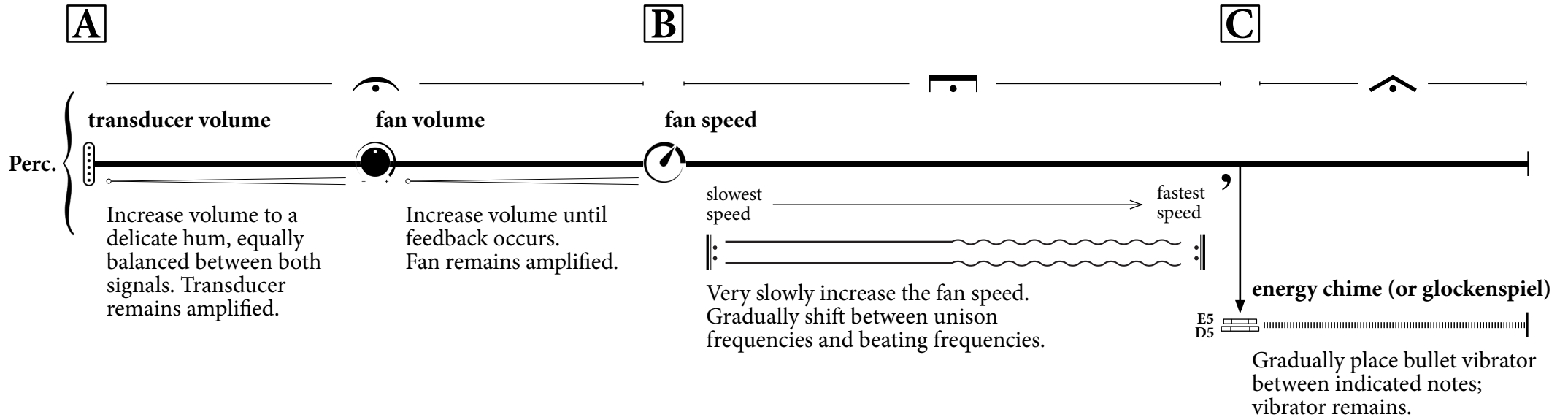
SETUP



This is an example of a quartet arrangement. Ensembles should be situated in stereo formation, with channels panned left and right accordingly. Players can also be distributed around the audience equidistant from each other; in this arrangement, spatialized amplification is strongly encouraged.

You bend over the hologram like God over his creature: only God has this power of passing through walls, through people, and finding Himself immaterially in the beyond.

– Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*



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D **E**

Perc.

slightly decrease fan volume to balance with strings

fan surface
 light pressure
rhythmically irregular, like a disjointed morse code

freely move between indicated areas

Str.

I
 II

Left hand applies fan to indicated area.
 Right hand applies harmonic pressure at 2nd harmonic (mid-point of string).

Slow to medium-speed rhythmic fluctuations of fan blades on strings, ad lib.

slow gliss. to open strings with right hand

See performance notes for scordatura tuning!

F

G

Perc.

restore full volume

wand vibrator

Tune wand vibrator to fan drone frequency. Place perpendicular to the drum head, and slowly rotate to a horizontal position for maximum vibration.

Str.

Steadily increase speed of fan fluctuations while gliding toward the center of the strings.

Hold fan at center of string; maintain steady drone, while allowing for pulsations in the strings.

The diagram shows a musical score for Percussion (Perc.) and Strings (Str.). At the top, there are two boxed letters 'F' and 'G' with horizontal lines below them. A triangle symbol is positioned under the line between 'F' and 'G', and a semi-circle symbol is on the line after 'G'. The Percussion staff contains a series of rhythmic marks, including a fan icon and a circle with a double-headed arrow. The Strings staff shows a violin and a double bass with fingerings 'I' and 'II' and a '0' above the notes. A technical diagram shows a fan being moved towards a string. A 'wand vibrator' is shown with an arrow pointing to the fan's position. A text box provides instructions for tuning the wand vibrator. The score includes the instruction 'restore full volume' and two detailed instructions for the string player's technique.

H

I

Perc.

Three horizontal lines representing percussion staves. The top line has a snare drum icon, the middle line has a tom icon, and the bottom line has a cymbal icon. The middle line is filled with a dense dotted pattern.

metal beads

A diagram showing a small oval labeled 'metal beads' on a horizontal line. Below the line is a dotted pattern with the word 'sim.' underneath it.

Place and remove metal beads on drum head, varying length of cresc. phrases ad lib.

Str.

Four horizontal lines representing string staves. To the left is a violin icon. The staves are labeled I, II, III, and IV. Above the staves are fingerings: '0' for the first three lines and 'I', 'II', 'III', 'IV' for the fourth. The bottom line has markings: a square, a 'v' with an accent, and 'sim.'. Below the staves is the text 'arco (ord.)'.

ff long, steady bow strokes; accent every change of bow direction

ord. ↔ s.p.
freely move between indicated areas

J **K**

Perc. {

Remove vibrator

gradually transition

beads remain on drum head

unison! ♩ = 120

Str. {

Glide fan towards bridge, slowing the fluctuations and fading out.

gradually transition

Rhythmically irregular circular bow strokes.

Rhythmically periodic circular bow strokes: horizontal motion that occurs with each semicircular arc should create a rhythmic articulation.

L ^ **M** ◡

Perc.

Turn down transducer

Turn down fan volume (fan speed remains)

Rotate wand back to a perpendicular position on drum

gradually transition

shoe brush

p

Rhythmically periodic circular motion on drum head: each semicircle should create a rhythmic articulation.

mp

gradually transition

half hair, half wood

Apply harmonic pressure at 2nd harmonic (mid-point of string).

gliss. to bridge

Str.

0

0

III

IV

arco

mp

p

The diagram shows a musical score for Percussion (Perc.) and Strings (Str.). The Percussion part is divided into sections L and M. Section L includes instructions to 'Turn down transducer' and 'Rotate wand back to a perpendicular position on drum'. Section M includes 'Turn down fan volume (fan speed remains)' and 'shoe brush' with a rhythmic notation of eighth notes at a tempo of 80. The Strings part starts with 'arco' and 'mp', followed by a 'gradually transition' to 'half hair, half wood'. A note is marked with 'Apply harmonic pressure at 2nd harmonic (mid-point of string)'. The piece concludes with 'gliss. to bridge' and a final 'p' dynamic marking.

N

O

Perc.

brush & file quickly
fade after chime

nail file

p

unison with brush: gently
glide along rim of drum

energy chime (or glockenspiel)

strike with tuning fork *f*

Str.

↑ ≈ 30, rubato

draw with wood of bow
L.H. harmonic pressure, R.H. heavy bow pressure

gliss.

IV III II I

wood of bow *gradually transition* arco


Gliss. full length of indicated string in the direction of the arrow, from bridge to nut and vice versa


P

Q



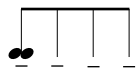
energy chime (or glockenspiel)

Perc. {  **ppp**

bird caller 

imitate harmonics of strings, rubato

$\text{♩} = 120$

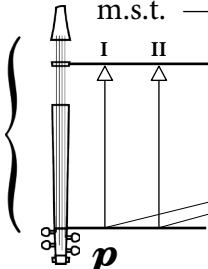


arco, light bow pressure

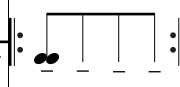
m.s.t.

s.p.

at tip of bow

Str. {  **p**

very slow gliss.



ppp

Freely alternate between I & II strings near the bridge.
Extract a combination of harmonics and white noise,
incorporating slight glissandi ad lib.

R

S



Perc.

D5

≈ 2-4''

rit.

morendo

Str.

molto rit. TACET

ppp

END
 September 22, 2017
 Ridgewood, NY