

Collidoscape

Francis Heery

for

Ensemble

Overview

This piece has two main goals. The first is to highlight the integral role of ornamentation in Traditional music and to use ornaments as the primary material for the work. The second goal is to use the ensemble as a kind of live granulation processor by having the performers play only short fragments of a traditional tune, separated by gaps of various lengths and manipulated according to the various techniques and instructions indicated in the score.

The piece is written for the whole ensemble. The ensemble is free to choose any piece of music that they see fit as the raw material for the piece, as long as ornamentation is a key aspect. One tune should be picked for the whole ensemble to play, and not a different tune for each player! Unless specified, some form of ornamentation should feature in each fragment played. As such the portions of the actual tune primarily serve allow the ornaments to come to the fore in the piece. No matter how adept the players might be at playing from memory (and perhaps because of this) it might be useful for them to have a notated version of the tune at hand. This may make it easier to scan fragments from unpredictable points in the tune. Where longer fragments are called for (parts 4 and 6), ornamentation need not be exaggerated and a sense of the original tune should emerge.

In the score, details are given as to what degree of 'pitchedness' present in the playing of the material. The three degrees are:

Pitched: Play in the 'standard' way.

Quasi-pitched: The pitch is distorted somewhat. For example, in string instruments, exaggerated bow pressures, bow position (eg. *molto sul pont./molto sul tasto*) different levels of finger pressure should be used to create diverse timbral modulation of the fingered pitches. In winds, various multiphonic and flutter tongue techniques could be used etc.

Un-pitched: No clear sense of pitch is given and instead a 'white noise' or 'radio static' type effect is created. For this effect, the strings could play *Con Legno*, or with the left hand damping parts of the fingerboard. In winds a variety of air effects could be used and Percussion might be bowed. The ornaments should still be articulated as clearly as possible so that a muffled 'outline' of their characteristics remains.

The durations for each section are approximate and need not necessarily be adhered to exactly.

The fermata lengths are as follows:

▭: 'Long' pause

⤿: 'Medium' pause

^: 'Short' pause

♯: 'Very Short' pause

(These pause lengths function to create different degrees of textural density when used by the ensemble as a whole. With this in mind, the lengths of the pauses may differ depending on the size of the ensemble. For example if the ensemble is comprised of 100 players the long pauses could be 30 seconds or more for each player, which would still allow for an overall sparse texture to come about. But if only three players are involved pauses of 30 seconds would be too long to create a sense of texture so shorter pause lengths would have to be employed.)

Pitch Deviation: This indicates the range of register in which the fragments of the tune can be played. The player can choose to transpose the fragments of the tune anywhere between the highest and lowest register of their instrument. When no pitch deviation is called for the tune is played in its standard key (still subject to the indicated timbral inflections etc.). When playing in the standard key the ensemble should include any harmonies that they would play if they were playing the tune 'normally'.

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