

Samuel J Maughan

Transcendence

for three untrained percussionists

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Performing forces and materials:

Three untrained percussionists, each equipped with a pair of smooth beach pebbles and a stopwatch.

Notation

The piece is notated in proportional space-time. Most systems are 17 seconds in length, but some systems are made shorter for layout purposes (they still retain the same proportionality). Stopwatch markings indicate major performance events, while dotted gridlines represent 1 second intervals. The word 'tacet' is used to denote silence.

Performance

As each individual player has their own stopwatch, they must be started simultaneously. However slight (200ms) differences in timing will not affect the overall performance significantly enough to be a concern.

Playing Techniques:



Rub the pair of pebbles together in circular motion.

For this technique, the height of a **solid line** represents the **intensity** of the sound. Intensity level can be varied by means of the speed of rotation and pressure applied. For example:

Crescendo from silence:



Sustained at high intensity:



Diminuendo to silence:



Additionally, the absence of a line indicates silence.



Rub the pair of pebbles together in a forward-backward motion.

Similar to above, for this technique the height of a **striped line** represents the **intensity** of the sound. Intensity level can be varied by means of the speed of the forward-backward action and pressure applied. For example:

Crescendo from silence:



Sustained at high intensity:



Diminuendo to silence:



It should be noted that although the notation may imply some degree of periodicity, the performer is allowed an element of freedom in this respect.

As before, the absence of a line indicates silence.



Repeatedly hit one pebble against the other.

For this technique, multiple **solid circles or dots** represent the **texture** and **intensity** of the sound:

- The density of dots represents the thickness of texture, or number of impacts occurring within an (ambiguous) time period.
- The opacity of the dots represents the intensity of the sound.

For example:

Thickening texture and intensity:



Low density texture and intensity:



Note that the individual impacts need not be precise in terms of timing: there is an element of freedom for the performer in this respect, so long as the overall texture and intensity is conveyed.



Repeatedly scrape one pebble against the other in a forward motion.

Similar to above, for this technique multiple **oval shaped lines** represent the **texture** and **intensity** of the sound:

- The density of lines represents the thickness of texture, or number of scrapes occurring within an (ambiguous) time period.
- The opacity of the lines represents the intensity of the sound.

For example:

Thickening texture and intensity:



Low density texture and intensity:



As before, the individual scrapes need not be precise in terms of timing.

1

0:00

2x

start stopwatch, pickup pebbles

0:10

2

0:00

2x

start stopwatch, pickup pebbles

0:10

3

0:00

2x

start stopwatch, pickup pebbles

0:10

1

0:20

0:25

0:32

2

0:20

0:32

3

0:20

1

0:42

2

0:39

0:49

3

0:39

0:46







