

Echolocate

for toy piano and harmonizing delay

Atau Tanaka

2024

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Duration: 6 minutes

Commission by Tricia Dawn Williams as part of the ToyPiano+ Project
Supported by Arts Council Malta
First performance on Friday 3 May, 2024 at Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta, MALTA

Score preparation and software programming by Francesco Di Maggio
Transcription assistance by Lara Serafin
Harmonizer by Manuel Poletti

Program notes

We can shout across a valley to the mountains to hear our own voice respond. We can clap our hands in a tunnel and hear the singing echoes dance around us. And when we walk on snow, the ground no longer gives us the reflections that remind us how tall we are. Sonic echoes are like acoustic mirrors. This piece mirrors the soloist on the toy piano in playful counterpoint. The electronic part picks up the live sound of the piano to produce echoes in musical time. By being electronic, it also contradicts the natural decay of acoustics, providing only specific repetitions. The quadraphonic transposing delay allows a four-voice counterpoint between soloists and their own reflection, and develops from simple call and response to infernal time machine.

Technical information

The electronic part consists of live processing. A Max patch is provided.

The sound of the live toy piano will be picked up by a microphone, to be connected to Input 1 of the audio interface of the computer. The audio output should be connected to the concert sound system. Please balance the levels of the live piano and electronic part so that they are equal in volume. There is an auxiliary output providing a metronome click track. This should be routed to the pianist's in-ear monitors.

The operator should press Play in the software at the same moment as the pianist plays the first note. In rehearsal, the electronic part can be paused and restarted at any measure. Note that measure numbers do not account for repeats. Please play the repeats when starting at any given measure number.

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1

♩=132

delay: 4 1/8 echoes for each note, hard panned left then right

Electronics

Toy Piano

mf

5

9

repeated echoes increasingly fade in

mp (2nd time)

13

f

17

21

mp

25

mf

29 feedback enters: 1/16 notes

mf

3 = 61

33

mf

37

f (2nd time)

41

p
f

45

p
f

4 = 85

3

5 = 93

49

mf

53

f

59 1/4 note delay

65

71

6 = 120

77

mp

86 16th note echoes with some decay

f *sim.*

90

f

94

f

98

f

102

106

110

114

ff

118 additional perfect 5th above 4th echo

Crossed hands

ff

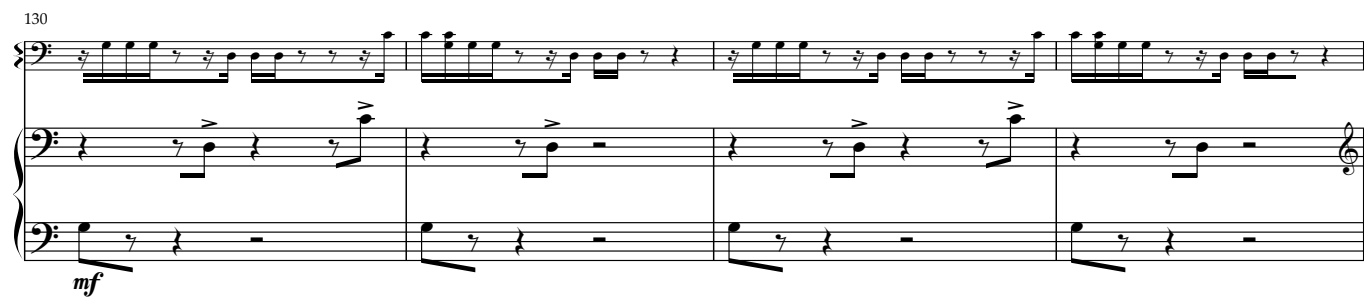
122



126



130



134



138



142

*ff*