

IEAOV (8)

*Instrumente und ElektroAkustisch Ortsbezogene Verdichtung
(»8 Vitrinen, Pigmentstaub«)*

Instrumental and Electroacoustic Site-specific Condensation
(“8 Vitrines, Pigment Dust”)

Percussion

(1992-)2000 Peter Ablinger

Instrumental and Electroacoustic Site-specific Condensation
(»8 Vitrinen, Pigment Dust«)
Percussion, (1992)-2000

Instrumentation: 7 Skin Percussion, 7 Metal Percussion

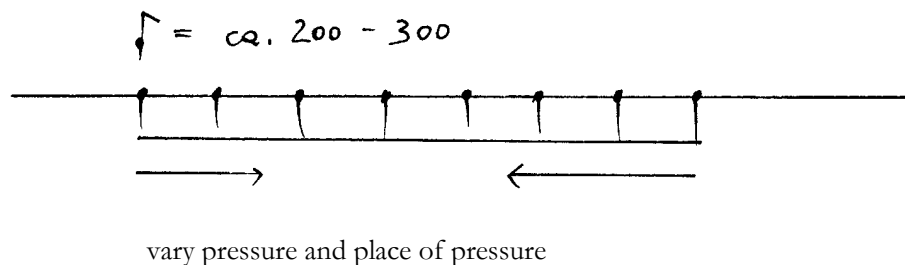
7 skin percussion, graded from low to high (Skins 1 – 7); only instruments of indefinite pitch (no timpani, congas...), and with the ability to alter their pitch by application of pressure with the free hand onto the skin, e.g. bass drum, tom-toms, possibly bongos, hand drum, ...

7 metal percussion, graded from low to high (Metals 1 – 7); only instruments with complex resonance spectra (though without a noise spectrum such as cymbals or tam-tams), e.g. some tubular bells (if the fundamental pitch is not too definite), car suspension coil, brass plates (of indefinite pitch), triangles, ...

The Introduction in 8 Sections

1. Skins 1 (deepest), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.
2. Skins 2 – 7 and Metal 1.
3. Skins 3 – 7 and Metals 1, 2.
4. Skins 4 – 7 and Metals 1 – 3.
5. Skins 5 – 7 and Metals 1 – 4.
6. Skins 6, 7 and Metals 1 – 5.
7. Skin 7 and Metals 1 – 6.
8. Metals 1 – 7.

Each instrument is struck, in the given order, between 6 – 10 times (not too hard), whilst the free hand produces the pitch (skins) and/or timbral (metals) glissandi, for instance:



Different drumsticks may be used for each instrument.

The Principal Section

8 Condensations will be electronically extracted from the 8 introductory sections to form, one after the other and without interruption, the main body of the piece. The duration of each section is at the discretion of the interpreter, but should last between 2 – 6 minutes. Preferably, no clock should be used to judge the timing, which should justify itself intuitively. Do not attempt intentionally to differentiate between the lengths of individual sections, but aim rather for each idea to be of similar length (even if the result is certain to deviate from this ideal).

The Live Part of the Performer

is produced entirely from a kind of involuntary playing technique, a soft trembling, which results when one allows a hard stick (possibly metal-headed) to lie less than 1 millimetre above the instrument and involuntarily tremble/tap against it: a sound like the vibration of the glass in a cabinet as a heavy vehicle drives past. One must not carry out this trembling with any forward planning, so far as may be heard! Nevertheless it is possible to train oneself to play involuntarily.

The Principal Section (also the electroacoustic part) must therefore be very quiet.

In each of the 8 individual sections of the piece are used each of the groupings of 7 instruments from the Introduction (though, within these groupings, in free sequence and combination). Begin with one instrument, the free hand dampening/glissandoing; in a second movement the dampening hand passes over to a second instrument, so that two instruments sound. The first hand leaves the first instrument and begins to dampen and glissando on the second instrument (manipulating the pitch and tone-colour); until one of the two hands once again changes instrument, etc.

There is thus a continual alternation between one instrument (modulated) and two instruments (unmodulated). An individual phase from this process may last between a few seconds and about one to one-and-a-half minutes. The single-voiced parts can tend to last longer than the two-voiced parts.

The Principal Section begins with skin 1 alone; the electroacoustic part is slowly and imperceptibly faded in. Free alternation between instruments begins only after the fade-in is completed.

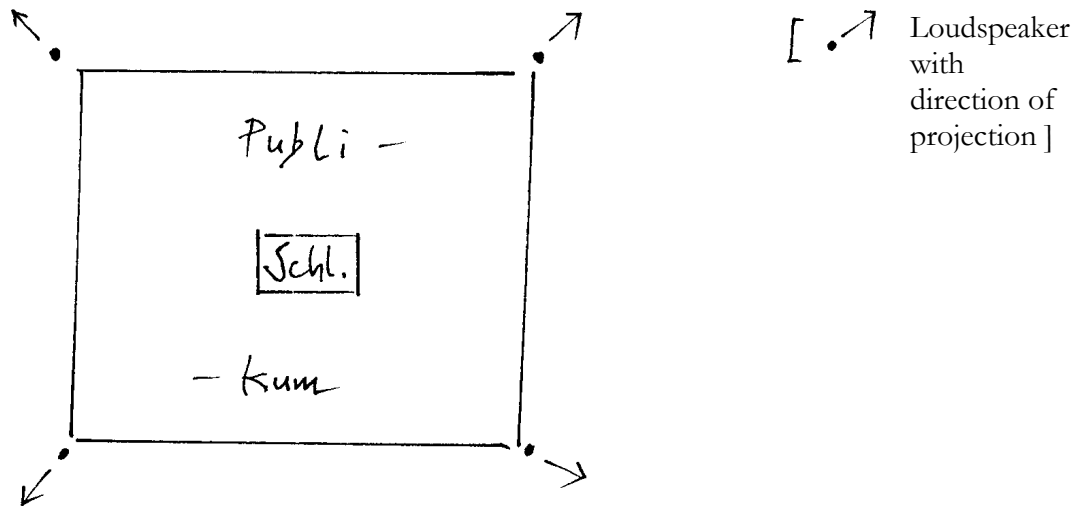
The switch between the parts (the points at which the electronic part switches) always takes place during a two-voiced 'fermata' on the percussion. The performer gives a sign when he or she arrives at such a fermata. During the fermata the next instrument may be anticipated.

The close mirrors the opening. The percussion therefore ends on metal 7, the electroacoustics fade slowly out, and the metal instrument sounds for a further 30-60", the free hand modulating the tone-colour.

The Layout

may be various.

However, when circumstances allow and the room is large enough, the following positioning is desirable.:



Percussion in the middle;

Audience surrounding it;

Loudspeakers (4 loudspeakers + 1 subwoofer) radiating outwards and reflecting off the walls.

Total Duration:

32-48 minutes.

Notes 2002/3

Instrumentation of the First Performance (with Berndt Thurner, percussion):

- Skin 1: large drum, Adams, 36".
- Skin 2: bass drum, Tama, 32".
- Skin 3: tom-tom 13.
- Skin 4: Burmese drum, Ø 18cm, 22cm lang.
- Skin 5: snare drum.
- Skin 6: tambourine with clasped (unsounding) shells.
- Skin 7: LP Drum, small, 6".
- Metal 1: deep Gong, about E.
- Metal 2: barrel (cobalt oxide barrel).
- Metal 3: tubular bell, brass, about f1.
- Metal 4: brass plate, ca. 22cm x 18cm.
- Metal 5: large car suspension coil.
- Metal 6: suspension coil, »Ranta«.
- Metal 7: triangle, medium, with tapered sides.

Sticks:

Various sticks were used in the Prologue (Introduction), each for the best resonance (all hard sticks: medium-hard marimba and rubber sticks, hard rubber sticks – i.e. plastic-headed on metal rod Ø 4mm – brass-headed sticks; in the Principal Section, for all instruments, only brass-headed sticks.

On the Percussion Quality:

For the 'trembling' effect, it is important to note the angle of the wrist when striking the instrument (particularly with the skin percussion): the incorrect (conventional) angle produces an (undesired) drowsy sound; preferred is a parallel position to the instrument, to obtain a 'pointillist' attack.

Aim, furthermore, not only at effecting single impulses, but rather the longest possible chain of impulses/trembling.

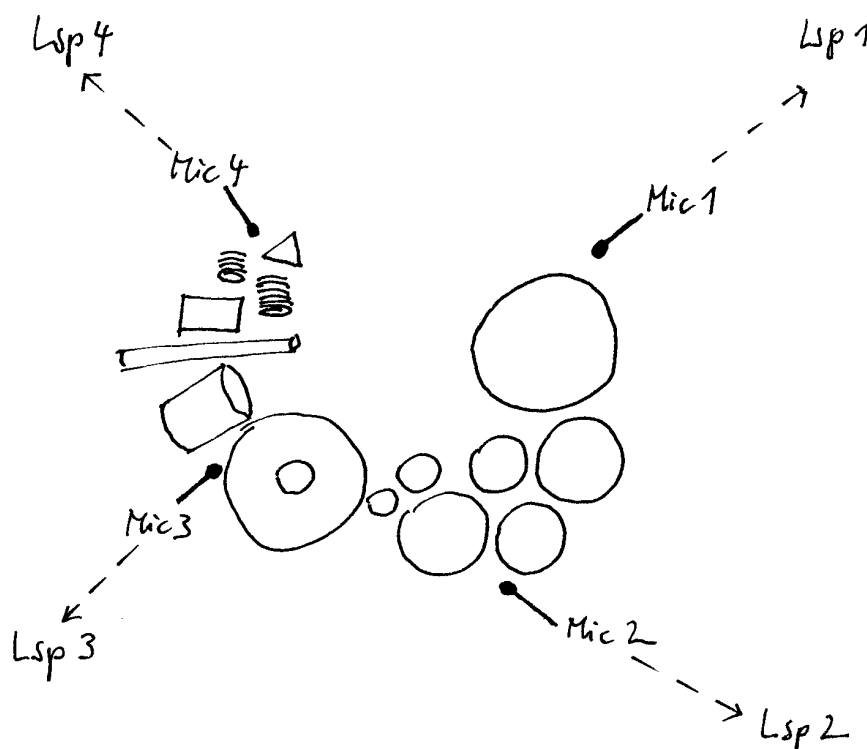
On the Principal Section:

It must not be the case (further in) that all instruments occur in each of the 8 sections!

The exchange between single-voiced parts with modulation and two-voiced without can be performed very freely.

A desirable possibility is to play different instruments, single-voiced, one after another in particularly quick succession.

On the Sound Projection with 4 Microphones and 4 Loudspeakers plus Subwoofer:



Throughout the Prologue, all four microphones sample simultaneously on four loops of different length to be certain that during the Principal Section the Condensation taken from Mic 1 is audible through Lsp. 1, from Mic 2 through Lsp. 2, etc. The square of sound equipment acts as if broadcasting the percussion throughout the room. (The live percussion part alone remains unamplified!)

The positioning of microphones is - in opposite to other IEAOV pieces - close to instruments. But as everything is always recorded by all 4 microphones, there is always only one microphone really close, and the other three in different distances, from which results different sound qualities.

To adequately capture all 14 instruments with the 4 microphones, direction – the angle – of each microphone has to be adjusted. I.e. Mic 1 is close fixed above skin 1, but points to skin 2 (and 3), etc.

On the Electronic Improvisation in Principal Section:

Beginning (slow, imperceptible fade in) and end (slow, imperceptible fade out) are, just as with the 7 switching points, maximally condensed (flat). In between each part, the Density is in a careful way improvised. One channel at a time is expanded/condensed. The same goes for amplification corrections and balance changes between the four loudspeakers. Such changes of ballance and pans between loudspeakers shouldn't even appear too seldom: thus in particular the different sound colors from distant or close recorded instruments become valid. Because of the decentralized positioning of the audience it is also helpful to not forget certain (off-center-) positions of listeners during

such balance changes, in order to make them aware of distant loudspeaker positions once in a while.

Expansions pass through different stages of graininess and may dissolve until single impulses are arrived at. A flat electronic sound produces a foreground/background relationship between percussion and electronics; during the evaporation/condensation blend with the percussion-part, so that it is unclear what is live and what comes from the loudspeaker. Their differentiation always remains subtle and imperceptibly controlled. This subtlety can be achieved above all when the actually de-condensed channel is leveled slightly lower than the others – when it is quasi masked.

Tend in each section to be less condensed at the middle than as at the edges, and do not in every instance dissolve to the extent of producing single impulses.

At all these changes of density and balance more still zones should not be forgotten (no hyperactivity!). There may be also zones of some time (several minutes) where nothing at all is changed.

The subwoofer is not necessarily varied during the performance, but – according to the general low dynamic – can be adjusted relatively high – without seeming pushed and unnatural.

(english translation: Bill Dietz)