SEGMENTITION

for large ensemble and drum-kit improviser

Amy Brandon 2019

CONCEPT.

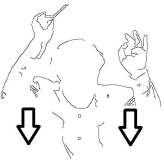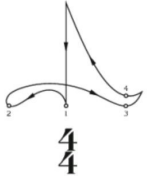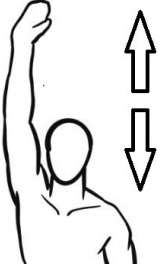This piece centres on the segmenting of a single sound into three layers.

The first layer is white noise, the soft air noises, clicks and string scrapes that precede the sounding of a note. A reminder of the physicality of instruments and the setting into motion the vibration of a physical object. The second layer is equal tempered pitch, the clarity and brilliance of the 'white notes' of a keyboard. Layer three is the material between these notes, quartertones and the inifinity of intervals within a single semitone, undulating, extreme, mysterious.

This piece is the **slow moving morphing of this material from one to another,** to interact with the [drum-kit] improvisor, who is also interpreting the same concept (the segmentation of percussion sounds into white noise, clear tone and microtonal/textural universes), forming a binary mirrored world in two dimensions (pitched and unpitched) via the manipulation and showcasing and slow change of the segmented sound.

NOTES.

CUES:

1.1 New gestures are 'cued' by the conductor using specific hand symbols (see chart below). Some gestures are drawn from Butch Morris's 'conduction' system, and others from Walter Thompson's 'soundpainting' and some are novel.

1.2 There are seven (7) orchestrated gestures.

1.3 On cue each individual member of the ensemble has **approx. 10 seconds** to switch seamlessly to the new gesture.

1.3 ONE CUE AT A TIME ONLY. With the exception of **Gesture 7**, cues are looped or continued until ended by the conductor.

1.4 Orchestra is always tutti, with the exception of some gestures orchestrated a particular way, (ie. horns only)

1.5 Improvising soloist is ad. lib., reacting to the ensemble, and vice versa.

1.6 The conductor can add a piano soloist (through pointing) in **Gestures 3 and 4** as desired for additional texture.

HAND SYMBOL:	IMAGE:	NAME:	DESCRIPTION:	ACTION:
A		**Downbeat**	Both arms down	Switch to this cue within 4 bars (Gestures 1-4) or instantly (Gesture 5).
B		**Tempo**	Right hand beating time in 4/4	Tempo for Gestures 1-3. Gesture 4 and 5 are unconducted.

CRESCENDO SHAPE and DYNAMICS:

6.2 Crescendo dynamics **(Gesture 5)** are shaped by the conductor using their left or right arm, or both arms, moving vertically.

C		Crescendo dynamics	**Hand / arm** positioned vertically high to low	High is **fff**, low is **ppp** (approximate).

Segmentition

CONDUCTOR HAND SIGNALS

When indicated (1 fingers),
start gesture ad. lib. within the next
10 seconds (approx.), for a slow entry
or crossfade across the ensemble.
Repeat ad. lib. until next cue.

CUE 1 Sustained White Noise

Gently

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FL., CL., and OB. ONLY
air, no pitch, stagger entries for sustained sound.

WINDS

n — *mp* — *n*

HORNS ONLY
air, no pitch, stagger entries for sustained sound.

BRASS

n — *p* — *n*

Bass Drum

Scratch head with fingernails, or nylon dish scrubber. ad. lib.

PERC.

n — *p* — *n*

Rub palm on bass strings, ad. lib.

PIANO

l.v.

n — *pp* — *n*

Ped.

Muted (white noise). Stagger bowing. ad. lib, not together.

IV

STRINGS

n — *p* — *n* — *n* — *p* — *n*

CUE 2 Movement White Noise

CONDUCTOR HAND SIGNALS

When indicated (2 fingers),
start gesture ad. lib. within the next
10 seconds (approx.), for a slow entry
or crossfade across the ensemble.
Repeat ad. lib. until next cue.

CUE 3 Sustained Pitch

CONDUCTOR HAND SIGNALS

When indicated (3 fingers), start gesture ad. lib. within the next 10 seconds (approx.), for a slow entry or crossfade across the ensemble. Repeat ad. lib. until next cue.

3

Gently

**Any white note, brilliant range, stagger entries for continuous sound.
Change note on repeat, restrict note choices to within one octave.**

WINDS

n — p — n

HORNS ONLY
**Any white note, warm range. Stagger entries for continuous sound.
Change note on repeat, restrict note choices to within one octave.**

BRASS

pp — n

Marimba + bow
Vibraphone + bow, no motor

**Any white note, bow one note on vibraphone and one on marimba.
Change notes on repeat, restrict note choices to within one octave.**

PERC.

mf

**Any white note cluster, warm or brilliant range,
restrict note choices to one octave, per repeat.
Change notes on repeat. ad. lib,
exact timing not imperative, quasi-improvised.**

PIANO

pp

con pedale

**Any white note, warm or brilliant range. Stagger bowing.
Change note on repeat, restrict note choices to within one octave.**

STRINGS

n — mp — n

4

CUE 4 Sustained Cluster

When indicated (4 fingers),
start gesture ad. lib. within the next
10 seconds (approx.), for a slow entry
or crossfade across the ensemble.
Repeat ad. lib. until next cue.

Disorienting

WINDS

Any note between C and G, brilliant range, stagger entries for continuous
sound. Change note on repeat, restrict note choices to within one octave.

n ———— *mf* ———— *n*

BRASS

Any note between C and G, brilliant range. Stagger entries for continuous sound.
Change note on repeat, restrict note choices to within one octave.

mp   *p*

PERC.

Timpani + Turkish Cymbal

Bow cymbal upside-down on timpani head, while glissing ad. lib.

n ———— *mf* ———— *n*

PIANO

Any cluster, restrict note choices to within
one half octave, per repeat. Change notes
every repeat. ad. lib, exact timing not
imperative, quasi-improvised.

p

l.v.

STRINGS

Any white note, warm or brilliant range. Roll finger to very slowly 'gliss' note
to approximately a quarter tone above and then below the note, as if fixing intonation.

IV

gliss.   *gliss.*   *gliss.*   *gliss.*

mf

CUE 5 Long Crescendo Cluster

CONDUCTOR HAND SIGNALS

When indicated (5 fingers), start gesture ad. lib. within the next approx. 10 seconds, for a slow crossfade across the ensemble. Volume or 'shape' of gestures (approx.) are cued with vertical arm movement. Endings are cued.

Violent

Any note between C and G, brilliant range. Stagger breathing.

Hold until cue.

WINDS 4/4

n ————————————————— *ff*

Any note between C and G, brilliant range. Stagger breathing, rest as needed.

Hold until cue.

BRASS 4/4

n ————————————————— *f*

Timpani +Turkish cymbal

Roll on cymbal.

Hold until cue, gliss. resonance.

PERC. 4/4

n ————————————————— *f*

Move large glass marbles on mid-range bass strings, drop for more intense sound.

Hold until cue.

PIANO 4/4

n ————————————————— *ff*   *l.v.*

Ped.

Long tremolo gliss on lowest string, starting from any point. Either up or down.

Hold until cue.

STRINGS 4/4

gliss.
gliss.

n ————————————————— *ff*

CUE 6 Highest Note Possible

When indicated (6 fingers), start gesture ad. lib. within the next approx. 10 seconds, for a slow crossfade across the ensemble. Volume or 'shape' of gestures (approx.) are cued with vertical arm movement. Endings are cued.

Disturbing

Highest note possible. Stagger breathing, rest as needed.

Hold until cue.

WINDS $\frac{4}{4}$ *f*

Highest note possible. Stagger breathing, rest as needed.

Hold until cue.

BRASS $\frac{4}{4}$ *f*

Suspended China cymbal - large

Hold until cue.

Roll erratically.

PERC. $\frac{4}{4}$ *ff*

Move large glass marbles on mid-range bass strings, drop for more intense sound, sustain pedal down.

Hold until cue.

PIANO $\frac{4}{4}$ *f*

Ped.

Highest note possible. Stagger bowings.

Hold until cue.

STRINGS $\frac{4}{4}$ *f*

CUE 7 Explosion Cluster