Composition Portfolio

Levi Raleigh Brown
University of New Mexico - Main Campus

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This thesis is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication:

Approved by the Thesis Committee:

Patricia Repar, Chairperson

Karola Obermueller

Richard Hermann
COMPOSITION PORTFOLIO

by

LEVI RALEIGH BROWN

PREVIOUS DEGREES
BACHELOR OF MUSIC

THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Music

Music

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

May, 2020
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this portfolio to my wife, Charlotte Leung. Thank you for always supporting me and my music and for helping to realize it in performance.
I would like to acknowledge Dr. Patrice Repar and Dr. Karola Obermueller for helping to guide my creative voice with these pieces. The music would not have happened without their thoughtful questions and influence.

I would also like to thank Dr. Peter Gilbert and Dr. Richard Hermann for their assistance during my time at UNM and for introducing me to new concepts and ways of thinking.

And thank you to all the performers who make music out of the notes on the page, particularly those who have performed the included pieces: Andreas Landstedt, Juan Saldivar Jr., Dr. Maxine Thevenot, and Rosie Cerquone.
COMPOSITION PORTFOLIO

by

Levi Raleigh Brown

B.M., University of Montana, 2018

M.Mu., University of New Mexico, 2020

ABSTRACT

The four pieces selected for this portfolio represent a variety of interests and pursuits over two years at UNM. Together they are unified through their attention to the universality of the daily human experience, particularly as it contrasts to human desire for control through constructed means such as art, although each approaches this relationship in a distinct way. Musically, these ideas are explored with a sense of spontaneity, drawing from a variety of musical styles, and experimenting with concepts of texture and form, with special attention to elements of live performance.

Included pieces are A Moment of Some Complexity, a setting of ten picture-poems by Kenneth Patchen for speaking pianist; God is an Alchemist for bass trombone and organ; Swept for Jazz Ensemble; and A Fire to Build for percussion and fixed media. These pieces were selected in part to satisfy the requirements for a music composition thesis.
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A Moment of Some Complexity

Ten pieces for speaking pianist
On the picture-poems of Kenneth Patchen

By Levi Raleigh Brown
“You will be told that what I write is confused, without order – and I will tell you that my book is not concerned with the problems of art, but with the problems of the world, with the problems of life itself – yes, of life itself.”

- Kenneth Patchen

_The Journal of Albion Moonlight_
A Moment of Some Complexity
For Speaking Pianist

By Levi Raleigh Brown

Total Duration: 18 – 20 minutes

Text and Images by Kenneth Patchen
Provided Courtesy Special Collections,
University Library, University of California Santa Cruz.

Composed October 2018 – February 2019
in Albuquerque, NM

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Program Notes

Kenneth Patchen was an American poet and novelist who lived from 1911 to 1972. He is best known for his experimental novel *The Journal of Albion Moonlight*, as well as being one of the pioneers of the jazz poetry movement.

Patchen suffered from chronic back pain most of his life, and, despite several surgeries, spent the last decade of his life bedridden. It was here, despite constant pain, that he created his collection of picture-poems. These were created using whatever was at hand (including garden tools and kitchen utensils as brushes, and tea and egg-dyes as paint) on ancient handmade paper, which had previously been used by botanists in France to preserve herbs and other plants.

The poems and paintings are often childlike and whimsical, other times depressing, but are always portrayed with sense of magic, playfulness, depth, and protest. He uses the images to extend his writing, not to illustrate the poems, but to bring us further into his world where all things, including his imaginary creatures, share the same wonder of life and tragedy of pain.

For this piece I have selected 10 of Patchen’s 151 picture-poems to put to music. In writing this piece, I did not aim to directly illustrate the words or images musically, but instead hoped to further express to an audience the bizarre, beautiful world and profound questions that exist in Patchen’s picture poems.

Text and Images by Kenneth Patchen, Provided Courtesy Special Collections, University Library, University of California Santa Cruz.
Performance Notes

Performance Possibilities:

- **Performance of all 10 pieces together (preferred):**
  - These should be presented in the order in they occur
  - Performance with the text is a necessity in the performance of the whole
  - Pieces and text may be divided between multiple performers if necessary
    - Ex. Player 1 plays and speaks “My Program”, Player 2 plays and speaks “Snow”, Player 3 plays “…it topples over” while Players 1 and 2 speak the text, and so on
    - This is just one example, there are many possible realizations
  - Performance by one player is preferred

- **Performance of individual piece:**
  - In this case, only I. “My Program” and VI. “All” have to be performed with the text. The rest may exist as simply piano solos.
  - Performance with the text is always preferred

- **A Selection of Pieces:**
  - If less than all, but more than one piece is to be performed:
    - Only adjacent pieces may be performed together
    - The following combinations are exceptions and may be performed as their own smaller cycles:
      - I – III – IV – VI – VIII
      - II – V – VII – IX – X
  - Text should be performed if possible

- **If possible, images should individually projected for each piece:**
  - Please contact the composer for a slideshow of the images
  - Slides should be changed quickly as each piece starts
Performance Notes (cont.)

**General Rules:**

- Intervals larger than an octave may be rolled only if absolutely necessary
- All durations and tempos are approximate
- When playing strings with pick, a credit card or similar plastics may be substituted
- Vertical dotted lines indicate where words and pedaling should occur in relation to notes

**Notations:**

- (Ped) - All pedal markings in parentheses are reminders of ongoing pedaling
- - Chromatic cluster at approximate pitch range
- Or - Chromatic cluster containing exact pitches within the range of the cluster.
- - Silently depress (to be sustained with Sostenuto Pedal)
  - These may be placed in chromatic clusters as well, in which case all pitches are silently depressed within range

- Short, Medium, and Long Fermata (respectively)
  - Long Fermatas are for a given duration or left to performer’s discretion

- Fermatas are also used to denote length of pause between movements

**Speaking:**

- Spoken text is in what looks like a handwritten font shown here: Example
- Text is spoken simply, as in conversation, unless otherwise indicated. Still, much room is left for personal interpretation and expression.
My Program?

Let us all weep together.
Snow is the only one that leaves no tracks.
It’s outside The Thing that Dances, not in “our minds”.

Dreams “come in the drum of Christ Wholeness & Freedom.
The universe is like a gigantic bird hopping up & down in such joy that from time to time it justtopples over.”
Believe

that apples could talk

if they had a mind too
The Moment

Before the girl picking field daisies
Becomes the girl picking field daisies

There is a moment of some complexity
All at once is what eternity is.
VIII.

The Hands of the Aiy

applaud the Wonders of God

O Light & Life unending
Which of us is not flesh?

Last and first, in that common cause.

Beyond this—I would like to be able to say... to say more.
A Moment of Some Complexity

Ten pieces for speaking pianist on the picture poems of Kenneth Patchen

I. My Program

Levi Raleigh Brown

\( \dot{=} 60, \text{flowing} \)

\( \dot{=} 92, \text{spontaneous} \)

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slowly, slightly sorrowful:

My Program?

let us all weep together

(sost.)
molto rit. . . . . . . . . $\frac{\text{f}}{\text{p}}$  $\frac{\text{f}}{\text{p}}$ $\frac{\text{mf}}{\text{mf}}$ $\frac{\text{pp}}{\text{pp}}$ $\frac{\text{sost.}}{\text{sost.}}$

(moderately fast tremolo) $\rightarrow$ slower

(very slow)

* If the 10th cannot be played without arpeggiating, exclude the F
* Text in this movement can be performed either with a normal, conversational speaking tone, or in a more pointilistic manner, with unique expression and articulation on each word, or a combination of these, whatever is most comfortable. Performers can thus choose to follow or ignore instructions and articulations on words.

**II. Snow**

prepare piano with 1 sheet of letter sized paper, placed vertically and centered over given range

\( \text{senza ped.} \)

\( \text{(snow)} \)

is

\( \text{the} \)

\( \text{(V)} \)

\( \text{on-ly} \)

\( \text{(Ped)} \)

\( \text{Ped} \)

\( \text{Ped} \)

\( \text{Ped} \)

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Snow

15

(\(\text{piano}\))

18

(\(\text{piano}\))

\(\text{rit.} \quad \frac{1}{2}=98\)

\(\text{of} \quad \frac{1}{2}=98\)

\(\text{ff} \quad \text{mf} \quad \text{mp}\)

\(\text{pluck strings with pick,}
\text{within upper segment of}
\text{the piano}\)

\(\text{gliss on strings,}
\text{within lowest segment}
\text{of the piano}\)

\(\text{rapid and irregular}
\text{strumming across strings}
\text{with all fingernails}\)

\(\text{r} \quad \text{d. sempre} \)
Snow

(whispered)

 accel.

 on keys

 gliss on strings with pad of fingers within lowest segment

 on keys

 (vocal gliss down)

 leaves

 play pitches as fast as possible in any order, avoiding repeating patterns

 (ppp)
\begin{align*}
\text{\textit{Snow}} \\
\text{\textit{j}=128 \text{ rubato ad lib.}} \\
\text{\textit{on keys}} \\
\text{\textit{with pick}} \\
\text{\textit{gliss with fingernails in lowest segment}} \\
\text{\textit{play pitches as fast as possible in any order, avoiding repeating patterns}} \\
\text{\textit{tracks}} \\
\text{\textit{remove paper}}
\end{align*}
III. ... it just topples over

Levi Raleigh Brown

- The following 7 phrases should be spoken at least once each throughout the piece, between letters A and B.

- Phrases should not be placed in the exact order listed.

- Phrases do not need to be spread evenly throughout and may be distributed in different ways, although they should not occur in immediate succession.

- Order and placement may be written in or improvised. If necessary, time may be briefly suspended during rests in order to speak the words when not playing.

- These statements are preferably announced or shouted.

1. It's Outside
2. The Thing
3. That Dances
4. not in "our minds"
5. Dreams "come in"
6. The Fun of Christ
7. Wholeness and Freedom!

speak only if following "Snow":

\[ j=132, \text{ animated} \]

But even so...

senza Ped.

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... it just topples over
... it just topples over

\[ \text{accel.} \]

\[ B \]

The universe is like a gigantic bird hopping up & down in such joy that from time to time it just topples over

\[ \text{repeat until finished with text} \]
IV. Believe

Levi Raleigh Brown

\( \dot{=}72, \) child-like

\( \dot{=}84 \)

\( \text{sost. Ped. sempre} \)

joyfully:

molto accel.

Copyright © 2018 Levi Raleigh Brown
Believe

poco rit.  .  .  .  .  .  .

whisper or speak:

if they had a mind too

(sost.)

Believe

ppp
V. The Moment

\( \text{\textcopyright \textcopyright \textcopyright \textcopyright 2018 Levi Raleigh Brown} \)

\( \text{\textcopyright \textcopyright \textcopyright \textcopyright 2018 Levi Raleigh Brown} \)

\( \text{\textcopyright \textcopyright \textcopyright \textcopyright 2018 Levi Raleigh Brown} \)
The Moment

Before the girl picking field daisies

Becomes the girl picking field daisies

poco accel.
There is a moment of some complexity.

Play deliberately with index (pointer) fingers only

Senza ped.
VI. All

Levi Raleigh Brown

prepare piano with 1 sheet of letter sized paper, placed horizontally and centered over given range

out of time

slowly, serious:

A \( \ll \) \( \at \)

sempe

once

is

what

\( \begin{array}{l}
4 \\
mf \\
6''
\end{array} \)

scrape along strings slowly with pick

\( \begin{array}{l}
2'' \\
3''
\end{array} \)

\( \text{(Ped.)} \)

eternity

is

\( \begin{array}{l}
7 \\
mf \\
5''
\end{array} \)

\( \begin{array}{l}
3''
\end{array} \)

\( \text{remove paper attacca} \)

\( \text{First and Last (if performing)} \)

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VII. Untitled (First and Last)

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Untitled (First and Last)

\[ \dot{=} (\dot{=} 56) \text{ molto accel.} \]

\[ \dot{=} 84 \text{ subito, blooming} \]

\[ \dot{=} 76 \text{ molto rit. a tempo (}\dot{=} 76) \]

\[ \dot{=} 60 \text{ poco rit. attacca} \]
VIII. Hands of the Air

Levi Raleigh Brown

\( \downarrow = 88, \) shimmering

\( \text{sost. Ped.} \)

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Hands of the Air

8  calm, perpetual  accel.

13  \( \text{\textit{f}=104} \)  accel.

18  \( \text{\textit{f}=124} \)

23

\( \text{\textit{sfz}} \)  pp sub
Hands of the Air

\[ \text{sfz} \quad f \quad p \]

\[ \text{cresc.} \]

\[ q = 88 \text{ subito} \]

\[ \text{mp} \quad \text{ff} \]
Hands of the Air

calm, speak freely over music

The Hands of the Air

Applaud the wonders of God   O Light and Life   unending
Hands of the Air

heavenly

\( \frac{56}{\text{u.c.}} \)

\( \frac{60}{\text{attacca}} \)
IX. But Even So

\( \dot{\text{=}} 120, \text{furious} \)

\[ \begin{align*}
&\text{fff} \quad \text{mf} \\
&\text{p sempre} \\
&\text{senza ped.}
\end{align*} \]

solemn, dramatic,
freely over music:

My god

the sorrow of it

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But Even So

furious

sub ff mp

sub p molto rit.

gliss on strings with fingernails

fast tremolo

molto rit.
* Extended fermatas create a section in which all notes are out of time and occur at an approximate location in time relative to their position in the bar. The overall length of the fermata should be similar to that of the current note value, unless otherwise notated.

X. Last and First

Levi Raleigh Brown

\[ \text{q\#}=68, \text{rubato} \]

\text{meditative, heavy}

\[ \text{\textit{Which of us is not flesh?}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{Last and first}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{Last and first}} \]

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Last and First

26

\( f \) \hspace{1cm} \text{sub} \( p \)

long, open in length

Beyond this - I would like to be able to say...

29

\( pp \) \hspace{1cm} \( ppp \)

inconclusive:

31

\( \ldots \) to say more \hspace{1cm} \text{allow sound to fade naturally}
God is an Alchemist

For Bass Trombone and Organ

Full Score

Levi Raleigh Brown
God is an Alchemist
For Bass Trombone and Organ

By Levi Raleigh Brown

Commissioned by Juan Saldivar Jr.
Premiered Feb. 5, 2020 by Juan Saldivar Jr. and Maxine Thevenot
in UNM Keller Hall, Albuquerque, NM

Duration: 9’ to 10’
Composed April to June, 2019
in Albuquerque, NM

levibrown13@gmail.com
leviraleighbrown.wixsite.com/music

Program Note:
“Go ahead, light your candles and burn your incense and ring your bells and call out to God, but watch out, because God will come, and He will put you on His anvil and fire up His forge and beat you and beat you until he turns brass into pure gold.”

- Sant Keshavadas
Performance Notes:

Trombone:

- Mutes needed: Straight, Harmon (with stem), Bucket
- Senza to poco vibrato except when notated
- Notated vibrato in brackets should be wide and moderately fast
- Vibrato does not apply to glissandos
- Notes following glissandos are continuous if included in a slur, and rearticulated if not in a slur
- Slurred passages are meant to be somewhat messy; it is not necessary to articulate notes but may instead allow glissandos to naturally occur
- flz. – flutter tongue, no articulation is necessary when flutter tonguing.

- Hand-mute positions:
  - Used to control timbre with Harmon Mute
  - o - open (hand off)
  - + - closed (hand covering Harmon stem)
  - ⊕ - half open (hand partially covering Harmon stem)
  - No audible transition between positions is desired, unless marked with an arrow
  - → - Transition slowly from one position to another (a jazzy or wah effect is not desired, merely a gradual transition from one timbre to another)
  - ———— — Used to show the continuation of one position throughout multiple notes

- Graphic lines to be interpreted as glissandos to be achieved by any means necessary

- Rehearsal Letter C consists of independent, cyclical parts for each player. Players should act largely independently, but should also keep their ears open in order to be musically engaged with the other
Organ:
- Part written for a 3 for 4 Manual Organ, but may be played on less with some adjustments
- Manuals are referred to as I, II, and III, for convenience of dictating specific changes, but player may use different manuals for each assignment as they see fit
  - Manual changes centered between staves refer to both
  - Bracketed changes above stave refer to one hand or the other
- Stop changes are labeled with instrument and timbre suggestions, giving the performer an idea of the sounds desired
  - Ex. - Winds/Strings could be winds, strings, both, or a similar effect
- Stop changes occur in Boxed Text
- Player will need 8 Key Weights or Wedges, abbreviated KW
  - Place Key Weight or Wedge
  - Remove Key Weight or Wedge
- Player is also asked to move Key Weights an octave; to do this, use one hand to continue to sustain the previously weighted key until the new note is sustained
- Cluster, including shown notes and all and all chromatic pitches between
- Circles are used to highlight when a note is removed from a sustaining chord
- Rehearsal Letter C consists of independent, cyclical parts for each player. Players should act largely independently, but should also keep their ears open in order to be musically engaged with the other
Full Score  

**GOD IS AN ALCHEMIST**

for Bass Trombone and Organ

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Brass/Reeds</td>
<td>8'</td>
<td>( f )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Brass/Reeds</td>
<td>4'</td>
<td>( f )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Reeds/Winds</td>
<td>4'</td>
<td>( mp )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ped.</td>
<td>Brass &amp; Ped.</td>
<td>8'+16'</td>
<td>( f )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Levi Raleigh Brown

---

Bass Trombone

---

Organ

---

Pedals

---

Manual I may be freely exchanged with an additional manual with slightly differing 8' stops, if available, providing variations in timbre

---

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The following four pages (letter C) consist of free, independent parts for each player. For this reason, they do not exist in score form.
freely, independent of organ part

continue directly into repeat

The following repeat occurs 3 times, each time at a different speed and hand-mute changes:

1st: 2" to 4" per note. Between each note can be as little as no rest or as much as 2" of rest. No rest should be placed between notes with dashed slurs.

2nd: 1" to 2" per note. Breathe as needed. Dashed barlines indicate divisions for hand-mute changes.

3rd: 0.5" to 1" per note, as legato as possible.

hand-mute changes for each repetition:

1st: 

2nd: 

3rd: 

improvise between pp and mp unless otherwise marked
change hand-mute position on each note following this pattern:

\[ \begin{array}{cccc}
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\end{array} \]

0.5" to 2" per note, breathe as necessary, performer may choose to improvise octaves between \textit{pp} and \textit{mp}.

repeat until organ begins steady pulse in pedals, then move on to join.
**C freely, independent of trombone part**

<table>
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<th>Brass/Reeds</th>
<th>8’</th>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Soft/Dark</td>
<td>8’</td>
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<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Reeds/Winds</td>
<td>4’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Bourdon</td>
<td>4’+8’+16’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instructions:**
- Move clockwise around circle, performing each action
- A cycle is a return to the starting point
- Some actions have indications of specifics for each cycle
- Each cycle should be approximately 20 to 30 seconds, but how the time is divided between actions is up to the performer
- No new key weights are place during 4th and 5th cycles

---

**Organ - 5 Cycles**

20” to 30” per cycle

- Play each **Event** from next page during corresponding cycle
- Move highest key weight down 1 octave
- Change stops of sustaining manual (II)
- Dynamics should stay as similar as possible
- Move lowest key weight up 1 octave
Events:

\( \text{\textbackslash!}=80 \text{ for each} \)

1st Cycle

2nd Cycle

3rd Cycle

Ped. \( \rightarrow \rightarrow \) Sustain until....

mp

4th Cycle

5th Cycle

Continue to next page after 5th cycle

Play throughout 4th and 5th cycles, 3” to 6” per note

Ped. \( \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow 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D \( \frac{3}{4} \) \( \text{dotted quarter}=80 \), building
join organ pedal rhythm, cue to go on

B. Tbn.

repeat until trombone joins rhythm, cue to go on
reduce stops for III (to \( p \))

Org. (II) Pitches sustained by key weights

reduce stops (to \( p \))

Ped.

52

B. Tbn.

\( \frac{3}{4} \) \( (\text{mp}) \)

(open)

if needed

III (4’)

Org.

add stops for dynamics

Ped.

\( \frac{3}{4} \) \( (p) \)
may cut off before organ if necessary

(poco accel.)

83

slide vib. flz.

8 sec.

(poco accel.)

3

8 sec.

(poco accel.)

3

8 sec.

quickly reduce stops

may cut off before organ if necessary

85

8 sec.

=88
\[ F \quad \text{\textit{j=60, deep, thoughtful}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{molto rit.}} \]

\[ \text{bucket mute} \]

\[ \text{lip vib.} \]

\[ \text{II Winds/Strings 8'} \quad \text{mp} \]

\[ \text{III Solo Flute 4'} \quad \text{p} \]

\[ \text{Ped. Winds/Strings 8' only mp} \]

\[ \text{6 sec.} \]

\[ \text{(silence)} \]

\[ \text{6 sec.} \]

\[ \text{6 sec.} \]
poco accel. \[ \frac{\text{\textdagger}}{\text{\textdagger}} \] \( \text{\textdagger} = 68 \)

B. Tbn.

add stops (strings) to III
and tremulants to II and III
H flowing, senza rubato

B. Tbn.

H flowing, senza rubato

Org.

III (4') mp

Ped.

poco accel.

lip vib.

B. Tbn.

poco accel.

Org.

III (4')

Ped.

mp

mp

mp
B. Tbn.  
\[ \text{slightly slower} \]

Org.

Ped.  
\[ \text{slightly slower} \]
148

B. Tbn.

non decresc.

Org.

5 sec.

tremulants off

Ped.

5 sec.
Swept
for Jazz Band

Full Score

Levi Raleigh Brown
Swept
for Jazz Band

by Levi Raleigh Brown

Composed September 2019 – March 2020
Albuquerque, NM

Duration: Approx. 7 minutes

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Program Note:

Swept was inspired by a story of Sen no Rikiū, a Japanese tea master of the 16th century, and his son Shoan, as depicted in Kakuzo Okakura’s The Book of Tea.

Rikiū was watching his son at work cleaning and watering the garden path. Each time Shoan believed he was finished with the task, Rikiū would ask him to clean it again. After an hour of doing it several times, his son complained that there was nothing more to be done, for there was not a twig or leaf left on the ground.

“‘Young fool,’ chided the tea master, ‘that is not the way a garden path should be swept.’ Saying this, Rikiū stepped into the garden, shook a tree, and scattered over the garden gold and crimson leaves”… “What Rikiū demanded was not cleanliness alone, but the beautiful and the natural also.”

Our experience as humans is often similar. We frequently try to live clean and tidy lives, maintaining a constant sense of control, but the unpredictable and the natural invade our order and destroy our plans. However, perhaps like the leaves, these uncontrollable elements are in fact an important part of the path.
Performance Notes:

• Conductor
  - Conductor should follow a stopwatch for the out-of-time section (beginning to K)
    - Duration should be given horizontally, bringing hands gradually together and apart without showing pulse
    - Begin with arms at shoulder width with palms facing each other at 0'00", then move palms to meet in the center at 0'05". Hands will move back to shoulder width by 0'10", and so forth, so that every 10 seconds hands are at shoulder width, and at the 5’s in between palms are pressed together.
    - It may be necessary to give a small pulse as hands reach shoulder width and together (at the 5 second intervals) so that players can see this precise moment.
    - Down arrows are placed on specific time markers. These moments require large cues for multiple player entrances or cutoffs. They should be given vertically with a prep either a second or a half second before.

• General
  - — Fade in/fade out to the best of the instrument’s capability
  - During long sustained notes, players may breathe and take breaks as necessary, always fading out and back into the note when they go to do so
  - Guitar and vibes – for long sustained notes do not roll, but attack softly and only as often as necessary to maintain sustain

  - Play pitches within box in any order rapidly and legato from beginning of box until end of arrow
    - Care should be taken to avoid repetitive patterns with given pitches
• **Out-of-Time Section (Beginning to K)**
  o Barlines show divisions of 5 seconds each
  o Events occur in time relative to their position in the bar
  o Blank space is equivalent to rest
  o Rhythmic figures played swung, at approximately q= 96
  o Duration of bars will be given horizontally by conductor, with hands reaching shoulder width at the beginning and center of every system (every 10 seconds), and coming together between on the bars between (5”, 15”, 25”, etc.)
  o Down arrows \(\downarrow\) show vertical conductor cues for entrances or cut-offs
    ▪ arrows in parentheses are cues that will be given but do not directly influence the given player’s part
  o \(\boxed{}\) – Double whole note – sustains for the entire bar
    ▪ Whole notes sustain until the end of the bar or next note within the bar unless otherwise notated
  o \(\rightarrow\) – sustain for length of beam

• **Spoken Text**
  o All players perform spoken text in a variety of ways, this should be done with high energy and with recognition of the inherent humor, but also with musicality and intention.
  o Each player must write a text depicting a true story from their everyday life. The focus should be on those elements which seem annoying, at least in the moment, or distracting from the things we enjoy or look forward to.
    ▪ The story only needs to be **around 5 to 6 sentences**, and does not need to be conclusive or have any moral, purpose, etc.
    ▪ Stories should be emotional in some way to you, possibly expressing qualities of humor, sadness, relief, frustration, or others, and this should be reflected in the text and performance of it.
    ▪ Examples include:
      - a story of an inconvenient traffic jam
      - a time when weather ruined plans
      - how your roommate never does the dishes
Players’ own text is used in the following ways, advancing through their text as they are required to speak. (It will likely be necessary to cycle through the text multiple times).

- **Speaking**
  - Relatively ordinary speech. This may be fast and somewhat soft and therefore not necessarily entirely understood by an audience.

- **Comprehensible**
  - Clear, pronounced speech. This should be spoken slower and more theatrical to be understood by an audience.

- **Shouting**
  - Rapid and frantic shouting, typically loud. The intention is not to be understood. Care should be taken to not damage the voice during extended periods of shouting.

- **Shout a designated word or phrase in rhythm.**
SWEPT

out of time, bar = 5 seconds

all rhythmic figures swung at approx. \( q = 96 \)

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independently (σ=96) light solo in top 1/3 of piano
as though a C blues, do not accompany self with chords
Full Score

[Music notation image with various instrument parts, including Alto 1, Alto 2, Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Baritone Saxophone (Bari. Sax.), Trumpet 1 (Tpt. 1), Trumpet 2 (Tpt. 2), Trumpet 3 (Tpt. 3), Trombone 1 (Tbn. 1), Trombone 2 (Tbn. 2), Trombone 3 (Tbn. 3), Bass Trombone (B. Tbn.), Piano (Pno.), and Vibraphone (Vib.) sections.]

- Instrument parts are labeled with dynamics, articulations, and text indicators such as "shouting," "speaking," "walk," and "fill." Notation includes musical symbols and text annotations.

- Tempo indications are present, such as "c=96, swing, in time."
Alto 1 solo

CF7 begin very minimal and slowly build

Alto 1 solo

(open feel, begin minimal and slowly build)
begin very minimal
and slowly build
Drum solo slowly begins

Open drum solo - out of time, approx. 15" to 30"
slightly faster

Fill in time
Full Score

Tbn. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Tpt. 4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

B. Tbn.

J. Gtr.

Bass

Dr.

nor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>J. Gtr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pno.</td>
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full band unison

harmony

rapid chromatic "noodling" in top 1/3 of piano

rapid chromatic "noodling" in top 1/2 of vib.

swing ff
A Fire to Build
For Percussion and Fixed Media

Levi Raleigh Brown
A Fire to Build

for Percussion and Fixed Media

By Levi Raleigh Brown

Commissioned and Premiered by Rosie Cerquone

Premiered Feb. 16, 2020

Duration: 11’ 25”

Composed November 2019 – January 2020

in Albuquerque, NM

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Program Notes:

“Music may be a human invention, but if so, it resembles the ability to make and control fire…”

As humans we have a natural desire for order, but the world has always been chaotic and unpredictable. Weather, wildlife, health, emotions, traffic, death – many things continue to be beyond our immediate control. I think people have always struggled with this, but perhaps it is this longing for control that drives us to do what we do best: to create, to plan, to organize, to teach, to invent; to make art, language, and music. Even these, though, are subject to unpredictable factors.

In this piece, the struggle for order in a chaotic world is illustrated by the ancient and critical process of building and controlling fire.

Performance Notes:

Instruments and Equipment:

- A variety of breakable twigs and other fire-starter.

- Two drumsticks of different size, with large barrel or ball heads. Ideally these are used sticks with some texture on the shaft (from rimshots and such).

- Two rounded stones, approximately the size of performer’s palms and fit easily in the hand. These should have at least one surface which is relatively flat.

- A large popsicle stick painted with red on one end to look like a large match.

- A sandblock with heavy grit, the louder the better.
- A small portable light source. I recommend some small, battery powered LED touch lights which are cheap and quick to turn on and off.

**Opening Staging:**
- Performer should sit on the floor, ideally NOT centered on stage.
- Light source is directly in front of performer and turned off.
- All other materials should be off to one side, within arm’s reach of performer.
- Speakers for audio should be in stereo on each side of the stage, or from house speakers.
- Stage lights begin on, or mostly on.

**Audio/Lights:**
- Instructions for an audio/lighting technician are minimal and put in **boxed text**.
- Lighting changes are desired but not absolutely necessary. If not used, then lighting should be at about 1/4 – 1/3 throughout.

**General Performance:**
- Piece must be performed as a whole; sections do not stand alone, and each section moves into the next without pause (other than notated pauses).
- This is a very theatrical piece. All motions and playing should be done considering the narrative and mimicking the physical motions of starting a fire.
- Audio and performer have very little direct interaction. It is therefore not necessary to be exactly with the audio throughout, but rather to realign at beginnings and ends of sections. Audio track cues, in approximate relation to the
percussion part, are given throughout with graphics, text, and time markers, to which the performer can make micro-adjustments. Additional cues could be written in based on performer’s interpretation.

- All durations are approximate and shown as “c.X” (circa X duration).

Voice:
- Percussionist is asked to sing, hum, and/or whistle.
- Notated key and range is arbitrary, melody should be sung where comfortable.
- Notated melodies are intended as a guideline. Performer may elaborate and even change the melody as they see fit.
- Singing and humming should be simple and folk-like, without vibrato. It should resemble the singing to oneself during everyday tasks.
- It is recommended that the approximate melodies be memorized to allow for more freedom of expression within them.

Theatrical Movements:
- Instructions that are exclusively theatrical are in a **bold, italicized text**.
- Instructions for “gathering, breaking, and assembling” mean:
  - Noisily grab twigs and other fire-starter from off to the side and break them.
  - Assemble them in a pile (as for a fire) in front of the light source, so that the source itself becomes somewhat hidden from the audience.
  - Focus on drawing out the sounds of this process.
  - Make sure to have enough materials left after the “Intro” for the “Interlude” later.
Percussion Notation and Instruction:

I. Friction
- With drumsticks

- Place “higher” sounding stick in left hand, “lower” in right

- Top line is right stick on left (making a higher sound), bottom line is left stick on right (making a lower sound).

  - \[\text{\textbf{\large \text{\textbullet\quad\text{\textbullet}}}}\] - strike right stick on left  
  - \[\text{\textbf{\large \text{\textbullet}}\quad\text{\textbullet}}\] - strike left stick on right  
  - \[\text{\Large \text{\textbullet}}\] - Rapidly scrape shaft of stick back and forth on shaft of the other for duration of note

- On the normal notehead, strike one stick on another and hold there (the duration is not heard but sticks are simply held together). Then on the x-notehead, very quickly with a snap of the wrist, slide the top stick down and off the end of the other. A snapping sound should be heard as it strikes off the head.

II. Percussion
- With stones.

  - \[\text{\large \text{\textbullet}}\] - Use a rounded end of the rock in the dominant hand to strike the flat surface of the other.

  - \[\text{\large \text{\textbullet\quad\text{\textbullet}}\quad\text{\textbullet\quad\text{\textbullet}}\quad\text{\textbullet\quad\text{\textbullet}}\quad\text{\textbullet\quad\text{\textbullet}}\quad\text{\textbullet\quad\text{\textbullet}}\quad\text{\textbullet\quad\text{\textbullet}}}\] - Pitch low to high controlled by opening and closing palm of nondominant hand.

    - Lowest = palm fully closed, cupped around rock
    - Highest = palm fully open, rock balanced in center of palm

  - \[\text{\Large \text{\textbullet}}\] - Use the flat surface of the rock in the dominant hand to strike the flat surface of the other. This should be higher and sharper than using a rounder edge.

III. Pyrotechnition
- With popsicle stick on sandblock.

  - \[\text{\textbullet}}\] - Scrape as fast as possible across length of sandblock with tip of popsicle stick

  - \[\text{\textbullet}}\] - Scrape as fast as possible across length of sandblock with edge of popsicle stick. This should be louder and higher than with tip
for Rosie

A Fire to Build

Intro

begin gathering, breaking, and assembling  open duration

Voice

Elec.

play audio

A $\text{\textit{=}}$64-76, molto rubato, continue gathering, breaking, and assembling throughout

lightly singing, humming, or whistling

Voice

Elec.

stop gathering...

c.10 to sticks

32" - traffic

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Friction

B\text{drumsticks} = 64

\text{accent sim. sempre}

\begin{align*}
\text{Perc.} & \quad \text{f sempre} \\
\text{Elec.} & \\
\text{Approx. 1'05" - traffic and city} & \\
\text{1'10" - clock} & \\
\text{3} & \quad \text{\ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{C} & \\
\text{Perc.} & \\
\text{Elec.} & \\
1'56" - alarm & \\
\end{align*}
sustain throughout sounds of rolling suitcases
c.8

3'05" - 2 rolling suitcases

3'13"
**Interlude**

**F**

*begin gathering, breaking, and assembling*  
3'22" - no audio

**G**

*=64-76, molto rubato, continue gathering, breaking, and assembling throughout*  
softly singing, humming, or whistling  
3'27" - sporadic attacks

**Voice**  
3'22" - no audio

**Elec.**
J a tempo

Perc.

Elec.

Perc.

Elec.

Perc.

Elec.

Perc.

Elec.

6'52" - sporadic stone strikes

123
stage lights slowly down to half

Approx. 6'14" - rapid stones

voices diminuendo
stage lights reach half

Perc.  \[\text{ff} \]

Elec.

6'49" - rain

mf

turn on light quickly, leave on c.2-3 seconds, turn off
c.10 to "match" and block

Perc.

7'13" - crack of thunder

Elec.  \[f \text{ (or greater)}\]
Starting durations between notes:
1 = quick, 0.5 seconds or less
2 = 1-2 seconds
3 = 3-5 seconds
4 = 6-8 seconds

out of time
"match" and block

mf sempre

Approx. 7'30" - rain (until end)

stage lights very slowly to off

poco accel. out of time (reducing durations between notes)
independent of voice

continuously repeat above passage

\[=64-76 \text{ sempre, molto rubato}\]

singing

mf

f
accel., independent of voice

Perc.

Voice

Elec.

rain gradually diminuendos

slam down "match" and block, give up defeatedly

Perc.

Voice

Elec.

stage lights fully off

Perc.

Voice

Elec.

127
quickly drop hands and turn on light, covering it with hands and then slowly revealing it, until track is done

11'02" - rain stops
References


