

Timothy Ferchen

# Sirens

for percussion and tape



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Helsinki, 2013

Music Finland

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## SIRENS

The idea for Sirens came to me when Harri Lehtinen told me about his DocMus program at the Sibelius Academy. He told me that his research subject was John Cage, a composer whose percussion music is very dear to my heart and mentioned that one of the concerts he was presenting dealt with music for tape and percussion. He also said he wanted to play an old composition of mine for just that combination. I said that I would rather work on something new instead, probably because I thought that the older work was horrible, but the idea of working with tape and percussion again was a opportunity that I wanted to take advantage of.

Since Harri's subject was John Cage, I wanted to do something that was on the order of an homage to the composer, so Sirens took on this job. I decided to limit all of the sounds to articles made of either glass or metal. Most of these articles were not instruments per se, but as with Cage, things found in our everyday environment. In addition to glass and metal, a female voice is also used.

The structure of the piece uses devices that 'sound' like the ones used by Cage and Lou Harrison in their percussion pieces from the 1930's and 40's. It wasn't my intention to imitate the technique of these composers so much as to imitate the sound that stayed with me from their compositions.

The instruments needed are as follows:

Spring coil	Thunder sheet
2 sets of small bells clusters	2 sus. Cyms.
Low chinese cym.	3 tin cans
3 chinese cyms. with sizzles	3 thai gongs suspended
Glass chimes	4 small thai gongs on a table
Metal wind chimes	4 small opera gongs on a table
Sleigh bells	Vibraphone with moter
Medium tam tam that can be bowed	2 octaves of crotales
4 small junk cyms.	Low wind gong
Large tam tam	Ice bell
	3 dobachi on a pedal tympani head

Because of the large number of instruments the performer should carefully consider the manner of the set-up. It is, for instance, possible to keep the F#, A, and C cowbells separate from the others to help keep space in front of the vibraphone. If some instrument is unavailable substitute it with an instrument of similar quality and sound. It is strongly suggested to use overhead mics and possibly mics on single instruments where needed for the performance. The sound from the performer should blend into that of the tape seamlessly.

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# SIRENS

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11

Tape

♩ = 60

Spring coil    low ch.cym    med. ch. sizzle cym    3 ch. sizzle cyms

Percussion

rubbed with bell clusters    thai gong

19

glass chimes    bowed t.t.    thunder sheet

sleigh bells    2 thai gongs    low t.t.

*pp*

24

sus.cym    3 tin cans

♩ = 96

28



28

$\text{♩} = 60$   $\text{♩} = 96$

33

Voice  $\text{♩} = 60$

5 sus.cym. 5:3

39

(voice) 5:3

43

4 small junk cyms. (dead strokes)

46

6 l.v. \* = Stopped at end of correct rhythm

4 thai gongs

49

6 4 opera gongs (melody line in unison with vibraphone) (voice)

Vibraphone motor on



52

Musical score for measures 52-54. The top staff shows a drum pattern with various rhythmic values. The bottom staff shows a melodic line with a 7-measure rest and a 6-measure rest.

55

Musical score for measures 55-57. The top staff shows a drum pattern. The bottom staff shows a melodic line with a 3-measure rest.

58

Musical score for measures 58-60. The top staff shows a drum pattern with a complex rhythmic sequence. The bottom staff shows a melodic line with 6-measure and 3-measure rests.

61

Musical score for measures 61-63. The top staff shows a drum pattern. The bottom staff shows a melodic line with 6-measure and 3-measure rests.

64

Musical score for measures 64-66. The top staff shows a drum pattern. The bottom staff shows a melodic line with a 3-measure rest and a 4-measure rest.



69

(etc.)

$\text{♩} = 120$

crotales

vibraphone

pedal always down

3

(voice)

80

90

cow bells

vib.

cow bells

vib.

100

(voice)

vib.

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

vib.

cow bell

110

low t.t.



116

low ch.cym.  $\text{♩} = 60$  glass ch. high cym with bow  
t.t. low wind gong

122

med. sizzle cym. glass ch. thunder sheet low wind gong 2 friction cyms. spring coil thunder sheet  
low sizzle cym. gliss on vib resonators with rattan stick cow bells low t.t.

129

cow bells (small bell) cow bells  
vibraphone con pedal

134

(small bell) (small bell)

139

(small bell)



144

(small bell)

(glock)

(voice)

med. sizzle cym. small sizzle cym.

crotales

6 6

150

med. sizzle cym. low t.t. metal wind chimes small sizzle cym. glass chimes low t.t. low sus. cym. metal chimes

slow gliss slow gliss (highest only)

3

158

lg. wind gong med. sus. cym. med. ch.cym. ice bell highest metal chimes

glass chimes low ch.cym

162

(♩ = 120)

accel. sempre



169

Subito  
♩ = 60

2 cyms.

3 ch. cyms.

2 bell clusters

wind gong, med t.t.

175

sleigh bells

3 dobaci on tympan head

thunder sheet

low t.t.

2 thai gongs

ped. 5

180

185

lowest t.t.

190

