



Headless Monkey Attack

for quintet and fixed media



Ryan Carter

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www.ryancarter.org

Instrumentation:

Bass clarinet (notated in score at transposed, not concert, pitches)

Percussion

Piano (with preparation)

Violin

Cello

2-channel fixed electroacoustic media (marked in score as "Tape")

All instruments should be amplified and diffused through the same speakers as the "tape."

Performances notes:

Percussion required:



1) kick drum

2) low and high tom toms

3) log drum (or set of woodblocks)

Conceivably, any flat wooden object (such as a table) could be used, provided that striking it on different points of its surface will produce slightly different sounds.

4) brake drum

5) ride cymbal (at first set so that its edge is lightly touching the F and E of the crotales, and moved later to resonate freely when struck)

Also required:

- vibraphone (with motor and prepared during the piece with aluminum foil)
- lower octave of crotales
- small squares of aluminum foil
- scotch tape

Filled noteheads refer consistently to hard mallet selection, open noteheads to soft mallets.

Notes for strings:

ord = ordinario

m_{sp} = molto sul ponticello

1/2 clt = half col legno tratto (play with equal portions wood and hair)

Program notes:

Headless Monkey Attack stems from an idea I had for a "band" (and the premiere may - in a sense - mark its founding). The idea is for any group of people - musicians or non-musicians; instrumentalists, vocalists, electronic musicians, dancers, video artists, pretty much anyone - to perform live with pre-produced electroacoustic tracks, which would be available as audio files and in conventionally notated score form ahead of time. Performers could compose their parts in advance (optionally with the aid of notated scores, for those performers who read music), or prepare improvised performances in advance, or improvise their parts with no preparation whatsoever. The distinctive sonic identity of the "band" would derive from the character of the fixed electroacoustic tracks, which must be carefully designed to fit cogently with a wide variety of instrument, vocal, and live electronic sounds.

This piece was composed in a similar spirit, but with Transit specifically in mind. I produced the fixed electroacoustic track to fuse neatly with Transit's specific instrumentation, and all the parts are either composed out or framed as improvisations with limited parameters. The work could, however, adapt to a different group of performers and still retain its identity. So, in a sense, all the members of Transit have just joined my new band.

Headless Monkey Attack

for Transit

Ryan Carter

Quasi impromptu (with a good deal of rhythmic freedom, except where indicated)

0:00

Bass Clarinet (transposed)

Percussion

Piano

Violin

Cello

Tape

bowed crotales buzzing against ride cymbal (set large thin ride cymbal between F and E of crotales, loosely touching both)

Prepare top two octaves of piano by applying scotch tape to strings. (prepared notes indicated with rectangular noteheads)

change bow as needed

change bow as needed

p *f* *msp* *mf* *p*

2 0:20

B. Cl.

Perc.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Tape

ord

ord

f *p* *mp* *p* *f*

f *p* *mp* *p* *f*

4
3 0:40

B. Cl.

Perc.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Tape

4 1:00 1:18

B. Cl.

Perc.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Tape

1:26

6 $\text{♩} = 160$ precise synchronization with the tape is not necessary except where indicated by arrows (e.g., m. 14)

B. Cl.

Perc.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Tape

with pedal

(Rhythm in bars 6-9 is heavily distorted. Clearer cues are provided in bars 10 and 12)

↓ (sync here)

B. Cl.

Perc.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Tape

log drum (freely vary playing position on log drum while continuing to play even 16th-notes with hard inner mallets)

vibes (motor off)

mp without pedal

mp (RH)

ff (LH)

II I II III

msp