

For Zero

*for vibraphone, cymbals, bass drum, electronics, and
(optional) mobile devices*

commissioned by and written for Joseph Gramley

*Kojiro Umezaki
2010*

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For Zero
for Joseph Gramley

Methodical, from Trepidation to Ease

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$\text{♩} = 108$

Vibraphone

mp

Vibraphone (recorded)

14

Vib.

mp

Vib.

29

Vib.

Vib.

42

Vib.

Vib.

54

Vib.

Vib.

67

Vib.

Vib.

78

Vib.

Vib.

molto rit.

0'00"

Carefree and Comfortable

87 $\text{♩} = 79$

Vib.

Cym.

B. D.

Vib.

98


Vib.

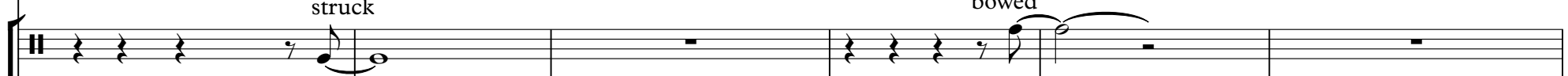
Cym.


B. D.

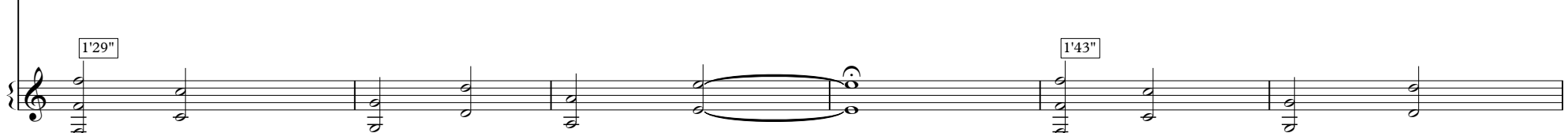
Vib.

107

Vib. 

Cym. 

B. D. 

Vib. 

113

Vib. 

Cym. 

B. D. 

Vib. 

molto rit.
♩ = 40

PROGRAM NOTES

In the end, what seems most central to this piece is that it follows a process of accumulation and its subsequent reversal. The opening descending dyads followed by a repeating bass line over which the melody eventually enters all feed into an electronically sustained accumulation of sound. Then, a pivot. The process reverses in a slightly different context, each new note subtracting itself from the amassed sonic material until none remains...

...and/or is passed on. Fulfilling the original concept for this piece—the sharing of material created during the performance—involves others "grabbing" pieces of the accumulation as a form of transference.¹

It feels worth mentioning that alongside working on this piece was reading Charles Seife's wonderful *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*.² Embracing zero as its own entity and an equal partner to infinity, among many other attributes, was an attractive thought to reflect upon.

Commissioned by Joseph Gramley in connection with an anniversary (the nature of which is hardly disguised in the title), it was originally written for vibraphone and marimba, the latter played by Haruka Fujii, for the premiere at the Julliard Summer Percussion Seminar Faculty Recital in July 2010.

¹ See <http://www.healthyboys.com/ForZero/> for information on the mobile application used to do this wirelessly.

² New York: Viking, 2000.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

- * Of the three cymbals, one can be without sizzles, preferably the one with the lowest frequencies (i.e. largest), to allow for slightly more variety.
- * Consider experimenting with a slightly muted vibraphone sound to reduce the duration of the decay of each note.
- * There is a 10 beat, silent countdown at 108 bpm at the beginning of the movie: "10, 9, 8, 7,..." It then starts counting from measure 1, beat 1.
- * At measure 85, the counter in the movie switches from measure:beat to "stopwatch" timecode. The score indicates approximate times for certain key measures in the recorded vibraphone part.
- * Despite the audio in the movie ending at 2'50", the movie continues to display timecode (in silence) until 4'00" so that the movie does not stop abruptly.

FILES

The following files are included in the online download (after unzipping the archive file):

- ForZero_LessRecVib_Noise.mov (backing track w/ video timecode)
- ForZero_LessRecVib_NoNoise.mov (backing track w/ video timecode)
- ForZero_MoreRecVib_Noise.mov (backing track w/ video timecode)
- ForZero_MoreRecVib_NoNoise.mov (backing track w/ video timecode)
- ForZero.pdf (the score)
- ForZero_RoughMix_061012.mp3 (a rough mix of a new version for the work)

There are four options for the movie files:

ForZero_LessRecVib_Noise.mov
ForZero_LessRecVib_NoNoise.mov
ForZero_MoreRecVib_Noise.mov
ForZero_MoreRecVib_NoNoise.mov

"LessRecVib" corresponds to less recorded vibraphone, which best reflects the score.

"MoreRecVib" adds to the recording the lower register vibraphone part starting from measure 38 until 84. In that way, the performer can play the melody without playing the bass line.

"Noise" corresponds to the filtered noise parts that accompany the cymbals and bass drum in the second half of the piece. Use the "NoNoise" counterparts to perform the work without the filtered noise.

The score matches the "LessRecVib" versions, but it should be easy to figure out how it works with the "MoreRecVib" versions as well. The "noise" parts double the cymbal and bass drum parts, so they are not represented in the score.

There are a few extra notes in the recorded vibraphone part as compared to the score. That may just be an inconsistency to be kept for now. *Details to be added here.*

The counter/timecode displayed in the movie is slightly ahead of the recording. The plan is to resolve this in the near future.