Scholarly Program Notes for Graduate Percussion Recital: Javier Alvarez's Temazcal, Andrew Thomas's Merlin, David Lang's Anvil Chorus, Toshio Ichiyanagi's Rhythm Gradation, Kevin Put's And Legions Will Rise, and Ben Wahlund's Hard Boiled Capitalism and the Day Mr. Friedman Noticed Google is a Verb

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by

James William Vilseck

B.M.E., Morehead State University, 2014

A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master of Music Degree.

School of Music
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
May 2017
SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES FOR GRADUATE PERCUSSION RECITAL: JAVIER ALVAREZ’S TEMAZCAL, ANDREW THOMAS’S MERLIN, DAVID LANG’S ANVIL CHORUS, TOSHI ICHIYANAGI’S RHYTHM GRADATION, KEVIN PUT’S AND LEGIONS WILL RISE, AND BEN WAHLUND’S HARD BOILED CAPITALISM AND THE DAY MR. FRIEDMAN NOTICED GOOGLE IS A VERB

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James William Vilseck

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Music
in the field of Music

Approved by:

Dr. Christopher Morehouse, Chair

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Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
April 3, 2017
AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF
JAMES VILSECK, for the Master of Music degree in MUSIC, presented on APRIL 4, 2017, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

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MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Christopher L. Butler

This research paper examines the works performed by the author in his graduate percussion recital. Works include Javier Alvarez’s Temazcal, Andrew Thomas’s Merlin, David Lang’s Anvil Chorus, Toshi Ichiyanagi’s Rhythm Gradation, Kevin Put’s And Legions Will Rise, And Ben Wahlund’s Hard Boiled Capitalism And The Day Mr. Friedman Noticed Google Is A Verb. Topics covered for each work included a brief composer biography, background information of the work, analysis, and performance tips.
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CHAPTER 1

JAVIER ALVAREZ’S TEMAZCAL

Javier Alvarez is a Mexican-born composer who started his musical career studying clarinet and composition in Mexico City. He later studied at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee and the City University in London. Alvarez’s composition style combines his Latin-American roots with European symphonic tradition. Specifically, he is known for his works which combine solo instruments with electro-acoustic sounds derived by the same instrument. Alvarez compares electroacoustic music to origami in that they are both “activities in which language and materials are magically bound together, where invention is experienced as it is being produced, and language unfolds as it is invented.”¹ Alvarez has won numerous awards for his music, such as the Prix Euphonie d’Or at Bourges.

_Temazcal_ is a work for solo maracas and tape composed in 1984. Originating from a Nahuatl word, an ancient Aztec tribe, _temazcal_ means “water that burns” and is inspired by the maraca playing of Latin-American Music.² In many Latin-American countries the maracas are accompanimental. An exception is in the Venezuelan flatland where maracas take a more soloistic role. The Venezuelan use of the maracas is the most focused influence of the maraca material within _Temazcal_. The work is dedicated to Luis Julio Toro and was first performed at the Electronic Music Association of Great Britain series in London in January 1984.


A temazcal is a permanent sweat lodge originated by pre-Hispanic indigenous people in Mesoamerica. Constructed from volcanic rock and cement and formed in the shape of a circular dome, temazcals are used as part of a healing ceremony to purify the body after exertion, or healing the sick. Its tradition is still used today in indigenous cultures of Mexico and Central America for spiritual and health reasons.

The score of Temazcal consists of two parts, graphic notation for the tape and short rhythmic cells for the maracas. It should be used more as a map of possible realizations rather than a definitive chart. No indication of phrase length or the number of repeats is given to the performer, with the exception of the conclusion of the work. The use of rhythmic cells with the ambiguity of the provided score for the accompaniment requires the player to carefully memorize each phrase, an action highly encouraged by the composer. This allows cohesion between the live elements, prerecorded elements and improvisation.

Most of the maraca material is based upon traditional rhythmic ideas found in Latin American folk music, specifically in the Joropo style of maraca performance. Alvarez states that due to the limited timbre of maracas, the objective of the rhythmic cell patterns played by the maracas is to interact with the rhythmic objects on the tape. The maracas are also used to supply the high frequencies of the work. In order to create variation, Alvarez supplies a main rhythmic cell for each phrase and occasionally provides two or three supplementary patterns. The performer responds to the pulse and objects on the tape and chains rhythmic cells together in any

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4 Alvarez, “Rhythm as Motion Discovered,” 214.
order to create larger pattern strands. Combination and ornamentation of the rhythmic cells are highly encouraged by Alvarez.

![Figure 1.1. Example of rhythmic cells from the performance notes of Temazcal by Javier Alvarez.](image)

On the tape, Alvarez attempts to use variation and transformation of rhythmic objects under repetition. While a majority of the tape consists of synthesized sounds, a portion of the material was recorded by live instruments, such as two bamboo rods. The harp is an example of an instrument which was sampled as a live instrument and transformed electronically. A variety of textures were created by repeating and speeding up the harp as much as six time the original speed. The notation of the tape on the score is quite loose, but still accurately demonstrates what can be heard. At times, a brief description of the sounds and layers in the tape are provided in the score. The only instance of traditional notation from the tape material is the final section, which represents a complete return to the Joropo style, both in the tape and the maracas.

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6 Alvarez, “Rhythm as Motion Discovered,” 214.

7 Ibid., 220.
Figure 1.2. Javier Alvarez, *Temazcal.* Notation of the tape is on the top staff. The rhythmic cell is provided in the bottom staff.

The information provided for the solo maraca part consists of short rhythmic cells of two to four sixteenth notes in length. The performer is provided one or more cells in each phrase and is able to switch to any of the provided cells or a variation of the cell at their discretion. The only specifically notated measure is the final measure of the work which pairs the performer with the tape in a final cadence. The player can ornament and vary each pattern, as well as improvise throughout the piece. Alvarez welcomes this individuality:

In each section, the complexity of the strands is thereafter left to the player and results from his reactions to the motions suggested to him by the pulses on tape. This is aesthetically very attractive to me, in two senses. Firstly, in that the performer must, by the very nature of the work, engage in active listening, and almost dance in order to pull the piece together. Secondly, this simple approach breaks away from the concept of the tape as a straight-jacket: in *Temazcal* it is possible to interpret freely the suggested material, but even under these apparently loose conditions, synchronization points invariably remain extremely accurate while the response to the material on tape remains seemingly personal.

The idea of spatial magnitude is another concept explored by Alvarez. The score provides a layout and specifications for four speakers to play the tape in four corners surrounding the audience. In a poetic way, Alvarez wants the tape to simulate a gigantic maraca. The audience, within the space of the four speakers, would ideally feel as if they are inside of the giant maraca

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9 Alvarez, “Rhythm as Motion Discovered,” 218.
where they can feel the movement and resonance of the beads hit the inner walls like a magnified instrument.¹⁰

When performing Temazcal, careful consideration must be given to the material on the tape. Developing some form of transcription of the tape material is a recommended practice strategy.¹¹ The author has found this particularly helpful since much of the tape is not divided into standard phrase lengths. In fact, most phrases do not end on strong beats and often end within a subdivision of the beat. Phrases that do end more comfortably often change tempo. It is important to know and anticipate these meter and tempo changes to allow the improvisation to flow freely, similar to knowing the chord changes in a jazz chart.

In addition to knowledge of the tape, a good vocabulary of skills for Venezuelan maraca playing is necessary.¹² This is difficult due to the limited number of educational sources available on this type of playing, especially printed in English. While developing these skills, it is recommended that one find video resources of authentic playing. Such artists might include Wilmer Montilla, Manuel Alejandro Rangel, and Juan Ernesto Laya. One can also explore articles on maraca playing, such as those by Brad Meyer.¹³

Temazcal stands out in percussion literature due to lack of published maraca solos, which is understandable due to the improvised nature of the instrument in traditional contexts. The

¹⁰ Alvarez, “Rhythm as Motion Discovered,” 220.


¹² Ibid., 49.

improvised nature of the piece has led to an expanded variety of interpretations by many percussionists. The flexibility of the work continues to inspire more performances and increase awareness of modern Joropo music.
CHAPTER 2

ANDREW THOMAS’S MERLIN

Andrew Thomas is an American composer and pianist born in Ithaca, New York. A graduate from Cornell University and the Juilliard School, he has studied with many prolific composers such as Karel Husa, Nadia Boulanger, and Elliott Carter. Later in his life, Thomas became the chairman of the composition department of the Pre-College Division at Juilliard. He is considered to be a world-class educator and has been awarded a Distinguished Teacher Citation from the White House Commission of Presidential Scholars.

Merlin is a two-movement solo composed for marimbist William Moersch and requires a four and a half octave marimba. The work was originally titled “Two Pieces for Solo Marimba,” but William Moersch pressured Thomas for an original title and he later changed it. The title comes from Thomas’s experience reading the poem Merlin, by Edwin Arlington Robinson while composing the work. The poem, Merlin, is a long narrative about the legend of King Arthur and the destruction of his Court. Thomas based the marimba solo on two quotes from the poem:

[Movement 1]
GAWAINE, GAWAINE, what look ye for te see,
So far beyond the faint edge of the world?
D’ye look to see the lady Vivian,
Pursued by divers ominous vile demons
That have another king more fierce than ours?
Or think ye that if ye look far enough
And hard enough into the feather west
Ye’ll have a glimmer of the Grail itself?
And if ye look for neither Grail nor lady,
What look ye for to see, Gawaine, Gawaine?

[Movement 2]

….Time’s way with you and me
Is our way, in that we are out of Time
And out of tune with Time.\(^{15}\)

The first movement is a slow and lyrical chorale employing tremolos to sustain vast harmonies. The score specifies the use of independent rolls, a form of tremolo where the sustain is cause by rapid rotation of the two mallets in an individual hand, thus creating a separate roll in each hand simultaneously. Many performers of this movement choose to play the traditional double vertical roll, where both mallets in a single hand strike simultaneously, at louder dynamics, or sometimes the entire length of the piece.

The pitch-set collections of this movement give an ominous feeling of anticipation which is reflected in the text. The movement is highly connected to the text. There is a brief reprise of the opening measures in m. 41 at the end of the movement which is in relation to the repeat of the first and last line of the poem excerpt. There are also ten lines of the poem and ten phrases of music which are separated by either rests of a breath mark. Harmonically, the movement does not follow traditional voice leading and has an unusual progression, switching between moments of triadic stability and instability.\(^{16}\)

The second movement is often referred to as “Time’s Way,” pulled from the first line of the text. Its main motivating factor is rhythm. This basic idea again relates to the text in the way time relates to rhythm and how the word “Time” is capitalized in the excerpt of the poem this movement is based upon. Highlighted by the term presto, the second movement mostly employs streaming sixteenth notes throughout. These sixteenth notes are organized in a manner where the


\(^{16}\) Parks, 68.
meter is not clear to a listener. Much of the work is in 6/8 but the groupings of sixteenth notes are in different combinations of two or three. Even within the opening bars, the groupings are different each measure. Time is supposed to seem pliable and unsteady even as the rhythm is non-changing. Arguably, the most difficult aspect of this movement is the fast tempo. This is most apparent at moments requiring the soloist to simultaneously strike three or four mallets playing sixteenth notes, such as m. 28 and the final measures of the piece.

The material of the second movement is largely non-repetitive in terms of pitch, but some common rhythmic themes and motives help to create cohesion. A common pattern used in a couple of different ways begins at m. 37. The right hand alternates between two chords, usually of a similar interval or spread on the keyboard, creating a perceived melody while the left hand alternates between three separate pitches. While the order the hands strike the keyboard remains the same, the pattern of two chords in the right hand over the pattern of three in the left hand displaces each new measure from the previous one. This idea is transformed and used in nearly every passage of the solo. At m. 57, as well as the passage at m. 70, a different pattern is used between the hands. Measure 104 introduces a similar pattern with double verticals in both hands, requiring the performer to eye four intervals on the keyboard at once. This instance of both hands striking chords is more of an introduction to a double vertical idea which isn’t fully utilized until m. 182. Another variation of the two over three idea is m 121. The roles of the hands have reversed. The left hand now plays the alternating chords while the right hand places a single tone binding the sixteenth notes together.
The final segment of the movement, starting at m. 201, is the most virtuosic moment of the work and quite possibly one of the most virtuosic moments in the solo marimba repertoire. The performer plays a run of thirty-second notes up the keyboard, in octaves from the lowest F to the highest F. At this point the player reverses the run and continues all the way down to the lowest F, only to ascend again. From here the performer simultaneously strikes the lowest F and B in the left hand and the highest two Cs in the right hand, a spread from lowest to highest of 4.5 octaves, or the entire length of the minimum required marimba size. In order to achieve such spreads, a performer must bend their knees and get as low as possible so the shoulders are more parallel with the keyboard. From here they must get the wrists as parallel to the keyboard in order to accurately strike the notes. Fortunately, the right hand immediately descends while the left hand remains stationary, allowing some relief as the spread decreases. The right hand plays an altered whole tone scale as it descends the entire keyboard, ending with the left hand on F and B, the same notes the first movement ended on, and the right hand on D and G, the same notes the first movement started on. Interpretations of this final segment vary greatly. Percussionist Ben Charles has created a comparison of different professional performances to get insight in to

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Many performers opt to allow more space and rubato within the section to make it more achievable.

Figure 2.2. Andrew Thomas, *Merlin*, second movement, mm. 203-5. The virtuosic passage from the end of the second movement. The large spread is shown on the far right.

*Merlin* joined the marimba repertoire at a time when the marimba was becoming a more prominent solo instrument in western music. It is notable that the work was written by a well-known non-percussionist composer. Due the challenges the work entails, *Merlin* should only be attempted by advanced students and professionals, where the work is common place in recitals and competitions. It will likely remain so, even as the marimba repertoire continues to expand.
CHAPTER 3

DAVID LANG’S ANVIL CHORUS

American composer David Lang has completed degrees at Stanford University, University of Iowa, and Yale University. His teachers include Lou Harrison, Jacob Druckman, and Henri Lazarof. Lang’s music has been described as totalist or post-minimal and he has composed for a large variety of settings. He is widely known for co-founding Bang on a Can, a new music organization with his Yale colleagues Julia Wolfe and Michael Gordon. He currently lives in New York City and serves as composition faculty at the Yale School of Music.

Composed in 1991, Anvil Chorus was commissioned by the Fromm Foundation and written for famous multi-percussionist Steve Schick, who premiered the work at the Bang on a Can Marathon held at the La Mama Theatre in New York City. Taking inspiration from preindustrial blacksmiths, it is a loud and raucous work. On a large project, blacksmiths would devise systems of counting in order to avoid hitting each other. For example, they would strike on predetermined beats creating various rhythms groups. In Anvil Chorus, a single percussionist replicates this idea by playing various rhythmic material at different speeds.

Within certain guidelines, Lang allows the player to choose their own instruments. The score specifies three groups of metal instruments: three resonant metals, four non-resonant metals, and four foot pedals. In addition, two woodblocks and a pedal bass drum are required. The instruments within each group should complement each other while remaining inherently different from the other groups, as the rhythmic material within different sections rarely switch between groups. In order for a listener to clearly interpret the formal structure of the piece, the

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performer must distinguish the various rhythmic structures played by the individual groups. While the proper instrumentation for the work was experimental throughout its first performances, Schick now performs this piece using steel pipes with relatively pure pitch for the resonant metals, break drums for the non-resonant metals, and two cowbells and two tam-tams for the foot pedals. Similar to Schick, the author used pipes and break drums for the resonant and non-resonant metals. The foot pedals consisted of two cymbal stacks, a thunder sheet, and a metal tub.

Schick and Lang were old, school friends and had a largely informal collaboration on the piece. The first rehearsals took place by phone. The informal relationship of the performer and composer allowed the work to develop gradually over time. After the first couple performances of the work, Lang and Schick explored different options of instrument and mallet choice. By the time the piece was first recorded in 1993, a more fixed version of the piece was finalized. While the information of the score was never changed, the interpretation and ideas of appropriate instrument choices evolved.

\[\text{21 Schick, 31.}\]

\[\text{22 Ibid.}\]
The beginning of the work immediately introduces one of the overarching concepts of the piece, decrescendo eight notes on the resonant metals. While one hand plays these eighth notes, the other hand plays isolated attacks on the lowest three non-resonant metals, often paired with a foot pedal.

The second section of the work is introduced without break. The melody is taken over by the lower woodblock, augmented by the high woodblock at rare moments. The other hand is playing on the non-resonant metals and is paired with a foot pedal and note length (Fig. 3.2; the pairings will be referred to by their number in the figure.) Each pattern begins with the foot pedal and its corresponding non-resonant metal the sixteenth note after. This begins with pairing 3 and alternates with pairing 2. After a few repetitions, pairing 4 is introduced at m. 69. It isn’t until m. 94 when the final pairing, pairing 1, is introduced. This is also the first occurrence of the lowest foot pedal and the highest non-resonant metal in the piece. The wood blocks continue their melody over the pairings throughout. The different length of the patterns give an illusion
of the pulse changing, each change initiated by a foot pedal. The pedal bass drum is not played in this section.

The third main section brings back the decrescendo eight notes from the top of the piece while introducing a new, repeating groove between the bass drum and pairing 1. Though remaining in constant 4/4 time, the resonant metals continue to shift in time in a similar fashion as it was performed in the beginning of the piece.

The fourth section combines multiple elements from previous sections. Performed slightly slower, it utilizes the repeating groove between the foot pedals and highest break drum from the third section and the woodblock melody from the second section. The spaces between notes in the woodblock melody are filled by the resonant metals, creating a constant stream of sixteenth notes during the phrase. Similar to the repetition of the resonant metals in the third section, the foot pedal groove is an exact repeat. This provides dynamic direction within the phrase since the line of woodblock and resonant metals does not change dynamics throughout the entire phrase. The combination of both parts together requires a vast amount of control and independence between the limbs. A series of dramatic pauses finish the section, with each pause being interrupted by motives from the piece. The length of each pause is notated.

Figure 3.2. Pairings of non-resonant metals and foot pedals from m. 57 to m. 113.

<table>
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<th>Pairing</th>
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The fifth section of the piece again brings the resonant metal motive from the beginning of the piece. In this occurrence the resonant metals do not decrescendo. This phrase, in contrast with the constant dynamics of previous sections, incorporates a large crescendo. The resonant metals are played with the non-resonant metals. While the resonant metals maintain the pattern from the first phrase of the piece, the non-resonant metals have a new independent pattern. Using the numbers previously assigned, the order which the non-resonant metals are struck is 4-2-1-3, each being struck in patterns of five or six times. Intermittent metal foot pedals hits occur at the first note of each repeat of the non-resonant metal cycle. The foot pedals follow a pattern of 4-2-3-1, with an exception of the first occurrence which is 4-3-1. Lang explores various combinations of five and six for the non-resonant metals in this phrase. The first time through the cycle, each non-resonant metal is struck six times. The second time through, all are struck six times, except non-resonant 4, which is struck five times. The third time all are struck six times, except non-resonant metal 2, which is struck five times. The series of five is traded in order to non-resonant metals 1 and 3. In the next occurrence of the cycle, both non-resonant metals 4 and 2 are played five times. All combinations of five and six are explored until three of the non-resonant metals are stuck five times. Just before the beginning of the final section, each non-resonant metal is stuck five times. The cycle of the non-resonant metals ends before the resonant metals cycle does.

The final section of the work begins “suddenly a lot slower” while gradually accelerating to an unmarked tempo at the end. The idea of the decrescendo resonant metals returns but in a more similar fashion to the non-resonant metals in the previous phrase. The resonant metals start out being played eight times each, then one of them seven and the other eight. The pattern of exploring the options of increasingly diminishing intervals extends to the end of the piece where
both resonant metals are struck four times. Underneath the resonant metals is the time changing non-resonant metals pattern from the second phrase, this time accompanied with the bass drum intermittently.

*Anvil Chorus* fits well into the multiple percussion genre. Players are required to take a series of different instruments and blend them together to form a single, cohesive sound. The somewhat open instrumentation leads to limited freedom for the performer who is restricted by the idea of cohesion. Players should strive to distinctly show all layers within the piece as they attempt to portrait four blacksmiths simultaneously.
Toshi Ichiyanagi is a Japanese composer and pianist. He studied at the Julliard School and was deeply influenced by the ideas of John Cage. As he became an active pianist and composer, he would give experimental performances which often contained chance procedures. He returned to Japan in 1961 where he organized concerts and worked with Toru Takemitsu to organize the Orchestra Space Festival. He promotes both western contemporary music as well as Japanese traditional music.

*Rhythm Gradation* is a solo for four timpani. The work was commissioned by Atsushi Sugahara. Sugahara gave the first performance of the work on April 22, 1993 at Asahi Seimei Hall in Tokyo, Japan. The work lasts around eleven minutes. Unlike most works for timpani which use a single staff, *Rhythm Gradation* uses one staff for each of the four drums. Much of the piece relates back to the word “gradation,” which means a series of successive changes. While this is obviously most noted in rhythm, pitch is often in a state of gradation through the use of glissandi.

![Figure 4.1. Toshi Ichiyanagi, Rhythm Gradation, mm. 15-16.](image)

An example of the four staff notation and glissandi.

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The compositional device of glissando is highly utilized and is performed in a variety of ways. At the *meno mosso* in m. 15, the glissando is written in a way that is supposed to seamlessly switch from one drum to the next, creating one large glissando from the lowest E-flat to the highest G attainable on the timpani, covering an interval of a tenth. This glissando employs tremolo to sustain sound, but many other glissandi effects within the piece rely on the resonance of the drum to sound the glissando or switch to an often specified pitch. At times, Ichiyanagi specifies glissandi to quarter tone pitches.

Pitch changes in the work are common and often occur between multiple drums at once. This element makes the piece rather difficult to perform without tuning gauges, which allow the performer to see the approximate pitch of the tuned drums without out striking the head. While not a perfect system, tuning gauges are incredibly helpful to closely approximate the correct pitch, allowing the performer to make slight adjustments. This can prove particularly helpful in the long glissando in m. 15. If necessary, a performer can create tuning gauges using string, a weight, tape, and a marker. Tie the string to the weight and then wrap the string around the two tuning lugs above the tuning pedal. Tie the other end of the string to the pedal. Lay one piece of tape on the rim of the timpani adjacent to the string and place another piece of tape or a mark on a part of the string which lays above the tape. Using a tuner, find an exact pitch on the head and mark the location of the marker relative to its position on the tape. This can be done to all pitches on the drums. A set of four drums would take around a half hour to complete. This time, however, would be made up in saved rehearsal time for the piece.

While the work is written using traditional western notation, with pitches notated upon a five-line staff, non-standard notation dominates portions of the work, particularly in the final
phrases. The score is divided into four staves, one for each drum, rather than the standard single staff. Instead of being labeled by size, the drums are labeled on the staves by a general range of low, medium low, medium high, and high. In addition, the work does not contain any time signatures. Most measures are three eight notes in length. The four staff notation presents some interesting challenges to the performer. Some sections are so complex that it is quite difficult to read the multiple staves simultaneously without a large amount of preparation. Using notation software, a performer can combine all staves into one to facilitate reading. Another challenge that arises from this notation is the large number of pages in the score. Page turns are common and often inconvenient. The performer will need to find an alternate way of performing the piece, such as using poster board to affix multiple pages of the part, resulting in fewer page turns.

Figure 4.2. Toshi Ichiyanagi, *Rhythm Gradation*, mm. 172-75. The top example is from the original score. The bottom example shows mm. 171-6 after using notation software to combine all staves into one.

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24 Ichiyanagi, 9.
The notation takes on a completely different style starting at the bottom of page twelve. The traditional five-line staff is replaced with a single line. There is no indicated pitch of the single line and the pitch of the drum is instead determined by the note head’s location relative to the line. This leads to a somewhat aleatoric glissando effect for each drum, focusing only on the effect of the gradation in pitch rather than specified intervals. On page fifteen, the beams are now removed leaving only note heads at varying distances representing gradual *accelerandos* and *ritardandos*, another interpretation of the word gradation.

![Figure 4.3. Toshi Ichiyanagi, Rhythm Gradation, m. 235 (top) and m. 292 (bottom). Two examples toward the end of the piece showing extended notation and the absence of definite pitch.](image)

*Rhythm Gradation* is an unusual timpani solo. It is not focused upon melodic or rhythmic motives, but is instead about slight changes of time and pitch. Maximizing the various effect called for in the piece required advanced musical training and its challenge is possibly one of the reasons it is still as prominent as it is today.

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25 Ichiyanagi, 12.

26 Ibid., 15.
Kevin Puts is a Pulitzer Prize winning American composer. Born in St. Louis, he studied composition as well as piano at Yale University and the Eastman School of Music. His many teachers include Jacob Druckman, David Lang, Christopher Rouse, and Joseph Schwantner. His first opera, Silent Night, won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2012. Formerly a composer in residence of Young Concert Artists, he currently is a member of the composition department at the Peabody Institute and is the Director of the Minnesota Orchestra Composer’s Institute.27

And Legions Will Rise was composed in the summer of 2001. The work was commissioned by the Kobe Shinbun ensemble, consisting of marimbist Makoto Nakura, violinist Yayoi Toda, and clarinetist Todd Palmer. Kobe Shinbun premiered the work in October 2001 at the Matsukata Hall in Kobe, Japan. The work is about the power in all people to push through and transcend in times of crisis and struggle.28 Puts imagined war scenes in blockbuster films where masses of troops get ready before going off on a great battle. He believes we have forces like this inside us, which are ready to do battle when we are at our lowest moments. While the army marching in the movie was the imagined by Puts, the piece is really about is the gathering of strength and girding one has to do before an incredibly difficult task.29 Puts originally


28 Kevin Puts, And Legions Will Rise (Aperto Press, 2010).

intended to write a poem to accompany the piece incorporating his title, though this never
happened.\(^{30}\) Puts leaves the meaning of the title up to the performer’s imagination.

While commissioned for the Kobe Shinbun ensemble, the work was written at the request
of Makoto Nakura. He and Puts first met in 1996 while they were both staff for an organization
called Young Concert Artists.\(^{31}\) Puts was a composer in residence and Nakura was the first
marimba artist on the roster. As part of his residency, Puts’s first assignment was to write a piece
for Nakura. The end result was a marimba solo entitled *Canyons*, Puts’s first marimba
composition. After *Canyons* showed success, Nakura commissioned Puts for a second work, the
*Marimba Concerto*. These works built a friendship between Puts and Nakura and later lead to the
request of *And Legions Will Rise*. All of the original performers for *And Legions Will Rise* were
on staff for the Young Concert Artists alongside Puts and Nakura.

The instrumentation for *And Legions Will Rise* consists of a marimba, B-flat clarinet, and
violin. Puts comments on how freeing it was for his imagination to write for this combination of
instruments.\(^{32}\) The beginning moments of the piece represent this freedom, demonstrating Puts’s
realization of how the violin can sustain without having to breathe. He also comments how he
can write all three instruments in the same register without losing their individuality due to the
timbre differences of each instrument. The work itself was originally written as a show piece for
the marimba which later became virtuosic for all parts. After the first draft of the work, Nakura
believed the work was not flashy enough. In response, Puts composed a longer ending with more

\(^{30}\) Freshinknc, “Kevin Puts Fresh Ink Interview Pt. 2.”

\(^{31}\) Freshinknc, “Kevin Puts Fresh Ink Interview Pt 1” (video), posted Jan. 12, 2012, accessed
March 6, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0WwjE4gRuQ.

\(^{32}\) Ibid.
complex phrases for each instrument. He states the new ending started around a pedal D in the marimba, which could possibly be around rehearsal H in the music. Puts also imagined the idea of passing information from one instrument to another. This idea could be represented in the clarinet and marimba at rehearsal A, when the clarinet plays in canon with the marimba.

The work went under revisions in March 2009. The primary reason for the revisions was due to the large number of performances of the work. After the first edition of the piece, Puts did not expect a large number of performances due to the odd instrumentation. He did expect Nakura to perform the work often stating that when Nakura commissions a work he performs it many times. After the number of outside performances, Puts briefly re-examined the work. Only minor adjustments were made. The canon between the marimba and clarinet at rehearsal A was reversed. The original version had the clarinet play first with the marimba following. Puts found it odd to have the instrument with the softer attack first and switched the order for the revised version. At rehearsal G, some *pizzicato* notes from the violin were transferred to marimba. Puts said that in his timbral thoughts for the piece, the combination of *pizzicato* violin and marimba did not work as he expected. Other minor changes include simplifying meter. For example, Puts combined groupings of 3-3-2 into individual measures of common time.

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\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{figure51.png}
\caption{Kevin Puts, *And Legions Will Rise*, clarinet part, mm. 3-6 (left)\textsuperscript{33} and mm. 18-20 (right)\textsuperscript{34}. The three note motive on the left and a transformation of the motive on the right.}
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\textsuperscript{33} Puts, *And Legions Will Rise*, clarinet part, 1.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{35} Freshinknc, “Kevin Puts Fresh Ink Interview Pt 2.”
*And Legions Will Rise* consists of three main sections. The first section includes the beginning of the piece and extends to rehearsal G. Rehearsal G to rehearsal H is the second portion and is the slowest portion of the work. This section feels more painful and is about the sadness and difficulty of rising from a tragedy. Rehearsal H to the end is the final large section and is the most virtuosic. It involves rapid sixteenth notes for all parts, remaining equally difficult for each instrument.

The primary motive of the piece is a three note pattern stated immediately in the clarinet at the beginning of the piece. In order, these notes are A, B, and G-sharp (concert G, A, F-sharp) or root, second, and seventh scale degrees in a major key. The tonal pattern of ascending major second followed by a descending minor third is quite common throughout the work. In addition to being performed as melody, the pattern can be seen mixed in various other accompaniment patterns. At rehearsal E, one of the few unison moments of the piece, the transposed three note motive of F, G, and E is played above a pedal perfect fifth of D and A. A similar idea is observed at rehearsal M where the motive is accented during a series of sixteenth notes. Rehearsal G consists of the three note motive in various transpositions eventually leading to a pedal D in the marimba at rehearsal H. Occasionally the motive overlaps, with one pattern beginning upon the third note of a prior pattern. Puts transforms the motive by changing the order of the three note collection. The melody changes in m. 13 to where the notes are descending (C–B-flat–A and later B-flat–A-flat–G).

When performing *And Legions Will Rise*, it is important for each performer to understand their role in the ensemble and how their part fits with the other parts. Much of the score involves interplay between instruments. The marimba often articulates another instrument’s sustained note, e.g., the very beginning of the work between the marimba and the clarinet. The phrase at
rehearsal A is a particular challenge to put together. The marimba and clarinet are playing in canon and must subdivide individually due to the velocity of the rhythm and tempo. The violin, playing a legato melody over the canon, must be able to read the rhythms of the other instruments clearly while still subdividing in time due to a lack of clear anchor points over an extended period of time. Puts often annotated instructions on balance and blend for sections where there is duel accompaniment or solos as well as annotations to each phrase, such as *vigoroso*, *cantabile*, and *leggiero*. These brief descriptors are helpful when trying to bring out the emotions of the work.

*And Legions Will Rise* is an emotional work which effectively portrays the feelings Puts intended. A good variety of colors are created even with the limited instrumentation. This often occurs through the blending of different instruments, requiring a solid ear for each performer. Though rehearsed and studied, this work was not performed in the recital due to complications with personnel.
CHAPTER 6

BEN WAHLUND’S HARD-BOILED CAPITALISM AND THE DAY MR. FRIEDMAN NOTICED GOOGLE IS A VERB

Ben Wahlund is an internationally known composer, educator, and performer. He received degrees from University of Mary and Northern Illinois University. His compositions have won various awards including first place in the Quay Percussion Duo Composition contest and first in the Methanex “Symphony and Steel” Composition Contest. As a performer, Wahlund has found success in the United States and Europe, performing at the Montreaux Jazz Festival, multiple Percussive Arts Society International Conventions, and the Illinois Music Education Association Conference. He currently lives in Chicago where he is the Assistant Director of the Birch Creek Music Center, the director of percussion at Naperville Central High School, and a member of adjunct faculty at North Central College.

*Hard-Boiled Capitalism and the Day Mr. Friedman Noticed Google is a Verb* was composed in fall 2008 for multi-percussionist Michael Truesdell. It was premiered by Truesdell in the summer of 2009 at the Nancy Zeltsman Festival, which took place in Appleton, WI. The lengthy title originates from a quirky observation made by the Wahlund in the summer of 2006. Wahlund was reading two books, Milton Friedman’s *Capitalism and Freedom* and Thomas Friedman’s *The World is Flat*. Thomas Friedman reflected on the creation of Google and its impact upon the world. Wahlund considered the question of how Milton Friedman, considered as a grandfather of the “neo-con” movement based on his ideas of capitalism, would react to

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reading Thomas Friedman’s book. What would Milton Friedman think would happen to
capitalism with the area of intellectual property dramatically leveled by “googling?” Though the
name of the solo is timely, *Hard-Boiled Capitalism and the Day Mr. Friedman Noticed Google is a Verb* was conceived before the recession of 2008.

The solo is composed for a modified three and a half octave vibraphone. The piece
requires the lowest F-sharp, and the highest D, E-flat, E, and F to be placed above their pegs.
This prevents dampener pedal from muting those keys. Wahlund also requests the performer to
use the motor at the slowest setting possible. Wahlund composed the piece for vibraphone for
two reasons.\(^{38}\) First Truesdell requested it. Second, which Wahlund felt is often overlooked, is
due to the simplicity of the graduated metal bars on the vibraphone.

The work begins under the description “with reckless abandon and pensive music.”
While the pedaling is not always specified, Wahlund is detailed about specific mufflings. This
can be indicated by a breath mark, such as in m. 5 and m. 84, or in the form of dead strokes. It is
also indicated to manually dampen the prepared keys at times. The dead stroke allows the
striking of a tone without the resonance of the individual key. The combination of ringing notes
and dead strokes allows for multiple layers on top of complex chords. Multiple kinds of dead
strokes are also described. Starting at m. 38, the right hand performs a combination of open notes
and very aggressive, accented dead strokes. If possible, these dead strokes should also cause a
pitch bend. These dead strokes are layered on top of a legato, mostly-repeated left hand pattern.
In addition to the pitch-bending dead stroke, normal dead strokes are used starting at m. 52 as

well as normal staccato notes, which are specified as “no longer necessarily dead strokes” at m. 114.

Wahlund is specific with tempos, which are always measured by quarter note or eighth note length. Tempo changes occur often and each new tempo is indicated by an exact metronome marking. The piece begins at quarter note equals 175 beats per minute. This quickly changes to quarter note equals 92 beats per minute after the opening phrase. In some cases, Wahlund uses half beats to describe tempo, such as m. 104 where the tempo is listed as quarter note equals 86.5 beats per minute. With two exceptions, all tempo changes occur after a brief pause. In these cases with a pause, the two tempos have no notable relation to each other. The two instances of tempo change without break occur at m. 71 and m. 146. The tempo change at m. 71 does have a relation to the previous tempos. The fivelet subdivision played at quarter note equals 86.5 in m. 70 is equivalent in length to the sixteenth note at quarter notes equals 175 in m. 71. This is also supported by the accent placed on the second division of the quintuplet on count four of m. 70. It is a similar method of changing tempo to the way Elliot Carter does in “Eight Pieces for Four Timpani.” The other occurrence of instant tempo change at m. 146 shares the same tempo relation, from 86.5 to 175. However, this change does not have the smooth transition with fivelets which occur at m. 70 and the player basically needs to focus almost exactly doubling the tempo.

![Figure 6.1. Ben Wahlund, Hard-Boiled Capitalism and the Day Mr. Friedman Noticed Google is a Verb, mm. 70-71.](image)

Much of *Hard-Boiled Capitalism and the Day Mr. Friedman Noticed Google is a Verb* utilizes different musical layers played simultaneously. The use of sustain and dead strokes mentioned earlier, as well as rhythm and register help to differentiate between the different layers. The idea first occurs at m. 6 with a repeating A and B-flat in the right hand while the left hand players a descending melody off put by a sixteenth note each measure. Soon after in m 17, rapid figures are played by both hands while the prepared F-sharp is struck in-between events, creating a sustain underneath the fast playing. More independent lines occur at m. 22. Similar events to m. 22 later occur at m. 85 and m. 204 at the same tempo. Measure 37 is the first instance of an ostinato in the left hand with various figures in the right hand. Wahlund specifies aggressive dead strokes in rhythmic conflict with the ostinato. Measure 114 starts a new, more tonal theme which begins in two layers. A whole note layer, in the high register of the vibraphone, is added the next repetition of the four bar phrase. Starting in m. 122, a fourth layer is added for a few bars. A fifth layer begins around m. 134, which is labeled as “with menacing intent.” A similar four-layer idea occurs once more around m. 176, when the player begins to control the volume of the various layers.

Figure 6.2. Ben Wahlund, *Hard-Boiled Capitalism and the Day Mr. Friedman Noticed Google is a Verb*, mm. 122-4. An example of four-part layering.

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Hard-Boiled Capitalism and the Day Mr. Friedman Noticed Google is a Verb is a great modern addition to the vibraphone repertoire. It explores a wide range of possibilities incorporating the natural sustain of the vibraphone and a variety of colors to provide different grooves and styles. An audience should have little trouble finding a section of the piece they enjoy.


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