

Cheong Li

Impromptu III

for woodwinds, keyboard and pitched percussion

2011

Notes

This is a framework for performers to improvise. There is no full score for this piece but only two part-scores. One of the part-scores is provided for all woodwinds: two or more woodwind instruments, preferably some non-transposing (e.g. flute or oboe), and some transposing (clarinet in B-flat or A, alto flute in G, alto saxophone in E-flat, English horn in F, etc.). The other part-score is given to keyboard(s) (e.g. piano or harpsichord) and pitched percussion instrument(s) (e.g. xylophone, vibraphone or marimba).

Performance suggestions for woodwinds

1. The same part is used for all woodwind instruments as read; that means transposing instruments would actually sound lower/higher than the written pitch.
2. Instrumentalists can decide whether they would like to play a solo passage, play together at the same moment (in which case one of the players has to give a cue), play a time interval apart (as in imitation), or simply opt out and pause for a moment.
3. One of the woodwind instruments can be the leader and indicates the start and the end of the improvisation.
4. The other woodwind instrument(s) can choose whether they would like to imitate what the other instruments are playing, to play as an accompaniment, or to play a countersubject. They can also choose to hold a long note as a drone for a while.
5. Explore different dynamics, timbre and articulations.
5. The pitches are to be played in the given order, either from left to right or from right to left (retrograde). You can also play segments of the melody starting from any point, and it is perfectly all right to reiterate a note or repeat a group of notes. A possible way is to play the whole sequence completely at one point and as use it in segments at other moments.
6. The players can decide which notes are grouped together as a phrase. The players are also free to play the notes in any register.

Some suggestions for how to interpret the notes:
 1. longer or shorter notes; 2. grace notes



4. rubato / strict rhythm; 5. try grouping the same notes in different phrases;
 6. play in different dynamics, articulations and timbre (e.g. flutter-tongue, double-tonguing)



7. reiterate the same pitch, or a group of pitches. A more elaborate example:



What two or more instruments can do together:

1. exact or inexact imitation

2. organum

3. silence



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(a framework for improvisation)

Woodwinds
(transposed score)

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Performance suggestions for keyboard(s) and pitched percussion instrument(s)

1. One keyboard and one pitched-percussion is sufficient, but more players are allowed. If there are more players, it is suggested that players should leave room for each other, rather than all playing together at the same time.
2. The chords are to be played in the given order, either from left to right or from right to left (retrograde). You can also choose any segments from the sequence, and it is perfectly all right to reiterate a chord or repeat a group of chords.
3. The players can decide which chords are grouped together – e.g. you can play two adjacent chords simultaneously, overlapping them by holding the chords or by pressing the sustain pedal.
4. The players can choose to be a soloist, to imitate each other, to play as an accompaniment or simply opt out to leave room for the woodwinds to play alone.
5. Instead of playing block chords, they can also play them as broken chords.

Additional remarks (19 Oct 2011): it is good for the players to form a circle and be able to see each other for better interaction.

What keyboard / mallet instruments can do:

1. grouping the chords together - playing simultaneously or linking up the chords by holding a chord or by sustain pedal)
2. different articulations, dynamics and timbre
3. octave displacement



4. reiterating a chord, or a group of chords

5. Play the three pitches in the chord separately, as broken chord or grace notes



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keyboard(s) & pitched percussion

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