

Jake Adams

Somewhere Between

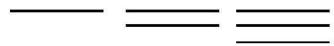
for pipa and electronics

Performance Details

Introduction for performers:

The overall duration of this piece is approximately 5 minutes, with each system being around 20 seconds long. The piece focuses on the idea of opposites and spectrums, exploring the space between pitch and noise, rhythm and aleatoricism, stillness and movement, and space and density. The performers should focus on exploring these spaces, communicating the find smooth changes between these ideas. The electronics part is split into two lines – one for the sustained pitched chord gestures and one for the ‘noise events’. When the score refers to ‘alternating chord’, a pitch from chord 1 will be selected, followed by chord 2, and continuing to alternate for the duration of the material.

Symbols:

	The greater the number of lines below a note, the faster it should be played
	Gesture to accelerate to the final number of lines
nat.	Normal right hand fretting pressure (opposite of xuan)
	An ornamental bend upwards with indeterminate pitch
	Quarter sharp
	Gradually add or reduce finger pressure in the left hand, changing between xuan and nat.
	Take cue from other part

Programme note:

Somewhere Between was composed as part of Psappha's 'Composing for Pipa' scheme. In this scheme, I was fortunate to work with pipa virtuoso Cheng Yu to compose a new piece for pipa and electronics. At the beginning of this process, it would be fair to say that I knew very close to nothing about traditional Chinese music or the pipa itself. Through Cheng Yu's guidance, *Somewhere Between* was created.

In my initial discussions with Cheng Yu, I was interested to know about the philosophical background of Chinese music as well as the practicalities of writing for the pipa. Through this discussion, I learned about how importance of Taoist beliefs around balance of opposites was of importance within pipa playing. This led me to start thinking about the spectrum of possibilities between two opposite ideas, and how seemingly polar opposite ideas such as pitch and noise both contain elements of each other (with an obvious connection to the Chinese philosophical concept of yin and yang). The primary spectrums being explored within the piece are pitch to noise, rhythm to aleatoricism, space to density, and stillness to movement. In our discussions, Cheng Yu suggested including electronics within the piece, which introduced an absolute opposite between a purely acoustic instrument and the electronics that uses pre-recorded materials. These two absolute opposites are connected through their explorations of the spectrums and how they interact to find the possibilities that these opposites offer.

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$$\boxed{1 = D} \quad (5, 1, 2, 5)$$

A Two colours, separated from each other

A The colours begin to slowly blur together

Pipa: 5 - - - - - 0 5 - - - - - 5 5 - - - - -

Electronics 1: Sustained 5 fades in

Electronics 2: Sustained 1 fades in

Pipa: - 0 5 - - - - - 5 - - - - - 5 - 5 - - - - - 0

Electronics 1: Sustained 1 fades in

Electronics 2: Sustained 2 fades in

Pipa: 1 → 2 - - 0 1 2 6 7 4 5 - - - - - 1 5 - 5 - - -

Electronics 1: Scattered bits of white noise quietly appear

Electronics 2: Scattered bits of white noise quietly appear

Pipa: - 0 1 → 2 - 4 - #4 - - - - - 0 1 5 5 - - - - -

Electronics 1: Pitches begin to fade out

Electronics 2: Pitches begin to fade out

B The colours begin to slowly blur together

Pipa: - - - 0 1 2 6 7 4 5 - 6 - #6 #6 - 6 - #6 6 - #6 - - - 0

Electronics 1: Silence

Electronics 2: Silence

Electronics 1: Chord: 1, 6, 7

Electronics 2: White noise returns

C The colours begin to slowly blur together

Pipa: - - - 0 1 2 6 7 4 5 - 6 - #6 #6 - 6 - #6 6 - #6 - - - 0

Electronics 1: Silence

Electronics 2: Silence

Electronics 1: Chord: 1, 6, 7

Electronics 2: White noise returns

Pipa

1 → 2 - - 0

4 6 7 - 1 7 7 7 7 - - 0

mp *f*

Elec.

Chord: 6, 7, 4, 5

Elec.

Pipa

2 3 5 - - 1 5 5 → 6 1 - - - 0

p *mf*

nat.

7 7 - 1 1 4 2 - - - 0

mp *f* *fp* *f*

Elec.

Chord: 7, 2, 4

Elec.

Noise starts lasting longer, fading in and out like waves

Pipa

2 - - - nat. 2 - 0 2 → 3 - - 0

pp *f* *mp* *p* *mf*

Elec.

Chord: 7, 2, 4 6

10 Alternating chords
Chord 1: 7, 2, 5
Chord 2: 3, 1

Elec.

C The line between the two colours is completely gone

Pipa

- - - - - 0

1 2 6 7 4 5 - 4 4 4 4 - 4 - 5 -

mp *f* *mf* *f*

Elec.

11 Silence

12 Alternating chords
Chord 1: 5, 1, 6
Chord 2: 4, 3

Elec.

5 Silence

6 Noise waves begin to have louder peaks

Pipa

5 6 6 1 - - - 3 7 6 5 - - - 0

p *f*

nat.

7 - - - - - 0

4 - - - - - 0

p *mf*

Elec.

13 Alternating chords
Chord 1: 4, 3
Chord 2: 2, 7

Elec.

Pipa

7 nat. 7 nat. 7 nat. 5 7 6 5 2 3 0

4 nat. 4 nat. 4 nat. 1 4 5 2 3 0

p *ff* *fp* *f* *fp* *f*

14 Alternating chords
Chord 1: 5, 7
Chord 2: 1, 6

7 Low rumble added under the noise

Elec.

Elec.

Pipa

1 2 6 7 4 5 nat. 4 4 4 5 6 #6 0

1 nat. 4 nat. 4 nat. 5 6 #6 0

p *mp* *fp* *mf* *fp* *f*

15 Alternating chords
Chord 1: 1, 6
Chord 2: 3, 2

16 Alternating chords
Chord 1: 3, 2
Chord 2: 7, 5

Elec.

Elec.

Pipa

7 7 7 3 2 2 2 6 6 6 6 1 2 6 7 5 2 7 1 5

4 4 4 2 2 2 6 6 6 6 1 2 6 7 5 2 7 1 5

2 2 2 6 6 6 6 1 2 6 7 5 2 7 1 5

ff *mf* *ff* *fp* *ff*

17 Alternating chords
Chord 1: 1, 5
Chord 2: 3, 6

8 Noise sounds begin to fade out slowly

Elec.

Elec.

Pipa

2 7 1 5 1 2 4 5 0

2 7 1 5 1 2 4 5 0

mf

D The colours slowly fade

18 Chord: 5, 1, 2, fading out to end

Elec.

Elec.

Pipa

1 2 6 7 4 5 0

1 2 6 7 4 5 0

p *mp*

9 Silence

19 Silence

Elec.

Elec.