

Jake Adams

Snow Blind

for two pipas, sanxian and Javanese gamelan (laras
slendro pathet manyura)

Performance details

Introduction for performers:

This piece can be performed with flexible instrumentation within the gamelan. The minimum suggested ensemble is slenthem, gendèr, gong, kempuls, kenongs and kendang dua. In larger ensemble versions of the piece, it is recommended to not include peking so that higher frequencies will not overwhelm the pipas and sanxian parts. When performing with a larger ensemble, the pipas, sanxian and gendèr may require some amplification, whilst in smaller ensemble versions the pipas and sanxian must scale their dynamics to the gamelan.

The whole piece is in irama dados. Gamelan garap is in pathet manyura, however due to the use of 5's in the middle of some gatra players will have to find some alternatives outside of the standard pathet. When a rest occurs at the end of a gatra, the previous note in the gatra is used as the sèlèh.

Performance symbols are only used in the sanxian when a particular technique is required. Outside of these specified techniques, the sanxian player is free to use techniques based on their own judgement. Performance symbols are all provided for the pipa. Due to tuning differences between the pipas and sanxian and the gamelan, the pipas and sanxian will need to tune their open strings to different pitches within the gamelan. The details of this retuning can be found below. The numbers used for pitches will sound the same across the ensemble, with the exception of slendro 1 in the gamelan, which will sound like a 7 in the pipas and sanxian.

Tuning:

Pipas:

6 = slendro 6
3 = slendro 3
2 = slendro 2
6 = slendro 6

Sanxian:

5 = slendro 5
2 = slendro 2
5 = slendro 5

Form (gamelan):

Buka – Ompak x2 – Ngelik – Ompak x2 – Ngelik – Ompak with suwuk

Programme Note:

Snow Blind focuses on combining the sounds of the Javanese gamelan and Chinese instruments. The piece is framed around a balungan (skeleton melody) which can be expressed both melodically and harmonically, allowing for the Chinese instruments to explore both possibilities whilst the gamelan still plays idiomatically. Due to the tuning differences between the two sets of instruments, there is a microtonal blurring of the balungan, inspiring the name of the piece.

Starting with a buka from the sanxian, the music alternates between two sections: the ompak (focusing primarily on the sanxian's performance of the balungan line working microtonally with the gamelan's, whilst the pipas take an accompaniment role) and the ngelik (where pipa 1 plays a solo accompanied by a simple and sparse gamelan line and the second time by pipa 2, whilst the sanxian responds to pipa 1 with lower pitched interjections to contrast with the rest of the ensemble). These two sections appear twice each, before finally returning to the ompak material in the gamelan, whilst the pipas and sanxian perform a chordal version of the balungan, sustained and blurred by constant luns and dynamic shifts.

This piece was composed for and is dedicated to He Sun, Zixuan Wen and Jiewen Fu.

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1 = C

Buka

Pipa 1 $\frac{4}{4}$ | | | |

Pipa 2 $\frac{4}{4}$ | | | |

Sanxian $\frac{4}{4}$ 0 3 - 3 | 0 $\sharp 4$ 5 2 - 2 | - - 2 7 | 0 $\sharp 4$ $\sharp 1$ 6 |

Gamelan $\frac{4}{4}$. . . V 6 . . . V 5 . . . ⑥

Ompak (irama dados)

Pipa 1 | 0 - $\overset{\star}{\underset{\underset{1}{\mid}}{3}}$ - - | - - - 0 | 0 |

Pipa 2 | 0 $\underset{\underset{2}{\mid}}{2}$ - $\overset{\star}{\underset{\underset{3}{\mid}}{3}}$ - | 0 | 0 - - $\overset{\star}{\underset{\underset{6}{\mid}}{\sharp 4}}$ |

Sanxian 0 $\underline{\underline{0\ 6\ 2\ 2}}\ \underline{\underline{2\ -\ -\ 1}}\ \underline{\underline{4\ 5\ 2\ -}}$ | - - - - | 0 - $\underline{\underline{3\ 2\ 4\ \sharp 5\ 6}}\ | - \underline{\underline{\sharp 5\ 6\ 7}} - - - |$

Gamelan 3 5 1 2 3 2 3 V . 3 5 6 V . . 5 6 ^ 1

Pipa 1 0 $\overset{\star}{\underset{\underset{2}{\mid}}{\sharp 2}}$ $\underline{\underline{3\ 5}}$ - | - $\underline{\underline{\sharp 5\ 6\ 2\ 3}}$ - - - 0 | 0 |

Pipa 2 $\overset{\star}{\underset{\underset{5}{\mid}}{5}}$ - $\overset{\star}{\underset{\underset{3}{\mid}}{3}}$ | - 0 | 0 0 $\underline{\underline{0\ 7\ 7\ 7\ 7}}$ | - $\overset{\star}{\underset{\underset{6}{\mid}}{6}}$ - - 0 |

Sanxian 0 | 0 $\underline{\underline{5\ 4\ \sharp 5\ 6\ 2}}$ | - $\underline{\underline{\flat 3\ 4\ 5\ 2}}$ - 7 - | - - $\underline{\underline{\sharp 4\ \sharp 1}}$ - 6 |

Gamelan 6 5 2 ^ 3 5 3 2 V . 3 2 1 V . 1 2 1 ⑥

Pipa 1

Pipa 2

Sanxian

Gamelan

p *mf* *fp* *fp* *mf*

pp *mf* *pp* *mf*

mf *mp* *mf* *mp* *pp* *mf*

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

Pipa 1

Pipa 2

Sanxian

Gamelan

p *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

mp *f* *mp* *mf* *mp*

mp *f* *mp* *mf* *mp*

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

Ngelik

Pipa 1

Pipa 2

Sanxian

Gamelan

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

p *mp* *p* *mf*

p *mp* *p* *mf*

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

8

Pipa 1

Pipa 2

Sanxian

Gamelan

2 • 3 6 • 2 • 5 • 1 3 2 1 ⑥

Ompak 3

[illegible]

The musical score is for a piece in 6/8 time, consisting of 16 measures. It features four staves: Pipa 1, Pipa 2, Sanxian, and Gamelan.

Pipa 1: The first staff uses a simplified notation with dashes for notes and vertical lines for bar lines. It includes dynamic markings *mp* (measures 7-10) and *p* (measures 11-16). The final measure has a fermata over the note 6.

Pipa 2: The second staff uses a similar notation to Pipa 1. It includes dynamic markings *pp* (measures 7-10) and *p* (measures 11-16). The final measure has a fermata over the note 6.

Sanxian: The third staff uses a notation with numbers and accidentals. It includes dynamic markings *mp* (measures 7-10) and *p* (measures 11-16). The final measure has a fermata over the note 6.

Gamelan: The bottom staff is a sequence of numbers and symbols: 6, 5, 2, 3, 5, 3, 2, •, 3, 2, 1, •, 1, 2, 1, and a circled 6. Above the numbers are two sets of symbols: Λ (above 3, 5, 2) and V (above •, •).

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$\bullet \quad \bullet \quad \bullet \quad \begin{matrix} \text{V} \\ 6 \end{matrix}$
 $\bullet \quad \bullet \quad \bullet \quad \begin{matrix} \text{V} \\ 5 \end{matrix}$
 $\bullet \quad \bullet \quad \bullet \quad \textcircled{6}$

[illegible]

$\bullet \quad 6 \quad \bullet \quad \overset{\cdot}{2}$ $\bullet \quad \overset{\cdot}{2} \quad \bullet \quad \overset{\vee}{\overset{\cdot}{3}}$ $\bullet \quad \overset{\cdot}{2} \quad \bullet \quad \overset{\vee}{6}$ $\bullet \quad 5 \quad 6 \quad \overset{\wedge}{\overset{\cdot}{1}}$
 $\overset{\cdot}{2} \quad \bullet \quad \overset{\cdot}{3} \quad \overset{\wedge}{\bullet}$ $\bullet \quad 6 \quad \bullet \quad \overset{\vee}{\overset{\cdot}{2}}$ $\bullet \quad 5 \quad \bullet \quad \overset{\vee}{\overset{\cdot}{1}}$ $3 \quad 2 \quad 1 \quad \textcircled{6}$