Monkey in the Middle

for percussion quartet

Jake Berran (2025)

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Full Score

Instrumentation

Player 1: 3 graduated triangles

Player 2: 3 graduated metal pipes (lower-pitched than triangles on average)

Player 3: 3 graduated wood blocks (mid- to high-pitched)

Player 4: 3 graduated drums (tom-toms or 2 congas + bongo)

Performance Notes

• The beaters indicated are meant to achieve the following sound qualities:

Triangles: plastic mallets = inarticulate \mathcal{E} ringing; thin beater = articulate \mathcal{E} less ringing; medium beater = articulate \mathcal{E} ringing

Metal Pipes: rubber mallets = clear & less bright; plastic mallets = brighter; metal mallets = brightest

Wood Blocks: rubber mallets = less bright; plastic mallets = brighter

Drums: yarn mallets = sustained; sticks = articulate

- Let ring unless damping is specified (+ over a note or ϕ after a note).
- Rolls should always be single-stroke.
- Aleatoric notation is explained each time it occurs.
- In mm. 1-4, each player may want to hold one of each specified beater.
- In mm. 95–96, the dotted-line arrow indicates to gradually dampen the instrument.
- It is ideal to perform from the score given the subtle dynamic and rhythmic differences between players.

Program Notes

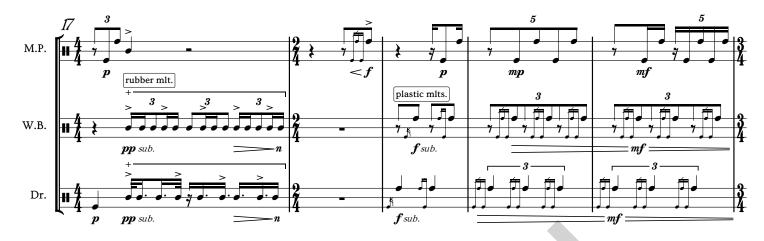
Just as three kids can endlessly entertain themselves with a ball, I sought to play with my own limited setup: four players, each with one type of instrument in three sizes. Like the game "Monkey in the Middle," the players initially exchange one-on-one with the occasional mediator, and the low and high pitches hog the metaphorical ball from the middle pitch. The music intensifies until the middle pitch takes hold and runs with it, starting a series of more abstract games and permutations of pitches and players.

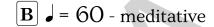
Duration: 6 minutes

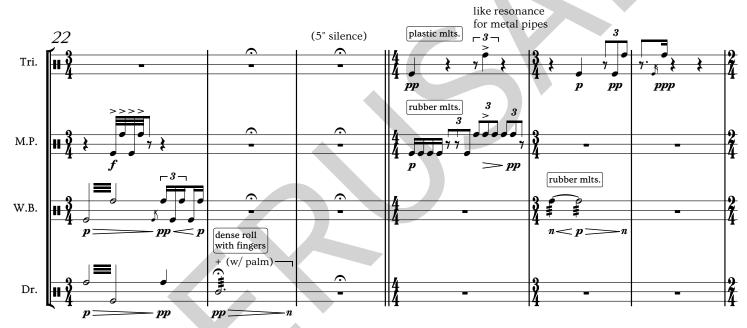
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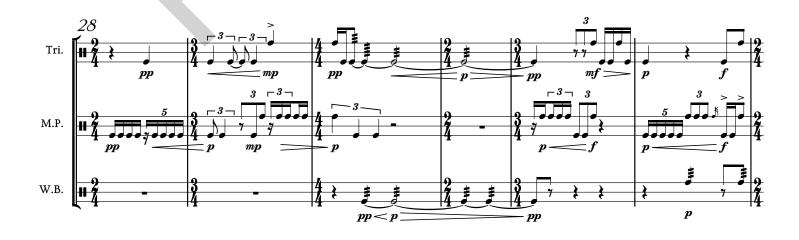
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J = 90 - turbulent

