

undercurrent

for percussion quartet

Ronald Keith Parks

Materials



Two concrete blocks stacked on one another.



Two bricks stacked on one another.

Although the cement blocks and bricks are depicted in a position which suggests the holes are in a horizontal position (for ease of recognition in the score) the holes should be in a vertical position (i.e. the holes should face the ceiling).



Two pieces of 7 3/4" textured surface ceramic tiles



Two pieces of 5 3/4" textured surface ceramic tiles.

Tile with a smooth finish will not produce the desired sounds. Stack the pieces of tile flat on the table with the textured surfaces together.



Two ten-pound metal exercise weights.



Two five-pound metal exercise weights.

The metal exercise weights should not be coated with vinyl or any other substance that might dampen or alter the sounds. They should be stacked flat on the table in a way that produces maximum resonance.



Two metal theater fly-house counter weights ca. 13 3/4" x 5" x 1" stacked flat on the table.



A small container partially filled with Gravel. Additional containers are required when pouring the gravel.
Three sizes: S = ca. 1/2", M = ca. 1", and L = ca. 2".



A small container partially filled with metal bolts.
Three sizes: S = ca. 1/4" x 2 1/2", M = ca. 3/8" x 3 3/4", and L = ca. 1/2" x 4 3/4".

Performance Notes



Slide the materials back and forth to produce the indicated rhythm.



Continuously slide or rotate the materials in the indicated manner. The numbers [1-10] denote the speed at which the materials should be rotated or slid [1 = as slow as possible, 10 = as fast as possible]. A dashed arrow signifies incremental change in this rate. Note that the speed at which materials are slid or rotated does not always correspond with dynamics.

FLAT

Leave the materials stacked flat on one another while sliding.

ANGLE

Hold the top piece at an angle while sliding or rotating. Vary the contact point between the materials (i.e. edge -> corner -> edge etc.)



Indicates a transition from one method of performance to another.



Stir or pick up the bolts or gravel with the hands. The rate of stirring is denoted as either fast or slow. The indication pick up instructs the performer to pick up the materials. Bolts should be rolled from one hand to the other after being picked up and should not be returned to their container until the indication put down is encountered. Gravel should be picked up then immediately poured slowly back into the container. Both acts of picking up and putting down the bolts should be audible.



Pour the gravel from one plastic container to another. The receiving container should not be completely empty. Enough gravel should be used so pouring can be sustained for approximately thirty seconds.



Scrape the bolt on the surface of the specified material. When rhythms are indicated a back-and-forth motion should be used. When longer note values are used the numbers [1-10] denote the speed at which the bolt should be scraped [1= as slow as possible, 10 = as fast as possible]. A dashed arrow signifies incremental change in this rate. Note that the speed at which the bolt is scraped does not always correspond with dynamics. Accents [>] should be performed by letting the threaded end of the bolt bounce naturally before commencing scraping.



Scrape the threaded portion of the bolt on the edge of the specified material. Note that the speed at which the bolt is scraped always corresponds with dynamics. Longer note durations [i.e. more than ca. one beat at quarter note equals 60] will require a back-and-forth sawing motion. The changes of direction are intended to be audible, however, take care to vary them as much as possible.

Instrumentation

Player 1



Player 2



Player 3



Player 4



DETAILS

The players should be arranged so that they can see one another (facing each other works well). Materials should be placed on a table or similar structure in order to produce maximum resonance. The performance space should be as reverberant as possible.

Amplification should be used if necessary. If used, amplification should only reinforce sounds which would otherwise be inaudible in a large or acoustically inferior hall. All sounds should be clearly audible, however, the sound levels should not be excessive or uncomfortable.

The performance space should be as dark as possible. The players should be illuminated only enough to allow them to see their music and one another. If available, subtle lighting effects may be employed, however, this should not detract from the music.

undercurrent

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♩ = 60~70 - *Rubato* throughout

A

Percussion 1 $\frac{5}{4}$ *pp* FLAT

Percussion 2 $\frac{5}{4}$ *pp* FLAT

Percussion 3 $\frac{5}{4}$ *pp* FLAT

Percussion 4 $\frac{5}{4}$ *pp* FLAT

on the side

 continuously and subtly vary the speed between 1 and 3

$n < pppp$

ANGLE

Perc. 1 6 ANGLE $n < ppp$ $n < ppp$ n pp $n < pp$ n pp

Perc. 2 pp n

Perc. 3 pp n

Perc. 4 n pp

11

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

B

on the side use 2 bolts, one in each hand



5 speed follows dynamics...

16

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

21

Perc. 1

n *mf*

on the side, use 2 bolts, one in each hand
5 speed follows dynamics..

Perc. 2

mf

ANGLE 1 speed follows dynamics...

Perc. 3

n *pppp* almost inaudible

Perc. 4

26

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

mf *mf*

C

6

ANGLE

5 speed follows dynamics...

Perc. 4

ANGLE 1

Perc. 4 *n*

ANGLE 6 speed follows dynamics...

Perc. 2 *n* *mf*

Perc. 3 *n*

Perc. 4

D

continuously and subtly vary the speed between 1 and 2

36

Perc. 1 *ppp*

Perc. 2 *mf*

Perc. 3 *mf*

Perc. 4 *n*

ANGLE L speed follows dynamics...

ANGLE S speed follows dynamics...

n *pppp* *n*

41

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

STIR - FAST
make as much sound as possible

pppp *n ppp* *pp* *mf*

pp *mp*

46

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

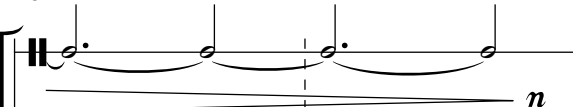
Perc. 4


continuously and subtly vary the speed between 1 and 2


pppp

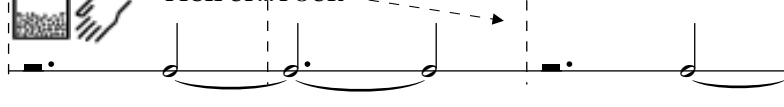
n *mf* *n* *mf*


51


Perc. 1  *n* E

Perc. 2  *mp* **SLOW** **FAST** *p*

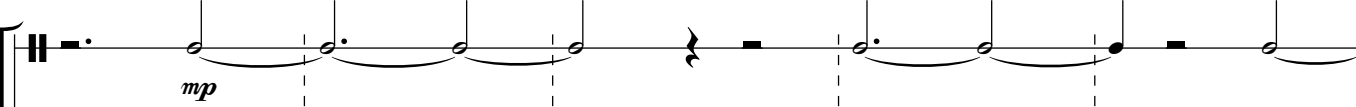
Perc. 3 


Perc. 4  *mp*


M  PICK UP... POUR PICK UP... POUR

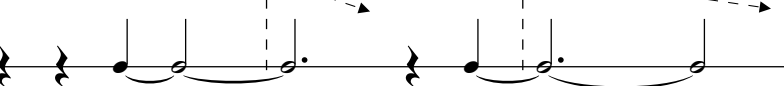
S  PICK UP... POUR

56

Perc. 1  *mp* PICK UP... POUR

Perc. 2  **SLOW** *pp* **SLOW**

Perc. 3 


Perc. 4  PICK UP... POUR PICK UP... POUR

71

CONTINUE UNTIL EMPTY...


Perc. 1

STIR - SLOW

S 

Perc. 2

ppp

S 


Perc. 3

mp


CONTINUE UNTIL EMPTY...

Perc. 4

F


R.H.  large bolts for both speed follows dynamics...

Perc. 1


L.H.  *mp*

Perc. 2

CONTINUE UNTIL EMPTY...

R.H.  large bolts for both speed follows dynamics...

Perc. 3

L.H.  *mp*

81

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

use 2 bolts, one in each hand

5 speed follows dynamics...

mp

86

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

S PICK UP - - - PUT DOWN

M PICK UP - - PUT DOWN

L PICK UP - - PUT DOWN

(2 bolts)

mp

G 91 **STIR - SLOW** speed follows dynamics... *mf* or louder = fast

Perc. 1 *mp*

Perc. 2 *n*

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

PICK UP PUT DOWN PICK UP PUT DOWN PICK UP PUT DOWN

SLOW

96

Perc. 1 *mf*

Perc. 2 *n*

Perc. 3 *mp*

Perc. 4

PICK UP PUT DOWN PICK UP PUT DOWN

STIR - SLOW speed follows dynamics... *mf* or louder = fast

STIR speed follows dynamics...

101

Perc. 1



Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

mf or louder = fast

f *ff*

L   PICK UP

p

ff

ff



ff



Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

M   STIR - FAST

L   STIR - FAST

ff

ff

ff

111

R.H. 10
L.H. 5

H

use 2 bolts, one in each hand
speed follows dynamics...

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

mf

mf

mf

mp

mp

M

STIR - SLOW

116

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

mp

p

mf

mp

p

S

STIR - SLOW

121

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

ANGLE

mp

FLAT

mp

mf

speed follows dynamics..

pp

126

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

n

gradually mute by closing the hands more tightly around the bolts

n

p

ppp

speed follows dynamics..

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

n

n

n

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