

# Themes and Distractions

Peter Saleh (2004)

**Lightly**  
♩ = 80

**Percussion I**  
(mounted tambourine, triangle, bongos, crash cymbals, cowbell)

**Percussion II**  
(snare drum, kick drum, [played horizontally] suspended cymbal)

**Percussion III**  
(timbales, temple blocks, bass drum, castanets, splash)

**Timpani**  
(E, B, C#, F)

*mf* w/ metal beater  
rim of snare drum  
*mp* Castanets

**7** **Clockwork**

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III

Timpani

*mp* (wood handles on shell)

**12** **Dance**

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III

Timpani

(in center of head) (felt heads)

**18** **21 Elusive**

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III

Timpani

(head) *mp* *p* (center, etc.)

23

Crash Cymbals

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III

Bass Drum (w/ small hard mallet)

Temp.

*pp*

*p*

28

zwischen senza accent

to triangle

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III

Temp.

Temple Blocks

E/F

33

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III

Temp.

*p*

38

Bongos

41

Hi Bongo

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III

Temp.

Temple Blocks

Splash and Low Timbale

Cascara

w/ hands

*mp*

*pp*

*p*

42

Perc. I *mf*

Perc. II *sub. mf* *dim.*

Perc. III *p*

Timp. *sub. mf* *dim.*

F/E

47

Perc. I *pp* *mf*

Perc. II *pp*

Perc. III *Cascara* *mp* *Splash*

Timp. *pp* *p*

Hard Felt

53

Perc. I *f* *mp*

Perc. II *pp* *p* *f* *mp* *f* *mf*

Perc. III *f* *mp* *f* *mf* *mp*

Timp. *f* *mp* *f* *mf* *mp*

Tambourine triangle w/ stick Cowbell Bongo triangle w/ stick

57 Solidly

Splash *secco*

58

Perc. I *f* *mp*

Perc. II *f* *mf*

Perc. III *f* *mp*

Timp. *f* *mp*

62 Hard Felt Mallet

Perc. I *f* *mp*

Perc. II snares off *mf* *mp*

Perc. III *f* *mp* (castanet)

Timp. *mf*

66 69 Funky

Perc. I *mf* snares on *mp*

Perc. II *mf* *mf*

Perc. III (castanet only) *mf* *mp*

Timp. *mf*

71 Bongos

Perc. I *mf* *f*

Perc. II *f*

Perc. III *f*

Timp. *f*

75 w/ stick w/ brushes Temple Blocks, *espressivo* 78

Perc. I w/ stick *p*

Perc. II w/ brushes *mp* *mp*

Perc. III Temple Blocks, *espressivo* *mf*

Timp. *pp*



95 (cowbell/tamb.)

Perc. I

Perc. II (leave on) 3 cross stick *mf*

Perc. III 4:3 3 *f*

Timp.

98 to Crash Cymbals

Perc. I

Perc. II *p* *fp*

Perc. III 5 5 3 *p* *f*

Timp. *p*

102

Perc. I *f* to bongos

Perc. II *f*

Perc. III *f* (rimshots)

Timp. *f* *p*

106 107 Pointedly

Perc. I *p* *cresc.*

Perc. II *p* *mf*

Perc. III *p* *f* *p* *l.h. cresc.*

Timp. *f*

109 **Arrive!**

Perc. I *ff*

Perc. II *ff*

Perc. III *ff*

Timp. *p* *ff*

111

Perc. I *ff*

Perc. II *ff*

Perc. III *ff*

Timp. *p* *ff*

113

Perc. I

Perc. II *f*

Perc. III *f*

Timp. *mf* *f*

center to normal

117 **119**

Perc. I *mp*

Perc. II *mf* *mp*

Perc. III *p*

Timp. *mf* *mp*

Bongos

Triangle

Tamb.

121

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III

Timp.

Castanets

*mf*

*mp*

125

127 Refocused  
triangle

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III

Timp.

*dim. al fine*

*dim. al fine*

*dim. al fine*

*dim. al fine*

130

non rit.

Perc. I

Perc. II

Perc. III

Timp.

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

gradually move to edge ----- (soft mallet)

*pp*

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## Performance Notes

**Percussion I - Instruments:** mountable tambourine, triangle, bongos, crash cymbals (med-thin), large cowbell. **Implements:** sticks, wire brush, triangle beater

- Use tips of sticks on cowbell at lower dynamics

**Percussion II - Instruments:** Snare drum, kick drum (played horizontally), medium suspended cymbal  
**Implements:** sticks, wire brushes

- It is recommended to use two snare drums; one with cable snares for 'snares on' music and one with wire snares for 'snare strainer' and 'snares off' music

**Percussion III - Instruments:** timbales, castanets, concert bass drum, temple blocks (5), splash cymbal.  
**Implements:** sticks, small med-hard bass drum mallet

- Perform accents on castanets as flams
- Timbale accents can be freely interpreted as rim shots. Use different zones to find lower sounds on low drum.

**Timpani (4) - Implements:** med-hard felt mallets w/ wood handles, hard felt mallets, wood mallets, rute or bamboo brushes (use Vic Firth 'Bams' or Promark 'Hotrods')

## Key to Notation

The diagram shows four staves of musical notation, each representing a different percussion part. Percussion I includes symbols for Crash Cymbals, Bongos, Snare Drum, Tambourine, Triangle, and Large Cowbell. Percussion II includes symbols for percussive use of strainer, stick-on-stick shot, Bass Drum, Medium Suspended Cymbal, and one-handed cross stick. Percussion III includes symbols for Castanets, Temple Blocks, Timbales, and Concert Bass Drum. Timpani includes symbols for Timbale shell(s), Splash Cymbal, and center of head. Various playing techniques are also indicated with 'x' marks and labels like 'normal playing zone' and 'play on bowl with wood'.

Recommended Set-Up: (audience)

III II I  
Timp.

## Program Note

The piece is set in somewhat of an arch form, meant to resemble four musicians busy playing, or perhaps practicing their own simple rhythms (drawn from music by Bizet and Rimsky-Korsakov), who gradually grow more and more distracted from their supposed work on their excerpts. As they become more drawn to rhythms they may have played earlier in the day (played on the timpani, drawn from music of Elliot Carter), they also incorporate things that they might be hearing coming from a room down the hall (the cascara on the timbale, or Thomas' *Merlin*, here played on timpani with hands and rute), or even music played long ago (a quick reference to Creston's *Concertino for Marimba*). The goal of the music then seems to drift far enough away to land on a sort of reversed variations on the opening snare drum excerpt of Bartok's *Concerto for Orchestra*, where assorted techniques (including canon, borrowed subdivision, and the subtraction of parts of the rhythm) are used to disguise it. The aim of the music still remains distracted though, as measures of 3/8 and 6/8 repeatedly pry their way in between the measures of the otherwise 4/4 theme. The true theme is finally exposed for what it actually is through the rudimental style of the lone snare drummer that tends to practice just outside the window. After a cathartic fortissimo section that is relieved of distraction, the quartet seems to realize they need to return to their work and gradually revert to their original patterns. Then, content with their progress, they finish playing, leaving the timpanist alone to try unsuccessfully to bring distraction back to the group.

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Distractions*

For percussion quartet

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