A Palimpsest

for alto saxophone and percussion ensemble

Dan Trueman
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commissioned by the International Saxophone Symposium and Competition (ISSAC) and Columbus State University
Percussion List

Marimba+ 1:
Marimba (4.3 8ve)
police whistle
guiro
suspended cymbal
floor tom
kick drum

Marimba+ 2:
Marimba (4.3 8ve)
police whistle
guiro
suspended cymbal
floor tom
kick drum

Vibrphone 1
Vibrphone (and 2 bows)
Crotale (only 1, low A)

Vibrphone 2
Vibrphone (and 2 bows)
Crotale (only 1, low A)
The Prepared Digital Piano

This instrument requires a standard 88-key MIDI keyboard controller (with sustain pedal) and custom software, running on an Apple Macbook or similar OSX computer. While the built-in sound on the computer can be used, a dedicated USB or Firewire/Thunderbolt audio interface is preferable, simply because the sound is better. Finally, a keyboard speaker (the Roland KC-350, for example) should be placed near the player, and that should suffice for the sound; a PA system should be used only if the entire ensemble is also being amplified. The instrument should blend with the acoustic instruments as naturally as possible.

Here’s the step-by-step, after having downloaded the “Nostalgic Synchronic Piano” software:

1. plug the MIDI keyboard into the computer (probably via USB).
2. plug in the audio interface, if you are using one in place of the built-in sound.
3. in the System Preferences:Sound panel, set the Output to your audio interface (or the built-in sound, if that’s what you are using).
4. NOTE: it is important that steps 1–3 happen before step 5...
5. double click on the Nostalgic Synchronic Piano. two windows should open:
6. it may take a minute or two for the application to finish loading all the samples, so wait until you see the “done loading Piano samples: READY” message in the white window. Also, sometimes it’s just not happy the first time it opens, in which case you should quit both windows and reopen.
7. choose “read” from small menu in the “presets” part of the main
application (see ‘7’ in the image below) and open the “NSP_Palimpsest.json” file that is included with the application.

(this menu may say “default” when you first open the application; just click on it and choose “read” from the menu)

8. select preset “25 Palimpsest1” in the main preset window (see ‘8’ in the image below) to set the opening preset for the piece (this one may say “25 Blank” or some such when first opening).

9. play!

When playing the piece from beginning to end, the presets will change automatically, based on the notes played. During rehearsal, you will need to manually choose the appropriate preset depending on where in the piece you are starting; preset changes are indicated in the part and score, so you should be able to figure out what preset is needed for any particular part of the piece. In the score, the presets are marked P1, P2, etc..., with P1 => Palimpsest1, P2 => Palimpsest2, etc...

Note that when quitting this application you have to quit BOTH windows; these are actually two separate applications that are talking to one another.

Questions/problems? email me: dantruemanmusic@gmail.com
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with these microtuned trills, I anticipate color changes as well; in fact, color changes are good. Quarter-tones are approximate; the main point is for the tuning to be between a unison and half-step, not necessarily precisely a quarter-tone.

These "ornaments" should be as short as possible, and just *before* the beat (unlike the sax ornaments). Their purpose is to change the tuning for the chord.
know this is an awkward one; a half key or false fingered trill is fine; again it is more a color trill, one that echoes the microtuning in the digital piano part, that is important.
breath tone: mostly noise, barely pitched at all

thin, light, airy

ornaments ON the beat, always
In this section, each bar has four beats, but the beats are either "long" (\(\ell\)) or "medium" (\(\rho\)).

I have avoided including misleading time signatures (like 14/16, etc...);
rather, the music should be counted and/or conducted "in 4", with two different beat types. The first vibraphone part, with its even subdivisions, is key here.

breath tone again...

note the placement of these pedal markings carefully.
The low left-hand notes should sustain through the subsequent bars as smoothly as possible.
If slap tonguing is not your thing, something that approximates it is welcome. It should be percussive, noisy, short, so using key-slaps and some other approach to tonguing to achieve something along those lines is also ok.
Alto Sax.

Perc.

Vib.

PDPno.
Alto Sax.

Mar.

Kick

Vib.

Perc.

Cymbals scrape tremolo, brushes

Cymbals scrape tremolo, brush

Perc.

floor-tom, brush

Police whistle, again very weak

bowed

Crotules bowed, l.v.

breath tone; mostly noise, barely pitched at all

barely pitched at all

breath tone; mostly noise, barely pitched at all
Alto Sax.
Cym.
Perc.
Vib.
Crot.
PDPno.

(tongue slap)
Meno mosso
\( \approx 50 \)

quiet, pure, gentle

also, hum A in comfortable octave, breathe as needed

(also 3rd tune to digital piano)

Alto Sax.

Cym.

Cym.

Crot.

Vib.

PDPno.

\[ \text{(preparations)} \]
these tuning indications are for reference only; this is what will be happening in the digital piano, and the player should tune by ear as best as is possible.

(very slight dip match digital piano again...)

continue until after the digital piano has faded, then l.v.

continue until after the digital piano has faded, then l.v.

continue until after the digital piano has faded, then l.v.

continue until after the digital piano has faded, then l.v.

continue until after the digital piano has faded, then l.v.