

Plus Minus

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Ming Tsao

$\text{♩} = 76$

$\text{♩} = 92$

Clarinet (also Bass clarinet)

Cello (Scordatura)
IV III II I
(Transposed to standard tuning)

Piano

Trumpet (also 2 crotales)

Trombone (also 2 crotales)

Classical Guitar and electric guitar (scordatura)
(also 11 crotales)
⑥ → ①
(Transposed to standard tuning)

Timp.
① ② ③ ④

Percussion

Accordion

Cl.

p 3 7 mp mf

p mf p sf p fp mp f pp mf p pp

ff p mf f

Ped. 3. Ped. 1 3. Ped. 4:3

Crotales

Whammy bar

E. guitar

med. tremolo on

Volume pedal

(P4)

ord.

⑥-④

tremolo off

Crotales

Vibr.

p mp pp mf

Γ Motor on fast

Γ Motor off

arco

Bow

pp p f pp

Crotales

Bow

arco on timp.

(Timp. pedal)

ppp p ppp p mf pp

Performance Notes

General

Quarter-tones

1/4-tone flat 1/4-tone sharp 3/4-tone sharp

either an eighth-tone sharp or the natural eleventh harmonic (context will determine) either an eighth-tone flat or the natural seventh harmonic (context will determine)

Assume that any note without an accidental is natural unless that same note has already occurred in the same measure preceded by a different accidental. In this case all accidentals can be said to hold throughout the measure

Durations

half note dotted half note

For longer durations whilst using special noteheads, circles around noteheads are used for durations equal to or longer than a half-note.

let sound die of its own accord

Dynamics in quotations, ‘*f*’, refer to the amount of force or effort required to produce a sound and not necessarily the sounding result.

—————> gradual transition from one state to another.

Glissandi: Notes in parentheses of a glissando are not to be articulated independently.

Continuously bow a metal wire hanger on the timpani head (there should be no break in the sound produced).

(flaut. ————) = light, rapid bowing, producing continuous, “white noise”. Try to vary the white noise as much as possible by bowing along as well as across the wire hanger.

~~~~~ = slight overpressure bowing, produce a continuous, low tone

Clarinet

1/2 breath 1/2 pitch   breath only through indicated fingering   slap-tongue   Multiphonic (fingering is provided)

Brass

inhale   exhale   slap-tongue

con sord — straight mute unless the cup or plunger mute is indicated

Trumpet

air noise through indicated fingering   air noise with slap tongue

Trombone

darkest —————> brightest  
breath sound with varying degrees of colour

Guitar

attackless harmonics (no R.H. attack, simply touch the strings at the indicated position with the L.H.)   Bar harmonic across all strings at the position indicated on the bottom or top strings

left hand finger percussion   audible release of strings

bar slide across all strings at the position indicated on the bottom or top string

down stroke   up stroke

When a dynamic is provided, then use the volume pedal to achieve that dynamic within the overall sound of the instrumental ensemble. When a dynamic is not provided, then follow the indication of the volume pedal in the lower stave always keeping in mind the overall balance with the ensemble. Often, at the attack of a chord, there is no volume pedal indicated. This means that the volume is “off” for that attack.

Piano and Celesta

clusters: white notes   black notes   chromatic notes

Rubber Hammer

Strike the rubber hammer against interior metal frame

plectrum across indicated strings inside the piano

Cello

pizz. behind bridge on indicated string

nail pizz.   snap pizz.   pizz. (left-hand) bowing technique   return to ordinary pizz.   finger percussion   mute   unmute strings

shaded harmonic – this requires only slightly more left-hand finger pressure than is normally required for the execution of a natural harmonic. Only a hint of the fingered pitch should be perceptible. In rapid passages slightly more finger pressure can be used, coupled with flautando bowing, than in the passages with shaded harmonic glissandi, which should be ghost-like and very delicately played. (This is to ensure the articulation of each note in the more rapid passages.)

gentle overpressure bowing   bring out pitch

slow bowing with overpressure

crunch   hard over-pressure bowing

action clef: end of fingerboard sul tasto   molto sul tasto

Percussion (and Table-top Guitars)

pizz. with plectrum (table-top guitars)   down stroke   up stroke   let sound die of its own accord   bar slide across all strings at the position indicated on the bottom or top string   dead stroke

Bar top and bottom

rub or tap vibraphone mallets or snare sticks together on Timp. (hold stick towards edge of Timp.)

Tap along belly of large timpani.

Note: Since changes from one instrument to the next are rapid, no pedal markings have been indicated for the vibraphones and celesta. It is recommended to have the vibraphone pedals depressed throughout with a heavy weight placed upon them. One possibility is to divide each percussion part among two players – requiring four players total . The choice of mallets is also left to the discretion of the performer, keeping in mind the overall musical context.

*Plus Minus* is a full realization of Stockhausen's *Plus Minus* from 1963. All seven symbol pages are realized with two layers, where layer 1 is represented by the trio clarinet, cello and piano and layer 2 is represented by the remaining instruments. The occurrences of the seven symbol pages are notated in the score as [Page 1], [Page 2], etc.

*First performed on 26 April 2013 at Wittener Tage für neue Kammermusik by Ensemble Ascolta.*