

Western edge.

desert surface.

euphrates.

eastern edge

piccolo, oboe / guitar, percussion, 2 pianos / violin, viola, cello, double bass

Charlie Usher

Performance notes :

The ensemble is split into four sub-ensembles, each more distant than the other.
In order of 'presence', these are :

piccolo, oboe and guitar
pianos 1 and 2
double bass and percussion
violin, viola and cello

The seating is not necessarily to reflect this.

General notes:

All grace notes are written to sound like small breaths rather than exclamations,
and should stand in slight relief to surrounding tones.

All attacks should be soft - tone should glow from background rather standing in relief from it.

Piccolo, oboe and guitar (acoustic)

General dynamic PPP - all resultant imperfections and discolourings of tone are fine.

Pianos 1 and 2

One part played in unison.

General dynamic PPP - just brushing the keys.

Independent light rubato for each player.

L.V. marks imply finger-sustain as opposed to pedal-sustain.

Double bass and percussion

Percussion part is for 4 'grainy' shaken instruments of staggered size/presence.

Both parts are very quiet, barely louder than the general ambient dynamic of the performance space.

The two players should work to create one unified timbre, each enriching the other.

Violin, viola and cello

As with the double bass, all parts are very quiet,

barely louder than the general ambient dynamic of the performance space.

All resultant imperfections in tone are fine.

The effect of the part is of an imperceptibly rising glissando.

Players have a certain amount of rhythmic freedom - new pitches should be arrived at within 3 or 4 beats of the notated point.

When writing this piece
I was thinking about types of presence:

strong presence through offering lots of information	-	less presence through offering lots of information
strong presence through offering less information	-	less presence through offering less information
quietness being more present than loudness		
loudness offering no information	-	quietness offering a lot of information
massiveness offering a lot of information	-	massiveness offering no information
massiveness smothering information	-	intimacy offering a lot of information

I'm still not convinced that any of this is quantifiable, but the ephemerality of this is something to work within.

The idea is that we stop hearing the long chord in the strings and that it becomes part of the flora and fauna of the room

and it's only when the 2 pianos* come back after 3** minutes (and that the pianos are now out of tune) do we realise the chord has been sliding upwards all this time

and that this room has changed.

In Michael Snow's 'Wavelength' the zoom fits the story like a glove in that what happens in the story fits uncannily into the limits of the narrowing shot.
The story gets less and less present - or rather offers less and less information.

Our view of the room changes and we are left with a photo of the sea
- outdoors - unconfined by horizon - infinity -

so a sort of nudge to look past the immediate
- the medium - the information - the story -

and further afield to reflection on other things.

* for me the constant unison creates extreme mass
and the impression of infinitely numerous pianos!

** 2 medium and 1 very long

Western edge, desert surface, euphrates, eastern edge

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7

$\text{♩} = 60$

PERCUSSION

DOUBLE BASS

6

11

15

This is a handwritten musical score for a chamber ensemble. The score is organized into seven systems, each with a different instrument or group of instruments. The instruments are: Percussion (Perc), Oboe (Ob), Guitar (Gt), Percussion 1 & 2 (Perc 1/2), Violin (vln), Viola (vln), and Violoncello (Vc). The score is written in a single system with four measures. The Percussion part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Oboe part has a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure and a sequence of notes with 'x' marks below them in the second measure. The Guitar part has a melodic line with triplets of eighth notes in the first measure and a sequence of notes with 'x' marks below them in the second measure. The Percussion 1 & 2 part has a melodic line with eighth notes in the first measure. The Violin, Viola, and Violoncello parts have a melodic line with eighth notes in the first measure. The score is written in a single system with four measures. The Percussion part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Oboe part has a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure and a sequence of notes with 'x' marks below them in the second measure. The Guitar part has a melodic line with triplets of eighth notes in the first measure and a sequence of notes with 'x' marks below them in the second measure. The Percussion 1 & 2 part has a melodic line with eighth notes in the first measure. The Violin, Viola, and Violoncello parts have a melodic line with eighth notes in the first measure.

24

Picc

Ob

Guit

Vln

Vln

Vcl

Handwritten musical score for five instruments: Piccolo (Picc), Oboe (Ob), Guitar (Guit), Violin (Vln), and Viola (Vcl). The score is in 4/4 time and begins at measure 24. The Piccolo part has a rest in the first two measures followed by a triplet of eighth notes in the fifth measure. The Oboe part has a rest in the first two measures followed by a melodic line with dynamics markings (mf, f) and a slur in the fifth measure. The Guitar part has a rest in the first two measures followed by a melodic line with a slur and a triplet in the fifth measure. The Violin and Viola parts play sustained chords throughout the five measures.

Handwritten musical score for a string quartet and piano. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Piccolo (Picc), Double Bass (Db), Guitar, Percussion (Perc), and Piano (Pf 102). The second system includes parts for Violin (Vln), Viola (Vla), Violoncello (Vcl), and Double Bass (Db). The music is written in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a 4/4 time signature. The score contains various musical notations including notes, rests, accidentals, and performance markings such as 'p' (piano) and 'x' (pizzicato). The Piccolo part starts with a measure number '29'. The Piano part features complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and quintuplets. The string parts provide harmonic support with chords and melodic lines.

34

Picc

Ob

Guit

Perc

PF 102

Vln

Vln

Vc

Db

33

Picc.

Guit

Perc

Vln

Vln

Vc

Db

44

Perc

Vln

Vln

Vc

Db

49

Perc

Vln

Vln

Vc

Dbl

Handwritten musical score for measures 49-53. The percussion part features a snare drum on the 8th measure. The string parts (Violins, Violas, Violoncello, and Double Bass) have a melodic line with a 7-measure rest. The score is written in a standard staff format with various musical notations.

Pf 1&2

Perc

Vln

Vln

Vc

Dbl

Handwritten musical score for measures 54-58. The piano part (Pf 1&2) features a complex melodic line with triplets. The percussion part has a snare drum on the 8th measure. The string parts (Violins, Violas, Violoncello, and Double Bass) have a melodic line with a 7-measure rest. The score is written in a standard staff format with various musical notations.

59

PF 1 & 2

Perc

VL1

VL2

VC

DB

The musical score consists of six staves. The top staff (PF 1 & 2) is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 3/4 time signature. It contains complex chords and arpeggios with fingerings (1-5) and accents (x). The second staff (Perc) is in bass clef and contains sparse rhythmic markings. The third staff (VL1) is in treble clef and contains sustained notes. The fourth staff (VL2) is in bass clef and contains sustained notes. The fifth staff (VC) is in bass clef and contains sustained notes. The sixth staff (DB) is in bass clef and contains sustained notes. A circled '8' is in the top right corner.

64

Pf 1&2

Perc

Vln

Vln

Vc

Dbl

69

Pf & Cb

Vln

Vln

Vc

74

Pf & Cb

Picc

Vln

Vln

Vc

Db

79

PFc 1 & 2

Perc

Vla

VL2

Vc

DL

Handwritten musical score for measures 79-82. The score includes staves for Piano (PFc 1 & 2), Percussion (Perc), Viola (Vla), Violin 2 (VL2), Violin 1 (Vc), and Double Bass (DL). The notation is sparse, with notes and rests in the first three measures, followed by a double bar line and empty staves for the last two measures.

84

Perc

D_h

Handwritten musical score for measures 84-88. The Percussion staff (top) shows a sequence of chords: 2-7, 1, a whole rest, and two octaves (8). The Drums staff (bottom) shows a sequence of notes: a quarter note with a slash, a half note, a quarter note, a half note, and a quarter note. A circled '12' is in the top right corner.

89

Perc

D_h

Handwritten musical score for measures 89-91. The Percussion staff (top) shows a sequence of notes: a quarter note with a slash, a quarter note with a '3' above it, and a quarter note with a '7' above it. The Drums staff (bottom) shows a sequence of notes: a quarter note with a slash, a half note, and a quarter note. A large blacked-out section covers measures 90 and 91 in both staves.