

Choroi kai Thaliai (Revels and Dances) (1982)

James Wood

Instruments required

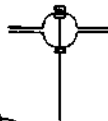
For Sections 1 and 4, Prelude and Postlude

6 drums, high to low (eg. bongos, congas, african drums etc)

Pedal Bass Drum (as large and rich as possible)

Concert Bass Drum (calf head, suspended horizontally)

Pair of Chinese Cup Cymbals, mounted in hi-hat stand -



Agogo Bells (LP or african - mounted with clip)
(interval between bells: avoid a 3rd -
- preferably 4th or augmented 4th)

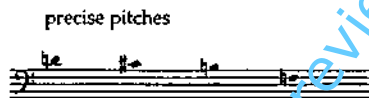


3 Chinese Cymbals, high, medium, low

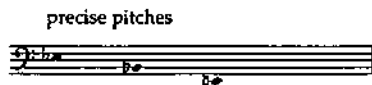
OR: 2 chinese cymbals and chinese Wind Gong

For Section 2 (Hymn to Sleep)

4 Javanese Bonang, or other gongs, or bells



3 Gongs (Thai or Javanese)



Javanese Gong Ageng (largest gong from javanese Gamelan)



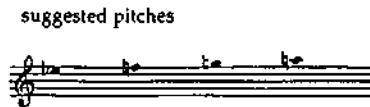
(if absolutely necessary, a large Eb gong may be substituted)



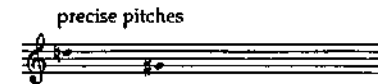
Large (1m) Tamtam (preferably chinese)

For Section 3 (The Frogs)

4 buffalo bells (or cowbells)



2 Javanese Bonang (or cowbells)



Log drum (2 pitches)

2 sin antras (solid pieces of hardwood)

Ankle bells

3 small tambourines with sleighbells attached, mounted horizontally

One extra bunch of small sleighbells hanging just above the highest tambourine*

*this is for the rolls in bars 518, 525-530 - strike the small tambourine with left hand mallet, simultaneously sustaining the sound by shaking the extra sleighbells with right hand

General Notes

The singer should be able to sing without vibrato, and should preferably have a strong, rather 'folk-like' vocal quality. She should be amplified, and the Hymn to Sleep may be sung from off-stage. The opening Prelude should be addressed to audience, but the closing Postlude should be addressed (extremely violently!) to the percussionist.

Electronic part

The electronic part of *Choroi kai Thaliai* was originally recorded, and diffused in performance, using an 8-track analogue tape recorder, with tracks 1 - 4 playing the four tracks of audio and track 5 playing a click-track in certain sections.

Since the re-editing and re-mastering of the tape in December 2002, the electronic part can be diffused either by computer, or by ADAT, or by a Hard Disk Recorder. The material is available for hire or sale from James Wood Edition in the following formats:

1) Computer file

Digital Performer (Macintosh)
Version 2.7 or later

2) ADAT

In both these versions, the tracks are laid out as follows:

- | | |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 - 4 | 4 tracks of audio for 4-channel version |
| 1 | to left front speaker |
| 2 | to right front speaker |
| 3 | to left rear speaker |
| 4 | to right rear speaker |
| 5 | click-track* |
| 6 | mono version (useful for fold-back to performers' headphones) |
| 7, 8 | stereo version (can be used if four channel diffusion is not available) |

The click-track can either be used as an audio click-track, fed to headphones (advisable for the percussionist) or to activate a light-box (preferable for the singer), or both. Unlike the original version, the click-track is available throughout the piece, but it can be faded out for certain sections if preferred. Likewise the level of the click-track can be adjusted to suit the demands of the performers from section to section.

Sound diffusion

Mics

- 1 (or 2, if *Hymn to Sleep* is performed from a different position) for soprano
- 1 head-mic (for percussionist's voice)
- 4 air-mics for percussion (optional)

Mixing desk

- 16 inputs
- 4 outputs
- + 2 aux for click-track to headphones/lightbox

Speakers

- 4, plus 1 or 2 subs
- The four main speakers should be positioned to left and right front and left and right rear of the audience.

If using a computer for sound diffusion, the following equipment will be needed:

Power Macintosh

- with multi-channel sound card (eg MOTU PCI 324)
- and multi-channel audio interface (eg MOTU 2408)
- Digital Performer 2.7 or later

Otherwise an ADAT machine may be used.

Choroi kai Thaliai (Revels and Dances)

Whilst on a visit to Indonesia in 1981 I had the experience of attending the Temple Festival in Peliatan, Bali. Throughout the whole night of festivities there were people drinking, eating, watching Gamelan and puppet shows, laughing uproariously at bizarre drama performances, sleeping, playing games and praying silently in the temple. It was this unforgettable experience that gave me the initial idea for *Choroi kai Thaliai*. However, anxious to avoid any literal representation of events, I sought texts from another culture altogether - this was Ancient Greece and the universal cult of Dionysus. In the selection of totally unrelated texts on which I finally settled I could see the possibilities both of devising a scenario that recalled the fantastic, surreal atmosphere of the Peliatan festival, and also of building a rich polyrhythmic structure from the fabric of the texts' metre. Once the sequence of texts was decided, the music was written in just three weeks, early in 1982. It is scored for soprano and percussion soloists, and a chorus of voices assembled onto a pre-recorded tape. In the opening Prelude, a Delphic Paean to Apollo, soprano, percussionist and chorus in turn appeal to the Muses to join them in singing Hymns to Apollo. This leads directly into the first main section, a Homeric Hymn to Apollo. This lively dance describes the enchanting and captivating manner in which Maidens of Delos are able to imitate the sounds of men's voices and castanets as they dance and sing hymns to Apollo. The next section is from a Hymn to Sleep from Sophocles' *Philoctetes*:

Ἔπνε δδύνας ἀδαίης, Ἔπνε δ' ἀλγέων	Sleep, sleep. who knows nothing of pain or sorrow,
εὐαῖς ἡμῖν	on a fair wind may you come to us, blessed,
Ἐλθοῖς, εὐαῖων εὐαίων, ὦναξ·	blessed one, O Lord!
ὄμμασι δ' ἀντίσχοις	And may you keep over our eyes this brightness,
τάνδ' αἰγλαν, ἃ τέταται ταυῶν.	that over them now is spread.
ἴθι ἴθι μοι πιαίων.	Come, come I pray, healing one.

By this stage the men have fallen asleep - their dreams become mingled with the events surrounding them and become disturbed and macabre. In this context the third section (from Aristophanes' *Frogs*) takes on the character of an erotic dream.

The men wake for the fourth section (from Euripedes' *Bacchae*), a dramatic enactment of the appearance of Dionysus. At the climax of this dance Dionysus speaks (his part take by the percussionist), creating awe and terror as he kindles fire and causes destruction - the house of Pentheus is thrown down in ruins, the tomb of Semele is struck by a thunderbolt and the Maenads hurl themselves to the ground in terror. This leads directly, and with more than a touch of irony, into the Postlude, a Hyporchema by Pratinas, in which the soprano delivers an impassioned and bitter attack on the current state of modern music with its predilection for crude instruments -

Mine is Dionysus, it is for me to shout, for me to sound his praise...let the flute take second place... let it be content to lead the campaigns of soused young revellers, battering on our doors. Smash the instrument with the voice of the speckled toad, burn the spittle-wasting reed that chatters and strides across melody and rhythm, its body fashioned by a boring tool... Thriambos, Dithyrambos, ivy-haired lord, listen, listen to this my Dorian Dance!

I: HYMN TO APOLLO

43 $\text{♩} = 120$

6 drum

Tap

place free cymb. upside down on foam pad.

59

75 $\text{♩} = 121$

91

107 115

123

139

4. BACCHAE

d. 104

of. cup symbs. (in highland stand, as before)

2 Agogo 557
bells**

567

583

599

615

620

Factor (d. 120)

(Perc. B) and Symphonic B (Charismatic)

* here B and B should be the same instruments as those used in the Introduction, ensuring that B remains 'see' and B remains 'in'

** pair of agogo bells, pitched about augmented 4th apart

** *F# - use a very light gong - best is a chinese 'wind gong' - or chinese cymbal.
 (do not use the large tam-tam)

634

Musical score for measures 634-654. The score consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and accidentals. The lower staff contains a bass line with chords and rhythmic patterns. Dotted lines connect the two staves at the beginning of each measure.

655

Musical score for measures 655-674. The score consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a melodic line. The lower staff contains a bass line. A box labeled "D=nd (d:60)" is positioned above the upper staff at the end of measure 672. Dotted lines connect the two staves at the beginning of each measure.

675

Musical score for measures 675-690. The score consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a melodic line. The lower staff contains a bass line. A box labeled "M = 2.2. (2.2) : T. 1000" is positioned below the lower staff at the end of measure 690. Dotted lines connect the two staves at the beginning of each measure.

691

Musical score for measures 691-706. The score consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a melodic line. The lower staff contains a bass line. Dotted lines connect the two staves at the beginning of each measure.

707

Musical score for measures 707-722. The score consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a melodic line. The lower staff contains a bass line. Dotted lines connect the two staves at the beginning of each measure.