


Marsyapollonomachia (1987)

James Wood

for oboe and percussion

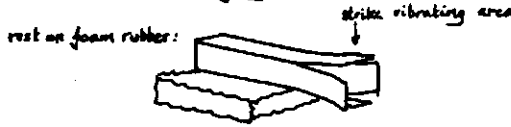
Percussion instruments required:

- claves
- maraca (single - hanging)
- sleigh-bells (large cluster, hanging)
- log-drum
- snare drum
- bongos
- moku-sho (round Japanese wood-block) - (or pic. wood-block)
- low bamboos (c. 2.5" diameter - it is best that these bamboos be split - this creates a deeper sound.)
- high bamboos (c. 1" dia.)
- low wood-block

bamboo or wooden chopper:
suspended:  both chopper and bamboos should be crushed from either side by the shaft of the sticks, or the hands.

simantra: solid length of hard resonant wood

steel bar: a length of steel bar tube with one end cut at all the four corners, and the four sides slightly bent outwards:

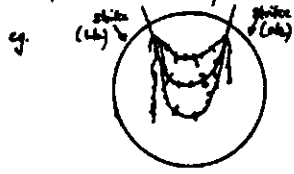


rest on foam rubber:

bell plate (with 'sizzle'): plate of brass - 3/16" thick, c. 8" x 15"

large tam-tam (with 'sizzle')

- the 'sizzle' on bell plate and tam-tam should consist of several strings of either lead weights or bolts, screws, etc. laid over the vibrating area. It is best to string these together with strong cotton thread, hooking or tying the ends to the instrument's supporting cords, at the point where they enter the holes in the instrument:



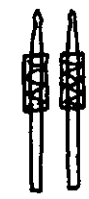
- both bell-plate and tam-tam should always be struck on the rim - whenever possible the tam-tam should be struck by both mallets (see note on mallets) - in this way the 'rattle' of the sizzle will be predominant over the more deep sound of the tam-tam's fundamental.

Large pedal bass drum
tom-tam

Mallets:


Only two pairs of mallets are required:

- 1) hard xylophone mallets (for section 6 only - and $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{moku-sho} \\ \text{steel bar} \end{array} \right\}$ if employed in G-signals)
- 2) heavy snare-drum sticks, with felt wrapped around the shafts:



Take some thin felt, and wrap it tightly around the stick to a thickness of about 1/4". Then bind it tightly in place with strong cotton thread.

These mallets (as well as the hands for maraca, s.bs. claves etc) are used in all sections except no. 6. The felt pads are used on tam-tam and bell-plate (except in certain f or ff strokes), and also for crushing the bamboos and chopper - sometimes when there is not time for the hands to play the sleigh-bells, the pad can be used to strike the bells. In this way these instruments can be sounded without the extraneous sound of the wooden snare-drum sticks themselves. The tips of the snare drum sticks are therefore only used for the snare drum, bongos, log drum and tom-tam. Never use the tips on the bell-plate, tam-tam, moku-sho, wood-block or simantra. In sections 2 + 3 it is left to the player's discretion to use the (wooden) area between the tip and the felt pad on the rim of the bell-plate and/or tam-tam on f, ff, or > strokes, as he feels is desirable. For the last section (9), he should return to the felt pads for the tam-tam. Sometimes the chopper, too, may be played with the wooden part of the stick between the tip and the felt pad.

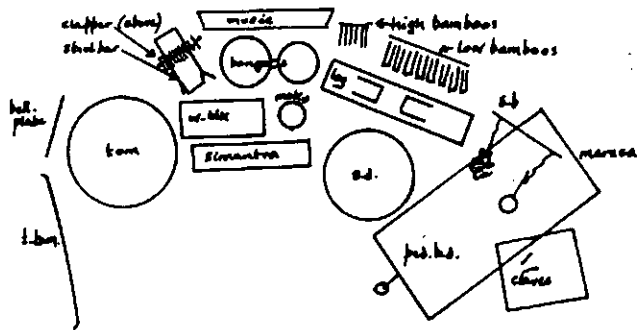
 This denotes a 'controlled decay' for bamboos, maraca, s.bells, snare-drum. Sometimes the decay sign lasts longer than the duration with which it begins, eg. bar 78 or 89. This is notated in this way for clarity of notation - in such cases the decays should overlap approximately as shown.

 indicates the opposite (controlled crescendo).

Sometimes a $\frac{f}{f}$ is marked for the log-drum simultaneously with another note or decay - in this case bounce one stick on the instrument.

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Layout of the percussion instruments



Oboe

♯ = 1/2 tone sharp; ♯♯ = 1/4 tone sharp; ♭ = 1/2 tone flat

♯ = multiphonics (see fingering chart)

Some 'pitches' have two or three different fingerings, producing totally different chords. In the case of these pitches, a (1), (2), or (3) is written above or below the note to designate which fingering is intended. Since these are treated as different notes, it is essential to observe these fingerings.

tonguing/phrasing

Only notes marked $\underline{\quad}$ or $\underline{\underline{\quad}}$ should be tongued.

$\underline{\quad}$ $\underline{\quad}$ $\underline{\quad}$ = tongued in non legato

$\underline{\underline{\quad}}$ $\underline{\underline{\quad}}$ $\underline{\underline{\quad}}$ = tongued in legato

Thus: $\underline{\underline{\quad}} \underline{\underline{\quad}} \underline{\underline{\quad}} \underline{\underline{\quad}} \underline{\underline{\quad}}$ indicates: the overall phrase of 5 notes
two 'inner phrases' (3+2) marked by the two tongued notes.

In long passages of unbroken, and untongued notes (especially in passages of multiphonics) circular breathe if necessary.

Glissandi

$\underline{\underline{\quad}}$ (b) : slow glis. over the entire period of the line. The note in brackets merely indicates the pitch towards which the glissando moves. Never re-attack, or even re-finger, the note in brackets, even if it corresponds with a tied note-value.

$\underline{\underline{\quad}}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ ($\frac{1}{4}$) : bend the note 1/2 tone (1/4 tone) below the note and back again.

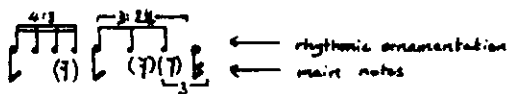
Fingering Chart for Multiphonics.

♯ has slightly leading

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Notes for both performers

Rhythmic ornamentation

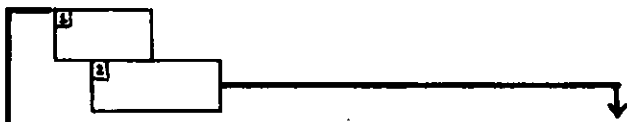


These are examples of rhythmic ornamentation. Try to play in a way that the main notes are subtly stressed, so that the principal rhythm (in bold notes, with rests in brackets where necessary to indicate their relationship to the main beats) can still be felt. The number of notes in each 'rhythmic ornament' can be varied spontaneously by the player. When learning the individual parts, the players are advised to practice the main notes only until such time as the main rhythms are firmly established in the mind, so that the rhythmic ornaments are not permitted to distort the main rhythms! A sound knowledge of the main rhythms will hopefully give the player confidence to be free and spontaneous with his or her rhythmic ornaments without disturbing the main rhythms.

Signals and Countersignals

Each of the work's 9 sections, or 'stages', is announced by a SIGNAL, either on a clapper, or a flörtangued multiphonia, or both. In the latter part of the work these are answered by a series of nine COUNTERSIGNALS. Whilst the SIGNALS are strictly notated in every way, the COUNTERSIGNALS demand several decisions to be made by the performers. Some of these decisions will need to be made in advance, but some should be made spontaneously during the performance, without any prior deliberation between the performers. For example, where an oboe countersignal is answered by a percussion countersignal, it is important that the percussionist should not know when the oboist is to play his or her countersignal, thus resulting in a spontaneous reaction. The percussionist should therefore be prepared to play his response at any point in the given period, whatever else he may be playing at the time... (and vice versa).

Performance of the COUNTERSIGNALS

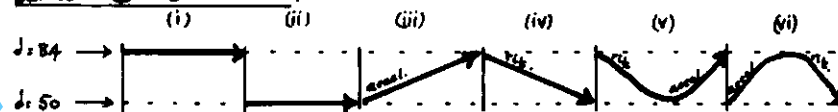


Playing of the Countersignals should take place at any time within the bracket (┌┐). Make sure to begin early enough for the whole countersignal, or pair of countersignals, to be finished by the end of the bracket (┐). If the occasion should arise where the CS has not been completed by the end of the bracket, stop abruptly at the arrow, leaving CS unfinished. In the case of pairs of CSs, the second CS should 'respond' to the first as follows: [1] should always start first, and [2] should always start before [1] has ended. Try to vary the starting point of [2] (relative to the available period) from one pair of CSs to another, and try to vary the amount of overlap (i.e. the starting point of [2] relative to that of [1]) similarly - also try to vary both from performance to performance, and rehearsal to rehearsal.

In sections [1] and [2] there are 2 pairs of CSs in the percussion part alone. Here the percussionist should try to find maximum contrast in tempo, timbre and dynamic (within the given limitations of each instance), to emphasise the feeling of 'reaction' between the two countersignals. It should seem as though the two CSs were being played by different players. This is bound to result, in one or other case, in some complex superimpositions at least between the two countersignals, but also possibly between both CSs and an entry (notated) of the SIGNEUR (clapper). In this case it may be necessary for the player to predetermine these superimpositions, and to work out some feasible realisations of the resulting polyrhythms. Try to vary the complexity (i.e. the amount of overlap between these 2 or 3 elements) from one pair of CSs to another.

Tempo

Six schemes are available:



Example

$\text{♩} = \begin{matrix} \text{ii} \\ \text{iv} \\ \text{i} \end{matrix}$ choose any one scheme from out of (ii), (iv) or (i). If the choice affects a pair of CSs (written outside the boxes), choose a different scheme for each.

Dynamics: (six are available: $\#/\#/\#/\#/\#/\#$)

Example

$\#/\#/\#$ choose any one of the given dynamics. Where the choice affects a pair of CSs (written outside the boxes), choose a different one for each. Do not crescendo or decrescendo.

Instrument: (six are available: bongo 1/tom-tom/w-block/simantro/mokusho/shel bar.)

Example

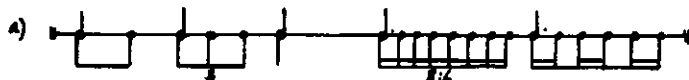
moko/sim/bongo 1 choose any one of the given instruments. Where the choice affects a pair of CSs (written outside the boxes), choose a different one for each. Do not change instruments during a CS - use just one instrument per CS.

Rhythmic ornamentation

orn: 6/3/2/3/1

Each of these numbers should be allocated to a different note of the CS. There is always the same number of numbers as notes in the corresponding CS, therefore all the numbers should be used up. No numbers should be used twice. The numbers refer to the number of subdivisions within a note, whether d or d-dot. Arrange the ornaments in any order. The given order is random.

Examples of above: (orn: 6/3/2/8/1)



a) and b) are two possible realisations. (1 = no ornamentation).

All subdivisions within a note should be essentially the same value, although tempi schemes (ii) - (vi) will obviously bring ritardandi or accelerandi to bear upon these internal durations.

In the score, space has been left for the players to pencil in their chosen tempo scheme above the notes, and their chosen ornamentation below the notes. These markings should be erased and altered for each rehearsal or performance.

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Marsyapollonmakhia was commissioned by Robin Canter with funds provided by Greater London Arts.

First performance given by Robin Canter and the composer, Almeida Festival, June 23, 1987.

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1 (1.54)

1

oboe

percussion

SIGNAL
clatter.

4

8

11

(poco)

15

18 *poor affrettando...*

23 **2** *(a tempo) sempre legato, e molto sostenuto*

SIGNAL:
clapper:

29

32

36

SIGNAL:
clapper:

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4
36 9*
(Andante) (Low numbers)
* see introductory notes

59
(tr. sempre)

63
molto f
(fff)

67

72

Musical score for measures 72-76. The upper staff features a melodic line with eighth-note triplets and sixteenth-note patterns, including a triplet of eighth notes marked with a circled '3'. The lower staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and bass notes.

77

Musical score for measures 77-80. Measure 77 includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#). Measure 78 contains a 'SIGNAL:' section with eighth-note triplets. Measure 79 features a 'poco f' dynamic marking and a five-measure rest. Measure 80 has a circled '5' above a triplet of eighth notes. The lower staff includes a performance instruction: '(clapper: f sample / b. base, t. tom: p sample)'. A large blue watermark 'Preview File Only' is overlaid on the page.

81

Musical score for measures 81-84. Measures 81 and 82 feature a '10:8' time signature and a circled '10' above a triplet of eighth notes. Measures 83 and 84 feature a '12:8' time signature and circled '12' above a triplet of eighth notes. The lower staff includes a 'poco mp' dynamic marking and a circled '10' above a triplet of eighth notes.

85

Musical score for measures 85-88. Measures 85 and 86 feature a circled '8' above a triplet of eighth notes. Measures 87 and 88 feature a circled '8' above a triplet of eighth notes. The lower staff includes a circled '8' above a triplet of eighth notes and a circled '10' above a triplet of eighth notes. Performance markings 'molto f' and 'molto sf' are present.

(1.44)

179

COUNTERSIGNAL:

♩: (vi) alargo:
(iii)

orn: 7/5/6/4/1/2. p

(1.54)

SIGNAL:

122

leg	s.d.	high bango	moku.she	low bango	simantm	low w-bk	steel bar	clapper	loos.loos	pel. b.d.

COUNTERSIGNALS:

1

♩: (ii) al.
(vi)
(iii)
(iv)
(v)

orn: 3/4/6 pp/#/m-||/||/||

2

bango I / loos/w-b / sim / moku / st. bar

♩: (iii)
(i)

orn: 5/7 #/#/||/m-||

6

123

♩: 69

(hard xylo. mallets)

CS...

129

Musical staff 129: A single staff of music with a circled measure number 129. It features a sequence of chords with various fingerings indicated by numbers in parentheses. Above the staff, there are several chord diagrams with numbers like 6, 3-2, 7-6, 5-3, and 4. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes.

CS...

134

Musical staff 134: A single staff of music with a circled measure number 134. It contains a series of chord diagrams with numbers like 6-1-6, 6-1-4, 3-1-2, 8-1-2, 5-3, 3-1-2, 6-1-4, 2-1-6, and 3-1-2. The notation includes eighth notes and rests.

(J. 60) Wild!

137

Musical staff 137: A system of two staves. The top staff has a circled measure number 137 and is marked *molto f*. It features complex rhythmic patterns with slurs and accents. The bottom staff is also marked *molto f* and contains a bass line with triplets and other rhythmic figures. A large blue watermark "Preview File Only" is overlaid diagonally across the system.

142

Musical staff 142: A system of two staves. The top staff has a circled measure number 142 and contains complex rhythmic patterns with slurs and accents. The bottom staff contains a bass line with triplets and other rhythmic figures. A large blue watermark "Preview File Only" is overlaid diagonally across the system.

144

SIGNAL:

150

low b. bass.

maraca	s. ba	log	s. d.	low b. bass	high b. bass	brill. plate (sizzb)	alp/par	t. tam (sizzb)	ped. h.
≡	+	+	•				x	+	+

154

7 Slow (♩: c.42)

poco rubato

(colla voce)

(colla voce)

poco rubato

* see introductory notes.

159

Musical score for measures 159-163. The top staff contains a complex melodic line with numerous slurs, ties, and ornaments. It features several triplet markings (3) and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). The bottom staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and bass lines. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Tempo 1° (♩. 54)

164

molto f

Tempo 1° (♩. 54)

f sost.

Musical score for measures 164-171. The tempo is marked 'Tempo 1° (♩. 54)'. The top staff begins with a 'molto f' dynamic and includes a 'f sost.' (f marcato) section. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes with various slurs and ties. The bottom staff continues the harmonic accompaniment. A large blue watermark 'Preview File Only' is overlaid diagonally across the page.

171

Musical score for measures 171-176. The top staff continues the melodic development with intricate slurs and ties. It includes dynamic markings such as 'f' and 'f (sim)'. The bottom staff shows the corresponding accompaniment. A large blue watermark 'Preview File Only' is overlaid diagonally across the page.

178

COUNTERSIGNALS
 bongo (1) / tom / w. b. / sim. / make. / st. bar

1

♩ : (ii / iv / iii)

orn: 6/3/2/5/L

f/mf/p

2

orn: 5/2/4/6/7/1/2/9

178

SIGNAL:

(c.s)

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