

JP Merz: Divisions (2012)

About the piece:

When people argue they tend to essentialize things; they think they are either right or wrong, but it's usually a lot more complicated than that. Visually, the wooden and the metallic percussion instruments appear completely divided with the Thunder sheets separating them. However, the music shows the complexity of the issues that divide us. I was working a lot with different combinations and pairings of players to explore the divided wooden and metallic timbres. This piece also fluctuates between sections which have an certain argumentative quality and sections which have a much more cohesive sound. But even the argumentative sections have something that just barely keeps them together. Conversely, the cohesive sections have something that's a little bit off about them and I hope that this reflects that sort of gray area that occupies all of these divisions.

Performance Notes:

- The from stage right to left should be Percussionist 1, 2, 4, and 3, with the thundersheets placed between Percussionists 2 and 4.
- In the senza misura section, horizontal lines indicate the length of sustained sounds.
- A vertical line at the end of a horizontal line indicates that the sound should cease completely.
- Without a vertical line, the percussionist should cease playing but let the sound ring.

Percussion 1:

Instruments: Log Drum
Snare Drum
Bongos
Seed Bracelet

Implements: Drums Sticks
Soft Mallets
Metal Brushes

Legend:

Rim of Snare Drum

Bongos

Rims of Bongos

Two pitches on Snare Drum

One Log Drum

Notes:

- Rims can be struck at whatever location is most convenient.
- Seed bracelet is wore on the wrist during the indicated sections as an extra timbral effect, but they are never played on their own.

Percussion 2:

Instruments: 25" Concert Bass Drum
2 Tom Toms
2 Woodblocks
Tambourine
Thundersheet

Implements: Bass Drum Mallet
Drum Sticks
Soft Mallets
Superball Mallets

Legend:

Tambourine
when placed
on High Tom

Tambourine

Bass Drum

Low and
High Toms

Rims of
Toms

Low and High
Woodblocks

Notes:

- Bass drum should be around 25", or the next smallest concert bass drum available.
- Bass drum will lay on its side, so the tambourine can be placed on it.
- Low tom should be the largest available and the higher tom should be large enough to place the tambourine on it and still have room to strike the head of the tom.
- The tambourine should be a traditional orchestral tambourine; 10 inches, wooden and a single head.
- This performer shares a Thundersheet with Percussionist 4.
- The Thundersheet should be the largest available, thin, aluminum sheet.

Percussion 3:

Instruments: Brake Drum
3 Coffee Cans, different sizes
3 Singing Bowls, different sizes
Vibraphone

Implements: Triangle Beater
Drum Sticks
Soft Mallets
Two Bass Bows

Legend:

Inside of
Brake Drum

Rims of
Coffee Cans

Brake Drum

3 Coffee Cans;
Different Sizes

3 Singing Bowls;
Different Sizes

Notes:

- Brake drum should be large and have a hole in the center large enough to stick a bass bow through.
- Brake drum should sit upright so that the whole length of the bow can pass through.
- Experiment with different brake drums to find the one which produces the most amount of sound with the bow.
- The “inside of brake drum” indication refers to attacking the hole in the center of the drum.
- The coffee cans should be large, medium and small sized coffee can, each with a distinctive sound.
- The singing bowls should also be large, medium and small sized.

Percussion 4:

Instruments: 29" Timpano
3 Different-sized Cookie Tins
2 Sus. Cymbals
Glockenspiel
Thundersheet

Implements: Timpani Mallets
Drum Sticks
Hard Mallets
Soft Mallets
Two Bass Bows

Legend:

3 Cookie Tins;
Different Sizes

2 Sus. Cymbals

Two pitches
on One Timpano

Rims of
Cookie Tins

Notes:

- Timpano should be 29-28 inches in diameter.
- The pitches should not be precise, but the lower one should be around a G2 and the higher one should be between C3.
- The cookie tins referred to are the ones that your grandma gives you around Christmas. They are usually about 5-9 inches in diameter.
- Try to get a large, a medium and a small sized tin, each with a distinctive sound.
- Use only the container, not the lid, and mount it in a way that allows it to sound when bowed.
- One cymbal should have a large and dark sound the other should be a shorter and brighter.

DIVISIONS

JP Merz

Agitato ♩ = 80

1 Timpano
Snare Drum
Log Drum

Tamborine
2 Woodblocks
2 Tom-toms
Bass Drum

3 Singing Bowls
3 Coffee Cans
Brake Drum

Suspended Cymbals
3 Cookie Tins
1 Timpano

4

Tamb.
W. Bkls
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

Divisions - JP Merz

A

12 rit. ----- Mechanically ♩ = 60

Bgs. S. D. L. D.

Tamb. W. Blecks Toms B. D.

Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.

Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.

To Thundersheet

To Thundersheet

mp

n

mp

n

14

Bgs. S. D. L. D.

T. Sheet

S. Bwls Cans Brk. D.

T. Sheet

Drum Sticks (2nd time only)

Drum Sticks (2nd time only)

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15

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

T. Sheet

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

T. Sheet

16

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

T. Sheet

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

T. Sheet

Divisions - JP Merz

(2nd time only)

rit.

♩ = 40 ← ♩ = ♩ → ♩ = 80

17

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

T. Sheet

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

T. Sheet

To Glock Hard mallet in each hand
+ Soft mallet in right hand

n
(dim. 2nd time only)

B Rhythmically loose, as if improvised

19

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Brushes scrape

mp *f* 5

T. Sheet

To Toms Tamb on H. Tom

mp *p*

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

mf

Glock.

melody semplice Hard mallets

mf 3 Cookie Tin

Divisions - JP Merz

23

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bkcs
Toms
B. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

Glock.

27

Soft Mallets *espress.*

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bkcs
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Glock.

f

Take Tamb. off H. Tom

mf

pp \triangleleft *mf*

pp \triangleleft *mf*³

espress.

f

Divisions - JP Merz

31

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Glock.

p *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *mf*

mp *mf* *sfz*

mf *sfz* *p*

34

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Glock.

p *mf* *f*

p *mp*

mp

f

Soft Mallet
Sus. Cymbal

Divisions - JP Merz

37

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blecks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Glock.

mp *ff*

mp *ff*

39

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blecks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Glock.

C

accel. ----- Con fuoco ♩ = 90

f

f

f

Divisions - JP Merz

42

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Glock.

45

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym
C. T.
Timp.

mf

p

p

p

Divisions - JP Merz

47

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

p sub. *mf* *f*

Tamb.
W. Bcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

49

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

mf

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

Divisions - JP Merz

51

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bkcs
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

p sub. \curvearrowright *f*

p sub. \curvearrowright *f*

n *f* *p sub.*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 51 and 52. It features four staves for percussion instruments. The first staff (Bgs. S. D. L. D.) has a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 9/8 time signature. It contains eighth-note patterns with accents and a dynamic marking of *p sub.* that increases to *f*. The second staff (Tamb. W. Bkcs Toms B. D.) has a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 9/8 time signature. It contains eighth-note patterns with accents and a dynamic marking of *p sub.* that increases to *f*. The third staff (S. Bwls Cans Brk. D.) has a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 9/8 time signature. It contains eighth-note patterns with accents and dynamic markings of *n*, *f*, and *p sub.*. The fourth staff (Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.) has a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 9/8 time signature. It contains eighth-note patterns with accents and dynamic markings of *f* and *p sub.*. A 4/4 time signature change occurs between measures 51 and 52.

53

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bkcs
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

ff

ff

f *ff*

ff

Detailed description: This system contains measures 53 and 54. It features four staves for percussion instruments. The first staff (Bgs. S. D. L. D.) has a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 9/8 time signature. It contains eighth-note patterns with accents and a dynamic marking of *ff*. The second staff (Tamb. W. Bkcs Toms B. D.) has a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 9/8 time signature. It contains eighth-note patterns with accents and a dynamic marking of *ff*. The third staff (S. Bwls Cans Brk. D.) has a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 9/8 time signature. It contains eighth-note patterns with accents and dynamic markings of *f* and *ff*. The fourth staff (Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.) has a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 9/8 time signature. It contains eighth-note patterns with accents and a dynamic marking of *ff*. A 2/4 time signature change occurs between measures 53 and 54, and a 4/4 time signature change occurs at the end of measure 54.

Divisions - JP Merz

D

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

mp

mp

57

Put seed bracelet on left wrist

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

Divisions - JP Merz

59

Soft Mallets

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

mp

Soft Mallets

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

mp

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

61

E Mechanically

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

pp

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

pp

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

Divisions - JP Merz

65

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

69

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bcks
Toms
B. D.

Drum Sticks

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

pp

Drum Sticks

pp

Divisions - JP Merz

73

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

77

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

To Thundersheet

Divisions - JP Merz

F Senza misura 3"

81

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

T. Sheet

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

84

1" 5"

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

T. Sheet

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

scrape

Bell Strike

p *pp* *f*

Divisions - JP Merz

86

4" 2"

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

T. Sheet

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

f *p* *mf* >

Superball Mallets
scrape
p

88

7"

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

T. Sheet

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

f *p* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mf*

arco

Center —————> Rim

Stay with Timpani mallets

Strike
pp *mp*

arco

Divisions - JP Merz

89

2" 3" 2"

Bgs. S. D. L. D.

mp

T. Sheet

scrape

pp *mf*

arco arco

S. Bwls Cans Brk. D.

f

Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.

f gliss. *p* *f* gliss. *p*

92

3" 3"

Bgs. S. D. L. D.

T. Sheet

Strike

ff *p*

S. Bwls Cans Brk. D.

Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.

pp *f* *p*

Divisions - JP Merz

94 snap lever so snares strike
bottom head but do not lock 2" 3"

Bgs. S.D. L.D.

mf *p* *f* *p*

T. Sheet

Shake

S. Bwls Cans Brk. D.

arco *mp*

Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.

mf *p*

96 2" 5"

Bgs. S.D. L.D.

ff *p* *f* *mp* *mf* *pp*

T. Sheet

Strike

S. Bwls Cans Brk. D.

To Vib. w/bows

Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.

f *pp* gliss.

Divisions - JP Merz

G **10"**

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

* Players 1, 2 and 4 quietly, but audibly, hum the melody following the lead of Player 3.
Graphics indicate level of intensity in improvisation: dynamics, density, speed, harshness of sound.

99 **13"**

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

Divisions - JP Merz

7"

100

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bkcs
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

7"

101

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bkcs
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

Divisions - JP Merz

9"

102

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blecks
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

103

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blecks
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Sus. Cym.
C. T.
Timp.

5" 4"

n

f

p *f*

pp

Divisions - JP Merz

H Con fuoco ♩ = 90

Bgs. S. D. L. D.

Tamb. W. Bkcs Toms B. D.

S. Bwls Cans Brk. D.

Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.

108

Bgs. S. D. L. D.

Tamb. W. Bkcs Toms B. D.

S. Bwls Cans Brk. D.

Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.

Divisions - JP Merz

117 Seed bracelet on right wrist I

Bgs. S. D. L. D.

Tamb. W. Blecks Toms B. D.

S. Bwls Cans Brk. D.

Sus. Cym. C. T. Timp.

mp *f* *p*

To Vib.

To Glock Hard mallet in each hand + Soft mallet in right hand Soft Mallet Sus. Cymbal

120

Bgs. S. D. L. D.

Tamb. W. Blecks Toms B. D.

Vib.

Glock.

f *p sub.* *f*

f *p sub.* *f*

mp *f*

Divisions - JP Merz

122

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Glock.

p sub. *f*

p *f*

p *f*

125

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Glock.

p sub. *f* *p sub.* <

Divisions - JP Merz

128 >

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Glock.

mp

f *ppp*

130

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Blcks
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Glock.

f

f

p *f*

p *f*

Divisions - JP Merz

132

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bleks
Toms
B. D.

Vib.

Glock.

ff *pp sub.* *pp* *mf*

arco

To Thundersheet

134

Bgs.
S. D.
L. D.

Tamb.
W. Bleks
Toms
B. D.

S. Bwls
Cans
Brk. D.

T. Sheet

To Thundersheet Superball Mallets
scrape *p*

arco arco

p