Scott Smallwood

Lumbering Ice

for soprano saxophone in B♭, alto horn in E♭, bass trombone
piano, percussion, and electronics

Instrumentation Requirements

Soprano Saxophone (B♭).

Alto Horn (E♭). A trumpet can be used if alto horn is not available, but the part will need to be adjusted/transposed. The player will also need an aluminum pie plate, or some other thin piece of stiff aluminum. This will be called upon in the score for producing buzzing effects against the bell of the instrument while playing.

Bass Trombone.

Grand Piano. With some playing on the inside of the piano. The following implements will also be required: wire brush, hard rubber xylophone mallet, wooden hammer, superball mallet on wooden handle, or a piece of rubber (from a bicycle tube). This is needed to rub on the piano frame and certain strings in order to create high-pitched sounds.

Percussion. A 6′ (or so) roll of bubble wrap with large bubbles, a bass steel drum (any one of a four or six bass set, preferably with pitches G2, B2, B3, E♭3), large sizzle cymbal (or ride w/ strings of beads draped over it), 1 timpani (tuned to G1), 2 4′ strips of thick aluminum foil. Implements: 2 medium timpani mallets, 2 medium yarn mallets.

Electronics. A computer (Mac OS or Windows) with 2 audio channels in and out (via a good quality audio interface), microphones for all instruments (see details in staging overview diagram), all connected to house console to a stereo PA. The electronics performer may also manage mixing of amplified instruments (see section on Technical Requirements for more details)

Program Notes

Lumbering Ice was inspired by a series of field recordings I made in Hamar, Norway during February of 2014. This small charming town, about 100 km north of Oslo, is on the edge of Lake Mjøsa, Norway's largest lake, and one of the deepest in all of Europe. Although it was winter and snowy, it had warmed up enough for a partial thaw of the lake, and this created a fantastic soundscape near the docks as large chunks of broken ice on the lake bumped up against each other and pummeled the wooden docks in the restless current. Other recordings were made on this trip as well, including an amazing air handling system on one of the large buildings, melting water and waves of ice on the shore, and the sounds of the train to Oslo. This piece is a reflection of those soundscapes.

General Performance Notes

1.) For best results, this piece should be performed on a fairly large stage with amplification. It is possible to perform this piece in a small, intimate space without amplification, but in that case adjustments will need to be made to the staging and movement requirements.

2.) This piece is composed in five sections, but should be performed *attacca*, with no breaks between sections. (ca. 15′)

3.) The electronics performer may also serve in the capacity of audio engineer, and should set up in the center of the audience (traditional mix position).

4.) Performers should always be mindful of the acoustic space in which they are performing.

5.) All timings in the score are approximate.

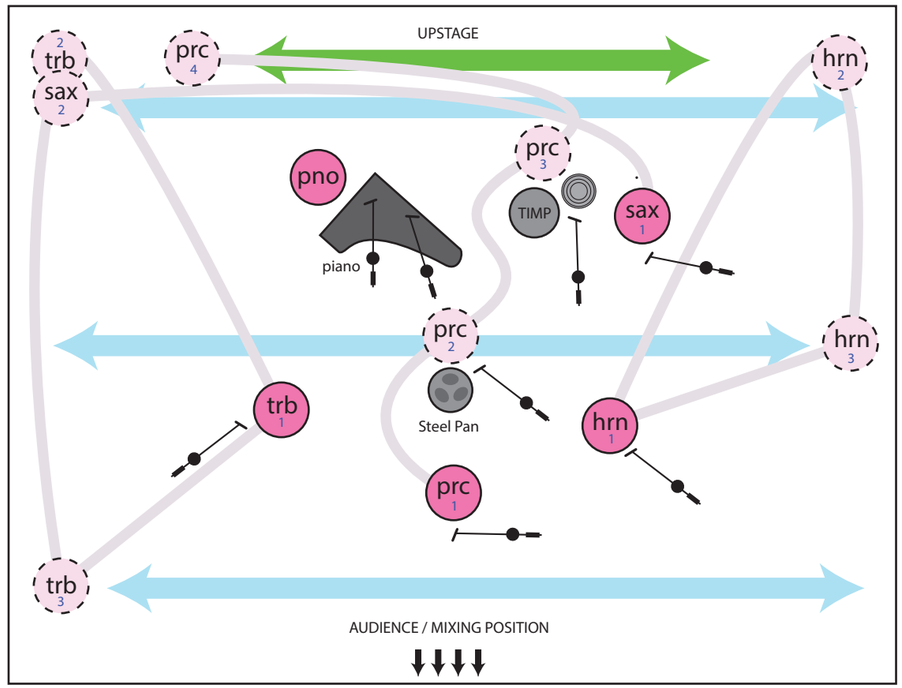
6.) ♩ = 60 (approximately) in all instances unless otherwise noted in the score.

7.) The score is transposed (not concert pitch).

8.) Wind players should NEVER play with vibrato unless otherwise indicated.

Staging Requirements

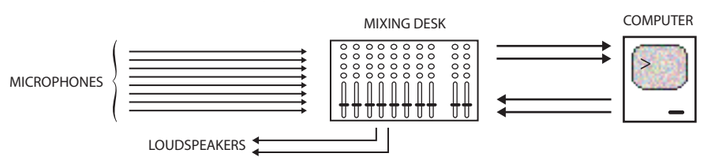
The overall stage diagram for this piece is shown below. It is not exactly to scale, but it shows a workable distribution on a fairly large stage. Note that most players (except the piano) are asked to move to various locations, indicated by a station number. For example, the alto horn player begins down front stage left, and then moves to the back left corner. Also note that the diagram shows where microphones should be.



Technical Requirements

This piece requires amplification for all instruments, as well as sound reinforcement for the electronics part. In an ideal environment, there will be 8 microphones on stage as shown: 2 for the piano, one for each of the wind players at their Station 1 location, one for the timpani/sizzle cymbal, one for the bass steel pan, and one in the very front center for the bubble wrap episode that starts the piece. These microphones should be mixed from the FOH position, where the electronics performer will also set up. The electronics performer will be required to perform the electronic parts of this piece, as well as mixing the ensemble. This will involve muting/unmuting microphones, as well as making adjustments in relative gains as necessary. A separate engineer is welcome, but that person must follow the score in order to ensure that microphones are only live when they need to be.

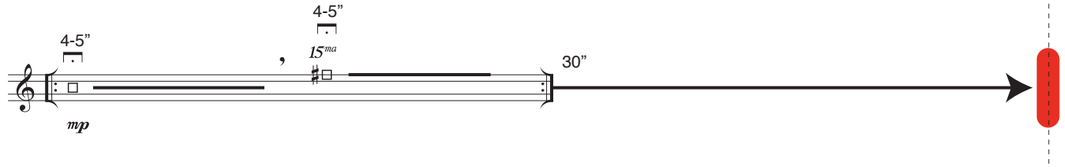
Assuming a standard mixing desk and PA setup, the electronics performer should be situated next to the mixing desk in the FOH, with stereo outputs from the computer connected to the mixer. In addition, a submix of the microphones should be routed to the computer's audio inputs.



Legend of Symbols in the Score

The following explains various symbols and notations found in the score:

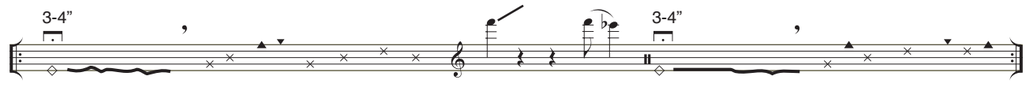
General (all instruments):



This example shows a repeating "cell", and indicates that the performer should play the material inside the repeat signs for 30 seconds. In some cases the timing is approximate to an oncoming cue, and if a cue is received before an entire repetition ends, the player should simply interrupt the pattern and move on. If sections in the score require cues from various players, the player who is required to give cues is indicated by a red signal, as seen in this example. Other symbols:

4-5" = sustain note for duration indicated , = short rest/breath 30" = rest for duration indicated

Wind Players (Sax, Horn, Trombone):

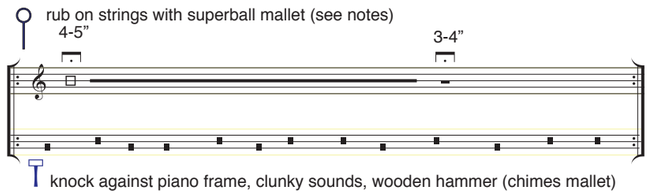


This example shows a passage that requires percussive and airy sounds to be produced (along with notes). The stemless noteheads indicate that each sound should be short/percussive, but not in any particular rhythmic pattern. The notehead shapes work as follows:

× = key clicks, ▲ = air pop (exhale), ▾ = air pop (inhale), ◇= blow air through instrument, = flutter/gargle
lines such as ~~~ indicate sustained notes/air should modulate as indicated with text

= aluminum pie plate (horn)

Piano:



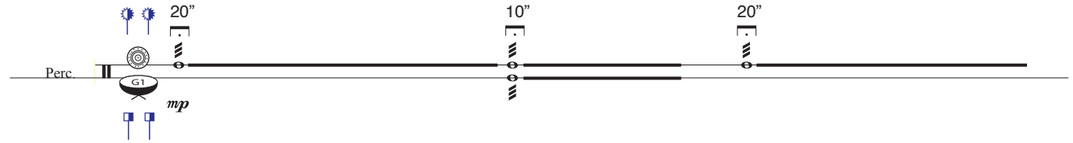
The pianist will be called upon to play inside the piano in various ways, with various implements. In the example above, the pianist is asked to rub on certain strings of the piano with a superball mallet, and to knock on the frame with a wooden mallet. Tip: a superball mallet can be made by drilling a hole partway into a superball and gluing a barbecue skewer into the hole. Another approach is to use a piece of bicycle tire tubing. The idea is to cause the string to simmer with high frequencies. Other implements are as follows:

= wire brush, hard rubber xylophone mallet, superball mallet, small wooden hammer(chimes mallet)

Other symbols to note: □ = rub string, ▪ / × = strike / knock on frame, cluster, strike string,

Legend of Symbols in the Score

Percussion:



This example shows how two lines/noteheads align with two instruments. The top line represents a large "sizzle" cymbal. If such a cymbal is unavailable, a large ride cymbal draped with beads/chains may suffice. The bottom line is timpani, tuned to G1. This example calls for one-handed rolls on the cymbal with the right hand, and one-handed rolls on the timpani (tuned to G1) with the left. General symbols for percussion:

Instruments:

= bubble wrap, bass steel pan, sizzle cymbal / timpani (G1), 2 long strips of heavy foil

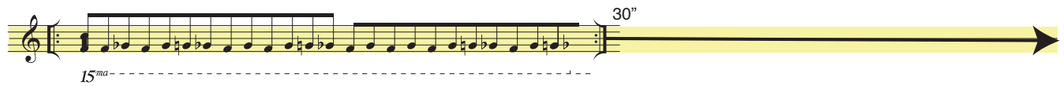
Implements:

= medium timp mallets, = medium yarn mallets, = use hands

Electronics:

The electronics part consist of two layers of information (except in the case of a dedicated audio engineer):

1.) Muting / Unmuting microphones: a yellow band indicates whether the sound should be amplified or now



2.) Playing sounds in the score: each section features an electronic layer at a precise moment. The onset/offset of sound is indicated as follows:

This passage [A] refers to specific sonic materials to be triggered via the performance software, created and included as a standalone application for Mac OS X and Windows, created in Max by Cycling 74. The software is included with the full score materials and/or can be downloaded by request. The sounds can also be reconstructed based on the descriptions of the sound events in the appendix included with the full score materials.

Each of the electroacoustic sound layers should be triggered, and dynamics controlled, as indicated. Each iteration of sound is represented by a letter indicating the sound layer (and key to press), as well as a dynamic level, which can be achieved via the < > keys (or by physical sliders/knobs - see program instructions for details).

A1

≈ 1:00

sax 1 — Soprano Saxophone in B♭

3-4” 3-4” key clicks, pops, sucks (see notes) 3-4” 60”

mp air, fluttery, guttural

hrn 1 — Alto Horn in E♭

key clicks, pops, sucks (see notes) 60”

mp

trb 1 — Bass Trombone

5-8” air, fluttery, guttural pops, sucks (see notes) 60”

mp

Piano

30” (pedal down, use weight) 4-5” 4-5” *15ma* 30”

mp rub on strings with superball mallet (see notes)

prc 1 — Percussion

bubble wrap, slowly manipulate with fingers in front of microphone - squeaky, crinkley (60”)

mp

Electronics

A

mp

A2

≈ 2:00

Sax.

3-4” 3-4” 60”

A. Hn.

5-6” 60”

B. Tbn.

5-8” 5-8” 60”

Pno.

4-5” 3-4” 4-5” *15ma* 3-4” 60”

knock against piano frame, clunky sounds, wooden hammer (chimes mallet)

Perc.

cont. (60”)

Elec.

A

A3

≈ 3:00

Sax. 3-4" mp 3-4" 60"

A. Hn. 5-6" mp 60"

B. Tbn. 5-8" mp 5-8" 60"

Pno. 4-5" mp 4-5" 15ma 60"

rapid bounce on frame w/ hard rubber mallet

Perc. mp

Elec. A mp

B1

≈ 3:30

Sax.

A. Hn. Move to Station 2 (see stage diagram)

B. Tbn. Move to Station 2 (see stage diagram)

Pno. 30" 15ma ppp

Perc. Move to Station 2 (see stage diagram)

Elec.

30"

B2

≈ 5:20

Sax. — 4-5" — 4-5" — 110"

A. Hn. — 45" — face back corner with bell — 10" — hrn 2 — 10" — 10" — 20" — 10" — 10"

B. Tbn. — 45" — face back corner with bell — trb 2 — 20" — 10" — 20" — 10" — 10"

Pno. — 75" — gliss highest 8va strings w/ wire brushes, ad lib — 40"

prc 2 — Perc. — 45" — 65"

Elec. — B

B3 — **C1**

≈ 6:30

Sax. — 50" — Move to Station 2 (see stage diagram)

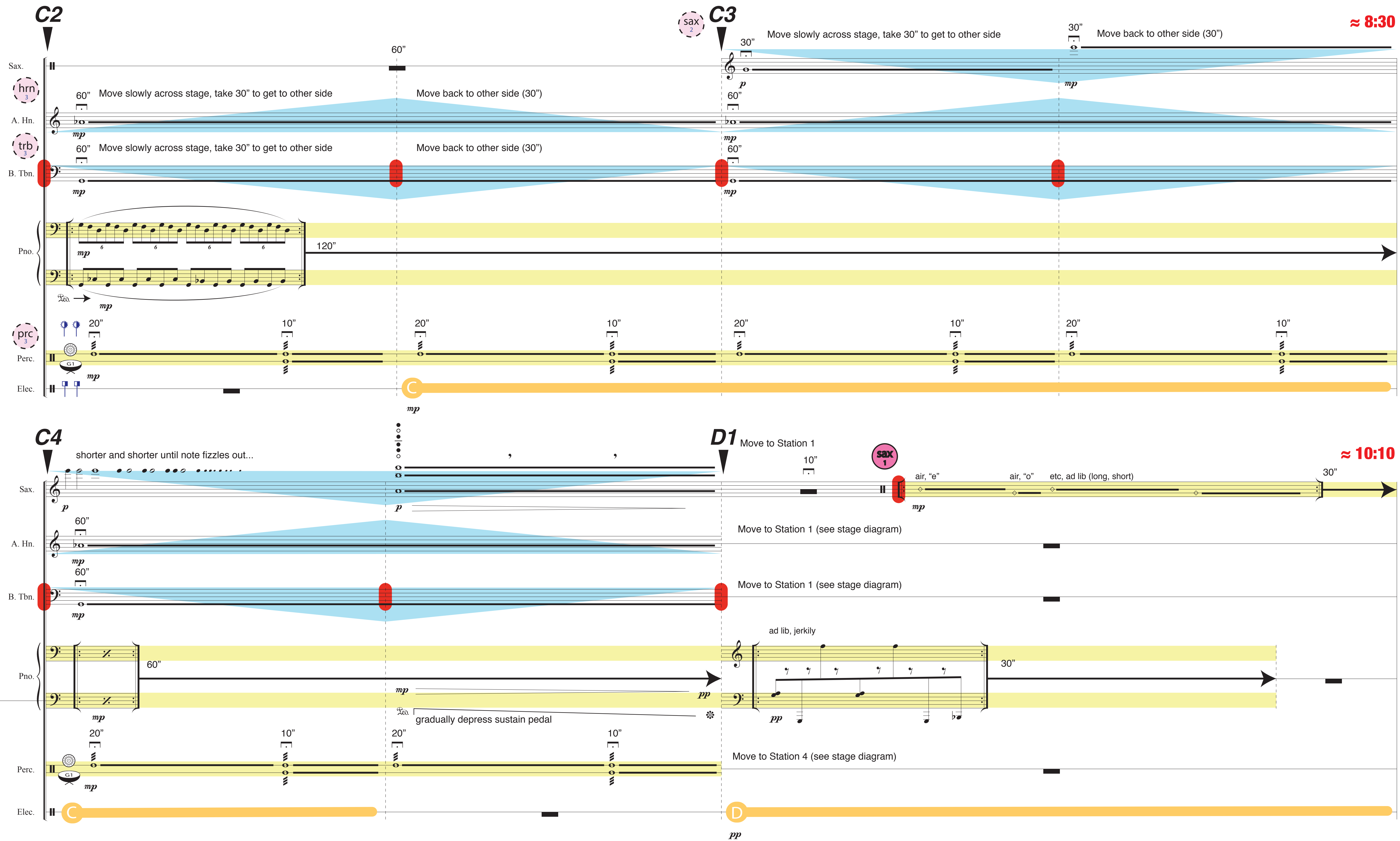
A. Hn. — 10" — 20" — 20" — 20"

B. Tbn. — 10" — Move to Station 3 (see stage diagram) — 20" — trb 3 — 20"

Pno. — 30" — 20"

Perc. — Move to Station 3 (see stage diagram) — 50"

Elec. — B


C2
60"
Sax.
hrn
A. Hn.
60" Move slowly across stage, take 30" to get to other side
Move back to other side (30")
mp
trb
B. Tbn.
60" Move slowly across stage, take 30" to get to other side
Move back to other side (30")
mp
Pno.
mp
120"
prc
Perc.
20"
10"
Elec.
C
sax
C3
30"
Move slowly across stage, take 30" to get to other side
30"
Move back to other side (30")
≈ 8:30
p
C4
shorter and shorter until note fizzles out...
p
60"
60"
D1
Move to Station 1
10"
sax
air, "e"
air, "o"
etc, ad lib (long, short)
30"
≈ 10:10
Move to Station 1 (see stage diagram)
Move to Station 1 (see stage diagram)
ad lib, jerkily
30"
pp
gradually depress sustain pedal
Move to Station 4 (see stage diagram)
D

D2

≈ 12:10

Sax.

60”

mp

60”

hrn 1

A. Hn.

hold metal plate against bell (let buzz ad lib)

120”

mp

trb 1

B. Tbn.

40”

40”

40”

p *mp*

etc swell in volume ad lib, pitch wavering

slow gliss

steady

15ma

Pno.

strike hard rubber mallet on strings, ad lib, 120”

pp

regular keys, ad lib, 40”

regular keys, ad lib, 40”

regular keys, ad lib, 40”

ppp

ppp

ppp

prc 4

Perc.

foil, slowly shake and move back and forth behind ensemble (slowly, 60” each way)

Elec.

40”

40”

E

mp

40”

D3

≈ 14:10

Sax.

60”

A. Hn.

key clicks, air pops

mp

60”

B. Tbn.

40”

40”

slow gliss

15ma

p pitch wavering (ad lib)

mp

Pno.

strike hard rubber mallet on strings, ad lib, 60”

pp

regular keys, ad lib, 40”

ppp

Perc.

foil, slowly shake and move back and forth behind ensemble (slowly, 60” each way)

Elec.

40”

E

mp

November 2014, Edmonton, AB, Canada, by Scott Smallwood