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The Synthesis of Artistic Elements in Works for Theatrical Percussion

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

THE SYNTHESIS OF ARTISTIC ELEMENTS IN WORKS FOR THEATRICAL
PERCUSSION

By

Karlyn Renee Mason

A DOCTORAL ESSAY

Submitted to the Faculty
of the University of Miami
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Coral Gables, Florida

December 2014

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PERCUSSION

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The Synthesis of Artistic Elements in Works for
Theatrical Percussion

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The extra-musical artistic elements in three works for theatrical percussion are examined, analyzed, and compared with one another. The pieces that are discussed include *Songs I-IX* by Stuart Saunders Smith, *Dressur* by Mauricio Kagel, and *Corporel* by Vinko Globokar. A brief discussion of each composer's life and music is followed by an in-depth analysis of extra-musical artistic elements, including vocalizations, movement, and other dramatic elements. This study examines the extra-musical artistic elements that are included in each piece and how they relate to the piece as a whole, including analysis of notation and interpretation.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Musical works that incorporate extra-musical artistic elements are certainly nothing new; from ancient Greek drama to the Florentine Camerata to Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerke*, musicians and intellectuals have long striven to create an encompassing and unifying art form throughout the history of western art music. Such cross-disciplinary collaborations are perhaps even more relevant in today's increasingly busy, over-stimulated, and multi-tasking society. Due to technological advances and the increasing prevalence of multiple electronic devices demanding our attention at any given time, it seems that society, as a whole, has become more difficult to impress.

Yet, percussion performance, as an inherently physical art form, lends itself naturally to the inclusion of theatrical elements such as vocalizations, movement, and drama. The inclusion of some or all of these elements provides the audience with a more complete and encompassing artistic experience. Vocalizations, movement, and drama are all human elements that can enhance the audience's ability to relate to a performance. Vocalizations and gesture, or movement, are primary forms of human communication, while dramatic instruction or scenarios may evoke a particular affect or emotion more directly than most absolute music can.

Composers such as Stuart Saunders Smith, Mauricio Kagel, and Vinko Globokar have been pioneers in the field of theatrical percussion, with major compositions including *Songs I-IX* (1984), *Dressur* (1977), and *Corporel* (1989). Each composer has

a different approach to theatricality, with extra-musical artistic elements serving different roles in each piece, and even within the same piece. What each composer has in common, however, is the goal of humanizing musical performance by incorporating other artistic elements. Theatrical percussion can be defined for the purpose of this study as works for one or more percussionists that incorporate artistic elements including vocalizations, movement, and dramatic elements such as theatrical instruction.

There is truly no substitute for live performance. To fully engage with any performance art, whether it is music, spoken word, theater, or opera, is to be immersed in the expression of the human experience, which cannot be fully appreciated through electronic reproduction (recordings).¹ Musicians and other artists work to connect with others through shared experience and emotion, and without live performance, this connection can become superficial or manufactured.

For musicians to incorporate other art forms such as visual arts, movement, literature, or theatrical elements into the presentations of their work, they are able to create a more inclusive performance experience that may be more relatable and connectable for today's audiences and for the audiences of the future.

Problem Statement

Contemporary musicians face a number of challenges today, many of which stem from the question of cultural relevance. In the classical world, concert formalities, programming choices, and an expected base knowledge of repertoire can easily alienate audiences. Presentations that incorporate extra-musical artistic elements are one way that

¹ Steve Guttenberg, "What's better? Live or recorded music?" The Audiophile – CNET News, http://news.cnet.com/8301-13645_3-10081699-47.html#addcomm (accessed December 4, 2012).

several orchestras and performing arts organizations around the country have been increasing public interest and cultural relevance. Innovative orchestras, such as the New World Symphony, a training orchestra of post-graduate musicians directed by high-profile conductor Michael Tilson Thomas are pushing the boundaries of concert expectations throughout every season with concerts that include video conceived to accompany certain pieces, poetry readings, lighting effects, and creative programming.² James Ross, an innovative and creative conductor of the orchestras of the University of Maryland, Juilliard School, and formerly of the National Orchestral Institute has been pushing orchestral boundaries as well via performances of John Adams' *The Chairman Dances* with a troupe of dancers, and a dramatized performance of Stravinsky's *Petrushka* complete with puppets, an outdoor winter festival, and of course, a bear.³

Chamber and solo musical performances are more financially viable than full symphonic performance due to artistic costs, and often offer more flexibility in instrumentation and venue. Even more important, however, is the accessibility of the performer (and performance) that comes with a more intimate setting, including fewer performers with more exposed individual roles in solo or ensemble settings.

Percussion, in particular, is relatable and approachable, as the act of creating a sound by striking something is an action that all humans can, and have done. The sound production on percussion instruments (as sound is almost always produced by striking the instrument) lends itself particularly well to connectivity with the arts: unlike some other instruments, the method of sound production is very visual, and also involves movement

² New World Symphony, "New World Symphony: America's Orchestral Academy," New World Symphony, <http://www.nws.edu> (accessed November 26, 2012).

³ University of Maryland School of Music, "UMD Symphony Orchestra," University of Maryland, <http://www.music.umd.edu/ensembles/orchestras/umso> (accessed November 26, 2012).

as a prominent element. This, in combination with the limited repertoire and subsequent need for new music for solo and chamber percussion, makes theatrical percussion a natural and viable genre, and also one that is instantly human, approachable, and relatable.

Need for Study

This study will serve to provide an examination of three major works for theatrical percussion: *Songs I-IX* by Stuart Saunders Smith, *Corporel* by Vinko Globokar, and *Dressur* by Mauricio Kagel, by comparing and contrasting the extra-musical artistic elements of each and their overall effect on a performance. As classically trained percussionists, many performers of these works come from an audio-centric background, with a primary focus on what the performance of a piece *sounds* like, but with a less-honed awareness for what the performance *looks* like or *feels* like. Through detailed study and performance of pieces such as these, a performer can integrate concern for visual and theatrical elements into future performances of theatrical music and also of absolute music (in this case, with no extra-musical or theatrical elements). By performing pieces with extra-musical or theatrical elements, performers have an opportunity to expand their artistic palate and also to increase connectivity between performers, audience members, and individual disciplines. A major issue facing classically trained musicians today is commanding and retaining cultural relevance; the study and performance of pieces such as those by Globokar, Smith, and Kagel is one way to achieve and maintain such relevance.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine three pieces for theatrical percussion and the extra-musical elements therein and how these elements work together to affect the overall performance of the works. This study will also address notation and interpretative choices in the three works for theatrical percussion.

Research Questions

- 1) What extra-musical artistic elements are used in each piece? In what way are they used and incorporated?
- 2) What is the relationship between extra-musical artistic elements and musical sounds?
- 3) How are extra-musical artistic elements notated? How does that affect interpretation?
- 4) How proscriptive is the composer? How much is left to interpretation and what are interpretive options?

Delimitation

While it is within the scope of this study to assess audience involvement and the communicative potential of multi-disciplinary works, this study will not attempt to be all-inclusive or to pass aesthetic value judgments on works studied, whether positive or negative. This study is also not meant to determine whether works with extra-musical elements are more or less effective overall than those without, as this would be highly subjective. It is, however, within the scope of this study to explore and analyze the

communicative potential and performer-to-audience connectivity of musical works that include extra-musical elements including theater, visual arts, and movement through organized analysis of the extra-musical artistic elements.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Stuart Saunders Smith: An Unconventional Approach

Stuart Smith is a composer who, rather than “thinking outside the box,” seems to not even consider that there is a box that might represent compositional convention. His work is difficult to summarize or categorize, but it is uniquely recognizable as his voice. As John Welsh describes in the prologue of his book, *The Music of Stuart Saunders Smith*, Brian Ferneyhough once asked Smith, “What kind of a composer are you?” to which Smith answered, “I’m a jazz composer!”⁴ Although to the common listener, Smith’s music does not suggest jazz in any obvious way, Smith does manifest the spirit of jazz through his music’s emphasis on discovery and collaboration.⁵ Welsh’s text gives the most authoritative and complete analysis and history of Stuart Saunders Smith and his music; this will serve as a key resource in my own research and analysis focusing on Smith’s piece for theatrical percussion, *Songs I-IX*.

One aspect of Stuart Smith’s music for theatrical percussion that I will examine is the relationship between notation and the resulting interpretation as final product. Two articles that offer important insight from the composer himself (both of which are co-authored by Stuart and Sylvia Smith) are “The Relationship Between Visual Art and

⁴ John P. Welsh, *The Music of Stuart Saunders Smith* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995), xxx.

⁵ *Ibid.*, xxx.

Graphic Notation,” originally published in *Percussive Notes*⁶, and “Visual Music,” originally published in *Perspectives of New Music*.⁷

Another key resource that relates directly to my study of *Songs I-IX* by Stuart Saunders Smith is Wendy Salkind’s article, “Language and Percussion: An Actor’s Perspective.” Salkind compares Smith’s usage of text between *Songs I-IX*, written in 1980, and Smith’s later work, *By Language Embellished: I*, which was written in 1984.⁸ In particular, Salkind discusses the relationship between Smith’s texts and any implied meaning thereof, and the percussive sounds that are created by the performer. Similarly, in *Words and Spaces: An Anthology of Twentieth Century Musical Experiments in Language and Sonic Environments*, an article entitled “Percussion in Discussion” by Stuart Smith examines, with personal anecdotes, the relationship between text and music in his speech songs.⁹ The composer’s own writings give valuable insight into not just the inspiration of the text, but the composer’s intention in text selection.

Mauricio Kagel: A Re-Humanization of Music-Making!¹⁰

Not unlike other composers to be discussed in the following chapters, Mauricio Kagel’s exploratory and experimental nature leads to a large body of work that is difficult to categorize. Of particular significance to my research, however, is Kagel’s work in the genre of instrumental theatre, in which Kagel strives for (in his own words) “an

⁶ Sylvia Smith and Stuart Smith, “The Relationship Between Visual Art And Graphic Notation,” *Percussive Notes* 20, no. 1 (1981): 49-54.

⁷ Sylvia Smith and Stuart Smith, “Visual Music,” *Perspectives of New Music* 22, no. 1 (1981): 75-93.

⁸ Wendy Salkind, “Language and Percussion: An Actor’s Persepctive,” *ex tempore* IV, no. 2 (Spring-Summer 1987-88): 96.

⁹ Stuart Smith, “Percussion in Discussion,” in *Words and Spaces: An Anthology of Twentieth Century Musical Experiments in Language and Sonic Environments*, ed. Stuart Saunders Smith and Thomas DeLio (New York: University Press of America, 1989), 127-156.

¹⁰ Björn Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 38.

enjoyment of music with all senses... a re-humanization of music-making!”¹¹ The most significant English text (and only English book to date) discussing the life and works of Mauricio Kagel is Björn Heile’s recently published book, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*. In addition to discussing his biographical background in more detail than any other English source¹², Heile includes chapters on Kagel’s Instrumental Theatre¹³, and on his experimental works that include multimedia, radio plays, and films that will be relevant to my work as I examine Kagel’s compositional approach in relation to his theatrical trio, *Dressur*.¹⁴

Aside from Heile’s tome, very little has been written about Mauricio Kagel, and especially about his theatrical trio *Dressur*. In his book, *Extended Notation*, Christian Dimpker discusses various graphics that Kagel uses to signify different instruments in *Dressur* and in other scores.¹⁵ In a *Grove Music Online* article, Paul Attinello gives a concise summary of Kagel’s life and works, but does not mention *Dressur*, the piece of Kagel’s that I will be examining most closely.¹⁶ An anonymous blog called “Roots and Rhizomes” offers an interesting personal analysis specifically of *Dressur*, written by a performer of the piece, that refers to both Heile’s *The Music of Mauricio Kagel* and Kagel’s score to *Dressur*.¹⁷ In *Modern Music and After*, Paul Griffiths does not provide much direct information on Kagel, but does refer to his music in several sections of the book with regard to his contemporaries, including Stockhausen, Berio, and Ligeti,

¹¹ Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 38.

¹² *Ibid.*, 7-32.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 33-68.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 69-104.

¹⁵ Christian Dimpker, *Extended Notation: The depiction of the unconventional* (Zurich: LIT Verlag, 2013), 106, 206.

¹⁶ Paul Attinello, “Mauricio Kagel,” *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed March 14, 2014, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/14594>.

¹⁷ *Roots and Rhizomes: A Two-Fold Examination of Contemporary Percussion Playing – Looking at the Past and Moving Forward*, accessed March 13, 2014, <http://www.rootshrizomes.blogspot.com>.

providing a cultural context for Kagel's role in Postmodernism.¹⁸ In an interview with Anthony Coleman in 2004, Mauricio Kagel acknowledges that his music is not well known or often performed in the United States; he blames his publishers for a lack of promotion, but also goes on to say that if the works are of a deserving quality, they will become known with time.¹⁹ If recent trends are indicative, Kagel will continue to have increased performances and notoriety in the U.S. in the twenty-first century.

Globokar: A Focus on the Performer

To Robert Everett-Green of the *Globe and Mail*, Globokar says, "I find it very sad that many players spend their whole lives playing on the music of others."²⁰ This sentiment is manifested through many of Globokar's works, which require the performer to become very personally involved, and which allow the performer's personality and interpretation to show through his sometimes complex and prescriptive scores. John Warnaby's article, "Vinko Globokar: Revaluing a Phenomenon"²¹ and Erik Lund's doctoral dissertation on Globokar's *Discours*,²² provide valuable biographical information on Globokar, while also discussing compositional influences.

Steven Schick, in his book *The Percussionist's Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams*, talks about the role of the contemporary percussion through his in-depth performer's analysis of several major contemporary percussion solos, including Globokar's

¹⁸ Paul Griffiths, *Modern Music and After* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 190-202.

¹⁹ Anthony Coleman, "Mauricio Kagel," *BOMB*, no. 88 (Summer 2004): 65, accessed March 14, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40427646>.

²⁰ Robert Everett-Green, "The Games that Vinko Globokar's Musicians Play," *The Globe and Mail*, December 7, 2011, accessed March 14, 2014, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/music/the-games-that-vinko-globokars-musicians-play/article4183454>.

²¹ John Warnaby, "Vinko Globokar: Revaluing a Phenomenon," *Tempo* 61, no. 240 (April 2007): 2-18, accessed March 14, 2014, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/203674063?accountid=14585>.

²² Erik Ragnar Lund, "The 'Discours' of Vinko Globokar: To Speak to Play" (D.M.A. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1988).

?Corporel, which is one of the pieces of focus in my research. Schick discusses possible interpretations, and also implications of the nakedness and vulnerability of the piece, as a piece for body percussion in which the performer is instructed to perform bare-chested.²³ Alex Lipowski gives a performer's account on a smaller scale in *Arcana IV: Musicians on Music*, which offers another perspective on the experience of performing *?Corporel*.²⁴ Two dissertations, written by Cory Hills²⁵ and Julie Strom²⁶, also discuss theatrical and notational elements of Globokar's *?Corporel* in relation to other works for percussion. Their analysis and comparisons relate closely to the focus of my research and analysis.

Other Multi-Disciplinary Composers

In order to gain a perspective on multi-disciplinary musical works and theatrical percussion, other composers and performers were researched for this study. Iannis Xenakis stands among the most widely written-about creators of multi-disciplinary art installations since 1950. He is particularly known for the relationship between his music, architecture, and mathematics. In 1985, Sharon Kanach translated and edited a transcription of the defense of Xenakis' doctoral thesis, *Arts/Sciences: Alloys*, in which conversations with Xenakis' five diverse committee members, Olivier Revault d'Allones, Olivier Messiaen, Michel Ragon, Michel Serres, and Bernard Teysseire, have been

²³ Steven Schick, *The Percussionist's Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2006), 164-169.

²⁴ Alex Lipowski, "*?Corporel--Vinko Globokar*," in *Arcana IV: Musicians on Music*, ed. John Zorn (New York: Hips Road, 2009), 188-191.

²⁵ Cory Hills, "Graphic Notation as Means of Music Gesture: Examining Percussion Works by John Cage, Morton Feldman, and Vinko Globokar" (M.M. thesis, University of Kansas, 2011).

²⁶ Julie J. Strom, "Theater Percussion: Developing a Twenty-First-Century Genre through the Connection of Visual, Dramatic, and Percussive Arts" (D.A. diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2012).

transcribed.²⁷ Although Xenakis is commonly perceived as a composer who incorporates mathematic formulas into his writing, his defense focuses more on what he refers to as global morphology, which Larry Polansky describes as “a search for deep forms that motivate human thought processes and concrete manifestations (art, science, technology, architecture and even the evolution and perception of biological forms)” in his review of the thesis defense.²⁸ Rather than simply basing musical constructs on mathematical concepts, Xenakis strives to unify theories of thought and perception through a synthesis of arts and sciences.²⁹ Xenakis goes beyond applying mathematics to his composition in his multi-disciplinary art installations of the 1960s and 1970s that he referred to as polytopes, which were large-scale multimedia presentations based in music and architecture.³⁰ This publication is significant as it is one of the first and most thorough publications of Xenakis talking about his own music and the connections that he intends and perceives between music, other arts, and sciences.

In 1998, Maria Anna Harley delves into Xenakis’ displays of light and sound works that he refers to as polytopes, and discusses their reception and place in culture.³¹ Although it is difficult to give justice to the polytopes in a written description, Harley gives the reader a relatively complete picture of the experience by describing each in detail and includes sketches of several of them. After describing and analyzing several of Xenakis’ polytopes, Harley discusses the reception and cultural implications of such

²⁷ Iannis Xenakis, *Arts/Sciences: Alloys: The Thesis Defense of Iannis Xenakis*, ed. and trans. Sharon Kanach (New York: Pendragon Press, 1985), 12.

²⁸ Larry Polansky, “A Review of “Arts/Sciences”: Alloys by Iannis Xenakis,” *Leonardo* 23, no. 4 (1990): 385.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 385.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 385.

³¹ Maria Anna Harley, “Music of Sound and Light: Xenakis’s Polytopes,” *Leonardo* 31, no. 1 (1998): 63.

large-scale and impermanent artistic works.³² While it is generally financially infeasible to keep such large installations erected for extended periods of time, a permanent exhibition of them would also be contradictory to the innovative and boundary-pushing nature of such works that explore the artistic potential of the newest technologies. Harley also discusses the political implications of a new art such as Xenakis' polytopes that transcends cultural and political borders, for it was an ideal of Xenakis that the world could be connected in a utopian political organization without nations or states.³³

Philipp Oswald's article, published in 2002 after Xenakis' death, focuses more on Xenakis' use of different types of space, including light space, projection space, sound space, and architectural space than did Harley.³⁴ Towards the end of the article, Oswald states that Xenakis has redefined the qualities of space in architecture from being merely confined by walls to include the intangible qualities of light, sound, and climate.³⁵ This description truly exemplifies the synthesis and unity of the arts and sciences towards which Xenakis was striving. Oswald also discusses the use of temporal space in *Psappha* (1975) for solo percussion, in which Xenakis utilizes overlapping tempi and divisions of time between slower low tones and medium and faster high tones.³⁶ Oswald's thorough descriptions of Xenakis' musical compositions, polytopes, and architectural projects makes the relationship between the three clearer than was done in previous publications.

Well-known contemporary percussionist Greg Beyer discusses the mathematical influence in another of Xenakis' pieces for solo percussion, *Rebonds*. In this piece,

³² Harley, *Music of Sound and Light*, 63.

³³ *Ibid.*, 64.

³⁴ Philipp Oswald, "Iannis Xenakis' Polytopes," ed. James Harley, *Contemporary Music Review* 21, no. 2/3 (2002): 35.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 39.

Xenakis uses the Golden Ratio or Golden Section, which occurs when the ratio of the sum of two quantities ($a + b$) to the larger of the two quantities (a) is the same as the ratio of a to b .³⁷ The ratio has been used for centuries in architecture, and its use in “Rebonds” is a prime example of architecture’s influence on Xenakis’ works for percussion.

Although the musical usage of the Golden Ratio is not unique to Xenakis, his usage in a piece that has become standard repertoire for solo multiple percussion is very notable.

Another resource that is useful to a study of performance of works for contemporary percussion is Steven Schick’s *The Percussionist’s Art*. *The Percussionist’s Art* offers not just analysis and background information on major works for solo percussion, but also a unique perspective on what it means to be a percussionist and contemporary soloist in today’s cultural environment. The book comes with a CD recording of Schick performing works that are discussed in the book. Of particular interest for this project is the section in Chapter 6, “This Is Not a Drum: Manipulating the Material of Percussion Music.”³⁸ Schick is a well-known champion of Xenakis’ works for percussion, having also published what many consider to be definitive recordings of Xenakis’ complete works that include percussion, and also performs and writes about other avant-garde twentieth- and twenty-first-century compositions, many of which incorporate other disciplines such as theatrical elements.

Iannis Xenakis was a major player in the twentieth century in the realm of multi-disciplinary works, not just because of his prolific output, but also because of the depth of connections between the arts and sciences found in his works. While multi- and cross-disciplinary projects are educational and cultural buzzwords in the twenty-first century,

³⁷ Greg Beyer, “All is Number: Golden Section in Xenakis’ “Rebonds,”” *Percussive Notes* 43 (2005): 40-48, 50.

³⁸ Schick, *The Percussionist’s Art*, 192.

many of these connections are shallow or exist to satisfy requirements or demand. Xenakis' synthesis of the arts was a lifelong ambition and calling, and was truly revolutionary.

Another major composer in the world of works for theatrical percussion is Frederic Rzewski. Rzewski's piece *To the Earth* for four flowerpots is increasingly played, and for performers and audience members, can serve as a gentle introduction to pieces for percussion that require employ extra-musical elements. In *The Percussionist's Art*, Schick describes the implications of the piece's instrumentation, and offers his own thoughts on interpretations of *To the Earth*.³⁹ Howard Pollack offers a more substantial background on Rzewski, his contemporaries, and influences in *Harvard Composers: Walter Piston and His Students, from Elliott Carter to Frederic Rzewski*.⁴⁰

Other sources, such as a dissertation by Lee Hinkle entitled "Theatrical Music for Solo Percussion," discuss the extra-musical elements in several pieces for theatrical percussion. Hinkle's dissertation also includes his own recordings of each work that is discussed.⁴¹ Aiyun Huang's doctoral dissertation also discusses the theatrical elements in works for solo percussion as it relates to Georges Aperghis' *Le Corps à Corps*.⁴²

³⁹ Schick, *The Percussionist's Art*, 9-13.

⁴⁰ Howard Pollack, *Harvard Composers: Walter Piston and His Students, from Elliott Carter to Frederic Rzewski* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1992).

⁴¹ Lee Wilkerson Hinkle, "Theatrical Music for Solo Percussion" (D.M.A. diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2010).

⁴² Aiyun Yaiyun Huang, "Perspectives on Music Interpretation: Instrumentation, Memory, Metaphor, and Theatrical Intention" (D.M.A. diss., University of California, San Diego, 2004).

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The purpose of this study is to analyze and explore the creative potential of musical works that incorporate extra-musical elements, focusing on three works for percussion: *Songs I-IX* by Stuart Saunders Smith, *?Corporel* by Vinko Globokar, and *Dressur* by Mauricio Kagel. To that aim, this study offers a brief overview of the genre of theatrical percussion, followed by detailed analysis and comparison of the extra-musical elements of the above pieces, including what elements are used in each piece, how they are notated, analysis of text and its relationship to instrumental sound, and how all of these elements affect a performer's interpretive choices. In addition to score study, recordings and, where possible, live performances of these pieces and others for theatrical percussion are examined and analyzed. Through the study of theatrical percussion, and of these three pieces in particular, the role of the percussionist, as an instrumentalist whose performance naturally incorporates visual and kinesthetic aspects, is further identified and defined.

Measures and Materials

Research for this project was conducted through personal examination of music and performance, and study of performers', scholars', and theorists' analysis of music and performance, gathered through research. The published scores to *Songs I-IX* by Stuart Saunders Smith, *Dressur* by Mauricio Kagel, and *?Corporel* by

Vinko Globokar are heavily referenced, in addition to texts and articles dedicated to the above composers and their works.

Examination of Music

The three pieces that will be examined as part of this study are *Dressur* by Mauricio Kagel, *?Corporel* by Vinko Globokar, and *Songs I-IX* by Stuart Saunders Smith. Each piece has been written by a prominent contemporary composer during the second half of the twentieth century, and analysis of each will be tailored to the characteristics and compositional concepts that are used in each piece.

Dressur is a thirty-minute theatrical piece for percussion trio and wooden instruments meant to expand the twentieth-century audience's experience beyond the purely auditory world such as that which comes from the popularity of mechanical reproduction of music.⁴³ Rather than any standard musical form, *Dressur* is through-composed, with music primarily serving the theatrical elements of the piece. *Dressur* includes the use of marimba and many other pitched and non-pitched wooden instruments, and Kagel includes both theatrical instruction and standard musical notation in the piece.

In contrast, the musical sounds in *?Corporel* are inseparable from the movements and instructions that Globokar dictates, as it is most often theatrical movement that creates the notated sound. Formally, *?Corporel* is also through-composed, is much shorter than *Dressur* and includes no instruments outside of the body of the performer.

⁴³ Mark Wessels, "Kagel's "Dressur" & the Instrumental Theater Idiom," Vic Firth, <http://www.vicfirth.com/exchange/2010/12/01/kagels-dressur-the-instrumental-theater-idiom/> (accessed November 25, 2012).

Songs I-IX is divided into nine short “songs” that utilize several unconventional instruments, including frying pans, glass jars, and wooden bowls; spoken text (with varying degrees of comprehensibility); and dramatic indications. Unlike *Corporel*, in which the performer has only his or her body to manipulate, in *Songs I-IX*, the performer has a table full of objects to use to express Smith’s dramatic intent. In *Songs I-IX*, the vocalized text is integral to the composition as a whole; the music is intended to serve the text.

For each piece, background information on the composer and his music is provided, followed by examination of three major categories of extra-musical artistic elements: vocalizations (both verbal and nonverbal), movement, and dramatic elements. Included in the examination is a discussion of what elements are used, how they are used, and what the elements’ roles are within the overall context of each piece. Notation and interpretation of extra-musical artistic elements will also be addressed for each piece.

CHAPTER 4

SONGS I-IX BY STUART SAUNDERS SMITH

Stuart Saunders Smith and his Speech Songs

Although very few listeners would describe the music of Stuart Saunders Smith as jazz, when Brian Ferneyhough once asked Smith what kind of composer he is, Smith replied: “I’m a jazz composer!”⁴⁴ Smith has a strong musical background in studying and performing jazz, and although its influence on his compositions is indirect, it is also undeniable. At the core of all of Smith’s music is a sense of capturing the natural and organic, through rhythm, pitch, character, instrument choices, and timing. Smith’s works can be divided into three main categories: theater music, mobiles and music of coexistence, and transmedia works (works that are not instrumentalist-specific).⁴⁵ *Songs I-IX* for Actor-Percussionist is an example of one of Smith’s speech songs, which make up a subset of his theater music.

One characteristic found in *Songs I-IX*, and also prevalent throughout Smith’s music, is rhythmic complexity, including unusual subdivisions and polyrhythms. When asked by Jeremy Muller about the interpretation of such rhythmic complexity, Smith replies that his intention lies in “making a music that floats, that doesn’t exist in slicing up time evenly, and gives the audience a very rich, organic listening experience... We are walking polyrhythms. I’m trying to express who we are corporeally.”⁴⁶ Smith’s use of polyrhythms and other complex figures to achieve an effect of floating over time

⁴⁴ Welsh, *The Music of Stuart Saunders Smith*, xxx.

⁴⁵ Jeremy Muller, “Amidst the Noise: Stuart Saunders Smith’s Percussion Music,” *Percussive Notes* 52, no. 4, July 2014, 7.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, “Amidst the Noise,” 9.

effortlessly is reflected in Smith's music as a whole, in which a natural, organic, and very human character is captured and portrayed regardless of the complexities of notation.

Of his childhood, Smith has said, "I was never taught to sing pitches. I sang rhythms. There was a palpable, inevitable connection made between language and rhythm."⁴⁷ This influence is clear in Smith's speech songs, which is a particular type of composition that involves spoken word. Smith's speech songs can be divided into two basic categories: one that involves more abstract connections between words (Smith calls this "engineered speech"), and a second that involves more traditional poetry. Pieces such as *Songs I-IX; By Language Embellished, I*; and *Tunnels* fall into the first category, while pieces such as *In Bingham* and *Three Winter Carols* are exemplary of the second.⁴⁸

As Welsh states in Chapter IV of *The Music of Stuart Saunders Smith*, one of the primary texts on Smith and his music, "Smith does not claim to be a poet, but rather one who composes music with the sounds of words."⁴⁹ The spirit of Smith's speech songs can be well-captured in Smith's own program notes for his "mini-opera" for solo percussion, *Tunnels*: "When I was very little I had a dream which never left me. In this dream, when people talked, they sounded like musical instruments...No words came out, just instrumental sounds...In my speech songs, I reverse the situation. Words come out, but it sounds like music. For me, this music-sense makes perfect sense."⁵⁰

Wendy Salkind, an actress who has worked closely with Smith on his theatre music, and on *By Language Embellished, I*, in particular, discusses Smith's compositional intent as it relates to his choice of text: that by juxtaposing words so that

⁴⁷ Wendy Salkind, "Language and Percussion: An Actor's Perspective," *ex tempore* IV, no. 2, Spring-Summer 1987-88, 290.

⁴⁸ Muller, "Amidst the Noise," 13.

⁴⁹ Welsh, *The Music of Stuart Saunders Smith*, 145.

⁵⁰ Stuart Saunders Smith, *Tunnels*, Baltimore, MD, Sonic Art Editions, 1985.

“sonic qualities and semantic value” are unfamiliar, Smith requires both performer and audience member to re-learn and re-interpret associations and meanings of the text.⁵¹ Smith’s aim is for performers to learn the text for his speech songs from a rhythmic perspective that is free of imagery or value judgments. Following this method, text such as “Gathered together to sew seeds/To sea weeds reek welts/Only to lather and foam” from Song V in *Songs I-IX*⁵², is approached for its rhythmic value, rather than its literal meaning. As familiarity with the text is gained, the performer develops a fresh association or imagery with the text, free from previous associations. In an interview with Muller, Smith describes this process as nonsense becoming “new-sense,” and ultimately common sense (at which point, Smith recommends moving on to a new artwork).⁵³ In studying, performing, or witnessing a performance of any of Smith’s speech songs, one is forced to perceive sounds, instruments, gestures, and words in an entirely new light, re-defined by Smith’s composition. In Smith’s own words: “If nothing more, speech songs are a reminder that language is invented by us and if we are not careful it totally invents us without our awareness or control. Composing in words helps us regain control...”⁵⁴

Extra-Musical Elements in *Songs I-IX* by Stuart Saunders Smith

Songs I-IX is a piece that Smith describes as “surrealist,” having utilized a compositional process involving associations and connections that are intuitive rather than rational, similar to thought processes found in dreams or in altered states of

⁵¹ Salkind, “Language and Percussion,” 290.

⁵² Stuart Saunders Smith, *Songs I-IX*, Baltimore, MD, Smith Publications, 1984.

⁵³ Muller, “Amidst the Noise,” 13.

⁵⁴ Salkind, “Language and Percussion,” 290.

consciousness.⁵⁵ Smith describes the structure of the piece as being a triptych, with three groups of three songs each.⁵⁶ The first three (Songs I-III) and the last three (Songs VII-IX) were composed using a process of associations involving “found text generating more text,” while the middle three (Song IV-VI) are centered more on the text and were “composed subjectively from sounds, memories and visual pictures of his imagination.”⁵⁷ Additionally, the textual meaning and character of the first three songs is the inverse of the last three.⁵⁸

As a piece for a solo percussionist, *Songs I-IX* travels easily, calling for many found objects as instruments, such as a plastic jug, a frying pan, four glass jars, and a “maraca” made from broken glass in a paper bag, all to be arranged on a “dinner-type table.”⁵⁹ Smith describes the setup as “poverty stricken,”⁶⁰ as the only traditional (non-junk) percussion instruments and implements that are required are a red maraca, a yellow yarn mallet, a ratchet, and a cowbell. Smith perceives the piece, as a mini-opera, to be the antithesis of the extravagance of modern opera production. In addition to using mostly found percussion instruments, *Songs I-IX* is short (usually under ten minutes), without linear plot, expensive costumes, or advanced technology.⁶¹

Vocalizations: Verbal

Vocalizations in *Songs I-IX* can be divided into verbal and nonverbal sounds; as a speech song, verbal vocalizations lie at the core of the piece. As mentioned in the

⁵⁵ Welsh, *The Music of Stuart Saunders Smith*, 318.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 321.

⁵⁷ Salkind, “Language and Percussion,” 294.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 294.

⁵⁹ Smith, *Songs I-IX*, 1984.

⁶⁰ Welsh, *The Music of Stuart Saunders Smith*, 322.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 322.

previous section, the structure and compositional process for the first three songs is similar to that of the last three, and as such, the role and treatment of the text is similar as well. In Songs I-III and VII-IX, most words are to be spoken rhythmically, aligned with specific percussive sounds. In Songs IV-VI, the text is less attached to specific percussive sounds and timing, and more integrated into the composition as a cohesive statement. The sectional nature of Songs I-III and VII-IX (as marked by single or double breath marks between short phrases) further exaggerates the difference in treatment of the text between the first and last three songs and the middle three.

It is particularly interesting to note the relationships amongst the sounds of the words, the percussive sounds, the literal meaning of the words, and the performance instructions. For example, in Song I Smith provides the performance instruction, “Short, clipped, monotone, very nervous.” In contrast to this instruction, the opening text of the first song is “Gathered together, Calm, Self possessed, Composed.” In further contradiction, the instruments used in Song I include both sounds of short duration: finger snaps, table (played with knuckles of fist), and handclaps, and sounds of longer duration: large cowbell, and rubbing sandpaper on sandpaper.

However, in Song VIII, the word meaning, percussive sounds, and performance instruction are all in agreement. Song VIII, with performance instructions of “As a curse” and “Erratically” uses words with harsh consonant sounds and negative associations, with lines such as “A shorn wracked demarked ruinate gr” and “Muck a muck whacking gravid grraah!” To enhance the affect and character of the song, harsher and more percussive instruments, such as the jar cover cymbal, ratchet, wooden bowl, and metal container are used in Song VIII. Particularly harsh sounds, like long ratchet

tones, are used to emphasize words such as “wracked,” “whacking,” and the exclamation of “grrraah!”

At other times, the percussive sounds can be interpreted as depicting the literal meaning of words. An example of this is in Song II, in which the first spoken words after picking up a plastic jug of water and “sloshing” it, are “A little stream.” In this case, the musical sound of the water in the jug is evocative of the image of a stream of water. Later in the same song, the word “fricative” is accompanied by the percussive sound created by the friction of rubbing sandpaper against sandpaper for the duration of the word.

Another interesting aspect of Smith’s text in *Songs I-IX* is the juxtaposition of words from the dictionary with words of Smith’s own construction. In Songs I-III, all of the words used can be found in the dictionary (although some nonverbal vocalizations are used, including the singing of the syllable “ma” in Song II, and the sounds “ha,” “h,” and “ho” in Song III). In Songs IV and V, the text becomes more abstract, as Smith incorporates “nonsense” words like “mentour” and “clubed,” or even different spellings of words that could be found in the dictionary, such as “Gleening” instead of the English word “gleaning,” or “baskett,” “brackett,” and “caskett” instead of “basket,” “bracket,” or “casket” (all found in Song IV).

In Song VI, Smith includes an entire monologue (found under the heading #C) made up almost entirely of nonsense words (the only exceptions are the words “in,” “I’m,” and “coal”). The passage is meant to be in a made-up language called “Quay,” with an instruction to be read “Like religious text in Latin.” In this sense, Smith incorporates humor into this song, as the performer is instructed to recite lines such as

“Fenquay?! Bum-fuzzle flabber-mizzle?!?!” as if they are to be taken as seriously as a religious text.

In contrast to the nonsense words that Smith uses in Song VI, several of the words that Smith uses that are not found in the dictionary are real words, but with a prefix or suffix that would not conventionally be used with the word’s root, such as “nefariousing” (Song VII), “chillsome” (Song IX), and “unfocus” (Song IX).

Vocalizations: Nonverbal

The first example of nonverbal vocalization in *Songs I-IX* can be found in Song II in the high-pitched falsetto singing of the syllable “ma.” This is recalled in the last vocalization of the piece, in which the performer is again instructed to sing a high-pitched falsetto “ma,” this time to match the pitch of the lowest-pitched jar.

Another type of vocalization that Smith incorporates in *Songs I-IX* is using the first syllable of an important word in the song in a rhythmic way. The first instance of this is found in Song III, in which the syllable “ha” changes to “h” and then to “ho” to lead into an exclamation of “Hot!” Smith notates odd subdivisions of beats into three, five, and seven, with two pitches for the vocalization marked as “H” and “L” for high and low. Similarly, the syllable “ga” is used rhythmically in Interludes 3 and 4, which start and end Song V. Interlude 3 segues directly into a monologue that begins with the phrase “Gathered together” (the same phrase that opens Song I), and Interlude 4 immediately follows another iteration of the text “gathered together.”

Other nonverbal vocalizations utilized in *Songs I-IX* include kissing sounds in Song II (written as an instrument rather than text), indications to “whistle-sing” and

“whistle” in Song VI, and growling sounds of “grrrrah,” “grr,” and “grraah!” in aggressive moments in Songs VII and VIII. In each instant, the vocalizations enhance the overall affect of the songs. In Song II, making a kissing sound into the air adds a sense of sweetness to the passage. In Song VI, the whistle-singing, which is described by Smith as whistling and singing simultaneously, adds a sense of levity and whimsy to the song. Finally, the growling vocalizations in VII and VIII complement the text by intensifying the dramatic indication of “cursing” with contentious growling sounds.

Movement

In *Song I-IX*, there is little proscribed movement, as the performer is situated behind the table with instruments on it for the duration of the piece, but body movement is demanded through the use of body percussion in Song IV, and visual gestures are dictated in Songs IV and V. In Song IV, 3., Smith uses slapping of the chest and stamping of the feet to achieve the effect of the line’s indication: “Strongly, marchlike [sic].” Later in Song IV, 5., Smith writes for a finger snap, a thigh roll, buttock roll, chest roll, foot stomp, and hand clap, in that order. With each of these actions, body movement is required and proscribed by the written notes for body percussion. Later in Song IV, 7., soundless visual gestures are called for, including touching the right and left nipples and butt, and pointing at the audience as the final line of the song, “Plastic lass,” is spoken.

In Song V, which includes a monologue to be given “as a faith-healer, Bible-wheeling very southern preacher,” the performer is instructed to use gestures that “look like this type of preacher.” In the performer’s hands during the monologue are a red maraca and yellow yarn mallet, and Smith asks the performer to improvise an

accompaniment to the monologue that includes shaking the maraca and hitting the mallet on the table. In this case, the musical sounds that are created are a result of the physical gestures that are meant to intensify the preacher-like monologue.

Of course, movement and gesture are inherently included in all of the percussion playing throughout the piece, not just in spots with specific movement instruction (this is because all percussive sounds are created by striking or rubbing an object with another object, which requires movement). One example of Smith incorporating movement indirectly can be found in Song VI, #C, in which the performer is instructed to hit the frying pan with a steak knife while speaking the syllable “wack!!!” Although not specifically indicated, the performer is likely to use a large motion to get a louder sound out of the relative deadness of the frying pan to match the emphasis that is implied in the text by the three exclamation points. In this case, the combination of the choice of instrumentation (steak knife on frying pan), the emphatic text (!!!), and exaggerated motion create a holistic affect of urgency and enthusiasm.

Another example of Smith’s implied use of movement is in his writing for the ratchet in Song VIII. Ratchets can either be handheld and spun in the air to produce sound, or mounted with a handle to spin, depending on the type of instrument. Many performances that I have seen or heard about have used a handheld ratchet for more visibility of the instrument, but in either case, the circular motion required to create the sound of the ratchet implies a degree of mania and exasperation that complements the accompanying text in Song VIII: “wracked,” “grr,” “whacking,” and “grraah!”

Dramatic Elements

One of the most obvious ways in which Smith incorporates dramatic elements is through his use of instruments as props.⁶² In the instrumentation list on the score, two items are listed as having a specific color: a red maraca and a yellow medium hard yarn mallet.⁶³ These two items are used together in Song V, during the “Preacherlike [sic]” monologue that has been discussed in previous sections. During the monologue, the performer is instructed to “improvise a table-maraca accompaniment” with the red maraca in one hand and the yellow mallet in the other. It is during this monologue that an allusion to the colors red or yellow is made in the line “Belton boay all red and yellow bob.” Although Smith does not specifically instruct the performer to gesture with the red maraca and yellow mallet when saying the words “red” and “yellow,” the connection between the instruments and the colors mentioned in the text is obvious to the listener.

Other instrument choices that can be viewed as props in *Songs I-IX* are the water jug, chopsticks, steak knives, and broken glass maraca used in Songs II, V, VII, and IX, respectively. Each of these is a nontraditional percussion instrument, with natural associations that each of us bring from everyday life. Perhaps the most evocative of these instruments is the steak knives, with their everyday use and association with cutting objects. The knives are used throughout the piece in two main ways: striking and scraping, with varying degrees of intensity and aggressiveness. Two examples of the steak knives amplifying the dramatic affect of the music are the previously discussed striking of the frying pan with a steak knife while the performer says “wack!!!” in #C of

⁶² Muller, “Amidst the Noise,” 7.

⁶³ Smith, *Songs I-IX*, 1984.

Song VI, and the rapid scraping of the knives on the frying pan to accompany the text “grrrah!” in the opening of Song VII.

The water jug is used in Song II to create a sloshing sound that is evocative of “A little stream” (the first line of the text following the beginning of the sloshing of the water jug). The chopsticks are used only in Song V on the frying pan and offer a much gentler sound than the later use of the knives on the frying pan. The broken glass maraca, which is what Smith calls a paper bag with broken glass in it that is to be shaken, is reserved until the last system of Song IX. The musical direction of “Relaxed, very lyrical” in the first system of Song IX, in combination with the more delicate sound of the knives scraping the glass jars create a peaceful atmosphere that is augmented with the introduction of the fragility of the broken glass maraca in the final system of the piece.

The most detailed dramatic instructions that Smith provides can be found in Song V and Song VI. The full dramatic instruction for the monologue in Song V is as follows:

“Directions: Deliver as a faith-healer, Bible-wheeling very southern preacher. Use many word tremolos for emphasis. Improvise a table-maraca accompaniment. Reinforce the verbal/word tremolos with maraca. Your gestures should look like this type of preacher. The mallet-table and maraca should look like part of the religious speech.”⁶⁴

Following these instructions, the performer must create his or her own version of the southern preacher character, using inflection, word tremolo, and conviction to depict such a character, and the table-maraca character to enhance the dramatic effect. Smith’s suggestions to incorporate word tremolos and to use gestures that “look like this type of preacher” will aid the performer in creating a convincing character to effectively portray the dramatic intent of the passage.

⁶⁴ Smith, *Songs I-IX*, 1984.

Another specific dramatic scenario can be found under #D in Song VI. The text in #D tells a story of a brief conversation between a man and a woman, and Smith's dramatic instruction is that "If the performer is a man, then he performs, "Oh yeah, . . . of you" in a falsetto, i.e., imitates a women's [sic] voice. But if the performer is a woman, she performs, "Because . . . of me!" in an exaggerated low masculine voice."⁶⁵ This instruction requires the performer to create a character of the speaker of the opposite gender that is separate from the character of the storyteller that is used for the rest of the text in #D.

Other dramatic instruction that implies a certain character to be adopted is "Short, clipped, monotone, very nervous" (Song I), "Like religious text in Latin" (Song VI, #C), "Descriptive, quasi-cursing voice" (Song VII), and "As a curse" (Song VIII). Each of these offers guidance to the performer to create a convincing character depiction that will complement the percussive sounds and text to create a compelling overall dramatic effect.

Notation of Extra-Musical Elements

The score of *Songs I-IX* begins with a page that includes information under the headings "General Directions," "Instrumentation," and "Performance Directions." The performer will find much of this information necessary as he or she begins studying the piece and making preliminary decisions about set-up, interpretation, and how to approach learning the piece. Smith's detailed lists of instruments, mallets, and other methods of sound production under the heading of "Instrumentation" is particularly helpful.

⁶⁵ Smith, *Songs I-IX*, 1984.

In the General Directions, Smith instructs the performer to construct his or her own interpretation of the piece's text before adding the percussion accompaniment, and to ensure that the percussion playing complements the flow and character of the text rather than affecting or detracting from it. In this section, Smith also explains his use of a single or double apostrophe between phrases of music as a shorter or longer pause, and makes a short statement about dynamics to make sure that the text of *Songs I-IX* are always heard over the percussion playing.

Under the heading of "Performance Directions," Smith provides instructions that should be read in addition to the instructions that are included in the score. Some of the instructions provided on this first page are almost identical to the instructions included in the score, as is the case for Song I: on the first page, Smith indicates "Speak words in a short, clipped, very nervous, monotone" and on the score at the beginning of Song I, Smith writes "Short, clipped, monotone, very nervous."⁶⁶ In other cases, such as Song IV, Smith elaborates on the instructions he provides in the score. For example, the instruction above #7 in Song IV merely says "No sound-visual gestures: giving directions, testing," while the instructions included on the first page of the score explain more thoroughly: "This stanza should be delivered in an affected, somewhat effeminate manner, as if giving directions for testing an Ass Latchett (made up word)..." Conversely, the instructions on the first page for Song V are different from the instructions that Smith offers in the score (the instructions in the score were previously discussed on pages 28-29 of this document). In the score, Smith asks the performer to develop a southern preacher character to deliver the monologue that makes up the bulk of Song V, and in the performance directions on the first page of the score, Smith compares

⁶⁶ Smith, *Songs I-IX*, 1984.

the song to a beat poem and suggests that the performer should “take the part of an impassioned beat poet exposing his/her soul.” It is not meant to suggest that the two are mutually exclusive, but rather that to consider only Smith’s notes that are included within the score could result in a much different interpretation of the character of the song than to also take the performance directions into consideration.

Another facet of Smith’s notation in *Songs I-IX* is his use of pictorial representation, which occurs in relation to only three objects throughout the piece. The first example of pictorial notation comes in Song II with a box with two wavy lines inside of it next to the words “Slosh water” to represent the sloshing of the water jug. Next to the picture is a wavy line that extends under the staff for the duration that the water is meant to be sloshed. Although it is not specifically explained in this way, it is inevitable that the size and frequency of the waves used to represent sloshing of the water in the score will have an effect on the performer’s interpretation of how to perform the sloshing.

Other pictures used to represent objects in *Songs I-IX* include a small drawing of a mallet to indicate that the performer should use the yellow yarn mallet, and a small picture of two knives to indicate the use of the steak knives. It is interesting to note that for other beaters, such as the chopsticks, Smith opts to use the abbreviation “CS” instead of a pictorial representation.

Another visual representation of sound production appears in Song VI when Smith indicates the contour of the pitch of the whistle-singing with a line (this is found under #A and #E in Song VI). This dictates contour, but not a specific starting pitch or overall range, leaving a lot to the discretion of the performer. In #A, the performer is

instructed to transpose the second whistle-sing a major second higher throughout the passage than the first one.

Added to the other visual notational tools that Smith uses in Songs I-III and VII-IX is a vertical dotted line that shows where certain percussive notes should line up with syllables in the text. While this is also never explicitly discussed in performance notes, the lines are so clearly aligned with the syllables of the text that there is no interpretive question.

Interpretation of Extra-Musical Elements

The element that offers the most room for variance in the performance of *Songs I-IX* is the performer's portrayal of characters and interpretation of dramatic performance instructions. While Smith's instructions are thorough and prescriptive, it is still the performer's responsibility to develop his or her own version of the characters that Smith describes. This can be a particular challenge for classically trained percussionists who may lack formal training in dramatic performance. An especially challenging character to portray is the "southern preacher" in the extended monologue in Song V. Because the percussive accompaniment to this text is improvised (and a result of the preacher-like gestures), it is the song that is most open to interpretation. The performer must work to create a convincing character through vocal elements such as diction, pronunciation, inflection, as well as gesture and percussive sound.

Smith also calls for improvisation in Song VI, where he asks the performer to improvise brief solos on the four glass jars by scraping them with the steak knives. Smith instructs the performer to include "various speeds, dynamics, and durations," but the

solos are meant to be improvised in each live performance. For a portion of the second system of Song IX, Smith also provides the performer with the option of straying from the written glass jar accompaniment to improvise in “direct conjunction with words” in a way that is analogous to what is already notated.

Another area left open to a degree of interpretation on behalf on the performer is instrument selection and setup. Although a picture of a setup of the piece is on the cover of the score, it is still up to the performer to choose and design a suitable setup of instruments and other materials, such as the table size. Other choices that can effect the interpretation of the piece are instrument choices, such as the size and pitches of the four glass jars or the resonance of the frying pan. As is typical in multiple percussion pieces, it is possible to have a variety of sounds from a certain type and even size of instrument indicated by the composer, which results in variance between performances.

Conclusion

In *Songs I-IX*, Stuart Smith demands that the performer and audience members let go of prior associations and expectations relating to sounds, words, movements, and objects to make room for a new set of associations and expectations within the sound-world created by the songs. While the text is central to the structure and meaning of the piece, vocalization, movement, and dramatic elements are incorporated seamlessly into musical performance to create an integrated work of performance art. Ben Johnston, a former composition teacher of Smith, describes this synthesis of artistic elements well: “...Because poetic consciousness is so fundamental to Smith, his musical thinking often

results in compositions that seem to transcend music itself...It's not that his art is lacking in logic or in expressive effect but rather that its center of gravity is elsewhere."⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Welsh, *The Music of Stuart Saunders Smith*, xxi.

CHAPTER 5

DRESSUR BY MAURICIO KAGEL

Mauricio Kagel and his Instrumental Theatre

As a self-taught Argentinian-born composer who settled and established his career in Cologne, Germany in the mid 1950s, the music of Mauricio Kagel is varied and eclectic with influences that can be hard to trace.⁶⁸ Kagel began writing in 1950, and was motivated to rebel musically against the neoclassicism that was encouraged by the Péron regime.⁶⁹ In Buenos Aires, Kagel worked as a choral director, accompanist, and cinema and photography editor before traveling to Germany as a student in 1957.⁷⁰ Once Kagel settled in Cologne, he became involved in the new music scene as a member of what Paul Attinello refers to as the “second generation” of Darmstadt composers.⁷¹

Björn Heile notes in the Introduction to *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, that Kagel’s compositions are varied and versatile.⁷² Most of his pieces, however, fall into one of three categories: structured “quasi-serial” works, instrumental theatre, and visual works (including film).⁷³ (The visual works are also sometimes referred to as *Die Himmelsmechanik*.)⁷⁴ *Dressur*, the piece to be examined in this work, is exemplary of Kagel’s Instrumental Theatre.

⁶⁸ Paul Attinello, “Cut and Splice 2005 – Mauricio Kagel,” BBC, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/cutandsplice/kagel.shtml> (accessed March 14, 2014).

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁷² Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 1.

⁷³ Attinello, “Cut and Splice.”

⁷⁴ Attinello, “Mauricio Kagel,” 3.

Influence in Kagel's works can be traced to vernacular music, including the Argentinian tango and New Orleans jazz⁷⁵, but also to theatrical influences such as John Cage's *Water Walk* and the chamber operas of Milhaud, Hindemith, and Britten.⁷⁶ Thematically, Kagel was "obsessed with deconstruction and subversion," and often used his compositions to examine and question systems and practices.⁷⁷ Another unifying characteristic of Kagel's works is his consistent use of unusual instruments, or of traditional instruments that are used in unusual ways.⁷⁸

A quote of Kagel's own writing from 1970 best captures his compositional motivation for his genre of Instrumental Theatre:

"Music has also been a scenic event for a long time. In the nineteenth century people still enjoyed music also with their eyes, with all their senses. Only with the increasing dominance of the mechanical reproduction of music, through broadcasting and records, was this reduced to the purely acoustic dimension. What I want is to bring the audience back to an enjoyment of music with all sense. That's why my music is a direct exaggerated protest against the mechanical reproduction of music. My goal: a re-humanization of music-making!"⁷⁹

Heile discusses how Kagel was, in a sense, looking to reclaim the visual element of live performance that had been devalued in the wake of increasing prevalence of audio recording and a classical music culture that values the appraisal of the purely auditory elements.⁸⁰ Heile also asserts that no other culture in the world "disembodies" the auditory product from the physicality of music sound production.⁸¹

Kagel manipulates the relationship between music and theatre in various ways in his theatrical pieces; at times, a theatrical situation is created by the music, while at

⁷⁵ Coleman, "Mauricio Kagel," 64.

⁷⁶ Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 33-4.

⁷⁷ Attinello, "Mauricio Kagel," 4.

⁷⁸ Attinello, "Cut and Splice," 1.

⁷⁹ Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 38.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

others, sound is created from theatre. Two of Kagel's early theatre pieces, *Sonant* and *Sur scène* (both written in 1960), portray these contrasting relationships: in *Sonant*, music becomes theatrical action, while in *Sur scène*, the music is included within a theatrical context.⁸² In *Dressur*, both scenarios can be found. In both cases, and throughout his theatrical works, Kagel "acknowledges the physical presence of performers and requires them to present a representational dramatic meaning rather than 'absolute music.'"⁸³

Extra-Musical Elements in *Dressur* by Mauricio Kagel

Dressur, Kagel's half-hour theatrical trio for percussionists and wooden instruments, is part of a cycle entitled *Quatre degrés* (1977), which includes *Dressur* (Dressage), *Présentation for two*, *Déménagement* (Removal): *Silent play for stage workers*, and *Variété: Concert-spectacle for artistes and musicians*.⁸⁴ According to a letter from Kagel that was found with sketches to *Quatre degrés*, the four movements, when performed in the above order, are meant to bring the listener from absolute music (*Dressur*) to absolute theatre (*Déménagement*), and back again.⁸⁵

Most listeners would not label *Dressur* as absolute music, but it is the closest to absolute music on the spectrum of the four pieces included in *Quatre degrés*. In the second of the pieces, *Présentation*, music is presented as merely incidental to the theatre. *Déménagement*, which is meant to represent absolute theatre in the cycle, is scored only for stage workers who are carrying boxes (an example of Kagel's protesting the western performance culture). In *Déménagement*, all of the musical sounds are created by the

⁸² Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 35.

⁸³ Attinello, "Cut and Splice," 2.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 63.

theatrical movement of workers carrying boxes of different sizes, in different styles and tempi. In the final piece, *Variété*, Kagel has written music that is to accompany variety show artists, which brings the listener back in the direction of the absolute music of *Dressur*.⁸⁶

Many of Kagel's theatrical works directly or indirectly serve to change the viewer's perspective on several of the procedural formalities that exist in Western classical music (applause, bows, concert dress, etc.), and *Dressur* is no exception.⁸⁷ *Dressur* (Dressage) is meant as a comparison between horse training and conservatory training of musicians. To start, *Dressur* opens with the second player performing the gallop from Gustav Peter's "Erinnerung an Zirkus Renz," which is circus music.⁸⁸ In *Dressur*, the musician is asked to perform complex musical, visual, and dramatic tasks from memory, often with slight variations in repeated material that serve to make it even more challenging.⁸⁹ These tasks create dramatic situations that are at times humorous, absurd, and confusing, and often physically uncomfortable for the performer. Kagel also designs conflicts and power struggles between the performers of *Dressur*, which may be reminiscent of the relationship between animal and tamer. A blog entry on *Roots & Rhizomes*, which is written by a performer of *Dressur*, refers to the piece as a "trap" for its performers and audience members alike⁹⁰ -- one that pushes boundaries, denies expectations, and alters the perception of all who experience it.

⁸⁶ Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 64.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁸⁸ Mauricio Kagel, *Dressur: Schlagneugtrio für Holzinstrumente* (New York: Lifolff, 1983), 1.

⁸⁹ Kagel, *Dressur*, 64.

⁹⁰ *Roots and Rhizomes*, 2.

Vocalizations: Verbal

Vocalizations in *Dressur* are ancillary to the dramatic situations created by the music and movement throughout the piece; in fact, there is only one instance of verbal vocalization in the entire thirty-minute work. This happens at the conclusion of the Fandango section, which begins in m. 436 and ends in m. 473 with all three players shouting the word “OLE!”⁹¹ The Fandango section begins right after Player 3 dons two pairs of wooden shoes, one on the hands to be clapped together, and one on the feet. The first segment of the section (mm. 436-463) is fully notated for all three players, with improvisational-sounding rhythms between all three players building from more to less sparse and from softer to louder. From measure 464-473, Players 1 and 2 have a rhythmically intricate castanet duet in 6/8, which accompanies Player 3’s improvised “pseudo-Fandango dance up until the ecstatic climax.”⁹² This second segment (mm. 464-473) maintains high energy and complexity in rhythm until measure 471, when a *stringendo molto* and crescendo from *fff* to *ffff* in Player 3’s dance, bring the entire Fandango section to a climax and Players 1 and 2 shout “OLE!” with open arms and Player 3 immediately echoes their call.⁹³

The end of the Fandango precedes what could be considered the closing section of the piece (beginning with the *Andante* in m. 474 and continuing through the *poco più mosso* and *accelerando* that leads to the final Tempo I in m. 522⁹⁴), and is arguably the biggest dramatic climax of the piece. This shout, the first and only verbalization in the piece, comes after over twenty minutes of dramatic scenarios that build tension and

⁹¹ Kagel, *Dressur*, 42-47.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 45.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 47-54.

energy that dissolve and subside to make way for new situations throughout the piece. Verbalization, perhaps the most natural and instinctive mode of human expression, is denied through all of the dramatic scenarios of *Dressur* until just before the closing section.

Vocalizations: Nonverbal

Nonverbal vocalizations are also sparsely used in *Dressur*; the first instance involves the shouting of the syllable “HA!” which first appears in the parts of Players 1 and 3, as they have a sort of rhythmic duel that builds to a climax in m. 92 prior to the *Tranquillo* section.⁹⁵ Another shout of “HA!” by Player 1 closes the *Tranquillo* section in m. 102.⁹⁶ A little later, in the *Doppio tempo* (mm. 103-141), all three players shout “HA!” over their percussion sounds that include constant sixteenth notes in the maracas for much of the section.⁹⁷ A final “HA!” punctuates the end of the *Adagio* section (mm. 142-162).⁹⁸

Kagel indicates for the shouts of “HA!” to be either high or deep, while in spots also dictating an inflection of a downward glissando (m. 138) or upward glissando (m. 162). The dramatic affect of the shouts is typically aggressive and combative, with dynamic markings of *ff* or *fff*, with the exception of two shouts in mm. 136 and 138 in Player 1’s part, which are marked *dolce* with a glissando inflection. In m. 132 on beat 3, Player 3 has “HA?” indicated, which corresponds to a bow by Player 2, which could suggest confusion or questioning of Player 2’s movement. In the *Doppio tempo* section

⁹⁵ Kagel, *Dressur*, 9-10.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 11-15.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

(mm. 103-141), players are asked to shout simultaneously at times, which may be interpreted as cooperation instead of aggression.

Another important instance of nonverbal vocalization lies in the *Adagio* section from m. 142-162, in which Player 2 is to whistle a melody while positioned at the center of the setup.⁹⁹ This is the only pitched melody found in *Dressur* aside from the marimba, and the affect of the scene is one of intimacy and humanness. While Player 2 whistles, Players 1 and 3 play accompanying material with the carpet-beater, giant wood block, bamboo sticks, and swingers at very soft dynamics. Kagel makes a note at the beginning of the *Adagio* that the melody may be transposed up or down by up to the interval of a minor third, which is helpful as there is no pitch reference from m. 118 until the *Adagio* at m. 142. It is interesting to note, however, that the marimba is played by Player 1 in mm. 155-157 on pitches that surround or are in unison with the whistled notes, which prompts a question of whether the whistler should adjust the pitch to the marimba when it enters, or remain in relative pitch to the written pitches in their own part.

Movement

All movement within and around the set of performers and instruments is very integral to the dramatic effect of *Dressur*. Kagel is very specific about exactly where and how performers should move throughout the piece, with diagrams that show walking paths and often also with dramatic instruction that describes the manner in which the performer should move. For each time that a performer moves to a new playing position, there is a box in the score marked “positionswechsel” or position-change with a pictorial representation and literal description of the movement that is to occur.

⁹⁹ Kagel, *Dressur*, 16-17.

Two examples of Kagel's specificity in providing instructions regarding movement can be found in m. 31 in Player 1's part¹⁰⁰ and in m. 182 in Player 2's part.¹⁰¹ In the first case, Kagel writes the following: "POSITION-CHANGE I: Lift chair with both hands and, slightly bowed, move to player II on tip-toe, without taking your eyes off him. Remain behind his back." In the second example in m. 182, Player 2 is given the following instruction: "as if a smuggler: walk with somewhat larger steps roguishly looking from left to right." In both of these cases, Kagel clearly describes how to move (down to the detail of where to look), but does not include dramatic instruction that indicates theatrical plot, intent or motivation.

Another notable instruction for movement comes in m. 441 at the start of Player 3's Fandango dance: "first place foot the podium [sic], then wait. Advance with every indicated step. Always walk with small steps, a proud expression and a puffed put [sic] chest (Fandango posture)."¹⁰² Similarly to the examples discussed in the previous paragraph, this instruction offers a clear and direct indication of how the performer should move, but lacks any explanation of plot or intention (the audience member is left wondering why Player 3 would be beginning an improvised dance in the style of Fandango with wooden shoes on both his hands and feet). In the *Roots and Rhizomes* blog entry referenced previously in this chapter, the author discusses how Kagel effectively targets the skills that concert percussionists already have in writing specific instructions without dramatic explanation.¹⁰³ The author notes that while most percussionists lack theatrical training, they will usually have extensive training and

¹⁰⁰ Kagel, *Dressur*, 4.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁰³ *Roots and Rhizomes*, 3.

experience in accurately performing tasks with great attention to detail.¹⁰⁴ This method of providing detailed instruction without plot or reasoning can also be seen as an extension of Kagel's ironic comparison between horse training and the training of musicians in classical conservatories.

The most striking and memorable instances of movement in *Dressur* include Player 1 nearly attacking Player 2 with a chair during the opening sequence,¹⁰⁵ Player 3 striking his chest with coconut shells in the following *Andante* passage (mm. 43-92),¹⁰⁶ and the previously discussed Fandango section (mm. 436-473) in which Player 3 improvises a dance using two sets of wooden shoes to create sound.¹⁰⁷ In each of these dramatic scenarios, unexpected and unusual movement is used to set up and drive the "plot" of the piece. While movement is central to any piece for percussion, as percussion playing is very visually created by movement, the movement included in *Dressur* is essential to performance; it is impossible to conceive of the piece without movement, as meticulously carried-out movement is what creates both the music and drama in *Dressur*.

Dramatic Elements

As was previously discussed, Kagel gave detailed and specific directions throughout *Dressur* with regards to movement and dramatic scenarios, but his directions lack theatrical intent or explanation. On this, Kagel writes the following under the heading "ACTIONS" in the score's introductory pages:

Such musical events as occur within the context of a scenic "plot" require rigour and concentration. One must renounce to every kind of facial expressions and

¹⁰⁴ *Roots and Rhizomes*, 3.

¹⁰⁵ Kagel, *Dressur*, 4-5.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 6-10.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 42-47.

gestures which might be misunderstood as means of putting across a particular 'content.' Only a high degree of intensity in the performance can awaken in the listener the desired degree of humour or seriousness; therefore the acoustic-visual situations don't call for any kind of exaggeration.¹⁰⁸

In light of this writing, the performers should closely follow all of Kagel's detailed dramatic instruction without adding any of their own additional theatricality.

Because Kagel's directions focus on the *production* of dramatic scenarios rather than the presented *product*, dramatic explanation or intent is more or less obvious in various scenarios in *Dressur*. An example of a scenario that is more explicit in theatrical meaning is the opening scene (mm. 1-42) in which Player 1 repeatedly interrupts Player 2's playing of Gustav Peter's gallop on the marimba by slamming a chair on the floor before finally threatening to attack Player 2 with the chair overhead until the marimba music finally stops.¹⁰⁹ Anyone who watches these two players performing Kagel's instructions with complete accuracy would interpret that Player 1 is becoming increasingly frustrated and exasperated by Player 2's playing, and is in the end prepared to threaten drastic measures to make it stop. The affect can be humorous, as the audience waits to see what will happen next between the pair (Player 3 is uninvolved in the drama between Players 1 and 2, playing rhythms on castanets that are evocative of a typewriter before pounding coconut shells on the table rhythmically as the drama of the scene intensifies).

In the section that immediately follows, marked *Andante* (mm. 43-92) the dramatic intent is much less clear. The *Andante* begins with Player 2 sitting at the marimba with the marimba mallets in his or her mouth. Player 2 proceeds to play the marimba with fingernails and finger tips (in confusing and complicated combinations)

¹⁰⁸ Kagel, *Dressur*.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 1-5.

while Player 1 spins the bullroarer, an instrument that creates a helicopter-like sound when spun in a large vertical circle. In the sixth measure of the *Andante*, a fermata allows Player 3 to remove his shirt and pick up the coconut shells, which he will then beat rhythmically against his bare chest. This scenario continues until Player 1 moves to the Pounding Tube, and Players 1 and 3 begin a more aggressive exchange involving shouts of “HA!” and percussive attacks. During this exchange, Player 2 empties wood shavings from a cloth sack, apparently oblivious to the action between the other two players. Although the actions of each player throughout this section have no clear motivation or dramatic intent, it is natural for performers and audience members to imagine a motivation or plot behind the actions.

As the title denotes, *Dressur* is composed entirely for wooden instruments, which includes traditional percussion instruments such as the marimba and wood blocks; exotic instruments such as angklungs from Thailand and the réak from Korea; and non-instruments, or objects, such as a chair, a carpet beater, and a nutcracker. Unusual instrument usage is characteristic of Kagel’s works, and each choice of instrument gives the musical passage certain affect outside of the sound of the instrument itself. For example, when Kagel incorporates parts of the set, such as the chair, the tables, the circle platform, and the wooden planks as producers of sound (instruments), the production of music is inseparable from the dramatic setting on stage. When Kagel writes for exotic instruments, such as the above-mentioned angklungs and réak, the cleft bamboo tube of the Phillipines, or the wasamba-rattle from the Ivory Coast of Africa, intrigue is fostered in the audience at the usage of an unknown instrument. These exotic instruments can also be challenging to locate and purchase, adding to the “trap” mentioned in the *Roots*

and Rhizomes blog entry, in which Kagel presents frustratingly difficult challenges to the performers as a commentary on conservatory training of classical musicians and the formalities of western performance practice.¹¹⁰

Notation of Extra-Musical Elements

As a fairly complex and lengthy piece (about thirty minutes) that is detailed in theatrical and musical instruction, Kagel's score to *Dressur* is very clear, thorough, and relatively easy to interpret. The introductory pages to the score include a complete instrument list by player, with descriptions and a pictorial graphic assigned to each one. Throughout the score, the graphics are used at the beginning of each system, or in the middle of the system in the case of the introduction of a new instrument, to denote which instrument should be played.

For all of the dramatic elements incorporated into *Dressur*, Kagel uses standard pitch and rhythmic notation throughout the entire piece. He augments this with detailed playing instruction, as it is needed, such as in m. 94 when player 3 is asked to toss the maraca in a circular motion: "till bar 102 throw maraca like a juggler into the air and catch it back)."¹¹¹ He uses symbols above or below notes to represent certain techniques that are called for throughout the piece, such as a curved line in the shape of a "u" to denote fingernails on marimba (mm. 44-73) and a semi-circle with an arrow to depict spinning of the bullroarer in the same section.¹¹²

Another noteworthy characteristic of Kagel's notation of *Dressur* is that the music is notated only in score format, with no parts available. This is an optimal format for

¹¹⁰ *Roots and Rhizomes*, 2.

¹¹¹ Kagel, *Dressur*, 10.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 6-8.

studying the score, and learning the relationships between players, but makes rehearsal before the piece is committed to memory very challenging. At the same time, rehearsing scenes together is very useful in committing the piece to memory. To make page turns easier in rehearsal, and for studying one's individual part, performers of *Dressur* may opt to electronically or manually create individual parts for each player, and even print copies on transparency film to lay on tables or instruments so that it is visually unobtrusive.

As discussed in the section pertaining to movement in *Dressur* earlier in this chapter, Kagel is very clear in indicating positioning of players and instruments throughout the set. He includes a diagram in the introductory pages of the score in which a number is assigned to each instrument to show where it should be placed in the beginning of the piece. In addition, Kagel uses boxes with dotted lines and arrows throughout the score to show any and all movement through the set by the players at the point in the score that it is happening.

Interpretation of Extra-Musical Elements

As noted previously in the discussion of Dramatic Elements, Kagel asks in the introduction to the score for performers to play with a "high degree of intensity," but without any exaggeration of dramatic elements, such as facial expressions or gestures. Kagel desires a strict interpretation of the score with close attention to detail and nothing extra; in *Modern Music and After*, Paul Griffiths remarks that Kagel was "not in the business of improvisation."¹¹³

In the *Roots and Rhizomes* blog post, the author reiterates that Kagel's musical instruction is written so that drama and theatre are the result of accurate interpretation,

¹¹³ Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, 216.

rather than being the primary motivation.¹¹⁴ This creates challenges for performers, who may have an instinct to develop their own stories or characters to explain the scenarios in the piece and to help provide a convincing performance. Of the several versions of this piece whose recordings are on YouTube, theatrical interpretation ranges from what some may call over-acting to more dry recitations of Kagel's score's indications. Some may argue that Kagel's instruction makes sense in the context of *Quatre degrés*, which is meant to show a range of theatricality from absolute music to absolute theater. However, *Dressur* is most often performed on a program without the other three movements, which may demand a more theatrical approach, since in that case, there is no contrast against the absolute theater.

Another interpretive issue in *Dressur* lies in making substitutions for instruments that are too difficult or costly to obtain for a performance. Certain items, like the anklungs, elephant bell, or the carpet-beater may be difficult to purchase in the United States, and may need to be shipped from overseas, which could be expensive and result in a delay in delivery. Under extenuating circumstances, players should create or find an instrument (made from wood, of course) with a sound and method of sound production as similar to the one requested as is possible.

One detail that Kagel has left out of the score to *Dressur* involves when and if Player 3 is meant to replace his shirt after it is removed in m. 49.¹¹⁵ The indication in measure m. 49 reads: "remove shirt and take coconuts; then stand up," but the player is never instructed to put his shirt back on after the conclusion of this section. Beyond the *Andante* section (mm. 43-92), the removal of Player 3's shirt does not serve any musical

¹¹⁴ *Roots and Rhizomes*, 2.

¹¹⁵ Kagel, *Dressur*, 6.

purpose (i.e. any purpose related to sound production); because of this, replacing the shirt during an appropriate break between sections, or when the attention is primarily focused on other players is a logical solution.

Conclusion

Dressur is a piece that stands alone in the repertoire for percussion for its musical, theatrical, instrumental, and mental demands on the players. Musically, the players are asked to play impossibly fast passages on marimba, intricate rhythmic figures on castanets, or to read from and play three instruments at once. Theatrically, classically trained percussionists are asked to incorporate movement, dramatic instructions, and vocalizations into already-complicated musical performance. Even obtaining, or building, all of the instruments and requirements for the set, such as tables and the circle platform, can be a major, and expensive, challenge. Finally, *Dressur* challenges performers mentally because the piece should be performed from memory, and performers must sustain complete focus and intense energy for the complete thirty-minute work.

In *Dressur*, the extra-musical elements are very important to the overall composition of the piece; the music is so intertwined with theatrical elements that it cannot stand alone. At times, theatrics influence the musical sounds in *Dressur*, while at others, the production of musical sound creates dramatic situations. In *Dressur*, Kagel incorporates movement, dramatic instruction, and to a lesser extent, vocalizations to synthesize a holistic performance experience.

Dressur requires performers to be fully physically, emotionally, musically, and mentally involved and committed to a convincing, and all-encompassing performance. Unlike non-theatrical works, the musicians must truly become their characters for the entirety of the piece. An effective performance of *Dressur* incorporates musical, visual, and dramatic components to create a complete product that does precisely what Kagel intended with his Instrumental Theatre: to “bring the audience back to an enjoyment of music with all senses.”¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 38.

CHAPTER 6

?CORPOREL BY VINKO GLOBOKAR

Globokar and his Music

Vinko Globokar, who is known both as an avant-garde trombonist and composer, was born in Aderny, France, to Slovenian parents. He studied music in Yugoslavia before returning to Paris in 1955 to study composition at the Paris Conservatoire.¹¹⁷ Globokar's music can best be described as original and creative, with jazz influence; many of his works explore improvisation and theatricality.¹¹⁸

While it is difficult to generalize Globokar's music, it is safe to assert that Globokar's musical philosophy features an emphasis on creativity and improvisation; Globokar himself has stated that he finds it "very sad that many players spend their whole lives playing only the music of others."¹¹⁹ This sentiment is frequently reflected in his works, in which the performer and their humanity is at the forefront of the composition. Robert Everett-Green, of *The Globe and Mail*, states that it is "impossible to play his [Globokar's] music and not become personally implicated in the creative act."¹²⁰

Globokar's philosophy as it pertains to writing for percussion is expressed in his article entitled "Anti-Badabum," published in *Percussive Notes* in 1992, seven years after the publication of *?Corporel*.¹²¹ In "Anti-Badabum," Globokar expresses that many of

¹¹⁷ Warnaby, "Vinko Globokar: Revaluing a Phenomenon," 2.

¹¹⁸ Niall O'Loughlin, "Vinko Globokar," *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscriber/article/grove/music11283> (accessed October 7, 2014), 1.

¹¹⁹ Everett-Green, "The Games that Vinko Globokar's Musicians Play," 1.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹²¹ Vinko Globokar, "Anti-Badabum," Translated by Nancy Francois, *Percussive Notes* 31, no. 1 (October 1992): 77-82.

his pieces, including *?Corporel*, are meant as a protest against a more traditional method of writing for percussion, in which composers consider each instrument to have a specific sound and timbre, and to switch instruments if a different timbre is desired.¹²²

Globokar's preferred approach, however, is to demand a "palette" of timbres and articulations from a single instrument, which requires musical exploration, creativity, and an element of improvisation.¹²³ *?Corporel* is a piece for the most minimal instrumental set-up: nothing more than the performer's body, which serves as an exemplary protest against the more traditional instrument-based method of composition. In the case of *?Corporel*, Globokar asks the performer to interpret graphic and standard notation to create a wide variety of sounds and theatrical gestures using only the performer's body and voice.¹²⁴

Many of Globokar's works, including *?Corporel*, *Atemstudie* (1972) for oboe, and *Toucher* (1973) for solo percussion, explore theatricality as a means of expression. Mauricio Kagel was an undeniable influence on Globokar; in an interview, Globokar credits Kagel with the invention of instrumental theater.¹²⁵ Another way in which Kagel was an influence on Globokar is through his creative instrumentation and use of unusual instruments to produce sounds.¹²⁶ Although their compositions as a whole are markedly different, Globokar and Kagel shared a passion for exploring new compositional avenues, and for circumventing compositional tradition and convention.

¹²² Globokar, "Anti-Badabum," 77.

¹²³ Ibid., 77.

¹²⁴ Vinko Globokar, *?Corporel: pour un percussioniste sur son corps*, (New York: Litolf, 1989).

¹²⁵ Strom, "Theater Percussion," 77.

¹²⁶ Warnaby, "Vinko Globokar: Revaluing a Phenomenon," 4.

Extra-Musical Elements in *?Corporel* by Vinko Globokar

The most striking characteristic of *?Corporel* in the realm of repertoire for solo percussionist, is that it is written only for a percussionist and his (or her) body. As well-known contemporary percussionist Steven Schick discusses, the body is both universalizing and distinguishing: while everyone has a body, each body is unique to the individual.¹²⁷ Because of this, every person interprets and performs *?Corporel* differently: as Globokar describes, “some like Tarzan, some like a fakir on a bed of nails.”¹²⁸ Another unique implication of the percussionist’s body being the only instrument in the piece is that the performer both initiates and receives all sound-producing strokes; in other words, the performer is both musician and instrument at the same time.¹²⁹ Although the instrumentation is limited, Globokar’s sound realm in *?Corporel* is not restrictive at all: in *?Corporel*, the performer explores sounds throughout the body, including striking bony and fleshy surfaces and using finger tips, hands, fists, or palms as a beater.¹³⁰

?Corporel can be approached by the performer as a series of scenes, or musical sections, that are separated by fermatas. *?Corporel* includes two types of notation as it pertains to time: gestural segments are notated with an indication of one centimeter to equal one second of time, while other segments are notated in standard time signatures with tempo indications.¹³¹ In general, as the performer explores and experiences various sonic and gestural effects, the energy of *?Corporel* is building in steps towards a final

¹²⁷ Schick, *The Percussionist’s Art*, 165.

¹²⁸ Everett-Green, “The Games that Vinko Globokar’s Musicians Play,” 1.

¹²⁹ Schick, *The Percussionist’s Art*, 165.

¹³⁰ Globokar, “Anti-Badabum,” 81.

¹³¹ Globokar, *?Corporel*.

climax at the performer's cry of "Ah!" with a simultaneous hit to the pit of the stomach, with bulging eyes that ends the piece.

Structurally, it is interesting to note that Globokar incorporates the Fibonacci series into the passage marked "vivo" which begins in the fourth system of the second page of the score.¹³² In this passage, the gestural phrases that interrupt the musical phrases grow in length from 1 second, to 2, 3, 5, and 8 seconds; at the same time, musical phrases shrink from 13 beats, to 8, 5, 3, 2, and finally 1 beat.¹³³ Throughout this section, vocal sounds are also added to the musical phrases one by one, while the performer beats on a lower body part in each subsequent phrase, moving from the head to the chest, abdomen, thigh, shin, and finally feet.¹³⁴

Vocalizations: Nonverbal

Nonverbal vocalizations are present throughout almost all of *?Corporel*, and can be divided into three basic categories: hard consonant sounds, soft consonant sounds, and mouth sounds. The hard consonant sounds include the sound of the letters t, p, k, d, and g, that are to be produced while inhaling; the soft consonant sounds include the sounds of h, f, s, sch, and a rolled r; and the mouth sounds are a kiss, clucked tongue, drawn back tongue, pronouncing 'ts' while inhaling, and the sudden opening of the throat while inhaling. Globokar indicates in the score that the player should avoid all vowel sounds; only breathing sounds and consonant sounds should be used.

The hard consonant sounds (t, p, k, d, g) are first used in the passage beginning at the top of the second page in conjunction with striking the face, chest, and stomach. The

¹³² Hills, "Graphic Notation as Means of Music Gesture," 63.

¹³³ Globokar, *?Corporel*, 3.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

effect of the hard consonant sounds, when performed as instructed without any vowel sounds while inhaling, can be that of trying to express oneself verbally, but being unable to pronounce even one word. The hard consonant sounds are always notated as sixteenth notes followed by rests, indicating that these sounds should be percussive and short.

In contrast, the soft consonant sounds (h, s, f, sch, and the rolled r) are almost always notated with a line indicating duration, and have a breathier, more introspective effect. (The only exception is the 1/4 bar that concludes the vivo passage in the second system of page three, when the soft consonant sounds are to be performed very quickly.)

Finally, the mouth sounds (kiss, clucked tongue, drawn back tongue, pronouncing 'ts' while inhaling, and suddenly opening the throat while inhaling) are notated in three different ways throughout the piece: as grace notes in the interruptions of the vivo passage on page 3; as short and percussive sixteenth notes in the vivo section beginning in the third system of page 4; and as eighth notes of various tempi in the penultimate phrase of the piece on page 5. It is also interesting to note that these five mouth sounds always appear in the same order in all three passages in which they are used. As strong sounds that require a committed effort to create, the mouth sounds can be interpreted as a decidedly outward nonverbal expression, an overflowing of inner tension that builds up and subsides throughout *Corporel*.

Rhythms throughout the passage beginning on the second page are notated in 3/4 time, with fragments of the passage played at 44, 52, 60, 68, and finally 76 beats per minute preceding a *rallentando* in the final fragment. In almost every measure throughout this passage, the voice has the same rhythm, with a single sixteenth note on beat 1, on the third sixteenth note of beat 2, and the second sixteenth note of beat 3.

Despite this, the rhythmic effect of the passage seems spastic and unpredictable because of the rhythm in the striking of the chest and stomach. Without seeing the framework of measures in 3/4 time, the non-pattern based rhythms in the body striking can obscure the rhythm of the vocalizations.

Other nonverbal vocalizations include the humming of a melody of unspecified pitch at circle 14 on page 3 while sitting with the torso bowed over the legs. This can be seen as an introspective moment between the increasing energy of the preceding *vivo* section and the building tension of the rhythmic passage that follows in the third system of page 3. Other introspective moments involving nonverbal vocalizations come at circle 20, when the performer is instructed to snore while lying motionless on the floor, and at circle 29, when the performer stands up, stretches, and yawns just prior to the final violent self-beating that closes the piece. In all three of these instances, the vocalizations serve to evoke humanness of the performer in brief interludes that interrupt the madness of the piece; through actions such as humming, snoring, and yawning, the audience can easily relate physically to the performer, making the preceding and following violence and insanity even more startling.

Vocalizations: Verbal

Verbal vocalization in *?Corporel* is limited to one instance just before the closing section of the piece. At the top of the fifth page of the score, the performer is instructed to recite the following text: “J’ai lu récemment cette phrase: L’histoire des hommes est la longue succession des synonymes d’un même vocable. Y contredire est un devoir.”¹³⁵

Globokar translates this to English as, “I recentliy [sic] read this remark: The history of

¹³⁵ Globokar, *?Corporel*, 5.

mankind is a long succession of synonyms for the same word. It is a duty to disprove this.” The text, which comes from a poem written by French poet René Char¹³⁶, can be seen as a moment of clarity, or as a climax of a state of confusion (or a combination of the two), depending on the performer’s delivery. As the only spoken text of the 7-10 minute theatrical work, the text is striking; while it is the clearest, most direct communication in the piece, the text itself is vague, thought-provoking, and symbolic.

The performer also has a choice of whether to recite the phrase in the vernacular language, or in the original French. Globokar provides translations of the phrase (and of all performance instructions) in both German and English, which offers the suggestion that the text could be spoken in the vernacular language rather than French, but this is never specifically indicated. A reading in the vernacular allows the general audience to immediately understand the meaning of the words, which places an importance on the literal interpretation of the text. On the other hand, a reading in the original French by Char means that non-French speakers may not understand the context of the phrase, but would instead experience the poeticism of the line in its original language: the lyricism and phrasing, the vowel and consonant sounds, and the line’s inherent rhythm. Both choices provide dramatically powerful recitations.

Movement

The performer’s movement in *Corporel* can be divided into major bodily movement and gestural movement made primarily with the arms. For the majority of the piece (until circle 19 on the fourth page of the score), the performer is seated on the floor

¹³⁶ Bonnie Whiting, “The Speaking Percussionist as Storyteller,” in *The Modern Percussion Revolution: Journeys of the Progressive Artist*, ed. Kevin Lewis and Gustavo Aguilar (New York: Routledge, 2014), 104.

in the center of a spotlight. At circle 19, the performer is instructed to lie down with arms crossed and legs extended just before what could be considered the most physically active section of the piece.¹³⁷ Following a segment (circle 20) between two fermatas where the performer is instructed to lie on the floor snoring, the performer slowly begins to strike the floorboards with the hands and feet in a pattern that is to accelerate quickly, culminating with a cry of “A—————” as the performer swings the legs to return to a seated position. The effect of this episode is that performer appears to be spastically flailing all four limbs against the floor (in context the pattern is generally not perceptible) until the flailing reaches a level of insanity that causes the performer to shout loudly and rise to a seated position.

In the section that follows (circle 24), the performer rubs the skull frantically while vocalizations and body striking with both hands intensify to a peak just before the performer recites the text, “I recently read this remark: The history of mankind is a long succession of synonyms for the same word. It is a duty to disprove this.” While reciting this text, the performer is kneeling and remains that way through the following passage (circle 27) where he or she is to ruffle the hair until it is “hysterically disheveled.”¹³⁸ At the end of this passage, the performer finally stands up for the first time in the piece. The performer is then standing just for the final passage at circle 30, in which he or she violently strikes all over the body, “as if hitting somebody else.” After the final “note,” a *ffff* strike to the stomach, the performer ends the piece “doubled up,” with “eyes bulging.”¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Globokar, *?Corporel*, 4.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

Main gestures with the arms are notated as a smooth line, which indicates sliding the hand on the body as if groping or caressing, or as a jagged line, which means to rub with the flat of the hand with increasing and decreasing speed. Until the third page of five, only the smooth line is used. These gestures, often indicated with loopy and curved lines, could be interpreted as exploratory, as if the performer is experiencing something internally that is new or unknown. On the third page, the gestures become more frantic, and both the smooth and jagged lines are used concurrently in the *vivo* passages in the first two systems. From the third system of the third page until the end of the piece, the gestures cease to be exploratory and only the jagged lines are used. It could be seen that the internal conflict has been identified, and is now being addressed by the performer, as the physical gestures intensify and become more frantic.

Another symbolic gesture with the arms comes at circle 26 at the top of page 5 when the performer is reciting the text from a poem by René Char; while reciting, the performer is instructed to have the arms crossed overhead like a prisoner. This can be considered representative of the sense of being trapped by the repetitive history of mankind, as the quote suggests. The gesture also emphasizes the vulnerability of the performer, who has already performed most of a seven to ten minute work half naked on stage with nothing to manipulate but his or her own body.

A final notable gesture comes at the very final note of the piece, when the performer strikes the pit of the stomach and ends the piece doubled up, with eyes bulging. This final note is marked *ffff*, and is a violent attack to one of the softest and most vulnerable parts of the body. This is the harshest and most violent action of the piece, bringing the dramatic tension to a final culminating point.

Dramatic Elements

The first dramatic element that an audience member would notice is the unusual way the performer is dressed for the concert stage; Globokar instructs the performer to dress in canvas pants, bare chested and barefoot. The effect of this uncommon dress is that the performer is much more physically exposed than in a typical contemporary music performance, which adds to the starkness and human vulnerability of the piece. The dress also serves a practical role in sound production; hitting bare skin on the chest and stomach will produce a more articulate and louder sound than hitting clothed skin.

Another dramatic element that Globokar incorporates in *?Corporel* is the use of the face as an expressive vehicle. In the opening of the piece, the performer is covering and uncovering the face with the hands in each of the exploratory gestures on page 1.¹⁴⁰ The piece begins with the face covered by both hands, and the face is exposed by the performer as the hands are moved as instructed by Globokar. Globokar does not indicate any kind of dramatic instruction with relation to the facial instruction through this passage; that is left to the discretion of the performer.

In the final performance instruction of the piece, however, Globokar does give a facial instruction to the performer: *?Corporel* closes with the performer doubled over with bulging eyes. This indication, in combination with a cry of astonishment and sadness at the final strike to the stomach offers an image of extreme physical distress as a result of the outer expression of inner turmoil.

Another dramatic instruction that Globokar gives is at circle 30, in the final phrase of the piece: Globokar says the performer should “violently strike both hands alternately

¹⁴⁰ Globokar, *?Corporel*, 1.

on all parts of the body, as if hitting somebody else.”¹⁴¹ With this instruction, the performer should not hold back any aggression or have any inhibitions in the way the body is struck; the body should be struck without concern for inflicting pain.

Aside from the above dramatic elements, Globokar indicates very little beyond movements and vocalizations to provide theatrical effect in *?Corporel*. Because of this, each performance of *?Corporel* can vary greatly between performers, with different dramatic affect. In the process of performing *?Corporel*, it is impossible for the performer to remain distanced or uninvolved in the performance; as both the musician and the instrument, the performer must be completely physically, mentally, and emotionally involved in the performance. When this effect is achieved, the facial expressions, precise movements, and vocalized sounds are both wholly engaging and highly individualized.

Notation of Extra-Musical Elements

Globokar’s notation in *?Corporel* combines graphic and traditional elements. He has staves for each body part, with lower staves corresponding to lower body parts (i.e. legs, feet) and higher staves corresponding to higher body parts (face, neck, etc.). The notation for the voice is always at the top of the staff. Music in *?Corporel* is organized in time in two ways: traditional note heads are written in time signatures with tempo markings, and gestural actions are notated with one centimeter equaling one second of time. At times, rhythmic notation and gestural notation are used within the same passage, as in the section beginning on the third system of page 3.¹⁴² In this passage, the player is

¹⁴¹ Globokar, *?Corporel*, 5.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 3.

to rub the abdomen with the left hand at rhythmically unspecified times while beating a rhythm in 6/4 time on the body with the right hand.

Note heads throughout the piece are either darkened or open circles, which tells the performer to hit bony or soft surfaces on the body, respectively; hard consonant sounds (t, p, k, d, g); or mouth sounds (kiss, clucked tongue, drawn back tongue, pronouncing 'ts' while inhaling, or suddenly opening the throat while inhaling). The only instance in the piece with other note heads appears at circle 9, which is a short passage with an 'x' and a circular note head to signify clapping the hands, and snapping fingers with crossed arms.¹⁴³

In *?Corporel*, Globokar combines graphic and traditional notational elements. As discussed previously in the section on movement, rubbing gestures are notated with a line to graphically depict contour, direction, and duration. Other actions that are notated graphically include the teeth clacking at the top of page 2 (notated with vertical lines of decreasing frequency), and snoring on page 4 (notated with vertical lines with arrows in opposite directions labeled "ronflements."¹⁴⁴ Globokar is always clear to include descriptions for graphic notation, whether it is within the score or in the notes included in the introduction to the score.

Steven Schick, a prominent percussionist, summarizes the challenges presented by Globokar's notation well: that one should "approach theatrical moments like music and musical moments like theater."¹⁴⁵ In practical application, one could interpret this to mean that music should be made out of gestural and graphically notated sections of the piece, and that musically notated sections should be treated with theatrical intent.

¹⁴³ Globokar, *?Corporel*, 2.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 4.

¹⁴⁵ Schick, *The Percussionist's Art*, 166.

Through the synthesis of these approaches, a performance of *?Corporel* is artistically effective and holistically expressive.

Interpretation of Extra-Musical Elements

While Globokar is specific and clear in his notation and performance instructions, there are many factors that create variance in interpretation between performers, the most obvious of which is that everybody's instrument (or body) is different. The ways that different performers move, act, and react to striking the body will be unique to each performer. In performing *?Corporel*, the performer would most likely draw from personal experiences to inform their interpretation of dramatic passages throughout the piece, including passages that are evocative of emotional disturbance; these experiences would also be unique to each individual performer.

A moment in the piece that is especially open to the performer's interpretation is the reciting of the text at circle 29 (translated from French to English by Globokar): "I recently [sic] read this remark: The history of mankind is a long succession of synonyms for the same word. It is a duty to disprove this." Globokar simply instructs the performer to "speak the following text," with no indication of affect or inflection.¹⁴⁶ As the only text spoken in the entire work, this statement could be seen as a moment of clarity amidst painful and uncomfortable behavior; on the contrary, the text is grandiose and somewhat ominous, which could be seen to be adding to the mania of the performer's actions.

More generally, pacing of the tableaux in *?Corporel*, is also left to the performer's interpretation. Specific tempo markings are often given, and in sections without meter, 1 centimeter is meant to equal 1 second of time, but pauses between

¹⁴⁶ Globokar, *?Corporel*, 5.

dramatic scenes are marked with fermatas that could be interpreted at different lengths. A longer pause may seem more appropriate at moments of particular poignancy, such as just before the recitation of the text at circle 26. At other points, such as between the shouting at circle 23 and the subsequent *vivo* section at circle 24, the momentum could be carried from the shouting into the growing intensity of the following section by taking a shorter pause.

In a broad sense, Globokar's writing in *?Corporel* is precise and specific with regards to movements and sound production, while leaving dramatic affect up to the performer to develop as he or she wishes. Specifically, factors such as facial expression, intensity in motions, and the character the performer portrays are largely left to the performer. Globokar creates a framework for an effective dramatic performance of *?Corporel*, within which multiple moving performances could be gleaned.

Conclusion

?Corporel is a piece that offers a unique challenge for performers; its demands can be both freeing and restrictive. In performing this work for body percussion, the performer is stripped of the comfort of standing behind an instrument and is made vulnerable by being alone onstage without a shirt or shoes (women may choose to perform the piece with various modifications to Globokar's instruction regarding dress). While it could seem limiting to have every sound in the piece produced by the body, it is also an opportunity to explore the dramatic sounds and gestures that are possible with only the body. Once a performer is exposed through a performance of *?Corporel*, an

increased awareness of the body and facial expression may be gained, along with diminished inhibitions in performance.

?Corporel is a prime example of Globokar's rejection of more traditional methods of composition for percussion. He perceived to be involving changing instruments for timbral changes as reflecting a lack of creativity. As such, a performance of *?Corporel* can be seen as being more about the human performing the piece than about the sounds themselves. In *?Corporel*, the sound is not independent of the theater at all – sound is produced by gestures, and gestures are created by producing sound. Everything about the piece is physical and visceral; sound is inseparable from the movements by which they are produced.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

Although described differently, *Songs I-IX*, *Dressur*, and *?Corporel* all have the common characteristic of being a challenge to performers and audience members alike to abandon expectations and transcend boundaries in performance. In her article discussing language and percussion in Stuart Smith's speech songs, Wendy Salkind states that Smith asks his performers to reject "any personalization of imagery," and to re-learn words to create new associations and images; in doing so, the performer and audience members hear words and musical sound in a new light.¹⁴⁷ In a similar vein, *Dressur* by Mauricio Kagel is described as a "trap" for both musicians and audience members in the blog "Roots and Rhizomes."¹⁴⁸ In *Dressur*, Kagel makes a comparison between horse training and conservatory training, as well as a commentary on the performance culture of western art music, that is challenging to performers and captivating to audience members. Robert Everett-Green describes Globokar as the creator of "games" for musicians, in which he pushes musicians outside their comfort zone of traditional performance to use their instruments or bodies in unusual ways.¹⁴⁹

All three pieces combine the artistic elements of movement, vocalizations, and dramatic elements with music into an organic theatrical experience, but each piece's artistic elements relate to the musical sounds in different ways. In *Songs I-IX*, the music is always serving the poetic and rhythmic value of Smith's texts. Percussive sounds support, interact with, and enhance the sounds of the spoken words, but should never

¹⁴⁷ Salkind, "Language and Percussion," 1.

¹⁴⁸ *Roots and Rhizomes*, 2.

¹⁴⁹ Everett-Green, "The Games that Vinko Globokar's Musicians Play."

overpower or obscure the text. Smith varies qualities of percussive sounds including instrumentation, timbre, and duration to create interplay between the spoken words and percussive sounds. Although the percussive sounds are not entirely accompanimental to the text, the music is driven by the rhythmic poeticism of Smith's words throughout *Songs I-IX*.

In contrast, *Dressur* includes passages where absolute music creates dramatic situations, and where dramatic situations create music. An example of the former is in the opening of the piece when Player 2 is performing circus music by Gustav Peters on the marimba, which inspires the first dramatic scenario in which Player 3 gets annoyed and angry with Player 2's performance, first expressing their annoyance through banging of a chair on the ground and hitting claves together, before finally threatening Player 2 with a chair to the head. A prime example of dramatic situations creating music comes later in the piece, when Player 1 performs an improvised "Fandango" dance with wooden shoes covering the hands and feet. The sound of the shoes against the wooden planks on the floor and the shoes in the hands against each other creates musical sound that interacts with the castanet playing of the other two players; in this case, Player 1's sound is created by the dramatic action of dancing a fandango.

In *?Corporel* by Vinko Globokar, dramatic elements creates sounds that are inseparable from the motions that create them. As a piece for only a percussionist and his body, all sound is produced by physical gesture (movement) that could be interpreted as theatrical, and all gestures produce musical sounds which are integral to the overall effect of the piece. Because in *?Corporel*, the performer and the instrument are one, the

musical sounds, movements, and dramatic effects are not subservient to one or another, but are intertwined in a way that creates a holistic work of performance art.

Further study of the synthesis of artistic elements could be done in a similar manner on other pieces for theatrical percussion (or on theatrical pieces for other instrumentalists or vocalists). Other composers for theatrical percussion whose works could be studied include John Cage, Georges Aperghis, Jennifer Stasack, and Mark Applebaum, among others. Study beyond the scope of this paper on the three pieces discussed and others could include analysis of audience responsiveness to theatrical pieces, economic feasibility of performances of works for theatrical percussion, or further study on the expressive potential of theatrical works.

Works for theatrical percussion such as the three discussed herein create powerful connections between performers and audience members that break down barriers put in place by the sometimes-stifling formalities of traditional classical music performance. With pieces that push the boundaries of performance art as these three pieces do, audience members do not need to worry about conventional concert etiquette, including formal dress, appropriate times for applause, or even an expected reaction to the music. The pieces ask the performer and audience members to let go of prior associations and expectations, and to open their minds to a new kind of artistic experience.

As several professional orchestras in the U.S. and abroad struggle financially and classical music concerts in many areas see declining attendance and ticket sales, theatrical works that combine musical performance with other artistic elements can help create a human connection with performers by evoking relatable emotions, actions, or effects. Additionally, solo and chamber performances can be more economically feasible

than full orchestral performances with fewer performers to compensate and perhaps a less formal performance venue to rent and staff.

Songs I-IX by Stuart Saunders Smith, *Dressur* by Mauricio Kagel, and *Corporel* by Vinko Globokar are three pieces for theatrical percussion that challenge audience members and performers to adjust their expectations for musical performance and to relate to live performance in a new way. The three composers incorporate artistic elements including vocalizations, movement, and dramatic elements to create a seamless and organic artistic performance. The artistic elements in each piece relate to each other and to the musical sounds of the piece in different ways, but throughout the three works, one factor is always consistent: the inclusion of theatrical elements, in the case of these three pieces, enhances the overall musical effect of a performance of each piece beyond what is possible with absolute musical performance, creating a visceral, engaging, and unique performance experience.

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