

# PERFORMANCE GUIDE

## *uniformity*

*for percussion duo*

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Molly Joyce

# ***performance notes***

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Commissioned by the New Works Project, *Uniformity* explores a desire for such through a pitch to non-pitch process, seeking to realize its complexities, opportunities, and impossibilities. The material asks if uniformity is a gradual movement or one of ups and downs, highs and lows, and perhaps transformable to subjective perspectives. The motive to explore such comes from personal experiences and explorations into the social model of disability, which states that disability is caused by the way society is organized rather than by a person's impairment or difference, and in my opinion illustrates how human uniformity is perhaps an impossible and flawed undertaking.

*[from the composer]*

# ***instrument list/alternatives***

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## **GLOCKENSPIEL [OR DESK BELLS]**

Both performers will share the glockenspiel in this piece. Because the primary melodic material repeats throughout, it is possible to remove the notes required and place them on a trap table with some weather stripping. Performers may also choose to use a set of desk bells in place or in addition to the glockenspiel. More information regarding the combination of the two can be found under *Setup Considerations*.

## **TWO TRIANGLES [OR OTHER HIGH RINGING METAL]**

Both performers should have the same type of ringing metal, but in different sizes. Each triangle, or other metal, should have different pitches than the notes used by the glockenspiel or desk bells.

## **TWO SETS OF SMALL BELLS**

Each performer requires their own set of small bells that enter in the second half of the piece. Ideal options include ankle bells or Indian Ghungroo Bells. Any other instruments used should have a similar sound and texture to the listed options.

## **TWO CONCERT TAMBOURINES**

A 10" concert (with a head) tambourine is needed for each performer. The tambourines will be mounted or placed on a trap table and will be played with an open palm technique. Slight muffling may be required to avoid too much resonance from the head.

## **ONE SHAKER**

An egg shaker or other small shaker is recommended for this piece due to the thin timbre of the other instruments and the need to often play on the lower end of the dynamic range.

# ***setup considerations***

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## **GLOCKENSPIEL AND / OR DESK BELLS**

As listed in the instrument list, it is possible to either use a glockenspiel, desk bells, or a combination of both for this piece. There are benefits and considerations for both options.

If just glockenspiel is used, you'll need to have a set of harder bell mallets available for the first half of the piece, switching to the softer pair at measure 101. If only desk bells are used, it will be much more difficult to get a consistently low volume out of the instruments from measure 101 - End.

Using both desk bells and glockenspiel allows for strong, full volume from the measures 1 - 100 (desk bells), and a soft, gentle touch from measures 101- End (glockenspiel). Because only a few notes are required, it is possible to only set up F4, G4, Ab4 & Bb4 for the desk bells, and Eb4, F4, Gb4, Ab4, & Gb5 for the glockenspiel notes.

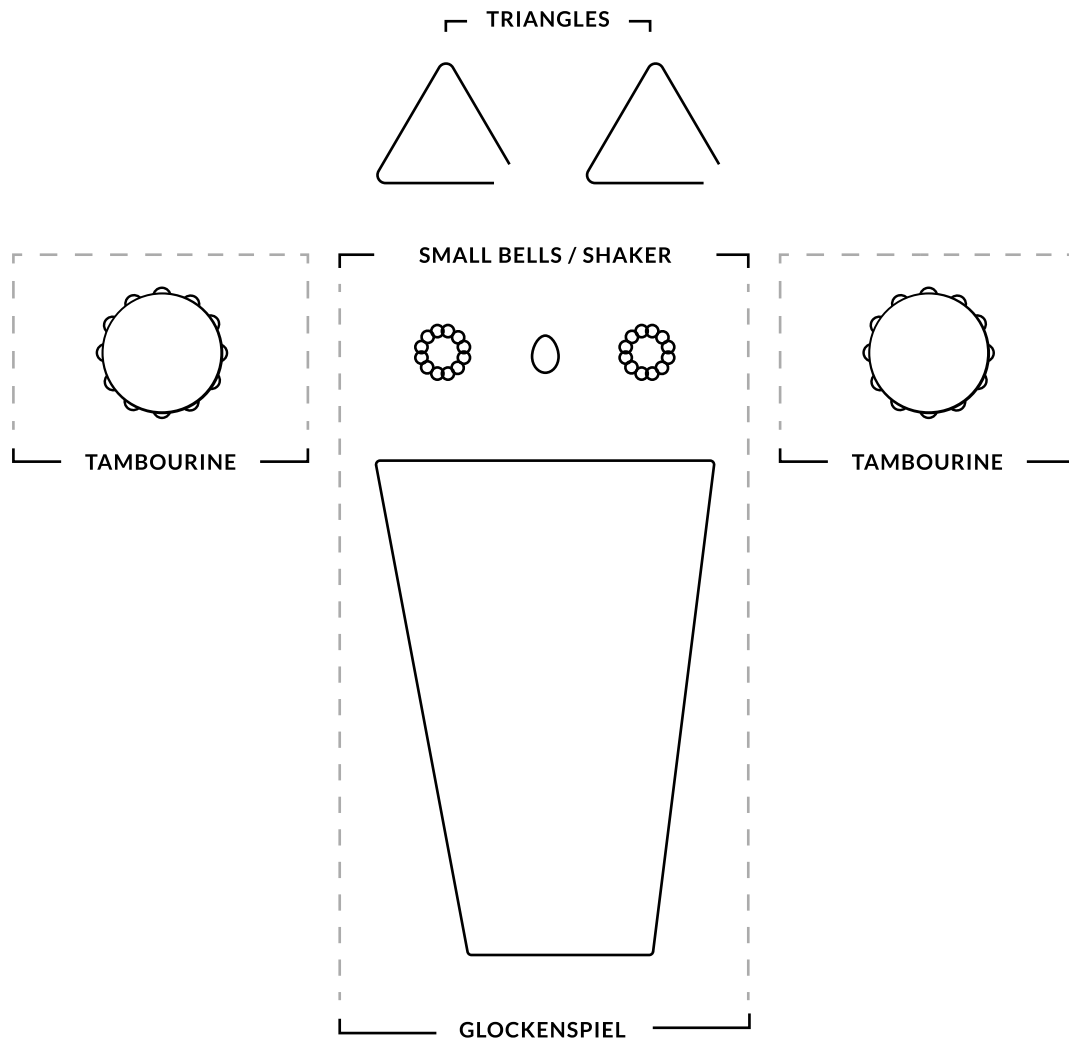
## **MOUNTED INSTRUMENTS**

Triangles or substituted metals should be mounted and played from that position.

Tambourines can either be mounted flat or placed head up on a trap table. There is no need to pick up or hold either while playing them throughout the piece.

It is also possible to mount or hang the small bells to allow for easy transitions for both players within the closing sections of the piece.

## SETUP DIAGRAM



## implement suggestions

### ONE SET OF SOFT GLOCKENSPIEL MALLETS

When choosing the best mallets to use, first consider at which dynamics the glockenspiel will be played. If desk bells are used for the first half of the piece (measures 1 - 100), then only a set of soft glockenspiel mallets are needed (one mallet for each player). If soft plastic mallets are not soft enough, consider wrapping them with a little bit of moleskin, thin felt, or rubber to help dampen the edge of the attack.

If glockenspiel will be played the whole time, a second, harder set of mallets may be needed to produce enough volume for the louder sections (measures 1 - 100).

## TWO TRIANGLE BEATERS

The two beaters don't have to match from player to player. Instead, each one should be appropriate for the particular player's triangle (or other ringing metal). The triangle beaters will also come in handy for playing the small bells in the second half of the piece.

# ***musical considerations***

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## COMPOSITE MELODY

One of the main challenges within this piece comes from two performers having to communicate and execute parts of one musical line. Rather than the thematic material being presented by one player or the other, it is broken up across both players for the entirety of the piece. This requires significant attention to detail when it comes to each player's approach, touch, and technique throughout the piece.

The melodic line, which is presented in its entirety in the score, should be phrased and approached as if coming from a singular voice. Each player should spend time with the full melodic line in preparation for knowing how their individual part makes up the whole. Similar to a marching bass drum line, each player must focus on their quality of sound, timing, and approach while listening and relating their part to the full musical line.

The image shows a musical score for two triangle beaters and a full Glockenspiel line. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of three staves. The top staff is labeled 'Percussion 1' and contains a 'GLOCKENSPIEL' box above a treble clef staff with a melodic line. The bottom staff is labeled 'Percussion 2' and also contains a 'GLOCKENSPIEL' box above a treble clef staff with a melodic line. The bottom-most staff is labeled 'Glockenspiel (full line)' and contains a treble clef staff with the full melodic line. The dynamic marking *ff sempre* is present below the first two staves.

[m. 1 - 4]

## BALANCING EACH INSTRUMENT

One of the intriguing aspects of this piece is the simplicity of the material from the audience's perspective, contrasted with the complexity of execution from the performers'. Achieving uniformity across the ensemble means having a constant awareness of the balance from one instrument to the next. With the variety of textures and timbres shared by both players, it's helpful to think of an overall hierarchy in which each instrument should fall. A forte dynamic on egg shaker, desk bell, and tambourine will all have a different maximum volume, so it's essential to adjust dynamics accordingly.

Each new phrase or section may present new roles for each set of instruments. For instance, at measure 43 (**B**), the word **Peppy** is used, indicating more forward momentum and energy than in the previous section. Consider allowing the shaker to be a more prominent voice with the melody and tambourine hits, emphasizing the syncopation without overpowering the motor rhythm.

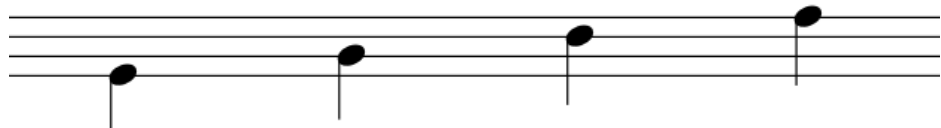
The image shows a musical score for measures 43-48, section B, titled "Peppy". The score is written for two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The music is in 4/4 time. The top staff begins with a box labeled "B" and the word "Peppy". The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. The bottom staff begins with a box labeled "SHAKER" and a dynamic marking of *f*. The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p* and *f*, and a "sub." marking. The score ends with a box labeled "[m. 43 - 48]".

[m. 43 - 48]

At measure 102 (**C**), the new textures of the ringing metals mixed with the evolving melody should be kept relatively quiet and distant throughout to reflect the **Muted** nature intended. As the duet builds towards the end, make sure to continue to consider the balance and impact of each instrument.

## PERCUSSION STAFF NOTATION GUIDE

As the piece reaches its climax and all the texture are reintroduced, it can be easy to forget exactly which instrument each player is responsible for. Below is a quick reference that will match each player's Percussion Staff.



**TAMBOURINE      SHAKER      SMALL BELLS      TRIANGLE**

Within the last seven measures (224-End) it is important to recognize the interchanging of instruments that takes place. Percussion 2 must be ready to transition from shaker to small bells in one beat between measures 224 & 225. Similarly, Percussion 1 must quickly transition from tambourine hits in the left hand to the shaker for the final tremolo in measure 229.

**accel.**  
(get dramatic with tremolos)

224

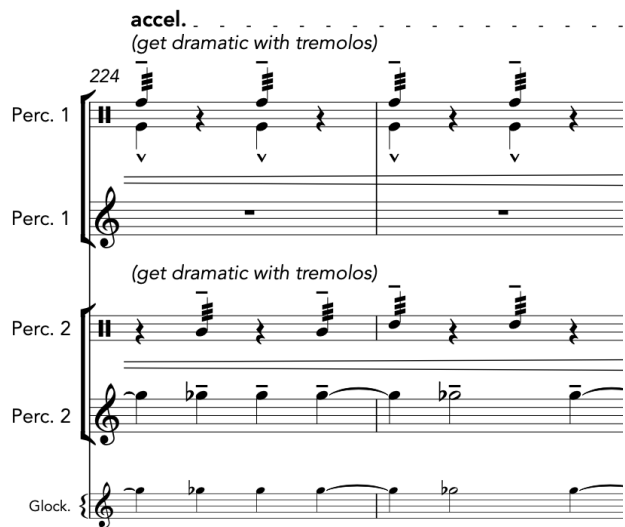
Perc. 1

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 2

Glock.



[m. 224 - 225]

$\text{♩} = 210$



[m. 228 - 229]