

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

**Narratives on Narratives, From Utterance to Stories: Finding a
Context for the Speaking Percussionist**

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requirements for the degree
Doctor of Musical Arts

in

Contemporary Music Performance

by

Bonnie Anne Whiting Smith

Committee in charge:

Professor Steven Schick, Chair
Professor Allyson Green
Professor János Négyesy
Professor Allen Otte
Professor Rand Steiger

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The dissertation of Bonnie Anne Whiting Smith is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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University of California, San Diego

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VITA

- 2004 B.M. in Percussion Performance, Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin, OH
- 2009 M.M. in Music, University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Ohio
- 2012 D.M.A. in Contemporary Music Performance, University of California, San Diego

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

**Narratives on Narratives, From Utterance to Stories: Finding a
Context for the Speaking Percussionist**

by

Bonnie Anne Whiting Smith

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Professor Steven Schick, Chair

The genesis and spirit of any piece of music for a speaking percussionist is tied to not only to the tradition of experimental music and art and but also to traditions of storytelling. This hybrid sonic art: an individual human voice modified and enhanced by a percussive sound world, or its inverse: percussion music extended by a single human voice, is powerful and accessible because it is an amplification and transformation of the familiar through a lens of ritualistic performance and even performativity. It is neither a purely cerebral listening experience linked to contemporary music nor a fully-staged theatrical experience, but rather a composite art form linked to these traditions. Being closer to our everyday human desire to tell and listen to stories while engaging with one another, listeners are in-

vited to an opening of their own everyday life experiences, even when a traditional narrative is not present in the work being performed.

This concept is explored in specific works for speaking percussionist (from John Cage, Frederic Rzewski, and Vinko Globokar, to more recent creations) and here addressed through the lenses of traditional storytelling, ritual in performance, corporeality, and narratology. Both illustrative and personal stories (after John Cage's *Indeterminacy*) are woven throughout.

Chapter 1

Narratives on Narratives, From Utterance to Stories: Finding a Context for the Speaking Percussionist

However, as is clearly discernible, most of the crowd have withdrawn into themselves. Here, in the sparse pauses between the battles, the people dream; it is as though the group released the individual, as though the restless were allowed, for once, to stretch out in the large, warm bed of the people. And within these dreams one sometimes hears Josephine's whistling; she calls it effervescent, we call it irritating; in any case it belongs here as it does nowhere else; otherwise music hardly ever finds an appropriate moment. Within it there is something of the poor, short childhood, something of the lost happiness which will never be found again, but also something of today's working life, of its small, incomprehensible and nevertheless enduring and inextinguishable cheerfulness. And all of this is really not said with great notes, but lightly, in a whisper, confidently and sometimes a little hoarsely. Of course it is a whistle. What else could it be? Whistling is the language of our people, often someone whistles his whole life without knowing it; here, however, whistling is freed from the restraints of everyday life, and for a short time it frees us as well. These performances are certainly not something we could want to miss. -Franz Kafka, *Josephine the Singer, or The Mouse People* [KB96]

The genesis and spirit of this relatively new and proliferating performance art–music for a speaking percussionist–is tied not only to the traditions of experimental music and theater, but also to traditions in narrative and storytelling. Speaking percussionist music (as opposed to speaking violinist music, for example) is powerful partially because percussion has always been inclusive rather than exclusive. A percussionist is so often connected to the next thing: the outlying element in the musical tradition. It is always a percussionist called on to cue the birdsong in Respighi’s *Pines of Rome*, to play the siren in the orchestra, to construct the next fantastical instrument out of everyday objects. The surface simplicity–someone striking something and vocalizing simultaneously: a creative re-imagining of seemingly familiar everyday tasks–lends this music strength and immediacy. Percussionists deal with sonic inclusivity on a professional level: finding audible ‘readymades.’

The use of text and poetry throughout centuries of Western Art Music has been generally relegated to song. With the advent of a solo repertoire for the performing percussionist in the late Twentieth Century, a new avenue for the performance of text came into being: one that did not require a trained singer. For the spoken word, it’s true: poets have always read their own work. As informative and interesting as that can be, these writers rarely think of themselves as performers. The entire genre of speaking percussionist music exists because of the creation of a new space. This space was born out of not only the richly diverse and forward-looking practice of experimentation in these contemporary works, but also out of a re-examination of more traditional storytelling.

There is a human need to tell stories. While few of us musicians have hired an acting coach or taken a theater course, all of us tell and listen to stories each day. We intrinsically know how to use our voices and bodies to tell stories, and we remain riveted by the narratives of our friends, family, and colleagues. When performing these works, I often think of myself as a storyteller rather than an actor. I have not been trained as an actor, but we are all hardwired to tell stories.

Actors generally play one part and serve that particular character, embodying her or his every facet. A storyteller serves the story: embodying each character

and scenario. Thus, a storyteller might at one moment speak in the first person, at another embody a dialog between two people, and at still another function as a more traditional third-person narrator. A storyteller controls point-of-view in a way that an actor generally does not. Rather than becoming something (a specific character), or saying something, a storyteller focuses on doing: on telling a story as a whole.

On a very personal note, I recognize that I am very much myself when I play these speaking percussionist pieces and when I tell these abstracted stories. There are many schools of acting, some of which ask the actor to create character free of self. In others, actors are charged to find deep within themselves the important (dramatic, significant, or traumatic) events relevant to the needs of the character being played, and relive their emotional history on stage. I imagine that these exercises could be extremely helpful to performers of speaking percussionist pieces if that performer was a trained actor. However, this sort of work is not necessarily what the pieces need to succeed, so I often think of myself as a storyteller instead, functioning more like more like a conduit. In a storyteller's omniscience, his or her role is perhaps even closer in role to that of director or dramaturge.

The depth of my connection to this genre stems from an active engagement with artists in related disciplines. I have found that these works become richer when I enlist the ears and eyes of dancers, directors, actors, movement and vocal coaches, etcetera. Being a person who enjoys talking and telling stories helps immensely of course, but it is nearly impossible to make the leap from *Stick Control* snare drum exercises, orchestral percussion excerpts, virtuosic mallet keyboard solos, and complex multiple percussion pieces to this hybrid art for speaking percussionist. Works in this genre won't simply play themselves.

A common thread we have is that of performance. Storytellers embellish: they add to, subtract from, and enlarge their subjects. As performers of experimental percussion music, we have perhaps less flexibility than more traditional storytellers, but anyone who has undertaken the task of playing a work multiple times in varied contexts knows that each performance situation is unique.

**I owe my life in “art” music to my parents’ conservatism.
For a (mercifully short) time in the early 90’s, they were al-**

most fundamentalists and popular music was the first thing to go. Contemporary Christian music was okay, as was “Classical Music”: vaguely, things with strings and without words. Needing music, I would shut myself in my room after school and listen to Detroit’s classical music station, taping pieces I liked. My parents got the hint, and for Christmas one year I got a cassette called “The Best of Mozart.” I began to wear the tape out and now, nearly two decades later, it features strange hiccups and wacky intonation. I often fell asleep listening to it, thinking that laying in bed and relaxing was how one listened to this music. Later in life, I find that I’m disappointed by the classical music that comes on NPR after the news, but I still leave the radio on. There’s an unfortunate consequence: whenever I hear the overture to the *Marriage of Figaro* or the first movement of Piano Concerto no. 23, I just want to go to sleep.

Albert B. Lord, a scholar known for his work researching epic poetry and song (both that of antiquity and that which persisted well into the mid-20th century when he did his work) asserted that, for the epic poet, “the moment of composition is performance” [LMMN00]. Furthermore, he calls “tradition. . . an organic habit of re-creation” [LMMN00]. All this is not quite analogous to the speaking percussionist music I am interested in; very real individuals (composers) wrote very real music for performers to play. But I feel that, as an audience member, there is a sense of heightened anticipation when we hear a story told by another human being. This is partially because, in addition to our stock set of expectations, there is a real understanding that anything could happen. Members of an audience are more prepared to come to the table as active, engaged listeners when they are confronted with a storyteller than with a purveyor of purely experimental music, even if that storyteller spins abstracted narratives from behind fences of both otherworldly and ordinary percussion instruments.

I was walking to my 9 am rehearsal; I had just arrived in New York and my body was still on Pacific Time. I found myself typically over-stimulated by the sights, sounds, and smells of the city. On my way to the theater, I stumbled upon a market of sorts: big white tents lining the sidewalk with people peddling smoked fish and jewelry, vegetables and baked goods. I

was too tired to pay attention. Suddenly, someone was shouting at me: “Hey. Hey! Excuse me!” Hypersensitive about scams and marketing ploys and pretty groggy, I figured my best bet was total indifference. I sped up. The woman was persistent. She abandoned her post at the fancy bakery tent and followed me on the sidewalk. “Julie!” I turned around, thinking this was a simple case of mistaken identity. I stopped in the street. “Sorry, it was the only name I could think of. I know you’re not Julie.” “I’m afraid you’ve mistaken me for someone else.” I said. “No no. Wait! Do you know someone named Ben Smith?” (now she had my attention) “I’m married to someone named Ben Smith.” At this point she starts laughing. “I know, you think I’m crazy; a stalker or something. But I know who you are! I’ve been looking at your picture for the last three years, so I recognized you.” (astonished silence from me) She went on to explain that she had just left Pittsburgh, where her roommate was my sister-in-law Julie. Apparently, Julie had a family photograph in their living room and I was recognizable enough to merit calling out into the city streets. So, I followed her back to her little tent, bought the most beautiful loaf of Challah bread I could see, and, laughing called my sister-in-law to tell her the story.

We like the ritual of listening to stories. We want to lean forward in our chairs and go beyond the experience of being simply entertained: to be swept away and momentarily lost while in the company of others. When combined with music, this enjoyment becomes nearly irresistible. In an attempt to demystify this very phenomenon—the accessibility of speaking percussionist music as storytelling—I plan to touch on analyses of the implicit narratives in specific pieces themselves as well as the choices involved in performance practice.

In dealing with the former, it is essential to point out that we don’t yet have at our disposal a text or method that specifically analyzes this subset of pieces. We have no choice but to borrow terms from elsewhere. In his wonderfully concise introduction to the study of literary theory, Jonathan Culler reminds us that, in addition to being specifically analytical and speculative, theory often deals with discourse that falls outside of its primary discipline [Cul97]. Theory is, after all, interdisciplinary by nature. Why not apply a branch of literary theory to speaking percussion music in order to parse these abstracted stories? In the search for some-

thing that might sympathetically resonate with (but by no means comprehensibly cover) this genre of music, I found narratology. A subset of literary theory that sprung from the work of the Russian Formalists at the beginning of the Twentieth Century and permeated aspects of structuralist and post-structuralist thought later, narratology can serve as a useful touchstone throughout this analysis. I have found this branch of study to be an effective tool that can clarify elements of a unique genre of percussion music; narratology has helped me to more easily reference concepts beyond my own autobiographical experiences with these pieces.

This branch of study recognizes that many things come together to “tell a story”: I believe that this is exactly what happens in speaking percussionist music, even when a traditional narrative is absent. Mieke Bal, the Dutch scholar who has written the definitive text on the subject of narratology defines it as “. . . the ensemble of theories of narratives, narrative texts, images, spectacles, events; cultural artifacts that tell a story. Such a theory helps to understand, analyse, [sic] and evaluate narratives [Bal97].”

In a nutshell, when looking at a text, Bal asserts that we have: 1. a narrative text (where text is a finite, structured whole composed of signs) in which an agent tells another a story, 2. the story itself (that story’s particular manifestation: with various colorings and shadings particular to the individual telling it. Here, she refers mostly to the individual within the story itself, so the narrator, but it is clearly applicable to a performer or a story in a live context. An example she gives later deals with cinema), and 3. a fabula, which is simply the events that happen in the story (as they are logically and chronologically carried out and perceived by an audience) [Bal97].

These three elements can be easily adapted to fit the elements of speaking percussionist music. Text becomes the score itself (as a subset, we can distinguish vocal text, which will be anything that encompasses actual words or vocal utterance). The live performance and all of the specific personal elements therein becomes the story. This story’s reception and perception by listeners as a logical and chronological series of events is the fabula. In touching on the subject of narratology in speaking percussionist music, the most relevant element becomes this

middle space: the place where the story meets people.

When I was living in Indiana, I occasionally worked as a substitute percussionist with the Evansville Philharmonic. At one point, I was asked to come play only bass drum, on just one piece. When I wasn't playing, I was asked by the principal percussionist, a Japanese woman about my age, to sit out in the hall and listen for balance. I dutifully took my seat. I couldn't even listen. All I could do was watch her play the bass drum, and see how small she looked compared to the instrument. Suddenly (it had really never occurred to me before) I noted that we were of such like size and build: I must look similarly dwarfed by the drum. I realized, recognized in myself for the first time, that when I played orchestral percussion, I always visualized myself as a six-foot tall man. Now, I see myself as a five-foot tall woman.

Percussion is (essentially) an easily accessible phenomenon: you hit something and then it speaks. Complicated cages of set-ups and specialized techniques notwithstanding, the relationship of a sound to its generating process is quite simple. This is easy to understand. Even in moments of virtuosity, the music can become transparent. A natural extension of this organic relationship of activation to sound is the even more universal element of vocalization or spoken language.

I want to begin by looking at a piece that embodies this simplicity, but is effective because of the distinctive ways in which its story can be told. To use narratological terms, the text for Frederic Rzewski's *To the Earth* consists of his English translation of a Homeric hymn from the Seventh Century BCE plus simple musical notation for four flowerpots. The musical and vocal texts move in simple parallel motion with one another. (See Figure 1.1)

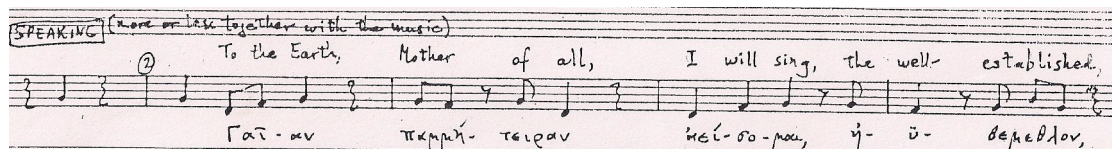


Figure 1.1: Rzewski: *To the Earth*

The story is essentially performer-specific. I choose to perform seated on the ground, and I vary my percussive attacks at the end of the work, using fingers

rather than sticks. My telling features a slight separation of the vocal text from the musical notation, made even more apparent by my choice of vocal inflections. Thus, the internal logic and coherence of the exact parallel between music and vocal text is still subconsciously heard or perceived by listeners, but this separation allows for a text delivery that is closer to natural patterns of speech. My version also utilizes the addition of a bit of sung text. This is to support an instance in which Rzewski momentarily breaks from his consistent line-by-line style of text-setting into a linear-additive pattern. (See Figure 1.2)

Figure 1.2: Rzewski: *To the Earth*

These points are small, and the work's means are simple. However, I think that these elements do work together to create a series of experiences—our fabula—for listeners. It is nearly impossible to perform a piece while simultaneously judging its reception. Even if one could, such critique is probably inadvisable. The story's delivery, then, is the performer's way of creating the audience's fabula.

To the Earth translates a ritual performed and practiced in private into one carried out in a more public context. The performance is related to storytelling in part because there is a clear awareness on the part of the performer of the surrounding listeners. Yes, it is a ritual, but this ritual is a rather simple one. Note that the percussionist isn't asked to find lovely temple bowls or execute virtuosic techniques; here is a ritual connected to everyday experience. I don't feel that I function as a priestess, or a singer of epic tales, but perhaps as a subtler modern storyteller: simply drawing attention to different wonders of our surrounding environment.

I learned this work while I was on tour with a musical quartet. The set-up is portable and quiet: two things essential for hotel room practice. Desiring feedback

before my first scheduled performance, I played the piece for my colleagues while we were on the road. Our trombonist responded first to its static nature, wishing for just a bit more variation. To inspire me to organically find for myself different modes of expression and inflection, he suggested that I recall a specific place for each section of the work. I created an imaginary scenario in which the piece moves from general to specific imagery. It would be pointless for me to describe the connections between what I am imagining during particular sections and the musical events that occur, but I do hold on to concrete images from that year's touring schedule: odd granite formations in the Black Hills of South Dakota, the thick mist in an urban green space in Portland, Oregon, a chilly evening by the Pacific in Long Beach, the quiet blanket of humidity wrapping the green hills of rural Kentucky, a blizzard in Westport, Connecticut, a fall walk in Voorheesville, New York. It would be impossible to make this explicitly clear during a performance, but using such specific places as models for expression has the potential to inspire similar imagination in others. I believe that the audience's ability to create their own specifics is directly proportional to the degree of specificity that the performer brings to their work.

For the most part, Rzewski has set the words of the poem in a standard linear, through-composed fashion, as was shown in Figure 1.1 above. Twice, however, he utilizes extended percussion solo sections where there is no text. Occasionally he allows the percussion to deviate markedly from the spoken word. (See Figure 1.3)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Rzewski's 'To the Earth'. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff has the English lyrics 'Their children are radiant with the joy' and the Greek lyrics 'παιδες δ'ευφροσύνην νεοθηλεις'. The second staff has the English lyrics 'of youth' and the Greek lyrics 'κνδισωσι, dim.'. The music is written in a simple, rhythmic style with a consistent pulse. There is a circled '21' at the beginning of the first staff.

Figure 1.3: Rzewski: *To the Earth*

Near the end of the work, (Figure 1.4 below on page 10) the timing of the text is radically stretched in time and space. It is sometimes hard to know what to do with all this extra space. Often, depending on my own perception of an

30 Hail to you, (carefully preparing each sound)
 Χαίρε,
 31 Mother of Life, (stir inside pot with stick, as though the pot contained some liquid)
 θεῶν μητέρα,
 32 You who are loved by the starry sky;
 ἡ ἀστέρων ἀγαπῶμένη,

Figure 1.4: Rzewski: *To the Earth*

audience’s reaction, I’ll contract it a bit. Clearly, though, the composer’s decision to elongate the time at the end becomes an invitation to the audience: a plea to hold each utterance in their minds for a slightly longer space in time.

I spent two years living in middle of the woods of Northern Michigan as a student at Interlochen. Every Sunday morning, I joined forty other kids on the church bus: a free ride into Traverse City fifteen miles down the road, where one could find several places of worship (or, good brunch if you got off downtown and just pretended to go in to the Methodist church first.) I attended Living Hope Assembly of God: lots of hands in the air, crying, fainting, visions, (snake handling in very extreme satellites of this denomination), loud trance-like music and, of course, speaking in tongues. I wasn’t sure if I bought it, but I was fascinated. On the bus back from church one morning, I sat next to a very beautiful trumpet player who also attended Living Hope. During the service, he was often pouring out the language of the Holy Spirit so I asked him about it. What was it like? Why did he feel compelled to do it? He said that all I had to do was pray to receive gift of tongues and see for myself. In fact, he could pray with me right now, right here on the church bus, if I’d like. He started praying, in English, and then in gibberish, and I imitated him. I didn’t know if I was speaking in tongues, but I liked what I was feeling. I liked holding his hands while we prayed, liked the sounds we were making, liked doing something in concentrated communion, liked that everything seemed warm and set-apart for a higher purpose, liked being let in. I tried speaking in tongues when the spirit moved me for a few weeks, but then I realized that it was utterly ridiculous, and stopped riding the church bus.

When I first moved to Seattle, I went dutifully to every new

music concert I could find. I learned about the three types of concerts there: Type A: more people in audience than on stage, Type B: an equal number on stage and in the audience, and Type C: more people on stage than in the audience. I also learned that on the West Coast experimental music often encompasses improvisation. I sat through a few Type C free improvisation concerts, one of which was so laid-back that it started twenty-five minutes late. Mostly, it was painful. When going to concerts that consist of primarily freely improvised music, I feel hypercritical, or at the very least left out as an audience member. Later, as I tried to find my place in the scene, I learned that one of the first questions a musician from Seattle asks is do you improvise? I developed a practice of saying yes: taking on a process of listening and responding, making up musical gibberish, and filling up holes with musical sound.

Whether we intend them to be or not, percussion instruments are set pieces and props: visual and theatrical elements as well as musical elements. Playwright Anton Chekhov famously wrote: “One must not put a loaded rifle on the stage if no one is thinking of firing it.” To enter a performance space and see a stage carefully set (or overwhelmingly littered) with percussion instruments is to already have a theatrical experience. A tam-tam with a diameter of five feet placed on a stage has approximately the same impact as a loaded-gun. Furthermore, many percussionists choose pieces and even string together whole programs with connective, communicative stories and theatricality in mind. While these pieces may be storytelling (fantastical or not), they are usually theatrical: performed on stage in real time for an audience.

It’s important to keep in mind that we are talking about a whole family of instruments, each specific one with an identity and history, often completely engulfed by the totality that has become multiple percussion. We do see obvious parallels here, though. The Nigerian kalengo (talking drum) can convey specific conversations, we all know about messages tapped out through military marches and patterns on early snare drums, and are aware that the sheer volume of some percussion instruments made them perfect senders of signals over long distances.

The history of such instruments themselves is overwhelming, and far too

removed to be thoroughly useful in this particular context of speaking percussionist music. A critic working for a well-known publication recently reviewed a concert involving a great deal of percussion instruments. He decided that the best way to convey the most salient, specific information about the music he heard would be to count the number of instruments on stage (102!) and go through a list of their names and origins (“ . . . a conga drum sits next to a large Chinese temple gong, a Cambodian Anklung, Indian ankle bells, a pair of maracas, sleigh bells, an African Udu and a wine bottle.”) I’m pretty sure he missed the point.

A better place to begin, when we think of percussion instruments as good vehicles for storytelling, is their accessibility. With few exceptions, there is little to be demystified in percussion playing; you strike, shake, or rub an instrument and it sounds. Furthermore, if we (even just for a moment) take the keyboard percussion instruments out of the equation, we find that percussion instruments are more intimately tied to rhythm than pitch, and thus can be very good at imitating patterns of speech.

When our feet sound on the pavement in rhythm as we walk, we are percussionists, just as when we relate the events of our day to a friend we are storytellers. Percussion, then, becomes a universally known quantity, immediately graspable in concept (in the way that, say, an oboe is not.) In addition to this universality, we find in percussion instruments a great deal of malleability: different sizes of instruments and beaters, different percussionists with different hands and bodies. When watching a performance of percussion music, the body of the specific percussionist is conspicuously present.

To the Earth is often performed because of its easy portability. Many percussionists play this piece in many places: memorable ones, with varying degrees of success, efficacy, and audibility. For me, these, include an outdoor performance in a run down gazebo behind an old panoramic theatre in L.A., a show for a thousand other percussionists in a ballroom at a Midwestern convention center, an offering in a busy bookstore when nobody listened but me, and one in the context of a group of students at a technical community college in New Zealand where, over the course of ten minutes, the energy shifted from derisive laughter to quiet attention. I once

found myself playing the piece in a small music school outside of New York City. The school was housed in a couple rooms in a run-down strip mall. The work itself intensifies at the beginning of the last third; there is a flutter of percussive activity mostly isolated from the voice. This then gives way to the simplest material in the piece; sparse playing and expansively spaced text. I choose to put down my sticks at this moment, forcing the audience to strain to hear. On this particular day, the moment I set down my sticks and began to speak the last phrases of praise to the earth, a torrential downpour shook this fragile little building. The roof, as it turns out, was metal, so the sound of the rain completely drowned out the last page. I did not strain to be heard.

Jerome Kitzke's 2003 work *The Earth Only Endures* is an example of a piece in which the performer, as a storyteller, must work to unify diverse elements of vocal and musical texts. The vocal text includes poetry by Walt Whitman ("Reconciliation"), Allen Ginsberg ("Hum-Bom"), the Tewa, the Lakota, and Jerome Kitzke (where Kitzke uses mostly non-texted utterance, as well as a few actual words). The musical score consists of both traditional and non-traditional notation for voice (see specifics below), as well as traditional notation for a large battery of percussion instruments (marimba, drums, chimes, splash cymbals, assorted small accessory percussion instruments) and harmonica. Kitzke wrote a program note for the work, which is excerpted here:

The Earth Only Endures is an anti-war piece written in response to America's invasion of Iraq in the spring of 2003. In choosing to use the same text found in my 1991 anti-Gulf War, *Mad Coyote Madly Sings*, I sought to express not just the same sentiments of opposition I felt then, but also my sad and angry astonishment at how little has changed in the twelve intervening years. Seeking to add words referential to the young women and men still losing their lives as of this writing, I added Walt Whitman's "Reconciliation" from the "Drum Taps" section of *Leaves of Grass*.

In performing this work and telling its story, I chose to use a relatively compact set-up (considering the given instrumentation) that catered to my own physical needs and preferences. Kitzke suggests the configuration in Figure 1.5 on page 14 below.

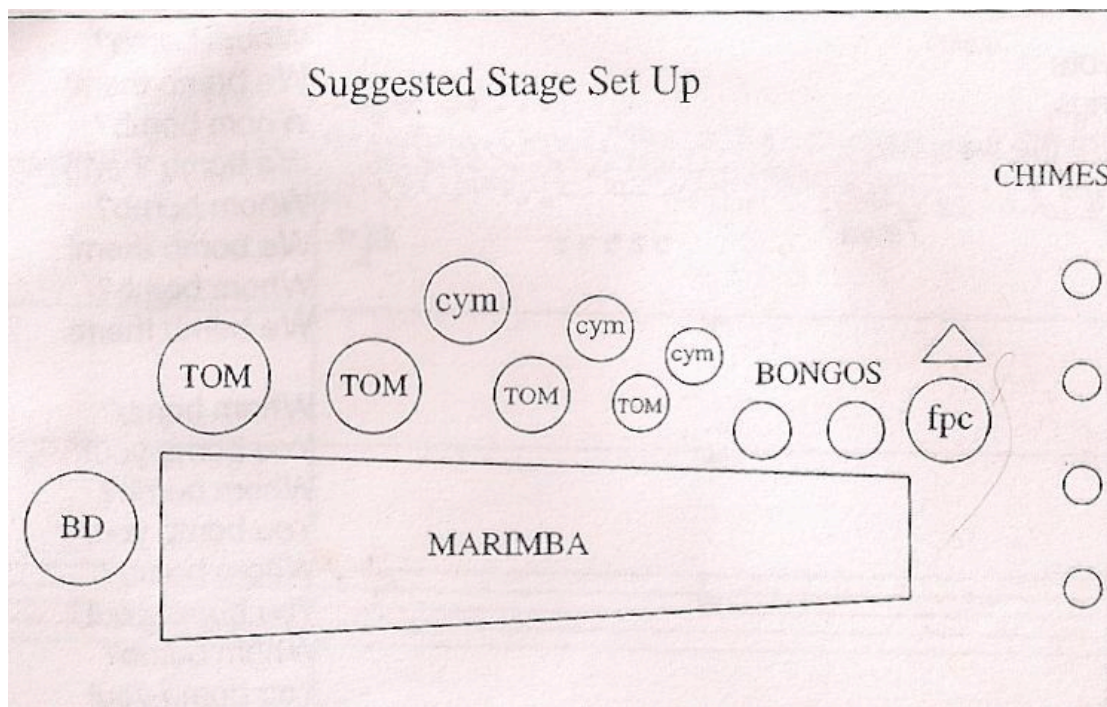


Figure 1.5: Kitzke: *The Earth Only Endures* proposed set-up

I am 5'2" tall, so it was clear that the piece wasn't going to work as diagrammed. For one thing, the chimes were just too far away from the lower notes of the marimba for my wingspan. I also feared being physically lost behind the tom-toms if they were placed downstage of the marimba. Furthermore, it was impossible to achieve a good striking position from this angle. After many experiments and conversations with the composer, I settled on the configuration in Figure 1.6 on page 15 below.

I realize that this sort of detail begins to read as over-specific percussion jargon. However, for Kitzke's piece, an appropriate set up is crucial to good physical storytelling. In this configuration, I rarely had to work with my back to the audience: I wasn't separated from the listeners by a rack, and I could keep the drums and the marimba on the same plane. There was also an added element of interest as the audience could see me move between the drums and marimba, as well as the three splash cymbals. I had a great deal of flexibility as I delivered much of the text; I could choose to turn to the audience from both sides of the set-up.

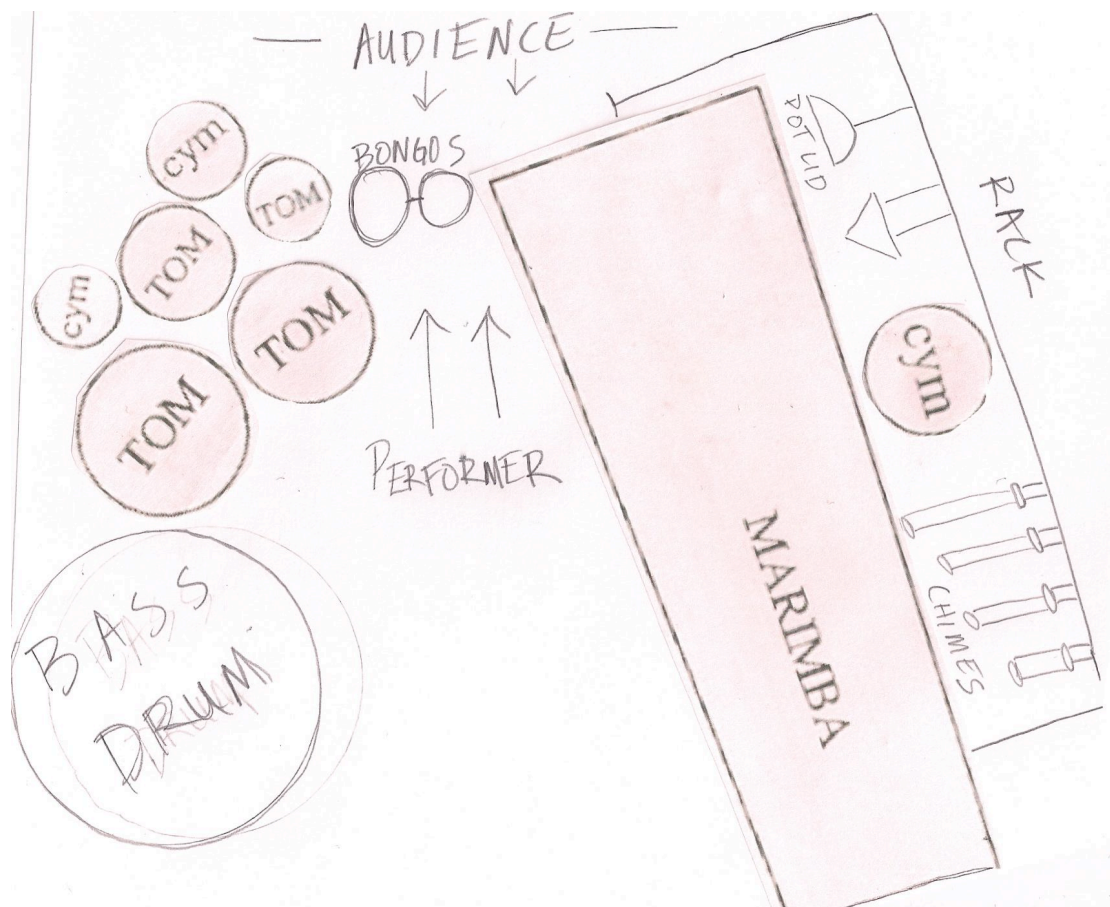


Figure 1.6: Kitzke: *The Earth Only Endures* BWS set-up

The Earth Only Endures was written for a male percussionist (with his vocal range in mind) so part of my personal telling of the story is linked to my gender. I was the first female percussionist to play the work, so I needed to transpose some passages so that they would speak appropriately. It was especially challenging to get around the concept of male falsetto, which is actually quite integral to the original. Kitzke is himself a fabulous vocalizer. I imagine him sitting at his desk in his tiny Upper East Side apartment figuring out these crazy vocalizations: singing and yelping in full voice. Knowing his personality was incredibly helpful as I learned the piece. We did a great deal of work together in person and over the phone, but some aspects of the realization process were still unclear. For example, Kitzke does not use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) in his scores; if he did, the pronunciation of his non-traditional non-texted vocalizations would have

been standardized. I like this ambiguity, and the result is that I deliver some of these sounds differently than he does or than another percussionist would. All this is part of telling the story. (See Figure 1.7 below)

Handwritten musical score for a vocal excerpt. The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. It features various musical notations including slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. The lyrics are written below the staff. Annotations above the staff include "ANGRY BRASSY BUZZ", "SLIDE", "LIKE AN ELEC. GTR. WIIWAH-WAH", "MOVE JAW", and "A BIT FASTER guttural". Dynamic markings include *f*, *mf*, and *ff*. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Figure 1.7: Kit Zuke: *The Earth Only Endures* vocal excerpt

Beyond the practical considerations of set up and vocalization, I needed to make some decisions about the text. The vocal texts by the various authors are strung together in what is delivered here as a catalog of human emotions in wartime. Throughout the twenty-minute piece, one experiences exuberance, anger, frustration, futility, grief, empathy, and confusion.

I believe that Kit Zuke mourns more than just the United States' invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the first Gulf War he references in his introductory note. Beyond even earlier (or implied subsequent) conflicts, there is a pervasive sense of remorse for everyday violence between individual human beings. Thus, my telling of this story ends up being one in which the storyteller takes on several different characters and a vast range of emotional communication.

The Earth Only Endures falls into an interesting subset of speaking percussionist pieces by American composers that ask the performer (the storyteller) to embody many different characters, with text coming from diverse (yet related) authors or sources. Two works not discussed here are *The Fall of the Empire*, Frederic Rzewski's 2007 piece for Allen Otte, and *The Authors* (2006) by Stuart Saunders Smith. These three works are fairly substantial in length: at twenty minutes, Kit Zuke's is the shortest. *The Authors* features writings by selected American Transcendentalists, while Rzewski's incorporates his own texts alongside those of Twain, Dickens, and Jefferson. Both Rzewski and Smith have in certain instances referred to their pieces as "operas" for speaking percussionist, though of course there is no singing, and furthermore these are solo works. Why would they use this term? It is in storytelling that we accept multiple voices from a single per-

former, and it is the world of storytelling that these pieces inhabit.

For Kitzke's setting of Ginsberg's poem, I found a character whose anger is unfocused and explosive, fueled by adrenaline rather than substance. This story is told in the moment. The character from Whitman's poem tells a story of reflection and regret after events of violence. The character generated through the texts by the Tewa and Lakota peoples capitalizes on the exuberance the human spirit, functioning too as a moral force. The most complicated character, a starling, is treated below. The story's form is quite clear: a series of separate pieces (with vocal text by different authors) separated by interludes:

Prelude (w/ Starling)

"Mad Coyote Madly Sings, Then roars the West Wind!" (Tewa)

Interlude 1 (w/ Starling)

"Hum-Bom" (Ginsberg) A play on words: who is bombing whom?

Interlude 2 (w/Starling)

"Reconciliation" part one (Whitman) (from *Drum Taps: poetry on and after the Civil War*)

Quasi-interlude

"Reconciliation" part two (w/starling) (Whitman)

Interlude 3 (w/Starling) *The Earth Only Endures* (Lakota) The old men say the earth only endures. You spoke truly, you are right. (+ Kitzke original text) When will we end the human war?

Postlude

I'll begin with the material that comprises the prelude, postlude, and interludes. These sections feature the most singing (always un-texted) and a great deal of vocal sound effects. Here lie the extremes in the percussion playing: the softest and sparsest material as well as the most virtuosic and complicated passages. Of course, this is to be expected; the other sections must serve to advance the text. Functionally, the opening and closing section and the interludes allow for change of setting and voice for the storyteller. The music clears the air, so to speak.

In these transitional sections, we find a character who is clearly connected to the earth and affected by the human emotions presented, though thoroughly non-human. This is a starling, and its music is the least traditionally notated throughout. (See Figure 1.8 above)

Text by the Teva, Allen Ginsberg (1971),
Walt Whitman, The Lakota

The Earth Only Endures
In Time of War
for Genevive Windbiel ...on the verge of...

Jerome Kitzke
(2003)

Vocals/Harmonica ♩ = 92 like a chattering starling *...
pp cresc p cresc mp cresc

Chimes/
Frying pan cover USE BODY MOVEMENT REPLEAT
WITH FOOT STOMPING AND HOPPING

Cymbals

Drums

Marimba

Triangle/Flexitone
Frying pan cover

* - (AD LIB CRISP RAPID CLICKS, POPS,
WHISTLES, GRUNTS, LAUGHS, GROANS -
THROW IN SOME STICK CLICKS TOO)

...madness... ACCEL.

Figure 1.8: Kitzke: *The Earth Only Endures* opening

That's the most guidance an interpreter gets. There are other directions as the piece progresses, but they are even more abstract: (the Starling gone mad, the Starling light and wispy, the Starling shell-shocked, the Starling takes a breath of renewal, etc.) I pressed Kitzke on this, wanting to know what he was after. He mentioned a particularly active bird outside his Manhattan apartment building. It would often burst into song in the middle of the night, assimilating sirens and human wails as well as clicks and pops and other birdsong. He pointed me to an online recording, but was careful to explain that he didn't intend for the percussionist to literally imitate a starling. He was after the frenzied character in its song: its diverse elements, stolen cadenzas, and unbridled craziness.

As a storyteller, I become the Starling in the prelude, postlude, and interludes. I can step out of a human role momentarily and, while remaining connected to the human dramas and emotions deployed throughout the piece, project a more abstract picture of the earth and nature itself. In these passages in particular, text

is taken away from the performer; instruments and un-texted vocalization become the tools of expression. This music is no less emotional. In these sections of music surrounding the startling, physical gesture (especially when combined with this vocalization) becomes a sort of utterance.

In his 2004 seminal work *Gesture: Visible Action as Utterance*, scholar Adam Kendon suggests that gesture is “a name for visible action when it is used as an utterance or as part of an utterance.” In his terms, then, the word utterance “. . .refer[s] to any ensemble of action that counts for others as an attempt by the actor to ‘give’ information of some sort” [Ken04]. In this way, he makes a case for physical gesture being a form of utterance.

We can easily apply this definition to the context of speaking percussionist music. It is a small step to go from an actual texted utterance and Kendon’s subsequent visual gestural utterance to the idea of a musical utterance, articulated by both the sounds and physical gestures necessary to music-making and specific to percussion playing.

In my opinion, physical and textual storytelling are inseparable. We find this in our own daily lives when we illustrate with our hands as well as our words a story or point in an argument, or when we read into the body language of a friend. Specifically, in the case of these more abstract pieces of music, the physicality and repetition of gesture can become the most graspable part of the story. Themes are articulated and re-articulated and a visual language is created that ends up supporting or complementing the actual text or vocalized utterance of the work. In many of these works for speaking percussionist, gesture, instrument, sound, text, and utterance can stand in for one another; they can be exchanged and peeled back to reveal different ways of presenting a story.

We need to take these diverse elements into consideration when we step away to judge the fabula: the events and perception of the whole. I believe that *The Earth Only Endures* would fail if performed as a solely theatrical piece or as a piece only connected to the tradition of experimental music. Jerome’s music is incredibly raw. It is unabashedly tonal, rarely refined, often incredibly loud, and unapologetically American. It boils over with unfiltered human emotion. It needs

a storyteller to embrace these larger than life sentiments and deliver them in a way that allows the audience room to feel them for themselves.

On this note, I have found that the most dangerous moment in this piece for me comes not when I'm shrieking as the Starling, or whistling with the explosive tom-tom bombs in the Ginsberg setting, but while playing the music of its postlude. Kitzke chose to end the work with quiet chimes, resonant pot-lid, and high harmonica. The setting is so simple and sweet; the delicate jostling of chimes hovers around E-major while the harmonica wavers imperfectly above. This would fail as a bad cinematic cliché and furthermore the piece as a whole would fail if it became an actor's carefully-crafted monologue. It would fail if performed dramatically as the end of a "theatrical" percussion piece. I make the decision as a storyteller to give less here, allowing the end of the work to function as the impossibly hopeful conclusion to the story.

I once gave a workshop on interdisciplinary performance for general music classes at a very fancy elementary school in West Hollywood. Mostly, they were normal kids; creativity spans all socio-economic boundaries. We were creating a music/theatre/movement piece from the first stanza of Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky". I've never met a student like Paul. I gave some context for the poem, and asked if any of them had ever heard of *Alice in Wonderland*. All hands shot up. While explaining that the same author wrote another book about Alice, Paul immediately interjected with the title and date of *Through the Looking Glass*, as well as salient biographical information on Carroll. I recited the poem aloud, and asked them to close their eyes and think about what the nonsense words might mean to them, and how we could use them in our performance. Afterwards, hands flew in the air with ideas for what the words meant. I ignored Paul's. (I later learned that his mother was one of the co-producers of the TV show "Friends.") He pumped his hand in the air. His face started turning red. He whined in anxiety and excitement. We were well into our version of the poem, casting the frumious Bandersnatch as a lovable creature who curled into a tight little ball while rocking back and forth shaking her maraca, when he could not take it anymore. "But a Banderstanch is an animal with snapping jaws and a long neck! You dont know the story." At this moment I realize the kid has

actually read some of Carroll’s commentary on the subject; I was either going to have a fight with a seven-year-old or explain irony in Carroll to all of them. Exasperated, I said he could be a different bandersnatch if he wanted, though he then responded by pointing out that the “slithy toves” as acted by his colleagues were neither lithe nor slimy. We performed the piece twice: once in a little dress rehearsal and once for the next class of students. During the first pass, Paul stood beside the other children, furiously acting out his correct version of Jabberwocky. In the second pass, he sheepishly smiled, picked up a maraca, and participated with everyone else, losing himself in our collectively invented story rather than his own literal translation.

Of course, most of these pieces for speaking percussionist do not actually make use of traditional narratives. The text is abstract poetry, or the story is manipulated, deconstructed, and obscured, or the vocalizations themselves are simply nonsensical. I often feel like someone who uses the tools of a storyteller, actor, or musician, while simply pretending to tell stories. Music is occasionally used to illustrate elements in the text, as is the case in a passage from Kitzke’s piece in which the tom-toms, cymbals, and voice become the sound of bombs. (See Figure 1.9 on page 21 below)

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Hum-Bom:" by Allen Ginsberg. The score is written for voice and drums. The voice part is in 4/4 time and consists of a repeating phrase: "Whom bomb?— We bomb them!". The drums part is also in 4/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic pattern of notes and rests, with the instruction "STILL INTENSE" written above the staff. The score is divided into four measures, each with a 4/4 time signature. The first measure is marked with a 2/4 time signature, and the second measure is marked with a 3/4 time signature. The third and fourth measures are marked with a 2/4 time signature. The score is written on a single staff for voice and a single staff for drums. The voice part is written in a standard musical notation with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The drums part is written in a standard musical notation with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The score is set against a light pink background.

Figure 1.9: Kitzke: *The Earth Only Endures* “Hum-Bom:” Allen Ginsberg

More often than not, though, I find that the music simply serves as another layer of abstraction. I recently asked composer Jeffrey Treviño for a speaking percussionist piece. He immediately suggested the poetry of Alice Notley, an American writer whose expressively musical poems are especially moving when she reads them out loud. Notley was a bit uncomfortable with the idea of someone else reading her poetry aloud in a performance context. I was initially quite dis-

appointed by this. However, she did consent to us using recordings of her readings as a fixed-format tape part. We settled on three of her poems, recorded over a span of decades. Jeff also made a prelude, several interludes, and a coda. In *Being Pollen*, Treviño explores ways to creatively move the percussive sonic materials. Connecting also to the sound of the human voice (specifically Notley's), we chose instruments and then arranged them on a scale of resonance from dry to wet. We began working more than a year before I was scheduled to premiere the piece. We spent a day experimenting and recording in UCSD's Warren studios, trying out notated passages, improvising, and making audio documentation of each instrument. What if I tried to play along with Notley's voice? Which instruments best embodied the syllables? Much of this process was an organic one; I often only read the words as a rhythmic guide (as in Globokar's *Toucher*, described below). However, Treviño also experimented with different technologies (the LISP programming language, Max/MSP, and AudioGuide), allowing for a diverse span of notational precision. As a result, the piece alternates between moments of conversational fluidity and passages with disjunct or halting phrases. The end result sounds how Notley's concrete poetry looks. (See Figure 1.10 on page 39 below)

The second movement of this piece is especially useful for discussion of intentional textual and musical abstraction. This is a condensed version of Alice Notley's poem "Conversation": "My name is Wesley Jackson. I am twenty-five years old and my favorite song is Valencia. Isn't that beautiful? Frank said." [Not73] It might be considered a very short story. Despite the fact that the text in this work is pre-recorded (and performed by Notley, rather than by the percussionist) it is still a story: a narrative. The context for the delivery is especially unique. Notley has spent years perfecting the technique of reading her poetry aloud, and thus one notices its inherent musical qualities. For this particular movement, Treviño chose a low-fi recording of one of her live readings. One hears footsteps, audience murmurs and laughter, her introduction of the poem, and the shuffling of a plastic bag in addition to her recitation. Though as the performer I am not asked to speak, I still do feel that in being the physical body on stage I fulfill the role of storyteller. The actual text heard in the performance follows:

Uh, this first poem is called “Conversation.” Conversation.

[sound of footsteps]

My name my name my name my name my name, my name is Wesley is Wesley Wesley is Wesley Jackson is Wesley Jackson my name is Wesley Jackson I am I am I am I am twenty five years twenty five years old old i am twenty five years old i am twenty five years old i am twenty five years old and and my favorite my favorite my favorite favorite favorite and my favorite song song song and my favorite song and my favorite song and my favorite song my favorite song and my favorite song is is Valencia Valencia isn't isn't that isn't that beautiful beautiful isn't that beautiful isn't that beautiful Frank Frank said, Frank said. [Not73]

Treviño chose to set the percussive materials of the piece in an imitation of the rhythm of Notley’s recitation patterns as well as in coordination with the extraneous sounds on the recording. He occasionally superimposes the corresponding musical material and its original text inspiration, but they are more often separated. (See Figure 1.11 on page 40 below)

In this little narrative, we are left with less of a story and more of an exploration of the sounds of these words repeated. The surface simplicity is opened up to a more complicated window of opportunity for each listener, who can choose her or his own personal referential meanings generated by the sounds of text and percussion.

For a period of weeks one summer I had the privilege of playing under Pierre Boulez. We were a relatively large orchestra of young musicians from many countries, converging in Switzerland. I was assigned the chime part in the composer’s *Notations*. Upon arrival in Lucerne, I learned that I would play Boulez’s personal set of chimes, a monstrous instrument comprising four octaves. It was so tall that I could not reach the tops of the tubes, so technicians from the Ensemble InterContemporain found me a large flight case to stand on and rigged a pedal extension as well as a music stand top clamped to the frame of the instrument itself. Thus, I towered over the orchestra. I could barely turn my pages, but I could see the conductor and my music. In our first rehearsal, we came to a chime solo, a simple descending phrase with a decrescendo. Boulez stopped the orchestra. The last chime note must be

louder! It should be mezzo-forte, not piano. I obligingly took my pencil, and stood on tiptoes, straining to reach my music stand to correct my score. The whole orchestra turned and suddenly laughed to see its smallest member teetering there. Boulez mis-interpreted their giggles: “What!? It is my music! I can change it if I want!” And so we all laughed harder, and nobody explained the joke to him.

Jonathan Culler explains the phenomenon of the sound of words themselves as meaning: “. . . [The] lyric shows us meaning or story emerging from verbal patterning. You repeat words that echo in a rhythmical structure and see if story or sense won’t emerge” [Cul97]. This phenomenon is in evidence in a number of works that precede speaking percussionist music: examples of experiments in the human voice as a percussion instrument, and one specific instance in which a speaker and percussionists meld musically.

The first musically-notated non-pitched text setting in Twentieth Century music was intimately connected to percussion music for the purpose of storytelling. Darius Milhaud’s *Les Choéphores* (1915) is part of a large-scale work for chorus, soprano, baritone and orchestra. A collaboration with dramatist and poet Paul Claudel, the piece is a setting of the Aeschylus *Orestian Trilogy*. During much of the work, the chorus and soloists employ relatively traditional singing, but during a few passages of heightened intensity, Milhaud chose to set the text rhythmically and without pitch. (See Figure 1.12 on page 40 below)

Most notably, the large percussion section provides all of the accompaniment during these passages. In a program note for the first performance, Milhaud writes:

I wrote *The Choéphori* according to the same principles as Agamemnon. However, in *The Choéphori*, while several scenes easily lend themselves to singing. . . two scenes are to be found which create a difficult problem for the composer: they are savage, cannibal, as it were. The lyrical element in these scenes is not musical. How was I to set to music this hurricane? I finally decided to make use of a measured speech, divided in to bars, and conducted as if it were sung. The Choruses are spoken and provided with an accompaniment of percussion instruments only.

The work as a whole is characterized by a great deal of polytonality; it is adventurous enough for its time even without these three pieces for speaker and percussionists. Still, this was not enough for the composer. There are lighter precursors to speaking percussionist music as well, and several examples of music involving speaking alone. We also find rhythmic settings in Ernest Toch's charming *Geographical Fugue* from 1930. (See Figure 1.13 on page 41 below)

And of course there's "Story" from John Cage's *Living Room Music* (1940) with wonderfully quizzical text by Gertrude Stein. (See Figure 1.14 on page 41 below)

Kurt Schwitters' *Ursonate* is by far the most significant example. Schwitters developed his seminal work of sound poetry in the 1920's. The score looks like this:

Fümms bö wö tää zä ä Uu, pö giff, kwiiee. Dedesnn nn rrrrrr, li Ee, mpiff tillff toooo, tillll, Jüü-Kaa? (cantado) Rinnzekete bee bee nnz krr müüü ü, ziiuu ennze ziiuu rinnzkrrm, Rakete bee bee. Rrummpff tillff toooo?

Looking quickly at this small excerpt of text is analogous to a cursory glance at a dense orchestral score. Here we have an instance in which the text is clearly an element worlds away from the story or fabula. The act of reading a novel by oneself in one's own time is a singular experience that is of course inseparable from the power of narrative. This music (and by extension, speaking percussionist music) thrives in the context of live performance, just as storytelling must live in the context of live performance. Schwitters himself honed this work through innumerable performances. Elizabeth Burns Gamard explains in her book *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau*:

Sound-poetry was by definition performative: it could not be written or read (though [Schwitters] did attempt to set down parameters for several works. . .), but was realized in the instant in which it is presented. . . These instances themselves were never absolute, but were dependent on the immediacy of the conditions in which they were realized: observers, the performer, and the context. The rhythms of sound, however structured, played off the flow of events, the circumstances in which they were expressed. The goal of the *Ursonate*—a neologism of Schwitters' that roughly translates as "primal sonata" (or

“Sonata in Primitive Sounds”)—was to expose the Übergriff (primary concept or ground) that underlay the natural impulse of music and language [Gam00].

Burns Gamard asserts an element of performativity—here, a creative act realized in the moment of performance—which translates to many of these speaking percussionist pieces and to works of experimental performance art in general.

**“I have nothing to say, and I am saying it, and that is poetry.”
John Cage, 35’40”, 45’ for a Speaker [Cag11].**

I play two works of speaking percussionist music in which I confront the problem of first-person vocal text originally generated by historical figures: in this instance, composers. One is my original composition, using text excerpted and fragmented from interviews with Lou Harrison, Harry Partch, John Cage, and Edgard Varèse, and the other is my solo-simultaneous version of two of Cage’s works from the 1950s: *45’ for a Speaker* and *27’10.554” for a Percussionist*. Part of the goal in both of these works is to tell a new story by removing the vocal text from its original context.

In the former work, . . . *perishable structures that would be social events*, the rhythm of the percussion music is generated entirely by the natural speech patterns of the text. At certain points, text fragments are covered or replaced entirely by percussion sounds. The point is not to act out the characters of these composers, but rather to present short stylized snapshots. I chose instruments for each movement based not on their ability to speak as in Vinko Globokar’s *Toucher* (discussed below), but rather so that the text might be transformed beyond recognition. The palette of musical sounds suits each composer: in Cage’s portrait there is a signature Chinese tom, in Harrison’s a clock coil, Varèse’s a field drum, Partch’s a set of microtonal metal screws, etc. These sounds are further abstracted by the integration of a cd turntable. Many of the instruments have been sampled for this purpose and then during the performance these sounds change speed or pitch and are often “scratched” in coordination with their live counterparts to create a somewhat disorienting soundscape.

Percussionists are often compelled to make music for themselves, and I have found music generated by speech and text to be particularly inviting. For me, it has been a way to most naturally contribute to the new music I care so much about without needing to delve into a complicated study of compositional structure (which my composer friends do better than I can) or succumbing to the temptation of making yet one more marimba or drum piece by and for a percussionist. We do know our sticks and instruments better than any composer ever could, just as they know compositional structures better than we could, but texts and stories are a domain for any performer. (See Figure 1.15 on page 42 below)

In the latter work, *51'15.657" for a Speaking Percussionist*, I find that my difficulty as a storyteller lies in the fact that Cage's text is by now so iconic, so him. The lecture *45' for a Speaker* is already pretty distant from narrative. The chance procedures that Cage set in motion create a fragmented whole; he jumps from one subject to another. (See Figure 1.16 on page 43 below)

The composer switches between telling stories, quoting other people and talking about time, structure, form or harmony, and thus each individual listener grasps his or her own meaning as the text flies by. I have found that over the course of nearly an hour, I myself drift in and out of understanding as I speak the text. This comes through in the performance, but I do not feel that this fluctuation is negative.

The percussion part is generated by embellishments on imperfections in the paper Cage was using. The example below (Figure 1.17 on page 43) shows Cage's unique proportional notation. Time moves horizontally in seconds and amplitude moves vertically, with the horizontal lines serving as a neutral mezzo-forte. The designations 'M', 'W', 'S' and 'A' refer to the material of the instrument used (metal, wood, skin, or auxiliary.)

I read from a score that combines both pieces. Often, I have pasted the text over the percussion part, though in sections with little percussion, I will occasionally simply make notes related to the percussion music on the text. I came up with a system of color-coding so that I could remember my instrument designations. The large numbers refer to sample numbers in the tape part, which is

highlighted in blue. Sometimes I found it helpful to transcribe a more traditional rhythmic notation above the dots in the score. I don't take this notation too literally, but instead I use it as a guide. (See Figure 1.18 on page 44 below)

The challenge of this project lies in the combination of the two compositions: one must choreograph together two divergent pieces of work, learn how they fit, and then in performance accomplish an act of forgetting this choreography. The ultimate goal is true simultaneity within one body, though I will admit to often being able to simply “forget” one part while concentrating on executing the other.

John Cage wrote on the subject of simultaneity in 1956, regarding his work with choreographer Merce Cunningham:

The independence of the music and dance follows from Mr. Cunningham's faith, which I share, that the support of the dance is not to be found in the music but in the dancer herself, on her own two legs, that is, and occasionally on a single one. Likewise the music sometimes consists of single sounds or groups of sounds that are not supported by harmonies but resound within a space of silence. From this independence of music and dance a rhythm results which is not that of horses hooves or other regular beats but which reminds us of a multiplicity of events in time and space: stars, for instance, in the sky, or activities on earth viewed from the air. . . The meaning of what we do is determined by each one who sees and hears it. The novelty of our work derives therefore from our having moved away from simply private human concerns towards the world of nature and society of which all of us are a part. Our intention is to affirm this life, not to bring order out of chaos nor to suggest improvements in creation, but simply to wake up to the very life we're living, which is so excellent once one gets one's mind and one's desires out of its way and lets it act of its own accord. [Cag11]

This element of simultaneity contributes to what each individual listener grasps as a unique fabula: an abstracted narrative-like story occasionally (intentionally) covered by the percussion instruments. In this telling, a listener actively chooses which story she or he hears.

As a freshman at Oberlin, one goes through an obligatory snare drum year: a year during which (aside from some ensemble playing) in private lessons, one begins with the simplest of stick-alternations and progresses through etudes and

all manner of excerpts for that instrument alone. I dutifully practiced *Stick Control*, did all of my work, but more than a month into this I was feeling pretty desperate. It was a special week, then, when all three of the “freshpeople” (MR’s sarcastic yet endearing nod at political correctness) were assigned the bass drum, cymbal, and snare drum part to “Putnam’s Camp, Reading CT” from Ives’ *Three places in New England*. The three of us met all week, we studied the score, and we worked out the polyrhythms, each one of us learning all three parts. As is traditional in that particular department, part of the assignment was to learn how to “do it with the band”: a practice of playing along with a recording via the powerful speakers in the studio. The day finally came to play for our teacher. It was exhilarating; after a couple months of eighth notes, to play music with other people in that context. We switched parts; it was my turn to play snare drum. MR watched the score, conducted along, actually shouting encouragement over the recording, helping us through when we were lost. I finished my turn at the snare drum, he smacked the music stand, and almost yelling exclaimed: “That’s right: balls to the walls, kiddo!” There was an embarrassed pause. . . but then all four of us were laughing, delighted by the indiscretion, the rawness of this music.

A voice (and of course, a storyteller) implies a body, and bodies (thus individuals, and collectives of individuals) are very present in percussion music. Percussionists move through instruments in space; one is immediately conscious of individual bodies while watching them move and play.

The defining presence of individual bodies in percussion playing is only strengthened by the addition of the voice. Brandon LaBelle talks about the prevalence of sound (often specifically vocal) in works of performance and experimental art in the 1960’s:

Many performative works adopt sound as a medium because of the intensities and immediacy of auditory experience. . . for sound figures as a vital articulation or lens on to the body and the tensions of its social performance, by making corporeality explicit: guttural, abrasive, intimate, explosive, vocal, and assertive, sound may amplify the inherent voices and drives of physical experience and what it means to be a body [LaB06].

Voice as sound is so specific; it defines an individual. Its combination with more abstracted sound—the limitless array of percussive vibrations—is so natural and powerful (speaking percussionist music as opposed to speaking violinist music.) The unique choices inherent in every different collection of percussion instruments, first as imagined by the composer and then as chosen by the performer, serve as an extension and enhancement of each storyteller’s unique voice. Scholar Steven Connor writes:

My voice defines me because it draws me into coincidence with myself, accomplishes me in a way which goes beyond mere belonging, association, or instrumental use. And yet my voice is also most essentially itself and my own in the ways in which it parts or passes from me. Nothing about me defines me so intimately as my voice, precisely because there is no other feature of myself whose nature it is thus to move from me to the world, and to move me into the world [Con00].

When this communicative movement of an individual from self to the world is amplified by performance, it can take on ritualistic qualities. One such piece uses little text, but a great deal of un-texted vocalization and an intensely physical delivery.

In Vinko Globokar’s *?Corporel* (1985), sound functions as the “lens on the body” described by LaBelle above. In this work, the body (and thus a specific individual) is the sole instrument, accompanied by non-texted utterances (with one notable exception). It is, paradoxically, this individual specificity that inspires in an observer feelings of collectivity.

The text is proportional music notation, placed on a grid, with traditional more metered sections alongside the principally graphic writing. The vocal text is notated according to IPA, and Globokar provides a very detailed preface with instructions. (See Figures 1.19 and 1.20 below on pages 45 and 46, respectively)

I understand this work as a ritual. A performer repeatedly executes calculated physical actions extracted from everyday life experiences (scratching, yawning, and snoring) as well as actions with heightened intensity (caressing, beating, and knocking). Subsequently, she or he abstracts those actions as the piece progresses, transforming them beyond singular (generally private) personal experiences.

There is so little text, yet much is implied in the vocalizations. The body becomes a total visual and sonic environment, and the non-texted utterances take on the qualities of narrative during a performance. The story is told on the body and through the body. When language finally appears (an excerpt from a poem by René Char), it seems more abstract and incongruous than what we have experienced with the percussive sounds. It has a jarring effect. Globokar lists translations, so one could assume that his intention was that performers would use the vernacular of their respective audiences, but this is not always the case. I translate the original from French: “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.’” into English thus: “I recently read this phrase: ‘The history of man is a long series of synonyms for the same word. To disprove this is our duty.’”

The actual text in this piece is problematic for every performer. Indeed, it is often rushed through in a wish that it were not there at all, delivered in a language other than the vernacular of the audience, or simply omitted. Yet, it can be a crucial, even focal point of the entire composition. I choose to tell this story through extreme vulnerability. In order to amplify this storytelling choice, I extend the duration of this text significantly, stammering it out of consciousness and in to a realization I seem to be coming upon only at that moment.

?Corporel is a complicated and personal ritual, suddenly on display. It is understood deeply for just moments at a time as the work travels from one action to another. The story is presented as a series of vignettes as the performer passes from one gesture or utterance to another.

In conversations with friends leading up to my first performances of *?Corporel*, a response was inevitably “are you going to do it topless?!?” Of course: these were generally folks who had some context for the work, knew me reasonably well, and felt comfortable asking such a brash question, even cloaked in humorous incredulity. I have done the piece with and without a shirt, and am currently settled on an interpretation with a nude torso. Part of the decision is absolutely practical: I am simply following the score’s instructions. Furthermore, the sound is better when the striking surface is not muted by a shirt. It also seems to me that wearing

a leotard or tank-top doesn't necessarily solve the "problem" of modesty. In choosing to remain partially covered, sometimes even more attention can be brought to that which is mostly concealed. When talking about this choice, I've found that I have to reply carefully. When I did confess to plan for a bare-chested version, the response was often that this was "awesome" or "bad-ass." Somehow that sort of exposure or risk alone was impressive enough to be celebrated. The other side of "risk" here is clearly acceptance of vulnerability. For this particular version of the story to work in the United States of America in the Twenty-First Century, it needs to find a way to transcend our culture's objectification of the female body without ignoring it. To be clear: as a feminist, I hate structures of subordination and their appeal (even and especially when this involves collusion in one's own subordination, as is often the case.) Thus, I like to think about *?Corporel* as a way out of the seduction of hierarchical thinking. A woman performing a carefully-considered version of this piece is in fact a break from the default reliance on old formats and contexts of communication. I will admit to liking the discomfort such a performance causes; it is empowering.

To confront this problem, I made a version of *?Corporel* that is longer than most, coming in at about twelve minutes (some interpretations are closer to seven). At the opening, the light comes up with the performer already in place. I choose to wait about thirty seconds before the first gesture. Drawing out the opening is a way of allowing the audience to first recognize what is (in this country, at this time) a charged image, then accept it, and finally move on to watching and listening to the rest of the work.

Having established this pacing of the opening tableau, I perceived the necessity of continuing throughout at this painstakingly slow pace, inhabiting and embodying this constant vulnerability in order to have command of it. This was my way to rob the viewer of a sensationalist reception of my performance. Instead of bad-ass extroversion, each moment of pose, gesture, or sound became contemplative introversion. This story, written on my body in these moments, was a story for everyone's body.

**I gave my first performance of John Cage's *51'15.657"* for
a *Speaking Percussionist* at a small art performance space**

(read: somebody's living room) in downtown San Diego. I invited just a handful of people for what was really intended as an informal preview, from which I might gain insight on the work as a whole. I asked people to come early for snacks, beer, and tea. The first arrival was Bonnie Wright, a veteran San Diego new music enthusiast and patron. She accepted my offer of tea. By the time I was boiling the water, a small group had gathered in the kitchen. I asked if she took sugar, she said yes. I couldn't at that moment find my host, the renter of the apartment, so without his permission I took sugar down from the shelf and gave it to her. Moments later, she spit out her tea, laughing and exclaiming that the "sugar" was actually salt. I made her another cup and found the real sugar. Later that evening, 4'49" in to the performance, at a moment when I am also directed to brush my hair, I came to this passage: *We bake a cake and it turns out that the sugar was not sugar but salt*. The line is delivered slowly, and a short silence follows it. I could see Bonnie in the second row, drinking her tea. I caught her eye. I had no choice but to laugh; we laughed together and shared a moment in the space that was intended to be silent and then I carried on.

I want to close with the piece that is commonly acknowledged as the first published work for speaking percussionist. *Toucher* (1973), also by Vinko Globokar, features the connection between musical sound, text and gesture. This piece was created during an especially fruitful time in Globokar's creative life. He was concurrently working on his the massive piece *Laboratorium*. Scored for ten instrumentalists in various combinations (including percussionist Jean-Pierre Drouet, for whom *Toucher* was written), Globokar considered the piece to be a sort of "work diary" compiling techniques in improvisation and extended techniques in acoustic and electroacoustic performance settings.

The vocal text of *Toucher* is taken from a French translation of Bertolt Brecht's *Life of Galileo* (1938), and it includes stage directions and denotations of character. The performer must embody thirteen different characters throughout the work, and also speak aloud all of the given stage directions. The musical score consists of a non-traditional notation that connects the percussion instruments to the voice in a strict one-to-one relationship, relying on rhythmic speech patterns

alone to advance the music in time. Furthermore, Globokar creates a sort of introductory solfege (not unlike the function of *bol* as a mnemonic device in Indian music) for different syllables. The percussionist is free to choose seven instruments that best solidify this relationship. This passage, performed at the opening of the work, introduces listeners to the sounds used throughout, and their relationship with the voice. (See Figure 1.21 on page 46 below) Scenes are separated by hyper-notated percussion-only interludes.

Finally I begin to describe a piece that seems to follow a traditional narrative structure! There are characters and a series of relatively coherent events. However, Globokar introduces a technique in which the percussion sounds gradually replace and stand in for the spoken words. Since the dialog scenario/system has already been set-up, what happens is that, in the middle section of the work, we are effectively hearing the story (or the idea of a story) through the music and seeing it through the gestures of musical sound. It may seem a bit heavy-handed, but the performer is asked to mouth the words to make this clearer.

Here I must point out that while the narrative of the original Brecht play does in fact treat the entire life of Galileo chronologically, this piece by Globokar deals with only fragments of that life-story. Furthermore, these fragments are presented completely out of order. While narrative, character, and even storytelling function as vehicles, the music itself (and the gestures required to perform this specific music) commands attention above and beyond words.

In this context, I feel that as a storyteller I must always come first from the score and the text. However, I must do so as an individual who is aware that gestures have meaning. Thus, a performer must make these choices in organic deployment of physical gesture in order to create a visual world where the music, text, and ultimately whole story can live.

A large cast of characters is presented in *Toucher*. The text is taken from a play, so why not get several friends together to do a version? An important clue lies in Globokar's inclusion of the stage directions as spoken text; in fact, these are said aloud even when the dialog is muttered or mouthed. As a storyteller must take on different characters and yet remain her or himself, the performer is very

much still a percussionist and a speaker, not each individual character. I think this is why audiences (even and especially non-francophone audiences who cannot follow the text) are compelled to listen to and watch this work.

The story is performed by an individual, so one notes immediately that it could be a person of any gender, that delivery is variable, and that even rhythms of speech and patterns of inflection serve to transform this work. Furthermore, the relative indeterminacy of the instrument choices allow for even more personalization of sound, touch, gesture, and voice.

The fabula is the events that happen in the chronology specific to this setting of the text. For instance, though in the original play Galileo meets the young child ruler Cosimo de' Medici years before his manuscript is rejected unread by the same adult authority, Globokar has chosen to reverse the order of these events in his piece.

In the context of a narratological analysis, it becomes possible to separate these layers. We can choose to pull out the last one, perception of the story by an audience as our fabula, and thus understand that for the performer one task is to shape and create a narrative for an audience where that narrative is intentionally obscured. In this particular case, the whole work is framed by an intensely emotional dialog between Galileo and his friend and colleague Sagredo. I approach the work less as a theatrical presentation of important events, and more as a clear and compelling narrative of a dramatic psychological conflict. Galileo knows and holds dear certain demonstrable scientific truths, but he is constantly asked to weigh the consequences of choosing to act on those truths when friends, family members, colleagues, and of course he himself are threatened.

We return to Kafka and Josephine:

However, what she produces is more than mere whistling. If one stands far away from her and listens, or even better, if you put yourself to the following test: If Josephine is singing among other voices and one sets oneself the task of recognizing her voice, then, without fail, one will hear nothing but a normal whistling, a little striking at most because of tenderness or frailty. But if one stands before her, it is more than just whistling; in order to understand her art it is necessary not just to see her but also to hear her. Even if it were just our everyday

whistling, there is first of all the peculiarity that someone solemnly presents himself to do nothing but the ordinary. Cracking a nut is really not an art, and therefore no one would ever dare to call together an audience and crack nuts in front of them in order to entertain them. If he does anyway and he succeeds in his intention, then it can certainly not be a matter of nut-cracking alone. Or it is a matter of nut-cracking, but it becomes clear that we have ignored this art because we have mastered it too completely and this new nutcracker shows us its true nature for the first time, in which case it might even be useful for the effect if he were even less skilled at nut-cracking than most of us [KB96].

A storyteller often slides between two functions. On one hand, she or he must take on a character or a persona apart from the consumers of the action in the audience. On the other, the performer acts consciously on behalf of and in accordance with the community for which she or he is carrying out the performative action.

Placed this context—one standing before others and carrying out an action when the fourth wall is a soft and entirely removable element—it is clear that this is not a new idea, but a function effective for thousands of years. Much of the specificity (and music) of traditions in ancient Greek drama and theatre has been lost. However, the function and practice of the chorus is quite relevant. This group collectively takes on a role both within and without the action. In fact, the action of the play often stops so that the chorus might speak. Rather than functioning as a disturbance, however, it is this pause that gives such theatre some of the power often attributed to ritual. The role of the chorus is to relate to both its own inner world and to the external audience [Bie09].

In this sense, the chorus has the potential to both experience the theatrical element and react to it. From the scholar Bert O. States: “Here is what we might call the kernel or gene of performativity from which all divided forms of artistic performance spring: the collapse of means and ends into each other, the simultaneity of producing something and responding to it in the same behavioral act [Sta96].”

Recent scholarship points to an evolutionary trajectory of theatre wherein a logical progression through time from ritualistic performance to purely aesthetic

theatre is less plausible. A more complete way of thinking about this progression is that we find out theatre has transformative power akin to that found in ritual experience, and encompasses elements of entertainment and spectacle as well [Bie09]. Along the same lines, we understand the power of a contemporary storyteller to transport listeners elsewhere, also understanding that while doing so they retain their identity: remaining her/himself while telling stories. Even when she or he is speaking but not technically using a traditional narrative, this is the role a speaking percussionist plays.

The lecture hall, an unfortunately resonant concrete grotto, was full of nearly 300 students. Even once the class started, it was very noisy. The instructor struggled, choosing her words, finding her PowerPoint slides trying (not unsuccessfully, I thought) to articulate her points. She was concise, she made her language accessible, and she had colorful examples to show and tell. Still, pencils dropped, and voices whispered. Finally, it came time for a listening example. She played Hildegard of Bingen's twelfth-century *Alleluia: o meditative branch*. I defensively braced myself for more chatter; how could these nineteen-year old biology majors possibly contend with this otherworldly music? To my surprise, the whispers in the room were instantly gone and the rustling of chairs and papers stopped. The whole space was full of music: music of a new genre and in a new language, so foreign to these beginning students, yet paradoxically accessible to them as well.

This hybrid sonic art: an individual human voice ranging from utterance to traditional narrative punctuated with all of the touch of the percussive sound world, or the inverse: a kind of timbre and touch and resonance music extended by a single human voice, is powerful and accessible because it is an amplification and transformation of the familiar through a lens of ritualistic performance. It is neither a purely cerebral listening experience linked to contemporary music nor a fully-staged theatrical experience, but rather a composite art form linked to these traditions. Being closer to our everyday human desire to tell and listen to stories while engaging with one another, listeners find in such pieces an opening to their own everyday life experiences. From Cage's *Indeterminacy*:

I went to hear Krishnamurti speak. He was lecturing on how to hear a lecture. He said, "You must pay full attention to what is being said, and you can't do that if you take notes." The lady on my right was taking notes. The man on her right nudged her and said "don't you hear what he's saying? You're not supposed to take notes." She then read what she had written and said, "That's right, I have it written down right here in my notes" [Cag11].

POLLEN

the scented flowers of white thorn depending on the rains acacias you
 are the yellow i once and then forgot that leaf or foothill paloverde the breath.
 you can be my breath you can be my health little word cupshaped aiy
 borne on slender woody stems hibiscus you i once.

came here by
 moth they say for i am only pollen and you are the afternoon and
 evening and everything for you believe in hierarchy archangelical
 blossom of only your wings . i once but you are banished for
 you are a human event

and in this rite i once but now
 prisoner of war but that was once
 and in this discovered a new species
 being pollen along the air flowering no roads no inroads no outlets no
 put do not put i am coming apart and scattering
 a gypsy

pollen
 and a velvety coat of white hairs keeps the leaves from
 becoming too hot

how gravelly it is coming apart
 everything good comes apart so you can not have it. this is our
 rite

any dead woman comes apart
 Sen tentia come apart like anyone you can be pollen too

spring but if summer rains have been good do you have to have
 thought like a hierarchical archangelical ty rant rant ma it is coming
 apart.

but if Sumer rains have been good
 but if the desert dust drinks drops coheres just there then
 COMES APART

rule comes APART and in this rite i and in this rite i
 must heal for i have no PARTS
 oh knowing go away Oh Know ing go away Oh try
 ing come a part oh roads abandoned dirt COME APART
 gravelly
 southern
 mohave sumer love love come APART

Figure 1.10: *Pollen* by Alice Notley, used by permission[Not06]

mp l.v. high potlid
My name my name my name my name my name, my name is wesley is wesley wesley is wesley jackson is wesley jackson
castanet
pipe (w/brush) bottle (w/brush) book (w/brush) high almglocken (w/brush) repeat and cresc. poss. spring coil (crack!)
dim. ppp mp l.v.
spring coil said thrice
my name is wesley jackson i am i am i am i am twenty five years twenty five years old i am twenty five years old
bottle high almglocken styrafoam bottle repeat styrafoam repeat
pipe mf book flowerpot styrafoam book flowerpot ("twenty-five years") book ("i am")
spring coil marble p
pipe book flowerpot styrafoam
said thrice

Figure 1.11: Treviño: “Conversation” from *Being Pollen*

TAMBOUR VOILÉ
TAM TAM
1 avec des baguettes de timbales en peau
2 GROSSES CAISSES
2e avec la mailloche
COUPS de MARTEAU sur une planche
Modéré $\text{♩} = 76$ environ
1re CHOËPHORE
Que de fois la terre a enfanté la terreur et les bras de la mer sont pleins de cho-ses à
SOPRANI
A A
CONTRALTI
Fi Fi
LE CHOEUR
TÉNORS
O
BASSES

Figure 1.12: Milhaud: *Les Choéphores*

S. *f* > > > *p*
 Trin - i - dad! and the big Mis - sie - sip - pi and the
 A. *pp*
 T. Can - a - da Ma - la - ga Ri - mi - ni Brin - di - si Can - a - da Ma - la - ga Ri - mi - ni Brin - di - si
 B.

60168

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Figure 1.13: Toch: *Geographical Fugue*

1 ti ti ti ti ti ti
 2 Once up-on a time a time up-on a time a time up-on a time a time a
 3 On- ce On- ce On- ce On- ce On- ce
 4 *mf* tim- e *p* (whistle)

Figure 1.14: Cage: "Story" from *Living Room Music*

I. Harrison

Track I, scratch off

clock-coil

$\text{♩} = 100$

SUDDENLY SLOWER

mf

f

quickly dampen all sounds

Damp coil suddenly

$\text{♩} = 70$ (w/ FINGERS)

L.V.

DAMP

(LONG PHASE)

SWITCH TO FR. 2

ff

* scrape w/ head of mallet

pot lid w/ finger

Attacca

Voice

you know your punctuations with percussivists

5 with percussivists (PAUSE)

Percussion

Figure 1.15: Whiting Smith: ...perishable structures that would be social events

4'00" not teach external signs." Like a long book if a long book is like a mobile. "The ignorant because of their attachment to existence seize on signified or signifying." No beginning no ending. Harmony, so-called, is a forced abstract vertical relation which blots out the spontaneous transmitting nature of each of the sounds forced into it. It is

10" artificial and unrealistic. Form, then, is not something off in the distance in solitary confinement: It is right here right now. Since it is something we say about past actions,

it is wise

to drop it.

20" *This, too, giving himself
& his quest up to the aimless rolling
of a metal ball, the hero, unquestioningly does.
They proceed thus, by chance, by no will
of their own passing
safely*

Figure 1.16: Cage: "45' for a Speaker" from *Silence*

Handwritten musical score for "27'10.554" for a Percussionist by John Cage. The score is written on four staves labeled M, W, S, and A. Above the staves are measures numbered 8 through 15. The notation includes various symbols such as dots, vertical lines, and horizontal lines, representing percussive events.

Figure 1.17: Cage: "27'10.554" for a Percussionist

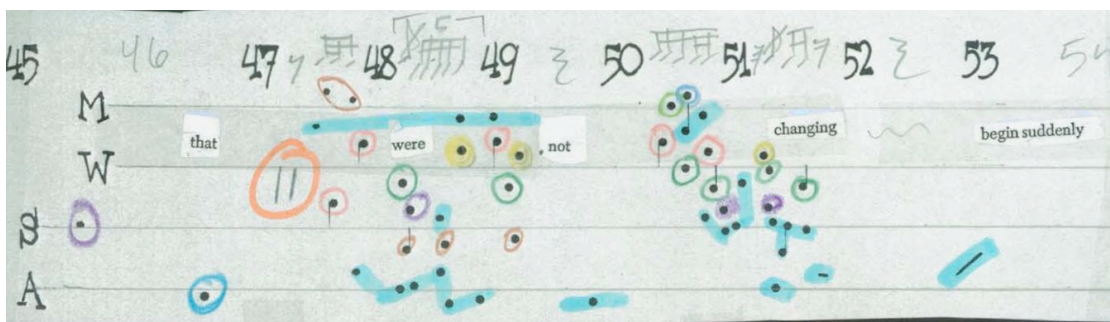





Figure 1.18: Cage (realized BWS): 51'15.657" for a *Speaking Percussionist*

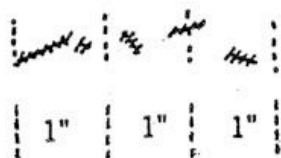
①

In canvas trousers, bare-chested, barefoot. Seated on the ground, facing the audience. Stage lighting. Amplification.

 = strike the "soft" parts of the body (cheeks, abdomen, thighs etc.) with the flat of the hand.

 = strike the "bony" parts of the body (skull, collarbone, breastbone, knee, shin etc.) with the fingertip.


 = slide the flat of the hand on the parts of the body indicated with the idea of groping, caressing etc; 1 cm = 1 second.


 = rub with the flat of the hand (increasing/decreasing speed).
 | 1" | | 1" | | 1" |


Voice: Avoid all vowel sounds. Only breathing sounds are used.

+ → ○ = start with mouth closed and gradually open it (wide open).

○ → + = start with mouth wide open and gradually close it.

 = kiss

 = cluck tongue (temple block sound).

 = draw back tongue while stuck on palate.


 = pronounce ts while inhaling (sound of disapproval).

Figure 1.19: Instructions from Globokar's *?Corporel*

The score for "Corporel" is a complex multi-channel composition. It features several parts: "Voix" (voice) with lyrics and dynamic markings; "Carrière" (hand) with rhythmic patterns; "tête" (head), "poitrine" (chest), "ventre" (belly), "cuisse" (thigh), and "tibia" (shin) with various rhythmic notations. The score is divided into five sections, each marked "vivo". It includes dynamic markings such as "f" and "r-sch-f". Performance instructions like "Hör" and "Ergk" are present. There are also circled numbers 11 and 12. A pencil icon is drawn at the bottom left.

Figure 1.20: Globokar: *Corporel*

The score for "Toucher, Introduction" is a vocal line with German and French lyrics. The German lyrics are: "Der Text: sprechen mit dem Spitz sprechen, aber fast un hörbar." The French lyrics are: "Je voulais connaître mes réflexions sur les deux grands nombres premiers à être... Ah oui, ah oui. Comment vont vos yeux? Pas très bien, très fatigués... Si vous permettez, j'ai lu la nuit traitant... L'état de vos yeux, me préoccupe : vraiment il me préoccupe. Cela prouve que". The score includes performance instructions "COSO" and "GALILEI".

Figure 1.21: Globokar: *Toucher, Introduction*

Chapter 2

Speaking Percussionist Music, Personally Speaking

2.1 On creating a uniquely percussive language

I like stories, and I love the voice in speaking percussionist music, but I still feel that sound is paramount in these pieces. Many of these particular works (at least the ones I gravitate toward) feature partially indeterminate instrumentation. In addition to having a literal voice in these pieces, I find (almost despite myself) that I have created a specific-to-me instrumental voice.

While putting together my recent doctoral lecture recital, a program exploring the connection between percussion and the voice, I was surprised to find so much overlap in my own materials. I was at first just annoyed: did I really need to buy a second mixing bowl? How many pot lids does one need on one stage? Most of the percussion community agrees that we are past the point of a found-object-for-its-own-sake: we don't need these instruments as novelty oddities. I do, however, still find myself fascinated by their sounds: drawn over and over again to the richness of sound via what Cage referred to as the poverty of percussion. I then noted that there was an equally embarrassing overlap of my personal collection of standard instruments: bongos and bass drums and snare drums. I began to wonder if I was bordering on the unimaginative.

Then I realized: a violinist uses the same instrument all her life. Pianists play on the same 52 keys for their entire career; likewise, fellow percussionists who choose keyboard instruments like vibraphones or marimbas as their special solo focus are in the same situation. In choosing to orchestrate a piece with flexible instrumentation, I find myself exploring the following criteria: resonance, timbre, pitch (a relative span), dynamic flexibility, and an overall sense of homogeneity or diversity, depending on the piece. In this sense, it is natural and expressively positive rather than negatively limiting to find that my own special snare drum and a specific set of sandpaper blocks allow me to best personally express what a composer has begun to imagine. That this specific subset of instruments (of course, constantly expanding and changing) can be implemented in such a diverse set of pieces is a testament to the success of this concept of an individual percussive and physical voice.

2.2 Thoughts on gender: telling stories as a female percussionist

I identify first and foremost as a percussionist; I don't usually qualify that I'm a *female* percussionist. Isn't it obvious? To be clear: I don't feel that I need to defend myself for not wanting to come to terms with issues of gender in performance while working on my soft snare drum rolls. Others will make that part of their life's work. It does sometimes become difficult to ignore gender, and it is useful to me to process what my experiences have been as a percussionist (who happens to be female.) Perhaps my future students (or their future students) will find this a non-issue. In my opinion, we are not quite there yet. I am probably not the right person to make a serious theoretical study of gender equality in the arts. I do however have some powerful experiences to share and some questions to ask about what it has been for me personally to be involved in this line of work as a woman.

The short story described in the first paragraph on page seven above has been powerful and representational for me. Having almost exclusively male role

models as a percussionist, I have sometimes (almost subconsciously) visualized myself as a man while performing. These role models guiding me through my formal training as a percussionist (Keith Claeys in Detroit, John Alfieri at Interlochen, Michael Rosen at Oberlin, Allen Otte in Cincinnati, and Steven Schick here at UCSD) have shaped me as a musician and a person, and I have been more than satisfied by my time studying with these men. I wouldn't change a thing about this training. However, I have also been lucky to have a handful of important experiences working with female percussionists. Sometimes these meetings cause me to notice our gender, sometimes not. I had a fabulous technical discussion of the vibraphone solo *Linde* by Daniel Alejandro Almada in a lesson with Aiyun Huang a few years ago. As a green high school student, I brought the crash cymbal excerpt from the end of Tchaikovsky's *Fourth Symphony* to Janis Potter; she helped me through some physical awkwardness that I would have surely felt uncomfortable discussing with my male teacher at the time. Most recently, I had the pleasure of meeting Robyn Schulkowsky: one of the very few first generation female percussionists. Robyn played a set of mostly free-improv music with a duo partner in a strip mall northeast of San Diego on incredibly poor-quality instruments borrowed from a local middle school. I was expecting to hate it. However, the way she elicited the sounds from these meager means, how she moved, how she carried herself, how her technique allowed for such sophisticated touch: it was one of the most beautiful performances I have ever seen.

There are still fewer women than men in my field. This usually feels to me like an advantage rather than a disadvantage. Surely, there are moments of doubt. More and more, percussionists use social media and the ubiquitous email blast to promote their latest projects and concerts. I find myself cringing when I see how few women end up being a part of these highly-publicized events. In moments of weakness, I feel like a little girl not allowed in the club. I then realize that it would be even worse to be invited as the token female, always wondering if I was asked for the right reasons. These moments are few. I have been lucky to have found a (literal and figurative) voice in this emerging genre of speaking percussionist music. This repertoire, both that which I have stumbled upon and

that which I am proud to begin to create with my composer colleagues, has ended up being a powerful way to work through issues in gender. I have no choice but to be myself because of the connection of my individual voice to the music being played. Furthermore, there is no confusion. I visualize myself as me and no-one else while playing these works.

So much of our repertoire is written by and for male performers. I sometimes find myself questioning how works change when a woman plays what was initially intended for a man. In the pages above, I confront this in Jerome Kitzke's piece (relating to problems with vocal range), and surely in both Globokar pieces. One of the oddest experiences for me is performing the text from *45' for a Speaker* as part of my solo/simultaneous Cage project. I feel absolutely entitled to perform this work; I see it as a musical composition with specific parameters that I follow to the letter to the best of my ability. However, I am aware that when most people hear or read or think of this piece, they think of not just a man, but of Cage himself. He wrote this lecture for his own delivery. He is the "I" in those pages. The result, I hope, is that any disorientation from this shift of perspective becomes a positive one. Rather than hearing Cage's voice, perhaps more of the content of the text (or even the sound of the words) comes to the foreground.

This disorientation runs the gamut from shocking to just slightly different; maybe refreshing. And, of course, as history progresses I hope we'll see opportunities for this to work both ways, with men working through pieces initially intended for women. A (male) colleague was recently working through Walter Zimmerman's piece *Glockenspiel*, which features a sung section in which a percussionist accompanies her/himself on part of a drumset and a xylophone while vocalizing. It's an oddly compelling piece: big tuneful set-ups, near rhythmic groove, quirky yet lovely poetry, thorny notation. I didn't know the work so well when this friend showed it to me. When he reached the part where the singing began, I wondered about his vocal articulations, and even about the range itself. Afterward, I asked him about it. I then learned that the piece was initially written for Robyn Schulkowsky. I found a live recording of her doing the piece and she delivers this sung section with playful grace, easily cutting vocally over the percussion instru-

ments. However, part of me missed my friend's struggle. I liked both ways this piece functioned, one with a male voice embedded within the texture of the instruments, and one with a woman's voice gliding above it. My memory of the work is richer for that.

Schulkowsky is one of just a handful of women who are living what it is to be a percussionist well into middle age. I was strangely comforted to see that Scottish percussionist (b. 1965) Evelyn Glennie's most prominent website headshot is, as of this writing, one in which she has kept her hair its current natural grey. I feel lucky to have avoided the lure of female-music-performer as supermarket checkout lane image, but I know that there are times when it is nearly impossible for any of us to escape our culture's commodification of women. At this moment in my life as a performer, I have found a middle ground lying somewhere between my personal penchant for second-hand jeans and ratty clogs and that of the airbrushed oversexed inhuman perfection too often expected of living, breathing women. This document deals mostly with speaking percussionist music, the concerns of which I have attempted to connect with those of storytellers or actors. To make a simple analogy, it is clear that men are able to function as sex symbols in the stage/film industry longer than women. (When the recent story broke that a woman involved in a hiking accident was rescued by happenstance via Harrison Ford (b. 1942) in a helicopter, there was plenty of publicized swooning. However, Helen Mirren (b. 1945) has elegant professional headshots that are less revealing in these decades.) That said, we have plenty of examples of both men and women making successful age-appropriate transitions in their Hollywood careers. Are issues in age any different for men than for women in the field of percussion? A grandmotherly version of Rzewski's *To the Earth*, for example, sounds lovely. Regardless of gender, all people will deal with eventual physical decline. I remember very clearly a class with Bob Becker (b. 1947) in which he joked that his current goal technically was to not get any worse. (To be clear: his chops remain far better than mine.) But what about these pieces in which we are tempted to see the performer as a sexual object? I wanted to make for myself a version of Globokar's *Corporel* that could live past my twenty-eighth year, one that could potentially reflect the changes in

me as a performer over the decades. A realization of this piece based on the concept of our culture's impossibly idealized and over-sexualized female image would be doomed for a forty or fifty year old woman. This piece is the most obvious and extreme example, but I think the connection holds. Young women percussionists may have the quick-burning advantage of sexual appeal (yes, even over their male counterparts), but these will not replace the more substantive contributions made through considered engagement with the musical and subtextual material itself.

For much of my early percussive life, I wanted to ignore the difference that my gender presented. Then I transitioned into a space where I tried to compensate for that perceived difference. Now, instead of trying to play louder than all the men in the room or (just as bad) apologizing for my failure to even walk into a Women's Studies class while I was a busy undergrad at Oberlin, my strategy is to simply enjoy how my gender might occasionally offer a variously strong or just slightly different perspective.

2.3 On my life and work at UCSD

I've said many times that going back to graduate school has been a gift; that's truly the best way to explain what these three years have been for me. The scope of the projects I was able to undertake, the level of chamber music performance, and the sheer number of fulfilling activities (including real teaching experience) would have been impossible in my previous life as a freelancer in Seattle or as a full-time touring musician with *Tales and Scales*.

I spent a great deal of time my first year working on a solo/simultaneous realization of John Cage's *45' for a Speaker* and *27'10.554" for a Percussionist*. It took a total of thirteen months of creation (begun in Seattle in April of 2009 and finished in San Diego in June of 2010.) After this year, I spent time performing the work (several concerts in the San Diego area as well as in New Zealand, Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, and various stops in the Midwest) and preparing it for a recording project. I then made an audio and video recording for Mode Records in UCSD's Warren Studios, including two of Cage's pieces I realized for

closed piano/voice, and a different solo/simultaneous piece, *Music for Two (by One.)* The disc also features a performance by percussionist Allen Otte, and an interview/discussion on realizing Cage's music that we made together. The audio for this project has been completely edited, mixed, and mastered, and it is set for an early 2013 release.

I devoted some of my second year at UCSD to learning repertoire pieces (namely, Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Zyklus* and Globokar's *Corporel.*) I then developed a special interest in Stockhausen's music, which led me to perform his *Klavierstück III* (on marimba) and make a version of his *Komet* from *Freitag aus Licht*. I traveled to Kürten, Germany during the summer of 2011 to study intensively and attend performances at the annual *Stockhausen Courses*.

I commissioned and performed three solo pieces by UCSD graduate student composers for voice and percussion: Carolyn Chen's *VIN DIESEL = I END LIVES* (including video and live electronics), Nicholas Deyoe's *Things Written in the Snow no. 3: Sitting Alone in a Frozen Parking Lot* and Jeffrey Treviño's *Being Pollen*. In addition to these pieces written just for me, I volunteered to perform many student chamber music works.

I spent much of my third year preparing for my qualifying examination and lecturing for the music department as an Associate Instructor. I taught MUS-4, an introduction to Western music, and developed two Twentieth Century music courses. The first was a survey of the music of the Twentieth Century through the lens of current concert offerings at UCSD. The second was a course focused specifically on John Cage and experimental traditions. I also made use of time in the recording studio throughout my three years here, making high-quality documents of music by Jerome Kitzke, Frederic Rzewski, and some of my own music.

I maintained an active schedule with UCSD's resident percussion group *red fish blue fish* featuring numerous performances in San Diego as well as at the Park Avenue Armory and Miller Theatre in New York, The Ojai Festival as part of a collaboration with Peter Sellars and Dawn Upshaw, the L.A. Philharmonic's Green Umbrella Series, and the Monday Evening Concerts series. I also spent two years as principal percussionist of the La Jolla Symphony, and reached out for collab-

orations in the strong dance and visual arts departments at UCSD. Memorable coursework included a seminar on the life and works of composer Edgard Varèse (co-taught by Steven Schick and Roger Reynolds), a sound installation art course (taught by Katharina Rosenberger), a course on improvisation (taught by Mark Dresser) and a course on interdisciplinary collaboration for musicians, dancers, and composers/sound designers (co-taught by Allyson Green and Anthony Davis.)

Non-traditional educational outreach has always been essential to my work. To this end, I helped to create and implement afterschool programs at the Spring Valley Community Center, inner-city Lincoln High School, and had a twenty-week residency at the Monarch School (a special institution for children impacted by homelessness) in Downtown San Diego. These programs all focused on individual and collective expression through experimental practices in music, movement, and narrative. The idea for projects in Spring Valley and at Lincoln High School stemmed from a string of incidents of racism on the UCSD campus in the winter of 2010. There was a thought that as a music department we were in a special position to do something that might (gradually) affect change in our community, and eventually create a student body more inclusive and representative of the demographic of our local community in San Diego County.

While I feel ready to move on to the next phase in my musical life (a one-year position as Visiting Assistant Professor of Percussion at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks), there are a few goals that I would have liked to accomplish at UCSD that have remained unfulfilled. Rather than listing such things as a litany of failures or complaints, I put them here as objectives for the future.

I would have liked to perform some of the substantial (unconducted) pieces for percussion sextet (i.e. Iannis Xenakis' *Pleaidés*, Harrison Birtwistle's *For O, for O, the Hobbyhorse is Forgotten*, Gerard Grisey's *Le Noir de L'Étoile*, etc.) Perhaps this will now happen for me in the role of a teacher alongside her students, or as a freelance musician as part of a more long-term or carefully considered project. Similarly, I had hoped to better utilize UCSD's resources in the fields of technology (specifically in live electronics and sound projection) to learn a work like Stockhausen's *Kontakte* or to take on more collaborative projects with composers and

computer musicians. These sort of things are quite difficult to do outside of an academic setting. Also, I have a strong affinity for contemporary chamber music. While I found many like-minded musicians while completing my degree, I have not yet found a core group of people to make this music on a consistent basis. This is one of my life's goals. However, many preliminary connections have been made. Finally, I feel that at the end of my time here I have just begun to work out how I need to function as a collaborator with composers. The work with Jeffrey Treviño was a watershed moment for me as I learned to speak more openly about what sort of a piece we could make together.

I want to end this document as I began it: with a story. This one is about a recent journey with a piece of music for speaking percussionist.

In my world, abstraction is easy. Put another way, when abstraction is the norm in an environment such as the graduate music program at UCSD, it is comfortable. I don't mean this at all as a critique, or as an oversimplified statement. While some might occasionally hide behind unfinished or unfounded abstractions in composition or performance, that's not what I mean. I might better phrase this as a question: can experimental practices live outside of the world of abstraction? If so, how and when?

I believe that music for speaking percussionist is part of an affirmative answer to this question. This special subset of repertoire lies in an interesting space: a middle ground connecting the colorfully fantastic (often abstract) world of percussive sound and the compelling world of storytelling. Even in moments when a snare drum roll evokes military memories or times when the voice is translated into abstract syllables, we find connective tissue linking narrative, meaning, abstraction, and pure sound.

Furthermore, I have found that adding the element of voice makes it less possible to for me to separate the performance itself from me personally. Percussionists often play behind elaborate set-ups: personal cages and barriers obscuring the being making the music. Jerome Kitzke's twenty-minute solo for speaking/singing percussionist, *The Earth Only Endures*, enlists a huge battery of instruments, dwarfing the player. However, I rarely feel hidden behind my set-up

when playing it.

In the spring of 2012, I brought Jerome to UCSD for a recording and performance project. Jerome's solo speaking percussionist piece requires such extroversion. In terms of both athletically virtuosic percussion playing and emotionally intense text delivery, I find myself exhausted at the end of each performance and practice session. I am, however, totally myself during these performances. I have been living with/learning through this piece for more than six years. I now play it from memory, and in many ways little has changed since my first performance for a tiny audience in a church in Northern Kentucky in 2006. Why, then, was I ten times more terrified to present this work at UCSD than I was to present my uniquely vulnerable shirtless version of Vinko Globokar's *?Corporel?*

I felt not just supported but *protected* by my community of peers at UCSD when performing the Globokar for the first time. My willingness to take this risk in performance grew partially out of the strength of this community. In the case of Kitzke's piece, the risk involved came from exactly the opposite sense: I feared that I would not have the support of this same group of people. Indeed my colleagues proved me right. The time for questions after his presentation in a class for the performers was met with a long silence. Finally one person asked what one particular physical gesture (vocalizing while hitting the chest) meant. Jerome responded quite simply that this passage had to do with expressing grief. This literal answer was enough to elicit stifled laughter. Processing afterwards with some (very kind) close collaborators who disliked the performance confirmed the majority of the department's bafflement by my choice of repertoire.

Jerome's musical language (and his personal language, for that matter) is an extremely physical one. The choreography of the piece is no accident. I have known Jerome to collapse on the floor laughing, or to beat his chest during the course of everyday conversation. In this sense, there is no separation between himself and his music. Jerome says exactly what he means, and that sort of honesty is revealing enough to border on embarrassment. I like that; its a refreshing way to be.

For an interpreter of such music, the task of performance is equal parts

freeing and daunting. In a coaching from Steven Schick this spring, I was asked to experiment with taking this work to nearly excessive extremes: louder moments of drumming, more abrupt changes in tempi, moments of quieter introverted speaking to balance the whoops and shrieks and yells throughout. I realized that this “permission” was just what I was looking for, that even in earlier performances I was just shy of the crazy passionate commitment necessary to allow these texts and this music to speak. Rather than tiptoeing around these choices between abstraction and accessibility and opting for emotional distance, I chose to follow the composer’s lead: stepping on toes while smashing conventional expectations of a doctoral recital at a “research” university with a strongly-developed aesthetic sense. It became my own deeply personal artistic and political statement rather than simply an attempt at expressing like sentiments by Jerome Kitzke or Walt Whitman or Allen Ginsberg.

The most difficult performance challenge I faced while at UCSD wasn’t my first go at 51’15.657” of solo-simultaneous Cage, or *red fish blue fish*’s project involving James Dillon’s incredibly difficult percussion sextet. It was presenting Jerome’s piece: an explicit anti-war work with clear narrative, tonal marimba music, and explosive drumming. I have never felt so vulnerable on stage; I was certainly more naked in *The Earth Only Endures* than I was in *?Corporel*. During the week of this writing, I finished mixing and mastering my recording session of Jerome’s piece. In retrospect, I cherish this risk and what I learned from taking it; I find it is clearly emblazoned on this audio document.

Chapter 3

Representative List of Pieces for Speaking Percussionist

Aguilar, Gustavo. *Wendell's History*, 2007. Text: Wendell Barry. Instrumentation: Glockenspiel. Commissioned by Steven Schick

Andersen, Simon Steen. *Split Point*, 2002. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: Snare drum/sandpaper blocks.

Aperghis, Georges. *Le Corps à Corps*, 1978. Text: Georges Aperghis. Instrumentation: Zarb. Commissioned by Jean Pierre Drouet

Aperghis, Georges. *Graffitis*, 1980. Text: Georges Aperghis and non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Aperghis, Georges. *Le Coup de Foudre*, 1985. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: Multiple percussion/foot organs. Commissioned by Gaston Sylvestre.

Billone, Pierluigi. *Mani de Leonardis*, 2004. Non-texted vocalizations (Greek) and Pierluigi Billone. Instrumentation: glass bowls/spring coils.

Billone, Pierluigi. *Mani Mono*, 2007. Non-texted vocalizations and Pierluigi Billone. Instrumentation: spring drum.

Brooks, William. *March Peace*, 1987. Non-texted vocalization. Instrumentation: Snare Drum

Chen, Carolyn. *VIN DIESEL = I END LIVES*, 2011. Text: found and Carolyn Chen Instrumentation: multi percussion, live electronics and video. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting Smith

Chen, Carolyn. What we swallow turns around, 2011. Non-texted vocalization. Instrumentation: timpano/preparations. Commissioned by Dustin Donahue.

Clay, Danny. Proverbs, 2010. Text: Terry Hermsen. Instrumentation: Snare Drum

Clay, Danny. Three Fantastic Houses, 2009 Text: found (children.) Instrumentation: multi/found objects. Commissioned by Austin Murphy.

Dargel, Corey. Perpetual, 1998. Text: Corey Dargel. Instrumentation: found objects and tape (for 1-4 players.)

Deane, Christopher. A Robe of Orange Flame, 2005. Text: Christopher Deane and found text (vietnam war era.) Instrumentation: resonant sheet metal. Commissioned by Greg Secor.

Delio, Thomas . As Though, 1994. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Deyoe, Nicholas. Things Written in the Snow no. 3: Sitting Alone in a Frozen Parking Lot, 2012. Non-texted vocalization, sung. Instrumentation: found metals. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting Smith.

Deyoe, Nicholas. Useless no. 1, 2010. Text: Nicholas Deyoe. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Brian Archinal.

Deyoe, Nicholas. Lullaby, 2011. Non-texted vocalization. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Brian Archinal.

Enslin, Mark. Sonata Quijada, 1988 ME (describing the US-aided propaganda campaign against the Allende's government in Chile.) Instrumentation: found/multiple percussion.

Gaburo, Kenneth. Antiphony VIII, 1967/8. Text: Tape only, found and Kenneth Gaburo. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Steven Schick.

Globokar, Vinko. Toucher, 1973. Text: Bertolt Brecht. Instrumentation: indeterminate. Commissioned by Jean-Pierre Drouet.

Globokar, Vinko. ?Corporel, 1984. Text: René Char/non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: body percussion. Commissioned by Gaston Sylvestre.

Globokar, Vinko. *Ombre*, 1989. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion/tape.

Globokar, Vinko. *Dialog Über Erde*, 2002. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion (water instruments.)

Heider, Werner. *Pendant*, 1980. Text: Latin syllables and Werner Heider. Instrumentation: Marimba.

Henze, Hans Werner. *Prison Song*, 1977. Text: Ho Chi Minh prison diary. Instrumentation: multiple percussion and tape.

Hills, Cory. *The Percussive Art of Storytelling*, 2005-2011. Text: Various and Corey Hills. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Hindman, Dorothy. *Tapping the Furnace*, 2006. Text: Dorothy Hindman (after civil war texts.) Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Hodkinson, Sydney. *Kerberos*, 1990. Text: after Dante (Italian.) Instrumentation: snare drum.

Hosokawa, Toshio. *Sen VI*, 1993. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Johnson, Tom. *Music and Questions*, 1988. Text: Tom Johnson. Instrumentation: five resonant metals (pitched.)

Jolley, Jennifer. *How to be a Deep Thinker in Los Angeles*, 2009. Text: Kendall A. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Kitzke, Jerome. *The Earth Only Endures*, 2003. Text: Ginsberg, Whitman, The Tewa, The Lakota. Instrumentation: multiple percussion/marimba. Commissioned by Tom Kolor.

Lane, John. *Nocturne 2009/10*. Text: Todd Boss. Instrumentation: mbira.

Lang, David/Steppenwolf. *Born to be Wild*, 1967. Instrumentation: multi. Commissioned by Steven Schick.

Leak, Graeme. *And now for the news*, 1985. Text: tape only, Vietnamese newscasts Instrumentation: multiple percussion and tape.

Leeds Carson, Ben. *A is for Azimuth and Arnica*, 2007. Texts: found and Ben Leeds Caron. Instrumentation: found objects and indeterminate. Commissioned by Chris Froh.

Lewis, George. North Star Boogaloo, 1996. Text: found (tape only), Instrumentation: Multi/tape. Commissioned by Steven Schick.

Lockwood, Annea. Amazonia Dreaming, 1987. Non-texted vocalization. Instrumentation: Snare drum and preparations.

Lucier, Alvin. The Sacred Fox, 1994. Text: Alvin Lucier and non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: singing into resonant vessels.

MacBride, David. Envelop, 1972. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Matamoros, Gustavo. Williams Tells of Rights, 1997. Text: Gustavo Matamoros. Instrumentation: Snare drum and loudspeakers. Commissioned by Jan Williams.

McCandless, Richard. Childhood, 1983. Text: Rimbaud (Illuminations.) Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Nielson, Lewis. Lenguas Encubiertos, 2011. Text: Roque Dalton. Instrumentation: Multiple percussion and autoharp. Commissioned by Jennifer Torrence.

Otte, Allen. As An Algebra, 1994. Text: Don Bogen. Instrumentation: Mbira.

Otte, Allen. Tribute, Benjamin Linder, VFW, 1986. Text: Homer/NY Times. Instrumentation: found objects.

Parenti, Susan. Exercise no. 4 , 1987. Text: Susan Parenti. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Pettit, Brandon. Aguas de Marco, 2008. Text: Brett Halliday. Instrumentation: marimba. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting Smith.

Pierzack, Bob. Endangered Bananna no. 3, 2011. Text: Bob Pierzack. Instrumentation: timpani. Commissioned by Eric Derr

Pierzack, Bob. Quest to Sleep, 2011. Text: Bob Pierzack. Instrumentation: multiple percussion and vibraphone. Commissioned by Jennifer Torrence.

Roque-Alsina, Carlos. Etude pour Zarb, 1984. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: Zarb

Ruders, Paul. Alarm, 1983. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion and digirido.

Rzewski, Frederic. Lost and Found, 1985. Text: Frederic Rzewski. Instrumentation: body percussion and props. Commissioned by Jan Williams.

Rzewski, Frederic. To the Earth, 1985. Text: Homeric Hymn. Instrumentation: flowerpots. Commissioned by Jan Williams.

Rzewski, Frederic. Fall of the Empire, 2007. Text: Jefferson, Dickens, Rzewski, Twain. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Allen Otte.

Senn, Dan. Peeping Tom, 1988 Text: Dan Senn. Instrumentation: Snare Drum

Shepard, Sam. Tongues, 1978. Text: Sam Shepard. Instrumentation: multiple percussion

Shepard, Sam. Savage love, 1981. Text: Sam Shepard. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Shlomowitz, Matthew. Hi Hat and Me, 2010. Text: Matt Scholmowitz and non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: Hi-Hat. Commissioned by Claire Edwardes.

Smith, Stuart Saunders. Songs I-IX, 1981. Text: Stuart Saunders Smith. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Smith, Stuart Saunders. The Authors, 2006. Text: Dickenson, Whitman, Kerouac, Thoreau. Instrumentation: marimba. Commissioned by James Dietz.

Smith, Stuart Saunders. By Language Embellished I, 1989. Text: Stuart Saunders Smith. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Smith, Stuart Saunders. Family Portraits: Delbert, 1997. Text: Stuart Saunders Smith. Instrumentation: multiple percussion (found.)

Smith, Stuart Saunders. . . .And Points North, 1983. Text: Stuart Saunders Smith. Instrumentation: multiple percussion/ and bird songs. Commissioned by Steven Schick.

Stockhausen, Karlheinz. Nasenflugelltanze, 1990. Text: Karlheinz Stockhausen and non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: drumset and multiple percussion.

Treviño, Jeffrey. Being Pollen, 2011. Text: Alice Notley (tape only.) Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting Smith and Johannes Fischer.

Ung, Chinary. Cinnabar Heart, 2009 . Text: Chinary Ung. Instrumentation: Marimba. Commissioned by Nancy Zeltzman (intermediate marimba music project)

Welsch, James . Call me Ishmael, 2006. Text: Melville. Instrumentation: Marimba. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting Smith

Whiting Smith, Bonnie. . . . perishable structures that would be social events, 2008/11. Text: Various (from interviews with composers.) Instrumentation: multiple percussion and found objects.

Wood, James. Rogosanti, 1986. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Steven Schick.

Zimmerman, Walter. Glockenspiel, 1982. Text: Jean Paul. Instrumentation: multiple percussion and keyboard instruments. Commissioned by Robyn Schulkowsky.

Zimmerman, Walter. Riuti, 1979/80. Text: Walter Zimmerman. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Zivkovic, Nebojsa. To the Gods of Rhythm, 1994. Non texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: Djembe.

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