Tristan Rhys Williams

Music for Three Cellos and Ensemble
Instruments:

Score in C

3 solo cellos (sat together)
Oboe
Bass Clarinet in b-flat
2 Percussionists
Harp
Piano
Steel-string guitar
Performance notes
General:
Crescendo to the loudest, most extreme dynamic possible in context

"f"
Forte dynamic in "f" represents the intensity (equivalent to loud playing) not the resulting volume of a gesture - used for techniques that do not inherently provide loud results

Unspecified, articulated pitch mid-gliissando

Grace notes sound before the beat.

All arrows on accidentals represent an approximate quarter-tone adjustment

Violoncellos:

Scordaturas: \( V_0.1 \), \( V_0.2 \), \( V_0.3 \)

All gliassandi should be equally distributed (cross note-heads are used to denote unspecified, articulated pitches between two outer pitch bands)

Strum, use more than one finger to produce a violent sound

Slap fingerboard with palm of hand from above, while fingering the previously strummed chord. This technique will provide a non-determinant pitch but aim for a predominantly 'wood' sound

Highest possible note on strings

Natural harmonic

Artificial harmonic (strings usually specified)

sp sul ponitcello

st sul tasto

br play directly on bridge (high, non-determinant sound with little pitch content)

flaut. Light, low pressure, floating bow

Scratch-bow (press bow deep into the string creating a scratch)
c.l.      col legno - use wood of bow

batt.    Lightly percussive (in this context) action - bounce bow off string
         without ricochet

ric....  Ricochet-bow, drop the bow onto the string and allow, or cause to
         bounce for specified duration

1/2 c.l.t.  Half col legno tratto: Draw some of the wood of the bow across
            strings - producing a dim, ghostly tone quality

Gradual change of position between two areas

Constantly shifting, vertical swishing, brushing motion between sp
and st

Circular and continuous contact with string

The 'TAB' clef represents the four strings of the instrument (bottom line represents
string IV). These are to be played 'tonelessly' by lightly covering strings with palm
(denoted by \(\hat{\text{p}}\)) and constantly moving fígers/palm up and down finger-board
(denoted by \(\hat{\text{u}}\)) - resulting in slightly shifting timbre and snatches of sound
suggestive of harmonics. The instruction 'toneless' should not be taken literally (do
not fully mute strings) as the resulting shifts between a whistling and dry brushing
sound is desirable. Experiment with varying finger pressure for a varied timbral
palette. The overall effect of this technique should be that of 'white-sound'.

Three note chords should be played with an angled bow at the 'st' position.

In addition to the vertical brushing motion described above a circular action
(promoting increased friction between bow and strings) is called for.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{[s] - - - - - - -} \\
\text{Play this cell continuously until } \\
\end{array}
\]

\(\hat{\text{p}}\)

Snap/Bartók pizzicato

\textbf{Oboe:}

\(\xrightarrow{\text{suck}}\)

suck on moist reed (unpitched air sound)

\(\xrightarrow{\text{tone}}\)

gradual surfacing of tone (usually low range)

\(\n\)

multiphonic (complex - fundamental given)
'perforated' tremolo - due to unlikely rapid sounding of low b

micro-tonal fluctuations and 'trill' passages can either be fingered or lipped in context (some more awkward permutations may be thought of as extreme vibrato)

rapid double tonguing (always accelerating)

Square note-heads denote the toneless sound of blowing with prescribed fingerings, providing constantly shifting quality of sound (resulting from changes in air column) and faint key sound (+)

mute bell  point instrument down and use knee to cover hole for soft timbre

**Bass Clarinet:**

multi. multiphonic (fundamental given), always pushpartials higher and gradually increase distortion

straight complex multiphonic without fanning out upper partials

flutter-tongue

Square note-heads denote the toneless sound of blowing with prescribed fingerings, providing constantly shifting quality of sound (resulting from changes in air column) and faint key sound (also used in conjunction with a flutter-tongue quality)

1/2 air allow more audible 'air sound' through from mouth (used in conjunction with flzg.)

ggradual shift from one playing technique to another (i.e. from air sound to a full, clean tone sound without vib.)

out of control vibrato

murm. alternation between notated pitch and one of its alternative fingerings* (as seamlessly as possible) - 'murmurando'

LS 'lip smack', produced by explosively opening lips which are sucking on the mouthpiece

ST 'slap tongue' - "in conjunction with a thrust of air from the diaphragm, the tongue flicks towards the front between the lips, thus abruptly blocking the flow of air. The result is a hard, percussive click (with fingered tone)

cr cracked tone, achieved by over-blowing and tightening
embouchure. Try for a complex, rich spectrum and something approaching an 'electronic' component.

highest possible pitch (squeak) can be produced with teeth on reed

* Overblown from different fundamental (controlled embouchure) providing a transparent, gossamer sound without vibrato

Percussion 1:

Instruments:

Ratchet [RT]

Thunder Sheet [TS]

Snare Drum [SD]

Pedal (kick)Bass Drum [Ped. BD]

Guero [GR]

Whistle [WHIS] - should be 'pea-less' with an extremely high frequency (but audible) sound - ones with complex 'beats' are preferable (worn on string around neck). Fox 40 whistles are good. Position above line denotes relatively strong, even breath pressure and position of note-head below line denotes low, whimpering breath pressure (arrow denotes gradual shift from one to another)

Guitar strings (wrapped around each other - use two or three to whirl next to you - a thin whip can also work)

Whip [WH] wooden, snap variety

Contact points:

Beaters:

Small polystyrene block
2 snare sticks (to be used with thin and thick ends)

Battery operated vibrator

2-headed yarn beater

wire brushes

2 metal knitting needles

violoncello bow

guitar strings (see above - lower ribbed ones are best)

Finger cymbals [fc] for use on either side of TS while being bowed

Percussion 2:

Instruments

Ratchet [RT]

Bass Drum [BD] - very large

Pedal Bass (kick drum) [Ped. BD]

Lion's Roar (LR) use long string and work on soft drawn-out continuous drones

Wood block [WB]

Foot pump (for inflating tyre) [FP]

Salad mixer [S.MIX] (small plastic with pebbles inside)

Contact points:

Beaters:

2 large yarns

2 snare drum sticks
small polystyrene block

Triangle beater (with rubber handle)

Long thin wooden dowel

Wet rubber thimble (lick)

Wire brushes

Soft brush (large material no handle)

Battery operated vibrator

Hot rods (loosely wound - have rubber half-way down)

Additional Perc. instructions:

RAP  rap fingers rapidly on surface

**Harp: (with several plectrums)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>symbol</th>
<th>description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clash</td>
<td>pluck strings forcefully enough to make strings hit each other when they vibrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ped. port. trill</td>
<td>continuously chug pedal up and down between two notches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plectrum(s) - have several on stand-by</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Behind pegs</td>
<td>use plectrum on strings behind pegs between two approximate areas that are convenient in context (always notated between highest and lowest point) - resulting in high-frequency, non-determinant pitch</td>
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<tr>
<td>On pegs</td>
<td>run pencil on pegs along any convenient area (for guero-like effect)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rub</td>
<td>vertically scrape low, ribbed strings with plastic 30cm ruler or small polystyrene block (as specified) continuously at a regular, slow speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knuckle</td>
<td>knock sound-board at most resonant or accessible area with knuckle or palm (have plectrum in fist or between two fingers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arpeggio - very fast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedal held between two notches for slightly distorted/metallic sound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scratch nail up low string</td>
<td></td>
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bow  
violin cello bow (when two notes shown the one in brackets will softly sound by angling the bow so that the wood is drawn along string). Partials get higher as bow moves towards base of instrument (sp). To be used col legno ricochet near end.

fan  
hand-held travel fan (with rubber bands to twirl around - make contact with strings - continuous whirling drone)

Harmonics should sound one octave higher than notated

**Piano:**

Lid fully open. Remove music stand from the slots and place further back on frame.

- Chromatic cluster (between two outer specified pitches)
- White-note cluster (between two outer specified pitches)
- Black-note cluster (between two outer specified pitches)

When these clusters are shown on stem use arms.

- Slap area under keyboard with palm

hammer  
Use toy hammer (wood or plastic * can be provided by composer) to strike the metal frame (supporting highest notes) inside piano. Rest hammer on cloth on the top right-hand surface of piano.

- Accented, percussive pedal depression (most effective with hard leather soled shoes). note-head used for more continuous, rhythmic passages
- Slide foot off pedal - causing mechanism to snap back violently. note-head used after continuous,rhythmic passages

Catch resonance of previous chord/cluster

- Half pedal (retaining some l.v.)

Gradually wipe resonance away - slow lifting of pedal

Third pedal

- Diamond note-heads for silently depressed keys - either to be caught with third ped. for resonance purposes or to be 'silently'
depressed directly after an accented attack of the same chord/cluster - providing 'echo-like' extension of notes

Play note on keyboard while fully dampening the strings inside the piano with fingers - creating a dead, 'wood' sound

these three pitches to be permanently muted with plastic for section from b.60 (prepare in advance and remove when specified)

pluck music stand runners on either side of casing (inside) with fingers - the stand should be placed further back permanently

'cluster gliss.' Like a 'glissandoing' slab of chromatic clusters (use sleeve)

**Guitar:**

*Scordatura:*

![Scordatura](image)

*Clef:*

![Clef](image)

Roman numerals denote fret number

- **↑** bend string towards you to tighten string slightly (creating quarter-tone fluctuations)
- **↓** pluck/strum strings with plectrum (have on on thumb permanently)
- **palm** right hand slaps strings over sound hole with palm
- **st** over fingerboard
- **ord.** over sound hole
- **sp** near bridge - high, tight timbre
- **Bartok/snap pizz.**
- **mute resonating strings (palm)**
- **more MBN within feet (make contact with metal)**
MBN  left-hand slide metal bottle neck along specified frets (all 6 strings)

PBN  right-hand use plastic bottle neck (thick and heavy) instead of fingers (maximize partial shift in 'ricochet passages' - force bottle neck to bounce in specified direction

diamond harmonic (occasionally 'dead' sounding) specified

e-bow  hold between thumb and index finger and move position as specified

finger extensions  as in percussive bass slap extensions (have on fingers 3 and 4) usually used in passages with e-bow

ruler  small 15 cm plastic ruler scratched up and down strings as specified

right palm hits body of instrument

right knuckles hit body

string tremolo

Key for chords from bb.60+: 