

luster

daniel allas (2019)

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 for 5 performers
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instrumentation:

piccolo (with voice amplifier)

bass clarinet (with ratchet, standard clarinet mouthpiece, & aluminum foil)

euphonium (with ratchet)

percussion (with ratchet, bottle, and voice amplifier)

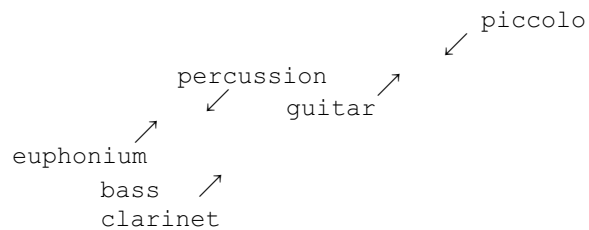
guitar (with three large binder clips & threaded rod*)

*can be substituted for plastic/wooden rod or plastic comb

boxed text: the boxed text above large sections serve as motivations for all performers. accuracy to the score is secondary to embodying the spirit of each motivation. said another way, the piece is a dance and the motivations give a specific, special energy to the choreography.

staging:

bass clarinet, euphonium, and guitar face upstage (45°). percussion and piccolo face downstage (225°).



euphonium and bass clarinet are downstage left.
 percussion and guitar are center stage, a bit left.
 piccolo is upstage right.

audience

setup: all performers may want to place their objects upon a small table or stand close to them. it is advised that a larger table be set up for the percussion and guitar to share. it is also advised that the guitar be placed down upon the table to facilitate the required techniques.

voice amplifier: piccolo and percussion require a small portable voice amplifier for the performance. the amplifier should face away from the audience and the performer.

when the score asks for an unspecified type of feedback, the performer moves the microphone towards the speaker to create a small blip of feedback.

when the score asks for static, the performer should scratch the metal housing of the microphone to produce an erratic sound resembling a kind of white noise.

when the score calls for mouth feedback, the performer should place the microphone inside their mouth (coupled with proximity to the speaker) to produce feedback.

circular breathing: the final ten minutes of the piece asks the euphonium and bass clarinet to sustain one note while circular breathing. if possible, the performers should highlight their inhalations, and the natural rhythm of these breaths should add a palpable layer to the texture. if circular breathing is not available to the performers, staggering breaths can be substituted.

aluminum foil (bass clarinet): when called for, the bass clarinet wraps a sheet of aluminum foil around the bell of the instrument. when the lowest note is performed, the foil should rattle and augment the tone of the instrument.

binder clips (guitar): three large binder clips are placed on the strings for the duration of the piece (one clip around each of the three pairs of strings). the clips should dangle in the sound hole of the guitar.

a word about the piece:

perhaps there is a type of pain that invites you inside itself, that one is compelled to enter over and over again.

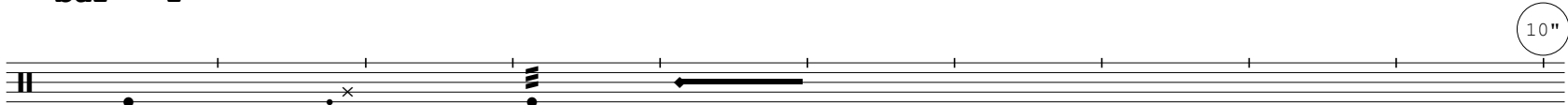
this piece was written for the wasteLAnd summer academy, and i am very grateful to be invited into this community of inspiring artists.

notation guide

the ensemble may use a stopwatch, or they may rely on their collective subjectivity to negotiate timing.

for most of the piece, every bar equals one second (ten seconds per system).
at the four minute mark, every bar equals one minute (ten minutes per system).
bars are delineated by tick marks.

bar = 1"



perform this event for the length of the solid bar

a slightly prolonged event

every inhale (delineated by an x notehead) should sound as if the event preceding it caused the performer to gasp for air
do not over-act, but make it clear the two events are connected

perform each event in time, interpreting its spatial placement within the bar

luster

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bar = 1"

every note hurts, each action is a needle stuck into the finger

10"

Musical score for the first system (10 bars). The score includes staves for Piccolo (picc.), Bass Clarinet (b.cl.), Euphonium (euph.), Percussion (perc.), and Guitar (gtr.).

- picc.:** Two vertical bar lines at the beginning of the staff.
- b.cl.:** Two vertical bar lines at the beginning of the staff. A dot is placed on the staff at the 10th bar, labeled "an intense quiet".
- euph.:** Two vertical bar lines at the beginning of the staff. Dots are placed on the staff at the 3rd and 7th bars, both labeled "an intense quiet".
- perc.:** Two vertical bar lines at the beginning of the staff. A dot is placed on the staff at the 2nd bar, labeled "an intense quiet". An 'x' is placed on the staff at the 5th bar, labeled "pained".
- gtr.:** A vertical bar line at the beginning of the staff, followed by a series of vertical lines representing guitar strings.

Annotations above the staves:
- Above b.cl.: "ratchet" at the 10th bar.
- Above euph.: "ratchet" at the 3rd bar.
- Above perc.: "ratchet" at the 2nd bar, "inhale (through the teeth)" at the 5th bar.

20"

Musical score for the second system (10 bars). The score includes staves for Piccolo (picc.), Bass Clarinet (b.cl.), Euphonium (euph.), Percussion (perc.), and Guitar (gtr.).

- picc.:** Two vertical bar lines at the beginning of the staff.
- b.cl.:** Two vertical bar lines at the beginning of the staff. A dot with an 'x' is placed on the staff at the 15th bar, labeled "pained".
- euph.:** Two vertical bar lines at the beginning of the staff. Dots are placed on the staff at the 18th and 19th bars.
- perc.:** Two vertical bar lines at the beginning of the staff. Dots are placed on the staff at the 3rd and 5th bars.
- gtr.:** A vertical bar line at the beginning of the staff, followed by a series of vertical lines representing guitar strings.

Annotations above the staves:
- Above b.cl.: "inhale (through the teeth)" at the 15th bar.

30"

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

40"

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

Detailed description: This system contains five staves. The Piccolo (picc.) staff has a double bar line at the beginning. The Bass Clarinet (b.cl.) staff has a double bar line at the beginning, followed by a quarter note on the second line, a quarter note on the second space with an accent (x) above it, a quarter note on the second line, a quarter note on the second space, and a quarter note on the second line. The Euphonium (euph.) staff has a double bar line at the beginning, followed by a quarter note on the second space, a quarter note on the second space, and a quarter note on the second space. The Percussion (perc.) staff has a double bar line at the beginning, followed by a quarter note on the second space, and a quarter note on the second space with an accent (x) above it. The Guitar (gtr.) staff has a double bar line at the beginning.

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

Detailed description: This system contains five staves. The Piccolo (picc.) staff has a double bar line at the beginning. The Bass Clarinet (b.cl.) staff has a double bar line at the beginning, followed by a quarter note on the second space with an accent (x) above it, a quarter note on the second line, and a quarter note on the second space. The Euphonium (euph.) staff has a double bar line at the beginning. The Percussion (perc.) staff has a double bar line at the beginning. The Guitar (gtr.) staff has a double bar line at the beginning.

romancing the pain, the repeated pricks become a strange comfort, more fluid in delivery

picc.

b.cl. *slap tongue on cl. mouthpiece*

euph. *louder and braver than before, but also calmer*

perc. *louder and braver than before, but also calmer*

gtr.

picc.

b.cl. *together*

euph. *tongue click*

perc.

gtr.

1'
30"

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

together

tongue click

3 binder clips on strings
as described in notes

pull threaded rod
across all strings
(muted until directed
otherwise)

loud

spasms; straining, glitching

static (v.a.)

1'
40"

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

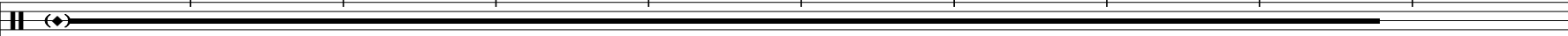
perc.

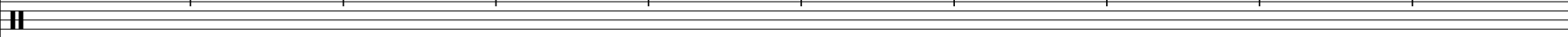
gtr.

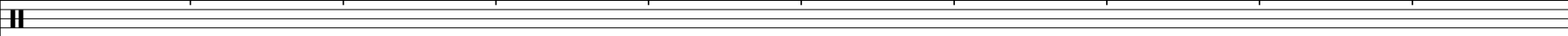
exert pressure downward into the guitar while pulling the threaded rod, such that only a few bursts of sound
come out, around one sound event for every 2-3"

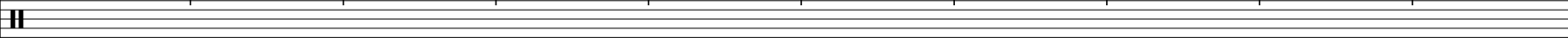
somewhat quiet, but still aggressive


1'
50"

picc. 

b.cl. 

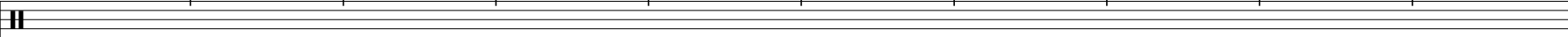
euph. 

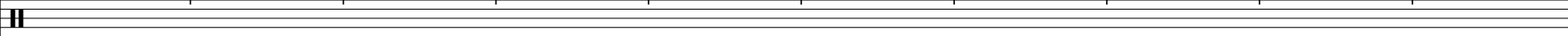
perc. 

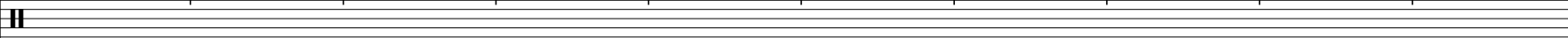
gtr. 

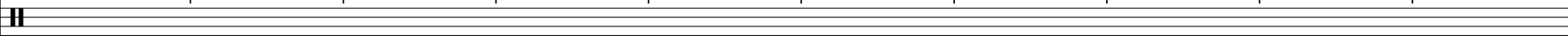
now downward...

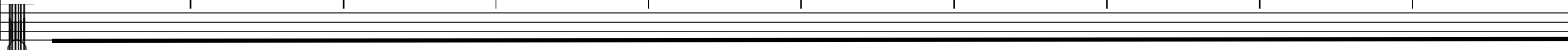
2'

picc. 

b.cl. 

euph. 

perc. 

gtr. 

increase the density of sound events until the 3'00" mark. some fluctuation in pitch direction is encouraged, but the overall trajectory of pitch should be maintained.

the pain returns, magnified and mutated, at odds with the pleasure recently felt

picc. fltg.
no pitch a pitch close to
the teeth on reed (2'
10")

b.cl. teeth on reed (comb)

euph. comb on the edge of tupperware

perc. bottle (high-pitched, brittle, harsh)
comb on the edge of tupperware

gtr.

picc. feedback (v.a.) (2'
20")

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

2'
30"

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

fltg.
no pitch

feedback (v.a.)

less pressure downwards, more horizontal movement...

2'
40"

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

approaching the edge of constant bowing...

2' 50''

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

loud

3''

held breath, joints locked, anticipating

static (v.a.)

3'
10"

picc.

b.cl.

euph.

perc.

gtr.

constant bowing across all strings, very close to the bridge, attempt to hide retakes of the rod

extremely quiet, suddenly

3'
20"

picc.


b.cl.

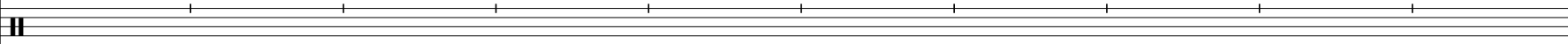
euph.

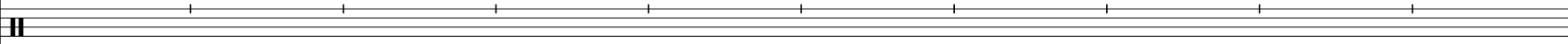
perc.

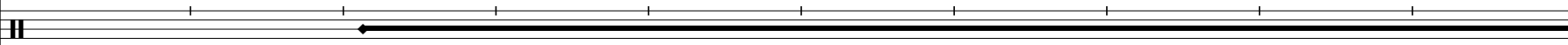
gtr.

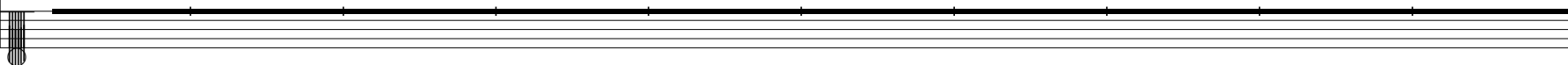
3'
30"

picc. 

b.cl. 

euph. 

perc. 

gtr. 

3'
40"

picc. 

b.cl. 

euph. 

perc. 

gtr. 

3'
50"

picc. 

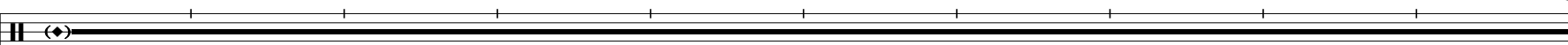
b.cl. 

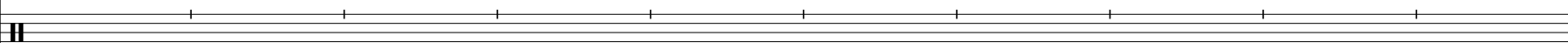
euph. 

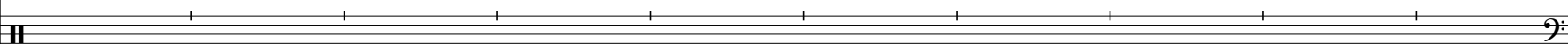
perc. 

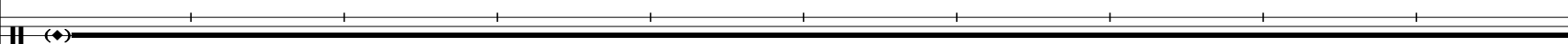
gtr. 

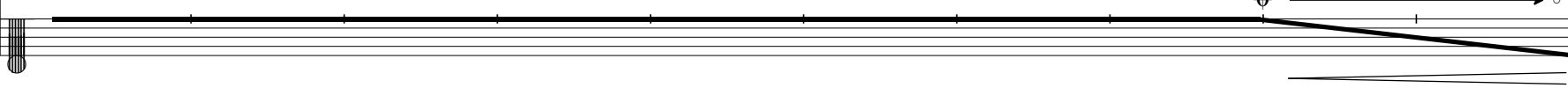
4'

picc. 

b.cl. 

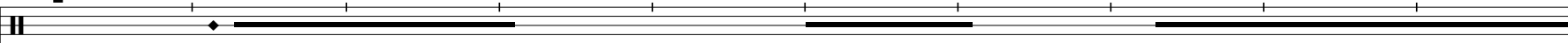
euph. 

perc. 

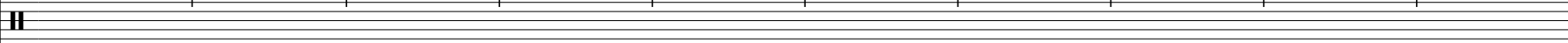
gtr. 

bar = 1' this moment was inevitable

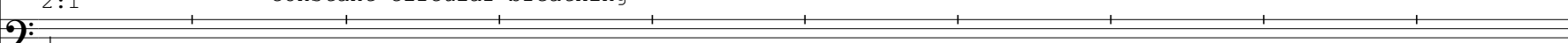
ad lib. producing feedback (mouth) 9' 14'

picc. 
loud, monolith


aluminum foil
 around the bell constant circular breathing

b. cl. 
loud, monolith

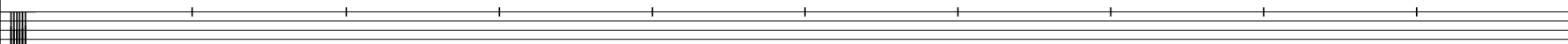
2:1 constant circular breathing

euph. 
loud, monolith

ad lib. producing feedback (mouth)

perc. 
loud, monolith

accent aperiodic retakes of the rod,
 pitch fluctuations are encouraged

gtr. 
loud, monolith