

# **Ceti Spiritus (2024)**

for percussionist and stereo digital audio

**Brad Decker**

### ***Ceti Spiritus* (2024) Spirit of the Whale**

For Percussionist and Two Channel Digital Audio  
Commissioned by the Tarble Arts Center 2024  
Premiered by Jamie V. Ryan, January 26, 2024

### **“Ceti Spiritus” (2024) Spirit of the Whale**

Ceti Spiritus is a work for percussionist and stereo digital audio, commissioned by the Tarble Arts Center to commemorate the culmination of their 2023-2024 exhibition “Who Speaks for the Oceans?”. The featured exhibit, titled “Whale Bells” by Jenny Kendler and Andrew Bearnot, consists of glass bell-like sculptures formed from the fossilized eardrums of extinct whales. The Whale Bells are performed by the percussionist as a 16-bell instrument, aside the 8-minute audio accompaniment. The sounds in the audio track are all sourced from samples of the bells themselves, heavily processed and manipulated to create a sea-like texture. Immersed in this texture is the performance by the percussionist, who follows a graphic score through the performance space, carefully activating each bell. The work attempts to continue the conversation begun by the exhibit, connecting the past with the current, as we contemplate the importance of the sea to humanity.

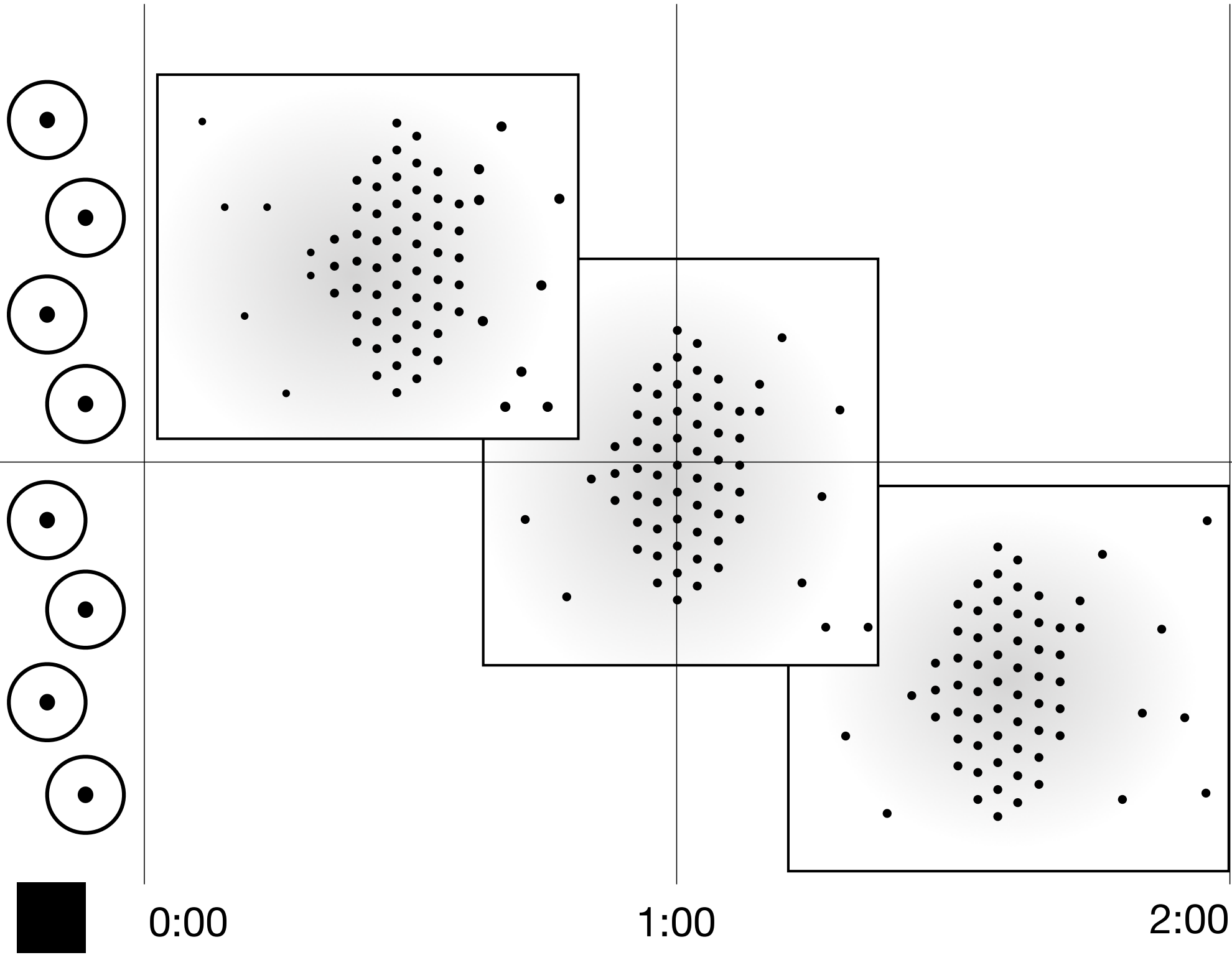
**Brad Decker** is a composer, educator, and performer of contemporary concert music, whose works often incorporate electronic, electroacoustic, or interactive media. His recent works explore the interaction of acoustic instruments and electronics to create immersive composite textures. His instrumental works combine virtuosic flourishes, polyrhythmic interplay, and extended techniques. Electronic elements include adventures in analog synthesis, interactive computer processing and sampling, multichannel diffusion, and fixed-media accompaniments. Multimedia projects range from traditional film soundtracks to live-performed improvisations with video. As a double bassist, he regularly performs his own compositions and improvisations that incorporate computer interactivity. His teachers include Peter Hestermann, Kenneth Jacobs, Erik Lund, Heinrich Taube, Steven Taylor, and Scott Wyatt. He has attended masterclasses and lessons with composers Agostino DiScipio, Stefano Gervasoni, Lee Hyla, and Tristan Murail. He is currently Assistant Professor of Composition and Music Technology at Eastern Illinois University. His music is distributed through his website [www.braddecker.org](http://www.braddecker.org).

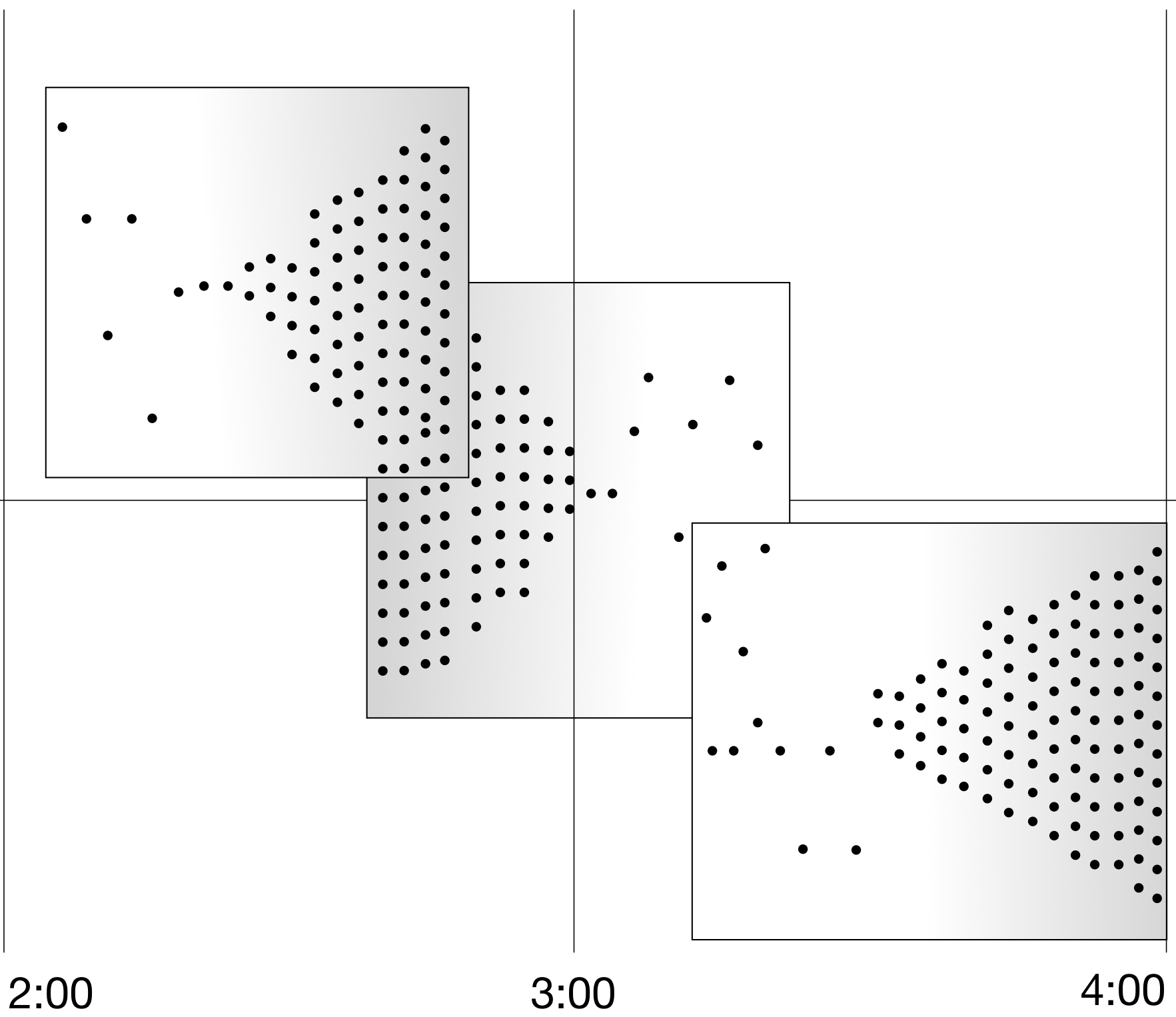
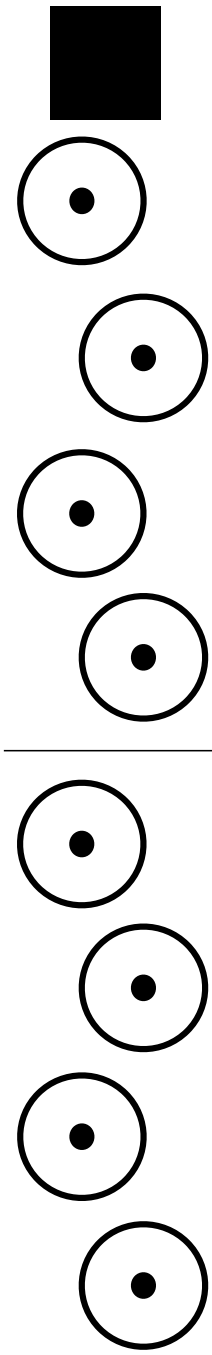
### **Explanation of Score**

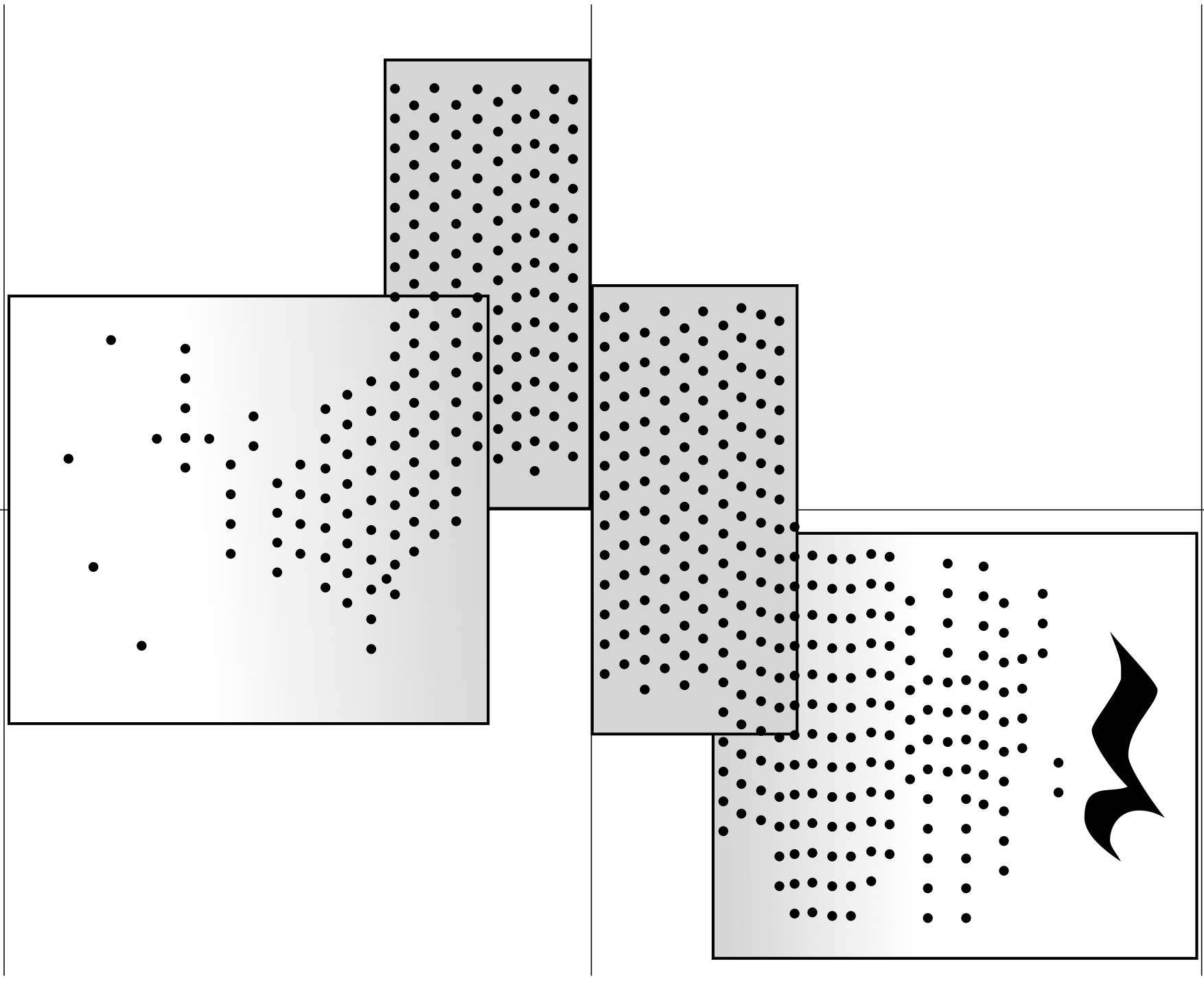
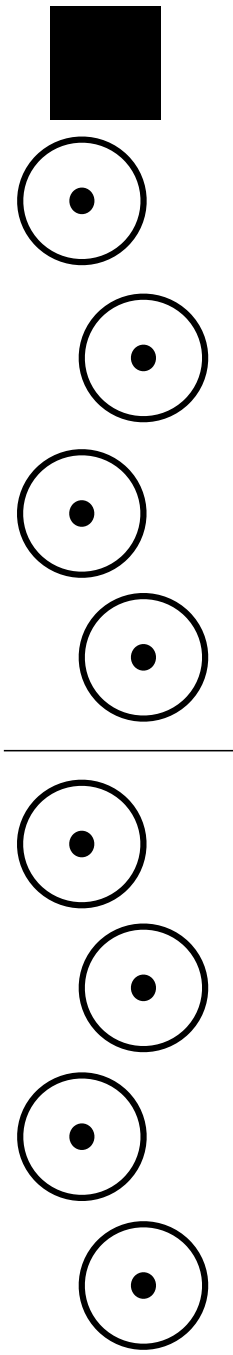
The score provides a timeline for performance, in context of the installation of the bells at the Tarble Arts Center. Hanging in the foyer are two sets of 8 bells, symbolized by the CIRCLES on the left side. The BLACK SQUARE provides a landmark which set of 8 bells, as there is a large pillar in between them - the BLACK SQUARE symbolizes that pillar. The TIMELINE at the bottom refers to the 8 minute audio track. Finally, the SHADED REGIONS and DOTS symbolize the rate and intensity of the articulation of the bells by the percussionist. This is to be freely interpreted, as the bells and space will dictate the levels at which this can be done carefully and respectfully.

Playback of the digital audio track should be on a stereo audio system in the space, preferably very near the bells themselves.

It is intended that this score and track also be interpreted by a percussionist outside of this specific context. In this case, the percussionist shall select 16 instruments of their choosing, which hang or are suspended in a way so they sustain and blend. These objects should be struck with a mallet that avoids a particularly harsh articulation. The performer may choose the material of these instruments - however the original instruments are made of thick resonant glass.







4:00

5:00

6:00



