

Brad Decker

Hall of Mirrors



for Percussion and Computer
2020

Hall of Mirrors

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3:00

Brad Decker - 2020

PROGRAM NOTES:

This work explores generational counterculture and apathy. I recently re-read a blurry image of a book in my phone's notes, from October 2019 (I don't know the book or author! I didn't write it down, and I can't remember...), that attempted to explain the Millennial conundrum. Gen-Xers were able to buy into baby-boomer optimism as children, only to counter it as adults. Today, Millennials are "shrugging toward ecological, economic and political disaster and drowning in entertainment culture". There is a sense of "collective irresponsibility" - internet media, opinion mongering, fact wars - all resulting in a meaningless Hall of Mirrors.

Hall of Mirrors is somewhat improvisational. The performer performs rhythms, which are regurgitated by the computer in distorted fragments. These rhythms are ordered according to change-ringing patterns, resulting in an interplay of rhythmic content that seems to echo both past and present. Instrumentation is decided by the performer, loosely adhering to these guidelines: 9 instruments of indefinite pitch, 3 wood, 3 metal, 3 membranophones, and all collections must differ in pitch (high, medium, low).

The computer part will perform live processing, and also trigger the playback of pre-recorded samples which are selected randomly.

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

Choose three instruments (unpitched: high, medium, low) for each stave. Stave A (wood), Stave B (metal), Stave C (membranes). This is rather flexible, but all sounds should be unpitched and varied.

Arrange each set of three instruments around you, so that Stave A is to your LEFT, Stave B is CENTER, and Stave C is to your RIGHT. However, all instruments should be accessible to you as you stand in one spot.

Place one large-diaphragm condenser microphone above your head, so that it catches all sounds.

This mic will go INTO your computer/audio interface and its signal is sent to the patch.

Begin the piece as you trigger the beginning of the Max patch. You can trigger the max patch with a MIDI foot pedal, or the SPACE BAR of your computer.

Notated pitches are suggestions only! You may improvise any and all pitches within each group. However, the rhythms should be interpreted exactly as notated.

The piece begins at q=60 and steadily accelerates to q=120.

The Max patch will play samples at random intervals. It will also record your sounds and play them back at random intervals. The recorded audio will also be processed with ring modulation, so it will sound slightly distorted.

All sounds and events should end at 3:00.

The piece should gradually accelerate and grow in intensity until the end.

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0" ♩ = 60

accel.

A
B
C

p 6 5 5 3 *f* *p*

11"

A
B
C

f

22"

A
B
C

p 5

33"

A
B
C

f

43"

A
B
C

f 5 6

53"

A
B
C

ff *mf* 3 3 5 5 6 *ff*

7/23/20 19:31:14 mirrors

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1'02"

25

A B C

p

1'11"

29

A B C

f

p

1'19"

33

A B C

p

f

p

1'27"

37

A B C

p

f

p

1'35"

41

A B C

ff

1'43"

45

A B C

f

ff

f

1'50"

49

A B C

ff

f

f

1'57"

53

A B C

fff *p*

2'04"

57

A B C

f *p*

2'11"

61

A B C

p *f*

2'18"

65

A B C

p

2'24"

69

A B C

p *f* *p*

2'30"

♩ = 120

73

A B C

f *p* *f*

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2'36"

77

A
B
C

ff

2'42"

81

A
B
C

ff

2'48"

85

A
B
C

ff

2'54"

89

A
B
C

fff

3'00"

93

A
B
C

fff

June 23, 2020
Champaign, IL

7/23/20 19:31:14 mirrors