

CONCERTO FOR SIX-MALLET
MARIMBA AND STRINGS

BY
JOE PORTER



PORTER
PUBLICATIONS

CONCERTO FOR SIX-MALLET MARIMBA AND STRINGS

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DEDICATED TO MAGGIE

Program Notes

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings was composed for two reasons: The first was the need to fill a gap in the repertoire for six-mallet marimba. This composition is the first marimba concerto to feature six mallets throughout. Secondly, but more importantly, was the need to write a piece for my fiancée, Maggie. Prior to this composition I wrote a six-mallet marimba solo for our cat Tango, entitled *Tango the Cat*. Maggie loved the piece but she constantly bugged me, "I don't have a piece written for me." So... here it is. Writing this piece for Maggie gave me great inspiration. The movements are dedicated to typical life situations that we face together.

The first movement presents a situation where I should have listened to her, but didn't. The cello kicks the piece off with an intense driving forward groove. After a marimba cadenza, the "I should have listened" melody is presented with the first violins and cellos. The whole movement is a constant play on feeling a level of frustration for not listening.

Movement II is all about letting it go. Even though I didn't listen, it's alright. I know she will get over it. Maggie's family is from Hong Kong. One of these years I need to meet the family, but it just hasn't worked out yet. This movement depicts a dream of Hong Kong and China where it's peaceful, calm and there are panda bears. To help set the relaxed atmosphere of the movement, the strings begin with a harp like introduction. I find the harp very relaxing, so to imitate a harp, the strings pass around the pentatonic scale using pizzicato, like an "Asian harp". Movement II also pays homage to the origins of the marimba, evolving from pentatonic xylophones like the African gyl and amadinda. The whole movement is based on the pentatonic scale, with the exception of some "jazzy" grace notes.

Of course, it was just a dream and it isn't alright... She is still mad. Movement III begins intensely building up to a climax with sirens coming from the first violins and cellos like a wakeup call, "It's not

alright!" The marimbist during these sirens screams out frustration by improvising intense cluster chords up and down the marimba. The second part of the third movement is an African and Afro-Cuban inspired 12/8 groove. This section imitates someone dancing around in my head, telling me I should have listened...

Finally, Maggie winds down and we realize that all of this tension was caused for nothing. Who cares! The strings open the movement elegantly and freely, letting the tension go away. The strings then go into a merengue, the perfect "Who Cares" groove. After some playful runs between the marimba and first violins, the marimba takes over the merengue groove and the strings add the "Who Cares" melody. But, contemplation kicks in, sudden outbursts into the minor mode with offsetting metres of 7/4 and 5/4 appear resembling that maybe I should have listened... The "Who Cares" melody comes back and everything seems alright. But of course, second thoughts emerge, growing and becoming much worse. Finally the contemplation comes to a climax. The orchestra and marimba join forces to fight this battle and finally I realize, "What does it matter?" The foot bell and rattle from the soloist ends the piece stating. "Who Cares" for the last time, and all is good...

Lesson learned; Who Cares!

Joe Porter - March, 2012

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Performance Notes

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings can be performed in a variety of ways. Because of the flexibility of strings, the piece can be performed with a string orchestra or in a chamber setting. A piano reduction is also available.

In the third and fourth movements, the soloist is required to play an ankle rattle and bell. The rattle should be somewhat of a lower pitch and the bell a higher pitch. In the third movement, the ankle rattle should be put on before the movement begins, but only if the player feels they can play the first section without creating additional noise from the rattle. The ankle bell should be added right after movement three, before the strings start movement four. In addition, the player should feel free to add fills at ends of phrases with the rattle and bell.

In the third movement at measure 37, the second violins and the violas are required to play rapid pizzicato notes in a row. If the pizzicato passages are too fast for the violas and second violins, the players can bow the passage, imitating the pizzicato sound as best as possible.

The approximate length of the piece is 16 minutes.

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

Score

Dedicated to Maggie

Joe Porter

I - I Should Have Listened

(Tenuto notes: slight emphasis)
Driving, Intense! (♩ = c. 90)

Cello
mf Separated

Vc.
mp *mf*

Mrb.
f *pp* *f*
() : May not be practical on certain marimbas

Vla.
f Separated

Vc.
f

Cb.
f *fp* *f*

Mrb.
f *mp*
B *loco*

Vla.
f *p* *mp*

Vc.
f *p* *mp*

Cb.
f *mp*

Mrb.

F

mp *cresc.* *f* *p*

Mrb.

67

f *mf*

Mrb.

G

mf

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

71

f *f* *f* *f* *f*

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.



H

Mrb.

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

f *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

mf

f

f *p* *mp* *mf* *mp*

f *p* *mp* *mf* *mp*

f *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Mrb. *f* *mf* *f*

Vla. *f* *mf* *mf* *f*

Vc. *f* *mf* *mf* *f*

Cb. *f* *mp* *mf* *f*

Measures 84-89. The Marimba part features chords in the right hand and rhythmic patterns in the left hand. The Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabasso parts provide harmonic support with various dynamics.



Mrb. **I** *f* *f* *f* *pp*

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Cb. *fp*

Measures 90-94. The Marimba part consists of sustained chords. The Violin I and II parts play a melodic line with a wavy contour. The Viola and Violoncello parts play a rhythmic pattern. The Contrabasso part has a single note at the end.

Mrb. *8va*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

f

J

Vc. *mf* *mp*

Vc. *mf*

103

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

Score

II - Don't Worry It's Alright

Joe Porter

x = with shafts

Like an Asian Harp (♩ = c. 140)

Marimba

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Contrabass

Mrb.

6

freely

mf

3

3

3

3

rit.

accel.

Mrb.

12

relax

rit.

5

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

Mrb.

16

A Chill (♩ = c. 80)

mf

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

2

Mrb. *mf*

Vln. I arco *mf*

Vln. II arco *mf*

Vla. arco *mf*

Vc. arco *mf*

Cb. *p*

Mrb. *p* **B** *subito p*

Vln. I *subito p*

Vln. II *subito p*

Vla. *subito p*

Vc. *subito p*

Cb. arco *mf* pizz. *p*

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

33

p cresc.

p cresc.

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

38

mf

mf

mp

mf

mf

f

mf

f pizz.

arco

mf

mf

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

Mrb. *Frustrated!*
Improvise up and down the marimba with intense 3 mallet cluster shots

Vln. I *Bring out the tri-tone like an alarm! (I Should have Listened...)*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *ff*

Cb. *ff*

Mrb. *rit.*
ff

Vln. I *ff*

Vln. II *ff*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Cb. *ff*

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

A Dance! (♩ = c. 120) Add foot rattle (x) on repeat

Mrb.

mf

Mrb.

f

29

Mrb.

33

Mrb.

B

Vln. I

f

37

Vln. II

f pizz.

Vla.

f pizz.

Vc.

f

Cb.

f

f

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

43

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Detailed description: This system of musical notation covers measures 43 through 47. The Marimba (Mrb.) part is written in a grand staff with two staves, featuring a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes with accents. The string parts (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Cb.) are in a lower register, with Vln. I and Vln. II playing a steady eighth-note accompaniment, while the other strings play a more sparse, harmonic accompaniment. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.

48

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Detailed description: This system of musical notation covers measures 48 through 52. It begins with a double bar line and repeat sign. The Marimba (Mrb.) part continues with its rhythmic pattern, but includes a long, sustained note in the right hand in measure 49. The string parts (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Cb.) continue their accompaniment, with Vln. I and Vln. II playing eighth notes and the other strings playing a harmonic accompaniment. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

6

C

Mrb. 52

Vln. I 52

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.



Mrb. 56

Vln. I 56

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

60

Mrb.

60

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf

p

arco

p

p

p

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

Score

IV - Who Cares

Joe Porter

Rubato ♩ = aprox. 150 pizz.

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Contrabass

f *p* *f* *p* *f*

mf *mf*

pizz. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

pizz. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

9 **A** Groove! ♩ = 90 Both foot bell and rattle on

Mrb.

On repeat, add feet (may ad lib rhythmically)

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mp *mp* *mp* *mp*

arco

arco

mp

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

4

E Contemplative!

Mrb. *f*

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Cb. *f*

Mrb. *mp*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mp*

Cb. *mp*

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

54 **F**

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

58

54 **F**

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

58

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

6

Mrb. 63

Vln. I 63

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Mrb. 67

Vln. I 67

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

G *Molto Accel!*

subito p *cresc.*

subito p *cresc.*

subito p *cresc.*

subito p *cresc.*

subito p *cresc.*

subito p *cresc.*

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

71 Vivace (♩ = c. 135)

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

76 8^{va} "Throw the gliss", not metric H (♩ = c. 140) *accel.*

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Concerto for Six-Mallet Marimba and Strings

Vivace (♩ = c. 135)

8

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf *pizz.* *cresc.*

ff

Mrb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf *cresc.*

ff

arco

"Who Cares"