## The Toy Universe JORDAN DYKSTRA (2018)

for violin, cello, electric guitar, vibraphone, an auxiliary quartet, and live-mixing of noisy electronic sounds through a circular array of 12 speakers

## for Ordinary Affects


"The purpose of this Toy Universe is to show, in a simple way, how the ideas of geometry, force, dimension, and particle interrelate to build a profound worldview. This Toy Universe is worth examining because it is rich in insights. But it is only one example of how to build a Toy Universe [...] This Toy Universe is not a flight of fantasy; its Toy Predictions are falsifiable by experiments in the real universe. Because to learn from a Toy Universe; it must be breakable in the real universe."

> THOMAS NEIL NEUBERT
> A Toy Universe (2013)

## PERFORMANCE NOTES for The Toy Universe

Duration: 61:00
Instrumentation: 2 groups and a Conductor
GROUP 1: Time-Space Ensemble
Player 1 - violin
Player 2 - cello
Player 3 - electric guitar (with Ebow and slide)
Player 4 - vibraphone (with a pair of hard and soft mallets, 2 bows)
GROUP 2: Fragrant Noise Ensemble
Players 5-8 - an energy chime in A, a metal bowl of potpourri ${ }^{1}$, and a large stone

## CONDUCTOR

Player 9 - live-mixing of 12 unique pre-recorded noise sound sources with playback through a circular array of 12 individually controlled speakers

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## Stage Layout:

Through careful stage layout, The Toy Universe is set. GROUP 1, the Time-Space Ensemble, sits closely together in the center of the stage, all facing the same direction. Surrounding them is an array of 12 speakers which are controlled through a mixing board at the Conductor Station. The audience is seated surrounding the speakers. GROUP 2, the Fragrant Noise Ensemble, sits spread out on the outskirts of the stage, ideally unseen but close enough for the sounds and fragrances to reach the audience.

> Stage layout for The Toy Universe by JORDAN DYKSTRA (2018)


## Directions for GROUP 1:

When sound emerges from one of the 12 speakers, GROUP 1 plays the corresponding cue in the score for that speaker. The 12:00 cue for GROUP 1 is silence. The score acts mainly as a guide for a morphing of overall density and harmonic space with the arrows indicating pitch direction only (no glissando). The pitch content for the entire group is only given 4 times ( $1: 00,3: 00,6: 00$ and 10:00), all other times the pitch material is open and microtonality is encouraged. All players are given a boxed "DENSITY" marking on a stave above their part which indicates the duration of events versus the seconds in between the event. Finally, all players act independently, with medium dynamics throughout.

## Directions for GROUP 2:

GROUP 2 sits equidistance from one another yet somewhat far away from the audience, ideally unseen. GROUP 2 mainly follows two directions:

1) Every 15 minutes: continuously strike the energy chime for 1 minute per player, orbiting through the group with some overlapping, and
2) Every 20 minutes: rub a large stone in the metal bowl of potpourri, creating a fragrant noise.
During the time when GROUP 2 is not performing these 2 actions, they will be silently peeling citrus fruits, adding the peels to the potpourri mixture. At the $60^{\prime}$ mark, GROUP 2 ends the piece with a combination of both actions: a $1^{\prime}$ sustain of their fragrant noise mixed with striking of the energy chime.

Directions for the CONDUCTOR:
With varied pacing, the Conductor goes through the score 5 times, yielding 5 unique iterations each different durations (for instance, at the premiere the durations were 10', 5', 7', 26', $12^{\prime}$ ).

Technological note for the Conductor:
All 12 speakers should be of similar make and model (if not identical) and placed on stands. There needs to be a variety in the sound sources for playback (i.e. tape players, cd players, synthesizers, radios, digital sources, etc.). The sounds themselves should consist of generally noisy and static textures (radio static, brown/white/pink/ grey/violet/blue noise, static stone texture, reverse-biased diodes, etc.). Finally, when live-mixing through the score, slow crossfades are desired.

Medium dynamics throughou
All players always acting independently
Arrows indicate pitch direction only (no glissando)
Use given pitches as a guide for pacing, all other times the pitch content is open and microtonality encouraged
DENSITY = duration : frequency (duration of event vs. seconds in between events)


THE TOY UNIVERSE by JORDAN DYKSTRA: timeline score for CONDUCTOR

|  | 12 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1a) O. A. (10'/0:50) | 0:00-0:50 | 0:50-1:40 | 1:40-2:30 | 2:30-3:20 | 3:20-4:10 | 4:10-5:00 | 5:00-5:50 | 5:50-6:40 | 6:40-7:30 | 7:30-8:20 | 8:20-9:10 | 9:10-10:00 |
| 1b) F. N. chimes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1c) F. N. noise |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2a) O. A. ( $5^{\prime} / 0: 25$ ) | 10:00-10:25 | 10:25-10:50 | 10:50-11:15 | 11:15-11:40 | 11:40-12:05 | 12:05-12:30 | 12:30-12:55 | 12:55-13:20 | 13:20-13:45 | 13:45-14:10 | 14:10-14:35 | 14:35-15:00 |
| 2b) F. N. chimes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2c) F. N. noise |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3a) O. A. ( $\mathbf{\prime}^{\prime} / 0: 35$ ) | 15:00-15:35 | 15:35-16:10 | 16:10-16:45 | 16:45-17:20 | 17:20-17:55 | 17:55-18:30 | 18:30-19:05 | 19:05-19:40 | 19:40-20:15 | 20:15-20:50 | 20:50-21:25 | 21:25-22:00 |
| 3b) F. N. chimes | 15:00-17:30: | Chimes |  | in | A |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3c) F. N. noise |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | $20^{\prime}-21^{\prime}$ : | Fragrant | Noise |  |
| 4a) O. A. (26'/2:10) | 22:00-24:10 | 24:10-26:20 | 26:20-28:30 | 28:30-30:40 | 30:40-32:50 | 32:50-35:00 | 35:00-37:10 | 37:10-39:20 | 39:20-41:30 | 41:30-43:40 | 43:40-45:50 | 45:50-48:00 |
| 4b) F. N. chimes |  |  |  | 30:00-32:30: | Chimes in A |  |  |  |  |  |  | 45:00-47:30: <br> Chimes in A |
| 4c) F. N. noise |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | $40^{\prime}-41^{\prime}:$ <br> Fragrant Noise |  |  |  |
| 5a) O. A. (12'/1:00) | 48:00-49:00 | 49:00-50:00 | 50:00-51:00 | 51:00-52:00 | 52:00-53:00 | 53:00-54:00 | 54:00-55:00 | 55:00-56:00 | 56:00-57:00 | 57:00-58:00 | 58:00-59:00 | 59:00-60:00 |
| 5b) F. N. chimes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5c) F. N. noise |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6a) O. A. - (1'/1:00) | 60:00-61:00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6b) F. N. chimes | Chimes in A |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6c) F. N. noise | Fragrant Noise |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

THE TOY UNIVERSE by JORDAN DYKSTRA: timeline for the Fragrant Noise Ensemble

|  | 0:00-14:59 | 15:00 | 15:30 | 16:00 | 16:30 | 17:00 | 17:30-18:59 | 19:00 | 20:00 | 21:00-29:59 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 |  | Chimes ( 1 ) |  |  |  |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise (1') |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  | Chimes (1) |  |  |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise (1') |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  | Chimes (1') |  |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise (1') |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |  |  | Chimes (1') |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant <br> Noise (1') |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 30:00 | 30:30 | 31:00 | 31:30 | 32:00 | 32:30-38:59 | 39:00 | 40:00 | 41:00-44:59 | 45:00 | 45:30 | 46:00 | 46:30 | 47:00 | 47:30-58:59 | 59:00-60:00 | 60:00 | 61:00 |
| 1 | Chimes ( $1^{\prime}$ ) |  |  |  |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise ( $1^{\prime}$ ) |  | Chimes (1') |  |  |  |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise and Chimes ( $1^{\prime}$ ) | THE END |
| 2 |  | Chimes ( $1^{\prime}$ ) |  |  |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise (1') |  |  | Chimes (1) |  |  |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise and Chimes ( $1^{\prime}$ ) | THE END |
| 3 |  |  | Chimes (1) |  |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise (1') |  |  |  | Chimes (1) |  |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise and Chimes (1') | THE END |
| 4 |  |  |  | Chimes (1) |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise (1') |  |  |  |  | Chimes (1) |  |  | peel fruit | Fragrant Noise and Chimes ( ${ }^{\prime}$ ) | THE END |

# The Toy Universe by Jordan Dykstra PLAYER 1 

15:00-16:00: chimes
19:00-20:00: peel fruit
20:00-21:00: fragrant noise
30:00-31:00: chimes
39:00-40:00: peel fruit
40:00-41:00: fragrant noise
45:00-46:00: chimes
59:00-60:00: peel fruit
60:00-61:00: fragrant noise and chimes

# The Toy Universe by Jordan Dykstra PLAYER 2 

15:30-16:30: chimes
19:00-20:00: peel fruit
20:00-21:00: fragrant noise
30:30-31:30: chimes

39:00-40:00: peel fruit
40:00-41:00: fragrant noise
45:30-46:30: chimes
59:00-60:00: peel fruit
60:00-61:00: fragrant noise and chimes

# The Toy Universe by Jordan Dykstra PLAYER 3 

## 16:00-17:00: chimes

19:00-20:00: peel fruit
20:00-21:00: fragrant noise
31:00-32:00: chimes
39:00-40:00: peel fruit
40:00-41:00: fragrant noise
46:00-47:00: chimes
59:00-60:00: peel fruit
60:00-61:00: fragrant noise and chimes

# The Toy Universe by Jordan Dykstra PLAYER 4 

16:30-17:30: chimes
19:00-20:00: peel fruit
20:00-21:00: fragrant noise
31:30-32:30: chimes
39:00-40:00: peel fruit
40:00-41:00: fragrant noise
46:30-47:30: chimes
59:00-60:00: peel fruit
60:00-61:00: fragrant noise and chimes


[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ The potpourri should consist of a unique, carefully selected, and delicate combination of sweet and savory fragrances such as citrus peels, flowers, herbs, spices, oils, etc.

