

Richard Barrett

news from nowhere

2011

4 wind players, 1 percussionist and (optional) drone instruments

performing score

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(2011)

a component of **CONSTRUCTION (resistance & vision part 8)**, commissioned by Liverpool Cultural Capital 2008.

Duration 7 minutes approximately

to Peter Neville

Instrumentation

4 wind players each using *at least* 3 different instruments, up to a maximum of 12 (one for each indicated change of instrument)

1 percussionist using a single instrument able to produce at least 4 distinct timbres, in rapid succession where necessary (examples: Udu, djembé, bodhran, darabukka, washboard...)

(optional) drone instruments, as many as possible, able to produce sustained sounds (winds, strings, electric guitar with E-Bow, bowed piano or vibraphone, organ, theremin...)

Performing instructions

Winds: One or more of the instruments (preferably as many as possible!) used by each player should be an “early” and/or “folk” and/or home-made instrument. Choices of instruments for each entry may be made spontaneously or in advance, taking into account that the score sometimes specifies that octave transposition should not be used (where this instruction does not appear it can be assumed that any pitch may be transposed into any octave) and that the individual character in timbre, intonation, articulation etc. of each instrument should have an opportunity to be emphasised. Each performer plays a sequence of 15 events (numbered 1-15 at the top left-hand corner of the “box” containing the indications for this event - these indications are to be taken as holding from its beginning to its end unless otherwise specified) whose starting and ending points are indicated in relation to the notated melody (sometimes in the middle of one of its notes). One or more of the players will at any given time be playing the melody more or less “as written”, while others might be relating to it more tangentially according to the instructions, or improvising freely (which might include any kind of relation to the melody, including none). The result should be that the melodic line is constantly changing in colour and character, sometimes going out of focus or becoming partly submerged but never entirely disappearing. Dynamics may be taken as *average* values for the event in question; extreme deviations should however be rare. An important aspect of performance technique should be the attention paid by each player to imagining and creating interrelationships between the sound-structures implied by the skeletal notated materials, and between the activities of the other players. The word “microtonal” in the indications means, for the present context, simply an interval smaller than a semitone.

M = follow the notated melody (with any additional obligatory or optional indications - see below)

∞ = free improvisation (also with optional indications)

⊙ = optional suggestions, for example “⊙ multiphonics”. The presence of some type of material or behaviour as an option somewhere in the score in no way precludes its appearance elsewhere (at points where it is not mentioned).

A double-headed arrow means “between these limits” (of dynamic, duration etc.)

C = change instrument - possibly to one you have used previously, but not the one used in the previous event

Percussion: each of 16 sections is prefaced with **1**, **2**, **3** or **A** (all) to indicate how many of the different sounds are to be used in that section. The “1” sections should naturally use different sounds rather than always the same one, especially in the last section, and the rhythmical and dynamic characteristics of the notated material might suggest which sounds and combinations would be most suitable for each section. Rests in the part are there to avoid excessive numbers of tied notes and have no implications for whether a sound is damped or allowed to ring.

∞ = free improvisation

Drones are to be played by as many performers as available, not less than 3 (unless this part is omitted altogether). The notated pitches may be played in any octave, except where indicated, and may be inflected by as much as a quartertone in either direction but (again except where indicated) with no further “ornamentation”, so that the “drones” always stay in the background of the main melody. If a sound is reattacked (when necessary to take a breath or change bow direction, but also in other types of instrument *ad lib*, as long as the overall “drone” texture is perceived as continuous) may begin with different intonation and/or in a different octave, but always with as little audible attack as possible. The arrows before and after new pitches indicate a timespan within which players individually stop playing the previous pitch and begin the new one, so the entry of new pitches is usually staggered to a greater or lesser extent through the ensemble. The new pitch may be attacked directly or reached by legato or glissando from the previous one. All attacks should be unobtrusive or nonexistent.

News from Nowhere is the title of a post-technological “utopian romance” written around 1890 by the artist, designer and socialist William Morris, whose protagonist finds himself waking up in early 21st century London which seems like a kind of neo-mediaeval world, although private property and government have been abolished and the inhabitants are almost without exception happy, healthy and long-lived. (The text can be read here: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1890/nowhere/nowhere.htm>) This music attempts to reflect Morris’ naïve fantasy of a non-futuristic future by taking the ancient concept of a melody with “ornamentation” in diverse “new” directions.

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$\text{♩} = 72$

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

① $\text{ppp} \leftarrow p$ microtonally around the prevailing melody pitch, each sound slightly different from the others in pitch and timbre \odot microtonal glissando to or from the prevailing pitch

① M tenuto/marcato p sempre

① short phrases in legato gracenotes, beginning and ending on the prevailing melody pitch
eg. or or etc. \odot staccato
 mp sempre

① M tenuto/marcato \odot occasional slight vibrato
 mp sempre

① p (all instruments begin together) ppp pp mf ppp pp mp

$ppp \leftarrow pp$ sempre

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

② short phrases in staccato gracenotes, beginning and ending on the prevailing pitch
eg. or etc. \odot legato
 ppp mf

② M $\text{dim. } f \rightarrow p$ on each new pitch in melody \odot microtonal pitch-fluctuations

(M) (as high as possible) ppp

① p ppp mf pp

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

③ ∞ intersperse with silences

② no octave transposition, vary speed within and between groups \odot substitute any or all pitches with different microtonal variants on each repetition
 mp sempre

① f p mp ppp mf pp p ppp $p \rightarrow ppp$

(each drone-instrument begins the new pitch independently, within this time-interval)

22

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2 (irregular accel.)
p sempre

wind instr. 3
 ② M tenuto/marcato senza vibr. \longleftrightarrow molto vibr. \odot measured vibr.
 cresc. *p* \longrightarrow *f* on each new pitch in melody

wind instr. 4
 ③ M

percussion
 ③ *ppp p* *ppp mp* *ppp mp* *ppp mf* *ppp f* *ppp*

drones

(see next system)

(see next system)

27

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2 groups of 3-7 legato notes, pitches from this sequence in order but starting anywhere in the "loop" \odot substitute one or more pitches in a phrase with any others
 each group *ppp* $\leftarrow (p \leftrightarrow f) \rightarrow$ *ppp* durations: $\text{quarter} \longleftrightarrow \text{quarter}$

wind instr. 3 develop from molto vibrato into wider and slower undulations in pitch, becoming more irregular in amplitude and duration...
ppp

wind instr. 4 (M)
p sempre \odot timbral changes accelerate into slow "vibrato"

percussion
 ③ *mf* *ppp p* *mp* *ppp mp* *ppp p* *ppp p* *ppp*

drones

32

melody

wind instr. 1 ④ M tenuto/marcato - "breathy" sound throughout \odot microtonal trills
pp

wind instr. 2 ④ continuous rapid alternation between changing pairs of pitches chosen from these (also see next page)
pp cresc... \odot alternation between two distinctive-sounding fingerings on a single pitch

wind instr. 3 ③ ∞
 \odot *ppp* cresc...

wind instr. 4 (M)
 breath only
ppp

percussion
 ③ *p* *ppp* *p* *ppp* *f* sempre

drones (as before)

(see next page)

(see next page)

39

melody

wind instr. 1 (increasingly wide trills/tremoli) → unstable! **C** *ff*

wind instr. 2 durations: (cresc.) → (cresc.) *ff* **C**

wind instr. 3 **C** *ff* **4** multiphonics only, based on any of these pitches: *ppp* <f> *ppp* ○ move between multiphonic and single pitch

wind instr. 4 (M) tenuto/marcato - multiphonics only, based on and emphasising the pitches of the melody ○ multiphonic trills *mf* sempre

percussion (2) *f*

drones

43

melody **4** **8**

wind instr. 1 **5** M single dense multiphonic based on G# using any of these pitches in free order: ○ sometimes in pairs *pp* *ff* *pp* ↔ *mf*

wind instr. 2 **5** M legato - constant alternation between prevailing pitch and microtonal variation(s) of it *f* sempre ○ wider intervals between main pitch and variants

wind instr. 3 **C**

wind instr. 4 (M) multiphonic based on G#, alternating with as many others as possible, accel. molto... perhaps breaking up... *pp*

percussion (2) *f* (A) *ppp* cresc. poco a poco 13-12 3-2

drones

51

melody

wind instr. 1 **C**

wind instr. 2 **7-8** **C** **6** *ppp* ○ predominantly *ppp*

wind instr. 3 **5** short phrases eg. *pp* sempre beginning with the prevailing pitch and continuing with a free selection from these: ○ microtonal variations


wind instr. 4 **5** M staccato sempre ○ iterated staccato eg. *p* ↔ *ff* at beginning of duration

percussion (A) 4:3 8:7 3:2 3:2 3:2 8:7 3:2 9:11 7:5 3 *(cresc. sempre)*

drones

59

melody $\frac{3}{16}$ $\frac{3}{8}$

wind instr. 1 $\textcircled{6}M$
legato, groups of between 2 and 5 grace notes before each melody note, using pitches from this sequence (in order, starting at any point): 
ppp cresc. poco a poco \odot differentiate the durations of the grace notes

wind instr. 2 ∞ \textcircled{C}

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4 (M) \textcircled{C}
pp sub. $\textcircled{6}$ (see next system)


percussion (A) $\textcircled{2}$
(cresc.) $\frac{9:7}$ $\frac{8:9}$ $\frac{10:11}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$
(mp) *f sub.* *pp* *ff* *mf* *pp sub.* *p* *mp*

drones

63

melody $\frac{4}{8}$

wind instr. 1 (M) \textcircled{C}
(cresc.) *fff*

wind instr. 2 $\textcircled{7}$
staccato grace-note groups, separated by breath-pauses, of between 3 and 7 notes beginning and ending on the prevailing pitch and otherwise consisting of pitches from this sequence (in order, starting anywhere in the "loop"): 
ff dim... \odot substituting microtonal variations

wind instr. 3 $\textcircled{6}M$
marcato, ending each note more or less early *ad lib.*
f dim. poco a poco \odot microtonal glissando away from the pitch

wind instr. 4 \textcircled{C}

percussion $\textcircled{2}$ \textcircled{A}
(mp) *p* *ff sub.* *pp* *mp* *p* *mf* *ff* *f* *mf sempre*

drones

70

melody $\frac{5}{16}$ $\frac{3}{8}$

wind instr. 1 $\textcircled{7}M$
legato \longleftrightarrow non tenuto, singing same pitch as the instrument (no octave transpositions!) \odot hold pitch with instrument, microtonal glissando away from it with voice
mf $\textcircled{6}$ intertwined instrumental/vocal glissandi around B \flat


wind instr. 2 $(dim...)$ \textcircled{C} $(dim...)$ *ppp*

wind instr. 3 (M) $\textcircled{7}M$
 $\textcircled{7}M$ tenuto/marcato, always with microtonal trills
pp sempre \odot trill and glissando

wind instr. 4 $\textcircled{7}$
glissandi (ascending or descending) from prevailing pitch to a minor 3rd or less above or below
ppp \longleftrightarrow *p* \odot singing same glissando while playing

percussion (A) $\textcircled{3}$
(mf) *pp sempre*

drones

* range of grace notes (no octave transposition): 

76

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

4 8

7 16

5 4 8

⑧ M

legato, no octave transposition

mp

fff

⑧ M

legato, no octave transposition

mp

fff

(M)

⑧ M

legato, no octave transposition

mp

fff

⑧ M

legato, no octave transposition

mp

fff

③

ppp

①

p

ff

no octave transposition!

f

82

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

4 8

7 16

3 8

M

staccatissimo, free octave transposition

f

p

⑨ M

either *diva sopra* or *bassa* throughout, legato ←→ marcato, freely-chosen grace notes and trills linking and ornamenting the melody pitches

sub. *ppp* sempre

○ occasional louder accent (*px* or *mpx*)

M

staccatissimo, free octave transposition

f

p

C

M

staccatissimo, free octave transposition

f

p

⑩ fragments of this section of the melody, speeded up irregularly to different degrees and almost always using microtonal variants of the pitches

tenu → staccato

- no octave transpositions!

sub. *ppp* sempre

○ occasional louder accent (*px* or *mpx*)

M

staccatissimo, free octave transposition

f

p

C

A

ppp

ppp sempre

②

4:3 3:2 6:5 3:2 7:5 3:2 4:3 4:3 3:2 7:6

free octave transposition as before

(tacet!)

ppp ←→ pp sempre

88

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

4 8

5 16

(M)

7

⑩

legato scales eg.

ppp → f ppp → f ppp → f

etc. - beginning from prevailing pitch and mixing intervals freely between quartertones and minor 3rds

○ accel. or rit. within scales

M

legato

ppp

f

dim...

⑩ M

(see next page)

pp cresc...

⑦ ∞

○ extract pitches from drones, beginning always *ppp* then extend and elaborate them

②

ppp

③

mf sempre

94

5 16 3 8

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

(dim.) **PPP**

(M) link melody notes with legato grace-note scales, eg. but also etc. staccato grace-note groups (cresc.)

∞

③ (mf) ① (tremolo or other kind of extended sound) p mf p (non trem) p mf p mf p

C 7

⑩ (see next system) mp sempre

101

4 8

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

play the melody (varying in timing and/or intonation from instrument 3) but alternate the prevailing pitch with freely-chosen pitches from this sequence: substitute other pitches freely for these

... using rhythms of this kind: (where the prevailing pitch has the longer durations) r: 3-2 r: 3-2

(M) (cresc.) distorted timbre **ff** **PPP**

⑩ M continue scalic grace-note links from event 10 in instrument 3, but now adding trills to all melody notes **p** **f dim...**

③ ① mf p mf p mf p f dim... 6-4 4-3 5-6 5-4 7-9

⑪ (see next system) mf dim...

⑪ M (see below) p sempre

107

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

legato phrases, each consisting of all 11 pitches: each time with different distribution of transpositions (octave higher, octave lower or at notated pitch) and different distribution of durations durations: phrases separated by: non legato

(dim.)

C 7

⑪ M legato - glissandi (over entire duration) or portamenti linking all pitches **pp** sempre glissando overshoots target pitch and then returns to it (as low as possible)

(M) non tenuto, ending each melody note early *ad lib.*, with glissando (up to a fourth) away from notated pitch each time tenuto/legato, with glissando linking to the next melody pitch

speed of trill becoming more irregular... **pp**

③ (dim...) 13-10 6-5 3-2 4-5 11-9 3-2 16-11

112

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

(dim.) ... *ppp*

(M)

(12) M (see below) *mf* sempre

(12) sparse, irregular staccatissimo sounds, varied in timbre and intonation, pitches chosen freely from: *mp* sempre ○ occasional longer duration

(11) sparse, irregular short sounds, varied in timbre and intonation, each with a glissando of up to a major third in either direction, pitches chosen freely from: *p* sempre ○ occasional longer duration, occasional staccatissimo

(3) 4:3 (dim.) ... *pp* 3:2 2 *p* sempre

119

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

(M) staccato iterations ○ brief gaps in the stream of staccato sounds

(C)

(12) M tenuto/marcato, always fluttertongued ○ (brief bursts of rapid tongued attacks placed irregularly) *mp* sempre

(2) (p)

126

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

(C)

(12) on each repetition substitute freely-chosen pitches for between one and three of the notated ones, including octave transpositions ○ sustain one of the sounds for a longer duration, with fluttertongue *mf* dim...

(13) M tenuto/marcato ○ distorted timbre on attacks *dim. f* → *ppp* on each note in melody

(M)

(mp) *ff*

(2) (p) (A) ∞

4/8

132

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

13 ∞

⊙ with unpitched sounds making connection to percussion

(dim.) -p

13 M

legato/portamento - no octave transposition - range =

ppp sempre

(M)

13 ∞

⊙ with unpitched sounds making connection to percussion

(A)

(C)

137

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

9 16

14 M

(see below)

ppp sempre

(M)

14 ∞

⊙ with unpitched sounds making connection to percussion

(A)

(C)

142

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

9 16 3 8

(M)

tenuto/marcato - no octave transposition - range =

⊙ transitions to and from breathy tone

(C)

14 M

legato, breathy tone

ppp sempre

14

repeat with slight variations in tempo of the 8-note phrase, up to four pitches transposed differently by octaves in each repetition

ppp sempre

⊙ some phrases with breathy tone, some almost only breath

mp ppp

p pp

mf

⊙ (ie. change the "I" for each group)

148

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

15 descending pairs of pitches, varying tempo slightly, each using any two of these: (no octave transpositions!)
 ○ repeat the same pair two or three times
 ○ vary one pitch of a pair by a quartertone up or down

(M) ∞

15 M tenuto/marcato, breathy sound sometimes vanishing altogether
 ppp sempre ○ irregular diaphragm accents as if at the end of a breath

① ① ① ① ① ①
 f mp ppp mf p mp p

155

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

15 ∞

(pure tone, no change in pitch, timbre or dynamic, use circular breathing)

15 M legato, beginning almost with breath only ... gradually increasingly distorted sound (with fluttertongue, multiphonics, trills, adding voice, gracenotes etc., singly and in combination)..
 ppp cresc. poco a poco

f

159

melody

wind instr. 1

wind instr. 2

wind instr. 3

wind instr. 4

percussion

drones

∞

(M) (sim...) (cresc.) -ff]

① ①
 mf ff

4-3

(end together)

(non dim.)