**Richard Barrett** 

# news from nowhere

2011 4 wind players, 1 percussionist and (optional) drone instruments

### performing score

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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)

I 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)

 $\infty$  = 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

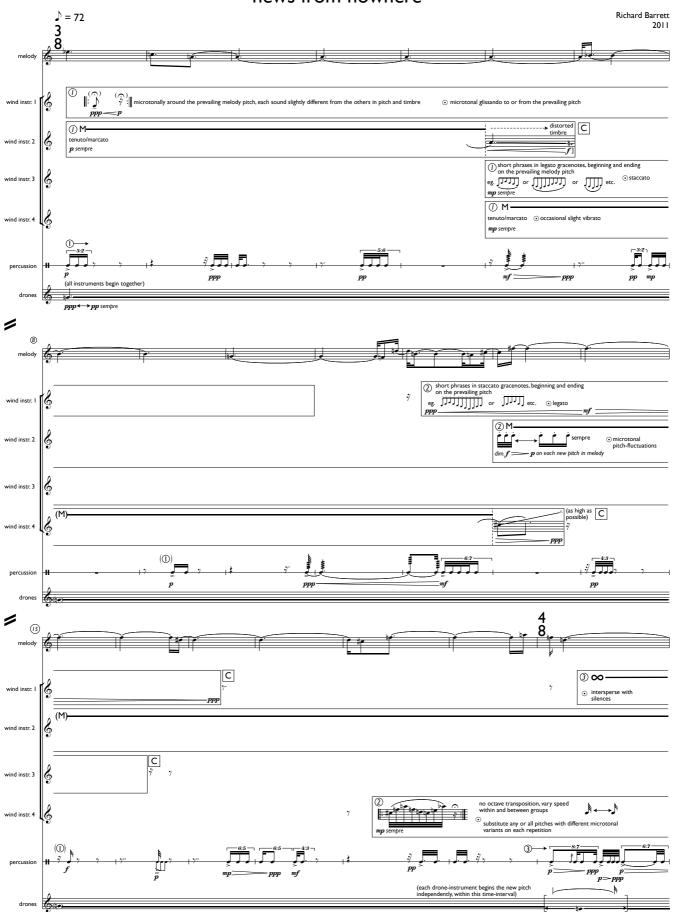
**Percussion:** each of 16 sections is prefaced with 1, 2, 3 or A (all) to indicate how many of the different sounds are to be used in that section. The "I" sections should naturally use different sounds rather than always the same one, especially in the last section, and the rhythmical and dynamic characteristics 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.

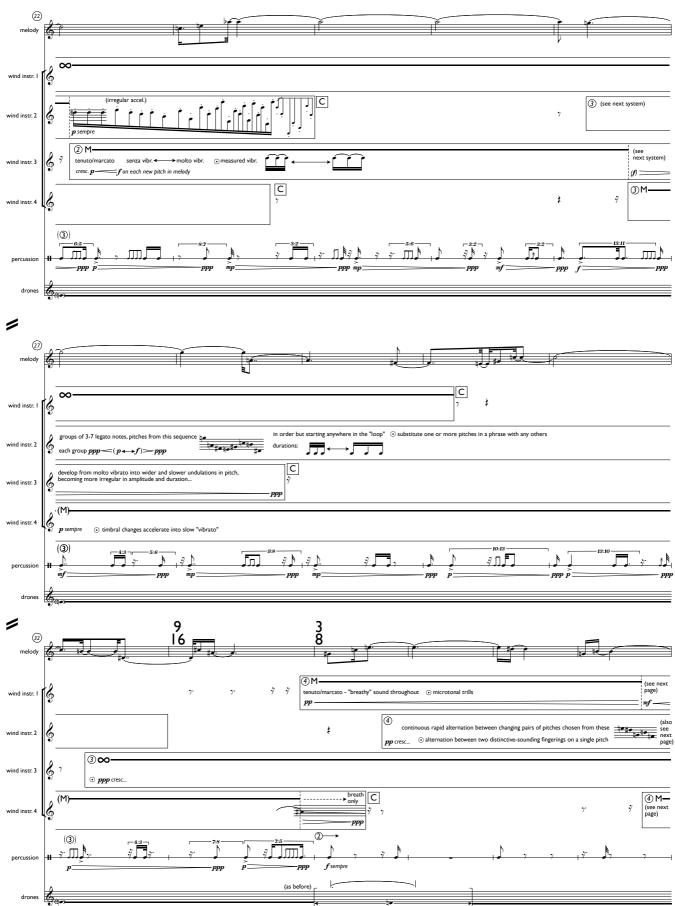
 $\infty$  = free improvisation

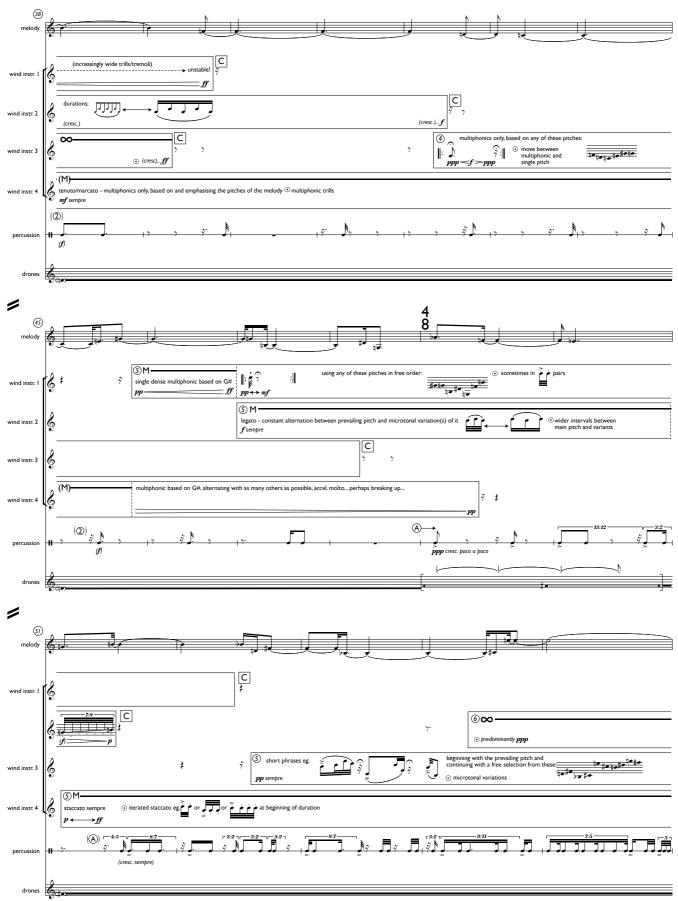
**Drones** are to be played by as many performers as available, not less than 3 (unless this part is omitted altogether). The notated pitches may be played in any octave, except where indicated, and may be inflected by as much as a quartertone in either direction but (again except where indicated) with 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.

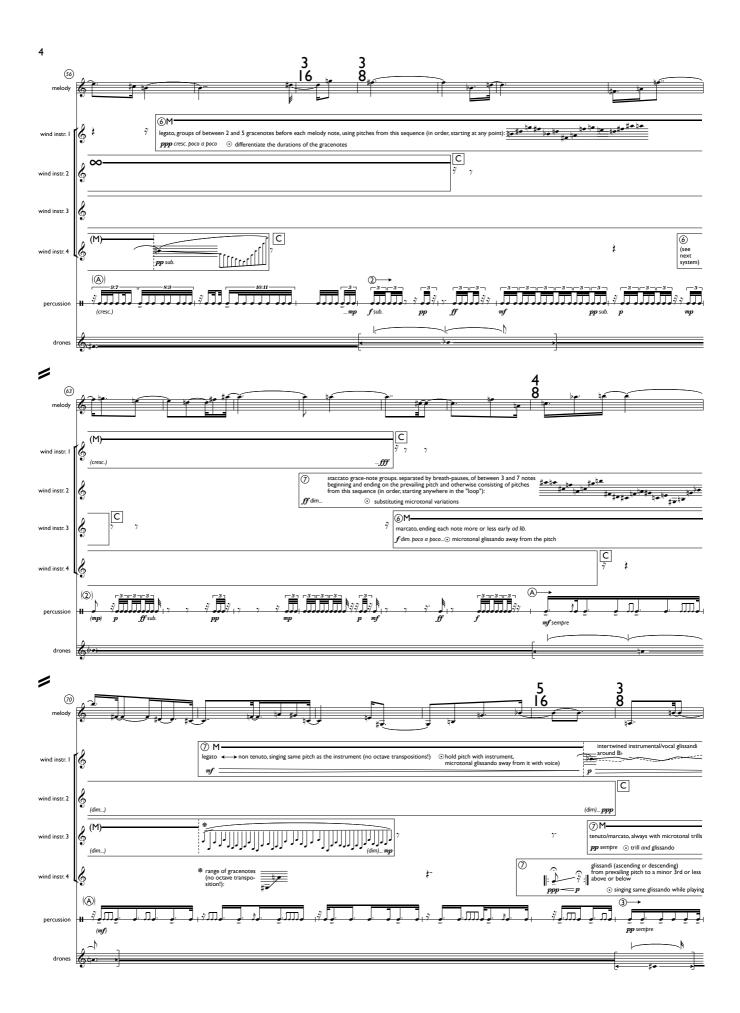
**News from Nowhere** is the title of a post-technological "utopian romance" written around 1890 by the artist, designer and socialist William Morris, whose protagonist finds himself waking up in early 21st century London which seems like a kind of neo-mediaeval world, although private property and government 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.

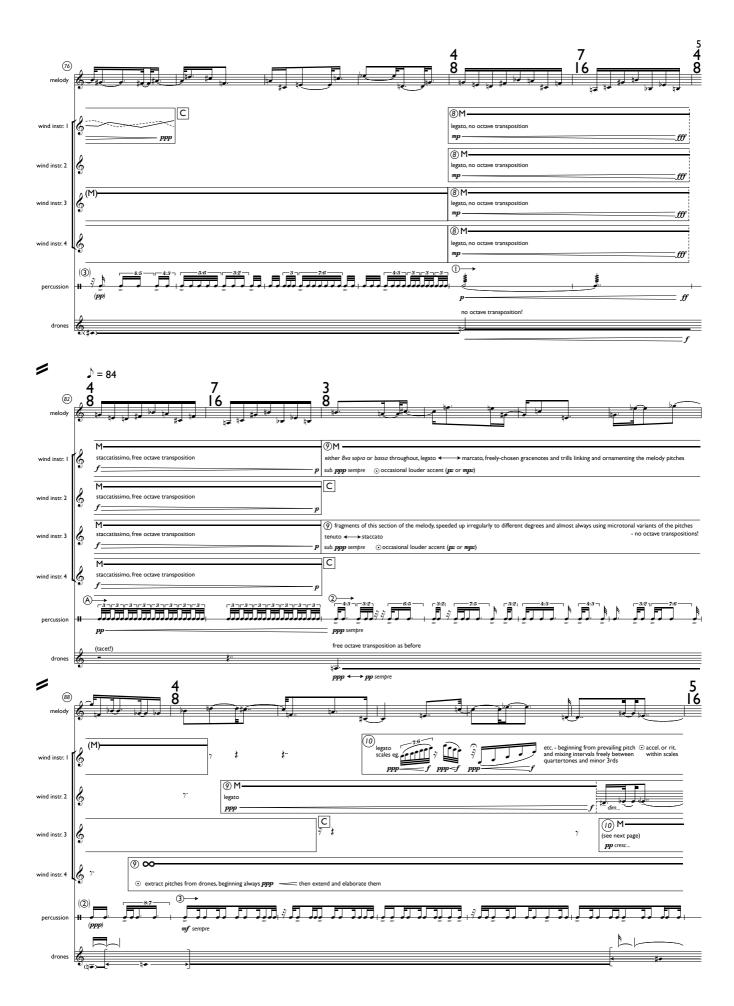
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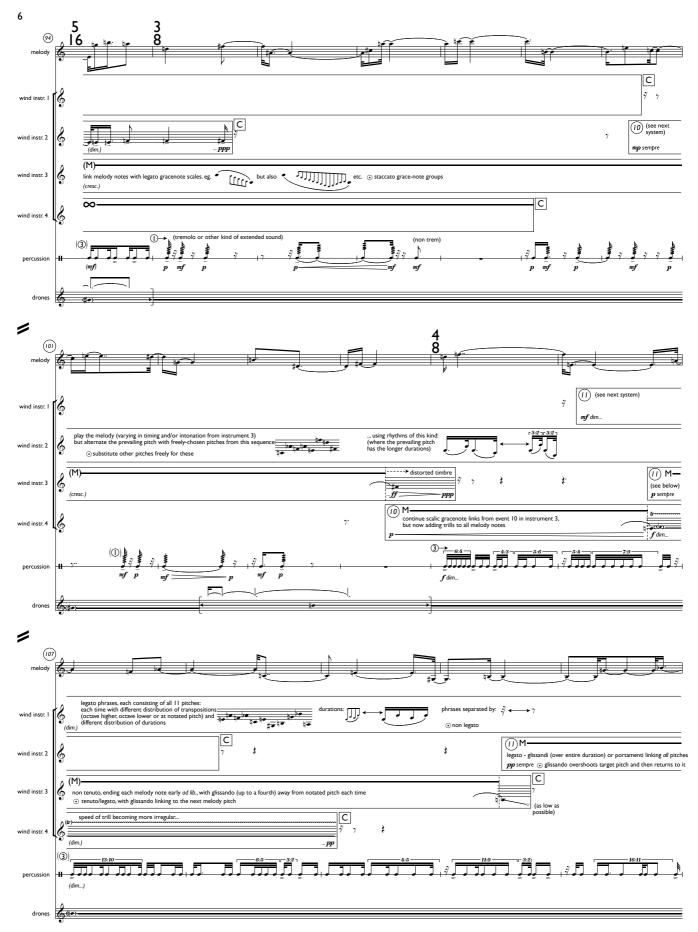


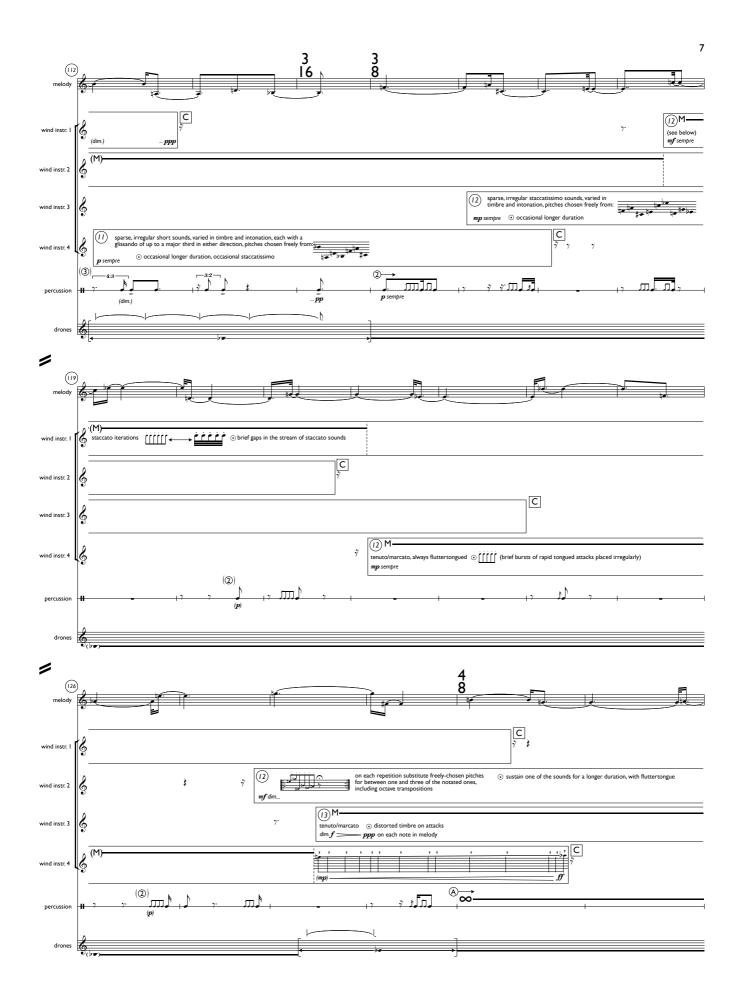


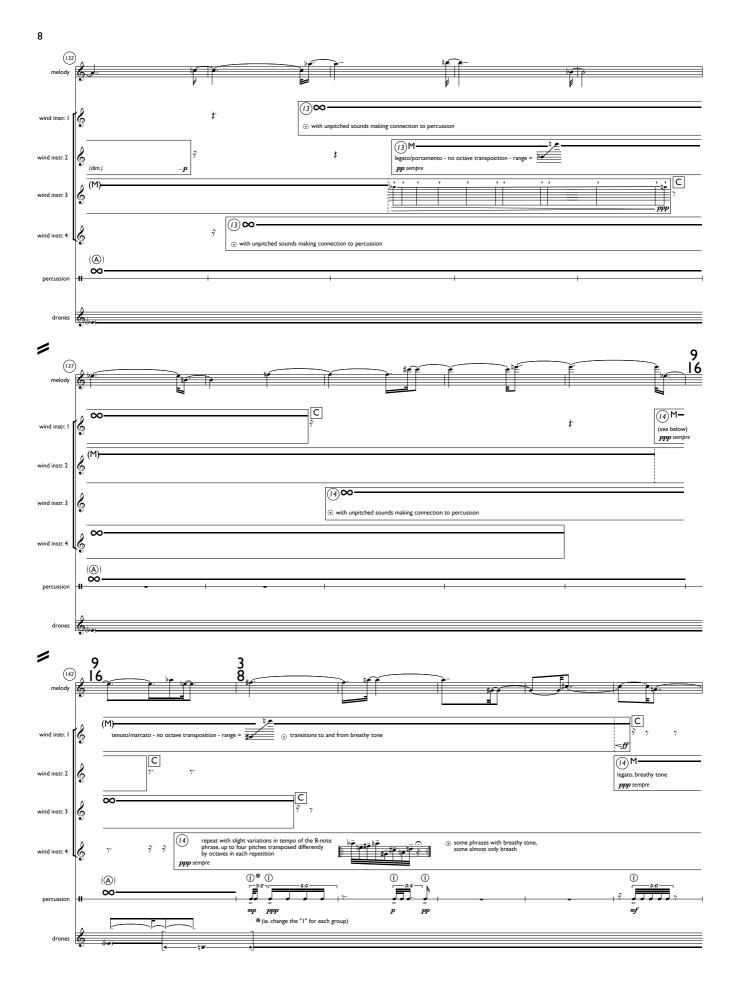


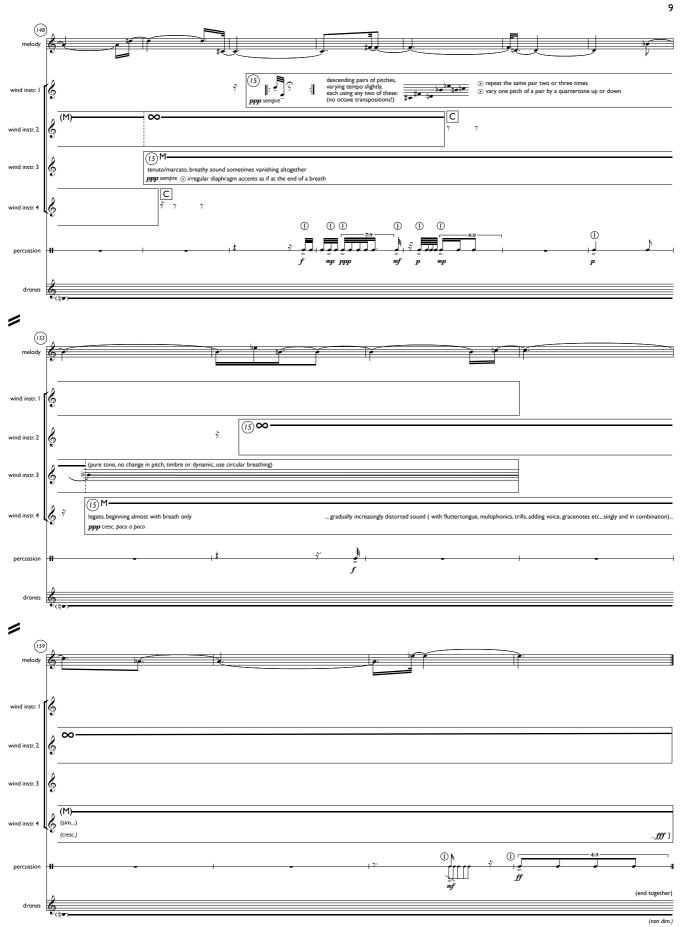












Berlin 24 February 2011