

Philip Schuessler

Glass Abattoir

for three speaking percussionists



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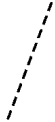
Performance Notes

General:


Durations are notated proportionally with noteheads only (no stems). Grace notes are very short durations, but are not to be taken literally in terms of rhythm. Bars delineate 5-second intervals, thus durations should be executed over the length measures suggested by the proportional notation.

 - Horizontal dotted lines above the staff indicate a gradual transition from one state or mode of playing to another.

 - Vertical dotted lines indicate when two or more players are to begin or stop at the same moment.


 - Diagonal dotted indicate when two gestures are to be connected one directly after another.

 - Solid horizontal lines after a notehead indicate a sustained duration.

 - Cut off, or dampen, suddenly


Voice:

The voice is notated on a single-line staff. There are three modes of vocal delivery: spoken, whispered, and singing (falsetto). Spoken delivery is notated with solid noteheads on the single line. Whispered delivery is notated with x-shaped noteheads on the space below the line. Falsetto delivery is delivered with clear noteheads with a dot in the middle on the space above the line:




in part o - ver

- One syllable per notehead is spoken for a regular and even delivery.




ma-jor wa-ter

- In some instances, multi-syllabic words are notated with the second (or unstressed) syllable(s) as a notehead in parenthesis. This indicates that the syllables should be spoken evenly but naturally. The regular stresses of each word should be maintained.




most-ly wo-men

- One syllable per notehead is whispered for a regular and even delivery.



like the light-house

- One syllable per notehead is sung in a falsetto or head voice register. Pitches may be selected at random; however, for passages in which falsetto voice is to be used in immediate succession, the same pitch should be sung for each note.



[and the gunners on the Humvees
guys who were 18 or 19 - would
shoot in that direction]

- Bracketed text underneath a solid black line on the staff indicates chunks of text to be delivered freely (unmeasured) within the indicated proportional time frame. Not all of the text need be executed, nor does the text need be delivered in any particular order.

Types of inflection:



- Written above the staff, this is an indication to execute the written text with a high degree of expression and inflection: lots of contour, over-enunciation of syllables, etc.



- Written above the staff, this is an indication to execute the written text with a moderate degree of expression and inflection



- Written above the staff, this is an indication to execute the written text in a very flat manner, with little-to-no contour or inflection

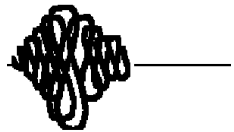
Graphic symbols:



- Whisper or speak (as indicated) nonsense syllables in a fast, dense manner. The width of the scribble is proportional to the density and loudness of the whispered or spoken syllables. In this example, the syllables increase and then decrease in loudness.



- In this example, the nonsense syllables are less dense and compact with more space between utterances



- In this example, nonsense syllables are interspersed freely with the text provided in brackets below the staff. Not all of the text need be executed, nor does the text need be delivered in any particular order.

[laughed good guys
jack o'lantern mother
18 or 19 cellphones
steering wheel]

Percussion:



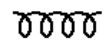
- Play with two metallic eating utensils (i.e. a fork and knife, fork and spoon, a knife and spoon, or two of the same)



- Play with hands. Use pads of fingers or fingernails to play on surface of instrument.

Percussion is notated on a three-line staff: the top line is for a drinking glass, the middle line for an unspecified metal object, the bottom line for an unspecified wooden object.

Glass – the glass percussion object should be a crystal drinking glass that may produce a pitch if a wetted finger is rubbed across the rim. The drinking glass should also be strong enough to sustain percussive taps with a metal utensil. The glass should be filled with potable water.



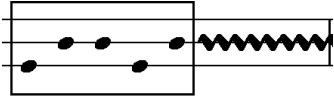
- At various stages of the piece, the performers are each asked to rub a wetted finger around the rim of the glass such that a ringing pitch is sustained for a certain length. This circular symbol is provided above the staff to indicate such an action. The pitch of the glass is indeterminate and will vary with the amount of water in the glass. The drinking glass for each performer should be filled to different levels so as to produce three distinct pitches.

At other points in the piece, the performer is asked to hit the side of the glass with a metallic utensil or hand. Performers should not break the drinking glass.

Each player is also asked to drink some, or all, of the water from the glass at different points in the piece.

Metal – the metal percussion object may of any type or size. It may be a standard percussion instrument (such as a cowbell or crotale), or it may be a non-standard, or found, object (such as a trashcan lid or piece of scrap metal). The object may resonate, or it may have a flat, dead sound.

Wood – the wood percussion object may be of any type or size. It may be a standard percussion instrument (such as a woodblock), or it may be a non-standard, or found, object (such as a 2 x 4 plank). The object may resonate, or it may have a flat, dead sound.



- noteheads in boxes that are followed by a thick trill symbol indicate to play the figure repeatedly at random intervals for the duration of the trill marking.

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The score consists of three systems, each with a Voice part and a Percussion part. The Percussion part is divided into Glass and Metal/Wood.

- System 1:**
 - Voice:** Starts with "whispered fast nonsense" (pp), followed by "can - dle light" (pp) and "glow - sticks" (pp).
 - Percussion:** Features a single note with an accent (p) in the Metal/Wood section.
- System 2:**
 - Voice:** Starts with "whispered fast nonsense" (p), followed by "fire" (pp), and then "whispered fast nonsense" (mf) transitioning to "spoken nonsense" (p to mp).
 - Percussion:** Features a note with an accent (pp) in the Metal/Wood section.
- System 3:**
 - Voice:** Starts with "whispered fast nonsense" (sfz) transitioning to "slow nonsense" (ppp), followed by "wa - ter" (pp) and "brook" (p).
 - Percussion:** Features a series of notes in the Metal/Wood section, starting with a note (p) and ending with a phrase (mf).

Voc. *p* broooo - m stick glow stick *pp*

Voc. *p* shh - - ooos! *mp*

Voc. *p* *mp*

Voc. *p* *mp*

Perc. *p*

Perc. *p*

Perc. *mp*

Perc. *rit* *p* *p*

whispered nonsense interspersed within text *poco mp*

[process water spiraling system people rainwater draw widespread]

whispered nonsense interspersed within text *poco mp*

[laughed good guys jack o'lantern mother 18 or 19 cellphones steering wheel]

repeat figure at random intervals

Voc. *mf* shh!

Voc. *spoken falsetto (random pitch)*
mp < f en - gines!

Perc. *repeat figure at random intervals*
mp *f* *mf* *f* *mp*

Voc. *whispered p* with - out shoes or *f* moc - ca - sins!
falsetto (random pitch)

Perc. *mf* *p* *mf*

Voc. *spoken p* car - ry - ing few *f* light!
falsetto (random pitch)

Voc. *whispered nonsense interspersed within text poco mf*
[gold whiskey walk lottery salt pork wagons]

Voc. *f* shh!

Perc. *f* *mp* *mf* *f* *p*

repeat figure at random intervals

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is organized into three systems, each consisting of a vocal line (Voc.) and a percussion line (Perc.).
 - **System 1:** The vocal line starts with a rest, followed by a note marked *mf* with the instruction 'shh!'. This is followed by a long rest, then a note marked *mp < f* with the instruction 'spoken falsetto (random pitch)' and the lyrics 'en - gines!'. The percussion line begins with a double bar line and a box containing a rhythmic figure marked *mp*, with the instruction 'repeat figure at random intervals'. This is followed by a series of notes marked *f*, *mf*, *f*, and *mp*.
 - **System 2:** The vocal line starts with a note marked *p* and the instruction 'whispered', followed by the lyrics 'with - out shoes or'. This is followed by a note marked *f* with the instruction 'falsetto (random pitch)' and the lyrics 'moc - ca - sins!'. The percussion line continues with a series of notes, including a note marked *mf* and another marked *p*.
 - **System 3:** The vocal line starts with a note marked *p* and the instruction 'spoken', followed by the lyrics 'car - ry - ing few light!'. This is followed by a note marked *f* with the instruction 'falsetto (random pitch)'. The percussion line has a note marked *f*, followed by a box containing a rhythmic figure marked *mp*, with the instruction 'repeat figure at random intervals'. This is followed by notes marked *mf*, *f*, and *p*.
 - **Additional Elements:** A large scribble in the vocal line of System 3 is labeled 'whispered nonsense interspersed within text poco mf' with the example text '[gold whiskey walk lottery salt pork wagons]'. A final note marked *f* with the instruction 'shh!' appears at the end of the vocal line in System 3.

The musical score consists of four staves, grouped into two systems. Each system has a vocal staff and a percussion staff.

- System 1 (Top):**
 - Voc. (top):** Lyrics: "pro - cess". Dynamic: *pp*. Performance instruction: *whisper*. There are two 'x' marks above the staff.
 - Perc. (middle):** Features a series of five notes with stems, followed by a *ppp* dynamic marking. A *p* dynamic marking is also present.
- System 2 (Bottom):**
 - Voc. (top):** Lyrics: "pro - mi - ses!". Dynamic: *f*. There is a black square above the staff.
 - Perc. (middle):** Features a series of five notes with stems, followed by a *pp* dynamic marking.
- System 3 (Bottom):**
 - Voc. (top):** Lyrics: "de - vi - ces". Dynamic: *p*. Performance instruction: *whisper*. There are three 'x' marks above the staff.
 - Perc. (bottom):** Features a series of five notes with stems, followed by a *p* dynamic marking.

Dashed lines connect notes between the Percussion and Vocal staves across the systems, indicating melodic or rhythmic relationships.

whispered nonsense -----> interspersed with text

f ----- *p*

The musical score consists of four systems, each with a vocal line (Voc.) and a percussion line (Perc.).

- System 1:**
 - Voc.: *mf* as part of
 - Perc.: *pp*
- System 2:**
 - Voc.: *f* ho! in part o - ver *mp*
 - Perc.: *pp*
- System 3:**
 - Voc.: [whispered nonsense] [interspersed with text] *f* ho!
 - Perc.: *f*
- System 4:**
 - Voc.: [whispered nonsense] [interspersed with text] *f* ho!
 - Perc.: *p* *f* *mf*

Performance instructions include: "exhale excitedly" (black square), "inhale excitedly" (black square), and "[restoration reconstruction public system water process]" (text). Dynamic markings include *f*, *pp*, *mf*, and *p*. A crescendo and decrescendo hairpin are shown above the vocal line in System 3.

[restoration reconstruction
public system water process]

whispered nonsense

exhale excitedly

inhale excitedly

Voc.

Perc.

rit.

pp

p

mf

mf

repeat figure at random intervals

inhale excitedly
f

ho!

spoken
mp

their homes were burrr

falsetto
poco *mf*

p

repeat figure at random intervals

mf

pp

f

inhale excitedly
f

ho! ho!

spoken
mp

or sit-ting out-side their homes

whispered
p

broom - sticks

Voc.

Perc.

mf

> >

System 1:

Voc. *inhale excitedly* **f** *spoken* **p**
 ho! the pe - ople re - spond - ed

Perc. *pp* **f** **p** *ppp*

spoken fast nonsense -----> slow nonsense

System 2:

Voc. *exhale excitedly* **f** *inhale exhale* *spoken* **p**
 ho! ho! ho! cross - fire pe - ople

Perc. *take small sip of water from glass* **p** *pp* *mp*

System 3:

Voc. *spoken* **p**
 cross - fire pe - ople

Perc. **f** **p** *pp* *mp*

Voc. *whispered, freely* **p** [The people responded. A four day general strike in January] *spoken* **mp** two thou-sand *spoken as fast as possible* **f** [When Enron's spiraling financial troubles scuttled the attempt]

Perc. **||** **f**

Voc. *spoken* **p** a - *falsetto* **f** bout! *spoken, freely* **mp** [two thousand moved west through this trickery] *spoken* **mp** some fif-teen thou-sand *falsetto* were not fooled by these meth-ods and *whispered*

Perc. **||** **f** **p**

Voc. *spoken, evenly* **mp** I know it's on-ly gon-na last fif-teen mi-nutes *spoken as fast as possible* **f** [When our guys went after someone who fired on us they were dead]

Perc. **p** **f**

whispered *spoken*
mp

Voc. spi-ral-ing fi-nan-cial trou-ble

Perc. *repeat figure at random intervals*

Voc. *spoken, freely mp* *falsetto p* *spoken* *falsetto whispered* *falsetto* *spoken* *as fast as possible pp*
 [troubles began in part over gold mines that] o - pened o - nly the ver - y old sick and small chil-dren [could be carried in wagons or ride on horseback]

Perc.

Voc. *falsetto p* *spoken* *whispered* *falsetto* *spoken*
 at - tend to ci - vil - ian cas - ual - ties most - ly wo - men and chil-dren

Perc.

10

Voc. *p* rates were quick - ly in - creased col - lect [rainwater without financial obligation to the new owner] *whispered freely, fast*

Perc. *p* *p*

Voc. *p* *spoken, freely* [their homes and gave them no chance to] col - lect were

Perc. *p* *p* *ff* *p*

Voc. they were *whispered* dead [driving by or sitting outside] their homes *freely*

Perc. *take small sip of water from glass* *p* *repeat figure at random intervals* *p*

The score is divided into three systems, each with a vocal line and a percussion line.

System 1:
 - **Voc.:** *spoken, freely mp* [some families were paying twenty to fifty percent]
 - **Perc.:** Starts with a double bar line. A series of five eighth notes is marked above the staff. A fermata is placed over the end of the first measure.

System 2:
 - **Voc.:** *freely* [burned and their property] *falsetto pp* de-stroyed
 - **Perc.:** Starts with a double bar line. A quarter note with an accent is marked above the staff. A series of five eighth notes is marked above the staff. A fermata is placed over the end of the first measure. The system ends with a quarter note marked *p* and a half note marked *pp*.

System 3:
 - **Voc.:** *whispered, freely mp* [and half of them] *spoken, evenly mp* died on me
 - **Perc.:** Starts with a double bar line and a wavy line. A series of five eighth notes is marked above the staff. The system ends with a quarter note marked *p*, a quarter note marked *mf*, and a quarter note marked *p*.

Voc.

drink entire glass of water and set glass back down

Perc. **||**

f

Voc.

Perc. **||**

f

Voc.

once player 1 sets glass down, pour half the amount of water from glass into player 1's glass

Perc. **||**

f

Legend:
 ■ freely from whispering to shouting
 □ spoken, evenly
 ○ *f*
 ● *mp*
 ● (●) *p*
 ● (●) (●) *pp*
 ○ *falsetto*

Vocal Part 1:
 [Enron corporation was in the process of capturing major water rights from Florida]
 ma-jor wa-ter rights from Flo-rid-a

Vocal Part 2:
 [Georgia legislature ruled to acquire the lands]
 Geor - gia le - gis - la - ture ruled
 [removal of all Indians to reservations and]
 di-scov-er - y of gold

Vocal Part 3:
 when our guys

Performance Notes:
 - Percussion: Drum hits at the start of each vocal line.
 - Dynamics: *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), *pp* (pianissimo).
 - Articulation: Slurs and accents are used to indicate phrasing and emphasis.

Voc. 1: *spoken, freely* **mf** [in 1999 a subsidiary of Bechtel] signed

Perc. 1: *f* **mf**

Voc. 2: *spoken* had *whispered* fueled *spoken* the *falsetto* fire *spoken* in *mp* earn - est *falsetto* the sol - diers *pp*

Perc. 2: *spoken* went *whispered* af - ter *spoken* some - one *falsetto* who fired *spoken* on *mp* us *whispered* they were dead *spoken, freely* [and the gunners on the Humvees - guys who were 18 or 19 - would shoot in that direction] there isn't *mf*

Perc. 3: *mf* repeat figure at random intervals

The score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line (Voc.) and a percussion line (Perc.).

System 1:

- Voc.:** Lyrics: "a con-tract". Performance: *freely*. [gaining control of Bolivia's water].
- Perc.:** Includes a double bar line and a series of notes.
- Voc.:** Lyrics: "search-light". Performance: *whispered p*.
- Perc.:** Includes a series of notes.
- Voc.:** Lyrics: "[general strike in January 2000 provoked a violent police response and the imposition of martial law]". Performance: *spoken, freely "like a news anchor" mf*.

System 2:

- Voc.:** Lyrics: "search-light". Performance: *whispered p*.
- Perc.:** Includes a series of notes.
- Voc.:** Lyrics: "[surrounded their homes and gave them no chance to collect their belongings]". Performance: *spoken, freely "like a town crier" f*.
- Perc.:** Includes a series of notes.
- Voc.:** Lyrics: "[surrounded their homes and gave them no]". Performance: *whispered, freely pp*.

System 3:

- Voc.:** Lyrics: "a po - li - cy". Performance: *whispered, evenly p*.
- Perc.:** Includes a double bar line and a series of notes.
- Voc.:** Lyrics: "you just do it". Performance: *mf*.
- Perc.:** Includes a series of notes.
- Voc.:** Lyrics: "search-light". Performance: *falsetto p*.
- Perc.:** Includes a series of notes.
- Voc.:** Lyrics: "[we were certified medics attached to a tank and artillery battalion]". Performance: *spoken, freely f*.

Voc. *mf* [without financial obligation to the new owner] *falsetto, evenly* like the light-house it - self *mf* *spoken, freely* [four-day general strike in January 2000 provoked a violent police response and the imposition of martial]

Perc. *mf*

Voc. *spoken p* the sol-diers *falsetto, evenly mf* like the light-house it - self

Perc. *mf* *repeat figure at random intervals* *mf* *repeat figure at random intervals*

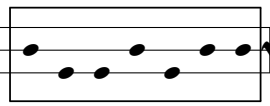
Voc. *mf* [some put glowsticks in this one dead guy's head] *falsetto, evenly* like the light-house it - self


Perc. *mf* *repeat figure at random intervals*

☐
spoken, freely, calmly
p

[families were paying twenty to fifty percent of their monthly income for water]

Voc. _____

Perc.  *mf* *repeat figure at random intervals*

Voc.  *spoken, freely*
mp


[law was passed that no Indian or descendants of an Indian shall be deemed a competent witness in any case in court to which a white person may be a party]


evenly

med-i - cal care was near - ly

p

non-ex - ist - ent

Perc. 

Voc.  *spoken, evenly*
mp



we were cert-i-fied med - ics


freely

[attached to a tank and artillery battallion]

rapidly
f

[my mother said I couldn't talk]

Perc.   *rit.*

f  *mp*

spoken, calmly
pp
[secure in the midst of the most turbulent sea]

p

spoken, calmly
pp
[a huge searchlight which scoured far and wide]

drink entire glass of water and set back down

spoken, calmly
pp
[my foundations went deep into the earth]

p

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal staff (Voc.) and a percussion staff (Perc.).
 - **System 1:** The vocal staff begins with the instruction "spoken, calmly" and dynamic marking "pp", followed by the lyric "[secure in the midst of the most turbulent sea]". A thick horizontal line spans the first two measures. The percussion staff starts with a double bar line and dynamic marking "p", followed by a thick horizontal line. A vertical dashed line is positioned at the end of the second measure.
 - **System 2:** The vocal staff has a thick horizontal line in the third measure, with the instruction "spoken, calmly" and dynamic marking "pp" above it, and the lyric "[a huge searchlight which scoured far and wide]" below it. The percussion staff has the instruction "drink entire glass of water and set back down" in the first measure. In the third measure, there is a musical notation for a hand gesture (a square box with a hand symbol) above a quarter note. In the fourth and fifth measures, there are musical notations for quarter notes with slurs above them.
 - **System 3:** The vocal staff has a thick horizontal line in the second measure, with the instruction "spoken, calmly" and dynamic marking "pp" above it, and the lyric "[my foundations went deep into the earth]" below it. The percussion staff has a thick horizontal line starting at the second measure, with dynamic marking "p" below it. A vertical dashed line is positioned at the end of the second measure.

Voc. 1
p
 [with their partners, Bechtel paid out less than twenty thousand dollars for a public water system worth millions]
falsetto pp trail
falsetto p known

Perc. 1
 II
 pour remaining water from glass into player 2's glass

Voc. 2
p
 [some fifteen thousand were not fooled by these methods and were forced to walk the]
falsetto pp of
spoken as it be - came

Perc. 2
 II
p

Voc. 3
falsetto pp tears

Perc. 3
 II
 pour remaining water from glass into player 2's glass
pp

Voc. 1
falsetto pp
 dead
whispered p
 an - oth - er
spoken, freely
 [of widespread organized protests and] civ - il

Voc. 2
falsetto pp
 they
spoken, freely "as a toast" f
 [their homes were burned and their property destroyed and plundered]
falsetto pp
 days

Voc. 3
spoken, freely mp
 [when our guys went after someone who fired on us] were
falsetto pp
 sev - en
falsetto pp
 [civilians were the casualties]
spoken, freely "as a toast" f

Perc.
 II
 raise glass in the air
 set glass back down
 drink entire glass of water and set back down
 raise glass in the air (keep glass lifted)

spoken
p
dis - o - bed - i - ence

repeat figure at random intervals, widening gaps of silence in between

pp

repeat figure at random intervals, widening gaps of silence in between

pp

pp

x ***pp***

shh

gradually lower glass and set back on table