

120 degrees

by Josh Gottry

Publisher: C. Alan Publications (2000)

Duration: 4'

Difficulty: Medium

Players: 8 players (optional doubling or split parts allows for up to 12)

Instrumentation:

- 1) Marimba (4-octave or larger)
- 2) Vibraphone and/or Bells
- 3) Xylophone
- 4) Snare Drum
- 5) Bongos
- 6) Crash Cymbals and Ride Cymbal (1 or 2 players)
- 7) Bass Drum
- 8) Timpani (32", 29", 26", 23")

Composer Notes:

Written entirely in compound meter and primarily in 12/8 time, the overall form of *120 degrees* is ABCBA with the C section in half-time and featuring unison timpani and keyboard lines. The A section focuses primarily on a vibraphone melody with an underlying groove established by the other keyboards and percussion. The B section is more driving in style and features a timpani solo followed by trade-offs between the timpani and bongos. Based strongly with a feel in four, this piece effectively includes groupings of four eighth notes within 12/8 for contradictory and complimentary rhythmic effects. This piece was written for and premiered by the Chandler Summer Percussion Ensemble in 1999.

Formal Structure:

- m. 1: Introduction
- m. 5: A Section
- m. 37: B Section
- m. 59: C Section
- m. 77: B Section reprise
- m. 88: A Section reprise

Historical/Stylistic Considerations:

Written in a fairly minimalistic style, this piece relies more on ostinati and varying rhythmic groupings to create interest. Since the piece uses little melodic content, various instruments (i.e. vibraphone, timpani, bongos) are given the primary voice during the work.

Technical Elements:

This work requires and will develop comfort with varying rhythmic groupings within compound meter. The mallet percussion parts are more rhythmically than melodically challenging, although there are a few arpeggio figures in the slower section of the piece. All mallet percussion parts require only two mallets. The timpani part is very exposed and a featured part of the ensemble. The part contains several challenging rhythmic and sticking elements, however, there are no tuning changes within the piece. The snare drum part is written in a rudimental style, incorporating accents, diddles, and flams, and would likely sound best on a piccolo or marching snare drum. The bongo part is featured in a brief call and response with the timpani and also includes extensive hemiola based ostinato figures.

Musical Elements:

This composition appears to be modal, set with no sharps or flats, but with G serving as the primary tonic note.

Teaching Points:

- Point 1 – Compound Meter Rhythmic Groupings: Score m. 13-15

Musical score for measures 13-15. The score includes parts for Maracas (Mar.), Vibraphone (Vib.), Xylophone (Xyl.), Snare (Sn.), Bongos (Bon.), Cymbals (Cym.), Bass Drum (Bd.), and Timpani (Timp.). A circled 'A' is placed above the Maracas staff at the beginning of measure 13. Dynamics include *mp* for Maracas, Xyl., and Timp., and *mf* for Vib. The Snare and Bongos parts feature rhythmic patterns with accents.

- Point 2 – Controlled Double Strokes: Snare Drum m. 60-80

Musical score for Snare Drum m. 60-80. Measure 60 is marked with a circled 'E' and the instruction "Suddenly Slower" above the staff, with a '10' below the first measure. The dynamic is *mp*. Measure 73 is marked with "accel." above and "cresc." below. Measure 77 is marked with a circled 'F' and "A tempo" above, with a dynamic of *f* below the first measure. The score consists of continuous double strokes.

- Point 3 – Sticking Considerations: Timpani m. 76-78

Musical score for Timpani m. 76-78. Measure 77 is marked with a circled 'F' and "A tempo" above. The dynamic is *f*. The score shows a melodic line with accents.