

m a r i n a

for brass and percussion instruments,
various modules and boat harbor

leigh landy
1981

La Rivière

*La rivière que j'ai sous' la langue
L'eau qu'on n'imagine pas, mon petit bateau
Et, les rideaux baissés, parlons.*

Paul Eluard

A field of water betrays the spirit that is in the air. It is continually receiving new life and motion from above. It is intermediate in its nature between land and sky. On land only the grass and trees wave, but the water itself is rippled by the wind. I see where the breeze dashes across it by the streaks or flakes of light. It is remarkable that we can look down on its surface. We shall, perhaps, look down thus on the surface of air at length, and mark where a still subtler spirit sweeps over it.

from "Walden"
Henry David Thoreau

MARINA is the first in a series of compositions inspired by and performed in (un-) civilized nature. It is to be performed at a marina (boat harbor) for a length between 30 minutes and one hour to be chosen by the performers based on performance circumstances. The piece is anything but spectacular - most all sounds are relatively quiet and the visual element of the piece is not in the slightest shocking. The goal is to emphasize the beauty as found in nature, but not necessarily that which is synthetically created around it. In a sense MARINA accentuates the sounds found at a boat harbor and through this accentuation emphasizes the uniqueness of a marina's soundscape when the piece is not being performed.

There are no soloists in MARINA other than the harbor, itself. The ensemble of various size is one organic unit continually communicating among one another, with the marina, and with the public. All sounds made are in fact natural to the boat environment and should be played in a non-striking manner.

The following instruments are called for: At least 14 Cor, Tpt, Tbn, Tba
 (various combinations - see below)
 At least 2 (Aerosol) fog horns
 Various metal, wood, and glass
 percussion instruments and conch shells

The amount of instruments is dependent on the sounds present at the performance space as well as the size thereof. Too loud or too quiet (i.e., unnatural) performances should be avoided.

Depending on the performance environment and available resources, other modules can be added, as:

- Dance
- Special light effects
- Video
- Sailing boats

The manner in which all these instruments and modules are to be presented can be found in the score below.

I. More continuous sounds

1 - 3 (a modular group) all horns, trumpets and trombones in any combination.

- 1) a duet group with notes:
- 2) a trio group with notes:
- 3) a duet group with notes:

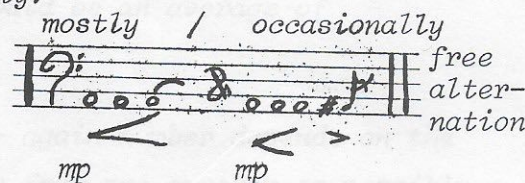
between
* mf & f

At least one duet (or trio) for each module must be present - any number for each module is possible (as for example 2 duets of no. 1, 3 trios of no. 2 and 2 duets of no. 3). These three or more groups are to be spread out as far apart from one another as possible throughout the entire performing space - the members of a given duet or trio are of course to remain together. At prescribed times:

at the beginning of the performance the periodicity of sounds is to be ca. 45 seconds, in the middle, 35 seconds, and at the end, 60 seconds after the end of the previous notes, one duet or trio (varying) begins by playing their notes at any given dynamic for a long time. As soon as possible all other duets and trios join with their notes to be played as long as possible as well. In this way each sounding "chord" begins in a different corner of the harbor. All notes are to be played as long as the breath holds and to have natural cut-offs. Still no single performer is to hold his or her note much longer than another musician in a duet or trio. The chosen locations of performance for all duets and trios are permanent as these performers do not move around during performance.

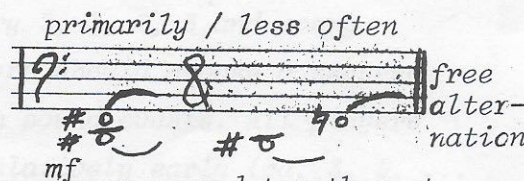
A duet no. 1 should start a performance of MARINA and slowly but surely all other musicians should join in at staggered intervals during the first 8 minutes. It is hoped that once the decision is made in terms of performance length that the musicians take care themselves that they end by playing a last chord - not all together - approximately at the end of the time length. Of course members of any modular unit stop together, not separately.

4) one trombone or tuba + note:



Although many comments for modules nos. 1 - 3 are similar, this module is not dependent on their sounds. In this case this instrument begins a few minutes after the first sounds from duet no. 1. The note is twice repeated at intervals of ca. 2 seconds - this is analogous to one sound event for the above three groups. Timing between sound events: ca. 45 seconds periodicity between note end/next note - completely independent of modules 1 - 3. The player is to remain stationary during performance.

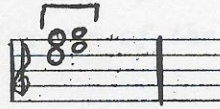
5) at least 2 trombones and/or tubas - notes:



These duets (at least one duet must be present) may more around together at will. They begin their minor third together and stop, naturally together but need not sustain their notes equally long each time. The various duets (if more than one) need by no means play together. Although the timing gives an average periodicity of these intervals, a wide variety of interludes may be chosen to avoid predictability of new sound events (e.g., if 60 seconds is given as an average time interlude between sounds, 15 and then 105 seconds might be chosen). These instruments as the instrument of no. 4 work independently of nos. 1 - 3. They begin 4 minutes after the first sounds of

duet no. 1. Timing: In the beginning, average ca. 60 seconds, in the middle, 45 seconds, and at the end, 75 seconds.

6) 4 trumpets - notes:



This quartet (only one is called for) is ^{between mf & f} stationary in another "corner" of the marina not too close to any duet/trio of nos. 1 - 3 and works independently of all of the above groups. They begin 3 minutes after the first sounds of no. 1 and end relatively late, i.e., they are one of the last groups to stop. There should be absolutely no periodicity to the time intervals between their chords - the chord is to be relatively dynamic and somewhat shorter than those of the other modules. Although time intervals are fairly long, these musicians should signal one another if a second and maximal third occurrence of the chord is to be played in succession.

This quartet must not play with staggered starts, i.e. attacks must be sharp; the note *f* should be played slightly louder than the other three, although moderate dynamic changes accentuating various notes during any given chord occurrence are also to be sought. Timing: there should be an average of ca. 1 - 1½ minutes between chords.

7) 2 or more (aerosol) fog horns (not too many - again number depends on the size of the harbor). These players are as far away from one another as possible. They begin respectively 5 and 8 (and 11 and ...) minutes after the beginning of the performance. The players follow nos. 1 - 3 by playing beginning about 5 seconds after the start of every "x" times the duets and trios play. The notes, which are by far the loudest of the entire piece, are to be played between 3 and 5 seconds long. After both (all) fog horns have begun, every ten occurrences of the chord of nos. 1 - 3, both (all) players should sound their horns together. In other words - Timing: every 2, 3, 2, 3 and every 4, 4, 2 sound events of nos. 1 - 3: any other players should choose a sequence adding up to 10 with minimum intervals of 2 between sound events. All players remain stationary during the performance and end relatively early (ca. 3, 5, ... minutes before the official end). Also one player may be chosen to end a performance by playing 3 times in rapid succession at the time limit.

II. More discrete sounds

8) buoy-like bells - 2 or more depending on the size and the sounds at the harbor. Any pitches. The period between ringing bells is long and completely free and should be determined by the roughness of the water during performance.

In any case make sure that there are enough bells so that they can be perceived throughout the entire performance space. The players are to be spread apart and remain stationary during performance. Play one of the following rhythms in free alternation:

$\text{P} \text{P}^{\wedge}$ or $\text{K} \text{P}^{\wedge}$

9) struck glass percussion instruments (dinner plates or similar objects - to make the sound of ropes beating against sail masts). At least 6 - more depending on the size of the harbor. These instruments are played more regularly than any other instrument; there must be no perceptible periodicity in intervals between these instruments - the wind is the most important factor in determining how often to strike a note - this part is played ad lib but not humerously with a nearby sailboat - players are spread out (in rows) and do not move around.

19) The rest: other possible instruments (depending on performance circumstances): metal (e.g. tubular), wooden, and/or glass instruments or objects and various conch shells can be called upon to reflect sounds of idling motors, wind, rain, squeaking boats rubbing against the pier, shaking loose sails, etc. ad lib and are to remain stationary or are to move about as would their equivalent.

Concerning the optional modules:

These extra possibilities, dance, light, video, and sailing boats can be added if desired. In none of these cases should any extra module be more prominent than any musical one. An example is to broadcast marina images on video screens stationed on a couple of floating row boats. These added modules accentuate the composed aspect of the piece but should not detract from the fact that the marina itself is the only soloist. Any added module should neither begin nor end the performance but be integrated into the musical fading in and out.

Rehearsals should include the following: - listening to the marina, - working with the given time intervals (with watches), - then listening to each other, - weeding out of certain sounds if the density is too high, - and finally integrating. Do remember that as the nature changes, the performance should be influenced likewise.

amsterdam
sept. 1981