

LOOPS

Piano and Electronics

Aileen Sweeney

(2019)



Aileen
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Performance Directions

This piece requires two performers and a sound engineer. The wavy lines are used to show points where no one is required to play anything but shows the length of time the loop pedal is to play back which is clearly marked by numbers above the staff. The loop pedal has been made on a max patch which is triggered by the sound engineer. The process of recording new loops and replaying them to layer on top of each other is continued until the letter B. The pianist will be stationed at the keyboard only playing the keys of the piano.

Notation for Pianist

The piano player will be reading the standard notation with any pedal markings being directed to the piano player. At letter B, the cross head notation shows that the chords are to be played silently with the sostenuto pedal depressed in preparation for the assistant strumming the chord immediately after. The pedal must be lifted immediately after the chord has been strummed and then pressed down again to sustain the chord.

Notation for Assistant

At letter B, the cross head notation shows that the assistant should use the fingernails of both hands to glissando across the strings. The inside of the piano is divided into segments according to the iron bars of the frame inside. Depending on the location of the chord, it is specified whether the assistant should strum only in the middle segment or in the lower segment. The strum should be as fast as possible catching as many strings in the segment as possible.

Notes for Sound Engineer

At letter B (once all of the required material has been recorded,) the sound engineer takes over the control of the loop pedal dynamically by riding the faders. No new material is required to be recorded. Letter C is also controlled by the sound engineer. There are notes in the score for the sound engineer regarding levels and effects. Until Letter B, the sound engineer will have to balance the levels between the loop pedal play back and the live piano to ensure they are of equal volume. There should not be a noticeable difference in volume between the piano playing and the loop pedal, it should sound as one continuous line. By the nature of the loop pedal, it does not increase in volume as more layers are added. Until Letter B, the sound engineer should gradually increase the volume of the playback to give a natural sense of crescendo as more layers are added. If there is a crescendo marked in the score for the loop pedal, this implies that the crescendo should be more elaborate in order to give a feeling of momentum into the next section. The engineer could also experiment with levels of EQ prior to the performance in order to pick up more of the high frequencies of the harmonics and less of the sound of the hammers hitting the string.

Amplification

In terms of microphones, we found the best results when a small microphone was strapped to the hand of the assistant.

Duration

c. 7 minutes.

Notation Key

Below is a key I have devised for which the assistant will need to be familiar with. The inside of the piano has been divided into sections and given four reference points. The assistant should slide their finger along the string between these marked points.

"Harmonic Closest to Keyboard" = H.C.K

This refers to the very last harmonic on the string found on the part of the string closest to the keyboard (in front of the dampers.)

"Harmonic in front of Dampers" = H.I.D

This refers to the harmonic that is found directly in front of the dampers (the side closest to the keyboard.)

"Harmonic Behind Dampers" = H.B.D

This refers to the harmonic that is found directly behind the dampers (the side away from the keyboard.)

"Furthest Possible Harmonic" = F.P.H

This does not mark a specific point on the string but simply signifies for the assistant to press on the string as deep in the piano as they can reach at any given moment. (It is not essential to find an actual harmonic to start on.)

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LOOPS

♩ = 90

Stand positioned to the left, (bass string side) of piano.

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H.B.D



Assistant

Musical notation for the Assistant staff in 4/4 time. It features a glissando line across the staff. A circled area below the staff shows a hand position for the H.B.D technique.

gliss.

6/4

♩ = 90

(Gradually add more pedal until bar 6.)

Piano

Musical notation for the Piano staff in 4/4 time. It shows a sequence of chords with dynamic markings *fff* and *f*. Pedal markings are present below the staff.

fff

f

Ped. ^

Ped. —

6/4

Loop Pedal

Loop Pedal staff showing a series of vertical lines indicating pedal activity over time.

5

F.P.S



H.B.K



(Move to curve of piano while notes decays)

Ast.

Musical notation for the Assistant staff in 6/4 time. It features a glissando line. A circled area below the staff shows a hand position for the H.B.K technique.

gliss.

4/4

Hold notes until it decays naturally.

(Click Track Cue)



Pno.

Musical notation for the Piano staff in 6/4 time. It shows chords with dynamic marking *fff*. A circled area below the staff shows a hand position for the H.B.K technique. A box with 'x' marks indicates a track cue.

fff

Ped. ^

4/4

Cue click track once note has decayed.

L.P

Loop Pedal staff showing a series of vertical lines indicating pedal activity over time, including a box with 'x' marks for track cues.

4/4

A

4

7

Ast. *H.B.D* *F.P.S* *H.B.D* *gliss.*

Pno. *f* *Ped.* *Record* *L.P Plays Back.*

L.P. $\frac{4}{4}$

H.B.D

F.P.S

H.B.D

4

15

Ast. *H.B.D* *F.P.S* *H.B.D* *gliss.*

Pno. *Ped.* *Record* *L.P Plays Back.*

L.P. $\frac{4}{4}$

23

H.B.D

F.P.S

H.B.D

5

3

Ast.

Pno.

L.P.

gliss.

Ped.

Record

L.P Plays Back.

32

H.B.D

F.P.S

H.B.D

6

Ast.

Pno.

L.P.

Record

L.P Plays Back.

4

42

H.B.D **F.P.H** **H.B.D**

Left Hand.

gliss.

F.P.H **H.B.D** **F.P.H**

Right Hand.

5

Pno.

Red.

Record

L.P Plays Back.

L.P

51

H.B.D **F.P.H** **H.B.D**

Left Hand.

gliss.

F.P.H **H.B.D** **F.P.H**

Right Hand.

6

Record

L.P Plays Back.

L.P

57

H.B.D ↓

Left Hand.

F.P.H ↓

gliss.

H.B.D ↓ 5

↑ **F.P.H**

↑ **H.B.D**

↑ **F.P.H**

Right Hand.

Pno.

Ped.

Record

L.P

61

Move to Left Hand
Side of Piano

8

Ast.

Pno.

L.P Plays Back.

L.P

Pages have been removed from this perusal score. If you would like to see the full score, feel free to get in touch on aileensweeney5@gmail.com