Title
As I ride the late night freeways (2014-15) For soprano and orchestra

Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3v34t8rd

Author
Schumaker, Matthew Thurman

Publication Date
2015

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation
As I ride the late night freeways
(2014-2015)

For soprano and orchestra

By

Matthew Thurman Schumaker

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music

In the Graduate Division of the University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:
Professor Edmund Campion, Chair
Professor Cindy Cox
Professor Franck Bedrossian

Summer 2015
As I ride the late night freeways
(2014-2015)
For soprano and orchestra
Copyright 2015 by Matthew Thurman Schumaker
Abstract

As I ride the late night freeways
(2014-2015)
For soprano and orchestra

By

Matthew Thurman Schumaker

Doctor of Philosophy in Music

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Edmund Campion, Chair

As I ride the late night freeways is a work for soprano and orchestra. The music is a setting of Census, a poem by Cathy Park Hong written specifically for this project. The score utilizes the theme of California freeway driving to suggest compositional processes and musical parameters to unify the work. Ideas derived from the parametric aesthetic provide a significant streamlining influence, echoed in the development of musical processes that take a variety of forms: from harmonic and textural elaborations drawn from the analysis of car sounds to a poetic suggestion of aerodynamism given by the algorithmic shaping of musical gestures and by the smooth morphing of one musical gesture into the next.
Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest thanks to my U.C. Berkeley professors: Edmund Campion, Cindy Cox, David Milnes, Franck Bedrossian, Davitt Moroney, Ken Ueno, and David Wessel for your wonderful instruction and mentorship throughout my studies. Thanks also to Richard Andrews and Lisa Robinson at U.C. Berkeley.

Many thanks to Martin Matalon, Jean-Luc Hervé, and Jean Bresson in Paris for their helpful comments and instruction during the creation of this piece.

Sean Finney and George Hambrecht, thank you for your enduring friendship and encouragement over all these years.

Thank you Mom, Dad, Vivienne and Merrill for your tireless love and support. I am truly blessed to have such amazing parents.

Thank you, Max. You are a bolt of lightning, a constant inspiration and a reminder of everything that is good in the world. I’m so honored to have you around and so grateful to be your dad.

Thank you, Malena. You walked with me through every day of this program with gentle, loving care. You make everything possible for me. You are my muse and my foundation, my one true love.
As I ride the late night freeways

Instrumentation and performance notes

Performers:

Conductor
Soprano soloist
3 flutes (3rd doubling piccolo)
2 oboes
1 English horn
3 clarinets in Bb
2 bassoons
4 horns in F
2 trumpets in C
2 trombones
1 tuba
3 percussion
piano
violins I
violins 2
violas
cellos
contrabasses

The score is in C.

Accidentals carry through the bar and apply only to the octave in which they appear.

All trills in all instruments are played as fast as possible one half-step above notated pitch.

In all instruments, play figure as fast as possible beginning at the specified time.

Text (written for this project):

Census
by Cathy Park Hong

The sun hollows our bodies.
Sunglass shacks melt to molten then molded back to blackest fetish masks.
And Surfers riot, beached boys in parking lots, punching down Port-a-Potties.
They’ll go out roaring in this Vaseline light where infinity pools sparkle like geodes.

Fade to twilight.
My shyness is criminally vulgar.
My hatred is gentle,
as I drive the late-night freeways, rampart after rampart shut down.
Night glows with the velocity of cars thinning to a stream of white light, and sodium street lights and tennis courts holy as an ashram.
Winds

--Non vibrato (non vib.) or senza vibrato (senza vib., s.v.)

--Fluttertongue (flt.)

--Key clicks:
played as fast as possible for the duration indicated by the length of the arrow

--Air sound only, no pitch:
(in French Horns: place mouthpiece upside down for air sounds)

--Aeolian + ordinario (Aeolian + ord.): ½ pitch, ½ air sound

--Multiphonic:
performer plays a multiphonic chosen freely but one that emphasizes the notated pitch. Example recordings of relevant multiphonics are available from the composer.

--Jet whistle

Percussion

Percussion 1:
Vibraphone
Woodblocks (2): high and low
Log drums (2): high and low
Medium tam-tam (possibly shared with Percussion 2)
Snare drum
Sizzle cymbal (poss. shared with Percussion 2 and 3)

Percussion 2:
Woodblocks (2): high and low
Log drums (2): high and low
Glockenspiel
Crotale
Guiro
Large tam-tam (or medium tam-tam shared with Percussion 1)
Sizzle cymbal (poss. shared with Percussion 1 and 3)
Suspended cymbal

Percussion 3:
Bass Drum
Timpano (1): 32-inch
Sizzle cymbal (poss. shared with Percussion 1 and 2

Key:
bass drum indications:
--slow, continuous, circular strokes to produce a quiet noise sound with no pitch

tam-tam indications:
--scrape with forceful motion in direction indicated
--play towards the center or edge of tam-tam (with dampen sign)

Piano

--“perforation” sounds—
inside the piano, scrape string up and down with plastic plectrum in a long, fluid and continuous movements. The result should be a perforated, largely noisy sound.
**Strings**

--Sul ponticello (s.p.), molto sul pont. (m.s.p.)

--Sul tasto (s.t.) molto sul tasto (m.s.t.)

--Trills: performed as quickly as possible; always to the semitone above the notated pitch, unless otherwise indicated

--Jeté: unmeasured rhythm, as fast as possible. Repeat bow throws if necessary to fill the notated duration

----------> move gradually from one state to the next, e.g. from norm. to sul ponticello

--Snap pizzicato

--Highest playable pitch (pitch indeterminate):

--Vertical jeté (battuto): drop bow on the strings with bow hair connecting to the strings.

**Soprano**

--“Airy”: sung with excessive breath for an “airy” sound

--Senza vib.: transition gradually to emphasize less vibrato

--Molto vib.: transition gradually to emphasize more vibrato

--In cases where a single syllable is notated across two or more notes, sing the first consonant and vowel together on the first attack followed by the same vowel and the rest of the syllable sound on the second or remaining attacks.

For example, with the word “hollows,”

music notated as:

would sound as:

**Soprano Amplification**

The soprano requires light amplification for rehearsals and performance. The preferred format would include two speakers, directed to cover the audience. These speakers should be located close to the singer on stage, pointed upwards from a low position. A suitable microphone should be chosen and run to a mixer in the hall from which the composer or technician can control the amount of amplification throughout the performance. Direct recordings from this microphone should be made at rehearsals and concerts so that these can later be mixed with general hall recordings of the orchestra.
scrub the surface of the drum lightly in slow, wide, circular movements with brushes for a quiet, white noise sound
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C Tpt. 1</th>
<th>Vln. I-2</th>
<th>Tbn. 1</th>
<th>Vla. 1</th>
<th>Hn. 4</th>
<th>Hn. 3</th>
<th>Ob. 1</th>
<th>Vc. 2</th>
<th>Vc. 1</th>
<th>Cl. 3</th>
<th>Pno.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- **Hn. 1 (-2)**
- **Eng. Hn.**
- **C Tpt. 1**
- **Vln. I-2**
- **Tbn. 1**
- **Vla. 1**
- **Hn. 4**
- **Hn. 3**
- **Ob. 1**
- **Vc. 2**
- **Vc. 1**
- **Cl. 3**
- **Pno.**

- Vertical jeté (battuto)
- Bass drum
- Natural harmonic gliss.
- (Slowly scrape the piano F# 1 string longitudinally with fingernail or plastic pick)
- ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
vertical jeté (battuto)

slowly scrape the guiro with a wooden stick up and down

air sound, no pitch

in an unbroken and continuous motion
divisi in 3 or 4

Hn. 3(-4)
Hn. 1(-2)
Eng. Hn.
C Tpt. 1
P3-B. D.
P1-S. Cym.
C Tpt. 2
Vln. II -
Vln. I-2
Vln. I-
S. Solo
Vln. 1-
Vln. II
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 1
Bsn. 1
Vla. 2
Vla. 1
Vla. 1
Violin IIs are divisi in 3 parts.
Violas are divisi in 3 parts.
Violin Is are divisi in 4 parts.
Violin Is are divisi in 4 parts.
Violin Is are divisi in 4 parts.
Cellos are divisi in 3 parts.

ppp
light, dreamy, but at times suggesting a darker intensity
p
l.v.
pedal ad lib.

s.t., punta d'arco
wire brush: brush in slow, circular continuous circular strokes, quiet noise sound

sul tasto,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Div. in 3 or 4</th>
<th>Hn. 3(-4)</th>
<th>Eng. Hn.</th>
<th>C Tpt. 1</th>
<th>P3-B. D.</th>
<th>Vln. II-2</th>
<th>Vln. II</th>
<th>Vln. I-2</th>
<th>Vln. I</th>
<th>Vla. 2</th>
<th>Vla. 1</th>
<th>Vla. 1</th>
<th>Tbn. 2</th>
<th>Bsn. 2</th>
<th>Ob. 2</th>
<th>Vc. 1</th>
<th>Cl. 2</th>
<th>Fl. 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

\[\text{\textcopyright} \text{\textregistered} \text{\texttrademark}\]
div. in 3 or 4

P2/P1-Glock.

Hn. 3(-4)

Hn. 1(-2)

Eng. Hn.

Vln. II-2

Vln. II -

div. in 4

div. in 4

div. in 4

Vln. I-2

S. Solo

Vln. II

Vln. II

Tpt. 1

Bsn. 2

Bsn. 1

Vla. 2

Tpt. 2

P1-Vib.

Ob. 2

Ob. 1

Vc. 2

Vc. 1

Cl. 3

Cl. 1

Tbn.

Fl. 2

Fl. 1

Pno.

Tba.

Fl.3

Cb.
agile and very light sound, freely adding breathy sounds for more pop/jazz-like tone