

Drum Circles

for three djembes

2011

Austin Shadduck

Drum Circles

Premiered May 10, 2011 by Patrick Kennedy, Hunyong Kim, and Rich Weismantel
LeFrak Concert Hall, Queens College, CUNY

Program Notes

Drum Circles is a short composition that passes motives from performer to performer. It explores the various sounds of the djembe as well as compositional techniques like imitation and rounds, call and response, and subtractive/additive rhythm. Pedagogically speaking, this piece could be used to develop hand technique or used as a stepping stone to the virtuosic *Okho* by Iannis Xenakis.

Recordings and performance materials are available from the composer.

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Drum Circles

Score

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Timbral Traversal $\text{♩} = 72$

Gently sweep right hand across skin of drum in a counterclockwise motion. A quarter note pulse should be barely audible.

Add left hand and sweep in a counterclockwise semicircle. Lift to avoid the fluid motion of the right hand. Gently set the left hand back down on the specified beat and repeat.

Djembe 1

Djembe 2

Djembe 3

p

p

p

Gently tap rhythms and keep sweeping.

6

mf

mf

mf

While still sweeping tap slightly faster and uneven rhythms with fingertips.

Accelerate and slowly change from sweeping hands with finger taps to tremolos on the tones specified in measure 16. *rit.*

11

mf

ff > pp

ff > pp

ff > pp

Repetition and Rounds ♩ = 96

17

Musical score for measures 17-19. It consists of three staves. The top staff starts with a dynamic of *f* and contains a complex rhythmic pattern with accents and a triplet of eighth notes. The middle staff starts with a dynamic of *mf* and has a triplet of eighth notes. The bottom staff starts with a dynamic of *mf* and has a triplet of eighth notes. The music is in 4/4 time.

20

Musical score for measures 20-22. It consists of three staves. The top staff starts with a dynamic of *p* and has a crescendo leading to *mp*. The middle staff starts with a dynamic of *mf* and has a crescendo leading to *f*. The bottom staff starts with a dynamic of *mp* and has a crescendo leading to *f*. The music is in 4/4 time.

23

Musical score for measures 23-25. It consists of three staves. The top staff starts with a dynamic of *mf* and has a crescendo leading to *f* and then *ff*. The middle staff starts with a dynamic of *mf* and has a crescendo leading to *f* and then *mp* and *ff*. The bottom staff starts with a dynamic of *mf* and has a crescendo leading to *f* and then *mp* and *ff*. The music is in 4/4 time.

25

f *mf* *mf*

mf *f* *mf*

mf *f*

28

rit.

Drag free hand or elbow across skin of drum.

Lead player ad lib. and other players respond.
Sample calls provided.

Call and Response ♩ = 72

ff *mf* *p* *f*

ff

ff

30

f *f* *f*

(Lead) *mp* *mp* *mp*

mp *mp* *mp*

33

Musical score for measures 33-34. It features three staves. The top two staves are for a pair of drums, and the bottom staff is for a lead drum. The music is in 3/4 time. Measures 33 and 34 show a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The dynamic is *f*. A note in measure 34 is marked with a circled 'x'. A text instruction below the lead staff reads: "Last time Djembe 3 should respond to its own call with others."

35

Musical score for measures 35-36. It features three staves. The top two staves are for a pair of drums, and the bottom staff is for a lead drum. The music is in 3/4 time. Measure 35 starts with the instruction "Play as written." and a dynamic of *mp*. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3'. Measure 36 continues the pattern. The dynamic remains *mp*. A note in measure 36 is marked with a circled 'x'. The time signature changes to 3/4 at the end of the system.

37

Musical score for measures 37-38. It features three staves. The top two staves are for a pair of drums, and the bottom staff is for a lead drum. The music is in 3/4 time. Measure 37 starts with a dynamic of *mf*. Measure 38 continues the pattern and ends with a dynamic of *f*. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3'. A note in measure 38 is marked with a circled 'x'. The time signature changes to 3/4 at the end of the system.

40

molto rit. *a tempo*

ff *p*

ff *p*

ff

Drag free hand or elbow across skin of drum.

43

mf *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf*

mp

f

46

mf *f*

f *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf*

accel.

49

f *ff* *ff*

52

p *mp* *mf*

55

accel.

3 *3* *3*

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♩ = 84 ----- ♩ = 88

57 *f* *ff* *mf*

♩ = 92 ----- ♩ = 96 ----- Fade ♩ = 72

61 *fff* *mf* *mp*

65 *p* *pp* <> <> <> *n.*

p *pp* <> <> <> *n.*

mf *p* *pp* <> <> <> *n.*

rit.

Drag free hand or elbow across skin of drum.

Play with knuckles and gradually slow tremolos while moving hands toward the rims of the drums. Alternate volume swells and fade away at end.