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Website Context and Research

Electroacoustic Chakras
(2011/13)

Variable form multiple movement or fixed single movement for structured improvisation:
Version for vocals, bansuri, sarangi, tabla, interactive sound and fixed media.

Structured Vocal Improvisation and Text: Yashashwi Sharma

Brief Elements of Synopsis

Prologue: White Light – Awakening – Introduction:
Bansuri and voice (4'38")

This fairly gentle prologue introduces the bansuri theme that can be heard in various guises throughout the piece accompanied by vocal overdubs empathetic to the bansuri phrasing and textural motion of the concrete sounds. The two musicians combine in an almost traditional song texture towards the end of the movement, with the concrete media completing a symbiotic trio texture guiding the atmosphere and pacing of the empathetic interpretation from the musicians.

The vocal overdubs were added and arranged by the composer (in collaboration with Yashashwi Sharma) during 2013.

There is an alternate arrangement of *The Prologue* (without vocals) available.

Chakra One: Balance and Earth:
Bansuri and sarangi (5'56")

The plucked sarangi parts (added as an overdub during studio production) introduces the movement and acts as a transition in the Macro Form, but the primary material (and instrument) is the extended melodic improvisation of the bansuri. The composer mixed alternate lines during final production to create textures of lyrical counterpoint and added some complimentary out takes of bowed sarangi to gently introduce the soundworld of the stringed instrument through complimentary resonances and supporting phrases.

Arranged and produced by the composer during 2013.

Chakra Two: Change and Water:
Voice and sarangi (7'22")

The voice makes a dramatic entrance to the movement with breathy vocalisations and wide melisma-like vibrato complimenting the mood and intensity of the concrete audio. This is a serious and intense soundworld enhanced and supported by the fluid legato phrasing of the sarangi, which screams (and sings) away in the near distance.

Although timings and entrances were adjusted during 2013 production, there are no overdubs used in this mix. This is primarily a single studio take in duet, an excellent interpretation and realisation by the musicians.

Arranged and produced (with pleasure) by the composer during 2013.

Chakra Three: Fire and Energy – The Power of the Sun:
Voice, sarangi and bansuri (7'38")

Chakra Three continues the textural evolution of the Macro Form and maintains the general sense of crescendo sculpted by the concrete parts. This movement features all three instruments, but the flutes are distant overdubs of incidental and complimentary phrases added by the composer during production.

The voice and sarangi seem to start in musical dispute, but grow more cohesive as the movement progresses. The change in concrete atmosphere halfway through the piece encourages the musicians to release most of the tension as they gradually come together in consonant agreement and the vocal overdubs (arranged by the composer during 2013) shape a return to a legible song structure in the latter sections.

There is an alternate arrangement of *Chakra Three* (Abridged) available.

The Void: Ocean of Illusions – The Principle of Mastery:
Sarangi and bansuri (4'48")

Originally recorded as a sarangi solo, overdubs and complimentary phrases from the bansuri were added to the latter section by the composer during 2013 production.

The sarangi part is the amalgamation of two different takes, but neither of the recorded performances was as empathetic to the concrete atmosphere and form of the fixed media as the composer would have liked. In retrospect, the composer feels that the balance and dynamic pacing of this version of the Meta Form could be improved through presenting *The Void* as an Acousmatic Interlude?

Chakra Four: Love and Air – Passion and Breath:
Voice, sarangi and bansuri (5'40")

Voice and sarangi return to the unison intensity and dynamic aggression first explored during *Chakra Two*, which compliments the general feeling of anxiety and claustrophobia (and dynamic contour) captured within the concrete parts. The bansuri overdubs and linear phrasing purposely exist in an alternate textural and rhythmic layer, reacting to and around the voice and sarangi duet.

This is a loud and aggressive movement that was very difficult to produce and arrange, but one clearly worth all the effort, resulting in an excellent recording and an excellent interpretation by the musicians.

The composer extensively rearranged this work (especially the vocal overdubs in the latter minutes) during 2013 production.

Chakra Five – Communication and Inner Sound:
Tabla and voice (4'36")

Originally recorded as a tabla duet, the ambient vocal overdubs were selected from various studio out-takes and arranged during 2013 production. The composer also set the tabla in overlapped syncopation at times within the arrangement and introduces sections of subtle (Reich-like) rhythmic phasing through the use of digital delay enhancing the empathetic performance of the musicians. The vocal overdubs help to shape the contour of form with just a little more definition and carry the atmosphere of the concrete soundscape through the developing rhythmic phrases with just a little more cohesion.

There is an alternate arrangement of *Chakra Five* (without voice) available.

Tabla: Ilyas Khan and Dhananjay Sahay

White Light – Consideration (Prologue):
Bansuri and sarangi (2'14")

The bansuri returns to the thematic phrasing of the introduction, but this time in a form of 'question and answer' duet with the sarangi and both musicians play in sympathy and empathy to each other and to the atmosphere of the concrete audio. The short movement serves the functional role of most interludes and releases any remaining tension in the Meta Form in preparation for the resonant resolution within *Chakras Six and Seven*.

Chakras Six and Seven – Inner Light, Sight and Enlightenment:
Voice (7'30")

Vocals and Text: Yashashwi Sharma

The structured vocal improvisation introduces the pre-composed concrete media and combines symbiotically with the resonant characteristics of the piece throughout. The text chosen by Yashashwi conveys prayers in Pali and Sanskrit. Individual words are chanted to enhance their meaning and collective importance, and blended with strong vibrato, throat and overtone singing, showing the versatile instrumental capacity of the voice.

Honour to the Blessed One, the Exalted One, the fully Enlightened One
The light of the three worlds, the Buddha...

The composer arranged the multi-layered texture of melodic vocal lines and overdubbed phrasing in the latter parts of this movement during 2013 production and would like to thank Yashashwi one more time for an excellent recording.

White Light – Chi (Prologue):
Bansuri and plucked sarangi (1'24")

A musical interlude ... A philosophical (and emotional) 'time-out' ...

Produced and arranged by the composer during 2013.

Epilogue – White Light – Conclusion:
Voice and bansuri (4'30")

In an almost traditional Western song form, with a well-timed crescendo and phrasing empathetically paced to the motion of the concrete audio, the *Epilogue* provides an ideal and relaxing conclusion to this extended sonic journey.

The composer set two alternate recordings (in different registers) from the bansuri in linear counterpoint through most of the piece, but allows room in the arrangement for a solo or two and overdubbed excerpts from alternate recordings of the vocal part towards the end of the movement resulting in the collaborative results that are clear for all to hear.

Sama: (Sanskrit) Calmness, tranquillity: control of the mind ...

Emotion, Instinct and Humanity: Introduction:
Bansuri, sarangi, tabla and voice (3'22")

This is a collection of out takes and overdubs set alongside and within the concrete atmosphere of a recomposed concrete *Prologue* conceived and arranged by the composer during 2013 production. It does exactly what it was intended to do: Shape an uplifting and celebratory encapsulation of the sound world and a tension-releasing caveat to the main body of the work.

In the general tradition of Classical Indian Performance, this arrangement features all of the musicians involved in the project united here for the first and only time in this version of the Meta Form.

Macro Form Total Duration: 58'32"

Alternate Mixes:

Prologue: White Light – Awakening – Introduction (No Vocals):
Bansuri solo (4'38")

Whilst the Macro Form version blatantly required the song structure provided by the added vocals and overdubs, this reduced version of the opening Prologue for bansuri solo was certainly worth archiving as a self-contained movement, an alternate arrangement.

Chakra Three: Fire and Energy – The Power of the Sun (Abridged):
Bansuri, sarangi and voice (4'34")

This is a similar recording from the Macro Form version, but a couple of minutes have been deleted from the end of the piece and all of the vocal parts removed from the first couple of minutes. Although the version in the Macro Form is the preferred arrangement, the composer was always intrigued with the concise nature of the musical statement in this version, which was certainly worth archiving as a self-contained movement, an alternate arrangement.

Chakra Five – Communication and Inner Sound (No Vocals):
Tabla solo (4'36")

Focus on the subtle intricacies of tabla rhythms in this movement was sacrificed a little in the Meta Form version in order to delineate the form with more definition through the addition of added ambient vocal overdubs, but this reduced version (without the vocal overdubs) was certainly worth archiving as a self-contained alternate arrangement.