

Teewinot.

by Betsey Biggs

Written for Grand Valley State New Music Ensemble as part of “Imagine the Parks”

PROGRAM NOTES

Teewinot (pronounced TEE-win-aht) is a mountain set within Grand Teton National Park, a landscape formed by earthquakes, glaciers, and creatures. Teewinot, the piece of music, is a musical ecology of sorts, a bundle of musical possibilities set within a larger structure of events. You might think of it as a sonic time lapse of the history of this land.

NOTE FOR PERFORMERS

As mentioned in the program notes, this piece is a musical ecology of sorts, with a general structure of musical events, within which there are a variety of sounds to be made.

There are many ways to notate such a score, and I hope the solution I came up with is easy for you to follow. Each section of the score (there are three) contains text instructions at the top, along with a set of musical possibilities. There are no larger temporal indications other than the text, which provides a general structure. Each musical possibility is delineated by double barlines.


The three sections of the work are *Earthquakes*, *Glaciers*, and *Creatures*. *Earthquakes* and *Glaciers* include all instruments on a single page; *Creatures* has more musical material, and it took up three pages. I’ve included the full score for everyone so that you can get a feel for the other parts, but in performance you will likely only need the one page that contains your own part.


Though uncomplicated from a technical point of view, this piece does require that musicians listen quite intently to one another, since without a temporal score there will be times that two or more musicians will need to begin a musical event together. Listening and reacting to subtle changes of textures is possibly the greatest technical demand the piece poses. I’m looking forward to hearing it!

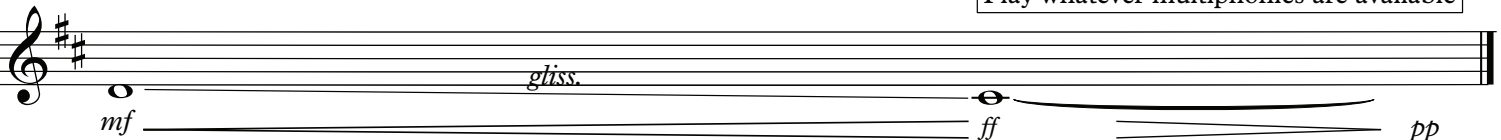
TEEWINOT.

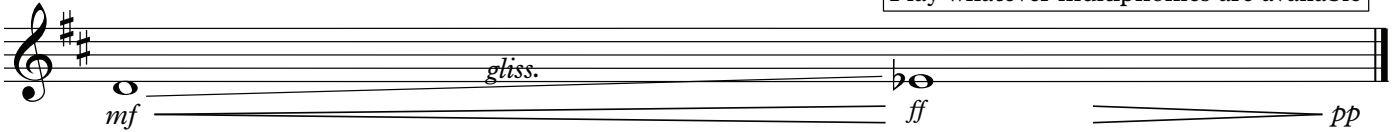
I. Earthquakes


1. begin with quiet gong roll
2. bass clarinet and tenor sax play unison, then slowly diverge, until beating can be heard.
3. piano enters with low cluster rolls
4. flute and strings listen for wind partials and double them loudly, bringing things to a fever pitch
5. everyone fades out slowly
6. gong alone crescendos and decrescendos three times, ending on a high, loud splashy roll
7. segue to movement 2: glaciers

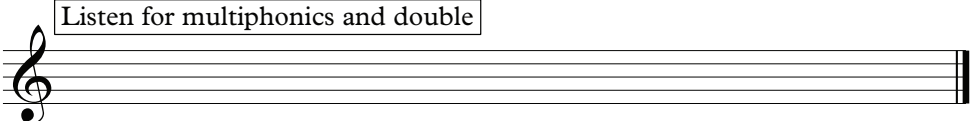
Small Gong  Crescendo, inner to outer of gong (increased noisiness), about 2 minutes.

pp  *ff* *p* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

Bass Clarinet  Play whatever multiphonics are available

Tenor Sax  Play whatever multiphonics are available

Piano 

Flute, Violin, Cello  Listen for multiphonics and double

TEEWINOT.

II. Glaciers

1. gong roll continues
2. cello anchors 'blue ice' chord with low octave; sax and bass clarinet play 2nd and 3rd harmonics.
3. flute & violin play any of the given pitches, as harmonics if possible. One long bow or breath; fade in and out of long notes
4. The balance of this composite chord should constantly shift, as instruments play with their dynamics.
5. gong fades out as imperceptibly as possible.
6. randomized stabs of low drum roll as rocks of avalanche and glaciers.
7. accompanying these rolls, noisy squawks of tenor sax and low piano cluster rolls, and faster and more frenetic flute and violin harmonics till they are arpeggiating.
8. these gestures become long and louder until they are completely overwhelming, then die down, going back to the original 'blue ice' chord, but no gong.
9. repeat steps 7-9 with intensified drums. flute and violin emphasize the 6th harmonic (Bb)
10. die down to the 'blue ice' chord again, no gong. cello fades out leaving harmonics only.

Low Drum

Gong

Cello

Bass Clarinet

Tenor Sax

Flute & Violin

Piano

mf

8va

15mb

Play note then following bass drum rolls, evolve into screaming/growling squawks

play your choice of these notes as wind/whistle/harmonics if possible for one long breath/bow; fade in and out of long notes; after drum rolls, get faster and more frenetic till arpeggiating.

The musical score is written for seven instruments: Low Drum, Gong, Cello, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Sax, Flute & Violin, and Piano. The Low Drum and Gong parts are at the top, with the Gong starting with a roll and fading out. The Cello part is in the bass clef, starting with a long note marked 'mf'. The Bass Clarinet and Tenor Sax parts are in the treble clef, both starting with long notes. The Flute & Violin part is in the treble clef, showing a sequence of notes with an '8va' marking. The Piano part is in the bass clef, showing a cluster of notes. There are two text boxes with performance instructions: one for the Tenor Sax and one for the Flute & Violin. The score ends with a final measure for the Piano part.

TEEWINOT.

III. Creatures (p. 1 of 3)

1. 'blue ice' chord continues without cello. cello plays scratch tones for creaking trees but can then go back and forth between this and low C octaves.
2. flute & violin play any of given pitches, as harmonics if possible. One long bow or breath; fade in and out of long notes.
3. The balance of this composite chord should constantly shift, as instruments play with their dynamics.
4. all instruments may fade out of 'blue ice' chord at any time to play alternative measures: tree creaks, bird songs, animals. back to 'blue ice' when done.
5. duet between quiet splashy gong roll and mid-range piano arpeggios: wind and water. lasts longer than comfortable. fade out.
6. low tom roll and low piano clusters form thunder. high piano octaves play rain; winds play wind tones/key slaps.
7. cello and violin break through this noise, playing dissonant long high bows as shafts of light. other instruments fade out.
8. back to the 'blue ice' chord. percussion and piano play 'night star' sounds.
9. one at a time, 'blue ice' instruments drop out and play triangles as night stars: first flute and violin, then tenor sax, then bass clarinet.
10. fade out.

blue ice chord

Cello

scratch tones for creaking trees.

with violin for shaft of light

blue ice chord

blue ice chord

Bass Clarinet

snipe mating duet with flute

mallard ducks with tenor sax

wind tone and key slap

scattered triangle as night stars

blue ice chord

Tenor Sax

growling for raven caw

mallard ducks quack

non-pitched wind tone and key slap

scattered triangle as night stars

TEEWINOT.

III. Creatures (p. 2 of 3)

1. 'blue ice' chord continues withour cello. cello plays scratch tones for creaking trees but can then go back and forth between this and low C octaves.
2. flute & violin play any of given pitches, as harmonics if possible. One long bow or breath; fade in and out of long notes.
3. The balance of this composite chord should constantly shift, as instruments play with their dynamics.
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10. fade out.

Flute

blue ice chord

dipper song

snipes mating

house wren

forceful wind sounds, nonpitched

scattered triangle as night stars

Violin

blue ice chord

eagles cry, forcefully

marmot shrieks

with cello, shafts of light

scattered triangle as night stars

gliss.

TEEWINOT.

III. Creatures (p. 3 of 3)

1. 'blue ice' chord continues without cello. cello plays scratch tones for creaking trees but can then go back and forth between this and low C octaves.
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3. The balance of this composite chord should constantly shift, as instruments play with their dynamics.
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9. one at a time, 'blue ice' instruments drop out and play triangles as night stars: first flute and violin, then tenor sax, then bass clarinet.
10. fade out.

The musical score is divided into several systems, each with specific instrument assignments and performance instructions:

- Wood Blocks / Small Gong:** The Wood Blocks part begins with a melodic line marked *mf* and a box labeled "downy woodpecker". The Small Gong part has a long sustained note with a box labeled "noisy gong wind duet w/piano as river".
- Triangle / Low Drum:** The Triangle part has a long sustained note with a box labeled "rolls of thunder, with piano". The Low Drum part has a long sustained note with a box labeled "duet with high gong as wind".
- Piano:** The Piano part has a long sustained note with a box labeled "sand hill crane".
- Grand Piano:** The grand piano section features a right-hand part with a box labeled "random high chromatic octaves as rain" and a left-hand part with a box labeled "choose sections of these chords to play night stars". Both parts have a box labeled "8va" above them. The grand piano section also includes a box labeled "rolls of thunder w/low drum" and a box labeled "Ped.".

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mf* and *p*. It also features performance instructions like "Ped." and "8va" (octave up).