

Samsara

Jerod Sommerfeldt

sam·sa·ra

:the indefinitely repeated cycles of birth, death, and misery caused by karma :conceived of as having no perceptible beginning or end

:unbroken chain that follows continuously

Note by Jerod Sommerfeldt

Echo Chamber

Joshua Emanuel and Christine Rohde

Echo Chamber explores the range of emotion when being left alone with nothing but the sound of your own voice. The piece focuses on the cycle of emotions that are felt through loneliness, creating patterns of isolation and despair, causing one to continue to hide their feelings behind closed doors. This collaborative piece explores the cavernous space of one's heart, beyond isolation, where one can reconnect to the outside world.

This piece evolved from a series of improvisations between the composer and the choreographer. A series of experiments with different instrumentation, timbres, styles, and digital audio processing resulted in the combination of vibraphone, tenor drum, and digital delay. The choreographer utilized imagery and texture as a way of representing the feelings of loneliness in relationship to the music score, as well as play between repetitive movements and actions that symbolize the suffocating patterns of feeling secluded.

The echo effect is created by using a digital delay running through Apple's Mainstage software. The audio signals are picked up by the microphones, which are processed in real-time by the dancer who wears a wireless MIDI controller on her finger. By moving her hand up and down or rotating her wrist, she is able to manipulate the panning of the echo to the left and right speakers. This effect mirrors the connection one might have through their physical actions to reach out from one's own enclave into the larger world, creating a ripple of sound beyond isolation.

Prime Ordinals

Jim Casella

Prime Ordinals is my first venture into the world of writing for a soloist with digital audio accompaniment. It was composed for Alex Harmon, during his studies at the University of Kentucky. It is written specifically for the djembe, a drum of African origin which is capable of producing a wide range of timbres. This piece is formed from an ordered sequence of prime numbers (1, 3, 5, 7, 11), in which the ordinals occur as note groupings, time signatures, phrasings, or the amount of semi-tones spanned by the portamento in the audio soundscape accompaniment.

Also used by the performer is a Himalayan singing bowl which marks certain points of the ordinal sequence at the start, middle, and end of the piece. This instrument appears prior to occurrences of phrases based on the number 3, which is thought by some to possess cosmic powers connecting our universe in intangible ways.

The djembe calls for a “delay” – a digital effect causing the acoustic sound of the drum to be repeated at a pre-defined number of milliseconds. In *Prime Ordinals*, the delay is set at a rate of 333.33 milliseconds, which will repeat the performed sounds back in the timeframe relational to eighth notes when the quarter note tempo equals 90 beats per minute. As such, this delay effect plays a critical role in forming the overall rhythmic outcome when combined with the sounds originated by the soloist. The resulting whole should represent a new composite where the interplay can be very deliberate, sometimes chaotic, but always greater than the sum of its parts.

Prime Ordinals was premiered in February 2008 by Harmon at the UAF New Music Festival in Fairbanks, Alaska, and was featured at the 2009 Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) focus day in Indianapolis, Indiana.

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