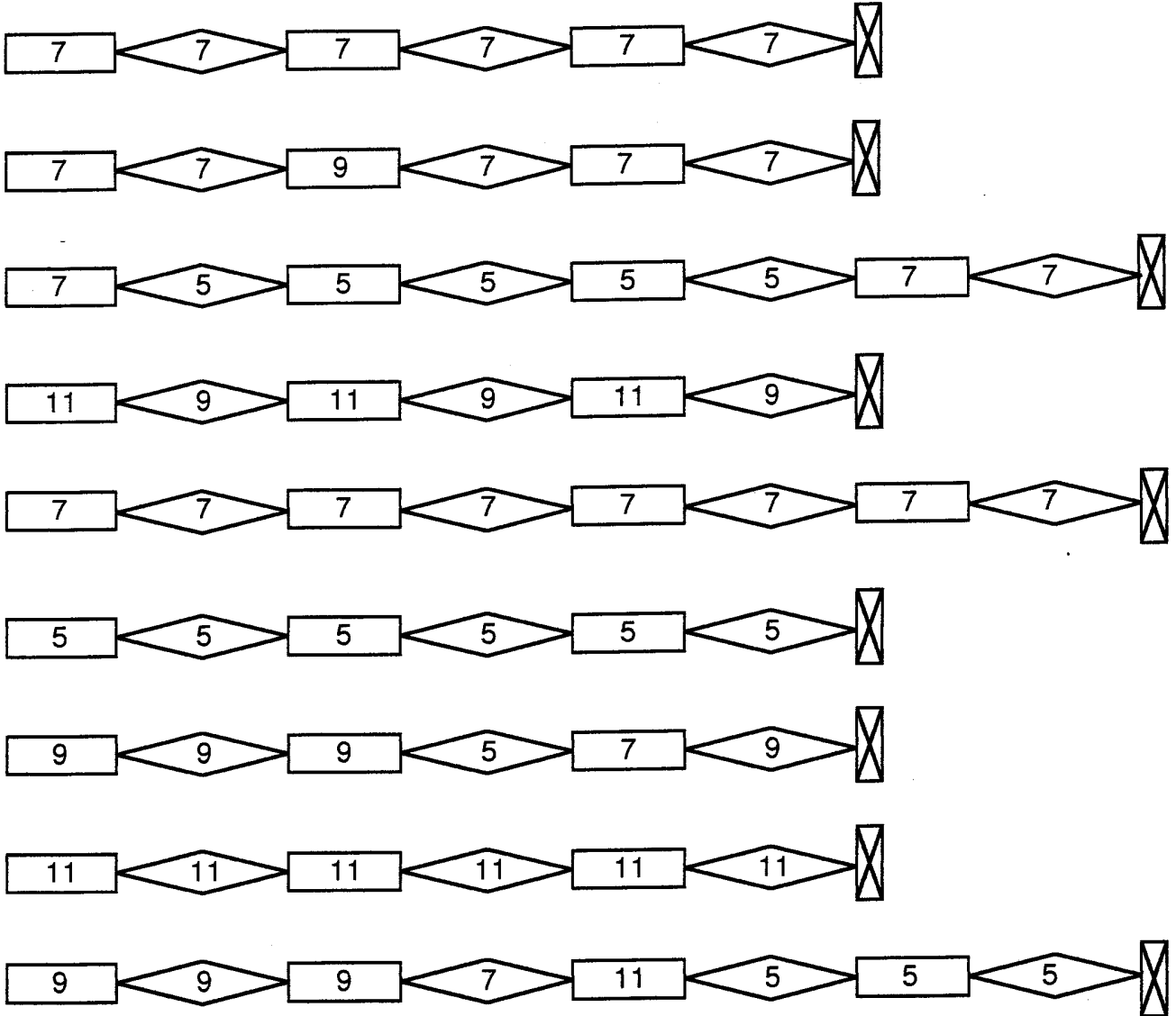


Adrift & Afloat

J. Simon van der Walt

for gamelan (or anything else)



Adrift & Afloat explained

This started life as a piece of gamelan music, specifically for the pelog gamelan of Naga Mas, the Glasgow Gamelan Group, but it has also been successfully performed on a range of other instrumental formations.

The single cryptic page above is, in a sense, the 'score' of the piece – the assumption being that I as the composer will be present to explain how it goes. Failing that, the notes below give an outline of how I usually like to have it played.

Instructions

- Leaving aside the intro for now, and also leaving the gong player out of consideration...
- All players start by picking a random note on their instrument; everyone picks their own note, without planning or consulting with anyone else
- The first rectangular box with a '7' in it means that everyone, together, at a steady tempo of 1 count equal to approximately 100-120 beats per minute, plays two quiet, even strokes on their chosen note for each count
- The next box, the diamond with a '7' in it, means do the same thing but with a moderate increase and decrease in volume across the seven counts
- Proceed in the same way to the end of the line, where the X is. At the start of the next line...
- All players pick a new random note, and carry on exactly as before; in other words, each line has a different, randomly chosen 'chord' that pulses, grows and fades according to the numbers in the boxes
- Damp little or not at all except when changing notes
- Moving on to the gong player now... (this part was not originated by me but developed in rehearsal by the group, but has become part of the piece)
- Three big gongs on their own, out of tempo, start the piece
- Then play seven soft strokes on any kempul as a count-in to the band
- From then on, play kempul or suwukan strokes on any pitch to mark the beginning of each rectangular or diamond box, staying on the same pitch for each line...
- and big gong strokes at the start of each line, as the chord changes
- At the end of the piece, play one big gong *a tempo* where the next line would begin, then two echoing, lingering strokes after that to finish

Other instruments


This piece has been played in many different instrumentations, from classroom percussion to a large contemporary ensemble. Whilst not impossible to perform on bowed, sung or blown instruments, it's natural home is on pitched instruments which are struck and then decay. As part of *Tribulation* for Ensemble Thing, for instance, an out-of-tune bass guitar took the gong/kempul part, while two out-of-tune electric guitars, four vocalists and two pianos played the rest of it. I am open to any interpretations of this material.

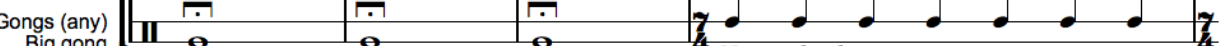
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Notation

Here is the opening of the piece roughed out in conventional notation;

Intro (suggested) ♩ = 115-128

Other insts 


Gongs (any) 

Big gong 

Any single kempul, as a count-in to...

Not too loud

Line 1 *All players pick any note, and stick with it until the start of line 2; undamped or very lightly damped*

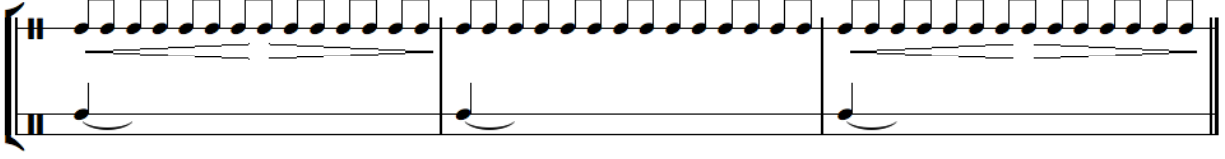


mp


mf/f ad lib


mp etc similar dynamics throughout

Any kempul or suwukan



Line 2 *All players pick different note, and stick with it until the start of line 3*





etc