Dual Ensemble Dramatic Concert Event Documentation & Choreography

Robert John Magnuson 2022 Approximate duration of entire performance: 11:00



I wish attribution to include my name, date, and title of composition, as are listed in each score. I request that any public performance of any work I have released be recorded to video with sound, and that recording be forwarded to me (as video file or website URL of video). Please use the 'Contact' form on my website listed below if you have a video of a performance, to arrange how I might receive such.

This file provides documentation and choreography details. Music is found in associated files, for both full ensemble and the two subensembles.

Overview: This is a "recital with choreography". Whereas a typical recital finds musicians entering the stage, playing the music, and leaving the stage... all participants in this composition will PLAY and ACT. No speaking out loud is undertaken, all is 'mime' or "stage business".

In this score, I elaborate details what the musicians**are to do, and how they should 'act'**. Please do not fear suggestion you are asked to be an actor; if directions are followed, all will hopefully produce a satisfying experience for the audience, and the players. It might prove beneficial to have a sort of "stage director" during rehersals, to help the performers with their choreography & actions. That person may be valuable, viewing from the audience's perspective, and action syncronization to the scores.

Important: from start to finish, musicians (who are to 'act' my listed choreography) MUST NOT 'ham things up". Musicians need to know that their essentially innocent authenticity has to be maintained from beginning to end. This is about a musical experience that has been enhanced by movement and/or individual or group actions.

All my free compositions (and further info) are found at: https://www.gandsnut.net 2

I trust this unexpected kind of performance will be entertaining. What you performers are doing makes perfect sense to you... **WE** know in advance the audience will be surprised. But we can't "let on" that we know there will be surprises along the way.

I consider this performance to begin when the first individual walks out on the stage, even if no music is being played.

Preface: As suggested by the title, there are TWO ensemble groups of 5 players each, AND a Conductor.

Ensemble 1 (ENS1) have a group demeanor of "*prim & proper*". ENS1 players are Flute (F), Clarinet (C), Violin (VLN), 'Cello (VC) and Piano (P).

Ensemble 2 (ENS2) are characteristically the "*rowdy bunch*". ENS2 players are Oboe (O), Bassoon (B), French Horn (FH), Trombone (T) and electric piano (EP).

Conductor (CON). There will also be a 'conscripted' audience member (CAM).

The parenthetical labels apply when a particular group member may undertake individual choreography.

Non-formal, sedate clothing is recommended. As would be worn by those in a "pit orchestra". Please arrange by agreement all wear (somewhat) similar shirts, uniform color (black?), open collar or with necktie is up to all involved. For ease of reference, 'he' / 'his' will be used here, no matter the sex of the participants. CON's attire is up to all participants, but in this setting, a "tux with tails" is likely overkill.

There are 4 'blocks' of music. Blocks #1 & #4 are performed by all players. Blocks #2 & #3 will be performed by ENS1 or ENS2 separately.

Equipment

Food. For ENS1, a medium small-sized bowel will contain, say, M&M candies, or small cookies, (or else chosen by ENS1 ahead of time). This bowel with contents MUST be of a size and shape to be easily passed between ENS1 members. Here, we'll refer to M&M candies. (Equip. cont.) For ENS2, there will be WATER instead of FOOD. 5 visually obvious BEER BOTTLES (matching) will have the beer removed & replaced with water, and the caps replaced on the bottles. The 'beers' will be stored in a medium-sized picnic cooler, which is easily carried. A beer-cap opener will be needed to promote the illusion that during the performance, the bottles are being opened for the first time. Some padding may be helpful inside cooler. No ice should be present. I don't recommend REAL beer, but, hey, it's your show... (And ENS2 is the "rowdy bunch".)

A 2-foot square piece of white poster board (there are such poster boards made of a stiff material) and a large, 'fat' black permanent marker.

A 'spinet' piano rather than grand piano, is preferred and will conserve the space on stage. A spinet will also lend better to a choreography moment.

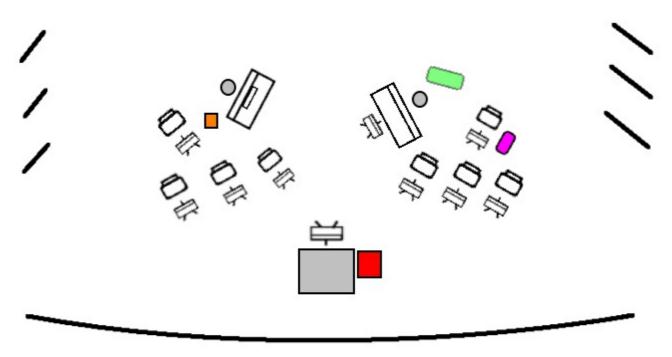
9 matching chairs (for all except pianist, who has a stool or bench seat). 9 matching music stands. Platform & music stand for conductor. Conductor's music stand can be larger, or the same as the others. The pianist's music will reside on the piano's built-in music stand above keyboard.

A small table to provide a place for the ENS1 bowel to be placed. Another table is needed, large enough for the poster board & permanent marker.

An appropriate amplifier with speakers for use with the electric piano. This is preferred over an electric piano with "built-in" speakers. A "sustain-pedal" is needed by electric piano player during performance.

Interactions between ALL PARTICIPANTS should be done with minimal facial emotion or body language, EXCEPT where specified in the choreography step at hand.

Choreography is indexed by notations in the scores with 'C1', 'C2', etc., when something should happen, or begin / stop happening. Measures which only contain fermatas are not typically musical, and should be interpreted as variable time spaces, in which the choreography (or other directions) are to execute. If a measure with fermata needs to be interpreted "in time", notation will be given in the score. Figure 1.



Audience

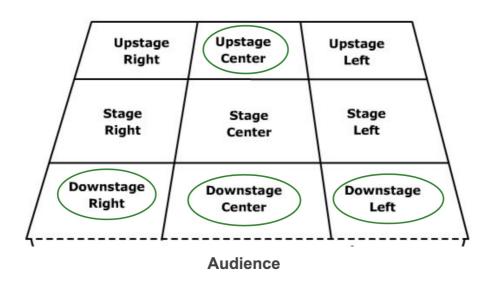
Figure 2.



CON Plat Tbl2

Audience

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT APPLAUSE: How any particular audience will react to this performance (*during the performance*) cannot be foreseen. The uncertainty revolves around the conductor's actions... especially when necessary pauses occur between blocks of music. Fortunately, since there is no dialogue whatsoever, I propose the conductor AND players SHOULD NOT pause the flow of the presentation, or to acknowledge any applause from the audience.



Pre-performance.

Please refer to Figures 1 & 2 for a suggested stage layout. ENS1 food & ENS2 drink (offstage, on the appropriate side R or L) have been made ready. The music scores are already on the music stands, including the conductor's score and baton (if used). The square of white poster board and permanent marker already on the table next to the conductor's platform. The electric piano AND its amplification are powered on, and set to the correct volume.

Note about CAM (conscripted audience member). At the end of the last block of music, this pre-arranged individual in the audience will leave the audience, walk to the stage from either direction, and interact with CON. More details will be given at the choreography step when this is to happen.

Performance begins.

C1: A member from ENS1 enters from stage-right with the bowel of M&M's, placing it on the small table in the ENS1 grouping. Member exits stage-right. A member from ENS2 enters in from stage-left with the picnic cooler (with 'beer' bottles already inside), places it (on floor) to the left of T & FH in the ENS2 grouping. Member exits stage-left. NOTE: entries can be simultaneous OR one, then the other.

C2: After 3-5 seconds of empty stage, all of ENS1 enter with instruments from stage-right, and take their seats. No interaction between them. At the same time, all of ENS2 enter from stage-left, with instruments, take their seats. No interaction between them. The whole ensemble can 1) take up to 90 seconds to "warm up", then 2) instruments "tune-up". Hopefully the EP and P will already be in tune.

C3: CON enters from either stage direction, walks upstage (behind) either ENS1 or ENS2 players, turns at center-stage, walks to raised conductor's platform. CON steps onto the platform, and readies music, but before raising baton (or hands), checks first towards ENS2 with a hand-motion of "are you all ready?" In response, ALL players in ENS2 raise one straightened arm high, presenting a hand-in-air "thumbs-up" in affirmation. Their gesture ends. CON then shifts attention to ENS1, again with handmotion, whereupon all ENS1 players slowly, graciously bow heads, chindown, politely. The head-bow ends.

C4: CON takes baton (or raises hands), all players ready their instruments. CON begins the first 'block' of ENS1 & ENS2 combined music. No choreography will occur for the rest of block #1.

C5: On conclusion of this music, CON does not step down from the platform. When block #1 ends, the audience may applaude. CON does NOT acknowledge this. CON immediately continues by reaching down for poster board & permanent marker, places both on his music stand, then writes in large numbers "23". Making an effort to hide (from the players) what has been written, he now turns the audience, showing them (for 3-4 seconds) what number he has written. He puts the poster board back on the table, written numbers side down. Permanent marker also returns to the table (maybe under poster board to prevent rolling off table). C6: With hand & pointed finger (no baton), he first seeks ENS2's input by pointing their direction, at which time the FH player stands, and holds up 4 fingers on one hand, 2-3 seconds. FH then sits. CON then seeks ENS1's input by pointing towards ENS1, where C stands, puts his instrument on seat / stand, and gestures unhurriedly, holding up 10 fingers, then 10 fingers again, then 5 fingers, to represent "25". C sits, and takes his instrument in readiness.

C7: CON points to ENS1 (who have gotten "first-draw"), and takes baton in hand, whereupon the ENS1 players ready instruments. Block #2 of music is performed by ENS1.

During the time block #2 is being played, the following actions happen. Silently, the ENS2 player closest to the 'beer' cooler opens its top, one at a time grabs a 'beer' for each player in ENS2, pops the top (depositing top back into the cooler), and distributes a 'beer' to each ENS2 member. (ENS2 members can pass-along a 'beer' to B and O, and EP can stand and reach for his 'beer'.) ENS2 members silently interact with a few, random (pretend) whispers between those closest to each other. They take random sips of their 'beer'. At some point (decided during rehearsal) a member of ENS2 puts his 'beer' on floor by his chair, stands, puts his instrument on his chair (or stand), walks over to P of ENS1 (who is playing), and from behind the piano, leans on its top, looking over and down-wards at P. (Rather than look AT P. the visitor can look at *P*'s **hands**.) P tries not to notice, paying attention to his playing. This visit from the ENS2 member lasts 3-6 seconds, then he returns to his chair. CON takes no notice of what is going on with ENS2's members, as well as when the ENS2 member walks over to P, then walks back.

C8: All ENS2 'beer' sipping and pseudo-conversations need to end by this point. Any applause for ENS1's playing, after the music finishes should, again, NOT be acknowledge by CON.

C9: (ENS1 sit sedately, instruments on a stand or on lap. They are oblivious to ENS2's playing. They look towards the audience.) CON has not stepped off his platform. Prior to raising the baton, CON & ENS2 players ready their scores, and the players ready their instruments. When ready, CON lifts baton (or hands), and their block #3 of music begins.

C10: As soon as ENS2 starts playing their block of music, either VC or P of ENS1 can take the bowel of M&Ms, take a few, then pass along to nearest member of group. The bowel can "make the rounds" between players as often as they desire, in an unhurried rate. In rehearsal, ENS1 can figure out how much time they have to distribute M&Ms. The bowel needs to be put back on its table with plenty of time for what comes next. (If any player does not wish to partake of M&Ms, the bowel can simply be passed to the next person.)

C11: After ENS2's music ends, CON does not step off platform, and makes ready the next music on his stand. ENS1 & ENS2 members can also organize their music to be ready. When CON sees all players are ready, he lifts baton (or hands), then begins the last block #4 of music for all players.

C12: After the last block of music ends, CON does not step off platform. The CAM in audience stands, walks onto stage from either direction, going downstage of all players, and stops immediately next to CON, who has remained facing the players. CAM now briefly scans all the players visually, then (pretend) whispers into CON's ear - this decides the lucky player who will leave early. CON points to said player, who leaves instrument, stands, and departs to his ENS's side of the stage. All watch, waiting patiently while this transpires. CAM repeats this scan of players (effective if a moment of slightly turning head L & R is done to see all players). CAM whispers to CON who should be released as second lucky player.

(NOTE: these early-departure players 1, 2, 3 can be decided during rehearsals, or can be done LIVE during performance. This is up to all people involved.) C12 (con't): Player #2 leaves instrument, exits as did lucky player #1. CAM again does his selection for #3, pretend whispering to CON. CON selects, lucky player #3 leaves instrument, exits to appropriate stage direction. CAM silently shakes CON's hand, and departs stage in any direction. When CAM has left the stage, CON then steps off the platform, stands next to it facing the players, who all leave their instruments on stage and depart to their original stage direction, calmly, unhurredly. As the last player leaves the stage, CON exits to either R or L stage direction.

Performance ends.

Offstage, players have regrouped into single-file lines (of their subensemble), and enter from their particular stage side (R or L). Both subensembles can enter at the same time, and stand downstage of chairs. Then CON, (and "stage manager", if one has participated during rehersals) enter from either stage direction.

CON (and optional "stage manager") likely should stand between the two sub-ensembles, for symmetry. CON can direct ENS1 (to his right) to take a bow, then ENS2 (to his left) to bow, then "stage manager" takes a bow. An all-group bow can be taken.

I am more than happy to answer questions or comments about this piece and its performance as I have laid out. Contact me via my web page 'Contact' form, or through the MuseScore website.