CHACONNE FOR JAMES TENNEY

Robert Hasegawa
2007
Like many of Tenney’s compositions, the *Chaconne for James Tenney* is about continuity and gradual change. A drone on the D above middle C is heard throughout the piece—above the drone, we hear a second pitch, gradually rising from a minor second above the drone to a major seventh. The interval between the drone and the rising pitch successively approximates just intonation intervals drawn from the overtone series—the rest of the ensemble reinforces and expands upon the harmonic implications of this interval. The result is a series of overtone-series chords over a cycling progression of roots. These roots are indicated on the lowest (unplayed) staff of the score, which also describes the interval between the drone and rising pitch, the root (notated in cents above the pitch class C), and the harmonic ratio that the interval implies. The dynamic form of the piece is a slow swell from *ppp* to *f* then back to *ppp*.

Microtonal pitches are notated as follows:

- closed-headed arrows indicate an adjustment of 16 cents (a sixth of a semitone) up or down
- open-headed arrows indicate an adjustment of 33 cents (a third of a semitone) up or down
- altered accidentals indicate quartertones
  - quartertone sharp: †
  - quartertone flat: ‡

The instrument with the rising line (cello, viola, then violin) has a more detailed microtonal notation—here, the arrows and altered accidentals are supplemented by a number indicating the deviation in cents of the desired pitch from the nearest equal-temperament semitone.

The drone is controlled by the percussionist—a drone on an acoustic instrument is ideal, but use of electronics is also possible.

Long tones for wind instruments should be played in one breath where possible—when this is impractical, a brief break in the tone and a discreet reentrance is acceptable. String instruments should change bow as necessary. Both wind and string instruments should play with a full, rich tone without vibrato. Notated durations for piano and percussion pitches may exceed the resonance of the instrument—in all cases, though, the sound should be allowed to decay naturally.

*Chaconne for James Tenney* was written for the White Rabbit Ensemble, led by Eric Hewitt.
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Robert Hasegawa (2007)
Score in C

Flute

Clarinet in B♭

Baritone Saxophone

Vibraphone

Piano

Violin

Viola

Violoncello

Roots

A+933  B♭1016  B1100  C0  C♯100  D200  Em316  E+433  F+566  G700
Fl.
Cl.
Sax.
Vib.
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.

mf
crescendo poco a poco

B 1100 (19:24)
E♭316 (15:19)
Ad 850 (11:14)
E+ 433 (7:9)
C♯ 100 (17:22)
B♭ 1016 (10:13)