Archive[s] for amplified violin and cello + video projection

Sivan Eldar [2011]
Instrumentation

amplified or electric violin
amplified or electric cello
two-channel (stereo) audio playback
one-channel (split screen) video projection

Duration: 5'15

Indications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GERGIEV</th>
<th>A word in uppercase corresponds with a change in the video (e.g. from Stravinsky to Gergiev).</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wiggle</td>
<td>A word in lowercase correspond with a cue in the video. Such words appear primarily in sections where the conductor's beat is ambiguous.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rehearsal letters correspond with rehearsal markers on the quicktime practice video.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>col legno battuto close to the bridge, with bow bouncing repeatedly and somewhat unevenly (like tiny bouncy balls on the string). Each arc should be played either up or down bow (i.e. legato).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bracketed note heads indicate approximate rather than absolute pitches</td>
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<tr>
<td>s.p. s.t.</td>
<td>sul ponticello, sul tasto</td>
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<tr>
<td>nat. ord.</td>
<td>naturale, ordinario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition gradually. For example, from nat. to s.p., or from ord. bowing to &quot;bow trill&quot; (m.34).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition gradually from regular bow pressure to heavy pressure (crunch).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The cello playback tracks should be pre-recorded by the performer.

All accidentals apply within the measure.

All temp indications are approximate, and should correspond with the subtle tempo changes of the conductors in the video. Practicing with the video is therefore essential.

While each performer is assigned one side of the split screen (see diagram), there are sections where the beat is hard to follow because of closeups (e.g. the beginning for the violin). In those sections, the performer should pay attention to the conductor on the other side of the split screen for clear rhythmic cues.
Technical Requirements

• 2 Speakers
• 2 Mics for amplification
• 1 Projector
• 1 Audio interface
• 2 music stand lights
• 1 Laptop with Max/MSP (for live processing+video projection)

The amplified cello and violin are positioned on stage right and stage left, facing the split-screen video projection (see diagram below). A speaker should be placed beside each instrument. Audio signal from each instrument is processed in Max, and then sent out as stereo mix to the speakers, together with the pre-recorded cello track.

![Diagram of split screen video with conductors and instruments]

About

_The conductor raises his arm to cue the entrance of yet another majestic Russian tune. The French horn prepares for its solo – The solo. It’s the finale of the Firebird._

In the absence of sound, a conductor’s gesture may be perceived as performative, bordering on absurd. It was Stravinsky’s unusual conducting – his subtle facial expressions, small hand gestures, confident cues – that originally inspired me to compose a work that explores the symbiotic relationship between conductors and instrumentalists, and the performative act of musical expression.

The visual element of this work consists of a compendium of Firebird interpretations by Stravinsky, Gergiev, Rattle, Arnold and Tilson Thomas. These conductors, synched to one another, function as both masters and servants to the new composition. The performers, each facing a conductor, indulge in this strange marriage of musical expressions. It is only at the very end that faint remnants of the original Firebird emerge, signaling, perhaps, that the music can never fully escape its old master...
*Begin by repeating the figure slowly and unevenly. Morph into the next figure (alternating between stopped and harmonic) while accelerating gradually to m. 33.*
Gradually begin to alternate between the two strings with the bow.

All harmonics between rehearsal letters F and G are artificial (touch 4 or touch 5), with the exception of m.44.
*Pizz freely to conductor's cues, with occasional accents on attacks.