The Shape of the Shell (2010)
for bass clarinet and live electronics

music by Cindy Cox
text by John Campion

World a Tuning Fork Press
Duration: 8’

Audio Requirements:
The audio sound for The Shape of the Shell exists in two different versions: a live, interactive version that requires a computer running Max/MSP, and a simpler version for CD that can be played in a standard CD player.

CD version:
A microphone and mixer in addition to the audio CD (tape part) are required for the setup. The bass clarinet should be amplified and mixed with the sound of the CD. Balance should be about equal between the bass clarinet and CD, with the bass clarinet perhaps slightly predominating.

Max/MSP version:
John MacCallum, programming, with help from the Center for New Music and Audio Technology (john@cnmat.berkeley.edu)

System Requirements: Operating system: Mac OS X 10.4 or higher (10.5 is better), or Windows XP, Vista, or Windows 7.

Software:
Max/MSP 5 or Max/MSP 5 Runtime
CNMAT objects from http://cnmat.berkeley.edu/downloads (already included in the data folder with the score materials)

Audio equipment: audio interface, microphone, mixer

Instructions for the Max/MSP version:
1. Open the file called ec_master.maxpat
2. Double click the footswitch subpatch to configure the footswitch if necessary (the footswitch option is available if the bass clarinetist would like to operate the triggers).
3. Set the levels to appropriate values—the first and fourth sliders (waves and reverb waves) can be ignored. The computer’s sound and the bass clarinet’s should be roughly about the same, with the bass clarinet perhaps slightly predominating. Add reverb to both the clarinet and tape to the amount desired for the room space.
4. Turn on the dac.
5. Press the space bar (or footswitch) to advance to the next section. The escape key reinitializes the patch. Timing, as shown on the “Timing/Triggers” page, is flexible within 5-10”.

Sound: throughout the piece, water and natural sounds are to be evoked. Play with a very breathy sound throughout, with a lot of air.

Lighting: it is desirable (but optional) to light the piece with blue lighting. If possible, begin with a lighter blue and progress to a deep blue lighting by 4:30, and move back toward a very light, almost white lighting by the end of the piece.

Movement: it is desirable (but optional) to include theatrical movement. See the score for specific instructions. The movement should use the entire performance space and generally trace the shape of a spiral, out from the center at the beginning of the piece.

Questions? contact Cindy Cox, cacox@berkeley.edu

The Shape of the Shell
Max/MSP Triggers

Note: in the Max/MSP score, the spacebar triggers each sound file to play. The escape key will stop playing, and stop the chronometer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trigger</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0:00 (after opening cue)</td>
<td>tape 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0:30</td>
<td>text: “shape causes the sound”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>text, complete poem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1:35</td>
<td>tape 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2:30</td>
<td>keyclick improvisation 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4:30</td>
<td>tape 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5:45</td>
<td>tape 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>6:30</td>
<td>text: “you throw a stick…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>7:00</td>
<td>keyclick improvisation 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (optional)</td>
<td>7:40</td>
<td>stop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The shape of the shell
Performance notes and examples

Examples:

pitch: for section one, choose among these pitches:
rhythm: play long tones, 3-10" articulation and dynamic: use lots of air or flutter tongue, and vary from ppp (extremely quiet attacks) to mf, as on tape

Examples:

pitch: choose among these pitches:
rhythm: very short, single notes and very fast groups articulation and dynamic: short, slap-tongue pitches play with a very fast articulation so that the result is noisy and unpitched, a little louder than "A" noise

Examples:

pitch: split harmonics on B-flat and C rhythm: 2-7" articulation/dynamic: very loud

Example:

rapid tongue improvisation: see taped example

pitch: play on given lowest pitch in score, with added distortion rhythm: very fast articulation/dynamic: double-tongue, very loud

Example:

mouth sounds: see taped example intermittently, with mouth on reed
The shape of the shell

for Laura Carnichael

Cindy cox

movement: optional throughout.
begin sitting or lying down, as in the
center of the stage, with a clarinet
in the ear.
speak into mic: "o-see", and repeat as desired,
several times

Bass Clarinet
tape

gradually stand up, while playing loud keyclicks,
with a sound like water droplets

slap tongue

P

begin tape...
time: 0:00
trigger: 1

alternate between "A" and "B" music,
with "A" music predominant

a
b

B. Cl.
tape

ppp cresc. poco a poco, to 1:20
text: "the shape of the shell causes the sound"


gradually increase overall intensity to about 1:20, and then decrease until 1:30.

C. I.

position: center of stage, no other movement

p

1:00
1:10
1:20
1:30
1:40
1:50
2:00
2:10
2:20
end text

begin movement outward in a spiral pattern,
in the opposite direction, gradually gaining speed
and moving outward, until about 1:40.

begin keyclick improvisation #1

(circuit example): alternating with multiphonics, until 4:30

end "A" and "B" multiphonics, growing in intensity

continue multiphonics, growing in intensity

D.
D.

B. Cl.
tape
from the center, slowly sit or lie down
mouth sounds: unpitched air sounds, intermittent, with mouth on and
slowing down...

II. Cl.

keyclick improvisation #2

(keyclick improv #2)
dim. poco a poco

p

dim.

noise with clicks
random, popping noises

end text

end tape

7:00 7:10 7:20 7:30 7:40 7:50