

VITTORIO

for The California Time Machine

Note: Vittorio was the chief lieutenant of Mangus Colorado, the first major Apache Chiefdom in the Wars of the Southwest in the latter half of the 19th Century. With Mangus' assassination, Vittorio took up the cause and, like Mangus, knew it was futile but that there was no choice.

Maximum 4 mikes (one of which is contact mike).

One Large Gong: Transducer affixed to backside of gong; Glass windbells on face of gong; contact mike on face of gong. Appropriate amp(s).

Chimes (or Carillons)

Flugelhorn (German Preferred)

2 Female speaking voices

Each with mike into amp... broadcast through gong.

Strings - Minimum of 4; any combination. Not amplified.

Lighting - generally quite dark; soft, diffused colored spot on gong. Placement - gong in front; performing activities well in back of gong.

The general characteristics of this piece should be ... an unremittingly dark, chiaroscuro... soft loveliness.

A very mysterious aural and visual quietude --- supercharged (or it were) with understated tension - inhuman duration - It's important to be pushed to the very extreme of perception and tolerance. These involved should be forced to come to the piece.

After all is said and done, VITTORIO is essentially a piece for one large gong (with transducer) and soft lighting. Given the possibility that the maximum facilities, equipment, etc. are available, the piece is as follows:

1. Set the gain on amp up to the point where the gong is activated (or as nearly so as possible). The glass windbells may (it is hoped) vibrate on the face of the gong... (optional: this sound can be picked up by one contact mike and be broadcast thru the gong... ad inf.).
2. Flugelhorn: Determine beforehand one note that, when played into a mike (sound through gong), tends to activate the gong thru sympathetic vibration (probably one of the first 2 partials). This note should be an occasional occurrence - wide separation - and should be of rather long duration; beginning with a near (or definitely) inaudible "breath sound"; gradual crescendo to SOFT, gradual diminuendo to near - then definite - inaudibility: :::::eeee e >>>.....
3. Chimes: A part is supplied. It too should (as best as possible) be amplified by use of a separate mike placed near the ictus of each stroke. Generally, the chime should be sounded somewhere within the envelope of the flugelhorn's activity.
4. Female voices: Likewise separate mike (broadcast thru gong). The given lines should be spoken at irregular intervals of time and rather quietly. Voice #1 should affect a rather deep, husky whisper, rather like Elizabeth Scott. Voice #2 should speak in a kind of whisper/cackle like the witches in Macbeth.

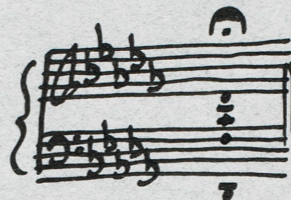
VITTORIO

- continued -

(Female Voices):
Voice # 1 : "Oh, My God!"
Voice # 2 : "Judas."
voice # 2 : "Dilettantes!"
Voice # 1 : "There's no time."
voice # 1 : "There's no time."
(last line rather drawn out ... spatial).

Strings:

Not placed too far in back of the gong, i.e., within view of the audience (within view means that some of the light on the gong may barely spill onto the string players. The players enter their performance area (the set-up as in any string quartet situation) well after the piece is in progress. They sit... compose themselves... on cue they sustain a D-flat Major triad for a long duration - very quietly (con sordini). For example (with 2 vln., vla., Vc.):



Dear Dan -

The piece is not about the equipment used (some or all). (Dan Lentz knows this; I mention it for other people). So much of it is optional that it's really un-necessary to list the "alternatives". For example, the piece is essentially unchanged if only chimes and gong are used: a quiet on-going sound from the gong with an occasional chime note coming from some mysterious place in back. The essentials of the piece are: The physical reality of gong in view; the lighting; the space of the performance area; the quietude; the long durations; the reality of the gong contributing to an on-going aural texture.

Perhaps you will choose activities of your own invention - or someone else's (using your own judgement as to what is, or is not, appropriate). Perhaps you will find a method to do it better (activating gong, for one example). At any rate, Dan Lentz does it not only "with permission" but with my full confidence.

Regards,

Hal Budd
August, 1969