ADAM SILVERMAN • 2017

The Rule of Five

DOUBLE CONCERTO
FOR TWO PERCUSSIONISTS AND WIND ENSEMBLE

COMMISSIONED BY A CONSORTIUM LED BY
NOVUS PERCUTERE

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The Rule of Five
Double Concerto For Two Percussionists And Wind Ensemble
Composed by Adam Silverman (2017). Duration: 20 minutes.

I. Prelude in Black & White
II. Claptrap
III. The loud alarum bells
IV. Flimflam
V. Interlude in Color
VI. Chatterbox

Instrumentation

- Piccolo
- Flutes 1-2
- 2 Oboes
- English Horn in F *
- Clarinet in Eb
- Clarinets 1-3 in Bb
- Bass Clarinet in Bb
- 2 Bassoons *
- Contra Bassoon
- Piano
- Timpani (dbl. Cabasa)

- 4 Saxophones (AATB)
- Trumpets 1-3 in Bb
- 4 French Horns in F
- 3 Tenor Trombones
- Bass Trombone
- Euphonium
- Tuba
- Contrabass
- Concerto
- Flimflam


2 Percussion Soloists

Solo 1: Castanets, 5 Wood Slats, 5 Metals¹, Riq, Snare Drum with Hoop Crasher or Ribbon Crasher, Ride Cymbal, Suspended Cymbal (or multiple Cymbals), Tubular Bells, 5 High Drums + Crot-Hats², Glockenspiel.

Solo 2: Castanets, 5 Wood Slats, 5 Metals¹, Performer’s Choice of Idiophone(s) or Membranophone(s)³, Slit Drum, Vibraphone, 5 High Drums (suggested: bongos + roto-toms) + Crot-Hats², Mark Tree, 5 Tom-toms.

* Substitute parts are available for English Horn (played on alto saxophone) and Bassoon 2 (played on tenor/baritone saxophones).

¹ 5 Metals: ex.: Gongs flat on table (muted), Almglocken rack, etc.
² Crot-Hats: Five pairs of Crotales with spring between them that can be triggered with mallets.
³ Performer’s Choice of Idiophone(s) or Membranophone(s): Select an instrument upon which a virtuosic solo may be improvised that is particularly suited to the skills of the soloist. Suggestions include Tambourine, Darbouka, Multi, etc. Do not use wood blocks or drums that are similar to the instruments that dominate the rest of the concerto.
Program note by the composer

An early idea for this piece — abandoned but remembered fondly — was to call it Every Good Bird Does Fly in homage to an age-old mnemonic used by those who wish to remember the notes of the lines of the treble clef; I could compose non-pitched percussion parts with each note assigned its rhythm and contour on the five-line staff, but with the instrument choice left entirely up to the percussion soloists. In the end, this name was jettisoned and instruments selected, but the five-line patterns remained, now scored for sets of five wood blocks, five metals, five small drums, five "crot-hats" (hi-hats made from pairs of crotales and springs) and tom-toms. The new title The Rule of Five refers to these sets of non-pitched instruments; it's a name that sprang to mind without my remember from where it came, and a quick search revealed all sorts of meanings; this piece relates to none of them.

The composition is in six movements, not all are of equal weight, with the music created to allow flexibility in the performance of excerpted versions. The colorful movement titles were inspired by my feelings, as I composed it, that percussive melody without "true" pitches can often seem like arbitrary clickety-clacks. In that spirit, the four main movements gained titles inspired by nonsense conversation (Claptrap, Flimflam, and Chatterbox), with the third movement taking the title The loud alarum bells from Edgar Allan Poe’s evocative 1849 poem “The Bells”: Hear the loud alarum bells / Brazen bells! ... In the startled ear of night / How they scream out their affright! ... They can only shriek, shriek / Out of tune / In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire. The remaining two movements, scored for the soloists alone, work as introductions to the movements that follow. The first is Prelude in Black & White (“black and white” because it has no gradation of pitches as it is scored solely for a pair of castanets) and the other is Interlude in Color (since it adds “color” to the prelude by scoring the existing music for pitched instruments: tubular bells and vibraphone).

The Rule of Five is dedicated to those who commissioned the music, especially Justin Alexander and Luis Rivera of the Novus Percutere Percussion Duo, who initiated the idea and assembled a wonderful group of collaborating commissioners. I am grateful to these fine percussionists and bands, and especially to Brian Nozny, who was a constant sounding-board and percussion consultant for me as I composed the music.

— Adam Silverman

Commissioned by

Novus Percutere Percussion Duo (Luis Rivera and Justin Alexander)

University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point (Michael Butler, Director of Bands, and Percussionist Brian Baldauff with Dave Alcorn)

Tommy Dobbs and Ben Tomlinson

Ben Fraley (Troy University) with Brian Nozny (Troy University)

Matthew Greenwood

The Illinois State University Wind Symphony, Anthony Marinello, Conductor, and David Collier and Ben Stiers, Percussion

Rob Sanderl and Tom Marceau

University of Missouri-Columbia (Megan Arns & Julia Gaines)

Virginia Tech Wind Ensemble (Jonathan Caldwell, conductor) with Escape Ten (Annie Stevens and Andrea Venet)

» For performance materials «

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» Music for wind ensemble

Alien Robots Unite! for wind ensemble, 8 minutes.
Alternating Current concerto for alto saxophone and wind ensemble, 23 minutes.
Carbon Paper and Nitrogen Ink concerto for marimba and wind ensemble, 21 minutes.
Hard Knocks for wind ensemble, 6 minutes.
Raining Bricks (2018) for wind ensemble, 6 minutes.
Zipzap for drum kit and wind ensemble, 8 minutes.

» Music for percussion ensemble

The Cruel Waters (2015) – marimba trio or quartet, 8 minutes.
Downtown Is The Battery (2018) – multi-percussion solo or duet, 7 minutes.
Gasoline Rainbow (2009) – percussion octet, 8 minutes.
Naked And On Fire (2011) – percussion sextet, 6 minutes.
Nightmare Machine (2017) – for drum kit and pre-recorded track, 5 minutes.
The Percustary Insectarium (2017) – for cello and percussion dectet, 15 minutes.
Sparklefrog (2014) – percussion octet, 12 minutes.
Spiderweb Lead (2016) – percussion quartet, 9 minutes.
Stars, cars, bars (1999) — for speaking marimbist, with text from Nabokov’s Lolita, 10 minutes.

» Music for percussion as part of an ensemble

In Another Man’s Skin (2000) – flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano and percussion, 20 minutes.
That Radiant Outburst (2015) for clarinet, cello, piano and percussion, 13 minutes.
Three Fell Swoops (2004) for tenor saxophone, percussion, guitar (amplified), and piano, 12 minutes.
Together (2016) for flute and vibraphone, 5 minutes.
Want It. Need It. Have It. (2015) for alto saxophone (or flute or clarinet or bassoon or euphonium) and marimba. 9 minutes.
III. The loud alarum bells  \( \frac{\text{\textsuperscript{3}}}{\text{\textsuperscript{4}}} = 80 \)