

retribution / redistribution

for improvising unamplified electric guitar duo

Amy Brandon 2018

Program Note.

retribution / redistribution is an exploration of the quiet but bright scrapes, clicks and string sounds of the unamplified electric guitar.

Instrumentation.

unamplified solid-body electric guitars (2)

- must have a pick-guard
- must have round-wound strings. Not flat-wounds or ribbon-wounds.
- plectrums (2)

low-noise condenser microphone (ie. Rode NT-1A) (2)

PA system, microphone stands & cables

Duration.

~5min

Technical notes.

1. If printing the score, use A3 size paper.
2. The guitars are unamplified, meaning there are no cables connecting them to any guitar amplifier. The sounds are made audible by the use of a condenser microphone which is connected to the PA system.
3. The tuning of the guitar is DADFAD* (String 1 being a D quarter sharp)
4. The microphone should be placed very close to the guitars, enough so that the player's breathing is also captured on occasion. The microphone must be focused near the pick-ups, in order to amplify the quietest sound – the scraping of the pick-guard.
5. A low-noise condenser microphone is best, as other microphones may emit too much noise to properly hear the quietest sounds.

Performance notes.

1. The goal of the piece is to create a continuous textural soundscape of a variety of clicking, scraping and string noises with some quiet vague harmonics and open string sounds.
2. Absolutely **NO** fretted notes, chords or idiomatic improvisation is permitted.
3. Approximate time is listed on the left hand side of the score in minutes. The score is read vertically from top to bottom. Each guitarist has two columns, one for each hand (left & right). Each hand will be creating a different sound simultaneously, allowing for a rich diversity of overlapping sounds.
4. The performers can interpret each symbol (and the gesture or sonic material it represents) in terms of rhythmic placement, time between repetitions of the gesture, or relative loudness to ensure the most musical outcome. Each gesture can be on a spectrum from completely continuous to sporadic. However, single demonstrations of a gesture are not what is intended. **Each symbol represents about 30 seconds of more or less continuous sound.**
5. The piece can be performed **either completely improvised OR using the sample interpretations of the symbols below.**
6. If interpreting the symbols yourself and not using the guide, try to perform the imagined sonic qualities of each symbol. Retain the left hand / right hand grouping of each symbol so that each guitarist is always creating different sounds with each hand. Freely explore the soundworld of the unamplified electric guitar.
7. The final row of symbols (at about 04:45 to 05:15) should be the 'loudest' and most dramatic.



ff

Use the side edge of the pick to hammer repeatedly, strongly, vertically downwards onto string 1, over the pickups. You may hit string 2 or 3 occasionally, which is ok.



f

Hit strings 6-4 at about the 7th fret over the fingerboard, allowing them to ring freely



mp

Use the flesh of the fingers to quietly tap strings 1-3 downwards, over the pickups.



f

Tap the body of the guitar with the tip of the plectrum.



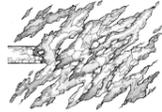
ppp

Using the tip of the plectrum, scrape all the way around the pick-guard edge as smoothly as possible.



pp

Run a finger up and down string 3, for a soft, speaking effect. Occasionally sound a harmonic (on any accessible string) by fretting using the left hand and plucking with the right hand pinky (4th finger).



p

Using all four right hand fingers, scrape the inside of the 1/8th inch jack using a tremolo motion.



f

Using the plectrum, scrape the bridge, altering speed with each scrape.

time
↑
in
minutes

left hand

guitar one

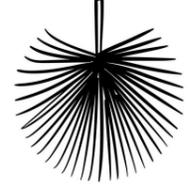
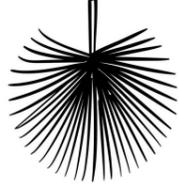
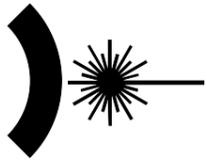
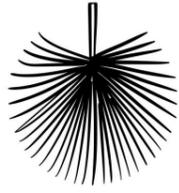
right hand

left hand

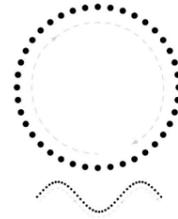
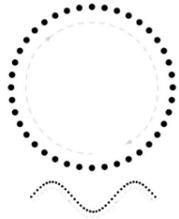
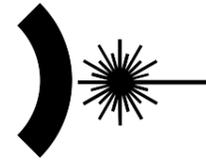
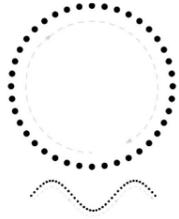
guitar two

right hand

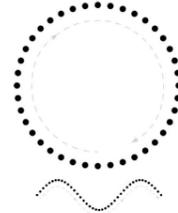
one



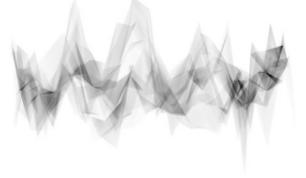
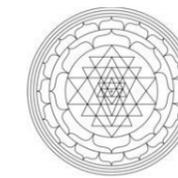
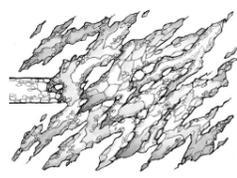
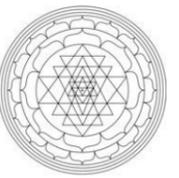
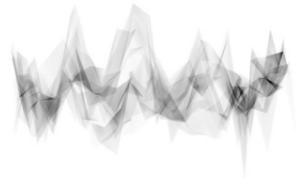
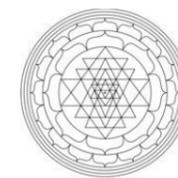
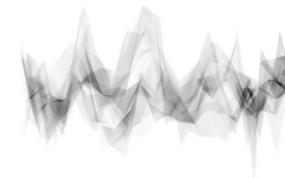
two



three



four



five

