call it culture
for 2 cellos

for Joan Jeanrenaud

Theresa Wong
Oakland, California, 2007
premiered on April 29, 2007
at St.Kevin’s Church, San Francisco
Mortan Feldman:  John, wouldn’t you say that what we’re dependent on, we call reality, and what we don’t like, we consider an intrusion in our life? Consequently, I feel that what’s happening is that we’re continually being intruded upon.

John Cage: But that would make us very unhappy.

Feldman: Or we surrender to it, and call it culture.

Cage: Call it culture?

Feldman: Or whatever.

-from Radio Happening 1, recorded at WBAI
New York City, July 9, 1966
Notes on technique:

The following 6 textures are each created with both cellos playing the same indicated figure together. The cellos are to play in their own time so that the conglomerate sound is a result of coincidental and or chosen unison, silence and staggering of the figure.

Pitch Set for 1, 2, and 3:

1. Electric Cable

   • Sometimes also sul ponte.

2. Whisk

   • Always a full down bow, letting sound ring in between each articulation.
   • Sometimes sul ponte.

3. Buoys

   • Very delicately and towards tip of the bow.
   • Lengths of notes can be varied so that the figure can be "long-short", "short-long", "long-long" or "short-short".
   • The sound is to be very calm with the activity level fluctuating, like buoys bobbing in the water; moving gently but going nowhere.
Pitch Set for 4, 5, and 6:

\[\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{III/IV} & \text{II/III} & \text{I/II} & \text{III/IV} & \text{III/IV} & \text{III/IV} \\
\end{array}\]

4. Honking Cars

\[\begin{array}{c}
\text{f-fff} \\
\end{array}\]

- To be played in a loud and explosive manner.
- No consecutive down and up bow are to be both fingered pitches.
- Let the notes ring.
- Occasionally choose a fixed rhythmic/pitch pattern and repeat for a few seconds.
- Leave space and vary the conglomerate density of both cellos sounding.
- Longer single notes are possible (for Honking Cars only).

5. Video Game

same as above and additionally:
- Mostly lower pitches (IV and III strings) are to be used.
- Fast consecutive down bows are possible.
- Figure is to be played as fast as possible.

6. Water Dripping

\[\begin{array}{c}
P-PPP \\
\end{array}\]

- The bow is placed on the string and lifted while pressure is applied on the string so that the string sounds as the bow is being lifted. (As if the bow were pulling the sound off the string).
- To be played very quietly and sparsely with ample silences in between figures, like water dripping or people hammering far away.
Square headed note:

- To be played with the left hand finger pressing the string only halfway down.

Collegno ricochet slides:

- These notes are to be played with the wood of the bow bounced on the open string with the string slightly damped by the left hand. The bow is to be slid with the bounce either up or down (closer toward the bridge or up the fingerboard towards the scroll) during the ricochet, according to the choice of the performer. The pitches indicate relative distance along the string; higher notes are toward the bridge, lower notes are further along the fingerboard towards the scroll.

Prepared clips:

- Use a 1/2" binder clip and line the inside with adhesive velcro (this creates a soft surface to protect the string that is being clamped).
- Place the clip on the string somewhere between the fingerboard and the bridge. Placement will determine the pitch and timbre of the clipped string. Player is to choose a placement of their liking.
- The bottom staff labeled “Vc.LH” is played by the left hand, plucking strings on the fingerboard (pitches correspond to the open string to be plucked), and the top staff labeled “Vc.RH” is played by the right hand plucking the string below the bridge (pitches correspond to string also.)
call it culture

for Joan Jeanrenaud

Theresa Wong
24
Vc.1
Vc.2

\[ p - f \] sometimes sul ponte

\[ f - \text{fff} \] let the sound ring, sometimes sul ponte

(m.26 for reference only, not to be played) Electric Cable and Whisk to be played with these pitches or other double stopped harmonics:

Both cellos play 'Buoys' texture for an open duration using pitches in m.27. Eventually, Vc.1 begins by playing the first fragment on m.28. Both cellos continue alternating between the 'buoys' texture and the fragments, not playing the fragments together in time. After each player has played the fragments between m.28-30, any fragment in either part may be repeated in any order. The rhythms can be loose. This section ends when either player moves to the next set of harmonic pitches for Buoys II. The same process is then applied for m.33-41.

Both cellos can begin to play any fragment.

Like a loosely threaded linen, falling apart...

short pause, Vc.1 cues m.42
\[ j = 40 \]

Vc.1

\[ \text{(meas. 49,50: Vc1 & Vc2 slightly faster and staggered, not together)} \]

Vc.1

honking cars

video game

water dripping

Vc.1

Vc.2

\[ \text{Collegno ricochet slides on open strings} \]

(Pitch is relative and indicates location between fingerboard and bridge.)

\[ \text{(m.55,56 for reference only) 'Honking Cars,' 'Video Game' and 'Water Dripping' to be played with these pitches or other double stopped harmonics.} \]
Vc.1

water dripping

Vc.2

57

mm. 59-63: Vc.1 & 2 staggered, not together

Vc.1

Vc.2

64 ant chorale

Vc.1

pp

Vc.2

69

Vc.1

Vc.2

Vc.1 repeats only m.64-68, then puts on prepared clips.

pizz
(with prepared clips)

Vc.1

LH
* Players may choose how to structure the following rhythmic fragments and include improvised sections:
(Metronome markings are only suggestions.)

**pizz**
(with prepared clips)

\[ q = 132 \]

Vc. RH
(below bridge)

Vc. LH
(sul tasto)

(mm. 76 & 77 played simultaneously)

Vc. 1 or Vc. 2:

\[ q = 104 \]

Vc. RH
(below bridge)

Vc. LH
(sul tasto)

improvise freely with RH

Vc. RH
(below bridge)

Vc. LH
(sul tasto)

\[ q = 152 \]

Vc. RH
(below bridge)

Vc. LH
(sul tasto)

4x

Vc. RH
(below bridge)

Vc. LH
(sul tasto)

\[ q = 104 \]

Vc. RH
(below bridge)

Vc. LH
(sul tasto)

3x