

Steed Cowart

Gibbons' Song

for fixed media electronics, with optional
balloon sounds and/or accordion

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For Pauline Oliveros, my teacher, colleague, and friend, with admiration, gratitude, and
love.

Note:

In 1977 I came to California to attend graduate school and to study composition with Pauline Oliveros at the University of California, San Diego where she was a professor in the Music Department. Pauline was a marvelous teacher who helped open my mind to entirely new possibilities, musical and otherwise. During one of her classes she played a recording for us. She had received special permission from the San Diego Zoo to record gibbons singing in the early pre-dawn hours. They produced striking and eerily beautiful songs. Natural sounds were important to Pauline. Frogs, cicadas, gibbons, etc., were all potential source sounds for compositions.

When I was invited to compose a piece for the Pauline Oliveros 85th Birthday Celebration (now, sadly, a memorial) I remembered the recording of gibbons from the San Diego Zoo. I found recordings of gibbons singing to use as source material for my tribute piece, *Gibbons' Song*. I hoped the sounds would please her and maybe prompt a chortle. *Gibbons' Song* is for fixed media electronics with optional balloon sounds and/or accordion.

Steed Cowart

Oakland, California

December 2016

Instructions:

Gibbons' Song may be performed in four variants:

1. The recording by itself
2. The recording with the balloon part
3. The recording with the accordion part
4. The recording with the balloon part and the accordion part

Balloon(s):

The balloon part in the score is a suggestion of times to play and general shapes of sounds. A one-to-one correspondence between notation and sounds is not intended. The balloon(s) should mimic the sounds of the gibbons and blend with the recorded part.

The balloon part may be played by one, two, or three performers.

The balloon sounds are produced in this way:

Fully inflate a balloon. Using the thumb and index finger of both hands, pinch the neck of the balloon near its mouth and stretch the neck sideways. As air is released vary the tension of the stretch of the neck. With experimentation and practice, different pitches, sustained pitches, glissandi up and down can be produced. Try to make sounds like the gibbons.

Amplification with reverb mixed with the recorded material would be best.

Accordion:

The accordion part consists of available pitches that match pitches from the gibbons on the recording. The white note heads are pitches that should be more prominent (more of them, longer durations). The black note heads are pitches that should be less prominent (fewer of them, shorter durations). The accordion part should mimic, blend with, and/or accompany the recorded part. Other pitches matching the pitches on the recording may be played too.

Amplification with reverb mixed with the recorded material would be best.

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Seconds

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85

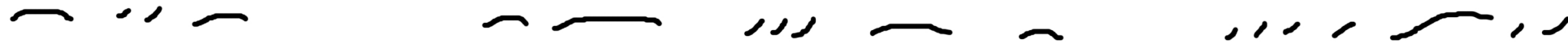
Recording



Seconds

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85

Balloon(s)
(optional)



Seconds

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85

Accordion
(optional)

