

Performance Notes

The number of repeats indicated for each bar is a *rough* guide to how many repeats should actually be played. It is *not* a good idea to count a fixed number of repeats for any given section. For instance, it would be stiff and unmusical to count eight repeats of each bar from bar 2 through bar 9. Rather, the numbers in parentheses are a general guide to the number of repeats and the true guide is what a musician intuits as the 'right' number of repeats in each bar as the piece goes on. If a player were to frequently play one or two or even three more or less repeats than indicated, so long as they were fully focused on the performance and moving on to the next bar when they felt it was musically right to do so, that would be preferable to a fixed number of repeats.

When the 'build ups' are played, as in bars 2 through 9, 35 through 42, 67 through 74, 104 through 111 and so on, both players should begin together using a nod of the head or some visual cue. That is, players four and five should begin together at bar 2, players five and six should begin together at bar 35, and so on. However, as the 'build up' goes on it is not necessary for each player to move on to the next bar at the same time. For instance, players four and five could begin together at bar 2 and after nine repeats player five could move onto bar 3 without signaling player four. However, as soon as player four hears player five move on to the next bar, then player four should immediately join player five on the next repeat. In this way they can move together through each 'build up'.

At the changes of mode, at bar 64 and then at bar 129, player one should give a nod of the head on a downbeat sometime during the repeats of the previous bar to signal that in two repeats (two bars) after his nod all players will change together into the next bar. Similarly at the end of the piece, player one should give a nod two bars before all end together.

If there is enough rehearsal time and players desire to rearrange the distribution of parts in order to give a fatigued player a rest or to give a part more variety, they may do so. As long as all the parts are played, their distribution within the ensemble is up to the players.

In a hall with more than 500 seats it may be desirable to amplify each of the marimbas with a microphone, leaving the balance equal between all marimbas on the mixing board thus allowing the players to make all changes in dynamics themselves.

Note by the Composer

SIX MARIMBAS, composed in 1986, is a rescoring for marimbas of my earlier SIX PIANOS (1973). The idea to rescore came from my friend, the percussionist James Preiss, who has been a member of my ensemble since 1971 and also contributed the hand and mallet alternations that are used in this score.

The piece begins with three marimbas playing the same eight beat rhythmic pattern, but with different notes for each marimba. One of the other marimbas begins to gradually build up the exact pattern of one of the marimbas already playing by putting the notes of the fifth beat on the seventh beat, then putting the notes of the first beat on the third beat, and so on, reconstructing the same pattern with the same notes, but two beats out of phase. When this canonic relationship has been fully constructed, the two other marimbas double some of the many melodic patterns resulting from this four marimba relationship. By gradually increasing their volume they bring these of these resulting patterns up to the surface of the music; then, by lowering volume they slowly return them to the overall contrapuntal web, in which the listener can hear them continuing along with many others in the ongoing four marimba relationship.

This process of rhythmic construction followed by doubling the resulting patterns is then continued in the three sections of the piece that are marked off by changes of mode and gradually higher position on the marimba, the first in D \flat major, the second in E \flat dorian, and the third in B \flat natural minor.

Steve Reich

SIX MARIMBAS

Steve Reich
(1986)

I ♩ = ca. 192

Player 1
Player 2
Player 3
Player 4
Player 5
Player 6

7 8 9 10 11 12 13

1
2
3
4
5
6

* Players 4 and 5 make eye contact and begin together at [2]. They may, but need not move to measures [3], [4], [5], etc., together. However, when one player moves to the next bar, the other should join on the next repeat. The same applies for all "build ups" throughout the piece at bars [35] - [42], [64] - [74], etc.

† Crescendi and decrescendi over repeated measures last for the duration of the complete repetition. Players 4, 5, and 6 should make eye contact and diminuendo together. The same applies for players 5 and 6 at [43] and similarly for other players throughout the piece.

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14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21

(2-4x) (6-10x) (2-4x) (3-6x) (2-4x) (6-10x) (2-4x) (3-6x)

n *f* *n*

(6-10x) (2-4x) (3-6x) (2-4x) (6-10x) (2-4x) (3-6x)

n *f*

22 23 24 25 26 27

(2-3x) (3-5x) (2-3x)

n *f*

(2-3x) (3-5x) (2-3x)

28 29 30 31 32 33 34

1

2

3

4

5

6

(2-3x) (2-3x) (2-3x) (2-4x) (4-6x) (2-4x) (2-4x)

sub. f

n



35 36 37 38 39 40 41

1

2

3

4

5

6

mf

(6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x)

f

f

1 42 43 44 45 46 47 48

2

3

4

5 (6-10x) (2-4x) *mf*

6 (6-10x) (2-4x) (1-3x) (2-4x) (8-12x) (2-4x) (2-4x) *n* *n* *f* *n*

49 50 51 52 53 54

1

2

3

4

5

6 (2-4x) (10-12x) (2-4x) (2-4x) (2-3x) *n* *f* *n* *n*

Musical score for measures 55-62, parts 1-6. The score is written for six parts. Measures 55-62 are indicated by boxed numbers above the staves. Part 1 (treble clef) and Part 2 (treble clef) play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Part 3 (bass clef) and Part 4 (bass clef) play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a *n* dynamic marking. Part 5 (treble clef) plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a *n* dynamic marking. Part 6 (bass clef) plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a *f* dynamic marking. There are markings like (8-10x), (2-3x), (2-4x), and (3-6x) indicating specific rhythmic or performance instructions.

Musical score for measures 63-69, parts 1-6. The score is written for six parts. Measures 63-69 are indicated by boxed numbers above the staves. Part 1 (treble clef) and Part 2 (treble clef) play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a *mf* dynamic marking. Part 3 (bass clef) plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a *mf* dynamic marking. Part 4 (bass clef) and Part 5 (treble clef) play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a *f* dynamic marking. Part 6 (bass clef) plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a *n* dynamic marking. There are markings like (4-8x)*, (6-10x)†, and (2-4x) indicating specific rhythmic or performance instructions.

* Player 1 nods head on downbeat two repeats (two bars) before [64] (II) as a cue for all players to change together.
 † Players 4 and 5 make eye contact and begin together at [67].

70 71 72 73 74 75 76

(6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (2-4x)

(6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (2-4x) (1-3x)

(1-3x)

mf *n* *n*

77 78 79 80 81 82 83

(10-12x) (2-4x) (10-12x)

(2-4x) (10-12x) (2-4x) (4-8x) (2-4x)

n *f* *n* *n*

1 84 85 86 87 88 89 90

2

3

4

5 (10-12x) (2-4x) (4-8x) (2-4x) (10-12x) *f* *n*

6 (10-12x) (10-12x) (2-4x) (4-8x) *f* *n*

91 92 93 94 95 96

1

2

3

4 (1-2x)

5 (5-6x) (1-2x) *n*

6 (2-3x) (5-6x) *f* *p*

1 97 98 99 100 101 102 103

2

3

4 (2-4x) (4-6x) (2-4x)
sub. f

5

6 (2-4x) (1-2x) n

104 105 106 107 108 109

1

2

3

4 mf

5 (6-10x) f

6 (6-10x) f

110 111 112 113 114 115 116

(6-10x) (6-10x) (2-4x) *mf*

(6-10x) (6-10x) (2-4x) (1-3x) (2-4x) (8-12x) (2-4x) *n* *f* *n*

117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124

(1-3x) (2-4x) (10-12x) (2-4x) (1-3x) (2-4x) (10-12x) (2-4x) *n* *f* *n* *f* *n*

125 126 127 128 (4-8x)† 129 (III) 130 131

(4-8x)† (mf)

(4-6x) (4-8x)† n mf

(2-4x)* (4-8x) (4-8x)† (2-6x)** n

(2-4x)* (4-8x) (4-8x)† (2-6x)** n

(3-6x) n mf

132 133 134 135 136 137 138

(2-4x) (6-10x) f

(2-4x) (6-10x) f

* Either Player 4 or 5 nods on downbeat two repeats (two bars) before 126 so both arrive at 126 together.
 † Player 1 nods head on downbeat two repeats (two bars) before 129 (III) as a cue for all players to change together.
 ** Players 4 and 5 make eye contact and fade out together.

139 140 141 142 143 144

(6-10x) (6-10x) (3-6x)*

poco \triangleright *mf*

(6-10x) (6-10x) (3-6x)* (2-4x) (6-10x) (6-10x)

poco \triangleright *n* *f*

(3-6x)* (2-4x) (6-10x) (6-10x)

poco \triangleright *n* *f*

145 146 147 148 149 150

(6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x)

poco \triangleright *f*

(6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x) (6-10x)

poco \triangleright *f*

* Players 4, 5, and 6 make eye contact and diminuendo together.

Musical score for measures 151-157. The score consists of six staves. Measures 151-157 are marked with measure numbers in boxes above the staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns and dynamics. Staff 5 has markings (3-6x) and (2-4x) above the first two measures, with a *mf* dynamic below. Staff 6 has markings (3-6x), (2-4x), (6-10x), (6-10x), (6-10x), (6-10x), and (6-10x) above the measures, with a *n* dynamic below the first measure and a *ff* dynamic below the fourth measure. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat signs on both sides.

Musical score for measures 158-163. The score consists of six staves. Measures 158-163 are marked with measure numbers in boxes above the staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns and dynamics. Staff 6 has markings (6-10x), (6-10x), (6-10x), (2-4x), (4-6x), and *(4-8x) above the measures, with a *mf* dynamic below the fourth measure and a *poco f* dynamic below the sixth measure. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat signs on both sides.

* Player 1 nods head during the repeats of bar 163 as a cue that in two bars (two repeats) all players end together.