

What She Saw There

By
Evan Ziporyn

For
Bass clarinet &
Two marimbists

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What She Saw There

Instrumentation:

b-flat bass clarinet w/low C extension
one marimba played by two marimbists, low and high

Length:

@13 minutes

Performance Notes:

Bass clarinet – A few extended techniques are called for. In particular, on numerous occasions you are asked to ‘sing and play’, that is, to hum a specified pitch through the instrument while playing another. In all cases, the ‘sung’ pitch is indicated by a diamond-head note and is transposed to b-flat. You are also occasionally asked to produce harmonics over a fundamental, to ‘quasi-flutter’ (sort of a spastic flutter-tongue), and to ‘breath flutter’ (to emulate flutter tonguing using breath). It is expected that each player will take an individual approach to the part.

Marimba – As mentioned above, the part must be played by two players on one instrument. The first section of the piece (mm. 1-39) calls for specific stickings, as indicated in mm. 1-5. This amounts to a crossing of the ‘inner’ hand (i.e., the upper player’s left hand and the lower player’s right hand) over the ‘outer’ hand on chords which use flats, uncrossing them for the ‘natural’ chords, so that the players look like mirror images. Please also note the notation in mm. 39-50 and subsequent sections: in these sections the ‘diamond-head’ notes are played softly with one hand while the ‘normal’ notes are played loudly with the other.

Program Notes

WHAT SHE SAW THERE (1987) is an attempt to evoke a narrative without the use of language. It was my first commission, I think I was paid \$400, and I wrote it in a little cottage in the village of Peliatan, Bali, where I was living on a Fulbright Fellowship. I had a teeny two-octave Casio running on batteries, as my landlord had balked at the cost of electrification. At that time, my interest in world music combined with my incompetence at foreign languages to lead to a state of constant and forced decontextualization. I always seemed to be listening to songs in languages I didn't understand, and I began to like the feeling. This piece strives to tell a straightforward, epic tale in a straightforward, epic style. The storyteller, however, speaks a slippery language that is, for better or worse, unknown to the listener. This results in a feeling of abstracted narrative. The original version was for cellist Mary Artmann, and was performed with marimbists John Keith and William Winant.

What She Saw There

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♩ = 88

Bass Clarinet in B \flat

Marimba

(cross hands - continue alternation where possible until m. 39)

r.h. *f* *l.h.* *f* *(cross hands)* *(uncross hands as before)* *(cross hands - continue alternation where possible until m. 39)*

6 *mf* *crescendo* *f* *ff* *pp*

11 *mf* *sub. pp* *mf* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *mf*

17 *mp* *f* *ff* *mp* *p* *pp* *mp*

22 *mp* *mp* *f* *ff* *mp*

Mar. *p* *mf* *mp* *p* *mp* *f* *mp* *p*

p *mf* *mp* *p* *mf* *f* *mf*

26

B. Cl. *mf* *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* (-2) sing diamond note

Mar. *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *mp*

mf *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *mp*

30

B. Cl. *mp* *sub f* *sub mf* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* (sing diamond note)

Mar. *mf* *mf* *p* *f* *mf*

f *mp* *p* *f* *mf*

34

B. Cl. *mp* *mf* *f* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Mar. *mp* *mf* *mp* *p*

mp *mf* *f* *mp* *p*

38

B. Cl. *p* *pp* **Faster (♩ = 92)**

Mar. *pp* *mf* *pp* *pp* *mp*

pp *mp*

r.h. plays diamond heads
- l.h. f, r.h. p

r.h. plays diamond heads
- r.h. f, l.h. p

44

B. Cl. *f*

Mar. *f*