

Jay C. Batzner

**All Our Broken
Instruments
(2015)**

for percussion soloist and
live electronics

UNSAFE BULL MUSIC

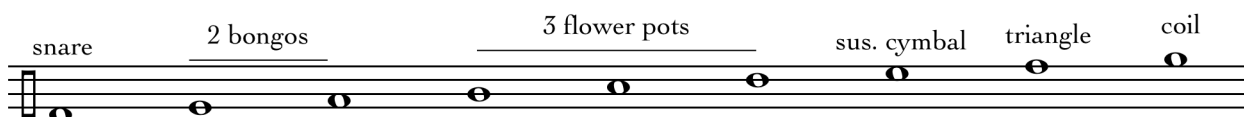
MAY OUR YOUNG FIND MUSIC IN ALL OUR BROKEN INSTRUMENTS

poem by Robert Fanning

In the back of a drafty barn, dust drifts
through shafts of light that split
wall slats. Everywhere, junked stuff:
bent coils of a warped box spring, a tossed
rake, a rusted sewing machine,
face of a grandfather clock
with no hands. Marooned among
these heaped shadows, a baby
grand piano sits. Left open
to the air, its fallboard hoisted
and stuck, it leans like a boat
once dashed on ice or shallows,
as if it sailed here carried on
the storm of its last song.
Now its new resident soloist's
strung her own resonant web,
her silk bridge strewn
across dampers and soundboard strings
she crosses nightly
to devour all her divers.
Under felt hammers and cleft rails, she's laid
dozens of pearly egg sacs, airy
clusters of opaque globes
clumped like dormant notes.
Soon they'll burst free, her progeny,
from the trap work and escapements,
to fury and scamper along the buckled keys
rehearsing scales and ascensions —
their catchy tunes too slight to register
yet played for far years: these melodies
no-one now here will hear.

Instrument Layout

also needed: 1 kalimba or mbira, connected to laptop via a MakeyMakey



All Our Broken Instruments

for percussion and electronics
composed for Andrew Spencer

music: Jay C. Batzner
text: Robert Fanning

senza misura, at the speed of narration

continuous scraping with hands *ad lib.* *sim.*

Percussion *p* In the back of a drafty barn,

Perc. *mf* *p* *sim.* dust drifts through shafts of light that split wall slats.

Perc. *f* *1* *sempre l.v.* *w/beater on crown* *2* Everywhere, junked stuff:

Perc. *slow scape, l.v.* *sim.* *with hands* *p* bent coils of a warped box spring, a tossed rake,

Perc. *3* a rusted sewing machine, face of a grandfather clock with no hands.

Electronics build-up and swell...fades out...

Perc. *with thin sticks* *ad lib.* *p* Marooned among these heaped shadows, a baby grand piano sits.

Perc. *4* *5* Left open to the air, its fallboard hoisted and stuck

2

6

Perc.

it leans

like a boat once dashed on ice or shallows,

7

Perc.

as if it sailed here

carried on the storm of its last song.

accel.

Perc.

Perc.

Perc.

8

dead strokes on rim

stop pulses when speaking

continue ad lib.

ff

p

9

10

Perc.

Now its new resident soloist

has strung her own resonant web,

with hands

11

Perc.

fp

her silk bridge strewn across dampers

and soundboard strings

12

Perc.

fp

she crosses nightly

fp

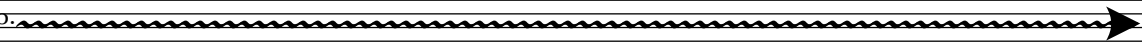
to devour all her divers.

with beaters

Perc.

p


13

Perc. *continue ad lib.* 

Under felt hammers and cleft rails,

14

15

Perc. 

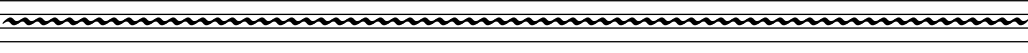
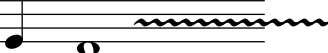
she's laid dozens of pearly egg sacs, airy clusters of opaque globes

ad lib.

continuous scraping with hands

16

17

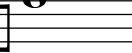
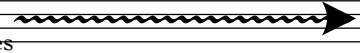
Perc.  

p clumped like dormant notes. Soon they'll burst free, her progeny,

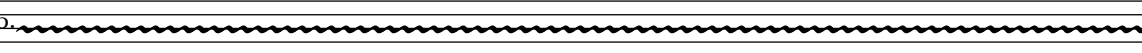
Perc.    

from the trap work and escapements, to fury and scamper along the buckled keys

with beater

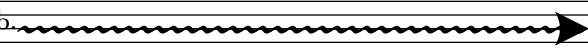
Perc.  

rehearsing scales and ascensions — take mbira or kalimba improvise pseudo-music box melodies

Perc. *continue ad lib.* 

their catchy tunes too slight to register

18

Perc. *continue ad lib.* 

yet player for far years: these melodies no-one now here will hear.

with hands

Perc. 

p