

**Full Score**

**Martyn Harry**

# **Prestidigitatio**

**for  
improvisation  
ensemble**

**1989-1993  
revised 2002**

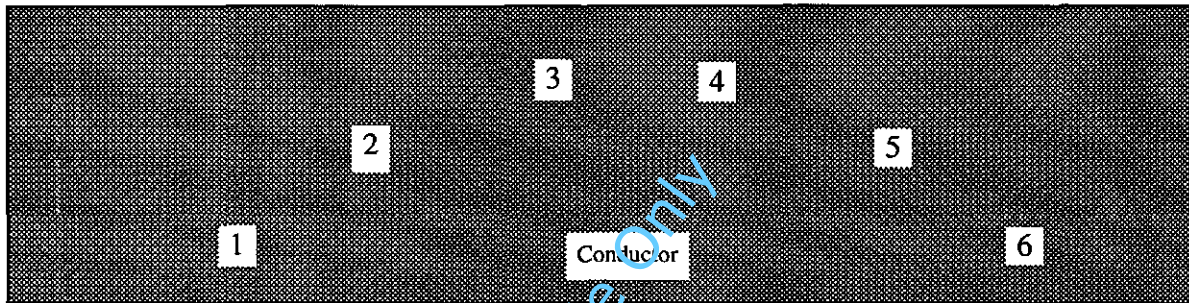
**4 minutes**

Preview File Only

# Martyn Harry

## Prestidigitatio

The title of this short work is derived from the word 'prestidigitation', which means 'a conjuring trick' or, more literally, 'fast finger work'. The six lines of the score can be taken either by single players, by ensembles, or a mixture of the two, providing each line is balanced in terms of volume. If possible, the players (or groups) should be arranged as follows:



### Instructions for the Players:

The idea of *Prestidigitatio* is to create a feeling of rapid movement at all times. One rule is that there should be no sustained note or obvious sense of pitch at any point in the piece. Instead of sustained notes, you should create a feeling of continuous, very fast movement by whatever means you have available to you. The durations of your line in no way reflects the sound you create but simply indicates when you start playing and when you stop. To avoid any sense of pitch, you should resort to non-standard playing techniques. In the case of a sustained keyboard instruments, clusters and fluctuating chromatic lines, or (even better) percussive noises.

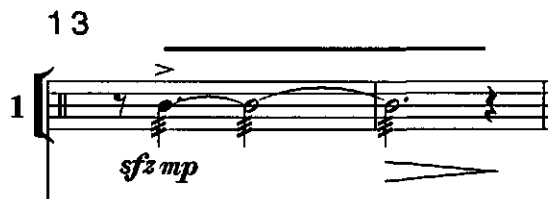
It is recommended that you devise a repertoire of sounds for the part in your own time before attempting to rehearse the piece with the other lines. Pay careful attention to dynamics when you do this and really try to exploit the full expressive range of your instrument(s) or voice. In the case of groups playing the lines instead of individual players, you should find your 'group sound' for each different passage. It is therefore recommended that each group has a sectional rehearsal first.

Do not be misled by the notation which seems to suggest the same pitch throughout. Chose the appropriate ('non-pitched') register on your instrument in order to create an interesting sound at the appropriate dynamic. Groups need not play the same register or same type of sound, providing that the players something interesting that contrasts well with the other groups.

There are four different categories of rapid movement, which are notated in the following ways:

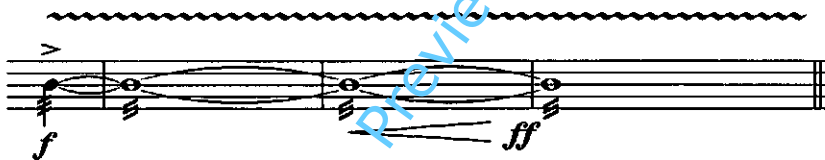
### 1) Constant, Continuous Movement

This does not necessarily mean a single sound (or non-pitch register) played as a tremolo, but could be several adjacent sounds played in a fixed relationship like a fast ostinato. This category is notated with a straight line above the note as follows:



### 2) Chaotic, Fluctuating Movement

This suggests wild changes of sound (and non-pitch register) within the notated duration. How this is done is left to each player's discretion, providing the dynamics are followed carefully. This category is notated with a squiggly line above the note as follows:



### 3) Cartoon Voices Speaking Nonsense Language

A classic example of this is the voice of Donald Duck, but the performers should give vent to their own personalities. All voices should suitably surreal, but well projected above the instruments from bar 53 ff.



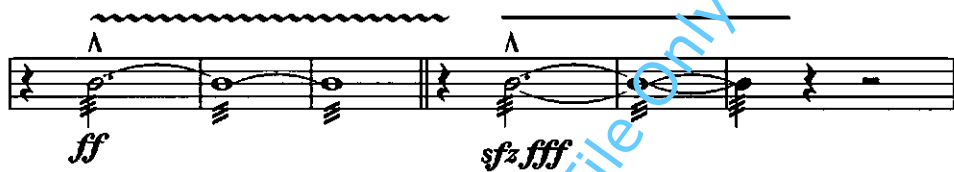
#### 4) Short, Sharp Attacks

This notation for this is self-explanatory:



#### Thick and Thin Sounds

Finally, there is one final subtlety in notation to be observed. If you find two ties following a note this means that the sound should be more dense than before. In the example below, the second event starting in bar 4 should have a thicker sound quality than the first event starting in bar 1.



# Prestidigitation

1 Prestissimo Scorrevole  $\text{♩} = 156$  **A** Poco Rit **B** A Tempo

13 **C** Meno Mosso  $\text{♩} = 120$  **D** Tempo Primo

1. *ppp* < > *pp* < > *p* >

2. *ppp* < > *pp* < > *ppp* *pp* <

3. *ppp* < *pp* < > *p* > *pp* <

4. *ppp* < > *ppp* < > *p* > *pp*

5. *p* > *pp*

6. *pp* > *p* >

1. *sfz mp* > *mf*

2. *p* > *sfz* > *sfz mf*

3. *sfz* > *ppp*

4. *sfz mp* > *ppp* > *sfz* > *sfz*

5. *p* > *ppp* > *pp*

6. *p* > *mf*

E

Musical score for section E, measures 22-29. The score consists of six staves. Dynamics include *sfz mp*, *f*, *mp*, *mf*, *sfz*, *f*, *mp*, *mf*, *sfz*, *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *sfz*, *mf*, *sfz*, *f*, *ff*, *sfz*, and *mf*. Articulations include accents (>) and slurs.

30 F

G

Musical score for sections F and G, measures 30-36. The score consists of six staves. Dynamics include *f*, *mf subito*, *sfz*, *sfz*, *p*, *pp*, *f*, *ff*, *sfz*, *sfz*, *p*, *pp*, *sfz*, *sfz mp*, and *p*. Articulations include accents (>) and slurs.

37

**H**

**I**

Musical score for measures 37-43, featuring six staves. Dynamics include *p*, *mp*, *pp*, and *mf*. Articulations include accents (>) and slurs. A large blue watermark "Preview File Only" is overlaid diagonally across the score.

Poco a Poco Allargando

**J**

**K**

Molto Allargando !!!

44

Musical score for measures 44-49, featuring six staves. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, *ff*, *sfz*, and *sfzfff*. Articulations include accents (>) and slurs. A large blue watermark "Preview File Only" is overlaid diagonally across the score.

1 *ff* *subito* *p*

2 *p subito* *p* *mf*

3 *p subito* *mf* *p*

4 *f* *p*

5 *f* *p* *mf*

6 *mf* *p*

1 *mf* *pp* *pp* *mf*

2 *p* *mp* *p*

3 *pp* *mf*

4 *mf* *pp* *pp* *p*

5 *pp*

6 *mp* *p*