

**ALEX SHAPIRO**

# **LIGHTS OUT**

For Concert Wind Band  
and Pre-recorded Soundscape

*Activist Music*

# ALEX SHAPIRO

## LIGHTS OUT

For Concert Wind Band and Pre-recorded Soundscape

Performance Time: 4:30

### Instrumentation

1 – Conductor	4 – B♭ Trumpet 1	1 – Glockenspiel
1 – Piccolo	4 – B♭ Trumpet 2	1 – Xylophone
4 – Flute 1	2 – French Horn in F 1	1 – Vibraphone
4 – Flute 2	2 – French Horn in F 2	3 – Egg Shaker
2 – Oboe	3 – Trombone 1	1 – Suspended Cymbal
2 – Bassoon	3 – Trombone 2	1 – Tam tam
4 – B♭ Clarinet 1	1 – Bass Trombone	1 – Tom-Toms
4 – B♭ Clarinet 2	2 – Euphonium/Baritone B.C.	1 – Bass Drum
2 – B♭ Bass Clarinet	2 – Tuba	
2 – E♭ Alto Saxophone 1	1 – Electric Bass	
2 – B♭ Tenor Saxophone	1 - Audio Accompaniment Track with click, for conductor	
1 – E♭ Baritone Saxophone	1 - Audio Accompaniment Track for performance	

In addition to the instruments listed above, *LIGHTS OUT* requires an audio system capable of playing the audio tracks from a laptop computer via a small digital audio interface connected to an audio mixer.

**To download the necessary accompaniment track, please send a friendly email to: [download@activistmusic.com](mailto:download@activistmusic.com).**

### Acknowledgements

*Perusal Score*

*LIGHTS OUT* was commissioned by Composers and Schools in Concert ([www.composersandschools.com](http://www.composersandschools.com)), with the participation of a consortium of adventurous partners:

Arrowhead High School, Hartland, WI; Stacey Zwirlein, Associate Director of Bands  
East Ascension High School, Gonzales, LA; Patti Roussel, Director of Bands  
Edina High School, Edina, MN; Paul Kile, Band Director  
Falmouth High School, Falmouth, ME; Jim Horwich, Band Director  
Kaufman High School, Kaufman, TX; John Mize, Director of Bands  
Keystone High School, LaGrange, OH; Jackie Townsend, Director of Bands  
Lafayette High School, Lafayette, LA; Scotty Walker, Director of Bands  
Monticello High School, Monticello, Iowa; Jim Davis, Director of Bands  
New London-Spicer High School, New London, MN; Brian Pearson, Music Director  
Nevada High School, Nevada, IA; Wade Presley, Director of Bands  
Olathe Northwest High School, Olathe, KS; Robert Davis, Director of Bands  
Owatonna High School, Owatonna MN; Peter Guenther, Band Director  
Peabody Preparatory, Baltimore, MD; Karen Seward, Wind Band Conductor  
Purdue University, Lafayette, IN; Jay Gephart, Director of Bands  
Rosemount High School, Rosemount, MN; Steve Olsen and Leon Sieve, Band Directors  
Rockwood Summit High School, Fenton, MO; Rebekah Long, Assistant Band Director  
Ruston High School, Ruston, LA; Walter Moss, Director of Bands  
Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA; Dr. Glen Hemberger, Director of Bands  
Twin Valley High School, Elverson, PA; Daniel Long, Music Director  
University of Memphis, Memphis, TN; Armand Hall, Associate Director of Bands

Special thanks to CSIC Executive Director Lisa Oman for making all of this possible, and to Mark Walker, for his assistance with the consortium.

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## Technical Notes

*LIGHTS OUT* is an electroacoustic piece in which the band plays along with a pre-recorded audio track, with the goal of creating one seamless, sonic entity. The percussive track drives the piece, and should be played loudly. The downloadable audio files include the accompaniment track in its stereo performance mix, and also in a mix for the conductor that includes a click track for in-ear monitoring.

## Rehearsal:

The rehearsal room will need a basic PA system, ideally with stereo speakers that can play loudly, placed facing the band. There is a stereo performance track which the band (and later, the audience) hears, as well as the stereo track that includes the click heard solely by the conductor through headphones or earbuds. These are routed from a laptop computer connected to an audio mixer via a small audio interface.

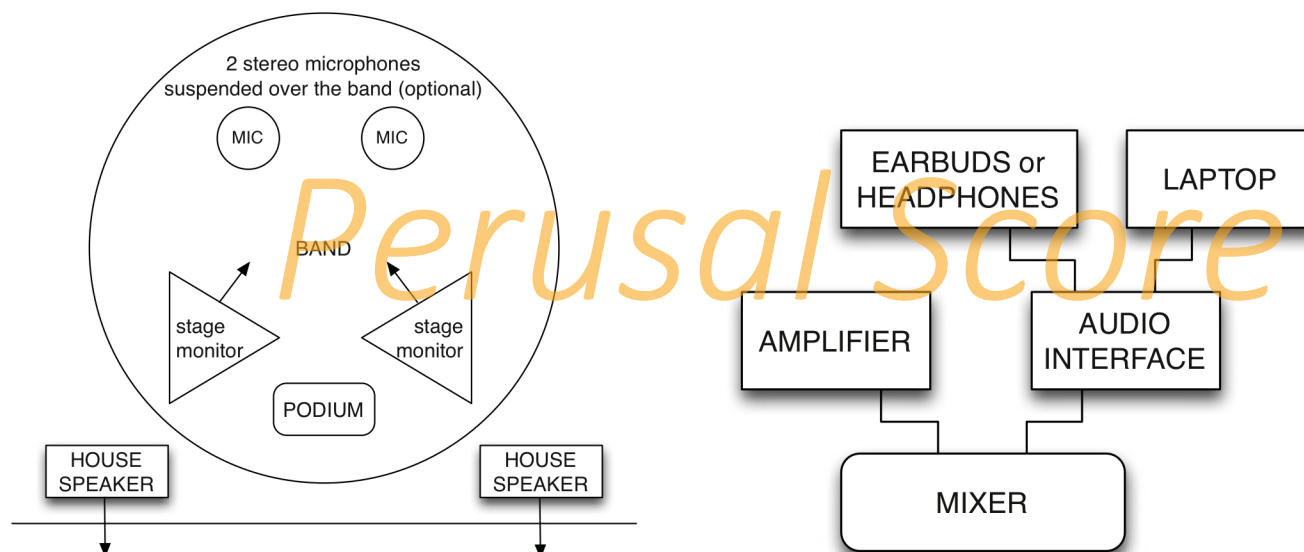
## Bonus!

Musicians can practice this piece at home by downloading the accompanying audio track, with the click. Please visit the *LIGHTS OUT* page on Ms. Shapiro's website, [www.alexshapiro.org](http://www.alexshapiro.org), to send an email requesting file access.

## Technical setup:

Connect a laptop computer to a small audio interface, which in turn connects to an audio mixer. Open a simple multitrack digital audio application, and load the accompaniment track **with** the click into one stereo channel routed **solely** to the headphones or ear bud worn by the conductor. Next, load the track **without** the click into two more stereo channels: one pair routed to the stage (and podium) monitors so that the band and conductor can hear the track, and another pair routed to the house speakers so that the audience can hear the track. The audio track uses panning effects, so be sure that it's routed to the audience in stereo.

An additional stereo channel may be used to route an optional pair of stereo microphones placed over the band. If the band is mic'ed, it's best to have an engineer reading a music score to ride the faders at the mixing board and control the balance.



Monitors, speakers, laptop, audio interface, and microphones are connected by cables to the mixer, which is usually placed in the back of the auditorium or on the side of the stage. Additional technical information and suggestions may be found on the *LIGHTS OUT* page at [www.alexshapiro.org](http://www.alexshapiro.org).

## Visual media: combining music with movement and lighting

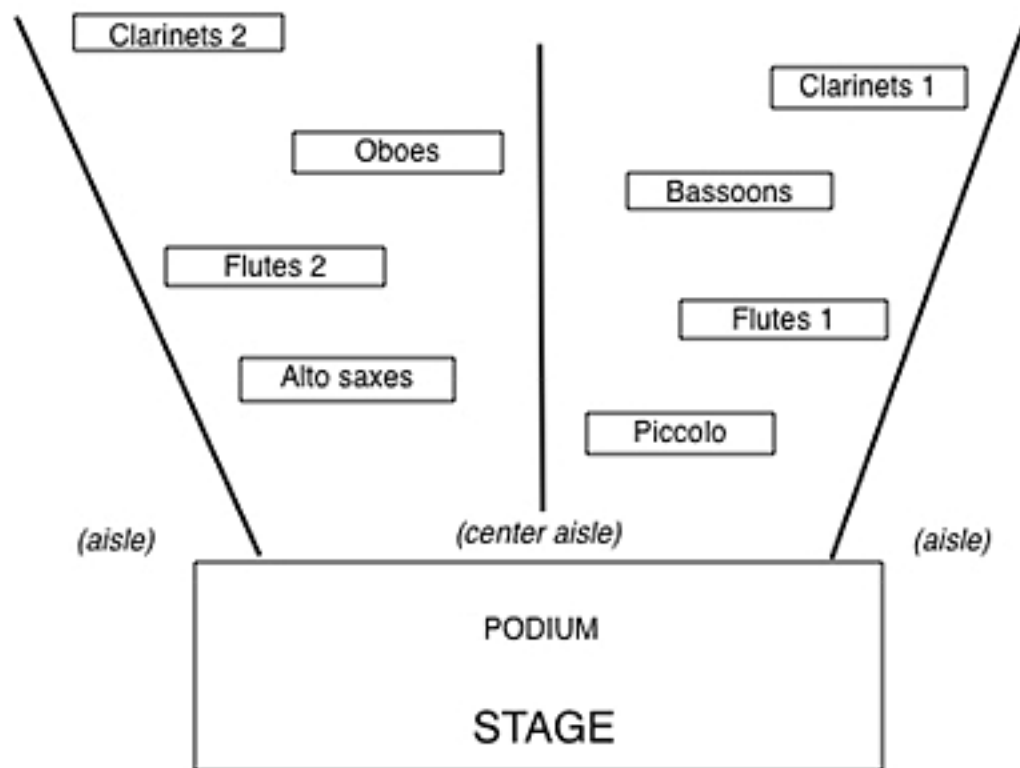
*LIGHTS OUT* can be effectively performed in a traditional concert presentation, with no additional multimedia effects. What makes the piece unique, however, is that it was conceived from the onset as a visual media piece. Ms. Shapiro composed the physical and lighting aspects of the work simultaneously with the music, and even before writing a single note of the score, she conducted Skype sessions with the majority of the bands involved in the consortium to elicit the musicians' creative ideas about what might make a performance particularly unusual and engaging. The result of these wonderful conversations resides in a remarkable log of over 250 suggestions, found on a page for *LIGHTS OUT* on Shapiro's website. Alex incorporated many of these ideas alongside her own, placing their indications on two additional staves of music devoted to movement and lighting effects, and leaving space on the score page for current and future bands to add their ideas as well. Ms. Shapiro views music as a collaborative, physical and multi-sensory experience, and she encourages all who perform *LIGHTS OUT* to consider presenting the piece in the spirit in which it was created, and to post performances on YouTube! Below are a few notes for general suggestions, and further resources will accumulate on Ms. Shapiro's website.

## Performing in the dark:

At the heart of the *LIGHTS OUT* concept is the fun of disorienting the audience by having not only the house lights, but the stage lights, be off. In their place, the creative use of finger or clip-on LED lights, glowsticks, glowing tape, or any other non-flammable lit and glowing devices will make the performance visually stunning. Placing colored LEDs inside the bells of instruments so that they glow, around the edges of the cymbals and tam tam so that they shimmer, on the mallet sticks so that they blur with movement, and around the fingers of the players, or the instruments themselves, are just a handful of ideas. No doubt, you and your band will have more! Resources for lights and props will be linked on the *LIGHTS OUT* on Shapiro's website.

### Staging: Woodwinds in the audience

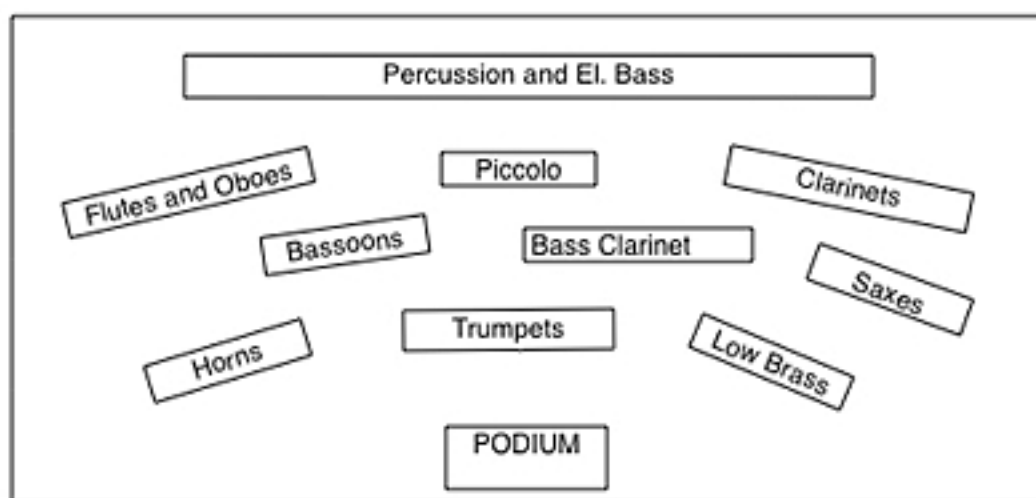
For the fullest effect, *LIGHTS OUT* begins with most of the woodwinds seated amidst members of the audience. Each entrance is staggered, and once playing, each musician must make his or her way to the stage by roughly bar 43, ready for the big theme at bar 45. Here is a helpful guide that suggests a logical placement for musicians according to how much time they will need to get from their seat to the stage within less than one minute.



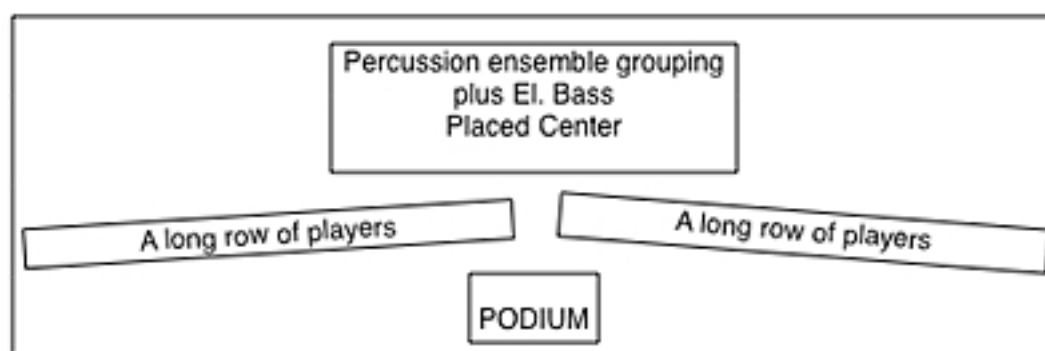
### Staging: Unusual placement on stage

There are many possibilities for the stage setup, depending on how creative a band wants to get. If using traditional seating, try to create extra room between the seats and rows if possible, to accommodate freedom of movement, starting with the need for each off-stage musician to take their seat while playing.

Given that a third or even half of the band will be starting the piece in the audience, it's easy to consider alternative staging. For instance, perhaps the players who normally sit in the back could have the chance to connect more directly with the audience in front of them? In turn, the listeners would enjoy a fresh view of those instruments, as well as a different sonic perspective. Of course, it could initially be a challenge for the conductor to remember where everyone is seated!



Another unusual staging idea is to have almost everyone standing on either side of a centrally placed percussion ensemble, with as many players in the front as possible, reaching to the wings of the stage:



### Opening dialogue:

The score includes a setup as intro to the music, for those performing in the dark. This adds roughly 30 seconds to the performance time, and requires someone to turn off all the stage lights on cue.

## **Memorization:**

The entire score is in 4/4 at a never-changing quarter note = 120, and should a band wish to memorize the piece, that would allow tremendous flexibility for staging ideas. Regardless of tackling the whole four and a half minutes, two very simple, short sections in which the musicians play the same rhythmic ostinato on one note for several bars, are marked for memorization in the score and in the parts.

## **Band choice:**

Each band is highly encouraged to depart from the visual and physical indications in the score, and present *LIGHTS OUT* in whatever manner they choose. There are a few places in the score that are marked, "Band choice" to indicate specific bars that would be well-suited to additional effects, choreography, and the like. There is no wrong way to perform it: email Alex Shapiro through her website to let her know what ideas your band has incorporated, and she'll add them to the list! She will also add the YouTube video of your performance to her YouTube page, and quite possibly to her website and Facebook page, as well. Visual media is a tremendous community-building resource, and Alex welcomes contact from anyone who performs her music.

## **Program Note**

Coming soon!

## **Personal Statement about *LIGHTS OUT***

Coming soon!

## **Composer Biography**

Alex Shapiro aligns note after note with the hope that a few of them will actually sound good next to each other. Published by Activist Music, her works for acoustic and electroacoustic ensembles are performed and broadcast daily across the U.S. and internationally, and can be found on over twenty commercially released recordings.

Long established in the professional chamber music world, Ms. Shapiro is also known for her groundbreaking electroacoustic works for wind band at the middle school, high school, and college levels. As the 2010 commissioned composer for the American Composers Forum BandQuest series, Shapiro created the repertoire's very first Grade 3 middle school electroacoustic band piece, *PAPER CUT*. The unusual addition of printer paper used as a percussion instrument rapidly turned the piece into a worldwide best seller, and sparked nearly a hundred YouTube videos of live performances, some of which include black light and other visual effects. The fun of creating fresh, contemporary music to engage students has become one of Alex's newest joys, and in 2013 Shapiro created another electroacoustic Grade 4 high school work, *TIGHT SQUEEZE*, incorporating the unlikely combination of Latin grooves and a 12-tone row. Both *PAPER CUT* and *TIGHT SQUEEZE* appear in the 2014 book and CD edition of "Teaching Music Through Performance in Band, Volume 10" edited by Eugene Migliaro Corporon and published by GIA Publications.

A familiar guest lecturer at universities around the United States, and the author of a chapter in the 2013 GIA Publications book, "Musicianship: Composing in Band and Orchestra," Ms. Shapiro has been a clinician at the 2013 Midwest Clinic in Chicago, and the 2014 Texas Music Educator's Association Conference (TMEA) in San Antonio where she presented workshops on electroacoustic band music and digital technologies in the classroom and concert venue. Shapiro wrote an extensive two-part article for the international band organization magazine, *WASBE World*, which appeared in the Summer and Fall 2014 issues and can be found on her website.

Born in New York City in 1962 and raised in Manhattan, Alex began composing as a much younger person at age nine. Educated at The Juilliard School and Manhattan School of Music as a student of Ursula Mamlok and John Corigliano, Ms. Shapiro is an enthusiastic leader in the new music community, and advocates for other artists through speaking appearances, published articles, and volunteerism. She has served on numerous U.S. music advocacy boards, and is the elected Symphonic & Concert writer representative on the ASCAP Board of Directors.

Alex lives on Washington State's remote San Juan Island, and when she's not composing she can be found communing with sea life, as seen on her music and photo-filled blog, [www.notesfromthekelp.com](http://www.notesfromthekelp.com) and her website, [www.alexshapiro.org](http://www.alexshapiro.org).

**To contact Ms. Shapiro, please email her at:  
[alex@alexshapiro.org](mailto:alex@alexshapiro.org)**

**For more information about Ms. Shapiro's work,  
including audio excerpts and score samples,  
please visit her website at:  
<http://www.alexshapiro.org>**



# LIGHTS OUT

HOUSE LIGHTS ARE OFF,  
STAGE LIGHTS BEGIN ON.

OPENING ACTION and DIALOGUE

Alex Shapiro

(Any improvised dialogue is fine)

SEATED IN AUDIENCE

SEATED IN AUDIENCE

SEATED IN AUDIENCE

SEATED IN AUDIENCE

SEATED IN AUDIENCE

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SEATED IN AUDIENCE

SEATED IN AUDIENCE

5. (low murmur from the band)

8. (nervous murmur from the band)

6. 2nd band member: "Oh no!"

4. 1st band member: "Uh oh."

7. 3rd band member: "Now what?"

2. Mallet player sprints up to podium and pretends to adjust a cable, saying loudly: "Wait-- let me plug this in."

3. Suddenly, the stage goes DARK. It appears as though a fuse has blown.

1. Conductor raises arms as if to begin.

Perusal Score

# LIGHTS OUT

TRANSPosed SCORE

8 CLICKS FREE (timings begin from free clicks)

Performance time: 4:30, not including opening dialogue

Alex Shapiro

00:00  $\text{♩} = 120$  **1** AUDIO TRACK BEGINS 00:04 2 3 4

Piccolo

Flute 1

Flute 2

Oboe

Bassoon

B♭ Clarinet 1

B♭ Clarinet 2

B♭ Bass Clarinet

E♭ Alto Sax

B♭ Tenor Sax

E♭ Baritone Sax

$\text{♩} = 120$  **1**

B♭ Trumpet 1

B♭ Trumpet 2

F Horn 1

F Horn 2

Trombone 1

Trombone 2

Trombone 3 (Bass)

Euphonium

Tuba

Electric Bass

Xylophone/  
Glockenspiel

Vibraphone

Sus. Cymbal/Tam tam/  
Egg Shaker

Tom-toms 1 (4)/  
Egg Shaker

Tom-toms 2 (4)/  
Egg Shaker

Bass Drum

Per previous page: There has been about 30 seconds of dialogue and nervous murmuring among the band members, after the house and stage lights suddenly went out.

House and Stage lights are OFF. Total darkness to the extent possible.

Stage players turn on their LEDs.

Visual: LIGHTS

Conductor has cued the audio track which starts with 8 free clicks.

Visual: MOVEMENT

-----8 FREE CLICKS-----

00:00

AUDIO TRACK BEGINS 00:04

steady 16th note percussion (etc.)

big ramp-up whoosh

syncopated metal hits

00:00 00:04 00:08 00:12 00:16 00:20 00:24 00:28 00:32 00:36 00:40 00:44 00:48 00:52 00:56 01:00

1 2 3 4

9. 9th band member:  
"I LIKE the dark!  
You never know what will happen."

Perusal Score

5 Seat kicks. 6 7 8 9 10

Picc. *p mp p*

Fl. 1 *p mp p*

Fl. 2 *p mp p*

Ob. *p mp p*

Bn. *p mp p*

Cl. 1 *p mp p*

Cl. 2 *p mp p*

Bs. Cl.

A. Sax *p mp p*

T. Sax

B. Sax

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Euph.

Tuba

El. Bs.

Xyl./Glock.

Vib.

Cym./T.T./E.S. *mp* *near bell* *on bell*

Toms 1/E.S.

Toms 2/E.S.

B. D. *p ff p* *p ff p*

Vis:Lgts

Vis: Movt *p mp p* *p mp p*

TRACK *low roll* *thud* *low rumble*

Perusal Score

MEMORIZE: Players seated in audience each **gently**, repeatedly kick the seat back of the person in front of them to coincide with the audio track and bass drum.

Players in audience each subtly kick the seat back in front of them.



11 12 13 14 15

Picc. Fl. 1 Fl. 2 Ob. Bn. Cl. 1 Cl. 2 Bs. Cl. A. Sax T. Sax B. Sax Tpt. 1 Tpt. 2 Hn. 1 Hn. 2 Tbn. 1 Tbn. 2 Tbn. 3 Euph. Tuba El. Bs. Xyl./Glock. Vib. Cym./T.T./E.S. Tom-toms Toms 1/E.S. Tom-toms Toms 2/E.S. B. D. Vis:Lgts Vis: Movt TRACK

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

MEMORIZE: Players in audience each turn on their LEDs.

*thud* *thud* *low rumble*

11 12 13 14 15

18 00:38

16 17 19 20

Picc. *p mp p*

Fl. 1 *p mp p*

Fl. 2 *p mp p*

Ob. *p mp p*

Bn. *p mp p*

Cl. 1 *p mp p mp*

Cl. 2 *p mp p mp*

Bs. Cl. *p mp p*

A. Sax *p mp p*

T. Sax

B. Sax

18

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Euph.

Tuba

El. Bs.

Xyl./Glock.

Vib.

Perusal Score

Cym./T.T./E.S. *(Sus. cym.) mp (l.v.) mf*

Toms 1/ E.S.

Toms 2/ E.S.

B. D. *ff p*

BAND CHOICE, 2 bars: any exciting lighting effect on stage.

Vis: Lgts

Vis: Movt *p mp p*

TRACK *dive bomb sound and a rise* *thud (continuous 16th perc. pulse)* *(etc.)*

16 17 18 19 20

*F bass with Eb pad* *F bass*

Players in audience each **gently** kick the seat back in front of them.

MEMORIZE: Players in audience each turn on their light and stand up at their entrance.

00:38

21 22 23 24 25

Picc. Fl. 1 Fl. 2 Ob. Bn. Cl. 1 Cl. 2 Bs. Cl. A. Sax T. Sax B. Sax Tpt. 1 Tpt. 2 Hn. 1 Hn. 2 Tbn. 1 Tbn. 2 Tbn. 3 Euph. Tuba El. Bs. Xyl./Glock. Vib. Cym./T.T./E.S. Toms 1/E.S. Toms 2/E.S. B. D. Vis:Lgts Vis: Movt TRACK

SING the same note that you play, in any comfortable register.

*mp*

Tam tam scrape *mf*

*p* *mp* *p*

thud

MEMORIZE: While playing, each musician in audience makes their way to the stage while moving to the music.

21 22 23 24 25





34 35 36 37 01:16

Picc. Fl. 1 Fl. 2 Ob. Bn. Cl. 1 Cl. 2 Bs. Cl. A. Sax T. Sax B. Sax

37

Tpt. 1 Tpt. 2 Hn. 1 Hn. 2 Tbn. 1 Tbn. 2 Tbn. 3 Euph. Tuba El. Bs. Xyl./Glock. Vib. Cym./T.T./E.S. Toms 1/E.S. Toms 2/E.S. B. D. Vis:Lgts Vis: Movt TRACK

34 35 36 37 01:16

Db pad

*mf* *mf* *mp* *p* *scrape* (l.v.) *thud*

*Perusal Score*



38 39 40 01:22 41

Picc. Fl. 1 Fl. 2 Ob. Bn. Cl. 1 Cl. 2 Bs. Cl. A. Sax T. Sax B. Sax

40

Tpt. 1 Tpt. 2 Hn. 1 Hn. 2 Tbn. 1 Tbn. 2 Tbn. 3 Euph. Tuba El. Bs. Xyl./Glock. Vib. Cym./T.T./E.S. Toms 1/E.S. Toms 2/E.S. B. D. Vis:Lgts Vis: Movt TRACK

38 39 40 F pad 41

*mp* *mf* *scrape* (l.v.) *mp* *p*

*Perusal Score*