**Voices from the Killing Jar**

**Performance Notes**

**Instrumentation**

Soprano/piano/clarinet/percussion

Soprano needs: one pair of thimble gloves (see below), Bb clarinet (or share with saxophonist/clarinetist), one china cymbal, tambourine, sandpaper blocks (share with percussionist), small triangle and beater (share with percussionist), low tom and mallet (can share with percussionist)

_Thimble gloves:_ fix metal thimbles to the middle three fingers of a pair of cotton gloves with strong glue: cut off the gloves’ thumbs and pinkies.

Flute/piccolo/bass flute

Bb Clarinet/Tenor Saxophone

Piano/soprano recorder

Pianist also needs: thimble gloves (share with soprano; see above)

Percussion

Percussion list: small triangle, sandpaper blocks, small woodblock, snare drum, small hand drum, 2 toms (low-med), crotales (2 octaves), wine glass tuned to C4, suspended cymbal, pin chimes, shell chimes, small hand drum, corrugated metal tube, bass bow, superball mallet. (Additional percussion required for soprano: suspended china cymbal, tambourine.)

Violin/Bb trumpet

Violinist/trumpet player also needs: guitar pick, violin mute, brass straight mute.

**Electronics** (should be cued/mixed by one performer - Max patches and sound files available upon request from composers: katepsope@gmail.com)

Soprano should always be amplified. Percussionist needs a vocal mic for movement VII: other instruments may need to be amplified as well for balance.

In addition, the following movements use electronics:

Mvt. I: Live electronic processing of soprano (max patch) plus 4 pre-recorded tracks triggered live
Mvt. II: 15 pre-recorded tracks triggered live
Mvt. III: 5 pre-recorded tracks triggered live
Mvt. IV: no electronics (soprano amplified)
Mvt. VI: Live electronic processing (max patch) plus 4 pre-recorded tracks triggered live
Mvt. VII: Live processing (max patch) on soprano and percussionist (voice only)
A Note on the doubling

The unusual doubling in *Voices from the Killing Jar* reflects the skill sets of performers for whom the piece was written. Non-standard doublings consist of the following:

**Soprano:** accompanies herself on piano (at advanced/intermediate level), plays clarinet (at beginner level), and accompanies herself on percussion (at beginner level)

**Violinist:** plays trumpet (at intermediate level)

**Electronics performer:** sings a Mozart aria (baritone range, intermediate/advanced level)

If played by groups whose members do not double on these instruments, the following adjustments are suggested:

Mvt. I: The first and second piano parts in movement I may be swapped if the vocalist is not able to play the piano I part.

Mvt. II: The clarinet part is extremely easy and can be played by anyone who is able to produce sustained pitches on the clarinet. The instrument may be shared by the vocalist and the saxophonist/clarinetist. If this is unacceptable, an eighth player may be used for the second clarinet part: in this case, the soprano should walk offstage during the prelude to mvt. II and re-enter during the vamped opening of movement III.

Mvt. III: The soprano’s cymbal part in movement III is very simple and playable by any performer.

Mvt. IV: The soprano’s percussion part is very simple and playable by any performer. An additional player may be used for the trumpet part, in which he or she should come on stage during the final moments of mvt. III (violinist remains onstage).

Mvt. V: A guest performer may be used for the baritone part. This player should not be noticeable from the start of the movement and should either perform from somewhere other than the stage (i.e., from the back of the hall or the aisle) or should enter the stage at the moment he begins to sing and sing from the piano crook or from extreme stage right.

Mvt. VI: The recorder part is very simple and should be playable by the pianist.

Mvt. VII: An additional player may be used for the trumpet part, in which case he or she should stay on stage from movement IV onwards.
Performance Notes, cont.

**Soprano** (for mvt. II clarinet technique, see "Woodwinds")

- Vary pitch microtonally.
- Mvt. III: microtonally inflect line in both directions so that each note is a slightly different pitch, always within a quarter tone of the written pitch.

**Mvt. III air sounds:**

- Breath tremolo: rapid recirculation on "sh" air from the back of the throat, as in German "ich".
- Tremolo lower lip against top teeth on syllable "I".
- Tremolo lower lip against top teeth on syllable "Iv".

**Mvt. III cymbal technique (for soprano):**

"Thimble gloves" attach metal thimbles to the three middle fingers of two cotton gloves with fabric glue. Cut off top of glove's thumb and pinkie. Same pair used by piano I, mvt. I.

- Scrape side of thumbnail over surface for duration of 1st note: release and let ring on tied note.
- Lightly tap cymbal with thumbs (let ring scrape).
- Scrape surface with thimbles and release, let ring on tied note.
- Bounce open palms forcefully against cymbal and scrape thimbles along underside, release, ring on tied note.
- Grasp cymbal with thumbs on top and scrape thimbles along underside, release, ring on tied note.
- Spin cymbal on stand with LE while holding RH thimbles against surface (spin once & let come to rest).

**Mvt. V**

*Changes in affect in mvt. V should be as extreme and sudden as possible.*

- Gradually change from nasal 'N' to nasal vowel with extreme vocal fry (pitch obscured but identifiable).
- Short, heavily accented grunt (like a voiced cough).
- Rapid, unintelligible but speech-like babbling.

**Baritone** (see "Electronics")

Baritone should not be visible to the audience until the moment he begins to sing. Sing either from somewhere other than the stage (i.e., the back of the hall or the aisle), or, if on stage, sing in a different area from the soprano (i.e., in the crook of the piano or extreme stage right).
Woodwinds and trumpet

Flute only:

Completely cover embouchure hole and forcibly seal it with the tongue. Will produce a pitch sounding a major seventh lower than written.

Blow air. Mutepiece covered

Overblow: play note loud enough to produce partials.

Trill 5/6 trill keys while playing specified pitches; will result in a wobbly, pigeon-like tremolo.

Speak syllable(s) into instrument (pitch will be audible).

Mvt. VII: speak into flute, entirely covering embouchure hole (sound will be extremely muted). When 'keys' is indicated, rapidly finger random pitches on the instrument while speaking.

All winds:

Short, percussive sound. (Flute/trumpet: produce the syllable "s". Sax: bounce tongue against reed.)

Blow air through instrument. Clar/sax/trumpet: pitchless white note (finger any pitch). Flute: pitch will be audible (finger written pitch).

Continuous rearticulation as fast as possible; tonguing should be soft; effect similar to an amplitude vibrato or a Monteverdi trill.

Timbral trill: trill different fingerings for same note (light microtonal variation, etc.)

Mvt. II, flute/sax: where symbol appears, sing while continuing to play. (as close to played pitch as possible).

Mvt. II, clarinet (preferably played by soprano): using the specified fingerings (holes not pictures are left open), rapidly tremolo the four right-hand trill keys with the index, middle, and ring fingers to produce a "bislagnando" sound. If the right hand cannot support the instrument in this position, rest the instrument on the leg. Pitches given in the score will be approximate and microtonal; the "normal" note of the given fingerings should not sound. The trill should be played as seamlessly and continuously as possible with unobtrusive breaks for air. Written pitches are equal-tempered approximations of the resulting sound.

Multiphonics - flute

Multiphonics - clar/sax
Percussion

Mvt. I: small triangle, sandpaper blocks, 2 tons (low/hi), wine glass tuned to C4, superball mallet
Mvt. II: 2 tons (low/hi)
Mvt. III: 2 tons (low/hi), crotales (2 octaves), bow
Mvt. IV: suspended cymbal, low tom, woodblock, snare drum, crotales, bow
Mvt. V: small triangle, suspended cymbal, 2 tons (low/hi), woodblock, snare drum, wine glass tuned to B4, corrugated plastic tube, crotales, bow, superball mallet
Mvt. VI: small hand drum, suspended cymbal
Mvt. VII: pin chimes, shell chimes, triangle, suspended cymbal, crotales, bow

Scrape roll: rapidly slide mallet or brushes back and forth without lifting off the surface.
Scrape

Buzz roll: allow mallet to bounce on instrument.
Buzz

Crotales: damp ringing note on symbol

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Piano

Mvt. I piano preparation, mvt. I (from top of piece until m.43)

Block with kneadable eraser: pitchless "woodblock" sound

Prepare string with kneadable eraser on node so that 7th partial sounds clearly (will not be equal tempered). Weigh eraser down with small piece of metal (e.g. small bolt or nail).

Mark nodes with string or tape on C2 and B3 so that harmonics sounding C4 (mvt. I, m.55) and B5 (mvt. V, m.11) may be located in performance (touch node tightly and play key to sound harmonic).

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pluck highest strings (ad lib.)

Scratch and pluck highest octave of strings with fingernails: a high, ringing, unpitched sound.

Scape one of the lower-octave coil-wrapped strings with a coin or pie (sound should be continuous, not hitched).

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thimble gloves

Thimble gloves: attach metal thimbles to the three middle fingers of two cotton gloves with fabric glue. Cut off top of glove's thumb and pinkie to allow keyboard playing by these fingers. (Also used by sop, mvt. III.)

"Rattle bolts:" rattle thimbled fingers against bolts on frame near highest register of keyboard.
Violin

"Growl": extreme bow pressure, completely pitchless. When tied to a normal notehead, growl on the fingered note and seamlessly emerge from growl to pitch.

Hold violin "guitar style"
strum with pic

Mvt. VI. hold violin like a guitar (neck in LH, RH strumming) and strum with pic.

Electronics

Max/MSP or Max Runime required. All sound files and max patches available from composer: katepsoper@gmail.com

Electronics performer may also take baritone role in movement VII (preferably). In this case, the performer should sing from where he normally sits to play the electronics. If inside a booth or otherwise aurally separated from the concert hall, he may come into the hall and stand near the back.
I. Prelude: May Kasahara

Text: Kate Soper

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