Alex Temple

7×7×7

for seven instruments

[revised version]

commissioned by Present Music, 2026

Instrumentation

flute
clarinet
violin
cello
electric guitar (with slide, chorus pedal & overdrive pedal)
vibraphone (F3–F6)
piano

Notation

× notehead — flute: air sound with as little pitch as possible
guitar: run finger quickly along the string to produce a friction sound

⌜ square brackets ⌝ — indicate the main melody at any given time

About the Piece

As you might guess, *7×7×7* is made mostly of sevens. There are microsevens, like the first bar: a seven-note chord played seven times by seven instruments, with the notes shuffled around so that each player plays each one once. There are also macrosevens, like the first half of the piece: seven sections, each of which follows an accelerating seven-chord progression that starts off sweet but closes clangorously. Each of those sections also has its own distinctive musical texture, and later in the piece the textures start stacking, until, just before the end, there are seven of them sounding at once.

7×7×7 was commissioned for Present Music by Nora Finnigan Werra in honor of the Wisconsin Woman's Club's 150 Anniversary; and by Mark Van Hecke in honor of Present Music's 45th Anniversary.

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Score

7×7×7

Alex Temple

♩ = 112

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

chorus: off
overdrive: off

Vib

hard mallets
motor: off
pedal ad lib.

Pno

8

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14

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

A

19

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

B

♩ = 108

25

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

mf ff

p f

slow roll,
on the beat

31

3

36

Fl

f *playful*

mp

f

Cl

mf *playful*

p

mf

Vn

Vc

mf

p

mf

Gtr

Vib

f

8va

Pno

f *playful*

p

f

40

Fl

mp

Cl

p

Vn

p

Vc

p

Gtr

Vib

mp

Pno

p

43

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

8va

C

47

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

51

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

54

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

fast roll, before the beat

Vib

Pno

D

♩ = 112

57

Fl

tr 3

p

Cl

p

Vn

f

p

Vc

pizz

mf

Gtr

mf lyrical

Vib

p

Pno

fast rolls, before the beat

mf luminous

60

Fl

tr 3

Cl

mf

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

mf

Pno

p

63

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

f

mp

arco

8va

66

69

Fl

Cl

mf

Vn

f

Vc

f

mf

Gtr

f

Vib

mf

Pno

f sneaky

8vb

72

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

E

75

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

mf *slinky, portamento ad lib.*

p

79

f

mf

fast rolls, before the beat

82

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

tr

3

mp

mf

F

85

ff mechanical

92

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

mp

gentler

Pno

mp

gentler

98

Fl

mp

mf

Cl

mp

mf

Vn

mp *lyrical*

3

mf

Vc

Gtr

Vib

p

mp

p

Pno

p

mf

p

G

103

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

ff *p* *mf* *slinky*

108

ff *p* *mf*

H

113 ♩ = 100

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

slow roll, before the beat

p

Vib

motor: fast

mp *sparkling and spacious*

Pno

p

like birdsong

tr

3

118

Fl

pp

Cl

pp

f

Vn

Vc

Gtr

mp

Vib

mf

Pno

3

3

mf

3

tr

122

Fl

f *like birdsong*

pp

f

Cl

f *like birdsong*

Vn

Vc

Gtr

mf

Vib

Pno

f

126 ♩ = 104

Fl

Cl

Vn

f *like birdsong*

Vc

Gtr

f

Vib

mf

Pno

f *ominous*

I

130

Fl

Cl

mp lyrical

mf

mp

Vn

Vc

mp

Gtr

Vib

Pno

p

mp

134

Fl

p

mf

Cl

mf

p

mf

Vn

p

mf

Vc

p

Gtr

p

mf

Vib

p

mf

Pno

138

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

141

J

♩ = 108

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

motor: off

146

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

151

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

157

K

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

mf *p*

mf *p*

p

mf *p*

ominous

f *p*

p

f *p*

p

ff *p*

p

ff *f* *p*

p

ff *p*

p

163

, Rall.

Fl

Cl

f *pp*

Vn

f *pp*

f *pp*

Vc

ff *pp*

Gtr

p *lyrical*

Vib

ff *pp*

Pno

L

169 ♩ = 112

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

176

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

179

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

182

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

M

185

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

ff

189

p

193

, Rall.

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

mf

f

pp

p

pizz

N

197 ♩ = 104

arco

mp eerie

soft mallets
motor: slow

chorus: on

slow roll, before the beat

lyrical, rhythmically free

203

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

arco

p

pp

Gtr

(with slide)

p *eerie*

Vib

fp

fp

Pno

209

Fl

Cl

Vn

pizz
slow roll, before the beat

mf *lyrical, rhythmically free*

p

Vc

II

III

pp

Gtr

Vib

p

pp

Pno

p *gentle*

O

216

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

pizz

gentle

223

P

227

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

arco

arco

anxious

anxious

hard mallets
motor: off

232

236

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

241

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

Q

245

♩ = 112

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

pp

f intense

fp

f

mf

chorus: off

overdrive: on

ff

intense

3

250

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

255

R

259

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

263

S

267

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

271

T

275

♩ = 112

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

f with a sense of arrival

fp

mp

p

mf

overdrive: off

282

285

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

288

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

U

291

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

ff

295

p

V

299

Fl

Cl

Vn

Vc

Gtr

Vib

Pno

’ Rall. **A tempo**

mf *f* *pp* *p* *ff* like an afterthought

306

mf *mp* *p* *pp* *ppp*