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NOVEMBER

MOON READINGS

for three percussionists
Amy Crankshaw



November moon readings

Amy Crankshaw

developed as part of the LSO Soundhub platform

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Programme note

New moon:	alignment
Waxing crescent:	waking the senses
First quarter:	taking action
Waxing gibbous:	refinement, preparation
Full moon:	harvest

'**November moon readings**' engages in various gatherings of sound, scent, and spirit, as we explore musical intuitions and layers of entanglement between the individual and the collective.

Performance notes

A common technique required is pitch fluctuation on the timpani, using the pedal. This is notated as a thick wavy line. This should always be performed slowly in order to produce a variety of pitch colour and to avoid too much pedal sound distracting from the tone of the timpani.

This piece is slow moving, moody, and relatively soft in its dynamics. In order to maintain this atmosphere and a sense of tension over the long span of time, performers should present themselves in a deliberately slow and somber manner, with every hit, stroke, movement and step. The theatrical elements should be carefully co-ordinated and agreed upon between the musicians, so that the atmosphere of the performance can be effectively conveyed.

Instruments & equipment requirements

3 modern timpani (C, D, F)

- from Bell Percussion: 32" (C-C), 30" (D-D), and 28" (F-F), from the "premiere elite" range)

2 large suspended cymbals, different sizes

1 spiral trash cymbal

1 large thunder sheet

1 large bass drum

4 superball mallets

6 medium-soft timpani mallets

1 set drumsticks

3 contrabass bows (lots of rosin required)

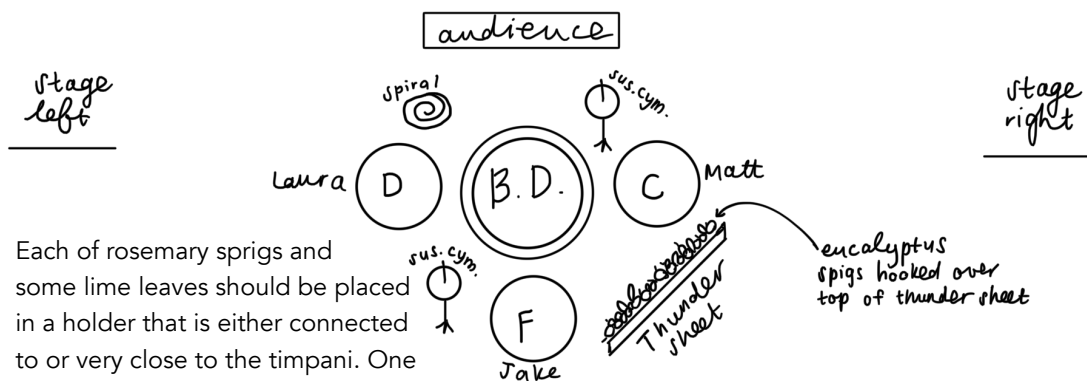
3 large rosemary sprigs (at least 25 cm long)

3 cups of dried lime leaf

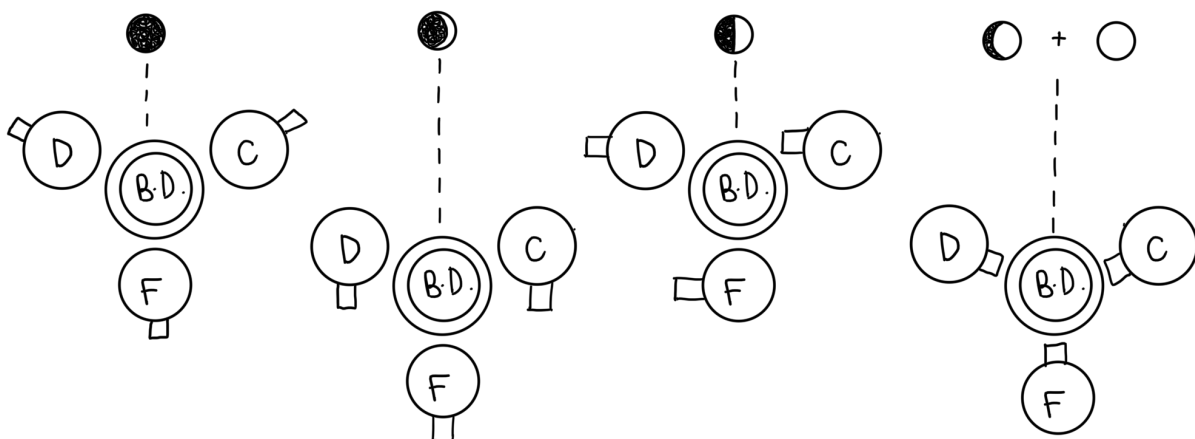
22 large (30 cm +) sprigs (or 22 posies of small sprigs) of semi-dry eucalyptus leaves

Instrument setup

For setting the stage, the 2 suspended cymbals should be placed on the floor, on a dark carpet so as not to make a sound when being picked up during the piece. The stands for these 2 suspended cymbals should be placed in the 'final' cymbal positions, but at their lowest possible height. The spiral trash cymbal should be set up normally.



Note the different timpani positions throughout the piece (to be marked on the floor for precision):



Explanation to accompany the graphic score

Lighting changes are indicated in the score with **

NEW MOON

Instruments: timpani

Beaters: medium-soft mallets + rosemary (at the end)

Performance description:

- This movement is to be read in free time, apart from where there is boxed notation with a tempo indicated.
- Lines that stretch across different parts (or staves) indicate phrasing in free time. The attack of these notes are therefore anticipated rather than counted in a set time.
- Glissandi with tiny lines written above indicate a continuous roll for the duration of the glissando.

WAXING CRESCENT

Instruments: timpani

Beaters: rosemary + citrus

Performance description:

Jake leads this section, using a timer

- **A:** [Jake only] With rosemary in RH: on the skin of the timpani, create a rustling sound in a crescent shape (noted as a curved arrow).
- **A1:** While Jake plays A, Matt and Laura move their timpani clockwise to new position (marked on floor)
- **B:** Tutti: Same as A
- **C:** Continue with rosemary in RH. With citrus leaves in LH: Create a rustling sound in a circular shape/area on the timpani, within the curve of the rosemary's crescent movement.
- **D:** The rosemary's continuous sound now becomes interrupted with taps, but the crescent shape must be maintained.

Choreography:

- R.H. rosemary: the movements created with the right hand must be consistent for all performers. The 'lift' of the R.H. from the end of one crescent shape to the beginning of the next one should be high overhead, slow, and emphasised (to be discussed in rehearsal).
- **IMPORTANT:** Matt and Laura (front timps) must co-ordinate their R.H. movements as one, while Jake (back timp) must move alternatively (i.e. at B, C, D, Jake makes contact with the timp skin to begin the crescent shape when Matt and Laura have finished the shape and have no contact with the timpani skin).

FIRST QUARTER

Instruments: timpani, cymbals

Beaters: rosemary + citrus (all) drumsticks, timp mallet (Laura only)

Performance description:

Laura leads this section

1. Matt and Jake continue with D (above). Laura breaks up the rosemary and citrus branch, throwing & dropping the leaves dramatically onto her timpani, from high above.
2. Laura picks up one drumstick and one timpani mallet. Laura begins playing the spiral trash ("star" material, in free time).
3. Once Laura begins the "star" material, Matt and Jake stop playing and move their timpani to the **new position** (marked on floor).
4. Matt and Jake place their cymbals upside down on their timpani.
5. Matt and Jake break up their rosemary and citrus branches, throwing & dropping them dramatically onto their cymbals, from high above.
6. While Matt and Jake break up the greenery, Laura picks up one bow and bows the spiral trash on different parts of the instrument. The bowed movement must be from high to low, retaking at a different position after each sound each produced. [Note: the higher edges/layers produce more effective sounds].
7. Matt (with bow) and Jake (with mallets, then bow) play the cymbal while pedaling the timp slowly (at different speeds) to highlight the various pitches and harmonics along the way.
8. Laura: After approximately 2 minutes of bowing the spiral trash, perform "start" material again, this time using 2 drumsticks.
9. Once Laura plays the "star" material until further notice, Matt and Jake stop playing, and set up their cymbals, with the face of the cymbal at 45 degree angle, and facing towards the audience like a moon.

WAXING GIBBOUS

Instruments: cymbals, thunder sheet, bass drum

Beaters: eucalyptus

Performance description:

Matt leads this section

1. Matt walks to thunder sheet (T.S.), takes two eucalyptus sprigs, and creates a scuttling sound on the T.S.
2. Once Matt starts walking, Jake moves his timpani to the **new position** (marked on floor).
3. Once Matt begins sounding the T.S., Jake walks to T.S.
4. Once Jake starts walking, Laura stops playing "star" and moves her timpani to the **new position** (marked on floor).
5. Once Jake reaches T.S., Matt returns to cymbal with 2 eucalyptus sprigs and strikes cymbal.
6. Once Jake begins sounding the T.S., Laura walks to T.S.
7. Once Laura reaches T.S., Jake returns to cymbal with 2 eucalyptus sprigs and strikes cymbal.
8. Once Laura begins sounding the T.S., Matt walks to T.S.
9. Once Matt reaches T.S., Laura returns to cymbal with 2 eucalyptus sprigs and strikes cymbal.

10. Once Matt begins sounding the T.S., Jake walks to T.S.
11. Continue in the above manner following the number of iterations on the score.
12. After 3 journeys to the thunder sheet, Jake returns to the **bass drum (not cymbal)**. Jake breaks up eucalyptus dramatically onto the bass drum, from high above.
13. Matt and Laura: On the 4th journey to the T.S., stay at T.S., and continue sounding the thunder sheet together until you hear the bass drum being bowed.

Choreography:

- The 'walking' between the instruments must be done slowly and methodically in a clockwise direction, around the outside of the setup – creating an imaginary circle.
- When making sounds at the T.S., try to fully immerse yourself in the sound-making process, communicating a sense of curiosity in the sound, and trust in the instrument.

FULL MOON

Instruments: bass drum, timpani

Beaters: eucalyptus, bows, timp mallets, superballs

Performance description:

Jake leads this section

1. Jake: Once the eucalyptus is broken up, pick up 2 bows and create 2-bow sound on B.D.
2. Laura & Matt: Once you hear B.D. being bowed, respond by collecting all the last eucalyptus from the T.S., and go to bass drum.
3. Stand on either side of B.D. while Jake continues bowing. Break up the eucalyptus dramatically onto the bass drum, from high above. Then go to respective timps and release their pedals to the lowest possible pitch.
4. Perform the notated material while Jake continues bowing B.D. This includes swapping positions in the long rest, before repeating the material on a different timp.
5. Once Laura and Matt have completed the repeat, all three players put down bows & superballs slowly & dramatically while Laura & Matt move towards B.D.
6. Tutti: play final material, following each box of music on the score (left to right).
7. Tutti: slowly tilt bass drum to almost 90 degrees. Each using one hand at a time, with flat palms, slowly wipe the foliage off the drum skin onto the floor. Use slow, continuous motions to create final 'swishing' sounds.

Choreography:

When moving between B.D. and timps, and when players are instructed to "MOVE" between timps, these movements must be co-ordinated with each other, as precisely as possible, and with a sense of confident intention.



new moon

November moon readings

Amy Crankshaw

Matt C

7: *solo*

Matt

7:

Take F

7:

Laura D

7:

Matt C

7:

Take

7:

Laura

7:

Matt

7:

Take

7:

Laura

7:

Matt

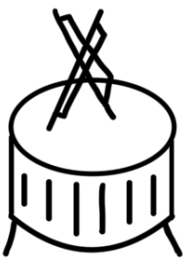
7:



Handwritten musical score for three parts: Take, Laura, and Matt. The score is written on three staves. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with dynamic markings of *mp* and *p*. There are three instances of "S.B." (Sostenuto) markings above the staves. A tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 60$ is present in the Laura part. The second system shows a continuation of the piece with dynamic markings of *mp* and *p*.

Handwritten musical score for three parts: Take, Laura, and Matt. The score is written on three staves. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with dynamic markings of *mp* and *(mp)*. There are three instances of "S.B." (Sostenuto) markings above the staves. A tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 60$ is present in the Laura part. The second system shows a continuation of the piece with dynamic markings of *mp* and *(mp)*. There are three instances of "S.B." (Sostenuto) markings above the staves. A tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 60$ is present in the Laura part. The score ends with a double bar line and a "go to" instruction.

☆ for Laura only
 (♩)⊙ + (♩)▽

○ full moon

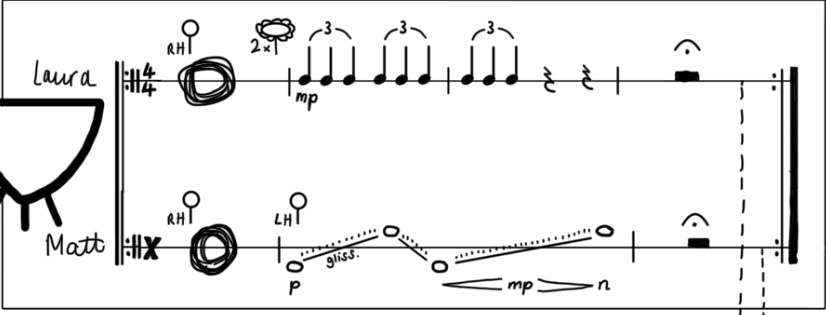
Take 

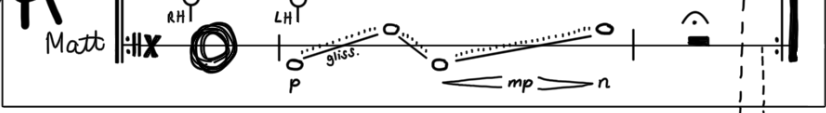
Laura & Matt  → go to your own timp RELEASE PEDAL 

second time: put down bows

first time: swap timps, play same part
second time: put down superballs


$\text{♩} = 60$

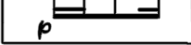
Laura 

Matt 

tutti

$\text{♩} = 60$

(T) Timp.  x 9

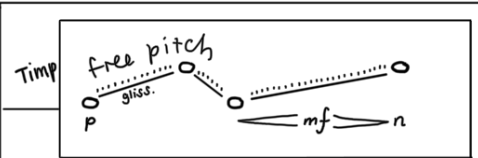
(P) B.D.  x 9

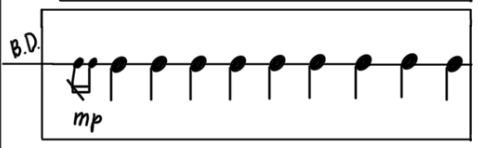
molto accel. →

$\text{♩} = 60$

MOVE to next timp (3 beats)

Free time

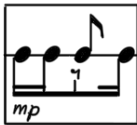
Matt & Jake 

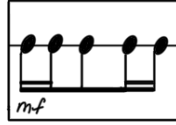
Laura 


$\text{♩} = 60$

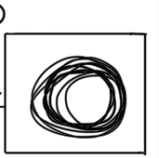
MOVE to next timp (3 beats)

$\text{♩} = 90$

 x 9



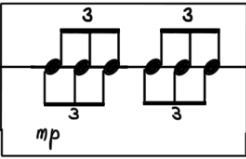
Take 

Laura & Matt 

$\text{♩} = 60$

MOVE to next timp (3 beats)

molto accel. →

 x 9

dim. → to n

