

Lightness

Juliana Hodkinson

TECHNICAL RIDER

Sound and light theatre for 3 musicians playing safety matches, sandpaper, sand and water, with amplification, optional distortion effects and lighting

LIGHTNESS was commissioned by SPEAK Percussion, with support from the Danish Arts Foundation. SPEAK Percussion (Eugene Ughetti, Louise Devenish and Matthias Schack-Arnott) gave the first performance at the Zürcher Tage für Neue Musik on 14th November 2015.

Duration: c. 14 min.

Please distribute this to all staff involved.

If you have any questions, or difficulties fulfilling these specifications, please get in touch in good time:

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1. Instrumentation

Three musicians/percussionists perform using safety matches, matchboxes and sandpaper in three different gradings of coarseness. Sand and water are used for extinguishing the flames. All sounds are amplified, ideally with small DPAs attached to the musicians' wrists.

2. Objects and materials required

Off-stage fire extinguishers / water in buckets

For each player:

- safety matches
- safety-match boxes (in 2 or more sizes)
- extended striking surfaces, or 'runways', made up of several ignition strips
- sandpaper (sanding discs): grit sizes c.40 (coarse), c.150 (medium) and c.240 (fine)
- sand and water (for extinguishing matches) in small, black, fire-proof containers
- amplification (see above)

In addition:

Player I (Stage Right)

2 'shakers'	matchboxes filled with matches and played by shaking, like a rhythm egg
2 'bongos'	empty matchboxes, with drawer adjusted to give 2 different pitches, played with fingers
2 'bass drums'	larger empty matchboxes, maybe two different sizes, or with drawers adjusted differently

Player II in Centre

2 'shakers'	matchboxes filled with matches and played by shaking, like a rhythm egg
'military drum'	filled matchbox, played with matchsticks (box may be modified to distort more)
'side drum'	empty matchbox, played with matchsticks
2 'snare drums'	filled/semi-filled matchboxes of 2 different sizes, modified to sound higher, played with matchsticks

2 'bass drums'	larger empty matchboxes, maybe two different sizes, or with drawers adjusted differently
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Player III (Stage Left)

'shaker'	filled matchboxes, played by shaking, like a rhythm egg
'tambourine'	larger matchbox, filled with normal-size matches or other modified material, e.g. flakes of metal, played by shaking like a tambourine
'snare drum'	large matchbox, filled with normal-size matches and played with (longer) matchsticks
'lion's roar'	see below*

*To make the lion's roar, use: 1 matchbox, 2 matches, 1 length of black cotton thread (c. 40-50 cm long), 1 needle

With the needle, prick a hole in the matchbox lid. Tie one end of thread to a match and place in matchbox tray. Thread the needle and pull through the hole. Put the tray inside the lid. Tie the other end of thread to the other match.

To play the lion's roar: hold the second match in one hand and press the little finger of that hand down onto the matchbox lid, to keep it down. Loop the thread around the fingers of the other hand. Pulling the thread taut, twist the second match back and forth to create a friction sound.

3. Scores, use of notation

The score of *Lightness* is available directly from the composer: contact@julianahodkinson.net, tel. (+49) 172 698 6025. Remember when ordering material to order 2 extra copies of the score, for the sound and lighting crew.

The basic lighting setting is absolutely pitch black, so the musicians must learn all or most of their parts by heart.

Alternatively, electronic tablets may be used for some sections, color-inverted (i.e. white notation on black background); still, all cues for turning screens on and off must be precisely coordinated between all three musicians.

Optional stand-light cues are indicated in the score, for the case that it is not possible to learn the piece entirely by heart. The timing of these cues must be executed with the same precision as the matches, so stand-lights (if used) must be controlled either via foot-pedal by one of the musicians, or from Front of House, cued from the score by a 4th musician.

4. Stage

The stage area needs to be minimum 5m wide and 2m deep.

Either the stage must be raised or the auditorium seating must be tiered, so that all audience members can clearly see the stage.

Please ensure that any extra equipment, chairs, instruments and music-stands for other pieces in the same concert are removed for this piece. Alternatively, a black grand drape or hard teaser may be drawn behind the *Lightness* set-up).

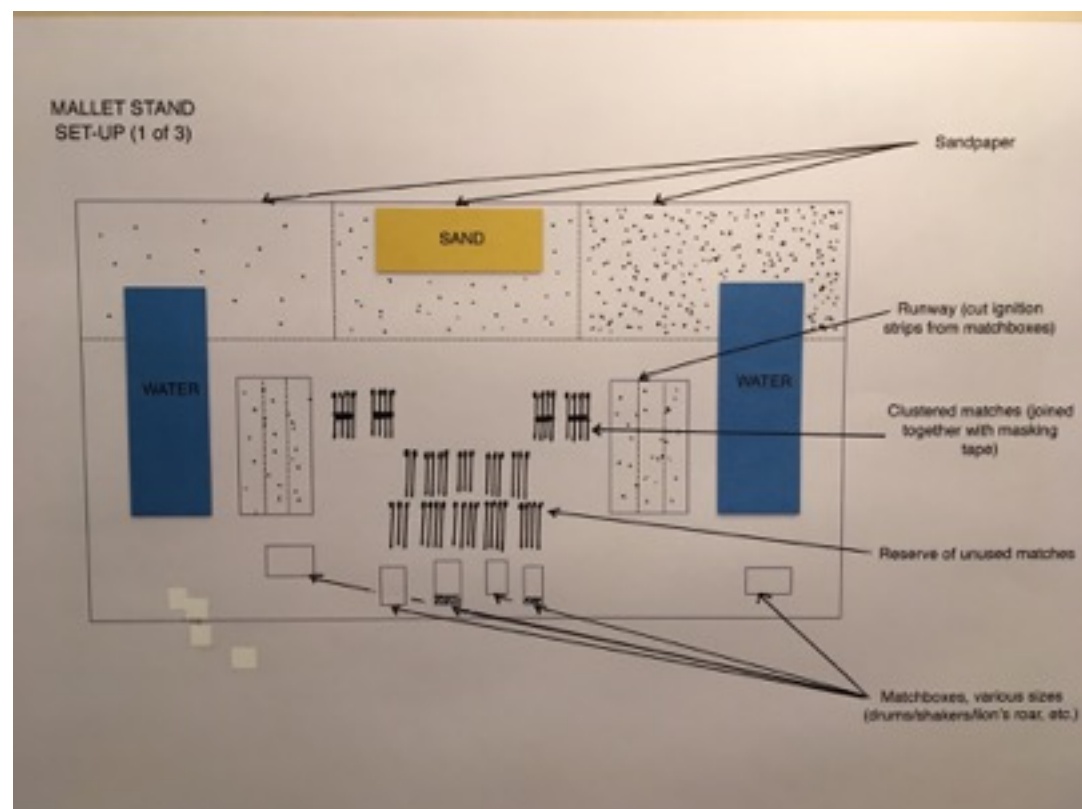
Three musicians perform at three separate stations: I Stage Right, II Stage Centre, III Stage Left. Each faces the audience frontally.

Each musician requires a black mallet stand or table: dimensions c. 60 x 40cm, height 90 cm.

Small low risers (1 or 2 risers, c. 60x40cm, height 5-15cm, depending on musicians' heights) are required, to compensate for differences in the musicians' heights (they must stand with shoulders and face at exactly the same height, as also their tables must be at exactly the same height).

The entire stage set-up must be black. The stage must be clear of all other equipment – no chairs, no music-stands, no instruments. (A black grand drape or hard teaser may be drawn behind the *Lightness* set-up.)

5. Mallet stand set-up



6. Safety

The piece is performed in total darkness – both stage and auditorium. The following hazards must be taken into account:

- hazard of fire on stage
- hazard of musicians stumbling or falling onstage
- hazard of musicians stumbling over edge of raised stage
- hazard of audience stumbling or falling in auditorium

These hazards must be addressed ahead of the production, and solutions provided that are sensitive to the performance (e.g. auditorium guides with torches, stage cleared of all minor and major obstructions, marking of stage-edge with luminescent tape, fire extinguishers/buckets of water and/or fire personnel positioned in the wings).

7. Sound

Full-range stereo PA system rigged at stage level, with monitor speakers next to each player (or in-ear system).

Each musician's station is enhanced with slight amplification - either using miniature mics on the musicians' wrists, or stationary/hanging mics, or a combination. Take care that no mics/stands interrupt sight lines from audience. Using mini mics, the musicians can precisely control their dynamics.

Also, an optional distortion effect is indicated in some sections of the piece. The distortion may be created and controlled via a guitar distortion pedal, played by one of the musicians, or from Front of House by sound engineer.

8. Click track

Due to the black-out, coordinating the tempi and metres between the parts will require the use of in-ear click-tracks for all three musicians.

9. Lighting

The basic lighting setting is pitch black. This means that the musicians must learn their parts off by heart or play from tablets with inverted colours: white writing on black background. Page-turns on the tablets may be executed by the musicians individually (footpedal or finger-swipe), or all three tablets linked to one musician's footpedal.

Wherever possible all auditorium exit signs, stair lighting and similar in the venue should be turned off or blacked out. This requires clearing fire and safety checks ahead of the production.

Some thought should be given to the beginning of the piece – whether the musicians will enter the stage in darkness, when the house lights will go down, etc. Several solutions are possible, but the piece must begin with precision and purposefulness.

At bars 241-242 there is ‘a blaze of electric light’, which lasts 5 seconds. This may be directed from above onto the players, from side-lights, or into the auditorium – it should be sharp and cued very precisely.

10. Dress

Players must wear black, with long-sleeves.