

Judith Shatin

For the Birds

Amplified Cello and Electronics



Program Note

For the Birds, commissioned by cellist Madeleine Shapiro, is an homage to birds, represented here by birds of the Yellowstone region. Many are in steep decline due to habitat loss and climate change. Rather than imitating their sounds, I include them, sometimes highlighting their calls, sometimes processing the field recordings to comment on their situation. The joining of the voice of the cello with that of the birds reminds us of the joining of the human world with that of the other animals we live among.

The focus on the birds of Yellowstone reflects Madeleine's love of the region and my own fascination with, and concern for, these birds. Naturalist Kevin Colver kindly shared some of his excellent recordings as source material. Each movement features a particular bird type and cello techniques that respond to them. The overall shape moves from the beckoning of songbirds, to the insistent pecking of the sapsuckers, to the ominous calls of the predators, to the voices and wing sounds of water birds as they rise in flight.

- 1-Songbirds*
- 2-Sapsuckers*
- 3-Birds of Prey*
- 4-Water Birds*

World Premiere
Madeleine Shapiro,
TechnoSonic Festival
Old Cabell Auditorium
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA
11/3/2005

Duration: 15:00

Performance Notes

The cello should be amplified in order for all of the timbres to be audible, and the output blended lightly with the sound of the electronics so they inhabit the same sonic environment.

Timings are indicated in seconds, and the performer should base the temporal flow of the cello part on the electronics cues. Square notes give approximate pitches in the electronic part. Rhythmic notation is specifically indicated in parts with clear synchronization with the electronic part, especially in movement 2. There is always flexibility in the motion, with the durational notation of the electronics given as proportional/suggestive temporal cues.

There are a variety of tapping locations on the cello and tapping patterns in movement 2. L stands for left hand, R for right. Other technique markings include the following:

FF	finger flick (use nail) the string
FB	finger flick on/close as possible to the bridge
C.L.	<i>Col Legno</i>
<i>tasto</i>	<i>sul tast</i>
<i>pont</i>	<i>sul pont</i>
~	<i>pizz. vibrato</i>
	bridge

For The Birds

I. Songbirds

Judith Shatin

Wistful

IV. *ppp* < *mp* > *p* :05 III. *f p f mf* :10 *p mp p*

Robinson

III. *tasto pont tasto pont tasto*

Vlc. *mp mf p* to Pont to Tasto

E. Vesper Sparrow

Vlc. *mf mp mf p* III/IV to Pont

E. *mf*

Vlc. *mf mp mf*

E. Marsh Wren

Vlc. *mp mf*

E.

1:00 1:05 1:10

Vlc. *p* **1:15** **1:20** **1:25**

Harmonic gliss on G string

Behind the bridge, D String

to ord, non tremolo

Vlc. *mf* **1:30** **1:35** **1:40**

ricochet while glissing on G string

pont ord

Vlc. **1:45** **1:50** **1:55**

Vlc. *f* *mp* *p* **2:00** **2:05** **2:10**

Urgent

Nuthatch

Vlc. **2:15** **2:20** **2:25**

sparse birds

to Pont

pont

ord

pont ,C.L. , pont ,C.L. , wiry

Vlc. *p* *f* *mp*

E. Nut Hatch

2:30 2:35 2:40

Vlc. *mf*

E.

2:45 2:50 2:55

Vlc. *mp*

E.

3:00 3:05 3:10

Vlc. *n*

E.

3:15 3:25 3:30

II. Sapsuckers

Playful

Sempre Pizzicato

Vlc. **Tap on front** **Repeat**

E. **CUE 1** **f** *LR (alternate)* **mp** **mf** *R L* **f**

:00 :05 :10

Vlc. **Tap on front** **rap** **FF** **Intermittent Flick on bridge**

E.

Vlc. **FF** **Tap on back** **mf**

E.

:30

Vlc. **Tap on front** **LH slap** **f** **Syncopated, intermittent FF; expand register a piacere. Build from same intervals.**

E. **Pattern gets closer together**

:37

Vlc. **syncopated** **Towards bridge**

E. **THICKER** **THICKER**

:50 1:00

Vlc. *FF* *slap* Tap move up body Intermittent pizz, ϕ , slap
mf *cresc.*

E. Start Upward Swirls

1:20

Vlc. Gradually expand register, intermittent interrupts for loud taps, *accel.*, sparser, higher register *f* FB

E. 1:44

Vlc. LH *mf* *slap*

E. 1:54

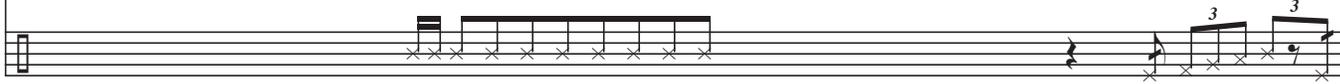
Vlc. *mf* *f* *slap*

E. 2:03

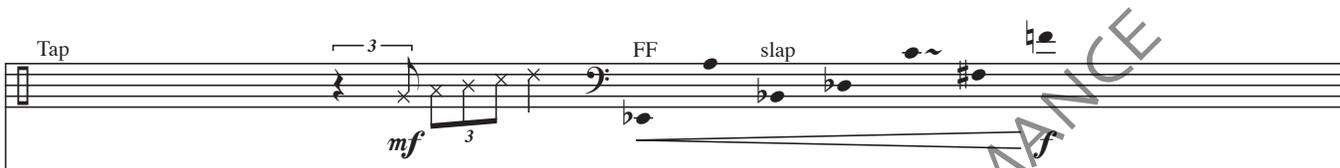
Vlc. Tap *mf* *f*

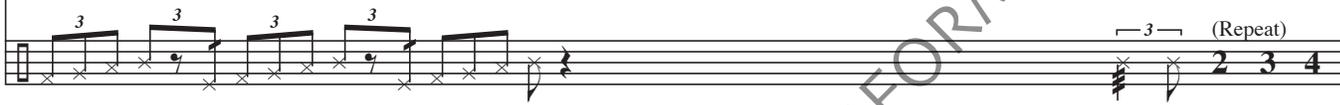
E. 2:07 2:11 2:15

Vlc. 

E. 

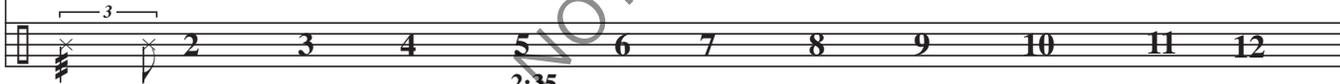
2:19

Vlc. 

E. 

2:27 2:31

Vlc. 

E. 

2:35

Vlc. 

E. 

2:39 2:43

Vlc. 

E. 

2:47

Vlc. *mf* *f* FB FF LH slap

E. 38 39 40 2:53 2:57

Vlc. On ribs Alternate hands *mf*

E. 3:05

Vlc. on front *f*

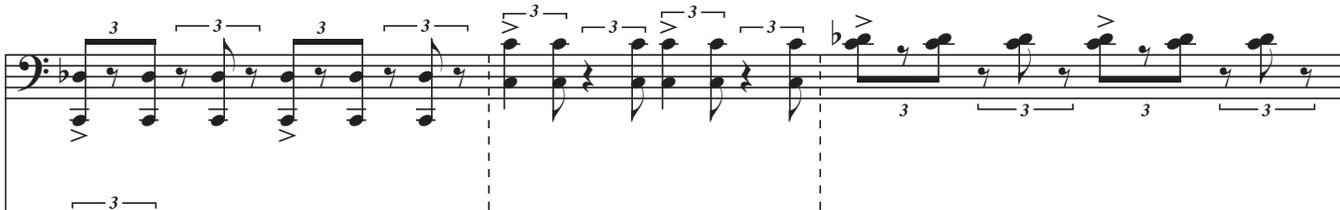
E. 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 3:07 3:11 3

Vlc. *mf* FB

E. 3 2 3 4 3:15 3:19

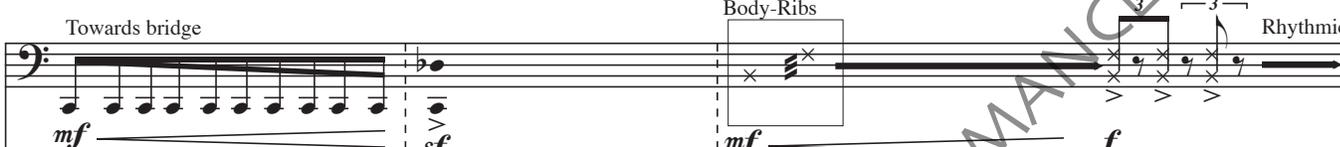
Vlc. Rap on instrument *f*

E. 3 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 3:23

Vlc.  E. 

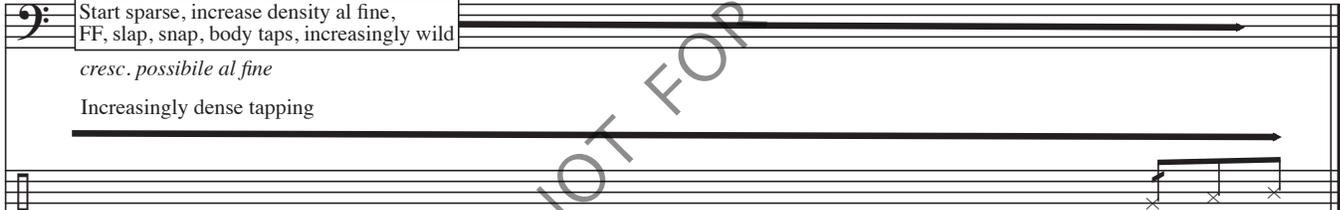
3:27 3:31

Denser tapping

Vlc.  E. 

3:33 3:36

Towards bridge *mf* *sf* Body-Ribs *mf* *f* Rhythmic

Vlc.  E. 

3:42 3:52

Start sparse, increase density al fine, FF, slap, snap, body taps, increasingly wild
cresc. possibile al fine
Increasingly dense tapping

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

III

Screeching

Vlc. *f* *ff*

Vlc. *mf* *mp* *f* *f* *mp*

4 *sul pont* *ord* *pont* *ord*

Elc. **CUE 1 (:07)** Bald Eagle

:00 :07

Vlc. *f* *mf* *f*

7 *pont* *ord pizz*

Elc. **CUE 2**

:16 :21

Vlc. *f*

9

Elc.

Vlc. *ff* *mf* *f* *mf*

12 *to Pont* *pont*

Hawk Hawk

6

:32 :44

Vlc. *mp* *f* *mp* *p* *mf* *mf*

16 *col legno* *ord*

Elc. *magpie* *Eagle*

:52 1:00

19 *pizz* *col legno* *tratto* *sul pont* *to ord* *ff* *mf* *f*

Vlc.

Elc.

1:05 1:12

23 *Rough* *f* *mp* *f*

Vlc.

Elc.

1:32

26 *mp* *6x accel* *mf*

Vlc.

Elc.

1:45

29 *Calm* *p* *With increasing terror* *mf* *cresc.*

Vlc.

Elc.

1:49

31 *sul pont* *ff* *Hawk*

Vlc.

Elc.

IV. Water Birds

Bow Tailpiece , **Repeat a piacere** -----

Cello *f*

Electronics

CUE 1
(Geese)
0:00

(answering geese)

Vlc.

Elc. **Trumpeter Swans**
:20 :25 :32 (fade)

Vlc.

Elc. silent :43 :53 Geese intermittently sing

Vlc. *mf*

Elc. continue, intermittent geese 1:10 Thicker sound, sandhill crane

Vlc. *mp* *mf* #6

Elc. (silent) 1:20 1:31

PERUSA SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

Vlc. *mf* **Quickening** *f*

Elc. (silent)

1:46 1:55

Vlc. *mf*

Elc. 2:01

Vlc. **Ricochet** *mf* **pont**

Elc. Tpt Swan **intermittent geese** sand hill cranes

2:09 2:17

Vlc. *ord* **Gently** *p* *mp* *cresc.*

Elc. (silent)

2:23 2:27

Vlc. *mf* **tr** **tr**

Elc. **Geese, intermittent**

2:37 2:41

Vlc. *tr* *tr* *#2*

Elc. getting denser, continue

2:51 2:56 3:03

Vlc. 3

Elc.

Vlc. *f* Flapping Wings *v*

Elc.

3:38