

Ji Heng, LEE
(2011)

WAR: A SOUNDSCAPE

PERFORMANCE INSTRUCTIONS

COMPOSED FOR
Raffles Junior College Guitar Ensemble

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(For Raffles Junior College Guitar Ensemble)

Ensemble configuration

The main ensemble will be split into 4 sections:

Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4
7 players	12 players	12 players	8 players

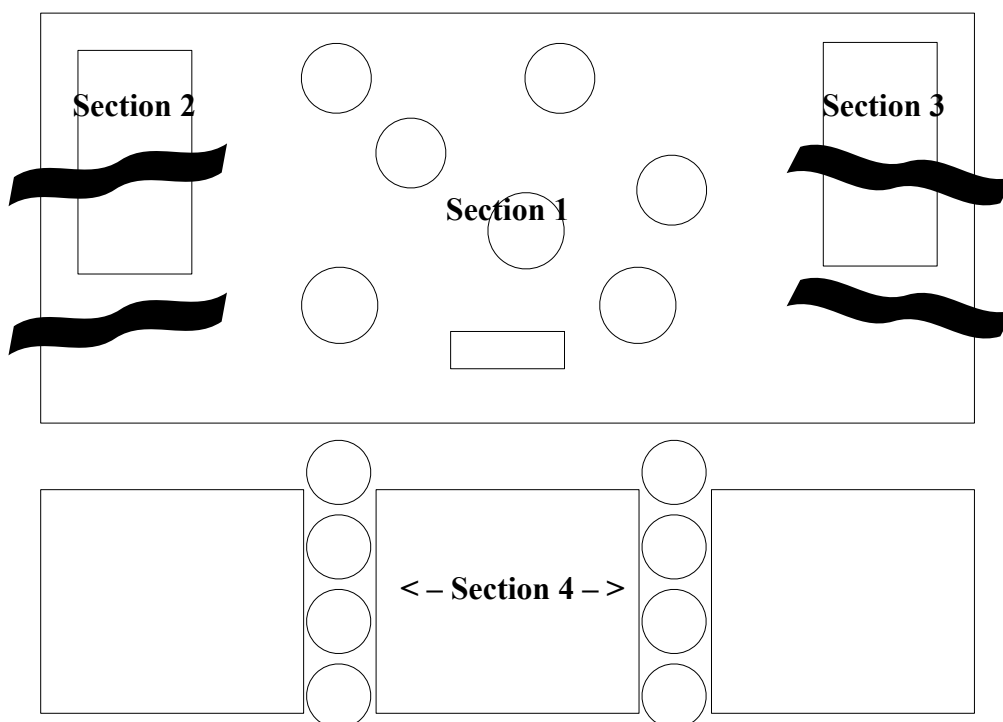
Note: Please use the guitars assigned to you.

Section 1 players will be standing on stage.

Section 2 & 3 players will be standing behind the stage curtains.

Section 4 players will be seated amidst the audience.

Layout of performance space:



Before performance

Stage curtains closed. Players to standby in their positions.

Emcee speech:

War is an openly declared state of organised conflict. It is a seemingly inescapable aspect of human nature. It is interesting and intriguing to think about look at how the motivations behind wars actually evolve across the course of history, along with the scale, magnitude and intensity of war. We thought that it would be exciting if we could feature an abstract soundscape and design a musical space in which we can explore a certain level of intensity and magnitude of conflicting sounds giving rise to tension and a sense of aural vulnerability. Now, there is a section in this work that we would need you to tap your left palm with two fingers to give the effect of a light shower (*demonstrates*). Across time, the light clapping should get softer and softer. So we would appreciate if you could look out for my cues.

The big ideas behind WAR is its magnitude of disorder and intensity. (*Curtains start opening*) With that, ladies and gentlemen, RJGE presents to you, WAR.

Conductor steps onto platform as curtains continue to open. (*Curtains open fully.*)

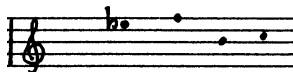
Lighting: Spotlights on only the 7 people on stage. The rest of the stage is unlit.

Part I. Undercurrent of tension

Each player is to play in a different rhythm / tempo / note / volume from the person beside him. The desired sound effect is that of an angular, disjointed texture. The dissonance arising from the clashing intervals played by the various sections builds up to a maximum.

Sequence of events:

1. Section 1: Enter with these notes one by one in a canon as cued by conductor:



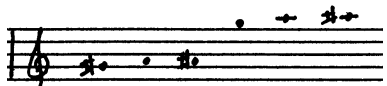
Can be played in any combination (single/chord) & rhythm. Gradually get louder and more aggressive. (*watch conductor's cue*)

2. Section 2: (*watch conductor's cue*) Each picks any note randomly from this set to play:



Listen to what each other is playing. Do not play the same note as the person beside you. No fixed sequence in the way you play these notes. Gradually get louder and more aggressive.

3. Section 3: (*watch conductor's cue*) Each picks any note randomly from this set to play:



4. Section 4: Do not play anything. Wait for conductor's cue for LOUD BANG.

Lighting: Spotlights still remain on only the 7 people on stage. Pure red backdrop lights fade in gradually.

5. (*on conductor's cue*) Section 2 & 3: STOMP feet in a disorderly fashion. LOUD BANG marks the start of Part 2.

Part II. Explosion of conflict

Across this duration, there should be extreme disorder in an organised fashion (chaos within order)

Sequence of events:

1. All sections: Pick any of the provided 1 - 13 sequences (at random) as musical material to play:

The sequences can be repeated for as many times as desired. Player can also choose to skip to another sequence. No fixed sequence.

2. Section 2 & 3: "Migrate" across the stage, half a step at a time. Players are to disperse as much as possible (not to crowd an area). Take care not to tramp over each other. Carry on playing the 1 - 13 sequences during "migration".

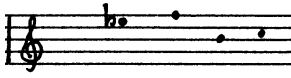
Lighting: Spotlights to flicker on and off at specific regions of stage, for duration of 3s each spot. Red backdrop lights to remain on so that players can find their way.

3. Section 1: Bend and bow slightly while playing.
4. Section 4: To play much louder than those on stage.
5. (On conductor's cue) Sections 2 - 4: FREEZE. Do not play anything.

Part III. Uncomfortable peace

Sequence of events:

1. Section 1: *(on conductor's cue)* FREEZE in position, but return to playing sequence at the start:



The intended effect is to 'reveal' this underlying material upon the removal of all the disorderly sounds.

Lighting: All lights to be turned off at once. Stage to be in pitch darkness for a duration of 10 seconds. After which, pure white stage lights to fade in gradually.

2. Section 4: Tremolo on intertwined D & A strings.
3. *(on conductor's cue)* Audience: Light tap-clapping to produce light-rain sound effect. Gets louder, then softer, finally stops.

Lighting: Stage lights to fade away gradually along with the decrease in sound volume. Pitch dark. (Curtains close.)

END