

Foreign Lands

open score for spatialized chamber ensemble

Jordan Nobles

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About the Piece

Foreign Lands was premiered by the **Negative Zed** ensemble and **Contact Contemporary Music** on April 5th, 2011

Performance Notes

MELODIC CELLS

- *Foreign Lands* is made of numerous melodic cells. Musicians perform any cell, in any order, in any octave, in their own time as expressive as possible, for the durations indicated. Only play cells suitable for your instrument!
- there is no synchronization required or desired in this piece.
- what cells to play, and when to play them, should be decided by each musician independently as long as they are responsive to the other players. A good rule is to stop after completing a cell and listen for a moment before joining in again. Musicians in smaller ensembles can play more often but in larger ensembles should play less often to give space throughout the performance.
- cells with chords are only for polyphonic instruments (guitar, piano, vibes, harp, etc.). A minimum of 2 of the indicated notes must be played in any octave as long as no intervals are inverted. Either strike the chord just once and let it ring or optionally tremolo, arpeggiate, or 'roll' the chord.
- the duration of the performance should be worked out ahead of time. Players should decide how long to perform and how to end; whether stopping all together or dropping out one at a time.

INSTRUMENT SPECIFIC NOTES

Percussion – please use mallets instruments (vibes, marimba, etc.) switching instruments occasionally for colour.

Piano – please use lots of pedal and change octaves frequently. Also, you can occasionally play phrases in octaves or different phrases simultaneously in each hand if you are up for it.

Guitars – use a clean warm tone with maybe a little reverb. A volume pedal can be useful but is not obligatory.

Please choose fingerings that allow strings to ring as much as possible.

Harp - As with guitar and piano, please do not damp notes but allow them to ring, even after moving to different cells.

Winds – use your main instrument predominantly, but feel free to switch to doublings for occasional colour if desired.

Strings – the cells with chords are for the piano, guitar and vibes but you can try a few as pizzicato arpeggios if desired.

Voice – as the melodic material is based on a symmetrical scale, it can be transposed up or down a minor third and still be in the same key. If it helps for some phrases to rewrite in a different range then free feel to do so.

SPATIALIZATION

Foreign Lands is written for the performers to be spatially spread about the performance space, preferably surrounding the audience. While it is not vital for the piece to be performed this way, a spatial distribution of musicians will greatly enhance the effect of the piece.

The exact layout will vary depending on the venue and is not important as long as they are evenly distributed throughout the space. Balconies, lofts, etc. can also be utilized as well. Also, if possible, similar instruments (winds, strings, etc.), should not stand together as would be the norm in an orchestral layout but instead should be separated so each member of the group is in a different area of the venue from similar instruments.

Note: It may be beneficial to rehearse the piece, at least at first, in the standard layout with all of the musicians together. Then, once the piece is learned, it can be spread out and rehearsed in a spatial configuration.

ALTERNATIVE PERFORMANCE IDEAS

- Mimic: performers can play a game of mimicking other performers (i.e. if you hear someone play a trill play another trill, if you hear them play an echo or a fast repeated cell, play one as well). This can give the piece a semblance of form as players move from section to section together.
- A performance can start with the musicians together on stage and as soon as the piece has begun they can slowly spread throughout the venue. Or alternatively they can come physically together by the end.
- or, musicians can enter the stage one at a time and begin playing. Also they can end the piece this way in reverse with each player gracefully exiting the stage after finishing
- the piece could instead begin with the piano, or other instrument, noodling absentmindedly with the above pitches before a concert. The musician(s) can be present before the audience even enters and sits. Gradually, the audience will figure out that the piece has already started and once they are quiet the other musicians enter, already playing.
- a large public facility (with good acoustics), such as an atrium can be taken over by the ensemble and the piece used as an installation of sorts with the musicians playing while dispersed throughout.

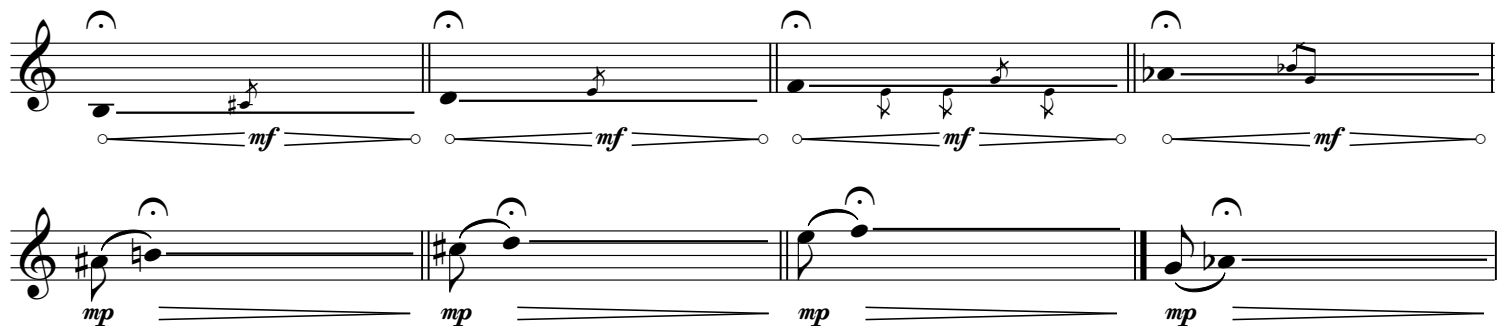
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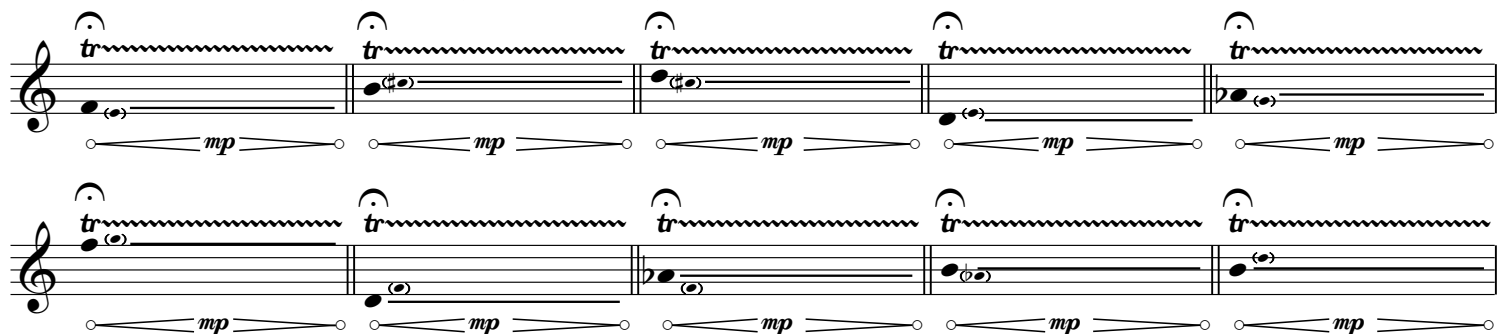
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Play any cells, in any order, in any octave (as long as the dynamics can be observed)

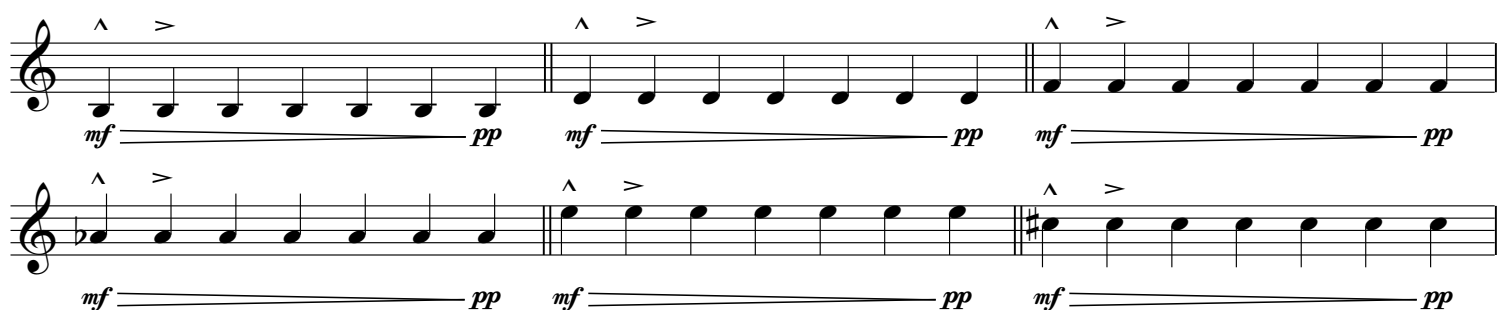
Long Tones - 5 to 10 seconds or for the length of a single breath or bow, optional tremolo, optional grace notes



Trills - 5 to 10 seconds or for the length of a single breath or bow, vary the speed of the trill



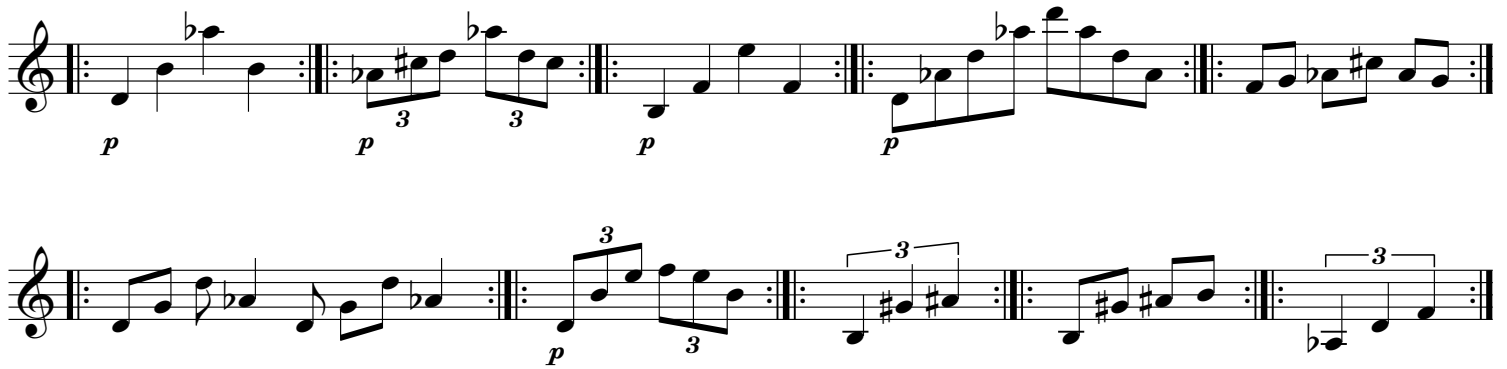
Echoes - (♩ = 60-120 the higher the note, the faster the pulse) repeat notes like fading echoes, decelerate while fading



Melodic Cells - (♩ = 60-120) - legato, play one time only, molto espressivo



Arpeggios - ($\text{♩} = 90-120$) repeat for 10 -15 seconds, fading in and fading out, decelerate while fading, let notes ring if possible



Fast Repeated Cells - ($\text{♩} = 120$) repeat for 10 -15 seconds, fading in and fading out, decelerate while fading

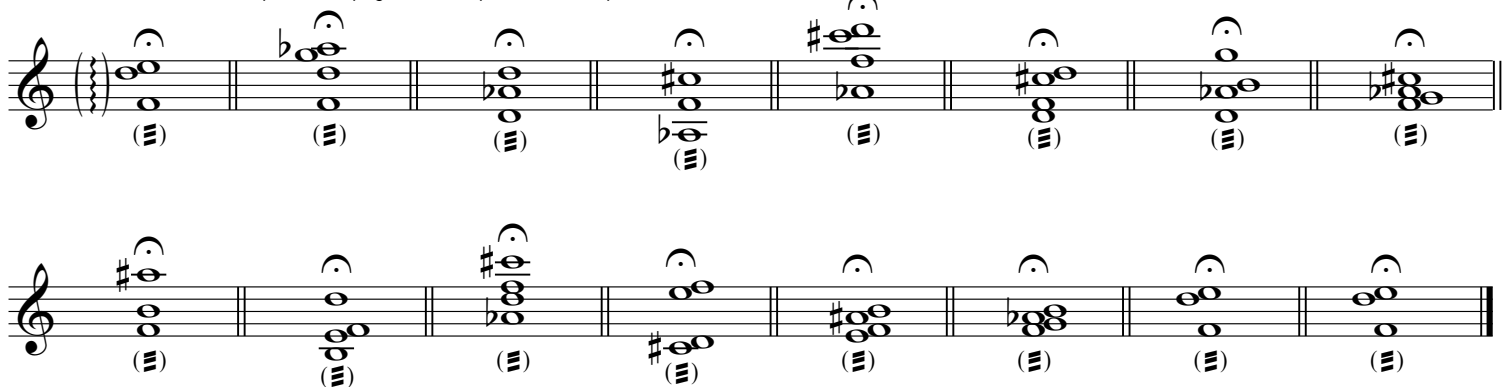


Melodies - ($\text{♩} = 60-120$) play independently, more than one can overlap



Polyphonic Material

Sustained chords - for piano, harp, guitar, vibraphone, etc... optional tremolo or roll



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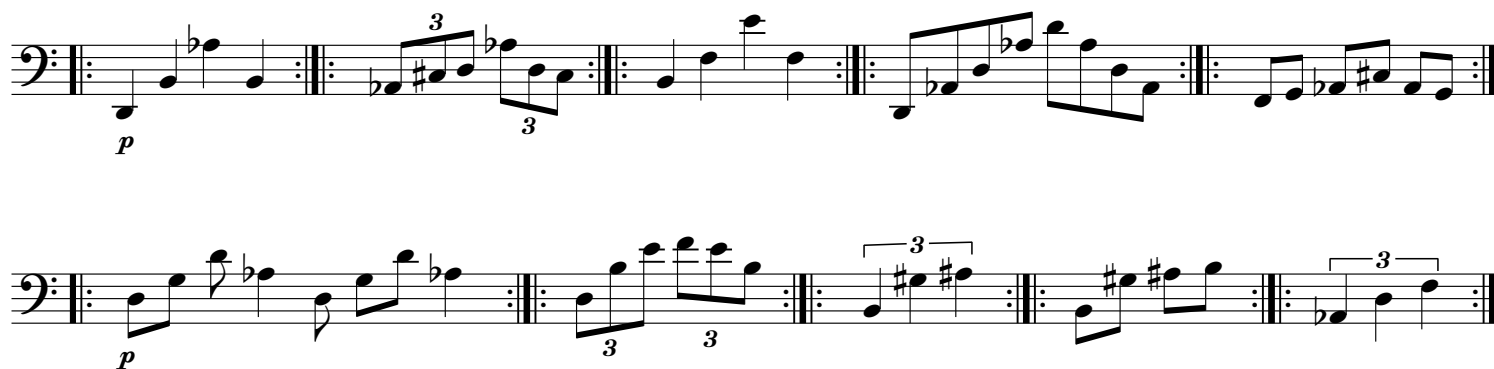
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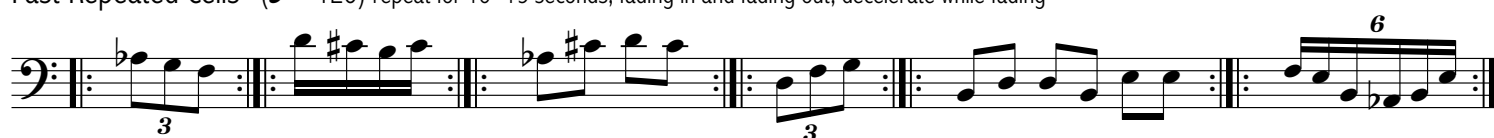
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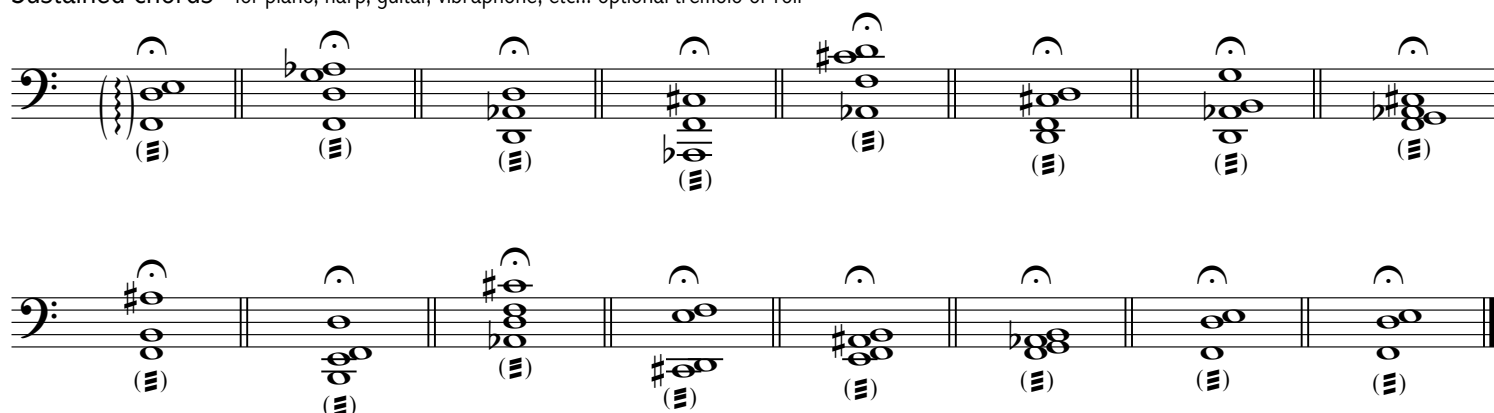


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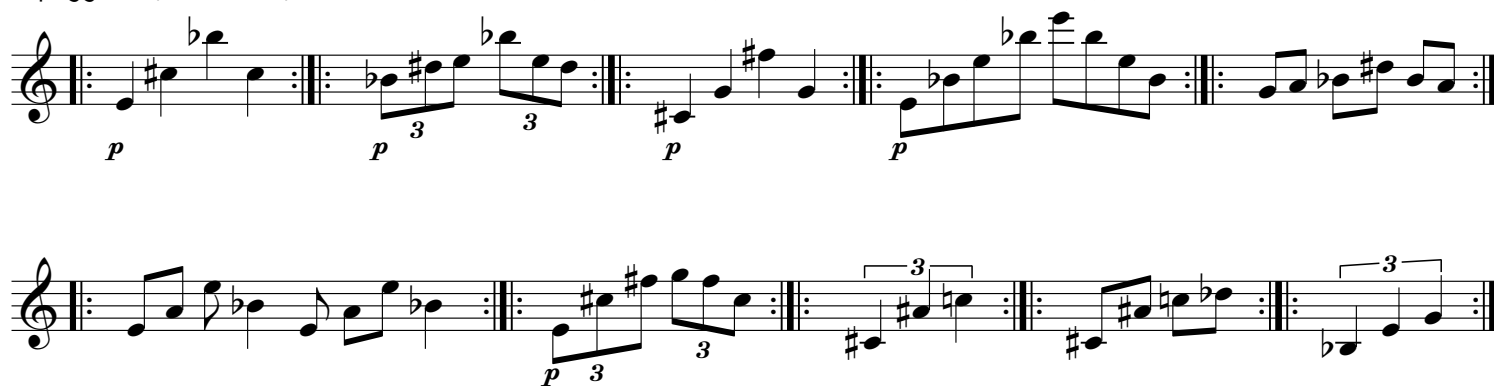
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