

Six Mallet Writing for Marimba

Rebecca Kite

Six voices give composers new possibilities of harmonies and textures in marimba music.

Examples of six mallet writing

Page 2 *Divertimento for Marimba and Alto Saxophone*, Akira Yuyama (1968)

- Block chord style

Page 3 *Itsuki Fantasy for Six Mallets*, Keiko Abe (1994)

- Single melodic line with three voice accompaniment
- Chromatic playing – use entire bar for playing area
- Block chord style to make a big, rich sound from the marimba
- Small changes in mallet spacing in the hands

Kite Commissions

Page 4 *December's Ballad from Jazz Suite for Marimba*, Joan Griffith (1998)

- Melody in right hand, left hand accompaniment
- Jazz chords – bass note plus the chord making four voice harmony in the left hand

Page 5 *Circe*, Evan Hause (2001)

- Block chords – setting up harmonic idea for composition – one complete chord in each hand
- Wide spacing between hands – new texture possibility
- Six note chords integrated with single lines
- Big changes in mallet spacing in the hands for increased harmonic variety

Holding Six Mallets

Page 6

- Use Musser or Stevens grip, with mallet handles down low in hand
- Add inside mallet at 90 degree angle against other two mallets, hold with third, fourth and fifth fingers and second joint of thumb
- Pivot this inside mallet with the third, fourth and fifth fingers (similar to the Burton grip)
- Thumb tip and first finger hold middle mallet

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Divertimento for Marimba and Alto Saxophone, Akira Yuyama
published by Ongaku no Tomo

Musical score for Marimba and Alto Saxophone, measures 110-114. The score is written in 4/4 time. The Marimba part (top staff) begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. It starts with a dynamic marking of *f* and includes the instruction "with soft mallets". The Alto Saxophone part (bottom staff) begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. It starts with a dynamic marking of *f* and includes a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure. Both parts conclude with a *rit.* (ritardando) marking.

Musical score for Marimba and Alto Saxophone, measures 115-119. The score is written in 4/4 time. The Marimba part (top staff) begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. It starts with a dynamic marking of *p* and includes the instruction "Andantino" with a tempo marking of $(\text{♩} = \text{♩})$. The Alto Saxophone part (bottom staff) begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. It starts with a dynamic marking of *p* and includes the instruction "Andantino" with a tempo marking of $(\text{♩} = \text{♩})$. Both parts conclude with a *p* (piano) marking.

Itsuki Fantasy for Six Mallets, Keiko Abe
Published by Xebec Music Publishing

Leggieramente ♩ = 116

Keiko ABE

Marimba

pp p

6

mp

mp f

51

ppp

♩ = 54 con espressione

56

ppp mp

December's Ballad, from Jazz Suite for Marimba, Joan Griffith
Published by Pleasing Dog Music 1998

17 *sim.* 2
(independent)
2 2
6

20 (Mandolin)
4 4 4
5 5 5
6 6 6
6 6 6
* note: Play B on end of bar
between B_b and D_b bars
6 6 6

22 (h) 4 4 4
5 5 5
6 6 6
6 6 6
sim. *see note above
-2-

December's Ballad

25 (Traditional roll)
mp

Undulating, yet forceful; "craggy" $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$

Musical score for measures 1-36. The score is written for piano and features a complex, undulating texture. Dynamics include *f*, *p*, *mf*, and *piuf*. The tempo is marked *rit.* (ritardando) and *A tempo*. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Musical score for measures 37-50. The score continues the undulating texture. Dynamics include *f*, *p*, *mf*, and *piuf*. The tempo is marked *rit.* and *A tempo*. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Musical score for measures 51-64. The score features a more rhythmic, wave-like texture. Dynamics include *ff* and *rit.*. The tempo is marked *rit.*. The key signature has one sharp (F#). A note indicates "all becoming gentler".

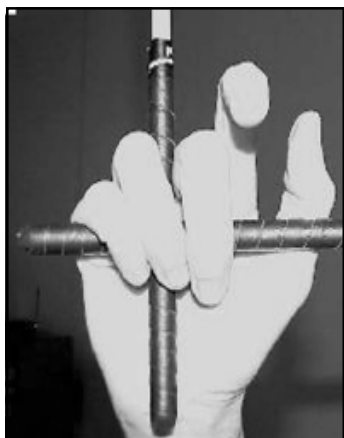
Easy; rolling like waves $\text{♩} = 42$

Musical score for measures 65-126. The score features a rolling, wave-like texture. Dynamics include *mf*, *mp*, and *mf*. The tempo is marked *mf*. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

51

Six Mallet Marimba Grip

Rebecca Kite



1- Place the outside mallet first, touching the skin of your palm, then the inside mallet so it can pivot freely.



2- This leaves your thumb and first finger free. Inside mallet rests below the first joint of thumb.



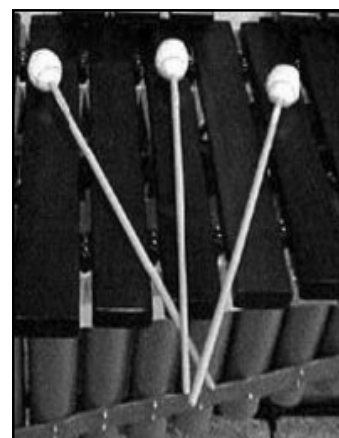
3- Slide third mallet under inside mallet. Control this middle mallet with your thumb tip and first finger.



4- Position for the middle and outside mallet heads to be close together.



5- Position for the middle and inside mallet heads to be close together.



6- Relationship of mallet handles while in your hand: outside and middle, touching palm: inside on bottom, pivoting from left to right under the outside mallet handle.

Six Mallet Compositions

Circe (2001) Evan Hause - six mallets, with some five and some four required

December's Ballad (1998) Joan Griffith (second movement of *Jazz Suite for Marimba*) - five mallets

Itsuki Fantasy for Six Mallets (1994) Keiko Abe - six mallets throughout

Stunts and Traces (marimba and tape) Bruce Hamilton - six and four mallets

All music is available from Steve Weiss Music and/or GP Percussion Online: www.GPPercussion.com

--www.GPPercussion.com--

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