

# *Distemper*

Scott Mc Laughlin

September 2006

Duration 10 mins.

Any equal-tempered plucked/struck instrument

MAX/MSP 4

# Distemper

## Performance instructions

Distemper is part of the *Functional Book of Harmony*, a cycle of works for live electronics and instrument of fixed tuning. Each piece in the cycle finds its own way of making the equal tempered instrument work within a microtonal harmony. Distemper allows the player to interact with a mistuned version of their own playing, this can be for a compositionally fixed part or quasi-improvised part.

### General

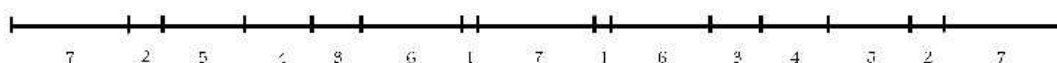
- In Distemper, sections of the live part are recorded by the computer and played back (reversed) over the next section of the live part so that section-by-section a web of reversed and mis-tuned pitches is built up along with reverberance tones from the room.

	Section (time→)										
Live	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J (tacet)	
Computer		A rev	B rev A	C rev B A rev	D rev C B rev A	E rev D C rev B A rev	F rev E D rev C B rev A	G rev F E rev D C rev B A rev A	H rev G F rev E D rev C B rev A rev	I rev H G rev F E rev D C rev B rev A rev	J (tacet) I H rev G rev F E rev D C rev B rev A

- The live part is extremely sparse to allow for the the full length of the note to fade out: each note should always be let vibrate as long as possible.
- The first section (A) is played without computer (the computer is recording the first live section as it is played). From the second section on, the player must time their attacks to be with the notes played back by the computer: some of these notes will be reversed so the player must acclimatise to timing attacks to coincide

with the reversed attack (a mock-up CD of sections A-D has been provided for this). After section A, the score is most useful as a guide, precise timings will depend on the player's timing in the previous sections.

- Each section uses the rhythmic template shown below (numbers are crotchet beats) which is the same in both directions: all notes in the piece fall on one of these points. The basic section is 63 seconds long but some have slight tempo changes which alters the intonation of the recorded sound, the tempo shift is almost unnoticeable (1 or 2 bpm either way) but should be taken into account, these are notated at the start of the sections as being 'slight ritard' or 'slight accel'. Again, the player's ears are the best guide.



### The Score:



*Computer part example*

- The computer part is included in the score as a guide to help with timing.
- Hairpins indicate reversed notes (to hear them coming...).
- 'u' and 'd' indications refer to notes which are mis-tuned in the computer part; not strictly relevant to the performer.

### Contact:

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# Distemper

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♩ = 60

[A] DCB/EFG#A

Harp

*l.v.  
sempre*

*f*

Tape-Harp

9

Hp.

[B]

Hp.

18

Hp.

Hp.

26 [C] Slight ritard

Hp.

Hp.

34

Hp.

Hp.

41

Hp.

Hp.

48 D A tempo

Hp.

Hp.

56

Hp.

Hp.

64 E Slight accel.

Hp.

Hp.

72

Hp.

Hp.

79

F Slight ritard

Hp.

Hp.

87

Hp.

Hp.

95 G Slight accel.

Hp.

Hp.

103

Hp.

Hp.

110 H A tempo

Hp.

Hp.

118

Hp.

*p* *f* *p* *f*

Hp.

126

I Slight accel.

Hp.

*f* *p* *f*

Hp.

134

Hp.

*p* *p* *f*

Hp.

141 J A tempo

Hp. *p* Tacet to fin.

Hp. *p*

149

Hp.

Hp.