

Sand Steps

For Percussion, Flute, Saxophone, Violin, Cello and Voice (Ideally cello and voice should be performed by the same player)

This score contains elements intended for collaborative rehearsal prior to performing.

I: THE STEPS

A drum beats the frequently regular sound *of the footsteps of one upon the sand.*

The drum beats alone.

II: SOUNDS OF THE SAND

Once all have had time to feel this motion as a part of the space, the Sand Sounds begin to be heard *underneath the footsteps*. Each instrument can be added gradually or simultaneously. Allow the Sand Sounds to gradually come into the collective awareness, shifting the focus away from *the footsteps*. Allow the drum to gradually die away. *The soles of the feet are microphones for the sand.*

Each sound is to be rhythmically linked to the drum. Alternate between the sounds and silence as desired.

The texture is sparse. Allow for dialogue between the instruments. Explore dynamics (from the extremities of softness to a speaking voice), colour and register as desired.

The Sand Sounds are as follows :

Voice (Cellist)

Vocalise: Shhm shhm - phrasing sharply off the 'm'

Vocalise: Sink sea sink sea - elongate the 's' sound and experiment with accents

Flute

Send a delicate spray of sound upwards. The sand grains kick up off the foot.

Saxophone

Find a leaning, pressing sound, followed by a sinking. The sand shifts under the foot.

As desired, allow the sinking to descend further. The foot sinks further into the grey-blue shadows of the rippled surface.

Violin

Tease out a gentle grating and scratching. The surface of the sand gives way.

III: TO LOOK OUT TO THE SEA

In rehearsal, together seek a state of quiet contemplation. Each player is to take one sound imagining to consider. How vivid can your sonic image become in your mind?

Can you imagine the sound of two grains of sand rubbing against each other?

Can you imagine the sound of sand running through your hands?

Can you imagine the sound of the sand being moved across the dune by wind?

Can you imagine the sound of sand becoming concrete?

Can you imagine the sound of sand becoming glass?

When you are ready, use your instrument as a vessel through which you respond to the sound imagining.

In performance, each instrument is to begin sounding in the order of the sound imaginings listed above. When the final instrument enters, sustain the collective texture. At a predetermined cue of choice, all players will abruptly resolve into silence.

IV: TO DANCE IN THE SAND (is to draw with toe tips and heels)

Draw melodic or textural arcs across the space. Allow the sounds to move freely and openly, with fluidity and perhaps a sense of searching. Draw your sounds across the ground and through the air. Throw them up, down, forwards and backwards. Offer them to all.

To continue (in any order, as many times as desired):

1. Weave your melodic/textural shapes with others.
2. Play independently
3. Imitate the shape of another
4. Resolve into silence

When your legs, your feet (voices, minds, sounds) start to become weary or heavy, its time to come home.

The drum beats again. The melodies gradually resolve to silence.

The footsteps walk alone, home.