Railway Game

For Quartet
Flute(s), Paetzold, Harp, Harpsichord

Anton Lindström

Program Notes

I think it's quite fitting, albeit in a sort of ironic fashion, to compose a piece about aspects of travel and of infrastructure in a time when fewer people are able to or allowed to travel. While making a piece about trains is in no way a replacement for actually being on one and having that built up excitement of "going somewhere", I think that writing this piece perhaps made me more excited about it. I spent way more time reading about railways than is in any way apparent or actually ended up being translated to the piece. Whether that was a waste of time or something which actually had an effect on the music, I'm not entirely convinced about.

Railway Game gets it's name from the 2nd and 4th movements which are as much music as they are a challenge or game the performers play among themselves.

More than anything, Railway Game is a piece about Frustration.

Performance Notes

Railway Game is written for four performers:

Flute(s) – Piccolo Flute and Bass Flute

Paetzold

Harp

Harpsichord

Flute

2 different flutes are required, Piccolo and Bass.

During the 1st (Solo flute) movement, regular switching between these 2 instruments occur, so care should be made as to make the switching as fast, simple and effective as possible.

⬤ Closed mouthpiece – Having the mouthpiece completely enclosed on all sides. No discernible pitch should be produced, and the resulting sound should be quite dark and consisting of only noise/breath.
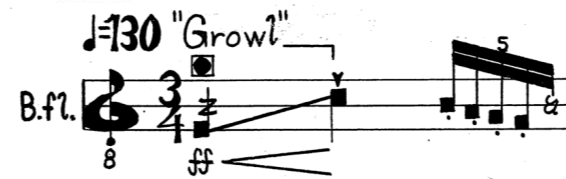
Half closed mouthpiece – Slightly more open, but still not enough to produce a discernible and specific pitch. Somewhat brighter. During these sections, adding more white noise produced from the mouth to exaggerate the effect might be beneficial.

A 3 line staff is used during sections which uses these 2 above mentioned techniques or similar situations in which no specific pitches are to occur and it only uses various different "noise"-based sounds. The lowest line being the darkest and lowest possible sound one can produce using any combination of means such as embouchure, fingerings, core sound etc. The top line represents the brightest and highest possible sound produced in the same fashion.

"**Growl**" - activate and include the throat in the technique by actively involving and creating a "bubbling" sound as deep down in the throat as possible. The resulting sound should be constantly varied, creating a sound akin to that of a wild animal rather than anything one would associate with a human.

Z marking on stem of noes – Flz.

V Inhale

Paetzold Recorder

Railway Game is written for Sub Great Bass Paetzold Recorder in C. This is an exceptionally rare instrument, and it most likely won't be available. If one is not available, either performing the piece on a Contrabass Paetzold in F and simply transposing all notes below the instruments range up an octave, or performing on a Great Bass Paetzold in C and transposing the entirety of the music up one octave are entirely acceptable.

Consonant sounds – Add a consonant to the start of the note to change to attack.

The final short solo Paetzold movement is written in the bottom right corner of the assembled "game" pages. This is to remove the need for page turns and the performer to have extra paper.

Harp

"Xylo Effect" Mute the specified and plucked string with the other hand close to the soundboard to shorten the decay of the string and produce a more Xylophone-esque character

Harpsichord

Preferably one of the manuals should have a 16' stop, (indicated in parenthesis in the score to be ignored if not available)

Which manual to use for different passages is left to the performer.

Stop indications replace the previously stated one. Aka an indication of 4' would mean a previous active stop of 8' should be turned off. If both are to be active simultaneously, it is specified as 4'+8' or similar.

 As fast and legato as possible – like an anticipation for; and build up to the following note.

Harpsichord is shortened "Cem" in them score (Cembalo)

General Performance Notes

All players read from the score.

Score is A3 paper size, printing at this size is highly recommended.

Railway Game is split into 5 movements. These should all be played as attacca as possible, optimally with no page turns and everyone having all the music visible at all times. Because of the "game" section, it is highly encouraged not to use ipads or other electronic devices to display the score.

The movements are as follows:
Flute Solo
Tutti *"Railway Game"*
Harp and Haprischord duo
Tutti *"Railway Game"* again
Short Paetzold solo (single bar located at the bottom right of the *"Game"* pages.

The change from the Flute solo into the first tutti section should have no specific queue or markings if possible. It should appear as though the flute simply picks up their instrument and would continue with the solo, except this time the entire ensemble suddenly starts playing. Having the rest of the ensemble constantly looking like they will start playing at any time and ready at their instruments through the entire flute solo can help strengthen this effect.

This is opposite of the change from the Harp and Harpsichord duo into the second tutti section, in which all players should very clearly queue each other and anticipate the downbeat.

The Tutti sections should all end as neatly, tightly and suddenly as possible, leaving as little space and silence as possible before the following movements.

Explaining the *"Railway Game"*

The 2nd and 4th movements of the piece, referred to as the "railway game" or simply the "game" is a specific performance situation in which the musicians are required to navigate the music they are playing following a simplified version of the rules of train traffic.

The score is laid out in a fashion somewhat resembling railroads containing and connecting various stations.

Assembling the score

The game pages consist of 2 A3 papers, or what would be one A2 page. Unfortunately, since A2 printers can be very hard to find or access, this features an alternate solution.

One is to print all of the pages of the score (Single sided) and pick out the 2 train pages. The second of the 2 papers has a dotted line along the left margin of the paper. Fold back or cut the paper along this dotted line. This is to compensate and standardize the process despite different printers and printer settings themselves including different margins in the printing.

Once it is cut or folded back along that line, line it up with the 1st of the game pages, so that the railroads connect as neatly as possible. These can then either be glued or taped together to create the full size score. It should look more or less as follows. (See next page)

Here the dotted line is left somewhat visible just to show where it is, in reality, this should ideally not be visible and as such, the actual connection between the 2 real papers will appear smoother and more proper than the one here.

This is to be done BEFORE the piece is played and not on stage. It is not a performance element, it's simply a way to get around the scarcity of A2 printers.

The Rules

The 1st time the players get to the game, they each independently choose one of the boxes on the page, referred to as *stations* to start at. (Most of the stations are quite distinct from one another in character, and it is heavily encouraged the players all become familiar with the material every other musician has at every station)

The 2nd time the players get to the game, after the harp and harpsichord duo, everyone starts at station G

The music written in a station should be continuously repeated over and over again until you reach a new station.

The players should attempt to locate where every other musician is by listening and looking around the different stations to locate where everyone is currently situated. *For example, if you clearly hear the piccolo flute at station B, you can deduce that is where they are located in the railway network.*
Once you have chosen a station and a little time has passed (a few seconds, or as short as possible to where you feel somewhat comfortable you know everyone's location) you can then choose to move out from your station using ANY of it's connected roads. Station F as an example has 2 different paths heading out from it, and you may choose either of these regardless of which instrument you are. Even though it may appear as the top road is connected to the piccolo and the bottom one is connected to the harpsichord, this is purely visual. All roads connected to all stations can be used to exit or enter that station.

As you leave, you will encounter instructions written along the various rails. You should apply these instructions to your playing, preferably in an obvious and exaggerated way so that the other players will clearly be able to hear the difference. While you're doing this, and you are changing your musical material based on the given instructions, you should continuously listen EXTREMELY ACTIVE to what the other players are doing in order to follow their paths as well.

You should be aware to where you are, and where the other musicians are at all time.

Travel with the speed in mind that it should take approximately 30-45 seconds from when you exit one station until you arrive at another.

Once you arrive at a new station, you are to stay at that station for a short while, repeating the materials within and perhaps do some sort of visual cue to your fellow players to notify that you have arrived at a new station.

As you are traveling

As you are traveling around the railroad, keeping track of where everyone else is, you have to follow these simple rules, which are a simplified version of the way actual trains travel.

- **You can't do any extremely sharp turns**. You are allowed to take turns that are 45 degrees or less, but you can't do u turns or sharp turns. For example, if you are leaving box B, you're not allowed to take either of the first 2 turns that go up to the left or down to the left, as these are both greater than 45 degrees in the direction you are traveling. (Both turns being in fact 135 degrees.) If you are coming from the other direction on the other hand, say you are traveling along this specific straight road from station G heading towards B, then you'd be allowed to take one of those 2 as then, in that direction you are traveling, they are obviously only 45 degree turns. (Any inexactness within the drawing should be excused, all turns are either 45, 90 or 135 degree turns and it should be obvious which is which)

- **You can't collide.** You are obviously not allowed to collide with different trains heading towards you. If you realize another player is traveling straight towards you, one of you will have to take a turn as to avoid the collision. Preferably, you should realize this as quickly as possible, as to avoid

even near collisions. **IF YOU THINK YOU COLLIDE,** then glance at the other player and make a pre-determined cue (such as an extremely distinct facial gesture they wouldn't confuse with anything else for example.) If they agree and also think you collided, then on cue, both of you make an ugly harsh noise on your instruments. This will ruin the feeling of the music and as such should optimally NEVER occur in a performance, but if it happens, you lost, but you still get to keep playing. But do try to avoid it.

- **You can't travel directly behind someone.** If someone is traveling on the same road as you, do attempt to take turns, slow down, and get away from them. This is because, say someone had to stop to let someone else heading towards them pass and make a turn, the one behind would run the risk of colliding with the train in front.

Duration

Each of these tutti game sections should last for approx. 2 minutes, or when everyone has visited approximately 3 different stations, (2-5 are also acceptable). They should then end as suddenly as possible as described earlier before the rules section.

Because of the innate variations in the duration of the music, because of the uncertainty of the 2nd and 4th movements, coupled with the uncertain and highly individual tempo of instrument switching in the 1st, I won't list a specific duration here, as I feel like that would limit interpretation if you are too forced to perform the piece in a certain duration.

Written for Airborne Extended, summer and early autumn 2020

Feel free to contact the composer at antonrunelindstrom@gmail.com for any and all questions.

This piece doesn't have copyright, It would be nice if you wrote my name on the program, or gave me the credit of the composer when performing it. But don't feel hesitant to ignore things like copyright association reports, paying fees to perform it etc. Share the score with anyone who wants it, encourage sharing, not restriction.

Improvise using these given pitches using both hands, varying tempo ad lib. Like 3 music boxes playing simultaneously.

Spend more time between repeats, be more contemplative.

Pause, think a moment, then resume
Playing, Repeat ad lib then resume

Keep what you're playing and add more.
Don't let the added material take over

Exaggerate!