

For Agnes Martin

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A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Music

University of Washington

2013

Committee:

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Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Music

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## Abstract

For Agnes Martin

Anthony Vine

Chair of Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Huck Hodge

Music

*For Agnes Martin* is a musical work scored for flute/piccolo, alto/soprano saxophone, two percussionists, piano, violin, and cello. The impetus behind this composition was to examine the 10-hole diatonic harmonica in terms of its pitch construction and timbral properties, and use this information to generate most of the work's content. With this approach, two primary harmonic/timbral reservoirs were employed throughout the piece: [1] a melodic sequence that was constructed from overlaid fragments of the harmonica's pitch layout, and [2] orchestrated ring modulation, which emulates the prominent combination tones of the harmonica. Varying presentations and interactions between these two entities shape the form of the work.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would first and foremost like to acknowledge my advisor, Huck Hodge, whose unique, insightful guidance, and immeasurable support have had a tremendous impact upon my life and music.

I would also like to thank the rest of the composition and DXARTS faculty at the University of Washington – Joël-François Durand, Juan Pampin, Richard Karpen, and Joshua Parmenter – who, over the past two years, have greatly contributed to my musical development through their instruction, research, and scholarship.

I would like to thank my friends and colleagues; Ivan Arteaga, Casey Grev, Ryan Jewell, Evan Smith, Michael Torres, and Evan Woodle whose collaborations and performances of my work have profoundly influenced my music; and Josh Archibald-Seiffer, Jeff Bowen, Rocco Di Pietro, Tom Johnson, and David Tomasacci for their discussions and encouragement.

Finally, I thank my family for their love and support throughout my life.

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## Performance Notes

### Quarter Tones:

-3/4                      -1/4    +1/4    +3/4  
↓                      ♭                      ↓    †                      #                      #

### Niente:

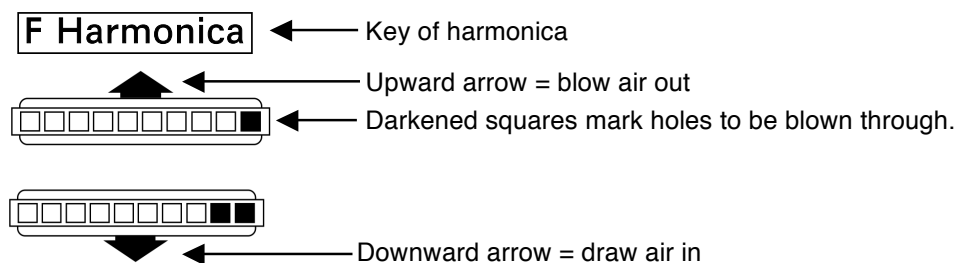
The niente dynamic markings are of extreme importance in this work. There should be as little initial articulation as possible.

*“Part of my musical thinking is to have the sound sourceless... My pieces fail if one can say: 'Ah, there's a trombone, there's a horn'. I like the instruments to... become anonymous”*

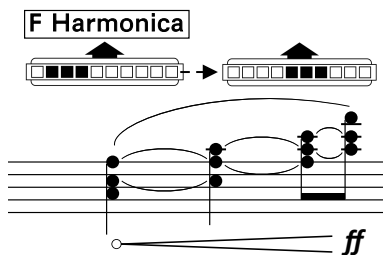
- Morton Feldman, “Morton Feldman talks to Paul Griffiths” (1972)

### Harmonicas

The piece requires two sets of diatonic harmonicas in all 12 keys. Label the key of each harmonica with masking tape for ease of play.



Blurring technique:



Move gradually from one mouth position to another. Rhythmic precision is not required, but the general rate of change should be retained.

Harmonica distribution:

Flute: E, C, F, F-sharp

Sax: E-flat, A-flat, D

Perc. I: B-flat, D-flat, C

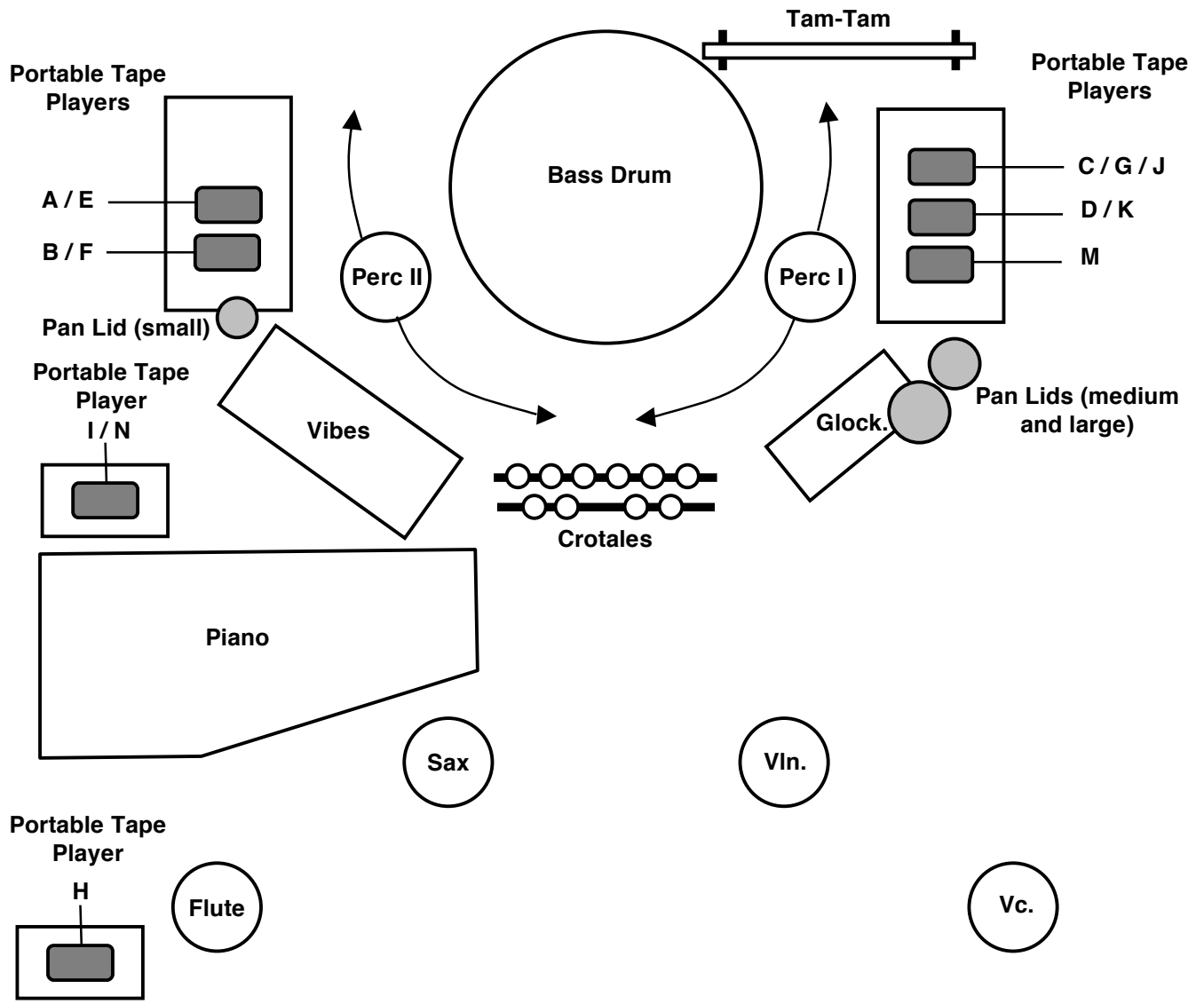
Perc II: B, E, A

Cello: E-flat, G, A

### Cassette Tape Players

Seven small, portable cassette tape players are required. The tapes will be distributed by the composer. Each cassette tape player should be at maximum volume to produce as much tape hiss as possible. The tapes will be recorded at a very low level to compensate for the tape players' volume.

# Ensemble Setup



1  
for agnes martin

♩ = 54 - 60 sempre flessibile

Anthony Vine (2013)

**Flute**  
E Harmonica  
(C) (A)  
mf  
mp  
mf

**Soprano Saxophone**  
C<sub>1</sub>  
B  
(circular breathe)  
p fragile, yet serene  
T<sub>c</sub>

**Percussion I**  
whistle  
p airy  
Crotales bow  
Pan Lid bow  
p  
mp  
p  
mp  
f

**Percussion II**  
B Harmonica  
Vibes  
Crotales bow  
Vibes  
mp  
p  
f  
p  
ped →  
Depress the sustain pedal with a heavy object.

**Piano**  
8va [muted]  
fff produce lots of piano resonance  
ped sempre (unless notated otherwise)  
mp  
pp  
D Harmonica  
(D)  
mf > p  
mp

**Violin**  
sempre sul tasto  
sempre sul pont.  
sempre sul tasto  
sempre sul pont.  
II  
mp  
p  
mp  
sul pont.  
III  
mf

**Cello**  
E<sub>b</sub> Harmonica  
8va  
mf  
G Harmonica  
Cello sul pont.  
I  
mf

**F Harmonica**  
 (A)

**E Harmonica**  
 (C)

**A**  
 clipped samples of sine tones

**Glockenspiel**  
 bow

**F Harmonica**  
 (D) (G#)

**D Harmonica**  
 (D) (A)

**Piano**  
 8va  
 [muted]  
  
 fff like m. 1

**Vibes**

Fl. **mp** **f** *molto* **ff**

Sop. Sax. **p** **f** **mp**

Crot.

Perc. II

Pno.

Vln. **mp** **mf** *sub. pp*

Vc. **mp** **mf** *sub. pp*

*tr\**  
 (erratic, fragmented trills)

Lightly depress the stopped note so that both the "touch-four" and the open harmonic sound.

13

Fl.

Sop. Sax.

Perc. I

Perc. II

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

very pure tone, like a sine tone

**E** Harmonica

(E) b

**Piccolo**

*mp*

*mf*

*p*

*f* > *p*

**A**

**B**

clipped samples of sine tones

*mp*

**Glockenspiel**

bow

*mf*

*f* > *p*

**Vibes**

*mp*

*mf*

*f*

*mp*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*f*

very pure tone, like a sine tone

sempre sul pont.

**A** Harmonica

(A)

*mp*

sub. *f* > *p*

*mf*

add paper clips (see performance notes)

20

Fl.

Sop. Sax.

Perc. I

Perc. II

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

**Flute:** *mf* *f > p* *mf*

**Soprano Saxophone:** *f* *pp*

**Percussion I:** **B Harmonica**, *f > pp*, *mf*, *ppp*, *p*, *f*

**Percussion II:** **Vibes**, **Bass Drum**, *f*, *mp*

**Piano:** *mf*, *f*, *mp*, *p*

**Violin:** *mf*, *mp*, *ff*, *mp*

**Violoncello:** *p*, *f*, *mp*, *ff*, *mp*

**Annotations:**  
 - **C**: clipped samples of sine tones  
 - **B**: Harmonica  
 - **Tam-Tam**: large, soft mallet; very light roll; bow  
 - **Vibes**: *f*  
 - **Bass Drum**: *mp*  
 - **Violin/Vc.**: Bow right below the nut. ord.

\* Increased pressure should add complexity and distortion to the sound, but not result in a pitch-less crash.

27

Fl. *f > p*

Sop. Sax. *mp* *f*

Perc. I *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

Perc. II *mf* *mf* *f* *mp* *mf*

Pno. *f* *p* *mf* *p* *f*

Vln. *poco* *p* *flaut.* *mf* *p*

Vc. *poco* *p* *flaut.* *mf* *p*

34

Fl. *mf* *f > p*

Sop. Sax. *f* *mf*

Perc. I *mp* *mp* *f* *ff*

Perc. II *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *f* *f*

Pno. *mp* *p* *ff*

Vln. *mp* *f > p* *f > p*

Vc. *mp* *p* *f*

**A** **B** **C**

**B** Harmonica **G** Harmonica

Tam-Tam Bass Drum

bow

8vb

tr

3 4 2 3 4

40

Fl. *ff* *f* *ff* *p* *sub. fff* *p* *mf*

Sop. Sax. *f* *ff* *ff > p*

Perc. I (off) *mf* *ppp* *poco* *mf* *p*

Perc. II (off) *f* *ff* *mf* *p* *mf*

Pno. *fff* *f* *mp* *fff* *ped*

Vln. *fff* *p* *f* *p* *mf* *pp*

Vc. *f* *p* *p*

**F Harmonica** 8va

**C Harmonica**

**F Harmonica** 8va

**A Harmonica**

**G Harmonica**

**B Harmonica** 8va

**D Harmonica** 8va

**Crotales** bow *mf*

**Tam-Tam** bow *ppp* *poco*

**Glock.** bow *mf* *p*

**(A)**

**(B)**

**(C)**

**(D)**

**(A) V**

**remove paper clips**

46

Fl. *F* Harmonica *mf* *F* Harmonica *mp* *A* Harmonica *f*

Sop. Sax. *E* Harmonica *Flz* 8va *mp* *E* Harmonica *Flz* *mp*

Perc. I *A* (off) *B* (off) *Crotales* bow *mf* *Glock.* bow *f* *D* Harmonica *mf* Quietly change the tapes: *A* to *E* *B* to *F*

Perc. II *D* (sine tones) *f* *mf* *f* *mf*

Pno. *mf* *G* Harmonica *f* *mf*

Vln. *p* *p* very mechanical and static

Vc. *sul pont.* *mf* *mp* *pp*

5/4 5/4 5/4 5/4 5/4 5/4 5/4 5/4 5/4 5/4

A Harmonica



Flz

52

Fl.

Sop. Sax.

Perc. I

Perc. II

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

*p* *poco* *p* *f*

*ff > mp*

(clipped sine tones) **E**

(D) (B)

*f > mp*

(clipped sine tones) **F**

*f > mp*

**D Harmonica**

Flz

*mf > p* *f*

**C Harmonica**

**E Harmonica**

*mf* *p* *f* *f*

flz

**A Harmonica**

**Pan Lid**

bow

*p*

**G Harmonica**

*f* (ped) *f* *mp* *f* *mp*

**A Harmonica**

(A)

*ff* *mp* *poco* *f*

**B Harmonica**

4/4

58

**Fl. I:** C Harmonica, Flz, *ff*, *mp*, *mf*, *ff*

**Sop. Sax.:** D Harmonica, Flz, *ff > mp*, *f*, *ff*, *f*

**Perc. I:** E, F, C Harmonica, Flz, *f*, *mf*, *f*

**Perc. II:** D, A Harmonica, Flz, *f*, *mf*, *mf*, G, Pan Lid, *f > mp*

**Pno.:** G Harmonica, Flz, *f*, *mf*, *mf*

**Vln.:** B Harmonica, Flz, *mf*, *f*

**Vc.:** *mf*, *f*

4/4

64

Fl. **H**

Sop. Sax. **Alto Saxophone**

Perc. I **F** **C Harmonica** **Flz**

Perc. II **D** **Flz**

Perc. II **G** **Pan Lid** **L.v.**

Pno. **(Fz)** **Flz** **(G/B)**

Vln.

Vc.

4/4 4/4 3/4 4/4 4/4

mf ff > mp mf f mf

mf ff f mf

mf ff mf

mf ff mf





**81**

**B Harmonica**

Fl. *f*

Alto Sax. *p*

(sine tones w/ white noise)

**K**

Perc. I *p*

**J** (stop)

**Spray Can**  
spray onto bass drum head  
*f*

Perc. II

**D Harmonica**  
*mf*

**Vibes**  
*p*

(sine tones w/ white noise)

**L**

Pno. *mf* *p*

ped

Vln. arco sul pont. *f* *p*

Vc. ord. III *mf* sul pont. *mp*

Flute: air through the instrument very narrow and intense bands of air *f*

Alto Sax: *mf* very static

Flute: *f*

Spray Can: *f*

Perc. II: *mf*

Pno.: *mf* *p*

Vln.: *f* *p*

Vc.: *mf* *mp*

87

Flute (Fl.) *mf*

Alto Sax. *f* *mp*

Perc. I

Perc. II

Bass Drum *mf* *p* *PPP*

Vln. *f*

Vc. *ff* *mp* *f*

Flute (Fl.) *mf*

A Harmonica

B Harmonica

Alto Sax. *f* *mp*

K

J

15va

M

F Harmonica

Tam-Tam *mp*

Vibes bow *mf*

F# Harmonica

L

ff *silently depress*

ped

A Harmonica





108

Fl.

*ff*

*p*

B<sub>b</sub>

*ff*

*ff*

air through the instrument very narrow and intense bands of air

**Bass Drum**

scrape slowly in a circular motion with finger nail

*mf*

*p*

*mp*

**F Harmonica**



*p*

**F Harmonica**



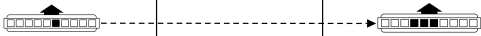
*p*

**Vibes**

bow

*p*

**B<sub>b</sub> Harmonica**



*p*

**Pot Lid**

bow

*pp*

with e-bow

**15 va**

*pp*

ped →

bow the body of the instrument to create breathy white noise

*ff*

*ppp*

*ff*

bow the body of the instrument to create breathy white noise

*ff*

30 - 45"

115

The musical score is arranged in a vertical staff system. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Fl. (Flute):** Part 1 (measures 115-118) in 3/4 time, marked *mp*. Part 2 (measures 119-122) in 5/4 time, marked *mp*.
- Sop. Sax. (Soprano Saxophone):** Part 1 (measures 115-118) in 3/4 time, marked *mp*. Part 2 (measures 119-122) in 5/4 time, marked *mp*.
- Perc. I (Percussion I):** Part 1 (measures 115-118) in 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4 time signatures, marked *p* and *pp*. Part 2 (measures 119-122) in 5/4 time, marked *mp*.
- Perc. II (Percussion II):** Part 1 (measures 115-118) in 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4 time signatures, marked *mf*, *pp*, *p*, and *mp*. Part 2 (measures 119-122) in 5/4 time, marked *mp*.
- Pno. (Piano):** Part 1 (measures 115-118) in 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4 time signatures, marked *pp*. Part 2 (measures 119-122) in 5/4 time, marked *pp*. Includes a note: "sine tone w/ shifting white noise".
- Vln. (Violin):** Part 1 (measures 115-118) in 3/4 time, marked *f*. Part 2 (measures 119-122) in 5/4 time, marked *f*.
- Vc. (Viola):** Part 1 (measures 115-118) in 3/4 time, marked *f*. Part 2 (measures 119-122) in 5/4 time, marked *f*.

The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 115-118, and the second system covers measures 119-122. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 to 5/4 in the first system, and then to 5/4 in the second system. The dynamic markings are *pp*, *p*, *mp*, and *f*.