

Makassar Strait

For Flute, Marimba, Piano, Violin and 'Cello

Jeff Myers
(2008-12)

Makassar Strait

Instruments

Flute

Marimba

Piano (grand piano required, preferably a Steinway B model)

Violin

Violoncello

The score is transposed

The duration is 10'

Comment on the music

The use of dynamic shadings is driven by considerations for color, so please observe gradations of dynamics between parts with careful consideration.

The piano harmonics should be played with minimal preparation (usually marking note names) on a grand piano which is of the same type as the one that will be used in performance (otherwise, the pianist may discover that all the finger placements will have to be relearned in short order).

Makassar Strait is a body of water which connects the southern part of Mindanao, Philippines (by way of the Celebes Sea) with the lower Indonesian Island of Java (by way of the Java Sea). This conduit is a metaphor for the connection between the Filipino and Indonesian folk music which inspired this piece. In the end there is a shadow of the folk music, sometimes coming to the fore and other times receding in a very (literally) abstracted way. The use of both idioms in my music is mostly distorted by my compositional techniques; the end product probably has more to do with my own tastes than anything else.

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Kulintang music is a genre of folk music which hails from the predominantly Muslim island of Mindanao—the largest southern island of the Philippines. This repertoire of folk music is played and cultivated on gongs; having a rich tradition that extends at least into the 15th-Century (during which the northern islands became colonized first by the Spanish, the Americans after 1899, and Japanese during WWII). The *kulintang*, is played by a seated performer with soft wooden mallets and although the mallets soften the sound, the sound is very loud (its name means “loud sound”) The *kulintang* player performs fast melodic patterns which repeat and cycle up and down in register. The other musicians play repeated rhythmic patterns to accompany the *kulintang*. Pieces are short and fast. There is set repertoire which is played and improvised over in subtle ways.

There are various styles or sub-genres which traditional pieces fit into according to mood, function or technique. *Sinulog* pieces are generally more lyrical and moderate in tempo. The tendency to imitate vocal music, or to take preexisting vocal pieces and make them into kulintang pieces is a common practice.

When I wrote movements I, II, and IV I took a *Sinulog* melody and converted melody note numbers to rhythms and made these rhythm layers in II and IV. For the first movement, I took the contour of the melody and put it into all of the parts, making the vibraphone the center of attention. The Java movement was written with fond memories of Javanese Gamelan practice on Lou Harrison’s Gamelan Si Aptos.

Performance notes

1. Accidentals carry through the bar, but are sometimes repeated for ease of performance.
2. It is essential to practice on the piano that will be used for the performance since the size and make of pianos will change the layout of the notes. Smaller 6-foot grand pianos often have fewer metal beams inside the piano and make the playing easier.

Makassar Strait was written for TRANSIT in 2008.

This is an arrangement of the original *Makassar Strait* which was written for bass clarinet, marimba, piano, violin and ‘cello.

MAKASSAR STRAIT

I. Kulintang 1

(Doppler-Morphing)

JEFF MYERS

(arr. 2012)

♩ = 88

non vibr. sempre

Flute

p *poco*

Piano

p

with some pedal

Violin

♩ = 88

muted, non vibrato sempre

ppp *pp* *p*

9

Fl.

mp *p*

Mar.

med. hard mallets

pp pochissimo a pochissimo crescendo

Pno.

Vln.

muted, non vibrato sempre

Vc.

p

16

Fl. *mp*

Mar. *mp poco a poco cresc.* *f poco a poco cresc.*

Pno.

Vln. *mf* *p*

Vc. *mf* *p*

8^{vb}

21

Fl. *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *con vibrato sempre*

Mar. *ff* *poco a poco dim.*

Pno.

Vln. *mf* *mute off tacet subito* *con vibrato sempre*

Vc. *mf* *mute off tacet subito* *con vibrato sempre*

Fl. *pp*

Mar. *mf* poco a poco dim.

Pno. *pp*

Vln. *mp* *pp*

Vc. *mp* *pp*



Mar. *mp* *p* *fz* *pp*

Pno. *pppp*

Vln. *pppp* *fz* *pp*

Vc. *pppp* *fz* *pp*

II. Kulintang 2

(Rhythm-Sculpture)

Well marked and mechanical, but always flowing
♩ = 160

37

Pno. *f sostenuto sempre*

pedal over harmonic shifts (in bass)

Vln. *f*

Vc. *p*

42

Fl. *f*

Mar. *hard mallets* *f*

Pno. *let ring sim.*

Vln.

Vc.

47

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.



52

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

sosten.

secco sempre

secco Ped.

solo

pù f

f

57

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

62

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

3. sostenuto

*) piano harmonics

*) Strike the note indicated in the bass staff, while lightly touching the corresponding string inside the piano at the node which gives the harmonic indicated by the small note. The 3rd harmonic has to be located with practice and then marked with tape or chalk. The 5th and 7th harmonics are almost always right after the damper pad, being the first accessible harmonic on the string. For longer notes, touch the node and then remove the finger to get maximum resonance. It helps to stand up a bar early so that you can prepare your fingerings. r.h. = right hand; it is easiest to play with the right hand and finger the node with the left.

67

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

72

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

f

pp

f

77

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

secco

sostenuto

f

83

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Ped.

88

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

secco

93

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

poco a poco dim.

p

97

Mar. *p*

Pno. *più f*

Vln. *p*

Vc. *mf*

5. *Ped.*

5. ** Ped.*

7. ** Ped.*

102

Fl. *mf*

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

5. ** Ped.*

7. ** Ped.*

107

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

* Ped.

Vln.

Vc.

112

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

116

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

f

secco

121

Fl.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

125

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

f

130

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

lunga

ff

ff

ppp *ff*

molto sul pont.

ff

attacca

attacca

I, II.