

Random Chords

soft, slow

	A	B
PEKING	3.6..3...6..1...0..2.0...2...3.2...2.5..0...0..1...2..0...1..0..5.6..6.	
SARON	0.2..0...6..6...0..1.6...2...2.3...2.6..1...6..0...2..2...5..5..2.2..0.	
DEMUNG	<u>3</u> 3. <u>1</u> ...0. <u>5</u> ...0.0 <u>5</u> ...6...1.2...3.2..2...3.0... <u>5</u> ..1..6..6..5 <u>5</u> ..6.	
SLENTEM	1.5.5...5..2...6..0.6...0...3.6...5.5..1...6..5...0..1...6..5..6.6..3.	

C	D	E
1.2...0..0.2...6.5...3.5.5.2.0.0.3...5..1...0..6...2..6...5..5...1..1..3..3..6.2...		
1.0...0..3.6...0.2...3.3.1.1.0.5.1...5..0...3..5...0..3...2..5...0..5..2..3..1.5...		
<u>3</u> .0... <u>6</u> ..1.2...2.2...1.2.3.0 <u>6</u> 5.0... <u>5</u> ..5... <u>6</u> ..6... <u>6</u> ..5...1..3...2..5..1..5..3.2...		
1.0...2..6.2...3.2...5.1.1.2.1.6.1...6..0...6..3...6..0...0..2...0..5..2..0..0.2...		

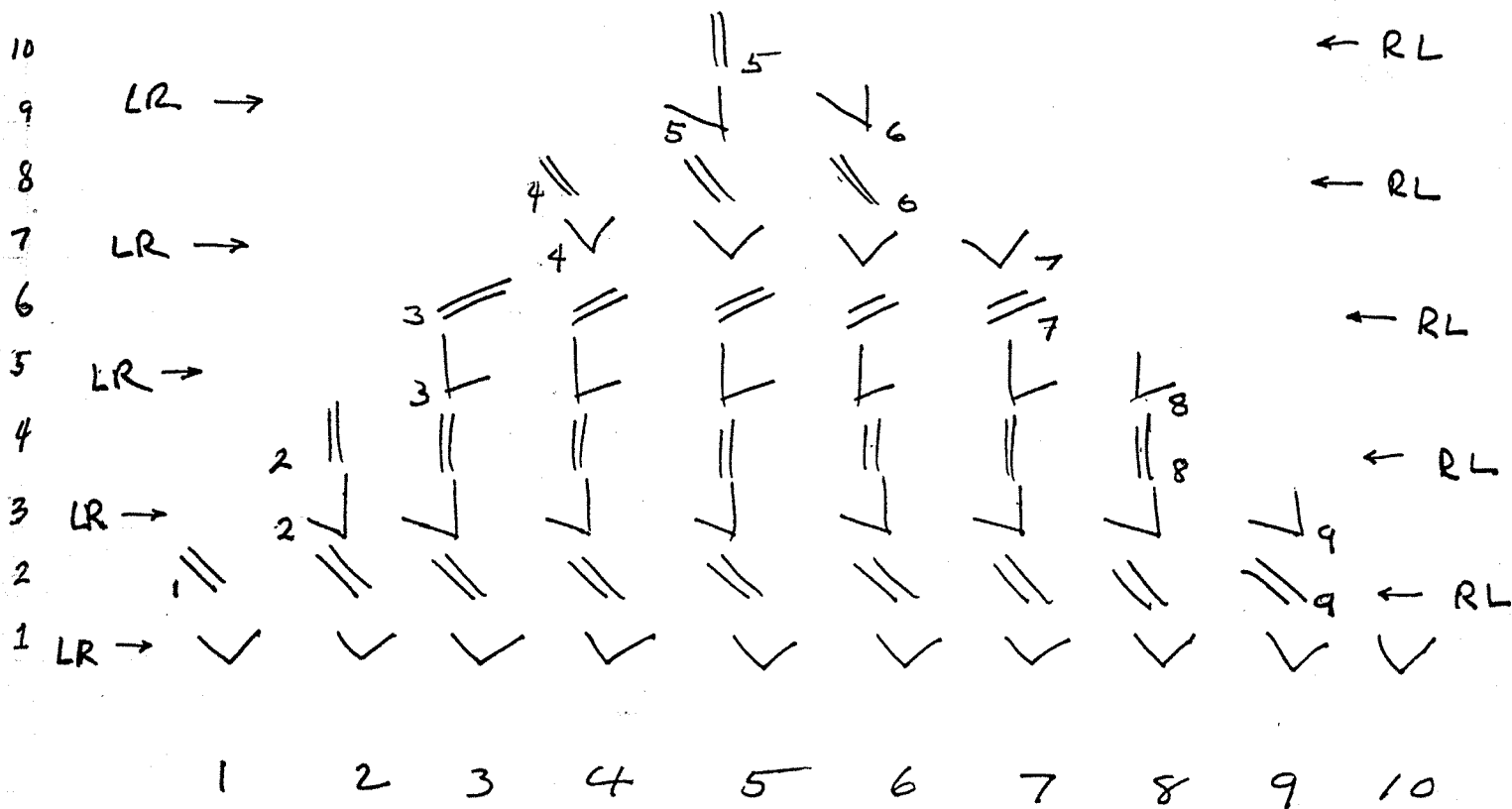
F	G
5...5..5...2...1...2...3...2.6...1...2..3..6...0.0.3...0.2...3...5.2.3...5...6..5...	
0...2..2...5...2...2...3...2.0...6...5..0..0..2.5..1..6.0..1...0.2.3...6...5..1...	
1...6.. <u>3</u> ...6..6..1...3... <u>6</u> 0... <u>3</u> ...6.3. <u>2</u> 0 <u>2</u> 2.. <u>3</u> 0.. <u>5</u> 0 <u>3</u> ..2...0.. <u>3</u> ..0...	
1...0..0..2..3..2..0...2.0...5...5..1..0..1.0.3...3.0..5...2.3.3...2...5..5...	

H	I (loud, faster at letter I)	J
0.0...3...2.3...6.2.2...1...2..0...2...0.1...5..2...0...1...5..6...3...1.3.0.2...		
2.6...3...3.1...0.0.6...1...3..5...1...3.2...1..6...0...6...6..2...0...5.1.1.5...		
0 <u>6</u> ...2...5.6...0 <u>5</u> 5... <u>1</u> ...2...6...6...0 <u>2</u> ...3.0... <u>2</u> ...0... <u>6</u> ..6... <u>1</u> ...3.0 <u>2</u> 0...		
0.5...1...0.2...1.0.3...5..0..2...3...3.3...2..2...0...1...0..1...1...0.2.2.6...		

K	L
1...1...5...6.6...0...5.0.5...5...5...1...1...3...3..3..6.0...5..2..6.5...2...6..2...	
1...6...0...0.6...6...3.6.2...1...2...3...5...0...2..0..2.2...6..5..1.5...3...2..5...	
<u>3</u> ...1...0... <u>3</u> 2...6...0 <u>2</u> 0... <u>5</u> ...6...2..1..0... <u>2</u> 2.. <u>1</u> 1... <u>1</u> ..6..0 <u>1</u> ...5..1..0...	
6...3...0...0.2...0...0.3.6...0...3...2..6..1...2..2..0.6...1..3..2.5...2...6..6...	

M	N
0.1.6...3...5...2..6...6...1...0...5...0.5...3...0...1...1..5.2...0	} soft (saron cues end)
2.1.3...6...0...6..0...0...6...5...6...6.6...6...3...2...6..2.1...5	
<u>6</u> 0 <u>6</u> ...3...1...5..6... <u>6</u> ...5...3..2..3.1...0... <u>2</u> ...1...3..5.0...	
1.6.2...3...0...1..1...5...2...1..6...3.5...0...3...2...5..3.2...	

The piece can be played in either Slendro or Pelog (but not both). Numbers are those of either scale. Zero is a hand held (or mounted) gong. Each player has one. They should be of complex spectrum and pitched in general from low to high (Slentem: lowest). Hubcaps hung from cord is one possible sound. The dots mean either 1, 2, 3, or 4 beats between chords, controlled by the leader: the Slentem player. Each chord is played as an arpeggio from Slentem through Peking. The Slentem player leads the quartet, counting the beats (it should not be metronomic). The speed of the arpeggio should vary, even within one chord, but always sound smooth, as if being produced by one hand. In the second part of the piece (letter I) the contrasts of arpeggio speed should be greater than in the first part. The line through the Demung part indicates an optional obligato melody part than can be performed by a wind or string instrument. The circled note is held for the duration of the line, and cut-off gracefully on the last note of the connected line. (Thus only one pitch sounds for the the length of that line: expressive variations of dynamics, vibrato, timbre can be used sensitively, but overall volume of the obligato must never exceed that of the gamelan instruments). The instrument must be able to play in tune with the scale notes. **Random Chords** was composed about 1981 and is one of three random number pieces by the composer. It is recorded in Pelog with clarinet obligato on the cassette, **Gamelan Son of Lion**.



Semaphores

I wanted for some time to write a piece that was intensely patterned both in sound and the gestures needed to make the sound. It was an aspect of the Javanese orchestras with which I was much taken in watching traditional touring groups from Indonesia.

My inspiration for patterning comes from current American pre-occupations in the visual arts and music; ideas from weaving—back and forth movement, negative space, gradual accumulations and diminutions. Then there is the power of the unison gesture—taken from semaphore arm gestures used for signaling. I flattened these onto the gamelan keyboard. Under each gesture the player can choose from several possible notes, varying within the scope of that gesture: for example, arms parallel straight ahead, arms parallel to the far left, etc. (see the score above).

In writing out the graphic for the score I realized several other ways of reading it. These became further variants—such as gongs adding while the keyed instruments subtract from the outsides into the center of the line of players. Every time I look at the graphic I think of new variants that come from contemplating its structure. My choice of which to use depends, not just on the logically possible, but on which ones draw performance energy from the score.