Changes

by Michael Parsons

Section A (3 times)

ḍ 1 2 3 5 6 1 ḍ 3 2 6 5̆
1 3 ḍ 6 2 5 3 1 6 ḍ 5 2)
3 6 1 5 ḍ 2 6 3 5 1 2(ḍ)
6 5 3 2 1 ḍ 5 6 2 3 ḍ 1̆
5 2 6 ḍ 3 1 2 5̆ ḍ 6 1 3
2 ḍ 5 1̆ 6 3 ḍ 2 1 5 3(6)

Section B (3 times)

i 6 5 6 5 3 6 i 6 5 3 5̆
6 6 i 3 5 5 6 6 3 i 5 5̆
6 3 6 5 i 5 3 6 5 6 5(i)
3 5 6 5 6 i 5 3 5 6 i 6̆
5 5 3 i 6 6 5 5̆ i 3 6 6
5 i 5 6 3̆ 6 i 5 6 5 6(3)
(−)

Section C (5 or 6 times)

− + − + − − − + − + − p *(sim.)*
N1
i 2 3 5 6 − 2 i 5 3 − 6̆
2 5 − − 3 6 5 2 − − 6 3
5 − 2 6 − 3 − 5 6 2 3 1̆
N1
i 6 5 3 2 − 6 i 3 5 − 2)
6 3 − − 5 2 3 6 − − 2 5
3 − 6 2 − 5 − 3 2 6 5(i)

Transition (once only)

− + − + − − − + − + − p *(sim.)*
N6
6 5 3 2 1 − 5 6 2 3 − 1̆
5 2 − − 3 1 2 5̆ − − 1 3
2 − 5 1̆ − 3 − 2 1 5 3(6) ’

Play section A twice more (A4, A5) to end.

Changes was written in 1981 for the English Gamelan Orchestra. The intention was to write a work which would respect the traditional character of gamelan playing and also be authentically English. The melodic structure is based on the English system of change-ringing. In each successive group of six notes, the positions of adjacent notes are exchanged. The result is a cyclic sequence of seventy-two notes; the second half is the inversion of the first. This seventy-two note sequence is used as a melodic ground. It is played in three pitch ranges: in section A, ḍ 1 2 3 5 6; in section B, 3 5 6 i (notes 5 and 6 are used twice in each group of six); and in section C, 1 2 3 5 6 i.

Michael Parsons (b. 1938) is a composer and performer living in London. He was one of the original members of the English Gamelan Orchestra and co-founder, with Cornelius Cardew and Howard Skempton, of the Scratch Orchestra in 1969.

Instrumentation and Performance instructions

The *kendang* player indicates changes of tempo (slow–fast–slow). The part is improvised; tempos given are approximate. The performance should last fifteen to sixteen minutes.

Two *saron* and one *peking*: play the main melody throughout. Peking should play on the beat in sections A and B1, half a beat behind the other instruments in B2 and B3, on the beat in C and transition, and half a beat ahead of the others in A4 and A5.

Demung: enter in line 4 of A1, playing only pitch 3, following its shift in position. In the last group of A1 play the last three notes (5 3 6) and play these three notes through A2, again following their shifting positions. In A3 join the saron and peking playing the complete melody. In B1 again play only the last three notes in the first group (6 5 3) and follow the shifting positions of these three notes

throughout. There are two 6's and two 5's in this section, so be sure to play the right ones: the positions of the three notes in each group are the same as in A2. From B2 to the end play the complete melody.

Slenthem follows a similar procedure: enter in A2, playing only pitch 6; in A3 play notes 6, 1, 2; in B1 play only 1 (low 1 may be used for greater resonance); in B2 play 1, 6, 5 (again using low 1); in B3, 1, 6, 5, 6. (Demung and slenthem parts may be written out separately.) From the last group of B3 to the end, play the complete melody.

Kenong: play the sixth note of each group throughout, playing on the beat in A1 and A2, then slightly after the beat thereafter. *Kethuk* and *kempyang* play only in C and the transition. *Kempul* (pitches 5 6 1), *gong suwukan* (pitch 2), and *gong ageng* play as marked.

Bonang barung and *bonang panerus*: in section A play the sixth note of each group in octaves, without damping. In section B1 play the last three notes of each line (eg. ——
—323), in B2 play the last five notes of each line, in B3 play all notes.

The order of the sections is A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, C, transition, A4, A5.

A1. One saron player begins alone, playing very quietly at MM. 30 [beats per minute]; the second saron and peking join in during lines 2 and 3. Demung enters in line 4. Kendang enters in line 5, improvising in quarter notes (i.e. a pattern based on four strokes to each note of the melody), at first very quietly, and then accelerating in the last line to MM. 50 to 60.

A2. Slenthem enters. Very gradual crescendo, accelerating in the last line to MM. 80.

A3. In the last line, the kendang changes to half notes, accelerating to MM. 100.

B1 Moderately loud; accelerating in the last line to about MM. 140.

B2. Accelerate in the last line to MM. 160.

B3. Kendang changes to whole notes in the last line, accelerating to MM. 200. In the last group of six notes, all instruments rest on (–) instead of playing pitch 1.

C. Loud, accelerating to MM. 240 during the second time through. Melody instruments and bonang are damped in the rests; kenong should ring out loud and resonant. The kendang may play strongly accented strokes on beats where there are gaps in the melody. The kendang player decides how many times to play this section, indicating the final time by slowing down suddenly in last line, moving into the transition at slightly slower tempo (MM. 200-180).

Transition. Slow down a lot in last line, moving into A4 at MM. 100. On the breath mark after the gong, pause one beat before going on.

A4. Softer; continue slowing down through lines 1 and 2 to MM. 80, kendang changing to half notes; slow down further in last line to MM. 60, kendang changing to quarter notes.

A5. Slow down more in the last line, ending very quietly. Delay final gong.

A recording of this piece is in the AGI Archives. ◗

Mas in 1 Minor

by Neil Sorrell

This piece was composed in June 1986 and first performed at the Cheltenham International Festival, England, in July of that year. It was conceived as a kind of independent sequel to the larger *Gendhing Kencana,* composed in 1983, which ended with the short flute phrase that begins this piece. (The two titles also correspond, of course.)

The flute can be the usual modern one; but, at the original performance a Baroque (wooden) flute was used, to better effect. The gamelan is reduced to a few instruments (both pelog and slendro, assuming a *tumbuk* [common tone] on pitch 6).

Performance instructions

The flute should feel free to improvise (stylistically) in repeated sections (this should come naturally to a Baroque flautist!) Note values are not strict, except in the section with a time signature. When gender dyads, kempul notes, etc., should coincide with a particular flute note, the alignment is indicated by a dotted line. Otherwise, it should be possible to follow the notation. A recording of the first performance is in the Archives of the American Gamelan Institute. The composer is happy to answer any query that may arise. ◗

Symbols for gamelan instruments used

P	pelog
S	slendro
g.	gender panerus
G.	gender barung
Sl.	slenthem
v	kempul (note indicated by numeral)
O	gong ageng
Pk.	peking
Sr.	saron