

Scacciare Pensieri

For any number of percussionists

Written for
Percussion Quartet Abstrukt

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Concept: "Scacciapensieri" is one of the many Italian words for the "Mouth Harp". "Scacciare" means "chasing away" and "pensieri" can be translated as "thoughts" or something that is on your mind. The name of the instrument refers to the fact that the mouth-harp is placed on the teeth and therefore uses the mouth but also the full resonance of the skull to create the sound. Since the full skull resonates, one says that the performer might forget what is on his/her mind and all thoughts will be chased away.

The compositional idea involves a group of performers chasing a chosen set of items out of their minds. They do this step by step and in the structure of a count-down song.

The structure in this piece is taken from a famous Italian song *Eh, Cumpari*.¹ The text of this song describes a list of musical instruments and asks how they sound. The melody continuously repeats, but with every repetition another instrument is added.

¹ La Rosa, J. (2008). Eh Cumpari. [online] YouTube. Available at: <https://youtu.be/Bsg73N0eUZk> [Accessed 12 May 2018].

Instrumentation

For any number of performers, minimum 4, performing with

a) Mouth-Harp (1 performer)

Any mouth harp size is fine for this piece.

There are several videos online how to play this instrument.²



- Place the instrument on you teeth or lips but do not squeeze your teeth together.
- Make sure the instrument does not vibrate against your teeth.
- Use your index finger to play it.
- Change the shape of your mouth to make higher and lower sounds.
- Blow air/breathe in and out against the harp to create louder sounds.

b) Mouth-Clapping (all other performers)

Clap in your hands very close to your mouth, clap without clapping sound but create air while clapping. Try first by clapping close to your face until you feel the air from your hands. When you feel a lot of air, try it by opening your mouth a little bit. Create different shapes with your mouth to make higher and lower sounds. With a little bit of practice, the sound can become very loud.

² YouTube. (2013). Lo Scacciapensieri - come è fatto, come si suona. [online] Available at: https://youtu.be/Tjv2_fKx5Tw?t=1m40s [Accessed 3 Jul. 2018].