LONG DISTANCE

FOR SOLO PERCUSSION
WIND ENSEMBLE, AND ELECTRONICS

STEVEN SNOWDEN
LONG DISTANCE

ATLANTA, GA – 1972
Vibes or Marimba + Electronics (4 min)

BROOKLYN, NY – 1975
Marimba + Electronics (6 min)

MONROE, NC – 1977
For Marimba or Vibes + Electronics (4 min)

PANORAMA, VA – 1976
Vibes + Electronics (6 min)

TOTAL DURATION – 20 MIN.

This piece was commissioned by an international consortium led by
Mike Truesdell and Tim Briones

Consortium members:

Mike Truesdell
Tim Briones
Aaron Butler
Josh Spaulding
Thad Anderson
Megan Arns
Alex Rolfe
Adam Groh
Nancy Zeltsman
George Nickson
Benjamin Fraley

Jeff Sass
Joe Millea
Chris Jones
John Corkhill
Pedro Carneiro
Ryan Truedell
Lucas Garner
Aaron Ragsdale
Abby Fisher
Sean Connors
Logan Ball

Omar Carmenates
Colin Walker
Oliver Molina
Neil Sisauyhoat
Tyson Voigt
William Moersch
David Stevens
Andy Bliss
Michael Ptacin
Joint Venture Percussion Duo
(Laurent Warnier and Xi Zhang)

Program Notes:

“Once upon a time, in the days before the ubiquitous and invisible internet, there was only one network. It was made of long-distance lines — actual wires — and it was ruled by an absolute monarch, Ma Bell. Most people traveled the network along conventional channels. But there were also explorers, a small group of curious misfits eager to map the darkest, most obscure corners of this evolving global net. Harvard students, blind teenagers, budding engineers — eventually they came together and formed a subculture. They became phone phreaks.” - Jesse Hicks

I first learned about phone phreaks a couple of years ago and was immediately fascinated by their tenacity and boundless curiosity. By hacking the inner workings of payphones, building small electrical devices, or even whistling repeated tones at specific frequencies, they were able to manipulate this analog technology to connect with others in far away places or simply listen in on the pops, clicks, and hums produced by the machinery of distant networks. These sonic identifiers were unique to each of the thousands of long distance networks and (luckily for me) it was quite common for phreaks to make high quality reel-to-reel recordings of what they heard. All electronic sounds used in this piece come from these recordings and each movement is based upon the unique sonic qualities of calls from payphones in various locations in the us in the 1970’s. – Steven Snowden

Technical Requirements:

I’ve designed the electronics for this piece to be very flexible and to work with a variety of setups. Running the included application from a computer will provide you with the most options, however this piece can be performed using just an mp3 player. Check out the included Long_Distance_read_me_first.txt file for all of the details.
**Performance Notes:**

**In instrumentation:**

*Brooklyn* and *Monroe* were originally written for marimba while *Atlanta* was originally written for vibes. However, I have written an optional vibes part for *Monroe* and an optional marimba part for *Atlanta*. With that in mind, it would be possible to program a performance of *Monroe*, *Brooklyn*, and *Atlanta* with only marimba. Finally, *Atlanta* was originally written for 3.5 vibes, but it can be performed on a 3-octave instrument. Optional notes for 3-octave vibes are give in parentheses except for measures 49-52 where the optional passage is shown in floating ossia measures in the part.

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**Notation:**

**Dead Stroke: (Monroe and Atlanta)**

![Dead Stroke Example](image)

Notes with a + sign over them are to played as dead strokes.

**Mallet angle and placement: (Brooklyn)**

In several sections of *Brooklyn*, I have specified the angle at which the mallets are to be used as well as where their placement on the bars of the marimba. The letter *T* indicates when the thicker top part of the mallet should be used and *N* indicates when they should be at normal playing position (with the shafts more parallel to the bars of the marimba). Likewise, the letter *M* indicates when the bars should be struck toward the middle and *NP* indicates when they should be struck at the nodal point near the string.

![Mallet Angle Example](image)

In this example, the roll begins near the middle of the marimba bars and gradually moves to the nodal point from measure 12-14. Also, the roll begins at the top of the mallets and gradually shifts to normal position from bar 10-12.

**Spatial notation: (Brooklyn)**

In a few sections of this movement, spatial notation (indicated by stemless noteheads) is used to allow for more rhythmic freedom and increased dramatic intensity. Horizontal placement of the noteheads gives a rough indication of duration between notes, however it is up to the player to decide what is musically most effective.

![Spatial Notation Example](image)

In this example, the player should adhere to the notated rhythm for the first two beats of measure 43. Though the next two beats correlate roughly with triplets, there should be a bit more space between the penultimate and final chords of that measure. That same sort of freedom applies to the following measure. You could think of this a bit like a written out ritard, though the clicktrack will continue with the same tempo.

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