

Peter Ablinger

WEISS / WEISSLICH 31e, Membranes, Rain
Concert Version with 8 Glass Tubes (2002)

Instrumentation: Waterdrops on glass tubes, miked

8 horizontal glass tubes
in any non-equidistant tuning, 20c to 270c -intervals, microtonal or diatonic

8 kitchen wipes
Hanging fixture, 8 clothespins
Water bowl, wooden board, water

Amplification system

Setup:

The glass tubes should be installed so close to the floor that water dripping from the tubes to the floor makes no additional sound.

The clothes-line, on the other hand, or rather the hanging fixture (percussion stand) for the kitchen wipes should be fixed as high as possible above the glass tubes (for example, 1.5 meters), as the height of the fall is decisive for its loudness.

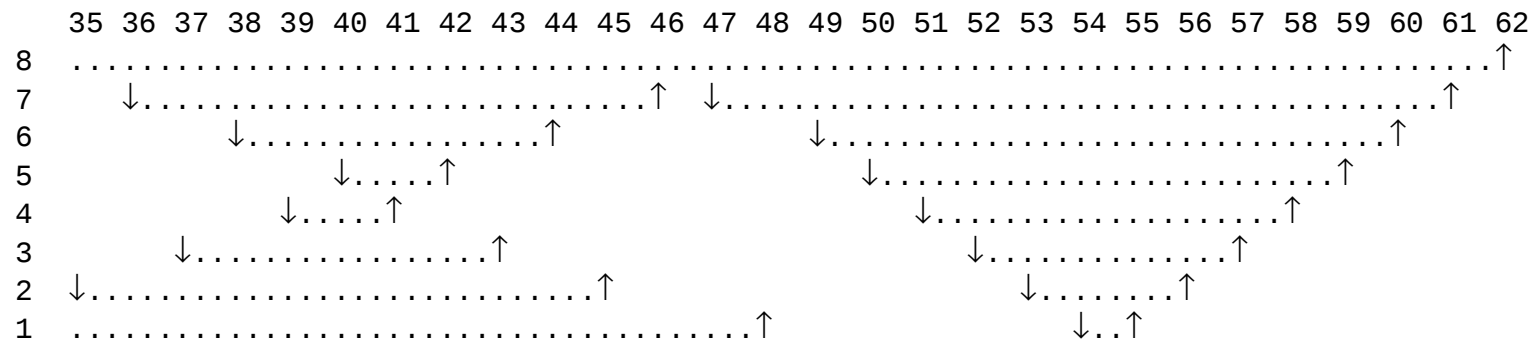
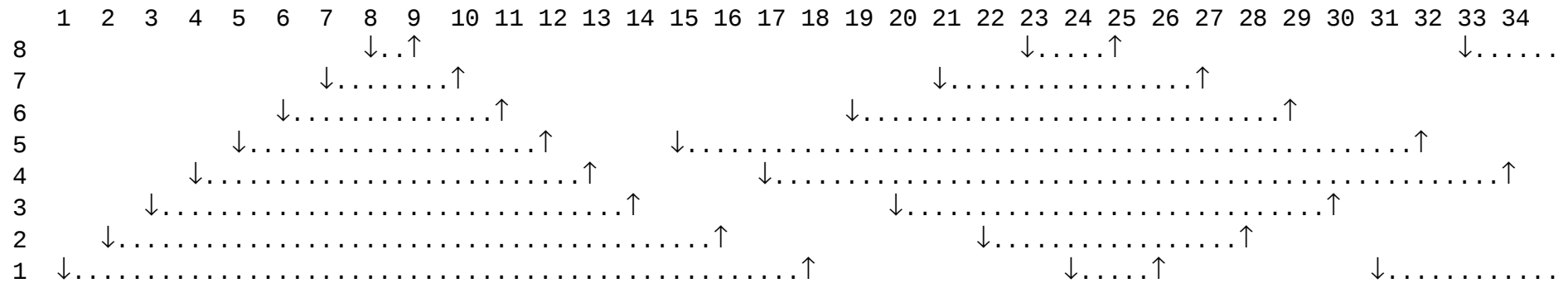
The clothes-line (frame) should be stretched exactly over the edges of the glass tubes, so that the droplets land as close as possible to the rims of the tubes (for best resonance).

Usual store-bought kitchen wipes are adequate (or other textiles such as men's cotton socks – though not too thick, no tennis socks, & not too long – for example, over 35 cm); for further criteria, see the annotations to the score; for each glass tube, one kitchen wipe;

A wooden board should be immersed at an angle in the water bowl, protruding over the bowl's edge: for the soundless drip drying/wringing out of the kitchen wipes.

Miking, Amplification:

Ideally with 8 condenser microphones, each placed only a few millimeters above the middle of a given tube, and 8 contact microphones placed at a nodal point on each of the tubes; the contact microphones should be low-pass filtered so that only frequencies under 600 Hz come through; the sound of the 8 tubes should be projected from a row of loudspeakers set up as far apart from each other as possible so that the first tube is heard from extreme left in the hall, and the eighth tube from extreme right.



horizontal: Measures 1 - 62
vertical: glass tubes 1 (low) - 8 (high)
↓ hang up kitchen wipe
↑ take down kitchen wipe

Score (Page 2):

The score is comprised of 62 measures of unequal length in which the hanging up or taking down of the kitchen wipes is noted; on average (for example) a measure lasts 20 seconds. Hanging up (including wetting the wipe and gently wringing it out) tends to last longer than taking down a kitchen wipe; one should in no case strive for periodicity; at any given moment it is possible to interrupt the process of hanging up and taking down in order to adjust a kitchen wipe, or simply to just listen for a few seconds (eventually in the situation in the middle and at the end of the piece one should savor each of the 4 phases: when either all or only 2 tubes are sounding, - *quasi fermata*). The process of hanging up must be completed absolutely silently. The kitchen wipes should be submerged in the bowl, though actually only the upper half (which is later to be clipped with a clothespin over a given glass tube), so that it takes a bit of time for the water to soak down into the lower half of the wipe, and thus begins to drip only approximately 20 seconds after being hung, - and thus dripping at first with a light *accelerando* (for example, around 100-140 drips a minute), followed by a prolonged *ritardando* up to the point of a given wipe's being taken down. The amount of water can be adjusted before hanging via gentle, soundless pressure of the wet portion of a given wipe against the protruding wooden board. The clothespins should be hung before the performance and thus mark the hanging/dripping points.

Adjustments:

After a given kitchen wipe has begun to drip, the exact drop location can be adjusted at any time: the best resonance for the droplets is found near the edge of the glass tubes, and at their apex; it could also however be that for the sake of an overall performance, individual tones may need to be correctively deemphasized. In the process of removing the kitchen wipes, small exceptions in the order may also be made if it helps the overall result (for example, in order to influence which of the last two tubes should be last, etc).

The preferred beginning of a new phase (bars 15, 17, or 31, 33, etc) depends on the delayed start of dripping; for example: ideally the dripping of tube 5 would begin after or at the moment where tube 1 in bar 18 ends.

Duration: for example 18' (minimum 16', up to maximum 32')

Another version of the piece as an installation for any glass membranes (glasses, glass cymbals, verrophone, glass harmonikas) takes place outside with actual rain:

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Peter Ablinger, Berlin, June/July 2002
english translation: Bill Dietz