

GROOVE TRAIN

CONCERTO FOR DRUMSET,
PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE,
BRASS, AND WOODWINDS

BY
JOE PORTER



PORTER
PUBLICATIONS

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Program Notes

My first instrument was the drum set and I have always wanted to compose a piece to feature the drum set. After I decided to write a piece for the drum set, I thought great.... but now what will I write it about?

I grew up in a small coal mining town in the Rocky Mountains, in Fernie, British Columbia. In Fernie, at least two trains pass by every day from the coal mines. While an undergraduate student, I worked four summers in the coal mines to help pay for University. I was around trains a lot and I developed an interest in the sounds of trains.

I decided having the theme of trains would be perfect for a drumset feature piece. With that in mind, the listener should think about the many sounds associated with trains. Whether it's the steam, the low rumble of the engine, the big train horn, a railroad crossing, or the train starting up like an old locomotive.

While composing, I experienced a stumbling block regarding the sound of the train horn. In the percussion ensemble, there are no instruments that could imitate this sound as well as brass and woodwinds could. I decided to add an instrument combination with the train horn sound in mind: a flute, two french horns and two tenor saxophones, with the hope that this combination would sound like a real train.

The train horn sound was problematic from a composition perspective. I had a very distinct pitch relation in mind: D, F, A, and B. The problem with this pitch relation is that the D, F and A, spell out a minor triad, but in the key of D minor, the B should be a B flat. I did three things with this issue: firstly, I adapted some sections to compose in D minor. Secondly, I used the D, F, A and B to spell out the dorian mode and composed a majestic section. Thirdly, if you use these four pitches and weigh hard on the B, it creates the locrain mode. The locrain mode is very dark, and I used it to create a dark and driving section.

Finally, it was my intention to add my own touches on trains. The piece gives many sounds of the train but it shouldn't be taken as a complete programmatic piece. As a "drummer" I am always thinking about groove in music and I hope some of the sections portray this theme.

Joe Porter – February, 2014

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Performance Notes

The Drumset part of this concerto is written out, however the soloist should not take the notation 100% literally. For example, cymbal notation is not specific and the player can choose which cymbals to use. There is a lot of room for improvisation, especially in the cadenzas. The big cadenza at [H] provides the larger structure, however the interpretation is left to the soloist. The fill into the Reggae Section [J] may be changed.

Pay careful attention to the dynamics of the piece. If the horns and woodwinds cannot be heard, make them play louder, or even add microphones as necessary. The dynamics give the overall impression, but a pianissimo is not the same with a drumset soloist as it is with a violin soloist! Make the necessary adjustments. Some parts may be doubled.

The approximate length of the piece is 13 minutes.

Recommended Setup:



B

10

Fl.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

D. S.

Glk./T.S.

Mrb. 1

Mrb. 2

Mrb. 3

B. Mrb 1

B Mrb. 2

f

f

f

f

mf

This musical score page, titled "Groove Train" and numbered "5", contains measures 16 through 18. The score is arranged for a large ensemble and includes the following parts:

- Fl.** (Flute): Measures 16-18, starting with a whole note G4 and moving to a half note G4.
- T. Sx. 1** (Trumpet 1) and **T. Sx. 2** (Trumpet 2): Both play a rhythmic eighth-note pattern in the first measure, followed by a melodic line in measures 17 and 18.
- Hn. 1** (Horn 1) and **Hn. 2** (Horn 2): Both play a sustained whole note G4 in measure 16, followed by a melodic line in measures 17 and 18.
- D. S.** (Drum Set): Measures 16-18, featuring a complex rhythmic pattern in measure 16 and rests in measures 17 and 18.
- Glk./T.S.** (Glockenspiel/Tam-tam): Measures 16-18, playing a sustained whole note G4 in measure 16, followed by a melodic line in measures 17 and 18.
- Mrb. 1** (Maracas 1): Measures 16-18, playing a rhythmic eighth-note pattern.
- Mrb. 2** (Maracas 2): Measures 16-18, playing a rhythmic eighth-note pattern.
- Mrb. 3** (Maracas 3): Measures 16-18, playing a rhythmic eighth-note pattern.
- B. Mrb. 1** (Bass Maracas 1): Measures 16-18, playing a rhythmic eighth-note pattern.
- B. Mrb. 2** (Bass Maracas 2): Measures 16-18, playing a rhythmic eighth-note pattern.

Groove Train

28

Fl.

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

D. S.

Glk./T.S.

T.B./B./G.

Perc

Mrb. 1

Mrb. 2

Mrb. 3

B. Mrb 1

B Mrb. 2

2

The musical score for page 9 of 'Groove Train' features several staves. The Flute (Fl.), Horn 1 (Hn. 1), and Horn 2 (Hn. 2) parts begin at measure 28 with a melodic line consisting of a dotted quarter note, a quarter rest, a dotted quarter note, a quarter note, a half note, and a quarter rest, all under a single slur. The Drum Set (D. S.) part starts with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests, ending with a double bar line and a '2' above it. The Glockenspiel/Tam-tam (Glk./T.S.), Trumpet/Bassoon/Guitar (T.B./B./G.), and Percussion (Perc) parts are marked with a slash and a vertical line, indicating they are silent. The three Maracas (Mrb. 1, Mrb. 2, Mrb. 3) and two Bass Maracas (B. Mrb 1, B Mrb. 2) parts are also marked with a slash and a vertical line, indicating they are silent.

Musical score for measures 35 and 36 of 'Groove Train'. The score includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Horns 1 and 2 (Hn. 1, Hn. 2), Double Bass (D. S.), Glockenspiel/Tam-tam (Glk./T.S.), Trombone/Euphonium/Guitar (T.B./B./G.), Percussion (Perc), and Maracas (Mrb. 1, Mrb. 2, Mrb. 3, B. Mrb. 1, B. Mrb. 2). Measures 35 and 36 are marked with a dynamic of *35*. The D. S. part includes a *2* marking with a repeat sign. The Perc part has rests in both measures. The Maracas parts have rhythmic patterns in measure 35 and rests in measure 36.

53

Fl.

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

D. S.

53

Glk./T.S.

T.B./B./G.

53

Perc

53

Mrb. 1

Mrb. 2

Mrb. 3

B. Mrb 1

B Mrb. 2

Detailed description: This page of a musical score, titled 'Groove Train' and numbered '17', contains measures 53 through 56. The score is arranged in a multi-staff format. At the top, the Flute (Fl.) and Horn 1 (Hn. 1) parts feature a melodic line starting with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and a quarter note B4, all under a slur. Horn 2 (Hn. 2) plays a similar line but with a lower register. The Drum Set (D. S.) part consists of four measures, each containing a double bar line and a slash, indicating a change in drum pattern. The Keyboard (Glk./T.S.) part has a complex, rhythmic melody with many beamed eighth notes and slurs. The Tenor Bass/Bass/Guitar (T.B./B./G.) part provides a steady accompaniment with a series of chords. The Percussion (Perc) part is mostly silent, indicated by a double bar line and a slash. The Maracas (Mrb.) section includes three parts (Mrb. 1, Mrb. 2, Mrb. 3) and two Bass Maracas (B. Mrb 1, B Mrb. 2). Mrb. 1, 2, and 3 play a complex, rhythmic melody with many beamed eighth notes and slurs. B. Mrb 1 and B Mrb. 2 play a steady, rhythmic accompaniment with a series of chords.

Groove Train

30

132

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

D. S.

Glk./T.S.

T.B./B./G.

Perc

Mrb. 1

Mrb. 2

Mrb. 3

B. Mrb 1

B Mrb. 2

ff

ff

ff

The musical score for "Groove Train" is arranged for a large ensemble. It begins at measure 132. The saxophone section (T. Sx. 1 and 2) and horn section (Hn. 1 and 2) play sustained notes. The drum set (D. S.) features a complex, rhythmic pattern with many accents. The guitar (Glk./T.S.) plays a melodic line with a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The tuba/bass/guitar (T.B./B./G.) and percussion (Perc) parts provide a steady, rhythmic accompaniment. The maraca section consists of three parts (Mrb. 1, 2, and 3), with Mrb. 1 playing a melodic line and Mrb. 2 and 3 playing rhythmic patterns. The bass maracas (B. Mrb 1 and B Mrb. 2) play a consistent, driving rhythm throughout the piece.

Groove Train

34

rit. -----

The musical score for "Groove Train" begins at measure 147. The instrumentation includes two Tenor Saxophones (T. Sx. 1 and 2), two Horns (Hn. 1 and 2), Double Bass (D. S.), Glockenspiel/Tam-tam (Glk./T.S.), Tenor Bass/Bass/Guitar (T.B./B./G.), Percussion (Perc), three Maracas (Mrb. 1, 2, 3), and two Bass Maracas (B. Mrb 1 and 2). The score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked *rit.* (ritardando). The saxophones and horns play sustained notes. The double bass and maracas provide a rhythmic accompaniment. The percussion part features a consistent pattern of eighth notes. The bass maracas play a steady eighth-note accompaniment.