HALLELUJAH GAMES

A musical game for marimba and piano

(original version for piano four hands 1995; revised for marimba and piano, 1998)

AMY RUBIN

"HALLELUJAH GAMES:" PERFORMANCE NOTES

BACKGROUND

"Hallelujah Games" was commissioned by Musicians' Accord in 1995 to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of this fine ensemble devoted to the performance of new music. Compositionally, the piece is a direct outgrowth of my study of West African drumming and rhythmic cells with Dr. William Anku, in Ghana, where I was a Fulbright Lecturer in 1993. In appreciation of his unique musical contributions and his generosity of spirit, "Hallelujah Games" is dedicated to Dr. Anku.

On one level, the title "Hallelujah Games" refers to the pervasive colonialism that had such a strong presence throughout Africa, prior to each country's struggle for independence, and continues to remain part of the fabric of its culture. While composing the piece I was reading Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart" which specifically addresses the irreversible impact of British missionaries on Nigerian life, and the political and religious "games" that were played out over time.

On a purely musical level, "Hallelujah Games" is a game of improvisational choices and rhythmic challenges, transformed from the culture of West African drumming to the culture of western music ensemble playing.

West Africa is known for its drumming ensembles which are complex, tightly woven musical communities consisting of a time keeper, supporting players, and at the head of the hierarchy, a master drummer. Each player has a specific role: the time keeper plays a fixed repeating pattern most frequently on the bell, the supporting drums play background parts, and the master drummer moves freely from one rhythmic pattern to another, creating a spontaneous feeling and form, that most western ears might call "improvisation".

In "Hallelujah Games" ~~PIANO II~~ the marimba functions in the role of the time keeper (sometimes adding additional supporting parts), and PIANO I functions in the role of the master drummer. The piece is composed so that any combination of cells or patterns can be played effectively at the same time. Please note that in the following text the words "cell" and "pattern" will be used interchangeably.

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME:

Each player chooses:

- which patterns to play
- which patterns to omit
- how many times to repeat each pattern (players need not change from one pattern to the other at the same time)
- the order of the patterns
- which octave to play in (although some choices are suggested in the score)
- dynamics

Hallelujah Games

by Amy D. Kubin
1995

♩ = 180 192

♪ = ♪ at all times

A

MARIMBA

1 2

MARIMBA CONTINUES

A1

piano down octave

PIANO

D E F

5:2 6:2

2 5 6 F

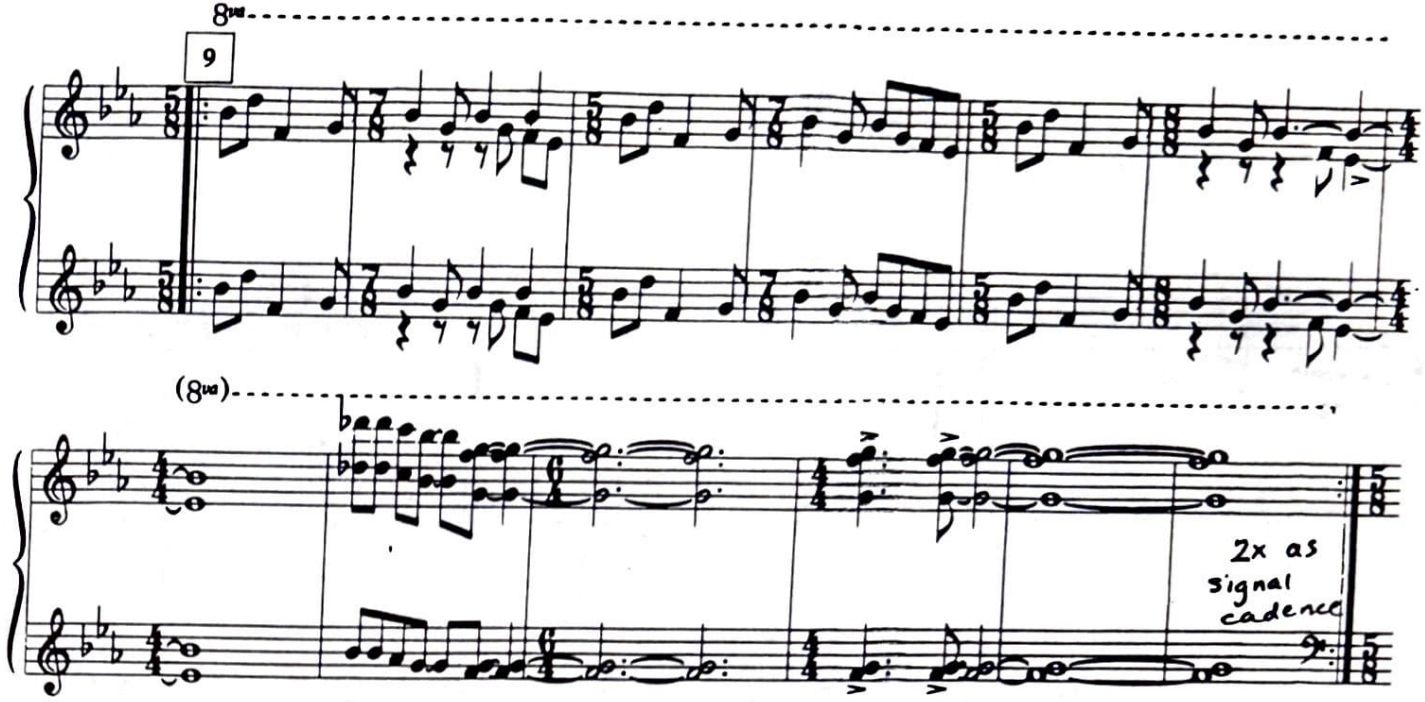
3+3+2 3+3+2

5:2 6:2

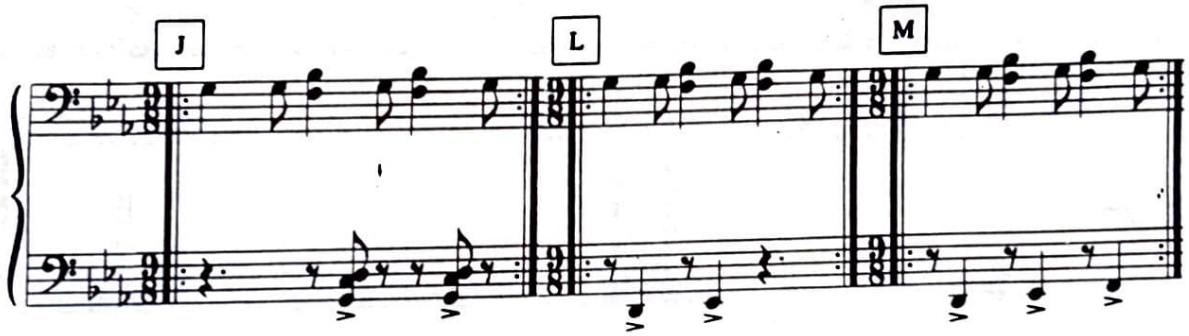
A

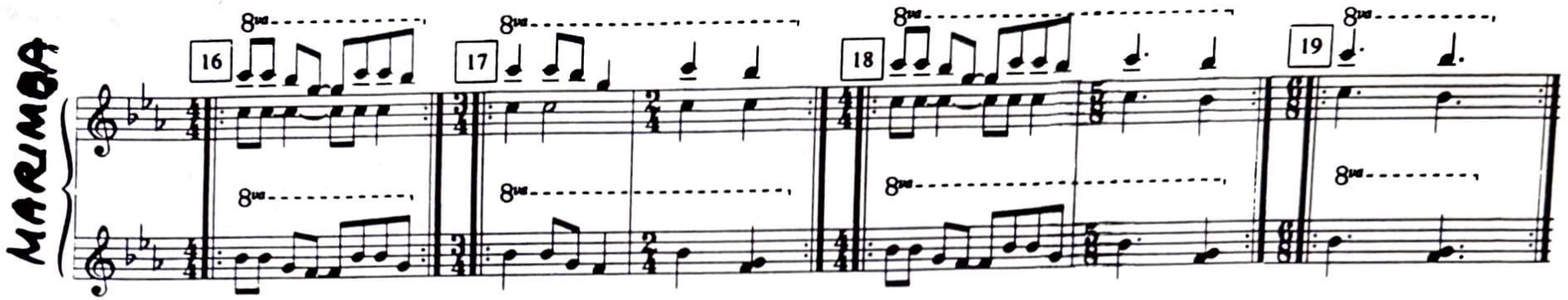
B

MARIMBA

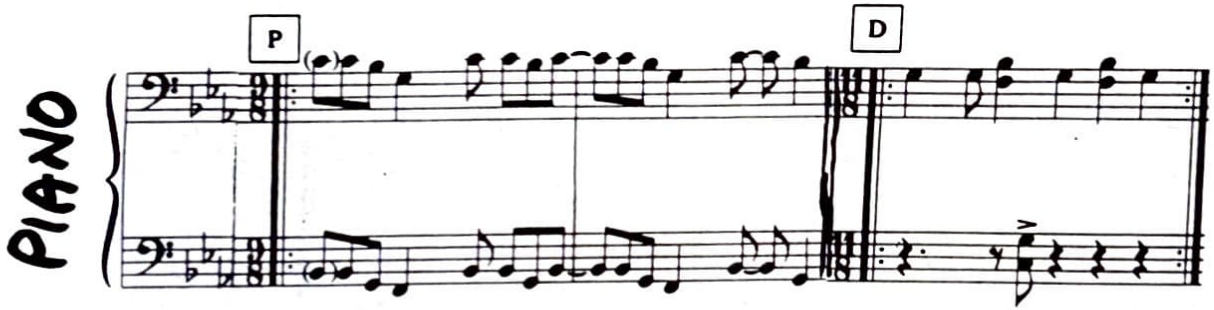


PIANO





C



PLEASE CONTACT AMY RUBIN FOR SCORE AND PARTS

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