

Copper Ouroboros

for solo tuba and electronics

(2024)

Mason Moy

Program Notes:

Copper Ouroboros involves placing a small speaker inside of the tuba, and having it play back recorded tuba sounds. The live tuba and pre-recorded tuba both fight to be heard, causing intense interference when they are played together at the same time. The piece is performed in one long circular breath, and as the fight goes on, the performer gets more and more tired. The piece concludes with the tuba finally eating itself.

Performance Notes

Electronics:

A SuperCollider patch triggers the recorded tuba sounds over a 10-minute duration. The sounds are semi-fixed. General harmonic events are fixed, while the order in which the notes appear in a cluster is not. The score is a transcription of one possible realization of the electronics part, with all possibilities accounted for.

A small, consumer-grade Bluetooth speaker is used inside of the tuba bell. I personally use the ANKER Soundcore Portable Bluetooth Speaker, though have experimented with many others at a similar size and price range. The piece works best when the speaker is set to 80-100% volume.

Performer:

The whole piece is a trill on the 4th valve that starts extremely slowly, speeds up to as fast as possible, then slows back down. Breathe through your nose for the entire piece. Taking your mouth off of the mouthpiece changes the sound of the speaker dramatically, so circular breathing is required.

Timing:

The SuperCollider patch has a built in timer that corresponds to the timestamps above the score. Performers do not have to be exact with the timestamps, gestures can be a few seconds ahead or behind. The electronics will work the same way.

Aleatoric box notation represents material that is played in any order. It does not have to start at the beginning. Standard repeat signs indicate that the material must start at the beginning and cycle through until the next event starts.

Copper Ouroboros

Mason Moy

0'00" **0'30"**

Tuba

new note is played every 11-13 seconds

Electronics

p

This section of the score spans from 0:00 to 0:30. The Tuba part begins with a whole note on G2, followed by a whole rest. At 0:30, it plays a half note on G2, then a half note on F2, with a slur and a *p* dynamic marking. The Electronics part starts with a whole note on G2, followed by a whole note on F2, then a whole note on E2, with a *p* dynamic marking. A box highlights the first three notes of the Electronics part. Both parts end with a thick black bar and an arrow pointing right.

1'00" **1'15"** **1'30"** **1'45"**

Tba

with ring modulation
new note is played every 8-10 seconds

Elec.

This section of the score spans from 1:00 to 1:45. The Tuba part begins with a whole note on G2, followed by a whole rest. At 1:15, it plays a half note on G2, then a half note on F2, with a slur. At 1:30, it plays a half note on G2, then a half note on F2, with a slur. At 1:45, it plays a half note on G2, then a half note on F2, with a slur. The Electronics part starts with a whole note on G2, followed by a whole note on F2, then a whole note on E2, with a *p* dynamic marking. A box highlights the first three notes of the Electronics part. Both parts end with a thick black bar and an arrow pointing right.

2'00"

Tba

mp

ring modulation stops
new note is played every 0.5, 4, or 5 seconds

Elec.

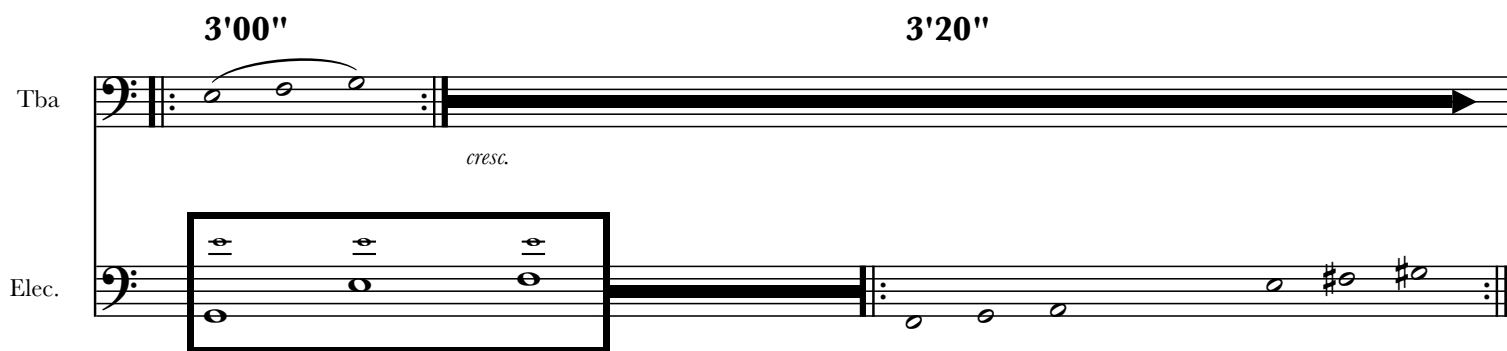
This section of the score starts at 2:00. The Tuba part begins with a whole note on G2, followed by a whole note on F2, then a whole note on E2, with a slur and a *mp* dynamic marking. The Electronics part starts with a whole note on G2, followed by a whole note on F2, then a whole note on E2, with a *p* dynamic marking. A box highlights the first three notes of the Electronics part. Both parts end with a thick black bar and an arrow pointing right.

3'00" **3'20"**

Tba

cresc.

Elec.

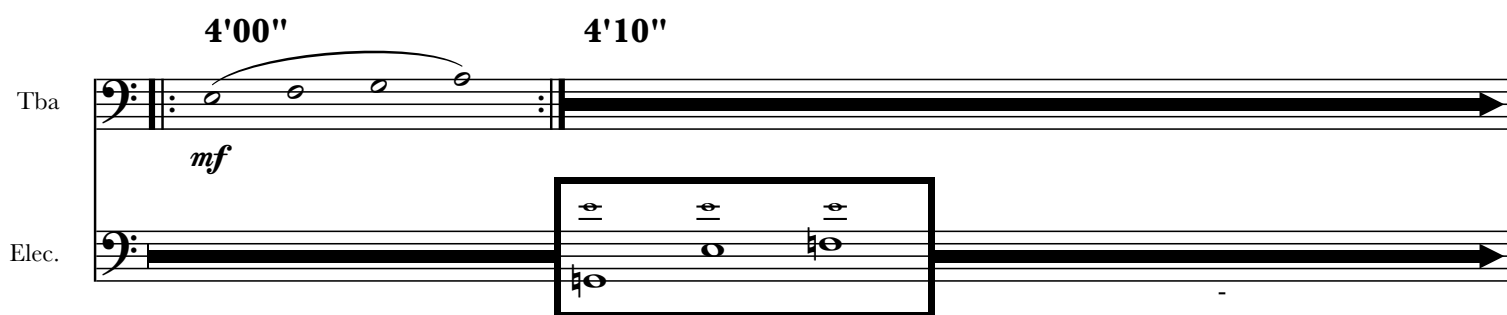


4'00" **4'10"**

Tba

mf

Elec.



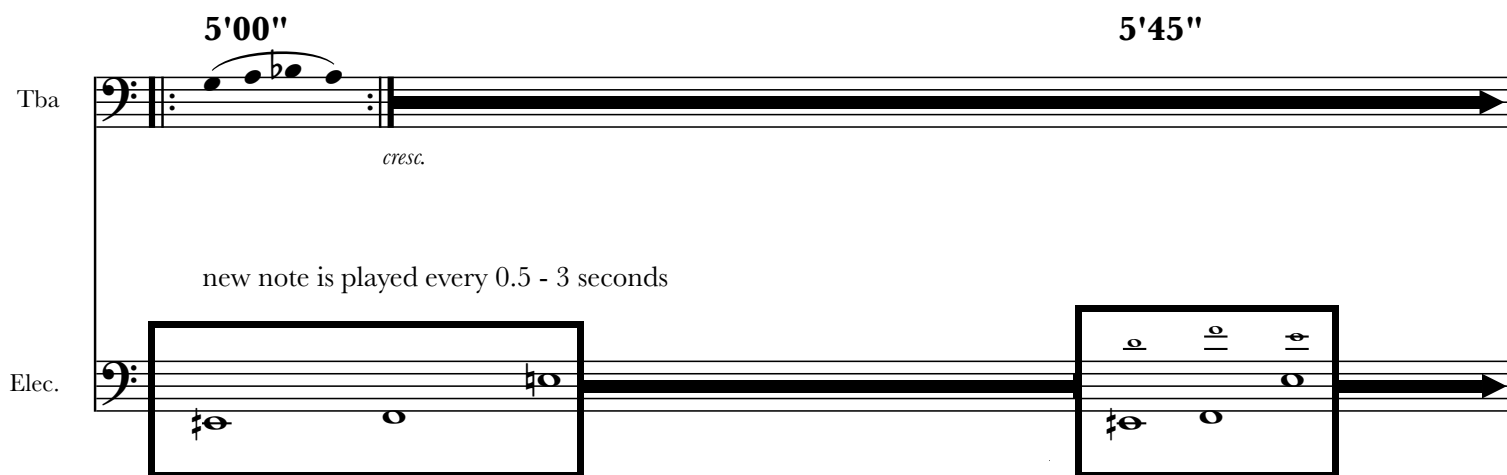
5'00" **5'45"**

Tba

cresc.

new note is played every 0.5 - 3 seconds

Elec.



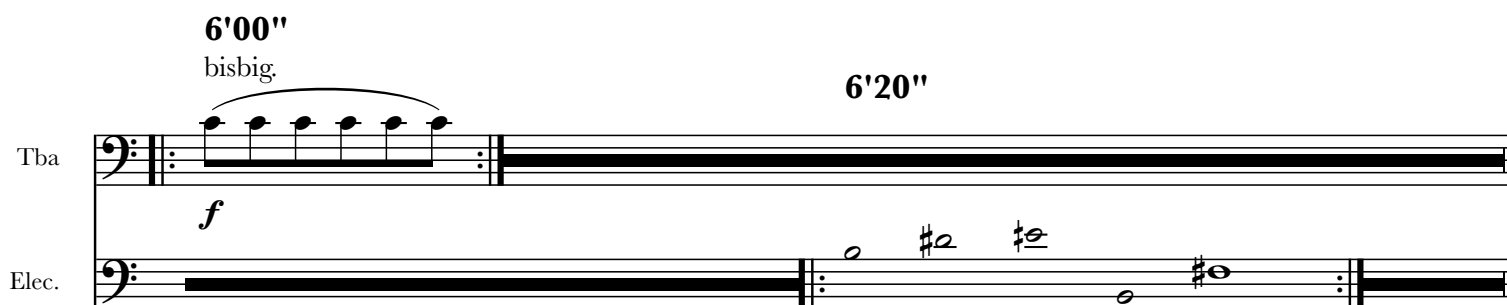
6'00" **6'20"**

Tba

bisbig.

f

Elec.



The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Tuba (Tba) and Electric Bass (Elec.).

Tuba (Tba): The staff is in bass clef. It begins with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first measure is marked with a time signature of 7'00". The second measure is marked with a time signature of 7'30". The Tuba part consists of a single melodic line with a slur over the first four measures. The dynamics are *dim.* (diminuendo) for the first four measures and *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the last four measures. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Electric Bass (Elec.): The staff is in bass clef. It begins with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first measure is marked with a time signature of 7'00". The second measure is marked with a time signature of 7'30". The Electric Bass part consists of a single melodic line with a slur over the first four measures. The dynamics are *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the first four measures and *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the last four measures. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Tuba (Tba) and Electric Bass (Elec.).

Tuba (Tba): The score is written in bass clef. It begins with a measure at 8'00" containing a half note G2, a half note F2, and a half note E2, all beamed together. This is followed by a double bar line and a measure at 8'40" containing a half note G2, a half note F2, and a half note E2, all beamed together. The dynamic marking *dim.* is placed below the first measure, and *p* is placed below the second measure.

Electric Bass (Elec.): The score is written in bass clef. It begins with a measure at 8'00" containing a half note G2, a half note F2, and a half note E2, all beamed together. This is followed by a double bar line and a measure at 8'40" containing a half note G2, a half note F2, and a half note E2, all beamed together. The dynamic marking *p* is placed below the first measure. A box highlights the second measure, with the text "new note is played every 6 - 9 seconds" written above it.

9'00" , , 10'00" (end)

Tba

8^{ba}

Elec.