

NATHANIEL BARTLETT

CRONOMETRO

UNSPECIFIED TIME-BASED MEDIA

FOR PAYTON MACDONALD'S SONIC DIVIDE PROJECT
LINEAR SCORE
COMPOSED NOVEMBER 2015

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CRONOMETRO WAS COMPOSED FOR PAYTON MACDONALD'S SONIC DIVIDE PROJECT

about (Payton MacDonald, from sonicdivide.com, accessed 11-28-15)

The Sonic Divide is a unique adventure that combines creative music with ultra-distance mountain biking. I will ride a mountain bike over 2,500 miles—mostly off-road—while periodically stopping to perform music specifically created for this event.

The Great Divide Mountain Biking Route spans the entire United States from the Canadian to the Mexican borders, approximately 2,500 miles. The Adventure Cycling Association mapped the route in the 1990s.

The route always stays within a few miles of the spine of the continent—the Continental Divide—and traverses the states of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico. As one rides along the Continental Divide one actually crosses over it 30 times between the two borders. I am commissioning 30 composers to write pieces that I will perform each time I cross the Continental Divide. Each crossing is marked on the maps I will use and when I reach one I will stop, dismount my bike, and perform a piece. The Divide crossings are on mountaintops, in the desert, in the deep forest, and everywhere in between.

I will carry lightweight recording devices with me so that I can make video and audio recordings of each performance. These will capture the music and some of the ambient sounds of the different environments. I will then compile these into recordings for release later in the year. I won't be racing, but I will be riding hard and fast as I usually do on my adventures, averaging at least 100–130 miles a day, typically riding (or walking if there's snow . . .) from 5:30 in the morning until about 11:00 p.m. or midnight each day. I anticipate it will take me about 25 to 30 days to complete this adventure. I will ride totally self-supported, carrying all my own food, drink, tools, and camping gear. I plan to do this in June, 2016.

Last year I rode about 500 miles of the route, in five days. This was the fourth multi-day adventure I completed, in addition to dozens of overnight trips. Now that I have had a taste for it, I am eager to do the entire thing, but I want to do it in a way that is musical, in a way that brings together my interests in creative music and extreme endurance sports and the outdoors.

The pieces will be scored for my solo voice, or solo percussion with found percussion objects, or a combination of the two. If there are people around I will perform for them. If not, I will simply perform for the universe. (I will be by myself for most of the ride.) Aside from the purely beautiful musical experiences and the athletic challenge, I view this event as a metaphor of rugged American individualism, a celebration of our potential and our place in this vast cosmos. Also, I was born and raised in Idaho, very close to a portion of the route, and I am eager to reconnect with that land. I spent my youth wandering the Rocky Mountains by foot, bike, and skis. My passion for creative music is undoubtedly related to my love of those wild, craggy peaks.

Payton MacDonald's parameters for the piece

I really love improvising and I would much prefer if your piece allowed for a great deal of improvisation. This will also be useful because it will allow me to interact with whatever unique environment I am in at the moment. Your piece could take the shape of a lead sheet, or a graphic score, conventional music notation, written instructions, a combination of all of the above, or something else entirely. But whatever you do, I definitely want to be able to improvise with each piece.

I will only be able to carry one pair of Malletech mallets, so if you choose to write for percussion, please be sure that your piece is open ended and flexible so that I can use whatever "instruments" happen to be near me. This might include body percussion or sticks or rocks or logs or whatever. And of course it may include percussive vocalizing, which I enjoy doing and have quite a bit of experience because of my many years of tabla study.

The length of your piece may be flexible. Since they will involve improvisation I may open them up a bit if conditions permit, but certainly if you specify something short that is fine, too. Given the number of pieces and the intensity of the experience, I suspect shorter works will be better, but I don't want to hamper your imagination. If you're feeling something longer that's no problem. But do keep in mind that I need to keep pedaling. Services are few and far between and if I dally too long in the wilderness I will run out of food and water.

GUIDE TO THE NOTATION

Although written from a musical perspective, cronometro could be adapted for any time-based medium.

time

The distance between adjacent vertical lines represents exactly one second.

icons

Icons represent the dominant textures in a given one-second increment.

dynamics

The shaded regions below the icons represent the dominant dynamic range of a given moment.

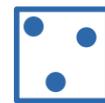
GUIDE TO THE ICONS



high density of events



medium density of events



low density of events



staccato



legato



non-regular event start points



ostinato event start points



ostinato event start points with
select events replaced with rests



increase speed



decrease speed



crossfade between two textures



glissandi up and down



extreme version of current texture(s)



long/sustained events



incorporate periods of rest



tremolo



fast grace notes



inactivity



high



low



repetition



alternate between two textures



alternate between four textures



vibrato



ascending texture



descending texture



sharp, percussive attack (envelope)



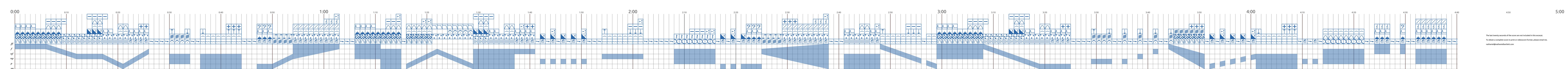
round, gentle attack and release (envelope)



abrupt, quick release (envelope)



accents



The last twenty seconds of the score are not included in this excerpt.
To obtain a complete score in print or videoscore format, please email me.
nathaniel@nathanielbartlett.com