

# Todd Tarantino

# Traffic

for 13 Instrumentalists



# Todd Tarantino

## Traffic (2007)

### for 13 instrumentalists

## Instrumentation

- Flute (doubling Piccolo)
- Oboe
- Clarinet in Bb
- Bassoon
- Horn in F
- Trumpet in Bb
- Trombone
- Percussion
  - Wood
    - 7 Temple Blocks (gradated in pitch)
  - Skin
    - Bongo Drum (2 pitches), 1 Conga Drum,
    - 2 Timbale Drums, 3 Tom-Toms (1 medium,
    - 1 medium-low, 1 low), Bass Drum
  - Metal
    - 5 Nipple Gongs (gradated in pitch),
    - Suspended Cymbal
  - Resonators (from a marimba or vibraphone played like a very large guiro)
- Piano
- Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Bass
  - (The Bass part is conceived for a four string bass with an extension.)

## Approximate Duration

15 minutes


## Conductor's Score in C

Standard transpositions apply to the piccolo and contrabass

## Quarter Tone Notation

- ♯ = 1/4 tone sharp
- ♭ = 1/4 tone flat
- ♯ = 3/4 tone sharp
- ♭ = 3/4 tone flat

## Other Symbols:

- I** = a multiphonic of the player's choosing
-  = a glissando of unspecified interval in the direction indicated

## Program Note

This piece was inspired by the chaotic traffic of the Indian city of Varanasi. The two-lane road that is ostensibly the "fast" option around the city, bypassing as it does the many narrow lanes of the old part of town, is actually teeming with cars, motorized rickshaws, cycle rickshaws, street vendors, horsecarts, bicycles, intrepid pedestrians, and an occasional camel or elephant; rising above this sea of metal, exhaust, and noise, like so many massive, furry islands, are Varanasi's seemingly oblivious, immobile cows. To enter into this chaos is to accept that every forward movement is a struggle, and that frustration is best avoided by measuring success in meters rather than miles.

What I found most exciting about the roads of Varanasi, however, was that this chaos was actually structured by countless context-dependent rules: individual agents, whether camel or bicycle, enjoy a great deal of freedom even as they negotiate many constantly shifting rules. In *Traffic*, I wanted to recreate this situation for the instrumentalists. Throughout, rules guide the interaction of four tempo layers, the shifting instrumentation, and at times the choice of pitches. Within these rules, though, the individual instruments' melodies are for the most part free. It is this tension between structural control and freedom within those structures that animates and frustrates *Traffic*.

*Traffic* is dedicated to Jeffrey Milarsky and the intrepid players of the Manhattan Sinfonietta.

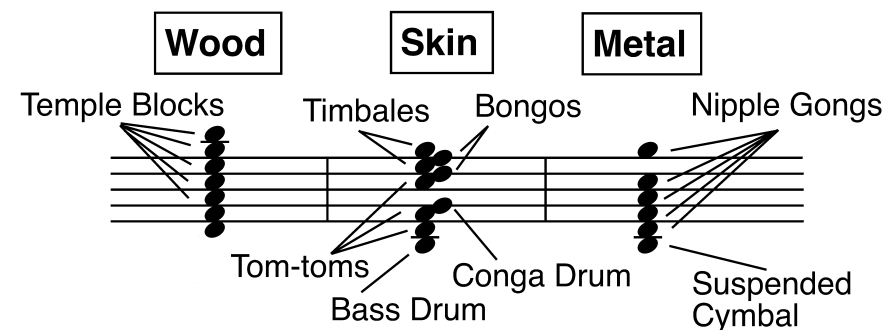
## For further information, please contact:

todd@toddtarantino.com

## A Note on Percussion

In the score percussion is notated as either Wood, Skin or Metal, or by the specific instruments. Percussion instruments should be gradated according to pitch. Players should choose mallets based on the dynamic level of the music at the specific time. In all cases the sound should be focused.

## Percussion Layout in the Score



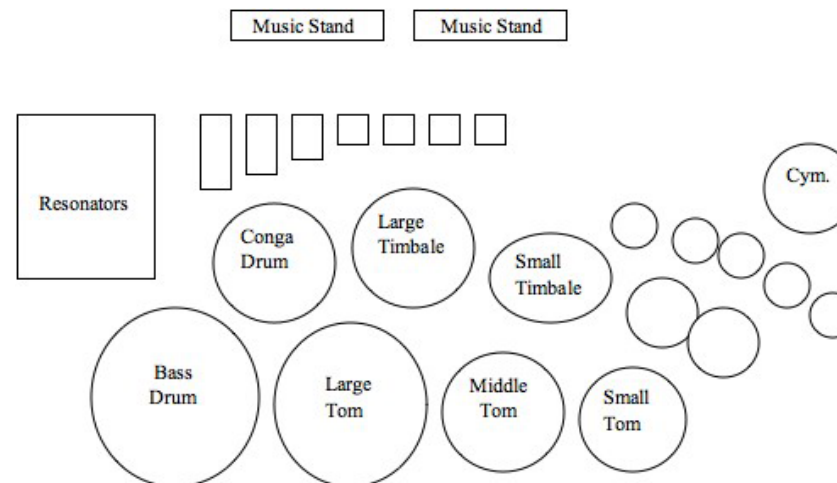
## A Note on Seating the Ensemble

The composer recommends that seating and stands for the ensemble be available on stage. However, with the exception of the piano and percussion the remaining seating and stands should be set as if for a smaller ensemble. The confusion of the ensemble recognizing that there is not enough seating, finding chairs on the side of the stage and setting their places is to be desired. This aspect should not be rehearsed. Ultimately, the ensemble seating should be that of a standard chamber sinfonietta.

## Performance Notes

Rhythms should be played accurately, but not mechanically. Individual lines should be strong and individuated. Players should follow rhythms and dynamics as indicated in their parts; neighbors may have different rhythms, dynamics and the like. Tempi are provided as suggestions, the entire work may be taken at a slower tempo provided the proportions of the tempi are kept. Within tempos, the conductor is encouraged to be flexible. Overall this is a work that puts individual players in an environment in which they are asked to perform difficult acts in an environment that pays them little heed. The structure of the piece is such that there are a series of soloists accompanied by a shifting arrays of trios; this structure is sometimes interrupted by ensemble statements. Sometimes it may be quite difficult for soloists to rise above the ensemble, this is intended and should be embraced by the players. To the strong, such as the brass, goes the test of endurance; this, too, is intended. Individual players should play throughout with a maximum of expressivity.

## Suggested Layout for the Percussionist



# Traffic

Todd Tarantino

for 13 instrumentalists

4/4 ♩ = c. 72 **with a sense of adventure** *Piccolo* *legato* ♩ = c. 120

Flute *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Oboe *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Clarinet *p* *f* *ff*

Bassoon *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Horn *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Trumpet *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Trombone *pp* *mf* *f* *ff*

Percussion *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Piano *p* *mf* *ff*

Violin *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Viola *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Cello *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Contrabass *p* *f* *ff*

NB: Measures 1-6 should sound as one gesture opening from the trombone

♩ = c. 72 **come sopra**

♩ = c. 120

*legato*

Musical score for the first system, measures 1-6. It features four staves with various dynamics (p, mf, f) and articulations (legato, triplets).

Musical score for the second system, measures 7-12. It features four staves with dynamics (pp, p, mf, f) and articulations (legato, triplets).

Musical score for the third system, measures 13-18. It features four staves with dynamics (p, mf, f) and articulations (con bravura, cresc., con ped.).

♩ = c. 72 **come sopra**

♩ = c. 120

*capriccioso*

Musical score for the fourth system, measures 19-24. It features four staves with dynamics (p, mf, f) and articulations (legato, triplets).

Musical score for a piano piece, page 14. The score is written for a grand staff with five systems of staves.

- System 1:** Contains three staves. Dynamics include *f*, *ff*, and *mf*. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 3, 5, and 6. Includes the instruction *overblow...*.
- System 2:** Contains two staves. Dynamics include *mf* and *f*.
- System 3:** Contains a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). Dynamics include *f*, *ff*, and *mf*. Fingerings 3, 5, 6, 7 are shown. Includes the instruction *Ardeente*.
- System 4:** Contains a grand staff. Dynamics include *ff*, *mf*, and *f*. Includes the instruction *con ped.* and *to CB*.
- System 5:** Contains a grand staff. Dynamics include *f* and *ff*. Includes the instruction *rude pizz.*.

Time signatures are 4/4 and 3/16. The score concludes with a double bar line.

4/4  $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 90$  3/8 4/4 affettuoso 2/4

*mf* *f* *ff* *rinforzando* *f* *ff* *sfz*

*mf* *f* *rinforzando* *ff* *f* *mf*

*sfz* *mf* *f* *f* *ff* *sfz* *mf*

4/4 3/8 4/4 2/4

*f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

*f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

4/4 3/8 4/4 2/4

*f* *ff* *effortlessly* *mf* *strepitoso* *ff*

*ff* *ff* *con ped.* *f* *ff*

4/4 3/8 4/4 2/4

*con bravura* *f* *ff* *rinforzando* *f* *ff* *pizz.* *arco* *f*

*f* *mf* *f* *ff* *sfz* *feroce* *sfz*

*con fuoco* *f* *ff* *sfz* *f*

*arco* *mf* *f*

19 *mf* *f*

\* Players should choose an easy to sound multiphonic. Generally, overblowing the lowest pitch notated works well.