

Jesse Budel

Mobilong

'haven for birds'

for string ensemble and electroacoustics

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Program Notes

Mobilong is derived from *moopolthawong*, a Ngaralta clan (of the Ngarrindjeri Nation) word meaning 'haven for birds', and nowadays refers to a former swamp-turned-irrigation area to the north of Murray Bridge, South Australia.

The history of the place tells much as to its current circumstances: once a natural floodplain, the transformation to irrigation land in the early 20th century interrupted the flood cycles which replenished aquifers (keeping saline groundwater at bay) and rejuvenated the native ecosystem. Droughts between 2000-2010 led to wide spread acidification of soils and local water, compromising a variety of land patches and related habitats for local flora and fauna, and consequently the resultant soundscape. Recent collaborative efforts (from 2010) by SA Water, The Waite Institute and other bodies have led to implementation of remedial projects; nonetheless, the current state of the ecosystem is substantially changed and voiced through the associated soundscape.

This work explores that soundscape through the representation of a soundwalk experience at the site. Traversing an unsealed road which extends from a cliff face to the river front, the stereophonic acoustic environment evolves over time as the listener moves past contrasting land patches and habitats. Beginning with passage over a channel (disturbing a group of ducks), we become surrounded either side by open fields, with high-pitched cricket choruses underpinning sky-borne avian calls. At the halfway point, the stereophony bisects: to the left, an introduced plantation provides new habitat for perching and song birds, whilst the right continues with wide open fields. This culminates in a rhapsodic dusk chorus at the river front involving diverse avian and anuran species, evoking the very identity of the place as a haven for birds.

Transcriptions of bird calls have been from the field recordings of Fred Van Gessel and Michael Dahlem (via the Birds In Backyards website), with their permission for their respective recordings.

Performance Notes

Staging Notes

This work is for string ensemble and octophonic array. The schematic to the right is advised for staging.

The string ensemble, ideally large, is split into four separate groups, each situated between speakers on either side of the audience.

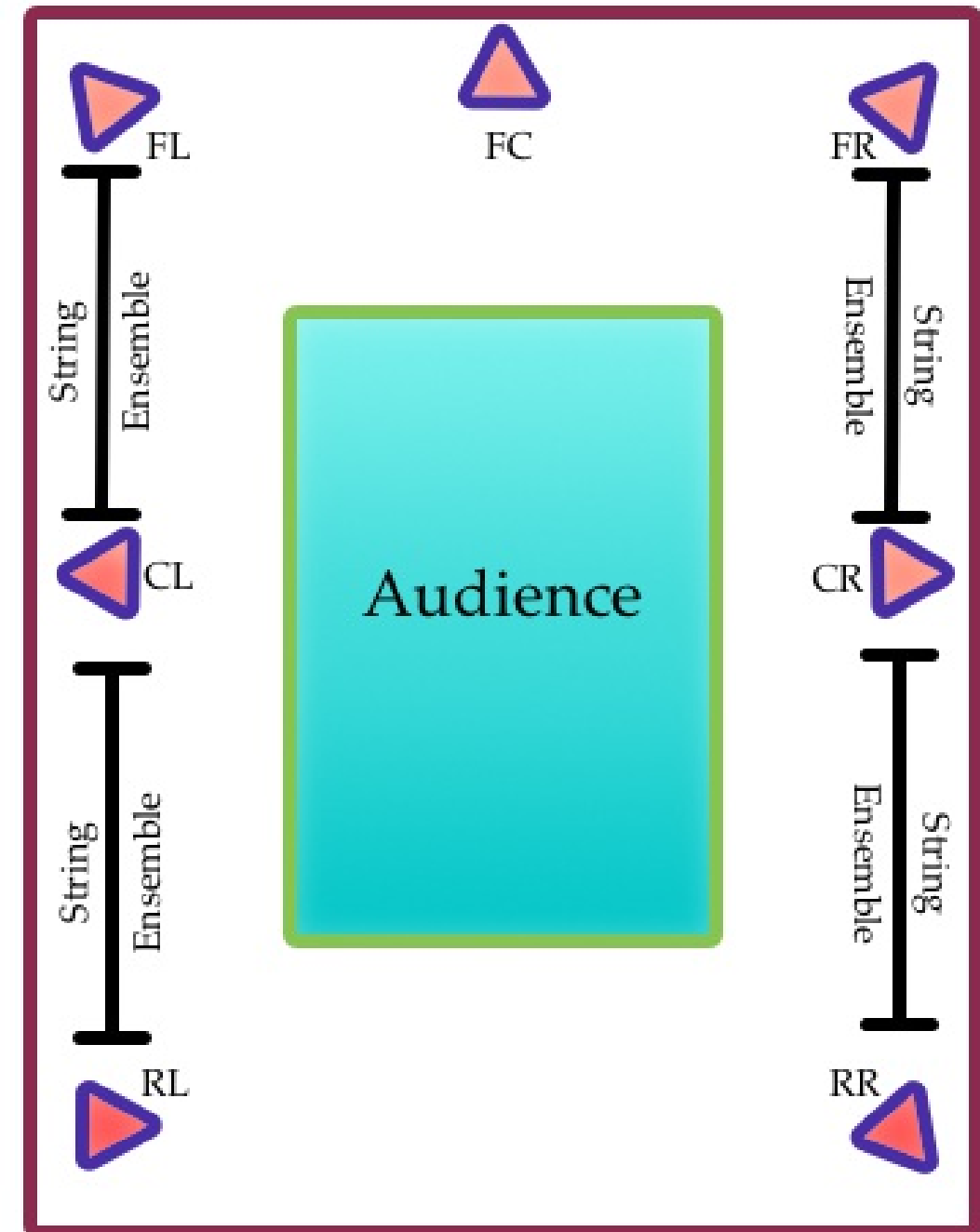
Score layout:

The score is punctuated with time cues. With each cue, groups are presented with a variety of modules to be played. There is one module per bar, with each set of modules (grouped together as a succession of bars) representing the calls of a particular species. Any presented modules may be played at any time, at each player's discretion, and are to continue being played throughout the piece after they have presented, accumulating as new material is presented.

Performers are encouraged to listen and play/enter into dialogue with other members of the full ensemble, much alike a dawn/dusk animal chorus.

The material is presented on a variety of staves and in various registers/pitches, such that any player may perform whatever is possible for their instrument. Specific instructions for each technique is found accompanying the relevant call (see performance notes for further details).

(A) time keeping device/s should be employed to keep the ensemble synchronised with the recorded material.



Performance Notes

Notation:

Where clusters are presented in the score, the performer is permitted to play any note within the cluster. Intervals (double stops) are to be played as advised.

Each call is accompanied by a recommended tempo, interpreted at the performer's discretion.

The reference recordings from which the transcriptions have been made can be found at the Birds In Backyards website (contact the composer for further information).

Techniques:

A variety of notations are employed to convey specific playing techniques:

Reeds:

This gestural sound is produced by bow on the body of the instrument. The bowing rate is at the discretion of the performer (as per unpredictable wind behaviour).

Cricket calls:

This sound, an evocation of field cricket chirps, is to be produced by playing *ricochet* with the tip of the bow, *sul ponticello*.

Bird calls:

As previously mentioned, each call is denoted by a singular bar, and calls are collected together with respect to each species. They are not to be played sequentially: as with all other content, each performer may play any call at their discretion.

- Dig In: this refers to the use of more bow pressure in short bow strokes, to provide a grittier, rougher sound.
- Bite: this refers to the application of more bow pressure in longer bow strokes, to provide a harsher, rough attack (and transient) to the sound.
- Chop Technique: this refers to the tango-style 'chop' technique, where one 'chops' on the short length of strings behind the bridge

Mobilong

'haven for birds'

Jesse Budel

0:00 (Tape begins)
Footstep = c. 60

Front Left Strings

0:00 (Tape begins)
Footstep = c. 60

Rear Left Strings

0:00 (Tape begins)
Footstep = c. 60

Front Right Strings

0:00 (Tape begins)
Footstep = c. 60

Rear Right Strings

Reeds freely

Reeds freely

Reeds freely

Reeds freely

0:30 (pp-p, no further reeds)

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
ricochet on tip of bow
sul pont. slight pause between calls

White-Fronted Chat
freely

poco sul pont.
with bite etc.

Little Grass Bird
moderately slowly

molto leggero

House Sparrow
freely
poco sul pont. and molto vibrato etc.!

0:30 (pp-p)
Reeds freely

0:30 (pp-p, no further reeds)

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
ricochet on tip of bow
sul pont. slight pause between calls

White-Fronted Chat
freely

poco sul pont.
with bite etc.

Little Grass Bird
moderately slowly

molto leggero

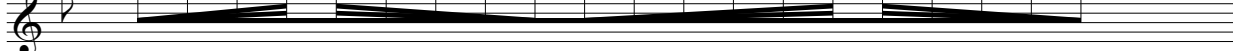
House Sparrow
freely
poco sul pont. and molto vibrato etc.!

0:30 (pp-p)
Reeds freely

2:30 (*p-mp*, no further crickets)

Masked Lapwing
freely

poco sul tasto, dig in with bow
sim.

FL 
vary accel/rit. and length of each phrase

Whistling Kite
rhapsodically

normale


sim. ad lib.

Black Kite
lyrically

normale
molto vib.



Nankeen Kestrel
moderately

sul pont.



Black-Shouldered Kite
freely (all)

sul pont., overbow *gliss.* *8^{va}* normale, poco vib. *8^{va}* sul tasto, ornament (grace notes, mordents) ad lib. etc.


improvise rhythm

Willie Wagtail
rhapsodically (all)

sul pont. *8^{va}* sul pont. *8^{va}* sul pont. *8^{va}* 'chop' technique on OSB



Grey Fantail
moderately

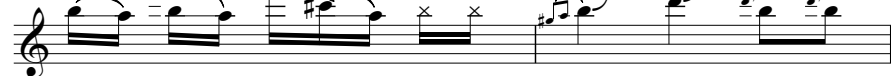
poco sul pont repeat either note ad lib. *15^{ma}* rhapsodically (sul tasto, as possible) *15^{ma}* rhapsodically (sul tasto, as possible) *15^{ma}* rhapsodically (sul tasto, as possible) *15^{ma}*



player may ad lib.
with similar gestures

Common Blackbird
rhapsodically (all)

normale



Australian Reed Warbler
rhapsodically

normale


non-pitch → full pitch *3* sim.

3:00 (p-mp, no further crickets)

Masked Lapwing
freely

poco sul tasto, dig in with bow

RL Musical notation for Masked Lapwing, RL part. It features a single melodic line on a treble clef staff with various ornaments and dynamics. A 'sim.' (simulazione) marking is present. Below the staff, the instruction 'vary accel/rit. and length of each phrase' is written.

3:00 (p-mp)

Reeds
freely

FR Musical notation for Reeds, FR part. It consists of a single line on a five-line staff with a treble clef, containing a few notes and rests.

Whistling Kite
rhapsodically

Musical notation for Whistling Kite. It shows a melodic line with a glissando (gliss.) and a trill (tr.). The instruction 'sim. ad lib.' is written below.

Black Kite
lyrically

normale

Musical notation for Black Kite. It shows a melodic line with a 'molto vib.' (molto vibrato) marking.

Nankeen Kestrel
moderately

poco sul pont.

RL Musical notation for Nankeen Kestrel, RL part. It features a melodic line with a 'poco sul pont.' (poco sul ponticello) marking.

Black-Shouldered Kite
freely (all)

Musical notation for Black-Shouldered Kite. It includes instructions: 'sul pont., overbow', 'gliss.', 'normale, poco vib.', 'sul tasto, ornament (grace notes, mordents) ad lib.', and 'etc.'. A '3' (triple) marking is also present. Below the staff, the instruction 'improvise rhythm' is written.

Willie Wagtail
rhapsodically (all)

sul pont.

sul pont.

sul pont.

'chop' technique on OSB

RL Musical notation for Willie Wagtail, RL part. It features a melodic line with 'sul pont.' (sul ponticello) markings and a 'chop' technique on OSB (Orchestra Sideboard) indicated by 'x' marks. A 'sim.' (simulazione) marking is also present.

Grey Fantail
moderately

poco sul pont

repeat either note ad lib.

rhapsodically

(sul tasto, as possible)

rhapsodically

(sul tasto, as possible)

rhapsodically

(sul tasto, as possible)

Musical notation for Grey Fantail. It features a melodic line with 'poco sul pont' and 'repeat either note ad lib.' markings. It includes 'rhapsodically' markings and '15ma' (15th fret) markings. A '3' (triple) marking is also present. Below the staff, the instruction 'player may ad lib. with similar gestures' is written.

Common Blackbird
rhapsodically (all)

normale

RL Musical notation for Common Blackbird, RL part. It features a melodic line with a 'normale' marking.

Australian Reed Warbler
rhapsodically

normale

(*) (*) *

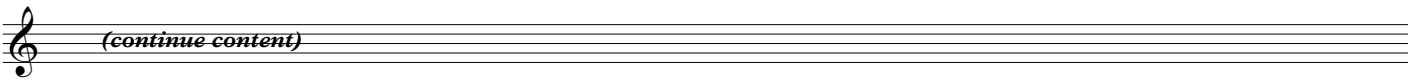
Musical notation for Australian Reed Warbler. It features a melodic line with 'normale' and '(*)(*)*' markings. It includes 'non-pitch' and 'full pitch' markings, a '3' (triple) marking, and a 'sim.' (simulazione) marking.

3:15 (continue content, no further crickets)

Reeds
freely

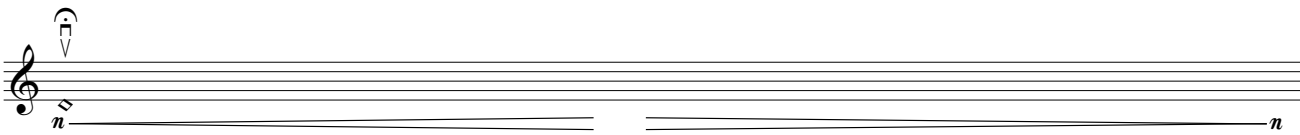
FL Musical notation for Reeds, FL part. It consists of a single line on a five-line staff with a treble clef, containing a few notes and rests.

3:30 (gradually fade out crickets, no further reeds)

RR 

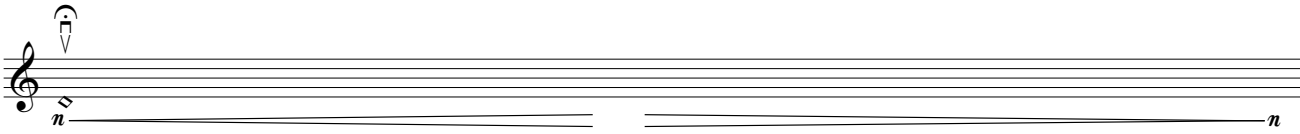
3:45 (no further crickets)

Reeds
freely

RL 

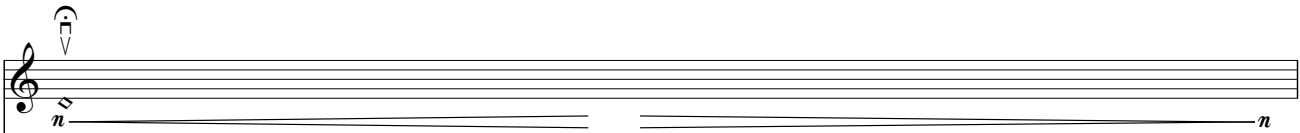
4:00 (gradually fade out crickets)

Reeds
freely

FR 

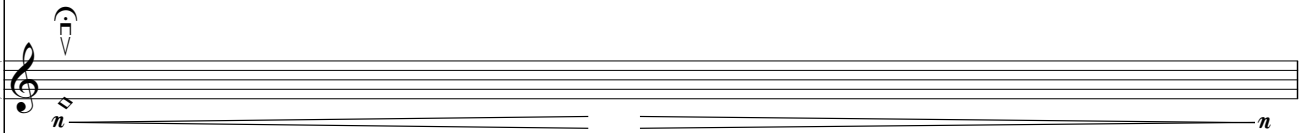
4:30

Reeds
freely

FL 

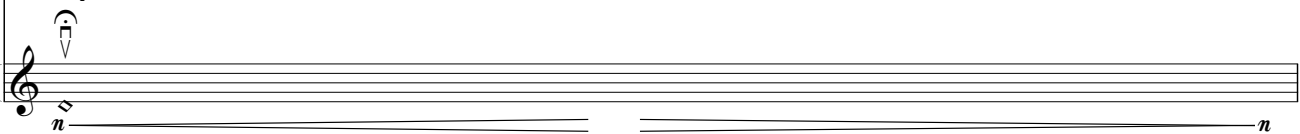
4:30 (no further crickets)

Reeds
freely

FR 

4:30 (no further crickets)

Reeds
freely

RR 

5:00 (mp-mf)

RL { *(continue content)*

FR { *(continue content)*

RR { *(continue content)*

5:15 (mp-mf)

FL { *(continue content)*

5:15
Reeds
freely

FR { *(continue content)*

n *p* *n*

5:45

Reeds
freely

RL { *(continue content)*

n *p* *n*

5:45

Reeds
freely

RR { *(continue content)*

n *p* *n*

6:00

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
ricochet on tip of bow

RL { *(continue content)*

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible

15^{ma}

ricochet

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible

ricochet on tip of bow
sul pont.

slight pause between calls

15^{ma}

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible

ricochet on tip of bow
sul pont.

slight pause between calls

15^{ma}

6:15 (no further reeds)

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
ricochet on tip of bow

FL

6:15
Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
ricochet

FR

Australian Raven
fast

poco sul pont.
slight bite at beginning
etc.

Crested Pigeon
moderately

on thickest possible string
poco sul tasto

Peace Dove
moderately (all)

on thickest possible string
poco sul pont.
drop bow slightly with stroke (little ricochet)

Spotted Dove
moderately (all)

play interval on thickest strings
sul tasto
play interval on thickest strings
sul tasto, with little ricochet on down bow
etc.

Galah
raucously

poco sul pont.
improvise rhythm

FL

Little Corella
raucously

poco sul pont.
thickest possible string

poco sul pont. and molto vib.
thickest possible string

Magpie lark
moderately fast

poco sul pont.
dig in

moderately fast

poco sul pont., moderate bow pressure

freely

poco sul pont., moderate bow pressure

Red Wattlebird
raucously (all)

sul pont., with much bow pressure
sul pont., with much bow pressure tap body of instrument

FL

Little Wattlebird
moderately (all)

normale
sul pont. sim.

sul pont.
dig in

(non-interval)
sul pont.
on the frog

normale
sul pont.

normale
sul pont.

sul pont.
dig in

Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater
moderately

(loco)

FL

moderately

moderately

as fast as possible

Gold-headed Cisticola
moderately (all)

normale
vary between accel. & rit.

Noisy Miner
raucously

Grey Shrike Thrush
rhapsodically

FL

quasi gliss.

Silvereeye
rhapsodically

poco sul tasto

poco sul pont.

etc.

Australian Hobby
moderately

poco sul pont.

FL

poco sul pont.

sim.

(end of call)

normale

sim.

like last call. begin at bottom of chord,
ascend and then move independently
in quarter tones

6:45
Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
ricochet on tip of bow

RL

6:45
Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
ricochet on tip of bow

RR

Australian Raven
fast
poco sul pont.
slight bite at beginning
etc.

Crested Pigeon
moderately
on thickest possible string
poco sul tasto

Peace Dove
moderately (all)
on thickest possible string
poco sul pont.
drop bow slightly with stroke (little ricochet)
normale

Spotted Dove
moderately (all)
play interval on thickest strings
sul tasto
play interval on thickest strings
sul tasto, with little ricochet on down bow
etc.

Galah
raucously
poco sul pont.
improvise rhythm
etc.

RL

Little Corella
raucously
poco sul pont.
thickest possible string
poco sul pont. and molto vib.
thickest possible string

Maggie lark
moderately fast
poco sul pont.
dig in
moderately fast
poco sul pont., moderate bow pressure
freely
poco sul pont., moderate bow pressure

Red Wattlebird
raucously (all)
sul pont., with much bow pressure
sul pont., with much bow pressure
tap body of instrument
non-pitch, sim.

RL

Little Wattlebird
moderately (all)
sul pont.
normale sim.
play interval sul pont.
(non-interval) sul pont. on the frog
normale sul pont.
normale sul pont.
sul pont. dig in

Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater
moderately
moderately
moderately
as fast as possible

RL

Gold-headed Cisticola
moderately (all)
normale
vary between accel. & rit.

Noisy Miner
raucously

Grey Shrike Thrush
rhapsodically
quasi gliss.

RL

Silvereeye
rhapsodically
poco sul tasto
poco sul pont.
etc.

Australian Hobby
moderately
poco sul pont.
poco sul pont.
sim.
(end of call)

RL

like last call. begin at bottom of chord,
ascend and then move independently
in quarter tones

8:15

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
ricochet on tip of bow

FL

8:15

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
ricochet on tip of bow

FR

8:45

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
ricochet on tip of bow

RL

Cricket Chorus
as fast as possible
8:45
ricochet on tip of bow

RR

9:15

Australian Raven
fast
poco sul pont.
slight bite at beginning
etc.

FR

Noisy Miner
raucously

Galah
raucously
poco sul pont.,
improvise rhythm
etc.

heavy bow, OSB (two strings)

Little Corella
raucously

poco sul pont.
thickest possible string

poco sul pont. and molto vib.
thickest possible string

Crested Pigeon
moderately
on thickest possible string
poco sul tasto
drop bow slightly with stroke (little ricochet)

FR

Magpie lark
moderately fast
poco sul pont.

moderately fast
poco sul pont., moderate bow pressure

freely
poco sul pont., moderate bow pressure

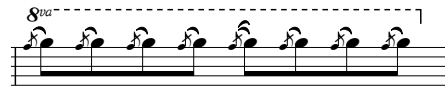
9:45

Australian Raven
fast

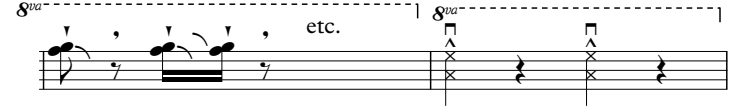
poco sul pont.
slight bite at beginning

RR 

Noisy Miner
raucously



Galah
raucously
poco sul pont.,
improvise rhythm



Little Corella
raucously

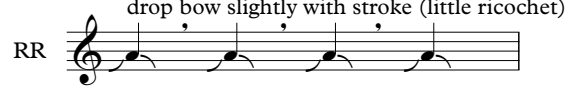
poco sul pont.
thickest possible string

poco sul pont. and molto vib.
thickest possible string



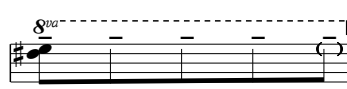
Crested Pigeon
moderately

on thickest possible string
poco sul tasto
drop bow slightly with stroke (little ricochet)

RR 


Maggie lark
moderately fast

poco sul pont.



moderately fast

poco sul pont., moderate bow pressure

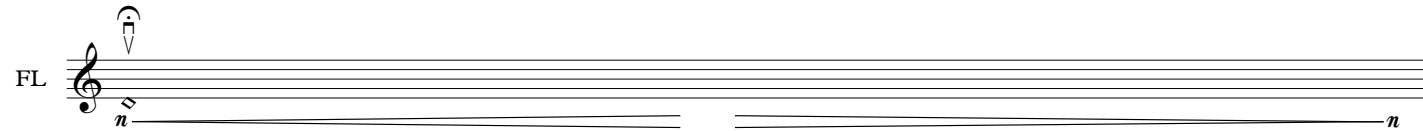


freely

poco sul pont., moderate bow pressure

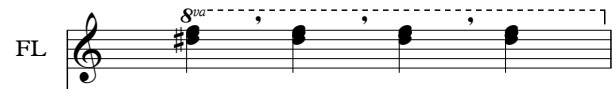


10:15 **Reeds**
freely

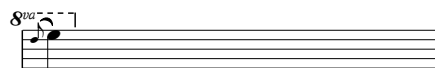
FL 

10:30 **Black-fronted dotterel**
moderately

on frog, with moderate bow pressure

FL 

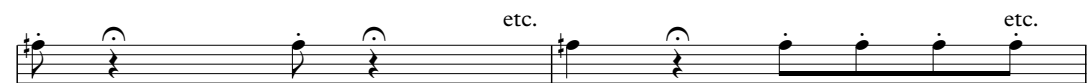
Red kneed dotterel
pointedly
normale



Red-necked avocet
pointedly

poco sul tasto

poco sul pont.
moderate bow pressure



(long pause)

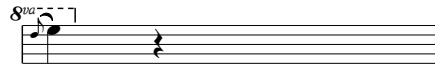
(mf-f, no further reeds)

10:30 **Black-fronted dotterel**
moderately

on frog, with moderate bow pressure

FR 

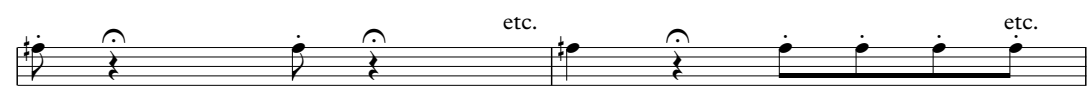
Red kneed dotterel
pointedly
normale



Red-necked avocet
pointedly

poco sul tasto

poco sul pont.
moderate bow pressure



(long pause)

Sacred Kingfisher
lyrically

FL *8^{va}* *sim*

FR *8^{va}* *sim*

ricochet

poco sul pont
with moderate bow pressure

Purple Swamphen
moderately

with mute, sul pont.

etc.

poco sul pont.
on med. thick string

with mute, sul pont.

Purple Swamphen
moderately

etc.

poco sul pont.
on med. thick string

Musk lorikeet
raucously

sul pont., with mute
thickest possible string

etc.

Musk lorikeet
raucously

(vary phrase length)

sul pont., with mute
thickest possible string

etc.

(vary phrase length)

10:45 (*f-ff*, no further reeds)

Black Swan

poco sul pont. with mute (honk-like)
with the frog

FL

Chestnut Teal

with bite $\xrightarrow{\text{quasi gliss.}}$ much bite with mute, with bite and release at end

Silver Gull

molto sul pont. sul tasto

10:45 (*mf-f*, no further crickets)

Reeds
freely

RL

Black-fronted dotterel
moderately

on frog, with moderate bow pressure

Red kneed dotterel
pointedly
normale

Red-necked avocet
pointedly

poco sul tasto poco sul pont. moderate bow pressure

10:45 (*f-ff*, no further reeds or crickets)

Black Swan

poco sul pont. with mute (honk-like)
with the frog

FR

Chestnut Teal

with bite $\xrightarrow{\text{quasi gliss.}}$ much bite with mute, with bite and release at end

Silver Gull

molto sul pont. sul tasto

Australian Wood Duck

poco sul pont. with mute (honk-like)

FL

Pelican

on thickest strings, molto sul pont.
heavy overbow

Sacred Kingfisher
lyrically

poco sul pont
with moderate bow pressure

RL

Purple Swamphen
moderately

with mute, sul pont.

Musk lorikeet
raucously

sul pont., with mute
thickest possible string

Australian Wood Duck

poco sul pont. with mute (honk-like)

FR

Pelican

on thickest strings, molto sul pont.
heavy overbow

11:00 (*mf-f*, no further reeds or crickets)

<p>Black-fronted dotterel moderately on frog, with moderate bow pressure</p>	<p>Red kneed dotterel pointedly normale</p>	<p>Red-necked avocet pointedly poco sul tasto</p> <p>(long pause)</p>	<p>Sacred Kingfisher lyrically</p>	<p>poco sul pont with moderate bow pressure</p>			
<p>Purple Swamphen moderately with mute, sul pont.</p>	<p>Musk lorikeet raucously</p> <p>(vary phrase length)</p>	<p>White Plumed Honeyeater lyrically</p>			<p>pointedly</p> <p>long pause</p>	<p>pointedly sul pont.</p>	<p>pointedly play opposite side of bridge</p>

<p>12:00 continue with content, fade out to end</p>	<p>12:30</p>
<p>continue with content, fade out to end</p>	<p>12:30</p>
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