

OBSERVATION

open instrumentation canon
for 5 to 25 performers

Michael Maiorana

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Performance notes:

▶ INSTRUMENTATION

Observation is a canon for 5 to 25 performers. Parts are included in a variety of octaves and transpositions, and may be performed by any instruments or singers in any order.

- Pitched mallet percussion may choose to roll long notes or play only the initial attack.
- Unpitched percussion should try to approximate melodic contour when possible.
- Singers should use vowel sounds ah, oh, or oo; exact pronunciation is unimportant here. Switch vowels as register and dynamics warrant.

▶ CANON

Each performer playing the canon starts 3 measures after the previous performer.

- If a performer is playing a keyboard instrument and performing two instances of the canon, the next performer should begin 6 measures after instead of 3 measures after.

▶ PULSE

The pulse is optional, but recommended. It may be played by any number of players. If included, the pulse should begin simultaneously with the first instance of the canon. One of the included parts has both the canon and the pulse — a performer using this part should be the first performer to begin the canon.

▶ DRONE

If desired, a drone on concert D can be included before and/or after the performance of the canon. If included, some or all of the instruments should play sustained or intermittently on concert D out of meter, out of time, with additional effects like harmonics, key clicks, blowing through the instrument, tremolo, etc. About 16 measures (25 seconds) of drone before and after the written canon can work well.

▶ FILM

There is a film you can choose to screen with the performance, available on my website at www.maioranamusic.com/observation. If you contact me, I can send you a full resolution file. When trying to sync up with the film, the number of performers playing the canon affects the length of the piece - the use of a drone at the beginning or end can fill it out when using fewer performers. Screening the film is totally optional, and the piece is fully functional without it.

▶ PARTS

Concert Pitch, Treble Clef High	E \flat Instrument, Treble Clef High
Concert Pitch, Treble Clef Low	E \flat Instrument, Treble Clef Low
Concert Pitch, Alto Clef High	F Instrument, Treble Clef High
Concert Pitch, Alto Clef Low	F Instrument, Treble Clef Low
Concert Pitch, Bass Clef High	Concert Pitch, 2 part grand staff
Concert Pitch, Bass Clef Low	Pulse + Canon, Treble Clef
B \flat Instrument, Treble Clef High	Pulse (polyphonic), Treble Clef
B \flat Instrument, Treble Clef Low	Pulse (monophonic), Treble Clef

ca. 3:30 - 4:30

Concert Pitch
Treble Clef Low

Observation

This piece is a canon.
A new player enters every 3 bars.
It may be played by any instrument in any octave.

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1 $\text{♩} = 120$

7 *p* *mf*

20 *mf* *p* *mp*

35 *mf* *p* *mf*

45 *p*

54 *f* *mp*

61 *f* *p*

68 *mf*

74 *f* *p*

80 **2**
mf *p*

90
mp *p*

96
mf *p*

105
f *mp*

116
p

Pulse (monophonic)
Concert Pitch

Observation

This piece is a canon.
Enter with the first canon player.
Follow the dynamic shaping of the group.

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1 $\text{♩} = 120$

2 2

13

23

31

39

47

55

63

71

79



Musical staff 79-84: Treble clef, six measures of eighth-note patterns. Measure 79 has a fermata over the first eighth note. Measure 84 has a fermata over the last eighth note.

85



Musical staff 85-90: Treble clef, six measures of eighth-note patterns. Measure 90 has a fermata over the last eighth note.

91



Musical staff 91-96: Treble clef, six measures of eighth-note patterns. Measure 91 has a fermata over the first eighth note. Measure 96 has a fermata over the last eighth note.

97



Musical staff 97-102: Treble clef, six measures of eighth-note patterns. Measure 102 has a fermata over the last eighth note.

103



Musical staff 103-108: Treble clef, six measures of eighth-note patterns. Measure 103 has a fermata over the first eighth note. Measure 108 has a fermata over the last eighth note.

109



Musical staff 109-114: Treble clef, six measures of eighth-note patterns. Measure 114 has a fermata over the last eighth note.

115



Musical staff 115-120: Treble clef, six measures of eighth-note patterns. Measure 115 has a fermata over the first eighth note. Measure 120 has a fermata over the last eighth note.

121



Musical staff 121-128: Treble clef, eight measures. Measures 121-124 are eighth-note patterns. Measures 125-128 are quarter notes. Measure 125 has a fermata over the first quarter note. Measure 128 has a fermata over the last quarter note.

129



Musical staff 129-133: Treble clef, five measures of quarter notes. Measure 133 has a fermata over the last quarter note.

134



Musical staff 134-138: Treble clef, five measures of quarter notes. Measure 138 has a fermata over the last quarter note.