

**Percussion Instrumentation – Turning Point Ensemble
Sonic Boom 2023**

Skins –

Concert Bass Drum (laid flat on stand)
3 tom toms (Low, med, high)

Wood –

3 temple Blocks (medium, med-high, high)

Metals -

Tam tam
2 suspended cymbals (low, med)
3 hanging crotales – upper octave - (struck, not bowed – hung close to glockenspiel – you choose any 3 pitches, except Bb)

Tuned gongs: select 3 from the following set of pitches E flat three, F natural three, F natural, F sharp three, G sharp three. Notate using the treble clef, write in the words “tuned gong”. These hang on a rack to the right of the glockenspiel and crotales set up (see percussion layout diagram).

Aux perc (all optional – choose up to 2) –

Vibraslap: This instrument can play a single note, marked LV, but can also play very specific durations in order to create rhythmic patterns or specific lengths of time. If using this instrument just put it anywhere on the staff and use the word Vibraslap. Be sure to allow time to pick it up and put it down.

Dumbek: Middle eastern goblet shaped drum played with the hands. If choosing this then use the bottom space for the bass sound and the middle line for the high sound (see percussion layout diagram). Be sure to use all articulation markings including accents, marcato and the like in order to add detail. This instrument has about 50 names all around the world. Check online. Be sure to allow time to drop mallets and pick up the drum and vice versa.

1 javanese ‘Angklung’ (Need 1 hand free to play 1 - give me 5 pitches to choose from, in order of preference)

See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yeEBoiQaN4>

1 or 2 small Chinese opera gongs (with pitch bend up)

Shaker

Tambourine

Tibetan ‘finger cymbals’ (not suspended, need 2 hands free to play them)

Three rice bowls: relative pitches only. Use bottom middle and top lines of the treble clef staff and use the words “rice bowls.”

Any other small instrument of your choice.

Notes:

For each instrument that is struck, pls specify soft, medium or hard mallets and leave it to the player to choose the most appropriate mallets.

Only sus cymbals, tam tam can be bowed. Long notes are most successful when bowing.

Important: by assembling all these individual instruments into a specific set up, they are no longer just independent instruments. Rather, the setup of the individual instruments results in 1 musical instrument, with its own limitations and possibilities, based on pure physics.

Always keep in mind the setup and placement of instruments. A graph of the setup has been provided. Make sure to allow enough time to switch mallets, move from instrument to instrument, etc. Try out the physics of movement yourself. See how long it takes to get from here to there, or to switch mallets, for example. Make friends w/ percussionists and try out the instruments.

Duration: with any long sounding instrument, like the cymbals, bass drum, Tam tam, finger cyms, etc – pls either mark LV (Let ring), or, in the absence of a written LV, then mark when the instrument should be muffled (stop the sound). This is easily achieved by marking a rest where you want the sound stopped. Be consistent w/ this, for clarity, pls.

Recommended score/listening study:

Stravinsky – L'Histoire du Soldat 'complete', not the suite.

Resource References:

Essential reference book for percussion composition:

<https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/how-to-write-for-percussion-samuel-z-solomon-v9780199920358?duration=180>

Classic book on percussion in general

https://biblio.co.uk/book/percussion-instruments-history-blades-james/d/1200869769?aid=frg&gclid=Cj0KCQjwyOuYBhCGARIsAIdGQRO7n8S0tisyGdbzzEkS2pqbcLglNApRenVRdNZpchV3Vmny8vEUSKAaAavgxEALw_wcB