
Prelude: Anyone Can Play



Jody Diamond
1987

This piece contrasts chaos and order. It satisfies the audience's curiosity about the gamelan instruments before the concert begins, and can sometimes help to dispel the idea that the musicians are just "banging away up there." A performance of *Anyone Can Play* contrasts unstructured playing (audience improvisation) with highly organized playing (gamelan piece).

MUSICIANS' INSTRUCTIONS

Reproduce the audience page the same number of times as the number of musicians. As the audience enters, hand each page discreetly to a member of the audience. The instruction page may be distributed by the musicians or by someone else.

At the start of the concert (indicated by dimming lights, or something similar) the musicians remain backstage, or alternatively, seated in the audience. The audience members will come up one by one and begin to play. Wait until all the audience members have come onto the stage, and allow them some time to play together, about 5 - 10 minutes, or however long it seems interesting. Sometimes you have to be patient.

After the audience "players" have had a chance to explore the instruments, the musicians come up to the stage one by one, going to the instruments they will play in the next piece. If there is an audience member playing there, each musician says "thank you" and takes the mallet from the audience member. This should be done quietly; the other audience members may still be playing. The musician does not yet play, but waits in place.

When all of the audience members have been replaced by the gamelan players, begin a piece. There should be as short a pause as possible between the playing of the last audience member and the start of the gamelan piece; the improvisation should seem connected to the piece. The piece performed can be the first of the program, or another piece selected for its contrast to the free improvisation of the audience. The piece ideally will be complex, with many layers of density and embellishment. For example, the Mills College Gamelan has performed a Javanese *lancaran*, beginning in Irama II, with simultaneous imbal on bonang, saron, demung and peking. A more standard Javanese treatment would also be appropriate, such as a *ladrang* in Irama III. Any piece would be suitable, however, that provided a marked contrast to the unstructured improvisation of the audience. The piece may be played for any length of time and ended at the group's discretion.

This piece is registered with BMI. Please report performances to the composer or the publisher at Box 1052, Lebanon, NH 03766.

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AUDIENCE INSTRUCTIONS

You are invited to participate in the first piece on tonight's concert. Please follow the instructions below.

- When the house lights dim, walk up to the stage; do not take this page with you.
- Remove your shoes; leave them neatly on the floor in front of the stage.
- Go into the gamelan and find an instrument that looks interesting to you.
- Using the mallet that you find on that instrument, *carefully* explore the sounds of the instrument. (Drums are played with hands only.)
- Listen to the sounds you make. You may combine your sounds with the others around you, or play just for yourself.
- Continue to play until a player comes to take your place. When the player says "Thank you," relinquish your mallet. This will happen at one instrument at a time; continue playing until someone comes to play *your* instrument.
- Leave the stage quietly.
- Put your shoes on and return to your seat.
- Enjoy the rest of the concert.

Thank you for participating in *Anyone Can Play*.

(If you change your mind and decide you would rather not play, please give this page to someone else.)