

# The Galvanized Natural Electric

*for viola, percussion & processed electric guitar*

Alexander Elliott Miller

# The Galvanized Natural Electric (2013)

for viola, percussion and processed electric guitar.

## **Program Note**

*The Galvanized Natural Electric* is a trio for viola, electric guitar and percussion composed for myself and my colleagues in the What's Next? Ensemble. It was first composed for our *Naturale* concert program in the summer of 2013, featuring compositions exploring the juxtaposition of things natural and artificial.

I had been experimenting with programming my own new effects for the electric guitar, and the results inspired me to search for new sounds with which to complement the guitar effects. One of the frequent guitar effects is a metallic bell like sound where the pitch and timbre of the guitar is significantly disfigured; this sound is complemented in the percussion by the use of an assortment of mounted automobile tail pipes. Other elements of the guitar writing influenced the style of the viola writing as well, where I searched for more percussive and harmonic effects to mirror the guitar sounds.

The result is a work in two parts, the first tense and lyrical, the second mechanistic and rocking, in which a wide collection of sounds, some familiar and some unearthly, are blended.

## **Guitar Processing**

The electric guitar part is processed with Max/MSP, and requires a MIDI-footswitch to alternate between two sounds. Left untouched, the patch will modify the guitar sound with some simple effects including reverb and chorus. When the pedal is depressed, a significant amount of pitch shifting will be applied to the guitar, resulting in a disfigured, metallic and "bell-like" sound. Contact the composer for inquiries regarding the Max patch.

## **Bio**

Alexander Elliott Miller is a composer, guitarist and educator whose music has been described as "wild....unearthly...lyrical...a voice worth listening to" (San Francisco Classical Voice) and "inventive....unconventional" (Mark Swed, LA Times). His compositions have been performed by Grammy-nominated musicians including soprano Tony Arnold and the Los Angeles Percussion Quartet. He has received awards and honors from the American Composers Forum and the MacDowell Colony, and was the winner of 2012 Earplay Donald Aird Memorial Composers Competition.

Currently, he teaches theory and composition at California State University Long Beach and Chapman University, and is a Co-Director of the What's Next? Ensemble. He holds degrees from USC, Eastman and the University of Colorado at Boulder.

## **Contact**

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**Percussion Instruments**

- Marimba
- Floor Tom
- Sizzle Cymbal
- 1 Triangle
- Suspension Spring
- 3 Automobile Tail Pipes &
- 4 Aluminum Pipes (pictured)

**Mallets**

- 4 medium hard yarn mallets
- 1 triangle beater

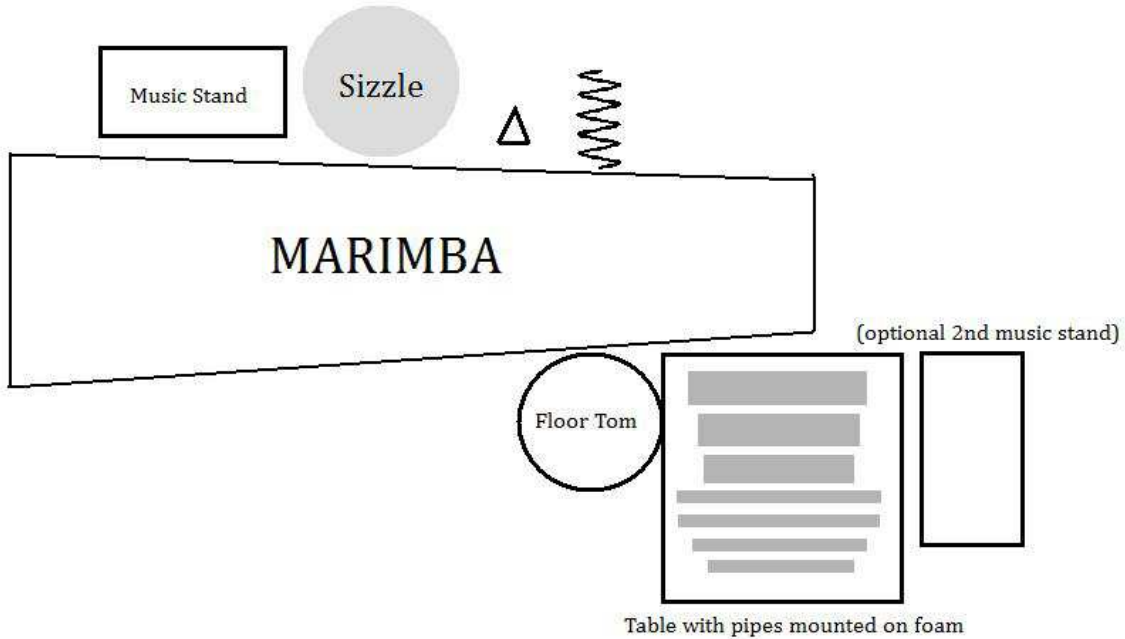


**Percussion Notation**

Two staves are used, the marimba on the lower staff and all other percussion instruments on the upper staff. Instrument names reappear in score with mallet indications.

Marimba on lower staff.  
*(notes: At measure 131, both staves are used for the marimba as a grand staff.  
 Utilized range of marimba writing shown, upper register not used in this work).*

**Suggested Approximate Percussion Setup**



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Part 1 ♩ = 56

rit. ----- a tempo

slow gliss.

Viola

Electric Guitar

D A B E B E  
Max/MSP Processing  
Reverb: OFF

**f**

Spring  
triangle beater

Pipes  
yarn mallets

[SPACE BAR] - Reverb ON

rit. ----- a tempo

Percussion  
(one player)

**f** **p** **mf** **p**

(take 3 yarn mallets & 1 triangle beater  
- beater in right hand)

4

Vla.

**ppp** **pp** **ppp**  
faint, ghostly, "underneath" guitar

ORD.

E.Gtr.

**p** (sounding dynamics louder with reverb ON)

**mp** **f sub.**

PED -

Sizzle Cymbal  
circle w/triangle beater

Triangle  
beater

Spring  
triangle beater

Perc.

Marimba  
yarn mallets

**pp** **p** **f sub.**

**pp**

7

Vla. *ppp*

E.Gtr. *p* *mp* *p* *slowly bend*

Perc. *pp*

Sizzle Cymbal  
circle w/triangle beater

10

Vla. *ppp*

E.Gtr. *f<sub>sub.</sub>* *ff* *p*

Perc. *f* *ff* *pp*

Sizzle Cymbal  
scrape w/triangle beater

Spring  
triangle beater

Sizzle Cymbal  
circle w/triangle beater

*pick scrape*

*PED* ----- *ORD.*

12

Vla. *(=)* *(=)*

E.Gtr. *mf* *p* *f* *slowly bend*

Perc.

16

15

Vla. *sfz* *fp* *pp* *p*

E.Gtr. *ff* *mf more urgently* *f* *pick scrape* *3*

Perc. *p* *f* *Sizzle Cymbal* *scrape w/triangle beater* *Pipes* *yarn mallets* *Marimba* *yarn mallets* *3* *mf sub.*

PED - - - - - ORD.

Vla. *f* *fp* *pp* *p*

E.Gtr. *mp* *ff* *mf*

Perc. *p* *f* *fp* *pp* *mf sub.*

PED - - - - - ORD.

slowly bend pick scrape

Pipes yarn mallets Sizzle Cymbal scrape w/triangle beater

Vla. *sfz* *mfp* *ppp*

E.Gtr. *f* *mp* *ff* *p*

Perc. *f* *pp* *mfp* *pp*

PED - - - - - ORD.

slowly bend

Pipes yarn mallets Spring triangle beater

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

**28**

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

**Sizzle Cymbal**  
yarn mallets

**Spring**  
triangle beater

At the following rhythm, play any harmonics on the 5th, 7th, 9th or 12th frets.  
Let all harmonics ring as long as possible, and avoid two successive notes on the same string.

**PED** -----

For rhythms with rectangular noteheads, play either the triangle, sizzle cymbal or one rung of the spring, letting all sounds sustain. Avoid successive repetitions of any instrument. Use the triangle beater for all 3 sounds.



30

Vla. *p* *mf* *sf* *jete*  
pitchless, percussive,  
muffled strings

E.Gtr. (PED.)

Perc. **Pipes**  
yarn mallets *mp* (continue as before)

33

Vla. *mf* *sf*

E.Gtr. (PED.)

Perc. **Pipes**  
yarn mallets *mp*

35

Vla. *sf* *sim.* *p*

E.Gtr. (PED.)

Perc. *p* (continue)

38

Vla. *sf* *sim.*

E.Gtr. (PED.)

Perc. *pp* Pipes yarn mallets

Vla. *mf* **3**

E.Gtr. **ORD.** *mp* **3** *p* **PED.** *pp* (continue)

Perc. **Marimba** *ppp* *p* *mp* *pp* **Spring** *p* **Sizzle Cymbal** *mp* *pp* *ppp*

*yarn mallets* *triangle beater* *yarn mallets*

44 **II** *p* **sim.** *sf*

E.Gtr. (PED.)

Perc. **Pipes** *mp* **6**

*yarn mallets*

47

Vla. *sim.*  
*sf* *pp*

(PED.)

E.Gtr.

Perc.  
**Pipes**  
*yarn mallets* *p*

50

Vla.

E.Gtr. **ORD.**  
*mp*

Perc.  
**Marimba**  
*yarn mallets*  
*ppp* *p*

**53** *pushing a little faster* ♩ = 72

Vla. *pp*

E.Gtr. *pp*

Perc. *mp* *p* *mp*

57

Vla. *p* (*quick port.*)

E.Gtr. *f* *p*

Perc. *pp* *p*

Sizzle Cymbal  
yarn mallets

59

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

PED-----ORD.

(Spring) (Triangle)

6

61

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

PED-----ORD.

PED-----ORD.

2/4

64 *rit.*

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

PED - - - - - ORD. 3 (slow, downward arp.) PED - - - - -

*ff* sub.

Spring triangle beater

*ff* sub.

*pp* *p* *pp*

68 *a tempo* ♩ = 56

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

*f* *p* *sf* *mf*

(PED.) (as before)

Pipes yarn mallets

(as before)

*pp*

71

Vla. *p* *sf* *mfp* *p* *ppp* *poco rit.* II III

E.Gtr. (PED.)

Perc. Pipes  
yarn mallets

74

Vla. *mf* *p* *mfp* 75 3 3 3

E.Gtr. (PED.) ORD. *mp* *mp* PED. 3

Perc. Marimba  
yarn mallets *mfp* *pp* Triangle  
beater *p* 3



Vla. *mf* *p* *mf*<sub>3</sub>

E.Gtr. *f*<sub>sub.</sub> *mp* *mf* *p*  
 Spring triangle beater

Perc. *f*<sub>sub.</sub> *mfp* *pp* *mf* *p*

(PED.) --- ORD.

Vla. *p* *fz* *sf*

E.Gtr. *f* *ff*  
 pick scrape

Perc. *p* *f* *ff*  
 Pipes yarn mallets Sizzle Cymbal scrape w/triangle beater Spring triangle beater Pipes yarn mallets

PED --- ORD. PED ---

Vla. *mf* *p* III

E.Gtr. *mp* ORD.

Perc. *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

♩ = 100

Vla. *ff* (noisy) *sfz*

E.Gtr. *ff* *sfz*

Perc. *pp* *ff* *sfz*

Pipes  
yarn mallets

PED

**91** Part 2 (♩ = 100)

*jete  
pitchless, percussive,  
muffled strings*

Vla.

E.Gtr. (PED.) [SPACE BAR] - Reverb OFF

Perc.

96

E.Gtr. (PED.)   
*(strike strings at 12th fret  
with pick, down against fretboard)*

Perc.   
*Spring  
triangle beater*

101

99

Vla. *f* *IV*

(PED.)

E.Gtr. *f*

Perc. *mf* *f*  
Pipes *yarn mallets* Floor Tom *yarn mallets*

103

Vla. *IV* *3x*

(PED.)

E.Gtr. *f* *pick scrape* *strum muffled strings percussively*

Perc. *p* *mf*  
Spring *triangle beater* Pipes *yarn mallets*

106

Vla. **III** **II** **I** **IV**

*f* *f*

(PED.)

E.Gtr. *ff* *f*

Perc. *f* *mf* *f*

Floor Tom yarn mallets **Pipes** yarn mallets **Floor Tom** yarn mallets

tom louder each repeat

109

Vla. **II** **IV** **3x**

(PED.) **ORD.**

E.Gtr. *f* *p* *mf* *f*

pick scrape *strum muffled strings percussively*

Perc. *p* *mf* *f*

Spring triangle beater **Pipes** yarn mallets **Floor Tom** yarn mallets

louder each repeat

112

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

115

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

117

Vla. *ff*

E.Gtr. (PED.) *p* *louder each repeat* *pick scrape* *ORD.* *ff*

Perc. *p* *louder each repeat* *ffp*

Floor Tom  
yarn mallets

Spring  
triangle beater

Pipes  
yarn mallets

Floor Tom  
yarn mallets

121

Vla. *p* *off string*

E.Gtr. *mf* *as before*

Perc. *mp*

Marimba  
yarn mallets

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

**Floor Tom**  
yarn mallets

**Pipes**  
yarn mallets

**Spring**  
triangle beater

*mp* *louder each repeat*

PED

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

*ff* *p*

(PED.) --- ORD.

**Pipes**  
yarn mallets

*ff*

*ff* *put down beater, take 4 yarn mallets.*



131

scratchy  
light touch

Vla.

Musical notation for Viola (Vla.) in bass clef, 2/4 time. It features a series of eighth notes with accents, followed by a rest, and then a series of notes with a 'scratchy light touch' annotation. The dynamic is *ff*.

E.Gtr.

Musical notation for Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.) in treble clef, 2/4 time. It features a series of chords with accents, followed by a rest, and then a series of chords with a *p* dynamic marking.

Marimba  
yarn mallets

Perc.

Musical notation for Percussion (Perc.) in treble and bass clefs, 2/4 time. It features a series of chords with accents, followed by a rest, and then a series of chords with a *p* dynamic marking.

135

Vla.

Musical notation for Viola (Vla.) in bass clef, 2/4 time. It features a series of eighth notes with accents, followed by a rest, and then a series of notes with a *ff* dynamic marking.

E.Gtr.

Musical notation for Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.) in treble clef, 2/4 time. It features a series of chords with accents, followed by a rest, and then a series of chords with a *ff* dynamic marking.

Perc.

Musical notation for Percussion (Perc.) in treble and bass clefs, 2/4 time. It features a series of chords with accents, followed by a rest, and then a series of chords with a *ff* dynamic marking.

139

Vla. *scratchy light touch*

E.Gtr. PED—ORD.

Perc. **Floor Tom** *yarn mallets* **Marimba** *yarn mallets* *ff*

143

Vla.

E.Gtr. *p* *ff* *pp*

Perc. *p* *ff* *pp*

146

*excited, driving forward,  
almost sloppy (sporadic off string bounces)*

Vla. *fp*

E.Gtr. **PED**  
*mf* *p* random harmonics at this rhythm, as before

Perc. **Pipes**  
*mf* *fp* slightly below viola  
yarn mallets

148

Vla. *f*  
(PED.)

E.Gtr.

Perc. *mf*

150

Vla. 

(PED.) -----

E.Gtr.   
*bend slightly*

Perc. 

152

Vla. 

(PED.) -----

E.Gtr. 

Perc.   
*p*

154

Vla. *ff* *jete* *p* *sfz* *f*  
 \* = gliss may start on any note and move immediately upward.

E.Gtr. *ff* ORD. PED.

Perc. *ff* Marimba yarn mallets take 1 triangle beater in right hand (keep 3 yarn mallets)

Vla. 157

E.Gtr. (PED.) *f* *p*

Perc. *mf* *p* Spring triangle beater (alternate adjacent rungs)

160

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

(PED.)

ORD.

*ff*

Marimba  
yarn mallets

*ff*

163

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

*ff*

Vla. *fz fz sim.*

E.Gtr. *p (p) (p) sim. >*

Perc. *p (p) (p) sim. >*

172

Vla. *fz fz sim. >*

E.Gtr. *f mf >*

Perc. *f mf >*

Floor Tom  
yarn mallets

Pipes  
yarn mallets

177

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

182

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

*f*

*ff*

*p*

PED

Pipes  
yarn mallets

*mf*



185

Vla. *scratchy* *ord.* *f* *ff* *scratchy*

(PED.) ----- ORD.

E.Gtr. *f* *ff* *pick scrape*

Spring triangle beater ----- Sizzle Cymbal triangle beater Floor Tom yarn mallets *f*

Perc.

190

188

Vla. *scratchy* *fff* *f*

E.Gtr. *pick scrape* *pick scrape* *fff* *mf* *fz* *sim.*

Spring triangle beater *f*

Perc. Marimba yarn mallets *f*

192

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

PED

Floor Tom  
yarn mallets

Pipes  
yarn mallets

Spring  
triangle beater

Sizzle Cymbal  
triangle beater

*p*

*pick scrape*

195

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

ORD.

Floor Tom  
yarn mallets

Pipes  
yarn mallets

*mf*

IV

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

PED

pick scrape

Spring triangle beater

Sizzle Cymbal yarn mallets

*p*

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

*ff*

*ff*

Spring triangle beater

Sizzle Cymbal scrape w/triangle beater

*f*

*mp*

*mp*

204

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

208

Vla.

E.Gtr.

Perc.

212

Vla. *ffz* *f* *vib.* 3

E.Gtr. *ff* *f* *mf* PED

Perc. *ff* *f* *mf* Sizzle Cymbal yarn mallets Spring triangle beater

215

Vla. *p sub.* *f* (respelling only)

E.Gtr.

Perc. *mf* Floor Tom yarn mallets

218

Vla. *ffz* *f* *vib.* 3

E.Gtr. *ff* *p* PED

Perc. *ff* *f* Sizzle Cymbal yarn mallets

221

Vla. *mf*

E.Gtr. *ff* ORD. [SPACE BAR] - Reverb ON

Perc. *f* *ff* Triangle beater Floor Tom yarn mallets

**223** *begin gradual diminuendo and ritardando on repeat*

Vla. *fp fp fp fp fp fp fp*

E.Gtr. *ff* pick scrape

Perc. (Spring) (Sizzle) (Floor Tom) (Triangle)(Spring) (Sizzle) (Floor Tom) (Triangle)

226 *mf* (tie second time only) 2x rit. ( $\bullet = 76$ )

Vla. *mf*

E.Gtr. PED --- ORD. PED pick scrape *mf*

Perc. (Pipes) *mf*

230 *rit.*

Vla.

E.Gtr. **ORD.**

Perc. *take 4 yarn mallets.* *(scissor tremolos)*

*mp* *p*

**233** (♩ = 66)

Vla.

E.Gtr. **PED - - - ORD.**

Perc.

*mf* *f* *mf*



Vla. *p* *mf* *f* *mp*

E.Gtr. *mf*

Perc. *mf*

Vla. *f*

E.Gtr. *mp*

Perc.

PED - - - - - ORD.

242

Vla. **II**  
*p* rebow freely

E.Gtr. *p*

Perc. **Pipes**  
 yarn mallets  
*pp* *mp*

245

Vla.  $\text{♩} = 56$  **4x**  
*fade away through repeats*

E.Gtr. **PED**  
*mf* quieter each repeat *fade away*

Perc. *mf* quieter each repeat *fade away*