

kpatsapatsaatsatsasaa  
patsa  
atsa  
tsa  
sa  
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for (up to) eight gankogui bells

brian parks  
composed and premiered 2010 march  
notated 2014 february

This piece is intended for eight stick-drummers striking eight *gankogui* bells. Gankogui are double-belled idiophones, native to West Africa. The rhythmic figure in this piece is a common bell pattern in Ghanaian drum patterns. Here, I invoke its use in the dance *kpatsa*, a staple of *Ewe* dance-drumming. There are only two pitch-points indicated: one for the low-pitched bell, and one for the high-pitched bell. Conveniently, the gankogui is shaped such that the low bell is in fact closer to the ground than the high bell.

I use notation common to rounds and canons, because the piece is essentially that: the eight players follow each other as they would in a round or canon. The circled numbers represent the pulse-points at which the second through eighth players enter the piece. As in a round, each player plays the same thing, starting from the beginning of the first line.

It may be helpful to have the first player play the full rhythmic figure once or twice on his or her own, similar to giving a measure for nothing. Many ensembles have found this helpful in both rehearsal and performance.

I am grateful to Nathan Repasz, who revived this piece after three years of not being heard. He requested it for his senior concert (February 28, 2014) at Wesleyan University. I am equally grateful to the seven other musicians who realized it that night: besides myself and Mr. Repasz, there were Jeff Berman, Michael Deck, Isaac Silk, Adam Johnson, Rob Hallberg, and Sean Winnik.

Finally, it should be noted that the piece can be performed by fewer than eight players. I have realized it with only two players, and the essence of it still came through.

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Fall 2014

(2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8)

Handwriting practice sheet with 14 rows of musical notation. Each row is labeled with a circled number (2-8) and contains a sequence of notes and rests on a five-line staff. The notation includes stems, flags, and beams. Each row ends with a double bar line and the text "eight times".

- Row 2: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 3: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 4: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 5: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 6: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 7: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 8: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 9: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 10: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 11: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 12: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 13: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.
- Row 14: 8 notes, 4 flags, 4 beams.