

# The Black Page Tropes

**Drums**

**Percussion**

**Interactive Computer System**

**Bruce Pennycook**

**Excerpts by Frank Zappa**

Dedicated to the memory of Frank Zappa and everything he did and did not stand for.

Composed for ACREQ with special thanks to Alain Thibault.

Duration: ca. 21 minutes

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# The Black Page Tropes

## **Percussion**

Marimba

Vibraphone

Hi-hat, 3 suspended cymbals

Snare, 3 mounted tom-toms

metal and wooden chimes

medium tam-tam

Roland Octapad and MIDI drum sample device (tuned to 8 tom-toms, low-high)

## **Drums**

Drum kit (5 toms, snare, bass, 4-5 cymbals, hi-hat, etc.)

Metal and glass chimes

Roland Octapad (or any MIDI drum surfaces to use as triggers)

## **Computer System**

MacPPC, CD Rom (for audio CD)

MIDI Drum Module (for percussionist's Octapad)

Roland JV1080 Tone Module (for "band clips")

Max 3.5 software (or higher)

Black Page Tropes Software (B. Pennycook)

Black Page Tropes Audio CD (B. Pennycook)

Black Page Tropes JV1080 Bank (B. Pennycook)

## **Audio System**

Multi-mic setup for drum kit and percussion

Mixer with 2 separate monitor mix feeds (for stage)

8 line inputs (from Computer system and devices)

Digital reverb (to balance hall and instruments only)

## **MIDI**

Percussion Octapad -- Midi Drum Module (direct, no computer)

Drum Octapad -- MIDI In to Macintosh (triggers)

MIDI Out from Mac -- Roland JV1080

Bruce Pennycook

1996

# The Black Page Tropes

This work was inspired by the percussion playing of Julien Grégoire and drumming of Blair McKay during our many concerts performing the works of Frank Zappa. The group, Dangerous Kitchen, was a joint production of ACREQ (Montreal) and Arraymusic (Toronto). Arrangements were by Walter Boudreau (Artistic Director, SMCQ) and Alain Thibault (Artistic Director, ACREQ) and Henry Kucharzyk, one of the founders of Arraymusic. As musical director of The Dangerous Kitchen, Walter Boudreau brought immense musical insight and energy to the arrangements and adaptations of the music of Zappa. Boudreau truly understood the music and produced a powerful two-act show.

*The Black Page* is a Zappa work that exists in two versions; one for drum solo (the most famous) and one for large rock band. Our show included both and they were often the highlight of the evening. It seemed that every audience had about 100 drummers that knew every single flam!

As the soprano sax player in The Dangerous Kitchen, I was reunited with my own formative years having attended numerous live Zappa concerts and knowing by heart far too many of the lyrics (and flams). As a young composer and jazz saxophone player the music of Zappa was both an inspiration and a worry. How could a “serious” musician do Zappa?

Sadly, Frank Zappa died on December 4, 1993 just as the Dangerous Kitchen was getting going.

This piece is my homage to a brilliant American composer who's originality and unique personality could produce great rock like *Zombie Woolf* and an elegant orchestral work commissioned by (his worship) Pierre Boulez at IRCAM. It is predicated entirely on the two versions of *The Black Page* and uses more than 100 different audio clips from Zappa CD's made over more than 25 years as a kind of audio retrospective.

Bruce Pennycook  
1996

# The Black Page Tropes

B. Pennycook  
F. Zappa

1  $\bullet = 60$

Percussion

Drums

*f*

3

Pcsn.

Dr.

*sfz p*

5

Pcsn.

Dr.

7

Pcsn.

Dr.

Musical score for measures 7-9. The Percussion (Pcsn.) part is silent, indicated by a horizontal line. The Drums (Dr.) part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. In measure 7, there are two eighth notes with 'x' marks above them. In measure 8, there are two eighth notes with 'x' marks, followed by a triplet of eighth notes with a '3' above and a '5' below. In measure 9, there are two eighth notes with 'x' marks, followed by a sextuplet of eighth notes with a '6' above and a '5' below. The piece concludes with two eighth notes, each with an 'o' above it.

10

Pcsn.

Dr.

Musical score for measures 10-12. The Percussion (Pcsn.) part is silent. The Drums (Dr.) part begins with two eighth notes with 'x' marks and 'o' above them. In measure 10, there is a triplet of eighth notes with a '3' above and a '5' below. In measure 11, there are two eighth notes with 'x' marks and 'o' above them, followed by a sextuplet of eighth notes with a '(+) 5' above and a '5' below. In measure 12, there are two eighth notes with 'x' marks and 'o' above them, followed by another sextuplet of eighth notes with a '(+) 5' above and a '5' below. The piece ends with two eighth notes with 'x' marks above them.

12

Pcsn.

Dr.

Musical score for measures 13-15. The Percussion (Pcsn.) part is silent. The Drums (Dr.) part starts with two eighth notes with 'x' marks and 'o' above them. In measure 13, there is a quintuplet of eighth notes with a '5' above. In measure 14, there are two undecimuplets of eighth notes, each with an '11' above. In measure 15, there are two eighth notes with 'x' marks and 'o' above them, followed by a triplet of eighth notes with a '3' above. The piece concludes with a dynamic marking of *sfz p* and a fermata over the final note.

14 octapad

Pcsn. *ff* *f* *32"* *3* *tamtam*

Dr. *fff* *ff*

16 med

Pcsn. *p* *cresc.* *fp* *ff*

Dr. *hh* (foot) *p* *cresc.* *mf* *f* *fp* *ff* *mallets*

20 freely, nervously

Pcsn. *pp* (sempre) *49"* *sim*

Dr. *pp* (sempre) *7* *sim*

22 e2

Pcsn. *just a sec*

Dr. *press roll*

*fp*  $\longleftarrow$  *ff*

24

Pcsn. *octa* *large*

Dr. *sfzp*  $\gt$  *ff*

27

Pcsn. *har* *fff*

Dr. *fff*

29

Pcsn. *fp*

Dr.

31

Pcsn.

Dr.

*p* *cresc.*

*f*

e3

ride

tom

33

Pcsn.

Dr.

*f* *ff*

mar



35

Pcsn. *fp* **e4** octa (toms)

Dr. *ff* *p* cymb. 4:3

37

Pcsn. *p* *mf* *mf* *mf* octa (toms) crash

Dr. 4:3 5:4 3 3

39

Pcsn. *ff*

Dr. *ff* (toms)

41 e5

Pcsn. *p* *cresc.* *f*

Dr. *p* *cresc.* *f*

43 e6

Pcsn. *ff* *ff* unison

Dr. *ff* *ff*

45

Pcsn.

Dr.

46 e7

Pcsn. *fp* *fp*

Dr. hihat

48

Pcsn. *f* 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 5

Dr. hihat 3 7:8 5

50

Pcsn. *fp* *f* 3 3

Dr. 5 3 5 3

51

Pcsn. *f*

Dr. hihat *f* *dim.* chin.

53

e8

Pcsn. hihat *f* sn. (press) *f p* crash octa *f*

58"

Dr. *f* sn. (press) *f p* *f*

55

Pcsn. *f*

Dr. *f*

57 **e9**

Pcsn. *f*

Dr.

58 **e10** freely----- **e11**

Pcsn. *ff* *p*

Dr. *ff* *ff* *p*

unison

60 vib

Pcsn. *Red.*

Dr.

62

Pcsn.

5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5

dim. ----- dim. a niente -----

(Ped.) -----

Dr.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

med/large freely

3 3 3 3

dim. a niente -----

64

Pcsn.

(Ped.) -----

Dr.

hihat (o+) freely

5 5 5 11 11

crash hihat

e12 mar

66

Pcsn.

3 5 5 6 11 11

*f* *fff* *fff* *fff*

Dr.

3 5 5 6 11 11

*f* *fff* *fff*

68 e13 OCTA ad lib 3

Pcsn. *p* *ff* *fff* *sub p*

Dr. *p* *ff* *fff* *sub p*

71 vib e14 8va = 68

Pcsn. *ff* *Red.* patterns\*

Dr. (chin.) *f* MIDIPAD [1-6] ad lib

74 tacet 2-4 m.

Pcsn. patterns *f*

Dr. improvise\* *f*

\* See Performance Notes

76

crash (hand inst)

4-8m

to OCTA

Pcsn.

ad lib with track

patterns

Dr.

improvise

get sticks

79

$\bullet = 60$

e15

3 5

ad lib

small

Pcsn.

unison

7 7

Dr.

3 5 7 7

cr. hihat

$f_{sub} p$

81

e16

8-16m

to VIB

30"

"Hello teenage America"

Red.

sim add instruments

Dr.

hihat

$p$

solo w/tracks

sim. ad lib (cymbals only)



84

Pcsn. *cresc poco a poco* 4-8m (sec)

Dr. very frantic *ff*

87 e17

Pcsn.

Dr. sec

88

Pcsn. *ped* 6 *mf*

Dr. *p* *sim ad lib (vib solo)* *p*

91

Pcsn.

Dr.

94

Pcsn.

Dr.

96

Pcsn.

Dr.

99

Pcsn. *mf*

Dr. *sub pp* *dim.*

101

Pcsn. *p* (no accent)

Dr. *p*

e18

1'26"

bell tree

mallets

104

Pcsn. *pp*

Dr. *gently*

hard mallets

cymb/bell small

glass

metal

107 **e19** (no accent)

Pcsn. *med* *large* *p* 3 3

Dr. *gongs* *cymb* *p* 5 (sm,m,large)

109

Pcsn. *p* 3

Dr. *large, rim* 5 5

111

Pcsn. *rims* 3 *fp*

Dr. 5 *tom toms* *p* 3

113 OCTAPAD (mixed) e20

Pcsn.

Dr.

*fp* *f* *p*

Null

5 3

115

Pcsn.

Dr.

*p* *ff* *p*

6 3 5 6 3 3

117

Pcsn.

Dr.

*p* *ff* *ff*

poco rit (ad lib) octapad

poco rit (ad lib)

(sticks)

5 5 3

♩ = 60

e21

119

Pcsn. *ff* unison *ff* large cym (sticks) snare *ppp* < >

Dr. *ff* *ff* solo *sub P* *cresc.*

123

e22

Pcsn. increase swells gradually (press - open - press) to MAR *f* *ff* *fff* FS 43" tempo dissolves . . . open molto *cres.* with audio

Dr. (12 - 20 m.) open solo *fff*

125

e23

Pcsn. *ff* unison *p* small cym large *mf* *f*

Dr. *ff* sn. *p*

127

Pcsn.

Dr.

3 3 5 (4+4+1)

3 5 3

129

Pcsn.

Dr.

5 (4+3)

131

Pcsn.

Dr.

*fp*

134 e24

Pcsn.

Dr.

135 e25

Pcsn.

Dr.

ad lib. swells

a tempo

*fp*

*p* *ppp*

35"

out of tempo solo, very erratic

sim.

*pp* *p* *p*

137

Pcsn.

Dr.

*p*

*p* *f*

4:3

6 3



140

Pcsn. *p* 5 *cresc.* 3 5 6 octapad *p*

Dr. 5 3 5 6 4:3 5:4 *p* sub.

142 crash 4:6 5:6 3 e26 octapad ad lib. erratic sim. *f* *p*

Pcsn.

Dr. Null sn (press--open--press) *f* *p*

144 a tempo Marimba 3 5 5

Pcsn.

Dr. rim *ff* 3 5 5

145 e27 (uneven swells)

Pcsn. *pp* *mf*

Dr. *pp* *p* (sempre) *pp*

free, ad lib. (cymbals only) gradually a tempo

147 **a tempo**

Pcsn. octapad ad lib. freely, vigorously *ff*

Dr. bell *pp* *cresc.* cymbal fill *ff* *mf cresc.*

150 (thinner)

Pcsn. *ff* dim.

Dr. *ff* dim.

153 a tempo

Pcsn. *dim.*

Dr. *mp mp mp p*

toms

158 e28 a tempo e29

Pcsn. *niente* (vibe, mallets) *ff ff*

Dr. *niente* fill *ff* fill

"He's gotta gun you know" 27"

Null

161 Vibraphone

Pcsn. *ff* fill *f* *Red.*

Dr. *hh +*

163

Pcsn.

(Ped.)

3

3

3

3

3

3

Dr.

(time)

5/4

5/4

164

Pcsn.

9

3

3

3

3

3

Dr.

5/4

5/4

5/4

165

Pcsn.

5

Dr.

4/4

4/4

167

Pcsn. *ff* *dim.*

Dr. (time)

170

Pcsn. *p* *f* *p*

Dr. cymb. only time (cymbals) hhat *p*

174

Pcsn. *p* *pp* (tone)

Dr. *pp* *pp* hhat

e30

178 e31

Pcsn. *ff* unison 6 3 5 e32 ad lib. *f* *ff* 1'54"

Dr. *fff* sub. 6 3 5 *ff*

180

Pcsn. cymb. *p* *ff* octapad *ff*

Dr. (time) 9 3 3 (time)

184 e33 (octa) ad lib. *p* *fff* 3 3 3

Pcsn. *p* *fff*

Dr. *p* *fff*

186

Pcsn.

Dr.

6

6

6

time

*f*

*fff*

189

Pcsn.

snare

*p*

3

5

3

*fp*

Dr.

(time)

*fp*

e34

191

(sn)

*fff*

*fp*

*f*

5

7

7

unison

Dr.

*fff*

*f*

3

5

7

7

192 tam tam l.v.

Pcsn. *mf*

Dr. (time)

196

Pcsn. *pp* *Red.* *5* *3* *5* *6* *8va* *leger.* *5* *p* *Red.*

Dr. (time)

(8va)

199

Pcsn. *(Red.)* *5* *5* *3* *3* *3* *3* *cresc.* *Red.*

Dr. time (sim)



(8va)

201

Pcsn.

(Ped.)

gradually increase density/complexity (sim.)

Dr.

(8va)

204

Pcsn.

loco

3

3

3

3

3

3

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Dr.

206

Pcsn.

(Ped.)

3

6

Ped.

Ped.

time

Dr.

208

Pcsn.

5

3

3

loco

6

*f*

Dr.

fill

6

210

Pcsn.

6

*ff*

(rapid)

Dr.

fill

fill

6

*ff*

212

Pcsn.

6

6

6

6

*f*

Dr.

fill

3

5

6

213 **e35**

Pcsn. *ff*

Dr. **Null**

5 11 11

214 **e36** **e37** **e38** **e39** **e40**

Pcsn. cym. *lunga* *fp* out of tempo octapads *ad lib.* *mp* *cresc.* a tempo *fff*

Dr. *lunga* *ff* *fp* out of tempo / w system *fff*

26"

218 **e41** **e42**

Pcsn. (ad lib.) unison *ffff*

Dr. 5 5 6 11 11 *ffff*