

STELAE

Stelae are slabs or tablets of stone set upright or planted in the ground. Usually bearing sacred, runic or memorial inscriptions, they bear witness to many ancient cultures, from Carthage to Mongolia, from the Maya to Orkadia.

NOTES ON PERFORMANCE

The two stands of gongs, Pelog and Slendro, should be quite widely separated, leaving room for the Bedhug to be placed midway, and giving reliable sight-lines to both sides. Adequate space should be left between the two ranks of instruments, so that players may shift position. (See Plan).

No conductor should be employed during the performance, and performance material should be invisible if possible. Cues and co-ordination may be provided by the Bedhug players, as well as within the Pelog and Slendro groups. Rhythmic structures are by and large simple: in homophonic passages, as in IV, it will be helpful if an underlying slow crotchet pulse is loosely maintained, allowing plenty of time for the resonance of each stroke, which should not be damped unless specified. A 'blurring' of tempo and sonority is desirable.

Save for the penultimate section, this piece consists almost entirely of unpitched material, derived from the variety of timbres that may result from the use of different beaters struck upon specific surfaces of the respective instruments. (See Diagram and Notational Symbols).

(It may be useful in rehearsal for each player to practise these strokes quietly, in order to discover and elicit the 'voice' of each gong).

Stelae may be performed either in sequence or separately.