

COLIN
CURRIE
RECORDS

STEVE REICH DRUMMING

COLIN CURRIE GROUP
SYNERGY VOCALS



1	Part I	Four pairs of tuned drums (4 musicians)	16:28
2	Part II	Three marimbas, vocals (11 musicians)	17:23
3	Part III	Three glockenspiels, whistling, piccolo (6 musicians)	11:47
4	Part IV	Four pairs of tuned drums, three marimbas, three glockenspiels, vocals, piccolo (12 musicians)	09:31
Total			55:09

Colin Currie

Hailed as “the world’s finest and most daring percussionist” (*Spectator*), Colin Currie regularly performs with the world’s leading orchestras and conductors. Currie is recognised for his commitment to new music and has premiered and commissioned numerous pieces by composers of significance. Colin Currie launched Colin Currie Records in 2018 as a platform for his diverse projects, celebrating the extraordinary developments for percussion music over the past century.

www.colincurrie.com

Colin Currie Group

Colin Currie Group, formed by Colin Currie in 2006, is a virtuosic ensemble that specialises in the music of Steve Reich. **www.colincurriegrup.com**

Percussion Colin Currie, George Barton,
Antoine Bedewi, Richard Benjafield,
Adam Clifford, Owen Gunnell, Catherine Ring,
Adrian Spillelt, Sam Walton
Piccolo Rowland Sutherland

Synergy Vocals

Synergy Vocals have performed and recorded with many of the world's top orchestras and composers. The group's close association with Steve Reich stems from their first ever concert in 1996, performing *Tehillim*. **www.synergyvocals.com**

Vocals Micaela Haslam, Heather Cairncross
Whistling Heather Cairncross

STEVE REICH

DRUMMING

When the BBC Proms asked me to curate a concert to celebrate Steve Reich's 70th birthday in 2006, I turned immediately to *Drumming*. A central pillar of his substantial output, the work is a thrillingly unclassifiable musical colossus, presenting robustly avant-garde attributes and positively teeming with energy. To date, it remains his longest work.

Based on a single twelve-note pattern, the work is in four parts, which all use the composer's trademark "phasing" technique to the fore of the musical development. In this process, musicians using identical timbres face off against each other, with one musician selected to accelerate their pattern until a new "resulting pattern" is established, thus considerably enriching the counterpoint and texture of the music. When this happens repeatedly, and with numerous percussionists, the overall effect can be extremely fulsome indeed. To highlight

these patterns further, the composer deploys women's voices to interact with the sonority of multiple marimbas, then whistling and piccolo to reach the higher-pitched massed glockenspiels. Some flexibility is afforded the musicians in this process, whereby the number of repetitions involved is subject to change and indeed the selection and ordering of the patterns to be highlighted. As such, the work lives and breathes an extraordinary flexibility and suppleness in performance that is very much part of its unique allure.

Arguably, the work is also a line in the sand for the composer. "Phasing" was in fact phased out after this composition, as if a particular musical process ultimately had been solved and sorted. In Part Four of the work, we hear his first ever use of a mixed-timbre ensemble, which he achieved by having all instrumental groups play together, thereby giving us a delectable foretaste of some of his colouristic combinations to come. "Drumming" also exhibits his first use of building patterns by substituting rests for beats (a process that is also used in reverse, by substituting beats with rests).

The joy in our continued performances of the music live in concert is in unearthing anew every nuance and acoustic subtlety available to the listener. It became important to the group to record the work

as a document of where these musical inquiries have taken us, and what this adventure has brought out of the notes on the page. Performing the piece is continually fascinating: years of experience playing it in a wide variety of venues and spaces has presented us with multifaceted insights into what the music can offer. This is also the work that brought this ensemble and the composer together in person for the first time (in London in

February 2010), and we are proud of our continued collaboration with Steve, which has resulted in many live performances together and the commissioning of new music for the group.

I hope you enjoy this wildly brilliant work, in all its excitement, delicacy, audacity, and power.

Colin Currie



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