

STEVE REICH
clapping music
for two performers
(1972)

Directions for Performance

The number of repeats is fixed at 12 repeats per bar. The duration of the piece should be approximately 5 minutes. The second performer should keep his or her downbeat where it is written, on the first beat of each measure and not on the first beat of the group of three claps, so that the downbeat always falls on a new beat of the unchanging pattern. No other accents should be made. It is for this reason that a time signature of 6/4 or 12/8 is not given – to avoid metrical accents. To begin the piece one player may set the tempo by counting quietly; “one, two, three, four, five, six”.

The choice of a particular clapping sound, i.e. with cupped or flat hands, is left up to the performers. Whichever timbre is chosen, both performers should try and get the same one so that their two parts will blend to produce one overall resulting pattern.

In a hall holding 200 people or more the clapping should be amplified with either a single omni-directional microphone for both performers, or two directional microphones; one for each performer. In either case the amplification should be mixed into mono and both parts fed equally to all loudspeakers. In smaller live rooms the piece may be performed without amplification. In either case the performers should perform while standing as close to one another as possible so as to hear each other well.

♩ = 160-184 Repeat each bar 12 times

clap 1
clap 2

f

12/72

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