# Play offWords 

for Orchestra

by Aidan Gold

Transposed Score

## Instrumentation

3 Flutes (2nd doubling Alto Flute in G, 3rd doubling Piccolo)
3 Oboes (3rd doubling English Horn)
3 Clarinets in Bb (3rd doubling Bass Clarinet in Bb )
3 Bassoons (3rd doubling Contrabassoon)
4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in C
3 Trombones, each doubling on 1 Crystal Glass (pitches: G5, Eb5, D5)
Tuba, doubling on 1 Crystal Glass (pitch: C5)
(the Crystal Glasses should be provided by the Percussionists)
Timpani (4 drums, plus the following Crotales to be placed on the Timpani: C4, C\#4, Eb4, E4, F4, G4, G\#4, A4, A\#4, B4, all sounding 2 octaves higher)

4 Percussionists (not counting the Marimba soloist):

## Percussion 1:

Vibraphone (shared with Perc. 2)
Tubular Bells
Finger Cymbals (mounted)
Triangle
Guiro
Metal Spring (if not avaialable use a buzzy, metallic instrument) China Cymbal
Thundersheet
2 Tom-toms (relatively low)
The largest pair of Crash Cymbals you own
Snare Drum


Percussion 2:
Vibraphone (shared with Perc. 1)
Castanets (mounted)
Woodblock (relatively low)
Bass Drum (shared with Perc. 3)
3 Brake Drums
Slapstick

## Percussion 3:

Glockenspiel
Small Metal Plate or Tile (placed on foam, somewhat resonant)
3 Glass Bottles (placed on their side on a trap table)
3 Tin Cans
Suspended Cymbal
Small Tam-tam (10"-20" diameter)
3 Bell Plates (suspended, as deep as possible)
Large Metal Trash Can (suspended upsidown and played on the base) Log Drum
China Cymbal
Ratchet
Bass Drum (shared with Perc. 2)


## Percussion 4:

Tambourine
Tam-tam (as large as possible)
3 Singing Bowls (any pitches, deeper is preferred)
3 Metal Pipes (any pitches, mounted to be as resonant as possible)
Miscellaneous Metal/Glass/Wood/Clay/Garden Wind Chimes
Slapstick
Crash Cymbals


Harp
Piano (amplified)
Celesta
Solo 5-Octave Marimba
Solo Violin
Violin I (at least 12)
Violin II (at least 10)
Viola (at least 8)
Cello (at least 8)
Bass (at least 5)- min. 1 or 2 with C string required

The two soloists in this piece should not visually stand out from the orchestra- they should wear the same concert attire as the other musicians, and enter with the rest of the orchestra. The Marimba soloist should be positioned close to the rest of the percussion section, but in a way such that the whole Marimba and the performer are clearly visible to the audience. The Violin soloist should sit in around the middle of the violin section, but in the outer chair of their stand so that they are clearly visible to the audience.

## Performance Instructions

The two soloists should pretend during warm-up and tuning that they are ordinary members of the orchestra, and should not receive a bow before the piece begins (though they should be given a bow and recognized as soloists after the piece ends!). The conductor should not give any gesture to start the piece- the solo violinist should just begin after the conductor walks on stage and everyone is ready to play.

Throughout the piece, various musicians (most frequently the soloists, sometimes other members of the orchestra, and sometimes the orchestra itself) play musical 'characters', much in the same way that actors or opera singers play characters. Instead of speaking with their voice, the instrumentalists speak with their instrument, often directed towards other characters with whom they are having a conversation. I have indicated at various points in the score where speech-like phrases should be directed towards another musician, but the performer should also use their own judgement to decide who to address their musical speech to. While I have notated rhythms for these speech-like sections, it can be approximated- the more important goal is that the gestures sound speech-like. Sometimes musicians fade in and out of characterization (such as a solo cellist who becomes a character which interacts with the two principal soloists when they play solo, but is subsumed into the orchestral background at other points and is not a character), and sometimes it is intentionally ambiguous who is a character and who is background. However, the two soloists remain their specific characters throughout, which is why it is important that, for example, the solo violinist not play with the tutti violin section.

When a musician is playing a character, there should be some degree of acting involved (again, much like an opera singer). When two characters are speaking, they should act as if they are communicating, so that it is almost like watching people have a conversation in a language you cannot speak- but you can pick out and guess meaning based on tone of voice, body language, etc. The specific body language and acting is up to the performer, but they should strive to give a convincing performance as an actor as well as a musician.

In some sections of this piece the soloists perform at a different tempo from the rest of the orchestra. The conductor should always remain with the larger group of musicians, and the unconducted group (usually just the soloists) can play their parts with a degree of rhythmic freedom (as described above). At the points where these soloists rejoin in tempo with the orchestra, there is always either a fermata or a bar that the orchestra can repeat so that any synchronization issues are fixed before the orchestra continues all in one tempo.

Sometimes the performers are asked to sing on a given syllable. The singing is always notated in concert pitch, and may be sung in any octave. Performers may even switch octaves in the middle of a phrase if that is what is most comfortable for them. The singing should always be done confidently enough to be clearly audible in the texture. Every singing line is doubled by an instrument in the orchestra playing so that the singers can find their pitches.

The piano should be amplified to balance with the orchestra throughout the piece. This means that from the opening of the piece to rehearsal 60 , the piano should be given small amplification. From rehearsal 60 -rehearsal 75 , the piano should be amplified significantly so to balance with the percussion and large orchestra. After rehearsal 75, the amplification should return to its original level.

## Notation <br> All Instruments

Rehearsal Mark. Note that there are no measure numbers in this piece. This is because in multiple sections different instruments are playing at different tempos, so some parts may have a greater or lesser number of bars, making bar numbers inconsistent and unusuable for reference points. These numbered rehearsal marks should be used instead for reference points.

Player Name. Bach, Shostakovich, and other composers famously used musical representations of their name in their music. Here, some of the musical 'characters' get to create their own names based on the performer's real name in some way. The exact way in which this is done is up to the performer- they could try to creatively manipulate the letters of their names to give note names in the manner that Bach and Shostakovich did, or they could just use a simple mapping such as the following, or one of their own:

## ABCDEFGH I J K L MNOPQRS T U V W X YZ

ABCDEFGBbC\#EbF\#G\#AB CDEFGBbC\#EbF\#G\#AB
Another option is that the performer could just invent a musical phrase that they believe represents them as a character. However, this phrase should be one that is easily performable on all the pitched instruments used in this piece (e.g. probably restricted to one octave), and it should also be able to be played fast enough to fit within relatively short units of time (e.g. probably not longer than 8 notes). The performer should then share this name with the orchestra during rehearsal.
When the musician sees this symbol in their music, they should play the name of the musician playing the instrument listed. In this case, the performer should play the Violin soloist's name. They should time their playing so that it lasts for approximately the duration given in the box (in this case, a half note at whatever tempo the music is currently at). When multiple players play a name simultaneously, it does not have to rhythmically line up.
Continuation Line. Always preceeded by some kind of figure or text description. Perform this figure or direction for the duration of the line. Depending on the specific directions, this may be continuous repetition of a figure or sporatic interjection of a figure at random points during the line.


Very High Note. Not necessarily the highest possible note, but the highest note that can be reached in the specific musical context. Does not need to be in tune.


Glissando rhythm. When a noteless stem appears in the middle of a glissando, it is simply to show the rhythmic length of the glissando and is not to be rearticulated, unless there is an articulation above the noteless stem (e.g. staccato or acccent).

## Winds

Air Sound. Blow air through the instrument, producing no pitch. You can freely vary the timbre of the air using embochure position or key movement, or playing with only part of the instrument.

## Percussion

(for Toms) play on rim of drum. (for Marimba) play with the shaft of the mallet.

+ Dead Stroke.


## Piano and Harp



Harmonic. Always notated at played pitch, not at sounding pitch. Sounds $8 v a$. For piano, this is produced by stopping the string with a finger on the nodal point $1 / 2$ the length of the string while playing the note on the keyboard.

## (for piano) Pluck string with fingernail

Cluster. For harp, this is produced by striking the palm against the strings in the given register. For piano, this is produced either by striking the keyboard with the palm or striking the palm against the strings in the given register, as specified by text in the specific situation.
(for harp) Pedal Buzz. Pluck the string while the pedal is halfway between positions to produce a buzzing sound.

## Strings

+ Left Hand Pizz.
I II III IV String Indications. Play the note or passage on the given string (I= highest, IV=lowest)


Harmonic. All string harmonics in this piece are notated in fingered position, not sounding. If the string number is not given, then the performer should play the harmonic on the open string it is directly above (in this case, the A string)

















 Solo Na:


Hn in 1 (


















Hn in F

Per. 4











| Hn in $\mathrm{F}_{1}$ | $6{ }^{3}$ |  |  |  |  | . |  | . | . | - |  | ? | ? | ? | ? ${ }^{\text {b }}$ | ? |  | 3 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | ${ }_{p}=$ | ${ }_{p}=$ | $p=$ | $p_{\text {sim. }}$ |  |  |  | ${ }_{\text {dim }}$ |
| Hnin $\mathrm{F}^{2}$ | b3 |  |  |  |  | . |  | . | . | , | ? | ? | \#0 | , \#o | \# | ? |  | 3 ? |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | $p=$ | $p=$ | $p=$ | $p_{\text {sim. }}$ |  |  |  | dim. |
| Hn in F 3 | $6^{3}$ |  |  |  |  | - |  | - | - | $\cdots$ | $?$ | $?$ | ? | ? | ? | ? |  |  |
|  |  |  | - |  | - |  |  |  |  |  | ${ }^{b_{p}}=$ | ${ }_{p}^{\text {bo }}=$ | $\stackrel{p}{p}=$ | ${ }_{p}{ }_{\text {s sim. }}$ |  |  |  | ${ }_{\text {dim }}$. |
| Hnin F 4 | \% ${ }_{\text {年 }}$ |  |  |  |  | . |  | - | . | $\bullet$ | ? ${ }^{\text {bo }}$ | $?$ | ? | $?$ | $?$ | $?$ |  | $?$ |
|  |  |  | - |  | - |  |  |  |  |  | $p=$ | $p=$ | $p=$ | $p$ sim. |  |  |  | dim. |
| Tpt in C 1 | $6^{3}$ |  | - | - | - | . |  | . | . | . | - | $\cdots$ |  | . | . | . |  | . |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tpt in C2 | 6 |  | - |  | . |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tpt in C 3 | $b_{3}^{3}=$ |  | - | - | - | - |  | . | . | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |  |  |
|  | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tbn 1 | \% ${ }^{\text {e }}$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | - | - | - | - | - | . | . | - |  | . |
|  |  |  |  |  | $\bar{\square}$ |  |  | $\underline{\square}$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tbn 2 | \% ${ }^{\text {4 }}$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | . | . | . | - | . | . | . | . |  | . |
|  |  |  |  |  | - |  |  | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tbn 3 | \%3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | - | . | . | - | - | - | - | - |  | - |
|  |  |  |  |  | $\bar{\square}$ |  |  | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \#3- |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | $\cdots$ |  | . |


 Pno




= 152
40 random mumbling, as before $\quad \boldsymbol{0}=132 \quad \boldsymbol{d}=152 \quad \boldsymbol{d}=92$
$41 \cdot=152$














 Solo Mar $\mid$ (rejoin orch at $d=152$ )





角 Solo Mar: $\mid=1$


$\pm$




53


















th Tragic Grandeur $\mathrm{J}=66$

Somm [16













