

# THE C CRAB

a diatribe for electric cello, soundfile, and video



## MARC LEMAY

1334 34<sup>TH</sup> STREET S APT. G  
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35205  
M@MARCLEMAYMUSIC.COM  
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For Craig Hultgren

# Program Notes

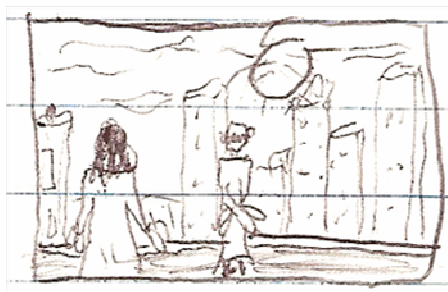
DURATION: 11'

This work for electric cello, computer-generated soundfile, and video is the result of the 2005-2006 Hultgren/University of Alabama at Birmingham Computer Music Ensemble Commissioning Prize. Co-sponsor Craig Hultgren premiered and recorded the ecello part, accompanied by the soundfile and video.



*The Crab (center, Rick James) and his flock.*

The video, conceived as a modern silent film, is an allegorical tale of the danger of good ideas taken to their extreme conclusions. It features red hands, cars, ideas, intrigue, white robes, cats, murder, gospel, trains, rebirth, and cereal. Live performers were once a common sight at silent film houses, and this project hopes to capture a bit of that lost spirit. *The Crab* premiered in 2006 as part of the UAB Computer Music Ensemble's Spring concert, and has since been performed by Mr. Hultgren throughout Birmingham and in Bowling Green, Ohio, and St. Louis, Missouri.



*A still from the Crab video, along with its corresponding storyboard, drawn by Marc LeMay.*

The video was shot entirely in Birmingham, using local talent. The two lead roles are performed by Rick James and Beth Kitchin, two favorites of the Birmingham theatre scene.

# Performance Notes

The piece is written with a steady, consistent tempo of quarter note equals 120 throughout. Precise alignment with the soundfile is necessary in many places, as seen in the graphic score to follow. The performer may wish to use a click track in one ear during performance for this reason.

Two effects pedals will need to be placed into the ecello's signal chain: a delay and an overdrive. Delay time settings should reflect the 120 b.p.m. tempo, to taste. The overdrive should create a tube-style distortion, bright and crunchy in tone rather than creamy and muddled, though again I'll leave the precise settings to the discretion of the performer. Indications to turn effects on and off are placed in boxed text in the score.

Special notation:



glissando whilst employing artificial harmonics across the range indicated



gradual rhythmic crescendo within the measure

jeté col legno battuto



tap wood of the bow on the strings at indicated stopped pitch, then let it randomly bounce for the indicated length of time

sul tasto → sul pont.

a gradual shift from tasto to ponticello

vib. → h.vib (M2)

a gradual shift from normal vibrato to hypervibrato of a width indicated by the interval in the parentheses

+

left hand pizzicato

⏻

snap ('Bartók') pizzicato

⤴

finger nail pizzicato

# The Crab

a diatribe for electric cello, soundfile, and video  
(graphic score)

Marc LeMay  
(b.1982)

Titles

0.0"  
Intro

soundfile

♩ = 120

scuttling sounds...

Disjointed

scratch tone

gliss.

ord.

*p* ————— *f* > *p*<sup>3</sup>

Part I: Birth

19.0"  
BIRTH Title

clang clang clang...

sul tasto —————> sul pont.

ord.

27.0"  
The Crab's Day

wine glasses...

Resigned

*p* ————— *mf* ————— *pp*

dolce

typewriter clicks...

x x x x x x  
x x x x x x x x

*p* ————— *f* ————— *pp* *mf* —————

*pp* *mf*

*p* *f*

clang clang...

*ppp* **Hopeful** *harm. gliss.*

BOOM! percussion

Driving

ord.

f

sul G

schling!

clicks...

bell synth

pp

f

p

wine glasses

ppp

mf

p



Part II: Tumor

2'42.0"  
TUMOR title

2'50.0"  
Crab's speech

clangs/tiney sounds... whirring tape sound

Frantic but Playful  
sul pont.  
*mf*

ord.

whirring tape sound

*pp*

crash! crash! gliss. gliss.

*f*

wine glasses/synth boom boom boom...

*p* *ppp*

crash! crash! crash! crash!

*mf* *ff*

vibes clang clang...

*p*

noise... crash!

vib. → h.vib (M2)

*ppp*

"yes - sir!"

sul pont.

*f*

"cha!"

ord.

*ord.*



The first system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains rhythmic notation represented by 'x' marks above the staff, indicating specific notes or rests. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a complex rhythmic pattern with many notes, some marked with 'x'.

The second system has two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with rhythmic notation. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains several notes with performance instructions: **DELAY OFF**, **Proud**, *vib. → h.vib (M2)*, *(arco)*, and *p*. There are also dynamic markings *p* and *f* and a *V* marking.

The third system is primarily in bass clef. It features several triplet markings (3) and a *f* dynamic marking. There are also *V* markings and a *trmm* marking.

The fourth system has two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and includes markings for *snare*, *boom!*, and *tinny orchestra*. The lower staff is in bass clef and includes the marking **Complacent** and *mp*. There are also triplet markings (3) and a *trmm* marking.

The fifth system is a grand staff with two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Both staves contain complex rhythmic patterns with triplet markings (3) and a *trmm* marking.

4'55.0"  
Crab/Assis. on Roof

woodwinds

**Lyrical, Profound**

*pp dolce*

pizz.  
*secco*

tinny orchestra

**Very Dramatic**  
arco  
*f*

Part III: Metastasis

5'31.0"  
METASTASIS title

tinny string section/wine glasses

5'39.0"  
Flock Bad I

clicks, etc. --->

x x x x x  
x x x x x x x x x x

clang clang

**Frantic, Scuttling** behind the bridge; unmeasured tremolo, improvise irregular patterns forcefully

DELAY ON

**ff**

tinny brass cacophony --->

piano/scraping sounds

**Portentous**

DELAY OFF

boom! and converging cluster

doot doot doot...

boom boom... ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ piano

*f*

synth lead

6'20.0"  
First Kill

clusters --> strings pedal whisper whisper whisper whisper

Violent ||

*pp* *ff*

6'34.0"  
Flock Bad II

whisper whisper whisper whisper whisper whisper whisper whisper whisper  
whisper whisper whisper whisper whisper whisper whisper whisper whisper  
distorted percussion

**Aggressive**

OVERDRIVE ON

*ff*

screams! screams! screams! screams! screams!

*p*

screams! screams! screams!

*f*

screams! screams! screams! screams! screams!

*ff*

screams!

glockenspiel

wine glasses, tornado siren...

sul G

OVERDRIVE OFF

Sf

etc. →

Disappointed, Resigned

ppp espress. p ppp

Sf

doot doot...

vib. → h.vib (M2)

p f pp

Sf

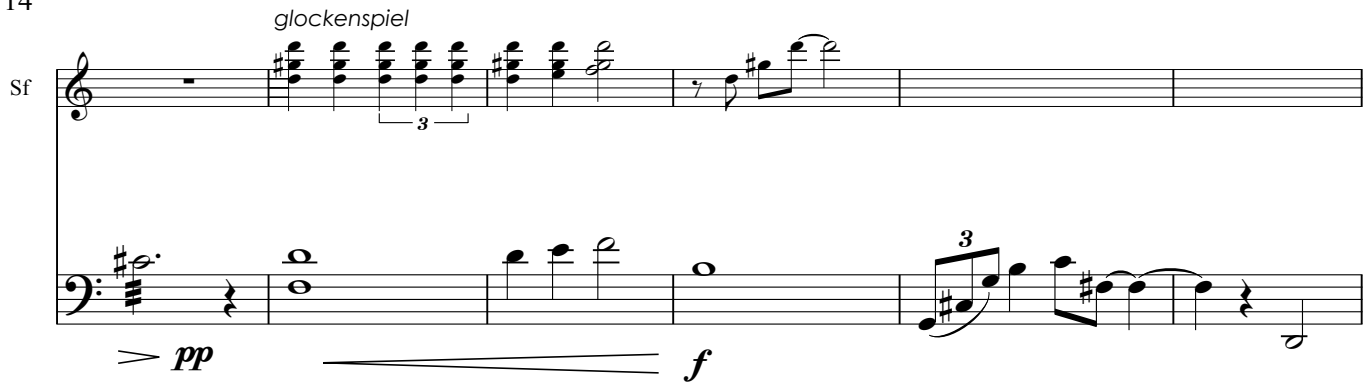
sul tasto → sul pont.

ord.

pp f p f

glockenspiel

Sf

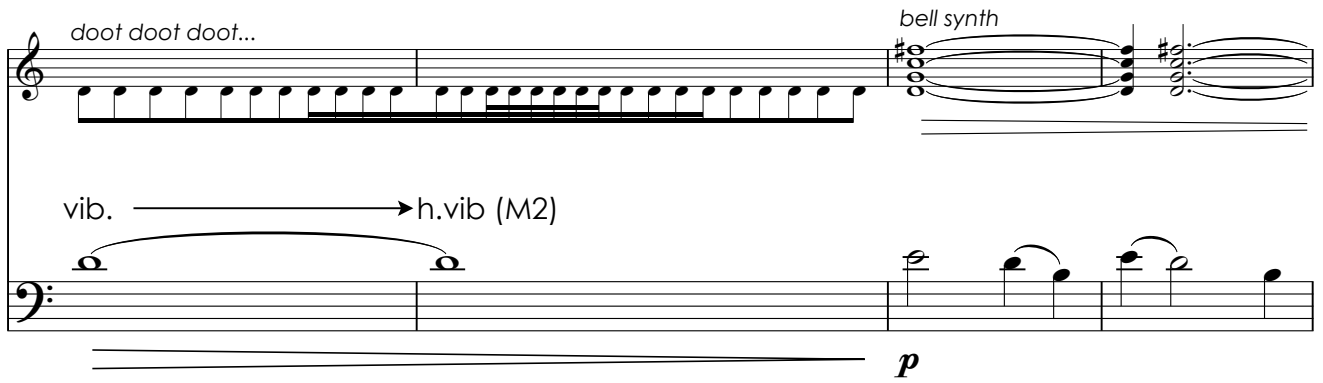


*pp* *f*

doot doot doot...

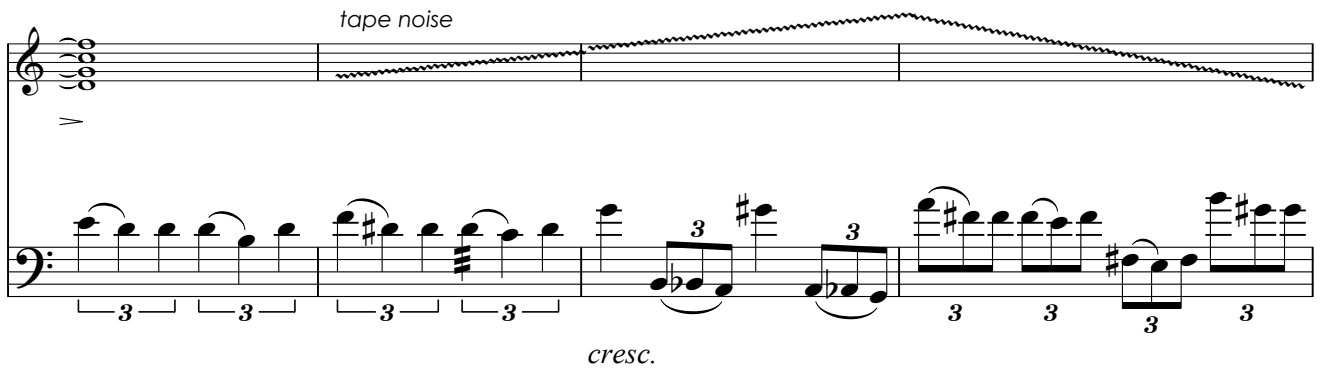
bell synth

vib. → h.vib (M2)



*p*

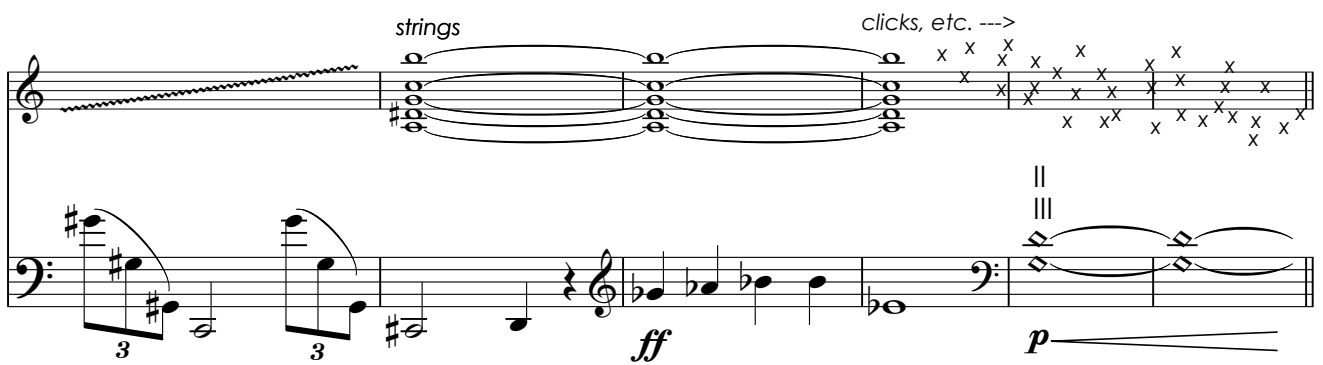
tape noise



*cresc.*

strings

clicks, etc. --->



*ff* *p*

Part IV: Death

8'14.0"  
DEATH Title

8'22.0"  
Crab Surveys the Damage

tings...

**Empty, Tired**

*ff* *p* *p dolce*

*ppp*

clang clang...

doot doot...

*ppp*

8'53.0"  
Crab Finds Assis.

wine glasses/bells

*ppp* *f* *p*

harp gliss. -->

*cresc.*

9'20.0"  
Walk Up Stairs

*harp*

**Elucidated**

*f* *p*

Detailed description: This system contains two staves. The top staff is for harp, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a series of notes with a wavy line underneath, suggesting a tremolo or rapid oscillation. The bottom staff is for 'Elucidated', starting with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. It begins with a rest followed by a series of notes, then transitions into four groups of triplets, each marked with a '3' above the notes. The dynamics are marked as *f* (forte) and *p* (piano).

Detailed description: This system continues the 'Elucidated' part from the previous system. It features a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. The notation includes a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with several triplet markings (indicated by '3' above the notes) and a change in clef to a treble clef for a brief section.

9'49.0"  
End Credits

*tinny orchestra*

*clang clang...*

**Aggressive, Playful**

*fff* *f*

*h.vib (M2)*

Detailed description: This system contains two staves. The top staff is for 'tinny orchestra', starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. It includes a section with a wavy line and a section with 'clang clang...' sounds. The bottom staff is for 'Aggressive, Playful', starting with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. It features a series of notes with a wavy line underneath, followed by a section with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp, and finally a section with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. The dynamics are marked as *fff* (fortississimo) and *f* (forte). The instruction *h.vib (M2)* is present.

*scuttling sounds*

x x

*p cresc.*

Detailed description: This system contains two staves. The top staff is for 'scuttling sounds', consisting of a series of 'x' marks on a staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The bottom staff is for a rhythmic accompaniment, starting with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. It features a series of notes with a wavy line underneath, followed by a section with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The dynamics are marked as *p cresc.* (piano crescendo).

x x

*f*

Detailed description: This system continues the 'scuttling sounds' and rhythmic accompaniment from the previous system. The top staff has 'x' marks on a staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The bottom staff is for a rhythmic accompaniment, starting with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. It features a series of notes with a wavy line underneath, followed by a section with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The dynamics are marked as *f* (forte).

Musical notation for the first system, featuring a treble clef staff with a complex rhythmic pattern of 'x' marks and a bass clef staff with a melodic line containing triplets.

Musical notation for the second system, including a treble clef staff with 'bells' and a bass clef staff with 'pizz.' and 'jeté col legno battuto' markings.

Musical notation for the third system, featuring a large black wedge-shaped graphic and a bass clef staff with 'jeté col legno battuto', 'ord.', and 'ff' markings.

Musical notation for the fourth system, including a treble clef staff with a 'BOOM!' dynamic marking and a bass clef staff with a 'fff' dynamic marking.