

Fantasy for Kalimba

Eduardo García-Padilla

"To restore silence is the role of objects."

Samuel Beckett

Fantasy for Kalimba

Tune to these notes (or transpose if needed)



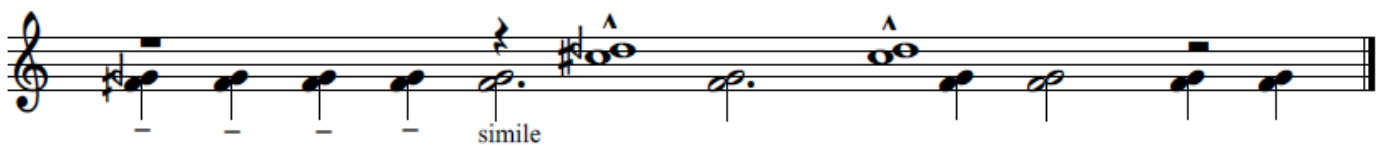
The two lowest notes should be slightly out of tune with respect to each other.

A microphone is necessary.

Play four high notes in succession, alternating left and right thumbs, slowly and fairly loudly. Wait until nothing is heard.

Repeat the sequence softly, somewhat more quickly and with a very subtle crescendo. Every four or five repetitions, change one of the notes in the sequence to a lower one. Eventually, the sequence should be only the lowest two lamellae (which are virtually the same note) repeated four times. Repeat the sequence with a gradual diminuendo and start to play with the fingertips instead of the nails. Once only a fricative noise is heard, play both very loudly and immediately mute those two, waiting for the resonance of the other lamellae to quieten.

Repeat the following motif around five times, approximately, with the lower notes played with the fingertips and the higher ones with the nails:



When repeating it, some of the notes start to change to others, until only relatively consonant intervals are heard in the end.

Repeat these but now slowly desynchronising the intervals that sounded at the same time until a sequence of four notes is reached, with a similar rhythm to that in the beginning. Again, repeat a few more times while changing the notes until the starting tonal intervals are no longer recognisable.

Attempt to play a tonal melody without looking at the tuning table; avoid stopping and trying to repeat to correct it if the wrong lamella is played.

Once the melody has finished, if there were any mistakes with execution (i.e. not taking into account the unavoidable tuning inaccuracies due to the lamellae having quarter tones), repeat again and slightly quicker. Otherwise, or after four repetitions, attempt to play the same melody but changing every note to the immediately lower or higher lamella.

The melody probably included alternating thumbs at some point. Repeat the melody three more times (either the first one or the modified one) but play the notes that alternated thumbs at the same time, creating harmonic intervals. Slowly remove any notes that are not played together with another note, until lamellae are only played two at a time.

Repeat, desynchronising, until a four-note sequence is obtained (a six-note sequence might occur . if confident, continue with that longer sequence, otherwise ignore any further notes).

Every four or five repetitions, change one of the notes in the sequence to a lower one. Eventually, the sequence should be only the lowest two lamellae (which are virtually the same note) repeated four times. Repeat the sequence with a gradual diminuendo and start to play with the fingertips instead of the nails. Once only a fricative noise is heard, play both very loudly and immediately mute those two, waiting for the resonance of the other lamellae to quieten.