

# **FOUR GIG BAGS**

**Christopher Coleman**

*commissioned by the Hong Kong Composers' Guild*

*for Four Gig Heads*

**Percussion Quartet  
duration ca. 8 minutes**

## Program Note

### ***Four Gig Bags***

I first heard the Four Gig Heads many years ago, in a masterclass with members of the percussion quartet Nexus. I was most impressed with their performance and enthusiasm, and so I am delighted, some 10 years later, to finally have the chance to work with them. I had written two other percussion quartets, both for large set-ups with many and large instruments; but the Four Gig Heads wanted a more portable piece—one with few if any large instruments, that would be able to be set up quickly and easily. The idea for *Four Gig Bags* was born—the piece would be composed using only small instruments that would fit into a single gig bag for each player. The piece begins quietly with the sound of zills (finger cymbals)—which ended my previous percussion quartet, *Crossing Boundaries*. It then grows through a series of timbral modulations, changing tone colors through the ringing metal sounds of triangles, bells, gongs, and cymbals; to rough scraped sounds of guiro, reco-reco, and rachet; to the percussive striking of tambourines and hand drums. At the climax of the eight-minute piece, the percussionists play in complete rhythmic synchronization, abandoning the earlier interlocking rhythms. After seemingly merging into one super multi-percussionist, the players retrace their steps backwards, in a varied retrograde that concludes where the piece began. —note by the composer

## Performance Note

If possible, *Four Gig Bags* begins with all players off-stage, and the performance area cleared of all instruments—only the necessary stands, music, and trap tables are set up in advance. Each player will pack a gig bag in advance with all of the instruments they will play in the piece. The piece begins as the four performers come on stage with their bags. They unpack only the minimum instruments necessary to begin the piece—this is indicated at the beginning of each part. As the piece progresses, instruments are drawn from the gig bags as needed (as quietly as possible)—this is indicated on the parts with the instruction “prepare instrument”. Care should be taken as to the order in which the instruments are packed, so that they can be removed easily without taking out instruments that should be revealed later. For ease and speed of set-up, certain instruments may be suspended rather than clamped or put on a stand—including the ice bell, splash cymbal, cowbells, and zills.

**Christopher Coleman** (b. 1958, Atlanta, GA) composer, conductor, trombonist, is currently Composition Coordinator of the Hong Kong Baptist University Department of Music and Fine Arts. He has also taught at the University of Chicago, DePaul University, Columbia College, and in the Interlochen Center for the Arts summer program. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago where he studied composition with Ralph Shapey and Shulamit Ran. While at the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned the M.A. in composition, he studied with George Crumb, George Rochberg, and Richard Wernick.

While most of Coleman's works are scored for traditional forces, recent efforts at Hong Kong Baptist University have resulted in two large scale multimedia/improvisation pieces: *September Variations* and *Prophecies for a New Millennium*. He has received commissions from the Hong Kong Wind Philharmonia, the Hong Kong Bach Choir and Orchestra, the Hong Kong Composers' Guild, the DuPage Symphony Orchestra, the Chicago-area chapter of the American String Teachers' Association, and the University of Georgia Trombone Choir, among others. He has been awarded first place in the Percussive Arts Society Percussion Ensemble Composition Contest and the ASUC/SESAC Composition Contest. His music is published by Maecenas Music, Theodore Presser, Ensemble Publications, C. Alan Publications and Crown Music Press. While away from music, Coleman can be seen performing stand-up comedy and comedy improvisation with People's Liberation Improv, Hong Kong's only regularly performing comedy improv troupe, at the TakeOut Comedy Club.

# Four Gig Bags

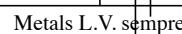
for Four Gig Heads  
commissioned by the Hong Kong Composers' Guild

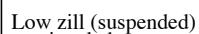
Christopher Coleman

 = c. 105

Prepare zills, cabasa

High and medium suspended zills  
with triangle beaters

1     Prepare zills,  
triangle, cup gong

2     Metals L.V. sempre

3   Prepare ice bell,  
triangle, cowbell

4   Prepare low triangle,  
low cowbell

6     Metals L.V. sempre

## Four Gig Bags

11

12

**Measure 11:** Eighth-note patterns on all staves. Dynamic: **p**.

**Measure 12:** Eighth-note patterns on all staves. Dynamic: **f**. Performance instruction: **Low triangle**.

**Measure 12 (continued):** Eighth-note patterns on all staves. Dynamic: **f**. Performance instruction: **Triangle L.V. sempre**.

**Measure 15:** Eighth-note patterns on all staves. Dynamic: **f**.

**Measure 16:** Eighth-note patterns on all staves. Dynamic: **f**. Performance instruction: **Medium triangle**.

**Measure 16 (continued):** Eighth-note patterns on all staves. Dynamic: **f**. Performance instruction: **High triangle**.

19

20

**Measure 19:** Eighth-note patterns on all staves. Dynamic: **fp**.

**Measure 20:** Eighth-note patterns on all staves. Dynamic: **f**. Performance instruction: **Cup gong**.

**Measure 20 (continued):** Eighth-note patterns on all staves. Dynamic: **fp** and **f**.

Four Gig Bags

3

24

Large hand-held gong

mf

mp

mp

p

Prepare Chinese cymbals

28

[28]

mf

p

p

mf > < > <

prepare medium cowbell,  
reco-reco, egg shaker,  
hand drum, wood block

Low cowbell,  
yarn mallet

Small Chinese Hand Cymbals

31

+ o + o + o + o +

+ o + o + o + o +

+ o + o + o + o +

+ o + o + o + o +

Chinese Opera Gong  
yarn mallet >

wood stick >

>

f

f

f

sim.

## Four Gig Bags

36

34

*mp*

*f mp*

-

*f*

*mp*

Medium cowbell,  
yarn mallets

*mp*

37

-

*f*

-

*f*

*f*

*f*

Reco-reco

*f*

*f*

41

*o*

*+ + +*

*fp*

*o*

*+ + +*

*p*

-

-

*o*

*+ + +*

*p*

Four Gig Bags

5

45

Lay gong flat

Cabasa

*mf*

48

Guiro

*mf*

*mp*

51

Toy rachet  
(Halloween noisemaker)

Rachet

*mf*

(Look disgusted at toy,  
grab actual rachet quickly!) *f*

## Four Gig Bags

54

55

Sandpaper blocks

*mp*

Egg shaker

*mp*

*f*

*mp*

3

58

*mp*

>>>

Hand drum  
(in hand)

*mp*

Pandiero  
(in hand)

*mp*

3

3

3

3

62

62

prepare hand drum,  
spring drum, wood block

*f*

Tambourine (in hand)

>>>>>> >

*ff*

Joyously!  
Drums up!

p

with half-closed brush

*ff*

Joyously!  
Drums up!

*f*

*fp*

*ff*

Joyously!  
> Drums up!

*f*

*p ff*

Four Gig Bags

7

67

Low hand drum,  
w. fingers

*p*

>

*ff*

>

*ff*

>

*ff*

71

72

*mp*

*f*

>

*f*

with stick

*f*

*mf*

*f*

>

74

High wood block

*ff*

Gong

Sandpaper blocks

Egg shaker

*p*

prepare castanets

## Four Gig Bags

78

*mp*

shake

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

82

83 Spring drum

*f*      *mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

3

o + o +

86

Machine castanets

*f*

3

o + o +

## Four Gig Bags

9

89

This section contains three staves of music. The top staff consists of two measures of eighth-note patterns. The middle staff has a measure of eighth notes followed by a measure of sixteenth-note pairs. The bottom staff has a measure of eighth notes followed by a measure of sixteenth-note pairs.

92

This section contains four staves of music. The first two staves begin with dynamic *f*. The third staff is labeled "Low wood block". The fourth staff begins with dynamic *f*. Measures 93 and 94 feature eighth-note patterns with various dynamics and performance instructions like + o and >.

95

96

This section contains four staves of music. Measures 95 and 96 begin with dynamic *ff*. Measures 97 and 98 begin with dynamic *ff*. Measures 95 and 97 feature eighth-note patterns with dynamics > and 3. Measures 96 and 98 feature eighth-note patterns with dynamics > and 3.

## Four Gig Bags

98

— 3 — 3 —  
— 3 — 3 —  
— 3 — 3 —  
— 3 — 3 —

102 — 3 —  
— 3 —  
— 3 —  
— 3 —

105 [105] 3  
Sandpaper blocks  
+ o + o + o + o + o

108

112

Spring drum >

*mf f*

*mf*

*mf*

116

*rit.* -----

*mf*

*mf*

## Four Gig Bags

120

[121] *a tempo*

*mf*      *f*      *f*

*f*      *mp*      *f*

*f*      *f*

*p*      Small Chinese Hand Cymbals with rubber mallet      Clashed

*f*

124

[126]

Gong (flat)

*ff*      Joyously!      *f*      *ff*

*ff*      Joyously!      *mp*      *ff*

*ff*      Joyously!      *mp*      *ff*

*ff*      Joyously!      *mp*      *ff*

128

suspend gong

Cabasa

Spring drum

132

*ff*

*fp*

*ff*

*pp*

Low cowbell

High hand drum

*mf*

Low wood block

Pandiero

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

Four Gig Bags

13

133

Sandpaper blocks

**p**

Egg shaker

**p**

suspend one Chinese Cymbal

**pp**

137

139

**fp**

**ff**

Tambourine (in hand)

**mp**

Reco-reco

**f**

**fp**

**ff**

Vibraslap

**ff**

**f**

**ff**

Rachet

141

> > >

> > > >

> > > >

>

3

3

3

145

147

Cup gong  
mf

Low cowbell,  
yarn mallet

Low triangle

Chinese Hand Cymbal (sus)

**fz**

149 Cabasa

152

mf

Guiro

>

mfp

Chinese Hand Cymbal (sus)

**mf**

153 Large hand-held gong

Triangle  
Zills  
Cup Gong

Chinese Opera Gong (in hand)

Large hand-held gong

**mf**

**p**

**f**

**ff**

**p**

**f**

Four Gig Bags

15

157

159  $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 115$

Machine castanets  
mp

Guiro (tapped)  
mp

mp

mp

160 High wood block  
Gong  
mf

mf

mf

mf

163

165

+ o + o + o + o + +

> — 3 — — 3 — >

—

—

—

—

166

One Chinese cymbal (suspended)  
with rubber mallet

Cowbell

Egg shaker

Ice bell

High triangle

169

pp

mp

High triangle

172

174 High and medium suspended zills

mp

Low triangle

mp

176

p

180

182

f

f

f

f

183

mp

mp

mp

187

Musical score for Gig Bag 187. The score consists of four staves. The first staff has a dynamic of *p*. The second staff has a dynamic of *p*. The third staff has a dynamic of *p*. The fourth staff has a dynamic of *p*.

190

192

Musical score for Gig Bag 190. The score consists of four staves. The first staff has a dynamic of *pp*. The second staff has a dynamic of *pp*. The third staff has a dynamic of *pp*. The fourth staff has a dynamic of *pp*.

194

Musical score for Gig Bag 194. The score consists of four staves. The first staff has a dynamic of *ppp*. The second staff has a dynamic of *ppp*. The third staff has a dynamic of *ppp*. The fourth staff has a dynamic of *ppp*. The text "Fairy bell" is written above the fourth staff.