Bob L. Sturm (folk-rnn)

Two Short Pieces with an Interlude

1. March to the Mainframe
2. Interlude
3. The Humours of Time Pigeon

flute (piccolo)
Bb clarinet (bass clarinet)
piano
violin
double bass
snare drum

Background:
Materials in these pieces were generated by a computer system trained to reproduce textual transcriptions of folk music (session music, e.g., Irish traditional music).¹

¹ https://github.com/IraKorshunova/folk-rnn
“March to the Mainframe” is X:488 in The folk-rnn Session Book Volume 1 of 10.

“Interlude” uses as its subject the first few measures of “The Millennial Whoop Reel” (left), which I co-composed with the system.

“The Humours of Time Pigeon” comes from material produced by an early version of the folk-rnn system, one trained only on text. Its verbatim output was the following:

This output is a “failure” in many ways: no measure is counted correctly in the given meter; measures are inconsistent in their beats; stylistically, it is not very close to the training material; the melody is rambling. However, the title generated by the system is brilliant. This motivated me to explore how to make sense of this otherworldly creature. (This failure of a transcription also appears in my composition, “Eight Short Outputs”.

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4 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaO4HpM07hE
Performance notes:

The march is pretty straightforward, really. Don’t play it too fast.

The interlude is sensitive. Don’t play it too fast.

“The Humours of Time Pigeon” is by and large meant to be fun. Like the other pieces, it shouldn’t be played too fast.

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March to the Mainframe

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Stamp your feet, as if you are marching