Christopher Preissing
POP: weasel
Vocalizing Flute and Stereo Acousmatic Playback
Christopher Preissing

POPP: weasel

vocalizing flute and stereo acousmatic playback

round and round the mulberry bush
the monkey chased the weasel

[ October 2010, Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts ]

Copyright © 2010, Christopher Preissing
All rights reserved.
POP GOES THE WEASEL

Half a pound of tuppenny rice,
Half a pound of treacle.
That’s the way the money goes,
Pop! goes the weasel.

Up and down the City road,
In and out the Eagle,
That’s the way the money goes,
Pop! goes the weasel.

Alternative Verses

A penny for a spool of thread,
A penny for a needle.
That’s the way the money goes,
Pop! goes the weasel.

Every night when I go out
The monkey’s on the table
Take a stick and knock it off
Pop! goes the weasel.

Round and round the mulberry bush
The monkey chased the weasel.
The monkey stopped to pull up his socks
Pop! goes the weasel.

I’ve no time to plead and pine
I’ve no time to wheedle
Kiss me quick, and then I’m gone
Pop! goes the weasel.

All around the cobbler’s Bench
The monkey chased the weasel.
The monkey thought it all in fun,
Pop! goes the weasel.

With references to pawning (pop) Sunday coats (weasel) and drinking at a local London establishment (the Eagle), the Cockney rhyming slang of Pop Goes the Weasel dates to the mid-1800s. The most common American version employs the opening phrase, “All around the mulberry bush”. It is often played as a children’s singing game.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

POP: weasel is a loose transcription of an improvisation with the acousmatic playback, and should be performed in the character of an improvisation. While the flute player’s goal should be to play as close as possible to what is written, a good performance will naturally be wild, breathy, and, as when indicated, jazzy and ad lib.

Alternatively, POP:weasel may be performed with percussion substituting for the acousmatic parts.

Notation is proportional with 30 seconds per line as indicated. Vertical dotted lines indicate alignment of the flute and acousmatic parts.

FLUTE NOTES

With regard to intonation, standard notation for quartertones is followed, i.e.:

\[ \begin{align*}
\sharp & \quad \text{¼ tone up} \\
\flat & \quad \text{¼ tone down} \\
\end{align*} \]

Vocalizations are to be executed as close as possible to that which is written. Sections notated ad lib. may be interpreted in a more improvisatory fashion with the given notation as a suggestion. In general, vocalizations are produced with the flute to the lips as if to play. This, coupled with specific fingerings, will give added resonance to the gesture. Vocalizations are written using Spelled pronunciation (English) rather than IPA pronunciation. Specific vocalization key is given below:

\begin{align*}
\text{UV} & \quad \text{Unvoiced, i.e., at about 0:03, a whispered “ha” gradually changing to “sh”}. \\
\text{IN} & \quad \text{Ingressive, i.e., at 0:11, gradually changing from “oh” to “ah” to “eye” to “ee”}. \\
\text{EX} & \quad \text{Egressive. Most vocalizations are egressive. This notation is used in order to avoid confusion, i.e., at 2:03}. \\
\times & \quad \text{Pop sound with lips. With staccato marking, unvoiced; with accent and (kiss), voiced, i.e., create a strong suction with the lips and pop.
}
\end{align*}

Fingerings are given in order that create certain effects, multiphonics, or tunings and should be executed as indicated unless a satisfactory alternative creates the desired effect. Multiphonics (with fingerings) are given with sounding pitches represented as standard-sized note heads, and root notes in parenthesis. Overblown notes do not have alternate fingerings. In these cases sounding tones are represented as standard-sized note heads, with fingered notes in parenthesis.

Other Notation

\begin{align*}
\text{pitch bend} & \quad \text{Pitch bend. To be achieved in some cases by rolling the flute in or out; in others by use of given fingerings.} \\
\times & \quad \text{Short vocalized note.} \\
\circ & \quad \text{Long vocalized note.} \\
\text{TR} & \quad \text{Tongue ram.}
\end{align*}

buzz mpc Buzz into mouthpiece. Lips are placed over mouthpiece and buzzed similar to a trumpet. As above, fingered note is in parenthesis; or buzz sounding pitch is represented as a standard-sized note head.

cvr mpc Place mouth over mouthpiece and vocalize or blow into mouthpiece as indicated.

Used with vocalizations. Change the volume and overtone structure corresponding to the graphic shape by opening and changing the shape of the vocal cavity.

The duration is 6:40.