

JOHN MELCHER

A Full Quarter Hour

For synthesizers (1981-2004)

This piece is made up of what was left over and didn't quite fit into *Drastic Measures*, my other large work with major minimalist influences. In fact, the original title was "*A Full Quarter Hour of Minimalist Torture*" and inspired by *San Francisco Chronicle* music critic Robert Commanday, who hated this kind of music and once described an earlier work written in this style as "a work of phase of phase or minimalist music that sounds as if Melcher knows better. He holds the movements and each sequence of machine-designed pattern play to psychologically reasonable lengths, changing each time just before boredom becomes torpor."

Thus, the image of an unsympathetic music critic strapped to a chair and forced to endure a full quarter hour of this. In fact, it was exactly fifteen minutes long until recently, when the ending was extended.

It actually began as the first movement of a two-movement suite for piano solo entitled "*Drastic Measures*" and also included what is now part of the Fourth Movement of *DM*, that other work going by different names over the years (sorry if that's impossibly complicated). This piece was premiered by Philip Aaberg in Los Angeles in 1990.

There's not much to say about it musically; it just evolves continually from one idea and style to another. The keyboard pattern in the middle section suggests Steve Reich's *Violin Phase* and was also used in the First Movement of *Drastic Measures*.

It was recorded, mixed and mastered in 2004 at my studio in Bangkok at 48 kHz, 24-bit resolution, using a Pro Tools HD audio workstation. Instruments used on this recording were a Roland M-GS64 General MIDI synthesizer, Access Virus, McDSP Synth One and Korg Wavestation virtual synthesizer plug-ins. The high violin solo in the middle was done with Gigastudio with Kirk Hunter's Virtuoso String samples.

John Melcher,
Bangkok, THAILAND
November, 2004