

## Ashes of Burnt Sage

For multiple drummers and multiple vocalists.

Duration: variable (ideally at least 20 minutes).

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## instrumentation

### DISALLOWED

Cymbals, sticks, snares.

### ALLOWED

Bass drums (double kicks highly recommended), toms, frame drums, timpani, etc. played with various mallets.

Rattles, shakers, maracas, detritus, etc.

Bells, singing bowls, etc. (end section).

## score

A set starts with a single drum. Other drums, percussion and voices may join in at any point (even after just a few moments). The piece should generally have a high intensity. Towards the end of the set drummers should sound bells, singing bowls, etc., perhaps only once or twice each, perhaps up to a few minutes, optionally while maintaining drumming. The bell sounds indicate to everyone to start searching for an ending, coming down, grounding oneself.

Strict rhythms should *always* be avoided. The piece calls for an exploration of ‘shamanic rhythm’ or ‘non-striated’ music.

The piece does *not* require a sense of cohesion in the ensemble. All players should strive for an individualistic sound with less regard for other players than in other forms of music.

The aesthetic of the piece is something like the sounds of a rapid flowing river or waterfall, or busy freeway—chaotic, but with a sense of momentum. The ‘flow’ may change, even radically at different points, but always with a sense of movement. Different sounds may clash with each other.

I encourage singers to use methods from extreme metal—death growls, screams, etc.—but any emotive or extreme vocal expression will work including laughter, crying, groaning, moaning, deep breathing, etc. Strive to allow yourself to feel affected by the intensity of the music and put aside one’s usual censors and filters. Sing (and play) from the gut or from the heart. Always avoid words, though feel free to make use of language-like sounds.

A player may drum and sing. Drummers should feel free to vocalise even if this happens only occasionally and vocalists may also use rattles, shakers, drums, etc. If using microphones to amplify voices, everyone should have a microphone, have the option of using their voice on an equal level, even if not actually utilised.

Optionally: end the piece with all players standing in a circle in silence.

Optionally: burn sage incense sticks before or during the performance.