

# BLOCK

retuned steelstring guitar and optional electronics

after *The Bewitched* by Harry Partch

Taylor Brook  
2022

## about *Block*:

*Block* was written in 2022 for retuned steelstring guitar with optional electronics in the Spring of 2022 to accompany the rerelease of the CRI recording of Harry Partch's *The Bewitched* by Anthology of Recorded Music.

*Block* compliments and contrast *The Bewitched*, taking inspiration from a spoken introduction given by Partch at a performance of *The Bewitched* in Chicago, 1957. In this introduction, Partch discusses our listening habits, playing on the expression of “in one ear and out the other,” by stating that he wants to create a “block between the ears... and when this block is effective all kinds of wonderful things happen: nerve impulses quicken, the adrenal glands begin to secrete their ecstatic hormones, the pancreatic juices begin to ooze.” Partch achieves this through his corporeal aesthetic, combining sound and sight in the musical theatre works that dominated his late output, *The Bewitched* among them. For myself, the immersed mental state is more often achieved using sound only - rather than exciting all the senses, focusing in on a single one. Combining the guitar with a corpus-based electronic accompaniment, *Block* invites the listener to enter the ecstatic experience that Partch describes.

## Electronics

The electronics for this piece are optional. When electronics are not use, amplification is preferable to purely acoustic sound.

The electronics require a live input from the acoustic guitar fed into a computer running a MAX patch. Details can be found here: [www.taylorbrook.info/block](http://www.taylorbrook.info/block)

## Tuning

The steelstring guitar should be tuned in the following manner. The tuning is provided using just intervals in fraction notation as well as the cent deviation from the nearest equal temperament pitch.

$3/2$  (+2c)     $1/1$      $4/3$  (-2c)     $7/4$  (-31c)     $9/8$  (+4c)     $11/8$  (-49c)



## Notation

The score includes both a standard and tablature staff. The standard staff is transposed up a semitone for the sake of legibility.

The published recording of the composer was recorded on an Eastman Parlour guitar.

# BLOCK

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steelstring guitar and electronics

*poco rit.*

$\text{♩} = 66$

Guitar

D+51.  
Gb-31  
Ab D b-2  
Eb+2

Measures 1-6 of the guitar score. The first four measures are in 4/4 time with a tempo of 66. The fifth measure changes to 5/4 time. Dynamics range from *mp* to *mf*. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 1-6. A triangle labeled 'cue 1' is positioned below measure 1.

A TEMPO

Measures 7-13 of the guitar score. The tempo returns to 'A TEMPO'. Dynamics include *mp* and *mf*. An 8va (octave) marking is present above measures 10-13. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 7-13.

*poco rit.*

A TEMPO

Measures 14-19 of the guitar score. The tempo fluctuates between *poco rit.* and 'A TEMPO'. Dynamics include *p* and *mp*. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 14-19.

Measures 20-22 of the guitar score. Measure 20 features a triplet and a dynamic of *pp*. Measure 21 is marked '(accel)'. Measure 22 has a dynamic of *mf*. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 20-22.

cue 2

Measures 23-26 of the guitar score. Measure 23 features a triplet and a dynamic of *pp*. Measure 24 is marked 'sim. ad lib.' with a wavy line. Measure 25 has a dynamic of *mp*. Measure 26 has a dynamic of *p*. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 23-26.

cue 3

28

Gtr.

8va  
p  
cue 4

34

Gtr.

8va  
mf  
f  
Sim. ad. lib.

37

Gtr.

8va  
mf  
mp  
vib.

45

Gtr.

8va

51

Gtr.

4  
5  
4  
accel.  
sim. ad. lib. A TEMPO  
f  
mp

56

Gtr.

8va  
mf  
p





17

Gtr.

*poco rit.*      **A TEMPO**

Gtr.