

DAVID DZUBAY

# **Starry Messenger**

[Sidereus Nuncius]

(2008)

Percussion Ensemble

**PRO NOVA MUSIC**  
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# Starry Messenger

[Sidereus Nuncius]  
for percussion ensemble  
(2008)  
by David Dzubay

I	Starfield	[2:40]
II	Constellations	[3:05]
III	Arecibo Nocturne (S.E.T.I.)	[2:25]
IV	Jupiter	[2:45]

**Duration:** 11 minutes

## Program Note:

*Sidereus Nuncius* (Starry Messenger) is a short treatise published in Latin by Galileo Galilei in March 1610. It was the first scientific treatise based on observations made through a telescope. It contains the results of Galileo's early observations of the Moon, the stars, and the moons of Jupiter. S.E.T.I. is an organization founded by Carl Sagan that searches for signs of galactic life in radio transmissions collected at the Arecibo Radio Telescope.

In the staging for this work, the centrally located marimbas represent the planet Jupiter, and the percussion satellites encircling the marimbas represent Jupiter's four moons, Europa, Ganymede, Callisto and Io.

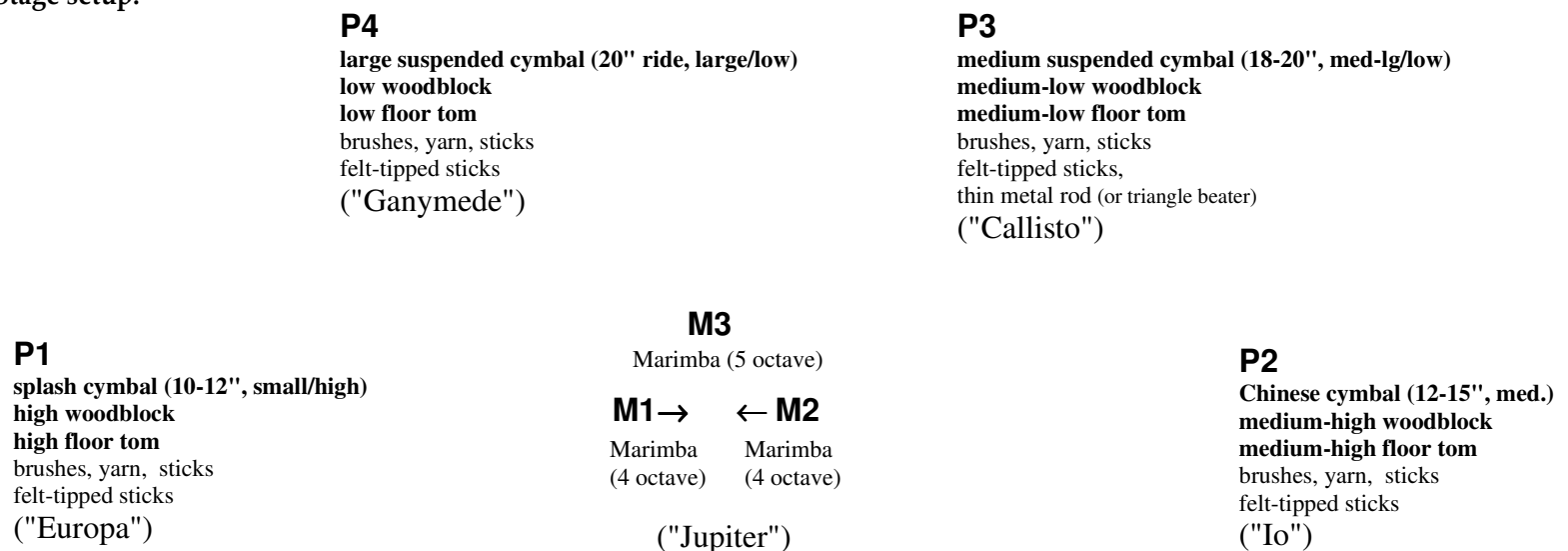
*Starfield* suggests galactic collections of stars, from hazy glows to brilliant splashes of light. *Constellations* takes its opening set of five marimba notes and spins them around in various ways, pitting this motivic figuration against spatial designs in the surrounding percussion. *Arecibo Nocturne* presents snapshots of intergalactic radio noise; perhaps 'views' from S.E.T.I.'s radio telescope. The concluding movement, *Jupiter*, is introduced with versions of the radio bursts the planet emits: long bursts lasting several seconds (drums), and very short bursts (marimbas); it continues with powerful music suggestive of the large planet's name, with only the faintest rhythmic hint of the great tune by Earth, Wind & Fire.

## Performance Notes:

- cymbals: pitched low to high (P4, P3, P2, P1), all with ridges so scrapes sound well and match.
- toms and woodblocks also pitched low to high (P4, P3, P2, P1).
- the satellite percussion should be spaced equally and as far apart as possible.
- the work should be performed without conductor. Cues are indicated as necessary.

*This work was begun at the Yaddo Artist Colony in Saratoga Springs, NY during May 2008.*

## Stage setup:



**PRO NOVA MUSIC** (BMI)  
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# Starry Messenger

[Sidereus Nuncius]

(2008)

DAVID DZUBAY

(b. 1964)

Score

## I Starfield

:10 (seconds)

:25

:35

Percussion 1  
splash cymbal  
high woodblock  
high floor tom

Percussion 2  
Chinese cymbal  
high woodblock  
med. high floor tom

Percussion 3  
med. sus. cymbal  
low woodblock  
med. low floor tom

Percussion 4  
large sus. cymbal  
low woodblock  
low floor tom

**tom** - muted with a cloth, sticks

**tom** - muted with a cloth, sticks

**tom** - muted with a cloth, sticks

**tom** - muted with a cloth, sticks

*ppp*

*ppp*

*ppp*

*ppp*

:10 (seconds)

:25

:35

soft yarn

soft yarn

soft yarn (4 mallets)

Marimba 1

Marimba 2

Marimba 3

*ppp*

*ppp*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

:15

:30

:39

:46

2

P1

P2

P3

P4

(Perc. 1 gives cue: **P1**) (7") remove muting

(7") remove muting

(7") remove muting

(7") remove muting

*p*

*mp*

*ff*

*p*

*mp*

*ff*

*pp*

*p*

*ff*

*pp*

*p*

*ff*

:15

:30

:39

:46

M1

M2

M3

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*ppp*

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*ppp*

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*ppp*

(compressed time scale)

3

P1 *ff ppp* *f* :14 :19 P2 random, highly syncopated accents, increasing in #... :25 P4 AFAP, yet distinct (random accents) :30 M1 :34 M1 :38

P2 *ff ppp* *f* :14 :19 P2 :25 P4 :30 M1 :34 M1 :38

P3 *ff ppp* *f* :14 :19 P2 :25 P4 :30 M1 :34 M1 :38

P4 *ff ppp* *f* :14 :19 P2 :25 P4 :30 M1 :34 M1 :38

M1 hard rubber :30 :34 :38

M2 hard rubber :30 :34 :38

M3 hard rubber :30 :34 :38

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4

P1 no more accents :9 M1 :16 P2 :26 P3 :41

P2 no more accents :9 M1 :16 P2 :26 P3 :41

P3 no more accents :9 M1 :16 P2 :26 P3 :41

P4 no more accents :9 M1 :16 P2 :26 P3 :41

M1 *f dim...* :9 M1 :16 P2 :26 P3 :41

M2 *f dim...* :9 M1 :16 P2 :26 P3 :41

M3 *f dim...* :9 M1 :16 P2 :26 P3 :41

Mute with cloth

*f* *mf p* *mp pp* *pp*

[2:40]

# II Constellations

(composite rhythm)



♩=176 +

P1 brushes tom (dead stick) splash cvm. mp mp pp

P2 brushes tom (dead stick) Chinese cvm. mp p

P3 brushes sus. cvm. quick scrape (strike) mp p p

P4 brushes sus. cvm. quick scrape (strike) mp p pp

♩=176 +

M1 p mp

M2 p mp

M3 p mp

11

P1 stir rim mp p pp pp mf pp mf

P2 stir rim mp p pp mp pp mp

P3 tom (dead stick) stir rim p mf p mf

P4 tom (dead stick) stir rim pp mp pp mp

M1 mp mf p pp mf

M2 mp mf p pp mf

M3 mp mf p mf

Musical score for Percussion 1-4 (P1-P4) and M1-M3, measures 1-12. The score includes various dynamics such as *mp*, *mf*, *p*, and *f*. Percussion parts P1 and P2 feature a 'shell-' articulation. The M1-M3 parts are melodic lines with dynamic markings.

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Musical score for Percussion 1-4 (P1-P4) and M1-M3, measures 13-24. This section features complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and 'stick on dome' articulation. Dynamics include *f*, *mf*, *mp*, and *p*. The M1-M3 parts continue with melodic lines.

40

42 (choke) yarn

P1

P2

P3

P4

M1

M2

M3

*ff*

*mf*

*f*

*mf*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*mp*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*mp*

marimbas:  
now use a more even articulation,  
though still emphasize groupings.

49

rim

P1

P2

P3

P4

M1

M2

M3

*mp*

*pp*

*pp*

*mf*

*mf*

*f*

*mf*

*p*

*p*

*mf*

*mf*

*f*

*mf*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

Musical score for measures 59-64. The percussion part (P1-P4) features various rhythmic patterns and dynamics including *mf*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp*. The melody part (M1-M3) includes dynamic markings such as *(mf)* and *p*.

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Musical score for measures 65-70. The percussion part (P1-P4) includes dynamic markings like *pp*, *mf*, *p < mf > p*, and *pp*, along with performance instructions for 'brush' and '(yarn)'. The melody part (M1-M3) features dynamics such as *f*, *mp*, *mf*, and *f*.



78

P1 *mp* *mf* *mf* *f* *mp* *f*

P2 *p* *mf* *mf* *f* *mp* *f*

P3 *mf* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

P4 *mf* *mf* *f* *mf* *mf* *f*

M1 *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

M2 *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

M3 *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

yarn

87

P1 *mf* *f* *p* *f* *mf* *f*

P2 *mp* *f* *p* *f* *mf* *f*

P3 *p* *f* *p* *f* *mf* *f*

P4 *p* *f* *p* *f* *mf* *f*

M1 *mf* *f*

M2 *mf* *f*

M3 *mf* *f*

Musical score for measures 95-99. The score includes parts for P1, P2, P3, P4, M1, M2, and M3. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, *p*, *ff*, and *mp*. There are triplets and various articulations throughout the piece.

PERUSAL COPY

Musical score for measures 100-104. The score includes parts for P1, P2, P3, P4, M1, M2, and M3. This section features complex rhythmic patterns and articulations, including a 7-measure rest in the M1, M2, and M3 parts.

hard felt, or sticks with tips covered in felt

Musical score for percussion parts P1, P2, P3, P4 and maracas M1, M2, M3, measures 108-116. The percussion parts (P1-P4) are marked with 'hard felt, or sticks with tips covered in felt' and feature dynamic markings *f*, *p*, *f*, and *ff*. The maraca parts (M1-M3) feature dynamic markings *ff* and include fingering numbers 7 and 5. The score includes various rhythmic patterns and articulation marks.

Musical score for percussion parts P1, P2, P3, P4 and maracas M1, M2, M3, measures 117-124. The percussion parts (P1-P4) feature dynamic markings *ppp* and include 'edge' markings. The maraca parts (M1-M3) feature dynamic markings *p*. The score includes various rhythmic patterns and articulation marks.

Musical score for percussion and maracas. The percussion part (P1-P4) consists of four staves with a common rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The maracas part (M1-M3) consists of three staves with a melodic line. Dynamics include *pp* and *crescendo...*.

# PERUSAL COPY

Musical score for percussion and maracas. The percussion part (P1-P4) consists of four staves with a common rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The maracas part (M1-M3) consists of three staves with a melodic line. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, and *p*.

Musical score for measures 144-150. The score includes four percussion parts (P1, P2, P3, P4) and three melodic parts (M1, M2, M3). The percussion parts feature rhythmic patterns with accents and dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, and *f*. The melodic parts consist of chords with dynamics *f*, *mf*, *ff*, and *fp*.

*accelerando poco a poco...*

Musical score for measures 151-156. The score includes four percussion parts (P1, P2, P3, P4). P1 and P4 play melodic lines with dynamics *fp* and *mf*. P2 and P3 play rhythmic patterns with dynamics *mf* and *pp*.

*accelerando poco a poco...*

Musical score for measures 151-156. The score includes three melodic parts (M1, M2, M3). M1 and M3 play chords with a *crescendo...* marking. M2 plays a triplet pattern with a *crescendo...* marking and a dynamic *p*.

157 (accel.)  $\text{♩} = 100$

P1 *pp* *f* *p* *f*

P2 *f* *p* *f*

P3 *pp* *f* *p* *f*

P4 *pp* *f* *p* *f*

(accel.)  $\text{♩} = 100$

M1 *f* *ff*

M2 *f* *ff*

M3 *f* *ff*

# PERUSAL COPY

1 poco ritardando poco a poco... Tempo

P1 *f* *pp*

P2 (dome) *mf* *mp* brush *pp*

P3 (dome) *mp* thin metal stick (or triangle beater) (scrape) *pp*

P4 (dome) *p* brush (scrape) *pp*

poco ritardando poco a poco... Tempo I

M1 *fp* *dim...* *pp*

M2 *dim...* *pp*

M3 *dim...* *pp*



(not together)



slap fingers FT, FN, knuckles, edge, dome, center, etc. *ad lib.*, max. variety...

:10

ECHO: same sounds, but increasingly, FT scrapes on edge and center..

:25

P1 *f sub.* *mf* *p* *mf* *f* *mf* *p* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *pp* *ppp*

P2 *f sub.* *mf* *f* *p* *mf* *f* *p* *mf*

P3 *f sub.* *f* *p* *mf* *f* *p* *mf* *f*

P4 *f sub.* *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf*

ECHO: same sounds, but increasingly, FT scrapes on edge and center..

M1 *crescendo...* *f* *pp*

M2 *crescendo...* *f* *pp*

M3 *crescendo...* *f* *pp*

# PERUSAL COPY

FT roll (i/m, both hands)

cymbals rock back and forth (front to back, getting Doppler effect) independently *accel.* to keep resonance present (small cymbals need to get faster than large ones)

:25

P1 *pp* *p* *mp* *p* *mf* *ff* *dim. poco a poco...*

P2 *pp* *mp* *p* *mf* *mp* *ff* *dim. poco a poco...*

P3 *pp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *mf* *ff* *dim. poco a poco...*

P4 *pp* *p* *mp* *mf* *mp* *ff* *dim. poco a poco...*

8 FTs, slap ↓ =60

independently *accel.* to keep resonance present (small cymbals need to get faster than large ones)

M1 *pp* *p* etc., independently *crescendo...* *f* *pp*

M2 *pp* *p* etc., independently *crescendo...* *f*

M3 *pp* *p* etc., independently *crescendo...* *f* *pp*



5

(*accel.*)  
(*dim...*)

P1

(*accel.*)  
(*dim...*)

P2

(*accel.*)  
(*dim...*)

P3

(*accel.*)  
(*dim...*)

P4

:15

(roaming)  
FT roll (both hands)

*p*

(roaming)  
FT roll (both hands)

*p*

(roaming)  
FT roll (both hands)

*p*

(roaming)  
FT roll (both hands)

*p*

:25

rub FTs around cym.

rub FTs around cym.

rub FTs around cym.

rub FTs around cym.

M1

M2

M3

6

flick FTs off edge

P1

*ppp* *pppp*

flick FTs off edge

P2

*ppp* *pppp*

flick FTs off edge

P3

*ppp* *pppp*

rub FTs around cym.

flick FTs off edge

P4

*pp* *ppp* *pppp*

:10

M1

*ppp*

M2

*ppp*

M3

*ppp*

:10

[2:25]

# IV Jupiter

:15

(together:) tom sticks  
*ff*

(together:) tom sticks  
*ff*

(together:) tom sticks  
*ff*

(together:) tom sticks  
*ff*

*ppp* *ff*

*ppp* *ff*

*ppp* *ff*

*ppp* *ff*

5/4  
5/4  
5/4  
5/4

(together:) hard yarn  
*ff*

(together:) hard yarn  
*ff*

(together:) hard yarn  
*ff*

*ff* *ff*

*ff* *ff*

*ff* *ff*

5/4  
5/4  
5/4

# PERUSAL COPY

♩ = 112

*ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

Chinese *cvm.*

sus. *cvm.*

sus. *cvm.*

sus. *cvm.*

(l.v.) *p* *f* *ff*

(l.v.) *p* *f* *ff*

(l.v.) *p* *f* *ff*

(l.v.) *p* *f* *ff*

*pp* *p* *f* *pp* *mf*

*p* *f* *pp* *mf*

*mp* *p* *f* *pp* *mf*

♩ = 112

9 12

P1 *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *p*

P2 *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *mp* *pp* *ppp*

P3 *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *pp* *pp* *ppp*

P4 *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *pp*

M1 *f* *mp* *pp* *mf*

M2 *f* *mp* *pp* *mf*

M3 *f* *f* *mf* *mp* *pp*

14 17

P1 *mp* *mf* *f* *ff* *p* *f* *ff* *pp*

P2 *mp* *mf* *f* *ff* *p* *f* *ff* *pp*

P3 *mp* *mf* *f* *ff* *p* *f* *ff* *pp*

P4 *mp* *mf* *f* *ff* *p* *f* *ff* *pp*

M1 *p* *mp* *mf* *ff* *p* *f* *ff* *p* *ff*

M2 *p* *mp* *mf* *ff* *p* *f* *ff* *p* *ff*

M3 *mp* *mf* *ff* *p* *f* *ff* *p* *ff*

19 tighten head loosen splash cvm. crown ord. 22

P1 *ff* *mf* *f* *p* *pp* *f* *ff*

P2 *ff* *mf* *f* *p* *pp* *f* *ff*

P3 *ff* *mf* *f* *p* *pp* *f* *ff*

P4 *ff* *mf* *f* *p* *pp* *f* *ff*

M1 *pp* *f* *p* *ff*

M2 *p* *f* *ff*

M3 *f* *p* *ff*

*tighten head* *loosen* *splash cvm.* *Chinese cvm.* *sus. cvm.* *sus. cvm.*

*crown ord.* *crown ord.* *crown ord.* *crown ord.*

# PERUSAL COPY

2 152 25 Woodblock

P1 *p* *ff* *p* *pp* *p*

P2 *p* *ff* *mp* *pp* *p* *ppp* *mp*

P3 *p* *ff* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mp*

P4 *p* *ff* *p* *ppp* *mp* *pp*

M1 *f* *joyial!*

M2 *f* *joyial!*

M3 *f* *joyial!*

*Woodblock* *Woodblock* *Woodblock* *Woodblock*

31 37

P1 *ppp mp pp mf pp mf f p f p mf*

P2 *pp mp pp mf pp f p mp mf f<sup>5</sup> 5*

P3 *pp pp mf pp mf mf p p < f f f<sup>5</sup>*

P4 *mf pp mf mf pp p < f p < ff f mf*

M1

M2

M3

39 45

P1 *mp p mp mp<sup>5</sup> crescendo... f*

P2 *ppp mp mp crescendo... f*

P3 *pp p 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 f*

P4 *p p 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 f*

M1 *crescendo... ff*

M2 *crescendo... ff*

M3 *crescendo... ff*

The musical score is divided into two systems, starting at measures 47 and 49. It features four percussion parts (P1, P2, P3, P4) and three music parts (M1, M2, M3). The percussion parts include various drum and cymbal patterns with dynamic markings such as *ff*, *f*, *p*, and *pp*. Performance instructions like "tighten head" and "loosen" are placed over the P4 part, and "squeeze cymbal w/arm to raise pitch" is noted for P3 and P4. The music parts (M1, M2, M3) consist of piano accompaniment with chords and melodic lines, also marked with dynamics like *ff*, *f*, *p*, and *pp*. A large, bold watermark "PERUSAL COPY" is overlaid across the center of the page.

56 *accelerando...*

P1 *p* *ff* *p* *p* *ff* *p*

P2 *ff* *p* *p* *ff* *p* *p*

P3 *p* *ff* *p* *p* *ff* *p*

P4 *ff* *p* *p* *ff* *p* *p* *ff*

squeeze cymbal w/arm to raise pitch

*accelerando...*

M1 *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff*

M2 *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff*

M3 *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff*

60 *(accel.)*

P1 *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff*

P2 *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff*

P3 *p* *ff* *p* *ff*

P4 *p* *ff* *p* *ff*

*(accel.)* *(trem.)*

M1 *(trem.)*

M2 *(trem.)*

M3 *(trem.)*

64 steady medium tempo (not together) merge to unison, then *ritard.* ... *molto rit.* (Pc. 1 cues last hit)  $\text{♩} = 112$  65

P1 *f* *fff* *f p f p f p f p*

P2 *f* *fff* *f p f p f p f p*

P3 *f* *fff* *f p f p f p f p*

P4 *f* *fff* *f p f p f p f p*

M1 *n* *mp*

M2 *n* *mp*

M3 *mp*

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6 *mf*

P1 *simile, and dim....* *mp* toms. *dim.* (still), cyms. *cresc.* ...

P2 *simile, and dim....* toms. *dim.* (still), cyms. *cresc.* ...

P3 *simile, and dim....* *mp* toms. *dim.* (still), cyms. *cresc.* ...

P4 *simile, and dim....* *mp* toms. *dim.* (still), cyms. *cresc.* ...

M1 *crescendo...*

M2 *crescendo...*

M3 *crescendo...*



73 G.P. (freeze!) 76 tighten head 5

P1 *p* *f* *ff* *ff* *f* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *p* *ff*

P2 *f* *ff* *ff* *f* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *p* *ff*

P3 *p* *ff* *ff* *f* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *p* *ff*

P4 *f* *ff* *ff* *f* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *p* *ff*

M1 *f* *f* *ff* *f* *mp*

M2 *f* *f* *ff* *f* *mp*

M3 *f* *f* *ff* *f* *mp*

G.P. (freeze!)

79 (ord.)

P1 *ff* *mf* *ff*

P2 (ord.) *ff* *mf* *ff*

P3 (ord.) *ff* *mf* *ff*

P4 (ord.) *ff* *mf* *ff*

M1 *ff* *f* *ff*

M2 *f* *ff*

M3 *ff* *f* *ff*

84 85 (l.v.)

P1 *pp* *ff*

P2 *pp* *ff*

P3 *pp* *ff*

P4 *pp* *ff* (l.v.)

M1 *p* *crescendo...*

M2 *p* *crescendo...*

M3 *p* *cre*

8 92 (cym.)

P1 (l.v.) (cym.)

P2 (l.v.) (cym.)

P3 (l.v.) (cym.)

P4 (l.v.) (cym.)

M1 *ff*

M2 *ff*

M3 *ff*

*8va...*

[2:45]