

“What makes it go”: Motion in Wuorinen’s *Grand Union*

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This essay explores the opening of Charles Wuorinen’s *Grand Union* for cello and drums, asking “what makes it go?” Focusing on details of the surface, it discusses Wuorinen’s deployment of pitch-class materials—the unfolding of the pc aggregate via chromatic subsets, their articulation in lines and registers, and their rhythmic definition against a changing metric grid—as shaped by instrumental interaction and timbre. The analysis is informed by interviews with cellist Fred Sherry (for whom the piece was written), percussionist Tom Kolor (who recorded the piece with Sherry), and Charles Wuorinen. Its seed is Wuorinen’s statement that “the ‘empty spaces’ of music—the intervals—... are what make music go” (*Simple Composition*, 20).