

Dedicated to the memory of Jed Speare.

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Introduction

Standing Waves has been a project of elucidation. It has been a way for artists to offer entry points into their work beyond what is offered through performance and exhibition. Deleuze and Guattari developed a concept in *What is Philosophy* that is particularly apt for the Standing Waves project; the 'plane of immanence'. The plane of immanence is, simply put, the creation of planes through philosophical thought. It is the work of establishing philosophical, scientific, and aesthetic realities. These planes are then multiple and simultaneous realities of conception. We are in the process of experiencing and exploring them and their interweavings.

Thought and especially art in the 21st century is perhaps making a turn back to materiality. Objects and concepts, their thingness, affect and their relation seem to be at the fore of aesthetic consideration. Consider then that the planes of immanence defined by Deleuze is an initial expression of the materiality of thought. Defining our conceptual lives through language creates these planes that exist in a virtual world of relationality to one another.

As artists, we are very much in the business of creating these planes of immanence. We are not so much interested in developing universal truths, rather we are creatively developing the conceptual; the materiality of thought. We are finding the material truths that exist within our specific identities and exploring their relational potential to the planes developed by other artists and thinkers. While we create our concepts, we are respectful of the creative truth making of others and seeking connectivity with the planes developed by our peers.

It is with this idea in mind that I present the final book in the Standing Waves project. Enclosed in these pages are five planes; five materialities of thought based on identity, personal cartography, object and process.

Thank you for reading.

Morgan Evans-Weiler

Aki Onda
Saturday, May 26, 2018
MIT Press Bookstore

Aki Onda is a New York-based artist and composer. He is particularly known for his “Cassette Memories” — works compiled from a “sound diary” of field-recordings collected by using the cassette Walkman over a span of last quarter-century. He creates compositions, performances, and visual artworks from those sound memories. Onda often performs in interdisciplinary fields and collaborates with filmmakers, visual artists, and choreographers, including Ken Jacobs, Michael Snow, Raha Raissnia, Akio Suzuki, and Takao Kawaguchi. Onda’s work has been presented numerous institutions such as MoMA, The Kitchen, documenta 14, Pompidou Center, Louve Museum, Palais de Tokyo, Bozar, and many others.

Cassette Memories in Sokołowsko

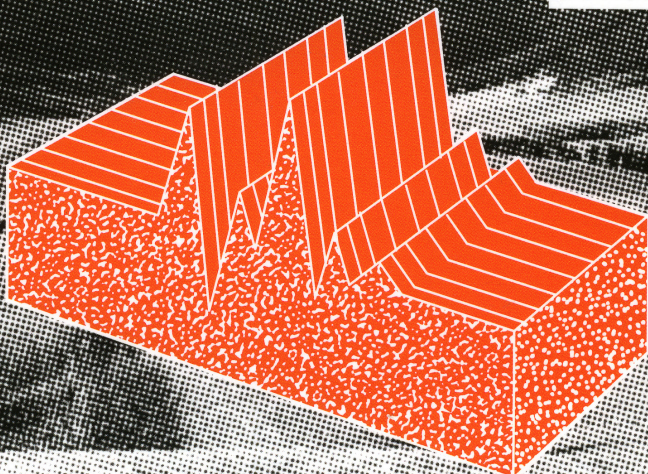
Cassette Memories is a site-specific performance series that started in 2004. I play back my own field recordings, so to speak my personal memories, at a location that is saturated with its own memories - a historic building, abandoned factory, old theatre, even a street corner. The result is invisible but one can feel live memories awaking sleeping memories.

In the summer of 2018, I visited a small Polish village Sokołowsko for my Cassette Memories performance, which was a part of Festiwal Sanatorium Dźwięku. Sokołowsko is close to the Czech border, and was a part of Germany historically. It was known for the world's first sanatorium for the treatment of tuberculosis, opened in the 19th century, although the large parts of the facilities are now decayed. During the location hunting in the village for several days, I was taking memos and making collages in my notebook. Eventually, I selected two sanatoriums for a series of performances in two days and wrote scores.

I would like to share my notebook that would show you the process of creating this strange ritual in situ that extract and abstract the essence of memory. A part of collages (pages 26-29) were made in collaboration with Kama Sokolnicka, who designed a brochure which was handed out to visitors at the performances.



**SANATORIUM
DŹWIĘKU**
17–19 August 2018
SOKOŁÓWSKO



DONAU



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x. post 6/7

Cassette Memories

in
S. Kotowski

Aki: onda

2018

53



4 057 AF 434459

organizers:

Gerard Lebik

Zuzana Foss

logistics:

Marta Stanczyk

design collages:

Kama Stanczyk

tech support:

Piotr

local guide

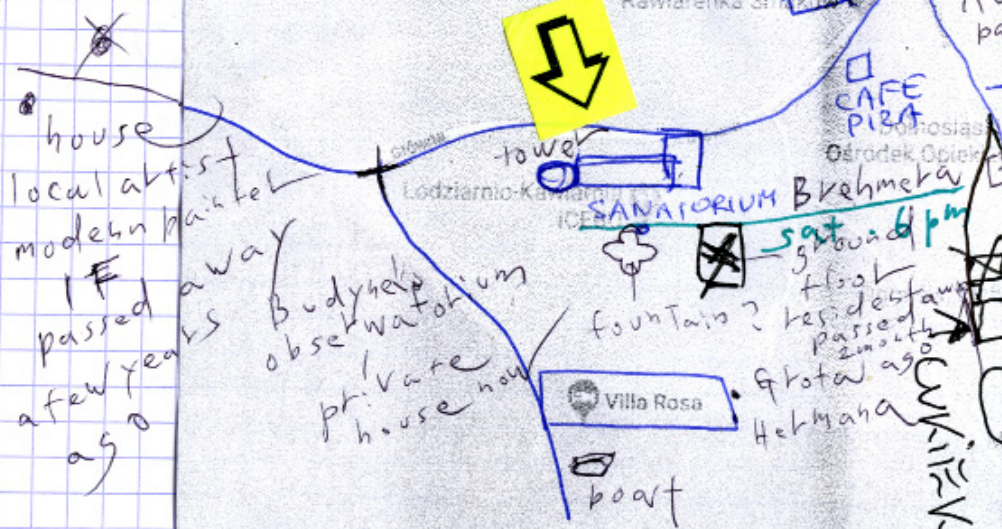
Kinga Mawługa

special thanks to

Bożenna Biskupska

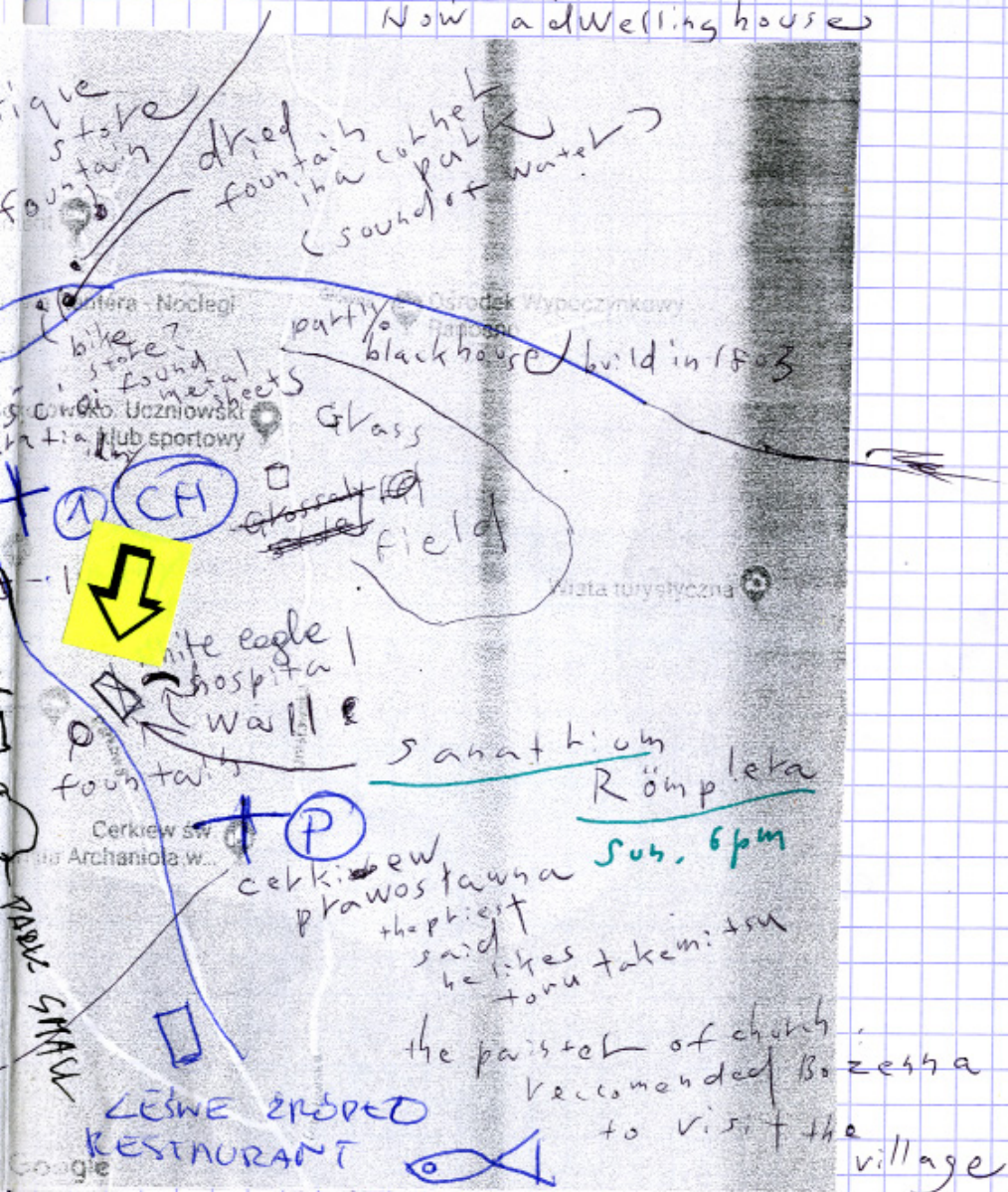
August 2018

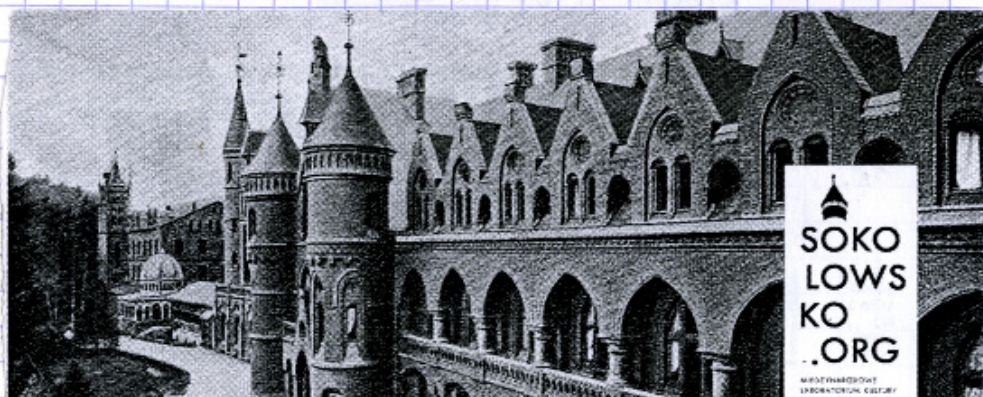
- 12
Sun location hunting ^{10am Kinga} find map
sanatorium cinema
- 13
Mon location hunting ^{11am Kinga} hospital
fountain wall
- 14
Tue write texts and take photos
- 15
Wed trip to Warsaw
meeting with Kama
- 16
Thu rehearsal at "white eagle" 2pm
until
- 17
Fri decide ~~to use~~ the taps to 4:20pm
make z'he se
- 18
Sat performance 6pm
- 19
Sun performance 6pm
- 20
Mon fly back to NY



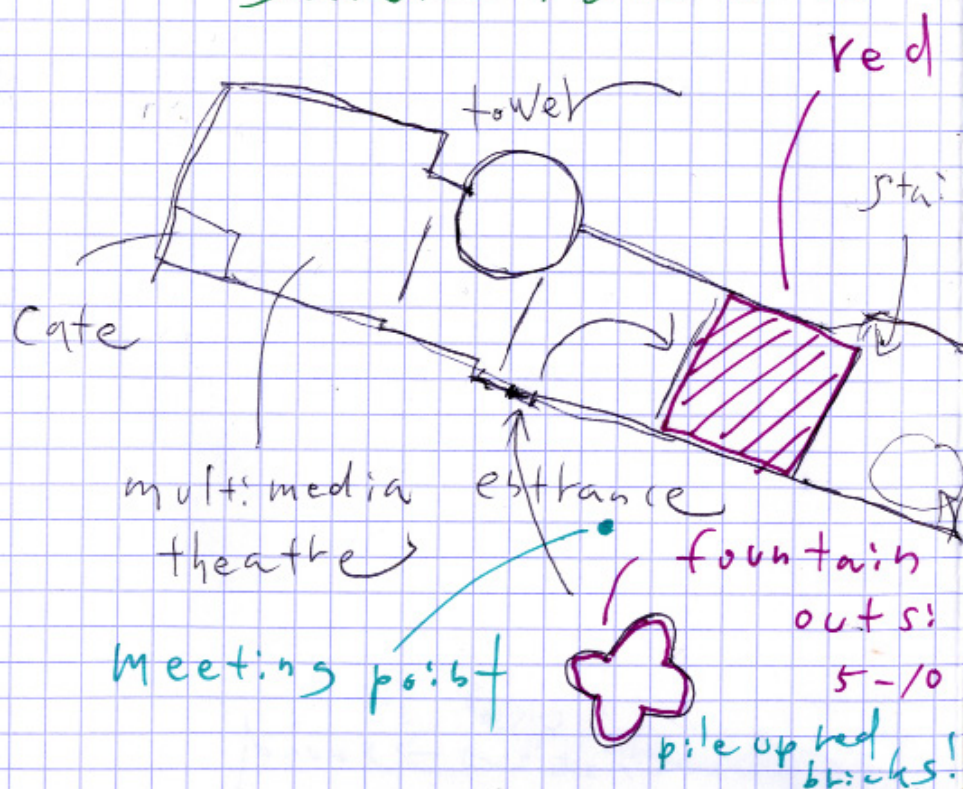
artist - KRZYSZTOF ZWIRBIS
 guide - TOMEK GŁADKI
 33.15
 made
 a film

old post office build around 1890
after world war 2 polish post office
closed in 2000
Now a dwelling houses





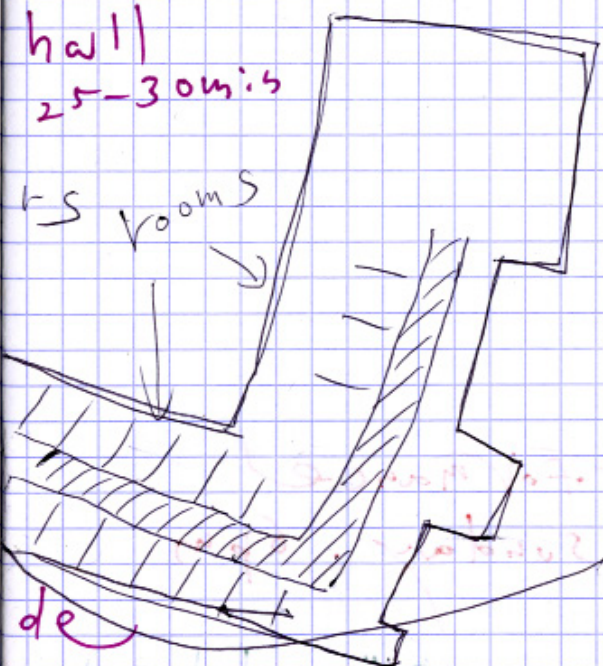
CM performance Aug 18
Saturday . 6pm
Sanathum Btemeta





hall
25-30m is

rooms



de
mish

← this part
of building
is ~~ghost~~
ruined and
partly
broken.
unusable!

Bożenna
Biskupstwa's
sculptures
shown at Venice
Biennale in 1984

← You can see it
from here anytime

Cm Sankthum Brehmet



fountain outside
Wojciech Bakowski
in NY 2014

↓ go inside
red hall

choir
up sala

no amp

tape reverse

~

18 08 18

hail storm
in Liege 2014



metal sheet



works as
plate reverb



half speed apb



CM Performance
Aug 19, Sunday. 6pm

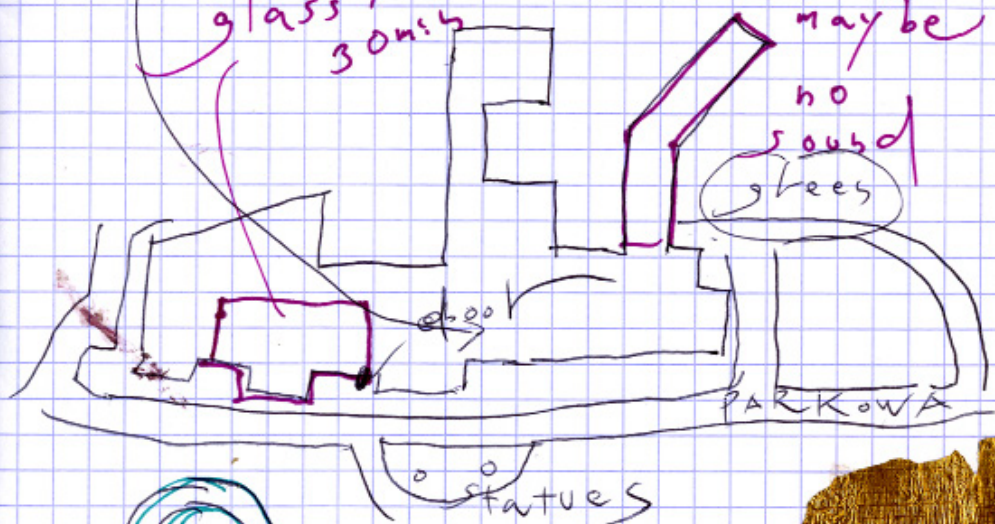
Sanatorium Römpler

full of sunlight
exotic palm trees
and cactuses

Woman
screaming
sometimes with glass dome

glass house
30m

Wood Wall
maybe
no sound
gles



big birds

totem poles

blue fountain
5-10m

no water run

Cm Sahatium Römpf



blue fountain out
across the street
water stream Ne

↓ go inside
glass house

birds
Bangalore



no amp

88
glass bells

••• ••• ••
bells

- loop tape
no amp

etw

tside

et
w Hampshire

190818

kats rattling
kiss ov....?

scratch ed

strings

100p?
aph

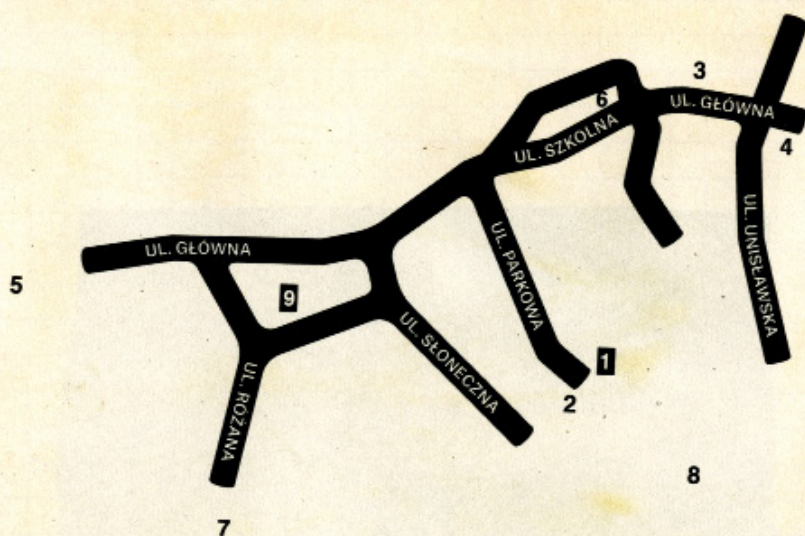
back side of
drumming warsaw
castle

reverse half speed
aph





Many fountains in this village now run dry... some of a sanatorium others are in a park or square... used to provide drinking water and bathing water more than a century and a half / softened the pain of their minds / still, you hear the sound of water echoes? / in the nineteenth century, only wealthy had a treatment for tuberculosis and the poor just died / exototic palm trees and cactuses in the gorgeous glass house / what do totem poles by the blue fountain have to say? / and post office closed in 2000, now a residential apartment building... you enter and see the newly installed doors of the each unit / a half-timbered house built in 1803... you look through a window and you see two white beds for kids, cute color blankets, a white closet and a few plants modestly furnished... gives a neat and clean feeling / the house of a local painter who passed away a few years ago... some of his artworks and belongings were robbed, but perhaps some remain, covered by fallen dust / rusty metal scraps randomly left by a window of the rental bike store / the wooden boat floating on the slope of the hill / the priest of the Orthodox church of St. Michael the Archangel said "Toru Takemitsu is my favorite composer"... surely, the music would fit with the interior / about a decade ago, Bogucki Michał, an artist and mystic who painted tableaus in the church told his friend and artist Bożenna Biskupska that she should visit Sokołowsko... was it the beginning of another turn for the village? / inside the Sanatorium Brehmera, Biskupska's large-scale sculptural installation, created with different materials such as soil, straws, resin, et cetera glued to metal structures and exhibited in the Venice Biennale in 1984, unguardedly stored without any protection, surrounded by piles of cracked and tipped red bricks and junks... all seems as if turning to nature... although probably it won't... the ruined and burnt part of the building will be restored and the artwork will survive...⁹



9 Performance part 1
Saturday
18 August 18:00

Sanatorium
Brehmera

In 1855, Sanatorium Brehmera was launched as the world's first specialized tuberculosis sanatorium. It was the first clinic in Sokolowsko founded by Dr Hermann Brehmer, as the architectural project of Edwin Oppler. At the beginning of the 20th century, Sokolowsko was very prestigious and known throughout Europe, not only for its medical facilities but also its rich cultural offerings. Since 2007, the In Situ Foundation for Contemporary Art has been restoring and revitalizing the crumbling building.

1 Performance part 2
Sunday
19 August 18:00

Sanatorium
Römpler

Founded in 1874 by Baron von Rosing. It is often called "White Eagle". There is a stunning glass house, filled with full of bright sunlight through a grass dome and glass walls, decorated with foliage plants. The Lumière brothers were there in 1910. They documented the interior of the sanatorium and the spa in their photographs. There is an old film projector at the entrance of the glass house, but not clear if it's related to their visit or not.



Derek Baron
Sunday June 24, 2018
MIT Press Bookstore - Cambridge, MA

Derek Baron is an artist working mostly with recorded sound and music.

Derek's work has been released by Penultimate Press, Power Moves Library, and many other outlets. Releases with Tristes Tropiques, Regional Bears, and Erstwhile are forthcoming in 2019. With Emily Martin, Derek runs the Reading Group record label from their apartment in New York. Derek is currently pursuing a PhD in musicology at New York University.

The piece that I wrote for and presented with Ordinary Affects in June 2018 is called CURTAIN. It's stitched together from fragments of music I had sketched in notebooks and on scraps of manuscript paper over the last ten years. Most of the fragments are from around 2009 until around 2011. The notebooks from which these scraps were gleaned have moved with me from apartment to apartment. What I was trying to do in the piece was not only show these years of my development, but to see how I could point towards where I'm at now with how the fragments are arranged. I see now, though, that this was both a lost cause and a self-fulfilling prophecy, not all that different from the specific brand of experimentalism that tries to compose music that completely liberated from the composer's desires. As soon as you think you've gotten out of it, you're right back in it. It was a lost cause in my case, at least, both because the music itself was not deliberately arranged developmentally, much less chronologically, and furthermore because I had the sense that a drawing a direct line of development from 2009 to now would somehow miss the point. Nevertheless (and this is the self-fulfilling part) the attempt to compose something like was itself revealing of "where I'm at now," and the music itself has its own sort of (il)logic (what Adorno would call its "law of motion"). My friend told me the other day that the most accurate way to determine the imperfections of a physical sphere is to shoot thousands of tiny BB's at it and measure exactly the angles at which they bounce off. It's hard to believe that the BB's themselves don't also create a certain amount of their own imperfections in the process. This idea of the sphere might be a better way to think about what's going on here than any sort of "development" myth.

In the interest of getting to the idea of 'where I think I am now', I want to start with some belated epigraphs. The idea with these is to line up the eyelets in each so that we might be able to get a glimpse of what I'm trying to describe. What interests me right now (not in 2011 though) is the chance to pose certain questions about art and the constructions of whiteness, which questions I believe are both necessary and not, in my experience at least, posed at the moment of liveness, the contact zone.¹ I am interested in at least gesturing towards the possibility of an alternative

1 I should mention that this essay is developed from a talk that I gave to introduce the (only, so far) performance of the music. The talk was given at the MIT Press bookstore in Cambridge in June 2018. So there is a concern with the live event as a 'chance' to intervene in a sort of sacred way. (More on the idea of 'chance' below). To keep in the written version this phrase about liveness and the contact zone, though, is to invite a whole scheme in which we might want to think about the racialization of the 'live music space' and the 'living room.' We might have to ask ourselves whether we agree with Adorno that being able to listen to music alone in our living rooms is a good thing, whether we think the living room is the scene of music's ascent to the status of reading (and if we do think so, whether we think that is a good thing). I'm tempted to think of this settling of the living room as a mode of suturing, or a prerequisite of suturing, which has its own vexed relationship with whiteness. More on suturing below, but the point here is to call attention to the fact that this text, which is no longer exactly live and no longer exactly music, started out as a live talk in preparation for some music. Let's keep that difference in mind.

whiteness "beyond anti-racism," which is George Yancy's phrase that I understand to mean a whiteness that does not return to invisibility following the public disavowal of particular racial hatred, but a whiteness that sees itself; a white vanguard that recognizes and studies what Fred Moten calls the ante-normativity of the black avant-garde (ante- as in before), and refuses the desire for a narrative closure that resolves the tension of white self-criticality. Here are some ideas by which I orient myself.



"To be undone by another is a primary necessity, an anguish, to be sure, but also a chance—to be addressed, claimed, bound to what is not me, but also moved, to be prompted to act, to address myself elsewhere, and so to vacate the self-sufficient 'I' as a kind of possession." -Judith Butler

"This split in the white subject—between disaffiliation from white supremacist practices and disavowal of the ongoing reformation of white power and one's benefit from it—is constitutive of contemporary white racial formation, underlying... 'white racial dualism.'" -Robyn Wiegman

"In white supremacist society, white people can 'safely' imagine that they are invisible to black people since the power they have historically asserted, and even now collectively assert over black people accorded them the right to control the black gaze." -bell hooks

"The flipside of fetishistic white hipsterism's recourse to black authenticity is a white avant-gardism whose seriousness requires either an active forgetting of black performances or a relegation of them to mere source material...Interest in the history and theory of the avant-garde in black performance demands that one be more concerned with the b-side than the a-side." -
Fred Moten

"Suturing is the process whereby whites install forms of closure, forms of protection from counter-white axiological and embodied iterations, epistemic fissure, and white normative disruption. The process of suturing involves an effort to be 'invulnerable,' 'untouched,' 'patched,' 'mended together,' 'complete,' 'whole,' 'sealed,' and 'closed off.' To be sutured also implies a state of being free from a certain kind of 'infection.'" -George Yancy

"This suturing process can be conceptually linked to Fred Evans's conception of an oracle voice, 'that is, a discourse that elevates itself above the others by presenting itself as universal and absolute.'... One might say that a sutured, oracular voice refuses to hear the 'interplay among voices,' refuses to come to terms with its own historical contingency and (un-sutured) openness to undergo modification or complete revision." -- George Yancy

The oracular voice is the voice that speaks from behind the suture. The source of the voice is invisible and safe, so the disembodied voice can be heard as legislative, universal, prophetic, and immaculate. The suture, then, also serves as a sort of invisibility cloak that imbues the acousmatic voice—the voice whose source is unseen—with its power. The suture is a curtain.



In a climactic scene from *The Wizard of Oz*, the acousmatically inoculated, safely invisible Wizard, a green holographic talking head adorned with bursts of flame, scrambles to buy himself more time. He's not ready. He demands that the gang of others—Dorothy, Toto, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Lion—"come back tomorrow," and then admonishes the "ungrateful creatures," framing his deferral as mercy, since he could just as easily "give them audience... twenty years from now." There's an anxiety of presence into which the Wizard is driven. His flight is from visuality (in its corporeality and presence) to an acousmaticity in which he issues directives from behind the curtain. The curtain here is the fold that creates a space inside of the chamber that is actually larger than (has dominion over) the chamber itself – and all of Oz. We might want to think about this in terms of a diffusion, or the dynamics of broadcast, but we'd have to do something to mark that the vocal booth is where he steals to, its a result of his refusal to be seen. We might want to talk about something like 'diffusal.'

His frenzy, what we will recognize as the self-defense of a last fragile hold of the unbreachable membrane of visibility, requires that he twist every knob and pull every lever, while legislating into the intercom. When Toto, with the low-to-the-ground wisdom of the non-human and non-anthropomorphized animality that therefore we are, pulls back the green curtain, we see the unseeable and must bear the unbearable: the man behind the wizard, the secret behind the law. When the wizard sees himself seen, he kicks into a higher gear of self-reflexive desperation, reiterating his dicta with "the Great Oz has spoken," and commanding the 'creatures' to "pay no attention to that man behind the curtain." That man, that therefore he, the wizard, is, is cornered when Dorothy, followed by her team, come over and pull the curtain back again. She asks him who he is. Into the intercom he says "I am the great and powerful," and in that split second, that split subject hears the echo of his pretense, steps back from his machinery and in a softening, deflating voice, finishes his sentence, "Wizard of Oz."



During his short decline in the face of an encounter with accountability, and before his long and flourished reascension by way of institutional, historical, privilege and prestige, the 'wizard,' now admittedly a 'very bad wizard,' receives and accepts, which is to say 'hears,' the accusation of being a humbug. His call and response of "Yes, that's exactly so, I'm a humbug," opens a space for self-criticality that is immediately foreclosed when Dorothy, seeing the opening, strikes at the heart: "You're a very bad man." But with this, Dorothy trips the fragility alarm, closing the good-man-bad-wizard off, giving him the leverage to prove his beneficence by bestowing gifts from his position of institutional power.

As rector of the Universitatis Committatum E Pluribus Unum, he bestows the scarecrow with an honorary diploma, the exceptional reification of the 'mediocre commodity' of the brain that the scarecrow has always had but always lacked the infrastructure and social mobility to use or enjoy. All four of the wizard's liberal bestowals are justified with a reference to the "back where I come from," the imagined homeland (which turns out also to be Kansas) in which his authority is publicly recognized—a space in which the bestowals and the machinery, crucially, are not, but whose local customs, agreements, and acknowledgments of grains of power are invoked to authorize the diploma, the medal of courage, and the commemorative ticking heart. Now that the body of the wizard is visible, he must have recourse to another invisibility: reference to where he came from: a land, it seems, of scholarship, courage, philanthropy, law and order. Colonial and institutional power might be their own kinds of acousmatic voice. I'm reminded of Yancy's point that "the white self is not a site of self-sufficiency and self-possession but a site of dispossession whereby the constitution of the white self is found at a great distance." (xvi)

The wizard's reclamation of righteousness is also marked by a series of man-splanatory corrections to what the hordes think they want. It's not a brain the scarecrow wants, it's a diploma. It's not courage the lion lacks, but wisdom (itself reified in a medal of honor). It's not a heart the tin man seeks. If only he knew how feeble human hearts were. But when the tin man reasserts his desire to enter the world of loving, he is appeased with a "testimonial" token of the wizard's "esteem and affection." There's something about the substitution of "esteem" for love that gets at what I'm trying to un-suture here. The actual curtain, having been pulled back, is sutured back together, reinforced by the prestige of his institutional gifts. The moment of encounter, the real chance to be undone, signalled by the ex-wizard's confession that he is in fact a humbug, is passed over and closed off.



Erik Satie teaches us another way of relating to the curtain. This is an image of the end of his "Prelude to the Heroic Gate of Heaven," which he composed in 1894 when he was 28. The Heroic Gate of Heaven is a play by Henri Antoine Jules-Bois, an occultist who is said to have predicted gender equality. This image is a scan from the book of Satie's piano music that I bought in 2007 and used to learn how to read music. "Rideau" is French for "curtain."

Satie is known for his evocative performance directions, like "Don't go out," "Consider carefully in advance," "Better," and "Again." But "RIDE-AU" is not a performance direction, it's an indication of the beginning of the play, The Heroic Gate of Heaven – everything up until that point had been prelude, preparation. After the sustained D major chord, the curtain comes up, the scene is set, the actor is visible.

The play begins with the setting description: "The Poet, in a loose robe, leans on the terrace of the castle of frivolity; his hand lethargically playing with a blank festival mask, while gliding at his belt, already heavy with the fan, the deceitful shine of a mirror."

The poet speaks: "Hush! Songs of the world and of distant cities, this night on the planet seduces me with strange glimmers. Why has Eros, with his games and his perfidy, left my soul indifferent? Could it be that I will no longer be myself, and that a formidable God is descending upon me?"

The curtain here is an opening up to the encounter with a loneliness, a spiritual indifference that turns the poet inward only to find that he may

no longer be himself. The festival Mask brings no festivity, the mirror only deceives. The Poet is left out by Eros, left to a serious chance. The curtain, the word CURTAIN in all capital letters in Satie's score, opens that chance and keeps it open. This might be part of what Heidegger was after when he described the work of art as framing, and by framing making possible, the world in which the truth, by which he means things in their unconcealed openness, can happen. The curtain is a consecration of and a confirmation of this openness, which is maybe also of a kind of 'exposure.'¹



If Satie and Jules-Bois show us a possibility for sabotaging the inoculating force of the curtain that white audio-visual hegemony in general and the Wizard of Oz in particular deny, the prelude itself, the stuff that comes before the rise of the curtain, must be a kind of "calm and deeply soft" ("Calme et profondément doux") preparation, a dedication that is itself dedicated to the self ("Je me dédie cette oeuvre.") before it goes into the world. The prelude is a getting-ready that is also a link to the spiritual power of "art," to not only ready oneself but to be that for which one gets ready. So Satie dedicates this work to himself.

In our context, not only does the white avant-garde actively forget black performances and use them as raw material but, and as a sort of fucked-up synthesis of the two, actually aestheticize anti-blackness as a sort of deceitful mirror of the artist's ideal whiteness. In such a context, I believe in the possibility of dedicating a work to oneself, as long as we use that dedication for its disruptive power rather than as a confirmation of the dedicatee. I believe that in the space of a chance, you bring your 'self' with you so that you can be able to no longer be it, so that a formidable God can descend upon you. Self-dedication isn't a guaranteed escape

¹ Heidegger's refusal to invite into his field of openness the possibility of what Judith Butler calls 'being addressed by what is not me' is his loss. His loss is his own but it also marks the historical incline of identification and support that I think Arthur Jafa is referring to when he says, "So if quote unquote white folks cannot support what we do, that's a problem they have, not a problem we have."

route. There are no escape routes. "I dedicate this work to myself" is like saying "I want to be ready." It's a statement of intention to prepare.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

After his break from the Rosicrucians, Satie started his own church, the Metropolitan Church of Art of Jesus, Conductor, for which he wrote his "Mass for the Poor." He was the sole member of both the laity and the clergy. At first I was thinking about his temporary descent into virulent Catholic chauvinism and anti-Semitism as a deep failure of his attempt to prepare himself for the world, but now I think that to think of it as a failure assumes that there's such a thing as sustaining success; that a relegation to 'failure' is my own sort of grasping for narrative closure.

That's not to apologize for that behavior, but rather to say that Catholic chauvinism and anti-Semitism are the poison gifts that Satie bestows upon his own institution, his Church, by which he reasserts his supposed invulnerability. A chance missed for him, maybe, but what happens with art is that the chance sends out a signal. By writing "CURTAIN," Satie sends us back to himself in his moment of possibility, which may have only taken up the space of a dotted double bar line, but that's enough. (In the past decade of thinking about Satie, I've become convinced that his

music is full of moments like this.) Plus, there's more to do with music than enjoy it, and there's more to the enjoyment of music than the assumption of its premises. If Satie was wrong about some stuff but we like some of his music, we might want to use that tension not to defend what we believe is our 'property' but rather to explore the depth of the problem.



The "Credo" section of a choral Mass is a recitation of the Nicene Creed, which was adopted by the First Council of Nicaea in the year 325. I would like to read the Creed as a kind of community agreement¹, a statement of collective purpose written in the first person singular.

When the credo of a Mass is sung, everyone sings, together, "Credo in unum Deum," -- "I believe in one God..." and continues on this long list of what each individually believes, in unison, but almost as if on accident -- like an incredible jinx. The word "credo," actually, only appears at the very beginning. When the other articles of faith are introduced, the "credo" is assumed, or rushed over, as in "Et in unum Dominum," "Et in Spiritum Sanctum"... "Et unam sanctam...."

Two more epigraphs:

"It's not just that there are ubiquitous instances of what Kropotkin would call mutual aid, it's that our capacity to get here, to be in this room right now, our capacity to continue to eke out something that feels sometimes like living on the earth, is a function of the ubiquity of these forms of mutual aid" - Fred Moten

³ This does not mean that I celebrate religion or religious institutions as community or communism at such. The point is not to use the First Council as a model for communist living, but to show an ineradicable communism (lowercase 'c') as the condition of possibility for the text they co-write.

"...the music under discussion (which I truly "love") seemed to me beautiful because it had to do with intensity of experience. For me, it was neither emotional nor sexual....it is about the transcendent joy of being alive, not dead, and aware of the difference," - Suzanne Cusick

With Moten, Cusick, Satie, and all my friends, I am myself made aware of the function, of the difference and of the music that, as Jules-Bois' artist says, "this night on the planet seduce me with their strange glimmers." This is a picture of me and my friend Nick from a couple years ago:



Nomi Epstein
Sunday July 22, 2018
MIT Press Bookstore

Nomi Epstein is a Chicago-based composer, curator/performer of experimental music, and educator. Her music centers around her interest in sonic fragility where structure arises out of textural subtleties. Epstein's compositions have been performed throughout the US and Europe by ensembles such as ICE, Ensemble SurPlus, Wet Ink, Mivos Quartet, Wild Rumpus, counter)induction, the Southland Ensemble, and Dal Niente.

She is the founder/director of the critically acclaimed, experimental music ensemble a•pe•ri•od•ic, and performs as part of this ensemble in addition to the experimental improvisation trio, NbN. She produced the Chicago area 2012 centennial John Cage Festival, and co-produced the 2014 Chicago Wandelweiser Festival and the 2017 Galina Ustvolskaya Festival. She continues to research, write, and lecture on post-Cagean, notated, experimental music. Epstein has served on the faculties of Northwestern University, Roosevelt University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, DePaul University and the University of Iowa.

The following writings come from parts of the lecture I gave at the Standing Waves concert on July 22, 2018, as well as a set of short gleanings on my work and my conception of and interest in sonic experience.

I. Identity

I was asked many years ago in a graduate school class whether my artistic identity shared the same characteristics as my identity as a person, my self. I remember at the time how profound a question this was, and the process of contemplating my answer was memorable. I remember considering and reconsidering how I conceived of these identities.

At the time, I felt I didn't know as much about my artistic identity as I did of my self. And in that way, I had already made a distinction between the two, and, therefore they were, indeed, separate entities. I tried to imagine a single identity within which these two parts of myself were thoroughly merged. Would that be possible? And if not, does that pose some kind of a problem for the me as an artist? Does that have any bearing on the authenticity of an artist, the integrity of her work? Is moving towards this single identity a goal?

In response to these musings, I spent a number of years working with concepts around communication, with a focus on communicating identity. This led to thoughts on how one expresses this identity to another, and whether we can truly and completely communicate who we are to others. My works of that time tended to focus on the process of attempted communication, or miscommunication, misrepresentation, and distortion.

I often think back to the question about identity, and as the years have passed, and I've developed as an artist and aged as a person, I've come to understand that there are certainly many parallels between these identities, between the person that I am and the music I make...between the qualities in sound I enjoy and seek and the qualities in people I enjoy and seek. I enjoy things that are still, things that take up space, but do so modestly, humbly, and without the need to draw attention to themselves.

I believe that as these two identities grow and as I understand their intersections, that I become a more honest and whole person, and a better artist. It feels important to recognize this.

I'm at a place right now where the me and the my are nearing a level of equivalence.

Me- what I am, what I believe, what I want to be.

My- my sonic/conceptual intentions and creations.



II.

I enjoy an introverted listening experience, where the responsibility of sound is not to draw others in, not to entertain, but rather the sound coexists within a space that the audience/performers also inhabit. This often involves creating systems whose control is determined by various parameters that I set up, but for which several outcomes are possible. These systems and parameters allow for multiple end products to arise within a specific sound world.

III. Modeling/Alone Together

Some of my pieces performed on the Standing Waves concert exemplify a kind of abstract modeling of our daily lives. They explore the possible interactions we happen upon as beings in this life. We can observe in any situation the sonic result of our actions, whether they are accidental or purposeful, whether they have unintentional sonic results, or actions which interact with those of another person/object/surface. These could include verbal interactions with people/objects (talking into a phone, to a person/group, reading aloud, etc.) and physical interactions (walking, brushing one's teeth, typing on a keyboard, preparing a meal, reading a book, breathing, etc.).

If we were to track the sonic result of these actions and interactions, we would be left with a composite of sounds of differing intensities, lengths, pitches, and contours. Some sounds would collide, intersect, some would sound alone, and some moments would be without sonic activity.

My Combine, Juxtapose, Delayed Overlap (2013/14) for 4 or more players is, in essence, a modeling of these types of interactions, presenting three different kinds of sound-relating, or textures. Sometimes sounds happen at the same time (combine), sometimes one sound occurs after another (juxtapose), or one sound starts and then another sound adds to it (delayed overlap). It can be satisfying to hear these three types of natural interactions artificially articulated with ease, coordination, and structure,

for in the midst of everyday life, they can and do happen unintentionally and often go unnoticed.

Similarly, if we were to enter a public space where each person is going about their own daily routine (or performing their “solo”), we would find interesting and unanticipated sonic moments of synchronicity, intersection, echoing, and regular or irregular repetitions. The composite sonic effect can be quite beautiful and unexpected.

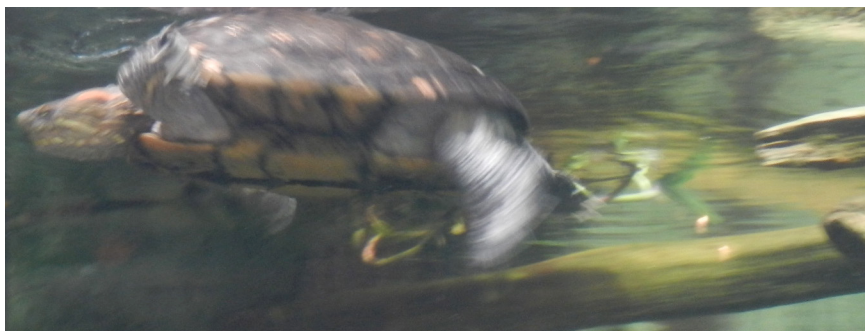
In my *sparsely placed* (2018) which I wrote for Ordinary Affects for the Standing Waves performance, I have given each performer their individual daily routine in the form of instructions for 1-3 types of sonic events. They each perform their ‘solos’ somewhat freely. To each performer, I indicate how many times an event should sound, but everyone receives the same instruction that their sound events should be “sparsely placed” within the total duration of their own solo. The listener, then, becomes a witness to multiple solos, or daily routines, and the composite sound of their simultaneous performance.

The modeling is, again, controlled and artificial, as I have generated the material of each “life,” and put restrictions on the regularity and rate of incidence. The indeterminacy forms a sort of replica of daily human activity complete with individuals having their own agendas and all the possibilities that loom at any moment in this space.

IV. Indeterminacy

I am interested in creating a sonic/spatial environment which is open to the possibility of a sound event, a sound interaction, silence, or a silent interaction.





V. Turtle

Setting up for my installation in the Lincoln Park Conservatory last month, I found myself watching a turtle in the small pond situated inside the Fern Room. Turtles are, indeed, some of my favorite things, and observing them is always a delight. The turtle sat on a rock jutting out of the water. With it being so still, we, the passersby/observers, questioned the life of the turtle. Is it alive? And, further, we questioned the veracity of its existence. Is it a real turtle?

Can you imagine being a living, breathing, moving, healthy body and having others constantly question as to whether you are real?

The turtle does not need to prove to its observers that it is alive. It moves when it needs or wants. It shelters itself when it needs or wants. It lives with the ability to shield itself from threat with its heavy shell, and although the shell protects the turtle, it also weighs on them. Its protection demands a life of slowness, of careful movement.

VI. Statement

My experience with music revolves around my conception of sound as phenomenon. I seek to create sound spaces that the listener can choose to enter. Inside these sound spaces, one finds a sense of timelessness where one's perception of time and its durational properties may be affected. The sound world I create is without pretense. Sound is often presented bare, not masked by gesture. Either as an outsider or as a participating listener, one may witness the way sound forms, its inner construction. Much of my music takes on a seemingly formless and ethereal quality.

To show the type of beauty I seek requires both time and patience from the listener.



Teodora Stepančić
Sunday, September 16, 2018
MIT Press Bookstore

Teodora Stepančić is a composer, pianist and curator based in Brooklyn. She is the creator and organizer of Piano+ and Shared Space, two concert series in New York inviting composers, performers and audiences into an intimate listening experience, a space for sharing sounds, ideas and music, a place for open minds and ears. In her curation she seeks diversity and inclusiveness and a community based approach to music making and organization. She focuses on showcasing works that speak in the voice of the outsider, a hushed voice that does not try to draw attention to itself, that stresses generosity, intimacy, attentiveness and spirit.

In her compositions, Teodora explores different ways of bringing together theatrical and visual elements into music performance, cyclical and game-based musical forms, and developing works in close collaboration with individual performers and non-musicians.

Teodora studied piano and composition in Belgrade, Serbia and The Hague, The Netherlands. She is a founding member of LCollective and Love Records, pianist of Netherlands based Ensemble Modelo62, and performs with composer Assaf Gidron as Stepancic.Gidron duo on casio organs, sine tones, piano and cello.

I write from a place of imagining a situation and an event. I don't see my scores as final, hermetic; some are not finished, some remain scattered between sketches, recordings, files on my computer, memory; some are forgotten. For me, the scores are one way of communicating how to realize an idea into music. There are many ways to translate ideas into a musical activities. And so I don't see ideas as sacred either.

I write most of my music for specific situations in which I plan to work with specific musicians in person. I know the location and the people playing. The instrumentation often comes from the instruments the musicians involved have access to. I find it most interesting and easy to verbally explain my pieces to the musicians, which also gives the possibility for discussion and change. The performance is not the final version of the piece either. If my piece is performed again, I am open to work on it again with the musicians and develop it further, inviting each musician to approach it differently and have different input.

[illegible]

My friend Coleman Zurkowski told me about a string quartet he wrote. He explained the processes and how the piece was made, and I had a complete imagination of the piece. When I finally heard the piece played I understood what Coleman explained, but it was different from what I imagined. So I composed my own version of the piece. I called it "Coleman's piece" because we are used to thinking that we have ownership of our ideas and value their originality. I like to think that we share them.

Rope

A long rope is tied to the lowest string of an amplified double bass. Across the space, a performer is on the other end of the rope, and throughout the piece they slowly move closer to the instrument, plucking the rope and bowing it, also turning on and off some lights and fans along the way. On the other side of the rope, various harmonics resonate through the amplified double bass, triggering a feedback.

A cello is hanging on a rope from the movable theater light rack. It is lowered down as the cellist approaches it, holds it and plays on it. During the piece, the cello is slowly and gradually rising upwards. By the end of the piece it will either go all the way to the ceiling or come back to the cellist.



A few musicians are sitting in circle: piano, guitars, bass guitar, harp, double bass. A rope is connecting them, tied through their strings; they pull the rope left-right-left.

Ropes pass through the strings of the harp; they connect pairs of string players standing on opposite sides, their bows tied with the rope passing through the harp's strings and to each other. Every movement makes the harp strings sound. When the cello player plays down-bow, they pull the bow of the double bass player. The bass player plays upbow, pulling the cellist's bow and the rope bows the harp string. A musician sitting behind the harp manipulates the pedals changing the resonating harmonies.

Two performers tie the audience together with a long rope.



Rope is an object, instrument, sound source, attachment, route, manipulation, fishing, wave, knot.

A percussion part I wrote for Jesse Greenberg for an ensemble piece we performed in 2015 at the Music for Contemplation concert series in Brooklyn: very slowly, over 30 minutes, the performer unwraps a radio hidden inside boxes, bags, fabric, aluminum...The radio is on, playing static noise. At some moments it can be heard but not yet seen. The crescendo of static noise speeds up when the last layers are taken off. A year later I was writing a piece for a concert with friends in Tel Aviv. Unwrapping the radio became the framework of this new piece, while the rest of the musicians play three harmonies, each lasting several minutes, with silences between them. That piece is Line 3, we performed it at the Standing Waves concert.

I like writing and hearing chords that overlap, harmonies blending together, changing slowly from one to another.

Keyboards - December 2017

Teodora Štepančić

for any number of keyboard instruments with the sound decay
multiple players might perform on one instrument (max 3)
everything should be played (and whistled) very soft
use left pedal if necessary

no sustain pedal
each player chooses one system (octave) to play
only play the written octaves
stick to your chosen octave throughout the piece

players count on their own - they are not synchronized
● = 1/2 second, tenuto, short chords are repeated 20x (or more)
○ = keep until the sound disappears, long chords are played only once

beginning: sit in silence for few moments, anybody can start the piece.
the rest follow freely, starting within the next minute or two.
end: wait until everyone is finished, then wait few moments in silence.

repeat 20x	choose 1 note	repeat 20x	choose 1 note	repeat 20x	choose 1 note	repeat 20x	choose 1 note	repeat 20x or more	wait until everyone
play every 3-5 sec	keep play once	play every 5-7 sec	keep play once	play every 7-9 sec	keep play once	play every 5-9 sec	play once	alternate freely between two chords or stick to one	is finished
						whistle long	stop whistling	play every 3-9 sec	whistle if you want few times
						soft high notes			
						throughout this section			
						don't try to match the pitch			

||.

Construction

musicians - play their instruments or sing.

constructors - create the piece by manipulating the sounds the musicians are making by any means - from treating their instruments to moving their bodies.

musicians perform pitches from pieces of papers that constructors put in front of them.

musicians can only play when they see the the paper.

if the score is gone - they are silent.

if their eyes are covered, or the score is too far to be visible - silent.

the score -

five notes: d, e, f, f#, c

each note is on a separate piece of paper, stacked on top of each other in front of the musicians in the order above.

the pitches are sustained and repeated very slowly as long as the musicians can see them.

if at some point there are two or more pages next to each other, they play the pitches in succession slowly. repeat.

please print/write the scores on used paper.

some of the papers might have different content (a part of a score, text, or picture) on the other side.

as soon as a score is put in front of the musicians, they start paying.

soft dynamics give nicer results and the manipulation of the sounds is more audible.

don't try to make "music" individually, play simple - just

produce sounds.

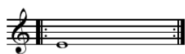
constructors manipulate the sounds, the instruments, the musicians, to create music. they can: turn the pages of the score, prepare the instruments, relocate the musicians (note: if you want them to continue playing you have to move the score too), silence them (musicians play only what they see on the given score). the constructors don't conduct or talk to musicians about what they want to hear. everything is done through movement.

take time, don't rush changes

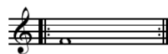
note 1



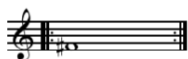
note 2



note 3



note 4



note 5



Eva-Maria Houben
Tuesday, October 16, 2018
The Yard - John Hancock Tower,
Boston, MA

Eva-Maria Houben studied Music Education at Folkwang-Musikhochschule Essen (Germany) and the organ with Gisbert Schneider. Since 1993 Professor Houben has been lecturing at Dortmund University's "Institut für Musik und Musikwissenschaft", with both music theory and contemporary music as her focus (see for example Adriana Hölszky, Violeta Dinescu, Hans-Joachim Hespos, wandelweiser composers [Musik-Denken, Antoine Beuger, Jürg Frey]).

As she is related to the wandelweiser group of composers, her compositions are published by edition wandelweiser, Haan (Germany). Her list of compositions includes works for solo instruments, ensembles, orchestra, voice solo or accompanied by instruments, voice and orchestra, and choir. She has presented her work in the US, Europe, and Asia.

1. Impulses to Listen— Feeling Awe and Wonder

As a composer and a listener, I enjoy the intermediary area between music and non-music. – “Non-music”? I think of the everyday life world outside the musical zone of composition. I am not referring exclusively to contemporary music: While performing, for example, the first movement of Beethoven’s famous piano sonata in d-minor (op. 31, 2) I often find myself at a standstill with fermatas while playing. Questions arise: And now? What now? What next? Completely marveling at the emerging voice (recitativo, parlando – “con espressione e semplice”) at the beginning of the recapitulation:

The musical score is for a piano piece, likely a sonata movement. It consists of three systems of music. The first system is marked **Largo** and features a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo changes to **Allegro** in the second system, which has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The tempo then changes back to **Largo** in the third system, which has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and fermatas. Expressive markings include *con espressione e semplice*, *cresc.*, *sf*, *p*, and *pp*. The score also includes a *Ped.* (pedal) marking.

The pause with fermata after the first appearance (bar 148), the breaks between different layers of tempo and the fermatas repeatedly pose the mentioned questions: And now? The composition becomes permeable to the world outside the composition. I even cannot continuously be sure if I am within the piece. As a performer I am involved in a process of a becoming that does not have a clear goal. I am involved in an activity, not in a production.

And now? What now? What next? The same question might arise in another situation quite similar to this one but referring to a different compositional issue. The extensive general pause with a fermata in the last completed movement (Adagio) of Anton Bruckner's Symphony no. 9 d-minor—the pause after the last grand climax (bar 206)—opens up a wide space. A potential might be discovered; an infinite abundance of possibilities might emerge. The performers as well as the listeners might experience a new moment of freedom. That's what has happened. That could not have been everything, though, surely? What is happening now? How do we proceed now? A friend of mine told me that he participated in a performance of this symphony, and while exactly during this general pause different bells sounding from a bell tower far away colored this exceptional moment.

A composition might gain permeability: the thresholds between the piece and the everyday life world can become blurred. Sometimes we are disorientated; we might not be sure if we are within the piece or outside of the piece. The transparency between the piece of music and the world outside the piece—between the reality of making music and the everyday life world—offers the chance to fall into a state of disorientation. We become disorientated and, on the way, we gain access to a wide space of possibilities. Orientation might be regained again, but this liberating disorientation is not just an offer to regain reorientation. It asserts itself as its own value. Compositions like these have sometimes provided the impetus to think about the thresholds between the world of making music and the everyday life world.

2. Transparencies: The Musical World and the World of Everyday Life

In the following, I would like to mention some of my compositions; they focus on this transparency between the worlds in different ways. Where do we find ourselves while performing? Are we always active only within the piece? – or do we act (sometimes) outside the zone of the composition? Perhaps different viewpoints are possible, depending on the decision, if we examine a single (one-movement) composition or if we observe the transition from one movement to the next one. What about the space between the first and second movement of a sonata? Where do

we find ourselves as a performer or listener?

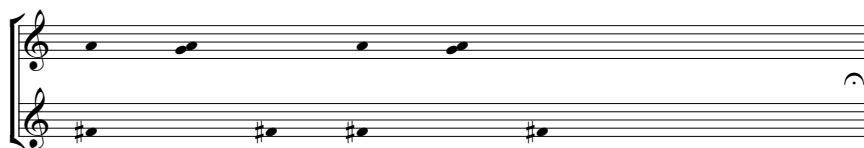
Questions like these, for example, may arise while performing the piece “busy. places to dwell for a whistling singer/ a singing whistler” (2019). Each of the 11 “places” (“a place” = a piece for itself within the piece “busy”) is performed for itself and is notated on one single page. The composition is dedicated to Denis Sorokin. He excited me into composing a piece for a performer who would sing and whistle at the same time. “busy”: Despite the bustle, all actions happen very softly, calmly, tenderly. The whistling singer/ singing whistler operates a radio that is switched on and off; concentrates on folding/ unfolding sheets of paper; inhales and exhales audibly; murmurs nearly inaudibly while reading a book or a newspaper. There are many pauses in each place—fermatas that provoke a kind of standstill. At the end of one piece (one page) the listeners cannot be sure if it is the end of this small piece (as a part of “busy”) or whether it is the end of the performance. This might cause disorientation, too. Since the performer chooses at least two pages (of eleven in total), it’s up to the performer to deal with the transition from one page (one place to dwell) to the next one. Again, we cannot be sure where we find ourselves in this moment: in or without the piece. Perhaps we can seize the chance—as performers and listeners—to fly back and forth. Disorientation: We do not exactly know what’s really going on. What game is being played here?

On the 16th of July 2005, a student of our Institute at the TU Dortmund, Laura Hinn, performed the whole series “ein bogenstrich” for violoncello solo. This series includes ten pieces, composed in 2002-03. The durations of the single pieces differ significantly from one another, but no single piece lasts longer than one hour. Laura followed a time schedule, and every new hour she began with one of the pieces—following the given order of the pieces. So, Laura was busy for ten hours—and there was enough time to eat or to drink, talk, or go for a walk, because some of the pieces are very short. The intermissions became islands of time for us to meet and to become acquainted with each other, to walk a bit together, and to have a meal together. Life time and performance time were very closely connected; the performance of the whole series became a certain life form. And we could cross light-footedly the thresholds between the world of making music and the world of everyday life. A series, therefore, seems to provoke the transparency between the worlds; it might perhaps easily gain permeability. How long can an intermission last without giving up the dotted line of connection between the musical reality and the everyday reality? The individual evenings of Richard Wagner’s music drama “Der Ring des Nibelungen” are separated by several days, at least by one day at a time!

When Ordinary Affects performed my pieces “gesang XI” (“chant XI”) for organ and ensemble (2018) and the “echo fantasies” I, IV and V for any kind and number of instruments (2018) (15th of October 2018 at Spectrum, New York City), I could feel that the performance created a musical space with a specific life of its own. I had the chance to perform together with the ensemble, playing piano and organ; the others: Laura Cetilia on the cello; Morgan Evans-Weiler on the violin; Luke Martin on the guitar, and J. P. A. Falzone on the piano/ vibraphone. We could hear all the noises from outside pouring in, the loud noises of the traffic, signals, even sirens wailing. But—putting aside for the moment the question of whether there were long pauses within each fantasy—we could experience that the noises from outside attached to the wide space that the performance created, without destroying it, or even disturbing it. They shaped this single performance and revealed one possible aspect of the composition among an infinite number of aspects. We also performed some of the pieces over the next days in other locations: in Hancock Tower in Boston and in Dartmouth College in Hanover. The performers create individual relationships. In “gesang XI”, for example, the organ plays continuously and opens a wide space that invites the single members to enter in and participate freely. The “echo fantasies” focus on the performers’ interaction with one another: Since there is no chronological order for the sounds, the performers orient themselves according to one another. One performer reflects, anticipates, or accompanies the other performer’s activity.

“at the end, we fell into deep listening.
we listened and listened and listened—and at the end we could no longer distinguish between sequence and simultaneity.”

We find these memories in the score of “echo fantasy IV”.



Non-linearity characterizes the other fantasies as well.

When we made the recording of all these pieces in the Wesleyan University Chapel in Middletown, we often felt disturbed by the occurring

noises from outside. But: It is important to distinguish between a live performance and a recording. A live performance, which creates the musical space of acuteness and relationship, allows the noises coming from outside to attach themselves on to it. On a recording, it might just be tedious if the same noise occurs at the same time when listening to it after the first time.

What does it mean to feel awe and wonder while listening? And above all: Why? Perhaps it is because we get the chance to achieve transparencies between the worlds. These transparencies between the musical reality and the reality of everyday life might allow a disorientation that helps to discover infinite possibilities. We might experience a potential that includes all forms of life, all locations and time spheres, as well as musical possibilities of sounds and noises, and furthermore outer and inner worlds of ideas, imaginations, sorrows, hopes and longings. All of this might emerge as the potential of all (virtually infinite) realities and possibilities and as a selection of the wealth of events actualized in the single performance activity. We never can set this goal for ourselves, but we can invite each other with hope.

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