

Advanced Motor Skills

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General information:

The piece is for 2-4 performers (possibly more) and a revolving music stand (provided by the composer).

The beginning note for each instrument is C# in the highest possible register.

The tempo is decided by the speed of rotation. The rotation is controlled at random by a pd patch (also provided by composer)

The piece is inspired by the illusion of the shepherd's tone and fractals. The illusion of something continuously spiralling downwards.

Installation:

The motor stand should hang so the main surface is no less than 2m from the ground. The score is hung by the clips attached to the stand. The coloured lines shall be connected at the seam. A lamp shall be placed inside of the score so that the score is fully illuminated. An arduino with a motor board is included with the motor stand. This is connected to a computer by USB. This computer shall then run the Pure data patch provided.

Instructions:

1. Each performer chooses one colour and assigns it to an instrument. (If there are 2 players, each performer chooses two colours, if there are three they must decide the last one in unison). One colour per instrument: e.g. blue=violin, yellow=electric guitar, red=tuba, green=timpani. Does the instrument have to be present in the performance space?
2. performers position themselves around the revolving music stand as if they were at 12,3,6 and 9 on a traditional clock - where there are spots of complete transparency in the score.
3. The players get ready to play their instrument. They start as soon as the stand rotates.
4. The players follow the colour they have chosen for their instrument of choice. The general direction is downwards, ergo the pitch goes downwards. Sometimes the direction is up. Then the pitch goes up. Glissandi is encouraged. If you finish all pitches available on your instrument, go back to the top (or bottom) and continue from there.
5. The thickness of the lines represent dynamics. Thick means loud and thin means soft.
6. The opacity of the lines represent timbre. 100% Opaque means a focused, clear tone. 100% Transparent means an unfocused, unclear tone or technique. It is encouraged to vary techniques used to represent transparency.

7. Sometimes a performer must choose which path to take. You could keep following your colour but you can also choose to transform by following the extra lines which transform colour.

When transforming you must take on the characteristics of the instrument assigned to the colour you are now following. Do you choose to replicate the timbre of the instrument? Do you choose to replicate the movement of performing the instrument? Do you choose to take on the attitude of a performer of the instrument? Does your instrument somehow become the other instrument? Do you become the instrument yourself? It must be as clear as possible to the audience which instrument you are replicating. In some cases this could be very unclear, but performers are encouraged to do their best.

8. If you reach a dead end, the performer is out.^{*} You must stop playing and pack your instrument. Do you exit the performance space? Do you keep sitting and enjoy the performance? Do you sabotage the other musicians? Do you destroy the score?^{**}

If the performance space allows, the musicians no longer playing are allowed to set the score on fire.

10. The piece ends when all players have reached a dead end or if there is no more score.

* It is allowed to have a number of "lives". All performers must agree on the total number of lives. If you are out for the first time, you must wait for approx. 30 seconds and then begin again from the highest C# available. Experienced performers are encouraged to perform the piece with only one try.

** Damage to the music stand or apparatus is discouraged. Damage to the score itself is allowed.

