

Richard Barrett

# *codex XV*

2015

3 groups of improvising musicians  
and conductor

performing score

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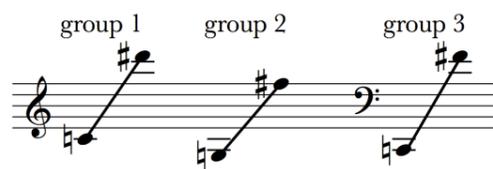
2015

for 3 groups of improvising instrumentalists (minimum 3 players per group) and conductor

duration 15 minutes approximately

for Desmond Clarke and the Chimera Ensemble

The three instrumental groups should be of more or less equal size. Instruments of fixed pitch (keyboards, harp, tuned percussion etc.) should only be included if the group containing them already contains three instruments of flexible pitch (woodwinds, brass, guitar, bowed strings etc.), and unpitched percussion should be excluded. The members of each group should be seated together but the groups should not be so widely separated in space as to create an “antiphonal” impression – each performer should be able to make direct musical contact with any other, whether in his/her own group or not. Each player in each group needs to have *at least* the pitch-range given below, either with a single instrument or using whatever doublings are available.



The pitches in the score (as well as above) are sounding pitches and should not be transposed by octaves except where this is specifically indicated (in section B4).

*Codex XV* is divided into nine sections with the following approximate durations and start points:

<b>A1</b>	1'00"	0'00"
<b>B1</b>	1'10"	1'00"
<b>C1</b>	1'40"	2'10"
<b>B2</b>	1'30"	3'50"
<b>D</b>	2'20"	5'20"
<b>B3</b>	1'50"	7'40"
<b>C2</b>	1'20"	9'30"
<b>B4</b>	2'10"	10'50"
<b>A2</b>	2'00"	13'00"
<b>end</b>		15'00"

Each section embodies a particular sonic/structural emphasis, relationship between instruments and groups and between these and the conductor, range of dynamics and of (specified but not exclusive) pitch, and so on. However, a performance should be projected principally as a single structure rather than a succession of structures – each participant should be aware of not only momentary or sectionally-defined events but also how these form part of a larger scheme.

In most cases the transitions between these sections are gradual, involving the three groups one at a time rather than simultaneously. The music is conceived as essentially improvisatory, including the conductor's part, so that as far as possible the notated material should be internalised by all performers so that they don't need often to refer to the score while performing. The conductor's role is not to control but to channel the improvisational energies, interactions and personalities of the performers by responsively indicating the score's processes and points of focus.

Indications preceded by ⊙ are *optional*, for example “⊙ multiphonics” means that instruments taking part in this event *may* (or may not) use multiphonics (if they are wind instruments!). Also, the presence of some type of material or behaviour as an option somewhere in the score in no way precludes its appearance elsewhere (at points where it is not mentioned). Lastly, the score is intended as a starting-point rather than indicating a goal to be aimed at. Spontaneous variations on or even contradictions of its suggestions may be made at any time, always however bearing in mind the individual's responsibility not to compromise the composed structure or the contributions of others.

# codex XV

Richard Barrett  
2015

**A1** (duration approximately 1'00" - therefore around 6 iterations of the two bars below)

conducted cues - vary durations each time unpredictably

(don't necessarily wait until the notated pitches are clearly established before giving the next LH cue)

in each of the last 2 iterations cue one of the 3 groups to start playing section B1 (section B1 proper begins below once the 3rd group is cued to start playing it)

(LH) 2-5" (RH) 4-10"  $\odot$  in one of the iterations, cue the three groups separately for the second bar

group 1  
group 2  
group 3

improvisation: dense and chaotic texture of highly varied sounds in mostly brief phrases using whole range of instrument

$\odot$  single complex sound eg. multiphonic

*tutti fff*  $\odot$  swells and other gradual individual dynamic changes *mf*

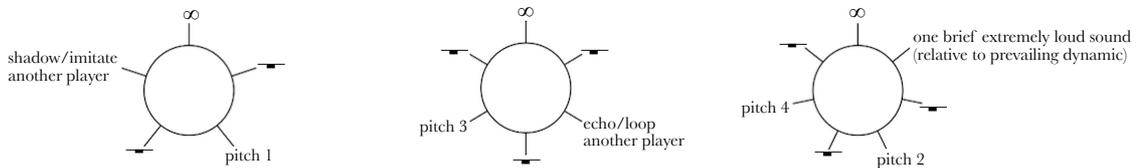
- \* on the conductor's RH cue: "freeze" on whatever sound you are making and move it *legato* slowly or quickly towards one (freely chosen) of the two notated pitches for your group using any kind of transition - scale, glissando etc.
- $\odot$  split legato into string of regular or irregular short sounds

**B1** (duration approximately 1'10" from entry of third group)

conductor: cue one of the groups **every 4-6 seconds**, responding to the changing combinations and textures (and silences).

instrumentalists: dynamic range in this section **mp-mf**. On the conductor's first cue to your group (two groups will already have been given this cue towards the end of section A1): choose freely a point on one (again freely chosen) of the three circles below and play (or not) as suggested. On the next cue to your group, go clockwise to the next point. When you have completed a circle, choose another at the next cue and continue clockwise around it. When you have completed all three circles, begin again with a freely-chosen point on a freely-chosen circle, and so on.

$\infty$  = free improvisation  
pitch 1, 2, 3, 4 = sustain this pitch from the selection for your group, possibly with microtonal and/or timbral and/or dynamic changes and/or rearticulations (the other indications should be realised in a different way each time!)



group 1  
group 2  
group 3

pitch 1 2 3 4

pitch 1 2 3 4

pitch 1 2 3 4

somewhere in the last quarter of B1, cue two groups in turn to begin section C1 (once a group has done so, its subsequent cues are C1 cues)

**C1** (duration approximately 1'40" from entry of third group)

conductor: cue one of the groups every **2-8 seconds**.  
 ○ cue two or all three groups simultaneously

- group 1: when your group is first cued, move immediately to (a) below; on next cue to (b) then to (c) and then back to (a) etc.  
 (a) 1 soloist (same soloist for the whole of section C1, chosen in rehearsal) freely improvises, others *lacet*  
 (b) each player plays sparse irregular sounds with pitches freely chosen from the six below (generally but not always playing all of them before repeating any)  
 (c) alternate at varying speeds (between "trill speed" and around 75bpm) between two freely chosen pitches from the six below (choosing a different pair in each iteration of (c), and a different articulation between staccato and legato)  
 ○ *glissando* between the two pitches
- group 2: when your group is first cued, move immediately to (a) below; on next cue to (b) then to (c) and then back to (a) etc.  
 (a) each player plays sparse irregular sounds with pitches freely chosen from the six below (generally but not always playing all of them before repeating any)  
 (b) alternate at varying speeds (between "trill speed" and around 75bpm) between two freely chosen pitches from the six below (choosing a different pair in each iteration of (b), and a different articulation between staccato and legato)  
 ○ *glissando* between the two pitches  
 (c) 1 soloist (same soloist for the whole of section C1, chosen in rehearsal) freely improvises, others *lacet*
- group 3: when your group is first cued, move immediately to (a) below; on next cue to (b) then to (c) and then back to (a) etc.  
 (a) alternate at varying speeds (between "trill speed" and around 75bpm) between two freely chosen pitches from the six below (choosing a different pair in each iteration of (a), and a different articulation between staccato and legato)  
 ○ *glissando* between the two pitches  
 (b) 1 soloist (same soloist for the whole of section C1, chosen in rehearsal) freely improvises, others *lacet*  
 (c) each player plays sparse irregular sounds with pitches freely chosen from the six below (generally but not always playing all of them before repeating any)

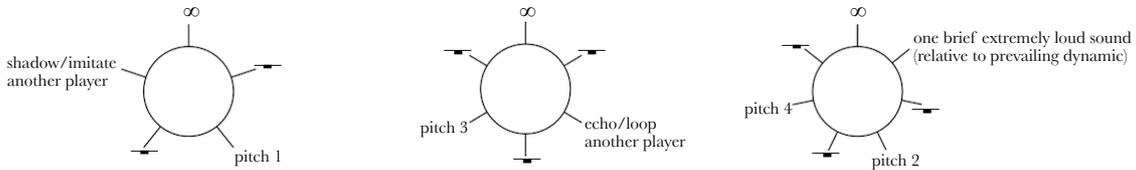
somewhere in the last quarter of C1,  
 cue two groups in turn to begin section B2  
 (once a group has done so, its subsequent cues are B2 cues)

**B2** (duration approximately 1'30" from entry of third group)

conductor: cue one of the groups **every 3-9 seconds**, responding to the changing combinations and textures (and silences).

instrumentalists: dynamic range in this section **p-f**. On the conductor's first cue to your group (two groups will already have been given this cue towards the end of section C1): choose freely a point on one (again freely chosen) of the three circles below and play (or not) as suggested. On the next cue to your group, go clockwise to the next point. When you have completed a circle, choose another at the next cue and continue clockwise around it. When you have completed all three circles, begin again with a freely-chosen point on a freely-chosen circle, and so on.

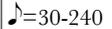
∞ = free improvisation  
 pitch 1, 2, 3, 4 = sustain this pitch from the selection for your group, possibly with microtonal and/or timbral and/or dynamic changes and/or rearticulations (the other indications should be realised in a different way each time!)



conductor: somewhere in the last quarter of section B2, cue two groups in turn to begin section D

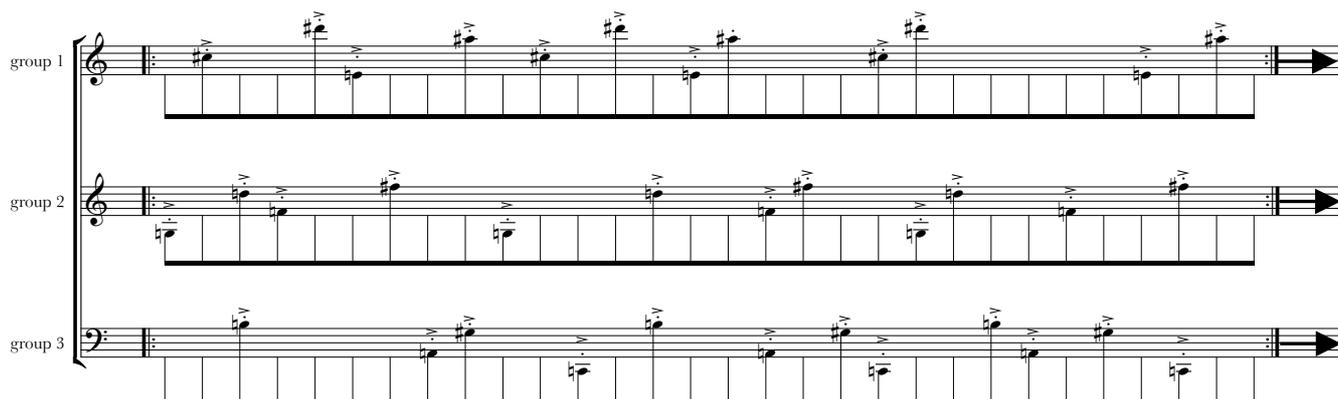
the three groups begin section D separately when cued (see section B2) - the principal material (PM) is shown for the three groups immediately below, and the internal structure of section D as shaped by the conductor is shown in the table below the PM.

**D** (duration approximately 2'20" from entry of third group)

=30-240 (tempo is not conducted! - each instrument varies tempo individually, irregularly, constantly, creating multicoloured, multiperspectival texture of points)

all three groups: *staccato sempre* (except as indicated below) - each sound with a different colour, dynamic, attack; the headless notes may be any pitch, not necessarily within the range of the specified notes, or pitchless, and varied as much as possible within and between the "repetitions"

○ microtonal alterations to the specified pitches



approx. time*	approx. duration	conductor		instruments	
		subsection (LH cues)	individual events (RH cues)	dynamic range	continue PM except when cued by conductor's RH:
0'00"	20"	1	-	<b>ppp-mf</b>	-
0'20"	24"	2	cue individual instruments every 1-8 seconds	<b>pp-f</b>	on cues: <i>accelerate</i> the PM over a period of 4-8 seconds to "as fast as possible" with a crescendo <b>pp&lt;ff</b> then return to irregular durations as above ○ with some <i>repetition</i> of sounds/phrases
0'44"	16"	3	-	<b>pp-mp</b>	-
1'00"	28"	4	cue individual instruments every 1-8 seconds	<b>p-ff</b>	on cues: <i>sustain</i> the next specified pitch for 4-8 seconds with a diminuendo <b>ff&gt;pp</b> then return to brief sounds as above ○ with microtonal <i>undulations/trills/glissandi</i>
1'28"	12"	5	-	<b>ppp-p</b>	-
1'40"	32"	6	cue individual instruments every 1-8 seconds	<b>mp-fff</b>	on cues: <i>free improvisation</i> for 4-8 seconds (!) with free choice of dynamics then return to PM as above
2'12"	8"	7	-	<b>ppp-pp</b>	-
2'20"	end	abrupt change (all groups simultaneously) to section B3			

# B3

(duration approximately 1'50" - all groups enter together)

conductor: cue one of the groups **every 2-12 seconds**, responding to the changing combinations and textures (and silences).

instrumentalists: dynamic range in this section **pp-ff**. On the conductor's first cue: choose freely a point on one (again freely chosen) of the three circles below and play (or not) as suggested.

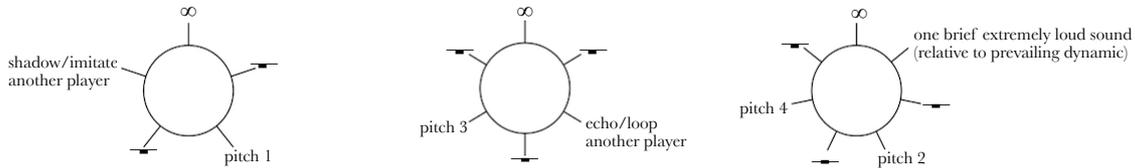
On the next cue to your group, go clockwise to the next point.

When you have completed a circle, choose another at the next cue and continue clockwise around it.

When you have completed all three circles, begin again with a freely-chosen point on a freely-chosen circle, and so on.

∞ = free improvisation

pitch 1, 2, 3, 4 = sustain this pitch from the selection for your group, possibly with microtonal and/or timbral and/or dynamic changes and/or rearticulations (the other indications should be realised in a different way each time!)



somewhere in the last quarter of B3, cue two groups in turn to begin section C2 (once a group has done so, its subsequent cues are C2 cues)

# C2

(duration approximately 1'20" from entry of third group)

conductor: cue one of the groups every **3-6 seconds**.

- cue two or all three groups simultaneously

group 1: when your group is first cued, move immediately to (a) below; on next cue to (b) then to (c) and then back to (a) etc.

- (a) 1 soloist (same soloist for the whole of section C2, chosen in rehearsal) freely improvises, others *lacet*
- (b) repeated *non staccato* sounds with a pitch freely chosen from the six below, irregularly varying between 75 and 135bpm, choosing a different pitch in each iteration of (b)
  - alternating between 2, 3 or more pitches
  - rapid *legato* grace-note group of between 3 and 12 notes starting together on the cue
  - sustain the final note **ppp**

group 2: when your group is first cued, move immediately to (a) below; on next cue to (b) then to (c) and then back to (a) etc.

- (a) repeated *non staccato* sounds with a pitch freely chosen from the six below, irregularly varying between 75 and 135bpm, choosing a different pitch in each iteration of (b)
  - alternating between 2, 3 or more pitches
  - (b) rapid *legato* grace-note group of between 3 and 12 notes starting together on the cue
  - sustain the final note **ppp**
- (c) 1 soloist (same soloist for the whole of section C2, chosen in rehearsal) freely improvises, others *lacet*

group 3: when your group is first cued, move immediately to (a) below; on next cue to (b) then to (c) and then back to (a) etc.

- (a) rapid *legato* grace-note group of between 3 and 12 notes starting together on the cue
  - sustain the final note **ppp**
- (b) 1 soloist (same soloist for the whole of section C2, chosen in rehearsal) freely improvises, others *lacet*
- (c) repeated *non staccato* sounds with a pitch freely chosen from the six below, irregularly varying between 75 and 135bpm, choosing a different pitch in each iteration of (b)
  - alternating between 2, 3 or more pitches

conductor: abrupt change to section B4

*tutti p*

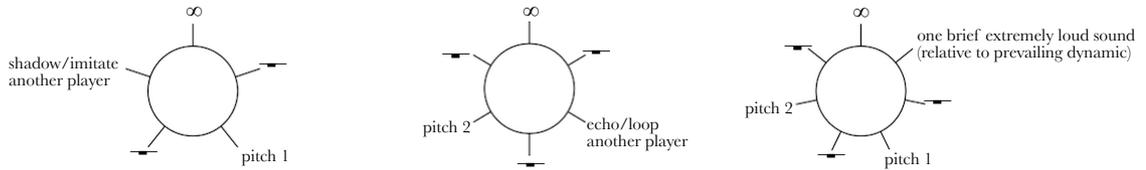
**ff**

**B4** (duration approximately 2'10" - all groups enter together)

conductor: cue one of the groups **every 2-12 seconds**, responding to the changing combinations and textures (and silences).

instrumentalists: dynamic range in this section **ppp-fff**. On the conductor's first cue to your group (two groups will already have been given this cue towards the end of section A1): choose freely a point on one (again freely chosen) of the three circles below and play (or not) as suggested. On the next cue to your group, go clockwise to the next point. When you have completed a circle, choose another at the next cue and continue clockwise around it. When you have completed all three circles, begin again with a freely-chosen point on a freely-chosen circle, and so on.

∞ = free improvisation  
 pitch 1, 2 = sustain this pitch (in any octave, using as wide a range as possible with your instrument(s) and all microtonal possibilities between C and C#) from the selection for your group, possibly with microtonal and/or timbral and/or dynamic changes and/or rearticulations (the other indications should be realised in a different way each time!)



group 1

pitch 1 (in all possible octaves)      2 (in all possible octaves)

group 2

pitch 1 (in all possible octaves)      2 (in all possible octaves)

group 3

pitch 1 (in all possible octaves)      2 (in all possible octaves)

conductor: abrupt change to section A2

**A2** (duration approximately 2'00" - all groups enter together - around 6 iterations of the two bars below before finding the right moment to cue the final bar - perhaps after a brief pause)

conducted cues - vary durations each time unpredictably

(LH)

(RH)

⊙ in one of the iterations, cue the three groups separately for the second bar

4-10"

8-20"

group 1

group 2

group 3

improvisation: dense and chaotic texture of highly varied sounds in mostly brief phrases using whole range of instrument

⊙ single complex sound eg. pitchless creaking sound of almost stationary bow against string

on conductor's RH cue: choose one pitch (different each time) and sustain

tutti **ppp** *sempre!*

final bar: ♩ = 45

⊙ swells and other gradual individual dynamic changes  
 ⊙ split the sustained sound into string of regular or irregular short sounds (microtonally varied)

group 1

group 2

group 3

7:6      7:6      7:6      7:6      7:6      7:6

ppppp *sempre*

ppppp *sempre*

5:6      5:6      5:6      5:6      5:6

ppppp *sempre*