Richard Barrett

codex XIX

2017
10 or more improvising musicians

performing score

codex XIX

2017

for 10 or more improvising performers in 3 groups

duration 30 minutes approximately

first performance: 8 August 2017 Meat Market, Melbourne, by ELISION:
Paula Rae (flute), Peter Veale (oboe), Richard Haynes (clarinet), Tristram Williams (trumpet), Peter Neville (percussion),
Marshall McGuire (harp), Daryl Buckley (electric lap steel guitar) Graeme Jennings and Elizabeth Welsh (violins),
Richard Barrett (electronics)

§The score of *codex XIX* consists of three components:
(i) this page of preliminary instructions
(ii) the formscheme
(iii) further specification of **rm** and **me** materials (see below)

The ensemble is split into three groups: **L** (to the left of the stage viewed from the audience), **R** (to the right) and **C** (in the centre). Groups L and R consist each of 3 melody instruments with at least the range of pitches shown on page (iii). Group C consists of 4 percussive, plucked and electronic instruments. Versions for more than 10 players may be adapted from this one. (Adding players to groups L and R requires no adaptation; adding players to group C requires changing at least one of the **so** segments from a solo to a duo.) In performance, groups L and R need to have pages (ii) and (iii) on their music stands, group C only page (ii).

The formscheme consists of 15 segments (see page (ii)). Timings given are approximate and indicate only general proportions. Stopwatches may be used if desired as long as they are not slavishly followed. Listening is more important. Each group has a leader who is responsible for giving the cues (to the entire ensemble) for moving on to the following segment, and, in groups L and R, for setting the tempo of the synchronised parts. This is shown on page (ii) by the arrows on the dotted line between segments. Responsibility for the precise timing of each segment is thus shared between the three group leaders. It's more important tocreate a sense of musical "logic" in the transitions between sections than for the proportions to be exact. Most (but not all!) of the transitions are suggested to be abrupt, but this doesn't necessarily mean blunt and unsubtle. The transitions are where the most engaging and memorable moments could happen.

Where no dynamics are shown they may be freely chosen.

The five types of material used by groups L and R shown on page (ii) are:

rm   looping the **r**hythmical **m**odel in diverse ways as described on page (iii). Each **rm** segment specifies the type of (de)synchronisation to be used, the type(s) of articulation and (where appropriate) ornamentation, a tempo or tempo range, the point in the rhythmic loop to start from, and a pitch range. Any pitches within the range may be used freely, including microtones.

me   using diverse fragmentary **me**mories of previous RB notated compositions (*at least* one per player and as many as possible) as described on page (iii) − perhaps look at score(s) prior to or during rehearsals but don't use them in performance! try to find a range between precise recollection and indistinct (or even completely inaccurate) impressions. Include this piece also!

sc   **s**ustain-**c**hange-sustain − double a pitch you can hear, beginning *ppp*; once it's established, gradually change it in pitch and timbre, with a crescendo, reaching a new pitch/timbre and holding this for a short while; then a brief silence and choose another pitch you can hear; each of these events has the length of a single breath; **sc1** begins from sounds already present in the foregoing **me** section (while also drawing pitches from group C where possible); **sc2** begins from and might occasionally return to the same set of six pitches subsequently used in **rm5** (see page (iii))

tacet   remain silent, remembering to make musical sense of transitions between sound and silence

∞   free improvisation − but not necessarily playing continuously, and thinking about connections with and between other events taking place currently or previously

The five types of material used by group C are:

tacet   remain silent, remembering to make musical sense of transitions between sound and silence
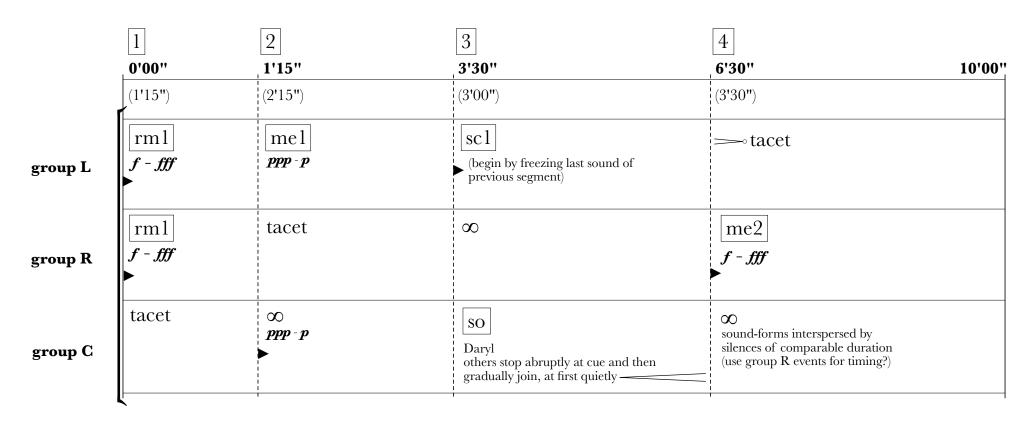
∞   free improvisation − but not necessarily playing continuously, and thinking about connections with and between other events taking place currently or previously

so   "**so**lo" (assigned to each member of group C in turn), implying that the "soloist" goes their own way and is followed and supported by the others (if they play at all)

bu   short synchronised **bu**rsts of sound, cued by the group leader, occasionally continuing or sustaining until the next one, occasionally ignoring a cue, differentiating each event as much as possible from the others in as many ways as possible

te   sustained complex **te**xture − all members of the group contribute to a dense, only slowly changing sound-form in which no individual stands out

codex XIX formscheme

System 1

	1	2	3	4	
	0'00"	1'15"	3'30"	6'30"	10'00"
	(1'15")	(2'15")	(3'00")	(3'30")	
group L	rm1 *f - fff*	me1 *ppp - p*	sc1 (begin by freezing last sound of previous segment)	⤙∘ tacet	
group R	rm1 *f - fff*	tacet	∞	me2 *f - fff*	
group C	tacet	∞ *ppp - p*	so — Daryl, others stop abruptly at cue and then gradually join, at first quietly	∞ sound-forms interspersed by silences of comparable duration (use group R events for timing?)	

System 2

	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	10'00"	10'30"	13'45"	14'45"	17'30"	19'15"	21'15"
	(30")	(3'15")	(1'00")	(2'45")	(1'45")	(2'00")	
L	rm2 *ppp - p*	me3 *p - f* (synchronised entries!)	rm3	∞	me5 *f - fff*	⤙∘ tacet	
R	rm2 *ppp - p*	me3 *p - f*	rm3	me4 *ppp - p*	sc1 (begin by freezing last sound of previous segment)	⤙∘ tacet	
C	bu *ppp - p* accel...	∞ continue previous segment and make gradual transition from synchronised sounds to free activity (which might still occasionally synchronise)	so Peter N	tacet (stop suddenly!)	so Richard B	∞	

System 3

	11	12	13	14	15	
	21'15"	22'45"	25'15"	26'00"	29'45"	30'
	(1'30")	(2'30")	(45")	(3'45")	(15")	
L	rm4	tacet	me7	sc2 *mp - mf*	rm5 *f - fff* (sync!)	
R	rm4	me6	tacet	sc2 *mp - mf*	rm5 *f - fff*	
C	bu loud rit... (non dim! but very sparse by the end)	∞ (sudden change!)	so Marshall others suddenly tacet!!!	te all <><><><><>... (individually, irregularly) *mp - mf*	tacet ⤙∘ (rapid fade!)	

rm1

each group
synchronised within itself,
staccato sempre,
with occasional
random accents

rm2

each group
synchronised within itself,
leader might initiate slight
changes in tempo,
legato sempre,
sometimes trills, tremoli, glissandi
& combinations of these

rm3

each player individually
changing tempo gradually or
abruptly within
notated limits,
mostly legato,
with timbral and
microtonal variations

rm4

each player individually
changing tempo gradually or
abruptly within
notated limits,
mostly staccato,
with timbral variations
and random accents

rm5

both groups in
rhythmic unison,
marcato sempre,
with timbral variations
and occasional
microtonal variations,
choosing a different
pitch for each attack

♪=66 starting from point A

♪=81 from point B

♪=60-84 from point C

♪=54-90 from point D

♪=72 from point E ending at C

group L

entire range of each instrument

group R

♪=78 starting from point A

♪=63 from point C

♪=60-84 from point D

♪=54-90 from point B

entire range of each instrument

♪=72 from point E ending at C

rhythmical loop for **rm** segments

3/8

A   B   C   D   E

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me1 group L only: play memory material in brief individual bursts separated by brief silences to create a dense (but quiet!) and highly variegated texture,
sometimes repeating an event with or without variation

me2 group R only: play memory material in brief individual bursts separated by long silences of 6" or more to create a sparse (but mostly loud!)
and highly variegated scatter of disjointed fragments,
sometimes repeating an event with or without variation

me3 both groups synchronised, led by leader of group L, at both beginnings and endings of entries, each entry between 3" and 9" long,
separated by silences between 3" and 9" long,
1st entry: all play memory material
2nd and all subsequent entries: choose between: (a) repeat previous entry with any kind of variation
(b) imitate the previous entry of one of the other players (in either group, or even group C!)
(c) choose a new memory

me4 group R only: on signal from group leader, play a memory event between 1" and 3" long and immediately repeat it but more slowly and more quietly,
when silence has been reached the group leader cues again, and so on, don't necessarily play on every cue (including leader!) and make each event as
different as possible from the others

me5 group L only: on signal from group leader, play a memory event between 2" and 6" long, then a brief silence, then another independently timed
event between 2" and 6" imitating what one of the others did just previously, then a silence, then another imitative event, and so on, not deliberately
synchronising, leaving a slightly longer silence each time. After a while the group leader cues again and the process begins anew

me6 group R only: on signal from group leader, play a memory event between 2" and 6" long, then a brief silence, then another independently timed
event between 2" and 6" imitating what one of the others did just previously, then a silence, then another imitative event, and so on, not deliberately
synchronising, leaving a slightly longer silence each time. After a while the group leader cues again and the process begins anew

me7 group L only: on signal from group leader, play a memory event between 1" and 6" long with a diminuendo *al niente*. After a silence of between 1" and 6"
the group leader cues again, and so on, don't necessarily play on every cue (including leader!) and make each event as different as possible from the others