

twenty-one commentaries for *places and pages*

places and pages (2015-16)

fifty texts to be performed at random places

performance by Cristián Alvear, Cyril Bondi, Christian Müller, D'incise, Stefan Thut and Ryoko Akama

composition by Ryoko Akama

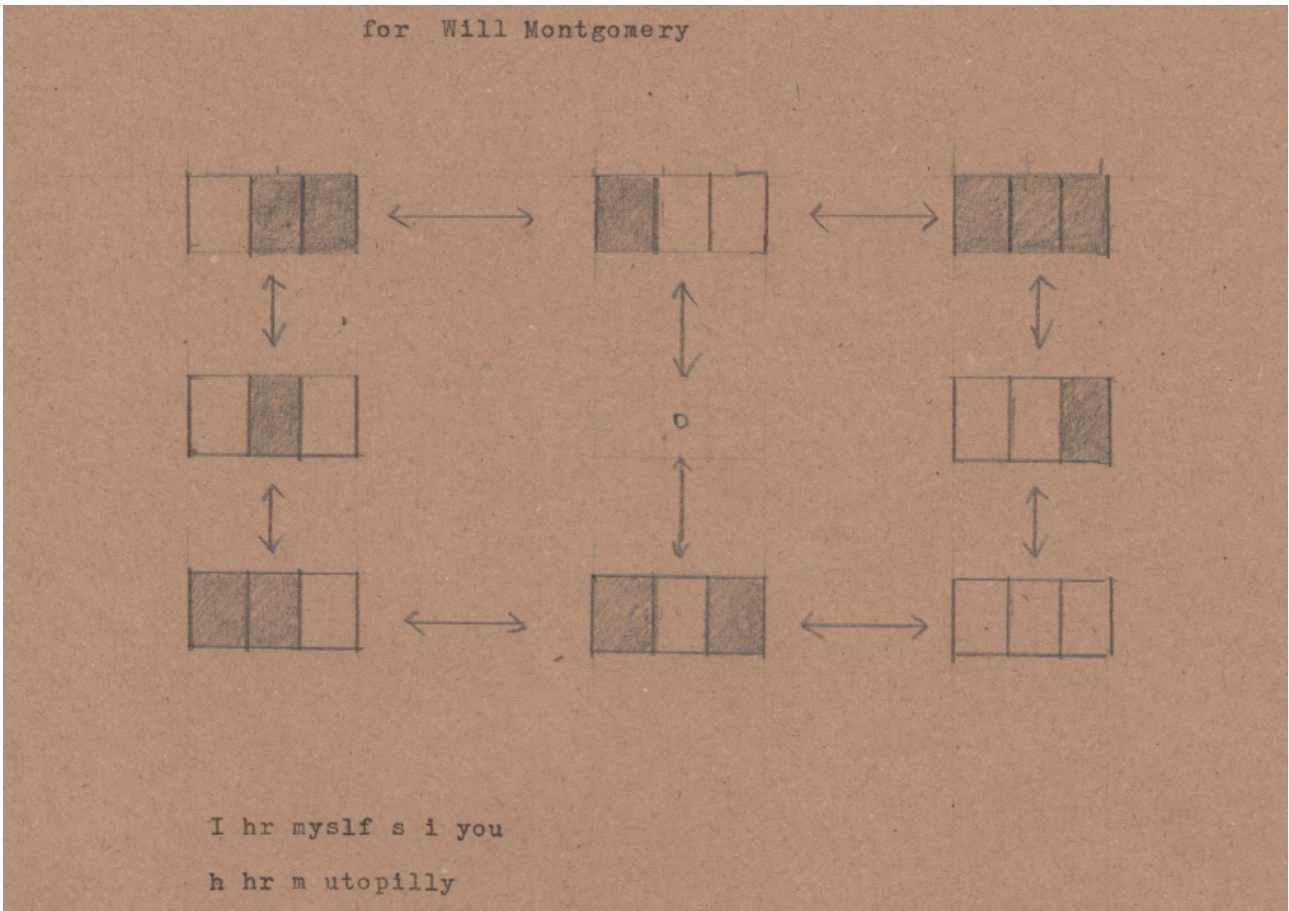
actualised in Switzerland, June, 2016



(the first page of *places and pages*)

The composition, *places and pages*, was initiated by Cristián Alvear and myself in Chile. We wanted to develop a score that would concern location, situation, time and environment in terms of performance, and that somehow would erase a boundary between 'performance' and 'installation'. The entire composition consists of fifty type-written pages and the rest as blank pages. I used a notebook found on my book shelf and inscribed abstract yet concise instructions onto fifty pages with my favourite typewriter over the four months' period. Spending time with a score, either completing your own or contemplating on someone else's, is similar to an act of listening. This creative space is a full of concepts and intentions, but at the same time, is very real and concrete. There aren't any preset responses defined by the instructions, but rather the instructions are to be considered as an event mark (?) that suggest a responsive action. In this instance, we focused on musical reactions, however, actualisations of this particular composition can take on many other formats or methods. Rather than engaging in verbal discussions, we performed in an insistent and continuous flow, as if actualising the fifty instructions were the only way for us to communicate and exchange ideas.

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(a score *proposal* - six, 2016)

As experimented in my recent compositional series *proposal* (2015-), I like collaborating with performers through given instructions that introduce particular systems and rules. These restrictions seem to bolster potentials of reactions. My scores are navigations that ask, propose, invite, instruct, describe or occasionally deliver certain ways which should be met with diverse acceptances and subversive confrontations in the most straightforward way. Intelligent thinking sometimes causes trouble when dealing with my works. I would say, 'do not neither ignore, nor over think'.

EARTH PIECE

Listen to the sound of the earth turning.

1963 spring

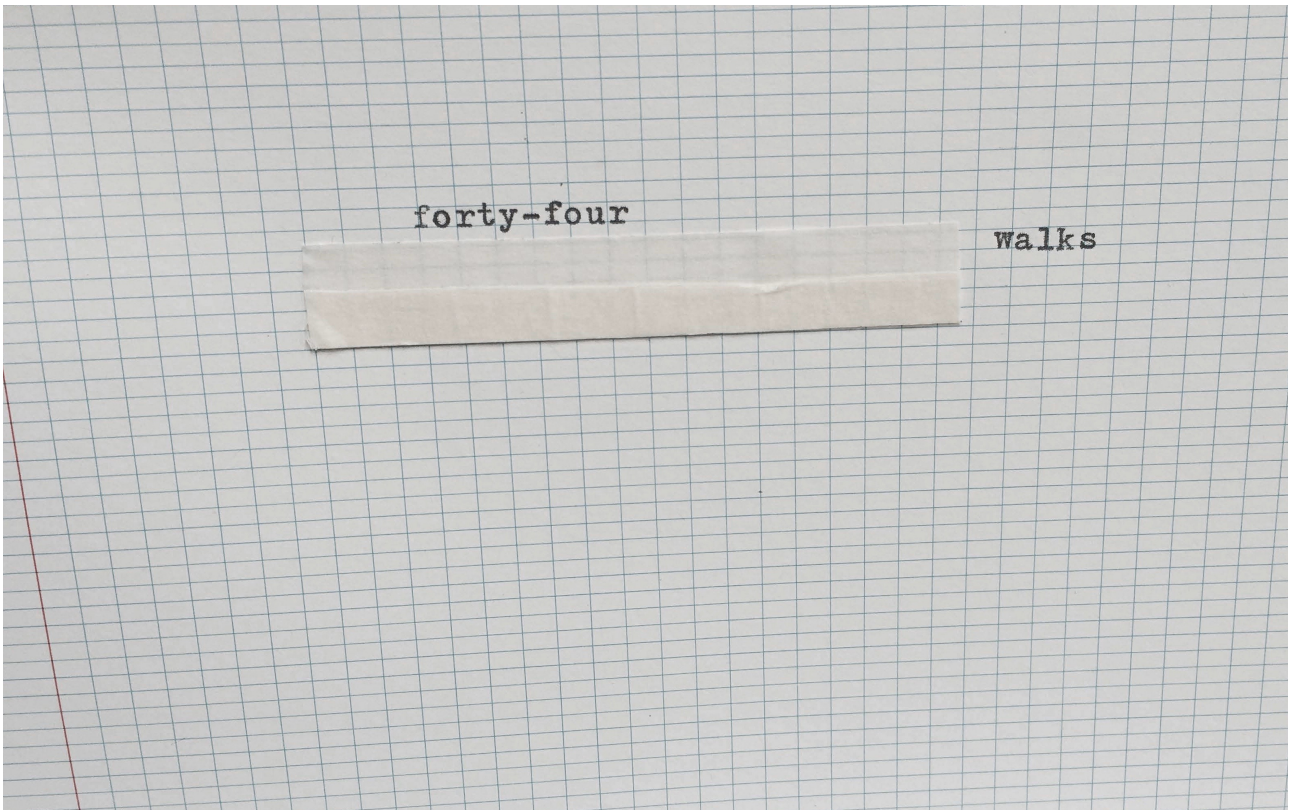
(EARTH PIECE from *grapefruit*, Yoko Ono, 1963)

'Event Scores, involve simple actions, ideas, and objects from everyday life re-contextualised as performance. Event Scores are texts that can be seen as proposal pieces or instructions for actions. The idea of the score suggests musicality. Like a musical score, Event Scores can be realised by artists other than the original creator and are open to variation and interpretation.' (Alison Knowles, 1965)¹

Contrary to a traditional music score whose aims are to be musically performed, an event score, like places and pages and proposal, is already an independent work visually, literarily and musically. My scores are like Yoko Ono's *grapefruit* (1964) or Susan Howe's *THAT THIS* (2011) that are incapable of being settled into one form of category. Depending on the receiver or how it is received, my score's intention is transformed and alternated through perception. Perhaps, this liberation of reception is the general definition of a 'conceptual' piece as far as a relationship between score, performer and listener is concerned.

Ono has always been seen as a female activist who married John Lennon or as a Japanese Fluxus artist who participated in borderless and radical happening activities. However, she has also created very inspirational 'quieter' works including *Painting to Let the Evening Light Go Through* (1961) and perhaps the most famous *Ceiling Painting* (1966). When she published *grapefruit*, it was perceived as a haiku-like poetry book that manifested a mysterious oriental thinking. That is somehow true. But for Ono, these texts were, equally and more importantly, physical and corporeal instructions or event scores for potential performances.

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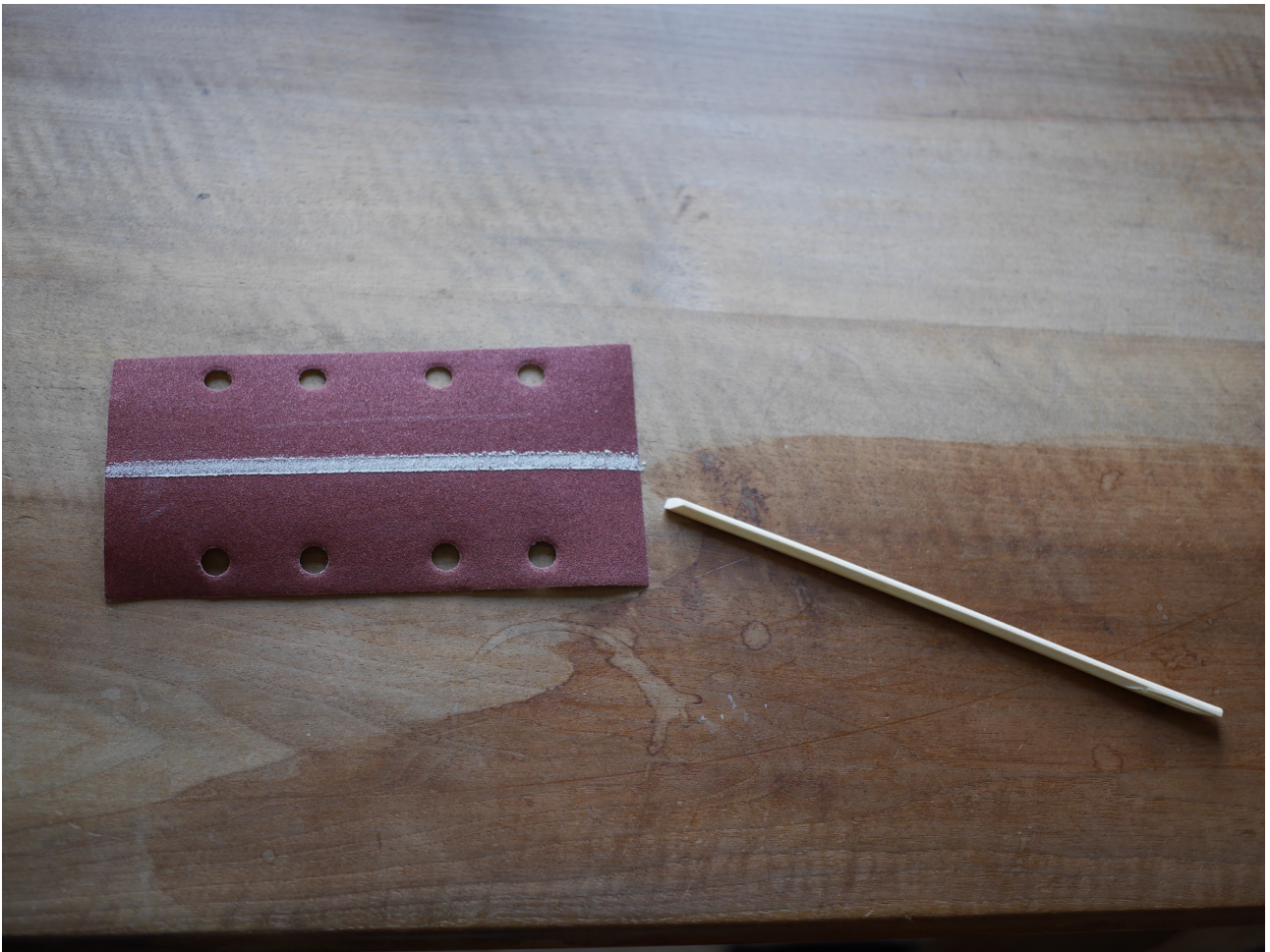


(#44, *places and pages*)

It seems to me that people tend to call something 'conceptual' when it presents a non-traditional appearance. However, it is hard for me to perceive that music derived from my scores is aurally more conceptual than any other non-conceptual music. My work has been denoted as 'arty-farty music', 'lazy music' or 'left-wing music' by my dear friends (which does not offend me on any account). Others have interestedly groaned that 'it's too conceptual for me to understand'.

This kind of work is fine not to be understood. For it is not to understand, but to be experienced, somehow, in one's own way.

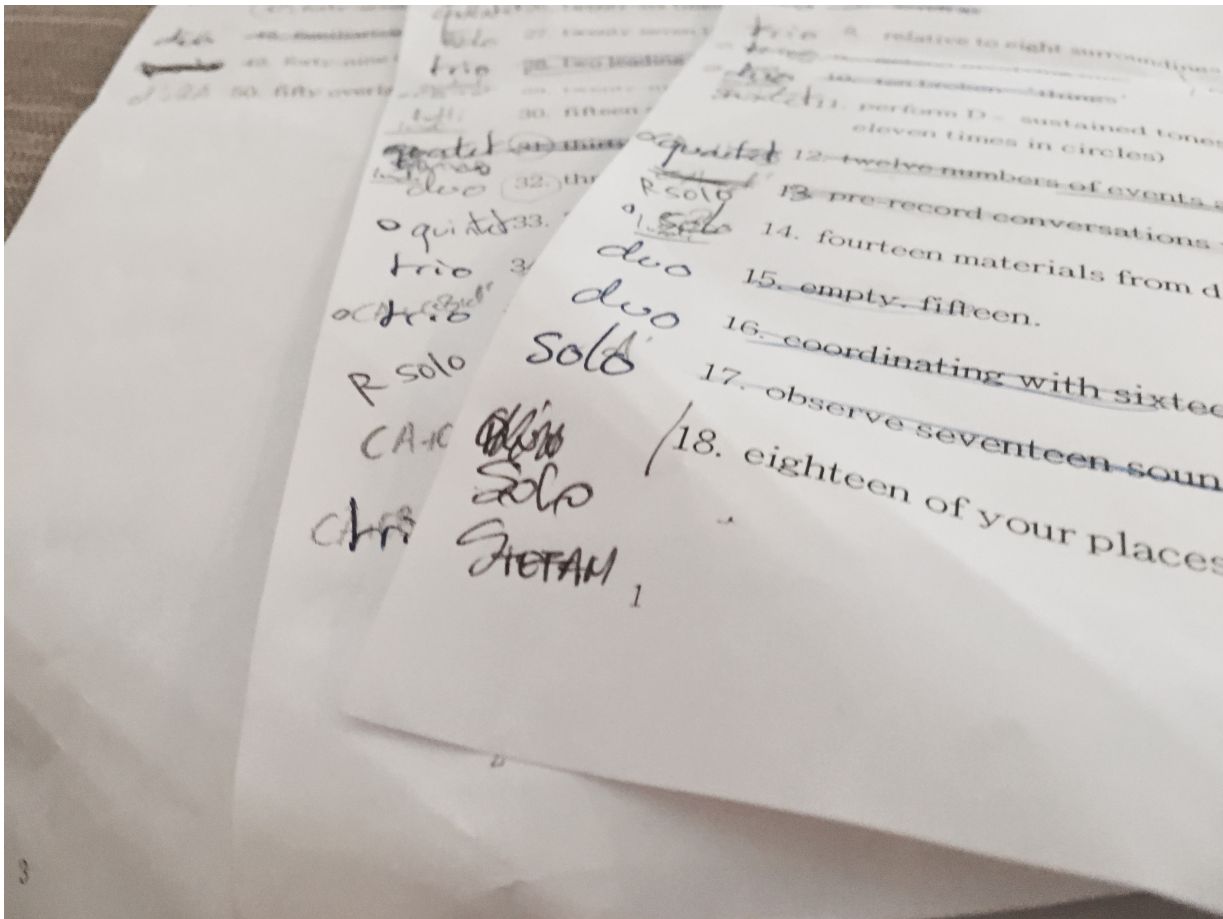
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(Thut at INSUB)

A thinking of *sound per se* or *vision per se* does not apply to my approach. A human has many senses that affect listening experiences. Space is a composite experience and has an unique process in time. Each process of a work; intention, sketch, score actualisation, performance, publication and even listening is a composition and must be responsive and communicative. An original intention or idea stays, continues, manipulates, changes, leaves or may become something else. I am interested in this transformation of an intention and idea, composed and actualised in different mediums, participated at in different stages.

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(planning on places and pages)

My approach pays a huge homage to the aesthetics of Japanese traditional art that insists on emptiness and simplicity. I am interested in the aspect of the particular philosophy that has established a fundamental idea of yohaku (余白: space of the imaginary). The beauty of yohaku, i.e. the beauty of paucity, has been appreciated and sustained (in both good and bad ways) since or even before the Motokiyo Zeami's written statement; *senjū tokoro ga omoshiroki* (Where there is nothing is the most interesting). This distinct proposition seems, as far as I am concerned, to be the first declaration on the aesthetic of nothingness.

Literates in ancient Japan learnt to 'read' *wake* (和歌: Japanese poetry). There are two ways of *yomu* (read) to be recognised in Japanese culture. The first is a commonplace *読む* (read) that defines an action of reading someone's texts either quietly or verbally. The latter is *詠む* (read) which is used when one creates a poem in order to express their inner feelings, describe landscapes, illustrate situations or articulate important statements. The latter is about *reading out* loud our minds to the others, i.e. it is directly the action of making a poem itself. Famous forms of *waka* are of course *haiku* and *tanka* though there are other numerical structures to construct poetic songs. In Japanese historical dramas, people occasionally start *reading out* loud important accounts or personal remarks in the form of poetry, which listeners would reply to with another poetic phrases. This kind of poetry exchanges happen in both writings or conversations. *Haiku* requires a special focus to not impose one's thoughts too much within the set of constructed words but to leave a collaborative task for a listener to comprehend the poem. Here, the art of abbreviation demands a skill of creativity as well as comprehension. It is believed that a wise *haiku* phrase has to have a quality of *yohaku*. A fine poem is the one that says what it must be said in the most minimal way. Here, concreteness and abstractness coexists in the art of the text.



(#6, places and pages)

One famous anecdote that illustrates the traditional sense of simplicity and minimalistic discipline begins with the tea master Sen No Rikyu inviting the ruler Hideyoshi Toyotomi to a tea ceremony with the purpose of celebrating marvellously blossomed morning glories. Despite Toyotomi's utter expectation of full blossoms, what Rikyu offered was only one morning glory in a tea house.

Because it is only *one*, it is splendiferously prominent.

It is crucial to appreciate silence when attending a tea ceremony. On the contrary, tea masters simultaneously say that there are sounds that should be noticed such as the flows of water, the pace of the master's footsteps or landscape noises. These sounds must determine the quality of silence that comes prior.



(#50, *places and pages*)

Almost nothing is an aesthetic potential of form because emptiness stimulates imaginations as well as magnifies reality. I love the presence of performers and audience members when they are not performing. In the absence of performance, any small sound around fills the space. These aural occurrences enhance one's listening and allow her to participate in particles of thoughts. I love the way confident silence permeates when things are all confident. On the contrary, I also appreciate a variety of awkward tension when silence fails to be confident and you see, you feel that everyone, everything is trying to regain comfort.

SPATIAL POEM NO. 4

shadow event

Make a shadow or shadows of the enclosed letter SHADOW on somewhere.
Please describe to me in details how you performed it... .. about the place,
light source, duration, movement, deformation etc.
Your reports will be recorded on the world map.

- * Performance period Jan 11-31, 1972
- * Reports should preferably be written in English and within about three hundreds words
- * Please add to your report the date and time of your performance

BOUNDARY MUSIC

Make the faintest possible sound to a boundary condition whether the sound is given birth to as a sound or not.
At the performance, instruments, human bodies, electronic apparatus or anything else may be used.

Chieko Shiomi, 1963

(BOUNDARY MUSIC, 1963 and SPATIAL POEM NO.4, 1972, by Mieko Shiomi)

'... I used to write lots of poems and short novels throughout my school days. So, it was quite natural and an inevitable process that I changed from writing music scores to writing instructions to do some actions or actions with specific elements of the nature. In another word, music, literature and nature are the three main pillars...I like usually to write a simple text describing a fundamental idea. It implies a lot of interpretations, lots of possibilities of interpretation. So, people can think about how to perform it. It leaves the possibility of creating new things to other people, other generations ... (on Spatial Poem works) Pieces I was writing at that time, which is 1963 or 4, they were fundamentally the works of do it yourself. But I soon felt that this direction would be the dead-end in terms of communication. I had a strong urge to communicate with many people not only in N.Y. but also Europe and Japan. So, I was wondering how to integrate these two; do it yourself and communication. It seemed to be a conflicting matter. But one day, I got this idea; why don't you think that this earth is a huge stage and invite people in many countries to do the same event at the same time in their own places according to the own interpretation [sic]...' (Mieko Shiomi, 2013)²

I have especially been inspired by Yoko Ono and Mieko Shiomi who succeeded to entwine details of small daily things and musical intentions into text events. Their words encouraged, and sometimes intended, sound events or performances. As far as I am concerned, the minimal aesthetic of their text instructions on papers were already an independent art form on its own, in which a beauty of paucity (yohaku) was accomplished with subtle irony in evidence. Irony and humour are other important essences of Japanese traditional art which extraneously 'seems' quite serious and abstract. It is called as *asobi-gokoro*, a sense of fun / the aesthetic of playfulness.



(Bondi, D'incise and Akama in the city of Geneva)

places and pages was actualised by Thut, D'incise, Bondi, Alvear, Müller and myself in INSUB studio and various locations around in Switzerland. Throughout our one week together, very little verbal debates were exchanged, as our concentration was continuously focused on musical actualisations. Although some of us had never worked together or met prior to this occasion, we felt that we had a lot in common and accepted each other's artistic characteristics without any forced effort. Six composers, six performers and six listeners continued to create fifty musical episodes independently and con-currently. *places and pages* projected a real experience and a real environment.

Listening is simply a mechanism that tries to accommodate spatial awareness in a performance situation, balancing our ears to extremely quite happenings and loud aural occurrences. One hears a mixture of aural elements that are being performed and that are environmental. Such listening makes one hear what is phenomenally there but not physically existent, and what is not phenomenally there but physically existent.

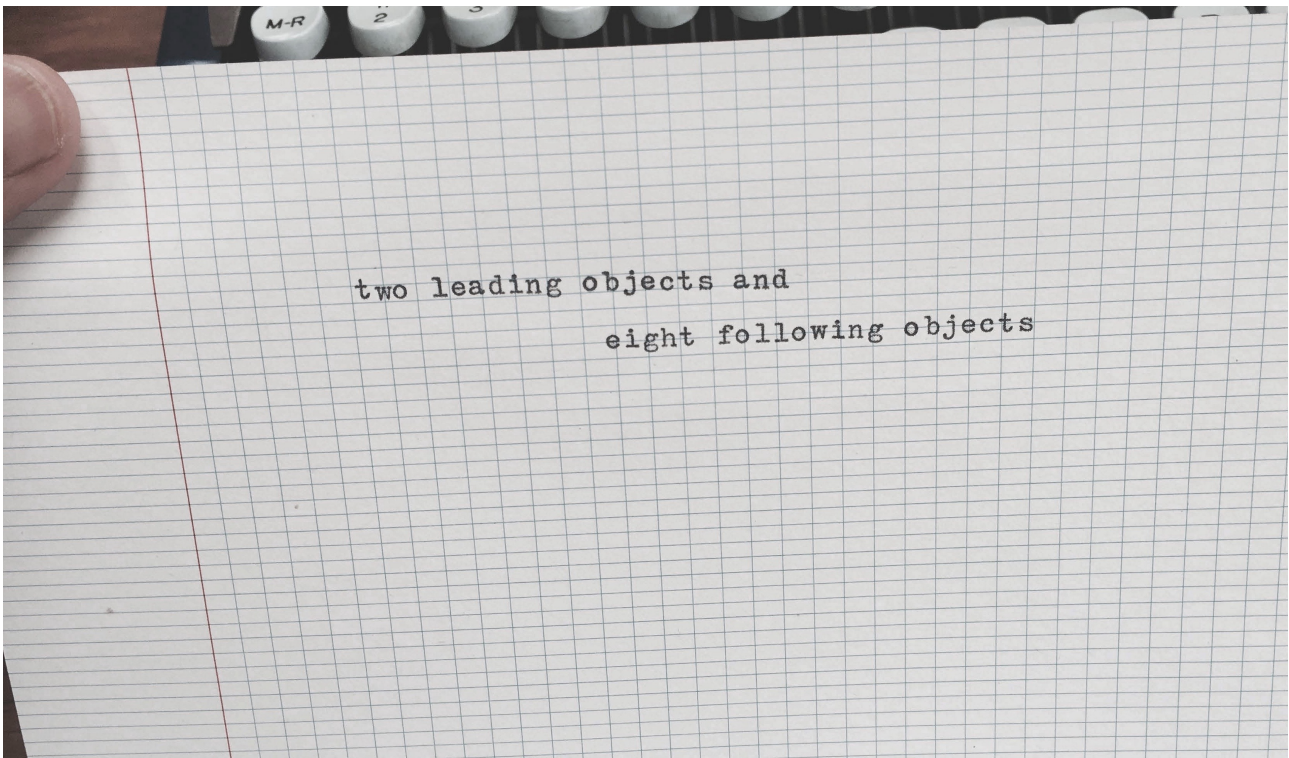


(Akama at INSUB)

What one hears and what is physically there is different. Both are phenomena that give spontaneous and true realities of listening. On top, space has its ability to integrate with our listening. Rolf Julius states that 'eyes are also good listeners', which can simultaneously support other perceptions; 'ears are also good viewers/readers' and 'senses are also good listeners'.

'...The reality of the perceptible and of perception is one and the same thing, but being is for them not the same. I mean, for example, the sound in reality and the hearing function in reality, because one can have the hearing function but still not hear, and what has sound does not always sound. But when that which is able to hear realises itself (is really active), and that which is able to sound actually sounds, then the hearing function appears in reality and the sound appears in reality, whereby the former can be called hearing and the latter can be called sounding ...Thus the reality of sounding capability is sound or sounding, and the reality of hearing capability is the hearing function or hearing; thus twofold is the hearing function and twofold the sound ...' (Rolf Julius, 1999)³

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(#28, places and pages)

How abstractness approaches reality - onomatopoeia for rain

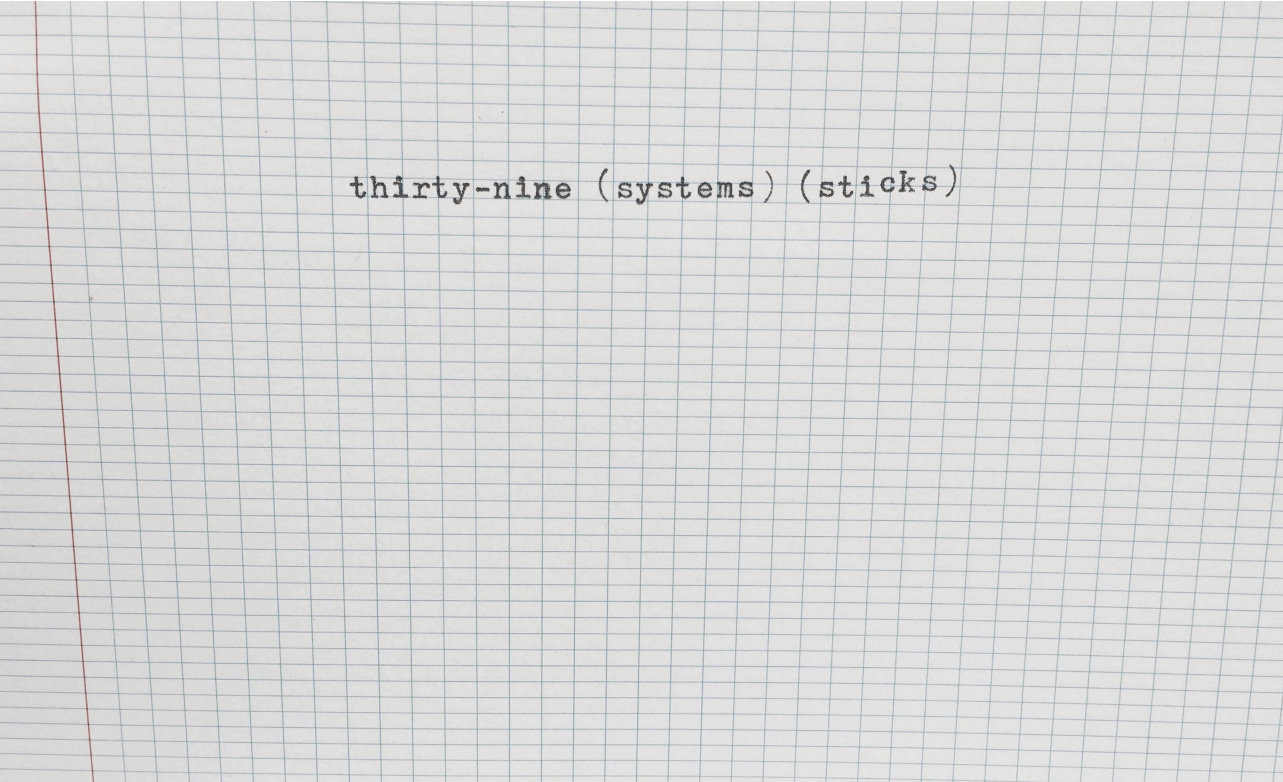
There are a number of onomatopoeic words to describe how it rains. For example, shito-shito huru: gently and softly drizzling. more humid.

para-para huru: sprinkling, small quantity.

zaa-zaa huru: heavy rain.

potsu-potsu huru: at the very beginning of rain. drops fall down from the sky and hit you as potsu.

These are mimicking onomatopoeia that directly describe the sound of rain and its characteristics.



thirty-nine (systems) (sticks)

(#39, places and pages)

How poetry approaches seasonal realities - phrases for rain

There are numerous Japanese words for different rains. For example,
小糠雨 (small bran-rain): gentle rain at the beginning of spring.

栗花落 (chestnut blossom-rain): rain at the beginning of rainy season (around June).

穀雨 (harvest-rain), 甘雨 (sweet-rain): summer. rain that enhances harvest.

時雨 (moment-rain): between late autumn and winter. rain with a sudden start and end.

狐の嫁入り (fox marriage): rain when there is no cloud in the sky.

These are descriptive terms that poetically determine rain characteristics aurally, visually, emotionally and realistically.



(Müller at INSUB)

places and pages - Interview with Cristián Alvear, D'incise, Christian Müller and Cyril Bondi

1. a first impression of places and pages

C.A. At first, although I was sure of the beauty of the outcome, I thought it was going to be a difficult project to complete due to so many pieces and so little time. Basically and finally, it was going to depend on the people defining the group. The project not only needed responsible individuals but also efficient ones. We were lucky, the group not only proved to be efficient and responsible but also warm and funny. The inner dynamics were just great. Although we worked non-stop for a week, we had a lot of fun. The talks, food and drinks we shared were as inspiring as the work itself. What can I say? The outcome reflects all that and much more.

D. Challenging, in a very open and positive way, ambitious in the time given to realise the composition. Humanly great, musically curious.

C.M. poetic and open. Sometimes, concepts and pieces themselves were almost philosophical. Challenging for a group as musicians or as humans.

C.B. To be honest, when I received the «score», I was a bit skeptical. I had already experimented with this kind of suggestive compositions and I know that the result can be really bad ! So my first impression was; «Let's wait to be together and start thinking about the sound, music and concepts together».

2.what inspired me when we were working together was that none of us questioned on the score too much but just naturally performed 'with' it. how did you react to the collaboration?

C.A. As I said before, the human aspect of this collaboration determined the outcome of the project. For me, it was important that every idea suggested by one was tried by the whole group. That was the way our

collaboration worked in a very fast and efficient way. We were able to build a relaxed atmosphere in just a couple of days, which led us into a dynamic and fun space to work. Needless to say, I felt comfortable and happy being a part of this project. The music we created was beautiful.

D. I think the lack of time helped us to be efficient and to find quickly where the music was in the written words. Questioning the score was not the point anymore. This would have come earlier if needed. Instead, we questioned the result more, although maybe even not enough, and the subjective interest of the music, what kind of new performances we could bring, where and how our collaboration could lead us in an unexpected path.

I really sees this type of work as collaboration. A collaboration between someone who brings thoughts as a format of score and the others who bring sounds in. I think of it in a very horizontally, i.e. non-hierarchical way, with all the different elements contributing to the end result.

C.M. The lack of time led to an efficient and fast way of recording with a lot of freshness and energy. On the other hand, it created a unique space in where questions were not able to be discussed, recordings were not questioned nor rarely done for a second time. The whole recording was structured not as a concept but done step by step at each moment. But, maybe this was not a problem because every piece of recording I did made sense to me. The result was clear and sharp.

C.B. Actually, it was a really nice experience. My first day was a trio with Cristian and D'incise, and it was easy to find an interesting interpretation of the composition together. I don't know if we consciously followed the idea of avoiding questioning too much. Sometimes, we need time and a lot of discussions to find a way, but other times, ideas come naturally.

3. difficulty, skepticism or reluctance?

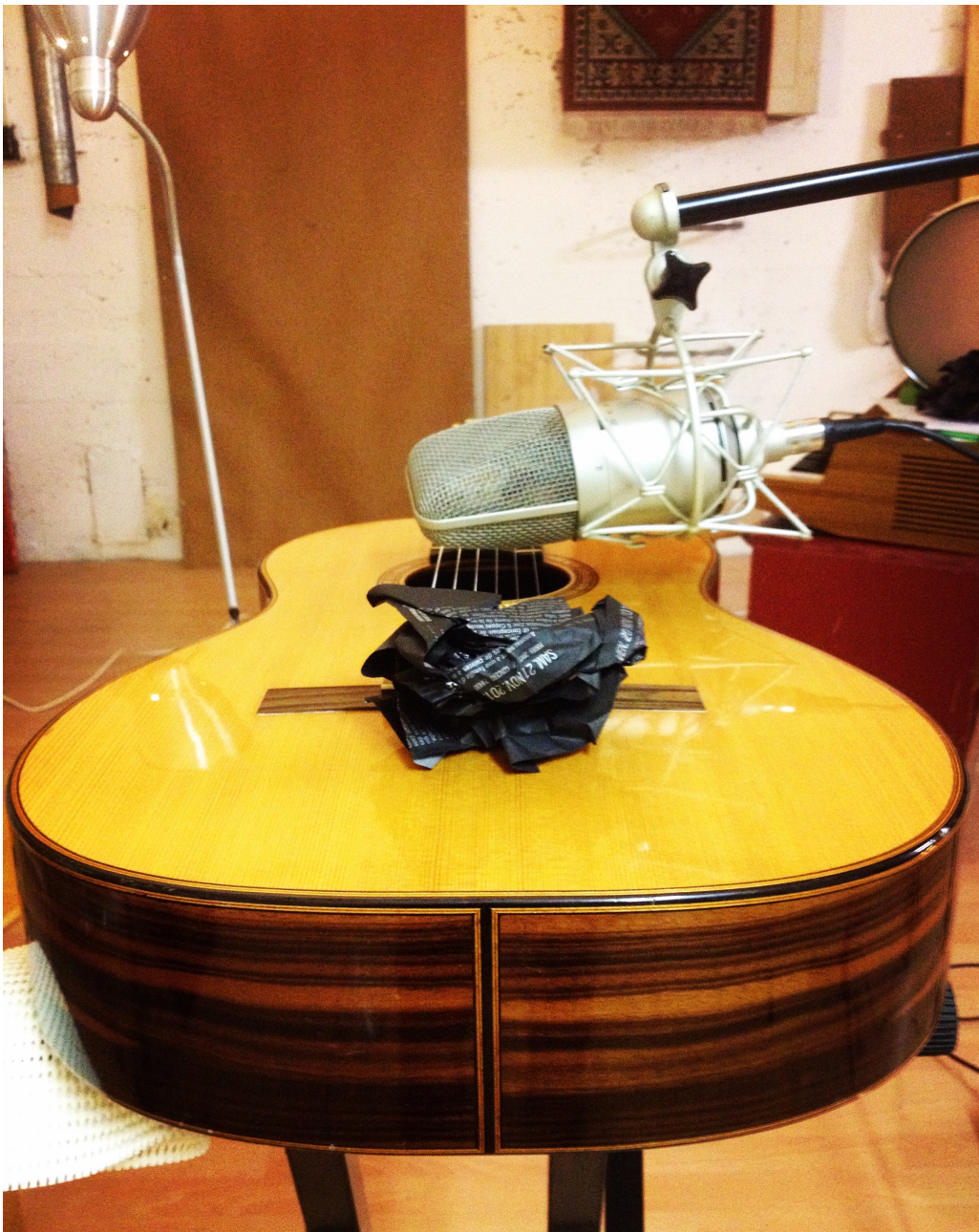
C.A. Skepticism at first but then just excitement. As each recording day ended, I grew sure that we were making a very rare and unique project. Working with you, Stefan, Christian, Cyril and D'incise made me realise you could actually DO projects like this one.

D. It was hard to have a whole vision of the 50 pages at first. It seemed very 'chance-related'. As we worked page by page without any specific order, I now wonder if a final structure will make sense or not, even though each piece made sense on its own.

The fact that we worked as an heteroclite group, split into various sub-assemblies, created diversity between pieces conceptually or aesthetically. I guess this composition provoked a different listening from other scores or band recordings.

C.M. See my previous answer. I am looking forward to a global result when all the pieces are mixed as one in the right order as a CD presentation, Installation, stream or whatever it will become.

C.B. I like to think to dig and explore most of all with collaborations. So I just enjoyed being with great musicians during these days with this crazy idea to record 50 pieces. The difficulty was to feel the whole project as one coherent whole. I don't know if all the pieces are something interesting as a whole.



(Alvear at INSUB)

places and pages with Alvear

4. *Though your background as a classical musician, you are recently involved with alternative scores. Is there any difference in your perception/attitude when you work with traditional scores and scores like places and pages?*

There's not really a big difference for me. Whether I'm working with traditional or alternative scores, each one needs a sort of 'special attention'. What's the same for me here, it's the will to find, to search or to investigate. I don't spend more time, for example, with a score by Takemitsu than Sugimoto, I just invest myself so I can enjoy the outcome.

5. *Is a visual aspect of scores important for you and why?*

Sometimes it is and sometimes it isn't, I mean, it can help you to have a better understanding of, or create a closer relationship with, the score. A visual aspect helps me a lot and can make all the difference for a performer. Anyway, this is not a rule and it always depends on the score.

6. Can you give an example of scores when you (don't) take notice of the visual aspect?

Almost all traditional scores and *appalachian anatolia* recently written by d'incise for me. *appalachian anatolia* needed me to create a score out of the original which was composed only of texts that were very direct and clear.

7. In which stage of the process, did you or do you feel that this composition is unique and rare?

I don't think the composition was unique nor rare, but what was rare was the group of people gathered to play and record the pieces. I wonder if we would have succeeded had the human element involved been different.

8. I feel that whether a score becomes a conceptual piece or not depends on not only the composer but also performer(s). I feel that when performance loses a 'direct approach', it tends to lose a fragile balance between ideas and art/music. For you?

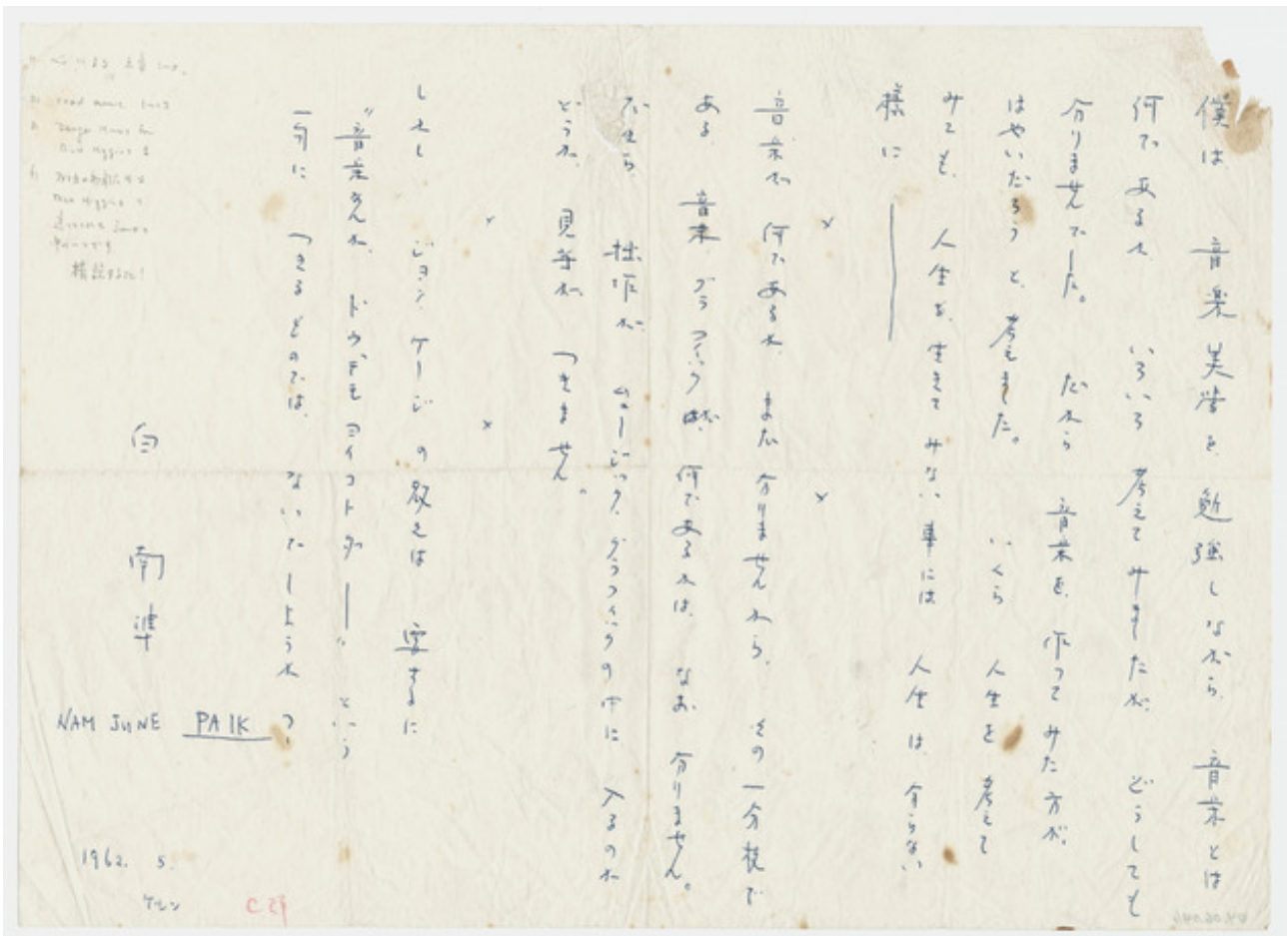
Not necessarily. It depends on the score, on the composer, or even on the circumstance. Does the fact that you know the composer change the approach you have for a score? Definitely. So I think it really depends. It's quite relative.

9. *places and pages* started from my questions towards physical structures, languages and places/ environments. How was it for you?

The score made me regard and question places/environment as well. During the whole process, *where* was absolutely important. It was what gave each piece some sorts of *frame* or a space in which the music would live. The group of performers thought about which space might respond to the text on each page in the best way. They considered sound in relation to the space.

10. In which point, did *places and pages* become an auditory experience for you? when you saw the score, performed it or began thinking about it?

As soon as I started thinking about the piece and the process, it became the auditory experience. The first step toward a musical outcome, for me, is the starting point to imagine how it would sound and when it would happen.



(Nam June Paik, 1962)

'I had no idea what music was even after having contemplated on the question and studied music aesthetics thoroughly. Then, I thought making music would make me understand it faster as if life would not be comprehended by thinking but only by living.

x

I have no idea what music is yet, so I have no idea at all what a graphic score, which is a branch of music, is. Hence, I am not so sure if (my) clumsy piece would fit into the graphic score category.

x

But above all, isn't a teaching of John Cage summarised as one phrase? - music does not really matter!⁴

Supposedly scores are displayed in front of our eyes. Will then the auditory matter exist only as an idea? I accept the double objectives of scores and naturally allow this kind of abstract contradiction to be existent. I am interested in an independent decision for when sound takes place and where the work should to be venerated, responsible, liberated and interpreted if at all.

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(Müller, Bondi and Akama at INSUB)

places and pages with Müller and Bondi

4. *In which point, does a score become an auditory experience for you? When you receive the score, perform it or begin thinking about it?*

C.M. When I begin thinking about it.

C.B. For me, it is exactly when we are in the studio, when we just sit with the scores in hands, and start to talk about ideas. It's really when I/we start thinking about it and sharing ideas.

5. *If I call places and pages '50 instructions', I am tempted to say; by six composers, six performers and six listeners. Do you accept or refuse?*

C.M. Due to the way we worked on it, I think this is a very good description.

C.B. Yes, you're right. It's exactly what I think. But you have to mention that you gave us the impulse to become one of the composer/performer/listener.

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(D'incise at INSUB)

places and pages with D'incise

4. *You used various instruments and sounding objects during our recording period. How do you choose which ones to perform? Is it purely an auditory decision or also conceptual matter?*

A first and generic answer could be; I have anyway no proper instruments. But precisely speaking, I tend to limit my set-ups or instrumentations a lot, and to be very specific for each project. *places and pages*, with its vast potential, a large amount of propositions and the possibility of a long length, made me feel to go into the direction of something more heteroclite. Conceptually, I thought of possibly contrasting between pieces and using various forms and sound qualities; acoustic, electronic, live, edited and so on.

5. *You work with diverse scores and projects. what is the relation between art and music for you?*

I don't think much of art. Music is the thing for me. I don't pretend to do something else, although the processes of creation can be vast and rely not only on auditory impulses but also multiple layers of reflexions. I love mixing concepts and aesthetics in the most common sense to do beautiful things.

6. *At which point, did places and pages become an auditory experience for you? When you saw the score, performed it or began thinking about it?*

As soon as I started to read it or even before in the guessing of how it could sound (knowing other work of yours). I'm always concerned with sonic results. I cannot be just satisfied with a process. I'm always projecting. I like the tension between expectations (a certain aesthetic etc) and impulses out of control (ideas of the others, will of rupture with the habits etc).

7. The entire piece has ended up like a sound installation that is scatters around with small objects. It certainly went beyond my expectations. Do you think the result just happened in the process or we (sub)consciously aimed at it?

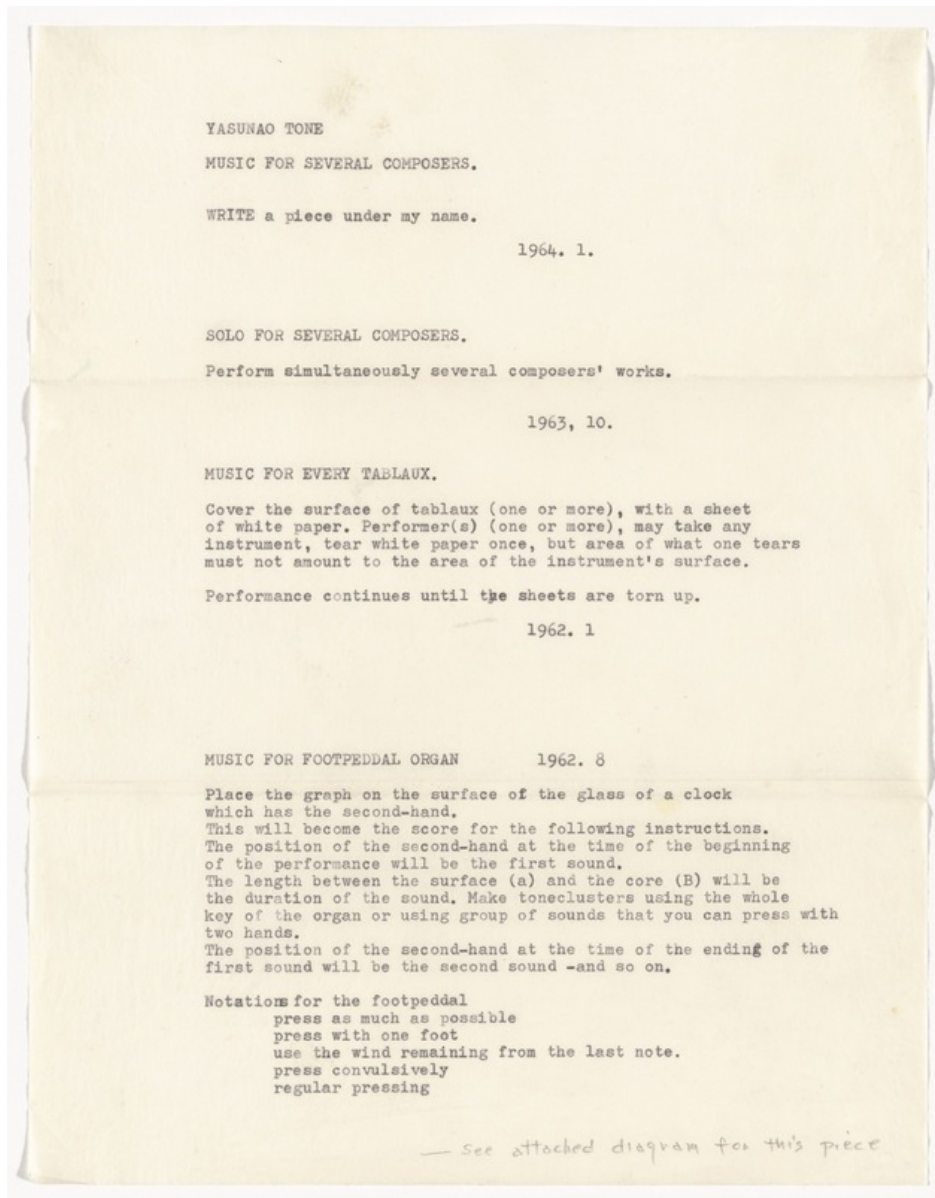
I guess the result is the superposition of various expectations. Yet, I felt we stayed away from any pressure while working and recording. We were driven by the curiosity about how all this would end up.

8. I feel that whether a score becomes a conceptual piece or not depends on not only a composer but also performer(s). When performance loses a 'direct approach' towards the score, a result tends to lose a fragile balance between ideas and art/music?

Not sure about your point. For me, the nature of the score makes it conceptual or not. Spontaneity wouldn't be for me a sign of conceptualism. On the contrary, I love the time spent talking or thinking alone that occurs between the score and its auditory form. But of course, performers are very equal to the composer in such works where the score that is an impulse for various potential results. I like the idea that the composer and the score are performance members on a horizontal level, though contributing concepts may not provide sounds. This kind of process is without hierarchy.

9. You as a composer, what are main concerns in creating scores?

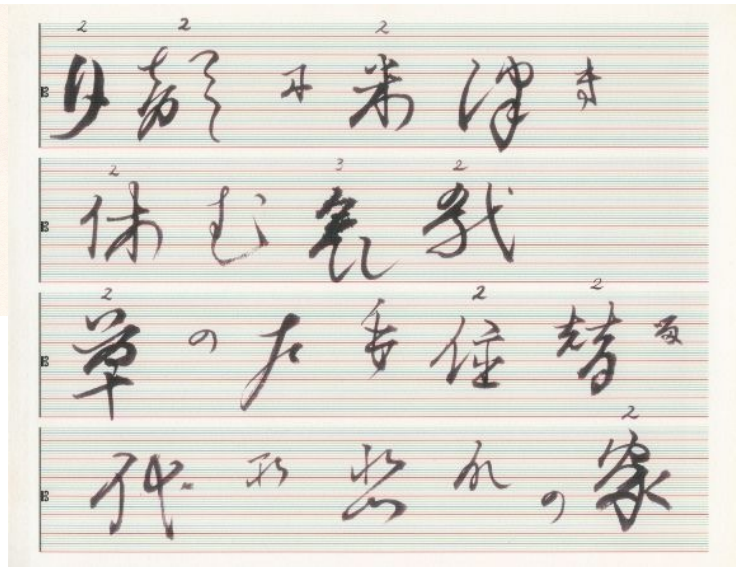
Score writing is one of my many tools. I do it when I see something specific at stake. Most of the time, what I do is not plainly conceptual. I like the idea of being able to transmit music via writing. It's nothing new. But I come from an experimental and improvised music scene where music is made by individual actions. And here, it is newish. I also like to seek a balance between a clear identity of sound, structure and open character that would make sense to someone else to do his own interpretations.



(text scores by Yasunao Tone)

Sharing a credit with Kosugi Takehisa and Shiomi for founding the Group Ongaku, which was said to be the first experimental improvisation group in Japan, the New York-based Japanese artist Yasunao Tone is perhaps the most known for digital music experiments and progressive noise performances. However, he is also a writer and text score composer who actively attend Fluxus performances, employing concepts and diverse forms in music in order to exchange ideas about music with others. Their new forms of notations proposed unconventional sounds and actions that did not always use musical instruments or ended up as musical results.

Tone wrote these event scores in Japanese which Yoko Ono supportingly translated in order to introduce him to George Maciunas and the Fluxus movement. Tone was heavily involved with event makings, performing with avant-garde composers and artists around Tokyo in the 60s. They actualised friend's pieces and scores from the US sent by Maciunas such as works by Cage or Brecht. He says there was a clear distinction between 'happening' and 'event' in Tokyo at that time. 'Happenings' were composed of more theatrical responses whilst 'events' were dealing with actions that were more ordinary or daily. Experiments from these periods fought against the form of authority and the idioms of music and music performances. They searched for new communication methods in composition and performance by embodying ordinary materials and actions.



(Theatre Music by Takehisa Kosugi and Ten Haikus of Matsuo Basho by Yasunao Tone)

'... After all, I am glad I was born in Japan. We own a kind of nature-lyricism and are haiku-idiosyncratic. I am grateful to have absorbed Japanese culture in myself, and their religion is also quite superb. Buddhism that manifests life as a stream of mountain river or as a water-ink. It is the pitifulness that they are talking about. This idealism that makes one's own life as absence. Life as emptiness without any repentance is yet hard to be accepted here, where the self-esteem is very permeated. So, I am very glad to have these perceptions of Japanese philosophy and views of life in me. On the contrary, I am not there much in Japan, well, not 'not there' but 'can not be there'. N.Y. is 'Home is where you make it' for me. As a matter of fact, it could have been anywhere, just happened to be N.Y., do you get me? ...' (Shigeko Kubota, 2012)⁵

This Kubota's quote identifies my personal multi-cultural life well. I am a half-Japanese and half-Korean who was born in Japan but lived in the UK for a third of my life. I think of culture, space and environment as the very transient yet concrete. Text is a communicative material that requires decoding to understand, but I often use text as a material that considers an alternative perception such as text used in *Ten Haikus of Matsuo Basho* (2006, Tone). Investigating sound and text in parallel is like sculpting time. Materials are re-identified, re-investigated and transformed. I am interested in formal and structural constrains, such as how Oulipo employed language or a particular emphasis on restricted structures of geometry or system embodied by artists such as Sol Lewitt or Agnes Martin. These works do not distribute a 'message' but proposes as *it is*. Yet, this as *it is* contains artists' subjective interests.

Theatre Music (1963, Kosugi) and *Ten Haikus of Matsuo Basho* possess pregnant and active emptiness. The scores are, to begin with, perhaps utterly conceptual but performance could attempt to undertake the score as *it is*. A performer, unless it's necessary, is now able to accept the score as the material that independently is separated from the composer's concept or idea. To me, that is the beauty of alternative scores and so-called, conceptual approaches to music.

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(Thut and Bondi at INSUB)

What makes something conceptual to you / What does conceptual mean to you?

C.A. As a musical performer, what makes something conceptual is being able to capture an idea/concept into actual music or rather into an actual musical action.

D. An idea as a starting point, preferably or possibly an idea not related to music. A score not aiming at a result but creating a process, and forcing us (musicians or listeners) to accept things out of habits. Conceptual is then a tool of breaking the expectation. Choosing 50 pages/pieces, without even thinking of any duration, is a good conceptual act. It could have ended up with 50x5 seconds or 50 hours for example.

C.M. Conceptual means, for me, going further than my "taste". Researching for music that is more than "just" music because the starting point is not just music. It is more philosophical, abstract, visual, game-like and so on. Conceptual is a tool of finding ways which lead me further than my "normal" musical strategies, breaking "normal" expectations and leading to musical ideas with the non-musical or the very fundamental start of thinking.

C.B. Concept for me is a way to give us limits and to explore things I can't do by myself. The concept asks me to try things, to avoid things and to take time and listen.

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¹ <http://www.acknowledges.com/eventscore.html> Alison Knowles on event scores (1965).

² <https://vimeo.com/60875686> Interview with Shiomi Mieko by Michelle Elligott (2013).

³ <http://www.galeriethomasbernard.com/en/expositions/presentation/186/music-for-the-eyes> Rolf Julius on (1999).

⁴ the letter was sent to the curator Akiyama Kuniharu in response to the invitation to submit Paik's own graphic score to graphic score exhibitions of held in Tokyo to coincide with John Cage and David Tudor's first visit to Japan (1962).

⁵ http://www.oralarthistory.org/archives/kubota_shigeko/interview_01.php Interview with the Japanese video artist Shigeko Kubota (2012).