

Etude: Being and Becoming

(2010)

for improvising ensemble

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Performance Notes

This is an advanced etude for an improvising ensemble made up of 2 or more players, using any instrumentation or sound making method. This etude explores possible performance roles and formal structures that may naturally occur in a successful freely improvised performance. Members of the ensemble will have to practice balancing predetermined material with improvisation, all the while remaining within the limits of assigned roles, and holding up the principles and aesthetics of "Being and Becoming" as defined below.

Towards aesthetics, subtle changes in timbre, rhythm and pitch are explored, which can often be difficult to effectively control and perform in larger improvising ensembles. As the piece can be long, and the pacing of events unhurried, restraint and endurance are practiced and necessary. This helps make possible the appropriate mindset for extensive contemplation of how *subtle change can both lead to and be structural transformation*.

On Being and Becoming

"Being and Becoming" is a lifelong composition of mine that has taken multiple forms, and has played out through many instruments. This etude explores and studies the *Principles and Aesthetics* of "Being and Becoming", and when performed according to the following rules, will be/become "Being and Becoming". In preparation for performing this composition, it may be useful to listen to other versions of "Being and Becoming". Both scores and recordings can be found on my website: www.loubunk.com.

At the end of these Performance Notes, I have included scores of two recent versions of "Being and Becoming". These two are particularly relevant to this version (*for improvising ensemble*) as they both approach improvisation through a similar format and method. Other versions of "Being and Becoming", which are completely composed and fixed in content and execution, will also provide insight into performance practice, and development of improvised material, though in a less direct way.

Program Notes:

Chick: Our way of organizing the data which rushes by in gestalt style -that is, in increasingly abstract forms -speeds up experience into a dangerously topsy-turvy fast forward comedy. Our need for rapid disposal eliminates the details that bewitch, hold or delay children. Art is one rescue from this chaotic acceleration. Meter in poetry, tempo in music, form and color in painting. But we do feel that we are speeding earthward, crashing into our graves.

Socrates: And a thing is not seen because it is visible, but conversely, visible because it is seen; nor is a thing led because it is in the state of being led, or carried because it is in the state of being carried, but the converse of this... It does not become because it is becoming, but it is in a state of becoming because it becomes.

Cooper: Wait a minute! Wait a minute! [sips, sighs blissfully] This is-- excuse me--a DAMN fine cup of coffee.

General Principles and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming"

1. There is no defined meter.
2. The tempo is often free and in flux.
3. Take the most content liberty in the transitions between sections.
4. Improvise using subtle changes (micro-variations) in timbre rhythm, and pitch.
5. The overall pacing of the composition should be slow and gradual. Though occasionally, the pacing may temporarily increase to provide contrast, or to hurry a deeper change.
6. Alternate (back and forth) musical ideas, but do not be too obvious.
7. Create patterns that are not perfect. Then let them fall apart.
8. If pitches are used:
 - a. Use pitch as a vehicle for timbre.
 - b. Think of pitches as working together to form an object, a sculpture.
 - c. Perhaps use repeated notes, or statically repeating pitch constellations (made of only a few notes) to create a sense of solidness, of harmonic stasis. Or just use a single note.
 - d. Avoid both completely tonal and atonal gestures.
 - e. Avoid distinctive melody, or any melodic phrase with too much latent progression.
 - f. Avoid any gesture that just sounds too pitchy.
9. Make most of your musical decisions in the performance, but rehearse multiple versions ahead of time.
10. Be deliberate and clear. Give every sound (pitched or non-pitched) purpose and possible function. Don't noodle, and avoid too much blending in. If you are blending, do it with purpose.

Basic Terminology

Ensemble: The group of improvising musicians playing this composition.

Players: The performers in your *Ensemble*. Each *Player* is numbered 1 through the number of Players in your Ensemble.

Performance Notes: The 16 pages of instructions (you are reading now) that explains how to perform "Being and Becoming", and outlines its Principles and Aesthetics.

Performance Score: A mostly blank formatted document in which Players will fill in information related to the musical material, and the form. It will be, or become the basis for, a part that Players refer to in performance. Note: it is a larger format, 11x14.

Roles: Each Player is assigned one or more *Roles*, depending on the Ensemble's size. The Roles are: *Lead*, *Follow*, *Contrast*, and *Wildcard*. Each Role has specific tasks, responsibilities and rules of improvisation.

Lead: The Lead(s) is responsible for composing the three *Improvisational Methods*, described below, according to prescribed rules. When improvising, the Lead should stay aware that all Players are making improvisational decisions based on what he/she plays. For this reason, the Lead should make an effort to communicate with others in performance, and be responsible for giving cues, or acting as a conductor if necessary.

Follow: The Follow(s) listens carefully to what the Lead is playing and improvises material that is similar and supporting, that *follows*. This could be through any method of imitation and matching

as long as the material played is not too contrasting. The Follow will often add color and embellishment to what the Lead is playing.

Contrast: The Contrast(s) listens carefully to what the Lead and Follow are playing and improvises material that is divergent and contrasting, often to compliment, or put into relief, what the Lead is playing. This can be through any method, as long as the material is not too similar, and does not overwhelm the Lead; short bursts of dominating contrasting material are OK, but should only be done rarely.

Wildcard: The Wildcard(s) listens carefully to what everyone is playing, and improvises material that seems missing, doing so while remaining within the Principles and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming" (as all Players should).

Director: Choose a *Director* for your Ensemble. In most cases, the Director will performer Player 1's part. Along with these performing responsibilities, the Director makes organizational decisions, and is the final say on all aesthetic evaluation. Though, in creative matters, the Director is not *Dictator*. Mostly, the Director should lead discussions of aesthetic and performance practice issues, and in any case where the group cannot come to consensus, make a decision. The Director should also schedule and lead rehearsals, help assign cue and conducting responsibilities (if necessary), and most important, keep the improvisation on target in regards to the Principals and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming" outlined above and throughout the Performance Notes.

In some cases, the Director may choose to not performer the part of Player 1, preferring instead to be a Player assigned more supporting Roles.

Improvisational Methods: (IMs) There are three *IMs* which roughly correspond to the *Form* (more below). Each is composed ahead of time by the three Leads, following prescribed rules. The IMs are:

- **Primary Sound Object:** (PSO) is a gesture to be played and repeated as a self contained unit. It's *Prime Form*, and *Alterations* are composed by the PSO Lead.
- **Transformation 1:** (T1) is a process based on an expansion, stretching and flattening of the PSO. It is created by following a list of *Guidelines* composed by the T1 Lead.
- **Transformation 2:** (T2) is a fragmentation of the PSO and T1 composed by the T2 Lead. Each fragment or *Item* also has a Prime Form and a set of possible Alterations.

Prime Form: A term used to describe un-altered versions of both the PSO and the Items of T2.

Alterations: (Alts) A list of possible ways in which the PSO and T2 can be changed during a performance.

Guidelines: (GLs) A list of rules which govern the creation of T1 during a performance.

Players, Roles and IMs

Roles and IMs are linking, such that during each IM, one Player is assigned as Lead, another as Follow, and another as Contrast. Since Wildcard's are ordinarily assigned to only one Player through an entire performance, they are not linked to IMs in this way. The result is 10 Roles including the Wildcard.

- (1) PSO Lead, (2) PSO Follow, (3) PSO Contrast
- (4) T1 Lead, (5) T1 Follow, (6) T1 Contrast
- (7) T2 Lead, (8) T2 Follow, (9) T2 Contrast
- (10) Wildcard

For an Ensemble with 5 Players, Roles are assigned based on the following grid:

	PSO	T1	T2
Player 1	Lead	Contrast	Follow
Player 2	Contrast	Lead	
Player 3	Follow		Lead
Player 4		Follow	Contrast
Player 5	Wildcard		

Thus, Player 1 is the PSO Lead, the T1 Contrast, and the T2 Follow. Notice that Player 1 and 5 are the only 2 Players who have an active role for every IM; Wildcards are (almost) always active in every IM, and Player 1 takes on a Role during every IM because he/she composed the PSO (the primary composing responsibility by a Player), and is most often the Director.

For an Ensemble with more than 5 Players

Assign roles by adding them in order according to the following grid:

	PSO	T1	T2
Player 6		Follow	Contrast
Player 7		Contrast	Follow
Player 8	Wildcard		
Player 9	Contrast	Follow	

So, if your Ensemble has six Players, you would use the first grid for Players 1-5 and give your 6th Player the above Role assignments for Player 6. For seven Players, you would add Players 6 and 7 from above to the first grid, etc. For Ensembles with more than nine Players, the Director should assign Roles for Players 10 and above according to these rules:

- Never add more Leads.
- Be careful when adding more Wildcards. Two may be enough for up to 15 or more players. Use your discretion.

- When adding Contrasts and Follows, balance the Roles so that T1 has the most, T2 the 2nd most and the PSO the least. Notice in the above grids, that with the addition of Player 9, T1 has 6 Roles, T2 has 5 and the PSO has 4. Try and keep this proportion with larger ensembles.
- Try to balance Contrasts and Follows such that the PSO has more Contrasts, T1 has more Follows, and T2 has an even distribution of Follows and Contrast. Notice in the above grids, that with the addition of Player 9:
 - PSO has 1 Follow and 2 Contrasts
 - T1 has 3 Follows and 1 Contrast
 - T2 has 2 Follows and 2 Contrasts
- Try and keep these proportions with larger ensembles, though depending on the exact number of Players, they may not be precise. The Director may also choose to reassign Roles for Players 6-9 as to better balance according to these proportions.

For an Ensemble with less than 5 Players

In the case of Ensembles with 2-4 players, Roles can be both omitted and combined among Players. This is determined at the discretion of the Director, who should, when making this decision, consider the principles of balance and proportion outlined in the above section on an Ensemble with more than 9 Players. For example, the Director might use the following grid for a 3 Player Ensemble:

	PSO	T1	T2
Player 1	Lead	Contrast/Follow	Wildcard
Player 2	Contrast	Lead	Follow/Contrast
Player 3	Wildcard	Follow	Lead

In this case, notice how the Wildcard is broken up as to give more Follow to T1 and allow each Player to have a Lead. Also notice that the PSO does not have a Follow. *Note:* It certainly is possible to rearrange so that the Wildcard is present in all three IMs, and subsequently give Player 1 two Lead roles.

Also notice how the Contrast and Follow are combined in two instances. The Director might give specific instruction on how the Players should interpret this. For example: be a Contrast in the first half and a Follow in the second half. The Director could also leave it up to the Player to switch back and forth at will, or give specific rules on how to switch, how often, under what circumstances, etc. In any case, the Director should be clear in these instructions, write them down, and communicate them to the Ensemble in writing, perhaps in a format similar to the above grid. *It is important that every Player knows the Roles of every other Player.*

Silent Time: In "Being and Becoming", a Player is still making music when silent. For this reason, each Role is assigned a percentage of Silent Time as follows:

- Lead, 0%
- Follow, 25-50%
- Contrast, 50-75%
- Wildcard, 50-75%

Note: these percentages do not include short rests like the ones at the end of the PSO (see below). Rest are often rhythmic, where Silent Time is more tied to form and texture, giving other players, and lines of musical thought, space to breath and grow.

For example, a Follow, who is silent between 25-50% of the time, will be playing music with sound 50-75% of the time. Silent Time should come in varying lengths, and not be applied all at once. The exact amount of Silent Time a Player takes (within the above ranges) should be decided in performance by each Player.

Composing the IMs

The method of composing and notating the IMs can be accomplished any way the Leads see fit, as long as the resulting music respects the Principles and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming". The Director should be sure that the Leads notate the IMs in such a way that is clear and readable to every Player in the Ensemble. If standard music notation is used (it does not have to be), be sure that either all Players can read it, or at least understand enough to be able to perform their part. Often simply playing what is written is enough to communicate the idea.

Rules for Composing the PSO

The PSO is composed by the PSO Lead, and consists of a *Prime Form* and a list of Alts (Alterations composed by the PSO Lead). The Prime Form should follow to these rules:

- Made up of 2 parts: a *sounding part* followed by an *ending rest*.
- The sounding part should be mostly or completely continuous, such that if any rest exists, it is so brief that it is not in any way confused with the ending rest.
- The length of the sounding part should be about 1-5 seconds
- The length of the ending rest should be about 2-4 seconds.
- The sounding part can be made of pitches, or non-pitched sounds such as percussion, electronic synthesis, sampled noises, circuit-bent feedback loops, etc. It can also be a combination of pitched and non-pitched sounds.
- The sounding part must be able to translate, in some way, to every instrument in the ensemble, particularly the other Leads and to a lesser extent the Follows. This translation can be very loose, particularly for the Contrasts and Wildcards. For instance, a sampled recording of a noisy machine can artfully translate to the violin as a carefully played

scratch-tone. The Director should keep this issue of translation in mind when choosing Roles and Players,

- The sounding part must have the potential to be altered in multiple ways.
- If pitches are used when composing the Prime Form, refer to line 8 of the "General Principles and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming" for direction.

Alterations (Alts)

While composing the Prime Form of the PSO, the PSO Lead should be thinking about ways the Prime Form can transform, and the changing parameters that cause this transformation. This will ultimately result in a list of Alts which govern the way a PSO can change in performance. When composing Alts, follow these rules:

- Create approximately 6-10 Alts.
- Alts should be subtle and affect only a single highly focused parameter of the Prime Form.
- The following Alts are mandatory:
 - Ending rest: Change length or omit.
 - Change a dynamic marking.
 - Add/subtract a hairpin cresc./dim.
 - Change/fluctuate tempo.
- If possible, consider using a version of the following Alts:
 - Subtly change rhythm.
 - Subtly lengthen/shorten a sound (1 second at most).
 - Pause on any pitch/sound.
 - Add/subtract a single note.
 - Add/subtract a repeated note.
- When using Alts that change pitch, refer to line 8 of the "General Principles and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming" " for direction. Be sure that the way the PSO transforms (as a result of the Alt) adheres to these rules.
- Invent custom made Alts based on the characteristics of your PSOs Prime Form.
- Note: the highest number Alt has a special designation in relation to the Form. See below in "Specials" SP1.

Rules for Composing T1

To Compose T1, the T1 Lead must compile a list of GLs (Guidelines) which govern how T1 sounds. As T1 does not have a Prime Form, its starting point is the transforming PSO, as a result of the Alts. The GLs should be a natural outgrowth of how the Alts have changed, and are changing the PSO. Therefore, when T1 becomes the active IM, it is from this moment that the GLs are applied, however the PSO sounds. This creates an exciting uncertainty when composing (and performing) T1, and will make every performance unique, even with the same Alts and GLs. When composing the GLs, follow these rules:

- Create approximately 5-10 GLs
- GLs should only influence a focused parameter of T1. Some GLs may be subtle, while others are more noticeable.
- Results in a musical process which is an expanded, flattened and stretched out version of the PSO. The relationship of T1 to the PSO should not be too obvious, but must still be apparent.
- The following GLs are mandatory:
 - Fluid dynamic shifts.
 - Occasional silence of any length.
- If possible, consider using a version of the following GLs:
 - Fluid change of a timbre, or an instrumental technique that creates the timbre. For example *ord.* vs. *sul. pont.* for violin, or *speed of bow* as applied to a cymbal or piece of Styrofoam. These can result in multiple individual GLs.
 - Fluid change of a rhythmic process (for example, tremolo)
 - Add/subtract pitches.
 - Fluid change of pitch (among a specified collection, in a certain way)
- When using GLs to change pitch, refer to line 8 of the "General Principles and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming" " for direction. Be sure that the resulting music that the GLs of T1 produce follow these rules.
- Invent custom made GLs (rooted in the above rules and examples) that are based on how you want T1 to develop the characteristics of the PSO.
- Note: the highest number GL has a special designation in relation to the Form. See below in "Specials" SP4.

Because T1 does not have a Prime Form, and can be in multiple states at any time (governed by the GLs), the T1 Lead should compose a short example realization to demonstrate how T1 could sound.

Rules for Composing T2

T2 is composed by the T2 Lead and made of several musical remnants or *Items* which are based on the PSO and T1. Each Item consists of a Prime Form and a list of Alts. In performance, these Items can be played in any order, at any tempo, and can be repeated any number of times. The Prime Form of each Item should follow these rules:

- Create 3-5 Items.
- Often, an Item's Prime Form will be quite a bit shorter than the PSO. Altered versions can become longer.
- Like the PSO, each Item is made up of 2 parts: a *sounding part* followed by an *ending rest*.
- The sounding part must have the potential to be altered in multiple ways.
- The sounding part should somehow represent a small part of the PSO (or T1), though not necessarily through exact repetitions. There will mostly likely be some new material through which a timbre, rhythm, pitch, process, etc. connection to the PSO is projected.
- If pitched material is used in an Item (from the PSO, T1 or newly composed), then refer to line 8 of the "General Principles and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming" " for direction.
- The sounding part should be completely continuous. That is, the only rest in an Item is the ending rest.
- The ending rest should be short, and the same length for every Item.

Alterations (Alts)

While composing the Prime Form of each Item of T2, the T2 Lead should be thinking about ways each can transform, and the changing parameters that cause this transformation. This will ultimately result in a list of Alts which govern the way Items can change in performance. When composing Alts, follow to these rules:

- Create approximately 6-10 Alts.
- Alts should be subtle and affect only a single highly focused parameter of an Item's Prime Form.
- Not every Alt should affect every Item. This is a way of focusing or limiting the influence of certain Alts, particularly Alts which may change or add/omit pitches. For example, one Alt may affect only Item 1, while another may affect, Items 1, 3 and 4, while still others may affect all Items. Be clear in which Item an Alt affects.
- The following Alts are mandatory, though do not necessarily need to apply to every Item:
 - Ending rest: Change length or omit.
 - Change a dynamic marking.
 - Add/subtract a hairpin cresc./dim.

- Change/fluctuate tempo.
- If possible, consider using a version of the following Alts:
 - Subtly change rhythm.
 - Subtly lengthen/shorten a sound (1 second at most).
 - Pause on any pitch/sound.
 - Add/subtract a single note.
 - Add/subtract a repeated note.
- When using Alts to change pitch, refer to line 8 of the "General Principles and Aesthetics" for direction. Be sure that the resulting music that the Alts of T2 produce follows these rules.
- Invent custom made Alts based on the characteristics of each Item's Prime Form.

Order in which to Compose

The Composition responsibilities should be completed in the following order:

- First, the PSO Lead should compose the PSO. When finished, the PSO Lead should transcribe the Prime Form of the PSO and its Alts into the draft *Performance Score* and give it to the T1 Lead.
- Second, the T1 Lead should compose T1 based on the PSO in the draft Performance Score. When finished, the T1 Lead should transcribe the GLs and the example realization into the draft Performance Score and give it to the T2 Lead.
- Third, the T2 Lead should compose T2 based on the PSO and T1 in the draft Performance Score. When finished, the T2 Lead should transcribe the Items and Alts into the draft Performance Score and give it to the Director.
- Fourth, the Director should look over the draft Performance Score, perhaps meeting with the Leads and offering comments and suggestions. Once the Director and the Leads are satisfied with the materiel in the draft Performance Score, the draft is ready to have the *Form* section filled in according to the rules described below in "Structuring the Form".
- Once the Form area is filled in, the Performance Score is complete, and should be distributed to the rest of the Ensemble for rehearsal.

Structuring the Form

"Being and Becoming" should last between 12-20 minutes, and have a Form that divides into four *Sections* as described at the bottom of the Performance Score. Within these Sections are *Sub-sections*, each marked with a letter, followed by a blank where the length will go, and a note to which improvisational methods is active. Several Sub-sections also have blanks for *Specials* [SPs] where information on specific instructions will be filled in, and blanks for [Quiet Tutti] and [Loud Tutti] which will be described below.

The Sub-sections Lengths

The Director will decide, in consultation with the Leads, how long each Sub-section will last, and then transcribe that into the Form area of the Performance Score; lengths go in the blank to the right of the letter name of the Sub-section. Lengths will fall within the following ranges:

- A: 10 to 20 times (Iterations of the Prime Form of the PSO with no Alts)
- B: 7 to 15 times (Iterations of the Prime Form of PSO using only 1 Alt)
- C: 4 to 6 minutes
- D: 1-2 minutes
- E: 30 seconds (there is no range)
- F: 1-2 minutes
- G: 1-2 minutes
- H: 2-3 minutes
- I: 2-3 minutes
- J: any length (see notes on Ending)

Specials

The Leads will propose, to which the Director will approve, how to use the SPs (Specials) related to their IM in the Form. SPs are numbered 1-4 and are each given a blank labeled [SP#]. Following are the rules for each SP:

SP1: is used in Sub-section C where Alts are slowly added. SP1 will be the number of the second highest Alt. So if the PSO has 7 Alts, then SP1 will be 6 and the range of possible Alts to use in Sub-section C will be 1-6. The highest number Alt (in this case 7) will be added in Sub-section D, where all Alts are available for use.

SP2: is a chosen instrumental technique, with multiple possible variations, that somehow alters the timbre or quality of what is being played. This technique is derived mainly from Player 1 (PSO Lead), but should be able to loosely translate to every Player in the ensemble. For example, if the technique is changing different mallets for a percussionist, this might translate to a cellist as different bowing (or pizzicato) techniques, or to a Player using prerecorded samples as different filter settings. SP2 states that, from this moment forward, this chosen instrumental technique can be used at will (within the Principles and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming") by all players.

SP3: is part of Sub-section E, which starts Section 2 and T1. SP3 should limit Sub-section E to either a single repeated pitch, or to some type of pitched or non-pitched drone. SP3 should be designed in such a way that once lifted in Sub-section F, a gradual growing of pitch or sound material can begin. *Note: the GLs for T1 are still active during Sub-section E, but if the GLs contradict SP3, then the rule of SP3 is used over the GL (just for Sub-section E).*

SP4: is similar to SP1, though in this case applied to T1. As above, SP4 is the number of the second highest GL. So if T1 has 7 GLs, then SP4 will be 6 and the range of possible GLs to use in Sub-section

F will be 1-6. The highest number GL (in this case 7) will be added in Sub-section H, where all GLs are available for use.

Tutti

There are two *Tutti* moments designated in the Form as [Quiet Tutti] and [Loud Tutti]. Both are moments in which all players must play, no matter what. Rules for what to play are as follows:

Quiet Tutti

- Occurs about two thirds of the way through Sub-section C (exact timing is decided by the Director).
- Will last between 30 seconds and 1 minute (at Directors discretion)
- Everyone plays quietly.
- The transition in and out of Quiet Tutti can be gradual or immediate. This can be decided ahead of time by the Director, or left up to the Players to decide during performance.
- For Players assigned a Role during this time, continue to follow the rules of that Role, while playing quietly.
- For Players not assigned a Role, be a Wildcard, while still playing quietly.

Loud Tutti

- Occurs about two thirds of the way through Sub-section I (exact timing is decided by the Director).
- Will last 30 seconds.
- Everyone plays loudly.
- The transition in and out of Loud Tutti can be gradual or immediate. This can be decided ahead of time by the Director, or left up to the Players to decide during performance.
- For Players assigned a Role during this time, continue to follow the rules of that Role, while playing Loudly.
- For Players not assigned a Role, be a Wildcard, while still playing loudly.

Wildcard Moment

Though not specifically notated in the Form, each player is allowed one Wildcard Moment (WM) during the course of a performance. *WMs* should adhere to the following rules:

- Duration should be 30 seconds.

- Follow the rules of the Wildcard as defined in these Performance Notes. In particular, see the section "Basic Terminology"
- Must occur when a Player is currently not assigned a Role. If a Player is assigned a Role for every IM, then that Player can choose to use a WM at any time.
- The Wildcard does not receive, nor have a need for a WM.

Ending

In the Form, the last section is "Ending". For this Section, freely improvise an ending. Do not plan it ahead of time. Let the music of the improvisation lead you there. It could be anything.

Performance

As an improvised composition, the musical result is very much a collaboration between composer (me) and performer (you). For this composition/etude, I have blurred the line between composer and performer, as the performer is asked to fill in much of the musical material, both in reflective composition and immediate improvisation. As is evident by now, the creation of this material is always done within strict parameters I have set up, and therefore the musical result is the composition "Being and Becoming".

When improvising, keep this in mind, and view the composing you have done as a performer not as the composing of "Being and Becoming", but rather as part of the process of performing it. In other words, be sure that all the music you play is founded in the Principles and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming".

Stopwatch

Each performer should either have, or be able to see, a stopwatch. The stopwatch will be started at the beginning of Sub-section C, as the length of A and B are determined by instance of the PSO and not a length of time. The Director will give a subtle cue as to synchronize the start of everyone's stopwatch. If a conductor is used, then a stopwatch may only be necessary for the conductor.

Transitions

Though the Form should be carefully followed in performance, Players should take liberties that make the transitions interesting, helping to avoid them sounding stiff and prescribed.

Section 1, C:

This Sub-section is challenging as it is a fairly long span of music that should change gradually. Work hard to balance the urge for forward motion with the principle of gradual change, all the while creating musical interest by exposing the beauty in the microstructures.

Alts

In performance, Alts can be added and subtracted at will, in any order, and can be applied to part or all of a gesture. Introduce Alts gradually, and give each new change time to breath and

grow. Feel free to linger for a while, or return to a previous state. Alternate old and new. Be aware of how one idea can segue to the next.

GLs and How to Transition into Section 2

GLs are different than Alts, as most need to be applied to the PSO in order to change it into T1. In performance, as Section 1 progresses, Players will be applying Alts to the PSO with the intention of bringing the PSO closer to T1. This transition should be gradual and non-linear, and can continue after Sub-section E and F are active, though in these later Sub-section through using GLs and not Alts.

Once T1 is achieved, and many of the GLs are operating, the ebb and flow of individual GLs will often happen at a faster rate than the workings of Alts. This will create a faster surface music, though on a deeper functional lever, the music should still be mostly changing gradually and moving slowly. To do this, consider what was said above about Alts: *give each new change time to breath and grow. Feel free to linger for a while, or return to a previous state. Alternate old and new. Be aware of how one idea can segue to the next.*

Listening and Texture

One of the most important aspects of performing this version of "Being and Becoming" is listening carefully to other Players during the performance. Though your improvising is often managed by prescribed Roles and rules, the specifics of where these rules take the composition is decided in performance, and will be different from one to the next. As a Player in performance, listen and respond to other Players. Be agile and receptive to the potential twists and turns others offer.

Listen for *texture*. In a general way, texture is regulated by the assignment of Roles, which limit who can play when, how often, and what the relationship/function is among those playing. Yet, the details of this are worked out through improvisation. Listen to other Players individually, and listen to the whole Ensemble. Decide how, what you might play, will add to or change the textures you hear. For example if you think the texture is too dense, then take Silent Time. Consequently, if you notice the texture is dense and sounds great, and think it would sound even better with you playing, then add a line that fits well, while conforming to your Role and any relevant rules.

Rehearsal

Before the first rehearsal, be sure the following is done:

- A Director is chosen. In some cases, it might make sense to appoint a Director as a first order of business at the first rehearsal. Just don't wait much longer.
- The Director should have a plan for assigning Roles, which can be negotiated during the first rehearsal. If the Director is chosen at the first rehearsal, then Role assignment will take up more rehearsal time.
- All Players should read careful all the instructions in the Performance Notes.

The First Rehearsal

- Start with a 5 minute freely improvised warm-up.
- Solidify Roles.
- Be sure Leads understand their own (and others) composition responsibilities.
- Formulate a plan as to how the draft Performance Score will travel from one Lead to the next. Set deadlines, and decide on where the handoff of the draft will take place.
- Experiment and improvise with different possible PSOs, T1s and T2s. Try improvising specific Sub-sections with these potential IMs. Discuss the results. What worked and what didn't? How well did Players adhere to their Roles and to the Principles and Aesthetics of "Being and Becoming"?
- The Leads may find it useful to record these first improvisations for reference when composing the IMs.
- End with a short free improvisation.

Homework between First and Second Rehearsal

- Leads compose IMs and consider how to use SPs
- Everyone should reread the entire Performance Notes and study the parts relevant to their Roles.
- Director should meet with Leads and finalize IMs and SPs before second rehearsal.

Second Rehearsal and Beyond

- Start with a 5 minute freely improvised warm-up, perhaps loosely based on the PSO without out any other restrictions.
- Hand out copies of the completed Performance Score (IMs and Form area filled in). Take some time to demonstrate and discuss.
- Once a copy of the completed Performance Score is distributed, all Players, in their own private practice time, should become familiar with the PSO, T1 and T2, and all possible Alts and GLs. Practice improvising the IMs, not only linked to your own Role, but also all others Roles. This will help Players to understand more deeply each IM and enhance everyone's ability to listen to what others are playing.
- Study the Form, and practice playing the Sections and Sub-sections, and in particular, the transitions between them.
- Fine tune lengths of Sub-sections.
- Fine tune IMs. Perhaps add or subtract Alts/GLs or adjust Prime Forms.

- Listen for *balance* among Players. Are you playing too loud? Too quiet? Are you breaking the rules of your Role, of the Principles and Aesthetics? Is another Player?
- Work out cues and decide if a conductor is needed. The composition is written such that a conductor is mostly likely not necessary, but some larger ensembles might find a conductor helpful. At most, a conductor would mark structural changes and help with entrances and exits. A conductor should not be used to keep a beat.
- Listen to and discuss other versions of "Being and Becoming".
- End with a short free improvisation.

Homework after Second Rehearsal and Beyond

- Rehears your Roles using the completed Performance Score.
- Annotate your Performance Score so that it is clear and easy to see exactly what you are to play, how to play it, and when. Perhaps highlight when you are playing, write in rules relevant to you, etc.
- Prepare a performance part that you will read from during the subsequent rehearsals and performance. This may be the annotated Performance Score, or an abridged version of it, or the Performance Score and a second sheet with notes and directions.

Other Improvised Versions of "Being and Becoming"

On the following pages (after the Performance Score), I have included the scores for two recent versions of "Being and Becoming" which use a similar approach to improvisation. In these two versions, the IMs are fixed and not composed by the Players. This can provide a useful reference for Leads when composing the IMs, particularly since one (of the following scores) uses an IM composed of pitch, and the other uses an IM composed of non-pitched material. Both of the following versions of "Being and Becoming" are for solo instruments.

NOTE: Please do not feel obligated to mimic or copy the material in the following scores, though you could choose to do so. I have included these scores just as a reference.

Being and Becoming, *for Improvising Ensemble*
 Lou Bunk (2010)

Primary Sound Object (Prime Form)

PSO Alterations

1. Ending rest: Change length or omit.
2. Change a dynamic marking.
3. Add/subtract a hairpin cresc./dim.
4. Change/fluctuate tempo.

Transformation 1 (example realization)

T1 Guidelines

1. Fluid dynamic shifts.
2. Occasional silence of any length.

Transformation 2 Items

T2 Alterations

1. Ending rest: Change length or omit.
2. Change a dynamic marking.
3. Add/subtract a hairpin cresc./dim.
4. Change/fluctuate tempo.

Form

Section 1, Primary Sound Object (PSO)

- A. _____ Repeat PSO as is.
- B. _____ Add 1 Alt. (not highest # Alt)
- C. _____ Slowly add more Alts. 1-[SP1]____ only).
From here forward, [SP2]_____

 _____ [Quiet Tutti]
- D. _____ (all Alts.)

Section 2, Transformation 1 (T1)

- E. 30 sec. Play T1 (only [SP3]_____)
- F. _____ Play T1 (only GLs. 1- [SP4]_____)
- G. _____ Play PSO (w/ any Alts.)
- H. _____ Play T1 (all GLs)

Section 3, Transformation 2 (T2)

- I. _____ Play T2 (w/ any Alts.)
 _____ [Loud Tutti]

Section 4, Ending

- J. _____ any content. *See notes.*

Etude: Being and Becoming

(2008)

for snare drum

Lou Bunk

Performance Notes for “Etude: Being and Becoming”

This is an advanced snare drum etude which studies various methods of improvisation with practice in multiple stick changes. It also explores the extended technique of covering the drum head with different materials. The student will learn to hear, and perform better, the many subtle timbres that are possible with the snare drum. The student will also be able to practice restraint and endurance, as the piece can be long, and the pacing of events are unhurried. This allows time for extensive contemplation of subtle timbres.

General Guidelines

1. There is no meter. The tempo is often free and in flux.
2. You have the most content liberty in the transitions between sections.
3. Study and learn to improvise with subtle changes in timbre.
4. The overall pacing of the piece should be slow and gradual. Though occasionally the pacing should increase to provide contrast.
5. Alternate musical ideas often but do not be too obvious.
6. Create patterns that are not perfect. Then let them fall apart.
7. Do not make a score ahead of time to bring into performance. The score is the next page titled “Performance Score”. Make most of your musical decisions in the performance.

Rehearsal: First, reading very careful all the instructions in the Performance Notes and the Performance Score. Second, practice with different beaters and covers, and become familiar with PSO, T1 and T2 and all the possible *alterations*. Practice improvising theses alteration, and transitions between parts of the form.

Section 1, C: is particularly challenging. It is the longest segment, and you will have to work hard to keep it interesting. See the addendum for examples of how PSO and T2 can be performed.

The Snare: Turn the snare on and off at liberty. Though overall, the snare should be on for most of the piece. At some point, explore the sound made when the snare is turned on and off.

Beaters: Use many different types of beaters. After the sub-section B, change them at will to provide timbre contrasts. All traditional and non-traditional beaters are acceptable.

Covers: Choose several covers to place over the head. After sub-section B, change at will to provide timbre contrast. Some examples: paper, felt, thin metal. Also, at times, feel free to not use a cover.

Primary Sound Object: (PSO) is a gesture to be played and repeated as a self contained unit. Its ‘prime’ form, before any alterations, is given in the performance score.

Transformation 1: (T1) is created by following a list of guidelines. I have provided a possible realization (of just a segment) to give a sense of the sound. You do not have to use it “as is”.

Transformation 2: (T2) is made up of three “Items”. In the Performance Score, each item is in its own box. The three items can be played in any order at any tempo. Each item can be repeated any number of times.

Alterations : The Primary Sound Object and Transformation 2 each have a list of “Alterations” which show you how PSO and T2 can be changed. They can be added and subtracted at will, in any order, and can be applied to part or all of the gesture to which it applies. Introduce these alterations slowly and give each new timbre time to breath and grow. Do not feel the need to always be creating a new sound. Return to old sounds. Alternate old and new. Slowly introduce a new sound. Linger on a sound for a while. Be aware of how sounds can segue from one to the next.

Form: The piece should last between 10-20 minutes. The form is set in four sections at the bottom of the Performance Score. With these sections is a list of sub-sections, each marked with a letter, an approximate length, and a note to which improvisational methods (from the three above) is active. Though this form should be carefully followed, take liberty to make the transitions interesting and not stiff and prescribed.

Ending: In the form, last section is “Ending”. For this section, find a way to end. Do not plan it ahead of time. Let the music of the improvisation lead you there. It could be anything.

Performance Score

Etude: Being and Becoming Lou Bunk (2008)

Primary Sound Object

♩ = 90
snare on
choose any beater and any cover

ppp

Alterations (for PSO only)

1. Change the tuplet. Can apply to one or more (or all) ↓ groups. Keep ↓ grouping of tuplets.
2. Add (or subtract) any number of ↓ groups. Note that it starts with seven.
3. Change the overall tempo.
4. Tempo fluctuation.
5. Change length of silence, (or omit).
6. Add crescendo and decrescendo.

Transformation 1 (example realization)

diagram shows where to strike drumhead

pp *f*

* number of slashes indicates approx. speed of roll
3=fast, 2=medium, 1=slow

Guidelines (for T1 only)

1. Fluid change of where on the drum head to strike.
2. Fluid change of roll speed.
3. Fluid dynamic shifts.
4. Occasional silence of any length
5. Align shifting roll speed, dynamics, and placement of strikes with each other, as in the example to the left.

Transformation 2

Item 1	Item 2	Item 3
<p><i>p < f</i></p>	<p><i>f</i></p>	<p><i>pp</i></p>

Alterations (for T2 only)

1. Item 1: Change dynamics and hairpin
2. Item 1: Change speed of roll.
3. Item 1: Lengthen or shorten roll.
4. Item 2 & 3: Change number of articulation.
5. Item 1, 2 & 3: Change length of silence, or remove.

Form

Section 1, Primary Sound Object (PSO)

- A. [5-8 times] Repeat PSO as is.
- B. [5-10 times] Add 1 Alteration and one beater or cover change to PSO.
- C. [5-8 minutes] Slowly add more Alterations.

Starting with C, change beater and cover at will.

Section 2, Transformation 1 (T1)

- D. [1-2 minutes] Play T1
- E. [1-2 minutes] Play PSO (w/ any Alts.)
- F. [2-3 minutes] Play T1

Section 3, Transformation 2 (T2)

- G. [2-3 minutes] Play T2 (w/ any Alts.)

Section 4, Ending

- H. [any length] any content. *See notes.*

Addendum

This addendum provides examples of how PSO and T2 can be performed. It should be used as a starting point in rehearsal, and as a reference. It is not meant to be played verbatim in performance.

PSO Example

The musical notation for the PSO Example consists of three iterations of a rhythmic pattern on a single staff. The first iteration is marked *p* and includes the instruction "paper on head soft yarn mallets". The second iteration is marked *mf* and includes the instruction "remove paper" and "2'' a little slower". The third iteration is marked *ppp* and includes the instruction "wooden drum sticks" and "2'' a tempo". The pattern consists of groups of notes, with the first group being a quintuplet (5), the second a sextuplet (6), and the third a quintuplet (5). The tempo changes from "a little slower" to "a tempo" between the second and third iterations. Crescendos and decrescendos are indicated by wedge-shaped markings under the notes.

This example gives three iterations of PSO. In the course of a performance, there could be dozens of iterations, depending on the length of each iteration, which is entirely up to the performer.

What to notice about this example:

1. The subtle change from one iteration to the next. This should be the norm, though does not rule out more drastic changes.
2. Every alteration is used:
 - a. Triplet changes.
 - b. Change in number of ↓ groups. Here we have 5+4+5
 - c. Tempo change. The 2nd group is slower. The original tempo of 90 returns in the 3rd group.
 - d. A tempo fluctuation is used in the accel. back to the "a tempo".
 - e. The length of silence is changed to 2'' for the 1st and 2nd iteration.
 - f. Crescendos and decrescendos are added in the 1st and 3rd iteration
3. The principle of imperfect repetition is used:
 - a. Though the crescendo is associated with the change to a sextuplet, notice how each crescendo is implemented differently.
 - b. Notice the silence after each iteration. The length of the silence is the same after the 1st and the 2nd iteration. The 3rd iteration returns to the original length of 3''.

T2 Example

The musical notation for the T2 Example shows a sequence of 10 items, each enclosed in a box. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 72 (♩ = 72). The first item is marked *f* and includes the instruction "(brushes)". The second item is marked *pp*. The third item is marked *mp* and includes the instruction "thin metal on head". The fourth item is marked *pp*. The fifth item is marked *pp*. The sixth item is marked *f*. The seventh item is marked *pp*. The eighth item is marked *f*. The ninth item is marked *pp*. The tenth item is marked *f*. The items are numbered 1 through 10 in the upper left corner of each box. The tempo changes from "de-accel." to "a tempo" between the second and third items.

This example shows a segment of T2 music in which 10 "Items" are used. Boxes are drawn around each individual item, and the Item number is placed in the upper left hand corner of the box.

What to notice about this example:

1. This is a particularly dynamic implementation of T2. Though T2 is designed to allow for this kind of activity, it would be just as true to the score to create a segment in which change is more subtle. Practice both in rehearsal, and when it comes time perform, let the music tell you what it needs.
2. Every Alteration is used.
3. Notice how Item 3 is repeated 4 times, and Item 1 is only used once. It would be just as true to the score to do the opposite, or to not use Item 3 at all, or to use only Item 1.

Etude: Being and Becoming

(2010)

for xylophone

Lou Bunk

Performance Notes for "Etude: Being and Becoming"

This is an advanced xylophone etude exploring various methods of improvisation with practice in multiple beater changes, and tremolo in various contexts. You will learn to hear, and perform better, subtle changes in pitch, rhythm and timbre. As the piece can be long, and the pacing of events unhurried, restraint and endurance are practiced and necessary. This helps make possible the appropriate mindset for extensive contemplation of how *subtle change can both lead to and be structural transformation*.

General Guidelines

1. There is no defined meter. The tempo is often free and in flux.
2. Take the most content liberty in the transitions between sections.
3. Improvise using subtle changes (micro-variations) in timbre rhythm, and pitch.
4. The overall pacing of the composition should be slow and gradual. Though occasionally, the pacing may temporarily increase to provide contrast, or to hurry a deeper change.
5. Alternate (back and forth) musical ideas, but do not be too obvious.
6. Create patterns that are not perfect. Then let them fall apart.
7. Do not make a score ahead of time to bring into performance. The score is the next page titled "Performance Score". Make most of your musical decisions in the performance, but rehearse multiple versions ahead of time.

Form: The piece should last between 12-20 minutes. The form is described in four *Sections* at the bottom of the Performance Score. Within these Sections are *Sub-sections*, each marked with a letter, an approximate length, and a note to which improvisational methods is active. Though this form should be carefully followed, take liberties that make the transitions interesting, helping to avoid them sounding stiff and prescribed.

Primary Sound Object: (PSO) is a gesture to be played and repeated as a self contained unit. Its *prime form*, before any *Alterations* (Alts), is given in the Performance Score.

Transformation 1: (T1) is created by following a list of *Guidelines* (GLs). I have provided a possible realization (of just a segment) to give a sense of how T1 could sound. It should not be used "as is". As this example shows, try to (at times) align shifting tremolo speed, dynamics, and pitch changes with each other.

Transformation 2: (T2) is made up of five "Items". In the Performance Score, each Item is in its own box. The five Items can be played in any order at any tempo. Each Item can be repeated any number of times.

Alterations: PSO and T2 each have a list of Alts. which describe how each changes from one iterations to the next. They can be added and subtracted at will, in any order, and can be applied to part or all of the gesture to which it applies. Introduce these Alts. gradually, and give each new change time to breath and grow. Feel free to linger for a while, or return to a previous state. Alternate old and new. Be aware of how one idea can segue to the next.

Transformation 1, GL 5 and 6: These GLs can change the music in subtle and significant ways as they introduce pitches outside the primary tri-chord (Ab, A, Bb). Use these GLs carefully, strategically, and in the spirit of gradual change. Note that these new pitches can be returned to in T2 through Alt. 4

Beaters: Use multiple types of beaters. After Sub-section B, change them at will to provide timbre contrasts. All traditional and non-traditional beaters are acceptable, particularly if they make an interesting sound.

Section 1, C: is challenging as it is the longest segment. Work hard to balance the urge for forward motion with the principle of gradual change, all the while creating musical interest by exposing the beauty in the microstructures. See the Addendum for examples of how PSO and T2 can be performed.

Ending: In the form, the last section is "Ending". For this section, freely improvise an ending. Do not plan it ahead of time. Let the music of the improvisation lead you there. It could be anything.

Rehearsal: First, read very careful all the instructions in the *Performance Notes* and the *Performance Score*. Second, become familiar with PSO, T1 and T2 and all Alts. and GLs. Practice improvising these, adding beater changes. Third, study the form and practice transitioning between the parts.

Performance Score

Etude: Being and Becoming Lou Bunk (2010)

Primary Sound Object (Prime Form)

♩ = 108
choose any mallet

Alterations (for PSO only)

1. Add/omit repeated notes (1-3 new iterations of a pitch at a time).
2. Omit any pitch(es).
3. Change tuplet.
4. Pause on any pitch.
5. Tempo change or fluctuation.
6. Fermata: change length or omit.
7. Change dynamics.
8. Add crescendo or decrescendo.
9. Add new pitch (only B3 - Ab4).

Transformation 1 (example realization)

* number of slashes indicates approx. speed of trem.
3=fast, 2=medium, 1=slow

Note: This realization is particularly active as to demonstrate as many GLs in use as possible. In performance, also allow for GLs to change at a slower pace, or for slower and faster paced GLs to exist side by side.

Guidelines (for T1 only)

1. Fluid change of pitch among Ab4, A4, Bb4. (*1st 30" all A4*).
2. Fluid change of tremolo speed (and therefore perceived tempo).
3. Fluid dynamic shifts.
4. Occasional silence of any length.
5. Occasionally add a 2 pitch tremolo (of any length) where one pitch is Ab4, A4, or Bb4. The other can be any pitch.
6. Play a 2 pitch trem., after a silence, that is 3"-7" and does not use Ab4, A4, or Bb4. (*2-3 times*)

Transformation 2 (Prime Forms)

Alterations (for T2 only)

1. Item 1: Change speed or length of trem.
2. Item 3-5: Change # of articulation.
3. Item 1-5: Change or omit rest.
4. Item 3-5: Change pitch using new pitches from T1, (GL. 5 and 6)
5. Items 1-5: Change dynamics/hairpin.
6. Items 4 and 5: Change octave

Form

Section 1, Primary Sound Object (PSO)

- A. [12-20 times] Repeat PSO as is.
- B. [8-15 times] Add 1 Alt. (not 9) and 1 beater change to PSO.
- C. [4-6 min.] Slowly add more Alts. (1-8 only). *From here forward, change beater at will.*
- D. [1-2 min.] Add Alt. 9

Section 2, Transformation 1 (T1)

- E. [30 sec] Play T1 (only using the pitch A4)
- F. [1-2 minutes] Play T1 (GL. 1-5)
- G. [1-2 minutes] Play PSO (w/ any Alts.)
- H. [2-3 minutes] Play T1 (GL. 1-6)

Section 3, Transformation 2 (T2)

- I. [2-3 minutes] Play T2 (w/ any Alts.)

Section 4, Ending

- J. [any length] any content. *See notes.*

Addendum

This addendum provides examples of how PSO and T2 can be performed. It should be used as a starting point in rehearsal, and as a reference. It is not meant to be played verbatim in performance.

PSO Example

This example gives three iterations of PSO. In the course of a performance, there could be dozens of iterations depending on the length of each, which is mostly up to you.

What to notice about this example:

1. Observe the subtle change from one iteration to the next. This should be the norm, though from time to time, more drastic change may be appropriate.
2. Almost every Alt. is used: (*Note: other moments will pace the use of Alts. slower*)
 - a. Added repeated notes.
 - b. The first "Bb" is omitted in the first iteration.
 - c. Tuplet changes.
 - d. There is a pause on "Ab" in the 3rd iteration
 - e. Tempo change. The 2nd iteration is slower. The original tempo of 108 returns in the 3rd iteration.
 - f. A tempo fluctuation is used in the "accel." back to the "a tempo".
 - g. The fermata length is changed to 3" for the 3rd iteration.
 - h. Crescendos and decrescendos are added in the 1st and 3rd iteration
3. The principle of imperfect repetition is used:
 - a. The rhythm is slightly changed between the beginnings (first 3 pitches) of iterations 2 and 3
 - b. Notice the silence after each iteration. The length of the silence is the same after the 1st and the 2nd iteration, while the 3rd iteration's silence is 3".

T2 Example

This example shows a segment of T2 music in which 16 "Items" are used. Boxes are drawn around each individual Item, and the Item number is placed in the upper left hand corner of the box.

What to notice about this example:

1. This is a particularly dynamic implementation of T2. Though T2 is designed to allow for this kind of activity, it would be just as true to the score to create a segment in which change is more subtle. Practice multiple variations in rehearsal, and in performance, let the music tell you what it needs.
2. Almost every Alt. is used. Can you find them?
3. Notice how Items 2 and 3 are repeated multiple times, while Item 1 is only used once. It would be just as true to the score to do the opposite, or to not use Item 3 at all, or to use only Item 1.