

Field

(2015)

for two violins

Lou Bunk

Field

*for two violins
in five movements*

By Lou Bunk

Program Notes

Silence and return attain meaning through conditions. A silence in the middle of a phrase is unlike a silence setup by a slow decrescendo, or a silence between movements, or a silence in an empty field, with the moon. The return of musical material, across gestures or longer spans, is shaped by the currently active rush of energy and purpose, perhaps creating a nostalgia for what was, but more importantly showing change and forward motion. In this piece, I question and veil the effects of silence and return through interruption, juxtaposition, disruption, and sometimes messy predicaments on a field of play that (at times) paradoxically attempts to prioritize an uncomplicated narrative. Polyphony and monophony are entangled as the two violins often merge to create a single voice, yet what they play is synchronously similar and different from each other. A stereophonic field created by the antiphonal placement of the violins makes vivid this sonic contradiction.

I began work on this composition in June of 2013, stopped twice along the way, and finishing in October 2015. Somehow, I spent 492 hours writing the music.

“Field” is dedicated to String Noise, who asked me to write them a new piece (and was very patient as I finished), and to my twins Ellie and Eli, who were born while I was writing it.

Performance Notes

Indeterminacy, Freedom and Interpretation

My precision when notating this music is not to try and account for every possible sonic outcome; for example, there are many shades of non-pitched sounds possible on the violin far outnumbering any assortment of symbols and combinations. Also, there is a certain amount of unpredictability to some of these sounds. Shape and control when you can, but at times allow this irregularity to blossom.

Still, the score is intended to produce a certain result; often this is very specific, while sometimes the notation creates the circumstance for a type of result. That said, no part of the score is purely prescriptive. From moment to moment, your interpretation of (and struggle with) the score is essential to creating the music.

Antiphonal Position: The violinists should perform at a noticeable distance from each other, (roughly half to two-thirds the width of the stage), while still remaining on stage, or in the standard performance area. The purpose is to enhance the inherent antiphonal/stereophonic nature of the music by increasing the sonic independence of each instrument. If this distance is impairing the ability to perform accurately, then move closer.

Page Turns: Parts are given unbound, on cardstock, to allow for quiet page slides, in place of louder page turning. This requires having two pages showing at once. Another advantage is the page slide does not have to occur only at the end of the page, but at any rest during the playing of the right hand page.

Duration: ca. 16 minutes

Notation Notes

Accidentals carry through the measure.

Quarter-tones:

♯ quarter sharp

♭ quarter flat

Octave signs

8 [Carry through the measure, but only apply to the note it is attached.

Vibrato: minimal to no vibrato.

Natural harmonics are notated with a diamond showing the note to stop and a standard note-head in parenthesis, to show the resulting pitch. When a second larger diamond is above the staff this indicates a natural harmonic in which the player chooses a fingering; the diamond note-head on the staff gives the sounding pitch, and the letter in the larger diamond indicates how to choose a fingering for the harmonic. The letters show relative strength and clarity of the harmonic pitch for each fingering: 'A' most clear, 'B' middle clear, 'C' least clear. An arrow indicates using the current diamond letter for the following harmonics.

Boxed Descriptions above top staff are for both players. These are not programmatic, but are intended to aid the player with interpretation.

Envelope Staff

An additional staff above the standard staff uses envelope lines to show changes in bow position and bow speed. Dotted vertical guidelines are used to help show rhythmic position of envelope changes, and other indications above the envelope staff.

The following cleffs are used:



bow placement

The top dotted staff line = the bridge. This creates a reference point for degrees of sul pont. When the dots of the top line are hidden by the envelope line, this indicates a pitch-less and airy "on the bridge" playing.

The middle staff line = ord.

The bottom dotted staff line = the edge of the fingerboard. This creates a reference point for degrees of sul tasto.

In some cases, I use SP, MSP, ST, and MST (sul pont, molto sul pont, sul tasto, molto sul tasto) to indicate bow position.

F

S

bow speed

The top dotted staff line = very fast bowing

The middle staff line = ord.

The bottom dotted staff line = very slow bowing

In some cases, I use the letters F, N, SL (very fast, normal, and very slow) to indicate bow speed.

Bow Body Cleffs



Correspondence with staff lines indicate different points to bow the body of the violin. Dynamics are bracketed to show they are relative to this playing technique. That is, [f] for bow body is not nearly as loud as "f" (without brackets) for other playing styles.

Bow Pressure Modifiers, for non-standard bow pressure

The following symbols are placed above the envelop staff to show four degrees of bow pressure. As with pizz/arco, bow pressure modifiers are in effect until the next modifier. Vertical dotted guidelines are used to show which pitch/sound they modify.

□ Extra light: extreme flautando, airy pitch.

▤ ord.

▥ Some extra pressure: mix of scratch and pitch.

■ Extreme extra pressure: all scratch without pitch

Bow pressure modifiers are relative to dynamics, and are not a fixed amount. For example, a ppp dynamic with ■ would mean to use the appropriate amount of extra pressure to make a pitch/scratch, while maintaining a ppp dynamic. Therefore, many more than four discreet sounds will result from these depending on dynamic, bow speed, left hand position, etc.

Finger Pressure

The following note-heads are used to indicate three degrees of left-hand fingering pressure.

- **Standard notehead:** Full stop. Used also with artificial harmonics.
- ◊ **Half-filled diamond:** Half-harmonic pressure. The sound should be a veiled coloring of the stopped pitch. Avoid harmonics when possible.
- ◇ **Diamond:** harmonic pressure. When resulting pitch is shown, or a second larger diamond with a letter is present (see above), play as a natural harmonic.

Headless stems indicates approximate position of stopped string. Use most recently notated pressure.

A dotted arrow is used to show a gradual transition from one finger pressure to another.

Mute



Non-pitched playing accomplished by using at least two fingers on sounding string while laying fingers across the other non-sounding strings (to the deaden sound). Adjust as need to facilitate faster figures. Avoid natural harmonics or any stable pitch, though some unstable pitch may result depending on bow pressure and speed.

Applies only to the note it is attached, and to notes under the horizontal extension line.

No Muting: ○ Occasionally used as a courtesy to show a return to pitched playing.

Field

I.

Lou Bunk (2015)

opposing, chasing, seeking

$\text{♩} = 84$

Musical score for measures 1-3. The score is for two violins (V1 and V2) in 4/4 time. Measure 1: V1 has a five-note chord (p), followed by a quarter note (p), and a seven-note chord (pp). V2 has a four-note chord (fff), followed by a quarter note (p), a quarter note (ff sub), and a quarter note (pp sub). Measure 2: V1 has a quarter note (pp), followed by a six-note chord (ppp), and a quarter note (ppp). V2 has a quarter note (p), followed by a six-note chord (p), a quarter note (f sub), and a quarter note (p). Measure 3: V1 has a quarter note (pp), followed by a six-note chord (ppp), and a quarter note (ppp). V2 has a quarter note (mp), followed by a seven-note chord (ppp), and a quarter note (mp). Above the staves are performance markings: SL and N with arrows and boxes, and dynamic markings like *pp*, *ppp*, *fff*, *p*, *ff*, *ff sub*, *pp sub*, *f*, *f sub*, *mp*, and *f*. Fingerings (5, 7, 6, 5, 4:3) and articulation (>) are also present.

Musical score for measures 4-6. Measure 4: V1 has a quarter note (p), followed by a six-note chord (mf), and a quarter note (mf). V2 has a quarter note (p), followed by a seven-note chord (pp), and a quarter note (pp). Measure 5: V1 has a quarter note (mp), followed by a three-note chord (f), and a quarter note (f). V2 has a quarter note (ff sub), followed by a three-note chord (mp), and a quarter note (f). Measure 6: V1 has a quarter note (p), followed by a six-note chord (ppp), and a quarter note (ppp). V2 has a quarter note (pp), followed by a four-note chord (mp), and a quarter note (f sub). Above the staves are performance markings: SL and N with arrows and boxes, and dynamic markings like *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *p*, *mp*, *p*, *ppp*, *fff sub*, *pp sub*, *f*, *f sub*, *pp*, *mp*, *f sub*, and *ppp*. Fingerings (6, 3, 6) and articulation (>) are also present.

Musical score for measures 7-9. Measure 7: V1 has a four-note chord (f), followed by a four-note chord (p), and a quarter note (p). V2 has a five-note chord (f), followed by a seven-note chord (p), and a quarter note (p). Measure 8: V1 has a quarter note (f), followed by a four-note chord (pp sub), and a quarter note (pp sub). V2 has a quarter note (ppp), followed by a nine-note chord (ppp), and a quarter note (pp). Measure 9: V1 has a quarter note (f), followed by a six-note chord (ppp), and a quarter note (ppp). V2 has a quarter note (pp), followed by a seven-note chord (pp), and a quarter note (pp). Above the staves are performance markings: SL and N with arrows and boxes, and dynamic markings like *f*, *p*, *ppp*, *pp sub*, *f*, *ppp*, *pp*, and *pp*. Fingerings (4:3, 6) and articulation (>) are also present.

10

Musical score for measures 10-12, V1 and V2 staves. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *pp*, *mp*, *p*, *f*, and *p_{sub}*. It features various musical notations including slurs, ties, and fingering numbers (7, 5, 9:8, 4:3, 5). Performance instructions like *n* and *pp* are present. A box labeled 'F' is positioned above the first measure, and boxes labeled 'SL' and 'N' are positioned above the second measure.

13

Musical score for measures 13-15, V1 and V2 staves. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *mf*, *mp*, *pp*, *mf*, *ff*, *mf*, and *p*. It features various musical notations including slurs, ties, and fingering numbers (6, 5, 5, 5, 5, 4:3, 5, 7, 7, 7, 7). Performance instructions like *n* and *mf* are present. A box labeled 'F' is positioned above the first measure, and boxes labeled 'SL' and 'N' are positioned above the second measure.

16

joining, untangled

touched agreement

Musical score for measures 16-18, V1 and V2 staves. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mp*, *ppp*, *p*, and *pp*. It features various musical notations including slurs, ties, and fingering numbers (5, 6, 7, 3, 5, 6, 7, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5). Performance instructions like *n* and *pp* are present. A box labeled 'F' is positioned above the first measure, and boxes labeled 'SL' and 'N' are positioned above the second measure.

familiar, uninvited

19

Musical score for measures 19-21, featuring two staves (V1 and V2). Measure 19 includes a dynamic marking of **[f]** and a slur over a five-note sequence. Measure 20 includes a dynamic marking of **[f]**, a slur over a four-note sequence, and a slur over a six-note sequence with a 'n' marking below. Measure 21 includes a dynamic marking of **[p]** and a slur over an eleven-note sequence. The V2 staff includes a dynamic marking of **pp** and a slur over a seven-note sequence with a 'n' marking below.

echo

nervous, tense

22

Musical score for measures 22-24, featuring two staves (V1 and V2). Measure 22 includes a dynamic marking of **pp** and slurs over seven and six notes. Measure 23 includes a dynamic marking of **pp** and slurs over seven and six notes. Measure 24 includes a dynamic marking of **f** and slurs over six, five, six, and five notes. The V2 staff includes a dynamic marking of **pp** and slurs over six, five, and six notes in measure 22; a dynamic marking of **f** and slurs over five, seven, five, and seven notes in measure 24.

25

Musical score for measures 25-27, featuring two staves (V1 and V2). Measure 25 includes dynamic markings of **mf** and **p** with slurs over six and five notes. Measure 26 includes a dynamic marking of **f** and slurs over six and seven notes. Measure 27 includes dynamic markings of **mp** and **f** with slurs over five, seven, six, and seven notes. The V2 staff includes a dynamic marking of **mp** and slurs over five, seven, six, and seven notes in measure 25; a dynamic marking of **f** and slurs over six, five, six, and five notes in measure 27.

27

Musical score for measures 27-30. V1 staff features a melodic line with dynamics *p*, *f*, and *mp*. V2 staff features a supporting line with dynamics *p*, *f*, and *mf*. Fingering numbers 5, 7, 6, 6, 7, 6, 5 are indicated.

31

question

rit.

Musical score for measures 31-35. V1 staff has dynamics *pp* and *pp* with a slur and a fermata. V2 staff has dynamics *p*, *pp*, *p*, and *pp*. Fingering numbers 7 and 3 are shown. Slurs and fermatas are present.

a tempo a stranger speaking

36

Musical score for measures 36-40. V1 staff has dynamics *p*, *pp*, *mf*, *p*, *f*, and *ff*. V2 staff has dynamics *ppp*, *p*, *ff*, *p*, *mf*, *pp*, *f*, and *ff*. Performance markings include *N*, *SL*, *4:3*, and *>>*. Fingering numbers 5, 7, 6, 5, 3, 7, 5 are shown.

39 ♩=50 as a vision

V1 *pppp* *n* *n* *pp* *5:3* *n*
"crossfade" *"crossfade"*
 V2 *pppp* *n* *pp_{sub}* *n* *p* *5:3* *n* *pp* *p*
 msp ----> ord

43 ♩=84 a stranger continues, confused

V1 *ff* *mf* *pp_{sub}* *mf* *p* *p* *mp* *p* *ppp*
 SL ----> N
 F ----> N
 V2 *f* *mf* *pp* *ff_{sub}* *p* *pp* *4:3* *mp* *f_{sub}* *p_{sub}* *ppp*
 6 3 7 7 4:3 6 7

46 *but!*

V1 *pp* *mp* *f_{sub}* *p_{sub}* *ppp* *n* *f* *mf* *pp*
 SL N
 V2 *p* *mp* *ppp* *p* *f* *mp* *pp_{sub}* *mf*
 4:3 7 7 5 6 6

60

V1

V2

p *pp* *mp* *pp*

p *ppp* *p*

SL N

5 6 7 9:8

64

V1

V2

pppp *pp* *ppp* *mp* *p*

p *mf* *n* *pp* *n*

N

5 6

68 $\text{♩} = 50$ *a dimming premonition*

V1

V2

pp *n* *mp* *n* *pp*

p *n* *pp*

msp ord

3

"crossfade"

70 $\text{♩} = 66$ *decay*

V1 *p* 7:4 *pp* 6 *p pp mp*

V2 *p* 5 *ppp* *n* *pp* 7 *p mp ppp*

SL N

73 *disease*

V1 *pp* 5 *ppp* *mf*

V2 *gl.* *ppp* *mf* 3

L/C (legno/crini)

77 LT (legno tratto) L/C

V1 *gl.* 3 *mp p mf sub mp* 3 6 *p pp* 3 *p*

V2 *gl.* 3 *mp p* 5 *mf mf p* *pp*

LT (legno tratto)

80

LT

L/C

V1

gl.

pp

7

mf

mf

mp

p

V2

5

[*mf*]

mf

mp

p

*mf*_{sub}

83

LT

L/C

LT

V1

gl.

mp

pp

p

pp

ppp

n

V2

gl.

mp

p

mp

pp

ppp

n

86

passing

LT

L/C

V1

gl.

p

ppp

V2

p

ppp

ppp

90

alien, brittle, otherworldly

molto rit.

♩ = 90

♩ = c.30

sord.



V1

V2

p f p f p pp mp pp

f p f p mp p pp

slowing to stop

10

déjà vu

shadowy, slipping away

Musical score for measures 10-12. The score is written for two staves, V1 and V2, in treble clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 4/8. The score includes various dynamics such as *mp*, *pp sub*, *< mf*, *mp*, *pp sub*, *n*, *mp*, and *pp*. Performance markings include *SP*, *OB*, *MSP*, and *ORD*. The first staff (V1) features an 8th note triplet and a dotted quarter note. The second staff (V2) features an 8th note triplet and a dotted quarter note. The score is marked with *mp*, *pp sub*, *< mf*, *mp*, *pp sub*, *n*, *mp*, and *pp*.

13

indifferent

Musical score for measures 13-15. The score is written for two staves, V1 and V2, in treble clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 4/8. The score includes various dynamics such as *mf*, *pp sub*, *mf*, and *p*. Performance markings include *5:3*, *n*, *pp*, *mf*, *pp sub*, *5*, *semp*, and *p*. The first staff (V1) features a 5:3 ratio and a triplet. The second staff (V2) features a 5:3 ratio and a triplet. The score is marked with *mf*, *pp sub*, *mf*, and *p*.

16

marking, questioning

Musical score for measures 16-18. The score is written for two staves, V1 and V2, in treble clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 4/8. The score includes various dynamics such as *n*, *mp*, *p*, *pp*, *mp*, *p*, and *ppp*. Performance markings include *MSP*, *ORD*, *SP*, and *ORD*. The first staff (V1) features a 5:3 ratio and a triplet. The second staff (V2) features a 5:3 ratio and a triplet. The score is marked with *n*, *mp*, *p*, *pp*, *mp*, *p*, and *ppp*.

19 $\text{♩} = 72$

muddled nostalgia

V1

V2

pp *p* *mp* *pp*

pp *mp* *pp*

F

SL

23 $\text{♩} = 50$

apathetic

V1

V2

p *mp* *pp*

p *mp* *pp*

pp *pp*

N

8va

26

8va

V1

V2

n *p* *n* *p* *n* *pp* *n* *p* *n* *p* *n* *mp* *n*

p *n* *p* *n* *pp* *n* *pp* *n* *p* *n* *mp* *n* *mp* *n*

A

B

29 (8^{va}) $\text{♩} = 60$ *pale affection*

V1 6^{va} III I

V2 III I

32 $\text{♩} = 50$ *still*

V1 6^{va}

V2 F S

36 *rising purpose and concern*

V1 15^{ma} 8^{va}

V2 F S

39

8^{va} *15^{ma}* *8^{va}*

V1

pp>n <pp>n <p> <p> <p> <mp> >mp *f*

V2

<pp>n <pp>n <p> <p> >mp <mp> >mp *f*

42

ST *8^{va}* *15^{ma}* SP

V1

mp *p* *ppp*

V2

mp *p* *ppp*

45

OB

a bewildering, another

V1

ORD MSP ORD 3

p ppp mp ppsub

V2

OB

ORD MSP SP 3 ORD

p mp pp

48

V1

V2

8^{va}

arco

pizz.

5:3

mp

p

ppp

pppp

51

V1

V2

8^{va}

arco

pizz.

gliss.

15^{ma}

ppp

mp

pp

54

♩ = 90 *postscript, photocopy*

V2

sord.

F

S

III

V

5

3

3

p

mf

p

mf

p

f

p

f

p

pp

semp (to end)

57

V2

F

S

IV

III

slowing

mf

slowing to stop

III.

♩ = 90 *authentic, an open window*

senza sord.

V1

p *f* *p* *f* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *pp*

sub *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub*

semp *slowing*

* VN1: The entire third movement is muted strings except in mm 19-24.

4

V1

p *pp* *mf*

slowing to stop

7

intimate, poetic

V1

p *f* *p* *f* *p* *pp* *mp* *mf*

sub *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub*

gl. *gl.* *gl.* *gl.* *gl.* *gl.*

slowing to stop

V2

f *p* *f* *p* *mp* *p* *pp* *f* *p* *f* *mf*

sub *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub* *sub*

gl. *gl.* *gl.* *gl.* *gl.* *gl.*

slowing to stop

* VN2: The entire third movement is muted strings except in mm 19-23 and 29-30.

10

V1

mf

trem. not synchronized *rate increasing*

V2

slowing to stop *slowing*

13 →

V1
f irregular popping
f *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*
sub sub sub sub
p *p*
sub sub

V2
mf irregular popping
mf *pp*
f *p* *f* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*
sub sub sub sub sub sub

III 11:8 V

16 ♩ = 50

V1
pp *mf* *p* *ppp* *mf* *mp*
 misplaced beauty

V2
pp *mf* *mp* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp*

A B A

(* not muted)

20

V1
f *p* *SP*

V2
f *pp* *mp* *p* *pp* *p_{sub}* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*
sub sub sub sub

ST 8[] F S semp III

return; absurd, stale

24

(to end)

V1

pp

V2

f sub *p sub* *f sub* *p sub* *pp*

ORD

V

OB

5

IV

III

3

slowing

27

ORD

(wait for vn 2)

rational, distant

V1

irregular popping

f *p* *mf sub* *p sub* *mf sub*

V2

slowing to stop

f *poco* *ppp*

ST O B

(to end)

31

nihilism

SP

ORD

V1

irregular popping

p *mf* *f* *ff* *[f]* *[p]* *[p]*

V2

irregular popping

mp rate increasing *ff* *[f]* *[p]* *[p]*

III

3

5

5

ORD

4:3

6

9:8

5

7

V1
 [f] *f*
 5
 [f] cont. body bow [f] while adding muted 'A'
 n
 I
 mp
 p f p f p
 sub sub sub sub
 5"

V2
 ppp
 IV
 gl.
 gl.
 mp
 3
 gl. gl.
 5
 pp
 f p f p
 sub sub sub sub
 5"

Diagrams: **F** (Force) and **S** (Speed) curves for both instruments. V1 shows a force curve that rises and then levels off, and a speed curve that is constant. V2 shows a force curve that rises and then levels off, and a speed curve that is constant. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 and 'n' for natural.

IV.

♩ = 50 *exquisite, harsh, almost meaningless, with visceral essence*

V1

V2

ff

gl.

*poco**

* poco is 1/2 step or less

5 3 5

3 5 3

10:8

5

3 6

4

V1

V2

pp

f

gl.

pp

ff

5 3

5 3

5 3

5 3

5 3

7

V1

V2

gl.

5 3 5

3 5 3

3 5 3

5 3 5

5 3 5

10

5

10

V1

V2

poco

gl.

3 5 6 3

5 3 3 5

3 3 5

3 5 3

5 3

13

V1

V2

poco

gl.

16

V1

V2

SP

ORD I

ORD II

pp

18

V1

V2

ff

gl.

SP

ORD

poco

breathless

22

V1

V2

gl.

24 more

V1

V2

27

V1

V2

31

V1

V2

34

V1

V2

unexpected lucidity

37

The musical score for Violin 1 (V1) and Violin 2 (V2) begins at measure 37. The V1 part starts with a *mf* dynamic, followed by a *pp* dynamic. It includes a *ST* (Sordano Trill) marking and a *poco* instruction. The V2 part starts with a *mf* dynamic, followed by a *mp* dynamic, and then a *p* dynamic. It includes a *ST* marking and a *SP* (Sordano Pulse) marking. Both parts feature complex fingering with 5ths, 3rds, and 6ths. The score includes repeat signs with first and second endings, marked with a double bar line and a '2' with a fermata.

V.

♩ = 50 *screaming with not much voice*

V1

[ff]

[ff]

pp
balance dynamics with body bow

5 3 5 3 5 3 6

10:8

V2

[ff]

5 5 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 6

4

♩ = 100

V1

[ff]

[ff]

pp
balance dynamics with body bow

5 3 5 7 6 n

4:3

V2

[f]

[ff]

5 3 6 3 n

