

The Creative Symbiosis of Composer and Performer

[An examination of collaborative practice in partially improvised works]

A portfolio and commentary submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

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September 2010

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Abstract

This thesis comprises a portfolio of compositions with supporting commentary in addition to a general commentary on past and contemporary models of performance practice. The compositions all use elements of improvisation and are documented in recorded and score formats. Recordings and discussion of the rehearsal process of these works are also included.

The thesis is divided into four parts. The first, entitled 'Context', examines issues of performance practice through reference to both historical and contemporary models. In this regard, particular attention is given to the work of Miles Davis and Peter Wiegold. Parts 2, 3 and 4 consist of the portfolio of original compositions with sub-headings as follows: 'Beginnings', 'Transition' and 'Current Projects'. As a part of the commentary on the portfolio, the role of the performer as creative artist will also be examined.

Part I: Context

Chapter 1 – Introduction

The relationship of composition and improvisation has become of critical concern in present-day musical culture. The interaction of these elements have resulted in significant developments in the performance practice of Western music, particularly in the last century. This thesis proposes to examine the relationship in two ways: through an examination of historical and current models of performance practice, and through the practice-based exploration of the author's own work.

From a compositional perspective, a key issue pertaining to this relationship is the function of notation. Composers today are re-evaluating the role of notation as they renew the forms of interaction between composition and improvisation. Although it is of course possible to devise a musical work without the use of improvisation (in a composed piece), or composition (in an improvised piece), or notation (in a composed or improvised piece), there has been a resurgence of interest in the integration of all three in present-day performance practice. Established composers such as Richard Barrett and Barry Guy routinely work as improviser/directors who devise personal systems of communication between these fields.

It is in this spirit of integration that the author has approached the original work presented in the portfolio of the thesis. The debate will focus on the intersection of

composition and improvisation, the way(s) in which they meet and the impact of their meeting. In the words of Peter Wiegold:

‘The chemistry between composition and improvisation is what is interesting. The clash, the points where one challenges the other. The point where one becomes redundant, the other ascendant.’

[*New Notes Magazine* leader article, January 2005]

As well as the principal commentary, the thesis includes portfolio of scores, all of which incorporate improvisational elements. Recordings are provided for all scores but one. In order to provide a full account of the works, the recordings are significant as they ‘complete’ the score through the documentation of the improvisational element. An index of works is provided in the appendix together with reference to relevant recordings.

The submission comprises four parts. Part I, entitled ‘Context’, is an examination of the research field with reference to both past and current practice. Parts II, III and IV consist of an extensive commentary on the portfolio of original works by the author. The division of the original work into three parts constitutes a retrospective decision based on the author’s experience of the research process as falling into preliminary, transitional and integrated stages.

Part I, comprising Chapters 2-5, explores definitions and conventions of composition, improvisation and notation as well as examining the relationship between them. Conventional and alternative models of performance practice incorporating these elements will be considered in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, the key areas will be contextualised from a historical perspective by means of an investigation into the composition/improvisation interface relating to selected works from the classical tradition. Initially, reference will be made to works and forms from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic eras in order to chart the changing relationship of improvisation and composition in 18th and 19th centuries. Thereafter, the proliferation of notation systems from the 1950s will be explored in addition to their impact on compositions using improvisation. The final part of the chapter will include an assessment of current trends and developments in the field.

In Chapters 4 and 5, the work of two composer/improvisers will be analysed as examples of specific approaches of combining composition with improvisation. The method of combining improvised and composed elements in the work of jazz trumpeter Miles Davis will be considered in Chapter 4, with particular reference to his output of the period 1969-1975. Through an examination of notation-based work, the music of Peter Wiegold (Chapter 5) will be investigated regarding the way in which notated material can serve as a point of departure for improvisation. The ways in which these methods facilitate the use of improvisation within structured compositional contexts will be evaluated.

The portfolio of original compositions in Parts II, III and IV (Chapters 6-11) consists of three modes of representation: score, commentary and CD recordings. The recordings include those made in rehearsal as well as concerts and studio sessions. The rehearsal recordings provide aural examples of the rehearsal process as well as providing snapshots of the different stages a piece may undergo in its creative development, thereby shedding light on the overall creative process behind such works. The order of presentation of the works in the portfolio is broadly chronological according to chapter although in certain cases, pieces of differing dates have been juxtaposed for reasons of cogency.

Each score is given an individual reference number. In some cases, the numbers follow more the sequence of the thesis discussion than the actual date of composition. Where a piece exists in several different versions, this will be made clear in the reference by the use of the labels 'a', 'b' and 'c' etc.

In general terms the compositions have been divided into three groups:

1. Short-term individual projects for a variety of performers and instrumental combinations (Part II, Chapters 6 & 7)
2. A single transitional work linking groups 1 and 3 (Part III, Chapter 8)
3. Projects for ongoing groups consisting of long-term associates/co-performers, (Part IV, Chapters 10 & 11)

The first group of works will be examined in particular with reference to issues of notation in partially improvised music. These include problems encountered by performers when engaged with non-standard notational methods. The second group will develop this theme with the added consideration of issues relating to the enlarged music ensemble. The size of performing group will be discussed particularly in terms of its effect on notational and improvisational practice. The third group explores works for fixed ensemble in which personnel and instrumentation essentially remain unchanged from piece to piece and concert to concert. In this type of ensemble, the author was in the role of group leader for rehearsal and performance situations. Therefore, the creative and executive roles of the group leader will also be taken into consideration regarding the effect on the group members and the work itself. In addition, issues of group dynamics in rehearsal and the performer's creative role in works involving

improvisation will be considered, particularly in Chapter 9 where the boundaries between composer, performer and director are explored and possible overlaps suggested.

The portfolio works contain a variety of notational and compositional approaches. In some instances, the music is fully realised and notated from a compositional perspective. In other instances, the music is freely improvised with little or no notational input. A variety of intermediary approaches is also represented. A primary aim of these is the deployment of effective and comprehensible notations for the performer. By the final works discussed in Chapter 11, I hope to have demonstrated at least a partial resolution to some of the notational problems inherent in works which adopt these approaches.

Chapter 2 - The 'Post-Composer' Period

Changing Roles of Composer and Performer.

The 1950s and 1960s were a time of upheaval in modern European music. The cultural impact was considerable and far-reaching. Even established elder statesmen of music such as Stravinsky took to making bold statements on the musical landscape of this time and that of the future:

'The next work in this succession, [after Boulez's *Marteau Sans Maitre*] it is apparent, must utilize musico-electronic means, exploit acoustical mirror effects, and mix composed with improvised elements.' (Stravinsky, I: 'Some Musical Questions', p.123 from *Memories and Commentaries* (1959), Faber & Faber)

'New Enemies of Art: 1. Improvisers. 2. 'Indeterminists'The least I ask of any artist is that which he *has* determined, *his* choices rather than those of his intermediary and collaborator, whose improvisatory brainstorm, if he were a member of one of the world's leading symphony orchestras, for example, would be limited to a hash of fifty-year-old ideas. But, then, we are already in the post-composer period.'

(Stravinsky, I: 'Squibs', p.19 from *Themes and Conclusions* (1972), Faber & Faber)

Put side by side, these quotations imply a contradiction, namely that improvisation has a significant role to play in the music of the future, but that the 'improvisatory brainstorms' of the performer are inadequate compared to the 'determined' choices of the composer. At the same time Stravinsky notes the bias towards the inclusion of improvisatory elements in the culture of his time by the provocative designation of the 'post-composer period'. It may be that Stravinsky is implying that the designation of the term 'composer' is inadequate in describing the new role assumed by the creative instigator(s) of the music in this new context. Alternatively, the term may simply constitute a rejection of this new role and a lamenting of the lost status and role assumed by and granted to composers up until that time. Either way, the term highlights the fact that when improvisation is used, the traditional boundaries between composer and performer become blurred and the altered roles played by both parties signify at least a re-evaluation of these hitherto transparent classifications.

The dilemma of the composer's (and by extension the performer's) role in contemporary Western musical culture needs to be addressed within the wider frame of performance practice. The composer, after all, does not realise the work entirely in isolation but as a representative of one of three specialist areas of music-making:

1. Composition
2. Performance
3. Musical Direction (conducting)

These three elements combined provide the template for performance practice in the conventional European sense. Of course, a musician may acquire skills in more than one discipline, for example in the case of Sergei Prokofiev as both composer and pianist, Daniel Barenboim as both pianist and conductor, or even in all three as in the cases of Bernstein and Stravinsky. However, the production of music in the classical tradition generally follows a well-established sequence of duties and responsibilities in terms of the respective roles played by composer, performer/conductor and audience.

In this system of roles and responsibilities, the identity of the notated score devised by the composer can be seen as a central point of reference in musical terms. Subsequent performances of a composer's work may involve different players and directors, but the notated score will remain the same in most cases save for corrections and minor revisions from the composer. The musical score therefore becomes both an object and a symbol for the piece and carries the potential (like the printed word) to be disseminated to any place where there is an understanding of the musical notation employed. At this point, the objectified work (described by the musicologist Christopher Small as 'sound-object'¹) is fixed in most aspects although interpretation may change from performer to performer and from country to country. It is chiefly identifiable by its notational representation which, according to convention, cannot be changed without intervention by the composer himself. The interchangeability of performers and performance localities

¹ *Music Society Education* (1977), p. 3

may be noted here contrast to the immutability of the score. As Small states:

‘The music is concerned, not with the assertion of community through ritual but with a communication of a personal idea from composer via performer to each individual listener. It celebrates the autonomy and the essential solitariness of the individual in post-Renaissance European society’.

(Small, C: ‘The Perfect Cadence and the Concert Hall’ p.29, *Music Society Education* (1977), John Calder)

In this respect the composer’s will is paramount, and although the phenomenon is not explicitly mentioned in practice, the process follows an unspoken chain of command. The audience follows the performers’ interpretation (without undue musical interaction or vocal response), the performers follow the director’s interpretation and the performers and director follow the composer’s vision. If a performer decides to re-interpret the work by putting in his/her own additions or amendments, or making cuts, there may result a reprimand from the composer, as happened in the case of Ravel with the pianist Paul Wittgenstein. Ravel attempted to veto performances of his Concerto for the Left Hand on account of Wittgenstein’s own revisions to the score. Upon hearing Wittgenstein’s protestation that “performers must not be slaves” Ravel replied “Performers *are* slaves!”

(quoted in Long, M: *At the Piano with Ravel*, p.61 (1973), Dent)

Critique

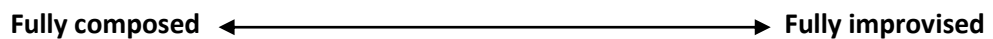
There is no doubt that the above model of classical performance practice has been successfully employed over centuries and has been adopted as the norm in European societies, as well as being adopted in Asia and America. The demarcation of boundaries between composer, performer and director, although they could be considered somewhat inflexible in a hierarchical sense, do make the respective roles of all the musicians clear and this means that they can focus fully on the particular tasks they have to fulfil.

This type of performance practice has been stable for centuries, but it does not necessarily provide the only model for composers in the 21st century. Indeed, as early as the 1950s and 60s composers such as Stockhausen and Feldman were adopting specially devised graphic notations with certain musical parameters left open to the determination of the performer. As performers began to take decisions previously in the domain of the composer, there evolved an overlap of roles which had previously been kept separate. Although many composers such as Britten and Shostakovich, (not to mention Stravinsky) continued to uphold the separation of the roles of composer and performer, the issues (and concurrent dilemmas) raised by the overlap continue to engage composers working with improvisation today, Richard Barrett being a prime example. These issues will be further discussed from a historical perspective in Chapter 3.

Re-examination: Composition-Improvisation

Rather than seeing composition and improvisation as mutually exclusive opposites, a re-evaluation of their interrelationship may view them as two sides of the same coin in terms of complementary yet distinct musical processes. They are two forms of musical creation and as such share a common link. Another way of visualising the relationship is through the analogy of a musical spectrum:

Ex.1 Composition-Improvisation Spectrum



In the same way that a spectrum will consist of distinct, definable colours at each end (with an infinite amount of gradations between those points), composition and improvisation can be considered as two end points along a musical spectrum but as not mutually exclusive disciplines. In the following chapters, works will be examined which are neither wholly composed nor wholly improvised but partially composed and partially improvised according to the place of each variable along the spectrum. For example a piece could be considered to be 75% composed and 25% improvised, or in broad terms 'mostly' composed or 'mostly' improvised (the more general terms perhaps offering a more authentic representation than estimated percentages which are difficult to verify).

The spectrum can be applied on various levels of musical comparison; it may be used to compare different sections of a piece, different parts of a texture, different parts of a musical phrase or different musical works as entities, all using the composition/improvisation association as the point of comparison. The potential for various points of overlap and combinations of composed and improvised elements is evident.

This association of composition and improvisation has led certain commentators, especially improvisers, to assert that composition and improvisation are manifestations of the same creative act. However, according to Peter Wiegold, this assertion is erroneous:

‘.....free improvisers argue that composition and improvisation are essentially the same thing, that improvisation is sped up composition. But this is wrong. There are essential differences.

There are things that composing can do that are impossible with improvisation. Formalities, proportion, exact repetitions, the sculpting of line, dialectical, critical change, ‘scoring’...’

(Wiegold, P: *New Notes* Contemporary Music Magazine leader article, January 2005)

He then asserts that certain compositions are written as such in the knowledge that they would not materialise through improvisational means:

'Bach was a great improviser, but he needed to write down the B-minor Mass'. (ibid.)

Conversely, in improvisation there are processes at work which could not arise through compositional means. Although the exact nature of these processes may not be as explicitly evident as in the notations of a composed work, they have an undeniable effect on the listener's experience. In the words of Wiegold:

'I have heard the most exquisite turns of phrase and subtle textures that could only arrive out of the unique conditions of a certain moment.' (ibid.)

In addition, Wiegold mentions the formal qualities of improvised music as having distinct properties from composed music:

'Improvisation can have another, different, formal quality, that of an absolute and flowing evolution'. (ibid.)

Composition and improvisation, therefore, both deal with the creation and production of music but with differences within the creative process which lead to different musical outcomes. It is precisely these differences which make the combination of composition and improvisation an inviting prospect.

Re-examination: Notation

For the composer using improvisation, notation raises crucial questions as it stands on at the crossroads of composition and improvisation. Notation has in recent centuries been seen as the default method of communication from composer to performer of the physical properties of the work, with interpretative content often being specified in terms of broadly descriptive words such as *espressivo* or *con fuoco*. Indeed, notation can be said to have reached a point of 'perfection of design' by the 19th century which was comparable to the 'perfection' of instrumental design of the time. However, once improvisation is included in the creative process, the role of notation changes as a matter of necessity as certain aspects of the work will by default not be suitable for communication in notational form. Communication between composer and performer may occur through verbal or visual cues, bypassing the need for notation altogether. In other instances, notation will clarify necessary structural features of a piece so that performers maintain an awareness of their own relation to the structure even if it contains improvisation. For the composer working with improvisation, a principal issue becomes the balance between notated and other forms of communication, along with the occasional transfer of the creative decision-making process to the performer.

As well as the issue of balance between notated and non-notated forms of communication, within the realm of notation itself the balance of clarity and complexity

remains of crucial importance, especially when considering the performer's added engagement with the improvisational dimension. Additionally, the question needs to be raised as to whether traditional models of notation, already hundreds of years old, can withstand the new semi-improvisational context for which it is now used, or whether it is advisable to develop and use new notations, which may even differ from one work to the next if the circumstances demand. This matter will be discussed further in a more detailed appraisal of the notational developments of the 1950s and 60s in Chapter 3 as well as that of the portfolio compositions themselves.

Re-examination: Performance Practice

It can be argued that performance practice, although it undergoes surface changes in instrumentation according to the inventions and musical taste of the times, has retained the constant element of groups of people singing and/or playing musical instruments together with a common artistic intent. This can be seen from the co-ordination of voices in Gregorian chant to the massed choirs and symphonic forces of Mahler's 'Symphony of a Thousand' (the latter perhaps reflecting the tendency towards expansion and mass-production in the newly industrialised society). However, once the internal organisation and socio-musical function of these groups and their component parts is scrutinised, variations can be seen to emerge especially in cultural trends following World War II. The aforementioned template for conventional Western performance practice can be seen as challenged (perhaps a reflection on wider social demands for change in the fifties and

sixties) and in some cases transformed by the developments of the post-war period, leading to a 'before' and 'after' scenario (perhaps, in Stravinsky's terminology, the 'composer' and the 'post-composer' periods).

Patterns in the constitution and organisation of musical groups can be compared to those of society as a whole. It may be beneficial to compare the models of musical performance practice mentioned in the introduction with those of wider society. For example, the division of labour common to 19th and 20th century musical practice (performer/composer/conductor/audience) may be considered in the context of the industrialized society of that time. In the words of Adorno:

'The objectification of art....is a product of the social division of labour. That is why, if we want to determine the nature of the relation between art and society, we must look not at the sphere of reception, but at the more basic sphere of production.'

(Adorno T.W, Lenhardt, C: 'Society' from *Aesthetic Theory* p.336 (1970 translated 1984), Routledge)

In particular, parallels can be drawn between the production of music and the production of goods for societal consumption at large, in that both systems use a pattern of manufacturer, distributor and consumer. In terms of the equivalent musical system, this could be seen to be the composer, performer and audience respectively.

Organisational systems in the context of industry have until recent times been based on hierarchies of responsibility following a similar chain of command to the one listed above. In traditional companies this hierarchy is fixed and boundaries between categories of worker are sharply defined and enforced for the purposes of clarity and discipline, much in the same way as the traditional roles in music outlined above. These forces are described by organisational theorist Charles Perrow as 'forces of darkness' and 'represent the mechanical school of organizational theory – those who treat the organization like a machine:

'This school characterizes organizations in terms of things such as centralized authority, clear lines of authority, specialization and expertise, marked division of labour, rules and regulations, and clear separation of staff and line'.

(Perrow, C: 'The Short and Glorious History of Organizational Theory' from *Organizational Dynamics* (1973))

However, in modern companies new strategies of effective management are being sought which draw upon the expertise and creative resources of the workforce by opening up channels of communication between different organisational levels and departments. According to business management writer Charles Handy:

‘Today the language is not that of engineering but of politics, with talk of cultures and networks, of teams and coalitions, of influence and power rather than control, of leadership not management.’

(Handy, C.B: ‘The Shamrock Organization’ p.71 from *The Age of Unreason* (1989), Arrow)

The aim of this approach is to make effective use of the potential resources of the whole organism in order to create the highest possible quality of product or service, thereby gaining an edge in the marketplace over potential (and real) competitors. Perrow sees the forces in use here as ‘forces of light’ which:

‘...emphasise people rather than machines, accommodation rather than machine-like precision, and draws its inspiration from biological systems rather than engineering systems. It has emphasised such things as: delegation of authority, employee autonomy, trust and openness, concerns with the ‘whole person’ and interpersonal dynamics’ (ibid.).

The question now arises in musical terms as to whether it would be beneficial to consider a group of musicians as a potential resource for the co-creation and development of a piece of music as opposed to a group of executants of a pre-determined product. This approach would, as in the above example, place emphasis on the people who make up the group rather than consider the group as an object or abstract construct. Again, parallels can be drawn to recent thinking on business practice:

'Organizations, of course, are not objects. They are micro-societies.'

(Handy, C.B: *Understanding Organizations* p.9 (1999), Penguin)

In short, the composer's role in this case would shift from remote creator to a more collaborative role. The composer's initial vision would go through a series of intentional transformations leading to a result that could not be predicted by composer or performers, but which would stand as the fulfilment of the potential of the original idea. It is this approach which the author intends to explore as the research element of the thesis.

The performers' role also changes inasmuch as they have the added responsibility (as well as freedom) of creative input. It is natural that as a result of the overlaps in terms of areas of responsibility, there is increased potential for conflict of ideas and confusion of boundaries between composers and performers as well as potential for enhanced communication and creative interaction. These problems will be discussed in a case-by-case manner as discussion of the composition portfolio progresses.

The processes listed above, although they have been implemented by other practitioners in various guises (some of which will be explored in Chapters 3, 4 and 5) invite an experimental approach and pose various initial 'what if' questions, some of which are listed as follows:

- What if the performers are requested or allowed to improvise in an otherwise composed piece of music?
- What if the composer allows creative input from performers, for example as to the manner in which sections of a work can fit together structurally?
- What if the work changes its form from rehearsal to rehearsal and from performance to performance as a result of the creative process?
- What if the process of creation is collaborative? Who 'owns' the music?

The question of ownership regarding such working methods is critical. Music groups which have worked collaboratively then disbanded have often found substantial complications in ascertaining which parts of the work 'belong' to which members, if at all. In the traditional model, the work does not belong to the performers, but to the composer, whose name appears on the score as a mark of ownership. However, when a composer invites the performers through a process of collaboration to co-produce the work, the traditional lines of separation become blurred and the accreditation of each performer's creative contribution becomes a complex matter. This matter will be further explored in Chapter 5.

Another crucial point regarding the 'what if' questions concerns the changeability of a work during the rehearsal stage and also between performances. There seems to be an increasing awareness among the artistic community that music-making deals with dynamic processes rather than fixed entities. Similarly, in the business world, the concept of 'change' has recently become a key issue. In the words of Charles Handy:

'If we want to avoid the fate of the Peruvian Indians.....we must learn to look for and embrace discontinuous change.....Discontinuous change is all around us.....There are opportunities as well as problems in discontinuous change. If we change our attitudes, our habits and the ways of some of our institutions it can be an age of new discovery, new enlightenment and new freedoms, an age of true learning.'

(Handy, C.B: 'The Argument', p.9 & 10 from *The Age of Unreason* (1989))

As mentioned above, a work made according to the traditional Western model will be fixed in many details from the start of the rehearsal period and through its various performances. Therefore, it may be inferred that whatever the circumstances of performance, the work is imposed on its surroundings as it has no way of adapting to them due to its predetermined form. There exists an element of security in this respect in that, in a concert environment, both the concert promoter and audience can predict, at least in general terms, the product that they are going to receive. The concurrently predictable behaviour of the performers onstage be seen by them as desirable in this context. However, it is generally agreed that the specialness of live performance is

brought about by its extraordinary qualities and combination of unpredictable and unique features. To this end, the unique circumstances of any performance may help in providing this outcome as long as the work presented has an inbuilt flexibility to accommodate them. The acoustical properties of a venue, the audience response and the inevitably accidental elements within live performance can be exploited by any musician from any tradition. However, it can be argued that the improvising musician has more latitude in this sense than the performer reading from a pre-determined score (where at least part of his/her energy needs to be on the presentation of the pre-prepared material). In this sense, it may be deemed practical and desirable to substantially change aspects of a piece in order to suit the circumstances of its next performance, for example in terms of structure, duration or instrumentation. Although this way of working may be regarded as compromising unnecessarily, it can also be seen as working with the local resources available to the musician with maximum efficiency. This matter will be discussed in the work of Peter Wiegold in Chapter 5 and in the work of the author with the group *Bash-O* (see Chapter 10).

Now that some of the general issues pertaining to performance practice involving composition and improvisation have been discussed, a more detailed examination of specific examples from music history will follow. As well as providing a context for present-day work, an objective of this exercise will be to chart changing attitudes and practices regarding the relationship of composition and improvisation in the Western tradition. The discussion will also include the role played by notation in bringing about

these changes.

Chapter 3 – Composition, Improvisation and Notation:

Historical Context

[NB All recorded extracts for this chapter can be found on CD 1]

The relationship between composition, improvisation and notation will now be analysed from a historical perspective in order to provide context for present-day work. The discussion will focus in particular on the role played by notation in the western classical tradition from the Baroque to the present day. The discussion of the actual development of notational signs and vocabulary such as staves, clefs and rhythmic configurations in the early history of notation (from plainchant to the Renaissance) will for reasons of space be restricted in favour of discussion of their function.

The Ascendency of Notation

From the early transcriptions of European plainchant in monasteries to the intricacies of scores by composers such as Brian Ferneyhough, notation has undergone a highly significant series of developments over the past millennium. It has played a crucial role in the preservation, communication and distribution of compositional information in the Western tradition. Less obvious, at least from the perspective of the musical score is the extent to which aspects of improvisational practice have at certain points of musical

history found eventual representation in fixed notational forms. This has led to an ascendancy of the role of notation as containment and preservation of the improvisational component, rather than the restriction of notational input for the benefit of spontaneous improvisation.

There are various techniques and circumstances by which composers assisted the ascendancy of notation. Some of these techniques will now be discussed in a series of snapshots of historical 'moments'.

Bach and the Baroque principle

In the Baroque era it is well known that both composers and performers were generally well versed in improvisational skills and that the decorative principle inherent in Baroque style was conducive to improvisational ornamentation in live performance. An example of this is the varied iteration by a singer in the Handelian *da capo* aria. Even musicians now known for their compositional achievements were known in their own society primarily as expert performers who were able to give demonstrations of improvisational prowess at their instrument. J.S.Bach provides an example of this historical reputation. Perhaps the current shift in perspective of public appreciation stems from the ready availability and apparent permanence of a Bach score-based work as opposed to the ephemerality of a Bach improvisation, together with the impossibility of preservation of Bach's own playing by means of recordings.

Documentary evidence of Bach's improvisations does exist however in the form of biographical notes and accounts from eyewitnesses. For example, it is known from Bach's biographer Johann Nikolaus Forkel that Bach improvised a fugue on a theme given to him without warning by the king of Prussia Frederick the Great. The account is given further verification by Bach himself in a letter to the king written after the meeting had taken place:

'With awesome pleasure I still remember the very special Royal grace when.....Your Majesty's Self deigned to play me a theme for a fugue upon the clavier, and at the same time charged me most graciously to carry it out in Your Majesty's most august presence.'

(J.S. Bach, quoted in Hofstadter, D.R: *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* p.6 (1979), Penguin)

The anecdote could have stayed within the confines of this encounter, yet a following passage from the same letter indicates a subsequent stage of musical development relevant to the present discussion:

'I noticed very soon however that, for lack of necessary preparation, the execution of the task did not fare as well as such an excellent theme demanded. I resolved therefore and promptly pledged myself to work out this right Royal theme more fully, and then make it

known to the world. This resolve has now been carried out as well as possible'. [ibid.]

Whether Bach in reality found his capabilities lacking or is merely observing social protocol in addressing a king, there is no doubt regarding the musical process at work. The initial improvisation is taken as a model for refinement, extension and completion through the use of various 'composerly' treatments of the theme to produce the work known as *The Musical Offering*.

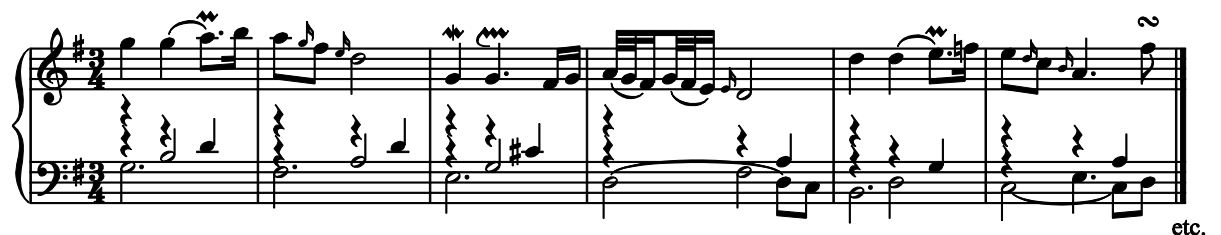
The Musical Offering is an example of a large-scale, fully realised work with origins in improvisation. However, it moves into the realm of composition through the establishment of musical boundaries, together with the notational 'seal' of the composer's decisions in this respect. Bach's choice of words such as 'resolve' and 'pledged' emphasise the conscious decision-making process of composition. His intention to make the theme 'known to the world', as well as a form of flattery to the king, demonstrates the role notation can bring in disseminating musical ideas of improvisational origin.

Bach can be seen therefore as an improviser/composer who, while consciously integrating improvisation, performance and composition, produces a clear separation between the stages of improvisation and composition in such works as the *Musical Offering*.

The improvisational stage can also be seen as preceding that of the compositional. The

same process can be seen at work in many Bach pieces, especially those connected with his activities as organ improviser such as the Fantasias, Toccatas and Chorale Preludes. It would seem that as a keyboard improviser and as composer, Bach was equally adept at representing his work in notated form and in live improvisation. The use of ornamentation, which would have been entirely familiar to him as a performer, finds extensive notational representation in the theme of the *Goldberg Variations*. This detailed ornamentation exists despite the ability of a skilled performer such as Bach himself to add improvised ornaments (see ex. 2 below).

Ex. 2 J.S. Bach: *Aria* from *Goldberg Variations*



The above example draws attention to the terminological difference between ‘improvisation’ and ‘improvisatory’. Although the extract may have been derived from the practice of improvisation, the fixed ornamentation results in an improvisatory texture which gives the listener the impression of an improvisation without being one. As with the Toccatas and Fantasias of Bach, it may be possible to view these realisations of improvisatory practice as an idealisation of improvisatory forms as well as compositional developments of them.

Beethoven and the Classical Cadenza

The stylistic changes effectuated between the music of the Baroque and Classical periods are of substantial importance to the relationship between composition and improvisation. Despite the activity of improvisers such as Mozart and Beethoven along with historical accounts of their prowess in demonstrations of their improvisational skill², on a compositional level there develops a gradual tendency as the period progresses to bring areas of improvisational practice, such as ornamentation, under the auspices of notational realisation. The change can be seen in the wider context of the move towards increased textural clarity sought by Classical composers in contrast to the impulse to decorate inherent in the Baroque tradition. As improvisation contains an element of unpredictability, even within the stylistic confines of the time, one of the most effective ways of curbing the tendency towards Baroque decoration is to set the form by means of notation. A very clear instance of this change from improvised to fixed form can be seen in the use of the Classical cadenza in concerto form, in particular within the professed 'early' to 'middle' periods of Beethoven's own composing career.

The two piano concertos of Beethoven will be used as the contrasting points of reference: no. 1 written as Op.15 in 1795 and no. 5 written as Op.73 in 1809. The first follows the traditional Mozartian model of a I_c chord played by the orchestra followed by

² Beethoven's biographer Thayer notes that Czerny reported Beethoven's improvisations as causing 'the greatest sensation in the first years of his sojourn in Vienna and even caused Mozart to wonder.' (Thayer ed. Forbes, E: 'The Year 1805' from *The Life of Beethoven*, Princeton University Press)

the cadenza itself which may theoretically be improvised or composed by the pianist but which can also consist of one of three alternatives supplied by Beethoven himself (the third of these cadenzas are included in 'Chapter 3: Score Materials'). Through the provision of notated cadenzas, Beethoven was following a tradition already established by Mozart who wrote down cadenzas for himself, students and other pianists to play although in performance he was known to extemporise without the reference to the notated version. In a letter Mozart writes: 'I have not changed the *Eingänge* in the Rondo [of K.271] because when I play the concerto I always do what comes to my mind'.³ The cadenza and quasi-cadenza intermediary passages of a Mozart concerto therefore represent sections of non-fixed content which can be realised from a variety of approaches and source materials. This element of choice remains in Beethoven's op. 15 concerto, but the three cadenzas supplied by Beethoven show extensive compositional workmanship as well as an improvisatory element. CD track 1 contains the third and most extended of the three cadenzas written by Beethoven. It includes numerous passages of Fantasia-like textures with sudden switches of key, of texture, and shifts from metered to *senza misura* sections. Although there exists a consistency of thematic treatment from the previous sonata-form argument, the whole passage lies outside the main framework of the piece as an addendum. It is, in the manner of any improvisation, replaceable.

However, by the fifth concerto the situation regarding the relationship of cadenza to main body of the movement is substantially changed. Not only does the cadenza exist in

³ Quoted in Neumann, F: *Ornamentation and Improvisation in Mozart* (1986), Princeton University Press

one version only, but the concerto also opens with the dramatic and innovative device of the cadenza itself (on CD track 2, also see score materials). Due to the structural issues as well as co-ordination with the orchestra, Beethoven writes the cadenza directly into the main score, thus precluding the possibility of alternative versions or an improvisatory approach. As the cadenza is now integral to the structure of the piece, it takes on a new compositional and notational significance. It enables the composer to exert more compositional control over the form as well as achieve compositional innovations which would be impossible otherwise⁴. The decorative elaboration of an improvised cadenza has no place here. The cadenza is embedded within the form as opposed to embodying a respite from it. This approach exemplifies the application of the unique properties of composition as described by Wiegold in Chapter 2.

Throughout his composing life, Beethoven can be seen as extending and testing the formal properties of Classical form while maintaining a strong sense of cohesion through the consistency and thoroughness of thematic and motivic treatment (for example in the Fifth Symphony). Despite his skills as an improviser, the process in action here is primarily that of composition. As the sonatas and symphonies become more extended with the progression of his career, so the compositional thoroughness of the working-through of material increases and the improvisational input recedes in favour of a hammering-out of dialectical constructs. The 'search for a compositional solution' in Beethoven's

⁴ It is possible that the increased compositional control exercised by Beethoven is connected with his retirement from the concert stage as a pianist around this time, since he would not have been able to play his own improvised cadenzas any longer.

sketchbooks also provides ample evidence for this dialectical process. Similarly, it is noteworthy that all major composers of piano concertos after Beethoven (Schumann, Brahms, Liszt, Grieg amongst others) did not revert to the earlier cadenza model of a pause bar over a I_c chord, but either grafted a fully-notated cadenza into the main score, or dispensed with the model of the cadenza altogether in favour of more dialectical compositional structures.

Beethoven and the Re-creation of Improvisation

The representation of improvisational devices (such as the cadenza) by notational means intensifies with the music of Beethoven's later music. In some late works, the composer attempts to recreate the improvisational process by means of the apparently paradoxical use of notational complexity and exactitude. A prime example of this phenomenon is the introduction to the fourth movement of his *Hammerklavier* Sonata op. 106 (the recording can be heard on CD track 3). Along with Beethoven's notated cadenzas of earlier concertos, this complex succession of abortive textures and contrasting compositional materials gives an indication as to the improvisational workings of the composer himself. The switches of textures and keys undertaken have parallels in such forms as the keyboard fantasia (as used by Mozart in K.397 and 475). In the case of Beethoven, the switches are brought so close together as to recreate the live thought process of a composer working at the composition desk. The process of sifting, trying out and rejecting ideas and the changing direction of thought in a real-time context are comparable to that

of an actual improvisation. The extract, therefore, is a commentary on what may be regarded as the improvisatory experimental stage of a piece's genesis as well as its integration into the actual piece, forming a part of the general search for a compositional resolution (which eventually emerges as the ensuing fugal structure). It is indicative of Beethoven's preoccupation with compositional form as opposed to improvisational flexibility that the improvisatory introduction is actually incomplete and requires the completion of a fully-composed movement for it to acquire legitimacy. In addition, despite the surface variability of texture, tempo and thematic material, there is (even in this section) a high degree of compositional control and planning in terms of the key shifts, which follow a carefully planned route from the chains of falling thirds in the bass octaves through to the varying levels of proximity (according to the circle of fifths) of the transitory keys to the final arrival point of Bb major. The sense of arrival at a predetermined point therefore gives context to all the improvisatory forays undertaken previously and lends credence to the composer's compositional resolve in his quest for a solution. The links between improvisational impulse, compositional control and notational representation have been described in terms of their radical effect by the commentator Charles Rosen:

'No other work until then....combined the effect of almost uncontrolled improvisatory movement with such a totally systematic structure'

(Rosen, C: *The Classical Style* p.429 (1972) Faber & Faber)

The composer's 'search for a solution' also features in the introductory section to the final movement of Beethoven's String Quartet op. 135. The music to this section can be heard on CD track 4. The opening bears the heading 'Der schwer gefasste Entschluss' (literally 'the heavily taken decision'). The composer opens the section with an upward phrase representing the question 'muss es sein?' ('must it be?', see ex. 3):

Ex. 3 Beethoven String Quartet in F Op. 135 fourth movement: motto theme



Reiterations of the question are met with varying responses by the upper strings in terms of dynamic, register and harmony, reflecting the mind's multiple improvised responses in order to reach a solution. As with the *Hammerklavier* sonata, however, the response, articulated by Beethoven's emphatic statement 'Es muss sein' ('it must be'), flows in the harmonically transparent home key and the consistent texture of the allegro finale.

When Beethoven, a former expert on improvisation as a performer, in later life confronts himself with the possibility of possibility itself in the question 'muss es sein?', (in musical terms perhaps intimating the possibility of the multiple responses inherent in improvisation), he takes the composer's approach of choosing one solution and notating it as the only possible solution. Therefore, although the textures used in the *Hammerklavier* and the String Quartet extracts may be called improvisatory on an aural level, there is no doubt regarding Beethoven's use of the improvisatory process as a

preliminary to compositional determinism.

Chopin and Notational Representation of Ornamentation

In the Romantic period, the exactitude of notational representation for improvisatory passages intensifies even further as the cult of the Romantic virtuoso emerges through composer/performers such as Paganini, Liszt and Chopin. Chopin, however, greatly admired the music of Bach⁵ and therefore can be seen as being equally influenced by aspects of Baroque style. Amongst these is the propensity to submit thematic repetition to increasing amounts of elaboration. The nature of this elaboration can be derived from Chopin's own improvisational practice at the keyboard, as commentator John Rink states:

'Not only did he compose at the piano, carefully crafting individual passages before committing them to paper, but he was expert at improvising in public concerts and the more private salons where he made a home for himself in 1830s and 1840s Paris.'

(Rink, J: *Chopin: The Piano Concertos*, p. 8 (1997) Cambridge University Press)

However, Chopin's use of improvisation does not (and cannot) fit the Baroque codes of notational shorthand used in ornamentation. Although Chopin may be effecting an ornament in terms of melodic shape, the complexity and precision required of the actual

⁵ Before recitals Chopin claimed to have shut himself away for two weeks to play the music of Bach rather than his own works (related by Chopin's pupil von Lenz and quoted in p.135-136 of *Chopin, Pianist and Teacher as seen by his Pupils* (1986) by J.J. Eigeldinger, Cambridge University Press).

execution demands an equally specific notation. In this way, techniques which in the Baroque era could be played through improvisational means become embedded within the compositional and notational fabric to such an extent that they are unchangeable.

As a consequence, a momentary 'flight of fancy', perhaps executed and transcribed by the composer in a matter of seconds, becomes a fixed entity through the process of precise notational documentation. Comparisons can be drawn with the documentary quality of photography which was also emerging as a technique around Chopin's time. As a result of this documentation, a precise level of reproduction is required from the thousands of pianists studying Chopin in present times, more than 150 years after the music was written. The power of notation demonstrated by this phenomenon of translation and subsequent dissemination of a single musical fragment is formidable. This is particularly evident in the field of classical music, where *Urtext* editions are generally accepted as the untouchable cornerstone of the repertoire. However, it should be remembered that as a result of the absence of recording technology in Chopin's time, in order for professional and amateur musicians to grasp the improvisatory style of a composer, it would have been necessary to see it represented in written form. The musical score as the medium for this purpose was a most effective form of dissemination.

An example of the use of complex notations by Chopin in variations on his own melodies is contained in his Nocturne in B major Op.9 no.3. The main theme is stated and followed by three four-bar extracts acting as variations and starting at bars 9, 21 and 29

respectively. The theme-and-variation forms are shown in the ex. 4 below and can be heard on CD track 5:

Ex. 4 Chopin Nocturne in B major op. 9 no. 3

Allegretto

p scherzando etc.

bar 9

5:3 5:3 7:6 9:6 9:6

bar 21

etc.

bar 29

etc.

schetz. 3 3 3 3 etc.

Detailed description: The image displays the musical score for Chopin's Nocturne in B major, Op. 9, No. 3. It begins with the tempo marking 'Allegretto' and the dynamic 'p' (piano). The piece is in 6/8 time and features a 'scherzando' character. The first system shows the initial theme in both treble and bass staves. The following four systems illustrate variations of this theme. The first variation (starting at bar 9) is marked with 'etc.' and includes rhythmic annotations: 5:3, 5:3, 7:6, 9:6, and 9:6. The second variation (starting at bar 21) also includes 'etc.'. The third variation (starting at bar 29) includes 'etc.'. The fourth variation (starting at bar 29) is marked 'schetz.' (scherzando) and features triplet markings (3) in both staves. The score concludes with 'etc.' in the final measure of the fourth variation.

On the first variation, stated four bars after the main theme has finished, Chopin incorporates a new figure in quintuplets which acts as a surrogate turn sign owing to the unorthodox use of irrational rhythmic groupings. In the second variation at bar 23, the ornamentation can be seen as an aggregate of upper mordent and appoggiatura but is given precise rhythmic placement, while the leap of a fifth in the last three notes lies somewhat outside the scope of the traditional notation of ornaments. The third variation at bar 29 varies the 'turn' motif of bar 9 and constitutes a variation of a variation. The subsequent leaps of an octave and above in bars 31 can be seen as decorating the chromaticism of bars 3 and 11. In this case and numerous others, the recourse to full notation rather than the ornamentation signs used in Baroque music can be seen as a requisite, even though the decoration itself can be seen as fulfilling a similar role. In the work of subsequent composers such as Liszt and Busoni (who in his transcription of Bach's Chaconne in D minor frequently wrote out Bach's ornaments in full notation), complex notations are consistently used to represent textures which may at least give the listener the impression of being partially improvised. There arises therefore a paradox between the relative complexity of the score in terms of the precision of its demands and the generalised improvisatory effect perceived by the listener. In such cases, the more generalised the texture, the more complex the notation needed to produce it. An example of this is the obfuscation of pulse through the use of supple rhythms working in syncopation against the main beats. The paradox may be more apparent in the so-called 'new complexity' music of the recent past (Ferneyhough, Finnissey and others), but this

can be argued to contain roots embedded in the classical tradition and such notationally radical works as Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata. Notwithstanding, such works represent the apotheosis of notation as a compositional tool and communicator of highly refined and precise musical information. They can perhaps be viewed as the merging of the decorative Baroque tendency with the substantive Beethovenian necessity to record musical events through a dialectical process.

Re-evaluation of Notation: Indeterminacy

The seismic changes of style in the classical tradition during the late 19th and early 20th century have been extensively documented and will not form a part of the present discussion except with regard to the relatively small impact the changes had on notational systems throughout this period. In the work of Stravinsky, Schoenberg and numerous other composers with reputations as innovators, the use of notation generally runs along standard lines, according to principles stable since the 18th century even if treatment of harmony and rhythm are stretched to unprecedented extremes. Although there were instances of cosmetic experiments (for example in the employment of crossed noteheads to represent accidentals in the work of Arthur Honegger and the deliberate omission of barlines in the work of Satie), it was not until the 1950s (in the work of composers such as Earle Brown, Morton Feldman and Stockhausen) that notation came to be explored as a medium itself. In particular, the score of *December '52* by Earle Brown was revolutionary in leaving fundamental musical parameters to the discretion of

the performers. These parameters would need to be deduced from the intentionally ambiguous graphic signs of the score (the horizontal and vertical lines of which resemble the work of visual artists such as Mondrian). The signs would therefore act as a catalyst for musical action but not represent the content in a familiar context of symbolic associations. Even basic musical information such as instrumentation is absent. All players, regardless of instrument, share the same one-page score, a feature which will recur in the work of Wiegold (Chapter 5) and the author himself (in Chapters 8 and 11).

The exploration of notation from this period did not happen in isolation. In the hands of composers, notation has always served the primary functions mentioned above of compositional representation and communication with the performer. As composers started to approach formal properties in alternative ways, they needed to adapt notation in order to reflect these concerns. In the Stockhausen work *Zyklus*, for example, the performer can start on any of the sixteen notated pages, read the score from left to right, right to left, or upside down (the author's own works *Dream Garden* and *Haiku Garden*, discussed in Chapter 10, further explore the directionality of music-reading).

Even composers who had previously generally adopted a relatively conventional approach to notation began to experiment with notation. In his Third Piano Sonata, Boulez used flexible notational layouts and Ligeti in *Volumina* used graphic notation to denote pitch clusters. Compositional priorities of the 1950s and 1960s often included aleatoric means and materials, and therefore notational systems were required to match

the new compositional processes. A representative piece for this approach is *Aleatorio* by Franco Evangelisti. In this work, performers are given choices between fixed compositional techniques such as *con* or *senza sordino* and the ordering of sections labelled *alpha*, *beta* and *gamma*. Further choices involve parameters of timbre, intensity, pitch, duration and tempo. However, the decisions to be made by the performers are specified by the composer as premeditated group decisions (as opposed to spontaneous decisions made on an individual basis in the manner of a single composer or improviser). Evangelisti also suggests that once the decision-making process is completed, players write out their version of the composition in full. Therefore the composer, having supplied the performers with the raw materials for the piece, transfers the traditional composer's role and responsibility of completion of the score entirely to the performers.

Igor Stravinsky, as probing observer of this phenomenon, comments on the (then) growing interest amongst composers in aleatoric procedures as follows:

'...The Sixties are the Age of the Aleatory.....in these do-it-yourself days, fewer and fewer composers actually bother to write their music out for the performer, or for that matter compose it, which is what Walter Lippmann meant by 'masterly inactivity'.

(Stravinsky, I: *Themes and Conclusions*, p. 30)

Stravinsky proceeds to cite as an example of 'masterly inactivity' the notorious example of *4'33"* by John Cage which (although the notation employed is entirely standard in score

layout and the use of the word *tacet*) carries indeterminacy to unprecedented extremes. Perhaps Stravinsky would see *4'33"* as a symbol of the 'post-composer' period mentioned in the previous chapter. It could be considered ironic, however, that it took a 'composer' to provoke the work into existence.

Other notations of a more graphic nature employed by such composers as Stockhausen and John Cage himself in his *Piano Concert* were experimental, innovative and appealed as visual objects in themselves. The score to *Piano Concert*, for example, has been exhibited in art galleries and has appeared in the book *Notations*, a compilation of extracts edited by Cage of score designs from a wide range of composers and compositional sources. The potential for the actual visual impact of a score to overshadow its traditional symbolic function was not left unnoticed by the somewhat sceptical Stravinsky who, in discussing 'one of Stockhausen's ideogrammatic percussion scores' (presumably *Zyklus*) commented:

'Interest is sustained primarily by the novelties of notation, and this is not the composer's intention, I think, as it is with the composers of the so-called graphic school, whose scores are avowedly for the eye only.'

(Stravinsky, I: *Memories and Commentaries*, p.25)

It is noteworthy that once a notated score is perceived to be of more interest than the aural realisation of its signs and symbols, its mere existence is called to question. Along

with indeterminacy and chance methods of composition, as employed by Cage, the role of notation became embroiled in the wider question of the role of the composer. Of particular concern in this regard is the consequent reliance on improvisation on the part of performers to interpret the (intentionally) equivocal signs and symbols presented by the notation itself.

Through the use of indeterminate means, notations were able to contain an internal flexibility to an extent which was hitherto unknown. In addition, they did not only serve as symbols of a composer's vision, but also existed as the actual original vision of the work itself, as in *Treatise* by Cornelius Cardew. This work consists of 192 pages of graphic shapes. These are occasionally reminiscent of noteheads and staves but never clearly symbolic in the conventional sense. They give the freedom (and concurrent responsibility) of interpretation to the performers. There is no 'imagined sound' for which the signs act as symbols. Cardew himself kept a journal whilst preparing the score. His own observations display his acute awareness of the shift of perspective produced by the new status given to the notation:

'The sound should be a picture of the score, not vice versa'.

'Interpreter! Remember that no meaning is yet attached to the symbols'.

'In the *Treatise* the score seems not representational. No rules of representation.'

(Cardew, C: from *Treatise Handbook* (1971), Edition Peters)

Cardew also acknowledges the emergence of improvisation as a result of the notational process of 'Treatise' (see below):

'It does seem (using hindsight) to have pointed in the direction of improvisation. A square musician (like myself) might use 'Treatise' as a path to the ocean of spontaneity'. (ibid.)

The radical nature of the resulting relationship between composition, improvisation and notation is summed up by the composer Michael Parsons:

'Cardew, like Wittgenstein in his later work, became increasingly concerned with the activity of interpretation, rather than the notion of a literal, fixed meaning for each sign.....In treating notation primarily as a stimulus to the performer, rather than a representation of a fixed musical structure, Cardew had in fact already undermined one of the basic foundations of the Western musical tradition.'

(Parsons, M: Introduction to *Cornelius Cardew, A Reader* p.xi-xii (2006, Matchless)

Underneath the graphic signs of *Treatise*, the composer actually provides empty staves for the 'realisation' of the piece, underlining the function of the score as process- (as opposed to product-) based.

It is evident that once precise notational symbols are replaced by graphic ones which rely on creative interpretation by performers, compositional and/or improvisational

processes need to be undertaken by the performers themselves in order to interpret the new notational signs. The increased freedom/responsibility of the performer which results may be seen either as a positive step towards collaborative composition, or as an additional burden on top of the demanding task of performing, depending on the piece in question and the mindset of the performer. However, with a constant stream of new works each providing its own notational systems and, in many cases (*Treatise* providing a notable exception) an instruction manual explaining the new notations, the task of interpreting each piece becomes highly labour-intensive. This contrasts with the universally recognised system embodied centuries ago in traditional notation. Cage's book *Notations* may be a fascinating collection of varied notations from many sources within the contemporary music world of the 1960s; however it does represent a dilemma of Tower of Babel dimensions in that for each piece a performer learns, s/he will also need to learn the specificities of its notational 'language'.

Contemporary Trends in Notation

Despite the advent of electronic music, computer graphics and the aforementioned innovations in notation, conventional notation has, for many composers, re-emerged and been reclaimed in recent decades as a flexible, resilient and proven form of communication between composers and performers. It has thus been adopted (and in some cases re-adopted) by many composers of the late 20th century, including some former composers of graphic music such as Feldman.

Nevertheless, the innovations of the 1950s and 1960s still bear relevance to the current situation and present possibilities for further exploration. It is in the context of broadly conventional notation, as opposed to the devising of replacement systems of notation, that these explorations still occur in the work of the author and other contemporary composers. In this respect, performers will be able to tackle the challenges of innovatory notational aspects while maintaining the frame of reference provided by conventional notation. This avoids the scenario of a performer necessarily re-learning the musical equivalent of the alphabet in coming to terms with the basic but unfamiliar invented notational vocabulary of a new piece.

Makoto Nomura and Collaborative Composition.

One example of a contemporary composer whose work habitually involves the mixing of conventional and non-conventional notational forms is the Japanese composer Makoto Nomura. Nomura has devised a form of collaborative composition entitled '*Shougi Composition*' (an example score can be found in the compilation 'Chapter 3: Score Materials'). *Shougi* is a form of Japanese chess, and in the collaborative process the musicians take turns to compose individual fragments of music, which are then written down on a single sheet of paper shared between the whole group. The notation chosen by the performers can be of any kind according to their inclination and skill-base, as any particular performer will only perform the fragment which s/he has written down. As can

be seen from the example, which represents the performing score, players have chosen a mixture of conventional, semi-conventional (letter names for notes, for example) and unconventional notational means, but the score still serves its basic function as an aide-memoire to be communicated through performance.

The collaborative nature of Nomura's *Shougi* composition method, coupled with the indeterminate notations of Cage, Feldman, Stockhausen, Cardew and others, have had a strong influence on the author who, whilst always using conventional notation as a starting point, has endeavoured to find specific notational systems to match the specific creative processes involved. All the compositions presented in the thesis have therefore at least to some degree a particular concern with specific notational issues. In Chapter 11, for example, the piece *Haiku Garden* contains an element of collaborative composition, while in other pieces the notational issues deriving from indeterminacy and/or improvisation take precedence.

Before the author's own work is analysed, however, the discussion will focus on two practitioners who are well-versed in the balancing of compositional and improvisational techniques and strategies: Miles Davis and Peter Wiegold.

Chapter 4 - Approaches (1): Miles Davis

[All audio extracts for this chapter can be found on CD 2]

This chapter will focus on the work involving composition and improvisation of composer, trumpeter and bandleader Miles Davis. Central to the discussion will be the inherent nature and function of predetermined musical material in works which involve a significant amount of improvisation. Particular reference will be made to works from the years 1969-1975.

Introduction to the work of Miles Davis

The music of Miles Davis during the period 1969-1975 is generally regarded as some of the most radical of his career. Overt reasons for this perception are the increasing use of amplified as opposed to acoustic instruments and the use of rock-based straight-quaver rhythms (with repeated bass ostinati) which replaced the conventional jazz approach of swing-based rhythms and standard tonal chord progressions.

However, it is the author's contention that the seeds of the musical materials and processes employed by Davis in the 1970s were already in evidence in his album *Kind of Blue*, recorded in 1957. Therefore, before examining the more recent work in detail, an initial examination will be undertaken of Davis' general working methods followed by a

track from this album.

Approach to composition and notation

If one discounts the big-band collaborations between Miles Davis and Gil Evans (which would necessarily rely on a score to co-ordinate the players), there are very few instances of detailed Miles Davis music scores for ensemble other than those transcribed by other musicians. Some jazz charts from his early career are publicly available as well as various transcriptions of his improvised solos⁶. In some group work however, although Davis supplied compositional material to a rehearsal or recording session (especially for small group work) it was often in sketch form as opposed to a fully-realised version. The evidence of this approach is given by fellow musicians working for Davis sessions:

“Miles frequently arrived in the studio with some chords written on a brown paper bag”
(McLaughlin, J. quoted in Milkowski B: *‘Miles’ Rock Manifesto’ – Complete Jack Johnson Sessions*, p.71 from CD liner notes)

“There were some minimal musical sketches laid out, a few notes and a few chords here and there, and big gaps leaving you to wonder what to do”

(Hancock, H. quoted in Tingen, P: *Miles Beyond* p.135 (2001), Billboard Books)

These comments are supported by Davis himself:

⁶ Transcriptions include the albums *Birth of the Cool* and *Kind of Blue* published by Hal Leonard (1998, 2000 respectively)

“I didn’t write out the music for *Kind of Blue*, but brought in sketches for what everybody was supposed to play because I wanted a lot of spontaneity in the playing.....the first time Bill [Evans] saw any of that music was when I gave him a sketch to look at just like everyone else. We didn’t even have rehearsals for that music.”

(Davis, M & Troupe, Q: *The Autobiography* p.224 (1991), Picador)

It may already be noted that, through bringing only sketches to rehearsal and recording sessions, Davis was clearly relying on the use of the creative resources of his players to complete the work either through improvisation or through the performer assuming the composer’s role in realising the compositional idea(s).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, such a method bypasses the orthodox expectation of a composer that a score be fully realised and detailed by the first rehearsal. The reasons for this are made clear by Davis himself, regarding his album *Bitches Brew*:

‘What we did on *Bitches Brew* you couldn’t ever write down for an orchestra to play. That’s why I didn’t write it all out, not because I didn’t know what I wanted; I knew what I wanted would come out of a process’.

(Davis, p. 290)

By ‘not writing it all out’, Miles Davis in *Bitches Brew* occasionally left some players

with no written parts even if others had them; according to band member Lenny White, in some instances only the keyboard players were given written sketches⁷.

Another factor regarding the notation used in such sessions is that the pre-notated music would often be transformed by the performers during whilst playing. The composer Paul Buckmaster commented on one particular rehearsal situation:

“I had written lots of keyboard phrases that were to occur at certain points in the piece. They were little fragments, phrases, or fills of two, four or eight bars long. The musicians interpreted them, and completely distorted them.”

(Tingen p. 143)

Whether this was Buckmaster’s intention is unclear, but in terms of jazz practice, transformation of written material can be considered common practice compared to the classical tradition, especially in terms of the type of process set up by Davis.

Although the actual sketches revealing the extent of Davis’s compositional input are not available for this discussion, plenty of recorded evidence is available (including alternate takes) and much of the predetermined material (whether notated or not) is terse and appeals to the listener’s faculties of recognition. Therefore, the predetermined material can be easily deduced from the recordings in most cases. It may be argued that

⁷ Related in Tingen p. 65

this clarity was fully intended in artistic terms by Davis. It gives such a strong compositional context for the improvisation that it may well have been his intention to deliberately refrain from the inclusion of additional compositional ideas for fear of constricting the improvisational possibilities. It is also the concise and transparent nature of the material which lends it to the following analysis.

Kind of Blue: Example (1): *So What*

So What is a track from the aforementioned album *Kind of Blue* (1957). The basic compositional material is transcribed overleaf in ex. 5 and can be heard on CD track 1.

Ex. 5 Theme from *So What*

The musical score consists of four systems of piano accompaniment for the theme of *So What*.
 - The first system (measures 1-5) is marked 'A' with a tempo of *c.135*. It features a bass line of eighth notes and chords in the right hand.
 - The second system (measures 6-10) is marked 'A1' and includes the instruction 'transposition up a semitone'. The bass line continues, and the right hand chords are transposed.
 - The third system (measures 11-13) continues the transposed material.
 - The fourth system (measures 14-17) is marked '(Da Capo)' and repeats the first system's material.
 - The overall structure is 8 bars for section A, 8 bars for section A1, 8 bars for the continuation of A1, and 8 bars for the Da Capo section, totaling 32 bars.

structure: A-A-A1-A (8+8+8+8 bars =32 bars)

The theme of *So What* consists of two strands of material:

1. a bar-long bass line with an upward profile through D2-A3-D3
2. two chords of identical intervallic formation, placed a second apart from each other.

The two strands can be seen as interlinked in a call-and-response structure, with the shared use of the Dorian mode providing a form of harmonic cohesion.

Although the call-and-response structure is common to many jazz tracks⁸, the factor which marks the Davis example as radical is that once the materials are presented in their basic distilled form, any alterations which follow never interfere with the essential structural elements of the repeated theme. For example, in bar 4 of the bass line just one note is omitted as a form of variation. Also in bar 9, instead of the usual jazz procedure of employing a contrasting harmonic progression (such as a 'middle-eight'), Davis simply transposes the whole section up a semitone to Eb, only to return to the root of D eight bars later. The melodic and chordal material is therefore characterised as much through non-development as it is through repetition or near-repetition.

In a rhythmic sense, the piece is strongly shaped by the on-/offbeat syncopation of the two adjacent chords. This example represents one of the simplest possible ways to achieve a syncopated effect. After the numerous repetitions of the opening rhythm, the improviser and audience will have absorbed it as a frame of reference for the subsequent improvisatory sections (for example, it is taken up by the piano at 2'22" as the first improvisation section starts). Along with the clear pedal points of D and Eb and the Dorian mode, the player is given very clear musical bearings from which to embark on improvisation. He knows that whichever musical avenues he decides to explore, the pedal point and the presence (actual or implied) of the syncopated rhythm will act as a constant frame of reference. It is typical in Davis works that the improvisatory element develops to

⁸ cf. *Moanin'* (1958), performed on the eponymous album by Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers

a radical extent (as in the solo played by John Coltrane from 3'26"), but that the whole will be anchored throughout by the bass pedal point. This provides a quasi-classical continued sense of overall architectural balance. The texture can be likened to a satellite (soloist) orbiting a planet (pedal point); the trajectory of the orbit may be narrow or wide, but the satellite will always be within the gravitational field of the planet. In addition, as the improvisers are not bound by the negotiation of the complex chord progressions commonly found in the previous Bebop era, they will also feel freedom to explore their own response to the musical material at a personal level. This is reflected in the highly contrasting approaches that saxophonists Coltrane and Adderley bring to their improvisations in the recording (Coltrane's solo starts at 3'26" and Adderley's at 5'17").

The above example demonstrates Davis' preoccupation with clear and concise presentation of compositional elements to provide a strong frame of reference for improviser and audience alike. In this sense he found himself working with a different set of priorities from so-called 'free improvisers' such as Ornette Coleman, owing to his insistence on clear structural guidelines. He remarked:

"You have to have some kind of form. You have to start *somewhere*."

(Tomkins, L: 'The Classic Interview: Miles Davis', *Crescendo International* p.28 (c.1970))

Davis 1970-1975: Riff and Head-Motif

Davis's work of the early seventies is characterised by live recordings and studio tracks of substantial length yet using a minimal amount of preset material. Often the preset material consists of a repeating bass motif and a terse melodic motif, while individual improvisations run for several minutes. In this section of the discussion, various motifs from this work will be analysed in terms of their suitability for improvisational contexts, following which their use from a structural perspective will be considered.

Terminology

The terms 'riff' and 'head-motif' will be used consistently in the following commentary. Although they are in common usage among musicians, their use is traditionally restricted to rock and jazz contexts. For purposes of clarification, the word 'riff' will be considered interchangeable with the classical music term 'ostinato', whereas 'head-motif' can be interpreted as the principal motif of a work (using the word 'head' in the jazz sense of principal theme). As Davis's melodies were usually compressed to the minimum dimensions, the use of 'motif' seems more apposite in these instances than 'theme' or 'subject'.

Davis Band Riffs – analysis

In Davis's work of the period 1969-1975, the riff can be seen as a fundamental structural building block. Therefore an overview of the nature and function of the riff may be deemed appropriate here. The list of riffs presented below all derive from Davis's work of 1969-75 and are mostly played by either double-bass or electric bass. Not all riffs are attributable to Davis as composer, although he is generally credited as composer on the commercial recordings. It is probable that he composed some, devised some in rehearsal with performers and that others were created by his band members, hence the personal use of the term 'Davis band riff'.

In considering the relationship between the composed and improvised elements of work from this period, it is useful to analyse the technical construction of the riff and its musical potential for improvisational response. From this point of view, riffs have been divided into three main categories as follows:

1. Dynamic-circular

Ex. 6 *It's About that Time* from the album *In a Silent Way* (1969)



This type of riff works as a loop by providing continuous forward momentum and often pushing the direction of the phrase to the first beat of the next bar. It is a self-contained, 'closed' structure and acts as a constant bedrock for solo improvisation.

2. Dynamic-Call and Response

Ex. 7 Willie Nelson from the album *A Tribute to Jack Johnson* (1971)



This type of riff has forward propulsion for some of its duration, but leaves space for the remainder, inviting the improviser to occupy or leave the vacant space as appropriate (in the manner of *So What* mentioned above). It can therefore be thought of as a 'semi-open' structure, containing latent energy to be exploited by the improvisers.

3. Static

Ex. 8 *Yesternow* from *A Tribute to Jack Johnson* (1971)



Although it may contain a basic rhythmic harmonic profile, this type of riff serves the

function of opening up improvisational space by leaving the majority of the phrase empty. It prompts the improviser to decide whether to occupy the space by playing or enhance the sense of space by remaining silent along with the bass player. The use of drums in such textures is often restricted accordingly. The riff can be seen as creating an ‘open’ structure in terms of its opening of the time/space field for other performers to exploit.

Example: *Honky-Tonk*

To provide a more detailed analysis of a riff in context, the ‘static’ riff for the piece *Honky Tonk* (1970) will be selected as an example (see ex. 9). The riff stands alone as pre-composed material; there is no main melodic theme or motif and no other set patterns for instruments other than the bass guitar.

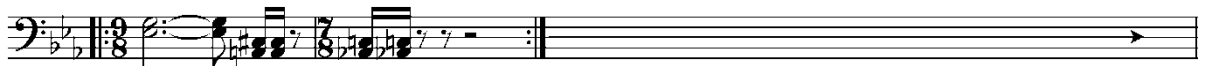
Ex. 9 *Honky Tonk* - bass riff from the album *The Cellar Door Sessions* (1970)



This riff evokes the I-IV chordal relationship central to the blues form and thus establishes a binary relationship of two polarised chords for the soloist to explore (the technique of providing two polarised chords to give harmonic context for improvisation will be further explored in the work of Peter Wiegold in Chapter 5). In the harmonic sense the riff is conventional, but the conventionality is offset by rhythmic asymmetry. This is caused by

the irregular spacing of the rhythmic cells and leads to an anomaly of aural perception. Because the riff is initially heard alone without any complementary rhythms to provide metric context, the opening upbeat, repeated after a gap of almost three seconds, may be perceived as a downbeat, leading to an aural perception along the following lines (see ex. 10):

Ex. 10 *Honky Tonk* – alternative rhythmic perception



The resulting perceptual imbalance creates the necessary tension for the solo improviser who then may feel inclined to intensify the asymmetry within the improvisation or respond with a more regular type of phrasing, thereby balancing irregularity with regularity. The possibilities for the soloist are therefore wide-ranging, including the use of silence set up by the gaps in the bass line.

The recording of *Honky Tonk* selected as an example (which can be heard on CD track 2) is one of various live versions, all of them sharing a slow tempo and a preoccupation among the soloists with the exploitation of the space activated by the bass riff. The CD example consists of the opening ten minutes of the twenty minute track, with successive solos from Keith Jarrett on keyboard and Miles Davis on trumpet. The extract

has been chosen with particular reference to the contrasting way in which the two soloists build their improvisations around the bass line.

The Jarrett solo begins at 0'30" and can be divided into three parts: the solo proper (0'30-4'30"), a short period of repose (4'30"- 4'45"), and a section which prepares the ground for the subsequent trumpet solo (4'45-5'05"). In the main solo section, Jarrett can be heard developing phrases of rapid note sequences in varying relationships of phrase length to intervening pause length. As the solo progresses, the phrases gradually become longer and the periods of silence shorter, reaching a point of saturation by 4'30". The improvisational approach employed here can be seen as contrasting the intermittency of the bass line with a high concentration of fluid, continuous sound. This creates a balance of tension between the changeable keyboard solo and the bass riff, the latter remaining unaltered for the most part (the only time the bass reacts spontaneously to the general density of texture is after the Davis solo, by means of quick flurries of notes at 9'45" and 9'56").

At 4'30" Jarrett cuts his solo abruptly, then merges with the bass part by playing a sustained Eb at 4'35". This provides a point of cadential resolution to the previous section, while simultaneously bringing the keyboard role in line with that of the bass from a harmonic and rhythmic point of view. Thereafter, the keyboard works on a chordal approach in the upper register outlining an Eb/Gb motif at 5'15" (which is picked up in the following Davis solo) as well as complementing the bass part by filling out the implied

I-IV harmony.

The Davis solo (ex. 11, CD 4'45'') starts with the cadential Bb-Eb figure outlined by Jarrett from 4'30'' to 4'35'', establishing the home key of the bass riff but also outlining in a transposed form its intervallic profile of a falling fifth. Despite this connection, however, the Davis solo is characterised by a contrasting approach to the development of improvisational line in terms of pitch and rhythmic profile. Much of the Davis line derives from just four central notes: Eb-F-Gb-Bb, although they are very rarely heard as an entire sequence. Instead, Davis often takes pairs of notes, in particular Gb-Eb (at 6'55'' and 7'28'', referring back to the Jarrett motif of 5'15''), F-Gb (at 7'05'', 7'47'' and 8'10''), and occasional groups of the three notes Bb-Gb-Eb (9'07''). The outline of the melody is shown overleaf in notational form (without rhythmic detail) and underlines the intense concentration on the pitches mentioned:

Ex. 11: Honky Tonk – Davis improvisation

end = 9'55"

In addition, the groups of two and three notes used by Davis can be seen as working in parallel with the two underlying bass chords of Eb-Ab as well as the full sequence of three chords of Eb-A-Ab (see ex. 9). From this perspective, the Davis solo can be seen as deriving from and working in sympathy with the bass line through the exploration of its inherent characteristics.

From an overall perspective, however, the structure of the Davis solo can be seen as contrasting the bass line through the exploitation of different instrumental registers. From the beginning of the solo on a Bb4 to its climax on the extreme Bb6, Davis works his way through his playing register to create a dynamic yet architecturally measured upwards sweep to his melodic line which is quasi-compositional in its deliberation.

Together with the switch from the muted sound of the wah-wah pedal (used on up to 8'30") to the strident sound of the open trumpet (at 8'45") and a gradual increase of dynamic level through the solo, the line generates a forcefulness which provides a marked contrast to the unchanging bass line. Using very different means to the Jarrett solo, Davis produces a level of tension between his solo and the bass line while at the same time maintaining connections between them through the use of complementary phrasing, rhythms and pitch selections.

Head-Motif

In many pieces by Davis from the period 1969-1975 there exists, along with the bass riff, a melodic fragment serving as a head-motif, usually consisting of a limited number of notes. It is worth taking into account that Davis's musical background was that of a jazz musician who, in a piece such as *My Funny Valentine*, would be used to playing a set theme which would serve as a melodic source for improvisation as well as signalling the recapitulation towards the end of the piece. However, the difference between such a theme and a Davis motif (as the terminology suggests) is that a Davis motif is more compressed and often dispenses with all but the most basic harmonic content. The conciseness of the motifs is evident from the examples given overleaf (see ex. 12-16):

preceding piece (as in the above example), creating a virtual double bar line. The conciseness and flexibility of the head-motif are conducive to such usage and reflect Davis's predilection for clear structure. In extended improvisational forms, it provides a navigational tool for audience and performers alike. In addition, the device of the head-motif allows Davis to give cues to his band through purely musical means, without resorting to visual direction in the manner of a conductor (this issue will be discussed in more detail with reference to the author's own work in Chapters 8 and 11). A more detailed analysis of the use of the head-motif used in ex. 16 will be discussed later in this chapter along with other structural issues of the piece.

Circular Melodies

The use of circular, repeating forms will be already evident in Davis's work, in particular through the use of riffs. However, the concept of circularity does not only exist in this small-scale context. As well as using riff and head-motifs, Davis occasionally uses longer melodies which bear a resemblance to the extended theme of a jazz standard.

Nevertheless, in Davis's case the treatment of the melodic line is often very different from the variation-through-improvisation approach of the jazz standard. In fact, in some cases the melodies are deliberately kept free of improvisational elaboration, in the same way that a cantus firmus will repeat in its original form in, for example, a mass setting of Machaut or Dufay. Another way of viewing an extended melody which repeats unchanged is as an extended riff around which variations can be elaborated. The use of a

riff in the mid-register may be seen as unconventional for Davis in view of his more frequent use of the bass range for this function, but it does give improvisational scope to instruments normally confined to an accompanying role in jazz, for example the rhythm section of piano, drums and bass. An early example of this in Davis' career is *Nefertiti* (CD track 4 and ex. 17, shown below):

Ex. 17: *Nefertiti* (1967): theme

(Swung quavers)

8

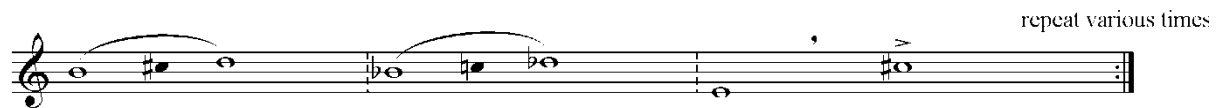
12

The structure consists of a sixteen bar melody played twelve consecutive times while the rhythm section takes increasingly explorative forays into improvisation. Circular melodies in following years tend to be played without a set pulse, although the trumpet sets the timing in terms of note-to-note change (with the saxophone often doubling simultaneously or a fraction of a second behind). The absence of perceivable pulse unhinges the melody from concerns of divisive rhythm and into the perceptual realm of a

continuous flow of time (a sensation enhanced by the various repetitions of the theme).

An example of a circular theme without set pulse is given below in ex. 18 and can be heard on CD track 5:

Ex. 18 *Great Expectations* from the album *Big Fun* (1974)



The melodies have been notated without stems in order to convey the relative temporal placing of notes. Longer notes are written as white notes and shorter notes are written in black. This type of notation also has apparently been employed by Davis himself, according to the eyewitness account of his drummer, Billy Cobham:

“There were no stems on the notes. Nothing was tied. There might be three notes then a space then four tones, then a space, then two notes. You’d have to generally know how it was phrased, but it didn’t necessarily mean that it was going to stay like that.”

(Tingen p. 78)

Once again the mutability and flexibility of notation in Davis’s work is brought to the fore in this statement. Notation serves more as a creative starting point than a documentary

end in itself.

It may be noted that this method of notation in terms of stemless notes has also been used within the contemporary European tradition by such composers as György Kurtág. This is evident in works such as *Játékok* ('Games') for piano. It also features in the author's own work, in particular the work *Memorial/Chorale* discussed in Chapter 8.

Yet another approach to circular melody is taken by Davis towards the end of the track *Pharaoh's Dance* (on CD track 6 and notated as ex. 19 overleaf):

Ex. 19 *Pharaoh's Dance* from the album *Bitches Brew* (1970)

16'38" COLOR

2 17'06"

6 17'26"

11

16 17'45"
marc.

20 18'00"
sost.

26 18'24"
più p

32 (tacet)

38 18'50"
più f

43 19'09"

48 fade (on groove)

end 20'04"

In the above example, Davis mostly plays within a framework of regular pulsation, but each time the theme is stated, he varies the rhythmic structure of the melody along with the articulation and dynamic level in some instances. The effect is of refraction of the melodic lines, at times distorting the sense of the time continuum through compression or expansion of the phrase. This technique recalls the distortion of the physical features of an object in a cubist painting in the way it draws attention to its formal elements.

Along with techniques already discussed, the existence in a texture of an unchanging, repeating element (in this case a sequence of pitches functioning as a color) gives rise to a flexibility of performance in other areas (in this case rhythm, phrasing, articulation and dynamics).

Head Motif and Riff: combinations

As exemplified above in *Honky Tonk*, it is possible for an entire work played by the Davis band to be founded on a single riff without any other preset material. However, in most cases there exists a combination of motif and riff working synchronously. Two examples will now be analysed in this respect. The first example is a piece by band member Wayne Shorter and is entitled *Feio*. The melodic line with harmonised variants is shown overleaf in ex. 20 and the whole piece can be heard on CD track 7.

Ex. 20 *Feio* head-motif

The image displays musical notation for 'Ex. 20 *Feio* head-motif'. It consists of two staves. The top staff features three variations of a motif, labeled (a), (b), and (c). Variation (a) is a melodic phrase in treble clef. Variation (b) is a harmonized phrase in treble clef. Variation (c) is a transposed melodic phrase in bass clef. The bottom staff shows a bass riff in bass clef, 4/4 time, labeled 'Bass riff (slow, rubato)'. The riff consists of a few notes followed by a long horizontal line with an arrow pointing to the right, indicating a sustained or rubato section.

The melodic phrases, played in multiple octaves or harmonised in inverted triads, are never developed through the course of the work, despite being presented nine times in total. The bass line, implying a I-IV-V chord sequence, also remains unchanged except for slight variations in the transposed version and sporadic improvisatory additions. The overall effect is of two objects crossing paths occasionally but essentially unaffected by each other. The intermediate acoustical space activated by the combination of melody and riff is exploited by the improvising instruments in a *senza misura* tapestry of textural and percussive interplay, without the domination of any particular instrument. The types of interjection given by each instrument are broadly consistent: for example the single distorted attack on the electric guitar, the subdued snare drum roll or the repeated Bb in the trumpet line. The consistency of types of improvised material in ever-changing combinations produces a kaleidoscopic effect, which in turn is offset by the entries of the bass riff and head-motif.

In relative terms, there is an extensive amount of time (11 minutes) given to this

exploration of musical space considering the minimal material used. This exemplifies the leeway given by Davis for the riff and improvisational possibilities to run their full course without compositional preoccupations of development or 'completion' of the piece. The track ends inconclusively, emphasising the non-developmental form of the work and the impression of its being able to continue indefinitely. Davis cites his influence in this respect to be Stockhausen; in his own words:

'I got further and further into the idea of performance as a process. I had always written in a circular way and through Stockhausen I could see that I didn't want to ever play again from eight bars to eight bars, because I never end songs, they just keep going on'.

(Davis, p. 319)

The question of open form will be addressed later in the thesis in particular with reference to the author's work *Dream Garden* and *Haiku Garden* in Chapter 11.

The head-motif is stated nine times by the ensemble, with an additional (possibly spontaneous) entry by the solo saxophone at 4'43". The spacing of entries varies from 56 seconds (6'42"-7'38") to 1 minute 36 seconds (1'16"-2'52), with most entries placed approximately one minute apart. This leaves enough space for each entry to make its impact individually, then leave the listener's short-term memory in order to focus on the texture in the intervening time. Despite the somewhat flexible timing of the head-motif, the arrangement of each entry is pre-set each time in the following sequence (overleaf):

(a) (b) (c) (b)

in octaves – harmonised – transposed – harmonised

This gives an overall sequence of (a) (b) (c) (b) (a) (b) (c) (b) (a), (if one discounts the ‘wild card’ saxophone entry between (c) and (b) entry at 4’43”). As well as underlining the ritornello-like function of the head-motif, this structure again displays evidence of Davis’s scrupulous pre-planning of certain elements in an otherwise spontaneous form.

When considering the combination of head-motif and riff in Davis works from this period, it is worth re-emphasising the importance of economy of means employed for clarity of musical intention. The second example, the title track from the album *In A Silent Way*, is a case in point. The final version of the track selected for the recording derives from the original composition by Joe Zawinul, which was brought into the studio for musicians to work on the very same day as the recording. The original recording, which contains a full set of chord changes (as is typical of jazz-based forms), can be heard on CD track 8. This recording may represent a rehearsal of the piece or an attempted recording. Whatever the case, Davis as bandleader/ arranger thereupon proceeds to make creative decisions regarding the piece which radically transform its impact. The results can be heard on CD track 9. Davis has relieved the form of all chord changes and rhythmical regularity leaving a pedal tone on the note E as the only constant remaining accompaniment for the melody.

The melody, assigned to the guitar, is played with a halting sense of rubato, presumably brought about by Davis's elliptical instruction to the guitarist John McLaughlin to play "like you've never played the guitar before" .

(Demicheal, D: 'Miles Davis' from *Rolling Stone*, p.23)

The situation is described by Davis himself:

'We changed what Joe had written in *A Silent Way*, cut down all the chords and took his melody and used that.....In rehearsals we had played it like Joe had written it, but it wasn't working for me because all the chords were cluttering it up. I could hear that the melody that Joe had written – which was hidden by all the other clutter – was really beautiful. When we recorded I just threw out the chord sheets and told everyone to play just the melody.'

(Davis, p. 288)

By means of this arrangement process, Davis achieves a concentration on what he considers the essence of the piece (the melody in this case) and concurrently to strip away anything which may be seen as detracting from that essence⁹.

In his treatment of other composers' material, Davis can be seen as deconstructing

⁹ As well as *In a Silent Way*, it is interesting to compare the pared-down melody of *Feio* (see above) to a more elaborate and harmonically sophisticated version recorded by the composer (Shorter). The latter version is re-titled *Ana Maria*, from the Shorter album *Native Dancer* (1974). It shows how the melody may have been imagined by the composer without Davis's intervention.

through a process of musical distillation rather than building upon another composer's vision. The process of refinement through arrangement is typical of his work and is supported by comments from musicians from his groups of this period, such as bass player Dave Holland:

"It was quite an education to see Miles take a piece of music and adapt it to what he wanted it to be. I don't ever remember Miles ever playing someone else's tune the way they had written it. He always changed it. He'd take a section, do something with it, and make it his. If there were many chords, he'd just have the bass play one note underneath all the moving chords, so that you get a pedal point. He did this with Zawinul's 'In a Silent Way'..... One of the main things I learned from these sessions is how important process is to the end result. The way you put something together is as important as what you put together, and influences what you end up with."

(Tingen p.57-58)

As well as demonstrating the importance in Davis's work of process as well as product, the above quotation also highlights the fact that Davis had no compunction in appropriating another composer's music. This leads to a contentious situation regarding ownership of the music, especially as *In a Silent Way* is credited on the CD as Davis's work.

It is arguable, however, that *In a Silent Way* would not have reached its final form

in any other way to that instigated by Davis. As a consequence, the composer, arranger and the piece become enmeshed in each other's identities in a way which would be unthinkable in the conventional separation of the roles of composer, performer and arranger common in classical and jazz music. In Davis's own words:

'People were walking about mad because I took credit for arranging *In a Silent Way*, but I *did* arrange the music by changing it like I did.'

(Davis, p. 287)

The tension between composer and bandleader in this instance highlights Davis's role not only as arranger, but artistic director of musicians in specific projects. It is this highly significant contributing factor to the Davis oeuvre which will be examined next.

Davis as Creative Project Director

Through his direction of such projects as *In a Silent Way*, Davis can be seen as conduit of creativity and a galvanizer of the creative resources of a group of musicians, the result of which is an alchemical blend unique to the time and place in which it was made. He can also be seen as creative leader who takes risks in the recording studio by making abrupt changes to a piece which has only been put in front of the musicians for the first time on the very same day. These risks could be considered as uncalculated, but from other

examples and anecdotal evidence from the musicians working for him at this time, it appears as more of a deliberate policy:

‘Through a mixture of rehearsing some musicians before the sessions, giving others written sketches, and offering no instructions for the rest, Miles allowed free improvisation to coexist with strong, repetitive, well-defined rhythmic, melodic and/or harmonic foundations¹⁰. These elements were very effective in keeping the musicians in the present and preventing them from slipping into habitual playing. “Miles insisted on minimal rehearsal in the studio” Buckmaster commented. “He wanted to catch freshness and unpredictability, catch the musicians without their ‘commenting minds’. Otherwise they fall into clichés and do their own thing. So Miles was keeping them on their edge, on their toes, and directed them into unexplored territory”’.

(Tingen, p. 135)

As Davis was dealing with jazz musicians who would be expected to contribute creatively and be innovative in concert and recording situations, it became a part of his brief as bandleader to keep the level of creativity and response high amongst his musicians. By withholding notated music from the musicians until the last possible moment, or bypassing any pre-planned material altogether, Davis could keep musicians aware of the present performance situation without the distraction of ‘past’ notations or premeditated

¹⁰ This can be seen as an example of the coexistence of composed and improvised elements discussed in Chapter 2.

instructions to be carried out in the near future. Naturally, the absence of the usual musical signposts was confusing for musicians, for example in the following conversation between guitarist John McLaughlin and Herbie Hancock (as related by Hancock):

McLaughlin: “Herbie, I can’t tell....was that any good what we did? I mean, what did we do? I can’t tell what’s going on.”

Hancock: “Welcome to a Miles Davis session. Your guess is as good as mine. I have no idea, but somehow when the records come out, they end up sounding good.’

(related in Tingen, p. 59)

This confusion, however, does not detract from the quality of the playing itself. Each player knows how to fulfil his/her assigned individual role in the work, beyond which point Davis has the necessary vision to oversee the whole group project, in a similar way to a conductor overseeing an orchestral work on behalf of the players.

The discussion will now focus on two aspects of Davis’s direction which impinge directly on the musical work:

1. the moulding of large-scale structures through the careful selection of head-motifs
2. the cues given as director for the band to change musical texture.

From the year 1969, Davis had instigated the medley concept as the presentation format for his concerts. This format entailed the continuous presentation of interlinked yet independent pieces of music. His drummer Jack DeJohnette elaborates on the reasons for this:

“The music would be continuous so Miles wouldn’t have to speak and announce things to the audience. He’d just speak with his horn and just cue the numbers by stating the front part of the melody, and then we automatically knew.....because he wanted it to be a seamless kind of thing”.

(Tingen, p. 115)

The bassist Dave Holland explains the potential of the head motif to change musical direction within a piece:

“I learned from Miles how these kind of cues could be used to change direction, or introduce a new section. Miles often used phrases to show us where we’d go next. When we were playing a tune, Miles would superimpose something on top of it, and as soon as he did that we’d know that we were moving on to another song, or that this or that rhythmic thing was about to happen.”

(Tingen, p. 116)

The example of this practice selected for discussion comes from the track *Zimbabwe* (1975). It consists of the first 21 minutes of a 41-minute live recording and can be heard on CD track 10.

Zimbabwe: Head Motifs

Even for a twenty-one-minute extract, the quantity and length of extracts used in terms of head-motif and riff are minimal. The whole extract is underpinned by a pedal point on Eb, and there are two head-motifs which are given their initial announcements by Davis at 1'50" and 16'14" respectively. The only other motifs brought to the fore during the whole extract are a rhythm in 5/8 time brought in at 11'24" and a (possibly spontaneous) quotation by Davis from the Gershwin song *My Man's Gone Now* (from *Porgy and Bess*) at 20'58". The rest of the performance is occupied by rhythms, textures and improvised solos based on one or more of the above fragments, reflecting the Davis preference for exploration of polyrhythmic textures rather than chord changes. In his own words:

"I would try exploring one chord with this band, one chord in a tune, trying to get everyone to master these simple little things like rhythm. We would take a chord and make it work for 5 minutes with variations, cross rhythms, things like that. Say Al Foster is playing in 4/4, Mtume might be playing in 6/8 or 7/4, and the guitarists might be comping in another time signature, or another rhythm altogether."

(Davis pp. 319-320)

This multi-layered, polyrhythmic approach is also highly characteristic of Wiegold's work and will be explored more in depth in Chapter 5.

The motifs are notated below:

Ex. 21: Head-motifs from *Zimbabwe* (1975)

♩ = 168 (Played 4 times)

1. 

2. 

The first is of circular structure, with the ascending chromatic sequence counterbalanced by the descending. The inherent chromaticism suggests a non-tonal improvisatory approach, even though it would always inevitably relate to the Eb bass note through the constant presence of the bass line. The *ritornello*-type structure recurs during Davis's first solo in a similar way to the aforementioned *Feio* albeit in a more compressed form with four statements appearing from 1'50" and 4'00". The intervening solo improvisations have a similar episodic status to episodes between, for example, statements of a fugue or of the principal theme in a rondo structure. The second motif is declamatory but shares

with the first motif a strong sense of rhythmic punctuation. In this instance also, space is left between statements of the motif in order to enable exploration of improvisational responses to it. Once the second head-motif has been presented, the scene is set for the guitar to take an extended solo improvisation. The timing of the second head-motif is significant; before it is announced, the rhythms and textures have dissipated to some extent, and it therefore signals a reversion to the high level of rhythmic definition contained at the beginning of the piece. The overall high- to low-intensity dynamic shape is symptomatic of the track as a whole and thus can be seen as a development from the broadly unchanging textures of *Feio* and *In a Silent Way*.

Zimbabwe: System of Cues

The extract in question contains numerous sudden switches of texture due to a system of conductor-like hand signals employed by Davis as group director. From the given context, it may be deduced that these hand signals are downbeats to indicate the cessation or recommencement of a particular texture. The resulting effect is akin to a jump-cut in film. It is also highly reminiscent of the cut-and-paste editing technique employed by Davis producer Teo Macero in the early 1970s. The influence of studio albums crafted in this manner, such as *In a Silent Way* and *A Tribute to Jack Johnson*, is not overt but can be intimated from the sudden switches of texture which occur as a result of Macero's technique of splicing recorded takes from contrasting sources.

The signals give an added dimension of structural flexibility, especially in view of the incessant nature of the riff-based material. Cuts can be seconds apart (for example at 15'36" and 15'39") or minutes apart (between 1'19" and 5'45"). The short intermediary section after the cut may involve one solo instrument playing in the manner of a traditional jazz 'break' (at 5'45" for example), it may alternatively contain a percussive attack and trumpet flourish (at 11'58") or it may contain absolute silence (at 0'46"). The textural variety and the heightened tension set up by unpredictability of the cuts (with each intermediate section differing in length) ensures an intuitive balance with the consistency and predictability of the repeated riffs. This resembles the way in which a balance of symmetrical and asymmetrical phrases would be established in an extended sonata movement by Mozart. Davis presumably also found the sudden switches between polarised textures, for example from a wall of sound to a wall of silence, conducive to keeping the band members alert and focused on the possibility of change at any point, and therefore aware of the present moment as performers. The timing of the change is therefore entirely in the hands of the leader and therefore can be made unexpected for the band as well as the audience, adding a tension of expectancy to proceedings. Allied to the fact that the textural continuum is not measured in bars, and along with the flexible placement of instantly recognisable head-motifs, the large-scale forms of such works as *Zimbabwe* have as part of their structure the in-built flexibility to change direction in an instant and thus provoke fresh improvisational reactions from the performers (the changing of texture in live performance time is also a speciality of Peter Wiegold and will be discussed more at length in the next chapter).

Summary

Miles Davis's music is challenging for performer and listener alike owing to his resolve to innovate rather than acquiesce to convention and cliché. Nevertheless, as has been demonstrated in various ways, Davis gives improvised material strong support from highly characterised riffs and motivic structures whose strength derives from an extreme distillation of musical material to its essential components. This structural foundation provides a strong base for the performer, who, while being aware of the gravitational pull of the set material, can take radical departures during improvisations. This can be seen in the riffs, motifs and improvised elements of the aforementioned works *So What*, *Honky Tonk* and *Feio*. These works share similar compositional, improvisational and notational concerns, despite the discrepancy of date of composition and instrumental forces used.

Regarding the issue of notation in Davis's work, it has been deduced from Davis's own words and players' accounts of rehearsal proceedings that notational sketches did not represent the final form of a work but were designed to be realised through a process of rehearsal and refinement. It is certain that the notated music brought into studio was never left untreated; the expectation was for it to be changed. The author is aware that by focusing on preset material as opposed to the analysis of Davis's own improvisational practice, only a small part of the whole musical picture has been examined. There is no doubt that improvisation, rather than riff or head-motif, was at the foreground of the musical activity in all Davis bands. However, as this is more a study of methodology than

content, the above analyses reveal, at least to some extent, the processes and strategies used by Davis to bring about maximum improvisational latitude while consistently providing a strong contextual frame for players and audience alike. It is this combination of premeditated and spontaneous decision-making which gives the music of the Davis band a unique musical tension and sense of balance between composed and improvised elements.

It has been difficult to speak directly of the notations used for Miles Davis sessions of the period under discussion as they are not generally in the public domain. However, much can be deduced from recording contexts and interviews with band-members regarding Davis's approach to rehearsal preparation, verbal instruction to players and hand signals. In the next chapter, the issue of notation in partially improvised works will be approached in a more direct manner through the examination of the idiosyncratic scores of Peter Wiegold.

Chapter 5 - Approaches (2): Peter Wiegold

[All audio extracts for this chapter can be found on CD 3]

“I definitely don’t want to make decisions too soon.” (Wiegold in rehearsal)

One may imagine that in the notated work of Peter Wiegold, there will exist a clear reference for the analyst in terms of source material. On confronting the actual evidence, however, a different picture emerges (see overleaf for examples):

Ex. 22 Wiegold: from *wood*

A

Percussion

ff

Percussion

Percussion

B

Perc.

Perc.

Perc.

C

Perc.

Perc.

Perc.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is divided into three sections, A, B, and C. Section A consists of two percussion staves and a bass line. The first staff starts with a *ff* dynamic and a series of eighth notes in 4/4 time, followed by a 5/4 section and a 2/4 section. The second staff has rests in the first measure, followed by eighth notes in 4/4, 5/4, and 2/4. Section B also has two percussion staves and a bass line. The first staff starts with a 5-measure rest, followed by eighth notes in 4/4, 2/4, and 2/4. The second staff has rests in the first measure, followed by eighth notes in 4/4, 2/4, and 2/4. Section C has two percussion staves and a bass line. The first staff starts with a 9-measure rest, followed by eighth notes in 4/4, and ends with a long rightward arrow. The second staff has rests throughout. The bass line has rests throughout.

Ex. 23 Wiegold: from *drive your cart and plow over the bones of the dead*

In notational terms, these extracts seem to pose more questions than they answer. In the first extract, it is not only unclear as to precisely which instruments are playing, it is also unclear as to which pitches are indicated by the noteheads. A third, empty staff defies explanation. In the second extract, from fig. 11 no notation is given at all apart from blank staves and the ambiguous text: 'open'. Furthermore, the scores contain no additional instructions as to how these unconventional notations are to be carried out. Yet all pieces have been performed by instrumentalists who are fully aware as to the manner in which the sections in question are to be interpreted. This raises two crucial points with reference to Wiegold's work:

1: Notations need to be understood within the context of composer/performer

interaction.

A principal consideration with many works by Wiegold is that the composer is also acting in the capacity of conductor and often additionally as a player, and therefore in a central position regarding the supervision of rehearsals and interpretation of the score. In this respect, performers and conductor work together on interpreting whichever signs (or blank areas) may be in the score, with the knowledge that the composer is permanently available to explain, interpret, evoke or otherwise communicate any ambiguous signs. It may be problematic if the score were to be interpreted by performers who had no contact with the composer, but in the rare instances where he is not directly involved in rehearsals, Wiegold is as a composer willing to supply a score furnished with all appropriate notational markings for clarity of communication. Correspondingly, Wiegold's work is not of the Earle Browne approach represented in *December '52* (see Chapter 3) where the inherent ambiguity of interpretation in notational terms requires the performers to decide on the necessary parameters themselves. He is not, to coin Stravinsky's term, an 'indeterminist' (see Chapter 2).

2. Notations may be written during or after rehearsals as well as before.

Part of Wiegold's creative process involves the documentation of the changing work as it undergoes modification during the rehearsal process. It would therefore go against the

principle of the process to completely notate a piece prior to the first rehearsal. It may however aid the process for performers to annotate their own creative contributions as rehearsals progress and for the composer to insert significant notational additions to the piece which are devised during rehearsal. These annotations partly serve as an aide-mémoire for performers but also reflect the increasing complexity of a piece as it develops through the rehearsal process. In this sense, the musical score can be seen as a snapshot of a particular moment in time. The snapshot may be of a particular rehearsal or a concert, but even a concert version of the piece may not necessarily be regarded as definitive (this will be later verified in the analysis). For this reason, various versions may exist of a Wiegold work, both in rehearsals and from performance to performance.

With these two points in mind, it needs to be remembered that when discussing a Wiegold score, the nature of the 'score object' is different from that which may be stocked in and disseminated from a music publishing house. Rather than aiming for universality, a Wiegold score may be seen more in terms of its unique circumstances: its performers, their role in the development of the piece and the stage of progression within the work, whether in a rehearsal or performance context. Indeed, the emphasis on special circumstances points more towards localization than globalization. The score is not intended for public perusal; it is a practical document of a work-in-progress to be used by composer/director and performers only and as such has no final form for the benefit of public consumption.

The notational form of a Wiegold work at any stage can be seen as part of a process and not as a predetermined result. In order to assimilate the larger picture of Wiegold's creative process, notations can be considered to be practical but not comprehensive records. To 'fill in the gaps' left by the notation involves the charting of the whole journey of the piece from conception to performance (and when the work is played several times, over several performances) by immersing oneself in the rehearsal process as the performers do.

The following analysis charts one movement of a Wiegold work from its first rehearsal to its third performance. During the initial week-long rehearsal period, the author was permitted access by Wiegold and the performers to make numerous rehearsal recordings, from which this movement was chosen for further examination. The experience of participating fully in the process in this manner provided a unique insight into Wiegold's working methods. Recorded extracts made during this period will be used to explain how strategies used by Wiegold affect the development of the work. The movement exists in substantially different versions and these will be compared in order to highlight the dynamic process of change to which the piece is subjected over time.

drive your cart: Introduction

The movement in question is entitled *drive your cart and your plow over the bones of the*

dead, the source of which is *Proverbs of Hell* from the book *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* by William Blake. This movement forms part of a larger work consisting of eight movements with the generic title *damn braces*. For practical purposes, the title of the movement to be discussed will be abbreviated to *drive your cart*. The piece exists in three basic versions: the first was premiered in February 2005, the second in June and the third in November of the same year. They will be known as versions #1, #2 and #3. Version #3 consists of two main parts played at different points in the concert programme, thus giving rise to the classifications #3a and #3b. The discussion will cover three main stages of the piece: pre-rehearsal composition/preparation, the rehearsal process and the performance itself.

Conception, Pre-composition and Composed Elements

Much of the above discussion has focused on the rehearsal process in determining the changeability of the musical score. Before the rehearsal stage, however, Wiegold assumes the role of composer, preparing materials and sketches in isolation. It may be unexpected for a composer who works extensively with improvisation that the compositional starting points for the piece show evidence of a high level of systematisation. In Wiegold's case, however, quasi-serial techniques can be seen in operation as exemplified by the 9x9 matrix attached to the score (see appendix to score versions #1 and #2). Although the note-row consists of nine notes rather than twelve (drawing comparison with Stravinsky's use of a rotating series of less than 12 notes in later works), this table of 81 notes

arranged in nine columns (transpositions) of the nine notes of the row shows evidence of 'pre-composition' (to quote the serialist term) . The use of such a matrix also invites comparison with the work of Pierre Boulez and especially pieces such as *Structures 1a* and *1b*. The melodic and harmonic formations of Messiaen are also brought to mind due to the quasi-modal constitution of note rows when re-arranged in ascending or descending formations, for example in ex. 24 which is taken from fig. 1(i) of the matrix:

Ex. 24: Wiegold *drive your cart* matrix fig. 1(i) - pitches arranged in ascending order



This mode, despite its nine pitches, is very close in construction to the octatonic scale as used by Stravinsky and Messiaen (in his Mode 2 of Modes of Limited Transpositions). For example, if the D is treated as an extraneous passing note, the tone-semitone pattern of the octatonic scale is entirely consistent. Although Wiegold rarely suggests the use of any particular mode in improvisation, the inflection of the harmonies derived from such systems will undoubtedly guide players in making corresponding improvisational choices whether on a conscious or subconscious level. His experiences as a student of Indian and Gamelan music underline the importance of mode in his music, whether improvised or composed.

Conversely, a method often used by Wiegold to generate material is the placing

of hands on the keyboard in an intuitive, improvisatory manner. Many large scale and highly elaborate pieces, such as the 2007 Proms commission *he is armoured without*, have their sonic origin in the form of an instantaneously devised chord on the keyboard. Such an approach, however, is highly unlikely to contain the same degree of structural rigour as a note-row or matrix and may well be used intentionally to bypass the rationalising tendencies of the composer's mind. Wiegold's working methods can therefore be seen to include the extremes of rigorous application of logical compositional method (as in the 9x9 matrix) and the intuitive generation of material through improvisation. This opens up the middle ground for negotiation in the rehearsal process.

Riffs in *drive your cart #1*

In *drive your cart #1* there are four main riffs, the first of which provides the initial thrust of the piece. This riff will be known henceforth as riff #1 (ex. 25).

Ex. 25 *drive your cart*, riff #1



Riff #1 derives from two alternating chords in a three-beat cyclic pattern, the third beat being longer than the first two. The rhythmic material can be compared in this sense to seven-beat patterns of certain Indian *tala* such as *rupak*, Bartok's *Dance no.2 in Bulgarian*

Rhythm from *Mikrokosmos* (vol. VI) or *Unsquare Dance* by Dave Brubeck. The irregularity of the two chord cycle against the three beat cycle brings about forward momentum at the same time as circularity, evoking the revolving yet forward motion of the cartwheel on its irregular course over the 'bones of the dead'. Concurrently, the binary nature of the two related yet distinct chords brings to mind the polarised chord structures employed by Davis in such pieces as *Honky Tonk* (discussed in Chapter 4).

Ex. 26 *drive your cart, riff #2*



Riff #2 (ex. 26) is essentially a one-chord riff based on a recurring rhythmic pattern. Despite its independent status, it shares common ground with the 7/8 riff in that it still consists of a three beat pattern. However, the three beats are now equidistantly spaced. The riff also contains space at the end of the one-bar cycle, in a similar way to the longer dotted crotchet final beat of riff #1. The actual chord in ex. 26 is an aggregate of the first chord in the treble clef and the second chord in the bass clef of ex. 25 above. It undergoes a number of harmonic transformations from section to section although the rhythmic profile stays intact. The new chords, for example at fig. 3 of the score, can be seen as re-voicings from previous chords with minor alterations of individual notes.

Ex. 27 *drive your cart*, riff #3



The third riff (ex. 27) is presented for the first time at fig. 4 and offsets the whole-tone movement of the chords at fig. 1 with more chromatic movement, although an octatonic collection (C-Db-Eb-E-F#-G-A-Bb) may be derived from it (allowing for chromatic passing notes). The G-Eb-C outline of the riff also implies the minor blues formation of C-Eb-F-F#G. Rhythmically the riff is an extension of riff #2, fulfilling the potential of the former in a compositional sense by occupying the third beat.

Ex. 28 *drive your cart*, riff #4



The fourth riff (ex. 28) extends over three bars but is essentially fragmentary. Silent beats outnumber notes in duration, leaving a substantial amount of space for the melody and other textural additions. In this sense it resembles a Davis static riff. The rhythms merge the 7/8 of the opening with the regular pulsation of fig. 2, but with added syncopation, recalling the bass line of bars 7 and 9. The irregularity of the rhythmic structure recalls that of riff #1, except that the longer time interval between chords is now at the beginning of the bar. The 4/4 time signature can be seen as 7/8 with an added quaver, in

the same way as the previous 3/4 riff can be seen as 7/8 minus a quaver. Interjections such as that at bar 61, at fig. 10 and at fig. 11 recall the irregular yet consistent use of rhythmic motifs based on additive rhythms in Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, while simultaneously expanding on the visual image of the cart bumping recklessly through the landscape. In fact, the changing time-signature coupled with the interjections bring an unbalanced effect to the texture and partially disguise its riff-based origins. The bass fifths of the alternating chords are placed a minor third apart, expanding further the single tone separation of the two chords of riff #1.

The six chords, in three sets of alternating pairs (or, alternatively viewed, two sets of three), also parallel the pattern of chords in riff #1.

The connections between the four riffs are not self-evident and may rely as much on subconscious creative processes on the part of the composer playing at the keyboard as much as pre-determined structures. There is however a marked degree of compositional correspondence between sections despite the apparent incompleteness of the score.

A final point regarding the above riffs concerns the fact that they are all playable on the keyboard, and may indeed be considered idiomatic for the keyboard as they contain harmonic as well as melodic content. They are also physically comfortable to play in terms of hand position despite the large quantity of notes in the chords. Perhaps this is a clue as to their creation at the keyboard rather than in a more abstract form. In any event, the piano player is often given the central role of playing the riffs while other instruments

supply doubling of various kinds.

The total range covered by all the riffs is A1 to E5, placing them broadly in the middle register but with a notable bias towards the bass register at figs. 4 and 9 of the score. The general mid-range settlement of Wiegold's riffs allows for surrounding material to spiral out both in treble and bass directions, yet with a strong sense of gravitational pull towards the centre. This leaves the upper register open for melodic material (which will be explored next). It is worth noting at this point that no riff in this movement is purely melodic, purely in the treble register, or purely rhythmic. At the instigation of a keyboard riff, the performers are given a strong indication of harmonic as well as rhythmic content, preparing them for action as improvisers or interpreters of different textural material.

Melodic content

Melodic material is presented on the top stave with *ossia* lines in the stave below (such as at bar 23 and 44). The initial statement occurs at bar 9 with a declamatory triplet figure. This figure also introduces the entry at fig. 5 of the score and re-appears at bar 23 and in augmentation at bars 27-8. Expansive intervallic leaps (b. 14-15, 34, 37) feature extensively and portray the extremity of the poetic image, as well as offsetting the registral containment of the riffs. On occasion, the 9x9 matrix comes into force regarding pitch selection for example in bar 30. At fig. 9 stemless notes appear in a time-space arrangement of relative note values. This gives a sense of rubato and suppleness to the

melodic line in contrast to the rhythmic exactitude of the previous sections. A similar approach has already been mentioned in the work of Miles Davis (see Chapter 4).

The pitch selection for this section derives once again from the 9x9 matrix, but contrast with the octatonic formation of the riff.

The musical material under discussion so far is that which is notated in the score and does not constitute the full texture and structure of the piece. As mentioned before, it would be an error to view the score as a product to be interpreted. An alternative view would be to see it as a series of compositional sketches, despite the thoroughness of systems used such as the 9x9 matrix. Seen from this perspective, the ensuing step in the process is crucial to the development of the piece. At this point, a conventional approach would involve the compositional development and elaboration of the sketches. These would be 'composed out' until all structural elements were fixed before the rehearsal period. The crucial difference to this approach in Wiegold's case is that not only does he bring sketches in directly for performers to rehearse and build upon, he also refrains from 'composing out' the material. This can be seen as part of his artistic discipline. In doing so he avoids, to use Miles Davis's terminology, 'cluttering the music'. Wiegold has also remarked that he looks forward to the creative reaction of the performers to the material, and so an element of curiosity is apparent as to what will happen as opposed to a compulsion to pre-emptively narrow the range of creative options through compositional decision-making.

When sketches are prepared in this way, the composer will naturally be aware that they will later be elaborated in rehearsal and therefore tailor the material to the process. Wiegold's riffs establish a strong harmonic and rhythmic context and melodies are clearly demarcated. However, bearing in mind that there are at most four (mostly two) strands of music occurring simultaneously for a group of nine players using only two pages of general score, there is evidently much scope for creative exploration by composer and performers. It is this exploration which will be the subject of the next section of the analysis.

Wiegold rehearsal process: stages

The rehearsal process of Peter Wiegold is cumulative. It is goal orientated, the goal generally being in the form of a public performance. Although it is possible to visualise the process as a single upward curve, various intermediate stages may be determined:

- **Preparation:**

This consists of techniques used by Wiegold to enhance the working dynamic of the group. It also gives an opportunity for Wiegold to explain and try out his system of musical cues as director.

- **Exploration:**

The notated material is explored for the first time.

- **Refinement:**

The piece is moulded through revisiting sections. Interpretative decisions start to be made.

- **Determination:**

Final decisions are made and boundaries are set regarding the final performance version of the work.

Each section will now be examined with reference to the rehearsal process of *drive your cart #1*.

Drive Your Cart #1 Rehearsal Process: Introduction

drive your cart #1 was rehearsed over a week-long period culminating in a public performance. There were seven other movements of the Wiegold work to rehearse, along with three other commissioned pieces from other composers. Despite the extensive list of new works, however, for the opening session on the first two days and an additional session later in the week, Wiegold concentrated the group activities on improvisational skills without reference to the notated pieces. The underlying reasons for this approach

will now be examined more in detail.

Wiegold is aware that as his musical approach involves improvisation, part of the training of the musicians in the group will involve the practice of improvisation and the personal development of communication skills as improvisers. Wiegold's initial intention is to explore the unique dynamics of his ensemble through unmediated playing and without the potential distraction or complication of notational signs from a score.

Much of the initial work consists of the building of musical textures, with individual instrumental entries cued by Wiegold himself. In this way textures can build gradually, with the contribution of each player clearly perceived and acknowledged. Once a texture has built up and a context established, Wiegold may ask a player to take a solo improvisation. Alternatively, he may select a single player and ask him/her to continue, while stopping the rest of the group. This highlights a part of the texture and refocuses the group dynamic towards it, so that when the texture rebuilds it is likely to take a different musical direction from before. A texture, once established, may be labelled a 'head' by Wiegold, marked out for future reference, then re-visited on cue by the whole ensemble in a similar way to a ritornello or Miles Davis head-motif. The structure of the improvisation is clear to follow for the performer who is therefore able to focus on the moment-by-moment progress of the improvisation itself as it unfolds.

Allied to the work on improvised texture, structure and solos, in this session Wiegold

introduces some key signs from a personal cueing system of hand signals. This system continues to evolve and develop, but some of the essential signs are listed below. The system of hand-signs also forms an integral part of the directions for *drive your cart*.

Common signs used for this performance are:

- Ostinato (may be rhythmic or arhythmic)
- 'Carry on': selected performers are requested to continue
- Stop
- 'Head': direction to play already established head-motif or texture
- Solo (improvised)
- 'Like...' (play similar material to another performer)
- Harmonise (other player's or players' figure)

Group Improvisation #1

An example of the opening of the first group improvisation (CD track 1) will serve as illustration for the above methods. As the group members were not entirely familiar with the system of hand signals at this stage, Wiegold occasionally gives verbal as well as visual instructions:

<u>Timing:</u>	<u>Wiegold direction:</u>	<u>to:</u>
0'00"	Riff	[Wiegold]
0'05"	Riff	marimba
0'13"	Riff	piano
0'22"	Riff	double-bass
0'34"	Riff	clarinet
0'50"	Riff	saxophone
1'04"	Riff	trombone
1'17"	Riff	oboe

[The above texture is established by Wiegold as 'head 1']

c.1'50"	'Carry on'	clarinet
1'52"	Stop	tutti except clarinet
2'18"	Head	tutti
2'55"	Stop	tutti [Wiegold plays new riff]
3'03"	'Like me' (Wiegold)	marimba - piano
3'15"	Long note	sax.-trb.-ob.-cl. (individual cues)

[The texture from 2'55" is established by Wiegold as 'head 2']

3'45"	Head 1	tutti
4'20"	Head 2	tutti
4'34"	Alternate harmonies	wind players
4'54"	Solo	clarinet
5'32"	Stop	marimba, piano, Wiegold
5'47"	Re-enter	percussion, piano, Wiegold
6'07"	'Like...'	clarinet 'like' double-bass
6'27"	Riff? Solo?	trombone
7'13"	'Like' (Wiegold)	trb.-sax.-ob.
c.7'55"	'Carry on'	percussion
7'58"	Stop	tutti except perc., Wiegold
8'10"	Solo	piano
8'31"	Riff	double bass
8'50"	Solo	saxophone
9'35"	Riff	saxophone
9'52"	Harmonise	cl.-ob.-trb.
11'07"	Stop	[individual cues]
11'12"	[double bass and Wiegold improvised duet]	

In all, there exist 35 cues for the first ten minutes of the group improvisation, underlining the firm steering of the work on the part of the director. In this instance, Wiegold initiates the playing of the improvisation himself (in later rehearsals, once

performers were more accustomed to the rehearsal system, he would ask other players to start, sometimes with specific instructions such as 'something in three time' or 'something on one cowbell and one woodblock' and sometimes without). He then proceeds to create two 'heads' which, in contrast to Davis head-motifs, are more textural than melodic in nature. A notable feature of the first head is that although most of the instrumentalists agree on an eight-beat rhythmic cycle, the saxophone player overlays a ten-beat cycle creating a polyrhythm. The potential for polyrhythmic sophistication of this kind is substantial in view of the number of instruments available and the potential range of interpretations of a downbeat by different players reacting to the same riff.

Wiegold uses various strategies to keep the textures mobile and dynamic. The cuts at 2'55" and 7'58" allow Wiegold to set new musical territory for the group to explore by the introduction of a new riff or through improvisational means. In addition, the request to a performer to switch roles while playing, for example at 9'35" when the saxophone is asked to change from solo to riff, keeps the texture flexible and sets up new instrumental relationships among the group. The process involves a substantial amount of moulding and sculpting the material in real time and whilst Wiegold lets materials grow organically to some extent (especially in terms of local detail) he always holds the 'live' compositional reins firmly over the general texture and structure.

At this point it may be worth considering the roles Wiegold assigns to himself as keyboard player as well as director. As can be heard from the extract above, he influences

the course of a piece as much through his own playing as he does through his hand signals. He can be heard initiating riffs at 0'00" and 2'55", but his sound is also present in various other guises, for example playing chords as a complement to the piano solo at 8'10" or stabilising the general texture with a two-note riff at 8'32". Wiegold's instrument, as well as being a part of the general instrumental forces, can be regarded as an important part of his resources as a leader and additionally as a source of support to the group (in the manner of an accompanist). In this way his practice may be likened to that of big-band leaders such as Duke Ellington and Count Basie.

Several other improvisation sessions were recorded during the course of rehearsals but considerations of space preclude the possibility of discussing each in detail. In general, subsequent sessions combined signals in more sophisticated combinations as players became more accustomed to them. Concurrently, sections expanded in length as the players gained confidence and motivation to explore solos and group textures more fully. The longest improvisation runs at 38 minutes. There is one improvisation, however, which particularly merits attention as it provides an intermediary stage between the free improvisations and the work on the notated versions of *drive your cart*.

9x9 Matrix – Improvisation

Unusually for Wiegold, a rehearsal session was instigated with the express intention of exploring a note-row by improvisational means. Modes and scales are not generally set

for Wiegold improvisation sessions, although the chordal riffs employed in his works often contain modal implications (see above). As preparation for work on *drive your cart* and other pieces from *damn braces*, however, the group took the 9x9 matrix supplied by Wiegold and each player chose groups of notes from the matrix as a starting point for riffs and melodies:

Keyboard (PW:) fig. 2 last 4 notes of (viii) and (ix)

Marimba: fig. 5 (iv) pitches 3-7

Piano: fig. 9 (ix) or (v) first 3 pitches

Double-Bass: fig. 7 (ii) first 4 pitches

Clarinet: fig. 2 (i) first three pitches

Saxophone : fig. 2 (viii) pitches 2-5

The build-up of texture can be heard on track 2 of the CD, and solo improvisation from 2'55". In both cases, the intervallic shapes prescribed by the row influence the players' choice of notes and therefore bring them into a more direct awareness and experience of Wiegold's pre-compositional preoccupations. The intention of this approach is for the performer to learn the shapes 'under the fingers' so as to be able to integrate them in a riff or solo improvisation from *drive your cart* or *damn braces* as a whole.

Rehearsal Process in *drive your cart #1*: Exploration

After the initial guided improvisations, players are introduced to the notated materials of the work. In the case of *drive your cart #1*, each player has access to all materials of the A3 score including the parts s/he does not play. This gives Wiegold flexibility to make decisions regarding instrumentation as well as allowing the players equal access to and awareness of the parts around them. Rehearsal numbers are given but do not necessarily follow each other sequentially in performance, as will be discussed later.

The use of a general score for all players, and by implication the absence of parts, is a common device in Wiegold projects. In common with the methods of American jazz musician George Russell, Wiegold has often kept sketched materials (whether his own or those of other composers) to one page of score ranging from the size of a postcard to A3 size. The materials are then 'fleshed out' through rehearsal with the players. Such a process can, despite the fragmentary nature of the initial material, produce expansive structures which substantially outgrow their miniaturist origins.

The material is initially played through as an exercise in sight-reading (see CD track 3) upon which sections are explored individually, developing textures in similar ways as may be done in an open improvisation session. One such example is an exploration of fig. 4, which is cycled to provide opportunities for building riffs and solo improvisation (in this case on the clarinet). This can be heard on CD track 4. Wiegold is careful to point out at

this juncture that these exploratory forays are not necessarily going to be fixed as the final form, and that they constitute experiments that may or may not be developed at a later stage. This approach contrasts with that used in much of repertoire the players will be used to playing (which arrives at the first rehearsal in fixed form). Wiegold counteracts the air of permanency in the notation by using phrases such as ‘it might just be....[x]’ which give the performers hints at what the texture may become without excluding other creative possibilities. During the first rehearsal, Wiegold makes his intention clear:

“For the first couple of days I just want to throw things around, then obviously you will need to know the ground rules for each piece.”

(in rehearsal, Craxton studios, 2005)

Key roles are given to some instruments at this time, such as the instruction to play a riff from the score. Several decisions regarding orchestration are also made at this point (for example, for the tuba to play the lowest bass line an octave lower than written at fig. 2 of the score). Additionally, Wiegold may ask certain performers to cue themselves or each other in, thereby delegating some of the conductor’s role and at the same time giving to the players some of the independence that they may be used to in chamber-music settings. In addition, riffs, melodies or other material devised by performers may be selected for future inclusion in the piece. Wiegold encourages the performer’s creative contributions to the piece in rehearsal by asking them to write down their own material when necessary:

“You have always got a spare line to write things in if you find something particularly nice.” [ibid.]

Instrumentalists who devise parts which are mostly set apart from the notated material, such as the percussionist, are guided by Wiegold through verbal instructions, many of which carry reference to particular styles of music familiar to the performer. Examples in these rehearsals include the music of such composers as Birtwistle or Stravinsky (“like *Petrouchka*”), or an indication of general style (“away from funk”). In this way Wiegold can leave space for performers to create appropriate material for the piece without dictating the precise musical content and thus encourage creative interaction from them.

As will be seen throughout the rehearsal process, Wiegold attempts to balance the set material, whether pre-composed or devised in rehearsal, with the formal flexibility required to encourage improvisation. Although the setting of material becomes more predominant as the process develops, some potential decisions regarding, for example, the selection of instrumentalist to take a solo improvisation or the number of times a section is to be repeated are never reached intentionally for this very reason.

Rehearsal Process in *drive your cart #1: Refinement*

After the initial rehearsals, the performers will be acquainted with the context of each section and will have tried out possibilities of texture and improvisation. In the next part of the process initial decisions are made regarding texture and ordering of sections with the continuing proviso that the decisions are not final. Wiegold is still careful not to reduce the creative possibilities still available by using such phrases as “for now let’s do that”, “almost certainly” and “let’s get that 90% certain”. Rather than showing a lack of decision-making skills, Wiegold’s strategy of delay is deliberate and purposeful in that the optimum moment is carefully sought to make the final decision(s).

Wiegold now concentrates on rehearsing several sections in sequence to develop a sense of continuity and to test the suitability of sectional juxtapositions. One such extract is the sequence of figs. 2,3,4,5,1,2 on CD track 5. Within fig. 1 from 0’50” Wiegold cues riffs in an open-ended cycle of repetitions until giving the cue for fig. 2. Despite establishing the overall structure, Wiegold is willing to include ideas from performers regarding compositional structure. A similar instance occurs in the discussion recorded on CD track 6 when the clarinetist, in trying to ascertain a repetition pattern in fig. 10-11, chances upon a solution which is immediately recognised and implemented by Wiegold as the final version. This can be heard in the sequence on CD track 7 (starting at fig. 9).

Another instance of Wiegold's accommodation of performer ideas regards a rehearsal of fig. 1 which can be heard on CD track 8. When the playing is halted, Wiegold instructs the saxophone player at 0'54":

"Remember that note.... that's the energy, just stick on the note." [ibid.]

The note in question was created during an improvised solo but is kept for future reference, thus establishing a small yet significant additional structural element to the section. Wiegold can be seen refining a player's part through specific instruction and direction. In CD track 9 the percussionist is asked to play more sparsely, then instructed to play in a particular part of the bar.

At this stage players will have become aware of their specific role at any part of the piece, whether performing a riff, soloing, harmonising, playing fragments, or staying silent. By this point, the sections to be left 'open' will also have become clear. These sections will usually involve an open number of repetitions for soloing or building riff-based textures.

As players' parts become more refined and as Wiegold increasingly relies on players to take responsibility for their respective roles, he can be heard to become increasingly active as a keyboard player. Much of the material he plays is supportive of surrounding

texture but there are occasional forays into solo improvisation, which mainly occur in the open sections. The keyboard enhances the established textures through a varied presentation of short and often fragmentary phrases. In this way Wiegold can continue to inject fresh musical input into the texture against which the performers can react. By means of this strategy, less active textures such as that of fig. 4 can be kept from loss of momentum.

Wiegold is at all times open to the momentary event affecting and possibly changing the course of the work. His acceptance of the accidental is revealed by his reaction to a performer mistake during a run-through:

“That was a mistake but I quite liked it.” [ibid.]

Before the final rehearsal Wiegold makes minor alterations to the score in order to clarify a complex structure of repetitions established in rehearsal from fig. 9 to fig. 11, as well as dividing fig. 7 into two sections for ease of navigation. These alterations are minor and the revised score is not included in this analysis. A more radical change is the complete withdrawal of the section from bar 70. This decision is made spontaneously by Wiegold whilst rehearsing the section. By this point, the section is deemed superfluous to the development of the structure. This illustrates Wiegold’s principle of adaptability to the evolution of the piece to the extent of shedding some original notated material. As Wiegold himself states:

‘Sadly many good ideas have to go simply because they get in the way of others, are overbearing or dominate too much and create confusion.....The most valuable thing I ever learnt, and it took a long time, was the ability to say no to material and let it go.’

(Birmingham Contemporary Music Group Composer Q &A article, 2004)

Rehearsal Process in *drive your cart*#1: Determination

In the final rehearsals, run-throughs and performance of the piece, the main priority is the determination of the final form of the piece, as individual sections and sequences of sections have already been rehearsed. The form is fixed according to rehearsal numbers as follows:

1-2-3-4-5-1 (open with saxophone solo) **2-3-4-5-6-7** (open with solos) **8-9-9-9** (with interjections from 10 and 11) **1** (open with percussion solo)-**2-3-4-5**

The final performance version can be heard on the CD track 10. It will be noted that the sequence 1-2-3-4-5 occurs three times, functioning as a *ritornello* (section A). If Section 6-7-8 is considered as section B, and 9-10-11 as section C, then the overall structure can be thought of as A-A¹-B-C-A², a form not dissimilar from the A-B-A-C-A rondo form. Although there may be intricacies within each section, the overall structure of the piece clearly

works in blocks in a similar way to such works as Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* and as such is easily assimilated by the ear.

Though the overall form may be quite clear to the listener, there was a problem caused for some performers by the complex negotiation of section changes between rehearsal numbers. On several occasions run-throughs of pieces faltered due to performers losing their place in the structure or playing the wrong section. The problem was practical rather than compositional but highlights one of the complexities of presenting a score in abbreviated form. In the next version of the piece the composer keeps the A3 landscape score format (with one version for all players) but offers a practical solution to the issue.

Drive your cart #2 – Evolutionary Path (CD track 11)

At first glance, the second version of *drive your cart* looks more complex than the first on a structural level as it contains forty rehearsal numbers (despite figs. 8-13 and fig. 37) being cut in the rehearsal process). However, a closer acquaintance with the piece reveals that it is a through-composed structure. Although there are more pages of score, the performers do not need to remember which rehearsal numbers indicate points of repetition. The through-composed form thus solves the aforementioned practical problem of score navigation posed in version #1 of the piece.

Nevertheless, the form is more elaborate than the first version, with the performance version running at thirteen minutes as opposed to the five minutes of *drive your cart #1*.

The approach with *drive your cart #2* entails more extensive exploration of the riffs presented in *drive your cart #1*. Particular scope is given to the building of riff-based textures at figs. 3, 4, 6, and 14 (fig. 3 is marked 'xX' to indicate open repetition).

Compositionally, the rhythmic latency of the main riff at fig. 1 is also explored, with the space in the last two quavers filled in by the bass line at fig. 1 and by the piano at fig. 7.

The through-composed form of the piece allows Wiegold to explore more gradual shifts between sections than those of version #1. For example, from fig. 3 to fig. 7, a single basic texture is maintained but with new elements appearing at each rehearsal number and contributing to an intensification of texture until the sudden halt at bar 43. In figs. 29-30 (CD 11'02"), the textural shifts also involve the superimposition of material from two sections in different time signatures and tempi. The types of material eventually converge by fig. 36 (CD 12'46") with the reversion to a 7/8 time-signature for all players. The same type of textural contrast, albeit co-ordinated under a single time-signature, can also be found at fig. 16 where the new material of the sustained chords is offset by the ostinati which continue from fig. 14.

The sustained chords of fig. 16 had not previously been used in *drive your cart #1*.

They can be seen in ex. 29 overleaf:

Ex. 29 *drive your cart #2*, 'chorale melody'



The three-note motif of the top line, identified by Wiegold as the 'chorale melody', derives from a melodic motif created by the saxophone player in rehearsal and is given vital structural significance in the latter half of *drive your cart #2*, appearing in figs. 16, 17, 18, 24, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34 and 35. For all the time the motif is present (except for fig. 28), Wiegold identifies the material with its originator in asking the saxophonist to improvise over his 'own' idea, thus acknowledging in a musical sense the player's ownership of the melody. On the other hand, Wiegold radically transforms the motif in a compositional sense by incorporating it as a quasi-cadential figure into the aggressive texture initiated by 7/8 riff (see figs. 2, 22 and 38). This figure also ends the piece.

In the course of *drive your cart #2*, there are also new melodies created by Wiegold himself, for example those of fig. 20 and fig. 26. These retain the quasi-octatonic structure of the melodic line of version #1, but the trajectory of the melodic line and rhythmic structure are radically different. Concurrently, all the melodic material of *drive*

your cart #1 (including the whole section from fig. 9-11) is discarded to make way for the new material. This does not only represent an example of the mutability of a Wiegold work, it also re-emphasises the vital role of riff (as opposed to melody) in establishing the identity of the work. The riffs retain their internal structure in all versions of *drive your cart*.

Other elements from *drive your cart #1* find more detailed notational form in the second version. The side drum rhythms, mostly devised by the player in the first version, are now written in the score as a two-bar pattern at fig. 1 and a four-bar pattern at fig. 3. The descending semitone sequence at the end of fig. 7 and fig. 8 of the version #1 now is the subject of elaborated treatment in the open-ended bars of 121 and 171. Its placement at the end of a section retains the same motivic function, but the players are given time to explore its potential in the pause marking. In contrast to version #1, which keeps a consistent quaver pulse throughout, the second version contains numerous stops and re-starts, as well as a variety of tempo markings ranging from crotchet=112 to quasi *senza misura* (fig. 28). It can be argued that the dramatic scope of the second version of the piece is enhanced as a consequence.

There are, however, new improvised riffs in version #2 which will be exploited further in the third version of *drive your cart*. These are a riff played by Wiegold himself at fig. 14 and a fanfare-type motif found by the trombonist at fig. 16. Although the second version contains a more radical exploration of materials than the first, the piece is to undergo yet

another radical transformation.

drive your cart #3 – the uniqueness of time and place [CD tracks 12 & 13]

Both performances of *drive your cart* discussed so far took place in standard concert settings. The third version, however, was produced as part of a music theatre work in collaboration with a performance poet. This immediately alters the performance context. As mentioned before, Wiegold is sensitive to the specific conditions of any performance of his work and will adapt his music accordingly even if it has already been performed in full. The uniqueness of the occasion takes precedence over an Urtext-style ‘one size fits all’ performing version. Therefore, *drive your cart* is revised once again for this occasion. In this sense, contrary to notions of globalisation and expansion prevalent in the last two centuries, Wiegold’s process can be seen to be one of ‘re-localisation’.

In this version it will be evident from the score that the piece is divided into two parts. Rather than forming the second movement of the *damn braces* ‘suite’ as in versions #1 and #2, *drive your cart #3* frames the concert programme by means of the two parts which will hereafter be known as *drive your cart #3a* and *#3b*. Version *#3a* appears at the beginning and of the concert and version *#3b* at the end. They can be heard on CD tracks 12 and 13 respectively. The introductory section of version *#3a* and the ending of version *#3b* serve different functions from previous versions and both contain compositional revisions which reflect this difference. These revisions will be

discussed below.

In the introduction to version #3a, the poet welcomes the audience then calls an ‘invocation’ for various spirits to fill the room and inspire the musicians. As a part of this invocation, he introduces the instruments of the ensemble individually by name. Each announcement is answered by a riff played on the indicated instrument until all instruments are playing. This texture is represented in the score at fig. 1. Here, the dramatic device is ideally suited to the building of texture through riff based forms, which are developed here in a similar way to the initial free improvisation sessions discussed above. Most of the riffs are set in notational form but two are left undetermined in order to maintain an element of the unpredictability of a fully improvised texture. The speaker, who is unrestricted by considerations of metric co-ordination with the players, is able to use natural speech rhythms with the assurance that the music has the inbuilt flexibility of timing (in this case through repetition) that is often required in music-theatre.

The ending of version #3b represents the finale of the concert, as mentioned above. Wiegold retains the prolonged crescendo from fig. 28 of version #2 and punctuates the ending with a two-semiquaver figure for the whole group as opposed to the equivocal solo tuba gesture of version #2. Parts #3a and #3b both end in a similar fashion, thus giving the audience a structural cue in #3b as to the finality of the piece. By following the strength of contour established in *drive your cart #2*, Wiegold encounters a form from fig. 7 to the end of version #3b which carries an air of finality not only for the piece, but

the whole concert. In his own words he wanted the music to be:

“as massive as can be as it’s the end of the concert.” [Wiegold in rehearsal, Nov.2005]

This demonstrates Wiegold’s attention to the placement of a piece of music in a concert programme, to the extent of making modifications to the piece itself for this purpose.

Additional structural parallels exist between versions #2 and #3 of *drive your cart*. In fact, there is no section built upon entirely new foundations. In particular, despite the elaborated version of fig. 1, the first five rehearsal numbers of version #3a closely follow the structure of the same rehearsal numbers of version #2. In other sections also the versions mirror each other closely, although there is more local detail in the instrumental parts of version #3a.

At fig. 9 of version #3b, the previously improvised saxophone part is partially transcribed and partially elaborated by Wiegold in compositional terms, a practice which appears in various sections of the piece. As an example, the trombone motif played at bar 106 of version #3a, initially devised by the player in version #2, is reworked and developed compositionally in version #3b from fig. 3. In the same vein, processes used in improvisation such as ‘harmonise’ (as in the free improvisation mentioned above) find notational form in version #3, for example at bar 70 of version #3a where the ensemble is asked to harmonise the alternating notes of the tuba line at fig. 9. The tuba motif was

once again devised in version #2 and was applied by Wiegold in the third version, perhaps in connection with the binary alternating chords of the principal riff at fig. 1.

The use of more detailed notation gives Wiegold the opportunity to create yet more sophisticated textures, such as that at fig. 1 where the oboe and saxophone play a rhythmically complex heterophonic response to the metrically irregular keyboard riff. The textural superposition of fig. 29 of version #2 is now increased from two to three elements in fig. 12 of version #3b through the addition of the notated trombone line. The through-composed structure allows for minor adjustments in phrasing, and the use of conventional dynamics and articulation bring about a level of notational detail absent from previous versions. The progression from version #1 to #2 to #3 can be seen as a process of increasing detail, refinement and specificity in notational form.

Despite the increased level of notational detail in version #3, there are still many blank bars for performers and sections such as that mentioned at the beginning of the chapter (version #3b, fig. 11) where little if anything is notated at all. Regardless of the quantity of notated material, Wiegold seems determined to maintain the same critical balance between composed and improvised elements as in previous versions, signifying a common thread running through all three versions of the piece. The third version does not in any way represent a composed-out 'realisation' of the first.

The third version of *drive your cart* is, however, crucially different from the first two

in two matters: instrumentation and general approach to notational presentation. The addition of a single instrument, the trumpet, increases the group size by 10% and has strong implications for the sound of the wind ensemble, particularly regarding the foreground role usually taken by the trumpet (this role was previously taken by the saxophone in the previous two versions).

As far as notational practice is concerned, it has already been seen that for the first two versions of the piece, Wiegold gave each player the complete score for ease of navigation between improvised and notated sections and also to ensure that players were aware of each other's roles as well as their own. The third version, however, marks a radical shift in notational format due to the existence of instrumental parts and a full score accessible only to the conductor. The reversion to seemingly conventional methods was made upon feedback from the players (re-emphasising Wiegold's willingness to consider suggestions from performers on practical rehearsal issues). The feedback concerned practical problems caused by the necessity for performers to navigate their own course through a complex general score, the small size of the notational script and the complexities of multiple page turns (due to the non-sequential ordering of sections).

The emergence of parts for the players certainly eases the above aspects of score-reading, but sets up new problems envisaged previously by Wiegold (which may be part of the reason behind supplying full scores to players in the first place). Symptomatic of one type of problem was the instance in which the clarinet player attempted to 'fill in'

the blank bars of his part by writing in specific pitches, whereas Wiegold's intention is to keep the pitch selection flexible. There is no doubt that a blank bar on a line where other bars are fully notated may give the player the urge to complete the part for his/her own sake, especially as the focus of the part itself is now the individual sound as opposed to the group sound. An additional rehearsal problem which may have been more difficult to predict is that, despite the continuing existence of bar numbers and numbered cues, players still missed cues and repeats as in previous versions. This occurred perhaps even to a greater extent than before as players did not have reference points regarding other players' material as they did with the full score (which in effect can act as a fully-cued part). Such questions as 'What happens at bar [x] or fig. [y]]?' were common and would not have been necessary with all players following one score. Conversely, the players did on other occasions respond positively to the part-scores, especially from the point of view of legibility and page-turns, although this positive response may equally stem from the performers' reversion to a notational comfort zone with which they were more familiar through their own training and professional experience. The presentation of notation for players remains a critical issue for Wiegold as it is with all composers working with improvisation, including the author, and will be discussed as a priority in future chapters. The search for balance between new notational forms and the player's existing expertise and training in standard Western notation is an ongoing concern which forms the basis of much of the potential research in the field of composition with improvisation.

Summary

From the process outlined above, it is clear that Wiegold works which involve improvisation do not exist in one definitive version but change from rehearsal to rehearsal and from performance to performance in a perpetual state of evolution. Throughout this process, however, Wiegold offsets change in his work with the constancy of fixed elements, in particular through the use of riffs. This recalls the work of Miles Davis discussed in the previous chapter. Once the principal riffs are established, the improvised solos, secondary riffs and other textural elements can be added like concentric circles around a central point. It is the strong sense of centrality inherent in the riffs employed by Wiegold, together with the satellite-type relations of the surrounding material, which points towards a modern equivalent to tonal centre and its related keys in a piece of diatonic music. This sense of internal form is strengthened by a clear sense of structural division by means of Stravinskian sectional blocks as in *drive your cart #1*, although more gradual transitions are also possible as in the cross fade section of *drive your cart #2*. The use of *ritornello*-like structures for riffs such as the principal riff at fig. 1 of each version gives aural signposts for listeners in the same way as a Davis head-motif or the main theme in a classical rondo. In this sense, Wiegold is relating to structural archetypes and traditions while at the same time discovering fresh textures through improvisational means. Through the balance of innovatory and archetypal forms, Wiegold's music gains an accessibility for the listener which is rare in experimental music.

Postscript: A Note on Ownership

The above pieces are known as compositions 'by' Peter Wiegold according to the title page of the score and on concert programmes, but the question may be posed as to who owns the work, especially when considering the creative input of the performers. There is no doubt that the work *drive your cart* would not have come to light in its present form (or, indeed, in any form) were it not for the initiative of Wiegold to form the group, write the compositional sketches and rehearse the musicians in ways particular to his working method. Conversely, the piece would not have had the possibility of reaching any of the three versions described above were it not for the input of the particular instrumentalists with whom he worked on the process. It can be expected that with different performers, even on the same instruments, the piece would evolve differently. Improvisation depends on individual response at a certain point in time, and no two responses will be the same in the case of genuine improvisation. The relationship between composer/director and performer in this case extends to creative co-dependency and therefore it may be more difficult to draw boundaries regarding the extent of creative contribution of each party. It can be maintained that Wiegold has the final decision on artistic matters and is therefore ultimately accountable, in the same way as Miles Davis claimed for the track *In a Silent Way* (see Chapter 4). On the other hand, this can be seen as unjustly biased in favour of the composer/director. In the words of improviser Edwin Prévost:

‘When composers include passages that are not specific in pitch, position or movement, then they are being dishonest if they do not acknowledge the creative contribution of the improvisors (*sic*). In such cases the musicians should be treated as co-creators and co-copyright holders!’

(Prévost, E: *No Sound is Innocent* p. 73 (1995), Matchless Publishing)

However, perhaps the application of terms such as ‘ownership’ to processes founded on different principles is misleading and is more an indication of the values of a society steeped in the concept of ownership. In musical terms, when a musical celebration happens in an African village, for example, there may be a leader of musical activities who will elicit a participatory response from the villagers, but there is no concert programme or monetary issues to be resolved in terms of copyright ownership. In a similar sense, a contemporary rock band may play an entire concert without the audience knowing which member(s) of the band created the component parts of the music due to the fact that the band operates under the general identity of the collective. To some extent, the ‘rock-band’ ethos is reflected in that of Wiegold’s group and the blurring of boundaries between composition and performance are actively pursued as a part of that ethos. However, in the cultural circles of concert halls, theatres and art spaces used by the group, the centuries-old practice of supplying the audience with programmes containing a rigid account of ‘division of labour’ is still the norm. As a consequence, the resulting impression of permanency and immutability in the clear typeface of the programme note will continue to propagate conflicting expectations concerning issues of ownership which are more than likely to be entirely illusory.

PART II:
Portfolio of Original Works

Chapter 6 – Works (1): Chamber

[All audio extracts for this chapter can be found on CD 4]

Areas of research

This chapter constitutes an exploration of works exclusively for chamber forces. They span the entire research period of 2004-2009, but do not constitute the entire research work undertaken during this time. They consist of works written for a variety of performers and ensemble sizes (ranging from solo to sextet) in the context of a single workshop or performance. Works for larger ensemble are explored in Chapter 7 and the works from Chapter 8 onwards were composed for fixed ensembles of which the author is performing member. Although there are common factors to all these research areas, the particularities of a chamber ensemble (as opposed to orchestra), or a unique workshop situation with a visiting performer (as opposed to a regular group of collaborators) merit separate discussions and will therefore be treated separately.

The research priorities for the compositional work in this chapter are twofold:

1. The application of varying levels of composed and improvised elements within the same piece.
2. The adoption of effective notation(s) to realise the required combination of composed and improvised elements in performance.

***Duel(t)* [Work #1 in portfolio, CD track 1]**

Introduction

Duel(t) is an unfinished piece and the recorded extracts cover only as far as rehearsal letter L. Nevertheless this piece, representing the first step in the research process in terms of its chronology, brings the research issues into sharp relief due to the application of its experimental notational system in rehearsal and feedback given on the subject by performers. In *Duel(t)*, the aim of this system is the transition from sections involving precise and explicit forms of notational instructions to sections involving performer choice regarding the application and interpretation of notational symbols.

Correspondingly, the mode of playing moves from an executive style to a creative one.

This gradual mutation of performance style is a central theme of the piece and relates to the dramatic implications of its title.

Dramatic conceits

Duel(t) is an invented composite word consisting of the component parts 'duet' and 'duel'. The dramatic conceit of the piece rests on the changing relationship of the performers along the scale of co-operation ('duet') to competition ('duel'). In order to bring this relationship into focus, rather than allocate a personal array of instruments to each percussionist, the decision was made for both performers to share a single instrument (in this case a set of temple blocks). Additionally, at the beginning of the piece each player is only allocated three blocks of the nine, leaving the three middle blocks as 'unclaimed' territory to be disputed later in the piece (from fig. L). This conceit puts a physical constraint on the territory occupied by each player and is a source of dramatic tension exploited during the piece. The players are, in this sense, performing as actors and although there is no specified theatrical setting, the piece can be viewed as music theatre in terms of the dramatic role-play between the two protagonists. The use of such a dramatic conceit is developed in the piece *Hot Air* (also a duet containing elements of a 'duel') later in this chapter.

Compositional Conceits

The focus of this percussion piece is generally rhythmic, despite the aforementioned dramatic element and the availability of a relative pitch on the blocks. Within the rhythmic domain, however, the bias is more towards rhythmic constraint than effusiveness. This parallels the dramatic constraint of placing both performers at one instrument. This constraint gives a context from which the performers can break out later in the piece.

The rhythmic constituents used as a basis for *Duel(t)* are quavers on the beat and off the beat. These elements form a constant point of reference for the work. The 'on' beat is established at fig. A, then the offbeat at fig. B. From this point, variables are added such as dynamic changes at fig. D, accents at fig. E and phasing at fig. F, but the on/offbeat dichotomy remains the central point of reference. From this point of stability, the dramatic transformation from the co-operative approach of fig. D to the opposing accents of fig. G and H is undertaken. By fig. H, the offbeat finally displaces the main beat as the perceived downbeat. At fig. I₁ the offbeat accents of player #2 can be heard pushing against the rhythmic groupings of the first player as a form of dramatic challenge on a rhythmic level.

An additional compositional feature in *Duel(t)* is the use of riffs which have in their

structure an inbuilt variability. This variability makes the riffs employed different in constitution and function from a riff by Davis or Wiegold. Although certain riffs are unchanging, such as those at figs. I and I₁, others are given flexibility regarding the number of beats before repetition, for example at fig. C. This follows the compositional procedure of using the same material but in different manifestations, somewhat akin to Schoenberg's concept of perpetual variation, but with the initial material always aurally present and recognisable whether in original or modified form. The pliability of the riffs allows for dramatic impact and unpredictability. For example, at fig. G each player knows that the other is going to place an *sforzato* accent at some point (thus upsetting his own sense of beat or offbeat), but it is impossible to predict the moment at which this will happen. This lends an air of expectancy to the performance and also gives it an edge of uncertainty as to the timing of certain actions. This happens in line with the changeable dynamic and relationship of the players during the piece as a whole.

Fig. G offers an additional notational issue for consideration, namely the use of repeats within repeats. Both bracketed sections denote repeated material, even down to the level of a single crotchet; therefore any amount of bracketed sections can potentially be contained within each other. This form of representation offers notational conciseness for elaborate repetitive structures, just as combinations of repeat, *da capo* and *dal segno* signs would have been used in the classical music tradition.

As bars are not numbered and the number of repeats is variable in several sections, a

device needed to be found whereby performers could co-ordinate at the end of a section in order to enter the following section simultaneously. For this purpose the 'exit' marking (found at the end of figs. A, B and C) is employed. The 'exit' motif, consisting of a short phrase, breaks the previous repeating cycle and also acts as a musical cue for the next section, in a similar way to a Miles Davis head-motif. This concept is developed in other parts of the portfolio, notably in *Dream Garden* and *Haiku Garden* from Chapter 11. Other musical cues in *Duel(t)* occur at the end of section J and J₁. For them to be recognisable to the performer and to break the pre-established cycle, they need to be distinct in form from the previous material. The quintuplet figure at fig. J is distinct from the preceding quavers, as well as providing momentum into the next section. Indeed, the sense of forward momentum is a crucial part of the rising dramatic tension of the piece. It is also assisted by the use of triplets in the riff at fig. L, the use of semiquaver-based rhythms in the same section and an *accelerando* marking before fig. J. The intensification of musical space through gradual tempo change coupled with decreasing note values can also be noted in other pieces from the portfolio, in particular *Hot Air* later in the current chapter.

Use of improvisation

In the case of *Duel(t)*, despite the heavily prescribed material in the first sections of the piece, there is an increasing reliance on material which is partially improvised. In this sense, the music can be seen as moving from the composer to the performer domain in

terms of generation of material, but the improvisation is heavily circumscribed by suggested rhythms and text, for example at fig. I. The accompanying riff from player #1 at fig. I is completely fixed, and a changing relationship of fixed (pre-set) and flexible (guided improvisation) from section to section is a central theme of the piece.

The technique of imitation is frequently used in *Duel(t)* and is closely allied to the use of improvisation. Starting at fig. K, the use of imitation at set distances creates the scenario of a musical game where the imitating player can be considered to be following or parodying the leading player depending on dramatic context. The roots in canonic structures are evident and links can also be found to Peter Wiegold's use of instructions such as 'play like... [player's name]' in improvisational contexts. Additionally, as the leading player is improvising, it is understood that the imitating player will never be able to imitate exactly regardless of the effort made to that end. This predicament is a consequence of the demands of playing and listening simultaneously. The psychological tension produced by this situation is used as a part of this 'game' strategy. Human error therefore makes possible the variety of textures necessary to offset the rudimentary nature of the rhythms. The improvisation in *Duel(t)* is rarely built entirely from the performer's own resources, but is highly dependent on circumstantial factors, particularly the guiding musical material, textual suggestions to performers and the structural and dramatic placing in the work.

Notation

It is evident that notation plays a crucial role in determining the extent and formal aspects of the improvisation for *Duel(t)*. The type of notation ranges from the almost entirely set notation at fig. A to the partially determined notations at figs. J and K. Some of the notations used can be categorised as aleatoric, such as those used by player #1 at fig I₁. In this case, a series of predetermined options are presented from which the performer chooses which ones to play and the order in which to play them. The resulting phrases will project the suggested martial quality not only because of the verbal instruction but also because of the quality inherent in the rhythms themselves. The performer is given the necessary building-blocks to create larger phrases, but the construction of the phrases and the manner in which they build depend on him.

In these sections, it is clearly imaginable as to how a phrase can be built and the type of texture which will result. Therefore, the decision to avoid complete compositional realisation before rehearsal merits consideration. The situation also applies to such sections as fig. H in which the options available to the performer are restricted to the quantity of rests to include before playing. In this case, the element of uncertainty regarding the quantity of rests ties in with the aim of creating dramatic tension in live performance. Even the combination of set rhythms at fig. I can take many different forms and provoke equally diverse responses. This approach upholds one of the central tenets of improvised music, namely the decision on a course of action in the heat of the moment

of performance as opposed to previous to it. Therefore there will exist in any rehearsal or performance the possibility of the performers surprising each other with their manner of applying musical material, even if the material itself is set. The unpredictability of the momentary decision, as opposed to the foreknowledge of the moment in which an accent will materialise, for example, gives the performers a dramatic edge on which they can enhance the characterisation in their playing.

'Impossible' notations

As *Duel(t)* progresses, notations become more complex once compositional and improvisational layers are superimposed on the initial material. This complexity makes score reading increasingly difficult for players as the piece develops, especially at the sight-reading stage. In the rehearsal, there were numerous points at which the performers were obliged to stop in order to decipher the notations employed. For example, during the partially improvised sections at fig. I and I₁, the performers are obliged to read through the possibilities of performance before they are able to play the section. In such situations as a time-restricted workshop, the effect of unconventional notations on performers and the time needed for them to interpret and become accustomed to them is of primary concern. For the purposes of clarification, the production of an introductory performance 'manual' in the manner of Stockhausen works (such as *Spiral*) is a possibility in these instances. However, rehearsal constraints often produce tension when a piece cannot be tackled directly on the part of performers

through the means of a conventionally notated score. The tension in this instance (although the performers were very quick to learn the piece) is to become a recurring theme of works which use experimental notations, several of which are discussed in this chapter and others in forthcoming chapters.

Part of the tension produced by notations which are deliberately left incomplete arises from practical questions which cannot be addressed directly by the notations themselves without recourse to precisely the type of compositional 'completion' which the notation is designed to avoid. An example of this is at fig. G where, in rehearsal, the question arose as to whether the instruments needed to play the repeat at the same time as each other. As the composer was on hand to give the answer (in this case 'not necessarily'), the issue could be resolved. However, if the piece were to be rehearsed by performers out of contact with the composer, the notation would be unclear unless the composer were to write a footnote of clarification. However, once explanations of the notation exceed a certain point, the use of the notation as an effective means of communication may be called into question. The score itself may also assume a cluttered and potentially confusing appearance as a consequence. The balance between the inclusion of explanatory notes to the score and their deliberate omission for the sake of clarity is a crucial issue for the composer working in improvisational contexts. As in the case of Wiegold, the score is not designed to be an object representing the piece, but as a working document subject to change through the rehearsal process. It presupposes the presence of the composer in rehearsal to help realise the potential of the score alongside

the performers, as well as answer questions such as that posed at fig. G.

Other particular instances of notational ‘impossibilities’ were pointed out by the performers during rehearsal. At fig. K³, one performer stated that:

“Following an improvisation at a crotchet’s distance is....optimistic. There isn’t time to react and then listen”.

(performer Chris Brannick in rehearsal, 2005)

The challenge in performing such a feat is indisputable and arguably impossible to achieve with a full measure of success. However, the composer is aware that in this case, imitation at a crotchet’s distance is impossible unless through technological means. It is precisely the result of approximation through maximum effort which represents the compositional intention of this ‘impossible’ instruction. The performer is also aware of this in proceeding to explain that he can produce the ‘idea’ of imitation at a crotchet’s distance. Therefore, although he cannot produce the perfect copy and in a statistical sense he is bound to fail, on another level, the attempt towards the impossible goal sets up the desired musical tension and ‘human drama’ of the result. The element of human error ensures variety and pushes to the fore the dramatic conceit of the imitator (challenging or following) the musical line of the soloist. It is also safe to assume that through practice, the skill of close imitation can improve in the same way as other specialised musical devices reliant on quick reactions (such as hocketing).

The above example can be seen in terms of a compositional strategy in order to produce a certain result as opposed to the presentation of the compositional result itself. It can be seen as a type of game in terms of its inherent challenge and dramatic possibilities, as well as the unpredictability of the result. The role of the performers as game-players therefore becomes paramount. Games themselves involve some kind of notational code, and play on the participants' notion of the possible and impossible. One performer commented:

“Games like this are often better on paper than in actual reality...if he [the composer] wants this, the best way of getting this impression across is to do this... [something different]”. (ibid.)

This emphasises the use of notation as conduit, not as a representation of what actually happens in performance. The performer proceeds to mention the problematic example given above:

“The improvisation with the imitation won't be improvisation because actually I will do this (different strategy).... you get much more of a musical sense....but it's nice to have the motivation, the reasoning.” (ibid)

The score therefore 'provokes' the performers into managing the seemingly impossible

notations through negotiation between the notational signs and the practical reality. The result is collaborative in that the performers will not reach the result without the motivational instructions given by the composer.

Despite the overall approach given above, there are areas in the score which are dense in informative content to the possible detriment of notational clarity. At figs. J and J₁, the simultaneous assimilation of various textual, graphic and musical instructions for the performers poses a considerable challenge, in particular the instruction for player #1 to keep to 20 beats at J₁ while improvising. An alternative notational device used in the piece *Torio*, which is discussed at the end of the chapter, is to designate approximate timings of sections in terms of seconds rather than beats and even to leave some timings to the intuition of the performers. This open-ended approach to timings allows performers to focus wholly on the improvisation without the constraints of counting beats and/or bars is adopted in some other works of the portfolio, particularly those of Chapter 11.

Summary

The initial notational experiments undertaken in *Duel(t)* may be impractical for a ten-minute workshop but they raise critical issues. These involve in the role of notation, the role of performers in interpreting experimental notation and the extent to which the score needs to be explicit in collaborative ventures between composer and performer.

The performers in this case were very alert in 'learning' the notations but the processing speed of performers and the consequent space between notational sign and performing action become important factors to consider in the devising of compositional games and strategies for performers. The possible usefulness of an instruction page/booklet is also a factor to consider, as well as its potential impracticality within a restricted time-frame of rehearsal.

Jiggy [Work #2 in portfolio]

[recording unavailable]

The second work under discussion is a solo piece and yet there exists a similar counterpoint of two contrasting elements to that in *Duel(t)*. The structure is less overtly dramatic than the percussion piece but there is a quasi-dramatic tension set up by the first four bars which serves as the material for exploration thereafter. The title refers to the Bach Gigue from the Cello Suite no.2 in D minor from which the first four notes (rearranged) constitute the basic pitch material for the piece.

The two note D-A assertion followed by the C#-Bb question at bar 2-3 sets up a rhythmic pairing of notes which is reflected in the bi-syllabic form of the title. The dramatic conceit consists of the image of each string of the cello representing a

‘character’. For much of the piece the pitches alternate between strings, one of which generally provides a stable pedal note for the other. In this sense the player is performing a duet with himself, in the same way as the contrapuntal layers in a Bach Cello Suite movement give the impression of multiplicity as opposed to monody. In *Jiggy*, the two parts increase to four at bar 54 when the C and G strings are introduced.

All rhythms are fixed for the whole piece. Much of the pitch material for the piece is also preset but there are areas for improvisatory exploration in terms of pitch selection. From bar 38-45 the upper pitches are selected by the performer on the A string and from bar 54 there is a wide variety of available pitches from the open A string to the lowest C of the cello. The combination of both sections essentially opens the whole range of the cello for exploration. The higher pitches available on the A-string are available once again in bar 86 resulting in a ternary structure of semi-improvised sections. The notation in such sections consists of note stems without noteheads and is therefore rhythmically prescribed. This type of notation is only used for 24 of the 137 bars in the piece. The determination of certain compositional elements is counterbalanced by the indeterminate elements, providing a counterpoint of fixed and flexible. A feature of work undertaken at this stage is the continuity of the compositional narrative of the piece while improvisational choices in a specified subcategory are made¹¹. The improvisational choices do not and cannot fundamentally alter the compositional course of the piece.

¹¹ For pieces in the portfolio which develop a different relationship between improvisation and compositional structure, see *Dream Garden* and *Haiku Garden* (Chapter 11)

Jiggy may be seen as a compositional étude in rhythm. Various rhythmic devices are used to this end. Using the basic 'gigue' rhythmic cell of long-short (trochee) durations, there are instances of metric modulation from bar 65-66 and 131-133. In bars 38-53 a form of phasing occurs in which the lower pitch approaches the upper in placement, practically converging at bar 45-46, and returning to its original place by bar 53.

As well as rhythm, articulation and playing techniques are kept varied. Contrasts are set up between slurred and separately bowed notes, accents on and off the beat, and between *arco* and *col legno/pizzicato* techniques. However, for the most part the piece is conventionally conceived in terms of phrasing and section length. This is a possible reflection on the original cello score of Bach which provided the source material for the piece.

Hot Air [Work #3 in portfolio, CD tracks 2-6]

The last two pieces for discussion, *Hot Air* and *Torio*, represent the latter stages of the research process. As in the piece *Duel(t)* they combine traditional with non-conventional notation in order to include improvised elements. *Torio* was developed with the players under the same kind of rehearsal constraints as *Duel(t)*. *Hot Air*, on the other hand, was developed under a very different set of circumstances.

Hot Air is a piece for two horn players which was entirely devised and created during a week-long period on a residential music course. It was given a public performance at the end of the week, the recording of which is on CD track 2. The process was one of collaboration in which composer and performer would play through and discuss sketches brought to rehearsal by the composer on a daily basis. In addition, performers would demonstrate techniques on their instruments which were requested by the composer or deemed relevant by the performers themselves. The sketches would then be elaborated, modified or rejected depending on the progress of the rehearsal.

The availability of players at the rehearsal stage is of great benefit to the composer working on experimental material. Sounds and techniques can be tested with immediate feedback from the performers, whose expertise on their particular instruments becomes a substantial source of practical information. There is no pressure, as in conventional composition, to commit all compositional aspects to paper before the rehearsal stage and therefore miss the opportunity to take compositional risks with relatively unfamiliar instruments. The performers' individual characters may also influence the way the music is written on a personal as well as technical level. Additionally, the musical and personal relationship between the two players can play a part in the compositional development. In the case of *Hot Air*, the performers consisted of a teacher and student. As a consequence, the unequal status between them was used as a pretext for a parallel musical struggle for dominance similar to that already explored in *Duel(t)*.

Ex. 30 *Hot Air* initial sketches

A

B

8

C

14 White noise - air only (no pitch)

other variants: 1. senza sord 2. con sord 3. bouché 4. vibrato 5. frull. 6. trill

Some initial sketches for the piece are shown above in ex. 30. They illustrate the preoccupation with the physical properties of the horn sound and intention to explore its different registers and dynamic levels. The material is kept deliberately basic in terms of presentation in order to address the following initial questions (see below):

- What is a horn? What does it represent?
- What are the capabilities of the horn?
- What is the nature of the physical sound of the horn?

The title *Hot Air*, despite its colloquial connotations, emphasises the enquiry into the physical qualities of the horn. 'Air' denotes 'airflow'. In the first system of the performing score, the unpitched white noise of the airflow through the tubing is heard as a residue from and emerging into the adjacent pitched notes. The intensity of airflow as it crosses the boundaries of unpitched to pitched regions and moves through the dynamic range of *ppp to fff* in different registers (including extremes of register) can be likened to different temperatures, hence the 'heat' metaphor of the title.

The recurring use of single, sustained notes at figs. A-C, I and M-N acts as the departure point for the exploration of the diverse intensities and serves as a *ritornello* texture. As well as the white noise of the airflow, the noise elements of the piece are expanded by percussive methods of playing. Notable examples of these methods are the valve clicks six bars after fig. K and the struck mouthpiece sound which constitutes the final note of the piece. Both of these additional sounds were gleaned in rehearsal: the piston sound is demonstrated by the players on CD track 3 and the hit mouthpiece sound was first heard by the composer in an improvisation workshop held as part of the week's course activities. These examples demonstrate possibilities of instrumental colour which may not be readily available in textbooks on instrumentation. In terms of pitched sound, as well as established techniques such as *cuivré* (used at fig. F) and *bouché* (bar 87), specialist techniques were introduced by the horn players such as playing melodies on

'one valve' (using the harmonic series, as at fig. U) and a form of glissando using valves, used from fig. T.

It is beyond doubt that without consultation from the players none of the above specialist techniques would have been employed. The advantage of having the performer demonstrate them unprompted is that the composer can use the technique directly not only in the knowledge that the performer is able to employ it effectively, but also knowing the range and other circumstances in which the technique works most effectively.

Approach to Improvisation

A fundamental consideration of the piece *Hot Air* is that, although the composition brief involved the use of improvisation as a given element, the performers had no experience of improvisation itself. Bearing this factor in mind, the composer decided to introduce the improvisational element gradually during the week and correspondingly reflect the process in the piece itself. *Hot Air* can therefore be seen as a gradual yielding of compositional material to the domain of improvisation. The process can be regarded as a move from small beginnings to eventual immersion. This starts at fig. N in which the performers colour a specific pitch and culminates in the generalised graphics of fig. S. As the piece progresses, the dramatic characterisation of the performers emerges in a

similar way to *Duel(t)*. The characterisation of the two players' parts, as well as the title, contains the potential for exaggeration and humorous interpretation through improvisation, recalling the game strategies already used in *Duel(t)*.

Compositional Techniques

The piece is generally structured metrically but involves several *senza misura* sections at the opening and at cumulative sections such as fig. M and S. The white noise element frames the piece as a structural element at fig. A and from fig. W to X. The first pitched notes, C-D a major second apart, are mirrored by the major second Eb-F at the end but the transposition reflects the process of transformation to which the piece is subjected.

The aforementioned *ritornelli* in sustained notes give way to episodes in strict metre starting at fig. D. The 'hunting theme' from fig. J initiates the intensification of momentum by taking the crotchet=132 beat and changing it to dotted crotchet=132. This process of intensification through tempo changes and subdivision of the beat from two to three or more parts is also a feature of *Duel(t)*. Improvisation takes the place of the last *ritornello* as the music spills over at fig. S from dotted crotchet=132 to *senza misura* thus reversing the previously established trend of moving from pulseless to metered sections. Added to the framework of *ritornelli* and episodes is a quiet section played at the heart of the piece (fig. O) which returns at the end. The surrounding radical changes of tempo, dynamic and pitch material give the impression that the quiet music is emerging from 'elsewhere', its

melody suggesting an alternative direction (or even existence) for the piece and thereby negating the previous dialectical discourse. The listener, through contrasting the slower section with those next to it, is given a moment of perspective to reflect upon the discourse thus far, but the musical argument resumes at fig. P as if fig. O had never occurred. At the end of the piece, fig. O is restated but transformed; although the dynamic is low as before, the tempo established at fig. T remains constant. In this instance also, any hint of other-worldliness given by the tuning, dynamic or *bouché* playing technique is cut short by the intrusion of the final percussive gesture at the end. Although the piece resolves by means of this musical version of a full stop, the worlds of dialectical argument and disembodied states are not resolved and leave deliberate question marks, perhaps insinuating wider questions of compositional approach.

Notation: ease of improvisatory context

In *Hot Air*, improvised sections such as figs. P and Q are guided by notational cues but rather than the specified rhythms of *Duel(t)*, pitches are specified instead, leaving the rhythmic construction to the players. In terms of assimilation of notational information, the passages at figs. P and Q are arguably easier to read than semi-improvised sections in *Duel(t)* due to the flexibility of temporal structure. By this stage in the research, the composer had taken note that one of the major barriers to successful improvisation in this context was the demand on the performer's attention by temporal constraints such as the counting of beats or bars. The problem is circumvented in this case through the

flexibility of the accompanying riff in terms of the number of repetitions, then by ending the 'bar' with a clear musical cue. This gives the improvising soloist as much space as he/she chooses for the solo. Another notational facet adopted for this piece is the writing of a group of pitches in a non-logical sequence. This avoids the scenario of soloists seeing and then crudely reproducing the stepwise motion of scales or modes in a predictable manner. At the same time, the scrambled sequence encourages the performers to make use of the intended wide intervallic leaps from note to note (of which the notated note row itself is an example). It would be perfectly plausible for the soloist to start the improvisation with the note row and develop from there, as the materials provide a secure base from which the inexperienced improviser can explore.

The improvisatory content for the section in which the non-notated materials start to impinge on the piece is kept as straightforward as possible for both soloist and accompanist. Figs. P and Q essentially consist of a short riff (maximum six notes) with the aforementioned suggested pitches for improvisation. The straightforward musical context gives ample choice for the soloist as to the duration and musical development of the solo. The riff acts as an anchor point just as in the work of Wiegold and Miles Davis. The 'free' section at fig. S is in fact highly contextualised, initially from the preceding scale and (written) A pitch of horn 1, but also to a large degree from the textual instructions for the horns to 'compete' in a 'Battle Cadenza', the effect of which characterises the instruments and dramatises the musical dialogue.

As with the piece *Duel(t)*, which follows a similar dramatic conceit, certain instrumental entries are kept deliberately unpredictable through notational means. At fig. I, the order of entries is always clear but, due to the marking 'entries sudden and unexpected', performers can genuinely surprise each other (and therefore the listener) with their sense of timing whether by means of delay, anticipation or even regular placement (the latter of which may paradoxically induce an irregular effect in view of the expectation of irregularity set up in the original instruction).

Within a more limited improvisational framework, variables are limited to simple *ad libitum* parameters such as the marking *dim./cresc.* given within brackets at fig. M. Along with a textual (often single word) 'quality' to permeate the sound, the instructions are quick to understand, absorb and utilise as well as offering much scope for interpretation, As well as the flexibility of timings of entry for each player, the whole spectrum of dynamics is also made available.

The convention of using single words to denote sound quality was used as a guide to interpretation in this and other sections. They range from specific techniques to colour a sound, such as *cuivré* at fig. F, to suggestions as to the way in which a note may be modified through the treatment of its sound colour, for example at fig. N. In this case, words are not meant to convey precise instruction but to act as a catalyst for performers' own sound colours (the door of which is opened by the additional 'etc.' marking). The composer is therefore communicating intention through insinuation, just as Wiegold may

ask a player to play 'like' another player (as opposed to copy him exactly). In this way, the performers have an opportunity to establish a personal creative involvement with the piece, while being aware that this involvement takes place within the structural constraints of the music and the composer's overall artistic intentions. For a performer unused to improvisational practice, this relatively modest level of involvement may be welcomed more than that of piece in which the demands of creative decision-making and responsibility are higher.

The graphic notation at fig. 5 represents a different type of notational suggestion. Due to the extremity of the musical situation, textual instructions were not considered sufficient to convey the intended effect. The graphic notation used is symbolic, inviting comparison with scores of such composers as Bussotti, and it requires creative interpretation as opposed to translation. The undefined nature of the notation needs to be considered in the context of the preceding material starting at fig. 1 and building up through the subsequent 6/8 sections. As has been discussed earlier, the momentum and material of the previous section will have a substantial impact on the course of the improvisation itself. Therefore, only a general improvisational instruction is used here so that the players use the previous material as a springboard from which they can 'complete' the dramatic climax.

Section O introduces a technique used in the Wiegold improvisation analysed in the previous chapter: namely harmonisation. The first player is requested to shadow the second on the repeat by adding a line in the bass register. The shadowing is in rhythmic unison, but the first player decides which actual pitches to use himself. The composer, rather than producing his own harmonisation according to personal habits, relies on the performer's approach to create a new collaborative form of harmony. The principal melodic line is by the composer and its coupling with the performers' harmonisation produces a hybrid in which the relative stability and predictability of the melodic contour mixes with the relative instability and unpredictability of the harmonisation, thereby creating a counterpoint of predictable and unpredictable elements. The original melody used as a sketch and used in initial rehearsals is shown below in ex. 31, along with the accompanying recorded examples of CD tracks 4 and 5.

Ex. 31 *Hot Air* original melody

The musical notation for Ex. 31, 'Hot Air' original melody, is presented in two staves. The first staff is in treble clef, marked '(in F)', and the second staff is in bass clef, marked '5'. The time signature is 8/8, and the tempo is marked 'c. 120'. The melody consists of two phrases, each ending with a double bar line. The first phrase starts with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes. The second phrase also starts with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes. The key signature is one flat (F major/D minor).

In the rehearsal recordings, harmonisations above and below the main line are attempted, one by each player. The harmonisations follow the contour of the melody but there is insufficient time for the performer to calculate the precise intervallic distance

between the harmonising note and the note of the principal melody, resulting in approximation tempered by the instinctive aural response to the emerging sequence of musical events. This outcome is in accord with the intentions of the composer inasmuch as an approximate realisation as a result of 'human error' creates the necessary amount of intervallic variety for harmonic tension to occur, even though the performers through their efforts may feel that they are 'failing'. The same type of psychological strategy has already been discussed in *Duel(t)*.

Additionally, the following strategy was devised by the composer: the melody was to be changed in each rehearsal so that the performers would not become overly familiar with the material to the extent that they could develop full accuracy in the harmonisation. In the event, one new version of the melody appeared in the final draft. The original melody was rejected in favour of the simpler melodic shape of the final version which only needs a brief amount of time to establish itself in the piece.

The instructions involving improvisation for this piece are made as concise as possible, in contrast to the more time-consuming and demanding notations of pieces previously analysed. The performers can therefore concentrate on the performance itself, without the need to decipher complex instructions and notations which suddenly appear in the course of the piece. The notation facilitates the performance situation through its communicativeness as opposed to drawing the performers' energy towards itself, and therefore serves its purpose as a medium rather than an end in itself.

Notational challenge and resolution

The course of rehearsals did not always run smoothly from a notation perspective and certain sketches presented particular difficulties. These sketches are shown in ex. 32:

Ex. 32 *Hot Air Hocket*

any notes from

mf

any notes from

5

The intention in ex. 32 was to create a system of hocketing pitches permutating in aleatoric fashion using rhythms on downbeat/offbeat patterns¹². The resulting single melodic line will be heard by the listener in stereo due to the relatively wide positioning of the players as they face each other. The hocket technique proved to be a difficult

¹² The on/off beat device is also a primary feature of *Duel(t)*

technique to execute, especially for the offbeat player who, as can be heard from the rehearsal examples (on CD track 6), tends to gravitate towards the main beat. Even playing the bracketed notes in order as an unchanging riff proved to be a challenge. The playing of notes in varying order consequently resulted in additional demands and performers occasionally forgot the notes assigned to them due to the placement of the pitches on a different staff from that of the rhythms. A further complication involved switches between downbeat and offbeat patterns every four bars, even though this was deemed necessary by the composer to achieve the intended stereo effect.

As there was a constraint on rehearsal time and as it was necessary for a practical solution to be reached prior to the concert, the resolution of this issue was to fully notate a single version. It was deemed sufficiently challenging for the performers to deal with the hocket technique without the additional calculation of unfamiliar notational systems. There is no doubt that performers of the classical tradition are far more accustomed to and experienced in dealing with notational outcomes as opposed to processes and are as a result likely to need more time in deciphering process-based notation. Steve Reich demonstrated a solution to this problem by forming a group specially to deal with unconventional musical processes such as phasing. In the case of *'Hot Air'*, the performers became more confident using the fully-realised version and produced an eventual optimum level of performance as a result.

Torio [Work #4 in portfolio, CD tracks 7 & 8]

Postulations

The aforementioned work *Hot Air* is an example of a piece in which inexperienced improvisers can be encouraged to explore improvisation through straightforward notational instructions. The next piece for discussion, *Torio*, was written in the knowledge that the performers involved already had considerable experience of improvisation and a willingness to explore unconventional notation. With this in mind, a pair of postulations were drawn up previous to the composition of the piece:

1. The piece is largely to use relative (as opposed to absolute) pitch
2. Sections will not be subdivided by barlines, but will be given overall approximate durations which may be disregarded if performers prefer.

In the score, there are in fact occasions where pitches are specified and barlines are written (for example from fig. G), but these are included as a safety valve from the constriction inherent in the premise. The piece invites comparison with *Duel(t)* in the use of open sections without regular barlines (despite the constant pulse) and *Jiggy* in terms of the use of relative pitch, although in the case of *Torio* its use is far more pervasive.

Instrumentation and texture

The instrumental group for which the piece was written was the homogenous combination of three melodicas. This provides the compositional challenge of creating textural differentiation from a single sound colour (a challenge already encountered in *Duel(t)*). Two approaches are available to the composer: firstly the creation of specific roles for the instruments (for example melody, chords and bass-line accompaniment) and secondly the treatment of the ensemble in the manner of a single instrument with the potential for diffusion of the principal sound-source. The latter approach was taken for *Torio*. For this purpose and in particular for instruments using the same pitch range, the technique of canon was chosen as particularly appropriate. However, owing to the use of relative pitch and the absence of numbered bars (even though order of entries is specified), the canon itself would necessarily be of a relative rather than absolute nature. This would in turn produce the combination of variation and repetition common to the aesthetic of many pieces under discussion.

Motivic treatment

The three-note motif of the opening section comprises the sole motivic material for the piece and as such continues the classical tradition of forms based on terse motifs such as the first movement of Beethoven's 5th Symphony. The reliance on the three-note motif re-emphasises the general aim of accruing the maximum creative output from the minimum amount of initial material. In this sense it shares the approach of the varied

development of on/off-beat structures in *Duel(t)*.

The motif is multi-functional in that it often serves as a riff as well as the principal melodic material. Nevertheless, it is given little time to settle as such. As soon as a texture is established, it is rapidly deconstructed in order to make way for the succeeding one, in a manner reminiscent of the mercurial textures of *Aventures* by Ligeti.

Seemingly distinct material, such as the alternating pairs of pitches in section B, can also be derived from the second and third notes of the initial motif. The zigzag shape on page 6 of the score can be seen as mobile extension of this two-note diminution. Likewise, the three note upward scalar figure at fig. C can be seen as a slight modification of the initial motif, with the last note inverted. The simple yet pliable motif therefore allows for substantial compositional (and improvisational) elaboration.

Notational Premise (1): Relative notation

The use of relative pitch as a compositional premise implies a corresponding notational system. The system employed resembles the score of *Workers Union* by Louis Andriessen. In both pieces, the noteheads are given no specific pitch reference while relative notions of higher and lower are maintained depending on the vertical level of the notehead. This approach offers ample scope to the performers in terms of pitch choice. For example, with the main motif at the start of the piece, they can choose notes as close together as

one semitone apart and as wide apart as the extremes of the instrument's keyboard.

In conjunction with the staggered cueing system, an outline of pitch patterns is given for canonic treatment. This treatment will of course accommodate the potential for divergence of pitch outlined above. The choices for the 'imitating' performers in terms of pitch selection can be divided into three categories:

1. Close imitation (similar pitch range or intervals to the choice of the previous player)
2. Contrast (of register and/or interval)
3. Independence (the performer follows an independent contour without influence or interference from the melodic shapes of other players)

Another factor which bears consideration regarding the three-note motif is the physical adoption of hand position at the keyboard by the performer. Any experienced keyboard player will have a repertoire of acquired hand positions on three notes (such as major/minor triads) which may be used readily, but from which arises the psychological issue as to whether to follow or act contrary to instinct when playing the piece. There is no explicit instruction for performers to follow or act against their instincts in this respect. As a result, there exist both conventional triadic and unconventional non-triadic chord

formations in the rehearsals and performances of *Torio*. In a general sense, these formations provide a quasi-contrapuntal balance of familiar and less familiar pitch combinations and contribute to a diversity and richness of harmonic content. On a more local level, harmony may vary substantially from section to section, but without drastic effect on the overall structure which, despite possible variations in timing, will be broadly consistent with each playing. In general, issues of dissonance and consonance will balance out unless performers take drastic personal decisions.

The other variable element, namely the question as to whether the performer will predetermine his/her chosen pitches prior to the performance or improvise them 'in the moment', will depend on circumstances beyond the scope of the score itself. In particular, the outlook of the performers on this issue is vital. There is no recommendation made on the part of the composer on this matter, a position which permits the performers to create pre-planned versions of the piece as well as a semi-improvised ones.

The two CD recordings of the piece on track 7 and 8 offer examples of ways in which partially determined notations can result in contrasting outcomes from one playthrough to the next. The choice of notes, pitch registers and distance of imitation differs each time albeit not to a radical extent. This is perhaps indicative of the way in which performers' habits, once established in rehearsal, can carry through to subsequent performance situations.

Notational Premise (2): General score layout.

In contrast to the score of *Workers Union*, in which all players read off one single-line stave, the score layout of *Torio* varies from one line shared between the three players to individual lines. All players read from the full score but players rarely enter in unison as a consequence of the canonic structure of most entries. The entries themselves are marked by cue numbers over the notes. Each player is represented by a number (1-3). Entries may also function in 'circular cyclic' form as at the end of page 7, in which the sound is 'passed' from player to player in a rotation. The approximate timings of entries can be deduced from the overall length of the section (measured in seconds), but on a more local level performers have autonomy determining the moment of entry. By employing such a system, the general cues necessary for the whole group are minimised. The absence of fixed bars also facilitates the timing of entries despite the constancy of the implied dotted crotchet pulsation. A consequence of these factors is that one section can move smoothly to the next as the performers are aware that they only need listen for (or initiate) the musical cue to be followed, for example the zigzag figure at the top of page 6 of the score. The written timings within sections are also only designated as an initial guide for the first-time performer, and performers become accustomed to the piece may well take more (or less) time to explore the creative potential of the sections by relying on intuition for timing issues but still following the general format of cues in the score.

The cues themselves act as musical triggers, much as head-motifs would act as aural

signals for the performers of the Miles Davis group in extended forms (see Chapter 4). By means of this system, the group does not need to rely on the constant presence of a conductor or musical director and performers can instead relate to each other in the manner of performers of chamber music. Many of the notational strategies used in the piece and the adoption of musical cues are further explored and discussed in the ensemble pieces of Chapter 11: *Frolic, Ma* and *Dream Garden*.

Summary

Torio was the last piece to be written out of the group presented in this chapter. It represents the last stage in a gradual process of notational refinement for pieces designed for players outside the composer's regular group of co-researchers and fellow performers. The consideration of the performer's ability to process notational information creatively while executing the music itself resulted in several changes of notational approach. However, the experimental notations of *Hot Air* and *Torio* were found to be practicable by the performers. As a result of the attempt to present the notational material as clearly as possible, the workability of these pieces was maximised despite the complexities of combining improvisatory elements with pre-composed ones. In the piece *Torio*, for example, the performers choose almost every pitch they play themselves, whilst in the context of a clear and through-composed structure. The notation acts as a buffer between the compositional and improvisational elements, the result of which is a balanced yet energised state of tension.

As has been mentioned before, all the works discussed in this chapter are on the scale of chamber music, with a sextet as the largest ensemble size. The question now arises as to how the notations and strategies expounded above can work on the wider canvas of a large ensemble or orchestral setting, and also to what extent the setting itself will determine the form of the notations and strategies themselves. In order to address these questions, the next chapter will focus exclusively on the orchestral projects undertaken by the author during the research period.

Chapter 7 – Five Orchestral Miniatures

[All audio extracts for this chapter can be found on CD 5]

The medium of the orchestra has frequently been used by composers for large scale projects and for conspicuous presentation in the public arena. The works presented in this chapter, on the other hand, have a different objective. They were made in order to explore the orchestral medium anew using an experimental approach. They were made to bring orchestral players into contact with improvisation, thus redefining their roles within the orchestra. The role of the conductor and the function of the orchestral score were also re-examined.

The experiments were designed to be small-scale rather than employing the large canvas of extended symphonic forms commonly used for the orchestra. The context was a workshop rather than a concert, therefore brevity was in keeping with the practical circumstances.

The research aim of incorporating improvisational elements in orchestral compositions is to examine the effect of experimental notations on a large group of players. This examination would necessarily take into consideration the complex range of textural possibilities available to an orchestra, ranging from unison to as many independent parts as there are players. The complexity extends to the human level, as

players adopt various levels of identity: the personal, the identity of the instrumental sections of which they are a member and the overall identity of the orchestral mass. Therefore, the composer using improvisation on this scale is faced by the extra potential and possible limitations of the 'mass' in addition to those of solo and chamber contexts.

The use of improvisation within orchestral settings also redefines the role of the orchestral conductor. One radical approach introduced by orchestras such as the Scratch Orchestra is to relinquish the conductor altogether. As mentioned before, however, a mass improvisation is of a different nature from an individual or chamber improvisation where the performer has more textural space to absorb and explore the contributions of his/her fellow improvisers. The orchestral improviser may still have choice as to when and what to play, but his/her individual contribution is less likely to be noticeable in the context of the overall sound. Additionally, the orchestral sound is also far less likely to change direction quickly owing to the slow-changing nature of crowd consensus in large group improvisation. The start of a free improvisation by the London Improvisers' Orchestra is provided on CD 5 track 1 as an illustration of this slow, organic process of change.

The aims for the author are different in that the improvisation always occurs within a compositional structure, in a similar way to the chamber compositions discussed in the previous chapter. Therefore, there is a necessity for a 'master' score and an orchestral conductor to direct proceedings. The conductor for the orchestral projects in this chapter

was Peter Wiegold and the pieces were composed in the knowledge that he would direct the improvisational material using his own methods as well as those of the composer. This creates a three-way interaction of composer/conductor/player on the improvisational level as well as the conventional three-way relationship based on the reproduction of preset compositional material.

Work #5: *Haiku 5-7-5*

One of the initial considerations for this orchestral project was format of the score. Using the format used by Wiegold in *drive your cart #1* and in contrast to the centuries-old orchestral practice of general score and parts, *Haiku 5-7-5* exists only as a general score and without specified instrumentation. *Haiku 5-7-5* was presented for a ten minute rehearsal slot as a part of an orchestral workshop. The time limitation warranted brevity in terms of the material presented.

The absence of bar-lines at the end of each line suggests that the notated material can be expanded, but there is no instruction against presenting the material once only, repeating sections 1, 2 or 3 individually or in combinations, or even overlaying sections. The decision rests with the conductor, along with the issue of instrumentation. The material is presented to act as a catalyst for realisation as opposed to existing as a representation of the realisation itself. Similarly, the Japanese poetic form known as

haiku can be regarded as an invitation to the reader's imagination to 'resonate' with and extend the given material as opposed to providing a full description of the image (which would concurrently curtail the imaginative response of the reader).

The pitch material, in the same way as the carefully selected syllables in a *haiku* poem, can be seen as the 'essence' of *Haiku 5-7-5* as well as sketches to be elaborated. For this reason, a straightforward note-for-note presentation of the piece would not be deemed an inferior or incomplete version if compared to an elaborated one. The *haiku*-related conceit is that since the source material is restricted, there exists freedom for the player to explore through expansion, elaboration and improvisation, or for the listener to elaborate through the imagination of the inner ear if the materials are not developed by the player. Compositional restraint regarding the treatment of material, radical though it may be in the orchestral context, has already been noted in Davis works such as *So What* and the initial notated material in Wiegold's *drive your cart*.

The scores are available to the players in C, Bb and F transpositions, but it is ensured that all players have all of the compositional material at their disposal. This provides a common reference point and transcends sectional boundaries in the orchestra, providing a level playing-field of possibilities. Conversely, it can be argued that the levelling-out of inherent sectional disparities negates the potential of subtle orchestral effects achievable through fully realised instrument-by-instrument orchestration. Admittedly, in one-page orchestral scores there can never exist the same level of moment-to-moment

deliberation of orchestral balance and timbral combinations that a composer will be able to notate at the work desk. However, as the orchestrated sound is 'live', it is constantly available for adjustment both by the conductor and also through the players in balancing their sound with the sound of others. Even the most detailed pre-notated score will involve these factors in live performance. In this sense, the resulting orchestration of *Haiku 5-7-5* can be as refined as any pre-orchestrated version. A further discussion on this issue is offered regarding *Haiku #4*, which compares the short-score notation of the original with a fully orchestrated version.

The compositional material of *Haiku 5-7-5* consists of the following:

- **Fig. 1:** A pedal note (Bb) and a four-note motif, which consists of two interval pairs in zigzag formation of rising intervals (a fifth and a sixth)
- **Fig. 2:** A melodic line in irregular zigzag formation consisting mainly of thirds and fifths
- **Fig. 3:** A single chord mainly constructed from fourths and fifths with the inclusion of an additional 'shadow' note (D)

The materials are distinct but share a number of common elements. The interval of the fifth is a key building block in each section, as is the zigzag formation of figs. 1 and 2. Although there is no sense of tonal centre, the note D runs through each section as a constant (albeit at times implied) presence, acting as a common thread linking pitch areas. Other common notes which act as satellites to the pitch D are the F# in figs. 1 and 2 and the group of E, C# and G# (Ab) in figs. 2 and 3. There also exist notes unique to each section. These help to define the individual character of the sections especially in relation to sectional juxtaposition or superimposition.

Registers for the piece are defined and provide another layer of characterisation.

The low Bb from fig. 1 occupies a unique register, a full octave and sixth below its neighbour note (G# in fig. 3). It therefore acquires the function of a fundamental, above which the D-C-Ab combination at the end of fig. 2 can be regarded as overtones from the harmonic series. Fig. 2 involves the higher register with all notes exceeding the range of figs. 1 and 3. This reinforces its melodic role as opposed to the accompaniment role of figs. 1 and 3. Figs. 1 and 3 have a degree of overlap in the middle register and offer the possibility of merging and interlocking harmonies.

In contrast to the fixed registers and pitch material, there is almost no information regarding pulse or rhythmic configurations, except that the four melodic notes of fig. 1 are to be played at equidistant time intervals. The notes of fig. 2 may be also played at even time intervals, or otherwise at the discretion of the player. Fig. 3 suggests a common

starting point in terms of a downbeat, but owing to the absence of time signature, metronome mark and tempo marking, the semibreve note value may by implication equally stand for a note of indefinite duration. This non-specific approach gives flexibility for the conductor to allow for the emergence and expansion of the original material. As such it provides relief from the constraints of pulse and rhythmic grids in much of the music discussed in the previous chapter.

The outcome can be heard on CD tracks 2 and 3. These two versions of the piece have different starting points and sectional sequences. The choice of section order, as mentioned above, is entirely at the discretion of the conductor, underlining the vital creative role he plays in the structural realisation.

The directions given by Wiegold are listed overleaf sequentially, but can also be heard on the CD as verbal instructions. Wiegold's use of verbal as opposed to visual cues in this case is as a result of the relative unfamiliarity of the players with his system of hand signals at this time. The actual words spoken by Wiegold are indicated by quotation marks and the prefix 'PW' (see overleaf):

Version 1

0'00" Fig. 3, strings only, *ppp*

0'05" PW: "Move....away" [from written pitch] "then come back."

0'12" PW: "Like [.....], just imitate." [player's name]

0'28" PW: "Very gradually move towards *pont*."

0'48" PW: "Everybody pick up the glissando but very very slow[ly]." [still *sul ponticello*]

1'08" PW: "Even slower and half the dynamic."

1'18" PW: "Oboe play [fig.] 2 over it, in free time."

1'28" PW: "Upper wind pick up the last note." [of fig.2]

1'33" PW: "Play with it."

1'36" Players fluctuate around the pitch of the note.

1'43" Players fluctuate around all the notes of fig. 2.

2'07" PW: "Everybody stop." [except two cellos who have been cued to continue]

2'11" PW: "Horns imitate cellos." [cellos on glissando, horn players perplexed]

2'30" Horn players imitate cellos.

2'50" Bassoons imitate cellos.

3'02" All lower strings and trumpets imitate the two cellos, "brashly." (PW)

3'17" All woodwind imitate trumpets.

3'35" All players stop except double-bass, which follows glissando up to topmost register.

[end of version 1]

The extent to which Wiegold builds homogeneous yet mutating textures through the use of imitation from one instrumental group to another is remarkable. The consistency of texture is achieved through the mimicking element of imitation, while the change is achieved through the differentiation implicit in the instruction 'imitate' or 'play like'. The instruction for physically dissimilar instruments to imitate each other (for example for horns to imitate cello glissandi) leads necessarily to a differentiated texture. This can be understood at least in part as the motivation for the seemingly paradoxical instruction for the horn players to imitate the cellos. However, it is also a feature of this section that instruments which are known in the field of orchestration to 'blend' effectively are selected to play together: horns, bassoons and cellos. Other instruments such as the oboe and upper wind are saved for textures involving fig. 2 but are used sparingly, leaving the string glissandi as a constant timbral reference point for the whole playthrough. The decisions in instrumentation taken by the orchestral players are 'local' (for example a violinist would decide which note(s) of the chord to play at fig. 3), but the overall decisions in this respect are made by the conductor. At the same time as cueing in players (as a conventional conductor's role would imply), it is the conductor who decides which players or groups of players to involve and which material they will play in the live situation. This brings a substantial improvisational component to the conductor's role as well as to that of the players.

There are various musical features in the above realisation which have no presence, physical or implied, in the original notation. Instead, they emerge as additional layers

upon the original sounds. Arguably the most striking of these is the nearly constant glissando which is so pervasive that it becomes a central conceit even though its suggestion is entirely the conductor's rather than the composer's. The realisation therefore becomes a study in the mutation of a single chord. However, it is to be remembered that the chord merely serves as a starting point to the 'resonance' to be found by conductor and performer in the exploration of its potential. The extent to which the piece can be moulded in limited time is also striking. The rapid rate of progress is made possible in the hands of an experienced conductor/improviser through the direct engagement with the 'live' sound as opposed to premeditation or by means of discussion.

The opening of the second version of the piece (CD track 3) is an instance of the rapidity of decision making involved. When Wiegold asks players to 'pick a note' from fig. 1, the chord is orchestrated in several seconds. The outcome of the chord in terms of balance of register, dynamic balance and timbre depends on the players. Trust in the aural abilities of the players on the part of the composer and conductor is implicit. Players are, however, given time to adjust or change note if needed, as the inevitable unpredictability of the initial results necessitates time for players' reactions and application of their critical judgment in deciding how to respond.

The second version of the piece explores the 'gaps' left by the first version, in particular through increased attention on fig. 1. It also includes two solo improvisations. The first is played by the flute and is based on the upper four notes of fig. 1. The second is

for the bassoon without specific reference to pitch material. These improvisations are demonstrations of two possible approaches to improvisation in the piece: the first modelled closely on the initial material and in the second liberated from it.

Haiku 5-7-5 – Chamber version [CD tracks 4 -6]

Four years after the orchestral workshop/performance of this piece, an opportunity arose to record a chamber version with three of the author's co-researchers. As in the orchestral rehearsal, the objective was to reach musical outcomes in the minimum time by dealing directly with the 'live' sounds and forgoing any discussion of how material would be developed. There were however two premeditated approaches to the initial structuring of the performance:

- Version #1 (CD track 4): Presentation of figs. 1,2,3 in order (with improvisational elaboration)
- Version #2 (CD track 5): sections in any order – performers are free to choose the sequence and manner of interpretation. No cues are given.

The versions were rehearsed in this order, hence with an increased level of creative autonomy for players in the second playing. In version #2, the performers spontaneously start in different sections from each other. The keyboard starts on fig. 1, the saxophone explores fig. 2 (starting with a melodic figure reminiscent of fig.1) and the guitarist starts

on fig. 3, providing an overall sense of harmonic equilibrium from the interlocking chordal structures. The keyboard makes much use of the central pitch D as a shadow for the saxophone melody, as well as colouring it through the use of irregular repetition and pitch shifts away and back. The saxophone melody is outlined in ex. 33 below and can be heard on CD track 5:

Ex. 33 *Haiku 5-7-5* version #2 (chamber setting): saxophone improvisation (CD track 5)

Senza Misura (relative timing)

(guit.) sax., pitches from fig. 2 0'40"

(=fig. 1 transposed) (=fig. 3 transposed)

2 0'58" 1'22" fig. 3 fig. 1 fig. 3

3 1'48" 1'58" fig. 2

4 2'08" 2'27" fig. 1 fig. 3

(piece ends at 3'07")

In this example, there is much use of octave displacement for variety of melodic shape (deemed effective despite the original intention of fixed octaves). The texture and harmony are kept mobile by switching pitch material to fig. 3 at 0'58" (with a fragment of fig. 1 at 1'22") then back to fig. 2 at 1'48" (incorporating fragments from figs. 1 and 3 towards the end). The sense of melodic mobility is also enhanced by the player's decision to transpose a phrase an octave higher while playing fig. 2 at 1'58", following an upwards trend which ends on the final long high D of 2'27". This final note could be derived from any section but is actually played in a different octave from those written in all sections of the score. It can be seen as a reflection of the middle D played earlier in the improvisation by the keyboard.

The consensus amongst performers was that the second version was the more successful. However, this opinion may be as much a reflection of their enjoyment of relative personal autonomy in the piece as the actual musical result. Nevertheless, with three performers, as in the recorded version, it is possible for each player to be aware of the individual sound of the others in the spirit of chamber music. Even without conducted cues, they will also in all probability be able to ascertain the section their fellow performers have chosen to play. This calls into question the need for a conductor figure (as in the aforementioned orchestral context) in order for the piece to proceed along a structured path. Players can also explore the potential within each section without the possibility of their chosen musical direction being diverted by a conductor figure (although the possibility of diversion remains in the music played by the other players).

With this context in mind, it is therefore no surprise that the guitarist produces the remarkable de-tuning of the low string of the guitar in the second version and not the first.

Following this initial recording session and the transcription of the saxophone solo, in the group's next live performance the author resolved to further the experiment by having the same saxophone player read his own solo improvisation off the page. In order to achieve maximum intuitive reaction, this version was not rehearsed. Although the saxophonist was aware that he would participate in a new version of *Haiku 5-7-5* and would receive a part to 'sight-read' in performance, he was not aware that it would be his own solo line.

The results of this experiment can be heard on CD track 6. The saxophonist mainly plays the melodic line 'straight' before adding small-scale elaborations late in the piece. In the context of the surrounding musical commentary from other players (including a second saxophone player), the line almost assumes the centrality of a *cantus firmus*. The potential of improvisation to transcription and back to improvisation is endless, but raises questions of the authenticity of transcription as well as providing a source of reference and illumination.

The presentation of *Haiku 5-7-5* as a chamber work as opposed to orchestral piece is evidence of the adaptability characteristic of open scoring. Without a single change to the

score, a wide variety of approaches is possible in terms of structure, timbre and instrumentation. The fixed element remains that of pitch. The tension between the fixed and flexible reflects that of the set structure embedded in the appeal to the imagination pertaining to *haiku* poetry.

Work #6: 4 Haiku for Orchestra [CD tracks 7-12]

Several months after the initial workshop, the opportunity arose to work with the same orchestra. The theme of *haiku* was chosen again as a starting point. The objective this time was to further the improvisatory element by eliciting an intuitive response from the performers, as if they were reading and reacting to a *haiku* poem for the first time. The intuitive insight provoked by *haiku* poetry seemed suitable for a parallel exploration through the intuitive nature of improvisation. The musical score would be designed to provoke this reaction from the players. Before each piece is analysed in detail, however, a brief discussion of the structure of *haiku* poetry will follow to place the work in context.

Haiku Structure

A conventional *haiku* uses a total of seventeen syllables divided into 5-7-5 sub-groups. In musical terms this can be imagined as a microcosm of ternary ABA form although it should be remembered that the final words of the poetic form do not repeat the opening ones. Rather, the third line synthesises the first two by combining their images, meanings

or actions in a form of resolution. An example is the following *haiku* by Matsuo Basho:

Old pond
Frog jumps in
Sound of water

Here, 'sound of water' can be seen as a synthesis of 'pond' (first line) and 'frog' (second line). In structural terms the form may therefore be more accurately described as AB(AB). This tripartite form resulting from two interacting elements, along with the brevity of form, is of central concern in two of the *4 Haiku*. Both these pieces are based on specific *haiku* poems. The other pieces are more developmental in abstract musical terms but still make use of the 5-7-5 syllable count in building the proportions of rhythms, phrases and sections.

All four pieces have as a notational premise the format of a one-page score. This follows on from the precedent established in *Haiku 5-7-5*. Individual orchestral parts are consequentially non-existent although in this case some details of orchestration are occasionally specified in the general score. In the spirit of *haiku*-like brevity, the content for each piece is contained within the page as opposed to expanding from it improvisationally (as in *Haiku 5-7-5*). This is partly owing to the absence of riffs as well as the self-sufficiency of the compositional material. Nevertheless, the creative leadership of Wiegold as conductor of *4 Haiku* was important in conveying the unfamiliar notations and

concepts of the work to the performers as well as guiding the players in their creative response to the poems. It would be unlikely that such a score would have been written without the foreknowledge of his participation as conductor.

Haiku #1&3

These pieces will be discussed together as they follow a common procedure. Both are based on particular *haiku* poems read by the players prior to playing the piece. With the poem acting as a catalyst, the image conjured up in the mind of the player translates directly to the physical sound of the musical response. There is little time for reflection as the response is demanded almost immediately, emphasising the transitory element in *haiku* poetry.

Haiku #1 [CD track 7]

For *Haiku #1*, the performers divide into two groups. The piece is based on the 'frog' *haiku* quoted above. In broad terms, the players in group 1 represent the frog and those in group 2 represent the pond.

Group 1 starts on only one pitch. As the note sustains, a gesture from group 2 represents the 'splash' which in turn is followed by (artificial) resonance. This produces the following overall sequence:

note - gesture - resonance

which parallels the poetic sequence:

stillness - jump - water rippling

This gives three 'moments' for the piece, corresponding to the three lines of the poem. The timing of each moment is at the discretion of the conductor.

The poem had been set previously by the author as a solo piano work. The score of this piece can be seen in ex. 34 below:

Ex. 34 Piano Haiku (on Basho's frog)

The musical score for 'Piano Haiku (on Basho's frog)' consists of two staves, Treble and Bass clef. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a whole note chord. The second staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a whole note chord. A fermata is placed over the first measure of the second staff, with the instruction '(retake silently)' written above it. A 'Ped.' (pedal) marking is placed below the first measure of the second staff, with a wavy line indicating the duration of the flutter pedal. The score ends with a double bar line.

In this version, the three 'moments' can be seen as bar 1, 2 and 3 respectively. In the orchestral version, the sequence of events is the same, but the availability of two instrumental groups with contrasting tone colour and material brings the contrast of

stillness and action more vividly into relief. Group 1 plays, group 2 interjects, then group 1 synthesises the two preceding events by 'allowing' its note to become infiltrated by the interjection before returning to its original state. Such a form may be thought of as a microcosm of sonata form in its use of two main subjects, a development (synthesis) and recapitulation (return to beginning state), despite the cultural remoteness between *haiku* and sonata. The *haiku* as a form however can be associated with such concepts as 'the universe in a grain of sand' and its implication of universal from particular states suggests the applicability of its miniature form to larger structures.

Haiku #3 [CD track 9 & 10]

Haiku #3 resembles *#1* in that the time continuum is pierced by a single momentary event. In this case the event is a lightning flash. The preceding pause is an acknowledgement of the fact that before a storm is unleashed, it takes time to gather energy. The performers therefore go through the same internal process before unleashing the percussive 'stormy' sound. The piece is in the form of upbeat (pause), downbeat (lightning flash) and aftermath (spider running). It therefore consists of three parts, the middle part marking the division between the inhalation (upbeat) and exhalation (downbeat). The exhalation denotes the running of the spider in reaction to the percussive attack. The intention is for the players to 'react' to and not anticipate the attack for the sake of dramatic as well as improvisational authenticity in responding to the 'moment'. The intensity and aggressiveness of the chordal attack is provocative; the

objective is to ‘shock’ the performers into a response, perhaps in the same way as a human shout would do in non-musical situations.

Two rehearsal tracks are included for this piece. They illustrate the variable responses of players to non-specific notation. Between the playings, Wiegold (as conductor) encourages the performers to play ‘more like a spider’, for the first chord to sound ‘more like lightning’ and also to aim to finish in twenty seconds. They fulfil all instructions in CD track 10, illustrating the conductor’s vital role in channelling the creativity of the group as well as placing practical limitations on the open-ended notations.

Haiku #2 & 4

As mentioned before, these two settings are not based on particular poems, but are modelled on the 5-7-5 syllabic structure of the *haiku* form.

Haiku #2 [CD track 8]

This *haiku* setting relies on a form of musical cue designated by the author as a ‘trigger’. In this case the trigger is a percussive downbeat but in others it may be any piece of musical material which signals a change of section or texture. It is used by the author in works where there is no regular pulsation or conductor to give cues, especially those in Chapter 11. Although he does not use the term ‘trigger’, Lutosławski makes frequent use of the technique. His approach will also be discussed in Chapter 11.

The orchestra is divided into wind, string and percussion groups, with the percussionist taking the central role. The timpani provide seventeen 'triggers' in three sections of five, seven and five notes respectively.

The timpani line constitutes a fixed textural element within which variability is supplied by the indeterminate pause length. The timing of the intermediate entries depends on the conductor. In the same way as *Duelt* (see Chapter 6), there is an element of tension in performance as a result of the unpredictability of the conductor's cues. This factor keeps the reactivity of the performers high in the same way that the Davis band members would need to be constantly alert for unexpected cues from their leader.

Whereas the wind chords remain essentially static, the string chord immediately becomes mobile through the instruction to depart from the starting notes by means of scale patterns. The mobile string texture is comparable to that of the first version of *Haiku 5-7-5* (see above), in which the initial chord was treated with pitch movement away from the initial notes (in the form of a glissando). The string texture therefore counterbalances that of the wind in that it is more open to transformation and more purposefully wayward in character.

Haiku #4 (#4a, #4b) [CD tracks 11 &12]

[NB track 12 only exists as a recorded fragment, representing bars 5-13 of the score of version #4b]

Haiku #4 constitutes a notational experiment and exists in two versions. Version #4a consists of a one-page general score for conductor and all players, in a similar manner to the other movements. On the other hand, version #4b is conventionally arranged with a full score for conductor only and parts for each instrumental specification.

In version #4a, all the players share the same material in the same sounding octave. If a player cannot reach some of the written notes, s/he can just select those within his/her own playing range. The purpose in writing a monody, as well as exploring the reduction of contrapuntal possibilities of a large group of players to a single line, was to compress the wide range of the orchestra into a narrow bandwidth of pitch, and thus mix tone colours of instruments playing in their mid-register with those at the extremes of their range. The piece is also an exercise in constantly changing tone colours as most players will make selections of some notes as opposed to playing all notes.

The texture of the piece is partially defined by general instructions regarding orchestration. The marimba plays accents only (with the brass undertaking the same role later in the piece). The strings and brass are asked to play some with mutes and some

without, in order to maximise the sound-palette. On the second cycle, an element of pitch variation is added through the availability of the alto and tenor clef for instruments which habitually use them. This results in an *organum*-like parallel harmonic voicing. There also exists the possibility for the Bb clarinet to play from the same score on the 'A' instrument. The use of these 'shadowing' transpositions adds a sense of depth to the melodic line through implications of overtones as opposed to contrapuntal development. This is in keeping with the uniformity (as opposed to plurality) of monodic writing.

In structural terms, the three ten-bar cycles represent the tripartite form of a *haiku* poem. However, unlike the presentation and synthesis of two elements, the monody proceeds in a more developmental manner along the lines of classical variations. The limits are set but players decide how to apply the variational strategies.

The notational system used in the piece leads to many possible versions of the main melody through performers making individual choices as to which notes to play. However, as the notational instructions at the top of the page were considered by the composer to be excessively condensed, it was decided to write a fully orchestrated version in order to ascertain which notational approach would be more effective from a practical and aesthetic standpoint. This version will be known as version *#4b*.

Version *#4b*, consisting of the first thirteen bars of the original, forgoes the need for detailed verbal instructions since all the notational possibilities of *#4a* are reduced to one

fully-orchestrated realisation. The compositional rules are the same, so in theory the constantly changing texture could also be produced in the semi-improvised version. In the event, the single realisation of the fully orchestrated version was deemed no improvement on the original in terms of musical results, although the performers considered the part-scores easier to follow (a predictable conclusion, in view of their relative familiarity with this notational format). The pre-ordained realisation also negates the possibility of involvement in the creative process. The intuitive choices made by each player in version #4a need to be replicated in version #4b by the composer alone in deciding what each instrument is to play. Although there may be some consistency of intent as a result, the composer's realisation at the note-to-note local level carries no more authority in this case than that of performers. In the author's opinion, version #4a constitutes the 'ideal' approach. The high-speed decision-making required from the players in this version generates a creative tension and gives the performance an edge which is absent from the read-through of version #4b.

Despite the detail of the fully orchestrated versions of *Haiku #4*, it remains a miniature in scale and form along with the other orchestral essays presented so far. The format of the one-page score, although challenging to players in certain aspects, was suited to this scale. However, the use of the large-scale medium of the orchestra in order to compose small-scale work can still be considered radical, despite the pre-existence of works such as Webern's *Orchestral Pieces op.6*.

Summary

The works of Chapters 6 and 7 represent a diverse set of approaches to the incorporation of improvisatory elements in compositional structures. They also represent a diverse set of instrumentations, performers and performing situations including workshops. Although the results are somewhat varied and the performers encountered challenges in the unconventional notations, the experimental notations and improvisation was generally acquitted skilfully by the performers. However, in view of the unconventional and experimental nature of the work, the question arose as to whether the solitary, time-bound workshop with performers unfamiliar with the composer's methods would be able to provide the necessary support for more ambitious projects. This question led to a radical change in the practical circumstances of the research.

Part III: Transition

Chapter 8 – Works (2): Research Group ESP

[All audio extracts for this chapter can be found on CD 6]

Introduction

The author's decision to participate as composer/performer in groups formed specifically to explore the interrelationship of composition and improvisation marks a turning point in the research. The work discussed in Chapters 8 and 10 forms part of the research activities of these groups. The works from Chapter 11, although not directly under the umbrella of the research groups' activities, were made largely in direct collaboration with performers from the same groups.

The group work can be divided into two distinct periods. These can be defined according to personnel changes effected approximately halfway through the research period. For the purposes of clarity, the earlier formation will be known as '*ESP*' and the latter will be named '*Bash-O*'. The activities of *ESP* will be discussed in Chapter 8 and those of *Bash-O* in Chapter 10. Chapter 9 consists of an appraisal of the player's perspective in such work.

The emergence of *ESP* and *Bash-O* brings two new factors to the research:

- 1. Availability of the same performer/collaborators over an extended period of rehearsal
- 2. The common research priorities of the group members

The possibility to write music for the same performers over an extended period of time is in marked contrast to the creative processes of Chapters 6 and 7. While acknowledging that this situation is typical in the current concert environment as far as commissioned work is concerned, it lacks the quasi-laboratory confinement of experimental work. Instead, various professional, personal, and environmental variables are involved, escalating the complexity of the conditions of the work itself. Therefore, consistency of personnel, working methods, rehearsal period and artistic aims provide a constant against which the experiments in notation and compositional/improvisational strategies can be ascertained relatively clearly.

The motivation for this research setting has parallels with established music groups which specialise in particular types of musical process. The Steve Reich ensemble is a case in point. Through its intensive training in techniques such as phasing and the decision on the part of Reich to concentrate his compositional output on the resources of the group

over an extended period, such laboratory conditions were made possible. Additionally, the formation of groups by Karlheinz Stockhausen in order to learn specific processes and techniques pertaining to specific pieces (for example *Aus den sieben Tagen*), may be seen as sharing the same motivation despite the disparity of stylistic approach.

As would be expected of a research group, external objectives such as concerts and recordings were relegated in importance in relation to that of the research itself. Although the recording documents for this chapter include live performances and studio work, the recorded results of these represent only one of various experimental stages. The absence of external pressures such as composition deadlines helped ensure that an adequate amount of time would be taken before public presentation of material, enabling notations to be tested fully without excessive time constraints. Over time, a repertoire of pieces would build in the same way that a rock or jazz band would develop a repertoire, with newer pieces replacing older ones in a constantly evolving process. Once pieces were presented, it would be common for them to re-enter the laboratory and undergo further experiments. In the same way as Wiegold's *drive your cart*, pieces were in a perpetual state of development and as such, recordings only represent a snapshot of a continuing journey rather than the final destination.

The second factor, that which refers to the common interest of group members, is an important psychological factor when considering the composer/performer interface. Since all players are aware that the score will consist of exploratory research materials

from the initial stages, rather than the representation of a final product, the composer will be able to expand the range of his/her notational experiments without the concerns raised in previous chapters by performers unprepared for such eventualities. The readiness of performers in this respect bypasses the problem of the composer using rehearsal time to convince the uninitiated performer of notational premises which may be self-evident in the hands of a performer versed in more experimental methods. In this sense the composer, rather than trying to negotiate a position of compromise in a notational 'middle ground', can push the implications of the notational systems fully in the awareness that s/he can rely on the performers' predisposition to engage with the material at hand. The work can therefore be judged more easily on its own merits without facing performer prejudice and/or anxiety resulting from unfamiliarity with experimental processes and strategies. This predisposition does not imply, however, that the performer will automatically agree with or overcome any new notational challenge proffered by the composer. The performer response in any creative situation is complex and for this reason a separate chapter has been set up to examine issues arising from this (see Chapter 9).

General Research Aims and Principles of *ESP*

The principal aim of group *ESP* was to devise and perform music which combines composition and improvisation. A fundamental additional principle was that the music would be co-created by the group on the instigation of a leader from within the group.

The composer of the material to be rehearsed would direct his own work. As group leader, he would present initial materials which the performers would develop on a weekly rehearsal-to-rehearsal basis. All performers would be expected to play a creative role through improvisation and contribution to the creative development of the piece from one rehearsal to the next.

Group Formation

The group consisted of the following players:

Flute: Sarah Robins

Clarinet/Tenor Saxophone: Ricardo Tejero

Soprano Saxophone: Oliver Leaman

Piano/Keyboard : Andrew Melvin

Electric Guitar: Joel Bell

Drums: Tom Lawrence

Electric Bass: Steve Gisby

The performers will be at times referred to by name as well as by instrument in order to emphasise each player's significance as creative contributor to the work as well as instrumentalists. The nature of the work in question means that instrumentalists cannot be seen as interchangeable as in a Beethoven String Quartet, for example.

Therefore, in accordance with this principle, a piece for 'flute and piano' (as Feldman may have specified) would be more fittingly described as 'a piece for Robins and Melvin who (happen to) play flute and piano'. The resulting approach considers the personality, habits, tendencies, musical strengths and weaknesses of the person through the medium of his/her instrument as opposed to the instrument as a starting point. It does not conform to the classical model of instrumental composition, where people but not instruments are interchangeable. The musicologist Christopher Small describes the situation in the following terms:

'In western classical music, performers too are interchangeable. A work is composed, not for a person, but for 'voice and piano', for 'violin and orchestra', for 'oboe and tape' and so on.....True, each performer will bring his own special skills and his personality to bear on the written notes, but he has very little room for manoeuvre, since the essence of the music lies in the notes, not the performer.....Within the ensemble too, musicians are interchangeable, given an acceptable level of technical competence, and even whole orchestras can be exchanged one for another, leaving the Beethoven symphony, the Bach suite or the Mozart concerto essentially unchanged.'

(Small, C: *Music Society Education* p.87 (1977), John Calder)

The approach taken in the formation of group *ESP*, along with other groups formed for performance of the works of Chapters 10 and 11, invites comparison with that of the

Scratch Orchestra. In defiance of conventions of instrumentation and audition processes designed to ensure common technical standards and approaches, it operated on an all-comers policy regardless of instrument and instrumental level, even to the point of incorporating non-specialist musicians. The resulting repertoire is therefore tailored to the individual resources and abilities of the players, rather than any preconceived notion of what an orchestra entails in terms of technical level or instrumentation (this approach also brings to mind Percy Grainger's earlier innovatory practice of 'elastic scoring'). In the case of *ESP*, although there was a certain amount of forethought in terms of the general balance of instruments and the technical abilities of performers, the pieces made for the group similarly needed to be tailored for the resources available. These resources could change weekly depending on the availability or otherwise of performers (the recorded extracts include several changes of instrumentation within the same piece). A challenge in composing for *ESP* was to achieve optimum musical results whilst allowing for changes in personnel on a regular basis. The acceptance of existing resources as opposed to the demand of idealised resources echoes Picasso's maxim 'I do not search, I find'¹³.

The group formation was also unusual in that the conductor/director of the group would change from piece to piece, as the composer presenting material would also lead the relevant section of the rehearsal as director. In this way, the group was not subjugated to the creative vision of one person; rather, a collective creative responsibility was fostered and upheld, as well as an equal allocation of rehearsal time to each

¹³ Quoted in *Life with Picasso*, p.199, F. Gilot and C. Lake, publ. Doubleday, New York, 1964

composer. The pyramid structure of leadership used in orchestras and string quartets is therefore challenged and modified in favour of more interactive models. These are aligned in principle with Perrow's 'forces of light' model outlined in Chapter 2.

Material for rehearsal was provided by Joel Bell, Tom Lawrence, Steve Gisby and the author himself, leading to the unusual situation of the majority of group members contributing as composers as well as performers. The composer/performer divisions evident in traditional (and contemporary) music practice are therefore less evident in *ESP*.

Player Background

The players came from a variety of musical backgrounds: Bell and Lawrence had experience in jazz, Melvin and Robins were trained in classical music and Tejero was predominantly working in the field of free improvisation. Therefore, the introduction of a new piece to the group would need to take into account the relative strengths and specialisms of the players. For example, at the sight-reading stage, it was necessary to acknowledge the relative inexperience of Tejero in reading notation compared to the experience of Robins. In this sense, the option of tailoring material according to performer presented itself to the composers. The mix of performing backgrounds also signifies that the central musical 'ground' in terms of style would need to be addressed and negotiated amongst the performers. The material presented by each composer, therefore, was at least to some extent influenced by this search for artistic common

ground as well as the rejection of any single set of performing conventions rooted in any one particular genre (such as 'jazz' or 'classical'). For example, it would have been against the ethos of several players and the group as a whole to attempt a fully notated work with no improvisation in the manner of a piece designed for a group such as the London Sinfonietta, although the music itself may not necessarily be beyond the technical reach of the players.

General Rehearsal Process

The group rehearsals generally adhered to the following format:

1. Basic materials would be introduced to the group in rehearsal (normally in notated form, although they could be presented through verbal introduction or musical demonstration). These materials would be given an initial playthrough by the musicians.
2. The materials would be developed, elaborated and/or modified during the rehearsal. Normally, the rehearsal would be recorded in order for the composer/leader to review the piece between rehearsals and possibly make further changes to the score. This stage is repeated for however many rehearsals are needed to reach the final form of the piece and until no more creative decisions need to be taken except for those to be made within the performance of

the piece itself.

3. The piece would be recorded in multiple versions (where possible) to ascertain the creative scope of the piece between one playing and the next as well as the varying creative landscapes resulting from differing improvisations on different occasions.

In the second stage, the composer/director would generally seek to expand the initial germ of an idea by extending sections or bringing new material for new sections to subsequent rehearsals. The performers therefore share in the creative growth of the piece from its seedling state to completion. Moreover, in terms of the improvisational element, the performers' creative input is essential for the piece to reach completion in any case. This level of involvement leads to a shared sense of ownership of the piece by composer and performers, as well as an enhanced sense of responsibility for its success or otherwise in performance. As there are numerous opportunities for performers to feed back impressions and opinions in rehearsal, the potentially divisive situation of 'them and us' between composer and performers can be attenuated if not avoided completely and replaced by a policy of mutual reinforcement.

Personal Research Aims

Within the general aims of the group, the author set personal goals and priorities which will be listed here (a brief commentary follows each statement):

1. *To write short fragments for the group, each possible to rehearse in 15-20 minutes, and which can be later patchworked into two larger movements, one slow and one fast*

It is clear from the first statement that a bipartite form is intended. The two-movement model is indeed adopted in the work discussed in this chapter, but eventually not according to the tempi indicated above.

2. *To experiment with different versions of the same piece, some with more notational detail than others, and some involving a greater degree of performer improvisation than others.*

The common procedure for all composers at rehearsals was to provide a modified or updated score at each rehearsal.

3. *To create flexible structures within pieces which can be moulded live in rehearsal by myself and the performers*

This follows the format laid out by Peter Wiegold in *drive your cart #1* (see Chapter 5) in which numbered sections can be reordered.

4. *For the performers to be able in certain instances to determine the structural pathway of a piece, and for each member of the group to potentially take the role of leader, for example playing a 'trigger' which will take the whole group to a predetermined point of the piece. For myself [the author] to act as catalyst but not necessarily conductor. For myself to lead the opening stages of the workshop but for the performers to take a more active role in the development of the piece.*

Certain points made in the above statement became more relevant in the work of *ESP* than others. Others became more relevant to pieces discussed in later chapters. In particular the use of musical 'triggers' (cues) determined by performers is more of a feature of the works *Dream Garden* and *Haiku Garden* (discussed in Chapter 11) than of the work undertaken by *ESP*. Much more relevance can be applied to the current chapter in the attempt by the composer to lead the group from the keyboard rather than in an exclusively conductor-like manner.

5. *To involve an element of improvisation in each piece, or at least indeterminacy. For pitches and/or rhythms to be indeterminate in certain versions of the piece, and fully determined in others in order to compare.*

This intention follows the work set out in *Haiku Monody* (#4a and #4b from *4 Haiku*) discussed in Chapter 7, where a notated version was compared to an aleatoric version of the same piece. Although contrasting notations were not deliberately devised as points of comparison in this project, the evolution of notational systems as the piece progressed from one rehearsal to the next was of prime importance to the process. Indeterminacy was primarily explored from a rhythmic perspective.

6. *To work with variable or flexible riffs, which may change each time they are played. To observe how this affects soloing, as compared to playing over a 'straight' (fixed) riff*

This statement entails a crucial improvisatory feature which is generally absent from the work undertaken by Wiegold and Davis: namely the variable riff. The author has in previous chapters also worked with riffs which involve an inherent element of indeterminacy. In the music of this chapter the variability of the riff, produced by different compositional and performance strategies, is a key element. Its relationship with improvised material may be seen as more complex than that of an unchanging riff as the riff itself is transforming at the same time as the improvisation.

7.not to write too much.....to compose that which couldn't be otherwise

The composer was aware that all performers had a willingness to improvise and that therefore care needed to be taken to balance composed elements with open spaces for improvisation.

8.....preparation, action and reflection on the rehearsal process.....

The rehearsal recordings served as the focus for reflection on the part of the composer as well as planning of the next rehearsal. Significant creative developments, especially those arising out of improvisation, could be transcribed or otherwise incorporated into the next version of the score in preparation for the next rehearsal. The circular process of editing, presenting and reviewing was constant.

The author presented several types of compositional material to the performers but settled on the development of a single work which eventually became known as *Memorial/Chorale*. It will be this work which will form the discussion of the remaining part of the chapter, from its inception to its final documentation as a recording. Extracts from rehearsals will be discussed and their significance within the overall process will be ascertained. Several versions of the score exist, and as each stage of rehearsal is

discussed, the relevant score will be analysed in terms of notational approach. Initially, however, the compositional origins of the piece will be examined.

***Memorial/Chorale* – Compositional Origins**

The title *Memorial/Chorale* arose from the intention to write a piece combining bell-like riffs and with lyrical melodic lines in a quasi-ritualistic extended form. The two movements of the piece were devised in two separate stages and finally merged into a single more complex structure. For much of the process, *Memorial* existed as an independent work, although the intention expressed at the start of the project states the bi-partite form as the primary objective. The fundamental musical difference between *Memorial* and *Chorale* is that *Memorial* is played *senza misura* while *Chorale* is organised in a regular 4/4 metre. This contrast reflects the mixture of metric and non-metric sections in such works as *Hot Air* (Chapter 6).

Considering the title of the second movement, parallels can also be drawn with the Baroque forms of free fantasia and chorale as found in the music of J.S. Bach. In this sense, the work continues the compositional concern of the balance of set pulse with flexible (or absence of) pulse.

Memorial will be discussed first as it was the first piece to be realised by the group. The different scores of *Memorial* are labelled version #1, #2, #3 and #4. For general discussion of the compositional material, version #4 will be used as it represents the most developed version of the piece. The other versions will occasionally be compared and contrasted with version #4 and their relevance to the final version established. However, when rehearsal marks are given without further reference, version #4 can be assumed as the default score.

Memorial – Riff

The basic constitution of the riff for *Memorial*, written in the piano part of fig. 1, is a single pitch E of unspecified duration. It was decided to start with rudimentary musical material in order to enable its development in various directions whilst retaining its essential features. The repetition of the note E can be understood as the tolling of a single bell from which all other riffs emerge in a process of temporal and pitch-based diffraction.

Additionally, certain secondary riffs in *Memorial* quote from bell-related pieces by other composers. The guitar riffs at figs. 3 and 4 (version #4) derive from the György Kurtág piece for piano duet *Bells (Homage to Igor Stravinsky)*, whereas the use of *acciaccatura* before the chord at fig. 5 in earlier versions of the work recalls the similar instance in the piano part at the end of *Requiem Canticles* by Stravinsky. Although the *acciaccatura* is not present in the final notated version, its use in rehearsal is often

maintained. The superimposition in *Memorial/Chorale* of rudimentary but pliable material and 'foreign' quoted material results in a harmonic tension between the two different types. An example of this can be seen in figs. 3 and 4 where the 'exotic' pitch material of the guitar part (based on the Kurtág piece cited above) forms an outer layer around the core of the pedal note E.

In addition to the main sections of the piece, in versions #1 and #2 of *Memorial* there exists an appendix of additional riffs labelled 'spare riffs'. The performers assigned to the riffs may play them at any point in the piece. The intention here is to employ rhythmically regular riffs to act as a counterpoint to the *ad libitum* timings of the main sections. Both spare riffs share pitch material with the main riff in terms of the predominance of the note E. The first is a (non-literal) stylistic imitation of the end section of *Requiem Canticles* by Stravinsky, while the second is a literal transcription of a Wiegold riff from the work *damn braces*. This forms an additional frame of reference to the original riff and pitch source of E.

Notation (1): *ficta*

It will be evident that extensive use is made of *ficta* in *Memorial*. However, the function of *ficta* in this piece is different from that used in mediaeval and Renaissance music. At fig. 2 (version #4) the piano pitch E is marked both with a sharp and a flat. This signifies

the option for the performer to sharpen or flatten the written note by a semitone, as well as that of leaving the note unchanged. In a similar way, bracketed accidentals in dyads and chords are optional (the indication of a particular pitch being more specific than *ficta* above or below chords). The use of *ficta* gives scope for variation within riffs and repeated fragments, giving a sense of harmonic malleability within individual instrumental lines without the need for further compositional expansion.

Notation (2): Variable repeats

Usually use of a bracket around a phrase signifies an unspecified amount of repetitions until the director cues another section. In figs. 3 and 4 of version #4, however, double bracket markings appear on one side of the phrase and a single marking on the other side. This notation is used to give the player the option to repeat from two different points in the phrase. The aim is to provide variety within a texture which is, in general terms, heavily reliant on repetition as a construct.

Treatment of riff

In *Memorial*, the single note riff is subjected to various treatments through the course of the piece, generating several 'satellite' riffs. These secondary riffs orbit around the central pedal note at different rates. In addition to *ficta*, several other devices are used to vary the presentation of the riff. At fig. 1, the central E is harmonised with notes from the guitar, bass guitar and piano chosen spontaneously by the players. The result of the

chords are therefore entirely unpredictable save for the E itself which therefore provides a consistent context for whichever chord is chosen by the players. The balance of entirely predictable with entirely unpredictable elements creates one form of the compositional/improvisational middle ground discussed earlier as an objective of the research. Examples of resultant chord formations are given below and can be heard in CD extracts 1 and 2.

Ex. 35 *Memorial* opening, CD tracks 1 and 2

The image shows musical notation for two tracks. CD track 1 consists of a guitar part (treble clef) with a single note (A) and a piano part (bass clef) with a bass line of notes. CD track 2 consists of a guitar part (treble clef) with a diminished chord and a piano part (bass clef) with a bass line of notes.

On CD track 1, the guitarist selects the pitch A and repeats it while the pianist changes the bass line from note to note as instructed, mainly choosing black keys in various registers. The chord spacings are generally wide (owing to the relatively high pitch choice of the guitarist) and varied (especially as a result of the mobile left hand of the piano). CD track 2 was played in rehearsal after a discussion on the diminished chord. The performers can therefore be heard to be reacting to the concept of ‘chord’ as opposed to single pitches, and it is the author’s assertion that the appearance of diminished chords (as well as chords based on the E minor triad) in the extract is by no means coincidental.

The two examples given above show the range of textural and harmonic possibilities available in a single section according to the performers' inclinations. Neither version is deemed by the composer to be superior. Both versions contain a degree of consistency and integrity in the performers' creative response within the given restrictions, as well as an element of surprise produced by the combination of sounds which arise from the moment-to-moment decisions of the performers.

The temporal structure of the piece combines fixed and flexible elements. The piece starts with precise co-ordination in all parts (although there is flexibility regarding the placing of the downbeat¹⁴). This forms a contrast with the relative freedom of pitch choice for players. As the piece progresses, the temporal scheme becomes more flexible, contrasting with the increasing prescriptiveness of pitch selection. At fig. 3, performers play in anticipation of or in delayed reaction to the cues of the director, and eventually play entirely independently of each other's pulse at fig. 4. By this stage, the pitch material is constricted to the extent that all instruments are bound by fixed pitch content with minimal deviance from the use of *ficta*. The counterpoint between the relative freedom of pitch and rhythmic content provides the structural tension of the movement. The constriction of pitch incites the performers to explore more dense rhythmic and textural fields until the release of fig. 5, where improvisation dissipates the pent-up energy of previous sections.

¹⁴ The same strategy is used in the *Haiku #2* ('Timpani Haiku') discussed in Chapter 7.

The addition of pitches and pitch fields as the piece progresses enhances the build-up towards fig. 5. The piano pitches extend downwards by step from the initial note E by adding a D at fig. 2, a C/C# in fig. 3 and a B in fig. 4. The direction downwards counteracts the upwards trajectory of the melody. In addition to the aforementioned quotations from Kurtág in the guitar part, there is also a significant change in the pitch material of the bass at fig. 3, foreshadowing the full four-note set of fig. 4. The note set is based on the circle of fifths around E major, although it is rarely heard as such owing to the variable note order and the contradictory harmonic implications of the other instrumental parts. The intention of the composer in this instance is to hint at E major/minor without letting the sense of key dominate and thus disrupt the fleeting harmonic interrelationships. Therefore it can be understood that the A#-A-G# piano part in fig. 4 of version #2 was eventually abandoned since its combination with the bass part proved too strong a suggestion of the II⁷-V⁷-I chord sequence on which it was modelled¹⁵.

Memorial reaches a point of convergence at fig. 5 with a chord which includes the pitch E at the top but which draws attention to the previously unobtrusive notes D, A/A#, G/G#, C/C# and G/G# (the sharpened notes representing *ficta*). If re-voiced, these notes could form a series of superimposed fourths: (E-A-D-G-C). The chord provides an open harmonic context for improvisation as it does not 'close' the cadence by drawing attention back to the note centre of E. It therefore enables a return to an earlier section or to the coda of fig. 6, although it can be argued that the B major pitch component of the

¹⁵ The voicing of the chord sequence was modelled on the ending of the work *Piano Piece Early '89* by Graham Fitkin.

resultant chord provides a harmonic link via the dominant to the key of E. The detuned low B of the bass, however, suggests an additional opening of harmonic space rather than a containment of it.

Memorial – melody

The melodic line of *Memorial* was a relatively late addition in terms of overall compositional design and it is notable that versions #1 and #2 of the piece do not contain the melody at all. The reasons for the decision to include a fully notated melodic line will be discussed in the later section of this chapter entitled ‘rehearsal process’; initially its compositional form will be examined.

The melodic profile of *Memorial* comprises an ascent; the upwards striving of the melody counteracts the gravitational pull of the riff patterns. Other contrapuntal considerations involve the melodic line itself and its progress from note to note. As with Gregorian chant and traditional cantus firmus exercises such as those found in *Counterpoint in Composition* (Salzer and Schachter, pp. 4-12), the principle prevails that intervallic leaps will be filled in melodically by subsequent notes, for example at fig. 2. As the melody develops, the intervallic leaps widen and pitch fields are expanded. Tension is created as the gaps become too wide to fill. By the end of fig. 4, the pitch ceiling of D quarter-sharp is reached, (fractionally short of the key centre of E). It is left for the piano and other instruments to release the harmonic tension at fig. 5, at which point the

melody instrument is given the safety valve of a descending improvisatory continuation (this is based on the contextual implication that the previous note is impassable and the E above therefore unreachable).

In terms of rhythmic structure, the melody adopts the *senza misura* approach of Gregorian chant. Stemless black and white denote relative values of short(er) and long(er) respectively. Rests are replaced by breath marks, the length of which are at the performer's discretion and which can vary from one phrase to the next. The melody itself can be elaborated also at the player's discretion. These factors leave much flexibility for the performer in terms of *rubato* playing and ornamentation.

Two improvised solos by the flautist Sarah Robins underline this points. These contrasting examples can be heard on CD tracks 3 and 4. In the first extract, Robins' approach is rhapsodic, using a substantial amount of *rubato* and arabesque-like ornamentation reminiscent of Indian classical music. In the second extract (which immediately followed the first playthrough in rehearsal), Robins takes a more direct approach through the omission of ornamentation but at the same time she elongates the melody notes, creating a more spacious presentation of the line. Both versions are equally valid as far as interpretation is concerned and point to the significance of the performer's creative decisions regarding interpretation of non-specific notational elements.

As the melody builds from fig. 1b (fig. 1 can be thought of as an introduction), the number of phrases increases from one to two (figs 2 and 3) and to three at fig. 4. The tripartite phrase structure, comprising note cells of 2-3-2 in quantity, is modelled on the 5-7-5 *haiku* proportions already discussed in the previous chapter. The structure forms an important bridge between the melodic material in *Memorial* and that used in *Chorale*, as will be seen in the analysis which follows.

Chorale – melody

The melody in *Chorale* takes place over three cycles of a structure spanning forty crotchet beats (ten bars of 4/4 time). As can be seen from the first cycle on the top stave, the melody retains its note-cell structure of 2-3-2, while subsequent versions elaborate the melodic line by means of pitch insertions and extensions. The stylistic models used in this case were the isorhythmic motets of Dufay and the *Messe de Notre Dame* by Machaut. In particular, reference is made to the complex simultaneity of seemingly slow and faster moving parts through the superimposition of upper parts using short note values onto lower voices using relatively long note values. Parallels can also be drawn with settings of slow-moving chorale melodies around which are woven rhythmically elaborate instrumental (and sometimes vocal) parts in cantatas by Bach. In the author's *Chorale*, the basic note value in terms of duration divides by two from one line to the next. As each instrument works through cycle 1 to 3, subsequent entries can occur one cycle behind in

canonic fashion and thus establish a multiplicity of note values and corresponding complexity of texture.

The associations with mediaeval music, early Renaissance music, Gregorian chant and the use of chorale melodies in the music of Bach all contribute to an evocation of the distant past much as the tolling of the bell-like sounds in *Memorial* evoke a Birtwistle-like sense of dramatic ritual. The use of regular 4/4 time signature, melodic material suitable for voice as well as instruments in terms of range and phrasing, and simple time values such as semibreve, minim and crotchet also bear resemblance to the structural features of hymn settings. Therefore, if *Memorial* can be viewed in terms of the outdoors (with the bell sounds penetrating the natural landscape), *Chorale* may be imagined as an interior piece where the ritual takes place in the rhythmically co-ordinated singing of a church congregation.

Against this backdrop, reminders of the near-present also feature in the musical materials of *Chorale*, adding to the mix of timeless ritual and distant past of sacred music. The most striking statement of music based on recent styles is given by the drums which play rhythmic figures based on the 'garage' music style developed in the 1990s. The addition of this part to the texture is made to be as unobtrusive as possible on a dynamic level, yet it provides a sharp contrast to the melodic material through its highly active figurations based on minute subdivisions of the beat. The drum part is therefore ambiguous in function; it simultaneously supports the rhythmic framework while at the

same time being stylistically removed from it. The issues raised by the convergence of musical styles from differing periods of musical history in the same piece are complex and not easily addressed from a philosophical point of view. From a research point of view, however, the juxtaposition of seemingly disparate material shows potential for hitherto unexplored stylistic connections.

Rehearsal Process

Following the overview of the basic compositional materials of the piece, the scores and recordings will now be analysed. The analysis will start with a commentary on the rehearsals using CD extracts relevant to each version of the score.

Version #1: [CD tracks 5-7]

It will be noted that the notation in first version of *Memorial* only covers riff-based rather than melodic material. It represents the first tentative aim at establishing the general texture. On CD track 5, the rehearsal commences with a playthrough of the riffs from piano and guitar. Neither of the notated bass lines from figs. 3 and 4 of the final version are yet present. On CD track 6, sections are played in order but with an extra repetition of fig. 5, and in CD track 7, fig. 5 is repeated after a return to fig.4. The reactions of players to the accented chord at fig. 5 is different each time. At its first appearance in track 7 at 2'36", the saxophonists continue a previously established improvisational course. On the

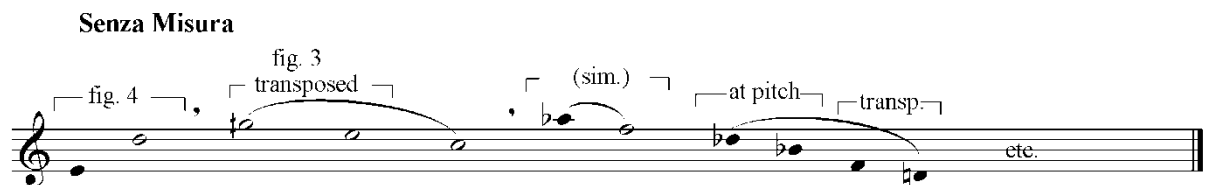
second appearance at 3'02", performers are much more reactive to the chord (a more frequent occurrence in subsequent rehearsals) and on the third time at 4'25", the guitar takes a more dominant role while saxophones play more sparsely, with Leaman later imitating the guitar at 4'39". At fig.6, which can be regarded as the coda, performers occupy the resonating space left by the chord from 4'47" with improvisatory fragments as the piece subsides. Performers rarely elaborated improvisationally in subsequent rehearsals as they discovered the finality of the chord.

Regarding dynamics, apart from the *sforzando* marking at fig.5, there are no markings in any section. On CD track 6 the piano starts at a moderate dynamic, while in CD track 7 the level is *forte*. The dynamic shape of a gradual rise from *piano* to *forte* (as in version #4) has not yet been established.

The two 'melody' instruments (soprano and tenor saxophones) are requested to improvise melodic lines according to the general verbal instructions at the bottom of the page. As can be heard from the CD tracks 6 and 7, the playing is generally tentative at this exploratory stage but fig. 4 (track 6 1'56" and track 7 1'56") induces the reaction from the saxophonists to rise in register, a factor which without explicit instruction recurs in subsequent rehearsals until the melodic line is implemented at fig. 4 of version #4. In CD track 7, several striking phrases are played by Leaman on soprano saxophone which find permanent notated representation in version #4. At 1'23" he plays the E-G motif from fig. 2 of version #4 followed by E-G#-G-E which pre-echoes the rise and fall structure of figs. 2

and 3. Most strikingly he plays the wide intervallic leap of E-D at 1'56" followed by falling thirds. This melodic shape finds its complement in figs. 3 and 4. The part is transcribed below, albeit in approximate fashion, to illustrate the correspondences between the two versions:

Ex. 36 *Memorial #1* - Leaman saxophone solo CD track 7 (1'56")



The transcription and subsequent use of improvised materials in the compositional fabric of the piece forms part of a rehearsal process previously discussed in *drive your cart #2* by Peter Wiegold (see Chapter 5) and forms a bridge between the domains of composition and improvisation. Despite these significant moments, the composer felt it necessary to provide more detailed guidance to some of the players who, within an otherwise precise arrangement of structural elements, have to spend long periods improvising without a set of cues or suggestions as to how to relate to the form.

In these initial rehearsals, the use of the spare riffs is sporadic. The piano uses riff (α) at fig. 4 (2'18" of CD track 6 and 2'08" of track 7). The guitar makes of the same riff

later in track 7 during fig. 5 at 3'20". Riff (*b*) emerges in the piano part between the repeated chords of fig. 5 (track 6 at 2'50").

Notation

The notation used in version #1 broadly resembles that of version #4, with the use of double brackets to create repeat options for the spare riffs (a). The melody instruments rely on textual instructions as opposed to notated materials. Indications of articulation are given in version #1 (*staccato* especially) but largely abandoned in subsequent versions as the author would make the articulation clear through the playing approach. Increasing efforts are made through the process to reduce the information on the page in order to give players quick access to the essential data.

Version #2: [CD tracks 8-13]

Version #2 of the score was produced for two subsequent rehearsals at which different combinations of performers were present. As mentioned before, rehearsals did not always involve all players, although this was not deliberate policy. The only recording representing the full complement of players listed at the beginning of the chapter is the performance in CD track 16. On tracks 9 and 10 the melodic material is carried by Sarah Robins on alto flute, accompanied by marimba, guitar and piano. On CD tracks 12 and 13 the two saxophonists from the previous recordings of version #1 are accompanied by

piano, guitar and vibraphone.

The changes in the score to the melody part are immediately apparent: players are given a mode which they can use as a basis for the improvisatory material. The modes include numerous *ficta* which enable the players to deviate from the mode when desired. The notes of E and F# (a ninth higher) frame the improvisatory sections, giving the performers a point of departure and arrival between which they can gauge the generally upward trend of the improvisation. In contrast to the version #4 of the piece, however, the melodic material is written in a different part of the score from the riff material, and no specific co-ordination between them is delineated.

In version #2, the spare riffs reappear in the score with extra *ficta* and in reverse order from the first version. Riff (b) from version #1 had not previously been selected in rehearsal before so is moved to a more prominent position in the score and consequently used by vibraphone at 1'43" and guitar at 2'33" of CD track 13. A continuation of riff (b) is provided and may act as a cue to fig. 5 of the main section. Riff (a) is stated by the piano, as in rehearsals of version #1. (2'01" of CD track 13). The riffs of the main section also include extra *ficta*, significantly at fig. 2 where the original E may be transposed to Eb or E#, momentarily rendering absent the E itself. In version #2, the written pitches of the bass part at figs. 3 and 4 appear for the first time as part of the compositional demarcation of the pitch material mentioned earlier, and the complementary bass clef riff of the piano appears at fig. 4, also for the first time.

The rehearsal process starts with the establishment of the piano/percussion texture at fig. 1. A new feature for version #2 is the alternation of the E between the piano and percussion (CD track 8). On track 9, The flute starts, as instructed in the score, on a low E and explores the mid-low register until 2'05", at which point there occurs a general shift of register upwards in response to the higher register of the marimba riff. A similar type of shift occurs around 2'04" from CD track 10. It is noteworthy that, without direct instruction or even suggestion, soloists are able to replicate almost to the second the timing of improvisatory features from previous rehearsal takes (this can also be seen in the timing of the saxophones' shift of register at fig. 4 as well as the pianist's use of riff (a) in tracks 6 and 7).

Robins' solo is more expansive than the saxophone improvisations of the first two versions; however it needs to be remembered that she occupies the whole of the solo space as opposed to sharing with another instrument. The expanded riff at fig. 4 provokes a new response from Robins in terms of pitch material, which is almost blues-like in the use of the pentatonic set E-G-A-B-D against the implications of E major in the piano part. Although the effect in itself is striking, from the composer's point of view it detracts from the gradual harmonic progression towards fig. 5 due to the strong inference to external styles. For this reason, the piano part is reduced back to a single line in version #4. In CD track 10 at fig. 5 itself, Robins anticipates the chord at 2'47" by making a *crescendo* and riding the 'wave' of the chord when it appears, demonstrating another approach to

improvisation in this section. Fig. 6 in this version may be played either by piano or vibraphone and is not cued by the director; therefore players need to pay attention to it as a musical cue rather than a visual one. There is a certain amount of tension and anticipation created by the fact it can be either player who signals the coda. This device was later superseded by the piano and vibraphone players combining forces on the last chord in unison in order to provide a clear cue within the dense texture of subsequent enlarged instrumental forces.

CD tracks 11-13 are taken from another rehearsal of version #2 with the same personnel as version #1 and Lawrence on vibraphone. In CD track 11 the riff is rehearsed first in order to set the context for the melodic lines, a procedure already established from previous rehearsals. In CD tracks 12 and 13, the composer/director varies the timing of the downbeat cues more than in previous rehearsals. This creates a variety of reverberating spaces between the cues as well as an edge of unpredictability. The form of the piece in these recordings settles into a straight progression from fig.1 through to fig.6, with an increasing tendency to follow an upward dynamic curve towards fig. 5.

Even though the melodic material was used effectively in the performers' improvisations, the composer concluded that more guidance for the melodic line would produce more consistent results. It would also cause less strain on the performers when improvising for extended periods in slow-moving textures.

Version #3: [CD track 14]

At this stage of the process, it was unclear to the composer as to whether the solution to the problem of generation of melodic material would depend on practice and refinement of improvisatory aspects or on the introduction of composed materials. In order to test the compositional approach, a separate score was given to saxophonist Leaman with a preliminary version of the notated melody of version #4. The combined scores constitute version #3. The melody in this case differs slightly from the final version in that there are more instances of microtones (in response to the improvised de-tunings of version #1). However, the use of microtones was subsequently abandoned (with the exception of the last pitch D of fig. 4), as they sounded unintentionally erroneous in the context of the entirely chromatic backdrop of the accompaniment.

The recording of this playthrough is on CD track 14. Rehearsal numbers are indicated on the solo part as well as on the general score, but there are moments in rehearsal when the solo line is truncated when a new section is cued. This situation arose as a result of the difficulty of synchronising two scores. The cues at fig. 3 (1'11"), fig.4 (1'37") and fig. 5 (2'04") are all given before the saxophone has finished the material for the previous section. Therefore, for ease of co-ordination the decision was taken to combine melody and riff parts in the same score of the following version. Now that the soprano saxophone is given the principal melodic line, the tenor saxophone plays a supporting role, still rooted in improvisation but shadowing and commenting on the melody itself. This role is

given in the knowledge that Tejero, the tenor saxophone player, has more of a background in 'free' improvisation than Leaman, who is a more experienced score reader.

Version #4 [CD track 15, 16]

Version #4 constitutes the final notated form of *Memorial* to date. The melody is added to the main score and the spare riffs are discarded in favour of a more unified texture to support the melody. This version was used for a rehearsal and live performance of the piece which can be heard on CD tracks 15 and 16. In this version Robins changes instrument in this version from the alto flute to the C flute, in view of the emphasis on the upper register at fig.4 (CD track 15, 0'59" onwards). On track 16, a prominent melodic role is given to Leaman on soprano saxophone. The structure of the piece now consists of a set sequence of rehearsal numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 2, 3, 4, 5, 2, 3, 4, 5. As the cycle repeats, the gap between sections is shortened to generate a cumulative effect and give players an increasing sense of direction and urgency to their solos.

Version #4 : Inclusion of *Chorale* and Musical Map [CD track 17]

As mentioned before, the composition of *Chorale* occurred after *Memorial* had been developed in rehearsal. Therefore it was introduced to the rehearsal process as a fully formed and self-sufficient movement. However, rather than consider *Chorale* as a

separate movement, the composer's intention was to integrate the two movements to form a larger whole. To this end, after its initial rehearsal, *Chorale* was embedded in the larger framework of *Memorial*, using the common musical material discussed earlier to form bridges between them.

Rather than rewrite the piece as a through composed structure and thus change the notational layout of *Memorial* (which was at that point already familiar to the players), the decision was made for performers to use the two scores placed side by side and also for a musical 'map' to be provided, the purpose of which would be to delineate the structure of the piece. The concept of a musical map had already been adopted for the group by guitarist/composer Joel Bell in his piece *T-Funk*. The map consists of rehearsal numbers denoting sections and players' roles within each section and is supplied in the appendix to the score. Using Bell's plan as a model, the map for *Memorial/Chorale* denotes each player's name and his/her role within each section of the piece. It follows Bell's chart in the score appendix. Alternate repetitions within *Chorale* are indicated by numbers. In this way, complex structures can be devised without writing instrumental through composed parts, although there is an element of complication and adjustment necessary on the part of the performer in order to gain confidence and skill in the navigation between score and map.

The results of this final form of the piece to date can be heard on CD track 17. As Leaman was unavailable for this recording, the solo line is given to Robins on flute and then to Tejero, who plays on clarinet on this track. The role of 'shadow play' around the principal melody is used as in version #3. The chord at fig. 6 is given to both piano and vibraphone, with resonance from the bass guitar added for the first time. General dynamics are written underneath the structural plan, with the added effect of a *crescendo* within a *crescendo* as the second entry of *Chorale* builds through the upper register of the melody instruments. The texture explodes at fig. 5, thus ending the piece at the apex.

Summary

In contrast to previous attempts at devising unconventional notational systems into textures combining composition and improvisation, *Memorial/Chorale* can be seen to achieve the aforementioned personal research aims (cf. Chapter 1) more satisfactorily than those set out in the previous two chapters. There are several factors bearing on this outcome. As mentioned above, the predisposition and skill of the performers in dealing with such notational challenges are of great significance in determining the musical results. In addition, the materials presented for elaboration are generally more simple in structure than previously, and any notations or strategies which did not work in one rehearsal could be easily adapted for the next.

There is one issue, however, which remained unresolved for the composer/performer and although its presence in the context of *Memorial/Chorale* did not adversely affect the piece, it did suggest a challenge to be resolved in future work. The issue concerns the role of the composer/performer in the real time direction of the piece. As can be seen in Chapters 4 and 5, Davis and Wiegold both adopt particular styles of conducting or directing while still maintaining a presence as performer. In the case of '*Memorial/Chorale*', the composer needed to provide many conductor cues for the group at figs. 1, 2 and 3 (as well as in *Chorale*) at the same time as playing his instrument. The combination of these roles proved demanding from a co-ordination perspective. The 'instrumentalist' side of the composer in particular felt the need for increased focus on the performance aspects and more space in which to pay attention to them in the live situation without the almost constant demand of co-ordinating the group. This applies particularly in improvised passages where the alertness of the performer needs to be at an optimum level in terms of listening and musical reactivity. One solution arrived at in different ways by Davis and Wiegold is to play for sections of a piece where direction is not necessary, and conversely not play in areas where more specific direction/conducting is needed. However, as the author is not by training or inclination a conductor, a different solution was sought instead. The results of this research are discussed in the piece *Dream Garden* (Chapter 11).

In the meantime, following the recording of the most recent (yet still provisional) version of *Memorial/Chorale*, practical issues involving personnel changes within the

group (in particular the departure of drummer Tom Lawrence) obliged the remaining members to reconsider the artistic stance and priorities of the group, as well as its name. The next stage in the group's development will be discussed in Chapter 10. Before this discussion, however, the role of the performer will be considered to counterbalance the composer-orientated approach taken thus far.

Chapter 9 – Interlude: The Performer’s Perspective

[Two audio extracts on CD 7]

Introduction: The creative role of the performer

From the recordings and analyses of semi-improvised works undertaken thus far, the crucial role of the performer as creative contributor can be regarded as self-evident. This chapter serves to represent the viewpoint and experience of the performer, and as such serves as a short interlude between the composer-centred discussions of neighbouring chapters.

It will have also become evident from the preceding chapter that the creative exchange between performer and composer is vital to the progress of the work. In the words of Peter Wiegold:

‘The composer or director....has an active relationship with the musician, needing not just to ‘notate’ their ideas, but represent them in the space, embody them, communicate them’.

(Wiegold, P: *The Convergence of the Twain*, article for ‘New Notes’, January 2005)

The two-way communication which results is cumulative:

'...as the player responds, so the composer can respond to that, so the players' creative potency becomes a critical factor.' (ibid.)

However, Wiegold warns against the levelling out of creative tension through the emasculation of the respective roles of the musicians:

'But 'player empowerment' need not mean switching to some kind of democracy. It is better to keep the tension.....between the score, the director and the players. Each can have a different, critical role. The triangle is fascinating, to have the best from pre-prepared notation, the best from creative direction, and the best from each individual player.' (ibid.)

From the author's experience in such works as *Memorial/Chorale*, this triangular relationship brings about particular characteristics, two of which are discussed as follows:

1. An improviser is a personality first and an instrumentalist second

When improvisation forms a part of a piece, the performer's creativity, habits, character and inclinations all contribute to the musical outcome in a distinct manner. Although the same can be said of the performance of fully notated classical music, these attributes carry additional impact in improvised music. This happens as a result of the substantial influence of an improviser's personality on the actual sounds chosen, the order in which they are

chosen, the articulation and phrasing with which they are played (along with the consequent direction the music will take on a structural level), and other players' improvised reactions to the player in question. These dimensions give extra import to the actual 'personality' playing the music as opposed to the instrument playing it. For example, the rehearsal recordings of *Memorial* (chapter 8) differ from each other significantly depending on the players present at the rehearsal, even though the notated materials are similar in each case. Even within the same track, one only need compare the solo improvisations of Davis, Coltrane, Adderley and Evans in the recording of *So What* (CD 2, track 1) to appreciate the vast realm of improvisational possibilities arising from a common compositional source.

In this sense, the composer who works for improvising performers will learn the traits of those performers and specifically write with those traits in mind. Whether the approach complements or challenges these traits, the composer will always be aware of them as long as s/he knows the player on a personal level. In the case of *Memorial/Chorale*, the composer was aware that the flute player Robins had more experience in playing notated music than the saxophonist Tejero. Correspondingly, Tejero was given proportionally more improvised material than Robins in the piece (the same can be said of the piece *Ma* in Chapter 11, in which Tejero has no notated part while the other performers play from notated parts).

The fact that players have certain inclinations does not mean that the composer necessarily needs to follow those inclinations in the writing process. It merely means that they will have an effect on the musical result whenever improvisation is included. When

Duke Ellington, for example, designated a solo for the saxophone player Johnny Hodges in his compositions for big band, he would have not only had the abstract sound of the saxophone in mind, but also the specific tone-colour, approach to phrasing and approach to articulation of that particular player. These factors would arguably have such an influence on the initial material written for him that it could not be played 'authentically' by anybody else. The Ellington commentator Ken Rattenbury writes:

'For Ellington composing was not an abstraction; it was an activity invariably directed towards performance.....The elements of the blues were present in the solo styles and timbres of Ellington's carefully selected musicians'.

(Rattenbury, K: *Duke Ellington, Jazz Composer* p. 52 (1990), Yale University Press]

The particularity of the group sound according to personnel has been well documented in the field of jazz. Davis is known to have chosen and changed his players carefully in order to achieve specific interpersonal and well as instrumental combinations. Dave Holland, the bassist from one of Davis's group formations of 1969-70 describes the situation as follows:

'The composition a classical composer writes is finished, and all musicians do is interpret it. Improvised music is different. Part of your palette is the musicians you're working with, and so with this group it will come out one way, and with that group it will come out another way' [Tingen, P: *Miles Beyond*, p.76]

It is no coincidence that in order to establish a working practice with *ESP*, and later the group *Bash-O* (chapter 10), the core performers remain broadly the same since the mutual understanding between group members is central to the creative development of the work.

In the words of *ESP* bassist Steve Gisby:

‘...when improvisation plays such a big part of what a group does, the inner relationships of the ensemble are so much more important. It’s not about playing the same piece the same way over and over again but about listening and responding which, for me, is much more effective when the players are ‘in tune’ with one another’.

(Gisby, S: response to *ESP* group questionnaire by the author (2009)).

Central to the group activity, therefore, is for the performers to become acquainted with each other and develop empathy through the playing itself, concurrently discovering the personal idiosyncrasies which form part of the identity of each musician.

Additionally, the group dynamics (as the term suggests) are never fixed. In conjunction with the interpersonal relationships, the improviser’s relationship with the composed piece evolves and develops over time. There is therefore an added element of learning and reflexivity on the part of performer and composer as they cross into each other’s creative territory.

2. No Mistakes and 'Happy Accidents'

An unusual situation arises when group members are involved in the creative exploration of a piece, especially when improvisation is used. If the circumstances set for exploration are to be genuine as opposed to artificially restricted, it becomes of prime psychological importance for the players that, whilst improvising, absolute concepts such as 'mistakes', 'right' and 'wrong' have no place in the process. These concepts may have more of a justification in relation to written compositional materials, but there also may be sufficient motivation for a player who is allotted pre-composed material to react improvisationally to the improvisation of another player, thus producing a mistake in notational terms but perhaps producing a 'correct' musical result on a deeper level. In a rehearsal of *Memorial* (cf. CD track 2), Bell makes such a 'mistake' by improvising a chord at the end of the piece (coinciding with the written vibraphone and piano parts at 2'39") instead of adhering to the preordained *tacet* role. However, it can be seen from the context of the preceding improvisational build-up and Bell's significant role within it that the chord can be justified as the 'right' musical choice to make in that particular circumstance. Other instances of notational mistakes in compositions resulting in enhanced musical solutions are discussed in Chapter 10 with reference to the works *Shifty* and *Evening Paths*.

As a piece which involves improvisational elements inherently carries the possibility of change at any moment, even an actual mistake can be put 'right' by the subsequent improvisational response. In order to put this phenomenon into context, an account of the

reactivity of Miles Davis as improviser will now be related. The event in this case concerns an event in which Herbie Hancock was playing as pianist for a Davis group:

‘He [Hancock] has described in many interviews how he once played a completely ‘wrong’ chord in the middle of one of Miles’ solos. Cringing with embarrassment, Hancock heard Miles instantly change his notes, to make Hancock’s chord sound ‘right’. “My mouth dropped,” Hancock commented, “I was so stunned, I couldn’t play for a few minutes. I just let the music go by. But Miles didn’t even look at me. He just carried on. He didn’t hear what I’d done as ‘wrong’. He heard it as part of the reality of the present moment, a reality he could shape any way he wanted to. It illustrated the kind of openness he had towards anything that happened.’

(Tingen, p. 37)

In such instances as the above, Davis can be seen as applying the adage of his mentor Charlie Parker, namely that ‘there are no mistakes’. Another instance of the practical application of this adage follows. During his apprenticeship with Parker in the 1940s, Davis was encountering problems in his improvisations due to a replacement pianist in the Parker group who was, according to Davis, “playing all the wrong changes.” On complaining to Parker, however, the latter replied:

“Well, play them with him and they won’t be wrong.”

(Tingen, p.106, extract related by Davis band member Mtume)

The flexibility inherent in situations involving improvisation can therefore transform 'wrong' notes into 'right' ones through the retrospective adjustment of the improviser. The author's personal term for such an occurrence is 'happy accident'; the occurrence is unexpected in the same way as an accident and as such the satisfactory ('happy') result cannot be predicted. The occurrence of a 'happy accident' is not necessarily restricted to improvised music. Through his indeterminate methods, John Cage may be viewed as advocating the 'happy accident' as a form of artistic ideal. A generally unspoken feature of the performance of fully-notated music without the use of improvisation or indeterminacy is that, in live performance, other indeterminate factors have a substantial impact on the performance itself: the acoustic, the relative placement of audience and performer(s), instrument response according to temperature and humidity, and not least the constantly changing state of mind of the performer (regardless of the levels of concentration reached).

Faced with such circumstances, the experienced performer will always acknowledge and work in conjunction with the conditions which s/he encounters, often in a spontaneous moment-to-moment process akin to improvisation. The pianist John Tilbury describes this relative approach to performance as follows:

'A chord which sounds louder than intended or anticipated can be 'contextualised' by the succeeding sounds, made to sound, in retrospect, right.'

(Tilbury, J: *Pianoworks* (liner notes to CD of works by Howard Skempton))

This resonates with a statement ascribed to Davis:

‘If you play a note you didn’t intend to play, what determines whether it sounds like a mistake or a moment of inspiration is the note you play after it.’

(Tingen, p. 106)

It may be maintained, therefore, that in any type of concentrated performance, improvised or otherwise, each moment contains a latent flexibility which needs to be acknowledged by the performer in order to be able to respond to the unique and possibly unexpected qualities of the moment itself. The performer is also required to be mentally alert and prepared to follow the musical implications of any change of direction which may arise from that which is predetermined. In improvised music, such as jazz, this quickness of reaction may even be prioritised as a performance prerequisite.

A celebrated example of the ‘happy accident’ in jazz occurs in the opening of the track *Right Off* from the Davis album *Jack Johnson* (CD track 1). In the improvised introduction before Davis’s entry, the E major key of the introduction is spontaneously switched to Bb by the guitarist at 2’20” to provide a new reference for Davis’s imminent entry, which occurs at 2’28”. The bass guitar player however, perhaps oblivious to the intention of the guitarist, does not respond to the change of key and stays on the key centre of E. Rather than abandon the improvisation, Davis enters the bi-tonal confusion with the note C#/Db. The note is labelled enharmonically in this instance since it relates to both guitarists’ keys

simultaneously: the sixth of E major and the minor third 'blue note' of Bb major. He therefore validates and transforms the musical cross-purposes of the guitarists by creating connections between apparently unrelated contexts.

Summary

Through the work undertaken with the group *ESP*, it is clear that the performer's musical background, experience and response are crucial to the creative outcome of music which incorporates improvisational elements. As in the case of Duke Ellington's knowledge of the musical inclinations of his players, it is important for the composer to consider 'who' as well as 'what instrument' is being written for in such work.

As well as awareness of players' tendencies, preferences, strengths and weaknesses on an individual level, the issue of group dynamics formed by the complex interrelationships of individuals, sub-groups and the group as a whole needs to be addressed by the composer/director. The change of personnel effected in the group *ESP* after the recording of *Memorial/Chorale*, although not necessarily as a result of a lack of 'chemistry' between the players, resulted in a transformation of working methods as well as the group sound. The consequences of this change will be examined in the next chapter.

Part IV: Current projects

Chapter 10 - Works (3): Research Group Bash-O

[All audio extracts for this chapter are available on CD 8]

[All scores (works #8-12) are bound in the single volume 'Bash-O']

After the departure of drummer Tom Lawrence from the group *ESP*, it was decided for the group to continue with reduced personnel. The revised group formation of four players was re-named '*Bash-O*'. The line-up was as follows:

Electric Guitar: Joel Bell

Electric Keyboard: Andrew Melvin

Electric Bass: James Tahmasebi

Drums: Zach McCullough

Half the members were, therefore, new to the group. Another major factor in the change of group dynamic is that now there were two active composers in the group as opposed to four in *ESP*. There arose therefore a bilateral, polarised (as opposed to diverse) source of compositional input, but with much opportunity for mutual influence.

In this chapter, rather than discussing the rehearsal process for one piece in detail (as in Chapter 8), five pieces will be examined. Frequently, one aspect of the music will

be examined at the expense of others in order to highlight the contrasting research paths taken in each piece.

Technical Terms:

During rehearsals, the work of *Bash-O* was frequently discussed using jazz terminology.

Accordingly, the following terms will be used in the discussion:

- **Groove:** a continuous but changeable pulse-based figuration, usually played by the drummer.
- **Head:** a principal theme normally played at the beginning and end of a piece.
- **Break:** an unaccompanied improvised passage played by a soloist.
- **Fill:** a variation (improvised or notated) to a riff at the end of a phrase.

Works #8a & #8b, *Monk #1* and #2 (CD tracks 1 & 2)

[NB when works exist in more than one version, they will be categorised as version #1, #2 etc.]

Monk consists of a one-page score divided into one staff for the bass line and one staff

for the head. The four empty bars of 9-12 (version #1) serve as an improvisatory middle section. There is also an improvised introductory section for solo keyboard and a coda which modifies the bass line to synchronise rhythmically with the head. The keyboard doubles the bass line and the head is played by electric guitar and keyboard right hand. The piece is a homage to the jazz pianist Thelonious Monk and alludes to the pianist's frequent use of sevenths in the bass register, displaced accents and dissonant upward gestures similar to that of the last bar of the head. The whole tone scale, a common feature of improvisations by Monk, also appears in the final section (from 5'16'' of track 1).

Ex. 37 *Monk* Head and Riff

The image shows a musical score for 'Monk Head and Riff' in 4/4 time, featuring a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into two parts: 'Head' and 'Riff'. The 'Head' section is written in the treble clef and consists of 8 bars. The 'Riff' section is written in the bass clef and consists of 8 bars. The 'Riff' section features a repeating rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests, with a final bar that includes a dissonant upward gesture. The 'Head' section features a melodic line with various intervals and a final bar that includes a dissonant upward gesture.

Monk: Evolution of the form.

The skeletal structure of *Monk #1* invites improvisational elaboration in the jazz idiom. The piece can be thought of a 16-bar form with jazz-based chord changes and a head which can be played at either end of the piece. 'Solos' (individual improvisations) can also be taken according to the 16-bar form with accompaniment from the other players. In the first rehearsals, the piece was tried out in this basic manner for performers to become

acquainted with the material and its improvisational possibilities. However, the ultimate aim of the process was not to reproduce traditional jazz structures, but to initiate new possibilities of form in rehearsal. The composer also prioritised the evolution of formal structures within the rehearsal room as opposed to the writing desk. Therefore, the possibilities of formal continuation and development are deliberately left open to suggestion through experimental playing and absorbing feedback from the other players. This approach had not been taken in any previous work in the research.

The results of the process outlined above can be seen in the score *Monk #2* and heard on CD track 1. Although the traditional jazz format of the head opening and closing the piece is maintained (as well as the guitar improvisation from 1'15" following the 16-bar form), a substantial part of the central section of the piece (from 2'45" to 5'25") is only fixed in instrumentation and discards the form and chord changes altogether. The initial instrumentation of drums and keyboard at 2'45" was suggested by Bell. This was in order to feature the distinctive keyboard timbre used on this track (a similar motive lies behind the use of keyboard solo in the introduction) and exploit its percussive edge in combination with the drums. In theory, the duet can be played either in tempo or in transition towards *senza misura* textures (in the recorded version the players continue in tempo). The keyboard player decides when to end the duet section, upon which the drummer takes a solo improvisation (3'31" in this recording). Upon a signal by the drums, a new improvised texture is announced, adding bass guitar (4'31") and electric guitar (4'41"), but still without fixed material until the keyboard cue at 5'16" previews the

return of the head at 5'25".

Much of the improvisation in *Monk* deviates substantially from the original form and has the potential to take a different direction and dynamic shape each time, albeit with the containment of the specified musical cues. This can be heard in the drum/keyboard duet of CD track 2 at 2'47" followed by a very different four-way interaction before the return of the head at 4'21" (the recording cuts at 5'25"). In this sense, *Monk* bears resemblance with some of the work undertaken by Miles Davis with his quintet of the mid-1960s in terms of the extent to which the players would diverge from the harmonic, melodic and structural features of the original material.

Works 9a & 9b: *Rat* #1 and #2 (CD tracks 3-5)

The origins of *Rat* pre-date the formation of *Bash-O*, having already been performed by Peter Wiegold and student ensemble *New Noise* three years previously (this performance will be discussed later).

The studio recording of *Rat #1* is on CD track 3. In the coda (4'47"), the bass and keyboard stay strictly to the notated material in order to free the drummer and guitarist in their exploration of the spaces left by the intervening rests. At 5'02", the guitar spontaneously quotes the opening of the theme three times in succession (with two statements transposed) in quasi-parodic fashion.

Rat #2, which can be heard on CD track 4, differs from *Rat #1* in terms of instrumentation and form. The bass line is taken by the keyboard and the addition of a melodeon creates new opportunities for the call-and-response textures previously shared by the electric guitar and keyboard. It was performed several months after the original version was recorded. Between these times, a substantial middle section had been added at fig. C of the revised score. In this section, the head is fragmented and the lower register of the melodic instruments explored. Rhythmic displacement of the last note of the one-bar phrase is set up at bar 35 and is the focus of bars 47-51. The focus on the rhythmic aspect helps prepare for the open-ended drum solo at bar 52.

The coda (7'35" in the recording) is also left open-ended. The texture however includes a deliberate dissolution of pulse in the final bars in order to open up non-metered possibilities of improvisation. In the event, the remnants of melody and density of percussive activity resulted in an improvisation reminiscent of the scurrying of rats, and although no such instruction was explicitly given, the compositional and formal

elements tilt the improvisation in this direction. The section is called to a halt with a preset drum figure at 8'32" which acts as a *segue* into the next piece in the concert programme. The absence of a double bar at the end of the piece makes this type of transition possible.

The recording of *Rat* by Wiegold and ensemble *New Noise* will now be considered as an alternative approach to structuring and performing the piece. The score was approximately in the format of *Rat #1*, although it was transposed to the key of Bb for the benefit of transposing wind instruments.

Wiegold used the compositional material without change; however, he did loosen the structure in order to accommodate the slowly evolving textures which are typical of Wiegold's work with improvisation. In contrast to the five minutes of the studio recording, the live version performed by the group lasts eleven minutes even with only three statements of the head. The performance is on CD track 5. Particular expansiveness can be found in the equivalent of fig. E (*Rat #1*), where on two occasions (from 2'05" and 5'36" respectively) Wiegold gradually builds the texture up from just bass guitar and percussion to the full ensemble. He leaves plenty of scope for new improvised material, often in the form of riffs, to emerge from the performers. An extra level of flexibility is enabled by Wiegold's decision to cycle the material of the first two bars at various points in the piece, as well as bars 28-31 (with an alteration to the rhythm at bar 31). This gives time for the director (and listener) to absorb the complex textures which may have

evolved, while planning the next structural move in the live situation. The malleability of form in this respect became of interest to the author in the work of *Bash-O* especially in the context of improvisation, since the containment of the four-bar structures of *Rat #1* did not always allow for full growth of the improvisational material. In the next piece to be analysed, structural flexibility and improvisational input were prioritised to such an extent that the composer was reluctant to develop the compositional elements at all.

Work #10: *Wacko* (CD tracks 6-7)

Wacko is a study on the contrast between a fixed bass line and flexible upper lines. There is much scope for the improvisation and exploration of structural design.

Ex. 39 *Wacko* Head and Riffs

The musical score for 'Wacko Head and Riffs' consists of three staves in 4/4 time. The top staff, labeled 'Lead (part)', shows a melodic line with a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note, then a quarter note, and a half note, with various accidentals. The middle staff, labeled 'Riff (keyboard)', features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a dotted quarter note, and a slash indicating a continuation of the pattern. The bottom staff, labeled 'Riff (bass)', shows a bass line with a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note, and a slash indicating a continuation of the pattern.

The portfolio score represented the most recent version of the piece. Fig. 5 was a relatively recent addition, and derives from a bass line used by Miles Davis. Since they both rise in fourths and use dotted rhythms, the bass lines were juxtaposed as family members. A recording using both lines can be heard on CD track 7.

Structure

The opening of *Wacko* contains a series of aural cues, highlighting the increased use of open forms within the group and the development of cueing systems which rely on listening rather than conductor-led gestures. All repeats are open and the only way a player will know which section is being played is by listening to the progress of the bass line. The bass line player listens to the evolving texture and moves to the next variation once the texture is established. This gives the opportunity for players to explore the evolving texture without the need to prepare for the next section by counting bars or waiting for a cue. The improvisation can react organically to the switches between sections and thereby effect smooth transitions. The bass line player is in effect the leader in this section since the transitions are initiated by him. It is, however, a leadership based on playing as opposed to a set of externally imposed instructions. The players are entirely free to decide the extent and manner of their participation. A performer may refrain from making his entrance until bar 5, for example, depending on the decisions made by the other players. However, he will have a sense of the musical direction of the section set up by the verbal suggestions, as well as an awareness of the goal of fig. 1 where the riff and bass lines emerge in full form.

Once the frame of fig. 1 is established, the head is played at fig. 2 as a final addition to the texture. The introductory section was one of the later compositional additions to

Wacko and forms part of the general principle of the piece to leave substantial space for improvisatory exploration. In this respect it bears resemblance to the riff-based work of Miles Davis, in particular works such as *Yesternow* and *Honky-Tonk* (see Chapter 4). Other variable elements, not explicit in the score, included changes of dynamics which were sometimes cued by the composer and sometimes occurred spontaneously among the players. In a piece with such a restricted amount of material, it was natural for the players to find contrasts and variety in areas not specified in the score.

Wacko can be structured in various ways. Sections may be arranged in a preset order, or they may be cued spontaneously during the performance. Since figs. 1, 2 and 3 are interchangeable, the possibility exists of only using a fixed cue at fig. 4 and letting the players move through the other sections at will. The latter approach was adopted on the CD track which will form the next part of the discussion:

Studio Take 1 (CD track 6)

Main events on the recording are indicated as follows (see below):

0'03" Keyboard solo – free improvisation away from written score

0'32" Official introduction (bar 1)

2'29" Fig. 1

2'40" Fig. 2 – Head played twice, with variations on second playing

3'27" Saxophone solo on fig. 1

5'02" Fig. 4 played four times, twice *piano* and twice *forte*

5'49" Guitar solo on fig. 1

6'42" Keyboard provides alternate bass lines. Guitar solo using distortion

7'04" Saxophone enters with material from fig. 3 (guitar solo continues)

7'28" Keyboard joins fig. 3 (guitar solo continues)

7'53" Fig. 4 played twice, first *forte* then *piano*

8'14" Fig. 1 *piano* with fragments of fig. 2 in the guitar and saxophone parts

8'50" End

It should be emphasised that there was no pre-established structure to the piece other than the use of the introduction and the cueing of the first appearance of the head and fig. 4. Improvised solos arose spontaneously, and dynamic changes were also cued without pre-planning. Thus, form and dynamics were kept as flexible as possible for this particular performance to encourage maximum intuitive response from the players. As an example of the players' inventiveness, the textural dissipation from 8'00" can be seen in terms of sophisticated improvisational treatment of a minimal amount of compositional material.

The introduction provides a useful insight into the way players become aware of the live musical events around them and respond to situations in which they have no specific preset material. There are no cues given by the composer/director and the

playing is executed through instinctive response. The only general instructions are those of the text. Players stagger their entries in accordance with the indication for a 'sparse' texture. The drums imitate fragments of the bass line from 0'53" and the saxophone enters at 1'01" in imitation of the D-C#-C motif of the keyboard (played at 0'48"). The guitar enters at 1'09" with a *tremolando* which is imitated almost immediately by the saxophone. At 1'28" the drum sets up a groove, but at 1'44" imitates the 3/16 semiquaver cross-accented figure of the guitar (initiated at 1'41"), which in turn is based on the two semiquavers of the second beat of the bass part in bar 1. It can be seen, therefore, that in such circumstances the players rely on both their listening and reading skills to react to material both played spontaneously and from the page, often through the use of imitation. Imitation also proves a very useful device to unify up a texture owing to its proliferation through different parts (as in a fugue).

Styles

Wacko also contains optional performing criteria in terms of possible switches of style, which are cued by the director at any time. By means of this technique, the basic materials of the piece pass through a stylistic filter but maintain their essential components even when they emerge refracted at the other end. The aim is to refresh the material itself through the refraction and collision of normally unrelated styles.

Alternative styles (from the default 'straight' styles) are listed on the last page as reggae, rock, swing and samba. The first suggestion of alternative styles arose from a discussion

of the original tempo of the piece, the drummer suggested 'samba' as an up-tempo style, but once the music emerged, the bassist remarked that the actual result sounded more like 'shuffle'. On the next playing, the group settled instinctively on a reggae texture, rather slower than initially intended but opening up a new creative avenue. It is this type of chain reaction which is the lifeblood for the creative development of such a piece. The piece therefore evolves in directions the composer would (or could) not anticipate.

A selection of contrasting playing styles can be heard on the rehearsal take of CD track 7. Reggae is introduced obtrusively at 4'33" and rock emerges at 4'45". Both styles are alternated until a samba cue from the drums at 6'12", followed by a sudden rise in tempo. There follows a *rit.* at 6'49" into the Miles Davis-based riff of fig. 5 at 7'15". In this way, the riff can be 'stretched' texturally and in terms of tempo, while maintaining its anchor role. As with the use of contrasting dynamics in the previous version, variety is sought through musical parameters other than that of pitch.

Variations on a Riff (1): *Shifty* #1, #2 and #3 (Work #11, CD tracks 8-10)

The use of different playing styles and techniques to give a multi-dimensional identity to a riff becomes of prime importance in *Shifty*. By this stage in the research process, a prime concern is the balance between the immutability of the essential components of the riff and its potential in terms of compositional and improvisational treatment.

Version #1 of the score was provided for the initial rehearsal of the piece. Owing to the rhythmic angularity of the riff and the polyrhythmic potential of the drum part, the discussion soon turned to the development of the polyrhythms in rehearsal through improvisational means. The recording of this part of the rehearsal can be heard on CD tracks 9 (at 3'48"). The rhythms were initiated by the drummer and guitarist, and later formalised as a metric modulation as the swing triplets turn to straight quavers in versions #2 and #3 of the score (see *Shifty #2* at fig. 8). The technique of metric modulation has been encountered already in the extended forms of works discussed in previous chapters (such as *Jiggy* in Chapter 6), but here it makes its first and only appearance in the more groove-based work of *Bash-O*. An objective of its use is to combine the two basic forms of swing and straight rhythms (common in jazz forms but normally kept separate) into a single extended form and in the process transform the constitution of the central riff. Once the new pulse is established, the drums take a solo improvisation after which the keyboard fades in (from fig. 10 of *Shifty #2*), producing a momentary duplicity of pulse before the drummer effects the reversed metric modulation to join the (initial) pulse of the keyboard. The process can be heard on the studio recording (track 9: 4'40" to 5'20").

Ex. 41 *Shifty* - Head

The musical notation for Ex. 41 *Shifty* - Head consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff contains measures 1 through 4, and the second staff contains measures 5 through 8. The music features a central riff with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure of each line, followed by a metric modulation to a straight eighth-note pulse.

The head provides a further level of tension in that although it contains the note Eb in its fourth bar (in common with the bass line), the sense of key centre leans more towards F major than the implied Eb major of the riff. The Eb in the melody can therefore be heard as the seventh of F major as well as the root of Eb major; conversely the 'blues' intervals of A-Ab within the melodic context of F major can be heard in a very different context when heard against the bass line, in particular the augmented fourth of Eb-A. The unhinging (shifting) of the melodic line from the harmonic root is designed to keep the solo line buoyant and free from the gravitational pull of the bass, leading to increased harmonic possibilities for improvisation. Indeed, at fig. 6 of the solo section of *Shifty #3*, the soloist is expressly requested to play a blues form in the 'opposite' (shifted) key of A, resulting in the two key centres of Eb and A creating added harmonic tension. The contrast of keys in this way recalls the polarity of tonic and dominant in extended classical constructs such as sonata form.

Another form of pitch shift is the possibility of transposition of the bass line at any point in the piece and to the extent desired by the player. This non-notated 'wild-card' idea is based on the image of shifting sands, whereby the ground can move (quite literally) from beneath one's feet. In translating the image to a musical context, the bass line, representing the ground, can shift from underneath a player's solo and leave the player 'hanging'. The player therefore either tries to find a new musical foothold or floats in the harmonic ether. The occurrence of this technique forms a non-notated parallel to

the instruction for the soloist to play in A major over Eb. The soloist may find it more challenging to be prepared for the occurrence of the improvised event, given its unpredictable placing within the structure, and also will probably not know the extent of the transposition until the bass riff has undergone at least several repetitions in its new form.

Two examples of the bass line shift occur at CD track 9 at 1'14" and 2'07". The keyboard player spontaneously effected these changes without warning the other players. In the first example, the bass line moves a semitone down to D-F-G under the saxophone solo thus immediately re-contextualising the solo from a harmonic point of view. The shift also challenges the player to either change harmonic course to comply with the new implied key or pursue the bitonal implications of the previously established key in combination with the new bass line. At 2'06", the bass moves further to along to C-Eb-F and is played in fragmentation. The resulting space in the phrase invites comment from the guitar soloist. The initial territory of Eb is reclaimed at 2'53".

Just before the bass line shift, there is an instance of a 'break' (at 1'59") in which the riff is momentarily suspended (in order to avoid its overexposure and also to create a shift in texture). Here, performers play fixed rhythms but at relative pitch, as in *Torio* from Chapter 6. In *Shifty #1*, the players are given a repeated bar of triplets to repeat as many times as they wish (bar 14) before giving the rhythmical cue of bar 15, upon which the riff re-enters on the accented offbeat along with the drums. The break links back to the fully

notated introductory pair of bars, which itself is a rhythmically displaced ('shifted') quotation from Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* (see ex. 42) below:

Ex. 42 Shifty / Gershwin *Rhapsody in Blue* comparison

Shifty: Introduction Gershwin: from 'Rhapsody in Blue' b. 117

The incessant invention needed to maintain a constant stream improvised of triplets in the break is considerable at the tempo set and proved challenging for players, who may be used to creating short breaks in improvised solos to regroup mentally and physically for the next phrase. During the statement beginning at 1'59" (track 9), the guitarist wavers on the pulse and hesitates on the triplets, inadvertently pointing the way to a previously unplanned texture from 2'06". This is an instance of the 'happy accident' phenomenon mentioned in the previous chapter in that the initial hesitation paves the way for an unforeseen circumstance which is acknowledged and exploited by the players. In addition, the return to the original riff at 2'53" carries additional weight due to the relative remoteness of the unforeseen texture compared to what may have resulted from a more 'correct' interpretation.

The triplet motif stated at the opening makes a return towards the end of the piece as the basis for a call-and-response coda section. This device was used instead of a

recapitulation of the head which was deemed redundant by this stage. The jazz-based phrasing, related to blues and shuffle forms of traditional jazz, is made more explicit in the clichéd harmonic sequence of the last two bars (versions #2 and #3 only), but contradicted sharply in the stark augmented octave Eb-E dissonance of the last note. This final serves as a reminder that all allusions to convention are in the context of a non-conventional approach.

A final treatment to the idea of 'shift' occurs in the realm of tempo. As a contrast to the many pieces written within the swing jazz tradition which are set at an unchanging tempo ('groove'), in writing *Shifty* the composer decided to experiment with shifts of tempo. As an adjunct to this device, the realm of pitch was brought into the equation. When the tempo decreased, the average pitch frequency of the riff also diminished, and as an accelerando progressed, the overall pitch level would gradually rise. Instances of this device can be seen in version #3 bars 19 and 59 (fig.14), where the tempo marking is changed by 25% and 33% respectively. The effect, which is similar to the effect of uneven pitch possible on a record player, can be heard on CD track 10 (2'34" and 5'41" respectively).

The three performing versions

Shifty exists in three distinct versions. Unlike other multi-version pieces in the portfolio, they were developed concurrently (rather than as a chronological sequence) in order to

produce several versions of the same piece with varying levels of balance between compositional and improvisational elements. The aim is two-fold: to explore varying levels of interaction between these elements on an experimental basis and to provide a flexible repertoire choice for the group within the confines of one piece. In the same way as Wiegold's *drive your cart #3* or the 'elastic scoring' of Percy Grainger, *Shifty* is designed to adapt to changeable performance surroundings. The variety of instrumentation which can be heard on the CD tracks is also evidence of the composer's intent to adapt the piece to the instrumental forces present.

Version #1 (CD track 8)

Version #1 is specifically designed to maximise the improvisational possibilities of the piece. It follows the example of *Wacko* in deliberately restricting the compositional information to a minimum. Apart from the principal riff, bass line and head, the only other material presented is the break at fig. 3 which can also be used as a coda (bar 16), and the alternative keyboard riffs from bar 17.

Version #2 (CD track 9)

Version #2 is a structural elaboration on the first version through the inclusion of the central polyrhythmic section of fig. 4 to fig. 11. The call and response structure and coda of figs. 11 and 12 are also absent from version #1. This version occupies the middle ground between improvisation and composition and although the form is mainly through-

composed from fig.4, there is scope for flexibility in the length of sections through the unspecified number of repetitions in each phrase.

Version #3 (CD track 10)

Version #3 is the most elaborate of all three structures and contains sections unique to itself as well as the polyrhythmic section and coda of version #2. This version contains the tempo changes at bars 19 and 59 and the stylistically bound treatments of the riff at figs. 5 and 6. The polyrhythmic section at fig. 8 follows version #2 until fig. 13 where the keyboard creates versions of the riff in a strictly controlled pattern of fixed cycles of repetition. This passage exemplifies the intention to explore the compositional (as well as improvisational) possibilities inherent in the riff and as such presents increased challenges for the improviser who is obliged to count bars more than in previous versions. For this reason, versions #1 and #2 were preferred by group members from a practical and creative viewpoint.


Variations on a riff (2): *Evening Paths* (Work #12, CD tracks 12 & 13)

Evening Paths is an arrangement of the first piece from the piano cycle *On an Overgrown Path* by Leoš Janaček. It acts as another example of the principle of the varied riff. In this piece, parallels can be drawn with the classical variation form. However, instead of variations based on melodic and harmonic schemas, the author chose to make variations upon ostinati. These were selected from the classical repertoire of the early 20th century,

in particular the work of Janaček and Bartók.

As a preliminary exercise, an improvisation session was instigated to explore the materials of the Bartók miniature *Bulgarian Rhythm*. The piece was transcribed in a slightly modified notational layout by the author as shown in the supplementary materials of the *Bash-O* album. Above the ostinato (see ex. 43 below) a melody of four rhythmically identical phrases is played. A short introductory section and coda frame the piece. The melody was used both as a head and *ritornello* motif between extensive improvised sections over the riff itself. An audio example of the group treatment is given in CD track 11.

Ex. 43 Bartók - *Bulgarian Rhythm* from *Mikrokosmos IV*



The image shows a musical score for Ex. 43, titled 'Bartók - Bulgarian Rhythm from Mikrokosmos IV'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff is labeled 'Melody (first phrase)' and contains a sequence of notes: a quarter rest, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5, then a quarter note B4, and finally a quarter rest. The bass staff is labeled 'Riff' and contains a sequence of notes: a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3 with a sharp sign, a quarter note B3, and a quarter note C4. The piece is in 7/8 time and consists of four measures. The first measure contains the melody and riff. The second, third, and fourth measures contain only the riff, with a double bar line and a repeat sign at the end of each measure.

The Bartók example was chosen for its clarity of presentation of musical materials as well as its potential for improvisational development. However, the author was more interested in using the materials of classical pieces in a more oblique way by making indirect (as opposed to explicit) reference to the riffs in question. In doing so, regeneration of the original material is made possible as well as the established

procedures of decoration and elaboration common in classical variation structures. The piece may be therefore seen as having more in common with the transformative procedures used by Michael Finnissy in his recompositions of Gershwin, Verdi and J. Strauss than the classical variation structures of Mozart's time.

The Janaček piece used as source material for the following stage of the project is entitled *Our Evenings*. This title and the overall title of the cycle *On an Overgrown Path* were merged into the composite *Evening Paths*. The 'paths' can be seen as representative of the exploratory processes on a technical as well as a poetic level.

In accordance with the aims outlined above, the allusion to the source material is elliptical rather than explicit. For this reason, rather than the 'theme' of the original being stated at the beginning of *Evening Paths*, it only appears with full harmonic context in the latter stages of the piece. From this perspective, the piece can be seen as a set of variations in reverse, with the theme revealing itself from layers of obfuscation. In CD track 13, the guitarist is asked to cycle the opening theme of the Janaček , around which float textures of keyboard improvisation and fig. 1. In the other recorded version on CD track 12, there is no direct reference to the Janaček original theme and the piece ends without an extended improvisatory section. This disguises the origins of the piece still further, evoking rather than elaborating upon the original.

The treatment of the original Janaček material will now be considered on a

notational level. Much of the modified content came into being through improvisation at the keyboard rather than any pre-defined structural approach.

Fig.1 of *Evening Paths* is based on the harmonic content of the first five bars of *Our Evenings* with particular reference to the B-A#-A chromatic figuration in bars 1-2 and the appearance of pitches E and D# in the right hand (although not as a seventh). The pitch D# in particular assumes structural importance in *Evening Paths*, acting as a mid-range pedal point from figs. 1 to 5. The falling second, whether in the first two notes of the tenor line of *Our Evenings* or the middle voice ostinato of the *Adagio* section (bar 95), is a vital structural element and given corresponding significance in *Evening Paths*. As well as the melodic fall in bar 8 of *Evening Paths*, there are also correspondences with phrases such as in the A-G# shift between the first notes of bar 5 and 6 of the keyboard accompaniment.

The melodic material generally follows the opening upward trajectory of the melody of *Our Evenings*. The intervallically compressed version of the melody at bar 98 of the original is quoted note-for-note at fig. 5 of *Evening Paths* along with the bass line as follows (see ex. 44 below):

Ex. 44 *Evening Paths* melody and bass line at fig. 5 (version #1)

The bass line for the opening sections of *Evening Paths* keeps to a C# pedal point, producing a combined C#-D# pedal and therefore an additional reference to the predominance of the second as a fundamental intervallic building block in the piece.

However, the unchanging pulse of the original is modified in figs. 1 and 2 to a series of irregular durations based on multiples of the semiquaver pulse (the actual durations range from two to six semiquavers). The concept of variation in this case is based on the shortening or lengthening the basic crotchet pulse, whilst preserving the crotchet itself as an option. The bass line is put in rhythmic counterpoint with the drum part which works on the same principles. At figs. 4 and 5 also, the regularity of the rhythms in the original version (bar 95) is manipulated to form syncopated rhythms reminiscent of rhythmic structures found in Latin popular music. Both original and treated versions are shown in ex. 45 below:

Ex. 45 Comparison of riffs from *Our Evenings* and *Evening Paths*

The exploration of rhythm in the ways discussed above can be seen as more extensive than the treatment of pitch elements and is partly responsible for the piece sounding distinct from one of classical origins.

Much of the riff material is circular in design, especially given its modified form in *Evening Paths*. Examples include the ebb and flow of the chromatic pattern of bars 3-4 and the wheel-like rotation of the three note motif D#-C#-A# at fig. 4. The Janaček original also makes use of the same pitches in the ostinato at bar 95. However, as is typical with classical music created without improvisational means to develop materials, the ostinato loses its status as such through subjugation to harmonic modulatory development from bar 114. Composers of classical music can in this sense be seen to override the instinct for ostinato by the need (real or imagined) for devices to produce compositional development and variety. It can be argued that ostinati employed by Stravinsky in the *Rite of Spring* were more radical than those of Janaček in their non-developmental treatment. However, even unchanging ostinati such as the Db-Bb-Eb-Bb in the *Dances of the Young Girls* were offset by numerous changes of texture and instrumentation to compensate for the 'primitive' repetitiousness of the ostinato itself.

As well as material derived from *Our Evenings*, from fig. 6 the author also quotes from his own previous work. The material consists entirely of broken chords. In this section, the melody instruments are kept free of pre-set melodic material in order to expand on improvisational development leading to the climax at bar 50. The broken

chords are presented in complementary pairs a second apart, relating to the aforementioned predominance of the second as a building block of earlier sections of the piece. By the 3/4 section at bar 43, the pairs multiply to form a chain of four chords based on the chromatic sequence Bb-A-Ab-G. The two types of sequence are both present in the previously composed solo piano piece *Alone*, fragments of which will serve as illustration and a point of comparison (see ex. 46 below). The use of compositional material of one piece in another is indicative of the author's approach to adopt material to circumstances.

Ex. 46 *Alone*, two fragments

The image displays two musical excerpts from the piece 'Alone'. The first excerpt, labeled 'bar 11', is in 2/2 time and marked 'p' (piano). It features a descending melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand, with a prominent falling second interval. The second excerpt, labeled 'bar 19', is in 3/4 time and marked 'mf' (mezzo-forte) with a 'meno' dynamic marking. It contains complex rhythmic patterns including triplets and quintuplets in both hands, with a similar falling second interval in the right hand.

It is notable that the falling second used in both *Evening Paths* and *Our Evenings* is also present in *Alone*. Fig. 6 of *Evening Paths* was a later addition to the structure but provided a useful textural contrast and starting point for fresh improvisational input over a more chromatic and unstable harmonic field (created partly by the liberation of the bass line

from the previous C#-G# polarity).

A 'Happy Accident' [CD track 13]

As mentioned in Chapter 9, mistakes can become positive elements in improvisational contexts. In the recording of *Evening Paths* documented on CD track 13, such an instance of the phenomenon of 'happy accident' is documented. The players were not given the order of sections prior to the recording; this was determined by the composer during the live playing of the piece. Therefore, players often needed to implement cues given at a few seconds' notice. At 6'57", the saxophonist Oliver Leaman missed a cue to return to fig. 5 at the end of his improvisation. On hearing the other players switch section he was still inadvertently improvising, but effected a semi-improvised *segue* to the following section. In doing so, he not only covered up the 'mistake' but also provided a structural overlap between the two sections by incorporating the thematic material of fig. 5 into his improvised continuation. He thereby simultaneously incorporated improvisational decoration around the melodic line. In the knowledge of the relative difficulty of achieving smooth transitions between semi-improvised sections, this was seen by the author as a boon to the piece rather than a drawback.

Heritage

Evening Paths constitutes an experiment in linking current improvisational practice with past compositional practice in the search to develop new forms of variation writing. The approach in *Evening Paths* is to transform through recomposition (as opposed to conventional variation) and thus create a piece whose source may be unrecognisable to the listener (except when directly quoted towards the end of CD track 13).

The piece also constitutes an implicit advocacy of the recycling of musical material and a concurrent repudiation of the notion of exclusivity of the musical material to its originator. It thus forms a bond with the ancient practice of using pre-existing materials for new works, as exemplified by Dufay's *Missa l'Homme Armé* and Bach's use of chorales in church cantatas. By these means, the material transformed into something 'new' itself. In this way, rather than rejecting the classical heritage as post-war modernist composers have done, the composer can develop processes and a musical identity formed in the present but with conscious links to the past. This continues the precedent set by composers such as Bach, Mozart, Brahms and Stravinsky in past centuries. In this way, present-day music can re-establish a dialogue with music from the past and reconnect with its own cultural heritage.

Group *Bash-O* and Notation

It is evident that the works in this chapter are not written as fully notated or through-composed structures. The form of a *Bash-O* piece was largely memorised by the performers. In keeping with the notational conventions of a jazz standard, only the heads in *Monk* and *Rat* were written and chords for improvisation suggested. As rehearsals progressed, more specific instrumentation was assigned (for example, the B and E natural of bar 3 of *Monk #1* was assigned to the guitar only), but was not usually specified in the score. The score itself was used in the initial stages for general navigation. Most decisions regarding instrumentation were memorised by the performers rather than written down. The drummer would generally follow the full score until he was familiar with the structure and rhythmic construction of the piece. As can be seen in all the pieces discussed in this chapter, additions in terms of improvised textures were made without the need to effect corresponding changes to the score. Such score changes would be of minimal significance to the performers in terms of practical usefulness and could also possibly complicate a mutual understanding which would already have been reached on a verbal and musical level. Only in the case of substantial compositional change (for example the insertion of the substantial central section of *Rat #2*) would the score be altered and re-introduced to the players. The cultivation of performance memory and its adoption in recalling improvisational contexts and structures played just as important a role in the development of the form of the pieces as any notational plan.

Drums and (non-) notation

The notated score of a piece which involves improvisation is to some extent at least an optical illusion. The pre-composed elements will sound as written, while improvised elements will probably have no representation in the score at all, despite being at the forefront of the musical texture. The role of the drummer in *Bash-O* is a case in point. For the vast majority of each piece, the drummer plays a full part in proceedings yet there is no drum part on any score (except in *Evening Paths* and two bars of *Shifty*). In this respect, the drummer's role follows jazz convention in that the player will follow the structure and accentuation patterns of the other parts, while simultaneously devising his own part through a mixture of idiomatic patterns and improvisational response. In the case of *Bash-O*, the drummer is left to develop his own part for most of the process without specific notational or verbal instruction. In later pieces such as *Wacko*, *Shifty* and *Evening Paths*, however, more specific information is given regarding playing style and set notation.

Evening Paths marks a new departure for the composer in terms of notational practice since figs. 1 and 2 include a prescribed pattern of accentuation patterns for the drummer. Formerly, two brief notational patterns had been suggested to the drummer in *Shifty*, but in this case the patterns last for sixteen bars and form a vital rhythmic counterpoint to the keyboard part. It should be emphasised that the accentuation patterns are a template

and not the resultant rhythm; the player may add variations of his own and also be responsible for the allocation of kit instruments to the given rhythms. The patterns are, however, more explicit in guiding the player towards textures and rhythmic configurations in keeping with the general compositional priorities of the piece. They may also provoke a stylistic leap out of the habitual patterns of the player. In the initial rehearsals, the composer requested that the drummer also use a combination of hard and soft sticks to produce a different array of sounds from that with which he was familiar. In addition, there are sections where the drummer is requested to withdraw from the texture or add only minimal colouristic effects to bring about additional textural variety. Examples of these sections are figs. 3 and 5.

Summary

The works explored in this chapter show a variety of approaches to combining riff, improvisation and composed elements. They also reveal an adaptability to circumstances of rehearsal and performance. In *Monk* the form was loosened through the suggestion of an open-ended section in the middle of the piece by the co-performers, while in *Rat* the performance circumstances suggested the loosening of the form at the end of the piece. In *Shifty* several formal options are offered simultaneously in the three performing versions. In *Wacko* and *Evening Paths*, sections can be ordered and re-ordered at will by the director either prior to the playthrough or spontaneously during it. In this way, the

general structure of pieces can be opened up to the instinctive treatment of improvisational processes.

The results of the work may be deemed fruitful in the above respect, but some questions of leadership raised by the work undertaken with the group *ESP* remain unanswered in this chapter. With this in mind, the author resolved to undertake new projects in parallel to the research undertaken with *Bash-O*. The results of these projects will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 11 – Works (4): A Japanese Quartet

Frolic, Ma, Dream Garden, Haiku Garden

Audio examples for this chapter can be found on CD 9 (*Frolic, Ma*), CD 10 (*Dream Garden*) and CD 11 (*Haiku Garden*)

Introduction

A seminal strand of research which runs parallel to the work of groups *ESP* and *Bash-O* research is that of group *MuSo*. The work of this group, which pools performers from both other groups, adds an overtly cross-cultural agenda to the experiments with notation and improvisation established in previous projects. The influences on the group in this respect were drawn from Japanese music and culture, including the use of Japanese instruments.

Japanese Quartet (1): *Frolic* (Work #13, CD 9 tracks 1 & 2)

Frolic represents an early stage of notational experimentation. It was designed as a piece for open instrumentation and with an structure which can be fixed previous to performance or kept flexible during the performance. The composer directed the piece from the piano.

Title and Origin

The piece *Frolic* is a musical response to the Japanese scroll of Kōzanji temple entitled 'Frolicking Animals'. The scroll depicts as ink drawings various scenes of animals participating in pastoral games. An image from the scroll can be seen below:

Ex. 47 Image from *Frolicking Animals*



The principal themes for the work, in accordance with the artwork, are those of play, playfulness and games. As a metaphor for the continuity of the scroll form as the spectator reads from left to right, the music 'scrolls' through time, moving swiftly and

incessantly from one type of activity to another.

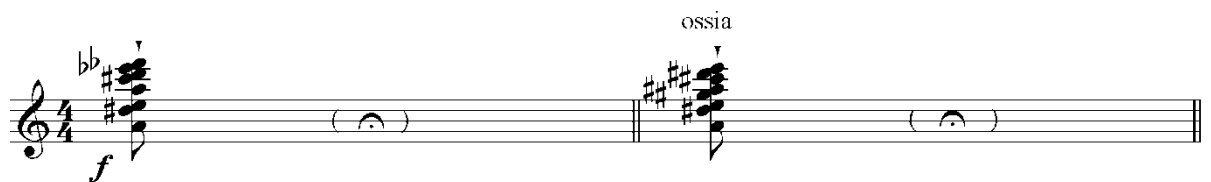
Starting Points: Lutosławski, Jeux Vénétiens and the 'trigger' technique

As discussed in Chapter 3, the 1950s-60s was an era in which standard metric notational organisation was frequently discarded by composers in favour of more flexible systems to create *senza misura* textures. For example, in the *ad libitum* textures of Witold Lutosławski, various players play various strands of ostinato free from constraints of precise metric co-ordination, as in the *Intermède* sections of his *Livre pour Orchestre*. In these extracts, as players are playing independently of each other for much of the time, it is necessary to provide points of general co-ordination marking the start or end of a section. These reference points, as well as serving the purpose of co-ordinating groups of players, serve as structural marker for the listener in terms of points of departure and arrival in otherwise complex and nebulous textures.

Cues do not only take the form of conductor downbeats; there are aural cues in some works which serve the same function of demarcating the boundaries of a section. A clear example of this is in the first movement of *Jeux Vénétiens*, which marks Lutosławski's first foray into *ad libitum* textures. This can be heard on CD track 3. The cue itself consists of a single percussive attack and is given several times in the piece, upon which various densities of generalised texture follow. Towards the end of the piece, the cue is given several times in succession with no response from the *ad libitum* group.

A similar cueing system is used as a structural device in *Frolic*. In this and other pieces in this chapter, the attack which gives the cue for players to change section will be called a ‘trigger’. As in *Jeux Venétiens*, the principal trigger consists of a single attack although in the case of *Frolic* this consists of a piano chord (the chord and its *ossia* version are given below in ex. 48):

Ex. 48 *Frolic* – Trigger chords

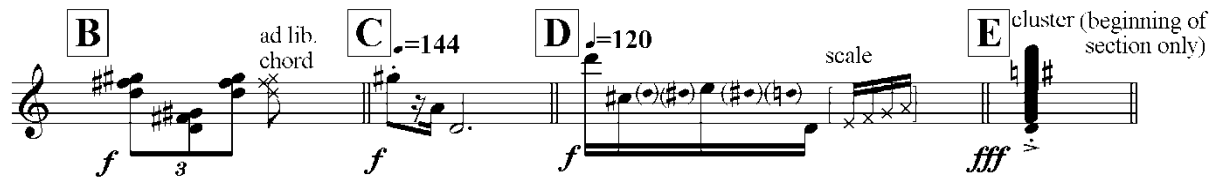


Unlike the Lutosławski piece, the intervening material of *Frolic*, although it could be considered *ad libitum*, has increased improvisational scope. Another difference is that in *Frolic* there is no conductor, and as a consequence the performers rely on the trigger purely as an aural (as opposed to a visual) cue. In this respect, the trigger system bears more relation to the system of aural cues given by Miles Davis in his band (see Chapter 4).

The trigger of ex. 48 is not the only one used in the piece. There is in fact a distinctive trigger for each section of the piece, and aural recognition of each cue is necessary on the part of the performers. Examples of the cues from sections B to E are

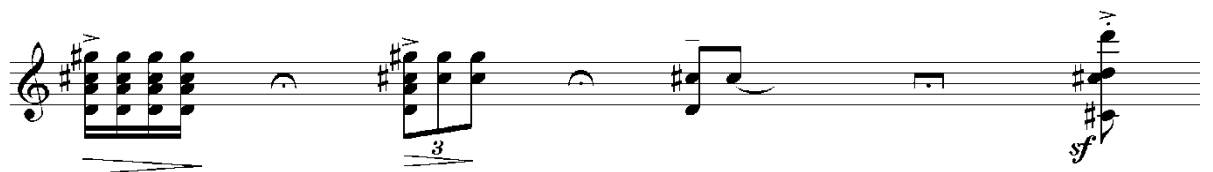
given below as ex. 49:

Ex. 49: Frolic Triggers sections B-E



Towards the end of the piece at section H, an extended cue appears in the form of several triggers spaced at increasingly wide time intervals, recalling the end of the aforementioned movement from *Jeux Venétiens*. The cue is given below:

Ex. 50 Frolic Coda - piano cue



The section has been subtitled 'hometime' and consists of a subsidence of the improvisational material. The cue itself can be likened to a school bell calling an end to the 'frolics' of the playground. The virtual bell, as in *Memorial/Chorale* (Chapter 8), cuts into the flow of time and draws conscious attention to the moment as opposed to the continuation of activity. It therefore checks the momentum of the various games in operation up to that point. The 'extended cue', consisting of multiple reiterations of a

single trigger or several different triggers, is further explored at the end of *Haiku*

Garden #2.

Structure

The structure of *Frolic* can be broadly described as that of a series of tableaux in *ritornello/rondo* form. However, not all sections need to be played and any section may occur any number of times depending on the trigger given. Sections are generally in the form of musical 'games' with headings such as 'Chess' (fig. F) and 'Hide and Seek' (fig. G). The games are all of a kind that children might play, with the aim of eliciting as much of a simple, spontaneous and carefree attitude to the material from the performers as possible. The free improvisation section of fig. E is designed to provide a contrast to the broadly uniform tonal structures of surrounding sections, while maintaining the free-spiritedness of the piece as a whole.

A pertinent image which came to mind recurrently during the composition process was that of a school playground. In this environment various games occur simultaneously and without regard from the participants for overall aesthetics of design. Nonetheless, there are definite boundaries in terms of the physical space used, the games which may be played, the rules which must be followed and precise time boundaries set by the teachers and signalled by the school bell.

The theme of play extends to the structure within each game itself. As in certain works by John Zorn such as *Cobra*, the rules of the game and the attendant strategies are of paramount importance, while the musical material essentially serves the game (as counters or dice would in a board game). For example in section B, subtitled 'Copycat', pitch and rhythm materials are given (as would counters and dice be given in a board game) but the actual game of one player setting a melody which the other player has to imitate by ear is left to the performers themselves. The use of game strategy has been used in previous works such as *Duel(t)* and helps to characterise the instruments in dramatic terms. As a continuation of the game metaphor, the use of triggers in the piano part may be likened to the role played by a referee especially in terms of demarcating the temporal divisions of a game.

Despite the set rhythms for each instrument, the general rhythmic interplay is free from constraints of precise co-ordination and from use of bars and bar-lines. The aim of this approach is to recreate the apparently chaotic yet exuberant simultaneity of events in a school playground or in the original scroll itself. In most cases players only need to be aware of the onset of a trigger in terms of temporal co-ordination. As a result, the players are able to become absorbed with the game itself without concern for external factors, much as children are able to fully focus on a game without distractions from more 'adult' responsibilities.

There are two studio recordings of the piece available on CD tracks 1 and 2. The

section order and timings are given below:

<u>Section</u>	<u>Track 1 timing</u>	<u>Track 2 timing</u>
A	0'03"	0'00"
B	0'29"	0'22"
A	1'17"	1'05"
C	1'36"	1'34"
D	2'14"	2'09"
E	2'40"	2'31"
F	3'27"	3'29"
A	4'18"	4'06" (+ section F)
G	4'58"	4'58"
C	5'30"	5'32"
A	5'37"	5'45"
H (coda)	6'05"	5'53"

The extent to which the timings approximate each other is remarkable, particularly as there are no fixed boundaries to each section such as bar-lines. The versions were, however, recorded in close proximity to each other.

Score Layout

Although the score consists of numerous single sheets of A4 paper, for the performances and recording the pieces of paper were joined into a single scroll structure. In this way, performers are able to effect rapid changes of section without concerns for page-turns, regardless of whether they are aware in advance of the order of sections. Even though the pianist is likely to read off a separate score, other players will wherever possible read from a single copy of the score as if sharing in the same overall game. Problems in score navigation are more likely to lie with issues of natural reaction time on hearing a trigger than the design of the score itself, although it is clear that the more the quantity of sections selected, the more the performer needs to be aware of the trigger signals as well as be able to differentiate between them effectively in the midst of a complex texture. For this reason, certain triggers were played several times in succession in the recording and performance, and it may be considered a necessity to repeat triggers although performers can always be expected to improve reaction times in the same way as athletes. The potential and unpredictability of the 'game' is therefore deemed to be of more import than the predetermination of cues and section order for the benefit of the performers, and adds a frisson to the live situation which may be more difficult to achieve under more controlled circumstances.

Instrumentation and texture

Much of the instrumentation is not specified in the score but the piano is central in providing the cues. The score is deliberately weighted towards the treble register, and therefore correspondingly upper-range instruments may be deemed most suitable. The decision to concentrate on the treble register was to re-create the playfulness of the original scroll and without the weight of a bass-line the textures have more potential to break out unhindered. Much of the pitch material is selected in order to aid the exuberance of the subject matter. Much of the modal material forms the sharpwards trajectory of the Lydian on D, with the interval of a sharpened fourth pushing the melodic lines upwards rather than gravitating downwards to the tonic below. Other modes form sharpened variants of the original mode, for example in fig. A where alternative modes start on E (E major) and F# (Mixolydian).

Japanese Quartet (2): *Ma* [Work #14, CD 9 tracks 3 & 4]

The second work of the quartet of compositions represents a return to the through-composed form, although there are various points at which performers are given improvisational scope. In essence, the piece is a reconstruction of a prototype premiered four years previously, but of which no audio or score documentation had survived. All that remained were the initial sketches, and the composer's memory of the performance. The process of revising material, already established as a regular working

method of *ESP* and *Bash-O*, was therefore re-applied in this case.

Ma as a title is used in the Japanese sense of the word and is not easily translated. It denotes physical space as well as an interval of time, so may be considered a composite time/space concept. For much of the piece, performers play single notes which have silence ('*ma*') on either side as well as the notes themselves being bound by time ('*ma*'). The silence is also defined by the surrounding sounds; thus the symbiotic relationship of sound and silence generates manifold possible interpretations. The '*ma*' of sound or silence can be long, short, or even just a miniscule moment. Different types of '*ma*' are represented by different durations of note and types of attack, for example the percussion attacks of fig. B of the score as opposed to the sustained sounds of the flutes or the *rin* (Japanese metal bowls) at fig. A.

Regarding the score itself, each bar may be considered a measurement of '*ma*' within which the smaller units of '*ma*' occur. With the exception of certain bars in section D, the bars are marked *senza misura* in order for performers to be able to develop a personal and internal sense of '*ma*' without external or periodically regular forms of '*ma*' competing for attention. Thus in fig. A⁵, performers will be aware that they need to deliver three attacks in the section, but they can place each one through the listening process rather than reliance on external cues.

At the end of the piece, there exists an optional framing device in the form of a

guitar solo which quotes a film theme of Joe Hisaishi. The guitar theme can be heard on CD track 4 only (at 19'24"), and is followed by the next piece in the programme as a *segue* (the beginning of this piece is included in the recording). The piano can be heard quoting the Hisaishi theme at the beginning of both performances. The use of straightforward pulse provides a contrast with the *senza misura* sections which follow.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation of *Ma* is unconventional not least owing to the combination of different tuning systems inherent in mixing Japanese with Western flutes. For this reason a degree of latitude was considered appropriate regarding the level of precision of tuning required; conversely the harmonic richness and timbral complexity which would naturally emerge from combining the different systems was seen as an advantage rather than a source of awkwardness. The players were left free to choose which type of flute to play at any point. Certain combinations of flutes, for example piccolo with *ryuteki* (which is naturally biased towards the upper register) were deemed satisfactory by performers and composer but were not fixed in terms of placement in the composition.

Despite the occasional disruption of musical texture at figs. A, C and the end of fig. D, most sectional transitions are intended to be smooth and barely perceptible from an audience perspective. Correspondingly, sections, such as A¹, A² or A³ can each be considered as one long bar of music averaging one event or type of event per instrument.

The piano is often used to give musical cues, for example in the pedal accents of fig. A² or the chord at fig. A⁷. Other cues, such as the flute cut at the end of fig. D are given by means of conventionally conducted signals. Although the flute and guitar players do not read from the full score, the instrumental parts are so heavily cued as to almost resemble the full score itself. The pianist, who reads off the full score and gives the conducted cues, becomes a quasi-director in a similar way to a pianist directing a Mozart Piano Concerto from the keyboard. Cue signs are generally indicated by arrows which act as downbeats.

Compositional and improvisational elements

In order to achieve maximum concentration on the element of 'Ma', the author decided to focus on a limited palette of harmonic and melodic compositional resources without recourse to a sophisticated rhythmic profile. The placing of sounds in time is a principal source for improvisational input, given the absence of regular pulse for most of the piece. For example, in fig. A⁵ the flautists and guitarist are requested to play two attacks, but it is not specified as to exactly at which point the attacks will occur. The temporal relationship of attacks between the instruments is also flexible. Therefore, the performers are required to listen as improvisers and to make decisions based on the context of the immediate circumstances, just as they would in 'free' improvisation. As they are mainly working with single notes in this section, a great deal of attention may be paid to the issue of timing of entries.

Another fundamental feature connected with timing is the playing of long and short notes. Once the relationship is clearly established at fig. B, the context is set for the short sounds to transform into (perceived) long sounds as the density of percussive attacks increases to the point where the individual struck sounds are subsumed into a textural continuum. Such phenomena had been explored before in works such as Stockhausen's *Kontakte* and Ligeti's *Continuum*; however in this case the results are reached in an improvisational fashion through the performers 'filling in' the gaps left by the other players and within the overall instruction to performers to achieve increased textural density as the section progresses. Much of the piece, in fact, consists of the performers realising local detail improvisationally but within pre-established directional compositional structures, many of which develop in a variation-like manner. The performers may be given very wide latitude in one area, for example timing, but entirely restricted within another, for example in the fixed pitches pertaining to each *rin* at the start of the piece. In this sense, the nature of the improvisation is quite distinct from that undertaken within *ESP* and *Bash-O*, but may have more in common with earlier works such as *Duel(t)*.

Spatiality

Since the Japanese word 'ma' itself signifies 'space' (amongst other things), the performers are requested to move to and from certain points during the performance, thereby activating the physical space as a musical dimension.

A particular aspect of spatiality in *Ma* concerns a 'ghost' instrument which does not appear in the score and which is offstage for the entire performance. It to the onstage music responds using improvisation. In the first version (CD track 3) this was a harmonica, and in the second (CD track 4) it was clarinet. The clarinet was played from a separate floor and to the back of the audience, while the harmonica was played from behind closed doors towards to the foyer area of the concert space. In both instances the intention is for the audience to be able to perceive sounds extraneous to the main body of the work but not necessarily be able to describe their provenance in terms of location or timbre. The device is similar to the Miles Davis band's unorthodox use of technology on such records as *Pangaea*. Allegedly, part of the motivation for this on the part of Davis was to confound critics as to the origin of the sound¹⁶.

¹⁶ Stated by Kevin Whitehead, liner notes to the Columbia album *Pangaea* (1975)

Japanese Quartet (3): *Dream Garden* [Work #15, CD 10]

Premise:

In 2008, an opportunity arose to write a piece for the Takemitsu Society of Great Britain. As an extension of Takemitsu's habit of quoting from his own favourite composers as well as from his own work, the author resolved to write a piece which almost entirely consists of quotations from Takemitsu's own work along with the work of composers with which he was associated. The quotations would be juxtaposed to form 'dream paths'.

Precursors:

Five principal sources of influence can be ascertained in this work:

1. The 'Garden' based works of Takemitsu himself, such as *Arc* (1966) and *In an Autumn Garden* (1973) and, by extension, traditional Japanese garden design.
2. The path-like score layout of the Maderna piece *Serenata per un Satellite*.
The score is included in the appendix to the score materials of *Dream Garden*.
3. Evolving forms, as employed by Wiegold in the various versions of *drive your cart*.
A formal design which could withstand changes of performance duration, instrumentation and structural design from performance to performance.

The fresh improvisational perspective and adaptability to immediate performance circumstances which arises from these forms.

4. One-page scores, as used by Peter Wiegold (see Chapter 7).

A score in which performers share all the material, with little or no predetermined allocation of instruments to parts.

5. The system of musical cues based on head-motifs as used by Miles Davis (see Chapter 4).

Notation

The score of *Dream Garden* considerably extends the one-page concept. The A1 size used in the performance score (the study score provided is a reduction) is one of the largest commercially available sizes in general use. The advantage of the substantial size resides in the capacity to accommodate a considerable amount of content therefore allowing for more elaborate compositional structures than those possible with smaller formats.

For the purposes of reference and analysis, the score has been divided into eight sections. Numbers 1 to 4 denote sections from left to right and letters A and B denote the top and bottom row respectively. Each section has therefore a reference letter and number in the same format as a conventional map reference. For example, the top left-hand corner would be A1 and the bottom right-hand corner would be B4.

The score also resembles a map in that it is made up of several distinct areas with interlinking paths, forming a network which may be likened to a labyrinth (as in works of Birtwistle). Some of the areas are given subtitles, and are represented on rehearsal recordings as individual textures. Examples are: 'Debussy Lake' (ref. B3, B4; CD track 1), 'Prayer Bells' (ref. B1, track 2) and 'Maze' (A2, track 3) which in the rehearsal recording leads to 'Playground' (A3). 'Playground' indicates the sole area of 'free' improvisation. Such is the scope for possibilities of realisation that the score may well be considered, to coin a phrase by Earle Browne: 'an environment for potential'¹⁷.

The general score is as free as possible from textual instruction as the density of the notation itself gives ample information for the performer to assimilate. As an alternative, the textual introduction to and explanation of the processes behind the piece are given on a separate sheet which the performers read prior to the first rehearsal (these are added in the score materials in this instance as an introductory page). The text is not comprehensive and various explanations were also given during the rehearsal process, once again in order not to overload the text with information that the performers would not easily be able to retain at the moment of rehearsal. The aim of this approach was partially to avoid the 'instruction manual' proportions of many scores written in the 1960s in which the explanation of the score occupies almost as much space as the score itself and necessitates intensive, exclusive and prolonged study on the part of the performer. As this type of score may be considered impractical, most of the guidance is given in the

¹⁷Quoted in the liner notes to the John Zorn CD *Cobra* [HAT HUT records 2002].

live rehearsal situation, a situation which is made possible through the presence of the composer as director and co-participant.

Notational Spatiality in Dream Garden

The concept of spatiality extends to the score itself. There are no page turns in the main score. All performers share the same virtual score space. The players enter at the top left of the score and they leave at the bottom right. In actual physical terms, the 'mobile' performers (in these versions all players except pianist and guitarist) enter the concert space from one end and they eventually leave from the other. The intermediate journey is unpredictable due to the many routes available to each performer. A performer can stay in a certain area for a substantial time or conversely move from area to area quickly. There also exists the possibility for a performer to leap suddenly to another area of the piece if his/her intuition suggests such a switch. The space is therefore bound by principles governing movement but these can be bypassed at any time according to the demands of the performing situation. For example, if a performer hears another performer playing in a different area of the work, and wants to join the other performer in that area. This provision gives the possibility of moments and sections of integrated as well as diverse performing material.

Structure

In general, the shape of the piece may be considered more circular than linear as the performers are more likely to walk around the 'garden' than straight through it. There also exists the possibility for the performer to move right-left or down-up, lending the piece the notational multi-directionality already mentioned in the discussion of *Zyklus* by Stockhausen (see Chapter 3). Nevertheless, pre-established musical sequences for the beginning of the piece do exist for this version. These mark the entry of the musicians into the garden, and for their departure which is labelled at D4 as 'Exit' (a rehearsal of the final section can be heard on CD track 4). These pre-established sequences give a clear frame for the performers as to time and the manner in which the piece is due to start or end. The introduction consists of a short melodic fragment played on Japanese flute (labelled 'INTRO 1', quoted from the Takemitsu work *In an Autumn Garden*). This is followed by the three-bar piano cue (marked 'INTRO 2') after which the melodic instruments start their 'journey' on the A-Bb-Eb motif.

In addition to the general score, selected players such as the guitarist and bassist are given supplementary pages for their individual use (see 'Garden Project - Supplementary Materials'). In the case of the bass player, the part offers additional material to be played within the general texture, while the guitarist's part offers a solo section in which fragments from various Takemitsu guitar works are played then commented upon by the soloist through the use of improvisation. At the bottom of this page, a riff is used from

one of Takemitsu's own arrangements of Gershwin's *Summertime*. This riff can be heard in performance on CD track 7 from 5'57" and on track 8 from 5'50". Other players join in with improvisational layers above the riff until the texture is subsumed by the main body of the work. Players can switch from general score to individual part with ease, as the moment of change is of their own choosing. The same practice of adopting multiple scores for individual players had already been carried out in *Memorial/Chorale* (Chapter 8) but the players in this case are under more pressure to follow external cues when switching from one score to another.

Apart from the guitar solos mentioned above, there are several solo items played as a part of the piece by other instruments. A full movement of the piano work *Les Pauses Ininterrompues* by Takemitsu is played on track 6 at 14'37" and the Japanese flute plays improvisations in track 6 at 4'24" and track 8 at 9'00". The solo items are cued by a stroke or series of strokes on the Japanese *rin*, which act as a signal for other instruments to gradually wind down textural activity. After the solo piece has finished, the previously established general texture resumes and develops.

Musical Material

The written material for *Dream Garden* is practically all derivative in that it consists of musical quotations. Most of the quotations are from Takemitsu's oeuvre, but there also exist quotations of other works of composers who were an influence on Takemitsu himself, such as Debussy's *La Mer* (ref. B3, B4) and Berg's *Lyrical Suite* quoted in ref. A2 (central melody). Although pitch content is retained in all quotations, on occasions markings of rhythm, tempo dynamics and articulation are omitted or modified. For example, in the quotation from the Takemitsu work *Distance de fée* (the lower staves of ref. A4 to D4), stems are removed from the noteheads and time-signature and bar-lines are not used. The temporal relationship to the accompaniment below is also made flexible. Many of the detailed markings of the original score are specific to the particular circumstances of that work, and as there is such a variety of different combinations of texture possible in *Dream Garden*, the restriction of a player to a certain tempo or dynamic would limit his/her intuitive response to the surrounding musical events. Certain aspects of the original material are therefore notated in a less specific manner in order to make it more pliable and responsive to the new context in which it is presented.

In all, the sources quoted total approximately thirty distinct works, and in some works various sections are quoted from the same piece. The sequence from one riff or melodic phrase to the next was carefully considered from the point of view of continuity, even if the extracts belonged to different parts of the original work. For example, the riff

material in 5/16 time of ref. A1, A2 and B1 all derives from fragments of the Takemitsu solo guitar work *All in Twilight* but in a more compressed series of structural juxtapositions than the original work, which incorporates several types of intermediary material. The material used in a single line may also include quotations from multiple interconnected Takemitsu works. This occurs in the melody line of ref. A1 to A4 which makes reference to the flute-based works *Air*, *And Then I Knew Twas Wind* and *I Hear the Water Dreaming*.

In the 'Prayer Bells' section [B1], the material is dominated by self-similar rising three note figures quoted from a variety of Takemitsu works principally involving piano, in the midst of which chords from *Le Fils des Étoiles* by Satie (and arranged by Takemitsu himself) make an appearance. Thus the recycling of motifs used by Takemitsu proceeds still further in *Dream Garden*.

The use of different works sharing common material was deliberate in establishing a unity of source material from which the 'garden' textures could emerge. In an extension of the garden metaphor, one may imagine the recurrence of a motif as the recurrence of the same species of plant in a garden setting, giving the viewer a sense of recognition and familiarity. The recognition of such unifying aspects gives the listener a framing device in an otherwise potentially dense and complex texture.

The compositional invention in *Dream Garden* does not lie so much with the material itself as with the juxtaposition of fragments from a variety of sources in order to create a

continuous but developing musical pathway for the performer. At the points of intersection, the composer also needs to be aware of the musical impact of changes of direction as the performer changes path or works backwards through the section just played.

Takemitsu was a composer who, as his career progressed, increasingly recycled motifs and themes from his own earlier work as well as that of other composers. *Dream Garden* can therefore be seen to recycle the already recycled work. Although the use of Takemitsu's own work is important for a piece designed in homage to the composer, for another piece constructed along the same lines, the type and style of the musical material can almost be seen as an irrelevance to the process. This phenomenon brings to mind the work of composer Chris Newman. Newman makes frequent allusion to other composers' work and styles (in his Piano Sonata no.6, the right hand playing the upper part of Beethoven's Op.90 Sonata while the left hand part consists entirely of Newman's own material). Newman explains as follows:

'The material is immaterial (as long as it is presented in such a way as to make it immaterial)'.
(Newman, C: Biographical Notes, from *Michael Finnissy plays Weir, Finnissy, Newman and Skempton* CD Liner Notes (1989), NMC recordings]

In a performance of *Dream Garden*, there are some quotations which will be familiar to

the Takemitsu connoisseur and others which will be unfamiliar mainly due to the considerable textural density of the piece as well as the fragmentary nature of quotations used. Although the provenance of the quotations is of import in any such situation, their treatment may take the quoted fragments to musical areas unimagined by the original composer. In this sense, the material may be seen as serving the process rather than the process serving the material. The overall results have been described by Burt as follows:

'Dream Garden [and Ma] both reveal on the one hand a sensitive understanding of the aesthetics of their model, while on the other hand demonstrating an artistic independence which identifies them as productions of an independent creative spirit.'

He proceeds to explain the nature of the composer's extended role as follows:

'The realisation of the score is as much of the compositional process as the production of the score itself, and one in which he is equally fully involved – if not, indeed, more so'.

[Peter Burt, unpublished article, 2009]

As well as acknowledging the importance of improvisation and performer choice regarding the musical realisation, Burt also draws attention to the importance of the composer's own presence as performer in his own work, undertaking the task of steering the realisation on stage through instigating musical cues, textures and solo features.

In *Dream Garden*, the material maintains a particular form of stylistic consistency through the continual reference to the work of one composer and his own heritage of musical influences. However, it cannot be expected that these influences are perceived in the musical foreground by the listener. This is a consequence of the textural complexity and the fact that each player may be in a different area of the piece at any one time. The different kinds of material in such processes, however, do not need to complement each other for the processes to be effective. In the game strategies of John Zorn, the material derives from a wide range of stylistic and textural sources. In CD track 9, an extract from the Zorn work *Cobra*, rapidly changing materials and intercutting textures include the use of distorted guitar, percussive hits, electronics, radio effects, a harp minuet, vocalise, accordion chords and clusters on the Hammond organ. Although all material used (if not improvised) is arguably derivative, the fast-paced juxtaposition of contrasting sections is characteristically that of Zorn. There is a sense that within his musical process any musical material is suitable, in the same way as any national anthem could be incorporated into Stockhausen's *Hymnen*. There is no sense, however, that the music is intended to be heard as an ironic or parodic statement. The same is true of *Dream Garden*. Even if, in Zorn's case, the unexpected twists of material and texture may produce a humorous effect, these are a by-product of the process. Even if the strategies Zorn employs are called 'game' strategies, they are as serious in intent as any strategies employed within, for example, a Beethoven sonata.

The strategic approach in *Dream Garden* can be seen as similar to certain

approaches taken from the field of popular culture, in particular the 'remix' phenomenon. The multi-track recording of the 1960s developed by such producers as Osbourne Rudduck and Lee Perry similarly exploit the rich possibilities of textural layering prevalent in the work. The use of the sampler in the 1980s in re-contextualising material can also be seen to connect with the processes of *Dream Garden*, not least in the creative role played by the producer/composer in the reshaping of another artist's material. The same approach can be seen as taking place on works such as *Evening Paths* discussed in Chapter 10, albeit in a live and semi-improvisational setting as opposed to a one focused on the use of specialist technology. To continue the analogy, each melodic strand in *Dream Garden* can be seen as a distinct track of the multi-track texture and subject to the editing of the player in live performance in the same way as the producer would take charge of creating a balance between the various tracks. The resultant textures bear only partial resemblance to the sources from which they are quoted, although the component parts undergo little or no internal modification.

Head-Motifs

The various themes and motifs in *Dream Garden* intermingle in a kaleidoscopic revolving texture (as in the Shorter/Davis piece *Feio* of Chapter 4), emerging and fading as would ideas and images in an actual dream. Amongst these themes, however, are two motifs used in *Dream Garden* which are particularly significant in structural terms. They may be seen as serving the same function of the Davis head-motifs discussed in Chapter 4. The

first motif consists of three notes in a short-short-long sequence consisting of the notes A-Bb-Eb. The intervallic formation of these pitches is symbolic for Takemitsu inasmuch as it shares the same structure as the 'S-E-A' motif used by him in such pieces as *Garden Rain* (the notes 'S-E-A' corresponding to the German reading 'Es-E-A'). After the initial introduction on the Japanese flute and piano, the motif serves to open the piece and set the players on their various paths. The rising intervallic shape also facilitates the melodic expansion of the piece upwards as well as setting up a sense of anticipation deriving from its implicit need for continuation or resolution by means of a corresponding filling-in of intervallic space. The same motif is set in three different directions much as in an actual garden or park, each person will enter through the same gate but subsequently follow his/her own path.

The other head-motif consists of a pair of falling fifths played by the piano at ref. B4. This motif is quoted from the final section of the Takemitsu piece *riverrun* for piano and orchestra. In a similar way to the Takemitsu piece, the texture subsides gradually as the motif comes increasingly to the fore (in *Dream Garden* this occurs through the players gradually leaving the auditorium). As a final cue, two verses of the Japanese folksong *Yuyake Koyake* are played on the melodica (CD track 4 at 0'43", track 7 at 9'20" and track 8 at 13'00"). After the second playing, the head-motif is 'completed' by another pair of fifths (A-E) grounded by a Bb bass note, the resultant A-Bb-E aggregate alluding to the A-Bb-Eb 'sea' motif used at the beginning.

Instrumentation and Texture

The instrumentation for *Dream Garden* is kept deliberately non-specific in order to accommodate various instrumental forces according to the circumstances of each performance. Transposing instruments play from the same score as instruments in C. In the recorded performances a clarinet in Bb is used, and therefore the melodic lines are heard a major second lower than written, thereby creating a layer of harmonic intricacy as well as a melodic shadow effect. (the 'shadow clarinet' role is reminiscent of that used in the performance *Ma* recorded on track 4).

At the time of writing the piece, the author had foreknowledge of the instruments and performers likely to participate in the first performance, and tailored the melodic and riff materials towards these instruments. Some of the performers were also members of the group ESP and the piano, wind and guitar constitution of *Dream Garden* also has much in common with that group. It was clear that, as in the ESP work *Memorial/Chorale*, the principal instruments to be deployed for riff material would be piano and guitar. Therefore, the material was necessarily written in the treble clef and within the guitar range, enabling the use of source material from guitar works of Takemitsu such as *All in Twilight*.

It was also known that the flute would play a principal role for the melodic material, and so material from various works by Takemitsu involving flute was used as the basis for

melodic material in *Dream Garden*. In the first performance of the piece there were two Western flutes (one of which can be heard prominently in the recording due to physical proximity to the microphone) and one Japanese flute player, whereas in the second performance there is one player of each type of flute.

It is noteworthy that there is little specifically bass line material presented in *Dream Garden*. This feature provides a marked contrast to the work of *Bash-O* (see Chapter 10) in which riff material was frequently underpinned by dynamic bass lines. For this project, however, it was decided for the bass to play a tangential as opposed to a central role, in order to enhance the rootless 'dream' atmosphere of the piece. The bass player (like the guitar player and the flute players) is given a list of performance options on a separate sheet of paper (see appendix to *Dream Garden* score). The materials include a 12-tone row previously used by Takemitsu, which may serve as the basis for a 'walking bass' of variable tempo in the spirit of the variable pace of a garden stroll. Other materials include distinctive bass fragments from Takemitsu piano works including *Les Yeux Clos*.

In terms of general texture, the multiplicity of lines from different pieces is deliberate in the evocation of the 'dream' relating to Takemitsu's music (the subject matter of dreams was also close to Takemitsu himself as illustrated by the title of his orchestral work *Dream Window* amongst others). The themes and motifs interweave even if their respective characters differ, much as contrasting themes and images are left to co-exist in dreams without urgency for resolution or logical explanation. Ideas may also emerge and

recede, only to re-emerge later perhaps played by different instruments, in different general instrumental configurations and textural formats (as in the phenomenon of the recurring dream). In this sense, the option for the performer to revisit material already presented runs in the spirit of the dream scenario.

Programming and Structure

As Dream Garden is by nature a malleable structure, various forms of presentation are possible within a concert programme. The two performances recorded provide examples of this. In the first performance (tracks 6 and 7 of the CD), a substantial part of the programme was given to the piece and therefore the decision was made to present the work in two parts: the first before the interval, and the second resuming the work straight after the interval at the point it had been left. This process, akin to changing sides of a record to hear the second part of a single work, emphasises the open-ended form of the piece inasmuch as it can be left temporarily then resumed at a later stage without the internal structure or issues of audience recall interfering with the listening experience.

The second performance took place at the end of a substantial concert programme and was time-restricted to such an extent that the whole concert was otherwise in danger of running over schedule. Therefore, the direction of the piece required the opposite of the expansive approach adopted in the first performance. In this version the final Exit cues occur eleven minutes into the performance as opposed to twenty-four minutes in

the first version, and the presentation consists of a single continuous movement rather than the bipartite form of the first version. The metaphor of a garden stroll still bears relevance in this case; the stroll can be made with ample time or within a strict time-bound schedule. In either case, the 'garden' itself and the possibilities latent within remain the same.

Japanese Quartet (4): *Haiku Garden* [Work #16, CD 11]

Concept and Brief

The last piece to be examined in this chapter and in the research process as a whole is *Haiku Garden*. The work so far has been played in several distinct versions and performance settings which will be labelled as follows:

- Version #1a: *Haiku Garden* Score (a), CD track 1 (Brighton performance #1)
- Version #1b: *Haiku Garden* Score (b), CD track 2 (London performance)
- Version #2: *Haiku Garden* Score (b), CD track 3 (Brighton performance #2)
- Version #3: *Haiku Garden* Scores (a) and (b), CD 10 track 4 (Exeter performance)

In the case of the Brighton performances, several composers were invited to participate in the overall project, and thus a descriptive outline was drawn up at the beginning of the

compositional process in order to explain the concept of the work. The text of this outline includes the following points:

- In *Haiku Garden*, various composers can contribute pieces to the work, but the overall design of the piece is in the hands of the Head Gardener (the author)
- It is the Head Gardener's job to create musical paths to link the pieces by the different composers.
- The pieces contributed by guest composers are fixed in time and space within the piece, and act in the same way as a 'garden feature' would in a real garden.
- When such a piece is played, the general flow of the 'path music' ceases, in the same way a spotlight on a stage focuses the attention on one moment in space and time.
- The specially commissioned pieces in *Haiku Garden* will be preceded in the programme by preludes composed by the same composers, called 'Haiku Seeds'. These will be musical previews of what follows in the 'blossoming' plants (compositions) of *Haiku Garden*, and are played earlier in the concert

programme.

- Composers will be asked to write the 'Haiku Seeds' first followed by the 'Haiku Garden' pieces. 'Cross-fertilisation' will be encouraged by one composer sending the next their work to develop/react to musically, in a 'Chinese Whispers' process.

For the Brighton performance, the pieces designated as 'Haiku Seeds' can be heard on CD track 5. Scores of these pieces can be seen in the appendix to the *Haiku Garden* score. In the case of the London performance, the initial material was selected as a pre-existing compositional work rather than being commissioned as an integral part of the project. The work in this case was *3 Haiku* by Alan Hovhaness for piano solo. The first two of these pieces (which can also be seen in the appendix to the score) and heard on CD track 6) were selected by Joel Bell and the author for further use in *Haiku Garden*. The work was selected not only for its apposite subject matter, but also for the latent possibilities of arrangement and development suggested by the stark presentation of its materials. For the Exeter performance, two original Haiku works were written by *Mu-So* members Joel Bell and Emi Watanabe (these scores are also included in the score materials).

Haiku Garden as collaborative Project

In a similar way to *Dream Garden*, which represents a virtual collaboration between Takemitsu and the author, *Haiku Garden* is a project rooted in collaboration. For the initial Brighton performance, the author worked in collaboration with four composers from the local area in which the premiere was to take place. The decision to involve collaboration has several sources as well as that of *Dream Garden*. The first of these is Makoto Nomura's approach of *Shougi* composition (discussed in Chapter 3), in which various players contribute to the conception and notational form of the piece, but for which Nomura himself provides very clear rules in the manner of a game designer. The provocative approach to notation employed by Nomura in such pieces as *No Notes III* (see supplementary score materials) was also an influence in considering the role of notation as creative catalyst as opposed to prescriptive document. In this piece the performers become creative collaborators in the interpretation of the score, as none of the actual combination of notes and rhythms produced are written or even insinuated by Nomura. Through writing the bar-lines and verbal instructions, however, he has provided the structural framework and context for all the musical content and therefore the work bears his own compositional stamp (a performance recording can be heard on CD track 5). In the same way, *Haiku Garden* can be seen as a framework for the pieces written by the guest composers, as there is too little information within the score

regarding musical events which will actually occur in performance for it to be considered a ready-made notational representation. The work may be considered in the same way as a gallery space, which only becomes fully functional when the pictures (which may be from various sources and which may be changed according to circumstance) are exhibited.

Consequently the author, as well as being seen as a musical 'gardener', may be regarded as a curator of the musical work as well as (or instead of) a composer, much as a gallery owner will curate the work of an artist or various artists and provide a conducive environment in which the work can be appreciated by the public. A substantial proportion of the project time was spent in communication with the invited composers, explaining the particular circumstances of the project and the possibilities latent within it. The composing of the 'shell' of the music itself occupied a comparatively brief span of time, and care was taken to avoid formal complexity in the framework and the musical content in order not to impose on the 'guest' works. Care was also taken to ensure that the guest composers did not feel compromised in terms of the style of music they were using, even if they were working in collaboration with another composer. The proviso was included that a composer may refrain from using another composer's material if desired, and this proviso was exploited in one case.

The intended result of the collaboration is a multi-faceted large scale piece made up of various parts: the guest composers' pieces, performers' improvisation and the musical

paths of the 'garden' itself. The piece may be seen as a microcosm of a concert programme in its adoption of varied items within an overall theme. In the Brighton performance it was decided to present the piece in both halves of the concert and in slightly different versions. This gave the performers an opportunity to explore the diversity of the structural paths available.

An additional pertinent factor regarding the collaborative process relates to the poetic tradition of the haiku itself. The historical practice of various haiku poets meeting and collaboratively producing a sequence of haiku was used as a model for the procedure by which the pieces were requested from the composers. In particular, for the second piece in the project (which consisted of an ensemble piece), composers were encouraged to use their own and each other's material from their original piano works. Therefore, as well as the garden metaphor of the process of growth from seed to plant, there arose the possibility of cross-fertilisation of different musical 'plants' by different composers. This practice has been already developed in the work of aforementioned composer Nomura through his ongoing compositional dialogue with composer colleague Sachiyo Tsurumi, and has given rise to their ongoing project *Blog-Music*. This ever-expanding set of pieces, written for accordion, can be considered as a set of variations arising from the compositional correspondence of one composer reacting to the other's musical ideas in a chain-reaction of compositional development.

Guest Pieces: Musical Cues in Haiku Garden

Musical cues introduce the 'guest' pieces in *Haiku Garden*. The cues themselves may vary according to the piece and performance circumstances. The pieces are performed much as the optional solos would be performed in *Dream Garden*. In the case of *Haiku Garden*, however, the pieces are entirely composed and exist outside the main framework of the piece, although they may borrow from each other. In the spirit of the brief outlined above, the 'Haiku Garden' ensemble piece by Michael Finnissy (Brighton performance) makes reference to the solo piano piece of John Alexander while the ensemble works of John Alexander and Chris Gander borrow from the Finnissy piano piece (see *Haiku Garden* score for all aforementioned pieces). For the Exeter performance (CD track 4), group member Bell bases his composition on the *haiku* setting by Watanabe (Bell's piece can be heard at 7'18"). Initially it was intended for the author to write a third piece, synthesising the first two in the manner of a final statement of a haiku poem, but it was decided instead to repeat the Watanabe work (at 18'40") to form an overall ABA structure of guest pieces. Apart from providing an opportunity to collaborate, the decision to encourage composers to work with each other's material was made with the intention of producing cohesion of compositional content in the work as a whole, much as a gardener may choose certain similar combinations of plants or trees.

The pieces may be played at any time according to the cue given although for all performances undertaken thus far, the sequence of works was partially predetermined in

order to ease practicalities of performance. The content of the cue material is normally based on a fragment of the composer's work, thus enabling the performers to distinguish between the pieces. On hearing a cue for a guest composer piece, the players would wind down activity until the performance reaches a momentary stasis, upon which the pre-composed piece would occur. The cues include extended cues of various 'triggers' used, for example to introduce the Finnissy group work placed at the end of the Brighton concert (CD track 3 at 15'26"). The extended cue extends the work as a whole while simultaneously signalling its end through a more gradual dissipation of momentum, as in *Frolic* mentioned above. The instrumentation for the pre-composed pieces was variable, ranging from duets to quintets and including one piece without instrumental specification of any kind save for the piano part (*Shimmering Noon – Unrecorded Summer* by Finnissy).

Centre and Open Form in *Haiku Garden* and *Dream Garden*

A concept of spatiality within the score which appears in both *Garden* works is that of the score, and thus the work, containing a centre. From this perspective, the overall form of both works can be seen as circular in that the music rotates around a centre which is either static as in the 'Pavilion of Rest' in *Dream Garden* or silent as in *Haiku Garden*. In both cases, the central area is seen by the composer as the heart of the piece, regardless of the juncture at which the players reach it. In *Dream Garden*, it is highly unlikely that all players will converge on the central section at the same time due to their independent trajectories through the work. In *Haiku Garden*, therefore, the composer devised a

method of all players converging towards the centre simultaneously in order for the centre of the piece to be perceived as such by both players and audience at the same time.

The kaleidoscope image, used already to describe works in the current portfolio, is also an apposite one in this instance. Connection can also be made in this sense to the circular forms of Stockhausen works such as *Spiral* and *Zyklus* and the music of Miles Davis and Peter Wiegold in which solos and textural layers surround the central riff in a satellite-like arrangement of concentric circles.

The closeness or otherwise of the material to the centre in the *Garden* pieces creates a sense of perspective and relationship between different materials and constitutes a form of counterpoint in itself. While it is not aligned to tonal theories, the concept of centre and satellites shares principles with the system of tonality and may be seen as a different manifestation of the same phenomenon. The use of a central point from which the music radiates differs from classical structures of linear narrative and therefore the ending of a piece such as *Haiku Garden* does not necessarily need to be located at the bottom right-hand corner of the score (although this is the case in *Dream Garden*). Issues of duration of the work and placing of any 'features' such as solo items in *Dream Garden* or preset compositions as in *Haiku Garden* are entirely flexible. It is conceivable that a performance of either piece could last as little as a few minutes or as long as a few hours and may contain as few or as many features as desired. It is also conceivable that among

a 'repertoire' of pieces chosen for inclusion in *Haiku Garden*, only a certain amount may actually transpire due to the particular progress of the performance itself. The piece is not of fixed duration; like the Davis work *Zimbabwe* analysed in Chapter 4, the impression is that the piece could continue indefinitely if it were not for the fade at the end. As the performances are of finite duration, decisions needed to be made as to how to end the work in each case. In all performances, the ending is signalled clearly through the use of musical cues or set pieces. The performance could, however, end with equal validity as open-ended improvisations.

Another key element in the *Garden* pieces is that of perspective. In *Dream Garden*, the notation may be read left to right and right to left in horizontally notated sections as well as downwards and upwards in vertically notated sections (for example reading from D1 to D4 or conversely D4 to D1). In *Haiku Garden #2*, the players may additionally read the music 'upside down' at 180 degrees. The intended multiplicity of perspective can be seen as representative of a state of reality in which, rather than the previously quoted 'es muss sein' determinism of Beethoven (see Chapter 3), performers are faced at any particular point with a certain amount of discrete choices as to which path they will take. The path may depend on the alternatives suggested in the score, on the performer's own reaction to the music played by the other performers, the player's state of mind (for example, the inclination to improvise at a particular point in time) or a combination of these factors.

In terms of performer mobility, there is a general instruction in both 'garden' pieces that as the piece progresses a player may move from one performance area to another, a factor which links directly to the metaphor of a garden stroll. The movements are easily made without continuous reference to the score as the performer can memorise the musical material s/he is playing or about to play before switching places, for example as a riff or improvised line stemming from a notated motif. An additional spatial factor In *Dream Garden*, as in *Ma*, is the significant placing of the *rin* bowls in the centre of the performing area. It is towards this area that a performer must move in order to make the announcement of his/her solo. This movement creates a dramatic visual aspect from the commitment made by the performer to make inroads into the general structure of the piece by inserting his/her solo section.

In this sense, connections can also be found with other artists in their use of performance space. Miles Davis states:

'I wanted to move on stage, play in different places, because there are areas on stage where the music and sound are much better than other places. I was starting to explore for those places.'

(Davis, M and Troupe, Q: *Miles, The Autobiography* p. 300 (1989), Picador)

Leader Role

It is evident that the role of the composer extended to that of group leader in the rehearsal and co-ordination of the works discussed in this chapter; yet at the moment of performance the composer is as much of a performer as the others, and the role of musical director is somewhat discreet compared to the prominent leadership of Miles Davis and Peter Wiegold. An allusion may be made to the difference between a pianist directing a performance of a Mozart Piano Concerto from the keyboard as opposed to conducting a Mozart Symphony from the podium. Upon learning from the labour intensive directing experience of *Memorial/Chorale* (which left limited time and physical resources to focus on the nuances of performance), the author decided upon an increased reliance on musical cues to take the role of 'director' and thus enable himself to participate fully in the performance as a player. As the cues are spaced further apart than those of *Memorial/Chorale*, the musical activities of the performers are not controlled as closely, but there exists the understanding that the performers will converge at certain points on hearing the cues themselves. As well as giving the performers a degree of leverage in terms of the choices available, this method also makes demands on their own sense of responsibility for their role in the progress of the piece in a similar way to 'free' improvisation.

Summary

The diptych *Dream Garden/Haiku Garden* can be seen as a culmination of the research process initiated in *Frolic*. The exploration of notational forms, layout, flexible instrumentation and improvisation within a partially flexible yet partially rule-bound structure brings about a new context in which improvisation can develop (compared with that of the *Bash-O* works of Chapter 10, for example). The structural device of musical cues present in the work of Davis, Lutosławski and earlier works such as *Memorial/Chorale* of Chapter 8 is employed in *Frolic*, *Ma*, *Dream Garden* and further refined in *Haiku Garden*, giving performers and audience a clear system of structural signposts. These signposts form a contrast to the circular structures employed in the *Garden* pieces, the circularity resulting partially from concepts of garden design and partially from the recognition of the non-linear nature of some forms of improvisational practice. From the earlier work of Lutosławski in *Jeux Vénétiens* and Stockhausen in *Zyklus*, structural and notational issues are developed through an engagement with a form of improvisational practice which was not a feature of the work of either composer at the time. The collaborative element of *Haiku Garden* in particular has much more in common with the current practice of collaboration between several artists on a single project instigated and 'curated' by a single artist (in this case the composer himself), and opens ways for the music to adapt to the artistic and personal environment for which it is written.

Chapter 12 - Conclusions

Significance of 'Garden' Project

The final 'Garden' pieces discussed in the previous chapter can be viewed as the summation of the research undertaken in Chapters 6 to 10. Within these works, notations are found which simultaneously convey musical fact and leave scope for performers to find their own partially improvised routes through the structure. In this sense, a resolution to some of the research questions outlined earlier (see p.25) can be ascertained. The process of working repeatedly in small groups has been shown to guide the act of composition and notation towards the strengths and other distinctive characteristics of the group performers. Therefore, with extended contact time, a creative symbiosis can be reached between composer and performer in which both parties will be able to cross into each other's supposed territories and relate to each other in a dialogue increasingly reliant upon instinctive exchange and mutual understanding.

Collaborative Work

The 'Garden' pieces also have been demonstrated to be adaptable to various forms of presentation. The 'garden' concept is applicable to a wide variety of musical material since it represents a structural holding-device rather than the actual musical content. The collaborative composer-to-composer relationship is an extension of the composer-performer relationship already developed in groups such as *ESP* and *Bash-O*. When the

work involves the flexibility of improvisation, bridges may be crossed in the work of composers of differing styles. This practice has already been demonstrated by the collaborative work of Makoto Nomura in *Shougi* composition.

Balance of East and West

Several works in the portfolio make explicit reference to Eastern culture and specifically that of Japan. The use of haiku as a structural starting-point, of Japanese graphic art in *Frolic* and of Japanese garden design with reference to the work of Toru Takemitsu have all contributed to an integration of Eastern and Western techniques and forms. This 'counterpoint' of East and West leads to new formal designs and can also incorporate forms of improvisation which transcend classifications such as 'jazz' or 'free'. In this way, fresh improvisational contexts and experiences are enabled for the performers.

Rehearsal Process

In the work of Chapters 6 and 7, one of the main frustrations for composer and performer alike was the frequent need to halt rehearsal proceedings in order to decipher unconventional notations. Given the importance of the effective use of limited rehearsal time, this problem was addressed in later works by gradually imparting the material to the performers. This process usually involved the introduction of the framework of the piece before elaboration through improvisation or other creative choices. The

unconventional score format of such works as the 'Garden' pieces could also be addressed during this initial phase. Therefore, the performers' immersion into the process could be gradual, rather than being thrown into the 'deep end' in the (often haphazard) attempt to achieve a general result prior to refinement. This distinction highlights the process-based (as opposed to results-based) approach to rehearsal used in later works of the portfolio. It also meets the need to give performers time and space (real and psychological) to appropriate the specific techniques, strategies and processes of the work itself.

For such work to be successful, the group size and choice of personnel was also found to be of primary importance. The performers' involvement in a work was facilitated considerably by regular rehearsals of an individual piece over several months, as opposed to the limited and infrequent time-slots of orchestral rehearsals. The reduced ensemble size helped create a distinct feeling of performer responsibility and creative contribution on an individual level, in contrast to the more generalised results of the orchestral pieces. The orchestral context did, however, provide unique improvisational opportunities in terms of massed group dynamics channelled through the creative conduit of the conductor.

In this sense, it is the work *Memorial/Chorale* (Chapter 8) which can be seen as providing the critical transition between the works of Part II (Chapters 6 and 7) and the work of Part IV (Chapters 10 and 11). It is this piece which most reflects a process of

evolution through an experimental approach in rehearsal, given that the final form of the piece cannot be deduced from the initial sketches of the first rehearsal. The vital role played by the performer in this process is acknowledged in the discussion of Chapter 9.

From this single piece, the research was able to develop along two strands: that of the work of group *Bash-o* and that of the Garden Project. In terms of musical style and content there are distinct differences but there are also marked similarities in rehearsal process and choice of personnel.

Composer as Creative Leader

A crucial change in rehearsal format and dynamic involved the role of the composer as creative leader. In contrast with earlier pieces of the research, in which the composer worked as consultant to the rehearsal process, from the piece *Memorial Garden* onwards, the composer acted in the capacity of performer as well as musical director. This situation gave rise to the possibility of directing the dynamic of the performance through musical as well as visual or verbal means, for example, through the use of musical cues or through improvisation. The role of the composer as co-performer as well as music director is an indicator of the inclusion of the composer within the performance process. It also blurs the boundaries between the traditional definitions of composer, performer and conductor mentioned in Chapter 2. This holistic form of performance practice advocates a new role and expectation of the composer.

This role can be seen as already pioneered and developed in different ways by Miles Davis and Peter Wiegold (see Chapters 4 and 5 respectively). Davis's use of hand signals and instrumental cues have been demonstrated to have a significant effect on the structure of a musical work, while his concise approach as composer maximises the opportunities for a wide range of improvisational possibilities. Wiegold's holistic approach can be seen in the way he is able to conduct improvisation using of a mixture of specially devised and conventional conducting signals while adding his own musical contributions as performer, often within the same piece.

The use of the riff as a springboard for compositional and improvisational content has been shown to be of central importance in the work of Davis and Wiegold. The circular forms which arise from these riffs have also given rise to the circular constructs of such works as *Dream Garden* and *Haiku Garden*. The author has also made frequent use of the riff as a structural foundation for improvisation, although in such works as *Memorial/Chorale* the riff itself has been shown to be as variable as any other element in the texture. Davis's use of musical cues as a real-time signalling device in performance has also borne a direct influence on the musical processes undertaken by the author in the Garden works.

Although the author's own approach can be seen to have elements in common with those of Davis and Wiegold, the approach to group leadership is somewhat different.

Whilst Davis and Wiegold take highly active roles as ‘bandleaders’ from the forefront of the group (in the tradition of Duke Ellington or Frank Zappa), the author, neither wishing for the role of conductor nor lead player, steers the group from the middle of the texture. In the Garden works he is willing to let the music run its course for much of the time, giving occasional cues or ‘triggers’ to maintain the dynamic flow of the piece. In this sense the leader’s role can be equally seen as that of musical ‘gardener’; the composer plants the seeds which bring about growth, but then ‘curates’ the performance, keeping intervention to a minimum in order for the work to flourish.

Irrespective of the style of leadership, the role of composer as project manager (using a multi-faceted skill base to provide creative leadership) can be seen to be of equal importance to the compositional practice of committing musical symbols to paper. The tradition of the individual(ist) composer may be seen to be giving way to a new paradigm of interrelationships between composer, performer and audience.

The Performer’s Role and Ownership

The multi-faceted nature of the performer’s role in the works discussed has been shown to involve him/her directly in the creative process. This has brought him/her into the realm traditionally reserved for the composer. Indeed, the structure and content of certain works in the *Bash-O* repertoire have changed dramatically in response to creative suggestions from group members. The performer therefore develops, in the words of

Wiegold, a 'composer's mind' which works in creative sympathy with the composer himself, much as the composer develops an awareness of performance issues arising from a direct engagement with the rehearsal process.

Together with the move towards collaboration arises the issue of ownership. The composer is much less likely to claim complete ownership of a piece in which the other performing members have made a distinct creative contribution. However, as stated at the end of Chapter 5, traditional expectations still apply when labelling the composer of a work. Consequently, biographical information and credits on concert programmes and recordings continue to bypass the intricacies of the collaborative process in order to name participants according to specialism in the conventional division-of-labour format.

Notation

In all the research work involving composition and improvisation, the issue of notation has proved to be of critical importance. Apart from certain conventions such as those of jazz music, there are few widely employed notational systems in this field. As the research progressed, the author became increasingly aware of the need for the performer to treat the notation as a catalyst for invention, as opposed to an idealised representation of the piece. Therefore the logical yet laboured notations of *Duel(t)*, having been found to be impractical for rehearsal purposes, give way to more concise notational instructions from the work *Memorial/Chorale* onwards. This occurs partly as a result of certain processes

being explained in the rehearsal room rather than in the score. It is worth noting that the highly unorthodox score design of *Dream Garden* and *Haiku Garden* posed few practical problems from a notational perspective in comparison to the earlier works, which on the page may seem more conventional. The composer learned in the later pieces especially to imagine the psychological impact of each sign and the time it takes for a performer to absorb unconventional notation. In this way, the information overload on performers so easily produced by experimental systems can be avoided, leading to enhanced control and satisfaction on the performer's part and thus enhanced musical results.

Graphic scores

The Garden pieces also represent a culmination of the one-page score concept initiated in such works as the orchestral *Haiku 5-7-5* of Chapter 7. The availability of the whole score to each performer makes possible the visual awareness of fellow performers' material and roles as opposed to the limited information of a single part. Even though the score reached extreme physical dimensions in *Dream Garden*, the psychological basis for performance remains the same of that in *Haiku 5-7-5*.

These scores have been shown to share some of the experimental spirit of works composed in the 1950s and 1960s which explore unorthodox graphic notations. Arguably, the general notation used in the Garden pieces can be considered to be more traditional than that used by some composers during this time. As such, the search may be for a

middle path between the radical array of notations of the 1950-60s and the relative conservatism of notation methods reached, perhaps as a compromise, by numerous composers in the 1970-80s.

Embedded scores

Added to the one-page score, there arose in the process of research the notion of an 'embedded' score (a score within another score). In *Memorial/Chorale*, the *Chorale* section was embedded into the main framework of *Memorial*. In *Dream Garden*, performers were able to insert individually prepared scores into the overall framework of the Garden score. In *Haiku Garden*, the embedded scores were pre-composed works by other composers which could be inserted into the main piece as special features. Allied to this notion was that of a musical map to guide players through the structure, as well as delineate structural boundaries.

Kaleidoscope: 'same but different'

Through the juxtaposition and superposition of compositional and improvisational elements, repeating riff and freely developing melodic line, notated and non-notated elements and facets of western and eastern culture, it may be deduced that the author is seeking a classical balance of contrasting or even opposing elements held in tension with each other. It has been demonstrated, however, that this balance can adopt

a variety of original forms and combinations, resulting in the maxim: 'same but different'.

An apposite image (mentioned in Chapter 11) is that of a kaleidoscope. While the actual elements are unchanging, they configure and reconfigure into ever-changing and unique formations and patterns, perhaps evoking processes of the natural world. As Ferruccio Busoni stated in his essay *Sketch for a New Musical Aesthetic*:

'Each day begins differently from the preceding, yet always with the flush of dawn'¹⁸.

¹⁸ *Three Classics in the Aesthetic of Music* p.85 (1962), Dover

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Index of Original Portfolio Works

Work	Title	Instrumentation	CD no.	Track(s)	Chapter
#1	Duel(t)	2 perc.	4	1	6
#2	Jiggy	Cello solo	N/A	N/A	6
#3	Hot Air	2 horns	4	2	6
#4	Torio	3 melodic	4	7, 8	6
#5	Haiku 5-7-5	open	5	2-6	7
#6a	4 Haiku	orchestra	5	7-11	7
#6b	Haiku #4b	"	5	12	7
#7a	Memorial #1	ESP ensemble	6	5-7	8
#7b	Memorial #2	"	6	8-13	8
#7c	Memorial #3	"	6	14	8
#7di	Memorial #4	"	6	15,16	8
#7dii	Memorial/Chorale	"	6	17	8
#8	Monk #2	Group Bash-O	8/1	1,2	10
#9a	Rat #1	"	8/1	3,5	10
#9b	Rat #2	"	8/1	4	10
#10	Wacko	"	8/1	6, 7	10
#11a	Shifty #1	"	8/2	8	10
#11b	Shifty #2	"	8/2	9	10
#11c	Shifty #3	"	8/2	10	10
#12	Evening Paths	"	8/2	12, 13	10
#13	Frolic	Group MuSo	9	1, 2	11
#14	Ma	"	9	4, 5	11
#15	Dream Garden	"	10	6-8	11
#16a	Haiku Garden #1	"	11	1,2,4	11
#16b	Haiku Garden #2	"	11	3	11

Acknowledgements

The author would like to pass on his gratitude to the following people and organisations:

The performers Chris Brannick and Richard Benjafield, Matthew Barley, Steve Stirling and Katie Woolley, Makoto Nomura, the players and administrators of the Southbank Sinfonia orchestra, the players of Brunel ensemble 'New Noise'.

The performers of groups ESP, Bash-O and Mu-So: Sarah Robins, Emi Watanabe, Joel Bell, Zach McCullough, Oliver Leaman, Tom Lawrence, James Tahmasebi, Ricardo Tejero and Steve Gisby.

The members of ensemble 'Notes Inégales' for their generosity in allowing unlimited access to record rehearsals.

Chris Jinks and Graeme Shaw for their considerable help with recordings.

Professor Peter Wiegold, for the inspiration and insight which led to this research, and for continued support and expertise during the entire research period.

My parents for their help and encouragement.

Shima for unending patience and support.

Ashley for being there.....