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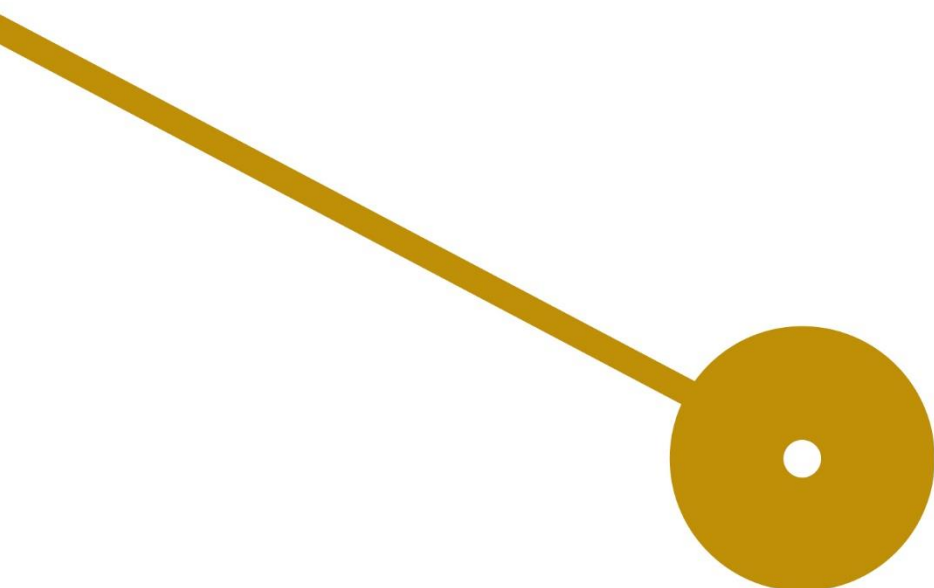
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MESTRADO  
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# Morton Feldman's early clarinet works: a study on temporality and audience perception

Martijn Susla

06/2022



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Dissertação apresentada à Escola Superior de Música e Artes do Espetáculo como requisito parcial para obtenção do grau de Mestre em Música – Interpretação Artística, especialização Sopros, *clarinete*

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“Now that things are so simple, there’s so much to do.”

Morton Feldman, as quoted in (Cage, (1959) 1968, p. 72)

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## **Abstract**

Morton Feldman, a major composer of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century American avant-garde, composed four works for clarinet: *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961), *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), *Bass Clarinet and Percussion* (1981) and *Clarinet and String Quartet* (1983). Today, these works are hardly performed and barely listened to. They present challenges to their audience that are connected to Feldman's central concern with the music's material, sound, and his wish to create a sense of timelessness in music: *Time Undisturbed*. By linking Morton Feldman's aesthetics with Jonathan Kramer's theory on temporality in music, particularly on nonlinear music, this dissertation has the aim of understanding why listening to Feldman's music presents these challenges to their audience. By using Feldman's two earlier clarinet works, *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961) and *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), as a case study, this work aims at understanding how Feldman tries to reach his unique aesthetical ideal of timelessness through different notational approaches. In an attempt to bring the audience closer to his music and give them a more intense experience, an empirical study offers an alternative way of how a performer could approach Feldman's works, by creating a performance of *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961) in which the audience has a more active role and in which traditional boundaries between listener, environment, performer, and work, established by the classical music concert conventions, are blurred.

## **Keywords**

Feldman, clarinet, temporality, Kramer, painting



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## Introduction

About three years ago, I had my first experiences with meditation, with the aim of finding a way to cope with performance anxiety. The practice of focussing on the movement of my breath and contemplating my thoughts and feelings by just noting them, and not engaging with them, became an important part of my daily routine. Soon, I discovered that meditating had a much broader impact on me and the people around me. I noticed positive changes in all areas of my life and I have been learning a lot both about my own mind and the mind of others. My interest in meditation has made me curious about John Cage, who intended to fade the frontiers between life and art under the influence of Eastern philosophies. Reading about this inspiring and revolutionary composer, his Zen Buddhism influences and his own influences on the New York School artists (and beyond) in Kay Larson's book *Where the Heart Beats, Zen Buddhism and the Inner Life of Artists* (2013), I discovered the works of his close friend and colleague composer, Morton Feldman.

It was thus only quite recently that I got in touch with Feldman's four works for clarinet and different combinations of other instruments: *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961), *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), *Bass Clarinet and Percussion* (1981) and *Clarinet and String Quartet* (1983). I immersed myself in Feldman's sound world, one full of interesting timbres and giving the impression of moving simply from one beautiful moment to the next, seemingly without any intention or directionality. However, I noticed that Feldman's intriguing pieces were also quite challenging to listen to. I found that their duration was so long in comparison to the small amount of material they contained, I could not really get a grip on what happened harmonically and metrically, and it was not always easy to enter in the atmosphere created by the omnipresent *ppp* dynamics and the slow tempos.

Maybe it was because of all these challenges presented to the listener that Feldman's clarinet works are so unknown to both performers and audience? I noticed that of all my fellow clarinet students at ESMAE, nobody had ever performed one of his clarinet works and that I could only find a handful of recordings of them. According to Matthew Philip Nelson, "these four pieces represent an important contribution to the clarinet repertoire by a significant twentieth-century composer, yet they are seldom performed and even more rarely discussed" (Nelson, 2010). Apart from Nelson's

analyses of all four clarinet works in *Morton Feldman's Clarinet Works: A Study through the Words of the Note Man* (2010) and an analysis of *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* by Michael Hamman (1996), there is no other detailed scholarly investigation around them. In addition, I noticed that the question of how these works are perceived by the audience was left totally untouched. When I asked Chris Villars, one of the main research specialists of Morton Feldman and the editor of *Morton Feldman Says* (2006), about how Feldman's aesthetics are perceived by an audience nowadays and if an interdisciplinary performance involving both music and visual arts could be an aid in the perception of his clarinet works, Villars responded me as follows: "So far as I know, no one has published anything addressing the questions you raise, and it would certainly be very interesting to have them investigated and answered" (Villars, 2021).

The fact that Feldman's clarinet works were unknown to my clarinet colleagues, that I could find few recordings of them and scholarly research around them, together with the email correspondence with Villars, made me conclude that this specific question concerning the audience perception of Feldman's clarinet works is still unexplored. In my investigation, I decided to follow this thread and focus on his two early clarinet works: *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961) and *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971). I had two reasons to choose these works: one is that their shorter durations might make them more accessible to both performers and audience; the other reason is that, while using totally different compositional strategies, both serve similar aesthetical ideas of Feldman, making them very interesting to analyse and compare. My aim was to get a better understanding of why these compositions are so challenging for the audience and if I, as a performer, could help the audience in appreciating Feldman's music.

In order to give answers to those questions, I first needed to understand the historical context in which Feldman worked. Therefore, Chapter 1 starts with a general outlook on Feldman's aesthetics, by discussing both the composer's own writings and secondary sources. My goal is to demonstrate how Feldman's unique way of composing and thinking about art emanated from the influences by his early teachers, John Cage, and above all, the abstract expressionist painters.

It was almost impossible to write about Morton Feldman and to ignore his special relationship with time. To form a better understanding of Feldman's approach to temporality, Chapter 2 draws from Jonathan Kramer's *The Time of Music* (1988). After having discussed the main concepts of Kramer's theory and having focused on his thoughts about "vertical time," I introduce the more recent and critical voices of Raymond Monelle (2000) and Michael Klein (2013). Today, after more than thirty years, Kramer is still a main reference in the area of temporality in music, but discussing his critics helped me form a more balanced view on his theory. In general, the second chapter has an undertone of being focused on listener's experience, with the perspective of supporting the more empirical investigation of the final two chapters.

In Chapter 3, my methodology was one of aesthetically- and historically-informed analysis. In order to reach a deeper understanding of his earlier clarinet works —*Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961) and *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971) — I applied the historical and theoretical underpinning presented in the first two chapters in my analysis of them. I demonstrate how despite Feldman's totally different notational strategies, asking for different approaches by the performer, he tried to reach the same aesthetical goals in both pieces.

The last chapter might not be the largest one, but it is certainly the culmination of this dissertation. Here, my aim is to give an answer to one of my main questions: how can I, as a performer, help the audience in appreciating Feldman's music? Chapter 4 is empirical in nature: I organised two performances of *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet*, one in which we performed the work in a conventional classical music concert setting and one in which we performed the work in an interdisciplinary environment where music was combined with abstract paintings. Building on Kramer's and Cage's ideas of temporal verticality presented in Chapter 2, I blurred the traditional boundaries between piece, performers, audience and the space of performance in an attempt to help the audience reach a deep and meaningful experience of *Two Pieces*. I also selected and interviewed a small group of people, consisting of five colleague-students of different areas and backgrounds at ESMAE, who attended both performances. In these semi-structured interviews, I asked them about personal, subjective experiences during both performances, especially as regards their experience of time and to what extent the altered concert environment helped them get a more intense experience of Feldman's music. Overall, my purpose is to get a deeper understanding of how they experienced

both concerts and see if there are other, fresher ways of bringing an audience closer to the music of Feldman.

## **Chapter 1 - An overview of Morton Feldman**

### **1.1 A contextualization of Feldman's education and early influences**

In many of his writings and lectures, Morton Feldman stresses his intuitive, empirical and non-ideological approach to composition. In *Modern Music and After*, British music critic Paul Griffiths even speaks of a “lack of ideology” (Griffiths, 2010, p. 278). In his early essays, Feldman would emphasize his place outside history and talk about working in an environment committed to neither the past nor the future (Feldman, (1965) 2000). The expression “outside of history” meant for Feldman not to be influenced by contemporary or past musical ideologies, but rather follow his own personal, individual and original way of composing.

Despite negating his place in history, his very personal composing style was willy-nilly triggered and influenced by the people who surrounded him. From his early education through John Cage and up to the Abstract Expressionist-painters, I would like to demonstrate how teachers and colleagues stimulated Feldman in creating his unique, personal aesthetics.

#### **1.1.1 Feldman's teachers**

At the age of twelve, Feldman started to have lessons with the Russian aristocrat Mme. Maurina-Press, a close friend of the Scriabins. The relaxed and non-disciplinary way in which she approached the piano was conducive to Feldman's creativity when he started writing little “Scriabin-esque” pieces. At fifteen, he changed teacher for Wallingford Riegger, a musical modernist inspired by Schoenberg's dodecaphonic theory (Feldman, (1962) 2000, p. 3). Praised by Leonard Bernstein as a pioneer of musical modernism and a creative artist who was “salty, peppery, crusty, unconventional and eternally young in spirit,” in Riegger we can find some elements that would be favourable for Feldman's non-traditional approach (Haag, 2004).

When he finished high school, however, the equally lax approach of Riegger made Feldman change teacher again for Stefan Wolpe, a former student of Webern (Feldman, (1962) 2000, p. 3) (Feldman, 1983). Wolpe could be seen, together with Varèse, as one of the pioneers of the abstract expressionist-composers, the group that came later to be known to consist mainly of Morton Feldman, Earle Brown and John Cage (Clarkson, 2011, p. 75). The abstract expressionist composers, or the New York

School composers, were highly influenced by the eponymous group of painters, including Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Willem de Kooning, Robert Motherwell, Barnett Newman, Clyfford Still, Franz Kline, Philip Guston and William Bazotes (Johnson, 2011, p. 2).

The foundation for the innovations of Wolpe and Varèse could be found in precisely this connection between the visual and the auditive. Both men observed early on how painters were more innovative in their works, while musicians still went on using nineteenth-century rules and forms (Clarkson, 2011, p. 76). Wolpe, participating actively in the intellectual milieu of abstract expressionist painters, passed these painterly influences to the new generation of composers. Morton Feldman got influenced by Wolpe on various important aspects of his compositional style and attitude.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the aesthetic influences from the visual arts, Wolpe also helped Feldman develop his own non-methodological approach towards composing. Feldman appreciated his non-authoritarian way of teaching and the fact that Wolpe always focused on the piece at hand – not on a specific method to be followed and obeyed to (Clarkson, 2011, p. 81). Ultimately, Feldman also mentions that Wolpe's concept of "opposites" formed the basis for his graph music (Clarkson, 2011, pp. 91-95):

I took this overall concept with me into my own music soon after finishing my studies with Wolpe. It was the basis of my graph music. For example: the time is given but not the pitch. Or, the pitch is given and not the rhythm. (Feldman, 1983).

### **1.1.2 John Cage's green light**

On January 26, 1950, Morton Feldman met John Cage in the lobby of Carnegie Hall, after listening to Webern's *Symphony, Opus 21* (Larson, 2013). "Wasn't that beautiful?" Feldman asked. Cage's curiosity was immediately provoked. The conversation that started in the lobby continued for years and reshaped both men's lives. Soon, Feldman moved into the same building as Cage, where he was introduced to his huge social circle, consisting of musicians, painters and other intellectuals. Shortly after, he met the painter Philip Guston, who became his closest friend and who contributed so much to his life in art (Feldman, (1962) 2000).

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<sup>1</sup> One example of this influence was through Wolpe's concept of "shape." See (Clarkson, 2011, p. 95)



Feldman learned from Cage to use chance in music (Friedman, 2000, p. XIX), in the sense that some important elements of the composition were left to the choice of the performer. It was in December of 1950 that Feldman showed Cage his first graph score. “I don’t know how I made it,” Feldman said. Cage’s response was full of enthusiasm: “Isn’t that marvellous. Isn’t that wonderful. It’s so beautiful, and he doesn’t know how he made it” (Feldman, (1962) 2000). John Cage gave Morton Feldman an early permission to have confidence in his instincts.

Cage at that time was totally immersed in Eastern philosophies and especially in Zen Buddhism. Feldman is known to have said that his only debt to the Orientals was Chinese food (Larson, 2013, p. 185). However, B.H. Friedman credits Cage to teach Feldman about “the importance of silence as positive Void, in the Eastern religious sense, rather than simply as negative space” (Friedman, 2000, p. XIX). Furthermore, in his essay *The Anxiety of Art*, Feldman states that he has only one argument with Cage, that is that he doesn’t agree with the dictum “Everything is music” (Feldman, (1965) 2000, pp. 29-30). Feldman’s admiration for Cage was great and persistent, but it is here that a crucial difference between the two can be found. Feldman sees Cage’s self-abolishment as a religious position, or as Paul Griffiths puts it: “[Cage has] the ideology of having no ideology” (Griffiths, 2010, p. 278). In contrast to Cage’s ideal of everything being music, Feldman made the decision for his art to be precise and selective. While Cage for example wrote *4’33”*, a composition in which literary every upcoming sound is part of the music, Feldman chose to write, with a few exceptions, exclusively for acoustical instruments and voices.

### **1.1.3 The New York Abstract Expressionist visual artists**

Cage and Feldman talked very little about music. They met each other often at the Cedar Tavern. There, mingling with the New York Abstract expressionists, the hot topic would be the new painting (Friedman, 2000, p. XIX).

According to Friedman, no other major composer was so concerned with visual artists and visual art as Morton Feldman – not even Gershwin or Schoenberg, both of whom painted, or Cage, who had many common friends with Feldman in the circle of the Abstract Expressionist painters, particularly Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns (Friedman, 2000, p. XXIII). Jonathan W. Bernard even states that Feldman has been influenced by the New York School artists both in his general aesthetic orientation and

in the finest details of his compositions, both in the 1950's, the period of their first encounter, and in the rest of his life as a composer. What attracted Feldman so much in the New York School painting was its physicality and directness:

The new painting made me desirous of a sound world more direct, more immediate, more physical than anything that had existed heretofore. Varèse had elements of this. But he was too 'Varèse.' Webern had glimpses of it. But his work was too involved with the disciplines of the twelve-tone system (Feldman, (1962) 2000, p. 5).

In this passage, Feldman writes about his quest towards “a more direct, more immediate and more physical sound world.” As I will discuss in greater detail below, Feldman's main preoccupation is on sound. While according to Feldman's own account this focus on music's material — sound — had already been initiated by composers such as Varèse and Webern, he will find this type of inspiration mainly in the painters of the New York School, and not in past or contemporary colleague composers. In the next subchapter, I will discuss how this inspiration manifest itself in Morton Feldman's aesthetics during his early career.

## **1.2 Feldman's aesthetics in his early career**

### **1.2.1 Feldman the anti-methodologist and his place in history**

One draws more freely on unruled paper (Feldman, (1964) 2000, p. 15).

According to Morton Feldman, a technical discussion of his methodology would be quite misleading (Feldman, (1964) 2000, p. 17). This is because his approach to composition is an empirical one; every single piece creates a new compositional environment. Herman Sabbe confirms this, stating that it is problematic to describe or verbally represent this music of continual change as it is not reducible to any system (Sabbe, (1987) 1996, p. 10). He adds that it is because his music is so difficult to categorize that conventional methods of analysis have difficulties in grasping his music.

In his essays, Feldman implicitly credits Edgar Varèse as the main influence on his non-methodological style of writing. He calls himself a Varèse imitator – not of his music, or his style, but of his way of living in the world. (Feldman, (1966) 2000, p. 41). Olivia Mattis confirms this importance of Varèse's influence on Feldman, stating that “it was their closeness to the other arts that made Varèse, along with Wolpe, a role model for young Morton Feldman” (Mattis, 2011, p. 63). As Feldman says, Varèse's

music “speaks to us with its incredible tenacity rather than its methodology” (Feldman, (1966) 2000, p. 41).

Varèse developed this empirical, non-methodological approach by having a look at how the painters of his time were working. He noticed that they were not constrained anymore to pure representation, description and academic rules. He saw that they were responding to their personal, subjective world, while contemporary Western composers were still trying to fit into certain forms or to obey obsolete rules (Johnson, 2011, p. 2). In the article *Sound, Noise, Varèse, Boulez* (1958), Feldman announces the following about Varèse:

And those moments when one loses control, and sound like crystals forms its own planes, and with a trust, there is no sound, no tone, no sentiment, nothing left but the significance of our first breath – such is the music of Varèse. He alone has given us this elegance, this physical reality, this impression that the music is writing about mankind rather than being composed (Feldman, (1958) 2000, p. 2).

With these statements, published in a journal by the abstract expressionist artists, Feldman points to the similarities between the aesthetic orientation of Varèse and that of the New York School of painters: “both seek to return to a ‘first breath’ and proceed outward in an expressive, ‘physical,’ and hence quintessentially ‘American’ way. Their art is about paint on a canvas; Varese's music is all about sound” (Mattis, 2011, p. 64).

The polemical Feldman invigorates his own non-methodological and non-academic approach by attacking artists on the other side of the spectrum. In his essays, strong criticisms are thrown especially to Boulez, who for him “has neither elegance nor physicality. [...] Nevertheless, he is a magnificent academician” (Feldman, (1958) 2000, p. 1). He also criticized “Stockhausen, a shrewd observer of the times, [who] even wishes to create a ‘nonprejudicial’ art which will encompass all techniques at once. What he emerges with, however, is a Gargantuan eclecticism that virtually does away with the necessity of originality” (Feldman, (1964) 2000, p. 17). According to Feldman, artists who rely on history and its methodological inheritances are just in a helpless search for an illusion of safety, running away from the “anxiety of art” (Feldman, (1965) 2000, p. 21). The anxiety of art, a special condition not to be confused with the artists’ anxiety of failure, is something that Feldman pursues actively. This condition can be created when artists don’t concern themselves with history. According to Feldman, he is only concerned with sound itself (Feldman, (1965) 2000, p. 22).

However, the idea of standing outside history is in itself paradoxical, and thus a problematical one to adopt with regard to Feldman's early writings. Feldman's individual, non-methodological and empirical style emerged from the very influences he took from precedent and contemporary artists. The idea of standing outside history is also a historically situated idea, that can be encountered in the attitude of the New York School of abstract-expressionist painters. Look at the famous quote of the abstract-expressionist painter Willem de Kooning, stressing his independence from history by stating: "The past does not influence me; I influence it" (Cressman, 2016, p. 143). The idea of not being influenced by history is one shared, indeed, by both the New York School composers and painters (Ashton, 1973, p. 163). The New York School could be considered as a group of artists that was inwardly directed, with an emphasis on feelings over preconceived ideas (Motherwell, (1950) 1992, p. 78). For the painters, this reflected itself in turning away from a figurative, representative style, to eventually abandon it completely (Bernard, 2011, p. 174).

The move away from representation shifted the focus towards the painter's material — paint. Arthur C. Danto eloquently describes this phenomenon in *Wake of Art: Criticism, Philosophy, and the Ends of Taste*:

The Abstract Expressionists were also sacramentalists, but chiefly as celebrants of paint. Paint symbolized paint for them. The paintiness of paint, its fluidity, its viscosity, the way it forms a skin, the way it wrinkles when it dries too quickly, the way it conceals and reveals, the way it pours, spatters, splashes, holds the hair marks of brushes-and the way it drips (Danto, (1998) 2011, p. 185).

The New York abstract expressionist painters consider their material — paint — to be the subject matter of their works. Their approach is radically abstract, non-representational, in the sense that they do not intend to represent anything but just present their material for what it is.

Morton Feldman shares the same approach towards his material — sound. As described by Matthew Philip Nelson, for Feldman "sound is something indivisible, something vertical, something self-contained, and therefore something lacking perceivable direction and the consequent logical tendencies typically encountered in Western art music" (Nelson, 2010, p. 3). Nelson stresses the fact that "sound" does not have any semantic value for Morton Feldman. Sound is just sound, an abstract material. Just like the abstract expressionist painters find paint interesting because of its

*paintiness*, sounds in Feldman's music are also meant to constitute a world of its own. Feldman celebrates the abstract (non-representational) qualities of his sounds: the different timbres, pitches, textures and dynamics.

Feldman regarded his concern with sound as one way of being “committed to neither the past nor the future.” (Feldman, (1965) 2000, p. 22) Paradoxically, this concern is itself historically situated and could be seen as a continuation of the fascination with timbre by composers like Debussy and Webern. Interestingly, when growing older and becoming “a gentler, more accepting polemicist” (Friedman, 2000, p. XXVI), he stated in 1973 that he always had a “big sense of history, a feeling of tradition and continuity (Feldman, (1973) 2000, p. 120).” Apart from his concern with timbre, inherited from other composers, Feldman was strongly influenced by the abstract expressionist painters, turning away from method towards material.

### 1.2.2 Between Categories

I then began to compose a music dealing precisely with “inbetween-ness”: creating a confusion of material and construction, and a fusion of method and application, by concentrating on how they could be directed toward “that which is difficult to categorize” (Feldman, (1981) 2000, p. 147)

Summarizing Feldman's aesthetics seems to put us in front of some challenges. As I discussed above, Feldman's empirical approach differs from piece to piece. However, “his theories remain remarkably consistent throughout despite changes in his means of realization” (Nelson, 2010, p. 1). One expression that can capture what has remained constant over his career is “Between Categories” (Bernard, 2011, p. 179), which is both the name of an essay he wrote in 1969 and a nice point of entry to several dichotomies along whose axes his music moves (Bernard, 2011, p. 179).

One central dichotomy presented by Feldman is that of subject and surface, or construction and surface. In order to understand this opposition, it is useful to start with a consideration of Karol Berger's concepts of *work* and *world* in his book *A Theory of Art* (2000). Imagine looking at the famous Greek sculpture of *Laocoön and His Sons*. The *work* of this medium is in fact a three-dimensional carved block of marble. However, looking at this work, we do not see only some sculpted stone; we perceive — or imagine — the human bodies, of flesh and blood, of a man and two kids, trying to free themselves in despair and agony from a monstrous snake. What we imagine when

looking at a sculpture is the medium's *world*. We actually perceive both work and world, the marble and the living beings, at the same time. Yet we know which one is real and which one is imaginary (Berger, 2000, p. 19).

Berger claims that in painting, the ontological discussion of what is work and what is world is largely similar to that of sculpture. We can make a distinction between the painted canvas — the painterly work — and what we interpret when looking at the painting — the painterly world (Berger, 2000, p. 24):

In painting as well there is clearly a distinction to be made between a stretched canvas with paint applied to its surface (the painterly work) and the human face emerging against a background (the painterly world) we are expected to see in the painted surface and in addition to it (Berger, 2000, p. 24).

Just like Berger makes a clear distinction between the two components of a painting, the painterly *work* and the painterly *world*, Feldman makes a similar division, but he uses other terms: *surface* and *subject*. The *surface* of the painting can be understood as the physicality of the paint on the canvas. The *subject* on the other hand is that what we imagine or “hallucinate” when looking at the painting (Feldman, (1969) 2000 , p. 83).

Both Berger and Feldman agree that in music the *work-world* and *surface-subject* dichotomies are considerably more complex. According to Berger:

The musical work is constituted [...] by the actual sounds produced by the singing or playing musicians (or by the sound-generating or -reproducing machines), sounds that, as physical objects, exist in the same space and time that we do (Berger, 2000, p. 28).

Berger explains that the physical quality of the sounds constitutes the musical *work*. Talking about the musical *world* becomes more problematic. Most music is representational, but what gets represented are abstract objects (Berger, 2000, p. 29). As a consequence, when listening to most music, we don't only hear the real sounding objects, but also something that is not really there, something imaginary. In music, the musical world is in part indistinguishable from the work. When hearing a melody, we hear its successive pitches and their timbre, dynamic intensity and rhythmic organization. There is nothing imaginary about that (Berger, 2000, pp. 30-32). However, Berger observes that “when the music is in a very broad and inclusive sense

tonal and metric; the imaginary content of real sounds depends on the closely interrelated phenomena of tonality and meter (Berger, 2000, p. 30).” When hearing notes in a tonal context, we hear them for their participation in the tonal syntax. Their hierarchy makes some notes stable and others unstable. As a consequence, we hear the notes in their relationship with each other, and not for their purely physical quality of sound. Closely related to tonality, meter also creates a hierarchy through strong and weak beats (Berger, 2000, p. 31). In most music, sounds are not meant to be heard just for their physical, tangible, vibrating quality, but also for their relationship with each other — their imaginary (if abstract) content. However, some music — like that of Morton Feldman — does not aim to evoke any imaginary content. When listening to this kind of music, in which it is enough for sounds to be just sounds, “we are asked to hear nothing but what is in fact presented to our ears,” as stated by Berger (2000, p. 29).

Feldman shares common ground with Berger’s view of music, in which he sees the construction of the music as the music’s subject, or the music’s world:

Music, as well, as painting, has its subject as well as its surface. It appears to me that the subject of music, from Machaut to Boulez, has always been its construction. Melodies or twelve-tone rows don’t just happen. They must be constructed. Rhythms do not appear from nowhere. They must be constructed. To demonstrate any formal idea in music, whether structure or stricture, is a matter of construction, in which the methodology is the controlling metaphor of the music. But if we want to describe the surface of a musical composition we run into some difficulty (Feldman, (1969) 2000 , p. 83).

It is interesting to note that for Berger the music’s subject (world) was a more problematic issue, while for Feldman the music’s surface (work) presents more difficulties. Therefore, Feldman attempts to clarify his ideas by making an analogy through the figures of Piero della Francesca, Cézanne, Bach and himself.<sup>2</sup>

According to Feldman “Pierro della Fransesca is compounded of mysteries” (Feldman, (1969) 2000 , p. 83). Feldman praises Fransesca to use the of his time newly discovered principles of perspective. His paintings are an illusion, we first see what is inside the picture before seeing it as a picture. According to Feldman, his subject, or his construction, is his primal focus and his genius. The surface on the other hand “seems to

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<sup>2</sup> See (Feldman, (1969) 2000 , pp. 83-85) for Feldman’s complete analogy.

be just a door we enter to experience the painting as a whole. One might almost say – despite all the facts against it – that there is no surface” (Feldman, (1969) 2000 , p. 84). Note how Feldman does not talk about any representational subjects in painting. As interpreted from *Between Categories*, for Feldman the painterly *world*, or the subject of the painting, is the painting’s construction or form. That is a different perspective than Berger’s, for whom the painting’s world or subject, is representational: “the human face emerging against a background” (Berger, 2000, p. 24). Subsequently, Feldman compares Della Franesca to Johann Sebastian Bach. For him, Bach represents the archetype composer of whom “his construction is his genius” (Feldman, (1969) 2000 , p. 83).

Cézanne, on the other hand, symbolises in Feldman’s essay the painter with whom the search for the *surface* became the obsessive theme of the painting. Note how Feldman stresses the *search* for the surface. There is still an original pictorial idea, in the sense that Cézanne’s paintings still evoke imaginary content, but its importance has been put on the second place, bringing us towards the more immediate reality of the picture plane. Implicitly, Feldman compares himself to Cézanne and his search for the surface:

I prefer to think of my work as: *between categories*. Between Time and Space.  
Between painting and music. Between the music’s construction, and its surface  
(Feldman, (1969) 2000 , p. 88).

On top of that, he makes it seem like his music is unique in Western civilization in having a surface. However, I do not agree with Feldman on this matter. In my opinion, all music has a surface. As we learned from Berger, the music’s surface is the material, physical, immediate quality of sounds. This is something that can be found in *all* music. What makes Feldman’s music different is his intention to shift our attention away from the construction of the music towards its surface. Feldman is well aware that it is inevitable to construct or compose in order to write his music. That is why his music can be understood as being *between categories*. It pushes the focus away from the music’s construction, which was hitherto the pole of main importance, towards the music’s surface, in this way achieving a new balance between the two. One way of noting the new importance of surface in his music is to observe that his compositions would lose their essence if performed on instruments other than the ones he wrote for,



while the essence of Bach's compositions, for instance, remains largely intact when played on modern instruments.

According to Feldman, in order to compose music which brings our attention towards the surface, Time should be left alone (Feldman, (1969) 2000 , p. 85). While I will discuss Feldman's approach to temporality in greater detail in Chapter 2, I should note that "Leaving Time alone" is the supreme artistic goal for Morton Feldman, one which he will try to reach by employing various compositional strategies. Feldman's calls his ideal "Time Undisturbed," (Feldman, (1969) 2000 , pp. 87-89) meaning a sort of extended present where our attention is not directed towards musical events unfolding in time, but rather to sounds themselves in the present moment. He observes that "Time Undisturbed" can be reached by writing music without any element of differentiation, in order to allow sounds to be heard for their physical quality, thereby shifting the focus away from subject towards surface.

### **1.2.3 Feldman's treatment of sound**

According to Paul Griffiths, Feldman's music has two more or less constant requirements: it is slow and it is quiet (Griffiths, 2010, pp. 278-279). The slow pace helps the listener to avoid linking sounds with other (previous or later) sounds. After hearing a note or a chord for a very long time, we start forgetting what has come before and we start to have less expectations about what is to come. Feldman's dynamics on the other hand, help him to blend the sounds and make it harder to distinguish which instrument is actually playing. Nelson states that "Feldman's use of ubiquitous *ppp* dynamics [...] creates carefully united blends of colour in which individual voices are hard to distinguish (Nelson, 2010, p. 4)."

Feldman's predominant use of soft dynamics is directly related to his issues with the historical connotations evoked by acoustical instruments. For Feldman, the instrument is purely a means to produce the sounds he wanted. The problem with the instrument is that the listener associates the instrumental sound to its historical connotations, making it harder to hear the sounds for what they are. In the quote below, Feldman discusses this problem:

In music, it is the instruments that produce the color. And for me, that instrumental color robs the sound of its immediacy. The instrument has become for me a stencil, the deceptive likeness of a sound. For the most part it exaggerates the sound, blurs

it, makes it larger than life, gives it a meaning, an emphasis it does not have in my ear (Feldman, *A Compositional Problem*, (1972) 2000, p. 110).

Consequentially, we could start wondering why Feldman did not start to write for electronic sounds instead. Interestingly, with very few exceptions<sup>3</sup>, Feldman kept on writing purely for acoustical instruments during his whole life: “I think pitch is too beautiful for that electronic sound, to get near it, too beautiful to be played on an accordion” (Feldman, 1984).

Closely related to both the slowness and quietness in Feldman’s music is his concern with the decay of the note:

[...] in my own music I am so involved with the decay of each sound, and try to make its attack sourceless. The attack of a sound is not its character. Actually, what we hear is the attack and not the sound. Decay, however, this departing landscape, this expresses where the sound exists in our hearing – leaving us rather than coming toward us (Feldman, (1965) 2000, p. 25).

For Feldman, the attack, or the beginning of the note, is a necessary evil as well. His sounds are “leaving us rather than coming toward us,” therefore, Feldman likes to hide the attack of a new sound as much as possible.

#### **1.2.4 Different notational approaches**

In line with his compositional ideal of “Time Undisturbed,” Feldman experimented with various types of notational strategies throughout his career. According to Nelson, Feldman made use of three (or four) distinct ways to notate his pieces: graph notation, free durational notation, conventional notation, and, possibly, what Nelson calls “disorienting notation” (Nelson, 2010, p. 11).

It was in 1950 that Feldman started writing his first graph pieces. As chronicled by David Cline (2016), John Cage, David Tudor and Morton Feldman were about to have dinner in Cage’s apartment. While waiting for Cage to cook his wild rice, Feldman sketched a small piece on graph paper. He drew rectangles which were divided in many different squares (see Figure 1). Vertically, there is a division in pitch between the higher, middle and lower pitches. Horizontally, there is a division in time, as we read the piece from left to right (Cline, 2016, pp. 9-11).

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<sup>3</sup> *Marginal Intersection* (1951) and *Intersection for Magnetic Tape* (1953)

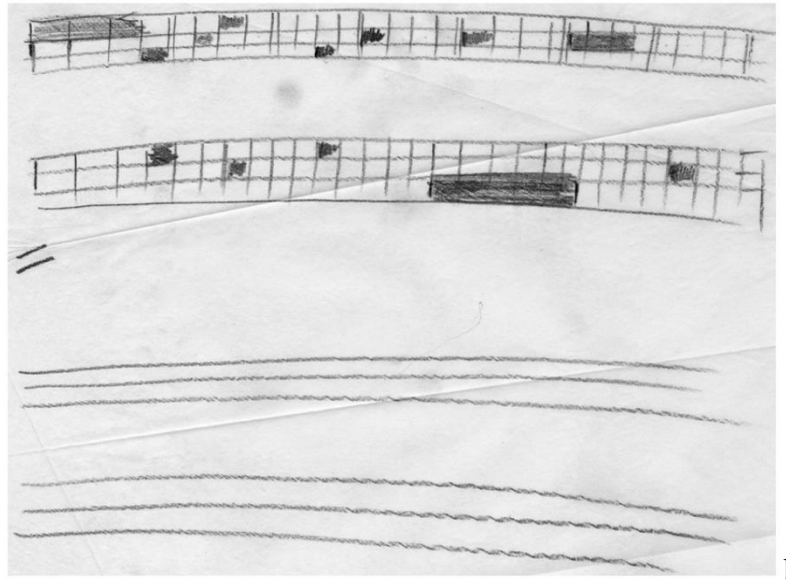


Figure 1. An untitled sketch of Feldman (Cline, 2016, p. 12)

The sketch that Feldman drew that night could have been the predecessor of *Projection I* for cello solo (Cline, 2016, pp. 9-11). Soon more graph pieces followed. His desire with these pieces was “not to *compose*, but to project sounds into time, free from a compositional rhetoric that had no place here” (Feldman, (1962) 2000, p. 6). In other words, it was an attempt to free the sounds from any imaginary content (in Berger’s sense). Feldman tries to obtain this by “unfixing” the traditional parameters, like pitch and rhythm. Generally, the parameters tempo, register, number of keys (for piano) and sometimes the number of attacks per unit of time are strictly fixed. Parameters like pitch and rhythm are up to the performer’s choice (Nelson, 2010, p. 11). By unfixing these primary parameters, Feldman wanted the sounds to exist as they are, and not as symbols, memories or memories of other music (Feldman, (1965) 2000, p. 35). Harmony and meter, the most important parameters in Western tradition, creating a sense of hierarchy and causal relationships between the different sounds, now become merely aleatoric. Feldman directs our attention from the causal relationships between the sounds towards the sounds on themselves. In other words, Feldman brings the focus from the construction towards the surface — from the *world* towards the *work*.

Although Feldman will still shift quite often between different notational approaches in the 1950s and 1960s, his “free durational notation,” used in the 1960s, could generally be seen as a transitional phase between his graph music of the early 1950s to his later precise conventional notation from the 1970s. The main difference to the graph pieces lies in the fact that the “free durational” pieces are conventionally

notated on a staff with five lines. However, they are different from conventional notation in that — just like in graph notation — some primary parameters are unfixed. One instance is shown in Figure 2, an excerpt from *Durations I* (1960) where a sequence of pitches and pauses is fixed but performers are free to choose the duration of the notes and pauses. As a result, performers are allowed to “not play together,” making each performance unique (Nelson, 2010, p. 11).

**DURATIONS 1.**

*Morton Feldman*

Figure 2. Fragment out of *Durations I* (1960), a free durational notated piece

Feldman soon discovered shortcomings in these indeterminate notational strategies (Feldman, (1962) 2000, p. 6). The biggest problem for him was that he was not only setting the sounds free but also the performers. In a 1982 interview with Cole Gagne and Tracy Caras, Feldman discusses the issue of musicians smuggling historical clichés in the performance of his graphical notated music:

I found that my most far-out notation repeated historical clichés in performance more than my precise notation. Precise notation is my handwriting. My imprecise notation was a kind of roving camera that caught up very familiar images like a historical mirror. I don't want the mirror of history in my work. I want it in my education, but I don't want it in my work (Feldman, 1982).

According to Feldman, the problem with setting the performers free and letting them “improvise” is that they will inevitably bring their own conditioned musical habits towards the pieces. Performers will willy-nilly try to bring meaning and a sense of direction to the music (Nelson, 2010, p. 13).

In an attempt to solve this problem, Feldman turns to conventional notation in the early seventies<sup>4</sup>, his most deterministic style ever (Nelson, 2010, p. 13). Because of the precise notation and because the technical demands of the pieces are kept relatively low, it is, in comparison to his earlier indeterminate works and his later “disorientating” works, possible to obtain almost identical performances of the same works. While graph pieces and free durational pieces only become fixed in an actual performance, all the elements of the precisely notated pieces are already fixed beforehand. This is why these works give Morton Feldman this feeling of a “still life”: in contrast to his younger and older works, which will be remarkably different from performance to performance, these works are fixed images of sound (Nelson, 2010, pp. 14,65).

Notating the pieces in an exact way also gave Feldman new possibilities, supporting his quest towards “Time Undisturbed” and putting the focus on the sound material. For example, in his indeterminate pieces Feldman could not use *crescendo* the way he wanted (it was not possible to coordinate patterns of crescendo and diminuendo in more than one instrument with free durational notation), but with precise notation he could (Feldman, Morton Feldman talks to Paul Griffiths, 1972). The crescendo had given him the opportunity “to explore new textural combinations and transitions” (Nelson, 2010, p. 14). It made it possible to hide pianissimo attacks in other voices, which minimized the sense of rhythm that could be implied by the attacks (Nelson, 2010, pp. 14-15). Less sense of rhythm means less sense of a possible metrical system, which means that the chance of creating metrical hierarchy between the sounds diminishes, making us experience the sounds for what they are and not for their syntactical relationships with one another. Figure 3 below shows a fragment out of *The Viola in My Life* (1970) – a work that explored the new possibilities of precise notation.

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<sup>4</sup> Note that between 1953 and 1958, Feldman also used precise notation

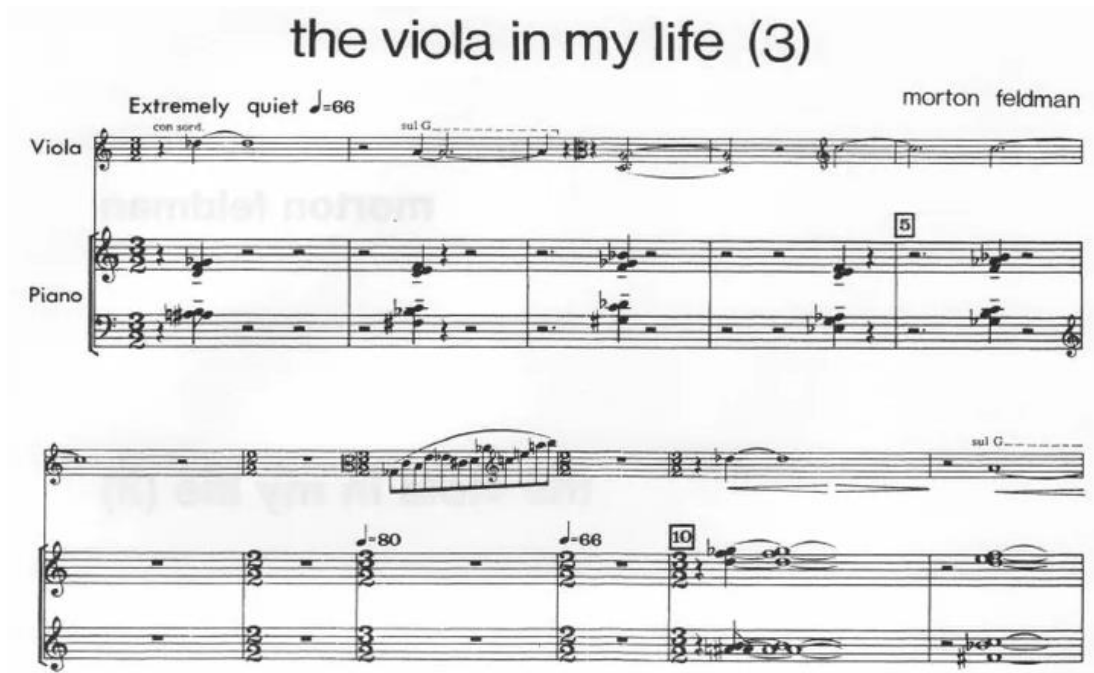


Figure 3. Fragment out of *The Viola in My Life* (1970)

A fourth variant of notation used by Feldman is the so-called “disorientating notation,” a term used by Nelson. The rhythm of pieces for several players is notated in such a way that it puts a challenge to even the most dedicated performers to play everything together and rhythmically synchronized (Nelson, 2010, p. 15). This kind of notation grew out of a growing concern with rhythm, about which Feldman talks in a 1984 conversation with composer Kevin Volans about his work *Crippled Symmetry*:

I'm very interested in a kind of [...] pan-rhythmic situation. [...] Sometimes I make a more complicated pattern, but very simple [modules] and out of it I get very complicated rhythms. And the reasons I'm doing it, I don't want to make a performers situation [where] they're looking to make a cue. I don't want rhythm to become an aspect of syncopation (Feldman, 1984).

As we can read in this statement, Feldman mentions his interest for a so-called “pan-rhythmic situation” in which Feldman rhythmically disorientates the performers in order to not give them a chance to create a sense of metrical hierarchy between the sounds. Again, we notice Feldman’s concern to weaken a traditional Western parameter of music (meter) in order to shift the importance towards *sound*.

Figure 4. Opening fragment of *Bass Clarinet and Percussion* (1981) – an example of disorientating notation

*Bass Clarinet and Percussion* (1981) is a fine example of a work written in a disorientating way (see an excerpt in Figure 4). The score of this piece is precisely notated: it contains time signatures, bar lines, notated rhythms and rests, all elements that were absent in an indeterminate score such as *Durations I*. The difference with a standardly notated piece like *The Viola in my Life* is that the notational scheme of *Bass Clarinet and Percussion* serves an indeterminate purpose by deconstructing the traditional rhythmic relationship between the parts.

As you can observe in the fragment above, the percussion has a 3/4 time signature throughout, while the bass clarinet is constantly changing the time signature. Interestingly, the spatial alignment of the score is not coincident with the temporal reality of the different voices. This is what makes this score so *disorientating* for the performer, who is in a constant struggle against the notational system (Nelson, 2010, pp. 35-38). Feldman only wrote the following instructions: “b. Cl. sounds as written. Every five systems = 135 ♩ for both the b. Cl. & percussion” (Feldman, 1981). The performers will thus have to attempt to converge every five systems, but until reaching those points, they have plenty of time to become out of phase. Again, traditional parameters as harmony and meter are relegated to a place of minor importance. Since different parts almost unavoidably will display different vertical relationships towards each other, there

will be different harmonic and metrical configurations. This is another strategy of Feldman's to emphasize sound and reach his ideal of "Time Undisturbed." To get a deeper understanding of Feldman's "Time Undisturbed," the next chapter will discuss Jonathan Kramer's theory of vertical music and how it is so strongly related to Feldman's music.



## **Chapter 2: Jonathan Kramer's theory of vertical time and its relation to Feldman's music**

### **2.1 Kramer's theory of temporality**

#### **2.1.1 Theoretical framework**

In *The Time of Music*, Jonathan D. Kramer (1988) distinguishes two major structural forces of temporality in music: linearity and nonlinearity. He defines linearity as “the determination of some characteristics of music in accordance with implications that arise from earlier events of the piece” (Kramer, 1988, p. 20). The principle of linearity is in fact one of cause and effect. Certain “earlier events” (causes) of the piece have “implications” for “the determination of some characteristics of music” (consequences). These characteristics or events can appear on a smaller level (such as the pitch or the articulation of a given note) or on larger structural levels (such as key modulations or tempo changes delineating the beginning of a new section).

According to Kramer, nonlinearity on the other hand is the “determination of some characteristics of music in accordance with implications that arise from principles or tendencies governing an entire piece or section” (Kramer, 1988, p. 20). Nonlinearity is not created out of the implications risen from of earlier events, but rather from a global, holistic and unchanging principle. In contrast to the causal principle of linearity which implies constant change, this holistic principle of nonlinearity implies a sense of stasis.

Further on, Kramer states that both linear and nonlinear music depend upon the expectations of the listener, but that there are some significant differences. When listening to a composition that is mainly linear, our expectations grow out of each event happening in the composition. Every new event will be heard in the light of these expectations, which can thus be “fully or partially satisfied, delayed, or thwarted” (Kramer, 1988, p. 20). Hearing the leading tone in a tonal composition, for instance, creates the expectation that it will resolve to the tonic, an expectation that can be immediately satisfied (by actually resolving), delayed or thwarted (if the music goes to an unexpected note). The expectations of nonlinearity, on the other hand, do not grow out of previous events, but out of an immutable principle governing the whole piece. Kramer gives the example of a string quartet's nonlinearity, that is being a string quartet. When listening to a composition for string quartet, we assume that the four

string instruments will remain and we do not expect an off-stage brass band to suddenly start playing (Kramer, 1988, p. 21).

According to Kramer, “virtually all Western music, even that with strongly nonlinear structures, is linear to a significant extent” (Kramer, 1988, p. 23). The author attributes this to our Western thought, which has been distinctly linear for centuries: “Ideas of cause and effect, progress, and goal orientation have pervaded every aspect of human life in the West at least from the Age of Humanism to the First World War)” (Kramer, 1988, p. 23). According to Kramer, linearity expresses itself most typically through tonality, a system which grew in the late Middle Ages and became fully developed by 1680. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the traditional tonal system started to fall apart. Out of the decay of tonality – the quintessential form of linear expression – other forms of temporality emerged (Kramer, 1988, pp. 23-24). Kramer’s other temporal categories of recent music are born out of the interaction and conflict of linearity and nonlinearity. I will shortly overview those categories in 2.2 and elaborate the categories closer to the nonlinear pole in greater detail, in an attempt to shed a new light on Morton Feldman’s music.

### **2.1.2 Kramer’s critics and alternative theories**

Before exploring the nonlinear pole of Kramer’s theory in greater detail, I think it is important to introduce some critical voices. Kramer wrote *The Time of Music* in 1988, already some decades ago. While being a widely praised and influential work, various authors have also criticized it and have proposed alternative theories. One is the British music theorist Raymond Monelle. He has developed a “bichronic” theory as well, thereby agreeing with Kramer’s theory to a certain extent. The two contrasting temporalities presented by Monelle are holistic and progressive: “music invites us to step out of time into its own timeless state; or it gives us an experience of movement, passage, orientation” (Monelle, 2000, p. 86). While these temporalities seem close to Kramer’s nonlinearity and linearity (respectively), Monelle takes issue with many aspects of Kramer’s approach:

Kramer is particularly concerned with contemporary music, as he declares (on p. 397), and modern composers often speak of matters of temporality. Kramer’s formal concerns, however, are with tempo, meter, rhythm, implication and realization, phrasing and closure, the ordinary components of musical time. His failure to identify these as chiefly syntactic features, not necessarily linked to any semantic

level, hampers him in analysing older music. He is much better at tracing temporalities in recent music than in the more syntactically governed music before 1900 (Monelle, 2000, p. 84).

To reach a better understanding of Monelle's criticism, particularly of the difference between the "syntactic" and "semantic" levels, I will give a brief explanation of the semiotic concepts of "signifier" and "signified", or *signifié* and *signifiant*, two terms introduced by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. The signifier is the physical form of a sign, as distinct from its meaning (Lexico - Oxford, 2022). In linguistics, this can be for example the physical quality of a meaningful sound, a written letter or word. In music, this can be the physical quality of a sounding note, of a certain rhythm, of the tempo of the piece. The signified, on the other hand, is the concept expressed by that sign, as distinct from the physical form in which it is expressed (Lexico - Oxford, 2022). The written signifier "beer" for example can have different signifieds for different people, speaking other languages. In English it is a fermented alcoholic beverage, in Dutch it is a big hairy mammal, a bear.

The same goes for musical signifiers. The same signifiers can have different signifieds, depending on the historical and cultural context and on who is interpreting the signifier. For Monelle, "musical temporality is also the time music *means*" — that is, temporality is one of music's signifieds. (Monelle, 2000, p. 84). Monelle states that "the two temporalities of the musical signified are respectively holistic and progressive (Monelle, 2000, p. 86). For him, our Western tonal music was not so much dominated by linearity (progressive time) as claimed by Kramer. According to Monelle, classical music can for instance articulate different temporalities through the cultural associations we make with its signifieds (Monelle, 2000, pp. 110-113). Monelle blames Kramer to put too much of his focus on the music's syntactic features, the so-called signifiers (Monelle, 2000, p. 86). He claims that Kramer solely uses the musical structure itself as the signifier of time; he is too concerned with the formal components of music. Monelle continues by stating that for tonal music, "the more syntactically governed music before 1900," Kramer is not the best reference. Interestingly — as quoted above — Monelle praises Kramer to be a lot better in his work about temporalities of music from the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Monelle, 2000, p. 84). Michael L. Klein shares Monelle's semiotic criticisms on Kramer:

Like many good books, Kramer's text opens new possibilities while serving as an example of the way not to go. As Raymond Monelle has argued, for example, the confusion in *The Time of Music* is the misapprehension that the time of the signifier is also the time of the signified. [...] Thus the impulse to map temporal motion/stasis solely onto musical linearity/nonlinearity places all of music's signifying power in the unfolding of its syntactic structures while failing to recognize that even within the heavily linear tonal system, composers have developed signifiers for nonlinear time (Klein, 2013, p. 13).

Klein presents an alternative to the linear/nonlinear polarity, focussing instead on musical narrative, a concept that is actually closely related to temporality, with their common emphasis on causality. He presents the scheme below (Figure 5) as a guide to narrative discourse in music after 1900. In the top left corner, we encounter the category of *narrative* music. This is music that “tells a story.” Or, to put it in Michael Klein’s words, it is “music that largely accepts the tonal, topical and thematic premises of the nineteenth century, including moments of thematic transformation, crisis and catastrophe, transcendence and apotheosis” (Klein, 2013, p. 4).

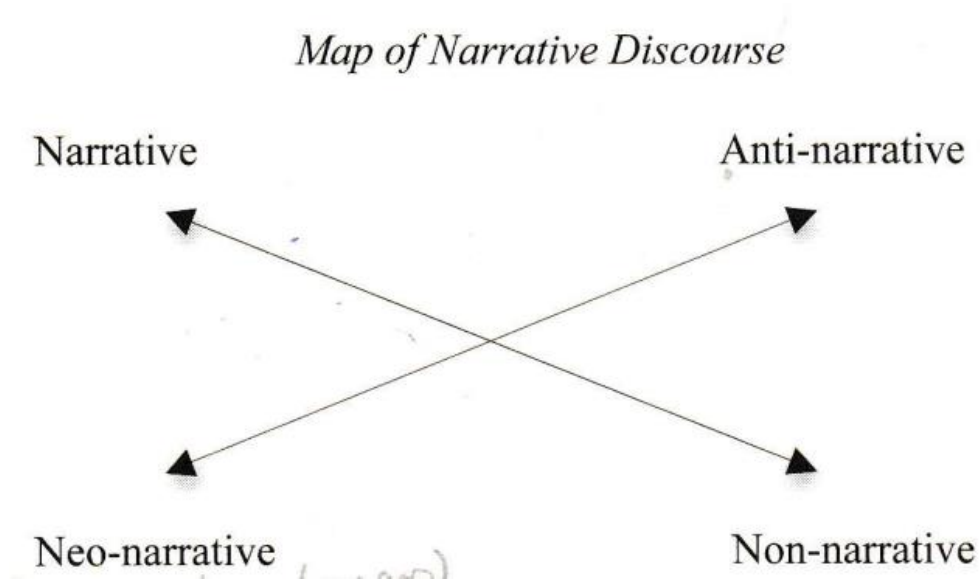


Figure 5 Michael L. Klein's Map of Narrative Discourse (Klein, 2013, p. 5)

In the right bottom corner of the “Map of Narrative Discourse,” we find the opposite category, which is the absence of narrative: “non-narrative.” This is “music with no tonality, no themes, no sense of causality or transformation, no organizing principle whatsoever, in fact: just a set of independent sound worlds, textures, or blips

of acoustic matter” (Klein, 2013, pp. 4,5). Interestingly, Michael Klein gives Morton Feldman’s *Projection 4* (1951) as an example. This early Feldman work for violin and piano — aleatoric and graphically notated — leaves the listener without a clue of any causal relationships between the separate sounds. Even if the listener would perceive any causal relationship, that would be purely accidental and non-intentional from composer’s side, since every performance will be different due to the choices made by performers as they interpret the graph score. However, I think it is very important to discuss the notion of “no organizing principle whatsoever” in terms of causality. Even the aleatoric music of Morton Feldman is organized according to some principles. However, these principles are (mainly) non-causal, nonlinear. Also, some works can have a linear logic in the compositional process, which is however not perceivable for the listener. When listening to *Structures* of Boulez, a heavy serialised work, I cannot sense any form of causality or transformation — thus I would place it on Klein’s non-narrative category. Therefore, I think that “no organizational principle whatsoever” should be interpreted as “no sense of causality in the music is perceivable by the listener.”

In comparison to Kramer’s bipolar division of linearity and nonlinearity, Klein’s map is quadripolar, thereby offering us two more categories: the *neo-narrative* and the *anti-narrative*. *Neo-narrative* music uses other means to reach the same goal of storytelling, so that it relies on causality as well. A beautiful example given by Klein is Ligeti’s piano etude “L’escalier du diable.” Here, the music does not “tell us a story” with traditional means (such as tonality and meter, or themes and their development). Instead, with a chromatic-scale motif, the pianist relentlessly keeps on striving towards the top of the keyboard to then fall down, something we could interpret as a metaphor for anxiously climbing stairs, looking for a way out, but falling down time after time. The upwards move through the registers of the piano with the subsequent falls has become a different, new way of storytelling (Klein, 2013, p. 5).

The fourth category presented on the map is *anti-narrative*. Compositions that are anti-narrative still use the traditional means of narrative. However, when listeners create certain expectations, the music will deny them on purpose. It is some kind of a humoristic, ironical category. Denying the listener’s expectations is in some way also responding to their expectations, which makes this a category based on causality as well. Klein gives us the repetitions and abrupt interruptions of Stravinsky’s *Petrushka*

as an example (Klein, 2013, pp. 5-6). Other examples can be found in the “wrong-note” music of Shostakovich and Prokofiev.

Can we draw an analogy between Klein’s narrative poles and Kramer’s linearity and nonlinearity? Narrative, anti-narrative and neo-narrative music tell respectively a story, a story about storytelling or a story with different means. Since telling a story implies a sense of causality, all these categories are all mainly linear. What with non-narrative and nonlinearity: can they be some kind of synonyms?

As interpreted from the description and the given examples by both authors, they do seem similar at first. However, I already raised some objections to Klein’s definition of non-narrative music as one with “no organizational principle whatsoever,” claiming that it would be better to speak of “no sense of causality in the music is perceivable by the listener.” However, even this definition makes it difficult to categorize certain types of music. In minimal music, for example, the causal, organizational principle(s) of the piece can be understood very clearly by the listener. If I am listening to *Les Moutons de Panurge* of Rzewski, for example, I understand that a melody repeats itself, while notes are first gradually getting added and then gradually subtracted. The organization of the music is perspicuous; an additive/subtractive process is going on. Minimal music must therefore be narrative and linear, even while being so repetitive? Kramer offers us a solution, not focussing on the listener’s *understanding*, but the listener’s *experience*:

One might think of such works as purely linear, but listening to them is not a linear experience, despite their internal motion. Because in such pieces the motion is unceasing and its rate gradual and constant, and because there is no hierarchy of phrase structure, the temporality is more vertical than linear. The motion is so consistent that we lose any point of reference, any contact with faster or slower motion that might keep us aware of the music’s directionality. The experience is static despite the constant motion in the music (Kramer, 1988, p. 57).

According to Kramer, although the listener might *understand* the organizational principle behind the piece, the non-hierarchical phrases and a constant and gradual rate of motion are *experienced* by the listener as being nonlinear. I think that Klein is not clear on this matter. He states that he sees the musical narratives from the listener’s perspective: “these shifting musical narratives are all around you” (Klein, 2013, p. 7). But it is not clear if he is talking about the listener’s understanding or experience. That is why it is difficult to categorize minimal music in the non-narrative category with a

definition stating that the music has no organizational principle. Kramer clearly talks about the listener's *experience*. However, I do not agree with him that listening to minimal music is necessarily a *nonlinear* experience. Mariusz Kozak gives us a more balanced perspective. He demonstrates that from an experiential angle, a minimal composition, in this particular case Steve Reich's *Violin Phase*, can be experienced and appreciated in a more linear way (Kozak, 2020). Kozak proves this by discussing Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker's eponymous choreography to Reich's work, which embodies and highlights the processual characteristics of the composition.

I think that in the specific case of minimal music, the organizational principles can be clearly understood by the listener, but the music must not necessarily be experienced in a way that the organizational principles define our experience. Klein's Map of Narrative Discourse does not provide us a solution for this problem. Despite Kramer's idea that minimal music can only be approached by the listener in a nonlinear way, with which I do not agree, his focus on temporality with the linear/nonlinear polarity still gives us a broader frame of reference than Klein's focus on narrative. For my own investigation, I am concerned with the *listener's experience of time* in the music of Morton Feldman. In what follows, I will therefore focus mainly on Kramer's theory of temporality, more specifically on the nonlinear pole and its associated categories.

## **2.2 Kramer's nonlinear temporal categories**

### **2.2.1 Moment time**

Kramer proposed a number of categories of musical temporality: directed linear time, nondirected linear time, multiply-directed linear time, moment time, and vertical time. These arise from different degrees and different types of interaction between linearity and nonlinearity (Kramer, 1988, p. 20). While linearity prevails – in different forms – in the first three categories, the latter two are essentially nonlinear. Kramer warns us not to assign pieces of music to purely one category (Kramer, 1988, p. 8). Most of the times, a composition can belong to various categories at once; they are overlapping, they can coexist and they do not follow the law of contradiction. For the purpose of this dissertation, which is to study Morton Feldman's music, I will focus mainly on vertical time. However, I think it is useful and important to explain another category situated close to the nonlinear pole, that of moment time.

Compositions written in moment time, a category named by Kramer after Stockhausen's *Moment Form*, share many characteristics with vertical time. A work that is experienced as being in moment time consists of various sections, or moments, that are separated by discontinuities. These moments are self-contained entities, characterized by stasis or a single process. In the latter case, there might be a sense of goal-directed linearity, but the goal is accomplished within the confines of a specific moment, so that moments remain causally independent from each other (Kramer, 1988, p. 207). Moments can be related with one another, for example motivically, but they are not connected by transition or any sort of causal implication (Kramer, 1988, p. 50). They are independent, free-standing temporal blocks that are not participating in a linear progression towards a certain goal. Some works even go so far that the different moments can be ordered in different ways, a so-called mobile-form. The succession of these moments can be arbitrary, because there is no causal relationship between the consecutive moments. Since later moments are no linear consequence of preceding ones, they don't need to be ordered in a certain way. If the moments are not connected and they are independent and self-contained, how do they form one piece together? Pieces that might lack a linear logic of progress towards a goal, often compensate this by having a certain nonlinear logic. This can be obtained by a certain proportional balance in length between the moments or a sense of consistency across the moments, for example by using a similar instrumentation or having similar textures or timbres, in order to make the moments seem to belong to the same piece (Kramer, 1988, p. 50).

Kramer observes that compositions written in moment time are not style-dependent (Kramer, 1988, p. 52). It is an ubiquitous idea in contemporary culture that started to grow in the twentieth century in the techniques of composers as Debussy, Webern, Varèse, Stravinsky, Messiaen and Stockhausen (Kramer, 1988, pp. 52,201). An early, but still impure example of moment time is Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920): "*Symphonies* consists of a series of quasi-independent sections that are defined by consistency of harmony, tempo, and motivic material: moment time operates on a middleground level" (Kramer, 1988, p. 61). (Kramer, 1988, p. 61). Another composer that started to write compositions in moment time is Olivier Messiaen. He shared Stravinsky's interest in static blocks, discontinuity and his approach of the sonata form as "a static object rather than a self-generating process" (Kramer, 1988, p. 213). His early works still display an impure use of moment time,



altered with more linear passages, such as *L'Ascension* (1931-1935) and *Turangalila-Symphonie* (1946-1948), but moment time in his later works such as *Chronochromie* (1960) becomes almost pure (Kramer, 1988, p. 214). Kramer states that Messiaen's music can be seen as a link between Stravinsky and Stockhausen. The latter was the first composer to explicitly formulate the concept of *Moment Form* (the concept that would give rise to Kramer's moment time) in his eponymous 1963 article where he emphasizes the notion that pieces written in this form are not oriented towards a certain goal:

Musical forms have been composed in recent years which are remote from the scheme of the finalistic [goal-directed] dramatic forms. These forms do not aim toward a climax, do not prepare the listener to expect a climax, and their structures do not contain the usual stages found in the development curve of the whole duration of a normal composition: the introductory, rising, transitional, and fading stages. On the contrary, these new forms are immediately intensive, and the main point which is made at once remains present at an equal level to the very conclusion. They do not induce constant waiting for a minimum or a maximum, and the direction of their development cannot be predicted with certainty. They are forms in a state of always having already commenced, which could go on as they are for an eternity (Stockhausen, 1963, quoted in (Kramer, 1988, p. 201))

### 2.2.2 Vertical time

Vertical time is an even more extreme category than moment time. Pieces written in vertical time no longer consist of various distinct moments (Kramer, 1988, pp. 54-55). They have just become *one* big moment, that is sonically and/or conceptually static (Kramer, 1988, p. 385). It is a type of music without direction, without a goal-orientated purpose. In these compositions, each sound exists for itself and not for its causal relationship with other sounds. Vertical music celebrates the present moment (Kramer, 1988, p. 385). The reason why Kramer calls the time sense invoked by such music *vertical* is that the kind of structure that is present in the music does not exist between the successive — *horizontal* — events, but rather between the piled up — *vertical* — layers of sound (Kramer, 1988, p. 55).

One obvious property of vertical music could be the lack of phrases, as these could be seen as a linear aspect of music. They imply a sense of direction and their ending (the cadence) breaks the temporal continuum. In addition, we are used to phrases forming hierarchies, to the extent that they are grouped into periods, subsections, sections,

movements, etc. While all of this would suggest that phrases are incompatible with vertical time, there are compositions that make use of phrases but are still perceived as vertical music. This is due to the lack of hierarchy between the different phrases (Kramer, 1988, p. 55). Take for example the second movement of Morton Feldman's *The Viola in My Life* (1970). The viola clearly has some passages that can be seen as phrases. Nevertheless, these phrases don't really go somewhere. Though they might achieve some sense of closure, it is not clear which cadences have more or less weight. This means that they are not perceived as being hierarchically structured. Because of that, and just like pieces written in moment form, vertical pieces do not formally begin or end. In Kramer's celebrated expression, they just "start and stop." The piece as heard is like a fragment of a static, potentially eternal continuum that does not change (Kramer, 1988, pp. 55, 204-203). Vertical pieces don't build to a peak of tension, either, nor do they create or fulfil linear expectations. They set their boundaries early on; as a certain sound world in which the music can move is immediately created. These boundaries can be very wide, as in John Cage's *4'33* (1952), as the composition can encompass literary any sound; or they can be much narrower, as in *La Monte Young's Composition 1960 #7*, which consists of merely two notes, B3 and F#4, forming a perfect fifth, and an instruction "To be held for a long time."

Vertical music invites the audience to a special time sense of an extended present. Bringing attention to the present moment, and hearing the sounds that are happening in that present moment for their material, physical quality and not for the semantic values the listener attaches to them, makes the listener more aware of his or her surroundings. This increased sense of awareness makes listeners feel more grounded, more present in the space in which they find themselves, thereby enhancing the feeling of fusion with his environment. This experience is common in Eastern religions, but less so in the West. In our conventional Western concert music indeed, there is a clear separation between the different roles of the composer, the performers, the audience, as well as between the piece and the space in which the piece is performed (Kramer, 1988, p. 382).

During the 1960s, the Fluxus group started blurring the traditional boundaries between these different components of the performance of a musical work in order to "destroy the difference between art and life," as stated by Kramer (1988, p. 382). For instance, in John Cage's *Theater Piece #1* (1952), universally considered as the first

happening, there is no clear separation between where “artwork” ends and where “life” begins (Larson, 2013, pp. 251-255). In this memorable and historical artwork, as illustrated in Figure 6, different art disciplines are going on independently at the same time in the same space, with the audience sitting in the middle of all the actions that are going on, making them part of it. (Larson, 2013, pp. 251-255). Simultaneously, there is dance, painting, lecture, film, music and more. Cage’s idea was not to make sense of all these individual actions, but to experience them as a whole. The overload of information implies that we do not any longer appreciate the artworks by the semantic values of their signs, but by the physicality and the concreteness of the works on their own. Or, to use Karol Berger’s typology, Cage does not want us to pay attention to the *world* of the different media, he wants us to merely experience their *work*.

Cage understood all the artists’ activities as the equivalents of “sounds.” Perceiving these “sounds” and experiencing them as themselves, and not in a causal relationship with each other, is a characteristic of vertical time. Furthermore, Larson states that *Theater Piece #1* eliminated separations between art and life. The artists understood that their individual art did not have to respond to a certain theme or be in a logical relationship with the other arts that were going on. Inspired by Eastern religion, the Buddhist idea of interpenetration, each of these activities or “sounds,” is interpenetrating with one another, and not obstructing each other. Blurring the boundaries between art and life, each activity is being part of both (Larson, 2013, pp. 251-255).

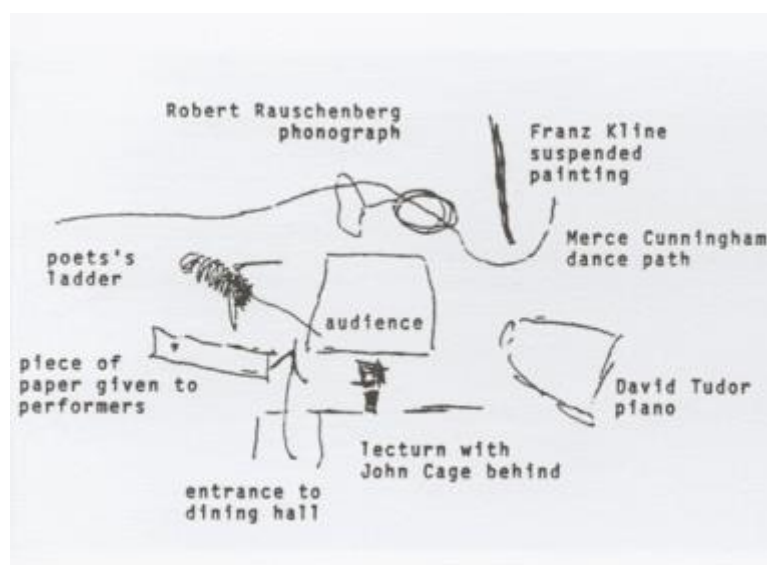


Figure 6. M.C. Richards, floor plan of John Cage’s “Theater Piece No. 1” (1952), drawn for William Fetterman in 1989 (maat.pt, 2021)

Kramer gives other examples of works that reduce the distance between composers, performers, listeners, piece and environment. In Xenakis' *Terretektorh* (1966), the audience is seated between the orchestra members. In Stanley Lunetta's *Music for Bandoneon and Strings* (1967), the concert ritual is parodied. The bandoneon player is carried into the concert hall and then physically manipulated by three people that control him with strings. The whole concert setup is an integral part of the work. Separations between performers, staging and the work are erased (Kramer, 1988, pp. 382-383).

In the statement below, Kramer explains how these pieces are setting up "situations" of which the principles remain constant throughout the performance – the basic premise for nonlinear music. The questioning and fading of the identities of listener, performer, work and space results in having no clear separation between the self and the other. The fusion of the listener with his or her environment results in timelessness and verticality in music.

Such pieces set up musical/ theatrical situations and explore them in nonlinear ways. The situations are the pieces. They start and continue but do not change. The pieces make strong, if obvious, statements about the essential identity of the listener, the performer, the piece, and/or the space. It is appropriate that much of this music [...] invokes vertical time, since the destruction of the self-other dichotomy leads, as psychoanalysts have demonstrated, to a feeling of timelessness (Kramer, 1988, p. 383).

One last, but not least, characteristic of vertical music concerns its relation to the visual arts, an especially important topic when writing about Morton Feldman. Kramer makes the comparison between looking at a piece of sculpture and listening to a vertical composition:

Listening to a vertical musical composition can be like looking at a piece of sculpture. When we view the sculpture, we determine for ourselves the pacing of our experience: We are free to walk around the piece, view it from many angles, concentrate on some details, see other details in relationship to each other, step back and view the whole, contemplate the relationship between the piece and the space in which we see it, close our eyes and remember, leave the room when we wish, and return for further viewings. No one would claim that we have looked at less than all of the sculpture though we may have missed some of its subtleties, despite individual selectivity in the viewing process. For each of us, the temporal sequence

of viewing postures has been unique. The time spent with the sculpture is structured time, but the structure is placed there by us, as influenced by the piece, its environment, other spectators, and our own moods and tastes. Vertical music, similarly, simply is. We can listen to it or ignore it. If we hear only part of the performance we have still heard the whole piece, because we know that it will never change. We are free to concentrate on details or on the whole. As with sculpture, the piece has no internal temporal differentiation to obstruct our perceiving it as we wish (Kramer, 1988, p. 57)

I think we can even make a broader analogy than Kramer's and extend the comparison with sculpture towards visual arts in general. Kramer mentions the fact that we are free to pace our own experience when viewing a sculpture or listening to vertical music. One of the main characteristics of the experience of vertical music and visual arts in general is its temporal subjectivity, as we can freely decide the pacing of our experience. In the case of the visual arts, we can look at sculptures or paintings from close by or from a certain distance, view them from different angles, focus on the whole or on details, etc. In the case of vertical music, sounds are not heard for their syntactical relationship with one another, but rather they are heard for themselves. These sounds can be listened to according to the listener's choice, be it a conscious or an unconscious one. Listeners can focus on the sound as a whole, or listen to the individual notes. They can even go further and start listening to the different overtones of a single tone. We could say, of course, that when listening to a predominantly linear piece, let's say a Mozart string quartet, we are also free to choose on which musical aspects to focus. This is true to a certain extent, but just like Kramer states that it might be "difficult to experience a production of Hamlet as a series of isolated, nonreferential sounds and images" (Kramer, 1988, p. 385), listening to the sounds of a linear composition without their imaginary content might be very hard as well. Vertical music, on the other hand, *simply is* (Kramer, 1988, p. 57). The absence of the sounds' imaginary content *forces us* to be creative and active as listeners and have an individual and subjective experience.

Another shared characteristic of the experience of vertical music and visual work of art is a result of this subjectivity of the experience of its contemplator. Just like having watched a sculpture or a painting and not having seen all of its details and subtleties, we have still heard the whole vertical composition if we have only listened to a part of it. The individual listening experience will be different from person to person and from moment to moment. Since the experience of the listener can and will be

different from time to time, it does not matter if we have only heard a part of the composition. It is our personal, subjective experience of the verticality that counts.

### **2.3 Origin of vertical music and its rise in 20<sup>th</sup> century Western music**

Linearity and nonlinearity are two opposite forces that are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In almost all music, both of them are present. According to Kramer, tonal music is the epitome of temporal linearity, yet he states that “virtually all Western music, even that with strongly nonlinear structures, is linear to a significant extent” (Kramer, 1988, p. 23). Kramer connects the linearity typical of Western music to Western thought in general, noting that the latter has been predominantly linear for centuries:

Ideas of cause and effect, progress, and goal orientation have pervaded every aspect of human life in the West at least from the Age of Humanism to the First World War. Proponents of technologies, theologies, and philosophies have sought to improve human life; capitalism has sought to provide a framework for material betterment, at least for the few; science was for a long time dominated by the temporally linear theories of Newton and Darwin; even Western languages are pervaded by words that refer to goals, purposes, and teleology (Kramer, 1988, p. 23).

While referring to different temporalities in Western music (holistic and progressive time), Monelle agrees that “musical temporality will tend to articulate the dominant temporality of the society that gives it birth” (Monelle, 2000, pp. 84,86). For Westerners, the linear temporality of our music is something self-evident, since it has been so deeply rooted in our society, way of living and languages. However, it is very interesting to observe so-called nonlinear cultures and their nonlinear music. According to Kramer, “many non-European cultures have produced predominantly nonlinear music, reflecting nonlinear cultural attitudes and lifestyles (Kramer, 1988, p. 24).”

Kramer gives some examples of nonlinear cultures and their nonlinear music. One of them is the Indonesian island Bali, where people appreciate and experience activities not as goal-orientated, but rather as being inherently complete and not needing a certain outcome. For instance, Balinese calendars have a circular quality, using ten concurrent cycles with distinct social significations and degrees of importance. Balinese music “articulates” their society’s predominant nonlinear temporality, as this music is

not goal-directed but rather contains rhythmic cycles which seem to repeat endlessly (Kramer, 1988, pp. 23-24).

It comes therefore as no surprise that the influence of non-Western nonlinear music is one of the main factors responsible for the rise of nonlinearity in the West during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1899, Debussy heard a Javanese gamelan orchestra playing at the 1889 Paris Exhibition (Kramer, 1988, p. 44). He understood that the sonorities of the gamelan orchestra were allowed to be themselves, that the functional relationship between the sounds was of no primal importance. He discovered the possibilities of a different time world. Kramer considers that the Javanese influence on Debussy was enormous. He claims that the music of the French composer was the first in the West to contain moments of pure sonority, events that can be appreciated for just being themselves, and not for having a role in a linear progression (Kramer, 1988, p. 44). Meanwhile, in America, Charles Ives was one of the first composers to introduce a nonlinear time sense into concert music (Kramer, 1988, pp. 44-45). Matthew McDonald states that “Ives’s music very often seems to lack linear direction and coherence relative to earlier or contemporaneous music of the Western classical tradition” (McDonald, 2014, p. Introduction 9).

Besides the musical influences of non-Western civilization, Kramer presents two other cultural transformations in the West responsible for the move to nonlinearity in 20<sup>th</sup> century music: the possibilities presented by the new recording techniques and the shift towards subjectivity in the arts (Kramer, 1988, pp. 43-46). The extreme discontinuities created by composers experimenting with tape recordings led to a reduction of the 20<sup>th</sup> century music’s linearity. For the listener, music moved from the sacred environment of the concert hall to all-time-accessible means by virtue of records, radio and tapes. As I discussed in 2.1, the experience of vertical music is subjective and individual, the work can be “visited” and “left alone” according to the individual choice of the listener. On the contrary to a ritualized visit to the concert hall, where listeners sit to experience a composition from the beginning to the end, people could start to listen to music practically whenever and wherever they wanted (Kramer, 1988, p. 45).

Ultimately, Kramer observes a turn towards subjectivity in our musical culture. Curiously, it is not our society that shifted from being linear and goal-oriented towards being nonlinear. It is rather our musical (and overall artistic) culture that started to shift

towards the nonlinear pole, exploring new temporal possibilities which according to Kramer reflect the temporality of the subjective mind, which is often unordered and unlogic. Kramer notices a shift of focus from “a logic that reflects the goal-oriented linearity of external life to an irrationality that reflects our shadowy, jumbled, totally personal interior live” (Kramer, 1988, p. 45).

## **2.4 The vertical experience: a listener's choice**

This subchapter is focused on the listener's *experience* of nonlinear music. I would thus like to start by sharing and discussing two personal experiences with nonlinear music. Next, I will relate my experiences to the ideas of John Cage and Jonathan Kramer about timelessness, boredom and the relationship between the listener and vertical music.

As a young bachelor conservatory student, I had the opportunity to listen to *The Well Tempered Circle* (2019), a work written by Belgian composer Stefaan Quix. The audience was seated in a big dark room, the *Muziekstudio* in *De Singel* in Antwerp. Around us, eight percussionists formed a circle and started to create sounds with different materials. These percussive sounds formed rhythmical patterns, that very gradually changed and progressed. I did not experience these gradual changes as being orientated towards a certain goal. Therefore, the music evoked a sense of stasis, of verticality in me, as a listener. The vertical temporal qualities of the music were reinforced by the positioning of the performers around the audience. As discussed above, vertical music often invites the listener into an extended present by erasing the separations between composer, performer, audience, environment and the piece itself. The positioning of the performers around the audience in *The Well Tempered Circle* enhanced the quality of unity between them. Quix was inspired in this aspect by the music, rhythmical in nature, of primitive tribes (ChampdAction, 2019).

In 2.2, I discussed how some non-Western cultures have a predominantly nonlinear culture and produce nonlinear music. The ritual music of the Balinese gamelan orchestra for example, does not “begin,” it simply starts. It does not formally “end,” it just stops. The same was true with my experience listening to the *Well Tempered Circle*. The music was just going on. Since it was one of my first encounters with vertical music, I have to admit that it was quite troublesome for me to reach a sense of timelessness. After the initial moments of curiosity about the surrounding percussive sounds, I quickly started to feel a bit bored. The music did not seem to go



anywhere and its repetitiveness and gradual changes started to annoy me. Time seemed to have slowed down and even though the piece only lasted for half an hour, the concert seemed to last forever. I think at that time I did not leave my mind open to wander through the sounds I was hearing. I had not yet cultivated a sense of curiosity for aspects like timbre and spatialization, the different type of overtones produced by the various instruments, and the qualities of gradual change and repetitiveness. I loved the *concept* of the piece, but I did not have sufficient patience or curiosity to *experience* timelessness.

Another day, I had a more “successful” encounter with nonlinear music, for sure one of my most intense experiences with musical verticality in the concert hall until now. I attended Philip Glass’ opera *Einstein on the Beach* (1975). Originally written as an opera of approximately five hours, I attended a shortened, sober and semi-scenic version of the Dutch installation artist Germaine Kruijff in May 2019 in *De Singel*, Antwerp, performed by *Ictus* and *Collegium Vocale Gent*.

*Einstein on the Beach* can be seen as one of Glass’ major works and certainly a culmination of the minimalist movement. According to Devlieger, this opera is characterised by being repetitive and by making use of additive and subtractive techniques and the principle of the cyclical structure. The opera is divided into four acts separated by intermezzos (called “Knee Plays”) (Devlieger, 2019), leaning clearly towards Kramer’s nonlinear pole and Klein’s non-narrative pole. Just as in the *Well Tempered Circle*, the music is always in motion, yet listening to this type of minimal music was essentially a static experience for me.<sup>5</sup> During the first half an hour or so, I had some trouble accepting the repetitiveness of the music. The thought of having to listen to this music for over three hours terrified me. The doors of the concert hall were left open, so as to give people the freedom to leave whenever they wanted (note this characteristic of vertical music: even when you have heard only a part of the piece, you still have heard whole of it). However, I persisted and stayed on my seat in the concert hall, unlike some fifty to hundred people (of an audience of about eight hundred people) who left their seats during the first hour. My patience was rewarded. After a while, I entered in a certain flow. I felt present and in great unity with the music and with my environment. Sometimes, I zoned out and got distracted by some of my thoughts or by

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<sup>5</sup> See (Kramer, 1988, p. 57) for Kramer’s discussion on minimal music.

physical feelings. However, most of the time, I just forgot about the time on the clock. Three hours and a half flew by, and the impact of this feeling of timelessness in altering my psychological state (as well as that of other people in the hall) was tremendous. Even when the piece was over, it seemed like it was still going on, taking me and the other people of the audience on a sort of a trip. The ecstatic applause of the audience held on for an unproportionable amount of time, as though they were still experiencing time at another pace and forgot what a normal duration of an applause actually was.

According to Kramer, there are two basic possibilities when listening to vertical music (Kramer, 1988, pp. 376-378). For some people, vertical music provokes boredom. In the absence of linear progressions, the listener can only focus on the nonlinear qualities of the music. According to Kramer, the listener needs to listen creatively and intensely in order to appreciate those nonlinear qualities (Kramer, 1988, p. 378). If they cannot do this or choose not to do this, they will not experience timelessness, but rather time as being slowed down. This is what I felt listening to *The Well Tempered Circle*. I was not accustomed to nonlinear music and did not learn how to appreciate its nonlinear qualities. Listeners also have another possibility when listening to vertical music: they can “enter the verticality” and stop thinking about clock time passing. These people experience timelessness: the experience of an eternal present.

How do we listen “creatively and intensely” to vertical music? We have to be interested in bringing our attention to the nonlinear aspects of the music. However, when reading Kramer, it can be misleading for the reader to interpret this as though we have to bring a lot of active effort to fulfil this. I think that we can draw an analogy between listening to vertical music and meditating. There are many different ways of meditating, but most of the time, the concept is similar: you bring your awareness to an object of focus. This can be an internal object, like your breath, or a specific or general physical sensation. The object of focus can also be external: the sounds around you, or the sensation of the sun shining on your face. The idea is to be aware of what is going on in the present moment. Awareness, however, is not something that involves active thought. It is rather stepping back from the content of our thoughts. A phenomenon that is labelled by psychologists as “cognitive defusion” (Cox, 2022). It can be problematic to understand Kramer’s writings as though you have to “think” actively about what is going on in the abstract sound world of the vertical pieces. You simply “are” with what

is going on. You are just present with the sounds that are happening in the moment. That is for me a real timeless experience.

Notice how Kramer stresses the fact that listeners who don't experience timelessness did not learn, "did not cultivate the ability," to enter the verticality of the composition (Kramer, 1988, p. 377). From my own experiences, I also noted that I started to become a more active and creative listener when I got more acquainted with this type of music. In other words, I learned, and I am still learning, how to appreciate vertical music. Furthermore, on some days it feels just natural and easy to appreciate this abstract sound world, on other days it can feel like a daunting task, evoking feelings of boredom.

Interestingly, boredom does not have to be a bad experience according to John Cage. He sees boredom as an opportunity to become more curious and to discover things that you have never encountered before. In a conversation with Morton Feldman, Cage explains why people get bored easily and defends how boredom can be valued.

JOHN CAGE: Boredom is not so bad and not really boring, you know. This is something I have known all along from Zen Buddhism. You know that story, if something is boring, after two minutes, try it for four, after four try it for eight, etcetera... You'll eventually find it isn't boring. People are constantly complaining. Almost every day somebody tells me that things are boring. Things aren't boring. Our music isn't boring. It is just that they – people - manage somehow, with these things they say are boring, not to get with them. Once they get with them, then boredom is the last thing that enters their mind. However, even while it is boring, I would say that it is something to be valued and experienced. Haven't you noticed that when your work gets really boring, as when you're copying out something that you had written, you know, it is at that moment that ideas begin to fly into your head, when you're really bored. It brings you closer and closer to the actual experience of -say- that *ocean* we were talking about. In which some other fish that you have ever encountered might suddenly appear.

MORTON FELDMAN: and eat up all the other things...

J.C.: [laughs] But then, who can speak of boredom nowadays really... Who has his eyes or ears at least a little bit open... The only one who can speak of boredom is the one who isn't really paying attention to what is happening (Cage & Feldman, 1966).

Cage emphasizes that the listener needs to pay attention to what is going on in order to not be bored. The listener needs to “get with these things they say are boring.” It is interesting to see how Cage also draws a parallel between meditation practice — Zen Buddhism — and listening to the music of his contemporaries. And lastly, how boredom can be valued. It is in these moments of boredom that you get new ideas, that you get inspired, he argues. You might encounter “some other fish;” or you might experience something that is truly new.

## 2.5 Morton Feldman's approach towards temporality

The composer whose music perhaps best epitomizes vertical time was Morton Feldman. While Cage has remained concerned with the compositional process, which can be linear even when the resulting music is not, Feldman simply put down one beautiful sound after another. Feldman's aesthetic had nothing to do with teleology: “I make one sound and then I move on to the next.” (Kramer, 1988, p. 386)

As you can read in this citation, Jonathan Kramer considers that the music of Morton Feldman is one of the finest examples of vertical time. The simple phrase “Feldman simply put down one beautiful sound after another” is a crucial one. It refers to Feldman's non-methodological approach, a different approach than Cage's, according to Kramer, who remained concerned with the compositional process. Feldman's primal concern instead was the music's material — sound (as discussed in section 1.2.1). A concern that comes within the framework of his supreme goal, that of *Time Undisturbed*.

What does Feldman's *Time Undisturbed* mean? I think it can be synonymous with Kramer's *timelessness*. Time is still passing by, the hands of the clock are still ticking away, but we are no longer aware of it when listening to this kind of music. According to Feldman, to have music that is *Time Undisturbed*, is to have music without any element of differentiation (Feldman, (1969) 2000 , p. 87). When he talks about music without any element of differentiation, as I observed in 1.2.2, he is talking about music in which sounds are intended to be heard for their physical quality. In this sense, the lack of differentiation in the music implies a lack of causality as well. The sounds do not differentiate; they do not develop, nor grow towards a certain goal. Feldman's sounds are allowed to be themselves, in the context of the holistic principles of his compositions.

As we have seen in 2.3, Kramer observes that even music that is strongly nonlinear will be linear to a certain degree. I think Feldman's music inevitably contains traces of musical linearity, as I will demonstrate in the two analyses of Chapter 3. As I discussed 1.2.2, Feldman considered his music to be *Between Categories*. Feldman's music is striving towards nonlinearity, but I consider it to be still somehow "between" linearity and nonlinearity.

In the next chapter, I will analyse Feldman's two clarinet works, *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961) and *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), building upon the historical and aesthetical context I have constructed so far. My attempt is to understand and describe how Feldman wrote these specific pieces to bring him closer to his ultimate goal of timelessness, or "Time Undisturbed."



## Chapter 3: An analysis of two clarinet works of Morton Feldman

### 3.1 Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet (1961)

*Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* is dedicated to David Oppenheim, dean of the art department of the New York University and the same clarinetist for whom Leonard Bernstein wrote his *Sonata* (1942) (Hevesi, 2007). Written in 1961, *Two Pieces* is an early work of Feldman, very similar to his series of *Durations* (1960-1961), with which it shares an indeterminate notation, specifically a free durational approach.<sup>6</sup>

As illustrated below (Figure 7), the score is divided into five staves which are not divided into measures by any bar lines. Apart from that, precise rhythmic values (such as quarter-, eighth- or sixteenth-notes) are also not employed. Instead, the sounds are represented by black note heads or more exceptionally grace notes, and the silences are represented by fermatas placed over empty spaces. Feldman leaves the following instructions for the performers:

The first sounds with all instruments simultaneously. The duration of each sound is chosen by the performer. All sounds should be played with a minimum of attack. Dynamics are very low throughout. Numbers indicate the amount of silent beats between the sounds. Clarinet sounds as written. (Feldman, *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet*, 1961).

According to Feldman's instructions, each performer has the freedom to choose the duration of each sound, within the boundaries given by his tempo indications (between 76 and 92 BPM in the first piece, and 52 and 76 BPM in the second piece). Apart from the first note, which is played simultaneously by all instruments, vertical alignments in the score are most unlikely to correspond to actual sounding vertical relationships, since the performers can move through the piece at different speeds. They can even decide to speed up, slow down or maintain the same tempo; in line with Feldman's instructions, all these options are possible.

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<sup>6</sup> See 1.2.4 for my overview on Feldman's different notational strategies.

TO DAVID OPPENHEIM  
**TWO PIECES FOR CLARINET AND STRING QUARTET**

Morton Feldman

♩ = 76-92

I

Figure 7. *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961), I, first system

Mathematically, there is a greater chance for the players to grow more and more apart, towards the end of the piece. In both pieces, with some small exceptions, one staff consists of 17 durations (17 black headed notes and fermatas). Imagine the most extreme situation in the first piece: if one voice consistently proceeds at 76 BPM, the slowest possible tempo, and another one consistently at 92 BPM, the fastest possible tempo, the fastest voice would reach the end of the first system, second system and the end of the piece respectively 2,33 seconds, 4,66 seconds and 18,64 seconds before the slowest voice. In the second piece, this difference is even larger, as the fastest voice could reach the end of the first system 6,20 seconds and the end of the piece 24,78 seconds faster than the slowest voice.<sup>7</sup> As the piece moves on, it becomes increasingly less likely that the actual simultaneities produced in the performance will correspond to the vertical alignments in the score.

Another indeterminate feature of *Two Pieces* is Feldman's frequent use of fermatas throughout both pieces. Sometimes, they stand on an empty space in the bar or on an empty space with a number, indicating the duration of the fermata (as indicated by

<sup>7</sup> For these calculations, I excluded the undetermined length of the fermatas and counted them as one duration.



the green circles in Figure 7 above). Other times, the fermatas are placed on a note (as indicated by the orange circles in Figure 7 above). In both cases, the length of the rest or the note is left to the discretion of the performer. Feldman uses these fermatas as an indeterminate strategy to help preventing a sense of metrical regularity to emerge. In addition, in most cases performers don't have fermatas at the same time. They will therefore lose track of each other in the score at a particular moment, giving them less possibilities to play *together*, make cues or follow each other's tempo by accelerating or slowing down together. In this way, Feldman suggests the performers should "mind their own business" by focusing exclusively on their own line, as though five people were saying unrelated things at the same time in the same room. As a result, it is much harder to understand what those people are actually "saying." Because of the individuality and unrelatedness of the different voices, we cannot make sense of the whole anymore. What we are left with are sounds, without their semantic value.

These indeterminate strategies are all reaching towards Feldman's ideal of timelessness or "Time Undisturbed." In trying to follow Feldman's ideal aesthetics, the players should perform the work in such a way as to celebrate every sound for its material quality. This implies that every sound is of equal importance and that no causal relationships between them can be perceived (a sound not being a cause or a consequence of another sound). However, leaving the performers free to choose their tempo has a problematic aspect. As I discussed in section 1.2.4, Feldman noticed that performers sometimes brought their own conditioned musical habits into the performance of indeterminately notated music. The conditions created by Feldman in *Two Pieces* still allow the performers to give a sense of direction and causality to the music, if they wish so. They have the possibility of consciously or unconsciously reacting to each other, making cues or creating a hierarchy that implies causal relationships between the different sounds. Let me exemplify with Figure 8 below. In the fourth system, the clarinetist (red) and the cellist (blue) could both decide to delineate a phrase that moves towards the high-pitched notes. Since Feldman demands to remain as soft as possible, doing this with the help of dynamics is not an option. However, they could attempt to create a phrase by manipulating the tempo—for example by accelerating towards the high note and remaining slightly more time on the top note. By delineating a phrase that moves towards the higher note, they create a sense

of direction and hierarchy on a local level.<sup>8</sup> In my opinion, performing in such a way as to highlight these possibilities of hierarchy and horizontal direction, is not conforming to Feldman's ideal of vertical aesthetics, in which he wanted his sounds to be heard for their individual sounding qualities, not for their participation in any sort of musical syntax.

Figure 8. *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961), I, fourth system

In Feldman's instructions, we can also find the indication to play with a minimum of attack and with very low dynamics. As I discussed in 1.2.3, Feldman wanted his sounds to be very soft in order to make it less obvious which individual instrument is playing and help the sounds blend with one another. In this way, he attempts not to evoke the cultural and historical associations that we tend to make with each individual instrument. I think this strategy helps the individual instrumental sounds blend with each other in *Two Pieces*, too. Feldman's instruction to play with a minimum of attack is a practical example of his aesthetic idea of the sounds "leaving us rather than coming toward us" (Feldman, (1965) 2000, p. 25). Minimizing the attack helps to avoid a sense of pulse and metrical hierarchy. Also, by being kept throughout the whole piece, these two elements — soft dynamics and a minimum of attack — are permanent, nonlinear principles.

<sup>8</sup> According to Kramer, using a non-pitch parameter, such as tempo, to create a cadence is a characteristic of certain type of temporality that he calls non-directed linear time (Kramer, 1988, p. 33).

In 1.2.2, I observed how the interrelated phenomena of tonality and meter are linked to music's imaginary content (according to Karol Berger). In 2.1.2, I discussed how tonality and linearity are inextricably linked for Kramer, and in 2.1.3, we saw how Michael Klein connects non-narrative music with the absence of tonality. In *Two Pieces*, it seems at times as though Feldman avoids the establishment of a tonal centre in order to hear the notes for their individual, material sound quality, and not for their participation in any sort of a tonal syntax. If we inspect the pitches played by the individual instruments at the beginning of both pieces, we can observe that Feldman uses an almost serial approach. In the first piece for example, the clarinet starts by playing ten different pitch classes before repeating any one of them (F is the first repeated pitch-class). In general, all instrument parts play a high number of different pitch classes before repeating one. This helps avoid any sense of tonal hierarchy to emerge. However, since the maximum number (12) is not reached, some pitch classes will inevitably be of a little higher importance than others. Is this a flaw in Feldman's quest towards timelessness? Actually, I think that Feldman the anti-methodologist just did not concern himself with following any rules — serial or otherwise.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, an F in the lowest register of the clarinet or an F in the clarion register (two octaves above) are totally different sound worlds. He did not choose to repeat the F in order to give that pitch class more prominence; he chose each of the two different *pitches* for their timbre or sound colour. The quotes below show how Feldman did not think in serial terms, but rather in terms of register and timbre:

[...] instead of the twelve-tone as a concept, I'm involved with all the eighty-eight notes. I have a big, big world there. [...] In fact, I can't hear a note unless I know its instrument. I can't hear a note to write it down unless I know immediately its register (Feldman, 1984).

Therefore, we could also think of Feldman's harmony (that is, his choice of notes) in nonlinear terms and not as a functional phenomenon of cause and effect. Also, due to the indeterminate features of the work, its harmony can, and most probably will be, different in every performance, with an increasing unlikelihood that the actual sounding vertical alignments of the performance will correspond to the visual vertical alignments in the score towards the end of both pieces. Nevertheless, Feldman gives more prominence to certain notes, by repeating them or making them recur more

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<sup>9</sup> See 1.2.1 for my discussion on Feldman and his non-methodological approach.

frequently. In the first two systems of the first piece for example, the clarinet repeats more frequently C4 and D5, the viola D3 and C#3 and the cello D2 and C#3. In general, the pitch classes D and C# are present or prominent in all five voices in the beginning of the piece. In the first two systems, the clarinet plays the D over 6 durations and the C# over 3, the first violin the D over 1 and the C# over 1, the second violin the D over 2 and the C# over 2, the viola the D over 2 and the C# over 2, the cello the D over 7 and the C# over 7. The last system of the first piece is even dominated by a final sonority: (C#3, G#3, C4, Bb4, G#6). However, with the piece's indeterminate structure set up by a free durational notation and a generous use of fermatas, Feldman seems to deny a linear logic of functional harmony. Especially towards the end of the piece, when the rhythmic indeterminacy is taking its largest proportions, there is no certainty at all as to whether the final sonority will actually become an audible reality.

While the first piece is characterized by a general sense of lack of harmonic organization— apart from the more prominent notes and the final sonority — the second piece presents a much more definite harmonic outcome. There is one note in every voice that gradually becomes more prominent: B2 in the cello, G3 in the viola, G#3 in the second violin, Bb3 in the clarinet and C#5 in the first violin. When we reach the second half of penultimate system, there is only this (B2, G3, G#3, Bb3, C#5)-sonority left until the end of the piece (as can be seen in Figure 9 below, showing the last system of the piece). But here again, while the pitches become more and more definite, the piece becomes more and more indeterminate, because there is a greater chance for the players to grow more and more apart towards the end of the piece, as I demonstrated above. Because of the piece's indeterminate aspects, it is not totally certain that the final sonority will become reality.

Figure 9. *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961), II, last system

A final aspect that I would like to discuss is texture. In both pieces, Feldman creates different textural densities, something which is already quite obvious when looking at the score. In order to measure these densities, I have made two graphs showing the amount of sounds per duration (see Figures 10 and 11). This amount can go from zero (when all instruments have a written silence) to six (due to the grace notes, the amount of sounds per duration can be higher than the amount of instruments).

When observing the graphs, you can notice that the first piece is in general denser than the second one. In the former, the moving average trendline<sup>10</sup> shows us that the number of sounds per duration mostly stays around three to four. In the second piece, this number is lower, around one to two. Another noteworthy aspect is that the first piece clearly displays some “textural waves.” At the beginning, the amount of sounds is quite constant. From duration 25, the music becomes gradually sparser, to then slowly grow again until around duration 82. From there on, we observe a more pronounced dip until around duration 100, to then grow again, and so on. These varying textural densities are visually clear, both in the score and in a chart. However, due to the indeterminate notation of the piece, the audible reality will most probably be different from the textural waves visually represented in the score and in the graphs below. The waves presented by the graphs below present an average outcome. The further we advance in the piece, the more improbable this outcome will be, since the possibility of the

<sup>10</sup> This moving average trendline, with a period of ten, shows the average amount of sounds of every last ten durations.

instruments growing apart increases the further we move in the piece. In the second piece, these waves are less obvious, as the moving average trendline stays much more constant. Noteworthy is also that in the audible reality, in contrast to the visual representations, the end of the pieces will most likely be the most sparse of all, because the performers that advanced at the slowest rate will be finishing alone. This “fading-out” in some way implies that the piece is reaching its end, something which is then actually confirmed. This could be an instance of a more linear characteristic in a predominantly vertical environment. In this sense, *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* is not a textbook example of *vertical music*. Feldman creates hierarchy by giving more emphasis to certain notes, he gradually grows towards final sonorities and he announces a formal ending by gradually having less sounds and more silences. However, his indeterminate notation offers a counterweight to these more linear features and the resultant indeterminacy helps the listener reach a state of timelessness, of Time Undisturbed.

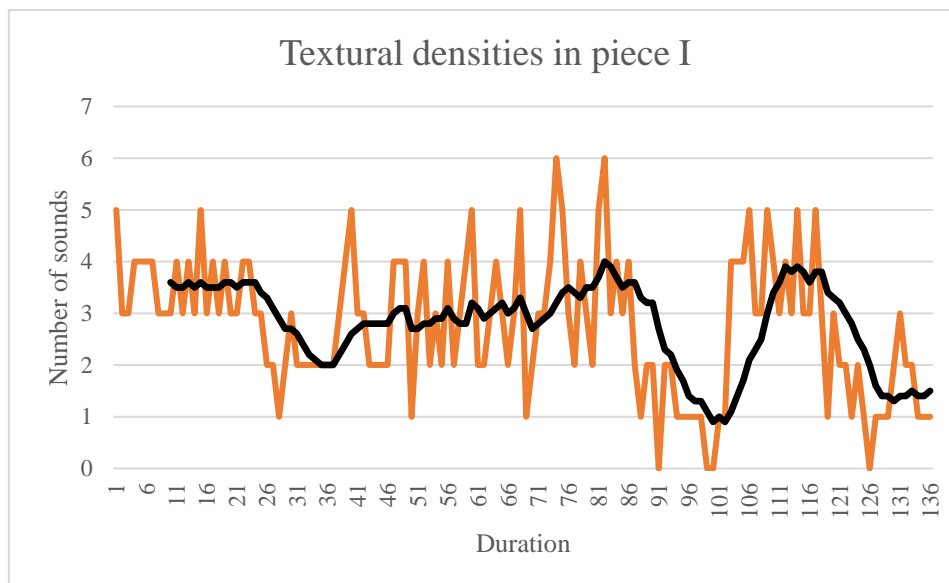


Figure 10. *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961), Orange: number of sounds per duration in piece I. Black: the moving average trendline with a period of 10.

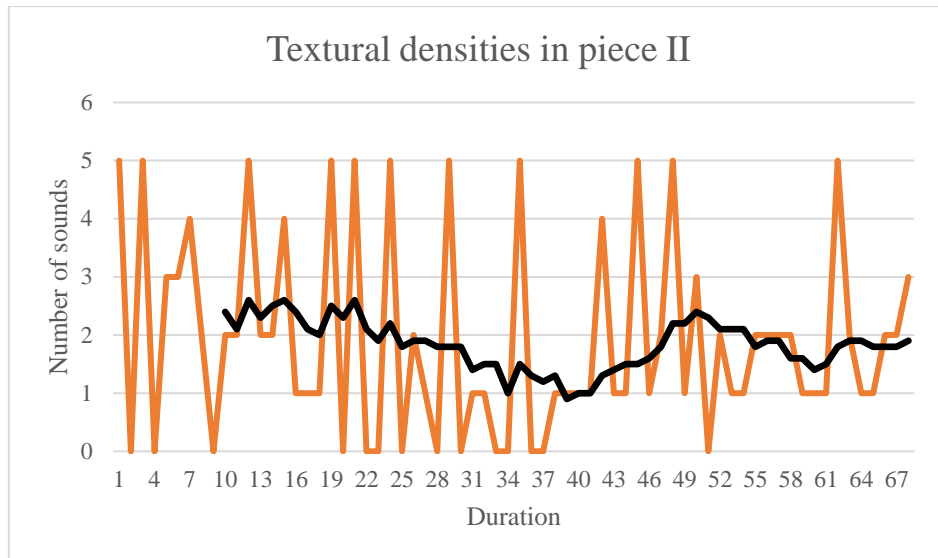


Figure 11. *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* (1961), orange: number of sounds per duration in piece II. Black: the moving average trendline with a period of 10

### 3.2 Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano (1971)

Morton Feldman wrote *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* in 1971, ten years after *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet*. Here, we encounter Feldman's most precise notational style. This piece can therefore be seen among Feldman's most determinate works, his "still-life"-works, as discussed in 1.2.4. *Three Clarinets* is similar in its notation and aesthetic orientation to *The Viola in My Life*, one of Feldman's most famous works, written in 1970, the year before.

Nelson categorizes *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* as an "orchestration piece" (Nelson, 2010, pp. 51-62). In so-called "orchestration pieces," the timbral characteristics of the different instruments form the foundation for the formal structure of the composition. Indeed, Feldman didn't choose the unusual instrumentation of *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* by accident. One particularly important aspect is that the characteristics of the three clarinets are opposed to the characteristics of the piano. The clarinet is well-known for its potential to start a sound with a minimal, sometimes imperceptible, attack. Besides that, like other wind instruments it is capable of sustaining the sound or making a crescendo. In contrast, the piano stands as a percussive instrument where the attack will always be louder than the rest of the (decaying) sound. The cello mediates between these two tendencies, having the capability of producing both stronger attacks, followed by an inevitable decay (with pizzicatos), and softer attacks, followed by a crescendo (in bowed sonorities) (Nelson, 2010, p. 52). The

opposition between percussive and sustained sounds will have implications on both the micro- and macrostructures of the piece.

Interestingly, Feldman was not the first composer to write a work for three clarinets. Composers as Stravinsky, with *Berceuses du chat* (1915), Schoenberg, with *Suite Op. 29* (1925), and Dallapiccola, with the *Goethe-Lieder* (1953), have preceded him in this regard. However, while these composers created fine contrapuntal relationships between the individual clarinet voices, Feldman chose to treat the clarinet trio as if it were a single instrument. The second and third clarinet never play alone, but always together with the first. Their rhythms are always equal, and even their dynamics, with some small exceptions, are the same (Nelson, 2010, pp. 54-55).

The precise notation of *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* gave Feldman new possibilities of reaching his ideal of Time Undisturbed. An obvious characteristic of the work is its continual changes of time signature. These frequent changes of notated meter in combination with long, frequent silences, and long, static notes leave the listener without any clue of a perceivable meter. By changing the time signature in such an unpredictable way, it is very hard for the listener to predict and feel a metrical pulse.

Another new possibility opened up by precise notation is to coordinate patterns of crescendo and diminuendo in more than one instrument. Throughout the whole piece, Feldman eagerly makes use of (gradual) dynamical changes, something his indeterminate notation did not allow. At first thought, we think of crescendo and decrescendo as linear features, because they can give the music a sense of direction and phrase structure. However, these phrases lack an internal differentiation. Each one of them might evoke a sense of closure or cadence, but there does not seem to be any sense of some cadences being stronger and other ones weaker (a crucial element for creating a greater feeling of linear hierarchy).

Furthermore, there are a lot of melodic or motivic fragments scattered throughout the piece, but the way they are used actually contributes to a sense of vertical temporality. Feldman was inspired by the way Robert Rauschenberg used photographs in his paintings. Just like Rauschenberg superimposed photographs — familiar images — on an abstract painting, Feldman superimposed his melodic and motivic fragments — familiar sound-images — on a static sound world (Feldman, (1971-1972) 2000). Nelson defines these melodic/motivic fragments as “translated



verticalities rather than goal-driven melodic fragments” (Nelson, 2010, p. 64). Feldman himself underlines the repetitive, non-developing, vertical quality of these melodies when discussing *The Viola in My Life*:

The recurrent melody serves no structural function. It comes back more as a “memory” than as something that moves the work along. Situations repeat themselves with subtle changes rather than developing (Feldman, (1971-1972) 2000)

In what follows, I will demonstrate, by analysing some excerpts of the piece, how Feldman used the characteristics of his instrumentation as structure-defining and how he fits the new possibilities offered by precise notation into his aesthetics of Time Undisturbed.

Figure 12 (showing the beginning of the piece) presents the first situation of the piece where the opposition between the clarinet and the piano has structural implications (on a micro level). In measure 4, the first clarinet starts a long Db in *ppp*, which then grows in dynamics with a small crescendo until the piano enters with a cluster-like chord — [F#, G, Ab, B, C, Db], a member of set-class (012456). In measure 5, only the D flat of the piano stays, in this way achieving an effect of decay with the same pitch class that had been introduced by the clarinet.

Figure 12. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), mm. 1-7 (1<sup>st</sup> system) © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien

In the second and the third systems (Figures 13 and 14), we can observe how the clarinet-piano opposition has implications on a larger structural level that spans over

two systems. Measures 7-14 are characterized by two long, gradually decaying piano chords. Measures 15-22, on the other hand, are dominated by sustained clarinet chords. The cello fulfils an intermediary role. In measures 7, 9 and 11, it plays pizzicatos, aligning with the percussive, gradually vanishing sound of the piano. In measure 14, however, the cello has a long bowed note with a crescendo, which stands in opposition to the fading sound of the piano, and in measure 15 it displays a diminuendo that complements the crescendo in the clarinets. In measure 14, the cello functions as a preparation to the next measures that will be dominated by the sustained sounds and crescendos in the clarinets. The opposition of the decaying piano chords of measures 7-14 to the sustained clarinet chords of measures 15-22, linked to each other by the cello, is a beautiful example of how Feldman uses the inherent timbral characteristics of the instruments as structure-defining (on a macro level).

•) SOUND AS WRITTEN

(Ped.)

Figure 13. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), mm. 7-14 (2<sup>nd</sup> system) © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien



Figure 14. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), mm. 15-22 (3<sup>rd</sup> system) © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien

As I stated above, precise notation gave Feldman new possibilities in his quest towards Time Undisturbed. One of them was the possibility to coordinate patterns of crescendo and diminuendo in more than one instrument. As illustrated in Figure 15, the three clarinets grow simultaneously from *mf* to *ff* measures 28-29.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Note how Feldman sporadically makes use of *forte* dynamics in *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971). In 1966, during the second radio happening performed by John Cage and Morton Feldman, Cage observed how Feldman's works gradually evolved towards a more consistent use of soft dynamics and towards fewer loud sounds (Cage & Feldman, 1966). However, in Feldman's works from the early seventies, like *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano*, his precise notation gave him the possibility to experiment with some dynamic outbursts.



Figure 15. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), mm. 28-29 © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien

In addition, the new precise notational means gave Feldman the possibility to write “melodies” with fixed pitch *and* rhythm. Throughout the whole piece, there are actually several melodic fragments that are repeated. Interestingly, these fragments give the listener a sense of movement, but not of development. The first example can be found in measure 2 (Figure 16), an arpeggiated pizzicato motif played by the cello. This fragment will be repeated by the cello in measures 79 and 109. However, the arpeggio will stay identical in pitch, rhythm and dynamics. Due to the separation by pauses before and after the fragment, it is not connected to anything else. The motif does not transform, does not develop, it is rather a “fixed image of sound.”



Figure 16. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), cello, arpeggiated pizzicato motif © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien

In comparison to the identical reappearances of the arpeggiated pizzicato motif, the chromatic pizzicato motif — played by the cello as well — is subject to a greater degree of variation. In measure 26 (Figure 17), the chromatic pizzicato motif, characterized by its rise and fall of a minor second, appears for the first time. In measure 81 (Figure 18), it reappears with the same rhythm and dynamics but an octave below. In measures 112, 114 and 148 (Figures 19 and 20), the initial motif of measure 26 appears an octave below, with different dynamics and rhythmically augmented and diminished. However, all these variations of the chromatic pizzicato motif are isolated by considerably big pauses, for which reason they do not seem to be a consequence of a preceding musical event, nor do they seem to have a consequence on a following musical event. Besides, these motives might evoke a sense of closure or cadence, but it is not clear which cadences would have more weight. This means there is no sense of linear hierarchy between them. They are an example of “movement without transformation.” Feldman changes them, but rather in a way as to disorientate the listener: “did I hear this before?” They change, but not in any causal, linear way.



Figure 17. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), m. 26, cello, the first chromatic pizzicato motif © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien



Figure 18. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), m. 81, cello, chromatic pizzicato motif, an octave below © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien



Figure 19. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), mm. 112-114, cello, chromatic pizzicato motifs, different rhythms and dynamics © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien



Figure 20. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), m. 148, cello, chromatic pizzicato motif © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien

Similar to the chromatic pizzicato motif is a motif that I will call the “motif of seconds.” This motive will also appear in different shapes throughout the piece, but it can be encountered in both the cello and the piano part.

The motif of seconds makes its first appearance in the cello part in measure 47 (Figure 20): an upward minor second followed by a downward major second. In measures 49-52 (Figure 21), the cello repeats the motif twice, but with a downward minor second followed by an upward major second. Remarkably, Feldman did not write any pause between these two motifs; the second motif continues the diminuendo of the first and almost fades-out into *ppp*. The diminuendo of the first motif, the first event, has an implication on the characteristics of the second motif, the second event, which we could consider as linearity on a small scale. In measures 54-57 (Figure 22), the motif is repeated twice again, but here it appears twice in exactly the same shape, without any progression. In measures 69-70 (Figure 24), the motif is picked up by the clarinet in a solo passage, but here it begins with a downward major second, followed by an upward minor second, thereby mirroring the initial shape of the motif set up by the cello. However, the mirroring of the initial motif by the clarinet, with twenty-two measures of long notes and silences in between, leaves the listener wonder: “did I hear this before?” Again, an example of how Feldman disorientates the listener’s memory.

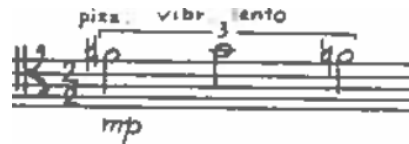


Figure 21. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), m. 47, cello © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien

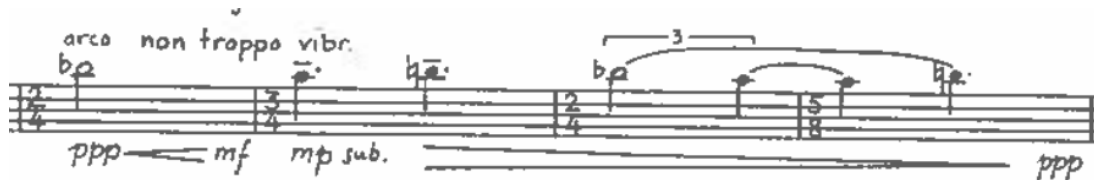


Figure 22. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), mm. 49-52, cello © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien

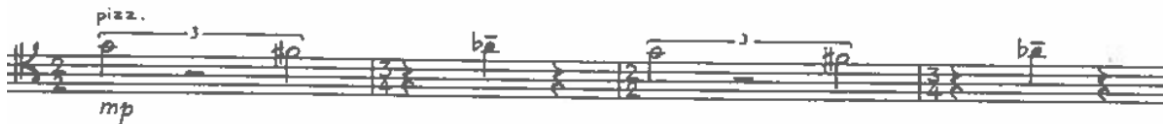


Figure 23. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), mm. 54-57, cello © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien



Figure 24. *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* (1971), mm. 69-70, clarinet © Reproduced by kind permission of Universal Edition A.G., Wien

Making use of the possibilities of precise notation, Morton Feldman presents us seemingly more familiar images in *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano*: gradual dynamics and motivic fragments. However, due to their memory-disorientating, non-developing, non-causal transformations, these images hover somewhere “inbetween” the categories of familiarity and randomness and serve Feldman’s goal of Time Undisturbed. The only certainties the listener has are the constant, nonlinear and inherent characteristics of the different instrumental groups, defining both the micro-and macrostructures of the work.

In *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* and *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet*, Feldman strives to reach the same goal of Time Undisturbed by making use of very different compositional strategies. However, both works inevitably contain some traces of musical linearity, such as a hierarchy between the different pitches and a sense

of reaching an ending *Two Pieces*, and the ambiguity of the melodic-motivic fragments, balancing between familiarity and randomness, in *Three clarinets*. In the next chapter, I will try to help the audience in reaching an experience of Time Undisturbed or timelessness in *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet*, by giving them a more active role and by blurring the traditional boundaries between listener, environment, performer, and work, established by the classical music concert conventions.



## **Chapter 4: A new approach towards the performance of Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet (1961)**

### **4.1 The difficulty of listening to Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet (1961)**

The music seems to float, doesn't seem to go in any direction, one doesn't know how it's made, there doesn't seem to be any type of dialectic, going alongside it, explaining it. They [the audience] are not told how to listen, that is the problem. Most music listens for the public (Feldman, Morton Feldman, Earle Brown and Heinz-Klaus Metzger in Discussion, 1972).

In section 2.4, I discussed some of the challenges that vertical music presents to listeners. I shared two personal experiences of mine listening to vertical music in the concert hall and I discussed how these experiences were challenging for me as well. I also explained how, according to Kramer, listeners of vertical music are put in front of a choice: either they enter a state of timelessness or they become bored. Subsequently, in 2.5, I demonstrated how Morton Feldman's music leans toward vertical music and in the third chapter, I discussed how *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* and *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano* both exhibit many characteristics of vertical music.

*Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet*, in particular, puts the listener in front of a considerable challenge. Due to the absence of melody, functional harmony and meter, the listener will become frustrated if he or she tries to listen in a linear way. Of course, there is always the possibility that the listener will infer some causal relationships among the sounds which are present to him or her, but these causal relationships would be purely a coincidental result of the indeterminate notation — and, anyway, the listener would have to put in a considerable amount of effort to find them. In the absence of linear relationships between the sounds, the listener is only left with the material, physical quality of the sounds at any given moment; the listener is confronted with Kramer's "choice:" does he or she enter an altered psychological state of timelessness or does he or she become bored?

## 4.2 Another way of performing *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet*

*Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* is a very little known work, as there are very few recordings available and these have been listened to very little.<sup>12</sup> As far as I have been able to find out in my research, the work has always been performed in the context of a traditional classical music concert, the audience listening seated from beginning to the end of the work, and also without any integration of elements from other art disciplines. A possible disadvantage of this way of performing the piece is that it places the audience in too passive a position for it to be able to appreciate the nonlinearity of the music. As I discussed in 2.2.2, in order to reach an interesting and personal experience of vertical music, it is important for the listener to be active and creative in his or her listening attitude. A performance of *Two Pieces* in a conventional concert setting might give the listener the “conventional expectations” of a musical narrative. However, *Two Pieces* is about nothing else than its own material. The listener might not know how to listen to this type of music and become bored.

In 2.2.2, I discussed how according to Kramer, the fusion between listener, environment, performer, piece, composer, etc., enhances a state of timelessness. We saw how composers like Cage, Xenakis and Lunetta blurred the boundaries between the different elements of a musical performance and how that could suggest a state of timelessness. In the traditional way of performing *Two Pieces*, I think that the boundaries set up by the classical concert conventions are quite strong. The performers are seated on stage, separated from the audience. They are in action, playing music, probably wearing concert clothes, while the audience is passive, seated, wearing a different type of clothes than the performers. An applause and other classical music concert formalities create clear separations between “the before,” “the during” and “the after” spectacle. This passive role of the audience might stand in the way of reaching a state of timelessness, as noted by Kramer:

If a nonteleological piece is to be appreciated and enjoyed, the listener must become a creative participant in making the music. He or she must chunk it,

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<sup>12</sup> The only CD-album featuring recordings of Feldman's *Two Pieces* is *Morton Feldman: Clarinet and String Quartet* by the Pellegrini Quartet (Feldman, 2010). On YouTube, there is also a performance available by students of the Boston University: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrTmM3USmwQ> (Lister, 2015).

according to individual criteria (since the music usually lacks unequivocal cues). He or she must create its hierarchies. He or she must provide contrast, by focusing attention on different aspects. The listener can thus become more important to the music than the composer. In this way he or she becomes a part of the music, and thus the distinction between the self and the other, the listener and the music, is minimized (Kramer, 1988, p. 384)

I wanted to find out whether there would be a different way of presenting *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet*, one in which listeners could reach a more intense experience of timelessness. As an experiment, I thought of comparing two different ways of performing *Two Pieces*: one in a traditional concert setting, and another one in an exhibition-like environment, in which the audience is free to walk around and “visit” both the performers and the visual works of art.

The first performance, in a traditional classical music concert setting, took place on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2022, at 11h, in the intimate concert hall *Teresa Macedo* at ESMAE (*Escola Superior de Música e Artes do Espectáculo*) in Porto. Due to the indeterminate features of this work, every single performance will most likely be different.<sup>13</sup> I thus opted to play the work twice, without having the audience applaud between the two versions. Repeating the work allowed me, on the one hand, to demonstrate to the audience how every single performance of the work is different. On the other hand, doubling the duration of the performance gave the audience more time to let go of their linear expectations and enter in the vertical time sense created by the music.

Apart from this repetition, the performance had all the formalities of a common classical music concert, placing the traditional boundaries between performer, listener, composer, and piece. We, the performers, dressed in performer’s clothes different from those of the audience, entered the hall and went to the stage (the performer’s space). Following that, the audience, seated in their own space, applauded, creating a separation between “before” and “during” performance. We then (actively) played the work, while listeners remained (passively) seated and immobile. Ultimately, the audience clapped again, separating “during” and “after” performance.

The other performance took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May, at 21.30h, in the entrance hall of FBAUP (*Faculdade das Belas Artes da Universidade do Porto*). In this case, the

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<sup>13</sup> See 3.2 for an analysis of the work

audience experienced *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* in a way that lies somewhere between a concert and an exhibition visit.<sup>14</sup> My purpose was to give the audience a more active role and I tried to blur the traditional boundaries normally established by a conventional concert of classical music.

For my collaboration with FBAUP, I was brought into contact with Fernando José Pereira, a visual artist, teacher and director of the PhD course of the visual arts department at FBAUP. We thought that an early work of his, inspired by New York School painters, would be perfect for the occasion. In the entrance hall of the FBAUP, two dark columns of acrylic painting, part of the abstract paintings *Untitled* (1991) of Fernando José Pereira were exposed. At first sight, the columns seem black, but when you take a closer look at them in the right light, you discover that they are actually coloured. Made of wood and canvas, F.J. Pereira covered the columns repeatedly in many layers of paint, until their opaque, dark colour was obtained. According to art curator Paulo Pereira, *Untitled* (1991) was influenced by the painters Mark Rothko, Ad Reinhardt and Robert Ryman (Pereira, 1991). All of these painters were connected to or part of the New York abstract expressionists and Rothko in particular had a very strong artistic and friendly bond with Feldman. Apart from Fernando José Pereira's work, replicas of Michelangelo's statues *Dying Slave* and *Rebellious Slave* (1513), and the neoclassical architectural richness of the entrance hall of the building contributed to the sense of visiting an exhibition or a museum.<sup>15</sup>

It is important to note that I did not have the intention to create an interaction between the visual artworks and Feldman's *Two Pieces*. The paintings, the statues, the architecture of the building and Feldman's music existed independently from each other. Note the similarities with Cage's *Theater Piece #1* (1952), as discussed in 2.2.2. However, whereas Cage created an overload of information because of the great amount of actions going on at the same time, my aim was to motivate the audience to approach the music in the same way they would approach the paintings and the visual artworks of the space in general: by walking around the performers and the artworks and thus listening and viewing them from different visual and aural perspectives.<sup>16</sup> My purpose

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<sup>14</sup> For the video of a part of the performance, see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SvwfA1PH9M>.

<sup>15</sup> *Casa de São Lázaro*, consisting of the actual buildings of FBAUP, was constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is today categorized as a *monumento de interesse público*, a monument of public interest.

<sup>16</sup> See 2.2.2 for an analogy between approaching a visual artwork and vertical music.

was to help the audience leave their passive role and create a very personal, “vertical” experience.

Not only the possibility of moving around helped the audience become more active and creative; it also assisted in blurring the separation between listeners and performers. The fact that the members of the audience could move around and in-between the performers blurred the separation between performer’s space and listener’s space. Actually, it was not only the audience that moved. We played *Two Pieces* seven times in a row, and after the third repetition, we started switching location every time before a new repetition would start. By moving around between the repetitions, we wanted to help the audience understand that the music could be listened to from different perspectives, and that every single listener would have a very personal experience.

I tried to erase the separations between pre-, during- and post-concert by starting the event too early on purpose. The official starting hour of the concert was 21.30h, but we already began playing at 21.20h, when the vast majority of people had not yet entered the hall. In this way, I tried to create the sensation that the music was part of the space, as though it had always been there. After playing all the repetitions, we simply left the hall in silence, making the audience wonder whether the spectacle was actually finished or not.

By being able to move around and thus *create* their own listening experience, the audience was able to take over a part of the role of the composer and performer. The performer, in turn, took over a part of the traditional role of the composer, by making decisions regarding the durations of the sounds (in line with the indeterminate score). The performer also took over a part of the role of the audience, by being able to walk around between the pieces, just like the audience was able to do so. As a detail, we used our day-to-day clothing as a performer to become more equal with the audience and to make less distinction between “us” and “them.”

### **4.3 A report of the two performances of *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet***

In order to understand how the audience experienced the two performances of *Two Pieces*, I took semi-structured interviews with a selected group of people who attended both events. I did not have the aim to statistically compare the two performances in

order to find out which one presents the “objectively best” experience. Rather, my intention was to understand how people felt during both events by sharing their individual experiences and honest opinions with me. This would allow me to see if my intentions of giving the audience a more active role and creating a fusion between listener, performer, space and work, gave them a more intense experience of timelessness.

The group of people I interviewed consisted of three classical music students, one scenic art student and one composition student. I chose them because of their sensibility and their critical attitude as young art students. Also, I chose these particular people, of whom I knew everybody personally, because of their diversity in personality and opinions. Ideally, I would also have chosen some people from non-artistic backgrounds, but practical circumstances forced me to limit myself to this group of young artists. Aljaž Jazbinšek (born in 1999) is as a Slovenian Erasmus clarinet student — my only non-Portuguese interviewee. Sofia Belo (b. 2001) is a violin student at ESMAE and David Dos Santos (b. 2001) is a clarinet student at ESMAE. Rafaela Silva (b. 1998) is a scenic art student at ESMAE, and Dinis Znachonak (b. 1999) is a student of composition at ESMAE and a violin player. The interviews were semi-structured; I had a couple of standard questions that I asked everybody, and depending on their responses I would sometimes choose to enter in more detail on interesting aspects. I recorded and analysed all of the interviews.

Apart from Aljaž, none of my interviewees had heard the music of Morton Feldman before they attended one of these performances I organized. Some of them had not even heard of his name before. When coming into contact with his music for the first time, during the conventional concert at Teresa Macedo, they told me they had to listen to this music in a different way than they were used to. The absence of a sense of meter and melody gave them space to focus on other elements. Interestingly, different people chose to focus on different aspects, creating in this way their very personal experience. Aljaž and Dinis started to focus on the many sound colours produced by the string instruments. Sofia, as a string player, started to pay attention to the technical execution of the pizzicatos and the harmonics. Rafaela told me that while she was still aware of what she was hearing, she started to pay attention to the movements of our bodies, the way we looked at each other and the space around us.

In general, the interviewees felt that the music was calm, relaxing, intimate, introspective and contemplative. When asked about their sense of time during the concert in ESMAE, it did not become very clear to me if they had experienced an altered time sense. Sofia reported that despite the short duration of the concert, time was passing by slowly for her. Aljaž had mixed feelings: for him, the concert passed by really quick, but “the moment” of the piece felt long. I think that the short duration of the concert, consisting of merely two repetitions of the work (a total of approximately 10 to 15 minutes) did not offer listeners enough time to calm down and immerse themselves in the music.

In FBAUP, most people of the audience entered the hall while we were already playing the music. I have to admit that the noises made by the door opening and closing, by the street and by people whispering to each other while entering the hall, disturbed the purity of the sounds during the first two repetitions of *Two Pieces*. However, for the people I interviewed, this aspect added value to their experience. For Rafaela, it did not feel odd, it just felt “natural” that the performance was already going on, as though the music was perfectly suitable for this occasion. Aljaž stated that “It felt like I entered in the whole performance, with the place by itself. It was the whole package, and it made me really immerse into it.”

In the beginning, people didn't really understand which role to take up as an audience, so they stood still close to the entrance door.<sup>17</sup> Sofia shared with me that she felt out of her comfort zone. After this initial discomfort, however, people started to explore their freedom of movement during the performance and started to walk around. In general, the people I interviewed were very enthusiast about this active role they had. In the first place, it gave them the possibility of searching for other acoustical perspectives. For Dinis, “changing the angle of perspective of the audience in relationship to the action gave the piece a new freshness.” Furthermore, it made some audience members feel like they were part of the performance and of the piece. Sofia witnessed: “I had a much more active role, almost like a performer [...] Much more than the passive role I had in *Teresa Macedo*, sitting down,” and Aljaž mentioned to be part of the performance as well, because of his freedom of movement. Also David was

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<sup>17</sup> See the pictures of Attachment 2. Some of them show the initial phase of the concert, with the people standing altogether close to the entrance door.

encouraged in having a more active role, as he started to walk around and tried to connect the space and the music with one another. Rafaela chose to sit down during the whole performance, still listening from different perspectives, since we switched positions as performers.

Apart from the fusion between the roles of performer and listener, some people also felt a fusion between the performers and the space. Aljaž witnessed: “I was thinking about you guys not as performers but as a part of the exhibition.” The audience was visiting us, the performers, as if they were visiting the space and the paintings in that space. In this aspect, the different artworks (Feldman’s music, Pereira’s paintings and the space rich in architectural beauty) helped each other out in being appreciated. However, they did so not by complementing each other (for Rafaela the paintings did not add anything to the music, but did not disturb anything either), but by encouraging the audience to approach them in the same active way, by walking around them and to listen and watch from different perspectives.

Some of the interviewees made statements that suggested they had experienced an altered time sense or timelessness during the concert in FBAUP. Aljaž experienced time in a different way, by reporting that “in the spectre of the real time, it passed really fast,” and Sofia clearly had an experience of timelessness, mentioning “if they would have asked me at the end of the concert in the Faculty of Fine Arts what time it was, or how much time had passed, I would not have any clue, really.” David did not have any notion of time either, he was more concerned with the sounds he was hearing in the moment.

To conclude, I will shortly discuss three criticisms of the interviewees that I found most interesting. Sofia remarked that people should have been able leave the hall more freely in order to avoid applause. Because we started to play before the official starting hour, the audience entered dropwise while the music had already commenced. This helped to feed the sensation that the music had always been in the space. However, while playing, the audience did not leave the hall gradually. Instead, they stayed until the end and started clapping more or less a minute after the last note, which created a separation between the “during” and the “after” performance. I think Sofia’s remark is very helpful, and I agree with her. It was very difficult to avoid an official ending for the piece. This happened because, on the one hand, we chose to keep the door closed



out of practical reasons – to avoid street noises and the wind from entering the hall – which made it hard for the audience to leave the space while the performance was still going on; and, on the other hand, because our performance was limited in time (around 45 minutes), because of practical reasons having to do with the endurance of the performers. If I would do another interdisciplinary performance of *Two Pieces*, I would like to experiment playing the work over a much more extended period of time and go to the limits of our endurance as a performer. If the performance would have lasted several hours, it would become acceptable and natural to leave the performance while it was still going on.

Another remark, made by both David and Sofia, was that we could have used more paintings. After a short period of time, the audience had already “finished” viewing the two painted columns of Pereira and was left without any other painting to visit. A last interesting suggestion was made by Dinis, who said that we could memorise our parts as performers and walk around freely while performing. This would allow us to mix much more with the audience, by walking in-between them and being able to be in constant motion.

Every single member of the audience I interviewed explicitly stated that they preferred their experience in FBAUP over their experience in ESMAE. Concluding from the interviews, I think I managed to give the audience a more active role and to create a fusion between the different elements of the performance. This helped the audience become a creative participant in Morton Feldman's *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* and have a more intense encounter with his sounds of “Time Undisturbed.”



## Conclusion

Morton Feldman's unique aesthetical approach manifests itself in different compositional strategies, all trying to shift the focus from the traditional Western parameters of harmony and meter towards those of timbre and texture, putting the listener's attention on the material quality of the sounds and not on the causal relationships between them. By having discussed Feldman's aesthetical intentions in his readings and lectures, I demonstrated his wish for a sense of Time Undisturbed in his music, an ideal that can be linked to Jonathan Kramer's category of vertical time. Subsequently, we learned how his "vertical" compositions pose challenges to the listeners. In an absence of musical's linearity, indeed, they are put in front of a choice: either they hold to their linear expectations and find themselves bored and frustrated, or they become active and creative participants in the music and enter an altered time sense — one of timelessness or Time Undisturbed.

By analysing *Two Pieces for Clarinet and String Quartet* and *Three Clarinets, Cello and Piano*, we could compare Feldman's free durational notation with his precise notation and see how almost opposing notational strategies actually strive for the same ideal of timelessness, of Time Undisturbed. From studying these two works in detail, we could also conclude that, in spite of Feldman's intentions, his compositions would inevitably contain some traces of musical linearity.

By giving the audience a more active and creative role as a listener and by blurring the traditional boundaries established by the conventions of classical music concerts, I was able to bring the audience closer to an intense experience of Morton Feldman's music. I am well aware of the limitations of the empirical investigation of the last chapter. I only interviewed a small and rather homogenous group of people; we performed merely a small and relatively early work of Feldman; and it is doubtful if Feldman would have liked this approach towards his music, since, as far as I know, he has never given his opinion on this matter. However, I obtained very enthusiast and praising reactions from the interviewees, and I have brought a group of people, of whom the vast majority had not heard of Morton Feldman before, closer to his music. Therefore, I hope that this small and embryonic investigation could function as a starting point for future research and as an inspiration for other potential performers of Feldman's music. It would be interesting, for example, to see an interdisciplinary

approach towards his later works, ones which stretched over a much bigger span of time.<sup>18</sup> It would also be interesting to do a similar study, but with a larger and more diverse group of interviewees, in order to get more “objective” results. In any case, I hope that this work will motivate other performers, researchers and composers to discover the timeless sound world of Morton Feldman.

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<sup>18</sup> Feldman's *Clarinet and String Quartet* (1983) lasts about 40 minutes and works as *For Philip Guston* (1984) and *String Quartet no.2* (1983) last over four and five hours respectively.

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## Attachments

### Attachment I: pictures of the performance in ESMAE



## Attachment 2: pictures of the performance in FBAUP







ESCOLA  
SUPERIOR  
DE MÚSICA  
E ARTES  
DO ESPETÁCULO  
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**M**

MESTRADO  
MÚSICA - INTERPRETAÇÃO ARTÍSTICA  
SOPROS - CLARINETE

Morton Feldman' s clarinet works: a study on temporality  
and audience perception  
Martijn Susla

