
[teaspoons and variations]

2014

for prerecorded piano, iPods, dancers and winds

9'

Dane P. Yates

[teaspoons and variations]

2014

program notes

The piece outlines that a prerecorded 'sonic score' is played to dancers through headphones. Dancers are then free to interpret the piece through improvised movement. Players, situated elsewhere on stage, interpret these gestures musically; one dancer to each player.

The score is a prerecorded piano piece performed by myself in which I play a theme and variations piece. The 'score' is to be played on an iPod with 'shuffle mode' enabled so each variation by each other dancer will be in a random and altered order.

The number of performers is not of concern as the piece can stand as a solo, duet, trio, chamber or large ensemble piece. In the case of a solo performance, the score could be played on loud speaker along with the live instrument. Consideration should be taken of the location of performers and dancers so as interruption is not caused by either the score or live performance.

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dancer considerations

At the start of the performance, make sure all dancers are ready to 'play' the first track on their respective iPods. One dancer is to signal the point of playback so all tracks are synced up as close as possible. Please be sure that shuffle mode is enabled on iPod.

Dancers should take consideration as to the phrasing of the piano. Gestures should also follow the contour of given melody and phrases. Improvisation should allow for changes within the piece, including timing, height and depth of pitch, denseness and quality of sound, 'glitches' and other musical qualities of the given piece, perceiving of individual dynamics, including body, energy, space and time.

Ultimately, the desired performance of this piece is to move as your brain tells you to in response to the sonic cues, be as true to yourself and the piece as possible.

At a point of silence in the piece, dancers are to remain in their current position, or if difficult, to lower your head and remain standing straight and stationary.

As the piece finishes, try to hold your position as long as possible.

musical considerations

At the point of performance, players should take consideration in into how the dancers start the piece in terms of size and exaggeration of gesture.

Throughout out the piece, play close attention to extreme and minimal gestures. Phrases played should correspond to height or depth of gesture, as well as recognition of dancers dynamics; body, energy, space and time. Volume can be determined by the extent of given gestures.

If the given dancer is motionless then silence must be performed. Once a dancer is motionless, hold your last played note and slowly decrescendo.

Some given phrases could be quite slow and long, in which case breathe where needed.

The key of the 'sonic score' is (largely) in Eb, players may decide to use this or ignore.

Strong feelings of tempo and meter are not favored but are not discriminable.

At the end of performance, depending on how players given dancer finishes, players can decide as to whether to finish quite abruptly or slowly decrescendo.