

THE ENTRANCE

for two-manual electric keyboard organ

for Larry Leitch

Make 36 equal stacks of pennies; the number of pennies per stack is that minimum number that will cause any key on either manual to be activated. 18 stacks should be heads-up; the remaining 18, tails-up.

PROCEDURE

Begin by placing one "heads" stack on any key; then, place a "tails" stack on the corresponding key of the other manual.

...thereafter:

1) Place a stack, of either denomination, immediately next to (chromatically), or among, the stack(s) of the opposite denomination; thus, producing a display in which all of the "heads," but one --- the most recently placed stack --- (or, all of the "tails," but one) are on one manual, while the most recently placed "heads" stack (or, "tails" stack) is on the opposite manual.

2) Then, one at a time, move the stacks that were previously on the keyboard to their respective opposite manuals; thus, producing a display in which all of the "heads" are on one manual, while all of the "tails" are on the other manual.

3) Continue in this manner (repeating items 1 and 2 alternately) until all of the stacks are on the keyboard.

...when all of the stacks are on the keyboard in a uniform display, and thereafter:

4) Remove any single stack, taking from that stack one penny, which will represent that stack thereafter. Invert that penny, so that its denomination is opposite to that of the stack it represents and place it on the key from which the stack was removed; thus, producing a display in which all of the "heads," but one (or, all of the "tails," but one) are on one manual, while all of the stacks or pennies of the opposite denomination are on the other manual.

5) Then, one at a time, move all of the stacks or pennies, except the most recently placed one, to their respective opposite manuals; thus, producing a display in which all of the "heads" are on one manual, while all of the "tails" are on the other manual.

6) Continue in this manner (repeating items 4 and 5 alternately) until all of the stacks have been replaced, on the keyboard, by single pennies.

CONDITIONS

For some instruments, the standard stack of pennies will fully depress some keys, while other keys will be only partially or intermittently activated. In the process of placing the stacks on the keys, the point, of course, is to allow the weight of the stack to activate the key. Thus, it is contrary to the idea of the composition to depress a key before placing a stack on it.

In the process of moving stacks from one manual to the other (items 2 and 5) the "intervals" described by the moves are irrelevant. The objective is always to "fill" the displays chromatically.

The performance should be considered as one continuous action at a natural pace --- a pace that may vary with the physical complexity of the situation; i.e., caution should be exercised to avoid spilling the stacks. If a stack is spilled, it should be reassembled before proceeding.

Voicing is optional, except that added-octave distinctions between the two manuals should be avoided.

The dynamic level is optional, except that it should be unchanging for any one performance.

Robert Ashley
November, 1966

THE ENTRANCE comments

The work of producing the sounds of THE ENTRANCE takes about three hours.

What form should that work take?

Is it to be performed?

For whom is it to be performed?

Is the notion of presenting the work in a continuous span of time implicit in the idea of the composition?

What is the relationship between the work of producing the sounds and the sound world created by the composition?

Is the work more important than the sounds, or vice versa, or neither?

Can the sound world created by the composition be discovered without carrying out the work of producing the sounds?

How shall we prepare for a production of THE ENTRANCE?

What is the attitude of the person doing the work?

What is the relationship between the composition (sound and work) and persons who might hear the sound or observe the work and who may or may not be performing the work?

How shall we proceed?

EIGHT SOLUTIONS OUT OF A NUMBERLESS VARIETY

1. Assemble an audience and perform the work as though the idea of the composition and the audience's expectations were identical.
2. Eliminate the audience, but retain the notion of a performance.
3. Allow the audience (a body of people not directing the performance) to determine its own relationship to the performance, and retain the notion of a performance. (David Tudor)
4. Eliminate the notion of a performance, but allow for the possibility of a body of observers who may or may not consider themselves to be an audience.
5. Retain the notion of the composition as work performed, but eliminate the notion of performance:
 - a) record the composition without regard to the possibility of its reproduction;
 - b) record the composition under the strict limitations imposed by the requirements of reproduction. (e.g., having defined that the reproduction will last twenty-two minutes, train yourself to accomplish the work of performing the composition within that time.)

Item 5 suggests that neither performance nor audience need be retained as a convention in order to satisfy the requirements of the composition.

6. Eliminate the notion of a performance, and eliminate the audience. (music as imagination: George Brecht)
7. Allow for observers whose role is undefined, as in Item 4, and retain the notion of a performance, but eliminate the act of performing:
 - a) perform the composition in a place remote from the place where observers might assemble and without regard for the possibility of reproduction for those observers;
 - b) perform the composition in a place remote from possible observers, but allow for the possibility of immediate reproduction in a place that is open to observers.
8. Allow for observers whose role is undefined, as in Item 4, and retain the notion of the composition as work performed, but eliminate the notion of a performance, and eliminate the act of performing.

Robert Ashley
December, 1970