THIRD DIVERGENCE: REPRESENTATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

A Synthesis Project Presented

by

NATHAN D WEAVER

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ABSTRACT

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2012 May

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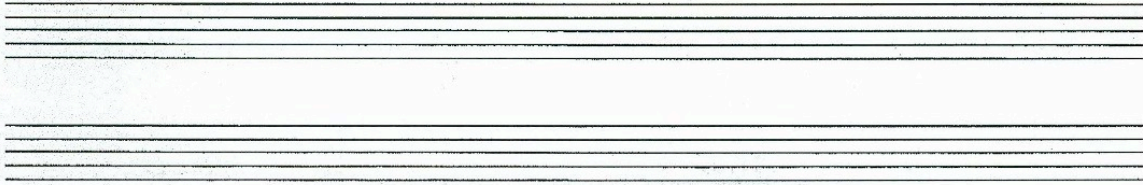Directed by Assistant Coordinator and Instructor Jeremy Szteiter

This paper presents an exploration of the process of developing a music composition through various layers of interaction with ideas through the abstract and the real. The composition is the most significant component of the project as a whole, and this paper regards itself as a sort of artist's journal developed during creation of the composition, making some attempt to show the process of improvising through the project. The project as a whole explores the various conceptualizations of the idea, of the relationship between the abstract and the real, and representations of a work that cannot be fully known. The composition itself represents the whole project through the interaction of two central ideas merging towards a circle of relation. Particular attention is given to the dynamic of composition and improvisation, and the role of improvisation in the creation of new work.

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Key: C Db Eb E (A) > 314321
      1 2 3 4 (5)

IN CIRCLE

Composing music is a dangerous activity. Who knows what it might lead to? Precarious, yet

continuing nonetheless. I have to. Maybe it's my way of making things work out. Maybe I can't

make life work the way I think I'd like it to, but maybe I could struggle through composing,

putting together various elements, organizing, and make something of that.[1]

This can take time. And it's risky to begin such an activity especially if one knows there is

a deadline. This can be exhilarating too – but more so if one "wins" the game. Then again,

composing music, performing music, is not about "winning" the game – though it can be, for

sure. Alright, composing *this music, for me, for this project, at this time in my life*, is not about

winning the game. It's about exploring, bringing elements together, trying to make something

work, getting to know the ideas, working with what's here. Part of what's here to work with is

time. And there's not a lot of time left. But there is yet a lot to do on the project.

It's important to think about time, especially if one holds to some idea of music as *the*

organization of sound through time. Time can be neutral, it can help or hurt. Sometimes I need

that deadline, other times it gets in the way. Most of the time I think it's both. It's ambiguous.

And maybe a bit arbitrary to worry about. It's there, part of reality. Whether *time* in some

conceptualization of *past, present, future* exists – and I'm not sure that it does – at least we can

say that there is *duration*. Maybe we could say there is *duration and development*. The

development need not be thought of as positive or negative, as progression or regression. How

could we know if we were really progressing, or if we were regressing? Development might be

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1   "The world is never something finished, something which thought can bring to a close; the world is always in
    the making, and our thoughts, like our actions, have meaning only in relation to the practical and social life in
    which we are engaged." Jackson (1996), 4.

better though of as *movement*, and this need not be movement to or from or around. Possibly, simply movement. And this movement happens through duration. And that's what a composition does, using organized sound. At least this is what I'm trying to do, struggling to do.

And it is a struggle, because there isn't much *time* left to finish it for public presentation and performance and discussion.

Time is like technology. It helps and hurts. Impedes and improves. This past week for me has been incredibly difficult because of challenges related to musical technology, my gear. These are tools. In some ways they help the music, in some ways they *are* the music, the instruments that play the music, that help create the music. These tools interact with the idea like the age old question of body and mind. We're always dealing with things outside of ourselves, outside of our bodies, with the *other*, if self is who we are. But we don't exist as ourselves, or, ourselves exist with others. That is, we exist *intersubjectively*, and not just with other people, but with other things, other ideas.[2]

The central difficulty this week has been with gear related to making live loops, where a short musical idea is electronically recorded in real-time and played back in an infinite loop. This is a useful tool for solo performance because a musician can play with an accompaniment they make in a live situation. I could play and record a 12-bar blues chord progression with guitar, loop it, and then solo over top of it. It would sound like two guitars, one playing chords, another playing a melody. The piece that I'm trying to put together for Synthesis takes the use of looping to another level, where the building of loops and layers – in the composition itself and also using the gear – is part of the composition, where the instrument of the composition is not

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2   See Jackson (1998), and elsewhere.

just the electric guitar but the pedal that controls the loops as well. The skill for the composition

is not the playing of the guitar itself, but also playing the pedal. But this has to be done in such

a way that it is organic, part of the composition, part of the development of the piece itself

through it's duration.

But then came the ominous "technical difficulties". No more to say but *What then can I*

do? Do I get rid of live loop-making, putting every note to play in the composition itself? Or do

I set up a different way of making loops? What are my options, what can I do? Do I really need

the looping technology to show the loops and layers in the composition? How integral to the

composition is this technology, or rather what the technology provides, that I can build into the

composition the live loops, using this instrument of technology as an instrument for the music,

not a solo of guitar, but a duet between guitar and loop? Do I need this for the composition,

does the composition call for it? What if I can't get set up in time for the performance with

looping technology that will work the way I want it to? *How could I then modify the*

composition to reflect what I want to without the gear?

What are the loops for? They show that the piece is a whole, every part pointing to that

whole, layers and layers working and cycling through this whole, developing around and

around, *showing* that there are many parts, but one whole, spiraling around, connecting.

How to read. Not chronological. Not time-oriented (though time is here, and there are

references to time). This is not a linear exploration. But it also is. Some goes here, some goes

there. Some is improvised, like freewriting. Other material is edited, revised, worked over. It

does not matter if one part here or another part there does not make sense. Why? Because this

is about exploring. This exploring happens this way and that way, upside down and outside in,

reaching for this *thing*. One view looks this way, and another view another way. The point is

not a development of one claim leading to another supported by evidence. The point is the

reaching, a working-in-progress, a working as I go, the circles around and around. It is not

written from start to finish, beginning to end. It is written *in the middle, the end, the beginning,*

all-around and before and after and in-the-middle-of. Every *part points to the whole* which

cannot be fully known. Paradox can be a wonderful friend. So read from "start" to "finish", but

do not think that way. Read outside of time, where my jumping back again and reaching

forward are virtues. Read like I'm presenting a merry-go-round, where each time around you/I

notice something new to focus on, something not seen before. Simply read, and wonder what

the whole might be at the "end". And thank you for reading.

Sometimes I wonder if in talking about our projects we make them into something other than

that which exists in our own minds alone, creating multiple realities in which the project exists.

This interaction is in play whenever the project is represented outside of ourselves. The dynamic

creates manifestations in various contexts of the most abstract form of the project, bringing into

existence multiple representations of the project.

      This multi-modal existence is clearly evidenced in the very work of bringing-into-being of

Synthesis. We create and play with an idea. This idea becomes represented in our own

thoughts, in our reflections, in our more formal writing, in our work of the piece itself if different

from the writing (such as a music composition or painting), in our talking with others, and our

continued cycle of all these things. And there are the formal requirements of representation for

the program. There is the written form of the idea-made-into-piece, there is the Self-Assessment

reflection, and there is the presentation. The idea, developed, is therefore presented in multi-

modal representations, none of which fully represent the idea-as-whole, but only give parts,

glimpses, sounds, of the whole which cannot be fully known.

        We interact then with layers of representations, multi-modal, parts of a whole that we can

explore, expressed in various presentations, abstract, flexible, eternal, as if the abstraction itself

is moving and developing in different contexts, different times, *improvising*.

I've got now several parts of this whole piece, each itself developing on its own, relating in some

ways to the others. It's interesting to reflect on one's own way(s) of working, and in this case it's

interesting to me to compare the way I've come into my own in terms of composition, what I'm

doing now, compared to what I've done before. Styles develop, habits too, things that I like and

do that are my "signature". Every artist has something. For Miles Davis it was the sound of his

horn, that beautiful, sexy, vulnerable, but unrelenting tone. For John Coltrane it was that *thing*

that came through the music, technical and virtuosic, that spiritual element, and his reaching

back towards that spiritual source.

        I'm not sure what my signature is. I know that I like to revolve around certain pitches –

the C natural minor scale / pattern sounds good to my ears. I don't know for sure why. I know

that I like pitch-class collections P2S and MND.[3] Maybe part of this gravitation toward the MND

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3   These letters denote collections of pitches, designated by letters (signifying intervals) rather than being called a

is due to the difficulty in tuning the third, major or minor, in what has become standard tuning

practice. If one goes back to the Pythagorean explorations in tuning on the string – and this

becomes especially relevant when one plays a stringed instrument – this oscillation of the thirds

becomes, to me, very interesting to play around with. Partly this is due to the third being the

note that in tonal music distinguishes between a major chord and a minor chord. But if one

plays with it, obscures its identity, creating ambiguity, there is a sort of control over the music

that is affected that has a reach beyond selecting movement of notes. There is a play not just

with the notes, but how we hear the tuning, how we hear what those notes are. A major chord

might not sound so major anymore, and a minor chord maybe not so minor.

　　　This MND, and the P2S, are becoming prominent collections in the piece. But I need to

fine a way to connect them, to let them grow into each other, become part of each other, so that

the final idea, once heard, could not be conceived as it's individual parts.

　　　I've made some progress on this tonight, but it's not there yet.

When I first started working on this Synthesis – the composition and the paper – we were all

asked what our purpose was, who we were writing for, who are audience is. I thought at the

time that my audience was mostly me and the "cosmos". I mean that I do this because I feel

that I am compelled to do it, that I must compose this music, let it free. I would do this whether

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name such as a Gmajor7 chord. The MND denotes a collection that includes a major third, a minor third, and a half step, such as C-Eb-E, where C to Eb is a minor third, C to E is a major third, and Eb to E is a half-step. The P2S signifies a collection consisting of two perfect intervals (4th or 5th) and a whole step, such as C-G-D, where C to G is a perfect 5th, G to D is a perfect 5th, and C to D is a whole step. The system was developed by Howard Hanson to give names to tone clusters in analysis of musical works which did not follow what became standard tonal harmonic structures. The complete system is: P=perfect 4th or 5th, M=major 3rd / minor 6th), N=minor 3rd / major 6th, S=major second / minor 7th, D=minor 2nd / major 7th, T = tritone (augmented 4th or diminished 5th).

I was the last person on the planet or not. It's not about a purpose – *it is the only thing there is*.

And it must be done, like a spiritual task, a message from the gods to be delivered, a religious

quest. It's not that my music is so important to others, it's that it is the reason for me to be. So

in this sense my audience is both myself and "the gods", the cosmos, the world of arts. Or

something like that.

But the more I've been composing, the more I pour myself into this, the more I practice,

the more I think about what to write about, the more I then realize that myself and the cosmos

are not the only listeners. It is my intention to perform the music for others. It is my intention to

attempt to *communicate* what I'm doing with the music, what it represents, connects with,

interacts with. And to do this I must be thinking about a specific audience. While it's true that

some cultures – maybe most cultures – attach specific meanings to musical devices, it is also

true that music still remains a fairly subjective experience.[4] Thus my mission is not just to

compose and perform, but to try and communicate what it is that I'm doing or trying to do with

the music, what it means to me, and open up some kind of space for others to share what it

might mean to them.

And more and more it is this process which is becoming of interest in regard to the

written Synthesis, these notes, these reflections. Is it possible to bring the reader / listener into

this world, this process, this improvisation of composing this piece?

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4   In the case of cultures which do attach more objective meaning to musical devices, the subjectivity remains in
    other areas. There will always be elements of more or less objective meanings (a lot of what we call "scary
    music" sounds similar), but there will always be the subjective as well, especially with how the music is
    received by each listener. In this sense, the objective and subjective are always there, but in a dynamic and
    shifting relationship with the listener in various cultural contexts, times, experiential contexts.

There is some use of the idea of categories. I've been fighting that for a long time. I don't like

categorization, but what I really mean is *rigid* categories. No, I do mean more than that: I mean

also that I don't like categorical thinking. While the image of concentric circles being various

places of the hierarchy of categories but all the same thing and with blurry boundaries does

make sense to me, in usual contexts I find myself – or think so – trying instead to break

categories down and try and argue where they don't work. The point of a choir is to blend

multifarious voices into a whole where no individual voice could be distinguished from the

group (unless that was the intention). Similarly, sometimes the orchestra, band, jazz combo, or

another ensemble showcases so much synergy, so much interaction, so much communication,

so much shared identity, that it becomes too difficult to distinguish one instrument from another,

or to hear one instrument apart from the others – not always because of the sounds, but because

the group dynamics are such that any one instrument on its own apart from the whole would be,

in context, incomplete, void, inadequate, tenuous, *undernourished.*

Of course, I'm still using categories. If writing is a category, and composition of music

another, I'm upholding those categories in the writing of this Synthesis. Similarly, I talk about a

bike, a musical instrument, or various collections of musical instrument ensembles – didn't I

imply a distinction between "orchestra" and "jazz combo"? Aren't these categories too? It's

worth noting the oft-remembered quip in so-called "jazz" culture: *We Called It Music.*[5] Maybe

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5   Eddie Condon (1947); compare this to Gillespie's "good and bad" in contrast to the "real jazz" (referencing
    Condon), in Gillespie (2009), 492. Compare also Frank Walker, in Shapiro and Hentoff (1955), 179: "I prefer to
    think that there are two kinds of jazz – 'natural jazz' and 'musical jazz'. The natural kind is what came out of
    New Orleans and folk music. 'Musical jazz' is what happened to it when the trained musicians got hold of it."
    There are also disputes about the origin of the term and how it was used. Arnold Loyacano, also in Shapiro and
    Hentoff (1955), 81: "That's when people started calling our music 'jazz'. The way the Northern People figured it
    out, our music was loud, clangy, boisterous, like you'd say, 'Where did you get that jazzy suit?' meaning loud or
    fancy. Some people called it 'jass'. Later, when the name stuck, it was spelled with a 'z', 'jazz'."

I'd have to admit that they are. But in another sense I'd argue no. Maybe again here is the

distinction between a strong boundary – where, for example, a bike is a bike and not a musical

instrument – and a blurred boundary, flexible boundary – where a bike could be considered a

musical instrument in some contexts or to some people.

Of course, there is more to labeling in jazz music than simply trying to organize or

identify, and it has been of acute concern throughout the history of the music. As Benzon says,

"The history of jazz is also a history of arguments about the nature of jazz."[6] This is important

not only for jazz but for other areas as well because of the degree to which we observe things in

categories overlapping and merging and interconnecting all the time in the real world, but at

some point we need to *name* something in order to talk about it. Ingrid Monson explores some

of this in relation to (jazz) music, and it's worth sharing:

A lot of musicians don't like the word *jazz*. Michael Carvin even went so far as to say,
"Don't use the word *jazz*. … Don't pigeonhole the thing" (Carvin 1992). When musicians say
this, they aren't arguing that there is no difference between jazz improvisation and other types of
music; they are recognizing the social significance of labeling. The music that is labeled, they
realize, is somehow the one that carries less prestige, the one that is considered less universal.
Musicians who "play the music called jazz" (as Carvin prefers to put it) have noticed, for
example, that what universities mean traditionally when they talk of a "music department" is a
"Western classical music department." This form of music, which has typically been accorded
the highest status in intellectual circles and American institutions, is thus made to stand
metonymically for all music. When musicians who play the music called jazz talk about "the
music," they are turning this usage on its head... Within jazz communities, "the music" means
jazz and other African American musical genres. This usage inverts the hegemonic
presupposition that Western classical music can stand for all music, setting African American
varieties on an equal footing with other forms and asserting pride in an aesthetics of

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6   Benzon (2001), 272. Further difficulties in the history of jazz arose anytime there was a new movement of
    music that used some of what was already there while building it into something distinct, such as bebop, free
    jazz, and fusion. Anytime the new comes along there appear to be lines drawn between the traditionalists and
    those who favor the new innovations, despite jazz as a "forward-looking art", Gioia (1997), 199. As is also
    apparent, those who are *doing* the innovations do not see the disconnect that others argue, such as with Miles
    Davis, and John Coltrane. For Coltrane, see Ratliff (2007), especially 60-63.

improvisation that expects those who come within its orbit to interact on its terms.[7]

Psychologists recognize some benefit of categorization – no, not some, a lot – because it helps us sort out the world, understand it, interact with it. "Take the train" has meaning, in part, because I've got some idea of what a train is, and I know it is not what some-idea-of the ocean is. Categories help again when schemas are developed and used. Again the idea seems to be that categories and schemas help us understand and interact with the world. Reisberg writes:

> No adult takes any pride in knowing what a dog is, or a house, or a tree. These concepts are so ordinary, so common, that there seems to be nothing special about knowing, and being able to think about, these simple ideas. However, ordinary concepts like these are, in an important way, the building blocks out of which all our knowledge is created, and, as we've seen in previous chapters, we depend on our knowledge in many aspects of our day-to-day functioning. … The idea, then, is that we need concepts in order to have knowledge, and we need knowledge in order to function. In this fashion, our understanding of ideas like "dog" or "house" might seem commonplace, but it is an ingredient without which cognition cannot proceed.[8]

In addition, Levitin, a psychologist and musician, notes that "Categorization is a basic function of living creatures."[9] Benzon discusses this idea of categories in terms of music – including jazz – with reference to stylistic cross-breeding. With regard to our jazz discussion and categories, Benzon writes that "Jazz, rock, and hip hop all involve cultural cross-breeding, the catalytic emergence of styles from heterogeneous meme pools."[10] Benzon goes on to say that "This relentless stylistic cross-breeding is generally acknowledged, but its implications have not been

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7 Ingrid Monson (1996), 101. Another more current example of the discussion about "real jazz" or the labeling of the music comes from Wynton Marsalis, proponent of some idea of "true" jazz. See for example Rafi Zabor and Vic Garbarini, "Wynton Vs Herbie: The Purist and the Crossbreeder Duke it Out", in Rowland and Scherman (1994), 97-128.

8 Reisberg (2006), 288. While I question the assumptions inherent in Reisberg's presentation – could knowing what a tree is be a source of pride for someone, such as an arboriculturist?, could knowing something about distinctions in *sound* and *music* be arbitrary to others but mean the world to me? – I think the point may be that we take for granted some of the things we claim to know, and that these things are the very "lesser" items that larger thinking structures are based on – building blocks for larger cognitive structures.

9 Levitin (2006), 140.

10 Benzon (2001), 262.

fully realized."[11] While these examples of styles in music could be considered fuzzy categories,

categorical in nature, there is yet a difficulty that there is a lack of process showing *connection*

between categories. As well, while we have bounded categories with clearly visible lines, and

fuzzy categories, where we're not sure where the boundaries are, there is another view that is

about *relational* categories. "*Extrinsic, or relational,* sets are formed, not on the basis of what

things are, but on their relationship to other things or to a reference point."[12] While this is yet

another more helpful expansion of the idea of categories, it is not enough for me. The

psychologists say we think in categories. They may be rigid, they may be fuzzy to a degree, they

may be directional. But I'm skeptical as to how they *show connection*. At the least, in my own

work I want something more. For this composition and paper and larger idea and project *I want*

something more.

　　Part of the process of putting this whole Synthesis project together is blending the

complete composition – the "original product" of Synthesis – with the writing about it. In that

sense, could one exist without the other? And if not, then there could not be a clear boundary

between what they are either, though there may be some boundary between their

communication – in written prose, letters, talking, and in music notation and performance. The

paper is talking about the idea, the composition is an example of it, a representation of it, but

the composition and paper also both represent the idea as well.

　　There is another way to think about relationships and the nature of things. I like to think

of a blank piece of paper. Write a bunch of terms on this paper. Now connect them with lines,

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11 To illustrate some of these connections, see his chart on 261.
12 Hiebert (1994), 111. Hiebert is writing from an anthropological perspective. Relational categories are a useful
　　way of thinking about things, and similar conceptualizations are found throughout anthropology as a discipline,
　　which places much emphasis on relations between people – both biological and social.

drawing this way and that, and write a few notes to explain. Now do it again with the same

terms, but draw new lines. *Show new relationships*. Any group of more concentrated

connections – yes, this is about *being subjective* – is a *cluster*. It need not be clear, bounded.

Nor does it need to be fuzzy. A cluster can be *whatever it needs to be* to help explain the idea.

It is the *interactions between* various things that are of interest.[13] And "understanding emerges

from interaction, from constant negotiation with the environment and other people."[14] In the

composition, the basic MND and P2S ideas are clusters of tones, ideas, connections, that are in

turn connected to each other and interplay with other developments. This paper, representing

the whole project idea through words on the page, is clustered around various ideas of

composition and improvisation, agency, representation, and the abstract – and probably a lot

more that I'm not naming. Thinking in clusters works for me because I can *see the relationships*

of things that don't have to be bounded or fuzzy or directional – they are none and they are all,

keeping things connected and moving.[15]

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13 In some ways, this idea of clusters may resemble the idea of *culture* presented by Clifford Geertz (1973), 5:
"Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I
take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law
but an interpretive one in search of meaning."

14 Lakoff and Johnson (2003), 230. See also 232: "But any really deep understanding of why we do what we do,
feel what we feel, change as we change, and even believe what we believe, takes us beyond ourselves.
Understanding of ourselves is not unlike other forms of understanding – it comes out of our constant interactions
with our physical, cultural, and interpersonal environment." Compare this also to Jackson's conceptualization of
one's phenomenological reality as being a constant negotiation between acting and being acted upon.
However, though common throughout Jackson's work, he does sometimes restrict himself "to speaking of this
existential imperative as a *sense* of agency, thereby setting aside the objective question as to whether human
freedom of action actually exists, for what seems to me most compelling is the human need to *imagine* that
one's life belongs to a matrix greater than oneself, and that within this sphere of greater Being one's own actions
and words matter and make a difference." Jackson (2002), 14.

15 Maybe this is for another topic, or maybe it should be in the body of the paper here, but it's got to be said one
way or another. All these tools – categories, directions, clusters – help us to organize and understand and work
with various elements. They also help us to *name* things. Naming is an important thing to do in that it gives us
some form of language to discuss what we're doing and thinking. This is a problem that I've encountered as I've
tried to talk about the composition in that the music theory and analysis methods that I'm familiar with are not
adequate to discuss the piece as I conceptualize it. Pitch-class set theory would be adequate to consider
clusters, but I want to consider these clusters within a *relationship* to the piece as a whole. It is a matter of limit.

But another image comes to mind for organizing as well: that of concentric circles of a body of water when a rock is thrown in it. Each smaller circle could be a portion of the whole, so some form of hierarchy of category could be established, where every smaller circle is also a part of the whole. Circles can be seen, thus the idea of bounded categories could be there. Yet circles of the water do fade, and a fuzzy category may then be indicated. More interesting is that these circles *move*. Throw several rocks in the water and create several clusters of circles, and suddenly we've got it all – loops, layers, sets, clusters, movement, development, relation.

What do we then make of the rock? Or of the one who throws it?

I like where this composition is going. Some good ideas now, modifications, developments. But this is still too much of parts rather than the whole. The whole is there, I just have to let it out. Or submit to it. Or struggle with both.

There is the idea of *the idea* as something directing us, where we are only an amanuensis to the idea. Stay out of the way, let the idea do what it wants. This is the true idea, the real idea. It is this conceptualization of the idea that this paper is named for – the real being that "essence" of whatever it is we then become. Being born, entering this life, would be a first divergence. Any subsequent period of intense devotion would be an additional divergence. Divergence from that *real*. And this is circular as well, for any *diverging* may also lead us closer to ourselves, closer to the real.

There is another idea of *the idea* as being encased in the rock, something we must toil over to set free, to loose, to reveal. We work to chisel away on that stone until the sculpture is made visible.

Both of these ideas of *the idea* have been present with me as I work in this composition. At times I feel that I am working. Other times that I need to stay out of the way and let the music go where it wants to.

But maybe it's neither of these. Maybe it's not an oscillation. Maybe it's a struggle of both. Where then does *the idea* reside, if anywhere?

I'm working with these two main ideas, with other sort-of-ideas, sub-ideas. The two main ideas, layers, lines, riffs, are centered around the MND idea, or {0, 3, 4}, and P2S / {0, 2, 7}. There are a few more notes that make appearances, and the most basic ideas heard as the piece, to my ears, are the MND and P2S. I hear it, they work, here, then there, but there needs to be more, a way to make them morph, blend, change one into the other and back again.

These symbols are methods of identifying pitch collections. What is a pitch collection? It is a group of notes. In tonal music, the most common form of a pitch collection is the *chord*, a group of 3 or more notes. But with the advent of new forms of music exploration that ventured outside the bounds – or even played with those boundaries – of tonal music and tonal modal / scale theory, there needed also to be forms of analysis that could identify music events so that we can talk about them. The two forms of analysis that I've presented here with these examples – the MND and {0, 3, 4} are representing the same collection – are two kinds of analysis that I've found more helpful in my own composition. Writing tonal music – tonal in a more traditional sense to indicate a definite tonal center, modulation to and from that center, and a harmonic movement to match – is difficult for me. I find the sounds old-hat, a little boring. In some sense this is a trick to compose in tonal styles – meet the challenge. This is not to say that

my music in general does not explore tonal relationships. It is to say that, to me, tonal music

and traditional tonal harmony are systems of arbitrary nature imposed on a more free

exploration of music, what music is, how we use it, how we create it. And it is worth noting that

the harmonic theory often comes *after* the new music compositions, it is a way to discuss what

is going on, to give names to what we're hearing. In some sense also though this harmony can

become a cage within which we are bound by form. Being limited is not necessarily

detrimental; when we are limited we must find creative ways to work with what we have that we

may not otherwise have discovered. I suppose in a way I should move on. I'll have to get to

what I wanted to say about these symbols, but maybe I can get back there somehow by

continuing to write, improvise, let it go, just keep going until I find it, becoming "a vehicle for

the music that plays [me]", playing, where "the act is it's own destination. The focus is on

process, not product."[16]

I'm thinking about some of my own history. My exploring of music ideas, then learning a lot of

theory, and then discovering a more informed music compositional style that I continue to

develop and recognize as my own. This style does not care necessarily about traditional scale

harmony. It is concerned with these *little ideas*. Little gems, glimmers, glimpses. To me, a little

flash of eternity, a keyhole, a portal to an ether-world and all-world where creative and artistic

longings do not go unfulfilled, a world where these ideas come from, and by some magic, some

divine blessing, these ideas are allowed to be developed in the midst of our imperfections.

That's what the arts are to me, in a way. And that's what these ideas are.

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16 Nachmanovitch (1990), 192, 45.

Playing scales, patterns, improvising, practicing, working – but there it is, that *sound*, that idea, that *being*! It is there! It is there, asking to be known, to be developed, to be free in this world! Set me free!

And this idea *is* a being. Artistic ideas. We work in *relationship* to them. We struggle to develop, to act on, and we find ourselves acted upon. We are there only to record and let the idea free to be on its own, like a divine being unstained by our imperfections. But we try to mold, to make, not letting go, but trying to act on the idea, to control. The reality is neither, but a *synthesis* of these, a *relationship with the idea*. It is a continuous *negotiation between acting and being acted upon*.

<p style="text-align:center">*(begin excerpt)*[17]</p>

The so-called Age of Discovery that began in the fifteenth century with Prince Henry of Portugal's global quest for material wealth, fertile lands, and a religious coalition with the mythical Prester John, is often regarded as a uniquely European phenomenon: a product of the Renaissance, of the development of science, and of the rise of capitalism. But we would do well to recognize that in every society and at every period in human history there are individuals who journey far from the safety of their own homelands, hazarding their lives in a wilderness or on wild seas in search of some bounty that they consider to be as essential to their own well-being as to the existential viability of their world. Indeed, the personal quest is typically identified with a *collective* endeavor in which individual ambition finds its justification and to which it is complementary.

This quest is one with which we can all readily identify. It is the quest to realize our own individual capacity to act upon a world that acts upon us, to make and unmake in some small measure the wider world that in large measure makes and unmakes us.

<p style="text-align:right">-Michael Jackson[18]</p>

"Society *is* ourselves, and not some foreign field that we approach from elsewhere or transcend in coming into our own. We no more exist outside of it than it exists outside of us. We are

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17 This excerpt comes from a paper I wrote in 2011 Spring for a course on social protest movements. The idea was to apply Jackson's framework of acting and being acted upon to protest movements. I include an excerpt here because I think it helps, by way of summary of some of Jackson's work, to show this negotiation that I have here applied to the idea of which this paper is a part.

18 Jackson (2009), 135-136.

<p style="text-align:center"></p>

social in exactly the same sense that we are bodies."[19] It is within society, within clusters of

interrelated and intersubjective beings, through experiences and aspirations, through dreams

and reality, through interactions with our environments, that we struggle to exist and live, that

within our lifeworlds we attempt to find a home, to "strike a balance between being acted upon

and acting, between acquiescing in the given and choosing [our] own fate."[20] Indeed, "We must

act, even if our actions only create the illusion that something has been done, some change has

been wrought, whether within or without."[21] We do this because we are social beings, living

intersubjectively with one another and within our environments and contexts. We do this

because it is our way of *improvising*, of adapting to change. Life is full of change, improvisation

is a way of adapting to that change, it is a way of acting on the world where we are acted upon.

We do this because we want to have some say in the lifeworlds in which we find ourselves. We

attempt to act because "men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world", because we

"exist primarily as acting and speaking beings", and because our human condition provides for

natality, our "capacity of beginning something anew, that is, of acting."[22] We improvise and act

like this because:

> ...the process of living is continuous; it possesses continuity because it is an everlastingly
> renewed process of acting upon the environment and being acted upon by it, together with
> institution of relations between what is done and what is undergone. Hence experience is
> necessarily cumulative and its subject matter gains expressiveness because of cumulative
> continuity. The world we have experienced becomes an integral part of the self that acts and is
> acted upon in further experience.[23]

We act because we must, it is our nature, it is our experience, it is our being-with-others, it is

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19 Jackson (1998), 45.
20 Jackson (1995), 123.
21 Jackson (2007), 152.
22 Arendt (1958/1998), 7, 181, 9, and throughout.
23 Dewey (1934), 104.

our existential imperative as we improvise through our lives.

Our own subjectivity is intersubjectively formed through our being-with-others in the contexts of our lifeworld experiences. This life is precarious and this life is change. We improvise through life as a way to adapt to this change – or to resist it, to mold this lifeworld into what we want it to be. We improvise as a way of agency, as a way of acting in the world where we are acted upon. Those who protest, who take this acting, this agency, and run with it, do so because they refuse to take the world that is given them and give in to it. Those who protest choose to take their lifeworld head-on and act upon it.

(end excerpt)

Improvisation is an existential imperative and a phenomenological reality: We must and do improvise in order to survive in our lifeworlds, and that's *the way things are*.[24]

The letting go is not a letting go of ourselves to allow the idea to exist on its own. It is not a staying out of the way. It is not an uncovering of what is already there. *The idea is a person, a being*. We exist intersubjectively with the idea. The idea can only exist through us, manifested, represented. We try to act on the idea, make it ours – but the idea is its own, and it is ours. We feel that we are only acted upon by the idea – but the idea is being changed by us too, and changing us. Therefore the letting go must be that of letting go of controlling where the *relationship* with the idea will go.

It is these little ideas that I'm working with. Their interaction, their development, their

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24 This is not an indication of determinism or nihilism, nor a giving in, but rather a nod towards phenomenology. On music improvisation in society see Feld (1984), Feld (1990), Monson (1994), Monson (1995), Monson (1996), Neal (2004), and Baraka (1999).

relationship, and the representation of these ideas through some sort of composition, notation,

words-about, and performance and presentation. New relationships. New changes. New

things learned about myself too. Let it be whatever it will become.

Two days ago I was working on the analysis of what I'm doing with Synthesis composition,

working as well on trying to develop the "hymn" section. See, I listened to my senior guitar

recital from college and remembered how much I loved that music, and how I must re-learn it

(with the new tuning I've been using since), and how I want something like that – with all it's

movement, so many lines and layers, all this stuff going on, but with only the instrument – in the

Synthesis composition. So I've been working on a way to do this. To me, it has to fit in a music

theory sense to what is already in the piece. I can't just throw something in there. It has to

relate to what's already there, be a development of it. And it has to work in a theory sense.

That's what I'm working on now. Making it fit. Finding a way for it to grow out of the theory

that's already there. Tricky.

But see I am playing with this idea of harmony. A little anyway. The piece is not tonal,

but there are some centers to the piece. This hymn[25] section might be a good way to explore this

though. I don't think that it's too rash to make the assumption that most of the music the

presentation audience will be familiar with is that which is consistent with more traditional

Western harmonic structures.[26] In Western tonal system we have 12 notes: C, C#/Db, D, D#/Eb,

25 I'm calling it a "hymn" because of the thought of what it is my mind. That is, there is an abstract form of the idea
     of this part of the composition in my mind, and it reminds me of a nice hymn, a chorale, a slower and gentle,
     but interesting piece that could be sung by a choir. It's not really a hymn, or a chorale. Or anything. Just a part
     of the Synthesis composition as a whole.
26 "Western" is a common term for the system, but it is used worldwide, including by places not often considered
     "Western".

E, F, F#/Gb, G, G#/Ab, A, A#/Bb, B.[27] If we take all these notes that don't have a sharp or a flat

we end up with the C-major scale: C D E F G A B C. Now we can take this scale and extend it

forever: C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C . . . If we start on C, skip a note, skip a

note, etc, we end up with a basic chord: C E G B, which is a Cmajor7 chord.[28] We follow this

same pattern starting on D and we get a Dminor7: D F A C. And we do this for every note,

ending up with 7 chords. These chords, this system, and a set of progressions (one chord

following another) have been the standard harmonic system for Western music for a long time.

You'll quite possibly hear it whenever you turn on your music. These systems came to be

popular and have been used ever since.

Not all cultures use these systems though. And even in Western music, especially around

the turn of the 20th century, composers began to create new conventions that, while often using

the same collection of 12 notes, abandoned the standard practices of traditional Western

harmony. Maybe unconventional progressions would be used. Or what is considered standard

movement of one note to another might be abandoned. There was also the introduction in so-

called "art music" of aleatory and serial methods. What I'm trying to say is that there are

conventions that have been used in Western music systems for a long time, these conventions

come from the composers – though in some ways the composers too are following conventions,

it's a chicken and egg with music theory and composition – and there are sometimes reasons to

abandon these conventions and pursue other ideas of musical structure and tonality.[29]

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27 The [#] indicates a "sharp" note, the note name moved higher in pitch by a half-step interval, and the [b] indicates "flat", the note name moved lower in pitch by a half-step. The slashes indicate "enharmonic equivalent", two names that indicate the same pitch. Thus I could place my finger on a particular place on the string and produce a pitch that could be called C# or Db, depending on context, notation, system.
28 A chord is, roughly, a collection of three or more notes.
29 In my experience, many people who hear the music that abandons these conventions do not think that the

The piece I'm working on for Synthesis does not follow traditional harmony. I think of it as having a tonal center, but not as the term is used in traditional tonal music and tonal music analysis. It does not follow the convention there, but there is a collection of notes that the piece revolves around and goes back to. There are also these two ideas that I've been working with, a collection of notes that can be referred to as MND and P2S. These two ideas dance around, are introduced, and then interact and grow together. If I put these two ideas together with a pitch set I can get a collection of 7 notes. From here I can follow the same pattern of building harmony as I demonstrated before with the Cmajor scale. And thus I can then follow the conventional pattern of chord progressions (most basically: 4-7-3-6-2-5-1). The collection of notes doesn't sound anything like a scale or mode. But it is a collection of 7 notes, and thus I can build a scale harmony based on those seven, follow the progressions, and thus make some sort of musical commentary on the use of harmonic structures in this piece. I'm making that harmonic structure, following the patterns, but using a very different collection of notes, a collection built off those two ideas of MND and P2S. In this way, like using a hymn or chorale style that is more conventional than the rest of the piece, I'm also playing with a harmonic convention in a way that fits the piece. I'm playing with the boundaries. And in the piece too there are sections where the MND is clear, where the P2S is clear. But their boundaries cross, interact and reach toward some kind of metamorphosis of the two. In a similar way, this section that plays with the idea of traditional harmonic structure while using an unconventional collection of notes on which that structure is built is playing with the idea of creating a metamorphosis, a Synthesis, from different ways of making music.

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music sounds very good, given some reason toward the conventions. But sound is subjective.

A lot of words, but yet left to the judgement of whether or not it sounds good and fits the character of the piece.

I had two lessons with Schoenberg. At the second one I brought him a piece of music I'd written. He said, "That's very good. Now go home and don't write anything like that again until you know the reason each note is there. Do you know now?" he asked. I said, "Isn't it reason enough if it sounds good?" He said, "No, you have to know why."

-Dave Brubeck.[30]

I didn't work on the piece last night, the dirty work of notating and making notes and making it look presentable. That work needs to be done, and it will take time and be tedious. When that work of "finishing" the composition is done it will also provide this sense of accomplishment that is unparalleled. But I didn't work on bringing these things together last night. I just played.

Notation. In some sense notation can be like writing, edited writing, by helping us to sort musical ideas, see what we're doing, and figure out if that's really what we want to do. At other times the limits of notation get in the way of the real music. Why do we have notation? If notation began as a way of preserving music it is not necessary anymore. We can record music easily now. And would we be better musicians if we learned new pieces not from notation but from listening? But notation can preserve a "lead sheet", like in jazz, where any given performance may simply be someone's interpretation of the *real music* – not unlike this work here that I'm doing, where the writing represents something else, the larger work. There is the

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30 In Shapiro and Hentoff (1955), 393.

benefit of notation also, despite its limits and the frustrations I have with it, that it allows the

musician to *show the work* in a way that can be printed and seen. That could be helpful to

illustrate both the development of a piece but also its movement. In my case, I make no

intention at this point of making the notation for this composition look nice. I'll keep it scratchy,

a sketch, a map of the piece, taking the piece, like the project, to be not-fully-known and merely

a representation of it. The hope is that this notation, handwritten, messy, will help to illustrate

both the work going into the composition and also it's possible nature as a representation.

I just played the instrument, explored the music. Got to know it a bit more. Why am I

doing this? Why does this matter to me? Why am I so compelled in this direction? None of

those questions mattered then, and maybe they don't matter at all. I was just *with the music*.

Simply being there, playing, working with what's already there, catching glimpses of what might

yet be. Growing with the music, into the music, and the music into me.

As it happened, I've discovered a way to merge the MND idea into the P2S idea. Each

idea, a little developed, merges into the other, and back around again. Not simply a repeat, they

truly move into a circle, one part into the other and *around* again. More importantly, I like the

way it *sounds*. It sounds a circle.

The story has been told many times, in many different variations; usually it involves
Coltrane rehearsing backstage through his intermission break. But inasmuch as this story
circulated in rock-and-roll circles, it suggested not only the enormity of Coltrane's inner drive
but also the notion of a Coltrane Performance as an ongoing happening, in which beginnings
and ends weren't necessarily musically important.[31]

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31 Ratliff (2007), 167.

FULL CIRCLE

When a piece is completed it is not really "finished" but rather completes a rotation of its

existence as-is. The piece comes full circle. It continues to evolve through time, improvisation

present at each experiencing of the work. Even if it is a music recording improvisation is there –

it is there in the listeners listening. The work continues on it's rotation, ever-becoming, changing

slightly or greatly, and it's history – existence through time – becomes itself another cycle of

existence.

I like to think of a bicycle wheel. Each rotation brings more debris from the road, more

fluctuations in air pressure and disbursement, more wear and tear on the tire, tube, and rim. But

it is still the same wheel. And the wheel continues to do what it does: rotate, moving,

developing through time.

"Working within the limits of the medium forces us to change our own limits."[32] I have been

experiencing many manifestations of limit while working on this project – notation, gear, health,

sanity, words, limits of instrument and body and room. But without limits there is nothing to be

free from. It is, maybe, in some things, not the freedom but the reaching for it.

It also turns out that as I'm "finishing" the piece – at least something that I feel is ready to

be shared with the public – I have found myself again in battle over the loops, the gear, and

what would more truly reflect the piece. I'm preparing for performance. Do I want to mess with

anything during the performance? What would be a more true representation of the

composition as a whole? And it turns out that I can conceptualize at least three versions of this

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32 Nachmanovitch (1990), 84.

piece: one that uses loop-making live, another that records various pieces into the computer and

edits the loops there, and another as a live performance with nothing but live and real-time

playing. All three are legitimate pursuits in my mind, but I do find myself wondering which one

might more accurately reflect how I've moved through the program, how I've pursued various

evolutions of musical ideas throughout my coursework and leading up to this Synthesis, and

what I might do to more accurately *show how I've been thinking*.

One thought is that this is about the abstract. If I then edit the piece with the computer,

where then does the piece exist? Everything in the program so far has largely been in my head –

no one in the program has heard me play yet. Would the computer version be a more accurate

representation of the abstract throughout the program and as manifested now in Synthesis?

A friend recently pointed out that if it's a recording it can be replayed. That is less

abstract than if perform live and then the music is gone.[33]

Another option is to use the loops live. But using loops live can become too cliché, and

it must be done very well for this piece to work, and I don't like how some of the loops work

together, and I'm not entirely sure if this is the more accurate approach, best fitting for the piece

right now at this time in its development. I am sure that loops and layers are a very central part

of the composition, and of the larger project of Synthesis of which the composition is the most

significant part. But I'm not sure that live loop-making would communicate this more clearly or

simply murky the waters a bit more. The loops are there regardless, in the music itself.

So I am again left with a crisis of both communication and with the limits of the gear that

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33 Even if the performance is recorded, the signification is clear that music would be heard, and then be
   experienced as "gone" in live performance.

I use. What would be a more true and accurate representation of the project (as best as I can

hope to know what the project is) at this time in its development? What would be more clear,

more persuasive, more communicative, indicative of the abstract? What feels right?

Three versions of the piece and about a week to go before the performance. I'm not sure

which one I'll put together and share. Part of me wonders not only which might be, at this time,

a more accurate representation of the project, but also which is more personal, which is

something I might want to share, which is how I want to be known in this new way.

Plato had something there with this realm of ideas. I like to think of a realm also, though not

necessarily Platonic. In "the realm" as I like to think of it, there are these ideas, these dreams,

desires, reaching for all these things to make them real in our own lifeworlds. In the Realm they

are real, but our life then is a struggle to make them real in our living. So I have these musical

ideas that I'm struggling to make real in a ready-to-be-shared composition. I have these ideas of

talking about the composition and the process of composing that I struggle to make real in the

form of words. And the writing itself and making the words come together with notation of the

composition into a single hard-copy format is also a struggle to bring ideas together and make

them real in this particular manifestation or representation of the whole project, the group or

cluster of ideas that these representations refer to.

The Realm is this "real" that we try to make real in our lifeworlds. A divergence is to go

in another way, to branch off, develop. This need not be thought of as developing in an

unrelated area, but could be considered a development of the main, tributaries of the river,

branches of the tree. A tributary is not the river, but it comes from it and cannot exist from it – or

it would not be a tributary. A branch is not the tree, but grows from it, is part of it, and cannot

exist apart from the tree. The tree is the *realm*, and the workings to make things real are the

divergences.

Any divergence from the realm could be thought of as a period of life filled with intense

concentration, working, focus, effort – *reaching to make the real become real in our lifeworld*.

For anyone, the first divergence from that true real of the real is being alive in the lifeworld itself.

For me, the second period of divergence was the reaching for new ideas, new connections, and

to make real in my lifeworld the reaching experienced when in college. This project of

Synthesis in it's various manifestations is the capstone for the reaching taken place while in this

masters program. It is the Third Divergence.

In trying to figure this out, trying to combine what originally were to be the first two loops, parts

A and B' of the composition, trying to put them together in a way that didn't need the

technology, I arrive again at the conclusion that this piece must have it, but I realize a new way

to put them together than before. A way that fits the piece, a way that I may not have – probably

would not have – arrived at if not for the difficulty.

And yet, a week or so later, I have now three versions of the piece. I find myself

wondering what is a more accurate and honest reflection – representation – of the way I've

moved through the CCT program, with how I've encountered ideas about what Synthesis might

be, of how I've explored music in each course, and now with how I'm finally going to share

some of my own music. This Synthesis presentation will be the first time anyone in CCT has

heard me play, or heard my music. But what I'm trying to communicate is this idea of the

abstract idea, the "real" me, and the relationship between, where the project as a whole exists

somewhere in that *in-between*, in the r*elationship*. The project, like the idea, like oneself,

cannot be fully known. And rather than consider something a contradiction, we can think of it

as different views of the same thing, and of a progressive understanding, a work-in-progress.

This project is not only about the composition. It is about the paper. But it's not about the

paper. It's about all of it. I cannot now have the composition without the paper, the reflection

to go with the music-making. I certainly cannot have the words-about without the *what* that the

words are about. And it may be that neither really exists unless it is shared with others.

I'm spinning through thoughts, struggling, I feel, to bring all this together, somehow.

There are various layers to this project. And representation goes both ways. There is the

way that the project is represented through its various manifestations, such as words on a page,

or sound organized through time. But there is also the matter of *representing* the project. And

that's the question of the beginning of this entry. The project is more than just Synthesis, it really

is the capstone of all CCT (and for me, other graduate study as well). Thus I feel the need to

represent the project as a whole in the most honest way for me. What way is that? All

throughout the program I've talked and thought about music, but not performed here in the

program. And what I'm trying to emphasize is this ambiguity of the abstract. So in a way I feel

that it would be more accurate, more honest, a better representation of the project, to record my

composition, edit into loops in the computer, and simply play it back. Think of it like film

music, or an ensemble that is playing my music while I sit in the audience. But this might not

be so. A friend shared with me this week that if I am able to play, go back, re-play, then that is

less abstract than if I perform and that's all there is to it. That's the jazz aesthetic that I'm

familiar with. And not just jazz, but any live music. It's magic.

So I have three versions of the piece now. One version uses no loop-making of any kind, just straight playing of the instrument (in my case, the 7-string guitar). Another version uses a pedal that can make live loops (short recordings, with many overdubs possible, and I could play overtop of the loops). And then there is the computer recording version, still using the loops, but put together in the computer rather than performed live. All three are equally legitimate. All three show that this project is not something concrete, but rather something *in-between* that I am reaching for, and it can be represented in multiple ways.

Another interesting thing happened this week that I've got to mention. Remember that I had two layers to try and loop. When I tried it, finally, I didn't like the way it sounded. So I had to then try and figure out how to merge the ideas together in a way that didn't use the looping, so that I could perform the piece without the loops, just guitar. I explored this, and I liked it. It actually worked very well. But then I realized that I did want the loops, but I would build them off of the new idea, the new way of merging A and B'. That's what I call these ideas. And that's what the piece has been, the dancing around of A (most basically an MND) and B (most basically a P2S). But something happened.

I went back to thinking that I didn't want the loops. I just didn't want to worry about it. It was another thing that could potentially go wrong at a time when I just want it to work very well. (Maybe in some way this represents the reaching toward the idea.) But the ideas didn't work very well, the piece as a whole, without the loops. Similar problem. The question then was a matter of what I could do to connect ideas, to create "fills", that could move between various sections of the piece, creating some kind of internal coherency, establishing some way of

playing the piece without the loops. Similar to the beginning matter, but now with the piece as a whole.

And another strange thing happened. What I had come up with as simply filler material, a little idea to go between, has now become as central to the piece. In some ways it is still most basically an MND, but it has a bit more interaction than the central A idea, and it creates a few more intervals *that have changed part of the character of the piece*. And I cannot do without this now. So rather than two parts dancing around each other, I now have three. I feel this has happened less intentionally and more as discovery. And it is not insignificant.

There are three sections of this paper. There are three parts of the Synthesis project – presentation / performance, paper / notation, and the Self-Assessment reflection. There are now three central pieces dancing around in the piece. And the composition itself has three main sections (another recent development). It's been do or die the last week as I prepare to perform this piece, as that is the way the tide has taken me the last couple days. And the way that various elements have come together in the composition is really interesting to me. But it's not just the composition, but this project as a whole, many layers / loops, multi-modal, various clusters of ideas, all dancing around each other, all relating to each other – different ways of exploring and expressing and experiencing. I wish I could draw a picture of these connections the way they feel in my mind.

And yet, in a sense, this is all arbitrary. It is only one example of whatever this project is wherever it exists. In the conceptualization I've been working with, there is the idea in the abstract, there is myself in the "real", and there is the in-between relationship which is where the project really is. It's not so much about me staying out of the way of the idea, nor is it about me

chiseling away to let the idea out, but rather this idea out there, and me here, and a reaching, and the relationship between that is the nexus that is where the project is. Any discussion or manifestation or representation of it is necessarily incomplete and partial as the project cannot really be fully known.

So does any of this matter anyway? Am I really trying to say something, or am I merely exploring? Or is it both? I think it's both. It's not so much that I'm demanding this conceptualization, but I'm exploring the idea of this conceptualization of ideas and selves and projects in-between, the relationship. This is how I feel the *process* working for me with the creation of this composition and the larger project of which it is a part.

Process. I began the project thinking about the words only as accessory to music. That this project is really about the music, trying to show what it's like to compose this particular piece for me. But it's become more than that. The audience matters. The dialogue with others matters (and with myself). The words do matter. And the project is much larger than just the music, it's about the whole thing. And like music notation, or words on a page when I really need to play music, much of the project is inadequate, fuzzy, arbitrary, and ambiguous. And that's ok. But it doesn't mean that I can stop reaching either. The whole is there. Somewhere.

 I would like to be able to say that this piece, the composition, is done, that this project, in terms of the musical manifestation, has come *full circle*, from ideas and dreams, round and round again in development, and somewhere became a piece, a work.

But I'm not done.

I can remember times where I'd worked on a piece and got to some place where I could

call it "done". Most of the those pieces were performed or recorded, notated, brought into

existence to others, and I have not played with them again. But if I think now about them I have

all these ideas about things that were left unfinished at the time, things I would have liked to

change had I more time or freedom to work. And there are new ideas now about what I could

do differently if ever I picked these pieces up again. Part of me does not like the idea of going

back and changing them – they were "done" after all – but part of me wonders what the piece

really was.

That has been a central theme of the words for this current project, calling into question

where something exists, *how* something exists, and how it is *shared* with others. If, as I have

explored in this paper, a piece exists in the mind, a relationship between idea(s) and self, and if

the idea – and possibly self as well – can only be known imperfectly, and if the relationship

between self and idea, the project itself, can be manifested and represented in various ways,

then what I am referring to as these pieces of my past are still active, they are still works-in-

progress, and "going back and changing them" is a myth of misunderstanding.

I am not sure if an idea can die. I am fairly sure that I am alive. If I'm alive, and the idea

is still alive, can the relationship ever really be severed? And if the relationship is still there, and

it is this relationship that grows into what is presented as a piece, a project, a work of art, a

paper, then the idea that anything is ever "finished" is also a myth.

It is well known that Beethoven (and others) had multiple endings for various musical

works, using this or that ending depending on the audience and purpose. Through time, one

ending may become more prominent than others, and thus another myth is created, that of the

"correct" version. Perhaps Beethoven did not have a preference. Maybe his preference was for

a version other than that recognized as the "real" version. Much of this has to do with

performance practice, or what Benson refers to as "the improvisation of musical dialogue"[34] –

the improvisation of a piece through its history of performance practice.

(begin excerpt)[35]

Improvisation is, apparently, "The creation of music in the course of performance."[36] That might

work alright as a preliminary understanding, but what does it mean to create music? What is a

performance? Does a DJ perform by spinning records? Are we running into the idea of

causation again, of causing something to come into being? While this entry recognizes that

there are different kinds and degrees of improvisation, it does not go so far into a delineation as

Bruce Benson. Benson's broad points are that there are many different kinds of improvisation

that all contribute within the performance practice of a piece of music into making the music

what it is. So Beethoven, in this sense, is not the only composer of a piece of music which bears

his name. But there are pieces of improvisation here and there that influence *how* a piece is

played through its history, the people making these impacts are thus improvising on the nature of

the composition itself. It is a continuous dialogue, a continuous creation.[37]

I see improvisation everywhere. If we sit in class we improvise our conversation. If we

listen to a recording we improvise our hearing of that recording. If we proceed to perform the

most strict Stravinsky we still improvise because we are human. We have to listen to each other.

We have to *play*, and in doing so we make mistakes, we make variations, we fluctuate. In all

these things we improvise.

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34 See Benson (2003).
35 Following is an excerpt from a paper I wrote for Foundations of Philosophical Though in 2011 Spring.
36 Randel (2003), 406.
37 See Benson (2003).

There is this musical debate about improvisation and composition. Are they distinct? The same? Different in kind or degree? Some say that composition is slowed down improvisation. I tend to see them differently, yet I see them often as the same too. Or maybe it is that I see improvisation as able to be composition as well, but composition cannot be improvisation. I'm not sure – nor can I tell if making such a distinction helps us make better music. I'm focusing here on the aspect of *completion*. Certainly if a jazz musician performs an improvisation in the form of a solo there is a completion in the sense of the usual understanding of the idea. Yet a composition, to me, implies a going back and revising, a working on it, a re-making again and again and again until some point when it's "done".[38] In contrast, an improvisation is here and is gone to the wind. Then again, if it is recorded, what happens? Does it then become a composition? Or is it a recorded improvisation? Is it both?

Of course there are the more overt forms of improvisation. The jazz soloist in the midst of a quartet. The jam band. The drummer making something up to a dance. The musician and word artist freestyling on the street or in the club. There are social forms of improvisation as well, where we seek to change our circumstances by how we move through them.[39]

I am making attempt to combine many views of improvisation into an idea that recognizes also the interrelatedness and complexity of life. I offer these only as interpretations, ways of understanding. *Life is full of change, much beyond our control, improvisation is the way that we adapt to that change. Improvisation is a way of acting in the world where we are acted*

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38 In Benson's view (or at least my reading of Benson) this process is continuous. Though there still has to be some sense of closure – or we wouldn't be able to recognize a piece of music. The improvisatory dialogue then, I suppose, must in some way be consistent with the *identity* of the piece.
39 On social improvisation, particularly with reference to jazz music, see Paul Berliner (1994), Ingrid Monson (1996), Fischlin and Heble (2004), especially in that collection Mark Anthony Neal's "'...A Way Out of No Way': Jazz, Hip-Hop, and Black Social Improvisation", West (1999), 474-484, and West (2001), 150-151.

upon. We are always being acted upon, and thus we are always in a process of improvising.

In a way I suppose this paper could be thought of as its own improvisation, or maybe an improvisation turned into a composition. Or maybe a course paper that I am writing – that might be the best way to look at it after all. I did sit down to write to see what I could come up with and what came out seemed to me spasmodic and erratic. Well, I'm ok with that. That's improvisation, in some sense anyway. Maybe I go back and fix a few things. Is it then a composition, or is it a revised improvisation? I don't know. Does it matter?

I had thought that I would like someday to come to a more expanded argument for my view of improvisation, as our way of adapting to change, as our way of acting in the world where we are acted upon. But maybe this is not something I should set out to do after all. Maybe it should be left alone to develop on its own, to be its own story. And maybe I can play a part in that story.

A lot of planning goes into a music composition sometimes for me. And sometimes I've simply got to let that go and play, improvise, and see where the music wants to go. It seems a theory of improvisation may play out similarly. And I think that philosophy will help.

While I am saying that we improvise as a way of adapting to change, of acting on life, I'm not sure that I can identify any sort of *cause* for improvisation. We may simply improvise because we do, because that's the way that we are. And that way is a complex, interrelated and intersubjectively formed identity that includes as a primary element the action of improvisation. We are improvisatory beings.

We exist intersubjectively, and grow through interaction with others in our environments. The world is full of change. We interact with the world and adapt to this change through

improvising. Improvisation is our way of acting in the world where we are acted upon. We are

always being acted upon in some way, and therefore we are always improvising.

As this essay, this wandering, this rambling, comes to some kind of close, I leave it like a

search for the beyond in a jazz improvisation – longing, seeking, gentle and fierce, reaching for

more yet letting go for now, the improvisation lost to time yet recorded for history. If nothing

else, maybe this improvisation of writing has planted a seed – or is *helping* a seed to grow.[40]

Nature is not, therefore, as Aristotle defined it, an essence, either deep within or distantly
without, but a threshold at which thought and language falter and mystery begins. If anything is
in our nature, it is that we are fated to live betwixt and between, compelled to act, driven to
understand, and bound to speak, even though we are constantly undone by what we do,
confounded by what we think, and damned by what we say.[41]

(end excerpt)

In some ways we could make many comparisons of improvisation and composition to various

sorts of writing. This is something that directly connects various manifestations of this project:

(1) the composition itself, both performed and notated, and that part of the composition which is

"composed" and that part which is "improvised", (2) the written form of the project, which is

both a collection of more improvised writing and more edited writing. It is difficult to see some

kind of distinction between improvisation and composition. Improvisation is spontaneous

creation, composition, at the least, that includes the *possibility* of revision. An improvisation

could become a composition, a composition could include improvisation. In some sense we

could think of them as the same process, but different cycles. That is, improvisation could be

considered one way around a circle, where composition could be thought of as taking another

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40 Referring to the opening of the paper, a consideration of the Frog and Toad story "The Garden", where I consider
      interactions of causation, identity, improvisation, and development. For the story, see Lobel (1972), 18-29.
41 Jackson (2007), 153.

turn if one chooses to. Schoenberg understood the distinction between improvisation and composition to be a matter of "speed of production, a relative matter."[42] Bruno Nettl, in light of ethnomusicological thought, considered it "time to begin to rethink the idea of improvisation, to see whether it merits consideration as a single process, whether it has integrity as an idea separate from other, related ideas about creating of music, and whether all the things that we now call improvisation are indeed the same thing."[43] While speculative at this point (for me), Stravinsky might have had a very different idea of improvisation, because he saw more controls and limits as allowing more freedom: "A mode of composition that does not assign itself limits becomes pure fantasy. … The more art is controlled, limited, worked over, the more it is free."[44] To me, improvisation has the idea of playing and creating in the moment, while composition has the feeling of something more formalized, finished, but these could be different stages or cycles of the same process, two sides of the same coin, different representations of the same idea.[45]

But this project, in addition to whatever else it is, questions all these things. My Synthesis composition is both a composition, though it is not "finished", and it is an improvisation, or at least improvisation is present.[46] The notation for the composition includes sketches of how to play the piece, but these are not exact, and there is great flexibility to play around with the piece in performance. Improvisation was a large part of how the work came to be, how ideas were formed and developed, and how I could put them together. But it is a distinct entity of a work of

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42 Schoenberg (1969), 175.
43 Nettl (1974), 2.
44 Stravinsky (1970), 63.
45 An additional idea of improvisation comes from the application of Chomsky's work on universal grammar in linguistics, for example Chomsky (2006) and Chomsky (1965), to music. Even in improvised music, Lerdahl and Jackendoff (1983), 106, both performer and listener employ knowledge in the understanding of pitch.
46 Refer to Benson (2003) who distinguishes between various kinds of improvisation. Of course we could think of a more overt form, a musician taking a solo, or even of language creation in conversation, but improvisation is always present in a work because we could never play – or *hear* – a work the same way again.

music. In that sense, it is a composition.

Similarly, this project as a whole includes many improvised writings, like freewriting, or journaling, yet these may – and sometimes are / have been – edited and revised later, and done so without regard to time. Some is more reflective, and some more "academic". So here also in the writing we have both improvisation and composition, and of different styles – more layers, loops, representations of this project as a whole. The process throughout all this work – the reflecting, the writing, the composing and improvising, and the sharing – is itself representative of the search for the project in the in-between, a finding out, a discovering. Or a hoping to discover what is there. This process is necessarily experimental, any given presentation is only a representation of the whole.

This is all to say, in part, that I'm not sure if it's important to draw the distinction between improvisation and composition, or how to do so, but I do think it is important to inquire. Why? In part, however we think about improvisation and composition, this will, in turn, affect, in some degree, how we think about the abstract, the real, and where this project exists and how it comes into being and is shared with others.

This whole project of Synthesis began in a very different place. Priorities change over time, and this is about process. The project began as a syllabus that used what I am calling a broad-based, multi-modal, explore and express model. The intention was to play through the syllabus, as if I were taking the course, and see what I might produce throughout, especially for the final project. The things produced throughout the course, along with the syllabus, and reflection about the experience, would together entail the Synthesis project. But even as I continued to

think about the syllabus this direction changed. I began to feel that I needed to compose. That's what I wanted to do. And even as I continued to compose, knowing that was the "final project" of the syllabus, and I continued to think about the syllabus as part of Synthesis whole, it was as if the project of composing took off and it was the only thing that really mattered.

I realized that the syllabus wasn't ready. I wasn't ready to play through it. There was more work to do than I could do in the time that I had. And it no longer felt right for this project. I had to compose, and, thinking back to previous music theory explorations of improvisation and composition that I'd explored throughout CCT, I had to continue to explore other matters of composition and improvisation and things related. That's what the work then became.[47]

Somewhere in this paper I wrote (or will write, or wrote but it will be later) that paradox can be a friend. I was thinking about this idea of paradox related to what I started with and what the project has become. The project started, most literally, with a title: *Third Divergence*. A divergence is a new direction, a separation of ways. The idea – whenever it was that I came up with the title – was that the "real" life is somewhere in the abstract, like an eternal existence, and the first divergence was entering the world. Soon enough, the world helps us forget the real. Good ideas come from the real, and to pursue those good ideas we have to reach back towards that real. Any subsequent divergence would be a prolonged time of intense focus and effort, such as a graduate program, for me. But, paradoxically, this intense focus, while *potentially* a divergence, may also lead us back to that *real*. The project became, in another

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47 In a sense, I've been able to explore the same essence between the two projects. Both were about exploring and seeing what would come of it. With the composition (and paper / reflections), I've been able to take advantage of the freedom that CCT provides in Synthesis to see what might happen. It's just that composing a new piece and interaction with it's development and the whole process is what happened / is happening.

paradox, the exploration of the "abstract" idea and the "real" me, where the project, which

cannot be fully known, exists in that relationship, in the in-between.

What the work then became. What came before matters, but it doesn't matter. Music

itself can be a paradox, as it can mean something very *real* to me, but in a way that is not real to

others. Whatever the work became, even *is becoming*, it started, and is, and ends, with a little

idea: Eb C E Eb Db C (A).

I use the term "jazz" here not so much as a term for a musical art form, as for a mode of being in
the world, an improvisational mode of protean, fluid, and flexible dispositions toward reality
suspicious of "either / or" viewpoints, dogmatic pronouncements, or supremacist ideologies. To
be a jazz freedom fighter is to attempt to galvanize and energize world-weary people into forms
of organization with accountable leadership that promote critical exchange and broad
reflection. The interplay of individuality and unity is not one of uniformity and unanimity
imposed from above but rather of conflict among diverse groupings that reach a dynamic
consensus subject to questioning and criticism. As with a soloist in a jazz quartet, quintet or
band, individuality is promoted in order to sustain and increase the *creative* tension with the
group – a tension that yields higher levels of performance to achieve the aim of the collective
project.[48]

When we enter a circle we don't really know what we're getting into. When *IN* a circle, we are

faced with crisis and challenge, as well as exhilaration. When we come *FULL* circle it's almost

as if none of that matters anymore – and yet it does. And when we *ENTER* we being again, go

around again, reflect and remember, continue.

This circular work started as a syllabus project where I would then play through the

syllabus and see what I would come up with as a final project, the Synthesis being that final

project for the syllabus, the syllabus itself, and all products of development along the way. But

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48 West (2001), 150-151.

the work quickly became a composition. I needed to compose. And in composing and

exploring this music, by improvising with it, I started wondering about where ideas are, what the

real is, what the *abstract* is, how to represent an idea, whether I can really know what the idea

is, and the relationship between the abstract and the real, between the idea and myself in my

lifeworld, the *in*-between, this continuous struggle and negotiation, in Jackson's terms, of *acting*

and being acted upon. Improvisation throughout the circle has been the mechanism that

sustains the motion of the circle. I hope this is evident in the composition, that it can be heard.

As well, this paper is about working through ideas again and again, going round and round,

sometimes saying the same things, hopefully showing some of the *process* of developing some

of these ideas related to the composition. The more overt forms of improvisation in the

composition help show as well this process of in-the-middle-of development, develop*ing*, and

my hope has been that the commentary on limits – of notation, of tonality, meter, music theory,

the instrument and gear, even of words – help show the process of improvisation and

composition, of creation, as not only circular but evolutionary.

The composition represents ideas in musical ways, making musical commentary on the

layers and loops represented in this whole project. The composition itself is the most important

component of the whole project. I certainly cannot have the words without the composition.

And while I could perform the music without making mention of the paper, the composition did

not come into being without the reflection in play during its process of improvising and

discovering. This composition is about these two ideas, the MND and P2S, their merging and

dancing, meshing, playing, developing together, looping and layering around each other and

into each other.[49] The piece itself is not tonal, but it is not modal, serial, or anything else that I

can discover; it is, as it were, some sort of "relative *tonation*", clustered around some notes and

particular patterns. Meter was abandoned, bar lines in the notation were used only as commas

for the music. No key signature was used, and there are few markings other than my own notes

and instructions. There is form, but some of this is very open to play. One layer of idea in this

composition was to play with the limitations of notation, meter, rhythm, form, and harmonic

organization, keeping the notation and piece itself as a map for further evolution, left to the

performer and any given performance.[50] I hope that this piece provides an example of a needed

expanded music theory and corresponding analysis which can account for / give names to what

is in the piece, yet in such a way that corresponds to my conceptualization of the piece.[51]

    The *Synthesis* composition itself, as the composition, is a synthesis of these various ideas

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49 Earlier I mentioned three ideas, but this is not entirely accurate in terms of how I conceptualize the piece now,
   for what was previously mentioned as the third idea is really only another way to play the MND idea. Also, note
   that I have intentionally used the term MND and P2S to refer to these two central ideas. The MND refers to the
   movement / patter Eb C E Eb Db C (A), and the P2S to C G D Bb G Eb. Both of those ideas are obviously larger
   than the monikers "MND" and "P2S". However, I have intentionally simplified because those names refer to the
   central pieces of those two ideas, they represent, as it were, the essence of the idea explored in those two ideas,
   and provide a useful way to reference and represent the ideas in discussion.
50 Each time I play the piece I play it a bit differently. I want the notation itself, the current record of the piece
   outside of my own mind, to be kept a *representative map*. This idea is consistent with what has become the
   conceptualization of the whole project, where the idea exists in the *in-between*, and cannot be fully known.
   Thus, keeping a map, rather than a set form, allows the idea of not-fully-known to be retained. Still, the question
   has been presented many times just how much I might be formalizing something, making a more official or
   permanent version, by notating the piece. I included the notation as a way of illustrating the work in a written
   form – another representation. I notated as I practiced, and could conceive many ways to put various items
   together. There was in this process another struggle to act and be acted upon, as the notation sometimes helped
   me slow down and work out what I was doing, thus aiding clarity, but also I was faced with the limits of notation
   – or at least my notational skills – in that it does not represent what I feel about the piece and what I was
   actually playing. Keeping the notation more vague – even more so than what I did write out – might be more
   true both the composition and conceptualization of the *in-between* as not-fully-known – or fully expressed.
51 Music theory and analysis give us a way to talk about music, a common language. While pitch-class set theory
   would be adequate to analyze clusters of the piece, it would not do so in relation to the whole. Every part of
   this composition, in my conceptualization, is related to the whole, and must be discussed that way. In this way,
   the composition is also a reflection of this larger project, where each portion in turn – paper, composition,
   presentation, discussions – refers to the whole project, another set of layers interacting to this *in-between*.

– the MND and P2S, the limits, struggle. And also the coming together of these parts of the

whole work, in paper and the composition and presentation, into one piece, one work, another

representation of ideas, is part of this whole Synthesis, loops and layers and representations.

In composition, I made attempt to be consistent with the character of the piece, with

what is already there, so that new developments grow out of the music that is already existing,

organic. If I were to go through my own piece and analyze it, would I find "rules" that I'm

following, would I be able to develop or find a theory that guides the composing?

As I attempt to bring this paper to a close before its beginning, I find myself taking breaks

by playing the composition. Just like I needed to compose and perform, so now I need to

continue to play this music to put the paper together – internally, and into the larger project

conceptualization.

In some ways, this paper makes an argument for the abstract. At least there is my

testimony that I needed to abstract to music in order to make a synthesis of these ideas.

Abstracting allows us to take something from one area, put it in another to develop, and then

(re)apply. But this project has questioned the idea of *the abstract* and of *the real*, and there may

be further ways of considering these ideas than I've presented here. I began with a more

Platonic idea of the idea, where the idea is more real, and the struggle of the artist is to reach for

the real in the realm of beyond the lifeworld. But I shifted to a more phenomenological

conceptualization of the real as being myself in my lifeworld, and the idea that I was reaching

for with the whole project and with the composition was more abstract. I applied the

anthropological work of Michael Jackson to enter the conceptualization that the project exists

in-between the phenomenological *real* me and the *abstract* idea, a constant struggle and

negotiation for acting and being acted upon. This conceptualization has become, by the FULL

circle of this project, the existential reality for me.

The week before the presentation was filled with crisis for how I might share the music.

Working with this conceptualization, what form of sharing the music would be more consistent?

The three forms considered were to record the music into the computer, loop various sections,

and build the piece that way, sharing by simply pressing "play". For a time, I felt this much more

abstract. Another way was to use a looping pedal to make loops in real-time, building off of

them, less to show the conceptualization of the whole than to illustrate the layers in the project.

And the third idea was to use layers in the music itself, simply playing this guitar and nothing

more. I discussed these concerns with my group for the course, and three invaluable

suggestions came from this dialogue: (1) present as somewhat of a workshop before performing

so people can get a little familiar with the set-up, whatever it is that I use, (2) if I only have a

recording, I can "play" and go back and play again, and that is more *real*, (3), playing the piece,

without loops, without the recording, but just playing, is more *abstract* because I play and then

the music is gone. These suggestions of the group became part of the work of Synthesis, as

many of our interactions had during the term. The presentation was, I hope, somewhat

interactive at the beginning, and when I performed I did not press "play" but rather played, no

loops, just the guitar, and the music was heard and was gone, hopefully both consistent with

and illustrating the conceptualization used in the whole project.

The project is about exploring, abstracting through composition, expressing through

performance and words-about. It is about the struggle, for me, of compositing and improvising,

creating, working-out ideas. It is about the relationship between, and a reaching for what I

cannot fully understand, acting and being acted upon. Both the paper and the composition

come to FULL circle in the middle, here in the FULL section of this paper and in the middle

development of the composition, D1 and D2, where the MND and P2S merge and dance and

layer and circle.[52]

This project has been about process, journey, exploring, from it's entering even until now

– and it will continue to circle. It has been, to some degree, arbitrary, and yet there may be

some reason to continue exploring the nature of the abstract and the real.[53] It has explored

limits and representations in relation to the specific project of this composition. The

presentation here in words has allowed for a journal, freewriting, but also, more edited and

revised writing, in some ways corresponding to the improvisational and compositional aspects

in the composition. I felt at the beginning of the project and now that this mixed medium

format would provide the most benefit to me in working with these ideas, as well as making

some attempt to *show the process* of this working.

I had written earlier that "It's about letting it be, so it completes itself, where I can step

back and realize that it is 'finished', and it is just what it needs to be. When I realize that, it's

done, and it doesn't matter what anyone else thinks of it." But while I began with the idea that

my work was for the "cosmos", that I do my work, my art, because I am compelled to, the

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52 Compare Porter (1985), 620, referring to the Golden Mean: "There does seem to be a certain naturalness about a
   climax two-thirds of the way through a work, perhaps because it agrees with our physical experiences in
   reaching short-term goals. We expend a great deal of energy to attain the goal then need some time to relax and
   unwind."

53 We could say, for example, that music is abstract and therefore *cannot* be understood, and our purpose then is
   only to create and experience music. Consider Stravinsky (1970), 27: "For the phenomenon of music is nothing
   other than a phenomenon of speculation." Compare to Plato (2002), 125: "...One might make the same
   argument about harmony, lyre and strings, that a harmony is something invisible, without body, beautiful and
   divine in the attuned lyre, whereas the lyre itself and its strings are physical, bodily, composite, earthy, and akin
   to what is normal." This corresponds, to a degree, with the conceptualization of the music and idea being
   abstract, whereas myself in my lifeworld is the real.

audience does matter to me. The composer seeks to act, to control expectations, to be

"organizer of sound".[54] And to do this in a more effective and communicative way requires a

connection and dialogue with one's audience. The role of improvisation is paramount in this

regard. And the work is never done. It is a dialogue through time,[55] a development, a

continuous process and evolution and improvisation.

I've questioned the realm of the idea, the abstract and the real, conceptualizing the

project as something that we don't know, something that exists in the *in-between* realm, where

we struggle to act and we are acted upon, a relationship between the idea and ourselves. It is

this relationship where the project is. All parts are layers, reflections, representations of the

project – the way the paper is written, the way the music is composed, the layers, the

explorations and expressions, the improvisations...

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54 Cage (1961), 5.
55 See Benson (2003).

ENTER CIRCLE

Setting out. It's a very exciting prospect, when ideas are raw, organic, flexible, abstract, unreal, to *begin* something. In a sense there really isn't any kind of real beginning. The idea is already there. We're simply picking it up, entering into a new work that makes the idea real-in-context. We are entering into an eternal existence of the idea and pulling it down from it's abstract heaven to manifest in our world for awhile in some particular way.

We never really know what's going to happen with this idea in our world(s). The idea has a will of its own, as it were, and the vicissitudes of life are relentless – that *is* life, to change, to improvise, to *go on*. But we try nonetheless to work with such an idea and make it our own in our world(s), to mold the idea, to apply it, to control it. It is a struggle, a continuous negotiating between what we envision, the possibilities of "real life" (which we can't know), and the idea itself. It is a subjective and intersubjective struggle as well. Subjective in that it means to us different than it means to others. Intersubjective in that the application of the idea does not exist in us alone but in interaction with other people, other ideas, and various contexts.

It is with such a mind that I set out to compose, to explore musical ideas. I don't know where I'll go with them. I play around, improvise, explore. I try to find the ideas in this exploring. And I find an idea. I can hear it. That idea *is* the piece. And once I find it then the piece is there, I need only to develop it. Or rather, to let the piece develop. Because the idea wants to go its own way. I find the idea – or it is revealed to me – and I try to develop it, to apply it to the composition and to the world that the composition will inhabit, the world of dialogue, performance practice through time, subjectivities, contexts. But the idea wants to go

its own way. It wants to grow organically, to stay raw and "real" in its abstraction. And thus this process of composition, for me, is a struggle, a negotiation between trying to act on the idea and make it mine, and a letting go and being acted upon by the idea – a letting go where I am only there to notate, to record, to document where the idea wants to go. The mark of the artist, in this understanding, is letting the idea be itself. *Or is it?*

Music composition, this exploring and expressing, improvisation, finding, acting and being acted upon, gives me both the greatest joy and the deepest pain. It is a working-out, and a working, and it will become a letting-go, where the idea then is what matters, and letting this idea go where it wants to. Or making it mine. Or both?

Of course, this is all a little silly anyway. What do I mean that the idea has a will of its own, that I'm just an amanuensis for this *thing* that flutters around in the abstract? I'm the one with the instrument, the practice, the training! And isn't the idea coming from my mind? Well, I don't know the answers to those inquiries. I can simply describe what I feel about this process for me.

And I don't know where it will go. I set out – to improvise, to explore, to express, to make some sort of "finished" work – but I don't know where it will end up. I find the idea, and I plan. I work to develop. But will the idea win, and am I then in service to it's completed manifestation in some form? I don't know what that will be, but I'm excited to find out.

This work of Synthesis is more than a composition. And it's more than something that will be completed in 2012 Spring. It is something that is a continued beginnings. It cannot be the true beginning of something in the sense that it hasn't come before – because the ideas have been

with me. It is not the beginning even of a journey in the sense that journeys often have a "this is

where we are coming from and where we are going" sort of route. The Synthesis is bringing

together various ideas into something that will be "finished" in the sense that it will be written

here and notated here and turned in. It will be presented and performed. But the work of this,

what it really is, will continue well after these "finalizing" sort of projects. The work of Synthesis

is the entering of a circle, a hop onto a merry-go-round that is already spinning and will

continue to spin after the "final" versions are "done".

   I conceptualize the written portion of this project then in three sections: In Circle, Full

Circle, and Enter Circle. The reader begins with In Circle, being thrown directly into the process

of the composition. That's what this Synthesis is about: the music, writing about the music, the

process of making the music. The reader doesn't necessarily understand what's going on. But

that's ok. Keep reading. In Full Circle the reader can now see that there is a piece to be heard,

some sense of "finished" becoming, and while understanding that there is some sort of "here we

are", the reader still wonders how we got there. And that brings the readers around to the

introduction of sorts, the last section, Enter Circle, where information is given about what I am

setting out to do with this project. Welcome.

I guess this piece could be considered a sort of artist's journal. Welcome to my world as I

attempt to put these pieces together and compose a new piece of music, with some of the items

that come to mind along the way, the associations attempted in the music itself, the

representations of the music in the language about it.

   Yet some of this writing is not a journal – free, repetitive, messy, in-development – but

rather revised, edited, fixed, expanded, contracted, twisted, and turned inside out or outside in. Some of the writing is more improvised, like freewriting, while some is more composed, structured, planned, worked-through. Most of the writing is *as it is, whatever it is, however it is*. And also *whenever*. I am not making any attempt to be chronological or have a set development from points with arguments in support of those claims that feed into subsequent claims. Rather this work is about writing a bit here, a bit there, a little more here, some development over there – each part pointing to the whole that cannot be fully known.

This is how my process of composing music tends to go. I get this little idea and work on it. Then maybe I get an idea for some development, but it doesn't go after the idea, or maybe it goes before. Then this, then that, and then a little more. I might develop a provisional plan for how I want the composition to go. It is then a sketch of the whole representation – the whole and "finished" composition is a representation of a whole of ideas that cannot be fully known. But then I begin to try and organize, complete, finish, in the sense that "finish" means a working that is ready to be shared. And the piece goes it's own way, fights back against my plan, and a surrender is all that fills my mind. But this is not a surrender of myself to the idea, just as the working-out of the idea is not all my doing, uncovering the sculpture within the rock. Rather it is a letting-go of the *relationship* between the idea and myself, a way of letting go of my will over it, so that this *relationship* can develop as it will, become what it may.

Similarly, the writing words about this composition and the process of relation is not about imposing will here and there, or uncovering where the words want to go. The focus is still on the composition, that's what this work is about, but the words too are a relationship between

me and the idea, representing this idea of the music through some sort of description. So while I might have an idea of the word-relating-to-the-music over here, or over there, and while I may develop some sort of plan, it is then the *relationship* of representation between me and the idea that must be allowed to develop. Therefore there is no attempt made to be chronological or systematic, but simply to write, all portions and parts pointing to the music, all parts pointing to a whole that cannot be fully known, a whole that is represented first in the music, and then in words about.

It is what it is for now while becoming something else.

This isn't how I write papers, thinking about editing and revisions and little pieces here and there. But that is how my own process works leading up to writing. I think about the idea, write about it my journal, and talk through it. I explore the idea in any way I can think of, saying it differently. This is the preparatory writing. It happens here and there, over time. And though I don't go back and edit those journals, I do often re-say what I'm thinking. When I feel I know what I'm doing and can put things together, it is then time to write the paper. I have a rough plan in my head. Maybe I know what I want to cover, but not where I'll end up. Maybe I know where I want to go, but I don't know how to get there. But when it's time to write, I'm ready, I write, and I let go of the piece.

This Synthesis writing is different. It is not like my normal papers. It is more like my journal. It is being written here and there. Parts are moved "before" or "after", and I'm working out here in the writing what it is that I think I am doing and want to do. This style does not normally work for me, and that's why it must be used here. Because it is this way of writing, for

me, that is going to show the *process* of putting together Synthesis, both the composition itself as the most important (to me) element as well as the writing about the music. This style is frustrating for me to work with – because I know it is not my own journal – but it is something that, more than anything else, will work to show that working-through process of bringing this piece to life.

And there is an advantage to this style as well beyond process. The piece itself – musically as well as the writing about – is not about time, chronology, linear development. There is a time, a place, a use, for these approaches, but that is not what I'm trying to do here.

And if I want to demonstrate the process of composing the piece, it is only fitting that the process of writing reflects this unfolding as well.

It is interesting to me that in order to feel like I'm ready to write I still need to write in my personal journal about my writing about my music, a meta- meta- approach, before I feel like I'm ready to write here.

The plan. The point. The purpose, goal. *Why am I doing this?* Why is this kind of writing the writing that I feel best represents the process of composing? Why was it a composition that I felt best represented my process through the program, or at this time in my life, with all the areas of exploring? Why was it composing and writing about composing that felt to me the necessary action to make this process *real to me and shareable with others*?

I had planned on working on a jazz project for Synthesis. A syllabus, that I developed in the

course *Processes of Research and Engagement*, developed as my way of tackling what I saw as a divide in modality of traditional formal music education, especially in higher education. There were courses more focused on reading and writing papers (music history) and other courses focused on practicing and performing (improvisation, lessons), and a few that were some combination (composition and theory). But we didn't *practice* music history, and didn't read much for instrument lessons. Why not? If I want to know and present something about 1940s through 1960s jazz, shouldn't I be able to play it as well as talk about it? This is not to say that someone can't specialize. It is to say that I am making an argument for a change in the basic nature of music in higher education toward a broad-based, multimodal, explore and express model. So I wrote a syllabus to make an attempt to put those things together around a topic. And the plan for Synthesis – at least through January and into February – was to "play" through the syllabus and see what I might do.

But that's not what I'm doing. Why? What I am doing is composing, and putting together this paper about composing this piece. How did this change? How did I get here? Some of the topics are still here. The project as it became is still multimodal – paper, presentation, performance – and it is still broad (I hope). But it is different. Why did I change? And how? It seems automatic. It changed because it changed. That's the way the current took me.

I think I realized that I was not ready to play through that syllabus. I needed to do more work first. There are particular works of jazz, written works, that I've yet to read through. There is a lot of practicing I need to do. I just wasn't ready. And I need time to do those things, more time than a Spring term. And there was also some sense of closure after writing the syllabus. I needed, maybe, to do something else. Yet, there are elements that are still retained. Elements

from things I wanted to do with the syllabus that have transferred over to what I am doing now with Synthesis.

It is abstracted, this Synthesis. It is still about broad-based (though maybe not as broad), and multimodal. It is still about exploring and expressing. But it is also much more abstracted. And maybe I needed that. Abstraction allows us to take something from a situation, move it somewhere else, re-work it, and then apply back to the situation it came from. Like metaphor and allegory, abstraction allows us to work through a situation that we can't understand and then (re)apply. This project of composition and abstraction is more personal for me. Maybe it is a way of saying that in order to make a synthesis of things explored during the CCT program *I have to abstract*, as a way of putting things together this way, of organizing, of making something out of all this exploration. And for me that way is composition and writing that is, well, like this. This project of Synthesis then is about making a synthesis, and the way that I felt I could do that – apparently the only way I felt I could do that right now – was to compose and reflect.

 The idea is this little pattern, two MNDs connected, making a collection that in total consists of 5 notes, {0, 1, 3, 4, 9}. Everything builds off of that. Until I discovered another pattern surrounding a P2S, 0>7>7<4<3<4, a collection {0, 2, 3, 7, 10}. The setting-out goal with the composition is to develop both of these ideas in a way that brings them together to circle around one another. The paper, in part, is to help discuss in words what I'm doing with the music, the process of trying to reach this musical goal.

I'm writing here about what I'm setting out to do. Is it strange to put this near the end of the

paper? Not at all. I'm writing about what I'm setting out to do, having completed some items

and still working on others. This is no paradox, it is part of the process, and in this process the

whole of the work is always there, revealed at various times by different pieces. Sometimes

something may appear as paradox, or contradiction, or inconsistent. But this is not about

something that always works. It is about working the way through, finding what might work,

exploring different options, and learning more and more throughout the working what this idea

really is and how I relate to it and how I can best present the idea to others in various media.

Each glimpse is a glimpse to the whole. It does not allow a linear development, it is

certainly not chronological – some is developed, some in time, some is improvised – this is

rather a circular finding-out. Each glimpse could *appear* contradictory, but might not be, giving

various perspectives of the same thing. Each glimpse could *be* contradictory, in that the paper is

trying to show the work-in-progress of the work – the composition especially, but the idea

through words as well – and this idea changes, my relationship with the idea changes, and I

learn how to communicate the idea differently. Each part must be considered with reference to

the abstract whole. No time, no line, no argument, no claim. And yet all those things can be

there – *if each element points towards the abstract whole, the idea, my relationship with the*

idea, a whole that is not reachable, yet I am ever reaching towards.

Reading, listening, looking at art is a matter of active response, of dialogue with the
material. Creative study entices us from one question to the next; we are bugged by the
question, which generates another answer, which is itself another question. We re-create the
book as we read it. As in the Twenty Questions game, we start at the edge and work our way
round and round into the center. We may reread the book or rehear the music months or years
later and find newer, more integrative meanings, rhythms we weren't ready to hear before,
deeper music.[56]

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56 Nachmanovitch (1990), 105.

This is how I feel about creating the work. It is a continuous process of relationship between myself and the idea, our growing together, and every time I encounter the idea in my thoughts or work on bringing some of this together I am again greeted by the idea, new ways of knowing, new ways of saying, presenting. As we improvise together we find new things. So the work of the whole altogether is always changing, changing as the improvisation continues, some ideas repeated, developed, others dropped.

I like to say that this is all about the music, but that's not entirely true. It's about the *relationship between* me and the idea, about whatever that *thing is* that the relationship between me and the idea becomes. While I may still be able to say that the most important part of the whole project is the music, it is not the only part that matters. The manifestation of the project through words – words on a page, words in a speaking presentation – matter as well. The words are the journal to the music, a log of how things develop and move, what I'm working on and thinking about as I work on the music and the project as a whole. At some point it ceases to be so distinct in words, in music, in speaking, and simply becomes one thing, one project. That's how I feel now about this work. I cannot have these words without the music. I cannot have the music without these words. All facets of the project have become so fused with the others that it's no longer about anything other than the working-through, manifested and represented in various ways.

More ideas about Synthesis today, realizing that the project is larger than just the composition and paper, even than the presentation / performance and self-assessment too. It is here also, it is

in my life. As a project, the presentations (live, as writing, as performance) are only *part* of the whole, *representations*, of the project – incomplete, glimpses, hints, but honest. That's the goal anyway, honesty. And here is this project as a whole that even I can't know, what do I then share?

Maybe this will all come together somehow. I can feel that letting-go beginning. Time to write and let these ideas work themselves out. I don't know how this will all turn out, but I'm excited to find out.

And what makes this real to me, in comparison to my own journaling, which brings things to life, what makes this process of Synthesis real? Why am I doing this? Why the composition? Who is it for?

I don't know if I have the answer to those questions. Maybe I chose the composition because I had to. That is to say that I didn't really feel that I chose it – I just found myself there. I had begun Synthesis by thinking about a syllabus project that would explore a topic – in this case, 1940s through 1960s jazz music – through multimodal and broad-based means, a way of both study and practicing the music, an explore and express model. But at some point it didn't feel right. Maybe I felt that I was done with that project for awhile. I did feel that there was more work I'd have to do before being ready to play through the syllabus I had written.

But maybe there is more to this current project of words and music. Maybe it was an attempt to reach back towards what I know. Maybe it is a way of synthesizing by abstracting and then manifesting in music and reflection. After all, "*Korte* does not care where it goes when it dies! Heaven and hell are all the same to it!"[57]

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57 Saran Salia, in Jackson (2011), 66.

This is a story about a medicine man, Saran Salia, with whom anthropologist Michael

Jackson has worked in his fieldwork in Sierra Leone, first in 1979. When first arriving, the

medicine man allowed Jackson and his family to stay in his house in Firawa. Saran Salia would

move in with his classificatory son Hassan, who was Muslim, and in opposition to traditional

medicine after his conversion to Islam. There was a day when Jackson and Hassan began a

discussion of metaphysics. Throughout Jackson's writings one can find reference to the things

people do in critical moments, reaching towards the familiar, the safe, the comfortable. Uttering

a "oh god" when one does not believe in god, choosing the path one knows despite the dangers,

simply because one knows the path. This story that Jackson shares has a similar turn.

> Our argument was beginning to take on the overtones of Bishop Berkeley's *Dialogues of
> Hylas and Philonous*. The undecidable question of whether matter is a product of mind, or mind
> a product of matter. Had I possessed a better grasp of pragmatism, I might have been able to
> overcome this false antinomy of idealism and materialism and see that Hassan's position and
> mind did not necessarily imply fixed and opposing worldviews but potentialities, available to
> both of us, depending on the exigencies of the situations in which we found ourselves. I
> therefore found it both illuminating and ironic when Saran Salia later informed me that, despite
> the Alhajis' vehement arguments against jujus and magical medicines, Hassan secretly availed
> himself of them, hedging his bets, as people everywhere do when they fear for their safety or are
> unsure of themselves. "If Hassan offended a man who owned *korte* [the strongest of all the
> medicines]," Saran Salia wryly remarked, "and that man used *korte* against him, he would die
> just like any other man, unless the antidote was applied. *Korte* does not care where it goes
> when it dies! Heaven and hell are all the same to it!"[58]

Perhaps I am doing the same thing as Hassan, surely as Jackson too has done, as we all do as

human beings. I am choosing that thing that is sure, even though it is not.

> It's not sure. There is much risk in the undertaking that this whole project has become.

The composing, the writing, the synthesizing – none of this is sure. But it is what *I found myself*

doing. Not contrived, not forced, it is natural, honest.

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58 Jackson (2011), 65-66.

And maybe necessary. Maybe I had to abstract and compose and reflect in order to synthesize, in order to make sense of this world I find myself in.

I remember sitting with Dr Frye at the piano, looking over a composition that I had brought it. We played through some of it, and he eventually stopped, looked at it, and circled three or four notes near the beginning. Pointing, tapping the page with the pencil, he said, "*That's* your piece; the rest of this is 50 more pieces." Years later, I think I understood what he meant. I hope that is reflected now in this Synthesis project, as I *improvise* through it, and especially the composition.

Well, I think that music, being an expression of the human heart, or of the human being itself, does express just what *is* happening. I feel it expresses the whole thing – the whole of human experience at the particular time that it is being expressed.[59]

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59 John Coltrane, in Kofsky (1970), 225.

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SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS: music notes, handwritten notes, music notation

Notes on Supplemental Materials (numbers below correspond to pages in the supplements)

Supplements to this paper include various music notation sketches, along with some

handwritten notes, and a version of notation for the composition. It is my hope that these notes

– few of many – will help to illustrate some of the work that has gone into this composition and

the larger project.

1ST SUPPLEMENT – music notation sketches

1ˢᵗ Supplement – music notation sketches

1. The initial idea of the piece, the MND (expanded), Eb C E Eb Db C . The circled notes show what I was thinking that I wanted for this piece, something that circled around. This came to fruition in the D1 and D2 of the notation (pages 8-9).

2. Shows some initial attempt to layer and merge the MND and P2S ideas.

3. More obscure of a note, indicating a possible direction for flow of the composition.

4. Shows work on the "hymn" section (first part of C, triangle 2 on page 4 of the notation). This came out of the teasing with traditional scale harmony. (See page 6 of Supplement 1 and notes.)

5. This page shows the combined MND and P2S, where I alternate interval direction in building development for the idea. The alternation of 4 and 5 indicate that intervals of 4ᵗʰ or 5ᵗʰ are legitimate representations of the "P".

6. This page shows the MND and P2S (most basic) blended to form a 7-note scale. The scale is not standard, but 7 notes is for traditional scale harmony. The idea was to play with the limits of traditional scale harmony by making a scale and following some simple patters / conventions associated with traditional scale harmony – both as a way to do something the listener might recognize and yet also make a commentary on the limits of traditional scale harmony. From the scale I could build chords following normative patterns using this approach, and these explorations became the basis for the beginning of C on page 4 of the notation. The numbered collections on the bottom of the page correspond to pitch-class set theory.

7. On the upper portion of this page can be seen the development of C using arpeggios (pages 4-7 in the notation) – patterns to use and directions to take. The notes written indicate the low note of each arpeggio, these follow the standard circle of 5ths progression from traditional scale harmony, 4-7-3-6-2-5-1, while the top voice plays the central A idea transposed. The lower portion of the page shows early development for what became A'. (See page 1 of notation, 3ʳᵈ Supplement. This is the "third" part that I mention in the paper.)

8. The central A idea, this little idea that started the whole compositional exploring.

Key: C Db Eb E (A) 〉 3 1 4 3 2 1
[2 3 4 (5) /

$F\Delta7 \rightarrow A\flat\Delta7, (3\times) B\flat\Delta7 - D\flat\Delta7 \longrightarrow$ E♭ beginning, mod around to D.

way using
MND, P2S

∅ M P N P D S →?

OK... MND chordal, then P2S chordal, then merge?
become less chordal, more lines

No, together,
split, together
as lines
→ but layer part of it!

E♭ G D

ndw   2012 Feb 8

chordal? → riff → devel w/ chords + taper down.
Then The IDEA → devel w/ return of previous material,
end w/ a bang or a song? Bom

2X w/ 3-6-2 5 1

X△7, ≠ X-△7   Oct, Aug, 1/2 Dim

1 = all major 7
2 = same as trad harm
3 = what it most sounds like?

△7

4 7 3 6 2 5 1

chord "hymn" 1st? Short?

△7 chords Though 4→1, then 5th off B.=A ≠ B,
They go C-E♭, D-F, E-G, F♯ Ⓐ
                    stay

maybe △7 descending / ascending?
unlead?
but of △ 4→1 ?

E♭△7

4 7 3 6 | 2 5 +

2012 Army now

Mode/scale theory (GAME)

1 2 3 4

0,2,4,10   0,2,6,11   0,2,6,11   0,4,9,11

5 6 7

0,6,9,11   0,5,7,9   0,3,5,9

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4-7-3-6-2-5-1

check there

etc
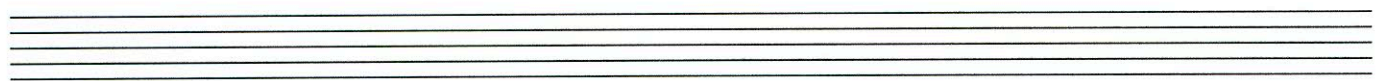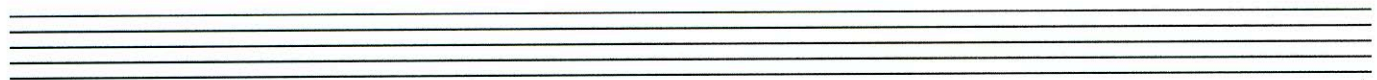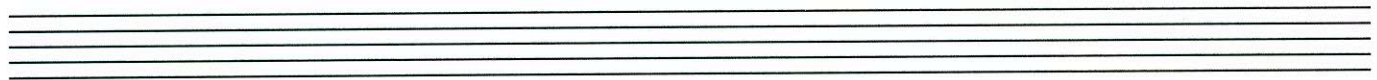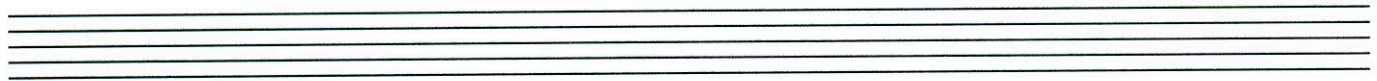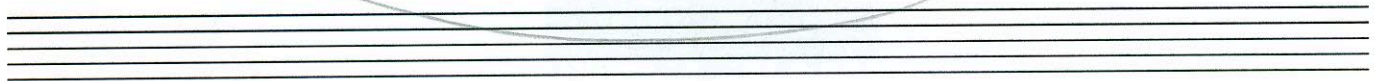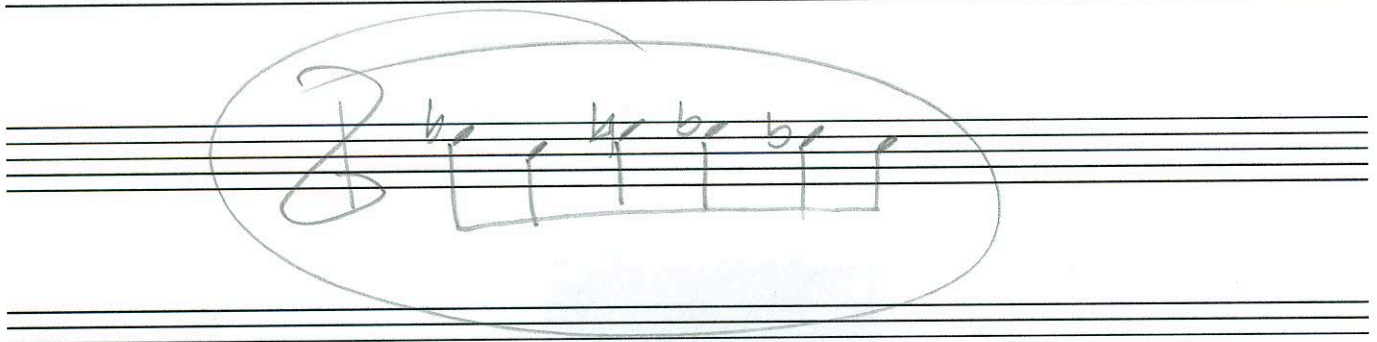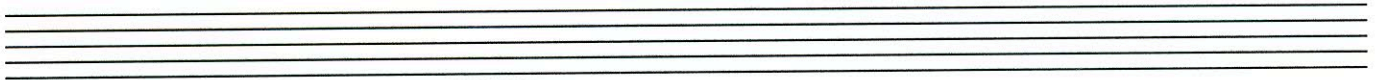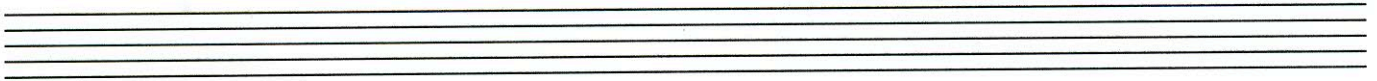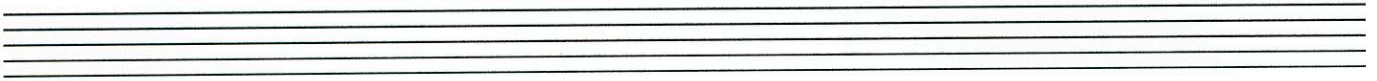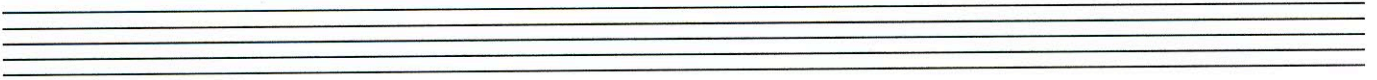
2ND SUPPLEMENT – handwritten notes

<u>2nd Supplement – handwritten notes</u>

1. This page shows some reflections on what I had set out to do with both the project and the composition.

2. On the left can be seen a flow map – device I use regularly in composing to figure out where I want to go with it. Something similar, relating to the paper, is on the right.

3. This page shows what eventually became the conceptualization of the project, where the project exists in the *in-between* of the abstract idea and the real me, and how the project is then manifested and represented in various forms.

4. This page shows another flow map sort of idea, relating to thoughts on how to present this material for the Synthesis presentation. Attempt was made to include, somewhere, all the central elements of the conceptualization of this work as a whole.

→ each "idea" Vector, call "inter-" they are the lines
(Connecting) each larger element, which one the cluster.
Explain all ties — representation, organization or connecting, structure of
the synthesis — in a piece at the end, a "Coda."

→ w/ notes, ideas, excerpts, writer...

I need a map
too, illustrating the
clusters + connectors

Directly, representative,
practical, explore + explain, importance
etc — all my favorite words
How would I explain to context of
Synthesis to their lest

"Representations"

"Synthesis"

2012 January 26

Is and is

Is. Music. To organize is
This is not Music. This is Music.
paradox music. To connect cluster—
To make is to organize set of organization
to draw lines,
A cluster is a smaller
lines/connectors.

The prices
of working on
Synthesis the tools,
the organizing, etc.

to Represent.

Pocket is
practice;

— rules for form
— achievement of the domination

Collect papers

Representation: Then
go to ways of representing
same thing, modally one mode
to another. And present the Meter which
"numbers" the (ideas) sections, and is the prime
Motive of the central (Composition)

A motive (loop)

B single (w/ A loop)

solos, run cycle (s)
$F_{67} \rightarrow Ab7$
(2 plies?)

B single, then turn a loops again, solo continued

$\rightarrow$ Ab7 complete DEVEL

B full build, loop + more impro (diffneut character)

* $\rightarrow$ devel here to

what about chordal section?

Nice loop + end w/ $F_{a7} \rightarrow Ab7$

Nice begin + end w/ $F_{a7} \rightarrow Ab7$

chordal/improv?
chordal + devel into STds
uns A + devel into STds

include elements of the A + chordal

*chords, minimal, then build to B

$3 \rightarrow$ all about circle, whole

$\boxed{I \text{ } Em}$

— no time
— no 4-requested
— all points to music.

$2 \rightarrow$ not like I write, but more like I practice + journal

$\rightarrow$ To open up pieces.

DEVEL
— loop each STds
part together later
— also builds to the loops
— build to chorus of loops, hints of Motive + B full.
— the B really fade out layers

Improv.
— loops
— layers
— representations
— avoid we go.

$\rightarrow$ you're not required to "get it", it's about the music.

doing your music

the style "what I'm going for.

$\rightarrow mod$ Eb c F# Eb Db C $||$ A E B G E D $||$: F# C# G# E C# A

$\rightarrow$ C A C# C# Bb A

(F#
don't sit on this.

chords $\rightarrow$ cascade $\rightarrow$ minimal $\rightarrow$ lines back to chords
and back on motive

new
2012 Spring
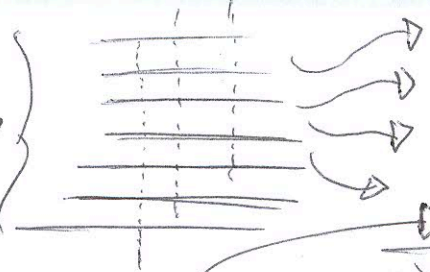
layers

composition
words about
presentation/performance
Reflection
loops in music (play
in real-time, and pedal,
and computer vision)

Abstract
IDEA

relationship between

The project

the in-between

Me (the "real")
Lifeworld

Manifestations

Representations

representing
the project

paper
3 parts
composition
3 parts
3 ideas

words

3 parts
- paper
- present
- reflect

speaking

sound
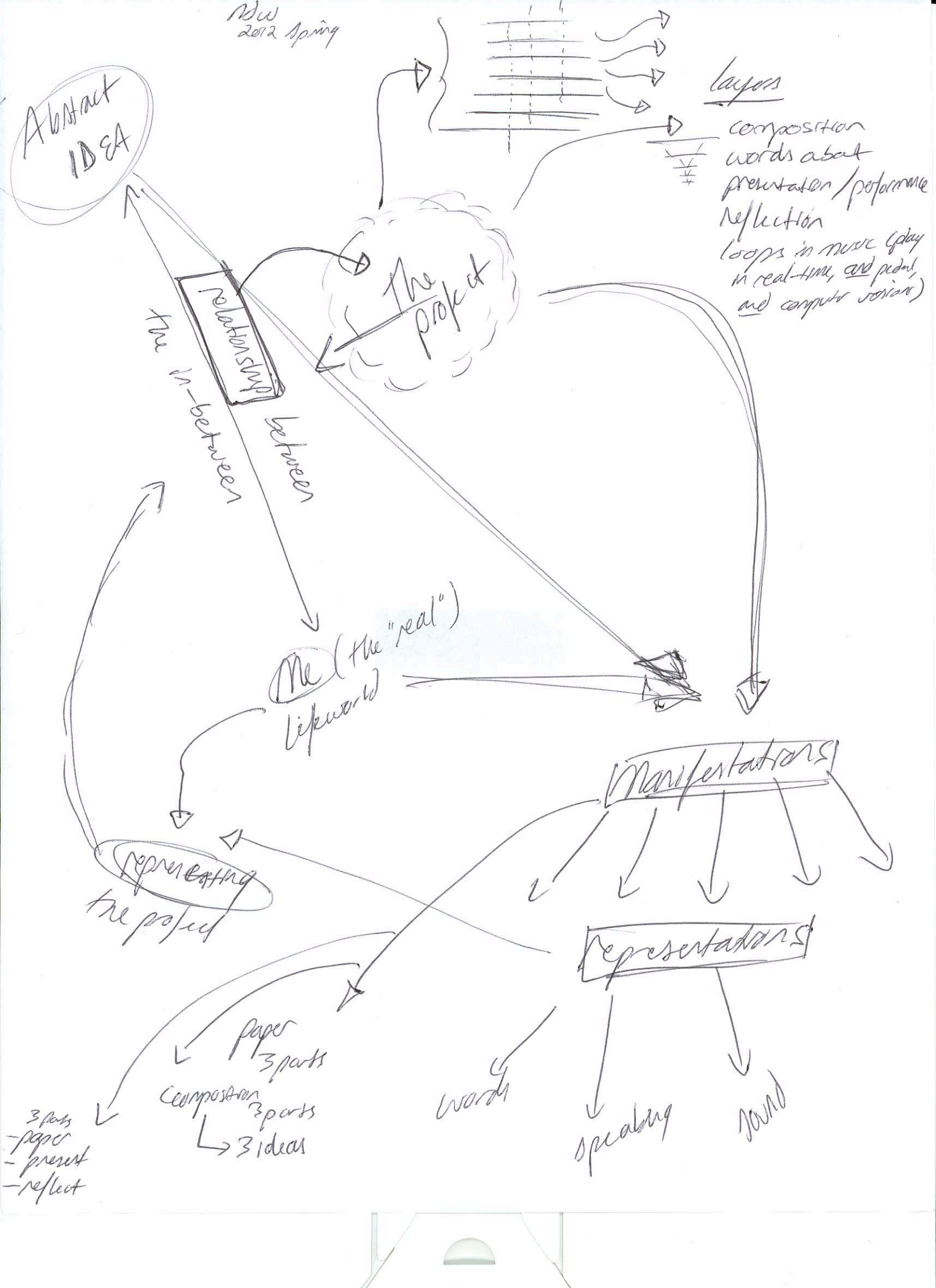
2012
April 26 now

— forget Matrix somewhere else
— became something else

— conp
  └→ needed? None
       abstract?
       honest?
       ☑ [A]

Would it should rather: MMS
a simple idea:
they inquiring, found around → P>S [B]

why not
find these
notes?

idea "abstract"
"real"

(at exact bit
simplest join)

S.M.'s can't begin
when vogue — too
vou an extension.

competing
(layers) project
become different
things — is difficult
→ play the way

CONFLICT
  └→ out of it ☐
play → 2/4 → (run)

① idea
   as let
   it be, they
   out of the way;
   awareness

② idea to be
   set free, chased
   away

③ setting out to
   make something

This poses of competing "improving" the
(ideas) I was working about how
to develop them.

How do ideas
come together into
a project.

Where do ideas
come from?

→ 3 sections
→ 3 parts
→ Significance

2/4
— differences of "real"
— importance of power
— against for abstract

→ 3 share

3RD SUPPLEMENT – music notation

3rd Supplement – Synthesis composition notation

This provides a version of the piece in music notation. While the beginning was written more vaguely in sections, as I continued to notate I wrote more out of what I was playing at the time. Thus, there is a mix between notating a few things and notating many things. Regardless, I still consider this to be a sketch for performance, a mere representation of the composition as it really is. Likewise, the performance at the Synthesis presentation is a representation of the composition.
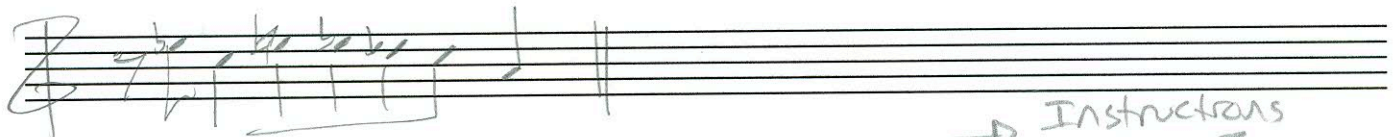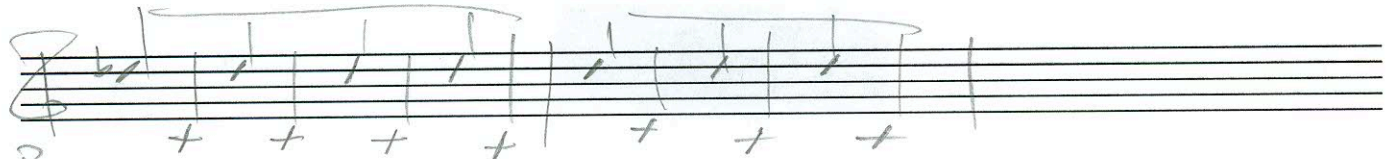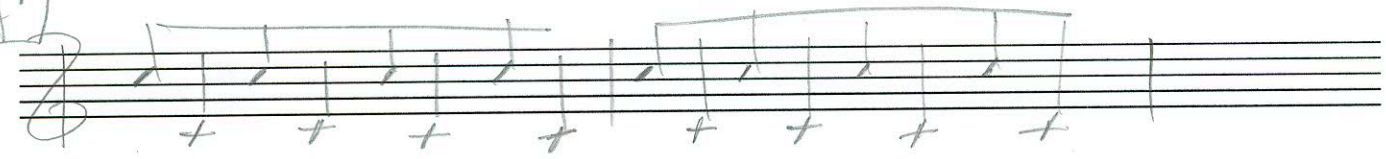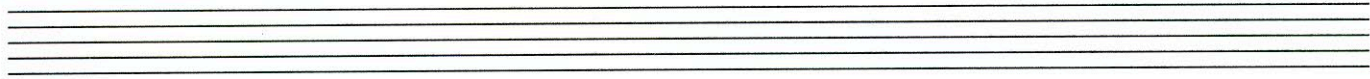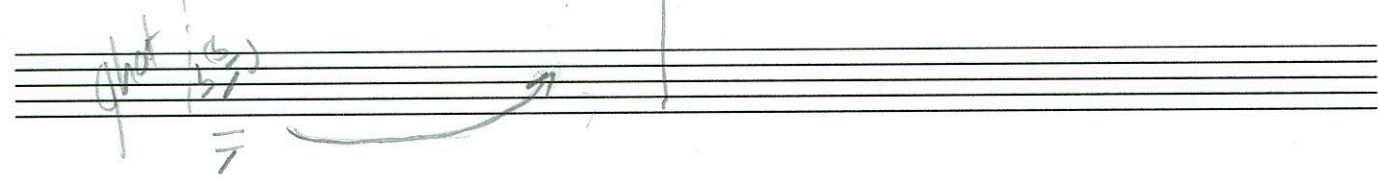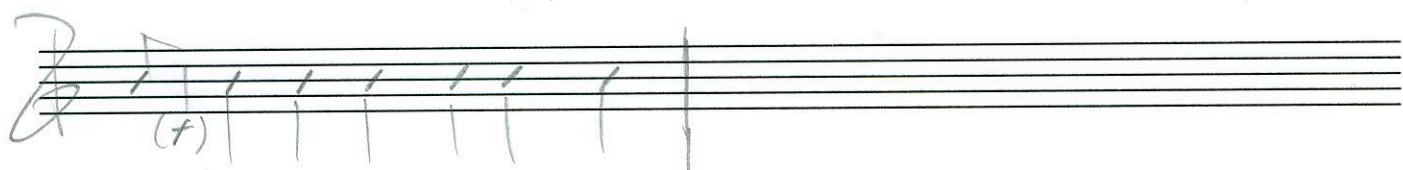
A/B

accents should feel "off"

Sounds more like half

1.

2.

↳time? like half pulse

Intro 1   Play w/ trill, aftr Bb, build

F∆7 Ab7   BbbØ7   DbbØ7

1. └ 3x ┘
2. └ 2x ┘

5T

to 2.

2x 1st
3x 2nd

3   Slow
    Synthesis

B'

- play w/ it.
- Improvisation in
  # of times something
  played, some order
  of sections,
  development
- push tempo in A,
  B, Δ, driving. C is
  chordal, like
  hymn, but
  arpeggios fast.
  Play w/ time here.

- Lots of movement
- Notation is a
  sketch! The
  music is the
  sound!!

→ - Flow: A, A', A, A' build
  A/B²ˣ⁷ or A'? ⚠1

  B' 2x, A/B, 1st part of B',
  Inter I. Repeat
  much of
  all that,
  staring w/ 1st two
  ins B'. Not as
  long though. Inter I.
  ②   C as is
  D1, D2, see notes there
  ③ see notes here on
      out

see (Inter I) page 2

- subtle changes
- internal coherence
- dance

New
Synthesis

now
synthesis

© continued

½ m3

D-△7

Db-△7

8va

back to
© sequing

now
Synthesis

© continued

Eb+

D+

Inter 2   play w/ it

A' fragment   A fragment

builds into [D] on

new
Synthesis

B fragment → A fragment → A' fragment,
↳ full last time
to B

Intro 3 continued —→ development here in moment, play w/ it

yd'y
continue

A
Volume

ghost

to B

new
Syntania

B

→ to E

Interl

now
Synthesis

thank you,
for listening

readers:
Jeremy Szteiter
Ben Schwendener

professors:
Christopher Frye (University of Wisconsin – La Crosse)
Michael Jackson (Harvard University)

group:
Alison, Lorna, Meghan

strangers on a path
likewise vagabonds
the "others"

Dana
Ephraim
Lanae'hannai
Nashaia