

actively listening to me (2016)

|

Harry Matthews

For Ensemble Paramirabo

Duration circa 7'-10'00''

Performance instructions:

There is no score for *actively listening to me*.

Musicians play independently of one another in terms of tempo (no alignment).

Each musician has two pages, labelled 'active' and 'inactive'. Both pages feature 6 musical events, musicians will play each of these events a number of times. The order is not fixed aside from the pairing rule. (See below)

Each musician is in a pair with another musician:

Violin | Synth

Flute | Vibraphone

Cello | Bass Clarinet in Bb

Beginning the piece

All musicians begin on the inactive page. Musicians can start on any event, and once they have finished the event proceed to any other event on the Inactive page. After playing three events on the inactive page, the **Violin, Flute and Cello** each move independently (in their own time) to the active page where they can begin on any event. Now begins the pairing rule. A stopwatch should be used, all musicians start playing within 15 seconds independently of each other.

Nb- Once the Violin, Flute and Cello have moved to the active page there is no hierarchy between pairs.

Pairing rule

There are pitch correlations between the inactive and active events for each pair. When the same pitch is played at the same time by both musicians within a pair, this triggers a swap: the musician playing the INACTIVE page moves to the ACTIVE page, and vice versa. The pairing rule will likely begin at different times for each pair. The musician playing the ACTIVE page will have a more dominant role than the inactive musician.

Nb- Before the pairing rule begins, players events may collide, this is expected and no swap should be made until the Violin, Flute or Cello has moved to the ACTIVE page.

Moving from inactive to active

At such a moment, the musician on the inactive part moves immediately to the active part, leaving the event they were performing incomplete. On the ACTIVE page, they begin playing the same numbered event that they were playing on the inactive page (e.g. if they were performing event 3 on their INACTIVE page, they will begin with event 3 on the ACTIVE page). After performing this event, they are then free to move around the events of the ACTIVE page in any order they wish, until the next exchange happens

Moving from active to inactive

At such a moment, the musician on the active part completes their event and then moves to the INACTIVE page, where they are free to begin with any event, and once again move freely between events.

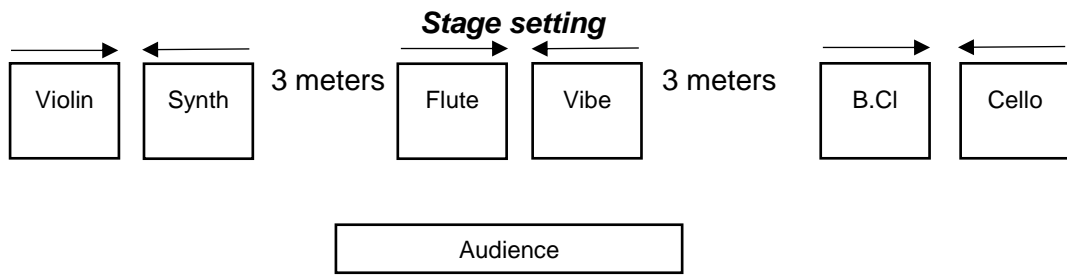
Nb- If the same note is played by a pair but the ACTIVE player is playing a technique that disturbs the note, for example: Bass Clarinet is playing multiphonic trill (event 4) – at this point the change is not valid.

Ending the piece

There are two possible endings to this piece, the musicians may choose which ending they will perform.

Ending 1) Agree a time to end after at least 7-10 minutes of playing, and abruptly finish.

Ending 2) After an agreed time of at least 5-7 minutes, musicians are to move to the active page and become stuck on event 4 (in their own time). Once all musicians have moved to event 4, musicians can choose to finish together abruptly or choose to finish when they wish after about 3 minutes of playing.

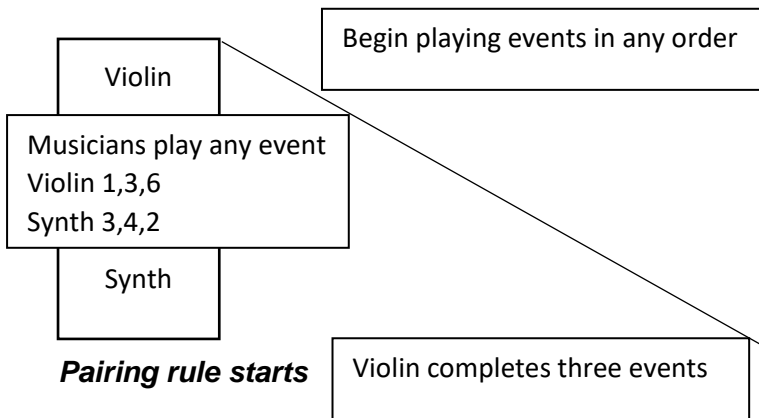


Performance example with Violin and Synth:

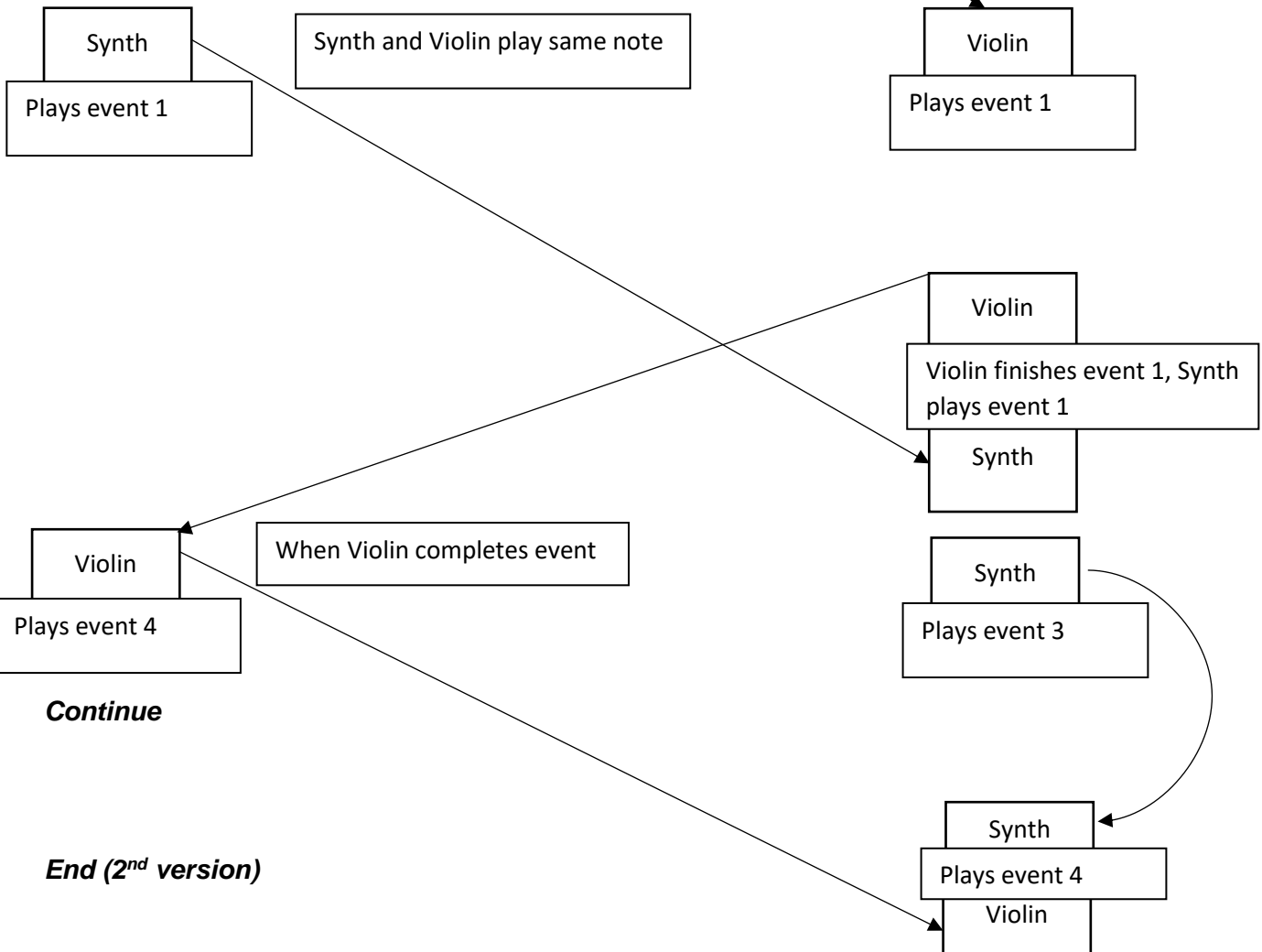
This is an example of what could happen between instruments over the course of the piece:

Beginning

Inactive page



active page



End (2nd version)

Notational instructions:

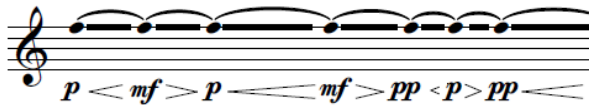
General -

active page

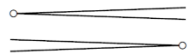
5 of the 6 events on the active page make use of relative time space notation. The musician may choose any tempo to play each event, the tempo can be changed when an event is replayed. However, the tempo that starts the event should be sustained throughout.

Event 3, the melodic line should begin extremely quietly and with each repetition the figure should get louder. This should happen collectively, and not individually.

The beams seen as a thick line between notes are there to provide an easier judgement of distance in time.



Comas are indefinite pauses, and should be used to create space within events on both the active and inactive pages.



Crescendo/ decrescendo from silence

inactive page

Seconds are shown above each event, on some events an exact time is given, on others, a time duration between one length and another is shown. Musicians may choose how long they play this note within the time specified.

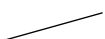


Individual -

Strings:

S.P *Sul Ponticello / very close to the bridge*

Ord. *Ordinary bowing position*



Line / Glissando – duration adheres to time/space notation



Extreme bow pressure / subtone sounding octave lower



X note heads / play on bridge producing gentle white noise/ almost inaudible



Artificial harmonic

Wind:

Half blow

Half blowing so that the note speaks some of the time, but is essentially unstable

Air sound

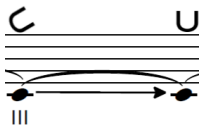
No audible pitch, only blowing air through instrument

Ord.

Ordinary air sound



Multiphonic trills for bass clarinet, see Heather Roche's article on this technique- <https://heatherroche.net/2015/05/19/quiet-multiphonic-trills-for-bass-clarinet/>



Wind tone for flute – III see Wil Offerman's article on this technique <http://www.forthethecontemporaryflutist.com/etude/etude-01.html#>

Keyboard:

Musician may choose any sound they wish, with the premise that it is in keeping to the flutes timbral qualities. A keyboard that has two modulation wheels and volume control must be used.

Cut off

Full cut off sound must give no pitch – there are three stages of cut off
0 = no cut off added 1 = cut off opened half way 2 = full cut off (no pitch)

Pitch shift

Pitch shift should have range of around an octave. Pitch movement lines must be interpreted and are not expected to be followed exactly.

Volume control

Volume control should follow the dynamic markings shown

Percussion:

Half pedal

Should create a fragile sound. (sometimes speaking, and sometimes not)

Mandolin roll

The bottom end of the sticks should be placed either side of the metal bar, producing a quiet fizzing on the vibraphone.

inactive

Harry Matthews

Violin

1

15" ← → 25" ,
ppp

2

10" ,
p

3

10" ← → 20" ,
pp

4

5" 5" ,
ppp

5

15" ← → 30" ,
p

6

10" ,
pp

active

Violin

Harry Matthews

1

sp. → Play on bridge → Ord. sp. → Play on bridge

pp

sp. → Ord. Ord.

2

ppp

♩=20-160
Begin at inaudible dynamic,
increase with each repeat

3

4

Gliss w/ harmonic Fast narrow vib.

p *poco* *p*

Gliss w/ harmonic

p *poco* *p*

5

p < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *pp* < *p* > *pp* < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *pp* < *p* > *pp* < *f* >

6

ppp < *p* > *ppp* < *p* > *ppp*

p *ppp* *p*

inactive

Harry Matthews

Synth

1

15" ← → 25" ,
ppp

2

10" ,
p

3

10" ← → 20" ,
pp

4

5" 5" ,
ppp

5

15" ← → 30" ,
p

6

10" ,
pp

active

Synth

Harry Matthews

Cut-off: pure - 0 | middle - 1 | noise - 2

1

2

3

♩=20-160
Begin at inaudible dynamic,
increase with each repeat

4

Pitch-bend

5

6

inactive

Harry Matthews

Flute

1

15" ,
pp

2

10" ↔ 20" ,
ppp

3

20" ,
pp

4

15" ↔ 30" ,
p

5

5" 5" ,
ppp

6

10" ,
p

active

Flute

Harry Matthews

1

Half blow → Air sound → Ord. , h.b. → a.s.

pp

h.b. → Ord. Ord.

2

$\text{♩} = 20-160$
Begin at inaudible dynamic,
increase with each repeat

3

4

5

6

5

inactive

Harry Matthews

Vibraphone (bowed)

1

15" ,
pp

2

10" ↔ 20" ,
ppp

3

20" ,
pp

4

15" ↔ 30" ,
p

5

5" 5" ,
ppp

6

10" ,
p

1

Pedal off → on → off → on

pp

off → on → off → on

2

ppp

3

$\text{♩} = 20-160$
Begin at inaudible dynamic,
increase with each repeat

4

Bowed
Pedal on

Pedal half

Pedal on

Mandolin roll with end of sticks
Like a tremolo, with fizz sound

p

p

Pedal half

Pedal on

Mandolin roll with end of sticks
Like a tremolo, with fizz sound

5

Pedal on

p < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *pp* < *p* > *pp* < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *pp* < *p* > *pp* < *f*

6

Pedal off

ppp < *p* > *ppp* < *p* > *ppp* < *p* > *ppp*

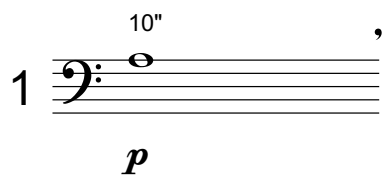
5

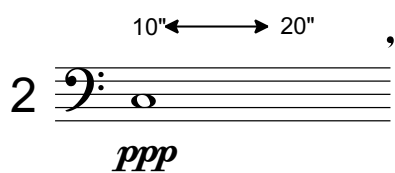
p *ppp* *p*

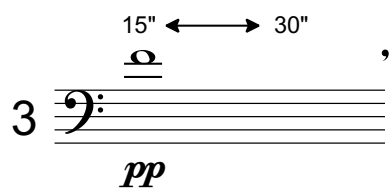
inactive

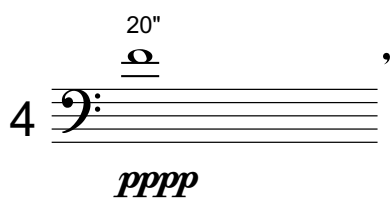
Harry Matthews

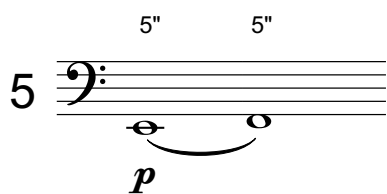
Cello

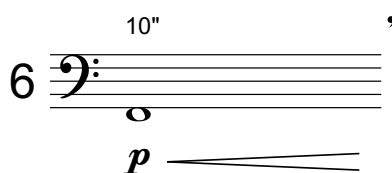
1 

2 

3 

4 

5 

6 

active

Cello

Harry Matthews

1

sp. Play on bridge Ord. sp. Play on bridge

pp

sp. Ord. Ord.

2

ppp

ppp

3

♩=20-160
Begin at inaudible dynamic,
increase with each repeat

3 3

4

Ord. Fast narrow vib.

p Sub-tone *p*

p Sub-tone Ord. *p*

5

p < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *pp* < *p* > *pp* < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *pp* < *p* > *pp* < *f* >

6

ppp < *p* > *ppp* < *p* > *ppp*

p *ppp* *p*

inactive

Harry Matthews

Bass Clarinet in B \flat

1

10" ,
p

2

10" ←→ 20" ,
ppp

3

15" ←→ 30" ,
pp

4

20" ,
pppp

5

5" 5" ,
p

6

10" ,
p

1

Half blow → Air sound → Ord. , h.b. → a.s.

pp

h.b. → Ord. Ord.

2

ppp

$\text{♩} = 20-160$
 Begin at inaudible dynamic,
 increase with each repeat

3

$\text{♩} = 20-160$
 Begin at inaudible dynamic,
 increase with each repeat

3 3

4

p *pp* *p* Fast narrow vib.

p *pp*

5

p < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *pp* < *p* > *pp* < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *p* < *mf* > *pp* < *p* > *pp* < *f* >

6

ppp < *p* > *ppp* < *p* > *ppp*

5

< *p* > *ppp* *p*