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PROFESSOR: OK. So, what we're doing today is what I call flexology-- most of you were here last time-- this conducted improvisation approach. So, we've got a music stand here for the conductors, if you want it. And we've got a couple stands here if people need anything. But you're free to do whatever you want, so--

AUDIENCE 1: So, I have three different melodic lines. Copy for you.

PROFESSOR: Thanks.

AUDIENCE 1: So, they're labeled 3, 4, and 5, and I'll signal those with the appropriate number. And then the other cues, I listed at the bottom, so 1, 1 and 2 are from the standard flexology sheet, so 1 is you improvise with a lot of notes, sort of active playing, 2 is improvised with a few other notes, mostly. 3 to 5 is [INAUDIBLE] by [INAUDIBLE] the melodic line, and then feel free to improvise upon it once you've played it once or twice. If I need to change the dynamics, I'll indicate it sort of hopefully intuitively, and that's it. I decided not to do cue-out and cue-in. I can just take care of that with dynamics. Any questions about the cues? OK.

PROFESSOR: Then we should try to keep all of these about two minutes, maybe two and 1/2 minutes. Something like that.

AUDIENCE: OK. So, to cue you in, I'll do a number and call you up. OK. So let's try.

[PLAYING FLUTE]

[FLUTE AND GUITAR PLAYING]

[PIANO, FLUTE, AND GUITAR PLAYING]

[APPLAUSE]

PROFESSOR: Very nice. How did that suit your--

AUDIENCE 1: The [INAUDIBLE] are varied, but this thing I noticed when people began playing was when I envisioned this in my head, I was swinging the eighth notes, but I didn't write that on the cue sheet, so you guys decided to play it straight. And, I didn't even thought of listening to the piece that way. The other shocking thing was hearing things be out of phase, since I didn't really establish a tempo, but it still worked out well even when people weren't playing together.

PROFESSOR: Yeah. Very nice. Players, any comments? Was this clear? Could you follow the instructions? Because it looked like a very clear set-up on the page. Very, very good to have five things, three of them actual lines, two of them sort of textural things, and we've got the whole density thing that we've worked with before on a couple occasions. So I thought that was really good. Really good. And obviously, you said you were shocked sort of. If you did this again, you could specify more things.

PROFESSOR: Yep. You could specify swing eighth notes.

AUDIENCE 1: You could-- I didn't even think of writing that, but I should have.

AUDIENCE 1: Right. Well, maybe or maybe not.

AUDIENCE 1: I like the way it turned out, anyway.

PROFESSOR: Yeah. It was very nice, very musical. And once again, we had the situation where, particularly, piano is the main rhythmic instrument. So once piano comes in and establishes a groove of some sort, another concept we've talked about, people tend to gravitate around that. So, if you are going to do this a second time, you might specify the swing quality, but you might also say, try not to get into a groove. Just as a test case sort of thing. Just something to work with. Very nice. Cool. Who would like to go next? OK.

PROFESSOR: Go for it.

AUDIENCE 2: All right. So, I'm just going to draw this on the board.

PROFESSOR: Uh-oh.

AUDIENCE 2: So, my piece starts off with a set tempo, so I'll sort of signal that at the beginning. And then the goal after that is to slowly introduce each of the instruments. I guess I'm just going to include everyone in this, because at the beginning it's going to be very sparse. Basically, I'm just going to ask you guys to pick one note and do any rhythm that you want on that note, but in the tempo. And I'll also introduce you guys one at a time. And then I'm going to have two motives that are just going to be sort of visual, and I'm just going to cue you guys one or two each at a time, and then the rest of you guys just stay on your note that you pick.

So basically, you have the center note, which is the one that you choose. And so the first motive will be like this. So that's the first motive. So this is-- And then the second one. So this is [? my idea. ?]

PROFESSOR: You like the sine wave?

AUDIENCE 2: Yeah. Sort of a mix of frequencies.

PROFESSOR: What's the top one?

AUDIENCE 2: I don't know.

AUDIENCE 1: Any indication of how long each of those should be?

AUDIENCE 2: No. For the pitch. So, this is your starting note and then go up. And the actual notes you use are totally up to you. It's all improvisation. So, I guess I'm going to start from this side with piano and introduce you guys in one at a time, and just go with the tempo and start a rhythm on a note and then once we have everyone in, then we'll go for these motives. So--

[PIANO PLAYING]

AUDIENCE 2: I just want one note.

[PIANO AND TRUMPET PLAYING]

[ALL INSTRUMENTS PLAYING]

[APPLAUSE]

PROFESSOR: Composer, conductor?

AUDIENCE 2: That one sounded cool. I wasn't really expecting anything, because these are just sort of randomly made up, but it was interesting. I like how it had the sort of groove to it in the way that it started out with. And I guess it would have been nice to have some areas that were a little more sparse. I probably should have had some signal sort of for people to drop out and make it sparser so I go back to that rhythmic thing, but I guess that was just something [INAUDIBLE].

PROFESSOR: Cool. Players. Comments from the players.

AUDIENCE 1: Everyone did the lines differently.

PROFESSOR: Right.

AUDIENCE 3: You asked, right? If you hadn't asked what does the level of the line represent? Pitch. OK. Probably people would have played that differently.

PROFESSOR: What did you feel as you were playing? What did you feel or what did you hear as you were playing?

AUDIENCE 3: I felt like I was taking a walk. I mean, because you had everyone doing their-- they had some simple walking in place kind of thing filling out before the lines happened.

PROFESSOR: What about in terms of the overall sound? The way you described is your particular perspective. Right?

AUDIENCE 3: Well, kind of. I mean, it was based on my feeling from what everyone else sounded like, but yeah. It was how I felt.

PROFESSOR: OK. And what I'm trying to get at is, did other people basically do that? Because that's a typical thing you do. You think about what you're doing. And/or did you factor in playing off of what others were doing? Was anybody more conscious of the second approach? Or can't you remember? Because it was hard to tell. Frankly, as an observer, it was very nice what was being created. But it was almost like I could tell, as we went this way, that each neighbor was listening to the neighbor. That's the easiest thing. But I'm not sure whether-- were people aware of what was happening on the piano, for instance? And were you aware of what was going on at the other end?

AUDIENCE 4: I could, like, [INAUDIBLE]. It's kind of hard to make out, because it's a [INAUDIBLE].

AUDIENCE 3: Yeah, I think because it was so dense it would be hard to hear the entire thing.

PROFESSOR: Right. Well, these are things we want to work towards, and, you know, especially, particularly, collective improvisation. Solo improvisation is its own animal. And that has peculiarities and things that you have to know. But collectively, which is what we've been doing mainly, it really is a challenge to try to listen to the whole thing develop as well as be attentive to your contribution. So let me just suggest that, as we go forward, we just try to pay a little more attention to the overall gestalt, so to speak, as we go on. But this was great, and what was happening was great. Really wonderful stuff. And once you came in, now we got the oboe into the mix. So that's another-- and now we're going to have another flute. Good. Now, if you can give me a written thing of this, that's important.

AUDIENCE 3: Oh, yeah. I'll send it to you.

PROFESSOR: That'd be great. OK. Who would like to go next? So is that a couple of melodic fragments?

AUDIENCE 5: Ah, yep. So I have two small written parts, here. And I have those-- 1 and 2, I guess. And I have these more just to establish a groove for then the rest of you guys to do your thing over. But, yeah. As far as my hand signals go, if I point to you and I flash the number 1 or 2, that's just indicating the part you're going to play. So

this is 1, this is 2. And, yeah. So I'm basically going start layering you guys in one by one to establish this groove. Not necessarily all of you. Maybe just a few to get that going.

And then, once that's started, I have these modes, just kind of like floozy kind of mode, written out here. And basically with that, if you're not playing the groove that I've laid down here, what you're going to be doing is watching for me to go like this with my fist. And that just means, pick a note, any note, in here. Just play that. So I'm going for short bursts or sound, I guess. If that makes sense. And yeah, that's basically it. I guess also, when I'm going like this, higher more intense, it's going to be a louder dynamic. Softer and lower is going to be--

AUDIENCE 3: How much trouble would it be for you to write those on the board?

AUDIENCE 5: Actually, it wouldn't be any trouble at all. That makes a lot of sense. Yeah, so that's just about it. I'll write these down so you guys can see it. And, oh, yeah. The only other thing is, so, if you're not playing the groove, if you're picking a note in this mode I have here, if I go like this with my hand and I also go like this with my other hand, that's to indicate pitch. So if I were to go like something like this, this is indicating, pick a note, any note you want in here, and then as my hand goes down, descend in pitch. Ascend [INAUDIBLE]. Yeah. Just, again, picking any note in here, just going up or down. All right. Yeah. And then when I'm having you just pick any note you want, it's just any in here. All right. Does this all kind of make sense?

AUDIENCE 3: Is that A, B, C?

AUDIENCE 5: Ah, sorry. It's A, C, D, E, G.

AUDIENCE 2: And the repeat happens once?

AUDIENCE 5: Ah, the repeat happens-- it just continues. So every time we get there, we just repeat it back. Yep. All right. So this would be-- if I point to you with 1, playing you're playing top. If 2, you're playing bottom.

AUDIENCE 1: And they should be in concert pitch? Right?

AUDIENCE 5: Yep. All right. I guess we'll start with piano. I'll have you play 1 to start with, I guess.
All right. 1, 2, 3--

[PIANO PLAYING]

[PIANO AND GUITAR PLAYING]

[PIANO, GUITAR, AND FLUTE PLAYING]

AUDIENCE 5: Keep going. If I point to you, you're going to improvise something on your own.
[INAUDIBLE].

[ALL INSTRUMENTS PLAYING]

[APPLAUSE]

PROFESSOR: So, composer, conductor. What did you make of it?

AUDIENCE 5: Ah, yeah. That was cool. I was kind of hoping to just establish a simple groove and then let it get more-- open up and have fun off of that.

PROFESSOR: What was this again?

AUDIENCE 5: So, this was supposed to be-- just, I laid down the notes in this floozy sounding note. And I just wanted people to pick any note in there and just play it in short bursts of sounds.

PROFESSOR: Did people get that?

AUDIENCE 1: It was really hard to do.

AUDIENCE 5: Yeah.

AUDIENCE 1: Because we didn't know how many times you were going to do this in a given--

AUDIENCE 5: Right. Yeah. The implementation was a little trickier than I thought. And also, I didn't tell you guys how I was going to, like, cue you to stop playing. But I think you caught on well enough for that.

PROFESSOR: And also, you didn't mention this, did you, for the--

AUDIENCE 1: You mentioned it during the piece.

PROFESSOR: Right. Right. That's all right.

AUDIENCE 5: I'm working on it.

PROFESSOR: But each of these constructs-- it's interesting, because you've clearly thought it out, which is part of a point of the assignment. But then it's clear that when you enact it, there are things that you hadn't thought about, which is like any laboratory experiment, I guess. And so, this is what you find out by doing it. And then the next time-- right?-- you would factor that kind of thing in. But I thought it worked really nice, and that tune is sort of like an African village kind of sound that I've heard in a number of things like this. So it was very nice. Very nice. Comments from players? Anybody's comments on that? Great groove. Great keeping of the groove. Good OK. Let's go to the next contestant.

AUDIENCE 6: Basically, there's going to be five gestures that we're doing, and they're all on your paper and I will demonstrate them first so that you know what they are and they don't look weird. So, the first thing says, meditative.

PROFESSOR: Great. Thank you.

AUDIENCE 6: Which we're going to gesture by this, maybe a little more flipping. And it's supposed to kind of be a cue to the scale that Alex is writing on the board and the-- I guess a throwback to the Indian music that we sort of were exposed to early in the semester.

PROFESSOR: Can I just ask-- this looks very Indian, this hand signal.

AUDIENCE 6: Yeah. I wasn't trying-- well, I was trying. So, yeah. So that's why that's like that.

Because it was a visual cue and hopefully an oral one also.

AUDIENCE 5: And it's supposed to sound like Indian classical music?

AUDIENCE 6: Yeah. Yes. Yes. Yes.

AUDIENCE 5: Wow. OK.

AUDIENCE 6: So, this improvisation's going to be a little more directed, obviously, because we're going to be in that frame of mine. The second thing is the hand wave, which is this. And that means to cycle/ undulation, so you can do whatever you want, but it needs to be repetitive. Waving fingers, that's this. It's a cascade of sound. Do what you will with it, as usual. The tempo will be given by just general conducting stuff. If we conduct high, then we would like you to play higher, and if you conduct low, then we'd like you to play lower. So, you can take off number six.

The tempo is going to cover tempo and the range at the same time. And then dynamics is like, two hands louder, softer, shh. Obvious stuff. And getting cut off and whatnot. And we're actually going to split, I guess, the room in half, and one of the pianists can come with me. Alex and Ben are both going to conduct, and we're going to see how this turns out.

AUDIENCE 5: Question.

AUDIENCE 6: Yes?

AUDIENCE 5: So that's a scale?

AUDIENCE 6: That is a scale.

AUDIENCE 5: OK. Why is there an A flat after an A natural if it's going up?

AUDIENCE 7: I mean, it's not a scale. It's notes-- OK.

AUDIENCE 5: It's a sequence of notes?

AUDIENCE 7: Yes. It's a sequence of notes.

AUDIENCE 6: It's a power scale.

AUDIENCE 5: Is there an order to it, or is it just a sequence?

AUDIENCE 7: No, there's not an order.

AUDIENCE 6: Yeah. Just play it how you would like it.

AUDIENCE 5: OK.

AUDIENCE 6: But these are the notes. OK. This is my first time moving like this, too. So-- OK, I'll take Chris, I guess-

AUDIENCE 7: Yeah, where are we splitting? Between [? Vanita ?] and AJ? OK. So, you four, and then you're taking Chris.

AUDIENCE 6: Yeah. OK. I guess-- I'll also bring you guys in individually too.

[PIANO PLAYING]

[MANY INSTRUMENTS PLAYING]

[APPLAUSE]

PROFESSOR: Very nice. Conductor, composers. What do you make of this which we just created?

AUDIENCE 6: It was cool.

AUDIENCE 7: It was like two pieces. It was awesome.

AUDIENCE 6: Yeah.

AUDIENCE 7: It was fun seeing the two different groups playing in the same scale, but playing [INAUDIBLE].

AUDIENCE 6: I completely forgot that-- I was in my head when I was-- when we were thinking about splitting, I was like, oh, I'm going to listen to what Alex is doing. And I

completely did not.

PROFESSOR: That was my next question. Right.

AUDIENCE 6: Yeah.

AUDIENCE 5: You were just having so much fun using us like marionettes. Like, you play this and you play that.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

AUDIENCE 7: At first, I was just experimenting to see what I could do, and then I looked to see what she was doing and she was doing this, and then I was like, oh, wait, I'll do that to.

AUDIENCE 6: That was interesting.

PROFESSOR: That was completely different than anything else we've heard so far. Very different. Players, what are your comments?

AUDIENCE 2: I really liked it. I think the only time-- well, I couldn't really hear you guys all that well. Like, I was really listening to James on the piano and guitar. But there was a point where you started going like this, and they were doing high-pitched things, so I heard that, and I was like, oh, I should try and blend in to this. So he was leading me on a tempo a little bit, so I sort of matched the tempo a little bit more to that, and it sort of sounded cool.

PROFESSOR: So you were both watching the conductor and gravitating to other people, other sounds in the--

AUDIENCE 2: Yeah. I started gravitating over there a couple times.

PROFESSOR: Yeah.

AUDIENCE 3: I was impressed. I mean, I'm impressed by that. There was enough going on that it was hard to pay attention to anything but your conductor out of two, and the people maybe, like, immediately surrounding you.

PROFESSOR: Well, I had the advantage of not having to play, so I got to hear it. It was great. It was really-- it was very interesting, textural. I mean, a number of you who have gone so far have talked about wanting to maybe lessen the density at some point or something like that, and that happened just because of whatever choices you made, and then however you folks responded. And probably, it's also a function that we've now been doing this for, what, maybe not exactly an hour, but maybe 40 minutes. So we're all becoming more in tune to what the concept is. So, it's very, very, very interesting. You know, there's modern dance groups as well as theatrical groups that do improvisation and that work also with musicians, and so you could definitely-- you could be the dancers. And then people respond--

AUDIENCE 7: This is it, right here.

PROFESSOR: --certain motion and then back the other way and all that kind of thing. So, really good. Really good.

AUDIENCE 1: The one thing I'd maybe change next time is some of that-- like, the waving fingers hand motion. When you did it, I forgot what it was completely and had to ignore you for the second and read it off the sheet.

AUDIENCE 3: Also, I had no clue whether-- I stuck to that scale the whole time, because I didn't know what else-- what other scale to play.

AUDIENCE 7: Yeah, and that's what we actually intended. We intended to start off with that, and then people to just generally play that throughout all of the [INAUDIBLE], yeah.

AUDIENCE 6: Thanks, guys.

AUDIENCE 1: Cool. Cool. And by the way, this-- I don't know if you guys had thought about this, but this arrangement of notes, this could be construed as what's called a pitch set, meaning it's not a specific scale, but it literally is a collection of pitches. And you can choose that. It sort of comes out of 12-tone method and that kind of thing. And you can choose to say-- what have you got there? You've got a nine-member pitch set. You could designate, play in a straightforward way, or take three notes or begin to

manipulate those in different ways. So there's a lot of things you can do with that. In other words, each of these pieces we're hearing today, you could take the basic elements you've got and really work on it. You could probably spend an hour just doing sort of a workshop with each of these approaches, and then maybe do three or four pieces. And I'll bet each piece would be different. At least, that would be the ideal. OK.

AUDIENCE 8: So our idea was, we're actually going to focus more on the rhythmic aspect of what people are doing. And maybe the harmony and we'll come up with different melodies. So our way of giving an idea of what the rhythm will be-- so, let's say I'm starting off by the tempo, and then maybe if I want you to play eighth notes, I'll go, like, eighth notes. And so then this would mean you're playing eighth notes on some notes. We decided we're going to--

AUDIENCE 3: Two per beat?

AUDIENCE 8: Yeah, so, two per beat.

AUDIENCE 3: Two per beat.

AUDIENCE 8: Or, like, four per beat.

AUDIENCE 3: So, nothing slower than a quarter note is going to happen.

AUDIENCE 8: No.

AUDIENCE 3: OK.

AUDIENCE 8: So, it's just kind of a guide for setting up the groove. And then we will bring people in and out for improv lines.

AUDIENCE 3: So, if you, for example, hold up three, do we have to play three notes or can one of them be a rest?

AUDIENCE 8: Yeah. So, yeah. You could play, like, a triplet, with one of them being a rest. Yeah. That's fine. The idea is just to give you an idea of the rhythm. Or so we could set up

more complicated rhythms, like eighth note, quarter, quarter, eighth note, eighth note, quarter.

AUDIENCE 3: Like, you'll have M on N for arbitrary M on N? Because you're going to be pointing at each person and putting up a different number.

AUDIENCE 8: Yeah.

AUDIENCE 3: OK.

AUDIENCE 9: Also, so, just to clarify, only when you do that, it's only for that beat rather than a looping, infinite all the time. So, if it's like, two, nothing, two-- if that makes sense.

AUDIENCE 8: Ba-ba-ba. Ba-ba-ba. Ba-ba-ba. Ba-ba-ba.

AUDIENCE 3: OK. I'm dead. Yeah.

AUDIENCE 8: But we never loop it. Does that makes sense?

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

AUDIENCE 9: I guess the way I think about it is, it's like a way to sort of help push along organically coming out collectively. And the other thing that we were thinking about doing was, if we wanted to change the pitches of the groove at any point, we could, like-- I say somebody, and then the secret would be how many half steps. Say, two half steps. All right, up? Wait for it, now you shift up. So, going down, three half steps going down, go down.

AUDIENCE 3: Sudden shift? Like, you go down on a chromatic?

AUDIENCE 9: So I mean, it'll be in time. So you should be able to preempt when I'm going to do that. If that makes sense. Oh, and also, you're sort of encouraged to deviate from-- play outside the range of just, like, one note continuously. Obviously.

AUDIENCE 8: So we're going to start on the D Dorian scale and, at some point, using the modulation, you might modulate up or down.

AUDIENCE 3: Also, by the way-- I mean, this group's small. We just didn't want to have three different conductors. We were going to do the same thing that Tess and Alex did, of splitting in half. So, half is following Adrian, half is following Vinnie, but because we're doing modulations, you have to be paying attention. [? So, if anyone ?] wants a modulation--

AUDIENCE 8: [INAUDIBLE].

AUDIENCE 9: OK.

AUDIENCE 8: All right.

[PIANO PLAYING]

[PIANO AND SAX PLAYING]

[PIANO, SAX, AND FLUTE PLAYING]

[MANY INSTRUMENTS PLAYING]

AUDIENCE 8: [INAUDIBLE].

[MANY INSTRUMENTS PLAYING]

[APPLAUSE]

PROFESSOR: Very nice. And again, completely different from what just preceded you and all the others. So, you're take on what worked and all that kind of thing.

AUDIENCE 9: It was a good way of keeping everyone together. I think it felt a little [INAUDIBLE].

AUDIENCE 8: It also felt a little too strict.

AUDIENCE 9: It did feel strict. I was like-- so, when I did give people notes and things like that, I was kind of hoping that there would be more variation and stuff, even if I said da-da-

da. And then I went [? on to move ?] somebody else, that they would sort of play around with it. But I guess maybe it was a bit strict system in itself.

PROFESSOR: So if you did it again, you might build in something about taking a little more liberty?

AUDIENCE 8: Yeah.

PROFESSOR: I thought it was very, very interesting. Really interesting. And it was a rhythmic thing, obviously, but became a color field. I don't know if anybody else sensed this. Because of the different tamblers, particularly over here. We have muted trumpet and oboe, flute, obviously, and then the strings and the piano. I mean, you would around, and when you shifted sometimes, the combination effect-- in other words, the relationship to whoever else was playing, whatever other pitch-- because you're getting sort of a different version of overtones or relationship that way. So I thought it was very interesting.

Do you guys know the Terry Riley. Piece called "In C"? You know that? It's very much like this. We have a recording and Evan Ziporyn did a version of this not too long ago on one of these many concerts going on in the spring, and it's basically-- the pitch is C, that's it. But there's about 30-some little fragments. Sort of like what you were doing, but written out. Little fragments like da-da-da-da, da-da-da, and then that kind of a thing. And so you sort of evolve a group mind, and then you can expand it. I think it's a variable duration as to what happens, but you're thinking, in other words, is very much in that ballpark. So you might want to check it out. Just Terry Riley, like sounds, R-I-L-E-Y, "In C." It's very, very cool. Very cool piece. Very nice. Very nice. Great. This is wonderful. This is great variety. This is fantastic. Somebody else.

AUDIENCE 10: So, I actually made a bunch of different things possibly-- oh, sorry.

PROFESSOR: Sorry, sorry, sorry.

AUDIENCE 10: --a bunch of different things to possibly do, including I guess a sort of riff. So, for the first one, the one is rhythmic pulses in tempo, and watch for the tempo. So just-- you can play notes, feel free to switch between two or three notes or just a single

note. That's up to you. Two is a lyrical legato playing, sort of continuous.

AUDIENCE 3: Can you write these on the board?

AUDIENCE 10: Sure. Then I actually had a drawing. Can everyone see that? Does everyone got it? So I guess I was going to start with the piano on five. So, yeah. And it's up to you to interpret the tempo of how it's played. I just drew them as quarter notes because you can see the notes that way. So.

[PIANO PLAYING]

[MANY INSTRUMENTS PLAYING]

[APPLAUSE]

PROFESSOR: Very nice. Conductor, composer, what did you feel?

AUDIENCE 10: So, I actually had nine different things that sort of just broke down, and then I guess given the atmosphere that I've been feeling from everyone else with the small amount, I decided to pick a few of them to put on the board for everyone to look at. Because I only made one copy. So, I guess just this, if anyone recognized it, is actually-- it's the very first part of Jimmy Page's solo from "Stairway to Heaven." I guess I was feeling that yesterday. But, yeah.

PROFESSOR: It was very nice, and you, as all the conductors, you're getting very expressive. It's wonderful to see this. I mean, you guys could be part of a dance troupe. I mean, we could call this a musical dance troupe and you could masquerade and go out and do something in the spring time, you know, whatever. But, no. It was very, very nice. And everybody's got their own particular way of doing this. It's very interesting how that worked out. Plus, this is the first little thing we've had on the board or musical thing that's gone down. All the others have gone up. So, I don't know, maybe it's the time of day, but now we're going with Jimmy Page. But now we're all descending, you know, sort of ideas. Very nice. Players, comments on this piece. Everybody played-- I thought-- followed you very, very nicely.

AUDIENCE 10: Tried to keep things pretty simple.

PROFESSOR: Yeah. A useful approach.

AUDIENCE 11: OK. This is kind of based on a really nasty thunderstorm, so you can keep that in mind while you're playing. And the parts are numbered 8, 9, and 10, because I wrote a bunch of parts but I like these the best. So, there's going to be some free interpretation here. We're going to start out with a summer day with kind of clouds floating sparsely was my image. So everybody can kind of play something pretty. Key of F major So just like play pretty notes in the key of F major. Make it kind of sparse. And when I do this, that means just play, like, a really ugly high note. Because that's like lightning off in the storm. The beginning of things being ugly. And then when I do two, then you're going to switch to 9 because that's the same [? chord ?] and just play these notes. I kind of have two parts, sort of.

AUDIENCE 3: Why don't you just renumber them 1, 2, and 3? OK.

AUDIENCE 11: I can-- whatever. It's an order.

AUDIENCE 3: Anything you can do to simplify that would be appreciated.

AUDIENCE 11: OK. I'll renumber it. OK. So, this is just going to be ugly. Play all the ugliest notes that you can find and the theme can kind of be this flow. And then I'll use this to slow down and speed up. So I'll eventually slow down, and then we'll come into this and it's like, I don't know. It's a really destructive storm, so it's kind of melancholy. Yeah. OK. And this means start.

[WHISTLING]

AUDIENCE 11: OK.

[MANY INSTRUMENTS PLAYING]

[APPLAUSE]

PROFESSOR: Very nice. So, composer, conductor, what are your thoughts on what happened?

AUDIENCE 11: It was a little less organized than I expected, which is definitely my fault. But it was cool.

PROFESSOR: So how would you adjust that in another performance?

AUDIENCE 11: I guess I would make-- because I kind of had the idea of having these parts coinciding to some extent, at least in the beginning. So I would probably make it be like that at the beginning and make more of a beat. Yeah.

PROFESSOR: Oh, so have a rhythmic structure.

AUDIENCE 11: A little bit. Yeah.

PROFESSOR: Now, what's the-- because some of your notation, there's notes occurring simultaneously. What was the idea behind that?

AUDIENCE 11: That was kind of like the parts that should occur together. Yeah.

AUDIENCE 11: Oh, OK.

AUDIENCE 11: So if it was more rhythmic, it would be like those occur together, and those and these.

PROFESSOR: I liked all the visual-- the bursts [INAUDIBLE]. And this is almost like an accordion sort of an idea or something. Yeah. Very good. Players. Comments on this? Easy to follow? Seemed like it was, you know, because you're directing, I mean, you're conducting. You're really giving pretty specific signals. Very nice. Do you all know the Beethoven's Sixth Symphony? By now, you should know it if you don't know it. The middle movement is a storm. It's a quiet day, like you're describing, and you even hear the sounds of birds that whistle or whatever. And then you hear a thunder with a timpani coming in, and the thunder in a storm.

And I-- one time, I was at Tanglewood listening to the BSO, and they played this. And this is an honest-to-god true story. As that movement came up and the storm

clouds threatened, this huge, black, storm cloud came over and it started to rain, and then it stopped exactly as the movement ended. And it went on to the next. So make of that what you will. But it was a very interesting experience, shall we say, on the lawn of Tanglewood. Maybe you're channeling Beethoven here a little bit or something.

AUDIENCE 3:

So this piece is called "Birthday," and I feel like one of these real jazz people because I did the following. So, oh-- do you have some way of standing there. You can just take one. There's an extra. And so I said the following. Let M be the number of the month of your birthday. And then there are things in the parts that depend on it. So, for example, I was born in November. M is 11. And I'll say things like, transpose this part up in half steps. So, we're not going to do number 5. Number 5 involves you singing, and it's really hard to sing in key together. So instead, we're going to do just-- so I have numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4. They're the four, let's say, phrases of the happy birthday song. And they're in whatever key is appropriate to your birthday month.

I'll cue them with just numbers 1, 2, 3, 4. And it, again, cues that apply to individual people-- or, like, if I want to cue a group of people, I'll do like this and then I'll say number 2 or whatever. And, keep in mind, you'll be playing in different keys, which is good. And I don't want you to play simultaneously. I want you to play somewhat chaotically out of sync. So the cues are-- OK, so. Number. Self-explanatory. It's on the sheet. Another cue I'll have is this. This doesn't mean do a shake or anything. This means play chaotically. This means play something that isn't written down that sounds crazy. Shake hands equals chaos.

And then the other thing that I'll do is this. So, this does not mean play the same note. This means play, well-- it means play a sustained note, and then a couple seconds later, change it to some other sustained note, approximately at random. It should be approximately at random. So level hand motion means play a series of sustained notes. And the last gesture I'll use is the flexology chord gesture, where I do this. Where I, like, sweep my hand back and forth. It means play a chord. Together. OK. So, that's what I got. Sound good? Any questions or any comments?

I guess I'll cue you in.

[MANY INSTRUMENTS PLAYING]

[APPLAUSE]

PROFESSOR: I didn't know what you were going to do at the end. I didn't know if you were getting ready to--

AUDIENCE 3: I was thinking about doing something else, but I figured no one would follow because they assumed I was done.

PROFESSOR: Very nice. So, your impressions of how this all worked.

AUDIENCE 3: That was pretty hard. I knew it would be hard to be clear in front of different people. It was. Also, no one ended up doing-- I cued a bunch of people for number 3. I didn't, I think, hear anyone doing the alternative. So I have cases. If M is even, you play, you know, (SINGING) happy birthday dear-- something. And then if M is odd, you'd go the other way. I can't even do this. (SINGING) Happy birthday to whatever. Something like that. That would've been cool.

PROFESSOR: So in another iteration, and then we're going to have to move on, in another iteration people would actually have to sort of study this a little bit more. Because I saw Brian, you were cued 2, and you were looking to see what's 2. Because we're getting a lot of material very fast this afternoon. But you would do just like you practice for a piece that's written out. You would really have to know what the cues were.

AUDIENCE 3: I guess I was hoping that the familiarity with this melody would help.

PROFESSOR: Right.

AUDIENCE 3: It probably did. But still, it's a lot.

PROFESSOR: It was there in the background. OK, so two more.

AUDIENCE 13: So there's six new reference material that'll just be basic framework material that I tried to at least transcribe to the order of numbers in [INAUDIBLE]. So these first two are just these very simple patterns. Definitely not very strict, or not required to be very to the transcription. But just as a starting point for the improvisation. And so I would maybe take that with ones or twos. And then the rest are graphical notations, so three is kind of like a trio above. It's the same thing for the rest of these patterns. Five and six have their own patterns, so interpret those as you will.

So those will just be the number signals, and if I point at you or point at a section, use those numbers, that's probably what you'll want to do. And then some other signals that I was interested in using is this. Bringing hands together like using a [INAUDIBLE] would be like making what you're doing simpler or adding more space to what you're using. Where the opposite like this would be making it more complicated. I'll just do some very intuitive, dynamic markings, too. And yeah. Anything else should be fairly intuitive. So is everyone good with that?

[PIANO PLAYING]

[PIANO AND SAX PLAYING]

[MANY INSTRUMENTS PLAYING]

PROFESSOR: Nice.

[APPLAUSE]

PROFESSOR: So, as far as this coming up, let me just ask. What worked as you had envisioned it and were there any surprises in here?

AUDIENCE 13: So, I think it was a good-- it kind of got everyone started in at least some idea of what sound or some rough idea of key, I guess. It was maybe a little freer than I expected, just because everyone started at different tempos. Yeah. So it was also different adding-- I guess it was probably not necessarily a bug, but just a feature of how it works. People have different, I guess, ideas of how to add complexity.

PROFESSOR: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Good. Very nice.

AUDIENCE 14: So, I didn't write any material. So this is going to be focused on listening to other people. All right. So, one is active. Two is sparse. These are the ones we've used before. What we're going to start with is three, which is, you should be alternating between serene chords and motives. As by motives I just mean two to four notes. It can have rhythm if you want. Something that can be easily recognizable. OK, so hands rising is crescendo, diminuendo. And if I cup my ears, that means listen to other people and try to repeat their motives. If I do a ball, like this, this means that we're going to try to sort of all come into-- all repeat the same motive. Like coalesce into one. And if that happens, then I'll go like this, and that'll mean to gradually break apart. So, we'll see if that works. All right. So. You guys--

[MANY INSTRUMENTS PLAYING]

[APPLAUSE]

PROFESSOR: What did you feel about this?

AUDIENCE 14: Well, it didn't really coalesce as I was expecting it to, maybe because there wasn't a really distinctive motive. But I did hear some feedback, which was great.

PROFESSOR: Yeah, I heard that as the non-interested observer, or very interested but non-participating observer, I should say. I could definitely hear that happening.

AUDIENCE 14: Yeah. I was trying to bring out certain motives, but I guess one really became dominant.

PROFESSOR: There, again, literally practicing or working with the material.

AUDIENCE 14: Right. But really, really well done. Give everybody a hand. Give yourself all a hand. Very well done. Very well done. So, as I've said after each person's thing, I've said-- or almost everybody-- I've said composer and/or conductor or composer, conductor, because each of you, when you did that, you're both those things. You're

enacting out of-- essentially, this is your raw material, whatever it would be, for each person. And you're enacting in the moment through improvisation what the composition is going to be. Because as we've said, improvisation is composition and all that.

So this is just a different, yet another way to do it. It's a little bit different than what we've done before, but can be interesting. I would suggest that you think about-- whether it ever happens again or not. I mean, it could be factored into your final project, obviously-- think about what I've said to a couple of you. If you were to do your piece for today, if you were to do that again, what would you do to enhance it? What could you do to make sure that it was closer to what your intention was? And the other thing is, I think you might want to check out that OCW film of Walter Thompson, his sound-painting thing from another course. But I think if you just put in Walter Thompson and sound painting on OCW, you'll get this. It's fascinating, what he does. And he has a whole different set of signals. I think you'd get a kick out of it. What was the last thing I was going to say? Oh, yeah. See you Saturday. Thank you. Good job. Really good job.