

Was our musical notion of postmodernism baptized by the open score? The open score's claim for inclusivity; its rejection of traditional notions of authorship; its non-hierarchical approach to form and time does, if even discreetly, allude to skepticism, plurality, and maybe even irony, right? And while those "authors" of open scores likely considered themselves to be mere innovators or even just your everyday non-Western thinkers (heh), they were, if even unknowingly, complicit in (re)moving the capital "N" and "M" from New Music in the modernist sense. Aside from the practical functions of open scoring that Behrman insists upon (the composer may use the open score as a tool to illustrate what the performer should prioritize), there are major ideological implications for working with humans in this particular way. By treating the performer as partial creator, a fellow human (not robot), the "composer" may write herself out of herstory, or write herself into her community, or not write herself very much at all. An open score is, for better or for worse, the embracement of the amateur artist. The performer when reading an open score is, by my traditional Western notions, an amateur composer. By elevating the amateur artist, are we not downplaying or denying individuality? Is this really a good thing? Is this not, paradoxically, a major restriction in and of itself? I find these questions to be crippling.

A community has the right to make scoring decisions itself, based on its own understanding of the implications of action... This comes back full cycle to our early discussion on scores in music and theatre, to the new attitude about involvement and against specialization. The new theatre, the new art, wishes once again to involve the people. (Hanoch-Roe at some point)

- At what point does a score that doesn't specify certain parameters become an "open score"?
- (^) Are such labels relevant?
- Does the open score successfully challenge notions of authorship?
- Do open scores run the risk of the performer inserting their own musical clichés?
- How important is it to choose the "right" performer for these kind of works?
- Do recordings do an injustice to open scored works?

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Architecture has a fixed structure, literally immovable. While you can navigate its body freely, there are only a number of determined options. Sure, *some* open scores also have only a number of determined possibilities, however many have an infinite number of possibilities. Would not the *choice* involved in deciding whether to sit in the front row, versus the back row, to see a piano concerto from the 18th century be more akin to choosing your route within a man-made space? There certainly is some validity in making the alliance between new music and architecture: time is more likely to resemble space, timbre reigns supreme in its resemblance of design. But open scoring?

But this may relate more to architecture in an abstract sense: "it is the mechanism which allows us all to become involved, to make our presence felt." Does presence not directly relate to space? As defined by the Merriam-Webster, presence is . . .

- the fact or condition of being present

- the part of space within one's immediate vicinity
- the neighborhood of one of superior especially royal rank
- something present of a visible or concrete nature

Maybe the open score in its most figurative representation resembles a *map* of a space. Musical Score = Map of Space ;

Musical Experience = Actual Space, Presence within Space

- Are open scores considered spatial because of the score design or because of the freedom the performer has for interpretation (headspace)?
- Do open scores function as maps?

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I was thoroughly enchanted by Earle Brown's discourse surrounding *December 1952*. His approach to music is a breath of fresh air in its respect for jazz, the performer, and communal art-making. Can we just take this in again for a second?

I very much like conducting and rehearsing the music. I am not so much interested in the piece ultimately being a monument as I am in the piece existing as a kind of field of the activity of music-making which can exist between sympathetic and reasonable kinds of people. (Earle Brown at some point)

The word *monument* is a good one; a monument is the externalization of the self, the phallus, the ego, the Western notion of power and righteousness. Perhaps the next step would be to question Earle's insistence upon the score. For his time, especially within the context of the culture at Darmstadt, his graphic, minimalistic score proved a revolutionary point— that being that the score does not necessarily have to have a 1-to-1 representational function. And while he does experiment with how he represents certain musical ideas, “the power of the printed image,” as he puts it, essentially remains unchallenged. Is not the printed image also a monument for which history can justify Earle's existence? Is this score-monument fetishized all the same? Does it matter? Score-making and authorship are not necessarily a problem, but we desperately need those people (whether composer, performer) to make our upside-downs seem upside-right.

Gutkin discusses works around this time having much in common with the photograph, being a snapshot in time, or a drawing. The idea of a photo and its distortion of time relates nicely to *Crippled Symmetry*, for example, where time feels as if it is hovering within a single plane. In the case of *December 1952*, however, the photo, or image is not projected onto the sound, but onto the actual score itself; the score *is* the image. The sound, perhaps, is far less important than the score itself. Similarly to how Bussotti discusses his work, Brown's score may function mostly as a visual impetus, or *gestalt* as Bussotti describes it, for which the performers may derive their inspiration. The score may suggest a type of inertia for which the musicians can respond to. Ironically, despite the fact that the performance is incapable of being reproduced (given that a recording would seem divisive to the idea behind the work), the score itself becomes a commodity. It can be bought, sold, and presented within a museum *because* of its materiality. When the composer removes intentionality from that

which happens in time, are they bound to place more artistic energy into the stylistic elements of the score itself?

Looking at Morton's *Projections* and *Intersections*, it seems the score is not fetishized despite using a more graphic approach to representation—which is maybe another way of saying the score is not necessarily “beautiful” beyond what it signifies. Where Morton's patterns in his *Crippled Symmetry* sound non-linear, the process and representation *itself* is nonlinear in his graphic works. By working with oddly arranged “cells”, Morton attempts to remove any linear thinking in the very conception of the piece.

- Do scores like Bussotti's function as *commentaries* on the tradition of musical scores?
- If not (^), then should/can we use abstract art pieces as scores just the same?
- Is there any difference (^) beyond intentionality?

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Returning to the question of whether the open score, or even just the musical preoccupations of that time, resembles architecture, I think it's important to address the visual/spatial significance weighing in on the composer's artistic conceptions. Both Earle and Morton (these are really great first names, btw), repeatedly refer to the major visual artists of their times and their influence on their works. I would argue that aside from opera, this is the first major push towards challenging the barriers between artistic mediums. By thinking about carpets, paintings, mobiles, the composers are challenging their traditional notions of time. In this pursuit, it may be inevitable that artists realize the old borders between music and sculpture, as an example, are bound to crumble.

Another interesting intersection between Earle and Morton is their mutual desire to remove the individual from their compositional process. While Earle uses computational devices to insert randomness into his score (though he admits that he controls parameters according to his taste), Morton states he doesn't like to over “meddle” with his musical material. Interestingly enough, I think Morton's case is not so much a rejection of the human as much as it is a kind of transcendentalism. Patterns, especially within Islam and Judaism, are religiously charged. Those divine proportions are not only found within rugs, but also *architectural* spaces of worship. Was the attempt to remove and transcend the self in both Earle and Morton's works a way to reject the intuition of the composer? Is the abnegation of personal bias attributable to modern science being replacement for God?

- Are open scores a precursor for mixed media, or other types of collaborative works?
- Do open scores successfully transcend the composer's sense of self?
- Why do you think composers of that time feel the need to escape their preconceived artistic notions?
- At what point does the open score allow for the *listener* to be the composer?