

the piece formerly known as
boring formless nonsense (2015)

Sundstrom

for Kevin Baldwin

Performance Notes – *the piece formerly known as boring formless nonsense*

General: *The Techniques of Saxophone Playing/Die Spieltechnik des Saxophons* by Marcus Weiss and Giorgio Netti was used extensively as a reference for both the composer and player. It remains recommended as a reference for future performances.

Breath markings: The piece is paced though the performer's breathing. A value less than or equal to 1 is given for the breath and a line is extended over the material which is playing during that breath. For instnace, 1/2 breath is used in the first cell of the first system, 2/3 breath in the first cell in the second system, etc. In cases like that of the second cell in the first system, the indication is “1 breath + 2”” which means the player is to use their entire breath *plus* two seconds for that unit. The strain should be obvious.

- Within the units, players should follow the spatial proportions given for crescendos, decrescendos, and other musical information. It is up to the player to properly place things in time according to the duration of their breath.
- It is not advisable to use circular breathing in the piece, even if a player is capable. When there is a need to take a breath between units, the player is advised to use the cover of the electronics to ensure smooth transitions.

Fingerings: Fingerings were derived both from Weiss and Netti's book, as well as consultation with Kevin Baldwin. The diagrams were also retrieved from the book. The main keys are denoted with a large circle while the smaller keys (pinky, palm, slide) are indicated with smaller circles (only during trills) and/or a key name. Keeping with convention, darkened circles indicate a key depression while open circles indicate an open key.

- **Trills:** Trills should be executed such that the intensity of the trill is directly proportional to that of the speed. In the first unit, for instance, the trill begins quickly and slows. Likewise, the trills intensity (that is, the force used to depress the keys) begins high and lowers as the trills slows. It is also advisable that as the intensity falls, the pressing of the keys becomes more shallow, such that towards the end of a slow trill the keys no longer touch the saxophone.

Dynamics: The dynamic levels are given only occasionally; this is due to the fact that some of the techniques only speak at up to a given dynamic. The high point of a given crescendo should be the loudest dynamic possible with the given technique, unless otherwise indicated. Vertical dashed lines indicate synchronizations between a trill or movement from single tone to multiphonic (and visa versa) and the desired place in the dynamic contour. Dynamics that are indicated should be followed within the context of other dynamics.

- The short attack at the start of the second system should be articulated with a “k” sound and should be as short and sharp as possible.

Pitches: Pitches are transposed. Sinlge pitches without a box are to be played as single tones while those in a box are to be played as multiphonics containing that pitch; the given fingerings allow this. They function as transitional pitches from which one can move into and out of multiphonics. Solid lines indicate a gradual transition between one state to another. Numbers next to the notes indicate during which repetition the notes are to appear.

Repeats: The number of repeats for a cell is given above the repeat symbol at the end of the cell. Cells at the end of every system do not repeat.

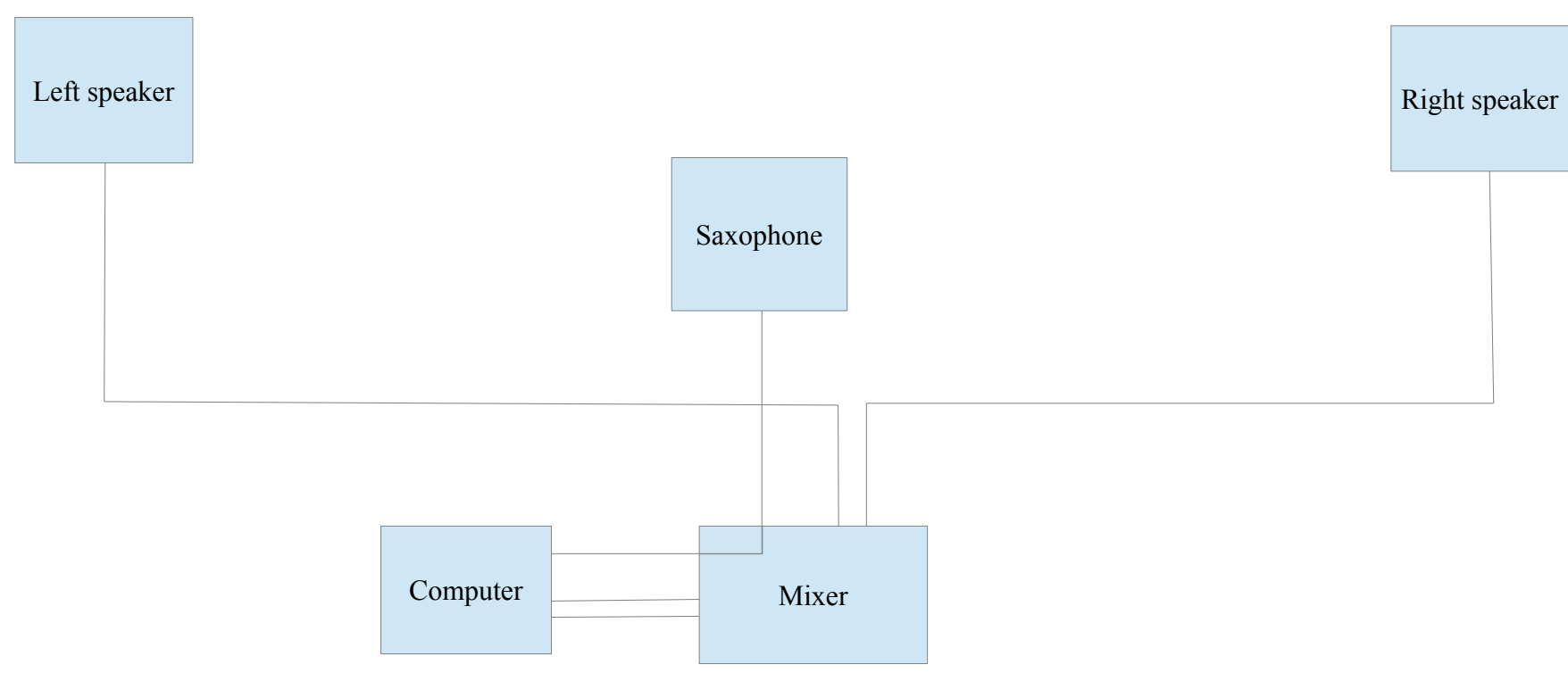
- The form repeats at the end of the third system, returning to “A” and ending with the coda.

Electronics: A copy of the SuperCollider program can be obtained from the composer. Audio output can be either 2-channel stereo (UJH), 6-channel hexagonal, or the 4-channel ambisonic B-format.

- Most often a clip microphone on the bell has been used to capture the sound of the saxophone, though it is possible (and recommended) to use a large diaphragm microphone that is angled lower on the instrument and set further away. This serves the purpose of picking up more low frequencies and limiting the 'click' of the keys during trills.
- There are several controls in the interface. The default settings are recommended but the player or electronic technician is encouraged to experiment with different settings depending on the venue. The overall sound, though, should be that of the electronics as *very* prominent such that the player and audience is consumed in the filters and reverb.
- Either the “autoFilter Task” or “onset trigger” should be used to change the filter bank automatically.
- A diagram of a sample stereo setup is given below (not to scale).

Lighting: It is recommended that there be as little light as possible in the performance space; a dark room with a colored stand light is ideal. If there must be light, it is recommended that the light be a cool color (blue, green, or some variation) and focused only on the player.

- If the performance is taking place in an ambisonic sphere, it is recommended that the player be as close to the center of the sphere as possible. This includes potential elevation.



A

1/2 breath

First time only

-don't inhale!

x2 1 breath + 2"

"First principle: one must need strength, otherwise one will never have it."

2/3 breath

1/2 breath

3/4 breath

x2

"So history is neither a perpetual novelty, nor a perpetual repetition..."

1 breath

"my body is constantly perceived."

1/3 breath

x3

1st time only

7/8 breath

Go to A then

1/2 breath

x2

1st time only

-don't breathe!

1 breath + 2"

gently

press down

key

poco f