

Earle Brown's Forgotten Piece in Moholy-Nagy's Light-Space-Modulator
Annesley Black, 2012

For piano and live-sequenced sounds and video

commissioned by the Earle Brown Music Foundation
première by Rei Nakamura and Annesley Black, Sept.3 2012, Sammlung
Graesslin, St. Georgen at the Bergstadtsommer Musik Festival.

Technical requirements:

laptop with PD (incl. GEM) installed

projector

midi interface

2 or more loudspeakers

microphones for amplification of the piano

mixing board

The Film “Ein Lichtspiel- Schwarz-Weiss-Grau” by Laszló Moholy-Nagy is
used with kind permission of the Estate of Laszló Moholy-Nagy. For further
performances please contact the VG Bild-Kunst in Europe, or in America the
Artists Rights Society.

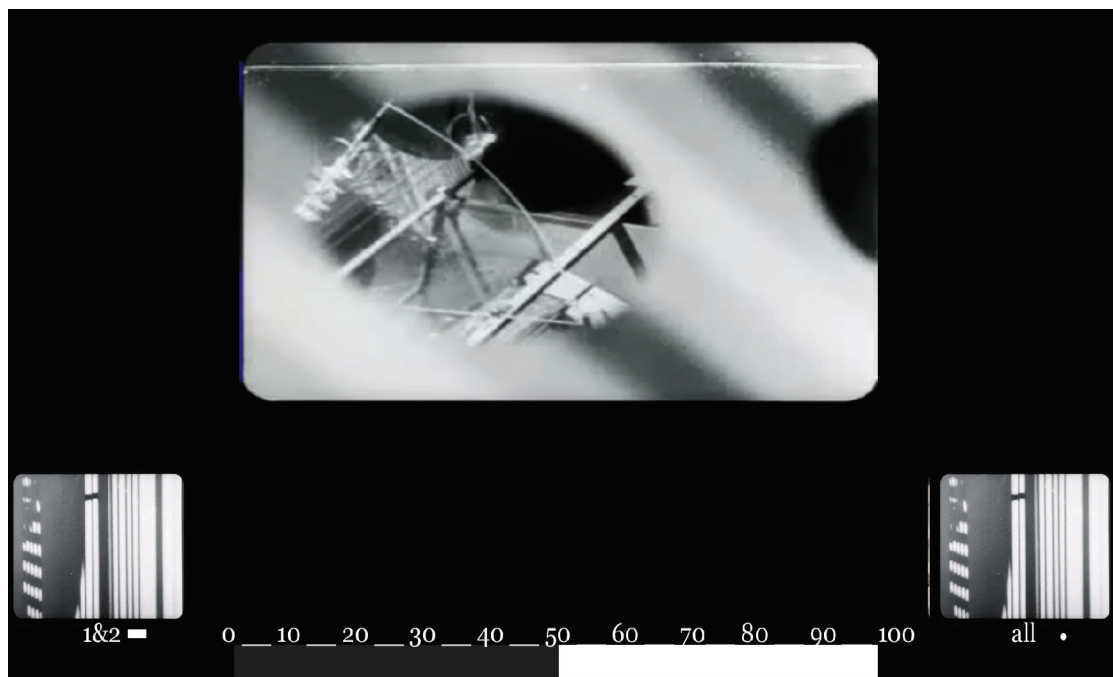
Performance/ Notation Explanations

The pitch material and proportions stem from Earle Brown's *Forgotten Piece* from 1954. In this composed interpretation of the piece, the pianist and sound artist follow an additional graphical score controlled live (or pre-composed) by the sound artist in Pure Data. The visual material from the score stems from László Moholy-Nagy's piece *Ein Lichtspiel- Schwarz-Weiss-Grau*, which uses footage from his *Light-Space-Modulator*, a rotating sculpture, which, in motion, filters and reflects light and projects shadows.

It is left open to the musicians how much they would like to pre-programme the performance or how much they would like to control live. An example of a programme that can be used for the performance (or modified as desired) is included with the patch- the text document entitled "audio-video.txt". The musicians may also decide to control certain functions live, while pre-programming the rest. The programme included runs for ca. 15 minutes.

HOW TO READ THE PD PATCH

The PD window with the graphic score is set up as follows:



The large main image in the centre is the film.

The two images and writing on each side is designated for each musician- the leftmost image and writing is for the pianist to read, the right for the sound artist. (It is possible to reverse this designation, should the performance set-up have the musicians staged otherwise).

In this screen-shot both performers have been assigned the shadow function (this will be explained in the next paragraph). The pianist is performing the long (held) notes in voices 1&2 and the sound artist is performing the staccato notes from all voices.

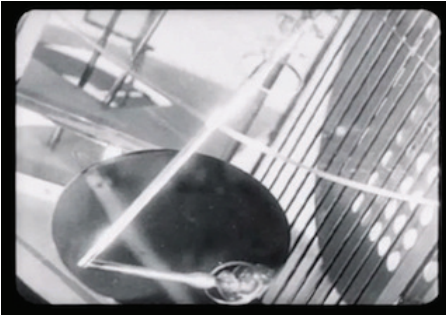
The bar on the bottom centre of the screen shows the point in the score that the musicians should read- from 0 to 100%. The speed the bar moves shows the musicians the speed they should read their score. In this screen-shot the bar is at 50% of the voice.

IMAGES

the two smaller images on each side of the screen define functions the musicians are to perform while playing the music, how they should relate to each other and to the film.

The images can be pre-programmed and written into a list, or controlled live by the sound artist.

There are three different image specifications:



REFLECTION/MIRROR:

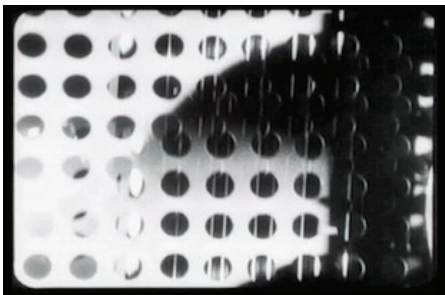
When the musician receives this image in their image space they are to react to the images in the film while still reading the musical material of Earle Brown. The musician should focus on one element/ object in the film. While continuing to adhere to the time-line they should only play the notes in the score which are synchronous to the articulations of the movement of the object they have fixated upon.



SHADOW:

When the musician receives this image in their image space they are to subtly obscure their notes in their score. The pianist may accomplish this, for example, by playing clusters around the notes (the size of the cluster may vary, or the musician may attempt to shape the clusters according to elements or objects or shadows in the film), by inserting random "false" notes (this may also be combined with clusters, and may also be coupled by elements in the film) or by hitting the strings inside the piano. The sound artist may also plant foreign notes into their material

or add clouds of sounds. The overall contour of the material being played should still be audible.



FILTER:

When the musician receives this image in their image space they are to filter their own notes, or the notes of the other musician. To filter their own notes the musician has the following options:
1) performing spectral filter (eg: flageollets)
2) filtering out specific ranges of the notes (this may also be done with the use of a different instrument with a limited register and an attack similar to a piano, like a toy-piano or a kalimba, etc.) - in this case only the notes available to the instrument will be performed.

If the two musicians are playing the same voice they may perform a spectral filter upon the notes of the other player (electronically or by playing flageollets or notes inherent in the spectrum of the pitches played).

If the two musicians are playing different voices, the musician assigned a filter may play the notes found in the voice that they are assigned.

If one musician has been assigned a shadow, the other musician may filter notes out of their shadow (trying to emphasize the notes in the voice they are playing).

NUMBER COMMANDS

under the images is a command which consists of number(s) and a symbol (■ or •) The numbers refer

to the voice, which is also indicated at the top left-hand corner of each page of the score. The following combinations of four voices are possible:

- 1
- 2

3
4
1&2
3&4

3&4. or 1&2. (only the short/ staccato notes of voices 1&2 or 3&4)

1&2 ■ or 3&4 ■ (only the long notes of voices 1&2 or 3&4)

all . (only the short/ staccato notes of voices 1,2,3&4)

should there be no indication, the musician should be silent, unless they are to shadow or filter the other musician.

DURATION/ TIME

The duration of each playing of the voice is indicated by the bar at the bottom of the screen. The time-line is also indicated on the score- the percentage which notes occurs in proportion to the duration of the whole voice is indicated at the top of each system.