"I touch what I cannot quite reach...."

for performers, kinetic objects & shadows

heather b. frasch
2019

"I touch what I cannot quite reach..."
for 1 - 5 performers, kinetic objects and shadow boxes

Performance Notes

General

This piece can be performed by different types of performers, but they must be comfortable with *almost nothing* activity and have a sensitivity towards *micro-sonic changes*. This piece requires patience and **careful attention to,** and **emphasis on, slight changes in activity**, especially in transitional sections.

The number of performers for each performance is between 1-5. The number of parts should be added in order, e.g.: Solo plays performer 1, Duo- Performer 1 & 2, etc.

Minimum time of the piece should be **15 minutes** but can be longer. The sections should be relative to the spatial notation but **do not need to be precisely proportional**. Each performer follows their own internal rhythm which doesn't need to coordinate with the others. Performers should linger in the transitional moments between sections, listening carefully to others to find interesting sonic moments.

Each performer needs to be equipped with: a 'shadow box' (*details below), a set of cards in an envelope provided by the composer, 4 vibrating materials, dangling objects (*details below), a set of small clamps, and 2 small lights.

Notation Explanations

There are 4 sections to the piece. The notation should be used as a reference for the performers. However this piece requires an important level of nuance and subtle performative decisions that are not written down.

Each section contains X number of phrases. These phrases are marked by an increase and decrease in amplitude control. Each phrase should start with no volume and no object. Then, just after the material is placed on the transducer, the volume should be just slightly increased so that the material placed on the transducer just *barely* starts to vibrate. Then, there should be X number of increase/decrease phrases without ever stopping vibrations until the final phrase. Each phrase should be slightly different. The increase/decrease motion doesn't need to be constant.

Cards: At the beginning of the piece, before the performer hangs the first object, they should take a card from the envelope selected at random. The text should influence how the piece is realized. It is up to the performer to determine that relationship.

Each of the 4 phrases uses a different combination of vibrating surface materials and dangling objects. Phrase 1: glass bowl surface + dangling metal object, Phrase 2: Wooden surface + dangling wooden sticks, Phrase 3: Styrofoam surface + dangling prickly object, Phrase 4: silent object (no dangling object)

Vibrating Surface Materials: Each performer should have: 1 small glass bowl between 4-9cm in diameter, between 3-6cm high, and not too thick; 1 thin piece of wood; 1 small piece of styrofoam; and 1 silent object (that doesn't make sound when set in motion, e.g. small sponge or foam ball)

These objects are placed directly onto the transducers . The amplitude should be at 0 before the object is set on the transducer, and then carefully increased so that the object vibrates *just slightly-* as if it's quivering. After, during the increase of amplitude, the performer will need to find the right level so that there is a change in vibration but without ever being too rattly. The vibrating surface materials shouldn't make any extraneous sounds.

Dangling Objects: 1 small metal object (such as a nail or screw), 3 - 4 small wooden pencils or light sticks about between 5 - 8 cm long and 1 small prickly ball

These objects are hung above the vibrating materials using string or fishing wire. They should be hung so that they just *barely* touch the vibrating surface material to ensure that they move by tapping or rattling in a gentle fashion. It might take the performer a bit of time to find the precise placement of not too much, and not too little.

Technical Requirements

Each performer will perform inside a **shadow box**, which is a modified box that contains 2 small transducers and amplifier. Each performer needs to attach a stereo sine tone wave generator with Lt/Rt control, to the amplifier. An app on a smartphone or tablet is an easy and ideal solution (reliable jack output and adapters needed). The transducers should be sent sent sine tones of 20 hertz that is constant throughout the piece, with the exception of Performer 1 and 2 who need to change the frequency one time as indicated. The only technical parameter that changes throughout the piece is the amplitude control which is why there needs to be **distinct Left and Right (or 2 channel) control**.

Performers will also have 4 materials that will be placed directly on to the vibrating transducers, and objects that will be hung to lightly touch the vibrating materials. **Clamps** are needed to attach them. The shadow boxes need to be obtained from the composer. The objects can be as well.

Each performer needs to have **2 small lamps**. One lamp should be small and attached to the box or placed very closely to it. The second one can be a variable size but should be further back, at least 30 cm away. The placement should be decided beforehand so there isn't a need for adjustment while playing. The lights should try to shine on the materials and objects, not the clamps or speaker set up. Although a little bit is fine. The exact moment when they should be turned on/off is up to the performer but within the given time constraints indicated on the score. Lighting of the hall should be minimal, although not necessarily completely dark during in the performance area in order for the individual lights to have an impact when turned on/off.

As many of the sounds are quite quiet, the closer the performers can be to the audience, the more ideal.

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Score for Performer 1

heather b frasch

Slowly

Delicately, with slight changes
Nuance is essential

Focus on interesting **blends**
among materials

max
Transducer 1.
off

metal object
on glass

Stop motion   change object   prickly object   No Action
leave object

4x's * *ad lib*. motion of phrase
never to zero til last phrase **

2x's *ad lib*. motion of phrase
never to zero til last phrase **

20 htz.

Wait for all performers
to reach this point

change object

max.
Transducer 2.
off

no object

wood on wood

Stop motion   silent object

3x's * *ad lib*. motion of phrase
never to zero til last phrase **

1 phrase only

2793 hz or 2561 hz ***   Change to 20 hz

turn on light 1 ****   turn on light 2   turn off light 2   turn off
light 1
*****

* X refers to the number of swells of increased then decreased amplitude phrases.
There should be an arched phrase butit should be erratic and doesn't need to be a constant motion.
Each iteration of the increase/decrease swell should be a different.

**Objects should always be in motion, even if only barely, until the end of the section.

Finding subtle in-between places is essential in this piece.

*** performer choose either of these frequencies

**** when appropriate within time frame
before glass object is removed but motion can already be stopped

***** after fermatta
(to signal end of piece)
uncoordinated with other performers

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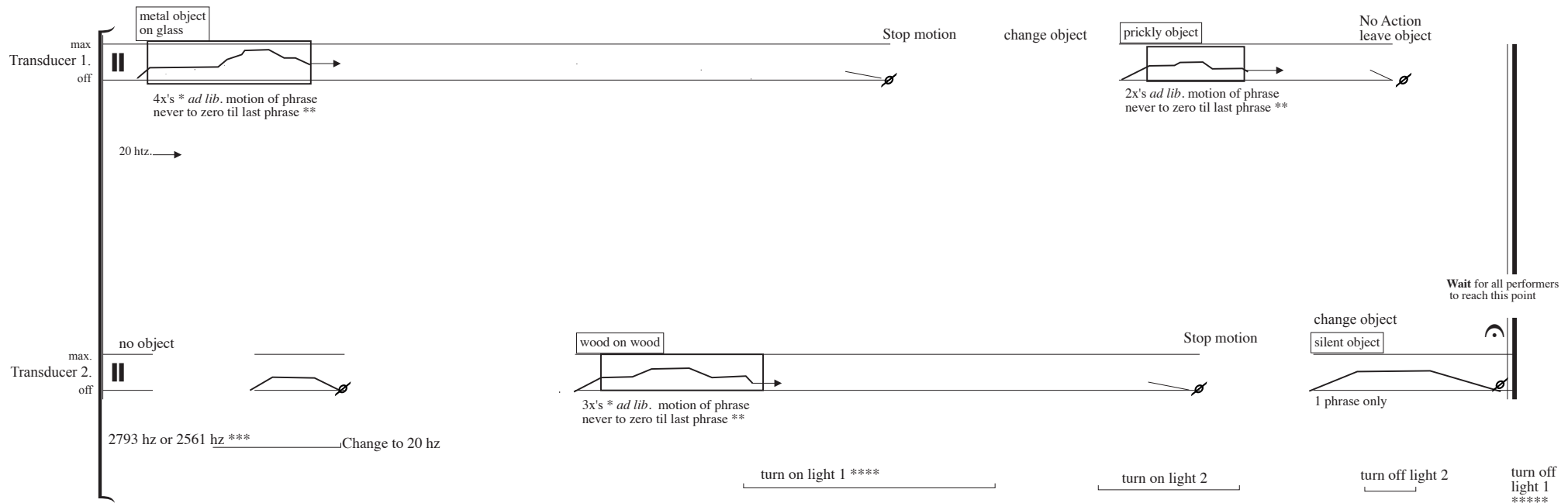### for performers, kinetic objects & shadows

Score for Performer 2

heather b frasch

Slowly

Delicately, with slight changes
Nuance is essential

Focus on interesting **blends**
among materials

Transducer 1. max / off

metal object on glass

Stop motion   change object

prickly object

No Action
leave object

4x's * *ad lib*. motion of phrase
never to zero til last phrase **

2x's *ad lib*. motion of phrase
never to zero til last phrase **

20 htz.

Wait for all performers
to reach the fermatta

Transducer 2. max. / off

no object

wood on wood

Stop motion

change object

silent object

3x's * *ad lib*. motion of phrase
never to zero til last phrase **

1 phrase only

2714 hz   Change to 20 hz

turn on light 1 ***

turn on light 2

turn off light 2

turn off
light 1
****

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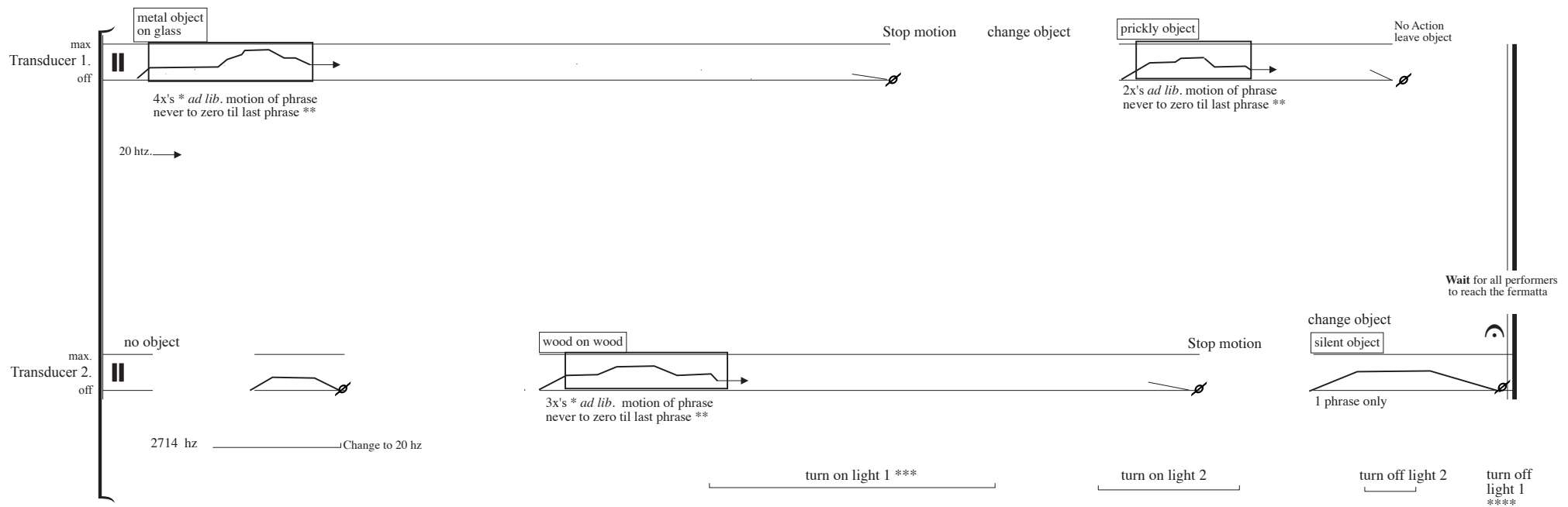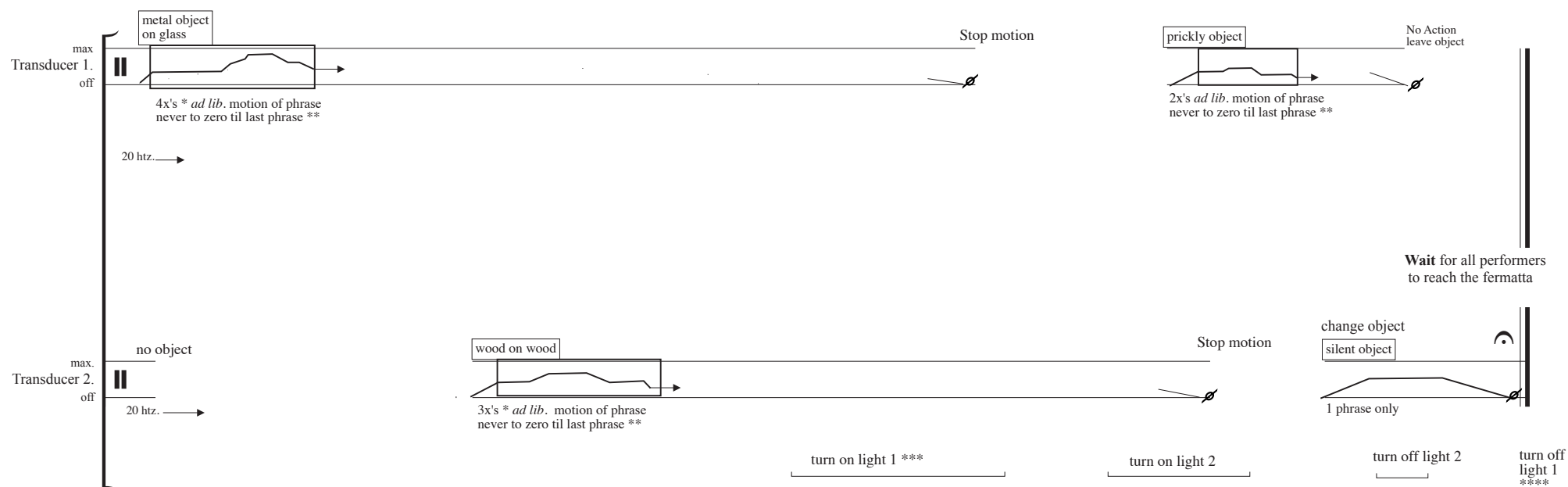
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Score for Performers 3-5

heather b frasch

Slowly

Delicately, with slight changes
Nuance is essential

Focus on interesting **blends** ————————————————————————
among materials

metal object
on glass

Stop motion

No Action
leave object

prickly object

Transducer 1.   max

off

4x's * *ad lib*. motion of phrase
never to zero til last phrase **

2x's *ad lib*. motion of phrase
never to zero til last phrase **

20 htz.

Wait for all performers
to reach the fermatta

change object

silent object

no object

wood on wood

Stop motion

Transducer 2.   max.

off

3x's * *ad lib*. motion of phrase
never to zero til last phrase **

1 phrase only

20 htz.

turn on light 1 ***

turn on light 2

turn off light 2

turn off
light 1
****

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