Bob’s Party
for instrumental and/or vocal quartet

Michael Boyd
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Performance Instructions

Basic Information
This piece is for four musicians of any type, vocal and/or instrumental (including live electro-acoustic/computer performers), though performers from other disciplines such as dance or theater may also be included. Performers’ skill levels may range from novice to professional. The total duration of a given performance is left to the ensemble’s discretion, and may be agreed up in advance or naturally arise from the performance process. Performances may take place in any performance venue, including non-traditional spaces, and the ensemble may physically configure itself in any way as long as performers can generally see and hear each other.

Performance Score
The final sixteen pages of this document comprise the work’s performance score, and are distributed evenly to ensemble members, each of whom receives four pages. A sample page is reproduced below and labeled to make the instructions that follow clearer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>replicate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performer (number) and order (letter) identification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitional Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When to move to the transitional section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional verbs and graphic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When to move to the next page (or end)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Performance Process**

Every score page is similarly configured. A grey number (1-4) and letter (A-D) are found at the lower left portion of each page. The number corresponds to each of the four performers, and the letters indicate the order (alphabetical) in which the pages are performed. Thus one individual will perform 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D in that order, another will perform 2A, 2B, 2C and 2D, and so forth.

Each page is divided into two sections by a thick vertical line. The larger section found to the left of this line is interpreted first and considered the page’s primary material, while the smaller section located to the right of the line is addressed second and considered transitional. Both sections contain graphic and text data that shapes and guides the choice of performance gestures.

A performance begins with the ensemble interpreting the pages labeled “A,” and each individual initially focuses on the larger, primary section of the page. The primary section of every page features a single verb and large graphic image, which are interpreted concurrently. The performance gestures that result from this interpretation can be sonic, visual and/or theatrical, and may be partially or wholly in reaction to the actions of one or more of the other ensemble members. The exact way that a verb/image pair suggests gesture(s) will vary significantly, as none have obvious performance connotations and might be interpreted in myriad ways. Over time performers should attempt to express the “essence” of each verb/image pair through varied interpretations (though of course repetition may be employed as part of a specific interpretation). The primary sections of each page identified with the same letter are somewhat related and somewhat distinct, featuring semi-related graphic images and semi-synonymous verbs. The ensemble should allow any resulting congruency (or variability) to arise organically from the performance, and not overtly coordinate in a forced or artificial manner. Performers should be creative, experiment, and explore!

The transitional section of each page is split into three subsections by thinner horizontal lines. The upper and lower subsections respectively indicate when performers should move to the transitional section and move on to the next page (or end). The middle portion of the transitional section features two oppositional verbs and a graphic image.

Events that occur during a performance (and performers’ understanding of those events) determine when performers move to the transitional section of the page. The score sample found on the previous page reads, “TRANSITION WHEN the ensemble’s interpretations are consistently incoherent and a lot of time has passed OR you believe another performer has already begun to do so.” Thus the individual interpreting this page should move to the transition section when they feel that the ensemble has been incoherent for some time, or when they think that another performer has already moved to this section of the page (whichever occurs first). Other pages feature different (or in some cases the same) “TRANSITION WHEN” criteria, though all instruct the performer to move on
when they believe another has already done so. Thus the ensemble should move forward at roughly, though not exactly, the same pace.

The center portion of the transitional section, which features a pair of oppositional verbs and a small graphic image, should be approached in essentially the same way as the primary section (see above). There is less (overt) commonality of these sections across the ensemble, though, as mentioned above, any similarity or contrast of interpretations between performers should arise naturally and not be artificially coordinated.

The lowest subsection of the transitional portion of the page also references occurrences that might arise during performance, though these events signal to a performer to move to the next page (in alphabetic order) or stop performing (should they be interpreting the final page labeled “D”). Performers should not attend to or employ this subsection until they have begun to interpret the verbs and graphic found in the middle of the transitional section of the page. The previous score example reads, “MOVE ON WHEN the ensemble has split into factions OR you believe another performer has already done so.” The interpreting performer should thus move to the next alphabetically labeled score page either when they feel the ensemble has split into groups or when they believe another performer has already moved on to the next page (whichever occurs first). The initial impetus is different for each page, though all pages instruct the performer to move on when they believe another has already done so (again causing the ensemble to move forward at approximately, though not exactly, the same pace). Performers interpreting their last page (“D”) will find the this subsection begins “END WHEN…”; once either listed criteria has been met the interpreting performer should cease to perform (in any manner of his/her choosing). The performance ends when all four performers have ceased to perform.

To provide a more global sense of this piece, the next page features all sixteen score pages organized by performer (columns) and performance order (rows).
Obscure you believe another else worth doing it seems like there is nothing has already done so thoroughly and exhaustively a lot of essence has been done so done so to do so

A

parallel 1

B

transform

disassemble

discern

dispose

C

oppose

divorce

dissipate

dissimilarity

D

obscure

dissipate

Performer

replicate

extend

mutate

convert

imitate

transmute

move on when

proliferate

move on when

performer

performer

performer

performer

commonplace disorientation has become move on when

s essence intensify augment

XYZ…
Performance Score
parallel

assemble

disassemble

TRANSITION WHEN
the page’s essence has been thoroughly and exhaustively articulated by the ensemble
OR
you believe another performer has already begun to do so

MOVE ON WHEN
you have nothing new to add
OR
you believe another performer has already done so
TRANSITION WHEN
the ensemble's interpretations
are consistently incoherent
and a lot of time has passed
OR
you believe another performer
has already begun to do so

MOVE ON WHEN
the ensemble exhibits total
cohesion and congruity
OR
you believe another performer
has already done so

transform
diverge
converge
oppose

TRANSITION WHEN someone in the ensemble seems to have deviated too much from the page’s essence
OR you believe another performer has already begun to do so

homogenize

MOVE ON WHEN something shocking happens
OR you believe another performer has already done so

diversify
TRANSITION WHEN
you feel that you have deviated too much from the page’s essence
OR
you believe another performer has already begun to do so

END WHEN
it seems like there is nothing else worth doing
OR
you believe another performer has already done so
replicate

Augment

Transition when the ensemble's interpretations are consistently incoherent and a lot of time has passed OR you believe another performer has already begun to do so.

MOVE ON WHEN the ensemble has split into factions OR you believe another performer has already done so.
TRANSITION WHEN
someone in the ensemble
seems to have deviated too
much from the page’s essence
OR
you believe another performer
has already begun to do so

extend

integrate

XYZ...

MOVE ON WHEN
something strangely familiar
happens
OR
you believe another performer
has already done so
counteract

TRANSLATION WHEN
you feel that you have deviated too much from the page’s essence
OR
you believe another performer has already begun to do so

penetrate

MOVE ON WHEN
moving on seems easier than not
OR
you believe another performer has already done so
The page's essence has been thoroughly and exhaustively articulated by the ensemble. OR

You believe another performer has already begun to do so.

OR

You feel like things have just become interesting. OR

You believe another performer has already done so.
TRANSITION WHEN someone in the ensemble seems to have deviated too much from the page’s essence OR you believe another performer has already begun to do so

MOVE ON WHEN something captivating happens OR you believe another performer has already done so

imitate

continue

discontinue
TRANSITION WHEN
you feel that you have
deviated too much from the
page’s essence
OR
you believe another performer
has already begun to do so

MOVE ON WHEN
it seems like it is time
OR
you believe another performer
has already done so
antagonize

TRANSITION WHEN
the page’s essence has been thoroughly and exhaustively articulated by the ensemble
OR
you believe another performer has already begun to do so

expand

100101101010101101010

contract

MOVE ON WHEN
you are bored
OR
you believe another performer has already done so
TRANSITION WHEN
the ensemble’s interpretations are consistently incoherent and a lot of time has passed
OR
you believe another performer has already begun to do so

END WHEN
the ensemble has unraveled
OR
you believe another performer has already done so
proliferate

TRANSITION WHEN
you feel that you have
deviated too much from the
page’s essence
OR
you believe another performer
has already begun to do so

oscillate

MOVE ON WHEN
disorientation has become
commonplace
OR
you believe another performer
has already done so

persist
convert

TRANSITION WHEN
the page’s essence has been thoroughly and exhaustively articulated by the ensemble
OR
you believe another performer has already begun to do so

smooth

roughen

MOVE ON WHEN
you feel isolated
OR
you believe another performer has already done so
TRANSITION WHEN
the ensemble’s interpretations are consistently incoherent and a lot of time has passed
OR
you believe another performer has already begun to do so

MOVE ON WHEN
the ensemble has become self-referential
OR
you believe another performer has already done so

negate

centralize

decentralize
TRANSITION WHEN
someone in the ensemble
seems to have deviated too
much from the page’s essence
OR
you believe another performer
has already begun to do so

END WHEN
something expected happens
OR
you believe another performer
has already done so

ambiguate

move

stop