Chapter 9. Meeting 9, Discussion and Workshop

9.1. Announcements

• No class next Tuesday (Monday schedule)
• Make appointments to meet with me to talk about projects

9.2. Tape Processes

• Working with tape promoted procedural approaches to creating music
• Acoustical compositional practices of serialism, indeterminism, and minimalism suggested organizing principles

9.3. Quiz

• 10 Minutes

9.4. Workshop: Sound Sequencing and Layering

• Open Audacity or another DAW; create three tracks
• Mute the first audio track; place a few sound files in this track
• Select and copy regions of audio from this track to the second and third tracks
• Use changes in amplitude to fade and cross fade between these two tracks
• Repeat, edit, listen, compose

9.5. Listening: Cage

• John Cage (1912-1992)
• 1951: Cage, with grant form Paul Williams, Project of Music for Magnetic Tape in New York
• Works with studio and equipment of Luis and Bebe Barron
• Composes Imaginary Landscape No. 5, employing audio from 42 records organized into multiple tape parts cut according to chance operations
• Cage commissions Barrons to create collection of field recordings
• Cage develops a system for selecting and organizing material using the I Ching
  • 8 Tapes assembled and played simultaneously
  • Toss three coins six times to generate a random number between 1 and 64
  • Random values used to select type of sound, track assignment, duration, and envelope and tape cut
  • 192 page score provides creative patterns for cutting and splicing tape (Homes 2008, p. 83)
• Took over 9 months to compose
• Cage: “Williams Mix” (1952)

9.6. Workshop: Looping in PD
• Install Martingale, open PD
• Open demo/samplePlayer.pd
• Press “bang” above two top most [openpanel] boxes; open “sampleFrench.aif” for both samplePlayerA and samplePlayerB

• Set start and end times for both samples at .25 and .27

• Set playback speeds for each player at 1 and .98

• Repeat, edit, listen, compose

9.7. Listening: Reich

• Steve Reich (1936–)

• Influenced by techniques of minimalism based in part on music of Terry Riley, La Monte Young, and others

• Explored phasing, or phase-shifting, with tape loops: gradual changes in time alignment of loops
• Employed a recording of a Pentecostal preacher (Brother Walter) recorded in Union Square, San Francisco

• Up to eight tape loops of the same fragment of speech are layered

• Reich: “Its Gonna Rain” (1965)

• “Scorification” of a technological process for acoustic instruments

• Reich: “Piano Phase” (1967)

9.8. Listening: Lucier

• Alvin Lucier (1931-)

• “godfather of process music” (Holmes 2008, p. 395)

• Iterative re-resonance, employing filtering and noise from room, microphone, and speaker [demo/iterativeResonance.pd]
• Generations re-recorded (at least) 16 times
• Lucier: “I Am Sitting in a Room” (1969)

9.9. Workshop: The Techniques of Early Tape Music
• Install Martingale, open PD
• Open demo/samplePlayer.pd
• Load one or more samples
• Manipulate playback speed and start and end loop points
• Adjust low and high pass filters to select regions of sound
• Record sounds by first pressing the “bang” above the [savepanel] object, then pressing [start] and [stop]

• Import these sounds into Audacity or another DAW, position and layer

• Repeat, edit, listen, compose