

NEXT TO BESIDE BESIDES #11

for amplified vibraphone solo

(or as movement or part in any combination of pieces from the NTBB series)

Simon Steen-Andersen 2003/2007

Instrumentation:

The piece should be played on a vibraphone with a steady and un-noisy motor/fan. The piece is played without sticks, only the fingers and a straw are used.

Amplification:

The actions should be amplified through a head-set microphone worn by the player.

The actions should be amplified as much as possible without it being unpleasant – at least loud enough to give a feeling of zooming in on the very soft sounds.

When played together with other versions of NTBB the amplification should level out the dynamic differences between the instruments as much as possible.

Dynamics:

Since the sound is being amplified through the head-set it is necessary to keep the head close to the sounds that are not by nature being produced close to the microphone – and even to adjust the resulting dynamics by adjusting the distance from the head to the sound source.

The ppp (without parenthesis) should be the softest possible *even* dynamic (trying to match all the soft events). Crescendos and diminuendos should be performed “exponentially” (very late cresc. with much direction, etc.). When ending or starting with an accentuated point, the point should always be a bit louder than the crescendoed or diminuended sound, in order to make them “melt together”, like a zoom (reverse reverb) or “natural” reverb of the accentuated point.

In general:

Only the upper 9th (Eb-F) of the vibraphone is used. The piece is notated with an octave-transposed treble-clef. The vibraphone is mostly being played by blowing on it. In order to make the intended sounds it is necessary to be very close to the instrument with the mouth when blowing – at some points actually touching it with the lips. This makes it rather problematic to read the score while playing and/or communicating visually with other instruments, which speaks for learning it by hard, and maybe for using a click-track when playing with others.

Signs:

- blow on a key.
- ‡■ blow into the tube to the right of the key (fan-movements not audible).
- × straw action. (The straw is mainly used to make gliss. across the keys or to stick into the fan).
- ↔ fan-sound: either by blowing on it or by touching it with the straw. (To blow on the fan the lips should touch the instrument and the air stream should be rather focused in order to make the fan-movements as audible as possible.)
- ◆ blow on the right side edge of the key.
- ↑ ↓ blow on the upper edge / lower edge of the key
- ↑ ↓ in general: the very upper part / the very lower part of the key.
(No arrow: at the middle of the key / above the tubes)
- × | - above the system: hit the “motor cover” with a fingernail – tapping in the softer nuances and finger-snapping in the louder nuances.
- within the system: dampened key played with a fingernail – tapping in the softer nuances and finger-snapping in the louder nuances.
- key played with a fingernail (tapping/finger-snapping sim.) – audible pitch.
- key played with a knuckle – more defined pitch.
- glissando: move in a straight line from the first point to the next in the given time.
The movement should start immediately.
- - - → gradual transition.
- ♭ “The tube under the missing key”: Fb; next to Eb, Cb; between Bb and Db.

Next To Beside Besides – en “re-cyklus”

Et abstrakt konciperet musikstykke vil stadig være det samme stykke, selvom det spilles på instrumenter med grundlæggende forskellige typer af bevægelser. Men hvad hvis den abstrakte komposition rettede sig imod bevægelserne? Hvad hvis kompositionen blev set som en koreografi for musiker og instrument – med lyd til følge? Så ville det samme stykke lyde vidt forskelligt på instrumenter med grundlæggende forskellige forhold mellem bevægelse og lyd. Og ville det så overhovedet være det samme stykke?

Re-cyklus'en "Next To Beside Besides" er en åben serie af koreografiske oversættelser af stykket "Beside Besides" (for hotel-sordineret solo cello), der allerede i sig selv er et spin-off fra sekstetten "Besides". ("Besides" var, ud over betydningen "desuden..." og "b-sider", ment som den ikke-eksisterende flertalsform af at være-ved-siden-af).

"Beside Besides" indeholder elementer på mange forskellige trin af skalaen mellem ren klang og ren bevægelse og vil således resultere i oversættelser, der svinger mellem nøjagtigt ensklingende passager (dér, hvor musikken er klangligt eller abstrakt konciperet) og vidt forskelligt klingende passager (dér, hvor musikken fx er baseret på glidende lineære bevægelser i forskellige dimensioner).

For at opleve disse grader af forskelle kræves naturligvis, at man hører de forskellige versioner op imod hinanden – det være sig forskudt, eller endnu bedre: simultant! Cyklus'en er således ikke blot en åben række af variationer, udgaver eller løsninger på forskellige oversættelsesmæssige problemstillinger og angrebsvinkler, men giver også mulighed for utallige kombinationer af klangligt heterofone, men bevægelsesmæssigt "unison" ensemble-kompositioner, hvor netop forskel og lighed er i fokus, hvor selve oversættelsessituationen bliver et musikalsk parameter.

Alle stykker skal kunne spilles alene eller i en hvilken som helst kombination af versioner, samtidigt eller efter hinanden som satser eller mellem andre stykker som fragmenter. Hvert stykke skal være lige tro mod originalen og dermed være lige idiomatisk og tro mod det pågældende instrument!

Next To Beside Besides – a “re-cycle”

An abstractly conceived piece of music will still be the same piece even though played on instruments with essentially different types of movements. But what if the abstract composition was directed towards the movements? What if the composition was thought of as a choreography for musician and instrument – with sound as a consequence? Then the same piece would sound completely different on instruments with different relations between movement and sound. And would it then be the same piece at all?

The re-cycle "Next To Beside Besides" is an open series of choreographical translations of the piece "Beside Besides" (for solo cello), a piece that already in it self is a spin-off from the ensemble piece "Besides". ("Besides" was, beside the meaning "besides..." or "b-sides", "back-sides", meant as the non-existing plural of being next to).

The many different degrees of abstractness and concreteness between pure sound and pure movement in "Beside Besides" will result in translations that contain exactly equally sounding passages (where the music is thought abstract or in sound) and very different sounding passages (where the music for example is based on gradual linear movements in different dimensions).

To experience these degrees of differences one has to hear the different versions next to each other – this could be one after another, or maybe even better: simultaneously! The cycle is in other words not just an open row of variations, versions or solutions of different problems and methods of translation – it also gives the opportunity to put together innumerable combinations of heterophonically sounding, but movement wise "unison" ensemble compositions, where difference and equality are in focus – where the translation situation in itself becomes a musical parameter.

Every piece can be played alone or in any combination of versions, simultaneously or one after the other as movements or between other pieces as fragments.

Every piece must be equally faithful to the original, which also means being equally idiomatic and faithful to the instrument in focus!

Next To Beside Besides – *meet the family!*

Choreographic Translations for amplified solo instruments or ensembles +

Next To Beside Besides is a series of "choreographic translations" (translations of the movements or actions, rather than an instrumentation of the resulting sounds) of the piece *Beside Besides* for solo cello, which is itself a modification of the ending of the piece *Besides* for three amplified instruments and three dampened instruments. All translations can be played solo or together in any combination simultaneously as ensemble pieces. Solo versions or combinations can be played alone or after each other as movements or between other pieces in a concert (or on different concerts) as ritornellos. The cycle will continue on the internet, where studio recordings of the premiered translations can be heard solo or in any combination, later extended with an interactive web-translation, called *Above Next To Beside Besides*, and more.

The Family

Besides (2003) (18')

for amplified piccolo flute, piano with whammy pedal and violin plus dampened string trio.

Beside Besides (a.k.a. NTBB #0) (2004) (3'30")

for amplified cello solo.

Next To Beside Besides #1-11 +... (2005-2007) (3'30")

for any combination of amplified double bass (2 different versions), saxophone, accordion, percussion (2 different versions), piccolo flute, violin, piano, guitar and a silent version for close-up camera +... (See www.simonsteenandersen.dk for an updated list.)

Self-reflecting Next To Beside Besides

Two or more translations performed by the same player with video; the second translation played together with a video recording of the first, the third translation played together with a video recording of the second performed with the video recording of the first, etc. Other instruments can be added - only criteria is that at least one player should perform live every time together with a video recording of him self performing a different translation.

For now there is only material for constellations containing percussion and/or double bass. Several more alternative versions are planned for all strings, guitar and percussion. (See www.simonsteenandersen.dk for an updated list.)

Future Generations

Above Next To Beside Besides (2007)

Interactive web-piece / "Virtual Sinfonietta". Meta-work in the sense that it displays general ideas behind the series. Interactive in the sense that it's a web instrument ideal and easy to play a translation of NTBB on – or to improvise on or compose for. Will include various didactic elements as well.

Around Next To Beside Besides

Translation of the movements in Next To Beside Besides to spatially staged sinfonietta. Can be performed by itself as an ensemble piece or with any of the solo-translations in front as a solo concerto or with a combination of solo-translations in front as a concerto grosso. The instruments can change positions/parts and in this way generate various different versions.

Behind Self-reflecting Next To Beside Besides

Continuation of a performance of Self-reflecting NTBB into a room-installation (three projections of pre-recorded video and one live-projection of the spectators watching the installation).

Next To Beside Besides #11

for amplified vibraphone solo

(pianissimo) furioso

(or as movement or part in any combination of pieces from the NTBB series)

♩ = 60

MOTOR ON,
MAX SPEED

BREATH IN
BLOW on ("naturally")
MOTOR (*p*)

(fff) STRAW on MOTOR

(the dynamic of the straw decides the general dynamic (*fff*) - it can be adjusted a bit by changing the distance to the head-set microphone by moving the head a bit away)

(ppp) (blow on the (side) edge of key) (nail on the "motor cover")

(nail on key - audible pitch)

(fff) (9)

(finger snap on "motor cover")

(fff) (crescendo by moving closer from far away with the head-set mic.)

(ppp) *(mf)* *(ppp)* *(fff)*

KNUCKLE

(mf) *(ppp)* *(mf)*

PED.

(head-set mic must be close to the sound source)

23

fff *ppp*

27

"freeze"...

ppp

29

(lower edge of the key) (upper edge of the key)

ppp *mf* *ppp*

PED —
(dampened) (normal) (the tube without key next to Eb)

34

"freeze"...

MOTOR SPEED: MINIMUM

mf *ppp*

39

(straw gliss. on the lower part of the keys, nail hit on the lower part of the E key, sim. the middle of the key, straw "gliss." over the crack between E and Eb, nail hit on the middle of the D# key, blow on the upper edge of the D# key)

MOTOR SPEED: ACCEL. — MAX

fff *ppp*

43

(upper edge of tube) (between Eb and E)

mf *ppp*

PED —

46

(gradually blow on the upper edge of the tube to make a sharper noise)

(MOTOR SPEED: MIN.)

MOTOR SPEED: ACCEL. — MAX

f *ppp* *fff*

51

MOTOR SPEED: ACCEL. (MS: MIN) → MAX

MS: ACC. → MAX, RIT. → MIN

fff *ppp* *fff* *ppp* *fff* *ppp*

56

(hyperventilation/
rapid panting -
or in and out with
the mouth only)

(MS: MAX)

MS: RIT. → MIN

f *ppp* *n* *(mf)* *fff* *ppp*

60

(MS: MAX)

open (or close)
the "motor cover"

(tube between
Bb and Db)

ppp *n* *(mf)* *fff* *ppp*

(straw gliss. on the
mechanics from below
the tube next to F all the
way up in 1 movement)

65

(blow directly on the key)

(mf) *ppp*

PED —

68

n *ppp* *n* *(mf)* *ppp* *n*

PED —

71

(mf) *ppp* *n* *(mf)* *ppp*

PED —

7:4

fine: bcn oct.03
/ ba dec.03
/ pfzh sept.07

Dur.: 3.30-4.00 min.