

# 3 ORTE / 3 PLACES / 3 LUGARES / 3 MIEJSCA / 3 LIEUX / 3 MÍSTA

by Peter Ablinger

Preface, Part I: preparatory issues  
short description and possible instrumentations  
preparatory conditions (room scout)  
technical requirements (measuring places)  
other practical things (music stands, chairs, etc.)

Preface, Part II: directions for musicians

## **short description**

The piece is for 3 different places and a number of instrumentalists. The work is always site specific.

3 places (rooms, halls) in walking distance are chosen and measured acoustically. The measurements result in one microtonal scale for each of the 3 rooms indicating their main formants, a kind of a self-portrait of these places. The performance starts at one of these places where -for example- 5 instruments play these formants as sustained tones in a (more or less) free order. After - i.e.- 20 minutes both, players and audience, walk together to the second place. The walk is part of the piece. Here the instrumentalists play the formants of the second place, walk altogether to the third place, play and end.

Possible instruments are all instruments that can play sustained, microtonal pitches. Clarinets and/or horns are especially welcome for this piece! As for a small group the following instrumentation could be a suggestion (although many other instrumentations are possible):

2 cl, hrn, vl, cb

*(english edited by Austin Buckett)*

## **preparatory conditions (room scout)**

*(english unedited)*

The room-size of the 3 places can not be too small in relationship to the expected audience. The room should be large enough to not change it's acoustic qualities between being with or without audience. A hall of 10.000 m<sup>3</sup> (a church?) might be able to tolerate about 400 people without stronger acoustical effects - but not much more! For a hall of 4000 m<sup>3</sup> (a foyer?) 160 people might be the maximum (audience plus instrumentalists). While a room of 200 m<sup>3</sup> (a galery room?) might endure just 8 people for this piece.

The 3 rooms/halls should be in walk distance (10-15 minutes between places could be ideal) and possibly diverse in character, e.g. an industrial hall, a church, a car parking garage... It is welcome if the halls are not only culturally determined spaces and the combination of places would create a sort of portrait of the town or area where it happens.

### **technical requirements (measuring places)**

The preparation of the score needs to make an acoustical measurement of each of the 3 chosen places. The measurement consists of projecting loud white noise into the rooms and re-recording the room answer.

Note that the temperatur inside the given spaces at the time of measurment should be similar to the temperatur during the performances.

The recording needs:

- a white noise generator (or another source for white noise)
- a good loudspeaker (transportable -but powerful- sound system)
- a (wav) recorder
- a sensitive space microphone on a stand

Before setting this up one first has to decide where the performers will be and where the audience. After this is decided one would set the loudspeaker in the performers space and the mic distant from the loudspeaker in variing positions of the audience space. One would make 3 or 4 recordings of each 1-2 minutes, variing the mic position within 3 or 4 most likely audience places and also changing slightly the angle of the loudspeakers direction.

In case the recording are not anyway made by myself, the wav-files from all 3 places have to be sent to me from which i would make the final score.

### **other practical things (music stands, chairs, etc.)**

Music stands:

should be foldable, so every musician can carry his/her own music stand; otherwise you would need seperate music stands for each of the 3 places.

Tuning devices:

for all musicians can be helpful.

Chairs:

are not necessarily required in each of the 3 places, but standing 3 times for 20 minutes might be tiring and unfocussing for the audience. Changing the listening position during the performance is fine, but with constant wandering around one might miss the piece.

The ways between:

Usually the musicians are leading the audience from one place to the next.

Rehearsal time:

The piece needs only one rehearsal of about 90 minutes to rehearse and explain everything necessary and to go to all 3 places in order learn the ways between and to fix positioning of every instrumentlist/performer within the places.

**as for performance directions please go to  
Preface, Part II, "3 PLACES LEEDS" (next 2 pages)**

### 3 PLACES LEEDS

## Clothworkers Centenary Concert-Hall Access Tunnel, Campus Leeds Roger Stevens Stairwell

1. *Room Formants (different versions for instruments ad libitum)*
2. *The Walk from Place to Place*

#### Notes:

*Each of the three parts of 3 PLACES LEEDS is specifically composed for it's given rooms and can be performed only there.*

*The room formants may be played (or sung) by one or more players. See transpositions for different instruments.*

*The distribution of performers and audience has be according to the recording situation (see above: technical requirements)*

*Performers should not play frontaly towards the audience. The sounds should be somewhat indirect / include the indirect portions of the space. Therefore e.g. turn towards the side- and backwalls in individual angles. (last 2 paragraphs un-edited)*

*The duration is free but it is suggested that in the succession of all 3 places, 20 minutes per place would be a good proportion.*

*The room formants are notated in ascending order. Every instrument chooses its playable range.*

*Whole note = ca. 4" to 13"*

*Half pause = ca. 3" to 6"*

*Without intentional variation of durations.*

*Every instrument plays independent from the others.*

*Each tone begins and ends inaudibly.*

*Dynamics are dependent on the "answer" of the space. Ideally, the space would enforce the actual formants so that the dynamic is determined more by the space than by the instrumentalists.*

*Some of the formants are underlined in the score to mark their significance:*

                     significant formant

                     very significant formant

----- less significant formant

Notation refers to A-442Hz.

(Earlier versions of 3 PLACES were measured according to A-440Hz.)

Individual players may wish to use a tuning device to achieve an exact result.

Order, choice and repetitions of formants are *ad libitum* but 3 different reading possibilities are distinguished:

1. free jumping from any note to any other

2. play tones in the given order; ascending or descending

3. form "patterns":

for example:

- choose 2 systems, play the first tones of both systems then the second tones of both systems, etc.; descending.

- play vertically: play the first tones of all systems, then the second tones, etc.; also descending.

- play in lines that move away from one another: start with a tone somewhere in the middle, then go 1 tone down, 2 tones up, 3 tones down, etc.

- start with the edges of your instrumental register...

- invent other patterns

Finally, mix all these possibilities. Sometimes keep one method for a longer while, sometimes only for a few notes. It is also possible to use only one method for the entire piece.

Another possible agreement would be that low instruments begin and end in each of the 3 parts. Within a minute the other instruments come in on their lowest tones. Within the next minute, they extend to their full range. End symmetrically to the beginning.

Begin and end without ceremony. As soon as the last tone has faded, begin to pack away your instrument so as to prepare for the walk between places. Try to avoid applause until after the conclusion of the final place.

The way between places:

The walk **between** the 3 places is part of the piece and is of equal importance to the instrumental playing. Musicians and audience should walk together.

Peter Ablinger, Berlin, May 2015  
(english edited by Henry Anderson)