

UCLA
Contemporary Music Score Collection

Title

Wet Magma

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3cs47166>

Author

de la Mata, Lola

Publication Date

2020

WEST

MAEMA

**BY LOLA DE LA MATA
2019**

INTRODUCTION

The concept for the piece was sparked by the artist Christoph Büchel bringing to the Venice Biennale 2019 the controversial “Barca Nostra (our boat)” the ship in which 700 - 1,000 migrants died. Before even making it to the Biennale, it was wrapped in a lengthy geopolitical debate over who it belonged to until it was eventually declared an Italian object.

With never a moment of silence, it was docked besides a cafe, perfect placement for selfies with individuals gossiping and slurping expensive drinks.

This total disconnect to the appalling conditions in which migrants lost their lives and the artists' claim to the so called 'object' and his decision to call it Art or at least present it as a form of sculpture, drew me to look further into Venice's own history of being formed by refugees, its damaging connection with cruise ships and the reality of its slow drowning.

The piece uses spatial panning to explore clouds of sounds, and movement based on hive mentality and particles attracting and repelling one another, sometimes forming clusters blurring the tone of individual instruments. The titles given to each of the 5 chapters hint to the physical arrangement of the musicians and the overall texture of a particular section. While the three notes of the piece were derived from analysing cruise ship horns, and chosen specifically for their dissonant qualities and their ability to evoke tension, as harmonics emerge from the sound waves crashing into each other.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Minimum 15 musicians

Approximate duration: 9.5 minutes

The piece asks the musicians to listen. To act as individuals and as a community, to pass on the echo and form an ecosystem.

To bring these concepts into the physical space of the listeners, the musicians are spaced within the audience as per the Spacial Map on page 2.

The orientation of each performer may change depending on the chapter and who is leading them in that section.

In Chapter two, all performers should face towards the center where 1 performer elects to become ‘the conductor’ for what I call “The fantasia Moment”.

The score is presented as a text score with maps / illustrations above to visualise the movement of the sound across the performance space.

Each chapter has approximate timings (which you are welcome to ignore), so that there is freedom to change the duration and speed organically.

There are only ever 3 notes given in the score: E F F#

In order to create beating, musicians are encouraged to gliss, detune and hover around the note and choose their own register within the 4 voices (high, upper/mid, middle, and low).

In the score, the Voices will appear marked as below:

Voice 1 - high
Voice 2 - upper/mid
Voice 3 - middle
Voice 4 - low

CHAPTERS AND DURATIONS

Part 1 Lighthouses	.	approx 3 minutes
Part 2 Waves	.	approx 2 minutes
Part 3 Organelle(s)	.	approx 2 minutes
Part 4 Mist	.	approx 1 minute
Part 5 Magnetic Rays	.	approx 1.5 minutes

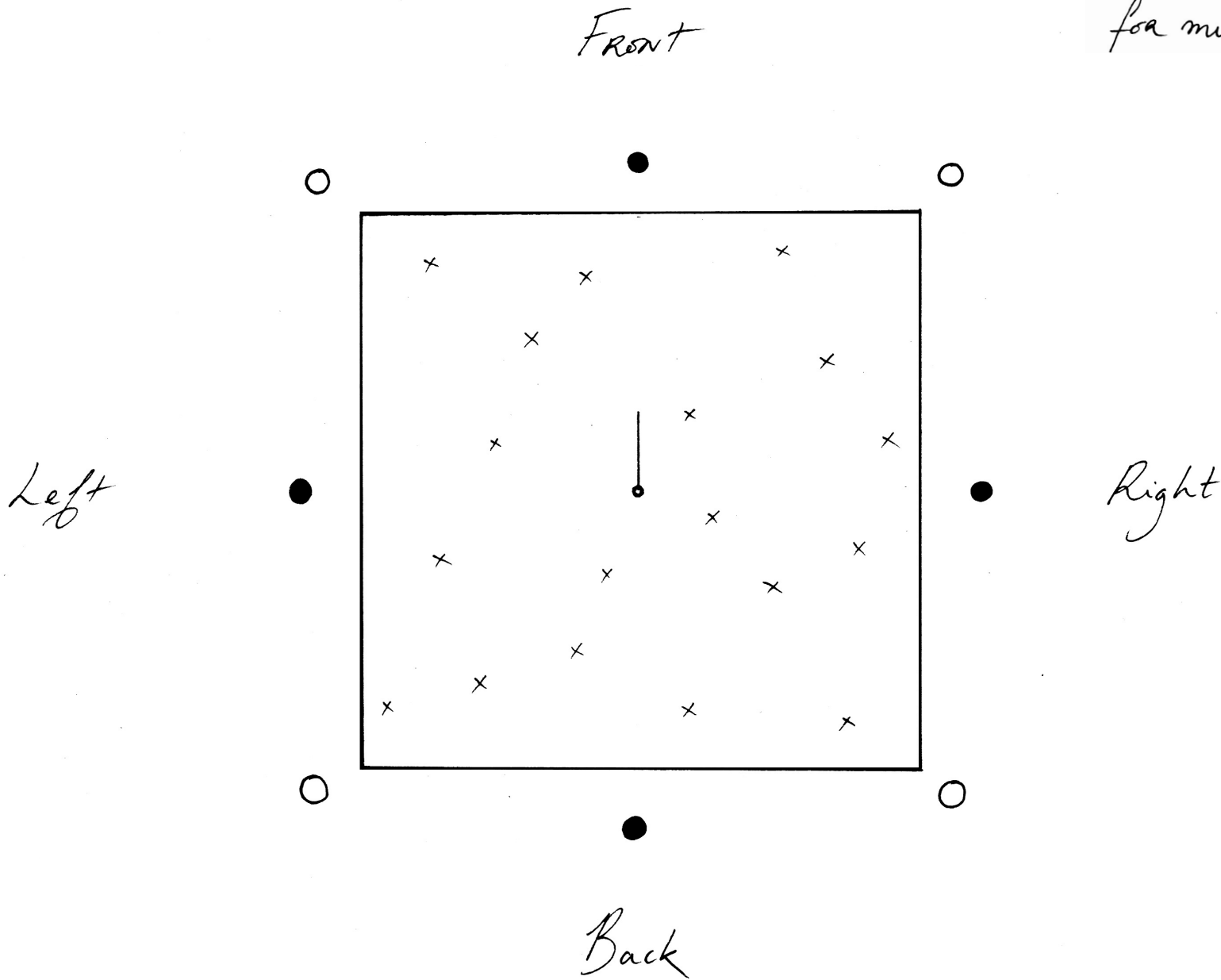
" For the artist communication with nature remains the most essential condition.
The Artist is Human; himself nature; part of nature within natural space. "

Paul Klee

(paths of the study)
of Nature

Spatial Map

for musicians, conductor & audience



↓ = Conductor

x = Voices 1, 2, 3
Randomly
spread out

○ = x 4 Voice 4
(Lighthouses)

● = Other Voice 4

□ = Audience

Part 1

The Echo

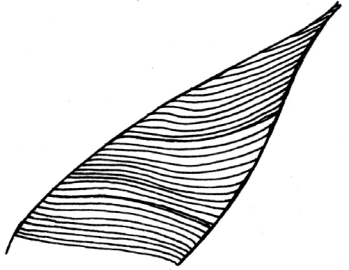
Lighthouses

Voice 4 only

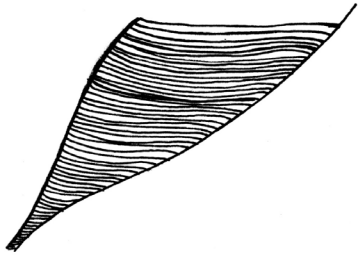
2

F

3



slow & spacious



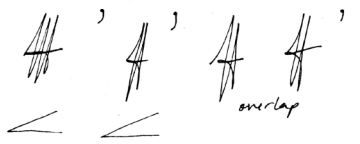
F

1

4

Imagine You have an Ocean Between You

1 starts, 3 responds
lowest F you can play



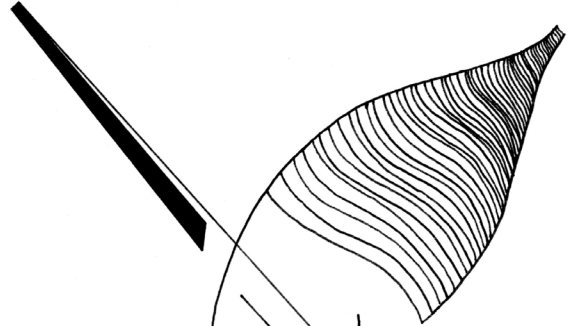
Meets

E

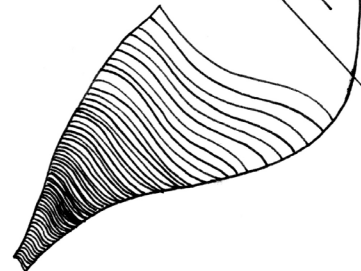
2

F

3



Call & Response



F

1

4

E

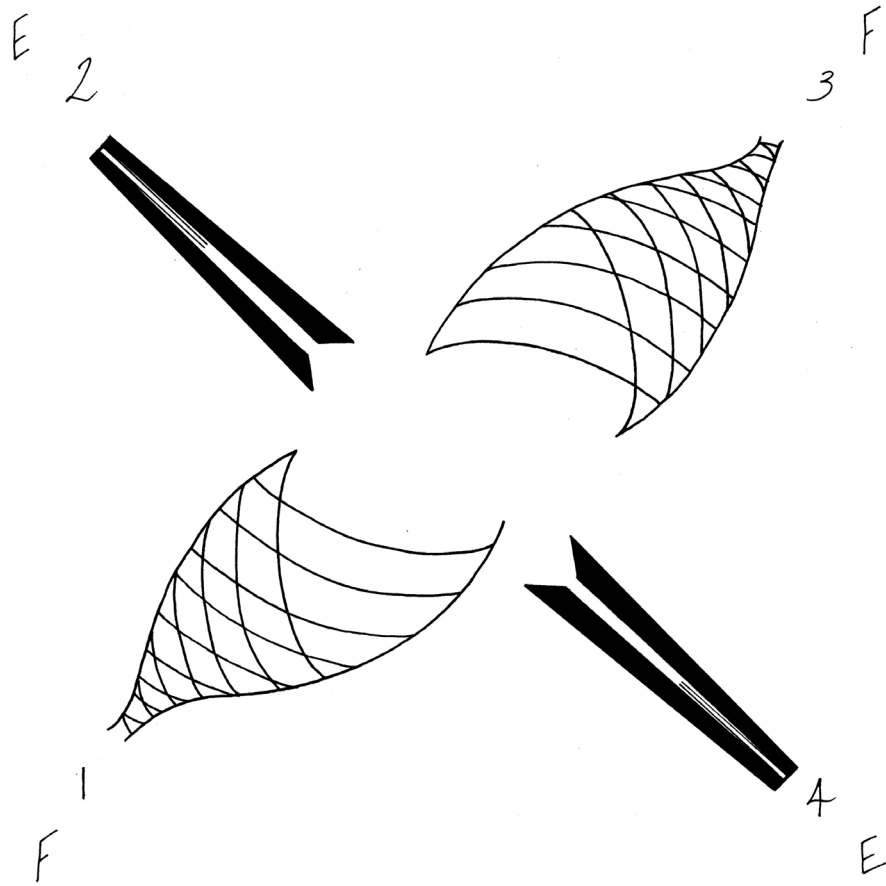
1 & 3

overlap

in unison
low F

2 & 4
mf
in unison
low E

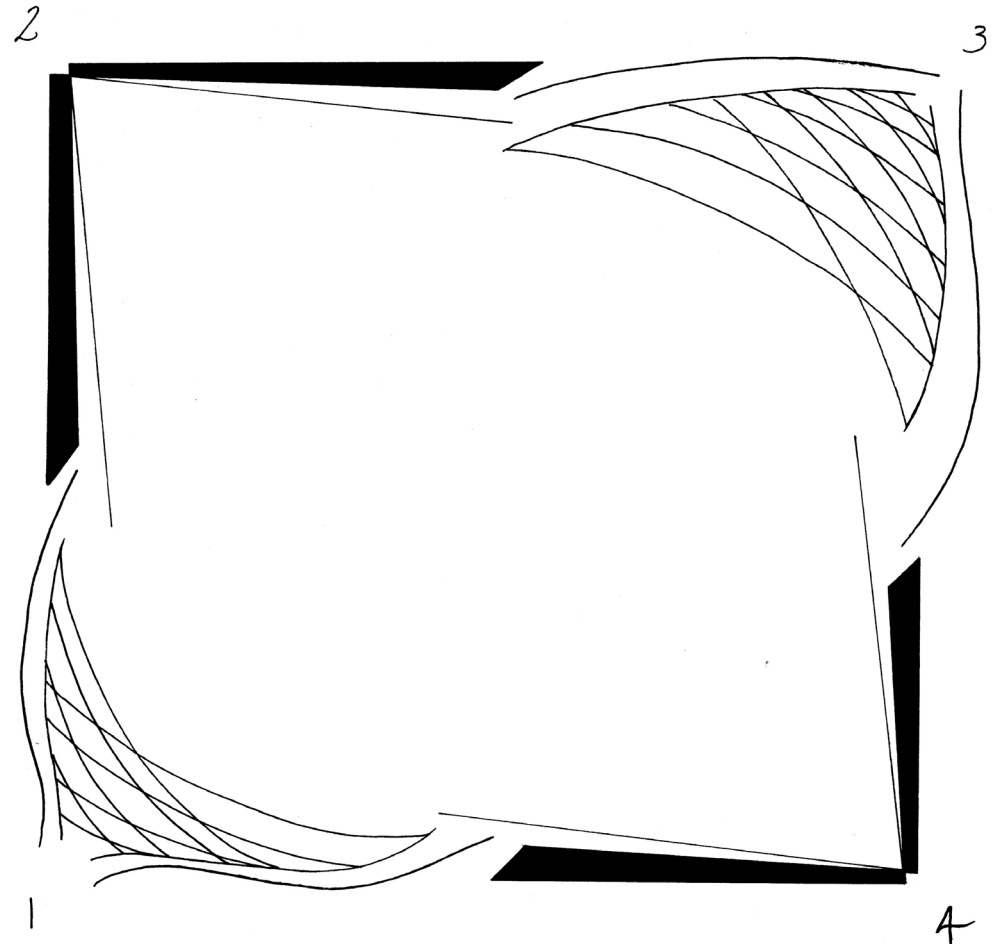
... into Crossfades



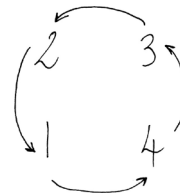
organically overlapping

- [1 & 4
- [2 & 3]
- [2 & 1]
- [3 & 4

The Drone



generate speed
inside the drone.

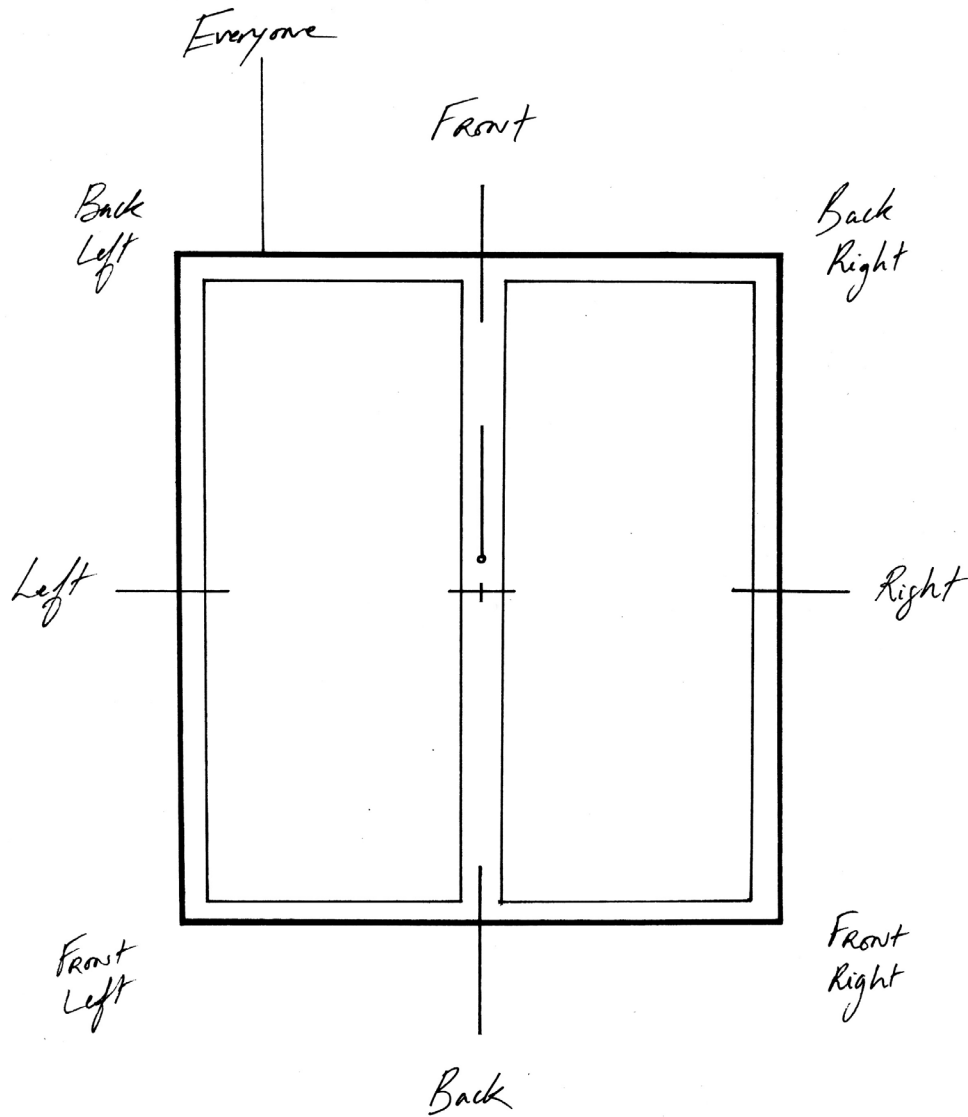


keep accelerating until Part 2 WAVES.

143214321...

Part 2 Waves

The Conductor's Fantasia Moment



In this section, the conductor signals the start of each wave by choosing any combination of 'areas' from the spatial diagram.

'Areas' can sound: individually, together and/or overlapping.

To mark the start of the 'Waves' Section, the conductor should bring everyone IN TOGETHER.

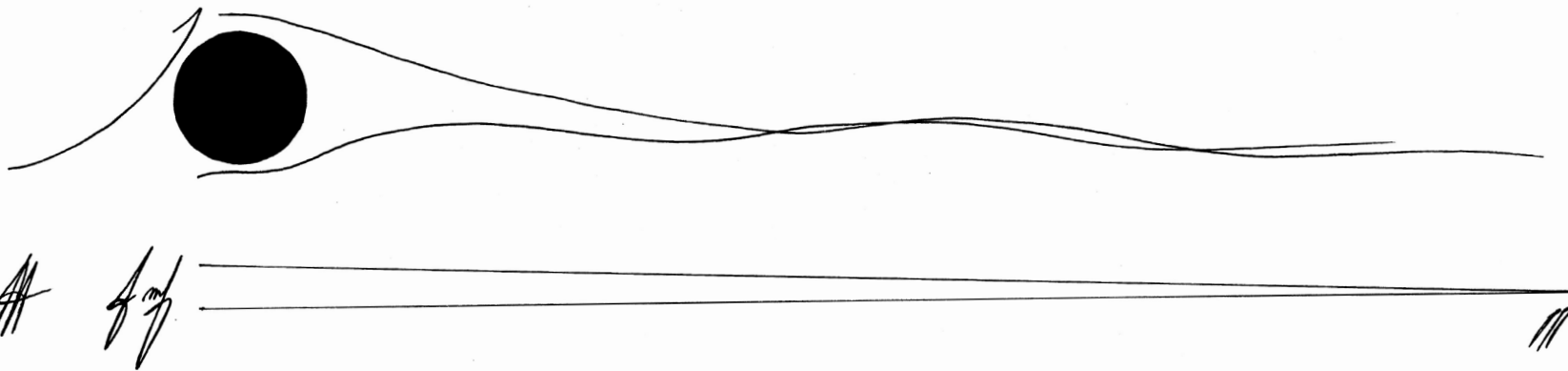
Musicians: All voices form a communal wave (see notation)

LISTEN to one another.

The Waves should sound animated, organic & dramatic.

Everyone
Left side
Right side
Back left
Front left
Back Right
Front Right

Conductor to assign signals for each Area.



Mountain — Voice 4

impact

E

~~///~~

short

Water — Voice 3

swell



E & F

f + mf

con soad

like a beehive

Air — Voices 1 & 2

phrasing

F & F# play very high

mf — ~~///~~

gliss/vib, catch noise

Sometimes hold F or F#



As the waves slow down, instruments begin to drop out
& musicians hum notes they hear.

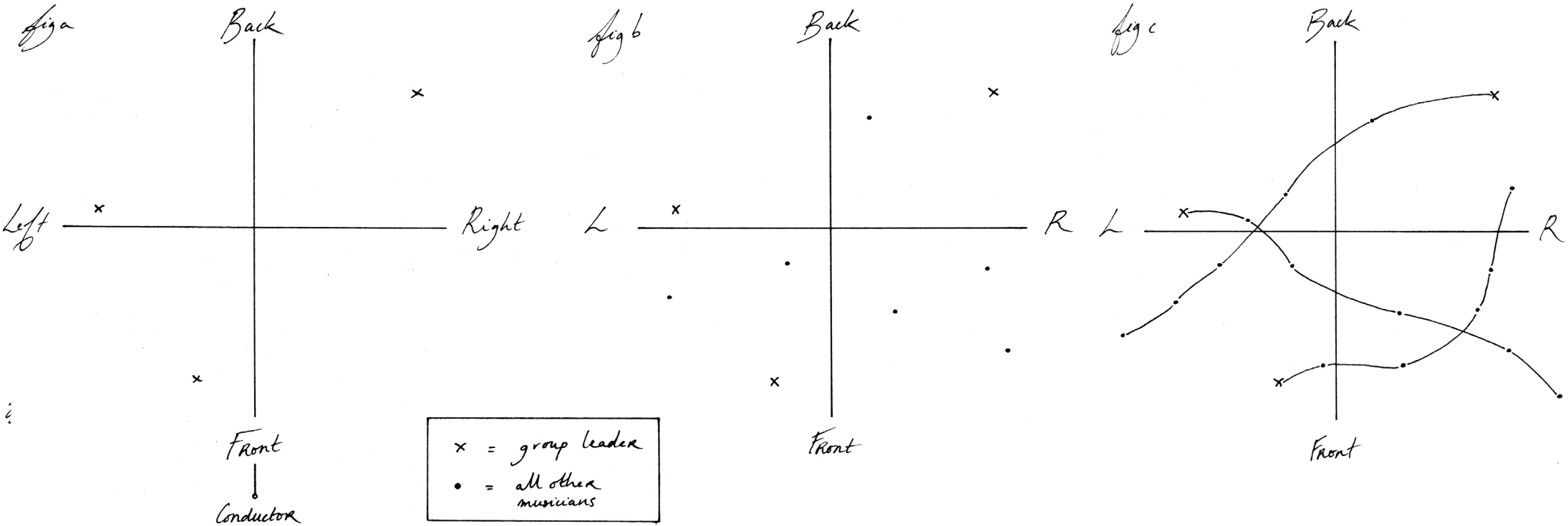
As the last instruments fade out, some of the humming
turns to open mouthed, slow 'hhh' exhales & silent inhales.

Conductor should signal for humming to cease so we only
hear exhales &.

No more inhales.

Part 2 ends

Part 3 Organelle(s)



- The diagrams are examples.
- There may be any number of groups of around 5-7 musicians.
- All musicians to decide on their own percussive sound.
- Conductor brings in the group leaders twice with a pause in between.

- After the third time, other musicians' percussive sounds begin to emerge.
- Sparcely at first - Random timings
- Like bubbles.

- individual group leaders start the percussive chain.
 - like an echo - panning of sound -
- It should be very fast, and multiple groups can be signalled at one time or close to each other.
- The 'bubbles' (fig b) continue in between this new action.

Part 4 Mist

I

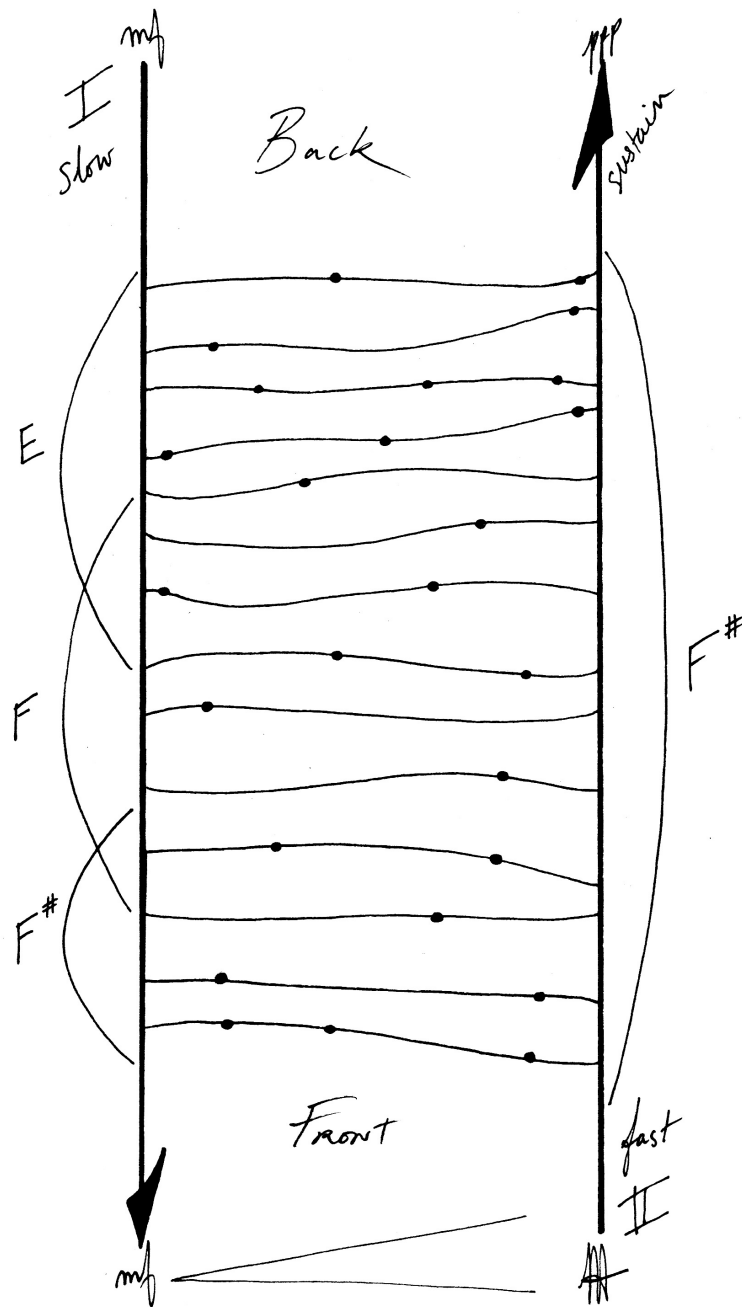
(fig c continues)

- Starting from the back and making its way towards the front, 'The Mist' (voices 2, 3, 4) change from making percussive sounds to holding E in low octaves.
- Voices 1 become silent when 'The Mist' reaches them.
- As 'The Mist' traverses the space, it morphs from E to F and finally to F#
- Maximum 3 rows of musicians.
Players should drop out to give the impression of a passing cloud.

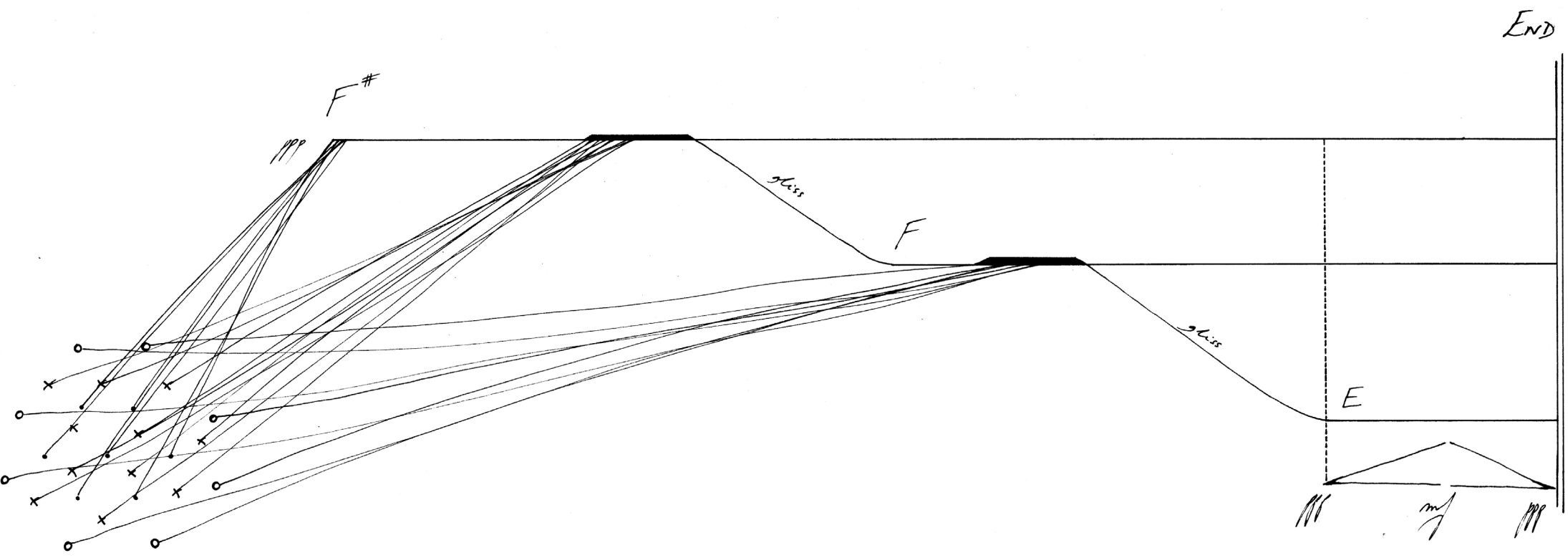
II

Tutti voices

- When the front is reached F# spreads back across the space as if catching fire. (///)
- Sustain $\text{///} \longrightarrow \text{///}$



Part 5 Magnetic Rays



- Voice 1 high $F^\#$
- x Voices 2 & 3 mid/high $F^\# \rightarrow F$
- Voice 4 mid/low $F \rightarrow E$

