

# Block Piece (by Knut Aufermann)

This piece is suitable for medium and large groups of electronic instrumentalists with the ability to play continuous tones. It was originally developed for the Feedback - Order from Noise tour in 2004.

The Block Piece is based on three instructions with regards to the duration, the dynamics and the frequency distribution of the music.

## 1. Duration

The piece is started and finished through an obvious hand signal by one of the musicians. Both, beginning and end, should be as abrupt as possible. A performance should last a minimum of 10 minutes, the longer the better.

## 2. Dynamics

All musicians play all the time at roughly the same volume and with very little dynamic change over time. The overall volume should be loud.

## 3. Frequency distribution

All players only play continuous frequencies (as far as their instruments allow, richer or multiphonic tones are preferred to sine waves). At the beginning of the piece each player chooses their frequency at random. For the rest of the performance each musician is asked to listen to the overall sound and listen for gaps in the frequency spectrum that are NOT covered by the ensemble. This could be called 'negative' or 'inverted' listening. It is important to determine which frequencies are not being played by anybody. As soon as a player hears a gap in the frequency spectrum he/she tries to shift the pitch of his/her continuous tone to fill that gap and starts listening for another gap.

Together with minimal dynamic variation this should produce a slowly evolving block of sound. (A sonogramme would look like a continuously shifting layer cake.)

A variation of the piece could include or exclusively use pitched acoustic instruments that can produce continuous tones.