



School: Bath School of Music & Performing Arts

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Project Title: know that your actions reflect within the group

UOA: 33 - Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies

300-Word Statement

know that your actions reflect within the group explores multitasking, cognitive load and group decision making. The players give and respond to three types of cues: spoken words and paired audio samples, auxiliary instruments, and drones. These different cue layers run in parallel, causing players to switch between different modes of cue-giving and response. The density, speed and patterning of these cues causes different amounts of cognitive load on the players, altering their response times and with it the texture of the resulting music. The cue system also creates a *lingua franca* between the players, giving them a shared means to direct each other's behaviour. Players may try to exert control over the group, work together, team up to make the task more taxing for individuals, and adopt many other common behaviours that are familiar within working groups. The piece embodies the values of consensus, collectivism, and equality, while facilitating approaches that allow for disruption, control, vindictiveness and individualism.

The research underpinning the composition translates theory from heuristics, game studies, and behavioural psychology to music. It focuses on how game structures create decision contexts for participants that reflect real-world values. This is explained in two papers: Saunders, J. 2017. "Rules and goals in game compositions." *Ludo2017 Conference*, Bath Spa University, 20 April 2017; and Saunders J. 2017. "What's the point? Balancing purpose and play in game compositions." *Performing Indeterminacy Conference*, University of Leeds, 1-3 July 2017. The role of group behaviours is explained in Saunders, J. 2018. "Group behaviours as music". *Sound and Participation*, Kask, Gent, 26.02.18.

Commissioned by Südwestrundfunk for the 2017 Donaueschinger Musiktage. First performed by Ictus Ensemble in the Strawinsky Saal, Donaueschingen, on 21 October 2017, and broadcast live on SWR Classik.