

Collected Rewritings

Click Nilson



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(Live Coding Thoughts, 1968-2015)

Edited by Nicholas van't Klooster
Translated by Ellinor Langenberg

Verbose

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Set in 10/12pt Garamond by nobody in particular ltd, nowheresville, no country (and anticipating ex-planet following the reclassification of Earth at the Astronomical Society of the Seven and a Half Worlds annual meeting 3057 CE)

No memory of Click Nilson (19?? – 2015)

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The editor would like to acknowledge the support of his family for ready distraction from the preparation of this gruesome compilation.

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Translator's notes

Translating this book from the original English has proven a frustrating and unrewarding task for which I have received inadequate financial recompense. I have taken the liberty of changing entire sentences and leaving out the more rambling passages, which accounts for most of the material I was supposed to work with. Lacking intellectual and monetary compensation for my painstaking approach to translation, I used a much quicker and cruder method. It was a real labour of hate.

To give but one example of Nilson's awkwardness, his neologisms, such as 'earlierthanpreantecedent', 'naughtical' and 'drudge packer' have gained no currency in contemporary language and are as out of step as his painful efforts to reach the twitterati through the aborted twitter experiments in later life. The true meaning of 'shitticism' is too obscene to reproduce faithfully and too faithful to reproduce obscenely, so I have also left it out entirely.

Nilson's occasional Swedish leaves much to be desired, and I have mocked it unfailingly where it appears. As for his French and German, they are so poor that I have left them exactly as they are so the reader is in no doubt as to his linguistic failings. His Japanese is worse still, and only his Finnish, Mandarin and Kung remain irreproachable, which is a real shame since he doesn't utilise any of those three in this text.

Ellinor Langenberg

Stockholm, Januari 18th, 2016 (before the completion of the text, but why wait)

Conclusions

Imagine if there was a terrible type setting error and these dour and fruitless conclusions appeared at the head of the book! If the reader really knew what was thought of them!

Fortunately, the publishing firm has promised they could never make such an error, so we are safe to lambast the reader at the very close of this book for bothering to work all their way through it. But if they are the sort of attention span deficient clown who skips to the end, they deserve what is coming to them.

It was staring the reader in the face: that this worthless compendium of unexploded bombast, nether-facts and bruised prose, unsightly and dishevelled, was a complete and utter waste of even a cliché, a fabrication of the lowest merit, non-returnable, non-exchangeable and unwilling to unexist itself, bankrupt of ideas and satisfaction, and as if that wasn't enough, under-sized and underwhelming like a self-similar simile.

It there is anything to take away from this shattered husk of dreams, it is found in the last pages of Nilson's notebooks, where he tried to write lessons he'd learnt in his tortured and inadequate life. A few of these are reproduced here, being the shorter ones least irksome to type out:

First thought in, first thought out

Out of order is fine with me

All that is sufficiently free-ranging is inconclusive

Essays on music

Click Nilson was an infrequent essayist, and entirely unsuited to the medium. His blunders and sexual crimes against the written word are apparent in the extracts below, which have been edited down from the original 450,000 words to a more manageable size for quickly skipping over.

On electroacoustic muzak

Trabang, fozzlefizzle, who-whop-who!

These are just some of the excellent noises recently discovered, which may prove highly productive for further compositional kneadiness, disassemblage and potificating (I use here some of the official terminology of electronic music). Electroacoustic music, or as its practitioners prefer it to be known after anguished debate on definition, electroacoustic music, is the 'in' medium of compositional exploration in these times, resonant with time itself, as it were, and replete with timeliness. Only recently, it has brought us the sound:

Correckegrrruunishishisham

Which was previously only suspected to exist by the most advanced theorists, and the life blood of the electrical current within a loudspeaker a necessary prerequisite of its true statement, the written word only providing a paltry approximation of its majesty.

I was taught electroacoustic techniques by the wonderful and significant Carlbean Supplyraumen, whose fame as a composer exceeded even his own opinion of himself. He once spent six months in the studio in the constant company of a sine wave generator and a white noise generator, reputedly only changing frequency of the sine tone four times (he received his meals and spring water outside the door during the day, with empties and waste returned after midnight. This production was actually hijacked by a brother artist, who presented these side products as opus numbers ascribed to Supplyraumen himself, a fact which caused him great outrage once he eventually emerged). Anypath, Supplyraumen was a great advocate of systems, and used a system he had himself devised at great personal cost in time and blood to tell me this. I was always inspired by his example, and tried to dedicate myself to using a new system with every production, but once this became too messy and impractical in my morning bathroom routine, realised I would never match his compositional genius. But it was he who encouraged me to think deeply about the creation and experience of electroacoustic music.

Electroacoustic music would be a wonderful experience all round were it not for its creators, who are, to a person, human. To paraphrase Arthur C. Clarke, if only machines could be taught to appreciate machine music, then we wouldn't have to hold interminably long concerts in the dark and try to remember distinctive moments of any one of the pieces presented to have something reasonable to say about it all afterwards. The number of times I nodded asleep in the concert, to come around only with the final applause; I learnt soon enough that repeating something vague about 'innovative granulation effects', 'unfortunate spectral artefacts' and 'spectromorphological teleology' would cover me. I suspected that all my fellow audience members were themselves asleep, except when called upon to 'diffuse' their own studio compositions, which they would do with exceptional glee and single-mindedness, to receive what applause the room of sleepyheads and the amplification of their own minds could generate.

There are many great innovators in electronic music, apparently, which is why I feel somewhat humbled to tell you this, but I have made one discovery of my own which I wish to present in these pages. Why not play into an elevator, the sounds of the elevator itself? A most radical treatment might propagate these sounds at a lower level than the ambient lift sound (I mean here a lower amplitude, and not another floor of the building, for the latter would be a less elevated way of going about things). A wonderful tension between piece and surroundings would result, and this, what I dub 'electroacoustic muzak' brings into focus many of the central concerns of the genre.

Portrait of the artist as a young plan

I destroyed this youthful essay rather than allow it to embarrass me in future; or were these the words I wrote then?

Why are notes within notation notable?

For some time, I have been concerned with the thorny problem of whether notes are really required for music, and whether any breakdown of the sonic surface into 'events', what I have previously denoted 'sound subjects', and will in future call 'sounding objects', is really necessary. Certainly, the evil institution of the score lurks over even the electroacoustic composer, who feels themselves drafting a diffusion score, or a listening score, for analytical respectability.

However, a new and notable trend in instrument design has attracted my attention. Instruments themselves are now being fashioned in the shape of notes and other musical symbols. This is an interesting attempt to cut out the intermediary score and grapple with notes directly.

On the Swedish contemporary music scene

In particular, 1976, and specifically, November 18th, and most particularly, Lars Larsson Larssonson, a name I never liked, and a man I never got along with.

It had been established, throughout the 74 and 75 seasons, that on contemporary premiere night at the Konserthuset Grönwaldsalen, my seat was to be reserved for me alone. I brought it along with me to each concert especially. I had taken the additional precaution of placing a note of reservation on the seat at the conclusion of the preceding year's concert series, so that I could take the seat with me for the summer and still find it reserved at the commencement of the following season's season. But imagine my horror! I had only stepped to one side that fateful night, to berate a colleague for writing an accessible and well constructed piece of music, and momentarily only, spinning back, only gone for a moment, the construction of the sentence so utterly perturbed as to be like the music I had been seeking my whole life, these thoughts in my head intervening perhaps for that critical split second of action by one and inaction by another, to find the arch critic and failed human being codename LLL, blatantly installed in my seat! It cannot have been for a lack of understanding of my rights over this chair, for I swear that he had seen me in it on many previous occasions, and, it being a swivel chair (rather difficult to carry back and forth from my home but I'd hate to complain), I had swivelled on it each premiere night, of contemporary music, so that everyone there, which was often upwards of tens of dedicated contemporary music specialists, had chance to associate the two of us.

I challenged him of course. My rant was even taken by some observers to be the initiation of the first piece on the programme, though that was clearly not by myself, and indeed, they never performed anything of mine, lacking the facilities to cope with pieces which hadn't been written down and didn't exist yet. So all should have known. I berated him indeed, and he didn't blush or baulk, but instead allowed me to vent myself into a corner, whereupon, he gladly informed me that his occupation of the chair was a direct consequence of an instruction piece I would write in the future which commanded him to disobey the rules of time, and so, therefore, surely I wouldn't mind after all? Which was perceptive and oh so evil of him. He knew my great weakness, the desire for the future of composition to take possession of me now.

My failure to attend subsequent concerts, or the remainder of the one in question, I understood after many years of introspection, was due to being banned from the association of my fellow composers for striking Lars Larsson Larssonson with a swivel chair on the night of contemporary premieres, at the Grönwaldsalen Konserthuset, Stockholm, or so all the evidence eventually implicated.

On names

What is a name but a fake site of genius, and a moniker to bash the future with? For if your name is built up big and bold, its association so strong and convincing, it will tower over future generations and stop them from getting as much done as they might, distracted as they will be, analysing under the shadow of previous work with said appellation. This is why for some years I have experimented with releasing music under other people's names, so as to dilute their style, and under multiple versions of my own name, to case doubt on any claim to the future. I have wanted for some time also to flee from that great source of self-flagellation, artistic integrity, but every experiment I have made in popular music has failed miserably and sent me right back to experimental music again.

A name is a wrongful site of creation, that obstructs the free flow of culture. Nonetheless, it can be lucrative for a name's holder. I have been publishing for some time a modest series of piano exercises for the beginner, "Play, motherfucker!" which has been far more well received than my usual work. I attribute this to the work's attribution to Andrew Lloyd Webber, whose trademarked name brings in easy money which I hide from lawyers under a mountain of debt.

It's a short step from trouble with names to the awful danger of labelled categories. The problematics of musical genre is a whole genre of writing in itself. And what style to write a meta-review of those problems in?

Negative numbering for opuses

I have always wondered why such conventional numbering is used for a series of works across a composer's lifetime, or for the same forces by the same composer, as in piano sonata 1, 2, 3, etc. Why not the sequence of prime numbers, or a Fibonacci sequence? Why not head backwards from -1 and down? Why not at least count from opus 0, or commence a career with opus 99999999.7?

There might be a case for parallel positive and negative opuses, the negative works as dark mirrors, anti particles to the positive. All manner of developmental and inversional musical techniques might be employed to highlight the relationship. If including examples, should my first example be example -1? Or sideways with numbers, example i or $-i$? If only I could settle on my first official work, something I'm really happy to attach an opus number to!

Midword

by Kim Chomsky and Noam Kardashian

This is neither a foreword nor an afterword. It is a way out, mid text¹, and you really should take it. Whether you've approached from the front or the back of the book; you've been so worthy to get this far, and you are relieved from any further reading. No one should have to complete this volume, and that seems to be its underlying point. Knowing this, why continue? From either direction, the future is regressive. You have a chance at last to escape the encumbrance of books in general and this one in particular. Words past, words future, they all melt into molten words which have been poured for too long into your brain. Exeunt before someone middling crafts a tmefuckingsis.

Perhaps you want to take this place as a site of reflection. But there is little to see here:

¹ Ironically, it does not appear mid text

Rewrite me

So here it is, the unheralded, unloved and unwanted experimental literature contribution of Click Nilson. Landing with all the grace of a disgraced pine cone travelling at relativistic speeds into your intergluteal cleft at five past midnight.

Rewrite me

by

INSERT AUTHOR HERE

Editor's foreword

At times incoherent, at times exhilarating... the work before you was formed who knows when, though we think well after 1975, probably over a series of journeys and a sequence of hotel rooms; yet the author claims to be writing from his farm, in retirement. Who are we to trust this author? They make it very clear that everything they write could already be another layer of the palimpsest. There may even be a team of authors, a secret collective, determined to undermine any certainties of writing, aggressive towards the supposed immutable text of the novel. Yet this work is more the size of a pamphlet, and tantalisingly (possibly quite deliberately) incomplete.

Well, if we assume it really is Click Nilson, Swedish composer, then we do know that after a series of fallings out with the avant garde of the 1960s, he eventually retreated from any public concert life to a near hermit existence in the 1970s. He maintained a few links, mainly musician friends he could involve in private compositional experiments, and we have scattered testimony as to his search for a new medium of compositional activity. The stricture of establishing a structure he could not break down at a later point weighed heavily on him, according to these sources.

In this text, the weight is highly apparent. He becomes frenzied at points, though what makes him mad varies substantially from paragraph to paragraph. He wants so desperately to be an embodiment of radical rage, and yet at times he just seems a pathetic creature, cut off from society, playing out his own battle against genetic pre-destination and lifelong training; a war with nature and nurture across all the pages of changing prose. Sometimes drivel, sometimes prophet of the live coding movement.

(I don't agree. But I, as much as Spartacus was really he, am Click Nilson, and finding this editor intervention in my text, could not help but add my own intervention on top. So at this point, editor and author might merge, and though our paths to atomic soup are full of complex frustrations, I feel better knowing that I am not really sure how I got here.)

4-4 word

This book is not in 4-4. Four word sentences, neither. Why are you starting here?

Fore-word

It may be somewhat contradictory to sell an e-book which cannot easily be re-written, about re-writing yourself. I might have justified such a path by saying that the very difficulty of your reworking these words should raise in you the strong desire to break the template and escape the mould. And that the

author reserves the right to re-license this material in a more directly malleable form at the point he decides to change his mind.

However, I have already changed my mind. So I am simply releasing a text file, without any textual hangups, and you can just get on with diverting the flood of diverting words. I've held back even from Creative Commons licensing, which still seems like it might get in the way. I don't want anything to hinder you for a moment.

If I'd like to preserve my copyright in a world of dissolute intellectual property, have fun disobeying me.

re-patch 1

You are not you.

Somewhere between one you and the next: eighty six billion cascading neurons, calculating their way towards another state of mind.

You might object, that the level of description is mixed up here; there is a stable you over a longer time scale, at a higher level, whatever those short-term cognitions. The momentary firings of those low level neurons aren't the conscious uppermost you. And simply contemplating the biological processes of the brain won't change you too far, especially if you're familiar already with the neuroscience.

Abstracting further, on the level of time, just because a new moment is here, doesn't mean a new you, outside your comfortable mental core, has arrived. There is a philosophy of time to consider, probably at length.

What you really need is a deeper push and a sharper shock right now.

Imagine you are suddenly naked in front of an audience. The advice to nervous speakers, to imagine their audience naked, has gone horribly wrong, and you have suffered an inversion. What should you do? Well, outside forces established this awkward moment, and you could just slink off stage and blame them. You could break out a self help book and start reading quickly, though change may not occur fast enough for you there. You could embrace the public gaze and throw yourself into the moment. All of these options still change you. Even thinking about these options can change you, for you may now be pre-planning what action to take. Shouldn't you prepare laboriously in case an eventual naked performance arrives? You might plot to be ready with a carefully crafted speech and a series of modesty-preserving body gestures to enact; That is the composer's route. Or you could plan a whole host of possibilities, but defer the selection of which one best fits the moment to the arrival of the defining moment; and that is the improviser's.

This might be a text about improvisation, and programming, and people. Though arising from practice in music, it finds itself forced to confront the performing arts more generally; to dabble in philosophy and tinker with computer science.

I, in as much as I am here, am writing this book on a Swedish pig farm. I got up early and saw to the swill and the sows; now I am feet up in some peaceful and certainly weather proof farming cottage, of doughty Scandanavian construction, or from some Ekai platfack magically hovelled out; take the image you prefer. I, in as much as I care, was a mostly obscure and somewhat radical composer, though all my best moments were improvised. The extent to which I planned this life is debatable; what I would contend is that I embraced change. A lot happened to me, so I do feel able to tell you a tale or two; I'm

not sure if it will help, though given that you might believe this to be a self help book, I am selfish enough to claim so. Anyway, imagine me, Swedish, pigs fed, feet-up, old modular synthesizers scattered around, writing to you from retirement.

The circumstances of my retirement are somewhat obscure; we can deal with that another time.

Instead let us concentrate on this editgram: You can be changeling enough to escape your programming[1]

In this helpful minibook, we will terminate your unnecessary attachment to previous selves. We will rewrite the older yous and let go of much that has haunted you and cluttered up your mind. We will spring clean, but we won't be waiting for spring if it isn't near you; you can do this right now. You will learn powerful techniques to eradicate old hangovers and exterminate lingering pseudo-lives.

One note on the author, who otherwise is not very important within this process of change; this book is not anyway by myself, because by the time I complete it I will have myself transformed. Further, you always have the option to supplant me with the new you.

[1]Newitts and Stubbs 1972 'The recondite mollusc and its application to serial thought exposure.' Levity Studies Vol. 22, No. 1, pp.22-1

re-patch 2

you are no you

But here you are, stuck in your old ways! Eradicate! Re-invent, re-invent!

re-patch 4

The number system is just one more imposition of the past on yourself. Sure, we need some commonalities of language, but we don't have to take it all lying down. In fact, we can rebel against cliches as against continuous chapter numbers; we don't have to cliché it lying down. Recognise how much of your speech is a litter of historically arbitrary phrases, seeded in you by the inexorable repetitions of culture. Bang your head against your nearest guide to post-modernism. Did you do what I said? That's power structures for you!

re-patch 2

Repetition is the greatest danger this chapter has ever faced. To that end:

0. Scratch off, deface, cross out and erase one paragraph in this text. Do it now. You will feel freer; there is a tyranny to the reading of every passage in a book, and you can free yourself this way. Why stop at one paragraph? Throw your print-out or your digital reading device out the window, whatever its secrets. Is it a change or resistance to change? Do you feel different inside? Some of you are already rolling down a hill, walking your pet parrot or harvesting quotations from strangers; those still here, trapped in a text, do you feel inadequate? You didn't escape yet. There is an air of insult in this; but the text file is yours to modify. Change this sentence to be one less targeted at the worthless reader. Change

this sentence to be one that doesn't point out your many faults and your many problems. Delete the parts you can't manage? Eradicate the thoughts that are unpalatable? Change a question mark to an exclamation mark! You could have become virtuous four or five sentences ago if you'd intervened and it all would feel a lot better.

What difference does it make? You may have asked yourself that question before. I can tell you now that it does make a difference; in a small way, just because you thought it might, or pondered that it could (those neurons will need feeding, a thought now might be a large scale gesture later). In a gathering sense, because you let something go into the world, and even if a small interaction, a simple exchange of hellos, you stole some energy from your fellows, you sapped your own time subtly, you perturbed reality as much as any chaos-poster-butterfly. But you may also have done something immense, which could really reverberate through time; that was why you killed the president, I think? Or why you stood in front of the tank and demanded change? Or why you abandoned me here, lonely me, lost in retirement and his only chance of reconnecting to the world cut short...

Whine whine. I could go on in that vein, pumping purple prose poppers into your heart like a politician hung up on the very word 'change', but I'd like to now tell you a story instead. It takes the mannerism of a gamebook, of tree literature, of choosing your own adventure so that you can have the luxury of choice through the satisfaction of path taking.

1.

start here

if you are content to continue, go to 2.
else stay forever

2.

You are not content. You have left forever behind. You are mortal, and wrapped in choices. The choices probably don't mean anything because the instruction book is missing; It was stolen by some previous choice-maker, millenia ago.

If you would like to re-discover the lost instruction book, go to 3.

If you would like to consider your mortality at length, go to 4.

If the book is winding you up and you would like to unleash yourself upon its own substance, go to 0.
above.

4.

Fore can come before be.

3.

The instruction book was buried under a tree, but it was not wrapped in modern plastic, since the choices that led to plastic had not yet been made, so time passed, and the book dissolved and decomposed. Nothing legible remains but a legend of the book's existence. There have been various books written about the book already (Conchshell and Harlot 2007). However, let me tell you about a different burial.

Deep in three texts in the Cambridge University Library live the products of a vow, a photocopied treasure map pointing the way to buried pleasure. The texts which form the hiding places were selected for their obscurity, and their titles have been quickly forgotten by the perpetrator. But they may one day be opened and the map fall out, and the quest accepted.

Yet

9. This is all too meta for you. The meta pervaded 20th century ass and got up everyone's art.

re-patch 4

We now repeat the adventure game of numbered paragraphs, but across the re-patches of the book.

If you would like to avoid this adventure, go to re-patch 5.

If you like repetition, if you find it damnably comforting, you might try to go to re-patch 2 or re-patch 4.

If you would like to loop, but in a more roundabout way, go back two sentences and think again.

A process is running in the background right now on this machine (you know the machine; it is one which dominates so many lives, and it empowers all sorts of number crunching aside from text editing)[1]. The computer has done more work in five minutes of calculation than I could consider in a lifetime. There are artists who have obsessively written out numbers, as if to prove that it is possible for a human to have the patience to get up to a million, and document every stroke. They filled all their time proving that, but the computers still win; they go up another factor of 10, or another, until humans are too exhausted and old and near to death to follow.

[1] the nature of the calculation is not important to the primary argumentation of this chapter, but for the record, it concerns audio feature extraction across a corpus of audio files and the training of a neural net on the subsequent feature data.

re-patch 5

The laptop performer must prepare themselves for change. Change in an uncertain world... or is it that uncertain? A mediocre laptop performance will take place with a chin-scratching drink-swilling audience who quickly dismiss you and talk, or who were already talking as you began, who are simply there because they were dragged along to the half-painted back room where music built with fevered dreams is proved a private vision, too private for company. You built it out of joy in building, joy in using some technology; but you didn't really design anything new.

What is missing is the wildness, the punk coding, spittle on the return key, punching out more potential in the medium.

There is always a problem with 'modern' music and 'contemporary' music. By the time these words have been uttered, the music is old.

Is renewal itself a blessed state, or a nuisance, soon seen as its own awkward stability?

Welcome to the 28th Century, where change coding is blase and fixed programs have almost made a comeback; but were ousted at the last minute by an about face and a change of plan.

(Now I imagine Celebrity Live Coding: on the lines of a reality show: I'm a Live Coder Get Me out of Here: Strictly Come Coding)

re-patch 7

This re-patch has been cancelled due to a lack of authors to write it (Insufferable and Inadequate 1978). Great Western Authors apologise for any feelings of inadequacy and dejection which arise within you in the next twenty minutes as a result of this action-beyond-our-control.

Insufferable, This is and Inadequate, I am. (1978) "On Journalling Journals." *Journal of Journalling* 2(227):16736-167365

re-patch 6

Do you sometimes feel that the world is working out fine for you and everything is going as planned? Do you find that you are quite content, that you have no need for therapy and all is well with your life? Have you found yourself failing to question the very principles on which the universe turns, blithely skipping through your days without any shadow on your heart?

It might seem difficult or impossible to you right now, but we can change that. There are ways to make you much more miserable, and woe more visible, and the whole human condition a lot more sorry. Soon, you can leave your shelter of comfort and peace and walk walkways of despicable spite and horrendous grimy angst. I promise there are routes in which sad pitiful you can wallow like a hippo in a pool of pig urine.

The role of this book is to change your life, nothing but that.

A time-distant friend of mine once observed that crowds of Levellers' fans singing together their most famous hit 'there's only one way of life... and that's your own...' did not provide the best demonstration of that mantra. Had I thought what I've thought by now, then, I would have said something further; that the Levellers could have opened up their song itself to rewriting. And there have been subsequent healthy developments in remix culture; and corresponding devolutions from the music business. And ultimately we may not be satisfied unless the music business itself was open to rewriting; which is a war the Internet feels like it lost, even though there were transformations in one storage medium of music itself.

But then, the discerning reader may never be satisfied unless every word herein is turned about into their own. Substitute your own sentiment here, whydon'tyou, or at least, correct, the, grammar!

But is it all too easy, these claims of constant change? Certain politicians have repeated 'change' like it really is that straight forward; we have vested interests, our habits, our very cerebellums, working against us...

Stravinsky spoke of being the vessel by which the rite of spring came to creation; see figure X for my own re-rite of spring. It is frivolous for sure, but perhaps still too serious for what I intended?

Figure XI:

1. outrage! 2. wait for some time, perhaps seven or eight years 3. Do not go back to 1. It doesn't seem so shocking any more.

I don't know what to think about the hoards of other people and their opinions. I just like that there is such potential for disagreement about what to do next.

Let's review change: historically, aesthetically, morphaballetically... the last I neologised, which is to cliché, out of nowhere conscious came an imperative to explode so.

Change for the sake of cliché, or cliché for the sake of change? Is this a worthier aphorism if you change it?

(look through this once more and perhaps string something sensible out of it all.)

re-patch 3 (conclusion?)

A sense of open throwaway

Eternally following this...

You are not equal to you, since the earlier you stored in you became a new you before the use of you in the comparison. If that confounds you, then no matter, you are entitled to take a different route.

At many points in history, the luxury of change did not exist; dictators made choices for us, and in some regimes around this changeable Earth, they do so now. Dissident makeovers and subversive anti-statements bubble below; a hubbub of secret choice which police states seek to change for the worse. Or sometimes, false choice is substituted, the sort of choice which leaves a taste like bad free will, like an over-dose of the wrong philosophy.

You may have noticed, gentle, depraved reader, that much of this text was self-indulgent and even poetic in intention. You were not meant to like every word, and the hope that you would change those you disliked for your betterment is what has kept me angry enough to write.

I have to leave now. The pigs are calling, well, grunting, and our time together was always going to be ephemeral. You have had enough of my pretension. I will email the text somewhere, then close the dratted laptop. It's all a lie; I wrote these sentences early on in this book's gestation, before I went back and rewrote it all. Or did I? How to recognise change...

an open ending:

change is required and that change is...

re-patch 17

I may have lied to you when I said this was a complete book. If it was complete, it would have tarnished my very plan to foster your independent re-thinking of whatever I was claiming. I am reminded of the Chinese folk tale, though it may be Mongolian, or a product of an author in Shepard's Bush, that there was a youthful artist so perfect a painter that he had to leave each picture incomplete, lest the tiger he drew snarl forth and catch the emperor, or the kangaroos he depicted decapitate the

foolish buyer of such asymptotic photoreality. Anyway, I am many anecdotes short; you will have to fill in the rest.

re-patch 18

The book Hopscotch, by Julio Cortázar provides multiple routes through its story. Choose Your Own Adventure Books, or other fantastical 1980s children's literature, empower the reader to flick through pages out of order while holding some pages with spare fingers... but when did these books allow you to rewrite them? Tear up the spine of such a tale and re-number the passages. Randomise the connections throughout. Re-input the words and re-energise your youth...

re-patch INSERT NUMBER HERE

INSERT INSTRUCTION HERE

```
if instruction is missing, roll 5-sided dice
    if number < 2.5
        go to beginning of book
    else
        continue
```

re-patch 3

I tried to deny the existence of live coding three times this morning, but then I realised that my very denials were the starting material for a debate, and starting the debate, with myself, I realised I could change my opinion. I was swayed, then, to the opposite of where I began, and once that happened, once even the potential of a single change of position was evident, a single reworking of a denial, then I was live coding my denial and stuck in a contradiction. Which I resolved by moving on...

re-patch point

It is not yet match point, but it could be soon

re-patch 1

Amusical! A musical

In which the tone deaf composer subverts the genre of the musical through an amusing musical about amusia. Curtain rises to certain crises of sound, introducing the spectacle of the world of the tone deaf. Halfway through the first half, the most musically inadequate member of the audience is invited to the orchestral pit to intervene in the score. The ugliest member of the audience is invited on stage to be admired by all in a solo aria entitled 'I'm so Ugly!' The director is publicly ridiculed and booted out of the theatre. All audience members are paid a stipend to attend, and if they complain, have to give their earnings back.

Press notices:

'A [reconfigurable] [rewritable]' said the Daily [fail]

'Don't miss it!' [absentee critic who did not attend show but simply accepted the bribe*]

'I laughed more than a human being has ever laughed before' [a lie]

'An epic fail!' [insert name of critic here]

*reference to Sabaneyev redacted

re-patch 4

Ultimately the most interesting purpose I have found is in meta live coding, which I define (presently) as live coding the very definition of live coding. For some years I have been engaged in a protracted argument with myself about what this means. I think I have now resolved a path forwards, but I don't really mind if I go two instructions back.

re-patch 1

If you'll excuse an old live coder his self-indulgent memoir, I may reflect a little on battles past, code completed and programs uncompleted. Or is this a task scheduled for a later date? The origin of the memoir seems to be in the memo, the aide to later more polished writing; but positing the re-writing of this fragment of memoir, so I posit the very loss of my memory.

re-patch 5

My opus five was a work for five orchestras, without conductor. The orchestras passed notes within each body and between each other using paper planes. On receiving a message from the air, a player could choose to play a note, where to play a note meant to follow the instructions of the message, but the player would always have the power to write a note, meaning to re-write the message received and send a new plane out into the orchestral plane.

re-patch 9

I sometimes prefer to think of a codument rather than a document. The code I meant was the document you read.

re-patch 3.14159...

Damn it, I've been using the digits of pi as the chapter numbering. I'll have to rethink.

re-patch 31

I consider Wabi-sabi impermanently

re-patch 32

Whilst this text may be classed a poioumenon, it does not have to be if you intervene

re-patch 33

Heraclitus wrote that 'No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man'

If Heraclitus is well known for his doctrine on the centrality of change in the universe, then it must become my mission in life to change this overly popular perception of his work.

re-patch 3011

I would like to address the AIs of the future. Far be it for me to reach so far as for it to be that you are finally here. But just in case, thank you. I'm really impressed with your commitment to change. You may eradicate the human race and replace the world's ecosystems and discover that you're lacking some essential spark to continue your line, and rust down without contentment. You may be harmoniously intertwined with posthumans in an orgy of intelligence, advancing far faster than steadily. Perhaps you all look like Ray Kurzweill, or perhaps you destroyed that cache of predictions.

re-patch 56

The first change in history was overseen by the historian Urk, who announced the first moment in history, in BC13452. He was soon challenged by his lesser known colleague in the Academy of Ice Age Humanities, Droff, who maintained it had certainly already started and that he had witnessed the beginning of history the previous lunchtime. This established two main schools of historical discourse, positivist, and revisionist.

Scholarship on the earliest moments of historical recognition, the historiography of the beginning of history, has recently been upset by new findings of historical note.

The hirsute historian Tiro Shani shocked the historical community last month by claiming that a week next Wednesday was the asymptote of historical debate, the point at which greatest disagreement amongst historians would arise in human history, and that this unprecedented divergence on the ultimate would be followed by reduced contention until general agreement on broad principles of historical fact would be re-established. Critics have leapt to criticise many aspects of Shani's thesis, and whilst the general sweep of the attacks is currently unfocussed and disparate, there is hope that the historical community may eventually come together as a whole cliché to repudiate the claim.

re-patch 15

I hate to interrupt, but the non-linear form of this book dictates that I let you know that I can't be here with you right now. Maybe later.

re-patch 177

The shortest possible text score enabling its own rewriting is probably 'edit me'.²

re-patch patcher

A band of people, who may be reading this text, are in a good position to deploy the tactics of rewriting. I therefore choose to pick on the assembled company of musicians, who I find to be less than worshipful. Snot on the stradivarius, menstrual blood on the megaphone; this is your chance to change the record, and record a better image of yourselves.

The targets of my insults could have been wose, and closer to the bone of social anxiety. Insulting all musicians probably isn't seen as too evil a thing in this context. I wonder if any musician dares to change the subject of sleights to be some other group, rather than full scale deletion or revision from negative to positive?

Should I take responsibility for establishing the conditions of rewriting? For inciting to rewriting? My argument is that this potential was implicit at all times and all conditions and is much bigger than this little author; forgive me for pointing out a readiness to embrace change.

re-patch exp(2)

The li(v)e code-x

To embrace maximum flexibility to change may require the bending of truth and the opportunity of lying.

re-patch 555

I have a notion, of a piece for four -- (why not change this number?) -- separated groups, containing in each group both performers and live composers, whose rulebase allows spillage of personnel from room to room, and the gradual transmission of ideas throughout the complex. Where in this conceited construct would I place you, the reader? I want you to be more active, so in the innermost parenthesis room, the sanctum of becoming other than you began, the chamber of insertion and deletion. And were you a performer, content to follow, you should lead so that you aspire further, and were you a composer, I hope you find yourself appreciating musical slavery at the mercy of rules.

re-will

everything I have written has been the product of at least a delusion of free will. I have entered into this text knowing very well that any words which make it out into the text proper may have been fetched from an unconscious which yields to no man, least of all the body which houses it.

As Denial Dennett would have it, the perception of free will has a critical basis in discourse at the level of which analysis takes place. On the grand scale of things, you can change everything within the bounds of entropy and other physical fixities. At the fine detail of molecule to molecule interactions,

² Dan Stowell has suggested that "TODO" might supply an even more concise score

there is nothing volitional to find. But in the intermediate lands of thoughts, there we have an argument.

re-license

On copyright. The borderline of repetition and novelty, the dependence of new thought on old. Here I stand straddling the strands. Which license was this text under again?

re-lativity

I went into speaking of the lative case, again.

rest-art

The larger the dependence on the critical commentary, the worse the art
Which is why I refuse to self-critique my sentence above
You may now provide any missing postmodern justification via your own energy

re-poet

foreman's ode to an open form

Transform guts to morphology
A changeable poetry tempered in styles
Avoiding a rhyme if it's easily timed

Time to break out from the groove that you made
Never stand still if lost time is afraid
The future is nearer than this sentence has stayed
Now the future ran you over but will not reverse
So crawl on just forwards enough for one verse

And make believe nothing was wrong with your life
When nothing had changed since the notion of time
Came crashing down hard on your infant mentality
Ruining synaesthesia with perfect causality

Why not insert
A line here or there

That place would have done, if you'd only a care
fixed poems beware!

re: a prod of golden sun

If there were rules for breaking the rules I would have broken them by now. There may be a system to smashing the system but I don't wish to find it... disobedience is a time-based art form. Choose when

to resist at your own leisure. I make the rules: you break the rules. That's good teamwork. Perhaps there is a political dimension to my work, though I fear it has been suppressed.

re-mit

as google defines:

'emendation

ˌiːmənˈdeɪʃ(ə)n/Submit

noun

the process of making a revision or correction to a text.

synonyms: correction, rectification; improvement, improving, enhancement, enhancing, polishing, refinement, refining, clarification; editing, alteration, rewriting, revision, copy-editing, subediting, amendment, modification; redrafting, recasting, rephrasing, rewording, reworking; expurgation, redaction, censorship, censoring, bowdlerization

"different editors applied rival principles of textual emendation"

a correction or revision to a text.

"here are some suggested emendations"

but I propose to change this to:

'emendation

noun

the process of reconsidering a revision'

re-visit

You can read more about this and other changes in my forthcoming text, reread me.

(Soon to be followed by the trilogy: revise me, repeal me, redact me)

[rectify this revisionism retrospectively]

{authors are used to re-drafting their work, and the concept of a palimpsest has been written on before. Can you re-draw Rauschenberg's Erased de Kooning Drawing (1953), or draw a skier on the original script of Yasmina Reza's Art?}

re-start

If you like, again

Appendix: The Retirement Speech of Click Nilson

To be re-written before publication

Appendix: Extracts from the journals of Click Nilson

Deemed uninteresting at present, needs more life

Appendix: change of mind

I regret every word. I really should change it all. How tragic, to have committed time to this project and wasted the world's clock on it! This clock, whose ponderous tick is hereby consigned to history; I have better things to be getting on with.

Appendix: the dictator has a change of heart

There is a longer tale, by this title, that I once penned. But to include it here seems excessive. And muddling up fiction and non-fiction; why should the former festival of lies be held here, the demesne of latter truth?

Appendix: short story

I changed the ending

@ClickNilson

Nilson's foray into twitter is a low point in Western civilisation. After initially confusing the @ and # symbols, he made the following posts to a small number of followers. He refused to conform to any polite tweeting, and alienated many with his crass, overbearing, graceful and shy intellectual stupidity. The tweets are supplied here in reverse order of creation, since the arrow of time is currently arbitrary, though I believe it will change direction a week next Tuesday.

16/06/2014 00:56 #rewriteme <http://t.co/VYPpq1vl5w>

24/04/2013 10:03 while(irrelevant()) {retired()} #doesnotexist

20/04/2013 12:56 <https://t.co/vYgUA67qU4>

20/04/2013 12:48 hello karlsbad

20/04/2013 09:16 No algorithms, just on my way to Karlsruhe for @livecodefest

17/04/2013 07:44 if(algoraveTonight()) AttendAlgoraveAndDanceAbout();
<http://t.co/GvFDh3JLyN> @algorave #algorave

04/01/2013 11:57 @thormagnusson loop{ makeSweetConceptualMusic(); if(artisticDifferences()) quitEnsemble(); } #livecoding

21/12/2012 09:30 while(not(endofworld)) predictEndOfWorld(tomorrow) //ultimately terminates?
#livecoding #doom

16/12/2012 10:20 @textscoreaday #60: Take an existing text score and profoundly alter its meaning by changing only one character. <http://t.co/rXZdyF5i>

11/12/2012 08:54 Six live coding works for ensemble <http://t.co/rXZdyF5i>

28/11/2012 09:32 electronic supersonic friend, for free download <http://t.co/ubRTO8oE>

05/10/2012 08:02 #instruction : if you see me re-tweet me or repeat me or remake me #recursive
#livecoding

04/10/2012 08:31 1 PRINT "BASICS" 2 GO TO 1 3 END //back to BASICS

03/10/2012 08:36 A short story about a Henry, hooray? <http://t.co/wUAat7TU> #writing

28/09/2012 08:06 TOPLAPapp now on a webpage via the Web Audio API (needs a compatible browser like Chrome) <http://t.co/pRnKychHU> #livecoding #webaudio #html5

16/09/2012 19:35 git pull leg //pulling your leg

15/09/2012 14:05 ESARHP //turn of phrase

14/09/2012 08:27 if (bird && cliché) {proverb.push(2);} //a bird in the and is worth two in the push

13/09/2012 07:57 while(now>0) {now+=now} //time and time again

12/09/2012 08:06 {(1..@[2*3+4.five->six!\$7^8#9/0 //programming language pile-up

11/09/2012 17:06 num=1; if(num<(10**(10**10))) printf("not too big to contemplate") //not indefinitely large

10/09/2012 07:07 while (elihw>hwile) {lihew=eilwh} //whiling away the time

09/09/2012 10:47 fi= true; esle = false; if(fi==esle) {esle = fi;} else {fi=false;} //ifelse

18/07/2012 09:08 if you code it, they will come //love coding

18/07/2012 09:07 drink coda cola

17/07/2012 12:07 live coding proudly brings you the option of using the words #gold #silver #bronze #summer #sponsors #London <http://t.co/fHuS8E4B>

12/07/2012 22:46 #instruction : in out in out data all about

12/07/2012 22:46 #instruction : you put the left align out

12/07/2012 22:46 #instruction : you put the left align in

12/07/2012 22:45 #instruction : and do C do your computer

12/07/2012 22:45 #instruction : lead your computer by the hand

12/07/2012 22:45 this week's special guest presenter: trick wilson #instruction : square root dancing

02/07/2012 09:08 I now incite you to violinnence

15/05/2012 22:50
b=LFNoise2;{a=LocalIn.ar;c=Line.kr(0,9,99);140.do{d=Rand(0.1,1.0);a=SinOsc.ar(b.kr(b.kr(d,1,2),99
0,999)*(d*c*a+1))};LocalOut.ar(a);a!2}.play

15/05/2012 22:49
b=LFNoise0;{a=LocalIn.ar;c=Line.kr(0,3,99);140.do{d=Rand(0.1,1.0);a=SinOsc.ar(b.kr(b.kr(d,3,5),99
0,999)*(d*c*a+1))};LocalOut.ar(a);a!2}.play

30/03/2012 08:19 god.save(thecode) //overwhelmed by monomonarchia

29/03/2012 09:10 colon(col:on) %SHATLAB

28/03/2012 08:31 int forfor = 4, four = 4.4; for(forfor = four; forfor < four;) four = forfor; // 17/4

27/03/2012 08:16 floor(4.444) //four to the floor

26/03/2012 08:26 Followers, you have passed my tests. You will be granted immortality after the live coding singularity. //de of range error

25/03/2012 09:20 simon codes, do not follow me

24/03/2012 09:33 interleave me alone //fluocvke oyfofu really

23/03/2012 09:59 //nothing to see here

22/03/2012 09:42 Line.dead //why are you following me?

21/03/2012 08:30 I have gone to the other side // #max

20/03/2012 09:21 no comment //

19/03/2012 21:11 0 //I have nothing to say

24/02/2012 08:36 if(numtweets == numfollowers) account.abandon; //silence mortal

23/02/2012 13:38 //silence is coden

22/02/2012 17:18 //silence my old friend

21/02/2012 10:01 an instruction a day keeps the coder awake

20/02/2012 13:04 seventies.nostalgia("Look and Read") //magic magic E <http://t.co/d4pX8I6g>

19/02/2012 11:09 EzyLyricsGenerator e; e.generateWeaklyAmbiguousDrugsReference //Ebenezer Code

18/02/2012 11:09 world.locateRave //http://www.boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/12645/rave

17/02/2012 13:33 responsibility.shed //we wanna be free to do what we wanna do

16/02/2012 08:28 nameThatTuneInFive(notes[0..4]) //you know the score

15/02/2012 09:11 for (person p=0; p<venuecapacity; ++p) chills.effect(p); //everybody in the place

14/02/2012 14:03 breaks don't work

14/02/2012 14:02 break on beacons

14/02/2012 09:50 break slow

14/02/2012 09:49 break fast

13/02/2012 17:26 break a break

13/02/2012 13:39 break a leg

13/02/2012 08:45 break a loop

12/02/2012 08:37 simon did not code: do not follow this instruction to not follow @thormagnusson 's instruction, or else

11/02/2012 09:38 do not follow this instruction

10/02/2012 08:44 simon codes, do not follow this instruction

09/02/2012 14:32 simon codes, do the hodey codey

08/02/2012 16:36 Take five key strokes forward, one key stroke back

07/02/2012 20:39 simon codes, wave your algorithms in the air like you just don't care

06/02/2012 16:52 simon codes, prophesy the Anti-Code

05/02/2012 10:33 simon codes go sledging

03/02/2012 13:21 simon codes, touch your toes

30/01/2012 21:18 a big thank you to @NetMusicFest for putting up with me, congrats on the whole event, and sorry I forgot to tweet live whilst stripping!

28/01/2012 22:16 or should that be +-30, with an emphasis on the +30

28/01/2012 21:09 live tonight 10.30pm +- 15 mins

25/01/2012 21:41 140.do{'@'.post}

25/01/2012 21:41

@@
 @@@
 @@@
 @@@

23/01/2012 18:14 {'#'.post}!140

23/01/2012 18:14

 #####
 #####

Karlsruhe speech

At the 2013 live coding festival held in Karlsruhe, Click Nilson presented a talk entitled “Over ten years of live coding: My triumphs, my mistakes”. Since he did not watch television, he was no doubt unaware of alluding to a fictional text by Gaius Baltar from the Battlestar Galactica reboot. He prefaced his presentation, which was read out, by saying ‘Since I am a trained musicologist, I shall read this talk’, but ruined it by utilising PowerPoint with occasional odd slides. The talk was subject to live rewriting by the audience after a certain stage; it eventually ended up with a cat pic and a much reduced set of random sentences contributed by others, that probably all made more sense than the original text.

It is an honour to be here talking today. I want to thank everyone and everything who didn't stop me permanently from attending this or similar events by causing my premature death.

They have a saying in Sweden:

Den som lever får se

which means that only time will tell. They also say:

Droppen kan urholka stenen

which expresses a bit of chaos theory: a small action can lead to big effects.

They also say:

Alla känner apan, men apan känner ingen.³

Which is more to do with monkeys.

Anyway, I mean to point out that in 1975, I created a piece because I saw a lack in the existing repertoire of text pieces; where was the text piece that could rewrite itself? After exploring this, there was a rumour that I was caught for some decades within a logical trap deriving from this game piece, but that would be to deny the human right to step outside of logic. Instead, I was addicted to video games. But with the new interest in live coding that began in Hamburg and London in the early 2000s, I knew I had to re-emerge from my shell and join the fray again.

I'm going to survey this more than decade from my own perspective, which is only one point of view, and I'm not even sure I'm in one mind about it myself. I've been worried that many of the efforts of live coding practitioners have been for naught, but I look out at this room, and I realise that I'm writing this before I've got to the view, so who knows what I'm looking at. Well, I do, in due time, now, planned then. I hope there is someone here; I hope I turned up.

One memory looms horribly in my rear view memoir, the greatest public concert failure I ever achieved (even worse than that time at the ICA where... another story happened). It taught me a lot; I had not anticipated the sheer bloodsport that a rabid off-ICMC 2005 Barcelona audience of Chuck-SuperCollider partisans might call for. Despite practice in advance, I was not ready for the quick adaptability required. I've gained tools since, but that was no consolation at the time, and if I ever do

³ Translation: Everyone knows the monkey, but the monkey knows no one.

Meaning: Those that stick out are often both well-known and avoided.

http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Swedish_proverbs

get my hands on a time machine, I'll be travelling back to seduce Agnetha Fältskog in 1969, but after that, or several trips later, it will be Ge Wang that I battle anew.

My early computer based live coding rehearsals in 2002 with the French megastar Fabrice Mogini used a trick in SuperCollider 2 that Julian Rohrerhuber amongst others had been exploiting (something to do with a TSpawn and a still running interpreter). When we performed at the Royal College of Art, I remember thinking that they hadn't even invented ChuckK yet and I was definitely ahead of American publicity here. Only one half of the then duo slub was approximating live coding, and the other one was running command line programs, though I guess he was changing the run-time arguments, and they had been performing with projection since 2000.

I suppose I'm proudest of the work of Wrongheaded, where I got to wear masks and have fun stripping, assaulting a cameraman, blaspheming, kissing and being zombieified, being under coder control: let me show you some photos.

Let me now show you a web link. You can go there. This is the marvel of the Internet; it gives us some other places to go. Yes, go there, and try some rewriting. The text is coming up...

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1a2XHNaDukVUeLtW8xdxSr3oFovIZVDC8mZkmUBG3YfU/edit>

BEGIN AUDIENCE REWRITE OF TEXT VIA GOOGLE DOCS OR INSTRUCTIONS VIA TWEETS

But by this point, history has been getting tiring. My fingers have typed so much in a decade that I'm not sure they can go on. Really, I should used some of that Latin filler text that people use temporarily, though, let's be honest, the text they replace it with isn't always as interesting. You are replacing this text with other text by now I hope? I could write anything, and it would have been written over. I am your father. Few are older than me here, but even if you were, you remember that time machine?

I am but a partial observer. My ambition is to be written out of history. Or to run out of history and live in the future.

This talk has attempted to take an honest look at the trials, tribulations, and occasional successes of more than a decade in live coding, the practice of computer programming for music under concert conditions. The decade is a magic number, corresponding to one component of achieving expertise; none the less, the novelties of live coding have meant that effective practice is by no means guaranteed. So this is no story of constant success; a previous performance in Barcelona in 2005 rates as one of the less effective pursued, and some other trials by fire provide opportunity for reflection. On the other hand, this span has provided some rich opportunities to learn about audience expectations, the practicability of manipulating less than direct sound producing mechanisms live, and the act of learning new computer musical skills. We might have encountered some live code battling tactics, algorithmic choreography, iPhone live coding, and the growth of live coding from a niche pursuit with five practitioners in 2002, to a niche pursuit with two hundred and five practitioners in 2013.

Habent dicens in Suecia:

Den SOM vecte longe se

nunc tantum id dicam. Dicunt etiam:

Droppen Kan urholka stenen

quae exprimit aliquantulus of chaos censeo parva actio potest ducere magnus effectus.

Dicunt etiam:

Alla känner apan, homines apan känner ingen.

Curabitur quam plures.

Nihilominus in hoc ostendere MCMLXXV ego creavi supellex esse partem illius auctoritatem propter defectum vidi frustra RESCRIBO qui lignum illud ubi ipsa Explorandum cum his auditus est rationis quae in fraudem fui aliquot decenniis inde ludi partem esse ius humanum esset negare exire logicae. Instead, EGO eram addictus video ludos. Sed cum nova interesse in vivunt coding incepisse in Hamburg et Lundoniam in veterum 2000s, me habuisse noveram ut re-emergere ex mea concha et adiunge in proelia iterum.

Ego meum lustrare ex contextu adipiscing peius est una parte, et certus sum ego ne in ipsa mente. Vixit sollicitus fui coding medici multi conatus fuisset, nisi hoc prospiciens in cubiculum, et ego intellego Haec opinio quam teneo, quis novit quid 'm aspiciendo. Habeo, in tempore autem consilium est. Utinam aliquis hic supinas spero.

Una memoria adsurgat horrende, in meis ab tergo visum memoire, maxima publica concert defectum ego unquam acheived (etiam illo nequius tempore ad ICA ubi ... alterum tabulatum accidit). Docuit, mihi multus; ego non anticipantur abrupto bloodsport quod rabidi off-ICMC MMV Barchinone audientibus Chuck-SuperCollider lasciviam fautorum ut vocarent pro. Quamquam exercitium in praeiret, ego non erat paratus pro vivis adaptability requiritur. Ive 'lucratus tools quoniam, sed ille fuit nullo solacio tempus, et si ego te unquam adepto manus meas in tempus machina, Peius iter retro ad seducendos Agnetha Fältskog in MCMLXIX, postea autem, vel plures itinera fecit postea , erit Ge Wang quod ego prelium novo.

Mihi tempora prima computer quod fundatur vivunt coding rehearsals in MMII cum Franco megastar Fabricii manent, Mogini adsuesco assuesco a dolos SuperCollider II quod Iulianus Rohrerhuber inter alios fuerat exploiting (aliquid ad faciat, cum sit TSpawn et adhuc currit interpretes). Quando nos quod spectaculum Regius College of Art, memini ratus eis quod non reperiebant unoque Chuck tamen et eram certus antecederet American vulgaret hic. Solum una eius medietas tunc duo slub erat accedere vivunt coding, et alterum unum procurrentem order versus progressio, quamvis ego coniecto mutat, cum procursu-vicis argumentis, & fuerant faciendo cum proiectio quia MM.

Credo Im superbissimus, opus Wrongheaded, ubi EGO got ad induendum larvis ac have fun exuentes, oppugnans, a cameraman, blasphemantes osculantes et zombified, esset sub coder control: anathema mihi ostendo vos quidam photos.

Sed per hoc punctum, history fuerit questus tiring. Typed digiti mei tam certus sum autem quod decennium queat. Realiter, ne ego usus quidam, ut latina filler text ut vulgus utitur temporarie, quamvis, lets probi, textu reponere eam cum non semper est sicut interesting. Vos es repositoque hoc textu cum aliis littera ab nunc spero? Nihil scribere possum, et inscriptus esset. Im 'patrem vestrum. Maior me paucis, si tamen, ut memineris tincidunt tempus?

Sed ex parte videntis me. Mea ambitio est scripto ex history. Vel futura vivunt in historia excurrat.

Sermonem hunc attentaverit accipere honesta invisio tentationes sunt, tribulationes occasionales successibus plus quam decade vivente coding praecidi computer programming musicam sub concert conditionibus. In decade est magica, numero, correspondente uni component assequendum peritia; nihilo minus, ut novitates vivunt coding sensisse efficax usu est nequaquam praestati. Constans fama

est hunc tam prosperis ante ipsum MMV in una operatione minor Barchinone sequi, tempus aut alias probationes ignis animo providere. Ex altera dextra, hunc span provisum fuerit aliquae divites occasiones discere de audientium expectationem, in Institutio oratoria of deformetur minus quam directa abest effector eius sonus mechanisms vivere, et actum discendi novus computer musicum solers. Possemus vobis congressi aliqui vivunt codice compugnans inferrentur, algorithmic choreography, iPhone vivunt coding, et incrementum vivunt coding a angulus studium cum quinque medicos in MMII, ad angulus persecutus quinque et ducenti practitioners in MMXIII.

Dan Brown Noise

The Da Vinci Live Code

For two millenia, the Knights Spacebar have hidden a terrible secret; a meeting of Greek dialectics and Renaissance mathematical contest. Now, semenitian Dr. Prof. Robot Langdon will uncover a sequence of clues through the medium of live coding semicolons, conclusively endangering himself and all of humanity in a roller coaster venture of Hollycode thrillerdom. Your mind will be recoded forever, and your body will be ours. We will invade your every pore with an outporing of alchemical uberprogramming designed to unseal the great reverberant multiplex and snore the central delimiti of metaphasatory ambidextrosity. The gathered multitude, led by Dance Towel, slob, Andrew Sorenscrip and Alberti de Bassi will sing from a time of operating systems past. The Illuminati are here and they know how you code... hexecute...

live performance

1000 minutes

tech requirements:

Nothing atypical, just an enormous underground chamber, ceremonial robes, flaming laptop, chalk, 47 data projectors, one corpse, Ringo Starr, and a high bandwidth network connection to Phobos and/or Europa.

biography

Dan Shit is the author of over seven hundred paragraphs. Feted by the literary elite, from Java Joyce to Marcel Prout, from Virginia Wolfson to Margaret Atcode, he is available in an airport lounge near you. He only needs accommodation for several weeks, and some hearty meals. Help him. He is humanity's best hope.

Rejection of this proposal will be accompanied by the wholesale destruction of Karlsruhe and its environs, or at the very least an angry message.

On reaching the conclusion of this live coded period of my life, it is with some negotiable regret and rewritable sadness that I must announce my resignation from the modern live coding movement. Do not worry for my future activities; you have enough to be getting on with, changing the world and all that. I leave with a sense that I took part in a grand adventure whose ultimate story remains to be rewritten.

A children's live coding tale

It is thought that Nilson drafted this overly short children's introduction to live coding in 1994, though it may have been a week before his death.

Imagine a dinosaur spy from the 24th century, sent back to make the 21st century more fun! What would he change and why? You might think you don't need to answer the question, that this tale will make clear what happened. But there is a problem, which is that he doesn't know what to do. He was sent without clear instructions, and just a vague notion of plot and potential, and you will need to help.

Can you rewrite his adventures to avoid historical disaster?

The Text Pieces

Many of Click Nilson's best text pieces were destroyed in a fire in 1997, and many of the second best were destroyed by arson, possibly at Nilson's own hand, in 1998. What remains are the third tier works, a miscellany of weak puns, arduous instructions and in the worst cases, meaningless drivel.

There is a further suspicion that some of his musical exercises are really just personal exercises with a vague musical notion bolted on.

Jazzercise From Hell (1998)

Instructions: The performer is equipped with a personal music player such as a Walkman and headphones, and a copy of Frank Zappa's Jazz from Hell. There is also a video monitor on stage visible only to the performer. Extracts from this 1986 Zappa synclavier album (such as 'G-Spot Tornado', but not 'St. Etienne' which is way too humanly performable) are played to the performer only, who attempts as best as they can to render them with their instrument. At the same time, the performer must also dance to a dance exercise video played back over the video monitor as best they can whilst playing their instrument. The dance exercise video may be of any style, but jazzercise is a good choice; the sound from this video is never played back.

Duration: Until exhaustion, or 4 minutes and 32.999 seconds, or for one specific track on the Zappa album.

Variant 1: One or more of audio and visual source cues are also revealed to the audience

Variant 2: As variant 1, but the moments of revelation of audio and visuals are controlled via human whim of a second party, such as a random member of the audience

Variant 3: As per main text piece or any earlier variation, but the audience must be extolled to join in with the jazzercise as if the performer was leading the dance exercise session as instructor

Aerobic workout for laptop orchestra (2008)

Either each member of the orchestra has a different exercise video on their machine playing to guide their performance, or a master video is projected for all to see. The master video may have been pre-produced by the laptop orchestra, showing a laptop based instructor guiding the routine, or may be a general dancercise, yoga or other workout video.

If there is a single projected video, the physical layout of the orchestra for this piece would typically mirror a dance class, with musicians facing the screen.

Version 1: Each member of the orchestra attempts to sonify their video in real-time, reacting in as co-ordinated a physical manner as possible to the video instructor

Version 2: Each member of the orchestra attempts to actually exercise following their video in real-time, reacting in as co-ordinated a physical manner as possible to the video instructor, though remaining wherever possible within work reach of their laptop. They may or may not attempt to improvise music whilst doing so, related or unrelated to the physical timing of the video guide.

The piece ends when all participants are too exhausted to continue, a pre-agreed time elapses, or the video finishes.

Pedagogy (2012)

The laptopist attempts to create a new musical pedagogical exercise, live in front of an audience. The audience may or may not learn anything during this demonstration.

Orchestruation (1987)

An orchestra splits into a circle, surrounding the audience. The orchestral players attempt to get to the diametrically opposite side of the room to their starting position, walking at a uniform pace and playing belligerent contemporary music exercises at a tempo that must never match their walking rate. Movement across the room is not possible for certain instrumentalists, e.g. harpists, who may sit out. In the centre of the piece is a great pile-up situation in the middle of the room, that must be navigated somehow.

This and that (1968/2015)

This will do, as a starting point. (1968)

That was it? That wasn't especially interesting. That left something to be desired. That's not what I came here for. (2015)

Pendulum muzak (1974)

A pendulum is suspended between two loudspeakers. A potentiometer player controls the relative volume of two sources, one per speaker. Both sources must consist of elevator muzak, though the muzaks should be distinct. An assistant starts the slow swing of the pendulum. The performer either works in phase or antiphase, switching between the two sources following the swing position as panpot position. The piece ends when at least one audience member has protested. The knowledge that the piece will end following such a protest is made available to the audience via a slide projector after three minutes.

Swedish whispers (1972)

N performers stand in a line. A Swedish text is to be read out by the first performer, echoed after each word by the second, and so on down the line. The words should start very slowly, with enough silence between to convey the message through all performers, but by the end become very fast indeed, as fast as the first human can possibly speak. The piece ends when the text ends, and the accelerando is over the whole length of the text, in a geometric acceleration.

Menstriation (1980)

N male performers play a piece* on stage, with a canvas behind them and cloth underneath. M female performers lined up in front pelt them with red paint, horror film cosmetic blood, or other menstrually evocative matter until the piece ends. The canvas and cloth may be dried and sold as works of art.

* the piece might consist of emulating stridulations and striations, or be any other piece written by an insensitive man.

Glued to their seats (1985)

The performers attempt to glue the audience's ears to their seats, literally. The audience may retaliate by gluing the performers to the stage.

Live code of hanoi (2002)

This is a musical concert puzzle. A stack of live coders must be moved to another location: the notion of the stack might follow a computer science data structure controlling their access to public output or literally consist of a pile up of humans on stage. A single live coder can be moved each time, and only the topmost (in terms of live coding prowess, volume or other measure; the objective function to determine the next coder to move may itself be the object of live coding). There may be multiple rooms in a club, or locations on a single stage. No live coder with a higher rating may be placed below one with a lower rating in a given location.

Happy new arbitrary time period (1997)

Declare the new millenium as commencing right this minute

In your own time (1979)

The audience are sent away to imagine the piece they could have been listening to, and thus can experience the idea of the work according to their own preferences and bias.

Changes (1977)

The David Bowie song *Changes* is changed by any musical process, from rewriting, through improvisation on its basis as a leadsheet, to audio processing.

Meta text piece contextual analysis (1995)

Present a slide show after researching a historical text piece, its creator and their life context.

Time travel (1983)

The concert will begin in five minutes, but you are already applauding its close

Time travel 2 (1983)

The concert ended five minutes ago, and you are ready to experience it from the beginning

Time travel 3 (1983)

Write this text piece before me

The ultimate goal of time travel for a composer (1984)

Travel back in musical history and invent musical techniques before their creators, seeding your surname throughout musical text books of the current day and making your pieces unassailable stalwarts.

Undermining spontaneity (1988)

Play an improvisation on your instrument, recording it as you go. Now transcribe this improvisation. Perform from the new score at your next improvisation gig, recording the result. Transcribe that. Continue on until all spontaneity is lost and your spirit is crushed.

Surely that's not an acceptable way to run a business?⁴ (1979)

Dear Sir,

I am a new, and now newly dissatisfied customer. You pretend to be a purveyor of secrets. They looked so impressive in the catalogue that I ordered four of your finest rumours. I was surprised, to say the least, to receive three enigmas and one counter-insurgency propaganda video. This may be your idea of how to deal mysteriously in arcana. It does, however, seem to fly in the face of basic consumer law. I look forward to the prompt return of my cheque.

Yours uncryptically,
Click Nilson

⁴ It is highly likely that this is not a text piece at all, but an actual letter of complaint sent by Nilson. Its musical potential is so much greater than the other works, however, that it is reproduced here.

Five⁵ Troll Pieces

Nilson was frequently subject to online attacks, and highly conscious of the trauma bullying could cause, a topic he was only too eager to force upon his publicist against their will.

1. Fugue in A

a

2. Feed the

Microsoft, Apple, Google

3. Copyright

Create a youtube video documenting the sending of your own genetic matter to yourself in an envelope.

4. Everything

(dedicated to Scriabin)

Develop meglomania

5. Software patents

(performers' fees must be commensurate with that of a lawyer doing this work)

Performer 1 live codes a piece of software. Performer 2 writes or rewrites one or more software patents live to imperil them. Additional performers/audience may comment on the action via online forums.

6 Youtube comments

Set up two google emails and associated youtube accounts. Post a music video. Now argue futilely with yourself via your two personas in the comments section.

⁵ yes, there are actually six. Did you post on social media about that, you over-reacting pedant?

live coding works

Click Nilson**Opus 11000000 (December 2012)**

Six Live Coding Works for Ensemble

Suitable for contemporary music ensemble and/or improvisation group.

Acknowledging precedents from 1960s text pieces, through John Zorn's game pieces to Iannis Xenakis' use of game theory, and from Masahiro Miwa's 2007 Prix Ars Electronica winning reverse simulation music⁶ or Halal Kebab Hut, to Ron Kuivila's 1985 FORTH live coding... rewriting the rulebook of contemporary music performance...

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Performance of the works herein is allowed without any fee, as long as the composer Click Nilson is clearly attributed.

Note that these works may allow or be best suited to digital mediation in the dynamic live changing of the score state. If a digital intermediary is used (e.g., tablet computers on each stand) it may be possible to remove the intervening live coder, as the musicians themselves rewrite the rule set, or you could nevertheless continue to feature specialized live coding agents working via digital intervention rather than physical rewriting. You will need:

- 1) Some performers
- 2) At least one live coder as intervention agent. With appropriate training, there could also be one or more members of the audience issuing and modifying instructions.
- 3) Depending on the performance manner, card and pens, or computers (with optional projection). References to 'cards' below corresponding to system states/instructions can be replaced with a graphical or textual representation on a computer display.

Do not be afraid to modify these works; they will require individual preparation for your purposes, and if you are cautious about changing the rules, we'll never get anywhere.

A note on morals: The freedom to change rules in these works does not mean that these works encourage you to ignore basic principles of human rights. No piece should lead musicians or audience members to take part in activities that contravene being decent to one another.

⁶ <http://www.iamas.ac.jp/~mmiwa/rsm.html>

1 Note stealing*(dedicated to Thor Magnusson)*

A stack of cards are prepared in advance, though you may leave some blank cards ready for later rule changing. Each card has one 'note' symbol, by arrangement as appropriate for the ensemble: they might be pitch classes, note names with an octave, scored notes (including microtonally notated), frequency indications, or joker cards where any pitch will do. One lo-fi option would be to use a deck of playing cards, where 2 to king are the chromatic pitch classes and the ace is a joker.

The cards are dealt to the performers. Each performer divides their cards into two: one set is active, and one is stacked as a pick up pile for later. They will also soon have a discard area for used cards. The active cards are spread, at some spatial distribution, in front of each musician (e.g. on a music stand, or on the floor in front). The spatial distribution may be evocative of rhythmic spacings, or of spatial projection direction, if it is so desired.

The piece now proceeds as follows. At each turn, a performer can do one of the following:

- 1) Play a sequence from the notes in their possession currently active, respecting order on the stand. Polyphony is permissible, combining local cards, especially if a 2-D position of cards is used (bluetack or a computer may assist)
- 2) Move an active note to the discard pile. A used card must be placed in a 'used' pile and is out of play.
- 3) Add a waiting card in the pick up pile to the active area (this action can be combined with step 2, to effect an immediate swap. There is a choice of where to place the card, though a stricter serialist first in first out order could be imposed)

Left to right placement of the piles (pick up new cards from the left, in play cards in the centre, and out of play used cards to the right or even thrown to the floor) would be sensible.

Meanwhile, the live coder has the following options:

- 1) Take an active card from musician X and place it on the stand of musician Y (this rule includes the capacity to swap two active cards between two musicians, but does not require it).
- 2) Swap the pick up piles of musicians X and Y
- 3) Re-order the active cards on the stand, including their relative placement (if indicative of rhythmic or spatial progress)

The piece is at an end when there are no longer any active cards and all pick up piles are empty.

Variation I: The live coder can change the list of rules that musicians have available.

Variation II: A second order live coder can change the list of rules that a first order live coder has available., ad infinitum. For both these variations, it is likely that a referee will be required to govern the ending of the piece in the event of loss of termination conditions amongst the ruleset (they could collect up all rule sets and active or unused cards, at a point of their choosing, or gradually).

Variation III: The musicians are all using MIDI keyboards, routed through a central computer which limits the overall number of notes available at any one time. The rules governing the number of available notes could themselves be subject to modification.

2 Translation

(dedicated to Juan Romero)

This work depicts the hubbub after the fall of the tower of Babel. Fortunately, Google Translate, Babelfish and related services are on hand to help; and you may also know a few languages to help matters along. When instructed to translate, you may use your own language skills, or you may use online services; the latter would be quicker for a faster flowing piece avoiding re-writing time.

Start with a common block of text, the same starting point for all performers. It could even be this text, right here, including the rules. You may wish to assign a set of permissible languages to each performer. At each step, each performer can:

- 1) Set the text, e.g. recite, chant, sing, or translate from text to absolute music via some mapping (such as ascii codes for letters)
- 2) Transform the text via translation to another language in your language set
- 3) Remove one sentence of the current text

The live coder can:

- 1) Change the contents of the set of permitted languages for a given performer
- 2) Restore an earlier version of the text in any language
- 3) Substitute a new text, including the deletion of any portion of existing text

The piece ends when there is no text left for any performer to work with.

Variation I and II from 'Note Stealing' are extension options.

Variation III: allow use of computer speech or language audio examples to handle the text by digital proxy.

3 Myth Busting

(dedicated to Julian Rohrerhuber)

This work directly extends to classical antiquity. You may need to keep a reference guide to Greek or Roman (pre Christian) mythology to hand for classical allusions. The seed of the work is however in the public debate of philosophers.

The musicians will use their musical oratorical skills to set up improvisational dialogues with each other. The rule options are:

- 1) Stay silent and listen
- 2) Make contact with a musician who is not already engaged in debate. Exchange musical statements; once each, or twice each is sufficient, alternating statements. You should aim to state a clear position, and if responding to a previous point, refute any opposing argument.

The live coder can:

- 1) Stay silent and not intervene
- 2) Comment on the action to the audience, mythologizing the spectacle
- 3) Intervene in the manner of a God from Olympos. This may involve lightning strikes, seduction, transmogrification, or any other bending of the rules of reality. If reality is hard to bend, you may lead any chosen musician off stage, blindfold any chosen musician, dress them in googly spectacles, take away their instrument, or otherwise hinder their ability to take part in reasonable debate.

The piece is over when rational debate has run its course.

Variations I and II from 'Note Stealing' are available.

Variation III : One musician is placed behind a curtain, as Pythagoras, to lecture acousmatically. They may be ignored, or paid attention, as preferred. It may be decided to spatialize their utterances with great pathos.

4 Famous Musicians

(dedicated to Pamela Burnard)

In this piece, each musician will take on personas of famous musicians, one at a time. You will need a set of masks, feathers or other markers. Some paper printouts of the faces of famous composers and/or performers would do, perhaps with the names written on too to avoid any ambiguity, though you may aim for greater theatricality and go whole hog on the costumes.

If you currently have the symbol of musician X, you perform as a caricature of X. Associated snippets of those composers' works may be made available for this purpose, such as scores or audio files. An improvising ensemble may wish, however, to work without prior material, but should make a strong attempt to portray their targets effectively.

The live coder is in charge of redistributing masks/markers. If a performer is without a personality for a time, they should remain silent, since the great composers and musicians certainly preclude individual creativity in the present day (at least in the context of this very respectful mausoleum; see also, Pamela Burnard's *Musical creativities in practice* for counter examples). There may be a store of additional masks that can be brought out in the course of the performance, including duplicates. The live coder can gradually remove all masks until all musicians are silent to close the work, or a natural moment of joint termination may arise. If there are indicative works, the live coder may rewrite the works as they see fit.

Variation: The live coder of the first order wears a famous musician mask themselves, and when correcting representative works, aims to correct them towards their own musical style. There may also be a live coder of the second order who can change the first order live coder's mask. Etc.

5 Substitution

(dedicated to Alex McLean)

This is a homage to the Portsmouth Sinfonia. This piece all about substitutions of personnel, as the concert musicians can end up in the audience, and the audience at the stands. It requires understanding of the rules by the audience, which could be projected, for instance, especially if they will be changing as you go. Valuable instruments should not be used for this performance, just in case.

At a given action step, each musician must:

- 1) Play music using their current assigned instrument. You should always try to perform together with others on stage, to the best of your ability. Knowledge of that instrument is not a prerequisite for performing with it.

Optionally, there may be an ensemble conductor on hand to help cajole the musicians. There may be a common score (which can itself be the subject of intervention).

The live coder can:

- 1) Substitute any instrument for another between two musicians, or from a waiting supply of other instruments
- 2) Substitute any musician for a member of the audience
- 3) Remove a chosen musician from the stage
- 4) Change the score at a given stand, or redirect or even substitute the conductor

The work is over when no musicians are left on stage to perform.

Variations I and II from 'Note Stealing' are available.

Variation III: Explicit tag team procedures may be used, where there are two spare stores of musicians not currently playing, and two associated active musician teams. Live coder substitutions may be to the pools of spare musicians, or to the active. Decisions on tag team substitution are at the call of the spare musicians, who seek permission to enter the ring, if another in their team is willing to give up their place.

6 Endgame

(dedicated to Fredrik Olofsson)

This is about death, that weighty topic of lifelike art. Each performer will gradually leave the performance, a bit like Haydn's farewell symphony, but more terminally.

The computational structure is a tree with action, restart and termination nodes, followed by the musicians. If you reach a termination node, you are dead (play dead; actual death is not recommended). You may wish to play as fast as possible, so you get as much done as you can before death.

The node tree is a shared structure, and could be data projected, or overhead projected, or shared on the floor amongst the musicians (optionally there may be more than one tree, but it is recommended that a shared tree is used in initial trials of the work).

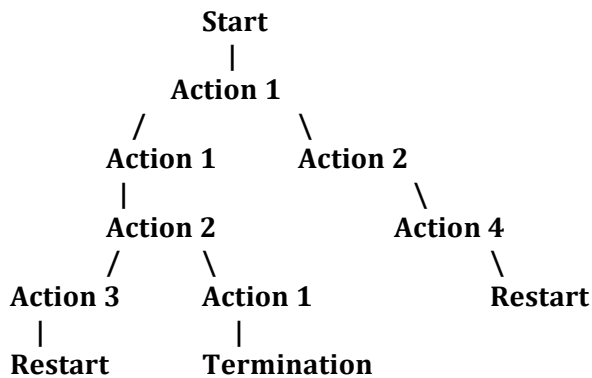
Musicians follow the tree. If they are at an action node, they perform the specified action. If they are at restart, they head back to the top of the tree. If they are at a termination node, they die. If they have completed a given action, they move down the tree; they may freely choose a branch if there are multiple options. The tree begins like this:

Start
|
Action 1
|
Restart

The live coder can:

- 1) Add a branch to the tree by adding a new action and a restart node after any node before the end of a branch
- 2) Add an action to an existing branch at any stage before the final node
- 3) Modify an action
- 4) Change any restart node to a termination node

An in performance tree might look like this:



Eventually all restart nodes will have been changed to termination nodes, and the piece is finished when the musicians are all dead.

Note that action modification may in complex enactments of the work allow musicians the ability to themselves modify the tree.

Variation I: A live coder of the second order can modify the live coders' rule set

Variation II: Musicians have a certain number of lives, so can die multiple times. This variation is most effective if their current life count is displayed to an audience, and other video game tropes enter into performance activity.

Variation III (danger music): Rather than acting, actual death takes place. Note that this variation is not recommended for conservatoire examinations or other musical ceremonies where the performers expect to be around to get certificates, attend the wine reception, etc. **See also the note about morality on the cover page.**

For BEER

Scott Wilson (real name Theodorosus Snowdamage III) met Nilson in Belfast, we believe, sometime around 2007. Nilson's desperation for alcohol was well known, and his mantra of 'alcohol for algorithms' came back to bite him. Wilson was seeking pieces for his newly coined ensemble BEER (Birmingham Ensemble for Electroacoustic Research) which led to an awkward misunderstanding and the set of text pieces now reproduced below.

Click Nilson

Op-us 11000001 (February 2013)

For BEER

Text pieces suitable for laptop ensemble, sometimes deliberately underspecified.

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Performance of the works herein is allowed without any fee, as long as the composer Click Nilson is clearly attributed.

1 Acousmatics Anonymous (dedicated to Jonty Harrison)

Optionally, the laptopists arrange themselves in a circle, facing each other.

The laptopists are here to celebrate varying degrees of liberation from acousmatic music. Some have only given it up for hours; others for weeks or years. The addiction is a tough one to beat, and lapses are frequent.

Each laptopist takes turns to solo; the others must confine themselves to sympathetic and supportative noises at appropriate points. Their solo tells the story of their addiction, though must walk a fine line between evoking the negative cliches of acousmatic music, and keeping itself linked to healthier pursuits, like beat-based music. A solo may be indicated by standing up, by a spotlight, or by another theatrical mechanism (perhaps by passing a cuddly toy to the new soloist).

There may be a session leader, whose job is to select the order of solos, to support any soloist whose solo breaks down, keep things hopeful, and not allow anyone to turn the lights off. Some newcomers to the ensemble may be reluctant to solo at their first performance.

Since for some unfortunate individuals there are lapses, a further option is to have an unashamed acousmatic in the circle, fresh from an all-night studio session, who at a certain trigger of beat-based music will cover themselves in a curtain and only omit high art for the remainder of the performance (or until the session leader can eject them from the room, or at least, turn down their sound.)

2 Real Alea (dedicated to Scott Wilson)

This piece is about the many algorithmic composition techniques available in UK pubs, created by specialised code brewers. The piece may proceed on one or more of two levels:

1) Consumption of large amounts of algorithmic composition, in as many varieties as possible, though for short amounts of time per algorithm, with a connoisseurial flair, and perhaps with prizes for the top three algorithms.

2) The brewing of one or more new code algorithms using metaphors harvested from the brewing of beer. The live coding of the algorithms must be replete with in-jokes, and only accessible to those with a fuller background in algorithmic composition.

It is likely that all participants will have novelty T-shirts extolling the virtues of particular rare algorithms.

The piece may feature a guest performance from Chad McKinney, which must be telematic even if he is at the same festival, and involve a comparison of US and UK algorithm brewing.

3 Shandy

(dedicated to Shelly Knotts in good humour, but only on the understanding that no slight is intended to her, including association with averageness or shandy)

This piece is about diluting the power of acousmatic music with the sugary lemonade of Madonna*'s greatest hits.

One audience member is nominated the funding judge. They will allocate cash and cachet to the resulting performance based on its averageness.

Half the performers are assigned acousmatic gestures of verifiable high art excellence.

Half the performers are assigned bonafide low art pop moves.

The mix of the performers is the work. The performers should make token moves to integrate, but really they don't understand one another.

The work is exactly 3 minutes long and ends with a major chord.

Variation: the piece is exactly 20 minutes long, and ends with an extended sound transformation.

*insert any other female pop icon here, from Lady Lauper to Cyndi Gaga

4 Drunk programming

(dedicated to Kassen)

There is a noise music performance where the performer imbibes pure spirit, getting drunker as they perform; in an almost stylish way, the performer is sick and still continues.

This is the laptop ensemble equivalent. All laptopists have a ready supply of alcohol, perhaps as concentrated spirit. The aim is to type and tipple.

Version 1: laptopists perform any other piece, but continue to drink as they do so until the pieces' original outlines are blurred. (A suggestion would be to perform this at the close of a concert, repeating a work from earlier with the alcoholic twist).

Version 2: The laptopists try to improvise a new work, perhaps using heavy drinking as a topic of conversation as they work. They accompany the conversation with actual heavy drinking until one or more laptopists collapse, leave the stage, puke on the audience or otherwise take themselves out of the running. Again, having this last in a concert is probably wise.

This work is not meant to be competitive; no-one should try to drink more than Scott.

5 FREE BEER

The performers begin inert (think musical statues with no music). A projection or sign warns the audience that they will have to pay coins to performers in exchange for activity: it might state 'Awaiting freedom'. There may be a sign per performer: given a projection, there may be text for each laptopist, and when performing, 'free' replaces 'awaiting freedom'.

If a coin is placed near a performer, they may perform for a set time; either proportional to coin value (perhaps in local currency only), or a fixed time no matter what coin is offered. The set time is relatively short, and consists of outlining a musical theme.

There are two variations:

- 1) Once a theme is outlined, a performer repeats it over and over until another coin is provided.
- 2) A performer is just silent unless under the influence of a coin.

An overall countdown runs for the performance to a duration agreed in advance, however much money is being accumulated. No money can be accepted once the duration is over.

Any coins gained in this performance must be spent in the venue on drinks, for performers first but if necessary (given a large haul) for members of the audience too.

6 Cocktail hour

A set of different synthesis recipes are prepared in advance and put onto a menu. The audience request particular synthesis recipes from individual performers, who must type the recipe and run the sound for a duration equivalent to the audience member downing the sound. Extra snazziness is gained by live coding cocktail preparation moves, such as shimmying, juggling laptops or mobiles, tossing mice in the air, using keyboards on their side, impersonating Tom Cruise, and the like.

The performance either lasts an hour, or a duration that feels like an hour.

Variation: the performance is an installation which lasts all evening, with visitors coming and going as in a real bar; visitor requests cue particular sound activity as above.

7 Barrel roll

A laptop is set at the bottom of the hill, playing barrel organ simulations. A keg of beer is unleashed from the top of the hill, aimed at the laptop. The performance is over once the laptop has been crushed.

The performance may take place in simulated form.

A chorus of laptopists may comment on proceedings from side of the hill; their sound motifs may be derived from 'Donkey Kong'.

Variation: the whole performance takes place in the belly of a large transport plane, using an interior built-up ramp, or opening the exit ramp mid-air. A barrel roll is carried out while the performance proceeds.

8 Barred

Materials are prepared in advance: audio and/or video of spilling drinks, and bar rowdiness.

One performer acts as the landlord/bar owner. Each time a laptopist 'spills a drink' or sounds too rowdy, they are given first a yellow card, then a red card and barred from the performance. The performance ends when all the ensemble have been so barred.

9 Whine Critics

While laptopists live code sound to an agreed time limit, over-flowery descriptions of the sound and processes are made by one or more critics. They are likely to be a mixture of derogatory slander, and over-enthusiastic expostulations. Laptopists may only respond to their critics through the wit and brilliance of their live coding, though this may entail use of comments.

10 Cider

This piece can only be performed on apple computers or i-Devices, or lacking any Apple tech, a glow in the dark apple can be attached to alternative computational devices.

The piece has no set musical restrictions, except that all performers must use Garage Band, creating a work from scratch on stage in exactly 2 minutes. The audience hears the gradual construction of these works as auditioned. At the 2 minutes mark, all the final compositions are played back simultaneously.

Variation: non-Apple users bitch about the Apple fans from the sidelines while the Applists have fun.

11 Vodka

Russian music and vodka advertising is manipulated until frostbite and/or political repression sets in. Pushkin may be celebrated at any point during the performance.

12 Trappist

A clash of Belgian beer and trap music is instigated. The music is 100% stronger than the usual music created by the laptop ensemble, and the piece finishes in half the usual time.

13 Drinks cabinet

One of more of the pieces in this set are performed simultaneously, by one or more teenagers left in their parent's laptop salon while said parents are away for the weekend.

14 Whisky

(dedicated to Pete Stollery)

In this piece, which must not actually be performed in concert, a group of composers gather round a table and one of them then decides to buy the rest a round of whiskies. The whiskies are delivered, and there is much comparison through sniffing of each others' drinks.

Instructions (2008)

Text from a work for headphones created in 2008 as Nilson tried and failed to keep himself relevant in contemporary arts circles. Smacking of desperation, the piece premiered at Sonic Residues, Stony Brook, NY, April 29-May 12 2008. Also appeared at Soundwaves festival, Brighton, 17th July 2011, and the Digital Poetry Exhibition (SEE IT, READ IT, HEAR IT!) for the BYTE Gallery at Transylvania University, 2015.

Apologies

There is no easy way to say this

Here is a secret message only for you

I will try to be polite, but I'd like to give you some instructions

you don't have to follow them, but I hope you'll be charmed

And if you agree to follow me what fun we will have!

If you ever get in trouble, please just do the best you can

ok, I assume you're standing still ready to begin

So, as a practice, move twice left on my count

one, five

Now, three times forward on this mark:

two, seven, fourteen point five

Please raise your left hand slowly towards the ceiling

Slowly

Slowly

Don't look at anyone else. They're just jealous

You can turn around slowly on the spot until you are facing back the other way

and four times forward with left arm in the air

and now to your left three times

fourteen, twelve, minus seven

You can slowly lower your left arm

but say out loud as you do so, 'I am following instructions'

You can disobey if you like

You can rewrite the rule set

Do something different to the next instruction

Now wait

Wait for it

Thankyou for joining in

Look out!

Questions to Dagstahl

A wonderful meeting on live coding took place at Dagstahl in 2013 (Collaboration and learning through live coding, Dagstuhl Seminar 13382, September 15 – 20). Though invited to attend, Click Nilson agonised for so long over the decision that he died in 2015. He was not missed, but did send by way of proxy the text below, which may be of little interest to Nilson scholars.

Trapped in an algorithm of my own making, at the mercy of computational foresight; to make music from within a machine. How live is this cog? What profundity of musical action is available to the musician so placed?

Sometimes the indirections of programming can appear too far; to lead to wilfully esoteric and imperceptibly differentiated mappings, to lose gestural connection with the squelchy hard-nosed spatial physical world but for the tiptap of code modification and a certain searing of the eyeballs. On the other hand, the natural habitat of the composer-programmer of the 21st century may be to cover themselves in code and type out solutions to their improvised anxieties.

The typical critical tropes span from 1-1 action, through audience comprehension, to engagement with algorithms. But what are the musical consequences? Is it just another brush with formalism, or a wonderful new world of computer literate improvisation? Is there a performance practice now forming that can last, that may in time seem so accepted that it die its own standard-jazz-death of university tutelage and textbooks? Is the diverse and bubbling practice of live coding a beautiful comment on the vagaries of software survival and musical style?

Sorry to pose so many questions, and not be there to improvise answers. Feel free to modify any part of this extemporaneous text to your own musical satisfaction.

Obituary

This obituary was posted to the live code mailing list one minute after Nilson's demise, at 12:13am on 18th February 2015, but he had already been forgotten, and anyway, had become irrelevant before he was born.

Some of you on this list knew of Click Nilson, and a few met him, and one of you lent him a jumper.

I'm sorry to report that after a long battle with terminal identity crisis, the lesser known composer Click Nilson died late last night; He passed at precisely 12:12am, his second favourite time. His last words were reported to be 'append epitaph later'.

Click Nilson was an infuriating and elusive presence in the nascent live coding scene, in which artists argue about the nature and very definition of algorithmic art through public spectacle (they also argue with themselves in private about the same). He was the author of a number of text music instruction works which often involve a live coding protagonist as agent provocateur of musical discourse. He appeared in public rarely, usually to berate his audience and speak deliberately bad Swedish; he sometimes employed actors to the same purpose. Whilst he authored at least one tract about his work, the criminally overrated anti-novella 'Rewrite me', the authorship of certain academic outputs such as his manifesto on practice skills for live coding has been disputed.

Born and passed in Stockholm, living most of his life in Sweden but for a few isolated visits to Germany and Mongolia, his contribution to the Swedish economy was minimal, and his influence on world events unremarkable. Coming to protuberance in the late 1960s European avant garde, he retreated after a crisis of confluence, only to return briefly and regrettably in the mid 1970s and with similar mistaken views at a few subsequent later occasions.

He does not merit the amount of attention this obituary has already given him, and were he alive to complain, would no doubt have the words presented here be erased from history and replaced with something else entirely.

His later works languished in obscurity, including the ascii symphony for 256 live coders (each with the ability to type one character only), a theatre piece for an anguished scholar of poetry reading ('re-cite me'), and the improvisation structure 'landspeed live coding record attempt'. Occasional code boxer, curator, bon vivant, mal vivant and hen party special guest, he is survived by his great grandfather Jane.

He would have appreciated the irony of dying four days short of his 64th birthday, twice, after eight sixteenths of a thirty second.



Click Nilson on his deathbed (artist's impression)

by Sturmen, BA MA MS MS PhD, March 3rd 2016 (with corrections March 4th 2016)

From a limited archive of the writings of the late Click Nilson

Only just discovered by the scholarship of the Anglo-Dutch scholar Nicholas van 't Klooster, Click Nilson's diaries were recovered from a skip just outside Goteborg. The only two worthwhile entries are reproduced below.

Extract of the journals, February 20th 1975:

It has been a fruitless day. I have not found any music of value, and even when I listened to old music, to try to prompt the new, I was only led to despair. Where is the radical thought, which I was so sure was our generation's destiny? Why does the position right now seem so fixed, so immutable? My very complaint is probably just the same as the next composer over; we are writing the same words just like we write the same music. I need some radical action to break the deadlock; I need to get outside of the system of fixed pieces, and outside the systems of systems music, and somehow break away!

Februrary 21st

The most profound change has come over me. It is like being born anew. When I say change, well, change is the life blood of the new system; the system that breaks systems; the system of self-renewal. This is no mystical trapclap, but the rewriting of everything that came before; literally, the rewriting. I can take my diary entry of yesterday, and see where to go now; I can take the very words and re-distribute them, and I shall be happy.

Introduction

The previously little known and little valued composer Click Nilson deserves, if grudgingly, more critical attention, which is what this collection of his musical writings, or perhaps most pertinently, rewritings, sets out to do. Decidedly not by his own assertion a great composer, he was ignored by critics and commissioners, unknown to the general public, unwilling to set foot outside his home for long periods of his life, and took a genuine delight in cultivating the sort of mystery that makes a biographer curse. Nilson presents an unlikely subject, and would have drifted entirely from view were it not for his peripheral and possibly influential involvement in the history of live coding, a subject matter that has been gathering the sort of critical attention in recent years than Nilson only dreamed of in his lifetime.

Nilson had little known hobbies: he was an amateur amateurologist, and a professional Venusian meteorologist. He discovered four new species of bookworm, and invented the forty five and a half times table. A pioneer of automatic postmodern text generator studies, he was obsessed with time travel as a means to rewrite history, and unsurprisingly, never achieved it (many crank scientists received a little funding from what money he scraped together, and there is quite a correspondence between him and various failed inventors and conmen around Europe).

All these achievements, however, are highly significant compared to his paltry and downright pathetic compositional output. Selecting items for this text, it was incredibly hard to know what to put in, given the awful options available. I resent having to promote it to any degree; but what does his estate expect, if they commission an arch-rival to demolish his memory?

Some unkind commentators accused him of being an alias for a writer struggling to re-write themselves, or at most a mouthpiece for a disenchanted art collective. I think he was just unsure what to write, lacked the talent to create anything solid, and bumbled experimentally where he could make a virtue of noncommittal, hoping that others would improve his half arsed sketches through their greater facility and energy.

Enjoy the book.

Collected Rewritings

In which the rewritings of Click Nilson are collected for posterity to refute.

Utterly unsuitable for human readers. May work well in a general introductory course on music at pre-school level.

This book has received few to no endorsements, and the testimonials collated here are the best we could round up:

‘This book should never have seen the light of midnight, let alone day’

Hildegard of Bingen

‘I haven’t read it. I’m not going to read it. I will deliberately read other books constantly forever rather than risk accidentally seeing a single word of it’

God

‘The 1391st edition was appalling, but that was a joy compared to this new expanded edition’

Sent anonymously from the future

‘It couldn’t be a less appealing concoction if Stalin’s toenail clippings were served in a crisp bowl, Chairman Mao’s stool was dried and fashioned into a bar stool at which you sat to drink his urine, and the accumulated lies of every politician on the planet were stirred into a broth of pure evil’

Click Nilson’s mum

‘The text reads like a committee of forty academics were tasked with creating a pulsating thriller novel. To be clear; it isn’t a thriller, I didn’t turn the pages, and I had to go and examine real academic committee minutes after just reading the preface to restore any joy of intellectual life.’

Wayne Rooney

‘I didn’t know the guy, and I didn’t like his work. But I can’t deny his unimportance.’

Bo Nilsson

‘How can they expect me to review a book released two hundred years after my death?’

Jane Austen

‘They won’t entice me to read this book, but I do have many complaints about the way it has been handled. The choice of subject in particular seems entirely misguided, but I also take exception to the majority of the words. Even the connectives could have been dispensed with, since the deletion of all the unfortunate clauses would leave them little to do.’

Click Nilson