

John Andrew Wilhite-Hannisdal

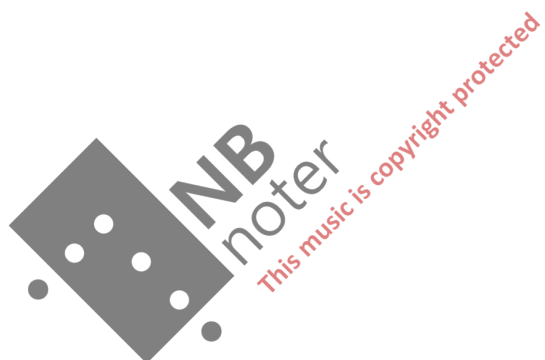
Torsketropping

Version 2

For dancing percussionists and 3D sound.



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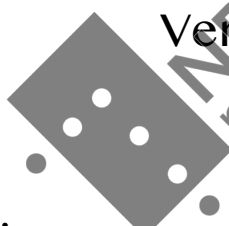


Torsketropping



By John Andrew Wilhite-Hannisdal

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For dancing percussionists and 3D sound.

Commissioned by Notam (Norwegian center for
Technology in Art and Music), and written for Pinguins.

2021

Score

Background and acknowledgements:

This composition is the result of a scientific and artistic collaboration between individuals actors and institutions Universitet i Agder, Notam, and Havforskningsinstituttet. The composition was commissioned by Notam for their program at the 2021 Ultima Festival in Oslo, Norway. The writing of this piece was made possible by Komponistfondet and Fond for Lyd og Bilde (Norsk kulturråd). The piece was written for (and developed with) Trio Pinquins. The electronics for the first version were written in large part by Balint Laczko, who also played an important role in developing the work as a whole. The live-electronics in this second version are created by John Andrew Wilhite-Hannisdal. **The score of the second version is also written such that the piece can be performed by both percussionists and dancers unfamiliar with musical notation.**

The composers would like to thank the following individuals who have contributed to the project:

Rebekah Oomen (UiO/UiA), Cato Langnes (Notam), Susanna Huneide Thorbjørnsen (UiA/IMR), Christian Blom (Notam), Bjørg Tønnesen (Notam), Leo McCormack (Aalto University), Esben Moland Olsen (IMR), Pinquins, Rina Rosenqvist, Jonas Carlsen, Torgrim Torve, and the staff and technicians at the Institute of Marine Research, Flødevigen.

Introduction

“Torsketromming 1” is a piece for moving percussionists and 3D sound.

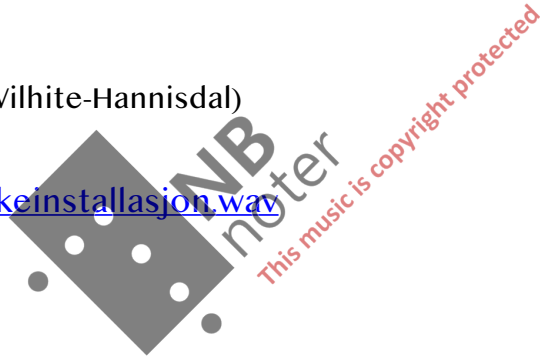
The percussion instruments will be set up on stands around the room for performance (diagrams shown later in the score), and the audience will be seated under a “sound dome”.

Where a sound dome is not available, the audience should sit in the center of the room with speakers around them in another surround set-up, ideally with as many speakers as possible.

The 3d sound is developed from underwater recordings of cod (in Norwegian “Torsk”). The 3d sound was developed in Max and Reaper and is performed live (in response to the percussionists). Sample .wav files accompany the score so that the performer can anticipate the sounds in preparation.

Sample of live electronics (Wilhite-Hannisdal)

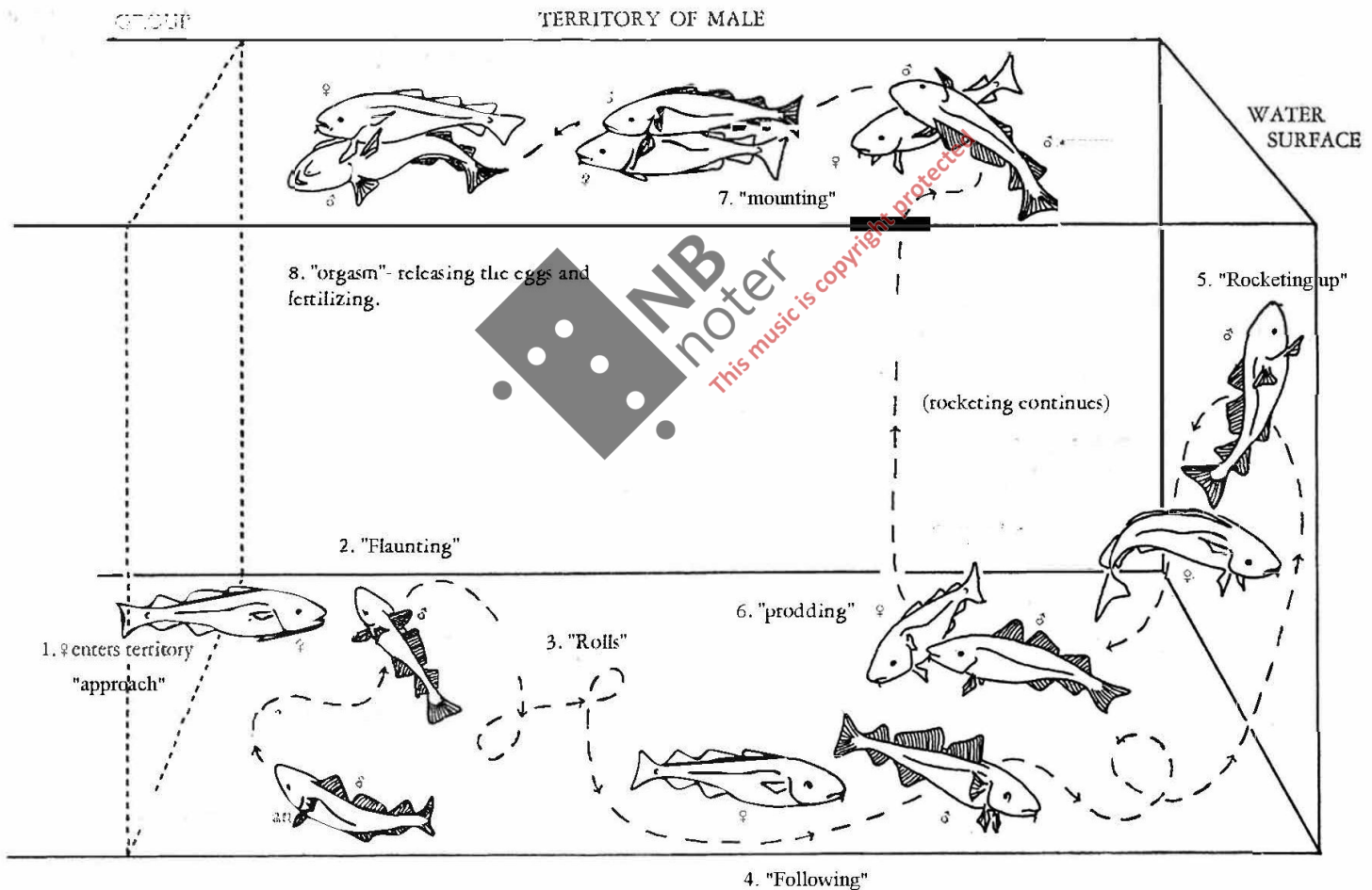
<http://johnandrew.no/torskeinstallasjon.wav>



Torsketromming is a piece for percussion and 3D sound.

The percussion instruments will be set up on stands around the room for performance (diagrams shown later in the score), and the audience will be seated under a “sound dome”. Where a sound dome is not available, the audience should sit in the center of the room with speakers around them in another surround set-up. The 3d sound is developed from underwater recordings of cod (in Norwegian “Torsk”). This sound was developed in Max and Reaper and is performed live (in response to the percussionists). Sample .wav files accompany the score so that the performer can anticipate the sounds in preparation.

The percussionists’ movements and music-making are based on the codfish mating ritual:



THE STEPS IN THIS RITUAL ARE HEREAFTER REFERRED TO AS "THE PROGRESSION". DIAGRAM BASED ON DEPICTION IN VIVIAN BRAWN'S 1961 ARTICLE, "REPRODUCTIVE BEHAVIOUR OF THE COD", PUBLISHED IN *BEHAVIOUR* V.18, NO.3

One percussionist is to play the role of the **female**, and two percussionists are to play the role of “**competing males**”. Female cods are not so easily impressed. The female cod wears a marching bass drum.

In this piece, the percussionists’ performances are governed by **fixed social rules (A.)** and **variable relations to elements in the 3D sound (B.)**. The sound vocabulary of the performers is governed by **the actions in the progression (how percussionists play the instruments) (D.), and the instrumentation and set up itself (F.)**. The variable relations (B.) change in each of the 4 scenes, which each contain their own “tempos”.

This document includes the following elements:

- A. List of fixed social rules between performers
- B. Variable relations to elements in the 3D sound according to scene
- C. “The progression” (shown in the brown diagram), and relation to scenes (see A)
- D. Detailed descriptions of each step in “The progression” in terms of performance by percussionists
- E. Set-up of percussion and speakers in the room
- F. Percussion set-ups (rigging and instrumentation)
- G. Movement in the room (per scene)
- H. Costumes

A. List of fixed social rules between performers

1. Closer proximity between performers = More movement/excitement
2. More excitement = longer sounds
3. Always follow “the progression”—
 - Perform the actions from “the progression” shown in the diagram on page 4.
 - Detailed descriptions of how to perform these actions are found in “D” (page 8).
 - How far along one goes in the progression before repeating or pausing is determined by which of the four scenes one is in. (see “C”, on page 7).
 - In scene number 4, the “progression” must be followed strictly, meaning that if it is not completed, it must be started again from the Approach/Flaunt gesture. In the other scenes, order is to be referenced, but not followed strictly (things can be repeated in the order, and one can start from a place that is not the beginning).
4. The female always loses interest (except in the final iteration, where mating is completed).
5. Competing males try to distract the female from the mating progression with the other male.
6. The female codfish is wearing a bassdrum. Males and the female herself can play on this bassdrum. This drum contains a “lions roar”, which will be pulled at the end of the piece.

Other general movement rules:

1. Keep the neck straight
2. Move as if you are floating in water (imagine there are currents, and less gravity).

3. Never have a consistent speed. Unless stationary, always either accelerate or decelerate.

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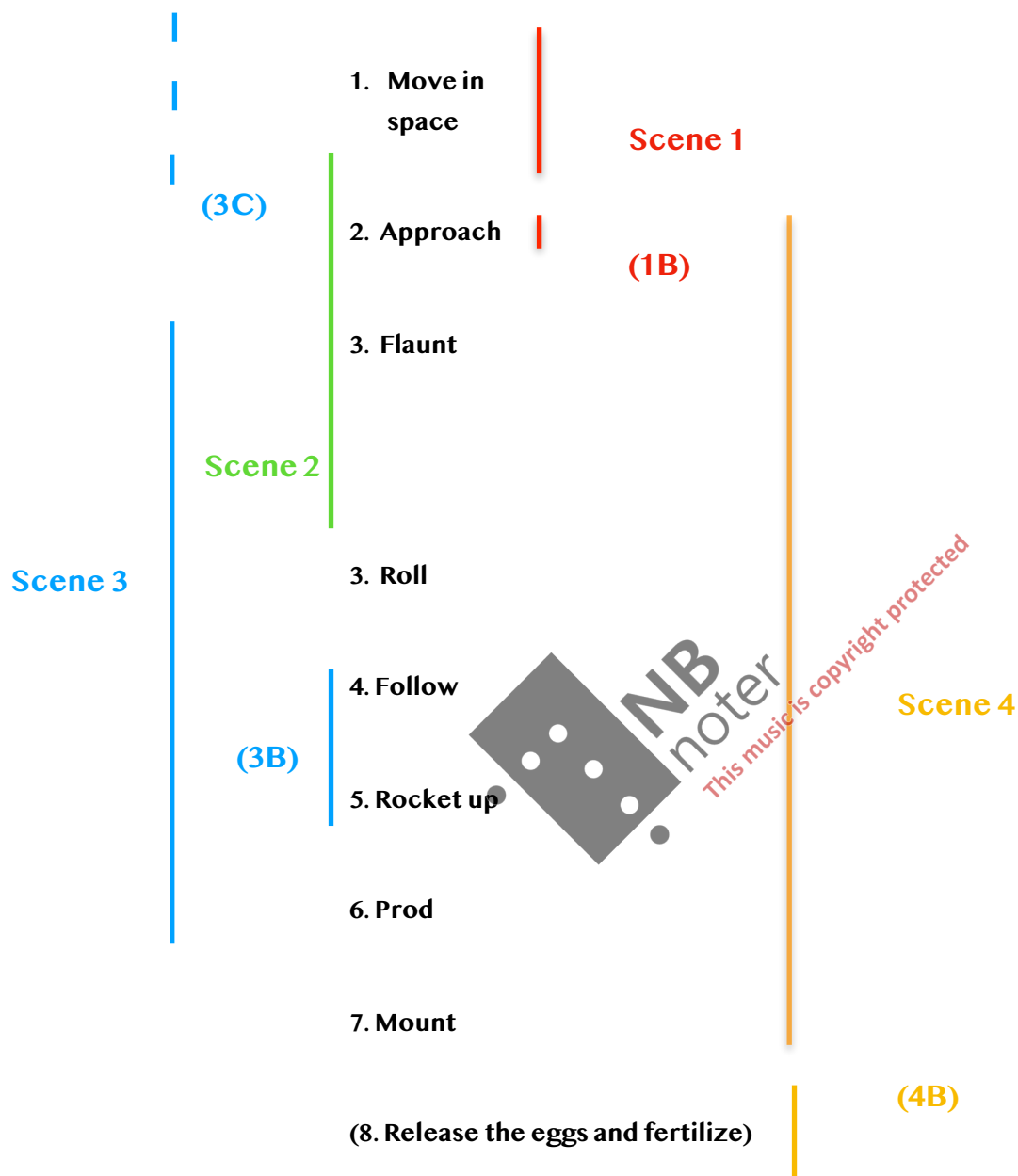
4. Move faster when playing instruments that are elevated higher in the air, and move slower when playing instruments that are not as highly elevated. The higher, the faster. The lower, the slower.



B. Variable relations to elements in the 3D sound according to scene

Scene #	Input from performers to computer.	Output from performers to computer.
1	More movement by performers leads to greater variation in the electronics	Lowering pitch in 3D sound leads to greater attraction between performers (& therefore closer proximity)
2	When the performers perform the “roll” gesture, live electronics gesture “x” is played through 3D sound.	Hearing “human sounds” in 3D sound triggers increase in speed.
3	Immediate repetition of an idea by a single player, or between players triggers “structural arpeggio” in 3D sound.	Performers alternate between imitating gestures they hear in the 3D sound, and imitating another performer.
4	Performers cue ending— the recording of the cod orgasm— when entering the final spin.	Lower and longer sounds in 3D sound encourage lower and longer sounds in the performers.

C. “The progression” (shown in the brown diagram), and relation to scenes (see A)



In the “sparse” **Scene 1**, performers should perform **action 1**, also performing **action 2** in the transition to Scene 2 (1B). In the “fluid” **Scene 2**, performers should perform actions 1 through 4. In the “wild” **Scene 3**, performers should perform **actions 1-6**. Scene 3B is a culminating subsection of Scene 3, where **rocketing and following gestures are repeated over and over in a building frenzy**. Scene 3C is a kind of **intermezzo/caesura** where the performers are less active. **Scene 4 is the whole cycle, but strictly in order and repeating over and over, speeding up**, and 4B is the release of the eggs.

D. Detailed descriptions of each step in “The progression” in terms of performance by percussionists

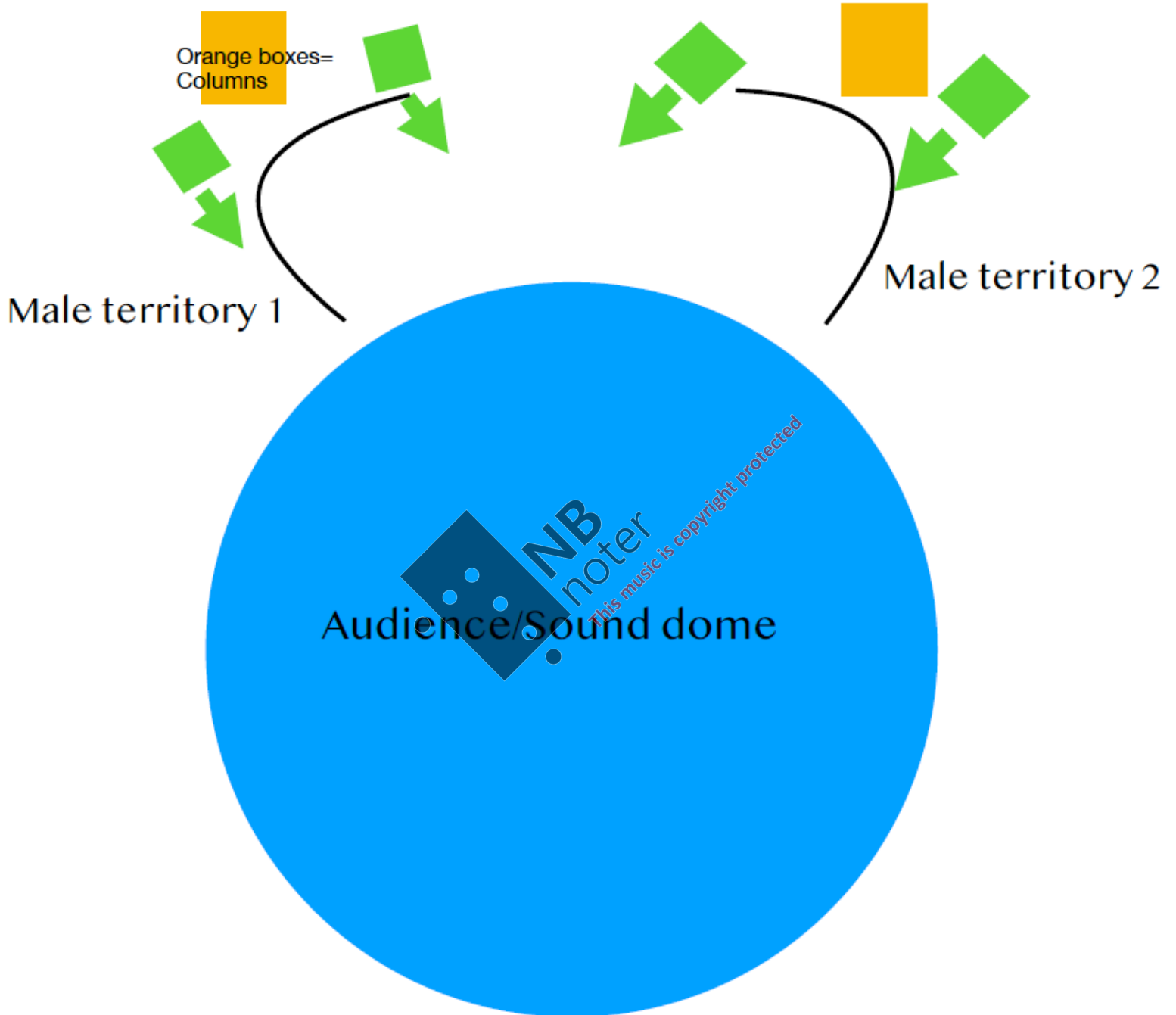
1. **Moving in space**— walk slowly through the room, click intermittently with brushes or clicking device. Don't be afraid to float in one place for a while. Males should stay near their territory while the female can go anywhere.
2. **Approach**— Female approaches male territory. Male move out towards the female and opens arms widely and, while looking at her, backs slowly into his territory. Female follows. The move out should be **fast**, and the moving backwards should be **slow**.
3. **Flaunt** — Still facing the female, the male leans back with arms out. The male uses a superball to vibrate on drums in that posture. Friction is key here. Anything seductive and sultry. Flashy can also be good with sharp masculine gestures. The female can respond with answering gestures in a kind of dialogue.
4. **Roll**— Percussionists roll slowly with backs touching each other, while playing instruments nearby. The flaunt and roll can move fluidly into one another i.e. one can roll while in the middle of flaunting, or go from a roll into a flaunt. Both males and females should roll. One can roll alone, back to back, or next to each other. Rolls are a **slow tempo**.
5. **Follow**— Follow each other— both physically, but also musically. Rhythms should be uneven and have a fluctuating **accelerandos and decelerandos**.
6. **Rocket**— Play instruments in quickly accelerating and crescendoing rhythms/dynamic in an upwards physical gesture. Can be played in both a kind of drum roll, and as a kind of glissando (sliding a stick or rubber ball across different objects). Rocketing is a **very fast** tempo, speeding up at the top of the percussion stand.
7. **Prod**— Bump into each other and into each others instruments. This is especially important in terms of the female, who is wearing a bass drum. The males should ram the drum with speed from both sides, and play it in different ways as they do so. Things **slow down** to a near halt in the moment of prodding, then speed up again shortly after.
8. **Mount**— Males have velcro on their stomachs, and the female has velcro on the front of the bass drum. To mount, the male plays the females bass drum on both sides of the drum while sticking himself to the front of the drum.
9. **Releasing the Eggs** – more on this in section “I”

E. Set-up of percussion and speakers in the room

*if possible, hang woodblocks throughout from light-rigging (with fishing line)

Green boxes = speakers
(used to amplify percussion)

Orange boxes=
Columns



F. Percussion set-ups

(rigging and instrumentation)

Stands are 2.5 meters across, 2.1 m tall .

Instruments attached to the stand are to include: Toms, bass drum, wood blocks, guiro, lions roars.

Instruments are to be attached such that the lower the pitch, the higher up they are mounted.

-this means bongos are the lowest drums, with the smallest toms next, and bass drums at the top.

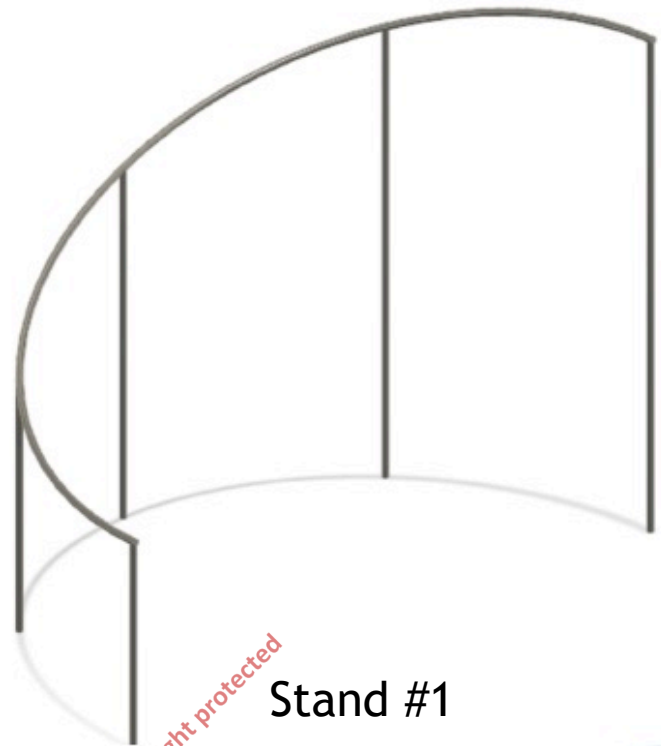
-the exception are guiros, woodblocks, and chimes, which can be attached anywhere.

Instruments are to be played with, “rods” (including back ends), brushes, and super balls.

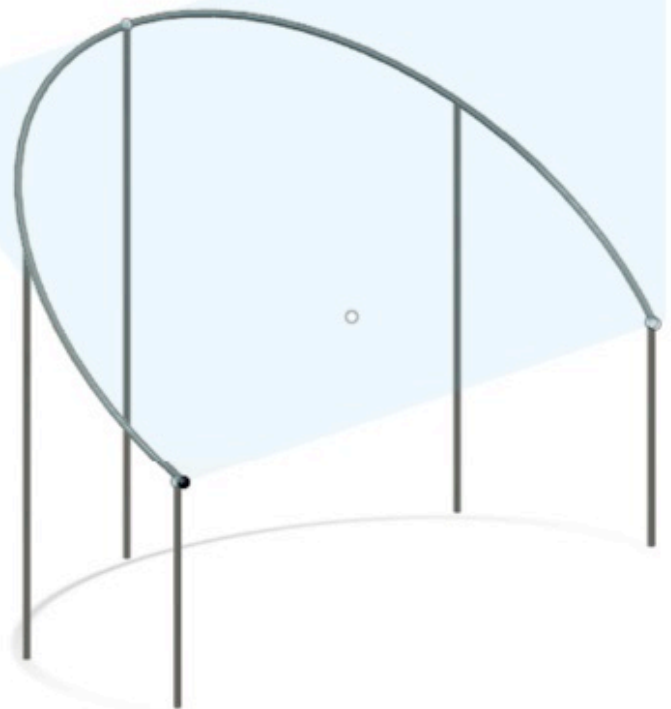
Lions roar drumheads should be attached to the backs of as many drums as possible.

Stands designed by John Andrew Wilhite
-Hannisdal and Jonas Carlsen.

Stands made (in steel) by Torgrim Torve



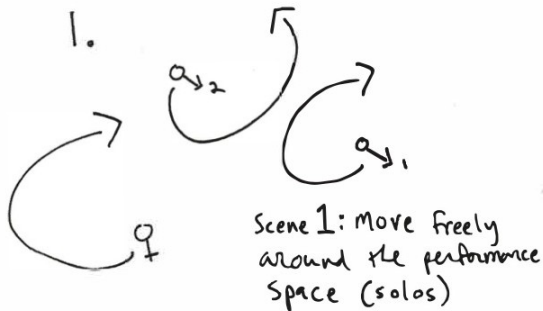
Stand #1



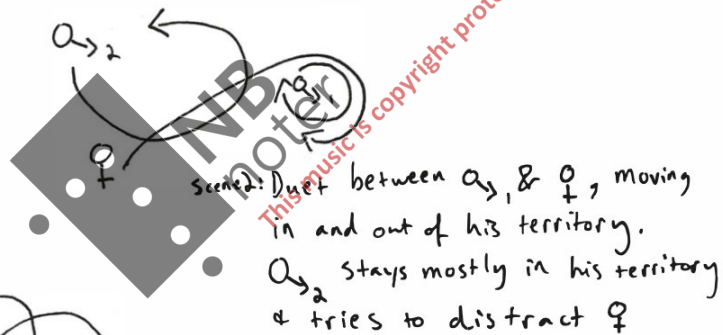
Stand #2

G. Movement in the room (per scene)

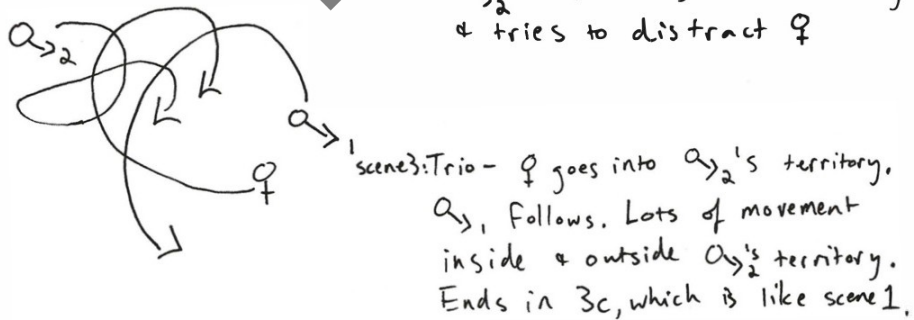
General Organization of scenes: 1. Solos (in space), 2. Duets (female going back and forth between territories), 3. Trio (back and forth between territories). 4. Trio and then Duet (duet in final iteration).



2.

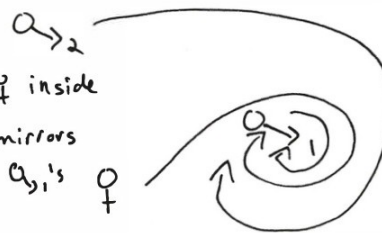


3.



4.

Scene 4: Duet between α_2 & ♀ inside α_1 's territory. α_2 mirrors them on the outside of α_1 's territory.



H. Costumes

Cod in southern Norway are a golden brown color.

Performers will wear gold sweatshirts and sweatpants (or sweatshirts and sweatpants painted gold), with velcro sewed on the front (in order to “mount”).

Fish eyes will be painted on the sides of the sweatshirt hoods.



We will 3d print the little cod goatee, which will be glued to the performers' chins.

The drums will also be wrapped in gold wrapping paper (around the outside, not over the drum heads), and the frames will be painted gold.

The piece ends with a repetition of the whole cycle repeated faster and faster. The “extra” male, follows behind the female as they repeat the ritual in alternating territories. After repeating this a number of times, the performers then begin to repeat the “rocketing” gesture twice within the progression. When they repeat the “rocketing gesture” three times within a single procession, the “extra male”, whoever this may be at the time, spins outside of the territory. The two remaining performers repeat the progression one more time, but when they come to the rocketing, they continue spinning around and around, drifting together and ceasing to play on the stands. They begin to spin together, and then the male grabs the female’s drum and plants his velcro onto it. He then begins to pull the lions roar inside the female’s drum. This cues the final noise (a long cod orgasm) from the electronic. The bubble machine turns on, and the lights then fade out.

