

Cage, John
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pt. 1

THEATRE PIECE.

PART I

John Cage

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THEATRE PIECE

The large numbers within brackets refer to a gamut of 20 nouns and/or verbs chosen by the performer who writes each on a card. These cards are placed (preferably face-down) so that knowing the number of each is facilitated (e.g. 5 columns of 4 or 4 of 5).

The large numbers are sometimes followed by smaller ones marked plus or minus. Plus means the introduction of new elements into the gamut (from a shuffled deck placed face down) at any points in the gamut and the removal of the old ones to a reserved deck. This latter is used whenever the sign minus appears. This plus and minus operation is only done after having determined the nature of the large number it accompanies.

The brackets refer to time*which may be measured by any of the rulers provided or by others made by the performer. Rulers may be changed at any points. The performer is to prepare a 30 minute program of action using as much or as little of the material provided (horizontally and vertically) as he wishes. If he requires more material horizontally he may request that it be composed.

If questions arise as to what is to be done, 4 may be asked, providing they are posed in such a way that a number or numbers (1-20) will provide an answer. The numbers in the column below each bracket give these answers. X is no answer (performer's free choice). None of the answers given may be used in response to more than a single question.

Pages may be performed in any order. If one extends beyond the vertical lines, an overlap (or an anticipation or extension) is indicated.

Each performer is who he is (e.g. performing musician, dancer, singer), but he is also performing a piece of theatrical music. Music is here understood to mean the production of sounds. Thus a performer's decision as to what he is to do will often be determined by whether he thus makes a sound.

A performer may include other performers in his gamut (as nouns).

For the purposes of performance, a performer may memorize his part, or may read it from cards which he carries about or which he places at useful points on the stage. He may time his actions by reference to a stop-watch which he carries or by reference to clocks placed on the stage.

There is no conductor or director. A rehearsal will have the purpose of removing physically dangerous obstacles that may arise due to the unpredictability involved.

The lighting will be general. Alterations of this may be included in a performer's gamut (as verbs).

* These time-brackets are the time within which an action may be made. Any amount of the bracket may be used. Preparation for the action may be made at any time (outside or within the bracket); and any necessary and relevant actions following are also free with respect to time.

J.C. Stony Point, N.Y. January 1960

15

6,10,12

11,19

7

5,12,17

1+2

9

6,17

18

2,8

17+2

3

x

x

x

12,18

10+2

10

6,16,20

1

4,10,17

3+2

4,15

x

x

6,16

14+3-2

14

x

x

8

11-1

1,14

15,20

x

8

20-2

6

17

17

17

2,11,15

9,17

15,16

19

x

14

+2-2

3 -1

2.8.14

5.12

x

x

20 -3

8.15.18

4.11

1

15

15 +1

20

7.15

x

14

12.18 -1

4

9.16

x

10

18 +2

5.11

9

2

14

9

5.15

9.11

4

x

20 + 1
x
3, 13, 19
x
12

9
6, 11, 13
3
4
17
6, 12, 16
4
6
x
17

12
 16
 x
 x
 8, 19

<u>19</u> +2	<u>16-2</u>
4, 13, 19	10
x	x
8, 11, 18	20
12	5
<u>6, 17-2</u>	<u>11</u>
5	17, 20
15	9
4, 11	13
11, 20	3
	<u>20+2</u>
	5
	10
	10, 12, 20
	16

<u>6-2</u>	7,	
19	17	
12	□	<u>13-3</u>
6, 12	4, 11, 13	15
x	x	2
	6	8, 10, 17
	15	7
	<u>18</u>	
	10	
	x	
	15	
<u>3-2</u>	12, 14, 18	
10, 12, 14	x	
x	x	
6	x	
x	x	

$\overline{13 + 4}$
 3, 14
 9
 x
 1, 5

$\overline{15 - 1}$
 17
 9
 2, 7, 11, 19
 x

$\overline{15 - 1}$
 15
 4
 1
 20

$\overline{3}$
 x
 16
 x
 10

$\overline{3 - 2}$
 8
 16, 20
 11, 14, 17
 x

10

x
x
8

9²⁰

14
x
8, 18, 20
10

8⁴

12
x
11
6

20 +2

6
x
x
12

20¹

7
x
x
13

10, 15

x
x
x
x

13

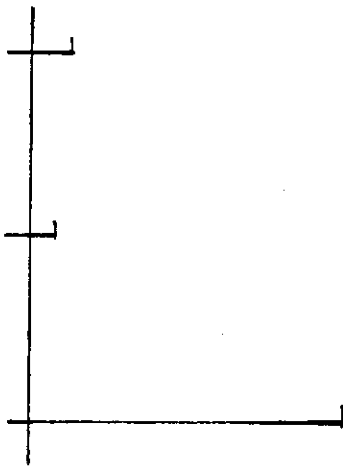
x
x
x
x

16

x
13, 18, 20
x
x

1

16, 18
x
3
x



3
15
18
1
8

10 +1	18 -2
3	10
5	3
x	7
x	15, 19
	+2 -1
12	
x	
3	
x	
x	

5 -5	4 -1	14	9 +1-2
4	x	x	8, 10
9, 15	x	x	19
x	x	17	1
7	x	x	1, 5

1 - 1
 5,7,11
 19
 11,15
 4,11,16

2
 x
 x
 x
 14
18-2
 8,20
 3,16
 13,14
 x

<u>14</u> +1 7 3 x x <u>3</u> x +1	<u>3</u> x 15 3, 9, 18 1, 7, 10
3, 7, 10, 14 8, 19 1, 4, 13 10, 11	

<u>19</u> 4, 14 10 12 10

4⁻¹
2, 8
x
x
x

<u>13</u> 17 x x 9	<u>8</u> 5 x 7 3
<u>16</u> 13 4 x 3	
<u>16</u> 16, 18, 20 x 5 3	

2 + 2

4
15
12
9, 20

2 + 2

2
9, 19
14
17

1, 14 + 2

12
2, 12, 19
14
8

13 + 1 - 2

11
7, 11
3
10, 20

11 - 3

5
7, 20
x
10

6 - 3

1
4, 19
16
9

8 + 2

x
12
11
5

9 + 1

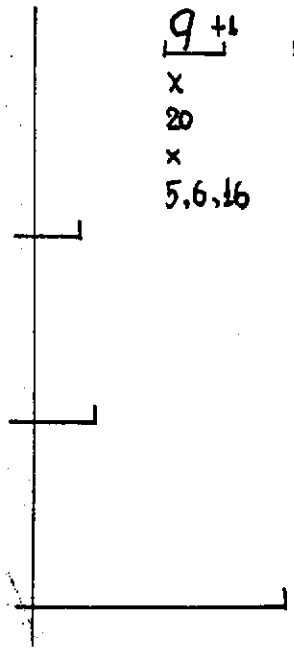
x
20
x
5, 6, 16

17

x
x
6
4, 10

15

8, 12
x
5
3



11
 19
 x
 13
 12

7-1
 x
 x
 x
 7
7 -2
 x
 x
 15
 x

5⁺
18
 7
 8
 x
 39
8 18 +1
 2,20
 2
 7
 10

10
 2,18
 5
 15,19,20
 x

19⁻¹
 6
 1
 7
 14,19

1⁻⁴
 2
 5,13
 x
 4,17

17
 x
 9
 x
 x

3 -2
 x
 6,16
 12,18
 4,11,20

17
 x
 x
 12
 x

8
 x
 x
 1
 x

14 10
 x x
 4 20
 11 7
 x x

20⁻¹

6
 x
 4
 15, 16, 17
 8

1
 x 13
 x 8
 2 x
 x 18

3+2-1
 12, 14
 1
 1, 6, 12
 10

5-2
 x
 18
 14, 15, 17
 2, 5, 8, 14

9 -1
 9, 10
 15
 5
 x

17 -1

9, 17
 2, 11
 1, 3
 12, 16, 20

16 -3

8, 16
 3, 8
 x
 3, 11, 16, 19

7 -2

x
 x
 x

3, 11, 19

11 -2

x
 x
 x

12

14 -1

11, 16, 20

x
 x

2, 13

4 -1

10, 15, 16, 17, 18
 13
 19
 5, 15

10
 x
 1
 9
 x
39 +1
 x
 x
 7
 x

1, 11, 17 +5
 2, 6, 16, 18
 7, 11
 4
 10, 17
2 +1
 1
 16
 x
 16

12, 15 +2 -1
 9
 x
 x
 11, 18

18,
13, -2
7
14
6
1

19 +1, 13 +1
4, 6, 19
1
x
1, 10
6, 13, 17, 20 +2,
18, 19
10
9
15

8, 9, 11, 17 +2 -2
1, 12, 17
8
x
6, 8, 15
7, 16
x
x
x
x

4⁻²
17
1
9
12, 18
3

3⁺²⁻²
5
20
11, 17
11

1, 13⁺²⁻²

6⁺²⁻¹

x
5, 8
14
2

x
x
6, 20
8

19⁻²

10⁻¹

1, 5
x
x
1

x
7
15
5

19⁻¹

17⁺²

4
8
9, 20
11

12
x
5, 11, 13
x

$$\begin{array}{r} \overline{620} \quad +1-3 \\ \times \\ 13 \\ \times \\ 4 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \overline{9} \\ \times \\ \times \\ 7 \\ \times \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \overline{10} \quad +3-6 \\ \times \\ 2 \\ \times \\ 5 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \overline{4} \\ 15.20 \\ 6 \\ 4 \\ 10 \end{array}$$

6 ⁺¹	18	+1
7	19	
14	8, 18, 20	
7	13	
20	10	
9, 17	+1	

7
13
6
5, 19

17 ⁺²
x
x
4
x
2
+6
-1

x
10
5
18

12
8, 10
17
1
9

19	-2
x	
15	
x	
19	

11 _____

5
8
14
1

12
4
5
7
x
x

6 _____

5
13
10
20

