
Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository

4-20-2023 1:30 PM

Non-Directed Time

Danial Derakhshan, *The University of Western Ontario*

Supervisor: Frehner, Paul, *The University of Western Ontario*

: De Souza, Jonathan Gregory, *The University of Western Ontario*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music degree in
Music

© Danial Derakhshan 2023

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd>

 Part of the Art Education Commons, Audio Arts and Acoustics Commons, Music Commons,
Performance Studies Commons, Philosophy Commons, and the Psychology Commons

Recommended Citation

Derakhshan, Danial, "Non-Directed Time" (2023). *Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository*. 9243.
<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/9243>

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarship@Western. It has been accepted
for inclusion in Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository by an authorized administrator of
Scholarship@Western. For more information, please contact wlsadmin@uwo.ca.

Abstract

Non-Directed Time is a sixteen-minute composition for mixed septet and soundtracks. Its two movements are entitled *Brainwash* and *Introduction*. The piece aims to challenge listeners' perception of passing time through gradual transformations between timeless, non-directional musical textures to moments of textural clarity and directionality. The musical material in my composition repeats at both large-scale and micro-scale levels, developing an alternative musical time structure and a sense of familiarity. Thus, changes in repeating material affect the experience of this time structure, in which time seems to expand and contract. Because these changes are gradual and their goals are unpredictable, listeners may feel suspended in time—until a sudden realization reveals the transformational process to them. The sense of waiting and temporal suspension, due to the transformational process, embodies the philosophical concept of "pure becoming."

Keywords

Twenty-first-century music, Composition, Chamber Ensemble, Electroacoustic music, Time, Pure Becoming, Repetition, Non-directionality, Directionality

Summary for lay audience

Non-Directed Time is a sixteen-minute piece for alto flute/piccolo, bass clarinet, electric guitar, piano/keyboard, violin, viola, contrabass, and soundtracks. Its two movements are entitled *Brainwash* and *Introduction*. The piece challenges listeners' perception of passing time through gradual transformations between ambiguity and clarity. The musical material in my composition repeats at both large-scale and small-scale, developing a sense of familiarity. Thus, changes in repeating material affect the experience of passing time, in which time seems to expand and contract. Because these changes are gradual and their goals are unpredictable, listeners may feel suspended in time—until a sudden realization reveals the transformational process to them. The sense of waiting and temporal suspension, due to the transformational process, embodies the philosophical concept of "pure becoming."

Acknowledgements

I want to thank my supervisors, Dr. Paul Frehner and Dr. Jonathan De Souza, for guiding me through my ideas and encouraging me while writing my thesis, and everyone who supported and encouraged me during the writing of my piece, including Dr. Omar Daniel, Dr. Jay Hodgson, Dr. Bryn Harrison, Dr. Kevin Mooney, Dr. Ashkan Fakhr Tabatabaie, Cadu Verdan, Matthew Lee Knowles, Mohammad Sahebzamani, Forest Muran, Ian Indiana, Neda Samavati, Armin Sanaye, Jack Thorpe, Christine Resendes, and the Contemporary Music Studio at the Don Wright Faculty of Music.

Special thanks to my parents and family for their genuine support.

I began writing this compositional thesis during the beginning stages of Iran's revolution in September 2022. These events had a significant impact on this composition.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Keywords.....	ii
Summary for lay audience.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Instrumentation	2
Duration.....	1
Performance notes	1
Soundtracks.....	1
Piano/keyboard	3
Electric guitar	3
Staging	4
First movement	5
Second movement	23

Non-Directed Time

for chamber ensemble and electronics

Danial Derakhshan

2023

Duration: approx. 16'

Instrumentation:

Alto Flute/piccolo

Bass clarinet

Electric guitar

Requires one speaker, amplifier, and volume pedal.

Piano/keyboard

Requires an 88-key MIDI controller keyboard.

Soundtrack (Fixed media)

Requires two stereo speakers and an audio interface.

The five soundtrack files for both movements.

Click-track audio for the conductor.

Another performer to play the soundtracks.

Violin

Viola

Double bass

Duration:

First movement, *Brainwash*: 9'

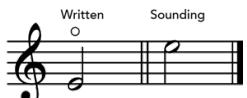
Second movement, *Introduction*: 7'

Performance notes:

The score is transposed.

All the trills written for the instruments are a semitone above.

The natural harmonics are notated as the sounding pitch (as shown in figure).

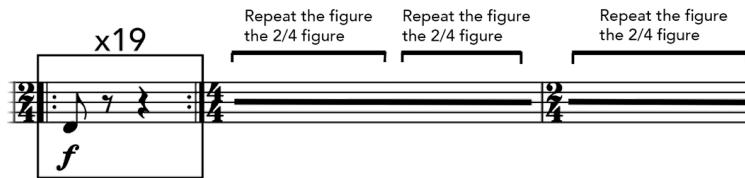


Woodwind performers may breathe imperceptibly during long durations.

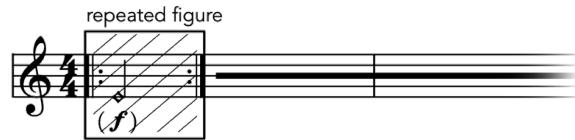
Performers should avoid metric accents.

During the second movement, long note durations should be played *sostenuto*.

The repeating figures should be performed with their specified rhythmic duration, as shown in figure below:



The slashed repeated figures in the score (shown in the figure below) display the continuation of an earlier repeated figure.



Soundtracks:

During the performance of the first movement, the conductor should sync the score and Soundtrack 1 and Soundtrack 2 via a click-track audio file.

The click-track starts with an empty 4/4 bar.

Soundtrack 2 (Narrator) should be played at 6'08" in the first movement.

Soundtrack 1 is 9 minutes and 30 seconds. The extra 30 seconds play at the end of *Brainwash* while the ensemble stops playing.

List of tracks:

Soundtrack 1

Soundtrack 4, additive birds

Soundtrack 2, narrator

Soundtrack 5, alien birds

Soundtrack 3, birds

Click-track for the first movement

Soundtracks' amplitude:

Soundtrack 1 should not be louder than the ensemble playing *forte*.

Soundtrack 2 in the first movement should be louder than the ensemble.

Soundtracks 3-5 are background elements and are quieter than Soundtrack 1.

Lyric from Soundtrack 2 was narrated and written by Danial Derakhshan.

"I was dreaming,
And I knew it anyways,
But I kept on dreaming,
For it is my reality always."

How to setup the audio:

The audio interface connects to a computer.

The two speakers connect to the interface's output.

The keyboard's MIDI output connects to the MIDI input of the interface.

A headphone/earphone connects to the interface, which plays the click-track for the conductor.

Piano/keyboard:

The MIDI keyboard triggers three synthesized samples from a DAW.

The composer's sample recommendation in Logic Pro version 10.7.7:

Sound library/Synthesizer/Classics/80s FM Piano (0 dB volume).

Instrument plug-in/Alchemy/Soundscapes/ Blowholes From Mars (with -9 dB volume).

Instrument plug-in/Alchemy/Sound Effects/ Dreams Illuminated (with -20 dB volume).

The MIDI keyboard's amplitude shall be as loud as playing *forte* on the piano

Electric guitar:

The speaker should be placed close to the performer.

The guitarist should perform with nails and fingers.

The amplifier's gain should be high enough for sustained durations.

Using reverb and compressor effects are encouraged.

The guitar's full volume (volume pedal fully up) should roughly equal the pianist playing *forte* on the piano.

Approximate dynamic marks are performed with the volume pedal as following:

pianissimo = 1/4 (almost fully down)

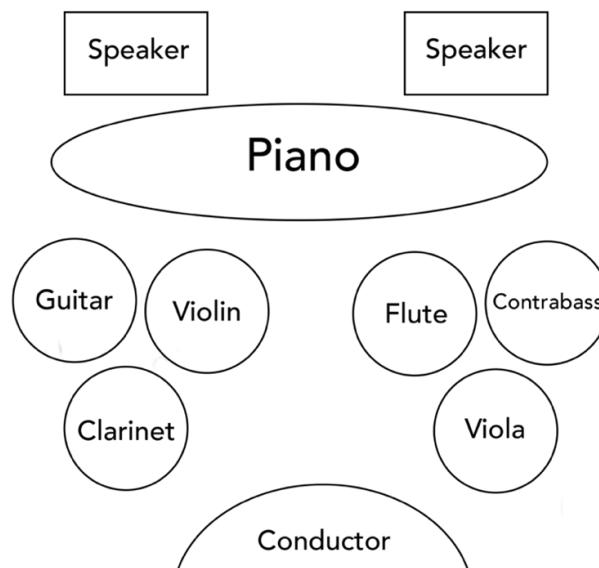
piano = 2/4 (halfway)

mezzo forte = 3/4

forte = 4/4 (pedal fully up).

Staging:

The graph below illustrates the suggested positioning of instruments on stage. The six instruments in front of the piano are arranged in a particular order, in mixed trios facing the conductor. The stereo speakers are positioned behind the piano, left and right, so the electronic sounds merge with the ensemble, creating an interlaced combination of timbres.



Mechanical, like a cloud of fragmented thoughts,
obscure foreground and background

Brainwash

Danial Derakhshan

$\text{♩} = 66$

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Alto Flute *f*

Bass Clarinet in B \flat *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Electric Guitar *mf*

Piano *mp sempre* *5* *sim.*

Soundtrack 1 *f sempre* *Reo.* *0'00"*

Violin *f*

Viola *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Double Bass *f*

©2023 - all rights reserved - Danial Derakhshan

10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Pno.

(*Recd.→*)

0'23"

0'29"

St.

Vln.

Vla.

Db.

A

Detailed description: This is a page from a musical score for orchestra and piano. The top section contains staves for A. Flute, B. Clarinet, and E. Guitar. The middle section contains staves for Piano, String Bass (St.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), and Double Bass (Db.). Measure 11 is highlighted with a large letter 'A' in a box. Measure 11 starts with a dynamic 'p' and a crescendo to 'f'. Measures 12-14 feature sixteenth-note patterns. Measure 15 has dynamics 'p', 'f', and 'p'. Measures 16-17 end with eighth-note chords. The piano part includes performance instructions: '(Recd.→)', '0'23"', '0'29"', and '8vb'. Measure 11 ends with a fermata.

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

A. Fl. (f)

B. Cl.

E. Gtr. (mf)

Pno. (Adagio)

St. 0'47"

Vln.

Vla.

D. B. (f)

B

26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Pno.

(*Ad.*)

1'13"

8^{vb}

St.

Vln.

Vla.

D. B.

36 37 38 C 39 40 41 42 43 44

A. Fl. (f)

B. Cl. (mp)

E. Gtr. (mf)

Pno. (Ad.)

1'35" 1'42"

St.

vln. (f)

Vla. (mp)

D. B. (f) mp

This musical score page contains ten staves of music for an orchestra and piano. The instruments listed are: A. Flute (Flute), B. Clarinet (Clarinet), E. Gtr. (Electric Guitar), Pno. (Piano), St. (String Bass), vln. (Violin), Vla. (Cello), and Db. (Double Bass). The score spans from measure 36 to 44. Measure 36 features a dynamic (f) for the Flute. Measure 37 has a dynamic (mp) for the Clarinet. Measure 38 is labeled with a large letter 'C' in a box. Measures 39 through 44 show various dynamics and performance instructions like trills and measure numbers. The piano part in measure 40 includes a dynamic (Ad.) and measure numbers 1'35" and 1'42" above the strings section. The double bass part in measure 44 ends with a dynamic (mp).

45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Pno.

(*ad.*)

1'58"

St.

Vln.

Vla.

Db.

ff

mf

p

x20

(f)

ff

mf

p

ff

p

D

53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63

A. Fl. *p*

B. Cl. *tr~*

E. Gtr. repeated figure *(f)*

Pno. *f* 5 *8vb* *x6* *(f)* 5 *8vb* (repeated figure ends next page) *2'21"* (20→)

St.

Vln. *p* *tr~*

Vla. *tr~* *mp*

Db.

64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72

E

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

E. Gtr. repeated figure *(f)*

Pno. *p* *f* *x9* *(f) 5* *8vb*

St. *2'47"* *3'05"*

Vln. *tr* *f*

Vla. *(mp)*

Db. *mp* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5*

73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Pno.

repeated figure
(*Rd.→*)
3'13"

St.

Vln.

Vla.

D. B.

f *p* *mp* *f*

F

84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91

A. Fl. *(mp)*

B. Cl. *p* *f* x19

E. Gtr. *f*

Pno. (f) 5

St. 3'38" 3'49"

Vln.

Vla. *f* *mp* *f*

D. B. *p* *f*

92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

A. Fl. (f)
repeated figure

B. Cl. repeated figure

E. Gtr.

Pno. (x7) (f) 5
8vb

St. 4'02"

Vln. (f)

Vla. (f)

D. B. mp

This musical score page contains eight staves of music for an orchestra and piano. The staves are labeled on the left: A. Fl., B. Cl., E. Gtr., Pno., St., Vln., Vla., and D. B. The score spans measures 92 through 99. Measure 92 starts with a dynamic (f) for the Flute (A.) and a 'repeated figure' for the Clarinet (B.). Measure 93 shows a 'repeated figure' for the Clarinet (B.). Measure 94 features a 'repeated figure' for the Guitar (E.) and a piano part with dynamics (f) and 5, and a bassoon part with 8vb. Measure 95 continues the piano part with 8vb. Measure 96 begins with a 4'02" instruction for the String Bass (St.). Measures 97 and 98 show violin (Vln.) and cello (Vla.) parts respectively, both starting with dynamics (f). Measure 99 concludes with a dynamic mp for the Double Bass (D. B.). Various performance instructions like 'repeated figure', dynamics (f), (mp), and tempo markings (x7, 5, 8vb) are included throughout the score.

G

100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Pno.

St.

Vln.

Vla.

D. B.

x10

p *f*

x10

p *f*

x15

x39

pp *f*

(f)

8 *8vb*

20

4'25"

4'36"

x10

p

109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119

A. Fl.

repeated figure

B. Cl.

repeated figure

E. Gtr.

repeated figure

(*f*)

x14

f

Pno.

p

(*sw.*)

4'51"

St.

Vln.

(*mp*)

Vla.

(*mp*)

repeated figure

D. B.

The score consists of ten staves, each representing a different instrument or section of the orchestra. The instruments listed from top to bottom are: Flute A (A. Fl.), Clarinet B (B. Cl.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Piano (Pno.), Double Bass (D. B.), String Bass (St.), Violin (Vln.), Cello (Vla.), and Double Bass (Db.). The score is divided into measures numbered 109 through 119. In measures 109 and 110, the Flute A and Clarinet B staves feature 'repeated figure' markings. The Electric Guitar staff in measure 110 includes dynamic markings '(f)' and '5'. The Piano staff in measure 110 includes dynamic markings 'p' and '3'. The Double Bass staff in measure 110 includes a dynamic marking '(sw.)' and a tempo marking '4'51''. In measure 114, there is a large bracket spanning all staves with the text 'x14', indicating a 14-fold repetition of the preceding measure. The Electric Guitar staff in measure 115 includes a dynamic marking 'f'. The Piano staff in measure 116 includes a dynamic marking 'sw.'. The Violin staff in measure 117 includes a dynamic marking 'tr.'. The Double Bass staff in measure 119 includes a dynamic marking 'p'.

120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130

repeated figure

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

repeated figure

E. Gtr.

Pno.

(*St.*)

p *f* *x7*

pp

p semper

x25

p

5'20"

5'38"

H

repeated figure

Vln.

Vla.

Db.

(*p*)

131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143

Half air

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Pno.

(repeated figure)

(p)

IX

(repeated figure ends next page) //

(p)

(\Rightarrow)

5'49"

6'05"

6'08" Soundtrack 2, Narrator

St.

I: I was dreaming, and I knew it anyways, but I kept on dreaming, for it is my reality always : \Rightarrow repeat until the end

Vln.

(pp)

Vla.

(pp)

Db.

pp

144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 //

G.P.

A. Fl. - (p) //

B. Cl. - (pp) //

E. Gtr. - b^o //

Pno. - x10 (p) //

G.P. x12 (repeated figure ends next page) //

6'24" St. (I was dreaming, and I knew it anyways, but I kept on dreaming, for it is my reality always)

Vln. - (pp) //

Vla. - (pp) //

D. B. - (pp) //

J 159 **G.P.**

A. Fl. 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Pno. **G.P.** Repeat till the end
The piano's tempo gradually slows down, to approx $\text{♩} = 30$ at the end of the movement →

7'08"

St. (I was dreaming, and I knew it anyways, but I kept on dreaming, for it is my reality always)

Vln.

Vla.

Db.

Repeat till the end
ppp

G.P.
30"

169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185

Repeat till the end

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Pno.

The piano's tempo gradually slows down →

(*Ex.→*)

7'38"

St.

(I was dreaming, and I knew it anyways, but I kept on dreaming, for it is my reality always)

Performers stop playing when the poem narration ends.

New electronic material.

Vln.

Repeat till the end

Vla.

(pp)

Db.

30"

Repeat till the end

(ppp)

Introduction

Expressive, calm,
as if strolling in a garden.

Danial Derakhshan

$\text{♩} = 66$

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

ord.

Alto Flute

Bass Clarinet in B \flat

Electric Guitar

Keyboard

Violin

Viola

Double Bass

p

Soundtrack 3, birds

p

pizz.

pp

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 A 18 19 20 21

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Kbd.

Vln.

Vla.

D. B.

(Soundtrack 3 continues) →

Soundtrack 3 ends

A

mf

p

mf

mf

p

mp

p

mp

arco

mp

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

A. Fl. *mf*

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Kbd.

Vln. *mp*

Vla.

D. B.

pizz. arco pizz. arco

31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45

B

A. Fl. (mf)

B. Cl. (mf)

E. Gtr. (mf)

Kbd.

Vln. (mp)

Vla. (mp)

D. B. (mp)

Soundtrack 4, additive birds

8va

pizz.

p

This musical score page contains six staves of music for various instruments. The top section includes staves for A. Flute, B. Clarinet, and E. Guitar. The middle section features a keyboard (Kbd.) staff. The bottom section includes staves for Violin (Vln.), Cello/Violoncello (Vla.), and Double Bass (Db.). The score is numbered from 31 to 45. A prominent section labeled 'B' starts at measure 35. Various dynamics are indicated throughout, such as *mf*, *pp*, and *p*. Performance techniques like *tr* (trill), *3* (triplets), and *8va* (octave) are also marked. The Db. staff includes a 'pizz.' instruction at the end.

46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54

A. Fl.
mf

B. Cl.
mf

E. Gr.
(p)

Kbd.
(Soundtrack 4 continues) →

Vln.
(mp)

Vla.
mp
arco

D. B.
mp

55 56 57 58 **C** *x3* 59 60 *x2* 61 62 *x2* 63

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

(Soundtrack 4 continues) → Soundtrack 4 ends

Kbd.

Vln.

Vla.

Db.

pizz.

p *p* *mf*

64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72

To Picc. Piccolo x2 x3 x7 x5

A. Fl. *p* *mf* *f*

B. Cl. *p* *f* *ff*

E. Gr. *p* 4

Kbd.

Soundtrack 5, alien birds

Vln. *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Vla. *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

D. *mf* *f*

Db. *mf* *f* *ff*

73 74 75 76 77 78

Picc. (f)

B. Cl. *mp*

E. Gtr. (p) *f sempre*

(Soundtrack 5 continues)

Kbd.

Vln. *mp* *mf*

Vla. *mp* *mf* arco

Db. (pizz.) *f* *mf*

This musical score page contains six staves of music for an orchestra and a keyboard instrument. The staves are labeled from top to bottom: Picc., B. Cl., E. Gtr., Kbd., Vln., Vla., and Db. The score spans six measures, numbered 73 through 78. Measure 73 starts with a dynamic of *f* for the Picc. and ends with a sharp sign. Measures 74 and 75 begin with a sharp sign and feature eighth-note patterns on the B. Cl. and E. Gtr. In measure 76, the E. Gtr. has a sustained note with a fermata. Measure 77 starts with a sharp sign and ends with a sharp sign. Measure 78 begins with a sharp sign and includes a three-measure repeat sign. Various dynamics are indicated throughout, such as *mp*, *p*, *mf*, and *arco*. Performance instructions like '*f sempre*' and '*arco*' are also present. Measure 78 concludes with a dynamic of *mf*.

Picc. 79 80

B. Cl.

E. Gtr.

Kbd.

(Soundtrack 5 continues) →

vln. 81 x2 82

Vla. 83 x3 84 x2

D. b.

E

f sempre

ff sempre

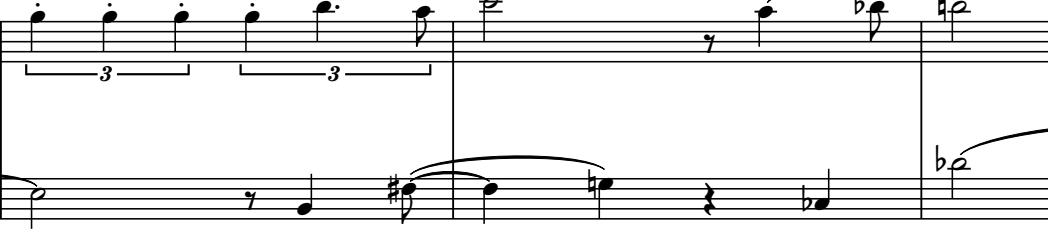
ff

f

f

85 86 87 88 89 90

Picc. 

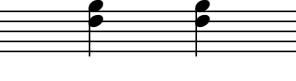
B. Cl. 

E. Gtr. 



(Soundtrack 5 continues) →

Kbd. 



Vln. 
ff sempre

Vla. 
ff sempre

D. B. 
ff sempre

91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

Picc. B. Cl. E. Gtr. Kbd. Vln. Vla. Db.

(Soundtrack 5 continues) → Soundtrack 5 fades out

91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

Picc. B. Cl. E. Gtr. Kbd. Vln. Vla. Db.

(Soundtrack 5 continues) → Soundtrack 5 fades out