upfold, downfold, unfold

Version 1 - for an ensemble of more than three players (remote collaboration)

Version 2 - for nine players (live performance)

Bofan Ma (2020-21, revised 2022)

Version 1 composed for and dedicated to Contemporary Music for All (CoMA) Manchester, 2021.

Version 2 reimagined for UNHEARD Manchester, 2022.

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Version 1 - for an ensemble of more than three players (remote collaboration)

Bofan Ma (2020-21, revised 2022)

Version 1 (for three+ players collaborating remotely)

This piece is to be played/assembled remotely. It calls for an audio-visual *collage*, of which materials are sourced individually instead of from a collective rehearsal or performance. It can be played on and/or with any instrument, voice, or object. If necessary, a dedicated ensemble member or sound engineer can be called for to assist with the recording and editing process.

Guidelines for performers

Part 1 - video

- Produce a c.5-6′ silent video of a discreet, mundane event.
- The event should feature a non-human object being engaged in either a consistent or intermittent *activity*, with an overall trajectory (of any sort) shaped over time.
- The video can be shot from any device but of only one steady angle (ideally with a tripod) and with a landscape orientation.
- The video can be of any format (through shot, time-lapse, segmented with short black screens in between etc).

Part 2 - audio

- Send your clips to each other to form a circle (e.g. for an ensemble of 4: player 1 – 2, p2 – 3, p3 – 4, p4 – 1).
- Find appropriate sound to respond to the footage received (as if you are musically *dubbing* it).
- Record it and superimpose the audio onto the clip (seek assistance from the editor if not sure how to complete this step).

Guidelines for the editor

- Gather all the superimposed videos when everyone has completed Part 2.
- Try to make sure that all videos are equally and evenly distributed in the collage, so that none of them draws particular attention when placed alongside each other.
- All clips should start at once.
- The piece finishes at whenever the longest clip finishes.

Version 2 (for nine players to perform under a live setting, with video projection)

This piece juxtaposes a to-be-assembled video collage with sound-making activities under a live setting. It explores the act of *dubbing*, in which visuals of the *everyday* are reimagined, and therefore given new meanings through sound.

All players contribute equally in the production of the collage (one silent video per player), before interpreting each other's videos through any live, sound-making means (e.g. instruments, objects, voices, mechanics). A dedicated editor (e.g. a member of the ensemble) should be appointed to assist with the filming (if needed) and to fulfil all collage-assembly tasks.

## Part 1 - Preparations:

Guidelines for performers

- Produce a c.12'-14' (silent) video of a discreet, mundane event.
- The event should feature a non-human object being engaged in either a consistent or intermittent *activity* (or movement), with an overall trajectory (of any sort) shaped over time.
- The video can be shot from any device but of only one steady angle (ideally with a tripod) and with a landscape orientation.
- The video can be of any format (through shot, time-lapse, segmented with short black screens in between etc).
- Send your clips to the editor.

Guidelines for the editor

- Gather all video clips from everyone.
- If any of the footage contains sound, remove it.
- Distribute the cleaned-up clips back to the players to form a circle (e.g. player 1's video to player 2, p2's video to p3, […], p9's video to p1).
- Make the collage. Try to ensure that all 9 clips are equally and evenly placed within the grid, so that none of them draws particular attention when all played synchronously.
- All clips should start at once.
- The collage finishes at whenever the longest clip finishes.

Part 2 - Rehearsal and performance (for all players)

- Receive (from the editor) a video that you're responding to.

- Learn it as if it is the score (your part).

- Source and experiment with sounds that completely blur the identity of the object featured in the video, whilst maintaining a similar level of sonic vibrance / dynamics / intensity as the object tends to project.

- Use them to dub all the *activities* or *movements* in which the featured object is engaged throughout the video. Try to follow these activities as closely as possible, which may require some practice.

- There is no need for much all-player rehearsal prior to the performance.

- All lights should at least be dimmed (if not switched off entirely) throughout the performance.

- If possible, the performance should also be spatialised, with the 9 players performing off-stage, encircling the auditorium, following the collage synchronously as it is projected on the screen centre-stage:

	Stage & Screen with the video collage projected		
P9			Player 1
P8	Audience		P2
P7			P3
	P6	P5	P4
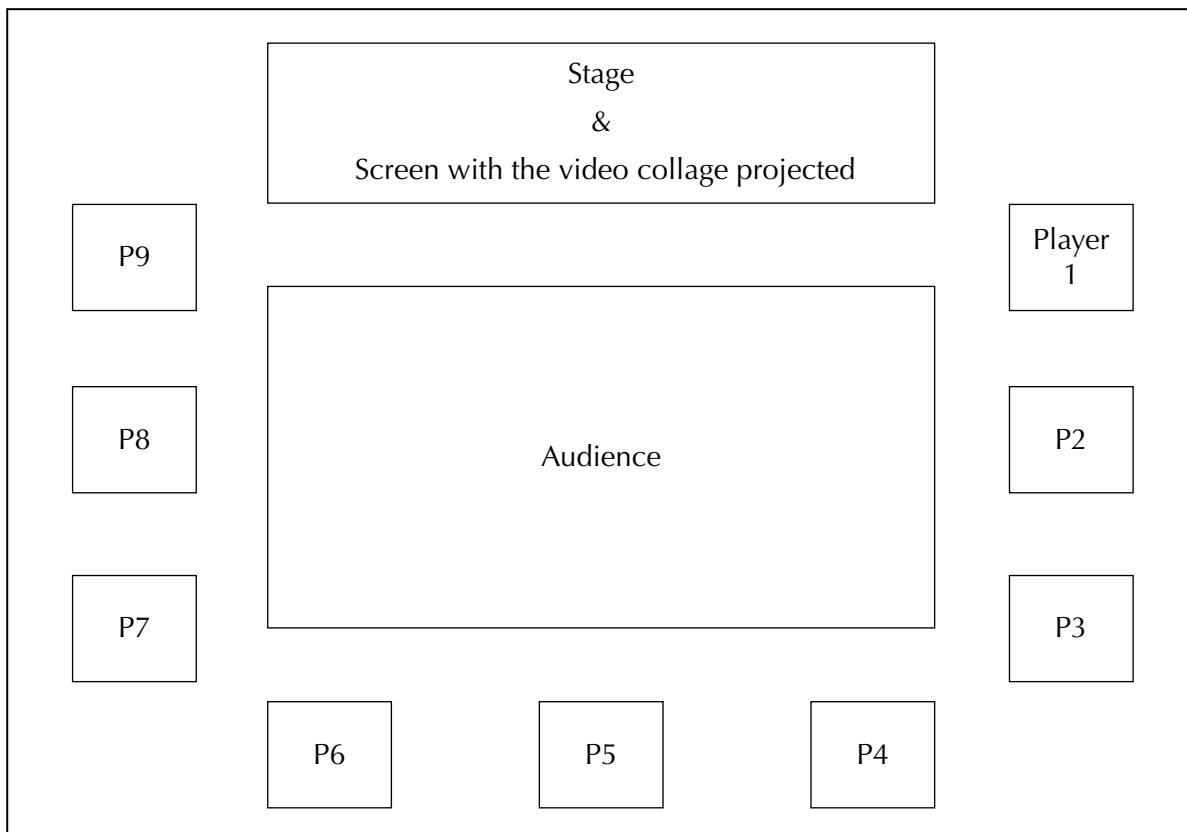
- The performance finishes when whichever the longest clip finishes (and thus when the player responsible for dubbing it finishes playing).