

NEXT TO BESIDE BESIDES #9

for amplified double bass solo

(or as movement or part in any combination of pieces from the NTBB series)

Simon Steen-Andersen 2003/2007

Mute and preparation:

The piece should be played with a heavy practice mute.
A piece of cloth should damp all the strings next to the bridge.
A special (cheap) bow should probably be used.

Amplification:

The bass should be amplified as much as possible without it being unpleasant - at least loud enough to give a feeling of zooming in on the very soft sounds. When played together with other versions of NTBB the amplification should level out the dynamic differences between the instruments as much as possible.

Scordatura:

(2nd string may be tuned down one quarter of a tone if played with NTBB #1).
4th string down about one octave (or like NTBB #1 if played together).

(The music is notated where it should be played - not as it sounds.)

Dynamics:

Action dynamics are written in parenthesis (fff) and indicate the amount of energy to be put into an action even though the resulting sound is much softer. The ppp (without parenthesis) should be the softest possible *even* dynamic (trying to match all the soft events).

Crescendos and diminuendos should be performed "exponentially" (very late cresc. with much direction, etc.). When ending or starting in an accentuated point, the point should always be a bit louder than the crescendoed or diminuended sound, in order to make them "melt together", like a zoom (reverse reverb) or "natural" reverb of the accentuated point.

In general:

The piece should be played as "dry" as possible, not letting any open strings ring out.

Notation and concept:

In this piece the bow and the actions of the left hand are notated separately. The whole concept of the NTBB-series is that the sideward (horizontal) movement and the (vertical) movement away from the player are treated independently and translated to different instruments. In NTBB #1 the right hand and the bow makes the sideward movements and the left hand makes the movement away from the player - moving up and down the fingerboard. The idea of NTBB #9 is that the hands are switched: The right hand/the bow makes the movement up and down the fingerboard either with the wood or with the hairs, and the left hand makes the sideward movement going from the instrument-body on the one side, over the strings to the body on the other side. The left hand position is more or less fixed vertically around the top of the body.

Right hand/bow:

The bow is notated as the upper part. The bow is never actually bowing. Its position is notated by a tone and a string number (where the string is not obvious - or in the beginning where the optimal position for the jumping bow and the buzzing sound is wanted). A squared note head indicates to touch the string(s) with the hairs, a normal note head means touch string(s) with the wood (col legno) - "silently" if nothing is indicated, hitting or jumping if indicated with a ^ . Glissando lines mean move up or down along the string (without any sideward movement). The hairs are basically used to damp the strings but the position still determines a kind of pitch or colour when pizz'ed with left hand, and a light noisy sound comes when the hairs are moved along the strings. The wood is either used as a "slide" (when plucked with left hand), or to hit the strings (either single notes or jumping - jeté).

The bows vertical area goes from "1st position" at the middle of the strings (at the first octave), to the very highest position just next to the cloth at the bridge. The highest note (indicated by the arrow) should be the same through the whole piece.

Left hand:

The left hand is notated as the lower part. The basic position of the left hand is just below the middle of the strings (around the top of the instrument-body, just next to the bow's lowest position). From there the left hand is either plucking the open strings (stopped or dampened by the bow), hitting or tapping the strings or tapping or rubbing the body on either side of the strings - moving sideward but always staying more or less at the same vertical position (finger board position). Slurred fast arpeggios could be performed in one movement, sliding across the strings instead of plucking each string. A small note above the open string indicates an exact plucking position (used when plucking above the bow).

Next To Beside Besides – en “re-cyklus”

Et abstrakt konciperet musikstykke vil stadig være det samme stykke, selvom det spilles på instrumenter med grundlæggende forskellige typer af bevægelser. Men hvad hvis den abstrakte komposition rettede sig imod bevægelserne? Hvad hvis kompositionen blev set som en koreografi for musiker og instrument – med lyd til følge? Så ville det samme stykke lyde vidt forskelligt på instrumenter med grundlæggende forskellige forhold mellem bevægelse og lyd. Og ville det så overhovedet være det samme stykke?

Re-cyklus'en "Next To Beside Besides" er en åben serie af koreografiske oversættelser af stykket "Beside Besides" (for hotel-sordineret solo cello), der allerede i sig selv er et spin-off fra sekstetten "Besides". ("Besides" var, ud over betydningen "desuden..." og "b-sider", ment som den ikke-eksisterende flertalsform af at være-ved-siden-af).

"Beside Besides" indeholder elementer på mange forskellige trin af skalaen mellem ren klang og ren bevægelse og vil således resultere i oversættelser, der svinger mellem nøjagtigt ensklingende passager (dér, hvor musikken er klangligt eller abstrakt konciperet) og vidt forskelligt klingende passager (dér, hvor musikken fx er baseret på glidende lineære bevægelser i forskellige dimensioner).

For at opleve disse grader af forskelle kræves naturligvis, at man hører de forskellige versioner op imod hinanden – det være sig forskudt, eller endnu bedre: simultant! Cyklus'en er således ikke blot en åben række af variationer, udgaver eller løsninger på forskellige oversættelsesmæssige problemstillinger og angrebsvinkler, men giver også mulighed for utallige kombinationer af klangligt heterofone, men bevægelsesmæssigt "unison" ensemble-kompositioner, hvor netop forskel og lighed er i fokus, hvor selve oversættelsessituationen bliver et musikalsk parameter.

Alle stykker skal kunne spilles alene eller i en hvilken som helst kombination af versioner, samtidigt eller efter hinanden som satser eller mellem andre stykker som fragmenter. Hvert stykke skal være lige tro mod originalen og dermed være lige idiomatisk og tro mod det pågældende instrument!

Next To Beside Besides – a “re-cycle”

An abstractly conceived piece of music will still be the same piece even though played on instruments with essentially different types of movements. But what if the abstract composition was directed towards the movements? What if the composition was thought of as a choreography for musician and instrument – with sound as a consequence? Then the same piece would sound completely different on instruments with different relations between movement and sound. And would it then be the same piece at all?

The re-cycle "Next To Beside Besides" is an open series of choreographical translations of the piece "Beside Besides" (for solo cello), a piece that already in it self is a spin-off from the ensemble piece "Besides". ("Besides" was, beside the meaning "besides..." or "b-sides", "back-sides", meant as the non-existing plural of being next to).

The many different degrees of abstractness and concreteness between pure sound and pure movement in "Beside Besides" will result in translations that contain exactly equally sounding passages (where the music is thought abstract or in sound) and very different sounding passages (where the music for example is based on gradual linear movements in different dimensions).

To experience these degrees of differences one has to hear the different versions next to each other – this could be one after another, or maybe even better: simultaneously! The cycle is in other words not just an open row of variations, versions or solutions of different problems and methods of translation – it also gives the opportunity to put together innumerable combinations of heterophonically sounding, but movement wise "unison" ensemble compositions, where difference and equality are in focus – where the translation situation in itself becomes a musical parameter.

Every piece can be played alone or in any combination of versions, simultaneously or one after the other as movements or between other pieces as fragments.

Every piece must be equally faithful to the original, which also means being equally idiomatic and faithful to the instrument in focus!

Next To Beside Besides – *meet the family!*

Choreographic Translations for amplified solo instruments or ensembles +

Next To Beside Besides is a series of "choreographic translations" (translations of the movements or actions, rather than an instrumentation of the resulting sounds) of the piece *Beside Besides* for solo cello, which is itself a modification of the ending of the piece *Besides* for three amplified instruments and three dampened instruments. All translations can be played solo or together in any combination simultaneously as ensemble pieces. Solo versions or combinations can be played alone or after each other as movements or between other pieces in a concert (or on different concerts) as ritornellos. The cycle will continue on the internet, where studio recordings of the premiered translations can be heard solo or in any combination, later extended with an interactive web-translation, called *Above Next To Beside Besides*, and more.

The Family

Besides (2003) (18')

for amplified piccolo flute, piano with whammy pedal and violin plus dampened string trio.

Beside Besides (a.k.a. NTBB #0) (2004) (4')

for amplified cello solo.

Next To Beside Besides #1-9 +... (2005-2006) (4')

for any combination of amplified double bass, saxophone, accordion, percussion, piccolo flute, violin, piano, guitar and a silent version for close-up camera +... (See www.simonsteenandersen.dk for an updated list.)

Self-reflecting Next To Beside Besides

Two or more translations performed by the same player with video; the second translation played together with a video recording of the first, the third translation played together with a video recording of the second performed with the video recording of the first, etc. Other instruments can be added - only criteria is that at least one player should perform live every time together with a video recording of him self performing a different translation.

For now there is only material for a percussion player to perform combinations of the versions for percussion, piccolo and camera with video. Several more alternative versions are planned for all strings, guitar and percussion. (See www.simonsteenandersen.dk for an updated list.)

Future Generations

Above Next To Beside Besides (2007)

Interactive web-piece / "Virtual Sinfonietta". Meta-work in the sense that it displays general ideas behind the series. Interactive in the sense that it's a web instrument ideal and easy to play a translation of NTBB on – or to improvise on or compose for. Will include various didactic elements as well.

Around Next To Beside Besides

Translation of the movements in Next To Beside Besides to spatially staged sinfonietta. Can be performed by itself as an ensemble piece or with any of the solo-translations in front as a solo concerto or with a combination of solo-translations in front as a concerto grosso. The instruments can change positions/parts and in this way generate various different versions.

Behind Self-reflecting Next To Beside Besides

Continuation of a performance of Self-reflecting NTBB into a room-installation (three projections of pre-recorded video and one live-projection of the spectators watching the installation).

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Simon Steen-Andersen 2007

♩ = 60 (*pianissimo*) *furioso*

leave bow (wood) on the string so that a buzzing sound appears when the string is plucked

- 4th string should be tuned down ~1 oct.
- All strings should be dampened near the bridge with a piece of cloth.
- The piece should be played with a heavy practice mute.

IV
col legno
battuto
saltando

sim. c.l.b.s.
sim. buzz

damp with left hand
fff pizz. with left hand

c.l.b. at the highest post of the string
(-same tone every time)

ppp
slide l.h. fingertips or palm a bit up and down the (top front) body on the bass side of the strings
hit body (bass side) with l.h. thumb

7

(bow: damp 1st string at G - no sideways movement)

(press wood against the 4th string to make it buzz when plucked)

10
fff (l.h.: tap 1st string at F)
ppp (tap body on the treble side)
f (tap bass side body once)
(pizz. dampened strings in one movement at the same poss.)

hit strings
(l.h. slide on and hit body on the treble side)

13
fff (damp)
ppp (bass side)

(l.h.: longer slide upwards on treble side)
mf

17
mf (r.h.: finger tap on bass side body)
ppp (l.h.)
fff
mf
ppp
mf

21

ppp

fff

ppp

26

ppp

29 (in circles, cresc. in one long movement)
(ossa: treble side)

ppp

mf

ppp

(wood)

(bow: no sideways movement) (hairs)

(adjust bow position so that the two pizz.'es sound - the same note)

(pizz. at Ab on the D# on the G string)

(pizz. at D on the D string)

32

ppp

36

mf

ppp

(wood)

(hair)

(wood)

(legato)

(clb.)

(clb.)

40

fff

ppp

(wood)

(keep hand on body)

44

mf

ppp

f

(highest poss.)

48

(wood) I II III IV
 (buzz) **fff**

52

I II III IV (buzz) **ppp**
 (buzz) **fff** IV (buzz) **fff** III II I **f**

57

IV **ppp** (mf) (buzz) III II **fff** I **ppp** n

61

III III (mf) (buzz) **fff** I **ppp** n I II III IV **ppp**

65

IV (buzz) III II (mf) **ppp** n n

68

n **ppp** III III n (mf) III III **ppp** n

71

III III (mf) **ppp** III III n (mf) III III **ppp** 3 7:4 **ppp**

fine: bcn oct.03
 / ba dec.03
 / pfzh aug. 07

Dur.: 3.30-4.00 min.