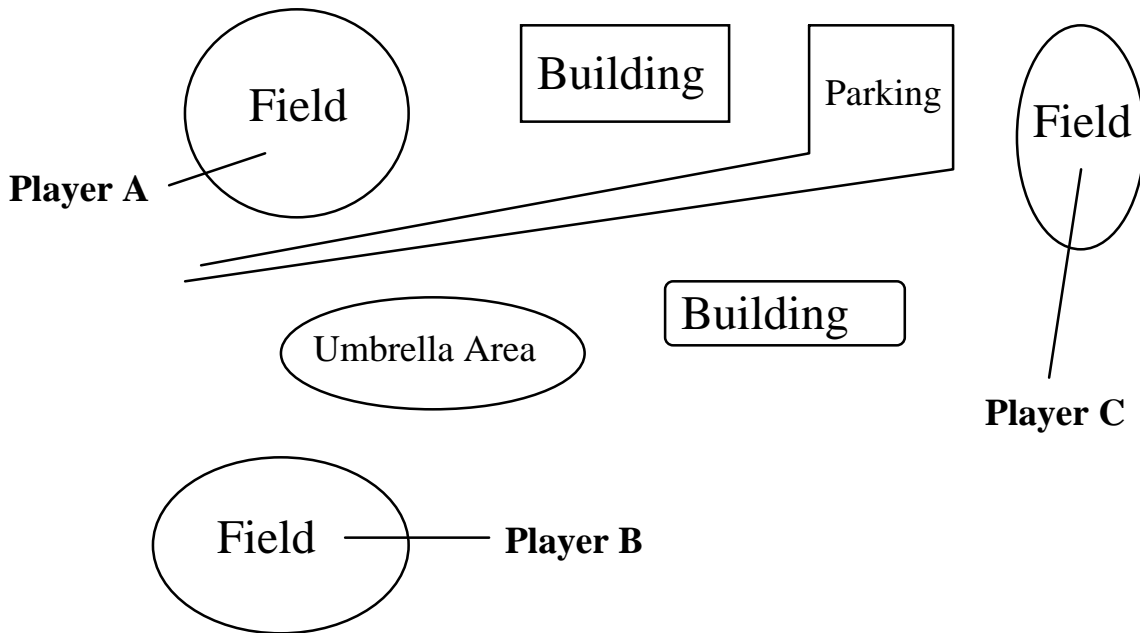


A Little Shade Music for Maggie

for three performers

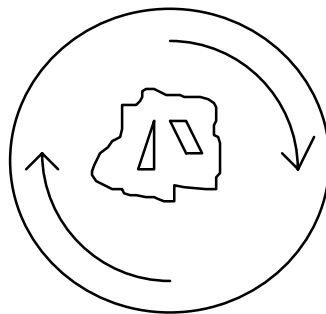
Dennis Báthory-Kitsz

1. Players enter from a great distance:



and walk slowly, unaware of others, to the umbrella area, all the time sing-calling the syllable “UM”.

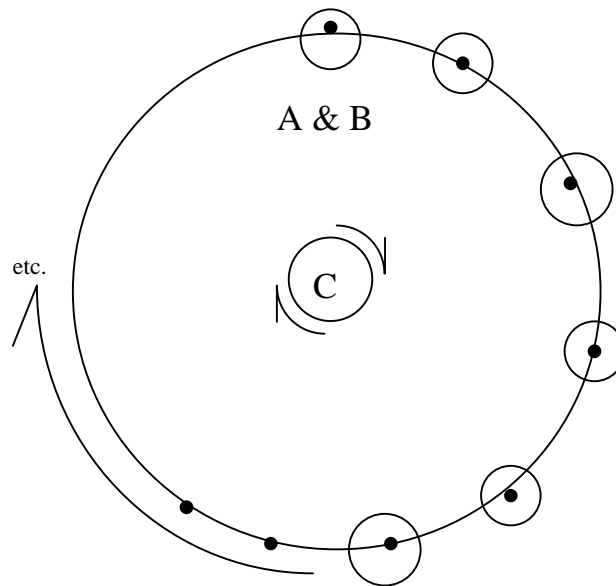
2. Players arrive in their own time in the umbrella area, still calling “UM” and beginning to trace a circle in the area. Oddly, a flute and a clarinet are resting on a magic carpet in the center. (All players circle in the same direction.):



3. Players *slowly* spiral in to the center to find the instruments, all the while still calling on “UM”. Player A continues to develop “UM” in a narrow vocal range, while Players B and C fade out, ritualistically pick up their instruments (after a deep slow bow to each other), and begin to play a slow filigree of notes centering on F (clarinet) and C (flute). The texture is low as player A begins to mutate “UM” and extend it into not unrelated words like “burnt umber”, “ombre”, “umberto”, “humble”, “hombre”, etc.

4. As soon as this pattern settles, the players play and sing to the umbrellas, trying to raise them like snakes with chanting and playing in D harmonic minor or/and D dorian (mixed). The flute slowly fades away, in fits of little twitches, ornaments and trills.

5. The flute Player (B) begins to chant the same or similar set of words as Player A. The two face each other and circle each umbrella in the circle, while Player C continues low patterns on the clarinet. The facing players hold perfect fifths together; if one shifts, the other does, until the fifth comes in tune again. The tones are sung on the letters M, B, R and L.



6. The flute player leaves the pattern after one complete tour around the umbrellas, returns to player C and retrieves (ritualistically) the flute. They exchange roles slowly — flute beginning to play, clarinet beginning to stop — as Player A forms an umbrella above them, still singing M, B, R & L, at ever-rising pitch levels.

7. The flute plays slowly and clearly into its high calling register, and after Player A releases the spell (“shadow of the umbrella”) over Player C, the clarinet is heard also rising into the high calling register. Dissonances — very long ones — are created, and they slowly begin to fall from the high register into the low one, eventually centering

on low C. Player A's umbrella release involves an *infinitely slow tumble* to the ground and inverting roll, while falling in pitch.

8. There is a general decrescendo. At an appropriate point, Player A begins to use vowel sounds U, E & A with the consonants M, B, R & L, but the vowels always appear clustered together, as do the consonants. When Players B and C have completed their decrescendo, they return their instruments and join Player A's singing.

9. The letters M, B, R & L slowly give way to U, E, & A, whose timbre suggests the beginning of harmonic singing — which, appropriately, then occurs as the players circle again within the space, spiral outward, and return on their previous paths, joining in rich harmonic singing so long as they can hear each other, and falling back to “UM” as soon as their colleagues' voices fade away. They shrink in resonance.

10. They vanish unseen from the fields, away from the umbrellas' shade.

July 11, 1992

Note: The umbrella area referred to in this piece is a small patch of grass containing hundreds of paper umbrellas usually found in mixed drinks. The umbrella concept was developed by performance artist Maggie Sherman, to whom this piece is dedicated.