

cents: 0 204 386 0 231 435 0 347 551 0 204 386 0 231 435 0 347 551
 ratio: 1/1 9/8 5/4 1/1 8/7 9/7 1/1 11/9 11/8 1/1 9/8 5/4 1/1 8/7 9/7 1/1 11/9 11/8

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Notes:

Three tuning groups are indicated by numbers in square brackets above the staff. Each group includes 5-limit, 7-limit, or 11-limit pitch ratios in just intonation. An accompanying sound file demonstrates the pitches. A thread may be tied around the fingerboard to indicate finger position.

Two groups of players will be located at different sides of the stage area. One group will play a combination of 5-limit and 7-limit pitches, the other group will play 5-limit and 11-limit. Five pitches are played on each string. Pitches are transposed by fifths so that each string is played from the same finger positions.

Pitches are indicated in standard notation with deviation up or down in cents shown above the notes. This is the system often used by James Tenney. In his explanation in the score for *Quintext*, he writes “a conscientious effort towards approximation is all that is expected here.”

Accidentals and indications of pitch deviation remain in effect until a different tuning is indicated, with the exception of notated harmonics. To clarify the finger positions for harmonics stopped at major and minor thirds, each sharp or flat is indicated, applying only to the note to its right.

Departures

For the ten violas of the Flexible Orchestra

Program note:

Departures is structured around the timbres of a text that describes ecological riparian zones — edge territories that border two recognizable ecosystems, such as forest and field, or open water and marshland. In its timbral exploration of pitch, the piece leads us through a sequence of sonic riparian zones; we adapt our perception, departing from one recognizable system and becoming accustomed to another. The unheard opening text, “We are walking through a field, similar to the ones we’ve known for years,” recalls Alvin Lucier’s 1969 *I am Sitting in a Room* and its exploration of dynamic timbral transformation. The title, *Departures*, refers to James Tenney’s 1966 explanation of timbre as departures from ‘simple harmonic motion.’

With appreciation to Adele Armin, who advised on notation and harmonics, and to Anne Holloway whose viola playing first introduced me to the subtle sounds of this instrument. Thanks to Daniel Goode, inventor of the Flexible Orchestra, for all the background work that makes a concert like this possible, and for inviting me to write for ten violas.

Notation:

The text shown below the staff is in essence a letter to the musicians from which a response in sound is developed. It takes the place of rhythmic notation. The words are translated into music, guided by the sounds and meanings of the text in the mind’s ear, each syllable matched by a note. The tempo, rhythm, phrasing, and dynamics are derived from the flow of the text and the natural rhythms of speech. Variations of bow position and pressure, as well as other techniques, shape the sound to match the inflections of the text as imagined by the performers.

Performance Notes:

All players use the same score and can trace individual pathways through the piece. One group of players moves among passages in 5-limit and 7-limit; the other moves among 5-limit and 11-limit passages. The conductor will cue the ends of passages where marked in the score by pause signs. Audio cues may include heavy bow strokes or pizzicato articulation. Players will move individually to the next section when the phrase being played at the time of the cue is complete.

Each phrase is optional. Any number of repetitions of words or phrases of any length can be included; shapes of phrases can vary. The numbers of players for each phrase can vary. Changes in the density of sound will be decided in rehearsal in consultation with the conductor, as the shape of the music is articulated.

The speed of playing can range from fast to slow, and can change from fast to slow. It is intended that only a few passages will be played in unison. Dynamics are shaped by the players’ interpretations of the text as well as the guidance of the conductor. (Sustained pitches intended as harmonic background are indicated as *ppp* in the score.)

Part Two:

Sustained long vowels are played as harmonics in this section, both natural (open string) and artificial, fingered at the fifth, the fourth, and major and minor thirds, as indicated by diamond-shaped note heads. When diphthongs occur the harmonics are played as glissandi.

At page 6, gradually increase variation of bow position and pressure to further shape text sounds. At page 7, expand numbers of repetitions of increasingly short phrases. (For example, short phrases like “rocky outcrop” and “floating boats” can be repeated as fragments isolated from the main flow of the text.)

Part Three:

The timbre of the viola sound is foregrounded by expanded playing techniques. Players should vary between sustained and rhythmic playing, as individuals or as groups established in rehearsal.

Sustained sounds can be played as harmonics and harmonic glissandi, extending into high registers. Other options include diagonal bowing, and increased bow pressure to bring out noise bands (scratch tone).

Rhythmic sounds can be played as trills, harmonic trills (light hammering on harmonics), tremolo, finger harmonics (finger on and off the string), bouncing the bow on strings, circular bowing, and heavy bowing where the sound starts and stops. Players can choose words or short phrases to repeat in rhythmic patterns.

Audio cues to signal the ends of passages can include a tremolo that ends with a ricochet, or a hammer that ends with heavy bowing, among other options.

Departures

- Gayle Young, 2016

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. The vocal line (top staff) contains the lyrics: "We are walking through a field, similar to the ones we've known for years. We're comfortably following the trail when something changes." The piano accompaniment (bottom staff) shows a sequence of notes. Handwritten annotations include "[5]" above the first measure, and pitch adjustments: "(-14)" with a downward arrow above the 4th measure, and "(-14)" with a sharp sign and a downward arrow above the 5th measure. There are also some circled notes in the vocal line.

We are walking through a field, similar to the ones we've known for years. We're comfortably following the trail when something changes.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system, consisting of three vocal staves and one piano accompaniment staff. The lyrics are: "The land slopes down to the water, there's an increase in moisture, the ground is less stable." Handwritten annotations include: "(+31)" with an upward arrow above the first measure of the top vocal line; "(+35)" with an upward arrow above the 2nd measure of the top vocal line; "(+31) (+35)" with upward arrows above the 3rd and 4th measures of the top vocal line; "(+31) (+35)" with upward arrows above the 5th and 6th measures of the top vocal line; "(-14)" with a downward arrow above the 7th measure of the top vocal line; "[5]" above the 7th measure of the top vocal line; "(-14)" with a downward arrow above the 7th measure of the middle vocal line; "[5]" above the 7th measure of the middle vocal line; "(-14)" with a downward arrow above the 7th measure of the bottom vocal line; "[5]" above the 7th measure of the bottom vocal line; and "(-14)" with a downward arrow above the 7th measure of the bottom vocal line.

The land slopes down to the water, there's an increase in moisture, the ground is less stable.

<p>We are walking through a forest, similar to the ones we've known for years.</p>	<p>We're comfortably following the trail when something changes.</p>

We are walking through a forest, similar to the ones we've known for years. We're comfortably following the trail when something changes.

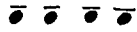
<p>The land becomes rocky, the trees grow smaller,</p>	<p>there's an increase in sunlight, the air is warmer.</p>
<p>The land becomes rocky, the trees grow smaller,</p>	<p>there's an increase in sunlight, the air is warmer.</p>
<p>The land becomes rocky, the trees grow smaller,</p>	<p>there's an increase in sunlight, the air is warmer.</p>

The land becomes rocky, the trees grow smaller, there's an increase in sunlight, the air is warmer.

[5] (-14) [7] (+35)

Berry bushes grow along the border between the trees and the prairie grass, between sunlight and shadow.

[5] (-14) [7] (+35)



Berry bushes grow along the border between the trees and the prairie grass, between sunlight and shadow.

(+47) (+51) [11] ↑ ↑ (+51) (+47) (+31) (+35) (+47) (+51)

Visibility is obscured. Definition is blurred. Identity is vague. Birds and small mammals gather to search for berries. Diversity flourishes.

[7]

Visibility is obscured. Definition is blurred. Identity is vague. Birds and small mammals gather to search for berries. Diversity flourishes.

PPP

Visibility is obscured. Definition is blurred. Identity is vague. Birds and small mammals gather to search for berries. Diversity flourishes.

PPP
Visibility is obscured. Definition is blurred. Identity is vague. Birds and small mammals gather to search for berries. Diversity flourishes.

Activity levels increase in riparian areas, along the margin between the land and the pond. Amphibians and reptiles scavenge

Activity levels increase in riparian areas, along the margin between the land and the pond. Amphibians and reptiles scavenge

The first system consists of two staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "Activity levels increase in riparian areas, along the margin between the land and the pond. Amphibians and reptiles scavenge". Above the notes are handwritten annotations: "(+51)", "(+47)", "[S+1]", "(+51)", and "(-14)". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment line with notes and rests. A bracket on the left side of the piano staff indicates the accompaniment. The lyrics are repeated below the piano staff.

between the marsh and the deep water. Always alert, listening and watching for sudden high waves, for signs of larger predators.

between the marsh and the deep water. Always alert, listening and watching for sudden high waves, for signs of larger predators.

The second system also consists of two staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "between the marsh and the deep water. Always alert, listening and watching for sudden high waves, for signs of larger predators." Above the notes are handwritten annotations: "[S+1]", "(+51)", "(+47)", "(-14)", "(+51)", "(+51)", and "(-14)". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment line with notes and rests. A bracket on the left side of the piano staff indicates the accompaniment. The lyrics are repeated below the piano staff.

[5]

oo-ee ah ah-oh-ee oh-oo ee ah ah oo ee ah-ee oh-ee ee oh
 We are following a road in deep fog, along a lagoon beside moist reeds and open

[5]

oo-ee ah ah-oh-ee oh-oo ee ah ah oo ee ah-ee oh-ee ee oh
 We are following a road in deep fog, along a lagoon beside moist reeds and open

[5]

oo-ee ah ah-oh-ee oh-oo ee ah ah oo ee ah-ee oh-ee ee oh
 We are following a road in deep fog, along a lagoon beside moist reeds and open

[11]

oo-ah oh-oo ee ah oo oo oo oh-oo ah ah-oo oh
 water, knowing the dawn winds will soon blow the fog down shore.

[5]

oo-ah oh-oo ee ah oo oo oo oh-oo ah ah-oo oh
 water, knowing the dawn winds will soon blow the fog down shore.

[7]

oo-ah oh-oo ee ah oo oo oo oh-oo ah ah-oo oh
 water, knowing the dawn winds will soon blow the fog down shore.

Departures - 6

- Gayle Young, 2016

oo-ee oh oo-ah-ee ah-oo oh-oo ee ah ee ah ah-ee ah-oo oo oo oo ah ah
 We notice wild flowers growing from seed on high ground, with room to blossom

oo-ee oh oo-ah-ee ah-oo oh-oo ee ah ee ah ah-ee ah-oo oo oo oo ah ah
 We notice wild flowers growing from seed on high ground, with room to blossom.

oo-ee oh oo-ah-ee ah-oo oh-oo ee ah ee ah ah-ee ah-oo oo oo oo ah ah
 We notice wild flowers growing from seed on high ground, with room to blossom

oo ee oh ee ee oh-ee ah-ee oo ee ee ah-ee ee oh ah ah ah-ee
 in the cool riparian zone between soil and light, rooted beneath high trees, protected from hot sunshine.

oo ee oh ee ee oh-ee ah-ee oo ee ee ah-ee ee oh ah ah ah-ee
 in the cool riparian zone between soil and light, rooted beneath high trees, protected from hot sunshine.

oo ee oh ee ee oh-ee ah-ee oo ee ee ah-ee ee oh ah ah ah-ee
 in the cool riparian zone between soil and light, rooted beneath high trees, protected from hot sunshine,

[1] ⁽⁺⁴⁷⁾ ↑

oo-ee ah ah-ee ee oh-oo ee ah ah ee ah-oo ah oh-oo ee ah-oo oo-ah oo-ee oo ee
 We are climbing slowly along a rocky outcrop, sloping downward. We soon see

[5]

oo-ee ah ah-ee ee oh-oo ee ah ah ee ah-oo ah oh-oo ee ah-oo oo-ah oo-ee oo ee
 We are climbing slowly along a rocky outcrop, sloping downward. We soon see

[7] ⁽⁺³⁵⁾ ⁽⁺³¹⁾ ⁽⁺³¹⁾ ↑

oo-ee ah ah-ee ee oh-oo ee ah ah ee ah-oo ah oh-oo ee ah-oo oo-ah oo-ee oo ee
 We are climbing slowly along a rocky outcrop, sloping downward. We soon see

[1] ⁽⁺³⁵⁾ ⁽⁺³¹⁾ ⁽⁺³¹⁾ ↑

ah-ee ah oo-ah oh-oo ee oh oh-oo oo oo ah ah oh ah-ee
 signs of water, floating boats, loaded and moored to the far-off shoreline.

[5]

ah-ee ah oo-ah oh-oo ee oh oh-oo oo oo ah ah oh ah-ee
 signs of water, floating boats, loaded and moored to the far-off shoreline.

[7]

ah-ee ah oo-ah oh-oo ee oh oh-oo oo oo ah ah oh ah-ee
 signs of water, floating boats, loaded and moored to the far-off shoreline.

[5] (-14) (-14)

We are walking through a field, similar to the ones we've known for years. We're comfortably following the trail when something changes.

[5] (-14) (-14)

We are walking through a field, similar to the ones we've known for years. We're comfortably following the trail when something changes.

(+31) (+35) (+31) (+35) (-14)

[7] [5]

The land slopes down to the water, there's an increase in moisture, the ground is less stable.

[5] (-14)

(+44) (+51) (-14)

[11] [5]

The land slopes down to the water, there's an increase in moisture, the ground is less stable.

[5] (-14)

[5] (+31) (+35) (-14)

[7] [5]

The land slopes down to the water, there's an increase in moisture, the ground is less stable.

<p>We are walking through a forest, similar to the ones we've known for years.</p>	<p>We're comfortably following the trail when something changes.</p>
<p>We are walking through a forest, similar to the ones we've known for years.</p>	<p>We're comfortably following the trail when something changes.</p>
<p>We are walking through a forest, similar to the ones we've known for years.</p>	<p>We're comfortably following the trail when something changes.</p>

<p>The land becomes rocky, the trees grow smaller,</p>	<p>there's an increase in sunlight, the air is warmer.</p>
<p>The land becomes rocky, the trees grow smaller,</p>	<p>there's an increase in sunlight, the air is warmer.</p>
<p>The land becomes rocky, the trees grow smaller,</p>	<p>there's an increase in sunlight, the air is warmer.</p>

[5]	(-14) [7] (+35)
Berry bushes grow along the border between the trees	and the prairie grass, between sunlight and shadow.
[5]	[7] (+35)
Berry bushes grow along the border between the trees	and the prairie grass, between sunlight and shadow.
[7]	
Berry bushes grow along the border between the trees	
[7]	
Berry bushes grow along the border between the trees	and the prairie grass, between sunlight and shadow.

(+47) (+51) [11] ↑↑	(-51) (-42) [7]
Visibility is obscured. Definition is blurred. Identity is vague.	Birds and small mammals gather to search for berries. Diversity flourishes.
[7]	(+31) (+35) [7]
Visibility is obscured. Definition is blurred. Identity is vague.	Birds and small mammals gather to search for berries. Diversity flourishes.
[11] (+31) (+47) ↑↑	
Visibility is obscured. Definition is blurred. Identity is vague.	Birds and small mammals gather to search for berries. Diversity flourishes.
[7]	
Visibility is obscured. Definition is blurred. Identity is vague.	Birds and small mammals gather to search for berries. Diversity flourishes.

[11]

Activity levels increase in riparian areas, along the margin between the land and the pond. Amphibians and reptiles scavenge

[5]

Activity levels increase in riparian areas, along the margin between the land and the pond. Amphibians and reptiles scavenge

[0]

Activity levels increase in riparian areas, along the margin between the land and the pond. Amphibians and reptiles scavenge

[5+11]

Activity levels increase in riparian areas, along the margin between the land and the pond. Amphibians and reptiles scavenge

Handwritten annotations: (+51), (+47), (-14), 5, (-14), 5, 5

[7]

between the marsh and the deep water. Always alert, listening and watching for sudden high waves, for signs of larger predators.

[5+11]

between the marsh and the deep water. Always alert, listening and watching for sudden high waves, for signs of larger predators.

[5+11]

between the marsh and the deep water. Always alert, listening and watching for sudden high waves, for signs of larger predators.

[5+11]

between the marsh and the deep water. Always alert, listening and watching for sudden high waves, for signs of larger predators.

Handwritten annotations: (+51), (+47), (-14), (+51), (+51), (-14)