what you must do, rather than must not do (2012)

James Saunders

at least two players
duration is variable

what you must do, rather than must not do comprises a set of prerecorded
instructions in different categories which are played back during the performance
and which govern the actions made by the performers.

preparation

Agree the performance duration.

For each player make a recording of spoken instructions, selected from the
categories below, lasting the previously agreed duration. Not all the categories or
instruction words need to be used.

The sequence of instruction words to be used in a recording should be prepared in
advance and read out whilst making the recording. Any ordering and spacing may
be used. Each of the recordings comprises a read sequence of the chosen
instruction words, which should be different for each player. A brief example has
been provided in the sample recording.

Players should each determine how many instruction words are required (e.g. for
‘noise’, if the player chooses to use 13 noises, then instruction words ‘noise 1, noise
2, … noise 13’ are required, and so on).

Each recording must be made by someone other than the player who will use it.
This could be done in a reciprocal way, with each ensemble member recording
instructions for another ensemble member. Where possible, each recording in a
performance should be recorded by a different person, so that a range of voices are
heard.

Each performer requires individual localized playback equipment for their recording
(e.g. mp3 player with speakers, mobile phone, computer, tablet etc.), together with
the necessary materials to realize their instructions.

Players may use any instruments, sound-producing objects, devices or sound
processing equipment (digital, analogue, or acoustic).

performance

All performers start the playback of their recordings together.

Recordings are played back during the performance at a level audible to the
audience, but not so loud as to cover any sounds made by the players.

The player responds to the instructions on the recording by realizing the defined
actions as soon as possible after they are spoken.

When rehearsing, players may produce secondary scores, perhaps indicating timings
or using other forms of notation, as a means of learning their parts. These should
not be used in the performance however.

Players follow the instructions on their own recording, but may optionally respond
to instructions on recordings of the other players if audible.
**noise**

Any noises may be used, all noises must be as different as possible to each other. Duration of each noise is free. Noises are sounded using any means following each cue.

Instruction words:
- Noise 1
- Noise 2
- Noise 3
- Etc.

**device**

Any automated devices may be used, all actions involve turning the device on or off. Changes to the device state are made following each cue.

Instruction words:
- Device 1 on
- Device 1 off
- Device 2 on
- Device 2 off
- Device 3 on
- Device 3 off
- Etc.

**pitch**

Any pitches may be used, each pitch must be different. Duration of each pitch is free. Pitches are sounded using any means following each cue.

Instruction words:
- Pitch 1
- Pitch 2
- Pitch 3
- Etc.

**process**

Any digital, analogue or acoustic processing of sounds may be used, all actions involve turning the process on or off. Changes to the process state are made following each cue.

Instruction words:
- Process 1 on
- Process 1 off
- Process 2 on
- Process 2 off
- Process 3 on
- Process 3 off
- Etc.