

they are always different, they are always the same / James Saunders (2016)

Aide à l'écriture d'une oeuvre musicale originale du Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication.

Commissioned by Lutherie Urbaine with support from the French Ministry of Culture and Communication.  
First performed by pupils from École Paul-Langevin, directed by Thierry Madiot, at Chateau d'Etang, Bagnolet, on 14 April 2016.

In *they are always different, they are always the same* the players work through a set of group actions. All players making a particular action do exactly the same thing, such as dropping an object from an outstretched hand, or stacking cardboard boxes on top of each other. The similarity of the action highlights the different ways in which people, behave, their attitudes and characters, and the way they undertake simple tasks. The title is a description of the band The Fall by John Peel.

*they are always different, they are always the same* was commissioned by Lutherie Urbaine with support from the French Ministry of Culture and Communication. It was first realised as part of an ongoing project run by Lutherie Urbaine working on new music repertoire with school children in Bagnolet. The first performance was by pupils from École Paul-Langevin, directed by Thierry Madiot, at Chateau d'Etang, Bagnolet, on 14 April 2016.

## **instructions**

The aim is for a group of people to present identical actions with identical resources, and through doing so allow natural variation in behaviours between the players to emerge.

The piece is performed by a group of players. Ideally this will be a large group (10+), but it can also be played by small groups (3+). It can last for any duration.

A performance comprises at least one of the activities described on the following pages. This could involve:

- a single activity for the whole performance
- a sequence of different activities (including multiple realisations of the same activity in different ways)
- a sequence of parallel activities undertaken simultaneously by more than one group

Each score page defines a particular generic activity and presents examples of its realization as follows:

resources: the object(s) and/or materials required to perform the activity.

Where possible, all players should use identical materials for each activity.

All players undertaking the same activity should stand/sit in a line so as to be clearly visible to the audience.

The audience should be able to compare the way each performer undertakes each action.

actions: what to do with the resources.

All actions specified in an activity must be performed broadly in the same way.

Actions should be performed in a natural way, with their pacing determined by the player, the nature of the activity, and the response of the objects or materials.

All actions should have some human agency necessary to complete them.

Where an activity specifies a single action, the action may be repeated any number of times, unless the activity presents a natural conclusion in the end condition (see below).

The co-ordination of actions by players should be either:

- independent: each player undertakes the activity without regard to the other players
- contingent: players synchronize their actions with the actions of the other players (e.g. dropping an object either when another player drops an object, or when the object hits the floor)

end: an end condition for the activity

The end condition determines the point at which the activity ends, normally when all players have met the condition

Alternatively, all actions may be terminated at a predetermined moment, for example after a particular duration or at an agreed signal.

examples

Each activity has three examples specified that suggest possible ways to realize the instructions.

These examples are not prioritised in any way, but simply show diverse ways for each action to be undertaken. The principles explained on each score page should be used to determine the type of action to undertake and resources to use.

All activities should have an audible result in some way.

## deforming

*resources*

Material that can be deformed through actions such as stretching, compressing, twisting, bending, kneading, or in other ways

*actions*

Deform the material using the chosen action until it reaches an extreme state but does not break. Once this state is reached, leave the object to return to its original state, as far as this is possible. Repeat the action.

*end*

The activity ends when the materials no longer begin to return to their original state in a discernible way.

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crumpling a sheet of paper into a ball and allowing it to unfurl

stretching a piece of elastic to its limit and letting go of one end

bending a plastic ruler to the point just before it would break and letting it straighten out

## dropping

*resources*

Object(s) that can be dropped from the hand.

*actions*

Place the object in the right hand. Hold the right arm out in front of the body, parallel to the ground. Drop the object so that it hits the ground. Repeat the action, either by using multiple identical objects, or by retrieving the dropped object from the floor. If retrieving the object, calmly collect it and return to the dropping position before repeating.

*end*

The activity ends when all the objects have been dropped and/or remain unretrieved.

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dropping eggs into a bucket

dropping sheets of paper from a high balcony

dropping tennis balls and allowing them to come to rest

## switching

<i>resources</i>	Device(s) that can be switched on and off, or to other states. The device(s) must be able to remain in its current state until switched to another.
<i>actions</i>	The devices must be off at the beginning of the activity. Switch the device to a different state.
<i>end</i>	The activity ends when all the devices are off and no player initiates a new sequence.

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turning an electric fan on and off

switching between six preset radio stations

pressing a buzzer and releasing

## rolling

<i>resources</i>	Object(s) that can be rolled across or around a surface. A set of identical objects may be necessary.
<i>actions</i>	Roll the object across the surface, or manipulate the surface so that the object rolls around it. If the surface is flat or slopes away from the player, repeat the action either by using multiple identical objects, or by retrieving the rolled object. If retrieving the object, calmly collect it and return to the starting position before repeating. If the object is rolled around the surface, try to keep it moving continuously.
<i>end</i>	The activity ends when the all players have run out of objects to roll, or at an agreed signal.

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rolling a bowling ball across a room

rolling a marble around a saucepan

rolling a can down a slope



## opening

*resources*            Object(s) that can be opened and closed.

*actions*             The object begins in its open state. Close the object abruptly, then open it.

*end*                    The activity ends when the all and nobody elects to make an action.

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opening and closing the doors to a room

removing and replacing the lid of a dustbin

opening and closing curtains

## breaking

*resources* Object(s) that can be broken, and any tools necessary to achieve this.

*actions* Break the object so that it is not possible to return it to its original state. Repeat either with additional identical objects, or by breaking the fragments of the original object further.

*end* The activity ends when all the objects are broken, or the object fragments cannot be broken further.

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breaking a sheet of polystyrene in half

breaking a sheet of glass with a hammer

popping balloons with pins

## **distributing**

*resources*            Objects or materials that can be distributed around a space.

*actions*             Distribute the objects or materials around the space through scattering, spraying, sprinkling, or in other ways.

*end*                  The activity ends when all the objects or materials have been distributed

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scattering grains of rice over the floor

spraying water from a pump-action diffuser

blowing sand across a table

## **unwinding**

*resources*            Material that is wound into a roll or ball

*actions*             Unwind the material until it cannot be further unwound (perhaps due to the available space)

*end*                    The activity ends when all the materials are fully unwound

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unwinding a tensed roll of masking tape with the end secured to a fixed point

unrolling a ball of wool

unwinding a toilet roll

## stacking

*resources*            A quantity of identical objects that can be stacked in some way.

*actions*             Stack the objects one at a time on top of each other such that they form a stable structure.

*end*                    The activity ends all the objects have been stacked, or when the structure collapses.

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placing large cardboard boxes on top of each other.

piling match sticks to form a heap

stacking apples in a pyramid

## **striking**

<i>resources</i>	Object(s) or materials to strike, and a tool with which to do this
<i>actions</i>	Strike the object or material with the tool, and repeat. If the object or materials are caused to move out of reach through the striking action, ensure there is a supply to continue the activity.
<i>end</i>	The activity ends when nobody elects to make an action, or all players have run out of objects or materials to strike

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striking a pillow with the palm of the hand

hitting table tennis balls with a bat

ringing a bicycle bell

## marking

<i>resources</i>	Material or objects that can be marked, and the tools necessary to mark them
<i>actions</i>	Make a single continuous mark or a series of identical marks on the object or material using the tool.
<i>end</i>	The activity ends when there is no space left to mark the object or material, or at an agreed signal

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filling a sheet of paper with a series of very short pencil lines

engraving a metal block with a sharp knife

shading a blackboard with chalk

## scraping

<i>resources</i>	Object(s) that can be scraped across a surface through pushing, dragging, bowing, sawing, rubbing, or other ways.
<i>actions</i>	Beginning at one edge of the surface to be scraped, move the object to the opposite edge maintaining contact between the object and the surface throughout. If the object is larger than the surface being scraped, then begin with one edge of the object in contact with the surface and move the object until the opposite edge is in contact with the surface. Once this action is complete, the activity may continue by reversing the action.
<i>end</i>	The activity ends when all objects have been moved completely across the surface.

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pushing an upturned paper coffee cup across a table

sweeping the floor with a broom

bowing a piece of card with a comb



## **moving**

<i>resources</i>	A group of identical objects that can be moved from one location to another location.
<i>actions</i>	Each player begins with all their objects in one location. Move the objects, one at a time, from the starting location to a different location.
<i>end</i>	The activity ends when all objects have been moved to the second location.

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moving a pile of dried lentils

moving a pallet of bricks

moving cars in a car park

## cutting

<i>resources</i>	Object(s) or material that can be cut, and any tools necessary to achieve this.
<i>actions</i>	Cut the object(s) or material either into two parts or through creating an incision. Repeat either by making further incisions, or making the same cut into additional identical objects or material, or by cutting the fragments of the original object or material further.
<i>end</i>	The activity ends when all the objects or material are cut, or the fragments from the original object or material cannot be cut further.

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slicing a large sheet of paper suspended from a rail with a knife

sawing a block of wood in two

cutting a series of small incisions in the surface of a watermelon

## mixing

### *resources*

At least two types of object or material that can be mixed together, and any tools or receptacles necessary to do this.

### *actions*

Start with the two types of object or material in separate locations. Gradually combine the two and mix them together.

### *end*

The activity ends when all the objects or materials have been mixed together and are indistinguishable as separate objects or materials, as far as this is possible.

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mixing vegetables and water with a blender

mixing four different coloured sands in a glass beaker

mixing two different coloured blocks of modeling clay to form a composite mass

## wrapping

<i>resources</i>	Object(s) that can be wrapped, and materials with which to wrap them
<i>actions</i>	Wrap the available objects with the wrapping materials. Each object may be wrapped with more than one layer of material if required.
<i>end</i>	The activity ends when all objects have been wrapped, or when there are no materials left to wrap them with.

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wrapping a block of polystyrene with tissue paper

wrapping a wooden box with cellophane

wrapping a football with masking tape

## detaching

*resources*            Object(s) comprising two or more removable parts

*actions*            Begin with the object intact. Remove each detachable part individually until the object is separated into its component parts. The object may be reconstructed in the same manner or left in its detached state.

*end*                 The activity ends when the object has been separated into its component parts, or when it has been rebuilt.

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detaching two strips of Velcro

detaching lids from pens

detaching bricks from a Lego model

## manipulating

*resources* Object(s) or materials that create sounds when handled

*actions* Pick up the object or material and turn it around continuously by hand so that the manipulation causes it to make sounds.

*end* The activity ends at an agreed signal, or if the manipulation causes the object or material to stop sounding.

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manipulating a glass tumbler

manipulating a block of polystyrene

manipulating a plastic carrier bag

## **pouring**

<i>resources</i>	Material that can be poured from one location to another, and vessels with which to contain it if necessary
<i>actions</i>	Pour the material from its initial location to a second location. One or more of the locations may be a vessel of some kind.
<i>end</i>	The activity ends when all of the material has been poured into/onto the second location

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pouring water from one bucket to another from a great height

pouring sugar from one metal bowl to another

pouring a bag of marbles down a slope

## **grinding**

*resources*            Material that can ground, and the means to grind it.

*actions*            Place the material between the surfaces required to grind it. Grind the material with a continuous motion.

*end*                 The activity ends when the material has been ground as much as possible and cannot be ground any further.

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grinding corn between two slates

grinding fragments of bark with a rock

grinding meringues with a spatula