

NI ZHENG

NERVOUS ILLS

FOR VOICE AND ELECTRONICS
2019

for Tyler Bouque

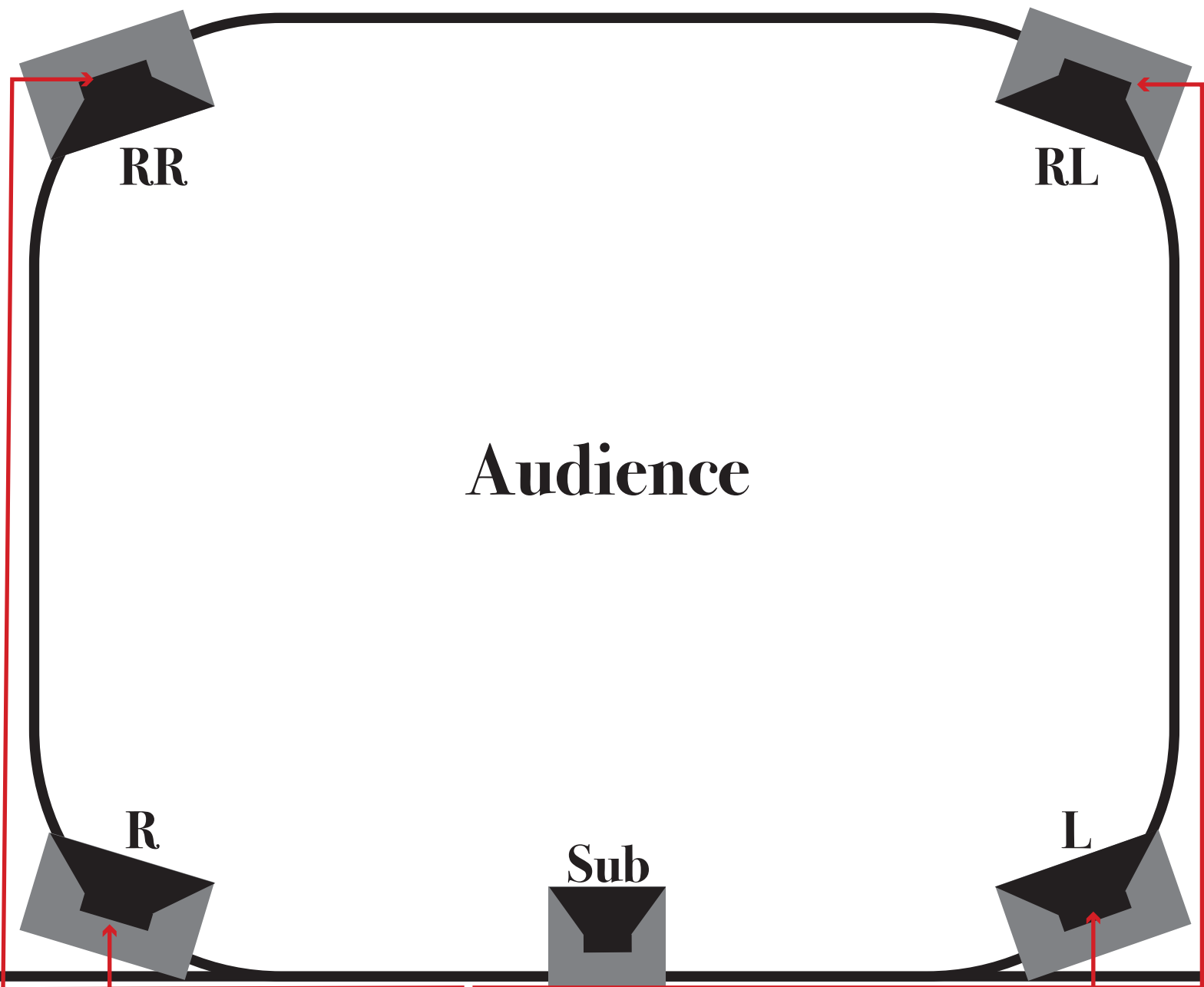
TEXT

Selected from the book *Nervous Ills: their cause and cure* by Boris Sidis published in 1922

Animals in which the fear instinct can be aroused to a high degree become paralyzed and perish. The animal mechanism is by no means perfect. A stab in the heart, a rip in the abdomen, a cut of the carotids, a prick in the medulla, a scratch of a needle infected with anthrax, or tetanus bacilli, a drop of hydrocyanic acid, an arrow tipped with curare, extinguish every spark of life. Organic material may be delicate and complex, but is highly imperfect and vulnerable.

TECH REQUIREMENT

This piece is for solo voice and electronics that include a quadraphonic fixed media track and real-time processing of the voice. It requires a 4.1 speakers surround sound system (front left and right speakers, rear left and right speakers, and a subwoofer); a laptop running a Max 8 patch, which was built specifically for this piece, on stage by the performer; an audio interface; a USB foot pedal; and a condenser microphone. See the next page for the patch and diagram of the stage setup.



Audience

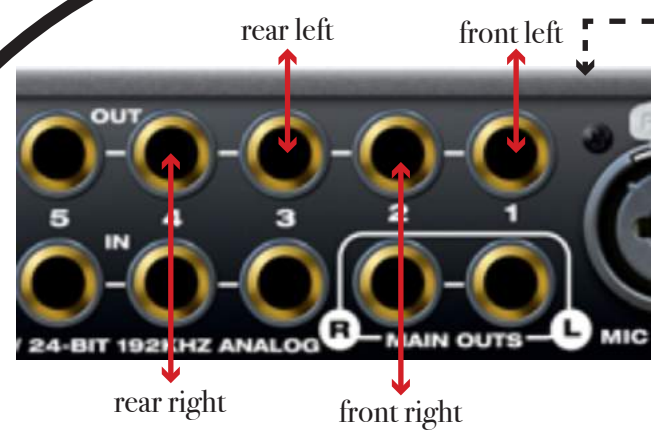
RR

RL

R

Sub

L



rear left

front left

rear right

front right



interface



laptop running max 8



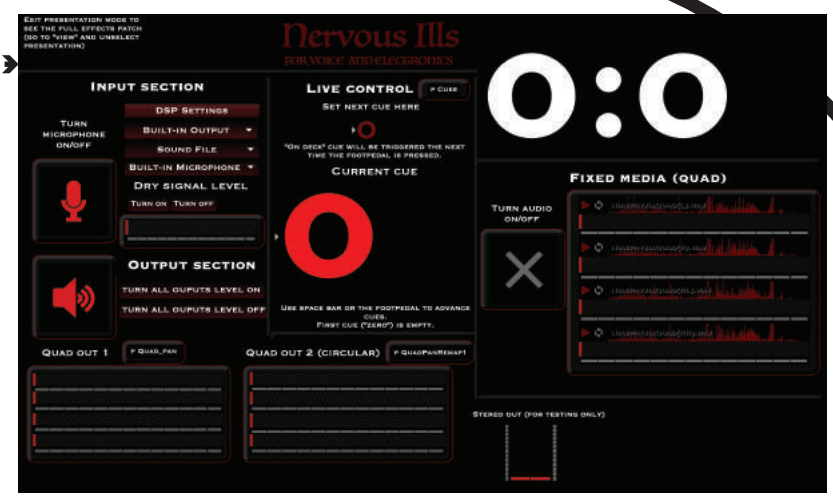
large-diaphragm condenser microphone



usb footswitch pedal for triggering preset cues



performer



max 8 patch

see more instructions inside of the patch

Stage

PERFORMANCE NOTES

This piece is designed for the performer to run on stage independently without the assistance of the composer.

The singer is responsible for triggering the real time processing; cues are marked by numbers in the score corresponding to the patch presets.

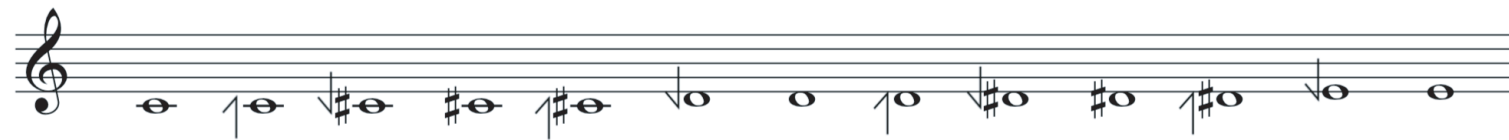
The singer should follow the timer in the patch throughout the performance.

Microtonal notation

This piece is written in 36ET and using Ezra Sims's sixthtonal symbols.

↑ = Raise 1/6 tone (33 cents) ↓ = Lower 1/6 tone (33 cents)

(Pitch rising by sixth-tones from C to E; symbol combined with traditional accidental)



Symbols (in order of appearance)

Sounds with specified pitches are notated in traditional staff, and sounds with unspecified pitches are notated in one line staff with relative pitch positions.

♫ air sound ^^^ distorted voice/vocal fry ^^^(•) distorted voice/vocal fry with pitch

♫ singing ♫ ingressive phonation/inward singing

↗ glissando with exponential curve ♫ percussive sound

~~~~~ exaggerated and irregular vibration

✕ speech with unspecified pitch/approximate contour

4/4 ♩ = 60

0" 4" 8" 12" 16" 20" 24" 28" 29"

voice

fixed media

1 2

An... mal... s... in

32" 35" 36" 40" 41" 44" 47" 48" 52" 53" 56" 59"

voice

fixed media

3 4 5 6 7

whi... ch the... in... S... can

1'00" 1'04" 1'05" 1'08" 1'11" 1'12" 1'16" 1'19" 1'20" 1'24" 1'28"

voice

fixed media

8 9

be... a... rou... to... a... high... high... de... g... re... e... be... come

1'32" 1'36" 1'40" 1'44" 1'48" 1'50" 1'52" 1'56"

voice

fixed media

10

de... g... ree... be... COME... de... g... ree... be... come... pa... ra... ly... z... ed... and per... ish

2'00" 2'04" 2'08" 2'12" 2'16" 2'20" 2'22" 2'24" 2'28" 2'32" 2'36" 2'40"

*mp* *p* *f* *mf* *mf* *f* *p* *f* *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *mp*

The an-i-mal mech-a-ni-sm is by no means perfect A stab in the heart a rip in the a-bdo-men

2'44" 2'48" 2'52" 2'56" 3'00" 3'04" 3'08" 3'12" 3'16" 3'18" 3'20" 3'22"

*mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mp* *f* *ffp* *ff* *p* *f* *mp* *f* *mp* *ffp* *ffp* *mf* *ff* *fff*

a cut of the ca-rrid-S a prick in the me-du-la a scratch of a needle in-fect-ed with an-th-rax or tet-a-nus ba-ci-li a drop of hydro-cyanic acid an al-ter-row tipped with CU-ri-a

3'24" 3'28" 3'32" 3'34" 3'36" 3'40" 3'44" 3'48" 3'50" 3'52" 3'55" 3'56" 4'00" 4'04"

*ff* *f* *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *fff*

re ex-tin-gui-sh eve-ry spar-k o-f li-

4'08" 4'12" 4'16" 4'20" 4'24" 4'28" 4'32" 4'36" 4'40" 4'42" 4'44" 4'48"

*f* *pp* *fff* *f* *pp* *ffp* *ppp* *mp*

fc organic material may be delicate and complex but it is highly imperfect and vulnerable

4'52" 4'56" 5'00" 5'04" 5'08" 5'12" 5'16" 5'20" 5'24" 5'27" 5'28"

*mp*

organic material may be delicate and complex but it is highly im- perfect organic material may be delicate and complex but it is highly im-