

battle pieces

for saxophone and drumset
(or any two instruments)

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yo momma

Yo Momma is a competitive music game. The objective of the game is to steal an 'ending' from the other player. You accomplish this by recontextualizing what the other player is doing as a possible end to the piece.

When you catch the other player in an ending you make a 'thumbs up' gesture to yourself, indicating your claim to the ending. If both players claim the point, no point is scored.

You may 'escape' an ending by skillfully negotiating a context to continue. If the player attempting to create the end feels you egregiously played through an attempted ending, they may make a claim for a point, which the escaping player may concede or refute (using facial gestures).

The game continues until one player scores two points.

When the winner player has scored their second point the losing player begins a solo, which continues until the winner 'ends' them, by creating an ending for their solo.

switches

Both performers begin by playing six unpitched events in unison. They can choose to play a short sound or a long sound, but must begin with each other regardless of the duration of their chosen event. The combination of the first three events determines the interaction modes used later in the piece and the duration of time between the last three events determines the dynamics of those sections (long = loud, short = soft).

The recipes for the first three events and subsequent modes of interaction are:

Player 1	Player 2	mode of interaction
short	short	unison stabs (stabs)
short	long	stabs + alternating stab/sustain (switches)
long	long	trading stab/sustain (trades)

After the opening six events there are three block sections which adhere to the modes of interaction and dynamics determined in the introduction.

glitch beat

Both performers begin by playing a busy/defined material. When one performer's variations are exhausted and/or no longer interesting, they stop playing.

The other performer carries on playing. They cannot stop.

The performer who stopped composes a rhythm/phrase/melody/figure in their head and then begins playing it loudly/confidently. The other performer must immediately join in trying to play it in perfect unison. The moment that both performers have phased into unison immediately start playing a new busy/defined material.

Repeat this cycle (busy/defined -> one performer stops -> unison rhythm) two more times except on the last repeat rather than trying to join in in unison immediately, internalize the rhythm/phrase/melody/figure and only begin playing it once you can do it perfectly.

Play the unison figure 50 times and stop. If the other performer stops first, carry on until you reach what you count as 50.

strains

Strains is broken into two sections. During the first section of the piece the performers play a musical version of “rock, paper, scissors” with predefined low/mid/high sounds. The drummer counts in the first round and then both performers play their chosen low/mid/high sounds at the tempo established by the count in with the 7th note determining who wins the round. The winner counts in the next round which is played at that new tempo and is only 6 notes long. This pattern continues until only one note is heard. The winner of the final round begins the second section.

The second section begins with free improvisation. The loser of the first section can interrupt at any point by playing a repeating rhythmic cycle. The winner then interrupts that cycle with one of his own (at a new tempo) and finally the loser interrupts one more time. This forms a rhythmic phrase consistent of 3 tempos. The rhythmic phrase is then repeated in unison before going back to the free improvisation. At any point during the improvisation a performer may cue to play the previous rhythmic sentence in unison.

The following cycle forms the remainder of the piece with the performers choosing to end after any unison rhythmic sentence.

free improv -> (last rhythmic sentence in unison) -> building a new 3section rhythmic sentence by interrupting each other -> unison rhythmic sentence ->free improv