

## LISTENING PERFORMANCES

Adam Overton, Feb 2006

For Elana Mann

. . .

The following are listening options that can be offered to spectators before any musical or sonic occasion, and can be used especially during any performance that one might not be enjoying for whatever reason(s).

. . .

Instead of listening the way you usually do, choose to direct your attention in one or more of the following ways, *or* feel free to develop your own alternative listening practices:

listen simply to the sounds being produced

.

try to predict the sounds that are about to be produced

.

listen for timbre and try to identify individual instruments [zoom in]

.

listen to the full mass of sound, trying not to identify individual instruments [zoom out]

.

remember conversations you've had in the past

.

compose something [musical or otherwise]

.

write something [down]

.

read something

.

stand up and listen

.

move to listen from different vantage points

.

stay in one place, but imagine what it might sound like from somewhere else

.

imagine what the event might sound like in a completely different environment

.

lie down [and listen]

.

try to sleep [but keep listening]

.

close your eyes (does it sound different?)

.

open your eyes (does it sound different?)

.

focus on one person on stage some or all of the time

.

focus on the interaction between a group of people onstage some or all of the time

.

get high beforehand [experimental these days]

.

don't get high beforehand

.  
listen for body sounds within the audience, or coming from the stage (is there a pattern to the grumbling of stomachs?? a secret code, or conspiracy???)

.  
send/yell telepathic messages to the performers, friendly, obscene or otherwise

.  
send telepathic messages to the people in the audience who you think have the same taste as you

.  
send telepathic messages to the people in the audience who you think have differing tastes than you

.  
observe another listener

.  
notice the movement of the performers' shadows

.  
explore the ceiling and lighting rig with your eyes

.  
notice how each light above affects and illuminates the image onstage [and off]

.  
imagine the lineage of the items onstage, for instance the instruments (e.g. violin -> craftsman building it -> the tree and horse tail it came from -> the ground and climate and farm -> the people and animals buried there -> the dinosaurs that peed there -> tectonic shift and migration, etc), or for the people onstage (e.g. from the present moment back to childhood, birth, parents, grandparents, ancestors, etc)

.  
imagine the performers as if they were dangling from strings like puppets

.  
imagine yourself as if you were dangling from strings like a puppet

.  
imagine the performers fucking their instruments

.  
imagine the performers destroying their instruments

.  
imagine the performers whispering [sweet love?] to their instruments

.  
imagine the performers naked

.  
imagine the performers fucking each other

.  
cause yourself to cry or become emotional to see if it sounds different

.  
secretly begin masturbating to see if it sounds different

.  
imagine the life of someone in the audience who truly loves this music

.  
imagine the life of someone in the audience who truly hates this music

.  
imagine what someone else might be doing in this very moment in another place in the world

.  
imagine where else in the world in this very moment someone might be at a similar concert

.  
imagine another dimension or time warp where another version of you is experiencing this same concert slightly [or quite] differently

.  
etc...