

## ***Rhetorics***

Free improvisation concept and recording project  
for violin and cello

## ***Rhetorics***

Improvisation concept and recording project  
for violin and cello

*Rhetorics* is based on a concept for a short improvised duo. The following presents the performers with limitations which affect the course of improvised events:

### *Rhetorics for two improvisers*

*Improviser 1 produces a sound. After three seconds, Improviser 2 produces a sound which is the opposite of the one produced by Improviser 1. Similarly after two-three seconds Improviser 1 produces the opposite of the sound produced by Improviser 2. The process of opposing responses continues, while the silence between the reactions gradually diminishes to nothing, finally producing a continuous sound of opposites. Duration: 1minute.*

*Note: The improvisers subjectively categorize a sound and its opposite by reflexively qualifying it, based on every possible attribute e.g. frequency range, length, loudness, timbre, shape, etc.*

Improvisers, while engaged in free interaction, can be considered to possess an extensive 'pool' of sounds from which they draw instinctively, forming gestures in a manner analogous to the way phrases are formed in verbal interaction. As in a conversation, a duo of improvisers tend to generate a totality of sound, derived by complementary mannerisms and gestures which mutually blend in order to achieve formal and textural unity, fluidity and transparency similar to that of cohesive verbal interaction.

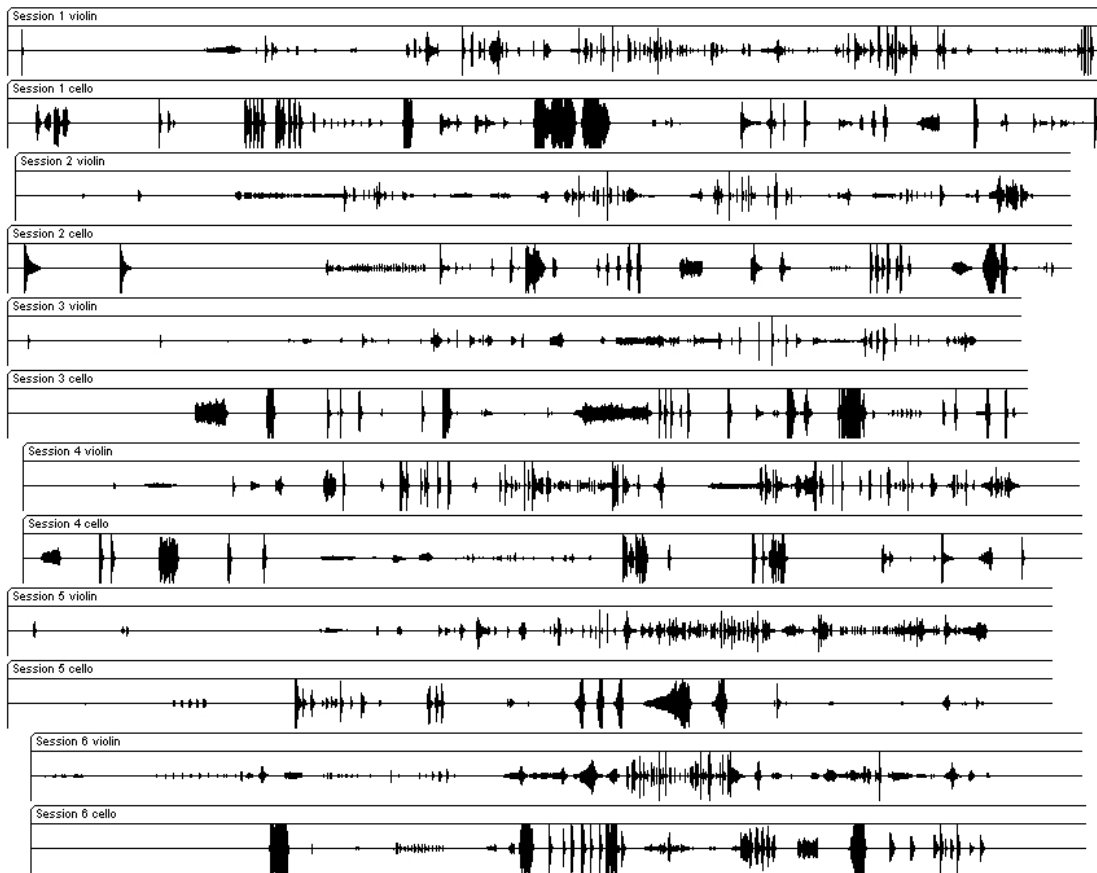
*Rhetorics* deploys the notion of the subjective 'opposite' as a limitation which compels the improviser to re-evaluate the categorization of their 'pool' of sounds. Consequently, this opposition of gestures has the potential to disrupt the mannerisms which produce a linear course of events, by forcing the unfolding of texture and form, towards the unpredictability of a performative dialectics of negation.

*Rhetorics*, initially conceived as a short performance piece, was subsequently developed as a multi-track recording project emulating the improvisation of a number of *Rhetorics* duets. The idea was to multiply the paths of interaction in a manner similar to the way the *Threshold* duet concept was expanded to the scope of *The Film Sextet*.

During the hard-disk recording session, six takes of *Rhetorics* duos were created, with Johannes von Weizsäcker on the cello and myself on violin. The two microphones were placed in separate recording spaces and the interaction took place through headphones, ensuring the created sound files had no sound 'leaking' from the other instrument. The resulting duos were panned 'hard left' for the violin and 'hard right' for the cello.

*Rhetorics parallel* is an audio track created by the synchronous playback of all six sessions, emulating the idea of six independent duos interacting in parallel, similarly to the VCR sections in *The Film Sextet* (Chapter 4), in which three independent processes happened simultaneously. Example 3 displays a screenshot of the six sessions layered in parallel:

### Example 1

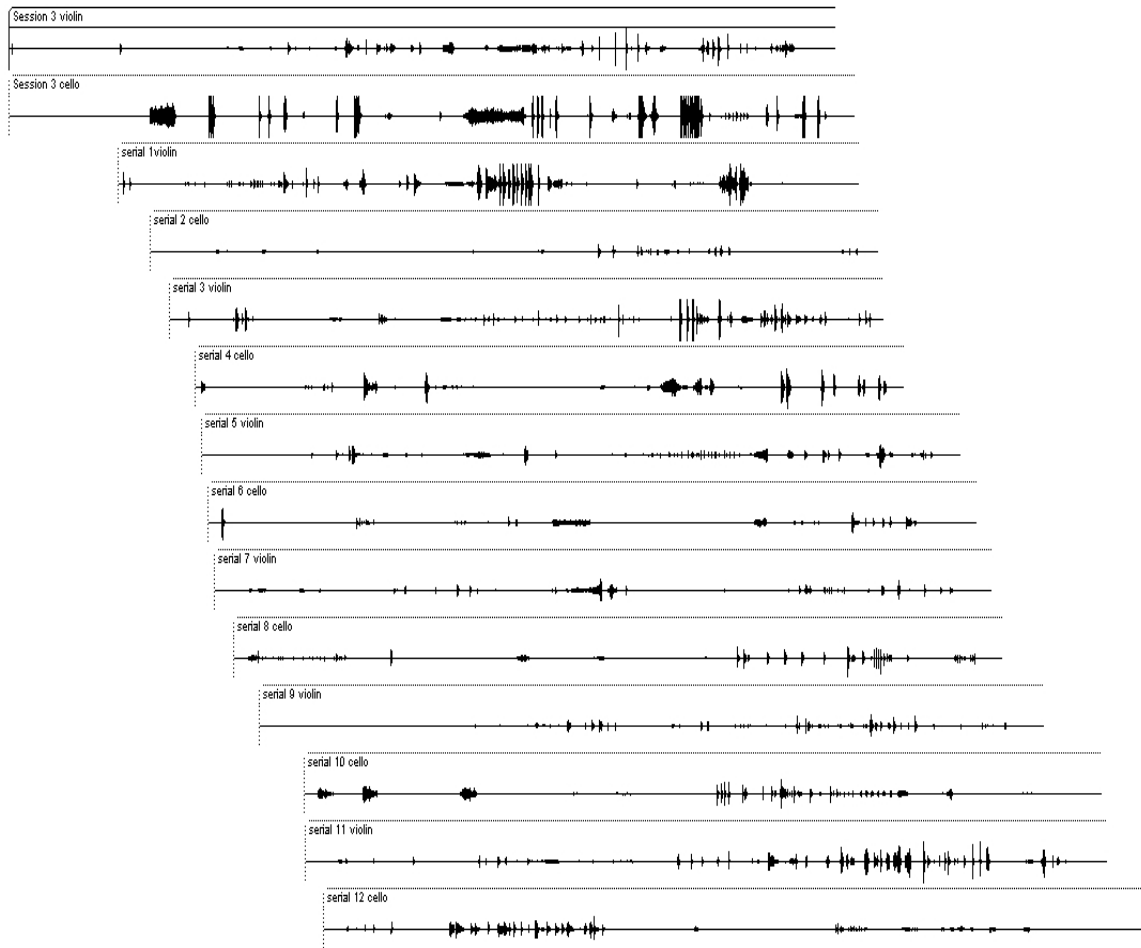


After auditioning separately all six sessions, *Session 3* was chosen as the most successful in representing the concept of *Rhetorics*.

*Rhetorics serial* is the audio track created by a process of layering 'chinese whispers' of the *Rhetorics* concept: *Session 3* was used as the starting duo. Then, a violin track was created by interacting with the recorded cello part from *Session 3*. A cello track was then created by interacting with the last recorded violin track. This chain of interactions using the *Rhetorics* brief took place six times for each instrument. The result emulates an improvisation in which seven violinists and seven cellists are alternately placed in a row and interact serially by unilaterally relaying sound information, from one end to the

other. *Rhetorics serial 10-11* and *Rhetorics serial 11-12* are respectively the second last and last isolated duos from the session. Example 4 displays a screenshot of the recording session:

### Example 2



*Rhetorics serial Violin* and *Rhetorics serial Cello* are tracks created by respectively isolating the violin and the cello sessions in the serial recording process.

***Rhetorics* Audio CD Track listing**

The CD can be found attached on the back cover

Panos Ghikas (violin),  
Johannes von Weizsäcker (violoncello)

1. *Rhetorics (Session 3)*
2. *Rhetorics (Parallel)*
3. *Rhetorics (Serial 11-12)*
4. *Rhetorics (Serial 10-11)*
5. *Rhetorics (Serial )*
6. *Rhetorics (Serial violin)*
7. *Rhetorics (Serial cello)*