

## Oscillations of One-to-Many

by Hannah Kaya & Aaron Finbloom

*Practicalities:* For 2-4 Participants. Required materials are: “Monologue and Dialogue 3x5 Cards” (see next page), ample blank 3x5 cards for rounds 7-8, writing implements

*Monologue Phase:* During Monologue phases the monologuer speaks about anything they desires trying not to have any long drawn-out gaps in their speech. While this is happening other participants can only interject by holding up a card in their hand and speak using the card’s directive. Cards can be used any number of times. And when used, each card has maximum duration of 5 seconds or 2 sentences.

Prior to each monologue phase, all participants simultaneously hold up their hands to indicate their level of interest in monologuing (as low as possible indicates no interest, as high as possible indicates great interest). The person with the greatest interest is the monologuer for the forthcoming round. If someone has already been the monologuer in a prior, they can only monologue again if all other participants have had a turn to be the monologuer.

*Dialogue Phase:* During Dialogue phases all cards are shared and placed in the middle. In order for anyone to say anything, they must point to a card in the shared pile and speak using its directive. There is no pre-set order. Cards can be used any number of times. You are allowed to interrupt someone if they are speaking; however, as stated above, interruptions must occur by the interrupter pointing to a card and following its directives.

### SEQUENCE

#1 Monologue:	no cards	[2 minutes]
#2 Dialogue:	no cards	[2 minutes]
#3 Monologue:	4 card hand, traditional set	[3 minutes]
#4 Dialogue:	8 card shared pile, traditional set	[3 minutes]
#5 Monologue:	4 card hand, all cards to choose from	[4 minutes]
#6 Dialogue:	8 card shared pile, all cards to choose from	[4 minutes]

BREAK [5 minutes]

- Each performer writes 2 monologue cards
- Each audience member writes 1 dialogue card
- Each performer selects their 4-card hand for the following round
- Each performer eliminate 2 dialogue cards (original or audience-made)
- The monologuer for Round #7 choses 2 participants to give their monologue cards to

#7 Monologue:	4 card hand, custom set	[6 minutes]
#8 Dialogue:	all non-eliminated dialogue cards in shard pile	[7 minutes]

## Monologue Cards

### **Traditional Set**

- Sentence  
(speak the beginning of a sentence and the monologuer repeats your sentence and fills in the end of the sentence and keeps talking)
- Word  
(repeat one word that the monologuer has just said and the monologuer now must replace this word with another word of their choosing)
- Story  
(speak about some event or idea that relates)
- Observation  
(make an observation)

### **Additional Cards**

- "That makes me feel \_\_\_\_."
- Repetition w/ Difference  
(Could you say that again, but differently?)
- Dynamics (louder/softer)
- Speed (slower/faster)
- "What are you feeling right now?"
- Eyes Closed/Open (for the monologuer)
- Hold Hands/Let go (yours and the monologuer)
- 5 second humming break (all hum)

## Dialogue Cards

### **Traditional Set**

- Negate
- Clarify
- Question
- Example
- Analogy/Metaphor
- Observation
- Definition
- Build

### **Additional Cards**

- Support
- Judge
- Appease
- State what is really happening
- State underlying assumptions
- Find flaws in the argument
- "That reminds me of"
- Affirm
- Expression of feeling/desire

## Screenshots



Monologue-Round #3



Dialogue-Round #8

## **Detailed explanation of artistic and technological paradigms, approach to musical praxis and technological implementation, including personnel needs and qualifications.**

This elaborate game-piece receives inspiration from works such as John Zorn's 'Cobra' and John Cage's pieces which involve chance-based operations. It draws on 'Cobra' in its use of cue-cards for determining the types of possible action within the game. Moreover, it is situative like 'Cobra', in that the game occurs within a meta-structure which determines when and how the cue cards come into play, and also provides opportunity for players to adapt and generate rules by providing a round for cue card construction. It is this sense that the cue cards are situative, as both the set of cards, their timing and their content shift over the course of the score and cannot be repeated. Cage is more of an influence for the strict use of timing and for our attempt to turn semantic language into musical practice. Whereas Cage's *Lecture on Nothing* (1959) is a sample of semantic language score, the practice of Conversation Scoring attempts to score dialogue (rather than monologue) and attempts to occupy a narrow improvisational middle-ground between an organic conversation and traditional theatre scripts. In this sense another influential paradigm are theatre games and exercises such as Meisner's *Repetition* or Augusto Boal's *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*. The practice of Conversation Scores differs from these exercises in a few important respects: 1) an increased focus on rounds and time-based shifts in procedures and rules 2) an interest in having conversational content (emotional or thematic) transfer from one round to the next 3) a release of the roleplay typically found in theatre and an activation of non-matrixed identities (as discussed in Michael Kirby's *The New Theatre*) 4) an investment in the content of the conversation 5) a Conversation Score is not meant to be a rehearsal or training; rather it is the piece

The praxis and training involved in conversation scores is somewhat difficult to determine, given its nascency. There is a mild resistance against extensive training and skill given conversation's cultural ubiquity, and given certain Fluxus and Surrealist avant-garde scoring traditions that don't demand the kind of performer training typically found in more conventional eurological music practices. However, this is not to say that there is no skill involved in performing conversation scores. Turning to Pauline Oliveros could be helpful, as her works ask for a similar difference in training – a general aptitude for awareness, attunement and attention. In this sense, conversation scores do ask of their participants the following: 1) an aptitude for conversational listening 2) willingness to confront one's own psychological distresses, discomforts or vulnerabilities that may arise as some of the exercises utilize techniques that plumb past the surface of our psyches 3) a general familiarity with the score (perhaps having played it once or twice). It is important to note, that in certain cases, excessive conversational training (for example, a training in philosophy, debate, dialogical facilitation, theatre) can actually harm one's capacity to perform conversation scores, as these practices can hamper one's ability to enter the unique relational field that is asked of by the score at hand.

The technological implementation in this piece is rather simple in terms of materials – one needs only a set of 3x5 note cards with the indicated cues written on them, extra cards for writing additional cues, pens, and table with 3-5 chairs. In terms of performers, it is important that everyone feel willing and able to improvised monologues and that all performers are capable of speaking loudly. No formal training in theater or music is necessary.

## **Bios**

Aaron Finbloom is a philosopher, performance artist, musician and co-founder of The School of Making Thinking (SMT), an artist/thinker residency program and experimental college. Much of Finbloom's creative practice functions as an attempt to expand the scope of philosophy's pedagogy via structured conversations, dialogical games, improvisational scores, contemplative audio guides and performative lectures. Finbloom has taught interdisciplinary studies at Concordia University, philosophy at Suffolk County Community College, and curated dozens of courses playing with experimental pedagogy for SMT. He has led numerous interactive workshops and performances at places including: matralab, Senselab, The Centre for Expanded Poetics, The Topological Media Lab, EMERGE Residency Program, The Performance Philosophy Conference and Elsewhere. He holds an M.A. in Philosophy and Art from SUNY Stony Brook and currently working towards his PhD at Concordia University's Interdisciplinary Humanities program with advisers Sandeep Bhagwati, Erin Manning, and Nathan Brown

Hannah Kaya is a thinker, performer, and activist based in Montreal. Her work offers ludic, participatory, and performative methods of enacting radical imagination. She is a co-founder of the Fishbowl Collective (a rad-femme, glitter-punk clown company promoting insurrectional and intimate dialogue), The Togethering Lab (an ongoing, participatory experiment that plays with ways of being together), and frequently collaborates with the [elephants] collective. Her work has been featured in: Outside the March (Vitals; Outstanding Independent Production and Outstanding Original Play Dora Mavor Moore Award Recipient 2014); The McGill Daily ("Not Quite the Rev, But We're Getting Closer"); Expat Expo Berlin; the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts; Paprika Festival; Tuesday Night Cafe Theatre; the Edinburgh, Toronto, and Montreal Fringe; the National Arts Centre of Canada; the Great Canadian Theatre Company, etc.

### **Youtube Link that Demonstrates the Score in Action:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLH1gVp3bnQ&t>