OVERTURE

Dave LaDelfa (2002)

OVERTURE is an exercise in subconscious music.

OVERTURE is intended for performance as the first piece on a concert program.

The players distribute themselves randomly throughout the audience as the audience enters the hall and seats itself in anticipation of the concert's beginning.

Without drawing attention to themselves, each of the players says aloud, as many times as is inconspicuous, a text memorized in rehearsal.

The object of OVERTURE is to instill in non-performing members of the audience a vague subliminal notion that everyone around them is saying the same thing. This impression, furthermore, must be one of "strange coincidence" rather than "obvious pre-arrangement."

The number of players employed should not exceed 10–20% of the expected audience count. Players should not dress in any fashion that draws attention to themselves or differentiates them from non-performing audience members in any recognizable way.

The text used for performance of OVERTURE should be developed by the players in rehearsal. The text may reflect phrases such as

> *The show is about to start.*
> *What are we hearing?*
> *I understand the first piece is somehow enigmatic.*
> *This is the first piece on the program.*
> *You are listening to "Overture" (by Dave LaDelfa).*

Alternately, the text may reflect none of these, but describe an object or incident. It will be preferable that the text chosen be grammatically sound.

A text that uses unusual words (e.g. "enigmatic") will catch the uninitiated ear more readily that will one composed of simple, everyday words. Accordingly, a text with "stand-out" words will need to be repeated fewer times to instill the desired effect — perhaps only once or twice per player.

As a variation, the players may decide to fragment the text and drop a word or two of it here and there into their normal conversation as naturally as possible. In this case, the text could take the form of a collection of between three and ten unusual nouns and adjectives.

An alternative method of rehearsal is to have one person decide on a text and distribute it to the players individually; this is, the players themselves will not meet until the moment of performance. This is perhaps the more desirable method in that the players, being as much "audience" (to each other) as "performer," are likely to act more naturally. In this mode of rehearsal, the players are instructed to not discuss the piece with anyone prior to the performance; they may, however, suggest to the performance coordinator names of people they know who might be likely candidates for players.

The performance coordinator may elect to give each performer a different text, each progressively different from the ones before it. In this case, it is conceivable that the entire audience might be players who each think that they are the only one performing; such a scenario is to be expounded more fully in SOLIPSISMS (currently a work-in-progress).

OVERTURE should be listed in the printed program distributed to the audience with the subscript "for unseen choir." Any pre-concert publication of the program, however, should omit this subscript to avoid speculation and inquiry.