

James Weeks

Entuning

for a single player

2025

In an open-air space, prepare by immersing yourself in the sound environment; with eyes closed, focusing on each sound in turn and gradually immersing yourself within their polyphony (see Polyphonic Listening). Continue until you feel calm, focused and attentive.

Play a long tone. Play as softly as possible, so that from your listening perspective your sound is embedded within the sound environment rather than standing out; soft enough even that its identity becomes ambiguous. Try to hear it as both something you are playing and something that is part of the environment at the same time.

The tone should have a pitch, chosen intuitively in response to the sounding environment. Overtones and other subtle timbral variation may emerge naturally.

As you play, listen not only to the sound of the tone among the others, but also to the relationship of the pitch to the other sounds, as if your tone is tuning the environment to itself. Enjoy the harmony this makes, between both pitched and unpitched environmental sounds.

The tone can last a long time, even minutes (string instruments can take many bows; wind instruments, a series of long breaths). Stop when you have finished listening.

After a break, either play the same tone again, or a new tone in a different register.

Finish the piece after as many tones as you want.

Note: this piece should only be played on instruments able to play very quiet drones (with mutes where available). Strings are particularly well suited; manually-controlled electronic instruments are also possible. It should not be sung, but some wind instruments are possible.

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