

WEITZ, JOSHUA ISAAC. M.M. *Soft Rain of Sticky Notes: An Experimental Musical Theater Song Cycle about ADHD for Chamber Ensemble* (2022)  
Directed by Dr. Alejandro Ruty. 92 pp.

*Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* is an experimental musical theater song cycle for voice and chamber ensemble about the struggle of being productive and getting work done with ADHD. The narrative progresses over five songs through different stages of getting work done and the struggles the vocalist faces with ADHD. The musical draws on elements of a variety of music, such as musical theater, musical comedy, pop, indie, jazz, avant-garde, punk, pop punk, metal, metalcore.

This paper is divided into five chapters. Chapter I introduces in detail the musical and contextualizes where it fits in experimental musical theater. Chapter II discusses the text and narrative, and how these relate to ADHD. Chapter III introduces the musical themes and motives used throughout the musical. Chapter IV goes over the musical elements and techniques, discussing the use of genre and improvisation, and how they relate to ADHD. Chapter V summarizes the essay, and synthesizes the narrative and musical analysis to show succinctly how each song is connected to symptoms of ADHD. The chapter further discusses how music and text is used to convey these symptoms. Finally, it is shown how the variety of genres, the wide-ranging musical influences, and the use of improvisation relate to the unfocused, unstill, unpredictable life of a person with ADHD.

SOFT RAIN OF STICKY NOTES: AN EXPERIMENTAL MUSICAL THEATER SONG  
CYCLE ABOUT ADHD FOR CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

by

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A Thesis

Submitted to

the Faculty of The Graduate School at

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Music

Greensboro

2022

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND PRECEDENCE

### Introduction

*Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* is an experimental musical theater song cycle about the struggle of being productive and getting work done with ADHD. The musical was written for one vocalist (who plays the unnamed main character), violin, clarinet, cello, bass guitar, and drum set. The musical's narrative progresses over five songs through different stages of getting work done and the struggles the vocalist faces with ADHD.

*Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* employs a variety of genres throughout the musical, such as; musical theater, especially the work of Dave Malloy; jazz, such as *Ascension* by John Coltrane; avant-garde theater, especially *Eight Songs for a Mad King* by Peter Maxwell-Davies; punk and pop-punk, such as The Wonder Years, Aaron West and the Roaring Twenties, and Pierce the Veil; musical comedy artists like Bo Burnham; indie pop, such as Young the Giant; and metal and metalcore artists like Slipknot, A Day to Remember, and System of A Down.

At times the musical switches rapidly or suddenly between these genres, and at others it works to meld several genres together. The vocal style is meant to be a cross between pop, theater, and the more aggressive style found in punk and metal. It also features many instances of spoken word and speech-singing and sections where the text is meant to be improvised or is unwritten. Similarly for the musicians, throughout the cycle there are several sections with varying degrees of freedom. There are sections that are unmeasured, sections where the ensemble is only loosely coordinated by one of the performers, and sections where the performers are asked to improvise, either freely or around a given parameters.

This song cycle is intended to be performed in a variety of small venue contexts and locations, from smaller theaters, black box theaters, and bars with performance spacing. The performers should be on stage just behind the vocalist, ideally with no elevation or separation between the audience and the performers. Lighting and set dressing should also be minimal, if done at all. If one were to provide any set dressing, the goal should be to make the set look like a work room, office, or studio. A desk or table covered with papers and a desk chair would be the first thing to consider. Any additional props or set dressing would be at the discretion of the musical director, keeping the work room aesthetic in consideration.

#### Precedence

*Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* fits between experimental music theater described by musicologist Björn Heile, Davies avant-garde monodrama *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, and the musicals by Dave Malloy, especially *Ghost Quartet*. Defined broadly by David Bithell, experimental music theater is:

An interdisciplinary practice centered on the exploration of nontraditional relationships between the fields of music and theater. The term often is used to distinguish works from the mid-20th and 21st centuries that do not clearly fit into the established categories of contemporary opera or musical theater and usually refers to projects initiated by musicians.<sup>1</sup>

Heile goes further in his article *Toward a Theory of Experimental Music Theatre*:

*“Showing-Doing,” “Non-Matrixed Performance,” and “Metaxis”*:

...experimental music theater refers to a type of performance in which theatrical actions are created by music making (playing of musical instruments or other sounding objects, singing). This form needs to be distinguished from other types of music theatre, such as opera and related genres, in which music accompanies theatrical action. Experimental musical theater focuses on the performance aspect, rather than the music alone, and takes after many other aspects of performance art.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bithell, *Experimental Music Theater* (Oxford Music Online, 2013)

<sup>2</sup> Björn Heile, *Toward a theory of experimental music theatre*, (Oxford Handbooks Online, 2013)



Heile goes on to distinguish it from traditional opera in two ways; one being the separation of stage and a pit orchestra; and two being the “union of singing and acting,” to drive dramatic roles. In experimental music theater, in contrast, there is no separation from stage and instrumentation, and there are no dramatic roles.<sup>3</sup>

I must note an important distinction in language. The medium Heile talks about in this article he calls “experimental *music* theater,” wherein I am defining *Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* as “experimental *musical* theater.”

Dave Malloy uses a constant pushing of boundaries and merging of genres. His musical *Natasha, Pierre, and the Great Comet of 1812*<sup>4</sup>, is described as an electropop musical. The musical begins with traditional acoustic instruments, and utilizes some avant-garde harmonic devices and extended techniques (4:10). Most notably the harsh vocals found in some of the characters (heard in the beginning of the example). During the first act, the electronic elements are brought into play to represent one of the characters (6:45).

His musical *Ghost Quartet*<sup>5</sup> was written for only 4 musicians, who simultaneously sing, play multiple characters, and perform their instruments. The narrative is completely nonlinear and covers multiple stories that are loosely connected. The music covers several genres, from folk (32:43), Thelonious Monk (54:02), and middle-eastern influenced vocalizations (17:28). The musical has been produced for many small theaters and performance venues, including the McKittrick Hotel and Next Door at New York Theater Workshop.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Dave Malloy, “The Opera,” May 18, 2017, studio recording, 4:10 <https://youtu.be/0mVJR08etM8>, Retrieved April 25, 2022

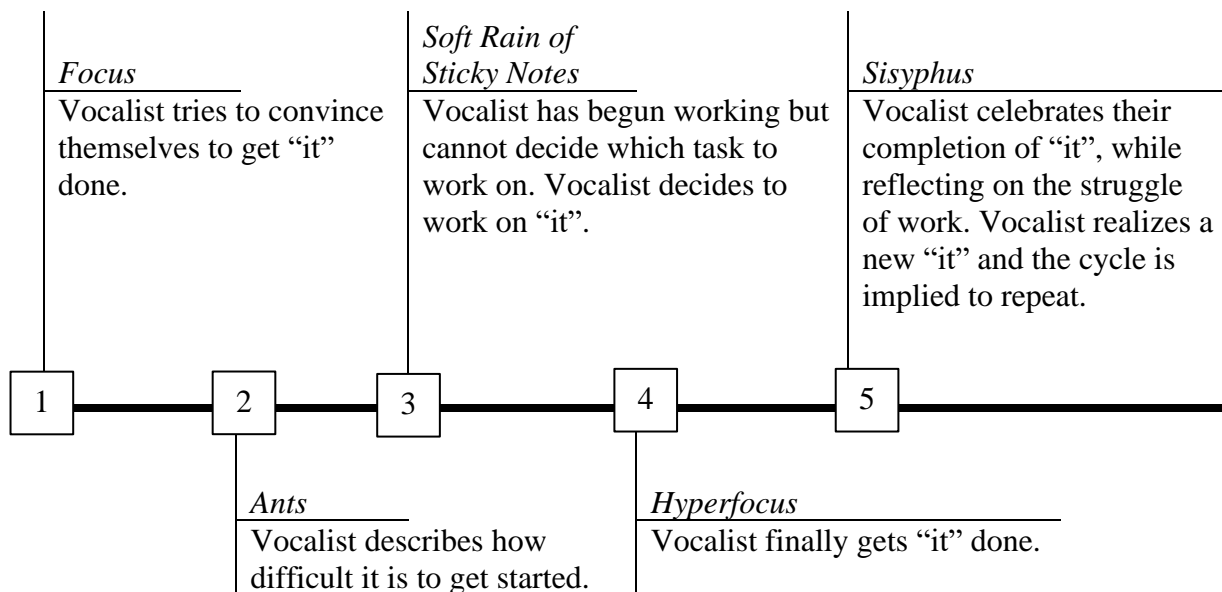
<sup>5</sup> Dave Malloy, “Ghost Quartet at the McKittrick Hotel, Jan. 12, 2015,” directed by Annie Tippie, March 15, 2015, live music video, (1:34:35) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJSaEJm8pCE>, Retrieved April 25, 2022

While *Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* uses some elements of avant-garde and experimentation as discussed by Heile, it is intended to fit more into the lineage of musical theater, in a similar vein of *Ghost Quartet*, with its use and blending of varying genres, implied narrative structure, and especially through its intended small venue performance space.

## CHAPTER II: NARRATIVE STRUCTURE, TEXT, AND MEANING

The story of *Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* is structured over its five songs around the vocalist getting work done and the struggles they face to complete a task at hand due to symptoms of ADHD. The task is unspecified, referred to as “it” throughout the cycle, acts a throughline throughout the cycle, completing “it” is the character’s main objective. Each song progresses in stages, from the difficulty of beginning to the eventual completion of the task, and ends with a realization that there is always a next task. Each song describes or personifies symptoms of ADHD that factor into the struggles faced by the vocalist. These are inspired by my own day to day experience with ADHD, which are focused on or exaggerated in the musical. Figure 1. is a table summarizing the events of each song and the narrative arch of the cycle

**Figure 1: Timeline of the Songs**



Below is a more detailed discussion of each song.

### *Focus*

The cycle starts with Focus. This song is a dramatization of executive dysfunction, which is the psychological inability to start or complete tasks. Theatrically, the vocalist struggles to begin the “it” task, which is the main task the vocalist will attempt to be completed throughout the cycle. The vocalist is asked to improvise spoken text along the lines of, “Just sit down. Just get it done.” The vocalist is meant to try to sit down, but every time the vocalist tries, they immediately stand up.

### *Ants*

Bridging to the next song, *Ants* covers how difficult it can be for someone with ADHD to sit still and extends that concept to the constantly racing mind of someone affected. The opening line, “I can’t sit still,” puts it succinctly.

Having “ants in your pants” is a common rhyming idiom told mostly to children who cannot sit still. The song plants this idiom with the line, “When I was younger, I was told that silly rhyme that kids are told,” which has its payoff at the end of the song.

The song talks about the difficulty of finding a comfortable position, and touches on the discomfort even simple clothing can present. When I was a very young child, I could only wear one certain kind of sock and I did not comfortably wear jeans until I was in late high school. Throughout this section, the vocalist’s shirt plays the antagonist, as it continually bunches up (which is also a real thing that happens to me).

These lyrics reference the still unmentioned ants, which act as a metaphor for the vocalists’ constant urges to move and constant stream of consciousness. The vocalist sings, “They’re in my brain. They’re in my brain. All of these thoughts, they will not stop, they’re unrestrained.”

The lines, “And I tap, tap, tap…” is a reference to the omnipresent need for stimulation, and is a direct reference to my own constant tapping on different objects. My sister has wondered how, and is annoyed that no matter where I sit, I am always able to find something to make a noise on.

At the end of the song, the vocalist pays off the ants idiom that was planted before, repeating the line, “I’ve got ants in my pants,” several times before extending it to a grotesque, visceral point with the following:

I’ve got ants in my shirt. I’ve got ants in my socks. I’ve got ants in my hair. I’ve got ants in my skin. I’ve got ants in my brain. I’ve got ants in my brain. I’ve got ants in my brain. I’ve got ants in my brain.

The vocalist is meant to repeat, “I’ve got ants in my brain,” an unnumbered amount of times, yelling, screaming, or singing, and eventually abandoning any pitch or rhythm that is written in the music.

### *Soft Rain of Sticky Notes*

The subject of this song focuses on the difficulty of prioritization. The vocalist has the “it” task in mind, but all other tasks seem equally important. As the song progresses, the vocalist gradually figures out how to prioritize the “it” task. The title of this song, as well as the cycle itself, comes from a short blog post I once read, wherein ADHD is described, “It’s like living in a soft rain of post-it notes.”

The song is divided into 10 sections, labeled in order as Intro, and their corresponding rehearsal marks thereafter. The song rapidly changes genres in each section, which creates an atmosphere of instability and unpredictability that reflects the overall frenetic and anxious mental state of the vocalist.

In the intro, the vocalist wonders aloud what they should do in the present and what they will do in the future. However, the drama of this short section rises intensely, reaching desperation as no one is able to answer the questions.

In section A, the vocalist tries to begin the “it” task, tries to choose that, but is distracted by other thoughts, represented here in the clarinet. The text here is improvised, save for the ending dialogue, where the vocalist addresses the clarinetist, pleading with them to stop. The clarinetist responds, “Only with Vyvanse!” Vyvanse is a medication used to treat ADHD and is one of the medications I took.

Section B the vocalist explains the struggle they are facing with the following lines, “Everything is underlined, and I can’t seem to prioritize. So, I don’t know how to choose which one of them I need to do.”

The vocalist immediately begins to list out each task they have. The text here is again improvised, the only thing written is the ending, “... and all of them are underlined,” which cues the next section immediately.

The text here, “Everything is underlined. Everything is underlined. Urgent. Urgent,” is anxious and angry, matching the punk musical style, and highlights the urgency felt by the vocalist.

With a dramatic style shift from punk to a demented form of a laid back, crooner style, big band tune, the vocalist now attempts to prioritize the tasks that were previously listed. As the vocalist tries this, however, they again realize the vast number of tasks they have and sarcastically break into song, “have a fuckton of things to do. A metric fuckton of things to do.”

Here, “fuckton” is imagined as a large unit of measurement. This is pushed further into absurdity by specifying that it is a measurement used by the metric system, before breaking into a

tangent about a made-up origin of the “fuckton.” A prewritten example is given, but the vocalist is encouraged to diverge from this text, improvising and free associating.

This is meant to reflect the way people with ADHD can often find themselves jumping from one topic to another in a stream of consciousness. I am especially guilty of this, as well as overexplaining topics, sometimes completely unprompted. The ensemble stops and the vocalist is left to finish their monologue about the fuckton on their own, ending with the written line, “...everything is underlined,” which cues the ensemble into the section, which is a repeat of previous material.

Section G conveys a sort of resignation to all of the tasks. The vocalist has given up trying to pick just one thing and decides they will have to, “Get everything done at the same time.” This blends into the next section, a refrain featuring the following lines, “I have to sit down and get everything done. Just sit down and get everything done.”

Section H ends with a self-demanding repetition of the words, “just sit down,” followed by a resigned alteration, “can’t sit down,” and a declarative, “I can’t just sit down,” as the vocalist expresses the immense difficulty of what should be a simple step to completing a task. The section ends with a brief lyrical reprise to *Ants*, with the phrase, “I can’t sit still.”

The song ends when the vocalist finally realizes they do not have to do everything, and they pick one task, with the lines, “Just do everything. Just get everything done. Maybe just get one thing done. Just get it done.” This is mirrored in the ensemble, as they, one by one, gradually drop out, until the clarinet is the only one left.

### *Hyperfocus*

This song is named after the state of intense focus that people with ADHD experience. Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is often known as an inability to maintain focus. It is better to think of the disorder as the inability to regulate attention. So, while the previous definition is partly true, people with ADHD do experience a deficit of attention, they also experience this hyperfocus state. In this state, a person will maintain intense focus for long stretches of time, potentially hours. While in this state, it is difficult to break away from what they are doing. This is partly due to the intense burst of productivity and the difficulty of reentering this state once broken, even for a short time. Even so much as stopping to use the restroom could be enough to break them from this state. As such, people with ADHD tend to experience an inability to judge the passage of time, known as time blindness, become unaware of their surroundings, and forget to eat or stay hydrated.<sup>6</sup>

At this point in the narrative, the vocalist has entered this state, and is finally able to complete the “it” task.

The lyrics are about being in the state of intense focus.

The world dissolves to only what’s in front of me.

Attention, centered. Blurred my periphery.

Focus.

### *Sisyphus*

The final song in the cycle, *Sisyphus* is theatrically very relaxed compared to the rest of the cycle, as the vocalist calmly celebrates the completion of the “it” task, while reflecting on the intense struggle it was to get there. The song ends with a sudden burst of energy, as the vocalist realizes their freedom from obligation:

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<sup>6</sup> Ashinoff & Abu-Akel, *Hyperfocus: The Forgotten Frontier of Attention*. (Psychological Research, 2019)



Now I have time to go outside. The world is mine. I can't deny. Time to run and jump and sing and scream with all this time I now have free. It's mine. It's mine.

The world is mine.

However, this freedom is trifled by the music, reprising the opening to *Ants* as the vocalist remembers the other tasks they must complete. The ensemble finishes and the vocalist ends with the words, "until tomorrow."

The gut punching bait and switch ending of *Sisyphus* was inspired by the song *If You Could See Her* from the musical *Cabaret*. The entire song leads the listener to believe what the vocalist believes: that they are free from the task. This is until they are hit with the final words, left with not even with a stinger, to leave the cycle uncomfortably concluded.

The title draws from the Classical Greek myth of Sisyphus, who, after being caught trying to escape Hades, was sentenced to push a boulder up a hill every day, only for the boulder to fall once it reached the top. Sisyphus then had to walk down the hill and start over, for eternity. With this cyclical ending, I wanted to emphasize that, though the vocalist did complete the task, this is a daily struggle experienced by those with ADHD.

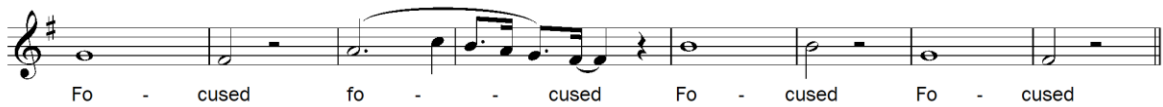
## CHAPTER III: REOCCURRING MUSICAL DEVICES

*Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* contains three reoccurring themes, motives, and harmonic devices. These are the *Focus* theme, the *Ants* motive, and the *just sit down* chord.

*Focus* theme

**Figure 2: The Focus theme is the vocal line at the end of Hyperfocus**

Vocals



Fo - cused fo - - cused Fo - cused Fo - cused

The image shows a vocal line on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of a half note F4, a quarter rest, a quarter note F#4, a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, a quarter note F4, a quarter rest, a half note F4, a quarter rest, a half note F4, and a quarter rest. The lyrics are: Fo - cused fo - - cused Fo - cused Fo - cused.

*Just sit down* motive

**Figure 3: This motive appears in the song *Soft Rain of Sticky Notes*.**



The image shows two staves of music. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a half note F#4, a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The bottom staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a half note F3, a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3.

It has two identifying factors; it is a harmonic device, the chord is always a  $C^{A7(\#11)}$  (though it is found in slightly different arrangements throughout the cycle), and it has a rhythmic function, breaking the flow of a triplet feel with straight eighths except for in one instance when this is reversed. Figure 3 is an example to show how the motive functions rhythmically (more in context examples of these will be shown later).

**Figure 4: showing rhythmic function**

The musical score for Figure 4 consists of three staves: Voice, Violin/Clarinet (vl cl), and Violoncello/Bass/Guitar (vc b. gtr). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

- Voice:** The melody is in a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are: "have to sit down and get ev - ery - thing done just sit down and get". The first four measures feature a triplet feel with eighth notes. The final measure of the first phrase has a quarter rest, and the final measure of the second phrase has a triplet of eighth notes.
- Violin/Clarinet (vl cl):** This staff plays a rhythmic accompaniment. The first four measures are marked with a forte (*fff*) dynamic and a "Triplet feel" annotation. Each measure contains a triplet of sixteenth notes, with a "6" above and below the group. The final measure of the first phrase has a quarter rest, and the final measure of the second phrase is marked with a box and the text "just sit down straight eighths", indicating a change to a straight eighth-note feel.
- Violoncello/Bass/Guitar (vc b. gtr):** This staff provides harmonic support. The first four measures are marked with a forte (*fff*) dynamic and feature a triplet of eighth notes. The final measure of the first phrase has a quarter rest, and the final measure of the second phrase is marked with a box and the text "just sit down straight eighths", indicating a change to a straight eighth-note feel.

*Ants* motive

**Figure 5: This motive comes from the song *Ants* and is sung by the vocalist.**



Below is a timeline which lists and summarizes the occurrence of use of each reoccurring device in each song. More detail on these occurrences will be provided in the following chapter

**Table 1: Songs and Motives**

	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Ants</i>	<i>Soft Rain of Sticky Notes</i>	<i>Hyperfocus</i>	<i>Sisyphus</i>
<i>Focus</i> theme	in the clarinet at the beginning (m. 1 – 16)			Home of the <i>Focus</i> theme, sung at the end of the song. (m. 101 – 108)	
<i>Ants</i> motive	in clarinet (m. 18, 20, 21)	Home of the <i>Ants</i> motive (m. 4 – 8, 41 – 45, 50 - 54)	<i>Ants</i> motive appears at the end of the refrain in the vocals. (m. 65, 89)		<i>Ants</i> motive found in the violin line. (m. 3, 5, 11, 14, 17, 31, 37, )
<i>Just Sit Down</i> motive	at the end, bridging into the next song. The is the only time the motive in triplets, interrupting an eighth note feel and reversing its normal rhythmically interrupting feature. (m. 22 - 25)		Home of the <i>Just Sit Down</i> motive. (m. 66 – 89)		<i>Just Sit Down</i> motive is found twice at the end of the B sections. (m. 24, 44)

## CHAPTER IV: MUSICAL ELEMENTS AND TECHNIQUES AND THEIR RELATION TO ADHD

### Use of Genre

A main feature of the musical is the variety of genres referenced throughout the musical. They are either based in one genre, shift suddenly between several genres, or blend genres. This feature acts as a reflection of several symptoms of ADHD, such as the constant switching between tasks, fast paced stream of conscious, sudden high energy levels, and anxiety that is often comorbid with ADHD.

### *Punk and Metal:*

Punk and Metal are referenced heavily throughout this musical, and *Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* in particular. In this is achieved through several techniques, such as emulating a guitar chug (m. 1-8), which is a low-pitched chord or single note played on distorted, typically palm muted guitars. The clarinet simulates guitar feedback (m. 5-8). The bass references metal with its strange bassline (m. 28-32) that is reminiscent the guitar riff in of Metallica's [\*Master of Puppets\*](#).<sup>7</sup>

Sections C and F are entirely inspired by punk music, especially in its drum beat and the aggressive style of singing the vocals demand. The violin and cello play on the off beats, which simulates how a guitar would play in a punk style like this.

Section G takes inspiration from the beginning of the ending section of the song *Sugar* by metal band System of a Down.<sup>8</sup> The tempo and rhythms are led by the vocalist and should be in a

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<sup>7</sup> Metallica, "Master of Puppets," May 26, 2020, studio recording, 0:22 <https://youtu.be/0obBdrfUMzU?t=22>, Retrieved April 25, 2022

<sup>8</sup> System of a Down, "Sugar," directed by Nathan Cox, October 3, 2009, music video 2:40, <https://youtu.be/5vBGOI6yBk?t=160>, Retrieved April 25, 2022

natural speaking rhythm. The ensemble loosely follows the vocalist, articulating syllables when they are given the lyrics and playing together only where stemmed notes are given.

Section H features a four-bar looping build that is loosely inspired by the build in *Cigarettes and Saints* by pop-punk band The Wonder Years<sup>9</sup>, with its powerful lyrical repetition at the end. The dramatic slowing of the tempo at the end of this section comes from the tension in the space found at the end of the song *Scissors* by Slipknot<sup>10</sup>.

### ***Musical Theater:***

The music for the song *Ants* was inspired by the introduction to the song *One by One by One* from the musical *Ordinary Days* by Adam Gwon<sup>11</sup>. The overall intensity is in reference to punk music, reminiscent of *Totally Fucked*<sup>12</sup> from the musical *Spring Awakening*, whose music was written by Dunkin Sheik. This is represented in the always unstable harmony, quickly moving rhythms throughout, as well as the constant tempo changing, shown in the chart below. This constant motion represents the vocalist's inability to maintain stillness, both physically with their body, as well as their constantly changing center of focus.

The final song, *Sisyphus*, especially the lyrical flow throughout but particularly toward the end, was inspired by *What's This?* from the musical animated film *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, whose music was written by Danny Elfman<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup>The Wonder Years, "Cigarettes and Saints," directed by Jeremi Mattern, July 31, 2015, music video, 3:30 <https://youtu.be/3hbcBrsUuz4?t=208>, Retrieved April 25, 2022

<sup>10</sup> Slipknot, "Scissors," November 12, 2014, studio recording, 7:20, <https://youtu.be/90tMjWQTBQ?t=440>, Retrieved April 25, 2022

<sup>11</sup> Adam Gwon, "One by One by One," November 1, 2017, studio recording, 3:34, <https://youtu.be/OXjH3UU7twA> Retrieved April 25, 2022

<sup>12</sup> Dunkin Sheik, "Totally Fucked," July 23, 2018, studio recording, 3:18, <https://youtu.be/OXjH3UU7twA> Retrieved April 28, 2022

<sup>13</sup> Danny Elfman, "What's This," September 22, 2013, Directed by Henry Selick, 3:37, <https://youtu.be/QLvvkTbHjHI>, Retrieved April 26, 2022

### ***Jazz:***

Section D of *Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* attempts to emulate the laid-back swing feel of a big band tune, juxtaposed with demented, tense harmony. The vocalist is given a few rhythmic cues to hit, akin to how a rhythm section in a jazz band might be given cues for important hit-points, and a general melodic contour to follow for those cues, but no melody is written, as the vocalist is instructed to improvise the melody in a “laid-back crooner style”.

### ***Pop and Indie***

The song *Hyperfocus* took its initial inspiration from *Island* by indie pop band Young the Giant<sup>14</sup>, and, though it is quite different, the idea of a gradual build straight to the end was retained. The intention for this song is for it to sound like it is being composed in real time. The song is meant to be a mostly instrumentally led song, with the vocalist’s role only coming to the foreground at the end. Most of the song follows an 8-bar chord loop structure, and each instrument is given a line that gradually changes with each loop. As the song develops, the instruments move through different iterations of their respective lines.

### **Avant-Garde Theater and Improvisational Elements**

Another important feature of the musical is the use of improvisation text and music and other free elements, such as free jazz, avant-garde theater, graphic scores, and certain styles of metal. This feature is used for several reasons, such as comedic effect in the text, as well as to create specific sounds, usually of high intensity, and to allow for some sections to be free of a tempo.

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<sup>14</sup> Young the Giant, “Island,” September 10, 2013, studio recording, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Q7QkZRaSuI>, Retrieved April 26, 2022



The ending of *Ants* is an example of this. The intention for the ending is for the ensemble to completely fall apart, blending the energy of many rock song endings and some of the freedom found in free jazz, to reflect the stress of the vocalist (figure 6.)

**Figure 6: Ending of *Ants***

**I completely uninged  
free time  
don't end together  
yelling, speech-singing**

84 *fff*

Voce: ants in my brain, \_\_\_\_\_

Vln. *fff*  
increase bow pressure gradually ascend → random notes scratching

Cl. *fff*  
wild random pitches ascending → random rhythms heavy, marcato  
Trem gliss, pont. → bariolage, scratching

Vc. *fff*

Bass *fff* fill

Dr. *fff* fill

*Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* has many instances of improvised text and singing, and many sections for the musicians to improvise around given parameters. These touch on elements of performance art seen in Cathy Berberian's *Stripsody*, as well as John Cage's *Aria*, especially in their lack of strict musical timing.

For most of *Hyperfocus*, the vocalist is given words that will become the lyrics. These are given first in small chunks, one to a few words a time, in random arrangement. The vocalist is

meant to repeat these words as if they are trying to make sense of them. Every 4 to 8 bars, the vocalist is given new words which they are to add to the previous phrases.

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

*Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* is an experimental musical theater song cycle about the struggle of getting work done with ADHD, and covers a range of a symptoms the main character must overcome to complete their task, referred to as “it”. It is structured around five songs, in each of which the vocalist gradually progresses through stages of productivity until they finally complete “it” and the music ends with the implication that the cycle will repeat and that these struggles are a daily cycle.

The text and music are inspired by and connected to ADHD, and draw heavily from my personal experience with it. The musical utilizes two important techniques and elements to achieve this connection: an intentionally wide range of genres and influences, as each song is either in a different genre, or blends or switches genres; and several instances of improvisation in the music, text, and lyrics. Both of these elements are used instill a certain instability of focus and lead to a sense of unpredictability to the entire musical.

While the musical uses symptoms of ADHD as an internal antagonist to the vocalist, each of the songs spotlight specific symptoms of ADHD. The song *Focus* uses executive dysfunction as inspiration, which is the inability or extreme difficulty of starting a task. With its looping back of the form, the song has a hard time starting until right at the end when it is launched into the next song. *Ants* focuses primarily on the inability for one to sit still and transcends that idea into the mental state of one with ADHD, which is constantly running and leaves the person without any control over their train of thoughts. To convey this, it constantly changes tempos and uses unstable harmonies, reflecting the constant motion and perpetual discomfort about which the vocalist sings. *Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* uses the element of rapid genre changing to demonstrate decision paralysis, especially when deciding what task to do, and difficulty prioritizing any one

task. *Hyperfocus* is specifically about the state of intense focus that people with ADHD can enter, and demonstrates this through its slightly changing lines that each instrument is given, which are completed at the end of the arch form that takes the entire song to complete. *Sisyphus* reminds the listener that this is a daily struggle, as material from *Ants* is referenced throughout the song, and ends with the lines “Until Tomorrow.”

Reflecting on the song cycle, *Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* is a broad overview of the symptoms that one with ADHD must cope with. Moving forward, I have a few ideas about very specific aspects of ADHD that I would like to narrow in on and express musically. I believe that theatrical elements would be useful, and in addition to a primarily vocally driven medium, it would be interesting to explore elements of dance and performance art.

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## APPENDIX A: TEXT

### *Focus*

Just sit down. Just get it done.

### *Ants*

I can't sit still.

I can't sit still.

I can't sit still.

I can't sit still.

I can't sit still.

When I was younger, I was told  
that silly rhyme that kids are told.  
I will probably never be comfortable.

Because my shirt is all bunched,  
And my desk chair isn't right.  
And the desk is all messed up,  
I'll adjust all things in sight.  
Now my shirt's again bunched up,  
and my mind has its own will.  
It must constantly adjust.  
Can't I ever just sit still?

This damn shirt is all bunched up.

I'll drive myself insane!

How is my shirt still all bunched up?!

AH!

My fucking shirt's still all bunched up!

I give up,

I give up,

I give up, I give up, I give up, I give up, I give up.

Because I fucking can't sit still

They're in my brain.

They're in my brain.

All of my thoughts,

They will not stop,

They're unrestrained.

There's no silence!

There's no stillness!

And I tap tap tap tap tap tap tap

On the wall on, Or the table,

or the chair, or my knee

and my brain, has to think, about every little thing

all at once, it's a mess, feels like somethings in my head,

scratching, crawling, picking, feasting, gnawing

I've got ants in my pants,

I've got ants in my pants,

I've got ants in my pants,

I've got ants in my pants,

I've got ants in my shirt,

I've got ants in my socks,

I've got ants in my hair,

I've got ants in my skin,

I've got ants in my brain,

I've got ants in my brain,

I've got ants in my brain,

I've got ants in my brain.

*Soft Rain of Sticky Notes*



What do I do now?

What will I do next?

What should I do?

What should I do?

What should I do?

(Improvised text)

(Spoken to clarinetist)

“Will you stop??”

(Clarinetist responds)

“Only with Vyvalse.”

Everything is underlined

And I can't seem to prioritize

so I don't know how to chose

which one of them I need to do.

(Improvised text)

... and all of them are underlined.

Everything is underlined.

Everything is underlined.

Urgent!

Urgent!

(Improvised text)

I have a fuckton of things to do

A metric fucktons of things to do

Which is 2.33 fucktons in imperial

(Improvised text)

Given example text: “I know this because I researched the origin of the fuckton as a measurement and the difference between the metric and imperial. It’s a fascinating history that could be entirely false because when I say research I mean read a Wikipedia article and I did it all because I didn’t know what to work on at the moment.”

As I’ve said I have a fuckton of things to do and everything is

Urgent!

Everything is underlined.

Everything is underlined.

Urgent!

Urgent!

I have to sit down and do everything.

Just sit down and get everything done.

Get everything done at the same time.

Simultaneously work on everything.

Sit down and get everything done.

I have to sit down and get everything done.

Just sit down and get everything done. (Repeated eight times)

Just sit down.

Just sit down.

Just sit down.

Can’t sit down.

Can't sit down.

Can't sit down.

I can't just sit down.

I can't sit still, I can't sit still.

Just do everything.

Get everything done.

Maybe just get one thing done.

Just get it done.

### *Hyperfocus*

The world,

Dissolves,

to only what's in front of me.

Attention,

centered.

Blurred my periphery.

Focus.

### *Sisyphus*

I actually

got it done.

Oh my god, I actually

Got it done.

What a relief, I can't believe I actually

got it done.

I've come so far, was that so hard to actually  
just sit down  
for hours, for hours, for hours, to chisel out something, of value and meaning  
or anything, anything, just do anything  
please get something done  
but at least for today, I can say  
Oh my god, I actually  
Got it done.  
What a relief, still can't believe I actually  
got it done.  
What a relief, now I can sleep, and wake up to  
Peace of mind  
That's something done, something done, one thing done, one thing done  
I finally sat  
And I got it done  
Got it done  
Just sat down and  
Got it done  
Now I'm done  
Finally done  
  
Now I have time to go outside, the world is mine, I can't deny  
Time to run and jump and sing and scream,

With all this time I have now free

It's mine, its mine, the world is mine

Until tomorrow...

## APPENDIX B: SCORE

Soft Rain  
of  
Sticky  
Notes

Joshua Weitz

Full Score

# Soft Rain of Sticky Notes

## Joshua Weitz

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for voice, violin, B♭ clarinet, cello, bass guitar, and drum set

duration: ca 20'

Program Notes:

*Soft Rain of Sticky Notes* is an experimental musical theater song cycle about the process of trying to get work done with ADHD. Through the musical, the vocalist is trying to get “it” done, and each song touches on various symptoms of ADHD, which stand in the way.

Performance Notes:

The vocalist should keep in mind the “it” task. “it” is intentionally left unspecified, so that it could be anything, but it is a big task that is weighing on the performer throughout the performance, and finishing “it” is the main goal of the vocalist.

Each song should be performed with minimal breaks between, and where *attacca* is written, there should be no breaks.

*Ants:*

The ending of *Ants* should be very chaotic and with no coordination between the players. They should all end in their own time, the only restriction being to not go on for too long.

*Soft Rain of Sticky Notes:*

The vocalist should improvise some of the lyrics. The spoken text in Rehearsal A is placeholder text, meant as a guide for the vocalist to take and make something more relatable to them. In measure 47, the text is meant as a sample tangent. The vocalist can follow this text if desired but is encouraged to deviate from the written word and free associate, so long as the vocalist ends with the directed text.

Section G should not be taken too slowly. Where lyrics are provided, each instrumentalist should articulate for every syllable, loosely following the vocalist. Ensemble should play stemmed notes together.

Section I should move at the pace of the clarinetist. The clarinetist should feel free to take their time through their long notes. The ensemble should follow, gradually dropping out as the clarinetist moves through the section.



*Hyperfocus:*

For the vocalist, this song features repeating, improvised text at random. The boxed text indicates what the vocalist can say, and each time the boxed text appears, the vocalist can add that text to their ramblings. When text appears that is not boxed, the vocalist is meant to say those words only, not repeated. When standard notation appears, the vocalist should sing normally.

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# Focus

music and lyrics by  
Joshua Weitz

$\text{♩} = 90$   
pacing around, constantly sitting down and immediately standing.

Voice

Spoken, Repeating:  
"Just sit down.  
Just get it done."

Violin

Clarinet in B $\flat$

Violoncello

Bass Guitar

Drum Set

5

Voice

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

6

**A**

Musical score for section A, measures 9-16. The score includes staves for Voice, Violin (Vln.), Clarinet (Cl.), Violoncello (Vc.), Bass, and Drums (Dr.).

- Voice:** Silent.
- Vln.:** Measures 9-10: *pp* to *p* to *mp* to *pp*. Measures 11-12: *p* to *mp*. Measure 13: *p* to *pp*.
- Cl.:** Measures 9-10: *p* to *mp* to *p*. Measures 11-12: *p* to *mp* to *p*. Measure 13: *p* to *mp* to *p*.
- Vc.:** Measures 9-10: *pp* to *p* to *mp* to *pp*. Measures 11-12: *p* to *mp*. Measure 13: *p* to *pp*.
- Bass:** Silent.
- Dr.:** Brushes on snare, *p*.

17 **B**

Musical score for section B, measures 17-20. The score includes staves for Voice, Violin (Vln.), Clarinet (Cl.), Violoncello (Vc.), Bass, and Drums (Dr.).

- Voice:** Silent.
- Vln.:** Measure 17: *p*. Measure 18: *mp*.
- Cl.:** Measure 17: *p*. Measure 18: *mp*.
- Vc.:** Measure 17: *p*. Measure 18: *mp*.
- Bass:** Measure 17: *pp*. Measure 18: *pp*. Measure 19: *mp*.
- Dr.:** Brushes on snare.

22 **C**

Voice

Vln. *mf* *fp* *mf*

Cl. *mf* *fp* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *fp* *mf*

Bass *mf* *fp* *mf*

Dr. *mf*

26 **accel.** *attacca*

Voice

Vln. *p*

Cl. *p*

Vc. *p*

Bass *p*

Dr. *p*  
to sticks

# Ants

**Unsettled**  
♩=144

Score for the first system of 'Ants'. It features six staves: Voice, Violin (Vln.), Clarinet (Cl.), Viola (Vc.), Bass, and Drums (Dr.). The music is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 144. The key signature has one flat. The first measure of the voice part is silent, followed by the lyrics 'I can't sit' in the second measure. The instrumental parts include a dense texture of chords and moving lines. Dynamics include *ff* and *f*. The drum part is marked 'loose hats' and *ff*.

Voice: I can't sit

Vln. *ff* *f*

Cl. *ff* *f*

Vc. *ff* *f*

Bass *ff* *f*

Dr. loose hats *ff*

**A**

Score for the second system of 'Ants', starting at measure 5. It features the same six staves as the first system. The voice part has the lyrics 'still, I can't sit still, I can't sit still, I can't sit still, I can't sit still.' The instrumental parts continue with similar textures. Dynamics include *f*. The drum part continues with the 'loose hats' pattern.

Voice: still, I can't sit still, I can't sit still, I can't sit still, I can't sit still.

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass *f*

Dr.

9

Voice: When I was young - er I was told, that sil - ly rhyme that kids are

Vln. *f*

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Bass *f*

Dr.

**molto rit.**  $\text{♩} = 86$

13 **surrendered**

Voice: told. I will pro - ba - bly ne - ver be comfor - ta -

Vln. *pp*

Cl. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

Bass *pp*

Dr. *pp*

10 B 18 **annoyed** *p*

Voice: ble... Be-cause my

Vln. *p*

Cl. *cue* *p* 6 6 6 6 6 6

Vc. *p*

Bass *p*

Dr. *p*

21 *mf*

Voice: shirt is all bunched up, and my

Vln.

Cl. 6 6 6 6 6 6

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

23

Voice: desk chair is - n't right, and the

Vln.

Cl. *6*

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

25

Voice: *f* desk is all messed up I'll ad -

Vln. *mp*

Cl. *6*

Vc.

Bass *mp*

Dr.



**C** increasingly frustrated

27

Voice

just all things in - sight. Now my shirt's a - gain bunched up. And my

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

29

Voice

mind has its own will. It must con-stant-ly ad-just. Can't I e - ver just sit still? This damn

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

32

Voice

shirt is all bunched up. I'll drive my - self in - sane! How is my

Vln. *f*

Cl. *6*

Vc. *f*

Bass

Dr. *mf* *p*

**D**unraveling  
unpitched  
34 follow contour

yell

Voice

shirt still all bunched up?! AH! My fuck - ing

Vln.

Cl. *6*

Vc.

Bass

Dr. *f*

36

Voice

shirt's still <sup>3</sup> all bunched up! I give up, I give up, I give

Vln. *mp* *mf*

Cl. *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf*

Bass *mp* *mf*

Dr.

38

Voice

up, I give up, I give up, I give up, I give up.

Vln. *f*

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Bass *f*

Dr.

**E** ♩ = 144

40

Voice

Be-cause I fu-cking can't sit still!

Vln. *ff*

Cl. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Bass *ff*

Dr. *ff*  
choke

44

Voice

Vln.

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Bass *f*

Dr.

47 **F**

Voice *f* They're in my

Vln. *ff* *f*

Cl. *ff* *f*

Vc. *ff* *f*

Bass *ff* *f*

Dr.

51

Voice brain, They're in my brain, All of my thoughts, They will not stop, They're un-res-

Vln. *f*

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Bass *f*

Dr. *f*



18

63 *f*

Voice *f*  
wall, on the table, on the chair, on my knee and my brain, has to think, a - bout

Vln. *fp* *fp*

Cl. *fp* *fp*

Vc. *fp* *f* *f*

Bass *fp* *fp*

Dr. *mf* *f*

66

Voice  
e - v'ry lit - tle thing all at once, it's a mess, feels like some-things in my head

Vln. *fp*

Cl. *fp*

Vc. *ff* *fp*

Bass

Dr.

69 *f* 19 *ff*

Voice: *f* *ff*  
 scrat - ching,      craw - ling      pic - king,    li - cking,    fea - sting,    gnaw - ing

Vln. *f* *ff*

Cl. *f* *ff*

Vc. *f* *ff*

Bass *f* *ff*

Dr. *f* *ff*

71 **H** *p*

Voice: *p*  
 I've got ants in my pants, I've got ants in my pants, I've got ants in my pants, I've got

Vln. *f*

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Bass *f*

Dr. *f*



75 *mf*

Voice  
ants in my pants, I've got ants in my shirt, I've got

Vln.  
Cl.  
Vc.  
Bass  
Dr.

77

Voice  
ants in my socks, I've got ants in my hair, I've got ants in my skin, I've got

Vln.  
Cl.  
Vc.  
Bass  
Dr.

80 *ff* 21

Voice

ants in my brain, I've got ants in my brain, I've got

Vln. *ff*

Cl. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Bass *ff*

Dr. *ff*

82

Voice

ants in my brain, I've got ants in my brain, I've got

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

**I** completely unhinged  
free time  
don't end together  
yelling, speech-singing

84 *ff*

Voice  
ants in my brain, —————→

Vln. *ff*  
increase bow pressure —————→ random notes  
gradually ascend scratching

Cl. *ff*  
wild random pitches ascending —————→ random rhythms  
heavy, marcato

Vc. *ff*  
Trem gliss, pont. —————→ bariolage, scratching

Bass *ff*  
fill

Dr. *ff*  
fill

# Soft Rain of Sticky Notes

23

spoken, repeatedly      accel. . . . .

*mf*      *f*

Voice: What do I do now?      What do I do now?

Vln. *f*      *pp*      *f*

Cl. *f*      *pp*      *f*

Vc. pizz. *f*      arco *pp*      *f*

Bass *f*      *pp*      *f*

Dr. *f*      *pp*      *f*

wait for vocalist

**A tempo**      accel. . . . .

*mf*      *f*

Voice: What will I do next?      What will I do next?

Vln. *f*      *pp*      *f*

Cl. *f*      *ppp*      *f*

Vc. pizz. *f*      arco *pp*      *f*

Bass *f*      *pp*      *f*

Dr. *f*      *pp*      *f*

wait for vocalist

alla guitar feedback

24 **free time** spoken hastily **a little slower** sing contour drum fill will continue into rest go on after it ends

7 *f* half sung *ff*

Voice: What do I do? What do I do? What do I do? What do I do?

Vln. *f* *ff*

Cl. *f* *ff* ascend quickly finish after singer

Vc. *f* *ff* *fff* ascend quickly finish after singer

Bass *f* *ff* *fff* ascend quickly finish after singer

Dr. *f* *ff* *fff* fill, continue briefly after ensemble stops

**A**

**voice and clarinet only**

13 sit and begin the "it" task lyrics spoken begin a different, less important task

Voice: That's really going to need some focus, maybe I should do something else first.

Cl. take your time *ppp* *f* Start slowly and accel. End somewhat obnoxiously. *ppp* *ff*

25

17 attempt a third task to the clarinetist

Voice That can wait,  
I should focus  
on this other  
thing now.

obnoxiously  
*tr*

Will you stop!?

Cl. *fff* spoken  
Only if you make me!

**B**  
uptempo train beat  
ca. ♩ = 140

sung

20 *f*

Voice *f*  
Eve - ry - thing - is un - der - lined, and i can't seem to pri - or - i - tize. So I

Vln. *f*

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Bass *f*

Dr. *f*

26

24

Voice

don't know\_ how to choose, which one of them I\_\_need to doOoOoOoOo.

falsetto/headvoice  
wide vibrato  
any high note

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

vamp

28

voice

vocalist tries to list tasks

...and all of them are underlined

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

walk

**C** punk beat, aggressively  
ca. ♩ = 160

27

33 *ff*

Voice

Eve - ry - thing is un - der - lined Eve - ry - thing is un - der - lined Ur - gent Ur - gent

Vln. *ff*

Cl. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Bass *ff*

Dr. *ff*

dig in

36

Voice

Eve - ry - thing is un - der - lined Ur - gent Ur - gent Ur - gent

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.



**D**vamp  
shuffle, laid back swing  
ca. ♩ = 120

go on when vocalist  
begins singing  
singing in laid  
back crooner style  
improvise melody

39 Vocalist tries to prioritize aforementioned task, keeping in mind the "it" task.

39

Voice

I have a

Vln.

*p*

Cl.

*p*

Vc.

*p*

Bass

*p*

Dr.

*p*

straight  
accel.

43

Voice

fuckton of things to do skeet ba do a metric fuckton of things to do skeet ba do

Vln.

*mf*

Cl.

*mf*

Vc.

*mf*

Bass

*mf*

Dr.

**uptempo train beat**

ca. ♩ = 140

spoken quickly

tangent about metric vs imperial fuckton, free associate until you circle back  
end with: *As I've said I have a fuckton of things to do and everything is underlined.*

vocalist continues their tangent,  
everyone else waits for cue

47

Voice

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

And that's 2.33 fucktons in imperial I know this because I researched the origin of the fuckton as a measurement and the difference between the metric and imperial. It's a fascinating history that could be entirely false because when I say research I mean read a Wikipedia article and I did it all because I didn't know what to work on at the moment. *As I've said I have a fuckton of things to do and everything is underlined.*

"...everything is underlined."

**E**

**punk beat, aggressively**

ca. ♩ = 160

52

Voice

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

Ur - gent Eve - ry - thing is un - der - lined Eve - ry - thing is un - der - lined Ur - gent Ur - gent

**F** loosely in tempo with previous section  
frustratedly

30

56

sung

*f*

3

3

3

What do I do? What do I do? What do I do?

Vln. *f*

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Bass *f*

Dr. *f*

similar ascend chromatically

fill

**G** unraveling  
tempo at a natural speaking rhythm  
free time, loosely coordinated

Where lyrics are provided, articulate for every syllable. Loosely follow the vocalist.  
Ensemble should play stemmed notes together.

60

*p*

*f*

I have to sit down and do eve - ry - thing.

Vln. *pp* *sfz*

Cl. *pp* *sfz*

Vc. *pp* *sfz*

Bass *p* *sfz*

Dr. *f* *sfz*

normal bowing

normal bowing

ad lib. sparse fills

61 *p* 31

Voice *f*  
 Just sit down and get eve - ry - thing done.  
 gradually ascend  
 cont. articulating syllables

Vln. *pp* *sfz* *sfz*  
 gradually ascend  
 cont. articulating syllables

Cl. *pp* *sfz* *sfz*  
 gradually ascend  
 cont. articulating syllables

Vc. *pp* *sfz* *sfz*

Bass *p* *sfz* *sfz*

Dr. *pp* *sfz* *sfz*

---

62 *p* *f*

Voice *f*  
 Get eve - ry - thing done at the same time.  
 gliss  
 cont. articulating syllables

Vln. *p* *sfz* *sfz*

Cl. *p* *sfz* *sfz*

Vc. *p* *sfz* *sfz*

Bass *p* *sfz* *sfz*

Dr. *p* *sfz* *sfz*  
 (follow voice)

32 *f* *ff*

63

sim - ul - tan - e - us - ly work on eve - ry - thing

Vln. *f* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

gliss.

Cl. *p* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Vc. *f* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Bass *f* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Dr. *p* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

65 *f* *ff*

alla Ants

sit down and get eve - ry - thing done.

Vln. *f* *ff*

gliss, change string when necessary wide vib.

Cl. *f* *ff*

Vc. *f* *ff*

Bass *f* *ff*

Dr. *f* *ff*

**H** Refrain  
ca. ♩ = 63  
(pick up bar)

33

66 *p*

Voice

I have to sit down and get ev - ery-thing done just sit down and get ev - ery-thing done I

Vln.

Cl.

Vc. pizz *p*

Bass

Dr. *p*

69 *mp*

Voice

have to sit down and get ev - ery-thing done just sit down and get ev - ery-thing done I

Vln.

Cl.

Vc. *mp*

Bass *mp*

Dr. *mp*

71 *mf*

Voice  
 have to sit down and get ev - ery-thing done just sit down and get ev - ery-thing done I

Vln. *mf*

Cl. *mf*

Vc. *mf* arco

Bass *mf*

Dr. *mf*

73 *f*

Voice  
 have to sit down and get ev - ery-thing done just sit down and get ev - ery-thing done I

Vln. *f*

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Bass *f*

Dr. *f*

75 *ff* 35

Voice  
 have to sit down and get ev - ery - thing done just sit down and get ev - ery - thing done |

Vln.  
*ff*

Cl.  
*ff*

Vc.  
*ff*

Bass  
*ff*

Dr.  
*ff*

77 *fff*

Voice  
 have to sit down and get ev - ery - thing done just sit down and get ev - ery - thing done |

Vln.  
*fff*  
 dig in

Cl.  
*fff*

Vc.  
*fff*  
 dig in

Bass  
*fff*  
 dig in

Dr.  
*fff*



36 79

Voice

have to sit down and get ev - ery - thing done just sit down and get ev - ery - thing done |

Vln. *fff* dig in

Cl. *fff* dig in

Vc. *fff* 3 dig in

Bass *fff* dig in

Dr. *fff* 3 *f*

**molto rit.** . . . . .  
 spinning out  
 of control

81

Voice

have to sit down and get ev - ery - thing done just sit down, just sit down, just sit down, can't sit down,

Vln. dig in

Cl. dig in

Vc. dig in

Bass dig in

Dr. *fff* 3 choke

86 37

any high note

any high note

any high note

any high note

any high note

fill

can't sit down, can't sit down, I can't just sit down, I can't sit still I can't sit still

gradually ascend

gradually ascend

gradually ascend

gradually ascend

fill

Dr.

**I** free time, coordinated with clarinet  
quietly, desperately

91 attacca

spoken  
gradually realizing you don't have to do everything simultaneously

*p*

Just do everything. Get everything done. Maybe just get one thing done. Just get it done.

random rhythms  
behind bridge

*p* *ppp*

cresc. over texture

*no* *f* *no* *f* *no* *f* *no* *f*

random harmonics

*p* *ppp*

scratching with  
pick or nails

*p* *ppp*

snare drum rustling

*p* *ppp*

Dr.

# Hyperfocus

**unmeasured, free time**  
ca. 30"

This system includes staves for Vocals, Violin, B♭ Clarinet, Violoncello, Bass Guitar, and Drum Set. The Violin and Violoncello parts feature a 'harmonic gliss' with a *pp* dynamic. The B♭ Clarinet part includes 'wind and key clicks' with a *pp* dynamic. The Bass Guitar part features 'pick slides, string scrapes' with a *pp* dynamic. The Drum Set part is marked with 'random rhythms and noises' and a *pp* dynamic. A tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 88$  is shown in a box with a musical example.

2  $\text{♩} = 88$

This system includes staves for Vln., Cl., Vc., Bass, and Dr. The Vln. part starts with a rest and then plays a melodic line with dynamics *mp* and *mf*. The Cl. part has a rest and then plays a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *mf*. The Vc. part has a rest and then plays a rhythmic pattern with dynamics *pp*, *p*, *mp*, and *mf*. The Bass part has a rest and then plays a rhythmic pattern with dynamics *pp*, *p*, *mp*, and *mf*. The Dr. part has a rest and then plays a rhythmic pattern with dynamics *p* and *mf*. A tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 88$  is shown at the beginning.

**A** improvised spoken word  
Focus

5

Vocals

Vln. pizz. *mp* arco *p* pizz. *mp* arco *pp*<

Cl. *mp* *p* *mp* *pp*<

Vc. pizz. *mp* arco *p* pizz. *mp* arco *pp*<

Bass *mp* *p* *mp* *pp*<

Dr. keep time 4

9

Vocals fo - cused

Vln. *p* *p* pizz. *mp*

Cl. *p* *p* *mp*

Vc. *p* *p* pizz. *mp*

Bass *p* *p* *mp*

Dr. 8

40 **B** Blurred Periphery  
Only in front of me

13

Vocals

Vln. *arco*  
*mf*

Cl. *mf*

Vc. *arco*  
*mf*

Bass *mf*

Dr.

12

The world  
Attention

17

Vocals

Vln. *mp* — *mf*

Cl. *mp* — *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Bass

Dr.

16



42

29 **C** in front of me  
Periphery

Musical score for measures 42-45. The score includes staves for Vocals, Vln., Cl., Vc., Bass, and Dr. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The Vocals staff contains a series of slanted lines. The Vln. and Cl. staves are empty. The Vc. staff has dynamics *mp* *espress.* and *mf*. The Bass staff has a dynamic of *mf*. The Dr. staff has a drum pattern in the first two measures, followed by rests in the last two measures.

Musical score for measures 46-49. The score includes staves for Vocals, Vln., Cl., Vc., Bass, and Dr. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The Vocals staff contains a series of slanted lines. The Vln. and Cl. staves are empty. The Vc. staff has dynamics *mp*, *mf*, and *f*. The Bass staff has a drum pattern in the first measure, followed by rests in the last three measures. A measure rest '4' is indicated in the Bass staff for measure 47.

37 The world  
Dissolves

Vocals

Vln.

Cl. *mp espress.* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf*

Bass

Dr. 8

41 Attention  
Centered

Vocals

Vln.

Cl. *mp* *mf* *f*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *f*

Bass

Dr. 12



44

**D**

45

Vocals: The world dis-solves at-

Vln. *mp espress.* *mf*

Cl. *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf*

Bass

Dr. 16

49

Vocals: ten-tion\_ cen-tered

Vln. *mp* *mf* *f*

Cl. *mp* *mf* *f*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *f*

Bass

Dr. 20

Only what's in front of me  
Blurred my Periphery

53

Vocals

Vln. *mp* *mf*

Cl. *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf*

Bass

Dr. 24

Detailed description: This musical score covers measures 53 to 56. The vocal line consists of a continuous series of slanted lines, indicating a sustained vocal line. The violin part starts at *mp* and transitions to *mf* at measure 54. The clarinet part also starts at *mp* and transitions to *mf* at measure 54. The double bass part starts at *mp* and transitions to *mf* at measure 54. The drum part is marked with a '24' and a slash, indicating a specific drum pattern.

Only what's in front of me  
Blurred my Periphery

57

Vocals

Vln. *mp* *mf* *f*>

Cl. *mp* *mf* *f*>

Vc. *mp* *mf* *f*>

Bass

Dr. 28

Detailed description: This musical score covers measures 57 to 60. The vocal line continues with slanted lines. The violin part starts at *mp*, transitions to *mf* at measure 58, and reaches *f* with an accent (>) at measure 59. The clarinet part starts at *mp*, transitions to *mf* at measure 58, and reaches *f* with an accent (>) at measure 59. The double bass part starts at *mp*, transitions to *mf* at measure 58, and reaches *f* with an accent (>) at measure 59. The drum part is marked with a '28' and a slash, indicating a specific drum pattern.

46 **E**

61 The world dissolves to only what's in front of me

Vocals

Vln. *mp* *mf*

Cl. *mp* *mf*

Vc.

Bass

Dr. 32

65 Attention Centered Blurred my Periphery

Vocals

Vln. *mp* *mf* *f*

Cl. *mp* *mf* *f*

Vc.

Bass

Dr. 36

69

Vln. *mp* *mf*

Cl. *mp* *mf*

Vc.

Bass

Dr. 40

Detailed description: This system contains measures 69 through 72. The Violin and Clarinet parts start at measure 69 with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and transition to mezzo-forte (*mf*) at measure 71. The Violoncello part has a sustained chord. The Bass part has a rhythmic pattern. The Drum part is marked with a slash and the number 40, indicating a specific drum pattern.

73

Vln. *mp* *mf* *f*

Cl. *mp* *mf* *f*

Vc.

Bass

Dr. 44

Detailed description: This system contains measures 73 through 76. The Violin and Clarinet parts start at measure 73 with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and increase to forte (*f*) by measure 75. The Violoncello part has a sustained chord. The Bass part has a rhythmic pattern. The Drum part is marked with a slash and the number 44, indicating a specific drum pattern.

Focus

77

Vocals

Dr. 48 52

Detailed description: This system contains measures 77 through 80. The Vocals part is marked with a box labeled 'Focus' and contains a series of slanted lines representing a vocal line. The Drum part is marked with a slash and the number 48, indicating a specific drum pattern, and then a slash and the number 52, indicating a change in the drum pattern.

48 **F**

85 *f*

Vocals *f*  
 The World diss-olves to on-ly\_ what's in front of me At -

Vln. *f*

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Bass *f*  
 similar beat with hats

Dr. *f*

4

89

Vocals  
 ten-tion\_\_\_\_\_ Cen-tered Blurred my. Pe-ri-phe-ry\_\_\_\_\_

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr. *f*

8

93

Vocals

The World diss-olves to on-ly\_ what's in front of me At-

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

12

97

Vocals

ten - tion \_\_\_\_\_ Cen-tered Blurred my\_ Pe-ri-phe-ry \_\_\_\_\_

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

16

50 **G**

101

Vocals

Fo - - - cused fo - - - cused

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

105

Vocals

Fo - - - cused Fo - - - cused

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

4

109

Vocals

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

Detailed description: This musical score block covers measures 109 through 112. It features six staves: Vocals, Violin (Vln.), Clarinet (Cl.), Violoncello (Vc.), Bass, and Drums (Dr.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. In measure 109, the Vocals staff has a whole rest, while the Vln., Cl., and Vc. staves have whole notes. The Bass staff has a half note, and the Dr. staff has a whole rest. In measure 110, the Vocals staff has a whole rest, and the Vln., Cl., and Vc. staves have whole notes. The Bass staff has a half note, and the Dr. staff has a whole rest. In measure 111, the Vocals staff has a whole rest, and the Vln., Cl., and Vc. staves have whole notes. The Bass staff has a half note, and the Dr. staff has a whole rest. In measure 112, the Vocals staff has a whole rest, and the Vln., Cl., and Vc. staves have whole notes. The Bass staff has a half note, and the Dr. staff has a whole rest.

113

Vocals

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

Detailed description: This musical score block covers measures 113 through 116. It features six staves: Vocals, Violin (Vln.), Clarinet (Cl.), Violoncello (Vc.), Bass, and Drums (Dr.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. In measure 113, the Vocals staff has a whole rest, while the Vln., Cl., and Vc. staves have whole notes. The Bass staff has a half note, and the Dr. staff has a whole rest. In measure 114, the Vocals staff has a whole rest, and the Vln., Cl., and Vc. staves have whole notes. The Bass staff has a half note, and the Dr. staff has a whole rest. In measure 115, the Vocals staff has a whole rest, and the Vln., Cl., and Vc. staves have whole notes. The Bass staff has a half note, and the Dr. staff has a whole rest. In measure 116, the Vocals staff has a whole note, and the Vln., Cl., and Vc. staves have whole notes. The Bass staff has a half note, and the Dr. staff has a whole note.



# Sisyphus

Relaxed  $\text{♩} = 82$

Vocals

Vln. *con sord. sul tasto*  
*p*  $\rightarrow$  *pp*

Cl. *pizz.*  
*p*  $\rightarrow$  *pp*

Vc. *p*

Bass *p*

Dr.

5

Vocals **A** in disbelief  
I ac-tual-ly got it done.

Vln. *pp*  $\rightarrow$  *p*  $\rightarrow$  *pp*

Cl. *pp*  $\rightarrow$  *p*  $\rightarrow$  *pp*

Vc. *p*

Bass *p*

Dr.

10

Vocals

Oh my god. I ac-tual-ly got it done.

Vln.

pp p pp

Cl.

pp p pp

Vc.

Bass

3 3 3

Dr.

13

Vocals

What a re-lief. I can't be-lieve I ac-tual-ly got it done.

Vln.

pp p pp

Cl.

pp p pp

Vc.

Bass

3 3 3

Dr.

**B**

54 16

Vocals

I've come so far. Was that so hard to ac-tual-ly just sit down? for

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

19

Vocals

ho - urs for ho - urs for ho - urs to chi - sle out some-thing of

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

22 55

Vocals *mf* val - ue and mean - ing, or an - y - thing, an - y - thing, just do an - y - thing. *f*

Vln. *mf* *f*

Cl. *mf* *f*

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

*poco rit.* . . . . . *freely*

25 *P* *a tempo*

Vocals Please, get some-thing done. — but at least for to-day I can say

Vln. *p* *p* *senza sord. arco* 3

Cl. *p*

Vc. *p* *p*

Bass *p* 3

Dr.

29 **C**

Vocals

Oh my god. I ac-tual-ly got it done...

Vln.

*pp*

Cl.

*p* *pp*

arco  
off the string  
except on tenutos

Vc.

*pp*

Bass

brushes

Dr.

33

Vocals

What a re - lief. still can't be - lieve I ac - tual - ly

Vln.

*pp*

Cl.

*pp*

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

35

Vocals

got it done... What a re - lief. Now I can sleep, and wake up to

Vln.

*p* *pp* *pp*

Cl.

*p* *pp* norm.

Vc.

*pp*

Bass

Dr.

**D**

38

Vocals

peace of mind. That's some - thing done, some - thing done, one thing done, one thing done

(arco)

*p* *mp*

Vln.

*p* *mp*

Cl.

*p* *mp*

Vc.

*p*

Bass

Dr.

41

Vocals

*mf* I fi - nal - ly sat and got it done, got it done *f* Just sat down and

Vln.

*mf* *f*

Cl.

*mf* *f*

Vc.

arco

Bass

Dr.

44

Vocals

got it done now I'm done Fin' - ly done

Vln.

*p*

Cl.

*p*

Vc.

*p*

Bass

bell

Dr.

**E**

**double time**

$\text{♩} = 164$

59

47

Vocals

Now I have time, to go out-side, the world is mine, I can't de - ny. Time to

Vln. arco

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr. sticks

50

Vocals

run and jump and sing and scream, with all this time now I have free. It's

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.



60 52

Vocals  
mine, it's mine, the world is mine

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

any high note

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

loose hats

*ff*

55

Vocals

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

57 **molto accel.** 61

Vocals

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

61

Vocals

Vln.

Cl.

Vc.

Bass

Dr.

spoken  
matter o' factly

until tomorrow