

# Of Other Narratives

tracings in the ground of  
*Collective Autonomy*  
people–practice–theory–history

## Volume 3

### Program Notes Part 2<sup>1</sup>

#### Variations on DIRECTIONS CHANGING

**D***irections Changing* sprang into life during 1987. As a guide for improvisation it plots a deceptively difficult structure. While writing the ‘head’<sup>2</sup> I was unconcerned with the oddness of the plot and it was only later, while we – the members of Feeling to Thought<sup>3</sup> – were playing it in rehearsal, that its difficulties became apparent. The difficulties were, in fact, woven into the very fabric of its conception and to address any one aspect meant, by dint, addressing its construction as a whole. Countless hours were spent in rehearsal and we played the piece many times in performance. Although we turned in some pretty astounding renderings of *Directions* these never quite covered the territory I’d imagined for it. Why this is so remains to this day, somewhat of a mystery. I approached it from several different points of view and, interestingly, each time I came at it from a different angle, it generated a very different result while concurrently, a new set of difficulties. The name, as it turned out, is significant and apt.

After having laid dormant for almost twenty years I looked at it again, this time in the context of Spaces and Streams<sup>4</sup> and again, approaching it from a different perspective it exposed a bunch of different characteristics while generating yet another set of difficulties. So, in what follows I’ll try to open up the world of *Directions Changing* in the hope of getting to the bottom of its mystery and in the doing I’ll address four different performance contexts in which it has been explored. In chronological order these are: Feeling to Thought, an essentially jazz orientated ensemble; Pipeline Contemporary Music Project<sup>5</sup>, an essentially composition dots-on-paper oriented ensemble; Feeling to Thought in collaboration with Pipeline<sup>6</sup>; and Spaces and Streams, an essentially jazz orientated ensemble.<sup>7</sup>

*Directions Changing* was never conceived of as a ‘jazz’ piece per se but rather as a “Work” that would enable a thorough exploration of the philosophical concern I named round the time of its writing, namely, Collective Autonomy. As will become increasingly clear in the process of unravelling the mystery of *Directions Changing*, this fact is significant. But *Directions*, in conception, didn’t preclude jazz orientation any more than it precluded the application of thorough composition. And this is another significant factor. If, in its conception, it precluded anything at all then that would be exclusivity itself. But this wasn’t the case either. In other words, when I conceived of *Directions Changing* I conceived of a “Work” that bore potential to be mapped onto, and have mapped onto it, various musical practices that are generally considered to be exclusive.

*Directions Changing* would represent an inroad into the erasure of categorical limitations while maintaining potential to be rendered as a categorical entity, with each being just a particular case or manifestation of its essence; yet another significant factor embedded in its concept. So then, as viewed from a birds’s-eye perspective *Directions* was, at the time of its conception, universal in its essential nature yet bore potential to embrace characterization, circumstance to circumstance.

At this point I’d be jumping ahead of myself if I broached the notion of its essential nature. So we’ll begin instead with the notion of character. Though this is almost as difficult to encapsulate as is its essential nature, we’ve already identified four performance contexts, two of which bear a jazz orientation. And given this observation we’ve reduced these contexts to three: 1., jazz, 2., compositional dots-on-paper, and 3., the intersection of 1. and 2. pursued in a collaborative ethos. And, just as a passing observation: by including the Spaces and Streams exploration and looking at the four performance contexts as a unified whole, it resembles in no meagre way, a classical structure, to wit, Theme 1, Theme 2, Development, and Re-Cap. Retrospectively, that’s the big picture.



Looking at the first of these performance contexts it is immediately clear that improvisation plays a major role in the “Work’s” rendering. When performed the head would be played then solos would follow built on the structures traced out by the head. And to be sure, this is a conventional approach. So for now I think it’s worth our while to take a good look at the head-structure of *Directions Changing* and in the doing at least some of the performance difficulties will become clear.

Crucial at the “Work’s” inception were the relationships that obtain between the vertical and horizontal domains. The pitch material, being construed in a modal formulation, constitutes the horizontal. It is the rhythmic material that generates a sense of the vertical while concurrently serving the horizontal. This, to some considerable extent, amounts to a role reversal; at least a role reversal in terms of standard practice as usually understood in EuroAmerican musical linguistics. Indeed, in the more common practices of jazz, for example, it’s the pitch material that constitutes the vertical through the designation of characteristic chords structurally located while the horizontal domain is accounted for through melodic lines that converge appropriate to the chordal layout and in this, rhythm generally plays a supportive role. That’s jazz.<sup>8</sup> But the same observation can be made in much music that stems from the European compositional tradition through to and including the twentieth-century, though granted, things in this regard become less well-defined in some ‘contemporary’ camps.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand though, much of African music is linear<sup>10</sup> yet implies a sense of verticality through polyrhythmic layering, albeit generally related to a common, regulated pulse. And this observation brings us to a field where *Directions Changing* finds itself at home. First we’ll detail its pitch domain.

### Outline of Pitch Fields for *Directions Changing*<sup>11</sup>

#### EXAMPLE 1

┌ 1st. time ───┐ ┌ 2nd. time ───┐

||: F Phrygian 6 bars | F alt. 2 bars :|| F# Dorian 2 bars || G Mixolydian 2 bars | A Aeolian 2 bars |

D Mixolydian 2 bars | D# Phrygian 4 bars || E Lydian 2 bars | C Phrygian 2 bars | Ab Lydian 4 bars |

E Ionian 2 bars | D Lydian 2 bars | G# alt./F# 4 bars ||

As is clear from this outline, the structure is conceived of in modal terms and, other than the two altered (‘alt.’) areas, all the pitch fields derive from major diatonic material. This presents nothing unusual and, in fact, it appears to be a pretty simple structure.

In its original form the ‘alt.’ areas were not problem free. As I recall, I’d viewed them in terms that might be expressed as Dominant 7th #4/b6, thus opening up the whole-tone scale.<sup>12</sup> But, how the second degree of the scale was to be inflected was never clarified by me; a problem I sought to overcome subsequently.

Given that *Directions Changing* was originally written with the band, Feeling to Thought specifically in mind,<sup>13</sup> that there was no chordal instrument to ‘lay down’ the changing key areas placed extraordinary responsibility on the bass. This was exacerbated by the fact that, in some instances, the key area remains the same while the bass notes imply a change; that is, a change in mode while the key area remains the same. For example, both D# Phrygian and E Lydian have a home in the key of B major. And, taking into consideration the bar structure,<sup>14</sup> things begin to become a little cloudy, broaching room for error and misunderstanding in improvised performance. The chance for error is exacerbated in the bars that follow this instance and for much the same sorts of reasons. What is actually going on here is layering – bass notes in juxtaposition with key areas – where the bass notes bear out one kind of intervallic relationship they do so in the context of different relationships between keys. For example: D# – E – C – A<sup>b</sup> in the bass (defining modes) with the respective key contexts being B maj. – B maj. – A<sup>b</sup> maj. – E<sup>b</sup> maj. Obviously, were the bass notes to mirror the key shifts through a constant – say a string of phrygian modes – the intervallic pattern of bass notes would be identical to the key shifts. Patently, this is not the case however and in fact, the various ‘directions’ implied by the bass notes in juxtaposition with the key shifts makes for a fairly complex terrain to negotiate; a terrain that can quite easily be misread-heard-conceived-directed. The “Work’s” title is now beginning to bear significance.

Having looked at the pitch-material characteristic of *Directions Changing*, I’ll now turn to the rhythmic material as this was initially conceived as part of the composition proper. Ostensibly, there are three layers at work. Each of these has an integrity of its own. The three layers are unified in the context of, what amounts to being, a 12-beat cycle with the beats being notated as crotchets.



The first layer of the cycle is structured as three blocks, each of which contains 4 beats.<sup>15</sup> Each of these blocks is clearly defined and rendered in a pattern played on drums, with the crotchet being patently fundamental to the pattern. In turn, the drum pattern implies the cycle's pulse which, if notated as such, would appear as minims – i.e., 6 pulses per cycle. This is significant as the pulse is never stated overtly but remains on the level of implication (though occasionally played on the bass drum in performance). Nonetheless, the first layer's pattern clearly alludes to the pulse and, consistent with there being three blocks in a cycle, alludes to two pulses per block.

The second layer rests on the 'pulse' and is expressed as a composite of 3 : 2 polyrhythms and minims. This layer effectively divides the cycle into two blocks of 3 pulses (minims) per block, with each block being construed as a minim triplet followed by a crotchet triplet. The combination of layers 1 and 2 makes for a fairly dense, driving, rhythmic texture, albeit one that bears clarity in its passage.

Looked at from a bird's-eye perspective, layer 1 structures the cycle into three divisions while layer 2 structures the cycle into two. In other words, the 3 : 2 bird's-eye view – as made manifest in relative structural divisions of the cycle, – is mirrored on a reduced level in layer 2 and through this mirroring a distinctly vertical character is established with rhythmic means and illuminated further by timbral considerations – acoustic bass playing layer 2 with layer 1 comprising a variety of repeated short and long, high and low pitched percussion sounds. The composite texture is complex yet each of its components distinctive.

The melody of *Directions Changing* constitutes the third layer, hovering in juxtaposition above layers 1 and 2. For the most part it is rendered by notes of long duration which, with the coincidence of common tones, bridge bars, mode changes, and key changes. A couple of examples here will suffice to make the point. At measures (mm.) 14 ~ 16<sup>16</sup> an A<sup>b</sup> is suspended where the mode of F phrygian (D<sup>b</sup> maj.) changes to F<sup>#</sup> dorian (E maj.). The A<sup>b</sup> is treated as an enharmonic equivalent to G<sup>#</sup> in the new mode. At mm. 16 ~ 17 an E is suspended over the change from F<sup>#</sup> dorian (E maj.) to G mixolydian (C maj.). The pitch G is suspended at mm. 20 ~ 21 over the change from A aeolian (C maj.) to D mixolydian (G maj.). And an E is suspended at mm. 22 ~ 23 over the change from D mixolydian (G maj.) to D<sup>#</sup> phrygian (B maj.). This line, realized by the two saxophones, characterized by common tones between diverse mode changes, and constituted almost entirely by long durations – these being in stark contrast to the rhythmic activity of both layers 1 and 2 – renders the melody as layer 3 and indeed, it is well-defined. In this, the first incarnation of *Directions Changing*, performance time was accounted for in a way not uncommon to jazz practice, to wit, through improvisation based on the harmonic scheme as outlined by the 'head'. The 42 bar structure shown in the *Outline* above was maintained throughout.

### Rhythmic Dispositions for

#### *Directions Changing*

EXAMPLE 2

The image displays three layers of musical notation for 'Directions Changing'. Layer 3, the top staff, shows a melody in 6/8 time with various note values and rests. Layer 2, the middle staff, shows a polyrhythm of 6 and 2 minims over 12 beats, with a '6' above the first six beats and a '2' above the next two. Layer 1, the bottom staff, shows a polyrhythm of 12 and 4 minims over 16 beats, with a '12' above the first 12 beats and a '4' above the next 4. Triplet markings are present in Layer 1.

### The Second Incarnation of *Directions Changing*

— a Variation Set —

The second incarnation of *Directions* was a vastly different affair. Where, in its first, it was performed by jazz musicians in a jazz-room kind of setting, its second incarnation placed it in the concert hall environment. Commissioned by Pipeline Contemporary Music Project in 1988 and completed November of that year, *Variations on 'Directions Changing'*, though still drawing upon improvisation, did so without making direct reference through performance practice to jazz.<sup>17</sup> The members of Pipeline were all interested in improvisation but none



had had extensive hands-on exposure to jazz practices. Alternatively, Pipeline was a body of musicians who'd had a wealth of experience playing compositional dot-on-paper and were, at the time, widely considered to be 'state of the art' in the field of contemporary music.<sup>18</sup> All of this I saw as being advantageous vis-à-vis the project of *Collective Autonomy*.<sup>19</sup> By 1988 I was already disinterested in aspirations that habitually adhered to jazz performance. What I *was* interested in was finding a field on which improvisation might be juxtaposed with composed/notated music and developed so as to generate intersections between the two; intersections that were not accidental nor incidental but were intrinsic to the compositional process while embracing the notion of improvisation, doing so in a way that would not compromise the music made but would, on the contrary, be indispensable to it.

Thus, in its second incarnation, *Directions* was explored from a vastly different perspective and looked at through the lens of notated composition but with some space given to improvisation. This is a crucial point. By 'some space given' I not only refer to matters of timeframe but also to performance mode. Improvisation, as with notated composition, can be, and is, made manifest in ways that yield infinite gradations. This brings into play questions concerning the issue of where music might cease to be considered the territory of notated composition to become improvised composition and it was around this time, or perhaps a little later, that I coined the two terms, 'thorough composition' and 'intuitive composition'<sup>20</sup> in order that this dilemma be accounted for. The Pipeline commission facilitated an ideal environment to explore this territory.

*Variations on 'Directions Changing'* is a work of 'thorough composition' with some space given to 'intuitive composition'. A full analysis regarding the constitution of these terms is beyond the scope of the present writing. However, a general analysis of the variation set will clearly indicate the high profile allocated these terms in my compositional thinking as this is made manifest, and their relationship to each other as contextualized in this particular "Work".

Based on **the Theme**, *'Directions Changing'*, the second incarnation is structured on the centuries-old principle, theme and variation. This presents us with nothing unusual. And in fact, the unfolding of this principle in the present case couldn't be much more conventional. In stating the Theme there were no changes made with respect to pitch and rhythmic material from the first incarnation. These were mapped directly onto the Theme of the variation set with 6/2 being the designated meter: layer 1 was taken up by the marimba, layer 2 by the piano's bass, and layer 3 by flute/piccolo, cor anglais/oboe, and tenor trombone (with the F trigger). The Theme of *Directions* in its second incarnation, the variation set, bore little change other than in instrumentation and in fact served as an introduction to instrumental colours to be explored, variation to variation, as a chief characteristics.

EXAMPLE 3 : Fragment from score p. 3 of *Variations on 'Directions Changing'*. These two bars from the Theme correspond with bars 7 and 8 of example 1.

NOTE: The contrasting dynamic markings shown here in the three wind lines, each with the same pitch-class rendered in a different octave, is indicative of the high profile given to concerns regarding timbre as this applies throughout the entire "Work".

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper. It consists of five staves. The top three staves are for wind instruments: flute/piccolo, cor anglais/oboe, and tenor trombone. The bottom two staves are for piano and marimba. The score shows two measures of music. The wind instruments play a melodic line with dynamic markings like *sfz* and *fmp*. The piano/marimba plays a rhythmic pattern with triplets and dynamic markings like *mf* and *sfz*. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.



In considering the four variations that constitute the remainder of its second incarnation, *Directions* begins to sound very different to its first. The theme is deconstructed then reconstructed in four divergent yet teleologic forms and a significant element in this process is improvisation. Albeit that improvisation accounts for a major portion of performance in the first incarnation, when put to work in the second it took on very different roles and these in very different ways, resembling none but a small reflection of the jazz tradition that was so central to the original incarnation. For my present purposes, to analyze each of these four variations in detail might actually prove to be counterproductive. The process would be lengthy and quite convoluted. Suffice to say that in composing out the four variations I employed divergent compositional methodology; indeed, it was an exploration of, and rigorous confrontation between, 1., compositional procedures and 2., the often taken-for-granted dichotomy between notated composition and improvisation. In the following, then, I'll mention detail only where apposite vis-à-vis matters of structure and the instantiation of composition in relation to improvised material.

A brief look at the sorts of compositional procedures that constitute the four variations will contextualize my concern here to illuminate the intersection on which notated composition and improvisation meet.<sup>21</sup> **Variation 1**, still in the 6/2 meter introduced by the theme, is a dialogue: the three winds being one interlocutor (unison phrases) with the percussion the other. The general characteristic of the winds is gestural, quite vocal in their expression, and functioning as commentary. The percussion part<sup>22</sup> amounts to being a precisely notated solo and it's only towards the end of Variation 1 that a 'solo', in the sense of it being improvised, is rendered. Though this remains in the 6/2 meter, its duration is non-specific and entirely open to in-the-moment shaping. This 'solo' portion is marked, "with brushes", and aimed at maintaining the atmosphere of the composed/notated music. Out of the 'solo', the percussion part gradually winds its way into a rendering of the rhythm from the Theme (there played on marimba) while the winds open up a more independent texture as an introduction to Variation 2.

EXAMPLE 4 : Fragment from score p. 17 of *Variations on 'Directions Changing'*.

NOTE: These are the last four bars of Variation 1.

The image shows a page from a musical score, specifically measures 83 through 85. The score is written for three winds (soprano, alto, and bass clefs) and percussion (drums and cymbals). The percussion part features a complex, rhythmic pattern with many triplets and sixteenth notes. The winds play melodic lines with some improvisation indicated by slurs and dynamic markings like 'mp' and 'f'. The page is numbered 83 at the top left and 85 at the bottom left.

**Variation 2** maintains the 6/2 meter but is now realized in a very different timbral context: piano and percussion. While being rhythmically intense a sense of disintegration hovers. This is achieved through counterpoint (in the broad sense) functioning on two levels, the most apparent being 1., timbral contrasts: the percussion part – drums ⇌ cymbals; mallets ⇌ brushes ⇌ sticks; long ⇌ short durations; and this in relation to equally pronounced contrasts between bass and treble in the piano; and finally, the contrast between piano



timbres and percussion timbres. 2. The piano part is anything but free. Unlike the percussion part, it is very tightly notated in two-part counterpoint. And although the Theme's melody is not elaborated here, it is structured in mirror image between the bass and treble and this in various construals. Generally, the treble line moves at twice the speed to that assigned the bass and, at certain points as these are related to the theme's unfolding, chords coinciding with the percussion are sustained for a duration somewhat determined by a diminuendo of natural resonance, thus suspending the contrapuntal texture. Rarely do these sustained chords fall on a downbeat, further confusing the meter and adding to the sense of disintegration. Unlike Variation 1 where the percussion part is consistently linked to the winds in dialogue, Variation 2 presents the percussion with a far greater freedom of invention. Rests are, however, clearly notated. Coincidence between the piano and percussion does occur but where Variation 1 precisely notates instruments for percussion, Variation 2 leaves this wide open to the moment and, crucially, between these rhythmically specified coincidences, the percussion is free to improvise, though in relation to the pulse. This not only leaves open to the moment, rhythmic relationships between piano and percussion but timbral relationships as well. Dynamics, too, play an important role in the general sense of collapse and this is made more prominent through the long durations given the sustained chords and their attendant lack of action. In fact, it is only the penultimate chord that does fall on a downbeat, with the final chord being the downbeat of Variation 3.

EXAMPLE 5.1. : Fragment from score p. 21 of Variations on 'Directions Changing'.  
Four bars from round the central area of Variation 2.

Example 5.1 shows a musical score for Variation 2, measures 109 to 111. The score is in 2/4 time. The piano part consists of two staves (treble and bass). The treble staff has a melody with various dynamics: *f*, *dim*, *mf*, and *cresc.*. The bass staff has a melody with dynamics: *f*, *mf*, and *p*. The percussion part is on a single staff below the piano part, with dynamics: *f*, *mf*, and *p*. The score is marked with measures 109 and 111.

EXAMPLE 5.2. : Fragment from score p. 22 of Variations on 'Directions Changing'.  
Four bars towards the final area of Variation 2.

Example 5.2 shows a musical score for Variation 2, measures 119 to 121. The score is in 2/4 time. The piano part consists of two staves (treble and bass). The treble staff has a melody with dynamics: *mf*, *p*, and *f*. The bass staff has a melody with dynamics: *mf*, *p*, and *f*. The percussion part is on a single staff below the piano part, with dynamics: *mf*, *p*, and *f*. The score is marked with measures 119 and 121.



**Variation 3** is a quasi solo for trombone, accompanied by piano and vibraphone, marked *rubato*, *cantabile con espressivo*, and a very different textural colour to all that has preceded it. The dynamic is generally pianissimo with sustained chords in the vibraphone and piano and the trombone sounding with harmon mute. All the chords are written for piano and vibraphone (not improvised) and they're abundant. The trombone part is improvised, though for every chord sounded by piano and vibraphone, there's a related mode written and from which the improvisation derives. Being marked *rubato* and written so that the piano and vibraphone remain connected rhythmically throughout, the entry of each chord functions to stabilize the structure. After each chord has been sounded the door is opened to the two keyboard instruments to extemporize. This is, however, limited by the very nature and character of this music. As is clear from Ex. 6, the chords are not downbeats. There are no downbeats in this music. Although the trombone is the soloist, this doesn't, by dint, make him the 'leader'. The process of working through this labyrinthine maze of chords and pitch material is a matter and responsibility equally shared by each of the three performers. Cohesion hangs on a thread. It's not so much a soloist/accompaniment ethos as it is a nurturing of the compositional fabric, the idea of which is to evolve a sonic form *en route*. It's incredibly demanding on the performers, yet the result of these strictures is reflective, contemplative, and hovers over the meditative. Arrived at after a gradual climb from the Theme's very beginning, Variation 3 is a plateau. Tension is present but submerged, only to fade completely with the final sustained chord, the natural resonances of which – both emotional and sonic – fade to *niente*.

EXAMPLE 6 : Fragment from score p. 25 of Variations on 'Directions Changing'.  
Final measures of Variation 3.



**Variation 4** is a trio – flutes: alto/concert; oboe/cor anglais; vibraphone – in 6/4 which feels, at times, like a waltz. The pulse taken by the performers rests on the minims. It is a contrapuntal setting of the Theme's melodic material, heard in the winds, with the vibraphone playing arpeggiated lines in juxtaposition. The texture is fairly transparent and the general feeling gentle and buoyant. It is intimate and expressionistic, fully notated and calls for no improvisation. It moves forward without being pushed and so, in a sense, tells a story that emanates resolve. Its character is peaceful. Although the wind lines are quite syncopated, they have a tendency to glide over the structure rather than digging into it. The vibraphone lines are more regulated than those of the winds in relation to the pulse though not in a way so as to create weight on downbeats.

EXAMPLE 7 : Fragment from score p. 29 of Variations on 'Directions Changing'.  
Climax to Variation 4.

The image displays a musical score for Variation 4, spanning measures 179 to 187. The score is written for a trio consisting of flutes (alto/concert), oboe/cor anglais, and vibraphone. The music is in 6/4 time. The score is divided into three systems, each with a measure number on the left (179, 183, 187). The first system (measures 179-182) shows a crescendo with the instruction 'poco a poco cresc.' and 'sub. p'. The second system (measures 183-186) shows a decrescendo with the instruction 'ff poco a poco dim.'. The third system (measures 187-190) continues the decrescendo with the instruction 'ff poco a poco dim.'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.



**Synopsis of**  
***Directions* in its Second Incarnation**  
***Variations on 'Directions Changing'***

When perceived from a bird's-eye perspective we find significant contrasts. These contrasts, and the forward motion generated by them, are achieved through two distinguishing dispositions: 1., the modes of relationship that obtain between notated and improvised composition as these are written into the structure, and 2., timbral contrasts made manifest through characteristics inherent to instrumentation. Though the variation principle is strictly maintained as a compositional form, when perceived from a bird's-eye perspective an arc is traced out that reveals a journey taken from the opening of the Theme through to the end of Variation 4; a journey that begins with considerable tension, passes through contemplation, and resolves in clarity and peace. Thus the structure of this "Work" is embraced by an overarching form, Developing Variation.<sup>23</sup>

A Romantic synopsis? Perhaps so. But Collective Autonomy does not seek to distance itself from the past. Nor does it seek to suggest that music's history be renewed or redirected by its lights. Collective Autonomy bears a philosophy of creative interaction and is fundamentally inclusive. As this applies to the people who engage with it, it no less applies to a music history that has given us an utter abundance in creative and spiritual heritage. Collective Autonomy not only acknowledges this as a received privilege but seeks, in its own way, to contribute to it.

***Directions* in its Third Incarnation**

Having rigorously explored the original *Directions Changing* with Feeling to Thought and delved into its structural potential as a compositional Theme in its second incarnation with Pipeline, the next step was to confront these two disparate perspectives in a third incarnation. Thus, the following year, *Variations on 'Directions Changing'* was programmed again in a Pipeline concert. The individual members of Feeling to Thought hadn't changed between the first incarnation and its third. It was an exciting time. We were all treading new ground and doing so with great anticipation.

The rehearsal week was, as with all Pipeline engagements, riveting, highly strung, and artistically rewarding. The energy that flowed between Feeling to Thought (a band of exceptional improvisers) and Pipeline (a band of highly accomplished contemporary music exponents), was a privilege to be privy to. The performance in North Melbourne Town Hall, May 12, 1989, was documented and broadcast live by the ABC.<sup>24</sup> It is this performance that has been reproduced in volume 3 of the series, *Of Other Narratives*. The audience response was effusive and quite drawn out. The following day, May 13, *Variations on 'Directions Changing'* was again presented, this time in the Joseph Post Auditorium, N.S.W. State Conservatorium of Music. Though the audience were fewer in Sydney than the previous night in Melbourne, the response was, nonetheless, enthusiastic, if also a little more restrained. Both concerts received critical notice in the newspapers. Whether intentional or otherwise, the observations made by both critics bear out salient aspects of the compositional material and performances I feel to be appropriate, significant, and, in part, how and why Collective Autonomy was, at the time, serving an Australian creative ethos.<sup>25</sup>

In this, *Directions'* third incarnation, the score for *Variations on 'Directions Changing'* was expanded so as to include improvisations à la its first. In addition, I composed two more variations, a 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, the former being precisely notated "thorough composition" while the latter employed sketch-like notation to inspire "intuitive composition". A 7<sup>th</sup> variation was also added. This was constituted through "improvisation" in the thorough sense of the term<sup>26</sup> by Feeling to Thought's bassist, Steve Elphick. There was no predetermined notation given him; he was entirely free to respond, as a soloist, to the preceding thirty-four minutes of music made and of which he'd been a crucial participant.

Looked at as an overview, then, the first and second incarnations were brought together in the one creative space as a third incarnation. Five more variations were added. Three being those already mentioned and performed as variations 5, 6, and 7. Further to these, two more were added. One, a tenor saxophone rendering by Mark Simmonds which was interpolated between the Theme and Variation 1 and the other, an alto saxophone rendering by David Ades, interpolated between Variations 2 and 3.

The performance in toto was constituted by the Theme and nine variations. Three of these were rendered as "thorough composition" – the Theme, and Var's. 4 & 5 –; five were rendered as "intuitive composition" – Interpolations 1 & 2, and Var's. 2, 3, & 6 –; one was rendered as "thorough improvisation" – Variation 7 –; leaving Variation 1 in question.



Variation 1 could be labelled “thorough composition” except for the fact that a section calling for “thorough improvisation” is interpolated towards its end. Not whimsical but rather, structural, this interpolated section functions as a bridge between two quite distinct forms of “thorough composition”, still in the context of Variation 1. Prior to the interpolated material, Variation 1 looks at thematic material through the lens of unison gestures in the winds, these being like commentary (quasi-accompaniment) to a precisely written percussion solo.<sup>27</sup> Following the interpolated “thorough improvisation” in the percussion, counterpoint is implied in the winds (see Ex. 4.), thus introducing the more stringent rendering of counterpoint when taken up by the piano in Variation 2.<sup>28</sup>

This general account of the third incarnation of *Directions* can be clearly grasped by a glance at Example 8 below.

EXAMPLE 8 : An overview of the compositional layout, indicating the flow of relationships – i.e., rendered modes of music-making, and the instrumental forces involved.

NOTE: the variations as numbered in the chart below are consistent with the score numbers. The Interpolations (Interp’n) are, in fact, variations on thematic material and related to the harmonic structure of the Theme. For detail regarding the Theme, see Ex. 1. above.

Theme	Interp’n 1	Var. 1	Var. 2	Interp’n 2	Var. 3	Var. 4	Var. 5	Var. 6	Var. 7
thorough composition	intuitive composition	thorough composition + thorough improvisation	intuitive composition	intuitive composition	intuitive composition	thorough composition	thorough composition	intuitive composition	thorough improvisation
Pipeline + Feeling to Thought	Feeling to Thought	Pipeline	Pipeline	Feeling to Thought	Pipeline	Pipeline	Pipeline	Pipeline + Feeling to Thought	Feeling to Thought
Quintet + Quartet	Trio	Quartet + Solo Perc.	Duo	Trio	Trio	Trio	Quintet	Quintet + Quartet	Solo Bass

<b>PIPELINE</b> <b>Contemporary Music Project</b>	Flutes: concert, alto, piccolo	<b>FEELING TO THOUGHT</b>	Alto Saxophone
	Reeds: oboe, cor anglais		Tenor Saxophone
	Brass: tenor trombone with F trigger		Acoustic Bass
	Piano		Drum-Set
	Percussion: marimba, vibraphone, quasi tuned drums, cymbals, assorted mallets		

Sufficient detail proper to the composed variation set has been given above under the heading, The Second Incarnation of ‘*Directions Changing*’, a Variation Set. This covers the Theme through Variation 4. In its third incarnation, compositional and performance procedures regarding Interpolations 1 & 2 are identical with the first incarnation. For detail see above under the heading, Outline of Pitch Fields for *Directions Changing*.

It remains now to discuss a few details applicable to Variations 5, 6, & 7, all new material which first appeared with the third incarnation of *Directions Changing*; this being the second incarnation of *Variations on Directions Changing*’.

**Variation 5** marks a clear and distinct change in direction from the compositional features of Variation 4 and the previous variations more generally. This distinct change of direction is not only a local matter but casts its reflection over the entire “Work”. The stark contrast in compositional procedure between Var’s. 4 & 5 signals a change in direction for the entire variation set, thus alluding to the immanent drive towards its final goal.



Variation 5 is a rigorous a-tonal setting of the Theme's melodic material and, in the recording as heard in *Of Other Narratives*, volume 3, it is realized by the Pipeline quintet. Quintet notwithstanding, the lion's share of the work falls on the shoulders of flute, cor anglais, and piano, with trombone and percussion entering only towards the end where Variation 5 begins to overlap with Variation 6. Its composition employs a-tonal procedures and is fully, and precisely, notated. It calls for no improvisation. Its texture is quite dense at times while at others, fairly transparent. It is a concise, pithy statement that alludes, in a sense, to another world altogether, one that is intellectual and somewhat remote. This places it in considerable contrast to the rest of the "Work" which I'd describe broadly as being warm (hot!) and open hearted.

The relationship between instruments is contrapuntal in Variation 5, often with each instrument rendering chunks of melodic material that are virtually self-contained. However, these chunks are composed out through rhythmic frames that draw them into correspondence. Aurally this is apparent. The often complex, tightly composed, contrapuntal texture functions as an introduction to Variation 6.

EXAMPLE 9.1. : Fragment from score p. 35, Variation 5, of Variations on 'Directions Changing' in its second incarnation – this being the third incarnation of 'Directions Changing'.

NOTE: The fermata in m.222, as with the one prior to this at m. 201, announces a change in the compositional fabric. This applies to both the local level of structure as well as the background. In the case of m. 201 (not shown here), the local change is one of timbre. At m. 222, as shown in the score excerpt, it is tempo (previously, crotchet = 80, now crotchet = 100). The change in tempo at m. 222 is an element consistent with the general ramping up of tension and activity, leading into Variation 6. For more on this, see Example 9.2.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Variation 5. It consists of three systems of staves, each with a measure number in a circle on the left: (218), (221), and (223). The notation is complex, featuring many notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A tempo change is indicated at measure 222, where the tempo changes from crotchet = 80 to crotchet = 100. The score is written on a light-colored paper with some visible texture and slight discoloration.



EXAMPLE 9.2. : Fragment from score p. 39, Var. 5, of *Variations on 'Directions Changing'* in its second incarnation – this being the third incarnation of '*Directions Changing*'.

NOTE: The final two measures, mm. 235 ~ 36 of Variation 5, indicating the overlap into Variation 6. Both the Pipeline quintet and Feeling to Thought performers are, at this point, involved. While the Pipeline quintet concludes the a-tonal setting of Thematic material for Var. 5, Feeling to Thought's tenor & alto saxophones and acoustic bass have begun the lead into Variation 6. The final chord sounded in m.236 by all players other than the tenor sax., sets Variation 6 in motion, with the tenor sax taking the predominant role through extemporization based on the alt. scale indicated in m. 236. (See fn. 12 for details regarding altered scales.)

Variations 5 & 6, back-to-back as they are, make salient the extremes in compositional processes that have brought them into being while alluding to equally extreme characteristics regarding the human condition (made manifest in performance). The relationship shared between Variations 5 & 6 reflect a relationship shared across the topography of the entire "Work". Thus, these two variations not only encapsulate the musico-creative character of *Variations on 'Directions Changing'* as a particular case, but Collective Autonomy in general.

**Variation 6**<sup>29</sup> is, put simply, 'full on'. It is dense, busy, fast and furious, and presents these characteristics in performance through "intuitive composition". It brings both groups together and all involved are stretched to the limit. The score, as I recall, was structured around a series of modes. Each change was, as performed, a conducted downbeat by Mark Simmonds as he played soloistically.<sup>30</sup> On each of these downbeats the players chose a note from the mode they were given in notation. The choice of actual pitch was left open to the moment. But after each downbeat-directed chord was sounded, each performer was free to improvise on the given mode until the next conducted downbeat and with it, another range of pitches to choose from. The result is a whirlwind of power, gathering momentum and chaotic intensity as it goes. This was the general idea intrinsic to the compositional vision and aimed at creating as greater contrast as possible between the two ensembles at full tilt and the bass, left to himself and his own devises in Variation 7.



**Variation 7** presents a texture, a timbre, and an emotional sense that is entirely new at this point in the performance of the Variation set in its second incarnation: solo acoustic bass in a rendering motivated by “thorough improvisation”. Beginning at around 34:00 minutes, this solo is contextualized by an extensive palette of music-making *as previously made*, the least of which not being the purely physical energy already expended in the doing. He was given no notation, no verbal directives (to speak of), and no expectations were brought to bear. It was left entirely in Steve Elphick’s hands and heart to do with whatever he felt and thought to be apposite. There is therefore, from the composition/analytic point of view, little to be said. The compositional aspect qua composer began and ceased with the idea that Variation 7 would consist entirely in a freely improvised bass solo.<sup>31</sup>

But this idea of a chunk of “thorough improvisation” does have a precedent in the “Work” and it harks back to Variation 1, score page 16, m.71, where the percussionist is relieved of “thorough composition” realization to engage “thorough improvisation”. And although this accounts for just a portion of the variation, in fact barely 1:00 (one minute), the anticipation it creates has to wait almost 25:00 before being given free rein; a freedom that has the last word, in the bass, as far as this incarnation of *Variations on ‘Directions Changing’* is concerned.

### Synopsis of *Directions* in its Third Incarnation *Variations on ‘Directions Changing’*

In the synopsis regarding the second incarnation of *Directions* the observation was made that ‘contrast’ is a significant structural factor which contributes to forward motion and is arrived at through 1., ‘modes of relationship’ that obtain between notated and improvised composition and 2., timbral considerations made manifest through characteristics inherent to instrumentation. The third incarnation of *Directions* further develops and explores these, taking some aspects to extremes. This, as pointed out above, is most notable in the newly composed Variations 5 & 6. Clearly at work here is the contrast perceptible between improvisation that is ‘jazz’ orientated – Interpolations 1 & 2 – and improvisation that stems from a dots-on-paper ethos – Variation 3. These are juxtaposed in Variation 6.

If we look at the first three compositional units – i.e., Theme, Interpolation 1., Variation 1 – we find that the compositional ‘modes of relationship’ as employed run, respectively, “thorough composition”→“intuitive composition”→“thorough composition”/“thorough improvisation”. Now, looking at the last three compositional units in this light – i.e., Var’s. 5, 6, & 7 – we find a similar formation, namely, “thorough composition”→“intuitive composition”→“thorough improvisation”. The music as realized in these units is, however, vastly different, therefore highlighting the compositional role these modes play. These sorts of background references are a feature of the compositional work that constitutes the “Work”; the work of the “Work”, so to speak.

Other compositional characteristics that become somewhat more pronounced in the third incarnation include bridging and overlap (see Ex. 9.2.), textural structure generally as a mode of forecast, and structural bridging, convergence, and goal orientation (Variation 5).

It has been pointed out that Variations 5 & 6 are an encapsulation of Collective Autonomy as a realized philosophical ideal and that Variation 7 bears long-range background reference. As alluded to in the note to Ex. 9.1., the fermata not only serves a local structural function but bears significant structural weight in terms of background reference. These fermatas at mm. 201 & 222 actually have a precedent in terms of structural significance as early in the “Work” as Var. 2, m. 99 where the fermata not only serves to suspend contrapuntal activity in the piano part, and more broadly the overall texture, but also to create a sense of goal orientation. (For detail see ‘The Second Incarnation of *Directions Changing*, a Variation Set’, Variation 2.)

And without trying to put too finer point on it, the Interpolated units not only serve in the Third Incarnation as mediums for real-time creative contrast but cast an arc all the way back to the original incarnation of *Directions Changing* when improvisation determined the major portion of performance time, here no longer the case but in no way removed from the field.

So, put in a nutshell and as pointed out above (see page 1), *Variations on ‘Directions Changing’* can be viewed as a very expansive Development in the classical mould while embracing utterly, the philosophical foundations of Collective Autonomy.



## Directions in its Fourth Incarnation

Twenty-one years after the third incarnation, *Directions* was to see the light of day once again and with it a number of significant changes.

When discussing the various characteristics of *Directions Changing* in its first incarnation I mentioned the residual problem stemming from my compositional use of, what I then referred to as, the altered scale (see above, p.2. ‘Outline of Pitch fields for *Directions Changing*’). It wasn’t until rewriting the original *Directions* that this problem was put to rest. It not only meant readdressing the harmonic field I’d referred to as ‘altered’ but also required that I inflect a couple of the melody notes so they’d be consistent with these changes.

As already noted, the original ‘alt.’ scale-form as it appeared amounted to the whole-tone scale with the exception of the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree (never clearly spelt out by me). Looking at Ex. 1., the F alt. is returning the harmonic field back to F Phrygian. The G<sup>#</sup> alt., the last four measures of the structure, is returning us to the same mode. If we consider both these simply as Dom. 7<sup>th</sup>s, in the first case we’d have F7 and in the second G<sup>#</sup>7 or, enharmonically, A<sup>b</sup>7. Given that F Phrygian is a mode of D<sup>b</sup> major, both these Dom. 7<sup>th</sup> sonorities takes us to that key area. In the rewrite I substituted for these two alt. sonorities, the so called Octatonic scale. This needs some explanation.

This particular Octatonic configuration of pitches has been used widely by twentieth-century composers, among them Messiaen, Webern, Stravinsky, and Scriabin. As spelt out in a-tonal language, its Prime Form reads: 0, 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10. And in Allen Forte’s denotation this particular collection spells the set, 8-28. The eight integers standing in the place of pitch names – e.g., C, D<sup>b</sup>, E<sup>b</sup>, F<sup>b</sup>, and so on (taking 0 as ‘C’) – spell out a given set of intervallic relationships that are unique to this configuration. One of the many fascinating characteristics of this set is its embrace of the diminished 7<sup>th</sup>; so that in jazz/tonal terms we get C, E<sup>b</sup>, G<sup>b</sup>, B<sup>bb</sup> (enharmonically, A, being integer 9). But if we look a little closer we see that precisely the same intervallic configuration will result from every other integer in the collection – e.g., 0, 3, 6, 9; 1, 4, 7, 10; 3, 6, 9, 0; 4, 7, 10, 1; 6, 9, 0, 3; and so on. A still closer look reveals that the sets from 0 & 3 & 6 & 9 are actually a rotated version of the same integers. The same applies to the sets from 1 & 4 & 7 & 10, and so on. Looked at from the Dom. 7<sup>th</sup> point of view then, these are interchangeable at the minor third – C, E<sup>b</sup>, G<sup>b</sup>, A (0, 3, 6, 9) – and the two together generate the Octatonic scale (0, 3, 6, 9; 1, 4, 7, 10).<sup>32</sup> Although this barely touches the surface regarding the implications of this fascinating collection, it is explanation enough regarding the substitution I put to work in *Directions*. To wit, D<sup>b</sup> major can be approached through Dom. 7<sup>th</sup> sonorities based on A<sup>b</sup>, B, D, and F. Or, by expanding this, the entire Octatonic scale that includes these: 8, 9, 11, 0, 2, 3, 5, 6.

Thus, in its fourth incarnation *Directions* explored this phenomenon in the two measures of the 1<sup>st</sup> time ending – i.e., an 8-28 on B and D – and the four measures at the end of the harmonic structure – i.e., an 8-28 on F, D, B, and A<sup>b</sup>. Note too, the fact that, where the bass in the 1<sup>st</sup> time ending rests on D (a semi-tone from the target key), it rests on the A<sup>b</sup> at the end of the entire harmonic structure before returning to D<sup>b</sup>, pointing out, long-range, the tritone relationship with respect to the home key.

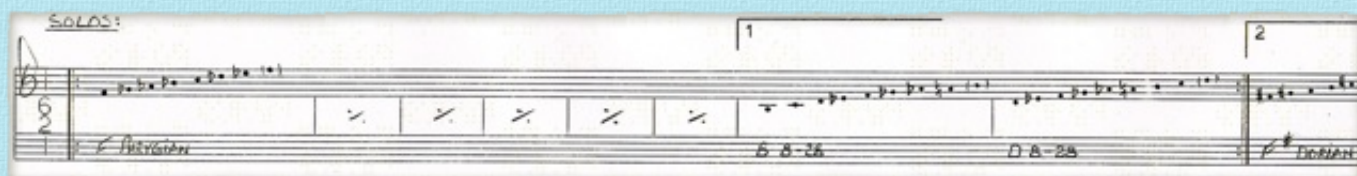
EXAMPLE 10.1.: Harmonic Scheme for *Directions* in its fourth incarnation.

NOTE: A comparison with the harmonic scheme as applied to *Directions* in its first incarnation (see Ex. 1.), reveals that this scheme is identical other than the substituted octatonic pitch collections discussed above.

┌ 1st. time ───┐	┌ 2nd. time ───┐
: F Phrygian 6 bars   8-28/B   8-28/D :	F <sup>#</sup> Dorian 2 bars    G Mixolydian 2 bars   A Aeolian 2 bars
D Mixolydian 2 bars   D <sup>#</sup> Phrygian 4 bars    E Lydian 2 bars   C Phrygian 2 bars   A <sup>b</sup> Lydian 4 bars	
E Ionian 2 bars   D Lydian 2 bars   8-28/F   8-28/D   8-28/B   8-28/A <sup>b</sup>	

EXAMPLE 10.2.: This excerpt is taken from page 5 of the rewrite of *Directions Changing*, completed June, 2010.

NOTE: It shows the pitch-class equivalents of the integer notation discussed above and is precisely what was given the performers. In the first-time ending the two octatonic scales are spelt out in pitch-class notation and, as can be seen, though each of the two bars employs a different bass note, the scales are identical. Put to use in this way in the context of *Directions*, they are consistent with the sort of modal structural thinking that applies to the entire piece.





Rhythm, too, was readdressed for the fourth incarnation. I'll not go into this in great depth here but suffice for my present purposes to say this: Where Layer 1 in the original *Directions* (see Ex. 2.) was constituted by a 'triplet pattern' based on the twelve-beat cycle and thus made manifest as a single strand in the overall 3-layer texture, the fourth incarnation of *Directions* added another strand to Layer 1. I should point out here that the hi-hat (not marked in Ex. 2.) was played on every other crotchet – 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 – in the cycle. This is standard practice in the jazz language. For the fourth incarnation, this was maintained. This, proved crucial. What changed was the way in which the 'triplet pattern' was rendered. Instead of it being directly related to (i.e., based on) the crotchets, the same pattern was reformed so as to emphasize the crotchet triplets. That is to say, it now bore a strong 3 : 2 polyrhythm. But, where this 3 : 2 polyrhythm also existed in Layer 2 in the bass, there it is in minim triplets. Thus, the relation between Layers 1 & 2 was made considerably more complex and this is magnified by the fact that Layer 1 retained the structure of three divisions of the 12-beat cycle while Layer 2 retained its two divisions. Where the hi-hat on every other crotchet functioned as a stabilizing element in the first incarnation, it became a curve-ball in the fourth incarnation and, indeed, a destabilizing factor. The plot was also made thicker by the fact that from time to time, during performance I'd revert to the original form of Layer 1.

Furthermore, in the rewrite I completely revised the bass part and thus the role it played in the overall texture. The rewritten base part now had a more solistic character and functioned that way. But concurrently, it retained its original function.

EXAMPLE 11.: This excerpt is taken from page 2 of the rewrite of *Directions Changing*, completed June, 2010.

NOTE: The four systems shown on this score page indicate clearly the relationship that obtains between the melody (Layer 3) and the bass line (Layer 2) in the fourth incarnation of *Directions*. The drum material (Layer 1) does not appear here but the description above will give some indication as to its rhythmic content.

Another aspect of the fourth incarnation of *Directions* is to do with its performance. On September 5, 2010, Spaces and Streams, a short-lived initiative I'd convened and quietly put great stock in, performed at Melbourne's Bennetts Lane.<sup>33</sup> We played three original pieces, one being *Directions*. This event was recorded by the ABC.<sup>34</sup> Given its obvious challenges and not so obvious mysteries, any rendering of *Directions* is going to be a matter determined in no small way by circumstances, this particular Bennetts gig being no exception. I'd decided that, rather than impose any performance expectations on this occasion, to let it run its course. It was therefore with an open mind that *Directions* was rendered.



## DIRECTIONS CHANGING

### Now in Retrospect

Given that for each of its four incarnations *Directions Changing* has been performed by a body of truly exceptional musicians, each bringing to it a creative and personal abundance and through which it is unquestionably the richer, one would expect, being its composer, to be in a position to have a clear and resolved feeling regarding it as a vehicle for shared creativity. Alas, this is not the case. Perhaps it is one of those experiences in life never meant to be about resolve and, by implication, closure. Perhaps it will always remain true to its name regardless of circumstances. And precisely because of this, maintain its potential to bear benefits.

*Directions Changing* might be likened to one of those sign-posts we see sometimes on the top of a mountain or some other vantage point; as an object that directs our attention towards different locations; a board that simply points to London, or Tokyo, or New York, or New Delhi. Maybe *Directions* does this too, drawing our attention to certain modes of musico-creative interaction.

Imagine those sign-posts, not only bearing a proper noun like London, but also includes a small attribution like, ‘a densely populated city in the United Kingdom’, or New Delhi, ‘India’s political center’, or Tokyo, ‘a thriving cultural center in Japan with a population of 17,000,000 people’. While none of these attributes tells us what we’ll discover as an individual visiting these places, it gives us some sort of an idea, just an inkling, as to the sort of place we can expect to find. Having gone there, we might find those attributes as stated to be reasonably accurate or otherwise. Whatever the case, our mountain-top sign-post not only points in several directions from a common location, but gives us a bit of an idea as to what we’ll find or experience. *Directions Changing* is quite similar, I think, but with a little more to it by way of characteristic attributes. We look here, we find this. We look there, we find that. But how we experience the place itself can only be discovered by actually going there and looking for ourselves, discovering the idiosyncratic characteristics that we feel make one thing distinguishable from another. And there are overlaps, too. Things in common. In the case of London, Tokyo, New Delhi, and New York, they are all big cities with large populations and ever-changing cultures.

Perhaps, then, the mystery that lies at the foundation of *Directions Changing* is somewhat like wandering the streets of those big cities and, for that matter, the tracks and paths of a forest, too. We see only what it is we are able to at the time of looking. Next time round, like it or not and by force of nature, we’ll see something entirely different. We may notice where changes have occurred, where similarities have been maintained, where both these seem to have merged in some way, or perhaps we perceive something entirely new to our experience. But we may also be witness to something that leaves us a little nonplussed, something that seems to be mysterious, something we can’t quite put our finger on, something quite outside our frame of reference, yet, strangely, so much seems familiar. I have come to understand *Directions Changing* in this light.

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Of Other Narratives: volume 3, Part 2 — *Variations on ‘Directions Changing’* © Phil TRELOAR, May, 2012



## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Due to the extraordinary length of program notes and the detailed footnotes that accompany them, I've divided *Of Other Narratives* volume 3 into Part 1 and Part 2.

<sup>2</sup> 'Head', deriving from the compound, 'head-motif', is a term that refers to the opening of a composition or series of pieces and functions as a 'motto' which, when stated, serves to establish a connected relationship between musical entities. In standard jazz practice it is the 'composed/notated' material that provides a structure from which improvisation stems and is usually realized as the opening and closing sections of a rendering.

<sup>3</sup> David Ades, alto saxophone; Mark Simmonds, tenor saxophone; Steve Elphick, contra bass; and Phil Treloar, drums.

<sup>4</sup> An initiative I established in 2010 which included Julien Wilson, tenor saxophone; Philip Rex, contra bass; and Phil Treloar, drums.

<sup>5</sup> Simone de Haan, trombone & artistic director; Mardi McCullea, alto & concert flutes, piccolo; Geoff Dodd, cor Anglais & oboe; Michael Kieran Harvey, piano; Daryl Pratt, percussion.

<sup>6</sup> This collaboration is documented on the CD, *Of Other Narratives*, vol. 3 (Feeling to Thought FT-010).

<sup>7</sup> Feeling to Thought, late-1980s; Pipeline, late-1980s; the collaboration between Feeling to Thought and Pipeline, 1989; and Spaces and Streams, 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Several exceptions to this general observation are conspicuous in the music of late-Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, et al. Notwithstanding, chordal orientations do tend to be present here, if only in the background.

<sup>9</sup> The music of Charles Ives being a case in point. Ives was interested in 'substance', abhorred 'stylistic mannerisms' and saw the calling of music's expression as the guiding principle. He was therefore open to employ, and did employ, any style orientation as long as it suited the demands of the music's expressive purpose ... a true 'pluralist'.

But, to some extent, I consider the serialist ethos to resonate with overtones of chord-dominated (that is, 'vertical') thinking in that serial methods generally deal with blocks of musical stuff unified through an all-embracing principle that ensures pitch construals able to function as structural pillars, and where the manipulation of these chunks of musical stuff winds up being, by dint, what the music is about. It follows that technical mechanisms dominate the proceedings. The following lengthy quote gives us cause to consider the point:

"In the strict logic of a serial technique for pitches, durations and timbres, arrived at through the study of Webern and a piano piece by the Flemish composer Karel Goeyvaerts, and also by further developing a technique of rhythmic cells stemming from Messiaen, he arrived at a differentiation of rhythm and dynamics which was unparalleled until then, and which can hardly be realised exactly. Here, where the performer must take such care that he can no longer take care at all, the indeterminacy of realisation finds its way into the total determinism of structures woven by means of serial technique."

György Ligeti, 'Some Remarks on Boulez' 3rd Piano Sonata', *die Reihe 5*. Eds., Herbert Eimert and Karlheinz Stockhausen. Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Company in association with Universal Edition, 1961 (1959), p. 57.

<sup>10</sup> As is equally true of much so called 'ethnic music'.

<sup>11</sup> This represents the pitch materials as were relevant in the original version.

<sup>12</sup> Note: I've designated these altered notes within the octave so as to preclude the perfect 4th., the major 6th., and, by implication, the perfect 5th. Thus, as a dominant 7th expression, the root, major 3rd, #4, b6, and diminished 7th account for all but one note – i.e., the second degree – of the whole-tone gamut. Otherwise expressed, these altered notes could be spelt out as #11 and b13.

<sup>13</sup> See footnote 3

<sup>14</sup> This is indicated in the 'Outline of Pitch Fields' with single and double bar-lines.

<sup>15</sup> I use the word 'beat' advisedly and as distinct from 'pulse'.

<sup>16</sup> Refer to the *Outline of Pitch Fields for 'Directions Changing'* as a guide to the present discussion.

<sup>17</sup> Pipeline Contemporary Music Project premiered *Variations on 'Directions Changing'*, in a concert at North Melbourne Town Hall, December 11, 1988. The concert was recorded and broadcast by the ABC.

<sup>18</sup> Writing for *THE AGE*, December 13, 1988, critic, Clive O'Connell, summed up this, the "Work's" premiere performance, thus: "[T]his composer's *Variations on 'Directions Changing'* made a much more telling impact. Composed for the Pipeline combination (flute, oboe, piano, percussion and trombone), this piece had a clear structure and textural clarity that also gave plenty of scope for the ensemble members to demonstrate their skills in moulding lines as a group and taking the limelight when required." Interestingly, O'Connell's article was published under the title, "New, but not all that jazzy."



<sup>19</sup> Here is not the place to develop to any great extent my thoughts on the issues involved regarding improvisation vs. composition – what the criteria might be that defines their differences etc. For me, then as now, the two are not incommensurable anyway. Nonetheless, the intersection between them presents to those who venture it, many problems not so easily solved. Certainly, by the late-1980s it had become pretty clear to me that the totally open approach to improvisation was wearing thin in its post-modern guise (whether or not the philosophy per se was conscious or otherwise among exponents) despite some remarkable music still being made by ‘free jazz’ practitioners as well as by those who came to it with (to put it simply) a less defined perspective. And while there is no disputing the enormous contribution made by the ‘totally open’ approach, I felt it had run into somewhat of a dead-end, with the huge creative benefits so vital to its initial manifestations becoming submerged beneath, on the one hand, obsessions with instrumental techniques for their own sake while on the other, ‘difference’ for *its* own sake. As I saw it, the days of musical revolutions with their attendant, often superficial, flag-wavers, had run their course during the 1950s through ’70s, generated their offspring, and left in their wake a huge amount of ground to be explored and mapped with greater precision and attention to detail. Importantly, I felt, there was a great deal of creative ground that had been bypassed altogether due to ‘revolutionary motivation’ and the rush to be ‘new’ or ‘different’, and though not a necessary characteristic, much superficiality did constitute the ‘new’. To my way of thinking abundant, fecund creative ground lay on a field where relationships between tradition and the ‘alternative’ might be confronted, explored, navigated, and through rigors of this sort, open up territory on which disparate forces might cohabit in a related way. Crucial to this was, what I saw to be, an interesting and potentially passionate dialogue between the two which might be wrought through expression. This sort of work was of central importance to *Collective Autonomy* and I’d decided that the place to address it lay squarely on the ground of ‘structure’; it would be through structural questions that I’d uncover the answers to the composition/improvisation dichotomy and thus render these equal partners in the one creative space. As I understood it at the time, this was central to the liaison that was formed between Pipeline and myself.

<sup>20</sup> I coined these terms as a way by which one might consider the sorts of characteristics intrinsic to the separate processes of, in the very broadest sense, composing and improvising. Considering these as separate entities there aren’t, necessarily, too many problems and anyway, most practitioners tend to take a great deal for granted when doing so. The problems begin to arise when the two are juxtaposed within the context of *a* composition and where that particular context can only be maintained as such by respecting certain characteristics as being identical to it.

<sup>21</sup> As these two terms, notated composition and improvisation, stand in direct relation to the terms I coined, “thorough composition” and “intuitive composition” (respectively), hereafter I’ll use the latter in referring to these processes.

<sup>22</sup> Four quasi-tuned tom-toms, two cymbals, and a range of sticks, mallets, and brushes in various combinations.

<sup>23</sup> Although I admit to perhaps attracting the accusation of confusion here, I’ll avoid the temptation of diving headlong into a protracted justification for the use of this term, ‘Developing Variation’. Suffice for the present to suggest that development does take place and indeed change, due to a dynamic, unfolds over the course taken by the theme; that the dialectical implications of the term are primarily accounted for, not by a sonata-like play of subject, but rather, by a process of interaction between the modes of music-making referred to as “thorough composition” and “intuitive composition” (see p. 4 and fn. 20. Also see fn. 26.), and, where this particular rendering of *Directions* is concerned – i.e., its second incarnation – the ‘resolution’ I speak of apropos Variation 4 is tantamount to a reconciliation between force and counterforce. Crucially though, I consider each of “thorough composition” and “intuitive composition” to not only embrace, *qua composition*, both force and counterforce but that they are able to pursue these processes in juxtaposition, independently, dependently or, inter-dependently. As we shall see, the very same thematic material in a distinctly different context is given a very different treatment and thus generates a very different result in the third incarnation of *Directions Changing*. The dynamic relationship between “thorough composition” and “intuitive composition” is fundamental to *Collective Autonomy* and bears the responsibility of inter-personal (social) exchange. For the present discussion, to elaborate on this aspect any further would be to take us too far a field.

<sup>24</sup> This ABC broadcast and recording was produced by Maria VanDamme with sound engineering and recording by Jim Atkins.

<sup>25</sup> Entitled: **Mutually enriching fusion, but long**

“The final piece, Treloar’s ‘Variations on Changing Directions’ [sic], tested everybody’s endurance – players and audience. It utilised both ensembles simultaneously and separated, with room for solo spots as well. Parts of it generated excitement; others made one wonder when it would all end (shades of the ‘60s?). The unexpected thing was that both reactions could occur in turn no matter which group or instrumentalist was holding the floor.” (Clive O’Connell, *THE AGE*, May 15, 1989)

Entitled: **Fruits, dangers of liberating mayhem**

“Unless one took part in the storming of the Bastille or some similarly liberating event, one is unlikely to have experienced the kind of exultant mayhem which Melbourne contemporary music ensemble, Pipeline and Phil Treloar’s contemporary jazz group, Feeling to Thought, created in the Conservatorium on Saturday, anywhere other than in music. // In a concert which exploited the divergent approaches to improvisation of contemporary jazz (and classical avant-garde) ensembles, this kind of wild trip to Parnassus, which reached its pinnacle in the penultimate section of Phil Treloar’s *Variations On Directions Changing*, illustrated the fruits and some of the dangers of the jazz approach.” (Peter McCallum, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, May 17, 1989)



<sup>26</sup> I have coined the term, “thorough improvisation” as a signifier for music made without any predetermined materials given the performer. Alas, this opens another Pandora’s Box, particularly with respect to psychology. Several incisive questions loom here for future research: “To what extent does memory impact upon intuitive processes in the act of music-making?” In the present context, for example: Although Steve Elphick was ‘free’ to improvise without predetermined constraints, “How constrained *was* he by the preceding thirty-four minutes of intense music-making in which he’d been a participant?” And, “To what extent might this have functioned to inflect his expression at the time?” Furthermore, another question follows on from these concerning the music he actually made, to wit, “Could his non-pre-specified improvised music as made on this occasion be considered a variation on the theme of *Directions Changing*, or is it something to be considered as entirely different, dislocated, disconnected; something of another order altogether?” Perhaps we are actually looking at a set of possible permutations here that might be referred to as: 1., “thorough composition”, 2., “intuitive composition”, 3., “thorough improvisation”, and 4., “absolute improvisation”. The possibility certainly inspires me to think further on the matter and I’d encourage anybody reading this to do likewise. I’d suggest there’s a vast pool to be fathomed here, especially regarding musical structure, both in its broad background as well as foreground perspectives.

<sup>27</sup> For more detail regarding this, see Variation 1 in “The Second Incarnation of *Directions Changing*, a Variation Set”

<sup>28</sup> For more detail regarding Variation 2, see “The Second Incarnation of *Directions Changing*, a Variation Set”

<sup>29</sup> Regretfully, score material no longer exists for Variation 6. I’ll thus give a brief account that will at least serve as an indication as to how it was presented to the musicians.

<sup>30</sup> I use the term, ‘soloistic’ here to make the point that everybody, in fact, was playing a solo. It happened that Mark Simmonds was ‘leading’ the proceedings as both a soloist and conductor. It is apposite therefore to clarify a matter I feel to have been crucial then, as I do now in light of this analysis, to the composition qua compositional intention and its representation qua performance.

NOTE: I had written all the material for Variation 6 with one clear intention: that no one person would be in a position to dominate the musical unfolding of this highly volatile creative environment. This, I felt, was not only crucial to this particular piece of music, i.e., Variation 6, but significantly, the way it would unfold and in the doing, relate, as the penultimate variation in the set, to the entire “Work”. Obviously, no small consideration. And equally obvious, compositional thinking. In an effort to secure what might prove to be a balanced outcome I’d provided, through ‘composition’ means, certain conditions to ensure it; or at least, give it a ‘best shot’, through an attempt to embrace equally all performers, including myself as the prospective conductor.

Intrinsic to these conditions, as I’d envisaged them, was that I thought I might best contribute to the performance of Var. 6, not from the drum chair but as a ‘conductor’. And in doing so, would attempt to follow Mark, as soloist, but also the others, as soloists. In light of this, Daryl Pratt, Pipelines percussionist, was asked to play the drum-kit for this variation (a request he was delighted to comply with!). This would then free me up to function as conductor and in the doing would not only fulfill the idea of there being no *one* person but rather, *all*, holding the reins, as it were, albeit with Mark taking center stage. One performance offshoot of this idea would entail a sense of precision, to wit, the attack points (downbeats) of the chords – where otherwise a whirlwind of expressive outpouring obtained. So the theory went!

In the event, however, Mark was reluctant to be put in a position where he couldn’t determine the changes of pitch material himself. In rehearsal, after a couple of attempts with myself as conductor, Mark was dissatisfied with the results and insisted on conducting these changes himself. At the time, as now, I understood. He was concerned with phrasing and disturbed by being cut-off in mid-sentence, so to speak. Ironically, I’d seen this as a positive thing, somewhat similar to what happens during a heated argument; and a heated argument was precisely what I’d had in mind when structuring, from a compositional point of view, Variation 6. But I had to let the idea go. Perhaps this was right, perhaps not.

<sup>31</sup> In the chart of Ex. 8., I’ve denoted this bass solo as “thorough improvisation” rather than another coinage of mine, “absolute improvisation”. The reason is obvious I would think. The solo came after 34:00 (thirty-four) minutes of intense and focused music-making which contextualized the performance and therefore made an impact, either consciously or otherwise, on the creative direction Steve Elphick chose to take. The solo was, literally, launched from the tail-end of Variation 6.

<sup>32</sup> Dom 7<sup>th</sup> from root, ‘C’: C–E–G–B<sup>b</sup>, and in integer notation, 0, 4, 7, 10; from ‘E<sup>b</sup>’: E<sup>b</sup>–G–B<sup>b</sup>–D<sup>b</sup>, and in integer notation, 3, 7, 10, 1; from ‘G<sup>b</sup>’: G<sup>b</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>, D<sup>b</sup>, F<sup>b</sup>, and in integer notation, 6, 10, 1, 4; from ‘B<sup>bb</sup>’: B<sup>bb</sup>–D<sup>b</sup>–F<sup>b</sup>–A<sup>bb</sup>, enharmonically spelt: A–C<sup>#</sup>–E–G, and in integer notation, 9, 1, 4, 7.



<sup>33</sup> Bennetts Lane has been one of Australia's premiere jazz rooms for quite some years and presents jazz and improvised music by practitioners from around the globe. As mentioned in fn. 4, Spaces and Streams was a trio comprising Julien Wilson, tenor saxophone; Phil Rex, acoustic bass, and myself, Phil Treloar, drums.

NOTE: While still in its planning stages, Spaces and Streams originally included Julien, myself, and Steve Elphick, acoustic bass. A small tour had been put into place, Sydney and Melbourne, which involved a few days rehearsal time. In addition to doing the rewrite of *Directions*, I'd written another two pieces, one in particular quite long and involved, with Steve in mind specifically. Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond his control, Steve was forced to withdraw from the project. Phil Rex agreed to step in but, due to a busy schedule, was unable to do one of the Sydney gigs and time available for him to rehearse was extremely limited. The two new pieces were therefore cut from the intended repertoire and our two brief rehearsals were spent on *Directions*, a modified version of *Shades of Bhairav*, and a rewritten version of *Moon Man's Main Message*. These were all pieces from the Feeling to Thought days and structurally none is straight ahead. The second Sydney gig, the one Phil couldn't make, wound up being a very different Spaces and Streams event. It was entirely improvised and included my old friend from Feeling to Thought, David Ades on alto saxophone, Carl Dewhurst on guitar, Julien and myself. This program also presented a duet spot with Hamish Stuart playing drums and myself, marimba. As it turned out, circumstances precluded *Directions* being given its required time in thought and rehearsal. And so, in this light, after the Bennetts Lane gig in Melbourne I decided it was better left to a future situation when it might be given its necessary preparatory attention.

<sup>34</sup> The three pieces recorded on this occasion have been put to air several times on Gerry Koster's ABC radio program, Jazz Up Late. The recording was done by Chris Lawson, assisted by Alex Stinson, and mastered by Mal Stanley. It includes just on 90:00 (ninety minutes) of music. The ABC holds these recordings and I have a copy in my private collection.