

## **Pairing**

for five performers

Jonas Kocher 2025

Composition commissioned by Maulwerker. First performance on May 10 2025 in Berlin.  
*With financial support of the FONDATION SUISA*

*Pairing* explores the quest for the other, the search for connection and harmony with this 'other' within a group, revealing the multiple duos that are formed, whether physical, sound or verbal. The audience thus find themselves witnesses of this game with multiple dimensions and meanings, where relationships are forged and unravelled, between presence and absence, distance and proximity.

*Pairing* is a dynamic choreography of positions, words, and sounds unfolding over 15 minutes. It is a game between repetition and variation, where the material is continually remodelled by superimpositions and changing positions in space.

## General guidelines

*Pairing* consists of three types of material: body position on stage, sound, and word. These elements form pairs at specific moments.

The composition is structured around a 15-minute soundtrack of sine waves and percussive signals, played through a small speaker on stage. The percussive sounds act as cues, marking the tutti sections and the final transition to the back of the stage.

To get the sound file write to [jonas@jonaskocher.net](mailto:jonas@jonaskocher.net)

The overall pace is slow, marked by frequent silences. All time indications serve as general guidelines rather than strict cues—actions should occur approximately at the suggested times, without rigid precision.

Unintended overlaps or chance occurrences, such as words or sounds colliding unexpectedly, are welcome variations that enrich the performance.

Performers use small, portable instruments capable of producing sustained sounds—such as trumpet, violin, bowed percussion, and similar.

## Body Position on Stage

Performers are positioned across the stage, facing the audience. At specific moments, they will change position—either to pair with another performer or to move apart and assume a new placement.

→ *Refer to the stage movement diagram*

## Pairs

### Physical Pairs

Every two minutes a physical pair is formed according to the stage movement diagram. Pairing lasts about 30 seconds as soon as person 1 and 2 are side by side. Then, either person 2 moves to the position previously occupied by person 1 or to another position (sec 8' and 12'). Person 1 remains in his/her new position or moves to another position 10 seconds later (see 8' and 14'). Performer 1 may optionally make physical contact by placing a hand on the other's shoulder, wrapping an arm around their shoulder, or holding their hand. While paired, performers don't play sounds but may, if the opportunity occurs, say a word in response to a word spoken by another performer.

### Word and Sound Pairs

In total, the five performers produce four to five words or sounds per minute, evenly spaced—approximately one every 12 to 15 seconds. This means that each performer contributes one word or sound per minute. Words and sounds alternate. Occasionally, pairs form, but not very often.

- When a word is spoken, another performer may say the corresponding word a few seconds later, forming a word pair. Only one word pair can be formed per minute. The first word pair happens after 3 minutes, not before  
→ *Refer to the list of words*
  - Similarly, a performer can play a sound in direct response to another sound, within a few seconds of its start, forming a sound pair. Only one sound pair can be formed per minute. Start with a note of your choice in the ambitus G3-D4, stay on it for a while. Move on to a new note when you feel it is necessary. Repeat this procedure throughout the piece. Do not return to a note that has already been played. Play a maximum of four different notes in succession.
- Duration of each sound: about 5 seconds
  - All sounds—whether produced by voice or instrument—are to be played softly, and without vibrato, fading away with a *diminuendo al niente*
  - Words must be spoken loudly, like questions resonating in space, creating a clear contrast with the soft instrumental/vocal sounds. Performers can vary the volume of the words: some are spoken suddenly and very loudly, others more softly. But in all cases, the clarity and comprehensibility of each word is essential.

## Tutti

Four tutti (① after 5'00, ② after 8'15, ③ after 9'20 and ④ after 11'30) must be performed all together, starting a few seconds after the corresponding percussive sound signal (see diagram). These tutti consist of sounds, words, and melodic fragments spontaneously invented and randomly performed by all the musicians, creating a brief, chaotic mass of sound and speech lasting approximately 3 to 5 seconds.

The tutti ② after 8'15, is composed by a word chain integrated in the tutti: champagne (f) – Sekt (d) – Sex (f) – Ex (d) – Axt (d)  
→ (f) for French pronunciation, (d) for German pronunciation

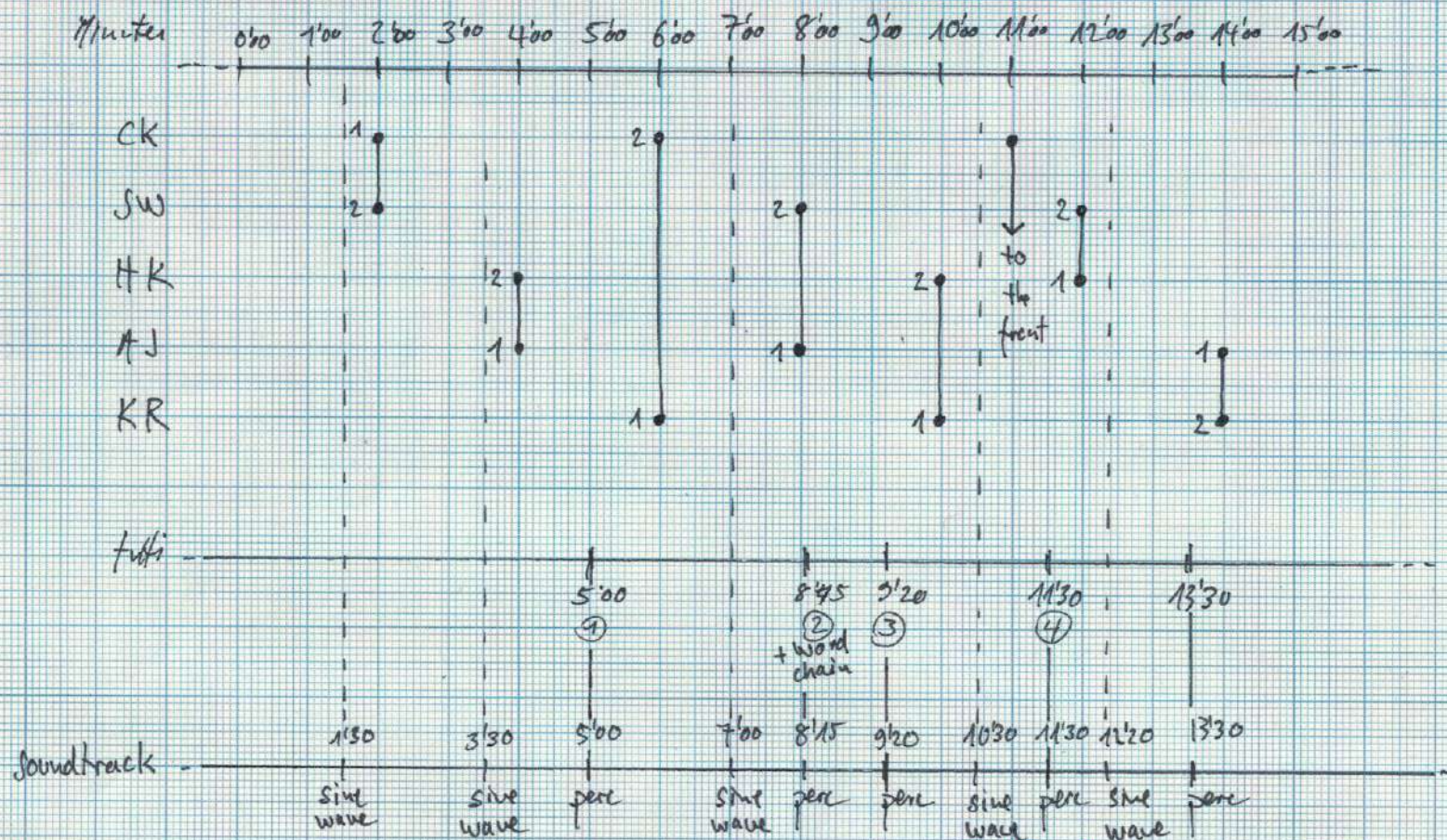
## Additional informations

### Going to the front position

Around minute 11:00, a designated performer moves as close as possible to the front row of the audience, as if forming a pair. However, no one joins them. The performer holds the position for at least 30 seconds.

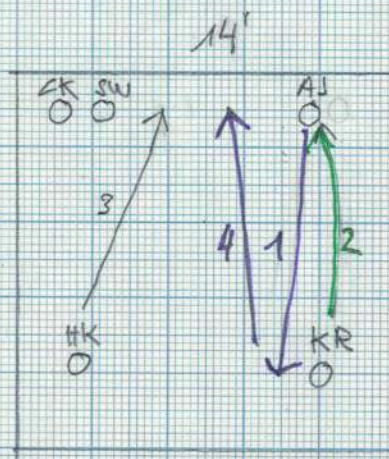
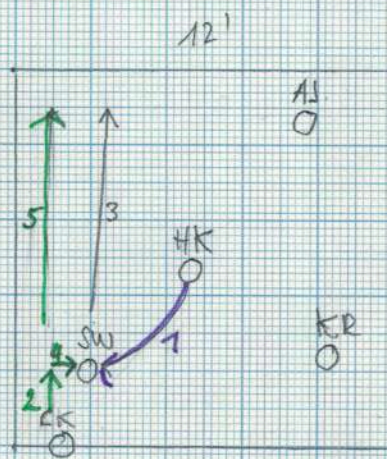
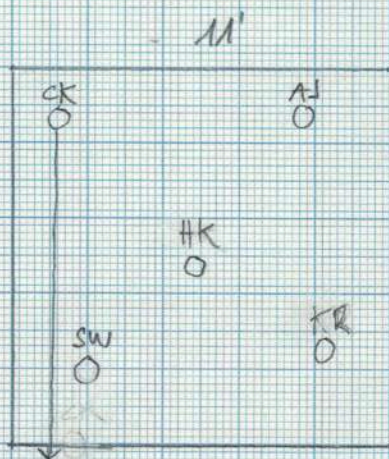
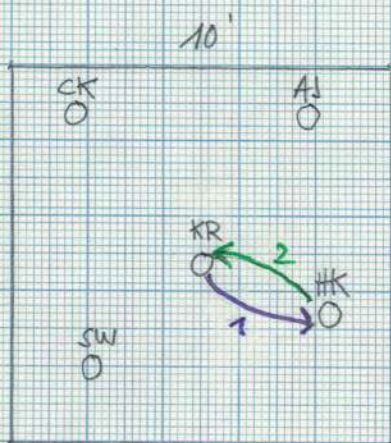
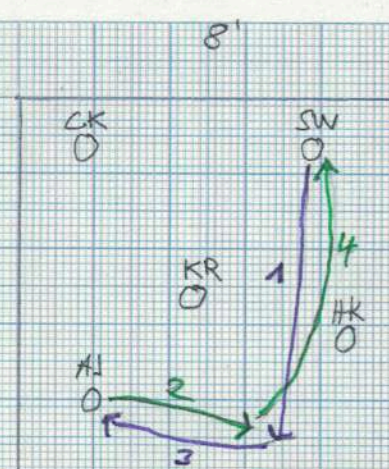
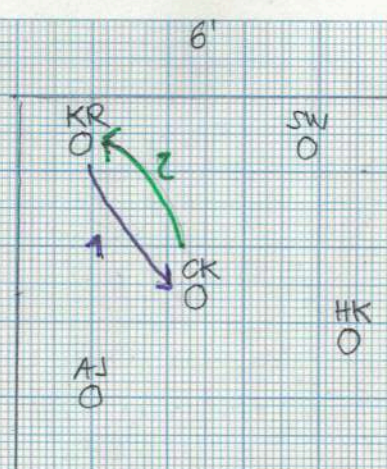
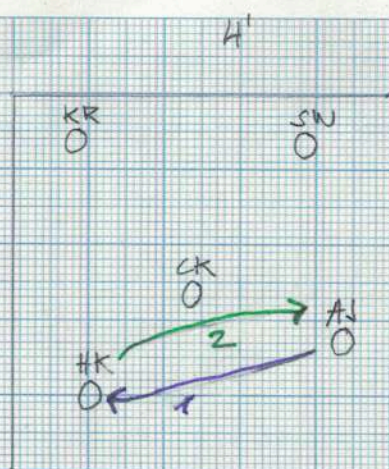
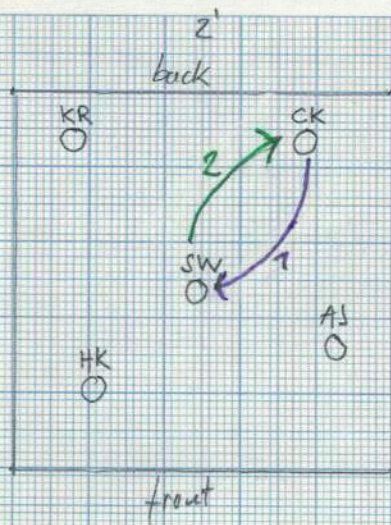
### Final transition to the back

Following the final percussive cue at minute 13:30, the five performers gradually form a line at the back of the stage. Once in position, they perform three brief tutti, each separated by a five-second pause. The first is loud, the second noticeably softer, and the third barely audible. The performance concludes after the final sound.



Structure diagram

Minutes



KR = Katarina Rasinski  
 CK = Christian Kesten  
 SW = Steffi Weismann  
 HK = Henrik Kairies  
 AJ = Ariane Jessulat

Stage chart

person 1 } pair  
 person 2 }

pairing lasts about 30 seconds  
 as soon as person 1 is coming  
 next to person 2 \*

\* exception: at 8' and 12'

## Word Pairs

(f) = French pronunciation, otherwise German pronunciation

<u>Christian</u>	<u>Possible answer</u>
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1. Lego (f)	logo (f)
2. rat (f)	riz (f)
3. flirter (f)	Flirren
4. Frau	Mann
5. mou (f)	dur (f)
6. Mama	papa
7. Tinte	Tüte
8. mec (f)	Mechanik

<u>Henrik</u>	<u>Possible answer</u>
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10. monsieur (f)	Madame
11. Adrenalin	Serotonin
12. Zart	Zahnarzt
13. Küche	Kuscheln
14. Glatt	Glatze
15. bijou (f)	bisou (f)
16. espoir (f)	désespoir (f)
17. matin (f)	patin (f)
18. Glücklich	gluant (f)

<u>Ariane</u>	<u>Possible answer</u>
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19. caresse (f)	carrie (f)
20. solitude (f)	finitude (f)
21. Trompette	tromper (f)
22. Arthrose	Thrombose
23. chien (f)	chiasse (f)

24. amour (f)	Rache
25. chialer (f)	chienlit (f)
26. salaud (f)	salade (f)
27. Distanz	distrainere (f)

<u>Steffi</u>	<u>Possible answer</u>
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28. Kühe	Mühe
29. fric (f)	Frack
31. Baby	Bye bye
32. Schwein	Schweiss
33. Colle (f)	Cholesterin
34. salut (f)	silo (f)
35. Roh	Rokoko
36. galant (f)	galère (f)

<u>Katarina</u>	<u>Possible answer</u>
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37. partir (f)	partouze, (f)
38. Sehnsucht	Seemann
39. Pfarrer	Pfeffer
40. Lust	Frust
41. ennui (f)	nuire (f)
42. Rad	radin (f)
43. seul (f)	sale (f)
44. Potenz	potentiel (f)
45. Zimmer	Zement
46. Kuss	cousin (f)