

NO

THIS IS A SCORE

Read the zine, take four steps sideways and click your tongue every time you encounter a word beginning with 'N'.

THIS IS ANOTHER

Read the zine, memorise it entirely, whisper it back into the ear of your closest friend.

PA

NO

THIS IS A THIRD

Read the zine, backwards.

NOW MAKE SOME MUSIC

NO PA ON is a score based experimental duo active in London. Luciano Maggiore and Louie Rice started NO PA ON in 2017 at Cafe OTO Project Space by executing scores made by other musicians [Marchetti, Chase], and eventually their own. Examples are *Actions for phone playback (hissing, torches, chairing)* or *Actions for strobes (humming, clapping, whistling)* where the performer's action is triggered by the ignition of a torch or the diffusion of a phone playback sound. OTO project space does not have a sound system, from here came the name NO PA, adding PA ON once the duo started using one. NO PA ON have tapped into a rich and varied history of post WW1 art practices and theories (Dada, Cage, Fluxus come to mind). Here Luciano Maggiore and Louie Rice share their considerations on some aspects of NO PA ON.

Your performances take place as an execution of a task, which completion does not involve a result. How does the public fit in this laboratory? Are you looking for a response during the concert, if so how is London responding?

LR.
The series started out of a frustration with what we thought was the under use of the project space for its intended purpose, a project space - not a secondary venue to Cafe OTO's main space. Many events in my opinion ignore the virtues of the space - lack of PA, intriguing design, lack of acoustic insulation from outside, exterior and exterior space etc.

We started the NO-PA series by exploring acoustic realisations of artist scores initially specifically within the Project Space. Having never performed scored music the idea was that the series would act as a sort of public research period, the performances were free of charge to reflect the nature of the events. No charge = no expectations, so they were low key, informal, often very short in duration with no need to fulfill any obligations to an audience, the audience mostly being our friends.

The idea of the 'task' came about as we found ourselves gravitating towards very simple instructional scores whereby the result has either a methodical or even mundane quality, the audience is not necessary to realise this type of score, in fact some of the events were very poorly attended, the 'tasks' were completed nonetheless.

Following the first few events at the Project Space we began to write scores of our own, I think the audience is more necessary for these as they attempt to alter the feel of the space, possibly to make people feel uncomfortable.

LM.

Let's break into parts your question. Working with scores means to work with directions, and with somebody that even if is not there is nonetheless telling you what to do. The result of a performance/interpretation of a score is then the completion of a set of tasks/indications/rules that you have to bring to a certain end. This is true with John Cage as well as with Johann Sebastian Bach.

That said, how the audience fits into this procedure? The audience is fundamental to carry on doing what we are doing: we are social animals and we need to feel certain things (let's call them gratifications, critics, whatever) to be motivated in order to carry on with other activities.

Speaking about our "open doors" experience with the Oto Project Space, every event had its own response, from the 3 persons of Aggregates to the 20ish of our first interpretation of Walter Marchetti's La Caccia. We always talk about small numbers, mainly our friends. We are not very good promoters and I guess this makes things even more complicated :)

At the same time working "closed doors" at the Project Space had given us the possibility to explore ideas, to develop our own aesthetic, and to build up new pieces.



You have released two tapes [self-released] and a digital file [Taku Roku]. In your performances there is an intrinsic visual component, yet you decided to document some of these purely sound-wise. It also seems that the way you decide to record your music takes into account the environment where the action is taking place, I am thinking of the sound of the support of the microphone in *Coring*, the traffic in *Aggregates*, or the falling glass in *Actions for strobes* (humming, clapping, whistling). How does the transposition from a performed live score to a recording work for you and what sounds are you interested in keeping?

CORING
Two or more performers jump up and down with hands in their pockets for 10 or more minutes.

LR.

There is an element of humour (maybe sarcasm) in releasing a visually stimulating performance as an audio recording, particularly the first cassette where one side documents us completing a set of actions in time with a flashing light. Fundamentally though I think they do make interesting audio documents regardless of the lack of visual accompaniment.

The recorded environment is very important and comes back to the first question about the perceived misuse of Cafe OTO's Project Space. I have seen countless performances in the room that ignore the sounds that are clearly audible from the street, it's futile and also sometimes embarrassing. It's more interesting to see someone respond to a space specifically as opposed to run through a performance strategy that could otherwise be happening anywhere.

Coring and Aggregates were both written specifically for the Project Space, to exploit the limitations of the space.

The specific points you reference, the microphone stand and the chinking glass - I think we recorded two versions of those pieces and agreed those incidental sounds gave the recording more life.

AGGREGATES
Two performers throw stones at the exterior of Cafe OTO project space.

LR.

The Fluxus Performance Workbook was a starting point when we were researching scores to perform, for the third event in the series we decided to perform a sequence of pieces from the book:

- Ken Friedman - *Homage to Mike Mckinlay / Unfinished Symphony* [1968]
- Emmet Williams - *In Unison* [1962]
- Robert Bozzi - *In Memoriam to George Maciunas #2* [1966]

I think this event was an important point as we performed the pieces one after the other with no gaps, that somehow enforced the idea of them as performed tasks and not musical pieces. This sequential theme is something that we have taken forward with a series of scores we have since produced loosely based around the idea of performing an action in direct response to a prompt of some kind, the actions and prompts varying according to the venue.

We wrote the scores on the cover at Luciano's flat whilst he made chips.

You can check out other material by NO PA ON on hideousreplica.co.uk/no-pa-on or listen to their recordings at nopaon.bandcamp.com

LM.

Is there a falling glass in *Actions for strobes* (humming, clapping, whistling)?

If I understand what you are referring to, that sound is one of us changing chairs and manually adjusting the frequency of the strobes as well. All our performances are site-specific or the reshaping of a preconceived idea into a previously unknown space. Said that we take into account a lot of things, we have always been aware of the traffic or the noise of the overground at the project space and we embrace it as a set of conditions to work with or to ignore; the same story goes with all the possible conditions we can find in other different spaces or situations. Recordings wise, we tend to act following the same principle.

Regarding why we choose to document only the audio of an action that has strong visual elements, we actually document all the aspects of it but keeping the visual parts on the discursivity of the title that always describes the action.

Briefly, tell us about the composers that you have been looking at/listening to and what, if any, influence they might have had on your research and score writing... How does the fact of not knowing how to play a classical instrument fit in this journey? Finally, tell us a bit about how you made the scores on the cover of this 'zine?

LM.

Difficult to say who influenced us in the world of music, apart from the obvious influences (Walter Marchetti, Fluxus, John Cage, Alvin Lucier, etc.), I would say that my contribution on what we are doing comes from different places such as folklore, dance, visual arts, travels, sports, jobs. I'm fascinated by endurance, repetition, rituality and so on, so it's easy to scratch ideas out of different contexts.

From a certain aspect, the way we put pieces together is still a mystery, I think for both of us.

Speaking about conventional instruments: teach yourself how to play the piano and play the entire Satie's Vexations (last time I checked somebody had done a 10 hours version).

INKJET 