

Young Voices of Lucerne

kyrr

vocal sculpture by

Ragnheiður Erla Björnsdóttir

2023

ABOUT

This vocal sculpture explores the feeling of time through still/moving/purple/microtonal/pulsating clouds, experimental vocals, deconstructed text and movement. The title of the piece means still in Icelandic and it is an invitation for the audience to feel a moment of stillness with their minds/bodies before-during-and-after the sonic/visual experience. To think, move and be with us: singing together is thinking together.

This piece was commissioned by Lucerne Festival Forward 2023. The commission is a part of the outreach project Young Voices of Lucerne, aiming to create a meaningful connection between Lucerne Festival Forward and the city's local music school communities. Additionally, it is a part of two artistic research projects. 'Multispecies Vocal Weaving' by Ragnheiður Erla Björnsdóttir and 'Boundless Place' by Ettore Biagi.

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HOW TO READ THIS SCORE

This is a flexible graphic score that can be adjusted to any size of choir/vocal group as well as different kinds of performance spaces. The score is intended to be musically accessible – leaving liminal space for the group to co-create according to the individual voices participating. Every vocal texture and perspective matters. This piece aims to be a safe environment for performers to explore their vocal curiosities.

Each part of the performance is marked with a number, followed by the approximate length of that part.

Everything is connected to something – the performers are weaved together with sonic fabric, resulting in the vocal sculpture moving as one creature.

This performance starts in the absence of the audience. According to the performance space, choose either beginning number one or two:

1) The performance space has doors that can be closed before the audience enters:

Everybody unrelated to the performance leaves the space except one person who is responsible for opening the door. The group comes together in the first shape of the vocal sculpture. They close their eyes and take five deep breaths together. Then, they begin the performance. The person responsible to open the doors does so when the atmosphere of the performers feels relaxed and steady. This can take 3-5 minutes. When the doors have been opened, the group continues humming clouds with their eyes closed.

2) The audience is already in the performance space before the piece starts:

The group comes together in an available space close to where the performance will happen (this can be a hallway, or a room). One person responsible for leading them to the performance space is with them. They close their eyes and take five deep breaths together. Afterwards, they begin humming clouds with their eyes open (see explanation below). The person responsible for leading the group to the performance space does so when the atmosphere of the performers feels relaxed and steady. This can take 3-5 minutes. When the group walks to the performance space, they do so slowly while humming clouds. When arriving in the performance space, they slowly go into the first shape of the vocal sculpture while still humming clouds.

NOTATION

a

Sing the note a in an octave comfortable to you

a

Sing the note a in an octave lower than the rest of the group

d e

Sing a short note on d, then e

d gliss e

Sing the note d and then gliss noticeably to the note e

st

Use your pronunciation of the letters given to create a rhythmic vocal sound

~~~~~

Long note, cresc.

↺  
↻

Repeat instructions without pausing

st

Improvise in your own dialect/language with the deconstructed text given

~~~~~

Create vocal waves using vowels a-o-u-e-i (imitating ocean)

c dive

Sing the word 'dive' on the note c

~~~~~

Improvise in syllable language (story-telling)

~~~~~

Improvise wind-like vocal sounds such as: s, f, soft whistle, inhaling, exhaling, etc

MOVEMENT



Sway together like seaweed



Repeatedly blink your eyes at the same time



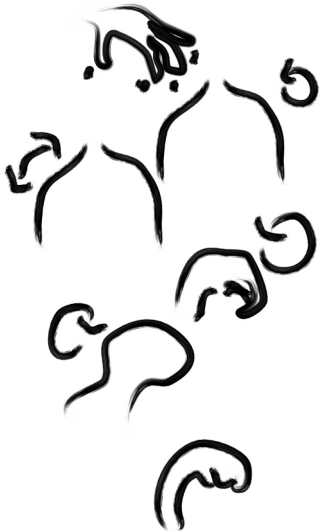
All eyes stare in the same direction



All eyes change a focus point at the same time

Fingers shake in a noticeable way

Fingers tap on another performer



Shoulders are moving in repeated, slow circles

Shoulders move front and back repeatedly

Wrists are moving in repeated, slow circles

Heads are moving in repeated, slow circles

Everybody clenches their hands at the same time



Start humming a note that feels comfortable to you
Hum each note as long as you can
Then, take a deep breath

Repeat this **again** and **again**

Let time pass while listening to each other's voices
Feel the vibration in your body
Imagine that the vibration is forming a cloud

Hum into the cloud

At the appropriate moment, let your voice slowly glide between microtones without forming melodies

One by one, start singing on 'u'

Notice how the group is forming multiple microtonal clouds in the space

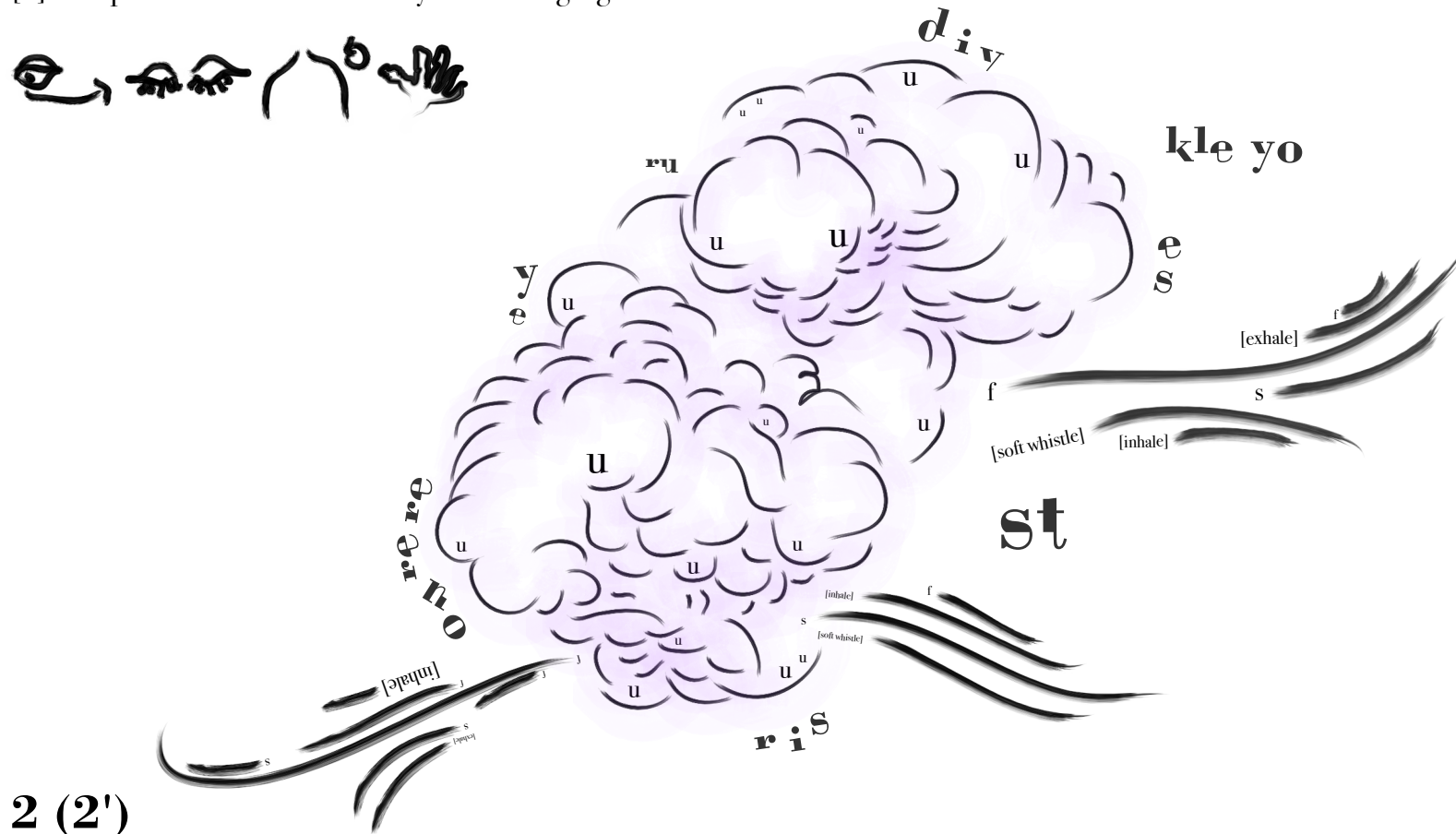
Glide around and inside the clouds

1 (3')

*For the last two minutes of this part, the group splits into three even groups.
Group 2 and 3 don't begin at the same time, and the singers in each group also begin at separate times.
The audience does not recognize the groupings or the moment of change.*

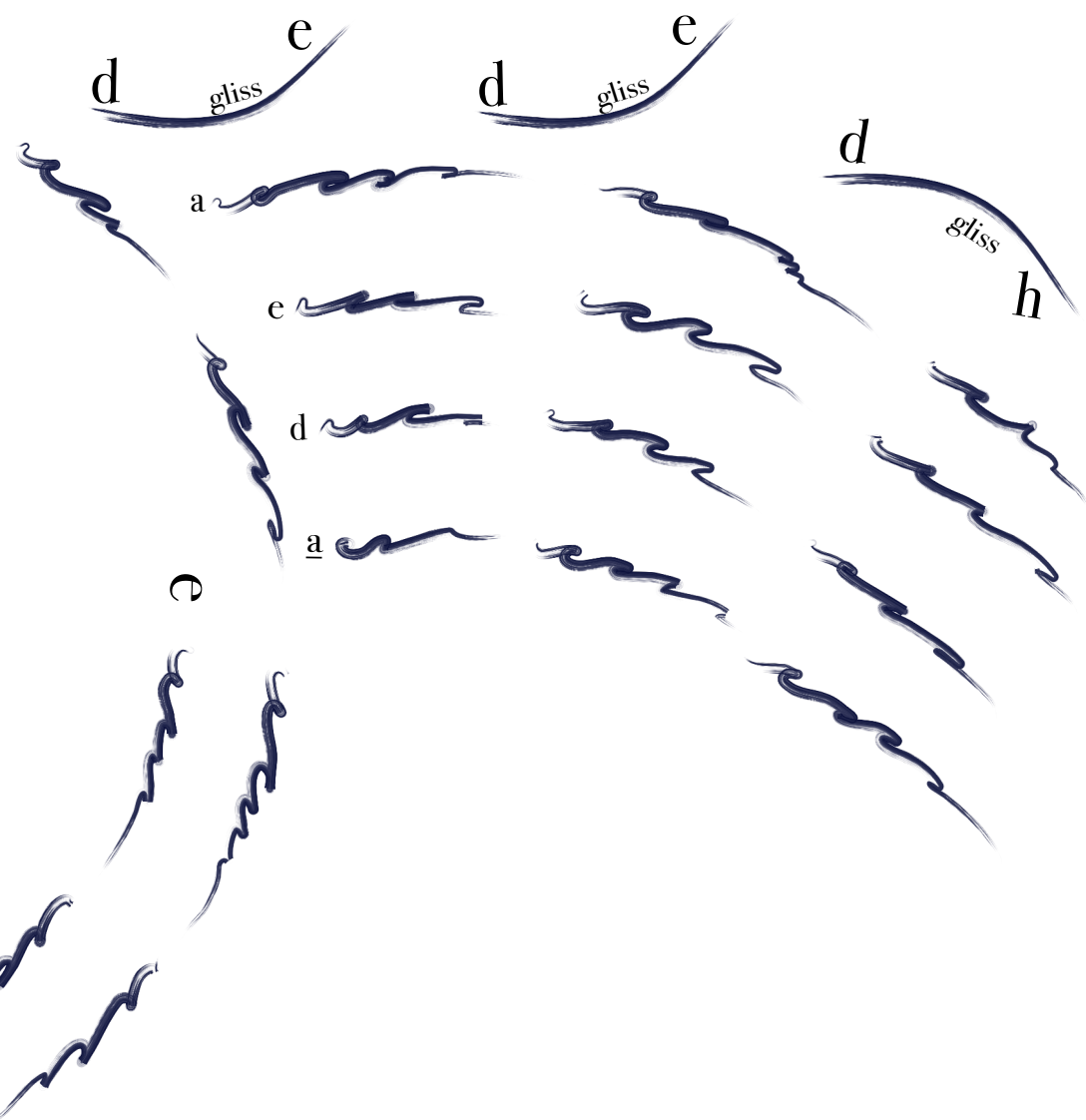
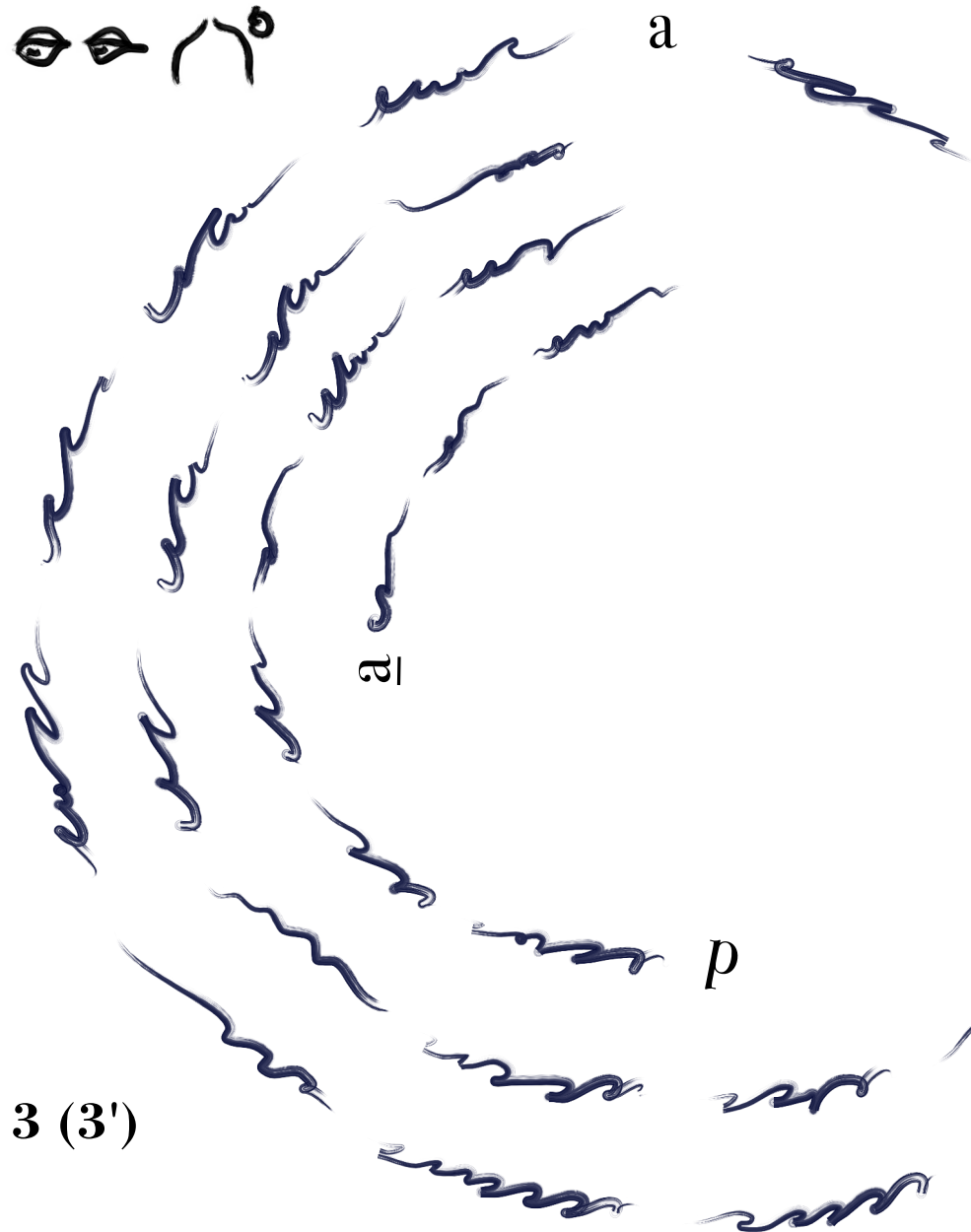
The groups do as follows:

- [1] Continue singing the microtonal clouds on an "u".
- [2] Imitate sounds reminding of wind. Do so with inhales, exhales, soft whistling, "f" and "s" sounds. Play around with dynamics.
- [3] Whisper deconstructed words in your own language/dialect.

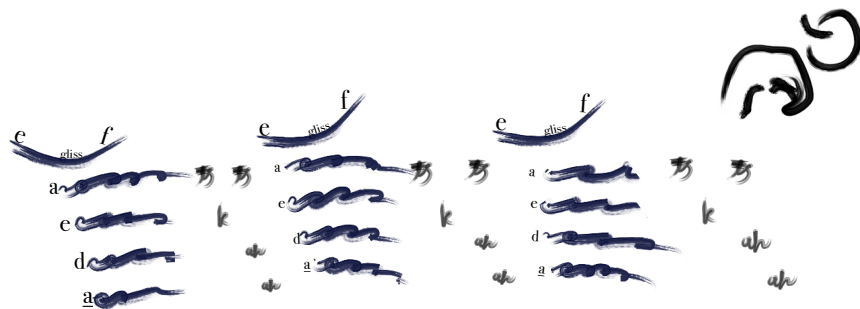


After p. 2, one member of the vocal sculpture begins the following part while the others continue the soundscape from last page. During this, they begin fading their sounds out until they join:

Repeat two times:



3 (3')



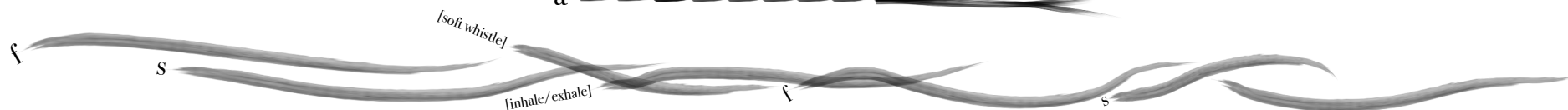
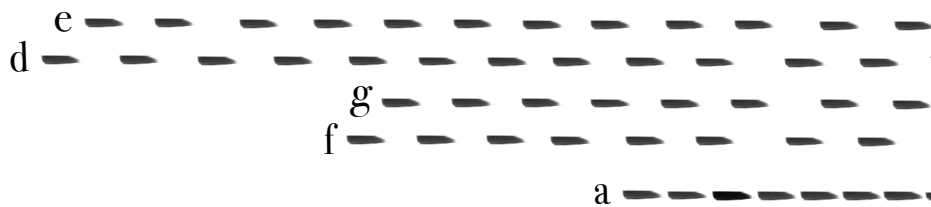
Repeat four times:

a

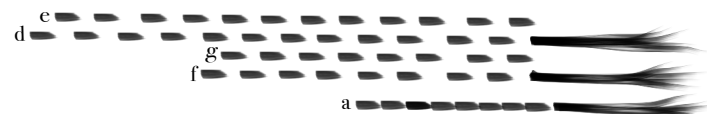
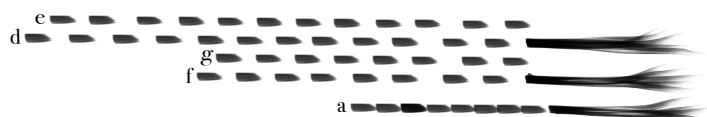
f

d

a



Repeat three times:



dive in

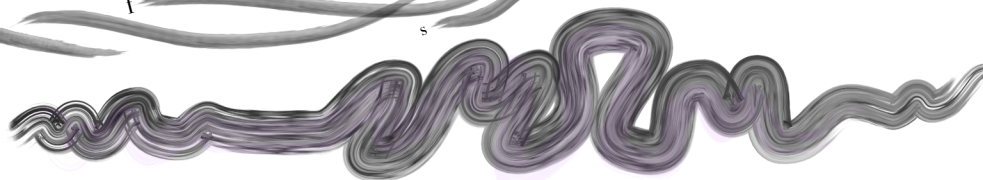
dive

in

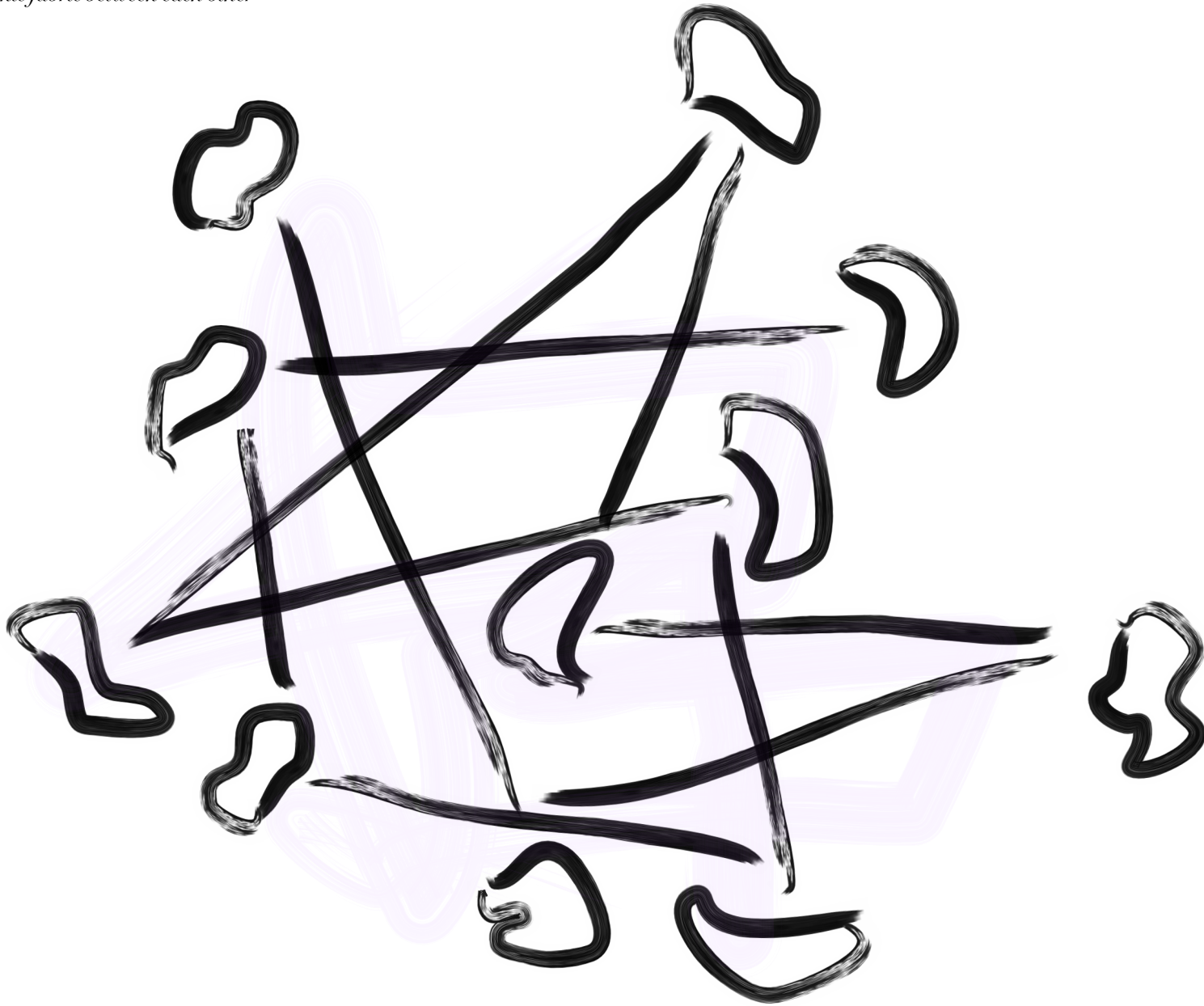


4 (2')

[syllable language]



Performers weave sonic fabric between each other



5 (2')