

MARCO DÖTTLINGER

POINTS OF NO RETURN

for seven mini-synths and live-visuals

FOR NAMES
2024

PROGRAM NOTE

This work was created for the 10th anniversary of NAMES.

The title "points of no return" attempts to describe several perspectives: on the one hand, it references the generative nature of all components involved, be it the live visualization in the form of a particle system or the performance with seven mini-synthesizers, which resist an exact, repeatable reproduction of a score by design.

In addition, the acoustic and visual components are placed in a recursive dependency, conceived as a feedback loop of interaction: the visuals autonomously generate their macro-temporal, formal development and thereby imply various possible behaviors of the synthesizers/musicians. Conversely, the performers are encouraged to play the synthesizers according to certain instructions, not to control them, but rather to understand them as accomplices, to listen, to explore the smallest changes. These sonic results in turn generate the micro-temporal visual details.

I want to understand this work as a contribution that deals structurally with today's digital reality, a world that is increasingly shaped by feedback processes between technological (algorithmic) and human action.

The score is the result of a practice based research and experimentation process.

This research was funded in whole or in part by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) [10.55776/AR821]

DURATION > 15 minutes (duration indications in the score are a suggestion, find your own, can be very long)

REQUIREMENTS

Bastl Instruments Synths: 2 BDRUM KASTLE / 3 ARPs / 2 KASTLE V1.5

PC w/ NVIDIA GPU (running SuperCollider and TouchDesigner, code/files provided by composer)

DC-coupled Audiointerface (7 ins, 12 outs), eg. Expert Sleepers ES-8 w/ ES-3 and ES-6

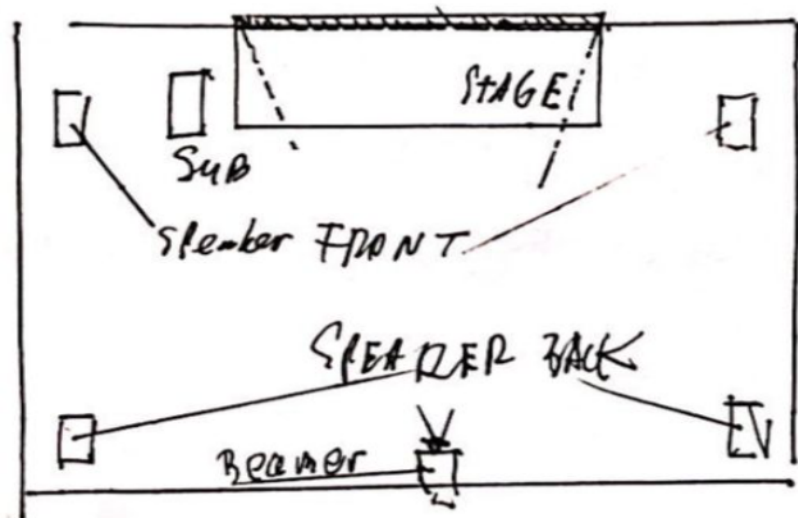
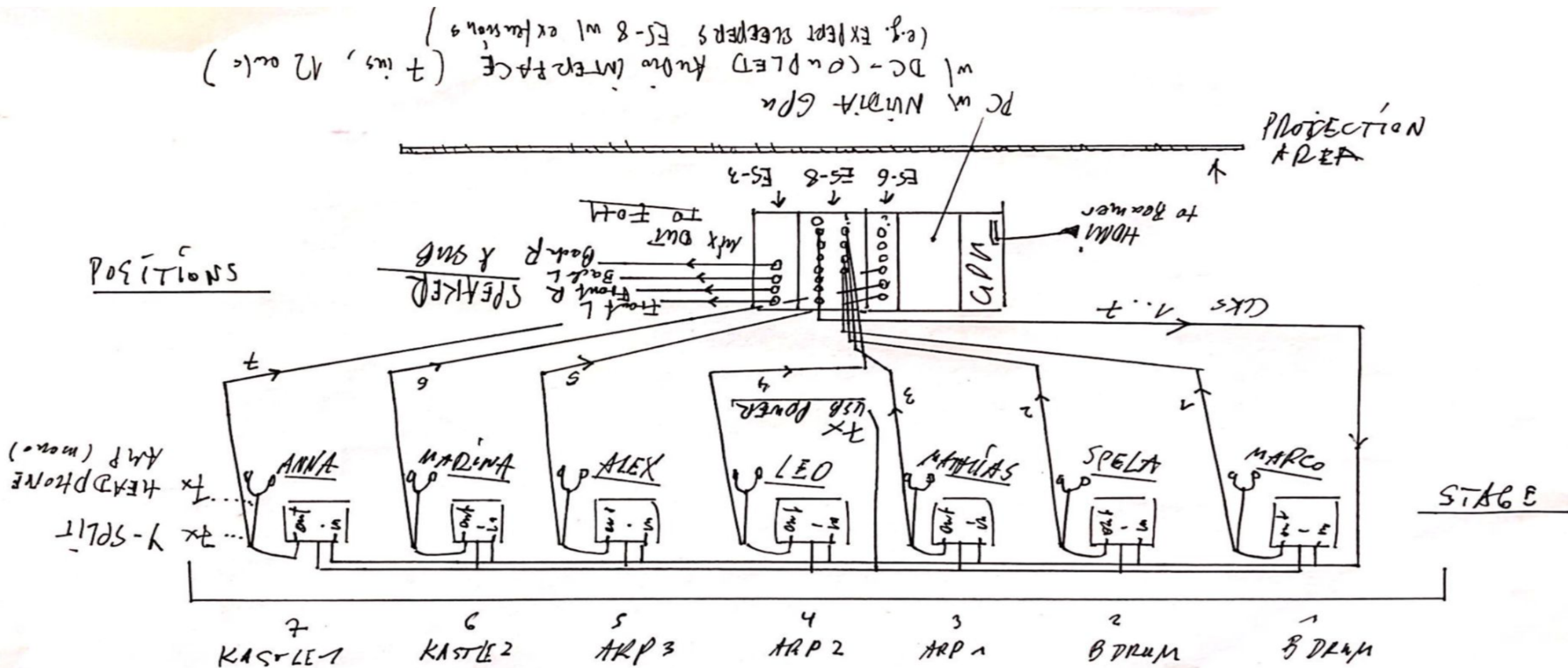
PA w/ 4 Fullrange Speaker (quadrophonic) and Sub

Decent Projector and (big) Projectionarea

7 headphone-amps (single channel) and headphones for musicians (w/ Y-splitter cable each)

modular synth patchcables (standard and 14 long ones)

(see sketch next page)

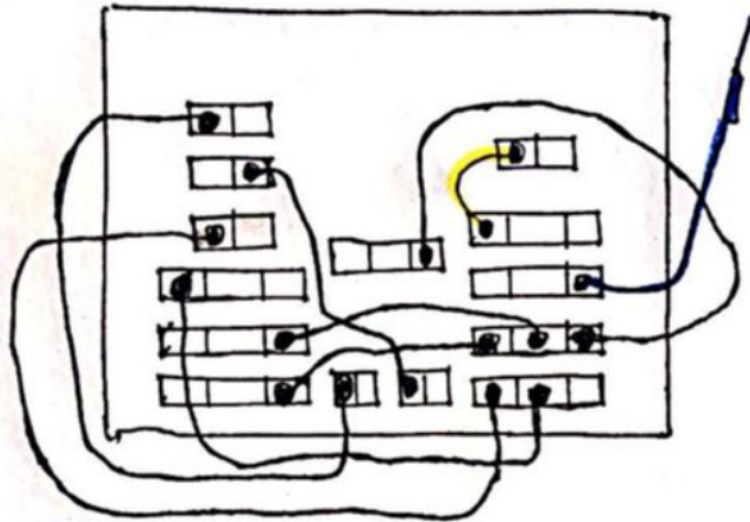


7 Performer sit on the floor of the stage,
at the edge of the stage, direction: to audience
not too close together!

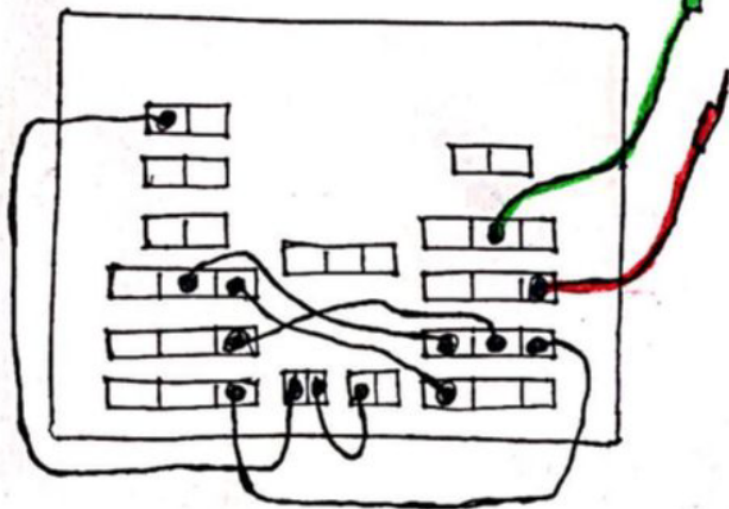
AUDIENCE

INITIAL PATCHES

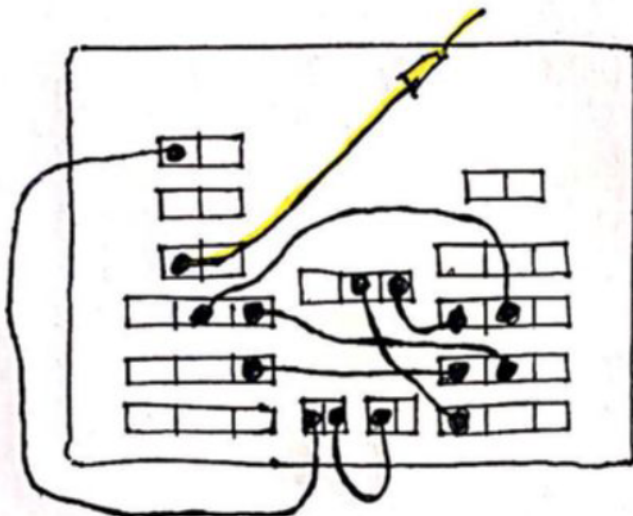
B DRUM KASTLE 1&2 (MARC0/SPELA)



ARP 1,2,3 (ALEX/LEO, VALERIE/MATTHIAS)



KASTLE V1.5 1&2 (ANNA/MARINA)



CABLES

GREY patch-cables: patched, do not change

COLORED patch-cables: (re-) patch while performing (see score)

KNOB ACTION TYPES



BLACK: exact position, dont touch or change



RED: bring knob to shown position, set exact position
or „sweet-spot“ Position, obligatory, do once



PURPLE: glissandi/expression in shown range (lines)



BLUE: explore sonic possibilities in shown knob-region
Continuous or in steps, fast or slow, repeatedly, find your way!



GREEN: explore sonic possibilities in shown knob-region
In small and fast steps, up or down (quasi like brownian motion)
More listening to sonic states than knobbing.

SWEET SPOT: a sometime hard to find knob position (or combination of knob positions) which has a certain effect

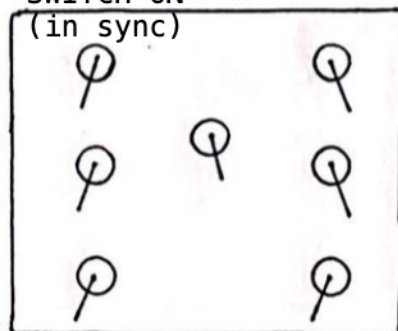
is silent: no sound (or a extremely soft one) is heard

A 00:00

B DRUM KASTLE 1&2



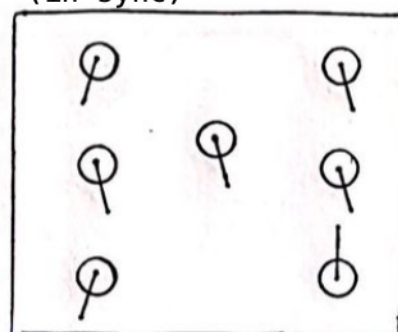
SWITCH ON
(in sync)



ALL ACTIONS ASYNC
(otherwise indicated)

ARP 1,2,3

SWITCH ON
(in sync)



IS SILENT

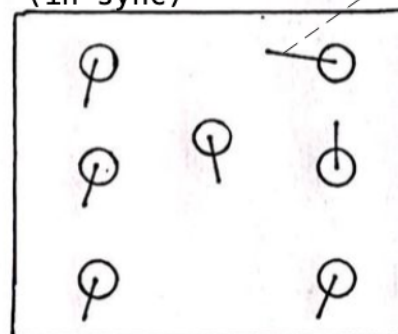
ALL ACTIONS ASYNC
(otherwise indicated)

KASTLE V1.5 1&2

YELLOW: is unpatched, touch end (play w/
noise!) then patch it to MINUS

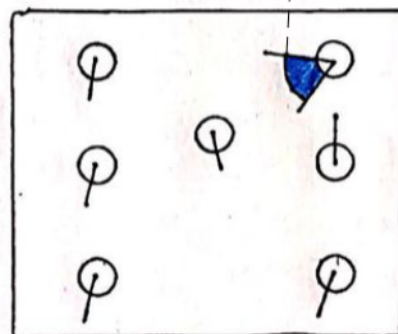


SWITCH ON
(in sync)



SWEET SPOT
gives silence

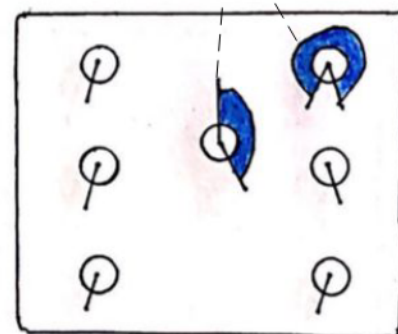
EXPLORE NOISES
start sparse,
increase density to B



ALL ACTIONS ASYNC (otherwise indicated)

B 01:00

EXPLORE sonic states



subito, fast, hands-on
chaotic shapes - SOLO

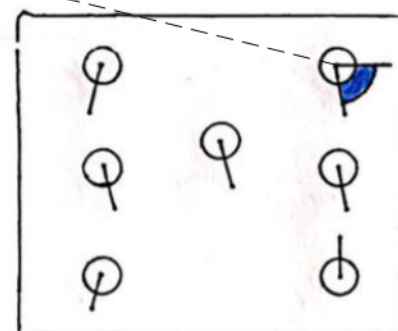
come back to init-state
(A) from time to time

w/ KASTLE V1.5 1&2
imitate/integrate/counterpoint

increase density to C

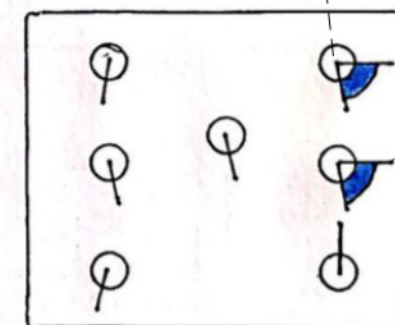
High chords
(small subtle movements)

w/ sparse, long pauses in between
getting more dense to C



More density and add „grace-notes“
(faster movements)

add harmonics,
timbral details



not too high yet

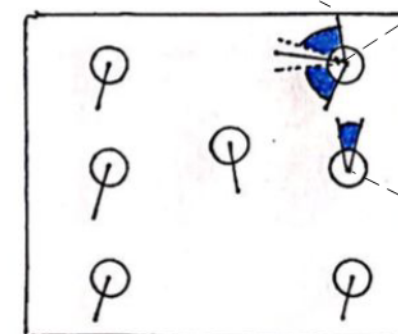
subito, fast, hands-on
chaotic shapes - SOLO

come back to init-state
(A) from time to time

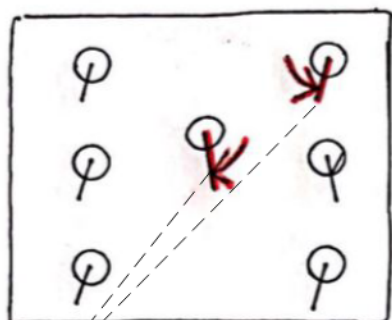
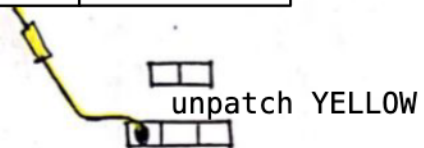
w/ B DRUM 1&2
imitate/integrate/counterpoint

vary tremolo / rhythm

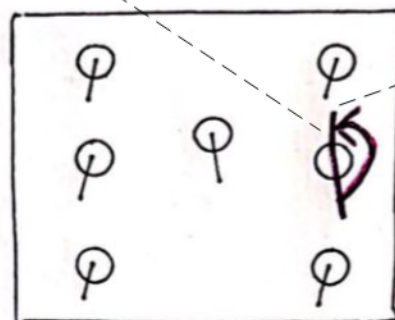
increase density to C



C 02:00

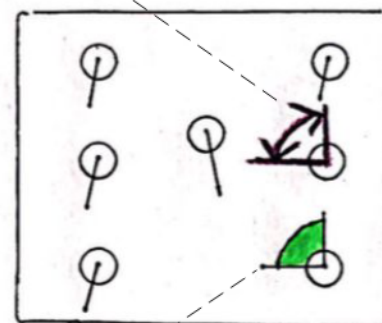
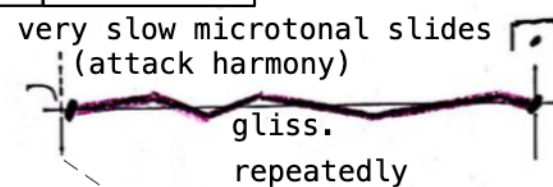


Set, then wait for ARPs to establish 2-tone patterns



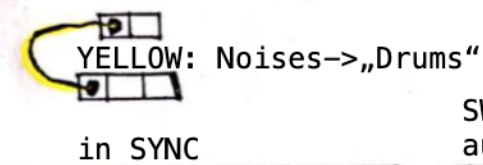
Find a note which is part of ARP-patterns (or any pleasant relation), then do slow microtonal glissandi

D 03:30

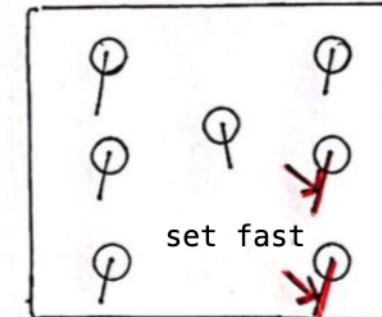


vary Tempo in small steps (no gliss.)

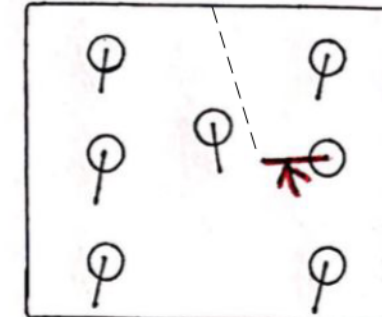
E 05:00



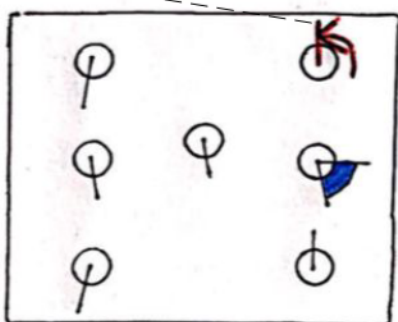
SWEET SPOT: find lowest audible bass note



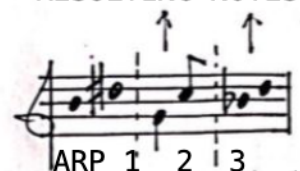
set fast



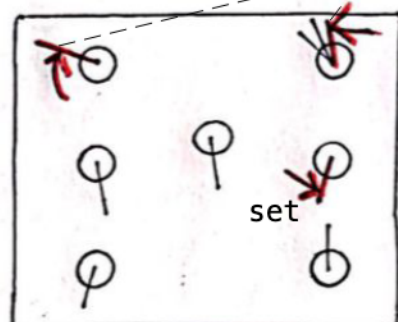
fast gliss. to center is silent



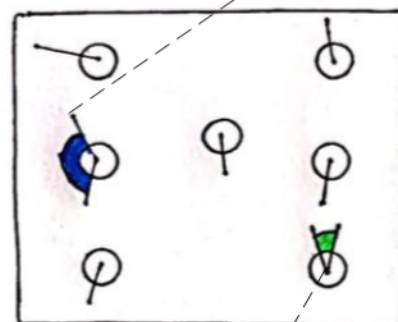
RESULTING NOTES



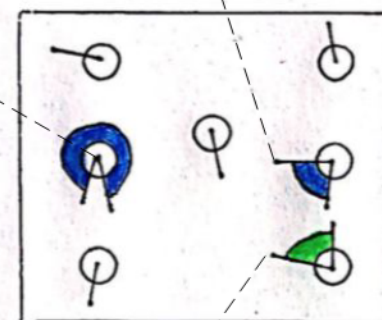
SWEET SPOTS (take your time) to find 2-Note Patterns



set

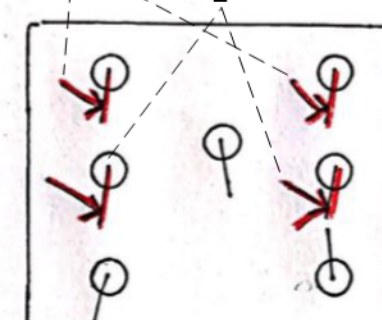


then shape timbre/spectra (very slow and continuous)



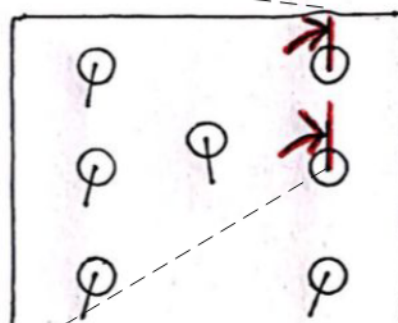
vary Tempo in small steps (no gliss.)

in SYNC
1st set fast
2nd



is silent

Set to center, listen to ARP harmony, then tune noisy tones to fit in the harmony in a pleasant way

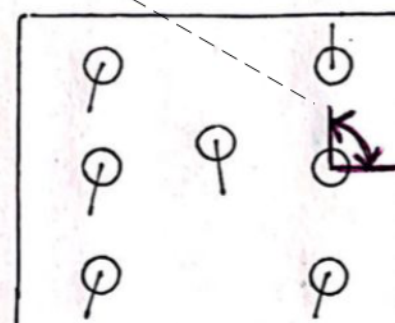


SWEETSPOT: very low tremolo

work on tremolo (gliss.)
acc.-rit.-acc.-rit. etc.



repeatedly

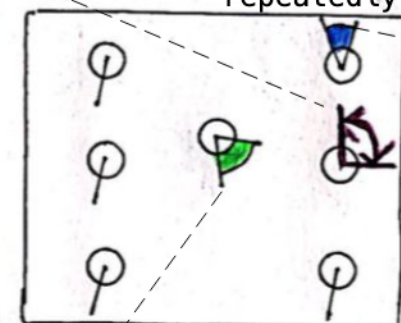


also tune resulting Bass-notes to ARP harmony

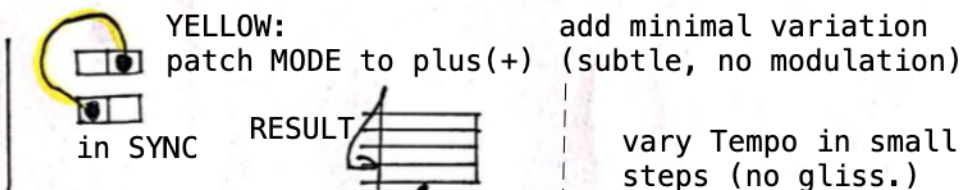
continue



add/vary new notes

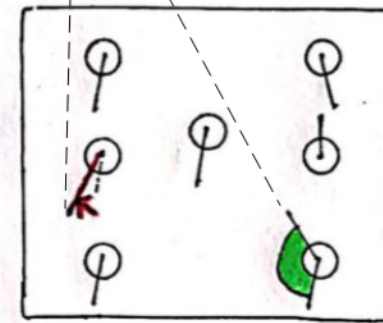
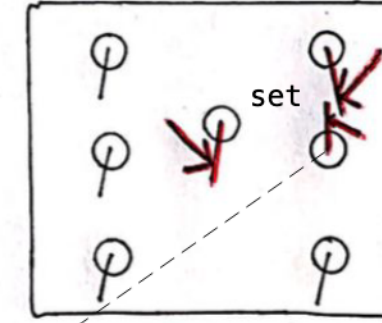


Introduce some „screamy“ notes, from time to time



add minimal variation (subtle, no modulation)

vary Tempo in small steps (no gliss.)

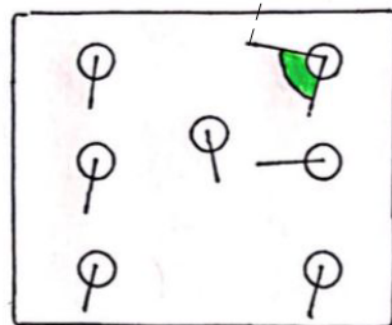


SWEETSPOT: noisy drone w/ pitch, detune to other KASTLE V1.5, beatings

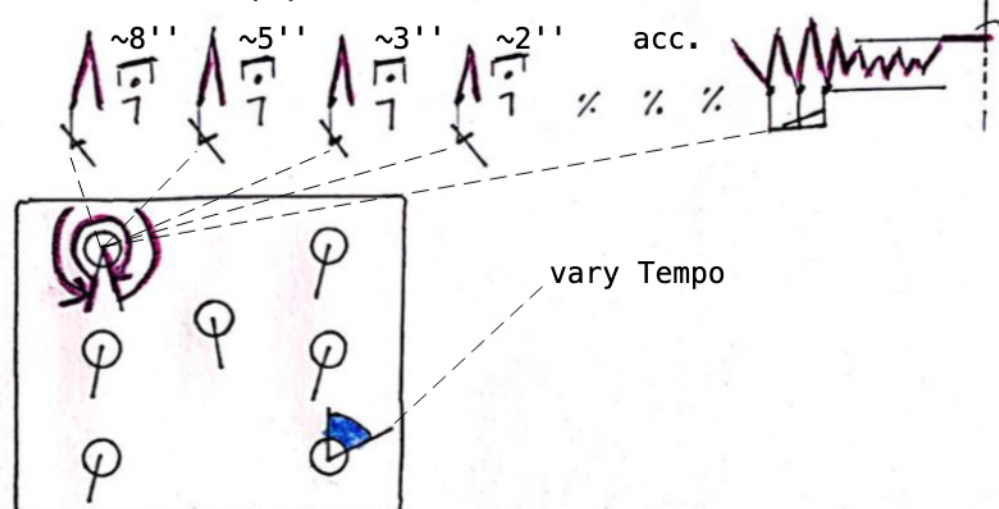
F

06:00

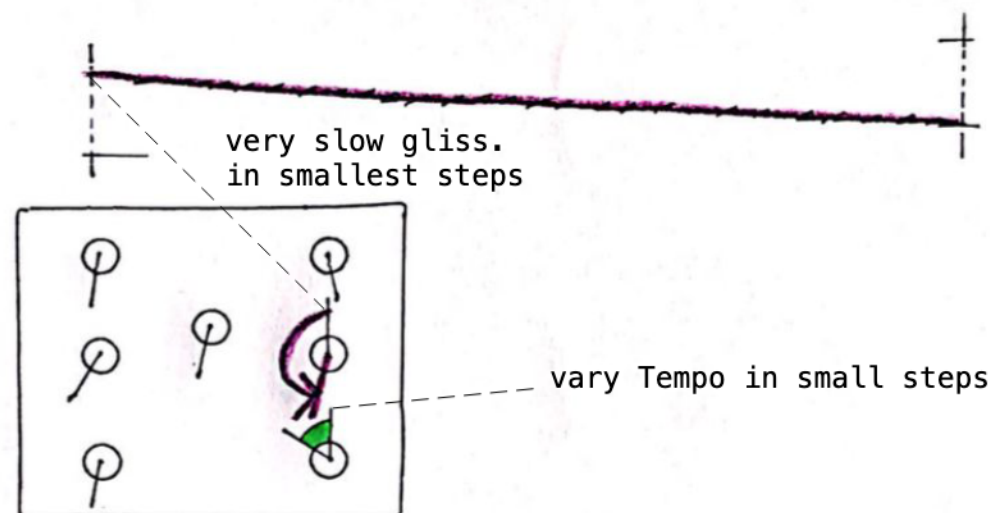
Fast, small changes, froggy
EXPLORE
more listening than moving knob



in SYNC ARP 1,2,3



vary Tempo

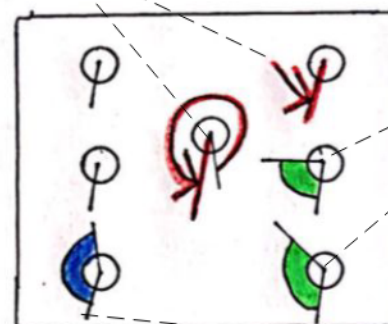


vary Tempo in small steps

G

07:00

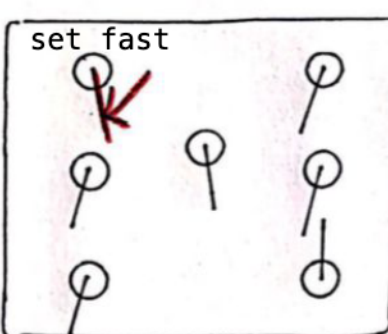
set fast

then vary:
Tone

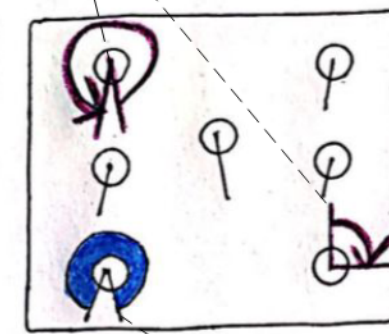
Tempo (in many small steps)

Regularity of events

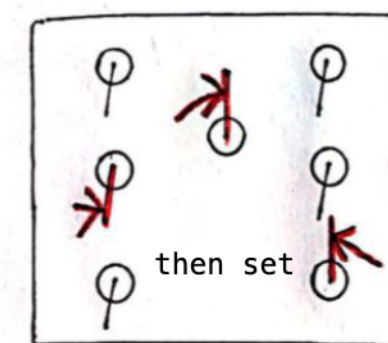
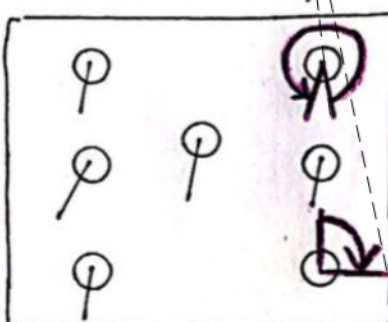
very slow double-gliss. then is silent



set fast

vary ARP patterns,
Tendency: getting faster (acc.)

very slow double-gliss. is silent

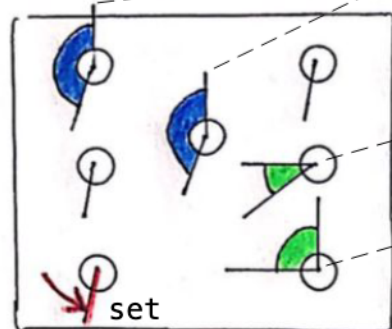


then set

B DRUM KASTLE 1&2

H 08:00

YELLOW:
unpatch from „Drums“



EXPLORE
Very active, hands on,
fluid and reactive to others

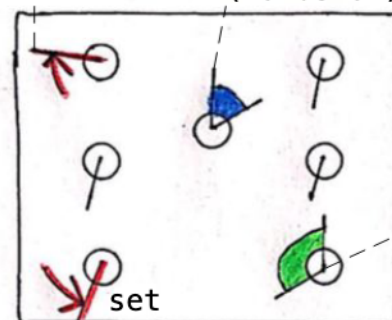
vary from time to time

vary Tempo in small steps
(from time to time)
listen to the others and
comment / contradict them

ARP 1,2,3

1st find SWEET SPOT
sparse, very low short notes

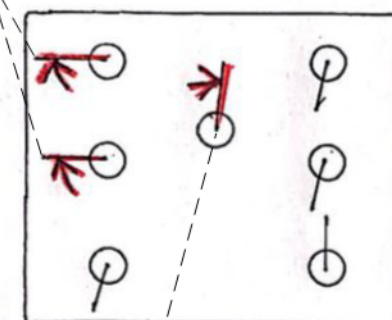
2nd active shape durations
(hands on)



& vary Tempo in small steps
(from time to time)
listen to the others and
comment / contradict them

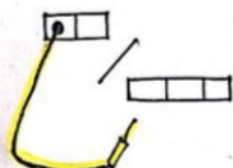
KASTLE V1.5 1&2

1st find SWEET SPOTS
short bass hits (kicky)



If YELLOW is patched,
find different noise colors
(SWEETSPOT)

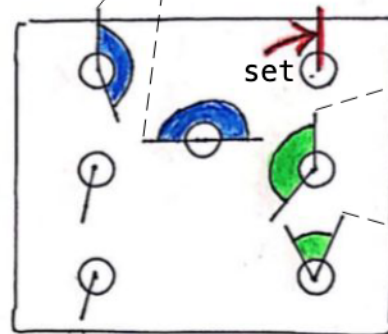
YELLOW:
active patching/unpatching
MOD->STEPPED
(like „morse“ type, vary,
imitate others or integrate)



Tendency to I: acc.
less noise (sparse patched)
to more noises (mostly patched)

I 09:00

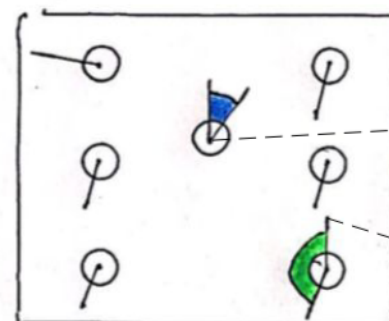
start to hunt a weird groove
& try to stay transparent
(decay knob)



if pitches happen,
integrate in harmony

vary Tempo in steps
(from time to time)

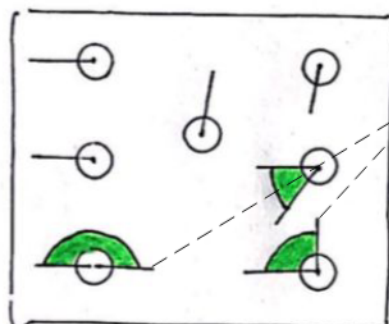
GREEN:
active patching/unpatching
Bass->„ARP“
(like „morse“ type, vary,
imitate or integrate in B DRUMS
beats)



active shape durations

vary Tempo in steps
(from time to time)

YELLOW: patched
MOD->STEPPED

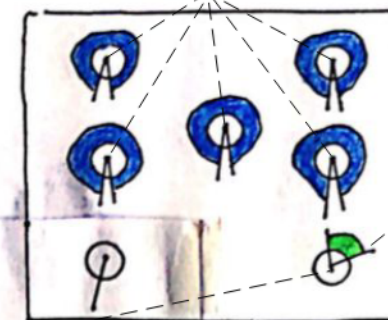


hunt a weird groove
working on density
Tempo and tremolo

try to stay transparent

J 10:00

EXPLORE sonic possibilities
find your way!
Try to stay transparent (DECAY knob)



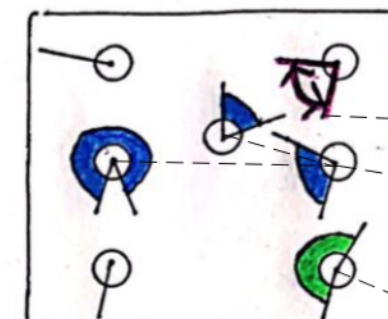
vary Tempo in steps
(from time to time)

If you go fast, change to moderate tempo
sooner (like a drummer playing „fills“)



GREEN: unpatched

very fibrant, reactive to others



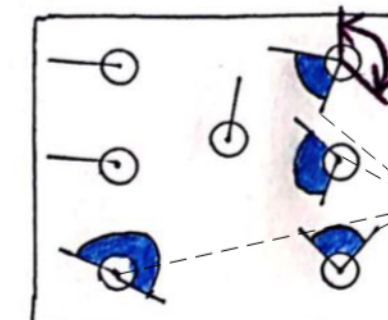
some very fast gliss.
(bass drops),
no arp. (not too high)

Active hands-on 2 knobs
at the same time,
Find your way!

Fast changes

EXPLORE sonic possibilities
Try to stay transparent (DECAY knob)

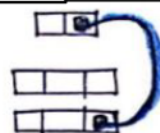
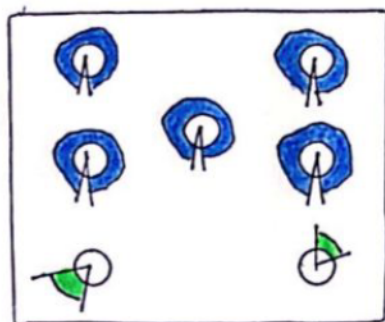
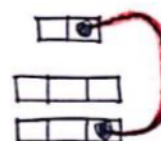
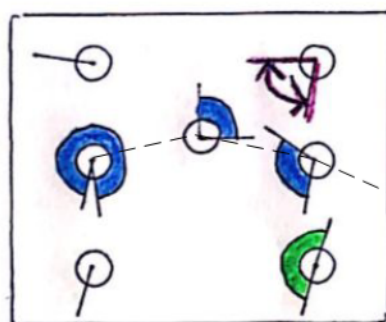
very fibrant, reactive to others
start to go crazy a bit



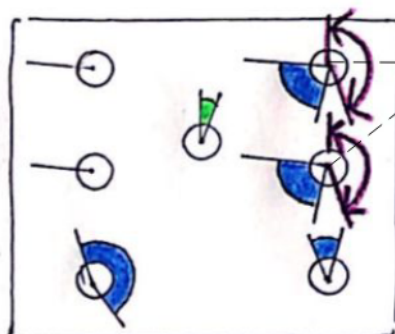
Some crazy outbursting
Soli, fast, screamy

weird grooves
actively shaped
fast changing, reactive

K 11:00

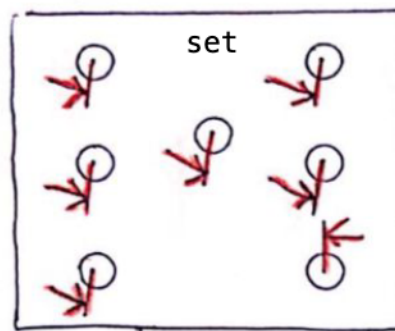
BLUE:
patch CLK->„Drums“continue like J
even more flexibleEXPLORE irrational beats,
polyrhythmic excessRED:
patch PULSE->„ARP“continue like J
even more flexible

EXPLORE „talky bass lines“

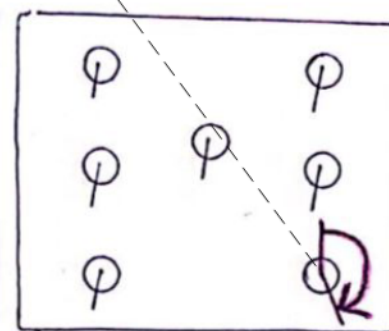
continue like J
even more flexible and crazy, reactiveMore and more crazy outbursting Soli,
rapid two hands
fast, screamy, hands on

L 13:00

then



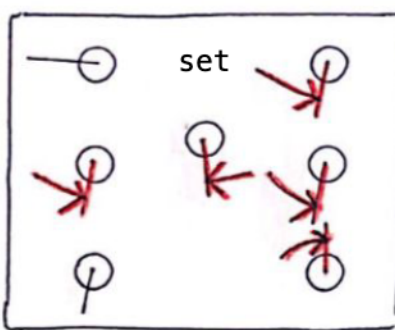
set

extremely long
gliss.IN SYNC
CUT - switch off device

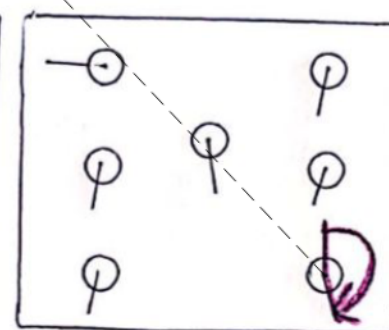
14:00

14:30

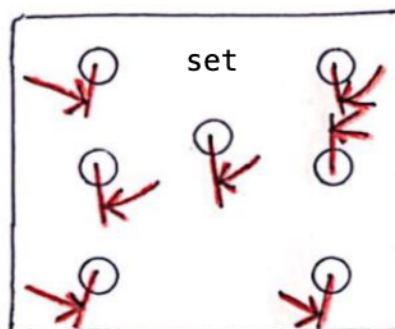
then



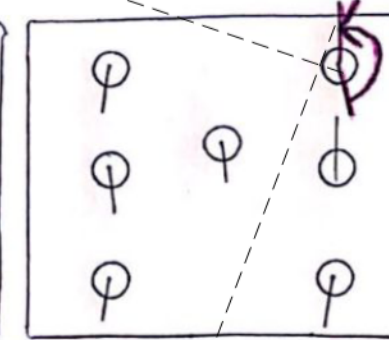
set

extremely long
gliss.IN SYNC
CUT - switch off device

then



set

extremely long
gliss.IN SYNC
CUT - switch off devicetune in to drone
(ossia vary minimal)