

III

*for five performers*

Adam Buffington

The length of this work is approximately 20 minutes.

The piece should be performed in an open venue with no fixed stage, large enough so that there is ample space for the performers to move.

Actions noted with approximate durations should be faithfully adhered to. All others should develop organically and freely, in accordance with the performers' own instincts "☺".

In order to keep within the approximate duration, timers should be used during the performance (1 for Performers 1-3, 1 for Performers 4-5), though their exact location should be concealed from the audience as much as possible.

For Performers 1-3, the work is divided into several sections: I, II, Transition 1, III, Transition 2, IV, Transition 3, V. All events detailed, whether they are notated on the same page (Transitions 1-3), or separately for each performer (I-V), are to occur simultaneously. For Performers 4 and 5, the events detailed are to progress over the duration of the piece. Though their events are seemingly separate, Performers 4 and 5 should be conscious of Performers 1-3 so their actions do not exceed the work's total duration.

Walking Instructions - Whenever required to walk during the performance, the performers must wear shoes which possess either wooden soles, or any other sole conducive to creating noise during movement. Walk in a slow, hesitant shuffle, but not in any overtly dramatic or humorous manner.

Areas should be placed in a triangular formation within the center of the performance space.

### Area A

-Black Leather Diary, Pencil, Ribbed Stick, Vase w/ dried flowers, Cracked Picture Frame, Sand

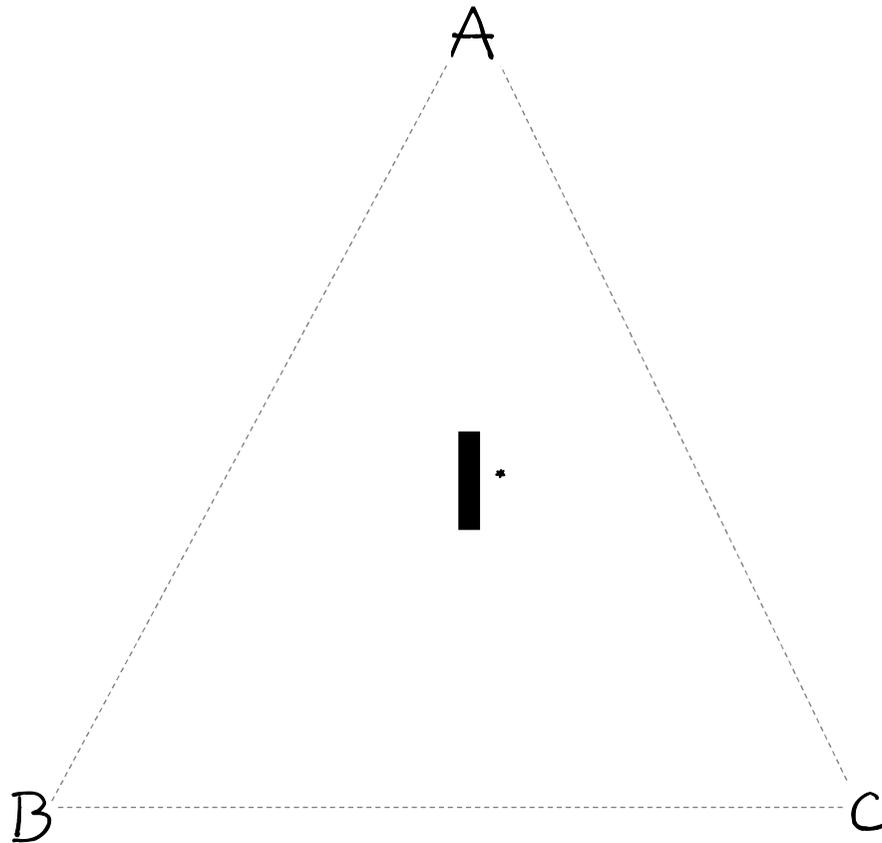
### Area B

-Table Lamp w/ shredded shade, Violin, Stones, Mirror on Easel

### Area C

-Overturned Wooden Chair, (Placed behind back of chair: 2 Glasses, Nails/Screws, Paint Scraper, Bubble Wrap), Child's Violin Bow (Placed in front of chair.)

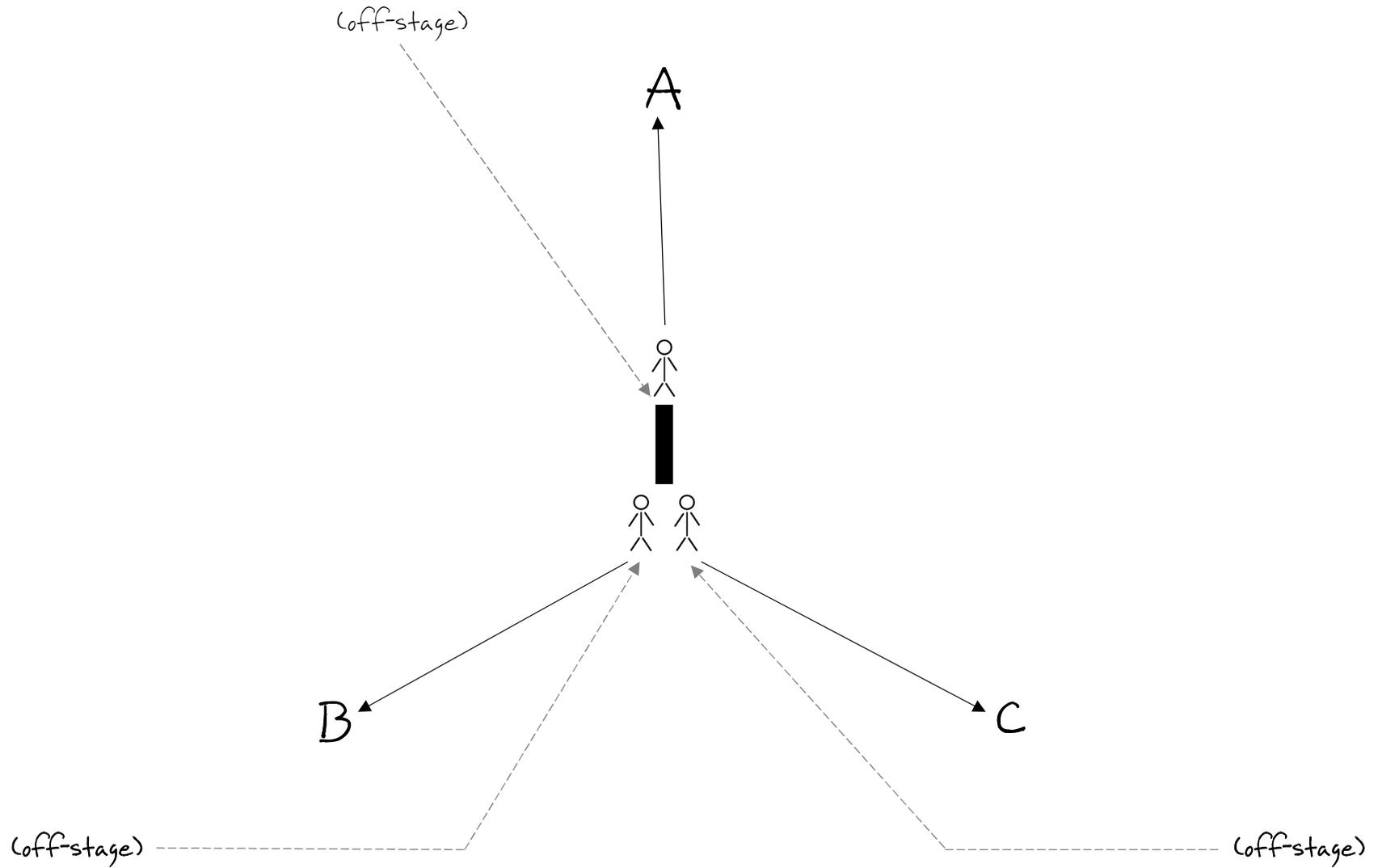
\*Wall-like object placed in center of triangular formation of Areas, tall enough so Performer 4 - 5 cannot see over it.



Audience should be situated, either standing (preferably) or sitting, in a formation surrounding performers most suitable to the shape of the performance space.

Performers 1-3

Movement Diagram for I (in unison)



I. (in unison)



(Walk towards center wall from off-stage to indicated locations, as if worn down, exhausted. Heads directed downwards, faces hidden from audience. Once in position, slowly turn towards respective Area, heads still down, eyes closed.)

Pause (≈ 1 minute)

(Suddenly change your breathing pattern by inhaling swiftly through mouth, from a soft to a loud dynamic, ending with a pronounced accent. Brief pause, exhale inaudibly. Continue breathing pattern, heads gradually rising with each inhale, until they are facing completely upwards. Arms should also be rising slowly in conjunction with head movement, palms facing out, stopping at shoulder height when heads are facing upwards.)

Pause (≈ 30 seconds)

(Gently exhale through nose, heads lowering until in normal upright position, arms lowering until at sides. Pause. Exhale. Pause. Open eyes and stare ahead. Following actions occur simultaneously:

Performer 1: Turn head left, Pause, turn back to center. Turn head right, Pause, turn back to center. Pause.

Performers 2+3: Turn heads and face each other, Pause. Heads turn back to center. Turn heads in opposite direction away from each other, Pause. Heads turn back to center. Pause.)

(Once finished, walk towards Areas. Upon reaching them, stop in position, heads looking down, examining each Area.)

II.



Performer 1: Area A

(Continue to stand over pile, staring down at it.) (≈ 30 seconds)

(Slowly kneel down on both knees, hands rest in lap. Quietly scan each object with eyes.)

(Attention is then drawn to the vase with dried flowers. Slowly reach out with right hand and gently rustle the dead flowers, listening to the fragile crackling sounds, feeling the coarse textures.)

(After several moments, right hand suddenly squeezes flowers, freezes in position. Brief pause. Right hand then loosens grip, retracts, and returns to lap.)

(Move right hand towards pile of sand. Gently sift fingers through the sand for several moments, then begin grasping handfuls, lifting hand above pile of sand, about shoulder height, then letting sand slowly and gently fall through grip back onto pile. Repeat gesture several times. Brief pause.)

(Begin grasping handfuls, and gently pour sand over the vase. Repeat several times, until the vase is fairly full.)

II.



Performer 2: Area B

(After glancing down at pile, kneel down on both knees, hands resting in lap.)

(Scan each object with eyes. Attention suddenly focuses on table lamp with shredded shade. Slowly reach right hand over to light switch, grasp it, turn it. Pause 7-10 seconds, with hand still on switch. Repeat gesture several times.)

(After final turn of switch, Brief pause. Then, glance over at mirror. Right hand leaves switch, and gently runs fingers down glass of mirror several times. Pause.)

(Right hand then reaches down towards pile of stones, briefly sifts through them, before selecting the largest one, and taps/rubs it against glass of mirror.)

II.



Performer 3: Area C

*(After glancing down at pile, kneel down on both knees behind overturned chair, hands resting in lap.)*

*(Scan each object with eyes. Attention suddenly focuses on chair. Begin to explore the chair with hands, feeling the surface and texture of the chair, occasionally grasping the rungs, feeling the firmness.)*

*(Return to objects, begin sifting through the pile of loose nails and screws. Notice the presence of two empty glasses. Then, begin placing the nails and screws, one by one, into one of the empty glasses. Once completed, grasp one glass in each hand, and hold them up, at mid-chest height.)*

*(Slowly pour the full glass of metal objects into the empty glass. Pause 5-10 seconds. Repeat gesture several times.)*

Transition 1.



Performer 1: Area A

Performer 2: Area B → Area C

Performer 3: Area C → Area B

(Performers 2 and 3 cease interaction with objects, hands return to lap. Brief pause. Both stand in unison, turn to face each other. Pause. Heads lower to face floor, and begin walking slowly towards each other's Areas.)

(Once in front of each other, abruptly stop. Both slowly look up into each other's faces. Pause.)

(Performer 2 slowly raises hand towards Performer 3, as if to touch them, but stops, returns hand to side, deeply inhales, then exhales audibly. Performer 2 and 3 both look down and resume walking to new Areas.)

(During this transition, Performer 1 ceases dropping sand into vase and glances at black journal on floor, picks it up, opens it, and begins to gently turn pages, scanning each page with eyes. Performer 1 then lifts it above face, and while gazing into it, slowly tears pages out, one by one, crumbling each in hand, then dropping them to the floor.

Repeat gesture several times until Performers 2 and 3 are in new locations.)

III.



Performer 1: Area A

*(Once Performers 2 and 3 are at new locations, cease tearing out pages, place journal back on floor.)*

*(Quietly sit for a few moments, with hands in lap, until directing your attention at cracked picture frame. Pause  
(≈ 45 seconds))*

*(Gently reach out with left hand, grasp side of frame, and place it in lap, both hands holding it. Look down upon the  
cracked frame. (≈ 20 seconds))*

*(Slowly lift frame off of lap, about mid-chest height, then drop frame flat on floor, leaving arms still suspended in  
air. Pause. Pick up frame, and repeat gesture 2 more times. After third time, lower right hand and gently glide  
fingers along glass, feeling the cracks in it.)*

III.



### Performer 3: Area B

*(After arriving at pile, kneel down on both knees, hands resting in lap.)*

*(Scan each object with eyes. Attention suddenly focuses on table lamp with shredded shade. Slowly reach right hand over to light switch, grasp it, turn it. Pause 7-10 seconds, with hand still on switch. Repeat gesture several times.)*

*(Return to objects, begin to sift through the pile of stones for several moments, grabbing two at a time, one in each hand. Slowly hold them up to approximate shoulder height, examine them, then place them back into pile. Repeat action again. Then pick up 2 largest stones. After scanning them, tap/rub them together at varying rates, eyes staring off at floor, as if in a daze.)*

*(Suddenly stop, and freeze in position. Glance over at the violin. Lay stones back on pile, and slowly pull violin towards you. Gently rub fingers along the violin's strings, body, and fingerboard. After several moments of this, grab a stone from pile, and rub on the violin's body and strings, with varying degrees of speed and pressure.)*

III.



Performer 2: Area C

*(After arriving at pile, kneel down on both knees, hands resting in lap.)*

*(Scan each object with eyes. Attention suddenly focuses on chair. Begin to explore the chair with hands, feeling the surface and texture of the chair, occasionally grasping the rungs, feeling the firmness.)*

*(Return to objects, begin sifting through the pile of loose nails and screws. Notice the presence of two empty glasses. Then, begin placing the nails and screws, one by one, into one of the empty glasses. Once completed, grasp one glass in each hand, and hold them up, at mid-chest height.)*

*(Slowly pour the full glass of metal objects into the empty glass. Pause 5 seconds. Repeat gesture several times.)*

*(Place glasses down on floor. Grasp sheets of bubble wrap with both hands, gently crinkling them, though being careful not to create too many popping sounds.)*

## Transition II



Performer 1: Area A → Area B

Performer 2: Area C

Performer 3: Area B → Area A

(Performers 1 and 3 cease interaction with objects. Brief pause. In unison, Performer 1 slowly stands up, head directed at frame, while Performer 3 places stone back on pile, and stands up.)

(Performer 1 bends completely down, arms as fully extended as possible, fingers touching frame, and slowly begins to walk towards Area B, pushing picture frame against floor. Performer 3 grabs body of violin, and drags the scroll of the violin against the floor beside their body, as they walk towards Area A.)

(Once in front of each other, suddenly stop. Each looks up to face one another, and stares at each other for a few moments. Then, each looks back down and continues walking to new Areas.)

(During this transition, Performer 2 begins to rub the chair with bubble wrap, tightening it around the legs and runs slowly, listening to the tightening and occasional popping sounds. Continue until Performers 1 and 3 are at new locations.)

IV.



### Performer 3: Area A

(Once arriving at pile, cease movement. Attention is suddenly drawn towards the crumpled paper on the floor. Let go of violin, slowly rise, and walk towards the paper. Keel down on both knees and examine each one, holding one up at a time.)

(After placing the final one down, look over at black journal. Keeping it on the floor, open the cover and turn a few pages until stopping. Keeping it open to that page, use free hand to grab nearby pencil.)

(Slowly lower pencil to blank page as if to write, then suddenly gasp and quickly raise pencil, freezing at mid-chest height. Slowly lower it again until it touches page, then gasp and quickly retract again. Repeat gesture once more, then Pause. Gently lower pencil back on floor, and close journal. Brief pause.)

(After pause, notice a ribbed stick lying on floor. Reach over and grab it, and after a few moments of investigating it, pull violin over. Slowly move stick up and down violin, tapping it, rubbing it against the violin's strings and body, with varying degrees of speed and pressure.)

IV.



Performer 1: Area B

*(Once arriving at pile, cease movement. Slowly stand up, holding frame in both hands, and kneel down at pile.)*

*(After brief pause, glance over at mirror. Right hand gently runs fingers down glass of mirror several times.  
Pause.)*

*(Right hand then reaches down towards pile of stones, briefly sifts through them, before selecting the largest one, and taps/rubs it against glass of picture frame.)*

IV.



Performer 2: Area C

(Once Performer 1 and 3 arrive at new locations, cease rubbing chair with bubble wrap. Suddenly notice a small violin bow lying in front of the chair. Slowly place bubble wrap on pile behind chair, and gently bend forward, reach down for the bow, and sit back, holding it in both hands. Brief pause.)

(Look down upon it for several moments, and after examining it, pick up the paint scraper sitting amongst the other objects behind the chair.)

(Gently rub the bow across the corners, sides, and surfaces of the scraper, creating soft, fragile sounds. Eyes staring at the floor, as if in a trance.)

### Transition III



Performer 1: Area B

Performer 2: Area C → Area A

Performer 3: Area A → Area C

(Performers 2 and 3 cease making sounds, and slowly stand up. Performer 3 covers their face with the violin, holding it upside down with their left hand around the fingerboard. Performer 3 then begins to walk slowly towards Area C, pressing ribbed stick against strings with varying degrees of pressure, creating intermittent noise. Performer 2 holds paint scraper, mid-chest level, and bows the top edge in a consistent, circular motion, creating delicate metallic noise.)

(Once in front of each other, cease movement and sound. With bow in hand, Performer 2 slowly reaches out to the violin obscuring Performer 3's face, and lightly rubs the bow down the violin strings until it touches Performer 3's hand. Brief pause. Performer 2 pulls bow away, deeply inhales, then exhales audibly. Performer 2 begins to bow paint scraper again and continues walking towards Area A as Performer 3 resumes towards Area C.)

(During this transition, Performer 1 directs the cracked picture frame towards the mirror, and reaches out with right hand to touch the mirror, gently running fingers up and down the glass. Do this until Performers 2 and 3 are at their new locations.)

V.



### Performer 2: Area A

(Upon arrival at pile, cease movement and sound. Bend straight down, and place paint scraper and bow gently on floor. Attention is suddenly drawn towards crumpled paper. Bend up, slowly walk over to the paper. Kneel down on both knees and examine each one, holding one up at a time.)

(After placing the final paper down, look over at black journal. Open it, and turn a few pages until settling on a blank one. Keeping it open with left hand, reach over for pencil and slowly lower it onto page Brief pause. Then, begin to slowly write on blank page. Writing should gradually increase in speed, though never outwardly frantic. Sound of writing should also become more pronounced, until pencil tip suddenly breaks. Pause for several moments, staring down at journal. Slowly bring pencil close to face, scanning it with eyes, then place it on floor and close journal.)

(After a few moments, look over at the vase. Slowly reach over to touch flower with right hand and, as if by accident, push vase over, causing flowers and sand to spill out away from pile. Freeze in position, hand suspended in air, a slight quiver present. Slowly lower hand, and crawl on hands and knees to the spilt flowers and sand.)

(Still on hands and knees, gently feel the flowers and sand for several moments, grasping sand and letting it slip through fingers. Then, gently lay down on side, facing the sand, and close eyes. Remain still until end of piece.)

V.



Performer 1: Area B

*(After Performers 2 and 3 arrive at their new piles, place the frame on the floor, and stare into the mirror.)*

*(Attention suddenly focuses on table lamp with shredded shade. Slowly reach right hand over to light switch, grasp it, turn it. Pause 7-10 seconds, with hand still on switch.)*

*(Repeat gesture several times, until Performer 2 and 3 have ceased movement. Then, with hand still on light switch, lower head and freeze in position until end of piece.)*

V.



### Performer 3 - Area C

*(After arriving at Area, cease movement. Gently kneel down on both knees behind overturned chair. Bend forward, and carefully place the violin on the other side of the chair, and rest the ribbed stick in front of it. Then, sit back, and rest hands in lap.)*

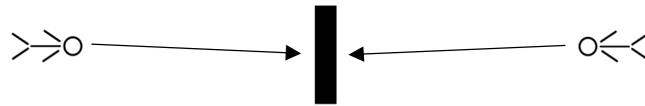
*(Scan each object with eyes. Attention suddenly focuses on chair. Begin to explore the chair with hands, feeling the surface and texture of the chair, occasionally grasping the rungs, feeling the firmness, until a rung comes out of the chair. Sit back, and look down at the rung, resting in both hands. Pause.)*

*(After several moments, place the rung with the other objects in front of you. Then, gently bend your body forward over the chair back, with your head and hands gently touching the floor near the violin. Remain in position until end of piece.)*

Performers 4-5

Movement Diagram for Performers 4-5

A



B

C



### Performer 4 - 5

(Just prior to performance, gently lay down on the floor on the front of your body, one performer on each side of the wall-like object in the center of the triangular formation. Each head turned to side facing Performers 2 and 3, eyes closed.)

(Remain motionless until Performers 1 - 3 have walked to their Areas. After this, open eyes and slowly turn head to face wall. Over an extended period of time, gradually pull your body towards the wall. Do so at an incredibly slow pace, alternating each pull with left and right arms. Pause between each pull as well. In order to reach the wall at roughly the same time, listen intently to the sounds of each other pulling yourselves across the floor to the wall.)

(Once reaching the wall, slowly sit up and kneel upon both knees, placing hands in lap, staring directly at wall. Pause for several minutes. After pausing, reach over and begin to slowly feel the surface of the wall with both hands, as if trying to find a way through, as if sensing something on the other side.)

(After doing so for an extended period of time, cease movement. Pause for several moments. With both hands pressed against wall, gently press right side of face against wall, close eyes. Remain still and silent until end of piece.)