

Schoenberg's Labyrinth – Performance Instructions

Schoenberg's Labyrinth consists of 'the labyrinth' – a graphic score to be read as an instruction to play single notes from the chord C C# E A B

The core instruction is to follow paths through the labyrinth thus encouraging an indeterminate series of notes with each pass (the labyrinth should be treated as a loop)

The ensemble themselves are encouraged to develop a performance collectively from this graphic motivation.

Example performances or instructions could include:

Slowing playing through the labyrinth in free time, producing chance chords and melodies as they fall.

Playing through in unison with sustain (dependent on an instruments ability to do this) creating series of chords.

Separating roles, some players playing quickly through the labyrinth, some meandering.

Dividing the group by register, or timbre.

Players are also encouraged – within reason (sticking to the paths written notes of the harmony) – to come up with novel paths and readings. 'Two steps forward, one step back', 'Play A before each note', 'Repeat the same path 8 times before changing' and so on.

A performance can be made up of several movements incorporating different instructions. For example:

1. Each player picks one note from the harmony and sticks to it by means of introduction
2. Enter the labyrinth and play slowly through it's paths
3. At a designated time 'freeze' on the note you are currently playing to fade