Clapping Machine Music Variations
for two or more laptops and two or more acoustic instruments

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Clapping Machine Music Variations

after Ligeti and Reich and Björk

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Theme

P1 (4:3:2:3)  

in these free sections, the Drum Machinists should improvise with various drum-pad samples, and with the Drum Machine parameters, eventually converging on the given beat-length sequence (BLS: in this opening case, the given BLS is the same as the Theme BLS, so there is no converging necessary, but there will be for all the Variations). Note that the Drum Machinists might choose to begin the new BLS together, in sync, though this is left up to the performers. Also, care should be taken to keep these sections from droning on too long, unless droning on for long is desired.

Drum Machinist 1

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
P1 (4:3:2:3)

Drum Machinist 2

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
P1 (4:3:2:3)

Any Instrumentalists 1

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
in these final bars of each variation, everyone rests, takes a breath, preparing for the next variation, though the Drum Machines will continue on, so these won’t be silent.

Any Instrumentalists 2

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

some kind of count-off will be required at the opening and for each variation, to facilitate syncing of drum machines. something contrasting to the spoken count-offs before the hand-claps at the end of each variation is best (stick clicks, for instance)

(leave some space before entering at first)

using 1-2 notes from the previous phrase, articulate this rhythmic cycle. enter when ready, without regard to when other AIs are entering (unless there are LOTS of you, in which case pairing might be good), but clearly synced with the pulse as you hear it from the Drum Machinists. rest as needed. repeat until interrupted by count-off for clapping.

number of beats (as felt from drum machines) to hold each note; everyone should be synched on these sections. octave transposition is possible for instruments that can’t reach these notes.

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Variation 1

(P1; sync should also recall the first preset, 4:3:2:3, at the beginning of every variation)

DM 1

DM 2

Als 1

Als 2

with this Variation and all that follow, the Drum Machinists should eventually converge on BLS sequence indicated here

as before, instruments that can sustain two notes should do so, playing each new note while continuing to sustain its predecessor
Variation 3

DM 1

DM 2

Als 1

Als 2

instruments that can sustain two notes should do so, playing each new note while continuing to sustain its predecessor
here, the group must decide whether to try to feel even quarters, as in the earlier variations, or whether to feel larger, slower beats (as shown in the alternative lines above). the choice will largely depend on how the Drum Machinists play these sections: it is possible for the quarters to be felt clearly, or not.

DM 1

DM 2

Als 1

Als 2

If the alternative, slowly warped beats approach is taken, then the count-off to the clapping should reflect that, and be a slow, uneven "one two three four."

Or:

Or:

here, the group must decide whether to try to feel even quarters, as in the earlier variations, or whether to feel larger, slower beats (as shown in the alternative lines above). the choice will largely depend on how the Drum Machinists play these sections: it is possible for the quarters to be felt clearly, or not.

and continue whichever strategy chosen through the clapping, the alternative notation is just to emphasize feeling the uneven beats in place of the quarter-note pulse.
Variation 5

DM 1

AIs 1
Variation 6

(P1)

DM 1

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

(P1)

DM 2

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Al's 1

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Al's 2

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

x4

easiest to treat first 16th as pickup when beginning; this will result in the quarter-note pulse continuing smoothly into the closing Clapping Music pattern

x4

last time, mute!

DM 1

DM 2

Al's 1

Al's 2

last time, mute!