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Five plays

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Thesis Report for the Master of Fine Arts Degree
College of Fine and Applied Arts
Rochester Institute of Technology

Title: Five Plays

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Date: October 8, 1973

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Date:

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Date:

Five Plays
William Roth Ortwein

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Introduction to Plays

Corolla

(a play for two Voices)

Necktie

(a play for one voice and
tape-recorded sounds)

Sparkling Doilies

(a play for one voice)

A Cocoon is Made Mostly of Herself

(for Robert)

(a play for five voices)

Calm Eye

(a play for five voices)

Introduction to Photographs
of Paintings

Introduction to Plays

These plays are inventions + progressions of sounds and words disassociated from common usage. Within the juxtaposition of various words and the concatenation of sounds and the implicit actions and the concomitant entangling of emotions lies a tragic and humorous statement.

The works have their meanings rooted in contradiction and struggle: more precisely where reality, illusion and dramatic purpose meet (where there is dynamic equilibrium between opposing forces). In Necktie the player struggles with the reality and illusion of the tape-recorded sounds. A tenuous relationship of man and machine sounds, often tragic, is maintained throughout, even though the visual man-machine relationship is laughable.

The lone player in Sparkling Boilies is involved in a deep psychological struggle as the collision of word sounds and word meanings establishes a state of dream-consciousness in which the player displays feelings of despair and feelings of ecstasy: despair as ruthless as the alienation of word and meaning; ecstasy as beautiful as the sounds and rhythm of sounds.

The five players in Calm Eye select their individual word parts from popular communication media. They perform

their parts simultaneously which renders the words meaningless, and creates a chorus of intensely beautiful sounds.

Corolla is completely constructed of sounds apart from word sounds and occupies a middle ground between dramatic dialogue and music and may be the most successful of the five works because its form is not readily definable.

Decisions concerning the arrangement of word and sound patterns in A Cocoon is Made Mostly of Herself are made by the players (players and playwright share equally in the actual creation of the play). The five words in the play suggest an approach in the spirit of a cartoon, however, approaches may range from a simple chant to a complex confrontation of man and nature.

Because the plays are based on universal concepts (reality vs. illusion, mind vs. body, man vs. machine, humor vs. tragedy, music vs. noise, etc.) there are as many interpretations as there are interpreters, thus the plays are changeable and renewable.

The plays are currently being performed and discussed in the advanced drama class at the Eastman School of Music.

I am now forming a theater group and plan to have several private performances during the last two weeks in May.

Corolla
(a play for two voices)

A Play for Two Voices

First voice (FV) and second voice (SV) parts are performed simultaneously.

FV: rapid two note whistle

SV: exaggerated, deep humming (5 seconds)

(5 second pause)

FV: exaggerated snoring

SV: alternate deep/high hiccups (3 seconds)

(1 second pause)

FV: deep snoring

SV: high sneezes (2 seconds)

FV: loud hissing

SV: loud whispered screams (1 second)

(1/2 second pause)

FV: exaggerated, deep humming

SV: exaggerated, high humming (2 seconds)

FV: alternate sneezes/whistles/pauses

SV: alternate deep/high hiccups (10 seconds)

FV: just audible, deep humming

SV: just audible, monotone humming (5 seconds)

FV: just audible snoring

SV: just audible, monotone crying (3 seconds)

FV: just audible laughing

SV: just audible hissing (2 seconds)

FV: just audible humming with pauses

SV: just audible coughing with pauses (5 seconds)
(5 second pause)

FV: just audible to loud sneezes with pauses

SV: loud to just audible sneezes with pauses (15 seconds)
(5 second pause)

FV: just audible to loud monotone humming

SV: just audible to loud coughing with pauses (7 seconds)

FV: just audible coughing

SV: just audible hissing (1 second)
(2 second pause)

FV: just audible snoring

SV: just audible sneezes (1 second)
(1 second pause)

FV: alternate monotone humming/monotone laughing/pauses

SV: alternate monotone hiccups/monotone whistles/pauses (10 seconds)

FV: exaggerated, deep humming

SV: exaggerated, deep laughing (3 seconds)

FV: exaggerated sneezes

SV: exaggerated hiccups (1 second)

FV: alternate deep/high coughing

SV: alternate deep/high sneezes (5 seconds)
(3 second pause)

FV: monotone humming

SV: loud hiccups (1 second)

FV: just audible hissing

SV: just audible moans (3 seconds)
(1 second pause)

FV: alternate just audible humming/loud humming

SV: loud hiccups with pauses (5 seconds)

FV: just audible screams

SV: alternate exaggerated sneezes/exaggerated snoring/pauses (15 seconds)
(2 second pause)

FV: just audible monotone humming

SV: just audible moans (2 seconds)

FV: just audible sneezes

SV: just audible hiccups (3 seconds)

FV: loud hissing

SV: loud whispered screams (1 second)
(1 second pause)

FV: loud snoring with pauses

SV: loud monotone humming (5 seconds)

FV: loud whispered scream

SV: loud humming (2 seconds)

FV: monotone humming

SV: monotone screams (3 seconds)

(3 second pause)

FV: exaggerated snoring with pauses

SV: alternate hiccups/sneezes/pauses (10 seconds)

FV: just audible hiccups

SV: just audible monotone humming (2 seconds)

At this point, going from finish to start, the first voice assumes the second voice role and the second voice assumes the first voice role.

Necktie

(a play for one voice and
tape-recorded sounds)

A Play for One Voice and Tape-Recorded Sounds

Voice (V)

Tape-recorded sounds (S)

S: just audible shooting (10 seconds)

(2 second pause)

S: loud radio static (1 second)

V: monotone humming (3 seconds)

S: alternate just audible/ loud shooting (4 seconds)

V: tweet balls cough kink milk steam from antelope

V,S (simultaneously):

V: alternate hissing/hiccups/pauses

S: just audible electric drill (10 seconds)

(3 second pause)

V: whispered screams (2 seconds)

S,V (simultaneously):

S: alternate - automobile engine idle/acceleration

V: income collectively vamp again a shoe divine revelation

college class or in a family unit such income damage or

punishment insult and herself and her will to her

creatures stamp vengeance revenue (15 seconds)

(2 second pause)

S: loud click

V: exaggerated high humming (2 seconds)

S: just audible barking dog (1 second)

(5 second pause)

- S: just audible airplane; loud ping-pong game (10 seconds)
- S: door opening and closing, repeated 15 times (20 seconds)
(2 second pause)
- S: just audible click
- V: alternate monotone humming/sneezes (3 seconds)
- V: just audible sneezes (10 seconds)
- V: loud whispered screams (2 seconds)
- S: wall light switch snapped, repeated 30 times (15 seconds)
- S: drum roll, barking dog, repeat 10 times with one second pauses
(14 seconds)
- V: loud monotone crying (1 second)
- V: short scream
- S: electric drill (1 second)
(5 second pause)
- S: loud shooting (3 seconds)
- S: just audible shooting (10 seconds)
(3 second pause)
- S: just audible to loud ping-pong game (20 seconds)
- V: exaggerated humming with pauses (3 seconds)
- V: exaggerated sneezes (2 seconds)
(5 second pause)
- S: just audible explosions (2 seconds)
(3 second pause)
- S: electric can opener (10 seconds)
- V,S (simultaneously):
- V: monotone laughing with pauses
- S: vacuum cleaner (12 seconds)

(1 second pause)

V,S (simultaneously):

V: just audible hissing

S: just audible buzzer (2 seconds)

V: just audible to inaudible deep laughing (1 second)

S: just audible to inaudible automobile engine (1 second)

V: exaggerated deep humming (1 second)

S: inaudible to loud to inaudible automobile engine (15 seconds)

(5 second pause)

S: loud unfolding of a folding table and four chairs (20 seconds)

Sparkling Doilies
(a play for one voice)

A Play for One Voice

Monotone:

tweet auxiliary mau mau

Monotone humming (1 second)

Monotone with pauses:

monk tense gland fly gargoyle tennis tongue

Just audible:

eye wash tutu sweetheart trapeze

Just audible to loud with pauses:

torpedo commerce suggest habitual immediate for a in as an
ring ferris wheel Sir Anthony Eden

Just audible:

intestines grandparents trumpet carrot

Monotone:

globe globe globe globe globe globe globe globe globe globe

Exaggerated sneezes (3 seconds)

Monotone, emphasizing each syllable:

congratulations

Just audible:

bounce chicken leg tool socket

Rapid monotone:

blink blink blink blink blink blink blink blink blink blink

blink blink blink blink blink blink blink blink

Monotone:

foot powder shrub bumper pale

Rapid monotone with pauses:

in or of the on a it near as either which with let from

Alternate monotone humming and monotone laughing (4 seconds)

Alternate deep humming and deep laughing (2 seconds)

Laugh in loud whisper (1 second)

Rapid monotone:

of and to from this that

(2 second pause)

High voice:

one second two seconds

(1 second pause)

Deep voice:

cow sandpaper drill cheese translucent spur

Loud whisper:

of and a for this that

(1 second pause)

Monotone:

machine gun Tibet float membrane

(3 second pause)

High voice:

gar-fish keyboard

Just audible moans (3 seconds)

Rapid monotone:

stomach coyote airplane

Deep, loud:

maiden engrave crystalline phlox blot

(5 second pause)

Just audible:

rose hospital distance nationally X-ray ball eel cheat feeble
swoon handy bankrupt gyroscope

Just audible, pauses between words:

smoker done inhabited chop handkerchief but does frequently
technically chew sea Cleveland blast top

Just audible (mumble):

lunches noose usually herring steeple anti-aircraft pawnbroker

Loud to inaudible with pauses:

insect lens Baghdad national park nutrient birthday lung stair-
way armed credit mutual usage shout camera police dog horn fly
leg world war chickweed ancestor granite

Deep, exaggerated with pauses:

or it these a the and a it to were that or the was a and or it an
and this the

Monotone, slow to rapid:

a is of any in also from like falls to of the of the of a for can
as of or like an almost to a an more put in these of a like with
a is a an any into

Just audible (mumble) with pauses:

a or of the is and in the is in for and the of and one out is but
or of which or of in an the of a this and a in or the

Just audible with pauses:

a as on the to a and to if an is to a an and a the as an of the a
the and a the of has a or them of in a an of the as for an of as
is the a and of an the as the a to and in of as a the is a to and
the a an a the a as the or an a the and if an a the for a the of

(cont.)

an a of the a to that an as the has of the are as of a and
 have a the of the a has a an the a has or of a in on and
 is an to in of is a the as a a of as in a is a to a the a
 the that a the in is a an it a it an has an has a the has of

Alternate deep and high with pauses:

candy diver garment holywater fox hole civil war air craft
 upholstery trout chancellor yard work napkin deed organ combat
 lice steam engine household

(3 second pause)

Rapid monotone:

click (repeat for 5 seconds)

Alternate deep and high:

larva duck furnish deep fat

Loud whisper:

chews (pause) rose

Alternate words and sneezes:

bounce meddling paddle

Rapid monotone:

cattle chloride wasp vacuum

Just audible with pauses:

aviary Connecticut egg whites walrus speed glands corpuscle
 test skill Lake Michigan moving parts skin

Whispered screams (2 seconds)

Just audible:

lace milk wool eye magnet vowel escalator salt Eskimo

Deep, each word emphasized:

scallop keyhole irregular wizard boer war spirits masses
granular

Word and word echo:

pack February germ skull romance furnace

Alternate loud/just audible:

a as a as a as a as a as a as a as a as a as a as a as a as a as
a as a as a as a as

Just audible:

and an and an and an

Just audible with pauses:

or can only this through cord tray field mild path light
instrument vapor priest manifold pipe ask turkey warship

Alternate deep and high humming (3 seconds)

Alternate deep and high laughing (3 seconds)

Whispered laughing (2 seconds)

Alternate deep and high laughing (4 seconds)

Alternate deep and high humming (1 second)

Just audible monotone humming (1 second)

Monotone laughing (3 seconds)

Exaggerated deep humming (1 second)

Exaggerated deep crying (2 seconds)

(3 second pause)

Just audible monotone laughing (3 seconds)

(1 second pause)

Rapid two-note humming (4 seconds)

High, over-emphasizing each word:

flash light preshrink goddess surgical

(2 second pause)

Rapid hicups (2 seconds)

Rapid, deep with pauses:

balls choke Mormon laundress birth rented last supper liquid

sharp tardy poppy

Whisper, loud to just audible:

fish shocked flourish orbit utensil empress

(10 second pause)

Just audible monotone humming (2 seconds)

Just audible whisper:

upper queen mocking shoulder original sin kerosene seminole

Rapid two-note humming with pauses (3 seconds)

Monotone crying (2 seconds)

Monotone humming (3 seconds)

Just audible humming (2 seconds)

Alternate deep and high humming with pauses (5 seconds)

(2 second pause)

Just audible, monotone humming (4 seconds)

Exaggerated, deep humming (2 seconds)

A Cocoon is Made Mostly of Herself
(for Robert)
(a play for five voices)

A Play for Five Voices

Voice one: tweet (throughout)

Voice two: bang (throughout)

Voice three: room (throughout)

Voice four: globe (throughout)

Voice five: kink (throughout)

The voice parts are to be arranged as follows:

Each part is to consist of associations of various lengths of time and various combinations of deep voice, high voice, normal voice, loud voice, just audible voice, rapid, slow, pauses.

The voice parts (voice one, two, three, four, five) are performed simultaneously.

The play is seven minutes long.

Calm Eye
(a play for five voices)

A Play for Five Voices

The lines for each voice are to be taken from current publications, newspapers, magazines, etc. Each voice has different lines and in each passage (P) the voices perform simultaneously.

Voice/Voices (V).

- P1. V1,2,3: monotone (10 seconds)
- P2. V3,4,5: monotone with pauses (3 seconds)
- P3. V1,2: monotone (1 second)
- P4. V3: monotone (2 seconds)
- P5. V3,4,5: monotone (1 second)
- P6. V1,5: rapid monotone (5 seconds)
- P7. V2,3: monotone (3 seconds)
- P8. V5: rapid monotone (4 seconds)
- P9. V1,2,3: rapid monotone with pauses (10 seconds)
- P10. V1,2: slow monotone with pauses (10 seconds)
- P11. V4,5: rapid monotone (2 seconds)
- P12. V4: slow monotone (4 seconds)
- P13. V1,2,3,4,5: slow monotone with pauses (5 seconds)
- P14. V1,2: rapid monotone (3 seconds)
- P15. V3,4,5: slow monotone (4 seconds)
- P16. V5: rapid monotone with pauses (10 seconds)
- P17. V2,3: rapid monotone with pauses (5 seconds)
- P18. V4,5: rapid monotone (3 seconds)
- P19. V3,4: monotone (1 second)
- P20. V1,2,3: rapid monotone (2 seconds)

- P21. V1,2: rapid monotone
 V3,4,5: slow monotone (4 seconds)
- P22. V1,2: high voice
 V3,4,5: deep voice (2 seconds)
- P23. V1: high
 V2: deep (1 second)
- P24. V3,4: alternate words/whistles (10 seconds)
 (5 second pause)
- P25. V3,4: just audible (1 second)
- P26. V1,2,5: just audible (2 seconds)
- P27. V1,2,4: just audible (2 seconds)
- P28. V1: deep
 V2: high with pauses
 V3: monotone
 V4: rapid with pauses
 V5: slow (10 seconds)
- P29. V1: high with pauses
 V2: deep with pauses
 V3: rapid
 V4: slow with pauses
 V5: monotone (10 seconds)
- P30. V1: monotone
 V2: rapid
 V3: high with pauses
 V4: deep
 V5: slow (3 seconds)

- P31. V1: rapid with pauses
 V2: slow
 V3: deep with pauses
 V4: high
 V5: monotone (7 seconds)
 (4 second pause)
- P32. V1: exaggerated, deep humming with pauses
 V2,3: just audible to loud
 V4,5: loud to just audible (10 seconds)
- P33. V1: deep
 V2: high
 V3: rapid with pauses
 V5: slow (2 seconds)
- P34. V1: high
 V2: deep (1 second)
- P35. V2,3,4,5: exaggeratedly deep with pauses (10 seconds)
 (2 second pause)
- P36. V2: normal voice (2 seconds)
- P37. V4,5: normal (1 second)
- P38. V1: whisper
 V2: just audible (3 seconds)
- P39. V3,4,5: whisper (1/2 second)
 (1 second pause)
- P40. V4,5: deep (1/2 second)
 (1 second pause)
- P41. V1,2: just audible (1 second)
 (3 second pause)

- P42. V1,2,4,5: just audible (2 seconds)
(2 second pause)
- P43. V3: normal (1/2 second)
(1 second pause)
- P44. V1,2,4: normal (1/2 second)
(1 second pause)
- P45. V1,2,5: normal (1 second)
(1 second pause)
- P46. V1: deep
V2: high
V5: monotone (2 seconds)
- P47. V2: deep with pauses
V3: high with pauses
V4: alternate words/exaggerated sneezes (15 seconds)
- P48. V2,3,5: alternate words/monotone humming (10 seconds)
- P49. V1,2,4,5: deep (1 second)
- P50. V1,2,3: exaggerated, deep (5 seconds)
- P51. V2,3: just audible, alternate words/humming/pauses (15 seconds)
- P52. V1: whisper with pauses
V4: loud whisper with pauses
V5: just audible (10 seconds)
(5 second pause)
- P53. V2: whisper
V3: loud hissing (4 seconds)
(1 second pause)

- P54. V1,2,3,4,5: just audible (1 second)
(2 second pause)
- P55. V1,2: just audible (1/2 second)
- P56. V3,4,5: just audible (1 second)
(5 second pause)
- P57. V1,2,3,4,5: normal (2 seconds)
- P58. V2,3: exaggerated, deep (1/2 second)
(1 second pause)
- P59. V1,2,3,4,5: normal with pauses (5 seconds)
(2 second pause)
- P60. V1,2,3: alternate deep/high (3 seconds)
- P61. V1: rapid deep with pauses
V2: rapid monotone (7 seconds)
(3 second pause)
- P62. V4: normal (1 second)
- P63. V1: monotone with pauses
V2: alternate deep/high (5 seconds)
- P64. V3: rapid monotone (2 seconds)
- P65. V1,2,3: normal, alternate words/pauses (15 seconds)
- P66. V4,5: normal (1 second)
(1 second pause)
- P67. V2,3,4,5: normal (3 seconds)
- P68. V3,4,5: alternate deep/high/pauses (10 seconds)
- P69. V1,2: alternate words/humming/pauses (5 seconds)
- P70. V1,2: just audible (10 seconds)
- P71. V3,4,5: just audible (3 seconds)

P72. V1,2: whisper (5 seconds)

(2 second pause)

P73. V2: loud hissing

V5: monotone humming (2 seconds)

P74. V1,4,5: exaggerated, deep humming with pauses (5 seconds)

P75. V1,2,3: normal (1 second)

P76. V2,4,5: alternate words/pauses (15 seconds)

Introduction to Photographs of Paintings

The photographs that follow represent four of some sixty paintings I completed during my thesis period. The main body of work consists of paper constructions and paper paintings.

The paper constructions and paintings began as an analogy between the fragile and temporal qualities of paper and dye and the fragile and temporal qualities of living beings. The works and ideas have since developed into a visual allegory in which materials used are subordinate to the life forces in the works.

The several directions in which I have been working include human-animal skins, bird skins, plant forms, stone forms and ocean forms.







