

Kory Reeder

in the end, everything is bare

for piano (or keyboard) and ensemble with electronics
(2023)

Duration: 15-20 minutes

Throughout most of this piece, the piano leads the ensemble through the chord changes and the ensemble acts as a resonating aura around the piano. In general, the piece is rather quiet but the piano does not need to be always the loudest instrument, and the piano does not need to *sound like* it's leading the ensemble; individual instruments can stand out from time to time, and the shifting of tones should sound more like a morphing cloud rather than a follow-the-leader exercise.

The ensemble should contain at least 5 other players.

Instrumentation is open, but the chosen instruments need to be able to play the written pitches in the notated register. Not all notes need to be sounding all the time (in fact, I would prefer if they weren't), but the closer the ensemble can be to having the full register of the piece covered the better (F2 – E5).

The electronics run off a provided MAX/MSP patch but could easily be made in a DAW for a live player to perform. The tones indicated in the score are sine waves, and each cue will trigger the next event (see MAX patch for instructions). The electronics should be played slightly quieter than the rest of the ensemble; something like a “background radiation” to the ensemble's aura.

Percussionists who do not have pitched instruments should gather 3 sounds and follow the electronic cues. The three sounds should be “grainy” in some way: a very close and rattling hi-hat, cardboard on a bass drum, rice dropped on a large cymbal, etc. To follow the cues, listen for the changes: there are only 3 sounds in the electronics (A-flat 3, pink noise, and E-flat 2), change sounds with the electronics and sustain these sounds *the entire time they are sounding*. These cues last *a long time* so take care to choose a sound that you can produce for such a time. Finally, as with the electronics, the chosen sound should be played slightly quieter than the rest of the ensemble; something like a “background radiation” to the ensemble's aura.

Written for and to the Christine Burke Ensemble, with gratitude.

Kory Reeder, 2023 (ASCAP)
www.koryreeder.com
kory.reeder@gmail.com

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Cue 1

Follow the piano: quietly play a note from the same chord as the piano and sustain it for as long as you want and then rest (the piano will continue).
The next tone you play should be from the chord the piano is currently playing.

20 seconds

Ab3 drone fades in

4" each

3" 5" X5

20 seconds

Play any tone from this system but coalesce on the final chords by the end.

X2

Each player is independent; choose a note from the chord and swell it; rest for a few seconds.
Stay within 2 or 3 chords of each other; the practice is similar to Terry Riley's "In C" mixed with James Tenney's "Swell Piece"

3" each

begin slowing down

6"

Ensemble: fade to silence by the last chord

4" each

X2

Cue 2 on the repeat:
pink noise fades in

For 2 minutes

Ensemble: very softly, play G3 or G4 and sustain it for some time.
Very discretely, play a few cents sharp or flat to color and add rhythm to the drone.
Piano: Play G $\flat$ or G $\sharp$ with several seconds between tones.

Ensemble: continues
Piano: slow rolls

5" each

Piano: block chords

Cue 3: Pink noise fades out

$\text{♩} = 80$, with rubato

Ensemble: Transform to F3/G3/A3/Bb3 cluster

Cue 4: A♭ drone is replaced by E♭

1 minute

Ensemble: Follow the chords like the first system.
Play in the lowest octave your instrument will let you play quietly in

X5 X6

Cue 5: Pink noise fades in

Cue 6 to end

X10 X5

20-30"