I'll need anything and everything you have to make this happen:

**Music for Metaphors**

Kenneth Fitzgerald
Workshop
◇ = Free Style

One of Brian Eno and Peter Schmidt's "Oblique Strategies" cards reads, "Feed the recording back out of the medium." So, let's go out of the medium of recording altogether and into graphic design. Music's my default metaphor for discussing graphic design and making it. What might it be like to make design the way contemporary, studio-produced music is made? We're going to make a design album (12 tracks?) as a large ensemble, with individual participants assigned roles. For instance, someone will be designated as "lead guitar," which, for our purposes may be primary typographer. Others will generate rhythms, step up for solos, sing backup. Roles will be swapped, different bands and types of music invoked. A set of Oblique Strategies cards will be consulted. Come prepared to play acoustic or electric or sample. Bring all your axes—I'm coming with crappy old Letraset sheets and rubber stamps along with my laptop.

Core topics covered:
- Craft and technology
- Pedagogy/teaching
- Formal skills
- Content/container synthesis/production

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AIGA DESIGN CONFERENCE 2016
GAMES FOR MUSICIANS

Introduction

I wrote these "games for musicians" during the recording sessions for what has now become the David Bowie album 1Outside. The sessions took place at Mountain Studios in Montreux, Switzerland, right on the edge of Lake Geneva.

At Montreux, David had assembled a great team – Mike Garson on piano, Reeves Gabrels on guitar, Sterling Campbell on drums, Erdal Kizilcay on everything and bass, and then the two of us. It quickly became clear that there were six people who had the talent and good humor (you need both) to be able to work together in a new, experimental way.

I wanted the sessions to be improvisation based, but I wanted also to think of some structuring devices that would prevent the Improvs from falling into the lowest-common-denominator grooves ("the blues" is the most common one). What I was after was a way of using the breadth of the players to create a music that was stylistically stretched, where there was a level of musical tension, a resistance to simple cohesion. So I came up with the games.

I printed them up and handed one to each of the musicians (and also to the engineer, Dave Richards, and the assistant engineer). I asked everyone keep his character secret. After that, we played "in character." It has to be said that we slipped frequently out of character, but nonetheless these set us off on a new foot and allowed us to come up with some kinds of music that we certainly wouldn't have made otherwise. Any absurdities could be blamed on the game: The game takes responsibility and lets you be someone else.

For Reeves Gabrels

It's 2008. You are a musician in one of the new "Neo-Science" bands, playing in an underground club in the Afro-Chinese ghetto in Osaka, not far from the University. The whole audience is high on "dreamwater," an auditory hallucinogen so powerful that it can be transmitted by sweat condensation alone. You are also feeling its effects, finding yourself fascinated by intricate single-note rhythm patterns, shard-like Rosetta Stone hieroglyphs. You are in no particular key – making random bursts of data which you beam into the performance. You are lost in the abstracted rational beauty of a system no one understands, sending out messages that can't be translated. You are a great artist and the audience is expecting something intellectually challenging from you. As a kid, your favorite record (in your Dad's record collection) was Trout Mask Replica.

For Mike Garson

You are a player in a Neo-M-Base improvising collective. It is 1999, the eve of the millenium. The world is holding its breath, and things are tense internationally. You are playing atonal, ice-like sheets of sound which hang limpid in the air, making a shifting background tint behind the music. You think of yourself as the "tonal geology" of the music – the harmonic underpinning from which everything else grows. When you are featured, you cascade through glacial arpeggios – incredibly slow and grand, or tumbling with intricate internal confusion. Between these cascades, you fire out short staccato bursts of knotty tonality. You love the old albums of the Mahavishnu Orchestra.

For David Bowie

You are a member of an early 21st Century "Art and Language" band. You make incantations, permutations of something between speech and singing. The language you use is mysterious and rich – and you use a melange of several languages, since anyway most of your audience now speak a patois that effortlessly blends English, Spanish, Chinese and Wolof. Using on-stage computers, instant sampling techniques and long delay echo systems, you are able to build up dense clouds of colored words during performance. Your audience regards you as the greatest living exponent of live abstract poetry. Samuel Beckett is a big influence.

For Erdal Kizilcay

It's 2005. You are a musician in a soul–Arab band in a North–African role–sex club. The clientele are rich, sophisticated and unshockable – this is to the Arab world what New York was to the US in the '80s. You play a kind of repetitive atonal funk with occasional wildly ambitious ornaments to impress your future father–in–law, the Minister of Networks for Siliconia, who is in the audience. You love the recordings of Farid El Atrash.
'Work space' is scarce like it was
design apartheid. Design bars.

Make America Music Again!  Classic
Grandmother Rock

19. You are a sophomore design student
at Ringling School of Art in Florida. Just about all you know about design
is from your intro-class text and
desk designers. Your boyfriend (you're gay, btw) showed you into Tad Wuol and
you have his, Reynolds & Simonian stickers
all over your laptop. Music: a capella!

...wearing a funking...

JO: You're a member of the neo-Punk us
collective but was purred for having
nice rump to say about branding. Now
you submit the most mainstream
brand design tropes unembellished
treated through pure entrenchment.
Influences: George Maciunas, Joseph
Cornell. Music: Stewie Whitter, Kanye

- instrumental
- ballad
- power ballad
- a cappella
- medley

- epic
- dirge
- lament

- solo acoustic (guitar)
- solo acoustic (piano)
- orchestral
- impromptu
- nothing

 Franz.

- LOOP
- IMP
- DM
- DM

- VEIN
- CHORUS
- INTRO/OUTRO
- other / special

- LINEAR
- DENSE
- SIMPLE

- LYRICISTS
- DRONE
- BASS
- DRUM / RHYTHM
- LEAD INST
- RHYTHM INST
- FILL
- PROGRAMMING
- BEATS
- WASH
- ORCH
- PERC
- VARIATIONS OF THEME
- GUIDE VOICING
- BREAKDOWN BRIDGE
- SEQUENCING
- SAMPLE(S)

nothing can be derived - must appear in final mix.
1. You are a precocious 21-year old freshly-minted graduate of a Pacific northwest undergraduate public university graphic design program. After a flirtation with UX design, you've plunged headfirst into an aesthetic driven by a fascination with Japanese graphics of all kinds. You find The Designers Republic to be too ironic and non-doctrinaire in their take. Your secret design favorite is Alvin Lustig, who bursts out expectedly in your layouts. Manga bores you but not Daniel Clowes. For music, you listen to location recordings of the street sounds of Tokyo, edited to varying lengths. John Cage who?
Trust the Ouija
(Punk thrash)
Track 2: Macabre (Orchestral)
Track 3: Kinky Jesus (Power ballad)
Track 4: Smoke a Sausage (A capella)
Track 5: Something about Empathy (Anthem)
“If the student will but endeavor to search out the thoughts which have been expressed in so many different languages, he may assuredly hope to find an ever-gushing fountain in place of a half-filled STAGNATE reservoir.”

Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament*, 1868
Track 7:
I Eat Butterflies
(Ballad)
Track 8: Weighz of Seeing (Acoustic)
Track 9: Tech Wipes (and 3-ply Tissues) (Instrumental)
Track 10:
Alright, Suite
(Epic)
Bonus Track: Disposable/Commodity (Free form)
Thank you:

Matt Barnes
Amelia Beard
Tim Bellard
Pierre Bowins
Ashley Calicchia
Todd Hilgert
Paźlina Johnson
Chad Miller
Mike Ortega
Marisa TenBrink