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fig. 1 Maybe live performance is akin to setting up an experiment in a laboratory. You set out to explore one thing and on the way, because you are looking and listening, you find other things that are brought into focus by the attention itself.

fig. 2 We pay attention. The phrase “to pay attention” gives an insight into itself: the attention must be “paid”, it is a resource spent and used. This is not lightly done; it requires a sober commitment to listening to and noting the rumblings of the system.
fig. 3  As we become more virtual, more committed to digital media, we become more logical. Not logical as in clever or consequent, but logical as in not physical, logical as in calculating rather than thinking, identifying with symbol manipulation in its various modalities from algebra to ordinary language.

fig. 4  In the musical case, we try to make maps and then navigate those maps, which is different from just walking through a landscape or swimming in the sea. We are making the waters abstract, and then having this modality problem, when we are about to perform, of wanting to switch back to just being in the water and swim through it.
Our sense of time is of course actually a gamble on the part of the nervous system (like consciousness itself). It is a neurological hypothesis, made while improvising modes for locomotion.

The object in my hand is an instrument, it allows me to anchor an experience in and around it in ways that may or may not be completely related to its actual characteristics. It pushes into my hand, it tells me something about what it is, what it can do.
fig. 7 A wiggle stick points to water or gold. Is it informed by something in the ground? Or is it an amplifier for our own quivering with unconscious sensitivity, of knowledge. Sensing, that we sense, where it is?

fig. 8 The original purpose of the cloud chamber was to capture and explain clouds, but it’s location in a lab investigating radiation allowed it to become a particle detector, a device to make visible invisibly small particles of radioactive decay. Or rather, not actually see them but at least mark their passage through the box. We see the moment as they enter the chamber leaving a trail of condensation like a highflying jet.
fig. 9 A session with the psychic involves another device: a crystal ball, a deck of cards, coffee grounds. It is a collision of two worlds: the human everyday and an unpredictable system promising some kind of access to a simultaneous parallel domain. The psychic is the sensitive reader; as subjects, we are left wondering, does she see us or do we reveal ourselves to her?

fig. 10 The roles are perfectly established. We are allowed to ask a question: What will happen now? Where will I find water? The situation and the mutual agreement to meet inside it, allow us to have an exchange inside which, the unspoken can be heard or acted out.
fig. 11 We arrive at the performance with expectations and questions. We take our roles as composer, performer, audience, crew and we build a temporary invisible structure. What emerges then will ride us like horses.

fig. 12 The musical instrument is a vehicle for the desire to make music. It is both something that must be internalized, incorporated and made flesh and something other, without which we could not get to that sound from the world beyond.
fig. 13 In this way the instrument is a kind of mystical machine, incorporating both a poorly understood phenomena and a piece of the material world, acting as an intermediary.

fig. 14 There is a point where the actual logistics of an instrument is less important, than it's ability to transmit our attention. Vibration or simulated vibration, fingers, neurons, touch, as interfering with the machine...
fig. 15 We could argue that music is one way, we can watermark time consciously, it allows us to insert a bit of ourselves into the awesome noise of time. So that we can make this dimension we live in our own.

fig. 16 “At some point I realized I always know better than the machine. I used to see this as a failure, now I see it as a feature.”
fig. 17 We fetishize machine precision, but it is nowhere as interesting as the mindful imprecision of the hand.

fig. 18 And then the performance itself becomes the test bed, where the unexpected curves into your plans and you are forced to reconsider everything; from your premises to the gage of wire in your cables.
fig. 19 We struggle to make research into interfaces and interactions, but an musician only has to pick up a new instrument...

fig. 20 and say: YES!