

222

For Soprano Saxophone, Percussion, and Computer Playback

Composed for Popebama

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Notes on the Score

Performance Suggestions

- The improvised performance should be very sparse. Lots of space. Meditative at times. Morton Feldman's "Rothko Chapel" could be a reference.
- Score should be thought of in vertical slices, where the ratio of white to black space equals the density of silence to sound.
- All the gestures in the score should be interpreted as minimally dense as possible. Perform the gestures but always with a sense of restraint (not dynamic restraining, but conveying gestures as simply as possible so as to leave space in the performance)
- Yes, do interact with the electronic 'tape' but no need to be overly reactive or 'tethered' to it.
- If helpful, the score can be divided horizontally, where the bottom part is for the percussion and the top part for saxophone.

Program Notes:

November 13, 2022, saw the tragic murder of three University of Virginia students: D'Sean Perry, Lavel Davis Jr., and Devin Chandler. Michael Hollins and Marlee Morgan were also injured. That night I was returning home from the Charlottesville Amtrak station having just arrived back in town from a concert in Connecticut a few days earlier. As I had been preparing for that concert since the beginning of the summer, I had earmarked the night of my return as a pivot toward this new composition I'd be writing for Popebama's University of Virginia 2023 residency. A few minutes after walking through my apartment door I began receiving a steady stream of messages from the university alert system warning of an active shooter, less than a mile from my home. Sadly, I learned of our three murdered comrades the next morning. In the daze of the ensuing days and weeks, my work became intertwined with the grieving process of the entire university community. As a natural outcome, this composition was born out of that tragic time.

I began to reflect on the levels of violence in our country. How is it that the inflicting of terror and pain upon neighbors, classmates, family, and members of our community seems to continue unabated? Why do the days pass with no break in the reports of non-stop killings? How does it come about that the people around us, our family, friends, and neighbors (or ourselves), become a part of this exchange of harm? I also began to wonder: statistically, of the people we personally know, how many will be murdered? After a few rough calculations averaging the past 10 years, I was shocked to learn that arguably one out of 222 people in the United States will eventually be killed within their lifetimes (this is in no way an official number, but simply a depiction of the violence that we face). I began to think of the people in my own life -- my family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and other acquaintances. How are they doing? Are they vulnerable to fall into an exchange of harm of some kind? What kind of struggles are they grappling with?

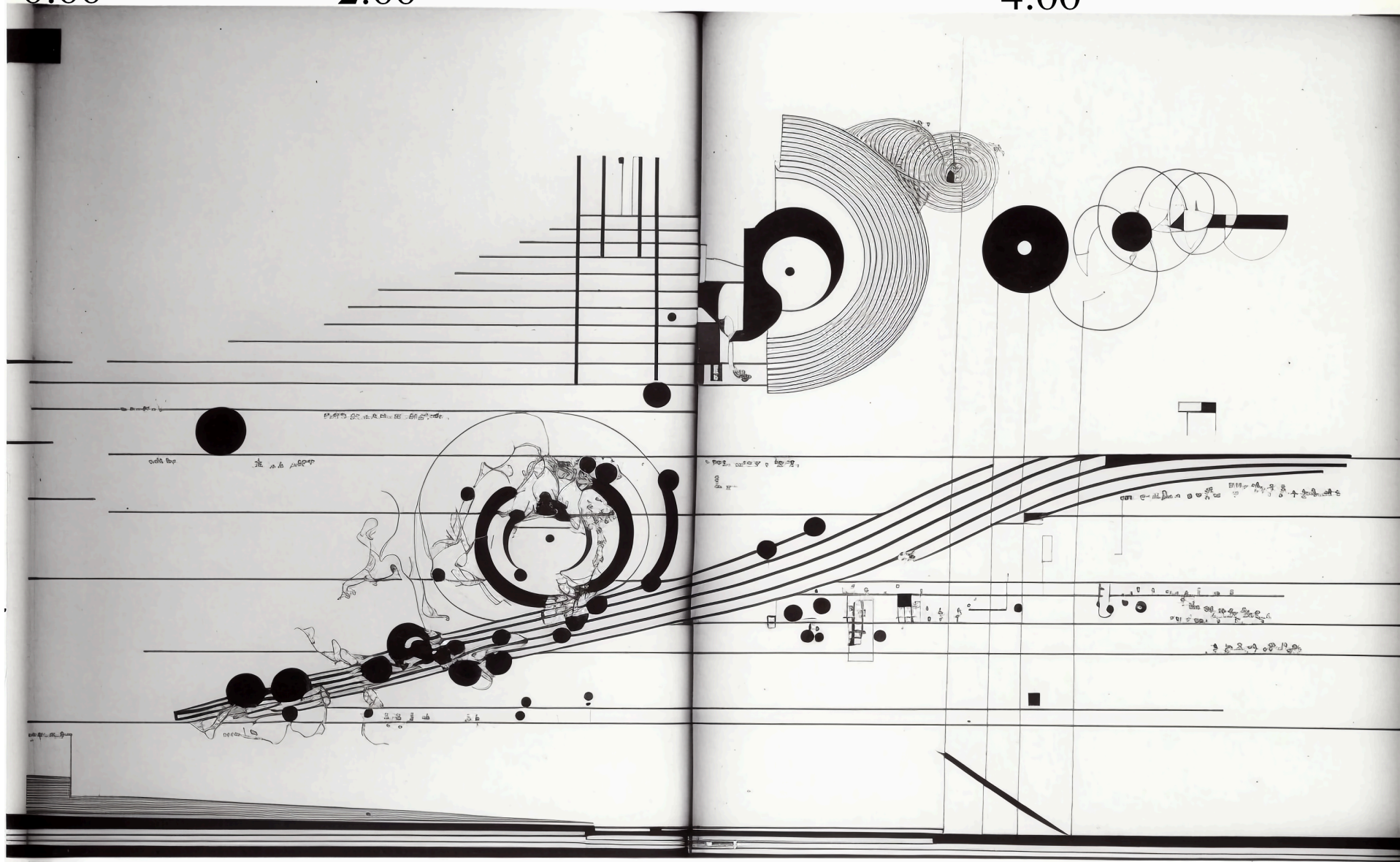
222 represents these people, and each of us have our own 222.

The course of the work consists of 222 audio clips that were created using the EV, a new hybrid digital/acoustic stringed instrument I'm developing. Popebama represents "I," -- either myself or you -- the individual. "I" is also one of the 222. The rate and order in which the clips are played back is somewhat pre-determined and also seemingly random, similar to the unfolding of our lives. The graphic score was created with Midjourney prompts.

0:00

2:00

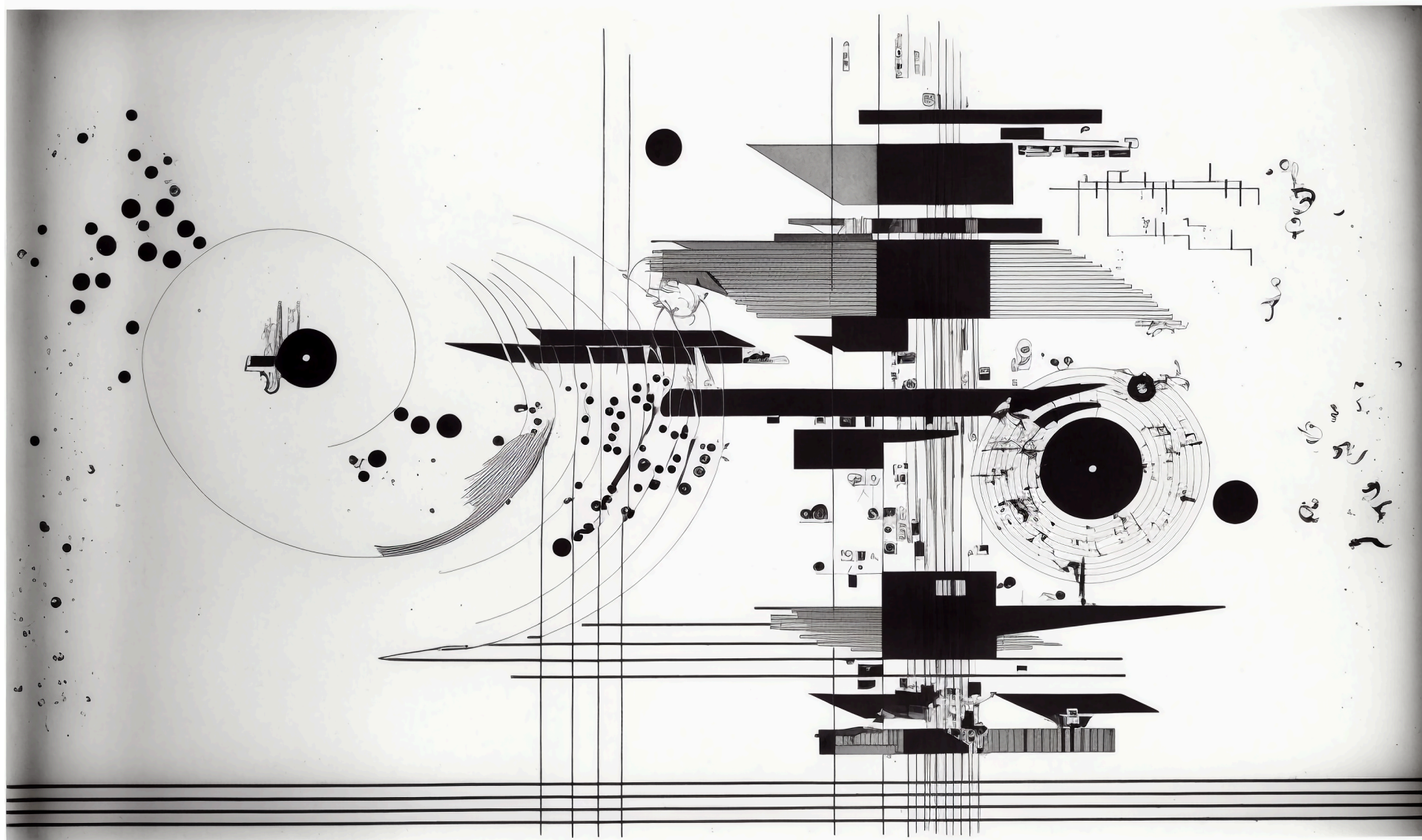
4:00



5:00

7:00

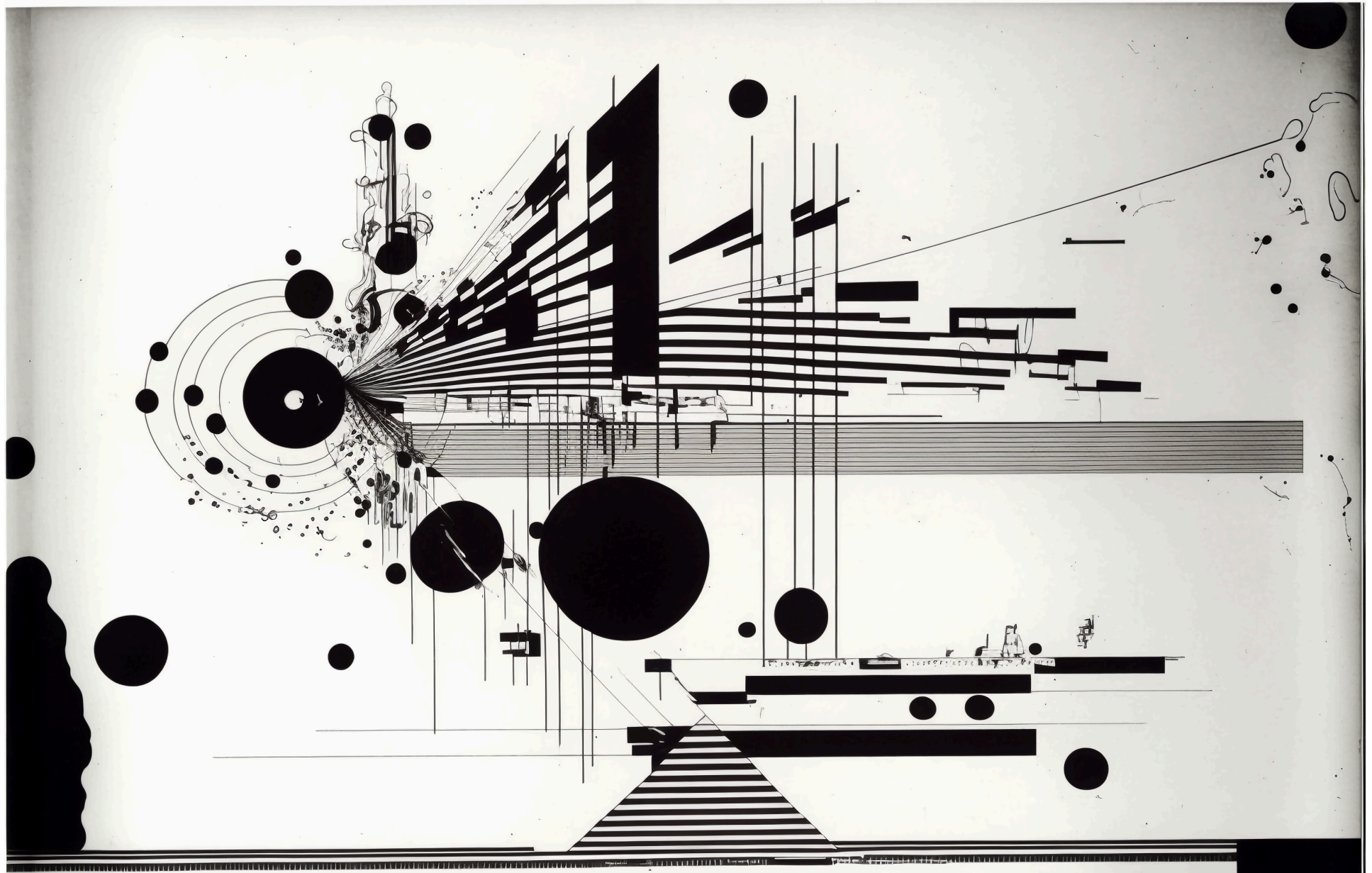
9:00



10:00

11:00

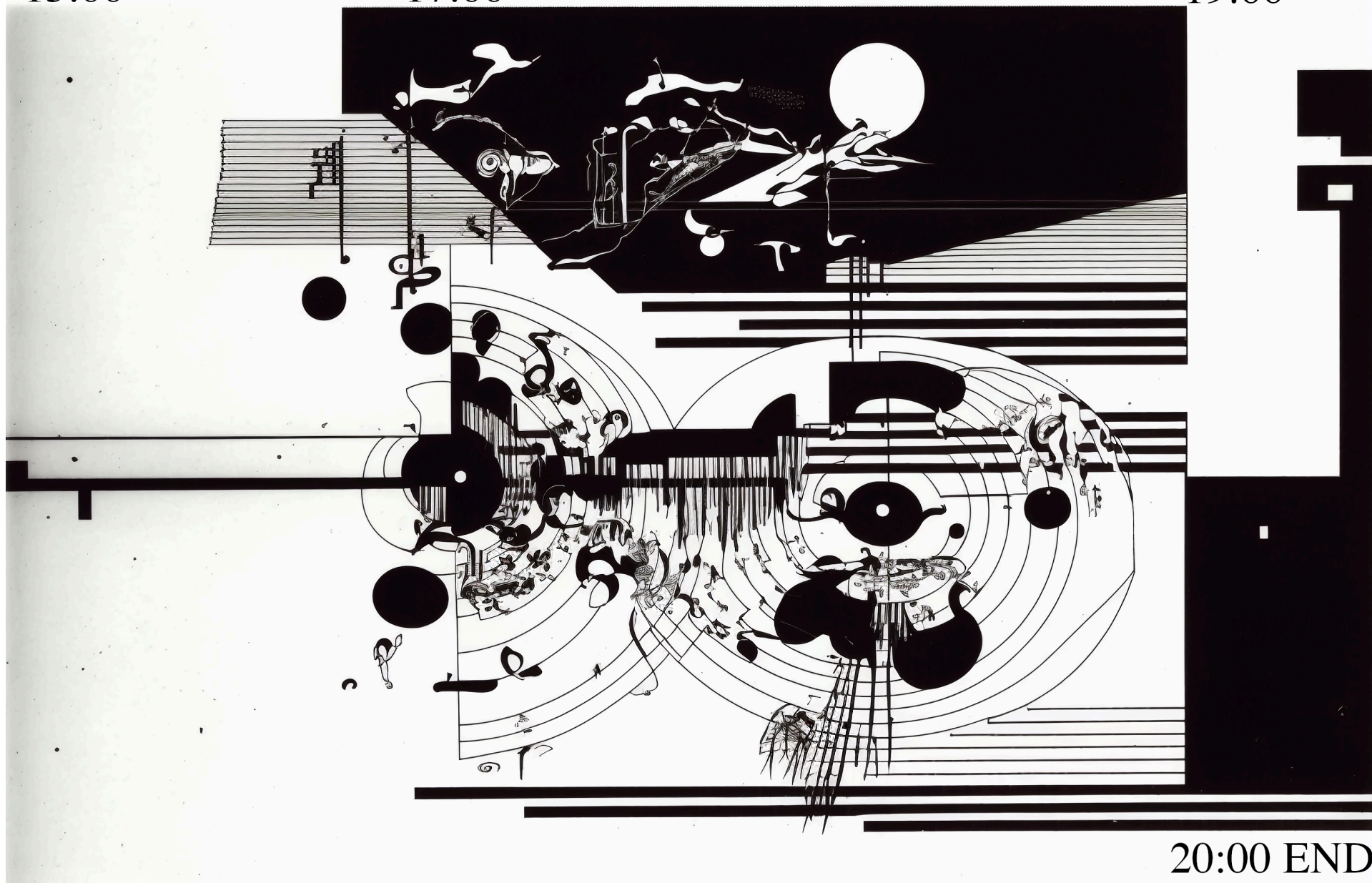
13:00



15:00

17:00

19:00



20:00 END