

~_(ツ)~

(for two seated artists)

Michael Flynn

M: So I had an idea for a piece involving two people sitting next to each other on stage.

M:The performers would be speaking the same text, simultaneously at
J:The performers would be speaking the same text, simultaneously at

first, occasionally falling out of sync for various musical or
first, occasionally(..)falling out of sync for variousMusicalOr

thematic reasons.
thematic reasons.

(~2 second beat)

speaking the same text, simultaneously at first, occasionally
speaking the same text, simultaneously at first,(.....)

falling out of sync for various musical or thematic reasons.
(.....)occasionally falling out of sync for various "musical"
or "thematic" reasons.

The text being spoken by the performers would refer to the piece
itself: my reasons for composing it, the challenges of composing a
piece like this,

the fact that this kind of piece could be seen as a fully
the fact that this kind of "piece" could be seen as a fully
self-indulgent exercise in creative vanity,
self-indulgent exercise in creative vanity,

(~2 second beat)

other personal creative hang-ups that may get in the way of a
(.....)other personal creative
successful realization of the work,
hang-ups that may get in the way of a successful realization of the
work,

(~1 second beat, cross right leg)

et cetera.
et cetera.

(~3 second beat)

To start with the hang-up that led to the creation of this piece:

I feel like lately I've been composing a lot of music that seems...

samey, for lack of a better word.
"samey," for lack of a better word.

You could say that I'm just cultivating a personal creative voice, or
You could say that I'm just cultivating a personal creative voice,
refining a set of compositional techniques,
(.....)or "refining" a set of "compositional techniques",

I'm just cultivating a personal creative voice, (.....)
(.....)cultivating a "personal" "creative" "voice",

(.....)or refining a set of compositional techniques,
or refining a set of compositional techniques,

(~2 second beat, uncross legs)

You could say that I'm just cultivating a personal creative voice, or
You could say that I'm just cultivating a personal creative voice, or
refining a set of compositional techniques,
refining a set of compositional techniques,

but either way I have found myself within a specific musical
wheelhouse.

And it is within this wheelhouse that I'm afraid I've begun to spin my
And it is within this wheelhouse that I'm afraid I've begun to "spin"
metaphorical wheels.
my metaphorical "wheels."

And I've been happy to spin my wheels,

meaning this wheelhouse has become a comfort zone!
meaning this wheelhouse has become a comfort zone!

Which is bad!
Which(.....)is bad?

(~2 second beat, cross left leg)

Or it could become bad,

and thus I've decided to creatively push myself and write a piece(...)
and thus I've decided to "creatively push myself" (.....)
(.....)with more of a performance art vibe.
and write a "piece" (.....)with more of a
"performance art" "vibe".

(~3 second beat, uncross legs, Mike look at Jared)

I first had the idea for this piece a couple months ago, while taking a late-afternoon anxiety shower.

I do some of my best creative work in the shower,

and this piece took shape rather quickly in my mind,
andThisPieceTookShapeRatherQuickly in my mind,

prompting a hasty end to my bathing.

After drying off and clothing myself, I calmly walked across the
After drying off and clothing myself, I "calmly" walkedAcrossThe
apartment to my roommate Jared's room to run my idea past him.
apartment to my roommate Jared's room to run my idea past him.

After taking a moment to pet his dog and tell her that she's a good
(.....)she's a good
girl,
girl,

I clearly and succinctly explained the concept of the piece.
I "clearly" and "succinctly" explained the concept of the piece.

(~1 second beat, cross right leg)

clearly and succinctly
"clearly" and "succinctly"

(~2 second beat, Mike look at Jared)

(sigh)
(smirk)

I clearly and succinctly explained the concept of the piece.
"Clearly" "succinctly" explained the concept of the piece.

He seemed into it.

I also asked him if he'd like to perform it with me.

He said yes!
(.....)He said...yes?

I also asked him if he really thought the piece could work.
I also asked him if he really thought(.....)the "piece"
could work.

(~4 second beat, uncross legs)

He said it would be fine.
He said it would be fine.

Before leaving his doorway, I also asked him if I could lightly fictionalize certain aspects of our conversation.
Before leaving his doorway, I also asked him if I could lightly fictionalize certain aspects of our conversation.

He said he wouldn't have a problem with that.

(~2 second beat, Jared look at Mike)

Feeling emboldened, I began the early planning stages of the piece.

Very soon, certain compositional hurdles and pitfalls began to rear their mixed-metaphorical heads:
Very soon, certain compositional hurdles and pitfalls began to rear their mixed-metaphorical heads:

For starters,

a piece like this lives or dies on the quality of the writing.
a "piece" like this lives or dies on the "quality" ofTheWriting.

(~1 second beat, Mike look at Jared, cross left leg)

(sigh)on the quality of the writing.

I like to think that I'm a good writer, (..)which brings us to the (.....)"good" "writer," which brings us to the next problem:
next problem:

Is this piece just heinously navel-gazey?

(~1 second beat, Jared look at Mike)

Is this piece just heinously navel-gazey?

Would anybody other than myself find it even remotely interesting?
Would anybody (.....)other than myself find it even remotely interesting?

(~1 second beat, Mike look at Jared)

Would anybody other than myself find it even remotely interesting?

(~3 second beat, Jared uncross legs, followed by Mike)

And even if the audience for this piece extends beyond myself,

how long could it last before it gets weird or boring?
how long could it last before it gets weird or boring?

(~5 second beat, Mike cross right leg, followed by Jared)
(~5 second beat, Jared uncross legs, followed by Mike)
(~5 second beat, both cross left leg, fold arms)
(~5 second beat, both unfold arms, sigh)

Thinking beyond this first performance:

is this the kind of piece that anybody else would want to perform?
is this the kind of "piece" that (...) anybody else would want to perform?

Does writing in the first person make this piece unperformable by
Does writing in the first person make this piece unperformable by
anyone other than myself?
anyone other than myself?

(~2 second beat, Jared look at Mike)

...and Jared?

Am I just completely full of myself?
(.....)full of myself?

(~4 second beat, uncross legs)

Am I just completely full of myself?
(.....)Am I just completely full of myself?

(~1 second beat, Mike sigh)

Am I just completely full of myself to think that someone else would
Am I just completely full of myself to think that someone else would
want to perform this at all?
want to perform this at all?

And is that just further proof that this idea is a vain exercise in
creative self-indulgence?

(~1 second beat, Jared look at Mike)

is that just further proof that this idea is a vain exercise in
is that just further proof that this "idea" is a vainExerciseIn
creative self-indulgence?
creative self-indulgence?

(~2 second beat, cross right leg)

Anyway, while pondering these compositional challenges, particularly
(.....)particularly
that last one, I remembered that many of my favorite works of
that last one, (.....)
contemporary music are, in fact, vain exercises in creative
(.....)vain exercises in creative
self-indulgence,
self-indulgence,

So I decided to forge ahead, undeterred.

If I'm being honest with myself, for me personally, the success of
(.....)the success of
this piece depends on my answers to two questions:
this "piece" depends on my answersToTwo questions:

One:

One:

Does writing this piece seem like it would be creatively satisfying?

And Two:

Do I think I would be comfortable performing this on stage?

(....)Do I think I would be comfortable "performing" this on stage?

(~3 second beat, Mike and Jared look at each other, back at audience)

Do I think I would be comfortable "performing" this on stage?

Do I think I would be comfortable "performing" this on stage?

(~2 second beat, uncross legs)

If my answers to these questions are even a tentative yes,

If I do think writing this piece would be creatively satisfying,

If I do think writing this piece would be creatively satisfying,

If I do think I would be comfortable performing a piece that makes

If I do think I would be comfortable performing a piece that makes

essentially no use of any of my previous musical training on the

essentially no use of any of my previous musical training on the

culminating concert of my collegiate career,

culminating concert of my collegiate career,

And If I just recognize that everything on this concert has been a

And If I just recognize that everything on this concert has been a

vain exercise in creative self indulgence, thus allowing myself to

vain exercise in creative self indulgence, thus allowing myself to

bust out of my comfortable artistic wheelhouse towards a shining new

bust out of my comfortable artistic wheelhouse towards a shining new

horizon of performative navel-gazery.

horizon of performative navel-gazery.

Then I should go for it!!!

(.....)Then I should go for it.

(~5 second beat)

I mean, it's really not that important.

(.....)it's really not *that* important.

It's fine.

It's fine.

It's(.....)fine?

(~3 second beat, Jared look at Mike)

It's fine.

It's *fine*.

(~5 second beat)

Jared said it would be fine.