a minute manifestoverture
The stage is set for the ensemble to begin. The audience must not expect a Speaker.

The Speaker appears at the front of the stage and stands facing the audience in front of the ensemble.

He carries a scroll which he unrolls vertically as he reads the text from it. On the back of the scroll is inscribed 'um.'

The Speaker begins. The piano should begin at any point after 'I am a composer.'

Upon reaching INFLATE, all players must do so as quickly as possible with a balloon that has been until this point completely hidden from the audience.

This action is to be followed immediately by RELEASE.

RELEASE of the air should be in whichever way the players wish, but should aim to last for the duration of the rest of the Speaker's text.

Try experimenting with sounds and variation of timbre. Try to make the air sound like radio static or flutter-tonguing.

On the last phrase ending 'any questions' the Speaker must look up from their score into the audience.

[The last segments of text are not to be read aloud by the Speaker.]

If the Speaker stands before a chair, he/she then sits down, stands still, or leaves.

Pause.

Written for The Chimera Ensemble
for performance at the Postgraduate Forum Composers' Workshop
at the University of York, 19th October 2011.

Duration: the piece must last 1 minute.
I am a composer of music

though I would rather you called me an ‘organiser of sound’

except I am not interested in sound alone

as you can see me talking to you right now

because my brain is telling my lips and tongue to talk to you and my eyes to look at you

and your brain is telling your ears to listen to me and your eyes to watch me

But they don’t have to be

and maybe not all of them are anyway

But they are intrinsically and unavoidably juxtaposed

and always have been

So what would it matter if I went and sat over in the corner

if there is one

What then do you call me

if you can see and hear me

or cannot see but can hear

or see but not hear

or cannot see and cannot hear

or do not see and do not hear

are you even listening to me at all

Is that not theatre

Or is it music

Does it depend on which you thought about first

that is

Why are you here

and

What were you expecting

and

Have the priorities changed

for that matter

why am i here

when i could be

over there

The hierarchy has slipped sideways at last

Now there are sounds and sights

So perhaps you should call me an organiser of sounds and sights

though are they really that disconnected

like a mind not present within a body

Is that all that the body will ever be

the experiential nebula, the nucleus of all outwardly measurable and categorical science

by which we understand ourselves

and is the mind not just the name we give to the capacity which we perceive ourselves to have

to think and ask why

and ask why are we asking why

the answer to which is surely

What priority was given to the first why and how has that shaped our experience

So please listen and look

and tell me what you think

and feel free to ask any questions

I must write what I hear

I must write what I see

I must hear what I see

I must see what I hear

I must see and hear what I write

I believe that the use of the body in addition to the use of noise to make music

is necessary for the organisation of sounds

and the manner in which they are created and received.
Full Score in C

Text by the composer

Auch Zeit ist um

Conductor

Speaker

I am a composer of music... though I would rather you called me an 'organiser of sound'...

Flute

Clarinet in B

Balloon

Piano

Violin

Violoncello

Copyright © James Whittle 2011

James Whittle
October 2011
All continue releasing air until it runs out.
The piece ends abruptly at the end of the speech: