

Movements

fixed media (originally composed with 8-channel spatialization)

- I. Stationary Chaos
- II. Lateral Descent
- III. Vibrations in Tight Spaces

By Jessie Lausé

This three-movement work for eight-channel mixed media explores the melodic and registral capabilities of modified human and spatial mechanical sounds. Everything heard in this piece began as sounds that were recorded over the course of a week on and around the Butler University campus. The original sounds include (but are not limited to) a person crunching on a tortilla chip, a person slurping soup, a group of people providing a “snap-plause,” a small crowd cheering (“woo”-ing), a person chattering their teeth, an elevator ascending and descending, and a person gasping for air. These sounds have been edited using various effect processors and audio units, and they have been modified via pitch, length, speed, dynamics, etc. using a simple wave form editor.

Musical development within the piece is defined by repetitive motion, perhaps up or down in pitch, moving in a specific direction throughout the space, or changes in speed, hence the title: *Movements*. **For the purposes of this application, it has been re-mixed in stereo.**

The first movement, “Stationary Chaos,” begins with a high-pitched repeating sound that slowly envelopes the room from front to back. In some instances, the figure is heard as three descending half steps, and other times it may be heard as an ascending minor third. It could also be heard as screechy nonsense, but to each their own. This fades into a contrasting section with a wave-like bass line, and ambiguity that was once marked by pitch is now marked by the ambiguity of the sound samples themselves.

The second movement reflects being inside an elevator but with many additional warped sounds. It begins with a chorus of snaps with a lot of the low frequencies removed from it. I also broke up the track, layering some portions on top of one another to create unique polyrhythms. It then fades into some recorded segments of an elevator ride, put through filters and with modified reverberation. The sound of the descending elevator is very intense and visceral, and the shifting of this sound laterally around the room provides a sense of disjointed movement.

The third movement includes a differently modified elevator recording as the background, and in the foreground are interjections of tonal pitches or notably shifting filtered voice sounds. The emphasis on pitch is what the title is attempting to reflect.