

bp Nichol/ FOUR TEXTS FOR PERFORMANCE

The pieces included here cover a range of notational systems we have used in the performing history of the Four Horsemen. McCaffery's John Clare adaptation dates from 1970 or 71. The basic structure of the grid is clear. Sound groupings are defined vertically with the horizontal transitions being left largely to the discretion of the performers. My own TWO: Less Time uses the same grid (12 years later) but the incorporation of the two diagonals allows for different groupings & synchronicity of voices each time it's read. Dutton's unnamed text shows the optophonetic base of much of what we do &, indeed, even the letter clusters in TWO are essentially interpreted in performance much as they are graphed in Dutton's single page text. Barreto-Rivera's recent SCRABBLE BABBLE takes the notion of grid, pushes it out into game, and becomes (in that process) an extended metaphor for much of what we've done.

These introductory notes are just to suggest a few pointers into what follows. We've dealt more extensively with all this in THE PROSE TATTOO (Membrane Press, Milwaukee, 1983), a collection of our performance scores from the last fourteen years & anyone interested is welcome to dip into that book for a more complete discussion & sampling. What's interesting here is to show how page functions simply as a unit of grid, the different directions in which that grid has been pushed, & how, too, once you are oriented to these as scores, their very visualness takes on an auditory dimension, becomes the cues you need in order to perform them.

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NOTE:

Scrabble Babble is a Moveable Text; Chance & Choice in Heterotextuality. It is one of an on-going series for The Horsemen by Rafael Barreto-Rivera.

Unnamed Text was created by Paul Dutton for use in Horseman Rafael Barreto-Rivera's EVENT HORIZON.

Adaptation of John Clare is inspired by that poet's "Written in Northampton County Asylum." It is reproduced here as published in The Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics (E. P. Dutton Co. Inc., New York, 1949). This piece was made by Steve McCaffery for Horsemen's MATTHEW'S LINE.

TWO: Less Time is a bp Nichol variable grid for The Horsemen.