

More than impossible

over-ambitious text pieces for impossible musical forces

Click Nilson (collected posthumously, all written after the composer's death)

Happening upon a sound art philosophy (2037)

Present on the topic, 'What happens if an unstoppable force hits an immovable sound object?'. This performance art lecture should end with an impossibly loud sound in a vacuum chamber.

Symphony of a Thousand Quadrillion (1905)

This more resource-intensive work outdoes Mahler's Symphony of a 1000 (8th symphony, 1906) by many orders of magnitude, requiring one thousand quadrillion human musicians for its performance (the number of humans who have ever lived is estimated at 100 billion). These human musicians must be normal human size and not virtualized and miniaturised ems (emulations), and all fit into the Sydney Opera House simultaneously.

Herod (0)

Each second, around 4.2 births occur. In this piece, which has a duration until the demise of humanity, five neonates are killed every second.

Unfinishable (1976)

In order to write down each marking on the score of this work, the composer must donate 1 centilitre of blood. The work must be completed within one single 'solo blood drive' day, and is finished if there are at least 1000 notes or other individual significant marks on the score; the composer may not accept any transfusion whilst writing the work. (there are around 500 centilitres of blood in the typical human body).

Unpublishable (1996)

If the score of this musical work is printed, or if a recording of this work is released, the work is immediately discontinued from the composer's collected works, and the composer is run over by a steam roller until they are unable to compose anything more.

Unplayable (1968)

A pianist is swung on a mechanically perpetual pendulum wire across the stage, passing just above the keyboard of the piano once every ten seconds or so. The piece is over when they have played all the Chopin Ballades in order without a mistake or interruption, whilst swooping to and fro, and without the ability to reach the necessary pedals, let alone play the right notes as they screech by.

Can't be written down (2004)

The composer's partner/family members/best friends etc are lined up in the sights of a professional sniper, who is under instruction to gun them down one by one as the composer writes down marks on the score in front of them. As a last resort to stop the creation of the work, the sniper is fully authorised to kill the composer, and burn all the evidence.

Unjustifiable (2025)

Gary Glitter is given a new recording contract, to sing an album of cover versions of the Jackson Five.

Inconceivable (1987)

The Princess Bride is watched by all of humanity*, gathered around special recording TVs for the purpose of collecting every noise they utter while watching the film whenever the word 'inconceivable' appears. The resultant piece is then deleted forever, as is this text piece description.

* If a single human, including babies, fails to attend for even one microsecond, the whole recording session must be started again.

Unhearable (-170000000001)

Wang Changcun's *Unhearable* (2002) is perfectly listenable noise music, unless it is played on the alien world Xan\jhyghjghy24 in a galaxy outside our observable light cone at 200dB SPL, 17 billion years in the past before the big bang.

Gödel (1931)

Just as Gödel discovered that mathematics of sufficient complexity is always incomplete as to the proof of all possible propositions, this musical work can never be composed, though it would be a technically legitimate musical work were it possible to find it.

Paradox (1901)

If this piece is performed, the piece has not been performed.

If the piece is not performed, the piece has been performed.

Either perform or do not perform this piece, but make your mind up as to which one you are doing, and do not do both.