

## 025:250 COMPOSITION: ELECTRONIC MEDIA I

Fall 2010

### How to Build Gesture

1. To build a gesture, do the following:
  - a. In a Pro Tools session, have all of the sound-objects and sound-classes that you have created in the region list.
  - b. Clear out a workspace area 30 seconds long at the beginning of the session.
  - c. Find one or more sound-classes that seem to have a gestural character, or can be used together to create a gesture. For this handout, we will consider the use of only one sound-object at this time.
  - d. Place the sound-object at the 5-10" position in the edit window.
  - e. Decide how you will approach the sound-object, whether from above or below in pitch, how much time you will allow for the approach to occur, and what kinds of sounds and density will be used.
  - f. Implement Item 1e, above.
  - g. Once the sound-object begins, add 2-5" of activity that sustains the character of the sound-object.
  - h. After listening to, and feeling, the flow and continuity of the music thus far, decide by feel and intuition how the gesture will end. Possibilities include having the pitches ascend or descend, and the having the density increase or decrease.
  - i. Implement Item 1g, above.
  - j. Decide how long and at what level of pitch and rhythmic activity the music will be static before quickly coming to a conclusion by increasing or decreasing again the pitch and rhythmic activity.
  
2. The ADSR model is described below:
  - a. The letter A stands for *attack*. The attack starts from no sound and builds in intensity of rhythm and density while rising or falling in pitch. The highest or lowest pitch marks the apex.
  - b. The letter D stands for *decay*. The sound decreases in intensity and falls or rises in pitch in the opposite direction of the attack. The highest or lowest pitch marks the beginning of the sustained part of the gesture.
  - c. The letter S stands for *sustain*. The sounds stay at the same level of intensity and pitch. These parameters may rise and fall in small degrees to keep the sustain alive. The sustain part of the gesture ends according to the feeling and intuition of the composer.
  - d. The letter R stands for *release*. The sound decreases in intensity and pitch in the opposite manner of the attack.

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