

My approach to *Scambi* was mainly based on a small discovery I made whilst experimenting with different sequences. These initial experiments were done principally by choosing a possible initial sequence, based on its sonic appeal. From that choice, respecting Pousseur's connecting rules, I drew all the possible directions created by the initial sequence, that is, the possible combinations that would begin with that specific sequence. I came to the conclusion, after drawing a couple of these sequence lines that when arriving at the fifth sequence of a combination the initial sequence would reappear, creating a cycle between beginning and ending sequences.

I started experimenting with this idea of cycles and also with the possibilities of dynamics, pitch transposition, polyphony, branching structures and subsequent spatial distribution. This led me to create several cycles, each having a particular identity given by the different use of these parameters. After having created a couple of these cycles I became more interested in a cycle with the sequences transposed down an octave. I decided to focus solely on this cycle. That allowed me to work with greater detail.

This cycle is based on two parallel sequences that branch out to four sequences and rejoin back again to two (fig. 1).

fig.1

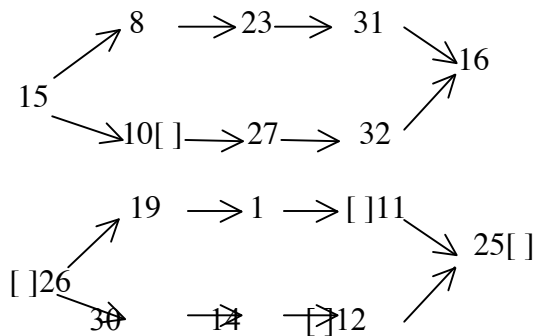
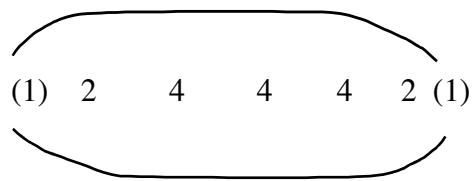


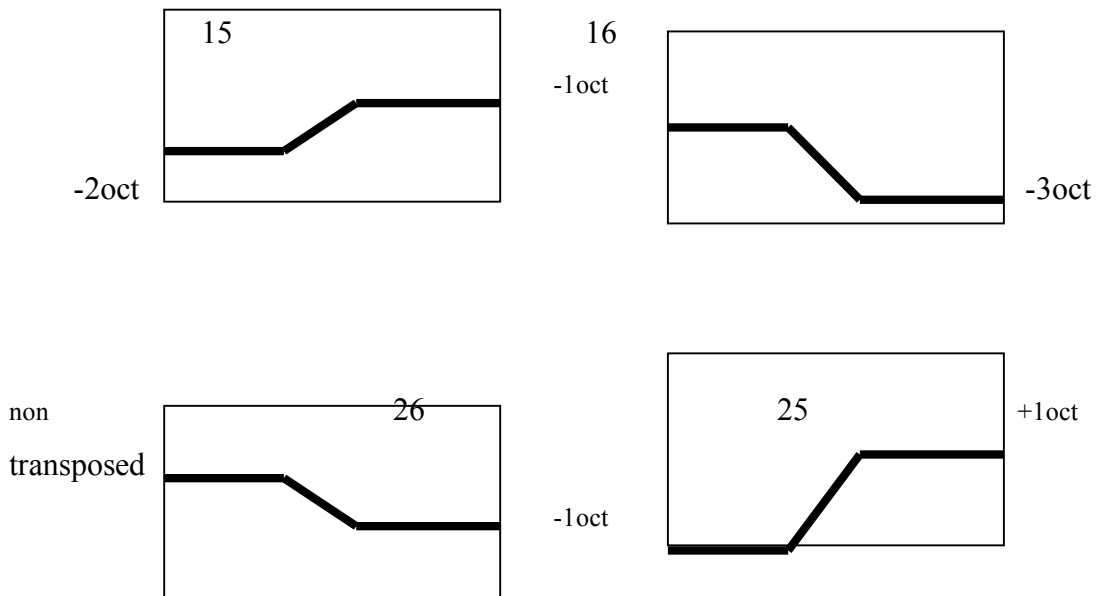
fig.2



It creates a (1)-2-4-4-4-2-(1) polyphonic structure/cycle (fig.2) starting with two sequences (15 and 26) that branch to four sequences (8, 10, 19 and 30). This quadraphony is maintained two more times before joining back into two sequences (16 and 25). The reason why there are two '1's appearing under parenthesis at the beginning and end of the

structure (fig 2) is due, as one can perceive when listening, to an asynchronous beginning and ending with not two, but one sequence. This is the result of a small game of transposition that I “played” with these first and last sequences, resulting in different file lengths, and therefore the beginning and end sequences are not simultaneous. Sequence 15 starts two octaves down in pitch and rises up one octave. Sequence 26 on the other hand descends 1 octave, from a non-transposed pitch to an octave down (this one octave pitch transposition is applied to all the sequences I’ve used). On the ending sequences the same thing happens but in an inverted way and in a range of 2 octaves. Sequence 16 (the pair of sequence 15) descends two octaves, and 25 (the pair of sequence 26) raises two octaves. This is represented graphically below.

fig.3



These four pitch/length transpositions lead to moments of solo (just one sequence present), which are an attempt to break the symmetry (primarily in the end) of spatial sound distribution present in most of the composition.

Besides these two moments there is also a solo moment when sequence 27 comes in. Again, the intention of this solo was an attempt to break the symmetry of spatial sound distribution. I did a sequence-solo here because sequence 27 has very different sonic qualities from all the other sequences, which is even more emphasized by the lowered pitch of all the sequences.

As mentioned before, the four loud-speaker spatialisation in my version of *Scambi* is a very symmetric one, trying in a way to physicalize the branching structure (1)2-4-4-4-2(1). In the first part, fragment 15 is placed to the front two speakers and 26 is placed to the back. In the second part, already with four parallel sequences, each sequence starts to shift gradually from the centre (back centre and front centre) to a loudspeaker (8 to left-front, 10 to right-front, 19 to left-rear, and 30 to right-rear). During the next two parts, still with a four-sequence polyphony, the spatial configuration remains static, although there is the small solo interruption provoked by the aforementioned fragment 27. On the fifth and last part, with a two-sequence polyphony, the spatial configuration returns to a back-front logic (16 front and 25 rear).

The dynamics, and moments of pause (shown in fig.1 as []) were parameters used not following any particular scheme, but only what seemed the 'right' thing to my ears.

I hope this text will explain in more detail and perhaps in a more comprehensible way what I have done in my realisation of *Scambi*. Questions, commentaries are welcomed.

Andre Castro, London, April 2005