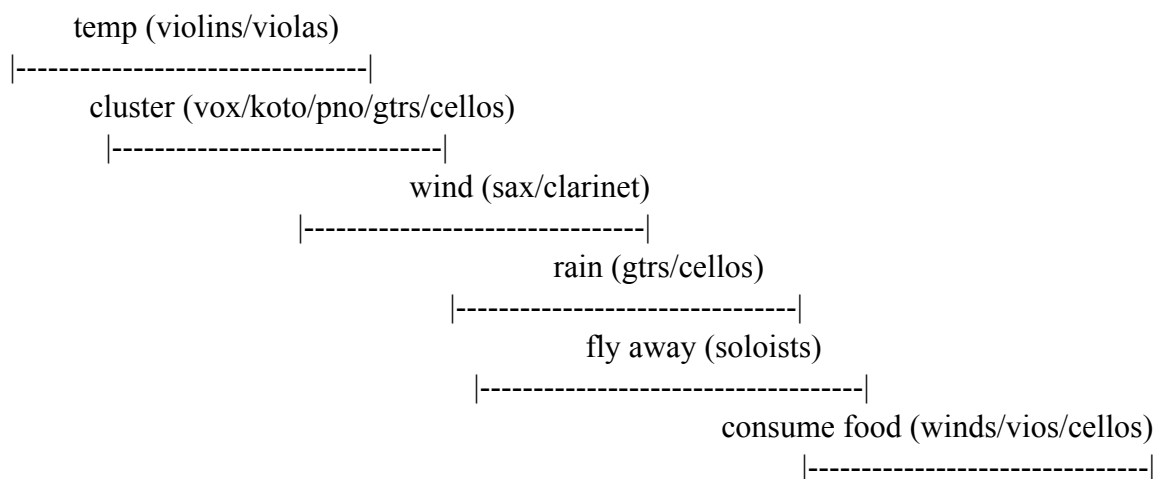


BUTTERFLY ECOSYSTEM

Relative duration of sections & instrumentation (sections are 4-5 min. each):



Temperature (average kinetic energy of particles in a system)

Violins, violas.

Members of the group are vibrating particles in a system.

Goal: create a pulsating drone (mezzo piano).

One player starts by playing a sustained note. Other players join in: match the pitch of the starting note, or offset your pitch by up to a half step above or below (microtones are encouraged, octave intervals are fine). Continuing sustaining your note, varying your vibrato throughout in contrast to that of other players. OK to change notes when you start a new one (by octave or microtone – keep hovering around the starting note).

Butterfly action #1: Cluster together to conserve energy

Voices, koto, pianos, acoustic guitars, cellos.

You are a fragile and fleeting organism, holding onto a tree branch by a single thread and at risk of blowing away. Play a quiet & delicate sound that reflects this state.

Repeat your sound, starting as closely as possible to the end of the last sound you heard played by someone else. It may be difficult or impossible to keep your own sound separate from others; this is good. Your chances of survival increase if you are stacked up densely with other members of the group. Keep repeating your sound until all sounds of the group pile up and form one dense mass, where it becomes hard to distinguish individual sounds.

Wind (horizontal airflow across earth's surface)

Sax & clarinet (2 players only).

Imitate a sound of wind: play a sustained noise on your instrument – without distinct pitch if possible. Duration = length of one breath. Dynamics: fade up in volume slowly, and fade out slowly, maximum volume should be mezzo forte. Repeat, staggering the entrances of your sound with those of other players. Play softly during ‘fly away’ solos.

Rain

Acoustic guitars, cellos, flute.

Play a series of short, percussive sounds – noise without pitch if possible. Each sound should have a different dynamic level than the previous. Limit the dynamic range between pianissimo & mezzo forte. Do not hit or strike your instrument in a way that is willful or forced: think instead of droplets that fall because of gravity. Try not to play at the same time as anyone else. Density should be like a steady drizzle – try to play frequently, but not at the same time as anyone else.

Butterfly action #2: Fly away

(Alee, Angela, Sheela, Kanoko)

Each player plays a solo that indicates that you are “flying away” from the cluster. Play only fragile & delicate sounds as you did in the clustering action, but you are free to play rhythmically and melodically as you choose. Butterflies glide and are driven by the wind: let the intensity of the wind sounds affect your improvisations. Each player should solo for 30 seconds to 1 minute and then pass the solo off to the player nearest you, by touch or eye contact. Players who have finished soloing can drop out for the time being.

Butterfly action #3: Consume a food that makes you toxic to your enemy

Winds vs. violins/violas/cellos.

Strings represent butterflies (toxic); winds represent the enemy (hungry). Strings start by playing a sustained sound: low volume, low pitch. (Different players can play different pitches.) Winds listen for 30 seconds to 1 minute, then attack using short bursts of sounds.

Strings continue to play a sustained sound but can either:

- 1) die by fading out, or
- 2) defend themselves by increasing in volume or vibrato.

Winds can either

- 1) win, & stop playing after strings fade out, or
- 2) die out in response to strings’ increased intensity.

If strings die out, they start playing again, louder than last time. Repeat the above process until the strings prevail (they are toxic, so they must eventually win). The cycle ends when strings play a sustained sound for a minute or more, and no more enemies choose to attack.
** This has to happen for the piece to end!