

# ***uPhone***

Matthew D. Harder

2009

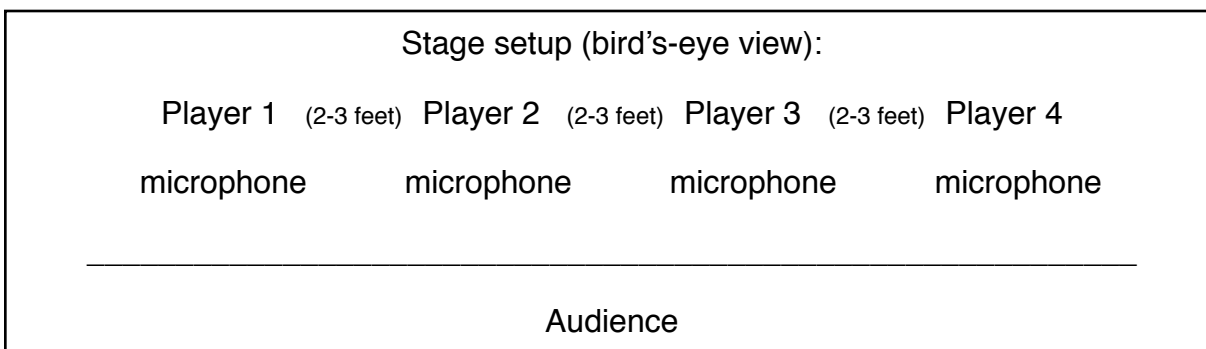
revised 2015

## **uPhone description**

Five players, four cellular phones, sound system, and computer running Max.

Players 1-4: On stage, each with a cellular phone and microphone, sitting or standing

Player 5: On or off stage, operating software



The piece unfolds as players make phone calls to the other players.

Each Call consists of a series of actions. For example, Call 1:

- Player 1 holds his/her phone near the microphone while dialing Player 2, and keeps it there for the duration of Call 1 so that the earpiece is close to the microphone diaphragm.
- Player 2 holds his/her phone near the microphone as it rings
- Player 2 answers the call after three seconds of ringing, brings the phone back to ear, and recites Quote 1 into the phone at a normal conversational volume and DOES NOT lean toward the microphone.
- After finishing the Quote, Player 2 hangs up.
- All players rest for 7 seconds before Call 2 is made.
- Call 2, etc.

Players 1-4 should assign a ringtone of their choice to each of the other players' phone numbers. The result could be as many as 12 different ringtones sounding over the course of the piece but it is possible that two or more players may choose the same ringtone.

Players should dial each phone number manually, no "speed-dial", in order to provide as much audio content as possible. Each phone should be set to ring out loud at maximum volume. Do not set phones to "silent" or "vibrate". Any other "alert" sounds should also be left ON including any type of notification sound for text messages, Facebook, Words With Friends, etc. Any notifications and/or text message sounds should be considered part of the piece. Indeed, if a player receives a phone call or text message during the performance of the piece, the player should respond to the caller, even if it means disrupting the progression of the piece according to the score below. If a phone call, the player should politely tell the caller to call back later. If a text message, the player should inform the "texter" that now is not a good time. If any of this occurs, the players must NOT communicate with one another, in any way, in order to get "back on track". Each player should respond and proceed according to what he/she

thinks is correct. Audience members are free to send messages or make phone calls to the performers during the piece.

A dynamic microphone should be placed approximately 18 inches in front of each player, pointing toward the player’s mouth. As per the example above, players should NOT lean forward to speak into the microphone when reciting Quotes or making sounds (“sss”, “shh”, in/exhale, “goodbye”). Each microphone should feed into an audio interface connected to a computer running the *uPhone* software. The interface should be able to handle four separate microphone input channels. Each channel’s gain should be set to provide a signal that is strong, but does not distort. All output volume levels will be controlled within the software (or via a mixer/interface such as a PreSonus StudioLive) by Player 5. The computer’s audio output should be sent to a mixer with either 2-channel or 4-channel output. The piece should be performed with a 4-channel system, but a 2-channel performance is possible. Two versions of the software are available from [matthewharder.com](http://matthewharder.com). The overall volume level should be appropriate for the size of the performance space.

***uPhone* score**

<b>Player 5 activates the software and cues Player 1.</b>					
<b>Call</b>	<b>Caller</b>	<b>Receiver</b>	<b>Let Ring</b>	<b>Receiver Action</b>	<b>Rest before next call</b>
1	P1	P2	3	Recite Quote 1, hang up	7
2	P3	P4	4	Recite Quote 2, hang up	6
3	P1	P4	5	Recite Quote 3, hang up	5
4	P3	P2	4	Make sound: “sss”, hang up	4
5	P1	P3	3	Recite Quote 4, hang up	3
6	P3	P1	4	Make sound: “shh”, hang up	4
7	P2	P1	5	Recite Quote 5, hang up	5
8	P4	P3	4	Recite Quote 6, hang up	6
9	P2	P4	3	Make sound: in/exhale, hang up	7
10	P4	P2	4	Recite Quote 7, hang up	8
11	P2	P3	5	Make sound: “goodbye”, hang up	9
12	P4	P1	4	Recite Quote 8, hang up	10
<b>All players call unavailable or disconnected numbers and hold earpieces to microphones.</b>					

## Quotes

The information after each quote should not be read aloud during the piece.

Players should read only what is within the quotes: ""

Quote 1: "Electronic communication is an instantaneous and illusory contact that creates a sense of intimacy without the emotional investment that leads to close friendships." Clifford Stoll, *Silicon Snake Oil*, 1995

Quote 2: "True interactivity is not about clicking on icons or downloading files, it's about encouraging communication." Edwin Schlossberg, 2002

Quote 3: "Let us make a special effort to stop communicating with each other, so we can have some conversation." Judith Martin, (Miss Manners)

Quote 4: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." Bible, 1 Corinthians 15:33

Quote 5: "The whole problem can be stated quite simply by asking, 'Is there a meaning to music?' My answer would be, 'Yes.' And 'Can you state in so many words what the meaning is?' My answer to that would be, 'No.'" Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990)

Quote 6: "As I see it, poetry is not prose simply because poetry is in one way or another formalized. It is not poetry by reason of its content or ambiguity but by reason of its allowing musical elements (time, sound) to be introduced into the world of words." John Cage, *Silence*, 1961

Quote 7: "Music can name the unnameable and communicate the unknowable." Leonard Bernstein (1918 - 1990)

Quote 8: "Information is not knowledge, knowledge is not wisdom, wisdom is not truth, truth is not beauty, beauty is not love, love is not music. Music is the best." Frank Zappa (1940 - 1993)