

The Great Learning, paragraph 2

1 page

For singers and drummers.

Composition dated January 1969

Content: THE POINT WHERE TO REST BEING KNOWN, THE OBJECT OF PURSUIT IS THEN DETERMINED; AND THAT BEING DETERMINED, A CALM UNPERTURBEDNESS MAY BE ATTAINED TO. TO THAT CALMNESS THERE WILL SUCCEED A TRANQUIL REPOSE. IN THAT REPOSE THERE MAY BE CAREFUL DELIBERATION, AND THAT DELIBERATION WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THE ATTAINMENT (OF THE DESIRED END).

Drumming

Mary: [Musical notation]

Polaris: [Musical notation]

Touch: [Musical notation]

Superior: [Musical notation]

Imek: [Musical notation]

Castor: [Musical notation]

Pollux: [Musical notation]

Taste: [Musical notation]

Michigan: [Musical notation]

Singing

KNOW THE POINT OF REST AND THEN HAVE AN ORDERLY MODE OF PROCEDURE. HAVING THIS ORDERLY PROCEDURE ONE CAN GRASP THE AZURE THAT IS TAKE HOLD OF A CLEAR CONCEPT HOLDING A CLEAR CONCEPT ONE CAN BE AT PEACE IN-TERNALLY BEING THIS CALM ONE CAN KEEP ONE'S HEAD IN MOMENTS OF DANGER HE WHO CAN KEEP HIS HEAD IN THE PRESENCE OF A TIGER IS QUALIFIED TO COME TO HIS DEED IN DUE HOUR.

DRUMMING. Each drum rhythm is repeated over and over like a tape loop for the duration of one bar of the vocal part. The 26 rhythms fall into 11 groups: 2 pentads, 1 tetrad, 4 pairs and 4 uniques. The words in front of the rhythms are a mnemonic based on this grouping. Like the vocal phrases, the drum rhythms are to be played strong and energetic throughout. Unlike the vocal phrases, they may be played in any order, and the selection of tempo for each one is up to the individual drummers. The rhythms should be memorised.

A PERFORMANCE. A number of groups are formed each consisting of the following: one drummer, one lead singer, and a number of supporting singers. These groups take up positions as widely separated as possible, and each group functions autonomously, as follows: "The drummer" takes the rhythm of his choice. When this rhythm is established the lead singer sings through the notes of the first bar as described above, each entry coinciding with the verbal stroke or rest of the rhythm. The supporting singers do the same, getting the notes from the leader and entering on each note as soon as possible after the leader. Their function is to support and amplify the leader's voice so that it is not placed under undue strain. The leader must be careful not to sing a new note until all his supporters have finished the preceding one. When all singers are finished with the last note of a bar the leader makes a sign to the drummer, who is then free (at his leisure) to select a second rhythm and establish that. He should not leave a gap between the two rhythms. So the cycle proceeds, each drummer going through the 26 rhythms in any order and all singers singing all the phrases in order given, sticking by their respective leaders.

The final rhythms of all the drummers (i.e. each one's 26th rhythm, probably all different) should be played in the same tempo. To achieve this a position visible to all drummers is pre-selected, and the first drummer to complete his 25th rhythm walks over to this position to play his 26th. Then, as the other drummers reach their final rhythms, they take their tempo from him.

One of the singer's may stand and take the preceding from the same position. Start the piece cleanly: all drummers enter with their chosen rhythms simultaneously as the chosen singer beats. End it roughly (probably best if the lead singer or the first drummer to reach his final rhythm does this). At any time after all drummers have achieved the same tempo or when it appears that this is unlikely to occur, the singer may signal the end, whereupon all drummers complete the rhythmic pattern they are in the middle of and stop (don't end on the next downbeat!).

This performance is not the only possible one: circumstances may encourage the devising of others, by all members of the chorus could both drum and sing.

White: [Musical notation]

Black: [Musical notation]

Smell: [Musical notation]

Huron: [Musical notation]

Hearts: [Musical notation]

Romulus: [Musical notation]

Remus: [Musical notation]

Sight: [Musical notation]

Erie: [Musical notation]

Diamonds: [Musical notation]

Right: [Musical notation]

Left: [Musical notation]

Hearing: [Musical notation]

Ontario: [Musical notation]

Clubs: [Musical notation]

Evobazon: [Musical notation]

THE GREAT LEARNING

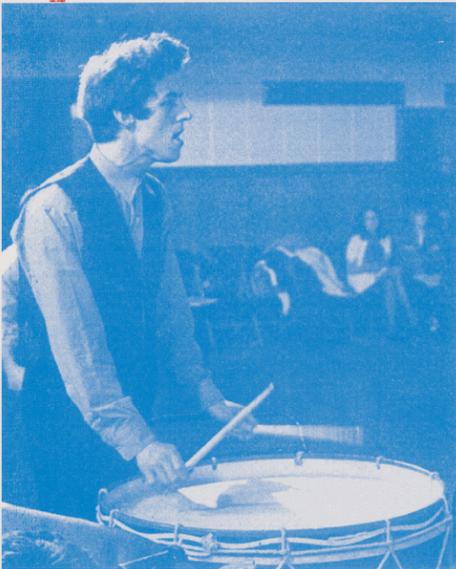
The Great Learning, paragraph 7

1/2 page

For any number of untrained voices

Composition dated 8.4.69

Content: IT CANNOT BE, WHEN THE ROOT IS NEGLECTED, THAT WHAT SHOULD SPRING FROM IT WILL BE WELL ORDERED. IT NEVER HAS BEEN THE CASE THAT WHAT WAS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE HAS BEEN SLIGHTLY CARED FOR, AND, AT THE SAME TIME, THAT WHAT WAS OF SLIGHT IMPORTANCE HAS BEEN GREATLY CARED FOR.



- sing 8 IF
- sing 5 THE ROOT
- sing 13(f3) BE IN CONFUSION
- sing 6 NOTHING
- sing 5 (f1) WILL
- sing 8 BE
- sing 8 WELL
- sing 7 GOVERNED
- hum 7
- sing 8 THE SOLID
- sing 8 CANNOT BE
- sing 9 (f2) SWEEP AWAY
- sing 8 AS
- sing 17(f1) TRIVIAL
- sing 6 AND
- sing 8 NOR
- sing 8 CAN
- sing 17(f1) TRASH
- sing 8 BE ESTABLISHED AS
- sing 9 (f2) SOLID
- sing 5 (f1) IT JUST
- sing 4 DOES NOT
- sing 6 (f1) HAPPEN
- hum 3 (f2)
- speak 1 MISTAKE NOT CLIFF FOR
- MORASS AND TREACHEROUS BRAMBLE

NOTATION
→ The leader gives a signal and all enter concertedly at the same moment. The second of these signals is optional; those wishing to observe it should gather to the leader and choose a new note and enter just as at the beginning (see below).
sing 9 (f2) SWEEP AWAY means: sing the words "SWEEP AWAY" on a lengthy (3-4 beats) note (syllables freely disposed) nine times; the same note each time; of the nine notes two (any two) should be loud, the rest soft. After each note take in breath and sing again.
hum 1 means: hum a length-of-a-breath note seven times; the same note each time; all soft.
speak 1 means: speak the given words in steady tempo all together, in a low voice, once (follow the leader).

PROCEDURE
Each chorus member chooses his own note (silently) for the first line (if eight lines). All enter together on the leader's signal. For each subsequent line choose a note that you can hear being sung by a colleague. It may be necessary to move to within compass of origin notes. The notes, once chosen, must be carefully retained. Time may be taken over the choice. If there is no note or only the note you have just been singing, or only a note or notes that you are unable to sing, choose your note for the next line freely. Do not sing the same note on two consecutive lines.
Each singer progresses through the text at his own speed. Remain stationary for the duration of a line; move around only between lines.
All must have completed "hum 3 (f2)" before the signal for the last line is given. At the leader's discretion this last line may be omitted.

WILD UP THE GREAT LEARNING, PARAGRAPHS 2 AND 7

Saturday, February 7, 2026
8 PM and 10 PM

ABOUT THE GREAT LEARNING

GRAMMY-nominated orchestral collective **Wild Up** presents *The Great Learning, Paragraphs 2 and 7* by **Cornelius Cardew**.

A ritual of gathering in community through sound, Wild Up members and an ensemble of 25 pre-appointed non-musicians perform two sections of this monumental work in which voices and percussion unfold through listening and response. Creating a vast field of resonance and play, Wild Up musicians will teach the work to a public ensemble, learning through repetitions and echoes, culminating in a performance where music becomes a shared space to embody collective creativity. Composed between 1968 and 1971, Cardew designed *The Great Learning* for a radically open ensemble that blurred lines between trained musicians and amateurs, grounding the piece in inclusivity, process, and duration.

Presented in conjunction with **The Broad's** special exhibition, **Robert Therrien: This is a Story**, *The Great Learning* touches on themes both intimate and monumental, plays with scale to change how we perceive the world, and collapses the distance between the personal and the epic. Therrien's large-scale sculptures can evoke childlike awe; Cardew's music sparks collective joy in making something bigger than ourselves. Both artists reveal how ordinary materials—wood, metal, voice, breath—can hold memory and become extraordinary.

PROGRAM NOTE

At its core, Cornelius Cardew's *The Great Learning* is a social experiment—a rehearsal for ways of being together. The composition sets *The Great Learning* (a Confucian text translated by Ezra Pound), which Cardew approached as a loose philosophical framework for an unconventional way of making music. It asks what happens when music becomes something learned collectively, without hierarchy or fixed roles.

This partnership between Wild Up and The Broad imagines the museum and the orchestra as civic spaces—places where people gather to practice creativity, and where culture is sustained through action and mutual responsibility. In a time of increasing authoritarianism, suppression, and the narrowing of public life, creation itself becomes a civic act, rooted in presence, agency, and shared authorship.

To retrain our imagination is to change what we expect, what we notice, and what we believe is possible with one another. At a civic level, it means relearning how to remain in relation without domination—how to listen across difference, hold complexity without collapse, and stay open to transformation. This is not about fantasy or escape, but about building the capacity to envision, and inhabit, other ways of living and belonging.

At the center of this collaboration is The Collective Orchestra, Wild Up's participatory orchestral model. When Wild Up formed sixteen years ago, it began as an experiment in rethinking traditions and imagining new pathways for musicians and for music—inside the field and beyond its usual boundaries. This new initiative grows from that lineage, bringing the public into the process through shared practice and close engagement, and treating orchestral music as something shaped collectively over time.

Here, community members become the orchestra, learning and performing alongside Wild Up musicians. Distinctions between professional and “untrained” musicians, between audience and ensemble, dissolve—replaced by a shared field of listening and response, where meaning takes shape through doing.

But participation is not frictionless. To learn in this way requires surrender: of mastery, of polish, of control. It asks participants to remain inside uncertainty, repetition, and not-knowing long enough for something shared to emerge. Time stretches. Voices waver. Attention must be renewed again and again, and the work depends on a commitment to remain present with one another.

The Great Learning offers a powerful and unsettling foundation for this approach. Though Cardew's political legacy is complex and contested, his belief that art should disrupt complacency and be held in common feels especially urgent now. Conceived as a social practice as much as a musical one, the work insists that culture should belong to the many—not through ease alone, but through shared labor and sustained attunement. It asks not only who gets to participate, but how power, responsibility, and belonging are practiced.

Presented in dialogue with *Robert Therrien: This Is a Story*, the performance reflects a shared interest in scale, material, and human presence. Just as Therrien enlarges the everyday to alter how we move through space, *The Great Learning* expands the act of music-making itself. Ordinary voices and simple gestures accumulate into something vast through endurance and collective commitment.

Here, learning is not preparation for performance. It is the performance itself, and it asks something of everyone present.

CREDITS

Wild Up

Eliza Bagg
Andrew Tholl
Jodie Landau
Linnea Powell
Sidney Hopson

Christopher Rountree, conductor

Wild Up's Collective Orchestra

Ceci Bastida, Marjorie Beale, Joey Brown, Eon Chan, Tate Chavez, Henna Chou, David Colker, Celine Sauquillo Davis, destefano bedi deluise, Heather Dundas, Christina Marie Karr, Nabil Kashyap, Michel Von Loh, Elaina Marino, Cat Mehta, Elliot Menard, Tomoko Ozawa, Hannah Rice, Kansaku Shinohara, giovanni singleton, Alejandra Sone, Lily Jane Tsong, Sam Wentz, Stephanie Zaletel, Nina Zavarin

The Great Learning was organized by Christopher Rountree, Artistic Director, and Elizabeth Cline, Executive Director, and produced by Brian Sea, Production Director, with Noah Klein, Assistant Producer, Linnea Powell, Personnel Manager, and Alitzah Oros, Digital Content Manager, Wild Up.

BIOGRAPHIES

Cornelius Cardew (1936–1981) was born in Gloucestershire, England, in 1936. He was a charismatic and controversial figure whose contributions to musical notation, improvisation, and political music are widely recognized.

In the mid-fifties, he worked with Karlheinz Stockhausen, collaborating on *Carre*, and introduced the music of the American composers John Cage, Morton Feldman, Christian Wolff, Terry Riley, and particularly LaMonte Young to European audiences. His experiments in musical notation culminated in two mammoth works—*Treatise* and *The Great Learning*—both of which, in different ways, bear witness to his astonishing invention and originality in this field. The spontaneity and improvisatory quality of his own music and music-making set him apart from both the American and the European avant-garde.

In the sixties, Cardew became a focal figure, attracting around him a variety of musicians, including non-professionals, fine artists, and jazz performers, and he turned principally to collaborative music-making in the AMM free improvisation group and in the unique London-based Scratch Orchestra, which he founded with Michael Parsons and Howard Skempton in 1969.

By the early seventies, the social aspect of his musical activity, so far libertarian and anarchist, took on a more precise, political definition with his opposition to U.S. and Soviet Imperialism and to British rule in Ireland. As a communist, he now repudiated as politically regressive much of the avant-garde of which he had been part. During the last ten years of his life, a period of intense political activity, he wrote music based on traditional and political songs, mostly for piano, in a romantic-realist style, aimed at a wider audience and within a political context.

On December 13th, 1981, in suspicious circumstances, he was killed by a hit-and-run driver, who was never apprehended, near his home in Leyton, London.

Wild Up is an LA-based orchestra collective that uplifts people and projects, leading the way for music-making today. Called “a raucous, grungy, irresistibly exuberant ... fun-loving, exceptionally virtuosic family” (*The New York Times*), Wild Up has been lauded as one of music's most exciting groups by virtually every significant institution and critic within earshot. Artistic Director Christopher Rountree started the group in 2010 to eschew outdated ensemble and concert traditions by experimenting with different methodologies, approaches, and contexts.

After a decade and a half of rampant creativity and curiosity, Wild Up is the ambassador of West Coast music. The group has collaborated with a wide range of composers, performers, and cultural institutions, premiering and creating hundreds of new works. They partnered with the LA Phil and REDCAT to present a two-month-long festival and gallery exhibition *To The Fullest: The Music of Arthur Russell and Julius Eastman*, accompanied Björk at Goldenvoice's FYF Fest, sung into a Picasso with Pamela Z at LACMA, and created *Democracy Sessions*—playing against growing autocracy with Raven Chacon, Ted Hearne, Chana Porter, Ursula K. LeGuin, Harmony Holiday, Saul Williams, and Karlheinz Stockhausen at MOCA. They premiered David Lang and Mark Dion's *anatomy theater* at LA Opera, often collaborated with the Martha Graham Dance Company, and performed scores for *Under the Skin* by Mica Levi and *Punch-Drunk Love* by Jon Brion at the Regent Theater and Ace Hotel. The group has been praised by *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Washington Post*, *NPR*, and *Pitchfork*, among many other publications and critics.

THE BROAD

221 S. Grand Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90012
212-232-6200 | thebroad.org

General Admission is always free

Special Thanks to Leading Partner

 EASTWEST BANK