

I AM A STRANGE LOOP V

for Fender Rhodes and Tape Machines

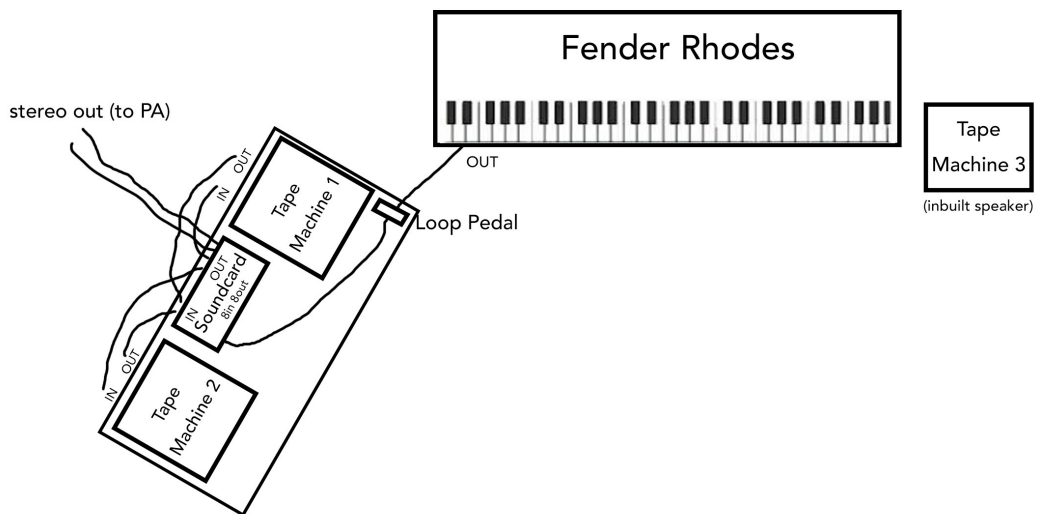
Michael Cutting
2016

Performance Notes:

I AM A STRANGE LOOP V is a fairly improvisatory piece, due to the unpredictable nature of the tape machines and loop pedal. The performer is asked to perform as much with the recording machines as much as the fender rhodes, and no additional person should be necessary with regards to the electronics.

Due to the specific nature of the piece, *I AM A STRANGE LOOP V* can only be performed using the composer's own Fender Rhodes and tape machines.

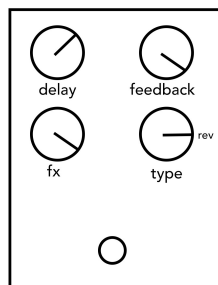
Setup:



Preparation:

Prepare tape machines with the loops of tape (make sure they are fully erased). Make sure they are set to tape mode (not source). Tape Machine 1's recording knobs should be fully turned clockwise.

The loop pedal should be set accordingly:



I AM A STRANGE LOOP V was kindly commissioned by the Britten-Pears Foundation to be performed by Richard Uttley in Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival on 26th November 2016.

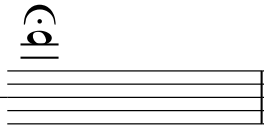
for Richard Uttley
I AM A STRANGE LOOP V

Michael CUTTING

Fender Rhodes +
Reel to Reel Tape

loop pedal ON

TAPE 1 REC.

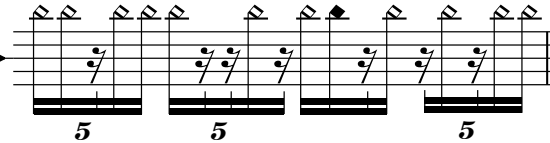
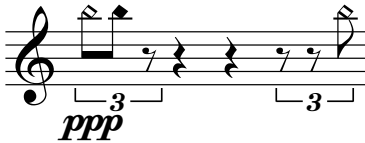


L. REC. OFF

bypass pedal

Ped. always

5 (with beaters)

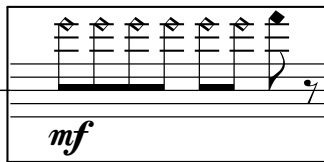


R. REC. OFF

varied dynamics

10

TAPE 2 REC.



repeat ad lib.

2

L. REC. gradually up

1/2 speed &
L. REC. OFF

0

(ped continues)

17 (with beaters)



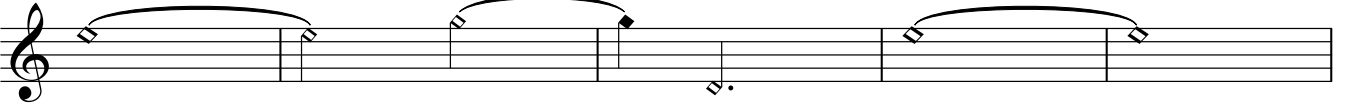
24



33

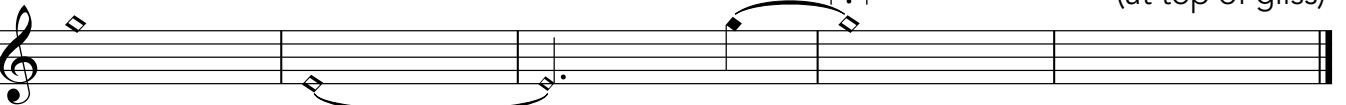


42



change tape on TAPE 2

47



(at top of gliss)

♩=112

Turn recording knobs to 12'

x3

Fender Rhodes

Tape Switches

F.R.

T.S.

5

x3

x3

x3

F.R.

T.S.

9

rit.

2

repeat from beginning

F.R.

T.S.

ad lib.
based on above

F.R.

T.S.

ad lib.

higher octave in tape

F.R.

ad lib.,
increasingly alternating
between two chords

T.S.

with ped.

judge tempo against chord decay

get a good buzz!

F.R.

fff

T.S.

ad lib with switches (slower than before)

F.R.

F.R.

switches based on bar 9

wait a little for decay

F.R.

f molto pesante
with ped.

until completely decayed

F.R.

p *f* *mp* *mf*

Contact mic + loop pedal

The full movement should be approx. 3 mins. Whilst very free, the build up in sound should be emphasised by a gradual contraction of time between each new action; the beginning for example should be incredibly still, with new sounds added a considerable length of time after the previous action.

Action 1

Having set up loop pedal in bypass mode, hold contact mic carefully in hand and plug into pedal.

Action 2

Unselect bypass, and allow the tiniest of sounds of mic in your hand to be fed to the pedal. Bypass again.

Action 3

Unselect bypass, and create sound by sliding fingers down cable. Bypass again.

(add few additional small sounds to increase the sonic activity over the looped material.)

Action 4

Place contact mic on fender rhodes' tone bars to create feedback sound. Try to stop the feedback by either repositioning the cable or removing the mic again.

Action 5

Repeat action 4 but this time send through loop pedal. Bypass again and leave time.

Gradually build up looped material through above action until created a certain groove, still ideally with some moments without feedback. Create your own actions too, such as a guiro-effect with mic dragged across bars.

Action 6

When loop feels suitably full, now place contact mic on bars and spring bars with fingers.

Continue until this becomes the highlight of the loop. Alternate bypass on and off.

Action 7

Place mic against side of high F, and press F key on Rhodes to create zinging pitch in loop (no bypass). Long notes.

Action 8

Same again but with F#.

Action 9

Place mic on E octave above, and create medium-paced irregular rhythm of short E pitches on keyboard.

Action 10 (climactic action)

Give time for this to feel significant. Place mic on top pitches of rhodes, let the mic bounce off of the bar when forcefully struck on the keyboard. Make this a visibly physical moment. Fast irregular rhythm.

(loop should now be suitably saturated with low drones, pitchless noise, and high pitches. Add additional actions if it needs more intensity)

Action 11

Press bottom key on rhodes and let it vibrate against the mic.

(loop is now completed, so give it time for audience to appreciate.)

Action 12

Gradually destroy loop by tapping hard on top of mic to saturate the input. Once loop is covered, unplug the cable, and then in a clear and deliberate movement, turn loop off.

IV

♩ = 60

Tape 1 change to "Source"

Play Tape 2

Fender Rhodes

Red. sempre

15

19

23



Record bassline in Tape 1

switch tape 1 to "tape" and play

play bassline again in same tempo

33



play Tape 3 (continue live, though decresc.)

39



switch loop ped. to reverse and gradually record in 3 diads

let the sound sit and eventually fade out

