



What NEXT? Take Two

In this activity, you will **compose** a duet and **perform** both parts of your duet using the free app **A Capella**. You will **imagine** and **notate** your music using shapes, images and lines instead of traditional music notation. This is called a **graphic score**.

Last month we shared our **What NEXT?** resource in which people were invited to create a **graphic score duet** for two of BCMG's NEXT musicians. These were performed in **digital concert** by our NEXT musicians **Maja (violin)**, **Raymond (clarinet)** and **Raddon (trombone)** on Wednesday 22 July 2020 during lockdown. Watch the concert: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=avQfkKVozWU>

There are **six sections** to this resource:

1. **Introduction**
2. **Explore your instrument:** Find different ways of playing your instrument and get to know the types of sounds you can make.
3. **Graphic scores:** what is a graphic score? And what to think about when making one.
4. **Conversations:** thinking about composing a duet where the parts have a conversation.
5. **Accompaniments:** thinking about composing a duet when one part accompanies the other.
6. **Recording your duet:** using the app A Capella to record both parts of your duet.

Your Turn!

We have created a **new version** of the resource so that you will be able to play and record **both parts** of the duet you compose.

First, have a think about **how two parts can interact** with each other during a duet. Watch and listen to **Maja (violin)** and **Rebecca (flute)**, two of our NEXT musicians, playing *Duet No.4* (about 5 minutes into the video) by composer **Harrison Birtwistle** <https://youtu.be/rNG71xFWFg4> and think about these **questions**:

- Which instrument **starts**?
- Who has the **main idea** and who is **accompanying**? Does this stay the same?
- Who is **leading**? Who is **following**?
- If you **drew** the music that was playing what would your **lines** and **shapes** look like?

2. Explore & Create Musical Ideas

Before you begin to compose your duet, take some time to **discover** different ways of playing your instrument and **explore** different musical ideas. You could try making up:

1. A **slow** melody
2. A **fast** melody
3. A long note **drone**. This might have trills, flutter tongue, tremolo or changes in **dynamics**.
4. A rhythmic **ostinato** - an ostinato is a repeating pattern or musical idea
5. A sound or musical idea that your instrument does **well**
6. An interesting sound or musical idea that your instrument can make in a **non-conventional way**

As you **explore** the different ideas on your instrument, you might want to **draw** the **shapes** of the sounds that you make. You can use these when you compose your piece.

Here are three videos in which Maja (violin), Raddon (trombone) and Raymond (clarinets), three of our NEXT musicians try this out:

<https://youtu.be/VNksPp83Syk>

<https://youtu.be/mS-iXetiLBM>

<https://youtu.be/l4J2HAah8Os>

Choose some of your **favourite** musical ideas from your explorations. **Section 3** sets out some conventions about creating graphic scores and **Sections 4 and 5** help you to think about how the two parts of your duet will **interact** with each other.

3. Graphic Scores

Now you are going to **create** a **graphic score** for your duet. A graphic score uses shapes, images, lines and words instead of traditional music notation. This is the way you will **remember how** and **what** to play in your duet. Google graphic scores to see lovely examples. It is really important to **IMAGINE** your **SOUNDS** first, and then think what shape or line it might be, not just draw any old shapes and lines

When you **draw** your graphic score, there is lots to think about. First, you need to remember that you read music from **left to right**, like reading a book. This means your **lines can't go backwards** like in a loop. You also need to **think about**:

● high note/sound

PITCH (how HIGH or LOW a note is): move from bottom to top or top to bottom of the paper to show how high or low you want a note/pitch to be.

low note/sound ●

DURATION (how LONG or SHORT a sound is): makes lines and shapes longer or shorter to show how long or short you want a sound to be.



long sound



short sound

DYNAMICS (how LOUD or QUIET a sound is): make lines and shapes thicker or thinner to show how loud or quiet you want a sound to be.



quiet note



loud note

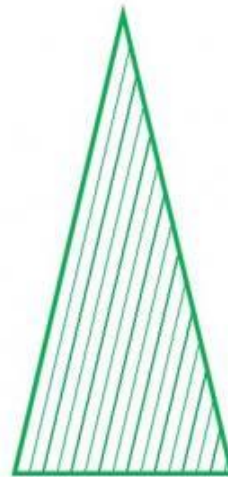
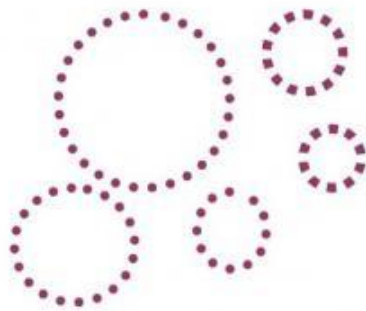


getting louder



getting quieter

CHARACTER: change or decorate your line or shape to show the character of your sounds and melodies.



4. Conversations

One way you can think about your duet is as a **conversation** between two characters. In a conversation, one person **starts** (in green) and the other **replies** (in purple). When they reply they could answer with:

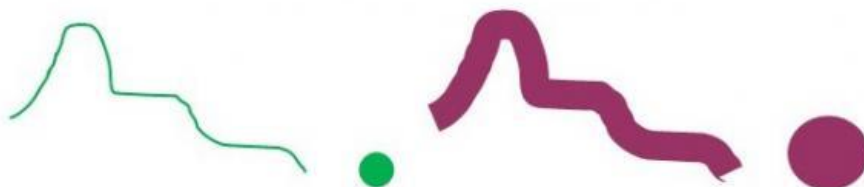
The **same** shape/line:



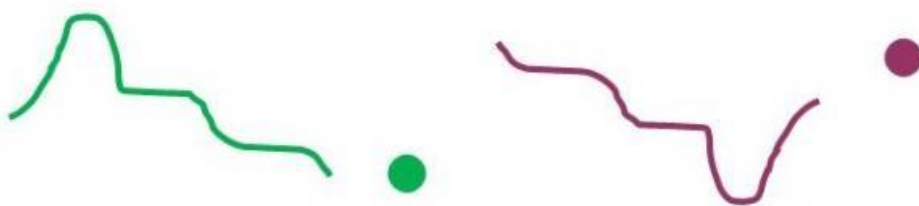
The same **shape/line** with something added to the **beginning, middle** or **end**.



The **same** shape/line but at a different **pitch** or **dynamic**:



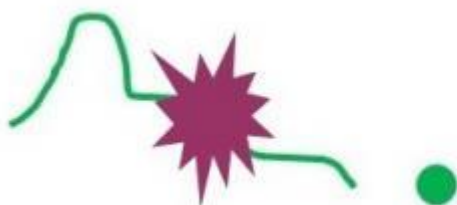
All or a bit of the idea **broken up, backwards, upside down** etc.



Something **completely different!**



And sometimes they are rudely **interrupted!**

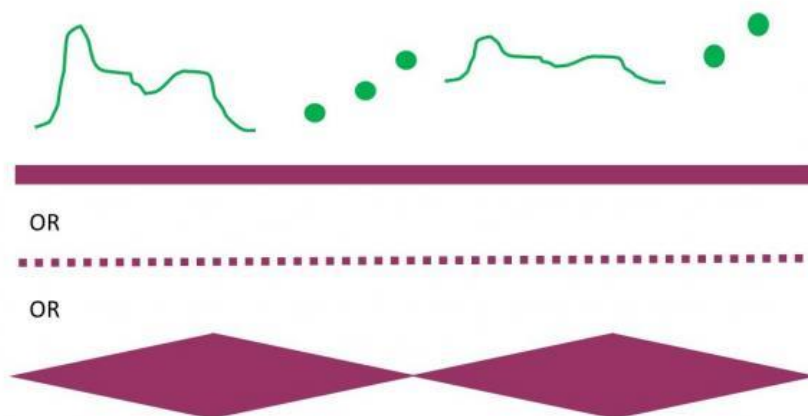


Make it clear which part is which. You could **divide the page** in two horizontally, or you could use **different colour** for each part as I have done here.

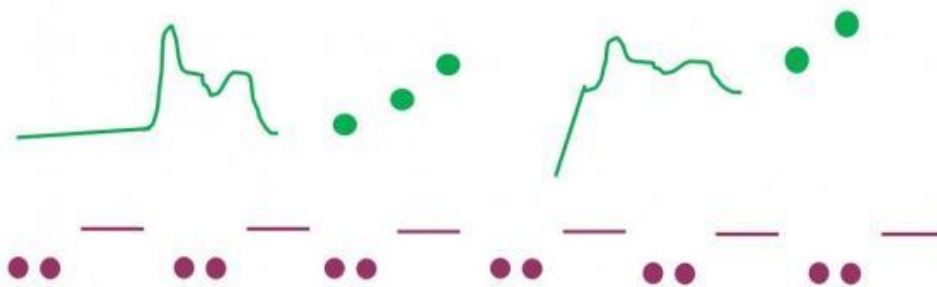
5. Accompaniments

Another way for the two parts in a duet to interact is for one part to have a **main idea** and for the other part to **accompany** it with a **simpler** idea. This second idea might **complement, decorate, interrupt** or give a particular **character** or **mood** to the main idea. Accompaniments could include:

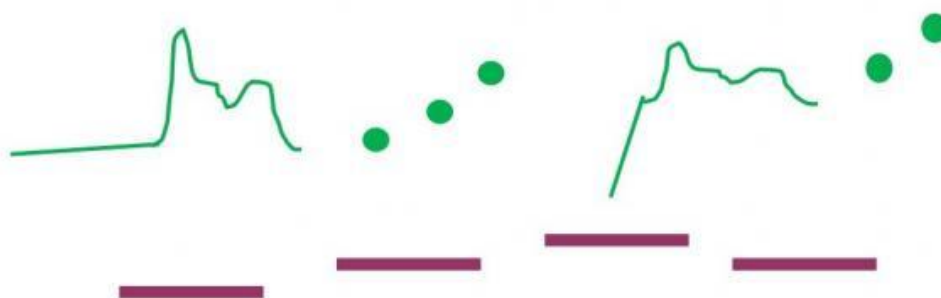
A **drone** (long note): this might change dynamics (how loud or quiet) or how it is played (trill, tremolo, flutter tongue).



An **ostinato** (repeating pattern) underneath: this could stop and start and could also be **melodic** as well as **rhythmic**



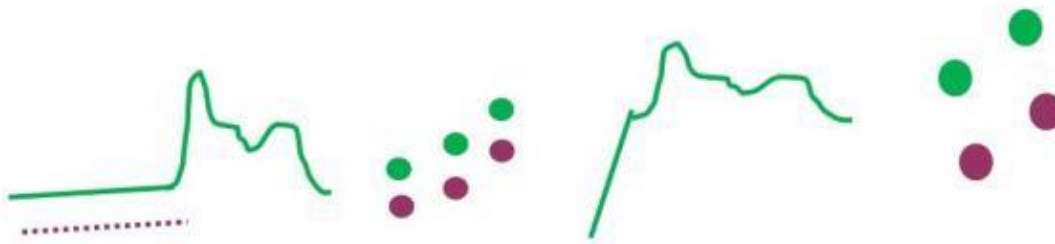
A **counter-melody** or **second idea**



Interruptions:



Complementing and decorating:



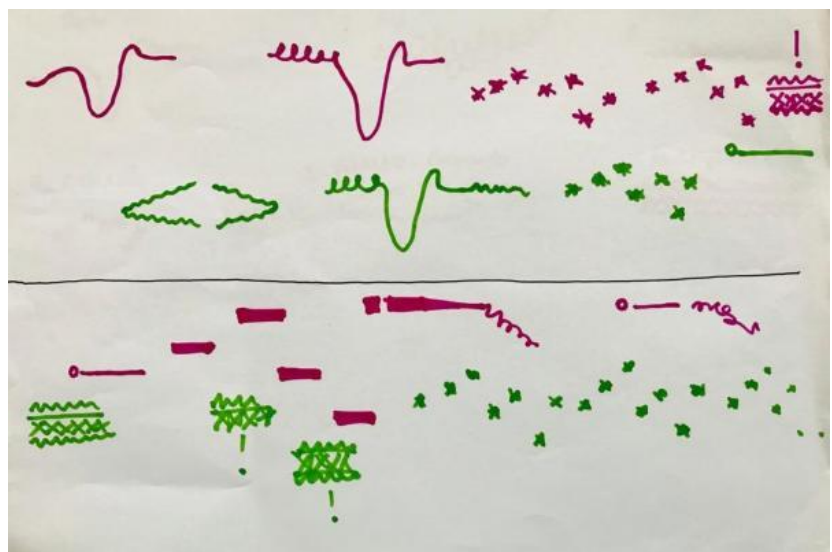
Remember, you can **swap** as many times as you like which part has the main idea.

Again, make sure you show **which part is which**. You could divide the page in two horizontally or you could use different colour for each musician. I have done both here.

6. Record Your Duet

Here is a graphic score that Jenny has created as an example:

A **duet** is normally performed by **two musicians**. However, it is possible for one person to record **both parts** and put them together using an app. You could use an audio app like [Audacity](#) or if you would like video too you could use **A Capella**. This is the app many musicians have been using during lockdown. Now it is time to perform and record your duet.



Instructions Part One:

Download the free version of A Capella – this is available on both **Apple** and **Android** devices and allows you to record for up to 30 seconds. You could also go for a free 7-day trial of the full version which allows you to record for longer. You will need a pair of **headphones** – ideally a set with a **microphone** built in.

1. **Open** the App and click **record new** – be careful, if you are already working on an A Capella project, you will delete it! Select **YES**.
2. **Select your video template:** remember you are recording a duet so select a template that splits into two parts.
3. **Select the length of your video:** it is best to go for the longest option of 1 minute. If you choose a shorter duration e.g 30 seconds and then play for 33 seconds the recording will cut you off before the end.
4. **Choose** the part you would like to record first then **select the screen** in which you would like that part to feature (you cannot edit this later),

Now **set up your recording settings**. On the recording settings you have 3 controls:

1. **Mic input gain:** when you are listening back on your device and the sound is distorted (or clipping) you can change the level so the sound is better quality;
2. **Mic monitor volume:** this lets you change how much of your sound you are hearing in your earphones when you are recording;
3. **Metronome audio volume:** Turn off the metronome. To do this select the metronome icon in the bottom left corner of your screen. Make sure the switch is off for the 'play tempo' option. This will allow you to play without a time signature or pulse.

Instructions Part Two:

1. **Record your first part:** press the red button to beginning recording. Press it again to stop the recording process. If you would like to retry then press 'redo' for another take. When you are happy with the 'take' you can select 'continue'
2. **Listen back:** if you are happy with this click the tick button on the top of the screen.
3. **Repeat the process:** use steps 6-10 to record the second part of your piece.
4. **Listen to your duet:** once both parts have been recorded you can listen to the performance using the play button in the bottom left of your screen. If you are unhappy with one of the parts, select and rerecord as you did in steps 6-10
5. **Edit your performance:** the speaker icon next to the playback button will allow you to experiment with and change the volume of each recorded part and add things like reverb (an effect that can make a recording sound as though it has been recorded in a much larger space like a big concert hall, adding warmth and

depth) and echo – have a play and see what sounds best! Once you are happy with the sound you can press the 'tick' in the top corner of your screen to save.

Make it your own: use the rest of the icons at the bottom of the screen to change filters, border colours and add text and images. You might like to include a picture of your score as you play!!

Here is Jenny performing both parts of her duet graphic score using A Capella:

<https://youtu.be/4Fsh-bm33I>

Share your creation: select the icon in the top left-hand corner of the screen to go on and share your video. You can then either select **Public** and share it directly on social media or you can choose **Private** and create a link to the video. The video will then export for you to use and share.