

The LaBorde Guitar Collection

for Chris Lemulo

A set of structured improvisations

Note:

“fretboard-hand” indicates the hand conventionally used to play on the fretboard.

“plucking-hand” indicates the hand conventionally used to pluck the strings.

I
(18/11/2013)

Spread out the fingers of your fretboard-hand, palm down onto a piece of paper.
Draw around your fretboard-hand using a thick, black pen.

Insert the paper, tracing upwards, between the strings of the guitar, over the fretboard.

Place the guitar on your lap with the strings facing upwards.

Play the guitar by placing your fretboard-hand wherever the corresponding fingers of the traced outline of your hand occur on the fretboard, whilst plucking the corresponding string with your plucking-hand.

Occasionally move the paper up or down the fretboard.

Every so often, rip off the tips of one of the paper fingers.

Finish when all the tips of the fingers have been ripped off.

II
(04/12/2012)

a.

Lay the guitar across your lap with its strings facing upwards.

Hold a torch, loosely, in your plucking-hand, as high above your head as possible and pointing towards the fretboard.

Play by hammering the fingers of your fretboard-hand onto the fretboard wherever the light shines.

b.

Lay the guitar across your lap with its strings facing upwards.

Hold a torch in the pit of either arm, pointing towards the fretboard.

Place the fingers of your fretboard-hand wherever the light shines and, with your plucking-hand, pluck the corresponding string.

Or, hammer onto the strings with both fingers, wherever the light shines.

c.

Hold the guitar normally on your lap.

Place the torch between your feet, shining towards the fretboard.

Place the fingers of your fretboard-hand wherever the light shines (whether on the guitar, or not) and, with your plucking-hand, pluck the string corresponding to where the fretboard-hand is placed.

d.

Lay the guitar across your lap with its strings facing upwards.

Hold a torch, tightly, in your plucking-hand, as high above your head as possible and pointing towards the soundhole.

Turn the light of the torch on and off at irregular intervals.

Don't be afraid of the dark, or the extended silence.

III
(28/02/2013)

Close your eyes and keep them closed for the entirety of the piece.

Hold the guitar normally (hereafter known as “Position 1”).

Play any single note, holding it until it has decayed completely.

Then, invert the hand playing on the fretboard, so that the wrist is over, rather than under the fretboard (hereafter known as “Position 2”).

In this position, try and play the exact same note as before.

Hold whatever sound you get, whether a failure or success, until it has decayed completely.

Rotate your hand back to Position 1.

If your attempt at playing the note was successful, attempt to play the same note but with an added note on another string.

If it was not successful, attempt to play whichever note you accidentally played.

Rotate your hand back to Position 2.

If the last attempt was successful add another note.

If it was not, attempt to play whichever note you accidentally played.

Repeat the following stanza until a chord containing all six strings has been created:

Rotate your hand back to Position 1.

If the last attempt was successful, add another note on another string.

Hold whatever sounds occur until they have decayed completely.

If the last attempt was not successful, attempt to play whichever notes you accidentally played (play one less note if more than one note was played).

Hold whatever sounds occur until they have decayed completely.

Rotate your hand back to Position 2.

If the last attempt was successful add another note on another string.

Hold whatever sounds occur until they have decayed completely.

If the last attempt was not successful, attempt to play whichever notes you accidentally played (play one less note if more than one note was played).

Hold whatever sounds occur until they have decayed completely.

Open your eyes.

IV
(idea: 28/02/2013)

Tie a length of string between 1m-3m to the wrists of your hands.
Hold the guitar normally.

Rotate your fretboard-hand once around the neck of the guitar, in either a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction, changing the amount of string wrapped around the neck.
Strum a chord.
Hold the chord for the length of time it took to rotate your fretboard-hand around the neck.

Repeat the above stanza until you are unable to repeat it.

V
(1/03/2013)

Place one wrist ontop of the other, palms down, with both sets of fingers pointing towards the opposite arm's elbow.
Bind the wrists together using a plastic cable tie of the type used by police to arrest people.
Place the guitar in whichever position is easiest to play in.
Perform.

VI
(1/03/2013)

a

Sit down in a chair.

Hold a clipboard with a blank sheet of paper to your chest, the paper facing the audience.

Stretch your legs out in front of you, knees completely unbent and heels on the floor.

Place a torch between your feet, such that its light shines into the centre of the paper.

Take a black marker pen and hold it onto the paper in the centre of the torch's beam.

Keep the pen in the centre of the beam and follow it if the beam moves, which it undoubtedly will, due to the awkwardness of the position.

b

Take the paper off of the clipboard but keep the torch in place.

Take a pair of scissors.

Cut with the scissors into the paper until they are at the centre of the torch's beam.

Follow the centre of the beam with the scissors, cutting until the paper has been cut to the point that continuing is no longer feasible.