UNPROTECTED PRACTICE:
Including Process as Compositional Material

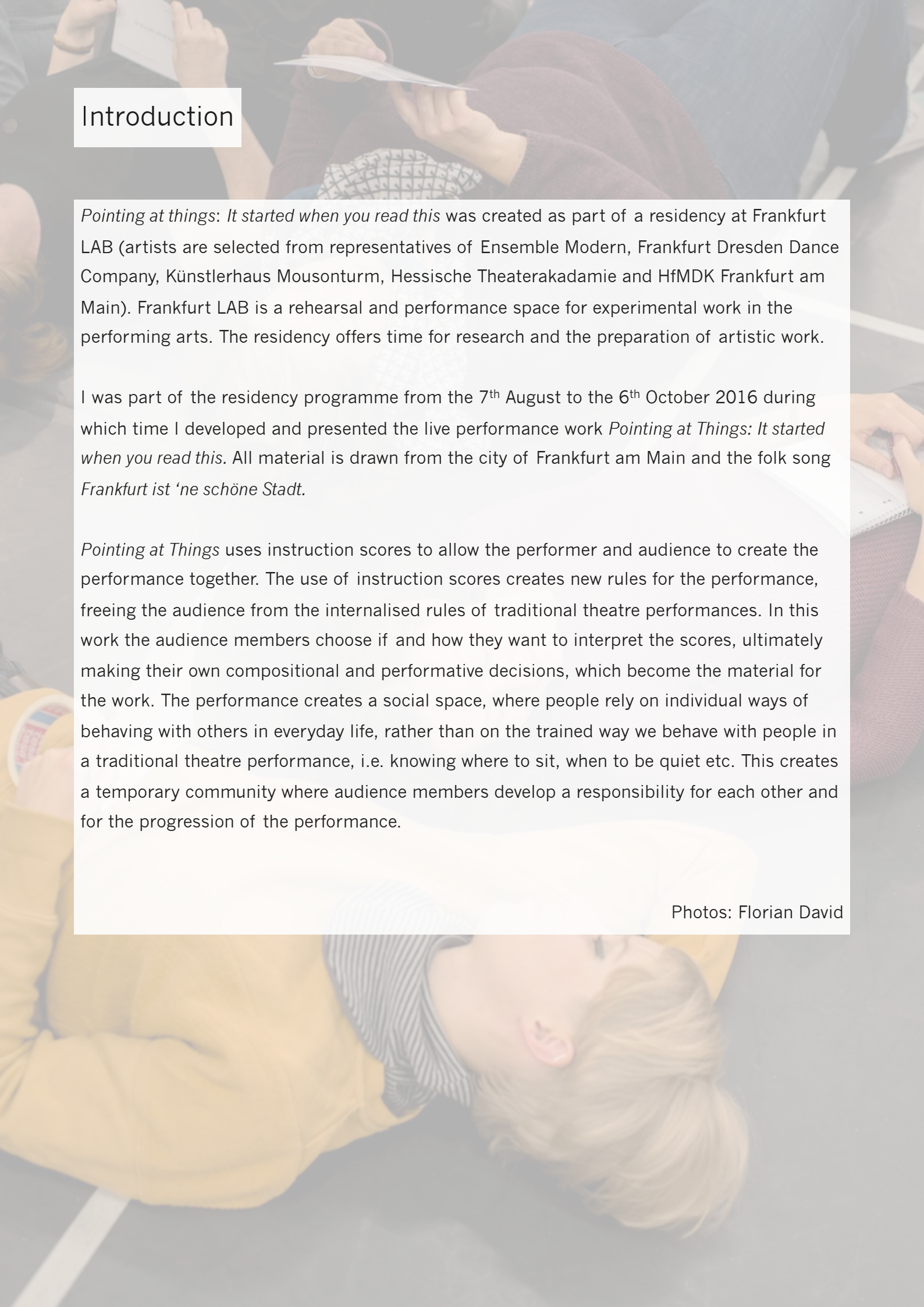## 3.5.1 Pointing at Things: It started when you read this

Documentation

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Introduction

Pointing at things: *It started when you read this* was created as part of a residency at Frankfurt LAB (artists are selected from representatives of Ensemble Modern, Frankfurt Dresden Dance Company, Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, Hessische Theaterakadamie and HfMDK Frankfurt am Main). Frankfurt LAB is a rehearsal and performance space for experimental work in the performing arts. The residency offers time for research and the preparation of artistic work.

I was part of the residency programme from the 7th August to the 6th October 2016 during which time I developed and presented the live performance work *Pointing at Things: It started when you read this.* All material is drawn from the city of Frankfurt am Main and the folk song *Frankfurt ist 'ne schöne Stadt.*

Pointing at Things uses instruction scores to allow the performer and audience to create the performance together. The use of instruction scores creates new rules for the performance, freeing the audience from the internalised rules of traditional theatre performances. In this work the audience members choose if and how they want to interpret the scores, ultimately making their own compositional and performative decisions, which become the material for the work. The performance creates a social space, where people rely on individual ways of behaving with others in everyday life, rather than on the trained way we behave with people in a traditional theatre performance, i.e. knowing where to sit, when to be quiet etc. This creates a temporary community where audience members develop a responsibility for each other and for the progression of the performance.

Photos: Florian David

Performance Preparation

The space

Image A shows a grid placed over the outline of the city of Frankfurt am Main.

The grid was laid out on the floor of the performance space with masking tape, according to the plan. The river was also marked onto the floor in blue masking tape (see image B).
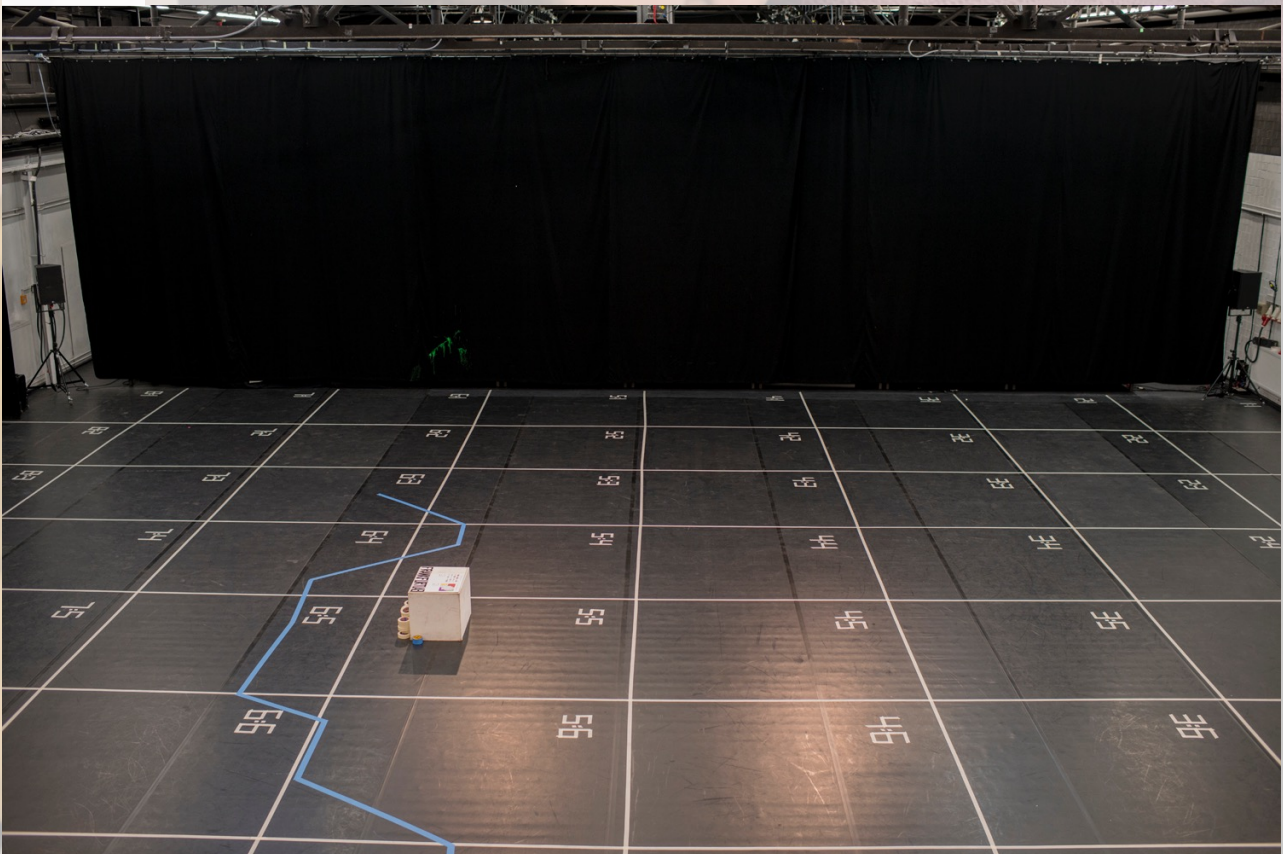
Image A

Image B

In relation to the outline of Frankfurt, Frankfurt LAB would be situated in square 5:5.

A small wooden box was placed in that square and labeled Frankfurt LAB (see image C).

The combination of the river and Frankfurt LAB allowed the audience to orientate themselves whilst standing on the grid.

Placed on top of the box was a pile of postcard scores (see image D).

The scores

Example of a postcard score (see images E and F)

Image E (Front)

Pointing at things:
It started when you
read this.

Image F (Back)

www.paulnormanmusic.com

Go to Frankfurt LAB, take the score on
the top and deliver it. Then repeat?

Deliver to a person of your choice.

Full list of postcard scores (see image G)

Image G

1. **Only the composer may take this score.** Go to Frankfurt LAB, take the score on the top and deliver it. Then repeat?

2. Go to Frankfurt LAB, take the score on the top and deliver it. Then repeat?

3. Find your home and go there.

4. Go to your favourite place in Frankfurt, taking the scenic route.

5. Find some landmarks and mark them.

6. Visit a friend's place. Think about how different it is to your own home.

7. Explore an area of Frankfurt you have never been to.

8. Go to a park and lie down.

9. Go to the river and sit in the middle.

10. Go to the edge of Frankfurt and begin to expand it.

11. Choose someone and swap one of your scores with them.

12. Try to imagine what is on someone else's card. Go and see if you were right and join in.

13. Change the course of the river.

14. Find some marked landmarks and move them closer together.

15. Go somewhere you will be tomorrow.

16. Go to where Frankfurt has been expanded and improve it.

17. Go and improve the new course of the river.

18. Recreate all the journeys you have taken today.

19. Find someone who is not expanding Frankfurt and teach them how to do it.

20. Jump onto the top of a landmark.

21. Find someone who can play the recorder. Ask them to go to Frankfurt LAB and play "Frankfurt ist 'ne schöne Stadt".

Structuring the scores

The postcard scores were arranged into a pile according to the structure of the lyrics of *Frankfurt ist 'ne schöne Stadt* (see image H).

Image H

<u>Verse One</u>

Frankfurt ist 'ne schöne Stadt, juppheidi, juppheida,

die auch einen Schutzmann hat,

juppheidi, heida,

Der Schutzmann steht am Gartenzaun

und hilf den Kindern Äpfel klau'n.

juppheidi und juppheida, juppheidi und juppheida, juppheidi, heida.

<u>Verse Two</u>

Frankfurt ist 'ne schöne Stadt, juppheidi, juppheida,

die auch einen Bäcker hat,

juppheidi, heida,

Der Bäcker schlägt die Fliegen tot

und macht daraus Rosinenbrot

juppheidi und juppheida, juppheidi und juppheida, juppheidi, heida.

<u>Verse Three</u>

Frankfurt ist 'ne schöne Stadt, juppheidi, juppheida,

die auch einen Metzger hat,

juppheidi, heida,

Der Metzger ist ein Schweinehund

an jeder Wurst, da fehlt ein Pfund

juppheidi und juppheida, juppheidi und juppheida, juppheidi, heida.

The first, third and last lines of each verse remain the same in every verse of the song. The second, forth and fifth lines change with every verse of the song.

The postcard scores were then arranged into verses (see image I). The repeating lines of each verse were always score 2 and the other lines were the next score in the list (see image G).

In addition, there was one copy of score one and two copies of score 21.

Score 1 addresses the composer only and score 21 requires the two recorders available, which is why there are not multiple copies of these scores.

Scores 1 and 21 form the intro and outro to the song structure (see image I).

Image I

Intro: 1
Verse 1: 2, 3, 2, 3, 3, 2
Verse 2: 2, 4, 2, 4, 4, 2
Verse 3: 2, 5, 2, 5, 5, 2
Verse 4: 2, 6, 2, 6, 6, 2
Verse 5: 2, 7, 2, 7, 7, 2
Verse 6: 2, 8, 2, 8, 8, 2
Verse 7: 2, 9, 2, 9, 9, 2
Verse 8: 2, 10, 2, 10, 10, 2
Verse 9: 2, 11, 2, 11, 11, 2
Verse 10: 2, 12, 2, 12, 12, 2
Verse 11: 2, 13, 2, 13, 13, 2
Verse 12: 2, 14, 2, 14, 14, 2
Verse 13: 2, 15, 2, 15, 15, 2
Verse 14: 2, 16, 2, 16, 16, 2
Verse 15: 2, 17, 2, 17, 17, 2
Verse 16: 2, 18, 2, 18, 18, 2
Verse 17: 2, 19, 2, 19, 19, 2
Verse 18: 2, 20, 2, 20, 20, 2
Outro: 21, 21

There are 20 different scores that the audience can follow and 80 squares on the grid. Therefore, I chose to use 4 copies of each score each time it is listed, producing a total of 435 scores including the intro and outro scores.

Background Music

Background music was created for the performance based on the folk song *Frankfurt ist 'ne schöne Stadt.* The Grid (Image A) has 80 squares: the same number of beats that are in one verse of the song.

To create the music the notes were laid on the grid from left to right, starting from the top left. The notes outside the outline of Frankfurt were used to produce the background music; the notes are coloured in the scores (Images J and K) to make this process clear.

Images J and K show the same information in different formats and together show how the background music was created. For the performance these scores were placed on top of the box labeled Frankfurt LAB.

Image J

Frankfurt ist 'ne schöne Stadt

Traditional

= Speaker 1
= Speaker 2
= Speaker 3
= Speaker 4

Image K

Frankfurt ist 'ne schöne Stadt

| B | A | G | E | D | E | D | D | D | C |
A	A	D	B	G	G	B	A	G	E
D	E	D	D	D	C	A	F#	G	G
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	A
A	A	B	C#	D	D	D		B	B
B	B	B	D	D	D	D	C	C	C
E	D	D	D	B	B	B	B	B	D
D	D	D	C	C	C	B	B		

= Speaker 1
= Speaker 2
= Speaker 3
= Speaker 4

To play the background music, a speaker was placed in each corner of the grid (see image L). Each speaker played a loop of pre-recorded music for solo recorder, which contained only the notes shown in images J and K.

Speaker 1 played the notes coloured red.
Speaker 2 played the notes coloured yellow.
Speaker 3 played the notes coloured green.
Speaker 4 played the notes coloured purple.

Two additional speakers that played a stereo mix of the four loops were placed in the foyer.
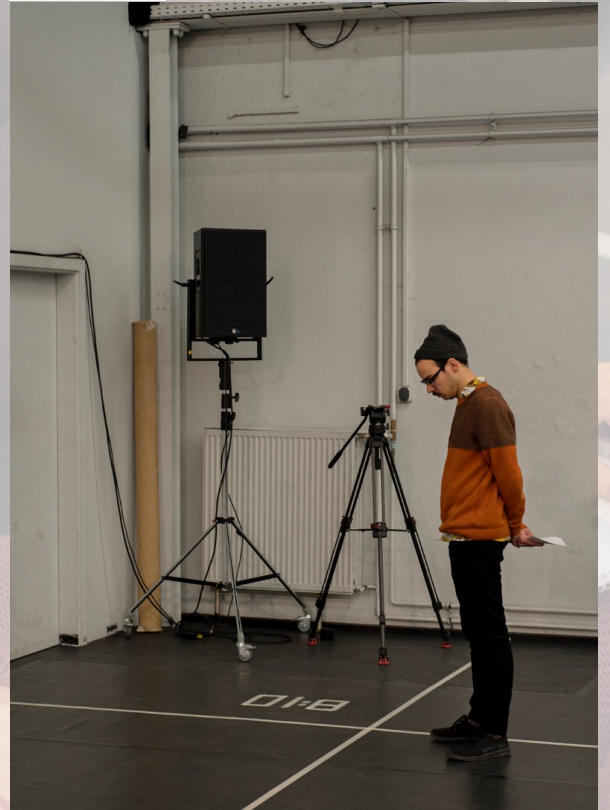
Image L

The Performance

To invite the audience into the performance space from the foyer, *Frankfurt ist 'ne schöne Stadt* was played on the recorder by the composer (see image M), who then left the foyer and walked to the performance space, where he started to mark the outline of Frankfurt on the floor.
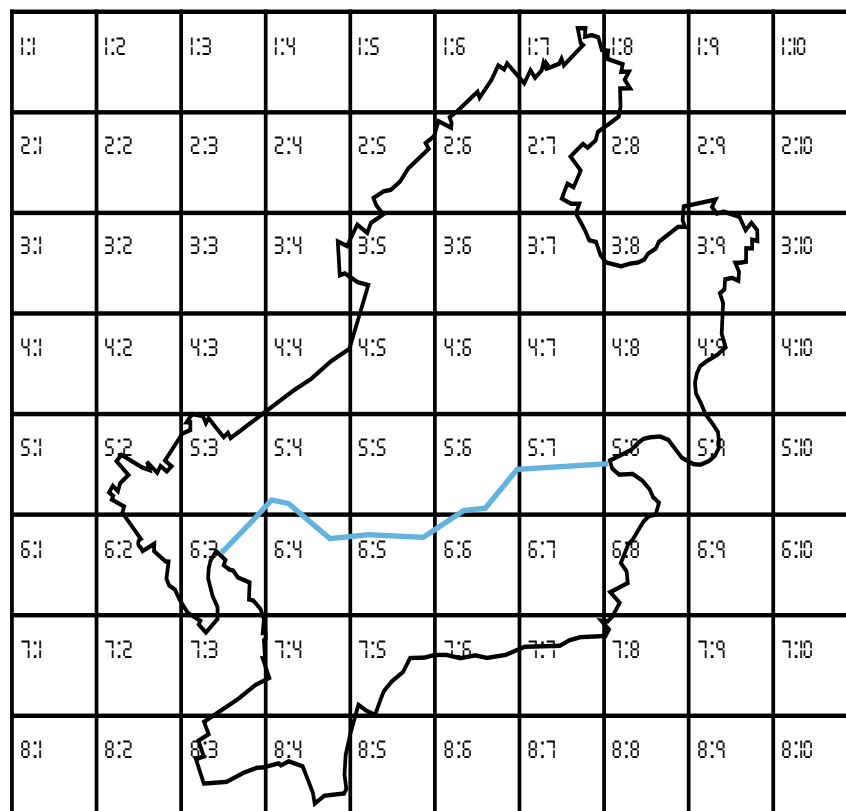
Image M

As the audience followed the composer into the performance space they were given a hand out (see image N).

Image N

Pointing at things:
It started when you
read this.

1:1	1:2	1:3	1:4	1:5	1:6	1:7	1:8	1:9	1:10
2:1	2:2	2:3	2:4	2:5	2:6	2:7	2:8	2:9	2:10
3:1	3:2	3:3	3:4	3:5	3:6	3:7	3:8	3:9	3:10
4:1	4:2	4:3	4:4	4:5	4:6	4:7	4:8	4:9	4:10
5:1	5:2	5:3	5:4	5:5	5:6	5:7	5:8	5:9	5:10
6:1	6:2	6:3	6:4	6:5	6:6	6:7	6:8	6:9	6:10
7:1	7:2	7:3	7:4	7:5	7:6	7:7	7:8	7:9	7:10
8:1	8:2	8:3	8:4	8:5	8:6	8:7	8:8	8:9	8:10

Please help me mark the
outline of Frankfurt, or this
may take a very long time.

The audience helped to mark the outline of Frankfurt onto the floor (see image O).

Image O

Once this had been completed together with help from the audience, the main part of the performance, which used the postcard scores, began.

The composer took score one from the top of the pile and followed the instruction, taking another score from the pile and delivering it to an audience member (see image P).

Image P

After this, the performance was allowed to run its course, with scores being collected, delivered and followed by everybody in the space. At times, the 'rules' were broken (for example: taking multiple scores from the pile and just following the scores themselves without delivering them), but always stayed within the frame of the composition. The overriding sensation in both rule following and breaking was the sensation of the shared responsibility to keep the performance going.

The performance ended as soon as someone had performed the final score (see image Q).

Image Q

Once the final score had been performed, the composer left the space and returned to the foyer where the background music was still playing and continued to play until all audience members had left the building.