

Early Minimalism: January 1965

Tony Conrad

Early Minimalism is a performance work founded, by the artist, upon his need to reconstitute and reconfigure an important but lost body of work, comprising the establishment of a strong minimalist tradition during the early 1960's. The series of *Early Minimalist* works, of which *January 1965* is the second, depends upon solo violin performance by the composer/performer.

The solo violin is greatly amplified; tuned to frequencies 587/440/293/147; and played without vibrato, using carefully-selected fingerings and pitches. The amplification makes difference tones unusually audible, so that tuning and fingering system takes advantage of rational harmonic relations, largely based upon multiples of the prime numbers 2, 3, 7, 11, and 17.

Early Minimalism may be performed as a solo work, though the segment *January 1965* is envisioned with a written part for string quartet (violin, viola, cello, string bass). The solo violin part, which will stand clearly in the foreground, is governed by constraints which the composer/performer developed during ten years of intensive commitment to playing in this idiom.

The first work in the series, *Early Minimalism: December 1964*, was publically performed in concert at the Experimental Intermedia Foundation in New York on March 22, 1987.

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