MUSI 231 • Assignment 1  
Fall 2015 

Due: In lecture, 9/15/15 

Part I: 

Read the following two articles: 

  Dan Trueman, “Why a Laptop Orchestra?” 
  Scott Smallwood, “Composing for Laptop Orchestra” 

Part II: 

Preview each of the videos from the list below. Then select two pieces to analyze in more detail, and write up a paragraph for each describing your observations and reactions. Frame your discussion using the arguments presented in the articles from Part I as well as the idea presented in lecture. Use the following questions to help guide your responses. 

- What are the primary sound sources of the individual instruments? (synthesized sounds, real-world recorded sounds, processed live sound, acoustic instruments, all of the above, etc.) 

- How are the instrumented performed? Does the control of the instruments contribute to the visual drama of the piece? 

- What is the overall sound of the ensemble. Is it rhythmic? Pitched? Does the piece rely on harmony and/or melody or texture and/or density? Could this piece be arranged for a group of acoustic instruments? 

- How is the piece structured? Are the performers reading notated music? Is there a conductor? 

- What aspects of the piece are successful in your opinion? What aspects are not successful? 

Pieces: 

LOrk Aeterna, Perry Cook - 

Walo, Lainie Fefferman - 
Undeciphered Writing, Jeff Synder -

Ctenophora, N. Cameron Britt -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J96lb6CYBBY

More Specific Gamelan Djembe Fusion, Perry Cook and Ge Wang -
http://plork.princeton.edu/video/More_Specific_med.mov

Stella Splendens, Nihar Madhavan -
https://vimeo.com/album/3382506/video/126996846

La Harpe de Melodie, PLOrk 2015 Medieval Ensemble Project -
https://vimeo.com/album/3382506/video/127001238

Machine Yearning, PLOrk - https://vimeo.com/99536775

Please print your responses and bring them to lecture on 9/15.