...until... was conceived in 1972 as a variable piece. It consists essentially of a cycle of pitches, initially highly consonant in super-particular ratios (n:n+1) to a given drone, but gradually increasing in dissonance. At the final, most dissonant stage, a small shift in the drone reveals that the cycle has now become a phase-shifted transposition of the original. This 'minimal' composition exists as an instructional text as well as ten realized versions for 1. low instruments (1972), 2. wind trio, violin or viola (1973), 3. North Indian instruments (1974), 4. jazz ensemble (1974), 5. piano (1974), 6. clarinet (1977), 7. guitar (1981), 8. piccolo (1981), 9. fixed media (1995) 10. double bass (2015).

...until... (original set of instructions, 1972)

Play a succession of pitches, the frequency ratios of which measured against a continuous drone can be expressed as pairs of contiguous whole numbers; a unison with the drone is also possible. Repeat this succession continually, at first without any change in it; after a while replace the pitch with the largest frequency ratio numbers at its position in the succession by another pitch with ratio numbers not necessarily contiguous and at least equal in size if not larger. Do this at first sporadically, then increasingly often, until it is the rule. Repeat this process with all the other pitches in order of decreasing ratio numbers. After all pitches have been replaced, the new succession ought to be a phase-shifted transposition of the original by an interval that is smaller than any of those between the initial pitches and the drone. Continue repeating the succession, gradually shifting the drone, slowly and continuously, by the same interval; during further repetitions start dropping the pitches one by one, again starting with the pitches with the highest ratio numbers against the present drone - hold the last remaining pitch for a while.

Version 5 for keyboard instrument is based on a rapid eleven-note sequence; the rhythm is simple - all notes are equally long. The process is also relatively swift, taking under four minutes. At the end the B-flat drone falls by a semitone.