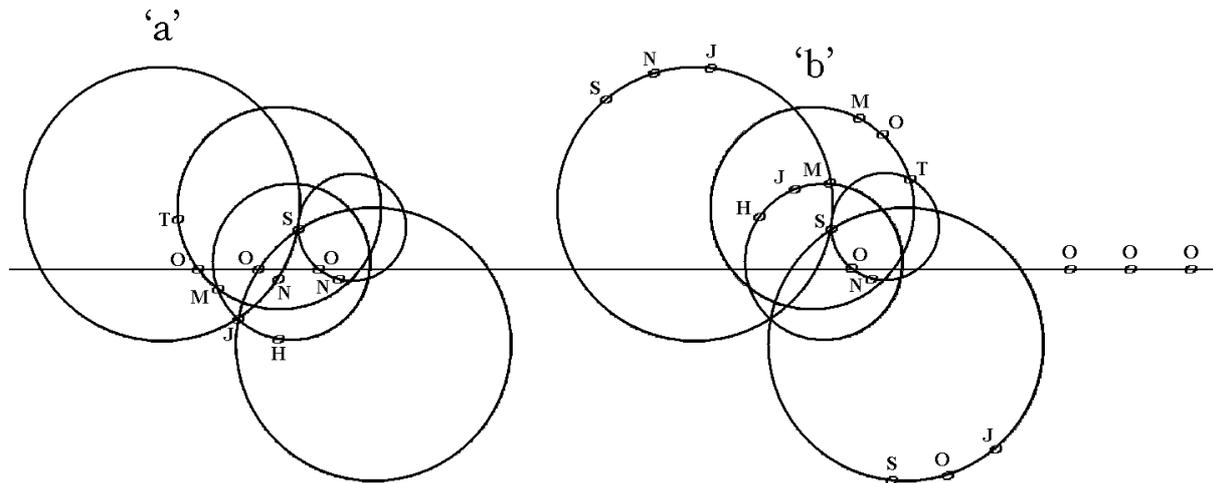


*Les Ciseaux de Tom Johnson* was written for a concert celebrating composer Tom Johnson's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1998. '*Ciseaux*' is a reference both to the composer's age ('Six-O' in French) and to the six 'O's in diagram 'b' here below. The next page displays an excerpt of the score.



Instructions for manufacturing *Les Ciseaux de Tom Johnson*

1. Write the letters T, O, M, J, O, HN, S, O, N from left to right, their alphabetical order reflected in their position from bottom to top - see diagram 'a'.
2. Sketch six circles through the letter combinations 'TOM', 'MJH', 'SOJ', 'JNS', 'SON' and 'OOO', the last group being on a straight line, i.e. a circle of infinite radius.
3. Allow the six letter combinations to move anticlockwise along their respective circles by one-ninetieth of the circumference of the smallest ('SON'-) circle: doing this ninety times in all causes all groups to traverse variously sized angular distances, 'SON' going full circle - see diagram 'b'.
4. Scan each of the ninetyone configurations thus obtained by an imaginary vertical line moving smoothly from left to right: interpret the vertical height of a letter encountered by the line as chromatic pitch, the moment of the encounter as time: this pitch-time interpretation yields a musical 'mini-score' image of the geometric letter configuration.
5. Overlap the ninetyone mini-scores along a time axis, such that the time gap between any 'OOO' group and the next is equal to the gap between the 'O's in themselves, i.e. so that all 273 (=91x3) 'O's are temporally equidistant. Voilà, *Les Ciseaux de Tom Johnson* is practically complete!
6. Notate the piece as a performance score for three instruments, allocating the 'TOM' and 'JNS' circles to the first, the 'OOO' and 'SON' circles to the second and the 'MJH' and 'SOJ' circles to the third. If needed, use also triplets and quintuplets to approximate the rhythm as accurately as possible. Insert a small pause at the end of the first mini-score. Impose a crescendo on the whole piece from soft to very loud. Apply a legato to the last three notes of each part (non-'OOO' in the second part).