

***I feel open to...* (2011) For violin, piano (toy piano), and percussion**

I feel open to... is an experiment in the interactions between music and text. Poet Denise Duhamel wrote a 1001-line poem, *Mille et un sentiments*, a list poem with the lines all beginning with the words “I feel.” *I feel open to...* is a setting of 78 lines taken from the section of Duhamel’s poem beginning with line 401. This section discusses the process of writing itself, the difficulties of writing, of starting out, the frustrations of searching for the spark that will set off creation, and the problems of translation. The lines of this section begin with the words “I feel open to.”

I wrote *I feel open to...* specifically for the three players of the California E.A.R. Unit. Each player is asked to speak lines while playing. Many of the speech rhythms are free, but where they begin and end is almost always controlled. Mostly the players speak as individuals, but there are places where they must speak in the rhythms being played by someone else in the ensemble, or in which they must speak in sync with another speaker. There are a few atypical instruments and playing techniques involved in the piece—the violinist must tune the G string down to a very loose D, and also plays the instrument as a ukulele at one point. The percussionist is equipped with prayer bowls, coffee cans, and a duck call, and the pianist doubles on toy piano.