

Checkout

from the series *In Between Times*

Text score for in-situ solo performance

Suggested Duration: 2–8 minutes (environment-determined)

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About This Work

Checkout is a site-responsive text score that treats waiting in a grocery store checkout line as a compositional condition. The work unfolds through attentive listening, restraint, and minimal action, shaped by the rhythms and contingencies of the situation rather than by predetermined musical material. Operating at the threshold of noticeability, *Checkout* engages social and temporal structures without interrupting them.

The work's primary conditions are patience, procedure, repetition, and delay. Conveyor belts, scanner beeps, routine actions, and moments of human error collectively determine pacing and form. Procedural delay and incremental progress are treated not as inefficiency, but as structuring forces.

Checkout functions both as a discrete action and as one instance within *In Between Times*, a broader body of work concerned with how musical structure can arise through attentive engagement with everyday environments.

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About This Series

In Between Times is a series of instruction-based sound works that unfold within ordinary systems of delay, transition, and regulated time. Across the series, attention and duration function as primary compositional materials, structured through constraints, cues, and environmental conditions rather than fixed sonic content. The works are intended to exist within lived contexts, often briefly and without trace, emphasizing responsiveness and restraint as forms of musical practice within shared systems.

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Performance Context

Enter a grocery store checkout line.

Attentional Frame

Attend closely to the environment, with particular focus on:

- mechanical sounds and human sounds
- repetition and interruption
- near-field and distant activity

Each category may suggest a different quality of response.

Instructions

- Observe the conveyor belt, scanner beeps, cashier actions, and the movement of people ahead.
- Each time the line advances, release one subtle sound or gesture.
- Gestures must remain small, socially permissible, and responsive to context.
- No gesture may be repeated.
- Timing and intensity are guided entirely by the environment.

After several minutes, gestures may become slightly more audible or visible, without breaking the work's overall subtlety.

Ending Conditions

The performance ends immediately and without emphasis when:

- your position in line changes significantly, or
- the transaction is completed.

Notes

The performer is responsible for maintaining the social integrity of the space at all times.

Attention, focus, and internal experience may shift throughout the performance and are considered part of the material. Action emerges not from intention, but from circumstance.

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Gesture & Sound Orientation

Performers may find it useful to identify a small, situation-appropriate palette of gestures or sounds prior to or during the performance. These function as orientation rather than instruction, and may change from one realization to the next.

Examples may include:

- lightly tapping a finger on the edge of a shopping basket
- shifting weight from one foot to the other
- a brief sigh or hum
- a momentary glance toward an object on the conveyor belt

The environment remains the primary source of timing, variation, and form.

Documentation & Reflection

The work may be documented, reflected upon, or allowed to pass without record. When documentation occurs, it is understood as a secondary practice rather than a goal.

Possible forms include:

- short ambient audio captures of hold conditions
- written notes on timing, repetition, or interruption
- diagrams mapping changes in system state
- abstract traces representing actions or pauses

Documentation may inform future realizations or related works, but is not required.

Traces and Translations

This work may generate traces beyond the moment of its in-situ performance. These traces are optional and are not the work itself, but may take the form of reflection, memory, or documentation. The work may also be translated into other formats—such as an ensemble work, an installation, or a digital record—through abstraction rather than reenactment of its source environment. Translations prioritize responsiveness, constraint, and emergence over representation, and draw from ideas accumulated through in-situ practice. Neither trace nor translation is required for the work to occur.