

CYBALMUSIC SERIES

(1982 - 1985)

Eleanor Hovda

- I. CENTERFLOW/TRAILS I - bowed cymbals and dancer
- II. CENTERFLOW II - bowed cymbals and audience
- III. LEMNISCATES WITH BREATH - cymbals, bows, mallets
- IV. ECCE - cymbals using bows and friction mallets
- V. MONTEMARTRE - cymbals using friction mallets

CYBALMUSIC SERIES

for double-mounted cymbals, bass bows and friction mallets

ELEANOR HOVDA

The CYBALMUSIC SERIES developed out of ensemble music that I've been making since 1972. The various pieces are made for a cymbal soloist who elicits sounds from the metal using bass bows and superball friction mallets. The cymbal player also uses voice sounds such as whistles, hums and vowel/consonant "breath" sound shapes as extension and counterpoint to the metal sounds. The player always works collaboratively with the space in which the pieces are performed, and in several of the pieces, there are collaborations with dancers and audiences.

CYBALMUSIC I - Centerflow/Trail I: This piece was made in 1982 for double bowed
1982 Ziljian cymbals and dancer. Notes on performance
are included on the score.

CYBALMUSIC II - Centerflow II: This work continues a series of pieces made for double
1983 bowed cymbals. I was working on the "mind and body" energies that happen during the process of cross-country skiing. I developed a "bowing stride" on the cymbals, which, continued for extended lengths of time, allowed sounds to evolve, grow and dissolve in a situation where the only "controlling" factor is bowing stride and the freedom to make choices about degrees of energy and use of variation in metric phrasing of the "strides". In CENTERFLOW II, the cymbalplayer collaborates with the audience. Long tones (hummed and/or whistled), made by audience and performer are folded into the cymbal sonorities.

CYBALMUSIC III - Lemniscates with Breath: Third in the Series, Lemniscates with Breath
1984 uses small rubber friction mallets in addition to bass bows. These mallets are made from several sized hard rubber balls, formerly called "superballs". They have the quality of being able to elicit sounds out of surfaces they are drawn across. Composer Alcides Lanza introduced superballs to me in 1968, and Ed DiLello is responsible for their functional name, "friction mallets". This piece is about excavating songs out of metal, and performance technique makes use of breath shapings and design of energy flow. "Lemniscates" are figures-of-eight forms.

CYBALMUSIC IV - Ecce: Written on a trip to Venice, this piece continues the concept of
1985 accumulating resonances and progression from "bowing strides" as a sound excavation technique to use of friction mallets to extend and shape the sounds drawn out of the metal. Ecce means "behold", and refers to the ability to Venice to continually reflect its own resonances in always changing dynamics and timbres.

CYBALMUSIC V - Montmartre: Friction mallets of three sizes (which elicit pitches in
1985 corresponding registers) are used to make Montmartre, which suggests the very three-dimensional trail images which come from walking all over small hills or mountains. Montmartre is a "walkaround", where the journey is the destination.

Performance Notes: For cymbal mounting and bass bow techniques, see CYBALMUSIC I score
friction mallets: use 1/4, 1/2, & 3/4 inch superballs on thin metal rods. Perform by drawing them slowly across cymbals from center to edge. Use upper and lower cymbals as well as alternate strokes on the same cymbal.

Centerflow/Trail I

A Song and Dance for Bowed Cymbals and Dancer

(1982)

Song by Eleanor Hovda

Dance by Sally Bowden

This music has been evolving as part of other ensemble music that I have been writing since 1972. I began bowing double cymbals in a piece written for Meg Harper's dance *Long Distance*, in 1979. I wanted to set up a music experience during that dance which would produce some of the external and internal results of doing something with sound, repeatedly, for a long time. "External," meaning "what actually happens to the sound that the audience can experience" and "internal," meaning "what happens to the player in the process of performing the piece which of course, affects what happens externally."

The Song takes shape from the process of interacting waveforms, resulting from continual bowing of the cymbals together with the results produced by ever-changing "energy shapes" and impulse patterns caused by variations in metric organization and bowing effort. Internally, in the mind and body of the cymbal player, an experience, which I find analogous to cross-country skiing, often happens. The player sets up a comfortable bowing "stride". The "stride" stays more or less constant; the player remembers to breathe fully in all parts of the body. The players may spend a long time bowing as evenly as possible (with respect to effort and/or accent) or the player may explore changes in accent (metric organization) and/or degrees of effort expended in bowing. The "pulse" or "stride" should remain constant and flowing. The second stage of performance, after a

long time of bowing, is that the performer becomes tired/bored/preoccupied with the physical work of bowing. It helps to focus on the magic of what is happening in the sound, concentrating on breathing fully and being relaxed in the arms and shoulders, & to explore ways in which one can make variations (within the structure or constant, "in stride" [pulsed] bowing). If the player is willing to "work through the pain" of Stage II, s/he will "come out on the other side" and there will be a plateau where the whole thing seems effortless and "plays itself". During this stage, the conscious efforts of Stages I and II seem to happen organically. Breathing becomes fuller and more integrated with the entire performance, and interaction between the player and the instrument becomes less "thought out" and more of a centerflow.

The score is conceived of as a visual "sound trail"—again, inspired by diagrams of cross-country skiing and hiking trails that I have become aware of since I moved to Duluth and "The Northcountry". The duration of the piece may be predetermined by the player and should be at least ten minutes long and can be as long as an hour or more. If the performance is over about 15 minutes, the player needs to deal with matters of pacing as

needed. In this case, the score is to be looked at by visualizing the score as a "trail" and the markings as "energy shapes" and "motion forms" that are sculptural in concept, that the performer will be able to stay away from a "linear", doggedly repetitive performance mode. I have borrowed from the aesthetics of "repetition" and "minimalism" to uncover a process of change. I am not interested in the mechanics of being "perfectly, consistently, repetitive" or "rigorously minimal" for those ends in themselves. What I am interested in, is the "songs" created by combining "stride" and breathing plus variations in metrical accent and bowing effort over an extended period of time—rather like when skywriting is sculpted by the wind.

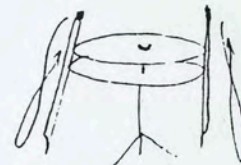
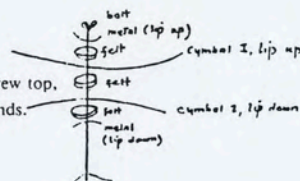
It has seemed important to me to do this piece in collaboration with a dancer as well as as a solo concert work. Choreographer/dancer Sally Bowden's dancing and approaches to making dances has been very compelling to me since I first saw her work in 1980. My sense was that *anything* that Sally chose to do with this music would make the whole idea of "Centerflow" resonate more fully. Hence, the collaboration. The Song and Dance are special cases of one another.

2 same-sized Ziljian symbols

2 bass bows

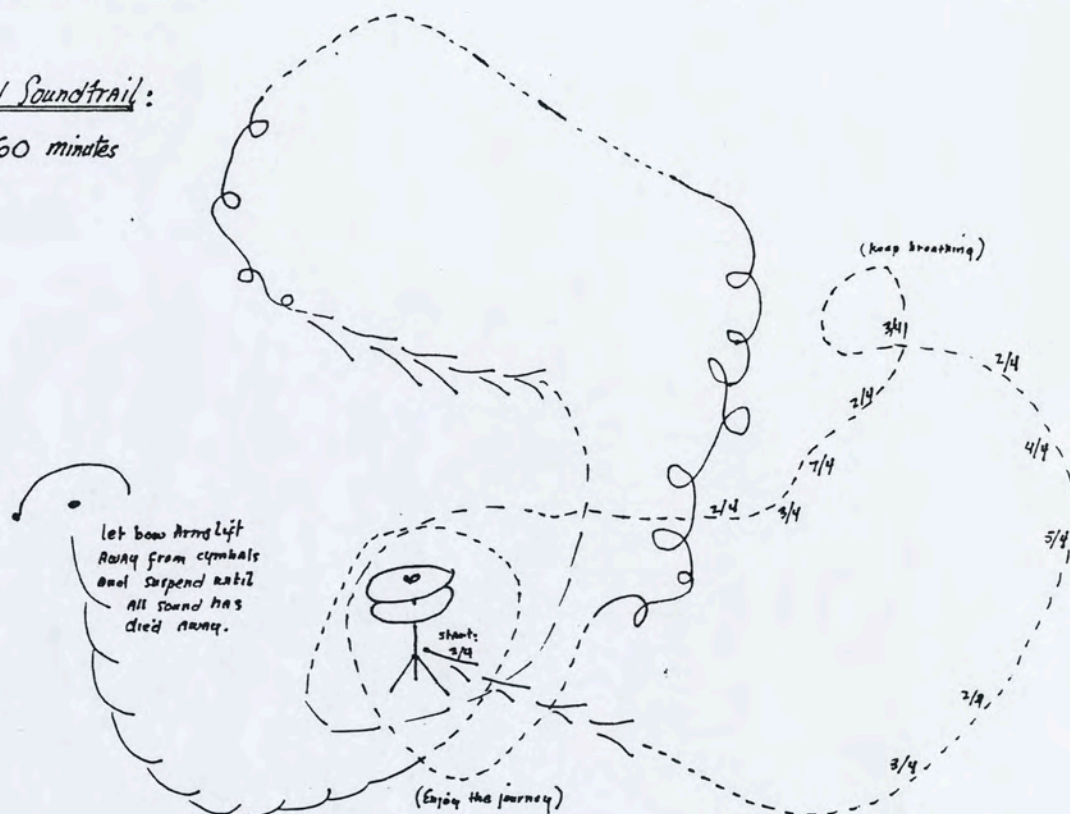
Cymbal stand with long bold/screw top,

three felt rounds, two metal rounds.

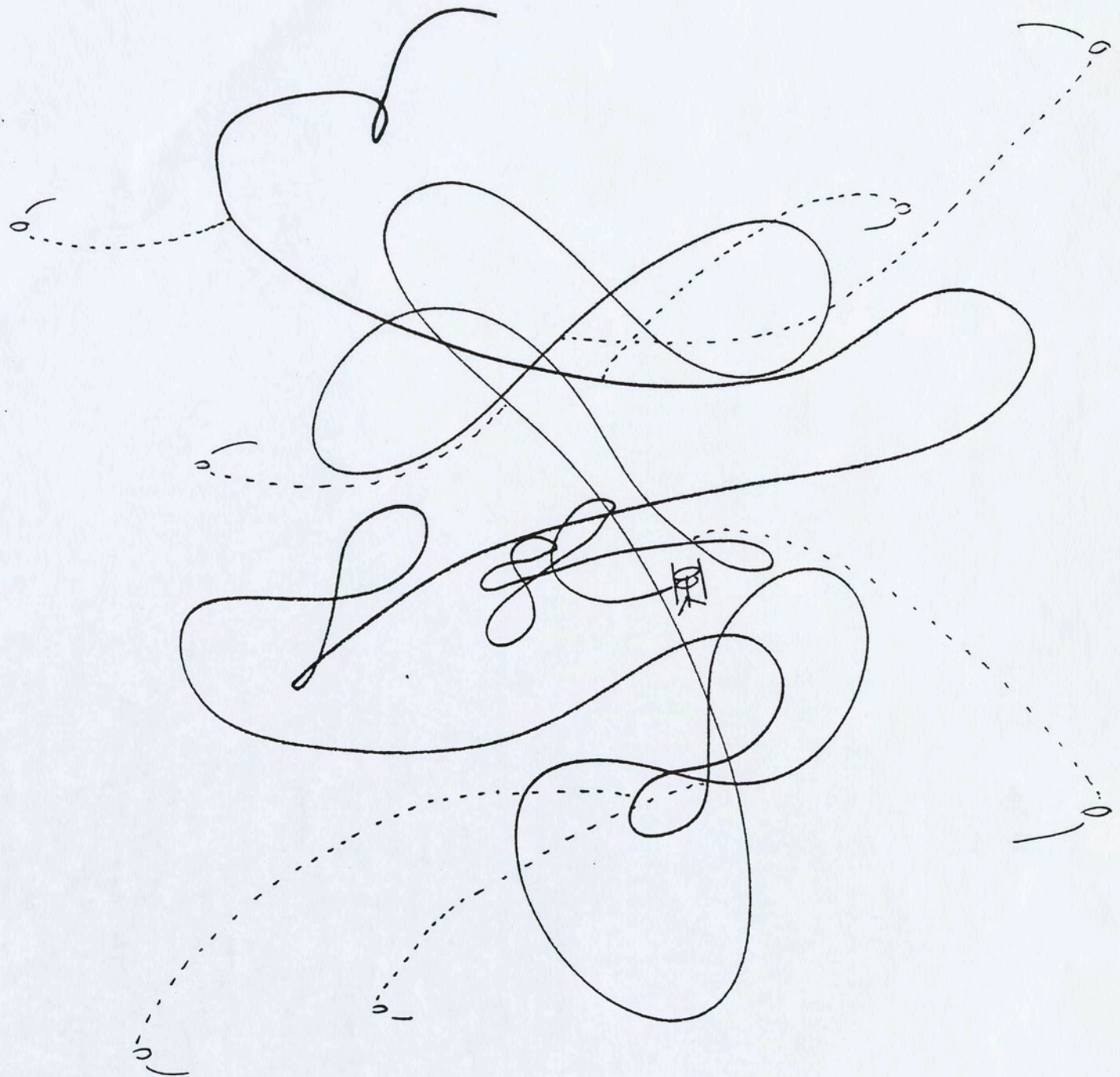


Cymbal Soundtrail:

10-60 minutes



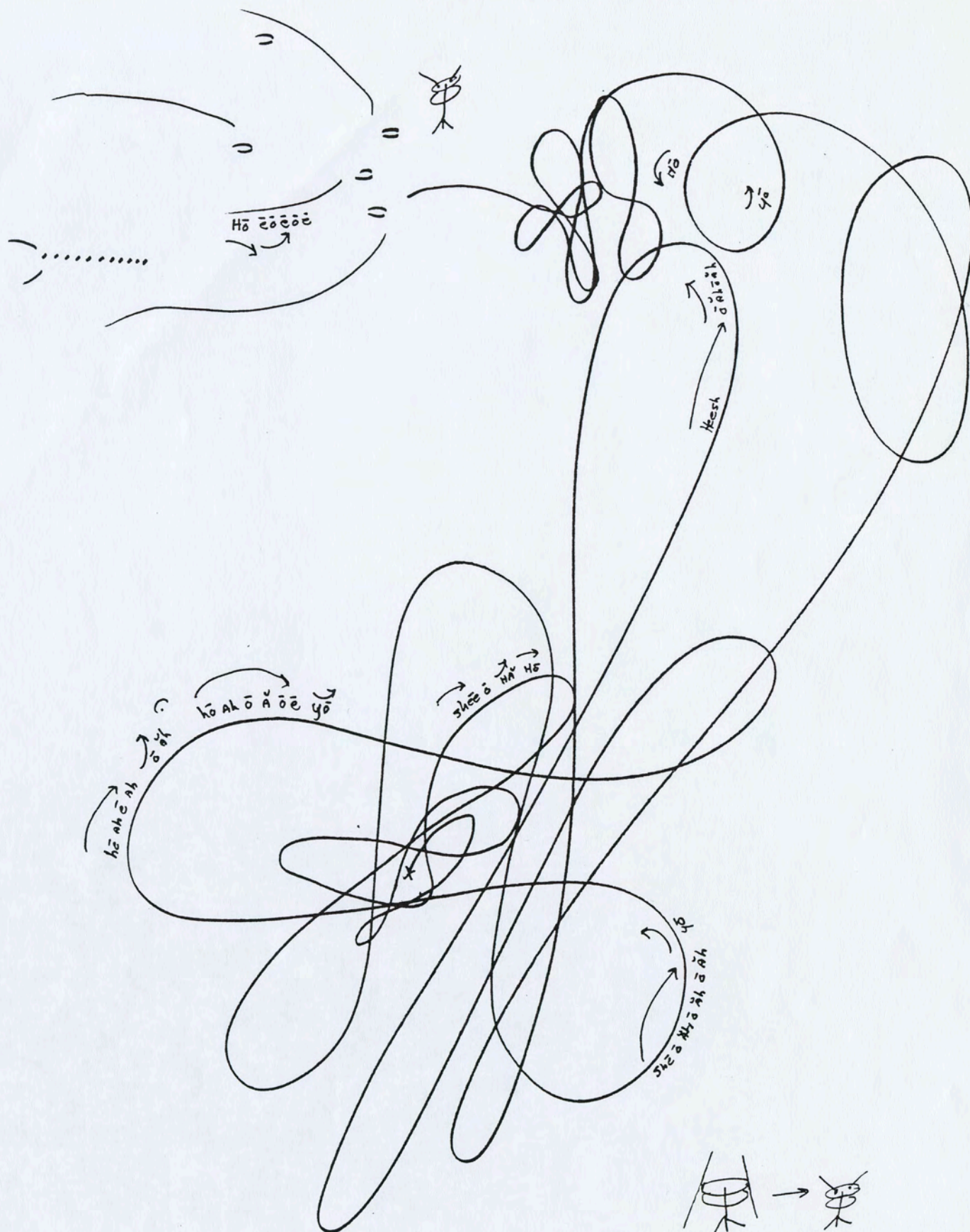
Cymbalmusic Series: #2 - Pentaglow with Audience



.... Audience hum/whistle unisons
— cymbal trail

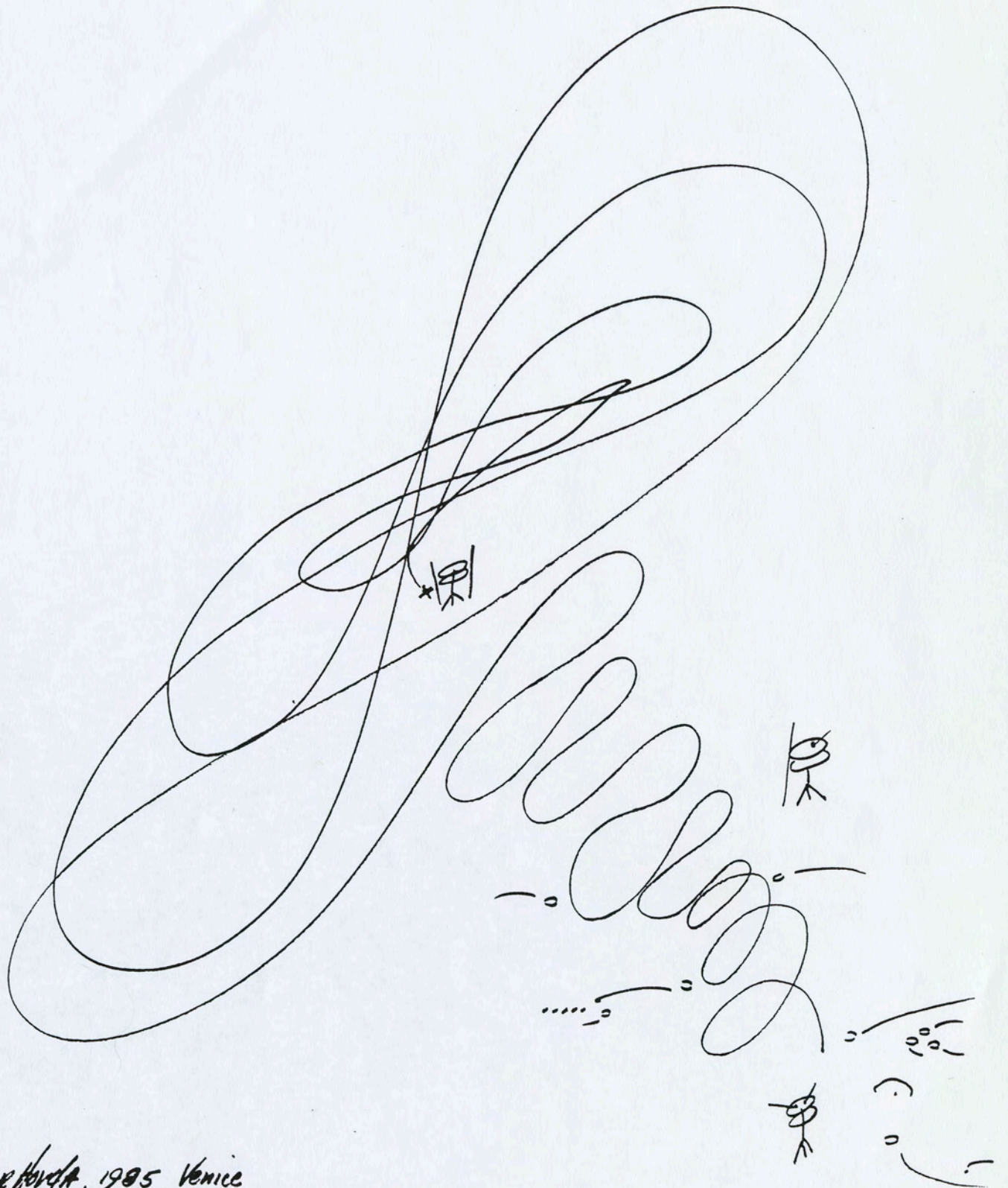
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Cymbal Music Series #3 - hemniscates

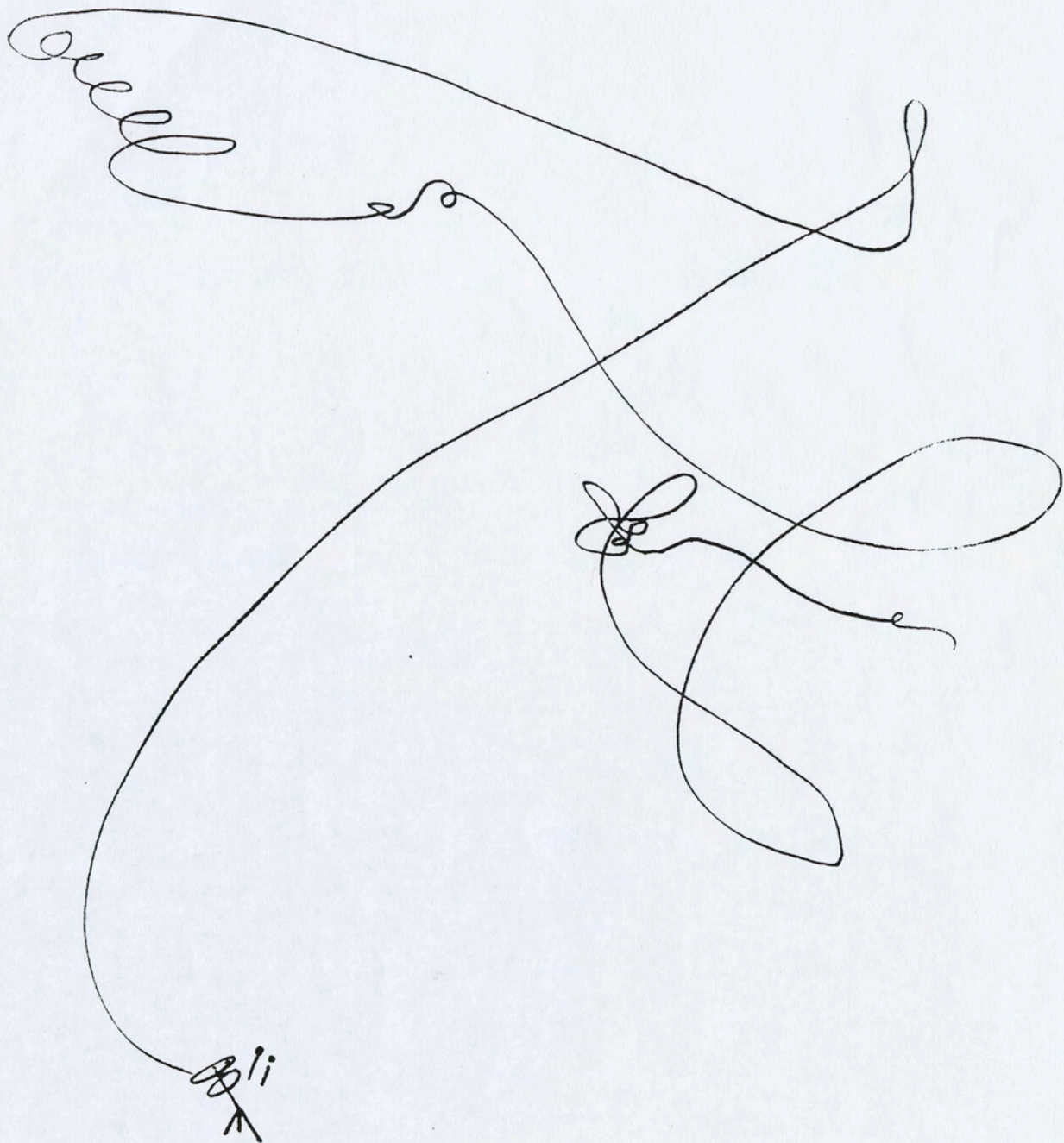


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Cymbalmusic Series: #4 - Ecce



Cymatmusic Series: #5 - Montmartre



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