

**Ontslaan
(toontood)**

four or five guitars

for Toon Callier and Zwerm

**Larry Polansky
2008-9**

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Ontslaan is for four or five guitars. If four, any combination of the five scores (labeled Guitar 1-5) may be used.

In each part measure-length = time. The notation is both spatial and metrical: the tempo of a measure is its physical length on the page. All parts begin and end together, starting and ending in some chosen tempo, more or less in unison. A different “stretching” function is applied to each part.

The ensemble should select a duration for the piece, and the players should “normalize” their tempo changes to the total, agreed-upon length. For example, the piece might be twelve minutes long. In that case, each player should practice their part in such a way that it lasts twelve minutes *and* the tempo fluctuations are sounded.

No click-tracks or independent timekeeping devices should be used, although some kind of common clock can be used to help the ensemble keep track of progress through the piece. The goal is not to be exact, but to try and play as an ensemble, and in as human a way possible, the changing interactive tempi of the work.

Parenthetical numbers at the end of measures indicate the percentage of progress thru the piece. In other words, (63.6) means that 63.6% of the total length has elapsed. These numbers are aids to the players, who may use them to help stay (more or less) with some fixed clock, or more importantly, to stay with the other players. For example, a player might write in a few cues from someone else’s part at certain places. These numbers are a kind of synchrony map: theoretically, when Guitar 1 is at 25%, Guitar 2 should be at or near same place in hisr part.

The “unstretched” score is the source arrangement, and in general not to be played. It is for reference and for practicing.

Ontslaan is based on the hymn tune “Dismission.” Of European origin, it appears in several shape-note tunebooks, including *The Missouri Harmony*. This song’s connection to several Shaker songs with the same or similar title is unclear. Thanks to Mary Ann Haagen and Amy Beal for valuable research regarding this tune.

Ontslaan was premiered by Zwerm (Toon Callier, Matthias Koole, Johannes Westendrop, Bruno Nelissen, and the composer playing guitar 5) at Logos, in Ghent, Belgium, on April 14, 2009.

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