

catchaiku was written for Toon Callier Jeroen Stevens. One measure long, it took about a month to write the computer code that generates the piece. Admittedly, much of that time was spent in clearly defining to myself the precise nature of the musical problem.

My idea was to create a *non-coincidental canon* — similar to what is often called a “tiling canon” — in which no two events occur at the same time. I fixed the relatively prime temporal relationship (17:13), the number of beats, and the number of events, and let the computer find the “best” configuration, where “best” means the “most non-coincident.”

catchaiku is related to several of my other works —notably the “time-span” idea of pieces like *Ensembles of Note*, and poly-temporal canons like the *Four Voice Canons* — but it was also a new direction. In *catchaiku* I imposed a particular kind of discipline on heterophonic structures that I had previously avoided. In *catchaiku* I thought of the difficult computation problem and the resulting rigid, fascinating structure (the canon) as a gift to the performers. I wanted these extraordinary musicians to be able to depend on the structure, using it like a solid jazz band rhythm section to be even more inventive and virtuosic in their own playing.

Larry Polansky
Santa Cruz, California
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