Oblique StrateTRIZ: Sparking Compositional Breakthrough

Darrell Mann

Innovation In Music, London, 7.12.19
Cited as "portentous" and "thoroughly foreboding", "Sense of Doubt" is one of the darker tracks of 1977's Heroes album, with a descending four-note piano motif juxtaposed with "an eerie synth line like a scrap of sound from a silent expressionist-era soundtrack". Brian Eno suggested that the contrasting themes were the result of him and Bowie each following an Oblique Strategies card to guide them in the track's overdubbing, Eno's directing him to "make everything as similar as possible" and Bowie's to "emphasize differences".
If I believe in the ideas of people who think I am stupid, then I am stupid.

If you have an extraordinary problem,

Don't try to solve it in the ordinary way.

OBlique Strategies

Emphasize the flaws

£4,319.41
Buy It Now or Best Offer + £21.60 postage

15 Watching
"I think *Taking Tiger Mountain* was more planned, and it was also a time when Eno was developing with his friend Peter Schmidt his playing cards, *The Oblique Strategies*. And we thought that was a great bit of fun."

They've been used by Eno across his career as an aid to the creative process, and whilst some people have seen them as an example of preposterous zen wankery, Manzanera is clear the fun that was had at the time.

"We said, 'Yep, we'll draw the cards and we've got to do what it says on the card.' We had some hilarious times and the whole album was done using those cards …it evolved into a very creative way of using the whole studio as an instrument."

"idiot glee"
“Some of it worked, some of it didn't, but quite honestly it did take me out of my comfort zone and look at it from a different point of view. And although I didn't like the point of view, when I came back, I was fresh”. Carlos Alomar
Think of a piece of music that makes you go 'wow'. What is it that evokes that emotion?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Durations (sec.)</th>
<th>Percentage of Duration</th>
<th>Ratio (or nearest rational approximate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>Beat</td>
<td>1st note</td>
<td>2nd note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inventive Principles 3, 16, 19
Think of a piece of music that makes you go ‘wow’. What is it that evokes that emotion?
Most ‘Wow’s Come From Expectation-Breaking

Like jokes….

Joke teller travels in this direction….

…convinces the listener to travel in this direction

Receiver ‘eliminates the contradiction’ and ‘gets’ the joke

…it’s about confounding expectations & about the building and release of tension…

Money

Bass: Roger Waters

Pink Floyd

…it’s about contradiction
Genrich Altshuller
1946-69 studied hundreds of thousands of patents to reveal DNA of ‘good’ inventions = solving contradictions

Reverse-engineered how inventors did it.

Created list of ‘Inventive Principles’
MILLIONS of systems

HUNDREDS of different problems

TENS of successful solutions

1. Segmentation
2. Taking Out
3. Local Quality
4. Asymmetry
5. Merging
6. Universality
7. ‘Nested Doll’
8. Counterbalance
9. Prior Anti-Action
10. Prior Action
11. Prior Cushioning
12. Shift Tension
13. Other Way Around
14. Arc/Rotate
15. Dynamics
16. Slightly Less/More
17. Another Dimension
18. Resonance
19. Change Periodicity
20. Continuity
21. Hurrying
22. Blessing in Disguise
23. Feedback
24. Intermediary
25. Self-Service
26. Copying
27. Cheap Disposable
28. Another Sense
29. Fluid
30. Thin & Flexible
31. Holes/Pauses
32. Timbre Shift
33. Homogeneity
34. Discard & Recover
35. Parameter Change
36. Phase Transitions
37. Relative Change
38. Enriched Surround
39. Calmed Surround
40. Composite
Mapping Oblique Strategies Onto TRIZ Inventive Principle
Mapping Oblique Strategies Onto TRIZ Inventive Principle

Inventive Principle 2, ‘Take Out’
Oblique StrateTRIZ

Reinvent anything with the universal rules for breaking rules

Systematic breakthrough in a box
Oblique StrateTRIZ: Connection-Direction

Remove the skeleton

Assume formlessness
Remove the riff?
Remove time signature?
Remove key?
...
Thanks

Slides: www.systematic-innovation.com

Paper: www.systematic-innovation.com/current-ezine

Cards: store.systematic-innovation.com/oblique-stratetrix/