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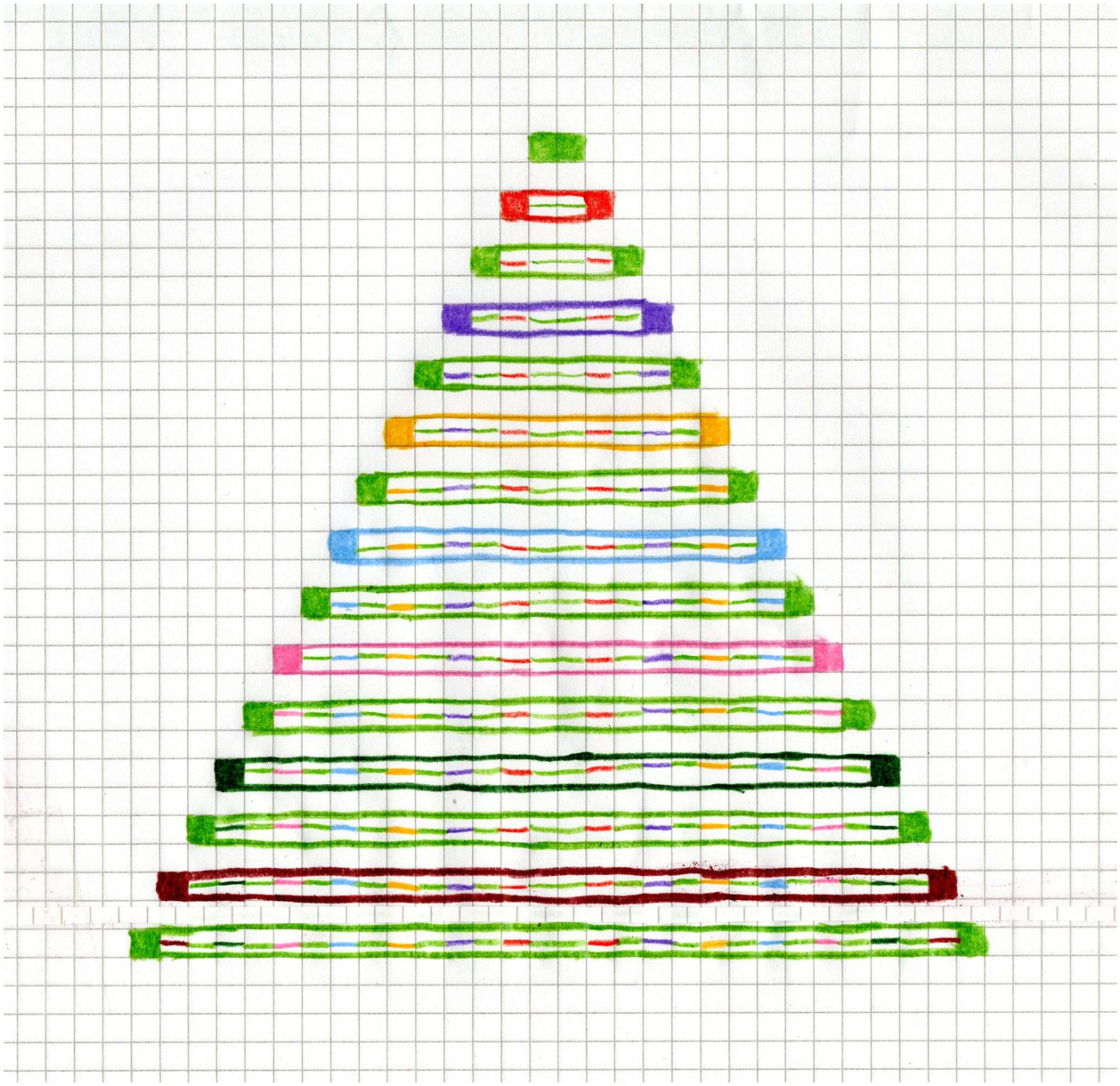
To be at hand without mediation or interference. A retention of cuts withdrawn in periodic impulses. Gossip? No.



"To be at hand without mediation or interference" comes from the abstract for Hortense Spillers' "To the Bone: Some Speculations on Touch," as given in 2018 in Berlin. "A retention of cuts withdrawn in periodic impulses" is an altered line from Sigmund Freud's "A Note upon the Mystic Writing Pad" (1925), as translated by James Strachey.

A recording of a space touches, cuts into, another space. That touch is recorded.
That recording touches, cuts into, the first space. That touch is recorded.
That recording touches, cuts into, a different space. That touch is recorded.
That recording touches, cuts into, the first space. That touch is recorded.
This continues, alternating between the first space and others.

In the drawing:

□ = A color indicates a space
■ = A filled-in box indicates recording
▬ = A line through a box indicates playback

Recording procedure:

Record *x* seconds in **Space A**.
*This is **Recording A**.*
Rerecord **Recording A** playing back in **Space B**, framed by 0.5*x* seconds before and after of **Space B** on its own.
*This is **Recording B**.*
Rerecord **Recording B** playing back in **Space A**, framed by 0.5*x* seconds before and after of **Space A** on its own.
*This is **Recording C**.*
Rerecord **Recording C** playing back in **Space C**, framed by 0.5*x* seconds before and after of **Space C** on its own.
*This is **Recording D**.*
Rerecord **Recording D** playing back in **Space A**, framed by 0.5*x* seconds before and after of **Space A** on its own.
*This is **Recording E**.*
And so on.

Based on the grid of the drawing, in exemplary detail:
If ■/▬ *= 5 seconds, and the first iteration (green) is 2* ■s, *then x = 10 seconds. This makes the second iteration (red) 20 seconds* ■▬▬■ *(5 seconds* [0.5x10]*, 10 seconds, 5 seconds* [0.5x10]*), and the final iteration (the fifteenth) 150 seconds long.*

General protocols:

The cycle between recordings made of **Space A** should be periodic (daily, hourly, as desired).

Recording levels in all spaces should be such that the spaces "on their own" are clearly audible in the 0.5*x* phases of each iteration.

Playback in all spaces should occur at a level slightly above (or at least clearly audible alongside) whatever the ambient level of the space at that time is. Choice of playback means should be made with local ambient levels in mind.

Each iteration produces a discrete recording that becomes the source file for playback in the next iteration.

A healthy buffer recording (of a space on its own) before and after the 0.5*x* seconds surrounding a played-back recording is advised.

Between iterations, some light editing may be necessary to prepare a next source file (for instance, cutting away the buffer).

A final version of ***To be at hand without mediation or interference. A retention of cuts withdrawn in periodic impulses. Gossip? No.*** should include a minimum of five iterations.

A final version should always end with a recording made in **Space A**.

The title of a final version should name the period and place of recording.
For example:

> ***To be at hand without mediation or interference. A retention of cuts withdrawn in periodic impulses. Gossip? No. September 28 - October 4, 2026, Princeton.***

26.ix.26, Liverpool

for Grace Villamil's "iASpace," presented in the CoLab of Princeton University's Lewis Center from September 28 - October 4, 2026