These two works commissioned by Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra explore words and loss of control with a central role for the voice.

A Bit in the Air is a collaboration between artist Cath Keay and Gios Greame Wilson. Keay’s scumpure Hung Sentence consists of 16 extruded letters in fired porcelain, spelling out a quote from a female patient in Latin & Esterson’s book Sanity, Madness & the Family.

Suspended in frames, the ceramic letters are played percussively by five orchestral members. The orchestra improvises in ‘families’ around a succession of vocalists, each drawing on words from the women in this book to shape what they speak, sing or play.

A Peculiar Slumber is Wilson’s response to the theatricality of the CCA space in which GIO regularly rehearses and performs. The piece consists of two different strategies using test on the theatre by the extraordinary Swiss writer Robert Wlaser. In the first part the orchestra tracks the quicksilver hyperbole and escalating calamity of ‘Response to a Request’. The second part builds through a calamity of improvised guests expressing the contradictory character descriptions in ‘The Theatre: A Dream’.