

Bowed Electrons 2022

Festival and Symposium

BE @ UCT 2022 programme

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information supplied by participants and/or sourced from the www

times: SAST (UTC +2)

admission: www.sacmnt.com



MUSIC, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
INSTITUTE FOR SONIC CREATIVITY (MTI²)

Welcome

Good morning and thank you for tuning in to this year's instalment of Bowed Electrons.

BE is hosted by the music technology section of the South African College of Music, one of the departments of the University of Cape Town. As such, BE is one of five 'pilot projects' nurtured by the music technology section.

BE is an initiative devoted to the exploration of sound, including the subset 'music'. It has, over the course of the last few years, obviously attempted to negotiate for itself a foothold in the vibrant South African cultural landscape. At first glance, the fact that this process has been guided by ambitions to secure a place on the cultural fringe, appears counterintuitive. The reward, however, is found in diverse, varied and probing programme content, accommodating and framing a range of contemporary composition currents in a process that culminates in an archived educational toolset.

The fact that BE can exist alongside "popular" musicking and the "classical" investment in tradition must be attributed to three factors. Firstly, a group of loyal participants have committed time and energy yearly, resolutely. A technical team has accommodated my wishes without complaint - publicly, at least. And finally, the South African College of Music has provided a home for, and a platform on which to develop this initiative.

I sincerely thank everybody involved, and wish all of us a constructive and productive event.

Theo Herbst
University of Cape Town, South African College of Music

Saturday 3 September 2022

10h00

Opening:

**Music, Technology and Innovation -
Institute for Sonic Creativity
What does the MTI² do?**

Speaker:

Prof. Leigh Landy

11h00

Composition seminar:

**That's Not My Mixer ... That's Not My PA ...
That's Not My Music ...**

Speaker:

Dr John Richards

12h00

Principal keynote

Making technology-driven sound-based music

Speaker:

Prof. Leigh Landy

13h00

Principal concert

Music from staff members of the Music, Technology and Innovation - Institute for
Sonic Creativity (MTI²) De Montfort University - Leicester, UK

*Note: please use headphones as some pieces are surround sound recordings reduced to
binaural and others are largely spatialised in stereo.*

Modulation for Mute Synth II No. 2 (2014, dur. 7'20")

Composer:

Dr Simon Atkinson

This music was made in response to a request from colleague John Richards (Dirty Electronics) to create a fixed-medium composition exploring the sounds of the prototype of his MuteSynth II instrument. This is a hand-held, battery-operated noise-making device. Constructed from cheap electronic components, it embodies a 'noise on a shoestring', post-punk aesthetic. I attempted to achieve something sonically idiomatic, that celebrated its distinctive bit-crushed sound world, whilst pushing beyond what it could most obviously do. I thus attempted to forge a 'hybrid' musical language through exerting a greater degree of compositional control over the aleatoric sound-making aspects of the instrument, and treated the task in a way meaningful to studio-based practice, developing a somewhat novel musical instrument/studio relationship. This was achieved through extensive use of the instrument's miniature patch bay that enabled me to drive the instrument through iterations of specially created 'control' sounds that ran directly into an audio input and miniature sequencer clock source input; hence the concept of the pieces, modulation, as primary technique and concept of musical rhetoric. This project featured in the 2014 publication of the Mute Synth II instrument on an accompanying audio CD (Mute Records).

Arioso (2021, dur. 9'36")

Composer: Prof. Dr John Young

Arioso (2021) grew from a soundscape experience on a humid September night in Tappan Square in Oberlin, Ohio in which a chorus of crickets and the constant electronic beep of pedestrian crossing signals formed an interlocking texture of distinct pitch and pulsing granular noise. My field recording of this unlikely duet between the purity of an artificial pulsing tone and the spatially rich stridulation of insects underpins the structure of the piece. A flock of jackdaws circling in flight near my home just after dawn provides another window on the world of natural sound, supporting the work's emphatic rhythmic shapes. While the form might be loosely thought of as reflecting the traditional recitative-like 'arioso', the title (arioso = 'airy') is also intended to be more deeply indicative of the atmosphere of sensual mystery I found with the air set in vibrant motion that night in Oberlin.

Arioso was premiered at St. Ruprechtskirche, Vienna, 13 June 2021.

Estuaries 4 (2021, audio-visual; dur. 8'41") stereo reduction

Composer: Prof. Dr Bret Battey

"Estuaries 4" is the fourth and final part of Battey's "Estuaries" audio-visual series, which can be viewed as a series of standalone works or ultimately as one large, multi-movement work. It explores contrasts between intense and frenetic textures and a gentler poetics, with the latter expressed in part through visualisation of the mathematical Rosenbrock function.

The "Estuaries" series involves visualizing Nelder-Mead optimization, a process used by mathematicians to find solutions to complex, multi-variable problems that cannot be addressed by solving equations. We see the results of many such routines searching for the brightest points in a source image or maxima/minima of a function. The music was created with Battey's Nodewebba software, which interlinks pattern generators to create complex emergent behaviours.

Déchirure (2013, dur. 7'35")

Composer: Dr James Andean

Déchirure: a tearing, a painful separation... This piece involves a number of 'déchirures', both musical as well as figurative (personal separations: the plaintive cry of the distant train, etc...) although the only literal 'tearing' is saved for the final phrase. It is also a reference to the sound materials: through the act of recording, these have been ripped from the world and moment which birthed them, to be reappropriated through the creative act in the creation of this piece. This work was composed for the *Presque Rien 2013* project, for which sounds from Luc Ferrari's archives were made available to composers for the composition of new works.

Magnets (2020, audio-visual performance; dur. 8'13")

Composer: Dr Anna Xambó Sedo

This piece gets inspiration from the late Alvin Lucier's *Sferics* (1988) to whom it is dedicated. *Sferics* musically explored electromagnetism from radio waves in the ionosphere. In this piece, I investigate the acoustic properties of electromagnetic fields and their translation into music. I am using MIRLC 2.0, a self-built library in the free Supercollider software. I am developing this library to allow the live coder to retrieve or rewire sounds based on music information retrieval techniques.

The audio input signal is a personal recording of electromagnetic fields emitted by a home network router recorded with a self-built induction microphone. Based on these acoustic properties of the pitch, onsets and beats, a sinusoidal sound generator, a bit crush sound effect, and a bass generator are triggered, respectively.

This piece was first released in the album compilation *Compassion Through Algorithms Vol. II* (Light Entries, 2020) and was presented live for the first time at “Concert PACE 1 Live Music from MTI²” on November 10, 2021.

Composer: ***Pulse*** (2013, dur. 8’04”) *binaural*
Dr Peter Batchelor

Peter Batchelor is mainly focused on large multi-channel sound installations these days. ‘Pulse’ explores impulse along with rhythm and periodicity. It plays with real-world sounds which exhibit such behaviour, both mechanical (engines and machinery, bicycle chains, a record player, thudding helicopter blades) and natural (crickets), allying these with looped sound fragments and repeated rhythmic patterns. Musical relationships are sought between these various materials, and the polyrhythmic complexities that result from their combination.

Composer: ***E Pluribus Plures*** (2021, dur. 18’45”) *binaural*
Prof. Leigh Landy

E Pluribus Plures (Out of Many, Many, 2021) departs from the point of view that the world’s diversity of music is rich and running the risk of both dilution and extinction due to the greater homogeneity and prominence of commercial forms of music available today. The work intends therefore to celebrate our universal love of music whilst equally celebrating its wonderful diversity in which the known and the unexpected seek to find cohesion (coexistence) through their variety. *E Pluribus Plures* is meant to act as a metaphor for our need to respect cultural diversity in all its forms. The word ‘respect’ is integral to my attitude regarding each and every sample used no matter how they were recomposed. No sample in the piece was altered in any manner beyond removing unexpected glitches.

14h15

Opening keynote I

My journey with and ambitions for the musical bow

Speaker: A/Prof. Dizu Plaatjies (read by theo herbst)

Although I grew up in ‘urban times’, my journey into the art of the bow started at the knee of my rural Mpondo mothers and aunts. This journey has taken me far away from these early formative interactions. However, the impact of their artistry and wisdom on me has not waned. It has provided sustenance and solace throughout my career as performer, instrument builder, educator and mentor.

Perhaps now is the time for me to reflect on aspects of the past and also contemplate what the future holds.

15h00

Composition seminar:

Presenter:

Random music for control freaks: Digital clockwork for the insecure

Dr Cameron Harris

16h00

Interview:

Presenters: Anne Graaff and Christopher Culpo

17h00

Afternoon keynote II

Music, mood, healing and flourishing - Perspectives from long term work with the San

Speaker: Dr Chris Low

San ancestry in southern Africa stretches back to the origins of modern humans. This remarkable continuity speaks loudly of the San's extraordinary knowledge of how to live well in southern African environments. To date, interest in the San has overwhelmingly concerned their subsistence strategies and how their hunter-gatherer lifestyle requires extensive environmental knowledge and skilled use of environmental resources. In this keynote I wish to turn attention in a different direction.

Living well not only requires profound environmental knowledge but co-operation, behaviours and moods that support the wellbeing of the individual and group alike. My talk situates San music within wider contexts of healing and mood that are intrinsically interwoven with wider San ontology and lifestyle strategies. Set against the self-evident success of ancestral San, my contextualising living well and flourishing within how individuals and groups feel and get along, has implications for us all in the face of the extraordinary challenges currently facing the world.

19h00

Opening concert

Nostalgia Nexus (version 2022, dur. 14'00")

Composer: Dr Cameron Harris

Nostalgia Nexus utilises a digital sample player that produces a new generated form of this work each time it is activated with a duration set by the user.

This version was recorded on 29 August 2022. For more versions and a download of the Nexus player, visit cameronlharris.com/clh

My initial intention for this project was to create an online browser-based piece that would contain a defined structure but material that could be altered within the structure. The piece would, by default, be populated with my own musical material but this material could be overwritten or added to by online users accessing the piece and then working with it locally in their browsers.

Initially, I decided that for such a browser-based piece to be possible using web audio, it would be best to restrict its technical aspects to the playing of recorded samples. Hence the idea for a sample player piece was born.

The next task was to decide how I would create the samples that would form the framework material for the piece. I began to look through recordings I have created over the years and identified characteristics that would help me group them together as the piece's material. However, in doing this I was struck by how nostalgic it made me feel, both for the sounds themselves and the memories of the works and times they evoked.

I don't think that nostalgia is always a very healthy or positive creative impulse but in this case, I decided to run with it. I believe that Covid 19 has caused much nostalgia for times when things were different and also for people we have all lost, and I think that it could be positive to acknowledge this in a work, without falling into the trap of living in the past or approaching it with rose-tinted spectacles.

Having made the decision to embrace nostalgia in this piece I then further decided to add a work by Schubert into the mix. Schubert is a composer I find myself constantly returning to for a variety of reasons. I took MIDI of a work by Schubert that I have a particular relationship with and which itself utilises variation as a central aspect. I subjected its pitch material to randomised processes and then worked with sound processing to mould the results into material that fitted the groupings I utilise in Nostalgia Nexus.

Although this material has been turned into something quite different from the original, I can still hear its phantom traces. I wonder if, after a few iterations of Nostalgia Nexus, you will be able to identify it too.

The piece uses 21 sample players, 20 of which are linked in tandem and which can either play infinite loops changing material or individual samples. The remaining player creates the last sample of the piece. Each pair of players plays a different group of sounds. These groups have been constructed in two ways: using sounds that in my view progress well from one to another and sounds that are best not heard against one another. There are two player pairs that combine groups but in all other cases, a sound will not be heard simultaneously with any other sound from its own group, such sounds will only be heard serially.

Simon Emmerson's Memory Machine (2010) and the generative players fLOW (1998-2018) and Seelewaschen (2003-2020) created by Austrian composer Karlheinz Essl are three key influences for Nostalgia Nexus.

Although the structuring of material for Nostalgia Nexus is quite prescriptive, the continuing renditions of the music produced by the player still manage to surprise me.

Each rendition contains moments that I really enjoy and feel to me well paced, and also corners that I would love to go in, clear up and make musically tidy. My guess is, though, that each listener will judge the locations of each of these extremes differently and I have therefore resisted the temptation to tamper with the generated output of the player once the final decisions were made regarding the source material. If you are interested in doing so, please go ahead and download the player itself and see what music it produces for you.

Background images for the work are adapted from:

'The Babbage Engine at the Computer History Museum Mountain View, California'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=be1EM3gQkAY>

Artwork: ***A Wall of Tears*** (2022, dur. 11'33")
Anne Graaff
Music and video: Christopher Culpo

Composer: ***Affecting Varèse*** (2021, dur. 5'58")
Sonic Response. A collaborative work for flute and affected electronics
Flautist: Meryl van Noie
Dr Esther Marié Pauw

This project was completed during 2021 and it felt good to collaborate with another artist despite the age of socially distanced art. The commission from the flautist was to create a sound collage or sound response to her recorded performance. The title of the original piece she played is "Density 21.5", arguably the most famous 20th century piece for solo flute, written in 1936 (revised version 1946) by Edgard Varèse, and premiered by William Kincaid in the USA, playing his new platinum flute. The platinum density of the instrument was close to 21.5 grams per cubic centimetre. The commissioner's instruction was for the composer to have free rein - i.e. the sonic response could include the piece, parts of it or nothing at all if the composer so wished. The idea was to respond to the original composition by Varèse in whatever way the composer saw fit.

Notes by each collaborator:

Dr Esther Marie Pauw:

"This raw recording, done at 2 metre distance, with Zoom Handy6 recording setting XY mic on 180 degrees, self-recorded in a room with high ceiling, but small: approximately size 6x4m. Recorded in mid-winter July or August 2020. The recording has not been mediated (reverb added or dynamic levels adjusted) and my volume setting was 8/10."

Meryl van Noie:

"From the beginning this project resonated with me since I love the romantic notion that Varèse is the original "organiser of sound". The composer had such clear intentions, it was only fitting to commit to doing the same. While I followed the brief of "Affecting Varèse" as a reactive project during a remote process, I was careful not to overshadow the integrity of the original composition, keeping in mind the composer's intent. At the same time, it was important to treat the musical performance with careful respect too. There are contrasting parts where at times the flute is 'whispering' right in one's ear and at other times grows into a powerful force, with all credit to the performer. 'Density' remains at the core of it. The 'reactive composition' is an expansion of this idea - crafts of the past and the future, as well as appreciating what was captured in a present moment. This idea allows for the musical ideas to be turned inside out and upside down, but hopefully the sincerity of the musical characteristics remain intact".

***Umnenga - Visual Music* (2022, dur. 7'10")**

Composer: Meryl van Noie
Biological Oceanographer: Dr John Ryan

Sightings of whales in Southern Africa are not unusual from June to January as Southern Humpback (Megaptera) whales migrate to warmer waters from the polar regions up the East Coast of Africa to mate and calve in the warmer waters off the coasts of Mozambique and Madagascar. Although simply passing by the continent on their epic journey, they are often spotted from South African beaches. Humpback whales can be seen just offshore in small groups of up to ten animals, as single females with a calf. These whales can launch their entire bodies out of the water and are the most vocal of the whale species. If you dive during the winter months off South Africa, you may be able to hear the haunting songs of the humpback whales underwater from several kilometres away.

The Monterey Accelerated Research System (MARS) Cabled Observatory is located off the coast of California. It consists of a 52Km long undersea cable that carries real-time data from the deep sea to a lab on land. This infrastructure has allowed various scientists to deploy instruments at the MARS ocean observatory testbed. Audio data recorded using this infrastructure fall into three categories: biophony (sounds of marine life), geophony (sounds

of the earth), and anthrophony (sounds of human activities). The intensity of all received sounds can be measured, and all are filtered and amplified so that people can accurately hear the character of these exciting sounds.

I sincerely thank John Ryan from the MBARI Institute for his dedication to his work, patience and generosity in answering my questions.

Umnenga is the Xhosa word for 'Whale'. Ryan remarked: "Umnenga. Love it"

References:

Audio Material: Pacific Ocean Sound Recordings recorded by John Ryan from the MBARI Institute were accessed on 11 August 2022 from www.freesound.org under the Attribution 4.0 International (CC by 4.0) licence.

Video and Image Stills material: Video and still image material extracts were accessed between 13 and 25 August 2022 from www.pexels.com under the Attribution 4.0 International (CC by 4.0) licence, uploaded by the following contributors:

Videos

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pexels-production-ID_4279313

pexels-production-ID_4332085

pexels-production-ID_3184446204

pexels-sean-johnston-video Video S3: A humpback whale in South Africa (tag ID mn161105-37)

Images

pexels-andre-estevez-3309870

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Journal Article: David E. Cade et al. 2021. "Social exploitation of extensive, ephemeral, environmentally controlled prey patches by supergroups of rorqual whales." *Animal Behaviour* Volume 182, 251-266. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2021.09.013>.

Dirty Electronics Piece for Makoto Nomura (2022, dur. 9'33")

Composer: Dr John Richards

Mixed and recorded: Davide Baldazzi

Special thanks to Neal Spowage - instruments and reclaim

John Richards explores the idea of Dirty Electronics that focuses on shared experiences, ritual, gesture, touch and social interaction. He is primarily concerned with the performance of large-group electronic music and DIY electronics, and the idea of creating music inside electronics. His work also pushes the boundaries between performance art, electronics, and graphic design and is transdisciplinary as well as having a socio-political dimension. Dirty Electronics has been commissioned to create sound devices for various arts organisations and festivals and has released a series of hand-held synths on Mute Records. (www.dirtyelectronics.org)

Makoto Nomura has pioneered new forms of collaborative composing, directly involving others – including ‘non-musicians’ – in the creation of his works. Using musical games and wordless discussions as starting points for compositions, he has involved community groups, including residents of old people’s homes, children, people with disabilities and dancers, in making improvisatory works. He has held recitals in public baths using hot water and buckets, played melodicas with animals (ducks, pigs, horses, monkeys, orang-utans, lions and an ant-eater) and, with the Hokusai Manga Quartet, used Hokusai’s drawings as a score. One of Nomura’s innovatory compositional strategies is Shogi, which he describes as ‘a kind of recipe for collaborative composition among various people with different musical backgrounds and various musical abilities. It is just like playing cards around a table.’ (www.makotonomura.net)

Richards and Nomura met way back in 1995 in York when the British Council invited Nomura to the UK. Whilst their careers seemed to take different paths – Nomura creating music for acoustic instruments and Richards focusing on electronic sound – they share a deep philosophy of music that celebrates experimentation and finding new ways to perform and make sound. In 2017, they were reunited when Richards, as Dirty Electronics, toured Japan and collaborated with Nomura making noise music with centenarians in an old people’s home in Yokohama.

Post BE @ UCT 2022 opening concert

!1-ichiigai cluster jam (2022, dur. 15'00")
!1 Ichiigai Collective: Zulfikar Filandra, Theo Herbst, Hoin Ji, Sangyi Lee,
Paul Modler, Matthew Pratt, Lorenz Schwarz, Yudong Wang,
Yunfei Zhang
Algorithmic visuals: Holger Förterer

Ichiigai - »not one« or »!1« - is an independent and experimental label and was founded by artists from the HfG in Karlsruhe. Ichiigai deals with the creative combination of sound, music, video and art in interactive environments, performances, and on fixed media, aesthetically meandering between loud and quiet, minimal and cluster, pattern and chaos. During the pandemic, we established a format where we as musicians meet online in regular intervals to perform jam sessions over the internet. With our partners from the SACM of the University of Cape Town South Africa we experimented with various hard- and software devices, possible internet tools and transmission facilities as well as different approaches for structured improvisation with remote participants. We explored the possibilities and constraints of technologies at hand to allow bidirectional musical communication over the internet in real time even between players long distances apart. Ichiigai's concept does not focus on the concept of an individual artist genius or a creative process to be viewed in isolation, but on collaborative, collective and democratic production processes within a social artistic network.

Sunday 4 September 2022

10h00

Screening: ***Gaia***
Composer: Pierre-Henri Wicomb

In the depth of an ancient forest, something has been growing. Something older than humanity itself, and perhaps greater.
<https://gaia.film/>

12h00

Screening: ***Eulogy on the extremely delicate things***
Composer, filmographer: Jeremie Jones

13h00

Screening: ***Scratchy Beard Ensemble - Vol. 2:
Into The Bear pit (album live recording)***
Project: Spesh Maloney

14h00

Composition seminar: **Inhale - discussing the creation of 'Inhale',
A new album releasing 02/12/2022**
Presenter: Dr Jonathan Crossley

15h00

Composition seminar: **η (154m)**
Presenter: Dimitri Voudouris

16h00

Interview: **Forty Minutes With The Shhart Ensemble**
Presenter: Matthijs van Dijk

17h00

Afternoon keynote

**Soft architecture in sound:
Reflections on hierarchies, chance and change**

Speaker: Dr Cara Stacey

19h00

Concert

Composer: ***Soft Walls, Soft Wood*** (dur. 5'50")
Dr Cara Stacey

Composer: ***Wildness Gone*** (dur. 4'30")
Dr Cara Stacey

Composer: ***Casing*** (dur. 3'35")
Dr Cara Stacey

Composer: ***Quartet No. 7: Personal Graffiti*** (dur. 20'00")
Matthijs van Dijk

morphei somnium (2021, dur. 5'54")

Composer: Matthew Pratt

morphei somnium is a sonic sketch depicting the world of Morpheus, the primordial ancient Greek god of dreams, who takes many forms. The work mixes the dark tone and jagged lines of the bass clarinet with hypnotic drone textures, shimmering percussion, live signal processing, and spatial immersion to reflect the mysterious and surreal nature of this sleepless fantasy.

η(154m) (excerpt) (2013 - 16, dur. 28'27")

Composer: Dimitri Voudouris

η (154m) is part of hydrophonics a series of data compositions relating to conditions affecting liquid flow in an enclosed transport systems, mathematical and scientific evaluation is necessary to analyze data and convert these into sound. It is the symbol of viscosity is used to measure the resistance and flow of liquid, 154m is the length of the pipeline under investigation in a cooling system. Variations of temperature, irregular volumetric flow rate, density, fluctuations in kinematic viscosity usually caused by the wall surface roughness and corrosion. A system consisting of a multi-mode acoustic signal with simple, single-element sensors inspected the pipe and determined the irregular flow rate.

Love is Blindness (U2) (2022 dur. 6'10")

Arranger: Dr Jonathan Crossley

Post BE @ UCT 2022 concert

Pan-African Music Ensembles

Director: Dr Rick Deja

Group 1 compositions
Madalena do Jucu (Martinho da Vila)
Vapor da Paraíba (Jongo da Serrinha)
Dali Nguwe (Master KG and Wanitwa Mos)

Group 1 personnel
Sikho Gaika - shaker, woodblock
Buhle Gombela - vocals
Ntombekhaya Halam - drum kit
Jason Hammond - bass
Ongezwa Hlwelelead - vocals (Madalena), shakers
Siyabonga Kawanalead - vocals (Dali Nguwe 2nd voice)
Buyile Kokose - shekere and shakers
Dion Eaby-Lomas - guitar
Sinathi Mdingazwe - lead vocals (Dali Nguwe)
Vuyisani Mkwambi - cajon
Lutho Mzongwana - congas
Mihlali Ngweni - shakers
Asiphe Ntyinkala - lead vocals (Vapor)

Nkuthazo Santi - surdo
Zandile Tukayi - vocals

Group 2 compositions

Uhadi Tune (Thabisa Dinga)
Mbalenhle (Xhosa trad. arr T. Dinga)

Group 2 personnel

Bronwen Clacherty - vibraphone, uhadi musical bow,
percussion, voice
Rick Deja - alto sax, electric guitar, percussion
Thabisa Dinga - uhadi and umrhubhe musical bows,
percussion, voice
Dion Eaby-Lomas - nylon string and electric guitars
Sabu Jiyana - congas, dunduns, djembe, rain stick
Jo Kunnuji - trumpet, voice
Dady Mbuyamba - electric bass

Group 3 compositions

Tizita-Anchi Iij - (traditional Ethiopian melody arr. Selamawit
Aragaw and Rick Deja)
Ambassel - (traditional Ethiopian melody arr. Selamawit
Aragaw and Rick Deja)
Nawe (words by Luthando Feni, music by Rick Deja)

Group 3 personnel

Selamawit Aragaw - violin
Papa Kow Agyefi - percussion, seprewa and vocals
Stephen de Souza - bass
Rick Deja - alto sax and guitar
Luthando Feni - percussion and vocals
Gbolahan Kolawole - percussion

Monday 5 September 2022

10h00

Composition seminar:

The Distributed Instrument for the Internet of Things

Presenters:

Tamara Ringas and Ryan Wolhuter

11h00

Composition seminar:

Multi-user instruments

Presenters:

Lucy Strauss and Ben Brown

12h00

Presentation:

Sonic Semiotics: Designing Sounds with Meaning

Presenter:

Denise Onen

13h00

Concert

***Fever tree* (2022, total dur. 28'27")**

Composer:

Tamara Ringas

This performance, titled '*Fever Tree*', is a selection of works from Tamriar's upcoming album '*Carrying Capacity*' (including '*Perfect Day*' with drummer Ben Brown) and Tamara's forthcoming album '*Fever Tree*'. There is also a piece featuring trombonist Reuben Steen-Stenerson.

Visuals include dancers Thalia Laric, Manuela Tessi, and Victor Malingreau, as well as Max MSP patches.

A Soundscape response to

***"all my ex-lovers are dead"* (2022, dur. 9'58")**

Composer:

Denise Onen

Playwright:

Dara Beth

About the Work:

This work is a sonic response to Beth's play "*all my ex-lovers are dead*". These sounds have been recorded and collected over the course of 2022 with the objective of being placed as motifs for each character in Beth's play, sounds serving as the soundtrack. The soundscape reflects on the fluidity of emotions, relationships and relating. Exploring the sonic potential for storytelling, soundscaping and creating an immersive experience via musique concrète techniques. Sonic themes include various forms of water, changing states, being in water and capturing the density, dynamism and textures of this liquid. An anchor in the piece and only curated and tailored sound is my voice split into a 9 part improvisation, stretched and slowed down; even if digitally manipulated, cut and spliced, there's likely familiarity with all the collaged sound objects.

About the Play:

"*all my ex-lovers are dead*" is an all-too-honest story of all the loves we've had, all the loves we could have had, and all the loves we should not have hoped to have. It's the type of danger you create for yourself - when curled up, safe and warm, on the couch, at 4 am,

dwelling on the past and sipping nostalgia - that causes you to profess all the loves you have ever had, to the love you have right now. *"all my ex-lovers are dead"* was selected for Artscape's New Voices Programme in 2021, and was just selected to be a part of STAND Foundation's Pen To Paper Programme for 2022.

About the writer:

Dara Beth is a short, angry, Jewish feminist with a desire to tell stories. Their main focus is to provide an audience with a language and vocabulary to explore new worlds. Dara graduated from UCT with an honours degree in theatre-making and a distinction in drama. Upon graduating, they were awarded the "Ruth Peffer's Prize for Most Promising Student". Dara has written and staged multiple original works for various festivals and theatres such as *Nasty Womxn*, *Just A Song And A Dance*, and *Lolly* to name a few. Dara has been nominated for Fleur du Cap, BroadwayWorld, and Kanna awards. When not producing their own work, Dara often works as a facilitator and director. In 2021, Dara's newest work, *"all my ex-lovers are dead"* was staged as part of the Artscape's New Voices Programme 2021. In 2022, Dara was shortlisted for the AWPN-Warwick Artist-In-Residence, selected for the Upper Jay Arts Centre CA+MP Artist-In-Residence programme, and chosen to participate in STAND Foundation's Pen To Paper programme.

14h00

Composition seminar:

Sound Composition and Imagination through Technology

Presenter:

Dr Pietro Polotti

15h00

Presentation:

Mixing "Miss Me" with Fermin + His Philosophy on Mixing

Presenter:

Fermin Suero with Bubele Booi - Noble

16h00

Composition seminar:

How to Create a YouTube Band

Presenters:

Mr Sakitumi and the Grrrl

17h00

Afternoon keynote

Ableton:

Shaping the Future of Music Making

Speaker:

Ms Yasmin Leonhardt

19h00

Concert

Evenly-Hovering (2022, dur. 8'26")

Composer:

Pierre-Henri Wicomb

I recently read an article about the composer and improviser Pauline Oliveros exploring her ideas about the body as a thing in itself that makes choices without the presence of the subjective mind. She talks about a process of generating sound by turning two dials that let minute 'unpredictable' body/hand movements decide the outcome. I explored my

understanding of this notion of implementing the body, to generate sound that was manipulated further in this piece. This process of investigation through 'performance' - interacting with electronic equipment/instruments - steered my curiosity towards a way of looking at the body that speaks my language: the body's practical division into a left and right side. This concept also took shape by presenting the material as guided by a process of differentiating between versions of a sound/sounds. Later in the piece, this translated to specific pitches, 'melody-ing' through its filtering. I concluded these experimentations by recording myself (Sennheiser MKH 416 shotgun microphone) walking through a leafy forest. This act brought together ideas of left/right but also, like previously, was aimed at allowing the body to be the guide. This process in turn led to the creation of an artificial outside world, an electric forest, which comes to life, triggered by the impact sound of my footsteps.

Cymbody Experiment 1 (2022, dur. 19'53")

Composers: Lucy Strauss and Ben Brown

CYMBODY Experiment 1 is a multi-user instrument project by Lucy Strauss and Ben Brown. Both musicians improvise and explore movement within their own creative music practices. CYMBODY is a space where they explore these practices together, using an interactive system that is simultaneously a multi-user instrument and a medium to connect players in a duet.

Strauss plays viola and Brown plays percussion. A transducer converts sound energy of Strauss's viola audio into movement energy. The transducer sings, buzzes, and dances about on Brown's percussion instruments. In between these sonic input and output layers, Brown's pulse is captured through a PPG sensor that reads the ebb and flow of blood in an earlobe. Sometimes Brown presses a foot into the surface of a bass drum to bend its pitch. Sometimes the transducer falls down. Always we improvise. If we consider an instrument as an extension of a musician's body, CYMBODY blurs the boundary between my body and yours. We pose questions on the musical agency of humans, embodied experience and vulnerability of the performing body. Experiment 1 exposes our gestalt through a collection of vignettes in chronological order.

This footage was filmed during the play sessions of Brown and Strauss at 8EAST, a space for new music and culture in historic Chinatown in the downtown eastside of so-called Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. We acknowledge that this place is situated on the unceded, stolen land and waters of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

Reliquiae Artifex - in memory of Helmut Starcke

(2022, dur. 12'31")

Composer: Maxim Starcke
Additional violin parts: Lisa Bauer-Starcke

Recorded, composed and performed by Maxim Starcke: 4 note dinner chime, paint jars, paintbrushes, found objects, paper, plastic packets, packaging, etc with classical guitar, radio static, custom paint jar shakers and voice. All sounds located and recorded in the studio of my late father, the artist/painter Helmut Starcke (1935-2017). The title image is a photograph of his paint colour test paper prior to beginning one of his paintings.

Tuesday 6 September 2022

14h00

Paper presentation:

Reconstructing Acoustic Space Vernacular Technologies and isiXhosa Choral Music

Presenter:

Sibusiso Ncanywa

15h00

Panel Discussion:

Indigenous Music Technologies

Chair:

Dr William Fourie

16h00

Paper presentation:

Circuitry-based Sound

Presenter:

Dr Lorenz Schwarz

17h00

Afternoon keynote

Line And Hemisphere: a Hybrid Spatial Studio Setup at University of Arts and Design Karlsruhe

Speaker:

Dr Paul Modler

19h00

Concert

***Anopheles* (2021, dur. 7'12")**

Composer:

Dr Miles Warrington

Ambisonic technicians:

Prof. Richard Foss, Sean Davenport

Recent work with insects (particularly mosquitoes), provides an important departure point for the composer who has spent some time now working with recordings of malaria-free *Anopheles gambiae* (*A. gambiae*). Studies of the insects has revealed that they respond to very specific changes in wingbeat frequencies during mating and other forms of insect taxis. In nature, this is referred to as phonotaxis. *Anopheles* is a stand-alone composition that was requested as part of an inter- and intra-disciplinary research project imagined and designed by visual artist Danielle Oosthuizen. The principle premise was to exhibit extreme sound envelope transformations and ambisonic spatialisation of mosquito sounds using unique projection techniques. The result is a repeating 11 minute 13 second acousmatic work (heard here in a slightly reduced version of 7 minutes 12 seconds) composed for thirty two channel system, as it was requested to have a circular array of up to thirty two channels (minimum sixteen) for the sound installation. Due to some constraints, we ended up utilising the possibility of sixteen channels in physical projection with the control of the spatialisation done by software developed specifically for this work. The team involved in doing the software are Richard Foss and Sean Devonport from Immersive DSP - <https://www.immersivedsp.com/immergo-pro/> The transformation and projection of the mosquito sounds presented unique compositional challenges that have resulted in informed practice for the composer and programmers alike. All material in the work is derived from the sounds of recorded mosquitoes and material generation using synthesis, MIDI and spectro-morphological treatments. The challenges were particularly germane as far as physical channels were concerned. This required the audition of two independent mono channels at a time in planned sequences in the studio. This produced a sort-of round-robin

style auditioning process that became essential in determining the sonic image of each independent channel in relationship to one another. Although lengthy, this process was entirely necessary and has helped to create a system of auditioning where composers could be requested to sequence large scale works for multiple channels. When listening to the render, it is recommended to use headphones as the binaural properties of the render are best suited to this mode of listening.

***Phonosaxis for soprano saxophone and live
Electronics (2 computer perf.) (2021, dur. Version 1)***

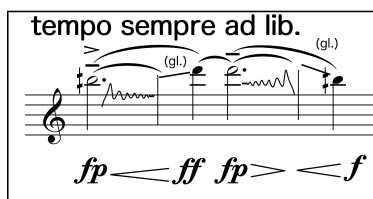
Composer: Dr Miles Warrington
Saxophone: Abraham Mennen

Introduction

Phonosaxis has been composed for Abraham Mennen. Recent work with insects (particularly mosquitoes), provides an important departure point for the composer who has spent some time now working with recordings of malaria-free *Anopheles gambiae* (*A. gambiae*). Studies of the insects have revealed that they respond to very specific changes in wingbeat frequencies during mating and other forms of insect taxis. In nature, this is referred to as phonotaxis. The work is thus a play on the words 'saxophone' and 'phonotaxis' forming phonosaxis. The broad concept is then that the interplay between the instrumentalist and the computers mimics the natural response found in nature of the insects during phonotaxis.

Composition

The work is structured as if it is a hanging mobile where each element is suspended from a central point and moving around randomly. All the musical elements depend entirely on the interaction between the solo saxophone and two computer performers. The saxophone plays a central role, providing fundamental carrier frequencies that are used with modulating frequencies provided by the laptop performers in order to mimic the behaviour of the insects in nature i.e., if the fundamental frequency of the wingbeats are changed by alternating carrier waves, then the insects behave accordingly. In an example, the probability of male mosquitoes moving toward the signal source increases as the carrier frequency changes from 200 to 260 Hz. The fundamental frequencies of the female and male mosquitoes respectively are 1kHz and 955Hz. This gives a mean of 900Hz, or A5 quarter-sharp. In fact, these frequencies provide the core carrier frequency range of the entire work around which the saxophone interaction is structured and is represented by this short motif:



The idea is that the listener should experience the sonic behaviour of the insects that is driven by a quasi-improvisatory interaction and music making by all the performers in the piece. The video recording of the performance here features Abraham Mennen (soprano saxophone), Cameron Harris (Laptop 1) and Miles Warrington (Laptop 2).

Naturell 1 | courage | naturell 2

(2002 / 2009, dur. 7'12")

Composer:

Prof. Achim Bornhöft

The electronic pieces Naturell 1 & 2 is the first version of a work conceived in such a way that it can never assume a definitive shape, but can always be reworked and performed in new ways in the future to suit new perspectives and circumstances. In the initial 'acoustical status report', Bornhöft works with various natural sounds from his personal but ever-changing sound library. In this case the sounds are primarily noises caused by water and birds – sounds we often encounter in his oeuvre in wide-ranging forms and variants. The piece's underlying material consists entirely of four-second excerpts, fragments extracted from the original recording of their acoustic continuum, thereby rendering their origins ambiguous. The result is an impressive and ambivalent interplay between concreteness and abstraction, searching and (re)discovery. Naturell is a study of acoustical identities, of mimesis and mimicry, of being and appearance. In all the things surrounding us we can always, depending on our distance and vantage point, describe another world – a 'second nature'. Courage Courage was made for the CD "90 Minuten Wirklichkeit" (90 seconds reality) by the German Association of Electroacoustic Music (DEGEM), a collection of 47 small pieces one and a half minute long. This piece is dealing with several sounds of action and reaction related to physical violence.

arrêts de ligne (2020 - 2021, dur. 10'46")

Composer:

Joakim Sandgren

bandes invisibles (2021 - 2022, dur. 8'20")

Composer:

Joakim Sandgren

corps étrangers (2018 / 2021, dur. 13'12")

Composer:

Joakim Sandgren

Post BE @ UCT 2022 concert

Circuitry-based Sound:

"Lab Report" (2022, dur. 12'00")

Performing Artists:

Jihye Jang, Hoin Ji, Yang Le, Yudong Wang, Yunfei Zhang

"Lab Report" is a collaborative live performance with self-made electronic instruments. The ensemble members have developed their own interfaces to interact and improvise live.

The exploration of audio electronics, music interaction and performance is the topic of the seminar "Circuitry-Based Sound" at the University of Arts and Design Karlsruhe. The course equips musicians with practical hands-on skills for building their own musical instruments for group performances.

Wednesday 7 September 2022

10h00

Composition seminar: **Semialeatoric Notation[:] How to build transitory processes between aleatoric and precise Notation**

Presenter: Michael Pelzel

11h00

Composition seminar: **Composing the in between - the use of neural synthesis in my work “common grounds”**

Presenter: Dr Marco Döttlinger

12h00

Composition seminar: **Aesthetization of Reality**

Presenter: Dr Alexander Bauer

13h00

Lunchtime concert Blendings and Collaborations

***Streamlines 2* (2010, dur. 15'31")**

Composer: Christina Viola Oorebeek

Electronics, experimental imagery: Christina Viola Oorebeek

Erhu: Ma Jiamun

Long streams of crystalline timbres snake their ways up and down. Suddenly, a rocking binary rhythm sounds and is joined by distorted imitations of itself in the electronics. The alternation of extended ascending and descending lines and the rocking rhythms continue and intensify. Fingertips rap on the body of the erhu, covered in python skin, and repeating notes echo and morph in fields of sound spikes. Near the end, a collage of streamlines expand and shrink, interspersed with circling motives and underlined by menacing noisy bass clouds. The first themes are reheard snaking downwards and again on high, to be overtaken by a deeper bass stratum.

An online collaboration with the wonderful erhu player, Ma Jiamun, made this performance possible. Exchanging written notes and recordings to offer feedback and ideas was of great value before the few days of 'live' rehearsals before the performance at the Shanghai Electronic Music Week 2009. For the third time, I've tried my hand at creating a visual environment for the music, what I call 'experimental imagery'. It is made by blending colorations and transitions of iterations of a single still image, sometimes reacting to signal moments in the music, sometimes not.

Circulus -

***I. Glish, II Felt Score, III Circulus* (2013, dur. 15'40")**

Composer: Christina Viola Oorebeek

Disklavier performer and electronics: Christina Viola Oorebeek

Live visuals and installation: Karl Klomp

Experiments with the interrelationship of sound and image in the early 20th century were a reference point for 'Circulus'. A fascination with synaesthesia, keyboard instruments designed to trigger and project abstract images, drawing soundwaves on optical disks and directly on film itself, are all part of the history of abstract film.

Techniques used in 'Circulus' are analogous to those used, among others, by Baranov-Rossine with his optophonic piano, which pre-echo both the 1960s colour-wheel projectors and the most recent DJ/VJ combos. Sending data from the Disklavier or the audio-out to the instruments of the visual artist offer two techniques of directly influencing the imagery generated by Karl Klomp.

The Disklavier is not always accurate nor predictable as a performer. The composer capitalises on this parameter of uncertainty to make the music sound sketchy, raggedy and not entirely well-rehearsed, at times, as a translation of Karl's 'glitch-video' imagery, which is generated by a modified analogue video mixer and synthesizer in "Circulus" and "Glisch". "Felt Score" is the exception - an automated track-mounted camera follows an imaginary score printed on felt, with the Disklavier 'reading' the score with varying success. Variation in repetition is perhaps the keyphrase to describe this exercise in making image and music intersect and initiate - 'Circulus'.

***Book of Samples - mergers/transitions:
kinetic collage (2022, dur. 12'40")***

Composer: Christina Viola Oorebeek
Keyboards and clarinets: Duo Ebano - Paolo Gorini, Marco Danesi

'mergers/transitions' is the third piece of my **Book of Samples** series, started in 2021. **Book of Samples** is a series in which acoustic, electronic music and experimental imagery (kinetic collage, video) play roles in different combinations.

Rippling, stripy, flowered and rhythmic swatch patterns compress, scrape, glide and distort - inspiring and generating sounding translations. Sourced from the swatch book (upholstery or clothing fabric samples) of Fortin, 1835, these swatches are designed to represent a larger whole.

Sound samples of obsessive repetitions, clusters forming and exploding, static sound fields are largely sourced from the recording of Book of Samples 1 'zero in/zero out' for B-flat Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Piano, partially live-prepared, pre-prepared Piano and Fixed-Media (2021).

14h00

Interview:

Presenters:

Blendings and Collaborations

Christina Viola Oorebeek and theo herbst

15h00

Composition seminar:

Presenter:

Overtone music

Prof. Dr Hubert Howe

16h00

Closing keynote I

Siberia Souls

Speaker:

Prof. Dr Audrius Plioplys

17h00

Closing keynote II

Lithuanian Birbynė in Electroacoustic Music Field

Speaker: Dr Darius Klišys

19h00

Closing concert

Siberia Souls
Artwork: Prof. Dr Audrius Plioplys
Composer: Dr Darius Klišys

Harmonic glissandos
Composer: Prof. Dr Hubert Howe

aquariumsleben
Composer: Dr Alexander Bauer

Common Grounds - Greatest Hits 2022
Composer: Dr Marco Döttlinger

... before the sky falls ...
Composer: Michael Pelzel

Post BE @ UCT 2022 Closing concert

Ambient Live Patching
Composer: Omri Cohen

Closing performance
Composers: Mr Sakitumi and the Grrrl
