

University of Iowa School of Music

ELECTRONIC MUSIC STUDIOS



4.26.08 3pm
Clapp Recital Hall
Lawrence Fritts, Director

The University of Iowa School of Music Presents The Electronic Music Studios Concert Spring 2008

<i>Encounter</i> (2007)	Daniel ROEDER
<i>The Ocean of Memories</i> (2007)	Minpyo KIM
<i>Percussivity</i> (2007)	Lieschen MAST
<i>Confluence</i> (2007)	Seth CUSTER
<i>Sacred Sleep</i> (2007)	Sandy NORDAHL
<i>Construct #1—"Left Unsaid"</i> (2007)	Matthew DOTSON
<i>A Fierce Light</i> (2007)	Zachary FISCHER
<i>The Boy Kicked the Ball</i> (2005)	Lawrence FRITTS

Program notes and composer biographies

Encounter is an exploration between four sound classes: a percussion rasp, vocal beatboxing, a "splat" sound that was created using wood flute and the sound of water boiling, and sounds of a local coffee shop. The original idea came from the handheld game "Simon," in which an electronic device with four different colored buttons and corresponding pitches produces a pattern one step at a time (for example: Red, Red, Blue, Red, Blue, Red, Red, Blue, Red, Yellow, etc.) and the player must repeat that pattern. When the pattern becomes too complex and is failed, the game is over.

Daniel Roeder is a first year graduate student at the University of Iowa where he is studying composition with Lawrence Fritts. He achieved an undergraduate degree in Voice at Gustavus where he studied with Michael Jorgensen and Shannon Stuckey.

The **Ocean of Memories** was written in the fall of 2007 when I started composing with the electronic medium. The work mainly consists of two sonic materials; the ordinary sound sources from keys and a PET water bottle and the instrumental sound sources from violin and Theremin. The former sonic materials represent realities, which often are busy and heavy, and the latter sources describe a thirst for the memories of my childhood that I always tried to remind whenever I am discouraged by the realities. Not only do the different sonic parameters create typical contrasts in various ways, but also they are often combined just as the real life usually coexists with some beautiful memories of past time. Chromatic transposition is mainly cultivated to color the memories in both homophonic and heterophonic ways, and some clear rhythmic gestures employed to the ordinary sound sources to express a well-organized routine.

Minpyo Kim is a native of South Korea. Before coming to Iowa City, he studied with Eunsook Kim and Kuetac Kim at the Mokwon University in South Korea, Cindy McTee at the University of North Texas, and Jan Radzynski, Donald Harris, and Thomas Wells at the Ohio State University. Now he is a pupil of Professor David Gompper as a PhD's student of Music Composition and a teaching assistant of Music Theory in the University of Iowa. Since fall of 2007, he has studied electronic music composition with Professor Lawrence Fritts.

Percussivity is an electronic work developed from a manipulation of traditional percussion sounds. The sounds used include snare drum, suspended cymbals, cowbell, woodblock, vibraphone, vibraslap, and gong. Several of the sounds in Percussivity are easily recognizable, but many have been altered to give only an allusion of the original form.

Lieschen Mast is a first year master's student in composition at the University of Iowa, where she studies with Lawrence Fritts. She received her Bachelor's degree from Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas, where she studied piano and composition with James Rivers. At the University of Iowa, Lieschen is currently a TA in theory. Aside from her interest in the musical world of academia, Lieschen enjoys traveling, and has been to South Africa, Europe, and most recently, Greece.

Confluence The title of the piece denotes the convergence of the many different streams of thought with which I experimented in EMS 1 last semester. The compilation of sound sources includes everything from extensively processed sound masses to recorded sounds added at the last minute in their original form. I found that the challenge and ultimate enjoyment of the compositional process came in the realization of what these sounds and gestures meant to me personally, and how frequently these streams changed direction over the course of the semester.

Seth Custer (b. 1980) is a native of East Grand Forks, MN, where he grew up studying the saxophone and piano. He received his B.M. (2004) in saxophone performance from the University of North Dakota, where he studied saxophone with Elizabeth Rheude and composition with Michael Wittgraf. He received his M.M. (2006) in composition from Central Michigan University, studying with composers David Gillingham and Jose Luis Murtua. He is currently a Ph.D. student of composition and theory at the University of Iowa, where he studies with composer David Gompper, and serves as a teaching assistant in theory and aural skills.

Sacred Sleep is a work for electronics. This work is what I imagine happens as someone slips from consciousness into that final sleep.

Sandy Nordahl is a first year PhD candidate in composition and currently Technical Director at the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, Iowa. He received his Masters in Music from the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Oklahoma where his master's thesis was a video/music composition that laid the groundwork for the Graduate College to accept electronic thesis instead of paper. In 1999 Sandy spent one week studying with Karlheinz Stockhausen in Kuerten, Germany. Sandy received a commission to write a work for electronic trio and wind ensemble, which was premiered in November of 2002. Sandy has recently written CD reviews for the Computer Music Journal. Sandy's background also includes professional commercial recording studio work. He has engineered releases for Time/Warner and Simon and Schuster as well as many other national and international releases.

Construct No. 1 — "Left Unsaid" An exercise in taking motivic development to its extremes, the majority of this piece was generated by a 10-second sound object comprised of an electric bass being played percussively. This source material was cut into very small increments manipulated in various ways to construct monophonic, gestural lines. These lines were then either cut-up and recombined (similarly to phonemes in language) or warped beyond recognition to facilitate the creation of a whole new sound palette. This spurred the addition of contrasting sonic material consisting of bowed electric bass. The dialogue between these two elements (percussive and tonal) is the main dramatic focus of the work.

Matthew Dotson spent many years of his life fiddling around with tape machines and rusty garbage in the sleepy town of Sycamore, Illinois before managing to acquire an undergrad degree in Media Studies from Northern Illinois University. Following this he remained at NIU to obtain a degree in Computer Music and New Media Technology under Dr. James Phelps. Currently he is pursuing a PhD in Composition at the University of Iowa where he studies with Michael Eckert and Lawrence Fritts. He has had works performed in Chicago (Roosevelt University), Kansas City (Electronic Music Midwest), Mississippi (Electroacoustic Juke Joint), San Diego (New West Electro-Acoustic Music Organization), Vancouver (Signal and Noise), Florida (Florida Electroacoustic Music Festival), Syracuse, New York (Urban Video Project) as well as Stockton and Oakland, California (SoundImageSound V and T-10 Video Festival respectively). Internationally, he has had works performed in Poland, Argentina, Brazil and Italy (SoundLAB IV).

Zachary Fischer (b. 1979) has studied composition with Stuart Sanders Smith, Gerald Chenoweth and Charles Wuorinen, and is working towards his PhD as a student of David Gompper. He has recently completed a guitar transcription of Robert Erickson's *Postcards* for Smith Publications in Baltimore.

I composed **A Fierce Light**, my first electronic work, in the fall of 2007. The sound source is a classical guitar.

The expression "**The Boy Kicked the Ball**" is used by linguists to exemplify the notion that elaborations of noun phrases and verb phrases generate natural languages out of a single kernel located in the intellect. This idea of a universal grammar, theoretically constructed by MIT linguist Noam Chomsky, has a remarkable similarity to Viennese music theorist Heinrich Schenker's belief that music is an art of elaboration and generation. The need to use such an elaborative process in my own music arose from working with very small grains or wavelets of sound. For these to coalesce into the kinds of musical gestures that I was seeking meant that I needed a very rich system of transformations acting on microscopically sonic events. The structure of these transformations was derived from an area of mathematics known as group theory, which possesses very complex sets of generators

and relations that can create large, dense, even viscous gestures that in turn grow into form as the music develops. I am enormously indebted to the late linguist Karen Landahl for many discussions on the subject and to Guerino Mazzola for encouraging me to apply group- theoretical methods to the wavelet-based approach to sound synthesis used here in *The Boy Kicked the Ball*.

Lawrence Fritts is Associate Professor of Composition and Theory at the University of Iowa, where he directs the Electronic Music Studios. He received his PhD in Composition from the University of Chicago. His music is recorded on 8 CDs published by Albany, Frog Peak, Innova, SEAMUS, and Tempo Primo. His writings appear in the *Computer Music Journal*, *Proceedings of the International Computer Music Conference*, and *Music Theory Spectrum*. He serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of Mathematics and Music*.