

A Concert of Electroacoustic Music

Presented by:



The University of Iowa
Electronic Music Studios
Lawrence Fritts, Director

Guest Composer:

Scott A. Wyatt

Director of the Experimental Music Studios
University of Illinois

Thursday, Oct. 19
8:00 P.M.

Clapp Recital Hall

Mats

Elsa **Justel**

tape

Residue

Dennis H. **Miller**

videotape

Mushrooms for Supper: Dinner with John Cage

Michael S. **Cash**

tape

Aftermath

Scott A. **Wyatt**

tape

INTERMISSION

Doctrine of Chances

Lawrence **Fritts**

tape

ABZ/A

Pete **Stollery**

tape

Flutter Horizon

John **Ritz**

tape

Time Mark

Scott A. **Wyatt**

Solo Percussion & Tape
Adam Grosso, Percussion

Program

Mats

As the pulleys of the masts rocked by the wind, the tackles of an imaginary ballet leave their members vibrating in a frantic dance. The voice of the erkencho became hoarse and shattered. It is no more his throat that sings, neither his entrails that shake, it is his bone that cries. Submerged into the liquid world of the rain stick, the horn emerges again and again, dancing and mocking, emitting an acid song that never ends.

The piece was based on sounds of primitive instruments of different cultures, including: erkencho, rainstick, a small Chinese drum, bamboos, etc. The tools used for the composition were: GRMTools, AudioSculpt, SoundHack, and Pro-Tools. The work was commissioned by the Ministry of Culture and the INA-GRM, Paris, France and realized in GRM-Paris.

Elsa Justel

Born in 1944 in Mar del Plata, Argetine, Justel studied composition and electroacoustic music in Buenos Aires. She has been a resident in France since 1988, where she had her Master and DEA degrees in Computer Music at the University of Paris VIII. She has taught avant-garde techniques at the Conservatory of Mar del Plata since 1980. Awards include the Prix Ars Electronica, the Stipendienpreis of Darmstadt, Germany (1990), and the International Electroacoustic Competition of Bourges, France. Major international festivals which have included her works are the ICMC, Festival Synthese of Bourges, Ferienkurse fur neue Musik, Darmstadt, Elektronischer Fruhling, Vienna, New Music Festival (Denmark). She received commissions from INA-GRM, GMEB, Elektronik Musik Studio of the Hochschule of Vienna, IPEM, LIEM, Madrid, and Phonos, Barcelona.

Residue

Residue was composed in 1999 and is the first extended work by its author to include both original visual and musical material. Unlike previous works by this writer, the animation and music were created simultaneously. The technical and artistic challenges this created were immense, but the necessity to carry both elements forward, each with some meaningful continuity, plus keep the two "in sync" from an aesthetic viewpoint, provided the author with a stimulating and provocative experience.

Regarding technical aspects of the work: All visual images were rendered using the POVray scene description language, while the main sonic sources included the Kurzweil K2500 and the Symbolic Sound Kyma System. Finalscheduling and compositing were done in Adobe Premiere, and final output wasdone via a DPS Perception video system. For the record, the work consists of 16,200 individual Targa (graphic) files, which live a precarious existence on the composer's hard drive.

Dennis H. Miller

Dennis Miller received his Doctorate in Composition from Columbia University in 1981. Since that time, he has been on the Music faculty of Northeastern University in Boston where he heads the music technology program and serves on the Multimedia Studies Steering Committee. He is currently Associate Professor. Miller was the founder and served as director of the League-ISCM in Boston from 1982-1988. His works have been performed on concerts and festivals throughout the world, and his music appears on Opus One Records and the Frog Peak Collaborative CD, among others. Miller is an Associate Editor of Electronic Musician magazine, for which he writes about music software and hardware technologies. He is also active as a graphic artist and 3D animator. His works are available at www.casdn.neu.edu/~dmiller.

Mushrooms for Supper: Dinner with John Cage

Mushrooms for Supper: Dinner with John Cage was composed entirely within the Experimental Studios at the University of Iowa. The piece, for the composer, is an experimentation in form and micro-sound composition. The main source for the sonic material presented was the sound of a silver dinner fork striking a surface and its subsequent resonance. The Piece gets its name from anecdotes told by John Cage himself. He once described the ambient sounds of a restaurant as having musical qualities. He was also known for his taste in mushrooms, once describing the quietest sound on Earth as a mushroom spore falling to the forest floor. This music takes its shape with these programmatic ideas and a morphological approach.

Michael S. Cash

Michael Cash is a Masters student majoring in Composition at the University of Iowa. Michael has studied composition with Dr. Marc Weber, Dr. D.M. Jenni, Dr. Michael Eckert, and is currently studying with Dr. Lawrence Fritts.

Aftermath

Aftermath--a consequence or reaction in which there is emergence from action, difficulty or conflict. We have all experienced many of life's trials; actions and reactions that challenge the mind and body, as well as the spirit. While we often try to direct the consequence currents, aftermaths frequently take a course of their own of sometimes anticipated, but usually a series of unpredictable events and interruptions. This work came about having witnessed the emotional and physical aftermaths experienced by cancer victims, their families and friends. Direct correlations exist between the composer's observations and the compositional design of this work. This gestural soundscape was originally designed as a multi-channel work for eight-channel projection playback, and was realized in the University of Illinois Experimental Music Studios.

Scott A. Wyatt

Scott Wyatt, Professor of Music Composition at the University of Illinois School of Music at Urbana-Champaign, is the director of the University of Illinois Experimental Music Studios. Among other honors that he has received, Scott Wyatt was one of the winners of the International Society for Contemporary Music National Composers Competition of 1978, the National Flute Association's 1979 Composition Competition, the 1979 Concorso Internazionale Luigi Russolo Composition Competition in Italy, and the 1984 International Confederation in Bourges, France. He was finalist in the 1989 International Electro-Acoustic Music Competition in Bourges, France, the 1990 recipient of an Arnold Beckman Research Award for the development of digital timescaling applications in music composition, and among others, recipient of several 1996-2000 grants for the development of compositional and live performance methodology for us with an eight-channel sound projection system. His compositions are recorded on CENTAUR, Library of Congress, MARK, OFFICE, SEAMUS, UBRES, and VERIATZA records. He served as the national president of the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States from 1989-1996.

Doctrine of Chances

Doctrine of Chances, the title of which is taken from an 18th-century mathematical treatise on probability, re-examines the relation between statistical distribution and form in music in the latter part of the twentieth century. The so-called chance composers of the fifties and sixties, represented by Cage, Wolff, Brown, and others, used probabilistic procedures to create sound worlds that were free from what they would regard as doctrinaire approaches to formal organization, as represented by Babbitt and the east coast academic composers. From our vantage point at the end of the century, these differences between these two approaches appear to be not so great as once imagined. Serialists, it has often been

argued, sometimes too casually applied higher mathematical processes without a clear understanding of their structural implications in order to create expressive patterns of richness and complexity. At the same time, chance composers came to incorporate increasingly elaborate sets of rules and conditions governing how chance operations would be employed in their music. Both approaches to creating pattern and complexity are integrated in *Doctrine of Chances*, which combines the structural clarity of digitally-generated sound with the richness of digitally-processed musical instruments.

Lawrence Fritts

Lawrence Fritts received his Ph.D in Composition from the University of Chicago, where he studied with Shulamit Ran, John Eaton, and Ralph Shapey. He is Assistant Professor of Composition and Theory at the University of Iowa, where he directs the Electronic Music Studios. His works have been presented throughout the world and are recorded on Innova and Frog Peak. A joint CD with Italian composer Roberto Doati is forthcoming on Scarlatti Classica (Roma) and a solo CD of instrumental works is forthcoming on Southport Composers (Chicago).

ABZ/A

ABZ/A is part of a larger collaboration called ...silhouettes/resonances... by four sound artists based in Scotland. In four sections each piece is concerned with the composer's response to a sense of place. The four places (Glasgow - Alistair MacDonald, Inverurie - Gregg Wagstaff, the Island of Harris - Robert Dow and Aberdeen - Pete Stollery) were chosen from across the varied landscape of Scotland and they reflect both the differences in landscape and the differences between the composers. The work was commissioned by the BBC for Radio Scotland's Week of Sound, March 1998.

ABZ/A consists of a number of scenes using sounds from in and around Aberdeen which kind of call up what Aberdeen means to me as someone who lives there, but which will also will mean something to everyone who listens to it; here are some fairly untreated sounds which are instantly recognizable to everyone (airport, cars on cobbled streets, shopping center). There is text but not that needs to be understood.

There is no story line - it's more a collection of scenes glued together by opening/closing gestures derived from the sounds themselves. These scenes get longer and longer with the last one lasting for over half the piece. It is best listened to over headphones to really get into the piece and to listen to the minute and subtle transformations of sounds. These sounds are sometimes real/familiar (beach, cars) and sometimes unreal/unfamiliar (opening sound, big drone at climax). Most of the time I am playing around with the images created by the juxtapositions of these sound types. Is the accordionist playing in a shopping center, on a street, by the sea, or in an unfamiliar space? All of these - and sometimes at the same time! This is what I find interesting about composing in this medium - I like to take the listener on a journey where everything around them is constantly changing from familiar to unfamiliar.

Pete Stollery

Pete Stollery (born Halifax, UK 1960) studied composition with Jonty Harrison. He now composes almost exclusively in the electroacoustic medium, particularly music where there exists an interplay between the original "meaning" of sounds and sounds existing purely as sound, divorced from their physical origins. In his music, this is achieved by the juxtaposition of real (familiar) and unreal (unfamiliar) sounds to create surreal landscapes.

He has collaborated with practitioners from all areas of the arts, most notably choreographer Andy Howitt and sculptor Anne Bevan, with whom he recently collaborated to produce the theatre piece *SUNNIFA* to great acclaim at the St Magnus Festival in Orkney.

He is currently Lecturer in Music and Director of the Electroacoustic Music Studio at Northern College, Aberdeen where he is able to guide school children, student teachers and existing teachers in the creative use of technology in music education. He is also Artistic Director of discoveries a series of concerts in Aberdeen which aims to bring together electroacoustic works by school children and students to be performed alongside works by established composers from around the world.

He was chair of Sonic Arts Network, the national organization promoting electroacoustic music in the UK, from 1997 - 2000; he continues to serve as a board member and edits the Journal of Electroacoustic Music published annually by SAN. In 1996, along with Alistair MacDonald, Robert Dow and Simon Atkinson, he established the group invisibleEARts whose aim is to perform acousmatic music throughout Scotland and to promote Scottish acousmatic music to a wider audience, both in Scotland and abroad.

Flutter Horizon

Flutter Horizon was inspired by a photograph by artist Sarah Shepherd entitled *Plucked Ascension*. In this photograph, the artist achieved a wonderful sensation of soft suspension, while adding hints of agitation. The sensuous color and focus add to the subtlety of the agitation. Flutter Horizon is an attempt to capture these feelings and subtleties aurally.

John Ritz

John Ritz is a senior at the University of Iowa where he studies music composition and media production. He works as a studio assistant at Iowa's Electronic Music Studios, and as a recording engineer at Iowa's Recording Studios.

Time Mark

Within *Time Mark* (commissioned by percussionist Kathleen Kastner of Wheaton College), are specific considerations including a continuum of timbre-thus providing for an integration of electronic and live sounds without the loss of individuality, and spatial disposition-wherein the location from which the sounds emanate within the performance space is also a parameter for composition. The electronic ensemble portion was realized by analog means. Sounds were generated with a Buchla voltage-controlled synthesizer and early Yamaha digital synthesizers.