

University of Iowa School of Music

Electronic Music Studios



9.2.07 8pm  
Clapp Recital Hall  
Lawrence Fritts, Director

# The University of Iowa School of Music presents The Electronic Music Studios Concert Fall 2007

<i>Monday Mourning: A Meditation</i> (2007)	William BARBOUR
<i>Brainstorm</i> (2007)	David DEVASTO
<i>Rachael's Collected Graffiti</i> (2007)	George MARIE
<i>Frog Box</i> (2007)	Carlos CUELLAR
<i>Recurrents</i> (2007)	Patrick FITZGIBBON
<i>Gasson in the Afternoon</i> (2007)	Timothy A. DAVIS
<i>Assuming the SUN</i> (2007)	Andrew MEIXNER
<i>Electric Tornado</i> (2007)	Christopher GAINEY
<i>ABC</i> (2007)	Kirsten WALLACE
<i>MX</i> (2007)	Israel NEUMAN
<i>Thought-form</i> (2007)	Lawrence FRITTS

## Program notes and composer biographies

Sitting in my studio the week of April 16th, mixing down and editing concrete audio samples for a composition class, I became aware of the strong emotional attachment I was having to some of the samples I was working with. I began to, just half hardily, assemble these into a rough sketch. This first sketch was a good start but it suffered from emotional cliché and audio stereotypes. I let the work linger in my head for a few days and returned to the studio with a clearer idea of what the piece needed to be. I had originally thought that the piece was going to be a response to the killings at Virginia Tech, as this was the news of the day as I was mixing the first sketch, but it became a larger meditation in which I would like the audience to settle into their own thoughts about mourning and lost.

**William Barbour** is a Ph.D. student at the University of Iowa. He is studying Collaborative Performance and has been involved in creating new theatre, dance, and multimedia events. William spent thirty years working in the entertainment business in California and is the recipient of many awards for new play direction, lighting, scenic design, and sound design. William composed the music for the world premiere of Cristina Pippa's *Cell Cycle* as well as incidental music for many of the theatrical productions he has directed.



I wrote **Brainstorm** as a reflection of internal cognitive dissonance. It was meant to depict the feelings of a restless mind where conflicting thoughts rush in and out of the stream of consciousness, which leads to anxiety. At least this was how I felt while writing the piece at the late hours of night before the project deadline.

**David DeVasto** (b.1979) is a PhD student at Iowa under the direction of Dr. Gompper. He received his MM at the University of Louisville (2006), and his BM at Webster University (2004) in St. Louis. David's music usually reflects his interests in Christian theology and Jazz.

**Rachael's Collected Graffiti** utilizes the following found objects: sheet metal, coins, pans, and a wooden spoon. These found objects were digitally processed in Kyma and Max/MSP in the electronic music studios. The title is inspired by my sister's drawings in her old bedroom at home, which became my study during the frantic spring semester in 2007.

**George Marie** (b. 1983) received a Bachelor of Music from Drake University where he studied composition, voice, and piano. His teachers included William Dougherty in composition; Dina Else in voice; and Nicholas Roth, a student of Van Cliburn gold medalist Ralph Votapek, in piano. He currently studies composition and electro-acoustic music with Lawrence Fritts at the University of Iowa. Active in the University of Iowa School of Music, he has served as a graduate teaching assistant in music theory and electronic music studios and is Secretary/Treasurer for the Society of Composers, Incorporated for the 2007-2008 academic year.

**Frog Box** (3:26) has a two-part structure. A narrative that takes off into an illusionary journey of sound objects. Events are not represented in their familiar contexts but have an irregular sequence that make musical sense.

**Facts:**

Frogs have a tympanum on each side of the head, which is involved in hearing and, in some species, is covered by skin. The call of a frog is unique to its species. Frogs call by passing air through the larynx in the throat. In most calling frogs, the sound is amplified by one or more vocal sacs, membranes of skin under the throat or on the corner of the mouth that distend during the amplification of the call.

**Carlos Cuellar**, Venezuelan born in Bogotá. B.G.S. The University of Iowa, he has studied Composition with Alf Hokum, Kenneth Gaburo, Richard Hervig, and Intermedia with Hans Breder. In 1998 Carlos moved to New York City where he worked writing spots for the advertising industry. Last year he collaborated with Hans Breder on a composition for a Video and Sound installation based on Schumann Lieder opus 39 "Twilight". This piece was premiered at The University of Dortmund In June of 2006. He is currently a Graduate Student in Composition at The University of Iowa where he has studied with David Gompper and Luke Dahn.

The title for **Recurrents** draws from the title of a previous work, *Recurrence*, while emphasizing the role concepts of periodicity and fluidity played in the compositional process.

**Patrick Fitzgibbon** graduated Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Chi with a B.A. from Roanoke College, where he studied with Gordon Marsh. A recent film project, *Intersticed*, was screened at the SEAMUS 2007 National Conference at Iowa State University. Patrick is currently working toward a master's degree in Music Theory at the University of Iowa. Research interests include the music of Stravinsky, Ligeti, and Radiohead, as well as theoretical applications of Spinozan views on causality.

**Gasson in the Afternoon** (2007) One of the immediate first impressions made upon a first-time visitor to the campus of Boston College is the remarkable Gothic architecture of some of the academic buildings. Most noticeable, and in my opinion the one that appears the darkest and the coldest of all, is Gasson Hall, whose impressive towers located on "the Heights" in Chestnut Hill can be seen for miles. I took in this architecture for the first time ten years ago, in the spring of 1997, as a junior in high school and a prospective applicant to Boston College. Eighteen months later, I was proudly calling the Heights my home. Lately I have been looking back on my personal journey in music, witnessing it morph from a mere hobby to a passion to a college major and, finally, a career. It was BC where my musical career actually began to develop. And while I thought little of it at the time, Gasson Hall was always there, from countless concerts held inside the building, to the bells in the clock tower ringing every fifteen minutes throughout the day, to its impressive presence stubbornly sitting squarely in the middle of campus and thus forcing itself into so many of my college memories. I have had these images in my head for the past ten years, and they were what I had in mind when constructing this piece.

**Timothy A. Davis** (1980) was born and raised in Springfield, Massachusetts. He studied composition with Thomas Oboe Lee at Boston College, where he earned his BA in 2002, and he received his M.Mus. degree in May of 2006 from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, studying composition with Bruce MacCombie. Tim is currently earning his PhD at the University of Iowa, studying with David Gompper.



I made **Assuming the SUN** by using a combination of real-time electronic performance and pre-composed material. I chose to use the sun as the topic of my piece because of its mesmerizing, humbling effect on me. I often times find myself afraid, and bewildered by the power, size, the real existence of this super magnificent energy.

**Andrew Meixner** is a third year undergraduate in composition. He has studied under Lawrence Fritts, and Jean-Paul Perrotte.

In April of this year, I began experimenting with complex gestures by layering simple sounds. The title of this piece, **Electric Tornado**, takes its name from a gesture resulting from one of these experiments where the source sound was the exceedingly annoying sounds made by my cell phone. I took these aggravating sounds and manipulated them into a whirling and chaotic gesture made up of electronic tones. Beyond constructing this gesture, I tried to recreate the experience of a tornado with the overall shape of the piece, e.g. a calm middle section much like the eye of a storm and moving the sounds around in space to simulate the storm's unpredictable movements.

**Christopher Gainey** (b. 1981) did his undergraduate and Master's level work at the Peabody Conservatory earning Master's degrees in composition, guitar performance and music theory pedagogy. At Peabody he was awarded the Gustav Klemm prize in composition and his *lago* for violin solo won first prize in the 2006 Virginia Carty DeLillo composition competition. He was recently awarded a commission from the Baltimore Classical Guitar Society to compose *Chupacabra* for two guitars, which was subsequently published by Vogt&Fritz. He recently received a "Masterworks Prize" from ERM Media and his piece *Nantucket Sleighride* for orchestra and four guitars has been recorded by the Kiev Philharmonic for an album entitled "Masterworks of the New Era," due for release in October 2007. He recently received an award for presentation of his music at the 2007 James F. Jakobsen Graduate Conference at The University of Iowa and is the recipient of the 2007-2008 Henry and Parker Pelzer Prize for composition. He is currently a doctoral student in composition at the University of Iowa.

**ABC** (3:36) is an electro acoustic piece that is organized into 3 sections, A B and C. Each section represents one of the three layers, ABC, and one of the three distances, foreground, mid-ground and background. The fourth layer, D, is used to add to any of the other three layers. A is the foreground section. B is the background section and C is the mid-ground section. The piece is tied together by a repeating sound that moves in and out of the texture. It changes in each section to a different sound. Section A is 1:10 long and the continuous sound is a swishing bag. Section B is also 1:10, as is section C, and the constant sound is a ting against a porcelain bowl, while section C is the ruffling of the pages of a book, periodically mixed with the bag swish.

**Kirsten Wallace** is a senior in the Composition department at the University of Iowa. She is currently studying composition with Lawrence Fritts. "ABC" is her third electronic piece and was composed in the spring semester of 2007.

**MX** is influenced by the jazz drummer Max Roach and his approach to improvisation. The source material for this composition is an audio recording of an exaggerated and somewhat hilarious scat improvisation on the jazz tune *Have You Met Miss Johns*. This tune, as many other jazz tunes, is in the form of AABA. The composition is also influenced by Roach's gestures and approach to dramatic development.

**Israel Neuman** is currently a PhD student in composition at the University of Iowa. He received a B.Mus degree from the University of Hartford, CT, and a MA degree from the University of Iowa. He studies composition with Lawrence Fritts, the return of the A theme. The third section combines all the material, both in original and altered form, from both the first and second themes.

**Thought-Forms** was inspired by the early twentieth-century spiritualist movement, whose proponents believed that images and matter were physical forms of thought. The musical gestures of Thought-Forms were created from a wide variety of sounds that originated in the physical world. Treated musically, however, these sounds lose their material identity as their physical continuity is transformed into musical thought-forms.

**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.