

The Newsletter of the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States, providing news, interviews, and announcements.

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Interview with Composer Barry Schrader

SEAMUS founder and first president Barry Schrader, 2014 SEAMUS Award recipient, responds to questions posed by electronic music pioneer and 2003 SEAMUS Award recipient Jon Appleton.

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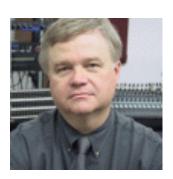
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"The power and circulation of music technology, and the use of electro-acoustic music in all of its incarnations have greatly expanded in the years since SEAMUS started. I think that SEAMUS has been an important force in this evolution, and I trust it will continue to be so in the future."

-an interview with composer Barry Schrader

Schrader began composing electronic music in 1969 while a graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh, where he was also organist for Sunday high mass at Heinz Chapel. He graduated with an MA degree in musicology and then went to the newly formed California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, California, where he received an MFA in composition in 1971. He was appointed to the School of Music faculty of CalArts in 1971, and has been on the composition faculty ever since. The founder and first president of SEAMUS, Schrader responds below to questions posed by Jon Appleton that prompt reflection on the past, present, and future roles of SEAMUS.

Jon: As the essential founder of SEAMUS, do you think the organization has fulfilled the direction you envisioned?



Barry: Yes, and no.

When you, Jon, in 1983, returning from the ICEM (The International Confederation of

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FROM THE EDITOR

Hello SEAMUS Members--welcome to the 2014-15 academic year, concert season, etc. If you're reading this it means you've taken a minute to renew your membership and have a look at the new SEAMUS Website. I'm working closely with Scott Miller and Adam Vidiksis to mirror the look of the site and also share content. We hope to integrate our efforts and make the great

content from recent and past issues more available to SEAMUS members.

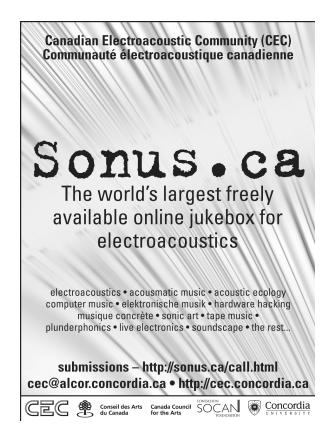
ALSO, by the time you receive this, you likely will have applied or may be about to apply to SEAMUS 2015 at Virginia Tech, by the (new) November 3 deadline. See the conference preview just opposite this note, and we hope to see as many of you at the conference as possible.

I'm very happy to present an interview with SEAMUS founder and first president Barry Schrader, recipient of the 2014 SEAMUS Award. Thanks to Barry for his willingness to share his insights and perspective with us, and also thanks to Jon Appleton for taking the time to field some great questions.

Finally, Tom Demptster is ready to write some more reviews! Please contact him via email at <u>tjdempster@gmail.com</u>, and send some materials his way! I hope you enjoy this issue!

Sincerely,

Steve Ricks

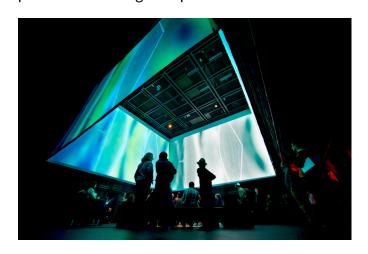


Announcing SEAMUS 2015!

REMINDER: Extended submission deadline is Monday, November 3. More information and access to the submission portal is available here.

SEAMUS 2015 will take place at Virginia Tech, March 26-28, co-hosted by the School of Performing Arts and the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology. Located next to the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains, the area is famous for its beautiful outdoors. The campus is in the heart of downtown Blacksburg, with plenty of amenities within walking distance, and guick access to the Roanoke Regional Airport, flying four major airlines and connecting to several Eastern and Midwestern hubs. As a Research 1 land grant institution, Virginia Tech is renowned for its technological innovation and we aim to utilize a number of cutting edge spaces and technologies to provide an optimal experience for SEAMUS participants and audiences alike.

The conference theme is "Emotion in Electroacoustic Music." We especially welcome compositions and papers that address this theme. Each morning, we will offer an opportunity for communal contemplative practice, in preparation for a day packed with exciting and interesting performances, presentations, and other events. One of our performance spaces, The Cube, a part of the new Moss Center for the Arts, is equipped for multi-level artistic performances, with three stories of catwalks in addition to the main floor. multi-surface video projection, motion capture, and a 100+ speaker diffusion system, including an ultrasonic beam array for uniquely localized sound. We welcome submissions of multichannel pieces that make good spatial use of The Cube.



(cont. on p. 9)

Electroacoustic Music) meeting in Bourges, contacted me and several other composers in the field, the electro-acoustic music world was a very different place than it is now. Accepting your call to work on the formation of what became SEAMUS, what I saw as its mission became the stated goals of the organization:

- To encourage the composition and performance of electroacoustic music
- To develop a network for technical information and support
- To promote concerts and radio broadcasts of electroacoustic music both in the US and abroad
- To create an exchange of information through newsletters and other means of communication
- To establish and maintain a national archive and information center for electro-acoustic music
- To attract a wide diversity of members and supporters
- To advocate licensing and copyright concerns.

We, the founding and early members of SEAMUS, earnestly tried to accomplish all of these goals. Some of these quickly became difficult. I had been working on a plan with Yamaha for a series of broadcasts, but that fell through. An archive was created at the University of Texas at Austin, but it never developed in a major way. Both of these goals were eventually made somewhat

irrelevant by the development of the internet, where the storage and instantaneous availability of data allowed for easy access, especially to sound files.

Other goals seemed to have been easier to accomplish. The national conferences became successful very guickly, and they continue to be an important series of events today, especially for emerging composers of electro-acoustic music in the academic community. This has been one of SEAMUS' main successes. But my idea of creating a diverse community of composers and performers never materialized. Looking back, it was probably naïve of me to think that this might be possible. There was, and to some extent still is, a sort of invisible wall between the academic and commercial music worlds, although academic music programs are increasingly offering more commercial music classes. This is because of several recent developments, not the least of which is the death of high art culture and the demand for more practical career-based curricula.

With regard to publications, SEAMUS has had an inconsistent history. There was a serious effort to generate publications in the early years, but now, again because of the internet, printed materials seem superfluous. Still, SEAMUS could have done more with its internet presence in the past. I'm happy to say that this has now been corrected with a new and excellent website. As for technical matters, the internet has provided a wealth of information from

individuals and companies, so the need for SEAMUS to provide this is no longer there in any major way. A means for sharing information among composers online is important, and, to an extent, this is being provided by the CEC in the operation of their list server, which is open to all.

Working with ASCAP, one of SEAMUS' earliest supporters, has been valuable, particularly with regard to how easy it is now to register electro-acoustic music. Even after the y copyright was introduced in 1971, it was difficult to register and get reasonable credit from licensing organizations for electro-acoustic music works.

A lot has changed since SEAMUS was formed thirty years ago. Electro-acoustic music is no longer a novelty; overall, in one shape or another, it has become the dominant form of music production in developed countries. Institutional studios are no longer necessary for the creation of electro-acoustic music; everyone can have a studio in a laptop. Access to electro-acoustic music, in all of its many genres, is instantaneous; there's little need for specialized collections, except, perhaps, for archival purposes. But with universal dissemination and availability, the currency of all recorded music has fallen to almost nothing. It's ironic that those of us who are involved with technology for the very existence of our music must also acknowledge the direct correlation of the rise of technology with the fall of the value of recorded music. At the

(continued on p. 5)





Dear members of SEAMUS,

There are many wonderful new things to direct your attention to at this, the start of our 2014 - 2015 membership year. First, you should notice that we have a new SEAMUS logo and complete look for SEAMUS as a whole. We can thank in particular Adam Vidiksis for making this happen, through his countless hours of work over the past several months. He helped us find and contract Punkt Digital to provide graphic design and web hosting, and he generally shepherded the entire process of updating and stabilizing our webbased materials.

This brings us to the new SEAMUSonline.org website. It is here that you will find the new member's portal, where you can renew your membership and create a member profile. As we continue to develop the member's area, you will find content that is not available to the general public, reflecting our efforts to provide improved value for your membership. There will be a store for SEAMUS recordings and swag, and additional content TBD. We welcome your comments and input on what you would like to find on the website and what we can do to make it a meaningful part of SEAMUS membership.

Related to the new SEAMUS website, I am happy to announce that the submissions portal for the SEAMUS 2015 National Conference is now launched and open for your submissions. Please keep in mind that the deadline for submissions is November 3! This year's conference at Virginia Tech--hosted by Ico Bukvic, Eric Lyon, and Charles Nichols--promises to be quite wonderful and I hope to see you there.

I hope you received your copy of Music from SEAMUS, vol. 23 in June. It features works by Jeffrey Hass, Butch Rovan, Cort Lippe, Christopher Chandler, David Gedosh, Chester Udell, Elliot Patros, and Halim Beere. And since following each year's conference, I have always wondered whose work would be included on the next CD, I would like to share with you the results of this year's voting, so we don't need to wonder until next May. The composers whose work will be included on Music from SEAMUS. vol. 24 are Per Bloland, Scott Miller, Ted Coffey, Joo Won Park, Chin Ting Chan, Nina Young, and John Nichols III. For more information on the conference, please visit the official conference website here http:// seamus.music.vt.edu/main/>

Finally, it is the time of year when I ask for members to nominate candidates for Board positions which will be open in the following year. The positions that are open are Vice President of Programs, Secretary, and Treasurer. If you are interested in serving on the board, or if you know someone whom you believe would be an excellent board member, please nominate yourself or them for one of the positions. The deadline for nominations was October 17. Please email me if you have questions about the positions or anything related to the board elections.

content@seamusonline.org>.

We are working on new opportunities for SEAMUS members and I look forward to announcing them in coming Newsletters. In the meantime, welcome to the new membership year, please submit your work to the conference, and don't hesitate to share your ideas for making everything SEAMUS does more valuable to you.

Scott L. Miller President, SEAMUS

time I'm writing this, most of the national societies for electro-acoustic music have disappeared. The international organization, ICEM, has been gone for many years. But SEAMUS remains, and has, I think, recently become (Schrader interview, cont.)

revitalized. The national conferences are still important and well-attended, the new website shows great promise, and the series of recordings by member composers remains an important resource.

When you begin a journey, you're never certain of what might happen. SEAMUS continues to fulfill several of the goals that I hoped would be realized thirty years ago. Some of the original goals have become realized by other means, particularly the internet, and a few have become irrelevant. It isn't easy to sustain an organization that is almost entirely run by volunteers. SEAMUS' continued and successful operation is, in itself, a testimony to its importance and durability.

Jon: At the last SEAMUS conference did you think the music was representative of the field world wide?

I'm not sure. I wouldn't consider myself an expert on this at this point in my life.

I've seen styles and philosophies of electro-acoustic music come and go over the decades. Often this has to do with when and where composers are making music, and also what technical resources are being used. When personal computers took over from controlvoltage analog systems in the mid-1980s, few would have imagined a later resurgence of interest in analog systems, but that happened over a decade ago, and now some composers have switched from computers to analog systems. It would have been difficult to predict in the 1960s that the Schaefferian-based style of concrete music would become the dominant approach in the academic electro-acoustic music world, not only in France and the rest of Europe, but also in the U.S. and Canada. Another important development has been the use of computers and other digital devices in improvisation and processing of live acoustic material. Laptop orchestras have been around for some time, and improvisation, in all types of music, seems to be increasingly popular.

What I noticed at the Wesleyan **SEAMUS** conference was pretty much what I expected: a predominance of the Frenchinfluenced acousmatic style for fixed-media works, and live works that were often improvisational and/or interactive. There were compositions based on algorithmic procedures, but not as many as I might have expected. A few of the live works seemed to me to have been carefully composed along more formalistic lines, and some of the scores for video works exhibited a greater degree of independence as opposed to certain other fixed-medial works.

Very few works used purely electronically-generated source material.

The technical level of all of the works was very high, and technical prowess of even young composers in the medium today is very impressive. But there's no question in my mind that people, especially students, are influenced by the styles and techniques that they find surrounding them. I've had faculty at certain institutions tell me that they have to compose a certain type of music in order to fit in, and I think this is unfortunate. I think academic programs in electro-acoustic music are doing a wonderful job of giving composition students technical skills. When it comes to compositional approaches and styles, however, a lot of academic electro-acoustic music seems to me to be stuck in a locked-groove. The commercial use of the medium rarely seems more inventive to me.

In the 1960s, Leonard Meyer said that musical style had entered a period of stasis. There were no major forces of stylistic cohesion, no coalescence of ideas or approaches, no dominant styles or directions. A composer could use any technique or procedure from any period of music history, combine them any way they wished, and it would all seem to be "contemporary." I don't think that has changed, but, personally, I don't see this as negative. I have found this a great opportunity to synthesize my own personal compositional style.

Jon: You continue to be an active and distinguished composer. Why have so many of your generation stopped composing?

Barry: Composers seldom state why they've quit composing. Age is certainly a factor. In the October 2014 issue of The Atlantic, there's an article that discusses creativity and aging, and it mentions, among other studies, one (done by Dean Keith Simonton at UC Davis) that states that a "classical" male composer typically writes his first major work at 26, peaks at about the age of 40 (composing his best work and producing his greatest output), and then declines in production, doing his last significant piece at 52. Perhaps women composers fare better. With age usually comes increasing illness, loss of energy, and, perhaps, a sense of ennui, so it's not surprising that some composers might stop composing as they age. But many composers continue to compose at they get older, and the quality of their output doesn't necessarily decline; it's an individual situation. Personally, I consider the compositions I've done since the age of 50 to be better than my earlier ones, but others may disagree.

I've known composers who worry about what to do for their next work, especially in light of what they've already composed. At one point in a composer's career, they will have done their best work. But knowing when this has happened is probably impossible to recognize. Sometimes composers think they've said all that they

have to say, and so, they stop composing. Some composers also worry about doing something new, especially since there is such a huge historical legacy of musical creation to consider. I think there has been too much emphasis placed on novelty in music and art in general over the past 60 or so years. But there's no question that the past weighs heavily on many composers, and this only increases with time.

Most non-commercial composers in the U.S. and other countries could never support themselves with their music in the world outside academia. In fact, most composers working in any style today are hard-pressed to make money from their compositions. Many of us composing noncommercial music have taken teaching positions in order to support ourselves, so, in a sense, today's colleges and universities are somewhat like the western medieval church that supported artists in an otherwise unfriendly world. But some composers in academic positions, for a variety of reasons, may lose interest in composing and continue to compose only to protect their positions. These composers often quit creating when they retire because composing has become irrelevant for them.

Some composers lament the possibility of finding an audience for their work. That's increasingly difficult in today's world. While the Internet provides opportunities to disseminate music, the sheer number of people who are doing so makes it difficult to distinguish

one's self in a sea of sound. There are many thousands of composers in today's world, and very few recognized arbiters of taste or quality. We've reached a point when anyone can claim to be a composer, author, poet, video artist, etc., and few will challenge their declarations. The realities of the very nature of today's musical world could be enough to discourage people to give up composing.

Jon: You were absent from the organization for many years. Specifically, what was the reason?

Barry: In, I think, 2003, the SEAMUS Board decided to join and contribute money to a consortium that was formed to commission Mario Davidovsky to compose two new works, Synchronisms Nos. 11 and 12. This was in honor of his 70th birthday in 2004. While I have great regard for Mario and his work, I was against doing this unless the Board took a vote of the entire SEAMUS membership and received their permission to contribute to the consortium. This is because, unlike the SEAMUS CD series and the SEAMUS student awards, funneling the money collected from members to a specific composer for a commission had never been one of SEAMUS' stated goals, nor had this ever been done in the past. I told the Board that if they gave the money to the commission without getting the permission of the majority of the membership, I would leave the organization. The Board refused to take a vote, and

so, from that point until this year, I haven't been involved with SEAMUS. I know that there were other rumors floated around about my leaving, but this is the only reason I did so.

Jon: What could be SEAMUS' engagement with electro-acoustic music in other countries?

Barry: To be honest, I have no idea.

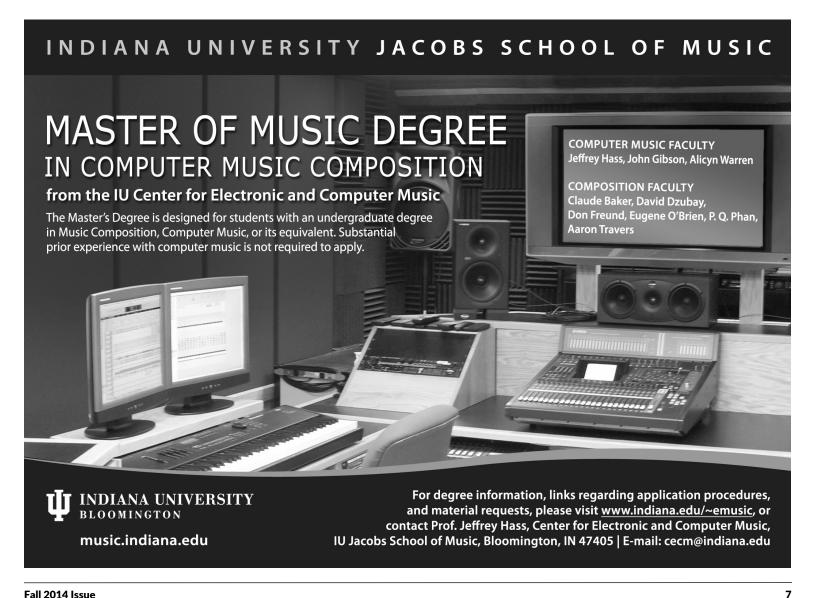
In the past, SEAMUS engaged with other national electro-acoustic organizations in mutually beneficial there are, and they seem like exchanges of concert production.

These were highly successful, allowing performance opportunities for several composers, opportunities that might not have otherwise existed. Today, however, many of the foreign societies have disappeared or are moribund.

I have always thought that the main focus of SEAMUS should be to serve its members. How and if SEAMUS could work with the few remaining foreign electro-acoustic music societies is something for the Board to consider. Perhaps there are opportunities, and if

positive prospects, I'm sure the Board will examine them.

SEAMUS' goals and activities have changed with the times. The natures of the music and academic worlds today are very different from when SEAMUS began in 1984. The power and circulation of music technology, and the use of electro-acoustic music in all of its incarnations have greatly expanded in the years since SEAMUS started. I think that SEAMUS has been an important force in this evolution, and I trust it will continue to be so in the future.



Canadian Electroacoustic Community (CEC) Communauté électroacoustique canadienne

eContact!

Published online four times a year since 1998, eContact! is the CEC's online journal for electroacoustics. Themed issues cover a range of topics related to EA.

jeu de temps/times play project • women in ea regional, national and international activities sound diffusion • interviews • hearing (loss) mastering in electroacoustics • canadian figures inter/national associations • and more...

http://econtact.ca cec@alcor.concordia.ca • http://cec.concordia.ca









SEAMUS 2015 Preview, Continued

Most days will end with an off-SEAMUS event, which will combine the music we are passionate about with a relaxed social environment.

With Virginia Tech's L2Ork (Linux Laptop Orchestra) as one of the available ensembles, we encourage submissions for laptop orchestra, especially works that focus on innovative approaches to laptop orchestra performance practice. In addition, instrumental resources

include the Virginia Tech Percussion Ensemble and Elemental Winds Woodwind Quintet, along with the following faculty performers:

Rob Chafin, voice Ariana Wyatt, voice Elizabeth Crone, flute John Walker, oboe, english horn, oboe d'amore Phillip O. Paglialonga, clarinet Wallace Easter, horn Jason Crafton, trumpet Jay Crone, trombone Tracy Cowden, piano Richard Masters, piano Annie Stevens, percussion William J. Glazebrook, violin, viola Alan Weinstein, cello

We look forward to seeing you here in 2015!

- Ivica Ico Bukvic, Eric Lyon, and Charles Nichols, SEAMUS 2015 National Conference Co-Hosts

Moss Arts Center, Virginia Tech





Conference 2014 held in Muncie,

Brian Belet's composition Summer Phantoms: Nocturne (piano and Kyma computer processing) was performed at the Onassis Cultural Center in Athens, Greece during the 2014 International Computer Music Conference, September 2014.

More details are posted at: www.BeletMusic.com

Michael Boyd's article
"Becoming...everything else:
Situating Performance in Public
Space and Daily Life" was recently
published in the Winter 2014 issue
(52:1) of Perspectives of New Music
- the article discusses my buildingwide performance-based
installation of the same title.

Julius Bucsis performed a set of his compositions for electric guitar and computer processing at a Composer's Voice concert in New York City in June, at The Electric Maid in Washington DC in June, and at the Electro-Music 2014 festival in Huguenot, New York in September. Convection (violin) was selected for the SCI National

Indiana in March where it was performed by Mary Kothman. The piece has been selected for inclusion in the Soundiff Miniatures CD for which it has been recorded by Carmine Marcello Rizzi. The CD is scheduled for release in November. In the Interest of Time (fixed media) was selected for the Circuit Bridges 2 concert held in New York City in April. Satoyama (clarinet and guitar) was selected for the 15-Minutes-of-Fame Japan Perspective Concert held in New York City in April where it was performed by Thomas Piercy and Vilian Ivantchev. The duo also performed the piece at a Composer's Voice concert in New York City in June. I Am Who Am I (fixed media) was selected for the XXXVI International Forum of New Music held in Mexico City in May. The Drama in Her Eyes (fixed media) was selected for the DIFFRAZIONI Firenze Multimedia Festival 2014 held in Florence, Italy in July. The Message (fixed media) was selected for the Metanast Media City concert held in Salford, United Kingdom in September. Some Writings of Spring (fixed media) has been selected for the

Electroacoustic Barn Dance 2014 which is to be held in Fredericksburg, Virginia in November.

Ethan Hayden's book on the use of nonsense and invented languages in Sigur Rós's music was recently published as part of Bloomsbury's 33 1/3 series. [August 28, 2014] He went on tour with the contemporary music ensemble Wooden Cities, playing a five-city stint across the rust belt that included performances in bookstores, dive bars, university concert halls, and experimental theaters. The group performed a number of works, including pieces by Berio, Eastman, Pisaro, Ives, Zorn, and pieces by members of the ensemble (including Hayden). [June 17-21, 2014].

His work bats with baby faces in the violet light was performed at NYCEMF 2014 [June 8th, 2014].

Panayiotis Kokoras, Assistant Professor at the University of North Texas, has been awarded First prize at the 7th Destellos

International Competition of Electroacoustic Music 2014 in Argentina for his composition Jet for soprano recorder and electronics. With the intention to offer new possibilities to the creators, the Foundation Destellos attributes to the winner \$600 US and subsequent performances by the Destellos Network. The Destellos Prix 2014 jury was composed of: Gilles Gobeil (Canada), Eric Chasalow (EU), Gregorio Jiménez (Spain), Federico Schumacher (Chile) and chaired by Elsa Justel.

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 www.panayiotiskokoras.com/
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 http://www.fundestellos.org/
 pageone.htm
 Europa in Rome, and Big Sky Alive
 Festival in Helena, MT, and at

(Panayiotis Kokoras)



In May, Charles Nichols premiered his piece At the Boundary, for string quartet and interactive computer effects, with the Third Angle Ensemble, at the Alberta Rose Theatre in Portland, OR, and presented his collaboration with

artist Marie Yoho Dorsey, multimedia piece Kimono Layer, in a six-week show at the Dairy Center for the Arts. in Boulder. CO. In June, he taught two week-long computer-music programming workshops, at the Charlotte New Music Festival and the University of Rome Tor Vergata, where he performed his structured improvisation Satisfaction Guaranteed, for laptop ensemble, with the workshop participants. He presented his collaborative multimedia piece Sound of Rivers: Stone Drum, at the New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, Festa Della Musica Festival in Helena, MT, and at the Big Sky Alive Festival, the Cascade String Quartet performed his piece Bells Resound, for string quartet.

Summer activities for Maggi Payne included an interactive installation using a Theremin interfaced to electronics at the Garden of Memory Walk-Through Event #17, Chapel of the Chimes, Piedmont, CA on the summer solstice. On 7/10 CINESONIKA 4 presented my video/electroacoustic work Quicksilver at VanCity Theatre, Vancouver. On 7/26 the Kala Institute of the Arts in Berkeley, CA presented Gravity Spells, collaborations between experimental composers and filmmakers organized by artist-inresidence John Davis, who also published a limited edition DVD/ LP boxed set of the 20-minute collaborations. I presented Black

Ice and STATIC in collaboration with filmmaker Craig Baldwin, who presented footage controlled in real time using two 16mm film projectors.

This summer, Adam Vidiksis's music was heard at many venues around the country. He performed music for live electronics alongside a play called The Future, staged by BRAT productions. His piece stria [feather] remix was heard at the NYC Electroacoustic Music Festival. Vidiksis performed an improvisation for live electronics and percussion with gugin player, Jeff Roberts, at the International Society for Improvised Music Conference in NYC. He performed his work synapse circuit for found percussion objects and realtime computer processing at the PARMA Music Festival in Portsmouth. NH this August. Vidiksis has written a 70-minute original score for The Hunchback of Notre Dame... A mute play, along with co-composer Joo Won Park, for percussion and electronic sounds. Vidiksis performed all the music in twelve shows that ran in Philadelphia to great critical acclaim. This season, Vidiksis is Artist-in-Residence at <fidget>, an experimental music and dance venue in Philly. Vidiksis will curate an evening on <fidget>'s Fall Experimental Music Festival, which with focus on the ideas of the remix, the cut-up, and the open work, featuring Vidiksis's own works alongside performers ThingNY, Dan Higbee, and other prominent performers. Other upcoming fall performances include the Electroacoustic Barn

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Dance, a collaboration with Luna Theater Company on Quills, the Third Practice Festival, and conducting Ensemble N JP, an experimental chamber ensemble composed of Western and traditional Japanese instruments. In addition to his performances, Vidiksis continues to serve on the faculty of Temple University, where he directs the Boyer Electroacoustic Ensemble Project (BEEP). He has been busy preparing the new launch of SEAMUSonline.com, as well. Finally, Vidiksis and his wife Patty were happy to welcome their first child to the world this July, a beautiful baby girl named Olivia Mary Vidiksis.

Adam Vidiksis performing synapse_circuit at the PARMA Music Festival in Portsmouth, NH





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"SEAMUS now includes paid advertisements in the Newsletter and the Journal.

Please consider advertising your departments/programs, festivals, and publications.

For rates and other information, contact Christopher Cook at:

christopher.cook@cnu.edu"



About the SEAMUS Newsletter

The newsletter is a volunteer effort made freely available as a public service to the electronic/computer music community from the SEAMUS website at: www.seamusonline.org.

Please direct any comments to:

STEVE RICKS: stevericksmusic@gmail.com

All ideas regarding content are welcome. Please let us know if you'd like to participate in its production.