



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

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Fall 2016 Issue

Interview with **Russell Pinkston**

*SEAMUS Member At
Large, Eli Fieldsteel,
interviews his former
teacher and past SEAMUS
President (2004 - 2007)
Russell Pinkston*



*A younger Russell Pinkston, in one of his
first forays into electro-acoustic music*

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“With every advance in technology, new possibilities are opened, even as some things we may have valued highly may seem to be lost. And the new possibilities tend to allow composers to work at a higher level, which then introduces a whole new set of techniques and problems that we hadn’t had to deal with before, either as composers, or as teachers.”

Introduction by Eli Fieldsteel:

I consider myself very fortunate to have studied electroacoustic music with Russell Pinkston while pursuing a doctorate at The University of Texas from 2010 to 2015. Russell is a founding member of SEAMUS, and

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FROM THE EDITOR



Hello SEAMUS Members,

On behalf of the SEAMUS Board, I'd like to painfully acknowledge the passing of two giants in the field of electro-acoustic music: Jean-Claude Risset, and 1999 SEAMUS Award recipient Pauline Oliveros. We plan to remember and celebrate the work of these distinguished artists via some essays and remembrances that will be published in a forthcoming Journal SEAMUS. Stay tuned.

I'm excited to feature an interview with past SEAMUS President (2004 - 2007) Russell Pinkston in this issue, conducted by SEAMUS Member at Large and Pinkston's former student, Eli Fieldsteel. Russell was kind enough to supply me with at least one, obligatory "picture of you with long hair from the '70's..."--he's a good sport!

We are in the process of changing the way we'll publish CD reviews. Beginning immediately, formal reviews of CDs and other recordings released by labels will now appear in the Journal SEAMUS. We feel that this will give them more weight and will also provide them with more access to researchers and other interested parties outside our organization. Look for some new reviews by Tom in the next Journal issue. I am currently in discussions with Scott Miller, Tae Hong Park, and Tom Dempster about what sorts of reviews might continue to appear in the newsletter. More information about this will be available soon. In the mean time, if you're interested in being part of the SEAMUS Publications review team, let me know. We would love to help you get involved.

Best wishes for a peaceful Holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Steve Ricks



The SEAMUS 2017 National Conference will be held **April 20 - 22, 2017** at St. Cloud State University in Saint Cloud, MN. Located on the banks of the Mississippi River, the conference will present a broad intersection of electro-acoustic music and art in small and large concert venues on campus, a downtown nightclub, and in guerrilla concerts. SCSU is excited to host the SEAMUS conference for the second time (having hosted the 25th Anniversary Conference in 2010) and we look forward to having you visit our campus and community this coming April.

Adjudication of submissions is being completed and notifications will be sent out in early December. We look forward to presenting about 150 different member works in our 8-channel large auditorium, our 5-channel recital hall, various indoor and outdoor installation sites, and a downtown nightclub. We look forward to presenting the new category of Performer Curated Concert, and will be provide guerrilla concert kits, which can be checked out by registered conference attendees for the presentation of guerrilla concerts* in a variety of in/outdoor locations on campus during the conference.

Questions can be directed to the Conference Co-Hosts, Scott Miller and Kristian Twombly at SEAMUS2017@stcloudstate.edu.

Conference website:

www.stcloudstate.edu/music/seamus

*Guerilla concerts will not be programmed prior to the conference nor selected based on adjudication.



served as the organization's president from 2004 to 2007. A gifted and humble teacher, he was an invaluable mentor in many respects while I was as student at UT Austin. Conducting this interview was an enjoyable way to revisit some topics which perpetually underscored my electroacoustic education, but were, perhaps, not always explicitly discussed.

How do you define electro-acoustic music, and how do you approach composing it?

First, let me say that I'm philosophically opposed to the whole idea of categorizing music – especially new music – with any real exactitude. I recently came across a book entitled "It's a Portrait If I Say So," which according to its publisher is "an exploration of the rise and evolution of abstract, symbolic, and conceptual portraiture in American art." The picture on the front cover is of a fingerprint, which is certainly a kind of portrait. But how liberating that idea is! A portrait doesn't always have to be a picture or painting of a face! So in the interest of broadening our definition of EAM as much as possible (for the purpose of membership building, if nothing else), I'm tempted to answer, "it's electroacoustic music if you say so!" But since we are members of the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States, I suppose we have to define what we mean by that from time to time. And I'm personally content with the definition on our website:

"Electro-Acoustic music is a term used to describe those musics which are dependent on electronic technology for their creation and/or performance." That lets us include the Illiac Suite, Silver Apples of the Moon, Variations pour une Porte et un Soupir, and Switched on Bach.

As for how I personally approach composing electroacoustic music, it depends on what part of the compositional process we are talking about. When composing an electroacoustic piece, my first steps are devoted to creating the palette of sounds, whereas that is usually a given when writing acoustic music. But with respect to the generation and development of musical ideas - building narrative, structure, form, pacing, et cetera, I can honestly say that it is no different from how I approach composing an acoustic piece. I come up with some ideas I like, usually through improvisation; I analyze them, experiment with them, and try to uncover all their possible implications. For me, composing is a continual process of questioning and discovery. What do I like about a particular sound or musical idea? What really defines it? What is essential to it (i.e., what can I remove from it without making it unrecognizable)? What is its antithesis? What could become of it? Where does it need to go and how long should it take to get there? These questions apply as much to a theme, or motive, or collection of pitches, as they do to the spectromorphology of an abstract sound. The techniques used to transform and develop the materials may be

different, but not the essential nature of the process. I am not a systems guy, or a maker of diagrams and/or pre-compositional maps, by the way. My approach is closer to that of the author, Stephen King, who has said that he never knows what's going to happen to the characters in his books. It seems to me that if your characters are interesting enough, they will gradually reveal more and more about themselves to you as you work with them. Eventually, their story will begin to write itself, and it will be better for not having been forced into a pre-compositional mold.

What drives your philosophical opposition to categorizing new music? Have you always felt this way, or have your feelings shifted over the years?

I have no problem with categorizing old music. Indeed, it helps us make sense of historically important trends and to understand how they may have influenced the work of various composers. But I do have a problem with putting contemporary music into "boxes," because I think it tends to stifle creativity and encourages a kind of laziness on the part of critics and theorists. It can stifle creativity if a young composer decides s/he needs to fit into a particular box in order to be successful, professionally, or to gain the respect and approval of certain colleagues and mentors. It can encourage critical laziness, in that it is always easier to evaluate a piece based on the extent to which

it fits (or doesn't fit) into a particular category, than it is to really analyze the music and evaluate it on its own terms. And especially when it comes to defining "electroacoustic music," in terms of what it is and what it isn't, I am concerned about the negative effects of discrimination based on personal aesthetic biases. As an organization, I believe that SEAMUS should be as inclusive as possible, and hence, that we should avoid defining ourselves (and our music) too specifically. I am proud of the fact that we admit performers and inventors, as well as composers, to join SEAMUS, and that we once gave the SEAMUS Award to Les Paul. But in addition, all my career in academia, I have fought against what Sam Adler once called "the ghettoization of electronic music" – something that has been all too common, particularly in conservatories. How often have we heard (or heard it implied) that electronic music is not "real" music, or that composers who specialize in it are not "real composers?" Or simply that someone "doesn't like electronic music," period? We first have to respond to this kind of thing by asking, "how do you define electronic music?" And then, "how much of it have you heard?" Usually, of course, the people who express such categorically negative views of "electronic music" have defined it for themselves, based on very limited knowledge. Moreover, since they already have a negative opinion, they tend to remain willfully ignorant of it. As the author, Eve Zibart, has said, "prejudice rarely survives

experience." I agree, but I would add that the problem begins by trying to make everything (people, music, whatever) fit neatly into boxes, big or small.

Has your philosophy or approach to composing EA music changed over the years? If so, how and why?

Well, if I have a "philosophy," it is that composing EA music is fundamentally no different from composing acoustic music, as I already mentioned. We may work with some different materials, but we are still organizing sounds in time, we still need to construct some kind of narrative, we still need to be concerned with pacing, timing, form, motivic development, texture, timbre, "orchestration," etc. And that philosophy has not changed over the years. But my approach to composing EA music has definitely changed – several times, in fact. Some of this has to do with the constantly changing technology, of course. I don't splice tape or punch computer cards any more. But other important factors are my personal growth, as a composer, and the types of pieces I have composed at different times in my career. Perhaps because I was a song writer before I was a "composer," my initial approach to writing EA music was almost exclusively focused on pitch and rhythm. I was interested in finding cool sounds on the synthesizer, but I tended to use them more or less in the same way I used acoustic instruments. And my teachers (Appleton, Arel, Davidovsky, and Charles Dodge) were also pretty

pitch-oriented, so that probably reinforced this approach. It was only after discovering the music of some contemporary acousmatic composers (Gobeil, Normandeau, Harrison, etc), that I began using more concrete materials and giving more weight to the sounds, themselves. At about this time, I was also writing a lot of music for a local modern dance company, and that music needed to be more abstract, and also flexible, with respect to timing. So I went through a period in which my approach was first to look for interesting natural sounds, and then begin manipulating and transforming them in various ways, to build a palette of sounds to use in my composition. I still was interested in pitch and rhythm, but I also began focusing more on texture, gesture, and timbre. More recently, I have been composing a lot of interactive pieces for solo instruments (*Gerrymander*, *Lizamander*, *Zylamander*, etc), and that has necessitated a return to a more traditional approach. I still start by searching for interesting sounds – often from extended techniques produced by the instrument(s) for which I am writing. But my primary focus in these works is on what the performer will be playing, so I tend to organize the composition around those pitches and rhythms.

Are there any significant works or events that have noticeably shaped your development as a teacher or composer?

There are numerous works that have influenced me as a composer,

(continued on p. 6)



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear members of SEAMUS,

It is the time of year that we look forward to upcoming activities in the organization, not least of which is SEAMUS 2017. It will be co-hosted by Kristian Twombly and myself at St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, MN, April 20-22, 2017. Submissions are being evaluated by our Adjudicators and we anticipate notifying programmed composers, performers, and scholars very soon.

Fall is also when we host Elections for SEAMUS Board officers. This year, the positions of Vice President of Programs, Treasurer, and Secretary are open. Information on the positions and a call for nominations have recently been posted. Please consider running for a position or nominating someone you believe would be a strong member of the board.

We are working on creating more transparency with regard to the various SEAMUS Board activities and how our organization processes operate. To this end, we have just posted the most recent revision of the National Conference Adjudication Process, which is especially relevant with the upcoming programming notifications being sent out. You can find them here: <https://seamusonline.org/national-conference-adjudication-process/>

This past May, the Board approved a new SEAMUS Statement of Nondiscrimination, part of our efforts to be inclusive and represent all of our membership equally. The Statement can be found here: <https://seamusonline.org/statement-of-nondiscrimination/>

Look for additional postings in the coming year as we clarify our policies and determine the best way to publicly share them.

Finally, while we are still in the midst of preparations for SEAMUS 2017, I ask members to please consider hosting SEAMUS 2019 (or 20, etc). There are many great rewards to hosting SEAMUS, and while it is a tremendous amount of work, it is an even greater service to the organization and community.

Best wishes for a great start to the membership year. I look forward to seeing you in St. Cloud in April.

With best wishes,

Scott



of course – too many to count, really. But I would say that three of my own primary teachers – Jon Appleton, Jack Beeson, and Mario Davidovsky – had a big influence on my development as a teacher. Jon Appleton had this wonderfully enthusiastic way of teaching – full of joie de vivre. He could be critical at times, but he was very open-minded and always positive and encouraging. I'll never forget his comment about my first piece of electronic music: "I think it's super fantastic, Russ! Of course, you're going to hate it someday!" And then he put it on an album with one of his own pieces and some other students' work. Sure enough,

I hate that piece now! But I learned from my experience with Jon how important it is to let young composers find their own way, not to force them into a particular mold, but to encourage their innate creative instincts, and above all, to "do no harm." From both Jack and Mario, I learned the value of the small, informal, weekly seminar. We students would bring in our works-in-progress, and while we would always get some helpful comments and suggestions from our teachers, they would encourage a free and open discussion, which everyone participated in. The result was that we all learned as much from our

fellow students as we did from our professors, and at least as important, we developed a real camaraderie. I still count my fellow students at Columbia as some of my closest friends in music.

In interacting with students over the years, have you noticed any significant or long-term trends? For example, in contrast with twenty years ago, the electronic music landscape is saturated with software/hardware tools, video tutorials, high-powered mobile computing devices, etc. Do you feel as if there have been tangible consequences on teaching and

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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.

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learning electronic music in academia?

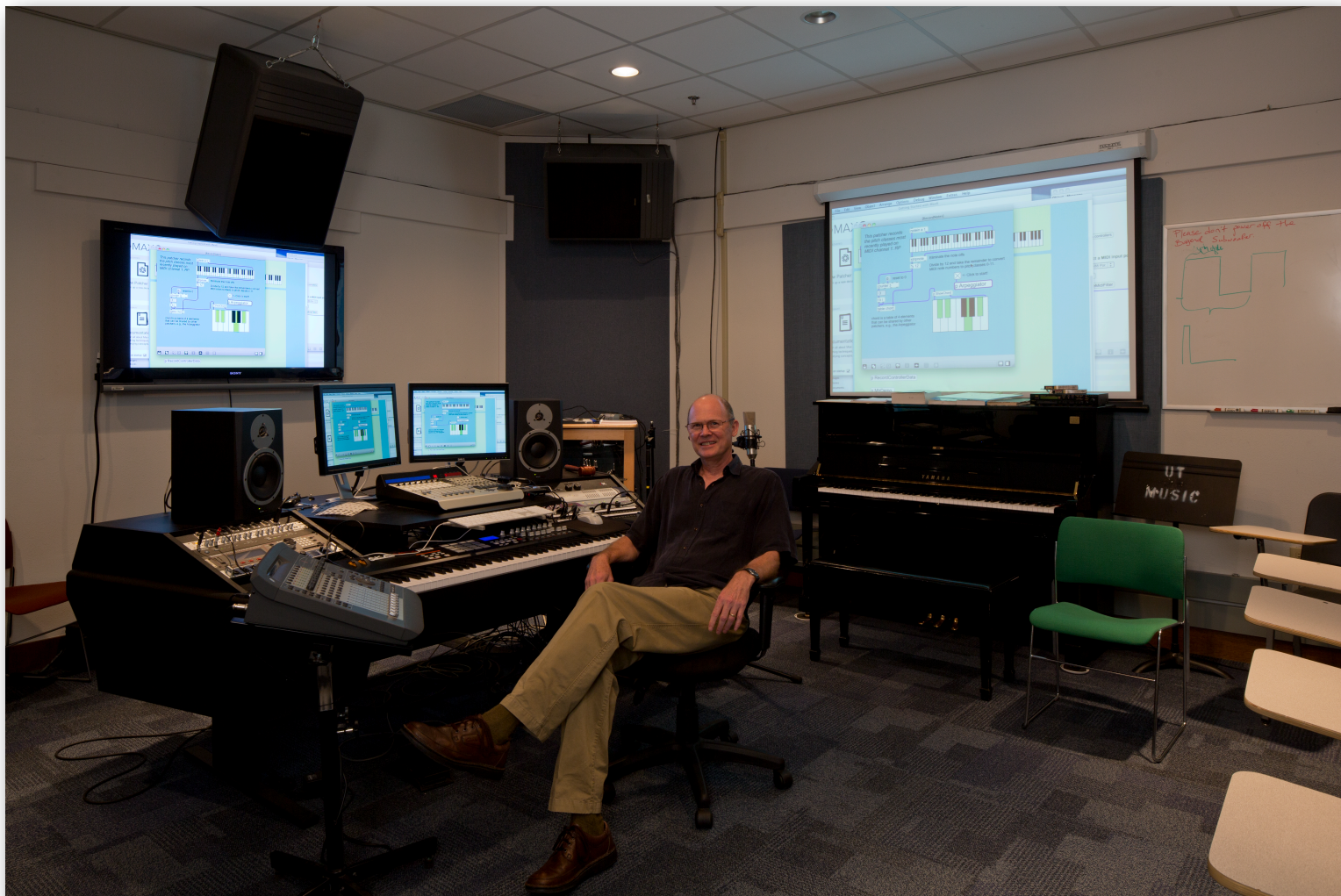
These are important questions, because they touch on something fundamental and far reaching about the relationship between technology, educational strategies, ways of learning, and productivity – and not just in the field of electroacoustic music. There really has only been one significant “trend” during my career as an educator, which is the gradual replacement of analog with digital technology. And obviously, all of us who started with tape machines, analog synthesizers, and mainframe computers have had to gradually adapt our approach to teaching electronic and computer music, just as we have also had to continually update and modify our studios. But I think the more interesting question is the second one, relating to “tangible consequences.” When the first voltage controlled keyboards appeared, there were some who expressed concern that they would encourage composers to use the analog synthesizers in conventional ways – more like organs – and that having to record every sound in a piece individually, and then cutting the tape to the exact length necessary to articulate a particular rhythm, had the benefit of enforcing a certain discipline on your compositional process. I can personally attest to this! But having a keyboard doesn’t preclude having a disciplined approach to composition; it just makes some things a whole lot easier. With every advance in technology, new possibilities are opened, even as some things we

may have valued highly may seem to be lost. And the new possibilities tend to allow composers to work at a higher level, which then introduces a whole new set of techniques and problems that we hadn’t had to deal with before, either as composers, or as teachers. There are valuable lessons to be learned from cutting and splicing tape, but do we really want to spend time teaching our students how to use an obsolete technology? We have to be willing to let some things that were a cherished part of our curriculum go, in favor of having the time in a semester to focus on the latest techniques that our students need to master. (I feel the same way about the music history sequence, by the way!) All that said, I still teach students in my computer music courses how to build the classic synthesis and processing algorithms from scratch, not only because it’s a great way to teach basic programming skills in any language, but also because it will help them master whatever commercial plugins and soft synths they own more quickly, and ultimately take better advantage of them. I have to say, though, that there will probably come a time when I feel I can no longer afford to do that.

On the topic of “the ghettoization of electronic music,” surely, this trend is part of the reason why SEAMUS and similar organizations came to exist— right? Broadly, what are your thoughts on the evolution of SEAMUS and electronic music? Do you feel like

SEAMUS has been effective in accomplishing its goals?

Our Articles of Incorporation state that the “specific purpose of this corporation is to encourage the composition, dissemination and study of electroacoustic music.” I don’t think there is any question that SEAMUS has been effective in the first two areas, considering the ASCAP/SEAMUS award, the CD series, the annual conferences, the journal, newsletter, website, etc. But when it comes to encouraging the study of electroacoustic music, I think we could do more. The ghettoization of electronic music in academia is real, at least in most conservatories. It’s also evident in the relative rarity of articles about electroacoustic pieces in the mainstream music theory journals. Articles about electroacoustic music tend to appear in journals devoted specifically to the genre, just as pieces of electroacoustic music are most likely to be performed in concerts and festivals established expressly for that purpose. This was not always the case. The reasons for the current situation are complicated and multi-factored, and it is certainly true that some responsibility must lie with us electroacoustic composers. But the result is that there are numerous degree programs in electronic and computer music now, often completely separate from the composition programs. Indeed, one might argue that the whole field of Music Technology is a by-product of the gradual separation of electroacoustic music from traditional music composition programs. Inevitably, the curricular



focus of these degrees is more and more on the technical/industrial, and less and less on the musical/aesthetical. Some will say this a good thing, but I don't agree. I think it's a big problem for our field. I'm not sure what SEAMUS can do to address it, as an organization, but I think it should be discussed.

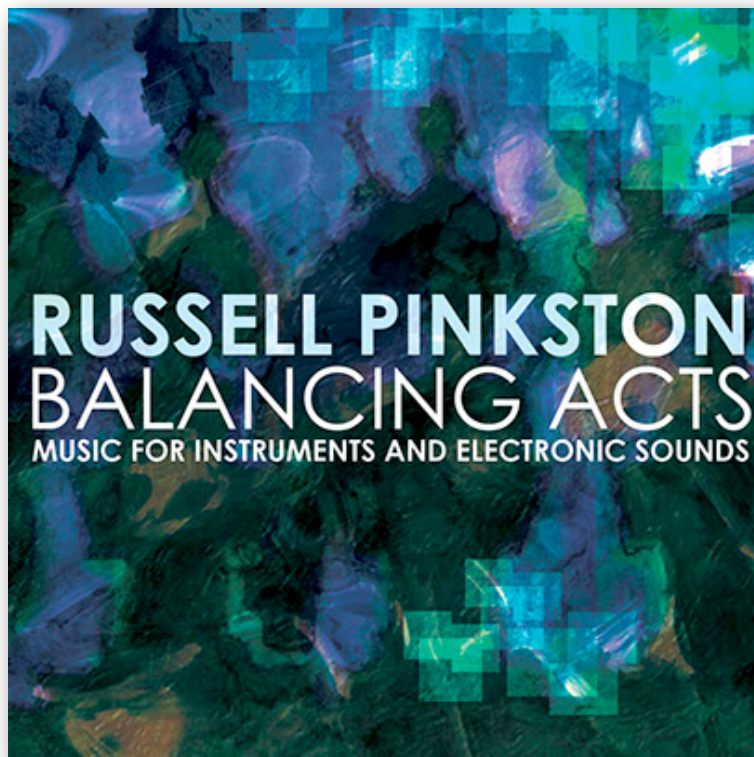
What has been your most memorable SEAMUS conference?

I can't say that there is any one conference that sticks out in my mind, unless it's the one we held here at Texas back in 1993, for reasons obvious to anyone who has ever run one! But I do have some specific memories from

various conferences that definitely stand out in my mind, most of which relate to the banquets where we honored the recipients of SEAMUS Award and SEAMUS/ASCAP Commission. It was very satisfying to be President at four of those occasions, and hence, to have the honor and pleasure of giving these awards on behalf of the organization. Actually, though, one of my most vivid SEAMUS memories is not of a conference, at all, but of the meeting at CalArts in 1984, where we founded the organization. I was fresh out of grad school, had just started teaching at Texas, and I didn't know anyone there except Jon Appleton, who had invited me, so I mostly just kept quiet, watched,

and listened. One of the things that stands out in my mind was the clear consensus about wanting SEAMUS to be focused primarily on music, in contrast to some other national and international organizations (the ICMC, in particular), whose focus seemed more and more to be on research and technology. Another point of emphasis was that we didn't want to be just another organization devoted to academic music and university composers, but one that embraced popular idioms and freelance composers, as well. Both of these ideas really appealed to me at the time; they still do. One other memory of that meeting stands out to this day: Barry Schrader suggesting the name

SEAMUS and pronouncing it "SeeMuse," and Jon Appleton's immediately countering with a laugh and saying, "no, we should call it Seamus, like the Irish name." Barry did not concur, and as many longtime SEAMUS members know, this led to years of controversy over how to pronounce our name, which was finally settled by the SEAMUS Board, who decreed that the official pronunciation was like the Irish name. I think this was decided at the Members Meeting of some conference, by vote of those in attendance, but I'm not sure. (I hope I am not re-opening that can of worms here!)



Pinkston's new Ravello Records release - [*Balancing Acts*](#) - includes several works with and without electronics, and includes performances by Gregory Allen, Leone Buyse, Rebecca Henderson, Patrick Hughes, Kristin Jensen, Elizabeth McNutt, Vanguel Tangarov, Bion Tsang, and Colette Valentine.





Member News

John Akins' latest electronic work, "Les Coqs de Delmas," was premiered at the Christian Fellowship of Art Music Composers (CFAMC) national conference at Mississippi College, Clinton, MS, in October 2016, following a report on a musical missions trip to an orphanage in Haiti in 2013. Ambient sounds recorded on location in central Port-au-Prince were processed in Audacity into the short stereo piece.

In June of 2017, in New York, Collide-O-Scope Music will present "Fireflies," an evening length collaborative work featuring SEAMUS members **Christopher Bailey, Lou Bunk, Christopher Burns, and Elizabeth Hoffman**. This performance will feature live poetry, original video art, and newly composed electronic and acoustic music woven together into a continuous montage and immersive intermedia experience. This production marks the latest in a series of collaborative Collide-O-Scope Music concerts. The boundaries separating one work from another are blurred as the

group weaves from fixed composition to open form interactive and improvisatory episodes.

<http://www.collidemus.com/>

Brian Belet's composition *Name Droppings* was performed on the Kaleidoscope concert, Hammer Theatre, San Jose, CA, October 22, 2016. His composition *Carla's Carousel* (co-composed with Virginie Viel), for Kyma controlled by two iPad performers, was premiered at the Kyma International Sound Symposium [KISS 2016], at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK on September 10, 2016. Dr. Belet also performed in concert with the symposium's Emergent Ensemble (electric bass & Kyma), and presented a lecture/demo on using the electric bass as a general purpose controller for live computer processing.

The University of California, Irvine hosted a Saturday Academy: "Playing Music with Gestures" taught by guest artist

Pamela Z with SEAMUS members **Christopher Dobrian** (Professor of Music) and **Alex Lough** (Ph.D. student in Integrated Composition, Improvisation, and Technology).

Ben Furhman released an album - Concrete Oasis. Full program notes can be downloaded here, and the album itself can be purchased or streamed via the usual music outlets.

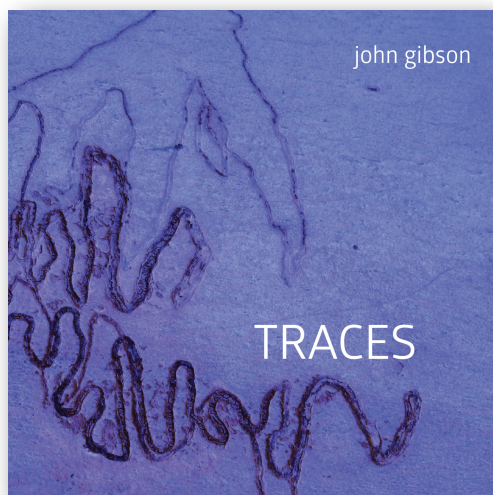
Bass Clarinetist Jorge Variago presented the world premiere of **Orlando Jacinto Garcia's** *Conversations with Harry* (*conversaciones con Harry*) for bass clarinet and fixed media as part of his solo recital on March 8 at 8:00 PM the Sandra G. Powell Recital Hall located in the Natalie L. Haslam Music Center on the University of Tennessee Knoxville, Campus. Principal clarinetist for the Simon Bolivar Orchestra, Gorgias Sanchez then performed the premiere in Venezuela on May 28 as part of the Festival Latinoamericano de Musica held in Caracas, Venezuela. Most recently clarinetist Fernando Dominguez presented the Florida premiere on

October 21 at 7:30 PM in the Wertheim Performing Arts Center as part of the Florida International University Music Festival. All 3 excellent clarinetists are disciples in some way of the great Harry Sparnaay for whom the work is dedicated.



Gorgias Sanchez performing Garcia's *Conversations with Harry (conversaciones con Harry)*

John Gibson announces the release of his CD, *Traces*, available from Innova:



Gibson will be leading a three-week residency for composers interested in electronics at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, beginning May 14, and invites graduate and post-graduate SEAMUS members to apply (atlanticcenterforthearts.org).

Lauren Hayes's paper 'Sound, Electronics and Music: an evaluation of early embodied education' was recently given the 2016 Best Paper Award at the International Computer Music Conference, Utrecht. She was also recently invited to perform at the Fiftieth Anniversary of Experiments in Art and Technology which took place at Stony Brook University, October 2016. Her newest album of improvised hybrid analogue/digital live electronics is available through pan y rosas discos. More info at www.laurensarahhayes.com

toured with his band Modality, promoting the release of their double LP [Under the Shadow of this Red Rock](#) playing the DAT Music Conference techno festival in Missoula, a downtown dive bar in Chicago, an opera space with Robin Cox and Ben Smith's Big Tent surround audio and video system in Indianapolis, a college jam band bar in Columbus, and the Cube Fest spatial audio festival in Blacksburg, where dancers wearing his 3D printed motion capture rings spatialized the instruments around the 134 speaker spatial audio system of the Cube at Virginia Tech. Recent pieces include *Beyond the Dark*, synthesized sound for installation art and 3D projection by architectural artist Paola Zellner Bassett, *Epimetheus Gift*, a densely textured and spatialized piece for amplified bassoon, computer, and ambisonics for Steve Vacchi inspired by the Swedish extreme metal band Meshuggah, *Describe the Sky to me...*, ambient filtered environmental recordings and

Last summer, Charles Nichols



Charles Nichols with Modality at Cube Fest 2016

granulized bird calls for an installation with performance artist Marie Yoho Dorsey, and

Wunderkammer, a trio for oboe, clarinet, bassoon, granular synthesis, and spectral delays, written for the PEN trio.



Andrew Litts and Ryan Olivier performing as PhEAD

In September, SEAMUS members, **Andrew Litts** and **Ryan Olivier**, presented their evening-length show, *Imaginary Music*, at the 2016 Philadelphia Fringe Festival. Litts and Olivier, performing as PhEAD (the Philadelphia Electro-Acoustic Duet), performed several original musical multimedia works, including Litt's *Singularity* and Olivier's *Fortspinnung*, as well as two multimedia arrangements of works by Steve Reich (*Clapping Music*) and Morton Feldman (*Palais de Mari*). DC Metro Theater Arts said of the show, "While *Imaginary Music* presents a highly intelligent synthesis of the arts with science and technology, it offers an equally lofty aesthetic of transcendent beauty; it is at once cerebral and emotive, intellectual and hypnotic."

Scott L. Miller was a featured composer at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre's Sügisfest 2016 Fresh Music Festival, in Tallinn this October. He presented a concert of music with students who he tutored earlier in the year via Skype on the history, repertoire, and techniques for composing for instruments and electronics. This concert featured pianist Mari Visnapuu, who performed Miller's *Every Problem is a Nail* and Davidovsky's *Synchronisms No. 6*. The festival also presented a portrait concert of

his work, performed by Ensemble U: and guitarist Mart Soo. While in Tallinn, Miller and Soo performed on the Improtest improvised music series as the duo Three Free Radicals.



The electronically enhanced piano, performed by Taavi Kerikmäe, on Miller's portrait concert at Sügisfest 2016.

In September, Miller premiered *Islands*, written for flutist Carla Rees, at Iklectik Art Lab in London and at the Kyma International Sound Symposium (KISS) 2016, held at DeMontfort University. He also assisted the ensemble rarescale in the U.K. premier of *The Frost Performs its Secret Ministry*, a work for flute, guitar, and electronic sound, and a performance of *Anterior/Interior*, written for and premiered by Rees in 2011.



Mart Soo during soundcheck for Three Free Radicals performance on Improtest

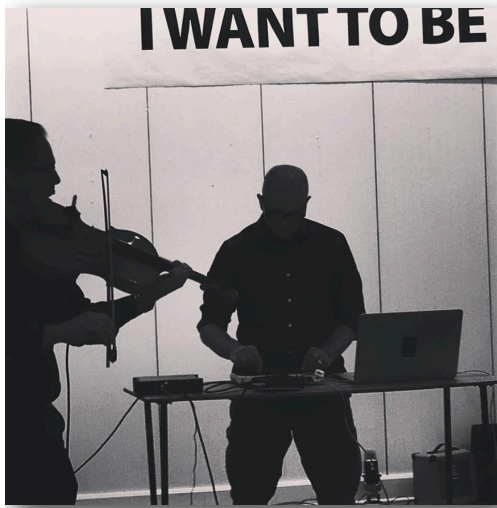


Generally good advice to be had at The Forge, London, on the evening of rarescale's performance of The Frost Performs its Secret Ministry and Anterior/Interior



Benjamin O'Brien during his residency at OMI International Arts Center

After his three week residency at OMI International Arts Center (Ghent, New York), composing and improvising with musicians from all over the world, **Benjamin O'Brien** returned to Marseille, France where he lives. Recently, he contributed audio as part of a commission from Tigrelab, a Barcelona-based video mapping and motion graphics firm, for their MUTIS audiovisual project, which premiered at the Signal Festival 2016 in Prague, Czech Republic (October 13-16). His fixed media work *along the eaves* was presented at the Sonic Environments festival in Brisbane, Australia last July, and most recently at the Malaysia Music Technology Festival in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October. Additionally his work *OSCines* was presented at EMUFest 2016 at the Conservatorio Santa Cecilia in Rome, Italy. Notable upcoming events include a presentation of his vidéomusique work *Piano Roll* at the Diffrazioni Festival in Florence, Italy (November 21), and the premiere of *Séquence et Vitesse* for real-time interactive audio and visuals at Cité de la Musique in Marseille, France (December 1). He will be participating in a panel discussion on his chapter "Sample Sharing: Virtual laptop Ensemble Communities," which appears in the "Oxford Handbook of Music and Virtuality," at the Art of Record Production Conference hosted by Aalborg University in Aalborg Denmark. For more information on Benjamin and recent work and events, check out: <http://benjamin-obrien.com>



RICKSPLUND at Urban Arts Gallery, SLC

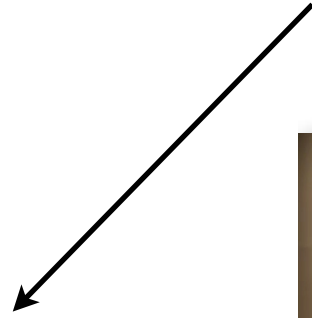
Steven Ricks recently completed some electronic music for a collaboration with Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company's artistic director, Daniel Charon, for a piece Charon is choreographing with BYU's Contemporary Dance Theatre. The work will be premiered in February 2017. Ricks also performed with Christian Asplund (as RICKSPLUND - electronic improvising duo) on the Salty Cricket Composers Collective "Just Duets" concert on November 17 at the Urban Arts Gallery in Salt Lake City.

Brian Sears was featured as a guest composer, along with Felipe Lara, on the fall installment of the wildly popular Original Gravity concert series at Bone-Up Brewery in Everett, MA. Original Gravity events feature the music of New England Composers, paired with specially brewed craft beers in the brewery where those beers are created. This intimate, sold-out concert showcased two of Brian's pieces, *Reverberance*, performed by Adam Vidiksis, and *Live in the moment; Live in the breath*, performed by Sam Wells. Sam also gave another inspired performance of this work at the 2016 Electroacoustic Barn Dance, hosted by Mark Snyder at the University of Mary Washington.

Temple University's CYBERSOUNDS concert series was delighted to host **Paul Rudy** on October 27. Joined by saxophonist Spencer Edgers, Rudy presented three works involving improvisation, fixed electroacoustic media, and unusual instruments.



Spencer Edgers and Paul Rudy



Also featured were new works by Sandra James, Andrew Litts, Benjamin Safran and **Maurice Wright**.



Andrew Litts, composer and trumpeter



Jon's Note

Words on music, composing, etc., from Jon Appleton



This is a brief report about our sister organization, The Korean Electro-Acoustic Music Society and events that were part of the Seoul International Computer Music Festival 2016, October 10-16, 2016. The concerts, almost all works by Korean composers, were held at the Jayu Theater at the new, magnificent Seoul Arts Center. The paper sessions, mostly presented by invited guests from the United States and Europe, were held at the Seoul National University.

Most of the music could well have been heard at SEAMUS or ICMC. Unlike those conferences, however, nearly half of the composers were women. The same is true of Korean electro-acoustic music faculty who studied in Korea and hold advanced degrees from American and European conservatories and universities. I believe the gender balance deserves some discussion in these pages. Cultural norms and expectations for female and male musicians are quite different in our two countries.

Many American composers have been influenced by Japanese, Chinese and Korean musical traditions as early as Roger Reynolds' *Ping* from 1968 when Reynolds was working in Japan under the auspices of the CIA (<http://spitfirelist.com/news/the-cia-and-jackson-pollock/>). More recently, Kevin Parks, David Evan Jones, Donald Womack and Takuma Itoh, among others, have infused their work with traditional Korean musical instruments. Two remarkable works of this kind were heard at the 2016 Korean Electro-Acoustic Music concerts: Jongchan Hyun's *durante mi viaje* for janggu and live electronics and Tae Hong Park's, *Gugak Study I* for gayageum and tape.

At the end of the paper sessions I concluded my keynote address saying, "I recognize that during the fifty years I have devoted to electro-acoustic music much has changed. People don't think about this field as my contemporaries did. When we, Larry Austin, John Chowning, Beatriz Ferreyra, Paul Lansky, Pauline Oliveros, Jean-Claude Risset, Morton Subotnick and others began composing electro-acoustic music, we often knew little of each other's work, we shared a sense of excitement and discovery because we were young but also because the field was new. I would like to discover our optimism in young composers today..." This remark generated much discussion. American composer and sound artist Sean Peuquet asked why a sense of optimism was absent today among young composers of electro-acoustic music? I don't think I know why but I would like to suggest that fifty years ago Americans knew what a composer was and today they are invisible – cogs in the wheel of the commercial music industry. I would like my SEAMUS colleagues to prove me wrong.

Jon



Recording Reviews by Tom Dempster



Formal reviews of CDs and other recordings released by labels will **now** appear in the *Journal SEAMUS*. Look for some new reviews by Tom in the next Journal issue. I am in discussions with Scott Miller, Tae Hong Park, and Tom Dempster about what sorts of reviews might continue to appear in the newsletter. More information about this will be available soon. In the mean time, if you're interested in being part of the SEAMUS Publications review team, let me know. We would love to help you get involved.

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