



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

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Winter 2017 Issue

Interview with *Eric Chasalow*

Director of the Brandeis
Electro-Acoustic Music Studio
(BEAMS), and co-curator of
the Oral History Project's
[Video Archive of the Electro-
Acoustic Music](#)



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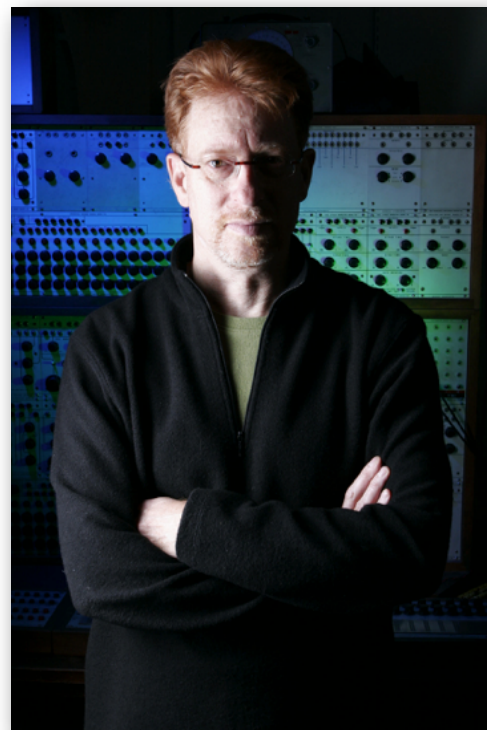
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"...as a composer, what is valuable to me, especially if I am trying to do a fixed media piece, is that connection we make to sounds that we recognize. So I am less interested in abstracting so totally that the source no longer matters. It is a little bit like figures in painting, right? When you see an outline of something and your brain can make those connections to something in your own memory, your own experience...that's powerful. These associations we the listener make with what we are hearing...it is a valuable aspect of doing things in electroacoustic music. "

- Eric Chasalow



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FROM THE EDITOR



Hello SEAMUS Members,

By the time this issue hits the interwebs and is posted on seamusonline.org, SEAMUS 2017 will nearly be upon us. Links to the conference website and schedule are included in the note just opposite my letter, on this page. I'll be at the conference for the first day (I wish I could attend more of it) so I hope to see as many of you as I can. Please say hi, and if you have any thoughts about the Newsletter I'll be happy to hear them.

It's old news by now, but congratulations to Carla Scaletti, recipient of the 2017 SEAMUS Award. She'll be in attendance at SEAMUS17 to receive the award and present her music. I had the pleasure of hosting Carla at my institution a year ago and she's an amazing person and a visionary artist. I can't think of a more deserving recipient.

ALSO old news by now, but exciting nevertheless, is the re-release of Music from SEAMUS, Volume 1, by New Focus Recordings--the new home of the Music from SEAMUS series. Page 12 of the newsletter is dedicated to some promotion, including some short notes from James Mobberley and Scott Wyatt.

The feature piece of this issue is an interview with composer Eric Chasalow by his former student and fellow SEAMUS member, Lou Bunk. Lou really went above and beyond with this one and covers a lot of ground with Eric, both in print and via some audio links to some of Eric's recollections and explanations. It's a thoughtful piece that has me examining my influences and considering more deliberate, meaningful ways to engage with them. I hope you enjoy it.

The "Member News" section (pp. 19 - 25) includes several updates and announcements, including images and links--an impressive chunk of stuff. And our distinguished columnist Jon Appleton is back with another "Note" on p. 26.

Best wishes for a beautiful spring and successful transition into summer. May it bring you some welcome opportunities for creative work, research, or that much-needed break.

Sincerely,

Steve Ricks

SEAMUS17

ST CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

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.

The full conference program and complete schedule of events is available [here](#).

The [2017 SEAMUS Award](#) will be presented to [Carla Scaletti](#) at the SEAMUS National Conference banquet, following a concert of her music. Carla is an experimental composer, designer of the Kyma sound design language and co-founder of Symbolic Sound Corporation. She received her DMA and MCS from the University of Illinois, where she studied composition with Salvatore Martirano, John Melby, Herbert Brün and Scott Wyatt and computer science with Ralph Johnson, one of the Design Patterns "Gang of Four." She received the Distinguished Alumnae Award for invaluable contributions to the field of music from Texas Tech University where she earned her master's degree in music and graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in music from the University of New Mexico.

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

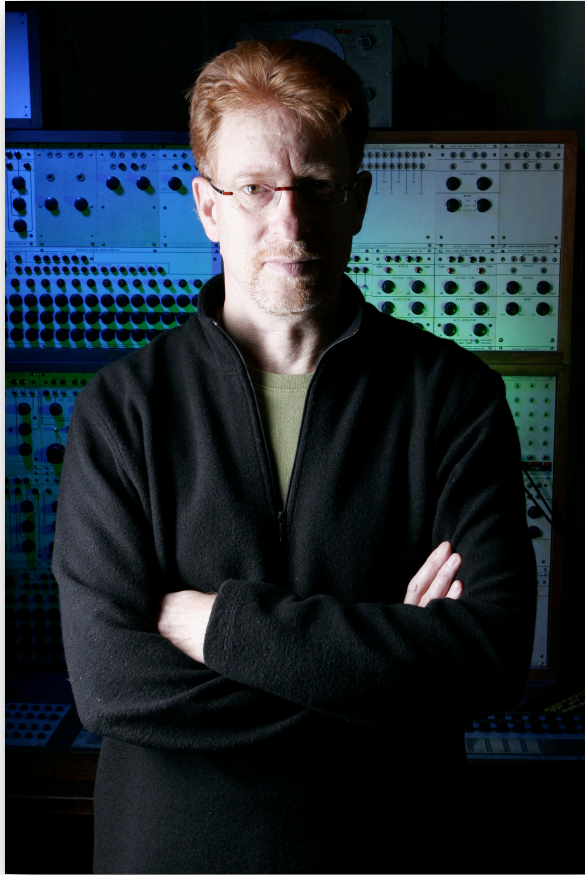
Conference website:

www.stcloudstate.edu/music/seamus



An Interview with Eric Chasalow

By Lou Bunk



[Eric Chasalow](#) is a composer known for creating a vivid kind of “super-musique concrète” that combines traditional instruments with manipulated pre-recorded sounds from any source imaginable. He teaches at Brandeis University, where he directs BEAMS, the Brandeis Electro-Acoustic Music Studio.

This past February, Eric and I met in his office at Brandeis and sat down for a good long conversation. While I came with some prepared questions, we freely drifted among many topics: the community of the Columbia-Princeton studios, what a sound carries with it, capturing the energy of Jazz solos, audience, Sound Art, conceptual art, aging, and what has stayed the same in Electronic Music while technology has changed. Below are some excerpts. Returning to Brandeis to spend some time with Eric was such a treat, and quite meaningful for me, as he was my dissertation advisor and a mentor in electronic music.

* 1 *

You wrote that “studios are like communities” in a description of your oral history project: “[The Video Archive of the Electro-acoustic Music](#)”. Could you describe the community of the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center while you were there? Who were your colleagues and mentors and how did being a part of this community impact you as a composer and musician?

It’s a big question... and I have to give just a little background. I discovered electronic music in high school. There just happened to be a copy of “Silver Apples of the Moon” in the band room, and I thought “this looks cool, what is this?” And at the same time, this local music store lent me an Arp Odyssey, which is like a MiniMoog. They just said, “Here, try and play with this.” They were looking for publicity because I had won an award for Jazz guitar.

Anyway, fast-forward a little bit, I got to college, and I started studying composition with Elliott Schwartz at Bowdoin. I was a student at Bates and he had a studio over there with an Arp 2600. My junior year, I spent

at New England Conservatory and worked with Bob Ceeley on an ElectroComp synthesizer. I made some tape pieces, and I thought this is a big part of where I want to go. I didn't know how it was all going to get reconciled with the other music I was interested in, which was still Jazz... or with what I was interested in doing with instruments, although pretty early on I heard Davidovsky's *Synchronisms No. 1*, and I was interested in that.

Track 1: Eric talks about studying at the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center in the late 1970's, and getting to know the people and the equipment.

Working there took a certain kind of concentration and dedication. We knew it could be a little bit easier because things were moving towards computers, and we were working in the analog studio... You got the sense that the people around you are all in the trenches together. And so that engendered a very strong sense of community. Plus I was a newbie at that point, and everyone's trying to help. The community at that time was large and included Pril Smiley, Alice Shields, advanced student/teachers Arthur Krieger and Maurice Wright, engineers Peter Mauzy and Virgil deCarvalho, and lots of students passing through.

Milton [Babbitt] would show up to work on something, not very often at that point because the RCA wasn't working. I would play things for him, and he was very generous with me. I was incredibly sheepish about what I was doing. I had classes with Mario where I played things, and Vladimir would ask me what I was doing. He really cared about that, thinking of himself as one of the inventors of this, but he was also a very curious person—earlier he was constantly jetting around the world to find out what Stockhausen and Berio were up to. If there was one thing these people had in common, and I mean Mario and Vladimir especially, Milton in a different way, and Bülent Arel, who had been the very first studio assistant, is that they were crafts people. Many of them would make furniture or do woodworking projects. And so splicing tape with your hands, it was this kind of manual skill, very much about inventing things, putting it together.

* 2 *

Do you think anything is lost from learning in such a physical way, using actual objects to make these sounds, and then all that going into the computer? Do you think anything is lost in the translation, or lost in the art that is being created?

It's different models... you know, there is lots of software that emulates those physical objects. You see the knobs, you move them around. So in that sense, I think it circled back. There is so much interest now in analog synthesizers, all these companies building them often better than they were built originally. I think a lot of people felt when we moved from that tactile environment to software-based models that something was lost. And I am not so big on nostalgia, although I do believe in certain traditions, certain ways of working. So if I really answer your question literally, "Is something lost?" The answer is yes.

What is it, do you think? What is lost?

Well it isn't as if what we have now is terrible. There is the immediacy of working with a machine, and with the models and software now, we have that. People would argue that analog synthesizers and analog devices

have a different sound. Buchla, Moog, Serge, ElectroComp, Oberheim, Sequential, Roland, all of those have a different way of working, different models, and each of them is a different instrument, different sound.



Do you think what is lost is the way you interact with those instruments, the performance aspect?

I agree with you... yes, that is what is lost. The physicality and muscle memory. The way we physically interact with instruments is really important. I didn't used to think about that a great deal. I think I'm not alone. People from my generation and before who were working in those studios, we were looking at that equipment as a way of making sound. We were so focused on the sounds. And a lot of us were pretty quick, as the technology changed, to replace it with something newer... moving into MIDI instruments. And then gradually a lot of us realized, oh, they're different

instruments they have different capabilities, different ways of working. You shouldn't just be discarding one and going on to the next. But it's not like a violin where you have 300 years of tradition or more.

I am not saying anything earth shattering here that even between Moog and Buchla... you know, Don Buchla very deliberately was thinking about building a machine that was not keyboard-based. He cared about that a great deal, as did the people around him, Mort, Pauline and Ramon, who were at San Francisco, and they were thinking very differently.

I mean this goes to the whole question of community too, because of having gotten to know a lot of these people over the years... you know these people were my heroes, Lou. I hadn't met them, I read about them in books and I heard their music. And the exciting thing was getting to meet them, many of them, and then have some sort of relationship where you explore things together.

Track 2: Eric tells a story about working as an audio engineer on a performance of Morton Subotnick's "Ghost Pieces"

* 3 *

Are there certain tools that have stayed with you over the years, even as the technology has changed?

The basic ways of thinking about sound absolutely did not change. When you start working in the studio, especially in an environment where you have to make everything, whether it is literally by hand or with software, where you don't have a lot of presets and you can't turn things on and let them go, you have to think it through. The advantage is you learn a lot about the microstructure of sound, and it focuses your ear on tiny nuances.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear members of SEAMUS,

Our National Conference, **SEAMUS 2017**, is just weeks away. It will be co-hosted by Kristian Twombly and myself at St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, MN, **April 20-22, 2017** and we hope to see you there. It promises to be a terrific conference as we present over 100 electroacoustic works, guerrilla concerts, and we honor this year's SEAMUS Award recipient, Carla Scaletti.

The **Elections** for SEAMUS Board officers concluded in February. The position of Vice President of Programs will be filled by Ico Bukvic, Heather Stebbins will be our new Treasurer, and incumbent Kyong Mee Choi was elected to be Secretary for another term. Congratulations to our new and returning Board members, and our thanks to Ryan Carter and Keith Kirchoff for their many years of service as Treasurer and VP of Programs. Finally, I would like to welcome Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner to the Board as our new Diversity Officer.

I look forward to seeing you in St. Cloud at SEAMUS 2017.

Scott Miller
President, SEAMUS



So very early on, I started thinking about how you make a phrase in terms of envelopes. This was a revelation. This was a big thing working with Davidovsky and he talked about it some. He didn't make a huge point out of it, but his music did. Different envelope types, different kinds of attacks, sustains, and decays, and incrementing those things in different ways is so powerful. I am always trying to do that with whatever instrument. It adds another layer to the counterpoint of a phrase. That's something I absolutely hold on to.

For you, what else has stayed the same? In your more recent pieces, have you used similar tools or concepts that you would have used in your earlier pieces? Or maybe not?

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I'll tell you Lou, one of the things I am doing these days, that I never would've done years ago, is applying mechanical processes to material. Very rarely in the past would I take a phrase and do a literal time augmentation. Or a literal inversion or retrograde. I did that stuff to see what it would do, what it would create that I could use. But I'm doing it with much bigger chunks of stuff now, because we have the tools to do it without thinking too hard. But ultimately it doesn't matter whether your processes are random or mechanical, what matters is what you discover and choose to put into a piece.

Track 3: Eric talks about Elliott Carter and musical layers moving at different rates. As he puts it; "an illusion of things coexisting that can't possibly coexist."

* 4 *

In an [ASCAP Audio Portrait](#), you say that Jazz "was the first art music that really excited me" and in many of your pieces what you are "going for" is "a kind of energy that you get from great Jazz improvisers." Can you talk a bit more about how Jazz has influenced your electro-acoustic music, perhaps from its forms and motifs, or other musical elements?

Well, I have these elements that are like Bebop riffs, or Post-bop riffs, or sort of a tonal bop, that kind of energy, with streams of 16th notes in a lot of my instrumental music, and in various places in the electro-acoustic pieces too. One of the things I struggled with was having the technique to play saxophone—guitar at a certain point—really fast and in an intelligent way. It is not an accident I was listening to Bird and Coltrane and then going into the city to hear Sonny Rollins multiple times. You know, the giants. I just found it tremendously exciting. One of the things you do, especially when you are younger and hear something that is tremendously exciting—you want to imitate it.

Track 4: Eric talks about trying to play Jazz but realizing "I never had that kind of technique. I loved the music, and I tried and I tried. But if I slowed things down, I could write out ideas that I could then give to other people to play really fast... and the thing you can't do, is what you want the most because you can't do it."

That pushed me to try and do what I couldn't do as a player, in like every piece I wrote. I entered this whole other world, this subculture of contemporary music which is not the subculture of Jazz, but where there are plenty of people who had experience with Jazz, and certainly a lot of people loved it.

So sometimes we talked about reconciling these two traditions, because we were very aware of them being different. Russ Pinkston, who was a classmate of mine, always talked about ways of dealing with tonality in his music. He was a really accomplished rock musician, in a band, with an album. He cared about that part of his life. And I cared about the other stuff I did too and thought, "How do I use this stuff I love? Maybe I can't improvise tonal Jazz very well, but I know that music, and I care about it, and I can use it. Where does that sit in a world with this other music that I have learned about? Davidovsky, Carter, Martino..."

(continued on p. 10)

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.

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(Chasalow interview, cont.)

* 4 *

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Outside of the surface energy you are talking about, is there something in the more extended forms of Jazz that you use in your own music?

I guess it’s a good question Lou. I don’t think so. You know, I am thinking of dramatic forms that come more from classical music. In the Jazz tradition, the various traditions, you have chord changes, and then a lot of the invention has to do with how you play with other people. How you feel it, how you feel time. But certainly when you are improvising over those changes, you don’t worry... I mean that kind of repetition, where you cycle through the changes again and again is built into that music, and no one thinks twice. Whereas when I was growing up, repetition in my sub-subculture, as opposed to downtown... people really avoided repetition. Or you thought about it very carefully, about how you used it. So no, I don’t think about that [extended forms]. I think about the materials themselves, not just the surface energy, but the kinds of

motives and themes that I write absolutely are related to improvising on Jazz instruments.

[Track 5:](#) *Eric talks about “quotation,” “re-contextualization,” and “getting somewhere else” in his piece ‘Scuse me for electric guitar and tape.*

Were you trying to capture the improvisatory nature of Jazz, and write it down?

I did think about it, but you know, that spontaneity is important when you are in a room with great improvisers, and they’ve got their vocabulary. It is not that they take it from nowhere, we know better than that, right? But they are able to put it together on the spot in a way where surprising things happen, and as a listener you go on that journey, and it’s like... oh my God.

[Track 6:](#) *Eric talks about meeting Branford Marsalis and asking him about a concert he played with Sonny Rollins.*

But beyond those few times [hearing Jazz played live] which are really memorable, most of my experience was digging through the classic recordings of Jazz. So I got to know Giant Steps and everything from Bird, Dizzy, Miles, Stan Getz, Chet Baker... I spent so much time listening, and that stuff gets in you, and you can go back to it, and hear it again. So when I put on Giant Steps, because it is iconic, it is something like a Beethoven symphony, you come back to it again and again. We have in the library, transcriptions of a lot of the solos Coltrane recorded. There are multiple takes. I have played through them, and I’ve looked at them, and they are all amazing in their own way. But the one that is on the record, which is in my head, I still find it extraordinary.

I never really thought about it until you asked me this question, but essentially what I’m doing is to capture recording, and trying to write something that is like a Jazz solo, that sense of structure—that it really takes you somewhere. And the best ones, they might have some formula, but there isn’t much, and there is nothing wasted, and it gets you there eventually. If it repeats, the repetition just reminds you where you have been and eventually it really builds to something extraordinary. And so you get that live, but I still get it in the recordings of those solos. I never thought about it consciously the way I am talking about it now, but it is sort of like recording a solo when we compose. I can slow it down, and make it work, because I can’t do it in real time. [laugh] I mean I can do it a little bit in real time. Maybe I can do it more now.

* 5 *

In a recent article you wrote for New Music Box titled “[Electroacoustic Music is Not About Sound](#)” you wrote: *“My most naïve idea may be that anyone is willing to concentrate and truly listen through a piece of music at all. If we cannot make this assumption however, we lose musical experience, so to abandon this hope is to abandon music.”*

Can you talk more about that idea, and if you are writing music for an ideal listener?

(continued on p. 13)

We are excited to announce the re-release of **Music from SEAMUS Vol. 1** on the SEAMUS Records imprint of New Focus Recordings:

<http://www.newfocusrecordings.com/catalogue/music-from-seamus-vol-1/>



James Mobberley, composer of the first track, shares these thoughts about his piece and SEAMUS:

"Composers and listeners have much to be thankful for about SEAMUS and its continuing commitment to the performance and distribution of electroacoustic music. It was both an honor and a great experience to prepare a recording of *Spontaneous Combustion* for the first SEAMUS CD. Tim Timmons is an exceptional saxophonist, and it was a joy to work with him. The piece is highly energetic in many spots, but Tim's method of negotiating the significant demands of the piece was to move almost nothing except his fingers. The visual and sonic experiences were so radically different in character that I found myself looking away much of the time -- it just seemed like the sounds could not possibly be coming from such an apparently calm, almost meditative image!"

Scott Wyatt, former SEAMUS President and long-time producer of the Music from SEAMUS CD series, has this to say about the re-release:

"I am thrilled to hear of the re-release of **Music from SEAMUS** volume 1 by New Focus Recordings, originally released in 1993. I am honored to have served as project director and engineer for the **Music from SEAMUS** Recording Series volumes 1 through 25. The idea for the **Music from SEAMUS** Recording Series was discussed for several years by the SEAMUS Board of Directors and finally came to fruition in late 1991 with financial planning for the Series having been appropriated earlier that year. The focus of the Series was and remains in support of the organization's commitment to promote electro-acoustic music within the United States and abroad, and for the Series to serve as a showcase for compositions by its membership. The hope was to create a Recording Series with a strong degree of permanency through hardcopy media being part of library and radio collections. Jon Appleton referred to this Series as clearly one of the most important collections of electro-acoustic music in the world!"

"After much discussion, the Board of Directors felt the best approach for selecting compositions for the Series would be for the participants of the national conferences to cast their vote for the compositions that they felt should be part of the collection. Volume 1 contains compositions by Stephen David Beck (*Improvisation on Strange Attractors v1.0b*), Kwok-ping John Chen (*Ring Shades*), Bernardo Feldman (*Still Life*), James Mobberley (*Spontaneous Combustion*), James Phelps (*Chordlines*), and Anna Rubin (*Remembering*). I would urge old and new listeners to make this part of their personal collection."

Stay tuned for future releases from the SEAMUS archive!

Yeah I can, only at the risk of quoting Uncle Milton again. These things come out of my head all the time; “I can only write what I want to hear.” So I don’t think about some external audience. And when I teach composition it is always a struggle with young composers who talk about audience, which doesn’t mean I think you ignore your audience. I am trying to capture ideas—and to follow musical ideas you have to concentrate hard over a period of time. You have to go on that journey. It is a narrative form.

In order to achieve any of that you start from the assumption, when you have a piece performed, that anyone who is listening is really listening. And I guess I am sort of bemoaning the fact that it is a learned skill. And I don’t think it is overstating things to say that most people don’t grow up learning it. To some degree that has always been true. And I am like everyone else. If I am in a concert hall, I have to put myself in a state of mind to be with a piece. And I don’t always do it, but I can think of times where a performance was so extraordinary that it demanded I do it.

We live in a world where everything is experienced in five second clips, and maybe we need to respond to that in some way as artists. This is what is so valuable about concert halls, and live music experiences—where you make a space for a piece to exist, but people have to learn how to have that experience.

Do you learn by doing it?

Yes. I think with some guidance. You learn by doing it, and being rewarded. And it is rare that we feel real gratification for doing it. It can be work too. Which I don’t think is ideal by the way. What we all long for is that experience where you get with the piece of art and you fall into it. Right? You lose yourself in it, and it shows you something about the world. And that takes a certain kind of concentration and letting something unfold over time.

There is a risk as well?

For the listener.

Because it may turn out to be something you may not like?

Yeah...how many times have we been in a concert, and we get up at the end and say “well there is an hour of my life I will never get back?”

* 6 *

In our pre-interview, you talked about Musique Concrète and how you are interested in “what a recorded sound carries with it.” Can you talk about this a bit, perhaps squaring this idea (or not?) with the main topic of that previous article (Electroacoustic Music is Not about Sound).

Yeah, those things seem to be in opposition to one another, don’t they? I remember our friend Hillary Zipper when she was studying here, and she would bring me music on her violin. She was just scraping a bow as slowly as possible for a long period of time. And she just really, really loved the experience of that sound. And that is legitimate—but for me it is not enough. And I used to argue with Hillary, and I have argued with other people about this. I argue less now about that. Cage always said we don’t have to do anything, the world is full of beauty. I am paraphrasing. There is sound all around us and we need to be awake to it. This is

the Buddhist approach to the world, to be awake to the world, which is an idea that I really value. I do think we need to be awake to our surroundings, and aware, and to not be filtering out all the time, narrowing down.

I guess what I'm saying Lou is I am not interested in that as a thing unto itself. Although, the older I get, the more I am willing to sit and just listen to a sound and find beauty in that. But as a composer, what is valuable to me, especially if I am trying to do a fixed media piece, is that connection we make to sounds that we recognize. So I am less interested in abstracting so totally that the source no longer matters. It is a little bit like figures in painting, right? When you see an outline of something and your brain can make those connections to something in your own memory, your own experience... that's powerful. So if we hear an electro-acoustic piece and there is something in it that sounds like someone humming, but maybe it isn't? You can lean one way and it is abstracted, and leaning the other way it comes into focus, and you recognize what the sound is. And these associations we the listener make with what we are hearing... it is a valuable aspect of doing things in electroacoustic music.

It is one of the reasons that those tape and instrument pieces started happening early on, because the live instrument is something we can connect to. We have a history with it. Solo violin carries the weight of all solo violin music ever written, or piano music, or string quartet. It is there as a point of departure. When you get to fixed media pieces, the sound source has the weight of every association we can make with it, whether it is a train—which is somewhat ironic because Schaeffer talked about not wanting you to hear what that source was, but rather the quality of the sound. But the fact is, the source itself is very powerful because of what it invokes and evokes in memory.

But that is just a point of departure for me. The sound quality itself, for me as a composer, it is not enough. I then have to work very hard with everything else at my disposal to create layers of meaning in a piece.

What carries it then? If it is not the sound itself that's carrying the piece forward, giving it shape, is it the combination of harmony, melody, rhythm, form, and then sound is fit in, or is sound somehow part of the structure?

Yeah, ultimately it is sound, but when we talk about sound here, we're talking about sound quality. Is it the sound of a string being plucked, or a can being kicked down the street? What I was reacting to in that article is that I have heard too many cases where composers get seduced by the quality of the sound. It seems to me they have given up on aspects of rhythm, or pitch. And by pitch we could mean how you manipulate the spectrum, it could mean all kinds of things, right? —the particular tuning of that sound. Whereas if you pay attention to every aspect of that sound, you could create very powerful music.

I am just saying, listen to what is happening with all the elements. Go beyond yourself as a composer. Work very hard. I know there are some people who read that article and thought I was being incredibly naïve, but what I am trying to do is to separate out [musical] elements that are hard to separate. I heard an awful lot of talk about how we have new tools, and so we convey meaning in a different way. We need to prioritize timbre, so we need to simplify pitch. Well that isn't necessarily true.

You also talked about how timbre can heighten what you do with pitch and harmony in reference to the slow movement of your piece [Are You Radioactive, Pal?](#). Can you talk about how this relationship between pitch and timbre plays out in this movement?

It is so hard... we artificially separate pitch and timbres as if they are separable. They are not. They're both conveying an idea. You quoted me saying sound can't carry an idea. I meant by itself. Sound is a complex construct. It is helpful to separate out those elements, to concentrate on how they are working in a piece. So in that piece, and this is true in any piece, what I am saying is back to this idea of counterpoint of different elements. I will write a line for an instrument thinking about pitch and rhythm sort of simultaneously. And very often I will be thinking about the timbre at the same time.



Track 7: *Eric describes his editing and composing process; “when you make an electro-acoustic piece, you are doing a realization of a performance, and you have got to put in there the energy and the physicality.”*

Do synthesized sounds, like the ones in this piece, carry something with them as well? How you described a train sound carries a train, do synthesized sounds carry something in a similar way? Perhaps to the instrument that created them or...

Potentially yes. What is interesting is that we worked so hard in the early studio to make things sound sensitive and instrumental in quality. We wanted it to have these nuances. But we never thought that synthesized sounds would then carry... would be in people's memories. My son, he writes EDM tracks and there are these pad sounds, and other kinds of synthetic sounds that we tried to avoid, we thought they were cheesy, we wanted to get rid of them. And it is just part of their vocabulary. Like a violin sound is part of our vocabulary, those sounds are part of our vocabulary now too. Once it is there in the culture, in the sphere, people hear it—it becomes a part of the way we communicate.

Our memory of sound... that is what I am talking about by putting something into a piece that carries something with it. My older pieces for instrument and tape, when they are played now, people hear them and say, “Oh, I love those cool retro sounds.” Or, “I hate that, why do you keep using those old sounds?” I mean, I get that too.

When you were working with the sounds of this more recent piece, were you thinking about that history of those sounds?

You mean the saxophone piece?

Yes, *Are You Radioactive, Pal?*

No, no, it is just sort of my repertoire. I am trying to move from what I know to something else and tweak them. I don't feel as if I am honoring some aspect of the history of electronic sound by making that piece sound that way. I don't want them [the sounds] to stand out. The focus there is on the saxophone, and on the way those sounds blend with, or are distinct from the live instrument.

Particularly in the second movement, the instrument and the electronics overlap quite a bit, and not seeing it played live, there can be an illusion, where you get tricked into not knowing where the sound is coming from.

Well that is the tradition that I really wanted to operate in, and when I make those pieces I still do. That was the cool thing about a couple of moments in the flute synchronism where a sine tone seems to come out of the flute. Or the beginning of *Synchronisms No. 6* is the famous moment where the piano makes a crescendo. If you are thinking about that all the time, oh... how can I do that differently? —you invent a lot of different ways of doing things like that.

For you, what's valuable in that particular technique? Or what is interesting to you about that way of writing?

What is valuable to me is in a live concert situation, seeing the traditional instrument and hearing it change in a way that is surprising. And then after a little while... you know, we have enough of those pieces now that it is not totally surprising, but to have something that can be so locked in, that it sounds like you are manipulating the sound of the instrument with live electronics. And yet, the live electronic pieces usually don't have the same kind of tension that you get with tape and instrument pieces.

The dialogue, you mean by tension?

I don't even think of it as a dialogue. The live player has got to be right there to synchronize if you don't have a click track, and I hate click tracks. But I haven't made one of these pieces in a few years now. I got a little burned out on them. So I put out a book that has all of that [[Eric Chasalow: Works for Instrument and Tape \(1979-2013\)](#)] and said "OK I am closing a chapter, and maybe I'll do another one. But not now."



* 8 *

Where have your interests gone recently?

I love setting text and working with the voice. That latest piece [Elegy & Observation](#) is found poetry from all different sources. Doing things that have other dramatic elements in them interest me. I am finally at a point where I feel like I could do a Sound Art installation, which gets away from the narrative. I haven't done that, and would like to tackle that set of problems.

What is drawing you to Sound Art?

I get bored with myself. I think the whole other venue draws me to it. I think people in the visual arts world are much more open to different possibilities. And there is another aspect, and I admit it is ego, but I hear a lot of so-called Sound Art, and I don't find it very interesting. I am sure the artist had an idea, and loved doing it, or worked hard to do it, but it doesn't get anywhere that I find revelatory. It doesn't make you hear differently. And I want to try to do that. And maybe I will fail. Certainly I will fail some.

Are you imagining something that would be an installation in a gallery?

Yeah, installation art. Also I am really interested in collaboration, and collaboration is really hard. I have done some of it. So I can imagine doing an installation where I am doing sound and working with a visual artist or sculptor. Yeah absolutely.

And I think it is absolutely legitimate. Sound Art artists self-identify and usually come from the visual arts. Although I think that is breaking down more now. Why shouldn't we—having all this experience and training and acute hearing, and having worked at this our whole lives—be doing that?

Are you attracted to the idea of working with a concept?

I am less against working with concepts than I was.... I am not anti-anything anymore, to a degree.

You used to be? [laughing]

Look, most of the time things are not transformative experiences. It is hard to get there. And maybe a piece that I don't find transformative, someone else does. That is perfectly legitimate.

With the chorus and tape piece [*Elegy and Observation*], I really wanted to have a very poignant text that addressed climate change. When you have a text, you can do things thematically. I have nothing against generating concepts. The idea of conceptual art however, most of the time, once you know what the concept is, you can throw the piece away. That I have a problem with.

Although I have started to find great beauty in simplicity. Maybe this is part of aging. The idea that you can have a single stroke of calligraphy and it can be very beautiful. It has a certain kind of energy, and that is very hard to capture. And you try to do it again, and again in order to get there. And when I was younger, I appreciated that less. I intellectually understood it, but I found it hard to get there. I understand it a bit more deep down now, sort of in my soul, the beauty of simplicity.

Track 8: Eric talks about “Body Tracks” by conceptual artist [Ana Mendiato](#), where she uses her blood to make body prints on paper.

I was looking at this work. I've seen those pieces on paper in the Rose collection as long as I have been at Brandeis, which is almost 30 years now. And I sort of thought, oh what an interesting idea, and then I would walk away, and not really look at it. And now I find myself standing in front of it... in a way, it is like the sound carries... getting back to the idea of a sound carrying an idea all by itself. Right? Just being with this one thing that's beautiful, intractable, and indivisible in a certain way. It has its own nuances, and that has

got to be enough if you are willing to stay and witness it, and absorb it, and process what it is you are looking at. Can it speak?

It has come to a point for me now, where with those pieces, I can do that. And I can do it a little bit more with sounds too. But I am not creating things that I would call a piece that consists of that kind of work, not yet anyway.

You have to get a little older?

Yeah, I've got to get a little older. I am hoping to get a little older.

* * *

[Lou Bunk](#) is a composer and improviser living in Somerville MA. He directs the concert series Opensound, co-directs the ensemble Collide-O-Scope Music, and is Associate Professor of Music at Franklin Pierce University.





Member News

Kevork Andonian's composition "Of the Dancing of the Spirits at Night" has been released on a CD album titled *Aboriginal Inspirations*. The instrumentation consists of Native American flute, frame drum, violin, and piano. The flutist is Ron Korb, who was Grammy-nominated in 2016. The other performers are percussionist Dominique Moreau, violinist Ralitsa Tcholakova, and pianist Benjamin Smith. "Of the Dancing of the Spirits at Night" is about the northern lights, also known as the aurora borealis. The Canadian government provided funding for this project. All of the pieces on the CD are based on Aboriginal themes.



Brian Belet and Stephen Ruppenthal performed "Andromeda's Dream," the second movement from Belet's *System of Shadows* (S. Ruppenthal, flugelhorn; B. Belet, Kyma processing), at Menlo Church in Menlo Park, CA, March 23, 2017.

Belet's composition *System of Shadows* was published on Stephen Ruppenthal's CD *Flamethrower* (Ravello Records, RR7954, March 2017). The CD contains five compositions for trumpet, flugelhorn, and interactive electronics. Belet also served as producer for the CD.

Belet's composition *Summer Phantoms: Nocturne* (piano and electronics) was performed by Keith Kirchoff ("The Electroacoustic Piano" concert) at San Jose State University on February 14, 2017.

Julius Bucsis performed a set of original compositions for electric guitar and computer processing at the NSEME 2017, held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in March and at Oscillate: Pittsburg, held in Verona, Pennsylvania, also in March. His composition *Stories from an Alien Pond* (fixed media) was selected for the DIFFRAZIONI Multimedia Festival 2016, held in Florence, Italy in November, WOCMAT 2016, held in Taoyuan City, Taiwan in December, and the SEAMUS 2017 Conference, held in Saint Cloud, Minnesota in April. *Won't Let Them Keep Me Down* (fixed media) was selected for the DIFFRAZIONI Multimedia Festival 2016, held in Florence, Italy in November. *My Breath Swept Away by Katmai's Skies* (flute and piano) was selected for the SCI Student National Conference 2016, held in Muncie, Indiana in November. *The Dawn of Memory - Awakening of the Ancients* (fixed media) was selected for the NSEME 2017, held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in March and for the NYCEMF 2017, held in New York City in June.

Mike Boyd's user-driven installation that premiered at the 2015 Electronic Music Midwest—*Confessional*—won the 2016 FETA Prize in Sound Art. Following is an image of the installation's Max screen, and then description that was in the press release for the prize:

burned all of his paintings, baked some of the resulting ashes into cookies, and publicly announced the act in a newspaper as a sort of obituary. Viewing some of these cookies/ex-paintings several years ago I felt that Baldessari's approach to his previous work, simultaneously embracing,

Users may also log this activity into an official registration book, and they may create and take home a frameable certificate commemorating the destruction. Any other way(s) that a user wishes to document the event are encouraged ("selfies," social media announcements, etc.), and a Facebook page is provided to collect such documentation. For score-based works, implements will be provided to facilitate the physical destruction of scores: paper shredder or scissors for indoor venues, a fire pit or barbecue grill for outdoor venues (if allowed)."

For additional information about *Confessional* and Michael Boyd, please visit:

<https://www.facebook.com/electroacousticconfessional/>
<https://michaelrboyd.com>

Confessional

a user-driven installation
Michael Boyd (2014)

We've all made poor decisions – had one too many drinks, dated the wrong person, overused a credit card, accepted employment at a toxic workplace, and so forth. Some such questionable decisions are artistic in nature. Indeed when looking back on one's early work, it is easy to have tinges of embarrassment and regret. However, those emotions are often at least partially counterbalanced by feelings of warm nostalgia.

I have love/hate feelings about my own early compositions and suspect that many artists have similar relationships with their early output. John Baldessari made this dynamic compellingly tangible in 1970 through his Cremation Project, an undertaking in which he burned all of his paintings, baked some of the resulting ashes into cookies, and publicly announced the act in a newspaper as a sort of obituary. Viewing some of these cookies/ex-paintings several years ago I felt that Baldessari's approach to his previous work, simultaneously embracing, annihilating, and remaking, was a fitting way to let go of one's artistic past.

Confessional is a user-driven installation that provides the opportunity for composers to briefly take pleasure in and then (symbolically) destroy one of their dubious creations. This process is accomplished with a computer (running Max or Max Runtime) and a recording provided by the user that is processed live. The audio processing unfolds in stages and mirrors the phases of animal decomposition: fresh, bloat, active decay, advanced decay, and dry remains. Through this series of transformations, the user's piece transitions from its original state to nearly imperceptible bits of noise.

Users may also log this activity into an official registration book, and they may create and take home a frameable certificate commemorating the destruction. Any other way(s) that a user wishes to document the event are encouraged ("selfies," social media announcements, etc.), and a Facebook page and hashtag will be provided to collect such documentation. For score-based works, implements will be provided to facilitate the physical destruction of scores: paper shredder or scissors for indoor venues, a fire pit or barbecue grill for outdoor venues (if allowed).

1. If you think someone used this installation before you, click this button to reset the patch (alternately you could also close and reopen the Max patch).
2. Click the "open" button to locate the soundfile (AIF or WAV) that you would like to use with this installation. (The soundfile, which you provide via a zip drive or other method, should be a recording of your own music that you find slightly to extremely embarrassing.)
3. Type the duration in seconds of the soundfile you located in the previous step and then hit "enter." (Do not use a decimal point - round down to the nearest second.)
4. If you would like to record the destruction of your rather embarrassing piece, click the open "button" and choose a name and location for the resulting soundfile.
5. Set an initial volume level for the installation using the slider. This slider may be used during the installation to adjust the volume. Approximately 1/3 of the way from the top is a suggested starting point, depending of course on attached hardware.
6. Click the toggle button to begin. The number boxes found below indicate the elapsed time in minutes and seconds since the installation's initiation. The process is complete just before the five minute mark. Enjoy!
7. Optional: Should it be necessary to immediately cease sound output, click the audio output button. Note that this button need not be used for any other purpose.

"We've all made poor decisions – had one too many drinks, dated the wrong person, overused a credit card, accepted employment at a toxic workplace, and so forth. Some such questionable decisions are artistic in nature. Indeed when looking back on one's early work, it is easy to have tinges of embarrassment and regret. However, those emotions are often at least partially counterbalanced by feelings of warm nostalgia. I have love/hate feelings about my own early compositions and suspect that many artists have similar relationships with their early output. John Baldessari made this dynamic compellingly tangible in 1970 through his Cremation Project, an undertaking in which he

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News from **Kyong Mee Choi:**

Water Bloom II for orchestra will be premiered by the Chicago Composers Orchestra conducted by Allen Tinkham on Saturday, April 22, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. at St. James Episcopal Cathedral. For this concert, Chicago Composers Orchestra will be collaborating with the Chicago Composers' Consortium (c3), a grass-roots organization of composers dedicated to creating new music in Chicago. The performance will feature a collection of works by c3 members expressing a wide range of representations, impressions, and responses to life in Chicago.

rare yet soft for electronics will be presented at the 2017 National Conference of the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States (SEAMUS) on Thursday, April 20, 2017 at the Ritsche Auditorium at St. Cloud State University. *rare yet soft* explores the subtlety of quoted thematic material.

This piece also will be presented at the Chicago Electro-Acoustic Music Festival on April 7, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. in Ganz Hall at Roosevelt University. This festival features works by Chicago College of Performing Arts composition students, Elainie Lillios, featured guest composer, and the members of Chicago Composers Consortium, Beth Bradfish, Kyong Mee Choi, Timothy Edwards, Kathleen Ginther, Timothy Ernest Johnson and Elizabeth Start.

To Unformed for piano and electronics will be performed by Aitor Lasa in Musikene, San Sebastián, Spain on April 5, 2017 at 7 p.m. This piece is inspired by Thich Nhat Hanh's book, *No Death, No Fear*. He describes life and death by saying, "When conditions are sufficient we manifest and when conditions are not sufficient we go into hiding." *To Unformed* attempts to depict Thich Nhat Hanh's idea musically by using the same musical material to express Hahn's idea of "manifestation" and "hiding".

Im Nebel for baritone and large ensemble was performed by the Illinois Modern Ensemble conducted by Stephen Taylor

featuring soloist Ricardo Sepulveda at the UIUC New Music Ensemble concert on March 31, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. This piece uses the text by Hermann Hesse's *Im Nebel*. The piece is dedicated to composer's beloved father, Soon Bong Choi. This concert will also feature 30-minute opera by one of Illinois' doctoral composition candidates, presenting a special collaboration between the Lyric Theatre and the Illinois Modern Ensemble.

rare yet soft for electronics was presented at the Rocky Mountain Chapter Conference of The College Music Society at ENMU Buchanan Hall, Eastern New Mexico University on Saturday, March 25, 2017 at 3:30 p.m. The concert features works by Olga Harris, Mark Dal Porto, Gregory J. Merti, Dominic Dousa and Kyong Mee Choi.

Im Nebel for baritone and large ensemble was premiered by the Illinois Modern Ensemble conducted by Carlos Carrillo featuring soloist Ricardo Sepulveda at the Faculty Composition Recital on March 15, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. This concert will feature works by Adam Nieman, Stacy Garrop, Stuart Folse, Teddy Niedermaier, Timothy Ernest Johnson and Kyong Mee Choi.

Slight Uncertainty is Very Attractive was performed by Jill DeGroot at the Symphony Center Buntrok Hall for a benefit concert on International Women's Day on Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 11 a.m. as well as at Narloch Piano Studios (4636 N Francisco Ave) on

Saturday, March 11, 2017 at 8:30 p.m.

Ferdinando DeSena is looking forward to the following performances:

April 6, 2017 - **Lasting Virtue** for flute and viola, at May 4, 2017 on a Chamber Cartel concert part of the Sound Now Festival in Atlanta GA
 April 18, 2017 - **Harp Dance** for two harps by Duo Scorpio at National Sawdust in Brooklyn, NY
 April 30, 2017 - **Spalding's Bounce** for tenor sax, cell and piano, on Zimmermann's Cafe at St. Andrew Episcopal Church, Lake Worth, FL
 May 4, 2017 - **Harp Dance** for two harps, at Compositum Musicae Novae Transitions Event, Miami.
 May 20 2017 - **Secrets for Free** for flute and electronic sound, on CMN Composers Forum, Miami FL

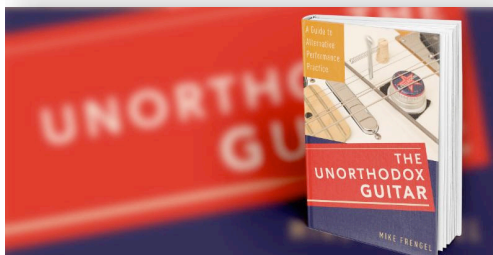
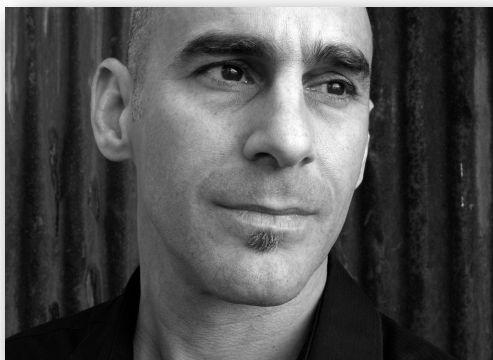
The University of California, Irvine hosted another in its series of Saturday Academy educational outreach sessions on Digital Music Production for high school students. The theme of this session was "Making Beats" taught by guest artist Val Jeanty (a.k.a. Val-Inc.) with SEAMUS members **Christopher Dobrian** (Professor of Music), **Josh Simmons** and **Alex Lough** (Ph.D. students in Integrated Composition, Improvisation, and Technology) <https://goo.gl/photos/EssaDgNJvUBquram7>

Robert Fleisher (Professor Emeritus, Northern Illinois University) continues to receive performances in the U.S. and abroad of several *musique concrète* experiments from his teens (c. 1970): *Loretto Alfresco*, *Altro Alfresco*, and *Dans le piano* (premiered respectively at NYCEMF 2009, SEAMUS 2011, and EMM 2012). In 2016, these three works received seven performances at four venues: *ÆPEX* (Ann Arbor, MI), *Concrete Timbre* (Brooklyn, NY), *Cicada Consort* (Tuscaloosa, AL), and *Forum Wallis Swiss Contemporary Music Festival/Ars Electronica* (Leuk, Switzerland). *Altro Alfresco* appears in the winter 2017 issue of the online journal of prose and music, *ink&codá*. Fleisher's acoustic works also continue to receive performances, premieres (in the U.S. and Greece during 2016) and recordings, including *Ma mère* (Ovidiu Marinescu, cello) on *Moto Continuo* (Navona, 2015), and *Beginning & Ending* (Iwona Glinka, flute) on *One Minute* (Sarton, 2017). Other recent performance venues have included the Univ of Northern Colorado (Open Space festival), Univ of Puget Sound (CMS), Pearson Lakes Art Center/Okoboji, IA (Grit Collaborative), Northern Illinois Univ, West Chester Univ, and Weill Recital Hall (NYC). Fleisher's 1971 interview with composer Cecil Effinger (1914-1990) appears in the winter issue of Sigma Alpha Iota's quarterly journal, *Pan Pipes*.

Mike Frengel's book *The Unorthodox Guitar: A Guide to Alternative Performance Practice* (Oxford University Press, 2017) was released on March 7. The book details extended performance techniques and instrumental preparations, along with practical strategies for



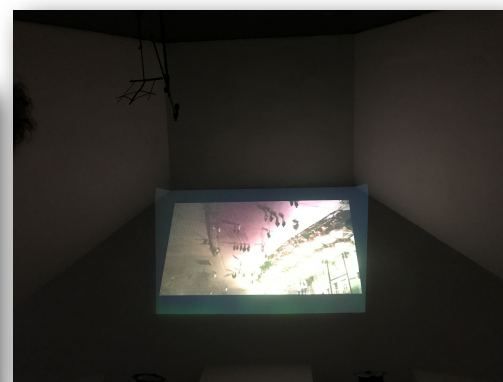
Robert Fleisher's *Ma mère* was performed by cellist Ovidiu Marinescu at Weill Recital Hall on May 12, 2015.



incorporating a computer into a guitar rig while preserving the tone and innovative ideas about sound projection in live contexts.

Virtuoso trumpet player Andrew Kozar premiered **Orlando Jacinto Garcia's** new work for trumpet and amplified resonant bodies (in this case grand piano) on April 6 as part of the New Music Miami Festival. The concert took place at FIU's Miami Beach Urban Studios at 7:30 PM.

Guitarist Federico Bonacossa premiered Garcia's new work for classical guitar and fixed media, *quasi chitarra* on Sunday, February 26 as part of the Miami International Guitart Festival held at Florida International University and again on Wednesday April 5 as part of a concert of new works for guitar and electronics presented by the Subtropics Festival and held at the Audiotheque on Miami Beach.



Stadluft Macht Frei by Orlando Jacinto Garcia

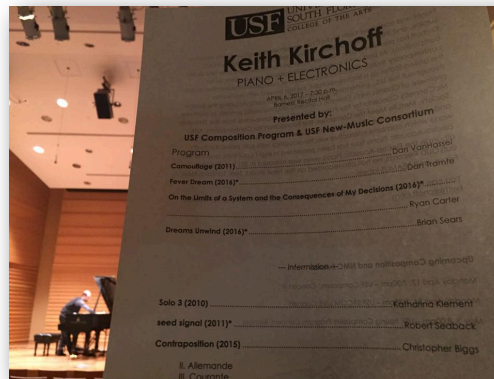
Stadluft Macht Frei for video and electronics (with video images by Jacek Kolasinski) was presented on November 16 at 4:00 PM at the Casa de las Americas in Cuba as part of the Festival de Musica Contemporanea de la Habana, a festival of new music from around the world.

Marta Gentilucci is currently completing a six-month artist residency at IRCAM where she is conducting research on the female singing voice, particularly the micro and macro evolution-in-time of vibrato, tremolo and their extended-techniques variations. She presented her research on [January 30, 2017](http://www.theinfidelnetwork.com/single-post/2017/02/10/Untitled). More information about her project is available at:

<http://medias.ircam.fr/xd48815>

Brian Sears, David Taddie, Dan Tramte, and Dan VanHassel.

<http://www.theinfidelnetwork.com/single-post/2017/02/10/Untitled>



Pianist/composer **Keith Kirchoff** has been touring his Electroacoustic Piano Program throughout the United States featuring the works of several SEAMUS members. Since January, he has been a guest artist at the University of North Carolina in Pembroke, University of Wisconsin in Oshkosh, San Jose State University, Santa Clara University, CCRMA at Stanford University, University of California in Santa Barbara, Cal State University in Northridge, West Virginia University, the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Florida, and the University of South Florida, and together with the SPLICE Ensemble, was a featured performer at the SCI National Conference at Western Michigan University. Featured on these recital programs have been works by Brian Belet, Christopher Biggs, Ryan Carter, Jon Fielder, Christopher Jette, Katharina Klement, Liviu Marinescu, Ryan McMasters, Caroline Louise Miller, Brian Riordan, Robert Seaback,



Robert Matheson recently formed and then led the Dixie Electro-Acoustic Performance (D.E.A.P.) ensemble in its first concert on Friday, 3/31 in the Eccles Mainstage theater at Dixie State University. The ensemble performed new works by DSU students and faculty.

Composer/performer **Fernando Laub** [Flaub] was recently interviewed by The Infidel Network. Access via the following link:

Charles Nichols' piece *Wunderkammer*, for oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and computer music was premiered by the PEN Trio, at Fairmont and West Virginia Universities, February 6 and 7. Nichols premiered his structured improvisations *Eulogy* (Risset), for controllers, computers, and video, and *Anselmo*, for electric violin, electronics, and computers, with video artist and computer musician Jay Bruns, at the Root Signals Festival at Georgia Southern University, February 10. His cowritten paper "Genesis of the Cube: The Design and Deployment of an HDLA-Based Performance and Research Facility", edited by Eric Lyon and cowritten with Terence Caulkins, Denis Blount, Ico Bukvic, Michael Roan, and Tanner Upthegrove, was published in the *Computer Music Journal*, Volume 40, Issue 4. Nichols premiered his composition *What Bends*, for electric violin and interactive computer music, accompanying narrated poetry, motion capture dance, animation, and processed video, with poet and narrator Ericka Meitner,

dancer Rachel Rugh, and video artist Zach Duer, in conjunction with the Extreme Appalachia: Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, in the 138 speaker spatial audio, 360° video projection, and motion capture systems of the Cube in the Moss Arts Center at Virginia Tech, March 11. His piece *Epimetheus Gift*, for amplified bassoon, computer, and Ambisonics, will be performed by bassoonist Steve Vacchi, at the SEAMUS conference and Birmingham ElectroAcoustic Sound Theatre Festival (BEAST FEaST), April 20 and 29.

Stephen Ruppenthal has a new CD out on Ravello Records titled "**Flamethrower.**" The CD includes premiere recordings of works written for him by Allen Strange, Brian Belet, Elainie Lillios, and Bruno Liberda. Here's the website for the release:

<http://ravellorecords.com/catalog/rr7954/>

Photo of composer, electric violinist, and computer musician Charles Nichols performing *What Bends*, with dancer and choreographer Rachel Rugh and dancers Eric Mullis and Barbara Tait, in the Cube at Virginia Tech



A recent podcast on Classical Music Discoveries dedicated an entire episode of their podcast to FLAMETHROWER.

https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/khedgecock/episodes/2017-03-22T23_00_00-07_00



Pictured: Andrew Litts, trumpet, performing his own composition, *singularity*, with a new multimedia arrangement by Ryan Olivier. Seen in the background, IUSB faculty Ryan Olivier (left) and Eric Souther (right)
Photo Credit: Photographer Kendall Asbell, Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts.

On March 20th, Indiana University South Bend (IUSB) held the Performing Media Festival [PMF~]. The festival welcomed guest artists the Mnemosyne Quartet and PhEAD (the Philadelphia Electro-Acoustic Duet) featuring SEAMUS members **Ryan Olivier** and **Andrew Litts**. The festival was a showcase of live multimedia art works by the guest artists and the faculty and students from IUSB's Raclin School of the Arts.



Adam Vidiksis was recently named the American Composers Forum Steven R. Gerber Composer in Residence for the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia. He was also recognized as a Conwell Entrepreneurial Fellow for his work on the faculty of Temple University. Vidiksis joined his fellow performers in SPLICE Ensemble—Sam Wells and Keith Kirchoff—and his students from BEEP, Heather Mease, Michael Tan, and Skyler Hagner, in a performance headlining the Andy Warhol exhibition gala opening at the MWOODS contemporary art museum in Beijing, China this past August. This event was attended by over 3000 people, had a live-stream of over half a million viewers, and was the featured article in New York Times T Magazine. In the fall, Vidiksis was a featured performer at various festivals and concerts including, the Electroacoustic Barn Dance, Orchestra 2001, and in residence at Ryder Farm in New York with Renegade Theater Company. Other performances include Original Gravity in Boston, Davidovsky's 10 Synchronisms in Philadelphia, and Rutgers University's Electric Café in Camden, NJ. In December, Ensemble Mise-En premiered his

new chamber work, *Deep Inelastic Scattering*, at a concert in Brooklyn featuring a solo set of music by Vidiksis for the first half of the concert.

Adam Vidiksis joins his trio, SPLICE Ensemble, members Sam Wells and Keith Kirchoff, and BEEP students, Heather Mease, Michael Tan, and Skyler Hagner in the gala opening of the Andy Warhol exhibition at the MWOODS contemporary art museum in Beijing, China.



John Villec presented a concert of Multimedia works by SEAMUS members in November as part of the 2016 CSU, Sacramento Festival of New American Music. Works presented were composed by **Michael Rhoades, Kyong Mee Choi, Elainie Lillios, John Villec, Sylvia Pengilly, Charles Nichols, Jeffrey Hass, Jerod Sommerfeldt, and Dennis H. Miller.**



Jon's Note

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



Last week I received an email from Qiangbin Chen, Conference Chair of ICMC 2017 / Artistic Director of EMW asking if I was willing to serve as a reviewer for the Shanghai event to be held in October of this year. Having done such service since the first international competition for electro-acoustic music launched by Dartmouth College in 1968, for multiple festivals of the Groupe de musique électroacoustique de Bourges in the 1970s, et al, how could I refuse? I like to know where electro-acoustic music is going. I was asked to choose a category from among the following:

- solo instrument + electronics*
- ensemble + electronics*
- voice + electronics*
- laptop improvisation/ live coding*
- live electronics*
- audiovisual work*
- new interface for musical expression*
- multimedia performance*
- noise music*
- technology aided music theater / dance (small scales)*
- DIY instruments and performance*
- miscellaneous/off-ICMC*
- installations*
- The EMW Young Talents Commission Program*
- electroacoustic / tape music*

Looking at the kind of works performed at the 2017 SEAMUS conference in St. Cloud, Minnesota (a somewhat smaller venue), there seems to be a clear indication that this is the direction our field has moved. I was especially surprised when our Chinese colleagues only added “electroacoustic/tape music” after the first announcement. Being the curmudgeon I have become, I thought “what ever happened to ‘pure’ electroacoustic music?” Isn’t this a variety of the question posed by Karlheinz Stockhausen to Pierre Schaeffer?

Frankly, I do miss music using no instruments or voice but sounds of uncertain origin that I have never heard before. Additionally, I miss hearing them in a dark space without having to look at performer(s). I occasionally do this at home and don’t feel obliged to applaud. There I take my audio journey away from location and to places my mind likes to wander. These days I avoid concerts for several reasons: There are almost none where I am currently in exile on the North Shore of Kauai; I don’t like feeling trapped into hearing music I don’t enjoy; I want to shout and laugh out loud when in a public concert when

something extraordinary happens. Such behavior would be deemed inappropriate, even at a SEAMUS concert. Concerts should be more like the British Parliament than the United States Congress. *Hooray, aah, oh no, boo, ugh*, etc. My basket is full of old chestnuts which I listen to daily either on CD (remember those?), and streaming services I hate, e.g. Spotify, iTunes which rip off all composers.

In conclusion, I quote two early, contradictory, comments by Steve Reich:

“As to whether a musical process is realized through live human performance or through some electromechanical means is not the main issue. One of the most beautiful concerts I ever heard consisted of four composers playing their tapes in a dark hall. (A tape is interesting when it’s an interesting tape.)”
Music as a Gradual Process (1968)

“Electronic music as such will gradually die and be absorbed into the ongoing music of people singing and playing instruments.”
Some Optimistic Predictions about The Future of Music (1970)

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