



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

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**Pictured right:**  
**SPLICE ENSEMBLE**

**Keith Kirchoff,**  
**piano**

**Adam Vidiksis,**  
**percussion**

**Sam Wells,**  
**trumpet**



**Interview with *SPLICE* faculty members, p. 3**

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“From my perspective, SPLICE Institute is about building and maintaining a community of creative individuals who all value the use of technology in music-making, whether it be performing, composing, producing, research, etc. We focus specifically on composing and performing, but the core of both of these is collaboration, creativity, and community. I call them the three ‘C’s’ of SPLICE...Did the field need a workshop like SPLICE? Absolutely! Did it get more than just a ‘workshop where you can learn about technology?’ Definitely.”

- Elaine Lillios, *SPLICE* faculty



*Permanent and Guest SPLICE 2017 Faculty Members*

*L to R: Elaine Lillios, Richard Johnson, Sam Wells, Keith Kirchoff,  
Adam Vidiksis, Christopher Biggs, Per Bloland, Paula Matthusen*

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## FROM THE EDITOR



Hello SEAMUS Members,

*I hope you've had a good semester and year! Each new year brings about change and new opportunities, and I hope you're all looking forward to what 2018 promises or has in store.*

*As an organization we obviously have changes underway and on the horizon--check out Scott Miller's final (gasp!) President's Message for a reminder of some of them.*

*Congratulations to Scott A. Wyatt on being the recipient of this year's SEAMUS Award! (Reprint of the press release on p. 6) Scott has served SEAMUS for years in many different capacities: as President, Director of the CD Series, and in numerable other ways. We look forward to hearing from him at the upcoming national conference in Eugene, Oregon. Submission info for SEAMUS 2018 is reprinted in this newsletter issue as an "FYI," and programming decisions are starting to be publicized and will be solidified in January 2018.*

*I'm excited to present a group interview with the six permanent faculty members of SPLICE--an organization that started with a summer institute at Western Michigan University and has now grown to include an ensemble and festival as well. The SPLICE faculty are all members of SEAMUS and will be familiar to most if not all of those that read this newsletter. I think the creation and growth of SPLICE is an interesting case study that might inform ideas other SEAMUS members and the electro-acoustic community at large might have regarding workshops, festivals, and other organized activities.*

*I'm also excited to welcome and feature SEAMUS member Lou Bunk as the newest regular contributor to the newsletter. His article in this issue (which starts on p. 21), "My Own Personal Canon," is a thoughtful exploration of performers/composers who have influenced him. He's curated a formidable selection of links that introduce some interesting and inspiring composers/performers committed to live (mostly electronic) music that, in some ways, presents a body of work that can serve as a foil to a lot of the work created by SEAMUS members (myself included). That's probably an oversimplification and not entirely accurate, BUT I do think these artists and their work are interesting to investigate, and I hope it invites SEAMUS members to examine their own work afresh.*

*There is, as always, an impressive collection of member news items (p.15), and contact info for all the board members on the back page. Please enjoy!*

Sincerely,

Steve Ricks

SEAMUS Newsletter Editor

# SEAMUS 2018

March 29-31  
University of Oregon

The Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States (SEAMUS) 2018 National Conference will be held at the University of Oregon School of Music and Dance in Eugene, Oregon **March 29-31, 2018**. SEAMUS 2018 will be presenting an exciting and diverse range of electro-acoustic music including fixed media electroacoustic works, real-time interactive performance compositions, works that combine sound and video, and sound installations. The University of Oregon, the School of Music and Dance, and Future Music Oregon are thrilled about hosting the SEAMUS conference and we look forward to having you visit our beautiful campus. Additional information about the conference is available at:

**[seamus2018.org](http://seamus2018.org)**

Questions can be directed to Jeffrey Stolet at [seamus2018@uoregon.edu](mailto:seamus2018@uoregon.edu)

\*Adjudication of entries is completed and notifications are going out now and into January 2018. Stay tuned!



An interview with SPLICE faculty members *Christopher Biggs*, *Per Bloland*, *Keith Kirchoff*, *Elainie Lillios*, *Adam Vidiksis*, and *Sam Wells*

By Steve Ricks

SR: I remember when Keith was using Facebook to audition various acronyms for what eventually became "SPLICE." At the time, I had known Keith for a while and had met Christopher, and I knew the two of them were involved with this collaboration, and that it was likely to involve others. How did this whole thing get started? And how did the faculty grow to the six of you?

CB: Keith called me to discuss an idea he and Adam had talked about at a conference. My boss was looking to start a summer composition program at Western Michigan University, but we had no unique idea. This idea was the first idea that would not be white noise amongst summer programs. WMU was willing to be supportive and provide space, equipment, and some crises money, if things went badly. Keith and I talked and had a nearly identical vision of who would be appropriate on faculty. All six of the core faculty were involved in the first year. Elainie was the first guest composer, but we always were hoping that she would return and we were thrilled when she was willing. While we were concerned about selecting the initial faculty, I do not think we imagined that the core faculty would be so consistent or work so well. I think we were lucky that we clicked in this capacity together. It took a good deal of time to work on the specifics of what would happen the first year and it has changed each year, but the underlying mission has been very consistent. It also took a long time to come up with SPLICE as an acronym, which we just dropped, and to call it SPLICE "Institute," verses some other term. The initial desire for the name to be an acronym repeatedly resulted in SPICE and other funny words, but thankfully we found an alternative.

KK: I had been wanting to start a festival like SPLICE for several years, but being unaffiliated to any university left me with obvious challenges. I would casually chat with various faculty from different institutions over the years, not formally proposing SPLICE, but just tentatively feeling whether or not they'd theoretically be a good fit.

In the summer of 2013 I started to get more serious about the idea and the time felt right. It then dawned on me that the perfect place would really be Western Michigan and the perfect collaborator would be Chris Biggs! I had known Chris for several years, and had recently visited Western as a guest artist. I was really struck with how passionate Chris was about his students and his program, not to mention that Chris is one of the most reliable and dependent people I know.

I drafted up a proposal about how a festival might look and sent it to Chris in an email. As luck would have it, they had just had a meeting about wanting to host a unique summer festival at Western but didn't have any proposals on the table. Then mine showed up in Chris's inbox!

Western has been abundantly supportive from the start, and it's been the perfect location!

With Western on board, Chris and I got to chatting about faculty. It was the easiest discussion: we both drafted our lists and they both included nearly the exact same people! The only difference was Chris hadn't really ever met Adam, and I had heard him play at SEAMUS 2011. I was really struck with his craft, his stage presence, and I knew he had to be involved.

EL: When Keith approached me to be the first SPLICE Institute guest I literally ran through my house shouting "Yes! Yes! Yes!" -- Firstly because I thought it was amazing that Keith and Chris chose me out of all the great EA composers in our community, and secondly because I had always wanted to start a similar program at BGSU but was never able to do so. There always seemed to be a big need in our community for a technology-focused summer program and with not being able to launch it myself, the next best thing was to join others who had the same idea and also the ability to get it off the ground. My first SPLICE Institute experience was amazing and inspiring, so when they asked me to stay on at the end of the week (and I may have said something like "please please keep me!" but my memory on that is a bit fuzzy) I accepted immediately. I love the SPLICE team.

SW: I clearly remember receiving the email from Keith about a year before the first SPLICE Institute asking me if I was interested in being a part of this summer festival. I was quite honored to have been asked to join a faculty of people I really look up to. The basic premise of the Institute was already fleshed out by Keith and Chris at this point, and it really resonated with me. I



actually just pulled up the original email and my responses was "I am 100% in."

AV: At that time, I was particularly concerned about the equilibrium in EA between performers and composers. So many programs were focused on producing highly-skilled electroacoustic composers, but performance programs weren't keeping up. In the composer-performer ecosystem, there needs to be many more performers than composers if great works are going to live on past their premiere. There were a number of wonderful programs offering EA performance as an important part of their studies, but not enough to achieve that healthy balance. I had known Keith for a few years on the conference/festival circuit, and one night we hashed out some solutions over beers. At this point, it was largely a hypothetical exercise—but Keith was determined to make some sort of festival happen. I was very happy and excited when I learned that he had established this opportunity with Chris at WMU, and of course, was thrilled that they wanted me to join the faculty. Through the years, a number of things have changed about SPLICE, but this mission to help form better EA performers remains a core part of our mission. Other than Keith, I initially only knew the other faculty members as acquaintances from conferences before our first year, but I knew and greatly respected their music. Keith is one of those consummate artists who really achieves excellence in all he does, so I knew the faculty that he and Chris had put together would be wonderful.

What surprised me the most was how quickly and easily we all got along. Now these are some of my dearest friends.

PB: I also have a very clear memory of receiving the invitation from Keith to join the faculty that first year! My reaction was similar - basically "are you kidding me, this sounds amazing!" I remember reading the initial description from Keith and thinking how strange that something like this didn't already exist. The possibility of being a part of it from the start was incredibly exciting. And that was before I saw the full faculty list. I already knew everyone on that list, some better than others, but the prospect of working with them all just seemed like fantastic opportunity.

What was the impetus for creating SPLICE? Was it just a desire to work together with a focus on involving electronics, or did you also feel there was a need for your sort of workshop?

I think we have a fairly idealistic concept that drives our focus and desire to do SPLICE Institute. I think we all believe in music that combines highly-skilled, expertly interpreted performances of music that has a robust, dynamic, and detailed electronic component. I think we feel that this medium has created amazing pieces and continues to evolve in interesting ways, but that the work is underrepresented in programming and

*Adam Vidiksis demonstrates software to institute participants*



*(continued on page 8)*





## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear members of SEAMUS,

As the year comes to a close, we can look forward to some exciting activities in the organization, not the least of which is SEAMUS 2018. It will be co-hosted by Jeff Stolet and Akiko Hatakeyama at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon, March 29 – 31, 2018. Programming notifications are being sent now and will be finalized in January. A big thanks is owed to all of the adjudicators who volunteered their time (and ears) to reviewing all of the submissions.

Elections for SEAMUS Board officers have recently concluded. Please join me in congratulating our President-elect, Ted Coffey and VP-elect of Membership, Kostas Karathanasis! They will assume their duties at the annual Banquet on March 30. I would very much like to acknowledge the service and contributions of Linda Antas in the role of VP, Membership for the past few terms. We will have a runoff election to resolve the tied vote for Member-at-Large. Please vote to help ensure that your voice is heard!

And last of all, this is the final President's Column that I will compose for the Newsletter, as I did not run for reelection. It has been a privilege to serve for two terms, and I am very proud of the work that the Board has accomplished during my time in the position. I will continue to serve the Board in the role of Past-President, and I hope to continue as Director of SEAMUS Recordings (an appointed position).

Best wishes for a wonderful new year. Looking forward to seeing everyone in Oregon this spring!

Scott

Scott L. Miller, President  
SEAMUS

[president@seamusonline.org](mailto:president@seamusonline.org)



## Scott A. Wyatt named 2018 *SEAMUS Award* Winner



The 2018 *SEAMUS Award* will be presented to [Scott A. Wyatt](#) at the SEAMUS National Conference banquet. Wyatt is Professor Emeritus of Music Composition at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he taught and championed electronic/computer music for more than four decades, serving as Director of the Experimental Music Studios until 2016. During his time as director, Wyatt commissioned more than 85 compositions by students and faculty, recording them on 5 vinyl records and 10 compact discs released by the University of Illinois Experimental Music Studios.

Wyatt's electroacoustic music, research, and creative interests have remained focused on innovative microphone techniques, clean engineering, multi-component sound design for both concrete and synthesis, and the development and application of positional three-dimensional audio imaging for multi-channel audio. He has composed works for voice, chorus, acoustic instruments, orchestra, electronically synthesized sound, computer-generated sound, and for a variety of performance realms including modern dance, documentary film, television, video, computer animation, and large laser and video projection presentations. His compositions are recorded on 26 commercial recordings including CAPSTONE, CENTAUR, GMEB

Cultures Electroniques Series, Library of Congress, MARK, OFFICE, Music from SEAMUS, UBRES, and VERIATZA recordings. While Wyatt has remained dedicated to the concert art music world, he also worked quietly in the field of commercial music having written and recorded music for numerous national and regional advertising campaigns over 40 years.

Among other honors that he has received, Wyatt was one of the winners of the International Society for Contemporary Music National Composers Competition of 1978, the National Flute Association's 1979 Composition Competition, the 1979 Concorso Internazionale Luigi Russolo Composition Competition in Italy, the 1984 International Confederation of Electro-Acoustic Music GRAND PRIZE at the 12th annual International Electro-Acoustic Music Competition in Bourges, France, and a finalist in the 1989 Bourges Competition. He has received numerous awards from the University of Illinois, including the *University Scholar Award*, College of Fine and Applied Arts Outstanding Faculty Award, and was appointed as an Associate in the University of Illinois Center for Advanced Study. In 2008, he received a Creative Research Award for the collaborative composition/performance of *Risky Business: a tribute to Nikola Tesla*, composition for electroacoustic music with live Continuum performance and two eight-foot tall 900,000 Volt Tesla Coils.

Wyatt has been an active participant in the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States (SEAMUS) for more than 30 years. He, along with Jon Appleton, Russell Pinkston, Stephen Beck, and Jon Nelson, initiated the ASCAP/SEAMUS Student Composer Commission Program. Wyatt served as president of SEAMUS from 1989 until 1996, and he remained on its Board of Directors, while also continuing to serve as director, engineer, and producer of the *Music from SEAMUS* compact disc recording series (25 compact disc recordings) until May 2016.

The [SEAMUS Award](#) acknowledges the important contributions of its recipients to the field of electro-acoustic music. The recipient is selected by the Board of Directors of SEAMUS. The prize was first awarded in 1987 and a list of previous recipients can be found [here](#).





(SPLICE interview, cont.)

pedagogy. That underrepresentation, in our view, results from various factors: 1) the inability of composers to create work that is technologically competent and functional in performance, 2) the inability of composers to match an aesthetic vision with a particular technological method, 3) the inability of composers to create fixed media and live electronics that are produced as adequately as we expect based on the quality of production of audio for other media, 4) the inability of individuals to maximize the equipment they have available to appropriately make a piece sound good in a particular space, 5) the lack of performers who have the technical knowledge to setup and execute performances involving electronics, and 6) the inability of performers to interpret works with electronics adequately. Curricula at schools of music are not covering these things for composers, nor – with some notable exceptions – for performers. So we felt that need. We also felt that music for instruments and electronics would be presented more often, if we designed a program that focused on community-building and collaboration. We wanted there to be a sense that you were meeting and working with people who you would continue to work with and support moving forward. I think that conferences do this for individual disciplines, but we try to do this for composers and performers. That is why it is important that the collaborations that happen are not between some ensemble that we bring in that plays a work once, but between composers and performers who are participating in SPLICE as colleagues.

Yeah, Chris pretty much summed it up in a nutshell. I might elaborate a little from the standpoint particularly of a performer.

When we started SPLICE, I was regularly noticing that – with a few exceptions – I was generally only hearing this music at conferences or with the composer present. Generally speaking, performers weren't programming the music on their own. This lack of integration into a regular concert experience has really led to what is oftentimes a really stark line between "composers" and "electroacoustic music people." I think of my own undergrad: as a piano major, I wasn't allowed to study composition. But I was allowed to study EA music because it wasn't seen as composition at all.

I think the largest reason that performers weren't generally including this music on their programs – besides a lack of knowledge about its existence – was an insecurity around the technology. How does this work?? I'm sent a Max patch, and what the heck am I even looking at? What am I supposed to do? You mean

you want to press a *pedal* in addition to play my instrument? Whaaaat???

This insecurity – at times, even straight up animosity – with the technology is completely understandable. A performer spends decades perfecting their craft on their instrument. We want to walk on stage being confident that we not only have the tools to play the music well, but we also have the tools to recover and be convincing if the music *doesn't* go well. Once technology is added to the mix, it adds an extra wild card that can be terrifying!

But it really doesn't have to be that way at all. At SPLICE, we break down the zillions of parcels of technology info into bite-sized chunks of what would particularly help a performer. You don't have to know gen~ or fft to be comfortable working with technology from the perspective of a performer. Give the performer a few basic tools, and their confidence and comfort levels will soar!

From my perspective, SPLICE Institute is about building and maintaining a community of creative individuals who all value the use of technology in music-making, whether it be performing, composing, producing, research, etc. We focus specifically on composing and performing, but the core of both of these is collaboration, creativity, and community. I call them the three "C's" of SPLICE... Did the field need a workshop like SPLICE? Absolutely! -- Did it get more than just a "workshop where you can learn about technology?" -- definitely.

I'll elaborate a bit on Elaine's response: while the impetus for the first year of SPLICE grew out of a perceived need for better resources and instruction for composers and performers to create EA music, much of what has grown since the first summer institute, particularly the festival and ensemble, has come as much from a perceived need as a desire to work together. The last of Elaine's three C's orbits around the incredible people on this faculty. The wonderful sense of community that has formed around SPLICE is a result of the passionate, caring, and dedicated musicians involved in the organization, their relationship to this art, to each other, and to the participants.

At the risk of over-inflating Elaine's list of Cs, I might add a fourth one - for craft. I think the balance between creativity and craft is particularly tricky when composing with technology. It's easy to get lost in the technical fun and under-represent the resulting music, or conversely to rely on under-developed electronics

when composing. I think SPLICE does a particularly good job of addressing this issue. Between our technical classes, our group aesthetics meetings, and all the ongoing discussions in between, we try very hard to tackle this head on. That being said, the thing that hooked me in immediately was the stuff that Keith discussed above - the opportunity to help performers better come to terms with the means to perform electronic works. There seem to be so many performers out there eager to improve their understanding of the tech they interact with, and to gain a greater amount of independence with it. I'm thrilled that we are able to contribute to this trend!

SPLICE started as a summer workshop, and then evolved to being an "Institute," and now also includes the SPLICE Ensemble, and a yearly(?) SPLICE Festival. How would you describe or characterize this growth--how did it happen, was all of it planned or has some of it been surprising, etc.?

SPLICE Institute was always SPLICE Institute, but we would just say SPLICE, since it was shorter, but now that we have the other components we are trying to acclimate to saying SPLICE when referring to the organization and SPLICE X, Y, or Z when we are referring to any component thereof. SPLICE Ensemble and SPLICE Festival evolved seamlessly from the summer program. Adam, Keith, and Sam had to work together on programming, curriculum, in performance, and in rehearsals and I think they realized how much they enjoyed working together and wanted to seek performance opportunities year round. Given some of the difficult music that is put together at SPLICE

Institute, we felt that we wanted to repeat some of those performances. We also felt that we wanted an electronic music festival that evaluated the performance in terms of both the interpretation and technique of the performer, in addition to how the performance component was conceived to add expressive value to the presentation of the work. Therefore, when we took submissions, they had to be for a specific performer and we wanted a document of that performer interpreting the work. We also think it is important that we encourage performers to submit pieces, and that they can be the individual who attends--the composer is not required to attend if the performer submits; therefore, someone can work up a piece by anyone and submit it. Lastly, the educational component of SPLICE Institute will be part of SPLICE Festival, since we will have presentations about many of the works that focus on aesthetic and technical features.

Yeah, Adam, Sam, and I really enjoyed playing together a lot, and in a short time have become very close friends. Like Chris mentioned, the SPLICE Ensemble really flowed quite organically from the Institute and has given us the opportunity to work together more than once a year!

We really see the Festival as a natural extension of the Institute with the same core philosophies: that of community, collaboration, and education. When we attend various festivals or conferences, there's so much that we could be learning! Both performers and composers have interesting perspectives on the tools they used to construct that performance, or ways they overcame certain challenges. These experiences aren't unique: we all share so many of the same hurdles. By sharing these experiences we can learn from each other and all be better for it!

By year two, Keith, Sam, and I would find our rehearsals interrupted by fits of belly-laughter with moderate frequency. Our various approaches to chamber music, and dedication to the music, made preparing, rehearsing, and performing easy and enjoyable. It is rare to find musicians who you respect so highly merged with personalities that you enjoy so much. We were clicking on both the artistic and personal levels. The decision to start a regular ensemble grew from there.

The Festival is also a way to share this SPLICE community with a wider portion of the EA field. There are many musicians who cannot travel to Kalamazoo for a whole week in the summer. A shorter festival during the year allows even more of the EA world to be



*SPLICE Ensemble rehearses during the 2017 institute at Western Michigan University*

involved. We are really excited that there has been so much interest in and support for this organization.

What have you learned about music education in general, and composition and performance instruction in particular, from your involvement in SPLICE? And what feedback have you received from the summer workshop participants about the workshop and the focus on electronic music (electro-acoustic, whatever) composition/performance?

We have changed and adapted significantly each year based on feedback and the teaching interests and skills of our guest faculty. An example of change is that we are adding an advanced performer track for SPLICE Institute 2018. The focus on electronic music composition and performance has been why people have attended, so I think that has been universally appreciated. The biggest challenges have been with the organizational structure and work associated with running SPLICE Institute. That has changed regularly and morphed each year with different people taking on different roles depending on who has time. I don't want to sound overly self-assured, but I think that the main thing we learned about music education was that our assumptions about the need for this type of summer program were valid. I think we all have been in school and/or taught enough that we had a sense of what we were doing and, while we have had to adapt to and learn about teaching in this context, we had a good sense of what we needed to do instructionally for the attendees. Many of us have been involved in significant curricular revisions in both composition and technology programs and have reviewed many degrees, so we had a good sense that we could provide significant educational opportunities beyond any typical coursework for any degree in composition or performance. We have all had our moments when we realized that we could have done something better, such as realizing that the amount of content prepared was too dense or too advanced. We do a good deal of assessment of the level and interests of the attendees as part of the application and planning process.

So much of it really is adjusting on the fly, too. Like Chris said, we really craft each year's workshops based on the members attending, and we often have to adjust midweek too. Maybe a particular topic is a little too advanced for the folks in that track. Maybe it's moving too slowly. The nice thing about the size of SPLICE is there is a good ratio of faculty to participants, and we

can really personalize the experience to have the most effective impact on the most people.

Part of your question asked about feedback from participants. I think the best feedback we receive from SPLICErs is the return rate. Many participants return for a second year, and some returned for a third year! -- Some who attended in 2016 but not in 2017 commented that they felt like they missed out by not attending. So I think the fact that many of our participants return for a second or third year points to a few things -- 1) they love SPLICE institute; 2) the SPLICE Institute curriculum is robust and diverse enough that attendees can return and learn new things; 3) having rotating "special topics" (like this past year's laptop ensemble and this coming year's focus on improvisation) gives returning attendees something new to engage with.

Each summer, we are working with musicians of various levels: some are students discovering themselves as artists, others are established composers and performers who are looking to explore electronics for the first time, others are experts in the technology, and lots in between. One of the unique challenges of SPLICE is finding a way to provide a meaningful experience for each participant. Our ability to do this has improved every year, and I believe this is due to the flexibility that we build into the curriculum, as well as the willingness and capability the faculty has to approach teaching in this way. You need to meet each learning opportunity where the participant is at in their skills, philosophy, and artistic practice. I think this is good advice for any music educator.

I'll second Adam's statement - I think the most challenging thing pedagogically is accommodating the vast range of experience levels within our curriculum. Of course the first year we had no idea what to expect in terms of the participants, specifically who would be drawn to what we were offering. It was incredibly exciting when that first cohort assembled and did indeed array across the entire spectrum of experience levels. That's exactly what we had hoped and planned for, and it has been consistently true each year. We work very hard to create an environment where no one feels left behind and no one feels held back. One of the ways we do this is by offering a pretty wide range of activities and classes, organized according to experience-level tracks. Participants can pick and choose as they please, or just sign up for a specific track and stick with it.



(SPLICE interview, cont.)

The field of electronic music is so broad...so many different tools, technologies, aesthetic approaches, etc. Does SPLICE have a particular aesthetic (or other?) focus? If so, what is it? Can you boil it down to a mission statement or statement of purpose? Or is your approach very broad and open to diverse approaches?

Aesthetic focus: I think we are all open and that we have divergent aesthetics within the core faculty. I think we push each other and surprise each other and that we seek a diversity of aesthetics in our attendees. I do think there are some universals. I think that we all A) accept the norms of what is considered appropriate usage of electronics in the academic sphere (so no unmodified playback of orchestral sound libraries unless it is intentionally referential in relationship to an extramusical concept, limited looping of beats, and a good deal of spectral morphology or a clear focus and interest on a specific timbre that is really exceptional); B) value a tradition of performance that focuses on the performer as an expressive conduit, an interpreter, not a passive transmitter of a fixed aesthetic object; C) are interested in experimentation, and D) believe that music is a temporal art form and that form is therefore important.

What he said. :)

Really, that sums it up perfectly.

WOOT Chris! That was great! I agree!

+1!!

That's about the most cogent set of values I can imagine! Should definitely be on the website. The goal is to achieve at least the skill level required to realize your goals without hinderance. This applies to any creative task, and no less to composing or performing electronic music.



Elainie Lillios with 2017 SPLICE Institute  
guest faculty member Mari Kimura

SPLICE believes that electroacoustic composition and performance are vital contributors to our twenty-first century musical world. Through workshops, applied lessons, performances, collaborations, and festivals, SPLICE seeks to promote electroacoustic composition and performance, and build a creative community of listeners, explorers, and technicians dedicated to composing and performing technology-mediated works.

What advice would you give your fellow SEAMUS members who might be interested in establishing an ongoing workshop or starting a festival--what are the challenges, the rewards, and what has to be in place for something like SPLICE to succeed?

Like with many things that are going to be too much work, I would recommend that you do it because it is unique and serves a clear need that you are passionate about and that you do it with people you admire and respect who challenge you. The sustainability of such things, especially when there is no endowment or institutional financial support, is really difficult. The amount of unrewarding, free labor is really difficult to sustain, so the passion you bring and the support you receive from those you work with is really important.

I would add that it is critically important to surround yourself with reliable helpers. Festivals like SPLICE or conferences like SEAMUS are dreadful to near-impossible to run alone. Especially if one is trying to start a periodic event, the amount of work to prepare for it is nonstop. I cannot stress enough how much of a difference equally committed, enthusiastic, reliable, and trustworthy assistants are. And I cannot think of a better team than Chris, Per, Elaine, Sam, and Adam! So sorry, folks. You can't have them. :)

I agree with Chris and Keith, and I would add that it takes a very special person or group of people to create and maintain ongoing festivals. Only the most dedicated people take on the yearly task of producing events that take such HUGE amounts of time to design, program, and produce. I think about other festivals and their organizers--EMM, EA Barn Dance, Third Practice. I'm sure those organizers will say the same things that Chris and Keith have said. You need to be amazingly dedicated to our field, and surround yourself with a great team. While everyone on the SPLICE team does a LOT of work, either in the planning stages or on the ground, Chris contributes the most because he hosts the event. So a lot of the pre-planning has to be done on his end--reserving dates and spaces, managing funds,

making sure we have enough gear for all of the workshops, rehearsals, concerts, laptop ensembles, extra things, etc. etc. The whole team is really amazing but we couldn't do it without Chris and his dedication. It's a privilege to work with everyone and learn from them every year.

You asked about rewards. The rewards for me are immense. SPLICE is truly my FAVORITE week of the entire year. I get to teach people who want to learn about technology! I get to mentor them and help them explore and realize their creative and technical ideas. I eat meals with them and hear about their projects, ideas, and experiences. I see them grow through the week and how they come together as a community of learners, composers, performers, colleagues, friends... and that's just the students! Then there's my SPLICE colleagues, who also inspire me daily with their amazing musical and technical talents. Plus, we have FUN at SPLICE Institute!

I think each year at SPLICE Institute we try to make a week that WE would really want to attend if we weren't already fortunate enough to be teaching there. We've set up an environment that is about being passionate, curious, hard-working, and collaborative. I think participants respond well to this, and feel welcome. We also have a lot of fun.

Absolutely, SPLICE week is definitely a highpoint of my year, every year. There are so many factors, and many of them have been discussed above. It seems worth mentioning though that none of the rest of it would be nearly as fun if I didn't really look forward to seeing my colleagues every summer. It's just such a fun group to spend time with, doing what we love to do. It's a great pleasure to see the SPLICE ensemble perform, and to hear what everyone has been working on compositionally over the past year. And then stay out too late talking about it all with the students - makes for a fantastic week!

Any predictions for the future of SPLICE? A cookbook? Or more seriously, some sort of publication or instructional materials? Competitions? Actual hardware/software developed by the institute? How do you anticipate SPLICE evolving?

I think we want to solidify what we are doing now, establish some fundraising geared towards scholarships so that we can offer more at SPLICE Institute without raising costs and solidify the structure of SPLICE as an organization with three components. While we are very

happy with how things have progressed, we are working to figure out how to be sustainable and to continue to improve. We are very excited about what we are planning for SPLICE Institute in 2018 with guests Sam Pluta and Dana Jessen. While we do not have any plans for publications, we give everyone who attends SPLICE Institute the materials that we teach from. We try to be a springboard for creative activity. Sam Wells and I have developed some tools that we will release, but we consider that a separate, though related, project. I hope SPLICE evolves as follows: A) we receive fiscal support, beyond the in-kind donations provided by WMU, and can offer more, by adding more guest faculty, without increasing costs, B) we are able to bring in more performers just to play on concerts, C) we are able to hire an administrator to deal with more of the organizational processes, D) that SPLICE Ensemble continues on its present trajectory of playing more concerts outside of SPLICE Institute, and E) that SPLICE Festival becomes an annual event and is hosted by institutions at which the core faculty do not teach.

Only that SPLICE 2030 will be held on Mars.

YAS!

No, seriously there is so much we already offer between the Institute, Festival, and Ensemble, that I think that will keep us busy for some time. I'm excited to see the Festival grow, especially as we look to collaborate with different schools each year.

I think the biggest goal is to help grow the *community* of musicians in this field. I emphasize that word because I really see SPLICE as a tremendously encouraging and supportive family!

I hope SPLICE continues to be an inspiring endeavor for all of our participants, and that as we continue we find new ways to help composers and performers become great EA practitioners.

Me too!!

Again, I agree with everyone. I think SPLICE is settling into its mature structure as an organization. We are all eager to see how the Institute, Ensemble, and Festival will each evolve. We are now at the point where I think we all are hoping to involve as many people as possible to increase the activity, support, and diversity in our EA community.

My hope for the future is that what we do here makes a meaningful impact on electroacoustic music. Along with

the many other EA organizations and festivals, I hope that the community we help build plays a part in bringing thoughtful, well-wrought, and diverse music to the next period of EA art. I personally hope I have the opportunity to work with this incredible group of musicians for many years to come. Other than this, one thing is clear: our organization has adapted repeatedly over time to the perceived needs of the EA community. So I am sure that new things will continue to emerge over the years as we respond to the shifting landscape of resources and opportunities available to EA composers and performers.

Also, given Keith's skill as a brewer—SPLICE Brewery!

The word has already been mentioned, probably too many times, but I can't help but ending with another mention: community. I suspect that solidifying the existing structures is enough for now, but all of this is in the service of building the community. Both bringing new people into the larger EA community, and growing our own little SPLICE world. A brewery would be nice though...

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*Christopher Biggs holds forth on the finer points of electro-acoustic composition to participants in the 2017 SPLICE Institute*





*Faculty and Participants  
SPLICE Institute 2017*

For more information about **SPLICE**, or to apply for the 2018 Institute, visit: <https://splicemusic.org/>





# Member News

Based on recent work in creating resonating sound objects, **Beth Bradfish** recently won a six-month Field/Work residency with the Chicago Artists Coalition. A sample of *Exhale*, a sonic bed, has been uploaded to the SEAMUS members new works: <https://seamusonline.org/work/exhale-a-sound-object/>

*Mediums of Electronic Music* (2017), by **Thomas D. Brosh**, is a summary of his 50 years using synthesizer technology. Beginning with an introduction to the Buchla and EMS systems, this article is a discussion of his compositions for tape alone, tape with acoustic instruments and live synthesizer with acoustic instruments. Based upon previous *Mediums of Electronic Music* lecture-demonstrations, it was written for his archive at the American Music Research Center, University of Colorado-Boulder.

News from **Kyong Mee Choi**:

***Orpheus with his lute*** for mezzo-soprano and piano will be premiered by Re'ut Ben-Ze'ev and Mila Henry at the Phoenix Concert at the Saint Matthew & Saint Timothy on Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. The concert will feature works by Kathryn Alexander, Gabriel Bolaños Chamorro, Kyong Mee Choi, Daron Hagen, Libby Larsen, Paula af Malmborg Ward and Steven Gerber. The program centers

on three poems - one each on earth, water, and air. More info can be found [here](#).

***MOMENT*** for haegeum, flute, clarinet, trombone, piano, and percussion will be premiered by Soo-yeon Lyuh (haegeum) and players from the misen ensemble at the cell ([338 w 23rd st](#)) in New York on Wednesday, December 6, 2017 at 8 p.m. The concert will feature works by Kari Besharse, Kyong Mee Choi, Timothy Johnson, and Gideon Kim.

***Rippled Pond*** for violin, cello, and piano was performed by the [Lincoln Trio](#) (Desirée Ruhstrat, violin; David Cunliffe, cello; and Marta Aznavoorian, piano) at 6 Degrees Composers concert in Ganz Hall, Roosevelt University on Sunday, November 19, 2017 at 2:30 p.m. The concert will feature works by Regina Harris Baiocchi, Kyong Mee Choi, Janice Misurell-Mitchell, and Patricia Morehead. The same piece was also performed by the Fifth House Ensemble Piano Trio (Charlene Kluegel, violin; Herine Coetzee Koschak, cello; Katherine Petersen, piano) in Ganz Hall, Roosevelt University on Tuesday, November 14, 2017.

***rare yet soft*** was presented at the [Third Practice Fesitval](#) at the Third Practice Electro-Acoustic Music Festival at University of Richmond, Richmond, VA on Friday, November 3, 2017. The piece explores the subtlety

of quoted thematic material from Mahler's Symphony No. 5 Adagietto. The piece has three sections when each quote is introduced in a different context. At the end, the piece shows how subtle influence of this quotation can affect the overall shape of the piece. This piece is dedicated the composer's beloved father, Soon Bong Choi.

***what prevails*** for clarinet, violin, and piano was performed by Christopher Nichols, clarinet, Stephanie Westney, violin, Ivan Hurd, piano at the sixtieth [College Music Society National Conference](#) at the Travis Park United Methodist Church ([230 E Travis St, San Antonio](#)) in San Antonio, TX on Friday, October 27, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. This piece is dedicated to those innocent people who were killed by acts of crime and violence.

***Rippled Pond*** for violin, cello, and piano, was performed at the Livewire Festival at the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMBC) on Thursday, October 26 at 7:30 p.m. The UMBC Department of Music presents [Livewire 8](#): Asian Music in America, a festival of contemporary music that will explore the creativity of composers with cultural connections to China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam. Music of ten composers, including Shih-Hui Chen, Kyong Mee Choi, Mandy Fang, Hitomi Kaneko, Liza Lim, Toshiro Mayuzumi, Tokuhide Niimi, and P. Q. Phan, was performed by UMBC



faculty and students, including the Ruckus contemporary faculty music ensemble.

**Ceaseless Cease** was performed by Derek Emch at the Bowling Green State University New Music Festival on Friday, October 21 at 2:30 p.m. The concert features works by Kyong Mee Choi, Asha Srinivasan, Mike McFerron, Scott Miller, Jay C. Batzner, and Konstantinos Karathanasis. For the detailed info of the entire festival, please click [here](#).

**Brad Decker** recently performed recitals of my new works for double bass and computer. "Karma is a Cruel Mistress," "Sudden Death," "Ricerca" (featuring video by Zlatko Cosic) and "The Devil You Know (vs. The Devil You Don't)" were performed at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on October 26, 2017, and at Lewis University in Romeville, Illinois on November 17, 2017. Decker also performed "The Devil You Know..." at the 2017 SCI National Conference at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, April 1, 2017.



Brad Decker

**Christopher Dobrian** gave a lecture about his research on "Gesture, Acceleration, and Expressivity" at the annual conference of the Korean Electro-Acoustic Music Society (KEAMS) in October, and his composition *Point of No Arrival* for cello and computer was performed by Hea-Mee Kim in the Seoul International Computer Music Festival (SICMF) at the Asia Culture Center in Gwangju.



Chris Dobrian and Hea-Mee Kim

In early November Christopher Dobrian did a tour of concerts, lectures, and master classes at the University of South Florida, Furman University, Columbus State University, Georgia Southern University, and the Georgia Institute of Technology with pianist Daniel Koppelman. The concerts featured several of his works for computerized piano, including the premiere of his latest piece, *Touch and Go* for iPad-controlled piano.

**Robert Fleisher's** *Maniondala* (Gregory Beyer, malletKAT) is included on the Albany Records CD, "Long Roll: A Tribute to Composer-Percussionist Michael Manion (1952-2012)," released December 1. The first commercially released recording of the University of Illinois Percussion Ensemble (William Moersch, director) in many years, this collection includes works by John Cage & Lou Harrison, Henry Cowell, Amadeo Roldán, Dmitri Shostakovich, and Alexander Tcherepnin, and features first recordings of Fleisher's *Maniondala*, Steven Lett's trio *Junta*, and Michael Manion's quartet *Long Roll II*, from which the album's title derives. *Maniondala* (2009) is dedicated to Michael Manion, who commissioned this solo work for malletKAT, but was never able to perform again following a stroke in 2008. Manion was a percussionist and a prolific composer of acoustic and electroacoustic music, whose sketches, compositions, and recordings were entrusted by his family to the Sousa Archives/Center for American Music at the University of Illinois after his death in 2012. During his two decades studying, composing, and performing in Europe, Manion was also employed by the composer Karlheinz Stockhausen.





**Jeffrey Hass**, Director of the Indiana University Center for Electronic and Computer Music, had a premiere of his ballet-based video *Capsule* featuring 3D motion graphics and an original computer music score this past Sunday, December 3 in Bloomington, Indiana. *Capsule* was commissioned by the Jacobs School of Music in honor of its 100th anniversary. The 9-minute work can be viewed online here: <https://vimeo.com/230491334>

**Lauren Sarah Hayes** was commissioned by the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival 2017 to create a new work for their 40th edition. The 25 minute live electronics improvisation was broadcast as part of the hcmf// International Showcase on BBC Radio 3's Hear and Now alongside works by Pauline Oliveros and Enno Poppe. The world premier broadcast is available here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09gxj10>

"A.M.A. (Ask Me Anything)" is the first full-length album featuring **Stefan Kristinkov** as a composer and a clarinet player. This project is the culmination of many years of endeavor from Stefan, and was inspired by influences encompassing the full scope of his musical development. From Stravinsky to NIN, the list of Stefan's influences reads like a history of heavy-duty basslines throughout the ages.

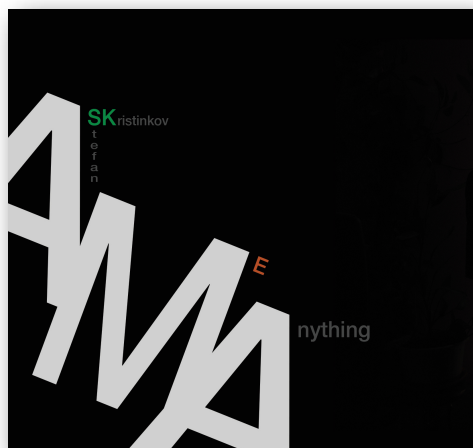
A question listeners could pose to Stefan in response to his request for them to ask him anything, could be how he has brought the clarinet from the side of the orchestra to the centre of an EDM album. Stefan nicknamed this album 'A clarinet like you've never heard it before' to illustrate the delightful fusion between classical and dance music lying at the heart of "A.M.A. (Ask Me Anything)". You can

experience this intriguing project for yourself right now, as "A.M.A. (Ask Me Anything)" is currently available for purchase, streaming and download on all major platforms.

Download or stream "A.M.A. (Ask Me Anything)" now on

**Apple Music:** <https://itunes.apple.com/us/album/a-m-a-ask-anything/id1286859779>

**Spotify:** <https://open.spotify.com/album/7JNMjGIVzCsbm72D0dlDfH>



**Joungmin Lee** made a presentation at the 2017 AGU(American Geophysical Union) Fall Meeting, taking place on 11-15 December, in New Orleans, Louisiana. The following abstract describes his work and the presentation:

"*Threatened by:* A music inspired by scientific data about glaciers and climate change."

"Glaciers often have been considered as a symbol of climate change, also its mass change is a major contributor to sea level rise. Dynamic discharge is one of the mechanisms that marine-terminating outlet glaciers loses its mass, whose trend consists of seasonal, annual and secular patterns. These patterns, along with the other climate parameters, can be inspirational to music composition, thereby it can be expressed and transferred by musical media.

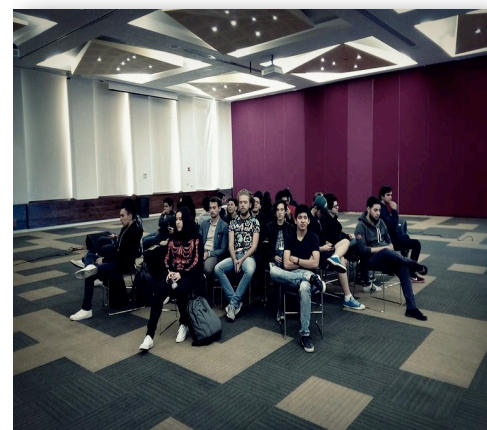
"Here we present 'Threatened by,' a piece of electronic music which represent an attempt to frame the sound of the glacier in freer ways vis-à-vis acoustic music. To give expression to the sound, musical production tools such as Pro tool, Sound Forge Pro, Logic Pro X, Max MSP, etc. are utilized to modify and combine a variety of sounds generated by a melting glacier. After adding impact by the way of EQ, reverberation, distortion, delay, reversal, etc., I created a two-channel stereo piece in approximately 7 minutes. I will also compose a video clip to make a poster presentation.

"We expect this work will raise awareness of glaciers' behavior to general public, also presenting one of the examples that scientists and artists work collaboratively to come up with an artwork that has social implications."

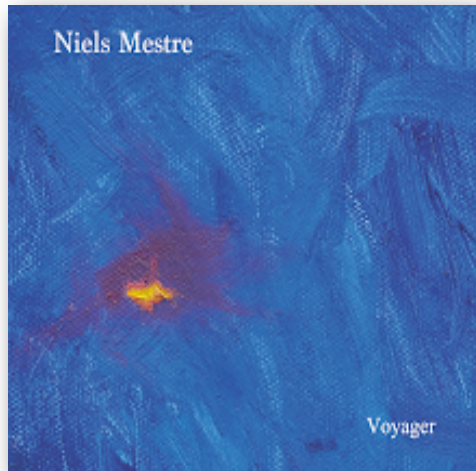
Last November 16th the work titled "The Web" by **Fernando Laub** was played at the Ecos Urbanos Festival in Mexico City.

It was an eight channel concert. Here you can listen a stereo excerpt of the piece:

<https://soundcloud.com/flaub/the-web-stereo-version-excerpt/s-qYcbx>

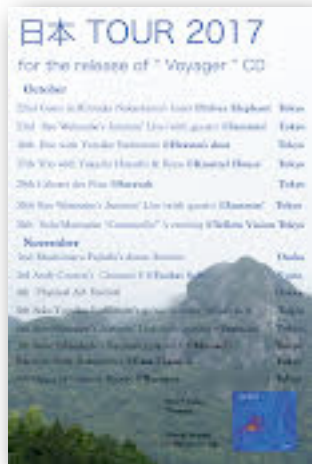


**Niels Mestre** recorded a solo album:



<https://nielsmestre.bandcamp.com>

and did a tour in Japan :



Electric violinist, composer and poet, **Mary Lou Newmark**, released her third CD, "Room to Breathe" this October. The album is a safari into the urban wilderness of Los Angeles. The music moves across genres to encounter coyotes, wild birds, a wolf woman, and poetic verse. "Room to Breathe" is being played on radio stations across the US. It is available on iTunes, CD Baby and Spotify.

September through December, **Charles Nichols**' composition *Underlying Space*, for recorded processed electric violin, accompanied the 30x30 art installation by artist Paola Zellner Bassett, at the Kibel Gallery of the School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation at the University of Maryland in College Park, MD and at the American Institute of Architects National Headquarters in Washington, DC. In September, the PEN Trio performed his piece *Wunderkammer*, for oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and computer music, on recitals at Ball State University, Western Michigan University, Butler University, and Indiana University. In October, his composition *Beyond the Dark*, for computer music, accompanied the *Dense Space* art installation, by artist Paola Zellner Bassett, at the ACCelerate Smithsonian Creativity and Innovation Festival at the National Museum of American History in Washington, DC, and his piece *What Bends*, for computer music and video, with video artist Zach Duer, was presented at the International Composers and Interactive Artists One Voice, Two Lands Concert, at the The DiMenna Center for Classical Music in New

York, NY. In November, the Beo String Quartet premiered his composition *Or Be Forever Fallen*, for amplified string quartet, computer, and video, with video artist Zach Duer, at Virginia Tech, and in December, the Washington & Jefferson Jazz Ensemble premiered his piece *Upstream*, for jazz band, at Washington & Jefferson College.



Paola Zellner Bassett's art installation *Dense Space II: Il Mobile*, at the National Museum of American History in Washington, DC, accompanied by Charles Nichols' composition *Beyond the Dark*, during the ACCelerate Smithsonian Creativity and Innovation Festival, with dancers from the North Carolina State University Dance Company



**Sam Pluta**, Assistant Professor at the University of Chicago, just released *Broken Symmetries*, an album of electro-acoustic works on Carrier Records. The album features performances by Mivos Quartet, Wet Ink Ensemble, and Anne La Berge. Pluta performs electronics on three of the four works. The album can be found on the Carrier Records website, [www.carrierrecords.com](http://www.carrierrecords.com). It is also available for streaming on various platforms. In other news, Sam looks forward to his role as Guest Composer in this upcoming summer's SPLICE Institute!



**Hanna Lisa Stefansson** received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Georgia in August 2017. Her dissertation, titled "*Ritual Habit: An electroacoustic music composition and dance collaboration*," was performed April 8th in the Dancz Center for New Music at UGA. The performance includes archetypes of ritual outlined by the late scholar Catherine Bell, including formalism, invariance, and performance.

The following text is an excerpt from the program notes:

"The concept of ritual has always fascinated me. Why is it that all known human civilizations have incorporated a form of ritual into their societies? From the common greeting of handshaking to ceremonies for the purpose of marking time, rituals serve as a way for humans to interact with each other and with the environment. Each of the four dancers featured in *Ritual Habit* represents a natural element – Earth, Water, Air, and Fire. After the musicians and dancers arrive at their starting positions, the dancers begin to "cast the space," marking the space that they will inhabit during the performance. Four movements follow this section in which each element is featured as a solo with support from the other dancers. The percussion and flute evoke these qualities as well, often reacting to and triggering the dancers' movements. The movements highlight the qualities of the elements in the following ways: Earth – roots, seed, soil, the core as well as the atmosphere above Water – droplets, washes, bubbles, malleability Air – breath, gusts, flocking Fire – glowing ember, crackles, warmth, burns The elements come together for the ritual, which incorporates the following archetypes outlined by the late scholar Catherine Bell: formalism, invariance, and performance. As Catherine Bell explains, "When analyzed, formality appears to be, at least in part, the use of a more limited and rigidly organized set of

expressions and gestures." Formalism also creates the boundary between the ritual participants and the observers. Invariance implies careful choreography and bodily discipline, striving for timeless repetition. This characteristic is often displayed in groups and in unison. The performance of a ritual creates a theatrical frame around the events, participants, and objects involved in the ritual. Also featured in the performance is the element of mystery. What is the significance of the ritual, the objects, the movements, and the sounds? Some rituals do not reveal the entire meaning to the observers, leaving them to solve the puzzle."

The performance video may be viewed via this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyT4-qA1Hhc>

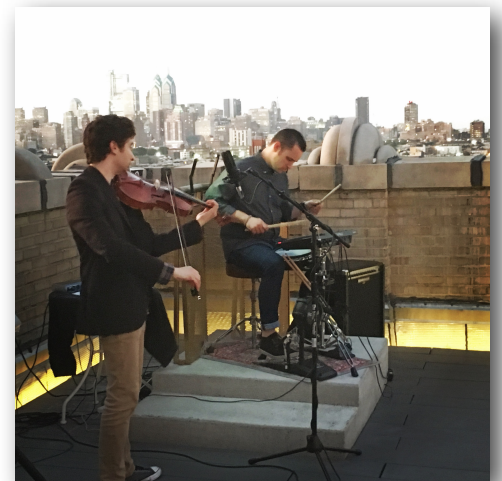
**Mike Testa's** new album electroacoustic "Compositions" dropped in September. It is available on all major digital distribution outlets (apple iTunes, Spotify, etc).

Also, Dr. William Pfaff and Testa will be performing their duo group named "*Cepheid*" on March 3rd, 2018 at SUNY Plattsburgh NY. It is an electro-acoustic group that will feature some new instrumental inventions as well Dr. Pfaff's performance on the Madrona Labs SoundPlane instrument.

For more information, contact: [MTesta@Salemstate.edu](mailto:MTesta@Salemstate.edu).

**Adam Vidiksis** is serving as Composer in Residence for the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia this season, the focus of which is improvisation. Vidiksis inaugurated his residency with performances at the season opening galas at the Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz and The Bok Bar. Most recently, the Chamber Orchestra

performed two of Vidiksis's works at the Kimmel Center. Additionally, Vidiksis performed his original compositions, as well as other works, as the featured guest artist at Rutgers University, New Brunswick's New Jersey Digital Arts Concert and Rutgers University, Camden's Electric Café. Vidiksis performed the premiere of a new work for electronic drum kit entitled, *Under the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge*, at the International Composers and Interactive Artists FUSE Festival at the DiMenna Center in New York City, followed by the Philadelphia premiere at Temple University's Cybersounds series. Vidiksis joined his fellow members of SPLICE Ensemble for a midwest tour, which included performing as the featured guest ensemble for Electronic Music Midwest, as guest ensemble at the University of Central Missouri and Wayne State University, and at the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's Strange and Beautiful Music Festival. Both Vidiksis's recent release of *Local Equilibrium Dynamics* on *Music from SEAMUS*, Vol. 26, and his work with Allendance company, *Time*, received critical acclaim this fall.



[photo by Stefano Daddi]

*Framed by the Philadelphia skyline, Adam Vidiksis performs with Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia's principal violist, Matthew Cohen at the Bok Bar to inaugurate Vidiksis's tenure as Composer in Residence for the 2017-2018 season, focusing on improvisation.*



**John Wiggins'** acousmatic composition **STRING II**, won Honorable Mention at the MA/IN Festival in Matera Italy and plays currently in the Case Cave Auditorium.

Here's a link:

<http://www.materaintermedia.it/>

**STRING II** was composed completely with sounds Wiggins recorded, and was made the way a film would be made, only from "the sound up."



In September, Null-state (**Benjamin D. Whiting** and Melody Chua) successfully completed a week-long residency at the Timucua Arts Foundation in Orlando, Florida. The duo performed a concert at the Timucua Arts White House consisting of three new works along with two live coding improvisations, and during which their sensor-augmented electroacoustic flute, dubbed the "Chaosflöte", received its American debut. They also held workshops on SuperCollider and Max/MSP at the

Orange County Public Library's Melrose Center, taught a masterclass on contemporary improvisation techniques at the University of Central Florida, and presented on the Chaosflöte at Eastern Florida State College. This residency was made possible by a NewMusicUSA grant and financial support through Timucua. For more information about Null-state, please visit <http://www.nullstate.org>.



# My Own Personal Canon

by

Lou Bunk

We have been playing John Cage's "Variations III" since well before Lou Cohen's death in 2013. Lou studied with Cage and would organize yearly performances of this work by musicians from the Boston experimental music community. At the 2017 "New Music Gathering" in Bowling Green Ohio, Tim Feeney and I arranged a performance of "Variations III" to express our connection to Lou through Cage's piece. Before we played, Tim said a few words and quoted our friend, and saxophonist, Dave Gross:

*"The best thing about this music is that your heroes become your friends."*



Lou was our hero and our close friend. He was also a mathematician, computer programmer and composer of highly original computer music. Near the end of his life, he released a 3 hour long album of this music which was "composed by means of algorithmic and stochastic processes":

<https://loucohen.bandcamp.com/>

\* \* \*

Some of you may know Tim or his music, or both. I am particularly fond of Tim's piece "Things I Said I'd Never Be" for its stillness, uncompromising length, and interaction between a live performer playing "continuous and detailed sounds" and field recordings chosen by the performer. Tim is my hero for writing this music.



<https://soundcloud.com/aaronmbutler/feeney-things-i-said-id-never-be>

I have other heroes too, some listed below. Some I know well, and others I don't.

\* \* \*

This past summer I received an email from Jeff Stolet asking me to review applicants to the 2018 SEAMUS conference in Eugene, Oregon. I quickly accepted wondering what my SEAMUS friends are up to, having not been to a conference in a couple years. After listening to 40 or so hopefuls, I had some questions: What is everyone listening to? What forms, ways, and sounds are influencing the SEAMUS zeitgeist? Who are the applicants?

\* \* \*

I noticed a certain uniformity in the music among some of the SEAMUS applicants. This can be valuable to an artistic community, creating a sense of identity and a common vocabulary of means. Of course difference is also valuable, as it can challenge and change artistic outlook by tracing new lines, forming webs, among and between works of a similar vein, expanding out to the different. Even if this different is not of interest, studying these spans of difference, in all their degrees, may help evaluate the familiar-ness that a community of musicians naturally forms.

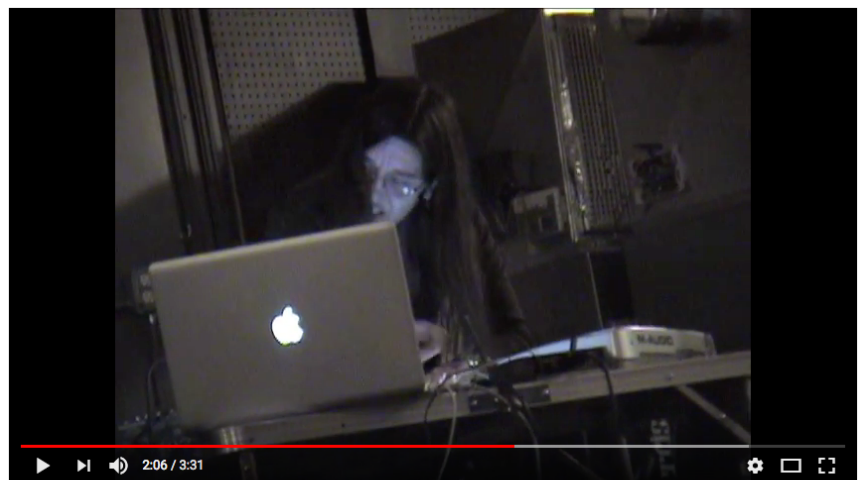
Below is a playlist of sorts, from which I can draw interesting lines of difference (*différance?*) from the SEAMUS works I reviewed, and for that matter, among those on the playlist. Most of the musicians perform or exhibit some kind of live electronic instrument, and live in New England. This list is not intended as a “best of,” but is more a curated sample of musicians I respect, whose music I enjoy, and who I have heard play live, some many, many times.

My hope is you may like some of it too.

Andrea Pensado:

*live vocal processing and synthesis through  
Max/MSP*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OshmpGUOUQ0>



ANDREA PENSADO 3.8.2012 Flywheel Easthampton, MA



Angela Sawyer @ Mystery Train Amherst MA 8/8/16

Angela Sawyer:

*live electronic sound, duck call, and voice*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UiPrLuaUY6g>



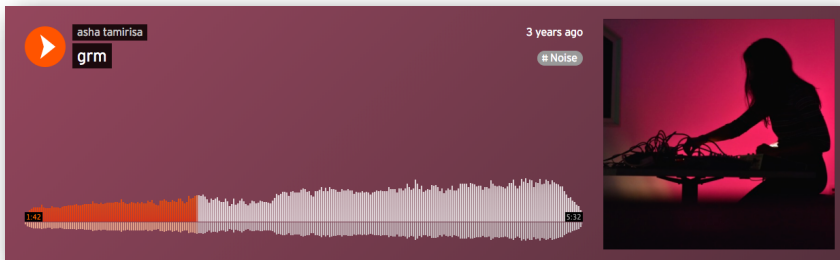
Arkm Foam:

*live tape manipulation and chair*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=7&v=GAilgK2hgsA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=7&v=GAilgK2hgsA)



119 Gallery W2-72: Arkm Foam. Oct 2013



Asha Tamirisa:

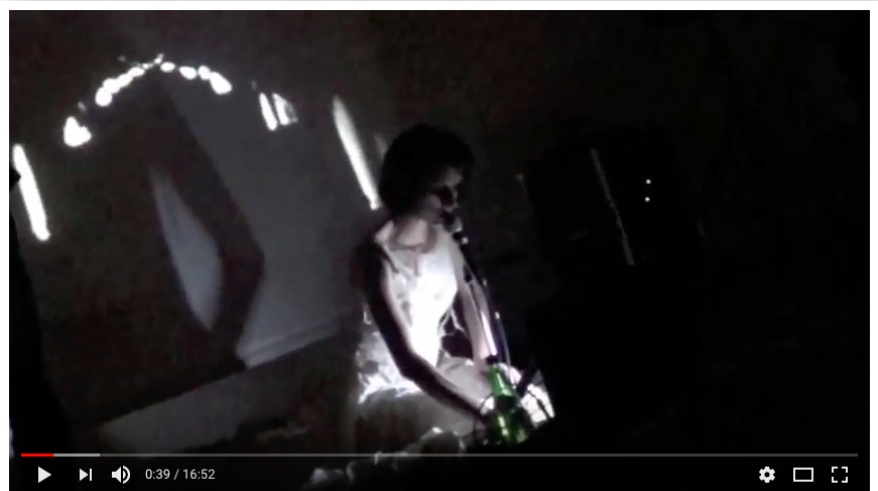
*laptop*

<https://soundcloud.com/ashatamirisa/grm>

Dei Xhrist:

*vocal reproduction of musique concrete, direct and through a Line 6 DL4 delay modeler pedal*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=33&v=xSyX7pie1S8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=33&v=xSyX7pie1S8)



Dei, Marc, and Greg at 119 Gallery Nov 2013



Ellen Band, "Swinging Sings":

*for tape and live violins*

[http://www.ellenband.com/audioplayer/playlists/swinging\\_sings.html](http://www.ellenband.com/audioplayer/playlists/swinging_sings.html)



FORBES GRAHAM 8.20.10 WEIRD STALK, TOO JAMAICA PLAIN, MA

Forbes Graham:

*trumpet, laptop*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFDoSSCO2SQ>

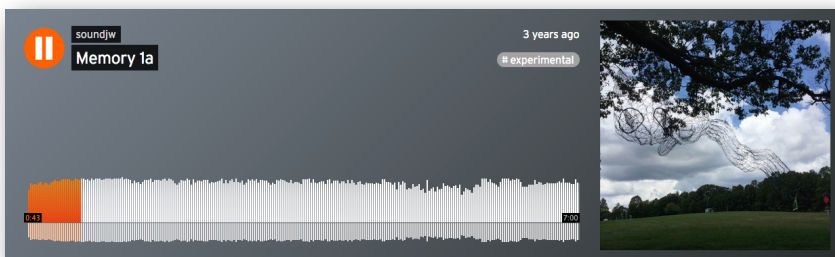
Id M Theft able:

*voice/body, contact mics, found objects, tape, feedback*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9UpQvcQMwk>



ID M THEFT ABLE @ Strange Maine May 8 2015



Jane Wang, "Memory 1a"

*a meditation on the dream state using recordings of rats brains*

<https://soundcloud.com/soundjw>

Jenifer Gelineau:

*amplified glass, violin, effects pedals, electronic sound*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KQUYRO3m7A>



Jenifer Gelineau @ The Brickhouse Turners MA 1/19/16



Judy Dunaway - Hommage à Kenneth Noland

Judy Dunaway:

*"Hommage à Kenneth Noland" for amplified giant balloon, vibrators, synthesized tones and projected video animations*

<http://www.judydunaway.com/amplified-giant-balloon.html>

Marek Poliks:

*"Interdictor" for aluminum and plexiglass object, 640 computer fans, 25 arduino megas, 6 transducers*

<https://soundcloud.com/marek-poliks/interdictor-exhibition-version-2017>







Stephanie Marie Germaine @ Noise Rites Of Spring Springfield MA 5/28/17

Stephanie Germaine:

*sound collage, field recordings, restless electronics, tapes, objects, voice and video*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G7iY5qVPaOY>

Vic Rawlings:

*"amplifier/ prepared cello, speaker elements/ exposed circuitry"*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nd9vPFw4kVQ>



\* \* \*

I am very glad Steve Ricks invited me to write a regular column in the SEAMUS newsletter. I hope to engage this community by featuring beautiful moments of music, and beautiful uses of technology, by musicians whose voice and aesthetic perspective is perhaps not central to the SEAMUS zeitgeist, to the extent that is a thing I can know. My purpose is not so much about analysis, critique or rational findings, but more about linking, tracing, discovery, and of course listening.

\* \* \*

Dave's quote from above is worth repeating:

*"The best thing about this music is that your heroes become your friends."*

Dave posted this on a Facebook thread about Jed Speare, who had recently died. Jed's piece "Mettle of Metal" uses the sound of cable cars to propose a place through a lovely ringing asymmetry. While I met Jed several times, I regret not getting to know him better.



<https://soundcloud.com/ear-room/jed-speare-mettle-of-metal>

You might also like Dave's work. While not electronic, he improvises on the sax like a sound making machine, as Helmut Lachemann put it "Musique Concrète Instrumentale." In this set, Dave also live manipulates a turntable at the beginning:

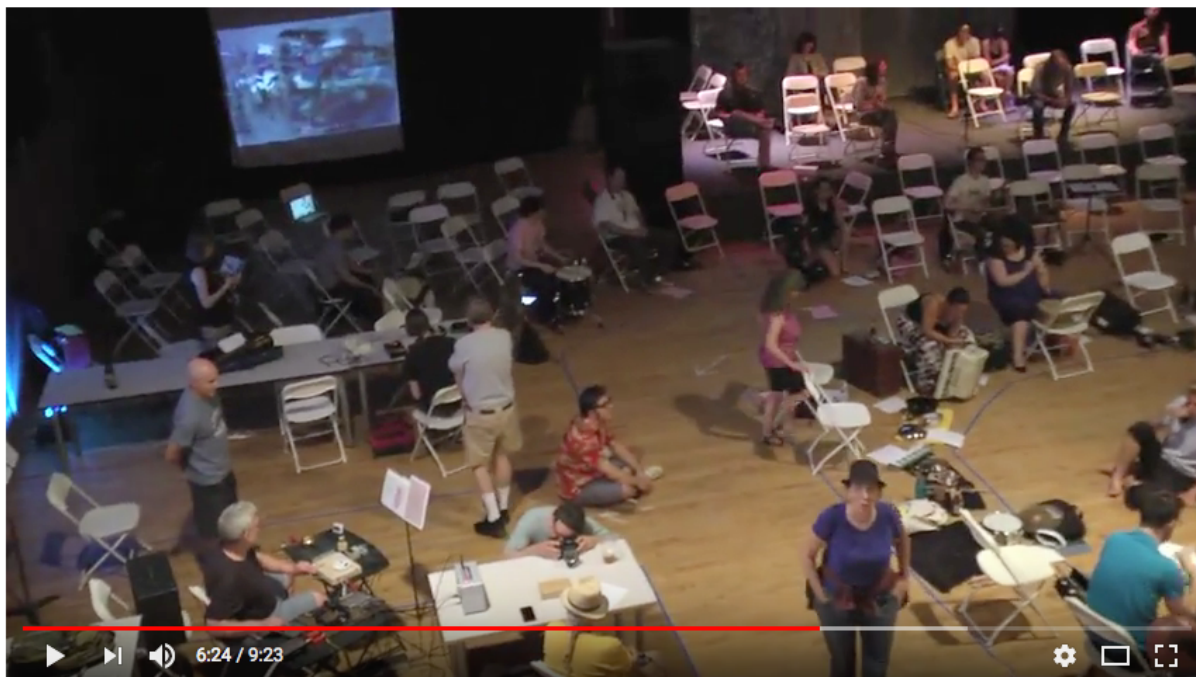
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9KDAsbYR35o>



Dave and Jed are my heroes too for making this music.

\* \* \*

I don't know if meaning in music is comprehensible through words, or in any way absolute --but perhaps some meaning is occasional, some is from a maze of difference, and some is metaphysically bound to knowing the people who make it. About 10 months after Lou Cohen passed, many of the musicians mentioned in this essay participated in a 100 person performance of Cage's "Variations III." This was a deep one (link on following page):



John Cage - Variations III

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKWPOyHIUPQ>

\* \* \*

See you soon,

Lou

*Lou Bunk is an American composer and improviser inspired by many forms of experimental artistic expression. His sonically rich and intricate music investigates sound and silence through extended instrumental techniques, microtones, amplified found objects, electronics, and generative approaches to texture and form. He teaches composition, theory, and electronic music at Franklin Pierce University in Rindge, NH.*





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