



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

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"I'm a bit of a music technology omnivore... I have always loved learning new instruments and new ways of working with sound. The endless fascination for me is in how different instruments and interfaces facilitate different modes of musical expression and different sets of aesthetic possibilities based on the materiality and the logics they present. If I roam around genres it is probably an outgrowth of that sort of multi-instrumental, multi-pronged, technological curiosity."



Photo by Bruno Destombes

Tara Rodgers

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Hello SEAMUS Members,

This one goes to 11! Thanks so much to all the contributors to this issue of the newsletter. It's packed with some great stuff, including essays by former (and hopefully continuing) newsletter contributors Dustin Ragland and Lou Bunk, and an interview with multi-instrumentalist, composer, and historian of electronic music Tara Rodgers (aka analog tara) by SEAMUS President Ted Coffey (beginning on page 3).

We were sad to hear of Larry Austin's passing at the end of 2018, and I feel grateful I'm able to include a beautiful eulogy in this issue that his daughter Thais gave at his funeral. Following her remarks, there are four heartfelt remembrances by SEAMUS members Elaine Lillios, Cort Lippe, Eric Lyon, and Rodney Waschka, all of whom were deeply influenced by Larry and his work.

Ted's "Letter from the President" (page 5) includes some words about Gordon Mumma, recipient of the 2019 SEAMUS Award, and a welcome to three new SEAMUS Board of Directors members. We look forward to hearing from Gordon in Boston this coming March, and thank the SEAMUS 2019 organizers for all their work in putting together a great conference. Links to the conference web pages are to the right, and conference registration will open shortly.

All best wishes for a successful conference and productive new year—see you in Boston or in the virtual world!

Sincerely,

Steve Ricks

SEAMUS Newsletter Editor

Berklee College of Music and
Boston Conservatory at Berklee
Boston, Massachusetts

March 21–23, 2019

We have finished the concert and presentation schedule for **SEAMUS 2019!**

Following the recommendations of 36 adjudicators we were able to program approximately 125 from the nearly 300 submissions. Thank you to all who submitted works for consideration.

Participants have been notified and accepted and all decline letters have been sent. If you have not received a letter of decline please double check the email address that you used when creating your SEAMUS Submittable account.

If you are presenting, please be sure to confirm your performance materials, riders, notes, bios, etc. by the **Friday, February 1st deadline** through the link emailed last week.

Registration for the conference is handled by seamusonline.org and at a registration table at the conference. Within the Registration portal you will also be able to select Banquet participation and meal options. (The Registration portal will open shortly at: <https://www.seamusonline.org>)

Other conference-specific information (schedules, accommodations, etc.) will be found here: <https://www.berklee.edu/seamus>

Note that if you are interested in attending the conference and require hotel accommodations, special SEAMUS 2019 rates for the Hilton Back Bay, the conference hotel, are available through a unique link found here: <https://www.berklee.edu/seamus/travel-and-accommodations>

(continued on page 4)

Interview with [Tara Rodgers](#) by Ted Coffey

. what's your current favorite piece of gear?

Well, I love different instruments and tools for different purposes. I am especially appreciating my Vermona DRM-1 mk III these days. It really is a singular sort of drum machine. Many drum machines follow the classic TR-808 and TR-909 in tone or logic, and I like that the DRM goes its own way. Beautiful tonality, tunable percussion, and new sounds that surprise me even after some years. With its capacity for tuning and its punch, its voices really sing in a mix.

. what are you listening to? what music-making people or communities particularly interest you?

As I write this, I'm listening to Miles Davis's *The Complete In a Silent Way Sessions*. *In a Silent Way* is my favorite album. Every so often I enjoy going back to the sessions to listen to the ideas in motion around what eventually congealed in the album's final form.

In general, I try to keep an ear toward jazz and improvised music, as well as some old and new techno, house, and electro; also pop and hip hop that stretches the parameters of what we might hear as popular vs. experimental. I guess a shorter way of saying this is that I pay attention to where improvising and studio craft are at, across genres. That nexus of improvisation and studio craft is mostly how I work. As a self-taught musician who learned by ear, I feel like an outsider whenever conventional notation is involved! It's harder for me to find points of entry to music where that is central, even if I can appreciate the work in the abstract.

Locally, we're lucky to have Rhizome DC as a venue and community for experimental and electronic music. The music happens on the first floor of an old Victorian house and it has felt truly special to hear in such an intimate setting artists like [Moor Mother](#), Luke Stewart playing [Works for Upright Bass and Amplifier](#), and David Dominique's ensemble touring with his brilliant new album [Mask](#). I'm always interested in what's happening there.

. now almost 10 years on, what's the resonance, for you, of your book?

It's hard to believe we are coming up on 10 years for the book and 20 years since the *Pink Noises* website launched...

Honestly, one surprise is how much the book still resonates. When I was working on it, one of the main challenges was how to handle the subject of contemporary music technologies and practices in a way that would stand up over time and not become dated as technologies change. That was one reason why I used very open-ended questions in the interviews. 10 years on, it's nice to see that this maybe worked! The artists' discussions of their creative processes are so rich and still relevant; I think this is one reason why people can still pick up the book now, even for the first time, and find it useful. Of course, the book is also still relevant because problems it identified with the centering of white men in electronic and experimental music histories and cultures persist.

The book has also resonated around the world to an extent that I never anticipated. Something

(continued on page 5)

THE SOCIETY FOR ELECTRO-ACOUSTIC MUSIC IN THE UNITED STATES

(SEAMUS 2019 message from the hosts, cont.)

Remember that presenters must register and attend their performance.

Until March 7 SEAMUS members and students receive an early registration discount:

Professional Member Presenter/Attendee (\$170)

Student Member Presenter/Attendee (\$80)

Non-SEAMUS Member Professional Attendee (\$200)

Performer* (\$0)

After March 7, registration fees are:

Professional Presenter/Attendee (\$220)

Student Presenter/Attendee (\$100)

Non-SEAMUS Member Professional Attendee (\$250)

Performer* (\$0)

*Only performers who are NOT also presenting their own compositions may register under the "performer" option, otherwise they need to register under one of the aforesaid categories.

We want to thank our pool of adjudicators who worked diligently and quickly to provide their evaluations of over 300 submissions: Annie Hui-Hsin Hsieh, Barry Moon, Ben Sutherland, Brian Belet, Carolyn Borcharding, Chris Chandler, Christopher Hopkins, David Gedosh, Derek Hurst, Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner, Erin Gee, Gabriele Vanoni, John Mallia, John Melby, Jonathan Wilson, Joshua Groffman, Joshua Michal, Juan Vasquez, Julie Herndon, Juri Seo, Kari Juusela, Katarina Miljkovic, Kirsten Volness, Mada Siskidiv, Maggi Payne, Mara Helmuth, Mark Snyder, Matthew Barber, Michael Bierylo, Michael Boyd, Monisola Gbadebo, Olga Oseth, Paola Lopreiato, Paul Lehrman, Peter Hulen, Rebecca Brown, Richard Carrick, Ronald Smith, Russell Pinkston, Sam Wells, Seth Shafer, Shih-Wei Lo, Stephen Beck and Yoon-Ji Lee

Hope to see you in March!

Sincerely,

The SEAMUS 2019 team

Derek Hurst, Matthew Nicholl and Brian Sears



shifted in this regard a few years ago as PDFs began to circulate online beyond the book's formal distribution channels. I wrote *Pink Noises* as an intervention against received histories of electronic music that are common in mostly anglophone contexts in the U.S., Canada, and U.K. And despite the multinational and transnational influences and identities of some artists in the book, the anglo/ North American framing of the book is a limitation, for sure. So it's been interesting to hear from people who are now reading the book in other parts of the world—like the Czech Republic, Poland, Argentina, Ethiopia, India, Japan, and New Zealand, and to find out that [electronic musicians in Cuba](#) have been downloading *Pink Noises* and sharing it through peer-to-peer file sharing networks there. What's interesting to me about this is that the book is resonating in places that may have quite different histories of electronic music technology and practice than the particular historical narratives that *Pink Noises* was responding to. I think this speaks to how the artists' work and their insights about creative process are able to connect with many other musicians and fans wherever they are. I'm glad the book facilitates those connections. It's always been my hope that it would teach something about electronic music history while also serving as a resource that inspires creativity with sound.

. in your book you define 'technoscientific priorities' as "aesthetic priorities of rationalistic precision and control" that "define 'hard' mastery in electronic music production." What are your relationships to technoscientific priorities while making your work?

Ahh! I wrote this as a first-year PhD student and it always makes me cringe when the words are read

back to me :) I would probably say things a bit differently now. I think what I was getting at there, as well as in my subsequent PhD research on the roles of metaphor in audio-technical discourse, is that sound textbooks and histories of electronic music practice have often privileged a relationship to sound material that is about control, or even domination, through technological mastery—a pervasive mythology of "taming unruly waves," if you will. What I also try to point out in my research is that this, like all technoscientific practices of classification, ordering, and control, is inextricably entwined with histories of racism, colonialism, sexism and misogyny. That western sonic and audio-technical epistemologies are built on these problematic foundations.

I think one misreading of this line of thought is that to be in opposition to logics of control of sound through technological mastery, one's music must necessarily sound a particular way—like sounding "out of control" or against precision. I think a better question is: how do we instead cultivate relationships to sound that practice or point toward ethical ways of being in the world? Approaches along these lines have been around for a long time. Pauline Oliveros's Deep Listening practice is certainly one touchstone for me. As are Eliane Radigue's insights informed by Tibetan Buddhism—like, how do you perform with or edit sound in a way that attends closely to that sound, following it through to where it needs to go? There's a humility there, and a recognition in Radigue's approach overall, I think, that our sounds, technologies, selves, and environments are deeply interdependent and the music we make necessarily comes out of these complex interrelationships, far exceeding whatever we might imagine to be within our control.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear SEAMUS Members,

Happy New Year! I'm writing with a few announcements and updates.

Three open positions on the SEAMUS Board were decided in December by election — and we had an exceptionally strong pool of candidates for each. Please join in welcoming Olga Oseth (Secretary), Lyn Goeringer (Treasurer), and Annie Hui-Hsin Hsieh (Vice President for Programs) to our Board. Sincerest thanks to everyone who participated in the election by offering to our community their time, energy, skill, and ideas. And thanks too to everyone who participated by voting.

The conference at Berklee / Boston Conservatory is just a couple months away! It will be a special honor to present the 2019 SEAMUS Award to Gordon Mumma, and to receive this music and biography from the source. (If you can't wait for the latter, check out his 2015 book, *Cybersonic Arts*.) We're further pleased to acknowledge the following four ASCAP/SEAMUS Award Finalists: Nathaniel Haering, Elliot Lupp, Felipe Tovar-Henao, and Yifan Wu. Finally, enormous thanks to the hosts at Berklee, Derek Hurst and Matthew Nicholl, along with Technical Director Brian Sears, for their ongoing indomitability producing the conference.

Very best wishes,

Ted

president@seamusonline.org



(Tara Rodgers interview, cont.)

Maggi Payne, whom I studied with at Mills, also has such a significant influence on my work. We know that Maggi's standards are nothing less than precision and mastery! Certainly by the extraordinary attention to detail in the example of her work. And yet, implicit in what and how she teaches is a practice of care when working with recorded sound. Almost like a reverence for the material, where your responsibility for all the details is about taking responsibility for the communication you are putting forward into the world. Like Pauline's work, for me, this has a dual implication—it's about the music you are making, yes; but it's also a practice of being in the world that is about listening, attentiveness, responsiveness, care.

. you've offered music to several distinct conversations — for example, *Fundamentals* (1432R 015, 2018) is in the house / techno world / marked by analog synths and drum machines; *Butterfly Effects* (self-released, 2007) is ecological / algorithmic / ambient (if not exactly soothing) / marked by SuperCollider noise ugens; *Ocean State* (self-released, 2007) is pretty wide-ranging in its materials and genre-wise, pretty assemblage-like — but generally it's in orbit around jazz piano and free improv. logics. Like a lot of us, you seem not only to be culturally omnivorous (Peterson), but also you're making really different kinds of work.

It's true I make very different kinds of work. I think one of the things you are sensing is that I'm a bit of a music technology omnivore... I have always loved learning new instruments and new ways of working with sound. The endless fascination for me is in how different instruments and interfaces facilitate different modes of musical expression and different

sets of aesthetic possibilities based on the materiality and the logics they present. If I roam around genres it is probably an outgrowth of that sort of multi-instrumental, multi-pronged, technological curiosity.

I'm not sure I would identify as "culturally omnivorous" though, if it implies a kind of dabbling or tourism through different music genres or practices. I try to be more the opposite, at least in terms of a devotion to staying close to my influences, especially with regard to jazz as a primary influence. I feel accountable to that. And, for better or worse, my listening habits are more deep than broad—I'll get stuck listening to a handful of recordings hundreds of times over many years (cf., *In a Silent Way*), trying to figure things out. Periodically I pull my head out of the sand and listen to a bunch of new things and check in across genres, as I noted earlier. And then I may find something else to fall into and listen to repeatedly and obsessively for years... and on and on.

. how do your poetics / techniques / compositional approaches inform one another across these diverse categories? What techniques and processes are common? Which are not? Does imagining sites of reception have any effect(s)?

One way of hearing it as a body of work is that most everything I do musically is traceable to the modes of listening I cultivated as a self-taught pianist from an early age, and to my exposure to both jazz music (pre-midcentury solo jazz piano traditions particularly) and hi-fi audio and computer technologies in my household growing up in the '70s and '80s. Even a computer music piece like *Butterfly Effects*, which may not be as recognizably in conversation with jazz improv as a project like

(Tara Rodgers interview, cont.)

Ocean State or my recent release sketches with piano + analog noise, reflects an ongoing interest I have in arrangements of parts and wholes in music composition. This very much comes out of my way of hearing music from the perspective of a solo jazz pianist, where you're always thinking in terms of how to isolate and synthesize various lines and patterns that emanate from a single sound source.

Another connection across different pieces is my interest for about 10 years now in composing systems that have harmonic depth and complexity, often achieved through algorithmic or instrument-specific variations that aren't entirely predictable. By harmonic complexity here, I mean some sort of compositional system in which unpredictable, interacting overtones are a substantive and deliberate part of the piece. The means of achieving this can be very different, but it's the same sort of musical question.

Butterfly Effects was the first piece where I took this on. In SuperCollider I coded many different arrays with sets of numbered frequencies where combinations of frequencies and overtones would be called algorithmically throughout the piece, always slightly differently given the significant amount of randomness embedded in the routines and the numbers of processes going on at once. More recently, in some of the techno tracks I'm making, it's analog synths and drum machines that have a certain inherent harmonic richness that is then enhanced or varied, either in combination with other analog instruments, or by the addition of digital effects. Another approach in electroacoustic composition is there in the first two tracks on sketches, which use randomized sample slicing and distortion effects to do unpredictable things with piano overtones.

I'm interested in harmonic complexity as a kind of blown-out timbral dimension that can tell an alternate story while other things are going on in a musical piece... like, if we use terms like lines or patterns when we refer to melody and rhythm, a complex system of interacting overtones is more like the impossible staircase of M.C. Escher, yes? Because it can lead you through a piece in all sorts of directions depending on where your point of entry is or how you focus your listening. And electronic and electroacoustic music is especially well suited to working within this dimension. Both my research and creative practice have a long-term relationship with approaching sound as material and metaphor. So, there are usually questions that guide my work in the studio—like, does sound have a surface? What tools and techniques can we use to create a sense of depth with sound, or to create various kinds of experiential pathways through a musical piece?

Imagined sites of reception can for sure have some effect on the process. This is especially true for the techno, where it might take only hours or days to draft a new track, but then weeks or months to settle on an arrangement that feels right, so that the track works in conversation with genre conventions and can be playable by DJs, and so the mix scales well to a large sound system. That's a very different process than composing the more experimental or electroacoustic works, where the composition or recording phase can be more time consuming than the mixing, and is also less concerned with following any particular genre convention.

. what are you working on? what's next for you?

Right now I'm working on a remix for a DC-based band—my first remix in many years, which is fun. Also trying to finish the arrangements and mixes for 4 techno tracks for a follow-up EP to Fundamentals.

And I've been fortunate to make recordings on some rare, vintage modulators in my travels in recent years—including the Moog IIIP at Mills College, the ARP 2500s at Brown University and University of Virginia, the E-mu System at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and hopefully the modulators at EMS in Stockholm soon. My next step is to spend more time with the recordings to figure out what sorts of pieces might emerge from those. I'm aiming in part to create a long-duration performance of ambient music over some hours that combines and processes this source material. Performance is often a first step for me, like a working session, to feel out what will eventually become recordings.

. [bonus question] what did you think of our ARP 2500?

Having worked with this instrument now on two occasions, I understand how Eliane Radigue worked with nothing else for 30 years! It really is remarkable. I mostly spent time with the noise generators and filters, and with generating varying patterns with those. With this instrument, as with the best analog instruments in my view, you get a sense that it has its own sort of interior life going on behind the surface of its matrix. And, as a performer, when you pass by to visit it, you are just activating or surfacing some of the complexity that is already happening and that will go on without you after you leave. That's a nice feeling. An honor to do that, really.

www.analogtara.net



Space Light Music:

A brief discussion on sound-image relations

Edited and expanded by Dustin Ragland

Academy of Contemporary Music at The University of Central Oklahoma

“Light appears to be an ideal mediator between music as a temporal art and painting as a spatial art... its movement allows the structure of flowing time to become visible...”

- Anne Hoorman, [Lichtspiele](#)



Visualization of abstract ideas is woven into our typical experiences to the degree that we think and speak under the guidance of “[visualism](#)” without giving much mind to it: “Have you seen...?” “Look into it...” “Let me show you...” are all typical ways of encouraging thought, study, and creative activity – in our provenance we might expect assorted sonic results from these visualist encouragements. Many of us learn complex mathematical processes (even in the early ages of [software](#) for such a thing) by means of visual help. Whether [eigenvectors](#) or [digital signal processing](#), visualization of complex implements leads to better understanding for anyone looking to employ them in their own creative work. Not only do these visual elements promote understanding of complex phenomena – they are aesthetic gestures as well: they reveal beauty (in the widest possible understanding of the word) in technological structures. When understood aesthetically, they show potential for not only creative *description*, but for creative *use*. Visual representations of algorithms and signals become part and parcel of the raw imagination of a composer: patterns, disjoints, harmonies, signals. Thinking about sound visually is rarely optional, and the resulting musical artifacts are more often than not accompanied by some visual medium. This visual medium can vary in formality from presenting musical work on social media with a low-resolution video demonstration, to laser-focused (or [laser-based](#)) audio-visual interaction.

The primacy of the eye in contemporary creative cultures is not merely something for those working in the arts of sound to discard in lament, or reify without thought to how images work epistemologically. In electroacoustic musical communities, there is a strong thread at work that imagines interactions between musical sound and visual phenomena that extends beyond the familiarity of film scoring into all manner of fixed and un-fixed media. I wanted to provoke a small discussion on these extensions by hearkening back to a small piece of aesthetics from Theodor Adorno and Hans Eisler, [Composing for the Films](#). I return to this work not because I find the arguments convincing, as several responses to the prompt bore out, but because the work of Adorno and Eisler can help to reveal among young composers, and among many experienced composers, how we might continue to privilege image or sound in our musical-visual works that seek some kind of epistemological unity between the two. Peter-Paul Verbeek’s [reflections](#) on Don Ihde’s “hermeneutic of instruments,” applied to our musical context, might guide us here: these visual interactions with sound (including algorithmic and computational elements of sound) are not neutral to the sonic acts we undergo. Musicians have leveraged the visual guidance of scores into sonic gestures for ages, we know that visual sonic illustrations “do not simply depict reality, but co-determine how reality can be present for and interpreted...”

Adorno and Eisler caution the independence of musical elements in relation to the images that are at work in a film, where “poetic-lyric” forces at work in the musical elements give too much conceptual primacy to the melody, against what they see as the music’s role in service to the film’s onscreen activity. The famously gnostic “sparkle and glisten” as the prescription for music for films treats music as a refractive glare - perhaps appearing when the primacy of the eye hits the screen visuals just so. K. Paul Boyev’s response on the SEAMUS Facebook group is exactly what I find unconvincing (but instructive!) in Adorno and Eisler’s framing:

Music and image are treated here as if they are on parallel tracks, when I would rather we treat them as a synergistic whole borne of collaboration between composer and visual artist (unless of course an artist chooses to tackle both forms.) I look at this as One Thing.

Sound accompanying film has typically been the beginning point for discussions around the interactions of music and image, and it does form a massive cultural artifact – economically and imaginatively. Reflections ranging from Eisenstein’s [“texture-timbre matching”](#) with Prokofiev, to Sofia Coppola’s [use of shoegaze and pop](#) remain vital and important to contemporary sound-image epistemologies, but seem to still operate under the assumption that sound and image are on “parallel tracks.” Michel Chion’s seminal [Audio-Vision](#), and Sandra Naumann’s [The Expanded Image](#) are two examples of works that begin to explicate Boyev’s One Thing. Chion’s work describes the phenomenon of “synchresis,” where the modalities of image and sound collapse into one another – forming a synthetic epistemology that moves beyond correspondences of concept or action into a realm where aesthetic experience casts a new alloy. Naumann’s work captures innovations in sound-image understandings, from the advent of the improvisational light show in the 1960’s (often accompanied by hallucinogenic assistance), to the rise of the VJ – where live, reactive, usually digitally-derived video accompaniment to music has made moves “from club culture to traditionally high-culture contexts.”

In another Facebook comment, Dave Gedosh outlines his purposeful disputation of Adorno and Eisler’s prescriptions for creative and pedagogical effect:

In several different courses I’ve taught, I’ve had sections on composing for media. One of the things I like to do in class is to take a video, film, or commercial and add different music to it and then discuss its impact. The music I use is not related to the media, its “formed independently of the action onscreen. This places a “poetic-lyric” activity into the melody that does not serve the “utility” of the motion picture, according to Adorno and Eisler.” The results can be amazing - and seem to contradict Adorno’s critique (in which case I’m usually happy with that). Had Adorno had modern tech to play with he might have not had the same criticism.

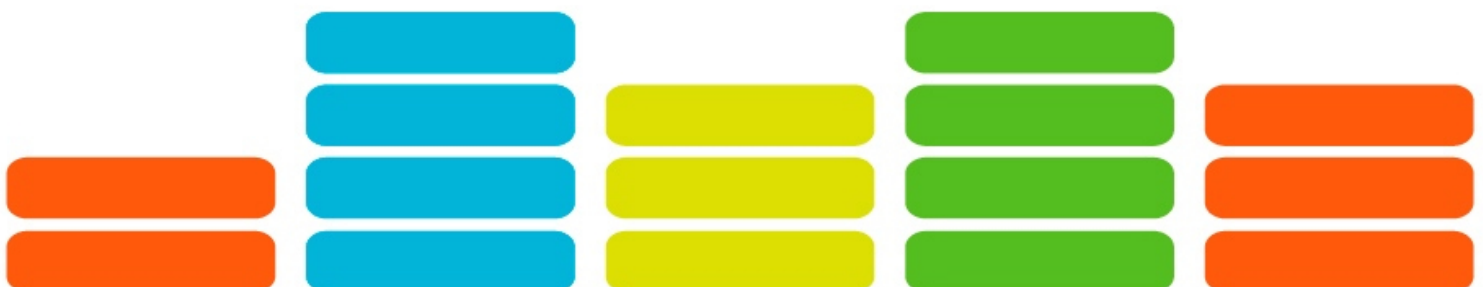
This is an excellent example of what I hoped for in my initial class assignment as well: for young composers to confront ideas that are likely not fully convincing to their own musical contexts – but ones that most of them readily admitted to informing how they understood sound’s relation to moving images onscreen. When written out before them, they were quick to decry the elitism that emerges from handwringing over contemporary musical forms. Yet they were at a loss as to how articulate their own formal principles – even when they would create brilliant new interactions of their own. Gedosh’s project is a wonderful idea on just how readily subversive sound-image combinations can become, and how to break the crust of expectations that forms on a composer’s formal approaches from time to time.

Gedosh's last point was echoed by a former student and gifted composer, [Santiago Ramones](#), who saw the prompt and came into my office, observing that much of the modernist framing, and the technological milieu surrounding Adorno and Eisler's work would barely have the benefit of "electronic music" as a compositional and generic category, much less the ubiquity of compositional tools that employ some form of sound-image relation, typically via a screen. Ramones' main emphasis was on how [Max/MSP/Jitter](#) might explode the framing mentioned in the prompt. Jitter's ability to reflect, respond to, and even generate audio in a visual format that is highly personalized, and instrument-like, provides ever-new approaches to composition and performance that practically employ sound-image as One Thing. The term "media" is used in myriad ways, but its concise plurality serves this technological vanguard well, and reflects the accessibility of affordable tools like Max/MSP/Jitter, and the newer VIZZIE/BEAP sub-formats.

Our discussion will close with Kyong Mee Choi's email response to the prompt, which is worth quoting at length:

In regards to the subject of "independence" of the musical ideas, and their "interdependence" with the visual element in the electro-acoustic music: I think keeping a balance between independence and interdependence is the key. If there are too much synchrony between the two medium it could be too predictable, yet, if there is too much independence then it would lose focus of the piece. Cohesiveness needs to evolve from contrast and diverse activities, allowing room for audience to digest and reflect connections. Adding more medium does not necessarily result in enhanced experience. The ideal result is that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." Also, each medium (music or visual part) should be convincing to begin with, instead of hoping to gain strength through adding other medium.

Choi's response is a thoughtful balance between some of the responses and provocations we began with, and the act of receiving audio-visual stimuli itself. Concepts from [design](#) and [technology interfaces](#) work their way ever further into [aesthetic imaginations](#), and the ideas of UX are reflected in Choi's helpful rejoinder to the "media" I had previously emphasized: "adding more medium does not necessarily result in enhanced experience." As composers understand, adding more notes, complex harmonies, allusions and formal elements – all of the "more" can suffocate what sonic bits of light are formed by the musical work itself. When it comes to providing actual bits of light (or whatever visual form you might imagine: corporeal, color-driven, architectural, etc.) that interlace with the sound elements – even the most multi-media trained audience can experience the media as clutter. Electroacoustic composers and performers have unique vantage points at the borderlands of music and technology – the spirit of sonic provocation: interlacing acoustic, acousmatic, and electronic technologies leads many electroacoustic musicians into audio-visual works that can provoke listeners into what [Edwin van der Heide](#) calls their "own spatial languages of light and sound."



Mindful Listening

By Lou Bunk

December 2018

I really like Annea Lockwood's work "A Sound Map of the Housatonic River." An excerpt and brief description can be found here:

https://archive.org/details/A_Sound_Map_of_the_Housatonic_River-10444

When I play this for my First Year Inquiry (FYI) class, I ask them to answer 3 questions:

- What do you observe?
- Do you like it?
- How do the above two questions (and answers) relate to and influence each other?

* * *

Mindful Listening is the theme in my section of FYI, a course all freshmen are required to take at Franklin Pierce University, where I teach. Each instructor develops a unique theme that provides a curricular focus for a course that also covers topics like: how to write a research paper, study for a test, register for classes, plan your future, etc. FYI is also a quasi-homeroom, so the students have more of a bond with each other than in most classes. This dynamic is fruitful to engage.

The first mindfulness lesson in FYI starts by asking the students to sit intentionally and observe their breath for one, two and three minute intervals. This *mindful breathing* is challenging for some, while others, who have some past experience, seem to ease right into it. I ask the students "what happened?" and "what did you hear?" The responses are diverse; some describe the external sounds in the room (fidgeting, heater buzz, doors closing), while others describe the internal sounds of the mind's churning thoughts, distracting to the point where the breath and exercise is lost.

Next, I play a quiet tremolo on a gong for 2 minutes, and talk about how mindful breathing may change the way we perceive it. I gently guide the discussion toward how mindfulness and the quieting of inner thoughts can help us focus on the intricacies of the sound, so we can hear more clearly the gong as it is.

Can we extend mindful listening beyond sound, to words and actions, and the meanings we perceive? Listening can be a powerful metaphor for paying close attention to the world around us, near and far, like the media, the environment, and the people we love. Perhaps dampening our own thoughts can help us better understand what others are trying to communicate, by more clearly hearing the noise in words, biases and circumstances.

* * *

Soon after, in a subsequent class, I play a video of Pauline Oliveros giving a Ted Talk called *The Difference between Listening and Hearing*, which is linked below.

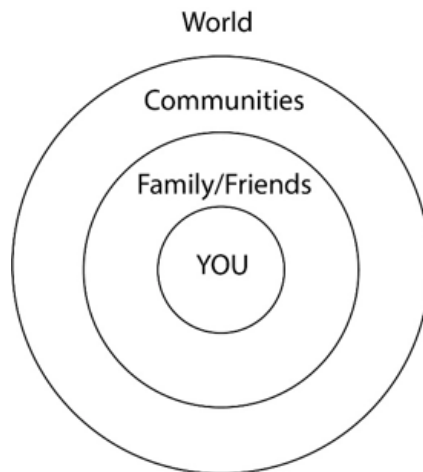
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_QHfOuRrJB8

Again, I engage the students with questions and discussion, steering us back to the gong and the breathing, detangling listening and hearing (as Oliveros describes) through our shared experiences with mindfulness. We sometimes dwell on this quote from Oliveros:

"Deep Listening for me is learning to expand perception of sounds to include the whole space-time continuum of sound, encountering the vastness and complexities as much as possible. Simultaneously one ought to be able to target a sound or sequence of sounds perceiving the beginning middle and end as a focus. Such focus and expansion means that one is connected to the whole of the environment and beyond."

* * *

Sometimes it is helpful to pose questions to students at the beginning of class without much context. For example, in FYI I eventually get around to asking "Does individuality exist?" Open questions like this can go off the rails pretty quick, and sometimes with interesting outcomes. Through this question, together we naturally traverse many aspects of the course: listening, bias, the purpose of education, career, etc. At the right moment, I propose this chart and ask if it is accurate.



We share experiences that exemplify the relationships between the layers; you to family/friends, you to your communities (school, hometown, workplace) and you to the world (government, media, corporations). This past year I shared my recent experience buying a house, describing how I listened to friends and family for practical advice (getting free moving boxes, paint colors, what to do with kids!), listened to my community to help pick a good location (school system, neighborhood vibe and

viability), and listened to the larger world for economic and political insights (interests rates, changing tax laws, climate change).

Questions arise: is it accurate to put “you” at the center of this chart? From the individual’s perspective, perhaps, but if viewed from space is this what we see? Are these layers in the chart so parsed, or conversely, does listening form an interconnectedness between self and other, making the strata not so disparate? Indeed, this interconnectedness (listening) goes both ways, right? And so, I might also reverse the perspective (of the chart) and consider what impact buying a house has on my family, my community and my world? And are these questions as important as how the outer layers affect me? Perhaps by listening carefully, and quieting my own roiling thoughts, I can make a decision that is helpful for all the layers in both directions? If there is value in generalizing this outlook, then maybe we don’t need a “you” on this chart, because through listening, the “you” dissolves into the middle bands, which in turn dissolve into the world.

Eventually, when we are all properly confused, I put a big X through the entire chart and ask the students to participate in mindful breathing for 3 minutes. After, I ask what role individuality or “self” plays in observing (listening to) the breath. Is it “you” that distracts (or is distracted?) from a clear perception of air coming in and out through “your” nose, its sensual and timbral intricacies, its tempo and its pitch? If self (as a concept) gets in the way of observing the breath, can it get in the way of listening to the world around us, or listening to music?

* * *

If you are so inclined, I invite you to sit quietly, and with intention, to observe your breathing for 3 minutes.

* * *

So, do you like Lockwood’s piece? Is what you observe in it influenced by what you like or don’t like? Is it helpful or even possible to put aside your likes when listening to a composition by your peer, the political opinion of your neighbor, an article in the newspaper, or the dreams and concerns of a rising generation? Perhaps careful, attentive, mindful listening, without purpose, bias or motive, is the obliteration of self, and is a state of being that is becoming the world.



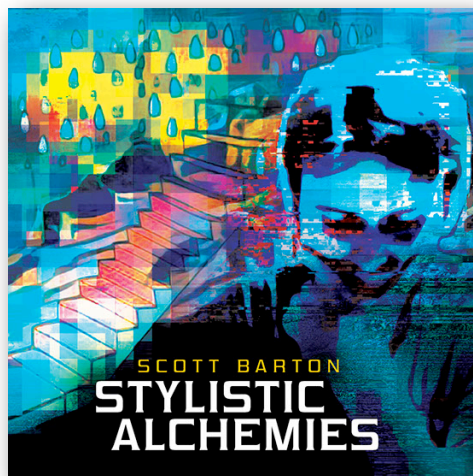


Member News

In **Scott Barton**'s recent release, *Stylistic Alchemies*, expressions that are typically treated as ends, such as a pop songs or acoustic performances of chamber works, become means to a music that is trans- (across and through), poly- (many) and meta- (beyond) genre. The modern production studio is the vehicle for this work, imparting its forms and techniques upon whatever passes through it. It becomes a laboratory; an assemblage; a pot for a stylistic hodgepodge where elements appear, converse, fuse, isolate, compete to be heard, transform, and influence each other to varying degrees. The album shows the studio as a place where the *real* and the *virtual* meet, and illuminates the characteristics of each and interactions between the two.

As a group, these works come from pop, classical, electroacoustic, EDM, experimental, rock, and avant garde traditions. Harmonies move in and out of tonality; rhythms lock into a beat and diffuse into asynchronous clouds; pieces have verses and choruses as much as they have discontinuous micro-collages; acoustic

instruments stand alongside buzzy synthesizers, and the two sometimes blend. The works synthesize and juxtapose diverse elements and in doing so exhibit a stylistically egalitarian musical perspective.



<http://www.ravellorecords.com/catalog/rr7990/index.html>

Jeff Boehm performed his piece for trumpet, fx, and backing track at the 2018 Electrobrass Conference held in Brooklyn, NYC.

Kyong Mee Choi reports the following:

what prevails for clarinet, violin, and piano, will be performed at the New Music Mannes Concert at Mannes School of Music in New York, NY on Tuesday, December 11, 2018. The concert is directed by Mannes faculty member Madeleine Shapiro. The piece is dedicated to those innocent people who were killed by acts of crime and violence. The same piece will be performed by Andrea R. DiOrio, clarinet; Elizabeth Brausa Brathwaite, violin; Kuang-Hao Huang, piano at the Chicago Soundings at the Queen of Angels Church (2330 W. Sunnyside Ave.), Chicago, IL on Tuesday, December 4 2018 at 7:30 pm. The concert features works by Kyong Mee Choi, George Flynn, Tom Stevens among others.

The line we can't cross for alto saxophone and electronics will be performed at the inner sOUNdscapes|Sax concert at the Pitman Recital Hall, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK on Sunday, December 2, 2018. The piece represents the composer's wish to transcend lines or boundaries that we believe we

cannot cross due to limitations or conflicts within our mind.

Kyong Mee Choi is a featured guest artist to give a lecture, present her music and give a master class at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK on November 14-15, 2018. Her music including fixed media, instrument/electronics, and video piece will be presented at the concert at the Pitman Recital Hall on Wednesday, November 14, 2018.

rare yet soft for electronics and **Slight Uncertainty is Very Attractive** for flute and electronics were presented at the [In the Realm of Senses](#), the first multi-sensory art exhibition at 1837 S. Halsted St, Chicago IL for two weekends on November 8-10 and 15-17, 2018 at 7:30-10:00 p.m. The multi-sensory art exhibition is based on the elements such as earth, air, water, fire, and metal in 3000 sq ft of space. Original works in visual art, gastronomic creations, scents, and music will be presented. The exhibition is created and designed by Jeff Yang.

what prevails for clarinet, violin, and piano, was performed at the PICOSA Ensemble Concert in Ganz Hall at Roosevelt University on Tuesday, November 13, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. As a part of Roosevelt University Residency Concert, PICOSA (Jennie Oh Brown, flute; Andrea R. DiOrio, clarinet; Elizabeth Brausa Brathwaite, violin; Paula Kosower, cello; Kuang-Hao Huang, piano) gave a concert featuring works by Valerie Coleman, Kyong Mee Choi, Florent Ghys, Marc Mellits and the student winner of the PICOSA Ensemble Composition Competition.

Tender Spirit II (video) and **Flowerlips** for solo vibraphone (John Corkill, percussion) were presented at the 6Degrees Composer Concert on November 2, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. in Ganz Hall at Roosevelt University. The concert featured works by Regina Harris Baiocchi, Kyong Mee Choi, Janice Misurell-Mitchell, and Patricia Morehead. The concert featured a program that explores ideas of peace and justice through many musical forms. Subjects ranged from war and peace, to the victims of the Sandy Hook school shooting, to the treatment of Native Americans.

The Ringling Arts Festival, Transient Landscapes, curated by Matthew Duvall (Eighth Blackbird percussionist), featured more than 70 pieces of music including **OM** (8-channel sound installation), which was installed and displayed for a month in the Dwarf Garden near The Ringling visitor's center. In conjunction of this installation, **Flowerlips** for solo vibraphone was performed by John Corkill. Guest artists were Matthew Burtner, Kyong Mee Choi, Tim Feeney, Cory Hills, Matthew McCabe, George Nickson, Rich Stitzel, beyond this point, and the Kraken Quartet.

Train of Thoughts for electronics was presented at the [Electronic Music Midwest](#) at the Philip Lynch Theatre, Lewis University, Romeoville, IL on Friday, October 12, 2018 at 8 p.m. The concert featured works by Elainie Lillios, Christopher Hopkins, Kyong Mee Choi, Ioannis Andriotis, Jeffrey Hass, Carter John Rice, Christopher Biggs, and Tianyi

Wang. **Train of Thoughts** is based on the experience of sitting on a train and having various thoughts evoked by the sounds of the environment. In the piece, the initial train sound morphs into various sonic gestures that represent thoughts. Over time, thoughts are intruded upon and triggered by ambient sounds such as a siren and city noise. **Train of Thoughts** describes how our mind travels through our present moment via sonic events.

Christopher Dobrian was invited lecturer/researcher at the Centre de recherche Informatique et Création Musicale (CICM) at the Université Paris 8 for the month of October, lecturing on aspects of realtime computer music composition and performance, and doing research on Ambisonic spatialization.

The new album by **Jennifer Ellis** with saxophonist Jonathan Hulting-Cohen, **Launch**, was released on December 1, 2018 on Albany Records. It features new electroacoustic and acoustic duos for harp and saxophone by composers Angélica Negrón, Stephen J. Rush, Yusef Lateef, Christine Hedden, Patrick O'Malley, Jasper Sussman, and Natalie Moller. More info [here](#).

On November 16th and 17th, 2018, under the direction of **Eli Fieldsteel**, the Experimental Music Studios at the University of Illinois celebrated their 60th anniversary with a festival of three electroacoustic music concerts, drawing together EMS community members from across the country for an opportunity to look back and reminisce about their electroacoustic music-making days at Illinois. The festival included compositions by EMS students, faculty, friends, and alumni, including M.O. Abbott, Brian Belet, David Bohn, Carolyn Borcharding, Quinn Collins, Brad Decker, Michael Drews, Robin Julian Heifetz, Lejaren Hiller, Christopher Hopkins, Vahid Jahandari, Paul Koonce, Ralph Lewis, Kerrith Livengood, Ed Martin, Charles Mason, Janis Mercer, Larry Polansky, Richard Power, John Ritz, Paul Schuette, Daniel Swilley, Andy Walters, Scott A. Wyatt, and Mark Zanter, with performances by Sorchia Barr, Greg Byrne, Gabe Evens, Craig Hultgren, Wilson Poffenberger, Chris Scarberry, Drew Whiting, and the Elara String Quartet.

News from **Mara Helmuth**:

1. A piece I composed collaboratively with **Esther Lamneck**, *Irresistible Flux*, by Mara Helmuth and Esther Lamneck, appeared on Esther Lamneck's *Tarogato Constructions* CD (2018) on Innova.



Here is a review:

<https://www.popmatters.com/esther-lamneck-tarogato-constructions-2586390010.html>

2. Joseph van Hassel commissioned a work *Onsen: Hot Springs* for vibraphone and fixed media, which he performed at University of Hartford, Make Shift Boston, and Framingham State University.

3. ICMC 2018 in Daegu Korea -- performance of *Breath of Water*, composed by Esther Lamneck and myself, with Esther performing on clarinet.

4. Lindsey Goodman performed my *Butterfly Within* for flute and fixed media at Glenview State College, and other places in fall 2018.

5. I was the guest speaker at the Japanese Sonic Arts Society, July 29, 2018 at their annual meeting in Tokyo.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViiYaDACzX8>

On September 14, Ravello Records released [*Mind and Machine Vol. 2*](#), an electro-acoustic compilation featuring seven composers. Works by SEAMUS members include **Jennifer Bernard Merkwitz**'s *Les Crapauds de la Fontaine* (*The Toads from the Fountain*), **Joshua Tomlinson**'s *Convergences*, **Lou Bunk**'s *Cut* featuring **Keith Kirchoff**, **Julius Bucs**'s *Some Writings of Spring*, and **Joshua Harris**'s *A Tiny Fleck of Blue Crying Light Into the Void*.



After 8 years at the American University in Dubai, Professor **Brad Moody** will be joining the faculty of the DSC School of Photography this spring. He will be serving as an Assistant Chair and leading our Digital and Interactive Media Program.

He now serves as an Associate Professor of Digital Media at American University in Dubai. He is a certified Apple Distinguished Educator and a Blackmagic Design DaVinci Resolve Trainer. Please check out his bio and website below.

Professor Moody will be teaching photography, video and interactive media courses this spring. He is a member of our Southeast Center Facebook Group, so please welcome him aboard!

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

Scott L. Miller presented a series of performances and lectures this fall, beginning with a residency at Boyer College of Music & Dance at Temple University, featuring a presentation on *Ecosystemic Music and Performance Practice*, followed by a concert with flutist/improviser Carla Rees, supported by members of the BEEP Ensemble. He and the Tallinn-based Ensemble U: presented two performances of his 360° VR concert work, *Raba*, and his electroacoustic composition *Accretion*, at Spectrum in Brooklyn. The Lenfest Center for the Arts and Film and Media Studies at Columbia University presented his collection of audio-visual and live cinema collaborations with film/video artists Paul Clipson, Ron Gregg, Ted Moore, Rosemary Williams, and Mark Zaki. Flutist Laura Cocks and guitarist Dan Lippel performed the NY premieres of five works with film/art video projection in this portrait concert. Miller completed his tour with a performance on the Electric Cafe series at Rutgers University in Camden, NJ.

Composer and violinist **Charles Nichols** premiered *Badstar: A Concert of Immersive Audio and Video*, an hour show in three movements inspired by fusion, old-time and noise, and drone metal, for electric violin, electric banjo, electric guitar, electronic drums, and computers, with multiple projections of interactive processed video mapped to custom architecture, a collaboration with banjoist and composer Holland Hopson, guitarist and composer André Foisy, drummer Denver Nuckolls, video artist Zach Duer, and architect Jon Rugh, in the 134.2 spatial audio system in the Cube of the Moss Arts Center at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA, for three sold-out shows, October 11-13. September 23, his composition *Pistons*, for violin and computer, was performed by Darragh Morgan on the Plumstead Peculiar Concert Series at The Ascension Church in London, England. His composition *Shakespeare's Garden*, for processed environmental sounds and recited poetry, was played from fixed media in the 32 channel spatial audio system at Envelop in San Francisco, CA, October 10. November 1, his structured improvisation and research titled *Traffic SONATA*, for amplified violin, oud, and qanun, controlling traffic simulations with pitch tracking of musical improvisation in response to sonified traffic data, a collaboration with transportation engineer and oudist Monty Abbas, qanunist Anne Elise Thomas, and transportation engineer Qichao

Wang, was presented at the National Conference of the Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru) at the University of Georgia in Athens, GA.



Charles Nichols and André Foisy performing *Badstar* in spatial audio, surrounded by multiple projections mapped to custom architecture, in the Cube at Virginia Tech

Gil Trythall was the guest of honor and after dinner speaker at Knobcon 7, a synthesizer convention, weekend of September 7-9, 2018, in Chicago, IL, USA. More than 800 attended. A video of his after-dinner speech is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xi4eOod5Q4>.

Ensemble Concept/21 premiered *Musica Speculativa*, an immersive, multimedia concert work by assistant professor of music, **Ryan Olivier** on Oct. 27th & 28th at The Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts at IU South Bend. The work was a concert-length composition in five movements and three intermezzi for ensemble, interactive audio and video, and dance. Notre Dame professor of conducting Carmen-Helena Téllez led Ensemble Concept/21 with original choreography by Colin Mysliwiec Raybin, and with guest vocalist Claire Shackleton and percussionist Kyle Evan Leffert.



Images from the *Musica Speculativa* concert

A number of new works by **Adam Vidiksis** were premiered this fall, including the American premiere of *At the Eagle Record Pass* at Symphony Space in NYC, and the opening of *Project Trans(m)it* at the Wimbelon Space in London, United Kingdom. *Project Trans(m)it* is a 35-minute fixed-media sound and video installation and dance performance created in collaboration with dancers Andrea Lanzetti, Lora Allen, Becca Weber, and Megan Mizanty. Vidiksis performed his own *Pulse Reflection* for percussion and real-time processing at the Third Practice Festival in Richmond, VA, where he also premiered a new work he commissioned from Heather Stebbins, entitled *Things that follow*. Vidiksis traveled to Bowling Green State University in Ohio for the second SPLICE Festival, a three-day series of concerts, workshops, and presentations focusing on music for electronics and performers, organized by himself and his fellow SPLICE organization members. His trio,

SPLICE Ensemble, performed a concert that included four premieres by composers Jeff Herriott, Flannery Cunningham, Rob Seaback, and Silvia Rosani. Additionally, SPLICE Ensemble recently received a Chamber Music America grant to commission composer Caroline Louise Miller. They will be working with composer Elainie Lillios, who will write them a new work funded by a Fromm Foundation grant. Vidiksis traveled to Montreal, Canada to give a presentation co-written with Chris Biggs and Keith Kirchoff on pedagogical methodologies of mixed music composition and performance at the SPLICE Institute. Vidiksis's student ensemble at Temple University, BEEP, performed in Philadelphia with percussionist Von Hansen. NewMusicMannes, under the direction of Madeleine Shapiro, will perform Vidiksis's trio for trumpet, piano, percussion, and real-time processing, *Local Equilibrium Dynamics*, this December at the New School in NYC.

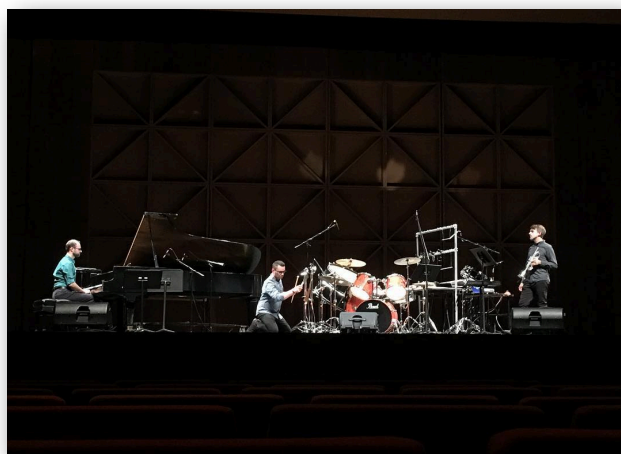


Photo by Troy Rogers

SPLICE Ensemble (Keith Kirchoff, piano; Adam Vidiksis, percussion; and Sam Wells, trumpet) premiered new works for SPLICE Festival 2 this November at Bowling Green State University.



Eulogy and Remembrances Of Larry Austin (1930 – 2018)

*Eulogy of Larry Austin by his daughter, **Thais Austin**:*

Hi, I am Thais. Larry Austin's middle daughter and fifth child. I was asked today to talk about my father's work.

Also known as his 8th child. I am not a music professional or colleague or student of my father's but I am a member of a unique club, the children of the avant garde. We were the observers and spectators to all the experiments, craziness, beauty.

Most people don't know that our dad's maternal grandparents were self-taught musicians and actors. Our great grandfather Slim played the trombone for a while in the traveling tent shows. His wife played the piano in those shows and then in the theaters when silent movies put the tent shows out of business. I believe this is where my father got his musical talent.

And in elementary school, when our father was given the opportunity to learn an instrument, he chose the trombone so he could be like Slim. Unfortunately, his arms were too short and he had to settle for the trumpet. This changed his life.

It was the Great Depression. Our grandparents were hardworking people without much money and Vernon, Texas, where my father grew up, was a small cattle community in North Texas. Nevertheless, Dad's talent was quickly recognized by his teachers, who made sure it was nourished and developed. He was the first person in his family to go to college entering North Texas State University. While at North Texas, he made extra money playing gigs around the Denton area. Truth be told, some of those gigs may have been in what we call now a gentleman's club.

And he played in the first One O'Clock Jazz band when it was established as part of the first jazz degree program in the world. Our father's attraction to improvisation and the newest and most experimental types of music started when he was a teenager. While at North Texas, he was greatly influenced by Canadian Composer Violet Archer and wrote his first piece of music. Although he was a talented musician, he put down the trumpet and picked up the fountain pen and started his lifelong career of music composition.

Our father went on to study at Mills College and the University of California at Berkeley before accepting a faculty position at the University of California at Davis. It was the sixties so this is where things got really interesting.

Life for us children of the Avant Garde included concerts almost weekly. A concert series in our living room by artists like John Cage, David Tudor and Karlheinz Stockhausen. For me as a kid, these were great parties

where sometimes there were lasers in our yard and we could stay up as late as we wanted. We, of course, thought this was normal.

And Dad even ended up on TV in Leonard Bernstein's Young People's Concerts program along with Aaron Copland. Bernstein loved the piece. Copland said it was not his taste.

The California years were interrupted twice for our family. The first time was when Dad took us to Rome for a year while he was on sabbatical from UCD, and a second time when he based our family in Canada and we performed in a piece my father wrote called the Magic Musicians. We were no Von Trapps but we did perform and sing in Toronto, New York, Chicago and a few other places.

One of our father's most lasting legacies was the Avant Garde music journal, *Source*, which he edited and which we, his children, had to spend hours packing for shipment to the subscribers.

In 1972 he accepted a position at the University of South Florida and moved the family to Tampa where he taught until 1978.

He finally returned to Texas, teaching at his alma mater, the University of North Texas, from 1978 until 1996 when he was named Professor Emeritus.

And during all of his teaching years and into his eighties, he continuously composed music, wrote books and articles and mentored colleagues. All of this and his awards and honors are too numerous to mention here. It's in Wikipedia. But I do want to talk about one of his pieces that meant a lot to my Dad and certainly meant a lot to us: his realization of Ives's *Universe Symphony*. I heard it the first time at a performance in Germany. What I remember while listening to it, was how organic it felt. How I could feel the music in my bones. And how our Dad had truly written a masterpiece. I was so proud to have that piece as a family legacy. And when it was performed again at Carnegie Hall with my father as one of the five conductors. I thought about what a special experience it was as a daughter to watch her father conduct his symphony at age 82 on that iconic stage. How many daughters get to do that?

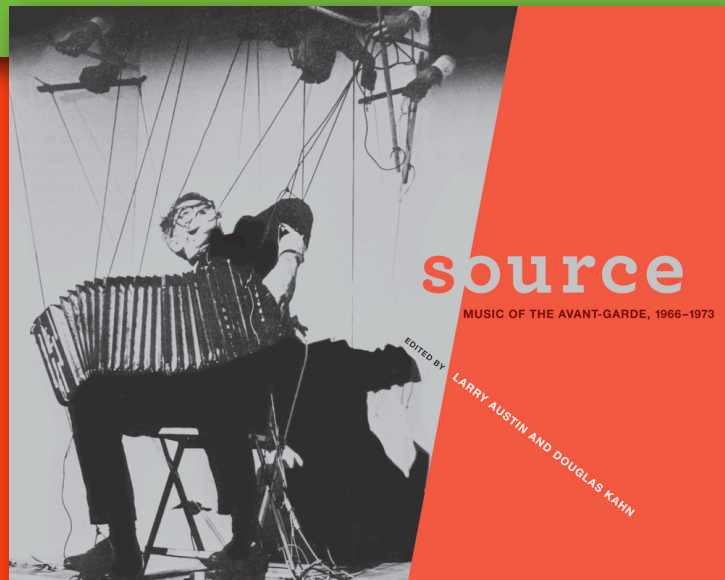
So in the words of Larry Austin, "Music is dead. Long live music."

Larry Austin is dead. Long live Larry Austin.

Remembrances from SEAMUS Members *Elainie Lillios*, *Cort Lippe*, *Eric Lyon*, and *Rodney Waschka* follow.

From Elaine Lillios:

I served as Larry Austin's final doctoral graduate assistant at the University of North Texas from 1994-96. I have many memories from that time and the years following, since we remained close after his retirement. One of my responsibilities as Larry's graduate assistant was serving as UNIX systems administrator for the studios, and most particularly of the NeXTcube that housed the ICMA board email list. That system could NEVER GO DOWN, since the ICMA board list was "absolutely vital" and Larry was very particular about it. I spent many sleepless nights getting the system back up and running after a crash, hoping Larry would never find out that the ICMA board email list went offline. Believe it or not, this was a coveted position at UNT in the mid-90's; being the caretaker of the ICMA board list was a very important job and one that I took very seriously, along with my other responsibilities, as Larry was quite particular about many things including the tidiness of the studios, and accuracy in concert production. It's from him that I learned many significant lessons about what it means to be a professional in the field of "computer music." Among my favorite memories are composition lessons with Larry, where he liked to share anecdotes, especially about his work with John Cage and Merce Cunningham on Larry's piece *Beachcombers*. Larry always started anecdotes with "I remember back in 19xx, when I was doing such and such with so and so..." and on the story would go. One of my favorite stories of his was one he liked to tell about meeting people who would ask what he did for a living. He would say, "I'm a composer," which of course prompted the inquiry "Oh, what kind of music do you compose?" to which Larry would always respond "Why, beautiful music, of course." Larry leaves behind a great legacy as an electroacoustic composer and mentor. We thank him for his pioneering spirit in creating "Source Magazine" and The Consortium to Distribute Computer Music (CDCM) CD series, and also for his service to ICMA and contributions to SEAMUS and our community at large. Larry certainly had his quirks (who will clear their throat at SEAMUS concerts during quiet moments now?) but was fiercely loyal and dedicated to all of us. He was proud of his colleagues, students, and grand-students, many of whom are now regular contributors to our SEAMUS community. I'm thankful to have been Larry's student and to have learned from someone who dedicated his life to promoting our music and community. It's due in great part to Larry's influence that I am the composer, teacher, and very particular mentor that I am today. May Larry's memory live on in his music, and in our music as we continue forward in this wide world of sound and experimentation.



From Cort Lippe:

I first met Larry in March of 1975 while he was on the faculty of the University of South Florida in my home town of Tampa, Florida. I was studying composition at Florida State University in Tallahassee and was in Tampa visiting my family. Larry had organized an enormous experimental music festival called "Interface" (at least that is my memory of the festival's name), that lasted for almost two weeks and included such luminaries as Sal Martirano, Ed London, Joel Chadabe, Stephen Montague, Jerry Hunt and many, many others. The festival had everything: pieces with live electronics, real-time computer music, a wired, interactive dance piece, multimedia, theater, etc. I ended up missing some days of classes to attend every concert, of which there must have been more than 20. Larry starting speaking to me, I guess since he saw me at every concert, and was so friendly and open that I began to think about changing schools to study with him. I managed to make the transfer a year later and spent an intense year studying analog electronic music, computer music, and composition with Larry before he moved to Denton. I wish it could have been longer, but since I took all of his classes, exclusively, (the school was on the quarter system, so I took 4 classes with him the first quarter, and three each in the other two quarters) my contact with him was intense, and included generous invitations to his home, where he and Edna hosted friends, including John Cage and Robert Rauschenberg, among others. As the year progressed, I understood that he was considering a move to Texas, and while I secretly wished he would stay in Florida, I could see that he and Edna were excited about the opportunity. That year was unforgettable, but more importantly, Larry continued to offer me encouragement and support throughout my life. It is impossible to summarize what we learn from our most important teachers, but that year was, to paraphrase the last line of the film *Casablanca*, "the beginning of a beautiful friendship."

From Eric Lyon:

It was sad to lose Larry Austin on the cusp of 2019. I first met Larry in Japan in the early 1990s, when he was working at the Kunitachi College of Music. Spatial computer music was a central topic in our initial conversations. Larry was working on multichannel music at the time, along with a set of cityscape pieces based on his Tokyo field recordings. It was a very different approach to computer music than what I was familiar with at the time, even though we were using many of the same tools (Cmix, Csound, rt, and NeXT computers). That first meeting gave me a lot to think about.

I came to know Larry better over the years, and found him to be an intense, super-supportive colleague, and brilliant raconteur with some of the best recollections of avant-garde music and its most colorful characters from the 1960s forward. His editorial work on *Source* magazine was essential, and remains an important part of his legacy.

Larry had a big, brash personality, backed up by deep knowledge of the art and craft of electroacoustic music. He made being an avant-garde composer look like a ton of fun. He was also, I think, a very social composer. It is notable that there were so many homages in his oeuvre, such as "Williams re[Mix]ed" which reworked materials from John Cage's seminal "Williams Mix," "Life Pulse Prelude," based on sketches from Charles Ives's unfinished "Universe Symphony" (Larry created a performance version of the Symphony itself in 1994), and "SoundPoem/Set," computer music based on Larry's recorded conversations with American experimental composers such as Pauline Oliveros and Jerry Hunt. With our loss of Larry, we lose one more connection to the spirit of the mid-20th century avant-garde, which was so different from our current cultural moment.

From Rodney Waschka:

Larry Austin's thoughts about music and life existed and developed on a grand scale.

As his student, I was constantly surprised and impressed by his way of making big piece after big piece. It seemed to me that he asked himself, "What could music be?" or "What else could music be?" over and over and managed to continually find new and interesting answers to that question. His realization of Ives' Universe Symphony, his 107-minute Transmission Two: The Great Excursion, for chorus, computer music ensemble, and recorded dialogue, his geographically expansive Canadian Coastlines (performed live for radio with musicians in different parts of Canada), and many other pieces bear witness to his large-scale vision. He also supported the big pieces and big ideas of others. He and Thomas Clark mounted a multi-level performance in the indoor "courtyard" of the Student Union of Cage and Hiller's HPSCHD for the 1981 International Computer Music Conference (ICMC) at the University of North Texas (UNT). That is one example. In a way, the whole of Source Magazine provides another.

Usually his music had little concern with mere "prettiness", but sometimes it could be downright gorgeous on many levels. His tribute to Cage, ...art is self-alteration is Cage is... is a witty piece of visual art that opens up a luxurious sound world in performance. It also shows his mastery of open form – one of the formal techniques that he utilized in many of his works.

For me to try to recount all of the Larry Austin stories I witnessed or heard Larry (or his wife Edna) tell would keep readers and SEAMUS lawyers up far too late tonight. Some, in a different telling, appear in Thomas Clark's biography of Austin. There are several stories related to the selection, performance, and recording of his Improvisations for Orchestra and Jazz Soloists by Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic, many stories about Larry's subversive (and justified) behavior – musical and otherwise, stories about his teaching techniques, his conducting, his interactions with colleagues (Cage, Stockhausen, Feldman, and on and on), heartbreaks (Larry and Edna lost two children), and struggles of various types – from surviving a plane crash to life-threatening illnesses.

SEAMUS readers will know Larry Austin through his electronic and computer music pieces, his founding of the Consortium to Distribute Computer Music (CDCM), his leadership as board member and President of the International Computer Music Association (ICMA), and as the 2009 recipient of the SEAMUS Award.

I will limit myself to one story, that may seem a small thing, but that shows Larry's dedication to his art, his teaching, and our community of musicians. At the same time that he was President of the ICMA and Director of CDCM, I served as a Research Assistant at the University of North Texas (1988-90). Sales and distribution of the ICMC Proceedings had been moved to the University and I was assigned (among many other duties) to processing and shipping orders. Meanwhile, Larry had converted a bedroom of his house into the shipping center for orders of CDCM discs. So, sometimes I would work in a storage room off the Merrill Ellis Intermedia Theater (MEIT) at UNT on ICMA orders – dealing with payments, pulling stock, boxing, taping and shipping – and other times I would go over to his house in Denton to work on the CDCM orders.

One of the CDCM discs had a misprint on the back tray insert. Fortunately, it was black print on white stock, so Larry carefully prepared a correction that was printed on a larger sticker. In a time-consuming process, after removing the shrink wrap, disassembling the CD case, and taking out the tray insert, one could then cut out an odd-shaped printed correction and finally, cautiously, slowly stick the correction over the misprint, reassemble the CD case, put it through a shrink-wrapper and have a corrected CD ready to ship out.

To my surprise, almost every time I went to work in either location, Larry would show up to help. Of course he mostly knew when I was in his house (sometimes Edna would let me in), but how did he know when I went into that storage room off the MEIT? He would tell me stories of Source, of performances and recordings, of treachery and betrayal, of naiveté and errors on his part; he would talk about his family, and, of course, many times we would just talk music as we worked. His willingness to help with these mundane tasks showed me a dedication to trying to make great art and great artifacts, despite the inevitable mistakes. I often now recognize the same dedication in our musical community, but am disappointed to find so little of it in our financial, educational, commercial, governmental and other institutions. While Larry Austin lived in a musical world of grand scale, he understood the necessary small-scale efforts needed to do fine work and to teach young, naïve, foolish composers.



Austin talking about his completion of Ives's [Universe Symphony](#), in advance of its premiere by the Nashville Symphony at Carnegie Hall on May 12, 2012.



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