

emusic@bennington presents

"on the couch"

new electronic works in 5.1 surround sound

Monday, December 9th, 2013, 8.00 pm
Deane Carriage Barn

Hysterests a.k.a. "how are you today"

Carlos Torres

Hysteresis is a mathematical modeling concept. It refers to the dependence of a system not only on its current environment, but also on its past environment. This dependence arises because the system can be in more than one internal state. This composition deals with the internal and personal through the musically abstract. When composing this piece I found myself subject to the changes around me; Was I having a bad week? Was I sad? Was I happy? *Hysteresis a.k.a. "how are you, today?"* is a reaction to my creative process, my continuous struggle with wanting to find structure and order in electronic musical expression, while still allowing myself to create musical gestures that simply 'feel right'. All sounds were generated with a Roland GAIA synthesizer, except an occasional recording of the wind. The piece is divided into 2 sections, each section ending with an almost orchestral moment of emotional elation. The timbres change over time, reacting to what was before and to what's coming next. Through changes in volume and intensity, and a sure sense of sonic flow, the piece attempts to mimic my personal changes in mood, purpose, outlook, etc.

CRTV

Fae Blackmer

This piece was conceived during a time when I felt as though my creative ability had gone away: I had to figure out *why I do what I do*. All I thought about for the whole term was concepts and processes - if things were good or bad. I reached a point where I decided the things I thought about were all bad. One day in the studio I tried to remedy this problem by searching on youtube: 'How to be creative'. The results were very serious. Some people believe that creativity stems from practicing being creative; others said the only way to be creative was if you were born that way. In my piece, CRTV, I made a journey to clarity. The first word in fact is creative. I have muddled it so it is barely audible, the same way I felt I was thinking earlier in the term. The sample of a forest fire comes after the question, 'How do I increase and improve my ability to practice creative visualization?' The fire represents this question as a 'burning question' and is followed by a statement, 'How to practice creative thinking.' Then there is a mash of small phrases like, 'shape and form, rhythm and color' and so on. This ends with, 'all working together', with no filtering and no other audio processing. The piece is humorous to me because, after all, I think that being creative is a combination of practice and intuition.

Coalmine/Canary

Hannah Rose

In mining's earlier days, miners brought canaries underground with them to test for impurities in the air. As long as the canary kept singing, it meant that the environment was safe but, the moment it stopped, it was time for the miners to evacuate. Coalmine/Canary begins with the sound of a single canary singing in an undefined space, simple and quite sweet. Then we hear the menacing sound of fumes roiling in the background. The sound of a warning siren surfaces, signaling approaching danger and, at this point, the canary's song becomes more urgent. The canary's song is all but drowned out when the composition reaches its climax at the collapse of the mine. The sounds of the deadly fumes is also created from canary song transformed into "vapor" through the use of pitch accumulation and spectral evolution. The warning siren was transformed with granulation and resonance. The idea was for it to sound like a canary but, as it grows louder, begin to show its true, deadlier form. The mine's final collapse is illustrated by two simultaneous explosions, reversed in time, so that the reverberation usually following a crash instead precedes it, making for a cruel, abrupt ending.

The Universe is Sad

Dan Winger

To be precise, the universe is a lot of things, but we must not forget its sadness. Chew on that while you listen to field recordings of wind chimes taken in Austin, TX last Winter. They are played forward and backward along with some chordal musings on a vintage Casio keyboard. The keyboard was intentionally recorded as it was almost out of battery power. The insufficient electricity traveling to the keyboard's speaker diaphragm creates unexpected textures and distortion; thus, it is a kind of hybrid instrument: electronic, yet subject to the chaos of the mechanical universe.

a valley

Alec Gear

These sounds have been sourced from photographs of manipulated light, edited so that they only show the colors yellow, green, and red. These edited images have been used as the basis for graphic sound synthesis in MetaSynth: waves of light translated into waves of sound.

Sam's Bath

Sam Irwin

This piece is meant to capture the environment whilst I am taking a bath. I use recordings of myself walking, taking off my clothes, doors opening and closing, running water, a fountain, and vocal sounds. I also use: "Hot in Here" by Nelly and "Softly Beams the Sacred Dawning" by the Seattle Experimental Opera. The first harmonic sound in the piece is the sample of a fountain. It is processed with pitch accumulation and equalization. The second harmonic sound heard is the sound of a different fountain also with pitch accumulation and equalizer. The composition begins with Nelly's "Hot in Here". This sample is re-used later on but is then processed with pitch accumulation and time reversal. After these samples are heard the "Softly Beams the Sacred Dawning" sample appears which is again processed with pitch accumulation and equalizer. At this point, the harmonic fountain sounds begin to change creating a melody. The piece ends with a high, frequency shifted sample of the original fountain fading into the first melodic sound heard in the piece.

The Doors

Dan Wininger

A piece inspired by the vocal quality of the creaks, squeaks, and groans that doors make. All sounds in this piece, including the percussive sounds, are door sounds gathered from doors in Jennings -- and one in Dewey. Playing and recording a door is an acquired skill: it requires patience and finesse. The audio processing of the doors aims to bring out the emotions embedded in them. Do doors have souls? Do their cries resemble those of birds of prey? of human babies? of distressed ruminants? Doors have seen a lot. Perhaps they tell stories through their vocalizations.

... pause ...

Started From The Couch Now We're Here

Benny Boaz

Attack, Decay, Sustain, Release. These are the four elements that bring to life the conceptual world of sound. The ADSR envelope has, for me, transformed this world into a visual interpretation of all that is audible. As I have continued to explore the intricacies of envelope design throughout this term, I have developed an attraction to specific noises that resemble the forming of a liquid drip. In attempting to digitally recreate this bubble-like sound through the virtual synthesizer program Massive, I became fascinated with the transformations that occur when this sound is treated with pitch automation and low frequency oscillations. My piece serves as an invitation for listeners to join in my exploration of sound-design as we move through a composition that spans all 3 spectrum types: the harmonic, the inharmonic and the continuous. Hoping to capture the true nature of each sound, I divided my piece into three distinct sections that are structurally sewn together through a persistent reintroduction of the bubble-like envelope. In fact, the second sound is a sustained version of this envelope heavily processed with low frequency oscillations and pitch changes. This sound subtly continues throughout the composition's three seemingly disparate sections. Spatialization and delay techniques were employed to animate sounds by moving them through time and space. In order to successfully express the concepts and processes behind my work, it was important that my piece remained minimal and under-embellished.

Delay Play

Dan Wininger

This piece is based on the multifarious sounds produced while making vocal sounds into a delay / loop pedal. Much of the processing was done live through the pedal. Some after-effects were employed. Some harmonic textures using the GAIA synthesizer were also added.

Space Jam (Celestial Wail)

Sam Popkin

Space Jam (Celestial Wail) is comprised of star sounds made possible by astrophysicists who gathered granulations of light from a star's surface and then converted this information into sound. All sounds used were made from real stars and manipulated only slightly in Protools for a listening experience. The last sound heard is a Pulsar, a highly magnetized, rotating neutron star that emits a beam of electromagnetic radiation. You will hear these stars (not in order): 1. Neutron Star; 2. Rapidly Oscillating Ap Star (RoAp): HR 3831-A; 3. Dwarf Star; 4. Pulsar (collapsed core of the star, rotating with a period of 11 times per second). All sounds were mixed in Protools 9 using GRM Tools, equalization and compression. Spatialization was created with 5.1 Dolby Surround.

Prayer Wheels

Isaac Wostrel-Rubin

Inspired by prayer wheels designed to release the mantra of great compassion to the world through being spun. This piece utilizes the sounds of the mantra of great compassion, Om Mani Padme Hum, and a spinning wheel. The sounds are modulated to change pitch and to reverberate. Time compression and expansion were used to align each syllable of the mantra with the spokes of the turning wheels. May it be auspicious!

Pika-Don

Zenji Oguri

The Japanese word Pikadon was created after the dropping of the atomic bomb. PIKA being the sound of the flash of light and DON the following boom. Like the word Pikadon itself, most of Japanese culture today is in some way connected to World War II. Western ideas were transplanted to a country that had tried to repel foreign influence for hundreds of years, resulting in a cultural mutation that changed the identity of Japan. With the demilitarization of Japan came emasculation. Capitalism created a hyper-consumerist culture and the memory of the bomb evokes haunting images while explosions are fetishized in animation. The first section of the piece is a recording of a Japanese bamboo flute, the shakuhachi, the second is composed of digitally constructed sounds and the third is a collage of Japanese pop music.

Dan Roninson, sound projection

A heartfelt thanks to all who assisted in the production of this concert!