## **COMPOSITION - EXPERIMENT - TRADITION:**

ORCIM]

An experimental tradition. A compositional experiment. A traditional composition. An experimental composition. A traditional experiment. A compositional tradition.

## **Orpheus Research Centre in Music [ORCiM]**

22-23 February 2012, Orpheus Institute, Ghent Belgium

The fourth International ORCiM Seminar organised at the Orpheus Institute offers an opportunity for an international group of contributors to explore specific aspects of ORCiM's research focus: Artistic Experimentation in Music. The theme of the conference is: Composition – Experiment – Tradition.

This two-day international seminar aims at exploring the complex role of experimentation in the context of compositional practice and the artistic possibilities that its different approaches yield for practitioners and audiences. How these practices inform, or are informed by, historical, cultural, material and geographical contexts will be a recurring theme of this seminar.

The seminar is particularly directed at composers and music practitioners working in areas of research linked to artistic experimentation.

Organising Committee ORCiM Seminar 2012: William Brooks (U.K.), Kathleen Coessens (Belgium), Stefan Östersjö (Sweden), Juan Parra (Chile/Belgium)

## Orpheus Research Centre in Music [ORCiM]

The Orpheus Research Centre in Music is based at the Orpheus Institute in Ghent, Belgium. ORCiM's mission is to produce and promote the highest quality research into music, and in particular into the processes of music-making and our understanding of them.

ORCIM provides a strong and supportive research environment generating new knowledge in-and-through musical practice. ORCIM is built around accomplished artist-researchers who have worked together for several years and have produced substantial research outcomes: publications, recordings, compositions and performances. In addition, ORCIM has built a strong international network comprising relevant institutions and individual artist researchers, and continues to attract visiting experts to contribute to this dynamic research environment.

For the period 2010-2013 the research focus for ORCiM will be: Artistic Experimentation in Music (for more information, visit <a href="http://www.orpheusinstituut.be/en/research-centre-orcim/research-projects">http://www.orpheusinstituut.be/en/research-centre-orcim/research-projects</a>).



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# **Schedule**

## Wednesday February 22 2012

| Registration  |
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| Welcome by <b>Peter Dejans</b>  |
| Introduction by William Brooks  |
| Keynote speech by <b>Richard Barrett</b> , From experimentation to  |
| construction  |
| Q&A   |
| Coffee break  |
| SESSION 1: IMPROVISATION  |
| Chair: Stefan Östersjö   Concert hall   |
| 16.00-16.25: Steve Tromans, Affecting, Evoking, Remembering:  |
| Composing Notated Parts for Expert Improvising Jazz Musicians   |
| 16.30-16.55: Alejandro Olarte, Andrew Bentley, James Andean,  |
| Hidden Control Lines – a performance/presentation   |
| 17.00-17.25: David Horne, Improvisation as Composition/   |
| Composition as Improvisation  |
| 17.30-18.00: Panel feedback (response Stefan Östersjö and open  |
| floor)  |
| Dinner (own arrangements)   |
| Concert by Richard Craig (flute) and Carl Rosman (clarinet) with Juan Parra (live electronics); pieces by L. Nono, H. Lachenmann, C. Czernowin and R. Barrett |
|   |

# Thursday February 23 2012

| 9.30-10.30  | Keynote speech by <b>Chaya Czernowin,</b> The art of risk taking:  Experimentation, invention and discovery   |
|-------------|---|
| 10.30-10.45 | Q&A   |
| 10.45-11.15 | Coffee break  |
| 11.15-13.10 | SESSION 2: HISTORICAL APPROACHES  Chair: Kathleen Coessens   Concert hall  11.15-11.35: Bob Gilmore, Mapping the experimental world  11.40-12.00: Jeroen D'hoe, Stephan Weytjens, Dirk Moelants,  Illusive Sound Phenomena in Contemporary Music: Analysis,  Composition, Perception  12.05-12.25: Svetlana Maras, Thingification of compositional  process: Emergence and autonomy of extra-musical object in  Western art music  12.30-12.50: Steven M. Miller, Peter Edwards, Reinterpreting the  American Experimental tradition  12.50-13.10: Panel feedback (response William Brooks and open |
| 13.10-14.10 | floor) Lunch (own arrangements)   |
| 14.10-16.20 | SESSION 3: COMPOSERS ON THEIR WORK  Chair: Juan Parra   Auditorium (3 <sup>rd</sup> floor) and concert hall  14.10-14.30: Roi Nachshon, From relations of exteriority to a relatable internal behaviour  14.35-14.55: Patricia Alessandrini, Composition as re-transcription, interpretation and performance  14.55-15.15: small break (& move to the concert hall)  15.15-15.35: Aaron Cassidy, I Am An Experimental Composer  15.40-16.00: Frederik Croene, Roll over Czerny  16.00-16.20: Panel Feedback (response Richard Barrett and open floor)   |
| 16.20-16.40 | Closing remarks by <b>Chaya Czernowin, Richard Barrett</b> and <b>William Brooks</b>  |

# **Abstracts & biographies**

### Keynote

#### **Richard Barrett**

#### From experimentation to construction

This presentation will consist of three main parts. Firstly I make some general comments about experimentation as it relates or could relate to compositional practice, and to define some terms. Secondly I develop these ideas further as they relate to my own practice as a composer. Thirdly I examine the specific application of these ideas, how central they are, how they are realised, and of course how they are made perceptible, in a recent composition of mine which was given its first performance three months ago.

**RICHARD BARRETT** (1959) is internationally active as both composer and improvising performer, and has collaborated with many leading performers in both areas, while developing works and ideas which increasingly leave behind the distinctions between them. His long-term collaborations include the electronic duo FURT which he formed with Paul Obermayer in 1986 (and its more recent octet version fORCH), composing for and performing with the Elision contemporary music group since 1990, and regular appearances with the Evan Parker Electro-Acoustic Ensemble since 2003. Recent projects include "CONSTRUCTION", a two-hour work for twenty-three performers and three-dimensional sound system, premiered by Elision in November 2011. He studied composition principally with Peter Wiegold, is based in Berlin and currently teaches at the Institute of Sonology in The Hague, having previously held a professorship at Brunel University in London. His work as composer and performer is documented on over 25 CDs, including five discs devoted to his compositions and seven by FURT.

## **Steve Tromans**

# Affecting, Evoking, Remembering: Composing Notated Parts for Expert Improvising Jazz Musicians.

[T]he primacy of the affective is marked by a gap between content and effect: it would appear that the strength or duration of an image's effect is not logically connected to the content in any straightforward way.

- Brian Massumi (2002: 24).

Perception is nothing but an occasion for remembering.
- Henri Bergson, in Guerlac (2006: 213).

This presentation is concerned with the 'problem' of incorporating notated materials in events of music-making in performance in (so-called) 'free' improvising in jazz. It is focused specifically on my recent, ongoing, practice-as-research concerning the processes involved in composing notated parts for a new work, *Remembering Bird*<sup>1</sup>. This work, experimenting with the 'traditions' of WAM notations and their utilisation in jazz performance practice, is being written for my new trio project (myself on piano, Jim Bashford, drumkit, and Colin Mills, baritone saxophone), and is to be premiered in March 2012 at the Yardbird Jazz Club, Birmingham (UK). The members of this new trio are known, professionally, for the ability to make music without the use of notated parts, both personally and collectively.

The practice-as-research 'problem', then, in terms of composing notations for these particular musicians, can be articulated as follows: Given these musicians' preference for working without notated parts in events of music-making in performance, how best can such parts be introduced into their personalised, professional, music-making processes, in order to potentially 'affect' the music-making in a 'positive' manner – contributing to, rather than constraining, the collective music-making in performance? In other words, given the constitutively 'freeform' nature of music-making in 'free' jazz and improvising music, how can such notated parts be composed, in order to convey compositional 'information' (to 'in-form' the music-making), whilst at the same time respecting the creative process of each of the performers as expert improvisers, and to the group collectively, in events of performance?

Drawing on the philosophical writings of two contemporary theorists – Brian Massumi on a deleuzian notion of affect, and Suzanne Guerlac's return to Bergson on memory and perception – this presentation will endeavour to model, in 'multi-modal' fashion (i.e., mixing audio, visual, textual, and music-making 'modes' of presentation), the practice-as-research work involved in the composing of *Remembering Bird*. Ultimately, an 'evocative' dimension of notated parts will be posited, and its pertinence beyond the immediate context of the work-in-progress will be speculated upon, with possible implications for our understandings of the composition of, and performance with, notated parts in *other* music-disciplinary fields.

The presentation will include live music-making, by myself on solo piano, with certain of the compositional notations of *Remembering Bird*.

#### References

Guerlac, Suzanne. Thinking in Time: An Introduction to Henri Bergson. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2006. Massumi, Brian. Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation. Durham: Duke University Press. 2002. Tromans, Steve. Remembering Bird. Unpublished work-in-progress.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> 'Bird', or 'Yardbird', was the nickname of the bebop saxophonist and composer, Charlie Parker. The notated parts for *Remembering Bird* utilise, amongst other, more 'experimental', compositional 'elements', melodic and rhythmic patterns from certain of Parker's compositions. The venue for the premiere of my new work is also named in honour of Charlie 'Yardbird' Parker.



**STEVE TROMANS** is a professional musician (composer and pianist) working in the interrelated fields of jazz and improvising music. He is currently completing a PhD studentship at Middlesex University in London, investigating expertise in jazz music-making in a series of practice-as-research projects. (Further info: <a href="https://www.steve-tromans.co.uk">www.steve-tromans.co.uk</a>.)

## James Andean Andrew Bentley Alejandro Olarte

#### Hidden Control Lines – a performance/presentation

We have been part of a research group at the Centre for Music & Technology of the Sibelius Academy, which, over the last two years, has been exploring issues surrounding the grey area between composition and improvisation. Central questions have included:

- The use of pre-determined structural elements in improvisation, or other combination of defined compositional parameters within an improvisation context; and
- Communication of evolving structural or formal intentions within an improvisation context.

Other key issues constantly being explored by the group's members include:

- Meaningful methods of interaction between acoustic and electronic sources, including the use of the latter as treatments for the former, in terms of compositional elements on the one hand, and performance tools on the other; and
- The use of traditionally non- or extra-musical objects and elements as performance tools, redefining and adapting both 'instrument' and 'object' according to the constantly evolving needs of the moment and the work.

For this seminar, we propose a presentation/performance, which explores some of the issues outlined above. This will be based around a trio performance for sounding objects and electronics, which will include the use of predefined parameter mappings inspired in part by Morton Subotnick's concept of 'ghost electronics'. Automation lines and curves will be prepared or generated, which will then be applied to a set of digital sound processing units – frequency and amplitude modulation, sampling, filtering, spectral modelling synthesis, and delay lines – which are then mapped to synthesis and treatment parameters. While key aspects of this automation will thus be conceived and prepared in advance, the results will of course be heavily determined by the improvised performance to which these are applied, which will in turn affect not only their combined results, but also the subsequent choices by the performing musicians, in terms of both the materials they develop, and the manners in which they choose to reflect and interact with the electronics. Thus, while these are prepared in advance, their 'meaning' is only determined in the course of performance, creating an interesting paradox in which the electronics shape the live sound, but the live sound spontaneously assigns both role and identity to the electronics.

In this manner, such a technique expands upon common classifications of interaction (f.ex. Lewis' 'strong' and 'weak' degrees) by combining a system that cannot know or analyze its input, with a series of pre-compositional decisions that determine processes, thus allowing for a supple formal development which combines the structural possibilities of composition with the flexibility and spontaneity of improvisation, while simultaneously redefining the roles of the performing agents.



**JAMES ANDEAN** is a musician and sound artist. He is active as a performer and composer in a range of fields, including electroacoustic composition and performance, improvisation, sound installation, and sound recording. He is a founding member of the improvisation and new music quartet The Rank Ensemble and of the sound collective Resonator Helsinki. He has performed in Finland, Sweden, Russia, Germany, Italy and Canada, and his works have been performed in Finland, Norway, Russia, Portugal, Canada and China. James currently teaches sound production at the North Karelia University of Applied Science, and is completing a doctorate at the Centre for Music & Technology of the Sibelius Academy, in Helsinki, Finland.

**LUIS ALEJANDRO OLARTE** is an electroacoustic musician. He is a doctoral candidate developing pedagogical tools for live electronics and improvisation at the Centre for Music and Technology of the Sibelius Academy, supervised by Dr. Andrew Bentley. He studied Guitar and Electroacoustic Music in Colombia, and Generative Improvisation and Musical Acoustics at the National Conservatory of Paris under the guidance of composers Alain Savouret and Charles Besnaionou. He studied Computer Music with Horacio Vaggione and Anne Sedes at Paris University. Olarte works as a freelance artist in Helsinki, performing and teaching, and is interested in cross-disciplinary collaborations with dancers and actors.

**ANDREW BENTLEY** (b. 1952, Fleetwood, UK) studied at York University 1970-76, completing a doctorate in music in 1981. He has taught electroacoustic music and music technology for 35 years at universities in Finland and England and participated in developing studios at Finnish Radio, Helsinki University and the Sibelius Academy. He was a founder director of the Composers Desktop Project in York 1985 and was involved in establishing the first degree programme in pop music in the UK. He is currently teacher at the Centre for Music & Technology of the Sibelius Academy. He performs electroacoustic music with many well known Finnish musicians and electroacoustic performance art as a duo called Son Panic with Juhani Liimatainen.

#### **David Horne**

#### Improvisation as Composition /Composition as Improvisation

The boundaries separating improvisation and composition are consistently blurred, often contested and possibly eventually spurious: their ability to inform each other is frequently exploited, but seldom subjected to close analysis by practitioners. Uniting an oboist/composer (Melinda Maxwell) and a composer/pianist (David Horne), our research project explores improvisation, transcription, reinterpretation, composition and re-composition as essential partners in our creative collaborative work. Our research asks questions such as: what roles do pre-negotiated parameters take in the improvisation process?; what role can transcription play as a tool for analysing composition and performance?; and what is improvisation's potential for inspiring notated composition? In a series of video documented experimental sessions we have examined improvisation as a compositional event and explored transcribed notation as a means of re-evaluating our improvisational and performance strategies, using them to inspire new compositions. Beginning with a series of improvisations from various stimuli (including no direction whatsoever), these were later transcribed and subsequently reinterpreted. The transcription process itself was intensely creative and inspired further composition. Analysis of the musical material from the improvisations demonstrated significant compositional strategies, albeit subconscious. These impacted on the material employed in the recompositions. Notation as a rich vehicle for interpretive suggestion was explored in both the transcription and re-composition processes. In transcription, how could rhythm and meter be employed as a means of recreating the initial freedom inherent in the improvisation sessions? Delivered by David Horne, this presentation will outline our entire creative project to date from the composer's perspective through the use of audio, video and textual material.

With over ninety published works, Scottish composer **DAVID HORNE** has received commissions from major soloists, orchestras and ensembles including Evelyn Glennie, Scottish Opera, BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Sinfonetta, Nash Ensemble and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. His music is frequently commissioned and performed abroad, including recently at festivals in Berlin, Paris, Rome, Singapore and Strasbourg. He studied in the USA, both at the Curtis Institute (BMus, 1993) and Harvard University (PhD, 1999). He is active as a pianist and won the piano section of BBC Young Musician of the Year (1988). David is highly sought after as a workshop leader/educator and has lead projects for the London Sinfonietta, BCMG, SPNM, Aldeburgh Festival and Wigmore Hall. He was composer in association with the RLPO from 2000-2003, led the New Music/New Media course for the Britten-Pears School in 2004 and from 2006/07 was a visiting professor at the Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya. All his compositions are published by Boosey and Hawkes and he has been recorded on BMG and NMC labels among others. He is a Lecturer in Music at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, UK, where he supervises research students and teaches at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

#### **Keynote**

#### **Chaya Czernowin**

#### The art of risk taking: Experimentation, invention and discovery

The paper tries to figure out the connection between experimentation to invention and to discovery. It looks at different types risk taking as agents leading towards invention on the one hand or discovery on the other, and tries to figure out how the various modalities of risk and experimentation merge or diverge.

**CHAYA CZERNOWIN** (1957) was born in Israel. She studied at the Rubin Academy in Tel Aviv, in Berlin and at UCSD. Invitations to Japan 93-95, and to Akademie Schloss Solitude, Germany, 96 have followed. In addition to her chamber music and orchestral works, Czernowin wrote 2 operas: *Pnima...ins Innere* for the Munich Biennale 2000, and *Adama*, a counterpoint work for Mozart's *Zaide* for Salzburg festival. Pnima was named "Best Premiere of 2000" by the critic's survey of Opernwelt. Zaide/Adama was broadcast on ARD TV and recorded on Deutsche Gramophone.

Czernowin was Artist in residence at Salzburg festival 2005/6 and will be Artist in residence at Lucern Festival 2013. She taught composition at JML Institute Tokyo, and at the Darmstadt Summer Courses between 94-10, was professor of music at UCSD 97-05 and at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna 06-09. Since 2009 she is Walter Bigelow Rosen Professor of Music at Harvard University. She has taught at the Summer Academy/ Schloss Solitude since 2003. Among other prizes, Czernowin was awarded the America israel Felllowships 79-82; she represented Israel at Uncesco composer's Rostorum 1981; DAAD scholarship 83-85; UCSD fellowships 87-93; Kranichsteiner Musikpreis , Darmstadt Fereinkurse, 1992: Asahi Shimbun and American NEA Fellowships 94/95; Akademie Schloss Solitude fellowship 1996; IRCAM reading panel commission 1998; scholarships of SWR experimental Studio Freiburg 98/00/ 01; ISCM 95/01; Bavarian Theater Prize 2000; The composer's prize of Siemens Foundation 2003; the Rockefeller Foundation, 2004; a nomination as a fellow to the Wissenschaftkolleg Berlin in 2008; Fromm Foundation Award 2009; and Guggenheim Foundation fellowship 2011. She is published by Schott.

#### **Bob Gilmore**

#### Mapping the experimental world

John Cage's famous definition of an experimental action, "an action the outcome of which is not foreseen", has been variously embraced, expanded upon, qualified, and rejected by the several generations of experimental musicians who have come after him. Cage may not have coined the term "experimental music" but for several decades he was its most enthusiastic and celebrated proponent. He was also one of its earliest chroniclers, seeking to establish what the historian Eric Hobsbawm called an "invented tradition" of which he himself was a part. By the 1970s the idea of an "experimental tradition" in music, however oxymoronic it sounds, was firmly established in the minds of composers, performers and, a little later, audiences.

In this paper, following the work of art historian Howard Becker, I argue that the construction of an experimental music "world" (more colloquially, an experimental music "scene") is only possible through a dynamic relationship between powerful agents and mediating factors. If the agents in this case have mostly been composers, the mediating factors comprise a complex network of organisations, foundations, academic institutions, private patrons, venues, publishers, publicists, critics, chroniclers, websites and so on. The experimental music world is sustained, ideologically and practically, by a network of people who collectively regulate patterns of dissemination and consumption. While this has many positive sides – for example the increasing attention paid to the work of important figures like Alvin Lucier, Robert Ashley, James Tenney, Eliane Radigue and others – the drawback is that quite a lot of what gets called (and packaged as) experimental music is not really experimental, because, paradoxically, it fits neatly within the practices of the experimental tradition. Genuinely experimental work, the work that takes risks and asks provocative new questions about method, material, and working practices, remains as rare as ever.

I will offer some reflections on the networks that sustain today's experimental music world and conclude with a brief discussion of the work of some younger artists whose experimental work seems to lie outside the established confines of even this recently invented tradition.

**BOB GILMORE** is a musicologist and keyboard player born in Northern Ireland and presently living in Amsterdam. He studied at York University, England, Queens University Belfast, and, on a Fulbright Scholarship, at the University of California, San Diego. He is author of *Harry Partch: a biography* (Yale University Press, 1998), a study of the revolutionary American composer, theorist and instrument builder; and editor of *Ben Johnston: Maximum Clarity and other Writings on Music* (University of Illinois Press, 2006), a collection of writings on microtonality by one of Partch's principal students. Both books were recipients of the ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award 'for works of excellence on American music'. More recently he has written about spectral music and is presently completing a much-awaited biography of the French-Canadian composer Claude Vivier. He also writes regularly about the new music scene in his native country, Ireland, and has contributed liner notes to new music CDs on labels such as Mode, Nonesuch, New World Records, NMC, Touch, Coviello Classics, Unsounds, Orange Mountain Music, Sub Rosa, CPO, and many others. He is founder and keyboard player of Trio Scordatura, an Amsterdam-based ensemble specialising in microtonal music. He teaches at Brunel University in London.

## Jeroen D'hoe Stephan Weytjens Dirk Moelants

#### Illusive Sound Phenomena in Contemporary Music: Analysis – Composition – Perception

This paper, in the context of the CREA research project "Researching innovative strategies towards 'illusive' sound-process composition" (Lemmensinstituut & KULeuven), highlights its study and production of analytical and compositional strategies (ARTISTIC EXPERIMENTATION) regarding ILLUSORY SOUND PROCESSES, and draws attention to its integration of artistic (composition, music analysis) and scientific (perceptual psychology) research areas.

In contemporary composition, the unambiguous coherence between different musical parameters can be purposely broken apart and, consequently, be rendered diffuse (asynchronous, ambiguous, indistinct), in order to create ground-breaking 'illusive' sound manifestations, which seemingly 'transcend' their limiting physical premises (e.g., CIRCULAR ILLUSIONS of continuously ascending/descending tone scales and endlessly accelerating/decelerating rhythmic pulses). Such 'illusive' musical manifestations can be related to psycho-acoustic experiments by Roger Shepard (1964), Jean-Claude Risset (1964) and Diana Deutsch (1974).

In accordance with the CREA project's 'design-through-research' and 'research-through-design' dynamic, this paper will deal with the following three subjects:

- (1) ANALYSIS of musical illusions: by means of analyses of selected music examples, the manners in which acoustic illusions can serve as departure points for experimental musical composition will be investigated. Whereas some recent compositions may have been directly inspired by the abovementioned psycho-acoustic experiments, other music examples—sometimes even dating from long before these experiments—are rather to be interpreted as free 'analogies' to these acoustic illusions.
- (2) COMPOSITION of 'illusive' sound samples: in the course of the research project, a number of new models have been designed and developed for the integration of acoustic illusions within new musical compositions. A selection of experimental samples of musical composition—computer simulations, presenting specific problems and hypotheses regarding acoustic illusions—will be presented by way of an audio-visual illustration.
- (3) PERCEPTIVE PSYCHOLOGY: experimental models of musical composition were presented to both specialists and laymen during interdisciplinary workshops and seminars, in order to examine the distinctive illusory value (in terms of effectiveness) of these samples for the listener.



Composer and musicologist **JEROEN D'HOE** (b. 1968, Leuven – Belgium) received a Doctorate (2003) and Master (2000) in composition at The Juilliard School, where he studied composition with John Corigliano. In addition, he holds a Master in composition from the Lemmens Institute in Belgium (1996) and in musicology from the University of Leuven (1992). He was awarded the SABAM Prize in the category classical music for his oeuvre (2008). He also won the National Composition Competition of the Queen Elisabeth Competition (2003) and the SABAM Prize for Composition (2003) with Toccata-Scherzo for piano solo, the Composition Competition of the Province Flemish-Brabant, Belgium (2002) with Festival Anthem for orchestra, and the Juilliard Composers Competition in (2001) with Wavechain for piano and orchestra (1999).

Jeroen D'hoe received a fellowship from the Belgian American Educational Foundation (BAEF, 1998-1999) and the C.V. Starr Doctoral Fellowship (2000–03), and teaches composition, music analysis, and music history at the Lemmensinstituut (Belgium), where he also is artistic researcher; he also teaches composition and music history at the Conservatory of Utrecht (The Netherlands).

**STEPHAN WEYTJENS** is Professor of Music Theory and Music History at the Royal Conservatory of Antwerp. After his studies in Musicology at the Universities of Leuven and Berlin, he studied organ and Music Theory at the Lemmensinstituut (Leuven). He wrote his doctoral dissertation on the analysis of Arnold Schoenberg's "Pierrot lunaire" and published about this subject in several international journals. As a research fellow of the Universities of Leuven and Antwerp, he has been involved in numerous research projects on the analysis of 20th-Century music. Stephan Weytjens is co-author of a book on tempo and time in modern music ("Tempo en Tijd in de hedendaagse muziek, Leuven: Acco, 2007). He is member of the editorial board of the Dutch Journal of Music Theory and Fellow of the Mannes Institute for Advanced Music Studies, New York City (2007).

**DIRK MOELANTS** studied musicology at Ghent University (Belgium), where he received his Ph.D. in 2002, with a thesis entitled "A model for rhythm perception applied to the music of the 20th century". He is currently working as post-doctoral researcher at IPEM-Ghent University, where he also teaches music theory and ethnomusicology. His research concentrates on rhythm and timing in the perception and performance of music. Apart from his scientific activities is also active as a viola da gamba player. He holds a master in music performance from the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague (the Netherlands), where he studied with Wieland Kuijken. With different ensembles, playing early music, as well as contemporary classical music and traditional music of different cultures, he performed throughout Europe and in Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Morocco.

#### **Svetlana Maras**

# Thingification of compositional process: Emergence and autonomy of extra-musical object in Western art music

This presentation has as a goal to show how *things*, physical objects of different kinds, were used to initiate compositional process and to stimulate the development of new musical practices. My presentation would be a talk based on a written article and accompanied with slides (audio and visual examples). The article is a part of my research, a book titled *Embodied composition: Treatment and meaning of physical object in experimental music and sound art*. This work is based on a thought that starting from the beginning of 20th century, there occurred a rapid inhabitation of musical field with physical objects other than musical instruments, which significantly modified compositional approach and paved the way for new musical and artistic practices. With this presentation, my aim would be to point out the milestones of the change which the infiltration of objects into musical field caused, and in my presentation I would focus on the short period in history of Western art music when this change became critical enough to call it a turning point, from where the contemporary music evolved into many different directions.

Article is divided into four parts: 1) Towards the corporeality of music 2) New musical object 3) Object and instrument 4) Object per se - Autonomy of extra-musical object.

The problematics of each section are the following:

- 1) the physicality of the outside (non-musical) world of objects, became initiator of compositional process, and things from everyday life with their unique sounding possibilities became an addition to existing palette of orchestral sounds (Varese Ionisation, Honegger Pacific, Satie Furniture music, Antheil Ballet Mechanique)
- 2) extra-musical element in music (noise), merged with extra-musical object to establish for short, a new musical instrument which manifested the signs of new musical practice: new performance technique, scoring methods and theoretical context (Russolo Intonarumori)
- 3) objects appear even more closely intertwined with compositional work composers build their own, unique palette of sounds combining objects with instruments, and they also compose for objects alone; this sonic exploration of physical world (of things) brings the important improvisatory character into composer's work, and it leads to the expansion of compositional practice towards the area of performance (and vice versa), which remains widely present until today in the field of free improvisation, live electronic music and similar genres (Cage Prepared piano pieces, Cartridge music, Stockhausen Microphonie I)
- 4) corporeality of objects alone, became an important element of the work's representation (Schnebel Music to read, Ono Stone piece, Beuys Homogenous infiltration for the piano)

Although this chronological structure that I chose might seem enforced, its aim is to provide us with the trace of logic how the composer's viewpoint changed with the acceptance of physical object as an element of musical work, equal in importance to sound, musical form, performance, or score. In my research this leads to the opinion that today we have reached the stage of embodiment of music into tangible, physical form, and thus the outcome of composer's work can as well be an *object* which is a musical work and therefore a musical object (Tristan Perich - 1bit Symphony, Christiaan Virant, Zhang Jian - Buddha Machine).

**SVETLANA MARAŠ**, born in 1985, is a composer and sound artist from Serbia. For years, she has been using sound as a tool for exploration of musical form, expression and meaning in the wider artistic context. Her works have been composed for various media, and in them, Svetlana explores the boundaries of musical being by the way of realization of musical ideas through sound, text, physical object or digital technology. She studied composition at University of Art in Belgrade and she graduated from Aalto University in Helsinki, department of Sound in New Media.

### Steven M. Miller Peter Edwards

### Reinterpreting the American Experimental Tradition

Even the most experimental music eventually develops 'traditions' in terms of compositional, performative, and interpretive norms. Within the American experimental tradition – beyond assessments of composer's intent – accumulated experience and praxial understandings guide creation and interpretation within a broadly defined set of constraints – i.e. a 'tradition'. These definitions and constraints develop organically, and often remain implicit and unexamined.

Ang Mo Faux (of which the authors are members) is a Singapore-based trio that performs realizations of experimental music, original compositions, and improvisations employing found sounds, percussion, hand-built electronics, and computer-based synthesis and signal processing. Due to this set of performance resources/instrumentation, we found new interpretations either necessary or possible when approaching works from the American experimental tradition.

In this presentation we address the challenges and opportunities that arose in realizing John Cage's *Four6* (1992) and Christian Wolff's *Stones* (1969). We will discuss how our interpretations might seem at odds with the performance and interpretation approaches that have developed around the American experimental tradition. Our process begins with reflecting on the scores, coming to an understanding of the composer's intentions (where clear), researching the accumulated history of relevant performance practice, and finally devising interpretations that are informed by a larger body of work and our unique performance resources.

In *Stones* Wolff implies the use of resonances and resonant spaces to broaden the palette of possible sounds. Our approach centers on the use of signal processing to create resonances that are both configurable and performable. For *Four6* we radically reinterpret the concept of "fixed characteristics" as called for in the score. The three performers cover a spectrum of approaches. One approach is 'traditional': performing on percussion and found sounds with as steady as possible characteristics. The second approach – involving the playback of field recordings – has no performativity except decisions about when to start and end. Other than time, each occurrence of a particular sound is always the same. Ambient sound recordings (natural, urban, etc.) were specifically chosen as a means of addressing Cage's concerns about the false dichotomy between musical sounds and environmental sounds. The third approach strikes a middle ground: sample playback with signal processing utilizing both fixed and modulating parameters so that – while the waveforms are unchanging – the results are not always exactly the same.

The presentation will address the following seminar topics of interest: 1) ethics of interpretation; 2) the use of non-musical elements; and 3) the effect of materials, history, and practice on the interpretation of experimental works.



**STEVEN M. MILLER** is a composer, sound artist, and musician currently based in Singapore where he is Associate Professor of Sonic Arts at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music at the National University of Singapore. His creative activity and background includes electroacoustic, instrumental, and vocal music; collaborative intermedia projects with photographers, film/video artists, dancers/choreographers, and actors; live performance, gallery installations, compositions for recorded media, and music and sound design for video/film/new media; audio recording and production; traditional musics of Java, Bali, the Balkans, Middle East and North Africa. He has performed in a variety of solo and ensemble contexts throughout the US, and Asia. Performances and radio broadcasts of his music have occurred in North & South America, Asia, Europe, and Australia.

As an undergraduate Miller studied electronic music and composition with Ingram Marshall and audio recording & production with Peter Randlette at The Evergreen State College in Olympia WA. He completed an MFA in Electronic Music and Recording Media at the Center for Contemporary Music at Mills College, where he studied with David Rosenboom, Larry Polansky, Maggi Payne, Anthony Braxton and William Winant. In 1989-90 Miller was a Fulbright Scholar in composition, studying traditional and new music for gamelan at Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia and the Pura Mangkunegaran in Surakarta, Central Java Indonesia.

**PETER IVAN EDWARDS** was born in New York in 1973. His work has been performed throughout the world by numerous ensembles, including the Mutare Ensemble, Ensemble SurPlus, Ensemble Chronophonie, Ensemble Ascolta, the Noise Ensemble, and the La Jolla Symphony. He has been an invited participant at both the Darmstadt Ferienkurse für neue Musik in 2002 and the June in Buffalo Festival in 2005. His works have been performed at major international festivals including the Darmstadt Ferienkurse für neue Musik, the MATA Festival, Donaueschinger Musiktage, and Wien Modern.

In addition to a DAAD Grant in 2001, Edwards has also been awarded three ASCAP Standard Awards, 3rd Prize in the Deutscher Studienpreis 2002, and was a winner of the Klangraum-Raumklang competition that was part of the 2002 Internationale Ferienkurse für neue Musik in Darmstadt, Germany. Edwards studied composition at Northwestern University; the University of California, San Diego; and the Folkwang Hochschule Essen. His principal composition instructors are Chaya Czernowin and Nicolaus A. Huber.

Currently, Edwards is an Associate Professor at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in Singapore, where he teaches music composition and music theory. His recent debut CD Object Lessons is available on Albany Records. His work Knapp, written for British trumpeter Stephen Altoft, can be heard on the recently released CD The Yasser Collection from Microtonal Projects.

#### **Roi Nachshon**

#### From relations of exteriority to a relatable internal behavior

In the proposed presentation I would like to draw lines of similarity between the process of searching for meaningful external relations for a musical work, to the process of developing its internal behavior and form - and to propose that both are in essence one 'experimental' process, even if the outcome does not explicitly bear the tag of 'experimental music'.

Beneath the above proposition lies the acceptance of the claim that: 'Musical material that I work with is always a result of external activity, either explicitly or implicitly'.

The first very few minutes of the presentation will be devoted to a brief explanation of this claim, as well as to the significance of external devices in my work as communicational / social features.

During the main part of the presentation, however, I would like to describe my experimentation, through recent projects (listed below), in which the presence of external devices was rather explicit.

For the most part, such explicit external devices in my work seem to offer rather simple, 'mechanical', or even contrived properties, and can be considered as merely 'interfacial'. I would like to propose, however, that from their initial impact and basic principles, increasingly complex musical behaviors evolve organically, and thus, the simple relations they exhibit, develop into the inner-workings of the musical composition itself.

By presenting certain aspect of my work process on the below-listed projects, I would like to demonstrate a single experimental process - from the consideration of the introduction of an external device to the organization of musical elements such as rhythm and harmony - following the same approaches and methods.

The (more-or-less) recent projects, on which I would like to base my presentation are:

- o wArd (2008) for ASKO | Schoenberg An audio-visual work, where musicians are alternately secluded and included from the ensemble using a specially built structure with 5 doors.
- Last day in Corinth (2010) for ensemble MAE and Percussion group The Hague A music-theatre production created in collaboration with director Shiri Limor - Based on the play Medea, and involving prominent considerations of decor and staging.
- o Nothing you can't fix (2011) with Elsa May Averill, David Kweksilber, and Wiek Hijmans A short film made in collaboration with director Shiri Limor, containing references to classic 'Film Noir' and based on a 'theatrical filming session' with live music both written and improvised.
- o *Percano* (2007, 2009, 2012) A simple mechanical device which I designed to be mounted on top of a piano and played by a percussionist. Used in the pieces 'A cradle made of bricks' (2007), 'Corrosion' (2009), and in a new piece for percussion and string quartet which I am currently composing for the *Doelen String Quartet*.

Where is the experiment? Why is this experimental at all?:

Answers are numerous, but the one on which I would like to concentrate during my presentation is that any device (musical or otherwise), can never be introduces into the compositional process as a component, but rather as a whole body, and thus it exhibits behaviors which have to be discovered through experimentation.

As my approach is that the organs of such bodies cannot be recognized analytically, the experimentation involves placing initial outcomes in a 'metaphorical lab' as complete bodies and studying their behavior and the new relations which they establish with other bodies while changing the conditions, recognizing and isolating newly formed bodies, putting them back in cycle, and so on. Obviously, it seems impossible to incorporate any sort of 'objective' feedback into the process, and I would like to raise a question regarding the necessity of such feedback.



Regardless, for the purpose of approaching primary devices and initial outcomes as whole bodies, I would like to describe a few conceptual experimental tools which I developed, and which are inspired by classic organicism as well as by 'assemblage' theories by Deleuze and Guattari.

The Hague based composer **ROI NACHSHON** begun his composition studies in Jerusalem music academy, and privately with the renowned Professor *Itzhak Sadai*. His work was performed in several high-level festivals and events across Israel, including "The Israel festival" in Jerusalem 2000.

In 2001 Roi came to The Netherlands to study at the Royal-Consevatiore with Gilius Van Bergeijk and *Martijn Padding*. During his studies and since his graduation with a masters degree in 2006, he has received commissions and invited to collaborate with top ensembles and establishments in the Netherlands including *Paradiso* theatre, *Gaudeamus* festival, *NMD* festival, the PROMS ensembles, ensemble *Loos, Orkest De Volharding, ensemble Klang, EM percussion Quartet, Slagwerk Group Den Haag, Ensemble MAE, ASKO* ensemble and the *Schönberg* ensemble by which his piece Exiled was premiered in May 2008 conducted by *Reinbert de Leeuw*. His pieces wArd - performed by ASKO / Schönberg during the NMD festival 2008, and Caterpillar - performed by the Schönberg ensemble during the Gaudeamus music week 2005, were singled out by the press as being among the highlights of those festivals.

As reflected in his recent compositions, Roi's current concern in his work, is with the expansion and manipulation of the musical stage and the concert hall, the introduction of foreign dramatical elements to the instrumental ensemble, and the exploration of simple and effective relations between visible and audible.

#### Patricia Alessandrini

#### Composition as re-transcription, interpretation and performance

Most of my compositions are what I consider to be interpretations of existing works. In the context of my own tenuous relationship to the concert repertoire, these compositions explore the tension between various forms contributing to the identity of a musical utterance - scores as well as recordings and other traces of performances - by heightening the distance between a musical work and its instantiation in performance.

These compositions are created through the following three stages: (1) the duration of each note (or other articulated musical unit) of various recordings of a given work is determined; (2) the recordings are time-stretched proportionally note by note so that, when superimposed, they are synchronized; (3) the result of the superposition of these different versions - further stretched in order to heighten the subtle variations between them and bring out the artifacts of the phase vocoding - constitutes the maquette for the composition, as all of the material of the work, including the electronics, is derived from it. The act of composing thus becomes a kind of performance of an existing work, or rather a representation of it based upon remnants of its performance history.

I will be discussing a work-in-progress, Forklaret Nat for string quartet, in the context of two previous works: De profundis clamavi (hommage à Alban Berg) for string quartet and electronics, and Adagio sans quatuor, a sound installation with optional live performance. In Forklaret Nat I am attempting to reconcile the qualities of sensuality and transcendence, and disentangle their respective associations with corporality and disembodiment in Verklärte Nacht, by superimposing material from different sections of that work (defined programmatically by the form of Richard Dehmel's eponymous poem). This project is somewhat related to De profundis clamavi, in which the electronics are used to articulate aspects of the 'secret programme' of Alban Berg's Lyrische Suite.

**PATRICIA ALESSANDRINI** composes mostly for instruments with live electronics, often incorporating multimedia elements. Her compositions are performed by ensembles such as Accroche Note, Arditti Quartet, Ensemble Aleph, Ensemble Alternance, Ensemble InterContemporain, Ensemble Itinéraire, International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), and New Millennium, and featured in festivals including Agora, Archipel, Darmstadt, Musica Strasbourg, Sonorities, and Soundscape, where she was the composer-in-residence for 2010. She holds a diploma in composition from the Conservatoire de Strasbourg and a PhD from Princeton University, and was granted a PhD Studentship by the Sonic Arts Research Centre (SARC) in 2008. She studied composition principally with Ivan Fedele, Tristan Murail, and Thea Musgrave. She has taught in the *alto perfezionamento* program of the Accademia Musicale Pescarese, and was recently appointed Lecturer of Composition with Technology at Bangor University.

#### **Aaron Cassidy**

#### I Am An Experimental Composer.

In a general sense, this paper outlines the many roles that experimentation plays in my compositional work, but more specifically and more crucially, the paper details what, for me, it means to identify oneself as 'an experimental composer' and what that means to the process of composition, the role of performance, and the act of critical evaluation and reflection after a work has come into being. The paper will address specific compositional and notational methods from my own work that foreground experimentation as process (through indeterminacy, a certain open-ended approach to

foreground experimentation as process (through indeterminacy, a certain open-ended approach to instruments and instrumental performance techniques/practices, an elastic and unstable relationship between notation and sound which has its roots in the American Experimental Tradition, a prioritization of liminal or transitional states, and an intentionally destabilizing approach to form and musical memory), and will focus in particular on my effort to locate the act of experimentation in the composition itself (in other words, the composition as question, rather than the composition as an answer to the question).

Concomitantly, I am interested in further addressing a topic that arose during a recent 'bloggingheads' style interview (<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4T4dbDsM">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4T4dbDsM</a> 50, search: "MEC MusicTalk + Aaron Cassidy") done for the promotion of a concert of some of my work in Los Angeles. In the video, the composer Michael Pisaro and I entered into a discussion about the nature of experimentation in music, and specifically about negotiating a certain scepticism both from self-described practitioners of experimental music and from their critics about the craft and technique and musicianship involved in experimental music. Or, to put it in the more casual parlance of the interview, 'how do you know if you know what you're doing?'

The paper will explore what it might mean to 'know what you're doing' as a composer of experimental music, or at least what it has meant in my own recent work, and to confront the problems of evaluating the results of experimentation. (How many performances of a work are necessary before any conclusions might be reached? How many performers need to engage with the notation? Does 'experimental music' maintain different criteria for success than more conventional approaches to music-making? What are the ethical and artistic implications of presenting a work to an audience without being confident of its success? (Why do we expect artists to have 'something to say', rather than 'something to ask'?)).

**AARON CASSIDY** (b. Illinois, USA, 1976) is a composer and conductor with a growing international reputation. His work has been programmed by leading contemporary music specialists including ELISION, Ensemble SurPlus, musikFabrik, Ictus Ensemble, ensemble recherche, 175 East, Talea Ensemble, the Kairos, Diotima, and JACK string quartets, and soloists including Garth Knox, Ian Pace, Mieko Kanno, and Christopher Redgate, at festivals including Donaueschingen, Ultraschall, Warsaw Autumn, Huddersfield, Darmstadt, Gaudeamus (Jurors Prize nominee, 2002 & 2004), Bludenz, June In Buffalo, and the ISCM World Music Days. In July 2008, ELISION presented a portrait concert of his work for broadcast on ABC Classic FM, and in 2009-10 the ensemble completed an extensive recording project of his work in conjunction with Radio Bremen. He has received grants, stipends, and commissions from Südwestrundfunk, allerArt Bludenz, the Yvar Mikhashoff Trust for New Music, Haupstadtkulturfonds Berlin, New York Foundation for the Arts, ASCAP, the American Music Center, Arts and Humanities Research Council, British Council, and PRSF 20x12/London Cultural Olympiad 2012. Recordings of his work are available on the HCR and Neos labels, with a portrait disc of eight works on Neos scheduled for release in early 2012.

Cassidy joined the staff of the University of Huddersfield as Senior Lecturer in Composition in the autumn of 2007 and serves as Coordinator of the MA in New Music at the university's Centre for Research in New Music. He previously served as Lecturer of Composition at Northwestern University and as Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Buffalo State College.

#### Frederik Croene

#### Roll over Czerny

Roll over Czerny is a conceptual composition framework in which mechanical etudes of Carl Czerny are confronted with experimental music on Le Piano Démécanisé and the theories behind this gesture. Theoretical text, sport like instrumental training and intuitive, improvisational music will meet on a same level, competing for relevancy.

In a previous project I developed special playing techniques for a dismantled piano: Le Piano Démécanisé. Roll over Czerny is a logical next step in a personal, artistic research of the fundamentals of pianistic virtuosity and a search for pianistic identity in a 21st century context.

Unlike Cage's prepared piano or extended piano techniques, Le Piano Démécanisé radically rejects any tradition generated by the inserted piano mechanics, thus forcing the pianist to rediscover his instrument and all musical abilities. Musicological research learns that Czerny was at the genesis of 19th century hyper virtuosity. To reintegrate conventional piano playing in a demechanised piano zone, it should start from Czerny's proto-modernistic piano method. Blending his mechanical etudes with demechanised, semi-improvised music, guarantees the theoretical birth of sublime piano music. Using his almost mathematical constructed music as a framework for a highly amorphous kind of experimental music, these two extremes of approaching piano playing give a specific solution for a relevancy seeking contemporary pianist.

Computer software blends Czerny and the piano frame improvisations together in a live performance. Theoretical text being read on tape is used as a musical source equal to the other piano sounds. On stage there's a piano grand, a piano frame, speakers and a computer.

Just like Le Piano Démécanisé, this project will present itself in threefold: as a live performance, as an LP-release and as an article. The article will be present on stage as a controlled sound file, just as it will be present on the LP protecting sleeve.

Underlying purpose of this project is the urge to put traditionally trained pianists in a situation where compositional thinking about experimental improvisation is the only strategy of artistic survival. It is a conscious move to put together on stage Czerny etudes, Le Piano Démécanisé and theoretical text that combines both worlds. The setting is the fundamental compositional gesture. All consequent handlings and questions (how to put this musics together, how will the overall structure be, how to put text understandably on a double soundtrack, etc..) are only logical consequences of the situation in which the pianist has put himself in.

Projects sounding like 492 kilo, an extended piano recital, Roll over Czerny, Pianos Palliatifs, Frames for Nostalgia or Le Piano Démécanisé demonstrate that pianist **FREDERIK CROENE** uses artistic radicality out of concern for the survival of some valuable traditions of classical music. With his unconventional approach towards the piano he's determined to prove that traditions should be cherished by manipulating them. To do just that he's been invited by concert venues like De Singel in Antwerp and Concertgebouw Brugge and festivals like Holland Festival Amsterdam, November Music Festival Den Bosch, Transit Festival and Artefact Festival in Leuven, Gent Jazz Festival and Klara Festival in Bozar, Brussels. He worked intensively with artists from several forms of art: Joris Verdoodt (graphic design), Lawrence Malstaf (installation art), Hallveig Agustsdottir (audiovisual art), Liv Hanne Haugen (dance), Af Ursin (intuitive improvisation), Laura Maes (soundart), Erik Bassier (gestural theatre), Wouter Cox (conceptual art), Paul Craenen (virtual music instruments) and Edurne Rubio (video).

Besides recording classical music (Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann,..) he realised the publication of vinyl long players (Voile au Vent, Le Piano Démécanisé) and CD's (Hout) that always start from a unique instrumentation idea.

## **Concert**

## February 22 2012, 8.00 pm Auditorium (3rd floor)

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'In the spirit of providing some music contextualization for the concepts, challenges, ideas that have inspired the theme of this seminar, and to provide a peek into the creative world of our guest speakers, flutist Richard Craig and clarinetist Carl Rosman, with the collaboration of Juan Parra, have put together a programme including works that reflect the malleability of the notions of experimentation and tradition when put in the context of musical creativity.

The composers selected for this programme share connections that - in some cases - go beyond and perhaps against aesthetic affinity. This event aims to open links between creative soundworlds that lie in sequential and parallel planes.'

Richard Craig, flute
Carl Rosman, clarinet
with Juan Parra, live electronics

music by R. Barrett, C. Czernowin, H. Lachenmann and L. Nono

Das atmende Klarsein I | Luigi Nono Richard Craig, flute; Juan Parra, live electronics

Dal Niente (Intérieur III) | Helmuth Lachenmann Carl Rosman, clarinet

Das Atmende Klarsein II | Luigi Nono Richard Craig, flute; Juan Parra, live electronics

While Liquid Amber | Chaya Czernowin Realization: Sylviei Lacroix (*flutes*); Florian Bogner (*recording*)

Das Atmende Klarsein III | Luigi Nono Richard Craig, flute; Juan Parra, live electronics

Knospend-gespaltener | Richard Barrett
Carl Rosman, clarinet in C

Das Atmende Klarsein IV | Luigi Nono Richard Craig, flute; Juan Parra, live electronics





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