

SURROUND SOUNDS

7:00 Part I:

Electroacoustic Music from Stockhausen to the Present

9:30 Part II:

Acousmatic Music of Jonty Harrison

*Presented by AMP
May 8th 2009
The Tank
NYC*

SURROUND

SOUNDS

PROGRAM

AMP is a new music project directed by Adam Mirza whose purpose is to present concerts of experimental classical music as individualized, organic events.

PART I : Electroacoustic Music from Stockhausen to the Present

Intersection (1953)

Morton Feldman
Gregory Cornelius [diffusion]

NoaNoa (1992)

Kaija Saariaho
Ashley Addington [flute]

Earth and Green (2007)

Gregory Cornelius
Gregory Cornelius [diffusion]

Breccia [improvisation]

Matthew Hough [guitar] Dan Peck [tuba] Sam Pluta [laptop]

Langanach (2009)

Elizabeth Hoffman
Ivan Goff [Irish pipes] Elizabeth Hoffman [laptop]

Telemusik (1966)

Karlheinz Stockhausen

PART II : Acousmatic Music of Jonty Harrison

Klang (1982)

Unsound Objects (1995)

Undertow (2006)

Internal Combustion (2005-06)

Undertow (2007) 12:19
(8-channel audio)

Plunging beneath the waves we discover a world teeming with life and pulsing with energy. But we cannot hold our breath forever. (And not only that, there seem to be cars down here, masquerading as breaking waves!)

Undertow was composed in 2007 in the composer's studio and was premiered on 2 June 2007 as part of *Océan-Cité*, a civil spectacle by La Compagnie Pierre Deloche Danse, Lyon, France. It was commissioned by La Compagnie Pierre Deloche Danse. Thanks to Martin Clarke for additional sea recordings made in Shetland. *Undertow* appears in a 5.1 version on *Environs*, a DVD-Audio on the *empreintes DIGITALes* label, Montreal.

Internal Combustion (2005-06) 11:50
(8-channel audio)

Internal Combustion is the second piece of *ReCycle*, a series of four works based loosely on 'the elements': *Rock'n'Roll* (2004 – earth), *Internal Combustion* (2005-06 – fire), *Free Fall* (2006 – air) and *Streams* (1999 – water). Each piece in the cycle uses a slightly different configuration of 8 audio channels and explores different aspects and types of motion, trajectory and spatial organisation.

As its title suggests, *ReCycle* revisits many themes and sound types I have used in earlier works and listeners may also detect a sub-text of environmental concern running through much of my work since the 1980s. In *Internal Combustion*, I would like to think that the overt use of the sounds of car engines is an ironic underlining of this theme, but I must also confess to a dilemma here. The fact is I *like* cars, even though I fully acknowledge the increasingly devastating effect they are having on the environment.

In addition to recordings of car engines (many made using accelerometers as well as air microphones), other forms of transport (trains, planes, ships, bicycles, motor-bikes and a Basel tram) are sonically present in *Internal Combustion*. The work is in four sections (echoing the intake-compression-ignition-exhaust cycle of the 4-stroke internal combustion engine), separated by dramatic 'arrivals' and 'departures', and framed by more 'environmental' scenes (which include the sound of traffic as an unavoidable part of our everyday experience).

The piece was composed during a period of research leave made possible by the University of Birmingham and supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK). It was finished in the Elektronsiches Studio of the Musik-Akademie, Basel during a residency in the Atelier Zum Kleinen Markgräflerhof. I am especially grateful to my friend Erik Oña, the Director of the Studio and a former colleague at Birmingham, for his invitation to work well away from another curse of our modern environment – the ringing telephone! Thanks are also due to Keith Moule and Paul Rodmell for putting their vehicles at risk by allowing me to attach accelerometers to the engines and to two former doctoral students, Pete Batchelor and Daniel Barreiro, for their wonderful Max patches. *Internal Combustion* appears in a 5.1 version on *Environs*, a DVD-Audio on the *empreintes DIGITALes* label, Montreal.

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The (Digital) Distortion of Reality

The expansion from mechanical to electronic technology reveals the micro-world; technological processes played out at the micro-level return to reformulate macro-reality.

Found Sounds

Sound objects of the human environment—a door closing, rain falling, voices—recorded, processed, reordered, re-narrated. The abstract musical “point”—a note—rejected in favor of an organic sound object—a sample—with a unique shape and life.

The ‘Inner Life of Sound’

Stockhausen's ‘unified time domain’ recognized rhythm, pitch and sound quality as varying phenomena of the same underlying substance: repeating fluctuations of acoustic energy. The micro-structure of sounds themselves could be understood and composed, synthesized.

Acousmatics

The followers of Pythagoras were divided into two groups: the mathematikoi (“mathematicians”) and the acousmatikoi (“listeners”). The latter were not permitted direct access to the philosopher's truths. They heard Pythagoras' hidden voice from behind a veil and from this inter their world.

(Virtual Reality: reality can be distorted, reality is distorted)

Postmodern Play

The free materialism of the man-machine in socio-technical interactivity

SURROUND SOUNDS

—musical space as human environment: physical, social, psychological—

is co-curated by Gregory Cornelius and Adam Mirza

PART I : Electroacoustic Music from Stockhausen to the Present

Morton Feldman (1926-1987)

American composer Morton Feldman developed an American modernist aesthetic that sought a sort of temporal “opening” within the sensual experience of live sound. Like other modernist composers of his generation in Europe and the United States, Feldman's early music drew upon the pointillism and abstraction of the Viennese composer Anton von Webern, but even there, Feldman's musical textures are characterized by a reticence and clarity that allow individual moments to show themselves with focused purity. Later, his music gradually recovers a certain lyricism, elongating and softening into suspended textures that hang across time.

performance of new music by young composers. As a founding member of the improvising quintet Glissando Bin Laden, he has focused in recent years on fusing the worlds of acoustic and electronic sounds through improvisation. In 2009 he won the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer's Award for his work SWITCHES.

Elizabeth Hoffman (1961)

Elizabeth Hoffman is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Music, Faculty of Arts and Science at New York University (NYU), where she founded and directs the Washington Square Computer Music Studio (WSCMS).

Hoffman won a Bourges International Electroacoustic Music Competition Residence Prize in 1994 for her work *Tesserae*, and in 1995 had this composition released on the ORF "Prix Ars Electronica '95" CD. She has received commissions from the International Computer Music Association (ICMA) for a premiere at the Berlin ICMC 2000, trombonist Abbie Conant, two Seattle Arts Commission Artist Awards, and a NJSO chamber commission. Her music was identified by the International Alliance of Women in Music in their Search for New Music competition (1996), and has been selected for programming by the Groupe de recherches musicales (GRM) for a retrospective electroacoustic concert in Paris (1996), Florida International Electroacoustic Music Festival (2000), Seamus (2002), ISCM (2002), and by the ICMA for presentation at two International Computer Music Conferences (Banff 1994 and Michigan 1998). Hoffman has worked as a guest composer at the Musik-Akademie in Basel (Switzerland).

Langanaich (2009)

(for laptop player, computer, and Irish pipes player)

The technical process that underlies this work is the analysis and reconstruction of timbral data from the Uilleann pipe player's live sound, sampled at designed intervals of time. The title of the piece is a Gaelic word that translates as 'female deer bellowing,' a sonic image evocative for me of the rich sound of this instrument.

Langanaich was written for Ivan Goff, and has benefited very much from his creative input.

Ivan Goff is an All-Ireland champion from Dublin, based in New York, Ivan plays uilleann pipes (Irish bellows-blown pipes), whistles and Irish wooden concert flute. A traditional musician with an eclectic background that includes master degrees in both musicology and computer composition, Ivan has performed in several well-known productions including extended engagements with Riverdance (US tour and Broadway), Michael Flatley's Lord of the Dance, and has featured in film scores such as recently-released *Cremaster 3* (Matthew Barney) exhibited in the Guggenheim museum 2003.

Karlheinz Stockhausen is the most bewilderingly provocative composer of the European post-war avant-garde—a genre itself heavily delimited by the wake of his incredible musical imagination. His works display an unflinching faith in unhesitatingly trusting *intuition*—musical or otherwise—along whatever material path it might construct to any psychic-social situation it might encounter.

In the 50's and 60's, his pieces successively reinvented the possibilities of musical language, matter and context, perhaps most famously with his pioneering work in electronic synthesis. He then turned to a massive 7-part opera cycle *Licht: Die sieben Tage der Woche* (*Light: The Seven Days of the Week*), that freely incorporated theater, dance, electronics, and varied forms of instrumental music. After completing the final opera in 2003, he began a new cycle of mostly instrumental works that was unfinished at his death in 2007.

Telemusik (1966)

(two-channel audio, originally for 6-channel magnetic tape)

Karlheinz Stockhausen, in the jacket notes for *Telemusik*, (Deutsche Grammophone Gesellschaft, 137012), as cited by Michael Manion, writes:

During my first 8 or 9 days in Tokyo I could not sleep; one vision came again and again, a vision of sounds, new technical processes, formal relationships, pictures of notation, human relationships - all at once and in a network too tangled up to be unraveled in one logical process. In all this I wanted to come closer to the realization of an old dream; to take a step further in the direction of composing not 'my' music, but a music of the whole world, of all countries and all races. I am certain you will hear them in TELEMUSIK, these mysterious visitors; from the Imperial Japanese court (the Gagaku Players), from the happy isle of Bali, from the southern Sahara, from a Spanish village fiesta, from Hungary, from the Shipibos of the Amazon, from the Omizutori ceremony, in Nara, in which I participated for three day and nights, from China - fantastic virtuosity! -, from the Kohyasan temple, from the Vietnamese highlands, and again from Vietnam, from the Buddhist Jakushiji temple, from the No drama 'Ho Sho Riu', and who knows from where else. They all wanted to participate in TELEMUSIK, sometimes superimposed and interpenetrating each other. I had my hands full in keeping the unknown world of electronically produced sounds open to these guests - I do not know how I did it, I was moonstruck, but I believe I succeeded in composing this TELEMUSIK... The situation of the 'collage' of the first half of this century has been overcome: TELEMUSIK is not a collage anymore. Rather, through the process of intermodulation, old objects trouvés [found objects] and new sounds, which I produced in the electronic studio, are combined into a higher unity: a univers-ality of past, present and future, of distant places and spaces: TELE-MUSIK.

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Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928 – 2007)