



established 2015

CONNECTED:MUSIC ^{IN} THE MUSEUM

STEVE ANTOSCA ~ CURATOR FOR NEW MUSIC-IN-RESIDENCE

American University Museum
at the Katzen Arts Center
Thursday, February 9, 2017 - 7:30 PM

PROCESS MUSIC

WILLIAM BRENT, CURATOR



CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FORUM
WASHINGTON, DC
since 1973



FRENCH EMBASSY
IN THE UNITED STATES

HIGHER EDUCATION,
ARTS, FRENCH LANGUAGE



CZECH CENTER

ČESKÉ CENTRUM

INTERFERENCE/*new music collective*

PROCESS MUSIC

Variations II (1961) LIVE

John Cage

A realization of John Cage's *Variations II* for laptop ensemble

William Brent, software

William Brent, David Hadley, Paul Oehlers, Jassie Rios, Griffin Tanner,
laptops

Optional (2016)

Lucie Vítková

Teri Lazar, violin

Nancy Snider, violoncello

Noah Getz, saxophone

Lucie Vítková, accordion

Particulae (2014)

Paul Oehlers

Todd Baldwin, trombone

Nobue Matsuoka, percussion

William Brent, computer

I Am Sitting In A Room (1969)

Alvin Lucier

William Brent, software, voice, and computer

Program Notes & Biographies

Variations II (1961)

John Cage

John Cage's *Variations II* is not a fixed piece, but a general method for composing an infinite number of pieces. Cage's original instructions describe a process of making graphical arrangements of 6 lines and 5 points using transparency paper, and measuring the distance from each point to each of the lines in order to determine details of individual sound events. Each arrangement produces only 5 sound events, making the process of creating even a 10-minute piece incredibly time consuming using the original materials. *Variations II LIVE* is a realization of this concept for live laptop ensemble. Players in the ensemble create point/line arrangements using a graphical interface on their laptop screens, and transmit their arrangements over a local area network. A central computer aggregates the incoming arrangements, generates the resulting musical scores, and animates the arrangements in synchrony with corresponding musical events to illustrate the sonic consequences of graphical choices made by players. *Variations II LIVE* is a real-time distributed music generation process carried out in live performance.

Optional (2016)

Lucie Vítková

This composition was commissioned by the contemporary American ensemble INTERFERENCE Collective. The main principle in this piece is the property of an option, originally derived from the optional part of the accordion. This method influences the evolution of the piece and its overall effect. The players are given the freedom to choose which material they would like to play at a certain time in the piece. The composition is recreated with every new performance during the rehearsals through a process of interaction and taste of the ensemble. The whole piece is optional too; it can be played or not.

Lucie Vítková is a composer, improviser and performer (accordion, harmonica, voice and tap dance) from the Czech Republic. Her compositions focus on sonification (compositions based on abstract models derived from physical objects), while in her improvisation practice explores characteristics of discrete spaces through the interaction between sound and movement. In her recent work, she is interested in the musical legacy of Morse Code and the social-political aspects of music and art in relation to everyday life.

She graduated in accordion performance at Brno Conservatory in 2010 and composition at Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno (CZ) in 2013. Along with her study of music she used to teach tap dance at the Theatre Faculty of JAMU. She is a member of the Brno Improvising Unit, Ensemble Marijan, Dunami, Dust in the Groove and Prague Improvisation Orchestra. She is a founder of Temporary Ensemble (2011).

During her Master Degree, she studied at Royal Conservatory in The Hague (NL) and at California Institute of the Arts in Valencia (USA). She has studied with Martin Smolka, Jaroslav Šťastný, Martijn Padding, Gillius van Bergijk and Michael Pisaro.

In her PhD. studies she is analyzing music of Christian Wolff, researching on the hierarchy and social relations in his music and looking for the composition techniques which express this phenomena. Furthermore, she is placing his music and scores into the context of free improvisation to explore the definitions of composition and improvisation.

As a student of JAMU Brno, she was realizing her PhD. research at Universität der Künste in Berlin (partly on DAAD scholarship) under the supervision of Marc Sabat (2014-2015). Recently, she is based in New York City and is enrolled at Columbia University as Visiting Scholar with Prof. George Lewis.

Particulae (2014)

Particulae combines live instruments, electronic music, and video playback with real time audio and video processing using software designed by William Brent. The video consists of microscope captures from water samples from three sites in Maryland – Essex, Baltimore, and Annapolis.

The first movement, Essex, was constructed using a magic square as a compositional model/process. A magic square consists of a series of numbers arranged so that the sum of each row, column, and diagonal is the same amount. Routes through the square are mapped onto a musical structure. This process resulted in the juxtaposition of sections of music that are radically different from each other (i.e. metered vs. unmetered, slow vs. fast). The second movement, Baltimore, uses a less process based approach, using the repetition of short motivic ideas throughout. Annapolis also employs a magic square to construct the form. The musical material in this movement, however, is more uniformly similar than the materials in Essex.

Paul A. Oehlers is most recognized for his “extraordinarily evocative” film scores. (Variety) Films incorporating his music have won Grand Jury prizes at the Hamptons International Film Festival, the Atlanta International Film Festival, and the Indiefest Film Festival. In addition, films with his music have screened at dozens of festivals in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia.

Paul A. Oehlers’ compositions have been performed in the United States and abroad including performances at the Society for Electro-acoustic Music in the United States national conferences, the

International Computer Music Conferences, the Gamper New Music Festival, the Seoul International Electro-acoustic Music Festival, the Institut für Neue Musik und Musikerziehung in Darmstadt, Germany, and the VII Annual Brazilian Electronic Music Festival, as well as a 1987 command performance for former United States President Ronald Reagan.

Paul was named the Margaret Lee Crofts Fellow by the MacDowell Colony for the year 2006. He is currently Associate Professor of Audio Technology at American University in Washington, DC.

I Am Sitting in a Room (1969)

Alvin Lucier

The text from Alvin Lucier's *I Am Sitting In A Room* (1969) is both the explanation and source material for the piece itself: "I am sitting in a room different from the one you are in now. I am recording the sound of my speaking voice and I am going to play it back into the room again and again until the resonant frequencies of the room reinforce themselves so that any semblance of my speech, with perhaps the exception of rhythm, is destroyed. What you will hear, then, are the natural resonant frequencies of the room articulated by speech. I regard this activity not so much as a demonstration of a physical fact, but more as a way to smooth out any irregularities my speech might have."

Tonight's performance of the work is distinctive in that it makes use of the unusual acoustics that arise from the museum's curved walls, hard surfaces, and vast space—factors that create a much richer set of resonant frequencies than a typical rectangular room. To account for the scale of the museum space, two microphones are used (one on each floor) so that a fuller picture of the room's response can be captured. A custom designed real-time visualization of the incoming audio is projected on the wall, reflecting the gradual evolution of sound from a graphical perspective.



www.interferenceCollective.com

INTERFERENCE/INTERMEDIA/*new music collective* was formed in 2015 by composer Steve Antosca and American University faculty members William Brent, a computer music specialist, and cellist Nancy Jo Snider.

INTERFERENCE was organized to showcase the talents of American University faculty, and to further the presence of new music at American University and in Washington, DC. The ensemble focuses on the use of technology in composition and performance and will promote the American University Museum as a significant presenter of new music and new media in the city.

As an integral component of the concert series, lectures on composition techniques, technology in music, the historical context of the concert works and the evolving language of music. These presentations aim to bridge the experience gap between the classroom and the performance environment, to inform AU students and the AU community about the concert programs.

STEVE ANTOSCA

The music of composer Steve Antosca has been described as *"spectacular, wonderfully provocative", "formidable" and "a fascinating dance between the human players and their electronic ghosts."* The Washington Post noted that *"he has brought wildly imaginative concerts... to Washington for more than a decade."*

In 2010 Antosca was appointed Artistic Director of the National Gallery of Art New Music Ensemble. Antosca was the NGA Composer-in-Residence for the Fall of 2013. In 2012 he was a co-director of the John Cage Centennial Festival Washington, DC. In 2015 American University Museum appointed him Curator for New Music-in-Residence The American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center, where he directs the concert series CONNECTED: MUSIC IN THE MUSEUM.

Antosca's awards include the National Academy of Music International Music Prize for Excellence in Composition, Meet the Composer, the 36th Bourges International Competitions, Mandel Foundation Lifetime Award, US Department of Education, Randy Hostetler Living Room Music Fund, Maryland State Arts Council, and National Endowment for the Arts grants for new music festivals. Among Antosca's works are commissions from Chamber Music America, McKim Fund in the Library of Congress, Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard University, Subito/Argosy/American Composers Forum, Randy Hostetler LivingRoom Music Fund, Kennedy Center, American Music Center, and Georgetown University Orchestra.

For their 75th Anniversary celebration in the Spring of 2016 the Phillips Collection commissioned a *delicate balance* for chamber ensemble and computer.

Steve Antosca has a Master's degree in Computer Music Composition from the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University. He lives and teaches in the Washington, DC area.

WILLIAM BRENT

William Brent is a computer musician and Assistant Professor of Audio Technology at American University in Washington DC. His creative work is spread across the areas of experimental music performance, sound art, and instrument design, and involves various combinations of human- robotic- and computer-realized sound. In collaboration with internationally recognized composers and performers, he develops and operates real-time audiovisual manipulation software for inter-media performance works, such as James Dillon's *Nine Rivers*, and Philippe Manoury's *Jupiter, Pluton, and Neptune*. In this capacity, he has presented work at venues such as SESC (São Paulo), Glasgow Concert Halls (Scotland), Miller Theatre (New York), and the National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC). As a programmer, Brent has developed open source software libraries for the Pure Data (Pd) programming environment that are used by an international community of artists and researchers. His current lines of research include new methods for physical control of synthesized audio, signal analysis techniques for quantifying timbre, and various aspects of human timbre perception.

Brent studied piano performance and composition at Wilfrid Laurier University and Mills College, earning Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees in Music. He holds a Ph.D in Music from the University of California, San Diego, where he studied in the computer music area with Miller Puckette, F.R. Moore, and Shlomo Dubnov. Centered on the notion of timbre, his dissertation research examined signal processing techniques for automatic classification of percussion instruments, and the relationships between objective measurements and human judgments of percussive sounds.

NANCY JO SNIDER

Cellist Nancy Jo Snider is a member of the Opera Lafayette Orchestra and performs regularly in a variety of chamber and period instrument ensembles in a range of venues that include The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Rose Theatre Jazz at Lincoln Center, L'Opéra Royal de Versailles to experimental stages and living rooms. In addition to her recording/performance projects with Opera Lafayette, performing highlights have included collaborations with Trisha Yearwood, Miřenka Čechová (Spitfire Company, Czech Republic), Modern Musick, Shakespeare Theatre, Washington Early Music Festival, Washington Ballet, Washington Bach Consort and VERGE.

Ms. Snider is the Director of the Music Program at American University where she received the Outstanding Teacher of the Year in an Adjunct Appointment Award in 2005. Currently, she serves on

the full-time music faculty of American where she holds the position of Senior Professorial Lecturer.

Ms. Snider was featured in a duo with violinist Victorie Halasu to open the Festival Zero Point in Prague, Czech Republic in July 2012 and, in September of the same year, participated in the John Cage Centennial Festival in Washington, DC as a performer and administrator.

Ms. Snider performed "The Voice of Anne Frank" in South Africa with the Spitfire Company at the 2013 National Arts Festival where the production was awarded "Best Overseas Production". She has enjoyed continued international performing opportunities in Prague, France and South Africa in 2014 and is looking forward to more in the year to come. of Senior Professorial Lecturer.

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NEXT INTERFERENCE CONCERTS

FEBRUARY 25, 2017 – 8:00 PM

elements ≈ *five transformations for cello and computer*

UMBC Concert Hall

(<http://my.umbc.edu/groups/music/events/45779>)

Steve Antosca/William Brent/Tobias Werner

MARCH 9, 2017 – 7:30 PM – *Washington Landscape*

American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center

Music by Washington area composers including

Steve Antosca, Tom DeLio, Alexandra Gardner, Steve Gorbos and

Frederick Weck



www.interferencecollective.com

Steve Antosca/composer/curator for new music-in-residence/washington

Lisa Cella/flute/baltimore

Alison Lowell/oboe/washington

Bill Kalinkos/clarinet Missouri

e. michael richards/clarinet/baltimore

Noah Getz/saxophone/washington

Ross Karre/percussion/new york

Jacob Greenberg/piano/new york

Jenny Lin/piano/new york

Lina Bahn/violin/la

John Pickford Richards/viola/new york

Alexis Descharmes/cello/paris

Nancy Snider/cello/washington

William Brent/computer musician/composer/washington

Jaime Oliver/computer musician/composer/new york