

THE SAN FRANCISCO TAPE MUSIC FESTIVAL 2016



PROGRAM 3

THE SAN FRANCISCO TAPE MUSIC FESTIVAL
is presented by the
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THANK YOU

Charles Kremenak, Hadley McCarroll

THE SAN FRANCISCO TAPE MUSIC COLLECTIVE is:
Joseph Anderson, Thom Blum, Cliff Caruthers,
Matt Ingalls, Kent Jolly, and Maggi Payne

SATURDAY JANUARY 9 2016 11PM
GRAND THEATER

PROGRAM 3

Music for 16 Graphophones (< 1899) Cliff Caruthers, arr.

Ubieties (2015) Bjarni Gunnarsson

Solar Winds...and Beyond (2014) Elizabeth Anderson
(in two parts)

interval

Intersection (1953) Morton Feldman

I am a recording instrument (2015) Voicehandler

Hibiki Hana Ma (1970) Iannis Xenakis

VARIOUS HISTORIC SOURCES, arranged by CLIFF CARUTHERS
Music for 16 Graphophones (<1899 :: 3:00 :: sixteen channels)

Music for 16 Graphophones is a mix of digitally scanned brown wax recordings from before 1900, sourced in large part from the UCSB Cylinder Archive. These brown wax cylinder recordings include commercial music and the first amateur experiments made when affordable versions of the Graphophone and Edison's Talking Phonograph were available in the late 19th century.

BJARNI GUNNARSSON

Ubieties (2015 :: 11:22 :: eight channels)

Ubieties is composed for eight groups of sound processes. The piece features various areas of sonic activity where singular characteristics of certain situations guide the way in which events unfold. We may think of music as navigating between different moments of continuous change. One chooses a starting point and from there tries to reach other positions. The way a contact between these occurs is however always different and depends on the engagement with previous points of encounter. *Ubieties* is composed for live exploration of the states it consists of and the infinite ways these can interact during its existence.

BJARNI GUNNARSSON is an Icelandic composer who has released numerous LPs, EPs, compilation tracks and reworks on labels such as Vertical Form, Thule, Uni:form, Spezial Material, Trachanik, Lamadameaveclechien, Shipwrec and 3LEAVES. He is concerned with process-based ideas, sounds focusing on internal activity and motion, fuzzy materials or forms. Bjarni studied at CCMIX in Paris with Gerard Pape, Trevor Wishart, Agostino Di Scipio and Curtis Roads and completed a Master's degree at the Institute of Sonology where he now teaches algorithmic composition and programming.

ELIZABETH ANDERSON

Solar Winds...and Beyond (2014 :: 17:51 :: eight channels)

The idea to present *Solar Winds* near the end of 2012 sprang from a desire to honor the astronomers of the ancient Mayan culture and their worship of the Sun at a time that marks the completion of one Mesoamerican Long Count calendar and the beginning of another. After an initial examination of several astronomical events, my interest centered on the relationship that solar winds might have with the Earth's magnetosphere. I found this model to offer an intriguing starting point for the sonorization of these non-sounding events via the acousmatic medium. *Solar Winds* incorporates acoustic translations of electromagnetic phenomena that are produced by the Earth as well as other

astronomical phenomena, and constitutes an imaginary celestial aural journey from the perspective of the listener who is Earth. *Solar Winds* was commissioned by Musiques & Recherches. The work was composed at Musiques & Recherches with support from the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (Direction générale de la culture, Service de la musique).

As a companion to *Solar Winds*, the composition “...and Beyond” explores the cosmos beyond our immediate imagination. What universe lies beyond the limits of our imagination? What kind of phenomena would occur in this universe? Would they be the result of pure chance or destiny? What would then be the nature of this destiny? Describing such an environment necessitates that the composer imagine the unimaginable and that the listener accept it. ...and Beyond incorporates acoustic translations of astronomical phenomena and proposes an imaginary celestial aural journey from the perspective of the listener who voyages beyond the limit of our heliosphere and explores interstellar space. The work was realized in 2014 at Musiques & Recherches in Ohain (Belgium) with support from the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (Direction générale de la culture, Service de la musique).

Solar Winds...and Beyond was awarded First Prize in the Musica Nova 2015 International Competition of Electroacoustic Music (Prague, Czech Republic).

ELIZABETH ANDERSON'S music comprises acousmatic, mixed and radiophonic works as well as works for multimedia and sound installations, and has been performed in international venues for over twenty years. It is the fascination with space, whether on the scale of the universe (macrocosm) or cellular life (microcosm), and the expression of this realm through sound that is among her primary motivations for choosing to compose with electroacoustic techniques. She sees in this medium a rich and powerful way not only to convey to the listener these opposite realms and their strong complementarities, but also to share with the audience her imaginary world which she translates and develops through her music.

Anderson has degrees in music from Gettysburg College, the Peabody Institute, and City University London. In 1987, she travelled to Brussels, Belgium to pursue a diploma in instrumental composition at the Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles, and while exploring instrumental techniques discovered electronic music.

Elizabeth Anderson's music has received numerous prizes in international competitions, including ASCAP-SEAMUS, Bourges, Città di Udine, Métamorphoses, Musica Nova, Noroit-Léonce Petitot, Stockholm Electronic Arts Award, and Pierre Schaeffer Competition of Electronic Music. Her works have been released on the label empreintes DIGITALes. Her music is frequently commissioned, most recently by the Institut de l'Audiovisuel / Groupe de Recherches Musicales in Paris for the new octophonic acousmatic work *l'Heure Bleue: renaître du silence* which will be premiered in Paris in 2016.

MORTON FELDMAN

Intersection (1953 :: 3:26 :: six channels)

Feldman once described the sound of electronic music as analogous to neon lights and plastic paint and claimed that it was "too identifiable ... I don't want to be political about it, but I loathe the sound of electronic music ... Let's put it this way. One of the best definitions of experimental music was given by John Cage. John says that experimental music is where the outcome cannot be foreseen.... After my first adventure in electronic music, its outcome was foreseen." Given the preceding, it is difficult to imagine that Feldman created a piece of tape music, but, as he said, it was to be "first adventure" in electronic music and his last. The "Project for Magnetic Tape" was begun in 1952 by John Cage and produced several classic electroacoustic pieces, among which were Christian Wolff's *For Magnetic Tape* (1952), Cage's *Williams Mix* (1952) realized together with Louis and Bebe Barron, and Earle Brown's *Octet 1* (1953) for eight loudspeakers.

In 1953, Feldman created a written score, somewhat similar to Cage's *Williams Mix*, in which Feldman assigned numbers of events and silences to take place within certain tape lengths. The score also specifies on which of the eight tape tracks the sounds are to be recorded. The piece uses the same box notation employed for scoring Feldman's *Intersections* nos. 2 and 3 for piano (1951, 1953). Unlike the Cage, sounds are left to be determined by the person(s) realizing the score. The 3 minute and 22 second realization was created by John Cage and Earle Brown. The wide variety of sounds includes extremely fast cuts that resemble the idea of quantum rumble, bits of environmental sound like water pouring, bird calls, chicken yards, frogs croaking, fast vocal phonemes from singing and preaching, bits of instrumental chords from pop and folk musics, car horns, test oscillators, speeded up violins, telephone bells, and radio telegraphy. The sharply truncated sounds are not used for their content, nor humorous juxtaposition, nor even for their textures, but simply as ways of realizing the parameters of the composition.

A major figure in 20th-century music, MORTON FELDMAN (1926–1987) was a pioneer of indeterminate music, a development associated with the experimental New York School of composers that also included John Cage, Christian Wolff, and Earle Brown. Feldman's works are characterized by notational innovations that he developed to create his characteristic sound: rhythms that seem to be free and floating; pitch shadings that seem softly unfocused; a generally quiet and slowly evolving music; recurring asymmetric patterns. His later works after 1977 begin to explore extremes of duration, often in one continuous movement, rarely shorter than half an hour in length and often much longer

VOICEHANDLER

I am a recording instrument (2015 :: 10:47 :: twenty-four channels)

William S. Burrough's 1959 novel *Naked Lunch* depicts man as a product of incessant cultural influences and biological necessities. Voicehandler's score is built from verbatim quotations from the book – rife with sonic imagery, descriptions of its own structure, and hallucinatory scenarios. The form of the piece is indicated by a graphic score integrated with the textual elements. The score was composed for live performance, but then also used as a score for the editing process. This edited version, which combines takes spanning two years, realizes the concept of the piece in a way far beyond the limitations of a live performance.

“This book spills off the page in all directions, kaleidoscope of vistas, medley of tunes and street noises, farts and riot yips and the slamming steel shutters of commerce, screams of pain and pathos and screams plain pathetic, copulating cats and outraged squawk of the displaced bullhead, prophetic mutterings of brujo in nutmeg trance, snapping necks and screaming mandrakes, sigh of orgasm, heroin silent as dawn in the thirsty cells, Radio Cairo screaming like a berserk tobacco auction, and flutes of Ramadan fanning the sick junky like a gentle lush worker in the grey subway dawn feeling with delicate fingers for the green folding crackle...”

VOICEHANDLER, the duo of JACOB FELIX HEULE and DANISHTA RIVERO, is an electroacoustic ensemble from Oakland combining improvisation with original compositions. Their foundation is in voice and percussion performance, and they have made extensive use of live electronics. Their first album, *song cycle*, combines textural acoustic improv, noise, and song forms in compositions based on writings by Borges, Burroughs, and Hamsun. They have also recently composed and performed music for Christine Bonansea's interdisciplinary performance piece *Floaters*, as well as live cinema artist Kerry Laitala's *City Luminous* series.

IANNIS XENAKIS

Hibiki Hana Ma (1970 :: 17:45 :: eight channels)

Hibiki Hana Ma (Reverberation - Flower - Interval) was commissioned by Toru Takemitsu for a concert at the 1970 Osaka World's Fair featuring recordings of orchestral instruments played back over 800 speakers. Xenakis composed the work on twelve tracks (mixed down to eight for performance) in Tokyo – recording, manipulating, and layering sounds from an orchestra, a Japanese *biwa*, and percussion. Spatialization was controlled with a tape of automated control data. The pavilion at the fair also featured dynamic light sculptures and laser projections by the artist Keiji Usami. Xenakis was greatly influenced by the technology controlling the lights, and adopted their use for many of his next works like *Polytope de Cluny* and *Diatope*.

IANNIS XENAKIS (1922-2001) was a Greek modernist composer, musical theoretician, and architect. He participated in the Greek Resistance during World War II, suffering from a severe face wound from a British army shell which resulted in the loss of eyesight in one eye. Escaping a death sentence, he fled under a false passport to France in 1947. In Paris he became a member of Le Corbusier's architectural team. Xenakis produced his first musical work (*Metastasis*) in 1954, basing it on the design for the surfaces of the Philips Pavilion Corbusier was building for the Brussels Exposition of 1958. In ensuing works he moved on to find mathematical and computer means of handling large numbers of events, drawing on (for example) Gaussian distribution (*ST/10, Atrées*), Markovian chains (*Analogiques*) and game theory (*Duel, Stratégie*). Other interests were in electronic music (*Bohor, 1962*), ancient Greek drama (used in several settings) and instrumental virtuosity (*Herma* for piano, 1964; *Nomos alpha* for cello, 1966). His later output, chiefly of orchestral and instrumental pieces, is large – many works from the mid-1970s onwards striking back against modernist complexity with the use of ostinatos and modes suggestive of folk music.

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