

Presents

The Composers' Workshop

December 1, 2006

7:30 PM

Brechemin Auditorium

PROGRAM

- 1 REVEILLE... (6:53) RICHARD JOHNSON
- 2 Opening Remarks (1:28)
- 3 KOLME (2006)... (9:16) DOUG NIEMELA
- 4 from KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS... (8:16) RICHARD JOHNSON
1. Lichen
3. ~~Z.~~ Opinion As Fact
2. ~~Z.~~ Opposable Toes
Lee Hancock - piano
- 5 MORPHOGENESIS... (15:34) ROBERT BLATT

INTERMISSION

- 6 ETUDE for Guitar and Computer Realized Sound... (4:19) DONALD CRAIG
Robert Blatt - guitar
Additional Guitar Performers: Donald Craig, Daniel Peterson, Eric Parr,
Jeremy Tolley
- 7 AUDIOSTEREOGRAM... (5:28) BRANDON PETTIT
- 8 PALIMPSEST for electric guitar and live electronics... (14:16) JOSHUA PARMENTER
Comments: Robert Blatt - guitar
Setup Gap + False Start ~ 2:52

REVEILLE is a reworking of a piece from 2003, dealing with timbre, polyrhythms, subtle changes of pitch and our perception of morning. Thanks to Josh Parmenter and Juan Pampin for help with technical issues.

Richard Johnson is a composer studying with Juan Pampin at the University of Washington. Previous teachers include Salvatore Macchia at the University of Massachusetts and Martin Boykin. Richard has been a resident at the MacDowell Colony and the Ucross Foundation and has received grants from the American Composers Forum and the Eric Stokes Fund. Richard has invented numerous musical instruments and is a member of the Zatsu Trio, an improvisation group.

KOLME came about from an ongoing fascination with the dichotomy of human design form and design within nature. The lines and textures of our cityscapes, technological devices, and visual communication have a distinct world of appeal when compared to those of the human body, earthly terrain, or weather phenomena. Using sound as the medium, audible design derived from the man-made and natural worlds are strewn across that dichotomy. In its starkest form, sounds derived from the natural complexity of muscle movement are juxtaposed with the mechanized human audiosphere. Viola and effects - Brianna Atwell.

Doug Niemela was born in Gainesville, Florida and started playing the trumpet at age 8. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Humanities from the University of Maryland, College Park. He studied bass and arranging at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. He has been a graphic artist for various firms in San Francisco, California and worked for the Microsoft Corporation in Redmond, Washington. He is currently a graduate music composition student at the University of Washington School of Music, Seattle, Washington. He has been a student of Ken Benshoof, Juan Pampin, and Richard Karpen and has had performances and works in Washington DC, Boston, San Francisco, and Seattle.

MORPHOGENESIS: The process in complex system-environment exchanges that tends to elaborate a system's given form or structure. Examples are the growth of an animal from a fertilized ovum, biological evolution, learning, and societal development. A morphogenic system is capable of maintaining its continuity and integrity by changing essential aspects of its structure or organization. (Von Bertalanffy, *General Systems Theory*, pp. 148-9)

Probably the most important contributor to the sound of a sound are its constituent overtones. Through an ATS (Analysis-Transformation-Synthesis, developed by Juan Pampin) analysis of the strike of the lowest E on a piano, the vibrating overtone's precise frequencies and amplitudes were calculated. With this material, pitch structures were gathered by analyzing and comparing the rates of change of the individual partial's amplitudes. With this sonic "genetic" information of the piano note, the piece applies its own internal evolution or development from this material. It achieves this through an increase in complexity and organization, by abstracting more and more musical characteristics from the overtone analysis itself.

Since arriving to Seattle in 2002, Robert Blatt has been busy pursuing a B.Mus. in guitar performance at the UW and writing both acoustic and computer music. As a performer and composer, he has worked with many Seattle musicians and organizations. He is also a performer, composer and/or improviser in various classical and new music ensembles. He will be graduating in 2006, having studied guitar with Steven Novacek and composition and computer music with Tom Baker, Juan Pampin and Josh Parmenter.

Donald Craig is a graduate student in Music Composition at the University of Washington. He is currently studying with Juan Pampin. He plans (and hopes) to finish with his doctorate in the spring.

Brandon Pettit is a composer, saxophonist and sound artist recently transported to Seattle from NYC. He has earned degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Composition and Saxophone and a Master's degree in Composition at the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music studying with Tania Leon. He is currently pursuing his DMA at the University of Washington.

PALIMPSEST for electric guitar and real-time electronics was originally written with the concept in mind that the electric guitar is one of the few instruments that an audience doesn't necessarily have to hear. One of my primary considerations in the piece was the control of what would and wouldn't be heard from the performer themselves, even though everything that is heard still originates in one way or another from them.

The idea of the computer part 'revealing' what has been played in the past by the guitar is an idea I have been trying to realize for some time (almost four years in fact). Early in the summer of 2006, the news of researchers at Stanford using laser technology to reveal the scraped text from the Archimedes Palimpsest finally helped bring quite a bit together for how I wanted to compose the piece as a metaphor of the past as knowledge to be discovered and re-discovered so it can be interpreted by those who come across that knowledge in a different time and place.

The piece explores this clouding of the past, the re-discovery of information, and the process that this entails. Along with the clear success there may also be confusion, an occasional conflict with what was believed to be fact, and even the successes and failures of the technology itself, which sometimes brings information almost within reach, only to be lost through its own limitations, possibly to be discovered at a later time through other means.

Joshua Parmenter recently completed his D.M.A. in Composition at the University of Washington, where he studied with Prof. Richard Karpen. He received his Master of Music in Composition in 2002 from the University of Washington. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied with Edwin Dugger and Jorge Liderman.