

Electronic Music by South African Composers

**Saturday, October 21
8:00 PM
Fenway Center
77 St. Stephen Street,
Boston MA 02115**

(6' 42)

Meditation on Maya (2017) for tape solo

Njabulo Phungula

A Meditation on Maya was inspired by the work of the American Avant-Garde filmmaker, Maya Deren. As was the case with her creative process, I sought to use modest means to create my musical impression of her surrealist images. Meditation moves in an out of various musical 'scenes' in a way that I would hope is reminiscent of Deren's inventive use of editing to jump between various 'episodes'. Here, I have employed only a handful of haphazardly recorded piano samples, all processed in a variety of ways to form this collage of sound. The work is presented for 4 channels of sound as a means of immersing the listener in the music the way a movie screen typically would.

(10' 01")

Itinerat | Umgewu for tape solo

Cara Stacy

Itinerant / Umgewu is an exploration of movement. Rooted in my fieldwork in Swaziland, this work explores the transition rural sound signifiers experience as they move into cities. My research revolves around southern African musical bows (the Swazi m akhweyane (gourd resonated bow in particular) and how musicians innovate with these slim, quiet tools. Too easily musical sounds designated "traditional" are relegated to past ways of living and knowing, when many of these contemporary musicians strive for newness.

Infrastructure makes movement possible and so this piece proposes three personal explorations of sound fluidly moving from the hills into the acoustic city (and back again). It creates sonic stories woven from the m akhweyane (bow but also draws on my own movements as a musician over time: 'u mgewu' being the Siswati word for a wandering musician. 'Itinerant / Umgewu' is divided into three sections based on the material make-up of the m akhweyane (bow: wood, metal, voice (the human voice and the overtone whispers of the calabash)).

(7' 36")

Me [an]D for tape and pianist

Pierre-Henri Wicomb

A work for acoustic piano and MIDI soundtrack. The title has its obvious meaning as well as a suggestion that MIDI will play a significant role. At its roots, the piece is based on a narrative, constantly reflecting on itself, in which the roles of the two piano entities, one acoustic and one digital (soundtrack), are established. The soundtrack (MIDI piano) is an extension of the 'live' piano in which the unplayable aspects (extreme jumps, speed, repetition, etc. of notes) of the piano are explored. In this lies its optimal application, while the acoustic piano, for its part, finds this in its colour, resonance and musical possibilities.

(8' 32")

cordeallement (2002) for music and images

Ulrich Suesse, music; Maciej Walczak, images

cordeallement was commissioned by IMEB (International Musique Electroacoustique de Bourges) in France - the title reflects on the French word "cordialement" (sincerely) which is often used at the end of a letter. The composition uses the sounds of string instruments (violin and cello) - string in French is "corde" and thus explains the one misspelling („e" instead of „i") of "cordeallement." Except for the spoken word "cordeallement" and a few other spoken words, three unusual playing techniques are used:

- 1) wiping along the lower strings with the wooden part of the bow
- 2) applying the wired part of the bow to the high strings
- 3) scraping the lowered low string (scordatura)

The composition follows rather precisely these three steps - the immanent necessity of moving from one part to the next includes not only the logical transitions between high and low, but also between noise and sound, sound and rhythm, rhythm and melody and, reversably, between melody and noise. Towards the end, language emerges as a link between the mentioned elements: the phonetic version of „corde(i)al(l)ement" sounds like „Allemand" (which, in French means „German") and thus explains the second misspelling (two „l" instead of one).

(5')

Sebeza (in progress 2017) for music and images

Meryl van Noie, music; Dennis Miller, images

Sebeza is a mixed-media collaboration that grew out of conversations Miller and von Noie had during Miller's trip to Cape Town in April, 2017. The piece was intended to express the concept of *sebeza*, which is a Xhosa word roughly translated as "whisper." The work is in a single movement and uses a limited color palette with the intention of provoking a quiet and subdued ambience.

INTERMISSION

(8' 30")

Psithurism (2017) for tape solo

Miles Warrington

Casuarina equisetifolia - the Horsetail Tree, Whistling Pine, Iron Wood or Australian Pine, is an invader species in South Africa. One of the many plants introduced that are native to Australia and the Pacific Rim region, this species disturbs the natural vegetation of sensitive coastal areas in our country. It may however, be grown under controlled conditions as a category two invader but is strongly discouraged for dune rehabilitation. For this reason they are found as wind breaks on many farms throughout the Cape and Karoo regions and they also provide shade since they are tall, fast growing evergreen plants. They have the longest needle-like leaves out of any of the casuarina or pine species known. For this reason, they make incredible sounds, similar to the wind through other trees with needle-like leaves, although the characteristic of the sound through this particular species is unique in that it is somewhat denser, with more timbral richness. This sound is called a psithurism or a souging of the wind through the trees.

Using material recorded from several farms around the Riebeek-Valley north of Cape Town, the acousmatic work here for two-channel sound, takes cognisance of both the naturally occurring destructive and creative

narratives of these trees and seeks to engage with the audible aspect of them, hitherto under-explored. These narratives take many forms, varying from contexts of biology and economy to those of social and cultural significance. For example, as the leaves fall, they poison the ground, preventing any other plants from taking root, thereby ensuring that only their seeds are given the chance to germinate in the near vicinity. At the same time however, they are extremely useful in curtailing the destructive almost constant prevailing Cape summer winds and providing shade on the farms. As a firewood, the coals burn long and hot and are known as amongst the best firewood in the world. As a result, the contrasting biological and economic pitfalls and benefits of these trees becomes clear. Perhaps one-day, however, our winds will muse these trees no more as we become more and more conscious of protecting our indigenous biology. The sounds themselves are very sonically rich and with careful transformation and application of electroacoustic composition techniques, enables the creation of much effective electroacoustic material, whereby everything from long sustained tones, bell-like tones, staccato attacks, highly varied timbres and many other sound-related gestures can be molded from the deeply dense and layered ingots of sound unique to these plants in the wind.

(5' 43")

L22P08M02 (2002-2005) for music and images

Dimitri Voudouris

The Landless Peoples March was staged by LPM - an organization opposing land eviction] took place o August 22nd, 2002. It was a protest march that took place at the World Summit in 2002 and addressed the injustice of land eviction imposed upon impoverished people in South Africa and in the rest of the world.

About the visual component – (a few points taken into account when approaching the design of this work)
Considering various points in designing the slogans that create unity with its barer are; speed, rate and physical nature of information exchanged at a given time, state of mind of the observer in relation to the protesters approaching, limitations of vision, limitations of hearing.

L22P08M02 Symbolism/s:

Font

The font used to create the slogans have their own symbolism; bold (represents the general view of the protesters), normal (different information merging from individuals), handwriting (gives a human touch to the slogan), italic (information drowned in the bigger picture)

Color

The colors of the letters symbolize: red (anger/frustration), yellow (mixed feelings), black (poverty), white (transparency), blue (spirituality), all other colors (people of different sex, age and race).

Sketched figures

The sketched figures: are faceless, sexless with no identity they are transparent, a conglomeration of organic compartments encapsulating mixed emotions. They turn themselves inside out constantly exposing themselves questioning their mere existence.

The symbolism of the eye

The eye is the camera, the observer and protester capturing different sides of the same picture.

Homes

They are transparent so are their homes exposing themselves to the elements.

This visual component of the work was designed by a collection of photos taken during the march; I used Adobe Photoshop 6, Corel Draw 10, Curious Lab Poser Pro and Adobe premiere V.7.

The Sound

L22P08M02 sound was created with the use of the following software in ++C sound, Steinberg Wave Lab 4, Steinberg Halion 2, and Logic Platinum 5.1.

(10' 30")

Between Nowhere And Now Here – Again for tape and pianist (1986)

Jürgen Brauninger, composer; Hubert Ho, piano

This piece (not to be confused with *Between Nowhere and Now Here - Zwischen Jetzt und (n)irgendwo* by Ulrich Süsse and Jürgen Bräuninger written in 1984 and first performed by Darius Brubeck and Evan Ziporyn) is based on sounds produced with an LSI-11 computer and a DMX-1000 digital signal processor while Bräuninger was composer in residence at San Jose State University, California in 1986. The final version of the 4-track tape was realized at Gerald Lapierre Studio, University of Natal, Durban.

(7' 35")

Sand, was daar for tape solo (excerpt; 2011-2015)

Theo Herbst

The title of *Sand, was daar* (sand, everywhere) was inspired by the geography of the physical landscape in which a Nama or Namaqua folk tale is set. The fable features two characters, namely a jackal and an elephant, and it recounts their adventures, or rather misadventures, in the arid parts of present-day Namibia.

Sand, was daar is an acousmatic composition, intended to be performed in at least two different settings. On the one hand the complete 45-minute work serves as musical accompaniment to an installation by the artist Hentie van der Merwe. On the other, excerpts may be performed in a more traditional concert environment. The intention always is for an audience to be provoked into allowing herself to pause, reflect on, and explore the sonic environment conjured from an orally transmitted, ubiquitous and timeless fable.

(7')

Second Hand Reading (2013) for music and images

William Kentridge, animation; Neo Muyanga, music

The flip-book film *Second-hand Reading* was constructed from the successive filming of drawings on the pages of old books - a second-hand reading of those books. The film is both about a narrative— it starts at the beginning and eventually gets to the end — but it also acknowledges repetition, inconsistency and illogicality as part of its material. Music for the film was composed and made by the Cape Town-based composer Neo Muyanga.

Artist Biographies

Meryl van Noie

Meryl van Noie is an active technologist, pianist, and experimental composer, eager to play with ambiguous textures, sound organisation, and improvisational structures. She experiments with audio technology in order to fulfill a thirst for an ever-evolving creative music identity. She has worked creatively on projects as varied as theatre music, sound design, film scoring, composing for contemporary dance, instrument building, and experimental music technology collaborations. Between 2001 and 2013 she was Operations Director of The SoundHouse in Cape Town, a Non-Profit Organisation offering creative music technology courses to children, university students, and music teachers. Since 2013, she has been based at the University of Cape Town. She completed both BMus (1997) and MMus (2005) degrees in Jazz Composition and Arrangement at UCT.

Njabulo Phungula

Composer Njabulo Phungula (b. 1993) graduated with a BA Hons. (specializing in music composition under the supervision of Jürgen Bräuninger) from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2016. Some of his previous works include "Fantasy Suite" which was performed by the KZNPO at a campus concert in 2015, "Abyss" (2015), written for the Ligeti tribute event "Clocks & Clouds," as well as "Kaleidopatterns" (2016) which was presented at the NewMusicSA event Unyazi 2016: Infrastructures.

Pierre-Henri Wicomb

Pierre-Henri Wicomb completed a Masters Degree in composition at the University of Cape Town and Post Graduate studies at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague and is currently working on his PhD at the institute Africa Open. Wicomb's music has featured at the Festival D'Automne (Paris), New York City Electronic Music Festival (NYCEMF), International Computer Music Conference (ICMC, Utrecht), Avignon Festival, Forum Wallis 2013 and 2014 (Leuk, Switzerland), Wilde Bloesem series in Amsterdam, Infecting the City Festival (Cape Town) to name a few.

Wicomb has been a recipient of residencies in Switzerland, Sweden and South Africa, winner of the Fleur du Cap award for best original soundtrack or score and received commission prizes for the Asko ensemble, ensemble DissonArt and South African New Music Ensemble.

Wicomb is currently working on an opera incorporating the fields of psychoanalysis, improvisation and composition in collaboration with the Swiss duo InterZones. He co-founded the Purpur Festival for transgressive arts hosted annually at the Young Blood gallery in Cape Town.

Cara Stacy

Cara Stacey is a South African musician, composer, and researcher. She is a pianist and plays southern African musical bows (umrhubhe, uhadi, makhweyane). Her debut album 'Things that grow' features Shabaka Hutchings, Seb Rochford, Ruth Goller, and Crewdson (released in September 2015, Kit Records). Cara holds a Masters in Musicology (Edinburgh), and a MMus in Performance from SOAS (London). She is currently completing her doctorate through the University of Cape Town. She is an NRF Freestanding Doctoral scholar, a Commonwealth Split ASite scholar, and the recipient of funding from the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust and the University of Cape Town.

William Kentridge

William Kentridge (born Johannesburg, South Africa, 1955) is internationally acclaimed for his drawings, films, theatre and opera productions.

His practice is born out of a cross-fertilisation between mediums and genres. His work responds to the legacies of colonialism and apartheid, within the context of South Africa's socio-political landscape. His aesthetics are drawn from the medium of film's own history, from stop-motion animation to early special effects. Kentridge's drawing, specifically the dynamism of an erased and redrawn mark, is an integral part of his expanded animation and filmmaking practice, where the meanings of his films are developed during the process of their making. Kentridge's practice also incorporates his theatre training.

Kentridge's work has been seen in museums and galleries around the world since the 1990s, including Documenta in Kassel, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Albertina Museum in Vienna, Musée du Louvre in Paris, Whitechapel Gallery in London, Louisiana Museum in Copenhagen.

Maciej Walczak

An audiovisual instrumentalist, composer, programist. He was born in Łódź in 1963. He studied cello at the Academy of Music in Łódź and new media at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart. He is an author of the software for his own multimedia projects. He is especially interested in phenomena appearing between sound, images, algorithms and its interaction with the human. The first public audiovisual presentation designed by Maciej Walczak was performed in Łódź in 1988. Since then the artist has produced a lot of concerts in Poland and abroad. From 1990 to 1994 he had been working in the Electronic Music Studio at the Academy of Music in Łódź.

Ulrich Süssesse

Ulrich Süssesse, born 1944, basic musical studies at the University of Music in Stuttgart. Thereafter a variety of studies in composition: with Karkoschka, Stockhausen and Ligeti in Europe; 1969 as DAAD-bursary holder in New York with Berio (Juilliard School), Wuorinen and Tanenbaum (Manhattan School of Music). 1973 - 1976 lecturer for composition at the University of Natal, Durban, South Africa, responsible for the establishment of an electronic music studio, and since 1976 (1980 as professor) at the

University of Music in Stuttgart. 1998-2002 director of the Electronic Music Studio. Contract lecturer for experimental music at the University and State Academy for Visual Arts in Stuttgart. Member of the board of the Film Academy in Ludwigsburg. Free lance contractor to SDR (South German Broadcast Corporation). Guest lecturer in the USA, Europe, Philippines, South Africa, Korea and Australia. Participation in festivals for (mainly) electroacoustic music in Varadero, Cuba (1985, 87, 89, 93, 98), Baltimore, USA (1988), Brno, CSFR (1991), Seoul (1993), Wroclaw, Poland and Bourges, France (1994), Montreal (1995). Guest conductor in Tainan, Taiwan (1985 and 88), lecturer at the Percussion Convention in Nashville (1989) and at the 3rd symposium of eco-acoustic art in Madgeburg (1997), artist in residence at the Studio PASS in New York (1986), the Washington Project of the Arts (1990), the Lee Strasburg Institute in Los Angeles (1993 and 96) and the Institute of Electronic Music in Bourges (2002). Retirement 2005, lives in Cape Town. Around 100 compositions mainly using electronics, amongst them 15 collective compositions with Patrick Bebelaar, Jürgen Bräuninger, David Mason, Oliver Prechtel, Matthias Schneider-Hollek, Yehuda Yannay, Macej Walczak and Rainer Wehinger.

Jürgen Bräuninger

Jürgen Bräuninger studied in Stuttgart with Ulrich Süssesse and Erhard Karkoschka and at San Jose State University with Allen Strange and Dan Wyman. He lectured in composition and music technology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal from 1985 until 2015. In addition to many compositions for ensembles of acoustic and electronic instruments, he has also contributed to a number of film soundtracks. He has produced South African jazz albums as well as recordings for workers' cultural groups and neo-traditional praise poets and has worked with choreographer/director Jay Pather on various Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre productions, among them Ahimsa-Ubuntu and A South African Siddhartha. More recent works include collaborations with Sazi Dlamini such as Jiwe released as part of The Bow Project (2010) by Tutl Records, as well as with Ari Sitas, Sumangala Damodaran, et al.: Insurrections: a musical dialogue between Indian and South African artists (2012) and Mayihlome/Aahwaan (2014) published by South African History Online. While still trying to speak through music, for the past couple of years he has been improving his equine communication skills to help with the rehabilitation of abused horses.

Dimitri Voudouris

Dimitri Voudouris Born 1961 in Athens, Greece and citizen of South Africa.

A clinical pharmacist, curator of UNYAZI the first electro-acoustic music festival and symposium to take part on the African continent in 2005. He composes for acoustic instruments, electronics, multimedia, dance and theatre. His technical and theoretical approach researches cognitive psycho-acoustic behavioural patterns in humans in an area of continued environmental changes.

Theoretical interests in kinetic motion and cognitive communication between sound and the listener require analysis, in flow rates of gases and liquids in various transport systems as well as organic principles relating to biochemical mechanisms in the generation of energy and molecular physiology. Thus bio mechanical principles assist him in the construction of various building blocks that intern form the backbone of his compositions.

Voudouris' compositions have been performed at numerous international venues including the International Computer Music Conference, the Unyazi Festival, the Brighton Festival fringe, and the Vence Architecture Biennale. He also received a Palmars des 34e Concours Internationaux de Musique d'Art Sonore Electroacoustiques de Bourges award in 2007.

Miles Warrington

Miles Warrington's main interest area lies in the field of electroacoustic art-music composition, research and performance. He is passionate about technology that explores the interface between humans and computers in the music domain. He has a keen interest in analysis theory of compositional practice in electroacoustic music and is inspired by the fields of both cognitive and neuro-musicology where they intersect with composition. Miles has recently been appointed as lecturer in Music Technology at the University of Pretoria, South Africa and serves as co-composition editor for the Journal of Musical Arts in Africa.

Theo Herbst

Theo Herbst holds a BMus degree from Stellenbosch University (1986) and an MMus (Composition) from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (1988). He continued his composition studies with Erhard Karkoschka and Ulrich Süesse at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart, graduating in 1993. From 1994 Herbst lectured at the Music Department of Stellenbosch University, where he established a music technology programme and served as musical director of the KEMUS-ensemble. In 2013 Herbst was appointed to the South African College of Music, University of Cape Town as Senior Lecturer. There he has been expanding the existing music technology programme and facilities (www.sacmmt.com).

He remains an active composer and explores musical acculturation in his doctoral research.

Mike Frengel

Mike Frengel holds B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in electroacoustic music composition from San Jose State University, Dartmouth College and City University, London, respectively. His works have received international recognition and have been included on the Sonic Circuits VII, ICMC'95, CDCM Vol.26, 2000 Luigi Russolo and ICMC 2009 compact discs. Mike serves on the faculty of the music department at Northeastern University, where he teaches courses in music technology and composition. His recently completed book, *The Unorthodox Guitar: A Guide to Alternative Performance Practice*, is available through Oxford University Press.

Dr. Hubert Ho

Dr. Hubert Ho's music has been performed in Carnegie Hall and at the Kennedy Center for the Arts, D.C. A former U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts, he is a recipient of the Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His music has also appeared at festivals such as June in Buffalo, the Wellesley Composers Conference, Cincinnati Conservatory's Music XX, the Rencontres de nouvelle musique at Domaine Forget, the Aspen School of Music Advanced Master Class Program, the Ernest Bloch Festival, Arcosanti New Music Workshop, and New Music North

His music has been commissioned and performed by groups including Prague Modern, Oesterreiches ensemble fur Neue Musik, FAMA String Quartet, the New York New Music Ensemble, the Verge Ensemble at the Corcoran Gallery, the Berg Chamber Orchestra, and the California EAR Unit.

Most recently he has performed at the New Waves Festival (CZ) and the Music and Sound Art Symposium (Germany). Prior performances include appearances with Earplay (S.F.) and the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players (Berkeley), and at Acanthes Festival (FR) and at the Darmstadt Ferienkurse fur Neue Musik.

As a Fulbright Student Scholar he worked with composer Marek Kopelent at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, also delivering lectures on contemporary electroacoustic music from America and on the music of Elliott Carter. His research is focused on perceptual approaches to music theory, pedagogy, and embodiment. Dr. Ho received his Ph. D. from the

University of California, Berkeley in Music and an A. B. from Harvard College in Music and Physics.

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