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Guest Artist Recital: The Music of Paul Elwood: Electronics, Film, and Banjo

Paul Elwood

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The Music of Paul Elwood

Electronics, Film, and Banjo

Hockett Family Recital Hall
Monday, February 1st, 2016
7:00 pm



ITHACA COLLEGE

School of Music

Program

Border Radio X (2006)

Evensong Evocation (2012/2015)

Among Vanished Aviators (2001)

Neighbors (1920/2016)

**World Premiere*

Brief Intermission

The Prairie Pranksters

*Joseph D'Esposito, fiddle
Paul Elwood, banjo and vocals
Sara Haefeli, cello*

**All performances in the first half of the concert are original works by Paul Elwood*

Program Notes

Border Radio X (2006)

Five-string banjo, voice, and fixed media

This composition was inspired by the famous Carter Family. This trio effectively launched modern country music. In the 1930s they performed on radio stations across the Mexican border with call letters that began with the letter X. These stations were unregulated as far as wattage was concerned, so the music from these folks from the hills of eastern Tennessee was heard all over North America (and sometimes beyond).

Evensong Evocation

Fixed media playback 2012 / film by Elwood 2015

Radio inspires much of what I do and this composition uses recordings of Dale Seidenschwarz, a.k.a., "Clyde Clifford," who had a nightly radio show called "Beaker Street" on KAAZ Little Rock in the early '70s. He played what was known at the time as "underground" music, or rock music not played on popular radio. I was riveted to my transistor radio each night at 11 pm sometimes until 2 am when he went off of the air. Recordings from a show in 1971 are heard throughout this composition.

Among Vanished Aviators

Five-string banjo, voice, and fixed media

This piece was composed very quickly when I was asked to perform a recital in Moscow for the Cold Alternativa Festival of New American Music - three weeks later. I used air-to-ground recordings from a vinyl instruction record that I found in a record shop in Boulder, Colorado.

Neighbors

The 1920 film by Buster Keaton with fixed-media soundtrack

Silent film has been a passion ever since I watched Orson Welles' PBS series on the history of cinema as a teenager. I still laugh at certain bits in this film even after having seen it perhaps 50+ times.

Biographies

Paul Elwood's music has been featured at festivals in Moscow, Sofia, Mexico City, Marseille, Strasbourg, Bangkok, Wollongong, Edinburgh, Darmstadt, and all over the U.S.A. Performers that have played his music include Stephen Drury, the Callithumpian Consort (Boston), the North Carolina Symphony, and Ensemble Signos (Mexico City). Recent recordings are on Innova Recordings as composer/banjoist with percussionist Famoudou Don Moye of the Art Ensemble of Chicago (titled *Nice Folks*, 2015), Misfit Toys (2013) with percussionist Dan Moore, drummer Matt Wilson, and reed player Robert Paredes, and his own chamber and folk music, *Stanley Kubrick's Mountain Home*, featuring bluegrass legend John Hartford (2011) and cellist Hank Roberts, with bassist Bertram Turetzky (2008), and Electric Cowboy Cacophony improvisational ensemble (2008). He is a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome and of the Camargo Foundation (Cassis, France). In 2000 he won the Sigma Alpha-Iota Inter-American Music Awards. Elwood's compositions are published by C.F. Peters and Smith Publications.

Joe D'Esposito recently graduated from Ithaca College with a degree in violin performance with Susan Waterbury. He started playing violin at the age of seven and as a young teen studied with Earl Maneein, a multi genre violinist whose projects include classical chamber music, jazz, bluegrass, and metal. Joe was raised in a musical family that gave him constant exposure to American jazz, Celtic, rock, bluegrass, and classical performances in a family band setting. These experiences fostered a love for performance in a wide variety of genres from a young age. It was in Ithaca, NY where doors began to open for Joe with Celtic, bluegrass, and contemporary string band music. He continually strives to expand the reach of live music to those not ordinarily lucky enough to have it as part of their lives. His most recent project involves performance and composition with guitarist, Mike Robinson and double bassist, Andrew Ryan, as the Freewheel Trio based out of Denver, Colorado and New York City.

Sara Haefeli teaches music history, philosophy of creativity, and music of the American avant garde at Ithaca College. Her work on John Cage has been published in the journal *American Music* and she has presented her research at conferences and festivals internationally. Before joining the faculty in Ithaca, Sara taught at the University of Northern Colorado where she was co-director with Paul Elwood of the Open Space Music Festival. Highlights from her tenure with the festival include hosting the composer Christian Wolff, the pianist Stephen Drury, and the virtuosic Calithumpian Consort. Sara is also an accomplished cellist who especially enjoys playing new music.