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Concert: Electroacoustic Music Class Concert

Electroacoustic Music Class Students

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Electroacoustic Music Class Concert

Students from the Digital Recording and Editing and Introduction to Electroacoustic Music Classes of Dr. Peter Rothbart

Nabenhauer Recital Room
Sunday, February 10th, 2019
7:00 pm
Program
Digital Recording and Editing

Whatifs, Rain Talosig, 4:05
The World is My Ashtray, Justin Bertolero, 5:02
Sea Shell, Nicholas Fagnilli, 6:44
Flashing Before Your Eyes (Purgatory), Charles Brenden McCrae, 4:59
Incongruity, Jacob Mittelman, 4:17
The Way We Live Now, Andrew Bain, 5:05
Movement and Dreams, Victoria Lam, 5:50

Introduction to Electroacoustic Music

Starstorm, Caleb Bates, 4:18
Astral Odyssey, Sean Maguire, 3:14
Untitled, Colin Costa-Walsh, 5:14
Droning Conversation, JT Wilkinson, 3:18
Upside Down, Danielle Cipriano, 3:38
Confused Stars, Olivia Rietti, 3:25
Fifteen Seconds, Chris Anderson
Program Notes

Whatifs

Whatifs - Anxiety is a large part of my life. It is often times hard to find ways to accurately express how this anxiety feels when it wells up inside with seemingly no outlet. “Whatif” by Shel Silverstein from Light in the Attic has been a favorite poem for a long time because I feel like it accurately describes the anxiety ridden voices in our heads. In this text-sound composition I try to embody the feelings associated with anxiety and the uncertainty associated with those feelings.

The World is My Ashtray

The World is My Ashtray is an interpretation of the progression of technology throughout the history of mankind, particularly the rise of artificial intelligence. I used lyrics from the Modest Mouse song “Tiny Cities Made of Ashes” and manipulated it into text sound. The piece goes through different phases of communication, transitioning from chisel and stone all the way to computerized voices.

Sea Shell

Sea Shell (text by Amy Lowell (1874-1925) is part of a triptych of poems by former poet laureate Amy Lowell, intended as children’s songs. All of us understand the merriment and wonder that comes to a child when they hold a seashell to their ear, hoping to hear the ocean.

In this piece, a Moogerfogger analog delay on the vocal part (sung by Caitlin Glastonbury ’22) mimics the mid-heavy resonance inside a seashell. The sonic environment morphs as the piece progresses and the singer continues pleas to the seashell to sing of “seahorses stabled in great green caves.” The listener travels from the sound of the seashell to the imagined space of a vast underwater cave. The piano augments this environment with muted strings and harmonic nodes, at once evoking the expanse of the imagined space and bringing a meditative quality to the piece, adding bell-like timbres with the upper harmonics of the low strings.

If your reaction as a listener is unsettled or spooked, I ask you to think of the feeling you may have had as a child holding a seashell to your ear and imagining the still unknown world that lies beneath the waves.
Flashing Before Your Eyes (Purgatory)

*Flashing Before Your Eyes (Purgatory)* was inspired by the thought of your life flashing before your eyes when you die. Throughout the piece a soundscape is created in which a man can be heard walking through his life and slowly grasping the fact that he’s stuck in Purgatory, the space where you wait for judgment before going to heaven or hell. Eventually he comes to terms with his death and fades into the afterlife and whatever awaits him there.

Incongruity

*Incongruity* - You’re an astronaut on a mission to explore the Small Magellanic Cloud, a nearby dwarf galaxy with potential for Earth-like planets. You’ve been alone in your shuttle for decades now, and the feeling of isolation overwhelms you. You reminisce fondly, obsessively over your memories of home, knowing you are never to return. You begin to wonder if the sounds you’re hearing are really there, or just your lonely mind’s desperate grasps at any uneaten feelings of belonging, companionship or togetherness that you may never find again...

The Way We Live Now

*The Way We Live Now* is a composition which explores the AIDS epidemic, and specifically its beginnings in the early 1980s. The name is derived from the Susan Sontag short story of the same name, which also served as inspiration for both the theme and composition. The influence of the short story can be found in the chopped up, overlapping soundbites from early broadcast news reports of the epidemic, due to how the short story is told exclusively through continuous, looping dialogue from its large cast of characters. Beyond that, this piece also features nods to other works about the AIDS epidemic. One such reference is to The Fear of Disclosure Project: Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien (No Regrets) by Marlon T. Riggs, referenced through the use of Non, je ne regrette rien by Édith Piaf, which serves as a sort of bookends to the rest of the piece. Through the usage of synthesizer’s, and gathered sounds (such as tuning radios, news reports, and so on) The Way We Live Now is an exploration of the AIDS epidemic, both its unpredictability, and the persistent sense of fear & anxiety it has left on both myself & various marginalized communities since its emergence in the early 1980s.
Movement and Dreams

Movement and Dreams begins from the point of view of a student, who falls asleep during the murmuring chatter and activity in a classroom. As the room seems to slow down in pace and tone around them, the student enters the dream in a monotonous state, but then is taken into a whistling tunnel of wind and dreamlike fantasy. It reminds one of flipping through a thousand dreams at once, transporting oneself through a whirlwind of time and space. The dream then drops their point of view into the calm and serene state of the beach, where the student orders a margarita and plays with their drink.

With the mixed and recorded sounds of ice and drinking, these sounds begin to morph and reflect the blending of physical states, environmental textures and consciousness. Orderly thoughts are not entirely possible in this state, and everything seems to flow into one. This section is meant to reflect the anxieties and confusions we often cycle into very exponentially when left in a state of solitude and calamity. The mixed sounds of the thunderstorm and cyclical ocean waves underlie this emotion of conflicting emotions.

As the climax of this storm is reached, the sounds of hail rains down upon the beach, as a sort of peace is reached once again, and the sounds of the snoring student returns, reminding us that it was only a dream.