

AV@CMU Audiovisual Composition Concert

Saturday, March 23, 2024 • 7:00 PM
Kresge Theatre, College of Fine Arts

AV@CMU 2024

Feed Stairs on Vectrex

Nick Fox-Gieg

Contours and Coincidence

David Stout

Stretched Bodies

Saadi Daftari

Screensong

Valentin Sismann

Roar Hills

Alejandro Casales N.

Impossible Dust

Michael Lukaszuk

The falling leaf, I was be with it

Lin Chang

Distractions, Horizons

J r mie Martineau

Geometry of the Paradox

**Przemys law Scheller (Music)
Tomasz Strojecki (Video)**

Storms

Jo o Pedro Oliveira

Program Notes

Feed Stairs on Vectrex– 3’30” (2023)

Nick Fox-Gieg

Walking up and down five flights of stairs at the FEED Media Art Center with an assortment of cameras and scanners.

The soundtrack is derived from the XY audio encoding that generated the oscilloscope images.

Contours and Coincidence – 9’44” (2021)

David Stout

Contours and Coincidence is a generative exploration of bio-morphic forms found in the natural world. Contrasting bold graphic gestures with lilting lines and chaotic filigree, this work draws inspiration from the tradition of hand drawn experimental films. The music score eschews my typical use of image sonification, synthesis and sampling, instead the work consists entirely of sounds taken from short wave, FM and AM radio broadcasts. As such, it is both performative, in the sense of incorporating dial scanning between stations, while also being highly composed using carefully drawn envelopes to sculpt each audible moment. Computational media, like the pencil, is a prosthesis extending the reach of the hand, the tongue and consciousness itself. Using generative image techniques as a form of contemporary scrying I can activate a deeper imaginal realm to play at the liminal edge of the mind's default pattern recognition states.

I typically work with software systems that allow me to synthesize and compose image, sound, and music all at the same time. Contours and Coincidence revisits an earlier working method for film, dance, theatre, and installation, where the music or sound design is created after the visual component has been completed. The sonic elements in Contours and Coincidence function similarly to a narrative film score designed to provide a deeper emotional aura or dramatic intensity. The difference lies in my approach to creating the initial visual elements with a strong sense of the kinds of music and sound world I wish to evoke. In this way we could consider the kinetic visual aesthetic and compositional method to be a form of animated graphic score.

Stretched Bodies – 4'30" (2023)

Saadi Daftari

Stretched Bodies is a quasi-narrative videomusic that spans across the multiple meanings that its title implies. That is, a body stretched out across different locations and times, charged with tension and contradiction, and a body stretched out in comfort, free of any tension and distress, but one that could also be lifeless. It is informed by the conditions of the itinerant and the migration. It examines questions pertaining to the trauma of leaving home behind, the violence of displacement and rupture, the fragmentation of identity and the realities of the double consciousness, of being here and there at once. How can these bodies in movement unsettle borders and deliver knowledge across them? How much of their stories echo in our history? *Stretched Bodies* superimposes multiple worlds onto one another to construct a poetic mosaic of a fleeting story. A placeless and timeless story that peeks out at a somber and not-so-poetic reality.

The voice-over of the non-diegetic soundtrack is the most important audiovisual element in the entire piece. Contrary to the visuals that bare little traces of the displaced protagonists, voice is the only clear embodiment of them, and the only hint to their existence. Voice also lays down the overall architecture of the piece, dictates its rhythm and works to create synch points for a tight synchronism all along. The first 30 seconds of the work is marked by a voice-over that echoes through a visual void to create a sense of tension and ambiguity and to establish a feeling of absence and loss. This is followed by audio-reactive visual elements that create tight synchronism and convey a sense of harshness and violence. This is occasionally countered (1:31) with looser synchronism to reduce tension and create a sense of suspense.

Screensong – 3'58" (2023)

Valentin Sismann

Screensong is a video piece, a musical system that exists only through a visual process, in this case the representation of the machine eye trespassing into domestic and private space. Obsessed with analyzing the objects around him and transforming them into data, he himself becomes an audiovisual object with which the video plays.

Roar Hills – 9'07" (2023)

Alejandro Casales N.

From a study of visuality, *Roar Hills* was created with artificial intelligence and human interaction. The video tries to involve the gaze and eye movements to extending perception towards objectives in different depth fields. Their music was carried out with recording techniques of percussive instruments, synthesis,

additives, resynthesis, granular synthesis, sculpted sounds, and transduction of sound objects.

Impossible Dust – 6'06" (2023)

Michael Lukaszuk

"Impossible Dust" began as an audio-visual particle study. On a technical level, the piece explores how audio reactivity can draw on aspects of a sound both including and beyond gain and frequency. The algorithmic system that produces the piece can move through various combinations of stage" to produce different fixed-media iterations of the work. On a conceptual level, this piece considers dust as a metaphor for timelessness, finality, and the afterlife. This is explored by disintegrating old photographs to form patterns of audible and visual "dust," and by using granular sounds and frenetic gestures to suggest a coming to terms with such themes.

Much of the content in both areas is particle based, there's also a fair amount of audio-reactivity (affecting things like scale, rotation, randomization of visuals based on frequency/gain and a couple other audio parameters). The displacement of visual particles is sometimes affected by images of old photographs, complimented by the way the idea of fidelity is explored in the audio.

The falling leaf, I was be with it– 7'18" (2021)

Lin Chang

The inspiration of this piece came from a movie shooting technique call MC (Motion Control Camera). The famous movie *Forrest Gump* used this technique to make a floating feather looks etherealize. For me, to compose this piece is an aspiration to summon someone. When I was 'watching' the falling leaf in this piece, I feel like there are two roles happen in a same body - the viewer and the falling leaf. The original sound materials only come from a few special notations of soprano Sheng and Pipa, two Chinese traditional instruments. The pitch materials extracted from the first chord of the song *Autumn leaves*.

Distractions, Horizons– 5'34" (2021)

Jérémie Martineau

Distractions, Horizons is a short experimental film/videomusic portraying meditative concentration dynamics. It invites us to oscillate between global and focal attention, while depicting the difficult task that is mindfulness. Distractions are represented by harsh noises and flickering lights, while "Horizons", those

moments of true mindfulness, are pictured by lush pads and slowly evolving liquids.

Distractions, Horizons' audiovisual relationships are developed through a strong but synthetic diegetic world created by the associations of sounds and images and their repetitions. Various syncretic relationships have derived from this structure, to articulate the narrative in a more precise and physical way.

Geometry of the Paradox – 5'35" (2019)

Przemysław Scheller (Music) and Tomasz Strojcki (Video)

"Plato says 'If you make a false statement, I will throw you in the water'. Socrates responds 'You will throw me in the water'." - J. Buridan

"If asking oneself 'Am I dreaming?' in a dream proves that one is, what does it prove in waking life?" - E. Hutton

"When a grain of millet falls it makes no sound, but when a thousand grains fall, they do, thus many of nothing become something." – Aristotle

In *Geometry of the Paradox*, the synergy between electronic media, flute, and grayscale visuals against a black canvas forms a profound exploration of paradoxical symbols. The deliberate connection between non-Euclidean geometry in visuals and the intricate dissonance in the music transcends conventional boundaries. This convergence serves an analytical purpose, delving into the complexities of paradoxes within the intersection of auditory and visual realms. Beyond mere synchrony, the composition fosters a contemplative experience, prompting the audience to discern subtle intricacies and intellectual nuances within the amalgamation of sound and visually rendered abstract forms.

Storms – 8'40" (2018)

João Pedro Oliveira

Storms are unpredictable. They move fast and change suddenly. There is rain, static energy, light, noise and movement. Colors are grey, dark blue, white.

In my works I attempt to make references to the organicity in the interaction between music and visuals. In addition to some of Chion's concepts and writings, the basis of my research focuses on the ideas formulated by authors such as Denis Smalley and François Bayle, who analyzed possible image representations in music, as well as Trevor Wishart and Robert Hatten, who developed theories related to gesture perception in music and in image. Specific moments in the image

interrelate with sound/music elements, in ways that can have multiple meanings, or go beyond a direct translation of one into the other. For that, the energetic potential of image and sound, their possibilities of emotion induction, implied movements, meanings or metaphors will provide the basis for understanding possible connections in the perceptual essence of the sound-image phenomenon, as they have been addressed in the field of acousmatic music as well as in the context of visual music or cinema. Other concepts such as causality, energy-motion-trajectory, articulations and disturbances in a sound or image time continuum, hierarchical levels of energy and disruptions, examined by some of the above-mentioned authors serve as a theoretical basis for the development of several compositional proposals where image and sound seek to be organically integrated.

Biographies

Alejandro Casales N.

National Institute of Fine Arts, Mexico

Alejandro equally cultivates the sound arts such as the repertoire of visual music, multidisciplinary projects, and research. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the National Institute of Fine Arts.

Lin Chang

Xinghai Conservatory of Music, China

Lin Chang, associate professor of Modern Music and Theatre College in XingHai Conservatory of Music, composition and jazz piano master's supervisor, chairman of Guangzhou Youth modern music association member of Chinese musicians association, signed composer with UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP CHINA, has been teaching composition, electronic music production, film scoring and Jazz piano since 2004 as a major course teacher. Meanwhile, he also took charge of orchestration, contemporary harmonic and jazz ensemble. From 2019 to 2020, Lin Chang has been invited to USA and finished research and composing in The Hartt School of University of Hartford as a temporary staff and consultant funded by abroad visiting scholar program, meanwhile he has been invited to UIUC, UCONN for holding lectures and composition group classes.

Saadi Daftari

University of Montreal, Canada

Saadi Daftari (he/his) is a researcher and a sound artist currently completing a master's degree in music composition and sonic creation under the supervision of Nicolas Bernier at the University of Montreal. His research-creation draws on ways of thinking outside music to examine how sound art can instigate the knowledge production qualities of sound. The result is a sound art that is in active dialogue with the environment it is situated in and emerges from its relations. It evokes inquiry into knowing the environment by listening and elicits paying attention to the revealing aspects of sound and how they relate to the unseen, the non-represented, the unheard and the displaced. In addition to exploring these themes via various electroacoustic compositions and sound installations, in the recent months Saadi has been experimenting with extending some of these notions to videomusic composition and construct an audiovisual universe where sound and image work in tandem to deliver a fuller sensorial experience. Saadi holds a master's degree in science and a graduate degree in digital music. His research-creation is partially funded by Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

Nick Fox-Gieg

York University, Canada

Nick Fox-Gieg is an experimental animator in Toronto. His awards include a 2017 Engadget Alternate Realities grant, Eyebeam and Fulbright Fellowships, and the jury prize for Best Animated Short at SXSW 2010; his videos have also been shown at the OIAF, Rotterdam, and TIFF festivals, at the Centre Pompidou, and on CBC TV. His XR work includes projects for the Verizon 5G EdTech Challenge, NYT T Brand Studio, the University of Waterloo, Google Creative Lab, and Framestore; his art practice has been supported by grants from Bravo!FACT, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the arts councils of Ontario, Pennsylvania, Toronto, and West Virginia. Fox-Gieg holds an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts, a BFA from Carnegie Mellon University, and is a PhD candidate at York University.

Michael Lukaszuk

Umeå University, Sweden

Michael Lukaszuk is an experimental music composer and sound artist. His creative work focuses on electronic music, sound installation and improvisation with musicians and multimedia artists. Recently, his research has been focused on how the use of generative processes and AI tools interact with existing ideas about composing, performing, and thinking about musical instruments. He is

interested in blending artistic and research practice to explore how controlling sound with algorithms can allow listeners to rediscover older media in new ways. His pieces have been played at numerous electronic and computer music events such as ICMC, NYCEMF, the Toronto International Electroacoustic Symposium, and the Australasian Computer Music Conference. He won 1st Prize in the Hugh Le Caine Awards – (electroacoustic music category) of the 2015 SOCAN Foundation Young Composer Awards. Michael lives in Sweden and currently serves as the Postdoctoral Fellow in New Media Art in the Creative Studies department at Umeå University.

Jérémie Martineau

Université de Montréal, Canada

Jérémie Martineau is an audiovisual artist and researcher based in Montreal. His work develops a multidisciplinary approach, bridging together digital art and concert music through the integration of acoustic, electronic, visual, spatial and scenographic dimensions. His recent research interests surround immersion, meditation, silence, spatial audio and videomusic.

Following a desire to reform the concert experience, his compositional approach is based on the immersion of both the audience and the performer(s) during the concert experience, but also within the compositional process itself. This immersive experience is not only achieved through the performer(s) and the sounds produced, but through everything that is to be heard, seen, and felt.

His work and research, supervised by Myriam Boucher, have notably been presented at the University of Montreal, the Montreal Symphony House, and the University of Greenwich. He recently won the JTTP award from the Canadian Electroacoustic Community for his work *Distractions, Horizons*.

João Pedro Oliveira

University of California Santa Barbara, USA

Composer João Pedro Oliveira holds the Corwin Endowed Chair in Composition for the University of California at Santa Barbara. He studied organ performance, composition, and architecture in Lisbon. He completed a Ph.D. in Music at the University of New York at Stony Brook. His music includes opera, orchestral compositions, chamber music, electroacoustic music, and experimental video. He has received over 70 international prizes and awards for his works, including the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship in 2023, the Bourges Magisterium Prize, and the Giga-Hertz Special Award, among others. His music is played all over the world. He taught at Aveiro University (Portugal) and Federal University of

Minas Gerais (Brazil). His publications include several articles in journals and a book on 20th century music theory. <http://www.jpoliveira.com>.

Przemysław Scheller

Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music, Poland

Przemysław Scheller was born in 1990 in Gliwice, Poland. As a contemporary composer interested in instrumental, vocal, and electro-acoustic music, He explores the nature of sound. He is developing various dimensions of time and space, searching for the bond between past and present. In this journey, he is much inspired by Gregorian chants, early polyphony as well as spectralism. He plays ethnic instruments, but his main area of interest is electroacoustic and chamber music where he explores different artistic ideas – usage of non-trivial instrumentation, topophony, interactive or multimedia music. His compositions are published by BabelScores in Paris, France and Lyon & Healy Publications in Chicago, USA. He works as an assistant professor in the Academy of Music in Katowice.

Scheller has won numerous prizes, scholarships, and awards including ones from: Ensemble musikFabrik, Tempo Reale, the Young Poland Programme, the Ministry of Culture, and the National Heritage Fund for exceptional artistic achievements.

Valentin Sismann

France

Valentin Sismann is a French artist working mainly in the fields of acousmatic music, experimental film, and video. One of his most important works is *In Repetito Religare*, an experimental film made in collaboration with Audrey Colard that premiered in an exhibition at The Film Gallery and was subsequently selected for several festivals worldwide. His acousmatic pieces have been performed at several festivals in France and on the radio.

Since then, he has been working with video, as with *Plasforms*, exhibited at CUVO and Light matter during 2023 and 2024.

Tomasz Strojecki

Academy of Fine Arts in Katowice, Poland

A Ph.D. professional at the Multimedia Activities Studio of the Academy of Fine Arts in Katowice, he spearheads projects utilizing new media, demonstrating a proclivity for interdisciplinary initiatives. Proficient in graphic design, animation

(including live visuals), and interaction, he contributes to diverse creative domains, crafting visual identities, posters, publications, and interface (UI) designs. With a particular ardor for VJing, defined as the creation of real-time visuals synchronized with music, Strojecki thrives in collaborative, interdisciplinary team environments. His multifaceted expertise encompasses the seamless integration of various mediums, reflecting a commitment to innovative and dynamic projects within the realm of multimedia.

David Stout

University of North Texas, USA

David Stout is a visual and sonic artist, performance director and digital film maker exploring the synthesis of new forms across the arts. He is recognized for works in cinema, installation and intermedia environments integrating immersive projection as an extension of performer, audience, and architecture. He is cofounder of the seminal interactive media ensemble, NoiseFold, whose multi-screen performances, installations, and sound works have toured worldwide. Having grown up in rural Oregon, David has a long deep connection to the land, waters, flora, fauna, and cultural histories of the west. His pursuit of an embodied eco-awareness extends to the interrelationship of complex multi-sensorial digital networks and the interdependent natural systems surrounding us. Drawing together the arts, technology, science and the tenets of global wisdom traditions, Stout embraces a speculative approach to emerging hybrid forms and potentials. These conceptual threads find expression in his current engagement with large scale public projection works, virtual reality, print making, generative AI, and performances that combine digital methods with art making traditions of the past including, mathematic generation of novel sculptural vessels realized in blown glass, the emulation of woven fabrics using real-time video processes and musical performances wedding diverse musical traditions with responsive visual technologies. He is director of the Hybrid Arts Laboratory (HAL) at the University of North Texas, where he coordinates the Initiative for Advance Research in Technology and the Arts (iARTA) as both a member of Music Composition and affiliated faculty in Studio Art.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, **March 24** • Student Recital: Natalie Hsieh, violin
Alumni Concert Hall, College of Fine Arts • 6:30 PM • Free: No tickets required

Sunday, **March 24** • Carnegie Mellon Philharmonic
Carnegie Music Hall • 8:00 PM • \$10 General Admission, \$5 Senior Citizens (65+), Free
for students, OSHER, CMU & Pitt ID card holders

Monday, **March 25** • Carnegie Mellon Chamber Series: Bruch and Strauss
Kresge Theatre, College of Fine Arts • 7:30 PM • Free: Tickets required

Tuesday, **March 26** • First-Year Composition Showcase
Kresge Theatre, College of Fine Arts • 7:30 PM • Free: No tickets required

Wednesday, **March 27** • Student Recital: Chloe Tordi, flute
Kresge Theatre, College of Fine Arts • 7:30 PM • Free: No tickets required

Thursday, **March 28** • Student Recital: Abby Cunningham, soprano
Kresge Theatre, College of Fine Arts • 6:30 PM • Free: No tickets required

Friday, **March 29** • Student Recital: Delia Zaleski, flute
Kresge Theatre, College of Fine Arts • 7:30 PM • Free: No tickets required

Saturday, **March 30** • Spring Composer's Concert
Kresge Theatre, College of Fine Arts • 2:00 PM • Free: No tickets required

Monday, **April 1** • Carnegie Mellon Philharmonic: Student Composer's Concert
Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall, 4141 Fifth Ave • 8:00 PM • Free: Tickets required

All performances subject to change. Please check our website: music.cmu.edu for the most up-to-date performance information and tickets.