



Present

The Bay Players in Concert

Saturday, May 5, 2007

8:00 p.m.

se una notte (2005)

Stephen F. Lilly
(b. 1976)

Stacey Mastrian, voice

(in)difference/s (2006)

Steve Y. Wanna
(b. 1976)

Stephen F. Lilly, found percussion

Hand Leg Suit (2003)

Michael R. Boyd
(b. 1978)

Michael Boyd, trombone
Stephen F. Lilly, electric bass
Michael Sparrow, percussion

BRIEF INTERMISSION

Like staring at a word... (2003)

Stephen F. Lilly

Stacey Mastrian, soprano

Bit of nostalgia... (2005-2006)

Michael R. Boyd

Kyle Johnson, computer
Michael Sparrow, percussion

*Please turn off all cellular phones, pagers and watches.
For your own safety, look for your nearest exit. In case of emergency, walk, do not run to that exit.*

Program Notes

se una notte

"Relax. Concentrate. Dispel every other thought. Let the world around you fade."

You are probably reading this while the house lights are still on – after you have exhausted all avenues of polite conversation with your companions but before you have had a chance to properly settle into your seat. If it is already five minutes past, be sure you have read everyone else's notes and scanned the donor list in the back of the booklet; you will hear my notes shortly...

(in)difference/s

This work deals with the notion of multiplicities: here, sound objects that initially are perceived to be very similar, but begin to gain some sense of uniqueness with familiarity. There are five components (interpreter and 4 loudspeakers) fixed in physical space cycling through sound objects of limited sonic material in random order. They are not coordinated but simply coexist in the space, which is a different level of interaction aided by the limited scope of the sonic material. The work, therefore, sets up an exciting situation with rich potential for unique formal explorations (sonic, organizational, etc), in which interactions between sound objects may (or may not) create fleeting moments of interest that have no history and that are not obligated to lead anywhere specific.

Hand Leg Suit

The title of this composition reflects a shift in my approach to composition that began with this piece from a strict focus on sound to the physical actions of the performers (thus the parts of the body in the title). In this piece specifically, players are provided with two general types of information that they interpret and amalgamate to generate the performance: simple graphic images, and charts that list actions, parts of the body, and parts of the instrument. Though each performer generally presents these interpretations without specific consideration for other members of the ensemble, the group periodically coordinates through the repetition of specific segments of the score. Ultimately, the players are required to continually rethink how their instrument and body are used in performance, creatively producing material that both represents their individuality and at times generates a unique sense of ensemble.

Like staring at a word...

Language is an abstraction. Simply by meditating on a single word, one can dissolve its meaning and disconnect it from the thing it represents. *Like staring at a word...* is the musical representation of this phenomenon. It goes beyond simply setting Ivan Molton's "Prosopagnosia;" it submits the poem to the very process described therein. Every dimension of the composition is derived from the aforementioned poem; all of the source sounds for the tape are taken from recitations of the poem by various male and female voice types, and the form is a temporal interpretation of poem's visual presentation.

Bit of nostalgia...

This piece investigates the ways that objects with which performers interact (instruments) shape their actions. The percussionists take an active role in designing the stage set-up for each performance by utilizing various combinations of instrument-types (listed in the piece's instructions including objects made of metal, wood, glass, paper, plastic, and stone) in different sectors of the performance space. Each group of instruments also contains three of eighteen relatively similar graphic score pages. The score page similarities require that performers frequently reinterpret some visual materials with greatly varying groups of instruments (and objects).

While the performance proceeds, another performer interprets the same score using Cycling 74's MAX/MSP (software that accomplishes real-time sound synthesis and processing) to process and playback sound segments from recordings of previous rehearsals and/or performances. The percussionists directly respond to these sounds as well as each other while interpreting certain pages of the score. These interactions bring a sense of self-history into the piece and create an interesting notion of depth which reflects a broader perspective of what constitutes a "work" by actively incorporating previous rehearsals and performances into the fundamental structure of the composition.

Biographical Notes

Michael Boyd, a member of the music theory faculty at Towson University, holds graduate degrees from the University of Maryland (DMA, composition) and SUNY Stony Brook (MA, music theory and history). Boyd's recent compositions utilize graphic scores that encourage performer inventiveness and creativity. *Hand Leg Suit* has been performed in College Park, MD, at the Flashpoint Gallery in Washington D.C., and Stony Brook Manhattan in New York City. *Becoming...everything else*, an interdisciplinary performance installation, was featured in the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center for an entire week this past May and included in the University of Maryland Baltimore County's "Danger: New Music" Festival. As a scholar, Boyd's work has focused on recent composers such as Luigi Nono and Roger Reynolds, as well as the analysis and criticism of popular music. His article "Perception/Form: Thomas DeLio's *Though* for solo piano" will appear in *Thomas DeLio: Composer and Scholar*, a forthcoming book edited by Thomas Licata and Jerry Tabor and published by Mellen Press.

Kyle Johnson is a composer and performer at the University of Maryland where he studies with Thomas DeLio. Formerly a student of Roger Reynolds, Johnson's instrumental works *And There In That Noise...* for solo piano, and *Yo Le Escribo* for two singers and instrumental ensemble, take their inspiration from late 20th Century literature greats Albert Camus and Pablo Neruda. His current work reaches across boundaries taking the sound and image of any given audience as the work's subject. While not busy composing, Johnson, a native of San Diego, performs improvised experimental and avant-garde electronics in the Baltimore-Washington corridor.

Stephen Lilly is a composer and theorist who holds degrees from the University of Idaho (BM) and the University of Maryland (MM and DMA), where his teachers were Mark Wilson and Thomas DeLio. During the 2005-06 academic year, he studied at the Institute of Sonology in the Hague, focusing on computer programming and electroacoustic composition, in both the digital and analog domains. His works have been performed internationally, and as a theorist, his analytical work on Wesley Fuller's *Sherds of Five* was published in *Perspectives of New Music* volume 43, number 1, and his analysis of James Dashow's *...at other times, the distances* is included on the DVD *Radial Matrix: Multi-dimensional Electroacoustic Music* from Capstone Records. He currently teaches music theory at Towson University and digital audio production at the Art Institute of Washington.

Stacey Mastrian, soprano, is a doctoral fellow at the University of Maryland and faculty member at Peabody Conservatory who specializes in 20th-century Italian vocal music and other contemporary works. From 2002-2003 she studied in Italy on a Fulbright grant and a fellowship from the Frank Huntington Beebe Fund for Musicians. She has appeared as soloist with the Nova Amadeus orchestra in Rome and as a featured performer at the Maxim Gorki Theater in Berlin; in 2005 she was selected to study and perform Luigi Nono's *La fabbrica illuminata* for soprano and tape at the Pisani Palace in Venice. Her voice has been hailed as "sweet and agile" (*The Washington Post*) with the ability to hold audiences "rapt" (*The Washington City Paper*). In 2005 *The Washington Times* hailed Ms. Mastrian's "exquisitely etched performance, unveiling delicate, silvery tones and pinpoint accuracy" as Gilda in *Rigoletto* with the Summer Opera Theatre Company. She has been the recipient of a prestigious Richard F. Gold Career Grant, and she has won awards in numerous competitions, from Bach to art song to opera. Her recital and oratorio performances have been broadcast internationally. For upcoming performances and more information, please visit www.staceymastrian.com.

Mike Sparrow is a percussionist and composer who currently serves as Assistant Director of Operations for the University of Maryland School of Music. He holds degrees in composition (MM) and percussion (BM) from the University of Maryland where he studied with Ron Barnett and Robert Gibson. Sparrow was a founding member of the highly acclaimed New Dark Age Ensemble, a percussion group dedicated to performing cutting-edge contemporary music. He composes for both acoustic and electro-acoustic media.

Steve Wanna is a composer, researcher and teacher with degrees from the University of Maryland and James Madison University. In his recent works, Mr. Wanna has worked toward incorporating an aspect of openness by which each performance is individually shaped from simple materials constructed in such a way as to engender and allow all the combinations possible in relation to the materials, without limitations. Additionally, he explores performer and ensemble behavior, controlling it by various means (limitations, infinite freedom, etc). Mr. Wanna started musical studies relatively late after emigrating from Lebanon, and after completing his doctorate, he spent a year in Paris at the Centre de Création Musicale Iannis Xenakis (CCMIX). He has written music for a wide variety of mediums and has recently focused on electroacoustic music. Mr. Wanna is currently living in San Francisco (a great city).