



THE PEABODY INSTITUTE
OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

presents

THE BAY PLAYERS EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC COLLECTIVE

**Friday, February 13, 2009
8:00 p.m.
Cohen-Davison Family Theater**

<i>Radio Music</i> (1956)	Stephen F. Lilly, Stacey Mastrian, Steve Wanna	John Cage
<i>321</i> (2008)	Stephen F. Lilly, Stacey Mastrian, Steve Wanna, percussion	Steve Wanna
<i>Twelve Actions [BEE^d]</i> (2008)	Stacey Mastrian, solo performer	Michael Boyd
<i>Augur</i> (2009)	Steve Wanna, judge Stephen F. Lilly and Stacey Mastrian, performers	Stephen F. Lilly
<i>Being There</i> (2008)	Steve Wanna, percussion	Stephen F. Lilly
<i>Trayectoria</i> (2007)	Stephen F. Lilly, contrabass Stacey Mastrian, voice Steve Wanna, piano	Steve Wanna

Radio Music (1956) was composed in Stony Point, N.Y. and premiered May 30, 1956, at the Carl Fisher Hall in New York City in a performance by Cage, pianist Maro Ajemian, pianist/composer David Tudor, pianist Grete Sultan and the Juilliard String Quartet. The work utilizes anywhere from 1 to 8 performers. The parts – unique for each performer – are simply listings of AM dialings interspersed with silences. There is no coordination between the players except that they must all end around the same time. Furthermore, the dialings do not necessarily correspond to existing stations. They were selected by means of chance operations, where decisions are made arbitrarily either at random or by consulting some independent source.

321 (2008) is an exploration of opposition and categorization. All sonic events in *321* fall into one of two categories: sustaining or non-sustaining. Given four types of material (metal, glass, wood, and skin), performers are free to choose their battery of percussion instruments. The instruments are then grouped into stations such that at each station both categories are well represented and have examples of some or all of the types. The performance itself relies on individualized scores whereby each performer plots his/her navigation between the two categories and among the four types, without specifying instruments. Each performer is encouraged to create as many scores as they wish to explore different sequential combinations, and if desired, the performers can devise a means of moving from one score to another or even from one station to another.

Twelve Actions [BEE!] (2008) is a theatrical work for solo performer that is divided into four acts. During each act, the performer interacts with the audience and performance space by interpreting three open-ended instructions that are each driven by a single verb. These verbs are drawn from *Becoming...everything else*, an interdisciplinary performance-based installation that I created in 2004; in that composition, performers concurrently interpreted sets of three verbs and simple graphic objects while responding to sights, sounds and behaviors encountered in a chosen public space. This is the first of several pieces that will draw material from that installation's score and documentation.

Augur (2009) is a contest between two performers. It begins with a coin-toss of sorts: after a signal from the judge, the first performer to play after five seconds, without being early, is given control of the game (the initiator). From here on, the other performer (the challenger) can only take over if he/she correctly predicts when the initiator is going to play. The initiator may only use simple sonic events, but he/she can articulate each event with his/her instrument, vocal cords, or any nearby objects. If the challenger guesses incorrectly, the initiator remains in control and scores points (one point if the challenger plays after the initiator and two points if the challenger plays before the initiator). If the challenger not only predicts when the initiator is going to play but also matches all other aspects of his/her performance (timbre, pitch, dynamics, and duration), then the challenger automatically wins. Otherwise, the game is played for a preset duration. The judge signals points by extending the arm on the side of the victor of each round and signals penalties (being overly theatrical, being overly complicated, or playing outside of the range of the other performer) by raising both arms. The end of the game is signaled by the judge walking toward the victor.

Being There (2008) is an exploration of acoustics. The percussionist tests the response characteristics of the performance space with a variety of instruments articulated either by short impulse-like attacks or tremolos. Based on what the performer hears, the instruments are eliminated one by one in search of three goals: imitation of ambient sound (e.g. audience noise, environmental noise, or bleed from outside the space), acoustic saturation (i.e. the end result is either too loud and/or too resonant for the space), and acoustic isolation (i.e. the ensuing sound can be only be heard by the performer and a few members of the audience).

Trayectoria (2007) is the latest work in which I explore the role of the performer, here in the context of the ensemble. The score consists of various combinations of geometric shapes, colors, and patterns, each encoding one instruction. These are arranged in a large hexagon and connected via arrows that are used to navigate between the shapes. Additional symbols are also used to allow each performer to determine their interaction with other performers. Each performer navigates the hexagon on their own, determining the precise interpretation and duration of each object. The overall behavior of the ensemble is determined by each performer as they carefully listen to and interact with other performers (or ignore them, depending on the specifications of each individual object and the spontaneous decisions of the performer).

Michael Boyd is a composer, scholar, and experimental improviser who holds graduate degrees from the University of Maryland (DMA, composition) and SUNY Stony Brook (MA, music theory and history), and currently teaches at Chatham University as an assistant professor of composition, music theory, and history. His music, performed throughout the United States, attempts to (re)integrate performers into the creative process of music making through graphic notation, and embraces experimental practices such as live electronics, improvisation, installation, multimedia, and performance art. Boyd has published reviews in *American Music*, *Computer Music Journal* and *Popular Music and Society*, and his article “The Roger Reynolds Collection at the Library of Congress” recently appeared in *Notes*.

John Cage was an innovative American composer, writer, and philosopher, considered by many to be one of the most important creative forces of the twentieth century. Cage came to prominence after World War II and pioneered the use of chance in modern music. His influence can be felt in most avant-garde musical genres including electronic music, composition for modern dance, and non-standard instrumental preparation/techniques.

Stephen Lilly is an internationally performed composer, a published theorist, and a performer of new music. After completing an advanced degree in composition (DMA, University of Maryland), he spent a year studying at the Institute of Sonology in the Hague, where he focused on computer programming and electroacoustic composition in both the digital and analog domains. Most of his work is scored for chamber ensembles, often including signal processing or computer generated sounds. His reviews and writings have been published in *Perspectives of New Music*, *Computer Music Journal*, and even included on the Capstone DVD *Radial Matrix: Multi-dimensional Electroacoustic Music*. An in-depth look at his approach to computer programming was recently published in *Organised Sound* (Vol. 13, No. 1; the accompanying DVD includes Lilly's *statics: convergence*). Lilly currently teaches digital audio production at the Art Institute of Washington and is co-founder and music editor of www.silenteditions.com, an online music publishing company.

Stacey Mastrian, soprano, is a Fulbright Grantee, Beebe Fellow, and Richard F. Gold Career Grant recipient who has sung with the Konzerthaus Orchestra (Berlin), Nova Amadeus orchestra (Rome), Experimentalstudio Freiburg at the Fondazione Cini (Venice), St. Peter's (Vatican City), and from coast to coast in the U.S. She recently made her Canadian debut at the Chapelle historique du Bon-Pasteur in Montreal, and she will be a guest artist with the Peabody Camerata later this spring. Her repertoire spans from Monteverdi through Verdi to contemporary works, with a specialization in 20th century Italian vocal music; her performances have been broadcast internationally. Mastrian teaches privately and is on the faculty of American University and the Peabody Conservatory. For more information, please visit www.staceymastrian.com.

Steve Wanna is a composer and scholar with a wide range of interests. He started his music studies shortly after immigrating to the United States from Lebanon. After completing his doctoral studies in composition, he spent a year at the CCMIX studios in Paris. He has written for a variety of mediums including traditional instruments, electroacoustic music and music for mixed media and interactive electronics. His recent scores are increasingly graphic and/or verbal in nature and present performers with new and unusual ways of thinking about and exploring performance possibilities. His music has been performed in the United States and Europe. Steve Wanna currently lives and works in the Washington D.C. area.