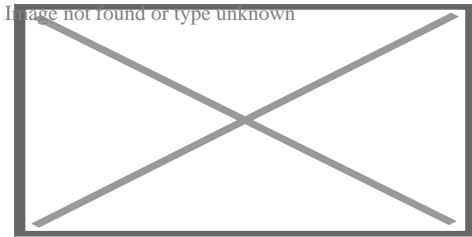


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# Other Minds Festival: OM 15: Panel Discussion & Concert 2, 5 of 7



## Identifier

OMF.2010.03.05.c1.E

## Object Type

Digital Audio

## Musical Selections

Kernel Expansion, for tape (2009) (14:28) / Natasha Barrett

## Description

The second night of the 15th Other Minds Festival of New Music (OM 15) began with a panel discussion with some of the composers and performers featured in that night's concert, held on March 5, 2010. Joining moderator Charles Amirkhanian on stage were, the electro-acoustic composer Natasha Barrett, Polish composer Paweł Mykietyń, and jazz legends Kidd Jordan and Warren Smith. Barrett describes how she blends, carefully, spatially placed natural sounds, spoken monologues, and electronic music, to create extended works that immerse the listener in a fully developed sonic environment. Mykietyń, whose works are very well regarded in his native land, and increasingly recognized internationally, talks about how his music has evolved from an earlier interest in classical Baroque music, to now include electronic sounds, quarter-tones, and theatrical elements. Saxophonist Kidd Jordan, and percussionist Warren Smith, share their memories of working with some of the greatest musical artists of the 20th century, including Paul Price, John Cage, Aretha Franklin, Dinah Washington, and Nina Simone. Kidd Jordan also discusses the importance of spontaneity in his jazz music, and life in general.

Moblis in Mobili

The ocean's physical nature, mystery, drama, mythology and concept have inspired art and culture throughout history and throughout the world. "Mobilis in Mobili" is the 8-minute central axis of the larger electro-acoustic work, "Trade Winds" (2004-06), and is inspired by this vast expanse of sea. The title "Mobilis in Mobili" is from "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea" by Jules Verne. "Several times, during various lulls of wind and sea, I thought I heard indistinct sounds, a sort of elusive harmony produced by distant musical chords...A few moments later, eight strapping fellows appeared... and dragged us down into their fearsome machine...we were suddenly plunged into darkness, utter darkness. The ceiling lights went out so quickly, my eyes literally ached...a sliding sound became audible. You could tell that some panels were shifting over the Nautilus's sides...Suddenly, through two oblong openings, daylight appeared on both sides of the lounge. What a sight! What pen could describe it? Who could portray the effects of this light through these translucent sheets of water, the subtlety of its progressive shadings into the ocean's upper and lower strata?" -- Natasha Barrett

### Father, Son, and Holy Ghost Ballad for Trane

Two works for a jazz trio of saxophone, bass, and percussion by Kidd Jordan. The first work, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," was reportedly conceived just a day or two before this concert, and is in no small part improvisatorial in nature, containing all the extended solos and integrated jams that are the hallmark of free-jazz. The second work, "Ballad for Trane," was written on the day Jordan heard that John Coltrane had died, and it is a fitting elegy for the great musician, a bluesy, melancholic ode to times and people passed by. Like light seeping under a back alley barroom door and music wafting through a dusty transom window, the sounds of the tenor sax drifts up and mixes with the subtle patterning of bass and drums. The effect is that of evoking memories of late nights spent in the sanctum of smoke filled concert halls.

### Kernel Expansion

"Kernel Expansion" contains three interconnected sections and addresses the essence of sound in its rich multiplicity, ambiguity and schizophrenia. Sketches began by drawing on the sounds and language of the acousmatic tradition, attempting to relinquish the task of inventing a language from scratch and with the aim of freely exploring music. From these first musical sketches the language of the work began to emerge. Interior spaces and timbres invert into exterior spaces and allusions. Rhythm, articulation and pitch planes, embedded in naturally occurring materials evolve into controlled performances of instrumental nature: a drum resonance and the birds of the Mexican Golodrin, the clearing of winter snow and the crush of a pestle and mortar. Dualities such as these are used to connect unrelated material until all sound condenses into a musical singularity. -- Natasha Barrett

### Epiphora

"Epiphora" starts with something like a big bang, and out of it a chord crystallizes. This chord returns again and again throughout the piece, and sounds as if it originated both from outer space and from the inner womb. Interspliced with this "cantus firmus" are musical quotes from an earlier time that spiral, at one point twice around the entire circle of fifths, spinning the listener out of orientation, and ending finally (and repeatedly) on a bombastic D-Flat Major chord. The speaker tells us (translated from the Dutch): "But you are my mother, not, because that's the order of things (because that's life.) And he said to him: But you are my father, not because that's the truth of things. He turned around and walked through the big door. They never saw him again." -- Eva-Maria Zimmermann

### String Quartet No. 2

"String Quartet No. 2" is a fantasy in microtonal harmonics. From the opening texture of quarter-tones woven in

rhythmic pulses, the music moves through a series of hocketing arpeggiated melodic gestures, built largely from the eerie hollow tones of artificial harmonics, a technique where one finger stops the string and another creates a node of vibration on the same string. The interplay is succeeded by a series of melodies on individual instruments, often capturing an image of a pastoral tune played on a crude flute. Unexpectedly, in the final section, the feeling of ambiguity, of harmonically drifting, disappears in a burst of pure harmonic tones, like church bells ringing in the distance. The quartet ends with one last verse of hocketing quarter tones. -- Charlton Lee

Notes: “Kernel Expansion” was commissioned by and realized in, the studios of ZKM, with additional support from the Norwegian Cultural Council. “Epiphora” was commissioned by the Experimental Studio of Polish Radio and is dedicated to Maciej Grzybowski.” “String Quartet No. 2” was commissioned by the Festival of Polish Music for the Kronos Quartet. Works and the appearance of Pawe? Mykietyn are presented in partnership with the Polish Cultural Institute.

#### **People**

Other Minds Festival (features)  
Barrett, Natasha (features)

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