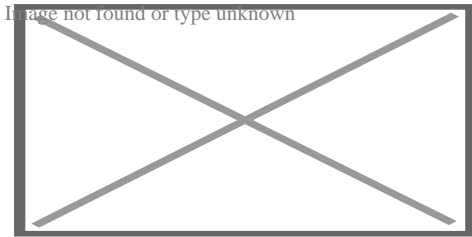




Other Minds Festival: OM 20: Panel Discussion & Concert 2, 15 of 17



Identifier

OMF.2015.03.07.c1.O

Object Type

Digital Audio

Musical Selections

Blinky (09:26) / Don Byron

Description

2015 marked the 20th anniversary of the Other Minds Festival of New Music. Other Minds Executive & Artistic Director Charles Amirkhanian explained the 20th anniversary as an opportunity to reflect on two decades' worth of prescient programming. "As we look back at the nearly 200 composers we've brought to San Francisco for these gatherings, it seemed a good time to tip our hat to some of our most surprising discoveries who have gone on to make signal contributions to international concert life. We'll also pay tribute to the late Peter Sculthorpe, who had accepted an invitation to be with us as our elder statesman, and the legendary Lou Harrison, whose last work was composed for our 2002 festival and our American steel guitar soloist David Tanenbaum, and will be reprised on our opening night."

Other Minds offered a hearty welcome back to Don Byron (OM 2), Frode Haltli (OM 12), Tigran Mansurian (OM 10), Miya Masaoka (OM 3), Michael Nyman (OM 11), Pauline Oliveros (OM 8), David Tanenbaum (OM 8 & 12), Maja S.K. Ratkje (OM 12), and Errollyn Wallen (OM 5). Some milestone birthdays were also celebrated: Tigran Mansurian, 75. Michael Nyman and Charles Amirkhanian: 70. At the pre-concert reception on March 5, 2015, Pauline Oliveros, at 82, received our lifetime achievement award - the OMie - in recognition of her exceptional contributions to experimental music. (Last year's first award was presented to synthesizer

pioneer Don Buchla.)

The second concert on March 7, 2015 was preceded by a panel discussion led by Charles Amirkhanian, with Pauline Oliveros, Errollyn Wallen, and Don Byron.

Concert 2: Friday March 7, 2015.

Improvised (According to Plan)

Charles Amirkhanian: Dumbek Bookache (1986)

The text of this work was composed during an April 1986 month-long concert tour of Australia and incorporates occasional place names (Adelaide, Geelong) of that country. It was composed originally for two live voices and taped percussion accompaniment, realized on a Fairlight synthesizer at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. All performances to date of the work have been by the composer with two pre-recorded voices (his own). The roots of the composer's background as a percussionist are evident in the contrapuntal writing for voice in which words are transformed into percussion objects. The interpolated voices in this version (IV) are those of three former American presidents: Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding, and Calvin Coolidge.

Ka Himeni Hehena (The Raving Mad Hymn, 1997)

This text-sound composition is in the rhythmic sound poetry style of my earlier live performance works Dutiful Ducks, Church Car and Dumbek Bookache. It was inspired by a trip to the Hawaiian island of Maui, during which time I became fascinated with names on various streets with Hawaiian names on very elongated signs and subsequently purchased several Hawaiian dictionaries.

The Hawaiian language contains only 7 consonants along with the 5 vowels familiar to most Romance languages. These latter are combined in various inventions to form diphthong-like sounds and intermixed with glottal stops and extended emphases to make up for the scarcity of consonants and to form the quantity of various words necessary to define the world of Hawaiian culture.

Marathon (1997)

The breathless pace of a marathon is replicated in the headlong rush of this two-voice sound poem and the overlapping divisions of the word (mara, thon). It was composed on an airplane riding toward San Francisco in anticipation of presentation at the Opus 415 Marathon, a day-long event featuring Bay Area composers and presented by Common Sense Composers Collective.

The word is reminiscent of the fundraising drives I did on KPFA Radio over the years and therefore carries with it a certain trepidation. We'd interrupt programming of music and talk to raise funds (the concept was created at KPFA in the early Fifties and now is used by public radio and television everywhere). Some composers' names figure in the piece (Babbitt, Bazelon, Thomas Oboe Lee) the last to which my friend composer Charles Boone responded by nicknaming himself Charles "Bassoon" Boone.

Errollyn Wallen: The Errollyn Wallen Songbook

The composer writes, "It is a delight and an honor to be invited back to Other Minds. I can honestly say that meeting Charles Amirkhanian and Carol Law in London, appearing at Other Minds and being a resident for a month at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program in 1999 changed my life. Charles had heard my songs and saw something special in them. These songs (words and music) sprang unbidden to me and began as a secret part of my musical life; they were written for my own pleasure and for me to sing. I have been amazed at the journey

they have subsequently been on. I will be forever grateful to Other Minds for being an important part of that journey.

“Many of my songs have been performed by other singers from all genres, featured in films — and their longest journey has been to outer space on the NASA STS-115 mission with astronaut Steve MacLean. Many have been recorded on my albums Meet Me at Harold Moores, Errollyn and Brodsky Quartet’s Moodswings. In 2006 The Errollyn Wallen Songbook was published by Peters Edition who publish many of my concert works.

“About Here and Road were composed at Djerassi, and it feels good to bring them back home. The film for Daedalus, featuring dancer Tom Sapsford, is from Jordan Town, the multi-media show which I took to Edinburgh Festival in 2001 with the Errollyn Wallen Company. The film is by the digital film partnership honey brothers—Mark and Daniel Goddard. I am delighted to be joined in Road, North and Daedalus by San Francisco’s own Del Sol String Quartet. “My set tonight is dedicated to Charles Amirkhanian in celebration of his 70th birthday.”

Intermission

Pauline Oliveros: Twins Peeking at Koto (2014, World premiere, commissioned by Other Minds)

Pauline Oliveros writes, “Twin Peaks is a San Francisco landmark at the end of Market St. near the geographical center of the city. The Ohlone Indians may have used Twin Peaks as a lookout point before the Conquistadores came. In any case a lot of peeking goes on from Twin Peaks. The 360 degree view is of course inspiring. Since two accordions implied twins the title for the new piece was irresistible. The peaks are the most famous twins in the city.

“With game-like options for the players Twins Peeking at Koto is an interactive improvisational trio. Each player is listening to one or both of the other players to react by shadowing some aspect of what is heard, or by responding in time. Each has one occasion to listen as a soloist ignoring the other two though one or the other may be shadowing or responding to the solo.

“The metaphor of Twin Peaks may be heard or not. For me it is an essential part of San Francisco where there is wild life at its center.”

Don Byron: Selections announced from stage

[Notes taken from concert program.]

People

Other Minds Festival (features)

Byron, Don (features)

Brown, Cameron (features)

Betsch, John (features)

Ortiz, Aruàn (features)

Related Collection

OMA.COL002.OMP.01

[Other Minds Festivals](#)

Related Objects

IM.OM.FP.0020.023

[Don Byron in rehearsal with pianist Aruàn Ortiz before their performance at OM 20, San Francisco CA \(2015\)](#)

IM.OM.FP.0020a.030

[Don Byron and John Betsch performing during the second concert of OM 20, San Francisco CA \(2015\)](#)