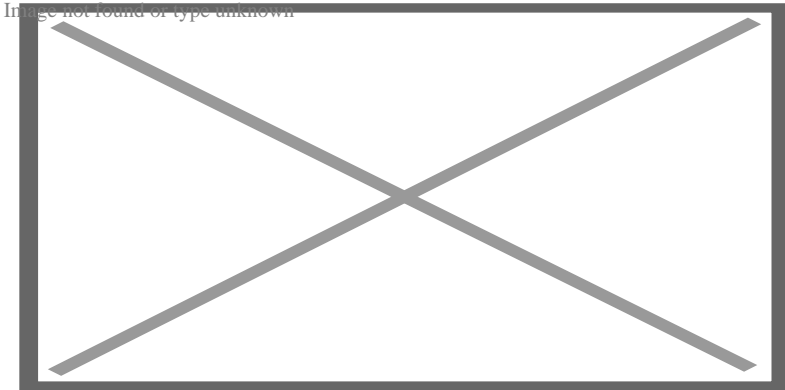


Other Minds Festival: OM 23: Sound Poetry - The Wages of Syntax (Gala Opening), 14 of 14



Identifier

OMF.2018.04.09.c1.N

Object Type

Digital Audio

Musical Selections

Just About Out Of Nowhere (33:10) / Alvin Curran & Clark Coolidge [world premiere]

Description

The 23rd Other Minds Festival, focused on the art of Sound Poetry, took place in San Francisco at the ODC/Dance Theatre over the course of six days (April 9-14, 2018); OM's longest festival to date which included five concerts and a day of lectures and workshops. This year's line-up brought together old and new masters from several countries, all well representing the "intermedium between poetry and music": Beth Anderson (US), Mark Applebaum (US), Tone Åse (Norway), Jaap Blonk (Netherlands), Alvin Curran (US/Italy), Sheila Davies Sumner (US), Enzo Minarelli (Italy), Amy X Neuberger (US), Ottar Ormstad (Norway), Aram Saroyan (US), Susan Gilmore Stone (US), Anne Waldman (US), Taras Mashtalir (Russia); Lily Greenham (Denmark), Pamela Z (US); Michael McClure (US), Sten Sandell (Sweden), and Clark Coolidge (US).

April 9, Concert 1 - Gala Opening

OM 23 opened with a showcase of legendary figures from the world of sound poetry including Jaap Blonk, Clark Coolidge, Alvin Curran, Michael McClure, Enzo Minarelli, Aram Saroyan, and Anne Waldman.

ENZO MINARELLI

Ptyx (Tribute to Mallarmé), World premiere

With sound this poem expresses what words cannot, World premiere

Ptyx is a short tribute to Stéphane Mallarmé, who in his sonnet “nul ptyx” invented from scratch a language of his own. He dares to break down unbroken barriers by *aboli d’inanité sonore* (abolishing the trinket of silence), and championing *le néant s’honore* (the sound of the nothing/the honorable nothing).

Caspar David Friedrich, to whom “With sound this poem expresses what words cannot” is dedicated, claims that listeners must commune with sounds the way that a German painter communes with nature. In both of these examples a sense of wellbeing and peace is attained through an osmosis unique to a person and their environment. In this piece, the phonemes “o” and “k” embody both rhythmic and arrhythmic qualities and in doing so convey meaning which the words no longer make.

MICHAEL MCCLURE

Marilyn Monroe Thou Hast Passed the Dark Barrier and other Ghost Tantras (1962)

Ghost Tantras is one of McClure’s signature works, a book mostly written in “beast language.” A mix of lyrical, guttural and laryngeal sound, lion roars, and a touch of detonated dada, this is one of his best-known but least available books – a deep well from which decades of poetry have drawn. McClure’s inspiration has always been the animal consciousness that still lives in mankind, and he has had a consistent message: “When a man does not admit that he is an animal, he is less than an animal.” Ghost Tantras is his original and singular manifesto for a poetry that relies not on images and pictures, but on muscular, sensual, energetic sound.

ANNE WALDMAN with Karen Stackpole, percussion

New & Selected Poems

Pieces of An Hour, for John Cage

Excerpts from Voice’s Daughter of a Heart Yet to Be Born

Excerpts from Trickster Feminism

Chenrezig Walks Among Us

“Pieces of An Hour” is a tribute to John Cage which has had previous iterations and is a “book” of The Iovis Trilogy: *Colors In The Mechanism of Concealment* (Coffee House 2011), a part of the recent *Voice’s Daughter of A Heart Yet To Be Born*, inspired by William Blake’s *Book of Thel* (The Unborn). Waldman drags the “unborn” from the realms of innocence into the realms of experience with “Offworld” and “Endtimes.” She will also draw on *Structure of the World Compared to a Bubble*, which notates parts for gong, and a short piece from a new book *Trickster Feminism* (Penguin, 2018), which is a book of activist protest. She will close with a chant for the Buddhist bodhisattva Chenrezig (Avalokiteshvara) whose name references “one who looks down upon sound,” one who looks down on the world of those crying in suffering.

ARAM SAROYAN

Crickets

Aram Saroyan writes of *Crickets*: “The piece, with its single column of the word “crickets” running down the right hand side of the page, was in part inspired by the “zip” paintings of Barnett Newman. In the words of Saroyan, “It was written in 1965 in my studio apartment in New York City. So far as I know there were no crickets around.”

INTERMISSION

JAAP BLONK

Obbele Boep ‘m Pam (A bebop sound poem)

Seepferdchen und Flugfische (by Hugo Ball, Seahorses and Flying Fish)

In 1916, the term “phonetic poem” was coined by Hugo Ball, finding no other term to adequately describe his “poems without verses.” Ball’s poem Seepferdchen und Flugfische (Seahorses and Flying Fish) is built of phonetic sounds particular to Swiss German. The only intelligible words are “fish” (fische) and “kitty” (kiti). In Blonk’s own composition, Obbele Boep ‘m Pam (A bebop sound poem), echoes of bebop and jazz become sound poetry.

CLARK COOLIDGE & ALVIN CURRAN Just About Out Of Nowhere, World premiere

After establishing a career of prolific poetry writing in the lineage of Gertrude Stein, Frank O’Hara and Jack Kerouac – fueled by chain smoking and coffee – Clark Coolidge decided one day in 1987 to give up tobacco cold turkey, fearful, however, that he’d never again be able to write. To maintain his momentum, he decided to listen to every one of jazz pianist Cecil Taylor’s records, while writing a manic single-spaced 120 + pages of abstract prose, Came Through In The Call Hold. The result has been kept under wraps until recently, and his performance at our Festival, a new piece based on this text, titled Just About Out Of Nowhere, is delivered in improvisational collaboration with fellow Brown undergrad and widely traveled composer Alvin Curran.

[Notes taken from the printed program.]

People

Other Minds Festival (features)
ODC Theater (features)
Coolidge, Clark, 1939- (features)
Curran, Alvin S., 1938- (features)

Related Collection

OMA.COL002.OMP.01
[Other Minds Festivals](#)

Related Objects

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[Clark Coolidge and Alvin Curran hug onstage after a performance at OM 23, San Francisco CA \(2018\)](#)
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