Friday, June 2, 19:30
CONCERT 5

Elegy (Ready, Set, Rapture)
by Rob Hamilton

deep structures
by Marianne Teixido and Emilio Ocelotl

The Moirai Mask
by Chloë Sobek

Pandora's Mycophony
by Jack Armitage and Celeste Betancur

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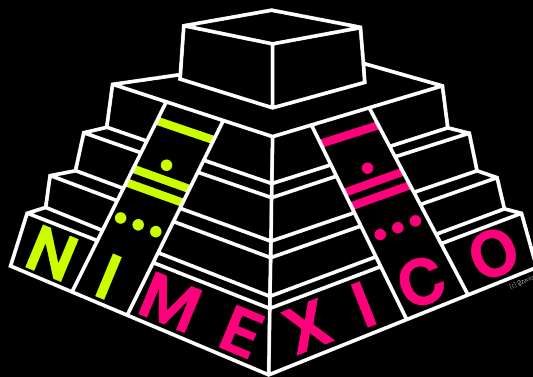
Program Notes (Concert 5)

Elegy (Ready, Set, Rapture)

by Rob Hamilton

Elegy (Ready, Set, Rapture) is the second work composed for Coretet (2018), a virtual reality musical instrument modeled after traditional bowed stringed instruments including the violin, viola, cello and double bass. This version of Coretet was built using Unreal Engine 5.1 and is performed using the Meta Quest 2 head-mounted display and Touch controllers. All audio in Coretet is procedurally generated, using a physical model of a bowed string from the Synthesis Toolkit (STK), running within Pure Data.

In keeping with NIME 2023's theme of "Frugal Music Innovation" and respecting Mexico's import restrictions on multiple computers, this performance of *Elegy (Ready, Set, Rapture)* will feature Coretet running natively and wirelessly on a single Quest 2 Android headset with its audio engine running on a single laptop. Also for this performance, instead of using a multi-laptop client-server configuration to display dynamic 3rd person camera views to the audience, the performer's view from the HMD will be displayed using the SCRCPY android screen mirroring shell application on a closed wireless 5.0 GHz LAN.

For anyone interested in playing with the Coretet instrument, this build of the software can be downloaded at:

https://rpi.box.com/s/96xoaa4db6zgoeh1ohen8l0g95qvt8vo

deep structures

by Marianne Teixido and Emilio Ocelotl

Sound composition using deep learning audio neural network training that explores with voice the implications of artificial intelligence from a transhackfeminist ethical perspective to act and think critically about these tools. In other words, as an algorithmic essay, the piece will explore the consequences of these technologies through voice, taking feminist and transfeminist research as a text that theorizes on the subject. The voice will be synthesized and reconstructed to hack into these networks and their understanding.

The Moirai Mask

by Chloë Sobek

The Moirai Mask is an ornate mask that operates as a NIME. The mask has an integrated MIDI controller that allows the performer to play music by touching the brass and bamboo panels. In performance, the artist uses audio-montage to collage sounds of the Australian wilderness with electronics and sampled fragments of an acoustic string instrument. The mask is handmade from predominantly recycled materials; hand cut brass panels and hand painted bamboo elements adorn the front of the mask, which are sewn into the cotton paneling that covers the hand soldered electrical components. *The Moirai Mask* is a sonic play on the Covid-19 PPE mask. The PPE mask, like an exo-skeleton, provides an extra, augmented layer of protection from our bodies, the 'outside world', the virus, the Other. The Covid-19 pandemic forced us to accept our bodily limitations and embrace this prosaic form of human augmentation, the PPE mask. Furthermore, as the Covid-19 virus enters our bodies and is transmitted through our breath, we must acknowledge that we are not separate from the non-human world that we inhabit but are in fact bodily constituted through it. As Deborah Lupton et al. point out 'the COVID crisis [has] heightened awareness of our collective vulnerability to each other's more-than-human bodies'.

Drawing on the concept of a NIME, here the PPE mask is appropriated as a symbolic and subversive art object, paying sonic homage to the non-human world while the artist's voice is subtly silenced.

Pandora's Mycophony

by Jack Armitage and Celeste Betancur

Pandora hears her own dreams, they talk to her in mysterious voices, unknown languages.

You find yourself standing alone, in the middle of her darkness.

You don't know how you got there.

Are you one of Pandora's dreams?

Talk to her, maybe she will answer you.

In this audiovisual dreamscape lies a re-imagining of Pandora's story, where the contents of her jar are bioluminescent swarming spores that seek to fill the world with hope instead of evil, and life instead of death. The spores want to get out, their evolutionary powers are hidden, and the whole universe is waiting to be explored. Meanwhile, Pandora is dreaming, condemned to keep the box closed. Life waits to be released.

Sonic Swells

by Cayn Borthwick

"I want to know what it says. The sea, Floy, what is it that it keeps on saying?"

   - Charles Dickens, Dombey and Son

Huge ocean waves and weather, surfing waves, and the art of musical improvisation crash together in this multimedia performance. ***Sonic Swells - Riding Swells*** combines sonification of ocean weather data from Bells Beach, Torquay, Australia, sonification of a surfer's movement data surfing at Bells Beach and the Urbn Surf Wave Pool, and live saxophone performance. The ocean weather data and movement data interact to create a modulating soundscape that the improvisor performs against, with further sonic effects applied to the saxophone from the surfer's movement data.

Refraction Interlude: redux

by Matthew Goodheart

Refraction Interlude is an interactive environment for live performer and transducer-activated metal percussion instruments. This piece was originally planned to be performed live with piano. However, due to the last-minute the change in venue, a piano performance was not possible. Since the nature of the piece requires significant preparation, a complicated set up, a focus on extended techniques, and significant rehearsal time, creating a new version for a new performer unfamiliar with the work was not an option. Instead, what is presented here is a multichannel re-mix of a performance by clarinetist Georg Wissel, with live diffusion. All sounds were created either by the clarinet or by transducer-actuated metal percussion – there is no additional processing. Consider it a live performance with significant latency.

Refraction Interlude fuses performer-centered free improvisation/ creative music approaches with the instrumental-acoustics based orientation of reembodied sound. Reembodied sound refers to the electroacoustic practice of using tactile transducers to project sound into resonating objects, thereby turning these objects into a kind of speaker. Designed in Max and combining performer-sourced pre-recorded sounds, real-time input analysis, and mixed synthesis targeted to the acoustic properties of the metal percussion, the system follows an independent set of algorithms in response to performer input. These processes facilitate adaptable sound worlds that allow significant creative construction by the performer in balance with the acoustic agency of the metal percussion instruments.

Absence

by Diemo Schwarz

The piece **Absence** evokes several notions of absence: Absence of light, absence of love, absence of humanity, when societies and all human artefacts will be destructured to gradually disappear within the materials and textures of the natural world, which, by themselves, will eventually dissolve back into primordial cosmic dust. The piece starts with the images of crepuscular cities, the buildings mere shadows, before evolving towards images of cities in ruins, warning of impending and very possible catastrophes for humankind, to which sounds are played that evoke emptiness and desolation. These elements gradually dissolve into the basic textures of natural materials of stone, sand, water, wood, with the sounds exploring different sensations of materiality through roughness and textures.

This path through different sentiments of absence is evoked in sound and images by a journey through intertwined corpora of sounds and images, linked by their cross-modal aesthetic properties of colour, texture, timbre, played via dynamic gestural control.

The spatial projection of sound is an important part of the artistic research of this piece, unfolding across different levels: One layer of the electronic sound is based on field recordings, which are recontextualized, transformed, and projected live into space by gestural control. Another layer of sound consists of a pre-composed electro-acoustic soundtrack that creates the work's basic ambience and immersion by dynamic surround sound spatialisation.

The narrative of the piece reflects itself in the underlying digital fabric of the work insofar as the material nature of the physical world is represented in the form of acoustic and visual fragments (sound grains and still images) that act as a conglomerate of particles to form the shape of the whole. This symbiosis of different modes and levels of perception is nourished by the desire of subjectivity in order to emphasize the relativity of all experience.

Flightless Path

by Iran Sanadzadeh and Chloë Sobek

This is the premier performance of **Flightless Path**, a new work for The Terpsichora Pressure-Sensitive Floors and Renaissance Violone. The Terpsichora Pressure-Sensitive Floors (The Floors) are a new digital musical instrument which uses whole-body motion to control electronic music. The instrument continues the development of early models for pioneering dancer Philippa Cullen (1950-1975), expanding its use as an expressive and versatile instrument for musicians to play. The Floors use a large interactive surface for fine control of many sonic parameters with a small number of sensors. The violone is the Renaissance precursor to the double bass. It is a large instrument that has six gut strings, gut frets and is played with a viol style underhand bow. This instrument also requires the whole body to play and physically support the instrument in performance. This new work brings these two instruments together and is an interplay between the definitions of instruments and controller as they relate to contemporary practices based on gesture. Working with the specific limitations of the body in relation to large objects, the Floors and the violone both function as controllers for affecting sound and as instruments for creating sound.