

austraLYSIS' @MARCS Milperra, Western Sydney University: Session # 2, 20191128, 19.00

Performers:

Roger Dean (Director; piano, electronics), Sandy Evans (saxophones), Phil Slater (trumpet), Hazel Smith (text performer), Greg White (electronics).

Program:

(During seating Luers, austraLYSIS: Hypnagogia, an AV work is projected)

Louis Couperin/austraLYSIS: Couperin meets Pelog (Ensemble, with 4-channel audio)

Felix Dobrowohl: GrinDrone (Premiere. 4-Channel acousmatic sound)

Roger Dean: Comparative Views (Ensemble, with 2-Channel audio)

David Kim-Boyle: alphabet games :: Maclow
:: bpNichol
(animation and 2-channel audio)

Jo Thomas Ultratonal (Australian Premiere. 2-channel acousmatic sound)

Sieglinde Karl-Spence, Hazel Smith, Roger Dean: Heimlich Unheimlich (Premiere. Ensemble, speaker, animation and 4-channel audio).

Greg White: Blue Note (Ensemble, 4-channel audio; Premiere of this version.)

Brief notes on pieces and people:

Louis Couperin/austraLYSIS : **Couperin meets Pelog** (Ensemble, with 4-channel audio)

We have recorded this Couperin Fantasia 7 (a so called unmeasured prelude, from the 17th century) twice and also researched on it; we presented a version at the first Milperra session, last year. But we continue to develop new interpretations. This time, reflecting on the fact that originally the piece was heard with a tuning system that preceded our current equal temperament, we present a version including a Javanese tuning system, and an additional set of continuous pitch variations on the material.

Felix Dobrowohl: **GrinDrone** (2019) (Premiere. 4-channel acousmatic sound)

Many new fields of artistic endeavour have been initiated as a result of basic research work which was not originally intended for that purpose. Whilst this is more often the case for technological progress and its subsequent utilisation for creative purposes (e.g. all kinds of computer music and digital arts), new findings in the field of audio perception seem also very well suited for influencing and informing musical practice to some degree. GrinDrone was created in an attempt to put this principle of research-led practice into ... practice. With my research focussing on miniscule timbre changes, it made most sense to go about creating a piece which could roughly be placed in the Drone (or drone-based) music genre. Its primary aim is to try to create a rather ominous soundscape, with difficult to define spatial and sonic attributes. A secondary goal is, given its main inspiration from Drone music pop-stars (Sunn O))), to emphasise the physical impact of very loud, low frequency sounds. A big stretch of the overall playtime therefore focusses on comparatively low fundamental frequencies of around 50Hz.

Felix is a Senior Technical Officer based at our Bankstown Campus. He has a background in Audio Engineering, Experimental Psychology, Cognitive Science and Musical Performance and Production. Previously, Felix has held a variety of positions including working as a classical musician in solo, chamber music and orchestral settings, as an audio engineer and Tonmeister for Pop/Rock and classical recordings and completing a PhD here at MARCS as an experimental psychology researcher studying human perception of musical timbre. His research uses interactive music manipulation interfaces to understand and explore listeners' processes behind mixing music and behind their preferences for different types of sound.

Roger Dean: **Comparative Views** (2018) (Ensemble, with 2-Channel audio)

A composition for improvisers with irregular repeating rhythmic structures. No pitches are specified, but a rhythmic accompaniment continues throughout on the piano.

David Kim-Boyle: **alphabet games** (2009) :: MacLow

:: bpNichol (animation and 2-channel audio)

The composer writes:

alphabet games is a collection of installation works exploring the musical and visual application of a series of experimental literary techniques pioneered in the writings of Georges Perec, Rimbaud, Jackson Mac Low, bpNichol and Harry Mathews. The works were premiered at the Spark Festival of Electronic Music and Arts at the University of Minnesota in 2010 and run in both standalone and interactive modes. We present two of the pieces.

alphabet games :: MacLow

In this work, a grid is seeded with letters and words to create a variety of acrostic patterns. Successive letters of randomly seeded words are displayed in sequence with each letter accompanied by a short tone with a pitch determined by the letter displayed. Words can be randomly seeded or chosen by the user. The work is inspired by aleatoric techniques developed by the poet Jackson Mac Low particularly in his work *22 Light Poems*.

alphabet games :: bpNichol

Canadian poet bpNichol was well known for his innovative and highly distinctive concrete poetry. In his poem "Horse Rider", the words "horse", "rider" and "trees" are assigned distinct colors and the letters gradually redistributed across the page from top to bottom. In this audio-visual interpretation of the poem, the letters of the three primary words, together with their distinctive colors, are distributed across different geometric shapes with the spatial position of the letters and the letters themselves mapped to notes of different pitch, amplitude and stereo position.

David Kim-Boyle is an Australian composer and new media artist whose music has received widespread recognition for its delicately nuanced sonic qualities and innovative use of technology. His work has been performed and presented throughout North America and Europe at various festivals and contemporary music events and he has been a guest artist at some of the world's leading computer music research facilities including the Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie (Karlsruhe), the Sonic Arts Research Centre (Belfast), and STEIM (Amsterdam). His creative practice is focused on the development of real-time graphic scores that explore the musical possibilities of extended open-forms and his research has been regularly presented at many of the world's leading forums for new music research including the International Computer Music Conference, the Digital Audio FX Conference, the New Interfaces for Musical Expression Conference and published in journals such as Contemporary Music Review and Organised Sound amongst others. Current projects include a new work for the ELISION ensemble featuring a real-time reactive score, and a collection of piano etudes the score for which is based on the use of k-d trees for parametric mapping.

Jo Thomas (2010) : **Ultratonal** (Australian Premiere. 2 channel acousmatic sound)

1. *Tula* The meaning of the name Tula is strength. Tula exists in two worlds. One is a light-hearted phonetic pattern, which sings throughout the work. The other is an impending rhythmic world of micro sound and glitch.

2. *Ultra Ultra* is the Brother of Tula. This work is an embedded world of continuum and stasis. The sea and the raw physicality of contemporary ballet inspired this work.

3. *Shine* Shine is a work, which explores a very human need to shine when times are not so light. A very deliberate association to human agency breath and body is made through this work incorporating the winding of gentle micro melodies and subtle rhythms.

Jo Thomas is a British composer. She won the Prix Ars Electronica Golden Nica in Digital Music and Sound Art for her work *Crystal Sounds of a Synchrotron*. Jo is working across the spectrum of sound design, solo live work and collaboration. Her work is available from Holiday Records, Entr'acte NMC and Naxos records.

Her music is often improvisational and she engages performing with large landscapes of composed sound. She has been commissioned by PRS Women Making Music Fund and the Britten Pears Trust Fund. In 2016 she created new record for the company Holiday Records, and was one of four composers to pilot the new Mini Oramics machine originally designed by Daphne Oram and re constructed by Tom Richards, AHRC funded and supported by Goldsmiths. Also in 2016 she went to Switzerland with the artist Urslé von Mathilde on a new site specific text piece for performance in Bern. Her music was presented at the Trondhiem Biennial in March 2016 and in April 2016 she presented a new collaboration with artist Florence Peake. Throughout her career her work has been profiled internationally working with organisations in Italy, France, California, Brussels, Switzerland and Australia. She has taught composition as a university lecturer, run large scale and left field music projects working for theatre, film documentary and dance.

Sieglinde Karl-Spence, Hazel Smith, Roger Dean (2019): **Heimlich Unheimlich** (Premiere. Ensemble, speaker, animation and 4 channel audio).

Heimlich Unheimlich is a performance work consisting of collages by Sieglinde Karl-Spence, computerised manipulation of the images by Roger Dean, text by Hazel Smith and music by austraLYSIS. The images are algorithmically organised so the order will be different each time.

The piece is taken from a larger ongoing project by Sieglinde Karl-Spence and Hazel Smith that uses their different childhoods as a starting point. It focuses on two characters who have names related to forms of cloth that sometimes appear as body parts in the collages. One character is Hessian, a German girl born towards the end of the second world war who migrates with her family to Australia when she is still a child and eventually becomes an artist. The other is Muslin, a violinist and poet born to a Jewish family in England after the second world war, who migrates to Australia as an adult. In Australia Hessian and Muslin become friends.

Heim in German means home, so *Heimlich Unheimlich* could translate loosely as *Homely Unhomely*. However, this is not a literal translation. Heimlich more usually means secretive or hidden while unheimlich means uncanny, so the meanings of the two words overlap. The relationship between heimlich and unheimlich is discussed in Freud's essay 'The Uncanny'.

The piece uses photographs from the family albums of Sieglinde Karl-Spence and Hazel Smith, embedded in complex graphical constructions.

Greg White: **Blue Note** (Ensemble, 4-channel audio).

Blue Note is the first of a series of improvisation pieces that combine software acoustic instruments and real acoustic instruments. For this performance, the software instruments are jazz upright bass and jazz drum kit, and the acoustic instruments are piano, sax and trumpet. The computer performer shapes the software acoustic instrument macro and meso time scale dynamics, density and texture, while the underlying algorithms determine micro detail. The contrast between the distributed human/machine control of the software instruments and the acoustic instruments who simultaneously control both macro and micro elements will become apparent as the piece progresses.

Greg White is a performer, composer, producer, programmer and educator, with a PhD that explores the convergence between composition, performance and production in realtime software environments. Currently he is postgraduate course coordinator at the Higher Education Leadership Institute (HELI) specialising in broadening the scope of what are considered scholarly activities. Previously he developed creative media masters programs in Australia, UK, France, Italy and Germany as Dean of the Graduate School of Creative Media at SAE Institute. He has been a core member of the innovative inter-media group **austraLYSIS** (1991 until the present) and jazz/world music group **Gest8** (2004-10). His creative output has been presented at the British Film Institute, Cannes, Clermont-Ferrand and Sydney film festivals; Huddersfield (UK), New Crowned Hope (Vienna), Festival International d'Art Lyrique, (Aix en Provence, France), Lincoln Centre (NYC), Auckland, Wangaratta, Sydney and Melbourne festivals; all major museums and galleries in Australia's eastern states; all major theatre companies in Sydney; on many web projects (including William Duckworth's 48hour Cathedra Project in 2001 with Roger Dean) and in many national and international multimedia collaborations with artists such as Ross Gibson, Kate Richards, Richard Vella, Norie Neumark, Lynette Wallworth and Susan Norrie.

About **austraLYSIS:**

austraLYSIS (formed 1990) incorporates **LYSIS**, the former European contemporary music group, which commenced in 1970 in the UK. Both were founded by Roger Dean (double bass, keyboard, composer, computer interaction) and Hazel Smith (violin, text-creator). **LYSIS** was co-founded with John Wallace (trumpets, composer), Ashley Brown (percussion), and Colin Lawson (clarinets). **austraLYSIS** has premiered, commissioned and/or created more than 150 musical compositions and new media works. It has appeared in most parts of the world, including Europe, Asia, North America, and Australasia. It has made more than fifty commercial sound recordings, intermedia CD-Roms and works for radio and the Internet. Its broadcasts have been heard all over the world.

austraLYSIS is committed to both composed and improvised new music, sound art and intermedia work. Originally primarily a performance group, **austraLYSIS** presented a concert devoted to the work of Stockhausen on the South Bank in London in 1980, in association with the Philharmonia Orchestra and the composer himself. The group similarly focused on the work of Xenakis, Cage and Reich, as well as work by numerous less well-known composers, in presentations in Australia and elsewhere. **austraLYSIS** placed particular emphasis on work from Australia and the UK, and collaborates with some of the most imaginative artists involved with contemporary music, sound and new media in Australia. **austraLYSIS** is now primarily a creative group, producing electroacoustic and computer-interactive music and multimedia works. Composers, improvisers, writers and video artists who are members include: Keith Armstrong (installation and video artist); Daniel Blinkhorn

(composer and audio-visual artist); Sandy Evans (saxophones); Phil Slater (trumpet); Hazel Smith (writer and performer); Greg White (computer interaction; sound design). Two members currently work in the US: David Worrall (Australian composer and visual artist living in Chicago) and from the USA, Will Luers (video artist and writer, living in Portland, Oregon). Another member, Torbjörn Hultmark (trumpet, soprano trombone, electronics), is based in the UK.

austraLYSIS frequently relates its sound works and performances to other artistic media. For example, in the case of the visual arts, it has performed compositions by the artist Tom Phillips (UK); collaborated with Alan Davie (UK); created music related to the painters Fred Williams and Michael Johnson (Australia) and Frans Widerberg (Norway); and worked with Australian artists such as Sieglinde Karl-Spence and Darani Lewers. Similarly, it has developed music/movement works such as *TimeDancesPeace* with the theatre and dance group Kinetic Energy. austraLYSIS has also created a number of text and sound pieces which were commissioned by the ABC including *Bird Migrants* (2014), *The Afterlives of Betsy Scott* (2007), *Returning the Angles* (2003), *The Erotics of Gossip* (2001), *Nuraghic Echoes* (1996), and *Poet without Language* (1991), all by Hazel Smith and Roger Dean — *Poet Without Language* was the ABC's nomination for the Italia Prize in 1992. austraLYSIS collaborates with other ensembles, notably in 2010 (and again in 2012) with the enterprising vocal ensemble Halcyon. The combination of vocal and electroacoustic expertise has allowed both rare and premiere performances. austraLYSIS is also prominent in multimedia work and electronic literature. In 2016 the collaboration *motions* by Hazel Smith, Will Luers and Roger Dean was included in the *Electronic Literature Collection 3*: the premier international anthology of electronic writing. Their 'novelling' won the international Robert Coover Award for a work of Electronic Literature in 2018.

austraLYSIS' breadth of style is illustrated on its many recordings and on those of its member musicians. Amongst austraLYSIS' numerous CD releases are *History Goes Everywhere* (2015), Dean's double album *MultiPiano* — piano and computer interaction — (2013), *Sonic Stones* (2006), *Present Tense* (1997), *The Next Room* (1994) and *Moving the Landscapes* (1992), all on Australia's leading label for new music, Tall Poppies. The double CD *Resounding in the Mirrors* was released on the UK label Future Music Records (2001). In addition, *Windows in Time* (1994) represents a range of austraLYSIS' work, with music from Xenakis to Cresswell, as well as by members of the group. austraLYSIS also contributed to Hazel Smith's sound and performance-text CDs, *Poet Without Language* (1994) and *Nuraghic Echoes* (1996), both on Rufus Records. In addition, substantial works of audio and intermedia feature on the CD-Rom included in Hazel's book *The Erotics of Geography*: poetry, performance texts, new media works (TinFish Press, Hawaii, 2008) — her most recent book is *Word Migrants*, Giramondo, 2016. One of austraLYSIS' recordings was listed as a Record of the Year, by Records and Recordings, UK, and several have been nominated for ARIA awards. An austraLYSIS album with Torbjörn Hultmark was released in May 2018 on Bandcamp (for digital download) and seems to be the first album featuring soprano trombone, piano and electronics.

austraLYSIS undertakes commissions and engagements for arts centres, festivals, broadcasting, recording and for international touring. It has completed fourteen overseas tours since 1990, and in 1992-3 performed all over Australia. In one such tour it was featured in three events at the leading new music festival in the UK, Huddersfield, and on BBC Radio 3. It has previously been supported by the Australia Council as a 'Key Organisation' for its creative and performance work, and its work is presented by the ABC and other international broadcasters as well as in multimedia formats. austraLYSIS is also concerned with research and educational work and other means of fostering appreciation. Examples of such work include Roger Dean's presentation of an ABC radio documentary on improvisation, and in

2010 two programmes for the BBC in London on Australian Jazz; his books *Creative Improvisation* (Open University Press, UK, 1989), *Sounds from the Corner* (about Australian contemporary jazz, Australian Music Centre, 2005), *The Oxford Handbook of Computer Music* (OUP, 2009) and the *Oxford Handbook of Algorithmic Music* (OUP, 2018); Hazel Smith's books *The Writing Experiment* (Allen and Unwin, 2005) and *The Contemporary Literature-Music Relationship* (Routledge, 2016); and Smith and Dean's jointly edited book *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

Web site: www.australysis.com (extensive listening and viewing is freely available on the site, as well as biographies of the individual member musicians).

Contact: roger.dean@westernsydney.edu.au