



Any Enemy and Brandon University New Music Ensemble

Saturday 30th January 2021, 1700

Programme

Pete Stollery	<i>Social D[is]tancing</i>
Melody McKiver	<i>All My Requests</i> (world premiere)*
Michael Ducharme	<i>Social Bubbles</i> (world premiere)*
Keith Hamel	<i>Three Years</i> (world premiere)*
Ollie Hawker	<i>It's More Than Just Midi To Me</i> *

*sound and Brandon University New Music Ensemble co-commission

Q&A with the composers after the performance

Programme notes

Pete Stollery *Social D[is]tancing*

During the first COVID-19 lockdown in 2020, we were allowed to leave our homes to walk for exercise once a day. We could do this alone or as a family group. Often, when walking on my own, I found that when I encountered another person coming in the other direction, an awkward kind of dance would take place as we tried to stay 2m apart from each other.

In this piece, a soloist improvises on a given collection of notes and, when another player arrives, they try to avoid playing notes within 2 semitones of each other. The rest of the ensemble (family group) arrives, at a distance, and engage harmonically with the two players. This happens five times in all.

Melody McKiver *All My Requests* with poetry by Brandi Bird

All My Requests was composed based on the instrumentation for the 2020/21 Brandon University New Music Ensemble (BUNME). I had previously performed with a number of the musicians as one of the guest artists-in-residence at the inaugural Brandon University Indigenous New Music Festival in February 2020, and it has been my pleasure to collaborate with these performers again.

As an Anishinaabe person from Treaty #3 (northwestern Ontario), I wanted to collaborate with an emerging Indigenous writer with stronger connections to what is presently called Manitoba. The writing of Brandi Bird was an easy choice - their vivid descriptive writing conveys such a strong sense of place that is specific to the Prairies. After carefully considering the entirety of Bird's 2019 poetry collection *I Am Still Too Much* (Rahila's Ghost Press), *All My Requests* was a natural fit. The poem's "ask for a..." refrain presented a lyrical structure that I was excited to set to music.

The premise of *Lockdown Composing* presented interesting parameters for composing this work. How to create an ensemble over Zoom when performers can't be together in person? I decided that the text, sung by soprano, would be paramount. Instrumentation, doubled by the musicians of Any Enemy, would be in a loose call-and-response format with very limited ensemble playing to accommodate the number of voices that Zoom can reliably reproduce on a call. Musicians needed extensive cues written in as a safeguard against the multitude of Zoom malfunctions possible. Though the composition is performed with a liberal amount of rubato to allow for the discrepancies in connection times, performers must be mindful of their rests so that voices remain balanced within the Zoom format.

Michael Ducharme *Social Bubbles*

Social Bubbles is a piece composed for performance via online medium (ex. Zoom) during the 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic. The piece is inspired by British Columbia Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry's references to the idea of "social bubbles", which advocates for people to create a "bubble" of friends, rather than come into close contact with too many new people. The piece is in five short movements played without interruption. The second and

fourth movements feature improvisatory passages, with the woodwind instruments having different characters and forming social bubbles with one another. The remaining movements feature a piano and solo soprano singing text from the BC COVID-19 daily briefings.

Keith Hamel *Three Years* with text by William Wordsworth

Three Years She Grew by William Wordsworth

*Three years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.*

*"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.*

*"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.*

*"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form
By silent sympathy.*

*"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.*

*"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."*

*Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.*

Ollie Hawker *It's More Than Just Midi To Me*

It's more than just MIDI to me presents the ensemble with a generative score consisting of several graphs, each assigned to one or more instruments. The performers play the graph like a MIDI piano roll, beginning the note when the it reaches the line on the left. The height of the note on the y-axis determines its pitch relative to the entire range of the instrument, and the length of the note on the x-axis determines its duration.

The score uses random number generators to produce these pitches and durations, and over time gradually reduces the range of numbers that it chooses from. It goes in a straight line from maximum entropy, a high degree of randomness in which any pitch and note length can be produced at any time, to minimum entropy, a low degree of randomness in which only a certain range of pitches will be produced, and each instrument has a distinct time period in which notes are produced.

In nature and the universe in general, entropy is on the whole always increasing (i.e. going from less random to more random). I guess what I'm trying to address with this piece is that sometimes the 'less natural' path can be the most beautiful. Tidying your room is going against the natural flow of entropy, but can generally be agreed upon as a good thing to do.

Biographies

Any Enemy is a flexible new music ensemble based in Aberdeen. Founded by Guera Maunder and Lesley Wilson in 2018, it is composed of local musicians keen to play contemporary music together. Any Enemy made its concert debut at the 2018 soundfestival.

Any Enemy is: Guera Maunder (violin), Alison MacDonald (cello), Catherine O'Rourke (flute), Fiona Gordon (oboe), Lucy Webster (bassoon), Lesley Wilson (bassoon), Pauline Black (trumpet), Brodie McCash and Peter Ney (percussion), Aden Mazur (piano) and Pete Stollery (conductor).

The Brandon University New Music Ensemble (BUNME), under the direction of Professor Megumi Masaki, is dedicated to the research and performance of diverse, interdisciplinary, cutting edge works of living composers and artists that engage with cultural and global issues. Main goals of BUNME are to work closely with composers, both professional and students, on the performance of works and on the creation of new works composed or arranged specifically for them. Another important aspect of BUNME is to explore creative contemporary performance practices with new technologies. BUNME is honoured to have worked with renowned composers and media artists including Steven Stucky (US), John Psathas (NZ), Kaija Saariaho (FI), John Corigliano (US), Nico Muhly (US), Kjartan Ólafsson (IS), Jorge Córdoba Valencia (MX), Nicole Lizée (CA), Gary Kulesha (CA), Keith Hamel (CA), Brent Lee (CA), Sigi Torinus (US/CA), T. Patrick Carrabré (CA), David Jaeger (CA), Harry Stafylakis (US/CA), Pēteris Vasks (LV), Ken Steen (US), Gene Gort (US), Cris Derksen (CA), Melody McKiver (CA), Ian Cusson (CA), Jared Miller (CA/US), Ollie Hawker (UK), and Pete Stollery (UK). BUNME also regularly tours regionally and internationally performing at established festivals including the Dark Music Days Festival Reykjavik Iceland, CoLab Festival London UK, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra New Music Festival, Nuit Blanche and the Brandon University New Music Festival (BUNMF).

With BU Knowledge Keeper Barb Blind and Cathy Mattes, a Michif curator, writer, and art history professor at BU's Visual and Aboriginal Arts Department, Megumi Masaki curates the annual Brandon University Indigenous New Music Festival to build intercultural understanding, right-collaborations and mutual respect through public lectures, workshops, community events and concert performances.

Pete Stollery studied composition with Jonty Harrison at the University of Birmingham, where he was one of the first members of BEAST (Birmingham Electroacoustic Sound Theatre) in the early '80s. He composes music for concert hall performance, particularly electroacoustic music, as well as work for outside the concert hall, including sound installations and internet sound projects. He is Professor of Composition and Electroacoustic Music, delivering courses on the creative applications of technology in music to students and communities around Scotland and Europe. He is also Chair and co-founder of **sound**.

His music is published by the Canadian label *empreintes DIGITALes*.

Melody McKiver's musical work integrates electronics with Western classical music to shape a new genre of Anishinaabe compositions. Their most recent single, Debiinaawe Giizhigon, was premiered in the fall of 2020 alongside a music video commissioned by Amplify on APTN. Their debut EP Reckoning was nominated for an Indigenous Music Award, and they were a participant in the Banff Centre for the Arts' inaugural Indigenous Classical Music Gathering. A frequent performer across Turtle Island, Melody has performed at the National Arts Centre, Luminato Festival, Vancouver's Western Front, and the Toronto International Film Festival. They have shared stages with Polaris Prize winners Lido Pimienta, Tanya Tagaq, and Jeremy Dutcher, and performed with acclaimed filmmaker and musician Alanis Obomsawin. As a composer, Melody was commissioned by Soundstreams and Jumblies Theatre to write Odaabaanag, a string quartet responding to Steve Reich's Different Trains, drawing on interviews conducted with local elders. Melody was invited to the Berlinale Talents Sound Studio as a music and composition mentor for the 2020 Berlin International Film Festival. A member of Lac Seul First Nation, Melody is also employed as a youth worker in Sioux Lookout (Treaty #3, Northwestern Ontario, Canada), providing mental health and cultural support to First Nations students. Upcoming projects include a film score for Returning Home, a feature-length documentary by Secwepemc director Sean Stiller, and a full-length album in the last quarter of 2021.

Brandi Bird is a Two-Spirit Sauteaux and Cree poet currently living and learning on Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh territory.

Michael Ducharme composes a wide variety of instrumental and vocal music, including chamber pieces, choral music, and orchestral works. His compositions have been performed by such ensembles as the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, the Yaletown String Quartet, and the Nu:BC Collective. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Composition from the University of

Manitoba, and a Master's degree in Composition from the University of British Columbia (UBC). He is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) candidate in Composition at UBC, under the supervision of Dr. Keith Hamel.

Michael's compositional style blends influences from film music with modern experimental contemporary classical music. He leverages his past experience with computers and programming to add interactivity and algorithmically-generated content to his works.

Keith Hamel is a composer living in Vancouver Canada where he is a professor of Composition at the University of British Columbia. He has written both acoustic and interactive electroacoustic music. His works have been performed by many of the finest soloists and ensembles both in Canada and abroad. He has received commissions from IRCAM (Paris), the Ensemble Intercontemporain, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Hard Rubber Orchestra, Vancouver New Music Ensemble, the Elektra Women's Choir, Hammerhead Consort, Standing Wave, and New Music Concerts, as well as from outstanding performers such as flutist Robert Cram, bassoonist Jesse Read, clarinetists Jean-Guy Boisvert and François Houle, saxophonist Julia Nolan, trombonists Jeremy Berkman and Benny Sluchin, and pianists Douglas Finch, Megumi Masaki, Corey Hamm and Jane Hayes. Many of his recent compositions focus on interactions between live performers and computer-controlled electronics.

Ollie Hawker is a Glasgow-based composer currently studying for his Masters degree at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, where he is trying to work out how best to explore the idea of digital nostalgia.

He has recently received commissions from Sound Festival, Cryptic, and Live Music Now Scotland, and has performed his live electronic pieces at Sound Thought Festival, Radiophrenia and the Scottish Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. He plays in the bands Neuro Trash and Instruction Manual, and works as a music practitioner for the charities Paragon and Hear My Music.

Forthcoming *soundfestival* events

Richard Watkins, horn + Composer Conversation | Sat 30 January | 2000
Philip Cashian's *Scenes from the Life of Viscount Medardo* and discussion with Philip Cashian, Aileen Sweeney and Rylan Gleave

social sound | Sat 30 January | 2130
Join us online for a chat about the day's events in the company of featured artists

Listen Carefully | Sun 31 January | 1000
Siobhan Dyson's audio-visual work depicts a day in the life of an autistic person

Hebrides Ensemble *Diversions* | Sun 31 January | 1300
Works by Joe Stollery, Ben Teague, Rylan Gleave, Siobhan Dyson, Ben Lunn, Jason Hodgson and Lucy Hale

Available throughout the festival:
[Digital French Horn Exhibition](#)

Most of the performances will be available on our YouTube channel until 28th February. Please see our website for more information.

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