

Bowed Electrons 2024

Festival and Symposium

BE @ UCT 2024 Programme


Times: SAST (UTC +2)
Evening concerts stream: URL <https://www.theoherbst.com/>
Meeting ID **849 6874 5504**
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Venue: SACM C07

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

SACM
SOUTH AFRICAN COLLEGE OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Staatliche Hochschule
für Gestaltung Karlsruhe 



**BADEN-
WÜRTTEMBERG
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MUSIC, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
INSTITUTE FOR SONIC CREATIVITY (MTI²)

Sunday 1 September 2024

11h00

SACM C 07 Tea, opening and welcome

11h30

SACM C 07 Seminar
Prof. Leigh Landy
Producing music/1: Early career – finding a voice

12h30

SACM C 07 break

13h00

SACM C 07 Lunch hour concert
South African electro-acoustic compositions

Cameron Harris

Blend fit operand (2021, 7')

In the summer of 1956 Jodrell Bank Observatory in the English Midlands picked up a distant signal from deep space that seemed to contain spoken language. This phenomenon continued for a number of months, seemingly due to unusual atmospheric conditions. The signals were all carefully captured on a 3M reel-to-reel tape recorder – a quality machine of the time.

After intense analysis, some three years later it was ascertained that the recordings contained speeches made by alien politicians on some yet unknown planet. As a result, all the recordings were wiped as it was concluded that the speeches were even more vacuous than those produced by politicians on Earth. As the speeches were devoid of all content, it was considered that the expensive magnetic tape could be better put to use recording other things. In late 2021, celebratory physicist and erstwhile musician Brian Cox stated that combatting climate change was vital because otherwise intelligent life in the universe may not survive. The logic follows that humans, politicians included, may be the most intelligent beings in existence: Extra-terrestrial life may not exist, and if it does it may not be as sentient as us. Without Earth, and without humanity, meaning in the universe may be lost – it is a striking thought.

Also in 2021 it emerged that one single reel-to-reel tape of the 1956 recordings survived. It was discovered being used as a stand-in for a hubcap on a Volkswagen Beetle which was still being used in a Cheshire village not far from the observatory that first detected these mediocre signals. The tape contains a particularly banal expostulation concerning an offset scheme for some toxic chemical that mercifully has not become known to man. The tape is presented here in full.

While the substantiation for some of the above may be hazy, it is well known that feedback delay using reel-to-reel tape was a key inspiration for Louis and Bebe Barron. The duo were given a 3M tape recorder as a wedding present and are best known as the creators of the iconic score for the movie *Forbidden Planet*, which was coincidentally also released in 1956. **Blend fit**

operand experiments with the idea of looped feedback delay and takes the mysterious pulsating sounds that result as its starting point. As such, it is a modest homage to the music of the Barrons, who changed the palette of electronic music forever.

Pierre-Henri Wicomb

Love.Lock.Nestle. (2024, 6'56")

The title consists of synonyms referring to 'holding on', alluding to the interaction of the flautist with her flute and also to the soundtrack. The playing techniques frequently rely on the rolling of the flute blowing into the instrument at different angles. The 'holding on' can be seen both as a metaphor for a delicate dance, while also trying to keep up with a 'moving' soundtrack. It has a concealed, pulse-like character, with pulses mostly scattered throughout the work, making consecutive ones an infrequent occurrence. This absence does not prevent the meticulous following of the soundtrack and its synchronisation. This supports an ongoing goal of the composer working towards a more involved and musical 'coming-together' of the electronic and acoustic, without the use of, for example, a click track. The soundtrack thus functions as both an aesthetic (sound/musical world) and practical artefact (cue provider/machine).

The soundtrack is constructed from a recorded session in which the playing possibilities and extended flute techniques of the flautist Liesl Stolz, for whom the piece was written, were explored. The soundtrack initially investigates, in a lyrical way, the noise aspects of the sound generation process of the flute. In this first section varying techniques and glitches become 'melodies' rather than pitches. Later in the work a more conventional sounding motif is introduced, firstly by the soundtrack and finally given over to the flute.

Dimitri Voudouris

μΠυ - (310 - 09 STT) (2024, 12')

μΠυ is a data detection series of micro-plastic polymer, sampled from the Vaal river water system aurally identified from a selection of microbeats at specified pitches. Waves of identical frequencies interfere (constructive and destructive interference patterns) in a manner to produce points along the medium that always appear to be standing still consisting of an alternating pattern of nodes and antinodes. Identifying these areas, pressure vibrations fluctuate so do the quantities of nodes, antinodes resulting in a variety of sound patterns showing accumulative cluster formations with conglomeration of polymer populations tested.

Günther Lübbert

Resonant Skins (2024, 6'46")

"Resonant Skins" is an exploration of the snare drum's sonic possibilities, pushing the boundaries of its traditional role. Using only snare drum samples, this acousmatic piece weaves a tapestry of glitch sounds, long extended tones, and immersive delay and reverb effects. The snare drum, often recognised for its sharp and immediate attack, is here transformed into a versatile sound source. By pitching the samples both up and down, a range of unexpected artifacts and textures emerge, revealing the hidden depth within this singular instrument. The

piece employs warping of samples, spectral transformations, and various other digital manipulations to create a landscape of evolving timbres and rhythms. "Resonant Skins" invites the listener to reimagine the snare drum, highlighting its potential beyond traditional rhythmic contexts. This composition challenges our auditory perceptions and encourages a deeper appreciation for the intricate and often overlooked sounds that can be drawn from a familiar source.

Cara Stacey and Keenan Ahrends

'Umbra' - Leam (2024, 3'05")

Umbra is a piece created by Cara Stacey and Keenan Ahrends in their new duo configuration, Leam. Built from diverse guitar sounds, the piece explores various spaces and textures created from the affected material. Umbra refers to darkness or shadow, and is used to describe the darkest part of the shadow of an eclipse.

Miles Warrington

Across || Lines (2015, edits 2018 and 2024, 6'32", Acousmatic work for multiple channel projection/diffusion)

The idea behind this work is to create a link between musical "gestalts" or sound objects whose structure and result could be inextricably linked with the way in which the sounds themselves were produced. Drawing various materials, such as a serrated metal edge, knife, wooden and plastic spatulas and a heavy thick wooden log across parallel upright gate bars of various sizes, the sounds produced formed timbral categories that could undergo a linear composition with the visual score. The visual score, intended to create various forms and possibilities of parallel lines both inferring the upright bars themselves and also the visual lines of the score, creates structure and form from the banks of sounds. Each of the sounds were then assigned colours depending on their timbral density (ranging from yellow - least dense to orange - most dense), and then the visualisations coloured in over the tiled mosaic form to create a 'score'. This idea draws inspiration from Iannis Xenakis's self analysis of his epic ballet work Kraanerg (1968) for large ensemble and tape, where he used a non-linear mosaic form to structure it. The work is comprised of 5 sections, each a few minutes long that flow into each other. They are: Accents from Lines—Lines Behind Lines— Horizon Lines—Shattered Lines—Ends of the Lines. The section titles refer to the visual representation of the score and provide some form of narrative as a macro structure to the work. The work is the composer's first acousmatic work, and is for 8 channel speaker system with or without 8 channel diffusion or live visualisation of the score.

phetolo (2019, version 2024, 6'45")

phetolo (2019) is a work inspired by various social, knowledge and technical factors. It was commissioned by the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria, as part of the Humanities 100th Anniversary Celebrations in 2019. The Northern Sotho word for 'transformations' is **phetolo**. Transformation as a central theme in the current academic and social climate is a critically important activity that seeks to recognise the inequalities of knowledge and social systems of the past and address them with positive change.

In the compositional practice of generating effective material in the discourse of acousmatic, electroacoustic and soundscape art-music forms, the 'transformation' of material through various techniques allows us to establish narrative and aesthetic contexts. The expression of a sound wave, or any signal varying over time, as the sum of its constituent sine waves, is known as the Fourier transform of that signal. The function of the signal varies over time, and gives us the means to visualise or express that sound. Images too, can be represented in this way by creating visual graphs of collections of sine waves to form a Fourier transform of the physical image from a greyscale photograph.

Anopheles (2019, 7'51", Acousmatic work for multiple channel ambisonic projection,)

The work formed an integral part of a public awareness drive about mosquitoes and malaria through the collaboration with artists by the Institute for Sustainable Malaria Control (ISMC) at the University of Pretoria. As apart of this project, the composer spent some time working with recordings of malaria-free *Anopheles gambiae* (*A. gambiae*) mosquitoes. Studies of the insects has revealed that they respond to very specific changes in wingbeat frequencies during mating and other forms of insect taxis. In nature, this is referred to as phonotaxis. The resultant sound work formed part of an inter- and intra-disciplinary research project imagined and designed by visual artist Danielle Oosthuizen and is aimed at creating public awareness of the interaction between man, mosquitoes, and nature in general. The transformation and projection of the mosquito sounds presented unique compositional challenges that have resulted in informed practice for the composer and programmers alike.

All material in the work is derived from the sounds of recorded mosquitoes and material generation using synthesis, MIDI and spectro-morphological treatments. The challenges were particularly germane as far as physical channels were concerned. This required the audition of two independent mono channels at a time in planned sequences in the studio. This produced a sort-of round-robin style auditioning process that became essential in determining the sonic image of each independent channel in relationship to one another. Although lengthy, this process was entirely necessary and has helped to create a system of auditioning where composers could be requested to sequence large scale works for multiple channels.

In order to create more opportunities for performance, there was also a requirement to create a stereo binaural version for easier concert projection. This was done by the team @ ImmersiveDSP: <https://www.immersivedsp.com/immergo-pro/> .

14h00

SACM C 07 Seminar
Prof. Leigh Landy

Producing music/2: Crossing artistic borders & confronting a silo mentality in the arts

15h00

SACM C 07 Tea

15h30

SACM C 07 Seminar
Prof. Leigh Landy
Afternoon composition discussion/1: Composing Today

19h00

SACM C 07 Evening concert
A concert devoted to compositions by Prof. Leigh Landy
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Stein's Way (2006, 2'20, for solo and recorded speaking voice)

This short piece is a sequel in a sense to Landy's often performed work *Rock's Music* which is to be performed later in this concert. What holds them in common is that texts from Gertrude Stein are recomposed and that, instead of setting these texts to music, the music can be found in their being spoken. The key challenge to the performer is 'feeling time'. From dozens of Stein's pages of ca. 100 years ago taken from two of her texts, the piece's sampled and remixed content is found on one single page. The original texts (source material) are *Subject-cases: The Background of a Detective Story* (1923) and *Composition as Explanation* (1926). Perhaps it is all about composition.

China/Music 中國/音樂 **Old/New** 舊/新 (2013, 11'30, 8-channel work:
commission of the Musicacoustica 2013 Festival, it is the first work in the
composer's 'Old / New' series)

This piece for 8-channel recorded sounds involves only samples taken from traditional Chinese music recordings which act as source material to demonstrate the wealth of musical and spiritual traditions in China as well as the fact that traditions can be renewed to be as fresh as anything newly discovered. The work was a commission of the Musicacoustica 2013 festival and was premièred at that festival. This work is dedicated to Zhang Xiaofu as he has shown the way of respecting his traditions whilst celebrating the dynamic nature of both Chinese contemporary music and Chinese contemporary society.

In an earlier work focused on the Chinese sheng (mouth organ), the composer composed a rap at the end that included the following lines:

'There's nothing new under the sun;
Take something old and have some fun.
Now this old sheng sounds really new ...'

The sheng's sounds, as all sounds of Chinese traditional music, can sound both old and new. This piece intends to explore both and that led to its title.

Oh là la radio (2007, 9', 8-channel recording + translation video. The first work of the composer's Radio Series commissioned by INA/GRM, premiered 12 May 2007 at the Salle Messiaen at Radio France)

This eight-channel work, like many of my recent works, focuses on recycling sounds (aka appropriation, plundering, sampling, etc.). *Oh là la radio* is a GRM commission based on their desire for composers to plunder archives. In this case, diverse French radio programmes covering very few days were recorded (with thanks to Christian Zanési) and used as source material. Other than the initial sound, which may be familiar to sonic art enthusiasts, all sounds were recorded from French broadcasts during this period. The role I chose was simply to re-compose what was supplied. For those familiar with the French radio, many familiar voices and logos can be heard. It works both at the level of heightened listening – understanding every word spoken if that is what you want to pay attention to – and reduced listening – catching the occasional phrase but listening to the work as organised sound. The piece seeks to take the known, tilt it ever so slightly and re-present it as a sound-based artwork. Humour is one of the work's key elements. This piece received such enthusiastic feedback, it became the first of a series that has continued for (at least) one and a half decades. As far as copyright is concerned ... don't ask. This piece typifies the composer's works that he calls 'theatre of sound in a choreography of space'.

Translation video: Andrew Hill.

Rock's Music (1988, 13', solo voice-overs + stereo tape)

The writer, Gertrude Stein has not only influenced my work, but she has also occasionally provided the source material for my pieces. I believe that music is already to be found in the texts' own sounds. They do not need to be placed on a five-line staff or need instrumental support. This composition is simply based on the re-composition of her writings; thus, the samples are texts as opposed to sounds. Three Stein texts form the basis of *Rock's Music* (the German word, Stein = rock in English). Hundreds of pages taken from the following, *Lifting Belly* (1915/17), *Patriarchal Poetry* (1927) and *As a Wife has a Cow: a Love Story* (1926) form the source material for this piece. Influenced by Samuel Beckett's famous play, *Krapp's Last Tape*, the performer is in conversation with himself through a recording. There the comparison ends. What inspired the piece is how Stein was writing texts that not only predicted minimal music several decades before it was born, but in her case, there is something else: what sounds like repetition is anything but that. As the number of voices increases, the ability to follow things decreases and, sometimes, reduced listening is the unexpected place where one arrives (also known as listening to music). This piece is the composer's most performed work. It appears on a CD recording, *La Zététique* (Erasmus WVH083).

Musical Bow Old / New (*First performance* – 2023/24, 14', for musical bows and 8-channel recording)

This piece has been commissioned by UCT/SACM and has been made for Bowed Electrons 24 in close consultation with Dizu Plaatjies, master musician of the musical bow, to whom the work is dedicated and who will be the sole performer ever to perform the work, Theo Herbst and Paul Rommelaere. It is the most recent work in the composer's 'Old / New' series. As was the case with the Chinese work played earlier on this concert, it is all about respecting ancient instruments of world cultures and investigating how dynamic these instruments can be over the centuries and how relevant they are to today's world. Working online from the UK, I watched Dizu record several musical bows at an unimaginable level of virtuosity and singing creating some sounds that reminded me of today's electroacoustic music although nothing was plugged into the wall! In between recordings, we all chatted together and, fortunately, the recording producer, Dave Langemann, kept the recordings going as Dizu caught his breath. Stories about the bows were shared and more offering material never used in this series to bridge sections of the work while Dizu can catch his breath during performance. I have always been passionate about a wide variety of forms of traditional African music and studied music from Southern Africa and the Gold Coast during my doctoral studies. To collaborate with such wonderful people has been a dream come true. I sincerely hope you will be immersed in the wonderful sounds of these musical bows and enjoy the journey.

Monday 2 September 2024

11h00

SACM C 07 Tea

11h30

SACM C 07 Seminar
Prof. Leigh Landy
Scholarship/1: Research strands in my career

12h30

SACM C 07 break

13h00

SACM C 07 Lunch hour concert

Current and prospective Karlsruhe University of the Arts - SACM exchange students

Pavel Polenz

low fader (2024, 7'30")

it's sliced and assembled recordings, compiled throughout an extended web surf. the piece contains fragments of all kinds of source material like movies, city walks or asmr videos. a walk through Tokyo streets transitions into a whispered vape haul. blowing the vapor through your ears and you get blown away to somewhere else. you'll learn how blackjack works. it's the end but then it's not. it's low fades. subtleness is key. engine roars and stretched sentimentality.

Denise Onen

South African Culture Snapshot (2023, 3'23", Video montage)

The "South African Culture Snapshot" from Imvuselelo is a snapshot of South Africa's relationship with dancing, drinking, and the church. This work was presented at the National Arts Festival, South Africa 2023, as part of Koleka Putuma's Standard Bank Young Artist Award installation. Imvuselelo is the first iteration of the Theatre of Beauty project. The project draws on research on psychedelic and indigenous medicine practices and how they have been used to heal individuals, communities, and generational traumas.

Koleka Putuma - Writer, Creator and Art Director

Montage Visual Editor: blk banana

Sound Designer: Denise Onen

Hoin Ji

Tshikona with ipcl (2024, 5')

Tshikona with ipcl is a dance music piece influenced by the Venda traditional Tshikona Dance. DIY wind instruments made with PCL (Polycaprolactone) material, meant to be resistant to art

authoritarianism through easily accessible materiality, then combined with some styles of music genres that express a sense of community and liberation.

Meryl van Noie

Scratch Study 02 (2018, 6'30", for music and visuals)

Meryl van Noie, music and visuals;

The idea for a series of "Scratch Studies" developed in 2017 after working on a compositional project for dance movement in collaboration with South African choreographer Themba Mbuli. At the same time, this process was inspired by American Professor Dennis Miller's 2017 visit to South Africa. His integrated method of composing music with visuals struck a chord. I decided to explore a series of studies using minimal objects, in order to harness their character through examination of their sound and visual palettes.

Scratch Study 02 is the second of such explorations, based around a theme of plastic bags. Plastic has become pervasive. Billions upon billions of items of plastic waste are choking our oceans, rivers and dams and piling up on land. It is estimated that 4 trillion plastic bags are used worldwide every year, and only 1% of them are returned for recycling. Yet most people continue to buy single-use plastic items almost on a daily basis. The plastic bag represents the oblivious and reckless nature of human beings. We are capable of turning a blind eye to serious consequences, by telling ourselves that it is someone else's problem to solve and not ours. This composition is an attempt to make sense of the nature of plastic bags.

Sounds and visuals from various different plastic bag sources set up the material palette for exploration. The piece seeks to extract textures and timbres out of plastic bags, as well as depict their rather villainous character.

Emancipation (2019, 5'48", for music (2017) and visuals (2019))

Meryl van Noie, music and visuals

In 2017 Themba Mbuli (choreographer) collaborated with Meryl van Noie, (composer) Thabisa Dinga (musician and dancer), Nkemiseng Khena, Sasha Fourie Myburgh, and Kirsten de Kock (dancers) to create Autho(r)ise: a work about women and their daily struggles for acknowledgement, survival and recognition. Although traces of struggle and difficulty linger, the intention is not to focus attention on the struggles of women. Rather, the aim is to highlight the strength women have, how they choose to nurture the next generation despite facing difficulties, sometimes overlook prejudice in favour of survival, or overcome gruelling complexities. It hopes to challenge us to reconsider how women are redefining their position in twenty-first century society.

Background: Extract from the original dance performance piece programme notes: "Autho(r)ise" interrogates our existence and explores the freedom of choice; allowing us to incorporate a sense of re-birth into our identity, tradition, and heritage. It asks women to consider how this knowledge in this era can emancipate us, when we decide who we are and what we want, even though the questions are nuanced and complex. It is our plight to express ourselves without fear or shame, to look to the future and expand the horizons of society for the generations that come

after us. During the creation process, the choreographer had an uncanny understanding of women, having been raised by a mostly female family. The music features recordings of the dancers' voices, feet, movements, books and pages as their stories unfolded, as well as deconstructed phrases or single notes of the nyungwe, uhadi and mrhubhe played by Thabisa Dinga. The full work for dance featured live instrumentation played by Thabisa during the choreography. The personalities of all the dancers are firmly engrained into the choreography and the music. As this work contains the DNA of every contributor and is difficult to re-create with the artists not always able to come together, the composer chose to re-arrange the music and compose visuals for a series of extracts, in order to preserve the work in a different context.

The hope is to perform it again with everyone reunited at some point in time.

Scratch Study 03 (2019, 7'25", for music and visuals)

Meryl van Noie, music and visuals;

The idea for a series of "Scratch Studies" developed in 2017 after working on a compositional project for dance movement in collaboration with South African choreographer Themba Mbuli. At the same time, this process was inspired by American Professor Dennis Miller's 2017 visit to South Africa. His integrated method of composing music with visuals struck a chord. I decided to explore a series of studies using minimal objects, in order to harness their character through examination of their sound and visual palettes. Scratch Study 03 is the third of such explorations, loosely based around a theme of wires.

Wire is usually made out of metal drawn out into the form of a thin flexible thread or rod. Its functionality is extensive and human beings use it for purposes ranging from washing lines, for hardware equipment, structures and fences, to making jewelry, constructing musical instruments and sending electrical signals. Vast quantities of various metals are used for making telephone and data cables and for conducting electricity, which firmly cements wire as an essential resource in technological society. This composition is an attempt to draw attention to how much we rely on this simple invention, particularly apt during a time when we have become acutely aware of not having access to it.

Sounds and visuals are from various different wire sources, which sets up the material palette for exploration. As with the other Scratch Studies, the composition seeks to extract textures and timbres out of wires, and in doing so focus attention on the scale and risk of our dependency on them.

14h00

SACM C 07 Seminar
Prof. Leigh Landy

Scholarship/2: Working at the cutting edge and at the foundation of electroacoustic music studies

15h00

SACM C 07 tea

15h30

SACM C07 Seminar
Prof. Leigh Landy

Afternoon composition discussion/2: A piece with and for Dizu Plaatjies

19h00

SACM C 07 Evening concert

A concert devoted to compositions by Prof. Leigh Landy
concerts stream

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I Conduct Electricity (concert version 1996, 2', for stereo recording and conductor)

This piece was composed in a longer version involving three dancers for the *Idée Fixe – Experimental Sound and Movement Theatre* production, a company co-directed by the composer, entitled *(Y)our House*. It is one of the precursors of the Radio Series that evolved from 2007. A series of radio recordings were made on BBC Radio 4 during one single evening and recomposed. Essentially the conductor with back to the audience is using rather unorthodox movements to conduct (?) the radio. The final section with the dancers, not included in the concert work, was co-composed with Odilon Marcenaro during which the dancers mock the conductor's movements as the samples fall apart.

On the Éire (2018, 11'20, commission – Ulster University: the 6th (pan-Irish) piece in the Radio Series, 8-channel recording)

On the Éire (2017, 11'20) is the sixth in the composer's 'Radio Series', works based solely on material from a nation's radio broadcasters recorded over a brief period. In this case material was collected shortly before Saint Patrick's Day 2017 throughout both Ireland and Northern Ireland, that is, in the time of Brexit and no Northern Irish government. Its formula, as in all the Radio Series pieces: take sonic materials from daily life and simply recompose them! There are short Irish language phrases here and there which most of us won't catch but their context will make their content fairly evident. As is the case in many of the composers' works, laughing is allowed.

Qing + Cha 馨 + 鏢 Old / New 舊 / 新 (2023, 6', for E. Asian bowls and cymbals, 8-channel recording, commissioned by Thierry Miroglio for its first performance at the 2023 Musicacoustica Festival in Hangzhou, China)

This is the fourth work in the composer's *Old / New* series that commenced with the international commissioned composition for the 2013 Musicacoustica Festival, *China/Music 中國 / 音樂 Old/New 舊/新* performed yesterday. In that work samples taken from recordings of a wide variety of forms of Chinese traditional music were captured and recomposed. In this work, created ten years later at the request of the French percussionist, Thierry Miroglio, Chinese and other East Asian bowls and cymbals have been sampled and recomposed in surround sound

providing an atmospheric sonic environment in which the live performance involving only those instruments completes the composition. The performance today is of a fixed 8-channel version without the live performer. The series and this composition's goal is to demonstrate how music and instruments with rich traditions can represent profound histories while remaining dynamic and thus eternally modern. The fact that the percussionist who requested this work is a specialist in East Asian percussion techniques demonstrates the old / new concept elegantly.

Texts in My Life (1919/20, 15'40, for speaking voice, 8-channel recording and video projection)

The title of this piece is borrowed from a work by my late friend and mentor, Morton Feldman, 'The Viola in My Life', a title I always admired as it seemed so odd. In this case, the texts used as material for recomposition (sampling) in this piece range from the highly sonic to the humorous and absurd to the repetitive. All have been influential in my life. I have always been interested in text-sound poetry, lettrisme and absurdist theatre, as well as the writings of Gertrude Stein which again play a major role in the work as it did in two works in yesterday's concert. The texts have been recomposed, made theatrical and, of course, musical and spatialised and pose a challenge with respect to timing and interpretation for the performer. It is for speaking voice, surround projection of the same voice and images of some of the more unorthodox texts. The challenge for the performer is to be able to feel the work's timing without any cues.

E Pluribus Plures (2021, 19', Commission from the Musicacoustica Festival, Hangzhou, 8-channel work using music samples from dozens of global cultures)

Shortly prior to starting this work I heard *Isshoni* (Together, 2014, 31') in which the composer, Hans Tutschku took a variety of forms of traditional music from across the globe, combined them elegantly seeking to achieve a form of unity. This work, *E Pluribus Plures* (Out of Many, Many, 2021) departs from the point of view that the world's diversity of music is rich and running the risk of both dilution and extinction due to the greater homogeneity and prominence of commercial forms of music available today. The work intends therefore to celebrate our universal love of music whilst equally celebrating its wonderful diversity in which the known and the unexpected seek to find cohesion (coexistence) through their variety. *E Pluribus Plures* is meant to act as a metaphor for our need to respect cultural diversity in all its forms. The word respect is integral to my attitude regarding each and every sample used no matter how they were recomposed. No sample in the piece was altered in any manner beyond removing unexpected glitches. Special thanks to Sato Naomi for re-recording the one online sample that didn't work (for Japanese shō). Despite its title, *E Pluribus Plures* forms part of the *Old / New* series. As its climax and many of its samples come from (Southern) Africa, there was no better piece to say thank you to all of you for this wonderful opportunity to share my work here in Cape Town.

Biographies

Leigh Landy

Leigh Landy (landy.dmu.ac.uk), a Dutch and US citizen, holds a Research Professorship at De Montfort University (Leicester, UK) where he directs the Music, Technology and Innovation Research Centre (MTI). UCT/SACM is MTI's most recent international partner, and we are proud to be working with you.

He was educated in the United States, the land of his birth, at Columbia University (BA, MA) and the State University of New York at Buffalo (PhD) where he was Lejaren Hiller's assistant and worked closely with Morton Feldman who organised his scholarship there.

Landy's work is divided between creative, musicological and outreach work. His compositions, many of which are sample based, include several for video, dance and theatre and have been performed around the globe. In his early career, he was significantly influenced by John Cage seeking few forms of experimentalism, but this was not to remain his sole focus. As time went on, he became increasingly aware of a gap between innovation in his beloved area of music and an appreciative public beyond specialists. This awareness was underlined through cross-arts collaborations. He worked extensively with the late playwright, Heiner Müller and the new media artist, Michel Jaffrenou and was composer in residence for the Dutch National Theatre during its first years of existence reaching audiences far larger than the typical new music public. In the 1990s, he founded the cross-performing arts company, Idée Fixe – Sound and Movement Theatre with choreographer, Evelyn Jamieson. In recent years, he has become less engaged with instrumental music and more with broader sound-based creativity, in particular sonic sampling. Nonetheless, one element of his studies remained an inspiration in his work, namely music as a cultural phenomenon (which is, in turn, related to his concerns regarding new music's marginalisation). Currently, the majority of his compositions fall within two series: a) his Radio Series involving broadcasts from a single country remixed bringing the universal, the national and regional as the dramaturgy of sampled sonic works; and b) his 'Old / New' series in which ancient traditional instruments and musical genres are the focus demonstrating the diversity and dynamic of these traditions which are able to be renewed and of continuing relevance regardless of the power of our ever-increasing commercial music culture.

His scholarship has also led him to giving keynote talks on every continent. His publications focus primarily on the studies of electroacoustic (or, as he calls it, sound-based) music. Other important foci include music dramaturgy, contemporary music in a cross-arts context and collaborative devising practices. However, his primary focus as a musicologist is exactly the same as in his artistic work, making innovative new music relevant in today's world. He speaks of Art for Life's Sake as a response to two centuries of Art for Art's Sake which most likely caused the above-mentioned marginalisation of new music. He is editor of the journal, "Organised Sound" (Cambridge University Press) and author of ten books including "What's the Matter with Today's Experimental Music?" and "Understanding the Art of Sound Organization" (MIT Press). His most recent books, "Experiencing Organised Sounds" and "The Music of Sounds and the Music of Things", the latter written with John Richards (who was in Cape Town

recently leading Bowed Electrons workshops and a frequent BE participant) both appeared and will appear with Routledge in 2024. Landy is a founding director of the Electroacoustic Music Studies Network (EMS), the global subject association in this field.

His outreach work can be summarised by the phrase, 'bringing new music to new participants and audiences'. To this end, beyond the more cutting-edge aspect of his scholarship, he has also undertaken various forms of foundational work. The above-mentioned company, Idée Fixe has offered many workshops over the years introducing new music and movement to a diversity of groups. Within sound-based music, this approach has been applied internationally. To make this possible for others to facilitate, he directs the ElectroAcoustic Resource Site (EARS) projects, supported by the European Union and Unesco, of which EARS 2 (ears2.eu), an eLearning resource in ten languages, has been used in educational and community settings to introduce teachers, students and interested parties of all ages to the pleasures of making music with sounds. His book, **The Music of Sounds** (Routledge 2012) reflects this spirit.

In "The Music of Sounds and the Music of Things" Landy and Richards claim that sampling and DIY approaches to sonic creativity should become part of 21st century folk music, something quite far from new music's marginalisation discovered during Landy's studies.

blk banana

blk banana is a South African multidisciplinary artist working with collage, poetry, video and installation. She fictionalizes prevailing notions of temporality, place, nature, body, dates, identity and belonging

In her practice, she explores speculative reconstruction as a form of resilience for fragmented identities created by colonial, anthropological, and algorithmic violence, and investigates the role of myth and imagination in the making of history.

Cameron Harris

Cameron Harris studied composition at the Universities of Edinburgh, Manchester and Pennsylvania during which time his teachers included Nigel Osborne, John Casken, Edward Harper, James Primosch and Jay Reise. He was a Thouron fellow at the University of Pennsylvania and later the recipient of a Benjamin Franklin scholarship. He won the Network for New Music composition competition in Philadelphia and the David Halstead Music Prize for composition at the University of Pennsylvania.

Originally from the UK, Cameron has been based in South Africa since 2006 where he lectures in music at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. He was Chair of NewMusicSA, the South African section of the International Society for Contemporary Music, from 2007 - 2011 and curated many festivals for the organization. His main interests are interactive electronic music composition and the history of electronic music.

Hoin Ji

Hoin Ji is an interdisciplinary artist who explores sociological phenomena through the lenses of abstract art's methodology and particular styles of music that express a sense of community and liberation.

Günther Lübbert

In 2019 Günther was accepted into the BMus programme at UP. There he studied piano under renowned pianists such as Prof. Wessel van Wyk and Dr. Tessa Rhoodie. He also took up composition and in 2022 he received second place in the Stefans Grove Composition Competition. In 2021, he was also chosen as one of five composers to premiere a piece at the Annual Sterkfontein Composers Meeting. It was during this time that his love for music technology started and he pursued it alongside composition.

In 2023 he premiered one of his compositions, "Xylem" at the 2023 ISCM World New Music Days festival in Johannesburg. From 2023 he started working at SAE institute Cape Town as a lecturer and is currently working on his masters in electroacoustic composition under the supervision of Dr. Miles Warrington

Denise Onen

Denise Onen is a South African-born sonic cultural practitioner. The particular standards of eclecticism and immersiveness which characterise her work so far stem from her vision of sound design as a kind of 'audio alchemy'. Her sonic artistry in film has garnered prestigious international features and awards. She's pursuing an MMus at the University of Cape Town. For a full biography, please see www.deniseonen.com.

Pavel Polenz

forthcoming

Cara Stacey and Keenan Ahrends

Cara Stacey is a South African musician, composer and musicologist and was the Standard Bank Young Artist for Music 2021. She is a pianist and plays the umrhubhe, uhadi, makhoyane musical bows. She holds a doctorate in African music, specifically looking at the makhoyane musical bow from Eswatini (University of Cape Town/SOAS). During her PhD, she was an NRF Freestanding Doctoral scholar, a Commonwealth Split-Site scholar, and the recipient of funding from the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust and the University of Cape Town. Cara holds a Masters in Musicology (Edinburgh), and a MMus in Performance from SOAS (London). Cara studied various African instruments (makhoyane, mbira, uhadi, umrhubhe and budongo) with Dizu Plaatjies, Khokhiwe Mphila, Bhemani Magagula, Tinashe Chidanyika, Modou Diouf, and Andrew Cooke.

Keenan Ahrends is a jazz guitarist and composer based in Johannesburg, South Africa. Having started playing the guitar at the age of fifteen, he completed his undergraduate degree in jazz performance at the University of Cape Town and the Norwegian Academy of Music in 2009. In 2019, he completed an honours degree in performance at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. During this degree, he completed research into the life and music of prominent South African jazz guitarist Errol Dyers. During his tertiary studies combined, he studied under the likes of Jon Ebersson, Wayne Bosch, Eckhard Baur, Alvin Dyers, and Andrew Lilly. He was awarded a Pro Helvetia artist in residency in 2021 where he spent three months composing, recording and performing in Basel, Switzerland.

Meryl van Noie

Meryl van Noie holds an MMUS in jazz composition and arrangement under the supervision of Professor Michael Campbell. She is respected as a teacher and music 'technologist' with innovative approaches to music education and a broad range of artistic experience.

Meryl has performed across 'genres', including with the symphonic pops orchestra, in various theatre, corporate productions and performance projects that range from jazz and popular music to experimental and improvisational music. She has experience as a technical contributor, advisor and organiser of various music festivals and productions, including foley sound recording for a production of Hamlet, directed by renowned UK Director Dame Janet Suzman in 2005. Meryl has composed music for projects performed at, amongst others, The Baxter Theatre Centre, Artscape, North Eastern University, Birmingham miniBEAST, Infecting the City and the Transgressive Arts Festival. She has written jazz arrangements, popular music, film music and jingles, multimedia works and electroacoustic music compositions commissioned by New Music SA, the Jazz Art Dance Company, and the Baxter Theatre Centre. Her research focus is artistic exploration in multimedia, collaborative and interdisciplinary compositional projects. Her creative work is rooted in electroacoustic and jazz traditions with a South African frame of reference.

She previously managed the SoundHouse, housed at the Baxter Theatre Centre and later at the Cape Town Science Centre, teaching music technology to children. Its success over many years transformed it into a non-profit NGO and saw her earn two BASA award nominations for excellence in community outreach. This resulted in Meryl advising various organisations on music technology curriculum development. These include the Western Cape Education Department and the Sci-Bono and KZN Science Centres. She currently serves on the advisory council of the Khula Cape Foundation, previously the Cape Tercentenary Foundation.

As an educator, she has expertise in general jazz studies and music technology specialisations with combined teaching experience of nearly thirty years. She has developed and taught curricula across disciplines, including music theory and technology, jazz piano, ear training, improvisation, composition and ensemble playing. Her teaching philosophy supports a holistic approach to developing resilient musicians. As an active composer, she embraces the shifts in technological advancement, thinking about how it impacts our social fabric and, ultimately, our artistic creativity. She lectures across various course modules at the SACM, including jazz within the historical and social context, jazz theory, ensemble practice, composition and arrangement. She remains focused on innovation in music education.

Dimitri Voudouris

A new music composer and practicing pharmacist who applies analytical principles of biomechanics and motion theory to his composition strategy.

Miles Warrington

Miles Warrington studied composition with Jürgen Braüninger and Theo Herbst, completing his Doctor of Music degree at the University of Cape Town in 2016. His main interests lie in the fields of electroacoustic music composition, research and performance. Passionate about technology that explores human-computer-interaction (HCI) in the music domain, he

investigates technology-art intersections through creative output with the bulk of his academic research exploring heuristics for HCI in the electroacoustic composition space.

Active as a contemporary composer, his music has been performed both locally and internationally. He currently holds the position of senior lecturer and teaches music technology and electroacoustic composition at the University of Pretoria. In 2019, he established South Africa's first academically-centred Laptop Orchestra (UPLorc) and between 2015 and 2024, served as the composition editor for the Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa.

Pierre-Henri Wicomb

Pierre-Henri Wicomb is a South African composer working in musical environments encompassing everything from contemporary acoustic/electroacoustic music, theatre/film soundtracks to composition collaborations with [unrehearsed] audience members. He is currently working on completing his PhD at Africa Open Institute incorporating psychoanalysis as a means to approach composition and free improvisation

Wicomb's music has featured at the Festival D'Automne (Paris), New York City Electronic Music Festival, International Computer Music Conference (Utrecht), Festivalen for Svensk Konstmusik (Stockholm), Forum Wallis contemporary music festival (Leuk, Switzerland) and ISCM World New Music Days, to name a few. Wicomb has been a finalist of the Greek ensemble DissonArt's Miniatures project and Ars Electronica Forum Wallis (Switzerland) call for works. He was the prizewinner for the South Africa New Music Ensemble (SANME) call for scores with his Double Bass Concerto, Ablaze Records (USA) call for works with his piece Role-ing and RMN Classical's (UK) annual electronic composition competition for the electronic work BlaBlaBlaBlavet.

He is the co-founder of the successful annual Purpur Festival (Cape Town) hosting the works and performances of local and international musicians