



**ALLAN SCHINDLER
MEMORIAL CONCERT**

Presented by Eastman Audio Research Studio
Wednesday, November 7, 2018
Hatch Recital Hall
7:30 PM

Allan Schindler (1944-2018) came to Eastman in 1978 after an appointment at Boston University teaching electroacoustic music. Until Allan's arrival, Eastman's electronic music resources consisted of three large Moog synthesizers and reel-to-reel tape manipulation. This changed in 1980, when Eastman installed its first computer for music making, the result of a concerted effort between Allan and a few other faculty and students. This computer, a PDP-11 "mini-computer" which, although it was still about the size of a refrigerator, was much smaller and less costly to operate than a mainframe computer.

It took a full year, but Allan and students had succeeded in taming this temperamental beast and began coaxing interesting sounds from it; by 1982 the first substantial pieces of computer music emerged. Thus was born the Eastman Computer Music Center (ECMC), which Allan directed until his retirement in 2015. Over those three decades, ECMC gained an international reputation for developing high-quality and innovative computer music. Many of Allan's students owe their careers in electronic music to him and ECMC.

While Allan's teaching was invaluable, he also knew when to step back and trust his graduate assistants to learn from each other and to invent solutions to hardware or software problems that inevitably arose. What Allan seemed to value most about teaching was seeing that his students develop a mature autonomy. This, in combination with his fierce advocacy on his students' behalf, ensured that anyone who worked in the ECMC could flourish in the field of electronic music.

A full account of what we learned from Allan is impossible, but if I had to choose the most important, it would be his insistence on deep musicality, and the kind of determination and sincerity it requires to achieve. Allan could create the most compelling sounds just by typing commands and code into a terminal. Hearing him work on a phrase was like watching a sorcerer conjure and sculpt vapors with a few deliberate motions of his hand.

Allan was always seeking ways of creating music which – as he put it – “makes you happy to be alive.” In order to celebrate his life and its reach, we have asked a number of Allan's colleagues and former students to submit music for tonight's concert. The response was great: we received a bevy of newly composed pieces, some works completed while the composer was studying with Allan, and some pieces which acknowledge Allan's influence in various, interesting ways.

- Matt Barber, interim director of EARS, and assistant in ECMC for 10 of Allan's 35.

PROGRAM

A Fire Rekindled (2015)

Allan Schindler

Dedicated to Nancy C. Schindler

Dieter Hennings, Guitar

Music of Allan's Colleagues and Students

Bells For Allan (2018)* Augusta Read Thomas
Through the Door (2018) Kevin Ernste
Rekindle (2018) Oliver Schneller
Allan Sitting in a Room (2012) Paul Coleman
A Cipher for Allan (2018) John Liberatore
After October (2018) Greg Wilder
Coleoptera A.S. (2018) Scott Petersen
Kinetic (2018)* David Liptak

*Zuzanna Szewczyk Kwon, Piano

Time Streams (2003)

Allan Schindler

Imagery by Stephanie Maxwell

Music of Allan's Colleagues and Students

Totem (2018)* Sydney Hodkinson
Severall Vigorous Mammoths (2018) Matt Barber
Aquatones (1983) JoAnn Kuchera-Morin
The Only Significance (2018) Baljinder Sekhon
Ascent.stereo.wav (2018) Geoffrey Pope
Patchwork (2018) Abby Aresty
libation (2018) Steven Rice
Elegy (2018)* Robert Morris

*Zuzanna Szewczyk Kwon, Piano

INTERMISSION

roundabout (2010)

Allan Schindler

Imagery by Peter Byrne and Carole Woodlock

Music of Allan's Colleagues and Students

- MandAllan (2018)* Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez
my mind is... Mikel Kuehn
Fibonacci Etude (2004) Christopher Brakel
Shadows (1997) Paul Lansky
Music, Too Brief, for Allan (2018)..... Jon Forshee
harmonia in the lyre (2018) Igor Santos
The careful muffled sound of fruit..... Ethan Borshansky
 falling from a tree
 among endless singing forest (2018)
Your Music Will Prevail (2018)* Samuel Adler

*Zuzanna Szewczyk Kwon, Piano

Breath of Life (1996-97)

Allan Schindler

PROGRAM NOTES

A Fire Rekindled

I have long been drawn to the warm, subtle and intimate sound qualities and the expressive performance techniques of the classical guitar repertoire. And yet, although I played acoustic and electric guitar myself during my teens and very early twenties, primarily within jazz and rock ensembles, several decades went by when I simply did not have occasion to write for this captivating instrument. Thus, when the superlative guitar virtuoso Dieter Hennings asked me to write a piece for him to play and record, this was an opportunity not to be missed.

This piece is constructed somewhat like a necklace, cycling through a collection of interlocking, mostly fragmentary and open-ended melodic, harmonic, rhythmic and textural ideas that recur continuously in various orderings, recombinations and contexts. Some of these ideas incorporate performance techniques derived from, or reminiscent of, a variety of guitar traditions that I have enjoyed, including Flamenco, renaissance and baroque lute music, Spanish and South American repertoires, and jazz, folk and electric guitar practices.

I wanted this piece to have a spontaneous, improvisatory, direct, and game-like quality, but at the same time to convey a thoughtfulness, and perhaps also a sibylline, “I don't surrender all my secrets immediately” crosscurrent. Most of all, although the piece is technically demanding, I wanted it to be exhilarating to play and, for listeners, to follow.

A Fire Rekindled is dedicated to my wife, Nancy C. Schindler.

Time Streams

The spiral-like structure and unbroken momentum of this film/musical composition are somewhat suggestive to the artists of intersecting streams (or ‘ribbons’) or time. The concept is not simply the familiar (although perhaps illusory) linear ‘march’ of clock time, but rather a nexus in which backwards time (e.g., dreams, recollections and *deja vu*), parallel temporalities, and the non-contiguous splicing together of segments of time are equally prominent and ‘real.’

The principal sound sources of the music are generic samples (digitized recordings) of instrumental and vocal tones and of environmental sounds

such as ice cubes and ping pong balls. However, in resynthesis the spectral structures (tones colors) of these sounds often have been retooled and their attack and decay articulations have been altered. The visuals are animations and manipulations of hand-painted 35mm motion picture film, small objects and liquid mixtures that are extensively interwoven and layered in digital post production.

Little pleasures (an in-joke between Stephanie and me): Late one night, while initially mapping out the imagery to be used at the beginning of this excerpted passage, Stephanie plopped in a forward rushing triangular image in the lower right corner of the screen to coincide with the one second percussive upbeat crescendo and roar heard at 7 seconds into the excerpt. Her intention was to replace this ‘temp’ image with something more abstract and, um..., ‘imaginative’ when time permitted. However, when we previewed this first-pass footage, it gave us a good laugh, visually and aurally bringing to mind an express train whizzing through the middle of a local New York subway station, momentarily creating a head-numbing vacuum followed by a showering cloud of dust, grime and assorted subway crud. It was the type of image that prompts one to ask, “What the hell was that?” – even when one knows what *that* was. And so, the triangle stayed. Nothing else would do.

roundabout

roundabout is an inquiry into landscape and memory, movement and flow. Peter and Carole have provided the following notes on the visual imagery in this work:

We use gesture, layering, randomness, pattern and color to evoke a sense of becoming. Live action footage, with hand-drawn and computer-generated composite animation sequences come together in order to establish a shifting and layered sense of time and place. Interrupting one’s sense of balance and location, a cascade of imagery interweaves and sweeps on a circuitous journey. A fragmented sense of place evokes a shifting center and viewpoint in which we seek to unearth the interaction and collapsing of virtual and real spaces.

Despite frequent variations in tempo and pace, occasional use of ambiguous tempi (seemingly fast and slow at the same time) and passages employing two or more simultaneous tempi in different layers, the computer-generated music is designed to convey a sense of continuous motion and

gravitation, perhaps analogous to the current of a river or, alternatively, of tidal-like fluctuations in inflow and outflow. The music employs 19-tone equal temperament throughout, so some of the chordal progressions and melodic lines initially may sound "pinched" or piquant (or perhaps simply 'offkey' to some listeners), while other passages might suggest a hollow or 'distant' quality owing to the use of acoustically pure (and thus hollow-sounding) intervals afforded by this tuning system.

Many passages are constructed from distinct, overlapping textural layers that employ different collections of sounds and often move at different tempi. However, I also attempted to interlock these layers and to thread them through one another, so that the music moves and breathes, swells and subsides as a whole rather than in a stratified or lumpy fashion.

Many of the textural layers are anchored by one or more defining sounds – short, prominent melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, textural and/or timbral ideas that recur in varied, transformed or expanded form several times throughout a work. Some examples of recurring *defining sounds* in *roundabout* include:

- a series of related jazz bass riffs, illustrated here by one of the initial presentations of this element, followed by one of its later transformations, and then by a subsequent expansion of the transformed version.
- an oboe-like melodic fragment, in which long 'floating' tones alternate with brief ornamental turns, presented here in two variants from early and late in the piece
- 4, 5, and 6 note melodic fragments of 'gentle' bass metallophones (possibly suggestive of large steel drums or gongs) that amble up and down throughout many sections of the piece and that provide a braking motion or slow moving temporal counterweight to more active rhythmic layers; four examples are presented here; the source sound used to create these synthetic metallophones is this high pitched cencerros (cowbell) strike
- diaphanous flickering or pulsating textural ribbons that rise into the air and then evaporate, as in these three examples

Concurrent with the gradual development of these defining thematic ideas, the piece also often employs rhythmically animated background textural layers that provide 'surface motion' and a backdrop.

Breath of Life

Breath of Life is a portrait, or perhaps more accurately a remembrance, of my son Ryan Mark during his first two years of life. For me, it also is a work about expectation, discovery, intimacy, tenacity, growth, change and even, in a few respects, loss.

The pivotal sound sources and musical gestures were culled from recordings that I made of Ryan between the ages of four and twenty-five months, and ancillary recordings of some of his favorite toys (rattles, shakers, squeakers, a toy piano and the like). Sometimes these source recordings are combined and mirrored in fairly straightforward fashion, highlighting, I hope, the inherently musical nature of almost all sounds made by infants. At other times, as in the two minute anticipatory surge that opens the work, these vocal and toy sounds undergo extensive processing and transformation.

Technically, the greatest challenge I faced in the composition of this work (beyond difficulties in coaxing a high energy toddler to project clearly into a microphone, without pawing or spitting upon this tantalizing object), was to integrate what at first seemed like a grab bag of very short, isolated sound sources into coherent, interconnected, ever larger patterns. Formally, the piece might be likened to a large, intricate mosaic or jigsaw puzzle, constructed from thousands of interlocking musical fragments, some of which recur twenty or more times during the course of the work.

The piece was realized on SGI computer systems at the Eastman Computer Music Center. Principal software employed included *Csound* (Vercoe) and *Score11* (Brinkman), *rt* (Lansky), various analysis-and-resynthesis procedures (including linear prediction, phase vocoder and *Spectral Modeling Synthesis*), and algorithmic compositional programs I wrote that generate note or event streams incorporating probabilities or other user-specified characteristics. The work is dedicated to all of my children – Garrick, Danielle, Ryan, Jethro and Elena (who lived only two days) – each of whom has brought me special joys.

BIOGRAPHIES

The musical endeavors of **Dieter Hennings Yeomans** span from new music on guitar to early music for lute, baroque guitar, and theorbo and can be heard on the Nonesuch, Bridge, Parma, Nre Branch, and Innova recording labels.

Mr. Hennings has been a soloist with Canada's New Music Concerts Ensemble, Tito Scipa Orchestra of Lecce, Italy, Eastman BroadBand Ensemble, Eastman School Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica de la Universidad de Guanajuato, Orquesta Filarmonica de Sonora, the University of Arizona Philharmonia, the Orquesta Filarmonica de Monterrey among many others. Mr. Hennings has won first prize in several prestigious competitions including the 2008 Aaron Brock International Guitar Competition (Toronto), 2005 Eastman Guitar Concerto Competition, the 2002 Villa de Petrer, Alicante (Spain) International Young Artists Competition, the 2001 Portland International Guitar Competition, among others.

Mr. Hennings is an active proponent of new music, particularly that of Latin America, having recently worked with composers Mario Davidovsky, Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, Juan Trigos and Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon. Mr. Hennings has recently premiered works by composers Jake Bancks, Wes Matthews, John Aylward, Beth Wiemann, Hebert Vazquez, Luca Cori, Juan Trigos and Scott Worthington and many more. Hennings has received grants from the Howard Hanson Institute for American Music, the Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (México) and the Fondo Estatal para la Cultura y las Artes (Sonora, México) to commission and premiere contemporary works for guitar.

Recent engagements include concerts with pop-singer Natalie Merchant and baroque violinist Monica Huggett as well as appearances at the Mexican Embassy in Rome, Festival SpazioMusica of Cagliari, Conservatorio de las Rosas in Morelia, Mexico, University of Chicago, Festival Internacional de Chihuahua, New York's Joyce Theater, Julliard's Paul Hall, and New England Conservatory. Mr. Hennings is a resident artist at the East Coast Composers Ensemble and the Eastman Broad Band Ensemble, with whom he maintains an active performing schedule.

Dieter Hennings is Associate Professor of Music at the University of Kentucky and curates the UK International Guitar Series, which has brought to Lexington some of the finest guitarists in the world. Some of the artists featured on the series include David Russell, Paul O'Dette, Paul Galbraith, Nicholas Goluses, Adam Holzman, Jorge Caballero, Marcin Dylla, Zoran Dukic, Grisha Goryachev, and many more.

Zuzanna Szewczyk Kwon studied piano at Eastman for over a decade. She earned a Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degree in Piano Performance, studying with Natalya Antonova. She especially enjoys playing new music and freelances in the Rochester area, where she lives with her three little kids, Cassie, Cucio, and Kuba, husband Vince, and dog Oliver.

Stephanie Maxwell is an award-winning filmmaker/ animator who teaches in the School of Film and Animation at Rochester Institute of Technology. Her works have been screened in countless international festivals and film programs, including solo retrospectives. She has also been artist-in-residence on several occasions. Professor Maxwell actively promotes a unique form of collaboration that she calls, '*True Collaboration*' where partnering creators equally lead and determine the processes and outcomes on a project. She was co-founder and co-director with Allan Schindler of the *ImageMovementSound* festivals (1997-2008), a cross-discipline, inter-university, annual production and performance program of image-makers, composers, choreographers, performers and other creatives.

Peter Byrne is a professor in the School of Design at Rochester Institute of Technology. An active artist and design-educator, Byrne's work involves an inquiry into notions of abstraction, sense of place, and a dialog between the handmade and the digital. His work includes motion graphics, films/videos, digital projects, paintings, and drawings. Byrne has exhibited his drawings, digital works, and paintings both nationally and internationally.

Carole Woodlock is a moving image artist and a professor in the School of Photography at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Born at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in Western Canada, she investigates notions of landscape, identity, and memory. Her recent work developed out of an intensive solo 120 mile walk through England's northern countryside, specifically Yorkshire and the North York Moors. Woodlock's experimental films have been selected and screened at over 70 juried festivals.

Allan Schindler's music is available in a number of commercial recordings, and from his website – <http://ecmc.rochester.edu/allan/> . A few of his writings about issues in composing computer music are available there as well; they are especially valuable for composers because he includes many sound examples which show his processes for improving and enlivening musical phrases created from computers. His Eastman Csound Tutorial is a classic text for getting started both with csound (his synthesis software of choice) and with classic synthesis and signal processing techniques.

