

MUSIC AT AN EXHIBITION

NOTATING

BEAUTY

THAT

MOVES

10.3.2018 SAT 6PM

11.3.2018 SUN 3PM



GESTURING

MOTION

Programme

Mark Applebaum	Aphasia (2011)
Lee Yi-wei Angus	IMA [Modus Operandi II] (world première) (cartographic studies in nonconformity) Commissioned by Hong Kong Sinfonietta
Mark Applebaum	Aphasia-Dialect (2011)
Jo Ganter & Raymond MacDonald	Slant & Caissons 1 (2015)
Thierry de Mey	Table Music (1987)

Special Guests:

Chou Shu-yi (Dance artist)

Karen Yu (Percussion)

Percussion:

Chau Chin-tung

Rieko Koyama

Mandy Lo (Guest performer)

Programme Notes

Mark Applebaum

Aphasia (2011)
Aphasia-Dialect (2011)

The composer wrote, "*Aphasia*, conceived originally for singer and two-channel tape, was commissioned by the GRM, Paris and composed for virtuoso singer Nicholas Isherwood. The tape, an idiosyncratic explosion of warped and mangled sounds, is made up exclusively of vocal samples — all sung by Isherwood and subsequently transformed digitally. Against the backdrop of this audio narrative, the singer performs an elaborate set of hand gestures, an assiduously choreographed sign language of sorts. Each gesture is fastidiously synchronized to the tape in tight rhythmic coordination. The eccentricity of the hand gestures is perhaps upstaged only by the observation that the singer, however extraordinary, produces no sound in concert. (In fact, the role of the 'singer' may be taken by any performer of suitably enthusiastic inclination and conviction.) In that regard *Aphasia* may be the first piece in the vocal canon that can be performed even when the singer has laryngitis. Isherwood deemed the piece's rigid synchronization impossible (except perhaps for a dancer) and instead championed a looser, more improvised version I call *Aphasia—Dialect*. (He also included an excerpt from the score in his seminal book *The Techniques of Singing*, Bärenreiter Verlag, 2013.) Considering his pronouncement a challenge, I learned the piece (it took me four months of constant work to memorize it) and made a video of my performance. The video subsequently attracted dozens of performers — mostly intrepid percussionists — to learn the piece. Ironically it has become my most performed recent piece: I know of some 58 players who champion it and have played it in 17 countries in nearly 200 performances since 2011."

Lee Yi-wei Angus

IMA [Modus Operandi II] (world première)

(cartographic studies in nonconformity)

Commissioned by Hong Kong Sinfonietta

The composer wrote, "IMA refers to the neurological disorder ideomotor apraxia, which afflicts its patients with the inability to mimic / mirror simple actions upon request, as well as, in other cases, the inability to motorise parts of the body at will. On a deeper level, if we were to consider from a sociological perspective, the inability to 'copy' or 'mimic' – hence 'learn' and 'assimilate' – as the primal stage of the inability (or unwillingness?) to 'conform', how can we relate this to the 'creative act' itself? If the foundation of society is based on homogeneity and stability, then, is it not the case that creativity – the will to difference, the will to destabilise – is revolution itself?"

Jo Ganter and Raymond MacDonald

Slant & Caissons 1 (2015)

The composer and artist wrote, "Running Under Bridges is the collaborative partnership between musician and composer, Raymond MacDonald, and visual artist/printmaker, Jo Ganter. They co-author series of original prints and musical compositions that test the possibilities of images as conductors of sound, and sound as a compositional tool for images. Graphic scores represent music using visual images outside the realm of traditional music notation, and have been an effective way for experimental musicians to convey musical ideas since the 1950s. However, while many graphic scores are visually interesting, few claim to be works of art in their own right. For Ganter/MacDonald, this it is important that the images work both visually as independent works of art, framed on the gallery wall, and as musical scores.

"The reproduction of the images allows the works to be used as graphic scores for groups of musicians to perform them, while they are simultaneously exhibited artworks. Intricate, 'grid-like' matrices, are hand drawn or computer-generated to provide boundaries for blocks of colour or tone and create temporal structures for the music. These are collaboratively developed in numerous ways. Sometimes both artists working on the images simultaneously, sometimes through a remote collaboration (scanning and digital editing etc.), and sometimes the images are edited while rehearsing with groups of musicians. The images replace conventional music scores for small groups of musicians.

"Ganter/MacDonald give directions for each graphic score: colour may denote instrumentation or type of music to be played for example. In *Slant* for example, the dark grey intricate shapes are to be played by two instruments together while the blue triangles are to be played by another instrument of lighter, brighter sound, high and melodic. The music may vary each time the score is played, but is always specific to the score."

Thierry de Mey

Table Music (1987)

Musique de Table (Table Music) clearly displays Belgian composer and filmmaker Thierry De Mey's interest in merging the visual and audio aspects of music into a performance art that engages multiple senses. *Musique de Table* is scored for 3 amplified "table surfaces" to be constructed by the performers and notated in a manner entirely unique to this composition. Every sound made by the performers is inseparable from a specific physical motion, and De Mey instructs the performers to create sounds/motions with such colourful names as "castanets," "the stone," "wind-shield wipers," and "the fan." This unique work of chamber music/choreography has become standard repertoire for percussion ensembles and other new music groups (Third Coast Percussion).