

Japan-USA: Musical Perspectives, Series I
~with Technology~

Featured Musicians:
Brian SACAWA, saxophone & Shiau-uen DING, piano

Friday, February 23rd, 2007 @7:30pm
Yamaha Piano Salon

PROGRAM

Kumiko OMURA: *La complication d'images++* (2002/07)
for tenor saxophone with recorded electronics & video (video: **Brian O'REILLY**)

Lyudmila GERMAN: *Dialogues* (2006) for piano and recorded electronics

Timothy POLASHEK: *A Few Moments Inside* (2005) for Yamaha Disklavier

Miyuki ITO: *Into the Forest of Stars ... (I)* (2005) for baritone saxophone with recorded electronics

intermission

Miyuki ITO (music)/ **Nate PAGEL** (video): *Tokyo Metro* (2005/06) for video and electronic sound

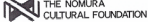
Lyudmila GERMAN: *Gone* (2007) for tenor saxophone and recorded electronics

Christopher BAILEY: *Balladei* (2005) for piano & recorded electronics

Brian SACAWA, saxophone

Shiau-uen DING, piano

1. *La complication d'images++* (2002/07) for Tenor Saxophone and electronic sounds and video
Kumiko OMURA (music) / **Brian O'REILLY** (video)

Several sonic images — the images that vary in their characters — emerge, fade away, or get accumulated as the piece progresses. They create chaotic textures and then evolve into a new dimensional state toward the end of the piece. Underlying the process above is my longing to grasp something that goes beyond our perception of images. In a way, it is a challenge to the impossible and praying for the eternal. The version with the electronic sounds and video (2006-7) was created with Brian O'Reilly at the studio in ZKM, Germany and financially supported by the Nomura Cultural Foundation in Japan. 

Brian O'Reilly is the creator of various works for sound, moving images, multi media assemblage/installation, and is a double bassist, focusing on the integration of electronics and extended playing techniques. After a year of research at Xenakis' studio, Les Ateliers UPIC in Paris (now CCMIX), he received an appointment to become the studio's Musical Assistant. He completed his graduate degree from MAT (Media Arts and Technology) at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Current projects include the DVD & performance of "Point Line Cloud", a collection of his visual mappings for the music of Curits Roads, a commission from ZKM, to create a series of video works and live performances collaborating with the Viola player Garth Knox.

2. *Dialogues* (2006-2007) for piano and recorded electronics by **Lyudmila GERMAN**

Dialogues (2006-07) for piano and electronic sounds was originally written for Yamaha Disklavier and Max/MSP. In the first version the solo part, performed on the Disklavier, triggered the electronic sounds from the computer, controlled by Max/MSP. Originally a triple dialogue between various 'voices' in the solo piano part, the pianist and the instrument, and the instrument and the computer, for this performance recorded sounds overtake the computer part, thus reducing the dialogue to two layers.

3. *A Few Moments Inside* (2005) for Yamaha Disklavier by **Timothy POLASHEK**

A Few Moments Inside (2005) is a composition for a digitally controlled modern player piano, the Yamaha Disklavier Grand Piano. It is a humble homage to Conlon Nancarrow's music and his wonderful collection of studies for player piano, which has greatly influenced both my acoustic and electro-acoustic compositions. This composition exploits the Disklavier's robotic playback systems to perform music with a wide dynamic range and complex rhythms that a pianist would be unable to execute due the physical limitations of the human body. A computer following a MIDI sequence of the score of this composition controls the Disklavier. This music is for piano, yet is not limited to pianistic gestures. My specific artistic motivation for this composition was to musically explore the contrast of pianistic gestures with "mechanical" non-pianistic gestures. *A Few Moments Inside* is available from Albany Records on *Timothy Polashek: Wood and Wire*.

4. *Into the Forest of Stars... (I)* (2005) for baritone saxophone with recorded electronics by **Miyuki ITO**

Text: (from *Manyô-syû*, originally in Japanese, ca. 8 C.)

Both English and Japanese versions used in the electronic and instrumental parts.

On the sea of heaven	Ame no Umi ni
the waves of clouds rise,	Kumo no Namitachi
and I can see	Tsuki no Fune
the moon ship disappearing	Hoshi no Hayashi ni
as it is rowed into the forest of stars	kogikakuru miyu

This piece is dedicated to saxophonist Taimur Sullivan. For the electronic part I recorded samples of saxophone sound and voices reading the poem both in Japanese and in English. I am grateful to Taimur for letting me record many interesting sounds produced by his baritone and bass saxophones, which inspired me to create this piece. Searching for subtle timbres, I have recently become interested in using phonemes in my instrumental pieces. I started composing

this piece at Djerassi Artist Residency, California, in 2005. The magnificent sky and views of nature there were also an inspiration to me. I had also used this text in the soprano solo piece titled *Into the Forest of Stars...(II)*, dedicated to Akie Amou.

3. *Tokyo Metro* (2005/06) for video and electronic sound

Miyuki ITO (music) / **Nate PAGEL** (video)

Tokyo Metro is a collaboration work with media artist, Nate Pagel. *Tokyo Metro* is the third part in Pagel's video installation series called *Mass Transit*, which focuses on metro systems around the world. The video and the sounds were shot and recorded in Tokyo subway in October of 2005. Musical part of the video is an electro-acoustic work, for which the subway sounds recorded in Tokyo serve as an original material. In this piece I was structurally conscious of silence—a concept related to Japanese “Ma”. Since 2006 *Tokyo Metro* has been presented at Urbis Artium Gallery in San Francisco, Nagoya City Minato Playhouse (Japan), San Francisco MOMA, and San Francisco Japanese Consulate.

Nate Pagel is a media artist who collaborates with choreographers, composers, programmers and designers to create theatrical performances, installations and works for DVD and the screen. An accomplished designer, writer, teacher and entrepreneur, Pagel has also collaborated on a number of commercial projects that have won him over 60 industry design awards. Pagel has been showing his work in galleries, museums and on stages internationally for over ten years in 15 countries

6. *Gone* (2007) for tenor saxophone and recorded electronics by **Lyudmila GERMAN**

Gone was written in 2006-07 for this performance and is dedicated to the memory of my aunt, whose sudden death in 2006 left a deep scar in our family. Letters from her name (G, A, B-b) become melodic pillars of the slow sections, and also appear in the sounds of bells in the electronic part. Obsessive repetition, fast passages, slow, lullaby-like melodic sections reflect a wide emotional palette that accompanied the creation of this piece.

7. *Balladei* (2005) for piano & recorded electronics by **Christopher BAILEY**

In *Balladei*, 2 virtual ensembles that complement the piano contribute to a (perhaps) quasi-medieval sound: the first, featuring sad recorders, bell-like sounds, and piercing viols; the other, made up of honking crumhorns, some kind of log drum, and lutes. They are tuned in 17 Equal Temperament and 29 Equal Temperament, respectively, which means that at times they mesh well with the piano, and at other times deliciously sour combinations result. Skin drums, woodblocks, cymbals, tam-tams and gongs contribute to a bizarre ritual-like atmosphere.

Balladei will often seem completely abstract, shifting mood and manner rapidly and continuously; on the other hand, a ballad is a story, and occasionally, the music lingers for a moment on a narratively suggestive meter, texture, or mood. For example, one might hear the solo piano opening (after the initial explosion) as a kind of pastorello. The first extended solo of the electronic sounds (featuring the recorders and viols) might be heard as a kind of drunken dream sequence. Clear triple meter occasionally breaks in to suggest dances---a formal Elizabethan thing about 1/4 through the work, and later in the piece, a crazy rapid jig. About 3/4 through the piece, another episode of drunken intoxication occurs, as our pianist bangs and shapes clusters played off against muddy clouds of tones in the electronics, perhaps suggesting that the drunken hero of the story mouthed off to someone s/he shouldn't have. This scene gives way to an odd kind of religious enlightenment: he honky crumhorns become chanting monks in the low register.

Throughout the work, the pianist is not so much in the role of traditional virtuosic soloist towering above the orchestra" of electronic sounds (though the part is difficult and requires intense concentration and attention to detail); but rather, the soloist is like a (sometimes petulant) child, cradled by the electronic sounds constantly surrounding her, sometimes responding to them, other times leading them to new places, or bursting free of them.

Christopher BAILEY

Born outside of Philadelphia, PA, Christopher Bailey turned to music composition in his late 'teens, and to electroacoustic composition during his studies at the Eastman School of Music, and later at Columbia University. Recent performances of his music occurred in Memphis, TN, Bowling Green, OH Munich, Germany, and in Seoul, Korea, where he was a 2nd-Prize recipient in the International Composers Competition. Other awards include prizes from BMI and ASCAP, and the Bearns Prize. His interactive composition SAND is now available on the web at <http://music.columbia.edu/~chris/sand>. For other stuff, including mp3's, software, and fun, informative and interactive paraphernalia, see <http://music.columbia.edu/~chris>. Mr. Bailey is currently Visiting Professor of Music at the College of William and Mary in Virginia.

Lyudmila GERMAN

Born in the Ukraine, Lyudmila German moved to New York in 1993, where she earned degrees from Brooklyn College and the Manhattan School of Music (studying with Ursula Mamlok and Nils Vigeland). Lyudmila is a recipient of Miriam Gideon Scholarship from Brooklyn College, Meet the Composer Grant, Ivar Mikhaschoff Grant for New Music, and Cantate Chamber Singers award.

Past and recent performances include a solo concert of chamber music—Manhattan School of Music, NY (2001); *A Thaw in the Forest*—a commission from *TimeTable* Percussion ensemble—Washington Square Church, NY (2001); *Lux Aeterna* for male vocal ensemble—by vocal group COSMOS—in Latvia (2004); four chamber works premiered at Yamaha Studio, NYC, (2006); *Pound Ridge, NY* (for electronics)—at The New School's *Sonic Channels* concert (2006); *A Clear Midnight* for mixed choir a capella—by Pharos Project—St. Bartholomew Church (2006); *Lux Aeterna* for mixed choir a capella—by C4 (2007).

Ms. German published three theoretical articles on symphonies of Dmitri Shostakovich and miscellaneous translations at DSCJ Journal. She was one of the speakers at UK Shostakovich Society Conference, dedicated to the centenary of the composer's birth, which took place in September of 2006.

Miyuki ITO

A native of Nagoya, Japan, Miyuki Ito earned degrees from Aichi Prefectural University of Fine Arts and Music (Japan), the Manhattan School of Music, and Columbia University, studying with Naoyuki Terai, Pierre Charvet, Philippe Leroux, and Tristan Murail. She pursued research at IRCAM (Paris) with an artist grant from Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan. Her works have been performed in the festivals all over the world such as Centre Acanthes 1999/2000 (France), the ISCM World Music Days 2002 (Hong Kong), Résonances 2002 (Ircam, Paris), ICMC 2004 (Miami), and Spark Festival 2005 (Minneapolis). She had received commissions by Harmonia Opera Company (New York), Tokyo Opera City (Japan), Taketoyo Concert Hall (Japan), Music From Japan (New York). Her recent collaborations include world-famous and prominent musicians such as Akie Amou, Takashi Harada, Camilla Hoitenga, Garth Knox, Tosiya Suzuki, and others. Recent awards include Nagoya Cultural Promotion Agency Prize 2005 (Japan) and Japan Symphony Foundation Prize 2005 (Japan). Ms. Ito has been a fellow at 2005 Djerassi Artist Residency in California with Oshita Fellowship. Ms. Ito currently teaches at the Aichi Prefectural University of Fine Arts and Music and the Nagoya University of Arts in Japan. She and Kumiko Omura are co-founders of *NymphéArt*, which organizes contemporary music concerts in Japan, inviting famous musicians from around the world. Ms. Ito's "*Fading Memories*" (2000) for marimba was recorded on CD AUCD-1: "My Favorite Things" by Mayumi Sekizawa.

Kumiko OMURA

After her studies at the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music, Ms. Omura studied composition with Nicolaus A. Huber and electronic music with Ludger Brümmer at the Folkwang-Hochschule in Essen, Germany, and participated in the annual composition course at IRCAM, Paris. Ms. Omura won the Irino Prize, the grand prix at the Gaudeamus Music Week in Holland, the second prize at the Hannover Biennale in Germany, the young artist prize at the Nordrhein-Westfalen in Germany, and Takefu composition prize. Her works have been performed in Europe, Korea and Japan at such festivals as the *Wittener Tage für neue Kammermusik* and *Musica Viva* in Germany, Festival Agora and Centre Acanthes in France, and International Computer Music Conference. <http://www13.plala.or.jp/kumiom/>

Timothy POLASHEK composes the world of nonsensical speech sounds into music, as well as pitch and timbre manipulations of other sounds in his electro-acoustic works. He applies computers and music technologies to create compositions for a variety of ensembles and media, including vocal, instrumental, text/sound, and interactive performance works. Tim is a music professor and director of the Electronic Music Center at Lehman College in New York City. He earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in composition from Columbia University. Recordings of his compositions can be heard on Timothy Polashek: Wood and Wire, released by Albany Records in 2006, and on the Electric Music Collective's albums *Incandescence* (2003) and *Defiant* (2004).

About Performers

Shiau-uen DING, piano

A native of Taiwan, pianist Shiau-uen Ding is a rising presence on the new and electro-acoustic music scenes. She is the founding director of NeXT Ens, an ensemble dedicated to commissioning and performing music for ensemble and electronics, as well as an original and energetic performer of standard solo and chamber repertoire. As a soloist, her virtuosic and sensitive interpretations have won standing ovations, including for performances of Liszt's *Après une Lecture de Dante* - Fantasia quasi Sonata at CCM, Tsontakis's *Ghost Variations* at Music06 Festival, and a solo recital of music for piano and electronics at Spark Festival. She has collaborated with numerous internationally renowned performers and composers, including Michael Kugel, George Tsontakis, and Moritz Eggert, who recently dedicated to her his *Hämmerklavier XIX: Hymnen der Welt (Afghanistan bis Zimbabwe)*. In addition, several new compositions have been written for her by well-known composers, including Mara Helmuth, Christopher Bailey, Burton Beerman, and Naxos artist Gao Ping. She has recorded for Capstone Records.

Brian SACAWA, saxophone

Praised by The New York Times as "an inventive musician," "fresh and surprising," and "vividly lyrical," saxophonist Brian Sacawa has firmly established himself as an important contemporary voice for his instrument. Named the Baltimore Citypaper's "Critic's Choice" for classical music in 2002, he is the saxophonist on the Grammy winning album *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. Mr. Sacawa has premiered over 50 new works for saxophone by both established and emerging composers, including Philip Glass, Michael Gordon, Jo Kondo, Ken Ueno, and Hillary Zipper. He is the co-founder of the new music duos Non-Zero with percussionist Timothy Feeney and Hybrid Groove Project with turntablist DJ Dubble8. Mr. Sacawa holds degrees from the University of Michigan, the Peabody Conservatory, and the University of Massachusetts. He currently resides in Baltimore, where he serves on the faculty of the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

About Our Group, *JUMP*

We wish to express our gratitude to Yamaha for allowing us to use their beautiful space, Yamaha Salon in New York, for the opening concert of our series.

We also want to thank all of you for coming.

JUMP (Japan-USA: Musical Perspectives) is a composers' collective, created for the purpose of organizing a series of contemporary music concerts both in USA and in Japan. We are planning to present experimental works, collaborating with active contemporary artists and musicians. In our first two concerts, we have focused on the works using computers and technology. We are also thinking of cultural exchange through music and arts between Japan and in the USA in the future.

Searching for "beauty" in my music is an endless subject for me as a composer. What is "beauty"? "Beauty" should be very personal. For me it does not mean 'external beauty', but includes ugly, fearful, sad, and crazy things that live inside of us. I believe that internal beauty, and not only the outward appearance, attracts people. A work strongly appealing to our souls is the real stuff of art music. I very much hope that you have experienced this kind of beauty through our works. It is very important for composers to have a feedback from the audience. Please, feel free to write to us at the e-mail address provided below.

(Miyuki ITO, Founder)

~Next Concert~

JUMP, series II in JAPAN: Saturday, May 26th, 2007 at Yamaha Hall, Nagoya, Japan

(www.yamaha-tokai.jp/nagoya/)

PERFORMERS: Takashi SAITO; saxophone, and Mari ASAKAWA; piano

PROGRAM: Works by Lyudmila GERMAN, Miyuki ITO, Hiroya MIURA, Kumiko OMURA, and Timothy POLASHEK.

contact: japanusamp@yahoo.com

(please email us to receive information on future concerts)