

The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth

presents

Sounds Modern

performing

House Taken Over

Saturday, September 23, 2017, 2:00 pm

Modern Art Museum auditorium

Program

Beyond the Mysterious Silence (1996) Pauline Oliveros (1932-2016)
Approaches and Departures – Appearances and Disappearances

Punitive ghosts like steam-driven tennis courts James Harley (b. 1959)
from *Five Poems by Richard Brautigan* (1982)

A Tale from Old Town (2017) Pang Vongtaradon (b. 1974)

Elegy Ethan Wickman (b. 1973)
from *Ballads at the Borderland* (2016)

Ghost Dances Andrew May (b. 1968)

House Taken Over (2003) Jeffrey Stadelman (b. 1959)

Performers

Daphne Gerling, viola

Heidi Klein, soprano

Joseph Klein, conductor, percussion

Stephen Lucas, electronics

Kimberly Cole Luevano, clarinet

Colton Lytle, percussion

Andrew May (Assistant Director, Sounds Modern), violin, electronics

Elizabeth McNutt (Director, Sounds Modern), flute, alto flute

Kourtney Newton, cello

Éva Polgár, piano

Notes

Misty Keasler's *Haunt* series presents images of spaces "both beautiful and horrific ... where fantasies are magnified" (in the words of Andrea Karnes); they explore the desire to be terrified, as seen at the distance of a camera's lens. The works in this concert also project fear into beauty, through the lenses of voice and instruments; all take as their subjects ghosts, hauntings, and otherworldly experiences, with the possible exception of the opening work by the late Pauline Oliveros, which will serve as a ghostly prologue.

Pauline Oliveros, *Beyond the Mysterious Silence*

Creator of the practice of Deep Listening, Pauline Oliveros wrote music that invites performers to use sound and time as a vehicle for meditative exploration. In this work, she proposes arrivals to and departures from a single pitch or sound, constantly changing in style and manner each time they move toward and away from it. By presenting this work as you arrive in the Modern's auditorium, we invite you to enter into a haunted soundscape where new ideas are constantly coming and going, and ghosts of familiar music hover at the edge of perception.

James Harley, "Punitive ghosts like steam-driven tennis courts" from *Five Poems by Richard Brautigan*

Punitive ghosts like steam-driven tennis courts
Haunt the apples in my non-existent orchard.
I remember when there were just worms out there
And they danced in moonlit cores on warm September nights. –*Richard Brautigan*

Five Poems by Richard Brautigan was awarded a prize in 1983 from the Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects. The Brautigan poems were taken from the collection *Loading Mercury with a Pitchfork* (1971/76). Richard Brautigan (b. 1935) was an American writer primarily based in California, who died by suicide in 1984. (James Harley)

Pang Vongtaradon, *A Tale from the Old Town*

A Tale from the Old Town depicts a Thai classical folk tale. A man was drafted to serve for his country while his pregnant wife gave birth to his son. Both mother and child passed away during delivery and their spirits have been seen waiting for his return at the pier every evening. This composition represents loneliness, longing, anxiety and a true love between different dimensions. (Pang Vongtaradon)

Ethan Wickman, "Elegy" from *Ballads of the Borderland*

Those were the happiest days, when all we ate was rice and beans.
Those were the happiest days, when in the winter, after school, the windows steamed,
and there were homemade tortillas waiting for you.
The happiest days.
In those days, we called our house "dark shadow." Every night when I went to bed,
I slept with the covers over my head.
The creaking door, the white hand, see-through white; the milkman in the sandbox
with his long and vacant gaze, standing in the spirit, stone faced.
On the day that Michael died, he dressed in black. Michael, my brother,
fifteen years old, dressed in black.
They attacked him at the lake, defending his girlfriend.
On the day he died, we waited all night.
In the morning daddy left for the lake. "I'll go with you daddy."
We saw his wallet and his blood. The divers pulled him out. Dressed in black. Michael, my brother.
In life you do your best; a handshake is enough; your word is your word.

In life we go through trials and tribulations.

I would choose my life again. — *Elizabeth Leal (adapted by Ethan Wickman)*

This song comes from the cantata *Ballads of the Borderland*, which anthologizes a series of cultural perspectives of life set in the greater Texas borderland region. Through the stories, a curtain is pulled back and something deeper is disclosed. “Elegy” recounts experiences of San Antonio resident Elizabeth Leal. Leal recalls memories of spiritual encounters in her childhood home on the west side of San Antonio, as well as the tragic death of her brother, Michael, in a violent confrontation as he defended his girlfriend from would-be attackers. The movement arrives at a moment of tranquility, as Leal is resigned to accept her life’s experienced—and even express gratitude for lessons taught and learned. (Ethan Wickman)

Andrew May, *Ghost Dances*

Ghost Dances is a set of variations on *La Folia*, a popular theme of the Baroque used by many composers, notably the violinist Arcangelo Corelli. My variations are haunted by ancestral memories and missed opportunities: the violin’s origin in the Near East, and the music that might have arisen, had the cultures of Europe and the Arab world been more closely connected in the early 18th century. I conceived the piece as a highly ornamented improvisation for *rabab* based on an imaginary folk tradition, accompanied not by the Baroque *continuo* of harpsichord and bass but by the *darabukka*.

Jeffrey Stadelman, *House Taken Over*

House Taken Over takes up my solo flute piece from 2001, *Evans House*, and resituates it within an electroacoustic environment, using live computer processing and triggered soundfiles. *House Taken Over* expands the solo piece within a symmetrical five-part form. Its rather surrealistic qualities betray its source as a refraction of the meditative *Evans House* through the lens of a Julio Cortázar short story. Cortázar’s *House Taken Over* tells, in stunningly economical and resonant fashion, the story of the eviction by memories or ghosts—experienced in the story only as sounds—of an aging brother-sister couple from their enormous ancestral home. The piece runs in Max/MSP. Thanks to Elizabeth McNutt for requesting the piece years ago; and for supplying much raw material used in its construction, in the form of FluteSource, her compilation of flute samples. (Jeffrey Stadelman)

It was pleasant to take lunch and commune with the great silent, hollow house, and it was enough for us just to keep it clean. — *Julio Cortázar*

Sounds Modern

Flutist **Elizabeth McNutt** conceived the **Sounds Modern** series as an invitation for modern art lovers to enjoy the best innovative modern music. Sounds Modern explores the sonic dimensions of the ideas represented in the galleries, bringing the artwork to life in the concert hall. In addition to directing Sounds Modern, McNutt is director of the Nova new music ensemble at the University of North Texas, where she teaches in the flute and composition areas. Sounds Modern assistant director **Andrew May** is on the UNT composition faculty.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to the Center for Experimental Music at UNT for providing electronics support, and Tina Gorski and John Nuckels of the Modern for collaborating in bringing our sounds to the Modern. The next Sounds Modern event in Fort Worth will be on Saturday, December 16, at 2:00 pm. Keep up with the latest Sounds Modern News at www.soundsmodern.org and www.facebook.com/SoundsModern