

Resonant Nature

a Sounds Modern pop-up event

Sunday, May 12, 2024, 10:00 am
Pavilion #2, South Lakes Park, Denton

Program

In a Large Open Space (1994) by James Tenney (1934-2006)
Recyclers (2009) by Andrew May (b. 1968)

Musicians

Sarah Ruth Alexander, voice, harmonium, recorders and whistles
Stephen Lucas, recorders
Hunter Long, paetzold recorder
Anne Dearth Maker and Elizabeth McNutt, flutes
Jung Choi, oboe
Charlotte MacDonald, clarinet
Jessica Stearns, alto saxophone
Mia Detwiler and Andrew May, violin
Mike Capone, viola
Kourtney Newton and Colin Stokes, cello
Aaron Gonzalez, double bass
Miguel Espinel and Gregg Prickett, electric guitar
Bobby Fajardo, Patrick Overturf, and Christopher Teal, percussion

Program Notes

In a Large Open Space brings together the performance practice of Tenney's 1960's *Postal Piece* – whose scores are verbal instructions for gradually evolving textures of sound in an instrumental ensemble – with his later studies of the “harmonic fusion” of multiple partials in the spectrum of a single note – in this case the first 32 partials of a low F-natural. Like an Aeolian harp, or the resonance of a canyon in the wind, harmonics emerge and fade, sometimes fusing to create the auditory illusion of the low tone that gives rise to all the other notes.

Recyclers is an open-form performance piece based on sounds of a Northern Mockingbird recorded in 2008 by Nathan Pieplow in Big Bend National Park, Texas (used with kind permission of Nathan Pieplow and the Macaulay Library at Cornell University). Mockingbirds are among the world's most inspired recyclers of sound and memory; they learn to imitate an enormous repertoire of other birds' songs (among other sounds) and incorporate them into their song. Humans, too, imitate and recycle the sounds we hear into our own songs and stories; technologies for recording and manipulating sound have made us even more avid recyclers. In this piece, both species' brands of mimicry are heard. Wild bird songs combine with the music of human performers to create a hybrid landscape. *Recyclers* was written for the Nova Ensemble, directed by Elizabeth McNutt, in celebration of Earth Day 2009, for a first performance at the eARTH Festival at the University of North Texas; the six-channel version was premiered in the same year at the Fort Worth Museum of Modern Art.

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