

UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA
MCINTIRE DEPARTMENT of **music**

presents

DIGITALIS

A concert of experimental work for sound and visual media created by
undergraduate and graduate students in
Composition & Computer Technologies.

Thursday, May 13, 2021

8:00 pm

Virtual Concert

Program

<i>Rachel's Home for Imaginary Friends Bao</i>	Rachel Gibson
<i>Computer Therapy</i>	Matias Vilaplana
<i>with(out)in</i>	Becky Brown, Daniel Fishkin, Rachel Gibson, Heather Mease, Matias Vilaplana
<i>Patience is a Virtue</i>	Mattias Zuffoletti
<i>Memory Lane</i>	Samuel Gerardi
<i>Wind Chimes</i>	Keyboard Skills Collaborative Composition
<i>And you still won't find it, even after you stopped looking</i>	Becky Brown
<i>Distortion Contortion</i>	Avantika Mehra
<i>A Sea We Must Wade</i>	Drew Buckley
<i>empadronarse digressions</i>	_oegf
<i>Delta.</i>	James Good
<i>Fall Project</i>	Andrew Harrington
<i>Duet for Tape and Voice</i>	Heather Mease
<i>Black Window</i>	Chris O'Neill
<i>OPRPQR</i>	Alex Christie

Program Notes

Rachel's Home for Imaginary Friends || *Bao*

Rachel's Home for Imaginary Friends || *Bao* explores creating and sewing a plush character [named Bao] as a means for sound-making, storytelling, and world-building. It incorporates e-textiles, soft circuitry, and sound, in combination with themes focusing on self-care and relaxation. The work also seeks to draw parallels between “Kawaii,” or cuteness aesthetics, and how these particular visual aesthetics influence what sounds Bao makes.

The story: Bao (big pink plush) is new in town, and she is feeling sad because she doesn't have any friends. The performer and audience (over Zoom chat) must interact with Bao in order to cheer her up!

Rachel Gibson is a percussionist and music technologist from Tower City, Pennsylvania. She is currently attending the University of Virginia to pursue a Ph.D. in Music Composition and Computer Technologies. She earned her Bachelor of Music degree at Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Percussion Performance and Technology in Music and Related Arts (TIMARA).

Computer Therapy is a web based performance structured as a psychotherapy diagnosis session carried out by an AI.

with(out)in A collaborative project by Becky Brown, Daniel Fishkin, Rachel Gibson, Heather Mease, and Matias Vilaplana.

Patience is a Virtue

Mattias Zuffoletti is 3rd year enrolled at the University of Virginia and currently working to further his studies in music composition and economics as well as other interests. Mattias composes neo-classical, singer-songwriter, electro acoustic-based compositions, most often stemming from improvisational works for the piano. *Patience is a Virtue* is a live electronic experience composed in MAX designed to synthesize the true art of customer service experience. A new

medium of exploration into the art of a music that so often falls victim to the circumstance of its performance. “

Memory Lane is a composition which focuses on capturing the peaks and valleys of my childhood. Many of the formative years of my life were spent moving from country to country around the world, with sudden goodbyes to new friends becoming commonplace as the years went by. The memories I have for this period of my life are bittersweet, and I believed it would be a compelling challenge to try and capture the sense of nostalgia I feel when I look back at those years. Though currently unfinished, the piece presents a contrast between the time I spent in America before moving away and my return to America after years of overseas living. This is done through the use of prerecorded and newly recorded samples, which comprise the entirety of the first part and second part of the piece presented today, respectively.

Samuel Gerardi is a second year undergraduate student at the University of Virginia's College of Arts and Sciences. He is a Biology/Music double major and a Miller Arts Scholar. Sam is a singer and plays several instruments, including viola, guitar, piano, and harmonica.

Wind Chimes is a collaborative composition written and performed by the two sections of the Keyboard Skills (Beginning) class during the spring of 2021, online. After each section collectively decided on a tempo and key signature, each performer composed five brief melodic fragments ~5 seconds long, recorded them, and distributed them freely over a 3-minute span. The result is a spontaneous and asymmetric connection between the performers' melodic material. While wind chimes are activated by the random occurrence of wind, the connections between fragments result from the random temporal decisions of the performers. Movement 1. Ante Meridiem, composed by the first section, was recorded with a click track and a C# pentatonic scale. Movement 2. Post Meridiem, composed by the second section, did not use a set tempo, and used a combination of F major and A phrygian scales. All keyboard recordings were re-synthesized with varying degrees of processing.

Performers:

Movement 1: Cassie Lipton, Claire McCall, William Mcdaniel, Tilden Puckett, Lili Saunders, Navashree Sing, Anna Woodward

Movement 2: Dean Barton, Marisa Dinko, Quyen Huynh, Ben Larsen,

Rachel Maxwell, Bridget Northey, Sai Raj, Ja'Mel Reed, Joanna Zhao
Direction/Electronics/Mix: Christopher Luna-Mega

And you still won't find it, even after you stopped looking

There's always another, every time. One more, and one more, and one more, and you're still back at the beginning, after all that about how going was going and leaving was leaving. "Let alone what can't," you'd say, if only the back and back and back again meant you'd really, truly spun to the other and elsewhere.

Becky Brown is a composer, harpist, artist, and web designer, interested in producing intensely personal works across the multimedia spectrum. She focuses on narrative, emotional exposure, and catharsis, with a vested interest in using technology and the voice to deeply connect with an audience, wherever they are. She is currently pursuing graduate studies in Composition and Computer Technologies at the University of Virginia.

Distortion Contortion

This piece represents an acoustic progression through the COVID-19 lockdown – from mindless bovine contentment to the unnatural, uncharacteristic quiet; from empty streets and vacant offices, a descent into paranoia and anxiety, spiraling into chaotic madness; this piece uses a series of sound clips to project the pandemic experience.

Avantika Mehra is a Cognitive Science major from Mumbai, India, studying the ethical implications of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence. She has previously performed with a MICE group at the Inauguration Installation Ceremony for President Jim Ryan at UVA, and was a member of the Melhi Mehta Music Foundation choir group in Mumbai.

A Sea We Must Wade

"The loss we must carry, a sea we must wade."

Amanda Gorman recited these words during her powerful poem during the inauguration of President Biden, which inspired millions of youths in a call to better society. This piece, for virtual synthesizers and Max electronics, is centered around the granular synthesis of Gorman reading the aforementioned line. The computer granulation algorithm randomly plays a segment of the text until it happens to play the first word

of the line off, etc. Next the random generator plays out a sequence, if the algorithm restarts. If by chance the random generator plays the text in its order of speech, the algorithm will shut the piece off. Statistically this is possible, but it could take a very long time! This is an abbreviated presentation, however, so as to highlight the sounds and processes without running forever. The composition seeks to both amplify Gorman's call for action, while at the same time exploring a world in which calls for change frequently get drowned out by political monotony and bureaucracy- yet, the good seemingly always wades its way through the tumultuous seas of nonsense.

Drew Buckley is a multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, and composer from Richmond, Virginia. He is currently a fourth-year student at the University of Virginia majoring in Environmental Science (B.S.) and Music (B.A.). During his time at UVA, he has performed in jazz combos as an alto saxophonist, in the Flying Virginians acapella group, and in the Mobile Interactive Computer Ensemble (MICE). As a relatively new composer, most of his compositions have centered around abstract and occasionally absurd concepts, and he enjoys exploring color and timbre within his music.

empadronarse | digressions

I learnt to ride my bike pretty late. But even later on, with one of my best friends, we used to ride around the city -guadalaxia- just for fun. Now i realized that my hometown was/is super dangerous for riding a bike. But i realize about that because, when i ride my bike here, i've noticed that you can ride without hands and even with closed eyes. The topography of this city -cville- is urbanized in such a way that even a blond... sorry, a "blind donkey could run through it without any problem" (as the ars-antiqua ensemble 2 Minutos says).

The point is that, when a bus or a car came by our side, my friend used to yell at me, something like: "align yourself to the right, align to the right, perro!" (which, EN INGLÉS, it would be translated as: "please, for the holy love of the virgin mary, address your bike all the way to the right, so you don't get hit by a bus!"). But the universal-transcendental part here is that we used to make laugh at that phrase by entertaining several variations of it, so it started to shift towards a more sarcastic direction: "Alling your body to the right! Affiliate to the rightwing, JOIN THE ARMY", so that, at the end, the phrase we were using to communicate danger in general, ended up in something like: "EMPADRÓNATE,

EMPADRÓNATE!!!” which literally means: “register/enroll yourself on the electoral federal institute® so you can vote”.

It was 1995 or something, we didn't used to vote but, certainly, we used to “quote” the military primer ID in order to get access to clandestine dens of vice in mejico... (as if they really asked for it).

_oegf

Human as an artist, inventor, magician, curator, teacher. After having deserted from two composition universities in mejico, he specializes in Sonology (Koninklijk Conservatorium - Holland) and holds a Master's Degree in Contemporary Art as auditor (Aguascalientes). His work is inserted into reality by transducing it and sometimes attempts to function as a refraction of white supremacy. His energies oscillate across fields of knowledge and sometimes enjoys collaborative work. Creator of Punto Ciego International Festival and artist of the infamous Guggenheim Aguascalientes, is mostly a self-taught visual artist although he holds an M.A. at Wesleyan and currently struggles towards a Ph. D at the self-evident UVA.

Delta. Consider a single element: a point in time. Our linear perspective of music associates time with two dimensional distance. The point becomes a line: a thought, idea, or passage. This line develops with time, and as it evolves, new branches diverge and swirl around, like the arms of a river. Furthermore, delta is defined mathematically as change. In this piece, the concept of change over time, or delta over delta t, is explored musically. Using very few notes but a variety of evolving and blending electronic and acoustic instruments, Delta brings light to the way music changes over time, delta m.

Delta is an acousmatic piece focusing on reverberative elements and the relationship between acoustic and electronic instruments. Systems of atmospheric soundscapes demonstrate the different ways that wind, string, and percussive instruments coincide with synthesized harmonics. The organizational form of the piece consists of methods of integrating electronic and acoustic instruments. Musical and electronic techniques such as multiband compression, unanimous effects, a consistent writing style, and an emphasis on pure tones to focus on the overtones of both acoustic and electronic reverberation, combine the two parties of instruments into a single formal system.

James Good is a first year undergraduate student at the University of

Virginia. He is pursuing a double major in music, with a concentration in piano performance, and astrophysics. A vocalist and a pianist, he has been creating music both electronically and for acoustic instruments for the latter half of his life. James is excited to have completed his first electro-acoustic work *Delta*, and hopes to continue to produce and compose as he furthers his musical education.

Fall Project

This piece is an instrumental piece composed during my last semester at The University of Virginia, December of 2020. It incorporates many instrumental elements and skills I have learned during my time at the school. I recorded each instrument into Ableton Live 10 where I processed all of the audio, composed the piece, mixed each track, and mastered the mix. It incorporates many ambient sounds, both natural and artificial, like the sounds of waves and the echoing sounds of guitar strings. The piece builds from a mellow half time to an energetic breakbeat before falling to the initial melody again.

Andrew Harrington recently graduated from the University of Virginia with a degree in computer science in December '20. He plays acoustic guitar, electric guitar, piano, synth, drums, percussion, bass, vocals, violin, viola, and many other instruments. He also produces most of with Ableton Live 10, and works on creating music technology and develop music software.

Duet for Tape and Voice

Made with two crappy tape recorders (one a Panasonic microcassette recorder from the 80's and the other a contemporary POS). The voice sings in counterpoint with and on the tape. I guess it's actually a trio, but whatever.

Heather Mease composes music and spends a lot of time listening to cassettes bought off craigslist. Heather does not like Hank Williams Jr., please don't give me any more of his tapes thanks.

Black Window is a fixed-media reflection on how mass media functions as a sort of window - just like a true window, it lets us see what's going on elsewhere and what we see in it influences our mental and emotional state. Unlike a real window, what we see may not pertain to our immediate situation, and it's easy to lose yourself in it and become consumed with worries you may have no ability to address. The piece's

sections feature news broadcasts from the first year of the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic as a refrain throughout the piece, interspersed with materials recorded in the home or prior to the pandemic to represent noises of the immediate surroundings as well as synthesized materials to represent an unspecified self's mental processes in response to circumstances and surroundings.

Christopher O'Neill is a fourth-year biology and music major in the College of Arts and Sciences. He plays viola in the UVA Viola Ensemble and Radio Music Society as well as percussion in the Cavalier Marching Band, and his studies with Dr. Leah Reid in the McIntire Department of Music have focused on the composition of acousmatic and electro-acoustic music. He also works in a research lab in the UVA School of Medicine under the guidance of Dr. Rahul Sharma and plans to work for two years as a postbaccalaureate IRTA fellow at the National Institutes of Health following graduation.

OPRPQR

Over the course of the past year I have composed dozens of musical fragments that will never evolve into fully fledged compositions (which is fine). I like many of these fragments, but forcing them to develop into longer pieces would undermine their individual characters. I like their characters. These various fragments are scattered between folders on my computer, external hard drives, google drives, dropbox, drum machines, zoom recorders, cassette tapes, etc. I have placed two of these fragments into the same space. I like both of these fragments. The form of this composition is their simple coexistence. They are a two-part sequence pulled from a constellation of seemingly incomplete thoughts.

Alex Christie is a composer, improviser, and intermedia artist who just wants you to be happy.

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