

CeReNeM VISITING ARTIST SERIES

Sarah Saviet

Monday 4 March, 2019

CeReNeM

PROGRAMME

Chikako **Morishita** : Etude III (2019)

for solo violin
world premiere

Pam **Hulme** : S_a__/_y/_ (2019)

for solo violin
world premiere

Andrew Leslie **Hooker** : 13 Impressions of Two Severed Heads

for amplified violin & magnetic tape
world premiere

INTERVAL

Liza **Lim** : The Su Song Star Map (2019)

for solo violin

Sam **Gillies** : There's fire where we're going (2019)

for violin and electronics
world premiere

Lawrence **Dunn** : Habitual (2017)

for solo violin



Chikako **Morishita** : Etude III (2019)

for solo violin

étude

1 : a piece of music for the practice of a point of technique

2 : a composition built on a technical motive but played for its artistic value

Etude III is the study of change and unchange. Written for Sarah Saviet as the beginning of our long-awaited collaboration project.

Pam **Hulme** : S_a__/_y/_ (2019)

for solo violin

"I've decided. To tie up my brain." - "Why?" - "Because it's not disintegrating."

The end-phase of neurological degeneration or 'tying up my brain', as my mum put it, is terrifying, unpredictable, harrowing, fascinating.

S_a__/_y/_ explores traces of shared cultural memory, specifically those which emerged in the final week of my Mum's life. As we sat together with her, the melismatic speech patterns of my family's regional accent enabled communication long after words, and then word-fragments had gone. Towards the end it seemed as if she sang along to the chorus of an unexpected song from her youth; implausible, perhaps, if not for this auditory mirage happening twice. What was she trying to say? Something? Nothing? Was she trying to express the meaning of the lyrics to this famous song, in itself a shared cultural memory? Or was she simply remembering the melody and singing along to it in her fragmented, mumbling way? It was impossible to know; soon there would be nothing more to say.

In the dark times
Will there also be singing?
Yes, there will also be singing.
About the dark times.*

Woven through S_a__/_y/_ are melodic fragments and rhythmic gestures inherent in the lilting Wirral accent, plus feint echoes of two songs which were part of that week's aural tapestry, including the song she "sang". Structurally, the music follows a stream of consciousness where lyrical passages of joyful, fantastical remembering become tinged with and then interrupted by emotions which are triggered by remembering the reality of the situation; at first sadness, then frustration. The sense of Self, of Gaynor Hulme's inner voice, is strongly present throughout the piece until intermittence gives way to incoherence and, finally, acquiescence. When the opening melody returns in the coda it is as an echo, a memory of the remembering which we shared.

Sarah Saviet is an American violinist who lives in Germany. She is a member of the Riot Ensemble (London) and is director of the concert series Sequence in Berlin. She performs frequently with Ensemble Modern, Ensemble Musikfabrik, hand werk, Ensemble Resonanz, and others.

Sarah appears regularly at festivals including Acht Brücken, Donaueschinger Musiktage, HCMF, Gaudeamus Muziekweek, and Ultraschall Berlin. She was recently a resident artist in the composition department of the University of the Arts Berlin, a visiting artist at Harvard University with ELISION ensemble, and has held artist residencies at Aldeburgh Music with composers Lawrence Dunn and Jack Sheen, and artist Rowland Hill. www.sarah-saviet.com

* Bertolt Brecht, 'Motto', (Svendborg Poems, 1939)

Andrew Leslie Hooker : 13 Impressions of Two Severed Heads (2019)
for amplified violin & magnetic tape



Fig. 1. Atrocity Image Score #1, 2019

The first season has come
a season like one never seen
everything pales with separation
the separation of flesh and bone
internal organs hanging out of the body
from separation to rotting
from rotting to digestion
where did that scream go
only hairs and nails grow without relation to personality
the world has completely changed
the skin is so weak it flakes at the slightest touch
even the insides of the organs are fully dried flaking collapsing
the heart is a pale bloodstained carriage inside a stone
the nerves in the forehead broken snap
birds fly out of the mouth

Fig. 2. Atrocity Text Score #1, 2019

flap flap flap flap flap flap
falling leaves inside the head
wind through the teeth
a slug sliding over the eyeballs
an insect crawling on the lips
the measure between heaven and earth
ripened fruit
that rich smell
radiating heat
fever
the stench of mould
an old gone-off smell stinging the nose
flowers waltz and exhale
that's rebellion
that's genocide
the punishment of a great god

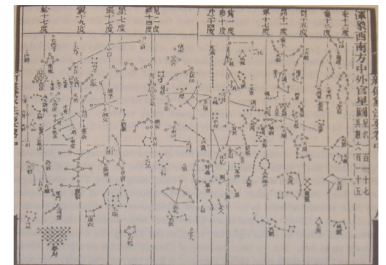
The one clear moral conundrum that I keep returning to in my work, above all others, is the dilemma of how mankind assimilates extremities of modern violence, be it social, political, ecological, economic et cetera. How do we humans arrange the overwhelming feelings of compassion and guilt that are (or indeed, should be) provoked by such acts in order to postpone sliding into states of complete mental ruin? How do we process and cope with such profoundly disturbing emotions and continue to live our daily lives? And moreover, how do 21st century artists, confronted with art's long slide into irrelevance, continue to make moral work that truthfully reflects, elucidates and yet somehow still transforms the countless horrors of the post-human era into a restorative experience?

Liza Lim : The Su Song Star Map (2019)

for solo violin

This is a star map for the celestial globe of Su Song (1020-1101), a Chinese scientist and mechanical engineer of the Song Dynasty (960-1279). It was first published in the year 1092, in Su's book known as the *Xin Yi Xiang Fa Yao* (Wade-Giles: Hsin Yi Hsiang Fa Yao). On this star map there are 14 xiu (lunar mansions) on Mercator's projection. The equator is represented by the horizontal straight line running through the star chart, while the ecliptic curves above it.

Su Song's star maps had the hour circles between the xiu (lunar mansions) forming the astronomical meridians, with stars marked in quasi-orthomorphic cylindrical projection on each side of the equator, and thus was in accordance to their north polar distances. Not until the work of Gerard Mercator in 1569 was a celestial map of this projection created in the Western world (Needham, Volume 4, Part 3, 569).



Sam Gillies : There's fire where we're going (2019)

for violin and electronics

"The fire is bound to come". Through the warm, soft hiss, little had been heard for some time. While small fluctuations of signal occasionally gave rise to voice-like sounds, more often than not they just as quickly flickered back out of existence before taking shape. Not so now. "The fire is bound to come. Choose what you are to be." The voice, faint, buried behind static still emanating an unmistakable strength. "Because the one thing you cannot say is: 'I will do without fire.'" The static lurches, peaks and drops to its previous lull. "You are already in the furnace" the voice continues "where fire is bound to come. You are bound to be there even more, because under no circumstances can you do without fire." The last few words struggle above the static, barely audible, before falling back into the gentle wash of sound, subsumed, covered and lost.

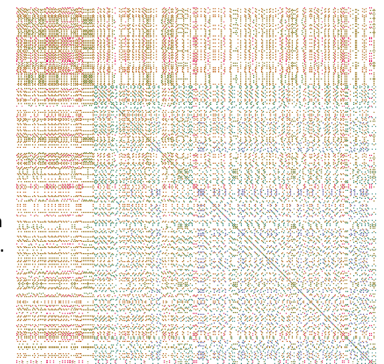
Lawrence Dunn : Habitual (2017)

for solo violin

Circulating music, weaving, as if confined to habit. Habit as self-similarity and self-resemblance, accretion and self-reinforcement. But also, habit as personal character: the accumulation of that which is self-consciously known and reflected. The piece has echoes of change bellringing—where each individual pattern is uniquely named, but all are infinitely circulating and self-similar.

The piece's gradual accretion is coupled to an accelerating proliferation of detail. There is a certain 'tension' or 'torsion' to this proliferation: things are joined together as if knitted or woven. In this sense the piece relates to, in Anni Albers' terming, 'event of the thread', the particularity of physical tension of accumulated warp and weft that is encountered when weaving. The weaver's 'following' of this thread, planning its path but also allowing its path to be invented as it is threaded.

The image to the right is a self-similarity diagram of the piece. Each pitch is given a unique colour, which is graphed diagonally from top left to bottom right. Each pitch is then reflected across the diagram, allowing for repeated streams of pitches to be visualised. The first section of the piece uses only five or six unique pitches; and as more pitches are introduced, the diagram becomes more chaotic and colourful.



UPCOMING CeReNeM EVENTS

Monday 25 March
Thursday 28 March

Monday 29 April

Diego Castro Magas: Guitar
New Music for New Instruments
Christopher Redgate | Philip Thomas

ELISION Ensemble



Book your tickets via www.hud.ac.uk/performance

