



THE AMPLIFIED ORGAN

Music with Electro-Acoustic Sounds

Guest Artist: Gary Verkade

Sunday, February 17, 2008

2:30p.m. Organ Hall

Organ Recital Series

MUSIC

 **Herberger College**
of the Arts

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Program

Disembodied Organics
(2004/5)

Jan Ferm
(1963)

Sunday Organ Piece for Church
From: Onceatoods
(2004)

Larry Polansky
(1954)

Ennoia 1
(1998)

David Dunn
(1953)

Three Organic Pieces
(2003/4)

Yehuda Yannay
(1937)

Organic Farming
Organic Compound
Organic Transplant

Breath
(2007)

Jan Ferm

Gary Verkade is an influential and sought after interpreter of New Music throughout Europe and the United States. An organist, composer, and co-founder of the Essen, Germany-based improvisation ensemble SYNTHIESE, he has been a leader in bringing forth serious new music for the organ, commissioning new works and working in a collaborative capacity with several well-known composers. He has a particular interest in performing music for organ and electronics. Verkade's own compositions range among music for organ, electronics, chamber and improvisation ensembles. As a player of improvised music, he has worked together with dancers, photographers and painters, on projects, which bring the arts together in a complementary and fructuous manner. He has published essays and articles on a variety of subjects relating to organ performance, Early Music performance practice, and composition.

Dr. Verkade has been on the faculty of the Musikhögskolan i Piteå, Sweden since 2000. He has recorded with the Innova, Mode, Penumbra, Kamprad and Mitra labels, most recently *Winded*, an album of works for organ and electronics, and Luciano Berio's *Fa-Si* on Berio: *The Complete Sequenzas, Alternate Sequenzas & Works for Solo Instruments*, a collection of performances by the premier contemporary interpreters of new music which won the German Record Critics' Award for 2007.

Program Notes- In concert order

The Swedish translation of the word disembodied is: sounds coming from a person one cannot see. The process used in composing this piece is also something that the audience cannot see. I had many starting points in the making of this piece--the first prints made as a score, improvisation sessions in my garage, dinners, strange relationships with people, relationships with strange people, good relationships with other people, love and non-love. The word organics to me refers both to the relationship between the organ and organist and the relationship between the tape part and the live organ part, but most to the relationship between Gary and me as colleagues and friends. Without that relationship this piece would never have been written. All of these factors went into the composition of this piece, which, for me, is a new definition of the concept disembodied: sounds are coming from someone who cannot be heard, i.e. the composer. It is the tape one hears, and the organ. On the other hand, it is indeed my own voice, which is being heard, albeit disembodied.

Jan Ferm

The *onceatoods* are a set of very short pieces using a simple melody algorithm written in Java/JMSL. Each piece uses slightly different software, settings, and ideas. Each is written or dedicated to different person or persons. *Sunday organ piece for church* is written for my hosts in Launceston, Tasmania, Hans and Trudy Meijer. Hans is an organ builder. When I showed him a rough draft of an organ right-hand piece, he said, "Maybe I can play it in church next Sunday."

Larry Polansky

The composition consists of a live pipe organ part and 2 channels of prerecorded electronic sounds on compact disc. The performance score places the graphic notation for the organ in the middle of the page with two different visual depictions of the electronic sounds. These graphic notations constitute a set of macro significations for various types of activity and not a literal one to one set of actions. In general the organ is to match levels with the electronic sounds such that an overall blend is achieved. The effect should be of a constantly evolving/fluctuating wall of sound. The graphics are the result of spectral drawings that were the generative source for all of the electronic sounds. In this sense there is an inherent relationship between the drawings and the harmonic content of the electronics that the organ should reinforce.

David Dunn

"Three Organic Pieces" is my first composition for organ. It is composed of three movements, the first entitled "Organic Farming." Its inspiration came in the summer of 2003, while roaming my city of birth in Romania (Timisoara) where urban landscape co-exists with chicken coops in front and backyards. The second piece, "Organic Compound," has a modular structure based on note repetitions representing numerical proportions found between carbon and hydrogen atoms that make up simple compounds. In the middle of writing this movement the composer fell seriously ill. After his recovery in spring of 2004 he completed the work, ending with "Organ Transplant," which is a slightly enhanced transcription of an earlier choral piece of his entitled "Le Tombeau de Satie" (1979). The German Romantic poet Novalis wrote: "Every sickness is a musical problem, and every cure a musical solution." Sometimes life imitates art.

Yehuda Yannay

Jan Ferm's Breath breathes purified air. It does not do more than that: breathe, for at this time in the musical world, after all that has happened in the 20th century, there is nothing left but to breathe, to get one's bearings, take stock of the situation, inhale and exhale slowly, deliberately, remind oneself that one is still alive, consider whether or not there is path down which one wants to travel, and then decide if one is even able to move yet.

Gary Verkade

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