An Immanent Future? Music Beyond Past and Present
A Music and Philosophy Symposium

Programme:

9:50 Welcome – Professor Peter Hutchings, Dean, School of Humanities and Communication Arts (UWS)

10:00 "Chaotic Mappings: On the ground with music"
Judy Lochhead (Stony Brook, NY)

11:00 Morning tea break

11:30 "Meeting the Composer Halfway: Which Anne Boyd?"
Sally Macarthur (UWS)

12:15 "Music and the Intertextualities of Listening, Performing and Teaching"
Professor Jenny Shaw (UNE)

1:00 Lunch break

1:45 “Play it Again, Masami. On the Vexed Question of Noise and Music (reprise and variation)"
Associate Professor Greg Hainge (UQ)

2:45 Afternoon break

3:00 "Restructuring Schaeffer's Sonic Objects"
Ian Steverson (UWS)

3:45 "Ethical encounters with determined others: ethnographic process and Holocaust survivor musical testimony"
Doctor Joseph Toltz (Usyd)
Chaotic Mappings: on the ground with music

Abstract: In his book on the painter Francis Bacon, Gilles Deleuze develops the notion that art is a mode of thinking the world, establishing it as distinct from the other two modes of philosophy and science. While philosophy thinks the world through the creation of concepts and science through the creation of functions, artistic thinking entails the creation of sensations. Although Deleuze claims that his work in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* is “philosophy, nothing but philosophy,” he devotes considerable descriptive attention to the colours, lines, figures, textures, and gestures of several specific paintings. These descriptive accounts eventually serve to demonstrate what for Deleuze is the “logic of sensation” operating in Bacon’s paintings and in artistic works generally. But they also serve another function—as a type of art criticism.

My paper develops the idea that Deleuze engages Bacon’s paintings as a type of art criticism whose primary aim is not judgment but rather an account of art as sensation. His descriptive accounts of the paintings in terms of their material existence constitute what I call a chaotic mapping—a mapping of the paintings that explores and takes account of their chaotic potential. Here, however, I focus on music and utilize descriptive accounts that combine words and graphics to map musical sounds as artistic sensations. I consider briefly excerpts from two recent musical works: *Prê*s for cello and electronics by Kaija Saariaho and String Quartet #3, *Gaia*, by Stacy Garrop. The chaotic mappings of these works demonstrate and exemplify a kind of detailed descriptive account of musical sound that takes a perspective from “on the ground.” Such on the ground mappings of musical sound serve to intensify apprehension of these works of musical art and hence to serve as a type of music criticism.

Sally Macarthur, University of Western Sydney
Meeting the Composer Halfway: Which Anne Boyd?

Abstract: The concept of ‘identity’ is central to how we think and write about music. The dominant model of the composer-identity is based in representational thought, defined in narrow, deterministic terms. In this model, the composer-figure is constructed as an uncreated creator, floating free of its social and institutional relations. It perpetually replicates itself as a stable, static, masculine entity, understood as inseparable from the musical work, and it competes for recognition out of its heroic independence and radical autonomy. The purpose of this paper is to challenge the habitual recourse to the image of the composer as individualistic and autonomous, and to its privileging of an anthropocentric view of music and the world. Focusing on the Australian composer, Anne Boyd, I will draw on two concepts – the ‘event’ and ‘line of flight’ – from the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari to consider some alternative ways to think and write about the composer. What is at stake? On the one hand, the classificatory system enables the creation of identity that, in its uniqueness, is easily recognised. On the other hand, the recognition of an identity constructed on the basis of a given category is limiting. A familiar trope for Anne Boyd, for example, is that she is an Australian woman composer whose music represents the Australian landscape and is characterised by a South East Asian aesthetic. Her identity and her music are locked into a concept of negative difference. In this paper, I will open up possibilities for understanding Boyd as connected to life, ongoing and emergent in a relational field where non-human forces are equally important in constituting the composer’s becomings.

Bio: Dr Sally Macarthur teaches musicology at the University of Western Sydney and specialises in twentieth and twenty-first century art music, and women’s music. An important strand of her work exemplified in her recent book, Towards a Twenty-First-Century Feminist Politics of Music (Ashgate, 2010), draws on the work of Deleuze and Guattari to open up new ways of thinking about the absence of women’s music. Other books include Feminist Aesthetics in Music (Greenwood Press, 2002), with co-editors Bruce Crossman and Ronaldo Morelos, Intercultural Music: Creation and Interpretation (AMC, 2006) and with co-editor Cate Poynton, Musics and Feminisms (AMC, 1999). She is published in a number of scholarly journals such as Radical Musicology, Cultural Studies Review, and Musicology Australia. Further details about Sally Macarthur are available on her website: www.sallymacarthur.com.
Jennie Shaw, University of New England
Music and the Intertextualities of Listening, Performing and Teaching

Abstract: Music often goes hand in hand with other artistic media: opera, film, computer games by way of example. Yet the complex technical language of art music restricts its practitioners and audiences to those who possess that technical knowledge. In the increasing number of undergraduate music programs that take students via traditional means (the classical music audition/essay) as well as via less conventional ones (e.g., the contemporary band recording or music appreciation class) that divide is both critical and defining.

This paper will examine ways in which recent contributions to post-structural philosophy, and, in particular, to writings on and about intertextual practices, may help to bridge that divide in the way we share knowledge with our students and guide them in their listening to and performing of music. I argue that our understanding of intertextuality, with its roots in the writings of Kristeva and Barthes, has, through the intervention of literary and cultural scholars such as Culler, Fiske and Riffaterre, as well as through the culture of the Worldwide Web, shifted; intertextual readings of musical texts can now comfortably encompass processes of reading and interpretation. But where does this leave the concept of authorship? If our focus has shifted from the ‘great men’ of music to multifaceted, mediated interpretations of musical texts and their audiences, why does the academy persist in teaching music and musical works along canonical lines? My discussion will draw on established texts and more contentious ‘threshold’ works to examine the shifting cultural and interpretative contexts of this problem.

Bio: Professor Jennie Shaw is Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the University of New England. She completed undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in music and law at the University of Sydney and Stony Brook University, New York. She has worked as an alternative dispute facilitator and adjudicator and has taught law at Flinders University, as well as musicology at universities in the United States and Australia. Her research focuses on the Second Viennese School and musical modernism, music copyright and the intertextualities of composing and performance. Recent publications include The Cambridge Companion to Schoenberg (August 2010), co-edited with Professor Joseph Auner. Jennie also teaches oboe and plays oboe and cor anglais in The Armidale Symphony Orchestra.
Abstract: In this paper, I will begin by suggesting why common sense definitions of noise and especially noise as it relates to music are problematic. I will suggest that in spite of the many contradictory and subjective meanings and definitions given to noise in many different fields and disciplines, it is possible to find some consistency across these definitions and to talk of the ontology of noise. This involves figuring noise as the nature or essence of the relation that is imimical to all expression when everything is conceived of as an expression, when ontology is relational, in other words.

In the second part of the paper, I will turn my attention to the question of noise and music that has travailed many scholars over an extremely long period of time. I will suggest that in figuring noise in the manner proposed in the first part of this paper, we are able to formulate some different ontological propositions about noise itself. Examining some of the most common assumptions made about the ontology of music, I suggest that the limits of certain ontological assertions made about music can by tested through application to the extreme limit case of very "noisy" works. Thus, through an analysis of Merzbow, I propose a new ontological taxonomy of music that is related to the ontological definition of music provided by Deleuze and Guattari yet which rejects outright the privilege that they accord to the refrain.

Bio: Associate Professor Greg Hainge is Reader in French in the School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Queensland. He is also the Immediate Past President of the Australian Society for French Studies, an Associate Editor and the Australasian Officer for Studies in French Cinema, and he serves on the editorial boards of Culture, Theory and Critique, Contemporary French Civilization, Études Céliniennes, Corps: Revue Interdisciplinaire and the editorial advisory board of Altitude. Hainge has published a monograph on Céline which interfaces the later works of this most infamous of French authors with the poststructuralist philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, and he has also published numerous book chapters on many different topics in film studies, cultural studies, literary studies, new media studies, experimental music, Critical Theory, and popular music. He is currently preparing a monograph on noise which will be published with Continuum. Further details including ordering details are available as folows: http://www.continuumbooks.com/books/detail.aspx?BookId=164807&SntUrl=153651&SubjectId=1381&Subject2Id=1712
Ian Stevenson, University of Western Sydney
Restructuring Schaeffer’s Sonic Objects

Abstract: This paper reassesses the structurally determined model of everyday listening and its corollary reduced listening proposed by French composer-theorist Pierre Schaeffer (1966). By examining the consequences of the acousmatic revelation, the paper seeks to uncover the genetic processes implied by the new modes of listening that are produced and the resulting dynamic and multistable ontology of sound. Rather than essentialising the Deleuzian virtual, the Deleuzian reading of structuralism (1972/2004) is used as a guide to exploring the basic symbolic elements and differential relations that comprise each structural series and through which Schaeffer’s concepts of sound and listening are articulated.

Having established the series of ordinary and specialist listening, Schaeffer is able, by introducing the new symbolic term ‘reduced listening’ to produce the new dimension of listening to sound as pure event. Rather than establishing ‘reduced listening’ and its correlated sound object as some sort of utopian virtual or purely differential mode of listening, it is perhaps more useful to consider all these aspects of sound as immanent to the field of sonic percepts.

Despite Schaeffer’s abstracting and systematising tendency which apparently congeals the deterritorialised percept within a typo-morphological system (Schaeffer, 1966, p. 389) of repetition and representation, the thesis of this paper rejects the notion that Schaeffer’s program for musical research provides merely the conditions of possibility that might determine a new music of the acousmatic. Rather, the paper proposes that by applying a Deleuzian reading of aspects of Schaeffer’s system, the genetic process which has energised seventy years of diverse musical activity (INA, 2004), and stands to produce musics as yet unheard, can be explored and exploited.

Bio: Ian Stevenson is coordinator of Sound Technologies in the School of Humanities and Communication Arts at the University of Western Sydney. He is currently studying for a PhD at the University of Sydney. His research interests are in sonic communication, new musical interfaces, and spatial audio. He has recently produced and engineered a number of CDs of contemporary chamber music for Australian label Wirripang, and completed a series of collaborative projects with choreographer/dancer Tess De Quincey and author/academic Jane Goodall. Prior to joining UWS in 2004 he held a variety of positions in product and information management for leading Australian technology companies such as Fairlight and DSP Media. He has worked as an artist, engineer, sound designer and production supervisor in galleries, theatre, live music, broadcast and post-production in Australia, Europe and the UK.
Joseph Toltz, University of Sydney and University of Western Sydney
Ethical encounters with determined others: ethnographic process and Holocaust survivor musical testimony

Abstract: The ethnographic study of music in ‘othered’ societies encountered significant challenges to its disciplinary premises at the same time that anthropology and history began to deal with concepts of self and other, power relations and post-colonial sensibilities. Representation itself was under critical examination, with the knowledge that representation of the other was no longer a neutral, viable practice in the light of new concerns. But what of encounters with multiplied other experiences? How can an ethnographic study take into account such multi-layered, multi-faceted situations? My twelve-year journey with just under 100 Holocaust survivors could be read as a multi-layered study of the position of othering. The project embodied a notion of musical testimony: survivors would re-explore personal narratives, searching for musical experiences that accompanied their experiences in camps, ghettos, in hiding or in partisan groups. With ethical sensitivity, my process aimed to bring out such experiences in order to explore the nature of survival and existence, encountered through the plane of memory and recall. The study aimed to transcend teleological notions of history and certainty by recording memories of musical experience, discussing the place of such memories in the lives of the survivor today. This paper will explore the theoretical model of musical testimony as a way of seeing music, an active, performative practice of the present, as a conduit to new ways of commemoration. Musical testimony allows for dynamic interaction with past memory, contributing to memory studies in a significant manner, and in a sense liberating the study of music in this context from the historical trajectory.

Bio: Dr Joseph Toltz completed his dissertation ‘Hidden Testimony: musical experience and memory in Jewish Holocaust survivors’ at the University of Sydney (2010), interviewing over 80 Holocaust survivors around the world. In 2011 he was the Barbara and Richard Rosenberg Fellow at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. He has presented at eight institutions and conferences in the past twelve months. Joseph has most recently published in Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History (Vol. 16:3). He has also written on the electronic group Kraftwerk (Continuum: London 2011); on the children’s opera Brundibár (Context, Vol. 27-28, 2008); and on the Jewish approach to illness (Spirited Practices, Allen & Unwin: Sydney, 2007). Joseph is an adjunct lecturer and tutor at the University of Sydney and University of Western Sydney.