

Northern Star

NIU's Electroacoustic School of Music host mixes in 60 seconds

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Jerene-Elise Nall | 0 comments

NIU's Electroacoustic School of Music will hold the 60x60 Crimson Mix concert tomorrow at 8 p.m. in the music building's Recital Hall. This concert will feature the music of some current NIU students and staff, as well as NIU alumni.

"I run a company called Vox Novus, and the mission of Vox Novus is to expose and promote contemporary new music," said Rob Voisey, creator of the 60x60 project. "Back in 2002, I had become heavily involved in some electronic music and some other contemporary music. I was looking for a way to present and promote this medium in a way that would be enjoyable for audiences.

"60x60 refers to a one-hour audio program, for starters, although it's become much more than that," said Robert Fleisher, Coordinator of Composition and Theory at NIU. "It's 60 electroacoustic compositions, either recorded, modified, filtered, sped up, slowed down, whatever. It could be natural sounds, synthesized sounds, whatever. These 60 pieces on any one of these mixes are in most cases by 60 different composers and not one of which exceeds 60 seconds."

"We're going to start with ten one-minute pieces by NIU students who are studying computer music," Fleisher said. "They were invited by Dr. Jim Phelps, who is my colleague that runs the computer music program, to create pieces for this concert in particular, and they were given the task to make them no longer than one minute. It's a 10x60. It's seven current students, one of which has two pieces, and then two alums that have pieces. We'll have a little break and then go into the 60x60."

"It's supposed to introduce newcomers and people who haven't had experience with electroacoustic music to this wide field," Voisey said. "60x60 is very eclectic. Anything and everything you can think of, we tried to throw into the batch. So if you're an audience member and there's a particular piece or aesthetic that you don't like, in 60 seconds, something new is going to come by."

Along with emphasizing the importance of exposure to new music, Voisey's 60x60 encourages community building.

"I would say that this is a directly community-related project," Voisey said. "The project is presented all over the world, so every little enclave that we attach to outside of [New York City] I've found are these little pockets of new music, some really great stuff, and really active communities all over the world. This project is a place for them to rally together and bring their music to the forefront. 60x60 in a lot of ways is really a grassroots project. In a lot of ways, the artists build up the project."

"I'm one of 60 composers that had a piece selected for this," Fleischer said of his personal involvement with the 60x60 project. "The nice thing about us is it not only connects us to Rob Voisey, it connects us to this whole network of composers."

Besides connecting the artists with one another, the 60x60 lets audience members connect with music that may be entirely new to them.

"Most people aren't even familiar with the genres," he said. If you go up to a few people in the street and ask them to go to a glitch music concert, they're probably not going to know what you're talking about. The drive of 60x60 is not only to be an introduction to these genres, but to do it in a positive light. I've found that a lot of people wouldn't normally listen to a noise concert or a glitch concert or an ambient concert, but with the 60x60, they're given the permission to not like the piece."

Voisey noted that audience members typically respond well, regardless of their initial reaction to a piece.

"Instead of people turning off for 60 seconds, they wind up listening more intently, because this isn't something they'd normally go to. They've got 60 seconds, what's the harm?" Voisey said.

While 60 seconds may not seem like a very long time, it is certainly enough time for a composer to make quite an impact.

"I noticed after I was a few minutes into it, I started thinking, 'My God, that's a lot of time!'," Fleisher said. "You start by thinking it's nothing, but some of these actually feel so expansive somehow. They make such an impact. They play such tricks with your perception of time."

While the 60x60 concert may be an entirely different experience, Fleicher promises to be well worth seeing.

"This isn't going to be your grandmother's concert," Fleicher said.



Microtonality in 60 seconds
- Brianna Wellen - PUBLISHED: 05-03-10

Most musicians use 12 standard tones and the familiar sound of the “Do, Re, Mi” scale as a guideline. But the 60 musicians involved in UnTwelve’s 60×60 mix have a different idea about music. For them, it is about exploring tones outside the musical norm—within 60 seconds.

Chicago-based microtonality group UnTwelve collaborated with New York-based Vox Novus to present the final installment of the Magical Musical Showcase series at the Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago Ave., on April 27. The groups created their own mix for the 60×60 project, an attempt to present 60-second pieces by 60 composers in 60 minutes.

“Part of the mission is to represent diverse composers from all walks of life,” said Robert Voisey, director of Vox Novus and 60×60 who also contributed a work to the UnTwelve mix.

The project in its entirety has featured the work of more than 2,000 composers from around the world on 30 different mixes. The newest mix featured composers from more than 10 different countries, and a great many local artists experimenting with microtonal sounds.

According to Aaron Krister Johnson, founder of UnTwelve, microtonality is a natural progression for contemporary musicians who are looking to explore something new. Much like the way painters often use colors outside of the rainbow, musicians follow their curiosity to explore tones outside of the standard scale.

“There’s a certain sense to the synchronicity to the universe that these ideas are ripe and, in a way, low-hanging fruit for people,” Johnson said. “You get bored with the same old, same old. The history of art always seems to be a quest for the new.”

For many of the composers involved, microtonality was not necessarily the foremost thought. Mark Eden’s piece, “Ma Minute,” featured nine separate Yo-Yo Ma tracks layered upon each other to fit into the 60-second time constraint. This created interesting tone combinations, displacing the standard scale. Tova Kardonne admitted her piece, “Undertow,” was accidentally microtonal. Using vocals to create layers of sound, she only tuned the first note to an actual instrument.

For the composers, a 60-second piece presented an exciting challenge. Often for them, the shorter pieces are more difficult and take longer to create—up to 90 hours of work for some.

“I kind of think of it like poetry,” Kardonne said. “When you prose, you can be a little more undisciplined, you can extend. But with the 60-second piece, you have to be really disciplined about what you want to say and really make sure that you only put the things in that are important to you to say.”

With more than 600 minute-long submissions for the mix, it was Johnson’s job to sort through and find the 60 that did say something. He looked, first and foremost, for good music, but then it became more complicated.

“You’re looking to create a dramatic tension throughout the hour so people don’t get bored,” Johnson said. “You’re creating maximal variety.”

While the 60×60 project will go on to explore other facets of their idea (60 dances by 60 choreographers in 60 minutes and 60 orchestral pieces in 60 minutes), Johnson and UnTwelve will continue presenting microtonal music to make it commonplace in Chicago.

“I’m hoping the general public can become a part of this too, not just the esoteric musician who knows what I’m talking about off the bat,” Johnson said. “I want to entice people, I want to seduce people in these sounds.”

Monday, November 23, 2009

Globalization At Its Finest

On Friday I saw the latest [60x60 Video \(2009/International Mix\)](#) at the [MainStreet Cinema](#) on the University of Cincinnati's campus. The 60x60 idea is something that I'm only somewhat familiar with (I did [A 60x60 competition](#) earlier this year, but it wasn't part of [THE 60x60 Project](#)).

My only gripe is that I found out about this viewing **ONLY** one week before the event, which means this wasn't highly publicized. However, I noticed that my friends [Hermes Camacho](#), [Danny Clay](#), and [Dennis Bathory-Kitsz](#) had their pieces performed. (Danny, get a website!)

What I liked most about this project was the mosaic of electro-acoustic pieces assembled with little bits of video art (by Patrick Liddell). I feel that electro-acoustic music needs some kind of visual (live or recorded) that accompanies the music, unless you have a [specific listening room](#).



Okay, maybe I was imagining something a little more darker, comfortable, and Québécois, but maybe McGill University had a different idea.

Anyway, I'm glad I went! I plan on attending more [60x60 events](#) in the future (if I can make them). And, maybe I'll contribute someday? The nearest deadline is December 31, but I have the wind piece (+parts) due then! Ack! If only I didn't have to...go..to..school...

POSTED BY JENNIFER JOLLEY AT 7:00 AM 0 COMMENTS

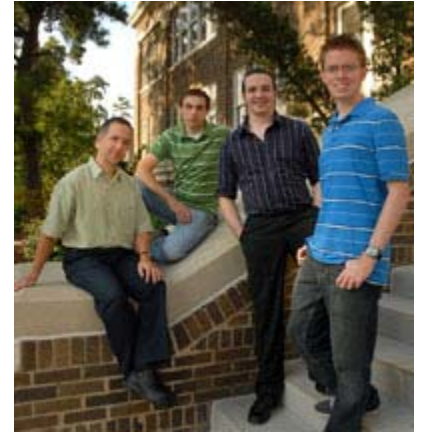


LABELS: [60X60](#), [DANNY CLAY](#), [DENNIS BATHORY-KITSZ](#), [GLOBALIZATION](#), [HERMES CAMACHO](#), [ICMC](#), [VIDEO](#)

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SFA Home / Public Affairs / News Releases / November 2008

SFA composers receive honors

Sylvia Bierschenk - November 4, 2008

NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS - "Steak-worthy" is what Dr. Stephen Lias calls the most recent honors bestowed upon three of his composition students.

"At the beginning of each year, I announce that a victory steak awaits anyone who writes a piece of music that gets published, is selected for a national or international conference, or wins any amount of money or prize, including honorable mention," Lias said. "Lately I've been buying lots of steaks!"

One of those steaks goes to Lufkin graduate student Garry Wickliffe. He received his second award from the Association of Composers, Authors and Publishers for the compositions he completed in the last year, including the trailer for "Innocent's Way," a feature-length film now in pre-production; an SFA student's film; and collaborative work on "Skipping Tomorrow," SFA's 2008 feature-length film.

Lias explained that it is unusual for a student to receive any award from ASCAP; the fact that Garry has now received two before earning his master's is quite rare.

When letters of notification came in from the international project "60x60," Wickliffe and Dallas sophomore Russell Cannon informed their professor that more steak dinners were due.

Both students had submitted a 60-second composition to be considered for inclusion on one of the seven hour-long mixes the panel of judges puts together from the 1,000 or so world-wide entries. The mixes are then recorded and distributed throughout the world to be presented in concert-type settings.

Wickliffe's "The Z Relationship" and Cannon's "Musical Mechanics" were both selected for the "Evolution Mix" and "Midwest Mix," and Cannon's will be included on the "International Mix."

Cannon and Lias are traveling to New York to see the "International Mix" presented at the World Financial Center's Winter Garden Friday, Nov. 14. Each of the 60 compositions on the mix has been choreographed by a different choreographer, and the 60 dances will be performed as the compositions are played.

Cannon said he was shocked but quite pleased with the response to "Musical Mechanics." "I feel like I've done something that people can enjoy."

A third member of the composition studio, Aden Ramsey, was notified a few months ago that one of his compositions is being considered for inclusion in the International Society for Contemporary Music 2009 "World Music Days" performances. Lias has already treated the Lufkin senior to a steak for making it this far in the competition. If Ramsey's piece is selected, Lias will owe yet another steak.

Another milestone for Ramsey occurred while he was serving--under Lias--as assistant music director for the 2008 Texas Shakespeare Festival. Kevin Otis, the director of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," asked the student to write eight songs for the play.

"Having to compose the songs so quickly was a real eye-opener about what it takes to be a good composer, but it was a great experience," Ramsey said.

Perhaps at one of these upcoming steak dinners someone will pick up the tab for Lias' dinner. He, too, was recently notified that he has won his 10th ASCAP award for the body of work he produced this past year."

I am keenly aware of the importance of teaching by example, and so I make it a point to regularly send new works to competitions and attend important events in my field," said Lias. "My hope is that by seeing their professor active in these ways, the students acquire a deeper commitment to developing habits that will ensure their future success."

SFA Associate Professor Stephen Lias (left) and three of his students have all recently been honored for musical compositions they have written within the past year. Pictured with Lias, from left, are Lufkin senior Aden K. Ramsey, Lufkin graduate student Garry Wickliffe and Dallas sophomore Russell Cannon.



60x60: Wellington welcomes New Music's fastest-ticking clock

New Zealand is counting down the seconds as it is set to host the annual 60x60 music event for the first time in the project's history. Organised by indispensable arts mag "White Fungus" and New York's Vox Novus (a collective of "composers, musicians and facilitators of contemporary music"), 60x60 will take place at Wellington's "Happy" venue on September 10th. At the heart of the performance will be a compilational composition, seamlessly integrating sixty different works by sixty different composers all taking sixty seconds or less – being played against the image of a giant analog clock with the assistance of Wellington artists. As much as it is a locally organised event, 60x60 also has a strong international focus, with similarly organised performances taking place all around the world. Furthermore, an integral CD version will accompany the live event, allowing for borderless dissemination of the work.

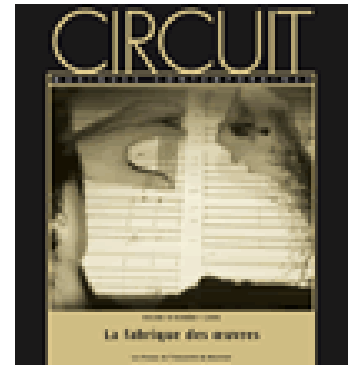
60x60 was initiated in 2003 and has since grown into one of the planet's most coveted contemporary music events. This year alone, the project received over 2500 submissions from a staggering 50 countries. Because the piece is stylistically diverse and eclectic by default, its success can be explained by the sheer wealth of different approaches on display and its capacity of organically integrating them underneath the roof of "New music".

It is important to note that there is not one definitive version of the piece, as different regional mixes cohabit with the all-encompassing international mix. The event in Wellington, for example, will premiere the Pacific-Rim mix and feature live contributions by Birdcatcher (Antony Milton and Bill Wood) as well as Harry Rama with Chris Barama (Jeff Henderson group).

The New Zealand rendition of 60x60 is set to start at 8pm.

By Tobias Fischer, published 2008-09-01

60 x 60: A Circle of Sound (2004)-A Slice of the Scene (2005)
Vox Novus, 2007, VN-001
[Réjean Beaucage](#)
Circuit
Volume 18 Number 1 (2008)



The art of miniature musical is more popular among contemporary composers, and recent examples in this area come mainly électroacousticiens of all trends. On thinking, for example, the British album "Three Minute Symphony - An International Compilation" (Xtract Records, 1984) where, in Quebec, "Ding Dong luxury" comprising parts of less than one minute (OHM / Avatar, 1995) and, of course, the "Electro clips" Footprints DIGITales, 1996 (also cited here by David Jaggard in its Vocalizacion Cristalina who deconstructs the Mambo the Braque Javier Alvarez published on the registration of Footprints DIGITales - this is not the only plunderphonic to be found here).

Both discs grouped under the title "60 x 60" returning in some way the concept of "Commercial Album" that was published in 1980, the enigmatic Californian quartet The Residents. Their disc included on each of its faces 20 pieces of one minute (their own Top 40), the avowed aim of musicians, who have never sought, or known, true success is to condense the effectiveness of short rengaines passing on the radio and the inventiveness of advertising (the entire album was also broadcast over the airwaves of a radio station in San Francisco during advertising breaks, the quartet who bought 40 blocks of one minute!). The album "60 x 60" therefore, on each of two discs, 60 pieces a minute (or less) by as many composers. The project was initiated by the New York composer Robert Voisey in an effort to provide access to the original music of today. The artistic director of the project proposes two compact discs provided for dissemination in concert for listening alone.

It is obviously not possible here around the 120 works offered, or even name composers, it would be presumptuous to say the least to judge their talent after a clip of a minute... However, The whole being greater than the sum of its parts, this is really the overall concept that holds the attention. The diversity of techniques used by composers could have deprived the whole of homogeneity that makes these parties put butt to form a whole, but it is precisely the heterogeneity of the 60 "movements" of both "Works" that infuses their dream if this character. You can also listen very well each disk mode random without affecting the quality at all. If it is not possible to judge the relevance of a composer on a single work of a minute (or even two works in some cases), these two discs will still serve as catalogue and prick the curiosity listeners who want to learn more about some of the creators gathered here.



Gone in 60 Minutes: Electronic Compositions Showcased at NC State University

by Alexandra Jones

October 1, 2007, Raleigh, NC: Ask the average citizen about the best way to hear new electronic music, and the answer (death is not an option) is likely to be something along the lines of "As quickly and painlessly as possible." The 60x60 series — concert-style listening events showcasing 60 contemporary electronic music compositions, each no longer than 60 seconds in duration, played in succession over one hour — just might change that. The tantalizing audio collage "60x60 (2007/International Mix)" appeared at North Carolina State University through the school's [Arts Now](#) series.

Composer and electronic music impresario Robert Voisey devised the 60x60 concept so large numbers of composers could bring their work to audiences in a portable, palatable, and decidedly unconventional format. Since the series' inception in 2003, [Vox Novus](#) — Voisey's organization dedicated to the promotion of contemporary composers and their work — has solicited 60x60 submissions by composers at all professional levels worldwide and presented its hour-long recordings at concerts in cities from Brooklyn to Bucharest. There have been regional compilations, like the Pacific Rim and Midwest series; collaborations with video artists; and 60x60 compilations released on CD.

This digitized, compartmentalized, sound-bite format is a tantalizing new way to experience widely varied and eclectic electronic music. And 60x60's longevity and international acclaim show that Vox Novus' innovative strategy to attract audiences and encourage composers has actually worked — something that other areas of Western classical haven't been able to accomplish on such a broad and populist scale.

Pieces included in 2007's "International Mix" packed as much nuance as any other worthwhile composition, but as listeners are meant to experience each over sixty seconds, broad strokes, verbal hooks, environmental clues, and unfamiliar sounds and textures stood out. I sketched brief impressions of what I heard as each minute's work unfolded.

Computer music composer and NCSU instructor Rodney Waschka II served as emcee, introducing the series' concept and posting numbers to help the audience match each piece to its title and program notes. His "Reminded of Dickens" (synth clicks, big swaths of tense, undulating dissonance) was also featured in the mix.



Some pieces, like Lithuanian Gintas Kraptavicius' "Godot in hurry" (synth-static hits in backbeat, static crackle, [crescendo]), began as sonic particles made by synthesizers or chopped up and scattered from a preexisting source, coalescing and building into apocalyptic waves or shrieking layers of feedback. Others began with found recordings of music, gradually devolving into choppy, broken record babble or churning distortion of the original material; Blas Payri's "Fluffy study with bel canto" (dizzy hits, choppy opera make rhythmic piece) distorted crackly, Victrola-style phrases of two different arias into a jerky, disorienting evil twin of the original.

Some pieces consisted of dismembered news clips, poetic recitations, or other found nonmusical sounds, like Sabrina Pena Young's "CYBERNATION" (robotified babbles - like Radiohead thing kinda - news clips?) or "what newspaper whispered to me this morning" (cut-up voice w/ whispers, static clicks, "I love you," etc.), which Taiwanese composer Meng-Chia Lin created by feeding a brief poem to her MacBook's text-reading software and manipulating the product. The source audio for Tim Reed's halting, grunting "He Changed Into His Brown Trousers" (human? voice clucking? tonal grinding metered noise, slam, muted sounds) featured, according to the program notes, "sounds which emanated from Russel Brown in the Spring of 2007." Still others were tongue-in-cheek but no less intriguing: Composer, painter, and poet Drake Mabry' used the sonic byproduct of the editing process — removing audience coughs from a live recording — to create "Public Concert" (coughs, sounds like air in big room, more coughs).

Two of the evening's most memorable pieces drew from politically charged text as source material. San Francisco composer Jesse Clark dismantled a sound clip of the title phrase "Go F*ck Yourself, Mr. Cheney" (...Cheney in Katrina news description clip...beeped in clip, cut to make melody/beat) to create a moment of catchy, politically charged electro-pop. Benjamin Boone used recitations of quotes by Jefferson, Madison, Washington, and Franklin on sixtieth-minute closer "Founding Fathers" (floaty osc[illation]).

Of course, not every piece boasted such intriguing sounds or unfurled as meticulously as some of the recording's highlights. And an in-person, communal listen-in of a 60x60 compilation is ideal — the anticipation and excitement is best experienced in person. But this concept, combined with the fascinating variety and breadth of its compositions, is well worth an hour alone at home with a pair of headphones.

SATURDAY,
MAY, 26,
2007

FLY GLOBAL MUSIC
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ROBERT VOISEY - TIME AND MOTION

“THINK OF IT AS THE FORD MANUFACTURER OF NEW MUSIC,” ROBERT VOISEY SAID OF HIS 60x60 ELECTRONIC MUSIC PROJECT, CASUALLY REVEALING HIS AMBITIOUS AND WELL-EXAMINED GOAL TO PRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE WHAT SOME MAY CONSIDER A RAREFIED AND OBSCURE MUSICAL FORM ON A GLOBAL SCALE

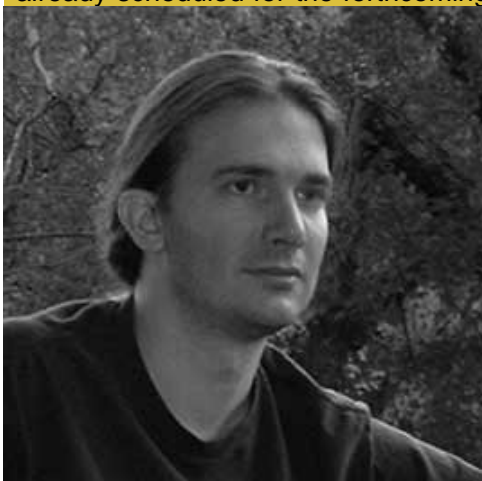


Bucking the market dominance of major music labels and the elitism of contemporary academic music circles with equal force, Voisey, a 37-year-old composer and impresario of new music, has created a project designed to promote the greatest number of composers to the largest audience possible.

It didn't take long for Voisey to pack his bags, halt his schooling, and fly to the rolling hills of Israel

The 60x60 project features 60 compositions by 60 different composers, each 60 seconds or less in duration, pieced together to form a one-hour continuous concert. Think 60 is not enough? Well, just to accommodate the overwhelming flow of musical submissions that daily crushes his tiny post office box in Radio City Station, Voisey has created “regional” concerts representing composers from a particular area. In addition to the International 60x60, this year he organized individual concerts for New York, Midwest, Pacific Rim and the UK, totaling 300 compositions from as many composers.

“My goal is to have a large amount of music reach a broad spectrum of people” said Voisey. With 35 concerts already scheduled for the forthcoming season in such diverse locales as London, Paris, Chicago, New York, Sydney, Los Angeles, Munich, Minneapolis, Bucharest and Istanbul, he seems to be accomplishing this goal.



Born 1969, Voisey came to composition from a non-traditional background. “I am not meant to be a composer,” he remarked about his upbringing. The son of two accountants, he received none of the formal training that classical and contemporary composers typically engage in from an early age. His mother, Helen Ging, and father, the late Richard Voisey, encouraged him to seek a more practical profession. His younger sister, Mary Voisey, works for the City of South Hampton.

As a student at Stony Brook University in Long Island, Voisey majored in computer science and showed talent as a programmer. But he soon began pursuing other interests, including studio art, engineering, mathematics and, of course, music. Although promising to provide a stable future, computer science did not satisfy him.

"I feel the work of contemporary composers, even the most successful and well-known, is greatly underexposed. This needs to change for society to grow and evolve,"

A surprising thing happened when Voisey's singing inspired him to take a music composition class for non-majors. He met Oded Zehavi, an Israeli composer who invited him to study at the College of Tel Hai, located in the Upper Galilee. It didn't take long for Voisey to pack his bags, halt his schooling, and fly to the rolling hills of Israel. Working on a kibbutz to cover expenses and writing music nearly full time, Voisey "finally found the passion I'd been missing all of my life."

Paradise doesn't last forever, but passion may. After two years of writing music in Israel, Voisey returned to Stony Brook, finished his Bachelor's, and moved to Manhattan. Relying on his computer programming skills to find jobs in the proliferating dot com industry of the late 1990s, he worked as many as 16 hours a day, putting in a full day at home and at work. Tackling such a difficult career path led him to rethink his approach: "in my struggling moments I realized that I needed to create a company."

The company was Vox Novus, and its mission was to promote contemporary composers and musicians. "I feel the work of contemporary composers, even the most successful and well-known, is greatly underexposed. This needs to change for society to grow and evolve," he explained. Vox Novus began in 2000 as a group of 5 friends, then expanded quickly to include more than 100 composers, who, by Voisey's current standards, may be considered "the inner circle." Counting the forthcoming concerts, the 60x60 project has included approximately 660 composers from more than 20 countries.

With the 60x60 project, Voisey discovered that he could accomplish his goals with greater facility, and on a larger scale. He has put his mathematical and engineering sensibilities to work and created a system to produce and disseminate contemporary music for a large audience. "What it's doing is taking our society and the models it's been given, and putting those into practice for new music," he said.

One of the major concerns expressed by critics of the project is that the brevity imposed on composers may compromise quality. Voisey seems unthreatened by such challenges, arguing that his simple and elegant format allows the composer full artistic expression while providing the audience with a specific expectation. Doug Cohen, a 60x60 composer and professor of music at Brooklyn College, remarked, "Not since John Cage's 'Indeterminacy' has the flow of time from one moment to the next been so significant."

—Anne Cammon

Saturday 26 May 2007

In Concert, 60 Times the Fun

By Sophia Yan

The thickly humid air in a darkened Fairchild Chapel was penetrated with a musically eclectic mix of murmurs, melodies and motifs, also visually realized with an ever-changing projection of computerized graphics. Last Saturday's concert, entitled 60 x 60, programmed an hour of new music, presenting 60 new works, each only 60 seconds long. The evening was characterized by the fusion of binaries, combining acoustic and electronic music, darkness and brightness and an infinite palette of colors.

Concert highlights included Xiting Yang's *My Visiting Card*, weaving spoken word in Mandarin Chinese between the musical layers; the disembodied voice claimed to be a university student, furthering the presence of the composition's jarring and disjointed fragments.

Andra McCartney's *Moving Water* evoked its bubbling namesake, and Visiting Instructor of Music Theory Ivan Elezovic's *I am actually not used to using a microphone* opened with the oceanic roar of applause, leveled with typical mic feedback foaming on top. The closing selection, David Fenech's *and die*, attempted to offer an appropriate conclusion to the hour of experimentally innovative music, but actually left the audience hanging, panting for just a little more.

A groovy animation was projected on a larger screen, mutating with the ebb and flow of the music. Bright colors transformed into rotund shapes and angular edges, sending glaring rays through the dim hall. To the right loomed a fluorescent analog clock, silently ticking through each second and each minute.

Since its inception in 2003, this annual project "has been an extreme success," according to Elezovic.

Masterminded by artistic director Robert Voisey, founder of Vox Novus, the 60 x 60 endeavor has received over 1500 submissions worldwide from more than 1000 artists. Based in New York City, Vox Novus aims to promote contemporary music and foster a receptive community in order to increase the popularity of new music with projects like this one.

Voisey described the venture as "a collage of music designed to be an artistic representation of the electronic music being created today."

Combining technological advances with tried-and-true acoustic music, 60 x 60 works to reach a broader audience, popularizing new music and living composers.

Voisey and Elezovic are currently working together to produce a two-CD album with selections from the past two years.

"It's a new challenge [for composers]," Elezovic said.



Ingenuity and madness?

MALCOLM MILLER investigates Robert Voisey's '60x60' project

'If you can fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run...' The idea of commissioning sixty pieces each a minute long has elements of both ingenuity combined with madness: can a creative artist have anything serious to say in just one minute? Can a listener gain anything in such a short time span?

The answer is yes if one may go by the individual contributions to *60x60*, a project in its third year, whereby composers are invited to submit minute long pieces in digital format with the prospect of being included in the hour long presentation -- concert -- CD. A minute can be ample time to express a whole gamut of imaginative sounds, or it can be a constraint which forces an artist to isolate what is the most important element of a work. The point of the project is that it enables an audience to take in and enjoy a cross section of different approaches to new music within a reasonable duration. And the purpose of Robert Voisey is to promote new music ...

Voisey's own input is compositional -- he organises the sixty works into a coherent and dramatic continuity and it is this which can enhance the individual works. In this *60x60 2005*, there are a range of approaches, some are purist electronic works, some use electronics and electro acoustics only minimally; some are atonal and postmodern, some are tonal, modal and jazzy, some clearly in the pop and film music genre. Of the electro acoustic works which make up the majority, several use sampling and play with the notion of the original acoustic instrument, whether a string instrument (violin, viola, double bass) or piano and marimba. Some of the pieces were clearly witty, some essays and experiments, some ambitious and some simple.

Voisey struck an arresting note from the start with two pieces that echo racing cars surging round a track. The first was created from samplings of viola note bending, the second was a more complex computerized sound generating programme. There followed three works exploring manipulated string sounds, one of which was clearly tonal.

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Malcolm Miller INGENUITY AND MADNESS?

As a contrast the next five pieces combined voice with transformations: one was a plangent ostinato, the next a witty exchange between students, the next a jazz riff farmyard polyphony and a pop piece. After a few minimalist pieces, which showed little change in a minute, the possibilities of the small scale were shown to great effect by Noah Creshevksy's witty and imaginative piece, *immediacy of effect*. The following pieces 16-20 were all engaging exercises in electronic sounds, distortions, metallic shimmers, bell sounds broken into noise and janglings.

More instrumental sampling ensued, appealing and stimulating -- piano music created out of one note that is transformed, a brilliant scenario for double basses. Of those pieces using minimal electronics was a jazz number for father and son; there was some ethnic cross-culturalism and a witty use of speech interrupted by regular phone rings, all of which had more to do with music theatre.

Several works had a more serious significance relating to memory and memorials: 32-33 38, 32 and 33 used Hebrew, the first piece with a cantor and a piano and bass accompaniment yet all filtered through electronic layers of sound; the second, *60 seconds in memory of 6 million*, blended layers of the Kaddish prayer; Robert Gluck's one-minute environmental soundscape of Prague (composed there on a recent visit) was eloquently paced with samples of cobbled streets, pacing through buildings and open air, a Czech conversation, to give a sense of 'being there'.

Jazz pop minutes by Alex Shapiro and others lightened the tone and made the hour pass with delight. Outstanding were two essays using piano and marimba as sources (46 and 48) while of the pure electronics, George Brunner (51) was immediately stimulating -- its varied palette of sounds. The last two pieces were overtly political, and as a witty ending, *Unwelcome* looped a soundbite from George Galloway's speech to the American Senate tribunal in an ironic, punchy miniature.

CDs and DVDs of the 60x60 project 2003-5 may be obtained by contacting Robert Voisey via the Vox Novus website, shown below.

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THE 60X60 PROJECT

Sound Sampler - Greg Haymes, February 9, 2006.

60x60 showcases a wealth of brief, contemporary compositions.

There are no live performances, so you can't really call it a concert. Maybe it would better be described as a listening party. Either way, "60x60," certainly does sound like the most innovative musical event on the Capital Region calendar this week.

Here's what it's all about. Vox Novus (check 'em out at <http://www.voxnovus.com>) posts a call for entries for composers from around the world. The limitations are simple -- all compositions must 60 seconds or less in length. The best 60 compositions are selected from those submitted, and then they're sequenced back-to-back, each one immediately following the prior piece.

So what you'll hear if you drop into the Performing Arts Center Recital Hall at the University at Albany at 8 tonight is just what you might guess from the title -- 60 compositions by 60 different composers and the whole event is only 60 minutes long.

It's like a Whitman's sampler of the contemporary new music scene.

Or as the Village Voice described it, "It's like channel surfing through experimental music."

Now in its third year, "60x60" received 450 submissions by more than 350 international composers. Among the 60 compositions selected is "One Prague Minute" by composer-musician Bob Gluck, an RPI graduate and associate professor of music at the University at Albany as well as associate director of the Electronic Music Foundation in Albany.

"One Prague Minute" is a soundscape Gluck created from sounds he recorded during a recent day of walking around Prague in the Czech Republic -- voices of people on the street, wheels rolling over cobblestones, television programming and city traffic. "Prague is a place where ancient and modern merge and collide," says Gluck. "It was those juxtapositions, collisions and gentle meetings that were of the greatest interest in creating this short work."

Although all 60 pieces will be presented as recordings, rather than live performances, the mini-music marathon in the Recital Hall will be accompanied by an expressive abstract video projection -- just in case you need something to watch while you're listening.

WRITERS' BLOCK

**With few opportunities and much competition,
young composers show creativity in just getting heard.**

By Chris Pasles, Times Staff Writer
July 22, 2007

...At 37, Robert Voisey may seem to fall outside the "young composer" category, but in fact he came to composing late, after first majoring in math and computer science at Stony Brook University in New York. There he met Israeli composer Oded Zehavi and, inspired to try his hand at music-making himself, followed Zehavi to Israel, where he studied with him for two years.

When he came back to New York in 1994, however, Voisey found few opportunities. "It was hard to get a piece played, hard to get musicians to look at it," he says. "There were no venues. There were and are very limited opportunities, no matter how you slice it."

Finally, frustrated by years of knocking on doors with no success, in 2000 Voisey set up a website, Vox Novus, to promote his and his friends' music.

"The idea was to create a community of composers, artists and musicians to work together to promote each other," he says. He started with five composers. "Now there are 120 and a few loose musicians I promote here and there."

Subsequently, in 2003, Voisey created the 60x60 Project, which every year showcases 60 composers, each contributing a 60-second piece. "I've had more than 1,000 composers submit to the project over the past five years," he says. "It's completely open to anybody. Spread the word. The more the merrier." ...



Arts Now! 60 X 60 2008

by Karen Moorman

September 11, 2008, Raleigh, NC: In 2003, [Robert Voisey](#) birthed a program promoting new music that spread like a friendly virus across the globe. This year's version, *60 X 60: The 2008 Evolution Mix (Part 1)* was presented by NC State University Director of Arts Now, Professor [Rodney Waschka II](#), in the Tally Student Center Ballroom. And thanks to Waschka's enthusiasm, the house was packed. Good news for contemporary music supporters and fans!

The *Mix*, comprised of 60 one-minute-or-less compositions, is created from contributions of 60 emerging and established composers. Carefully arranged by Voisey, they are polished and cut rubies and diamonds, neatly packaged on a recorded disc — miniatures, if you will. Like composers of the art song, the format challenges the maker to explore. And like the craftsmanship required of the short-story writer, these artists "make their case" concisely and precisely. Waschka refers to the program as "a box of chocolates." Indeed they are tasty morsels inviting us to sample more — and that is the point. But Waschka directs us to the more interesting phenomena saying, "I [the composer] control time..., and I can make it seem like a long time..., " but on the other hand, "it can seem like time whizzes by." I can testify to this. At the 30-minute mark, I noted that I was getting tired. Yet, the last 30 minutes passed by like a speeding train.

Such collaborations are not unprecedented. I'm reminded of John Cage's project with David Tudor called *Indeterminacy* (Folkways, 1992). On this recording, Cage recites stories, anecdotes, and excerpts from his lectures in one-minute intervals — slowly if they are short and quickly if they are longer. Tudor, who worked alone, recorded himself playing snippets of Cage's Concert for Piano and Orchestra (1957-58) with tracks from *Fontana Mix* (1958-59). And like the Cage-Cunningham music and dance productions, the *60 X 60 Mix* was paired with 60 independently-constructed choreographies. (They were performed in New York City last weekend at the Galapagos).

The evening's program included collages of voice and electronics (Doug Cohen's "Welcome"), some with recorded instruments; music influenced by the Middle East and Hindustani Ragas; and segues to other-worldly sounds from the cosmos. From everyday musical snapshots ("Bathtime" by Dorothy Hindman) to Laurie Spiegel's "multiscale sweeps," I felt like a stowaway in Kubrick's *Discover*, secretly traveling through the creative minds of the makers. Some were playful ("The Starling Clock Wound" by Charles Norman Mason); others were serious (Stan Link's "Endless Song"); some, political ("Animal Farm" by Serban Nichifor); and others, sentimental (Rodney Waschka's "Strange Moon"). From explorations of sine waves to jazz swing, I was totally and happily engaged in the music. Okay, I didn't love Bigg's "March of the Krumerhorns," but it did bring back memories of medieval music history. Space limitation prevents listing all 60 wonderful works. The interested reader can find a complete listing of the composers at [Arts Now](#).

The *Mix* ended with Allen Strange's exemplary, "Shadowboxer." A deeply loved and greatly missed member of the composers' community, it was a fitting close.

