

music we'd like to hear

SUMMER EXHIBITION - New works from British composers

St Mary at Hill, London EC3R 8EE

10th July 2015

Performed by Sarah Hughes, Dominic Lash, Amber Priestley, Paul Whitty, with John Lely and Tim Parkinson.

On and Off 2 was first performed at Kings' Place, London in 2008. It further explores the idea of the manmade (electronically produced harmony) and the random (radios stations and static) first encountered in *On and Off* (2007). Both *On and Offs* were designed to be performed with a minimum of preparation time and by both musicians and non-musicians. As a result, these works are quite pragmatic in their approach to music-making. The score is a scrolling multitrack waveform file on a computer which refers only to a very basic set of possibilities: when the player is to turn their device on and off and whether this is to be done abruptly or gradually.

JOANNA BAILIE

Dominic Lash

A Wilderness of Harmony was composed specifically for tonight's concert. The title for comes from book II of Shelley's *Queen Mab*. The piece - which includes a collection of chords to be played in at least two simultaneous sequences, alongside two either types of activity - is in no way based on the poem, but for those who might be interested the relevant lines are as follows:

Above, below, around,
The circling systems formed
A wilderness of harmony;
Each with undeviating aim,
In eloquent silence, through the depths of space
Pursued its wondrous way.

Shelley, *Queen Mab*, book II

STEPHEN CHASE *harmoniphon vexed* (2009) for melodicas
a reading(s) through of a reading through (of a reading through Satie)

“...a variable intensity of light, an internal balance of time, a movement within a given space” (Ernie Gehr, Filmmaker)

“My parents bou**g**Ht me a melodica for Christmas.
It's just **A** cheap Hohner Student 32 -
my dad said he o**R**dered it online
fro**M** Guitar Center.
It's a blast t**O** play!
it's somewhat out of tu**N**e, particularly the bottom F.
It might be just the way I'm
Playing, but I'm not sure.
The second thing is that the keybed is very uneven.
It d**O**esn't really affect it's playability, but it's a bit odd
Are these **N**ormal things to expect from a cheap student model?”
“...generic, inexpensi**V**e instruments and music equipment around my parts,
I have to say, I'm always quit**E** satisfied with their products - I swear by their keyboard and mic
stands, much less e**X**pensive, and sturdier,
than th**E** horribly more expensive QuikLok alternatives
that I have, that are **D**efinitely out to kill me.”



SARAH HUGHES *Collapsed Points For Living In* is written as a response to the work of British painter and printmaker, Basil Beattie. Focusing on Beattie's *Janus Series*, Hughes interprets the work as a series of cues for thinking about gesture, symbolism, duration, cinematic devices, and language. Through direct engagement with the paintings, reference to critical discussion and conversation with the artist, *Collapsed Points For Living In* looks at the artwork as a form of composition subject to temporality. The score is part of a series of works by Hughes that deliberate the practice and potential of composition across various media.

PAUL WHITTY - This is what happens when nothing happens [2015]

There are many things in place Saint-Sulpice; for instance: a district council building, a financial building, a police station, three cafés, one of which sells tobaccco and stamps, a movie theatre, a church on which Le Vau, Gittard, Oppenord, Servandon and Chalgrin have all worked, and which is dedicated to a chaplain of Clotaire II, who was Bishop of Bourges from 624 to 644 and whom we celebrate on 17 January, a publisher, a funeral parlour, a travel agency, a bust stop, a tailor, a hotel, a fountain decorated with the statues of four great Christian orators (Bousset, Fénelon, Fléchier, and Massillon), a newsstand, a seller of pious objects, a parking lot, a beauty parlour, and many other things as well.

A great number, if not the majority, of these things have been described, inventoried, photographed, talked about, or registered. My intention in the pages that follow was to describe the rest instead: that which is generally not taken note of, that which is not noticed, that which has no importance: what happens when nothing happens other than the weather, people, cars, and clouds.

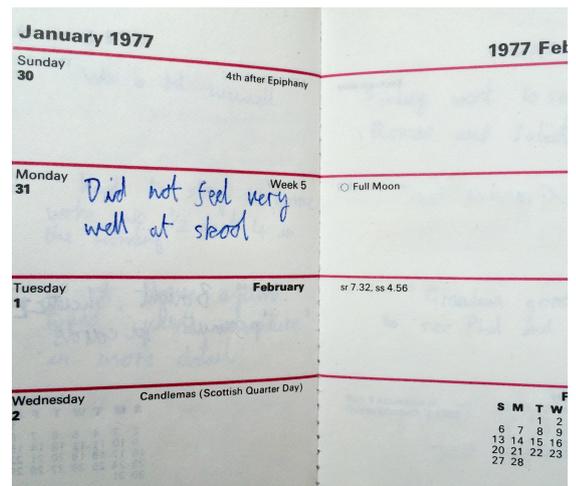
An attempt at exhausting a place in Paris; Georges Perec

*A heartless hand on my shoulder
A push - and it's over
Alabaster crashed down
(Six months is a long time)
Tried living in the real world
Instead of a shell
But before I began...
I was bored before I even began*

Shoplifters of the World Unite; Morrissey & Marr

Did not feel very well at skool (2015)
for: keyboard players of wildly varying
abilities
duration: 11 minutes
by: Amber Priestley

I was told off constantly for making mistakes &
for going my own way.



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COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES

Joanna Bailie was born in London in 1973 and has been living in Brussels since 2001. She studied composition with Richard Barrett, electronic music at the Koninklijk Conservatorium in Holland and in 1999 won a fellowship to study at Columbia University. She is currently working on her doctorate at City University, London. Her music has been performed by groups such as Ensemble Musikfabrik, L'instant Donné, EXAUDI, Ensemble Mosaik, The Nieuw Ensemble, Apartment House, The London Sinfonietta and the Ives Ensemble. She has been programmed at events such as the Venice Biennale, Huddersfield, SPOR Festival, Festival Reims Scènes d'Europe, Tuned City, Darmstadt, the Borealis and Ultima festivals in Norway and the Transit festival in Belgium. Her recent work includes chamber music and installation, and is characterized by the use of field recordings together with acoustic instruments. She is also interested in the interplay between the audio and visual as evidenced by her works for camera obscura which include the installation *The place you can see and hear* and the music theatre piece *Analogue*. Together with composer Matthew Shlomowitz, she is the founder and artistic director of Ensemble Plus-Minus and in May 2010 she was the guest curator at the SPOR Festival in Aarhus, Denmark. In 2014 she was invited to be a composition tutor at the 47th edition of the Darmstadt International Summer Course for New Music. Upcoming pieces include a commission for the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

Stephen Chase composes, improvises, sometimes writes, walks quite a lot. His work veers between conceptual strategies and following-his-nose, and is drawn to such things as the relationship between physical action and sound production, the influence of group interactions upon the shape of a work, and the acoustic characteristics of a space. He has collaborated variously with Ross Parfitt, Philip Thomas, Exaudi, Quatuor Bozzini, Apartment House, Berlin's Ensemble Zwischenräume, Music We'd Like to Hear, Sound Intermedia, BBC Singers, Mick Beck, edges, THF Drenching, Gwilly Edmondez, Coastguard All Stars, Husk, Gated Community, Damo Suzuki, omoplate sarangi, murmuration, and Freaking Glamorous Teapot. He co-edited a book of essays with Philip Thomas on the music of Christian Wolff for *Ashgate*. He has also returned to playing other people's music for solo guitar, specialising in premiering music by composers whose first initial is J: so far, James Saunders, James Weeks, Jennie Gottschalk and Jürg Frey.

Sarah Hughes is an artist, composer and performer, producing work that ranges sculpture, installation, composition and music. She is the co-founder of Compost and Height, a curatorial platform that focuses on new music and composition. She is also co-editor of the new music journal, *Wolf Notes*, and co-founder of *BORE*, a publication dedicated to experimental text-based and graphic scores. Hughes's work has been exhibited and performed internationally, including at Supplement, London; V22, London; Sydney Non Objective, Australia; Oriol Davies, Wales; Center for New Music, San Francisco; Constellation, Chicago and the Wulf, Los Angeles. Hughes is Composer-in-Residence at South London Gallery 2015-2016.

Dominic Lash is a freely improvising double bassist, although his activities also range much more widely and include playing bass guitar and other instruments; both writing and performing composed music; and writing about music and various other subjects. He has performed with musicians such as Tony Conrad (in duo and quartet formations), Joe Morris (trio and quartet), Evan Parker (duo, quartet and large ensemble) and the late Steve Reid. His main projects include *The Dominic Lash Quartet*, *The Set Ensemble* (an experimental music group focused on the work of the Wandelweiser collective) and *The Convergence Quartet*. Based in Bristol, Lash has performed in the UK, Austria, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and USA. For nearly a decade he was based in Oxford and played a central role in the activities of Oxford Improvisers; much of 2011 was spent living in Manhattan. In 2013 & 2014 he took part in Take Five, the professional development programme administered by Serious. Festival appearances include Akbank Jazz Festival (Istanbul), All Ears (Oslo), Audiograf (Oxford), Freedom of the City (London), Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Hurta Cordel (Madrid), Konfrontationen (Nickelsdorf), LMC Festival (London), Manchester Jazz Festival and Tampere Jazz Happening. His work has been broadcast on a number of radio stations, including BBC Radios 1 and 3 and Germany's SWR2, and released on labels including Another Timbre, b-boim, Bead, Cathnor, Clean Feed, Compost and Height, Emanem, Erstwhile, FMR, Foghorn, Leo and NoBusiness. Since moving to Bristol he has been involved in organising concerts under the banners of *Bang the Bore* and *Insignificant Variation*.

Born in the shadow of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, **Amber Priestley** has lived in the U.K. since 1991. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sussex, and her doctorate in composition at the University of York. Some recent performances include: *And Yet Something Shines*, *Something Sings in that Silence* (Bozzini Quartet, Composer's Kitchen 2013); *There, I've said it, I've put my cards on the table*. (London Sinfonietta, commission); *Floors are Flowers*, *Take a Few* (EXAUDI Vocal Ensemble, Tectonics Festival 2014); and *And Yet Something Shines*, *Something Sings in that Silence*. (The Royal Norwegian Navy Band, Borealis Festival 2015). The majority of her work deals directly with musicians performing both music and theatre. Some of this forms a very small portion of the performance (for example, choreographed page turns) or a fundamental portion of the performance (such as where the music is the least important element, with the focus on the various movements of the musicians). Another of her major preoccupations lies in open-form scores. In 1932, the American photographer Edward Weston wrote that photography "is not all seeing in the sense that the eye sees...Our vision is in a constant state of flux, while the camera captures and fixes forever a single, isolated, condition of the moment." As in photography, most concert music is also an attempt to define a certain time (in music it is the length of the piece of music). This certain length of time will be very similar each time it is experienced in most music. Amber is interested in trying to allow again for a possibility where time is not fixed, and each time a piece is experienced, the music has the chance to be different. The other separate reason that Amber is interested in open-form scores is that she would like, without use of traditional jazz-style improvisation, to allow for the performer's own individuality to emerge through her scores.

Paul Whitty was born in Lisburn, Northern Ireland, in 1970. He studied with Roger Marsh at York University, Magnus Lindberg and Colin Matthews at the Britten-Pears School, and Vinko Globokar at the Dartington International Summer School, and completed a DPhil in composition with Michael Finnissy at the University of Sussex. His work has been performed by the London Sinfonietta, Ensemble Expose, IXION, Michael Finnissy, [rout], Philip Howard, and Mieko Kanno amongst others, and his music has featured at festivals including Brighton, Ultima in Oslo, the Gaudeamus Music Week in Amsterdam, the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, the 54th Venice Biennale and at State Of The Nation in London. He has received awards, including from the Arts Council of England, AHRC, the Britten-Pears Foundation, and the British Council. Paul Whitty is a founder, along with the composers Sam Hayden and Paul Newland, of the ensemble [rout], which has made concert tours in the UK, appearing on BBC Radio 3's contemporary music programme Hear and Now, on a BMIC Cutting Edge concert tour, at the ICA and at the Huddersfield Festival. He is Professor in Composition; Research Lead for Film, Fine Art and Music; and a Director of the Sonic Art Research Unit at Oxford Brookes University and has been a visiting tutor in collaborative practice at Dartington College of Arts and the Laban Centre, London. He is a Director of audiograf, Oxford's Festival of experimental music and sound art, with Stephen Cornford. He has become increasingly interested in collaborative cross-disciplinary work methods, often involving on-site projects and installations. Projects have taken place at the Mecca State Bingo Hall in Kilburn, Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge, and the office of Beaconsfield art gallery in Vauxhall.