

music we'd like to hear

Alexey Shmurak *Railway Etude* (2020–21)

Railway Etude is the first part from *Greenland*, a piano cycle written in 2020–2021. It is ironic because in reality Greenland has no railways. The title could seem to refer to *Cinq études de bruits* by Pierre Schaeffer. But this would be a false reference, because the music sounds more like minimalism or jazz. It could also be possible to interpret the title in another way, connecting it with railway blues, as for example *Different Trains* by Steve Reich.

Railway Etude consists of two elements: the first one is reharmonized J. S. Bach Prelude No.1 from WTK No.1; the second one is playful and jazzy. The piece is constructed with consistent avoidance of binary and ternary meters. The author uses different phenomenologically non-obvious prime numbers (like 13, 17, 29) for meters. Sensually *Railway Etude* is groovy, accented, concentrated and slightly sentimental.

Alexey Shmurak



Sarah Hennies *Spectral Malsconcities* (2018)

"My entire practice is based on this idea of self discovery or self introspection, of using things about me or my consciousness or whatever that I want to know more about or that I don't understand in a piece of music, and I wrote this piece really without any kind of plan or realising what it was, and more recently I've started to do that more often, where I'm just writing without a reason and not understanding why it's coming out of me and I figure it out later, and the title of this piece, *Spectral Malsconcities*, is something that actually has no meaning whatsoever, it came to me in a dream, and I hardly ever have dreams about music, but for some reason I had a dream that I titled a piece *Spectral Malsconcities* and thought that was so funny and I woke up and I Googled it and it's a made-up word, and so I decided I needed to use it as a title because it's in my head for some reason and so if this piece that I don't understand is in my head and I'm not sure why yet, then I might as well give it this title that I also don't understand. Almost all of my music is based on a similar idea of trying to understand something that doesn't totally make sense to me."

Sarah Hennies in conversation with Matthew Shlomowitz

John White

Entrance and Exit Music for vibraphone
FINISHED 7.41pm 8th September 2004 Lower Clapton

Conversation Piece for solo clarinet, dedicated to Barney Childs
FINISHED 8.20pm 31st March 1990, Redlands, California

Piano Sonata No.143 for multiple metronomes and piano
FINISHED 6.29pm 21st March 2004, Lower Clapton

Promenade for trombone and vibraphone (arranged for double bass and vibes), dedicated to Hugh Shrapnel
FINISHED 1.45pm, 1st September 1997, Lower Clapton



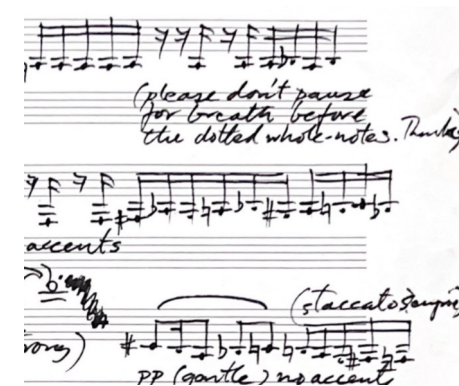
Friday 24 June 2022

Piano Sonata No.105
FINISHED 2.11am 26th December 1980 Highgate, London

Signing-On Music for vibraphone
FINISHED 2.19pm 9th September 2004, Lower Clapton

Souvenir for bass clarinet and piano
15th April 1989, Calypso IX, Apto.10, Costa Mijas, Malaga, Spain.

Drinking and Hooting Machine (1971)



Plus-Minus Ensemble

Mark Knoop | piano
Vicky Wright | clarinet
Joe Richards | percussion
Owen Nicolaou | double bass

Alexey Shmurak was born in St. Petersburg in 1986. He is a composer and sound artist based in Kyiv, Ukraine. After training as a pianist and graduating from the National Music Academy of Ukraine in music composition, Alexey started exploring various fields and practices: classical, contemporary classical and experimental music composition and performance. Shmurak's music explores genre borders, nostalgia, deconstruction, attention gaps and interruptions. As a performer, he frequently employs voice, drums, winds, electronics and surrounding space. As an educator, he gives lectures and workshops in the fields of critical listening, political and social aspects of music, borders of disciplines and discourses.

Alexey had numerous performances and multimedia projects at Akademie der Künste Berlin, WDR hall Köln, International Summer Courses for New Music Darmstadt, Muffatwerk Munich, Warsaw Philharmonic, Moscow Philharmonic, St. Petersburg Mariinsky Theatre, Gogolfest Kyiv, Lviv Philharmonic, Platform Moscow festival, Nizhny Novgorod National Centre for Contemporary Arts.

Alexey was a resident of Plivka (2016-2018), an interdisciplinary experimental art space in Kyiv. He worked closely with venue's curators: Dima Kazakov, Lotsia publishing house co-founder, and Sasha Andrusyk, Ukho music agency co-founder. Since 2010 Alexey is a long time partner of Goethe-Institut mission in Kyiv. With choreographer Alexander Liubashin (Russia) and Goethe-Institut departments (in St. Petersburg, Tashkent and Munich) Alexey curated art-laboratories "Intersection of Parallels" (2016-2018) researching interdisciplinarity.

Alexey has an ongoing collaboration with a Kyiv-based electroacoustic artist Oleg Shpudeiko specializing in modular synthesis.

Their field of interests includes reimagining of traditional and old music forms, as well as sound and audiovisual installations. Alexey's and Oleg's art works are in collections of the National Art Museum of Ukraine and Museum of Modern Art of Odessa.

Sarah Hennies (b. 1979, Louisville, KY) is a composer based in Ithaca, NY whose work is concerned with a variety of musical, sociopolitical, and psychological issues including including queer & trans identity, psychoacoustics, and the social and neurological conditions underlying creative thought. She is primarily a composer of acoustic ensemble music, but is also active in improvisation, film, and performance art. She presents her work internationally as both a composer and percussionist with notable performances at MoMA PS1 (NYC), Monday Evening Concerts (Los Angeles), Le Guess Who (Utrecht), Festival Cable (Nantes), send + receive (Winnipeg), O' Art Space (Milan), Cafe Oto (London), ALICE (Copenhagen), and the Edition Festival (Stockholm). As a composer, she has worked with a wide array of performers and ensembles including Bearthoven, Bent Duo, Claire Chase, ensemble 0, Judith Hamann, R. Andrew Lee, Talea Ensemble, Thin Edge New Music Collective, Two-Way Street, Nate Wooley, and Yarn/Wire.

Her ground-breaking audio-visual work *Contralto* (2017) explores transfeminine identity through the elements of "voice feminization" therapy, featuring a cast of transgender women accompanied by a dense and varied musical score for string quartet and three percussionists. The work has been in high demand since its premiere, with numerous performances taking place around North America, Europe, and Australia and was one of four finalists for the 2019 Queer|Art Prize.

She is the recipient of a 2019 Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grants to Artists Award, a 2016 fellowship in music/sound from the New York Foundation for the Arts, and has received additional support from New Music USA, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the Community Arts Partnership of Tompkins County. Sarah is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Bard College.

John White was born in Berlin in 1936 to an English father and German mother; he arrived in London in 1939. He took piano and theory lessons from the age of 4 with Hélène Gipps, a second-generation pupil of Brahms. He took a lively interest from early teenage in the musical exception rather than the rule and his interests at that time included Satie, Milhaud and Hindemith, later, early Schönberg, Berg, Webern, Skalkottas and Stockhausen.

Then, at age 19, a step backwards to the enlightened tonality of Messiaen. He began composing at this time, while still a student at the Royal College of Music, under composition professor Bernard Stevens, and he discovered yet more traditionally tonal music with a difference: Medtner and Szymanowski. He was the first student at the Royal College of Music to play Satie, Schönberg and Messiaen at a chamber concert. He encountered John Tilbury and Cornelius Cardew and spent the '60s deeply involved in "performance art" of the time, but broke away from Cardew and the Scratch Orchestra because of political differences. He has written many single movement piano sonatas (190 to date) under the tonal influences of Satie, Medtner and Szymanowski.

Plus-Minus Ensemble is a London based ensemble committed to commissioning new work and placing it alongside recent and landmark modern repertoire. Formed in 2003 by Joanna Bailie and Matthew Shlomowitz, +- is distinguished by its interest in performative, electroacoustic and conceptual pieces, and experimental open works such as Stockhausen's 1963 classic, from which the group takes its name. Since 2019, +- is directed by Matthew Shlomowitz, Vicky Wright and Mark Knoop.

+- has performed in London at Kammer Klang, Cafe Oto, BBC Radio 3 Open Ear, Cut and Splice, City University Concerts, and at Borealis (Bergen), Sampler Sèries (Barcelona), Fundación BBVA Bilbao, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, MaerzMusik (Berlin), Spor Festival (Aarhus), Transit Festival (Leuven), Ultima Festival (Oslo) and Warsaw Autumn.

+- has an ongoing relationship with Bath Spa University and the Guildhall School of Music and in September 2019 started a three-year role as Ensemble in Residence at the Reid School of Music (University of Edinburgh). The group has also given workshops and concerts at Stanford University, Durham University, Huddersfield University, University of Southampton and City, University of London.

We're grateful to the Hinrichsen Foundation for their continued support of the series.

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