

Frank E. Taplin '37 Auditorium
in Fine Hall
Princeton University

GENERALS CONCERT CONSTELLATION

**Seth Cluett
Michael Early
Sean McClowry
Samson Young**

**The
Composers' Ensemble
at Princeton**

Steven Mackey and Michael Pratt, Directors

Thursday, April 26, 2007
8:00 p.m.

THE PROGRAM

<i>kottos</i>	Iannis Xenakis	Ballade No. 3 in A-flat Major, Opus 47	Frederic Chopin
<i>Daedalus</i>	Michael Early	<i>Piano Piece no. 1</i>	Sean McClowry
	Benjamin Schwartz, <i>violoncello</i>		Monica Ohuchi, <i>piano</i>
French Suite No. 1 in D Minor, BWV 812	J.S. Bach	from String Quartet No. 6 in E-flat Major <i>Ruhig. Var</i>	Paul Hindemith
<i>Allemande</i>		<i>Roxy, New York</i>	Samson Young
<i>Courante</i>		<i>So musical a discord ...</i>	
<i>Sarabande</i>		<i>Gödel's Strange Loop I</i>	
<i>Minuet I</i>		<i>Distorted epilogue</i>	
<i>Minuet II</i>		<i>Gödel's Strange Loop II</i>	
<i>Gigue</i>		<i>... Such sweet thunder</i>	
		<i>Chiptune and Last Spin (Loop III)</i>	
<i>counter-memory</i> for magnetic tape	Seth Cluett		
<i>llmnd</i>		Music: Samson Young @ EmergencyLab	
<i>crnt</i>		Video: Christopher Lau @ EmergencyLab	
<i>srwnd</i>		Dancer in video: Xing Liang	
<i>mntt I</i>		Olivia De Prato, <i>violin</i> — Eric km Clark, <i>violin</i>	
<i>mntt II</i>		William Lane, <i>viola</i> — John Popham, <i>violoncello</i>	
<i>dcp</i>			
gg			

— intermission —

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Daedalus
(or, how I learned to stop worrying and love the labyrinth) for cello and tape

Michael Early
What strikes me most about the music of Iannis Xenakis is its uncompromising directness. There is an in-your-face immediacy to much of his music – as in the aggressive cello piece *kottos* being played tonight. Aggressiveness is apparent even in the title; *Kottos* was one of three fifty-headed, hundred-armed giants who helped Zeus destroy the Titans. Xenakis writes that this is an ‘allusion to the fury and virtuosity necessary to the performance of the piece.’

The immediacy of Xenakis’ music strikes me first of all as intuitive and visceral, although this may seem for some to be contradicted by his use of mathematics in creating his pieces. Xenakis’ use of math has always impressed me less as a dogmatic system than as a means to an end. I’m not sure that I always understand the end he has in mind; but his pieces inevitably leave me with a strong impression.

In engaging with Xenakis, I felt very aware of his position outside the Western art music tradition; trained as an engineer, with little musical education, he brings an unusual perspective to a tradition that has often been obsessed with ‘classicizing’ its own history. As a composer who comes from more within that tradition, and who often obsesses unhealthily over his relationship to it, I took this as a challenge to think from outside the Western music ‘box’.

Part of the unpredictability in Xenakis’ music comes from his use of ‘stochastic’ procedures, using mathematical

expressions to ‘randomize’ specific musical events: notes, rhythms, etc. In creating the notes and rhythms for *Daedalus*, I used several simple computer programs, which introduce various elements of chance, to generate a large part of the raw materials of the music.

When written for larger ensembles, these stochastic processes produce another impressive effect – an enveloping sound world that embraces (or assaults) the listener on all sides. In creating the tape part for my piece, I tried to achieve a similar end, constructing a sound world that resonates with the cello’s music and extends it beyond the instrument.

Prodded by the Greek mythology of *kottos*, I decided to call my piece *Daedalus* after the supposed creator of the Cretan labyrinth. In one version of the myth, *Daedalus* becomes trapped in his own invention, and is only barely able to escape. I took this as a metaphor for the struggle to engage with the ‘labyrinth’ of randomized musical material I had generated. Taking much of the material as a given, the challenge became to work through it and emerge with something satisfyingly ‘musical’ at the end of the journey.

Daedalus was written for Ben Schwartz, and it is a pleasure to have him perform it.

Michael Early likes to think of his music as a telling a story without words. He has received grants and awards from ASCAP, the MIT Council for the Arts, the USC Thornton School of Music, the National Federation of Music Clubs, and Yale University. Michael is now a graduate fellow in composition at Princeton University in Princeton, NJ.

counter-memory
for magnetic tape

Seth Cluett
The Six French Suites (BWV 812-817) are J.S. Bach’s response to the French keyboard music embodied in the generation of composers previous to his own, namely Couperin; what is ‘French’ in the French Suites are elements of musical style broadly conceived. In the Suite in D minor in particular, the treatment of the dance forms manipulates the rhythmic and gestural vocabulary with a buoyancy and performative physicality that is clear and fore-grounded. In the junction between pitch, rhythm, motivic rhetoric, and the hands of the performer there exists a palpable sense of the body that remains overtly audible throughout the piece.

In the six suite movements of *counter-memory*, I am responding to these elements of Bach, broadly conceived, in a ‘French style’ a generation previous to my own, specifically that of the musique concrète tradition. Simply put, musique concrète is a style of concert electronic music in which recordings of sounds are manipulated. The sounds are then treated as the musical material and subjected to the same compositional rigor as the elements of traditional acoustic instrumental concert music. In this piece you will hear the sound of waves, walking, threads on bolts, a cigar box, metal, a radio, reverberation of spaces, and birds, as well as a host of other sounds organized in such a way so as to relate to each other musically.

I have tried to employ a strongly motivic vocabulary in order to create a gestural and responsive music that can be

developed through invention, repetition, arrangement, and memory. In each of the suite movements, elements from the baroque dance forms have been used both implicitly and explicitly, and, like Bach, this music is more for listening than for dancing.

These pieces were performed in the studio and edited together from the multiple takes of these performances. No digital signal processing or synthesis was used. Each of the original sound sources were either recorded live on location or live in the studio. Where necessary electronic devices and analog tape playback equipment was made or modified to create the ‘instrument’ used to perform this piece.

counter-memory is dedicated to my mother Anne Cluett and my father Allen Cluett (the smartest man I know) for showing me that working with the tools one has and making the tools one needs is a good way to get the job done, and that singing makes the work go with a smile. “A record is a concert without halls and a museum whose curator is the owner.”

— Glenn Gould

Seth Cluett (born 1976, Troy, New York) is a composer and visual artist whose work includes photography, drawing, video, sound installation, concert music, and performance. His pieces are an exploration of the role that sound plays in the experience of everyday life.

His work has been shown/performed at galleries, festivals, sound art venues, and concert spaces throughout the Americas and Europe. Seth’s work is documented on Errant Bodies Press, foArm journal,

Sedimental, Crank Satori, Boxmedia, and Wavelet records as well as a forthcoming DVD retrospective of sound art from Diapason Gallery in NY. For more information: <http://www.onelonepixel.org>

Piano Piece no. 1 Sean McClowry

In responding to Chopin, I thought I would abandon the computer and write at the piano with pencil and paper. Actually, I thought about going so far as to get a quill and ink, but then I thought it would be a bit much and since I often spill coffee on my clothes, I could see myself staining a nice Steinway in the process. As I fumbled through the Ballade's on my own, I learned several practical tricks from Chopin. Some were tricky compositional ideas that are idiomatic to the piano, while some were as simple as fingerings. These methods helped me to improvise (badly) on the piano, write down portions of the improvisations, and develop them as I thought to be logical. I am thankful to have my good friend Monica play it for you tonight.

Sean McClowry is a composer and a double bassist. Prior to his studies at Princeton he received an MM from the Yale School of Music and a BM from Peabody Conservatory. As a double bassist, he remains active as a freelancer and is a member of the American Modern Ensemble. Lately, Sean has been exploring songwriting and he can be seen from time to time singing and playing the acoustic guitar near his home. Another little known fact about Sean is that he is obsessed with double bass strings and he routinely changes the setup on his bass to

fit the style of music he needs to perform. He made a bit for his cordless drill for this purpose. Other bass players think this is totally ridiculous, but he really can't help it.

Roxy. New York Samson Young
for amplified string quartet, video and electronics

Roxy is a dance club in New York that was recently shut down.

Roxy is also the first trans-gender character in the history of video game: In 1989, Capcom released the arcade version of "Final Fight." In the 80s and early 90s it was common for arcade title to be relaunched on domestic video game platforms after its initial release, and "Final Fight" was no exception. Capcom later presented Nintendo with a remake of the game intended for the 16-bit Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES). Nintendo reject the first version of the remake on the basis that the female enemy character "Roxy" violated Nintendo's code on violence against women. In response, Capcom revealed that there were no female enemies in the game, and that the character "Roxy" was in fact trans-sexual. Nevertheless, Roxy was removed from the SNES version.

In the same year, Capcom released "Rockman 2" (known as Mega Man 2 in North America), a platform action game in which the player controls a boy robot named "Rock" who fights for peace. The

frustrating difficulty of the "Quickman" stage from this 8-bit NES classic is well publicized - particularly near the end, when you try to dodge the laser beam that streak across the screen, which almost always hit you as you drop. It traumatized me as a child. Sometimes I feel the same way about development in a composition, or, in a prose, such as the one you are reading right now.

The electronic part of *Roxy. New York* features 8-bit chiptunes from "Rockman 2," which I programmed using Tannick Delwiche's tracker software. Special thanks to Andrew Oster who generously shared with me his original research on Hindemith's radio operas, and provided me with sound clips from the 1930 recording of the first version of *Der Lindberghflug*.

Samson Young

I grew up playing video games in a 500 square-foot box on the 23rd floor of a skyscraper in the pre-1997 colonial Hong Kong. I spent my formative years in Australia, and received education from the University of Sydney (music, philosophy and gender studies) and the University of Hong Kong (composition and musicology). Currently I am pursuing a Ph.D. degree in music composition at Princeton University.

My music reflects my schizophrenic split-cultural-identity: I tend to go through phases of exploration, and my musical language simply adapts to the subject matter that is of interest to me at the time. Some of my previous works have dealt with hybrid-Asian identity, exploring subject matters ranging from Chinese passage rituals (the instrumental ritual series) to

zen calligraphy (the studies series). More recently, I have developed an interest the sound of vintage video game consoles, as well as the hardware of electronic dance music and its application in the concert hall. I also have an interest in video and new media art, and I am the co-founder and co-director of multi-disciplinary artist collective Emergencylab.

I maintain my own website at www.samsonyoung.com.

Christopher Lau, born in Hong Kong, received his Masters Degree in Fine Arts from the School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong, preceded by a degree in Mathematics from Brock University of St. Catherine, Canada. Lau is an educator, new media artist and programmer. He is currently a full time lecturer at Chung Kong Art & Design Institute of Shantou University in China, and a guest lecturer at the Hong Kong Art School. Lau is also the co-founder and co-director of artist collective Emergencylab.

Lau's festival appearances and major presentations include: the Microwave International Media Art Festival (2002 & 2004); Sense Nonsense Group Exhibition, Cattle Depot Artist Village of Hong Kong (2003); video screenings in Hong Kong, Japan, Switzerland, and Australia (2002 - 2004); Aftermath dance video commissioned by City Contemporary Dance Company (2004). Lau has also collaborated with artists of various disciplines. Recent collaborative projects include *Umdulation*, *Sparkle*, *Fracture*, an interactive sound installation with composer Samson Young (2003, University of Hong Kong); *Metalove*

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with choreographer Daniel Yeung (2004); *Lot.us*, with choreographer Mui Cheuk-yin & vocal artist Priscilla Leung (2005); *Gone-tormented Sea*, an interactive installation + site specific performance with composer Samson Young and vocal artist Priscilla Leung (2006); and *This is America*, a webart + cyber performance live at Centraal Museum Utrecht (2006).

Lau is also active as a curator. He curated several major presentations and international festivals including: *Electron* (for Microwave International New Media Art Festival, Oct 2004); *Shoot and Play* (for Cream Magazine and Videotage, June 2004); *Jumping Frames* (a dance video project, 2004 & 2006); Le French May Arts Festival (2004); and Hong Kong Dance Festival (2006).

EmergencyLab is an interdisciplinary artist collective co-founded and co-directed by poet Ron Lam, journalist / new media art scholar Kedy Fan, new media artist / programmer Chris Lau, lighting / stage designer ah Man, and composer / VJ Samson Young. EmergencyLab is dedicated to experimenting, to playing, and to "doing everything all the time."

In 2007/2008, EmergencyLab will have lots of fun with composer Anne Hege, Casey Hale, Paula Matthusen, Will Smith and Samson Young. For more information, see www.emergencylab.hk.

Benjamin Schwartz, *'cello*, has been hailed as "impressive" and an "elegant, accomplished player" by the *Boston Phoenix*, and has performed extensively as a chamber musician and soloist, appearing in venues across Europe and the United States. An enthusiastic champion of new music, Ben has worked closely with a number of young composers in premiere performances of their music, including Curtis Hughes, Per Bloland, Robert Hasegawa, Hillary Zipper, Ken Ueno, Bartolo Musil, Dominique Schaefer, Tolga Yayalar, Aaron Berkowitz, Karola Obermueller and Peter Gilbert, among many others. More established composers Ben has collaborated with include Lee Hyla, Christian Wolff, Alvin Lucier, Frederic Rzewski, John Zorn, Paul Elwood and Michael Finnissy. In November, 2005 Ben was soloist in the first Boston performance of Iannis Xenakis's cello concerto *Epicycles* at Jordan Hall with the Callithumpian Consort, conducted by Stephen Drury, a work he then reprised this past March, again with the Callithumpians and Drury. Ben was also soloist in a recent performance of Boris Tischenko's concerto for cello and winds at Jordan Hall and for the 2006 premiere performance of Chris Honett's *The Performers Need Not be Masked*, a concertino for amplified cello and ensemble dedicated to Ben and White Rabbit, the ensemble in residence for Harvard Group for New Music. An enthusiast of many musical genres, Ben participated as cellist in the legendary Boston rock band Mission of Burma's 2006 Matador Records release *The Obliterati*, which was recognized as Album of the Year in the 2006 Boston Music Awards. In a slightly different genre, he recently recorded the solo cello line in a sound clip soon to be

incorporated into the music for ABC's long running *The Young and the Restless*. In addition to his performing, Ben is currently executive director of the Callithumpian Consort and also holds the position of assistant to the artistic administrator of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Monica Yuki Ohuchi, *piano*, has performed to wide acclaim from audiences across the United States, Canada, Japan, and Europe both as a soloist and chamber musician. Highlights in Monica's upcoming season include her solo recital engagement at the Toronto Opera Company Richard Bradshaw Amphitheater as part of their Piano Virtuoso series, as well as chamber concert engagements across the United States. Monica has previously performed in such prestigious venues as Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, Juilliard's Peter Jay Sharp Theater, Brooklyn's Bargemusic, and Meany Hall of Seattle. She has been featured in live radio and television broadcasts on New York's WQXR, Seattle's KING FM, *Delaware Today*, a television broadcast of rising stars, and the WE Network. Monica made her orchestral debut at age ten with the Wilmington Symphony Orchestra performing Beethoven's First Piano Concerto. Now, in her mid-twenties, Monica is a seasoned performer, having been invited as guest soloist for such orchestras as the Rain City Symphony, the New Millennium Symphony Orchestra of Gijon, Spain, Orchestra Seattle, and Seattle Junior Symphony Orchestra. Monica has been awarded top prizes in numerous national and international piano competitions. Since capturing first prize at the Chinese International Piano Competition at the age of five, Monica most recently won

first prize at the 2006 William Garrison International Piano Competition, and was awarded a solo recital engagement to take place in the fall of 2007. Monica is also the first prize winner of the Wayne Nadeau International Piano Competition, and winner of the Dorothy A. Anderson International Piano Competition. Monica is the only two-time national champion of the Music Teacher's National Association Piano Competition, and is a four-time grand prize winner of the WIAA Washington State Piano Competition. She was also named a New York Steinway Hall Recital Award Recipient.

Olivia De Prato, *violin*, received her Bachelor's Degree in Music in May 2005 from the Eastman School of Music as a student of Prof. C. Castleman. She was born in Vienna and started her musical studies at the age of 5 in Italy. From 1995 to 2000 she studied at the University of Music & Arts in Vienna as a student of Prof. D. Schwarzberg, (Ass. M. and L. Sorokow).

She has performed in Europe and the United States in chamber music ensembles and as a soloist with different orchestras (The Clafin Hill Symphony Orchestra, Savaria Symphony Orchestra). In August 1999 she was invited to play a recital at the Festival of Ravello (Italy). In October 2003, she performed in Fortaleza, Brazil with the "Orchestra Philharmonica di Ceara".

She attended master classes with Prof. Alice Schoenfeld, Prof. Dora Schwarzberg, Prof. L. Sorokow, Prof. Zvi Zeitlin, Prof. R. Zanettovich, Prof. Peter Salaff, Prof. K. Winkler. Olivia attended music festivals such as "The Quartet Program", Music Academy of the West, "Accademia Chigiana" (Italy), Bang

on a Can Summer Institute, Kazusa Music Festival (Japan), Ensemble Modern Festival and the Lucerne Festival directed by Pierre Boulez.

She is currently involved in contemporary music and has worked with composers such as Bernard Rands, Luca Francesconi, Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Helmut Lachenman, Krystof Penderecki, Pierre Boulez, Benedict Mason, Meredith Monk, Steve Reich, Michael Gordon, Julia Wolfe, Evan Ziporyn, Todd Reynolds, Brad Lubman and Philippe Manoury.

Recent performances include concerts at the Bang on a Can Marathon concert in NYC, at the Lucerne Festival with Pierre Boulez and the Ensemble Intercontemporain, at the Klangspuren Festival and at the Steve Reich @ 70 Birthday concert at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City.

Olivia moved to New York City in 2005 and performs regularly with ensembles such as Tactus, the "NY - Soundpainting" orchestrated by Walter Thompson, the Electric Fuzz Ensemble founded by Brad Lubman and Lauren Radnofsky, and the electronic new music group "slow six" founded by C. Tignor.

She is also a member of the string quartet "Zangiaco" that recently recorded Brad Lubman's string quartet N.2 on Tzadik. (www.tzadik.com)

William Lane, viola, has a growing reputation as a solo artist and chamber musician. A prize-winner at a number of international competitions, he has performed all over Australasia, Europe and North America. He studied under Jan Sedivka (Bachelor of Music 1st Class Honours, Australia) and Bruno Giuranna (Accademia Walter Stauffer,

composers.

He is Artistic Director and Violist of a twenty-member New York/Berlin/Melbourne network of musicians dedicated to intercultural collaboration through the medium of new music. In 2007 he will spend some time in India performing and researching, as resident musician of the ORKA-M International Institute of Innovative Music in Mumbai, supported by the AsiaLink Centre (University of Melbourne) and Arts Tasmania.

Eric Kenneth Malcolm Clark, violin, is a composer and violinist originally from Victoria, BC, Canada. A recent addition to New York, he spent the past two years in LA studying composition with James Tenney. Eric has enjoyed success performing in many genres, though most often in new music, experimental, and improvisation settings. He has performed new music throughout Canada, the US, Europe, and Australia, recently completing a tour of Belgium and Oslo with his high octave group Skakk. Eric also enjoyed a series of performances as violinist with the legendary west coast new music group California EAR Unit last spring 2006. Other notable recent appearances include the 2006 Minimalist lukebox in Walt Disney Concert Hall, Michael Gordon's new opera *What to Wear* and *Decasia*, and the Creative Music Festival at RedCat.

Compositionally, Eric is a diverse composer, ranging from writing for hearing-deprived musicians to improvisation works for his bands in New York and Europe. Eric has recently returned from the neither/nor new music festival in Toronto, in which he performed and presented his works *Mein Schatz* and *Slaughter Series I-IV*. He has had

music performed by members of Bang on a Can, the California EAR Unit, and the Bozzini Quartet, among many others.

John Popham, 'cello, a native of Louisville, Kentucky, is becoming one of the most versatile cellists of his generation. *The New York Times* has described John's playing as "graceful but variegated" and "finely polished." Winner of the Louisville Orchestra's Young Artist Competition, the Lillian Fuchs Chamber Music Competition, and the Macauley Smith Chamber Music Competition, he has appeared as a soloist with the Louisville Orchestra and the Starling Chamber Orchestra on numerous occasions. John has served as principal cellist of the 2000 National Festival Orchestra, the Louisville Youth Orchestra, and orchestras at Indiana University School of Music and the Manhattan School of Music. He has participated in various summer festivals including the Music Academy of the West, the Aspen Music Festival, Spoleto USA, and Musicorda. An active performer of contemporary music, John is a member of the Red Light Ensemble and has performed with the acclaimed TACTUS Contemporary Ensemble, ECCE, and the Nomos Trio. Recent and upcoming performances include appearances at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, Yale University, The New Music Collective of South Carolina, and the Hanns Eisler School in Berlin. John was a student of David Geber, founding cellist of the American String Quartet. He is a co-director for The New Project of Louisville, a collaborative arts organization that produces experimental concerts in the Louisville area.