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2022 – 2023
CONCERT SEASON

GS4

**DUO D'ENTRE-DEUX AND
MYRIAM BOUCHER: BLEEPS & TUBES**

**NOVEMBER 29, 2022
7:30PM**

**WEST END
CULTURAL CENTRE**



Duo d'Entre-Deux and Myriam Boucher: Bleeps & Tubes

Nov. 29, 2022

West End Cultural Centre (WECC)

Acknowledgement

GroundSwell acknowledges that it operates on Treaty 1 land, the original territories of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples and on the homeland of the Métis Nation.

Gender Parity

Arts organizations all over the world are acknowledging that programming must fairly represent gender diversity. GroundSwell has joined this growing movement by pledging to achieve and maintain gender parity in its programming and commissioning by 2022-23. You can help GroundSwell reach that goal. See gswell.ca for more details.

Programme

PROMPT (2022) *†

Luis Ramirez

build / break / shatter / release (2020) *

Stephanie Orlando

HOMEXHOME (2021) *

Nick Zoulek and Tommy Davis

Nyanse (2021) *

Alissa Cheung

Improvisation *

Myriam Boucher, Tommy Davis,
Gordon Fitzell, Nick Zoulek

data_scape (2022) *

Gordon Fitzell, music;
Myriam Boucher, video

* World premiere

† GroundSwell 30th Anniversary Commission

There is no intermission in tonight's concert.

Thank you to:

Julie Epp, Video Recording
Ian Fillingham, Stage Managing
Lloyd Peterson, Audio Recording

Programme Notes

PROMPT (2022) by Luis Ramirez

For two tenor saxophones, fixed audio and live video

The last couple of years have seen an incredible acceleration in the development of Artificial Intelligence. One of the areas with the most impressive progress is that of image-generating algorithms, which has seen a huge increase in popularity. This surge has been mainly due to the release of Dalle-2, an AI system that generates very impressive and detailed images based on users' text prompts, and it was recently made available to the public for the first time.

Deciphering the key to obtaining the most accurate results has led to the emerging field of prompt engineering. This is the meticulous crafting and testing of different prompts in order to yield the best results from the generator, and it is precisely the focus of *Prompt*.

The mission of the performers is to craft a compelling prompt for the generator. They test out these prompts by exchanging musical gestures, and refine them by adding small variations or complementing each other's lines. The question is - can a prompt be so detailed and well designed so that there is virtually no difference between the image generated and reality?

This prompt exploration is accompanied by gradually evolving speech-synthesis technology, representing both the improvement of the prompt and the accelerating development of Artificial Intelligence, or what is called the "Technological Singularity". This concept asks a much larger and critical question - What will happen after Artificial Intelligence surpasses Human Intelligence?

This work is a GroundSwell 30th Anniversary Commission.

build / break / shatter / release (2020) by Stephanie Orlando

For two tenor saxophones and fixed audio electronics

build / break / shatter / release creatively explores the expression of anger. It follows the build-up and dissipation of this strong emotional state, moving through sections of tension, effusion, and resolution. The performers convey this through their gestures and interaction, as if in conversation with each other. The work builds to a climax of the performers trying to overpower each other, or "who can shout the loudest", symbolic of how

anger can be an ineffective way to communicate. The sampled sounds of breaking glass in the electronics were recorded by the composer and connect to the explosive, impulsive, and destructive nature of anger.

This piece was commissioned by the Duo d'Entre-Deux with support from the Canada Council for the Arts.

HOMEXHOME (2021) by Nick Zoulek and Tommy Davis

For tenor saxophones, tubes, fixed audio electronics and video

HOMEXHOME is the first video in a multimedia series co-created by the Duo d'Entre-Deux in 2021. The project began as an experimental video journal, capturing scenes of our respective homes during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Each duo member recorded video and audio, digitally exchanging and layering the sounds and images, creating a sort of pen pal collage of daily life, ranging from unique to mundane, outstanding to repetitive. These videos were then blended into a singular narrative exploring our combined experience during this trying time.

This performance will mark the premiere showing of the HOMEXHOME video, which will be accompanied by a live improvised performance employing the video as a multimedia score. As the HOMEXHOME series grows, we will continue to explore and develop new paradigms of digital communication that originated during the pandemic. We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts in the creation of HOMEXHOME.

Nyanse (2021) by Alissa Cheung

For two or more saxophones (any register) and live video

In being together

Nyanse, Norwegian for shades of colour or nuance, here refers to a series of pieces for different instrumentations and explores subtle changes in harmony or texture. *Nyanse for two or more saxophones* is a text score encouraging players to make choices based on what they hear in the moment.

Improvisation

Free improvisation by Myriam Boucher (live video and audio electronics), Tommy Davis (saxophone and/or tubes and/or audio electronics), Gordon

Fitzell (live audio electronics), and Nick Zoulek (saxophone and/or tubes and/or audio electronics).

***data_scape* (2022) by Gordon Fitzell, music; Myriam Boucher, video**
For soloist or ensemble on any instrument(s), with audio and video electronics

data_scape is built around the idea of repurposing digital data. The first step in this process is the sonification of raw data files. Beginning with a commonplace source file such as a text or image document—a file whose structure was intended for another purpose—various software programs are employed to map aspects of the data onto basic parameters of music and sound (pitch, rhythm, amplitude, waveform, etc.). In this way, the structure inherent in the data is repurposed in service of an auditory expression of the file.

Using these resultant sound files as building blocks, a digital soundscape is created—essentially a pastiche of sonified raw data files. Next the structure of this soundscape is itself repurposed through processes like audio-to-MIDI conversion (a type of data extraction) and temporal quantization (a type of rhythmic alignment). Perhaps most importantly, certain elements are converted into staves of open music notation which are available for interpretation and selective performance in real time by the musicians, alongside the audio soundscape. In this way, all sound components of the piece derive from a series of transformations, with the original source being raw data files.

In one last act of repurposing, the composite structure of this entire sonic array, including all its constituent parts, is then applied to visual parameters by video artist Myriam Boucher. The resulting video, which is presented together with the musical performance, offers yet another expression of recycled, integrally linked data.

data_scape is dedicated to Duo d'Entre-Deux, who commissioned the work with support from the Canada Council for the Arts.

DUO D'ENTRE-DEUX

Formed in Paris in 2011, Duo d'Entre-Deux features Nick Zoulek (USA) and Tommy Davis (Canada) as saxophonists and interdisciplinary artists whose work spans performance, composition, multimedia art and beyond. Known for pushing the physical and aesthetic limits of the saxophone and related instruments, the Duo offers a unique blend of improvisation, hand-held electronics, and acrobatic performance techniques.

The Duo has developed a broad portfolio of artistic endeavours, including full-length choreographed performances with Wild Space Dance Company at Brooklyn's Roulette Theatre, multimedia performances at the Society of Composers Inc. National Conference, evening-length improvised performances with Montreal's Codes d'accès, and recitals at the World Saxophone Congress in Strasbourg. Over the years, the duo has fostered relationships with esteemed composers such as Christian Lauba and Mikel Kuehn, and commissioned works from the likes of Robert Lemay and Etienne Rolin.

The Duo is currently developing their multimedia project HOMEXHOME. Generously supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, the project is an ongoing collective expression blending the Duo's skills as saxophonists, composers, videographers and audio engineers. The Duo also continues to explore their Reverberant House program, an evening-length experience of saxophonic improvisation. In addition, the Duo is deeply committed to musical education, regularly performing outreach programs for young musicians and masterclasses for emerging professionals.

MYRIAM BOUCHER

Myriam Boucher is a video and sound artist based in Montreal. Her sensitive and polymorphic work concerns the intimate dialogue between music, sound and image through visual music, audiovisual performance, Vjing and immersive projects. Fascinated by the natural environment, she creates audiovisual compositions from the landscape and the relationship that humans maintain with it. Her work, « evocative in its dynamism, brings its audience close to something akin to feeling multiple emotions all at once » (*The Link*). Boucher's compositions range from works for orchestra and chamber ensemble to collaborative and solo A/V performances.

Composer Biographies

Born and raised in Aguascalientes, Mexico, **Luis Ramirez** is a Mexican-Canadian composer with an affinity towards rhythmically colourful textures and visually-evocative sonic worlds, which often incorporate elements of Mexican folklore and a cinematographic approach to musical storytelling. He is currently pursuing doctoral studies in Composition at York University in Toronto with Randolph Peters, in which he is exploring the digital landscape for music-making and humanity's often pernicious dynamics with the internet.

His work *Chido* was premiered by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra during the Winnipeg New Music Festival 2018 as winning composition of the CMC Prairie Region Emerging Composer Competition. In 2019, *Chido* was awarded first prize at the SOCAN Foundation's Sir Ernest MacMillan Awards and was performed by the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra in 2022. Other prestigious awards include the OAC Music Creation Projects Grant with Amarras Tango Quintet and the Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Award. He was the first recipient of the Jacques Israelievitch Scholarship at York University, established to honour Toronto Symphony Orchestra's longest tenured Concertmaster. Luis was selected as a Composer Fellow for the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra in 2020, and was commissioned by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Gabrielle Israelievitch, Trio Kalysta, and GroundSwell, among others. He was recently commissioned a second time by the TSO as part of their 2022/23 NextGen Composers program.

An eclectic musician, Luis has toured as a classical pianist, taught composition at York University, conducted the Brandon Community Orchestra, presented his academic research at conferences around the world, and performed at bars with his tango quintet.

Stephanie Orlando has had her music has been performed by ensembles and soloists such as Esprit Orchestra, 5th Wave Orchestra, Duo d'Entre-Deux, Femmelody Chamber Music Collective, Stereoscope Saxophone Duo, junctQin Keyboard Collective, Daniel Ramjattan, Nikki Joshi, and Gloria Yehilevsky. Her catalogue contains works ranging from standard ensembles to less common performing forces — orchestra, amplified pill bottles, and everything in between.

Her current interests include mixed media composition, creative coding, and using technology in combination with classical instruments. She engages with contemporary classical influences, while exploring them

through the lens of her own inspiration. One of her current projects is a series of works that explore mental wellness. Through this long-term project, she seeks to create honest and vulnerable works that connect with listeners who see themselves in her work and feel represented in bringing this conversation to the concert stage.

Alissa Cheung's works have been performed at the Winspear Centre (Edmonton) by the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, at Salle Bourgie (Montréal) by Quatuor Bozzini, at the University of Michigan by the percussion duo Arx Duo, at New York and Chicago by the electric guitar quartet Instruments of Happiness, in Jordan Hall (Boston) by the Boston and Turtle Island String Quartets, in Australia by Duo Myburgh-Feakes, and in Switzerland by Duo Luce. She is regularly featured as composer-in-residence at C'mon Festival in Edmonton.

In recent works, she has experimented with improvisational aspects and open forms, resulting in co-composed pieces that differ from performance to performance. Upcoming projects include a half-concert length co-composition with Duo d'Entre-Deux saxophone duo, and an outdoor live-installation project based on whale songs with Alain Lefort.

Alissa Cheung is also a violinist of Quatuor Bozzini, based in Montreal. Her solo and chamber performances have taken her throughout Canada, USA, Europe and Asia, and her work has been featured in the New York Times, The Guardian UK, Le Devoir, the Edmonton Journal, and has been broadcast on British Broadcasting Corporation (UK), Österreichischen Rundfunks (Austria), Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen (Switzerland), Nederlandse Publieke Omroep (Netherlands), and CBC Radio (Canada).

Gordon Fitzell is a Canadian composer, improviser, and sound artist. His music, described as “eerie, throbbing and trancelike” (New York Times), tends to explore peculiar points of connection between classical and popular elements of culture, freely inhabiting acoustic, electroacoustic, improvisatory, and interdisciplinary performance environments.

He has worked with a wide range of international artists including BIT20 Ensemble (Norway), eighth blackbird (USA), ensemble mosaik (Germany), Ensemble Orchestral Contemporain (France), and PianOrquestra (Brazil), as well as Canada's Ensemble contemporain de Montréal (ECM+), Trio Fibonacci, Ensemble Paramirabo, Standing Wave, Aventa Ensemble, and numerous solo performers. His music has been conducted by Robert Aitken, Daniel Kawka, Véronique Lacroix, Reinbert de Leeuw and Bramwell Tovey, and performed at international festivals including the Darmstädter

Ferienkurse (Germany), the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (England), the Pan Music Festival (South Korea), the Tanglewood Music Festival (USA), and the Winnipeg New Music Festival (Canada).

His music is featured on various albums, including GRAMMY-winning, Opus Award-winning, JUNO-nominated, and West Coast Music Award-nominated recordings. In addition to concert music, he has presented sound installations in North America and Europe and produced recordings for other artists. He is an associate composer of the Canadian Music Centre and a professor of composition at the University of Manitoba Desautels Faculty of Music, where he co-directs the eXperimental Improv Ensemble (XIE).

Websites

Duo d'Entre-Deux: duodentredeux.com

Myriam Boucher: myriamboucher.com

Luis Ramirez: cutza.xyz

Stephanie Orlando: stephanieorlando.ca

Alissa Cheung: alissacheung.com

Gordon Fitzell: gordonfitzell.com

Julie Epp: julieepp.com

Lloyd Peterson: paintboxrecording.com

GroundSwell: gswell.ca

Coming Up

GROUNDSWELL — LEARN

In partnership with the Winnipeg Film Group, GroundSwell is pleased to offer two music-related films in the coming months:

- *The Rumba Kings (2021)* – at WFG’s *Gimme Some Truth Documentary Festival* (December 7-11, 2022). www.therumbakings.com
- *Delia Derbyshire: The Myths and the Legendary Tapes (2020)* (January 13, 14, 15, 18, 2023). www.deliaderbyshirefilm.com

Go to www.winnipegfilmgroup.com for all the details.

GROUNDSWELL — LINKED

Starting in December, we’ll be releasing concert videos from the first part of our 2022-23 season. Stay tuned for videos featuring:

- *GS1—Ensemble Télémaque: Marseille in Manitoba;*
- *GS2—Standing Wave: Ex Machina;*
- *GS3—Megumi Masaki: Transformation;*
- *GS4—Duo d’Entre-Deux and Myriam Boucher: Bleeps & Tubes.*

Go to www.gswell.ca for all the details.

GROUNDSWELL — LIVE

GS5: Toninato/Thiessen: *Winter[City]Speaks* February 22, 2023, West End Cultural Centre

Winter[City]Speaks is an immersive sound experience exploring the cycle of death and rebirth as manifested by the experience of winter. This new work is Ida Toninato and Jennifer Thiessen’s second collaboration after their 2019 JUNO-nominated album *The Space Between Us* (Ambiances Magnétiques, Montréal). Expanding on their previous palette of reverberant viola d’amore and baritone saxophone, the duo includes field recordings, voices, live processing, and original texts. Imagine the sound of snow and ice interwoven with urban life and landscapes of Montréal and Winnipeg, expressed in sonic textures, ambient improvisations and experimental songs: this is *Winter[City]Speaks*.

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- to make our varied content available to more people, more often.



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