

East Carolina University *School of Music*

*and the*

NORTH CAROLINA  
NEWMUSIC INITIATIVE

*present*

CIRCUIT  
BRIDGES

ELECTRONIC MUSIC  
AND SOUND

Supported by funding from the R.L. Jones Distinguished Professorship

Sunday, February 22, 2015

7:30 p.m.

A.J. Fletcher Recital Hall

*This evening's music*

Three Excerpts from s_traits	Bill Seaman/John Supko
Twitter Music	Scott Lindroth
selectric.metal	Travis Garrison
Bubble Coitus	Keith Allegretti
Étude Géologique No. 2	Lee Weissert
<i>intermission</i>	
Aural Spiral #1	Lin Culbertson
seascape triptych: hermetica	Daniel Blinkhorn
Dancing Tree	Thomas Rex Beverly
Colony	Melissa Grey
A Portrait of Pablo Picasso by One of His Lovers	Rodney Waschka II
From Whence They Sing	Stephen Anderson
Relief	David Morneau
2BTextures	Elainie Lillios/Bonnie Mitchell

## *Notes on this evening's music*

**s\_traits** is an ongoing collaboration between Bill Seaman and John Supko. It started in 2011 with conversations about generative music and how to make it. The two quickly discovered that they had been independently exploring what might be described as the “uploading” of human creativity to the computer: Supko’s work involved developing software that emulated his compositional process; Seaman was investigating how creativity could be codified and reanimated through artificially intelligent systems.

- 1) the drive is on the blink
- 2) flung overboard as poetic justice
- 3) at the end of the mouth

Every detail of **Twitter Music** is generated by text patterns found in a set of 1000 English-language Twitter messages posted shortly after the assassination of Osama bin Laden. Every message contains the word “osama”. The sonification makes audible the different communities of shared tweets about this momentous event. I pay no attention to the meaning of the words. As a reminder of the music’s origins, a screenshot of the algorithm in action runs simultaneously with the performance, offering the audience a chance to see the emerging communities centered around particular shared terms (on lines beginning with “---->”).

### **selectric.metal:**

Type. Bounce. Hit. Manufacture.  
Drone. Mix. Bake. Serve.

**Bubble Coitus** was created using purely electronic technology, without any reliance on recorded sound. Opening with a series of broad gestures build out of synthesized pops, the piece paints images of thousands of tiny bubbles in a cloud. These clouds move through different densities, contours, and volume levels, each one painstakingly constructed to be different from the others. The sonic result is something that is organic and tactilely stimulating.

**Étude Géologique No. 2** is the second in a series of electroacoustic compositions that uses natural materials as source sounds. Several hundred recordings were made of bottles, crock pot lids, window panes, carboys (large vessels used for brewing beer), crystal glasses, and salad bowls. The recordings are heard in their unaltered state. With 33 sections ranging in duration from four to thirty seconds, the concept of “formal section” veers at times indistinguishably into that of “gesture.”

**Aural Spiral #1** is the first in a series of compositions inspired by Robert Smithson’s Spiral Jetty. In this study, a photograph of the actual Spiral Jetty has been transmuted into sound through the use of a computer program, and loosely rendered in synthesized sound. The rhythmic pulsing of water and wind lays the foundation for the first appearance of the jetty aural event. With each subsequent appearance, the duration of the event is halved, accelerating to the point of spiral origin. Finally the spiral submerges, sinking into obscurity beneath the pulsing waves.

**hermetica** attempts to capture the sonic vitality accompanying the life of a colony of hermit crabs. After encountering a surreptitious colony of hermit crabs on an island off the coast of Venezuela, I lowered a microphone into the colony, hoping to eavesdrop on their activities. The beautifully articulated sound I heard produced an impression of motion and dexterity as the crabs grappled and vied within their colony. I was struck by the disparity between what I saw—the crabs moving so slowly and awkwardly over one another—and what I heard—sounds of sheer density and intensified activity. The sound was processed to reveal this heightened aural activity and, whilst nudging and transforming some of the sounds, the overall shape of the work was designed to create a portrait of the colony, allowing the listener to observe another aspect of sound ecology from a seascape environment.

**Dancing Tree** is a product of my fascination with slow growth. The tree in this time-lapse video is about 300 years old, but is only 15 feet tall because of the desert environment where it grows. The music in this piece is a sonification of the subtle, but often frenetic movement of the dancing tree on one windy day in the desert of west Texas.

**Colony** explores the acoustical perception and symbolic communication of the honeybee. Field recordings from hives in Nova Scotia, summer 2010.

**A Portrait of Pablo Picasso by One of His Lovers (2014)** was created by using audio processing software to read visual images as audio input—in this case, an image of Pablo Picasso and images of three of his paintings. The resulting sounds, including clouds of clicks and pops, were then manipulated in an intuitive manner. The sounds heard in the initial part of the music reappear throughout the work, modified and often detached from the other sounds that form the beginning of the piece. For a brief survey of some of Picasso's lovers, see <http://sapergalleries.com/PicassoWomen.html>

**From Whence They Sing**, for electronic media, was created entirely from a single sound file that was recorded at a street market in Tijuana, Mexico. The title loosely echoes the words of a street musician who sings, “de donde son los cantantes” as he plays the claves, and while a nearby street vendor repeats over and over the words, “one dollar...one dollar...” Various portions of the file were extracted and manipulated in Sound Hack, Audio Sculpt, Sound Edit I6, and Peak software, and the modified sounds were subsequently mapped in Pro Tools.

**Relief:** This sonic palindrome was created using a waveform editor to delete, clip, cut, and paste little bits of a synthesized sound. Originally intended only as a private exploration, it has become the music for a piece of dance by Erin Tisdale Feiler.

**2BTextures:** i. Branches ii. Breath. 2BTextures is a two movement abstract animation that explores the complex relationship between experimental audio and visuals. This experience takes viewers on an integrated sonic and visual journey into a surrealistic environment influenced by nature.

# NORTH CAROLINA NEWMUSIC INITIATIVE

INITIATING NEW MUSIC & NEW IDEAS ABOUT MUSIC

The success of 14 years of the NEWMUSIC@ECU FESTIVAL drives the pursuit of a more expansive mission: unique programs of commissioning, new approaches to audience engagement, broader concert scheduling, and a recording series, and we mark this phase of growth with a new name: the NORTH CAROLINA NEWMUSIC INITIATIVE, supported in part by director Ed Jacobs' appointment as Robert L. Jones Distinguished Professor of Music.

Our 15th year's initiatives establish new paths of discovery, including

- A unique commissioning program involving students in all phases of the development of new works—identifying composers, negotiating contracts, writing grants, performing world premieres, producing archival recordings;
- New approaches to concert settings, encouraging new opportunities for audience reflection. Look to our March 21 event for discussion on “engaging music on first hearing”;
- The beginning of an annual recording project, in which faculty leads students in capturing the energy of music written expressly for our NEWMUSIC programs.

The Greenville community's support has been vital to NEWMUSIC's growth, and we look forward to building even more partnerships to help the unique projects of this new initiative grow and thrive. Please explore [www.ecu.edu/music/newmusic](http://www.ecu.edu/music/newmusic) and contact me to explore ways to further our mission.

The NORTH CAROLINA NEWMUSIC INITIATIVE is made possible only with the generous sponsorship of foundations, corporations and individuals. We are profoundly grateful for the support they have offered us, and proudly count those listed below among the Festival's benefactors:

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If you are interested in becoming a friend of the NORTH CAROLINA NEWMUSIC INITIATIVE, please contact: Edward Jacobs, 252-328-4280 or [jacobse@ecu.edu](mailto:jacobse@ecu.edu)

With special thanks to Chris Buddo, Chris Ulffers, Britt Theurer, Michael Crane, Harley Dartt, Travis Garrison, Diane Ritchey, Paula Toothman, Dawn Harrison, Dawn Phillips; to John van Coutren, Ron Feeny, Rebecca Feeny, and Caitlin Lutes of the Hilton Greenville; and the entire School of Music staff, faculty and administration for their ongoing support and assistance. And to Pattie Glennon, a very special thanks for everything you do year-round.

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unless noted, events free, at A.J. Fletcher Recital Hall

ROOMFUL OF TEETH, vocal octet

October 2, 2014, 7:30pm, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, ticketed

BLAIR MCMILLEN, piano, November 6, 2014, 7:30pm

PREMIERE PERFORMANCES

Student performers showcase student composers, November 20, 2014, 7:30pm

CHRIS GRYMES, clarinet & XAK BJERKEN, piano

January 23, 2015, 7:30pm

CIRCUIT BRIDGES

A concert of electronic music, February 22, 2015, 7:30pm

FREQUENCIES

Student contemporary music ensemble, March 20, 2015, 7:30pm

ECU CHAMBER WINDS

Scott Carter, Director; Aaron Brooks, composer, March 21, 2015, 7:30pm

PREMIERE PERFORMANCES

Student performers showcase student composers, March 22, 2015, 7:30pm

ECU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Jorge Richter, Director; Chris Grymes, clarinet, March 28, 2015; 7:30pm

Wright Auditorium

PREMIERE PERFORMANCES

Student performers showcase student composers, April 20, 2015, 7:30pm

[www.ecu.edu/music/newmusic](http://www.ecu.edu/music/newmusic)

