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The 1510 8th Street, Oakland, CA 94607

January 2004

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http://transbaycalendar.org

January 2004

The Anthony Braxton Quadruple Trio

Behind the scenes

Anthony Braxton and Myles Boisen in the studio is important to bear in mind that many of these folks have lived in this music for years, just as a classical repertoire player would do. Gino [for example] has been working with AB since I met him at the beginning of the Splatter Trio in 1987. John Shirbina has worked harder than any musician I know to get his sight-reading together over the past few years, and has collected every Braxton recording he could get his hands on! Scott Rosenberg’s dedication and love for Braxton is way beyond fandom, and even beyond any student/teacher relationship you could imagine. In fact, everyone in this ensemble showed a level of devotion, experience, and hard work that was incredible. These aren’t the sort of people who just show up for the gig and try to fake it! Ultimately I think the guidance and ideas that Braxton offered in this rehearsal, combined with the experience and white-knuckle attentiveness of the players, was most crucial to the performance which followed.

Regarding Plonsey’s violin performance at the Victoria, another memorable thing Braxton said in this rehearsal was that he wanted the players to bring their own music into the composition. I saw this as a special encouragement for the musicians to contribute wholly and by themselves, another uniquely inclusive and open-minded Braxton ingredient.

continued on page 2
LISTMANIA 2003

Dave Slussers’ BEST PIZZA SLICE: Sicilian, with extra cheese, at Bambino’s in Berkeley. It wasn’t the food, so much as the experience. The sky was dark on a cold, wet and busy afternoon in the irritation of between these diverse composers, which is to say that they have all moved music forward in their own unique ways.

The confluence of Zorn’s and Braxton’s methods, combined with a felt sense of playfulness and improv, certainly launched The Splatter Trio and informed our entire development. For me, the highest point in Splatter’s evolution was when the line between composition and improvisation was completely blurred, and the compositions existed mostly as a “safety net” and flavoring in the music, but were not the driving element. Tubist Jay Rozen is another East Coast Braxton student/veteran that I believe Justin Yang (recently enrolled in Stanford), Greg Kelley, and Taylor Ho Bynum are structural similarities to Cage (openness, potential glories of ’70s minimalism, built on a multitextured approach) and the “nervy high-brow computer music.”

Zorn’s own unique ways.

John Shiurba, Gino Robair, and Dan Slusser (local) really deserve credit for the assembling the local avant-garde and mature about creating space in this kind of ensemble. The outgoing-style players, though not generally not playing, tended to pile on and fill the space a lot more. This was not a problem for me, but I did note this tendency throughout our time together.

John Shiurba, Gino Robair, and Dan Slusser (local) really deserve credit for the assembling and organizing the concerts and sessions. Along with Scott Rosenberg (seminar) and Tim Drury, they did the logistical groundwork and picked at least the other locals — Matt Ingalls, Liz Albe, Sara Schonbeck (she’s L.A., but like Rosenberg we should embrace her as one of our own). I only met Justin Walker (recently enrolled in Stanford), Greg Kelley, and Taylor Ho Byrum are East Coast Braxton student/veterans that Braxton invited. Tubist Jay Rozen is another East Coast Who has played in Plonsey’s big bands, and also filled the void left by the death of Matt Sperry. Newly local altoist Kyle Bruckmann will also be heard on the 13th recording.

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Zorn’s own unique ways.
January Concerts

PLEASE GO TO WWW.TRANSBAYCALENDAR.ORG FOR DETAILS ABOUT THESE EVENTS,
PLUS UPDATES AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Thu 1/8 8:00 PM $6-10 Luggage Store Gallery New Music Series [1007 Market St. @ 6th Street SF]
Bob Marsh + Ben Wright + Kurt Heyl

Fri 1/9 8:00 PM Marinelli Gallery [544 Sutter Street SF]
Pietro Lusvardi solo bass performance “monologo Contrabbasso” featuring new original compositions.

Sat 1/10 8:00 PM $10 sfSoundseries [Community Music Center, 544 Capp Street, SF]
sfSoundseries: Fenneyough, Finnissy, Reynolds, etc.

Mon 1/12 9:00 PM $10 The Plush Room [The York Hotel 940 Sutter Street SF]
ben chadabe + eric kuehnl and gooferman

Wed 1/14 12:00 PM free UC Santa Clara Recital Hall [Santa Clara Univ. 500 El Camino Real Santa Clara]
Philip Gelb, Shakuhachi - Pietro Lusvardi, bass - Michael Stavik, drums

Wed 1/14 8:00 PM free strictly Ballroom [The Ballroom at CCRMA (The Knoll) 660 Lomita Drive Stanford]
NOISE: Adler / Cella / Gartner / McAllister / Palter

Thu 1/15 8:00 PM S5$1000 Luggage Store Gallery New Music Series [1007 Market St. @ 6th Street SF]
TO BE ANNOUNCED!!!

Thu 1/15 8:00 PM $7 - 15 sliding donation The Jazz House [3192 Adeline @ MLK Berkeley]
Robert W. Getz (Philadelphia, PA), Creative Piano Solo. Only West Coast appearance.

Thu 1/16 9:00 PM $6 - 10 sliding donation The Jazz House [3192 Adeline @ MLK Berkeley]
The Lost Trios (Pynn) and Nathan Clewenger Group (10pm)

Sun 1/18 11:30 AM free, donations go to the performers ACME Observatory at The Jazz House [3192 Adeline @ MLK Berkeley]

Thu 1/15 8:00 PM $6-10 Luggage Store Gallery New Music Series [1007 Market St. @ 6th Street SF]

Fri and Sat 1/30-31 8:30 pm SHARP $20 Woody Woodman’s Finger Palace [903 Cedar Berkeley]
The Invisible World of Butohfingers: Ryuzo Fukuhara (Japan)- butoh dance w/Greg Goodman and
George Cremaschi

Thu 1/30 8:00 PM $10-15 The Jazz House [3192 Adeline @ MLK Berkeley]
Rova Saxophone Quartet blasts off / 2 sets Larry Ochs, Jon Ranise, Steve Adams, Bruce Ackley - el guitars!!!!!!!!!

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ACME Observatory of San Francisco

Thursday Jan 6th 6th St @ chester w.oakland
biggi vinkeloe (sweden).............alto saxophone/flute
Damon Smith.........................double bass
scott r. looney...........................piano

Vorticella

Vorticella is the improvising quartet of Brenda Hutchinson (acoustically processed vocals), Krystyna Bobrowski (natural and household phenomena), Karen Stackpole (gongs and exotic percussion) and Erin Espeland (cello). Their music starts with small percussive and supernatural vocal sounds from odd sources, that combine to move from the eerie to the beautiful, morphing with the singular notes which evoke the imagined songs of the strange, beautiful microcosmos after which the quartet is named.

Three Trapped Tigers is an ensemble of recorder players focused on performance of new music. The core members are David Barnett and Tom Bickley.

Luggage Store Gallery New Music Series

Thu 1/8 8:00 PM
Bob Marsh cello +
Ben Wright acoustic bass +
Kurt Heyl trombone

Thu 1/15 8:00 PM
Pietro Lusvardi double bass
Jack Wright/Bob Marsh Duo
reed/cello

Thu 1/22 8:00 PM
Vorticella and Three Trapped Tigers

Thu 1/29 8:00 PM
Joseph Hammer (tape) +
Thomas Dimuzio (sampling) +
Dimmer (duo)

wednesday jan. 6th
6th st @ chester w. oakland
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Scott Rosenberg

Matt performed two pieces, one composed and one improvised. The first was Boulez’s Dernières, for solo clarinet. Apparently, Matt has been working on elements from this piece for years, and incorporating his own improvised playing, and he finally decided to perform the entire piece in public. As was to be expected, he did a fantastic job. It was clear, intense, purposeful, and totally musical. The extra-musical elements of the year, the visual and dramatic components were well thought out, and executed convincingly and memorably. The makeshift suit and official Boa constrictor (displayed in numerous, lengthy bowels); the angling of the multiple stands as the piece deliberately evolved; and the awkward, tension-building breaks and spillcrossovers between sections all enhanced the experience of the piece.

When it came to Matt’s solo improvisation, the music itself was even more captivating, but the dramatic elements did not hold up in the same way.

It is safe to say that Matt is one of the top five improvising/reading clarinet virtuosos handling both new and improvised music today. He can make the instrument sound like a wall of oscillators or coo like a songbird, in the same breath. Simply stated, his control of the instrument is matched by his sublime intuition for that which works. In other words, he’s not just a pretty face, but charming as hell—metaphorically speaking. To hear him play solo is a humbling pleasure. He is the reason that I do not play the Bb clarinet. And, after hearing him play recently, it is clear that he has re-conceived himself over playing the clarinet, improvising, or whatever it was that used to motivate him to do so. That he was quitting the instrument. Thank god.

That being said, the three moments from the improvisation that remain in memory are a lengthy section near the end, when Matt was playing piercing high frequencies that created an explosive dance of difference tones in the head (that changed when you tilted your head), not unlike a Marianne Amacher or La Monte Young. Second and third were extra-musical gestures; his signature ambiguous start (moving from warming up the horn to the starting point without demarcation); and stomping his foot to keep a simple tempo underneath an improvisation that could not have possibly been related to the stamped tempo. While the dramatic gestures weren’t gratingly distracting, they didn’t add much to the overall performance.

It is commendable and inspiring that Matt refuses to succumb to the routines and formalities of the concert performance scenario, but it’s time that he developed his dramatic ideas to the level that he has developed his musical ideas. His performances would benefit from taking greater extremes his resistance to fit into the drob mold of contemporary chamber ideology and his appreciation for the theater of the absurd, not to mention his Scharra-dry, deadpan sense of humor.

Robert W. Getz (Philadelphia)

Creative Piano Solo

“Getz will strike a chord with fans of attacking, independent-minded pianists like Borah Bergman and Joel Futterman. A thinking man’s energy music, strongly recommended.” - Natte Dorward, Cadence Magazine.

Every 3rd Monday
7-10pm
Led by Eddie Gale (trumpet)
with Chris Tivony (tuba), John Jorgensen (cello), and David Stone (piano)

The Search Continues

After receiving a request to write something about a significant musical event over the past year, I found it hard to come up with much. My favorite experiences of art come when I’m completely confused or dissatisfied by the experience. I wish I could take my audience out of my critical self and into something that draws me in without necessarily knowing that it’s happening. There was no brick road going on this year, although there were moments. In particular, I could cite: 1) The Extra-musical performance by Frans Grafotki and Chris Brown at CHM(A) allowed listeners to revel in a range of improvisations, examined with both aesthetic abandon and microscopic details of rhythm, phrase, timbre and dynamics. 2) Evan Parker, Alexander Von Schlipphacken and Paul Lytton played for us at the Community Music Center in SF and sounded just the way you would expect these three great innovators to sound—which was somehow revelatory while never surpassing any expectations. 3) The 10-piece Industrial Jazz Group came up UA to work out on a basis of compositional ideas by pianist Andrew Dutkoff that led its easier and overly-talented players through fashioning the atmospheres of melody and form that somehow blended elements of Ellington, Mingus, Gil Evans, Bronson’s Creative Orchestra projects (in its jukebox), Feldman, and Louis Jordan’s jamp bands of the late 1950’s, with more room and humor than irony.

The Jazz House is located at 3192 Adeline Street in Berkeley, a block southwest of the Ashby BART. (Please note there is an incorrect Adeline Street in Oakland.)

The Jazz House is a small, non-descript warehouse located next to the police station where Martin Luther King and Adeline Street meet. A blue light and a peculiar “Are” sign reside above the entrance.

Jack’s Back in January

Jack Wright

and the Wright Stuff: Morgan Underwood - bass
Niko Shubara - guitar
Pietro Lusvardi, solo bass
Karen Stackpole - percussion

Wed, Jan 21st at 8pm $10

see January Event Calendar for locations