

Notice Recordings Cassette Release Show

John Cage: Four Realizations for Solo Percussion

by Matt Hannafin

John Cage, *Experiences No. 2*

Margaret McNeal (soprano)

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John Cage, *Child of Tree*

Matt Hannafin (percussion), Emily Jones (dance)

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Christian Wolff, *Play*

Lee Elderton (soprano sax), Matt Hannafin (percussion),
Branic Howard and Evan Lindorff-Ellery (cassettes),
Takahiro Yamamoto (dance)

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John Cage, *Composed Improvisation for One-Sided Drums*

Matt Hannafin (percussion)

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Toshi Ichiyanagi, *The Field*

Brandon Conway (guitar), Lee Elderton (clarinet),
Matt Hannafin (percussion), Branic Howard (guitar),
Emily Jones (dance), Margaret McNeal (soprano),
Takahiro Yamamoto (dance)

Celebrating the release of Matt Hannafin's *John Cage: Four Realizations for Solo Percussion* on Notice Recordings, this concert presents three compositions by Cage and one each by his students/associates Christian Wolff and Toshi Ichiyanagi.

THE MUSIC

John Cage, *Experiences No. 2* (1948): A simple, unadorned vocal solo punctuated by extended silences, *Experiences No. 2* was composed for a 1948 production of Merce Cunningham's 1945 dance piece *Experiences*. The text is derived from the tenth of e. e. cummings' *Sonnets—Unrealities* and the musical structure mirrors Cage's *Experiences No. 1*, a piano piece composed for the original Cunningham *Experiences* of 1945, during a period in which Cage's work was heavily influenced by the music of Erik Satie.

John Cage, *Child of Tree* (1975): One of Cage's three "nature pieces" from the 1970s, *Child of Tree* asks a performer to make music with plant materials and/or "altered" plant materials. Deliberately opaque instructions lay out a complicated, time-consuming procedure of consulting the *I Ching* to determine section durations and instrument assignments within those sections. Having demonstrated his/her seriousness through this ordeal, the musician is then free to improvise within the received parameters.

Christian Wolff, *Play* (1969): This text piece asks performers to improvise within an architecture formed of several succinct instructions—just enough to give the piece a clear character, but not so detailed that they impede the performers' ability to make choices in the moment. We've chosen to interpret the final instruction ("At some point or throughout use electricity") in a way that dovetails with this concert's *raison d'être*.

John Cage, *Composed Improvisation for One-Sided Drums with or without Jangles* (1990): Exploring Cage's late interest in improvisation—a performance practice he'd criticized earlier in his career—this piece was dedicated to percussionist Glen Velez, with whom tonight's percussionist, Matt Hannafin, studied several years later. Like many of Cage's late works, it provides a method for structuring a performance, then leaves musical content to the performer. "One-sided drums" refers to the frame drum family (tambourines, Irish bodhrans, etc.), Velez's instruments of choice. Cage's decision to abstract that family as "one-sided drums" (e.g., any drum with a single head) may be a display of his workmanlike practicality, giving non-frame drum players the option of using more common "one-sided" drums.

Toshi Ichiyanagi, *The Field* (1966): Reproduced as part of Cage's groundbreaking 1969 book *Notations*, Ichiyanagi's spare graphic score is both straightforward and enigmatic, depicting 17 shapes and patterns spread across an otherwise blank though highly textured field. A short block of text instructions asks players to "make performing rules by measuring the patterns and the white spaces in the following manner: Distance (time), Area (space), Density (speed or compactness)."

THE PERFORMERS

Brandon Conway (electric guitar) is an improviser who continually seeks to develop and deepen his own idiosyncratic approach to the guitar, employing techniques from diverse genres and improvisational approaches that utilize abstracted gestures, divergent tonalities, indefinite and simultaneous pulses, and emergent ensemble textures. Brandon serves on the board of the Creative Music Guild and performs with improvised punk band Halfbird. www.halfbird.bandcamp.com

Lee Elderton (clarinet, soprano saxophone) has been a featured soloist in concerti and solo works, and has toured internationally with the Spectrum Quartet. In addition to his pursuits as a classical saxophonist and clarinetist, he is an avid performer of jazz and improvised music and has performed with the Portland Jazz Composer's Ensemble, Machete Order, Ocular Concern, the PDX Saxophone Quartet, Bud Shank, Ernie Watts, Roscoe Mitchell, Wayne Horvitz, Tiger Okoshi, Tim Berne, and William Hooker.

Matt Hannafin (percussion) is a New York-born, Portland-based percussionist active in experimental music, improvisation, and Iranian classical and traditional music. A frequent solo performer, he's also played with chamber groups, improvising groups, traditional Ukrainian and Sephardic ensembles, and musicians including trumpeter Nate Wooley, oboist Catherine Lee, sound artist Loren Chasse, and electro-acoustic duo Golden Retriever. Matt is the curator and director of Portland's Extradition Series. www.matthannafin.com/Music.php

Branic Howard (guitar, cassettes) is a composer engaged with sound and how place is inscribed with meaning through its sonic surrounding. He performs as an improviser with electronics and computer, heads the audio engineering program at Portland's Grant High School, and runs Open Field Recording, an on-location mobile recording business. www.openfieldrecording.com

Emily Jones (dance) is a movement artist and teacher based in Portland, Oregon. She is passionate about movement as a form of expression and a conduit for healing. She studied dance at the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Performing Arts. She has performed with a variety of choreographers and performers in Portland and San Francisco.

Evan Lindorff-Ellery (cassettes) works with visual and aural mediums and is the co-owner of Notice Recordings. Originally from Vermont, he resided in Portland for five years before recently relocating to New York's Hudson Valley.

Margaret McNeal (soprano) is a Portland-based vocalist, producer, and multi-disciplinary creative. As a vocalist, Margaret focuses on cross-genre contemporary music, improvisation, and collaboration. She has sung and contributed text to contemporary chamber works, created improvised film scores, writhed on the floor in an ensemble of dancing musicians, performed Terry Riley's *In C*, and studied oracular laboratory theatre and extended vocal techniques at the Roy Hart Center. Her album and indie-classical project *Lilith* can be found at lilithensemble.com.

Takahiro Yamamoto (dance) is an artist and choreographer based in Portland. He co-directs the performance company *madhouse* with Ben Evans and is part of Portland-based support group Physical Education with Allie Hankins, keyon gaskin, and Lu Yim.

Notice Recordings is a cassette label that started in 2009 in Chicago, migrated to Portland and New Orleans, and now resides in New Orleans and New York's Hudson Valley. It continues to focus on modern composition and contemporary sound and music works. Notice is run by Evan Lindorff-Ellery and Travis Bird. Tonight's concert is a co-production of Notice Recordings and the **Extradition Series**.

www.noticerecordings.bandcamp.com
www.extradition-series.com

