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Plays *Corner*

CELEBRATING 90 YEARS IN THE LIFEWORK OF PHILIP CORNER

CONCERT FOUR OF FIVE • FEBRUARY 11, 2023

Performance Works NW, PDX

Presence

Linda Austin, Danielle Ross (dance), Juniana Lanning, Maxx Katz,
Loren Chasse, Matt Hannafin, Caspar Sonnet (percussion, objects)

La Bella Infinita

Danielle Ross (dance), Caspar Sonnet (dobro), Branich Howard (guitar),
Loren Chasse, Juniana Lanning, Matt Hannafin (percussion, objects)

Sounds, Austere, for Elegant Rooms

Maxx Katz (flute), Annie Gilbert (trombone), Caspar Sonnet (dobro),
Stephanie Lavon Trotter (voice), Matt Hannafin (psaltery, percussion)

3 for Phyllis for Some Things

Linda Austin, Danielle Ross (dance), Stephanie Lavon Trotter (voice),
Annie Gilbert (voice, trombone), Maxx Katz (flute, voice),
Loren Chasse (percussion), Matt Hannafin (percussion),
Branich Howard (percussion, guitar)

A Day in the Life (or a Moment) (or More)

Linda Austin (dance), Juniana Lanning (voice), Matt Hannafin (voice),
with projected images and audio by all three performers

Extradition offers a standing ovation to Philip Corner & Phoebe Neville for their decades of creativity, their absolute dedication to a life of art, and their unflagging help and encouragement as we prepared for these concerts.

A CONCERT OF DANCE

Presence (1995). This is a one-page text score headed as “a solo for a group dance by Phoebe Neville”—Phoebe being Philip’s wife. It is scored for “miscellaneous small instrument-objects, including: drum (frame), resonant bowls, wood sticks, bricks, pouring water, stones,” and rather than defining a structure, it simply enumerates three types of sound forms performers may use to construct a performance. The *Basic Sound* is described as “a continuous rubbing, grating” that begins the piece and “to a large part underlay(s) others, and represent(s) itself often.” *Interrupting Sounds* comprise single-stroke sounds, single-action resultant sound, rocking until still, dropping, rebounding, and combinations of those sounds. *Continua-Pulsings* are to be played at contrasting tempi, “one high, the other low.” In correspondence about the piece, Corner remarked, “I am so happy you’re doing this one. Hurrah for Phoebe! Make it as beeyootyfull as she, pleaz.”

La Bella Infinita (2001). “Conceived as an accompaniment to steady focus,” this piece was first performed to complement “a slow circular dance by Phoebe Neville” but could also accompany “the projection of a simple light spot, white, or a more resplendent image, which would move slowly. Or an image from nature seen close . . . water or wind, leaf or a tree, or vistas: plains mountains seas (sections from some Stan Brakhage films).” A performance consists of mildly resonant sounds suspended in a much more prevalent silence, with small variations in the character of individual sounds.

Sounds, Austere, for Elegant Rooms (1960s). “Sounds, Austere” is one of many 1960s pieces rediscovered by Corner 40 years later, after he’d had his papers shipped from New York to Italy. Scored for an indeterminate number of independent instrumentalists, percussionists, and/or vocalists, it presents interpreters with two large pages scattered with “sketches of developable event-modules,” some graphical, some text. As with many Corner pieces, interpretations are to be guided by directions given or implied, but from that basis performers are free to push things as far as they wish. In correspondence, Corner noted, “The title should count for something—the elegance. The room must be part of the performance. Put in easy chairs! With embroidery! Repaint the hall! Put in flowers! Crepe

designs! Fancy curtains! Candelabras! Maybe even uniformed attendants! Or at least the musicians in livery! Wigs? . . . too much, but ribbons and bows!" We've done what we can.

3 for Phyllis for Some Things (1967). Another rediscovered piece, resurrected from the remaining score pages and incomplete instructions 41 years after performance by its namesake, dancer and choreographer Phyllis Lamhut. The "3" refers to the piece's three-part structure, while "some things" refers to the instrumentation, which consists of "mostly natural noise sounds with possible non-sung voicing." The score itself is a massively confusing set of graphics, graph paper, and number strips, which are to be cut out and pasted over one another—a task made more difficult by the fact that some pages were enlarged and others reduced to fit the published score's dimensions, making accurate superimposition impossible absent judicious use of Photoshop. Interpreting the score took days of mental effort and frustrated discussion, but we're pretty sure we have it right. If not, we lean on a sentence that appears toward the end of Corner's 2008 notes about the piece, which reads, "Any remaining ambiguities should be resolved by good sense."

A Day in the Life (or a Moment) (or More) (2008). This piece is a diary, a sequential list of "Things Heard. Also Things Seen maybe. Simple Words—separate. More Nouns. Modif[ied] only as necessary. Adjectives few. Verbs even less." Performers collect these words, and also possibly representative images and sound, throughout a day (or a moment, or more), then present them as a performance—which, given Corner's direction that the piece is "for: anyone-to-do / for: everyone-to-do / to do. forever"—could simply be the private performance of living. We have chosen to perform it as a multimedia piece, combining voice, dance, visuals, and recorded sounds, all describing things heard and scene throughout a day in our individual lives.



LEARN MORE: Our EXTRADITION PLAYS CORNER page includes quotes, biographical information, articles exploring Corner's main themes and compositional approach, and links to additional resources. Scan here or go to:

www.extraditionpdx.com/extradition-plays-corner

NEXT CONCERTS

EXTRADITION PLAYS CORNER concludes next Saturday:

FEB 18, 7:30PM @ LEAVEN COMMUNITY • 5431 NE 20th Ave, PDX

When They Pull the Plug (2002)
Electro-Acoustics (2009)
Homage to Revere (1962)
Attempting Whitenesses (1964)
The Art of No-Art (2019–22)
Through the Mysterious Barricade (2003)

AND THEN . . .

After the concerts, EXTRADITION PLAYS CORNER goes digital with a compendium of live concert recordings, recordings of additional Corner pieces from Extradition musicians, and still more recorded by friends and peer ensembles around the world. Look for it on Bandcamp in late March or early April—just in time for Corner's 90th birthday.

AND FOR THE REST OF 2023 . . .

Spring Concert • April 22 @ Leaven Community, 5431 NE 20th Ave, PDX

Summer Concert • July 22 @ PWNW, 4625 SE 67th Ave, PDX

Fall Concert • October 21 @ Leaven Community, 5431 NE 20th Ave, PDX

See www.extraditionpdx.com for performance calendar, ensemble info, sound archive, and more.

Extradition is directed by **Matt Hannafin**. Live sound by **Tim Westcott**. Recording services by **Branic Howard / openfieldrecording.com**. Door management by **Caspar Sonnet**.

This concert is supported by the generosity of our patrons.

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