Sound Junction 2015

7:30pm Wednesday 13th May 2015, Firth Hall

Chris Hobbs          No Holds Barred (All Bars Held)
Dimitrios Savva      ‘Stous Theous’ ('To The Gods')
Alex Gowan-Webster   4:33 (am)
Jonathan Higgins     Digital Spaces
 Interval
Isaac Baggaley       Sleep Sounds… The Rocks
Ross Davidson        Night Toffee
Vanessa Sorce-Lévesque Bora
Chris Hobbs
No Holds Barred (All Bars Held)

'No Holds Barred...' is an acousmatic piece combining elements of EDM and glitch within the acousmatic form. The opening piece of an album, it hints at the ideas explored in the rest of the pieces, transcendentalism, lattice-influenced rhythm and source bonding. The piece starts by layering un-edited guitar chords over elongated guitar chords, creating a cell-like, almost minimal listening experience. The piece begins to slowly introduce electronic elements whilst fragmenting the instrumental samples. The piece uses the idea of tempo-lattice in flux – what I thought of as an 'organic tempo' in which tempo fluctuates influenced by the intrinsic elements of the sounds themselves, as opposed to sound objects being mapped onto a static tempo. The piece works in fragments, offering fleeting moments of beat-based phrases juxtaposed with the introspective style of listening that opens the piece. The piece itself acts as a deconstruction of a chord progression, which occurs twice, inaudible as a progression (presented as drone material), only audibly revealing itself in the final moments of the piece – the decomposition of the materials acting over the course of an extended form to finally reveal the primary source of the piece.

Dimitrios Savva
‘Stous Theous’ (‘To The Gods’)

‘Stous Theous’ (‘To The Gods’) refers to the process of praying and the need of people to communicate with Gods, seeking to reach that inner spiritual state of ‘nirvana’. The composition is trying to capture in an abstract and spontaneous way that specific feeling of tuning in and gradually moving closer to that undefined spiritual state.

Alex Gowan-Webster
4:33 (am)

4:33 (am) is a piece created for the Furnace Park Album project and draws exclusively on sound sources from Furnace Park and the surrounding area. All pitched materials are derived from one fence hit and the other materials are bricks found in the park and a sound walk made in the local area. The name 4:33 (am) comes from my personal favourite time of day in a city where the world seems peaceful before the bustle of the morning. The joke in the name is related to the fact that at this time the city is seen to be silent but of course never is.

Jonathan Higgins
Digital Spaces

Composed for the Furnace Park Project, Digital Spaces is an exploration of noise through the resonance of the real world. The sounds used throughout the work were generated by converting images of the park into audio; this harsh noise was then processed using convolution to allow these digital sounds to interact with real spaces and resonances captured at the park.
Isaac Baggaley
Sleep Sounds... The Rocks

As a long suffering insomniac, Isaac has tried everything in his power to achieve a peaceful nights sleep. This piece started life as a functional collection of environmental sounds compiled to induce sleep, these include waves lapping on rocks, a bird filled field and a windy loft. Rather than inducing the rest that Isaac had hoped for he found the sharp transitions jarring and spent night after night merging sounds and creating artificial bridges between worlds. The product of this tinkering has been condensed and prepared for diffusion, the result a dreamscape of environmental sounds colliding and transforming.

Ross Davidson
Night Toffee

With Night Toffee, I aimed to capture the broad range of emotions that are triggered through the experience and proliferation of toffee; from the modern-day industrial toffee manufacturers of Delhi and their controversial socio-political heritage, to toffee's mystery-shrouded beginnings, there has always been a substantial level of intrigue and myth embedded in the smooth texture of the sweet. This composition seeks to recreate sonically the chewy phenomenon of this nourriture douce, but reconceptualising the context to night time.

Vanessa Sorce-Lévesque
Bora

Inspired by the Adriatic sea catabatic wind Bora, this musical piece is one that expresses travel. Throughout the composition, one can hear a constant rhythmical sound which bears great resemblance to one of a train in motion. As its path is followed, soundscape-like elements emerge on the way, to create a sense of direction and perspective. It is a work of 'sonic geography', that is, deliberately exposing different layers of spatial depths with the use of different sound sources as well as specific sound processing. As if, like on board a train, one could choose to look at the blurred landscape drifting by, or be calmly carried away by the more distant outlines of scenery.
Chris Hobbs
Chris Hobbs is a UK based Sonic Artist who studied an MA in Sonic Arts under Adam Stansbie and Adrian Moore. He released his first album ‘Between Black and White’ which explored hybridised ideals in an acousmatic idiom online in September 2014. Before that he has had works played at Musica Nova, Sound Junction and in the Crucible Theatre. He currently continues composing, alongside writing music for film, games and theatre. For more information visit: www.chrishobbsmusic.com.

Dimitrios Savva
Dimitrios Savva was born in Cyprus, 1987. He received his Bachelor degree (distinction) in music composition from the Ionian University of Corfu and his Master degree (distinction) in Electroacoustic composition from the University of Manchester. In January 2015 he started his PhD in Sheffield University under the supervision of Adrian Moore. During his studies he had contemporary composition courses with Joseph Papadatos and Dimitra Trypani and electroacoustic composition courses with Andreas Mniestris, Theodore Lotis and David Berezan. He has attended to electroacoustic composition seminars with Steven Miller, Leigh Landy, Tim Ward, Andrew Bentley and Simon Emmerson. He has also participated in live electronic concerts with the EPHMME student ensemble. His compositions have been performed in Greece, Cyprus, United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium, France, Brazil and USA. His acousmatic composition Erevos won the first prize ex aequo in the student category of acousmatic composition competition Metamorphoses 2012 and his composition Balloon Theories has been awarded with the public prize at the composition competition Metamorphoses 2014.

Alex Gowan-Webster
Alex Gowan-Webster is a composer based at the University of Sheffield. He has dual interests in Electroacoustic and Instrumental composition. His music is often timbre and drone based as opposed to using pitch or tonality as a structural tool. Alex was a selected winner of the 2013 Armitage Composers’ competition at the University of Sheffield and has recently been commissioned by the University Symphony Orchestra as well as in the past by pianist and composer Ben Gaunt. He was the Sheffield composer at the Leeds Lieder Day of Song where he collaborated with poet Antony Dunn. He has also presented electronic works at Sines and Squares: University of Manchester 2014 and Sound Junction: University of Sheffield: 2014.

Jonathan Higgins
Jonathan Higgins is an undergraduate composer from Surrey who is currently based in Sheffield where he is in the third year of his BMus degree. He is currently working for Furnace Park in Sheffield as part of their ‘Sheaf Prospects’ soundscaping and composition project. His music is often densely gestural and noise based with influences from beat and glitch based music. He has presented works both in the UK and internationally, most recently at the joint ICMC-SMC conference in Athens, Metanast in Manchester, Sound Junction in Sheffield and Noise Floor in Staffordshire. His electroacoustic remix of Gary Carpenter’s piece “Neiderau” played by the Tempest Flute Trio was shortlisted for the Nonclassical 10 Remix Contest. Fragments, a piece based on Humpty Dumpty received a runners up prize in the USSS Nursery Rhymes competition.

Isaac Baggaley
Isaac Baggaley is a keen ornithologist. One day whilst analysing a field recordings of bird song he found himself more and more fascinated with the background environmental sounds. With simple tools he found he was able to manipulate and compile these sounds to create unique and impossible sonic landscapes. As the recipient of a White Rose scholarship he is now studying at a Masters degree in Composition at The University of Sheffield. He spends a weekend every month locked in a small room at the top of his house crafting environments from sounds harvested from his immediate surroundings.

Ross Davidson

I grew up in Northumberland, and came to Sheffield last year to study English literature and music. It was at that point that I first became conscious of Electroacoustic music, and since then I have become interested in the large amount of possibilities this type of music and composition offers on top of more “traditional” styles.

Vanessa Sorce-Lévesque

Vanessa has recently moved to Sheffield to research performance in electroacoustic music, with the intention of completing a PhD. Her supervisors are Adam Stansbie and Adrian Moore. Until recently based in Montréal, she has had the privilege of studying at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal, receiving the teachings of Yves Daoust, Martin Bédard, and Louis Dufort, among others. As a composer, her musical style includes a good deal of poetry, sounds of the environment, themes of the North, travel, a great use of different space levels and a high aesthetic sensibility. As a performer, Vanessa has had the chance of interpreting works of a great palette of styles, and a variety of sound diffusion systems in North & South America and Europe.