



Ways of Hearing: Music by Taylor Brook

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2023 | 8 PM

Phillip T. Young Recital Hall, MacLaurin Building
University of Victoria

We acknowledge and respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

PROGRAM

All works composed by Taylor Brook

Industry and the Arts (2022)

Heather Byford, alto voice and MUGIC controller
Taylor Brook, electronics

Song (2015)

Sandra Espínola, cello

Soundscaper (2022-)

Alex Matterson, flute
Taylor Brook, electronics

INTERMISSION

Livingry and Ways of Seeing (2023)

Jeffrey Gavett, baritone voice and piano
Corey Hamm, keyboard
Hamilton Lau, keyboard
Taylor Brook, electronics
Gracie Leavitt and John Berger, text

Canticum (2023)

Taylor Brook, bowed guitar and electronics

Special thanks to all of the performers, Dr. Anthony Tan, and the UVic School of Music.

PROGRAM NOTES

about **Industry and the Arts**

Industry and the Arts is a set of five short songs for alto voice with MUGIC controller and electronics. This piece was written for Heather Byford in 2022.

Industry and the Arts explores the relationship between industry and art. The initial inspiration for this piece was a passage that describes a newly-opened Parisian Arcade from the opening pages of Walter Benjamiun's unfinished *Arcades Project*:

De ces palais les colonnes magiques
À l'amateur montrent de toutes parts,
Dans les objets qu'étaient leurs portiques,
Que l'industrie est rivale des arts.
— *Nouveaux Tableaux de Paris* (Paris, 1828), vol. I, p. 27

Benjamin describes the 19th-century arcades of Paris as the birthplace of modern consumerism, and in this piece, I connect this idea with current technology of the Internet and machine learning as the focal point of industries incursion into our lives and art.

While writing this piece, I met with vocalist Heather Byford to create a corpus of recordings that were used to create the electronic elements of this piece. This electronic part takes the form of a motion controller (MUGIC) that is attached to the performers hand, triggering electronic sound.

about **Song**

This score was written for Anssi Karttunen during the Summer of 2015 in Smithers, British Columbia, for a recital at the Scandinavia House in New York City, Fall 2015.

This composition results from a collaboration with cellist Anssi Karttunen. The project began when I sent him an object that would serve as inspiration for a solo improvisation, an improvisation to form the basis for my score. From the improvisation, I drew out collections of pitches as well as some playing techniques and gestures that I then incorporated into the music, forming a dialogue between performer and composer.

The title, *Song*, alludes to the melodic character of this composition. Mr. Karttunen's improvisation had a textural and gestural character, more concerned with timbre than melody. Despite this, I heard a great deal of melodic potential in his improvisation, which was only being hinted at, and took this as a challenge.

about **Soundscaper**

Soundscaper is a piece of software that generates unrealistic nature soundscapes by reacting to live audio. Tonight's performance will feature an improvised duet between Alex Matterson on flute with Soundscaper. You will hear the software sometimes trying to match the sound of the flute and at other times trying to contrast it as it improvises its part in the duet.

about **Livingry and Ways of Seeing**

Livingry and Ways of Seeing was written in the Summer and Fall of 2022 for Jeffrey Gavett.

This piece is a set of six songs for a baritone who also plays acoustic piano accompanied by two keyboards. The two keyboards are used to simulate retuned pianos, each song featuring a different tuning for the keyboards. The text for this piece is made from excerpts of *Ways of Seeing* by John Berger and poems by Gracie Leavitt from her *Livingry* collection. The songs alternate between the prose of Berger, discussing aesthetics, and the emotive poetry of Leavitt. The song titles and texts are as follows:

- I - Ways of Seeing (John Berger)
- II - Nonce Hex For "Romantic Love, The Last Illusion," which will "[Keep] Us Alive Until The Revolution Come" (Gracie Leavitt)
- III - Holbein's Ambassadors (John Berger)
- IV - The Sticks, Wilily (Gracie Leavitt)
- V - Publicity (John Berger)
- VI - Amygdala Madrigal (Gracie Leavitt)

about **Canticum**

Canticum is a piece for bowed guitar and computer improviser. This piece is of indeterminate length, decided in the moment by the performer as they react to the sound generated by the computer improviser. The computer improviser software has been trained with recordings of bowed guitar in a wide variety of tunings, which it draws from to generate an accompaniment for the live guitar.

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