

FALL COMPOSITION JURY CONCERT
THURSDAY, October 31, 2019 - 7:30 P.M.
Conrad Prebys Concert Hall

Nathaniel Haering

Sparte II

Stephen de Filippo

Casuarina-salvaged Dreaming

Sang Song

Tracing Gretel

I. To the Little House

II. *Kindertotenmusik*

Intermission

Zachary Konick

Currents

Jacques Zafra

liusa

Nasim Khorassani

Line

(Audience will be requested to relocate to the Experimental Theater)

Nathaniel Haering
Spate II

Teresa Diaz de Cossio, flute
Juliana Gaona Villamizar, oboe
David Aguila, trumpet
Berk Schneider, trombone
Michael Jones, percussion
Rebecca Lloyd-Jones, percussion
Ilana Waniuk, violin
Kathryn Schulmeister, contrabass

Steven Schick, conductor

While seeking to expand on the concepts and material found in the original iteration of *Spate I* was immersed in its erratic, panicked atmosphere. I became obsessed with the idea of frantic, futile solos lashing out violently from silence with such constant intensity and fervor that they resulted in a kind of horrified stasis, a unit of grotesque and vicious sustain, striving endlessly but going nowhere, grasping desperately at nothing in the pursuit of a distant unseen hope.

Stephen de Filippo
Casuarina-salvaged Dreaming
for mixed octet & electronics

Teresa Diaz de Cossio, flute
Alexander Ishov, flute
Juliana Gaona Villamizar, oboe
Michael Jones, percussion
Rebecca Lloyd-Jones, percussion
Dimitris Paganos Koukakis, piano
Ilana Waniuk, violin
Kathryn Schulmeister, contrabass

Steven Schick, conductor

In West Australian and indigenous folk traditions, the casuarina tree (*casuarina obesa*) is understood as a conveyer of past experiences, a holder of messages, and a 'vocal' tree. The tree has been consistently noticed for the sounds made as wind passes through its unusual foliage of needles and leaf scales. The acoustic experience of the casuarina has been represented as haunted, grieving and voicing a secret language — expressing personal histories and experiences.

Using a field recording of the tree as a starting point in both the composition and electronics, I wanted to explore memories in flux. The wind, voices, birds, and instrumental samples all travel between channels in the auditorium, and the ensemble reacts, replicates, and manoeuvres around the electronic component. Sound has high social significance innately relating to a sense of place, but through electronic manipulation I wanted to represent a displacement.

Most of the electronic sound sources are localised specifically within the Southwest region of Australia: some are extracts from home video recordings, conversations with friends, field recordings (urban and natural), recitation of local poetry, and tidbits found in the process of composing. These sources are sometimes processed; others occur in full — sometimes hidden in the texture, other times more present. However, all the sources have a personal connectedness to myself, my experience, my sense of place, and my relationship with home.

Acknowledging my current distance from home, I wanted to express that these memories are in flux. I am in America, the casuarinas are gone, but the recordings help salvage my connectedness to place. This is not an exoticised representation in any sense, and specific place may not be perceptible in the recordings' origins — more-so in an international context. Nonetheless, I hope the messages hidden in the wind's texture, the native birds, the voices, and the experiences imbue themselves within the work.

III

Sang Song *Tracing Gretel*

I. To the Little House

II. *Kindertotenmusik*

Teresa Diaz de Cossio & Alexander Ishov, flutes

Juliana Gaona Villamizar, oboe

David Aguila, trumpet

Berk Schneider, trombone

Michael Jones, percussion

Shaoai Ashley Zhang, piano

Ilana Waniuk, violin

Kathryn Schulmeister, contrabass

Rebecca Lloyd-Jones & Dimitris Paganos Koukakis, actors

Steven Schick, conductor

Tracing Gretel is in two movements, the first of which is given the subtitle “To the Little House.” The name “Gretel” in the title, of course, refers to the little sister from *Hansel and Gretel*. As the absence of her brother’s name in the title suggests, however, this work is far from being a retelling of the classic fairy tale. It is well known that fairy tales are often tinged with dark—even gruesome—undertones. *Hansel and Gretel* is not an exception: it features heartless parents, attempts at cannibalism and a virtual auto-da-fé. But this 19th century fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm may have an even grimmer undertone.

The original 1812 version of *Hansel and Gretel* concludes as follows:

Der Vater freute sich als er sie wieder sah, er hatte keinen vergnügten Tag gehabt, seit seine Kinder fort waren, und ward nun ein reicher Mann. Die Mutter aber war gestorben.

The father rejoiced when he saw them once more, for he had not had a happy day since they had been gone, and now he was a rich man. The mother, however, had died.

The cause of the mother’s death is not mentioned in the story, prompting some commentators to propose that she and the witch are (metaphorically?) the same person—with the implication that Gretel may have committed matricide when she pushed the witch into the fiery oven. While the verity of this claim is

debatable, ambiguities like this are the primary inspiration for this work.

The second movement, entitled “*Kindertotenmusik*,” alludes to, and includes quotations from, Gustav Mahler’s 1904 song cycle *Kindertotenlieder*. The quotes are from the last song “In diesem Wetter!” and are limited to the music roughly corresponding to Mahler’s setting of the following line:

Sie ruh’n als wie in der Mutter Haus, They’re at peace as if in their mother’s house,

The quotations are invariably interrupted right before the word “Haus,” however. This work also quotes the following questions from the fake 911 call the Menendez Brothers made after brutally murdering their parents in 1989:

911 Dispatchers: *What’s the problem? . . . What happened? . . . Who shot who? . . .*

During the first trial, the brothers’ lawyers introduced the so-called battered-child syndrome as a defense: Lyle and Erik Menendez, who were 21 and 18 at the time of the crimes, committed the murders as a result of years and years of sexual and emotional abuse by their parents. (The “abuse excuse” was not allowed in the retrial and the brothers were subsequently found guilty.)

There are several ambiguities surrounding all of the deaths referred to above. In case of *Hansel and Gretel*, it’s the alleged matricide. In case of the Menendez Brothers’ fratricide, it’s their motivation. Lastly, while *Kindertotenlieder* is often translated as “Songs on the Death of Children,” the German expression is quite ambiguous in that it can denote anything relating to children *and* death. (And there’s no clear indication in the song cycle that the children of the grieving father died of natural causes!)

In light of these ambiguities, I’ve given this work an “open ending”—with the help of headphones.

You should have received a pair of headphones upon entering the hall. PLEASE KEEP YOUR HEADSET TURNED OFF AT ALL TIMES until it becomes abundantly clear that you may turn it on. At that moment, turn on your headset and experiment with it as you please. There are three channels available, each represented by red, green or blue light. Towards the end of the work, three different tracks will be transmitted and *you* get to decide how the piece ends by choosing a track you find most convincing or appropriate. Also, you could put on your headset as one normally would—but you also could merely bring it close to your ears so you can hear live music clearly. Of course, not doing anything is also an option! No matter what you eventually decide to do, please keep your headset turned off until you are allowed to turn it on. And please make sure to return your headset after the performance as it doesn’t work outside of this particular setup. Thank you.

Zachary Konick
Currents

Alexander Ishov, flute
 Juliana Gaona Villamizar, oboe
 David Aguila, trumpet
 Berk Schneider, trombone
 Ilana Waniuk, violin
 Kathryn Schulmeister, contrabass
 Rebecca Lloyd-Jones & Michael Jones, percussion
 Dimitris Paganos Koukakis, piano

Steven Schick, conductor

Currents for chamber ensemble was composed in 2019 for Steven Schick and members of the UC San Diego Department of Music. The work opens with a distinctive polyphonic ensemble texture, which journeys through morphed ensemble textures by an unveiling of perceptual sonic clarity juxtaposed against perceptually cloudy sonic material.

Jacques Zafra
liusa

Ilana Waniuk, violin
 Juliana Gaona Villamizar, oboe
 David Aguila, trumpet
 Rebecca Lloyd-Jones, percussion

Berk Schneider, trombone

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VI

Nasim Khorassani

Line

(Conrad Prebys Music Center, Experimental Theater)

Berk Schneider, trombone

Michael Jones, marimba

Rebecca Lloyd-Jones, piano

Kathryn Schulmeister, contrabass

Gabriel Zalles – technical integration

This is a line. It can guide you to your goals, or surround you like a border.

JURY DISCUSSION SESSION
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2019
9:00 a.m. - CPMC 231

Production Credits:

Production Coordinator – David J. Espiritu

Theatrical Production Specialist – Jeremy Olson

Production Technicians – Bobby Bray, Mark Geddes, Pablo Ochoa, and Aaron Sum

Recording Engineers – Andrew Munsey & Mike Butler

Recording Assistants – Xochilt Khoury, Christopher Robinson, Jeffrey Xing, Hailey Brown,
Mason Davis

122 GSR – Gabriel Zalles

Program Associate – Madison Greenstone

Audience members are reminded to please silence all phones and noise-generating devices before the performance. As a matter of courtesy and copyright law, no unauthorized recording or photography is allowed in the hall. UC San Diego is a non-smoking campus.

CONTACT US

For information on upcoming concerts:

Music Box Office: (858) 534-3448 | <http://music.ucsd.edu/concerts>