



EMC²: The Talks...

Virginia Anderson

The Experimental Music Catalogue

In 1968, the pianist John Tilbury and the composer Cornelius Cardew, having built up a great body of experimental music, asked the then-youngest member of the experimental music community, eighteen-year-old Christopher Hobbs, to create a method of disseminating these pieces to other musicians. Hobbs founded the Experimental Music Catalogue (the EMC), which took off so well that by 1971 the EMC was run by a committee consisting of Hobbs, Gavin Bryars and Michael Nyman. The EMC was distinctive as a small publishing initiative in its Anthologies of score collections grouped according to instrument or activity (the Keyboard Anthology, Educational Anthology, Verbal Anthology) and in its insistence that composers kept rights and other decisions regarding their works. From 1969 to the early 1980s, the EMC sent experimental and minimalist music by mail order to an international audience, representing British experimental and systems music worldwide in scores as Brian Eno's *Obscure Records* represented it worldwide in sound. Although the EMC mailing address was in London, much of the musical activity from these composers occurred at Leicester Polytechnic (the predecessor of this festival's host, De Montfort University), where Bryars had founded a music department steeped in the ethos that created the EMC. Indeed, the EMC, revived by Hobbs and Virginia Anderson in 1999 as a web-based publisher and record label, is now based in Leicester. This lecture shall explore English experimental, minimal and postminimal music as part of the history of the EMC, much of which will appear at the EMC²: Remembering the Experimental Music Catalogue weekend.

Biography:

Virginia Anderson specializes in the study of experimental, minimalist, and free improvisatory music. Her work is published in *The Journal of Musicological Research*, *Performance Research*, *New Sounds*, and the *Galpin Society Journal*. She has written chapters in academic anthologies published by Cambridge University Press, Ashgate, University of Michigan Press, and the University of Leuven Press (two titles in this last). Anderson is the editor of the *Journal of Experimental Music Studies*, runs the Experimental Music Catalogue with its founder, Christopher Hobbs, and maintains its web blog and other pages. As a clarinetist, Anderson has recorded on Zanja, Advance, and Rastascan Recordings, specialising in new works for Eb clarinet and free improvisation. She is interviewed in the March 2017 issue of *The Clarinet* (journal of the International Clarinet Association). She is currently a member of the free improvisation group CHA, with Bruce Coates (saxes) and Christopher Hobbs (keyboards, electronics, percussion).

Hilary Bracefield

From Birmingham to Belfast: improvising and experimenting with students

This paper will look first at the influence of experimental music in Birmingham University from early 1971, based on the Manifesto by Peter Dickinson published in *Contact: a Journal of Contemporary Music*, Issue 1. It is interesting to note the repertoire of the group started in that year, given that participants did not have regular access to the London scene. Discussion of what evolved at the university will examine three years of concerts and the gradual disintegration of groups as people moved on.

The second part of the paper will discuss the Mushroom Group, existing at Ulster University (formerly Ulster Polytechnic) from 1977 - 1995, even further remote from London. The influence of American experimental music, the use of the EMC catalogue, the variety of repertoire and the dynamics of the group will be examined. The effect on the Northern Ireland public, teachers and schools, and the influence on 25 years of student cohorts will be looked at, and some possible lasting results advanced

Biography:

Hilary Bracefield, now retired, was Head of Music at Ulster University. Born in New Zealand, she came to the United Kingdom in October 1970 to do research at Birmingham University, just too late to discover the Scratch Orchestra. By March 1971 she was taking part in improvisatory music, and became a member first of Embarkation and then Twenty-Three. After moving to Northern Ireland she founded the Mushroom Group at Ulster University (then Ulster Polytechnic) which gave numerous performances in the Belfast area between 1978 and 1995. She was an editor of *Contact: a Journal of Contemporary Music*, and has published on American experimental music and music therapy among other interests.

Tim Bausch

Repetition as Catalyst: The Process of Creation and a Reinterpretation of Roles in the Music of Alvin Lucier

Through three pieces by Alvin Lucier, *I am Sitting in a Room*, *Silver Streetcar for the Orchestra*, and *Music on a Long Thin Wire*, I will explore the generative process of repetition. Each piece features a unique type of repetition that facilitates the exploitation of a phenomenon—a vital part of Lucier's music. An observation of the repetitive processes in his music informs the placement of Lucier in the practices of both experimentalism and minimalism. These concepts lend themselves to a reinterpretation of what constitutes, and what holds the role of, the performer in the music of this style. Subsequently, the player of this music transitions through a series of guises: interpreter, catalyst, machine, and eradicator. Furthermore, through what I call the performer paradigm, this series of roles informs who, or what, holds the position of the performer.

Biography:

Tim Bausch is currently working towards completion of his MM in music theory at the University of Louisville; this—his third—joins his already completed percussion performance and music composition degrees from SUNY Fredonia. Tim is a member of the Society for Music Theory, Music Theory Midwest, and the Society for Music Perception and Cognition. Tim's scholarship focuses on the perception of sound as a whole as well as its individual parts through means of analysis of various styles of music. In conjunction with this, he strives to perform the music attached to his studies for further understanding.



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