

**WFAE2001-INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ACOUSTIC ECOLOGY
CROSSING LISTENING PATHS -- CORFU 2011**

CONCERT 1-- MONDAY 3 October 2011

Andrea Dancer: *EarCeption: a soundwalk from Albertov to Smikov, Prague*

[Jay Needham -

Eric Leonardson -

Sabine Breitsameter]: *Conversation, Improvisation and Locality*

Andrea Dancer

EarCeption: a soundwalk from Albertov to Smikov, Prague

On a blustery spring day, 40 plus European Broadcast Union members of Ars Acoustica affiliation, acoustic artists and ecologists based in Prague, a number of international interventionists (Prague installation artists, German audio students, Hungarian and Canadian experimental musicians -- and some unexpected cast members (a dog and woman singing and fishermen...etc.) converged to experience Prague as they had never before, to create a living acoustic-based collective experience in the form of a soundwalk. And this event, true to a purist's approach, was not recorded. Never-the-less, the collaborators did extensive recording before and after the event, in different weather and times of day, of the soundwalk route and environs, keynotes and ambiances, and interventionists in order to shape the acoustic form of the experience, to understand acoustic features and anomalies of the spaces traversed, to shape a listening experience that took participants deeper into listening meditative states and reconfigure their ear to eye-centric ratios. These recordings form the basis of this multi-channel soundwalk composition: *EarCeption: A soundwalk from Albertov to Smichov, Prague*. The composition consists of acoustic events and ambiances from different times and vantage points in relationship to the soundwalk route. There are interventionists including an installation of radios on a beach along the Vltava River whose tuning is modulated by water vibrations, an accordionist responding to a ferry journey under a railway bridge, a leitmotif of trains, bells and boats. It also uses multiple mic techniques and equipment ranging from binaural to mono to an eight-in-one microphone to re-create a profoundly complex sound environment and ones movement through it mimetic of an increasingly deepening spatial listening experience and sensate realignment. This piece is commissioned by Czech Radio, Premier Atelier for R(a)dioCustica (Producer: Michal Rataj) and we propose to premier it as a multi-channel concert piece at the Crossing Paths WFAE Conference.

Andrea Dancer is a radio art and soundscape composer, and an arts-based researcher - educator working internationally. She has produced radio documentaries and radio art for the CBC (Vancouver, Toronto) and NPR (USA), Radio Vltava (CR) and at festivals such as Deep Wireless and Radio without Borders. A member of the Vancouver Soundwalk Collective and Prague's acoustic art community, she creates site-specific soundwalk compositions for artists, professional groups and the general public -- and as a form of radio art. As an artist-researcher, she practices and lectures about acoustic and multi-media art as a research paradigm. Ms. Dancer is the Chair of The Canadian Association for Sound Ecology and Chair of External Relations with the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology.

Jay Needham, Eric Leonardson, Sabine Breitsameter

Conversation, Improvisation and Locality

Our lecture performance will provide a three-tier perspective on a consistently systemic approach to listening, which is Acoustic Ecology. Our approach to the lecture performance allows for experimentation and improvisation, a conversational exchange between the three artists/scholars that is both critically aware and expressive with the hope of demonstrating a new type of discourse. We seek a hybrid model composed of live improvised electro-acoustic sound and lecture presentation elements that reflect on our collaboration and background research.

Our approach consists of three main tiers or *listening paths*. The three paths represented in the lecture performance are history, conversation/improvisation, and locality. The performers are all leading artists and scholars in the field of Acoustic Ecology who will lecture and perform jointly. The aesthetic of the lecture performance content will be mixed, moderated and created collaboratively by the three artists.

The path dedicated to history will introduce the system of Acoustic Ecology and its relation to participation and interactivity and exemplify and discuss it by means of a diverse range of historical perspectives including Weizenbaum's "Eliza", the ancient Greek "Ars Sermonis" and the "conversation" as a figure of thought by the German poet Friedrich Hoelderlin.

The path dedicated to improvisation considers *improvisation as conversation*; a highly interactive process based on listening, sense making, understanding and sound making. While traditional score-based music composition music is based on reconsideration, conversation-improvisation offers additional forms of cultural counterpoint. This improvisatory process allows for *a forgetting*, an anti-mnemonic form of acoustic communication that favors real time expression and interpretation.

The path dedicated to locality will consider listening to environments as active and participatory. Departing from the notion that an aural sense of place is governed and negotiated, audience members will learn to listen and contextualize ambience as informed by contemporary art practices.

The lecture performance addresses a set of relationships that the three artists' have to listening and performance. It is our hope to provide new insights to our relation to sound, locality and our culture's multiform aesthetic practices. By exploring the diverse set of relations and schisms between content-based factuality and sensuality-based aesthetics, this lecture performance crosses *listening paths*.

We would like to request that the lecture performance be 45 min. in length in order to help establish an immersive atmosphere and also allow for creative reflection after the lecture performance.

Jay Needham is a sound artist, electro-acoustic composer and scholar. His compositions activate listening as an irreplaceable component of an artistic cognitive process. His collaborations with grass roots organizations such as the, Asociación Panamericana para la Conservación have increased awareness of the importance of natural places and disappearing soundscapes around the planet. His recent residency in Antarctica aboard the MV Antarctic Dream has resulted new series of sound sculptures titled *South Polar Suite*.

Sabine Breitsameter is an expert of sonic media art, Acoustic Ecology, electro-acoustic art and sound for and media culture. Her main interest focuses on experimental audiomedias including network based sound, radio art and the interrelations between Acoustic Ecology and concepts of digital technology. In 1993 she became a founding member of the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology. She is a professor of Sound and Mediaculture/Media Arts and Sciences in Darmstadt, Germany.

Eric Leonardson is a Chicago-based composer, radio artist, sound designer, instrument inventor, improviser, and visual artist. He has devoted a majority of his professional career to unorthodox approaches to sound and its instrumentation with a broad understanding of texture, atmosphere and microtones. He is President of the American Society for Acoustic Ecology and director and co-founder of the World Listening Project. He teaches at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Department of Sound and Contemporary Practices.