



**College of Music  
& Dramatic Arts**

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## **CINEMA FOR THE EARS**

**SEAMUS 2023 National Conference  
Rhizome Event**

Friday, March 24, 2023

7:30 PM in the Digital Media Center Theater

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**CHANGING THE WORLD THROUGH THE ARTS**

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PROGRAM

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<i>Introduction to Bleep-Blop Music</i> (2022) (2')	16-channel fixed media	Stephen David Beck
<i>...grind...</i> (2022) (8')*	8-channel fixed media	Ryne Siesky
<i>Stratospheric</i> (2019) (7')	16-channel fixed media	Eric Lyon
<i>In vivo, in silico – Fundulus grandis</i> (2023) (5')	16-channel fixed media	Jesse Allison
<i>Reverie</i> (2019-2020) (10')	16-channel fixed media	Leah Reid
<i>Breathless</i> (2022) (14')*	8-channel fixed media	Annie Hui-Hsin Hsieh
<i>7deadlySins</i> (2023) (6')	16-channel fixed media	Stephen David Beck
I. #2		
II. #1		
III. Schtup		
<i>Sk(etch)</i> (2018) (5')	32-channel fixed media	Leah Reid

\* - SEAMUS Adjudicated Work

Tonight's Cinema for the Ears concert is a collaboration between the Experimental Music & Digital Media (EMDM) program at LSU and the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States (SEAMUS). Every year, SEAMUS holds its annual conference as a place for composers, performers, students, and like-minded individuals to gather, share music, share ideas, and sustain a professional network. Between the increasing cost of travel and post-pandemic travel concerns, SEAMUS solicited proposals for "Rhizome" concerts this year to be held at various locations throughout the US where members from that region could share in the conference without having to travel far. The events would be curated both by the SEAMUS conference selection process as well as by the local hosts.

In response to the call, we proposed a concert of fixed media works composed specifically for large collections of loudspeakers, specifically 8 or more, to be performed on our unique DMC Theatre loudspeaker array, which distributes 71 audio channels through 89 individual loudspeakers. As one of the very few large-scale arrays dedicated to electroacoustic music in the country, we thought this would be a great opportunity for us to share its unique capabilities with our colleagues and friends.

On tonight's program, you will hear works designed for between 8 and 32-channel performance. Some have been composed specifically for the DMC Theatre, others for different loudspeaker arrays, and others for abstract arrangements of speakers. For each piece, we have created an individual loudspeaker map that creates virtual speakers placed around and above the audience according to the composer's specifications.

We hope you enjoy this unique musical experience.

- Stephen David Beck

### ***Introduction to Bleep-Blop Music*** (2022)

When I first arrived at LSU, I was describing my electroacoustic music to a friend (not affiliated with the School) as a way to entice them to come to a concert. After the concert, they said "oh, like it's bleep-blop music." This piece was created while I was teaching a course in using the program Csound as a way to demonstrate to students how to efficiently create granular textures and how to deploy those textures across a multi-channel environment. As it turns out, the piece sounded just like bleep-blop music.

### ***...grind...*** (2022)

Each year, approximately five-hundred billion plastic cups are used, of which roughly six billion end up in landfills every year. "grind" attempts to symbolize the faulty business and political ideologies that ultimately contribute to a lack of environmental sustainability through the destructive morphology of a single sound source: a plastic Keurig coffee pod hitting the floor.

***Stratospheric*** (2019) was composed for a dual octophonic loudspeaker array. Textures were designed with spatialization strategies that allow for stratified spatial hearing, with a particular awareness of motion on the higher and lower planes.

*In vivo, in silico – Fundulus grandis* (2023)

Gulf killifish, *Fundulus grandis*, are small fish that fill the estuaries of Louisiana. In fact, they are everywhere that the rivers meet the seas along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, from Mexico to Nova Scotia. As such, these fish can be used as biosensors providing indicators of toxicity.

In collaboration with the research lab of Benjamin Dubansky at LSU, killifish data has been sampled and gone through a process of sonification and musification to create this work. Sonification provides a direct path from data to audio to hear the dynamic system of the killifish cardiovascular system. The data is also put through a number of analytical processes which then map onto musical parameters in a process of musification. This work blends both approaches allowing us to musically explore these tiny yet significant animals. In the words of Dr. Dubansky, they are, “an army of sensitive biosensors, guarding our coasts from incoming and domestic chemical threats. Killifish act as beacons for environmental injustice and public health disparity.”

*Reverie* (2019-2020) is an acousmatic composition that leads the listener through an immersive fantasy centered around deconstructed music boxes. The work is comprised of eight sections that alternate between explorations of the music boxes’ gears and chimes. In the work, the music boxes’ sounds are pulled apart, exaggerated, expanded, and combined with other sounds whose timbres and textures are reminiscent of the original. As the piece unfolds, the timbres increase in spectral and textural density, and the associations become more and more fantastical. Gears are transformed into zippers, coins, chainsaws, motorcycles, and fireworks, and the chimes morph into rainstorms, all sizes of bells, pianos, and more.

This work was composed during residencies at the Ucross Foundation and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. *Reverie* won first prize in the 8th KLANG! International Electroacoustic Composition Competition, Sound of the Year’s Composed with Sound Award, and Second Prizes in both the Xenakis International Electronic Music Competition and the XIII<sup>o</sup> International Destellos Competition.

*Breathless* (2022) explores an immersive quality of experience in which what is perceived reaches beyond what we could bodily comprehend (i.e., larger than how our senses understand the world as it measures new sensations against our physical body). The primary sonic materials used here are “breath-like” sounds synthesized from human breaths and light-bowing strokes across string instruments. These “hybrid breaths” create a symbiotic, part-human, part-instrumental, part-electronic, sonic space that allows the live performer to articulate and expand on these given environmental cues to find their own paths in and out of the labyrinthine cloud of sound, encircling while slowly thickens and condenses. Originally written for viola d’amore and live electronics, the version included here for SEAMUS 2023 is in the fixed media format.

*7deadlySins* (2023) was inspired by the comedy routine from George Carlin, “the seven words you cannot say on TV.” The piece takes recordings of people saying those words, granulates those sounds and reconstructs them in a way that conveys their meaning without actually hearing the words. Ideally, this piece should be acceptable for broadcast over radio. Each movement focuses on one word at a time, and the title of the movement is a euphemism for the banned word.

*Sk(etch)* (2018) is an acousmatic work that explores sounds, gestures, textures, and timbres associated with the creative process of sketching, drawing, writing, and composing.

**STEPHEN DAVID BECK** (b. 1959) is the Haymon Professor of Composition and Computer Music. He holds a joint appointment at the Center for Computation & Technology, where he previously served as the Area Head for the Cultural Computing focus area and Director of the AVATAR Initiative in Digital Media. Dr. Beck received his Ph.D. in music composition and theory from the University of California, Los Angeles, in 1988, and held a Fulbright Fellowship in 1985-86 where he was a researcher at the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique (IRCAM) in Paris, France. He currently serves as Associate Vice President for Research & Economic Development at LSU.

**RYNE SIESKY** (b. 1996) is a Filipino-American composer, educator, and music technologist. Ryne's music explores the relationships between art, community, and identity. His recent works engage with Asian American identity politics and intersectionality as idiosyncratic mechanisms for musical creation and sonic processes. His music has been performed by Hypercube, Peridot Duo, Transient Canvas, Duo Sequenza, Deco Saxophone Quartet, Braeburn Brass Quintet, the Mississippi Valley Orchestra, Robert Black, Lindsay Garritson, Jacob Mason, and Laura Silva, among others. His music has also been featured at several festivals including the Aspen and Atlantic Music Festivals, Society of Composers, International Trumpet Guild, Diffrazioni, Festival DME, NYCEMF, SEAMUS, and ICMC, among others. Siesky serves as Assistant Professor of Music Technology at Johnson University where he teaches courses in computer music programming, studio recording, and digital art. Siesky is virtually completing his Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition at the University of Miami, Frost School of Music. He is currently serving as the EID Director for the Millennium Composers Initiative.

**ERIC LYON** is a composer and audio researcher focused on digital interventions, post-hierarchies, high-density loudspeaker arrays, and the inspiration of performer-based creativity. His publicly released audio software includes "FFTease" and "LyonPotpourri." He is the author of "Designing Audio Objects for Max/MSP and Pd," a guidebook for writing audio DSP code for live performance, and of "Automated Sound Design," a book that presents technical processes for implementing oracular synthesis and processing of sound. In 2015-16, Lyon architected both the Spatial Music Workshop and Cube Fest at Virginia Tech to support the work of other artists working with high-density loudspeaker arrays. Lyon's creative work has been recognized with a ZKM Giga-Hertz prize, MUSLAB award, the League ISCM World Music Days competition, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. Lyon is a Professor of Practice in the School of Performing Arts at Virginia Tech, and is a Faculty Fellow at the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology.

**JESSE ALLISON** is a leader in sonic art technology, thought, and practice. Dr. Allison holds the position of Associate Professor of Experimental Music & Digital Media at Louisiana State University. As part of the Cultural Computing focus of the Center for Computation & Technology, he performs research into ways that technology can expand what is possible in the sonic arts. Prior to coming to LSU, he helped to found the Institute for Digital Intermedia Art at Ball State University and Electrotap, an innovative media arts.

Research and invention interests include computer interactivity in performance, distributed music systems, mobile music, interactive sonic art installations, hybrid worlds, and multi-modal artworks, those that can be experienced through a variety of means. As such, he manages the Media Interaction Laboratory and Library (MILL), co-directs the Laptop Orchestra of Louisiana (LOLs), and heads up the Mobile [ App | Art | Action ] Group (MAG) for the CCT. As an artist, Allison has disseminated his work around the globe through live performance art, interactive installations,

virtual and hybrid worlds interventions, and presentations. Recent performances/exhibits include the Pixilerations Festival, New Instruments for Musical Expression (NIME), SIGGRAPH, Techfest Bombay, International Computer Music Conference (ICMC), the IUPUI Intermedia Festival, Boston Cyberarts Festival, and the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States. Allison received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in composition from the University of Missouri — Kansas City.

**LEAH REID** is a composer, sound artist, researcher, and educator, whose works range from opera, chamber, and vocal music, to acousmatic, electroacoustic works, and interactive sound installations. Winner of a 2022 Guggenheim Fellowship, Reid has also won the American Prize in Composition, first prize in the KLANG! International Electroacoustic Composition Competition, Sound of the Year's Composed with Sound Award, IAWM's Pauline Oliveros Award, and prizes in the Iannis Xenakis International Electronic Music Competition and the International Destellos Competition. She has received fellowships from the Guerilla Opera Company, the MacDowell Colony, the VCCA, the Ucross Foundation, and the Hambidge Center.

Her compositions have been presented at festivals, conferences, and major venues throughout the world, including Aveiro\_Síntese, BEAST FEaST, Espacios Sonoros, EviMus, ICMC, IRCAM's ManiFeste, LA Philharmonic's Noon to Midnight, MA/IN Festival, NYCEMF (USA), OUA-EMF, Série de Música de Câmara, the Tilde New Music Festival, TIES, and WOCMAT, among many others. Her works are published with Ablaze Records, New Focus Recordings, Parma Recordings, RMN Classical, and BabelScores. Reid received her D.M.A. and M.A. in music composition from Stanford University and her B.Mus from McGill University. She is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Virginia.

**ANNIE HUI-HSIN HSIEH** (b. 1984) is a Taiwanese-Australian composer working in acoustic and electroacoustic mediums currently based in the United States. Her work focuses on creating immersive experiences and she often considers sonic expressions in terms of architecture, choreography, and musical-social interactivity. Hsieh's music has been presented internationally at events such as Metropolis New Music Festival, OzAsia Festival, WasteLAnd Music Series, Center for New Music (SF), Asian Composers League Conference, International Rostrum of Composers, SEAMUS, New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, Seoul International Computer Music Festival, Eavesdropping Symposium London, Pittsburgh Festival of New Music, Huddersfield Festival of Contemporary Music, Sonic Matters, and Bendigo International Festival of Exploratory Music. Some recent commissions include The Arts Centre Melbourne, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Wien Modern, Foundation Royaumont, Lucerne Festival, Red Fish Blue Fish, Quince Ensemble, Hypercube Ensemble, and ELISION Ensemble, among others. Her works have also been performed by ensembles including the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Rubriks Collective (Australia), Thin Edge New Music Collective (Canada), Ensemble Paramirabo (Canada), Ensemble Dal Niente (USA), Ensemble Offspring (Australia), Alia Musica (USA), and Hong Kong New Music Ensemble (Hong Kong). She has been a recipient of several awards and honors such as the 2017 APRA (Australian Performance Rights Association) Art Music Fund, the Monash University International Women's Day Composition Commission Prize 2020, as well as support from the New Music USA, Australian Cultural Fund, Australian Council of the Arts grants, and the National Cultural and Arts Foundation (Taiwan). Annie completed her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Melbourne and her doctorate degree from the University of California, San Diego. She is currently an Assistant Teaching Professor of music at Carnegie Mellon University.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Timothy Haden and Ben Corbin Guest Recital  
Sunday, March 26, 2023  
3:00 PM in the Recital Hall

Brad Edwards, Trombone Guest Artist Recital  
Tuesday, March 28, 2023  
7:30 PM in the Recital Hall



**LSU**

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