

Curatorial > LINES OF SIGHT

With this section, RWM opens a line of programmes devoted to exploring the complex map of sound art from different points of view organised in curatorial series.

LINES OF SIGHT is a bi-monthly programme, which takes its name from the interconnected points of the global resonant space created by radio and other wireless technologies. From out of the extraordinary array of music that plays on this world-wide stage, we will follow threads as diverse as musical notation and non-linear composition, and introduce artists who explore the ideas around transmission as a medium for creative expression.

Curated by Barbara Held and Pilar Subirà.

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Barbara Held is a flutist, composer and sound artist, whose current focus is the rhythmic relationship between music and video image. She has commissioned and performed an idiosyncratic body of new repertoire for flute by both Spanish and American composers, and was the creator and producer of "Music at Metrónom", a series of concerts of experimental music that gave special support to collaboration between musicians and visual artists. She believes in the responsibility of artist/curators to take a turn at presenting each other's work.

<http://www.barbaraheld.com/>
<http://barbaraheld.wordpress.com/>

Pilar Subirà is a percussionist, a sought-after performer of new music and frequent member of various orchestras and chamber ensembles. For the past 15 years she has been presenting a daily program in the classical music channel of Catalunya Ràdio.

Sound mastering by Ferran Conangla.

You can submit your questions, comments and links to:
linesofsight@gmail.com

LINES OF SIGHT #2

Sound has no hidden face...

LINES OF SIGHT # 2 begins and ends with an invitation to join in the ringing of bells at sunrise and sunset every day, to remember and to celebrate, a year-long project by Brenda Hutchinson. "I am convinced that something as inarguable as the movement of the earth can be used as a point of unity and awareness among large groups of people who might otherwise find it impossible to agree."

"Sound has no hidden face; it is all in front, in back, and outside inside, inside-out ...to be listening is to be at the same time outside and inside, to be open from without and from within..." , as Jean-Luc Nancy¹ differentiates listening (listening takes place at the same time as the sonorous event) from our other senses. "...[sound] is a present in waves on a swell, not in a point on a line; it is a time that opens up, that is hollowed out, that is enlarged or ramified, that envelops or separates, that becomes or is turned into a loop, that stretches out or contracts..."

"We live with latency", according to Pauline Oliveros, who in her program notes to "Koto Accordion", a new recording by Oliveros and Miya Masaoka, speaks of "the intensity of listening – listening as close to 'new' as possible." "...We know that our consciousness is delayed by a fraction of a second that the brain interprets as new – however the body is instantaneous in its perception. Thus the phenomena of playing and becoming conscious of what has played – been played – is a continually surprising experience in such improvisation." "Daylight" is the first of four sections that are named for the different times of day.

Phill Niblock records a slice of the sound of a Russian train in much the same way as his early films captured long uninterrupted takes of the rhythms of people working.

This performance of "Kubing", by Philippine composer and musicologist José Maceda, was recorded by his students, colleagues and friends as part of a series of events marking the first anniversary of his death. Maceda's concept of time as a basic aspect of culture and social relationships inspires musicians of our time who are searching for alternatives to the linear, cause and effect logic of the West in "a concept of the larger space", infinity, community and interconnection. Chris Brown and William Winant perform "Stupas", a piece dedicated to José Maceda that is written for piano and vibraphone treated together as a gong, an instrument that defines its own time.

Finally, we celebrate the issue of a set of recordings old and new by The Hub, the band that pioneered laptop ensembles over twenty years ago, musicians performing together over a network of computers that could be in the same room or anywhere in the world.

¹ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Listening*, translated by Charlotte Mandell, 2007 Fordham University Press, (A l'écoute Editions Galilée, Paris 2002) p. 13 & 14



01. Playlist

- 01 Brenda Hutchinson, "**dailybell2008, (2/29/2008, 7:27 AM)**" 00'44
- 02 Pauline Oliveros and Miya Masaoka "**Daylight**", 2007 12'53"
- 03 Phill Niblock, "**Russian Train**", 2007 10'02"
- 04 José Maceda, "**Kubing**", 1967 (performed by University of the Philippines Contemporary Music Ensemble, conducted by Ramon P. Santos, 2007) 08'45"
- 05 Chris Brown, "**Stupas**", 2007 (performed by Chris Brown and William Winant) 15'
- 06 The Hub, "**ROL'EM**", 1988 07'04"
- 07 Brenda Hutchinson, "**dailybell2008 (2/29/2008, 6:41 PM)**" 01'38"

02. Track description

01

Brenda Hutchinson

"dailybell2008, February 29, 7:27 AM, Barcelona"
2008

"I am convinced that something as inarguable as the movement of the earth can be used as a point of unity and awareness among large groups of people who might otherwise find it impossible to agree." Brenda Hutchinson

More info:

<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/>
www.sonicportraits.org

02

Pauline Oliveros and Miya Masaoka

"Daylight"

2007

Pauline Oliveros, accordion and Miya Masaoka, koto

From the record *Koto Accordion*, edited by Deep Listening, 2008

"Our *recording session* was delayed for a year – a beautiful baby was born. The energy of the recording is like a birth – the power of birth. Though an unlikely combination – accordion and koto – it is not so much about the instruments as about the energies of the music that comes from the intensity of listening – listening as close to 'new' as possible. We know that our consciousness is delayed by a fraction of a second that the brain interprets as new – however the body is instantaneous in its perception. Thus the phenomena of playing and becoming conscious of what has played – been played – is a continually surprising experience in such improvisation.

The surprise continues as you listen back with a recording extending memory and taking you more and more deeply into the phenomenal miracle of making music spontaneously - trusting the relationship as it becomes a relationship.

As I listen again and again my appreciation of the experience with Miya Masaoka grows and provides a delight that I hope we can extend to you as you listen to this recording." **Pauline Oliveros**

"Listening to this recording session I am lifted to a world both evanescent and yet somehow connected to a distinct culture of music making in the 21st century. It is indeed an honor and a privilege to take part in this captured musical episode with Pauline Oliveros, whose legacy is broad, rich and deep in the history of music, whether it is the field of electronic, improvisation, experimental, that is to say, music, – period! What do I hear when I listen back? Unexpected harmonies,

dailybell2008.blogspot.com

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This is an invitation to join in the ringing of
bells at sunrise and sunset everyday this year.
Let's take a break to remember and to celebrate.

Together.

for time info: <http://www.sunrisesunset.com/>

[Brenda Hutchinson, *dailybell2008*]



discreet orbits of swirling energy and activity, variegated textures that constantly transform... The spatial feeling with the eight speaker system through which we recorded was an aspect of the recording that, even when mixed to stereo, retains a sensory depth that is true to the experience.

Improvisation has a way of being new but endowed with moments of familiarity, somehow encapsulating the essence of the New, and simultaneously forming a variation and posing another path, an alternative... Improvisation speaks to spontaneity and yet breathes a conscious design of variation that is endlessly different as each moment is different from the past, even within static areas. Perhaps what is necessary to create this music, and what I am trying to describe in the post-production experience – or sonic awareness, that is, the ability to focus attention upon both environment and musical sound, a concept that Pauline had introduced in the early 1980's.

In 2004, Pauline Oliveros and I had played at Bard College together, where we both taught in the MFA program. Since then, we have been searching for an opportunity to play again, but my pregnancy and the birth of my son postponed things even longer. So it is with tremendous joy that I feel that this recording happened at all, let alone being something out in the world." **Miya Masaoka**

More info:

Pauline Oliveros

<http://www.deeplisting.org/pauline>

Miya Masaoka

<http://www.miyamasaoka.com>

www.myspace.com/miyamasaoka

03

Phill Niblock,

"Russian Train"

2007

In much the same way that Niblock's early films (shot in Sumatra, Africa, China, Brazil) are long takes of the choreography of movements and gestures of people working, capturing natural dance material, Niblock made this sound recording while on tour through Russia in September-October 2007.

"There are people inside of Niblock's films – 'no editing, no comments just people doing what they do' and they are inside of the film. The music is inside of the audio – and it must be loud to assert its presence and continuum. Film and music inside of the technology – a continually present moment." Pauline Oliveros

[in Niblock's music] "something happens in the way of change that is not fundamentally a change of pitch: it is a change of what the pitch sounds like".

Robert Ashley

"Phill Niblock's music is a bit like the ocean, always the same and always changing. On the face of things, not much happens."

Dusted (USA)

"...a different light shines on reality"

Paris Transatlantic

More info:

<http://www.phillniblock.com>

<http://www.paristransatlantic.com/magazine/interviews/niblock.html>

http://www.phillniblock.com/biography_photos_images.html



[Phill Niblock, *Russia*, 2007]



04

José Maceda

"Kubing"

1967

Performed by the University of the Philippines Contemporary Music Ensemble, composed of students, faculty and friends of Dr. José Maceda, conducted by Dr. Ramon P. Santos, 2007. This concert was part of a Commemorative event marking the first anniversary of Jose Maceda's death, organized by the UP Center for Ethnomusicology in cooperation with the Musicological Society of the Philippines. The piece was recorded live at the Abelardo Hall, University of the Philippines auditorium on May 5, 2005, in cooperation with the Cultural Center of the Philippines, technical crew supervised by Doods Manzano on multi-channel miking. Stereo mastering was done in the UP College of Music Sound Lab by Reginald Tan.

José Maceda was born in Manila in 1917. Between the 1930s and 1950s he led a career as a concert pianist studying in Paris with Alfred Cortot (1937-41) and with E. Robert Schmitz in San Francisco (1946-49). He studied musicology-ethnomusicology at Columbia University, the University of Chicago, Indiana University and UCLA, where he received a PhD in 1963. He subsequently joined the faculty at the University of the Philippines in Quezon City, where he established an important archive that now contains more than 2,500 hours of field recordings of over fifty Philippine linguistic groups. His research on music in the Philippines and Southeast Asia produced articles on time; scales; gongs and bamboos in Southeast Asia; machines, drone and populations in Asia; Aristotelian logic in Tang Court Music; and bipolarity, four counts and the fifth interval in the court musics of Asia.

The other side of his musical experience began with his contact with *musique concrete* in Paris in 1958 and the music of Varese and Xenakis, which he introduced in Manila in the 1960s. His first works in the 1960s employed voices, gongs and bamboos for large ensembles ("Ugma-Ugma", "Agungan, Pagsamba"). "Cassettes 100" (1971) and "Ugnayan" (1974) utilized tape-recorders and radio stations as musical instruments, with hundreds, even thousands of performers. In the 1980s he composed for smaller ensembles combining groups of five or more similar Asian and Western instruments. These works, including "Siasid" (1983), "Suling-Suling" (1984), and "Strata" (1988), were not meant to fuse Western and non-western instruments for the purpose of creating new sonorities, but rather to disfunction the Western instruments, and eventually "liberate" them from their confinement in western musical thought. He applied these principles later in pieces using only Western orchestral instruments: "Dissemination" (1990), "Distemperament" (1992), "Music for a Chamber Orchestra" (1997) and the piano, "Music for 5 Pianos" (1993).

Maceda was one of the most highly respected composers of contemporary concert music in Asia, his unique compositions blending Western and Asian musical traditions in a highly original manner. Elements such as drone, distribution of labor, separation of musical functions, relative pitch values and timbre levels are ideas leading to a new theory of music. The humanistic values of communal agricultural work in East and Southeast Asia was an important influence on his compositional methods.

He continued composing and writing at his home in Quezon City, Philippines until his death in 2004 at age 87.

More info:

<http://www.tzadik.com/>

<http://foarm.artdocuments.org>

Read the article **José Maceda, A Concept of Time in a Music of Southeast Asia** at <http://rwm.macba.es/uploads/20080402/maceda.pdf>



05

Chris Brown

"Stupas"

2007

Performed by William Winant, vibraphone; Chris Brown, piano and computer

"The form of a *stupa*, a square base with circular domes rising above it, is used to structure this piece. The piano and vibraphone are treated like the sound of a single gong, and a series of four octatonic chords whose notes are shared between the instruments gradually expand into upward sweeping melodies. The chords are sampled during the first half of the piece to provide material for electronic halos, and a drone gradually emerges beneath. Dedicated to the composer José Maceda, the piece was recorded in November 2007 in a concert performance that was part of the 40 Year Celebration of the Center for Contemporary Music (CCM) at Mills College."

Chris Brown

"India and Southeast Asia were absorbed in another concept of the world, another measure of time, not a linear, cause and effect entity of logic and matter, but a metaphysical world with a profound respect for nature and the divine for whom temples, stone monuments and stupas were constructed [...] one musical element concerning time is the concept of a vibrating medium which[...] is allowed to vibrate freely with one stroke, without further control of the fingers, the hands, or human volition. [...] A gong sound is at liberty to vibrate by itself." José Maceda (in "A Concept of Time")

More info:

Mills College Music Dept. Center for Contemporary Music (CCM)

www.cbmmuse.com

06

The Hub (John Bischoff, Chris Brown, Tim Perkis, Mark Trayle, Phil Stone, Scot Gresham-Lancaster)

"ROL'EM"

1988

From *Boundary Layer*, a new recording to be released soon on John Zorn's Tzadik label

A conducting computer randomly composes musical textures using short text messages sent to each player. The players improvise following combinations of six descriptors of these parameters:

- 1) "Ensemble" (TACET – SOLO – DUO – TRIO – QUART – QUINT);
- 2) "Role" (BOSS – LEAD – ACCOMP – FILL – WLFLR – SUBM);
- 3) "Tune" (CHROM – 8NOTE – 6NOTE – 4NOTE – 2NOTE – DRONE);
- 4) "Range" (HI – MEDHI – MED – MEDLO – LO – ALL);
- 5) "Timing" (GALOP – TROT – WALK – CRAWL – DRIFT – SNOOZ).

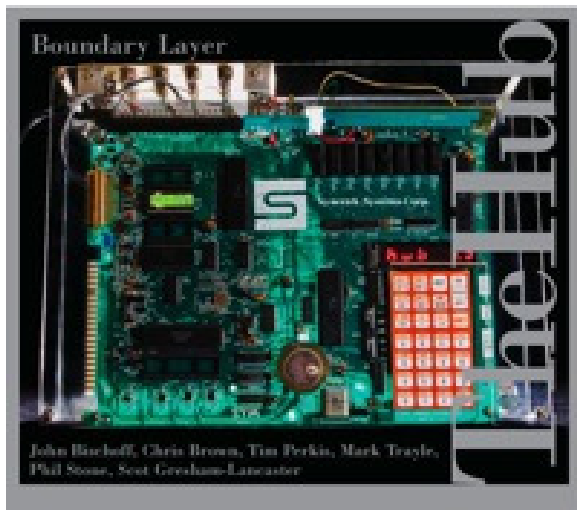
A common clock transmitted through The Hub helps players in coordinating transitions between sections; and the sounds made by each player are mixed and processed by an analog electronic system also controlled by the conducting computer.

More info:

<http://crossfade.walkerart.org/brownbischoff>

<http://hub.artifact.com>

<http://www.tzadik.com/>



[The Hub]



dailybell2008.blogspot.com

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for time info: <http://www.sunrisesunset.com/>

[Brenda Hutchinson, *dailybell2008*]

07

Brenda Hutchinson

"dailybell2008, February 29, 7:27 AM, Barcelona"
2008

"I am convinced that something as inarguable as the movement of the earth can be used as a point of unity and awareness among large groups of people who might otherwise find it impossible to agree." **Brenda Hutchinson**

More info:

<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/>

www.sonicportraits.org

03. Transcription of the interviews

LINES OF SIGHT:

I was struck by the fact that you named the four sections of music on your CD after the different times of day, "Daybreak (Akegarasu – sound of a crow)", "Forenoon (Hirumae, just before noon)", "Afternoon (Hirusugi)", and "Twilight (Boshou – tolling of a bell)".

MIYA MASAOKA:

I think that it was an elegant and eloquent way of thinking about how time and how experience is envisioned... and Pauline came up with the idea of taking the 24 hour day period as a metaphor of the time lapse or time events in the recording, and I think that it's a really beautiful metaphor.

PAULINE OLIVEROS:

I think that the piece has a lot of emotional dynamic and somehow the times of day have that as well, the rhythm of nature, the way the process of a day, a good way to name the material that we had generated. We weren't thinking about that beforehand, we had a hard enough time getting to a studio to record, the birth of child and other things intervening, so when we got to the studio we just played, and the playing had a great deal of intensity but the naming came afterwards, there wasn't a structural concept, not consciously delineated.

MM:

It fits really well, in the sense that in a 24 hour period there are really different levels of activity, from sleeping, eating, running around, and actually the more I think of it the more I think that it is an amazing complement to the playing.

LOS:

It's also an ancient way of thinking about music.

MM:

Of course in Indian music, the modes the time of day, there is a lot of history to it.

LOS:

Pauline, your text in the program notes is beautiful, please talk about your concept of delay in consciousness.

PO:

First of all the delay in consciousness is not my idea, it's something that human beings are stuck with! We live with latency. First of all there was the latency in making the recording, then the latency of other people hearing it. I've been thinking about that a lot lately because I've been doing so much telematic transmission of music, playing with remote partners in different parts of the country and the world, and there is the latency of transmission, and the software that we are using in the high-tech version of this is about 25 seconds which is not very much, but in our own consciousness it takes us about a ¼ of a second for us to be aware of an evoked potential in the brain. This was discovered by Benjamin Lebay, so as I say it isn't my idea, it's a measurement, a scientific measurement of evoked potentials in the arrival of consciousness in a person's brain. We think that we're in the present moment but we never are! I think that this is very interesting. I discovered tape delay in the 60's, the distance between



the record head and the playback head and that represents a latency or a delay, and you can hear from the record head and the playback head simultaneously, and that has been the idea that has driven the development of my electronic or expanded instrument system, so I wanted to work with an array of time delays. In a way it's almost like a spatial concept, the sound arriving at different times, even though it's generated from one sound. So that's what I was talking about. There's one other time delay that I want to mention, which is the Big Bang. The wave form from the Big Bang still existing in the microcosm so you have everything from the least increment to the vast, so that's what we're living in is time delays, latency.

MM:

That's a really interesting way to look at it, moving from the biological to more social and other physical realities, I was just reading today in the NY Times about cigarettes, and how there's a huge lapse from finding out that they cause cancer and stopping smoking. In these other areas there's the consciousness in our brain, and the synapses and neurons firing, if there's a predator or you need to run away from something or to catch something to eat, it has to be fast, and then the body of a society that can be slow, using as an example the cigarettes, it can take really very long.

I think it's an interesting thing in improvisation, making decisions based on immediate consciousness, it really taps into early, primal areas of the brain that takes place before your brain decides if it is good or bad. The thing about non-verbal communication or communication with sound or music improvisation is that it takes advantage of very quick reactions, as Pauline was saying the $\frac{1}{4}$ of a second, this tool that we have of being hyper-aware of our surroundings, we still have that ability to access everything that is going on in our environment, sound, lights, and movement, that can be transferred from running away from danger or trying to hunt a deer to making music.

PO:

My whole system that I use is based on latency, and I've been practicing for so many years playing with delays that it's very natural for me, but I also listen that way. Wherever we go and whatever we're doing there are time delays, so if we're making sound in a space often we're not hearing the sounds directly but we're hearing the reflections from the walls. The audience that goes to a concert is hearing time delays. It's very rare that you're in a space where you can hear direct sound. How direct is it? There is a time delay in terms of arrival time of sound between the ears, there's inter-cranial delay. So there's quite a lot to understand and learn about this.

MM:

I think what Pauline is talking about too about latency and delay is repetition, the basis of rhythm, the different kinds of rhythms, poly-rhythms, layered rhythms that can occur because of delay. The things that happen between musicians in a recording, going back and forth between musicians, as in this duo recording, the delays that we send back to each other are varied either by technology or in our brains, hearing a gesture and playing it back soon after, or waiting awhile and playing it back later, playing it on another instrument its going to sound different, going back and forth of interaction and the repetitions of the delay changing quality so the sound evolves.

LOS:

The intimacy of people being able to connect any time of day, from anywhere in the world.

PO:

We are able now to connect more than ever using the internet and as we develop these ways of performing live we become more connected and that opens up wonderful possibilities for global connections and global consciousness, and the musicians can be leading this evolution of conscious awareness that is represented or that is carried by the technology that is in the stage it is in, the internet, none of us knew that we'd have an internet. Say 10-12 years ago it didn't exist, the acceleration of communication is very interesting because the telephone was invented in 1860, over 100 years have past, it took a long time for



that to be adapted by humans, it took about 25 years for it to be widely distributed whereas the cell phone only took 5 years for that to happen, and now this internet where you have almost instantaneous communication, we see things accelerating in communications, and for me that's hopeful. We have this medium and we can develop it and we will have the possibility of live performance on a world-wide stage.

MM:

With video combined with audio in terms of the internet and performing on the internet, in just a few more steps to actually have a 3-D entity with you, it won't be that much longer until we have actual high resolution images of the people performing with you.

04. Additional info

"Zeitraum": Espai Ubú in Barcelona presents a solo show by German sound and video artist, Thomas Köner, 6 March- 5 April, 2008

The German word "Zeitraum" (literally, a 'time room' or 'time space') has a spatial component that lies at the heart of all of Thomas Köner's sound and video installations. In the past, Köner has used images from surveillance cameras to reflect on the way they monitor observation. Taking a step forward, he has now invented imaginary tools that emulate them to observe how fragments of daily life can merge into the vast space of a given moment. Blurred and unstable, memories and splinters of the here and now become perceptible as the fabric of observed time.

"My camera records everyday scenes and I attempt to understand them, as if, by means of my inquiring gaze, I were able to penetrate their essence, as if there were one at all. Amongst other things, this involves a process of recognizing the way that time slips away at the very moment that it begins to slide out of our reach and to render it visible. At the same time as this moment becomes clearly visible, the layers of false time are removed, from our memories, too." Thomas Köner

More info:

www.koener.de

www.espaiubu.com

Simulcast 1.0 : Saskatoon

Simulcast images

Four sound artists are each invited to create an unchanging radio broadcast. Simulcast 1.0 : Saskatoon is a temporary condition conceived to explore the relationship between radio and eternity. It starts from the current situation of radio: driven by time, driving time. Webcast nightly on free103point9 Online Radio at www.free103point9.org, April 1 - 28 2008 All times Central Standard Time (GMT -6). (Sunset and sunrise times as observed in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.) Artists include Martine H. Crispo (Montreal, April 1 to 7 - midnight to sunrise); GX Jupiter-Larsen (Los Angeles, April 7 to 14 - sunset to sunrise); Magali Babin (Montreal, April 15 to 21 - midnight to 6:36 a.m.); and Harold Schellinx (Paris/Amsterdam, April 21 to 28 - sunset to sunrise). Click here to listen to this webstream each night this month.

More info:

<http://www.free103point9.org>

<http://www.free103point9.org/events/1911>



[Thomas Köner, *Pasajeros peregrinos pilotos* (video still)]



05. Additional links

"Deep and Wide", an article about Pauline Oliveros by Miya Masaoka (San Francisco Bay Guardian, May 29, 2002)

http://www.miyamasaka.com/interdisciplinary/writing/sfbg_pauline_oliveros.html

"Eternal Network Music", by Chris Brown and John Bischoff

Two real-time sound pieces for quartets of networked players.

<http://crossfade.walkerart.org>

Hanne Darboven

From the moment in the mid-1960s when Hanne Darboven moved to New York City, after a highly academic training at the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Hamburg, her work has been informed by Conceptual art practices. Based by the late 1960s on various forms of numerical writing, her systematic work securely occupied the realm of abstraction and universality. [...] Over time, time has become the focus of Darboven's art. (from essay by Lynne Cooke)

http://www.diacenter.org/exhibs_b/darboven/essay.html

<http://www.diacenter.org/exhibs/darboven/project>

<http://www.ubu.com/sound/darboven.html>

Barbara Held "Singing Stones"

"Singing Stones", (in German, Singende Steine) is a collaborative project of music and visual art, inspired by the theories about musical symbolism put forward by the German ethno-musicologist, Marius Schneider (1903-1982). Four musical compositions representing the natural rhythm of the times of day were presented in an installation at the Sales Municipals d'Exposicions in Girona, Spain, during the "Festival de Músiques Religioses del Món", 2001.

Trumpet: Matt Davis

Percussion: Angel Pereira

Voice: Anne Wellmer

Flute: Barbara Held, video: Adolf Alcañiz

Sound space: Pere Noguera

Curated by Pilar Parcerisas

<http://barbaraheld.wordpress.com/2008/04/01/singing-stones/>

06. Acknolegdments

Special thanks to scientist Itzhak Gilboa for his thoughts on the absurdity of trying to linearize music.

07. Copyright note

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