Guest Recital, October 4, 2015

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Guest Recital

Ogni Suono
Noa Even and Phil Pierick, saxophones

Sunday, October 4, 2015
6:00 p.m.
Harper Hall
Ogni Suono is committed to expanding and promoting the repertoire for saxophone duo by commissioning and performing new works. The duo’s international appearances include the inaugural Singapore Saxophone Symposium, Romanian-American Musical Days Festival in Sibiu (Romania), Berlin University of the Arts, Felicja Blumental Music Center in Tel Aviv, Night of the Museums Festival in Budapest, Songkla Rajabhat University (Thailand), and World Saxophone Congresses in Scotland and France. Numerous tours throughout the United States have brought their music to cities such as New York, Boston, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, and Baltimore.

Noa and Phil have collaborated with many composers, including Ian Dicke, Quinn Collins, Ryan Carter, Claudio Gabriele, and Hong-Da Chin. Their debut album, Invisible Seams, featuring commissioned works was released in 2014. Supported by New Music USA, Ogni Suono is currently working with composers David Coll, Kate Soper, and Felipe Lara to initiate SaxoVoce, a long-term project dedicated to exploring the wide-ranging ways of synthesizing saxophone and voice. SaxoVoce will be unveiled in Los Angeles on the Outpost Concert Series and in San Francisco on Switchboard Presents.

Emphasizing the importance of education, Ogni Suono regularly supplements performances with clinics, master classes, community outreach programs, and presentations. They have given clinics and master classes at many institutions, such as University of Houston, Penn State University, Western University (Canada), and West Virginia University. As winners of the 2012-2013 CMS Yamaha-in-Residence Fellowship, Ogni Suono presented outreach programs at a museum, retirement community, middle school and high school in Iowa. Additional outreach includes Lincoln Elementary School in Chicago and Orlat Orphanage in Romania.

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Roya  Parents often told me that becoming a father would change my life. And I believed them. But the experience has been wholly different from the contemplating, as it is with nearly everything. Composing Roya was, for me, a return to composition as it was when the desire was first born in me. This piece became an exploration of the utterly simple and delicate, a return to the beauty of a scale in counterpoint, a return to consonance (which I had never abandoned in the first place). Major sections of Roya were composed by coding strict additive processes as algorithms in Common Music and notating the results. I then went in and manually mangled the music as I pleased. This, I felt, reflects a child-like process. The infant is swept up in an inevitable course of growth, a sort of fate, a genetic crunching of numbers... yet every turn seems unexpected. There is a joyful noise within the patterns; not “indiscipline” in a Boulezian sense, but rather an improvisatory playfulness. And isn’t that what musicians do? Not study or coerce or force or think. We may do all of these things, but ultimately, and firstly, we use a different word. We play. Roya is dedicated, with undying love, to my daughter.

—Halim Beere

The saying “sound like a broken record” means to say something over and over again. In Two Broken Records, each saxophone is treated as a broken record that is constantly in a love-hate relationship with the other. Argument and harmony can be heard back-to-back, or even overlapped during the emotional interaction between these two mischievous broken records. This summer, Ogni Suono premiered Two Broken Records in Oldenburg, Germany and toured the piece in Europe, including performances at the 17th World Saxophone Congress in France and the Felicja Blumental Music Center in Tel Aviv, Israel.

—Hong-Da Chin

ogni suono come un essere vivente  Every sound like a living being. Our biology/psychology expresses itself, in part, by a need for both logically ordered structures, and a need to exert independence from such structures. This dialectical reality is at play in O.S.C.U.E.V. Form and proportions are derived from the first 28 placeholders of pi (I’m also 28 years old as I write this...cheesy). Note the remarkable coincidence of triads of alternating numbers (3.141 5926 535 8 979 323 84 626 43 383). Yet there is a conflict between the traditional musical need for formal rhetoric permitted by this stupid and anecdotal use of pi, and the biological need for organicism (demanded from the materials themselves). In the end, in order to honor my sense of what is musical, I had to corrupt my sense of what is numerically "logical" – this has always been the case, regardless of the logic I begin with. My intuition will not allow me to accept perfect congruency, symmetry, or logical consistency. As we say it sounds dry; lifeless. Imperfection, distortion, and erasure are signatures of our humanity.

—James Bunch

Dart: don’t be his shadow  Dart: the verb. don’t be his shadow: In 2001 or 2002, when I was still living in Cincinnati, I went to see a Juilliard jazz trumpeter (whose name currently escapes me) play a guest concert at the Blue Wisp. A local trumpeter showed up (presumably uninvited) to sit in. At one point an aging hipster, donning a beret and smoking a Black and Mild, got up from the bar and confronted the intruder while he was playing, pointing at him and saying, “Don’t be his shadow, man. Don’t be his shadow.” And so much of the piece focuses on heterophonic close canons and near-unison playing, sometimes slipping into true unisons. The end of the piece quotes “A Carrot is as Close as a Rabbit Gets to a Diamond” from Captain Beefheart’s 1980 album Doc at the Radar Station. Dart: don’t be his shadow was written for Noa Even and Phil Pierick, the Ogni Suono Saxophone Duo, in 2010-2011.

—Quinn Collins

When recently asked to describe his own music in four words, Alex Mincek responded with “texture, timbre, and rhythmic vitality.” Karate explores a broad spectrum of the saxophone’s timbral palette in an improvisatory manner reflective of music by John Zorn and Anthony Braxton.

Straphanger is inspired by Diego Rivera’s 1931 mural-style painting Frozen Assets. The painting’s three scenes of Great Depression life in New York City inform Straphanger’s structure, timbre, and register. The first movement, “Drudge,” is derived from Rivera’s depiction of the commuting middleclass dwarfed by oppressive skyscrapers. “Underclass” references the middle of the painting, where the homeless, many of whom provided inexpensive labor to build the city, are warehoused in a steel and glass shed. The final movement, “Robber Barons,” is centered on the bottom third of the painting. Here, the wealthy preside over their fortunes in an underground bank vault. Hidden away from mainstream society, they appear indifferent to the inequality they perpetuate.

—Ian Dicke