

EMPRES presents: *The Art of Noises IV*

AN EVENING OF EXPERIMENTAL ELECTRONIC MUSIC AND SOUND ART



Featuring *Despicable Zee*

+ *The OWL Collective, Jon Packham, Carol Jones and Members of the Oxford Music Faculty and Ruskin School of Art graduate and undergraduate communities*

Free tickets available at
modernartoxford.org.uk

DOORS FROM 6PM
THURSDAY
31ST
OCTOBER
MODERN ART
OXFORD



SCHEDULE

18:00–20:00

Basement

Harris Ferguson

inscrutable is comA eel (installation)

18:30–18:45

Cafe

John Alexander

Ghost Machinery (film)

18:45–19:30

Project Space

OWL Project

Workshop

19:35–19:45

Cafe

Gascia Ouzounian and Jonathan Packham in Conversation

19:45–20:15

Piper Gallery

Jonathan Packham and Friends

Copper House Music

20:15–20:30

Basement

S.E. Holloway

Wish (film)

20:30–20:45

Project Space

OWL Project and Friends

Performance

20:45–21:00

Cafe

David De Roure

Ada Lovelace: Numbers into Notes

21:00–21:20

Basement

Beth Shearsby

[CAUSTIC || AMBIENCE || NOISE || INTERPLAY]

21:30–21:40

Basement

Jasmin Irscheid and Despicable Zee in Conversation

21:40–22:00

Basement

Despicable Zee

Atigheh – هقی ت ع

PROGRAMME

Harris Ferguson | 18:00–20:00 (Basement) inscrutable is comA eel (Installation)

Feed the piece your ugly thoughts and hear them digested beyond recognition. Give it the things you hide from your friends and loved ones. Get off on the opportunity to anonymously tell the room how you feel; the piece doesn't care about you beyond the raw input you provide. When it is switched off, all sound files associated with your voice will be destroyed – but you will still know what you said.

Harris is an electroacoustic composer, sound artist and recent graduate from Oxford's Faculty of Music with an interest in generative music and spatial installations. He is about to start work running music, dance and theatre events at the Jacqueline du Pre Music Building in Oxford.

Josh Alexander | 18:30–18:45 (Cafe)

Ghost Machinery (film)

In an exploration of work, language and delusion, Fresh Haircut goes on a dark journey into the forest to discover if he will live forever.

Joshua Alexander is a 2nd year Part-Time MFA student at The Ruskin School of Art. He makes moving image work that combines writing, music and performance. His film Ghost Machinery was nominated for the International Prize at Zebra Poetry Film Festival in Germany in 2018. Also in 2018 his film Animal Drums (a collaboration with poet SJ Fowler) was premiered at Whitechapel Gallery. He has been commissioned to make short films by several organisations including The Austrian Cultural Forum and English Pen. He has screened work at various events including A World Without Words and Kakania.

OWL Project | 18:45–19:30 (Project Space)

Workshop

During this 45-minute workshop, Simon Blackmore and Steve Symons will introduce some of the themes and ideas behind their work and then lead a hands-on workshop which will focus on the loomuter installed at Modern Art Oxford. They will demonstrate how the simple patterns of a punch card computer can be sent over a wifi network and used to make sounds in different software including SuperCollider and PureData.

Please bring a laptop or acoustic instrument and come and make some noise with us. Enthusiastic participants will be welcome to join us for a short improvised performance later in the evening. If you are interested in using PD or SuperCollider please have a go at installing it before the session.

<https://supercollider.github.io>

<https://puredata.info/>

OWL Project are an art collective formed by Simon Blackmore, Antony Hall and Steve Symons. They work with wood and electronics to create music-making machines that fuse sound art with sculpture. Notable works include 2012 Cultural Olympiad commission ~Flow, a large-scale floating installation which sonified the flow and salinity of the River Tyne using a range of hand-crafted machines, and their range of iLogs – handheld portable electronic music instruments.

Gascia Ouzounian and Jonathan Packham | **19:35–19:40 (Cafe)** **In Conversation**

Jonathan Packham is a composer, researcher and performer of contemporary music based in Oxford, UK. He also performs as DJ SALINGER. Please visit jonathanpackham.org for more.

Gascia Ouzounian is Associate Professor of Music at the University of Oxford. She is artistic director of Optophono, a label that publishes interactive music and sound art (www.optophono.com).

Jonathan Packham and Friends **19:45–20:15 (Piper Gallery)** **Copper House Music**

Copper House Music is a new site-specific spatial performance commissioned by Modern Art Oxford. In the early 1900s the space that now houses the Piper Gallery was the Copper House of the City Brewery, hence the title. The open graphic score for this piece is based on the visual and functional identity of the Piper Gallery space: in many instances I worked directly from the architectural plans of the building. This piece can be listened to passively or actively: after the conversation with Gascia Ouzounian (see above) there will be the opportunity to make your own "listening score" for the piece, which you can use to guide your movement around the Piper Gallery space during the performance.

S.E. Holloway | 20:15–20:30 (Basement)

Wish (film)

Wish (2019) is a film that is exactly that. It is a wish to heal and communicate with the woods. It was shot where I found myself most at peace in the city of Oxford: Aston's Eyot, Holywell Cemetery, and University Parks. During deep meditation and in dreams, I hear a lot of music that is incredibly healing, so I was interested in imitating this music to share through my work. I can't say for certain what the instruments are in my dreams, but for Wish I distorted an improvised tune on an acoustic guitar. Recently I've been particularly inspired by angels, Native American medicinal ritual, and the shamanistic role of artists and musicians in contemporary society.

Holloway is an interdisciplinary artist and Ruskin MFA graduate who is inspired by the natural world and its spiritual inhabitants. She comes from a family of musicians, and is interested in the healing qualities of music, forests, and light.

OWL Project and Friends

20:30–20:45 (Project Space)

Performance

The OWL Project returns with a performance based on their earlier workshop!

David De Roure | 20:45–21:00 (Cafe)

Ada Lovelace: Numbers into Notes

In the 1840s, Charles Babbage had been designing his giant steam powered mechanical computer, the Analytical Engine, well ahead of its time but never actually built. Ada Lovelace could see the potential for the computer to do things other than calculations – like generating music. What would have happened had Babbage eventually built this hypothetical computer, and Lovelace lived to program it for music? This is explored through a variety of experiments, from emulating the analytical engine through to algorithmically enhanced instruments.

David De Roure is a computational musicologist who has turned from music analysis to creation, developing AI code and algorithmically enhanced instruments for composition and performance. He is a founding member of the RNCM Centre for Practice and Research in Science and Music. Since 2010 his research team in the Oxford e-Research Centre has worked on the 'transforming musicology' and 'fusing audio and semantic technologies' projects. David is also a Turing Fellow, conducting further research on music and AI at the Alan Turing Institute in London.

Beth Shearsby | 21:00–21:20 (Basement) [CAUSTIC || AMBIENCE || NOISE || INTERPLAY]

Beth Shearsby is an experimental artist based in Oxfordshire, exploring sound using synthesisers, tape loops, D.I.Y circuits and other materials during improvised live performance. She is also an active member of the creative educational charity Young Women's Music Project, which supports women in music through workshops, talks, festivals and more.

bethshearsby.com

Jasmin Irscheid and Despicable Zee

21:30–21:40

(Basement)

In Conversation

Musician Zahra Haji Fath Ali Tehrani, also known under the pseudonym Despicable Zee, will speak with Jasmin Irscheid about her new EP Atigheh – هقی‌ت‌ع. In her music, Zahra reflects upon her mixed heritage and issues around belonging and displacement. Born in Oxford, the musician and producer grew up with an Iranian father and Irish mother in a working class home. Discussing different elements and production techniques used in Atigheh – هقی‌ت‌ع, they will explore how contrasting musical identities can be negotiated and reconciled. The two will also discuss the perception of her music by audiences and the local press in Oxford, and explore her views on identity politics in the context of current public discourse.

Despicable Zee | 21:40–22:00 (Basement)

Atigheh – هقی ت ع

Atigheh derives its name from a ballad by Persian singer Hayedeh, a sample of her evocative voice wails around Tehrani's drumming; a reference point we may not understand but it is filled with meaning nonetheless. The song was released shortly before she entered a self-imposed exile in 1978, the year before Tehrani's own father emigrated to the U.K. It feels like many voices intersect. Layering melancholy, lazy melodies to shape a vocal sound that sits somewhere between poetry and quiet rap, her voice is fragile yet assured. Tehrani describes her writing style as 'stream of consciousness', and it's apparent that this release has been collaged together from many different notes, secrets, scraps and moments in time. Not only through the variety of samples, but also in the content, which poetically relates her father leaving Iran to her own feelings of loss in the present day. In Atigheh – هقی ت ع we hear a more direct approach to the issues that Despicable Zee raised on her previous releases, where she began to creatively navigate her dual heritage and a feeling of being on the periphery. Through the process of music-making she tries to locate a place of belonging. Hayedeh left Iran so she could keep singing, Tehrani sings to attempt to understand why her father left and what he left behind. The sparse sound acknowledges the holes that displacement leaves.

Zahra Haji Fath Ali Tehrani aka 'Despicable Zee' is an Oxford-based musician, composer, performer and currently the Director of the Young Women's Music Project in Oxford. She additionally drums for Lafawndah, who is currently supporting Kate Tempest during her latest UK tour, and also for the Young Knives in preparation for their album release next year.

ABOUT EMPRES

The Faculty of Music's Electronic Music Practice RESearch group (EMPRES) promotes and advances research and public dissemination in electronic music practice. EMPRES works with musicians, composers, producers, researchers and academics from a wide range of disciplines interested in electronic music, as well as other members of the music industry.

For more information, please visit:

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