

MOBIUS NEWSLETTER

354 CONGRESS STREET BOSTON
(Fort Point) 617 542-7416

Vol. 4 #3 NOV/DEC 1986

MOBIUS (the space) was founded by the members of Mobius Performing Group, as a laboratory for artists experimenting at the boundaries of their disciplines. MOBIUS provides a forum for audiences and artists actively engaged in the development and critique of new genres of art-making.

"Performance art requires experimental conditions, which should create a certain (and necessary) ecstasy. Therefore, high demands are placed on the performance artist, since he [sic] has to exert discipline while at the same time being totally involved. Performance art is an intermedia field, a no man's land. When it is fully realized - something which rarely happens - it can be magic. In such moments, performance art attains a rare and essential concentration of creative energies in the 'here and now' - unlike all other forms of art. ...As always, what [is] called for here [is] steering the boat into the open sea between Scylla and Charybdis. The Scylla of performance art manifests itself in the psychopathic aspect, which in its uncontrolled state can destroy or disturb the artistic form. The Charybdis, which is another cause for frequent and lasting failure in performance art, is the mere show of reassured routine. As a matter of fact, both these dangers exist independently of the quality and intensity of a performance. The right balance between drive and premeditation depends upon various factors - sometimes even upon the right room-temperature. And it is this very balance which in other art forms exists between the intention and technique. The polarities are different, but what matters is the tension between them."

- Heinz Ohff from Performance - Another Dimension

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

MOBIUS WORKS-IN-PROGRESS

SERIES

MOBIUS will sponsor the next Works-in-Progress series during the week of February 23, 1987. We are seeking proposals from artists in all performing media, film and video for potential inclusion in the program.

The purpose of the Works-in-Progress series is to present work in its developmental stages to an informed audience, in order to elicit responses that will help guide the work as it continues to grow. An introduction by each artist or group before the piece is presented, and an informal discussion after the presentation of each piece are integral elements of a successful program.

Proposals should include: a description of the work as you now intend or imagine it to be; background about the artist(s) involved; and any supporting documentation you can provide (except videotape, for the time being).

We are specifically looking for pieces that run a maximum of 20 minutes, and that involve simple technical requirements (if any).

The deadline for submitting proposals is December 15, 1986.

We're looking forward to hearing from you!

YOUNG GOODMAN BROWN

November 23 and 24

Nancy Adams (choreographer, performer, visual artist, mercenary waitress)

Christian Herold (director, adaptor, producer, mercenary bureaucrat)

Terrie Waters (composer, vocalist; New England Conservatory Third Stream Department; mercenary technocrat)

This is our first collaboration together -- it's a struggle but fascinating. Nancy is shocked at basing a performance on a "story". Christian is shocked at performance artists' ideas of scheduling. Terrie is in shock.

The piece is based on Nathaniel Hawthorne's Young Goodman Brown. It will be a work-in-progress, as we intend to continue working on the piece and reshape it in early '87. This first phase of the project is designed to be something of a seasonal (fall) event. It will be participatory, ritualistic, sense-oriented, material as well as spiritual.

Hawthorne's story, written in the 19th century, is set in Puritan Salem. Young Brown is tempted by a metamorphizing figure into the night woods, where after a period of self-examination and final loss of faith, he joins a Witches' Sabbath. Present are all the best people in town -- mayor, minister, etc. After a series of lurid rituals and moral digressions, Brown renounces Satan and everything vanishes. Brown returns to town the next morning believing everyone

around him to be evil, and dies a bitter and alienated man.

Besides engaging a core American myth -- concerning the "innocence" of Americans and the refusal to gain maturity through knowledge of guilt, evil and suffering -- the story touches on the more easily seen themes of egotism and the failure of moral imagination to transcend a "black and white" sense of morality.

Terrie is using traditional hymns and Bulgarian "shout style" singing to develop a score for ritual moments of the story; its style is also uniquely suited to use by the other members of the ensemble, and potentially members of the audience. We will experiment with microtonal music for the "demon-worshippers". At least two vocalists will use improvisational/notated techniques.

The physical environment of town and wood will surround the audience to encourage a feeling of participation in the event; the set will be created in part by performers and costuming. The audience in fact will be part of the set: they will be arranged/arrange themselves sculpturally in the environment. The audience will also pass through a fun-house in preparation for the Sabbath.

If you're like us, you never get enough of Hallowe'en!

-- Nancy Adams
Christian Herold
Terrie Waters

NEW ELECTRIC AND ACOUSTIC
MUSIC: 5 EVENINGS

December 3 to 7 8pm \$4

Dec 3 Jake Dillon & friends
An evening of impro-
visations featuring
electric football game
and other instruments

Dec 4 Geist: original works
performed on diatonic
harp and Chapman Stick

Dec 5 Tom Plsek: Music for
late 20th century
trombonist--Rapbone
for microbone, and
The Stillness by
Reynold Wiedenaar
for video & trombone

Dec 6 Thomas Janzen: Four
Old Songs for alto
recorder and 2-second
delay, Coins for pianist
and coinist, Lucy's
Dance, and other com-
positions for keyboard,
kalimba, vocals and
electronics
Michael Billow: new
tape music

Dec 7 Ellen Band: Closet Bird,
a sound image decay
piece on tape, and
Depth of Field, an
audio-visual journey in
North American spaces
Bob Kopacz: Egoless
Birdsong, a sound
environment featuring
3 or more tape decks
and Simon Kopacz on
electric guitar and
signal processors

plus a new work for
trombone and Digital
Sound Processor

Dec 7 Diana Stork and Teed
2 pm Rockwell will lead a
free! workshop on African,
Latin American and
original harp tech-
niques plus an intro-
duction to the Chap-
man Stick.

NEW ELECTRIC & ACOUSTIC MUSIC--producer's notes

The inevitable diversity of influences that Tom Plsek has found among contemporary trombonists certainly holds true for all musicians and all listeners. Likewise, the contemporary musician has the freedom to strike out in unique and entirely personal directions, through a process essentially like that which distinguishes every snowflake, and needs only to free her or himself from the compulsion to turn out marketable products. There will be beautiful music, beautiful things and beautiful people and difficult music, difficult things and difficult people.

The other common denominator among these musicians is their by-now-unremarkable inclusion of electronic instruments and sound processing. They employ these devices in ways ranging from Jake Dillon's gonzo control systems to Teed Rockwell of Geist's scrupulous avoidance of all processing other than linear amplification. Jake uses a customised array of cheap commercial "effects" with the nimble "electric football game" as a sound source, harnessing the power of the monster known as feedback and getting it to sing.

Owen O'Toole is arranging the schedule for Wednesday evening's performance. Improvising musicians who would like to take part can reach Owen at 625-9135.

Geist is a San Francisco based duo consisting of Chapman Stick player Teed Rockwell and harpist Diana Stork. They blend African, South Asian, European, Latin American and North American folk idioms into an original style. The uninterrupted flow of melody in their music sets them somewhat apart, in terms of genre, from the other participants in this series. Diana has developed a system of body awareness, resulting in a light, tensionless touch on the harp and an ability to direct its sound spatially. Teed approaches the Stick as if it were an acoustic instrument, achieving a bass guitar-like sound in its lower register and a range of lute-like timbres in the upper octaves. This will be Geist's first appearance in Boston.

The hallmark of Thomas Janzen's compositions seems to me to be their wry humor, which is balanced by solid technique. His pieces range from Ivesian send-ups of academic and popular idioms to a strangely rambunctious, boogie-influenced minimalism. Last spring he performed Slow Asleep, for voice and electronics, during Mobius' Works In Progress #18.

Michael Billow is a tape musician whose work in Boston Regrets for Eventworks 1985 and sound tracks for the MIT production Viscera and, most recently, Daniel Banks' production of Komachi at Harvard. He likes to work in collaboration with film and video artists.

Ellen Band recently moved to Boston from California. A former student of Pauline Oliveros, her work tends to be process-oriented. Presently she is developing a non-traditional and non-coercive music education curriculum at Tufts' graduate school of education.

Artist, inventor, Chinese calligrapher and musician, Bob Kopacz has in recent years traveled extensively in China and Japan. Since returning to this country he has begun to produce tape music. Several of his most recent pieces are based on Indonesian and Korean scales and rhythms. Bob's son Simon Kopacz plays rock as well as free-form guitar.

--Jonathan Scheuer

CLOSET BIRD

and

DEPTH OF FIELD

by Ellen Band

Tape and slide performances.
Dec. 7th at Mobius

Closet Bird- What happens when you live with a canary?

Depth of Field- Imagery of deserts, forests, and dreams of Southern California and other exotic North American locations with music and sound by: David Dunn, Diane Porter, The Glass Orchestra and others.

MUSIC FOR LATE 20TH CENTURY TROMBONE/IST

by Tom Plsek
Trombonist/Composer

- RAPBONE for microbone
- ...of the Ogaden and Sahel dry and gentle...:for solo trombone
- THE STILLNESS by Reynold Wiedenaar: for video and trombone
- untitled: for video and trombone

It occurred to me recently that the music I have been doing lately is very inextricably tied to the late 20th century not only conceptually, but as importantly technically as well. I mean technically in the sense as it applies to new technologies in digital electronics for example, and also as it applies to new performance techniques on my chosen instrument, the trombone. The late 20th century trombone is an instrument quite different from that in use even as recently as the middle of this century. It is better made and has a different sound. It is also used with various electro-acoustical sound transducers such as microphones (implying the use of speakers as well) and other sound modifiers which have become an extension of the instrument. The 20th century trombonist is likewise unique to this time. At no other time is he/she as aware and knowledgeable of so many different styles and types of musics including jazz, classical, ethnic, and all the contemporary idioms (interpret 'contemporary' in any manner you wish). Communication systems are so vast and far reaching that we are literally bombarded with a seemingly infinite numbers of bits of information that can tend to overwhelm us. If we were to limit this discussion to only sound information, it would hardly lessen its impact.

The first piece RAPBONE draws its impetus from 'Rap music' with its basically unpitched, rhythmically pulsing discourses. It also uses an instrument which I call a 'microbone', a trombone/trombonist with several various types of microphones making sounds audible to the listener which would not ordinarily be heard.

The second piece is for an acoustic trombone. It began its existence as an improvisation done at Mobius a couple of years ago, at a time when the world was rather painfully aware of the plight of the people of Ethiopia in their struggle to satisfy the most basic human needs. The piece concerns itself with struggling toward a harmonic series, perhaps the most basic concept to all the worlds musics (the harmonic series, alias overtone series, is the set of frequencies all of which are integral multiples of some fundamental frequency, e.g. $f, 2f, 3f, 4f, \dots$). The title comes from a commentary by my dear friend Taylor McLean written after the first performance. I quote it in its entirety:

Tom blew a piece about
Ethiopia. He blew the death
wind of the Ogaden and Sahel
dry and gentle where it enters
the ear and belly. He
blew the wind in the belly
as it rattles past the
lung on the last trip out
the mouth. He blew the dust
of bone mixed with millet
seeds and clay. He blew the
valley of dry bones. I didn't
know that Tom went that
deep. But now I do.

Video techniques create the central imagery for the Reynold Weidenaar's "The Stillness". The trombonist (again acoustically) is called on as a commentator upon the visual imagery and the electronically processed sounds derived primarily from the New York City subway system and an alto saxophone. At times the music of the tombonist is composed while at other times it is improvised within a given framework. The trombone version of this piece was done by me with the encouragement and full support of the composer.

The second half of the program will be devoted to a single new work that is as yet untitled. It will make use of the Yamaha SPX90 Digital Sound Processor. The work is very much in the process of becoming and for that reason, there is not much to say about it. The overall direction of the work will be from the fragmented/disjointed to the continuous/coherent. It will make much use of the pitch change, delay, and especially the wonderfully long reverberation effects of the SPX90. Because the trombone must be played with two hands, all the mixing will be done via foot pedals operated by the trombonist, demanding a new concept of technical proficiency. Much of the musical material will be improvisatory with the sequence of sound processing effects contributing a structure to the work.

Tom Plsek

ancestral presence

Produced by Harborgroup
Conceived and directed by
Tom Brennan

Dec. 12-14, 19-21.

An integrated art, theatre ensemble consisting of visual, sound, theatre artists, choreographers, and technicians, gearing ourselves to create works which contain a vital dramatic energy, a strong aural-visual dynamic, and an ability to evoke an encompassing layered atmosphere. Feeling no one medium should dominate theatre, we are working symbiotically, accenting one another while providing parallel emotional actions, time acclimations and thematic unfoldings.

In December we will present ancestral presence, first

scene for a work entitled scenes of incarnation, a two room theatre installation exploring the realms of preborn and chaos and the seeming order of death and our memories of death.

We are living results of a bizarre recipe triggered by conception. We are the embodiment of ancestors who in giving us life provided a preselected range of sensibilities and inclinations onto which we add our own lives.

ancestral presence is set as an embedded lab/kitchen where ancestral technicians collate ingredients for a life potential: sound, mold, corrosion, light, blood, honey, keifer, images. Two realms meet when we see the agents of incarnation enter

as couriers from the second room. There is an exchange. Couriers accept the life parcel to implant. They exit for the tomb in mind, set as a grove sown close to the surface of living.

Seventy percent of this work was conceived while travelling though Asia during the winter of 1985-86. You will notice the influence of an oriental aesthetic by the unique participation of musicians and dancers, by the stylized gesturing, posturing and the elaborate costuming and makeup. Also, you may recognize our depiction of invisible worlds or the influence of animist and Hindu ancestral worship.

We ask the audience to enter as observers-absorbers.

Tom Brennan

BLIND ACTION

and
SONGS AND PICTURES

By Lewis Gesner

Dec. 18th. 8:00pm.
\$6

I have always kept notebooks in which I wrote descriptions of sounds, pictures and activities. These descriptions were self contained, sometimes repetitious and short. Most were specific, particular images which I felt were symbolic for some aspect of the human experience, or "just a good image". I found as time passed that these separate discrete pictures were connected to each other by more than the fact that I made them. One might be a refinement of another. One might try to express a similar notion as another in

a completely different way. I found when I juxtaposed these segments, new pictures would pop up. I liked the feeling that I was creating ideas that surprised me, and in some cases, didn't understand. It is this lack of full perspective that makes this present project exciting for me. I have harnessed this freedom to not know what I am doing.

When does something not mean something else? When it is repeated ten thousand times, or maybe when shot into space on a microwave? Or maybe when you put a cardboard divider between your eyes, and try to read a newspaper on either side? I don't know, because this is something I don't understand.

BLIND ACTION is a presentation of actions, images and

sounds that are being given a time and space to affect each other. The events I have chosen to display are products of my need to symbolize things that I feel might be important, though I try not to make point-to-point relationships. I leave that up to the observer. All I might say about subject matter is that memory may make life bearable or unbearable, and repetition may lead to learning or perfection.

SONGS AND PICTURES are fictionalized stories from real life, told as songs and illustrated with slides. I've tried to capture the confessional quality of country and western songs, while developing a folklore drawn from my own experience.

Lewis Gesner

Thurs.-Sat. November 6-22

INSIDE A LEGEND: IMAGES OF ST. JOAN

solo performance by Mari Jones
presented by The Mobius Performing Group
\$7.00 / \$5.00 students

Sun. & Mon. November 23,24

YOUNG GOODMAN BROWN

a performance carnival by:
Nancy Adams, Christian Herold & Terrie Waters

Wed.-Sun. December 3-7

NEW ELECTRIC AND ACOUSTIC MUSIC: 5 EVENINGS

Dec. 3 Jake Billin & Friends
-----Dec. 4 Geist
-----Dec. 5 Tom Plsek
----Dec. 6 Thomas Janzen
-----Dec. 7 Ellen Band
\$5.00

***Free Music Workshop on African,
Latin American, & original harp technique
& introduction to the Chapman Stick
by Diana Stork & Teed Rockwell
Sunday, December 7 2:00 PM

Fri.-Sun. December 12-14, 19-21

ANCESTRAL PRESENCE

produced by harborgroup
conceived & directed by Tom Brennan
\$6.00

Thurs. December 18

BLIND ACTION / SONGS & PICTURES

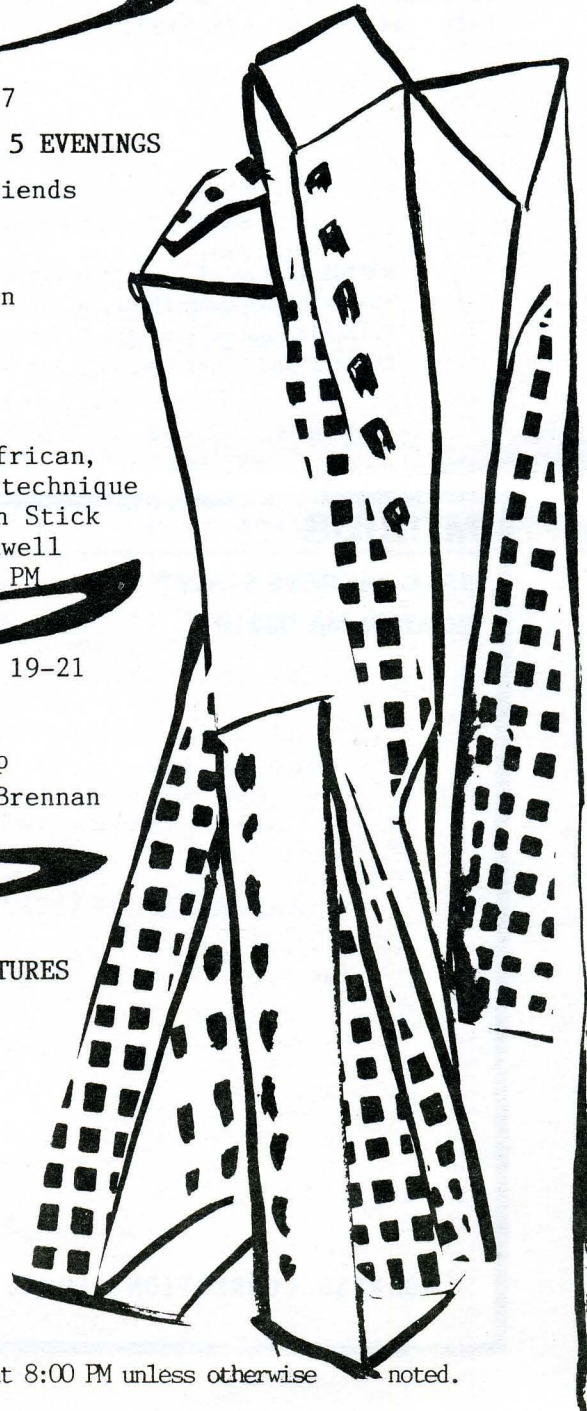
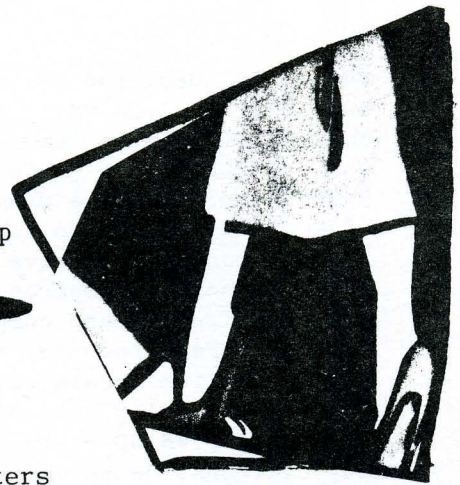
by Lewis Gesner
\$6.00

354 Congress St. Fort Point

MOBIUS

542-7416

all programs begin at 8:00 PM unless otherwise noted.



FRI & SAT, Dec. 5-6 8:00 PM
SUN, Dec. 7 2:00 PM -- at
The Boston Shakespeare Theater
DANCE COLLECTIVE & DANCE
UMBRELLA present the premier
of KNOCKING HEADS, collaborat-
tion by Dance Collective choreo-
graphers Martha Armstrong Gray
and Dawn Kramer, and composer/
musicians Fast Forward, Malcolm
Goldstein, Tom Guralnick,
Christian Marclay, and David
Moss. \$10, \$8.50 - students,
sr. citizens, Dance Umbrella
members. Res: 267-5600,
Info: 492-7578, 576-2737.

3 MONDAY EVENINGS AT THE LONGY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

November 24, 1986 ... Conducted by David Hoose, Featuring 3
Boston Premieres and Soprano Janice Felty.
February 23, 1987 Birthday Celebration Honoring Milton Babbitt
and George Perle, Conducted by Gunther
Schuller.
April 13, 1987 An All British Program, Conducted by Oliver
Knussen.

collage 1986-87

TICKETS \$8 general admission, \$5 students and senior citi-
zens. Available at the box office the night of perform-
ance and in advance at Bostix (Faneuil Hall), Out of
Town Tickets (Harvard Square) or by calling Concert
Charge at 497-1118.

FOR INFORMATION ... Call (617) 437-0231 or write collage, Inc., 295 Hunt-
ington Avenue, Suite 208, Boston, MA 02115.

MOBIUS is funded in part by: the National Endowment for the Arts, the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities, a state agency, by grants from the Boston Arts Lottery Council, the Polaroid Foundation, the Boston Globe Foundation, the Eugene F. Fay Trust of the Boston Safe Deposit and Trust Company, and generous private support.

MOBIUS

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Blind Action and Songs and Pictures

Two Performances by Lewis Gesner

Thursday, Dec. 18
Adm. \$6

Mobius
354 Congress St.
Boston

