

slave chamber
ménage à quatre

five pieces for string quartet

I bill viola: buried secrets, 1995

II solver (j. nixon, m. fusinato, s. bram, r. nolan): 3, 1997

III gabriel orozco ligne d'abandon, 1993

IV kurt merz schwitters ursonate, 1922-32

V the gobbler (m. kelley, p. mccarthy, a. byington, c. jamie, d. muller): lazy siren, 1998

recomposed/arranged/transcribed by
rohan drape & neil kelly

slave edition 1999

Bill Viola (b.1951, New York, US) had an early interest in experimental music that developed via the soundtracks to his pioneering video installations. On study trips to Indonesia and the Pacific Viola made recordings of traditional music. As ethnographer of universal human experience, notions of ritual—such as the rites of passage—have themselves become the focus of his own work, which has diverse roots in Sufism, Christian mysticism and Zen Buddhism. The acoustic potential of sound in space lead him to explore the sonic characteristics of Gothic cathedrals, Greek amphitheatres and ancient architecture. Viola uses the acoustic properties of site such as reverberance to envelop the viewer in a total environment.

Mike Kelley (b. 1954, Wayne, Michigan, US) cultivated his musical interests during the early 1970's while enrolled at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. During this time he became aware of Fluxus and the musical experimentation of West Coast composers Harry Partch, New York Minimalist LaMonte Young, the noise music of Karlheinz Stockhausen, the free jazz of Sun Ra and the Chicago Art Ensemble. In Detroit he co-founded the band Destroy All Monsters at a time when rock bands like The Stooges and the MC5 were redefining performance parameters, exploring links with free jazz, radical politics and rock and roll counter-culture as a site for social experimentation. Kelley initially approached these concerns through non-traditional instrumentation, predominantly vacuum cleaners and squeeze toys. The band blended experimental techniques—particularly noise—with pop, a result of Kelley's interest in rock and roll, particularly the outrageous and ironic proto - punk bands formed in the Detroit area.

Paul McCarthy (b. 1945, Salt Lake City, Utah, US) developed his musical interests initially through the Destruction Arts Symposium in London, which included composers such as Gustav Metzger, Wolf Vostell and Ralph Ortiz. In particular his interest lay in the piano smashing performances that reportably inspired The Who's guitar wrecking stage antics. Additionally McCarthy followed the works of the beat generation, the music of John Cage and Karlheinz Stockhausen.

John Nixon (b. 1939, Sydney, Aust) established his musical path via an awareness of the punk music scene from the mid 1970's. His retrieval of the DIY attitude first associated with punk has become a mantra for his various practices. Shunning the rock world system he developed Anti-Music, an umbrella term for a number of anonymous experimental music/art recording groups. The resultant noises showed the influence of Pere Ubu's first LP ('The Modern Dance') along with

Futurist, Dada film music. Solver was founded by Nixon in 1997 and is named after a commercial brand of paint he once used when executing monochrome paintings. Using classical rock instrumentation the noise music produced maintains the vitality of punk's energy but is mediated by the sound excursions of bands like Sonic Youth and by what could be called musique concrète, a 'truth to materials' approach which disavows all musical virtuosity. The music develops as free improvisation, each track being only briefly considered prior to recording.

Marco Fusinato (b. 1964, Melbourne, Aust) began composing from his interests in rock, experimental and noise music. He sites the early works of Glen Branca and the New York no-wave scene as being particularly important to his practice. Fusinato has developed a repertoire that investigates the harmonic relationship between music and colour (pitch and hue). To date his compositions have concentrated on the primacy of the E chord and red, its harmonic equivalent hue. These constant wavelengths—aural and ocular—under amplification and feedback expand or cancel nodal/anti-nodal characteristics thereby creating kinaesthetic interference.

Kurt Merz Schwitters (b. 1887, Hanover, Deut, d. 1948, London) was the great lyrical composer of Dada. He made music from the incidental social intercourse heard on the street; the city being the contemporary trace of every living moment. His use of random events and verbal phrases clearly owes much to Marinetti's Futurist theatre. His major opus, the Ursonate 1922-32 composed for solo voice, is grand opera—mechanical Wagner. The sonata consists of four movements; an introduction, an end, and a cadence in the fourth movement. Although Schwitters was very specific about articulation, phrasing and rhythm he conceded that as with any printed music, many interpretations were possible.

Gabriel Orozco (b. 1962, Jalapa, Veracruz, Mexico) is from the new world school of suspended time, a notion first resolved through still photography. These parallel concerns, and their possible aural equivalents are central to Orozco's compositional practice. Like a photographer Orozco creates from the momentary and the ephemeral, he perceives the world to be full of dormant compositions waiting to be brought into being. Ligne d'Abandon, 1993 with Manuel Rocha, is a sound piece generated by a skidding car and its relationship to an impending catastrophe. The screeching wheels' noise was computer manipulated by stretching and contracting the different sound lengths by Phase Vocoder.