

*Amongst The Clutter* - Chris McCann

Quite often we come across something beautiful amongst clutter, be it in a drawer, a cupboard of a pile of rubbish. That not to say that clutter and rubbish cannot be beautiful. *Amongst The Clutter* was conceived during the summer of 2012. The inspiration for the piece came from my contact with various household items, which I found to have extremely interesting sonic qualities when moved, stuck or collided with another object. The concept behind the piece is based on the imagery of finding something beautiful ‘amongst’ mess or ‘clutter.’ The first recording for this piece was that of a toilet flushing. This has been utilized throughout as a transitional tool between sections of the piece and also to convey the image of ‘clutter’ being flushed away. All of the chords and tonal elements of the piece have been created from, what we would describe as, ‘clutter,’ stretching the sound and using a sampler to perform this material in the form of chords. The recurring chord that appears in almost every section of the piece is a recording of guitar being strummed in a spacious room, which I have isolated and used to produce the chords heard throughout. This recording had been stored on my computer, acting as clutter on my hard drive.

**Chris McCann** is a Belfast based composer currently studying an MA in Instrumental Composition. He focuses his output on Acoustic Composition, Electroacoustic Composition and a bridging of the two worlds. His current acousmatic portfolio consists of 30 minutes, with an addition of short sketches which will become larger scaled works. His undergraduate final year electroacoustic composition was accepted for his first conference ‘From Tape To Typedef’ in 2012. Chris plans on continuing his studies with a PhD in composition, exploring the medium of instrumental composition and electronics (fixed media). Chris produces electronica and chill-out music in his spare time and has recently started composing music for a sponsored athlete’s series of videos.

**Tom Erbe - “Sweet Thunder Listening Room” curator**

**Tom Erbe** has had an important role in American experimental and electronic music of the last 20 years. In addition to his pioneering and widely used program SoundHack, he has become one of the most sought after and respected sound engineers for contemporary music. He studied computer science and music at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and got his initial audio engineering experiences by volunteering at WEFT, WPGU, and Faithful Sound Studios. After graduating Tom became the Technical Manager of the Computer Audio Research Laboratory at the University of California, San Diego. There he was involved in the development of an electronic violin, a DSP based sound processor and an early computer music production workstation.

As the Technical Director of the Center for Contemporary Music at Mills College, he worked with composers Robert Ashley, David Rosenboom, Larry Polansky, James Tenney and Alvin Curran, as computer music and recording engineer. His research work at CCM included the program SoundHack, and the design of a DSP based sound processor for use with the language HMSL. During this time he also developed a 4-channel spatial audio processor for the NASA Ames Research Center. Joining the faculty of the California Institute of the Arts as Technical Director of the computer music studios in 1993, he continued his work with SoundHack and spectral techniques, teaching courses in computer music, programming and audio engineering. Tom also directed the design and construction of CalArts’ Dizzy Gillespie Recording Studios. He rejoined the faculty of UCSD in 2004 in its Department of Music and serves as Studio Director. Most recently Tom has released SoundHack Spectral Shapers, the first of a planned set of three plugin bundles to bring extreme spectral processing to the VST, AU and RTAS formats. He has recently been named the President of the International Computer Music Association.

**Curators:**

Tom Erbe, Elliot Patros, Jamie Pawloski, Zachary Seldess, Rick Snow

**Co-Curators:**

Steven Schick and Rand Steiger

**SWEET THUNDER SCHEDULE**

**APRIL 24- 27, 2014**

**Ongoing Free Installations:**

Katharina Rosenberger’s Viva Voce (2012) - Firehouse, FMC  
Sweet Thunder Listening Room - Fleet Room, FMC

**Thursday, April 24**

6:00 pm - Festival Kick-Off/Reception - FMC Festival Pavilion  
7:30 pm - JACK Quartet - FMC Festival Pavilion

**Friday, April 25**

7:30 pm - International Contemporary Ensemble ICE - FMC Festival Pavilion  
10:00 pm – Morton Subotnick - FMC Festival Pavilion

**Saturday, April 26**

2:00 pm - Solos - FMC Festival Pavilion  
7:30 pm - San Francisco Contemporary Music Players (and Friends) - FMC Festival Pavilion

**Sunday, April 27**

12:30 - Compose Yourself - FMC Festival Pavilion  
2:00 pm - red fish blue fish/George Lewis/Jaime Oliver - FMC Festival Pavilion

# SWEET THUNDER Listening Room

**CONCERT H:  
Thursday 6pm**

***Only Now*** (0:07:51)

Richard Garrett

***Stuck*** (0:10:57)

Rafael Munoz Gomez

***Just Inference*** (0:05:03)

John Oliver

***Homage to La Monte Young*** (0:06:36)

Nicholas Cline

***Gates (Kedesh-Naphtali)*** (0:08:46)

John Nichols III

***Slumber*** (0:05:00)

John Gibson

***Qualia*** (0:10:42)

Fernando Alexis Franco Franco Murillo

***OVERTURE (in memoriam T.A.T.)*** (0:10:38)

Javier Alejandro Garavaglia

***Amongst The Clutter*** (0:11:30)

Chris McCann

**APRIL 24-27, 2014**  
Fort Mason Center, SF

**Only Now - Richard Garrett**

If Hollywood movies are to be believed, echoes equal memory, reverie, and flashback. Each echo is a perfect copy of the original but getting fainter and fainter as we sink back in time. Yet, science tells us that memory is not like that – each time we remember something, we rewrite it – introducing subtle changes – so that all memory becomes false memory. In addition, there is a small time delay between the moment when our senses perceive an event and the moment when, the brain having processed that information, we consciously experience it. So, perhaps all experience is memory and if all memory is false, is there such a thing as “now”? Many religious traditions would say there is. That “Now” is an experience that exists outside of time and conscious thought – a place attainable by contemplation where everything is still and everything is connected. Whether this is cosmic unity or a distant memory of the womb is a matter for individual interpretation. The title, *Only Now* plays with these ideas of echoes, distortions, and a still point, attempting to take the listener from one strike of a bell, through silence to another or, perhaps the same, strike.

**Richard Garrett** (1957) started playing guitar at the age of sixteen and has been composing music ever since. Over the years, he has played in rock bands; accompanied poets; sung solo in folk clubs; and sat in a pit orchestra for pantomime. He has studied singing with Gilles Petit and attended the Welsh Jazz Summer School several times. Alongside composition and performance, Richard has been professionally involved with recording technology and computers for some years, and combines these interests by experimenting with various forms of algorithmic composition. In 2003, along with Brian Eno and others, Richard contributed some of his generative music to a five-day outdoor exhibit at the Ars Electronica festival in Linz, Austria. He has studied Max at Goldsmiths College, London and Algorithmic Computer Music with David Cope and Peter Elsea in Santa Cruz, California. One of Richard’s larger projects was Weathersongs, a system to generate electronic music from the weather, the installation element of which has given public performances in Wales and Italy. Richard uses Max and SuperCollider programming languages extensively in his composition and has written a suite of software modules called nwdlbots (pronounced “noodle bots”) for generative composition within Ableton Live. He is currently studying for an MA in Electroacoustic Composition with Andrew Lewis and Patricia Alessandrini at Bangor University in Wales and, in September, will be starting a PhD.

**Stuck - Rafael Munoz Gomez**

Being stuck. Trying. Trying. Being stuck again. Searching. Still being stuck. Finding. Ah, wait no, again stuck. Finally, composing, in a tense mood, a stucked music.

**Rafael Muñoz Gomez** was born in Brussels, 1988. Fascinated by electronic music for years, Rafael has been playing as a DJ in Brussels since 2004. This passion for music, especially for the minimal techno movement, led him to get into the Royal Conservatory of Mons (Belgium) in the Acousmatic Composition class of Annette Vande Gorne. Rafael is keen on repetitive music, rhythm, sound features and the study in minute detail of it. Nowadays, he tries to base his work on a mix of all these elements.

**Just Inference - John Oliver**

*Just Inference* was commissioned to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the GEMS Ensemble of Montréal, which Oliver co-founded with Claude Schryer and Alcides Lanza, and was first performed at the Clara Lichenstein Recital Hall on October 23, 2003. Composer Alcides Lanza asked former composer members of the ensemble to create short “remix” pieces based on the McGill University Records recording of his composition *Interferences III*. I performed, as guitarist, in this seminal work for voice, chamber ensemble and electronic in the first season of the GEMS ensemble. I took the two most active passages from the work and created a remix using additive and subtractive procedures. The pulse that underlies the entire piece reminded me of another early GEMS work by my colleague Claude Schryer called *Just a Pulse*. So my work *Just Inference* is a tribute to the cofounders of GEMS and to electroacoustic music that gives the drama of the human voice a central role.

**John Oliver** writes & performs music for acoustic instruments & electroacoustic media; won six prizes in late 80s for five compositions ranging from chamber to orchestral to electroacoustic music, including the Canada Council’s Grand Prize at the 8th CBC 8th National Competition for Young Composers for his live electronic work with tape, “El Reposo del Fuego.” Oliver performs on special nylon-stringed MIDI-capable guitars made by Quebec luthier Godin, specializing in their transformation by electronic & computer processing. He also sometimes conducts his own music or mixes a show of electroacoustic music. Music on CDs from empreintes DIGITALes, earsay, CBC Records, ZaDiscs, SNE & McGill University Records.

**Homage to La Monte Young - Nicholas Cline**

*Homage to La Monte Young* explores the interacting sounds of the feedback from scordatura electric guitars and noisy amplifiers. The pervasive 60-cycle hum that permeates our daily soundscape provides the initial impetus and harmonic material for the work. Naturally, a precursor to this idea can be found in La Monte Young’s *Composition 1960 #7* (B and F# ‘to be held for a long time’). A second point of intersection comes from Robert Palmers’ essay, “The Church of the Sonic Guitar.” “But an electric guitar, properly tuned to resonate with everything from the [concert] hall’s acoustics to the underlying 60-cycle hum of the city’s electrical grid, is forming its massive sound textures from harmonic relationships that already exist in nature; compare this to the arbitrary ‘equal temperament’ system which causes decidedly unharmonious harmonic interference patterns and dissonances when certain tones are allowed to ring together.”

**Nicholas Cline** is a composer of acoustic and electroacoustic music. His compositions have been performed in the US and Europe and his collaborative film projects have been screened at prestigious festivals around the world. He was featured on the 2012 SEAMUS electroacoustic miniatures recording series: Re-Caged and received an honorable mention in the 2012-13 UnTwelve International Composition Competition. Other musical pursuits include building experimental instruments, transcribing Calypso songs, and playing the mandolin. He holds a BMus from Columbia College Chicago and an MM from Indiana University. He is currently studying at Northwestern University where he was awarded a doctoral fellowship and teaches aural skills. His principle teachers include Aaron Travers, Don Freund, John Gibson, Jeffrey Hass, Ilya Levinson, and Sebastian Huydts.

**Gates (Kedesh-Naphtali) - John Nichols III**

Completed in 2013, *Gates (Kedesh-Naphtali)* is a stereophonic composition that was partly inspired the Pleiades constellation. A musical mapping of an image of the constellation occurs in the middle and at the conclusion of the composition. One can hear this depiction in the “wood block” timbres. The composition begins with a complimentary relationship between periodic and non-periodic sounds; the sustained sonorities are engraved with a variety of successive fleeting noises. The idea to overlay, or “etch” sustained sonorities with a variety of successive ephemeral noises was partly inspired by Luigi Russolo’s use of the term “sound” to describe an audio signal with periodicity and “noise” as the lack thereof. Although some of the “noises” in this composition may not be entirely in accordance with his definition, the contrast between the two ideas is apparent. In addition to this relationship, the composition generally balances active and static components between the first and second half. Finally, this work is meant to convey the salvation of individuality through the renunciation of egoism.

**John Nichols III**’s compositions are audible effusions of 21st century experience. He intends to intrigue listeners with a diverse collection of timbres, shapes, sensations, and surprises that have been melded together into a coherent form. His works have been selected for performance at numerous national and international events such as the Gaudeamus Music Week, Electronic Music Midwest, Music Since 1900 Conference, New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, Congreso Internacional de Ciencia y Tecnología Musical (CICTeM), Electronic Music Festival of the Center of the Cypriot Composers, Slingshot 2013, International Computer Music Conference, Society for Electroacoustic Music in the United States, Toronto Electroacoustic Symposium, and International Workshop on Computer Music and Audio Technology, where he was a winner of the WOCMAT 2012 International Electroacoustic Music Young Composers Awards. His composition *The Pillar* won the second international Conlon Music Prize for Disklavier Plus. His 33 minute, multi-movement electroacoustic composition, *Theory of Accidents*, was a finalist in the 2011 Morton Gould ASCAP Young Composer Competition. Mr. Nichols was awarded a Special Mention and was selected for inclusion on the CD for the 2012 Métamorphoses Acousmatic Composition Competition for his composition *AGE*. His composition *Headbanger* was selected for inclusion in the SEAMUS 2012 Electro-miniatures *Re-Caged* CD and he was selected for inclusion in the *Electronic Masters* Vol.2 CD (ABLAZE Records, 2013). A native of Chicago, he is pursuing a Doctorate in Composition at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where he won the Fourteenth Annual 21st Century Piano Commission Competition.

**Slumber - John Gibson**

*Slumber* was commissioned by the Third Practice Festival for a DVD of multichannel pieces that engage the music of the past in some way. In *Slumber*, I looked to music from Schumann’s *Kinderszenen*, “Kind in Einschlummern.” I asked pianist Mary Rose Jordan to record this piece. Then I subjected parts of the recording to the whims of my own software, which stratifies the spectrum of a brief sound and creates many shimmering, out-of-sync repetitive patterns. *Slumber* begins noisily but eventually settles into a quotation from the end of the Schumann. The listener slowly senses the presence of the piano — first only as a subtle timbral reference, then as explicit piano notes reconstructed from the recording, and finally as the unprocessed Schumann phrase. Almost all of the sounds in the piece come from the piano recording. The synthesizer solo in the middle section was performed by me, using a glove controller. Thanks to Mary Rose Jordan for playing the piano, and to Neil Cain for engineering the piano recording.

**John Gibson**’s acoustic and electroacoustic music has been presented in the US, Canada, Europe, South America, Australia, and Asia. His instrumental compositions have been performed by many groups, including the London Sinfonietta, the Da Capo Chamber Players, the Seattle Symphony, the Music Today Ensemble, Speculum Musicae, Ekko!, and at the Tanglewood, Marlboro and June in Buffalo festivals. Presentations of his electroacoustic music include concerts at the Seoul International Computer Music Festival, the Bourges Synthèse Festival, the Brazilian Symposium on Computer Music, the International Biennial for Electroacoustic Music of Sao Paulo, Keio University in Japan, the Third Practice Festival, the Florida Electroacoustic Music Festival, and several ICMC and SEAMUS conferences. Among his grants and awards are a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, two ASCAP Foundation Grants, and the Paul Jacobs Memorial Fund Commission from the Tanglewood Music Center. Recordings of his music appear on the Centaur, Everglade, and SEAMUS labels. Gibson holds a Ph.D. in music from Princeton University, where he studied with Milton Babbitt, Paul Lansky, Steven Mackey, and others. He writes sound processing and synthesis software, and has taught composition and computer music at the University of Virginia, Duke University, and the University of Louisville. He is now Associate Professor of Composition at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.

**Qualia - Fernando Alexis Franco Franco Murillo**

Feelings and experiences vary considerably from one individual to another. In each one of these cases, I am the subject of a mental state with a very distinctive subjective character.

**Fernando Alexis Franco Murillo** is currently studying electroacoustic composition at the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal under the direction of Louis Dufort.

**OVERTURE (in memoriam T.A.T.) - Javier Alejandro Garavaglia**

*OVERTURE (in memoriam T.A.T.)* (1997) is an acousmatic work (quadrophonic) composed to the memory of my viola professor Tomás Alejandro Tichauer, who died in December 1994 at the age of 50 due to a heart attack. Because the viola was almost a part of him, the note “C” (basic tone of the viola) was chosen to organise the entire pitch-system for the work. This was thought as there are for this pitch two different overtones series: one positive (the real overtones), representing the presence of life, and one negative or abstract (the inversion of the overtone series), which we normally do not realise as such, representing the absence of life (his not being alive anymore). Numerical connotations in relationship with his name and his birthday serve to organise algorithmically the rhythms and also the pitches. The materials used come from different sources but are all based on the note “C”. There are concrete sounds, for example: 2 pizzicatti and one “sul ponticello” sound from the viola, 1 clarinet C and the first C Major chord of the Overture from Wagner’s *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. On the other side there are synthesised sounds, most of them treated with granular synthesis. The “C major chord” was transposed using pitch shift algorithms (SoundHack’s Phase Vocoder) about 8 times higher and 8 times lower, following the order of the harmonics of C, in the positive (higher) and the negative (lower) way already mentioned. The equipment used to produce and mix this piece at the ICEM of the Folkwang Hochschule in Essen - Germany was ProTools 4.0, Csound, Audiosculpt and SoundHack. Some passages were algorithmic composed using CommonMusic (Lisp).

**Javier Alejandro Garavaglia** is a composer and performer (viola/electronics). Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina; he also shares Italian and German citizenships. He lives between London (UK) and Köln (Germany). He is currently Course Leader of the BSc Music Technology (Sound for Media) at the Sir John Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture & Design, London Metropolitan University (UK), where he teaches music technology and composition, at UG and PG levels. He studied composition at the Universidad Católica Argentina (Buenos Aires - Argentina) and continued with postgraduate courses in composition and electronic composition under the supervision of Prof. Nicolaus A. Huber (1990-1992) and Prof. Dirk Reith (1990-1995) at the Folkwang Hochschule Essen (Germany). Ph.D. awarded by London Metropolitan University: The Dramaturgy of Music: its Impact on my Composition in 2010. He was a lecturer (1997- 2003) at ICEM (Folkwang Hochschule Essen - Germany) and Associate Director of the Florida Electroacoustic Music Festival (University of Florida - Gainesville - USA) between 1999 and 2008. In 2009 and 2010 he was a juror of the New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival (NYCEMF). Several publications about different topics of his research appear in journals, books and online (Spanish, German and English). His compositions are performed in several places in Europe, the Americas and Asia and include works for solo instruments, chamber music, audio-visual, ensembles and big orchestra with or without the inclusion of electronic media. His electroacoustic works can be found on CD releases.