

letter from the editor

Welcome to the second issue of Artsphere, HM's performing arts magazine, now printed in colour!

Inspired by HM's Black Box Production of Eugene Ionesco's Rhinoceros, Artsphere presents our readers with a provocative choice.

As our world spins further into a vortex of political, economic, climatic, and social turmoil, will you stake your position in the body of the beast or the mind of the human?

Our two covers, with no designated front and back, are equivalent in weight, size and design. we invite you to consider the choice taken and reflect on the divergent paths ahead – its moral ramifications and its social consequences.

Similarly, the articles in our current issue also grapple with choices and divides. They present the arts as a vibrant way to confront and overcome alienation, be it of technological change, biological breakdown, ideological oppositions or political differences.

On a physical level, this issue seeks to play on a convention. We wish to enliven the reading of printed matters – usually a stationary act – into a movement. We want to literally flip your view on engagement and absorption. You, the reader, can only access the full contents through two 180 degrees rotations of the magazine – or a flip over the horizontal axis. As you take on the magazine, Artsphere becomes a body in dance; it is turned front and back, marking lines and drawing circles in space. Our inaugural issue, in bold and dynamic graphic design, made our pages a stage. Our second issue now seeks to make the magazine itself into an interactive performance – enacted by you.

The German dramatist-director Bertolt Brecht once made his audience conscious of theatre as an artifice through alienating effects. Perhaps Artsphere could make our reader self-conscious in their act of reading the textual plays of this magazine?

With *In Dialogue*, we have the honor of interviewing Tod Machover, one of the most visionary, innovative and technologically engaged music composers of our time. As Muriel R. Cooper Professor of Music and Director of Opera of the Future Group at MIT Media Lab, Tod has been crossing the divide between music and technology for more than three decades. We publish the first section of our extensive interview with Tod here, centering on how he employs technology in the service of humanity in the field of music. Tod also shares his personal journey in musical explorations from his toddler years, through his rock'n roll youth, to his current projects which have become communal ventures that champion the concept of "active music" on the world stage.

With **Portrait of an Artist**, we speak with Zhang Zhen Xin, the choreographer of The National Ballet of China. Zhang shares his optimism for dance as diplomacy as he recounts his journey from being a young student of classical Chinese dance to become a principal dancer and now choreographer of China's national ballet troupe. Artsphere catches Zhang for this exclusive interview right after the debut of "Crane Calling" in "Fall for Dance" festival in New York City.

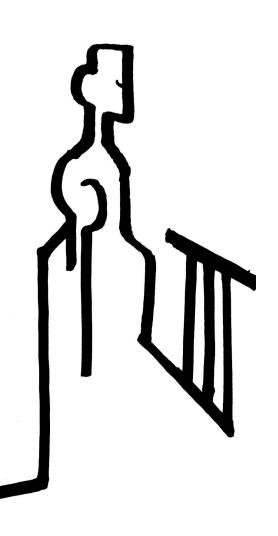
With **Frontiers**, we examine the vanguards of the performing arts domain, exploring intersections with fields such as technology, the environment, culture, and politics through research and personal experience. With **Creative Minds**, we tap into the brains and lives of individual artists at Horace Mann. With **Beyond** the **Curtains**, we have the opportunity to showcase the hidden journeys of a production.

A big thank you to all of the artists who contributed to Artsphere in support of our second issue.

My heartfelt thanks to our advisor Mr. Timkó, for inspiring Artsphere to probe deeper the inner workings of creative arts through rigorous inquiries across disciplines. For this issue of Artsphere, his Black Box Production of Rhinoceros by Eugène Ionesco has made all the difference!

Sincerely,

Kyra Mo Editor-in-Chief



EDITOR IN CHIEF Kyra Mo

Mandy Liu Nishtha Sharma

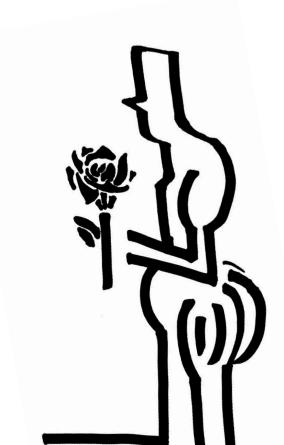
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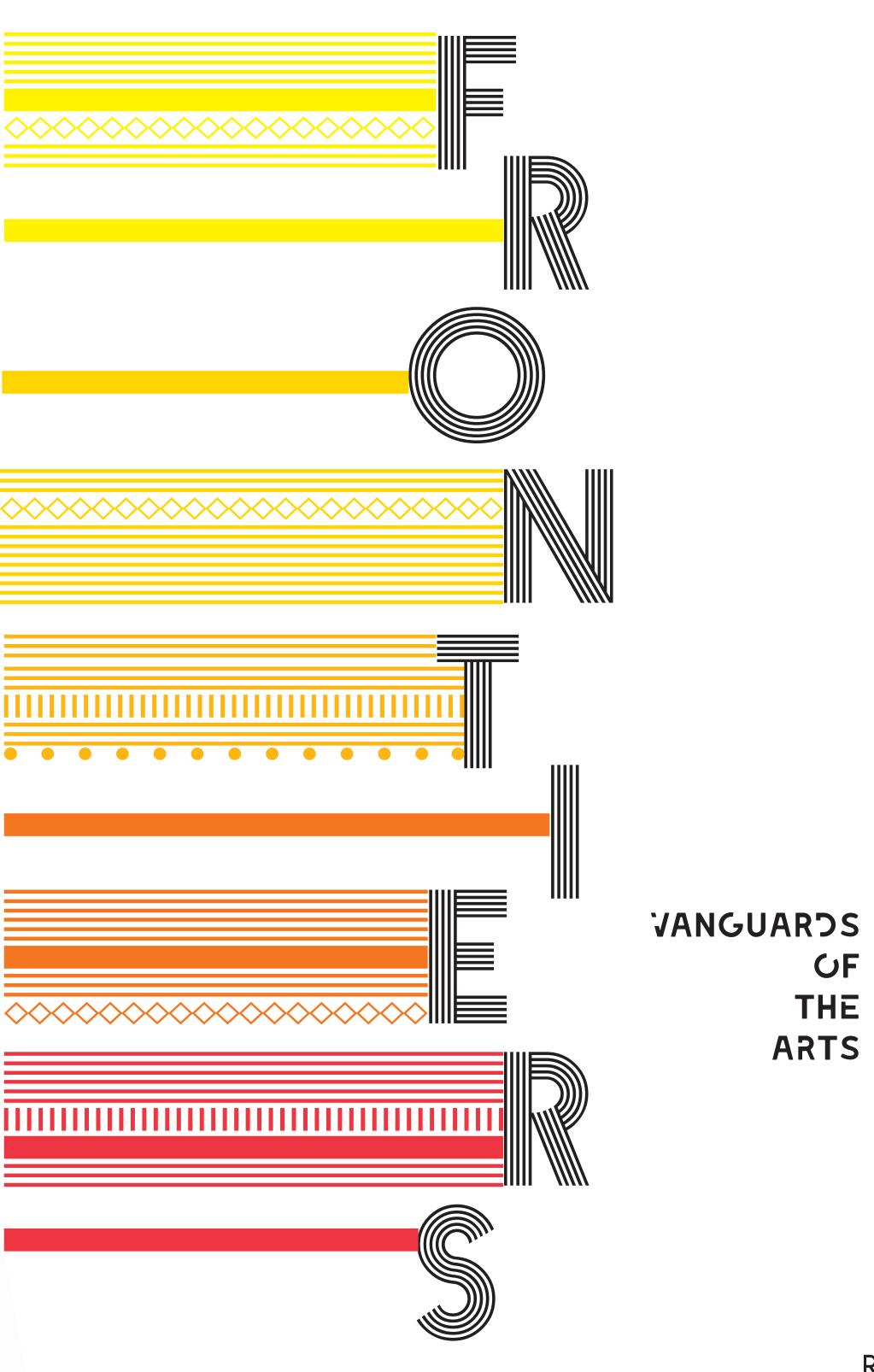
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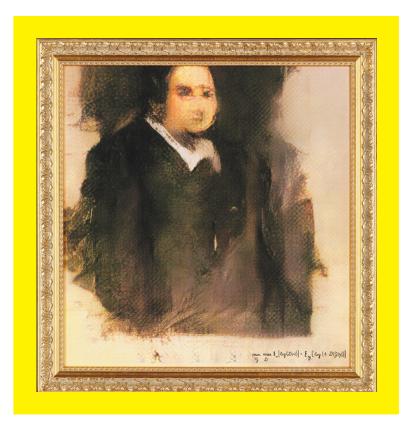


SO, WHAT REALLY IS OR 1.2

IS THERE A BOUNDARY SEPARATING ITEMS THAT CAN AND CANNOT BE DESIGNATED AS ART? WHY DO WE ENJOY "MASTERPIECES" SUCH AS THE MONA LISA, OR DAVID, AND VALUE THEM SO HIGH, BUT LAUGH AT

DOODLES MADE IN KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS? IF YOU RECEIVED A PIECE OF PAPER WITH A FEW CURVES ON IT, WOULD YOU AC-CEPT IT AS ART? OR, EVEN BETTER, JUST A BLANK SHEET OF PAPER?

In the technologically-dominated world in which we live in today, this is a topic we struggle with now. Art has been defined as a form of human expression, and a demonstration of the creative skill and imagination humanity has developed and achieved - coming straight from the dictionary. However, we have seemingly crossed those limits today, when the Portrait of Edmond Belamy was sold at an art auction, in October 2018. The work sold for \$432,500 on auction at Christie's, but that



is not the most surprising fact - this work was not made by any human, rather a computer. The portrait is part of a batch of works released by a Paris-based group, Obvious Art. Members Hugo Caselles-Dupré, Pierre Fautrel, and Gauthier Vernier created a fictitious Belamy family, to create a total of eleven portraits all done by a machine.

"COMPUTERS ARE USELESS. THEY CAN ONLY GIVE ANSWERS."

- Pablo Picasso

Is that really true anymore? Less than fifty years past his death, that famous quote seems to be completely false now. However, more importantly, is that dictionary definition of art as "human expression" valid anymore? If not, what is the new definition? Is there one?

Caselles-Dupré, Fautrel, and Vernier used a machine learning algorithm called a "Generative Adversarial Network" to create this batch of art. Essentially, there are two algorithms working against each other - one to make a work of art, and one to detect if it was made by a human or not. And, as you may have guessed, the detection device, called the "discriminator", eventually failed to correctly sort some of the works. Of course, this detector is not as good as the human eye, but several of the portraits released seem perfectly reasonable to have been made by a person. Richard Lloyd, an art expert at Christie's, said that, while this art was not made by a person, "it is exactly the ARDEN CHEN kind of artwork we have been selling for 250 years".

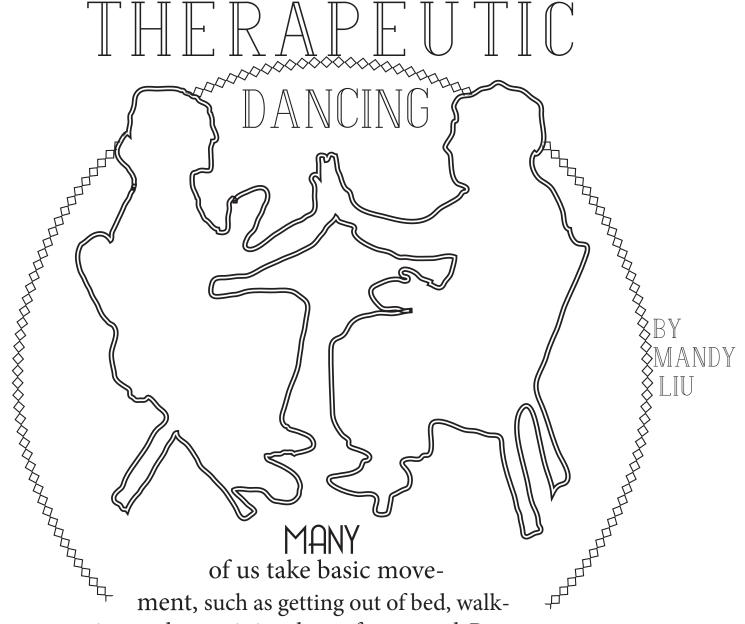
The algorithm they used was not new - in fact, Obvious themselves from code borrowed from Robbie Barrat, who wrote it originally a

In 2015, researchers at Rutgers University, Babak Saleh and Ahmed Elgammal, began to dabble into the crossover between art and artificial intelligence. Over 80,000 images by more than 1,000 artists over 15 centuries were used in an experiment to test if machines could distinguish between artists and styles. 27 different styles were used, each with over 1,500 works included.

THE MACHINE COULD IMPRESSIVELY IDENTIFY THE ARTIST IN OVER 60% OF THE TEST IMAGES AND THE STYLE IN OVER 45% OF THE IMAGES.

The numbers seem comparatively low; however, after analyzing the machine's results more carefully, the mistakes are explainable and even humanlike. The algorithm made connections between similar artists/styles, where most people would take a lot of time to differentiate as well - Claude Monet and Childe Hassam, who was influenced by Monet, or expressionism and fauvism, which is a type of expressionism. This algorithm has then proved to become a useful tool for art historians because many of the connections may be new and unexplored for them. *Obvious* brought this to the next stage, using examples of art to make their own art.

THESE MACHINE ARTISTS AND ART HISTORIANS ARE SIM-PLY THE BEGINNING OF THIS UNPRECEDENTED NEW ERA OF ART. MANY ASK IF THE PORTRAITS BY *OBVIOUS* SHOULD EVEN BE CONSIDERED AS ART. IF A HUMAN DIDN'T MAKE IT, IS IT EVEN DEBATABLE? ART IS BOTH DEFINED AND PERCEIVED AS SOMETHING THOUGHTFULLY AND INTRICATELY CREATED BY HUMANS FOR THE ENJOYMENT AND CRITIQUE OF HUMANS - IS IT POSSIBLE FOR MACHINES TO ENTER THIS HUMAN CONVERSATION DATING FROM MILLENNIA AGO?



ing, and even sitting down, for granted. But people with Parkinson's disease can't rely on their bodies to do these basic activities. Parkinson's disease is a type of movement disorder and it affects the nerve cells in the brain that produce dopamine. As the disease progresses and the levels of dopamine decrease, the symptoms of Parkinson's such as tremors, rigidity, and slowness of movement will become more apparent. The connection between the mind and the body of a person with Parkinson's is broken. There are drugs that can help alleviate the symptoms, but they don't always work.

Exercising can also help recover the mobility of patients and one of the most creative and promising type of physical therapy turns out to

be dancing.

Dance for PD is a worldwide program that offers dance classes to patients with Parkinson's in 24 countries. It was founded 15 years ago in Brooklyn, NY and since then, many universities have been introduced to it. One being Stanford University. On the Stanford Medicine website, they describe the Dance for PD as a group artistic experience rather than a dance class.

"Teachers use elements of classic and social dancing, together with imagery, poetry and live music, to inspire participants to move in creative ways." These dance sessions not only help build patients' upper/lower body strength and enhance

balance and coordination skills, but they can also uplift a patient's mood. 20-40 percent of patients with Parkinson's have depression or anxiety, and dancing can help mitigate these mental illnesses. Sherry Brown, a patient who suffers from Parkinson's, said that she went through a "grieving period" when she was diagnosed with the disease. She began to miss out on social events because of exhaustion and she "fell into despair". *Dance for PD* has helped Brown improve herself both physically and mentally and she, along with many patients, think that dancing has helped them overcome challenges that they thought would have never been possible.

IN DIALOGUE



TOD MACHOVER

Music Composer, Innovator, and Educator Muriel R.Cooper Professor of Music Media , MIT Media Lab

WITH KYRA MO

CAN YOU SHARE WITH US HOW YOU ARRIVED AT THIS CONCEPT OF "ACTIVE MUSIC"?

When I was little, music was a kind of "total activity". My dad was one of the first people in computer graphics, very involved with technology and creativity. My mom went to Juilliard, was a music teacher, and is still a pianist. I was her oldest son and her guinea pig. She believed always that along with learning to play and learning about music, everyone should create music. When I was two or three, we would have our lessons, and she would have four or five kids stay after lesson, and would say, "Everybody, I give you a few minutes and look through the house and find something that makes an interesting sound." We would bring back things like pots and pans, books or lamps. She would ask, "What sound does that make, and what is the loudest sound and softest sound you can make with that, and what if you play them at the same time? Let's make a story with this. Which would be a piece, and what comes first. When you go home for the week, make a picture of what we just did, and so when you come back next week, you can remember and play it again." What a great experience to have grown up with that!

INTERCONNECTED HYPERINSTRUMENT EN-SEMBLE FROM TOD'S PIECE *FENSADENSE*, AT THE LUCERNE FESTIVAL (2015).



ABOUT TOD MACHOVER

Currently Professor of Music and Media at the MIT Media Lab, Tod Machover leads the Hyperinstruments/Opera of the Future group and has been Co-Director of the Things That Think (TTT) and Toys of Tomorrow (TOT) consortia since 1995. In 2006, he was named Visiting Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London. He has composed significant works for Yo-Yo Ma, Joshua Bell, Matt Haimovitz, the Ying Quartet, the Boston Pops, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Penn & Teller, and many others, as well as designed and implemented various interactive systems for performance by Peter Gabriel and Prince. Machover gave a keynote lecture at NIME-02, the second international conference on New Interfaces for Musical Expression, which was held in 2002 at the former Media Lab Europe in Dublin, Ireland, and is a frequent lecturer worldwide. A Finalist for the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music for his opera "Death and the Powers", Tod Machover's latest projects include City Symphony, Schoenberg in Hollywood and an upcoming collaboration with orchestral and choral groups in North and South Korea.

Being creative about music is very important. In a way, traditional performance is always taught by learning how someone else has done or composed or technically performed. My mom taught us that music is not just a system that has been inherited, but that you can make your own music, you can collect things around the house. The way human beings make systems is part of the creative process. I just took that for granted when little. I also took for granted, people learn different ways. I have two daughters. My older daughter learns by all principles and theories first, integration after. My younger daughter will dive right in without all the required knowledge and learn along the way. If you have something you are passionately doing, you can find your own path to learn what you need to learn. That's the way I happen to learn, and I always try to encourage people to do that too.

AS AMUSIC COMPOSER, AN INVENTOR, AND AN EDUCATOR FOR MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS, YOU HAVE BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF ENGAGING PEOPLE WITH MUSIC ACROSS MANY ETHNICITIES, CULTURES, AND COUNTRIES. FROM YOUR WORK SUCH AS CITY SYMPHONY AND BRAIN OPERA, WE SEE YOU BLURRING THE TRADITIONAL LINES BETWEEN THE CREATOR AND THE AUDIENCE. CAN YOU TALK MORE ABOUT HOW YOU SEE THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL COMPOSER VERSUS THE COLLECTIVE CREATOR IN MUSIC?

Being involved ACTIVELY with music makes it more personal, more powerful and more immediate. So much of art in our world has become ritualistic, that our experience of it is too often passive, like wallpaper. We have to change that.

Music is basic, fundamental and natural for human beings, it seems. At the same time, it's also kind of snobby because you do need a certain expertise and training, and that leads to a sense that only special people can do it. It becomes intimidating and we put art on a pedestal even in the coolest environment. It's really important to show that art is part of life; the closer we can feel to it, the bigger the impact.

CAN YOU SHARE WITH US HOW AND WHY YOU STARTED INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY IN MUSIC MAKING?

When I went to Juilliard, I went there as a composer. I wanted to write instrumental music. I grew up as a cellist, then wired my cello so I could have a rock band in high school. But when I got to Juilliard, I intended to write purely instrumental music. As it happens, I started imagining really crazy stuff, either multi-layered and complex, or timbrally bizarre and impossible to play with traditional instruments. I remember writing a string trio, for example that was basically impossible to play.

But then a light bulb went off in my head and I remembered all the fundamental experiments my dad's companies had been doing with figuring out how to display and manipulate images on cathode ray tube computers. So I found a teacher at Juilliard (no one there was interested in computer music at the time) who connected me with CUNY Graduate Center, where I learned to program in Fortran and started my experiments, making models of my instrumental pieces to convince performers to play them, or creating new sounds that didn't exist in the physical world.

Technology, software in particular, has become the universal language of our time. They allow us to develop things that don't already exist. These tools allow us to take something directly from our imagination and to make it real. Once I realized this possibility, this power, I never looked back.

DO YOU THINK TECHNOLOGY LIBERATES OR CONFINES MUSIC?

When I talk to young composers, I always warn them that technology has become extremely standardized now, and not always in a good way. Most composers have access to so much software for music production – even apps on a smartphone – that it's much easier to make music on a laptop than on the piano or on paper. The software that exists is not malleable; it's more like a package. Software used to be an open-language, but now it's so powerful but it closed, and does just specific things. It is important to gain the power to shape software to do what you want it to do.

I always try to let my imagination go wherever it needs to go. In fact, it usually goes somewhere bizarre, where the means and materials don't already exist to make things real. So I have to create the whole environment – usually from scratch – for each of my projects. And it turns out that the MIT Media Lab has been the perfect environment for me to do that.

NOWADAYS READILY ACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGIES LIKE GARAGEBAND ALLOW US TO DOWNLOAD INTO LAPTOPS AND COMPOSE MUSIC WITHOUT ANY PROFESSIONAL TRAINING. HOW DO YOU THINK THIS WOULD SHAPE THE FUTURE OF MUSIC?

That's a big question! I do think that's a funny paradox. Music is part of most people's lives now and we have it playing around

us all the time. But we're usually listening with millions of other things going on around us. You talked about the future. I think we all need to cultivate the ability to focus on something. The arts are a powerful way to teach us to truly pay attention, to absorb and assimilate our experiences.

I was out walking early this morning and no one else was out in the woods in western Massachusetts. I could hear a variety of different streams, little mountains, and water coming in from all over the place. I am usually so busy, I am guilty of this too, and I do a million things at once. Having this one-hour to myself, to listen and turn my head, to hear a different part of the stream at every turn. An overlay of sound...it's so interesting and so beautiful. Listening to a stream is important; truly listening to someone in a conversation – truly hearing that person – is even more important.

John Cage always said that if we could really listen to the world around us, we wouldn't need art or artists. He believed that the arts are a means; they are not the end themselves. The end is to live a full life, to help other people, to be connected to everything and everyone in the world. Perhaps one of the powers of technology will be – paradoxically – to make art a more integrated part of our lives, since technology already is part of everything. If we can make that technology that enhances our sensitivity to – and awareness of – the world around us, rather than numbs or insulates us…now that is really worth doing!

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE IMPACT OF AI UPON MUSIC AND IN WHAT WAY DO YOU THINK HUMANS CAN RETAIN THE POWER OF CREATIVITY IN OUR MACHINE-LEARNING AGE?

The most powerful technologies often take us into different directions. AI, of course, has the potential to simulate what it thinks human qualities are or what it thinks our relationships to a particular experience might be. If left to its own devices, however, it could be a terrible thing. Ultimately, we don't want something artificial assuming it knows what we want or what we would like an experience to be. We want smart technology to help us connect with each other, with our world, to enhance something that we care about.

It will be pretty easy for AI to generate music based on existing composition. Spotify has developed a software named the Continuer, for instance. It improvises while you're playing by analyzing your prior listening patterns without knowing anything about you or about the music. More and more companies now create music that hasn't been composed by anybody, but instead in the *style* of an artist or genre. The reason for this development is the elimination of royalty payment to a specific creator.

The only great and interesting thing about art is that it represents somebody, a specific person expressing a personal feeling or an idea about what the world is like. If that connection is missing or is just simulated, it's kind of dangerous. I would rather go out and take a walk to listen to the river, to the sounds of nature, than to listen to something that no one has made.

CAN YOU SPEAK ABOUT HOW AND WHY YOU BEGAN DE-VELOPING HYPERINSTRUMENTS?

In the 1950s and '60s, people started making sound with computers, thinking that it would be incredible to make any sound in the universe. But when they tried to create a note, it sounded pretty dead. It took a while to understand that there are limits. In one piano note, there are 150 harmonics that vibrate differ-

ently depending on how you play the key. The natural systems are unpredictable, and more much complicated than the technological systems. On physical instruments, there is a vastly rich range in the way you can play a note. Depending on the room temperature, your mouth structure, how much air you put, the physical sound resonates in the physical space in a way that is much more complicated than sounds from loud speakers.

I created Hyperinstruments after being inspired by the complex, layered combination of instrumental and natural sounds in the Sgt. Pepper, Beatle's first album that was made in the studio. It was artificial music, mixed and balanced with all the effects, something that seemed miraculous but paradoxically very direct. It was so complex that you could never actually perform it. But there was something creepy about that. Part of music is having the spontaneity to change what you're playing, how you feel it, and whom you're playing with.

Hyperinstruments were my way to put back the spontaneity and the complexity into carefully produced music.

SO IT'S ADDING ANOTHER DIMENSION OF EXPRESSION ONTO THE TRADITIONAL PERFORMANCE. TRANSLATING IT BECOMES ALSO A PROCESS OF TRANSFIGURING MOTION, FEELING AND POWER INTO THE MUSIC.

Yes! Part of what I try to do is to make it possible for a human being with his or her natural reactions or talents to shape music in the most intuitive way possible, to find the subtlest way to bring out that note. In Toy Symphony, for instance, through touching, squeezing or tapping a ball, we can measure all kinds of gestures and musical behaviors and make the right interface to shape a musical experience, for everyone from children to Yo-Yo Ma. Intelligence is put into the instrument, into the system so we can use our natural ability to shape music to the way we want it. The amount of control you have depends on the amount of experience you have.

IN YOUR ROBOTIC OPERA, DEATH AND THE POWERS, YOU DEALT WITH DOWNLOADING A HUMAN LEGACY ONTO A MACHINE. HOW DO YOU GRAPPLE WITH THIS IDEA OF HUMAN AUTHENTICITY IN OUR AGE OF THE MACHINES?

Technology can't replace people. We want technology to be at our service, to stay out of the way so people can do better. Maybe it's my age; life is what it is and there are certain things about the human condition that I must accept. It's a folly and an obsession to desire immortality. How poignant that each of our lives are so textured and detailed. There's a limit to how much we can convey ourselves to anybody, whether it is to the person we are closest to, let alone across generations.

There's a movement in California for people to capture everything 24-7 about themselves and archive them for posterity. My question is what if we can do that, who would want that? Do our kids really want to go around and have everything about our ancestors accessible all the time? I think not, actually.

The interesting question for all of us moving forward is what are art and technology for. What is the core of our human experience, what is the core of what we want to share, preserve, and what we would want to let go.

You said so yourself before; music combines so many things, physical movements, motions, and experience. Music is not information. We are trying to get to what we do when we prac-



SIMON POWERS WITH OPERABOTS IN *DEATH AND THE POWERS* (2010)

CHILDREN PLAYING A RHYTHM TREE FROM THE *BRAIN OPERA* (LINCOLN CENTER FESTIVAL, 1996).





tice, how we learn to simplify and how we get to the essence of all these details that is at the core of something authentic. We're not accurately approximating 100,000 things at once – like AI algorithms do – but instead, 10-20 things. We figure out how these more essential elements relate to each other.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS UNIQUE ABOUT MUSIC AS OPPOSED TO OTHER FORMS OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION?

Music can be verbal but it's not really story telling. It's closer to poetry, setting off one word for many associations. Wordless music engages our emotions and also our intelligence. I agree with what the AI pioneer Marvin Minsky, one of my big heroes, once said, "Music involves more aspects of your brain than any other phenomenon." Music is a way to practice and rehearse your real life, without danger, without exposing yourself. You can play a piece that is the most personal and deepest thing about yourself, without [uttering] a word. It's just distant enough. Just to follow, without thinking, you're making proportions in your mind. You're remembering something you're comparing. You're not doing it consciously. They are just natural mental processes, just like expressing something emotionally without words.

If you think through music, you'll never have the wrong answer. No one can tell you that you listened to it the wrong way. Music can compress a whole feeling, a whole lifetime, a whole experience. To experience it fully, your emotions are given a workout.

But music could be so attractive that it becomes dangerous. With headphones on all day, you can have all these experiences without any relationship to the real world. This is why we are trying to shake people out of what music has become. It's important to take the qualities of what we appreciate about music and put them back in our real life. Right now, most people don't have the habit to allow others to say a complete thought, absorbing it before we turn to another person. Having a conversation is rare and rarer. We need to use music responsibly.

FOR OUR HORACE MANN READERS, CAN YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL DAYS IN FIELDSTON. I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU HAD STARTED A ROCK BAND? WHAT WAS GOING ON IN YOUR MIND AT THAT AGE?

You know, I was choosing between Horace Mann and Fieldston. But Horace Mann wasn't co-ed back then...

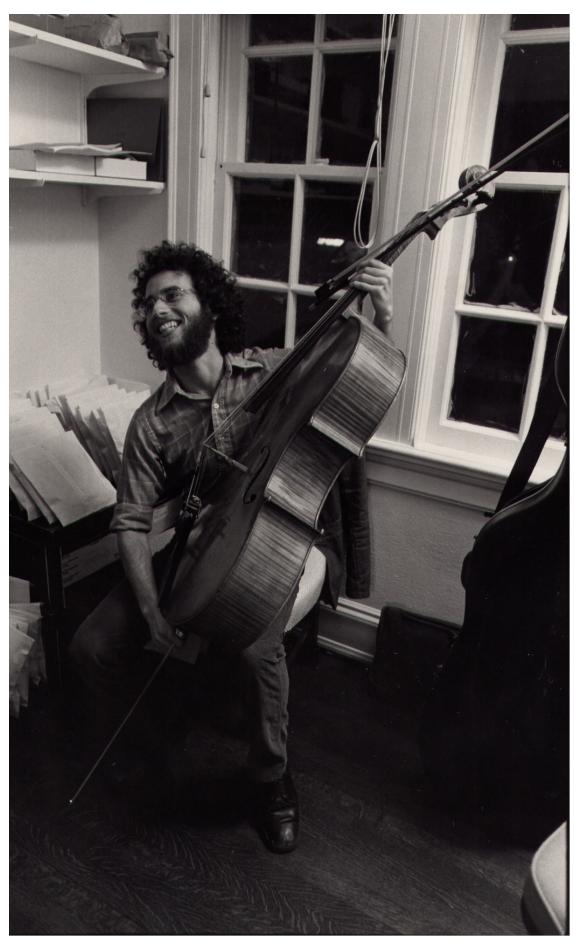
AHA. SO YOU WERE LIKE, NOPE, I'M HEADING OVER TO FIELDSTON...

Yes, plus it definitely was slightly more conservative those days!

Rock music is remarkable as it's the most immediate, direct way to talk to people. It's a powerful, visceral and immediate communication. Back in those days, I formed this rock band with my best friend in high school, Wesley Strick. He's this absolutely brilliant guy who is now a very successful screenwriter in Hollywood. We were both very lucky to have each other. We were actually good, but not experimental. My dad was a visual guy from the mid-West with his whole family involved in popular culture. My mom, on the other hand, came from upstate New York, with all the European high art. As a teen, I was reading, thinking and interested in all kinds of ideas that were not very popular, things that were still useful and important and which can touch anybody. To combine all that's great about rock bands but create an experience that's extremely subtle was my quest. I was grappling with how difficult it is to combine those worlds. In a way, I still am doing the same today.

Those days, we also had this division between Uptown and Downtown music. Uptown was Milton Babbitt, Elliot Carter, Columbia University and Lincoln Center. That style of music had no traditional harmony, no real melody or musical narrative. Interesting but difficult to listen to. No repetitions. Downtown music was John Cage with his silences, his piano, his "Four Minutes and Thirty Three Seconds." There was a huge divide about what music was for. Was it The Beatles or was it this intellectual thing that made your mind work, a tool to experience the world? I realized in high school that music was all those things, and it had to be all those things, so I wanted to figure out how they can exist in one form. I knew I didn't want to be a rock musician nor a performer. It didn't feel intellectually or creatively stimulating or sophisticated enough.

But the second I got into college I knew I was going to be a composer. It just clicked. I knew in an instant that composing combined everything I loved to do – think, create, feel, interact, isolate, analyze, dream, inspire – and I knew that it would be an activity that was so hard that I would never totally master it in a lifetime. I was sure right about that!!



TOD WITH HIS CELLO DURING THE FIELDSTON DAYS.

WHAT MUSIC ARE YOU LISTENING TO NOW?

Every morning when I get up and exercise, I always listen to English vocal music from the 15th and 16th century. It's music from before Henry VIII, through Queen Elizabeth. A lot of it is still not very well known. I have a huge collection of this music on my iPhone, and then just go to iTunes when I need to find something new. England being an island really influenced its culture at that moment. It received all the latest trends from Europe but always a bit late so it developed its perverse way of interpreting and assimilating ideas from the continent. Kind of like Shakespeare who knew a lot of French and Italian literature from a century before him, but he re-interpreted in a very fresh way. Musically, it was very powerful. It was a period when Europe was abandoning polyphonic music very abruptly, trying to simplify chords and textures mostly so that words could be heard and musical stories could be told. But England allowed both tendencies to exist simultaneously, with gorgeous melodies and innovative harmonies co-existing with crazy, complex textures with strange tangles and surprises at nearly every turn.

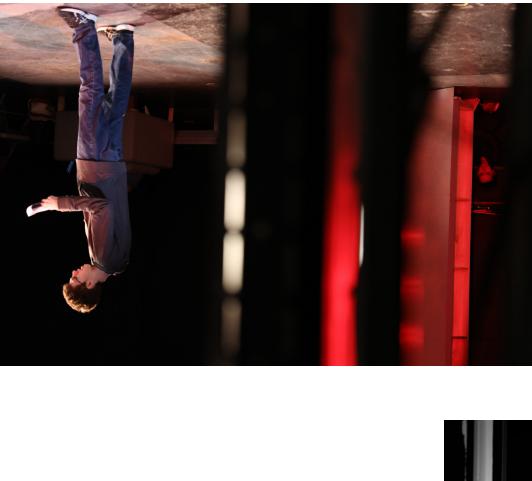
I am especially fond of English unaccompanied vocal music of the Tudor and Elizabethan periods, especially William Byrd and Thomas Tallis, two of the greatest composers who ever lived. I listen to this music every morning, since it combines calm and craziness in a very powerful, moving way.

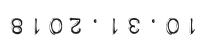
For other listening at the moment, I recently got the remix re-release of The White Album by the Beatles, an album they made when they were breaking apart in 1967. This restored version brings out the raw power of the original, and shows it to have extraordinary music range and a kind of shocking revolutionary energy that feels very modern, very relevant. I'm also listening to some Korean music now since I will be heading over to Korea for a City Symphony project soon. Korea took a lot from China and Japan so it's a bit like England about Europe. Lastly, I've been listening to Mitski's latest album, "Be The Cowboy." Mitski is a very talented singer/songwriter in her mid-20's. She's awesome! She plays fantastic guitar and does most of the electronics and production herself. Her music is direct and simple, but also unusual and strange.

I guess this mixture of simple and complex, calming and crazy, brawny and brainy, is pretty central to everything I truly care about.

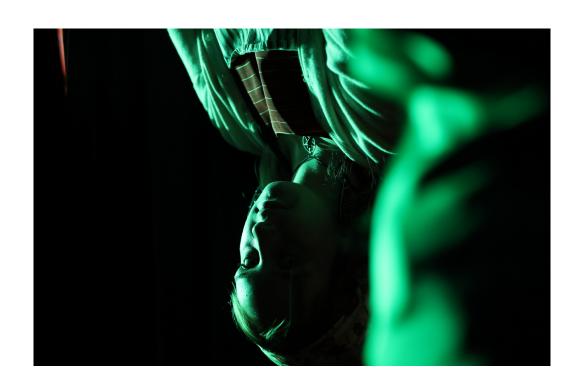


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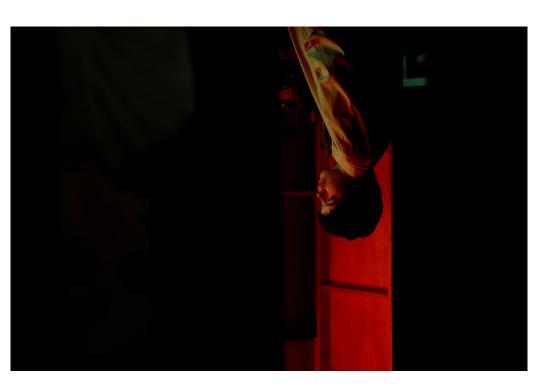




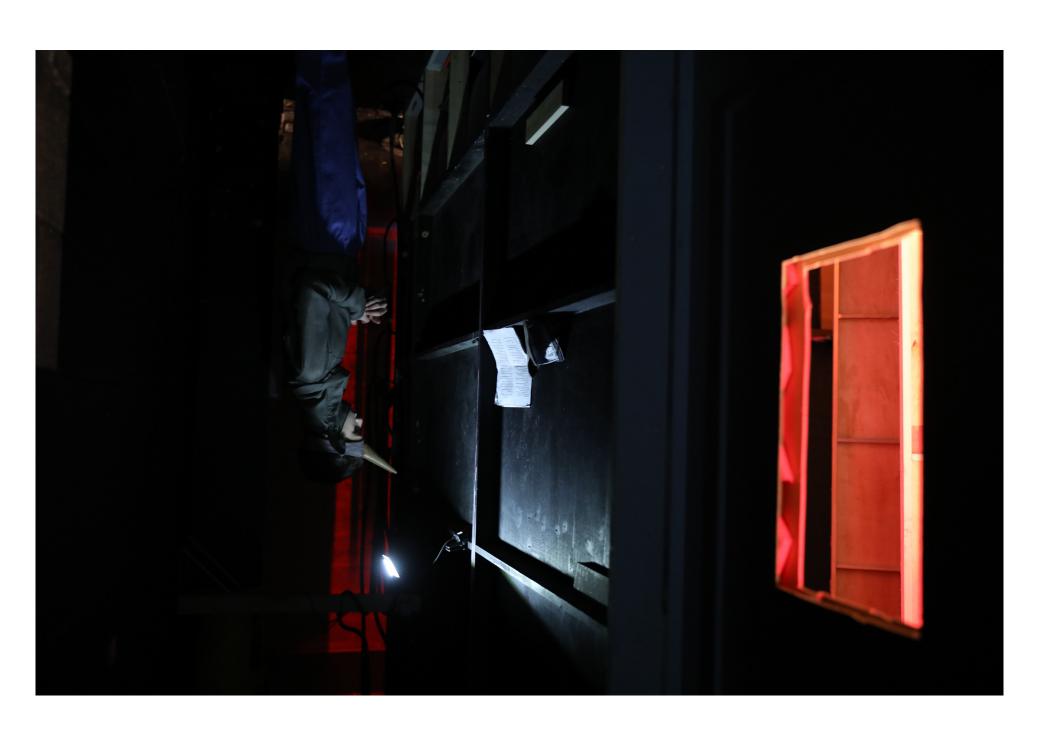




TECH MEEK



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BY KYRA MO

A PHOTO ESSAY



RHINO NOIR

Once all that information has been mastered, the take *ahem, Ashley Dai*. answer are there making sure you learn from your misget any wrong at any time, those who know the right miss the mark or don't set the proper mood, for if you vision of playwright or director. And be afraid if you at any given time to be considered to bring about the of the information a lighting designer has in their brain Feel crammed yet? Well that is about a one hundredth of the instrument, which has the actual light attached. dal, there is a C-clamp, followed by a yolk, or the arm strument. In a standard light, the source four ellipsoiknowledge of the actual anatomy of each lighting inand highlight a specific character. Added to that is the used by lighting designers in order to set mood, tone and scoops are just some of the types of lights that are so much). Fresnels, zooms, junior zooms, pars, strips, then Bagain (yes, I repeated a class because I liked it years of Theatre Production and Design A and B and of lighting itself is necessary, mine came from many Steoffani. After this, standard knowledge of the world person at HM, and Naomi Kenyatta, or as I know her, Maya Dubno, perhaps the most intimidating yet kind of questioning by the technical directors, Joel Sherry, signer has no chance of surviving the cutthroat world ing highlights. Without this knowledge, a lighting dethe play is necessary in order to set the proper light-

task, to start a deep knowledge and understanding of

Going about designing a lighting plot is not an easy

time of snap decisions and choices; this is the time for the timeline to completion quickens. Now is not the audience, and it is boring to give only one type of light of these directions will create a different feel for the light, back light, and more. (This is debatable, and may consider are: front light, top light, side light, diagonal the lighting angles to consider areighting angles to angles, creating the ability to have any light from any A preliminary plot should have lights coming from all liminary plot risks having to reset the design entirely. critical stage in the lighting process. Having a bad prestance, or blocking at any given time. This is the most the space without worrying about the actors and their designer must figure out is exactly how to illuminate writer has described in their vision. The first thing the lighting designer can actually get to creating what the

forward to the place where there is no turning back. well-thought plans which once made will move the plot to a scene. After the preliminary plot has been finished, ruffle some feathers in the lighting department...) Each angle hit the actor later on. In my order of importance,

By Bernard von Simson

out having it run eleven pages long.

Honorable mention in this article goes to:

Ming Hawkins

Sophia Reiss

sign is over.

this experience, I couldn't fit them in the article with-Despite the tremendous impact they had on me and

amazing, terrifying, inspiring method of lighting de-

ry of beauty while the scene moves on before it. And say what lights turn on when to create a magical flur-

to be made. This is the hardest part, where I actually

right on the third try by adding a mild tint of red in-

stead. After all this feedback though the cues still have

tor commented that the result looked hellish. I got this

rated yellow, used a saturated red, to which the Direcmade people look sickly and dying. I, instead of a satu-

or choices from the front lights rather than inspiring called from those in the TPDB class, my original col-

even then, most of the time, they are redone. As re-

es color for their lights, a process that takes hours and Now is about the time that the lighting designer choos-

once that is all done, the play is ready, and the difficult,

Once I have put up the special lights, lights that are figure out how to actually execute the vision. is, you as the lighting designer are the one that has to don't be fooled: no matter how good the stage manager and dedication to the best possible show and craft. But with her, both because of her passion for perfection have, much to Sarah's chagrin, become close friends quips always at the ready, I and others on stage crew With her thoughtful recommendations and sarcastic ah Sun, was the best stage manager one could ask for. of stage crew. The Stage Manager for Rhinoceros, Sartroduced to a new, often even more intense member knowledgeable and intimidating Mr. Timkó, I am in-As the blocking comes in from the director, the very

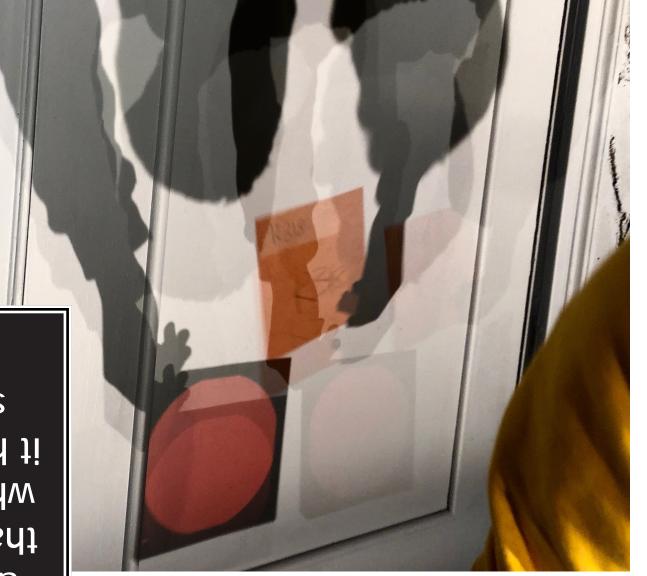
to have helped guide me through this. protests, correcting me in a way I couldn't have surdidn't stop her from learning quickly and, despite my lighting board operator, was new at her job, but that world, the Lighting Board Operator. Reena Ye, our I move on and meet a new giant in the stage crew used for very specific scenarios made clear by the show,

vived without. I could not have asked for a closer friend

Lighting a production is one of the pillars of guiding the audience through a play. This subtle manipulation of light connects deeply with mood and drama, creating a world beyond the set. If manipulated effectively the lighting can be an actor's best friend.

Is there a lull when actors are simply moving to their next position? A lighting change's sudden distraction causes the audience to see beyond the concreteness of actors standing before them. Yet then the play moves on, and the audience forgets the beauty they saw but one scene before. The world of colors and brightness and angles does more than just show them what the actors are; it helps the audience see exactly what they can be.

The world of colors and brightness and angles does more than just show them what the actors are; it helps the audience see exactly what they can be.



fabric and hangers. looms over you, its aisles a labyrinth of tors' measurements. The costume shop and begin to pull pieces based on accharacter in lieu of design sketches Create a list of costume pieces for each



to be scrapped and rethought. there. Some pieces, however, will need hem let down here, a waist taken in and what doesn't fit on the actors- a First round of fittings. See what works



fine. You're fine. ing asking for an actor's shoe size. It's manager at 9AM on a Saturday mornyour tape measure. You call the stage with your list of measurements and mistaken for an employee at Goodwill costume shop doesn't have. You get cal thrift shops for some pieces the contemporary, so you hit up your lo-Shopping! Your costumes are more

own shoes. some actors will need to wear their of clothing stores, you realize that more shopping! Wandering the aisles try on new or tailored pieces. Then, Second round of fittings for actors to

pull off a stray tag. vou trail behind an actor hoping to duty by working on lighting design. and the rest of the time pulling double ing fake flowers onto a wedding veil Tech! Spend the first hour hand-stitch-

Read the play.

finding the perfect band shirt. acters' lines and obsess over song lyric in one of the chartumes. Pick up on an obscure and the practicality of the cosabout the setting, time period, and the roles they play. Think Think about the characters about the tone of the piece. No. Read the play again. Think



and taking notes. Begin sitting in on rehearsals



and you are proud. reached peak-2016 tumblr ettes and quotes. You have ter, complete with color palmoodboards for each characcostumes connected? Make way? How are the characters' WHY are they dressed this can be dressed this way, but concept- yes, the characters to include reasoning for your sign of each play. Make sure ment about the overall de-Write a basic concept state-



blocking and movement. necessities for costumes regarding art about what to do next. Discuss Panic. Meet with Joel and Stew-

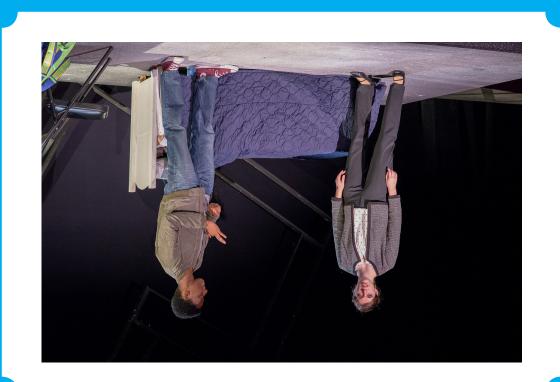


Scene from In a Blink



Scene from In a Blink





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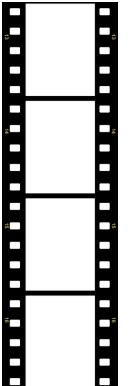
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and IN A BLINK.

During the 2017-2018 HMTC season, I was given the opportunity to design the costumes for two of the Student Written One-Acts.

Working with JEWART LEE

(guest artist and costume design mentor), JOEL SHERRY (faculty technical director), and
ALEXIS DAHL (director extraordinaire), I developed concepts
and costumes for (HARYBDIS)



idea of what being on a set is really like. third week served to give everyone the best and bonding experiences. In my opinion, this that these were not incredibly interesting, fun way in 90 degree weather. Now thats not to say cluded around an hour in the 66th Street subalso acted in three other films one of which inhad written. In addition to my shooting day, I felt that Julia was really perfect for the role I have actors come in from outside the class, I only) actor. Although some directors chose to and sound and Julia Roth as my main (and crew consisted of Maggie Brill on both lightit was a particularly long eight-hour day. My mainly in the girls' bathroom of Tillinghast, shooting day was on a Friday and as it was set ation on the part of the different groups. My day required total concentration and cooperwere tight and to fit an entire movie in one the most demanding week as the schedules

The final week of the program was for editing our footage. This was also a stressful week because we only had a week to cut the scenes together and add sound, but Ms. Rathus really guided us through it and broke it up in a way which was manageable. That Thursday was the Film Festival where friends and family came to see the finished products. After showing the films there was a short Q and A and ing the films there was a short Q and A and after this we were officially finished with our films.

For anyone thinking about participating in HMSFI, I would say that it is definitely worth your time. I had a great time making new friends and learning about film from the wonderful and talented Ms. Rathus. If you can get over the idea of returning to Horace Mann during June and are interested in movies, this program is for you.

hen I came into Ms. Rathus' classroom the first thing I noticed was that I knew no one there, and not one person was even from my grade. Although at first this was one of my favorite parts of the program because it facilitated connections across grades with people I might have never met otherwise. Over the next four weeks I never met otherwise. Over the next four weeks I never met otherwise. Over the next four weeks I never met otherwise.

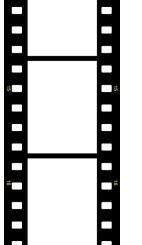
through rising seniors and the fabulous Maggie

Brill who was the TA for Ms. Rathus.

In terms of schedule, the first week was for creating a script, i.e. developing characters, writing an effective plot and coming up with realistic dialogue. To begin this process Ms. Rathus told us we could write literally anything, set anywhere, cast with anyone we wanted. Although she warned us we would work out actual logistics the next week, this initial freedom was what allowed me to write a script without restrictions and produce the truest piece of art I could create. The city was our canvas and this was another fantastic part of the program, mostly because this teally distinguished HMSFI from a class during the school year.

The next week was devoted to learning the more physical aspects of a film including directing, lighting and acting. Throughout these first weeks of "pre-production" different speakers of film making we were working on. In addition to this, we were able to hear about aspects of the film industry that we didn't have to use for our films but were still valuable to learn about such as distribution and how money is raised for different productions.

The third week was the shooting week. The group was divided into crews of three to five and each day different crews would work on one person's film for the entire day. This was definitely



to learn even more about film and production. June 18th I found myself back at school hoping is something that connects many people. So, on film industry, but I do think that a love of film for me especially because my mother is in the younger. I guess this may have more significance times that have fascinated me since I was much them, Writing them, directing them are all pasthis article, is that I really enjoy films. Watching ond answer, and perhaps the more relevant for seeing this other side to Horace Mann. My sec-I and I decided that summer I genuinely enjoy Sophomore year when I enrolled in Comp Sci Over the summer was in between Freshman and er side to HM. The first time I spent time here and work is lifted and one is able to see anothand quiet, the atmosphere of stress, competition a different place during the summer. Deserted point I have two answers. First, school is really bly would have asked the same thing but at this reaction completely. A few years ago I probato school over the summer?" I understand that people this is "Why would you want to go back tute. Usually the first question I get when I tell four weeks to be part of the Summer Film Instihis summer I returned to Horace Mann for





WEE IN BOELYN

Lomedy is based in contrast. The reason why comedy even works is because of how a joke can shift away from someone's expectations. Unexpected things are funny, that's why we laugh at a friend who trips on their own shoelaces, for example. Without contrast, without unpredictability, comedy fundamentally can't

that's the very thing that political comedy is. thing being said over and over again, when in reality, as repetitive and boring. It seems like it's just the same And it's this very reason why people view these shows the spectrum, they naturally have a lot of things to say. ple they are "punching-up" are on the opposite side of very clear left-leaning opinions, and because the peohow much material they have to work with. Both have John Oliver are successful in this environment because of Show with Stephen Colbert and Last Week Tonight with because of how partisan it's become. Shows like the Late opportunities to make fun of our government these days is because of how divisive of a figure he is. There are more politics. The reason why there are so many "Trump jokes" cy, and it's these opinions that allow jokes to flourish within of contrast. Differing opinions are the basis of our democra-This is why political humor works, because it is born out

Referring back to Ancient Greece earlier, it's thearound the comedies of the day. It's possible that without the public forum of comedy, the public opinion, and the actions that resulted from it would be completely different. It's because of this reason that it's so dangerous to see current day political comedy under attack. We need comedy so that society has an outlet to "punch up". Comedy serves two very specific purposes; the means to speak against those in power, and to make it more relatable to those who may not understand what's going on. In order for us to have a successful democracy in the future, we need to keep making Trump jokes now.

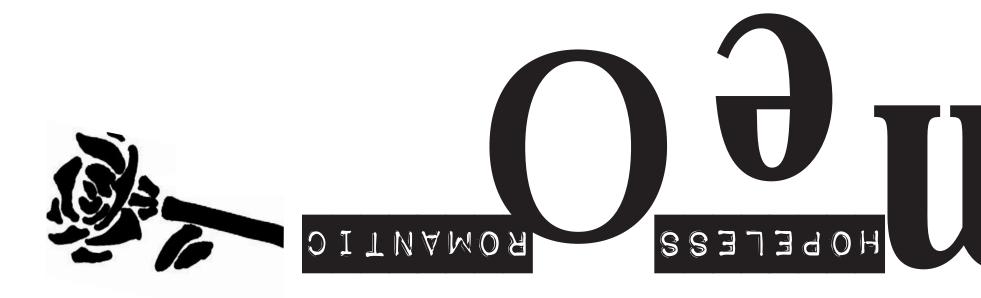
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One of the first things I learned when doing stand-up is to always "punch up". While I personally don't make jokes at anyone else's expense, sticking mostly to observational comedy, I understand that many other people write most of their material directed at someone completely different. This idea of "punching up" essentially means that no matter who you less fortunate than you are. This is obviously not a new or revolutionary idea in our society. From childhood we are taught never to "kick someone while they're down", and the agreed upon universal rules of war state that there shouldn't be any unnecessary violence directed at people of a lower status.

satire is imminent. lines", and it seems like the death of political are just bored of the "same old political punchbine this with the growing opinion that people ly condemning those making fun of them. Comhave started to fight back against comedy, publicpolitical leaders, once impartial to these jokes, is some kind of controversial idea in 2018. Many the government. And yet, it seems as though this of American Culture; you can't go any higher than erful political positions. This is the "punching-up" comedians base their material on those with powidea is still prevalent in our society today. Today, many aimed directly at those at the top. In fact, this same traction because of their political satire, which was of the original "comedians" in Greece gained a lot of this has been the fundamental idea behind jokes. Many Since the beginning of comedy in Ancient Greece,

So why is this important? People are allowed their own opinions. Jokes won't always work the same on everyone. Why should it matter that political humor is under attack? "I never thought it was funny anyway."



drinking poison, but perhaps everyone can use a you kill yourself on top of their non-dead body by romantic advice from Romeo, by no means should serve that makes us human. This doesn't mean take hold onto from Romeo, something that we pre-The pureness of true love should be something we writing poetry and performing it for our betrothed. tic speeches professing our undying dedication, or lieve in pure love. We won't believe in long romanlove. Ask most people our age and we won't beety, we've lost the touch for the romantic and pure bit more naïveté for pure love nowadays. As a sociheart in the end. I think that the world could use a himself up completely to her, literally giving her his and he does everything he does for Juliet. He opens to the harshness of reality because of his pure love, But he does it all for the sake of love. He is blind He is far to rash and arrogant, too hasty and naïve. I don't think anyone should be entirely like Romeo.

lead a few times in the past, but never

CHIN

BODAL

playing my character. the aspect that helped me the most in to Romeo, and I am certain that that is picture who is as key to me as Juliet is lucky in that I can have someone to emotions that accompanied her. I am tured her instead, and acted upon the had any line referring to Juliet, I picer importance to my heart. When I sioned someone of much, much greattions Romeo felt in real time, I enviso in order to actually feel the emowith was not anyone too special to me, give it life. The Juliet I was partnered speare's perfect text. I only needed to mostly taken care of through Shakethe audience I felt it too, but that was Beyond feeling it, I needed to show could not bear to be without. the one person Romeo simply absolutely everything to me, to this one person who meant channel deep and pure devotion to the extent of Romeo. I had to

that the truth is yes and no. portraying him, I can now say part Romeo myself, and after saw I tant bies eyewle 9v'I



bit of his sentiment.

good old fashioned love? hat can go wrong with a bit of



NAJYO 人 8

soon as possible. love, and therefore must also die as cannot bear living a life without his be well. But Romeo cannot wait. He

truly define his spirit. Juliet and Romeo scenes are what Juliet. But as already mentioned, the much different feel than those with with Benvolio and Mercutio had a contrast to around Juliet. My scenes fluences his actions around them in fellow Montagues, and how that incharacter is his camaraderie with his of a test. Another aspect of Romeo's akin to that in the last 15 minutes an underlying tone of hurrying, ant moments by giving everything without speeding through import-I made sure to emphasize his haste,

creepy. I have played the romantic great surplus and bordering on Romeo's affection is abundant, in



MAS PART ROMEO MYSELF.. I . VE ALWAYS SAID THAT I

YES AND NO. SI HTUAT 3HT TAHT YAS WON NAD I



have been able to do just that. mance itself, and I am so grateful to him is like being chosen to embody roit has become almost a cliché. Getting to play shows, and simply in day-to-day conversation that with Juliet is referenced so often in songs, movies, tered on his relationship with Juliet. His infatuation original hopeless romantic, his entire plot arc cenonce in their lifetime, and rightly so. Romeo is the characters that every actor aspires to play as at least ging for the sake of bragging. Romeo is one of the you probably already know that. I'm not just bragsation with me for ten minutes in the last 5 months time, Romeo and Juliet; but if you've had a converbe the most well-known Shakespearean story of all nity to play the character Romeo from what might his summer I was blessed with the opportu-

he is doing, she would have awoken and all would waited just a few more seconds to think about what die, just before his beloved awakens! If he had only must die with her. Spoiler alert, he actually does as he hears that Juliet has "died," he knows that he says, or he will certainly die without her. As soon wait for Juliet, and he has to have her instantly as he chief among them being Romeo. He has no time to depressed and back again in the span of minutes, also emotion. Characters swing from elated to 180 degree turns in not only events but and haste. The entire play is made of quick Romeo's youth also comes his naïveté, impatience, perately want to play before they get too old. In is partly why he is a character that actors so desshine. Romeo is very young, sixteen at most, which has to take care to let the nuance of his character and expect the romance to exist on its own. One Romeo doesn't work if you just read the lines

CESS OF DEVELOPING CRANE CALLING? KM: CAN YOU SHARE WITH US THE PRO-

ideas about composition and script. common vocabulary and seem to share similar All of us were born after the '80s so we have a Shen Yiwen, who is now a graduate of Juilliard. ums such as the choreographer Ma Cong and to have former National Ballet of China algan the choreography. We are most fortunate care of the birds at the parks. In 2015, we bespecialists and workers who nursed and took the cranes, and learned much from the crane in detail the postures, habits, and motions of larly in Heilongjiang and Jiangsu. We studied throughout China, north and south, particuferent crane habitats and conservatory park observations and immersions throughout difpany of dancers conducted multiple fieldwork started as far back as 2008. In 2014, our com-ZX: Our first inspiration for this piece really

In many ways, Crane Calling remains a work in progress as we still don't think it's that perfect. We continue to revise and refurnish with every performance.

KM: WHAT IS NEXT FOR YOU AND FOR NA-

AX: For our company, I would like to continue more overseas collaborations. It is so important that we continue to exchange and communicate across cultures and nationalities, to promote mutual understanding. I also love to bring something unique to our overseas audiences. Hopefully, somewhere in there, we have them understand more about Chinese culture and appreciate it as well. For me personally, I would simply like to just keep going, and never stop in pursuing my life in dance.



OTHER COUNTRIES? KM: WHAT DO YOU THINK DISTINGUISHES OF KM: WHAT DO YOU THINK DISTINGUISHES CHI-

is unique. National Ballet of China has inherited the artistic legacy of our older generation of artists. Our path of development has been quite multi-faceted in that our historical lineage comes both from classical, modern and contemporary ballet. But we have also developed our own unique repertoire. When touring, we have found that our own creations, such as Raise the Red Lantern, The Red Detachment of Woman, The White-Hair Girl, The Peony Pavilion, and our Dunhuang piece, and acclaim, and acclaim.

KM: DO AON LEEL A DISTINCTION BETWEEN

SX: Our Chinese audience seems to share the same love for our Chinese-inspired pieces or those with Chinese characteristics in choreography or aesthetics. But they are particularly interested in the presence of narratives, the lines of storytelling, or realism, for immersion, probably because they have been more used to this mode of reception. But they are also very open and accepting of other traditions.

DANCE FESTIVAL THIS YEAR? AUDIENCE AT LINCOLN CENTER AND FALL FOR KM: WHY DID YOU CHOOSE CRANE CALLING

because it expresses homage to youth and life. This ballet piece embodies the harmony between man and cranes. We hope this work convey our sentiments about the importance of environmental conservation and the protection of nature. Crane is also an animal that signifies the East. It is a bird that has a very rich tradition clouded in mystery and spirituality. In many ways, Crane Calling is an expression of China's collective spirit and philosophy towards the unity between heaven and losophy towards the unity between heaven and earth.



KM: WHAT HAVE BEEN THE FORCES THAT YOUR PATH?

step forward. ly and very happily, I have been taking every no regrets. And because I enjoy dance fulis extremely difficult, but I keep going. I have ty years, pursuing an art form that I love. It challenges. I have been on this path for twenferent. But I have overtime overcome these classical Chinese dance and ballet are difcareer as the footwork and forms between were adjustments in the earlier years of my a kind of professional pursuit as well. There tunate, as my passion for dance has become most financially rewarding. I have been forall that you've got even if it may not be the for a particular art form, you have to give it But I truly believe that if you have a passion culties and challenges as they train and learn. ZX: All dancers in the world encounter diffi-

PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST



MANGED AND THE

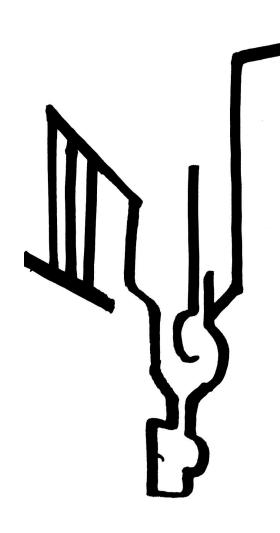
Choreographer, National Ballet of China

CONDUCTED AND TRANSLATED

BY KYRA MO

How did you first become a ballet dancer?

As a child, I learned classical Chinese dance. In fact, for both high school and college, I had specialized in it at the Beijing Dance Academy. When I graduated, National Ballet of China was recruiting male dancers so I auditioned. I had no prior experience in ballet but I wanted to engage my specialized training in classical Chinese dance with a completely new disciplinary practice.



EDITION IN CHIEF Kyra Mo

Nishtha Sharma uid ybneM 2501(2)

Walters Arden Chen

Dylan Jacob Chin

Ashley Dai

Wilder Harwood

Spencer Kahn

Mandy Liu

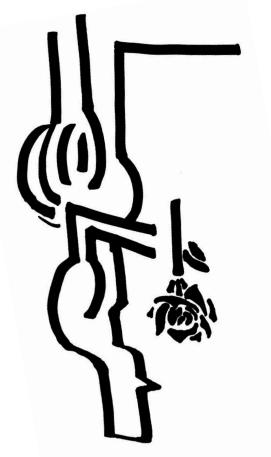
Bernard von Simson

DESIGN Kyra Mo

Sarah Sun LAYCUT Kyra Mo

COVER ART Kyra Mo

FACULTY ADVISOR Mr. Joseph Timko





Welcome to the second issue of Artsphere, HM's performing arts magazine, now printed in colour!

Inspired by HM's Black Box Production of Eugene Ionesco's Rhinoceros, Artsphere presents our readers with a provocative choice.

As our world spins further into a vortex of political, economic, climactic, and social turmoil, will you stake your position in the body of the beast or the mind of the human?

Our two covers, with no designated front and back, are equivalent in weight, size and design. we invite you to consider the choice taken and reflect on the divergent paths ahead – its moral ramifications and its social consequences.

Similarly, the articles in our current issue also grapple with choices and divides. They present the arts as a vibrant way to confront and overcome alienation, be it of technological change, biological breakdown, ideological oppositions and political differences.

On a physical level, this issue seeks to play on a convention. We wish to enliven the reading of printed matters – usually a stationary act – into a movement. We want to literally flip your view on engagement and absorption. You, the reader, can only access the full contents through two 180 degrees rotations of the magazine – or a flip over the horizontal axis. As you take on the magazine, Artsphere becomes a body in dance; it is turned front and back, marking lines and drawing circles in space. Our inaugural issue, in bold and dynamic graphic design, made our pages a stage. Our second issue now seeks to make the magazine and dynamic graphic design, made our pages a stage. Our second issue now seeks to make the magazine

itself into an interactive performance – enacted by you.

The German dramatist-director Bertolt Brecht once made his audience conscious of theatre as an artifice through alienating effects. Perhaps Artsphere could make our reader self-conscious in their act of reading through alienating effects. Perhaps Artsphere could make our reader self-conscious in their act of reading through alienating effects.

With In Dialogue, we have the honor of interviewing Tod Machover, one of the most visionary, innovative and technologically engaged music composers of our time. As Muriel R. Cooper Professor of Music and Director of Opera of the Future Group at MIT Media Lab, Tod has been crossing the divide between music and technology for more than three decades. We publish the first section of our extensive interview with Tod here, centering on how he employs technology in service of humanity in the field of music. Tod also shares his personal journey in musical explorations from his toddler years, through his rock'n roll youth, to his current projects which have become communal ventures that champion the concept of "active music" and the concept of "active music" of the concept of the concept of "active music" of the concept of the concep

on the world stage.

With Portrait of an Artist, Zhang Zhen Xin, the choreographer of The National Ballet of China. Zhang shares his optimism for dance as diplomacy as he recounts his journey from being a young student of classical Chinese dance to become a principal dancer and now choreographer of China's national ballet troupe. Artsphere catches Zhang for this exclusive interview right after the debut of "Crane Calling" in "Fall for Dance" festival in New York City.

With Frontiers, we examine the vanguards of the performing arts domain, exploring intersections with fields such as technology, the environment, culture, and politics through research and personal experience. With Creative Minds, we tap into the brains and lives of individual artists at Horace Mann. With Beyond the Curtains, we have the opportunity to showcase the hidden journeys of a production.

A big thank you to all of the artists who contributed to Artsphere in support of our second issue.

My heartfelt thanks our advisor Mr. Timko, for inspiring Artsphere to probe deeper the inner workings of creative arts through rigorous inquiries across disciplines. For this issue of Artsphere, his Black Box Productive arts through rigorous inquiries across disciplines. For this issue of Artsphere, his Black Box Productive arts through rigorous inquiries across disciplines.

Sincerely,

Kyra Mo Editor-in-Chief

