

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Presents

BREATHING AND ITS TRANSFORMATIONS

A Solo Concert of Historical Repertoire
on Flute and Prepared Devices

Featuring Guest Artist

BARBARA HELD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 2017 • 4PM
RUTH GANT RECITAL HALL, PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA



BREATHING AND ITS TRANSFORMATIONS

by BARBARA HELD

Introduction

by GODFRE LEUNG

SCSU Assistant Professor of Art History

Program

Aletheia (1987) by Yasunao Tone

(For flute, voice control solenoid system and amplified grand piano)

The score consists of dance notations from 8th century China and analytical charts of the dance notations. The interpretation of the flutist is based on the meanings and phonetic values of the Chinese characters used in the score, numbers in the charts and manipulation of the voice control solenoids by parameter of the flute's amplitude. The solenoid system was first used for *Piano for Taoists*, with an ancient text, tales of Taoist hermits and magic, in English translation and original Chinese. The voice of the reader triggers electro-magnetic hammers on piano strings so the piano seems to be played by a ghost.

Self-Portrait for Flute and Wind Anemometer (1990) by Alvin Lucier

A wind anemometer is mounted on a stand facing a flutist standing several feet away. As the flutist plays tones of various kinds the blades of the anemometer spin at speeds determined by the direction and intensity of airflow from the embouchure of the flute. A light illuminates the anemometer in such a way that the shadows produced by the spinning blades hide and reveal parts of the player's body.

Self-Portrait was written for Barbara Held and was first performed by her at Roulette in New York on October 27, 1989

Trio for Flute Player (1988) by Yasunao Tone

Trio for Flute Player uses three components: sound from the flute, the flutist's voice, and electronic sounds—all performed by the solo flutist. These components are based on a single source: poems from the *Manyōshū*, an 8th Century anthology and one of the earliest poetic texts to be published in Japanese. The curvy line of calligraphy of the poem, overlaid by a musical staff, does not correspond with pitches or any tonalities but with the player's finger placements. Fingering, with its movement and pressure, triggers an electronic sound, varying in pitch and intensity, which is generated by an oscillator with a capacitor. The poems are read through the flute mouthpiece. The sounds of the original *Manyōshū* poems, the

other part of the signifier of the poem, serves as the substructure for the rhythm and intensity of performance. The poems are not interpreted but transformed into sound.

The image shows two parts of a musical score, labeled #1 and #2. Each part consists of three staves of music. The notation is highly stylized and appears to be a form of tablature or shorthand. Above the staves, there are horizontal lines with arrows indicating time intervals. For part #1, the intervals are marked as 20"~25", 28"~35", and 28"~35". For part #2, the intervals are marked as 20"~25", 28"~35", 20"~25", 28"~35", and 28"~35".

(A page from *Trio for a Flute Player* score by Yasunao Tone)

Lyrictron (1988) by Yasunao Tone

In *Lyrictron* the sound of the flute causes a text to be generated by a computer system. The source of the flute score is a western transcription of flute tablatures from the Tang dynasty. When a tune is played the computer system detects pitches and converts the flute sound into a Haiku poem by choosing lines from a "dictionary" composed for this piece and stored in the computer. The poem is displayed on a TV monitor and is read aloud by the voice synthesizer at the same time. The process of generating Haiku from pitches played on the flute through a pitchtracking program is somehow similar to the Surrealist's "Cadavre Exquis" method of writing a chance-determined poem.

This version is a recreation of the original Commodore 64 software, programmed in Max by Wolfgang Gil.

Electric Wind (2004-2017) by Ron Kuivila

The shape of the piece is a result of the interaction of the flute and the electronics, while the flute elicits a specific response from the electronics, the absence of a response in some cases is what creates the beauty of the form.

Featured Guest Artist

BARBARA HELD, a native of Central Minnesota, is a classically trained flutist and composer who lives and works in Barcelona, Spain. Known for her subtle exploration of the minutiae of sonic material, she creates sensitive, focused sound work that exposes the detail of the physical space of listening in equal part to a keen attention to how we listen as bodies moving through the world.

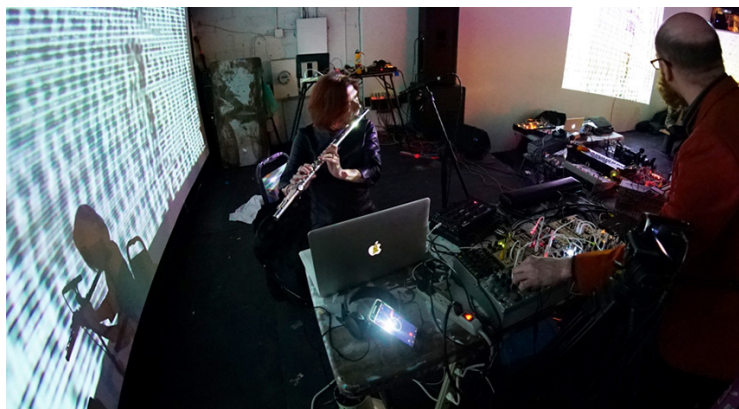


She was flutist with New York's Bowery Ensemble, a group with close ties to Morton Feldman and John Cage, directed by Nils Vigeland. She has collaborated with composers such as Robert Ashley, David Behrman, Eleanor Hovda, Brenda Hutchinson, Jin Hi Kim, Alvin Lucier, Phill Niblock, Elliot Sharp and Yasunao Tone. Her work has been featured in venues including LOOP Festival of Videoart, Experimental Intermedia Foundation, Gulbenkian Foundation, Walker Art Center, Eyebeam, and has been published by *Leonardo Music Journal*, *FO A RM* magazine, and on the Lovely Music Ltd. CD *Upper Air Observation*. She performs with media artist Benton C Bainbridge using a custom software and hardware A/V synthesis system. Their generative audiovisual installation *Observatory / Lisa Joy* is currently on view as part of "Escuchar con los ojos. Arte sonoro en España, 1961-2016," a group exhibition of Spanish Sound Art from the past half century at the Juan March Foundation in Madrid.

With a continuing interest in composing with sound and image, she has performed with live video artists including Ursula Scherrer and Benton C Bainbridge, as well as creating sound for installation pieces by visual artists such as Paloma Navares, Pere Noguera, Francesc Abad, and Eugènia Balcells.

She was the creator and producer of "Music at Metrónom," a series of concerts of experimental music that gave special support to collaboration between musicians and visual artists, a project that she shared with invited co-curators such as Augustí Fernandez and Francisco López. With Pilar Subirà, she co-curated "Possibility of Action: the life of the score" for the Documentation Center and Archive of the Barcelona MACBA museum of contemporary art during the 2008-09 season, and "Lines of Sight," a series of seven programs of experimental music and radio art for Radio Web MACBA. *Paraparemys; Desplaçaments; Cosificacions* with poets Ester Xargay and Carles Hac Mor received first prize for multimedia art by the 1999 Concurso de Creation Audiovisual, Navarra, Spain, and *The Well*, a piece by Barbara Held and Adolf Alcañiz for flute and live video, was awarded a mention at the Concours International de Musique et d'Art Sonore Electroacoustique de Bourges 2000. barbaraheld.com

Barbara Held's concert and artist's talk is part of a larger Creative Art Series project, sponsored by St. Cloud State University's School of the Arts. In collaboration with New York-based video artist Benton C Bainbridge, Held is also staging an exhibition entitled *Pausa*, a sound and video installation that runs in Kiehle Gallery in the Kiehle Visual Art Center from March 20 - April 7.



BARBARA HELD AND BENTON C BAINBRIDGE
KIEHLE GALLERY - SCSU KIEHLE VISUAL ARTS CENTER

Pausa pairs acoustic and electronic sound with realtime image processing. A unique Binary Pattern Generator creates simple rhythms that are interpreted by an A/V synthesis system, generating variations in the timbre of a live flute performance and molding abstract forms into moving paintings. Held and Bainbridge co-designed the system, with custom audio software by Josep Aymi and Binary Pattern Generator by Brendan Byrne.
<http://blog.stcloudstate.edu/kvac/>

BENTON C BAINBRIDGE is an American artist known for creating movies, installations, and live visual performances with custom digital, analog and optical systems of his own design. His early career focused on the live creation of electronic cinema in collaboration with other artists and anticipated today's VJ collectives. Bainbridge's aesthetic technique is characterized by extensive realtime manipulation analog and digital media. His work is presented in both art and entertainment spaces ranging from museums to stadiums. bentoncbainbridge.com

The SCSU Creative Arts Series is designed to enhance student learning and broaden public perspective through art, music, film and theater.
stcloudstate.edu/sota/creative/2016-2017



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DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Performing Arts Office: (320) 308-3223
music@stcloudstate.edu
www.stcloudstate.edu/music

DEPARTMENT OF ART

Department of Art Office: (320) 308-4283
art@stcloudstate.edu
www.stcloudstate.edu/art

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ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

720 4th Ave. South, St. Cloud, MN 56301
St. Cloud State University Admission: 1-877-654-7278

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