INSIDE OUT:
NEW ELECTRO/ACOUSTIC WORKS
BY ADAM MIRZA

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2019, 8:00 P.M.

EMERSON CONCERT HALL
SCHWARTZ CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS
**PROGRAM**

quad channel fixed audio  
Adam Mirza  
(b. 1978)

*cracks* (2019)  
Bent Frequency Duo Project  
Jan Berry Baker, alto saxophone and Stuart Gerber, percussion  
World premiere

*Space Phrase* (2018)  
stereo fixed audio with dance  
Lori Teague, choreographer  
Juana Farfán, Charné Furcron, Onur Topal Sumer, 
Helen Wang, and Nadya Zeitlin, dancers

*Appeals of Distance* (2018)  
for horn and seven channel fixed audio  
Jason Eklund, horn

*White* (2019)  
stereo fixed media  
Text by Rimona Afana  
World premiere

Mark Teague, lighting design  
Matt Williamson, audio production assistance
PROGRAM NOTES

This recital culminates four collaborations that have been in process since I came back to Atlanta last year, after 15 years in New York City. Each involves a particular combination of media and each developed in contact with certain physical, acoustic, cultural, and political spaces.

When Jason Eklund proposed I write a new piece for horn and electronics, I immediately envisioned him in Emerson Concert Hall, playing against copies of himself that echoed from various corners of the hall. This led to one year of collaboration in which we explored the instrumental capabilities of the horn and how best to record them. During our first session in Emerson, I met Mark Teague, stage manager and tonight’s lighting designer, who introduced me to his wife, choreographer Lori Teague. The mobility of sound intrigues me: how sounds are created by performance and how they also create space for performance. I played my four-channel piece *Inside Out* for Jason, Mark, and Lori; their thoughtful engagement with my work moved me.

I decided to title this recital after that piece, since *Inside Out* has become a broader motto for how I experience contemporary sound, sound after technology. Lori described *Inside Out* as a “sound collage” and asked if I might make something new for the upcoming revival of her dance work *Rule of Thumb*. I created *Space Phrase* over several intense weeks—my first collaboration with dancers. Each day I visited the dance studio to try new sounds and sequences with/against the dance phrases, as they were being tweaked and developed on the dance floor.

Later that spring, I met scholar-artist Rimona Afana, a visiting fellow at the Vulnerability and the Human Condition Initiative at the Emory School of Law. I felt an aesthetic kinship with her inventive, surreal language and collage-like arrangements of text. We decided to collaborate on a series of multimedia pieces based on her texts, the first of which, *White*, struck me sharply for its raw intensity, even as I struggled to understand its meaning. I asked to record her reading the text, sensing her beautiful spoken voice essential to the piece. We traveled together through Israel, Palestine, Romania, and Turkey last summer. The bulk of the audio for Jason’s piece *Appeals of Distance* was completed in Ramallah, Palestine, in our lodging across from the city’s central mosque. I finished the first draft to echoes of the call to prayer resounding off the surrounding walls and hills. Contested spaces and timelines . . .

Returning to Atlanta in August, I began work on *cracks*, written for Bent Frequency Duo Project. Stuart and Jan are progressive forces for art and contemporary music in Atlanta. I first met Stuart more than 10 years ago at the Stockhausen Courses in Kürten, Germany, where I saw him perform *Himmels Tür*, a piece written for him by Dr. Stockhausen. I met Jan in 2010 when my new music organization, Amp, played with Bent Frequency during our tour—the first performances of my music in Atlanta, my hometown.

It is an honor to work with these artists and to have these pieces performed tonight.

—Adam Mirza, composer
Inside Out (6 mins)
This composition is an audio poem on “microphonic” listening. The title is a response to the question, how do we hear when we listen through the microphone? Modern electronic media—whether music, photography, video, or internet—(re)duplicates reality, mobilizing the intensities of experience. Experience becomes mediated and virtual (think, for instance, the uncanny aspect to hearing a recording of your voice), blurring time, memory, presence, and history. Like camera lenses, microphones present a singular, flattened perspective. They allow us to transcribe actions, write them onto magnetic tape or hard drives, and treat performances as texts: to cut, trim, reverse, stretch, and distort, whenever we want after the event took place. We hear, through the microphone, an original in the form of a copy.

I juxtapose a sequence of microphonic situations produced by different recording techniques, including close-miking of concrete or object sounds, off-axis recordings of physical movements around a space, overheard audio (used with permission), and recorded artifacts, including a lecture by Michel Foucault and Barack Obama’s 2015 State of the Union speech. Each recording embodies different registers of audio presence, from bodily intimacy to modern media circulation. These phrases are deployed around the acoustic space through four imaginary stereo-windows looking forward, left, right, and backward; the result is a confluence of architecture, sound, and history.

cracks (10 mins)

on the street
This piece ex
there are cracks between
hibits the spaces
the
between
lines
and the sound and
and in the hall
the action-reaction
the dynamics
of two (or more) instruments which
are different

Space Phrase (12 mins)

Space Phrase was originally written for Rule of Thumb, a larger dance work created in 2018 by choreographers Lori Teague and Christine Suarez.

About this movement score, Lori writes:
The space score was built by asking over and over again, how do I live in my body as I enter a space? What is the most salient, immediate connection I make and what are my choices? The space can feel really open. It can seem really open. You can smell democracy in the air. But still, there are those who oppress the space and ways that we oppress ourselves. We learn how to release. We discover how to share the space between us and how to inhabit the ground underneath. My body is my body.

For the audio, I used samples of broken instruments from Philadelphia public schools (recorded by the Broken Orchestra project), field recordings from outdoor environments (including an anti-Trump rally in New York City from 2016), audio feedback, and synthetic sounds (processed with the software MaxMSP). By restaging these sounds, each broken in some way or another, I hoped to sustain new configurations of bodies and spaces, in ways that were complementary to the dance piece created by Lori and Christine.

**Appeals of Distance** (18 mins)

*Appeals of Distance*, for live performer and multichannel surround audio, elaborates the gestural rhetorics of horn calls as a series of echo-reflections, transformations, and distortions. This progression of encounters probes the curious appeal of the horn call and situates it within the contemporary context of modern electronic musical production. The horn call—a device, variously of the hunt, the military, and the court—orientst attention to an impending or ongoing event. The horn greetst, signals, announces, encourages, threatens, activates, mourns, and warns, simultaneously introducing and dictating the terms of engagement with pomp and aplomb. The horn sounds a message that all will hear across its domain.

Such force of appeal is no less manifest in modern orchestral halls. The horn, unique among orchestral instruments, points away from the audience. Its calling arrives by reflection. Scattered, delayed, and redirected, the horn sounds from afar as its own echo. This composition was assembled in several stages (including multiple workshops and recording sessions with Jason) over one year. All of the electronic sounds were derived from those recording sessions.

**White** (13 mins)

*White* is the first in a series of multimedia projects based on the poetry and fiction of Rimona Afana. Like the L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poets, Rimona treats words as objects and plays with the intersection between content and layout to imply utterance, phrasing, and weight. Written virtuosically in today’s *lingua franca* (rather than Romanian, her mother-tongue), her work surfaces (neo) colonial legacies, immigrant experience, shared fragility.

To me *White* (2017) is one of her most difficult texts. The language is intense yet elusive—a sequence of fragmented experiences and fraught human encounter. Its coherence is a residue of the contemporary incoherencies it
documents. I read each line as a mute explosion, an after-flash that briefly illuminates an obscure world. The image-implosions expose the paradoxes, contradictions, mis-citations, and inversions endemic to humanity. “Hic locus est ubi mors gaudet succerrere vitae”—This is the place where death rejoices to help life.

The first explosion is white phosphorous. A self-igniting incendiary chemical banned from military use in civilian areas, it has nonetheless continued to be deployed in conflicts around the world, including in the offensive on the Gaza Strip in 2008–2009. White phosphorous burns a blinding, searing bright white at room temperature. It cuts through flesh and cannot easily be put out. Its effect upon human bodies is inhumane.

White addresses our unstable modern materialism: the in/human urge to destruction, our de/natured humanity (DNA gone astray). Brokenness emerges as blindness towards the suffering of others, a “blurred vision” which dissipates with “the next commercial” or perhaps accentuates “in 9D in your local cinema.” The tone is neutral and detached, contrasting its charged content. Her piece draws upon experiences during her stays in Israel/Palestine, also hinting at racism towards immigrants during the Brexit debates while she was living in Northern Ireland, and at how other intersecting, insidious forms of violence become abstracted. As in José Saramago’s work, blindness turns into an epidemic, a sea of “white” flooding us inside-out.

While creating the audio I decoded the text in light of our travels last summer in Israel, occupied Palestine, Turkey, and Romania. For me the text echoes voices of those I encountered: Bedouins, Holocaust survivors, Palestinian activists, Romanian farmers, Turkish musicians—spaces and peoples who are, as she puts it, a continuum. I asked to record Rimona reading her prose poem, loving her voice, but knowing that she feels performing does not come easily to her. Natural synthesis and synthetic nature. This dialectic occupied my audio work. Her voice becomes fragmented and multiplied, processed and distorted, merging with the digital technologies to which it is subjected.

The apocalyptic imagery momentarily subsides in the “refuge” of a “luxuriant beard.” The audio then cuts to a different terrain: field recordings and extemporized improvisations on white/ness in Romanian. White—the unmarked privilege, the negative space taken for granted—purity and terror, a technosynthetic formula that can solve (burn away) all of our differences. Whiteness as a roar of white noise. Symmetrical and open-ended, both text and audio are framed by . . . “white.”
phosphorus blasts envelop the strip; charred flesh, eroded structures, blurred vision until the next commercial. As Buddha says, hic locus est ubi mors gaudet succurrere vitae. It is with great sorrow that we need to disclose she is alive still. Had it not been for his luxuriant beard, I would have had no refuge. Yet, we can now contribute a note to her pre-postmortem honors, the email concludes. Among their funeral directors, this raccoon with a sesame-coated baguette instead of a baton, conducting a choir of hired weepers. We are not racist, but we feel circumspect about the hue of your meninges. You see, the standard round here is the nuance of our Queen’s triple-filtered amniotic fluid. You suggest unscrewing my hand so you can keep it. Offers of dismemberment feel flattering once you pass a certain age. Overhead for the connoisseurs, the OSN-9 Reaper is now available for pre-order. Better yet, you are automatically entered into our draw for a one-way ticket to the open-air slaughterhouse. Alternatively, you can join the drone’s exploits for free in 9D in your local cinema. Our green Lord advises you do so. As Yair once warned me, finding holes in holiness precipitates adrenal fatigue. Your black belt’s turning
PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES (in order of appearance)

**Bent Frequency** brings the avant-garde to life through adventurous programming, the promotion of New Music, and a creative synthesis of music and media. Hailed as “one of the brightest new music ensembles on the scene today” by *Gramophone* magazine, Bent Frequency engages an eclectic mix of the most adventurous and impassioned players in Atlanta. Bent Frequency presents innovative programs of cutting edge works and re-contextualizes classic works of the 20th century through cutting-edge programs that embrace experimentation, curiosity, community engagement, and activism. Bent Frequency is an ensemble in residence at Georgia State University and is run by co-artistic directors Jan Berry Baker and Stuart Gerber.

As the Bent Frequency Duo Project, Jan and Stuart have commissioned more than 25 new pieces for saxophone and percussion and have toured extensively across the United States and Europe. Their first CD, *Diamorpha*, was released on Centaur Records in May 2017. In addition to her work with Bent Frequency Jan performs regularly with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Grant Park Orchestra, and the Atlanta Opera, and she has appeared with the Paris Opera Ballet, Chicago Chamber Players, American Ballet Theater, and Joffrey Ballet. Jan is associate professor of saxophone at Georgia State University. Lauded as having “consummate virtuosity” by the *New York Times*, Stuart has worked with such noted composers as Stockhausen, Saariaho, Murail, and Reich. Recent appearances include the Mata Festival (Mexico), Tage Aktueller Musik (Germany), the Cervantino Festival (Mexico), and the New Festival (Estonia). Stuart is professor of percussion at Georgia State University.

**Lori Teague** is an artist/activist who invests in a variety of ways in which movement can empower individuals, build sustainable connections between people, and invite more awareness of self and our surroundings. Her study of contemporary movement includes contact improvisation, improvisational performance, and somatic practices that focus on development progression in the body. Lori has an MFA from Ohio State University and a certification in Laban Movement Studies. She has been on the faculty since 1994 and currently serves as the director of Emory’s dance and movement studies program. Her choreographic research focuses on the social and psychological features of human behavior. Her most recent work, *Rule of Thumb* advocated for a new understanding of gender expression. This year she launched D.I.R.T (dance in real time) to maintain a practice of improvisational performance and continue to awaken the relationships we have with natural environments and environmental concerns. She works collaboratively with movers and the space/environment to make original works.
She co-directs the Dancing Flowers for Peace, engaging women over forty in collaborative movement experiences that transform negative action into peaceful engagement; trains teachers to work in outreach settings; and serves as the program chair for Moving in the Spirit, a youth development program.

**Jason Eklund**, artist-in-residence in horn, is a native of Tucson, Arizona. Eklund began his professional performing career at age 18 as substitute horn for the Tucson Symphony Orchestra. In 1998, he graduated summa cum laude from the University of New Mexico with a bachelor of music degree in horn performance. While at the University of New Mexico he served as principal horn of the Santa Fe Symphony and substituted for the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra. In 2000, he earned a master of music degree in performance from the Meadows School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

Jason is an artist-in-residence at Kennesaw State University and an instructor of music theory at Emory. He is principal horn of the Atlanta Ballet Orchestra, second horn of the Atlanta Opera Orchestra, principal horn of the Georgia Symphony Orchestra, and fourth horn of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra.

Jason has been a featured soloist with the Tucson Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, the University of New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, the Catalina Chamber Orchestra, and the Kennesaw State University Wind Ensemble. He has attended many summer music festivals including Aspen, Interlochen Arts Camp, Keystone Brass Institute, Kent/Blossom, and Sarasota. His teachers have included Jacqueline Sellers, Stanislav Suchanek, Patrick Hughes, and Gregory Hustis.

In 2018, **Rimona Afana** completed a PhD at the Transitional Justice Institute in Northern Ireland. Her research looked at the synergies-tensions-tradeoffs between justice and reconciliation in Palestine/Israel, drawing on settler colonial studies, peace psychology, international law, and critical criminology. Currently a visiting scholar at the Vulnerability and the Human Condition Initiative (Emory School of Law), using vulnerability theory to reinterpret her doctoral findings on the justice-reconciliation nexus. Since last fall she has also been developing an interview series on vulnerability and ethics with scholars and practitioners in Atlanta, and she is involved in the Science.Art.Wonder program, creating multimedia pieces inspired by the research of the CDC enteric diseases epidemiology branch. She has been engaged during the past 12 years with civic groups around the world in human rights, international justice, peacebuilding, corporate accountability, and arts projects. Romanian-Palestinian, both and neither, she encrypts rootlessness-transience-dissonance in words and visuals: poems, flash fiction, photography, collage, drawing, painting, and installation.
Adam Mirza is visiting assistant professor in composition at Emory. His research interests include experimental and electronic music, immersive music theater, critical approaches to music technology, avant-garde aesthetics, and DIY concert organizing. Adam teaches courses involving composition for acoustic instruments, field recording, acousmatic music, live electronic music using Max MSP, and music with video.

Adam’s works have been presented at the Zurich New Music Days, the DiMenna Center in New York City, the Oleksandr Dovzhenko National Center in Kiev, the North American Saxophone Alliance, the New York Electroacoustic Music Festival, and other venues in the United States and abroad. He has worked closely with new music performers and ensembles such as the International Contemporary Ensemble, JACK Quartet, Argento Ensemble, New Thread Quartet, and the Ekmeles Vocal Ensemble. His recent projects have drawn upon recorded sound, live electronics, and installation to create immersive spaces for experimental musical theater. An exponent of DIY and collective music making, he has collaborated with young composers and musicians in the more than 40 concerts he produced or co-produced through the new music organization Amp, a new music festival, and an NEA funded series at the Tank in New York City.

Adam has conducted archival research for his dissertation at the Stockhausen Foundation and Archives, the British Library and the Paul Sacher Archive. His dissertation, Action Aesthetics, applies Hannah Arendt’s theories of action, revolution, and public judgment to the aesthetic practices of the musical avant-garde, in particular, to Glenn Gould, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Helmut Lachenmann.
MUSIC AT EMORY

The Department of Music at Emory University provides an exciting and innovative environment for developing knowledge and skills as a performer, composer, and scholar. Led by a faculty of more than 60 nationally and internationally recognized artists and researchers, our undergraduate and graduate students experience a rich diversity of performance and academic opportunities. Undergraduate students in our department earn a BA in music with a specialization in performance, composition, or research, many of whom simultaneously earn a second degree in another department. True to the spirit of Emory, a liberal arts college in the heart of a research university, our faculty and ensembles also welcome the participation of non-major students from across the Emory campus.

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Friday, February 22, noon, Ransom Notes, ECMSA: Cooke Noontime Series, Michael C. Carlos Museum, free

Tuesday, February 26, 8:00 p.m., Todd Qualls, piano, artist affiliate recital, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Saturday, March 2, 8:00 p.m., Emory Wind Ensemble, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Thursday, March 7, 8:00 p.m., Emory University Symphony Orchestra, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Sunday, March 10, 4:00 p.m., The Atlanta Jewish Music Festival Concert, ECMSA: Emerson Series, Emory Hillel, free

Saturday, March 16, 8:00 p.m., Spirit Songs, Atlanta Master Chorale, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, $30/$10 all students

Sunday, March 17, 4:00 p.m., Bach Birthday Recital, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Wednesday, March 20, 8:00 p.m., Elizabeth Fayette, violin, artist affiliate recital, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Friday, March 22, 8:00 p.m., Eric Owens and Lawrence Brownlee, Candler Concert Series, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, $60/$10

Thursday, March 28, 7:00 p.m., Barenaked Voices, Sixteenth Annual Student A Cappella Celebration, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, all tickets $5

Friday, March 29, noon, Zuill Bailey, cello, ECMSA: Cooke Noontime Series, Schwartz Artist-in-Residence Program, Michael C. Carlos Museum, free

Saturday, March 30, 8:00 p.m., Zuill Bailey with the Vega String Quartet, ECMSA: Emerson Series, Schwartz Artist-in-Residence Program, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Tuesday, April 2, 8:00 p.m., Emory Jazz Combos, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Thursday, April 4, 6:00 p.m., Jazz on the Green, Patterson Green, free
Saturday, April 6, 8:00 p.m., Emory University Chorus and Emory Wind Ensemble, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Sunday, April 7, 4:00 p.m., Atlanta’s Young Artists, ECMSA: Family Series, Michael C. Carlos Museum, free

Sunday, April 7, 7:00 p.m., Emory Collaborative Piano Concert, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Tuesday, April 9, 8:00 p.m., Clarinet Meets Guitar Duo, Jeffrey Brooks, clarinet, artist affiliate recital, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Friday, April 12, noon, Inna Faliks, piano, ECMSA: Cooke Noontime Series, Michael C. Carlos Museum, free

Friday, April 12, 8:00 p.m., Emily Brebach, English horn, artist affiliate recital, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Sunday, April 14, 4:00 p.m., Songs of the Birds, ECMSA: Emerson Series, Michael C. Carlos Museum, free

Sunday, April 14, 7:00 p.m., Emory Chamber Ensembles, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Thursday, April 18, 6:00 p.m., Jazz on the Green, Patterson Green, free

Saturday, April 20, 8:00 p.m., The Vega String Quartet, ECMSA: Emerson Series, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free

Tuesday, April 23, 8:00 p.m., Emory Big Band, Schwartz Center, Emerson Concert Hall, free