

## Program Notes

**Transparent City** is a series of electronic pieces assembled from the combination of field recordings made in Los Angeles and sine tones. Each piece is ten minutes long

In each case there is a visitation. Sonically, there is nothing simpler or more abstract than the sine tone: it might well be the opposite of sonic dust. Its temperature is always the same (somewhere near 0° Celsius). In each piece a set of four sine tones occurs in segments over the course of the ten minutes (according to a procedure which distributes the tones individually and which also controls their durations). Using another procedure, the frequency of the tones is calculated to never be the same, so that each of the 102 pieces has a distinct collection of four frequencies (which must lie between 60 and 3100 Hertz).

The trajectories of the two elements, field recording and sine tones are therefore distinct, unrelated. But the ear and the mind do strange things. Sometimes the tones are imposed directly upon the atmosphere, like a kind of monument; at other times they disappear into the air; sometimes you hear them when they are not there at all. Somewhat like the Martian spaceship in the film *Five Million Years to Earth* they are, at the same time, a foreign object and the foundation of the world.

*Performed by Michael Pisaro, guitar, with pre-recorded material.*



## Michael Pisaro: Biography

**Michael Pisaro** (born 1961 in Buffalo, New York) is a guitarist and composer. He is member of the Wandelweiser collective. While, like other members of Wandelweiser, Pisaro is known for pieces of long duration with periods of silence, in the past fifteen years his work has branched out in many directions, including work with field recording, electronics, improvisation and large ensembles of very different kinds of instrumental constitution. Called "patient, unpredictable, exceedingly beautiful" by the *New York Times*, Pisaro's music has been featured on many recordings in the last decade.

Pisaro has a long-standing collaboration with percussionist Greg Stuart, with over thirty collaborations (pieces and recordings) to date, including their 3-disc set, *Continuum Unbound* from 2014. Recordings of his work have been released by Edition Wandelweiser Records, erstwhile records, New World Records, Hubro, Potlatch, another timbre, meena/ftarri, Senufo Editions, Intonema, winds measure, HEM Berlin and on Pisaro's own imprint, Gravity Wave.

Before joining the composition faculty at the California Institute of the Arts, he taught music composition at Northwestern University. In 2006 he was awarded a grant from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts. He was Fromm Foundation Visiting Professor of Music Composition at in the Department of Music at Harvard in the Fall of 2014

**asleep, forest, melody, path** is the 7<sup>th</sup> in a series of pieces devoted to the investigation of a location through field recordings and live performance. There are up to six 10-minute sections to the piece. Each section is organized into four parts as follows.

**First part (3'):** a mono location recording is played in each of four channels, with a fixed delay in the start of the recording as it moves through the four speakers, creating a four-part "canon" of the recording.

**Second part (3'):** the recordings from the first part are repeated, at a lower volume, while a soloist from the ensemble plays a melody with an open-ended (indeterminate) accompaniment by the rest of the ensemble.

**Third part (3'):** the soloist and ensemble play the same music, but without the field recordings.

**Fourth part (1'):** a silent pause.

A melody can be seen as a path through the frequency landscape. So the music the ensemble makes, follows its own "path" through each of the field recordings. The soloists, who have a set of written tones, are a bit like guides through the fog of tones and noises that the ensemble creates. The ensemble is equally influenced by environment and melody.

*Performed by The Other Minds Ensemble (including Wendy Reid, Randall Wong, Michael Jones, Lula Asplund and Sally Decker) with pre-recorded material.*



LARGO

# THE NATURE OF MUSIC

MOLTO SMOG

**THE NATURE OF MUSIC:** Since the music of Haydn, Dvořák and Messiaen, classical composers have been using the sounds of the natural world as source material. With the advent of reel-to-reel tape recorders that inspired composers of the musique concrète movement, we could hear sounds slowed down or speeded up to bring new ears to common everyday sources. Along the way John Cage proposed in 1952, with 4'33", a silent piece for piano, that a listener could create their own concert by simply listening to ambient sounds without altering them, recognizing that they too have form and content. With the advent of personal recording equipment like the cassette recorder, environmental sounds have been recorded, sampled and integrated into composed and improvised music. In 1970, Charles Amirkhanian and Richard Friedman launched the World Ear Project at KPFA in Berkeley. They invited people from around the world to record continuous sound for 15 minutes or longer without alteration. The result was a long-running program in which listeners driving over the Bay Bridge would be mystified by long segments of sounds of a street market in India or frogs and crickets at night in Cayucos, California.

**ARTWORK CREDITS:** Images on the front cover and the top of this page are from compositions by Luciano Ori, from the collection of Charles Amirkhanian. The top photo of Michael Pisaro is by Yuko Zama; the photographer for the bottom photo is unknown. The events image below is from an assemblage by Liam O'Gallagher, also from the collection of Charles Amirkhanian. Program designed by Mark Abramson.

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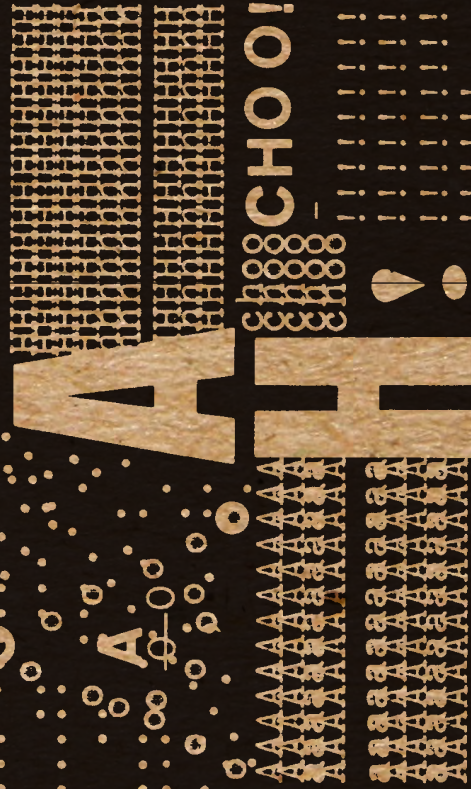
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## EVENT



### UPCOMING OTHER MINDS EVENTS

**The Nature of Music**  
**Audio-visual artist Joshua Churchill**  
Thursday, July 12, 2018, 7:00pm  
The Richard & Rhoda Goldman Theater  
David Brower Center  
2150 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA

**The Nature of Music**  
**Composer Linda Bouchard**  
Tuesday, October 16, 2018, 7:00pm  
The Richard & Rhoda Goldman Theater  
David Brower Center  
2150 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA