

Sat 18.3. 12:00 – 18:00

Haus der Berliner Festspiele, Kassenhalle

Decolonizing Time

Thinking Together Conference, Part 1

12:00

Donna Haraway

Statements on “Decolonizing Time”

Excerpts from a pre-recorded video interview with Berno Odo Polzer

12:15

C. K. Raju

Decolonizing Time:

Time at the Interface of Religion and Science

13:30

Rolando Vázquez

Decolonizing Time and the Question of Precedence

15:00

Jason Bahbak Mohaghegh

Enemy Imagination: The Assassins of Western Thought

16:00

Rana Issa

Morbid Time and the Return of the Antic in Syrian Writing

Live-Stream on facebook: #mm_together

Audio recordings of the lectures will be documented on voicerepublic.com

Sat 18.3.2017, 12:15

C. K. Raju

Decolonizing Time:

Time at the Interface of Religion and Science

Colonialism captured the mind, by sustained indoctrination through Western education – for centuries a church monopoly. It gave three time-gifts to the colonised, all deeply influenced by church politics.

First, the religious Gregorian calendar, an unscientific method of timekeeping, which spreads the AD/BC superstition, while ruining Indian farmers even today.

Second, the clock, a symbol used on church steeples to depict the immediacy of apocalypse. Ironically, both calendar and clock provide robust, non-textual evidence against the fictitious history of science used by Thomas Babington Macaulay to impose colonial education.

The third time gift was the clockwork cosmos in the name of science. Aquinas said that god rules the world with laws of nature, which supposed laws were later formulated as differential equations. Because neither Newton nor Leibniz understood the calculus, imported from India, the very formulation of those differential equations today assumes formal real numbers, and that time is like a line. Newtonian physics failed just because he, similarly, made time meta-physical.

Calculus must be understood using zeroism, not formalism. This permits the reformulation of science by a partial return to the notion of quasi-cyclic time. "Cyclic" time was cursed by the post-Nicene church, by confounding quasi-cyclic with supercyclic time, as did Nietzsche. However, quasi-cyclic time permits a cosmos with creativity and spontaneity, without which art cannot exist. This also restores the original notion of soul as a scientific possibility.

Sat 18.3.2017, 13:30

Rolando Vázquez

Decolonizing Time and the Question of Precedence

The question of time sits at the heart of the decolonial critique of modernity. Modernity, the western project of civilization, has been characterized by a relation to the real (to earth, world and ourselves) that is articulated by a particular temporality. The 'metaphysics of presence' has meant the reduction of time to chronology, and the confinement of experience to empty time. It has meant the impoverishing of our site of experience, of our relation to the communal, to earth and to what precedes us. In contrast, the decolonial comes under the sign of the return. It brings to the fore the thinking of relational temporalities, as a different way to experience and produce reality. By shredding the surface of empty time, relational temporalities signal a break with modern ontology. It delinks itself both from radical immanence and abstract forms of transcendence. Relational temporalities bring to the fore the mode of precedence as the thought of an ontology grounded on the coming into presence of multiplicity of times. Precedence tells us that under the surface of representation we are before the before. It tells us that what precedes us is a grounding projection, it antecedes and anticipates us, it is always already before us. Decolonial temporalities dis-obey the confinement of experience to empty time, decoloniality breaks with the normativity of contemporaneity, the reification of earth and the enclosure of the self in the space of representation.

Sat 18.3.2017, 15:00

Jason Bahbak Mohaghegh

Enemy Imagination:

The Assassins of Western Thought

This talk explores a kind of philosophical warfare between the so-called East and West along the axis of temporality, tracking a strangely fatal arc through which the icons of Western thought envision the approach of some ominous / unbound futural figure (Nietzsche and the overman, Bataille and the headless, Deleuze and the nomad, Foucault and the barbarian) that are then incarnated by a series of Middle Eastern poetic visionaries (al-Buraikan and the Bedouin, Adonis and the assassin, Darwish and the exile, Shamlu and the horseman). Through this mirroring of existential silhouettes, one can locate a fiercely anti-colonial East-West pendulum that threatens to break open modern subjectivity from a timescape beyond its own confines. Thus a hostile intersection of images, and with each a different technique of epochal overthrow.

Sat 18.3.2017, 16:00

Rana Issa

Morbid Time and the Return of the

Antic in Syrian Writing

For exiles, it is always a matter of time. Time measured in human degeneration, in units of lifetime. Our bodies are out of balance in exile. In the space of displacement, our bodies experience exile as a waste of lifetime, a monumental and greatly insurmountable waste of lifetime. Exile awakens in us the idea of our insignificant lives. We may think we matter, until we go into exile. Then we discover that we decay. In such conditions of dejected existentialism, it is difficult to sustain any frank political thoughts. For in the exilic rupture, we lose out on those who we wanted to become political with. In exile our numbers are reduced, and so we transform into an expiring minority, so atomized that our voices become imperceptible and out of synch with this new place where we moved.

Sun 19.3., 12:00

Haus der Berliner Festspiele, Kassenhalle

Decolonizing Time

Thinking Together Conference, Part 2

12:00

Georgina Born

Time – Music – Gender

13:00

Kodwo Eshun

Non Negation: Blackness out of Space: Noise out of Time

15:00

Björn Schmelzer

The Chronopolitics of Early Music

16:00

**Lendl Barcelos, Amy Ireland, Katrina Burch,
Matt Hare, Ben Woodard**

Time()Pieces – Workshop Presentation

16:30

Rolando Vázquez, Ovidiu Țichindeleanu, Madina Tlostanova

Staging the End of the Contemporary – Workshop Presentation

17:00

Georgina Born, Arnbjörg María Danielsen, Ashley Fure

Gender Relations in New Music – Workshop Presentation

Live-Stream on facebook: #mm_together

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Sun 19.3.2017, 12:00

Georgina Born

Time – Music – Gender

In this paper I move between a series of perspectives on the interrelations between time, music and gender on different scales. With regard to historical time: if “decolonizing time” registers the limits of Eurocentric enlightenment and modernist assumptions of cultural, social and artistic progress, then music and the arts offer, paradoxically, experimental stages on which to imagine, enact and perform, in both aesthetic and social dimensions, what might be considered a progressive politics without guarantees. Moreover, against the clamorous visibility and audibility of canonic and universalistic Eurocentric accounts of historical process in music and the arts, because of their openness to new aesthetics and new values, music and the arts offer a basis for the proliferation of what might be called minor or counter histories and thereby alternative understandings of historical time.

With reference to musical time: I examine a series of thinkers – Bergson, Schütz, Adorno – wedded to normative accounts of time, music and listening, reviewing alternatives; and via discussion of such critical theorists of gender as Nancy Fraser and Amy Allen, the latter in dialogue with the anthropologist Saba Mahmood, I pursue parallels in terms of the impasses and epistemological closures of the dualism of normativity versus cultural relativism. Articulating the productive challenges of combatting institutionalized inequalities of gender in music, I suggest that recognition and redistribution, culture and economy, justice and equality but also new pleasures, knowledges and collective solidarities are necessary and enlivening components of what Chantal Mouffe identifies as an unending politics of ‘agonistic pluralism’.

Sun 19.3.2017, 13:00

Kodwo Eshun

Non Negation: Blackness out of Space: Noise out of Time

The presence of Non Worldwide, Babyfather and Hype Williams, to name but three Afrodiasporic sonic platforms, announce a 21st Century black noise that decoheres the blackness of black metal. If the most immediate satisfactions generated by the new black noise issues from its capacity to summon the whitened body of industrial noise so as to mortify its dismayed audiences, then what concerns us here are the deeper, abyssal and abysmal implications of the black arts now practised by diamond black hearted youth.

What emerges from this black noise that moves within and by way of the abnormative traditions of white noise supremacy? The intransigence of Non Worldwide be and the belligerence of Babyfather might be heard as the conjuration of blackness out of space, of noise out of place and of matters out of time. What can be heard when blackness moves out of its space? When noise leaves its place? When matter matters?

What is conjured are intensities that unbind themselves from under the skin of the black square. Entities that mobilise the ends of the monochrome until they become uchromic. Continenties that move through a blackened universe, desedimenting the human foundations of colour.

Sun 19.3.2017, 15:00

Björn Schmelzer

The Chronopolitics of Early Music

“Early Music”, a generalized notion for a (musicological) focus on musical repertoires of the past and their (eventual) performance, is a concept born with Western modernity and the idea of historicity.

However, the fascination for “voices of the past” since modernity and even long before, has always been somehow ambiguous: on the one hand there is an almost spiritualist and re-enacting desire of evoking those voices, on the other hand they are exorcized or at least put into a neutralizing framework which excludes any anachronistic eruption of time, giving rise to the paradox of the impossible embodiment of past sounds.

As soon as we start to believe in the coexistence or subsistence of the past in the present, “Early Music” becomes an act of listening and evocation of past voices, not so far from many practices outside Western, rationalizing modernity.

Is it in this way that the performance of “Early Music” could be a chance or potential for musicology, leaving its philological and modernist heritage behind in favor of a practice “in the midst of things” where analysis can not exist without affective and exegetic performance? The performance of “Early Music” would be a way of politicizing musicology, where the musical event is at the same time a listening, a negotiation and a transference, opening up the historicist representation of musical repertoires.

It would be necessary to show that it is the musical repertoires and practices themselves that have been always intrinsically resisting a proper place and origin in time and space, and that they are machinized with the help of affective diagrams in order to transform the things around them and guarantee the animation of an “after-life”.

Sun 19.3.2017, 16:00

Lendl Barcelos, Amy Ireland, Katrina Burch,
Matt Hare, Ben Woodard

Time () Pieces – Workshop Presentation

Over five days, this group will study a selection of texts and work through a variety of temporal circuitries. Each session invites participants to think-with open questions concerning a particular “piece” of the modalities of time. Jason Mohaghegh will begin our week-long *dérive* with an exposition of “chronomania” and “chronocide” in Middle Eastern writing, exploring the ways in which these outsider temporalities express themselves through different conceptual personae (i.e. the timescape of the madman, the prisoner, the martyr, the barbarian, the wanderer, the traitor, the seducer, the machine, the visionary, and the exile).

This will set the stage for a pair of sessions extending the general problematic of decolonizing time along forked (but complementary) paths, investigating the pre-conditions of temporality on one hand, and the (im)possibilities of a universalist time on the other. Some of the questions we hope to broach include problems around ‘universal history’, its pact with eschatology; the transcendental production of time; standardization and temporal objectivity; modernity and transmodernity. From here the focus spirals wildly outwards to the twisted temporalities of what might be named a ‘gothic futurism’. Contemporary Chinese science fiction will provide the launchpad for an examination of the relationships between technology, suspicion, and temporal lag that place the human species as a whole in the position of alien subject within a speculative cosmic coloniality.

Sun 19.3.2017, 16:30

Rolando Vázquez, Ovidiu Țichindeleanu,
Madina Tlostanova

Staging the End of the Contemporary – Workshop Presentation

The contemporary has been a normative position within the arts since the 2nd half of the twentieth century. The emergence of the “global contemporary” towards 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Havana Biennial and the “Magicien de la Terre” exhibition, opened a critique of eurocentrism in the field of contemporary art, but left the normativity of the contemporary untouched. What remained untouched and at the same time became globalized was the normativity of modern time. Modernity as the civilizational project of the West imposed economic and institutional systems, modes of subjectification, and epistemic structures, but it also instigated and established a form of relation to the world regulated by the chronology of modern time. The metaphysics of modernity, the relation to the world and to the real has been mediated by a particular form of temporality; a temporality that upholds the present as the site of experience and contemporaneity as the now of history and as its most advanced stage. The contemporary in the arts became associated with novelty, with transgression, with rupture and the unexpected. “Novelty” as a form of futurity, as belonging to the now of his-tory is what the contemporary normalized and regulated. “Decolonial aesthetics” comes under the sign of the return. It presents a radical critique to the temporality of contemporaneity. Decolonial artists do not seek novelty, their focus is on the transformation of the present through the memorial as a radical contestation of what has been relegated to the pastness of contemporaneity and to oblivion. Decolonizing contemporaneity, including the global contemporary, is a necessary step in the opening of “a world in which many worlds can fit.” The end of contemporaneity opens a different question to the one of globalizing the contemporary. It is not seeking the incorporation of the non-Western world into the present of contemporaneity; it is not seeking the recognition of coevalness. It seeks to undo the temporal normativity that has been exercised through the notion and the institutions of the “contemporary,” it seeks to humble modernity in its claim to be the totality of the present and in its affirmation as globality. The decolonial brings to the fore relational temporalities as a response to the confinement of experience in the empty present of contemporaneity, in the metaphysics of presence, in the field of assemblages and immanence.

Sun 19.3.2017, 17:00

Georgina Born, Arnbjörg María Danielsen, Ashley Fure
Gender Relations in New Music – Workshop Presentation

Gender Relations in New Music (GRINM) is an activist and research group committed to challenging and redressing the inequalities of opportunity and representation along lines of gender and sexuality, as well as race and class, that afflict new music institutions and scenes worldwide. GRINM was initiated during the 2016 Darmstadt International Summer Course for New Music. In this three-day workshop, the group will engage in collective deliberation about GRINM's principles and goals, how to organize GRINM going forward, and its political strategies. The stress will be on practice and theory and their interrelations: if GRINM cannot be useful to musicians, composers and sound artists, curators and critics, then it has little purpose. At the same time, GRINM offers an unprecedented opportunity to rethink the nature of a de-centered but coherent political movement, engaging with the work of such theorists as Chantal Mouffe, Marilyn Strathern, Moira Gatens, Genevieve Lloyd and Amy Allen. GRINM aspires to be a movement adequate to our times: if "decolonizing time" registers the limits of Eurocentric modernist assumptions of artistic, cultural and social progress, then, paradoxically, music and the arts nonetheless offer an experimental stage on which to realize and develop, enact and perform, on many levels, what must be considered a progressive politics without guarantees. Core questions include: how can music become the site for such realisation and enactment? From materialist and aesthetic standpoints, do different genres – music theatre, sound art, improvised music, electronic music, opera, the string quartet – offer distinctive potentials for actively reshaping inequalities, and if so, how? How, in new music and sound art, can we take steps to boost diversity and equality among those commissioned and performed, published and taught while retaining commitments to high musical and artistic ambition? And how can new music institutions, in their variety, be encouraged radically to reform themselves?

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