

## **XV - a celebration**

**April 25 & 26, 2024 | 8pm | CRASHBOX**

### **Ben Hackbarth**

*Decryption in Three Parts* (2024)

\*world premiere

### **Sivan Cohen Elias**

*Escape Room* (2024)

\*world premiere

### **Julio Zúñiga**

*10000000000 animales* (2024)

\*world premiere

### **Constantin Basica**

*line upon line* (2024)

\*world premiere

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**Ben Hackbarth** lives in London and teaches at the University of Liverpool where he directs the Interdisciplinary Centre for Composition and Technology and is the artistic director of the Musical Futures Concert Series. He has a Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego where he studied composition with Roger Reynolds and received a Master's degree while working with Chaya Czernowin. He has a bachelor's degree in composition from the Eastman School of Music.

Ben has been composer in research at IRCAM three times since 2010 and has had residencies at Cité des Arts, Centre Internationale de Récollets, and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. Notable performances include those by the Arditti String Quartet, Ensemble InterContemporain, the L.A. Percussion Quartet, Ensemble Orchestral Contemporain, Ensemble SurPlus, and the Wet Ink Ensemble.

***Decryption in Three Parts***, written for line upon line, is for a trio of percussionists and computer sound. It explores coded signals, garbled transmissions, crossed wires, and makeshift solutions. The work is divided into nine sections: Begin Transmission, Can(on), Radio Active, Live Broadcast, Shell Game, Docking Sequence, Air Lock, Overture, and Piano Three Hands.

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**Sivan Cohen Elias** is an electroacoustic composer and improviser. Her work is cross-disciplinary, combining modified musical instruments, objects, fixed media and live electronics, body gestures, and video, while exploring social themes of failure, entanglement, and illusion. As noted by *The New York Times*, she often “deconstructs the instruments themselves” to establish extended sonic environments consisting of multi-layered textures and timbres.

Cohen Elias’ work spans the United States, Europe, and Israel where she has received various prestigious international awards, including the Harvard Fromm Foundation, and the International Staatstheater Darmstadt Music-Theater Composition Competition; residencies include Akademie Schloss Solitude; commissions, broadcasts, and performances include ensembles such as Klangforum Wien, soundinitiative, Jack Quartet, among many others. She received her Ph.D. from Harvard University, where she studied with Chaya Czernowin.

Since Fall 2022, she is the Assistant Professor of Composition/Music Technology at the University of Minnesota School of Music. Her new album *Melting Planets* will be released by Innova Recordings in summer 2024.

### ***Escape Room***

Escape the Room is a game in which a group of people are put on a mission to solve puzzles and codes to find their way out of a locked room. The piece *Escape Room* takes inspiration from the experience of the game, taking us into a mysterious, layered world in which the players keep transforming from one escape room to another. The piece also serves as a study for an installation-based interactive sound art in progress.

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**Julio Zúñiga** is a composer of contemporary music working with acoustic instruments, analog and digital electronics, and field recordings. He has developed a practice that explores the idea of sound as an acoustic phenomenon that, as artistic material, offers the unique characteristic of being fundamentally spectral: although sound is emitted by vibrating entities in physical space, the absence of a bodily materiality by the time it is perceived by the listener lends itself to an experience determined by what is not physically and tangibly present. With this as a point of departure, Julio has built a musical language that is defined by a narrative around what is not actually there, an aesthetics of absence and the illusion of presence, an aural phantasmagoria of sorts.

Julio holds a PhD in music composition from Harvard University, where he studied with Chaya Czernowin and Hans Tutschku, a Bachelor of Music in composition from McGill

University, and a Master of Music in composition and electronic music from the Hochschule für Musik Carl Maria von Weber Dresden, where he studied with Mark Andre and Franz Martin Olbrisch.

### ***10000000000 animales***

Matt, Adam, and Cullen, together with 10000000000 souls, transform latent energy into new life, ascend the harmonic stair of celestial motions. From a single particle, they lay down the archetype of the fabric of this World:

For just as our bodies put out hairs from their skin,  
so does this earth put out plants and trees;  
and just as lice are born on our hairs,  
so are worms and cicadas born Here;  
and just as our faces pour out mucus and tears and earwax and spit,  
so do these mountains pour out rivers and magma, and thunder and rain.

But this World is not unlike an ox or a jaguar, slow to anger yet mighty,  
and it will be all the more violent the more it is kindled.

And between men and angels, beast, mortal in body like men, immortal in mind like angels.

And between the celestial homes of the blessed dead and our sublunary nature—

these starry heavens.

\* most of this paraphrases Kepler

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**Constantin Basica** is a Romanian composer living in the San Francisco Bay Area, whose current work focuses on symbiotic interrelations between music, video, and performers. His works have been performed in Europe, North America, and Asia at various international festivals and conferences. Constantin earned a DMA in Composition at Stanford University (US), and he holds an MA in Multimedia Composition from the Hamburg University of Music and Theatre (DE), as well as two BA degrees in Composition and Conducting from the National University of Music Bucharest (RO). In recent years, Constantin has been collaborating with other artists and researchers on projects involving Artificial Intelligence and music improvisation. Currently, Constantin is a postdoctoral scholar, lecturer, and the concert coordinator at Stanford's Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA).

#### Journal Entry 611

I arrived at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. Flight was fine.

#### Journal Entry 612

Matt is a total sweetheart, and I also met his awesome kid, Zeke. They picked me up from the airport and gave me a tour of a local grocery store. Matt and his wife Natalie are kindly hosting me at their place over the next few days. I heard rumors about their cookie-baking rivalry - hope I get to taste some of their sweets :)

#### Journal Entry 613

They cooked delicious pasta and I got to know them a little bit. Built some LEGO with Zeke and then read a book with him and his sister Renata. It was a picture book with words in both English and Italian. I translated into Romanian some of the words that sounded like Italian and they seemed amused. These kids are so smart and fun. My recording gear made an impression, so I let them have my camera to take photos.

#### Journal Entry 614

Ever since I was commissioned to write a piece about line upon line a few years back, I wondered how my encounter with the ensemble would unfold. I feel like I am connected to the three of them by some strange force... Tomorrow morning I will visit their studio on Bolm Road.

#### Journal Entry 615

We had breakfast tacos at a cool spot with food trucks. I got a flat white and the barista told me a nice story about the place where the coffee beans came from—though I seem to have forgotten it already...

#### Journal Entry 616

They are very friendly and generous with their stories. Adam seems a bit quiet, but Matt and Cullen compensate. I learned a lot about their professional and personal lives during the first interview. But they also seemed very reluctant to talk about some sort of traumatic experience they all had in 2017... Will have to see how I can find out more about it. Maybe meeting with each of them separately later?

#### Journal Entry 617

They promised to give me a demo of their quirky instruments tomorrow and teach me some percussion tricks. It's crazy how much stuff they have in that space. Not only is it full of percussion instruments, but they also have things like hair dryers, Christmas lights, pots and pans, empty spice jars, beans (are they also cooking in there?), various brushes, tools, bags, sewing buttons—and this is just what I can remember...

#### Journal Entry 618

Matt is driving me around the city to meet some of the ensemble's close friends: Norma Yancey and Rich Armington today, then Andy Stoltz and Natalie George tomorrow.

#### Journal Entry 630

Had a very interesting chat with Natalie Teodori tonight after the kids went to bed, but too tired now... Will update in the morning.

#### Journal Entry 631

What was Matt doing out there in the dark?!?!?!?

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## **LINE UPON LINE**

Formed in 2009 at The University of Texas at Austin, line upon line exists to champion living composers and pursue the musically unfamiliar.

The Austin-based trio has premiered hundreds of new works for percussion and has worked with composers in residencies at Harvard University, Stanford University, Cal Poly, University of California at Santa Cruz, University of Texas at Austin, Kunstuniversität Graz, University of Huddersfield, University of Liverpool, City University of London and Monash University (Melbourne).

Internationally, the group has performed at the Bendigo International Festival of Exploratory Music (Australia), Open Circuit Festival (Liverpool), Novalis Festival (Osijek), in Basel (Hochschule für Musik), Berlin (Unerhörte Musik), Cologne (Loft Köln), Freiburg (Hochschule für Musik), Graz (Open Music), Koper (Koper Biennale) and London (City, University of London), and has taught at the Conservatoriums in Melbourne and Sydney, London (Guildhall School of Music & Drama), Manchester (Royal Northern College of Music) and Tours (Le pôle Aliénor).

Nationally, line upon line has performed and taught in twenty-four different states, at two Percussive Arts Society International Conventions, the Festival of New American Music (Sacramento) and The Myrna Loy Center (Helena, MT).

In Texas, the group has performed at two Fusebox Festivals, the Menil Collection (Houston), Victoria Bach Festival and the International Festival-Institute at Round Top.

line upon line consists of its three original members: Adam Bedell, Cullen Faulk and Matthew Teodori.

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\*Supporters listed here gave between September 1st, 2022 and August 31st, 2023.