



Degrees of Fidelity

EMPIRES

Founded in 2013 by composers Cody Brookshire and Brian D. Kelly, **EMPIRES** (Eclectic Music Productions and REcording Series) is a new music organization that orchestrates special music events and produces, publishes, and curates albums of contemporary music, with a focus in electronic music. Cody Brookshire and John Hennecken are the current co-directors of EMPIRES.

Shortly after the release of their Southeastern United States compilation, *Discordia*, EMPIRES presents this third compilation of electronic music from across America and internationally. The theme for this collection took shape quickly with many of the contributed tracks possessing lo-fi, glitch, or raw qualities, while other tracks sparkle with stunning high-definition clarity. With this contrast and with a few tracks that move throughout and touch on both ends of the spectrum, we are proud to present **Degrees of Fidelity**, a collection of works capturing the emotion and magic of the antiquated and crude, the cutting-edge and precise, and various points in between.

Degrees of Fidelity

Launch Sequence – Carter John Rice

I, Philip – Kate Wagner

Bump 3 – Se'nam Palmer

We Could Live Forever Tonight – Cody Brookshire

Just Breathe – Greg Lloyd

I See Spirits – Anne Hege

Exhaled Rhyme – Vanessa Law

Music for Strings and Interference – Andrea Mazzariello

Sounds of DISSCO – John Nichols III

Stillness Refracted – Adam Vidiksis

Featured Instrumentalists on **Degrees of Fidelity**:

Track 2 – **Kate Wagner** – synthesizers

Track 3 – **Se'nam Palmer** – guitars

Track 6 – **Anne Hege** – voice and live electronics

Track 10 – **Naomi Sato** – sho

Additional Credits:

Compiling, Mastering, Artistic Direction – **Cody Brookshire**

Administration, Logistics – **John Hennecken**

Album Art – **Cody Brookshire**

Bios, Program Notes, Headshots – provided by each composer

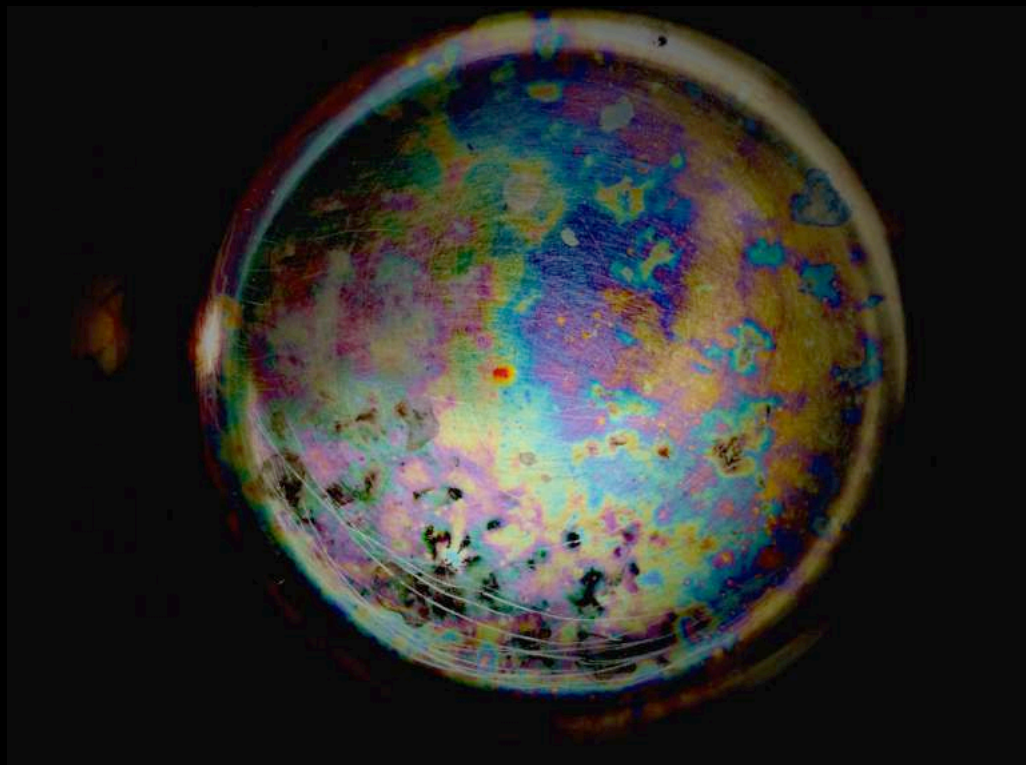


Carter John Rice, a native of Minot, North Dakota, is a composer of new music currently pursuing a Doctor of Arts (D.A.) in music theory/composition at Ball State University. His music has been featured across the United States and abroad, including performances at SEAMUS, ICMC, The National SCI Conference, The Bowling Green State University New Music Festival, Electronic Music Midwest, The Electroacoustic Barn Dance, and the National Student Electronic Music Event. He was the inaugural recipient of Concordia College's Composer of Promise Award, for which he received a commission from the Concordia College Orchestra.

Rice received his Master's degree from Bowling Green State University where he studied with

Elainie Lillios and Christopher Dietz. He frequently collaborates with friend and flutist Colleen O'Shea Jones. Rice currently works as an instructor of music composition and computer music at Indiana University East, and also serves as the national student representative for The Society of Composers Inc.

Launch Sequence, unlike most of my other recent compositions, has little in the way of narrative or extra-musical association. It is a piece constructed of highly dramatic gestures and abstractions that are intended to provide a meaningful experience, albeit that meaning is not made clear. Its title comes from the notion of a countdown (i.e. 5, 4, 3, etc.). The opening section of the work has 5 major arrival moments, while the next has 4, then 3, and so on. It was completed in the Spring of 2015 at Ball State University.



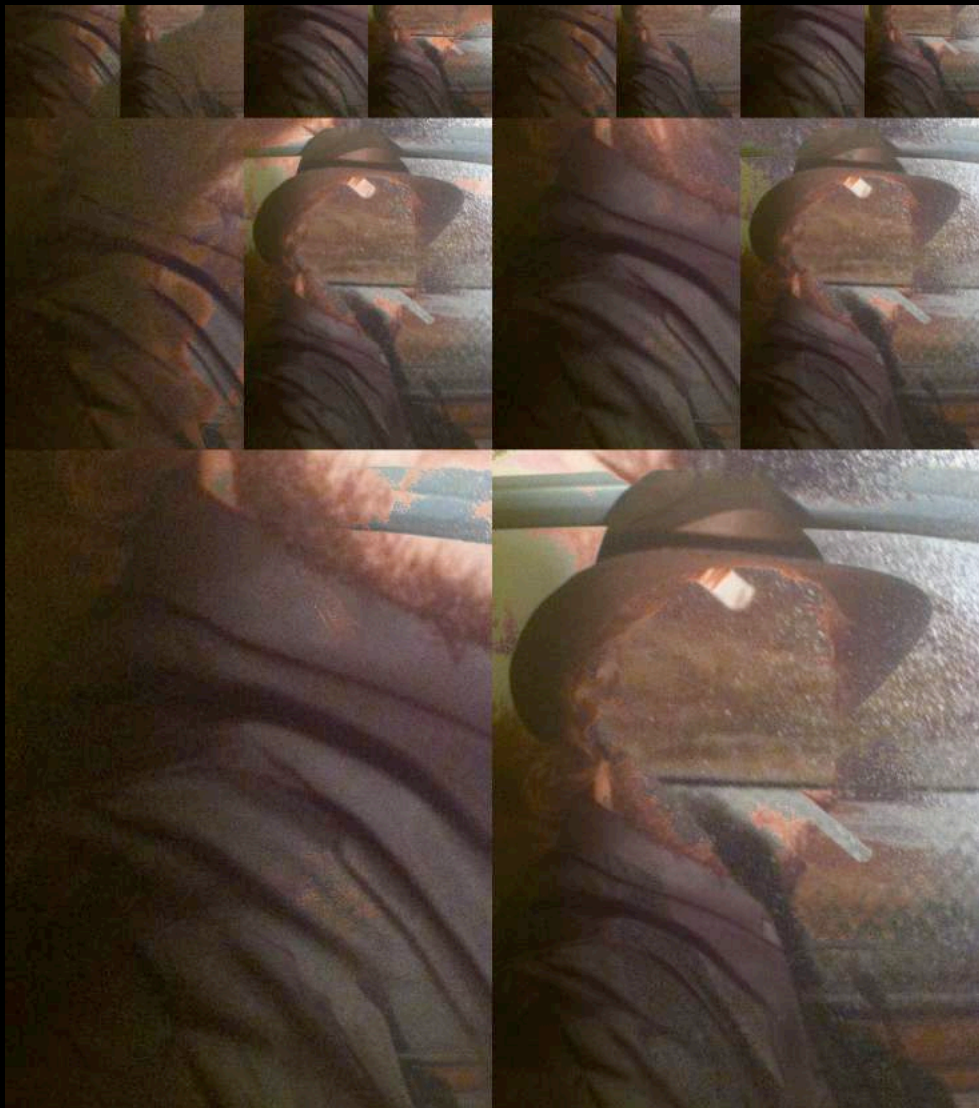


Kaitlyn Wagner (b. 1993) is a promising young composer whose works have been performed by the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Freya String Quartet, Cellist Dr. JW Turner, the Oasis Saxophone Quartet, violinist Sarah Plum, and a variety of musicians hailing from Singapore and the Ukraine to students at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Ms. Wagner is a member of the Society of Composers, Inc., Women's Audio Mission, and the Audio Engineering Society and is the Vice President of the University of NC Greensboro chapter of the Society of Composers, Inc. In 2013,

Kaitlyn was the youngest featured composer at the Charlotte New Music Festival, where her piece *Kings of Infinite Space* was performed by the Pittsburgh-based Freya String Quartet, and in 2014 she attended the Bowdoin International Music Festival. In 2015, her piece *I, Philip* for Moog Synthesizer and live electronics was performed at the 2015 National Student Electronic Music Event, Root Signals Festival, and the Electroacoustic Barn Dance. Her long-term composition teachers have included Randall Woolf, Alejandro Rutty, Mark Engebretson, Steven Bryant, Derek Bermel, and Samuel Adler.

Ms. Wagner is a Senior at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where she majors in Music Composition and works as a technician in the school's recording studio. When not in school, Kaitlyn works in acoustical measurement as a part of an ongoing internship at Polk Audio in Baltimore, MD.

I, Philip is a piece for Moog Model 12 Modular Synthesizer with keyboard, Korg Analog Sequencer, laptop (live processing), and quadrophonic sound (mixed down to stereophonic sound for this compilation album). The score is essentially an instruction sheet, which diagrams exactly which happens at each stage of the piece. The title *I, Philip* pays homage to Philip Glass, due to its initially repetitive nature (inherent in the way analog sequencing works) and its bizarre interpretation of additive processes (one of Glass' favorite compositional techniques). The simple four chord progression is a nod to the popular music of the 60s, which is when most of the equipment used in the piece was designed and produced.





Se'nam Palmer is a solo, loop based guitarist, born and raised from Charleston, South Carolina. His music blends many styles and approaches from quirky hip-hop based rhythms, punchy yet warm chords, and tons of colorful build that will lead you wondering what will happen next. His influence ranges from many styles from bands like Kayo Dot to Lil B but yet manages to create identity through his mediums and has many more projects in the coming months under the musical moniker #Shredgaze. Be sure to check

up the endeavors of this up and coming musician and for any additional information be sure to follow his social media accounts:

Facebook: Se'nam Palmer / Se'nam Palmer- Music

Instagram: Got_Thall

Twitter: Got_Thall

Snapchat: Got_Thall

Soundcloud: Senam Palmer

Bandcamp: Senam Palmer

I tracked ***Bump 3*** when I was in Colorado with my bandmate and the strongest musician I know, Monochrome Sweatsuit (Justin Tolan) when we were tracking as many ideas possible in order for me to get the cogs in the wheel started for future projects. I was in the early stages of learning how to multitrack on my own terms for future endeavors. Listening back on this only get me excited in regards of providing music for others and working on many projects in the coming months.

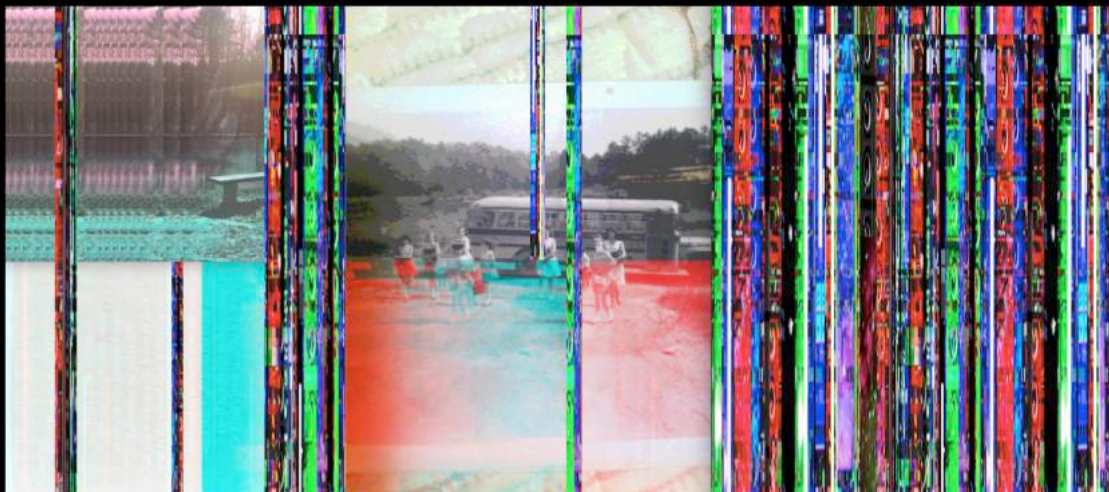




Cody Brookshire's music has been performed at events and venues including the New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, SEAMUS National Conferences, the Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology, the Audiograft Festival of Contemporary Experimental Music and Sound Art, the Guangzhou Grand Theater in China, and the Wiltshire Heritage Museum in England. He has composed for and worked with groups such as So Percussion, Great Noise Ensemble, Transient Canvas, Chamber Cartel, Athens Guitar Duo, Terminus Ensemble, Lineage Percussion, the Hodgson U-Band at the University of Georgia, and the University of North

Georgia String Orchestra. Awards include 1st place in the 2015 ElectroBrass National Composition Competition, 1st place in the 2014 Southeastern Composer's League Philip Slates Competition, 3rd place in the 2014 NACUSA Young Composers Competition, a Judge's Honorable Mention for the 2015 American Prize in Composition, as well as several grants from the University of Georgia. Some released recordings include "Harmonic Meditation No. 1" appearing on the 2014 SEAMUS Miniatures album *Transients*, and "Wasting All My Precious Time" appearing on the *Greg Lloyd / Cody Brookshire* EP on the Good Static label. In the Fall of 2016, a recording of "PRISM," commissioned by the Athens Guitar Duo, will be released on their second album on Claudio Records. www.CodyBrookshire.com

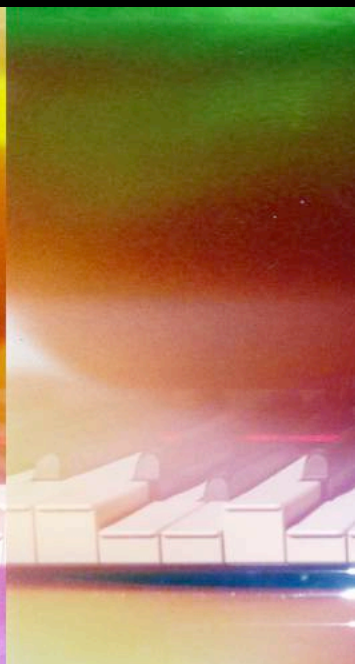
We Could Live Forever Tonight was inspired by one of my favorite songs: the Beach Boys tune “Don't Talk (Put Your Head on My Shoulder)” from their album *Pet Sounds*. This piece draws its material from the gorgeous and bittersweet chord progression in the song but durationally augments each voice of the original progression by a different factor, and each voice is recreated as if played by old organs on derelict vinyl records. The mood goes in a very different direction, however, with multi-temporal manipulation, various distortions, spectral blurring, and added field recordings. *We Could Live Forever Tonight* touches on themes of nostalgia, remembering and misremembering, connected webs of moments and memories, the desire to control the passing of time, and how music can make that desire not seem as futile as it truly is.





Greg Lloyd is a freelance musician and multi-instrumentalist living in the Phoenix area. Greg performs in a range of ensembles from experimental and traditional classical music to jazz, rock, and ambient music, and also stays active teaching, recording, and producing music. Information on his current projects can be found at www.GoodStatic.org.

Just Breathe is an exploration of sound as texture and movement, composed in February of 2016. The track is comprised of manipulations of original material composed by Greg Lloyd and performed by Aeryn Burley on violin and Allyson Wuenschel on viola.





Dr. **Anne K. Hege** is a San Francisco based composer, conductor and vocalist. She received a BA in music with honors from Wesleyan University, CT and an MA in music composition from Mills College, CA. In 2014, she completed her PhD in Music Composition at

Princeton University where she researched how embodied cognition theory can be applied to musical multimedia composition. Hege's work has been recognized with awards such as The Elizabeth Mills Crothers Prize, The Gwen Livingston Pekora Prize in Music Composition, and a Mark Nelson Fellowship. She has composed for film, installation art, dance, and concert settings. Ensembles such as the Princeton Laptop Orchestra, Ensemble Klang, NOW Ensemble, Newspeak, Flux Quartet, New York Virtuoso Singers, Princeton Chamber Singers, Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, Voce in Tempore, Carmina Escobar, and Jason Calloway, among others, have performed her works. Since 2008, Hege has composed musical scores for choreographer Carrie Ahern. The *New York Times* praised her score for Ahern's *SenSate* as "convincing" and "strangely environmental." Influenced by her deep listening practice, her latest compositions lie somewhere between ritual, music, and theater with some homemade instruments thrown in for good measure.

I See Spirits is performed live on my homemade looping instrument, The Tape Machine. This instrument is made of wood and retrofitted cassette players and was built so that I could perform live looping in a way that would be transparent and physical for the audience. I wanted the audience to be able to see the tape, my manipulations, and my movements as essential to the sound. What was surprising was how magical it feels to play this instrument. Even though I have been playing the tape machine for years now, it still feels like I am not completely in control of what will come from this machine. As I hope you can hear on this track, what is summoned from the cassette can be surprising, as if the tape machine gives the spirits that surround us a voice.





Vanessa Law was born in Hong Kong and began her studies at the Hong Kong Baptist University in 2004, started out as a piano major and studied piano with Chinese composer Mr. Cui Shiguang. Vanessa composed a number of ensemble works in her undergraduate

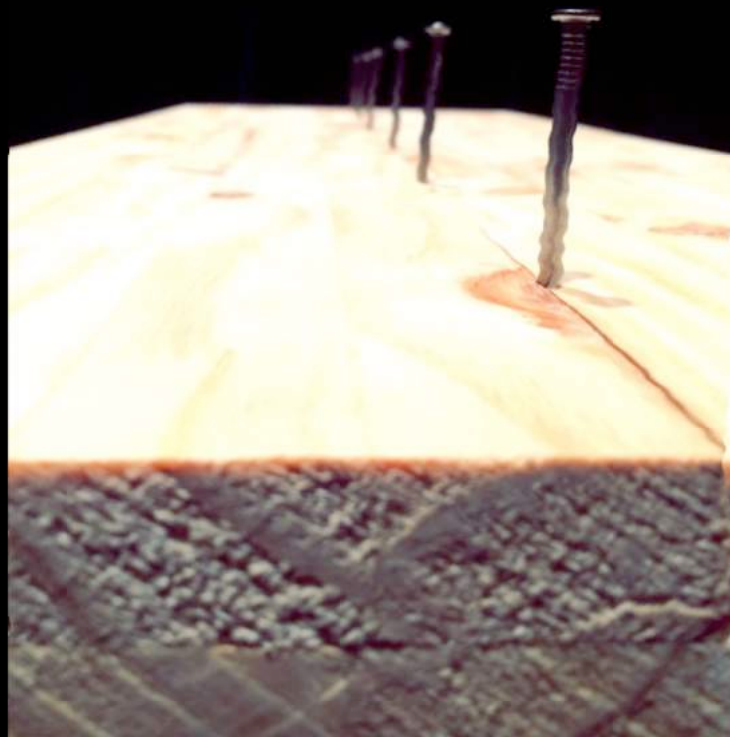
study and presented her first choral suite Tsunami in the honors project composition recital in 2007. Vanessa then turned her focus towards electroacoustic music composition during her stay at Ball State University, Indiana, majoring in voice and music composition. Vanessa's composition teachers include Michael Pounds, Keith Kothman, Jody Nagel and Derek Johnson. Vanessa studied voice with Ms Katusha Tsui-Fraser and Dr. Mei Zhong and was the winner of the regional (Indiana) audition of the National Association of Teachers of Singing in US in 2008.

Vanessa returned to Hong Kong in 2010. Under the supervision of Dr Christopher Keyes, Vanessa is now a PhD candidate at the HKBU working on interactive electroacoustic music. Vanessa's pieces and installations have been premiered and exhibited internationally at various events and festivals including the 13th International Conference on New Interfaces for Musical Expression (Seoul, Korea), Society of Composers (SCI) Region VI Conference (Texas, US), University of Central Missouri New Music Festival (Missouri, US), the soundSCAPE festival (Italy), 2013

International Workshop on Computer Music and Audio Technology (Taipei) and Hong Kong Arts Festival.

Vanissa was granted the Fulbright Research Award and was sponsored to do a 10-month research at Louisiana Digital Media Center in 2014–15. She returned to Hong Kong in July 2015 and is now the associate artistic director of Contemporary Musiking Hong Kong.

Exhaled Rhyme came out of the imagination about sitting in the centre of time; and being inside the brain of a psychosis patient, who feels arrogant and insignificance at the same time.





Andrea Mazzariello is a composer, performer, writer, and teacher. His music thinks through the capabilities of the performing body, in terms of both instrumental technique and the possibilities afforded by technological intervention, and pays special attention to the treatment and setting of his own original text, spoken and sung.

He's active as a solo performer of his own work for a novel and evolving instrumental setup, and has presented in such diverse venues as The Knitting Factory, Cakeshop, the Queens New Music Festival, and the Wassaic Festival. His concert music has been performed or read by the New Jersey Symphony, The Berkshire Symphony, So Percussion, Mobius Percussion, NOW Ensemble, and Newspeak, among many others. SEAMUS and New

Amsterdam Records have released recordings of his work.

In 2011, he completed his Ph.D. in Music Composition at Princeton University, writing on the vinyl resurgence and its connection to our ideas of physicality and abstraction in music analysis. He holds an M.M. from the University of Michigan and graduated magna cum laude from Williams College with degrees in music and English.

Andrea joined the faculty of the Princeton Writing Program in 2010, where he taught several first-year writing seminars, including "Music and Power" and "Found Sound," through spring 2015. As Adjunct Professor in the Production Program at Ramapo College of New Jersey's School of Contemporary Arts, he taught beginning and intermediate Electronic and Computer Music. He currently teaches composition, music technology, and music fundamentals as Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Carleton College. He also directs the composition program at the So Percussion Summer Institute. His first book, *One More Revolution*, is scheduled for release in winter 2017 by The Operating System.

Music for Strings and Interference mangles orchestra music, by amplifying ambient noise and other imperfections often found in concert hall performances and recordings. I originally made the track in 2000; actually it was a very frantic remake of another piece with a similar idea and character, for which I mistakenly deleted all of the sound files. This 2016 rework tames the dynamic range and widens the image, but hopefully not at the expense of raw, visceral impact.





Confronting the immediacy of life, the compositions of **John S. Nichols, III** have been described by listeners as “cosmic,” “seismic,” and “tectonic.” His works have been performed around the world (most recently in Switzerland, Germany, and New York City) and are internationally recognized with awards such as the Grand Luigi Russolo Prize, First Prize in the ASCAP/SEAMUS Student Composer Commission Competition, First Prize Absolute in the

International Composition Competition “Città di Udine,” First Prize in the WOCMAT International Phil Winsor Composers Awards, winner of the Conlon Music Prize for Disklavier Plus, winner of the Fourteenth Annual 21st Century Piano Commission Competition, as well as other recognitions from Prix Destellos, Métamorphoses, Exhibitronic, Open Circuit, and the Morton Gould ASCAP Young Composer Competition. His compositions are published by Musique & Recherches, SEAMUS, Monochrome Vision, Exhibitronic, and ABLAZE Records. More at johnnicholsiii.com

Sounds of DISSCO (2012) was composed using exclusively sounds developed in Digital Instrument for Sound Synthesis and Composition (DISSCO) in Professor Sever Tipei's class on DISSCO at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Approximately six hundred and seventy DISSCO sessions (most ranging from ten to twenty seconds) resulted in an array of experimental additive synthesis sounds. The composition groups the results together based on similarities in characteristics. "Sounds of DISSCO" demonstrates a trajectory based around transitions in timbre exhibiting a heterophonic nature.





Adam Vidiksis is a composer, conductor, percussionist, and technologist based in Philadelphia whose interests span from historically informed performance to the cutting edge of digital audio processing. Regarded for both electronic and acoustic composition, his music has been heard in concert halls and venues around the world. Critics have called his music “mesmerizing”, “dramatic”, “striking” (Philadelphia Weekly), “notable”, “catchy” (WQHS), “interesting”, and “special” (Percussive Notes), and have noted that Vidiksis provides “an electronically produced frame giving each sound such a deep-colored radiance you could miss the piece’s shape

for being caught up in each moment” (David Patrick Stearns of the Philadelphia Inquirer). Vidiksis has become known for exploring new timbral soundscapes in his electronic and acoustic works, often using the computer not only as a means of enhancing and manipulating the sounds he produces, but as a digital performer on equal footing with its human counterparts. His unique approach to composition has been praised for its “outstanding control” (Philadelphia Weekly) and for being “restrained” and “magical” (Local Arts Live). His music has been played by the “Black Sea Symphony” in Constanta, Romania, Omaha Symphony, Momenta Quartet, Nicholas Isherwood, and Zephyrus Duo. His commissions include Network for New Music, ICIA, the Luna and Renegade Theater Companies, the ElectroAcoustic Piano project, Federal Winds, and the Institute for Computer Music and Sound Technology in Zürich. He has a deep interest in science and technology, an enthusiasm that has profoundly influenced his work as a musician. Vidiksis’s work has won numerous awards, including recognition from SCI, ASCAP, Phindie, and Blow-Up Chicago International Arthouse Film Festival. His music is available through HoneyRock Publishing, SEAMUS, and PARMA Recordings. His music often explores sound, science, and the intersection of humankind with the machines we build. Vidiksis holds degrees from Drew University, New York University, and Temple

University, culminating in a doctoral degree in music composition. Vidiksis currently serves on the composition faculty of Temple University, where he teaches classes in composition and music technology. He serves on the faculty of the SPLICE summer festival, and performs in the SPLICE trio. He is conductor of the Temple Composers Orchestra and Ensemble N_JP, director of the Boyer Electroacoustic Ensemble Project (BEEP), and General Manager for the Association for the Promotion of New Music in NYC. [www.vidiksis.com]

I have worked for years with my friend and ensemble-mate, Naomi Sato, in Ensemble N_JP — and it is from this collaboration that I was inspired to write for her and the sho. The piece uses both traditional and extended techniques to create a varied and complex sound palette, one that is well-suited for the experienced and nuanced performance that Naomi brings to all new music. As an American composer of European descent, I was interested in finding a way to collaborate with my friend — a process that was easy from years of working together — but I was particularly careful to try to find a path that is respectful of the long and wonderful tradition of Gagaku music, while still being true to my own compositional voice. There is a practice of writing for this instrument in Western music, most notably in the music of John Cage and Helmut Lachenmann. The sound of the sho is both ancient and somehow quite new. Sounding almost electronic at times, it is little wonder that this instrument appeals in unique ways to a modern ear. Listening to both ancient traditional Gagaku and modern uses of the instrument by Western and Japanese composers is an experience I highly recommend to all lovers of music. I hope my deep respect for this instrument and its long performance practice is evident in my composition. In ***Stillness Refracted***, the sound of the sho is augmented and shaped through the use of live electronic processing. The computer serves to augment, frame, and magnify small phenomena in the sound of the sho that I find fascinating. The instrument is traditionally tuned in near-Pythagorean ratios, which means that beatings that occur due to slight mis-tunings in its intervals are minimal. And yet, it is these small fluctuations that I find so intriguing. The computer processing acts as a prism to refract and expose these various small sonic phenomena, hidden in the stillness of the sho's placid tones. I would like to thank Naomi for her friendship, and for being such a wonderful advocate for new music.

