

Curatorial > LINES OF SIGHT

With this section, RWM opens a line of programs devoted to exploring the complex map of sound art from different points of view organized in curatorial series.

LINES OF SIGHT is a bi-monthly program, which takes its name from the interconnected points of the global resonant space created by radio and other wireless technologies. From out of the extraordinary array of music that plays on this worldwide stage, we will follow threads as diverse as musical notation and non-linear composition, and introduce artists who explore the ideas around transmission as a medium for creative expression.

Curated by Barbara Held and Pilar Subirà.

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Barbara Held is a flutist, composer and sound artist, whose current focus is the rhythmic relationship between music and video image. She has commissioned and performed an idiosyncratic body of new repertoire for flute by both Spanish and American composers, and was the creator and producer of *Music at Metrónom*, a series of concerts of experimental music that gave special support to collaboration between musicians and visual artists. She believes in the responsibility of artist/curators to take a turn at presenting each other's work.

<http://www.barbaraheld.com/>
<http://barbaraheld.wordpress.com/>

Pilar Subirà is a percussionist, a sought-after performer of new music and frequent member of various orchestras and chamber ensembles. For the past 15 years she has been presenting a daily program in the classical music channel of Catalunya Ràdio.

Sound mastering by Ferran Conangla.

You can submit your questions, comments and links to:
linesofsight@gmail.com

LINES OF SIGHT #6

Collaborating with Strangers. Brenda Hutchinson

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field. I'll meet you there.
When the soul lies down in that grass,
the world is too full to talk about.
Ideas, language. Even the phrase each other
doesn't make any sense.

Rumi

To improve society, spend more time with people whom you haven't met.

M, writings '67-'72 by John Cage

The life work of Brenda Hutchinson (literally "life work", based on the cultivation and encouragement of openness in her own life and in those she works with) covers a range of action from abstract electronic music to year-long pieces such as her ongoing project, "dailybell2008", a commitment to the simple action of ringing bells at sunrise and sunset every day for a year and sharing the awareness of that moment with others.

In public collaborations such as the "The West 4th Street Quintet", Hutchinson records people that she encounters on the street, listening and witnessing; in more personal explorations and performances she works with family and loved ones working through grief and loss or fear. A recent turning point is "SoundTracks", a score/invention and collaboration with her friend, artist Ann Chamberlain, whose memory was seriously compromised due to end stage breast cancer. "SoundTracks" enabled Ann to draw by means of programmed sounds, intimate and personal elements of her daily life. Brenda has currently completed hospice and palliative care training to explore extending the potential benefits of the project to others. (The "SoundTracks" drawings were shown as part of "Possibility of Action, the Life of the Score", an exhibition exploring musical notation curated by Held-Subira and produced by MACBA June-October 2008).

For "Lines of Sight #6", Hutchinson converses with Barbara Held and with San Francisco composer/performer Jon Brumit, a core collaborator within Neighborhood Public Radio, about the thread of "collaborating with strangers" that runs through their work, and premieres a work in progress with The Cardew Choir directed by Tom Bickley.

More info:

Jon Brumit
<http://www.jonbrumit.com>
NPR
<http://www.neighborhoodpublicradio.org/>



[Brenda Hutchinson]

01. Biography

B.F.A., Carnegie-Mellon University; M.A., University of California, San Diego. Sound Artist and musician. Her works include performance and composition for dance, opera, film, video, radio, and multi-media interactive installations with extensive use of language, stories, and ambient and sampled sounds. Brenda also makes large-scale experiments in socially based improvisations with sound, stories and performance. She has spent many years singing into a 9 1/2 foot tube and has designed a gestural interface for the Long Tube and MAX/MSP.

Brenda has produced work for National Public Radio's Soundprint and is the recipient of: Gracie Allen Award from American Women in Radio and Television, Ucross Residency Award and Montalvo Artist Residency.

She has received commissions from the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, Meet the Composer/Reader's Digest, National Endowment for the Arts, and McKnight Foundation, among others. Brenda has been an artist in residence at San Quentin Prison, Headlands Center for the Arts, Harvestworks, The Exploratorium and Djerassi Resident Artists Program.

Recordings of her work are available through TELLUS, Deep Listening, the Aerial, O.O. DISCS, Frog Peak Music and Leonardo Music Magazine.

More info:

<http://www.sonicportraits.org/>

02. Playlist

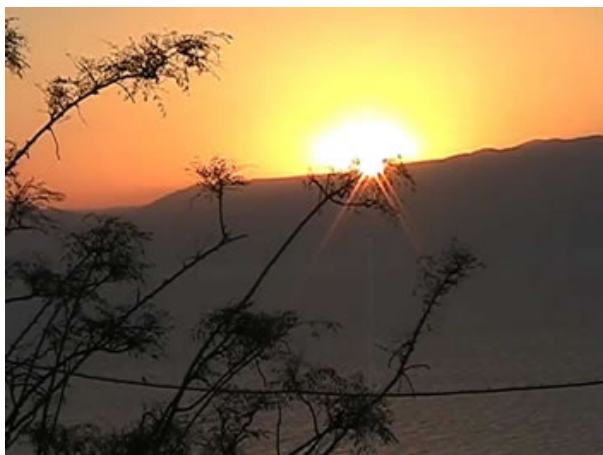
Total running time: 01h 09min 20sec

- 01 Brenda Hutchinson "dailybell 6-21, SolsticeMix", 2008. 4:24
- 02 Jon Brumit, "Pioneers walk"
- 03 Jon Brumit, "door-to-door"
- 04 Brenda Hutchinson "West 4th St. Quintet", from Apple Etudes, 1981. 5:52
- 05 Brenda Hutchinson "dailybell 9-11, sunrise", 2008. 1:43
- 06 Brenda Hutchinson "EEEYAH! ", 1989. 11:44
- 07 Jon Brumit, "evilbrad"
- 08 Jon Brumit, "prtynmr"
- 09 Jon Brumit, "drumface"
- 10 Brenda Hutchinson "dailybell 4-10PM", 2008
- 11 Brenda Hutchinson "dailybell 4-30, sunset, phone", 2008 0:13
- 12 Jon Brumit, "Turfquake"
- 13 Jon Brumit, "waterworld-van-boven"
- 14 Brenda Hutchinson "dailybell 8-17, sunrise", 2008. 2:27
- 15 Brenda Hutchinson "Star Strangled Banner", 2008. 3:18
- 16 Brenda Hutchinson "dailybell 11-6, sunrise", 2008. 1:16
- 17 Brenda Hutchinson "dailybell 9-19, sunset", 2008. 0:50
- 18 Brenda Hutchinson "Erasure", 2008. 3:59
- 19 Brenda Hutchinson "dailybell 8-27, sunset", 2008. 0:55
- 20 Brenda Hutchinson "dailybell, 11-9, 2008, sunset", The Cardew Choir directed by Tom Bickley, 2008. 3:00



[DB1-5AMSan Fran

http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2007_12_30_archive.html]



[DB3-5AMDeadSea2

<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/03/first-week-of-march.html>]



DB3-17AMMcDonald's

<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/03/third-week-of-march.html>



DB5-21AMSF Ferry

<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/05/end-of-ferry-saga.html>



DB6-1AMNYSubway

<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/06/first-week-of-june.html>

03.Program Notes

01, 05, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17, 19 and 20
"dailybell 2008", recorded by Brenda Hutchinson
 2008

INSPIRATION VARANASI, INDIA

In February of 2007, Norman and I went to India to hear the winter teachings of the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala. At the end of the teachings, it was early March and we descended from the mountains and went to the Ganges River in Varanasi. Every morning at dawn and every evening at sunset thousands of people gathered on the bank of the river. In the predawn darkness, slowly and very quietly, monks began to chant and softly ring small bells. Gradually the chanting got louder and more people joined in to chant or listen. Chanting voices and ringing bells greeted the sunrise every morning. Every morning.

In the evening, the farewell to the sun was much more elaborate. Again thousands of people lined the banks of the Ganges River: monks, pilgrims, tourists, and residents of Varanasi. This time the chanting was much louder and there were many, many bells. And fire. In some places the chanting was electronically amplified. Further along, there were no chanting voices, but small orchestras accompanied other choruses. People were talking and laughing and singing. And ringing hundreds of bells. The bells were mounted atop very tall poles with their ropes dangling to the ground. Anyone in the proximity of a bell pulled the string and rang the bell for as long as they could. This singing and ringing went on for at least an hour. And it happened every single night. And it had been going on for a very, very long time.

HOME

It was an amazing experience and I wondered what it would be like to greet the sun and bid it farewell everyday once we returned home. As a culture, it seems we reserve our bell ringing for special occasions like weddings, funerals, sacred ceremonies and commemorations. People are not used to ringing or hearing bells in their daily lives. Furthermore, our bell ringing is not often associated with the time of day as it once was.

I have a large clock in my house that chimes every 15 minutes. The chiming pattern for each quarter hour is distinctive so that I can tell what time it is by listening. Listening to time pass is a very different experience than looking at a clock. Punctuating intervals of time with sound accentuates the passing of time and the accumulation of memory and experience. When listening to the chiming of a clock in order to know the time, one must stop and wait and think. For a brief moment, one suspends what one is doing to become aware of something else. That something else is constant and ongoing. And timeless. Through that moment of awareness perhaps we can connect with the rest of the world. Or at least our immediate worlds.

JOYA NO KANE

Japanese New Year's Bell Ringing Ceremony. I attended The Asian Art Museum of San Francisco's version of this bell ringing ceremony today. The museum has a large Japanese Temple Bell in their collection that they bring out each year for this occasion. The public is invited to participate in a version of the Joya No Kane ceremony that traditionally takes place in a temple on the first day of the year beginning at midnight. The bell is rung 108 times.

The Joya No Kane ceremony provided the final inspiration and clarity. There were 1000 people present in the room. When the chairs were full, people sat on the floor. The bell was at one end of the room and it was framed by a large, open window. After the initial blessing, people were invited in groups of 6 to approach the bell, stand on either side of a long wooden pole and gently swing the pole into the bell. Watching and waiting and listening with so many people wove a delicate connection among those present. I would like to inspire and participate in an activity that extends that connection day by day.



DB7-1AMAccident

<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/07/beginning-of-july-up-and-down.html>

More info:

dailybell2008

<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com>

dailybell project, live streaming

During the last month of the dailybell2008 project, we have extended an invitation to 30 people from around the world to offer their own sun observations, which will be broadcast once a day on free103point9 online radio.

<http://www.free103point9.org/events/2036/>

04

"West 4th St. Quintet", from Apple Etudes

1981

One of the 12 studies that comprise Apple Etudes, West 4th Street Quintet was recorded in New York City one Spring evening in 1981. Apple Etudes was created from 2 years of recording of ambient environments and people living in New York. Most of the recordings were made of people living in and on the streets, and I used the act of recording as a way to both document and investigate my own experience with homelessness and the struggle to survive as an artist living in New York at that time.

My intention on this particular evening was to wait until dark and then go to an area of the city known as "Needle Park". As the name might suggest, it was an area of serious drug activity and not an especially safe place to be at night. However, I wanted to go there and talk to people and record our interaction. So I invited my friend Clive Smith to accompany me. As we waited for darkness to continue our journey, we sat by an abandoned park outside of Mac Donald's on 6th Avenue. Suddenly, an incredibly eerie sound drifted through the approaching darkness. It was the sound of wailing cats, and I tracked it down to 4 really drunk guys inside the fence. They were singing 1950's style harmony, and we ended up spending the evening singing and recording with them. By this time, I had been recording for "Apple Etudes" for over one year. A very clear picture of the number and extent of marginalized and disenfranchised people had emerged. It was heartbreaking, and I was angry and bitter. I was also very moved by the strength, resourcefulness and resilient spirit of many of the people struggling to survive in whatever ways they could. So I asked everyone I met to sing "America the Beautiful" because it was a song I loved and seemed to represent all that was unattainable and long, long forgotten for the people I was meeting.

15

"Star Strangled Banner", Brenda Hutchinson, Long Tube and voice

2000

This version of the National Anthem is sung in the key of the most disruption for the Long Tube and voice. It is a struggle to sing the Star Spangled Banner in this key. The distortion of the melody occurs at the vocal cords when the sound waves return from the bottom of the Long Tube to the top. They interfere with normal mode of vibration of the vocal cords and produce the unpredictable variations on the melody.

More info:

Link to performance of Star Strangled Banner at Lincoln Center

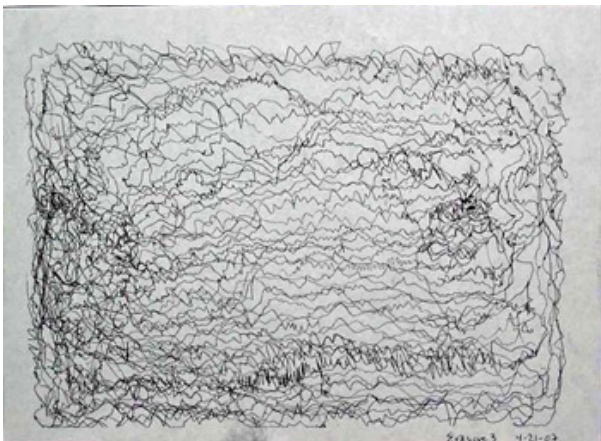
<http://www.funnyordie.com/videos/d2fb6d2d11/star-strangled-banner-from-brendah>

18

"Erasure" 4/21/07, drawing by Ann Chamberlain from Soundtracks

2007

These drawings are selected from a series of 42 drawings Ann Chamberlain and Brenda Hutchinson created between February 4, 2007 and February 7, 2008. When they first began to make the drawings, because of serious illness Ann's short-term memory was about 3 seconds long. Her intellect and powers of observation were as sharp as ever, and she was fully present and engaged in



[Ann Chamberlain and Brenda Hutchinson, *Erasure3*, 4/21/07]



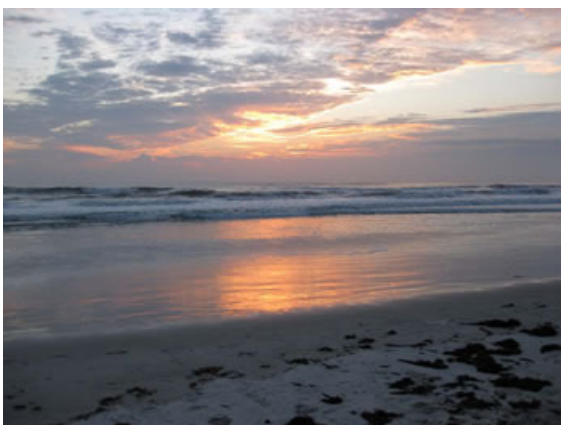
[Ann Chamberlain and Brenda Hutchinson, *Erasure 4*, 6/20/07]



[DB9-18AMBayBridge
<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/09/ferry-building.html>]



[DB9-25AMFlorida
<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/10/end-of-september.html>]



[DB9-27AMDaytona
<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/10/imperfect-sunrises-and-cable-tv.html>]

whatever was happening. However her ability to store and retrieve thoughts and information was contingent upon the length of time she could hold onto and articulate an idea. This condition made it very difficult for Ann to work, and as an artist it was important to her to continue to create new work.

Ann, a visual artist and Brenda, a sound artist have collaborated on several projects over the years. They are good friends. In response to Ann's desire to make work, Brenda created a system for drawing that requires no memory or planning. It works best when the person drawing is paying attention only to the present moment. Concentration is focused on the tip of the pen as it moves across the page, searching and initiating sound as it explores the surface and dimensions of the page through time. The continual feedback of the sound is a compelling and essential element for the creation of the drawings. However, once completed they can be appreciated as animated drawings with sound, drawings on paper, sound pieces and evidence of an abiding friendship.

More info:

A really nice little film about Ann Chamberlain from Public TV
<http://www.kqed.org/arts/programs/spark/profile.jsp?essid=4169>

20

"dailybell, November 9, 2008, sunset", The Cardew Choir directed by Tom Bickley

a work in progress

No two sunsets are alike. But there is often a point at which we notice that it is in progress. Clouds suddenly appear to turn an intense pink or the light momentarily strikes the side of a building at a particular angle, and it glows very briefly. The sunset may seem like a collection of moments of startling beauty and surprising changes. Yet, the movement of the earth is constant. It's only at the times of day when the sun rapidly approaches the horizon that we are able to so easily perceive the turning of the earth. Even so, our experience is less a gradual slide into darkness than a series of discrete changes we notice in the way our everyday world is transformed by the simple relationship of a moving earth and a stationary sun.

I invited each person in the choir to observe a sunset, and to write about it. Each person's part comes from this text, and the tessitura of each person's speaking voice determines the starting point for his or her vocalization. The form and timing of the piece are largely determined by the collective progression of the individual members of the choir performing their personal texts as a single entity. As the voices gradually transform from normal everyday speech through intoning to singing, the thresholds between these various modes of articulation are both blurred and accentuated. And while the rates of change between individual parts vary according to the uniqueness of each person's voice and text, everyone is merging slowly and inevitably together towards the eventual dissolution of distinction.

More info:

The Cardew Choir
<http://www.metatronpress.com/artists/cardewchoir/>



[DB1-17PMStarbucks
<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/01/sunset-11708.html>]



[DB3-16PMTelAviv
<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/03/first-week-of-march.html>]



[DB3-21PMSanFran
<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/03/third-week-of-march.html>]

04. Additional links

Following is a collection of links to people and projects that embrace and celebrate everyday life through direct engagement with the public. This work requires the active participation of other people to complete it.

PEOPLE/PROJECTS:

Jon Brumit- NPR and other projects
<http://www.ionbrumit.com/>

Miranda July and Harrell Fletcher- Learning To Love You More
<http://www.learningtoloveyoumore.com/>

free103point9
<http://www.free103point9.org/>

<http://www.trannyroadshow.org/>

Where the Hell is Matt?- Matt Harding dancing around the world
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlKdbWwruY>

Free Hugs Campaign- Juan Mann
<http://www.freehugscampaign.org/>

Balloon Hats- Addi Somekh and Charlie Eckert
<http://www.balloonhat.com/diggy/>

Sherri Wood and her Mantra Trailer
<http://mantratrailer.com/>

Vienna Vegetable Orchestra
<http://www.gemueseorchester.org/>

Judy Dunaway- S.W.I.R.L (Sex Workers' Internet Radio Lounge)
<http://www.jeweltone16.org/swirl/>

The Yes Men
<http://www.theyesmen.org/>

Julia Christensen- Big Box Reuse
<http://www.bigboxreuse.com/>

Guerilla Girls
<http://www.guerrillagirls.com/>

Linda Montano
<http://www.lindamontano.com/>

Merle Ukeles- Sanitation Workers
http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2002/09/touch_sanitatio.php

Kevin Clarke- The Red Couch
http://www.kevinclarke.com/red_couch1.html

A really nice little film about Ann Chamberlain from Public TV
<http://www.kqed.org/arts/programs/spark/profile.jsp?essid=4169>

Ann Hamilton
<http://www.annhamiltonstudio.com/>



[DB6-21PMChapel
<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/06/summer-solstice-am-and-pm.html>]



[DB8-5PMHiroshima1
<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/08/first-week-of-august-public.html>]



[DB8-20PMMarketST
<http://dailybell2008.blogspot.com/2008/08/hawking-bells.html>]

CHANCE ENCOUNTER, Lisa Bielawa and Susan Narucki: A 35-minute piece in, and about, transient public space with texts overheard in transient public space.
http://lisabielawa.typepad.com/chance_section

Improv Everywhere. Started by Charlie Todd in 2001
<http://improveverywhere.com>
<http://improveverywhere.com/2008/11/17/welcome-back/>
<http://improveverywhere.com/2008/01/31/frozen-grand-central>

Xavier Maristany – Bandaeria
<http://www.bandaeria.com/>
<http://www.xaviermaristany.com/bandaeria.htm>

Cuidadsonora - Barcelona
<http://www.ciudadsonora.net>
<http://buenosairessonora.blogspot.com/2008/07/intervenciones-sonoras-del-espacio.html>

Theremidi - Girona
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRuD53tiTEQ&feature=related>

BOOKS:

But Is It Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism, edited by Nina Felshim, Bay Press. Seattle, WA. © 1994.

Expanding Circles: Women, Art And Community, edited by Betty Ann Brown, Midmarch Arts Press. NY. © 1996.

Nickel and Dime, by Barbara Ehrenreich. Henry Holt and Co. NY © 2001.

The Yes Men: The True Story of the End of the World Trade Organization, by The Yes Men. Published by Disinformation Company, Ltd. ©2004

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