

The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

The Company of Ideas Forum

29 - 31 May 2023

Art and Music

'Music is sculpture in elastic space, sculpture is music in plastic space.'

Jeffrey Rubinoff

The arts have been compared for thousands of years. From Horace's notion of 'ut pictura poesis' and the paragone debates of the Renaissance, theorists and practitioners have long been fascinated by the similarities and differences between painting and sculpture, poetry and music. Some, such as Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, believed these disciplines were fundamentally different: the former being 'spatial' while the latter being 'temporal'. Others instead stressed their affinities: at the end of the nineteenth century, Walter Pater famously claimed that 'all art constantly aspires to the condition of music'.

Jeffrey Rubinoff was himself profoundly influenced by music. He aimed to give his sculpture 'rhythm', 'harmony', 'melody' and 'syncopation', and even nicknamed one series his 'Brandenburg Concertos'. In many respects he worked like a classical composer: creating motifs then developing and recapitulating them sequentially. Above all, he drew on the musical notion of counterpoint. Just as a composer combines multiple voices in one work, so he attempted to create a conversation of visual polyphonies, within and between sculptures, and with the spectacular landscape that surrounds them.

Over the last hundred years, old distinctions between the arts have become increasingly blurred. From Luigi Russolo and Marcel Duchamp onwards, a number of modern and postmodern artists experimented with sound and music. Contemporary practitioners now move freely between disciplines, artforms and media, combining visual, aural and textual dimensions. Many no longer even use categories such as painting, sculpture, poetry or music, but speak of 'sound art', 'audio art', 'sonic art' and 'transmedia' or 'multi-media' practices.

At this year's Forum, we'll explore the complex and fascinating relationship between visual art and music. Over two days, delegates will interrogate a cluster of related questions. These include but are not limited to:

- How have theorists compared art and music over the centuries?
- How have visual artists used the dimension of time?
- Did abstraction bring these artforms closer together?
- How have visual artists and musicians collaborated?
- How far have multi-media practices dissolved old cultural categories?
- How have digital technologies altered the relationship between these and other artforms?
- How have artists used sound to raise awareness about non-western cultural traditions, colonial histories and climate change?

Agenda

Monday 29 May	1:00 pm	Light lunch and introductions at the Sculpture Park
	2:00 pm	Workshops in the Sculpture Park
	4:00 pm	Check in at Sea Breeze Lodge
	6:00 pm	Welcome drinks at Sea Breeze Lodge (all speakers to submit presentation files to Karun)
	7:00 pm	Dinner at Sea Breeze Lodge
Tuesday 30 May	8:00 am	Breakfast at Sea Breeze Lodge
	8:30 am	Depart for the Sculpture Park
	9:00 am	Welcome by JRSP Board Chair, Betty Kennedy & JRSP Manager-Curator, Karun Koernig
	9:15 am	Introduction by Dr James Fox
	9:30 am	Dr Vanessa Brassey, King's College London <i>Time for Beauty</i>
	10:15 am	Samantha Chang, University of Toronto <i>Listening to Painting: Music Inside the Painter's Studio</i>

	11:00 am	Coffee Break
	11:30 am	Dr Michelle Liu, Monash University <i>Abstract Art & Music</i>
	12:15 pm	Seth Kim-Cohen, Art Institute of Chicago <i>We're Trying To Get A Light On Him Now</i>
	1:00 pm	Lunch
	2:00 pm	Student Presentations followed by questions
		Pascal Ricard (MA candidate, Department of Art History of Visual Studies, UVic) <i>Squeaking Chairs & Mechanical Clatter: The Puppets Forsaken, Sculpture Informed by Noise Music</i>
		Miranda Carroll (MA candidate, Department of Art History and Visual Studies, UVic) <i>Art as Instrument: Exploring Urban Sonic Spaces in Étienne Paquette's Instrument à Vent</i>
		Lewis Nicholson (MA candidate, Department of Art History and Visual Studies, UVic) <i>The Sound of Clay: The Curious Life of The Ocarina</i>
		Shaylin Allison (MA candidate, Department of Art History and Visual Studies, UVic) <i>Anishinaabe drumming and visual art: engagements and influences</i>
	3:30 pm	Optional tour of Sculpture Park/podcast recording
	7:00 pm	Dinner at Sea Breeze Lodge
Wednesday 31 May	8:00 am	Breakfast at Sea Breeze Lodge
	8:30 am	Depart for the Sculpture Park
	9:15 am	Prof. Paul Walde (University of Victoria) in conversation with James Fox <i>Notating Nature: Reflections on Scoring Techniques</i>
	10:00 am	Jess Conn-Potegal & Karun Koernig in conversation with Josh Fitzgerald <i>Sculpture in Elastic Space</i>
	10:45 am	Coffee Break

	11:15 am	Daniela O'Fee <i>Transmissions: Sonic Improvisations on the Sculptures of Jeffrey Rubinoff</i>
	12:15 pm	Vaughn Neville in conversation with James Fox <i>Making Paintings and Making Music</i>
	1:00 pm	Lunch
	2:00 pm	Student Presentations followed by questions
		Vithória Konzen Dill (MA candidate, Department of Art History and Visual Studies, UVic) <i>The S(ex) Tapes (2020): Conveying the Rawness and Vulnerability of Heartbreak Through Film and Music</i>
		McKaila Ferguson (MA candidate, Department of Art History and Visual Studies, UVic) <i>"Raynershine": Gordon Rayner, Abstract Expressionism, and The Artists' Jazz Band</i>
		Megan Austin, MA (Department of Art History and Visual Studies, UVic) <i>Finding Rhythm: Melodic Interventions of the Body in Naamsa Tsabar's Sculpture</i>
		Anna O'Meara (PhD candidate, Jeffrey Rubinoff Scholar in Art as a Source of Knowledge, Department of Art History and Visual Studies, UVic) <i>A Space Beyond Space: Arnold Schönberg, Isidore Isou & the Kabbalah</i>
	3:30 pm	Concluding Discussion
	4:00 pm	Optional additional tour of Sculpture Park/podcast recording
	7:00 pm	Dinner at Sea Breeze Lodge
Thursday June	8:00 am	Breakfast at Sea Breeze Lodge
	9:30 am	Departures begin

Further details can be found at: <http://www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org>
Please direct queries to the JRSP's Manager and Curator, Karun Koernig:
karun@rubinoffsculpturepark.org

Abstracts

Vanessa Brassey

Time for Beauty

We typically think that a sculpture's beauty (or other aesthetic qualities) depends solely on its existence in space: a curve here, a line there. In comparison, we say music's beauty depends on its existence in time namely, rhythm, melody, and cadence. How the score is played not how it looks scored onto a page is what counts. In slogan form, sculpture is spatial and music is temporal. Yet here's something puzzling. Sculptures can be nostalgic. Nostalgia points to the past. Hence, the aesthetic qualities of at least some sculptures are interestingly time based. Despite this, philosophical interest in the role of time in sculpture, architecture and pictures has been relatively overlooked in the philosophy of art. Even the basic question, 'in what sense can a painting be 'temporal' rather than 'spatial'?', seems to fall into an investigative vacuum. In what follows, we are going to unpack the sense in which paintings and sculptures are 'time-machines'. Do they have rhythm? Do they generate virtual time zones? Is past and future strange symmetrical in pictures? What light does this shed on the way memory works...and our emotions? Films clips may include drone footage of the Rubinoff Sculptures, clips from the National Gallery films, and can finish with a 'time-altering' 60-second guided visual meditation by expert Michelle Langer.

Samantha Chang

Listening to Painting: Music Inside the Painter's Studio

The notion that music is an art of the ear and painting an art of the eye has long been recognized in the writings of Plato and Aristotle. The assignment of individual senses to the arts contributed to the *paragone* debate of the sixteenth century. Leonardo's examination of the comparative merits of painting, music, and poetry, and the hierarchy of the senses in his posthumously assembled *Trattato della pittura* (Codex Vaticanus Urbinas Latinus 1270) champions painting and the sense of vision, whilst relegating music and the sense of hearing. If Leonardo was correct in his determination of the visual arts as the pre-eminent form, what accounts for the abundance of musical elements in paintings of the early modern period?

Ten to twelve percent of all seventeenth-century Dutch paintings include musical elements; for some artists, this figure can be as high as thirty percent (Kyrova, 1994). The myriad of depictions of instruments and musicians elicited earlier studies of music iconography and performance practice (Brown and Lascelle, 1972; Winternitz, 1979); however, in recent years, the trend has shifted towards a study of the conceptual analogies between painting and music, specifically those of intersensoriality, synaesthesia, performativity, temporality, and identity (McIver, 2002; Lingo, 2013; Shephard and Leonard, 2014; Coleman, 2015).

In "Listening to Painting: Music Inside the Painter's Studio," we will consider the possibility of viewing painting as a performed art, a concept that appears in various early modern texts. In Baldassarre Castiglione's discussion on music, musicians, like painters, have distinctive styles in the act of performance (Sohm, 2001). Paolo Pino describes the parallel between painters and musical performers in his *Dialogo della pittura* of 1548 and states that artistic inventions can only be manifested through performance (Barocchi, 1960). The story of Federico Barocci in Giovan Pietro Bellori's *Le vite de' pittori, scultori et architetti moderni* of

I 672 recounts the painter referring to his work as “painting music” (*sto accordando questa musica*) (Bellori, 2005). Drawing upon the works of Philippe Junod (2000), François Quiviger (2010), Simon Shaw-Miller (2013), Herman Roodenburg (2014), and David Howes and Constance Classen (2014), we will (re)examine the interrelationship between visual arts and music and explore the many roles of music in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century paintings.

Michelle Liu

Abstract Art & Music

Paintings that imitate music are a significant presence of modern art. Such paintings come in a spectrum, with paintings that are aimed at representing music on one end and paintings that draw inspiration from music’s special characteristics on the other. The influence of music on painting was arguably a major factor in the development of abstract art. But just how can a painting, often an abstract one, imitate music? In my talk, I will look at two important ways in which this is possible: structural resemblance and cross-modal correspondences. Along the way, I will discuss the work of Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee and others, as well as psychological research on the associations between colours and musical sounds. I end the talk with a short reflection on abstract art more generally.

Seth Kim-Cohen

We’re Trying To Get A Light On Him Now

When the Stooges performed at the 1970 Cincinnati Pop Festival, WLWT television’s evening news crew was there to film it for broadcast. As Iggy Pop descends into the audience the camera loses sight of him. The frame fills with a teeming mass of bodies, deprived of a focal point. Host Jack Lescoulie comes to the rescue, promising the TV audience that order will soon be restored, “We’re trying to get a light on him now.” Enlightenment aesthetics reaches a kind of apotheosis in postwar American culture: on supermarket shelves, on television, and in the celebration of Modernist painting in the influential art criticism of Clement Greenberg and his acolyte, Michael Fried. Fried’s epochal 1967 essay “Art and Objecthood” issues a set of demands that are surprisingly in synch with those of television, but at rather severe odds with the experience of rock and roll performance. Examining these opposing aesthetic programs reveals a great deal about the world views and ideologies which underpin them and about the world-in-the-making of the 1960s.

Paul Walde

Notating Nature: Reflections on Scoring Techniques

Though Paul originally trained as a painter, his artistic practice has been dominated by music and sound compositions for more than 20 years. He is perhaps best known for his interdisciplinary performance works staged in the natural environment, and documentation of these events is frequently used as the basis of his sound and video installations. In this conversation, with James Fox, he will reflect on the role played by scoring in his practice – instructional scores, graphic notation and standard music notation – and how visual information (or a translation of it) can be used as directions for performance. Paul will also delve into the origins of these techniques in twentieth-century music and intermedia practices such as Sound Art.

Daniela O’Fee

Transmissions: Sonic Improvisations on the Sculptures of Jeffrey Rubinoff

Daniela will share examples of her practice around nature scores, graphic sonification and soundwalking as experimental approaches between visual and sonic culture. Relating music

theory ideas of atonality and silence to visual concepts of abstraction and negative space will address intermedia possibilities for lateral modes of social dialogue. Presenting the process of using extended instrumental techniques to create her new audio work *Transmissions: Sonic Improvisations on the Sculptures of Jeffrey Rubinoff* will pose how the exercise of remote interpretation can shift the sensory experience across time and space.

Jess Conn-Potegal

Sculpture in Elastic Space

Musician and sound art creator Jess Conn-Potegal proposed to investigate how live, informal interpretation of Jeffrey Rubinoff's sculpture might directly and indirectly influence sounds, moods, tonal qualities, and structures in improvised music. Together with JRSP Curator Karun Koernig, they explored real time musical interaction and response to Rubinoff's work. The resulting project was planned as a first step in creating a unique soundtrack for the park that would 'evoke the experience of the sublime' and function as an initial experiment toward intuitively interpreting the park experience in aural form.

The methodology involved capturing live improvisations of musicians interacting with the sculptures, and then arranging and remixing the recordings in an in-situ temporary studio. A central idea was to explore the harmonics of the sculptures and their materials literally by using mallets and contact microphones to capture the sounds of 'playing' the forms. The artists also examined various creative decisions through a rubric influenced by the sculpture and park including elements like tempo, silence, singularity, relationality, materiality, monumentality, analogy, timbre, tension, pitch, repetition, and expectation. Through experimentation and improvisation, the artists aimed to convey the awe of the setting and the scale of Jeffrey's vision while respecting the complexity of the sculptures and the park experience overall.

The resulting experimental composition embraced a soundscape approach, using recordings of the sculptures and metal-based instruments to relate to the materials along with field recordings that reflect the natural environment. The abstract nature of the piece allowed for a perceptual exploration of the sculpture's qualities, resulting in an experimental proof-of-concept compositional flow that largely echoed the artists' initial experiences and intentions, and opening the door to further exploration.

Vaughn Neville

Making Paintings & Making Music

Vaughn Neville makes paintings as well as music. For him, the two artforms complement and inspire each other. He uses both to explore the limits and possibilities of creativity, expression and improvisation. This session will begin with the screening of a short video that consists of a time-lapse of Vaughn's unveiling of canvas after canvas in his outdoor studio on Hornby Island. The sequence is accompanied by a soundtrack of his own music, improvised together with a number of internationally renowned musicians. The following conversation, with James Fox, will explore the connections between art and music in Vaughn's work. Delegates are invited to look at Vaughan's work in the flesh, which will be on temporary display in the Barn.

Speaker Biographies

Dr Vanessa Brassey

King's College London

Dr Brassey is an academic philosopher (King's College London) and figurative painter. These are surprisingly sympathetic activities which allow her to investigate a number of unsolved puzzles using a wide variety of tools. Mostly, these puzzles are about emotions, pictures, and perception. Brassey completed her PhD in Philosophy at King's College London, and continues to lecture and teach graduate students. Her research focusses on the malleability and adeptness of our imaginative perspective-taking. This may involve spatial changes (imagine you are looking down on yourself) and temporal changes (imagine you are sat exactly where you are but 10 years in the future). She uses these gateway cases to get to grips with empathic shifts. Understanding these shifts, she argues, contributes to our understanding of art. Because these kinds of shifts enable us, as competent appreciators. In her picture making, she aims to capture the transient emotions that make up the quicksilver of our lives. She is also the British Society of Aesthetics Postdoctoral Fellow, 2022-2023, writing and making films about 'Time for Beauty'.

Samantha Chang

University of Toronto

Samantha Chang (she/her) is an art historian by day and a classical musician by night. She is the Faculty Liaison, Anti-Racist Pedagogies at the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation, University of Toronto and a Certified Advanced Flute, Piano, and Theory Specialist at the Royal Conservatory. Samantha is a PhD Candidate from the Department of Art History at the University of Toronto, where she holds a Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship (CGS) Doctoral Award, a Faculty of Arts & Science Top (FAST) Doctoral Fellowship, and a Mary H. Beatty Fellowship. A professional flutist and conductor, Samantha graduated from the Royal Academy of Music and is a fellow of the Trinity College London and the London College of Music. Samantha's research explores the conceptual relationships between visual arts and music in the early modern period, specifically those of artistic identity, temporality, synaesthesia, and performativity. Her current research project examines the representation of music in the painter's studio. In 2021, Samantha received the Course Instructor Teaching Excellence Award from the Teaching Assistants' Training Program, Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation, University of Toronto.

Dr Michelle Liu

Monash University

Michelle Liu completed her DPhil in philosophy in Oxford in 2019. She is currently a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the University of Hertfordshire and will be a lecturer at Monash University in Australia from July 2023. Michelle has published on various topics in philosophy, including on consciousness and pain in philosophy of mind, polysemy and language processing in philosophy of language, and abstract paintings and poetry in aesthetics.

Seth Kim-Cohen

Art Institute of Chicago

Seth Kim-Cohen is a writer, musician, and artist. He is author of *Rock and Roll vs, Modern Life* (forthcoming), *Against Ambience* (2016), *In the Blink of an Ear: Toward A Non-Cochlear Sonic Art* (2009), and *One Reason to Live* (2006). He has released more than a dozen albums of

experimental, rock-based music and toured extensively in North America, the U.K., and Europe. Seth is Professor of Art History, Theory, and Criticism at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Paul Walde

University of Victoria

Paul Walde is an award-winning artist, composer and curator who lives in Victoria, Canadian ləkʷəŋən territory. Originally trained as a painter, Walde's music and sound compositions have been a prominent feature in his artwork for over 20 years. He is best known for his interdisciplinary performance works staged in the natural environment, often involving music and choreography. The documentation of these events is frequently used as the basis of Walde's sound and video installations which have been the subject of exhibitions nationally and internationally. Current and recent exhibitions include: *Alaska Variations* at Indexical, Santa Cruz, CA (2022); *HYPER-POSSIBLE: The 3rd Coventry Biennial* at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry, UK (2021-2022); *Ecologies: Song for the Earth* at Musée des Beaux-arts de Montréal (2021); *Weeks Feel Like Days, Months Feel Like Years* at the Anchorage Museum, Alaska and One Mile Gallery, Kingston NY (2020); *Tom Thomson Centennial Swim* at Touchstones Museum in Nelson, BC (2020); and *Summer Winter Exhibition*, Royal Academy of Art, London (2020). Walde's work can be found in public and private collections in the Canada and the US including the Musée des Beaux-arts de Montréal, The Anchorage Museum, and Museum London. Walde is a graduate of the University of Western Ontario (BFA) and New York University (MA). In addition to current grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and the BC Arts Council, he is the winner of The Prescott Fund Award from the National Arts Club in New York City and the Kenny Doren Award from ED Video in Guelph. He is an Associate Professor of Visual Arts at the University of Victoria where he was also the recipient of the University's REACH Award for Creativity and Artistic Expression. Walde is also a founding member of Audio Lodge, a Canadian sound art collective and Experimental Music Unit a Victoria-based sound and music ensemble.

Daniela O'Fee

Seeking relevant approaches to democratic public art engagement motivates Daniela to retune her practice of music performance towards the amphitheater of the outdoors. Investigating the flux between acoustic and visual realms, she uses field recording, graphic scores, soundwalking, wood bending, deconstructed instruments, obsolete media and extended piano techniques to address resource extraction, settler colonialism, culture dynamics, ecology, immigration, and diversity. While maintaining her indoor performances at the piano with Chamber Musicians of Kamloops and the Kamloops Symphony Orchestra, Daniela has been spending more time in the field discovering shifted sounds, assessing atmospheric conditions, and resonating with the environment approaching the limitless, land-based immersion of alternative listening theories. Her intermedia work has been presented by Vancouver New Music, Kamloops Art Gallery, UBC CiTR Radio, Salmon Arm Art Centre, Republic Gallery, TRU Gallery, Jelly Fish Outdoor Film Festival in Minneapolis and internationally at the Walking Festival of Sound. During late-career visual art studies, her sculptural soundscape composition *Tuning in, Tuning out for Solo Listener* was selected into the Thompson Rivers University permanent art collection. Awarded BC Culture Days Ambassador in 2015, Daniela has since curated frequent Culture Days events in the form of free public soundscape experiences in Kamloops and has been nominated for the City of Kamloops Mayor's Performing Artist of the Year. She has received coaching in conducting through Tapestry Opera's Women in Musical Leadership program and has recently directed

a performance Paul Walde's *Alaska Variations*. Daniela holds a Bachelor of Music from the University of Victoria where she was the winner of the school's concerto competition.

Jess Conn-Potegal

Jess Conn-Potegal is a Montreal based musician, DJ, audio storyteller, and playlist curator. Since coming up in the early Pacific Northwest electronic music scene, Jess has focused on percussion, live improvisation, and intuitive collaboration to explore new sounds. As a drummer and sound art creator, Jess founded groundbreaking bands and experimental music collectives, performing across Canada including at The Vancouver International Jazz Festival and the Festival International de Musique Actuelle in Victoriaville among many others. As a music consultant and sonic branding strategist Jess works with companies around the world to design artful custom playlists that bring their spaces to life. Creative partnerships include renowned chefs, notorious Vegas hotels, iconic fashion houses, global hospitality and retail brands, and institutions like Jazz at Lincoln Centre and the AT&T Discovery District. Jess is interested in how music subjectively affects our experience of environments and vice versa. His work focuses on informal, instinct-driven processes, investigating how embodied interaction with spaces influences rhythm, tonal qualities, structure, and valence in improvised music. Recently Jess has moved towards collaboration at the nexus where emerging forms of visual art, music, and analog/digital media are cross pollinating; bringing the power of sound together with technology to create immersive, emotionally resonant experiences.

Vaughn Neville

Vaughn Neville is a renowned Canadian artist concerned with spontaneous expression in art as is manifested in his paintings, drawings, reliefs, sculpture and music, which all explore combinations of color, motion and sound. Vaughn was born in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1948, and has lived on Hornby Island, British Columbia since 1970. Vaughn's interest in painting began early on as an art student and later flourished under the mentorship of iconic Canadian abstract painter Jack Shadbolt. Vaughn's early abstractions of the natural landscape have in the last decade developed into complete abstraction, forging a determined and rigorous exploration of the possibilities of paint and canvas. From 1986 to 1995 Vaughn exhibited his work with the Bau-xi gallery in Vancouver and Toronto and has since shown his work independently in numerous solo and group exhibitions. Vaughn has been dedicated to his full-time painting practice for the past 40 years, and his work is in private and corporate collections throughout the world. He shares his life on Hornby Island with his wife Susan Cain, who is also an artist.