

CELESTE ORAM + ANDREW C. SMITH

October 28, 2016, 7:30pm at CCRMA, Stanford

HOW TO GET THERE FROM HERE

How To Get There From Here transforms the phrase “we remember not the word, but the sound of the word” in three ways, each in its own movement. The first is drawn from 1,600 segments of speech arranged first as a fixed media electronic composition and then transcribed into International Phonetic Alphabet symbols for human performance. The second is a transformation on the spelled words themselves (“we remember not the word, but the sound of the word”), moving from one word to the next by making simple edits: adding, removing, or editing letters. The final movement is a semantic interpolation from “memory” to “word,” moving first into more general terms—“representation,” “abstraction,” etc.—and again narrower terms ending on “word.” This final movement is constructed entirely of quotations from existing English texts.

—Andrew C. Smith

RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction, for solo speaking voice and electronics, is a poem and performance dealing with memory, writing, and the way that one affects the other. The electronics consist entirely of fragments of speech drawn from the live performance, rearranged to yield an absent text that is not spoken.

—Andrew C. Smith

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIPS: A RADIO SÉANCE

With improvisations by trans-Pacific violinists Keir GoGwilt (CA) & Alex Taylor (NZ). Starling poems written and recited by Keir GoGwilt.

Vera Wyse Munro (1897-1966) was a pioneering New Zealand ham radio broadcaster, improviser, and sonic experimenter. Her primary media were amateur radio broadcasts, Morse poetry, and sono-topographical scores. Via her broadcasts, which were frequently received by amateur radio operators as far afield as the United States and Europe, Munro initiated some of the earliest telematic performances, in which she would perform violin in improvisations with other musicians broadcasting from elsewhere in the world. Munro’s work was often necessarily clandestine, as a result of legislation and regulations curbing amateur radio activity in New Zealand. As a result of this, as well as the absence of extant documentation about her life and her ephemeral practice, Munro’s work is only now starting to be regarded amidst New Zealand’s cultural history.

Tonight’s event is not a re-construction of Vera Wyse Munro’s “works”, for not only does documentation upon which to base an “authentic” re-construction not exist, but Munro was not “a composer”; she did not “perform”, and she seldom had any guarantee that anyone out there was listening at all. Instead, we present a re-enactment of her broadcasts: which were not a performance but a practice, a pastime, a kind of personal devotion.

There will be two radios onstage playing over loudspeaker, receiving radio broadcasts of tonight’s re-enactment. If you have brought your own radio, you may use this to augment your listening. Please listen to your own radio via headphones, and feel free to explore the radio spectrum. The frequencies on which tonight’s re-enactment is being broadcast will be announced during the event.

—Celeste Oram