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CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS
NANCARROW AT 100: A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
IN ASSOCIATION WITH OTHER MINDS AND BAM/PFA
FRIDAY–SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2–4

The weekend features the Calder Quartet, sculptor/composer Trimpin, pianolist Rex Lawson and violinist Graeme Jennings, among others, in concerts, films, installations and panel discussions

BERKELEY, September 21, 2012—Other Minds, the UC Berkeley Art Museum, Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA) along with Cal Performances salute the visionary yet oft-overlooked American composer Conlon Nancarrow with a weekend of events titled *Nancarrow at 100: A Centennial Celebration*. Cal Performances presents three concerts in Hertz Hall that will display his diverse body of work, much of it composed while Nancarrow was an expatriate in Mexico. Best known for his pianola (a.k.a. player piano) studies, “Conlon’s music has such an outrageous, original character,” said John Cage. In addition to concerts, there will be a number of events taking place at BAM/PFA, including an art installation, film screenings, panel discussions and interviews. Some of these events are free and open to the public and will feature performances of selected works.

The first concert on **Saturday, November 3, at 2:00 p.m. in Hertz Hall** will feature musical instrument maker and composer **Trimpin**, performing various Nancarrow studies on a mechanical piano-playing device known as the *vorsetzer*. The Seattle-based Trimpin, who goes by a single name, was an apprentice of Nancarrow’s for many years. Pianola player **Rex Lawson** will also perform a Nancarrow work alongside those of **Percy Grainger** and **Sergei Rachmaninoff**. The concert will conclude with a performance of the pianola score to the French silent film *Un tour au large — Voyage to the Open Sea*, originally composed and directed by **Jean Grémillon** in 1926. Though the film was lost, the pianola score survived. Despite the seemingly automatic nature of the pianola, the human operator is responsible for controlling dynamics, articulation and pedaling and can be likened to an orchestra conductor.

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At **8:00 p.m.** also on **Saturday, November 3**, the **Calder Quartet**, consisting of **Benjamin Jacobson** and **Andrew Bulbrook**, violins, **Jonathan Moerschel**, viola and **Eric Byers**, cello, takes the Hertz Hall stage with a program consisting of two of Nancarrow's string quartets and a pianola study arranged by Paul Usher. Nancarrow's works will be interspersed with movements from **Thomas Adès's** *The Four Quarters*. After intermission, the quartet will perform Béla Bartók's String Quartet No. 5. The chamber ensemble is known for its eclectic programming that spans genres and centuries and has been "garnering notoriety as a group that can do anything from tackle the pillars of the string quartet repertoire...to perform with the indie band Airborne Toxic Event" (WQXR-FM).

The festival's closing concert on Sunday, **November 4** at **7:00 p.m.** features percussionist **Chris Froh** performing Nancarrow's *Piece for Tape*. **Rex Lawson** returns as pianist with violinist **Graeme Jennings** to perform *Toccata for piano and violin*. Lawson will also perform Igor Stravinsky's masterwork *Le sacre du printemps (The Rite of Spring)*. The **Bugallo-Williams Piano Duo**, consisting of **Helena Bugallo** and **Amy Williams**, closes the festivities with Nancarrow's *Sonatina for Piano, Nine Early Pieces* and several pianola studies transcribed for two pianos.

The festival's opening event on Friday, **November 2** at **5:30 p.m.** features BAM/PFA Chief Curator and Director of Programs and Collections **Lucinda Barnes** in conversation with Trimpin. This event is free and open to the public. There will also be two screenings at the Pacific Film Archive Theater: *Conlon Nancarrow: Virtuoso of the Player Piano* on **Friday, November 2** at **7:00 p.m.** and *Music for 1,000 Fingers: Conlon Nancarrow* on **Sunday, November 4** at **4:00 p.m.** The screenings will be bookended by short films and remarks by special guests. Lastly, there will be two free and open to the public panel discussions at Hertz Hall: *The Expanding Universe of Conlon Nancarrow* on **Saturday, November 3** at **11:00 a.m.** and *Eyeballs Out! How Performers Learned to "Play" Nancarrow* on **Sunday, November 4** at **12:00 p.m.** Guests at these discussions will include **Yoko Sugiura-Nancarrow**, widow of the composer, Other Minds Artistic Director **Charles Amikhanian**, music archivist **Felix Meyer**, music publisher **Peter Garland**, biographer **Kyle Gann**, as well as a number of musicians from the festival. These discussions will also feature performances of selected works by Nancarrow. BAM/PFA's exhibition **Trimpin: Nancarrow Percussion Orchestra / MATRIX 244**, will be

on view from November 2 through December 23. The exhibition, commissioned by Other Minds, introduces a new sculptural sound installation by Trimpin that incorporates percussive elements designed by Nancarrow. Further details can be found at bampfa.berkeley.edu.

Born on October 27, 1912, in Texarkana, Arkansas, **Conlon Nancarrow** left to fight against the fascists in the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s. Because of his membership in the Communist Party, he was harassed by the American government, prompting him to immigrate to Mexico where he focused on his highly sophisticated and viscerally exciting musical creations. He is best known for his series *Studies for the Player Piano*, an exploration of a musical instrument as a machine. The pianola's ability to perform notes with infinite speed and complexity allowed Nancarrow to experiment with writing music beyond the human ability to perform. Were it not for his discovery by famed Hungarian composer György Ligeti in the 1980s, Nancarrow and his works would surely have been lost in obscurity.

San Francisco-based Other Minds initiated the *Nancarrow at 100* project as part of its ongoing portrait concerts of American experimental composers. Previous festivals have been devoted to Henry Cowell, Dane Rudhyar, Ruth Crawford and Alan Hovhaness. Charles Amirkhanian, Executive & Artistic Director, and longtime champion of Conlon Nancarrow's music, conceived and programmed the event. Other Minds also produces an annual avant-garde music festival, curates a large archive of radio programs online (radiOM.org), produces a weekly radio program on KALW FM, and operates a CD label that has released the complete studies of Nancarrow.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for *Nancarrow at 100: A Centennial Celebration* concerts on **November 3** and **4** at **2:00 p.m.** and **7:00 p.m.**, respectively, in **Hertz Hall**, are **\$20.00**. Tickets for the concert with the **Calder Quartet** on **November 3** at **8:00 p.m.** are **\$30.00**. Ticket prices are subject to change. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5.00 discount (Special Events excluded). For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. For more

information about discounts, call (510) 642-9988 or go to
<http://calperformances.org/buy/discounts.php>.

Tickets for the screenings at the Pacific Film Archive Theater are available online at bampfa.berkeley.edu/tickets, by phone at (510) 642-5249, daily at the BAM/PFA admissions desk (11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.), and at the PFA Theater box office beginning one hour before each showtime. Tickets are \$9.50 general admission; \$6.50 for UC Berkeley faculty and staff, non-UC Berkeley students, seniors, youth, and disabled persons; and \$5.50 for BAM/PFA members and UC Berkeley students. A special price of \$7.50 is being offered to *Nancarrow at 100* concert ticket holders.

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Cal Performances thanks Wells Fargo and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for their major support of the Season.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

NANCARROW AT 100: A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Friday, November 2 at 5:00 p.m.

BAM/PFA
2626 Bancroft Way, Berkeley

Nancarrow at 100: A Centennial Celebration

Trimpin: *Nancarrow Percussion Orchestra*/ MATRIX 244

Exhibition Opening and Conversation with the Artist

Program: Commissioned by Other Minds in collaboration with BAM/PFA, Trimpin's *Nancarrow Percussion Orchestra*/MATRIX244 is a sculptural sound installation that pays tribute to the composer's rhythmically complex and intensely layered studies. The exhibition opening features a talk between the artist and curator Lucinda Barnes at 5:30 p.m.

Tickets: This event is free and open to the public.

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Friday, November 2 at 7:00 p.m.

Pacific Film Archive Theater
2575 Bancroft Way, Berkeley

Nancarrow at 100: A Centennial Celebration

Don't Shoot the Player Piano: The Music of Conlon Nancarrow

Film Screening

Program: The West Coast premiere of James R. Greeson's *Conlon Nancarrow: Virtuoso of the Player Piano* (2012) plus two experimental short films from 2008 by Alban Wesly, *Studies on Nancarrow, #2* and *Studies on Nancarrow, #18*. Director James R. Greeson, along with special guests Yoko Sugiura-Nancarrow, Mako Nancarrow, Trimpin and Charles Amirkhanian will comment.

Tickets: \$9.50 general admission; \$6.50 for UC Berkeley faculty and staff, non-UC Berkeley students, seniors, youth, and disabled persons; and \$5.50 for BAM/PFA members and UC Berkeley students. A special price of \$7.50 is being offered to *Nancarrow at 100* concert ticket holders.

Saturday, November 3 at 11:00 a.m.

Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at College Ave., Berkeley

Nancarrow at 100: A Centennial Celebration

Panel Discussion

Program: Moderated by Other Minds Artistic Director Charles Amikhanian and including Yoko Sugiura-Nancarrow, Felix Meye, Kyle Gann, Peter Garland and Trimpin; and will also feature performances of Nancarrow's Study Nos. 12 and 25

Tickets: This event is free and open to public

Saturday, November 3 at 2:00 p.m.

Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at College Ave., Berkeley

Nancarrow at 100: A Centennial Celebration

Trimpin, vorsetzer

Rex Lawson, pianola

Program:

Nancarrow/Study Nos. 5, 6, 11, 21, 26, 37; Study No. 41c for two pianos

Grainger/*Molly on the Shore*; *Shepherd's Hey*

Rachmaninoff/Prelude in E-flat, Op. 23 No. 6

Grémillon/Silent film score to *Un tour au large — Voyage on the Open Sea*

Tickets: \$20.00, subject to change, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door.

Saturday, November 3 at 8:00 p.m.

Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at College Ave., Berkeley

Nancarrow at 100: A Centennial Celebration

Calder Quartet

Benjamin Jacobson, violin

Andrew Bulbrook, violin

Jonathan Moerschel, viola

Eric Byers, cello

Program: Nancarrow/String Quartet Nos. 1 & 3

Nancarrow (arr. Paul Usher)/Study No. 33

Adès/*The Four Quarters*

Bartók/String Quartet No. 5

Tickets: \$30.00, subject to change, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door.

Sunday, November 4 at 12:00 p.m.

Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at College Ave., Berkeley

Nancarrow at 100: A Centennial Celebration

Panel Discussion: *Eyeballs Out! How Performers Learned to “Play” Nancarrow*

Program: A panel discussion moderated by Charles Amir Khanian with Southbank Centre Nancarrow Festival curator Dominic Murcoot, percussionist Chris Froh, pianist Helena Bugallo and Amy Williams, Nancarrow biographer Kyle Gann, violinist Graeme Jennings, and artist Trimpin; the event will include performances of Nancarrow’s *Piece for Tape* and Study No. 3a.

Tickets: This event is free and open to the public.

Sunday, November 4 at 4:00 p.m.

Pacific Film Archive Theater
2575 Bancroft Way, Berkeley

Nancarrow at 100: A Centennial Celebration

Don’t Shoot the Player Piano: The Music of Conlon Nancarrow

Film Screening

Program: Uli Aumüller and Hanne Kaisik’s *Music for 1,000 Fingers: Conlon Nancarrow* (1993) with two shorts, Alban Wesly’s *Studies on Nancarrow, #3C* (2008) and Tal Rosner and Sophie Clements’ *Nancarrow Player-Piano Study No. 7* (2007). Special guests Yoko Sugiura-Nancarrow, Mako Nancarrow, Trimpin, and Charles Amir Khanian will discuss the films.

Tickets: \$9.50 general admission; \$6.50 for UC Berkeley faculty and staff, non-UC Berkeley students, seniors, youth, and disabled persons; and \$5.50 for BAM/PFA members and UC Berkeley students. A special price of \$7.50 is being offered to *Nancarrow at 100* concert ticket holders.

Saturday, November 4 at 7:00 p.m.

Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at College Ave., Berkeley

Nancarrow at 100: A Centennial Celebration

Chris Froh, percussion

Rex Lawson, pianola

Graeme Jennings, violin

Bugallo-Williams Piano Duo

with **Helena Bugallo**, piano

Amy Williams, piano

Program:

Nancarrow/*Piece for Tape; Toccata for piano and violin; Nine Early Pieces*

Nancarrow (arr. Dominic Murcott)/*Piece for Tape*

Stravinsky/*Le sacre du printemps*

Nancarrow (arr. Amy Williams)/Study No. 3b

Nancarrow (arr. Eric Oña)/Study Nos. 4 & 18

Nancarrow (arr. Helena Bugallo)/Study Nos. 9, 44, and 20

Nancarrow (arr. Yvar Mikhashoff)/*Sonatina for Piano*; Study No. 15

Tickets: \$20.00, subject to change, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door.

– Cal Performances –