

(<http://newmusicbuff.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/om190046-5.jpg>)

OM 19, the final bow. Left to right: Charles Amirkhanian, Charles Celeste Hutchins, Joseph Byrd, Wendy Reid, Myra Melford, Roscoe Mitchell, John Schott, Mark Applebaum, John Bischoff, Don Buchla

This past Friday and Saturday the San Francisco Jazz Center hosted the 19th annual Other Minds Festival concerts. This is the first year not to feature an international roster. Instead the focus was on composers from northern California. (Strictly speaking these composers' creative years and present residence is northern California.) It was not a shift in policy but a focus on a less generally well known group of artists who have not enjoyed the exposure of east coast composers but have produced a formidable body of work that deserves at least a fair assessment. In fact these concerts presented a fascinating roster of composers from essentially three generations.

The first generation represented was one which came of age in the fabled 1960s and included electronic music pioneer Don Buchla, AACM founding member Roscoe Mitchell and proto-minimalist Joseph Byrd. The second was represented by Wendy Reid, Myra Melford and John Bischoff. And the youngest generation by Mark Applebaum and Charles Celeste Hutchins.

The program opened on Friday night with a sort of pantomime work by Stanford associate professor of music Mark Applebaum. The piece, called Aphasia (2010) consists of an electronic score to which the composer, seated in a chair, responds with a variety of carefully choreographed



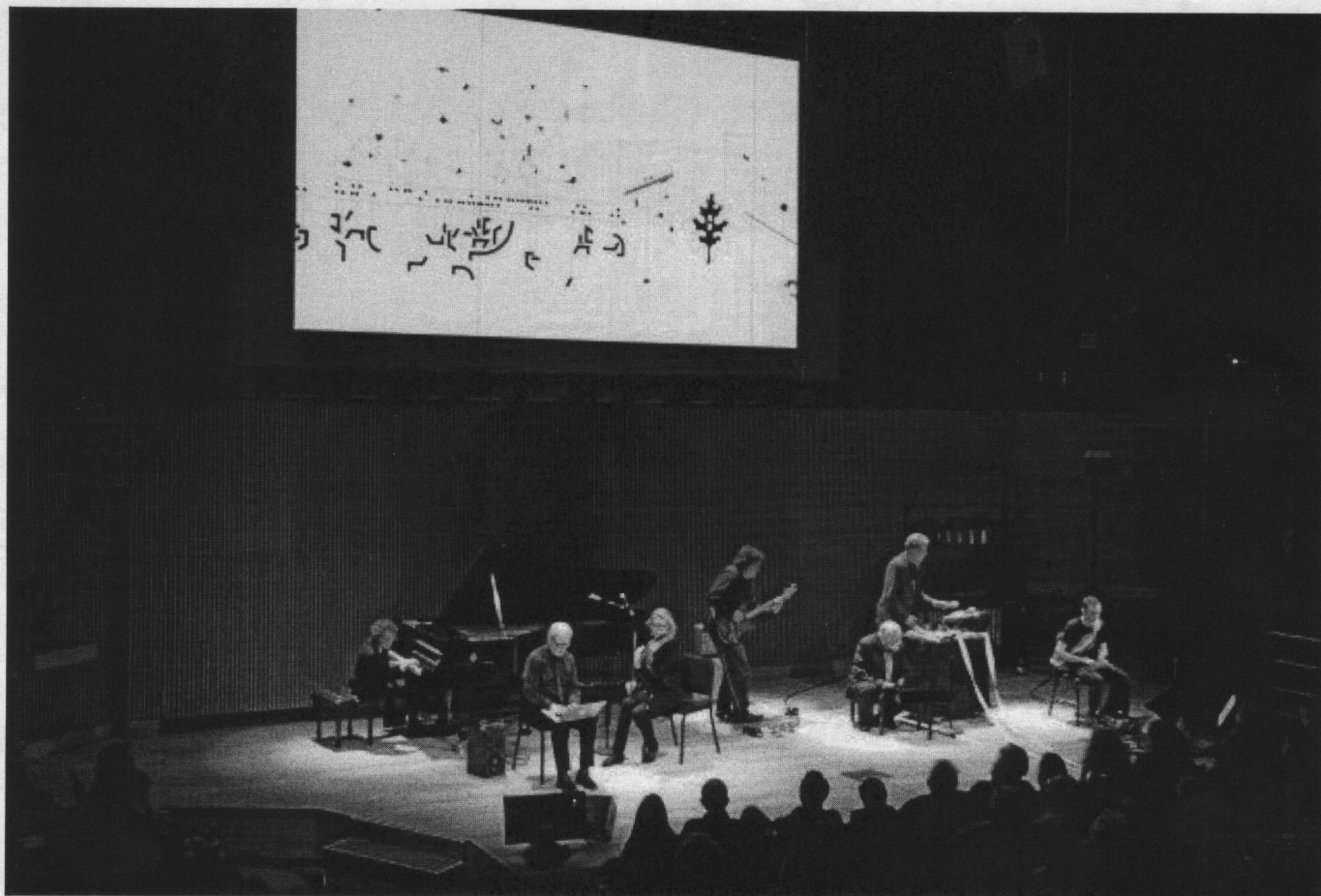


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Ribbons strewn across the stage, a part of the Other Minds Ensemble's interpretation of the Metaphysics of Notation

The piece was full of minimal musical gestures, humorous events like ribbons strewn across the stage and the popping of little party favors that emitted streamers. The ensemble appeared to have a great deal of fun with this essentially indeterminate score which they are instructed to interpret in their own individual ways. It was a rare opportunity to see and hear Mr. Amirkhanian (who is a percussionist by training) as well as an opportunity for the other composer/performers to demonstrate their skills and their apparent affinity for this type of musical performance. Again the audience was both amused and appreciative.

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<http://newmusicbuff.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/om190011.jpg>

Applebaum's *Metaphysics of Notation* (2008) performed by the Other Minds Ensemble. Left to right: Myra Melford, John Bischoff, Wendy Reid, John Schott, Joseph Byrd, Charles Amirkhanian and Charles Celeste Hutchins

Applebaum's graphic score *Metaphysics of Notation* (2008) was projected overhead while the ensemble played their interpretations of that score. The ensemble, dubbed the Other Minds Ensemble, consisted of most of the composers who participated in the festival including Mr. Amirkhanian displaying his facility with a percussion battery among other things. (Presumably Roscoe Mitchell, who was reportedly not feeling well, would have joined the ensemble as well.) Mr. Applebaum was conspicuously absent perhaps so as to not unduly influence the proceedings.





<http://newmusicbuff.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/om190040.jpg>

Tree Piece #55 "lulu variations" with Tom Dambly, trumpet, Wendy Reid, violin and electronics and Lulu Reid on vocals.

Reid's Tree Pieces are an ongoing set of compositions incorporating nature sounds with live performance. This is not unlike some of Pauline Oliveros' work in that it involves careful listening by the musicians who react within defined parameters to these sounds.

Lulu the parrot appeared nervous and did a lot of preening but did appear to respond at times. The musicians responded with spare notes on violin and muted trumpet. It was a whimsical experience which stood in stark contrast to the more declarative music of the previous trio but at least some of the audience, apparently prepared for such contrasts, was appreciative.