

For immediate release through April 9, 2016, Victoria & Vancouver, BC

A LaSaM Music production

Songs for Glass Island

a performance in glass

Camille Norment and
Experimental Music Unit

Art Gallery of Greater Victoria

Thursday, April 7, 2016 | 7 pm

Friday, April 8, 2016 | 1 pm

Admission: \$25 | \$20 members. www.aggv.ca

Contemporary Art Gallery Vancouver

Saturday April 9 | 7 pm

Admission: \$15. www.contemporaryartgallery.ca

MEDIA INQUIRIES: lasammusic@gmail.com



Artist/musician **Camille Norment** (Norway/USA), and Victoria, BC-based **Experimental Music Unit** (performer/composers **Tina Pearson**, **George Tzanetakis**, and **Paul Walde**) have created a new sound performance work that premieres at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria April 7 and 8, followed by a performance at the Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver April 9.

Songs For Glass Island is situated in the world of glass – its sounds, textures, and contexts – and informed by possibilities and quandaries exposed in Robert Smithson's unrealized land art work *Island of Broken Glass*.

Smithson (1938- 1973) proposed encrusting Miami Islet, a small pumice islet in the Salish Sea off Vancouver Island, in 100 tons of tinted glass. Although the Canadian Government granted permission for *Island of Broken Glass* to be completed in 1969, public pressure against the project forced the shelving of what would have been Smithson's first permanent large scale land art work.

Using glass as the primary sound source, the collaborators will perform a set of inter-related works that imagine the possible sounds, stories, textures, and ecologies of Smithson's fabled island. The juxtaposition of the practices of sound art and experimental music performance, in glass, will create a visually stunning and sonically captivating concert length program.



Photo: Norment's glass 'armonica' by OCA / Magne Risnes

Songs for Glass Island resides within realistic and fantasy scenarios provoked by ideas and concepts of the *Island of Broken Glass*. It includes considerations of glass as a visual and sonic material; glass in acoustic and marine ecology; used and waste glass; and metaphors associated with glass, such as glass ceilings, broken barriers, reflection, transparency and invisibility.

One of the sound sources for the work is Camille Norment's glass 'armonica, a crystal instrument invented in 1762 by Benjamin Franklin as a mechanical version of its ancestor, the glass harp, a set of equal temperament tuned crystal glasses played with water-dipped fingers.



The Experimental Music Unit and Norment have made sounding instruments from discarded glass, and glass objects which were originally designed for shelter, drinking, decoration, scientific and mundane purposes: windows, tables, vessels, vases, glasses, scientific tubes, bottles and fixtures. These include a giant glass turntable, glass patten gongs and shard percussion objects.

The University of Victoria's Scientific Glass Blower (Sean Adams) has made glass flutes and tuned glass overtone tubes for the group. Tina Pearson's glass harp (crystal glasses, vases and bowls arrayed in just

intonation) has been expanded with tunings that enhance and interfere with the equal tempered tuning of Norment's glass 'armonica, giving the ensemble a rich array of tone colours with which to sound.



The creative process for the ensemble includes a process of coaxing hidden and unusual sounds from this collection of glass in response to the critical imagination space of an island made of broken glass. 'Songs' and musical movements reflecting the themes in structure and content weave through this compelling sound world.

Artistic Collaborators



Walde, Tzanetakis, Norment, Pearson. Photo by Hollis Roberts

Camille Norment is a multidisciplinary American artist living in Oslo. Norment often uses the notion of cultural psychoacoustics as both an aesthetic and conceptual framework. She defines this term as the examination of socio-cultural phenomena through sound and music, and the contexts in which they are produced. She applies this concept towards the creation of critical works that consciously interweave the formal and the contextual. Her work has been the subject of numerous international exhibitions including an exhibition and performance at the Museum of Modern Art, New York and a commissioned artwork and performance for the Museum of Contemporary Art,

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Oslo. In 2015 she represented Norway at the Venice Biennale. Norment performs and records with the Camille Norment Trio in which she plays the rare glass 'armonica. She brings an interest in the physical, visual, sonic and metaphorical aspects of working with glass, as well as a strong focus on collaboration and improvisation.

<http://www.norment.net/>

Experimental Music Unit (EMU) is **Tina Pearson** (flute, accordion, voice and glass); **George Tzanetakis** (clarinets and saxophones) and **Paul Walde** (bass guitar and percussion) with **Kirk McNally** (electronics and production). Its debut took place in 2013 with *Music for Mycologists*.

Tina Pearson is a composer, performer, and facilitator. Her work often resides in eco-mimicry, altered tunings and spectral-temporal investigations, and usually incorporates breath, attention states and/or stretched modes of performance practice. As a member of the Avatar Orchestra Metaverse, Pearson also investigates notions of identity and telepathy in globally networked virtual reality platforms. Recent presentations of her work include *PwRHm with Helicopter* (NetNewMusic Festival, Birmingham, UK; EMPAC, Troy, New York), *In This Far Now* (Newfoundland Sound Symposium), *Gentle Hands* (Cluster New Music Festival, Winnipeg), *Migration of Their Materials* (Innovations en Concert, Montreal, Western Front, Vancouver), and *This Is For You* (ohrehnhoch, Berlin). Pearson has played with various incarnations of glass harp since 1980. www.tinapearson.wordpress.com

George Tzanetakis studied classical saxophone performance in Athens, Greece and has played in classical, jazz, experimental, and folk settings. While pursuing his PhD in Computer Science at Princeton he continued his music studies and performance. He holds a Canada Research Chair (Tier II) in the computer analysis of audio and music and was awarded the 2011 Craigdarroch Award for Excellence in Artistic Expression. Tzanetakis has been a core member of the LaSaM experimental music ensemble since 2009 performing on kaval, saxophones, and clarinets. He also has participated and performed several times in the ritual yearly performance in wilderness "And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon" by R. Murray Schafer.

Paul Walde is an intermedia artist, composer, and curator. Walde's body of work suggests unexpected interconnections between landscape, identity, and technology. Recent exhibitions of his work include: *Sonorous Kingdom* at the Surrey Art Gallery (2014), *All Together Now* at the University of Toronto Art Centre (2014), and *Nature's Handmade* at Museum London (2015). In 2013, he completed *Requiem for a Glacier*, his renowned site-specific sound performance featuring a fifty-five-piece choir and orchestra live on the Farnham Glacier in the Purcell Mountains. *Requiem for a Glacier* was subsequently developed into a multichannel sound and video installation which has been the basis of solo exhibitions at L' Université Laval Art Gallery in Quebec City, QC; Art Gallery at Evergreen, Coquitlam, BC; Oxygen Art Centre in Nelson, BC, (2014) and The Langham Cultural Centre in Kaslo, BC (2013). Walde is a founding member of Audio Lodge, a Canadian sound art collective and has been a member of LaSaM Music since 2012. www.paulwalde.com

Since 2008, **LaSaM Music** has presented themed events that provide space for enhanced listening through projects that investigate relationships between the natural world, sound and music, and between notation, improvisation and attention states in music making. Its recent sold out production of Pearson's and Walde's *Music for Natural History* at the Royal BC Museum featured 18 performers sonically reimagining the flora and fauna in its Natural History Galleries. www.lasammusic.wordpress.com

Songs for Glass Island is presented by the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and the Contemporary Art Gallery (Vancouver) in partnership with LaSaM Music (Victoria) and generously supported by The Canada Council for the Arts / le Conseil des arts du Canada, the Office for Contemporary Art Norway through its program for International Support, and The University of Victoria's Distinguished Women Scholars Fund, Orion Fund in Fine Arts, and the Department of Visual Arts.



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