


NOVEMBER 23 7:30PM



PERFORMANCE

**Central Intelligence Agency**  
Wojtek Ziemilski

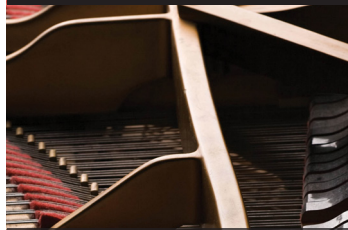
DECEMBER 5 7:30PM



SCREENING + A DOOR AJAR

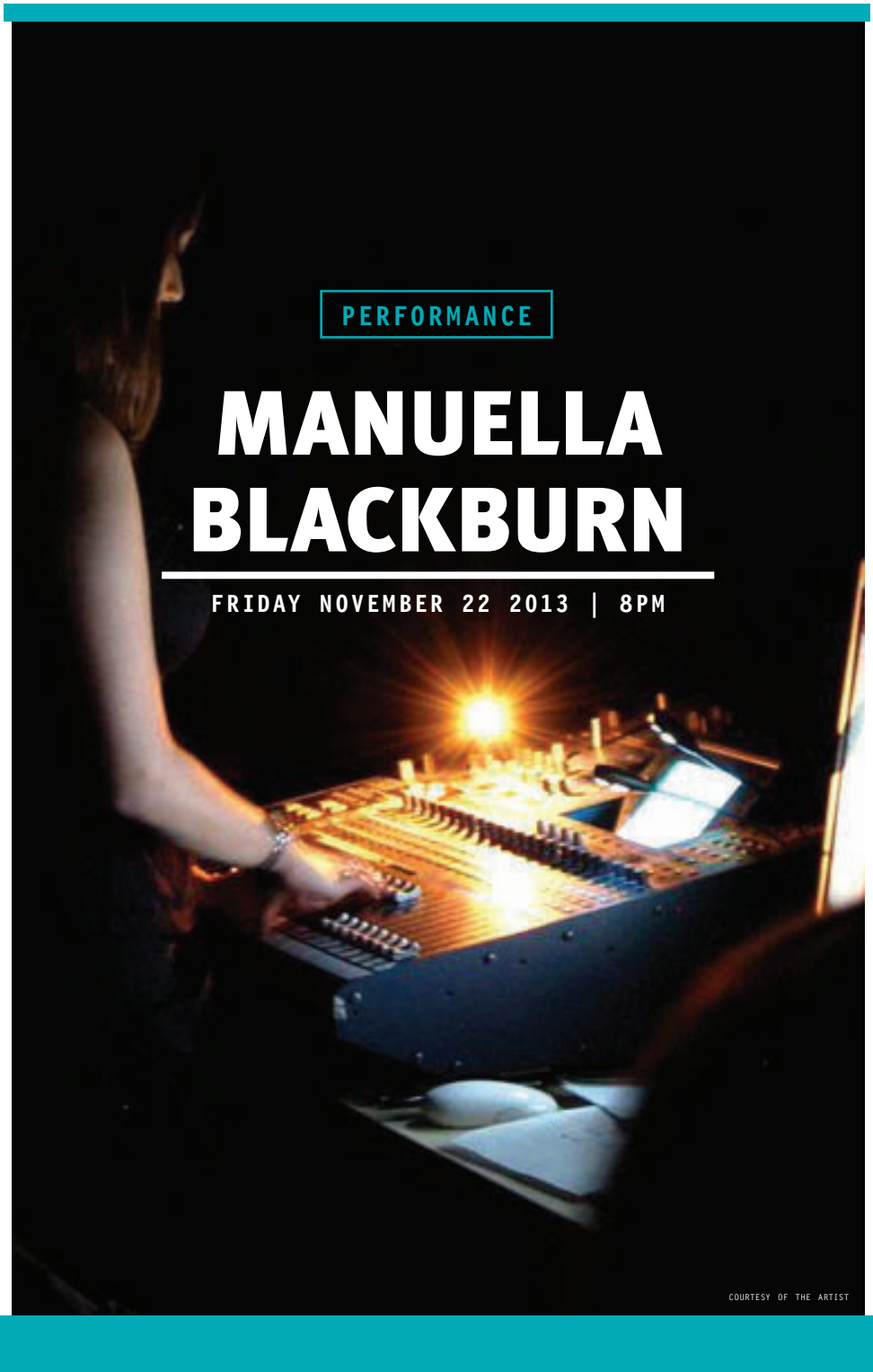
**Mulholland Drive**  
Directed by David Lynch

DECEMBER 6 7:30PM



PERFORMANCE

**Craig Taborn + Vicky Chow**



PERFORMANCE

# MANUELLA BLACKBURN

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 22 2013 | 8PM

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

PERFORMANCE

# MANUELLA BLACKBURN

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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 22 2013 | 8PM

*Vista Points*

*Karita oto*

*Time will tell*

**Interval**

*New Shruti\**

*Switched on*

*Origami (The Crane)*

*Javaari*

\*Dr. Rajeeb Chakraborty - Sarod

*VISTA POINTS (2009)*

All materials used in *Vista Points* are derived from electric guitar sounds. Often the electric guitar sounds are left raw and then layered with processed materials. When these sounds interact, there are points of causality, conflict, and turbulence. This work explores the effect of varying the distance between sonic events. When constructing the piece, contrasts between pressured and voluntary behaviors became a primary focus, with the aim of achieving moments of activity and emptiness. *Vista Points* was realized in 2009 at the Electroacoustic Music Studios of the University of Manchester (England, UK) and premiered on August 8, 2009 during the 4th Sound Art Workshop of the International Music Academy at the Orford Arts Centre (Orford, Québec). Thanks to Carlos Lopez for providing the electric guitar sounds. *Vista Points* was awarded First Prize at the 10th Concurso Internacional de Composição Electroacústica Música Viva 2009 (Lisbon, Portugal).

### KARITA OTO (2009)

All sound materials used in *Karita oto* were recorded on a field trip to Tokyo in November 2008. These sounds all have an instrumental origin, many of which are considered to be traditional and typical of Japanese heritage and culture. Among these there are sound recordings of ancient and rare instrument specimens contained within the Kunitachi College of Music Museum archive. *Karita oto* brings together concepts of cultural borrowing and compositional strategies developed from Denis Smalley's spectromorphology. Five characteristic paths, belonging to Smalley's theoretical writing, inform the use of space in this piece. In particular the words—approach, departure, crossing, rotation, and wondering—were useful in informing the trajectories, placement, and organization of materials, while the episodic form was inspired by the extremes Japan has to offer from the dense activity of the city, to the tranquility of the Zen meditation gardens that co-exist, side by side.

*Karita oto* was realized in 2009 at the Electroacoustic Music Studios of the University of Manchester (England, UK) and premiered on October 31, 2009 during the MANTIS Festival at the University of Manchester. Thanks to Takayuki Rai, Shintaro Imai, Kunitachi College of Music, and the Shindo family. *Karita oto* was pre-selected in the Destellos Competition (Mar del Plata, Argentina, 2010).

### TIME WILL TELL (2013)

Tiny, microscale ticks, tocks, clanks, bumps, and rings combine together in new shapes and forms. Miniature sounds from time keeping devices, old and new, were sourced and isolated for their brevity and barely-there quality. Reassembling regular clock rhythms from an abundance of single clock ticks and strikes was a fundamental composition methodology in this work, along with the simulation or illusion of internal clock mechanics churning, rotating, and sometimes malfunctioning. The idea of clocks being wound and reset features as a structural device. Clock gongs, bells, and chimes also provided pitch content and harmonic moments throughout the work. This composition builds upon the microstructures constructed in *Switched on* (2011), which deals with small on/off switches, and button and dial sounds for powering up electrical devices.

*Time will tell* was commissioned by the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC), Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY, and was composed in the Goodman Studio at EMPAC and Liverpool Hope University, UK.

Many thanks to Harry Vannucci from the Waterford Clock Co. (Waterford, New York) and Sir George White, keeper of the Clockmakers' Museum, (London, UK) for access to all the clocks in the collection.

### NEW SHRUTI (2013) FOR SAROD AND FIXED ELECTRONICS

In the same way that a shruti box or tampura provides the supporting drone for many Indian classical music performances, this composition seeks to create a complementary line for the sarod material within the piece. Derived from recordings of sarod, sitar, veena, violin, tanpura, swarmandal, and ghungroo ankle bells, *New Shruti* forms a montage from all these sounds while exploring the possibilities of sound transformations common to electroacoustic music. In places, *New Shruti* goes beyond just a drone function—it aims to instigate, provoke, and energize the performer through three main sections: (i) glitch and crackle; (ii) pitch curves; and (iii) minor slow section. Through creating this work I have discovered the beauty of both the timbres of Indian instrumental sounds, and also stylistic features commonly associated with the tradition and performance practice such as *gamakas* (pitch bends) and *tihai* rhythmic cadences. Interpreting and reworking these features into my own music language has brought me closer to a musical culture previously unknown and unfamiliar. This work composed in collaboration with Dr. Rajeeb Chakraborty is the second of a series of works exploring the transference and translation of cultural sound use to the medium of electroacoustic music, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). Many thanks to Rajeeb Chakraborty, HN Bhaskar, Gaurav Mazumdar, Aditi Sen, Shyla Shan, Rashmi Patel, and the whole Milapfest team (the UK's leading Indian Arts Charitable Trust).

### SWITCHED ON (2011)

This piece began by exploring the sounds of switches, dials, and buttons collected from my home and place of work. A particularly interesting sound was sourced from turning on an old TV, which ignited a series of high frequency pitches and crackling static flutters before eventually powering on. Lower transpositions of this sound revealed a usually inaudible collection of electronic-like frequencies that feature throughout the work. Together with this the switch sounds, being very short in duration, are clustered into intricate groupings, cascades, and explosive flourishes. In addition to these aspects, I was particularly drawn to the concepts of inanimate object powering up from moments of inactivity, and surging electricity running and humming through circuitry. *Switched on* was realized in 2011 at Liverpool Hope University (England, UK) and completed at the EMS (Stockholm, Sweden) and premiered on June 10, 2011 during the MANTIS Sonic Meta-Ontology 2 festival at the University of Manchester (England, UK). Thanks to Lynn Holland and David Lewis for their help and extensive switch hunting in the art department of Liverpool Hope University, and Andrew Hall for his valued sound contribution. *Switched on* was a finalist for the Gaudeamus Prize 2012.

## ORIGAMI – MOVEMENT II: THE CRANE (2008)

This miniature is taken from a larger work entitled *Origami*. This work makes use of a compositional tool developed from Denis Smalley's spectromorphological language, this time specifically focusing on different types of motions. Experimentation with this vocabulary informed the creation of directional, reciprocal, and cyclic motions that the origami structural shapes initially inspired. The other miniatures within this work are entitled *The Fortune Teller*, *The Leaf*, *The Goldfish*, and *The Dragonfly*. Origami is the art of economy—a few simple folds can suggest an animal or shape and with slight modifications an entirely different creation can appear. The Crane is a representation of good fortune. It is an agile bird with a fleeting presence and swift movements.

## JAVAARI (2013)

*Javaari* is the term given to the bridge of the sitar where the melodic and sympathetic strings run and create the sound. The bridge is made traditionally of deer horn and is made in a certain shape, width, and length, while the surface is flat with a slight semicircle bend. The term also refers to the unique buzzing tone produced by the sitar. This piece explores these fascinating timbres originating from this instrument and pays particular attention to the beautiful pitch bends that arch over and under like vocal melismas. The work is structured into four episodes, each exploring a different intensity of explicit cultural sound use—often the sitar material is in the fore and sometimes it recedes or pokes through intermittently. This acousmatic work is the first in a series of pieces composed in collaboration with Milapfest based at Liverpool Hope University. The yearlong project aims to examine the translation and transference of cultural sound to electroacoustic music and is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). *Javaari* was recipient of the ICMA 2013 European regional award.

Many thanks to Roopa Panesar (sitar), Kousic Sen (tabla), Raaheel Husain (sitar), Kiruthika Nadarajah (violin), Senthana Nadarajah (mridangam) Kaviraj Singh (santoor), Upneet Singh (tabla) and Rohan Kapadia (tabla).

## BIO

**Manuella Blackburn** received a bachelor's in music, a master's in electroacoustic composition, and a PhD from the University of Manchester. She currently is a lecturer in music technology at Liverpool Hope University. She has received many awards for her work, including first prize for *Vista Points* in the 10th Electroacoustic Composition Competition Música Viva 2009, Portugal, and the grand prize at the Digital Arts Awards, Japan, for *Kitchen Alchemy*.

Blackburn is a member of The Splice Girls, a live laptop improvisation duo who have been performing since 2006. Together, with Dr. Diana Simpson Salazar, the group utilizes tools built in Max/MSP to create messed up loops and shimmering soundscapes.

## STAFF

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