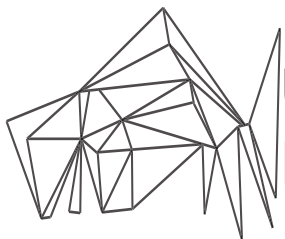


**they banded together
under the battle cry
of **ILLUSION!****

**March 5th, 2015 @7PM
Conrad Prebys Music Center
Concert Hall**

Ine Vanoeveren, flute

**Music by Brian Ferneyhough,
Fernanda Aoki Navarro &
James Bean.**



UC SAN DIEGO
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

they banded together under the battle cry of ILLUSION!

**DMA Recital Ine Vanoeveren, flute
Conrad Prebys Music Center, Concert Hall
March 5th, 2015, 7pm**

Superscriptio (1981) B. Ferneyhough
for piccolo solo

Cassandra's Dream Song (1970) B. Ferneyhough
for flute solo

ligament at distance (2015) - world premiere J. Bean
for flute solo

Sisyphus Redux (2011) B. Ferneyhough
for alto flute solo

brief intermission

Through (2015) - world premiere F. Aoki Navarro
for flute and bass flute

1. watching
2. about beauty

Mnemosyne (1986) B. Ferneyhough
for bass flute and pre-recorded tape
electronics: James Bean

PROGRAM NOTES: 'they banded together under the battle cry of ILLUSION!'

My doctoral research is focused on understanding and interpreting Brian Ferneyhough's music. As a performer, I want to explore the magic, the poetry, the inspirations and the myths. I try to translate his language and to use that as the source for my own interpretations. Interpretations that are not as literal as they were when the music was written or the pieces were created.

The research takes me through the fascinating path of Greek mythology, psychology, environmental psychology, complexity, poetry, literature, paintings and a lot of notes!

This concert is already the third step of the experience for me. The third step of four in understanding and recreating Brian Ferneyhough's music as the person I am today.

First step: practicing the music

These were the most intense, insane, and physically and mentally draining months of my career so far. A confrontation with myself: who I am as a musician and as a person?

I was confronted with my limits more than once! In fact, the very rare (and brief) moments of accomplishment were what dragged me through this process.

Deciphering the music; trying to master a bar a day; switching flutes and starting all over again with a different piece; questioning my abilities as a musician (and thinking more than once that I would fail); fighting against headaches, inflammations and emotional breakdowns... That can be the résumé of the last 6 months.

But then, after a certain time, there is that tipping point: being able to play through half of the piece; the joy of experiencing the music; not questioning my abilities as a musician (so much) anymore; headaches that disappear and a body that feels 10 year younger again instead of 10 years older. In a word: rewarding.

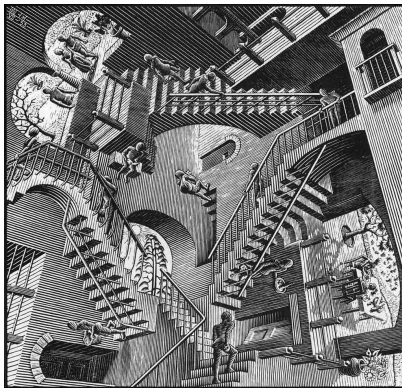
That feeling of accomplishment, of joy and of reward, is an emotion I had never felt to this extent with any other music. I can best describe it as suddenly seeing colors after only seeing black and white.

Second step: unraveling the layers

Reading about Brian Ferneyhough's music, and him as a composer, isn't a manual in how to interpret his music: at least not for me. I had to abstract myself from the theory and start reading about the content of the music. I wanted to discover what his music really means to me. I will not pretend that my view on his music is unique, mind-blowing or revolutionary, but this is what his music truly means to me and how it shapes me as a performer of his music.

Superscriptio

Just looking at the *Carceri d'Invenzione* by Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-1778) doesn't do justice to Ferneyhough's piccolo piece. You really need to *look*. What is a creepy, dark, medieval dungeon at first sight becomes an inspired, futuristic, optical maze of fantasy and visionary once you keep staring at it.



Relativity - M.C. Escher

It immediately reminded me of the optical illusions of M.C. Escher, the Dutch painter who lived from 1898 to 1972. He used mathematical structures and theories about infinity to create impossible constructions and perspectives. His lithograph 'Relativity' reminds me of Piranesi's dungeons.

I think of this painting while playing *Superscriptio*: its impossible perspectives on dynamics, relative relations between articulation, and its optical illusions that even out the previous examples. Nothing is what it seems in *Superscriptio*, but you are more than willing to believe it.

Cassandra's Dream Song

This research path was the most personal one for me. It led me to a never-ending discussion where there is no wrong or right, only maybe.

Reading about the pioneers who performed this piece (P.Y Artaud and H. Starreveld) led me to the discussion about gender qualities: a discussion

between 'male rationality' and 'female hysteria'; between 'male, controlled performers' and 'female, emotional performers'; between a 'male' (Apollo) first section and a 'female' (Cassandra) second section. But what determines 'male' and 'female'?

A first step in understanding this loaded connotation is looking at the original myth.



Cassandra seeking sanctuary in the temple of Athena

Cassandra, the daughter of King Priam of Troy, is given the gift of prophecy by the god Apollo, in exchange for her love to him (read: spending the night with him). At the last moment she refuses and Apollo is furious. A gift, offered by the gods, can't be undone, so he curses her. She will be able to see the future, but no one will ever believe her.

Cassandra is portrayed as a madwoman, tortured by frustration of speaking the truth, without ever being believed.

A literal interpretation of this myth, combined with all male performers of this music during the seventies and early eighties, could indeed lead to a stereotypical interpretation of the piece and even a stigmatization of the performer. By connecting gender specific qualities to the music, one might impose the same characteristics to the performer himself or herself.

But creating a gender-divided interpretation, based on a myth—where the outcome is controlled by a third, overriding power (the gods)—seems unfair to me, because no human being can ever overpower a god's decision. Cassandra will always be doomed to act like a mad woman, even when she would be strong and emancipated.

My interpretation is based on the concept of the '*Cassandra complex*'. This is a term used in the worlds of psychology, environmentalism and finance for visionary people who speak the truth, but who are not believed - because the truth is too much to handle.

Their predictions are constantly shifting, since the input of their research develops day by day. A good example are the environmental scientists who give warnings about climate change and its associated natural disasters. Often they are not believed; and when they are, their predictions have already changed, because new data is constantly being generated.

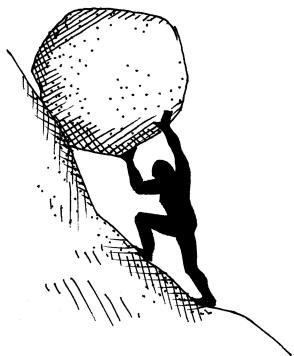
Sisyphus Redux

“One must imagine Sisyphus happy”

- Albert Camus

In Greek mythology Sisyphus was the king of Ephyra, now known as Corinth. He was afraid of dying and did everything to escape his certain fate.

Sisyphus put Death in chains, so no human would ever have to die anymore. But Death managed to escape and when Sisyphus' time had come to die, he devised a deceit in order to escape the underworld. The gods caught him and punished him for eternity (oh the irony!): Sisyphus was condemned to roll an enormous rock uphill only to see it fall downward again after reaching the top.



The myth of Sisyphus was an inspiration for the French philosopher Albert Camus in developing his theory of the *absurd*: “man's futile search for meaning, unity, and clarity in the face of an unintelligible world devoid of God and eternal truths or values”.

For Camus, Sisyphus is the absurd hero who lives life to the full, hates death, and is condemned to a meaningless task, a

metaphor for modern lives spent working at futile jobs in factories and offices.

"The workman of today works every day in his life at the same tasks, and this fate is no less absurd. But it is tragic only at the rare moments when it becomes conscious."

Camus is convinced that, when one becomes conscious of the meaninglessness of life, it doesn't lead to suicide or madness, but rather creates a strange state of contented acceptance.

Camus concludes that Sisyphus experiences a rewarding feeling every time he wanders back downhill to fulfill his task again. While looking at the overwhelming landscape, and with the knowledge and feeling of accomplishment, “one must imagine Sisyphus happy.”

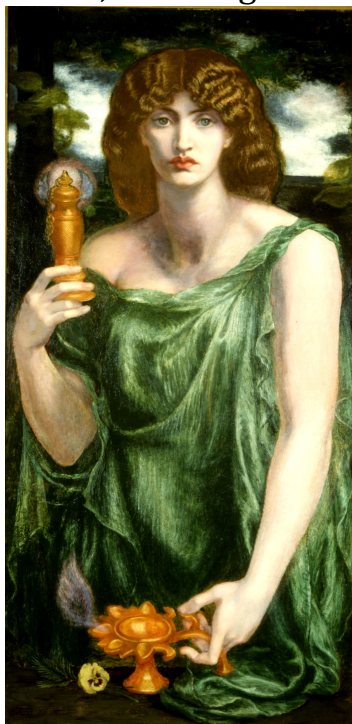
For me, *Sisyphus Redux*, means reviving personal accomplishments and trajectories. This music is so poetic and rewarding that I myself overlooking

the overwhelming landscape while walking down the hill. This piece evokes the same feelings for me as looking at 'The Scream' by Edvard Munch. The consciousness of nihilism can be both destructive and comforting.

Mnemosyne

Mnemosyne was the personification of memory in Greek mythology. She was a Titanide, or Titaness, a member of the second order of divine beings, descending from the primordial divinities and preceding the Olympian gods. She was the daughter of Uranus and Gaia, and the mother of the nine Muses, conceived by Zeus.

In some stories, kings and poets receive their powers of authoritative speech from their possession of Mnemosyne and their special relationship with the Muses, her daughters.



Zeus and Mnemosyne slept together for nine consecutive nights, giving birth to nine Muses.

In other myths, Mnemosyne also presided over a pool in Hades, related to the river Lethe. Dead souls drank from Lethe so they would not remember their past lives when reincarnated. Initiates were encouraged to drink from the river Mnemosyne when they died, instead of Lethe, so they would remember their previous actions.

Although Mnemosyne is one of the elder divinities, her role seems vague and undetermined - as if we have forgotten her role over time.

For me, this is representative for this piece: *Mnemosyne* is a reflection on the previous pieces of the *Carceri d'Invenzione* cycle, but vague and undetermined. The bass flute has an undetermined sound: it has a rich and yet a very hollow sound; it has vague articulations, undeclared dynamics and an overall smooth sound world. We receive impressions of the past, without ever being obvious or losing subtlety.

Third step: the concert

I am looking forward to my experiences during and after the concert. Will I suddenly explore new or different insights? Exactly how exhausting will it be? Will I lose myself (again) during the performances, or will I be able to control every part of the performance?

How will the audience perceive this free interpretation of a new cycle? Will the new pieces be part of the whole cycle, like I intend to, and will they put Ferneyhough's pieces in a new light?

Fourth step: reevaluation

After this concert, my research is not over of course. I will continue exploring this fantastic music.

Next step for me will be an essay on *Cassandra's Dream Song*, where I go further in detail about the gender issues connected to this myth and this piece. My next, integral Ferneyhough concert is scheduled for Spring 2016, where I will add *Unity Capsule* and *Carceri d'Invenzione* to this program.

While studying, practicing and performing Brian Ferneyhough's music, one aspect of his creativity stands out for me: his conceptual ideas are timeless, visionary and adaptable to every generation and era.

World creations by James Bean and Fernanda Aoki Navarro

Last year, when I decided to program this recital, I asked two marvelous composers and good friends to write a piece for me for *this* concert. The results are two very different, yet very personal pieces that reflect my journey as a performer.

Both James and Fernanda immediately crossed my mind when I started to think about this project.

I worked with James before and I knew how excited he was about this Ferneyhough project. In fact, it was he who encouraged me to begin this fascinating journey. James' music is multi-layered, challenging and carefully balanced, yet constantly flirting with the physical boundaries of the instrument and the mental capabilities of the performer.

Fernanda was one of the composers I absolutely wanted to work with during my stay at UCSD. Her musical style really is one of a kind. I knew that she would come up with a concept that completely changes the esthetic expectations of my instrument. Her music is vital, challenging, refreshing and innovative and pushes the performer's physical limits to unprecedented heights.

I am very grateful that these two wonderful people, who mean very much to me, offered their time and talents to write such personal music.

ligament at distance - James Bean

The musical materials of *ligament at distance* are taken directly from the neighboring two pieces on this program. Some of the materials can be heard on the surface of *Cassandra's Dream Song* or *Sisyphus Redux*, while some of the materials are excavated from structural levels of these pieces. The materials are removed from their original context, and squeezed into a too-tight space. Brian Ferneyhough's music on this program is dynamic, explosive, flickering -- it has almost always disappeared by the time you've started grasping for it. This piece stays in one place.

James Bean

Through - Fernanda Aoki Navarro

When Ine asked me to write a companion piece to most of Ferneyhough's flute music and gave me some sort of prompt (to "reflect" or "interpret" his music in some way), my first reaction was to ignore the prompt. I felt both honored and intimidated, excited and paralyzed, and felt the need to rebel in order to not compromise and to not be stuck. I decided that my prompt would be to reflect Ine's relationship with the flute, which opened an entire world of possibilities to deal with: virtuosity, corporeality, femininity, vanity, insecurity, bravery, guts...

I. watching

- During the dictatorship in Brazil, the newspapers would publish a cake recipe in the front page, as a replacement of a headline or image that was disapproved and vetoed by the government.

- Many artists encrypted their voices and sang about a lost love using a romantic, cheesy song as a metaphor to the freedom they have lost. They sang upbeat samba about the physical exhaustion of a dancer during Carnaval as a metaphor for the physical violence against those who were persecuted by the military.
- In 1983, the best-selling single in the US was a rock song about stalking. And perhaps love.
- In 1938, Sammy Fain and Irving Kahal composed the jazz standard that became an anthem for Americans serving overseas during World War II. When the night was new, a guard would look at the moon, but he would be seeing his significant other. He would also see his significant other in old familiar places, even if the significant other wasn't there.
- There is such a thing as a socialist anthem. Is there a capitalist anthem?

II. about beauty

The fact that music is not and could never be a language, combined with the (perhaps naive) desire of “communicating” and creating meaning through music, and with the (perhaps futile) necessity of creating semi-reliable, seductive, solitary and semi-rational structures of abstractions, led me to the attempt of composing a piece that could be a reconstructed version of a language that was never spoken, never read, never written, but only felt (do we “feel” language?.)

I resent language for being a perverse, flawed and insufficient tool to produce meaning; I resent music for being so incomplete and yet so self-sufficient. I wanted to rub them against each other, I wanted to crash them against each other, to break them in an almost infinite amount of pieces, then to recombine them in one single piece and see if they can find a way to be beauty (not beautiful!)

Fernanda Aoki Navarro

Special thanks to:

My parents and my partner Stijn, for their unconditional support from far and near.

My fantastic advisor John Fonville for his wisdom, advice and artistry: 1 word of him makes a world of difference.

My friends who are always willing to listen, both to my music as to my moaning and whining.

Jessica Flores, Antonio Estrada, Daniel Ross and their production team for a fantastic job, as always.

James Bean and Fernanda Aoki Navarro for writing me such amazing pieces.

Brian Ferneyhough for his wonderful music, encouraging coaching and inspiring residency at UCSD.

Rand Steiger and Steve Schick for including my recital in this fantastic week.