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Clarada, for B \flat Clarinet and Electronics

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Clarada, for B \flat Clarinet and Electronics

Part of the journal section “Essays, Studies, and Works”

Jeffrey Funderburk (composed and performed by), “Clarada, for B \flat Clarinet and Electronics”
Clarinet performed by Amanda McCandless

Clarada was composed between November 2012 and August 2013. It is one of a number of electro-acoustic works I have written to allow a performer not particularly familiar with the medium to explore. The composition is intended to appeal to an equally inexperienced audience.

To encourage engagement, I use some familiar elements and build from those. In *Clarada*, familiar elements include a quote from an easily recognized clarinet solo and also the sounds of cicadas that are then related to the sound of the clarinet tremolo.

Clarada is composed in a fairly traditional rounded form that can be represented as ABCA. The performer has a great deal of freedom in terms of what is played as well as how long to remain in a particular section. Many notated passages played by the clarinet signal a change of settings in the electronics which are manually triggered in response. Thus, the form serves as a road map to guide one on a leisurely journey rather than a rigidly fixed itinerary.

Various audio resources are combined to create the electronic component of *Clarada*. The cicada sounds were collected from several science related online sources of free audio samples. I edited and combined these to sound like a natural event. They are not arranged into a single audio file but rather remain as individual clips triggered independently so that the section can continue indefinitely without clear repetition patterns emerging.

Recorded samples of the clarinet were then processed to create audio clips. The resulting prepared elements have a clear relation to the live clarinet sound, thus increasing unity and integration within the composition.

Critically important in electro-acoustic music is amplification and processing of the live sound. This allows for true interaction of the performer with the electronic sounds.

Throughout *Clarada*, the clarinetist actively creates an audio environment that accompanies and interacts with her creative ideas.

The greatest challenge I faced was notation. I elected to use a combination of traditional notation as well as graphic notation to depict sounds. Working from an electronic rendition of the composition and with input from colleagues, I believe the resulting notation effectively communicates my concept of the work.

The live performance utilizes six separate audio feeds sent to speakers surrounding the audience. Two are located at the front, one on either side of the audience and two behind the audience. Effects as well as prerecorded clips are sent to different locations in the hall and also made to move about. This creates a sound environment that envelops the audience and allows sounds to travel throughout the soundscape. In the video of this performance, the audio does not accurately reflect the surround sound aspects as the recording was made by two stereo microphones in the hall.



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Clarada

(2013)
for Bb Clarinet and Electronics
for Dr. Amanda McCandless

Jeffrey Funderburk

dark hall, clarinet with microphone
begin tremolo quietly, electronics begin after second tremolo

timbre trill

timbre trill

...and improvised clarinet cicada sounds gradually move active and increased range as if awakening (ca. 2 minutes)

end with low tremolo and then higher one, (signal for electronic sound to completely disipate) ca. 5-10 seconds silence

wait ca. 15-20sec

wait ca. 5 sec.

wait ca. 15-20sec.

.....improvise repeats with same note and try notes a 4th or 5th distant
ca. 1-2 minutes

wait for delays to mostly fade and then play tremolo roughly one octave above original wait a bit then play lower

timbre trill

timbre trill

Wait until sound thins substantially....