

Dedalus Ensemble: Motor Tapes

Friday 21 November, 9:30pm
Bates Mill Blending Shed

Dedalus Ensemble:

Didier Aschour guitar / artistic direction

Amélie Berson flute

Cyprien Busolini viola

Eric Chalan double bass

Denis Chouillet piano

Stéphane Garin vibraphone / percussion

Deborah Walker cello

Thierry Madiot trombone

Pierre-Stéphane Meugé saxophone

Christian Pruvost trumpet

Silvia Tarozzi violin

Fabrice Villard clarinet

Benjamin Maumus sound

Sarah Hennies (US, 1979)

Motor Tapes (2023) 60' UK Premiere

Motor Tapes is composed of densely overlapping repetitions and rhythmic patterns that evoke neuroscientist Rodolfo Llinás's study of the human brain. In his book *I of the Vortex* he coined the term "motor tapes" to describe the neural embodiments that facilitate all mental activity, and in it posits that the brain contains innumerable "tapes" that run continuously within the mind. Llinás's characterisation of this phenomena is strikingly musical: "The activity in the basal ganglia is running all the time, playing motor patterns and snippets of motor patterns amongst and between themselves [...] they seem to act as a continuous, random, motor pattern noise generator." In my work of the same name, musicians represent synapses that fire independently and sometimes coordinating and coalescing into complex, interwoven activities.

The work is also inspired by involuntary musical imagery, more commonly known as earworms. Llinás describes human physical and mental activity as various "tape" coordinating both voluntary and involuntary events of which the earworm is one of the most common. In Oliver Sacks's *Musicophilia* he studied individuals who experience musical hallucinations, auditory illusions distinct from when one hears music playing in their head but rather, someone who experiences auditory hallucinations who hears the music as though it were physically in the room with them. Sacks noted that the music heard by patients was invariably songs from their childhood and thus my piece *Motor Tapes* is punctuated by transformed and warped melodies from my childhood.

I am interested in the motor tapes theory because it suggests that alongside lived experience there is a mysterious biological basis for our inclinations, talents and identities. © **Sarah Hennies**

Produced by hcmf// supported by hcmf// Benefactors Allan and Mo Tennant

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***Motor Tapes* is commissioned by Dedalus and GMEA – Centre National de Création Musicale d'Albi-Tarn**