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Sonorities of Site

Aphids, Architecture & New Music 1998–2010

EDITED BY
CYNTHIA TROUP



DESIGNED BY
PAUL DUCCO & JACOB THOMPSON

Sonorities of Site
Aphids, Architecture and New Music 1998–2010

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Left to itself, art would have to be something very simple—it would be sufficient for it to be beautiful. But when it's useful it should spill out of being just beautiful and move over to other aspects of life so that when we're not with the art it has nevertheless influenced our actions or our responses to the environment.

John Cage

ARTS
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Victoria
The Place To Be


Australian Government


Australia Council
The Arts

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cee
creative
environment
enterprises

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Aphids is artist led, project driven and not-for-profit. Founded in 1994 and based in Melbourne, Aphids creates collaborations across artforms and borders. Aphids has researched, developed and presented work across Australia, and in Asia, Europe, South Africa, Central America and the USA.



I am elated to be inviting you to contemplate and explore this enthralling publication. My first experience of Aphids was in the rarified environment of the Victorian Arts Centre, in 2007. I watched and listened as prodigious classical musicians ‘played’ the mystical prehistoric imagery etched into the remote slopes of Italy’s Camonica valley. Reeling in the foyer after *Val Camonica Pieces*, I felt distinctly that with the precise alchemy of place, space, research and artistic response, even the most elusive hidden worlds could be made palpable.

As any glance through the Aphids archive will show, the years 1998 to 2010 represent a period of prolific industry for the artists involved. For those years, *Sonorities of Site* highlights a proposition that continues in the way Aphids artists and collaborators approach their work. We seek to place our artworks in new sites and space, not from a desire to work outside ‘the traditional’, but through an intuitive grasp that architecture and landscape command our physiological relationship with culture. We are seeking to exhume, celebrate, destroy and illuminate that which binds us and how.

Sonorities of Site is important homage to the history of Aphids, and to the continued prescience of those works it celebrates through word and image. As Artistic Director of Aphids beginning in 2010, I take great inspiration from these earlier projects—indeed, the current program is a palimpsest informed by the devoutly exploratory ethos of Aphids’ heritage.

In the astute, multi-faceted perspectives contained in *Sonorities of Site* there is a beautiful confidence. There is also, implicitly, the terror and courage of working across artforms and borders; a reminder that art, as Rainer Maria Rilke says of the divine, ‘will not be lived like some light morning but must be prised loose in tunnels’.

Willoh S. Weiland
Melbourne March 2012

The generosity of Melanie and Michael Young has made it possible to create this book as a distinctive limited edition—and to feel energised by the enthusiasm of such loyal supporters. Melanie and Michael have been in the audience for Aphids projects since 1994. Working on *Sonorities of Site* has intensified my appreciation for all Aphids’ audiences over the past 17 years. This seems the right place to express gratitude for their curiosity; their faith, attentiveness and questioning; their openness to the next experience, which have been of ineffable, lasting value to the artists and their work.

Sonorities of Site had its recent origins in an application to Arts Victoria submitted in 2010, shortly before Willoh S. Weiland was announced as the new Artistic Director of Aphids. The initiative of Thea Baumann, Aphids’ Executive Producer, carried the application through to success. Thea was readily assisted by Rosemary Joy. Eleanor Chapman, Phip Murray and Ulanda Blair also contributed to the application. For ongoing practical assistance since that time, thanks are due to Thea and to Bek Berger, Mark Pritchard and Sally Goldner at the Aphids office.

As the Aphids archive has grown, members of the Committee of Management have devoted much discussion and care to ensuring that documentation of Aphids’ history is well organised and conserved. Louise Curham’s expertise in matters of cultural preservation has been of particular benefit to the archive’s development, setting the scene for the content of this publication. The unstinting, collegial support of Willoh S. Weiland and the current Committee of Management—President Eugene Schlusser, members Christy Dena, Greer Evans, Rosemary Joy and Vivien Allimonos—has, of course, been a vital condition for bringing *Sonorities of Site* into being.

In the early stages of research, Anna van Veldhuisen’s friendly and efficient assistance in the archives was much appreciated, as was Eugene Schlusser’s kind willingness to screen edited footage of *Ricefields* in his home. For pre-publicity on the Aphids website, Daisy Noyes unreservedly gave permission to use her photograph of the Aphids logo shown on a printing block. Special thanks to David Young who has played an indispensable role, answering queries and fact-checking at all hours, always with calm good humour.

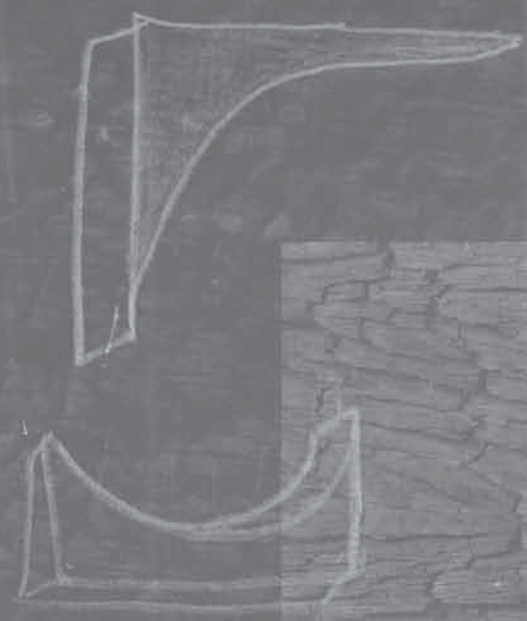
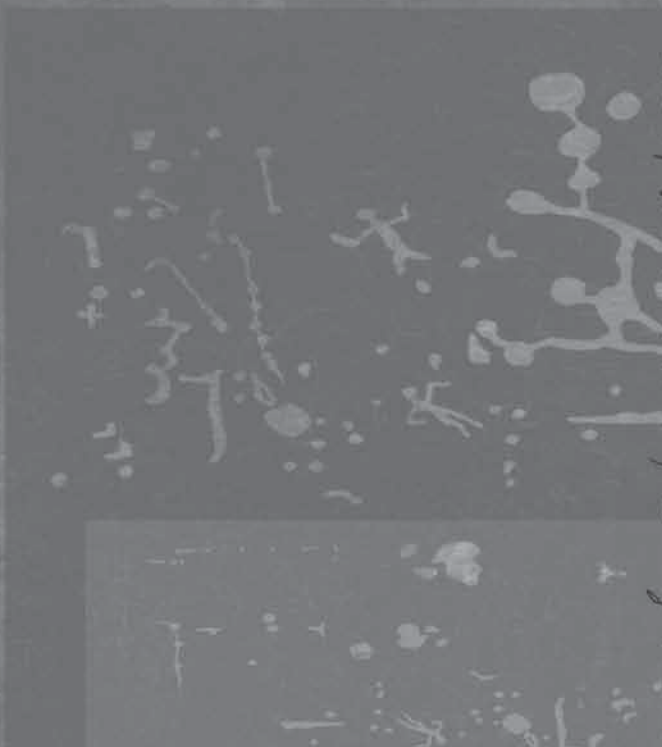
Each of the contributors was clearly delighted to respond to the premise of this volume. Warmest thanks to Anna Tweeddale and Bronwyn Stocks for their great patience, and the stimulus of their incisive contributions; to interviewees David Young, Deborah Kayser, Juliana Hodkinson, Matthias Schack-Arnott and Rosemary Joy for their passionate and conscientious engagement. Paul Ducco and Jacob Thompson have worked with meticulous attention to detail to develop a design that is truly splendid, rewarding scrutiny from every angle. I thank them for their commitment and talents, our collaboration has been exhilarating. At Bambra Press, Michael Nicholas has remained thoroughly approachable—thanks for his continual helpfulness.

Robyn Archer AO has been an inspirational patron of Aphids for many years. She very graciously agreed to launch *Sonorities of Site* well before the contents had begun to take shape. By promptly agreeing to host the launch, Melanie Katsalidis and colleagues at Pieces of Eight Gallery and Edition X also gave momentum to the project.

I could not be more grateful for Sudaya’s cheerful forbearance in the face of multiplying clusters of Aphids archival materials in our home; her editorial advice and suggestions; her skill and speed as proofreader. Her support I never need to question. To risk using an architectural image, Sudaya has been a brick.

Cynthia Troup

Cello continue a bit as violin stops, puts down instrument and walks across
get an eraser out of a bag. Returns to seat and rubs ^{out} something as
gets up and walk across the room to get a water bottle. Cello then puts
meat and takes off jumper, walking across the room to put it away.
The violin has put the metronome back on, to ♩ = 70.
Everyone is settled, violin beats in, leaving the metronome on...



voice and bass recorder: still, open tones with gentle, smooth glissandi
percussion: distant and indistinct free improvisation - sparse

voice and bass recorder: still, open tones with gentle, smooth glissandi

percussion: distant and indistinct free improvisation - sparse



Cynthia Troup

Introduction

A muffled rattle of footsteps, pulsing clocks and metronomes from the corridor, a cloying scent of rose oil. My friend Amanda and I are set on plinths, at one end of a corniced room. We are heavily clad in black dresses, Victorian mourning garb. We are thirsty, and stared down by two colonial portraits. These faces shudder in their gilt frames when the door to the room swings open, and we must prepare to perform: me from my lectern, she on her rusted typewriter. As an ensemble of voice and amanuensis we declaim on the disappearance of paradise from maps of the world.

I sway slightly, and swallow again. Two storeys below me, an audience of strangers sits motionless in a dry swimming pool. They encircle three accomplished musicians, who are in concert. Their thrumming is so fine, strange and faint—like the breathed echoes of unnameable vibrations. Perhaps the whistling and intermittent murmurs from an overgrown garden. Straining to hear past my own heartbeat, I am surveying the scene from amidst grey dust on a green-tiled balcony. I am waiting for a sign, so as to begin pacing the narrow gallery while broadcasting through a megaphone snatches from a lecture on the Roman history of public baths.

Matthias Schack-Arnott recalls ‘entering a dreamlike state’ shortly after entering the North Melbourne Town Hall in an audience for the project *Maps* Part 1 Melbourne (2000).¹ My own recollections of performing as part of *Maps*—and again, as part of the collaboration *Scale* (2004)—are also inextricable from somatic memories of a dreamlike state. A state of exhilarated alertness, and of being held inside an unrepeatable scene by a logic at once secure, exacting, and temporarily forgotten. Meanwhile, the felt sense of time’s necessity, and the necessity of movement, is poetically magnified through sound, the performance of sound, the performance of an unfamiliar, if not singular music.

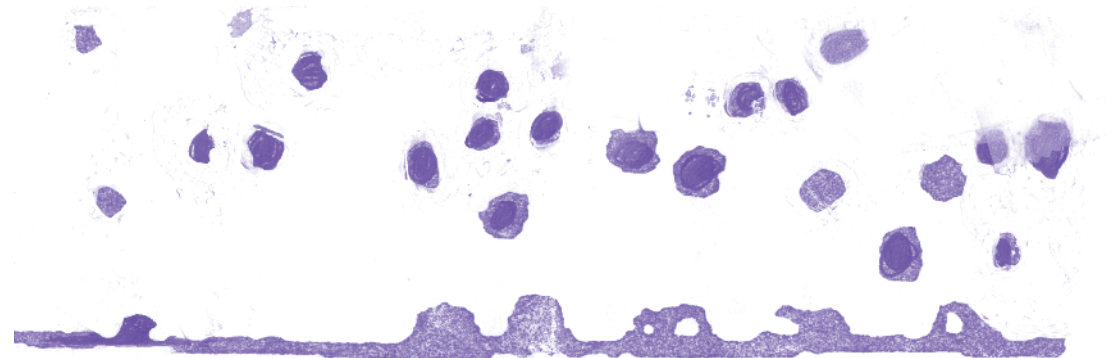
Both *Maps* and *Scale* involved a certain self-conscious ‘haunting’ of historic buildings. For *Maps* Part 1, Aphids politely annexed most of the North Melbourne Town Hall, which had been recently renovated to serve the arts community. The site for *Maps* Part 2 København (2002) was the sombre edifice of Copenhagen University’s Institute of Musicology, originally a Freemasons’ temple. *Scale* took place at Bains::Connective in Brussels, once an imposing bathhouse and swimming complex. No doubt, in both projects, a role as an audible ‘ghost’ has helped infuse my memories with an atmosphere of the uncanny. Yet the brief evocations above also suggest the dramatic momentum of these Aphids projects when offered to an audience—a resolute theatricality which was at the heart of the company’s earliest aspirations for presenting contemporary music.

Maps and *Scale* are two amongst myriad new music projects developed in the context of Aphids' practice to 2010. More precisely, as you have begun to discover (see the inside front cover, Notes on Site-Specificity), *Maps* and *Scale* are two amongst some 17 such projects that might be described as site-specific. In their attention to site, these works were variously created with reference to architectural maps, settings and details, and stories of place, perchance with scholarly, personal, or mythical emphases. This book considers the continuing sonority of a number of these projects. It explores their connections as highly original works resonant with artistic and intellectual interest beyond their historical moment. Like *Ricefields*, *Thousands of Bundled Straw*, and *Schallmaschine 06*, *Maps* and *Scale* feature in the following pages, not least in the second part of the volume, where each of these projects is represented as a floating catalogue of images—excerpted jottings and sketches from collaborative work in progress, score fragments, publicity photographs, souvenirs from performance. They are published here for the first time, and in stunning sequences that display their peculiar texture and detail. This documentation furnishes a glimpse of the density and visual appeal of hard copy materials archived at the Aphids office—located since 2007 in an upstairs room at Linden Centre for Contemporary Arts, St Kilda.² Architect Anna Tweeddale and designer Paul Ducco have made intrepid forays into this archive, intrepid because unprecedented. To her or his foray, each has brought a perceptiveness at once sharp, questioning and freely appreciative. Tweeddale's essay in Part I discerns a kaleidoscope of architectural thinking and practices in the history of Aphids' site-specific works. And like a kaleidoscope, Part II creates shifting patterns of reflections. Five edited interviews conjure and comment upon the featured projects, and many besides. They offer the personal perspectives of artists who have also been devoted witnesses to Aphids' activity during its first decade and beyond. The interviews are infused with archival imagery to render prismatic descriptions of collaborative processes, intentions, results. Composer Juliana Hodkinson, soprano Deborah Kayser, percussionist Matthias Schack-Arnott, artist Rosemary Joy, and composer and founding artistic director David Young are the five interviewees; without doubt, all remain highly motivated by the insights and pleasures of their experiences with Aphids.

Matthias Schack-Arnott's interview concludes with mention of his evolution as an artist. Every interview highlights Aphids' role as an incubator of artistic confidence. Nowadays this role is recognised and pursued through the Aphids Residences and Mentoring Scheme, which began in 2007, and in the following year involved Willoh S. Weiland and her 2008 Next Wave project *Yelling at Stars*. However, far beyond the reach and purpose of this Scheme, as a rubric for creative practice, and then as a flourishing organisation, 'Aphids' has come to denote a structure for growth—a structure capable, in turn, of illuminating that hazy, inward architecture of 'being an artist'.

To begin with, 'Aphids' was the name for an event staged one evening in May 1994. I was amongst nine musicians who performed solo and chamber works by David Young; each piece was presented in an interior or garden setting precisely curated by Young, fashion designer Kath Banger, and artist Sarah Pirrie. In handmade costumes and sculptures, in the sightlines and lighting, the curators foregrounded imagery of the home gardener. Their approach was playful, even whimsical. When the event was being planned, Young had telephoned soprano Deborah Kayser. He learnt that she had been in her garden, washing rosebushes in soapy water to rid them of aphids—those clustering insects so common to shrubs and ornamental plants. This, or so the tale is told, was the origin of the name. Equally an artistic and social occasion, *Aphids* took place in a private home in the inner Melbourne suburb of Northcote. Members of the audience had received personal invitations on handmade cards. Food and wine were served, and the evening had the spacious, genial atmosphere of an 'open house'.

When I remember *Aphids*, and other occasions from Aphids' early years, it seems clear that the curators sought to cultivate this hospitable atmosphere as a means to enhance the performance of new music. Therefore, notwithstanding the spirit of experimentation in which these events were conceived, the musicians' skill and rigor was always in evidence—an enduring characteristic of any Aphids project involving music performance.



It was in 1998 that 'Aphids' was used to designate a legal entity, a not-for-profit, incorporated association focused on cross-artform collaboration. Aphids on plants are not always easily visible; as a name for an organisation 'Aphids' is hardly obvious, nor self-explanatory. As such, it has bestowed extraordinary conceptual and practical freedoms, while bringing to mind—at least to the founding members and early supporters—the whimsy and geniality of that 1994 soiree. With the inaugural collaboration in mind, 'Aphids' also acknowledges the place of chance and spontaneity in art. In 1994, the fortuity of David Young's phonecall with Deborah Kayser had reinforced the curators' plan to work intensively with the frames, materials and tools that were to hand in that Northcote house and garden. 'Working with what is to hand' typifies the approach of the home gardener, and the bricoleur. Further, it carries affinities with the nest-building of ants, birds and other animals—territorial acts. In her essay for this publication, Anna Tweeddale invokes concepts of territory to uncover recurring themes in Aphids' new music projects. Specifically, she takes up philosopher Elizabeth Grosz's thinking on architecture, territorialisation and art in their relation to nature. Tweeddale thereby links many seemingly heterogeneous examples of Aphids' collaborative work, while underlining the currency of the name 'Aphids' for its connotations of ecosystem, and ecological awareness in arts practice.

In 1988, Aphids applied for funding to the New Media Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts, a board established in the same year 'on an equal footing with the other artform boards of that time' to support interdisciplinary or hybrid arts practice.³ The project funded through Aphids' application was *Ricefields* (1988): the first project for which Aphids formally received financial assistance; the first to be developed for a season of performances; the first Aphids project to tour nationally and internationally.

As Deborah Kayser recalls, *Ricefields* 'was billed as "an installation/performance"'.⁴ The term 'installation/performance' can be viewed as a typically awkward expression of the zeitgeist focused on innovation that precipitated the formation of the New Media Arts Board. But in her interview Kayser maintains the pertinence of the billing to the achievement of *Ricefields*. An early circular to the *Ricefields* performers outlined the vision for the project: 'the challenge of new notations; the need for transgressing one's artform; the tension between audience and performer; and of course the genre of what we're doing—is this theatre? A concert? A gallery opening? Something else?'.⁵ For Juliana Hodkinson, it was certainly 'something else'. Having attended a performance of *Ricefields* in France, she vividly remembers the encounter as 'uncategorisable'.⁶ And indeed, a long view of Aphids' new music projects indicates that a refusal to classify these endeavours has persisted as part of the collaborative ethic. This refusal was motivated by a desire to subvert expectations, and especially audience expectations concerning contemporary music.

In the 1990s it was my experience that these expectations tended to converge around notions of difficulty: contemporary music for instruments of the classical tradition was reputed to be a cerebral, obscure artform. Supposedly, intellectual and technical abstractions all but eclipsed its pleasures. For young composers like Juliana Hodkinson and David Young, and for at least a generation of classically trained musicians, new music needed new contexts in which to be heard—in which to be affirmed and enjoyed as a strand in the cultural conversation. In Young's words, 'For all the projects involving new music, Aphids was wielding every artistic means to try to create doors and windows, so to speak, into contemporary music. We wanted to foster a particular kind of attention to the music, making it a rich and integral part of the audience's experience of performance in a wider sense'.⁷

Amongst the projects rediscovered in these pages, *Thousands of Bundled Straw* is easily categorised as a song cycle composed by David Young during the period 1997–2005. Scored for mixed ensemble and soprano, it was first performed in its entirety by the Libra Ensemble in 2005—a concert co-presented by Aphids and Libra in association with the Melbourne International Arts Festival. A second performance took place in 2009, in the new Melbourne Recital Centre. To composer and author Gordon Kerry, *Thousands of Bundled Straw* is ‘allusive and beautiful’; Young’s music ‘sounds unlike much else’.⁸ The palette of instrumental hues in *Thousands of Bundled Straw* was influenced by the idea of *oku*, a poetics of sensory depth linked with Japanese and Chinese architecture. It manifests a refined indeterminacy which has characterised the sonic language of many Aphids projects. Speaking as artistic director of Aphids 1994–2010, Young discusses *Thousands of Bundled Straw* as a source for profoundly trusting relationships with musicians. In turn, these relationships provided significant stimulus for Aphids’ development as a vibrant forum for musical experimentation.

Ricefields, *Maps*, *Scale* and *Schallmaschine 06* were premised on experiments with notation and instrumentation; location and acoustic environment; placement of performers and audiences. Jeff Pressing’s elated review of *Maps* Part 1 Melbourne for *The Age* newspaper précised the work as ‘a spatial composition for town hall, with musical accompaniment’.⁹ After the cosmological conceits of *Maps*, with its patiently promenading audiences, it is possible to observe a preoccupation with more and more subtle sound worlds, and a corresponding interest in increasing the intimacy of performances. For Rosemary Joy, such intimacy is a natural consequence of her fascination with the process of ‘customising instruments for a particular musician, a particular place and a particular time’.¹⁰ So *Schallmaschine 06* (2006) involved a season of 42 performances over seven days. Each time, each of three percussionists played to an audience of three. Reviewing the project for *The Age*, Martin Ball conveyed the enlivening effects of this arrangement: in the tunnel below Federation Square he savoured as ‘the strangest sensation ... the faint smell of rosewood and orange oil’ from one of Joy’s instruments.¹¹ Subsequent projects, such as *System Building* (2009–10), have continued seeking to elicit an atmosphere of the personalised performance, implicitly saluting the origins of Aphids.

When David Young speaks of endeavouring to ‘create doors and windows, so to speak, into contemporary music’, his self-conscious use of architectural metaphor is telling. Anna Tweeddale examines ways in which architecture in different guises has served Aphids artists as a resource for the risk-taking intrinsic to collaboration across artforms. The visual texts and geometry of architectural plans, maps and photographs; the artists’ mutual experiences of exploring an unusual site, its built frames and textures, its inheritance of stories—in broadest terms these materials have served to produce and contextualise new sonorities, new music. They have represented fresh, practical means to invent structures, choose and respect constraints, liberate creativity both collective and individual. This book proposes that such means are always topical, as potentially inexhaustible sources of creative stimulus. Indeed, Tweeddale’s diagram has a basis in the same drawing that impelled the structure and content of *Ricefields* and *Thousands of Bundled Straw*. Edited and supplemented with colour and line, the map of the Grand Shrine of ancient Izumo in Japan now traces an architect’s response to the layering and intricacy of a selection of Aphids projects, 1994–2010.

A goal of this volume is to point out the abundance of the Aphids archive accrued over the past 17 years, and so provoke further research, unforeseen responses. At last count, in February 2012, the archive comprised over six linear metres of shelf space, six filing drawers, a database of digital images, as well as boxes of filmed footage, sets and props in storage. The dedicated shelves are packed solidly with lever arch folders containing every kind of working document and record. From the Preface to the Bibliography, all the elements of this book give an unexpected congruity to certain new music projects according to the theme of architecture: perforce *Sonorities of Site* shines a light over a fraction of the archive. Aphids’ proliferative ethos has also resulted in text-based works for theatre, exhibitions, mini festivals and concert series, community events and more. There are numerous other voices to be interpolated, other artistic preoccupations to be brought into view. The motif of the miniature, for instance; the notion of film as music; an attraction to the absurd, these hover close to the surface of the archive. But any indications presume. You are invited to take a tour. Investigate, form bold questions, construct your own rejoinder. The hope, above all, is to encourage originality—invoked by Iannis Xenakis, the great twentieth-century architect and composer, as ‘an absolute necessity for the survival of the human species’.¹²



Endnotes

¹ Matthias Schack-Arnott, interview with Cynthia Troup, Melbourne, 25 October 2011.

² The same office was also tenanted by *Aphids* for a year in 1999.

³ Andrew Donovan, Sarah Miller, Elaine Lally, *New Media Arts Scoping Study: Report to the Australia Council for the Arts*, September 2006 (Sydney: Australia Council for the Arts, 2006) p. 10.

⁴ Deborah Kayser, interview with Cynthia Troup, Melbourne, 17 October 2011.

⁵ David Young, 'Ricefields [...] some notes beforehand', unpublished document of 4 unnumbered pages circulated to the *Ricefields* artists, 1988.

⁶ Juliana Hodkinson, interview with Cynthia Troup, Berlin [via telephone], 18 October 2011.

⁷ David Young, interview with Cynthia Troup, Melbourne, 8 September 2011.

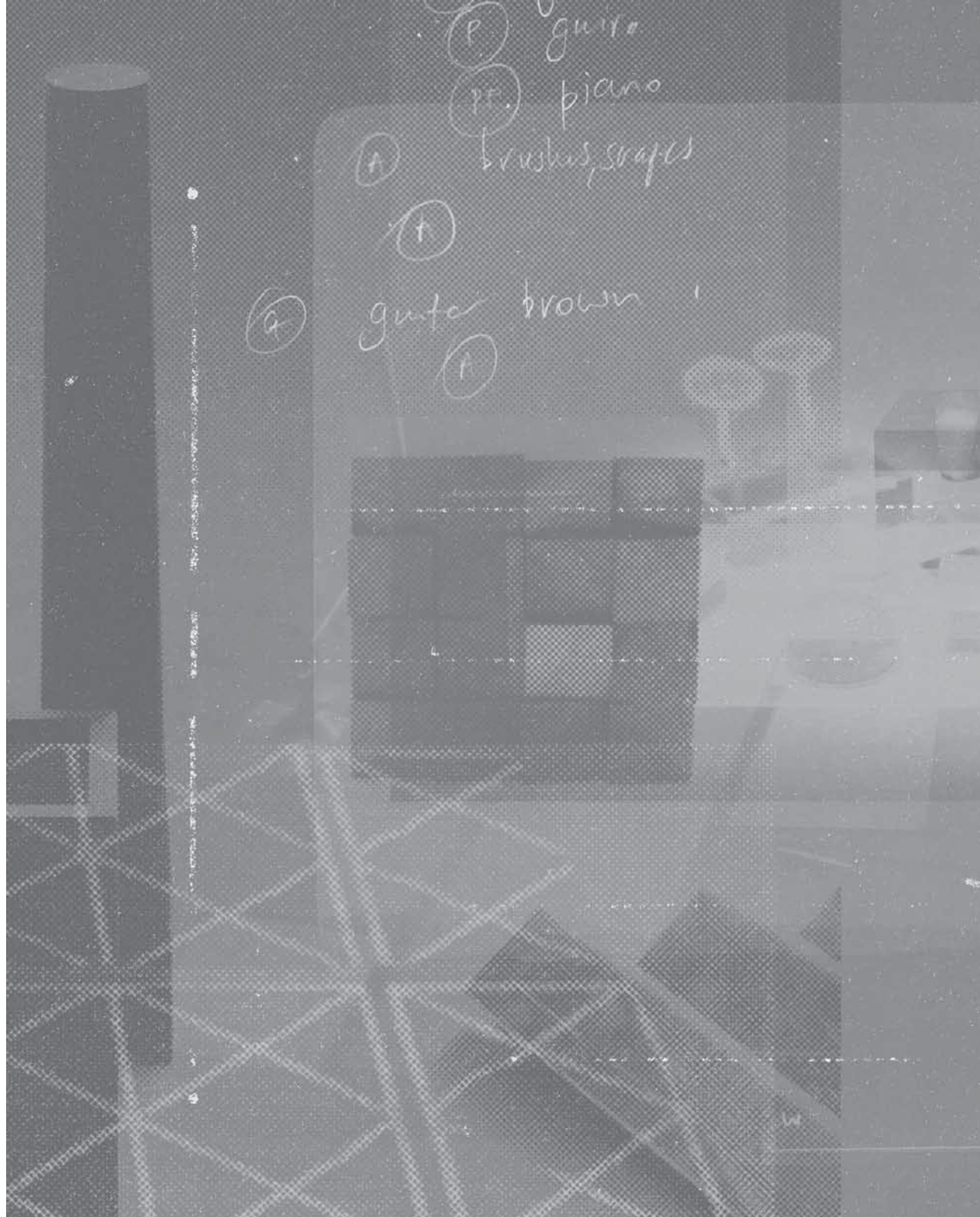
⁸ Gordon Kerry, *New Classical Music: Composing Australia* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009), p. 64; 'Take one song cycle, add eggs ...', review, Elision Composer Podium, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 March 1998.

⁹ Jeff Pressing, 'Tracks Vibes and Views', review, *Maps Part 1* Melbourne, *The Age*, 1 December 2000.

¹⁰ Rosemary Joy, interview with Cynthia Troup, Melbourne, 30 October 2011.

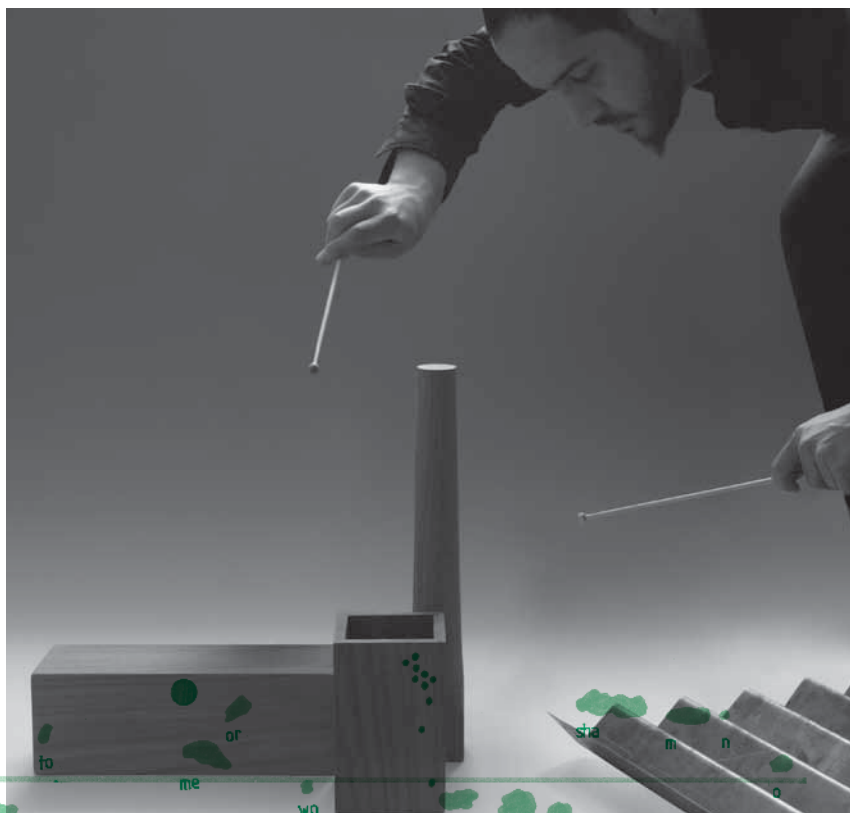
¹¹ Martin Ball, 'To Hear the Deep Rumbblings Below the Surface', review, *Schallmaschine 06*, *The Age*, 24 October 2006.

¹² 'L'originalité est une nécessité absolue de survie de l'espèce humaine.' Iannis Xenakis, *Music and Architecture: Architectural Projects, Texts, and Realizations*, compilation, translation and commentary by Sharon Kanach (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2008), p. v, p. xxi.

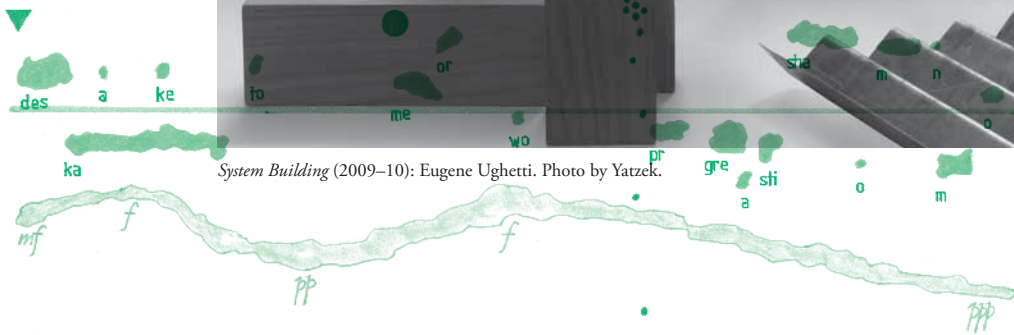


Anna Tweeddale, Architect

Improvised Territories: Aphids and Architecture



System Building (2009–10): Eugene Ughetti. Photo by Yatzek.



Architecture is too often represented to the world as a finished product, in images of hard surfaces and spaces devoid of human activity and entropy. Very simply, people frequently understand architecture as the formation of built structures for delimiting spaces and territories in order to tame them, make them regular, useful and aesthetic. Yet a broader understanding of the architectural imperative could be imagined as the continual creation, inhabitation and destruction of territories from the materials of nature—and through the energy of many living beings. Seen in this way, architecture's processes are infinitely expansive; they extend from play and inception, to more deliberate experimental and construction, to years of inhabitation and alteration. They result in the evolution of designed spaces over time, but also include deterioration and intentional destruction. The Aphids projects represented in this publication are strongly conversant with this broader understanding of architecture. In these works, expansive spatial and material methods align with an obvious confidence in the value of 'reading' the physical world and exploring it with all senses and modes, to favour open-ended artistic thinking beyond fixed performance conventions and sensorial expectations.

Since the 1960s, artists working in almost every form of creative practice have attempted to break down traditional frames of reference and expand their fields of operation. It is possible to situate Aphids' work within this broad tendency in the recent history of art. Even so, there are very specific qualities embedded in Aphids' projects and practice that are especially interesting to consider in architectural terms. Firstly, there is the way that, since the company's inception in 1994, Aphids artists have produced immersive territories—as performances, or as a result of performance works. Then there is Aphids' particular take on site-specificity, one beyond narrow conceptions of 'site'. Thirdly, Aphids artists have made extensive use of graphic and sculptural musical scores that are fascinating to an architect. Some of these scores have referenced architecture directly, as in *Ricefields* (1998), for which composer David Young took a plan of ruins at the Grand Shrine of ancient Izumo in west Japan and, through a series of manipulations and interpretations, created graphic scores and a staging plan for a series of musical compositions. Finally, Aphids' long-term explorations into instrument building, visible across a series of projects involving or led by Rosemary Joy, might be seen as comparable to the use of models in architectural design. These four aspects of Aphids' work are all remarkably familiar to me, which suggests that an absorbing dialogue might be staged between the architectural imperative and Aphids' approach to performance in ways that shed light on both.

Territories

In *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth*, philosopher Elizabeth Grosz investigates the biological genesis of art and architecture as an intensification of sensation produced by the forces and energy of living bodies. Living bodies, she argues, ‘create through their efforts, networks, fields, territories that temporarily and provisionally slow down chaos enough to extract from it something not so much useful as intensifying, a performance, a refrain, an organisation of colour or movement’.¹ To illustrate this idea, she reproduces an example given by French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their celebrated study *What is philosophy?* first published in 1991:

Every morning the *Scenopoetes dentirostris*, a bird of the Australian rain forests, cuts leaves, makes them fall to the ground, and turns them over so that the paler internal side contrasts with the earth. In this way it constructs a stage for itself like a ready-made; and directly above, on a creeper or branch, while fluffing its feathers beneath its beak to reveal their yellow roots, it sings a complex song made up from its own notes and, at intervals, those of other birds that it imitates; it is a complete artist. This is not a synaesthesia of the flesh but blocs of sensations in the territory—colors, postures, and sounds that sketch out a total work of art. These sonorous blocs are refrains; but there are also refrains of posture and color, and postures and colors are always being introduced into refrains: bowing low, straightening up, dancing in a circle and a line of colors. The whole of the refrain is the being of sensation. Monuments are refrains. In this respect, art is continually haunted by the animal.²

Grosz’ reference to the animal in art (from Deleuze) is hardly coincidental to Aphids’ processes. It was referenced in Cynthia Troup’s critical essay of 1998, titled ‘Artists and Insects’, which discussed Aphids’ earliest, hive-like collaborations.³ In many Aphids projects—such as *Ricefields*, *Maps Part 1 Melbourne* (2000) and *Maps Part 2 København* (2002), or *Scale* (2004)—a territory of intensity similar to that described by Grosz was produced through the unfolding of loosely choreographed moments of aural, visual and material intensity. In these works, the demarcated territory was not a precondition for the experience; rather, the territory was created by and throughout the time and space of each performance.

Ricefields was an audiovisual installation orchestrated by musical pieces that were read from a mixture of prescriptive and suggestive scores for voice (soprano), percussion, recorder, violin or viola and lighting. Instead of being notated on a musical staff and printed on paper, the scores for all but one of the pieces were produced from a combination of object ready-mades—an old circuit board, for example, or a length of electric cable casing—and as graphic scores printed on various surfaces; a section of metal sheeting, for instance, or on a t-shirt suspended on a coathanger. A spatial network was established on the floor between these objects and the performers, while the audience sat outside of this. The performance unfolded according to a loosely choreographed ‘flight path’ (to quote David Young) across the object-scores, as each performer’s movement to or around the scores articulated shifting spatial relations between the installation materials and members of the ensemble.⁴ In *Powerline*, a duet for bass recorder and percussion, cues for playing the object-score were taken from lit matches. Recorder player Natasha Anderson played only while percussionist Peter Humble could bear to hold the burning match before it went out, and only during this time did the match provide the light necessary to read the object-score. The music paused with each dying light and began again when the next match was struck, and so on. *System Building* (2009–10) also drew unconventionally on instrument sounds in the creation of a larger theatrical piece. This project more intimately established territory directly between instruments and the percussionists’ bodies, as instruments were taken apart and put back together within a visible territory demarcated by limited light. In his online review of *System Building*, Geoffrey Gartner’s description suggests he was particularly taken with this aspect of the performance and the work’s development from that exploration:

The performance itself takes the form of a controlled improvisation in which the two percussionists gradually deconstruct then reassemble the models, playing the various parts the entire time. The gradual dismantling of the miniature structures reveals their complexity, comprising myriad parts, filled with holes, secret compartments, and sliding panels. All these constituent parts are utilised to create sound: blowing across the apertures of the blocks, hitting one against another, rubbing, scraping.⁵

Other Aphids projects have seen audience members interpolated into the unfolding territory of the performance. Sometimes this involved a reinterpretation of the spatial relations characterising a performance—for example when audiences inhabited the space between the performers and their musical scores. The event *POD* (1994) transformed the upstairs studio at Melbourne’s Dancehouse into a vibrant gallery for a mobile audience, where musical performances were staged amongst installations and artwork created for the occasion by fashion designer Kathleen Banger and visual artist Sarah Pirrie. At Bains::Connective in Brussels, the project *Scale* more formally provided an immersive audience environment: the audience was invited to share the aurally and spatially limited floor of the empty swimming pool with the musicians, their instruments, the scores read from laptop computers, the reverberating music, and handsewn booklets that resembled stray swimming pool tiles. In other cases, sound and time played a key role in establishing the unfolding territory of sensation. For instance, *Maps Part 1 Melbourne* included individually preset alarm clocks carried through the North Melbourne Town Hall by audience members; the alarms had been set to sound at random junctures, thereby contributing sudden, partially choreographed moments of intensity in both time and space. Percussionist Matthias Shack-Arnott attended *Maps Part 1 Melbourne* as an 11-year-old. Recollecting the experience in an interview for this publication, Shack-Arnott has described how the territory of performance also bled into the space and time outside of the event. He remembers Danish soprano Helle Thun, dressed in a bathing suit, holding a mysterious conversation in a payphone outside the North Melbourne Town Hall as people arrived.⁶ Conversely, *Schallmaschine 06* (2006) separated the space and time of the performance from the everyday city. This separation was established by the ritualistic passage of audience members as they were guided through the concrete labyrinths of Melbourne’s Federation Square prior to each miniature concert.

Territory is equally defined by the receptivity of the senses, and by the audience’s ability to read or hear its demarcations: numerous Aphids performances have also demanded more of the senses, and initiated their audiences into this greater sensitivity. When interviewed for this publication, Rosemary Joy affirmed her keen interest in altering the aural receptiveness of audience members so that they might be more discerning of everyday sounds.⁷ The intimate and sometimes intensely quiet performances of *Schallmaschine 06*, *Schallmaschine 07: klein* (2007) and *System Building*, for instance, required subtle and at times more obvious effort from the audience. For performances of *System Building* in a water tower in Groningen (Netherlands), audiences were required to use a ladder to climb to the top of the tower.

They then emerged through a trapdoor before listening to the performance directly under the roof of the structure. Similarly, audiences for *Maps Part 1 Melbourne* were asked to climb the stairs of the town hall belltower, where they shared the space with the large bell as it was played by percussionist Vanessa Tomlinson. Physical exertion alters the body’s sensorial reception: in this way such performances were creating not only the territory, but also the animal.

In all of the projects mentioned so far, the unfolding of an Aphids performance over time and in space became a quasi-architectural tool, either by carving out an ephemeral territory of sensation, or by encouraging the audience to explore such a territory. Furthermore, these actions of territorialisation did not occur only during the time of the performance; they began earlier, during the conceptual development process itself. The project *Scale* saw three Aphids artists travel to Bains::Connective in Brussels, an art space located in a disused public bathhouse and swimming pool. For this residency, each artist brought from home a tool or prop, something they had made or selected, to help them engage with this strange context of production together. Rosemary Joy chose a set of purpose-built percussion instruments, or, more accurately, the basic framework for such a set, on which she could build during the residency. David Young took a new piece of software, developed in collaboration with Matthew Gardiner, which was to enable the use of laptops as moving image musical scores. Cynthia Troup took the collection *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces* by Georges Perec. She focused especially on a list of ‘uninhabitable spaces’ that mentions public baths: this list became a conceptual filter for an unfamiliar site of art making. Here, like the bird in Deleuze’s description that arranges and turns over leaves, or the male Satin Bowerbird that collects blue objects in a bower to create an ornamented stage, the transportation of materials to the site of performance was a first act of both defining and intensifying territory—an act that quite literally generated affects.

Reinterpreting Site

Since Aphids' earliest projects, such as *Aphids* (1994), *Torta* (1995), and *Banquet* (1997), where programs of musical performance unfolded as 'happenings' in residential spaces and galleries, Aphids artists have transformed existing built structures into readymade stages. This approach was extended to the use of the former public baths in *Scale*; to the appropriation of the North Melbourne Town Hall and then the Musikvidenskabeligt Institut in Copenhagen for *Maps*—it is the most common manifestation of site-specificity. However, Aphids artists have explored concepts of site not only as this material residue, such as a building or ruin, but also as a *locus* composed of cultural representations and sensual impressions. *Fight with the Violin* (2003) brought together Japanese violinist Yasutaka Hemmi and the community of martial arts practitioners of the Melbourne Budokai, in a performance at the Kenshikan Dojo in West Melbourne—the Budokai's training hall, a space purpose-built in accordance with the culture and heritage of Japanese martial arts. Hemmi performed a program of fiendishly difficult solo violin works that created a dialogue in movement and space with the skilled choreography of live martial arts. The music installation *Yakumo Honjin*—for miniature percussion, violin, harp, and video projection—was developed in 2007 in the rarefied setting of a 280-year-old Samurai hotel overlooking Lake Shinji in Japan. *Yakumo Honjin* was first presented to audiences at Matsue Castle in 2009, even as the historic architecture of the lakeside hotel informed every aspect of the work. In such conceptions of site there is room for experience itself: the traces of previous territorial demarcations, crossed with fresh sensation. During the development of *Ricefields*, David Young's notes to the artists described the project as:

bound up with those heightened experiences, pinned down in memories of seeing fireflies in an irrigated inky black rice field; waking up to mosquitoes and temple drums; the bewildering juxtapositions that confronted me in Japan. These memories are in fact just tools for defining an idea, a conceptual experience whose semantic vacuum demands utterance.⁸

The territories of intensity created in this performance thereby become a form of mimicry or reinterpretation of another site of heightened sensation. For *Travelling* (1997), Bernice McPherson's biro sketch of the space and sensation of travelling in a Tokyo subway was translated into a piece for solo viola, performed by Cynthia Troup. Through a program of original compositions, multimedia imagery, and a scripted lecture, *Val Camonica Pieces* (2007) reinterpreted the scattered prehistoric rock etchings in north Italy's Camonica valley—evoking their atmosphere of mystery as well as the rigors of their codification by researchers. *System Building* was centred on percussion instruments made to mimic the architectural forms of the venues in which the work was performed, as interpreted from photographs and plans. The venues were: Watertoren West (Netherlands); Radialsystem V (Berlin), Sydney's Carriageworks, the Melbourne Recital Centre, and, in 2010, Red Gate Gallery (Beijing). Made in Melbourne, these new instruments were transposed into an ongoing project that accumulated new model-instruments with each refrain. In all these manners Aphids artists have used the notion of site as an important generative tool across their cumulative practice.

Sculptural/Graphic Scores

Some Aphids projects transformed such representations of site into graphic or sculptural scores. In this manoeuvre the drawing of a particular space and time became attributed with new significance when it was creatively 'read' by the artists, as they constructed new territories of aural, textural, and visual intensity in the presence of an audience. To create *Ricefields*, for instance, the plan of the Japanese shrine ruin was variously photocopied, magnified, cut and pasted, collaged, and drawn over, before becoming a base for the graphic scores of individual pieces. David Young used the same plan, again cut into sections, as a template for the composition of the song cycle *Thousands of Bundled Straw* (performed 2005, 2009), influenced by Georges Perec's use of the plan of an apartment building to structure the narrative in *Life: A User's Manual*.⁹ The mode of thinking behind these graphic and interpretive operations was made explicit in the project *Maps*, in which Cynthia Troup—costumed, and by candlelight—performed a lecture that guided listeners across historical shifts in cartographic meaning and interpretation. Such a strong fascination with the forms of their abstract notation has long been common ground between music, performance and architecture.

In some moments these graphic scores were given presence as an object, or as part of the performative illustration. Experiments in this vein have included the musical score printed on a t-shirt for *Ricefields*; the scores projected onto walls in *Maps*; the scores for *Scale* and *Skin Quartet* (2003), which were animated by specialised software on laptops, the software also actively marking out the duration of the performance. In addition to these instances featuring graphic scores, other sculptural scores developed for Aphids projects have reinterpreted found objects, or altered material objects. For a particular piece in *Ricefields*, Rosemary Joy took a section of circuit board from a model railway and devised a method for interpreting the spaces of the board as music. She added text fragments, either written or appropriated, and developed a musical composition in liaison with soprano Deborah Kayser, who was to perform the piece. Elizabeth Grosz has referred to these generative possibilities of existing sites or discarded objects as architecture's inherent 'futurity', or openness to the future.

The virtual is the realm of productivity, of functioning otherwise than its plan or blueprint, functioning in excess of design and intention. This is the spark of the new that the virtual has over the possible: the capacity for generating innovation through an unpredicted leap, the capacity of the actual to be more than itself, to become other than the way it has always functioned. It is differentiation that, while propelled by a tendency or virtuality, can only actualize itself through its encounters with matter, with things, with movements and processes, and thus with obstacles, through which it produces itself as always other than its virtuality, always new, singular, and unique.¹⁰

Essentially Grosz suggests that buildings, or things made and put into the material world in some way, have a unique capacity for unanticipated reappropriation, interpretation and playful interaction by future bodies and subjectivities. The generative and creative potential of this material futurity is also demonstrated beautifully in the instrument building aspect of Aphids' repertoire.

Instrument Building

In the 13 years since *Ricefields*, and across a series of projects such as *Instrument Building* (2003); *Scale*; *Schallmaschine 06*; *Underground* (2007); *Beauty Boxes* (2008); *System Building*, and *Xantolo* (2009), Rosemary Joy has been exploring the performative possibilities of miniature percussion instruments created for individual musicians, events and spaces. Joy's sense of the sonic, aesthetic and performative potential of her palette of rosewood mahogany timbers is highly developed. This sense has arisen from unselfconscious, playful and iterative engagements with her material constructions.

While during the making process Joy experiments with the sounds of the instruments, it is only once an instrument is glued together and dried that the final acoustic possibilities can begin to be discovered. Thus this process too necessarily becomes iterative, bearing resemblance to the way in which physical models figure in developing and testing architectural concepts. In both *Scale* and *Schallmaschine 06* the final instruments were handed to David Young, who subsequently composed a suite of pieces that further explored relationships between such already-iterative instruments and their players. For other projects, Joy has developed compositions directly with the musicians; *Beauty Boxes* was a collaboration of this kind with percussionists Claire Edwardes and Bree van Reyk from Ensemble Offspring. While Joy's instruments are unique, she often creates instruments with the favoured sounds and techniques of a particular musician in mind. For *Schallmaschine 06* she interviewed the Melbourne-based percussionists to discover their favourite sounds. Evident in this process is an obvious relation to architecture as bespoke making for particular sites, clients and functions.

In fact, taken as a cumulative practice transpiring over more than a decade, such an investigation into percussion instruments also compares with the slow and incremental variations in building typologies that result from consistent architectural investigation. While traditional instruments vary by era, maker and materials, nevertheless they adhere to type. The sound of such instruments is changeable, and regulated by the conditions for performance, a player's technique and so on; however, when these instruments are played, composers and performers can presume to rely on certain expectations of timbre and pitch. A deliberate subversion of instrument typologies—as with building typologies—opens up numerous fresh possibilities:

As soon as you use a non-conventional instrument, there arises the urgent question of how to write the score for it, and how to indicate how it needs to be played. This is an exercise in and of itself, and a challenge. We've learned a lot about the limitations. [The experience] forced me to be very open and vulnerable in my work processes, which I'd never done before to such a degree.¹¹

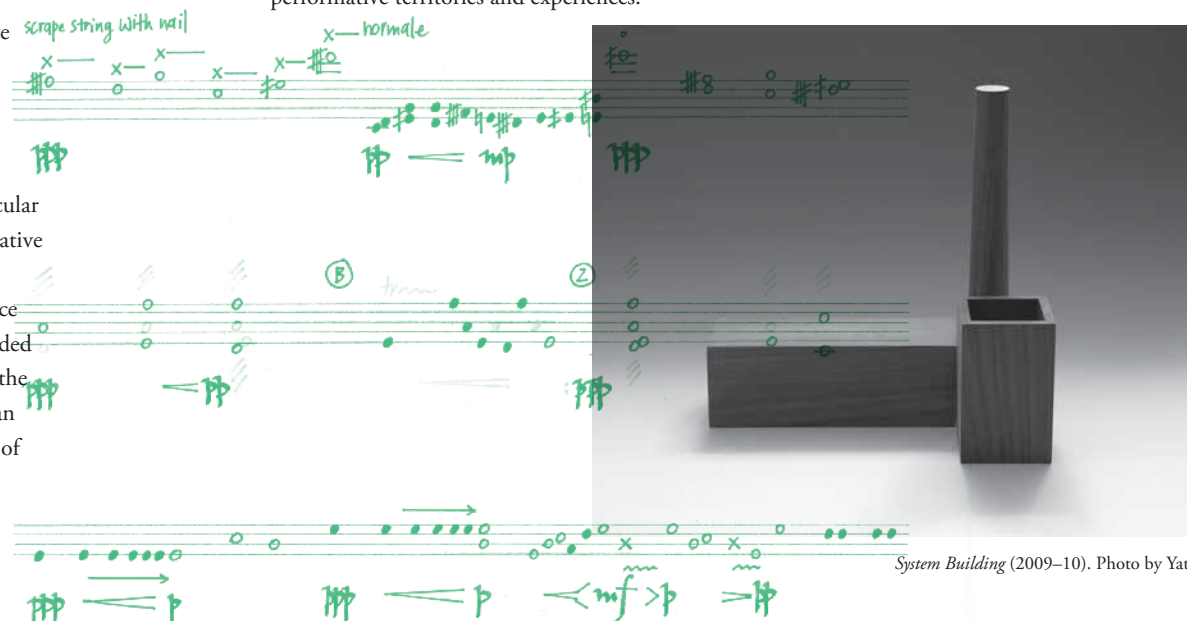
Once this move away from conventional sounds and tools occurs, the existing structures that enable collaboration are also opened to constant reinvention. Aphids artists have been explicit about embracing such a complication, or break with convention, for its generative potential; a potential capable of reinventing the very structure of a collaborative work.

Controlled Improvisation

Many more observations might be made about Aphids’ unique contribution to contemporary performance since 1994. Yet in my view, most notable about the company’s oeuvre is the way in which Aphids projects have challenged so many artistic conventions on such a diversity of fronts. Simultaneously, from the potential chaos of radically open processes, Aphids artists have achieved such coherent aesthetic experiences for their audiences. *Scale* describes an elaborate scenario; when viewed in context, it appears quite typical of these projects—notably in the overlapping of Rosemary Joy’s experimentation with instruments; David Young’s testing of moving graphic scores, and Cynthia Troup’s textual mode of working, all while collaborating with three musicians, as part of a group of individuals who had never worked with one another before in an unfamiliar site. Aphids’ success at this level, at each stage of generation, production and presentation, stands out, particularly today in the context of the extreme professionalisation and institutionalisation of collaborative tendencies in art, and indeed in architectural practice. Aphids’ achievements have gestated from the contributions of a group of confident and self-aware artists, prepared to give the unfolding of each work its own space and validity. These artists understand implicitly that in respecting one another’s individual skill and agency, each gains from the process, and the process from them, in cumulative ways. During her interview for this publication, Rosemary Joy referred to these processes as a generous ‘gifting’ between different artists. They can also be understood as a sort of relayed dance between species—a dance that is at the centre of Aphids’ creative excess.

In his response to *System Building* quoted above, Geoffrey Gartner used the term ‘controlled improvisation’ to describe the short performances on Rosemary Joy’s scale-model instruments unfolding before a select audience at Carriageworks in Sydney. Wonderfully evocative of a particular performance, the term ‘controlled improvisation’ might equally be applied to the complex generative processes of Aphids’ performances as a whole. According to David Young, Aphids performances have never been simply ‘improvised’.¹² Rather, the improvised sensation yielded by a performance has emerged from an expanded definition of the performance event—a definition that has included the initial conception, play, and development of the work alongside whatever was articulated at the moment of audience engagement. This viewpoint, in turn, proposes an Aphids performance as an extended refrain of ‘controlled improvisation’ to which each audience was invited as a gathering of last-minute collaborators.

This publication presents archival traces of textual, diagrammatic and material activity pertaining to Aphids’ collaboratively constructed territories of aesthetic experience. From the Aphids hard-copy archive, it is fascinating to observe how early Aphids projects were developed internationally, prior to widespread use of the internet for communication and file sharing. Documentation archived for the project *Maps*, for instance, contains extensive postal correspondence between composer Juliana Hodkinson in Denmark and artists in Melbourne. Elaborate letters include copious notes and references, along with diagrams, score excerpts, photocopied and collaged images, many of which exhibit a distinctive architectural quality. Such openness and dynamism demonstrated by Aphids artists; their optimism for exchange across different languages, media, tools, and distances; their manifest and ever-developing interpersonal skills for communicating ideas—all of this deserves acknowledgement. Furthermore, it has obviously been generative for Aphids’ evolution as a company, and central to Aphids’ contribution to the wider artistic milieu. The ‘Aphidic’ collaborative process, fostering this significant individual and shared responsibility from each artist, in this way also makes possible—perhaps even invites—serendipitous events of mistranslation or miscommunication into its scope. The diagram-map that accompanies this essay (see the fold-out on the following page) is a modest attempt to graphically outline some threads of this extended scene. It takes shape as a series of isolated riffs identifiable within a more complex archaeology of performative territories and experiences.



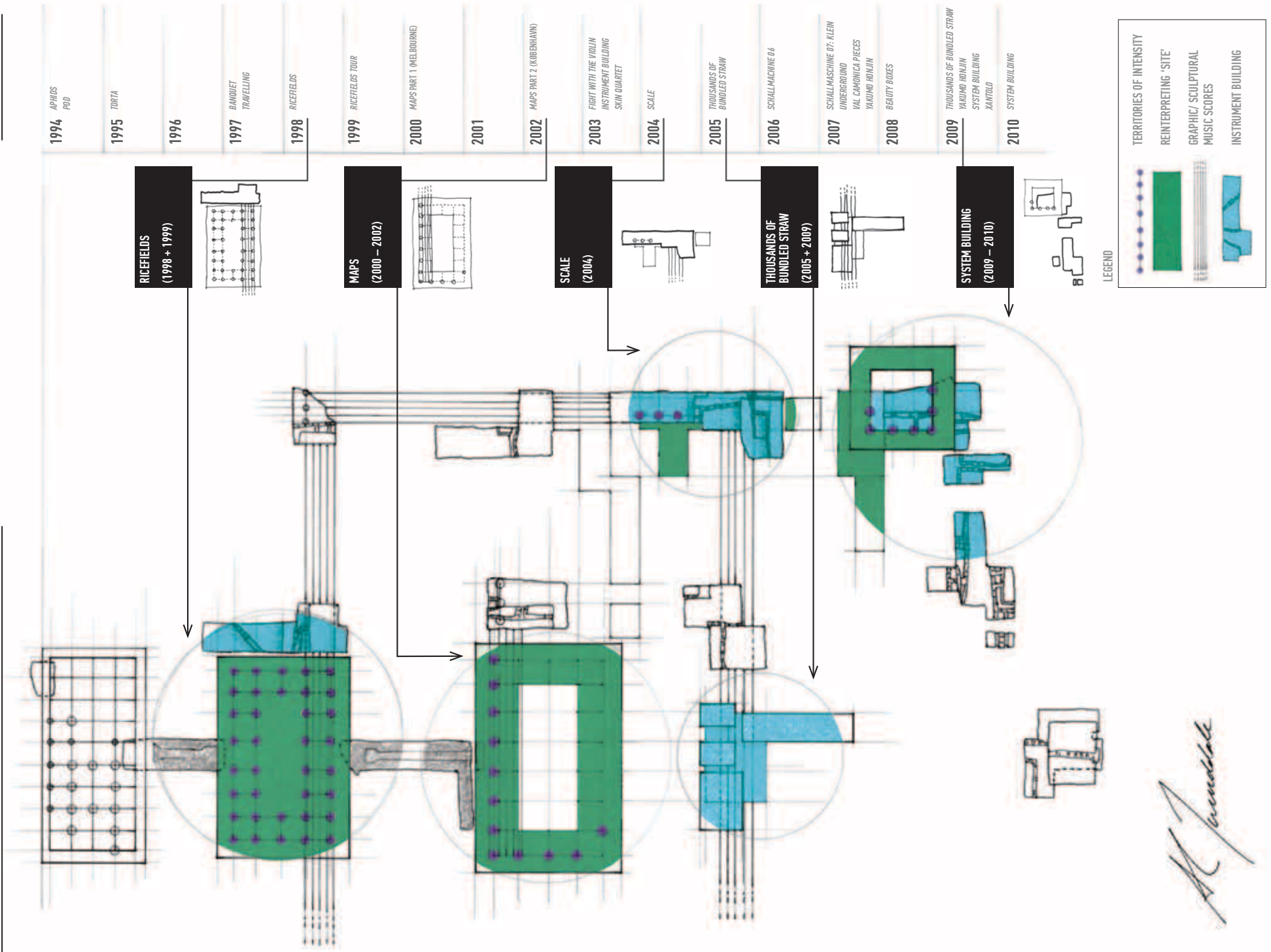
System Building (2009–10). Photo by Yatzek.

Surveying Practices

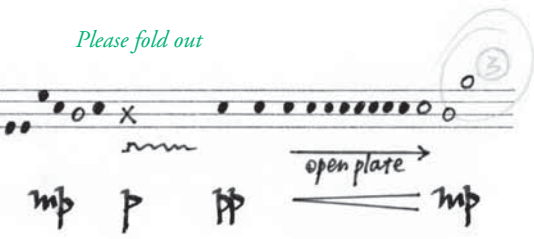
In many ways, the projects captured by this publication demonstrate the artistic trends and innovations of their time, created as they were during the transition to networked media, which in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has irrevocably altered concepts of territory, methods of representation, and modes of communication. It is exciting to observe that beyond those earlier shifts, Aphids' creation and reframing of territory through artistic practice and performance continues; indeed it is being further extended. Since January 2010, Aphids' founding artistic director David Young has been Artistic Director of Chamber Made Opera, and the latter's Living Room Opera series (2010–), sees Young revisiting the residential setting of those early Aphids 'happenings' such as *Aphids* and *Torta*. This occurs as the concept of domestic interiority itself is reconsidered, even turned inside out, by increasing exposure to networked media. Meanwhile, under Artistic Director Willoh S. Weiland, Aphids projects continue to respond directly to shifts in the perception and shaping of territory within present paradigms of digital technology. It is notable that Weiland first worked with Aphids in 2008 as part of the Aphids Residencies and Mentoring Scheme, creating the project *Yelling at Stars* for the 2008 Next Wave Festival. *Yelling at Stars* was a 40-minute sound, audiovisual and performance work recorded and streamed live to the Deep Space Communications Network in the United States, where it was transformed to radio waves and transmitted four light years into space. This project literally projected a sort of intergalactic birdsong to embrace potential others in an expanding performative territory. Aphids' current projects under development, such as *Coral Work* and *Atelier Edens*, see a new generation of artists armed with their various disciplinary tools, and embarking from urban territories into the ocean and wilderness. Aphids' persistent expansion into wild and spectacular territories continues to provide generative energy that significantly affects new artists, practices, and works: the creation of territory is always improvised.

Aphids: A Selective Archaeology of Practice 1994–2010

Anna Tweeddale



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Endnotes

¹ Elizabeth Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), p. 3. Grosz's conceptualisation of architecture, territories and art in this volume have strongly informed the present essay.

² Elizabeth Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art*, pp. 11–12. Where quoting the example of the *Scenopoetes denirostris* on p. 12, Grosz includes an in-text citation to the English translation of Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?* by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 184.

³ Cynthia Troup, 'Artists and Insects: Considering Collaborative Relationships', *Sounds Australian: Journal of the Australian Music Centre*, 52 (1998), pp. 28–30.

⁴ David Young, 'Ricefields [...] some notes beforehand', unpublished document of 4 unnumbered pages circulated to the *Ricefields* artists, 1988.

⁵ Geoffrey Gartner, 'Rosemary Joy—*System Building*', review, *Resonate Magazine*, 10 December 2009, archived at <http://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/article/rosemary-joy-system-building>.

⁶ Matthias Schack-Arnott, interview with Cynthia Troup, Melbourne, 25 October 2011.

⁷ Rosemary Joy, interview with Cynthia Troup, Melbourne, 30 October 2011.

⁸ David Young, 'Ricefields [...] some notes beforehand', unpublished document of 4 unnumbered pages circulated to the *Ricefields* artists, 1988.

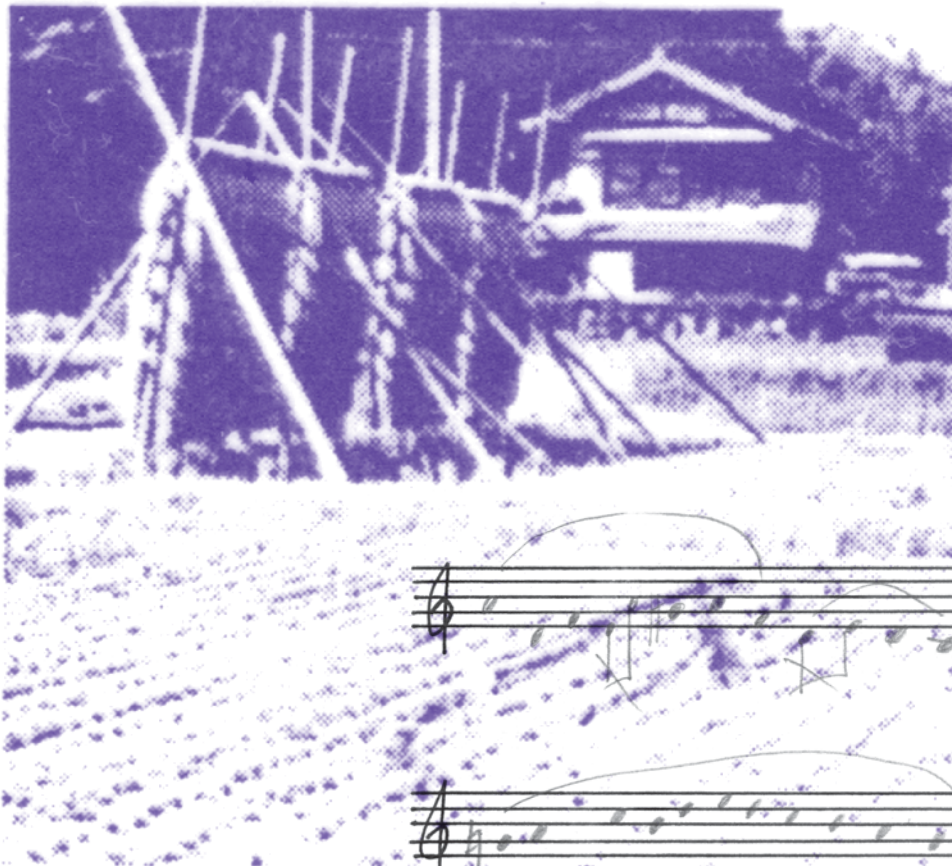
⁹ David Young, interview with Cynthia Troup, Melbourne, 8 September 2011.

¹⁰ Elizabeth Grosz, 'The Future of Space', in her collection *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), p. 130.

¹¹ David Young, interview quoted in Peter-Paul de Temmerman, 'Scale vult oud badhuis van Vorst met klein werk', or, 'Scale Fills the Old Vorst Swimming Pool with Small Work', review, *De Financieel Economische Tijd*, Belgium, 30 July 2004; unpublished translation by Annelies Willinck, 2005.

¹² David Young, interview with Cynthia Troup, Melbourne, 8 September 2011.

Juliana Hodkinson, Composer reflects on *Ricefields* and *Maps* as characteristic of Aphids' collaborative approach



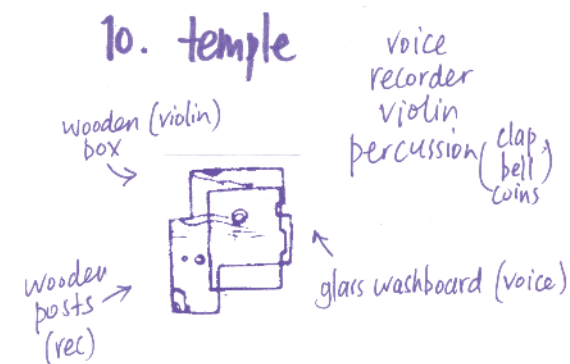
David Young and I first met at the 1997 Akiyoshidai Festival of contemporary music in Japan. There, and in later conversations in Japan and Denmark, I began hearing about Aphids. In my own generation Aphids' collaborative approach was a rare thing, and not one of the past, but excitingly ambitious, current, and involving vastly different kinds of people. It was difficult to imagine what sort of musician or artist Aphids wouldn't be able to absorb, given the right desire—and I felt that I could discover so much. Indeed, that's the way it went, becoming involved with Aphids proved to be an adventure in expanding my way of working, and taught me how to collaborate.

In 1999, I was able to attend a performance of *Ricefields* in France, when the project toured to the Festival International de Musique Universitaire hosted by the city of Belfort. Beforehand I had seen some video footage and photos of the *Ricefields* 1998 season at La Mama. But as a member of the live audience, I felt I was being invited to become a part of an uncategorisable experience. In other words, it seemed that while the artists were knowingly challenging my expectations, the work was presented simply as an invitation to come and dwell. This sense of 'giving' a performance as an act of hospitality held enormous appeal.

As a composer, my background had been working almost exclusively within the conventional concert format. It seemed like I had been exploring that situation in millimetre steps, whereas *Aphids* was walking in much bigger shoes, exploring formats beyond the concert, around and outside it. *Aphids*' concern with site-specificity and inclusivity dismantled many of the oppositions so often in place around the performance of contemporary music—without fear of trouble. This was immensely refreshing and inspiring. In its quality and focus, *Aphids*' work remained loyal to the laws of the best of concert productions, while questioning the heritage of the concert, and related assumptions about the roles of musicians and audiences. *Aphids* was also challenging the culture of the contemporary music rehearsal, usually a circumstance for perfecting material passed from a writer to a reader. In rehearsal the *Aphids* artists could ask, 'what if the rehearsal is a place where work is truly created through the individuals and processes meeting here?'. Of course, for everyone involved, this attitude promotes intensity, because of a commitment to staying open, to being influenced by one another, through offering and receiving constant feedback. Although demanding at a personal level, it's always enriching, adding depth and sensitivity to the work. This definitely came across when I was in the audience for *Ricefields*; a sense of being part of something which was still open to change, still open for improvement, still open to being responsive to the moment.

There was a remarkable consistency between all the elements of *Ricefields*. Although some moments were rather incomprehensible to me, every detail conveyed a kind of authenticity, the impression that the means were carefully deliberate, internally logical. The work had such a strong structural underpinning, a narrative arc, if you like, founded on the use and re-use of an architectural fragment—more precisely the drawing of an ancient architectural fragment, located in Japan. Soprano Deborah Kayser, recorder player Natasha Anderson, violinist Yasutaka Hemmi, and percussionist Peter Humble performed in a unique setting, a highly textured installation delicately lit by Lisa Trewin. And with one exception, the music was interpreted from the surrounding surfaces and objects, sometimes simultaneously mixed by sound designer Michael Hewes. So *Ricefields* included a situation new to the performers as well as its audiences—the journey included chance, but 'in safe hands', it was gentle.

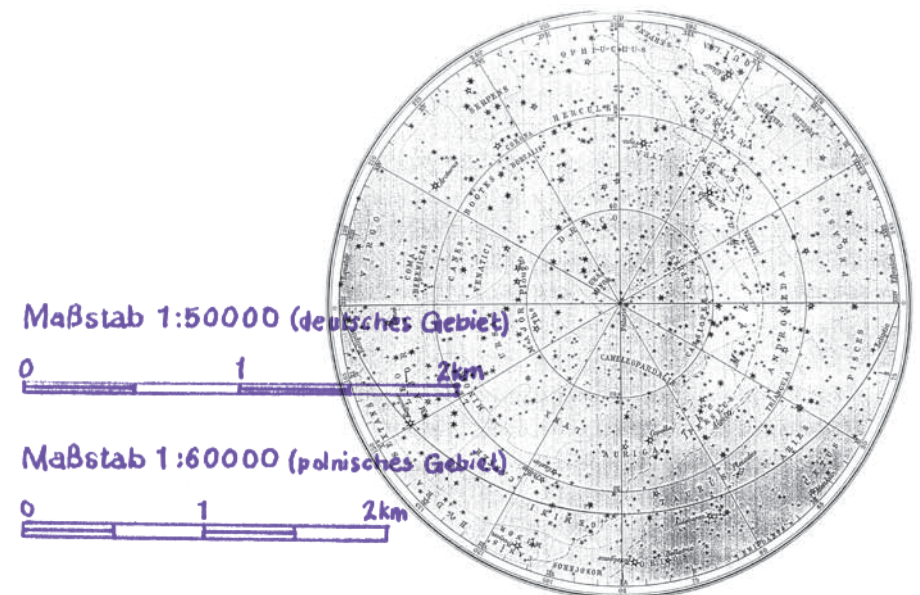
The theatre in Belfort was a large space: fantastically small sounds and intricate things zoomed in and out of perspective. This corresponded to the idea of 'overhearing' a ricefield in modern Japan; of being witness to the whole spectrum of that environment, whether consciously, or on a subconscious level, encouraging flashes of insight here and there. Each particular of the *Ricefields* installation seemed essential, rather than the contingent result of a 'style'. The smallness of some gestures and surfaces (a glass bottle, for instance); the sustained 'close-up' perspective—the *Aphids* publicity tended to describe these aspects as botanic, or organic. I saw them as strategies and aims: the substance of the performance was realised in the nesting, repetition and magnification of detail. In turn this kindled the impression of a powerful field of latency—a feeling that the work was a dance, half-hidden but activated and energised by all sorts of materials, and that anything might be seen and heard dancing. That quality of latency has been an interesting trait of *Aphids*' work.



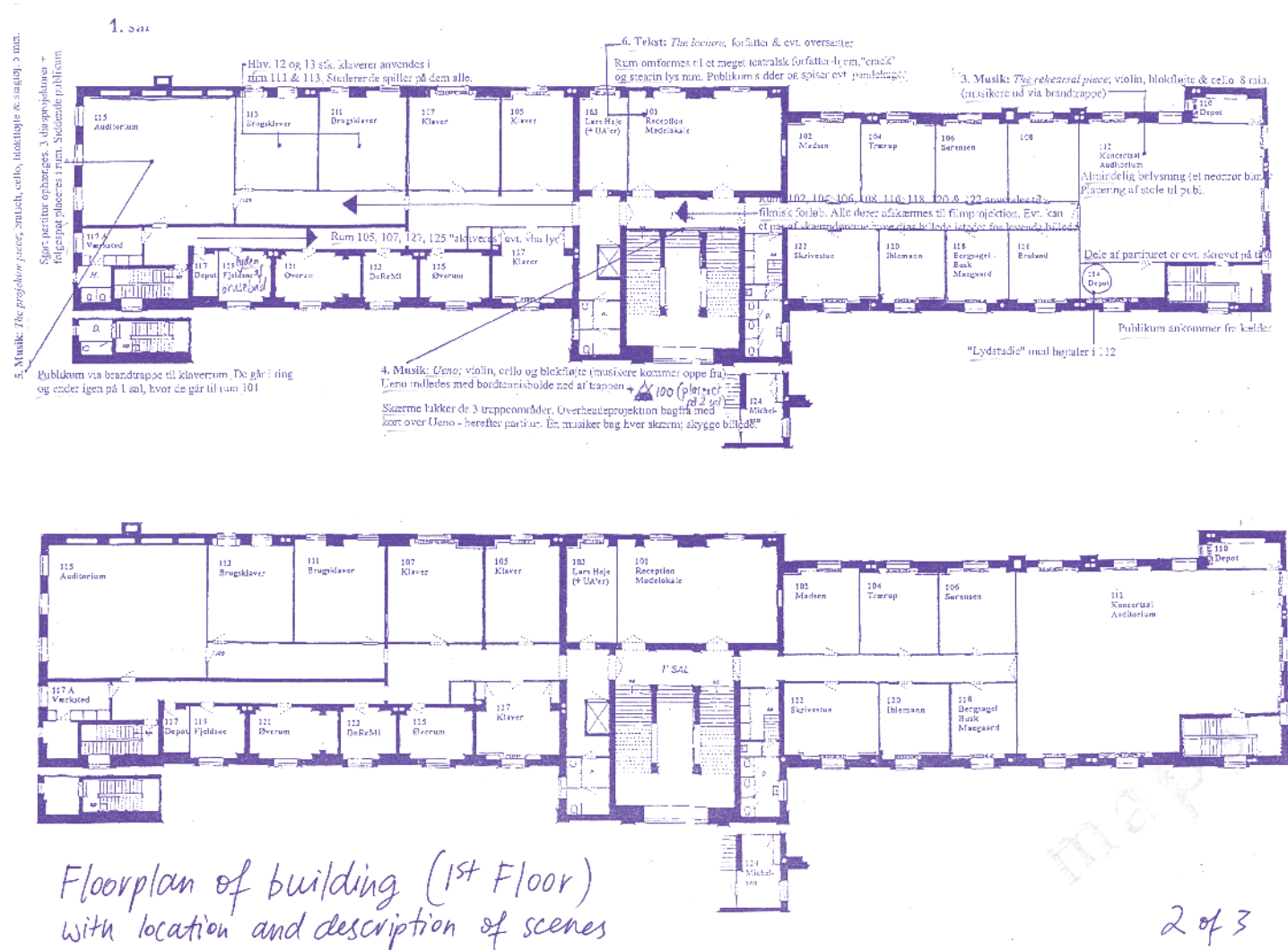
After Belfort, I wrote the essay, 'Reading, Writing and *Ricefields*' for the program that accompanied the *Ricefields* tour to Shimane and Ginza (Japan), Brisbane and Sydney. Crucial to my essay was Cynthia Troup's 1998 article, 'Artists and Insects: Considering Collaborative Relationships', about the early days of Aphids. In a most readable way it formulated a practice which successive projects have since developed and confirmed.

The project that I undertook with Aphids, *Maps* Part 1 Melbourne (2000) and *Maps* Part 2 København (2002), addressed many themes that were already integral to Aphids' work, building on aspects of the musical vocabulary that had been explored in *Ricefields* and previous smaller projects. At the festival in Belfort it had been easy to see how the various touring productions used the same theatre space, and how, unavoidably, the venue tended to predispose performers and audiences to certain behaviours. For *Maps* David and I thought of choosing a space for its own qualities: we wanted to experiment with extracting performance from a space, and structure a dynamic experience of the building, or the site, through music. Danish scenographer Louise Beck quickly became part of the *Maps* team; she and I were colleagues. Louise had experience in making site-specific work on a large scale, and a sure hand in controlling spaces with light. Soon we were working with Aphids from the opposite side of the globe, sending letters, knowing that literally and metaphorically we would travel a great distance to bring together under one roof a multitude of practices—not only musical, but also those of a writer, Cynthia; a film-maker, Louise Curham; a chef, and in Copenhagen, 15 'extras'! Firstly, in 2000, we plunged ourselves and then our audiences under the roof of the newly renovated North Melbourne Town Hall.

Maps undeniably bore the Aphids hallmark of legitimising variety and diversity within a performance. Both seasons of *Maps* included more than 15 original compositions (not counting installations on staircases and in corridors); the musical score was always made visible to the audience, as a form of cartography, if you like, which conspicuously inflected the space in some way. The music was developed for flexible groupings of musicians. Yasutaka and Natasha became part of the *Maps* company, bringing to *Maps* their history with *Ricefields*. Like them, cellist Caerwen Martin performed in both the Melbourne and Copenhagen seasons of *Maps*. Vanessa Tomlinson was the percussionist in Melbourne, Henrik Larsen in Copenhagen; the Melbourne ensemble included Danish soprano Helle Thun, whereas in Copenhagen pianist Katrine Gislinge was featured. It was characteristic of Aphids that each musician clearly represented his or her instrument, and a set of enthusiasms or preoccupations, remaining strongly individual within the project ensemble. For instance, as I recall, Natasha had very recently acquired a contrabass recorder—this made possible a huge expansion in sound for *Maps*, and her interest to experiment was definitely part of the project's musical development.



We tackled *Maps* Part 1 Melbourne by moving from a conceptual phase into the town hall, wandering its floors and asking questions. We wanted each room, or space, to be replete artistically; while respecting the nature of the architecture, we created an itinerary for the audience that also took dramatic form as a logic through time. There were places in the building where different layers or fragments of performance material coincided, bringing about moments for reflection; stimulating memory for sound-images. When we moved *Maps* to Copenhagen in 2002, the relationship between developing work and rehearsing changed significantly. Whereas the North Melbourne Town Hall is a High Victorian public building, the edifice for *Maps* in Copenhagen was a Masonic temple converted to serve as the Institute of Musicology for Copenhagen University. It was a place carrying intricate cultural associations, and full of pianos, self-evidently a building for musical performance. By then we knew what an expensive, time-consuming production *Maps* was, so our process was one of compact honing; we were more pragmatic.



The years during which I first encountered and worked with Aphids represent a very formative time in my artistic life. They were an irreplaceable apprenticeship in softening the borders of my professional territory. For Aphids in Melbourne, there were such frequent visits from those of us based overseas, and such varied forms of contact, that a rare constellation of artists was consolidated during that time. For instance, Yasutaka from Japan has been central to many Aphids projects, most recently to the music installation work *Yakumo Honjin* (2010). With Aphids I learned that it's possible to integrate the aesthetic for a new project with the format; design the structure while generating the creative development. Most importantly I gained a necessary confidence that I could be part of an artistic community—that collaboration could become a practice that would put down roots, ripen from one project to another.



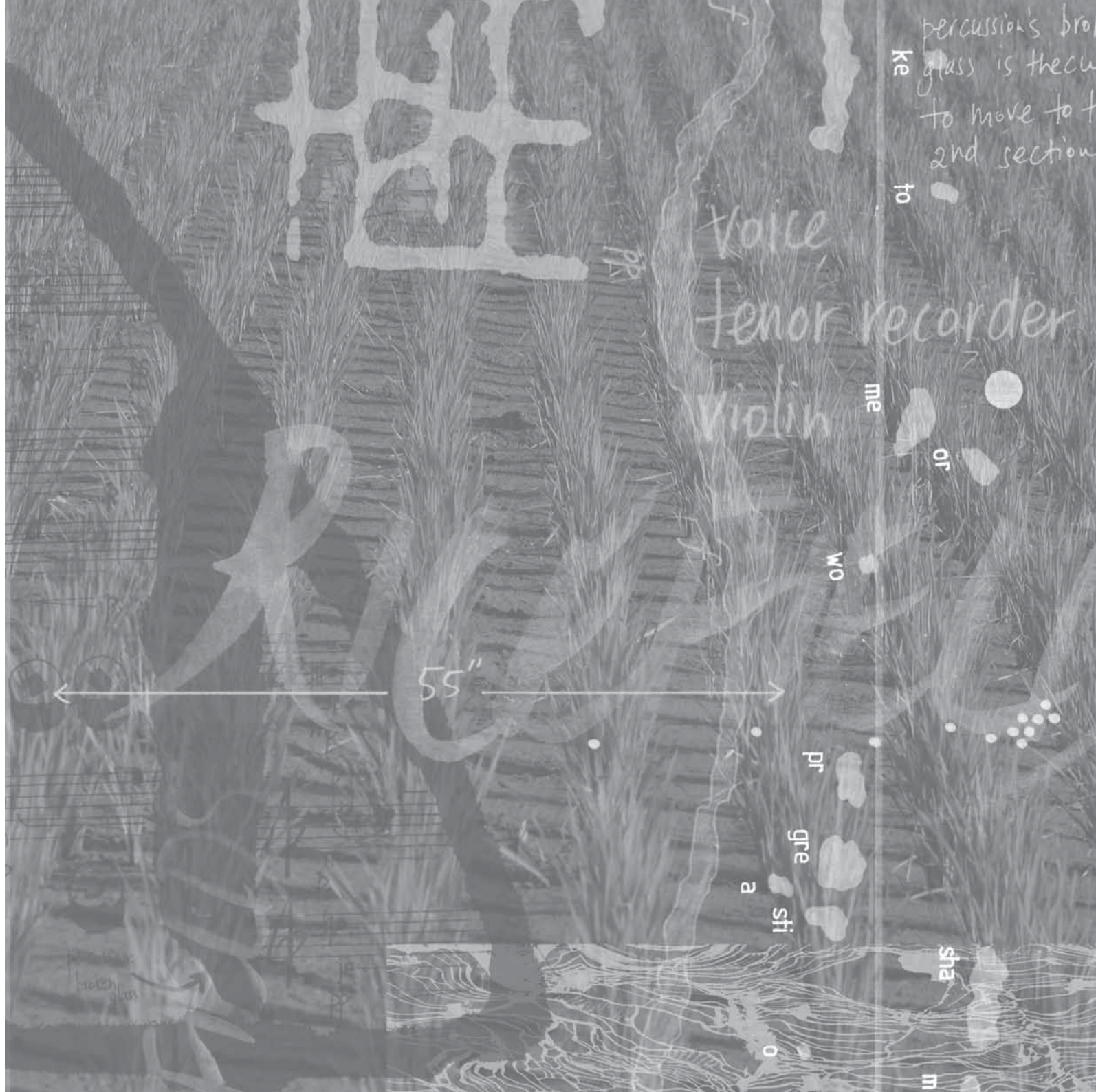
encouraging
flashes
of insight

Ricefields

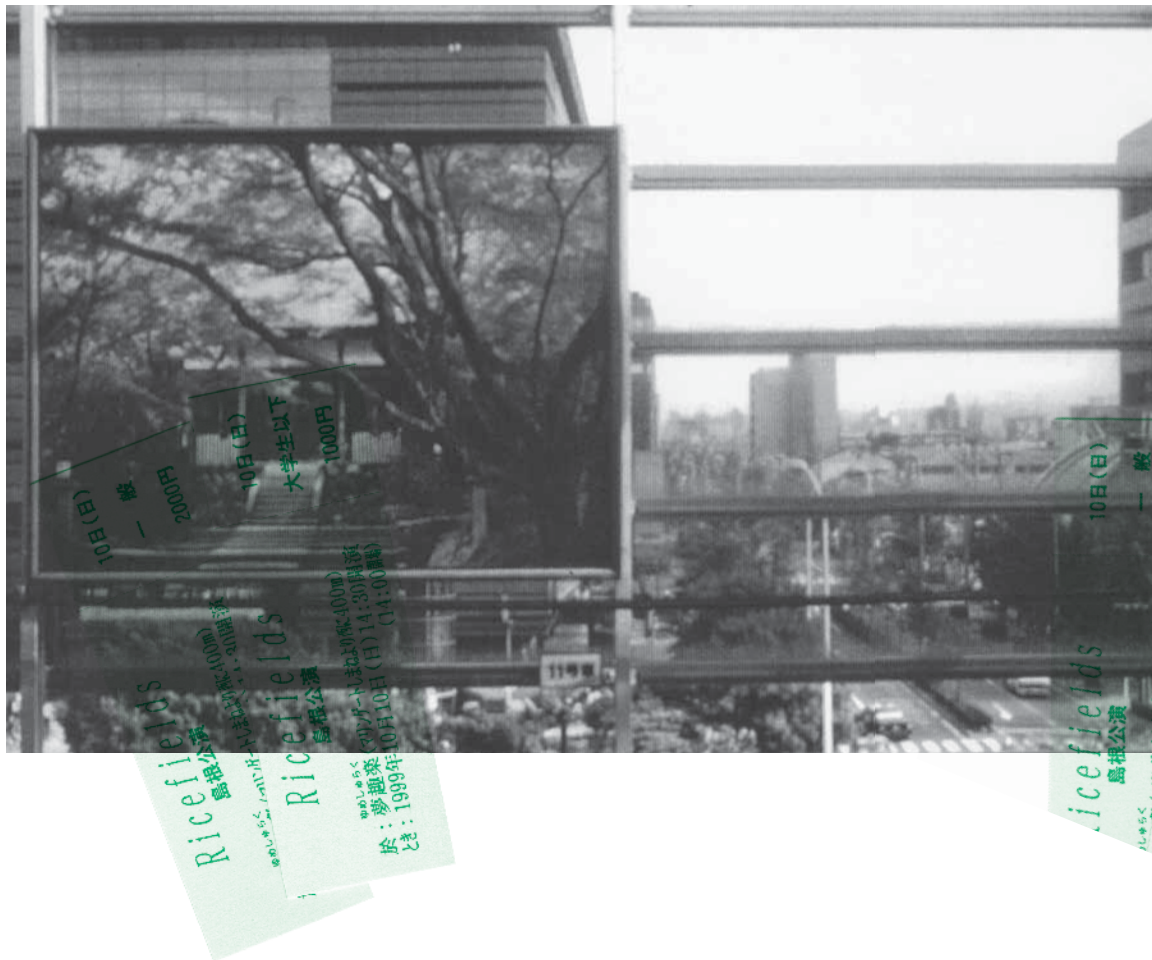
An Installation/Performance

Rosemary Joy Curator/Artist
Sarah Pirrie Curator/Artist
David Young Curator/Composer
Deborah Kayser Soprano
Natasha Anderson Recorder
Peter Humble Percussion
Yasutaka Hemmi Violin/Viola
Michael Hewes Sound Design
Lisa Trewin Lighting

First performed 16–19 September 1998 at La Mama Theatre, Melbourne. In May 1999, *Ricefields* toured to Le Centre Chorégraphique National de Franche-Comté in Belfort, France. Also in 1999 performances in Japan at Yumeshuraku, Shimane and at Ginza's Gallery 21 in Tokyo preceded Australian seasons at MetroArts, Brisbane and Performance Space, Sydney.



Deborah Kayser, Soprano reflects on having said 'yes' to *Ricefields* and *Thousands of Bundled Straw*



Ricefields (1998) was billed as 'an installation/performance'. Recently I watched Aphids' video document of the work, edited from footage of the first season at La Mama Theatre in 1998. I was struck by the sustained subtlety of the music in that space. This wouldn't have been possible if *Ricefields* had been a concert performance; the installation supported the music extremely well, and brought its own intrinsic qualities. We achieved more refinement, and more dynamic range of sound, texture and pacing in that context.

Ricefields involved four performers: myself; Natasha Anderson on recorders; Peter Humble on percussion; Yasutaka Hemmi on violin and viola. As well as David Young, the other artists were sound designer Michael Hewes; lighting designer Lisa Trewin, and artists Sarah Pirrie and Rosemary Joy, who were described as 'curators'. The shape of the work was derived from an architectural drawing of the Grand Shrine of ancient Izumo. The ruined shrine was brought to our attention as a starting point for the project, and details of the drawing served as scores for individual pieces.

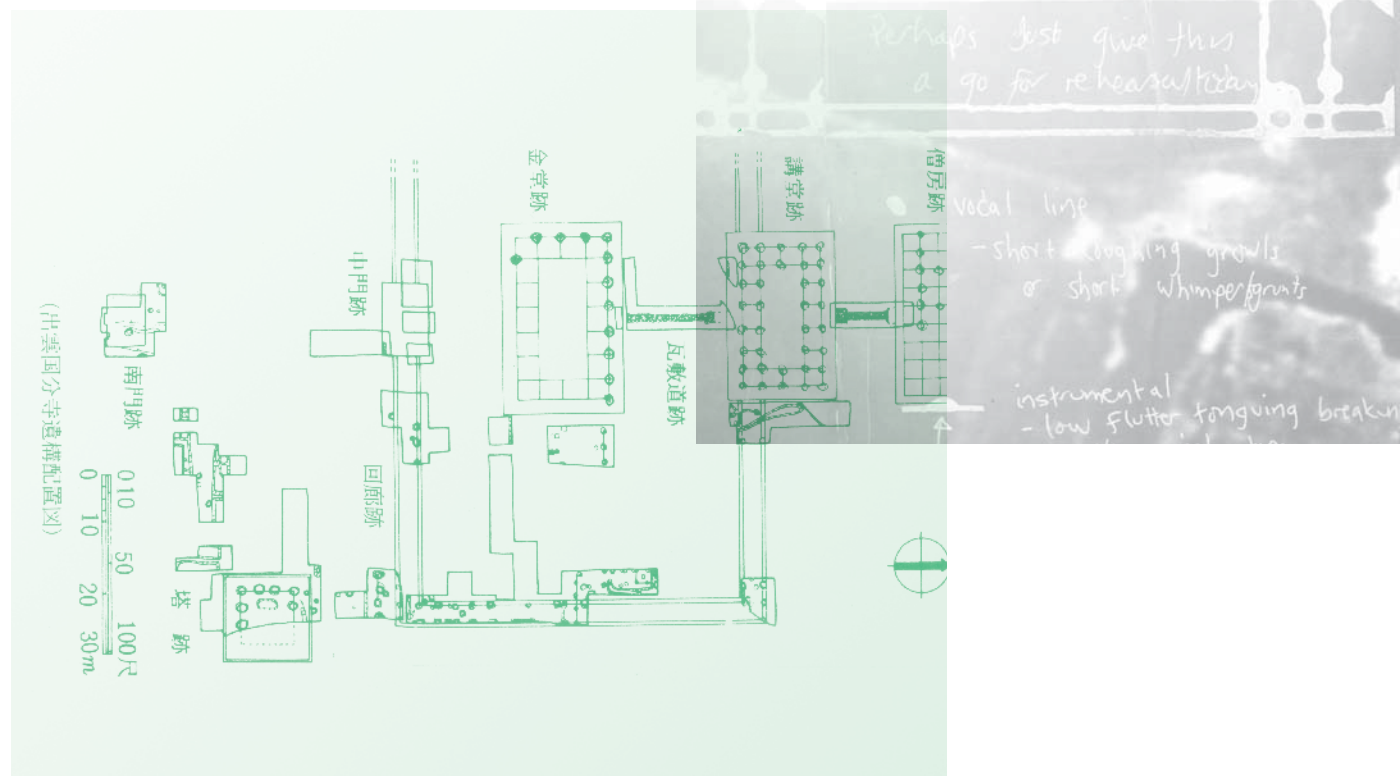
From memory, the *Ricefields* installation comprised a frame, like a huge dress rack, on which items were hung or placed, distinctive materials and objects from which we played—a glass bottle with a score fixed to it, for instance. In addition there were objects placed on the floor which we read as musical scores. These included a power board made from masonite brought in by Rosemary; electrical tape marked out radiating circuits, and words or syllables for me to sing. Each time I performed the circuit board piece, I would ‘travel’ along a different line of tape, thereby articulating different syllables and musical contours, and singing a rather punchy composition.

There were also metal sheets, a charred piece of wood, a block of dried resin, other architectural fragments relocated to the installation. The textures were quite eroded. Their attractiveness lay in the way they were lit, and in the confidence of the musicians amongst them, but parts of the installation were quite humble to the eye. Of course there’s long been a great movement of re-using rather than throwing away. In this spirit, for an ensemble piece called ‘Recycling’, we read our parts from the glass bottle, a piece of cardboard, and a t-shirt. So the found materials and objects were momentarily elevated to something other than the ordinary.

For a project that included musical improvisation, *Ricefields* was carefully staged in a theatrical sense. All four performers were free to move around; we worked with the lighting cues and manoeuvred to the scores.

The objects themselves, and their positions in the installation, certainly affected the music we produced, especially by influencing our postures. To read the circuit board, for example, I needed to be half bent over; I used a mad hand choreography to beat out a rhythm. It felt impossible to sing the work without those dancelike gestures.

In the centre of the space was a pile of papier-mâché fragments that resembled ridged pieces of slate. Sarah had also made sculptures from sea sponges, and these brought to mind brightly coloured, toxic sushi rolls. Microphones were placed amid these sculptures, so that the speaker system amplified any sounds of contact, our scraping, scratching, pounding; we discovered all sorts of timbres. For many years David’s compositions have emphasised the microtonal aspects of created sounds—miniature, accidental sounds that surround more deliberately made ‘music’. In *Ricefields*, all sound was part of the performance, the *soundscape*. At the outset, the imagery was that of a Japanese ricefield at dusk, though we departed significantly from this idea.





Aphids' events in
Matsue office

辺見 康孝

Kasutaka HEMMI

6-6 Hitsu-cho

Matsue Shimane

690-0863

JAPAN

There were humorous moments, and moments of absurdity, although I often had an impression that the audience was too polite to laugh out loud. Other moments were very tender. We lit gentle 'rockets' made from unused, emptied teabags. They floated upwards beautifully, and looked enchanting. Again, countless layers of meaning emerged; some people viewed this image as a release of souls.

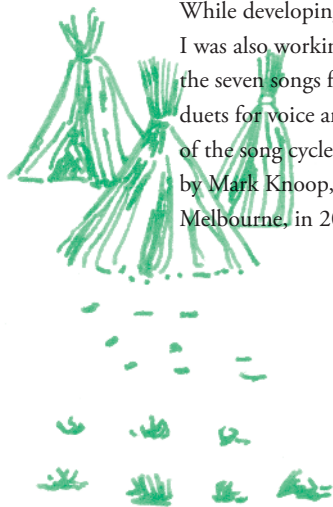
La Mama's intimacy meant that distinctions between the area occupied by the audience and the area pertaining to the performance were effectively blurred. This resulted in a particular poise. It felt to me that our audiences were witnessing some sort of ceremony, and the closer members of the audience were, the more they were a part of it. People responded strongly to *Ricefields*. The setting was dramatic and immersive. Also, it was completely blacked out; Lisa's precision lighting pinpointed the objects and instruments. Because of this confinement, the sounds had an effect of being very present, and inducing a psychological tension that some members of the audience found quite oppressive. This was fascinating, because elements that we had become very familiar and comfortable with—the playfulness, the unconventional scores—could be challenging or whimsical for the first-time viewer. I remember my mother felt as though she had witnessed an interpretation of the Vietnam War. To her, the manner in which we 'picked our way' through sound, or tried to reveal sound through objects, suggested someone searching a ricefield for sustenance.

The second movement of David's song cycle *Thousands of Bundled Straw* was the first piece we performed in *Ricefields*: this was the only music customarily notated on staves, and read from a music stand. For his pictorial scores, David characteristically had definite ideas concerning our interpretation—about whether the details referred to tessitura, texture, and so on. The piece 'Fireflies', for instance, was a trio for voice, bass recorder and percussion: the score was a coloured-in version of a small architectural portion of the Izumo shrine. When photocopied onto graph paper, it became music in time-space notation. Each performer followed a separate colour contour; there were pitch restrictions and cues clearly marked. The vocal parts for *Ricefields* required numerous extended techniques. Where we were instructed to improvise, directives were added, so that we could chart our way through the pieces. Through discussion and rehearsal, we focussed on the prescribed tone colours, durations, and 'landmarks', the ensemble becoming more and more precise. In performance, the length of any piece might have varied by just a few seconds or thereabouts.



Every tour of Aphids' work has entailed a huge risk; the opportunities have been rare, even sudden—especially in the days of *Ricefields*, when Aphids was so new. In 1999, we first took *Ricefields* to a festival of experimental art in north-east France. Of course the work fitted that situation well, but our audiences were perplexed. The venue was so unlike La Mama, which was problematic: we were a small, curious pool of colour in the middle of a vast space. To take *Ricefields* to Japan was another kind of challenge. I wondered whether the work resonated comfortably. Perhaps there were aspects that our Japanese audiences found puzzling, if not difficult to handle, given their own histories. Most extraordinary, and very moving, was the chance to perform in a fishing village outside Matsue City, close to where Yasutaka lived at the time. There, *Ricefields* became a high occasion. The local community was proud to host a performance, and families came, the children beautifully dressed. Many had cooked at home, and brought food for a banquet to share with us afterwards.

While developing and touring *Ricefields* with Aphids, I was also working with guitarist Geoffrey Morris to learn the seven songs from *Thousands of Bundled Straw*—the duets for voice and guitar that form the fifth movement of the song cycle. As part of Libra Ensemble, conducted by Mark Knoop, we performed the complete cycle in Melbourne, in 2005 and 2009.



scraping,
scratching,
pounding: we
discovered all
sorts of timbres

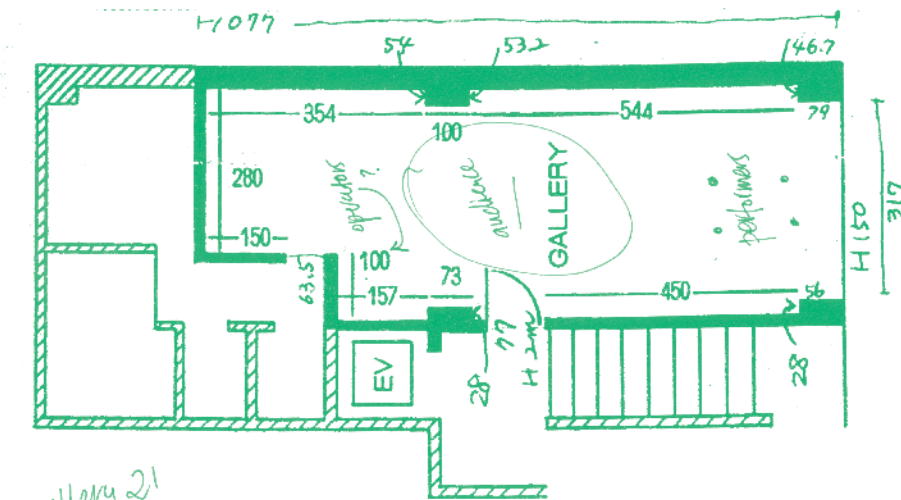
David's writing of *Thousands of Bundled Straw* seemed to proceed steadily and quite separately from the cross-artform Aphids projects. Connections between *Thousands of Bundled Straw* and *Ricefields* seem much, much stronger now in retrospect. They include an architectural underpinning, so to speak; influences from David's travels in Japan, and incredibly fine, 'just overheard' musical textures. Nonetheless, the compass of *Thousands of Bundled Straw* is far greater, and, rightly, it has always been presented as a major work for the concert hall.

I first met David when he was a composition student, in 1991. I was asked whether I would be interested to perform *Maxim*, his duet for baroque flute and soprano. Blindly I said 'yes'—and by saying 'yes' to that piece, doors began to open for me into the whole world of contemporary music. That was tremendously liberating. I realised there was so much sensation and context to explore outside the standard classical western vocal repertoire, and I'm still in the middle of the journey, saying 'yes'!

incredibly fine,
'just overheard'
musical textures



I have enjoyed tremendously the chance to work with certain people over and over again—David Young is one of these. As we all grow on (and here's hoping we will grow old together), each project feels more valuable, or has greater depth, for having a basis in experiences of collaboration 10 years ago, 20 years ago. That history is very precious—it's emotional. And I take my hat off to Aphids, which for more than 15 years has continued to draw together artists with drive and vision, tease out the meeting points of various idioms, and create new work for others to consider. It's an amazing life force.



Gallery 21
Tokyo

Maps Part 1 Melbourne
Maps Part 2 København

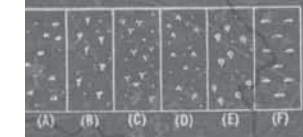
Juliana Hodkinson & David Young Composers
Louise Beck Scenographer
Cynthia Troup Writer (Film Script) & Lecturer
Louise Curham Filmmaker
Caerwen Martin Violoncello
Natasha Anderson Recorders
Yasutaka Hemmi Violin
Helle Thun Soprano (Melbourne)
Vanessa Tomlinson Percussion (Melbourne)
Henrik Larsen Percussion (Copenhagen)
Katrine Gislinge Pianoforte (Copenhagen)

Produced by Aphids (Melbourne) and Kokon (Denmark), *Maps Part 1 Melbourne* was performed 29 November–2 December 2000 at the North Melbourne Town Hall, Queensberry Street, North Melbourne; *Maps Part 2 København* was performed 23–26 October 2002, at the Musikvidenkabeligt Institut, Klerkgade 2, Copenhagen.



we pass pressing footprints that pool, subside
we pass and waves beat
we pass crushing shells crushing
we pass by waxy knots of weed
we pass shallows
we pass through wet back rocks
we pass over
we pass the tide's tracery
we pass onto sand, fine, like pepper

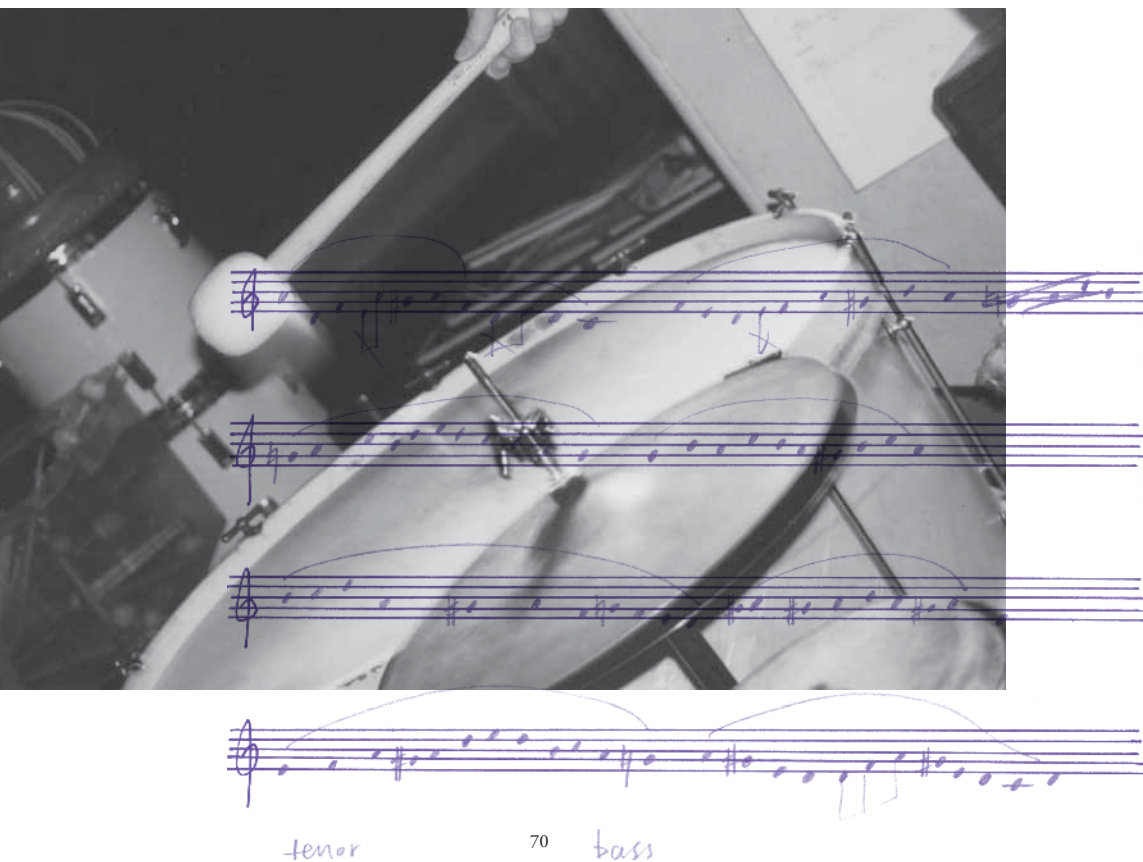
I'm so inspired by all the you've sent me about me aphids in general - and I need respectful, arch and - I want to see hear to it all!



vi går uden om

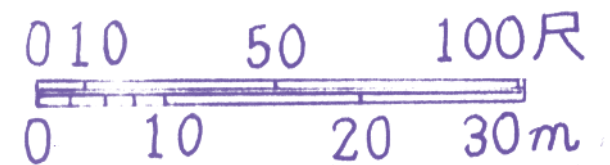
vi springer over

Matthias Schack-Arnott, Percussionist reflects on the lasting effects of *Maps* Part 1 Melbourne and *Schallmaschine 06*, his early encounters with Aphids



My first contact with Aphids was in 2000. I was 11 years old, and part of an audience for *Maps* Part 1 Melbourne at the North Melbourne Town Hall. I went along with my parents and sister, because Caerwen Martin, the cellist in the *Maps* ensemble, was my sister's teacher. As a family, we had never experienced anything in the field of cross-artform or interdisciplinary art, so we had no shared framework for our expectations of *Maps*. That night was so meaningful for me—while it was overwhelming, I felt a resounding sympathy and connection with the work. *Maps* was overwhelming for the sheer scale of the concepts behind the project, its investigation of analogies between aspects of cartography and music. I intuited that my experience exceeded my perception and my understanding, and this was intensely exciting. As is often the case with Aphids projects, there were countless allusions, and there were layers of ambiguity. Therefore it triggered interesting areas of my consciousness, while also triggering a great deal of reflection later.

Maps began before the audience entered the building—or at least the boundary marking its beginnings was blurred, shattering my expectations. Danish soprano Helle Thun appeared suddenly on the footpath; she was in a bathing suit, and spoke Danish into a payphone outside the main doorway to the town hall. I'm half Danish, and speak Danish, so I had an impression that she was speaking my family's 'secret language', although strangely.



From an alleyway we entered the basement of the town hall, and *Maps* commenced with a welcoming ritual: as I recollect, each member of the audience signed an indemnity form, and in exchange received a ‘show bag’ to carry during the performance. The bag evoked mystery. It contained unique objects that were poetic, and tactile—a small river stone, for example, and a ticking alarm clock. The objects seemed to have an obscure purpose, and I began entering a dreamlike state of sensing hidden connections between things, and many almost inexpressible connotations.

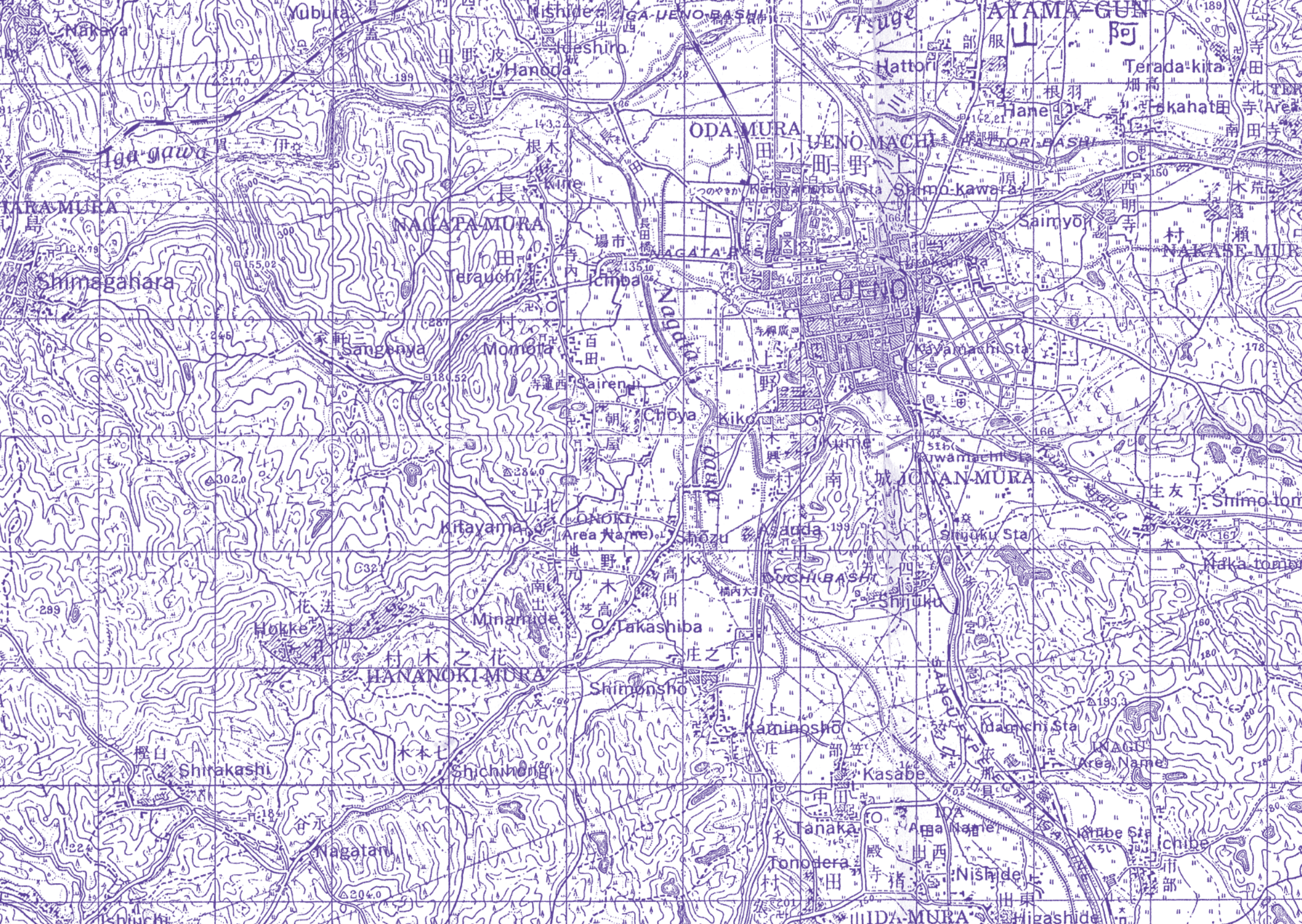
By 2000, I’d been studying and playing percussion for just over a year. The percussionist featured in *Maps* Part 1 was Vanessa Tomlinson, who is now widely recognised on the Australian and international scene. Even so, for me instrumental performance wasn’t the main focus of *Maps*; I was struck by the combination of so many artforms (music, theatre, film, text) and their coalescence into one continuous, holistic experience. With reference to the music, I was enthralled by the fact that distinctions between intentional sound and unintentional sound didn’t hold. For example, Juliana Hodkinson had written a duo called ‘The Pancake Piece’, which was performed in a kitchen at the rear of the town hall. It was scored for chef and percussionist. Their gestures were presented in parallel, as a pancake was cooked and served. The chef’s movements were functional, while the movements of the percussionist produced abstract sonic results. By itself this piece suggested percussive performance to be more codified and rarefied than I had ever imagined. There were many similar instances of playfulness, and the drama of surprise. The ‘Rehearsal Piece’ composed by David Young, for recorder, violin and cello, was delightful, because the audience couldn’t be sure whether we were attending a rehearsal or a performance. The ensemble stopped and started, the musicians spoke and adjusted their instruments, while we were constantly second guessing the situation.

everything had
its place, even
the dust on a
window sill

I was having the time of my life. The North Melbourne Town Hall seemed to be alive; it felt possible that something magical was going on behind every closed door. I experienced the building—not merely as a structure, or a set of scenes—as an enveloping environment, complete with miraculous details. I was so open, so perceptive, I noticed all kinds of minutiae in the architecture and interior design. To me everything was part of the art experience, everything had its place, even the dust on a window sill.

We had moved through the town hall complex circuitously, right up to the bell tower. Finally we entered the main hall, where performers were standing motionless on plinths. There were also glass cases containing miniature souvenirs from the rooms and compositions we had encountered. At that point, however, my parents decided that we needed to go home! I protested, became very upset. Having been aware of the performance advancing towards a finale, I felt that to leave before the culmination was a betrayal, a travesty.

Above all, *Maps* planted the seed, gave me a model for the type of experience I want to enjoy, and to offer. Art should be immersive. It should be overwhelming, life changing. After *Maps* I continued playing drums, but as my percussion practice has expanded, and since I began collaborating with artists from various disciplines, and producing my own work, the nature and calibre of *Maps* is always at the back of my mind.



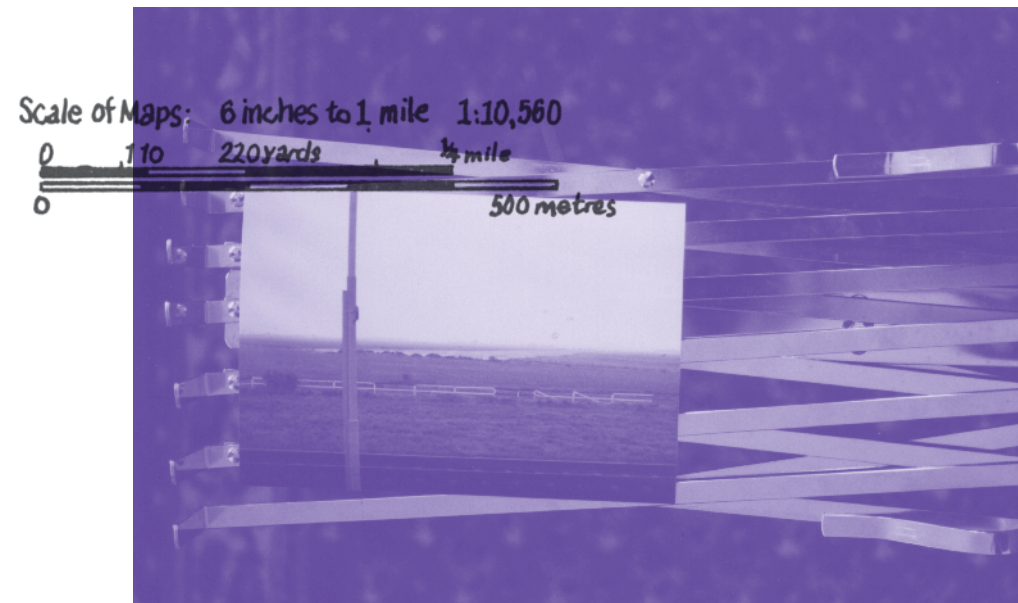
By the time I attended a performance of *Schallmaschine 06* (2006), I'd been living with the memory of *Maps* for six years, and had heard about developments in Aphids. *Schallmaschine 06* was a project that seemed to continue along the same trajectory described by *Maps*, though centred on percussion. Fritz Hauser, Eugene Ughetti and John Arcaro were the performers. I found *Schallmaschine 06* unique for the connections it made between Rosemary Joy's sculptural instruments, and the bleak, concrete surroundings of spaces underneath Federation Square. Tiny audiences were seated inside such a space, and heard it being activated by various, conflicting forces and materials: delicate sounds of the music; trams overhead; the groaning of the city's massive substructure. Like *Maps*, *Schallmaschine 06* felt exciting for ways in which it extended the boundaries of music performance. Each sound, each of the performer's movements, including the functional movements, suggested a world of meaning. Such works tap into the idea of the mystery of allusive gestures, which, as a percussionist, I find compelling. A delicate dance of hands can push the sound barrier, and form a basis for strangely wonderful experiences.

The influence of John Cage on Aphids' new music projects is clear, perhaps most obviously in *Schallmaschine 06*, one of a series of projects for which Rosemary has created percussion instruments. A Cageian openness to sound beyond that which is controlled by the performer represents a free, generous listening perspective. *Schallmaschine 06* involved openness to the outside energies of the city and the subterranean space itself.

I'm really free:
 1st May → 26th June 1999
 I'm not free:
 7th → 18th June 1999
 I'm sort of free rest of June, but that depends a lot on the Operanord production "Gilles Requiem" and how they pace the rehearsals, also on whether I pre-determine my role in the score or leave a lot up to collaboration in rehearsals.

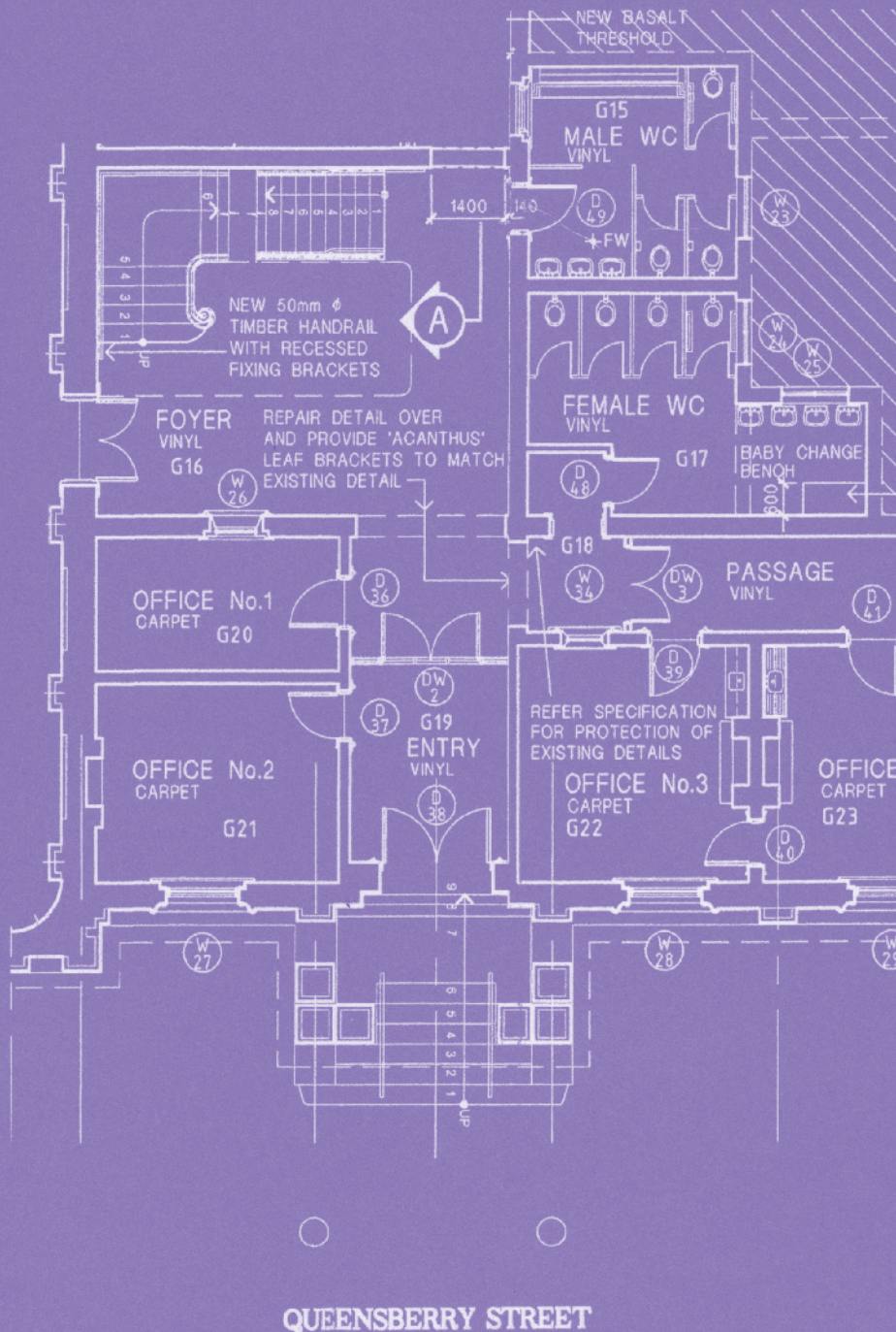
With fellow percussionist Eugene Ughetti, I performed *System Building* (2009–10), at Red Gate Gallery in Beijing in 2010; I also toured to Japan with the first performance of *Yakumo Honjin* at Matsue Castle in 2009. I had first worked with Aphids two years earlier, also with Eugene Ughetti, as part of *Underground* (2007). Exploring the sound world of Rosemary's handmade instruments was a key to *Underground*—a process that began during *Music at Mount Egerton*, an Aphids residency at a clay mine in country Victoria. To develop *Underground*, David as the composer would lead sonic exploration of the instrument objects, suggesting timbre, texture and form. Typically for Aphids, it was a shared practice of refining a sonic grammar and syntax for the project, distilling performative sound and gesture.

Aphids has conceived, presented or co-presented such a wide variety of memorable new music projects. Libra Ensemble's 2009 performance of David's song cycle *Thousands of Bundled Straw* comes to mind. The work is very beautiful, strange, written with a fluid approach to instrumental colours, highly structured and formalised. Each of the seven movements has a distinct character, and uses different combinations from the ensemble of 13 instruments. As the cycle unfolds, the listener is taken into special places within this ensemble—quite like being taken into small rooms of a large dwelling.



Scale of Maps: 6 inches to 1 mile 1:10,560

0 110 220 yards 1/2 mile
 0 500 metres



Over the years, shifts of interest regarding music notation within Aphids' projects have followed David's shift, as a composer, towards graphic notation. The scores composed for *Maps* predominantly involved conventional notation, and some text-based materials. In the suite known as the *Val Camonica Pieces* (2007), the notes on the staff literally transform to a graphic notation, the scores gradually 'teaching' the performers how to interpret imagery devised from ancient rock etchings. Graphic scores have the capacity to express subtlety and nuance that is lost in conventional notation. For example, the crunching of sand between two rocks, or the scraping of metal against wood—these sorts of ideas aren't easily expressed on a staff. David's graphic scores have tended to emphasise a suggested sonic result; how to achieve this is really up to the performer. When working with bespoke instruments, such an approach is ideal, because the instruments change through the collaborative process. The instrumental language is progressively altered, and the graphic scores allow for this, because they describe parameters for sonic results.

As I start to create my own projects, I see Aphids' influence, particularly because I experienced *Maps* at a formative age. By conveying the possibilities and the power of art experiences, Aphids has helped me to evolve as an artist. So without my history with the company—as an audience member, and as a performer—my view of art would be much less full.

for example, the
crunching of sand
between two rocks

Schallmaschine 06

Fritz Hauser Artistic Director/Percussion

Boa Baumann Designer

David Young Composer

Rosemary Joy Artist (Instruments)

Eugene Ughetti Percussion

John Arcaro Percussion

Kath Banger Costume Design

Richard Vabre Lighting

Michael Hutchison Construction

Presented by Aphids, Speak Percussion, Fritz Hauser and Boa Baumann in association with the Melbourne International Arts Festival at Federation Square in Melbourne, 22-23 & 25-28 October 2006. *Schallmaschine 06* was part of Aphids' year-long company residency at Federation Square. Following the 2006 season in Melbourne, the next iteration of the work, *Schallmaschine 07: klein*, was presented in Basel, Switzerland, as part of Different Beat directed by Fritz Hauser.

01 The Hostile 239" 3'59" 217" 3'37"

02 The Grey World or Concrete 217" 3'37"

03 The Anonymous - tiles 163" 2'10"

04 The Ugly 116" 1'56"

05 Corridors of the Metro - tiles

06 Public Baths - strawberries - score

07 Hangars - photo?

08 Car Parks (unison) 57" 11"

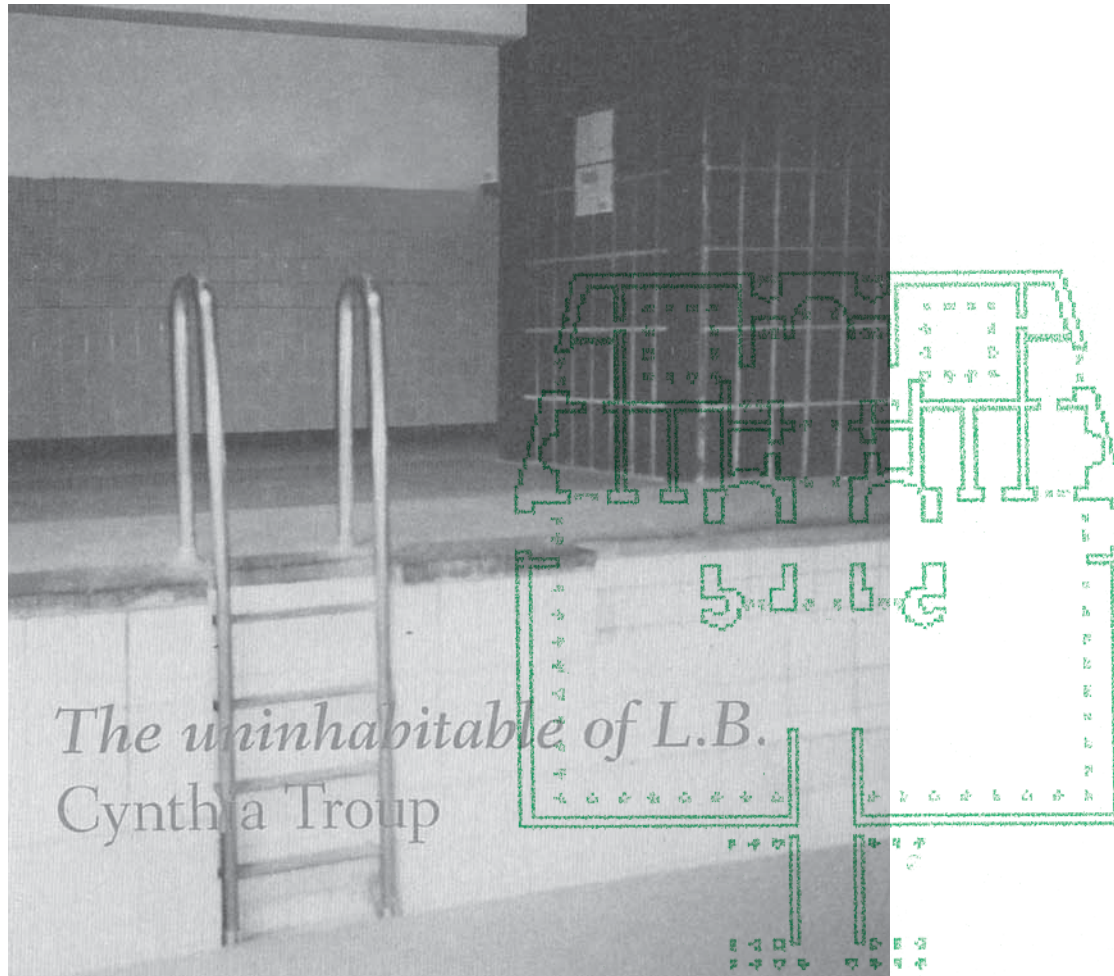
09 Marshalling Yards - water - photo

10 Ticket Windows - different leaves

11 Hotel Bedrooms - photo

NOTES
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later a
played
yes,

Rosemary Joy, Artist reflects on *Scale*, her history with Aphids and the development of her sculptural instruments



Scale was created in suburban Brussels, at Bains::Connective, a bathing complex given over to artistic collaboration at that time (2004). The music was composed for prepared toy piano, and six instruments I made from Queensland rosewood mahogany. We sourced the piano at a Brussels flea market—*Scale* involved a month-long residency with Cynthia Troup and David Young from Aphids, and a trio of musicians from Champ d’Action ensemble: Guitarist Tom Pauwels, pianist Yutaka Oya, both based in Brussels, and Dutch percussionist Fedor Teunisse. When David had worked with Champ d’Action in 2003, he and I had attended a celebration at Bains::Connective.

Field Kits was the first project for which I developed a suite of instruments beforehand, similarly based around wooden boxes. It was part of the Aphids project *Instrument Building* (2003) at Linden Centre for Contemporary Art, and featured percussionists David Hewitt, Graham Leak, Peter Humble, Vanessa Tomlinson. Since collaborating with Vanessa on *Puff* (2000), I had become fascinated by the idea of customising instruments for a particular musician, a particular place and a particular time—rather than creating something which had a performative life detached from its surroundings. This is what interests me, working intensively with these unique, sculptural instruments.



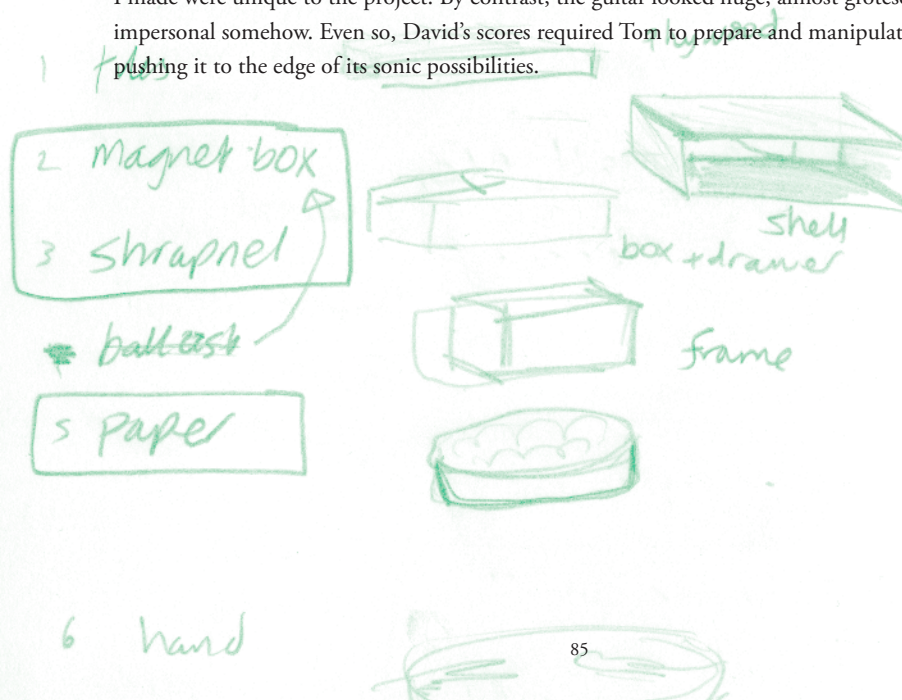
For *Scale*, I discovered that Fedor liked sounds made by dragging one object over another. At first this seemed like a puzzle: how could this inform the development of an instrument? I wanted my work to be anchored in the space of the former swimming pool, but also in a responsive relationship to the musicians. One instrument that resulted is called ‘The Tile Box’, a simple square, 138mm x 138mm, 40mm deep, containing four white tiles and two ball bearings. The tiles relate to the tiled swimming pool—inside the box, the ball bearings rolling across them generate a very compelling sound.

Cynthia took to Brussels a quotation from Georges Perec’s collection of essays *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*. She had found ‘public baths’ listed in a short paragraph on the idea of ‘the uninhabitable’. Yet in 2003 I had experienced Bains::Connective as a beautifully ‘inhabited’ space; a wonderfully warm community of artists creating beguiling work there. For that reason, perhaps I never quite came to terms with the Perequian imagery that Cynthia brought to the collaboration.

Architecturally, the spaces at Bains::Connective struck me as a series of nested boxes: there were cubicles upstairs for changerooms, and laundry rooms downstairs. I was also taken by the story of the building. A couple of times it had been under assault, during World War II, for instance, and again later when it had been a nightclub. But my work during the residency wasn’t grounded in a strong historical analysis of the building.

I assembled materials by working fairly intuitively and laterally from my impressions of the complex, the fragments that I knew of its history, the discussions I’d had with Fedor about his favourite sounds. The notion of ‘the uninhabitable’ did feed into some of my work, I realize. For example, another of the instruments, a larger box called ‘The Munitions Factory’ (233mm x 340mm x 105mm), connects with the building as a site of conflict. It has 13 holes through the top, and contains a series of metal tracks for ball bearings. Items found at Bains::Connective or collected nearby from local shops are also hidden inside.

These instruments required the musicians to be able to ‘reach in’ and manipulate the small-scale shapes and forms. They demanded a ‘hands on’ approach for every sound that we had discovered during the residency, which was graphically notated by David. For the performance at Bains::Connective, 40 audience members sat on the carpeted floor of the empty swimming pool. The three musicians were also scattered on the floor with their various implements. The atmosphere was remarkably quiet and intimate. I felt the audience leaning in. The musicians were seated in pools of light, which also conduced to an extraordinarily focused performance. The lighting rig was positioned so that it established, in effect, a very low ceiling for the whole swimming pool. The toy piano is rather battered, giving a sense of having passed through many hands, and the boxes that I made were unique to the project. By contrast, the guitar looked huge, almost grotesque, and impersonal somehow. Even so, David’s scores required Tom to prepare and manipulate the guitar, pushing it to the edge of its sonic possibilities.



I felt the
audience
leaning in

L'inhabitable

L'hostile, le gris, l'anonyme, le laid, les couloirs du métro, les bains-douches, les hangars, les parkings, les centres de tri, les guichets, les chambres d'hôtel

The hostile, the grey, the anonymous, the ugly, the corridors of the Métro, public baths, car parks, marshalling yards, ticket windows, hotel bedrooms

ATTENTION AUX
ACCIDENTS

Il est interdit d'entrer dans l'eau et d'en sortir continuellement. Le baigneur doit quitter l'eau immédiatement et définitivement dans les cas suivants: sensation tenace de froid, frissons, engourdissements, crampes, bleuissement des lèvres, nausées, vertiges, difficultés de respiration, douleurs

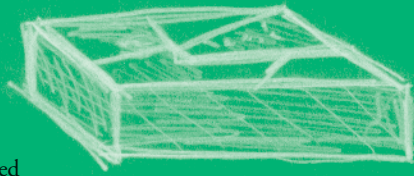
BEWARE OF
ACCIDENTS

It is forbidden to enter and leave the water continually. The swimmer must leave the water immediately and conclusively on experiencing persistent feelings of cold, shivering, numbness, cramps, discolouration of the lips, nausea, dizziness, breathing difficulties, pain in the thorax.

For *Ricefields* (1998), David had presented to us the premise of creating sculptural scores, and I had decided to experiment, try everything. Why not? We had a photocopied plan of an ancient archaeological site, which I didn't think about in terms of architectural space, but as a graphic reference point for all the contributing artists. I constructed a number of scores, and worked closely with the musicians to develop their interpretation. As I've outlined, the instruments for *Scale* were broadly inspired by the space of Bains::Connective—and they were more or less containers for found objects. Whereas nowadays, the container or box has become the percussion instrument in its own right. Those I made for *System Building* (2009–10), were literally miniature versions of the buildings in which the music was performed.

I was still captivated by the idea of site-specificity, but how do you make site-specific work that can also tour? Initially *System Building* toured to the Watertoren West in Groningen, The Netherlands; Radialsystem V in Berlin; the Melbourne Recital Centre, and CarriageWorks in Sydney.

In keeping with this itinerary, I worked from photos and plans of the venues and made a suite of four instruments. The following year, the work toured to the Red Gate Gallery in Beijing, so I added another sculptural, architectural instrument. In Groningen, audiences were required to climb up inside the Water Tower; it took them 20 minutes, via ladders and stairs, until finally they arrived through a trapdoor at the top.



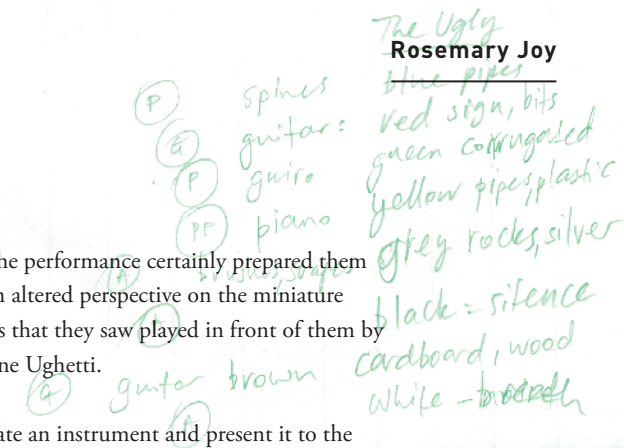
Paper
cloth
ceramic
metal on metal
wood

Such a journey to enter the location of the performance certainly prepared them to engage with the work. It gave them an altered perspective on the miniature wooden water tower and other structures that they saw played in front of them by percussionists Diego Espinoza and Eugene Ughetti.

I've reflected often on the idea that I create an instrument and present it to the musician as a gift. This fosters a certain frame of mind that the musician, in turn, can convey to the audience. Most adults and children can be enchanted by boxes, opening a box, 'what's inside?'. And the gesture of revealing detail, quietly opening something up for someone, encourages people to become more receptive, more sensitised to sound. Perhaps later they can hear the sound of the door key in the lock, the cup hitting the saucer. I'm hoping to have a kind of transformative effect; it's relational, about the human being. When I first encountered Aphids, I was excited by the artists' different, even holistic way of engaging with an audience—from sending handcrafted invitations to events, to offering food as a gesture of welcome. This created conditions for me to find my own artistic path.

Since *Schallmaschine 06* (2006), I've continued working with furniture maker Adam Stewart, which adds another level of collaboration. With Adam, suddenly it was so much more interesting to be able to be more adventurous in constructing the instruments. The sound of the African rosewood mahogany is spectacular, but only when the instrument is built can its distinctive character begin to emerge.

to experiment,
try everything.
Why not?



The image features a hand-drawn musical score in green ink overlaid on two photographs. The top photograph shows a square wooden box with a white interior, containing two silver spheres. Handwritten notes in green ink are scattered around and on the box, including 'scrape string with nail', 'normale', and various musical symbols like 'x', 'o', and 'pp'. The bottom photograph shows a dark, multi-compartment box with its lid open, revealing internal components. Handwritten notes in green ink are also present, including circled letters 'B' and 'Z', and musical symbols like 'pp', 'mf', and 'p'. The score consists of several staves with notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Schallmaschine 06 was part of the 2006 Melbourne International Festival of the Arts. There were 42 performances, all to an audience of nine, or three groups of three. The percussionists Fritz Hauser, Eugene Ughetti, and John Arcaro each performed in a different space concealed within Federation Square. Foreknowledge of these spaces informed the creation of the instruments, though I began by interviewing Eugene and John, who are based in Melbourne, about their preferred sounds. Eugene had the exquisite idea of a treasure chest with a harp in the lid. The area in which Eugene was to perform is known as 'the trench', because it's part of the hidden engineering of Federation Square, and resembles an underground concrete dungeon. So Eugene's instrument became a chest, like a small pirate chest. It was first played upside down, and there really is a harp in the lid! It's also like a travelling Japanese tea set.

When I reflect on these Aphids projects, each had a very personal quality. There's a rich history around all the relationships between the artists involved. And the same personal quality and rich sense of connection is also there in regard to the space in which the works were first performed. I see the attention to site-specificity as part of Aphids' broader ethos.

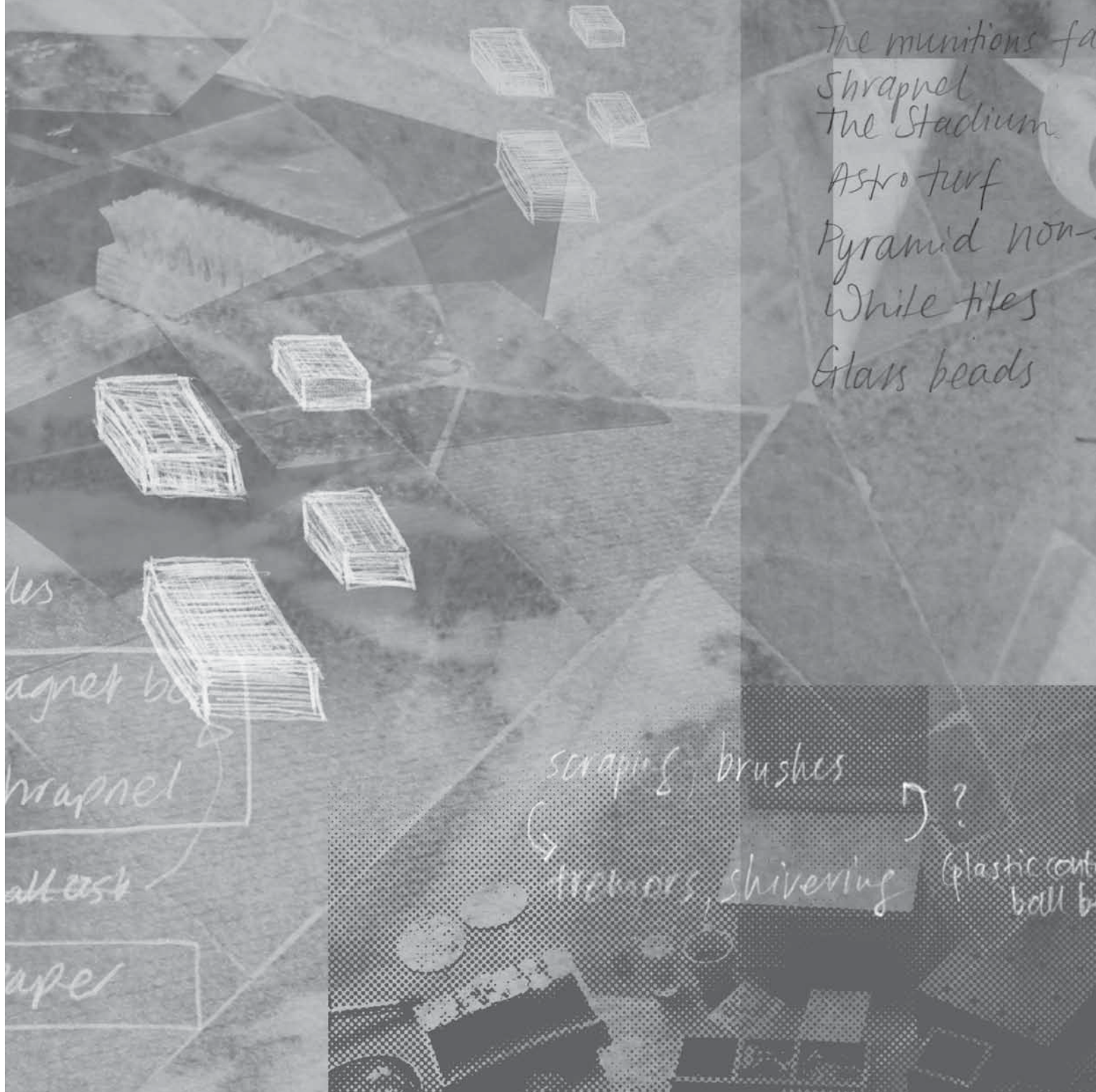
Initially my role in Aphids was administrative. Then to have the opportunity to work with David Young as an artist, and begin exploring what really interested me, within the broader, nurturing space that Aphids provided—it's been life changing. It's given me a confidence that certain private, yearning thoughts can have validity, and can resonate with an audience.

Scale

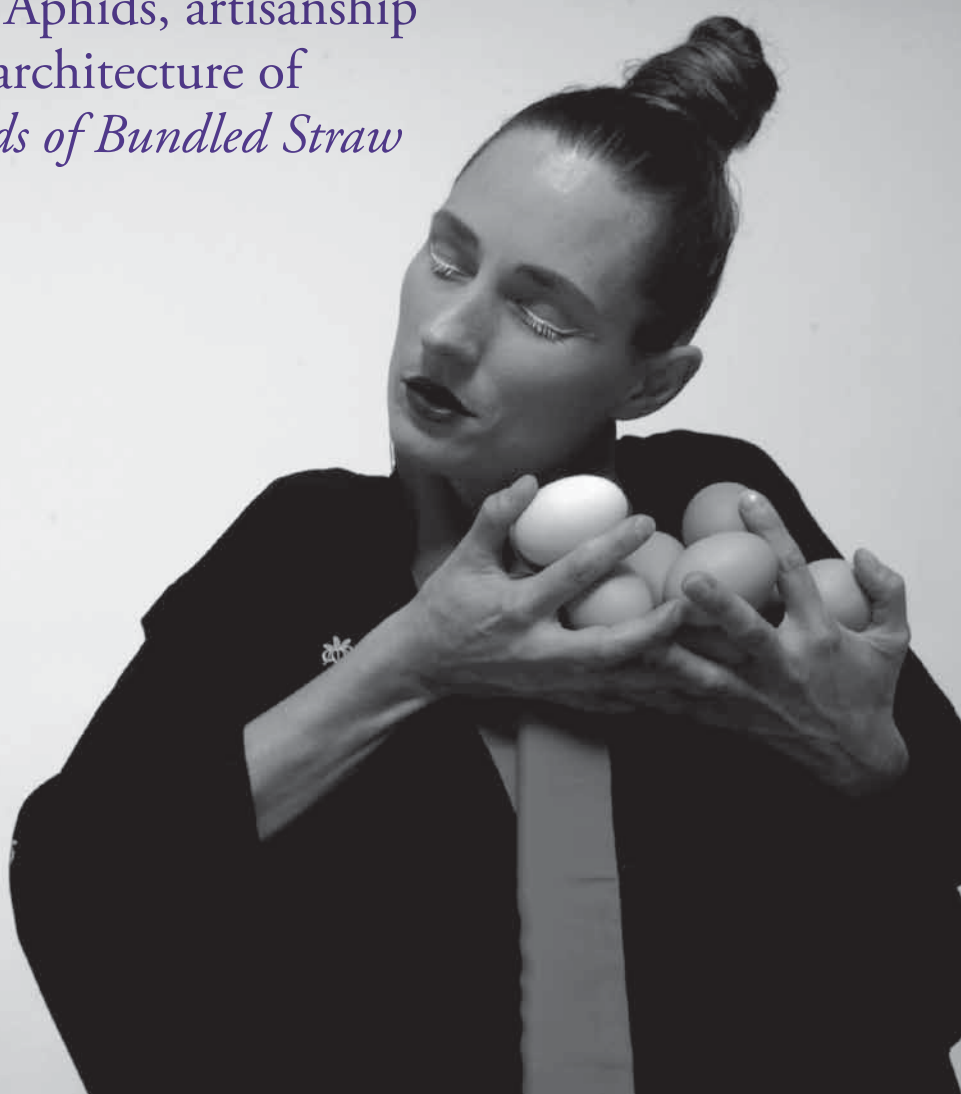
Aphids in residence with MUSiCLAB
at Bains::Connective

Rosemary Joy Artist
Cynthia Troup Writer
David Young Composer
Yutaka Oya Pianoforte
Tom Pauwels Guitar
Fedor Teunisse Percussion
Els Van Riel Lighting
Ludo Engels Sound Recording
Marie-Hélène Elleboudt Coordinator, MUSiCLAB

The music of *Scale* was first performed on 30 July 2005 at Bains::Connective, 34 Rue Berthelotstraat, Brussels. The text of *Scale, The Uninhabitable of L. B.*, was first performed in its entirety by Caroline Lee as part of New Music Machine (festival of independent new music ensembles presented by Aphids) at the South Melbourne Town Hall, Bank Street, South Melbourne on 2 November 2006.



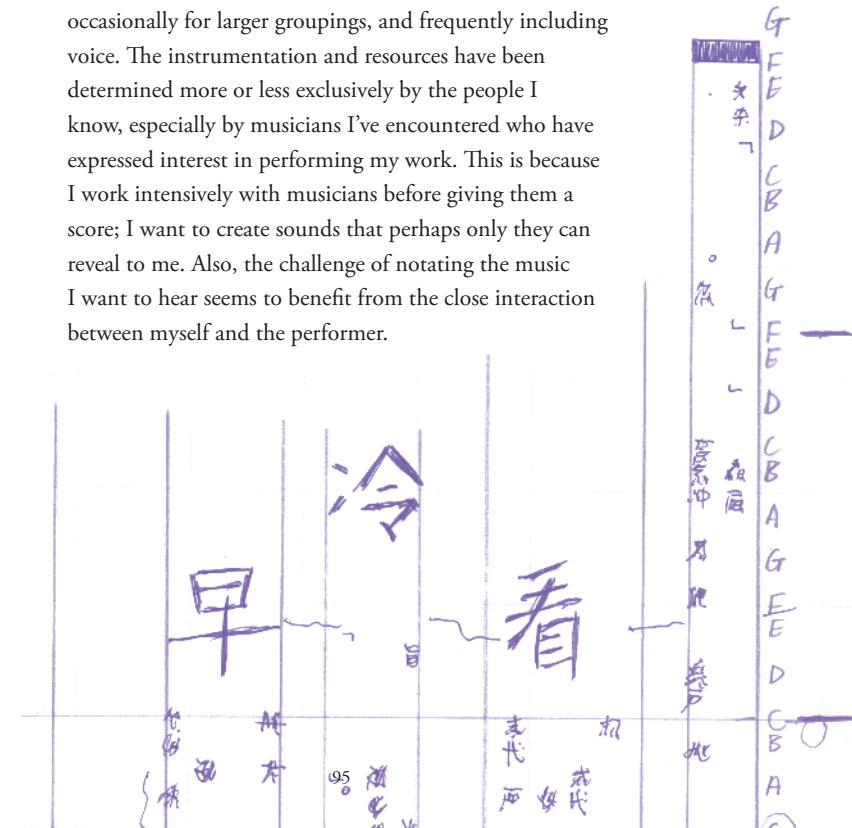
David Young,
Aphids Artistic Director 1994–2010
 reflects on the relationship
 between Aphids, artisanship
 and the architecture of
Thousands of Bundled Straw



Thousands of Bundled Straw (2005); Deborah Kayser. Photo by Yáñez.

Aphids has undertaken so many collaborations with artists working in different artforms; after seven or eight years as artistic director, I began to refer to the collaborative process as a meeting of artisans. The ‘cross-artform’ space in which the new work was created was where we intersected, but it was very important that each of the collaborators came from their own, individual base of practice, technique and experience—very much in terms of artisanship. To be true to this approach to collaboration, it has always been vital that I maintain an independent practice as a composer.

That practice has consisted almost entirely of writing chamber music, often for small groupings of instruments, occasionally for larger groupings, and frequently including voice. The instrumentation and resources have been determined more or less exclusively by the people I know, especially by musicians I’ve encountered who have expressed interest in performing my work. This is because I work intensively with musicians before giving them a score; I want to create sounds that perhaps only they can reveal to me. Also, the challenge of notating the music I want to hear seems to benefit from the close interaction between myself and the performer.



Thousands of Bundled Straw is a 54-minute song cycle, which I completed in 2005. I began the work in 1997, when I was in a small fishing village in Japan, staying with a young composer, Takashi Tokunaga, and his family. I'd go cycling along the seaside. The village was very built up, industrial—to me a chaotic landscape that included asymmetrical pine trees on islands and mountainous horizons. Fantastically beautiful but strange, as Japan can be.

Composing *Thousands of Bundled Straw* began with the fifth movement, which consist of seven songs for voice and guitar. The fourth of these songs is scored for soprano, five eggs, and guitar; it's the kernel of the work. I remember drawing up the staves, and looking at a Japanese biscuit packet, a plastic-wrapped cardboard box containing a polystyrene biscuit tray, in which each biscuit was individually wrapped. This idea of 'boxes within boxes' enthralled me. It relates to the concept of *oku*, or 'hidden depth' in Japanese and Chinese traditional architecture—and struck me as a fittingly bizarre metaphor for the way in which I wanted to make the song cycle. The first little song that I was writing would be like the biscuit, eventually packaged into a much larger architectural structure. In this fourth song, the soprano is required to drop the eggs; eggs were listed amongst the ingredients on that biscuit packet.

Gradually, over the following eight years, I composed *Thousands of Bundled Straw* in seven movements, with the fifth movement for voice and guitar at the heart of the work. Overall the song cycle is scored for 13 instruments: clarinet, strings, recorder, percussion, piano, trombone, trumpet, soprano, and guitar, each movement involving different instrumentation. Having begun 'in the middle', I wrote the other movements according to opportunities that arose and what was happening in my life at the time. So *Thousands of Bundled Straw* can be considered an autobiography of my evolution as a composer over the years 1997–2005, such a significant period for my creative life. To use the artisanal imagery, *Thousands of Bundled Straw* was the workshop, like a blacksmith's, for forging exceptionally strong relationships with musicians.

The relationship with soprano Deborah Kayser, for example, has been crucial. We've worked together for more than 20 years. Our collaborative relationship first had the concert hall as its context, concert performances of chamber works I had written. But the communication as artists and the trust that developed then emboldened me to invite Deborah into the much more open sphere which became the sphere of Aphids. Indeed, Deborah performed in the first Aphids event—called *Aphids*—in 1994, one autumn evening in a private house. I venture to say that none of the artists involved in the earliest Aphids projects could have compactly explained what we were doing, or seeking to do. The events were similar to 'happenings' characteristic of the 1970s, and Fluxus-inspired, yet choreographed and rehearsed with immense care and attention to aesthetic detail, musical detail, sightlines and timing. And further, beginning with the installation/performance *Ricefields* in 1998, when Aphids embarked on making work for a season rather than a single event—to bring a classically trained musician into a collaborative space in which the initial ideas were quite abstract; in which there were also visual artists, a lighting designer, a sound designer—well, *Ricefields*, *Maps*, *Scale*, *Schallmaschine 06*, and other projects were only possible because the musicians and I had developed great artistic trust.

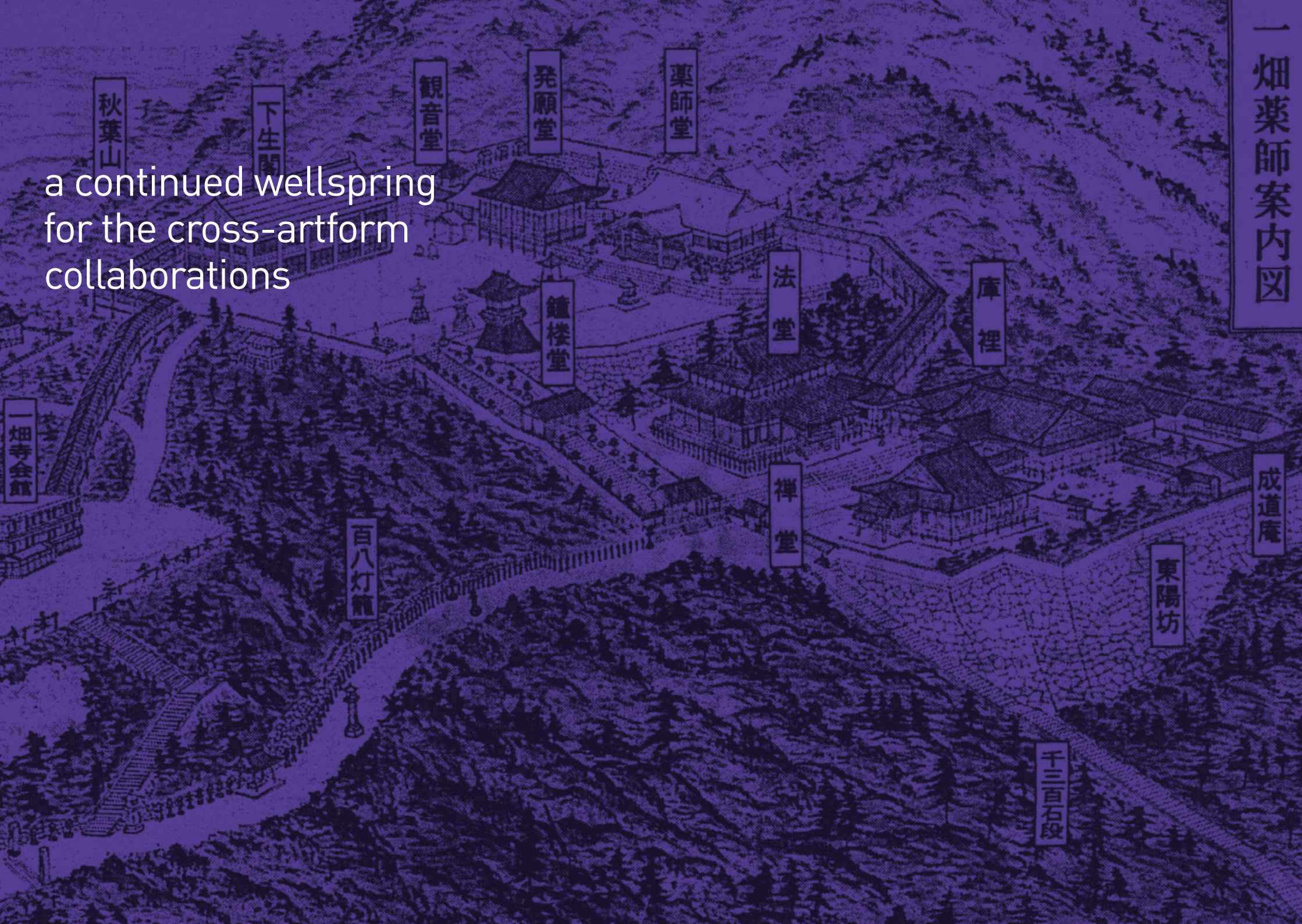
no no no no
voice oboe pf vc articulations

A# no vc → pure
E# no pf →
C# microtones: ← G # ♯ ## bend gliss → norma
D# disturbances: break grace trills trills Flz sing → norma
F# no oboe →
G# no voice → disrupted

(E) A# C# D# F# G#

一畑薬師案内図

a continued wellspring
for the cross-artform
collaborations



一畑寺会館

秋葉山

下生閣

観音堂

堯願堂

薬師堂

鐘樓堂

法堂

庫裡

禅堂

成道庵

東陽坊

百八灯籠

千三百石段

Compositionally speaking, there's a very direct connection between *Thousands of Bundled Straw* and *Ricefields*. The second movement of the song cycle is scored for bass recorder, oboe, trumpet, violin and percussion, and was first written for Japanese recorder player Tosiya Suzuki. Adapted for the *Ricefields* ensemble of soprano, recorder, violin and percussion, this movement was critical for setting up the sound world of *Ricefields*. Indeed *Ricefields* opened with this movement. It was a conventionally notated piece, read from music stands. As such, it served as a kind of overture for the music that followed—which was read from three-dimensional and graphic scores, variously made by Rosemary Joy, Sarah Pirrie and myself. I think we were able to create music from the sculptural devices in coherent ways because the opening ensemble established certain sonic landmarks and timbral gestures. It was a means of 'tuning in' to the installation and the musicians' interpretative work.

an ancient shrine in Izumo, also in far west Japan

otturato		oboe solo				trio + arpa
clarinet 'cello	recorder oboe violin trumpet perc	voice oboe 'cello piano	oboe clarinet trombone viola db	voice guitar	voice oboe clarinet trombone vv vdb celaste	all xguitar
voice clarinet 'cello	rec trump tromb perc					

①

recorder
trumpetto

②

chitarra
percussion
trombone

③

violino
viola
Contrabasso
Arpa

④

voice
clarinetto
violoncello

⑤

oboe
flauto
clarinetto

↓

hinsun

↓

jasmine

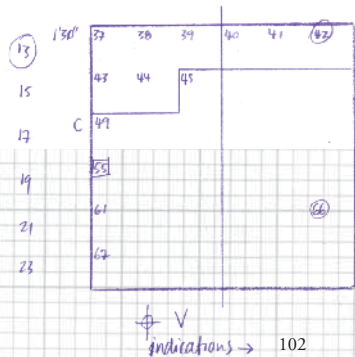
For all the projects involving new music, Aphids was wielding every artistic means to try to create doors and windows, so to speak, into contemporary music. We wanted to foster a particular kind of attention to the music, making it a rich and integral part of the audience's experience of performance in a wider sense. It took a long time for *Thousands of Bundled Straw* to be performed as a complete song cycle, though parts of it were performed in concerts, all over the world and around Australia. With the Libra Ensemble, Aphids presented *Thousands of Bundled Straw* in concert twice: in 2005, at Melbourne's Iwaki Auditorium, and in 2009 in the Salon of the Melbourne Recital Centre. These performances were immensely valuable as an expression of Aphids' aspirations regarding new music, and they highlighted the song cycle as a continued wellspring for the cross-artform collaborations.

Thousands of Bundled Straw 'contains' or cites numerous buildings and maps of buildings. It makes allusive and allegorical reference to the Temple of the Healing Eyes above Lake Shinji-ko, in far west Japan, which encloses a statue of the Buddha both miraculous and rarely seen. A key visual source was an archaeological map of an ancient shrine in Izumo, also in far west Japan. I'd overlay graph paper, notate the map into music, and use the map's proportions to determine temporal proportions in the work. Of course architecture is often aligned with music on the basis of mathematics. It's more unexpected to observe that architecture and music are experienced in embodied time—both are temporal arts. Also written into *Thousands of Bundled Straw* is the Parisian apartment block that's methodically explored and dissected in the novel *Life: A User's Manual* by Georges Perec. In a similar manner, the third movement systematically moves through an abstracted space, like a building of 6 x 6 x 6 rooms, each room with its own particular musical key, pitch, dynamics, ornamentation and so forth.

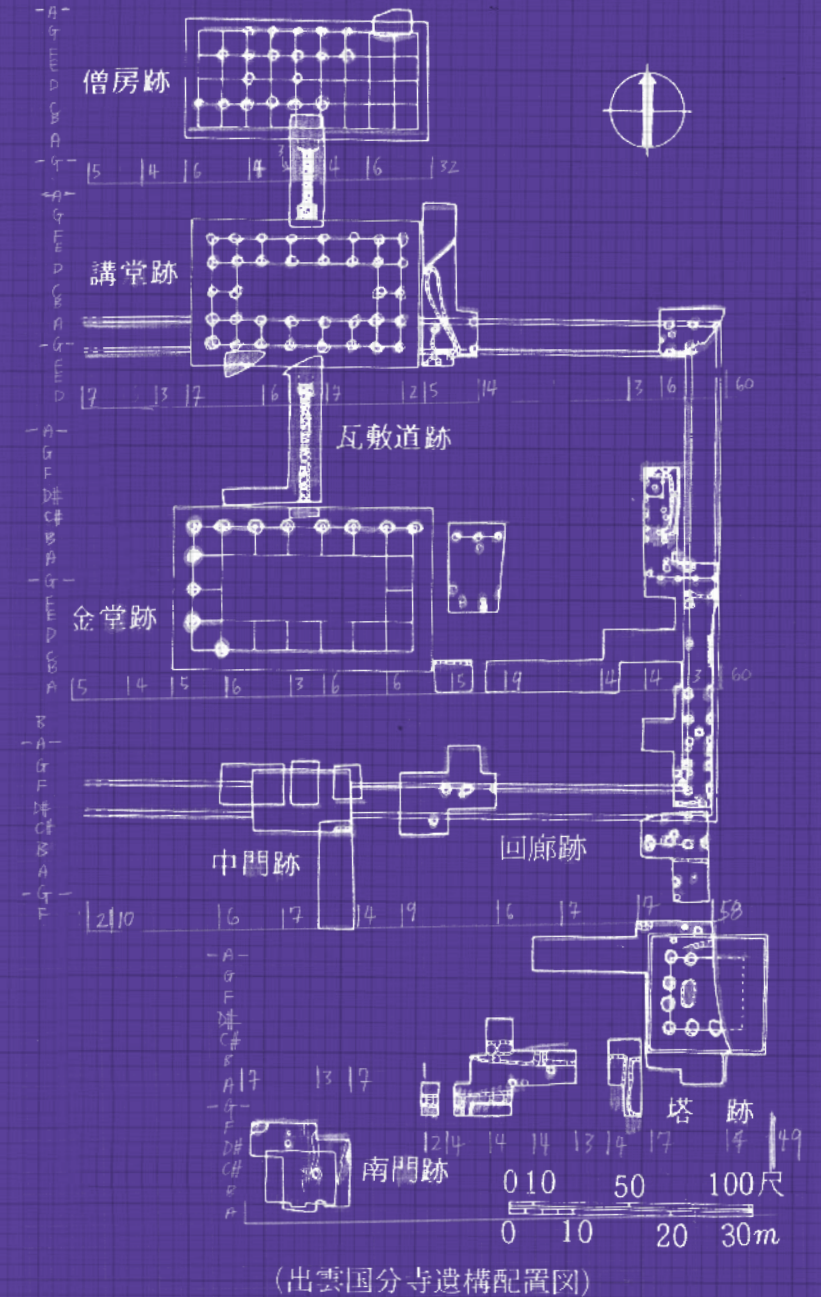
Projects, Processes

It fascinates me to reflect now that, likewise, we explored and dissected the North Melbourne Town Hall for *Maps Part 1 Melbourne* (2000), creating an itinerary from the basement to the bell tower—a new world in every room. Aphids has never undertaken anything before or since at such a scale. While *Maps* was unwieldy and the experience was epic (the performance went for two hours), the material needed that physical space and duration to play itself out, somehow. *Maps* perfectly exemplified Aphids' cross-artform practice, involving a Danish scenographer, Louise Beck; film-maker Louise Curham; writer Cynthia Troup; five musicians—including Danish soprano Helle Thun, Japanese violinist Yasutaka Hemmi—and two composers, myself and Juliana Hodkinson: a wealth of artisanal expertise! Actually *Maps* provided the impetus for Juliana to found a sister company in Denmark called Kokon. There were ideas within ideas akin to 'boxes within boxes'; extensive transcontinental dialogue, research and correspondence, much to learn. Together we were in uncharted territory, which also, obviously, entailed cultural exchange. In 2002 we translocated the project to Copenhagen (*Maps Part 2 København*), adapting the same content for performance in the Danish Musicological Institute—housed in a former Masonic temple.

Just as the third movement of *Thousands of Bundled Straw* was a point of departure for *Ricefields*, translocation has been a hallmark of many Aphids projects to 2010: work was not only translocated from one country to another, one building to another, but often by some means from one artform to another. An idea here or a conversation there later became another performance, an installation, a song, or a publication.



clarity
concision
incision
candour
vivacity
unity



Thousands of Bundled Straw

A song cycle in seven movements by David Young

Libra Ensemble

Mark Knoop Conductor

Deborah Kayser Soprano

Geoffrey Morris Guitar

Natasha Anderson Bass Recorder

Matthew Tighe Oboe/Cor Anglais

Carl Rosman Clarinets

Tristram Williams Trumpet

Ben Marks Trombones

Elizabeth Sellars Violin

Jason Bunn Viola

Roseanne Hunt Violoncello

Dorit Herskovits Contrabass

Peter Neville Percussion

Mark Kruger Pianoforte

First performed in its entirety by Libra Ensemble on 18 October 2005 at Iwaki Auditorium, ABC Southbank Centre, Melbourne, in a concert presented by Libra Ensemble in association with Aphids and the Melbourne International Arts Festival. A second performance took place at the Salon, Melbourne Recital Centre, on 12 February 2009, presented by Aphids and the Melbourne Recital Centre.

textual resonance

ivy)

lambon cookies

chome

shir

ken

soprano

oboe

clinet in Eb

tenor trombone

violin

viola

clinet in Eb

Violoncello

-attacks/articulations

-text?

Bronwyn Stocks

Afterword

'Doors began to open for me', says Deborah Kayser, speaking of her first meeting with David Young, when she agreed to perform one of his compositions. So too does this publication open doors for the reader. It enables surprising encounters with Aphids' works—their points of creative departure and exploration, and their extraordinary and ordinary sites of enactment. Evoking this via the remembrances of performers and creators permits precious insight into personal experience, as well as an appreciation of a sense of wonder that remains very much alive.

Matthias Schack-Arnott, for example, recalls and eloquently characterises his impressions of the North Melbourne Town Hall as the site for *Maps Part 1 Melbourne* (2000), his first experience of an Aphids production. In this as in other descriptions, the language conveys an almost visceral sense of the past performance. The site, and particularly the architectural space, is vital in this process, just as it was in the original site-specific projects: in their charting of space, the recollections draw the reader in, and one re-enters the performances. This entry, a movement of thought, perception and sensation, touches upon the classical art of memory, the art of the 'memory palace'. According to this tradition, the creation in the mind of a series of *loci* or places within a building could be a remarkably effective mnemonic for storing facts. Here, we traverse the spaces of the descriptions to unlock a memory or imagining of performance.

Land artist Robert Smithson coined the term 'non-site' to describe the phase of a site-specific artwork in which the project is evoked by photographic, textual or material relics within a context remote from the original location. For Smithson, such evocation became increasingly necessary, as it offered a quasi experience of artworks that were otherwise temporally and geographically inaccessible. Simultaneously dis-placing and displaying elements of performances past, and so valuable for the numerous ways in which it provides an imaginative re-staging, *Sonorities of Site* might well be described as a non-site work.

Recollections are always subjective, and alter in the re-telling; they are liable to further metamorphosis when received. The photographs, maps, plans, scores, sketches, and notes scattered amongst the texts, and enclosed within these book covers (another architecture) prompt recognition and memories, musing and invention. At this moment, what is happening in the spaces and places of the original performances, now enlivened and translocated to new environs of the imagination?

(P) guitar

(P) piano

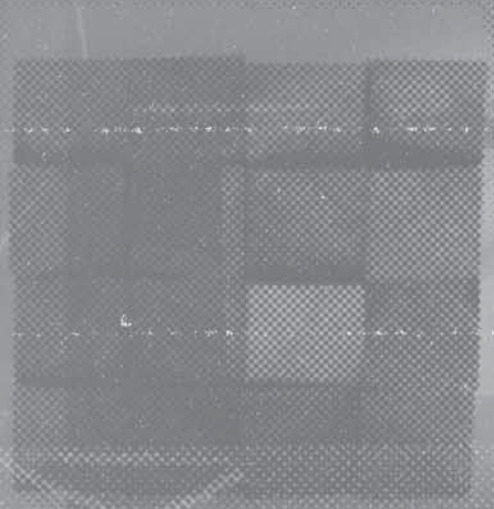
(A) brushes, scrapes

(T)

(A)

guitar brown

(T)



Interviews with Cynthia Troup

Juliana Hodkinson, Berlin [via telephone], 18 October 2011.
 Rosemary Joy, Melbourne, 30 October 2011.
 Deborah Kayser, Melbourne, 17 October 2011.
 Matthias Schack-Arnott, Melbourne, 25 October 2011.
 David Young, Melbourne, 8 September 2011.

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_____ 'David Young: Producing Uncertainty', *Contemporary Music Review*, vol. 25, 4 (2006), pp. 379–92.

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_____ 'Sustaining Flexibility', interview with Daryl Buckley, *Sounds Australian: Journal of the Australian Music Centre*, 65 (2005), pp. 22–24.

_____ 'Ricefields [...] some notes beforehand', unpublished document of 4 unnumbered pages circulated to the *Ricefields* artists, 1988.

Also

Maps The Soundtrack, audio CD from the Aphids/Kokon project *Maps* (Melbourne & Copenhagen: Aphids/Kokon, 2003).

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Scale, audio CD and chapbook (*The Uninhabitable of L. B.*), from the 2004 Aphids::MUSICLAB residency at Bains::Connective in Brussels (Melbourne: Aphids, 2006).

Thousands of Bundled Straw: A Song Cycle in Seven Movements, audio CD, Libra Ensemble, live and studio recordings of the first complete performance of the song cycle (Melbourne: Aphids, 2005).

Anna Tweeddale imbricates into her practice as architect, urbanist, artist and writer a fascination with the complex formations of cities and territories; an equal fascination with the creative cultures that transform them. Anna holds a Master of Architecture and Urban Culture from the Metropolis Program at the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona. She has been a sessional lecturer at RMIT University and Monash University, and an invited critic at programs internationally.

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Bronwyn Stocks, PhD, BA, BLitt (Hons), was formerly Senior Lecturer in Theory of Art and Design at Monash University. After twenty years' experience teaching art, architectural and design history and theory at The University of Melbourne, RMIT University and Monash, Bronwyn has recently embarked on a new career as Principal of Büro: Architecture, Interiors and Planning; a practice involved in architectural design, education and art projects. www.buro.net.au

Cynthia Troup's recent works for performance include *Dwelling Structure: An Opera in 8 Time-Use Episodes* created with Madeleine Flynn and Tim Humphrey. She was a founding member of Aphids in 1994, as a musician, researcher, writer and editor. Her publications include *Care Instructions: Script for Single or Multiple Voice*, and *And When They Were Good*, part of the much-loved Aphids production *A Quarreling Pair: A Triptych of Small Puppet Plays*. www.cynthiatroup.com

David Young is a composer and has been the Artistic Director of Chamber Made Opera since January 2010. He co-founded Aphids, and was artistic director from 1994 to 2010. As a composer he is preoccupied with exploring the relationship between sound and image, employing intricate and often miniature formats in unconventional settings. His music is performed internationally, in contexts ranging from concerts to music theatre and installation.

Deborah Kayser performs in areas as diverse as ancient Byzantine chant, French and German Baroque song, and classical contemporary music—both scored and improvised. Her work has led her to tour across Australia and to Europe and Asia. Since 1993 she has been a member of the chamber ensemble Elision; since 1998 she has been collaborating with Nick Tsiavos. She continues her support of new music in her work with Chamber Made Opera.

Juliana Hodkinson's music is about the way we act, as listeners and musicians, and the contexts in which we do so. These contextual aspects may be manifested through interaction with other media, such as theatre, text or film, or they may be located more ambiguously within the music. Silence plays a central role in her work; she has written a PhD thesis on the subject. Juliana lives and works in Berlin.

Matthias Schack-Arnott is a percussionist who works primarily in the fields of new music and hybrid arts. He has appeared in major festivals across Australia, and has also toured to China, Japan and Denmark. Matthias is the Artistic Associate of Speak Percussion, a founding member of the new music ensemble Quiver, and a guest performer with, Aphids, Chamber Made Opera, the Glass Percussion Project, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Synergy and Victorian Opera.

Paul Ducco is a multi-disciplinary designer and moving-image director. Motivated by the discoveries that follow from collaboration, his focus is on working with art and design practitioners across all media. In 2010 he established the design studio All Things Considered, where design is the process, not the outcome. Paul is currently designer in residence with Aphids and works closely with Willoh S. Weiland to convey the multi-faceted nature of Aphids' projects and practices.

Rosemary Joy's percussive sculptures and boxes have been performed—usually for very small audiences—around Australia and in Europe, China, Japan and Mexico. Recent projects include *Cuttings* at Linden Centre for Contemporary Arts, with Natasha Anderson, Sarah Pirrie and Vanessa Tomlinson; *Gauge* at CultureLAB, with Madeleine Flynn, Tim Humphrey, Graeme Leak and Cameron Robbins. Rosemary became a member of Aphids in 1997.

Willoh S. Weiland is an artist, writer, curator and the Artistic Director of Aphids, which creates collaborations across artforms and borders. Recent Aphids projects include *Exile*, an opera for the iPad; the online soap opera *Void Love*, about astrophysics; *Thrashing Without Looking*, a live-cinema and performance work experienced through video goggles, and—in collaboration with science and industry—*Atelier Edens*, a two-year research project focused on the sustainable creation of cross-artform works in remote locations. www.aphids.net

