

The Ph.D./D.M.A. Programs in Music



March 28, 2025 2:00 p.m.

*Baisley Powell Elebash Recital Hall*

## OVERDRIVE FESTIVAL: Electroacoustic Music Concert I

*NYC is a Demon God* (2013)

Sofy Yuditskaya

*Shadow*

Douglas Geers & Maja Cerar

Maja Cerar, *violin* & Douglas Geers, *electronics*

*Home Truth* (2023)

Manuella Blackburn

*Lied eines tages, und von schatten* (2024)

Daniel Galow &  
Zachary Lowell Blakeslee

Daniel Galow, *alto saxophone* & Zachary Lowell Blakeslee, *live electronics*

*Fatal Error 1402* (2024)

Philip Mantione

*Antropocene* (2024)

Bruno Belardi

*Folding Spaces*

MAYSUN

Please switch off your cell phones and refrain from taking flash pictures.

## About the Program

***New York City is a Demon God.*** The metropolis itself is a distributed, sentient entity, feeding on the energy of its inhabitants. The film explores the city as both a deity and a machine—one that is made up of its inhabitants, whose sineus are the rail lines, whose cells are the humans, and soul is the relentless rhythm of the streets. We contain multitudes but what message would those multitudes relay to us if they had the chance?

Merging documentary textures with a memory of speculative mysticism, *New York City is a Demon God* reimagines the urban environment as a site of ritual, resistance, and surrender through field recording. The film moves through everyday landscapes, underground tunnels, and city streets, revealing the city as a pulsating, omnipresent force—a demon god swirling with music that demands worship even as it drains the souls of those who dwell within it. Or is its soul simply made of ours? To live is to devour.

***Shadow***, for violin and live electronic sounds, was designed to be an intimate exploration of timbre. The piece is completely notated, but includes many small-scale aleatoric choices for the performer. The computer instrument in the piece was created by the composer in the Max/MSP software environment.

***Home Truths.*** Interruptions dominate this composition, acting as pauses, abrupt stops, moments cut short and held breaths. These moments represent the many interruptions experienced in my daily life, in work, activities and composing. Interruptions are temporal states where continuity is ceased but then resumed or returned to after the interrupting event is over. In this work, interruptions are positioned as the main event; acting as focal points and instances to explore the creative potential of these typically unwanted occurrences. There are many different types of interruptions constructed throughout the composition. These show the different outcomes between successful versus unsuccessful interruptions, those that form segues to those that forcefully threaten and break down sound's continuous presence. This creative experimentation with many interruptions is set within the context of home life and home sounds. These sounds tell a story, imitating interruptions to flow, being in the home for extended periods and all this entails.

***Lied eines tages, und von schatten*** (tr. "Song of a Day, and of Shadows") is a work of musical allegory—its form and instrumentation drawn from the phenomenon of an object casting a shadow during different times of day, its content drawn from the composer's own psychic impressions of those different times.

***Fatal Error 1402*** is composed primarily of improvised content generated from no-input mixing using the Mackie 1402 VLZ Pro mixer, a handful of effects pedals, and Eurorack modules. The original raw and unbridled content has been formally arranged to balance temporal interest, static textures, chaotic uncertainty, and periodicity.

***Antropocene.*** What will be the future of humanity in a world we have irreparably altered? Human action, intense and relentless, takes ceaselessly without giving anything back. Rapid progress has left behind a trail of destruction, exploiting the planet beyond its sustainable limits. I have tried to imagine and represent this chaos, where every sound becomes a call to the reality of a world in crisis.

In my travels, I have collected sound material to capture the different nuances of various landscapes, urban and natural, noticing how human impact is not only physical and structural, but above all sonic.

In this piece, I have used recordings collected from different journeys. Among the recordings, we find the incessant noise of traffic on the Brooklyn Bridge in New York, vibrant chants and dances from a world music festival in Morocco, the chaotic voices of markets in China and India, and the sounds recorded in the parks of Seoul.

***Folding Spaces.*** This performance uses the room as the main sound source, capturing and reprocessing it to create layers that fold and shift within the space itself. Percussion and additional processing further shape these sounds, resulting in an improvised composition that blends contemplative and experimental soundscapes.

## About the Artists

**Sofy (@\_the\_s0urce\_)** is a site-specific media artist and educator working with sound, video, interactivity, projections, code, paper, and salvaged material. Her work focuses on techno-occult rituals, street performance, and participatory art. Sofy's performances enact and reframe hegemonies, she works with materials that exemplify our deep entanglement with petro-culture and technology's affect on consciousness. She has worked on projects at Eyebeam, 3LD, the Netherlands Institute voor Media Kunst, Steim, ARS Electronica, Games for Learning Institute, The Guggenheim (NYC), The National Mall and has taught at GAFFTA, MoMA, NYU, Srishti, and the Rubin Museum. She is a PhD Candidate in Audio-Visual Composition at NYU GSAS.

**Douglas Geers** is a composer who uses technology in nearly all his works, including concert music, installation works, multimedia theater, and improvisations. Geers is a Professor of Music at Brooklyn College (CUNY) and Ph.D. composition faculty of the CUNY Graduate Center.

Violinist **Maja Cerar** has performed as a soloist with orchestras since her debut in the Zürich Tonhalle in 1991, and has played at the Davos "Young Artist in Concert," the Lockenhaus Festival, the ISCM World Music Days, the ICMC (Singapore, Barcelona, etc.), SEAMUS, "Viva Vivaldi" in Mexico City, *Diffrazioni* (Florence), etc. [www.majacerar.com](http://www.majacerar.com)

**Manuella Blackburn** is an electroacoustic music composer who specializes in acousmatic music creation. She studied music at The University of Manchester (England, UK) and completed a PhD in electroacoustic music composition with Ricardo Climent in 2010. Her music focused on intricate details and the clustering and careful arrangement of small sounds within clear, polished sound worlds. Her sound recording of everyday objects, environments and instruments make their way into new pieces through the transformation of the ordinary into the fantastical. Manuella Blackburn's music has been performed at concerts, festivals, conferences and gallery exhibitions in Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the USA. Her acousmatic works have also received a number of international awards and prizes. Manuella Blackburn is currently based at Keele University (England, UK) and is a Reader in Electronic Music and Sound Design.

**Zachary Lowell Blakeslee** is a composer, performer, improviser, currently based in Brooklyn, NY. As a composer, he is interested in the notion of mutual transformation undergone between the work and the observer, and the deployment of psychic affects informed by behavior at the fringes of our

perceptual tendencies. His current composition research involves inquiries into human cognition and perception, architectural/sculptural design, acoustics, statistical and behavioral models, and the notion of holism in complex rhythmic systems. He is poetically oriented by literary and artistic depictions of obsession, mania, delirium, recursion, piety, and the multivalence of the all-encompassing monolith of substance, truth, or God. He is currently studying for his Master's in Composition at CUNY Brooklyn College under the guidance of Jason Eckardt.

**Daniel Galow's** work as an artist and arts administrator stems from a lifelong curiosity and commitment to uplifting others. Exploring new frontiers of sound through chamber music, improvisation, and experiments with modular synthesizers, he is equally comfortable working with classically trained musicians as he is collaborating with noise artists or avant-metal bands. He primarily derives inspiration from literature, poetry, movies, and visual art. As an administrator, his primary skillset lies within the sphere of program development; his work with the Bergamot Quartet allowed the organization to expand donor relations and create a sustainable education program with over 40% projected increase in revenue within the first three years. When Daniel is not involved with his work as an artist or arts administrator, he enjoys chess, no-limit Texas hold 'em, and wine.

**Philip Mantione** has been professionally active in the audio and music industry as a composer, guitarist, synthesist, technologist, music copyist, multimedia artist, writer, and educator for over 30 years. He is an experienced Max/MSP programmer and has produced numerous music projects and multimedia installations that have been presented in festivals, galleries, and museums around the world. His latest project, *Triangular Bent*, was a collaboration with virtuoso circuit bender, Jeff Boynton, and Don Preston – original founding member of Frank Zappa's Mothers of Invention. He currently teaches audio technology courses and acoustics at Mt. Antonio College, Los Angeles College of Music, and Los Angeles Film School.

**Bruno Belardi** is a musician and composer from Naples. He studies Classical Double Bass and deepens his exploration of Electronic Music under the guidance of Elio Martusciello at the "San Pietro a Majella" Conservatory in Naples. He is currently engaged in international concert activities with Ars Nova Napoli. His acousmatic works have received recognition, including being selected as a finalist for MA/IN 2024, Musicacoustica Hangzhou 2024 (China), Soundcinema Düsseldorf 2024 (Germany), Concurso Destellos 2024, and awarded at the Totem Electroacoustic Contest 2025 (Canada) and Landscape 2024 (Italy).

**Etienne Mason**, known professionally as **MAYSUN**, is a composer and sound artist known for his unique blend of drumming expertise and sound design, creating immersive atmospheric soundscapes. With a focus on the use of physical space to shape and manipulate sounds, he crafts compositions that serve as soundtracks to his life events.

MAYSUN's work is characterized by an innovative approach that transforms real-life sounds into musical tones, skillfully interweaving time and space within his compositions. His work explores spatial audio, technology, and the emotional impact of sound.

## **OVERDRIVE FESTIVAL**

Directors: Tobias Fandel & Itzá García

Organizing team: Tobias Fandel, Itzá García, Teté Leguía, Tianfang Jia

In collaboration with *NYU Arts and Science Department of Music*