



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

TEXAS TECH

J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual & Performing Arts

Electronic Nights No.5

Wednesday, October 29th, 2025

School of Music, Texas Tech University
Room 203

Curated by Ali Balighi

Reverie (2019–2020) – 10'

Composer: Leah Reid

Pnoe (2025) – 9'

Composer: Taxiarchis Diamantopoulos

Back to the Drawing Board (2016) – 7'

Composer: Kyle Shaw

Glassophonie I (2021) – 6'

Composer: Wiktor Mastela

Strangled Piano (2024) – 6'

Composer: Arshan Najafi

Se Qatre Khun (2018) – 5'

Composer: Mattia Benedetti

Reverie (2019–2020) – 10'

Composer: Leah Reid

Program Note:

Reverie is an acousmatic composition that leads the listener through an immersive fantasy centered around deconstructed music boxes. The work comprises eight sections that alternate between explorations of the music boxes' gears and chimes. In the work, the music boxes' sounds are pulled apart, exaggerated, expanded, and combined with other sounds whose timbres and textures are reminiscent of the original. As the piece unfolds, the timbres increase in spectral and textural density, and the associations become more and more fantastical. Gears are transformed into zippers, coins, chainsaws, motorcycles, and fireworks, and the chimes morph into rainstorms, all sizes of bells, pianos, and more.

Bio:

Leah Reid is a composer, sound artist, researcher, and educator whose work spans opera, chamber, and vocal music to acousmatic, electroacoustic, and interactive sound installations. A 2022 Guggenheim Fellow and winner of The American Prize in Composition, Reid has received international acclaim, earning first prizes in the Galaxies "New Vision" Composition Competition, the KLANG! International Electroacoustic Composition Competition, Musicworks' Electronic Music Competition, and the Sound of the Year Awards, among others. Her music has been presented at major festivals, conferences, and venues around the world. Reid is Assistant Professor of Composition and Computer Technologies at the University of Virginia. www.leahreid.com

Pnoe (2025) – 9'

Composer: Taxiarchis Diamantopoulos

Program Note:

Pnoe (2025) – from the Greek word “πνοή” ('breath', 'respiration', also implying 'to reinvigorate') – is a composition based on the 4 criteria model, developed as part of my doctoral/research project on Sound Space: Isomorphism (the degree to which a spatial system exhibits homogenous features), Heterodefinition (ways of interactions between isomorphisms resulting to the shaping of spatial awareness), Distribution (topologies of spatial morphologies both as part of the compositional process and as a performance practice) and Temporal Inertia (qualifiers contributing to our sense of spatial expansion vs temporal evolution). Material used combine a variety of unrelated sound sources, signifiers of already acquired sound spaces: domestic appliances, industrial machinery, short electronic and instrumental phrases as well as soundscape recordings. Cut from their original cause and context, processed or in their original state, are then reconstructed to an act of a playful reinvention of new sound spaces. Compositional material -signifiers of already acquired sound spaces- cut from their original cause and context have been reconstructed to reinvent new sound spaces.

Bio:

Taxiarchis Diamantopoulos is a member of the Hellenic Electroacoustic Music Composers Association (HELMCA). He holds a teaching position in Sound Composition at the Athens School of Fine Arts (ASFA) and has been a foundation faculty member at the Music Technology & Acoustics Department at HMU-Crete, in Sound Synthesis and Algorithmic Composition. As author and co-author he has published a number of textbooks in Greek on Sound Synthesis, Computer Music and Electronic Music. He has a major artistic and research interest in Sound Space.

Back to the Drawing Board (2016) – 7'

Composer: Kyle Shaw

Program Note:

The impetus behind this work was my memory of innocently exploring the visual arts while growing up. After some time, I learned that the blank canvas can be exciting--a symbol of endless possibility--but it can also be unnervingly formidable--begging to not only be filled with expression, but with meaning and significance. In the present work, the canvas is time and the aural space created by the speakers. Throughout, the artist's responses to the daunting canvas--frustration on account of the ensuing mental block--are sonically represented as they become increasingly violent outbursts.

Bio:

Composer Kyle Shaw writes music in acoustic and electro-acoustic mediums, tailored to the occasion and informed by his performance experience as a pianist and organist. He has presented his work at the University of Nebraska's Chamber Music Institute, Electronic Music Midwest, the Studio 300 Digital Arts Festival, the New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, Electronic Music Eastern, the SEAMUS conference, the International Computer Music Conference, and the College Music Society Conference. He is a recent winner of the Catherine M. Urner Composer Discovery Project and has been a finalist for the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, a prize winner of the Belvedere Chamber Music Festival, the American Guild of Organists Composition Competition, and 1st-prize winner of the Iowa State University Carillon Composition Competition and the Vera Hinckley Mayhew Creative Arts Contest. He has been commissioned by the Barlow Endowment, the 17th-annual 21st-Century Piano Competition, and has been a resident fellow at the Osage Arts Community's Mid-Missouri Composers Symposium. He earned his DMA from the University of Illinois and is currently associate professor of music theory and composition at California State University, Bakersfield.

Glassophonie I (2021) – 6'**Composer: Wiktor Mastela****Program Note:**

In this particular piece, the sound events and music are made of glasses and a metal ball (sphere). These Objects interact with each other and produce sound textures, which bring out interesting musical ideas and sound structures. The "journey" of the metal ball through different glass and the differentiated chierism of this sphere, leads the listener to different sound scenes. In addition, for the enriched sound activity, additional equipment such as console and guitar effects pedals are used in order to make multiple use of each sound event produced by the glass. Through a mixture of electronic elements (from guitar pedals) and acoustic textures from glass, the piece creates an aural experience that shows the enigmatic nature of dealing with sound.

Bio:

Wiktor Mastela is a graduate of the Department of Music Studies at National University of Athens, with a Master's in Music Technology and Contemporary Practices. As a sound engineer, he has supported numerous events and concerts for the University of Athens and collaborated with the Music and Acoustic Technology Laboratory(LabMAT) on artistic and academic projects. As active musician and composer, Wiktor contributes to various bands and genres, showcasing his versatility through diverse musical collaborations and original compositions.

Strangled Piano (2024) – 6'**Composer: Arshan Najafi****Program Note:**

"Strangled Piano" opens the Imaginary Crisis (my debut solo album) cycle like a fractured dream, a composition born from the breath of an upright piano and the hum of sine waves. Captured through a Shure SM57, the sound was drawn from the instrument's soundbox, recorded from shifting angles to unveil the secret tremors of wood, wire, and dust. Traditional keystrokes meet spectral gestures: strings are bowed with a Kamancheh bow, coaxing out hidden voices, making the familiar uncanny. The piano is not merely played—it is interrogated, caressed, and strained until it confesses its raw, mechanical soul. Threaded through this sonic tapestry is a ghostly echo, a looping fragment of Khachaturian's "A Little Song" from Pictures of Childhood. It emerges like a half-remembered lullaby, slipping in and out of focus, a memory worn thin by time, haunting, elusive, and unresolved.

Bio:

Arshan Najafi is a composer and live electro-acoustic performer specializing in sound, image, and words.

Recognized as an emerging talent of his generation, his works have been featured and published by Spectro Centre for New Music, Noise à Noise Records, Petrichor Records, Unexplained Sounds Group, Cold Spring Records, XOR Space, Texas Tech University, Yarava Music Group, Unerhörte Musik, Tehran International Electronic Music Festival, MUSLAB, SIMEC, CMMF, EGFF, ECHOFLUXX, ICMC Boston, Noise-Works and Ash International.

He has studied music with Saba Alizadeh, Parsa Hadavi, Sohrab Motabar, and Ata Ebtekar, exploring complex musical structures with a focus on experimental soundscapes and *musique concrète*. Selected as a winner of Petrichor Records' "Call for Young Iranian Composers," he received mentorship from Chaya Czernowin, Arshia Samsaminia, Reza Vali, and Amin Sharifi.

Najafi has also been recognized in competitions and events, including the 7th Reza Korourian Electro-Acoustic Music Competition by Yarava Music Group, the "Electronic Nights" series at Texas Tech University, "Seyr" call for scores for saxophone and electronics by the Spectro Centre for New Music, MUSLAB After, ICMC Boston, Echofluxx 25 amongst others.

In 2022, his debut book, *Twenty Wrong Turns*, was published by Aso Publications in Tehran.

Also his debut on Noise-Works "Imaginary Crisis" was released on December 27th, 2024, and later a release of his live performance on Ash International on July 11th, 2025.

Se Qatre Khun (2018) – 5'
Composer: Mattia Benedetti

Program Note:

Three Drops of Blood is a cruel and melancholic short story, where a multitude of mirrors is staged just to see them broken and to scatter the reflections.

Sadegh Hedayat is a master of deceit : the same objects appears from multiple perspectives, sometimes opaque and trivial, sometimes shiny and mysterious. Three Drops of Blood is perhaps his best short novel: a cruel and melancholic glimpse of madness that stages an ensemble of mirrors and crashes them all. We descend into the abyss of an insane asylum, where after a year a sectioned patient can finally write his memories.

Just a few sounds are used to evoke his world: two distant voices in farsi, strange machinery, lonely tolls. Dismantled, broken down, mixed and treated, they're familiar and uncanny at the same time.

Machinery tries to talk, voices becomes inhuman. What's happening is not clear at all, the environment is gloomy and cold. The curtains drops.

Se Qatre Khun [Three Drops of Blood] is a Quadraphonic acousmatic piece based on the eponymous short novel by Sadegh Hedayat. Starting from fragment of the text and concrete sounds it tries to evoke the disorientation of such an uncanny reading; every element appear as a symbol, but the interpretative frame is lacking.

Bio:

Mattia Benedetti creates acousmatic music, pieces for instrument and live electronics and A/V compositions. He's interested in quietness, algorithmic and aleatoric techniques and the relationship between sound and words. His pieces have been presented in Europe, North and South America and Asia.