

Paul STEENHUISEN - PROGRAM NOTES

PIECE: NOW IS A CREATURE

Everything is connected; everything is moving, breathing, bleeding. With Now is a Creature, there exists an intimacy between the face of sound (the timbre/stamp of the trombone) and the body of structure (the piece), the mechanics and the physics of the instrument and performance. In this hyper-idiomaticism is the instrument which provides the architecture of the pitch structure: a line going down from 9th to the 3rd harmonic of the trombone in its first slide position.. The mid-level structure canters incrementally up rotated flights of the harmonic series and down the slide positions through to the 14th through 8th partials in seventh position. The surface activity and the identities of sound gestures are entrenched but never trapped - they're diluted and accumulated in an archipelago of formal superpositions. The result is a sort of musical cubism, where multiple angles of the materials are simultaneously present, distorting the image through the continuous change of perspective. Movement constantly destroys any fixed point of view as layers accumulate, chirp, and crack. Now is a Creature was composed at IRCAM (Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris). It is dedicated to Benny Sluchin, principal trombonist of the Ensemble Intercontemporain, who premiered it in September 1997, at the Espace des Projections. Composed 1996/97. Technical revision, 2003.