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Mapping Contemporary Music in Los Angeles

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### Publication Date

2015

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Mapping Contemporary Music in Los Angeles

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements  
for the degree Master of Arts

in

Music

by

Michael Matsuno

Committee in charge:

Professor John Fonville, Chair  
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Professor Steven Schick

2015

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

2015

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Signature Page .....                            | iii |
| Table of Contents .....                         | iv  |
| List of Figures .....                           | v   |
| Abstract of Thesis .....                        | vi  |
| Mapping Contemporary Music in Los Angeles ..... | 1   |
| References .....                                | 17  |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Figure 1: Jacaranda 2014 Season Poster ..... | 16 |
| Figure 2: Gnarwhallaby Icon .....            | 16 |

## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Mapping Contemporary Music in Los Angeles

by

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Master of Arts in Music

University of California, San Diego, 2015

Professor John Fonville, Chair

My thesis considers the network relationships between 14 contemporary music presenters and ensembles active in 2014. Through examination of their structural and aesthetic components, a pattern emerged in which several institutional spheres collided among functional hierarchies within groupings of organizations. Given the constantly shifting nature of the scene, the thesis also serves as a thorough cross-section of the landscape of grassroots new music.

## Mapping Contemporary Music in Los Angeles

Since the 1980's, Los Angeles has seen the explosive formation of a contemporary music scene. Throughout its thirty years, the California EAR Unit was one of the first leaders in this growing landscape, interposed between the Monday Evening Concerts and the Los Angeles Philharmonic series. The ensemble was founded in 1981 by students at the California Institute of the Arts, and they rightfully called themselves "Los Angeles and Southern California's new music ambassador to the world."<sup>1</sup> Their experiences playing under Stephen "Lucky" Mosko and performing at the early CalArts Festivals in the '80s seemed to have awakened a new energy among performers. In 2015, the ongoing expansion of new music collectives across Southern California features a new generation of ensembles that maintains a comparable spirit of empowerment through programming diverse and often unfamiliar music. Meanwhile, the musicians who make up these organizations form interconnecting networks, which spring forth from and traverse a number of institutions.

In this thesis I will begin to recreate a synchronic representation of this scene as it currently exists in 2015. I have selected a cross-section of fourteen ensembles and concert series that are devoted to programming a wide variety of contemporary and avant-garde music. Each has been active since 2014, and strives to present concerts of highest professional quality while promoting cooperation amongst its members and audiences. Each organization's most recent concert season is indicative of the scope and character of its overall aims. All have either non-profit status, or sponsorship from a

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<sup>1</sup> The California E.A.R. Unit, "About," <http://www.earunit.org/> (accessed 19 December, 2014)



promotional arts council. Therefore, they are independent in nature, and not affiliated with any larger concert organization such as the LA Phil or the Long Beach Opera.

These selections exemplify the full range of these criteria: Brightwork new music, Eclipse Quartet, Formalist Quartet, Gnarwhallaby, Jacaranda New Music, Lyris Quartet, Microfest, People Inside Electronics, Piano Spheres, Southland Ensemble, Synchrony, WasteLand, What's Next? Ensemble, and wild Up.

It is fair to take into consideration that groups such as these will continue to emerge and recede, and understanding the basis of these patterns of change is a far-reaching task. In fact, it is this exact kind of ephemerality that makes any larger discourse about California's current scene so elusive. Since Angelenos are already tasked with having to mentally navigate an immense physical sprawl, the project of looking at a snapshot of ensembles has removed some of the challenges imposed by both time and space.

In my inquiry, I was most curious to understand the correlation, if any, between a group's structural organization and its function within a city-specific sphere. I predicted that larger collectives and concert series would serve as a hub for smaller ensembles, sometimes involving members of multiple groups. While the larger organizations would have greater access to resources, the ensembles with more tightly-knit personnel structure would enjoy more freedom to program music that directly reflected the interests of its members.

Based on my preliminary mapping of these musicians, I discovered that while an ensemble might publicize its co-directors or an artistic board, there exists a more untraceable substratum of gigging musicians across all networks. Predictably, these are most often viewed as ensembles formed within a university or conservatory. There are

however, many examples of performers with strong connections to one or more ensembles who move fluidly throughout these many arenas. One broader implication is that the mercenary culture that pervades Los Angeles' highly diverse musical market has influenced these fiercely independent musicians who are more increasingly asserting their own voices. This analysis therefore aims to delineate the various layers of relationships at play in a shifting landscape.

These various group identities seem to fall into classifications based on the function and formation of its members. wild Up, What's Next? Ensemble, and WasteLAnd, form a trio of centralized collectives that branch out into other networks. Southland Ensemble and Gnarwhallaby are two of such smaller more focused ensembles. The larger presenter series, such as Jacaranda, Piano Spheres, PIE, and Microfest generally emphasize a broader, seasonal approach to programming, with less of a consolidated group of musicians. On the other end, the three quartets might be the most integrated units, having to balance both their own concert series, and those of contiguous groups.

The ensemble wild Up, which debuted in 2010, is a 25-member collective of musicians and composers whose broad-ranging repertoire asserts the diverse interests of its members.<sup>2</sup> In their mission statement, they characteristically state, "We make music. New music. Old music. We'll play it, as long as we love it." Music director, Christopher Rountree, ostensibly plays the role of bandleader, while the musicians take on a similar rallying excitement when they perform. This sort of atmosphere is most concretely evidenced in their mini series called Work, which acts as artist portraits of both its

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<sup>2</sup> wild Up, <http://wildup.la/> (accessed 17 December, 2014)

members and outside collaborators. The group also has three additional co-directors: Andrew McIntosh, Andrew Tholl, and Chris Kallmyer. Surrounding this close knit administrative body, the extensive roster of musicians is constantly rearranged to form various combinations and instrumentations. Most prominently, the group Gnarwhallaby itself is a wild Up formation, consisting of Clarinetist Brian Walsh, Trombonist Matt Barbier, Cellist Derek Stein, and Pianist Richard Valitutto.<sup>3</sup> Its more peripheral musicians are active in other musical fields, contemporary or otherwise, such as Oboist Claire Chenette, who has appeared frequently on the Jacaranda New Music series.<sup>4</sup>

The What's Next? Ensemble shares a similar profile as a larger structure, centrally located within a network. Where wild Up incorporates a sizeable community of CalArts students, with a modicum of musicians from University of Southern California, University of Michigan, and the Colburn Conservatory; the What's Next? Ensemble undoubtedly acts as a mainstay for likeminded USC musicians and composers.<sup>56</sup> Founded in 2008, the ensemble's programming seems to gravitate towards academic European modernism, as well as American contemporaries, particularly West Coast composers of ranging style and stature. Its two founders, Vimbayi Kaziboni and Jack Stulz, manage the ensemble alongside Percussionist Ben Phelps, Violinist Sakura Tsai, and Composer Alex Miller, with additional help from Cellist Frederick Rosselet, and Flutist Michael Matsuno. The ensemble's personnel page lists twenty-six musicians who

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<sup>3</sup> Gnarwhallaby, <http://www.gnarwhallaby.com/> (accessed 01 December, 2014)

<sup>4</sup> Claire Chenette, "Recent Events," <http://clairechenette.weebly.com/recent-events.html> (accessed 01 December, 2014)

<sup>5</sup> wild Up, "Musicians," <http://wildup.la/musicians/> (accessed 17 December, 2014)

<sup>6</sup> What's Next? Ensemble, "about," <http://www.whatsnextensemble.com/about.html> (accessed 01 December, 2014)

have, at one time over the last six years, performed in its shows.<sup>7</sup> The core members are consistently active in other far-reaching areas. Violist Jack Stulz, for example, is presently involved with the Klangforum Wien,<sup>8</sup> while Clarinetist Eric Jacobs performs regularly with Los Angeles Philharmonic and is the newly appointed Bass Clarinetist with the Seattle Symphony.<sup>9</sup>

The year-old concert series WasteLAnd identifies strictly as a presenter, not as an ensemble. However, its affinity to the avant-garde has quickly drawn in a community of University of California San Diego and CalArts musicians and artists. Its website archives its fluctuating roster of performers, and gives links to a handful of their own websites. Yet they retain a sense of transparency through physical and online presence of its five board members, Matt Barbier, Nick Deyoe, Brian Griffeath-Loeb, Elise Roy, and Scott Worthington.<sup>10</sup> In June, the series hosted the San Diego based trio, ensemble et cetera, consisting of Clarinetist Curt Miller, Bassist Scott Worthington, and Percussionist Dustin Donahue.<sup>11</sup> Other connections to the broader new music community include Violinist Mark Menzies, who also frequently performs on their shows and is a member of the Formalist String Quartet.

The two smaller ensembles, Southland and Gnarwhallaby, both exemplify a more unified structure formed mostly by CalArts alumni. Gnarwhallaby, founded in 2011, is

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<sup>7</sup> What's Next? Ensemble, "musicians," [http://www.whatsnextensemble.com/about\\_musician.html](http://www.whatsnextensemble.com/about_musician.html) (accessed 01 December, 2014)

<sup>8</sup> John Stulz, "concerts," John Stulz Sonic Art, <http://www.johnstulz.com/concerts.html> (accessed 14 December, 2014)

<sup>9</sup> Aspen Music Festival and School, "Alumni News," <http://www.aspenmusicfestival.com/students-welcome/amfs-alumni-society/alumni-news/> (accessed 17 December, 2014)

<sup>10</sup> WasteLAnd Music, "WasteLAnd Music Concert Venue," Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/wstlndmsc> (accessed 17 December, 2014)

<sup>11</sup> WasteLand, <http://wastelandmusic.org/> (accessed 20 November, 2014)

modeled after the Polish ensemble *Warsztat Muzyczny*, and the German Quartett *Avance*, borrowing from both of their repertoire.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, Southland Ensemble includes artist Casey Anderson, Trombonist Matt Barbier, Violinist Eric Kenneth Malcolm Clark, Violinist Orin Hildestad, composer James Klopffleisch, Bassoonist Jonathan Stehney, Violist Cassia Streb, and Flutist Christine Tivolacci.<sup>13</sup> Like Gnarwhallaby, the ensemble's uniformity and specialized interests allow them to program recitals of rare composers like James Tenney and Robert Ashley, and for Gnarwhallaby, works by Feldman, Górecki, and Spahlinger. Thus, it seems not surprising that Flutist Tivolacci will collaborate with Gnarwhallaby on her final DMA recital at UCSD.

Larger series like *Jacaranda* and *Piano Spheres* seem to present themselves more as musical establishments, centers for engagement among broader audiences of musicians, non-musicians, and new music enthusiasts alike. The *Jacaranda* series, currently in its tenth season, was founded by Patrick Scott and music director Mark Alan Hilt.<sup>14</sup> Its sizable board of directors includes an impressive lineup of Southern California luminaries including director Peter Sellars, producer Sheila Tepper, and composers Bill Kraft, Veronika Krausas, David Lang, and Morten Lauridsen among others. Though the performers that make up the *Jacaranda* Chamber Ensemble fluctuate with each performance, a typical roster includes a number of well-established gigging musicians, such as members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Los Angeles Chamber

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<sup>12</sup> Gnarwhallaby, "About," <http://www.gnarwhallaby.com/about.html> (accessed 20 November, 2014)

<sup>13</sup> Southland Ensemble, "Members," <http://www.southlandensemble.com/members.html> (accessed 20 November, 2014)

<sup>14</sup> *Jacaranda*, <http://www.jacarandamusic.org/home> (accessed 22 November, 2014)

Orchestra. In this top-down, industrial model of employment, the musicians have less authority over artistic decisions, but are promoted as soloists and chamber musicians.

The Piano Spheres concert series was established in 1994 by pianist and musicologist Leonard Stein, who also gave the first performance at the Pasadena Neighborhood Church.<sup>15</sup> Previous guests have included Ursula Oppens, Thomas Schultz, Christopher O’Riley, Liam Viney, Eric Huebner, and Thomas Adès. The founding members Mark Robson, Vicki Ray, and Susan Svrček along with the Philharmonic’s Gloria Cheng, are the principal artists who also serve on the board of directors. This season, Richard Valitutto and Aron Kallay gave solo recitals met by enthusiastic reviews.<sup>16</sup> According to their mission statement, Piano Spheres is devoted to commissioning and presenting new works in the piano repertoire. They “[provide] a context for these new works by including lesser-known music by established composers whose compositions influenced the course of piano music.”<sup>17</sup> Like the Jacaranda series, Piano Spheres highlights many contemporary musicians who are also active in a number of grassroots ensembles.

The Microfest and People Inside Electronics concert series perhaps make for the most surprising comparison. Despite the formula of their concerts being somewhat different in nature, their emphasis on the miscellany, and their promotion of guest artists, cause both to resemble something like yearly festivals. As outliers in terms of their exclusive programming, the personnel that they share with other organizations are often

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<sup>15</sup> Piano Spheres, <http://pianospheres.org/> (accessed 18 November, 2014)

<sup>16</sup> Mark Swed, “Aron Kallay experiments, triumphs in Piano Spheres’ ‘Nothing Is Real,’” *LA Times* <http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/la-et-cm-piano-spheres-review-20141218-column.html> (17 December, 2014)

<sup>17</sup> Piano Spheres, “About,” <http://pianospheres.org/about/> (accessed 18 November, 2014)

limited to the most specialized, and the most diverse among them. Most notably, Pianist Aron Kallay co-directs both series. Microfest, founded in 1997 by John Schneider, celebrates music that engages alternate tunings and instruments constructed to perform in those tunings.<sup>18</sup> In its fifth season, People Inside Electronics borrows more than a title from the East Coast Collective, Composers Inside Electronics,<sup>19</sup> as it promotes performers and composers interested in live electroacoustic music.<sup>20</sup> Over the past eighteen seasons, Microfest has undergone what outwardly appears to be a gradual shift from an annual concert event, to a four-month festival in each Spring. For many of its early seasons, Schneider featured his trio, Just Strings, which included himself on just guitar, Harpist Susan Allen, then Dean of Music at CalArts, and Percussionist and instrument maker Gene Sterling. Artists of unique talents from the US and abroad made up the rest of the programs, which included a variety of canonized works, arrangements for Partch instruments, and new commissions. By 2005, the series was attracting guest performances and residencies from artists like the Partch Ensemble, Eclipse Quartet, JACK Quartet, Calder Quartet, and Pianist Aron Kallay. This allowed the festival to program even rarer canon works, such as the Johnston String Quartets, and to explore large scale instrument making projects. Despite the parameters implicit in its title, Microfest's scope actually remains one of the largest and richest. Because preservation is a central motivation for these concerts, the directors have meticulously catalogued their entire performance history, and published all of their promotional and program material

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<sup>18</sup> Microfest, "About," <http://microfest.org/about-microfest/> (accessed 18 November, 2014)

<sup>19</sup> Composers Inside Electronics, [http://composers-inside-electronics.net/cie/cie/cie\\_home.html](http://composers-inside-electronics.net/cie/cie/cie_home.html) (accessed 25 November, 2014)

<sup>20</sup> People Inside Electronics, "About us," <http://www.peopleinsideelectronics.com/about> (accessed 20 November, 2014)

on their website.

Where PIE and Microfest are thematized presenter series, the string quartets are inherently autonomous ensembles with immovable personnel and structure; the connotative unit of a string quartet by itself, often suggests a level of engagement between its members that is highly personal and unique. Such could easily be said for the Formalist, Eclipse, and Lyrus Quartets, which boast impressive and diverse membership. The Formalist Quartet debuted in 2006, and has since amassed a repertoire of standard and “adventurous” contemporary quartet literature.<sup>21</sup> Its members are Violinist Andrew Tholl, Violinist/Violist Mark Menzies, Violinist/Violist Andrew McIntosh, and Cellist Ashley Walters. Menzies is a full-time performance faculty member at CalArts, while the remaining three are alumni. They perform in venues across the United States, and generally seem to serve as focal point for avant-garde string quartet music in Southern California.

The Eclipse Quartet, consisting of Violinist Sarah Thornblade, Violinist Sara Parkins, Violist Alma Lisa Fernandez, and Cellist Maggie Parkins, maintains an equally diverse repertoire, including works by Ben Johnston and Lou Harrison performed on the Microfest series. Thornblade is a member of both the LA Chamber Orchestra, and the ensemble Xtet, co-founded by Vicki Ray. They have recorded works on four CDs, such as the Feldman Piano and String Quartet also with Vicki Ray.<sup>22</sup>

The six year-old Lyrus Quartet performs internationally, and has appeared as

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<sup>21</sup> Formalist Quartet, “About,” <http://www.formalistquartet.com/about.html> (accessed 01 December, 2014)

<sup>22</sup> Formalist Quartet, “About,” <http://www.formalistquartet.com/about.html> (accessed 01 December, 2014)



resident quartet on the Jacaranda series, the Hear Now festival, and the Long Beach Opera company among others. Their members are Violinist Alyssa Park, Violinist Shallini Vijayan, Violist Luke Maurer, and Cellist Timothy Loo.<sup>23</sup>

The Synchronomy collective is perhaps one of a kind in its exclusive makeup of composers. Currently, they are Jason Barabba, John Frantzen, Vera Ivanova, Nick Norton, and Ann Noriel.<sup>24</sup> Past resident composers have included Jenni Brandon, Daniel Gall, and former LA Percussion Quartet member Eric Guinivan.<sup>25</sup> Their recent revival concert took place at their previous home at Occidental College's Bird Studio, and featured performances by Piano Spheres' Mark Robson, Lyris Quartet's Alyssa Park, Eclipse Quartet's Alma Lisa Fernandez, and the debut ensemble, Brightwork newmusic. Like Synchronomy, Brightwork's musicians maintain diverse careers. They are Flutist Sara Andon, Pianist Aron Kallay, Cellist Roger Lebow (Xtet), Violinist Tereza Stanislov, Percussionist Nick Terry, and Clarinetist Brian Walsh (wild Up, Gnarwhallaby).<sup>26</sup>

Among these organizations, there appears to be an underlying framework of musicians who move fluidly throughout the various ensembles. This sort of occupation of space might call to mind the network of physical locations in which the performances actually take place. Ensembles like the Formalist Quartet or the What's Next? Ensemble can freely maneuver within a city, and among a number of venues throughout the greater

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<sup>23</sup> Lyris Quartet, <http://www.lyrisquartet.com/> (accessed 03 December, 2014)

<sup>24</sup> Synchronomy, "Who," [http://www.synchronymusic.org/Synchronomy\\_Music/bios.html](http://www.synchronymusic.org/Synchronomy_Music/bios.html) (accessed 01 December, 2014)

<sup>25</sup> Robin Goldsworthy, "Synchronomy Composers Present New Musical Works at Occidental College's BirdStudio," *Crescenta Valley Weekly* <http://www.crescentavalleyweekly.com/leisure/02/24/2011/synchronomy-composers-present-new-musical-works-at-occidental-college%E2%80%99s-bird-studio/> (24 February, 2011)

<sup>26</sup> Brightwork newmusic, <http://brightworknewmusic.com/> (accessed 13 December, 2014)

Los Angeles area. By contrast, *Jacaranda* and *Piano Spheres*, with more stable and well-heeled audiences, benefit from remaining stationary by building up rather than out.

As one of the most active ensembles, *wild Up* has a performance history that seems to trace a clear geography from West to East Los Angeles. In total, they have performed in over twenty venues representing thirteen cities across Southern California, as well as one venue in Reykjavik, Iceland. After their debut at the Armory in Pasadena, the group immediately resettled in the Westwood District near UCLA where they picked up a six-month residency at the Hammer Museum, and a one-month residency at UCLA. In addition to their twenty-eight thematic events at the Hammer, the group performed a kind of variety show titled “America,” at Broad Stage’s black box theatre in Santa Monica. After some thirty performances in their opening season, they began 2013 with their debut performance on the Monday Evening Concert Series at the Colburn’s Zipper Hall in Downtown. That year, they also performed in Disney Hall’s Roy and Edna Disney/Calarts Theater (REDCAT), in addition to further performances at the Hammer, and Art Share LA in the Downtown Arts District.

By 2014, their profile was clearly characterized by an interest in exploration of widespread locales. They performed amidst large crowds at the Natural History Museum in Exposition Park. Bassist Maggie Haspacher gave a solo recital at the popular Boston Court Theatre in Pasadena. And in August, they collaborated with the Icelandic female choir, *Graduale Nobili*, at the Langholtskirkja Church in Reykjavik.

The *What’s Next?* Ensemble and *Gnarwhallaby* share similarly dispersed trajectories. *Gnarwhallaby* has given repeated performances at the Neighborhood Church

of Pasadena as well as Art Share LA.<sup>27</sup> They have appeared at popular venues such as the Bluewhale, Boston Court, and Monk Space, and the experimental art collective, Automata in Chinatown. The What's Next? Ensemble initially maintained two homes, at USC and the Royal-T Café in Culver City. Over the last two seasons however, the types of events they curate have evolved from more traditional concerts, to large-scale shows. These have required bigger venues such as the Café Club Fais Do-Do theatre for their collaboration with Jacob TV, and the MiMoDa Studio for their performance of Grisey's *Vortex Temporum*.<sup>28</sup>

Rather than moving away from locations, the Microfest series has successfully expanded by accumulating spaces, and returning to them each year. In its first six years, it maintained relationships with both Pomona College and Pierce College, and later Harvey Mudd college. When Disney Hall opened in 2003, Microfest was able to secure yearly use of the REDCAT theatre in addition to its other venues.

In some cases, programs and web design function as visual enhancement to the aesthetic profile of the series. For example, Jacaranda asserts a kind of playful approach to repertoire, often highlighting bold contrasts of new and old styles. The vibrant and resonant space inside the First Presbyterian Church of Santa Monica adds further lightness to the often heavy musical content. Throughout its advertising, the series appropriates portraits of the composers, disembodied in what appear to be floating bubbles superimposed over photos of the venue and the artists themselves (see fig. 1).

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<sup>27</sup> Gnarwhallaby, "Past Events," <http://www.gnarwhallaby.com/past-events.html> (accessed 03 December, 2014)

<sup>28</sup> What's Next? Ensemble, "Concerts," <http://www.whatsnextensemble.com/concerts.html> (accessed 03 December, 2014)

These humorous collages fill the covers of their programs, creating a kind of retrospective patchwork of the music that they showcase.

By contrast, Gnarwhallaby's musical hedonism is accompanied by an icon of the animal that gives the group its name (see fig. 2). The creature, which defies all sense of perspective, has a wallaby's limbs and visage, complete with erect ears, the spotted torso of a whale, and the protruding tusk an arctic narwhal. Their programs also feature a pencil drawing by Taryn Dyle of the a trombone, cello, clarinet, saxophone, and piano, characterized and personified by a shared speech bubble showing a single exclamation mark. These sketches, like the handwriting font type, elegantly reflect both their skillful precision as performers, as well as their often absurdist music subjects.

Finally, the titles of these organizations carry allusions to their structure, content, and tone. PIE, the acronym abbreviation of People Inside Electronics for example, might immediately call to mind the dessert served by the slice. Perhaps this bimodal sensory play of sound and taste suggests a kind of synesthesia, or rewiring of nerves, literally and metaphorically. The flagrant borrowing of title from its historical influence, as well as the physical paradox of the image it conjures, might offer the series additional contour and likeability.

Meanwhile, little argument can be against WasteLAnd as a panorama of a desolated landscape. The embedded capitalization of the city's acronym appears to manipulate the word into an icon in itself, transforming a bleak commentary into a visual anthem. If place is implied in its title, space might be suggested in the highly abstract musical forms and course textural aesthetic of its repertoire. Art Share is also conveniently located in the graffiti-littered Arts District, where a similarly rough beauty

seems to surround the audience. The series' last show in 2014 featured UCSD clarinetists Curt Miller and Samuel Dunscombe performing Pierluigi Billone's *I+I=I*, a "seventy-minute sonic experience" which they cast in almost complete darkness. They did not move far, performing in the massive art space, 356 S Mission Rd, just a few blocks away from Art Share.

A similar synesthesia takes hold with the title, Jacaranda. These fragrant trees are unmistakable by their blue violet blossoms, and thrive in the dry Southern California climate. As tropical plants, they were imported to the US in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by San Diego's own horticulturalist Kate Sessions.<sup>29</sup> Themes of native culture seem to spring forth in their regular programming of living West Coast and East Coast composers, such as Thomas Adès or Tobias Picker.<sup>30</sup>

For audiences who attend many of these shows, as well as for the artists themselves, this kind of aesthetic reinforcement through titles and images might have the overall effect of creating a sensual topography. The impressions left by performances in various counties, plot literal points on a map already imprinted in every commuter's mind. This in turn crystalizes histories, and develops into a culture that might hopefully continue to progress over generations to come.

In April 2014, the wild Up ensemble made its Walt Disney Concert Hall debut as a guest ensemble on the Green Umbrella's Minimalist Jukebox series, joining forces with John Adams, Nico Muhly, members of the International Contemporary Ensemble, and

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<sup>29</sup> David Hochman, "Best Places To See Jacarandas In Bloom In Los Angeles," Forbes. <http://www.forbes.com/> (published 19 May, 2013)

<sup>30</sup> Ahdda Shur, "Jacaranda's exciting chamber music season opens in Santa Monica Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012," Examiner.com <http://www.examiner.com/> (published 19 October, 2012)

the Calder Quartet.<sup>31</sup> Among others, the concert included premieres by Andrew McIntosh, Mark Grey, and Missy Mazzoli, as well as three works by Steve Reich. Perhaps the newest variable here is the set of people, not the repertoire, which appears simultaneously nostalgic and forward thinking. Since the LA Phil has already garnered a progressive reputation, and has consistently featured young contemporary musicians, perhaps it is this developing network that gives these artists a clearer dimensionality and more immediate context.

If this is the case, it might be possible that by continually generating new roles for themselves, emerging ensembles might unconsciously be the ones carving out the very room that they need to grow. Turning up any one of these stones however, reveals just how deeply entrenched these spaces are. Particularly in Los Angeles, where so many musicians make a living as freelancers, it can be difficult to discern on paper, who the other movers are, and what other networks support the public sphere. Where sensationalism seems to have taken hold, it seems important to reflect on the current state of affairs, so that we can see more clearly in either direction, where we are going.

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<sup>31</sup> LA Phil, "Minimalist Jukebox: Maximum Minimalism," <http://www.laphil.com/> (accessed 19 December, 2014)



Figure 1. Jacaranda 2014 Season Poster



Figure 2. Artist Unknown, Gnarwhallaby Icon

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