

# THE REHEARSAL STUDIO

A PLACE TO EXERCISE IDEAS BEFORE WRITING ABOUT THEM WITH GREATER DISCIPLINE.

SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 2021

## The "Chamber Version" of Fure's "Shiver Lung"

Last night the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players (SFCMP) launched the 2021 portion of its 50th anniversary season with a video stream that will be accessible for viewing for one month. Viewing requires ticketing, and the preceding hyperlink connects to the Web page from which tickets may be purchased. The program presented was entitled *Overtones and Undercurrents*, and it is part of the **in the LABORATORY** series of concerts. The performance lasted slightly more than half an hour.

The second half of the program was devoted entirely to Ash Fure's "Shiver Lung 2." Readers may recall the discussion on this site of "Shiver Lung," which was the opening track on Fure's "portrait album," *Something to Hunt*. In that article I cited her description of "Shiver Lung" from her Web site, which bears repeating:

A ring of subwoofers encircle the audience, projecting soundwaves too low to hear until performers slide the flesh of their hands across each palpitating surface, pulling the soundwaves into the realm of the audible.

For those unfamiliar with the terminology, a subwoofer is a loudspeaker cone large enough to reproduce the sounds of the lowest audible frequencies. It can create inaudible frequencies simply by vibrating at a slower rate. At those vibrations, audibility arises when the speaker cone itself vibrates against the hands of the performer.

In "Shiver Lung" those speakers were part of a small ensemble. "Shiver Lung 2" may be described as the "chamber version" of "Shiver Lung." It consists of two of those speaker cones and a single performer, SFCMP percussionist William Winant. There was also a credit to Brendan Glasson, presumably for mixing the sounds resulting from Winant's performance. That performance consisted of bringing a variety of different objects into contact with the speaker cones, resulting in a diversity of sonorities from the movement of the objects themselves, as can be seen in this screen shot from the video:

STEPHEN SMOLIAR



The author's construction of his reality of self!

ABOUT ME

STEPHEN SMOLIAR

Still trying to "liberate the mind from fear, superstition and pettiness."

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It is unclear how much, if any, of Winant's activities were explicitly scored (through either notation or text). From the listener's point of view, Fure's work emerged as an exercise in discovery for both performer and listener. I came away with the impression that Winant had definitely prepared his performance, possibly even making his own choices of the objects that would come into contact with the speaker cones. What was important, however, was how he managed to turn this "study in vibrating objects" into a quarter-hour journey that kept the attentive listener consistently engaged.

"Shiver Lung 2" was preceded by world premiere performances of two works created by students at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music under the Technology & Applied Composition Program. Each was scored for a solo instrumentalist and electronics. It appeared that, in both of these compositions, the electronics had been prerecorded.

The first selection was performed by SFCMP guitarist David Tanenbaum. The composition was Garrett Lucero's "Onward." This was followed by DeVanté Winn's "Yesterday Night," scored for oboe and electronics and performed by SFCMP oboist Kyle Bruckmann.

Sadly, neither composer seemed to have given much thought to any sense of interplay between instrumentalist and electronics. Instead, the electronics seemed to serve as little more than background for the solo performers. Both performers elicited richly expressive rhetorics with little evident relations with that background. For that matter, the richness of their respective parts seemed to reflect music of the past century, almost as if both of the composer's were coping with nostalgia for a time before they were born.

Winant's performance of Fure's music, on the other hand, was very much in the immediate present!

POSTED BY STEPHEN SMOLIAR AT [6:50 AM](#) 

LABELS: CHAMBER MUSIC, MUSIC

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