

Pauline Oliveros in the Arms of Reynolds: A Collaboration

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Keywords

Accordion, collaboration, Reynolds, remix, distance performance, Internet, improvisation, video

Abstract

Reynolds is an unusual group of creative heavy metal musicians in Buenos Aires Argentina. This paper will discuss the nature and history of our collaboration as well as the philosophical and technical aspects. I will discuss my own work as I performed it in Buenos Aires, the Deep Listening seminar that I led with Reynolds in attendance, how Reynolds responded to the seminar, to me and to my concert and the resulting remix CD — *Pauline Oliveros in the Arms of Reynolds* that consists of a pirate recording on my solo concert and Reynolds additions in the remix.

Introduction

On a visit to Buenos Aires in 1992, I was invited to do a weeklong seminar on my practice of Deep Listening [1]. Among the varied group of people in the seminar were a couple of intense and punkish looking young men — Alan Curtis and Roberto Conlazo. They seemed somewhat skeptical and a bit defiant with their questions and comments.

I was not sure that they were getting my drift. However they were there everyday and participating in all the exercises and discussions.

Little did I know that collaboration would develop that includes three recordings, a couple of concerts and continue to this day.

I performed a solo accordion concert after the seminar in the Biblioteca Nacional. What a lovely concert hall: Every sound is crystal clear in dynamic range from the faintest pianissimo to the very loudest — a very delicious space for a soloist.

To my surprise, Alan and Roberto were sitting in the front row seats right under my nose as I performed — their facial expressions open and surprised. They were making a pirate recording of the concert.

At a farewell party in an artist's loft, Alan, Roberto and a few others of their group showed up to play a

serenade for me. They had all brought brass instruments and none of them knew how to play them. They improvised an outrageous serenade for me that was wonderful, hilarious and full of soul. Later Alan asked me if it was possible to learn about new music in a University. I left Buenos Aires with good feelings about Roberto and Alan and all of the good people I met during my seminar.

A year or so later Alan showed up in New York and greeted me at a concert at The Kitchen.

Later I had an email from Alan asking permission to re-mix the pirate recording that he had made of my Buenos Aires concert. I replied that it would be fine with me and thus the collaboration was born.

I knew by now that Alan and Roberto called their music group Reynols. They took the name from the actor Burt Reynolds but had dropped the D.

Reynols started e-mailing proposals to title the CD production of their remixed version of my concert. First they wanted to call it *Deep Heavy Metal Listening* or *Heavy Deep Listening Metal* — Alan and Roberto are accomplished electric guitar players. Finally they hit upon a title: *Pauline Oliveros in the Arms of Reynols*. I accepted with delight.

The first edition of 100 CDs included individual hand painted covers, a cassette version and a tiny bag of colored sand to represent the grittiness of the music. Cream Gardens of Amsterdam produced the second release of the CD with Roberto's drawings [2].

Reynols is a remarkable group in many ways. They have produced a hundred recordings of their work, a couple of notable ones are *Blank Tapes* [3] — a production made from found blank cassette tapes and the *Ten Thousand Chickens Symphony* [4].

The Voice on *Pauline Oliveros in the Arms of Reynols* is of Miguel Tomasin their percussionist and poet. Miguel has Down's syndrome. Alan and Roberto consider him to be their teacher — they pay close attention to what he says. His sayings are poetic and full of invented words. Alan and Roberto work with other physically challenged people as therapists with their music. Because Miguel cannot travel with them on their numerous tours they include him with recordings during their live shows.

Pauline Oliveros in the Arms of Reynolds - Released on Cream Garden in 1999 is a remix of Oliveros solo concert performed in Buenos Aires in 1993.

Click on URL to hear: http://leoalmanac.org/journal/Vol_15/lea_v15_n01-02/av/poliveros1.mp3
(Mp3, 1.41Mb, 0:46sec)

Our second project was hatched because of my interest in distance performance. I started working with remote locations in 1990 when I participated as an interviewee from the Verbum Gallery in San Diego with my interviewers Morton Subotnick and David Rosenboom in Santa Monica at the Electronic Café, run by Kit Galloway and Sheri Rabinowitz. The medium was video telephone. The video updated every five seconds as a new still image. This was a fun medium to play with. There is a lot one can do in five seconds to change the way things look. Kit and Sheri started the Electronic Café with a benchmark piece – *Hole in Space*.

The Minecxio Connection: Live at the Rosendale Cafe is a live concert with Pauline Oliveros and Reynolds in 2000 in Rosendale NY.

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(Mp3, 1.87Mb, 1:01min)

Hole in Space was a Public Communication Sculpture. On a November evening in 1980 the unsuspecting public walking past the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City, and The Broadway department store located in the open air shopping center in Century City, Los Angeles, had a surprising encounter with each other. Suddenly head-to-toe, life-sized, television images of the people on the opposite coast appeared. They could now see, hear, and speak with each other as if encountering each other on the same sidewalk. No signs, sponsor logos, or credits were posted, no explanation at all was offered, no self-view video monitors to distract from the phenomena of this life-size encounter. *Hole in Space* suddenly severed the distance between both cities and created an outrageous pedestrian intersection. There was the evening of discovery, followed by the evening of intentional word-of-mouth rendezvous, followed by a mass migration of families and trans-continental loved ones, some of which had not seen each other for over 20 years [5].

In 1991, before I met Reynolds, I celebrated 40 years of composing with a six-city video telephone broadcast [6]. I invited friends where I had lived and worked to perform something to help me celebrate. I performed with friends in my living room at home in Kingston, New York. There were 20 minute performances from the Experimental Media Foundation in New York, my mother reading from our letters from a studio in Houston, Texas, friends and former colleagues at the University of California San Diego, friends at the home of Joe Catalano and Wendy Burch in Oakland, California, and others at the Electronic Café in Santa Monica with Kit and Sheri.

We could all see and hear one another. Each broadcast was unique. At the end we performed a six-city audio and video improvisation. The loudest signal would grab the line so everyone took heed to give and make space for others to sound and be seen and not just dominate this interactive improvisation. Each image was a surprise. All the video documentation from the six cities still awaits editing.

Later I worked with Picture-Tel, a video monitor with a camera mounted on top and connected for transmission to ISDN high-speed telephone circuits, for several distance productions with the Deep Listening Band. From The Kitchen we once played a concert with a group in Toronto and we also played with a group in Paris. The audiences in both places got to talk to one another after the concert. This way we created some more 'holes in space'. At another time, the band was distributed with one member each in Seattle, Chicago and New York. Each of us performed with the other two members of the band on screen and with our own audiences present.

Around 1996 I began to improvise with others over the Internet. I appreciated the latency of the medium (about eight seconds between Boston and California, for example) since I work with delays as the basis of my Expanded Instrument System (EIS).

I decided to invite Reynolds to improvise with me between Buenos Aires and New York. Reynolds was very excited and thought they could arrange to do it. They made many arrangements for a space and PR and were including Miguel Tomasin. I kept cautioning them about the necessary protocols with the ISP for the ports to be open. They kept assuring me that all would be well. On our end we were set to go on the day of our netcast at The Thing, a digital arts center in New York. Our streaming on to the Internet was working but there was no connection with Buenos Aires. We recorded our work and so did Reynolds. However the actual netcast did not happen because of the technical problems in Buenos Aires.

Our second project – *NetCast* [7] — is a mix of the two recordings we made simultaneously during our phantom netcast. Now I am pirating and mixing tracks from *NetCast* into a film score that I am making with Vicky Funari on the Maquiladores, the factories of Tijuana Mexico. Those tracks will be remixed by the Nortek Collective of Tijuana!

Reynols did arrive in New York on tour in 2000. They took part in my Lunar Opera at Lincoln Center Out of Doors – a very large production with 250 performers involving all the our door spaces at Lincoln Center [<http://www.deeplisting.org>].

Then we played our first live concert together in upstate New York at a local venue resulting in a third recording mixed by Reynols. *The Minecxio Connection: Live! At The Rosendale Cafe* produced on vinyl by Roaratorio [8].

The manager of the Rosendale Café, Mark Morgenstern presents many wonderful musicians every weekend and throughout the year. He told me after the concert that Alan and Roberto were the most spiritual musicians he had ever experienced at his café. He was very impressed with them.

During their stay in Kingston, New York, Reynols also performed a duo concert at Deep Listening Space — the facility for the Deep Listening Institute — a non-profit Arts organization that I founded in 1985.

Additionally Reynols conducted a workshop with 20 children from the Kingston Children’s Home. We watched as the initially reticent and despondent orphans gradually were drawn in to making sounds. By the end of the hour they were unmistakably making music together and were delighting in the process that Alan and Roberto had set in motion with them. This is the magic of Reynols and their deep commitment to making music and helping others.

Last year Reynols announced that there would be no more of Reynols. Many including myself were shocked at this announcement since the group has done so much and established a true musical presence and statement.

Their answer is “we will go on but want to take a break from this particular name and form so we can begin again.” I look forward to beginning again with them.

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Hole in Space, 1980 <http://www.ecafe.com/getty/HIS/>

Picture-Tel is a video monitor with a camera mounted on top and connected for transmission on ISDN high-speed telephone circuit. <http://web.media.mit.edu/~federico/creativity/picturetel.htm>

Nortek is a collective of Tijuana musicians. www.nortek.org .

Expanded Instrument System (EIS) <http://www.pofinc.org/EIShome.html>

Maquilopolis (City of Factories) is a film about the women factory workers of Tijuana Mexico with original music by Pauline Oliveros. http://www.maquilapolis.com/project_eng.html

Pauline Oliveros with libretto by Ione, *Lunar Opera: Deep Listening For Tunes*, <http://www.pofinc.org/lunar/score.html>

The Minexcio Connection: Live! At The Rosendale Cafe produced on vinyl by Roaratorio (2003)

Rosendale Cafe <http://www.rosendalecafe.com/>

Deep Listening Institute, <http://www.deeplisting.org>

Author Biography

Pauline Oliveros (1932) is one of America's most vital composers. Deep Listening®, her lifetime practice is fundamental to her composing, performing and teaching. She serves as Distinguished Research Professor of Music at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York, Darius Milhaud Artist-in-residence at Mills College, Oakland, California and president of Deep Listening Institute in Kingston, New York.

Citation reference for this Leonardo Electronic Almanac Essay

MLA Style

Oliveros, Pauline. "Pauline Oliveros in the Arms of Reynolds: A Collaboration." "Unyazi" Special Issue, Leonardo Electronic Almanac Vol. 15, No. 1 - 2 (2007). 1 Jan. 2007
<http://leoalmanac.org/journal/vol_15/lea_v15_n01-02/poliveros.asp>.

APA Style

Oliveros, Pauline. (Jan. 2007) "Pauline Oliveros in the Arms of Reynolds: A Collaboration," "Unyazi" Special Issue, Leonardo Electronic Almanac Vol 15, No. 1 - 2 (2007). Retrieved 1 Jan. 2007 from
<http://leoalmanac.org/journal/vol_15/lea_v15_n01-02/poliveros.asp>.

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Leonardo Electronic Almanac (ISSN: 1071 4391)

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