

Dr. Paul Schuette, DMA

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Dear Hack the Bells Jury,

Carillons, in their most traditional guise, mark the time, yet paradoxically they are fixed in space. What I propose is an electroacoustic/multimedia composition for carillon that plays on this intrinsic dynamic of the instrument. Through the use of microphones, loudspeakers and video projection, I want to create a work for carillon that exists in space-time and causes the entire tower (not just the sounds it produces) to become part of a physically felt multidimensional experience.

As a composer, I am interested in combining acoustic sounds with electronic effects to enhance the capabilities of live performance. The idea to bring this approach to a piece for carillon immediately set my imagination running wild. Over the past week, I have been electronically generating sketches. I hesitate to share the following audio because it is merely a sketch of the kinds of sounds and textures that I would seek to craft into a live composition, but the initial results have been exciting. Specifically, to create this music I would place microphones on the bells and process those sounds in real time with a computer that outputs four discrete channels of audio to loudspeakers on all sides of the tower.

<https://soundcloud.com/paul-schuette/carillon-sketch-1>

But the composition is ultimately only one part of the piece that I would like to propose. To accompany the music there would be a four-channel video projection onto all four walls of the tower. Painter Mary Laube and I (collectively known as The Warp Whistle Project) have been creating work that is deeply influenced by a phenomenological approach to art making and theoretical physics (an academic field with deep ties to California!). Our mission is outlined in the following artist statement and I am sure it will be evident why the idiosyncrasies of the carillon - especially the fact that it does not present a definitive listening/viewing experience - make it an extremely attractive medium for us.

The Warp Whistle Project tugs at the relationship between space and time providing sensations that are paradoxical, multidimensional, and which ultimately reflects our 21-century understanding of existence. Through an understanding of theoretical physics and physiology, The Warp Whistle Project seeks to present phenomenological experiences that exist in space-time.

Linear perspective, that most famous of Renaissance inventions, paved the way for Newtonian physics. A single infinitely deep vanishing point was in congruence with the worldview of classical physics: all phenomenon are equally measurable from any perspective by a neutral observer. However, as Einstein and Heisenberg showed us, space and time are intimately related, our relative position matters, and, moreover, the very act of observation matters. Reality is set on a stage that linear perspective can no longer capture.

So the question becomes - how do we as artists observe, interpret, and report on this reality? The Cubists offered an answer which our endeavor hopes to build upon. Rather than jumbling our perception of space, we seek to jumble space-time by asking viewers to reconsider their most basic senses as a field of endless possibilities, full of nuance and surprise.

In terms of vision, building on the work of 20th century color theorist and painter Josef Albers, we seek to present color phenomenon that effect viewers in a physical (as opposed to an abstract) way. While we consider both the subjective nature of perception and the objective framework of biology to be equally effective on human experience, our enterprise is rooted in accessibility. Working eyes and ears are the only requirements for 'understanding' this work; comprehension is rooted in the ability for one to notice. And in our undulating portraits of space-time, it is our hope that viewers are left with a deliciously abstract conception of what it means to be present: to look and observe from a unique and singular vantage point.

Here is a link to our website which contains our "sound paintings" but also some recent videos that demonstrate the visual style that we would bring to the projections.

<http://www.paulschuette.com/the-warp-whistle-project/>

The carillon does not offer listeners a definitive listening experience; these instruments do not exist in hermetically sealed concert halls. Carillons offer listening experiences that are about space and the commingling of natural and urban sounds. While concert goers often argue over the best seats in the hall, the carillon, conversely, provides an infinite number of listening experiences - all of which are equally valid and unique. Our work would seek to make the listening and viewing experience even more personalized - more about the present. By projecting different images on to the different sides of the structure and different sounds in different directions, no one viewer will experience our piece in the same way.

Moreover, our project would seek to rejuvenate the tradition of the carillon as a public instrument by presenting a work whose totality can only be perceived by the collective - the sum of each listeners unique experience. On an aesthetic level, we also see this artistic goal as an homage to the committees inspired choice make the selected work freely licensed - we would be honored to openly contribute our piece to the intellectual community.

Thank you for considering this proposal. We would be delighted to have the opportunity to rise to the occasion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Schuette". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name below.

Dr. Paul Schuette, DMA