

# **LEFT-HANDED SAW RIGHT-HANDED**

## **A Truncated History of Listening**

**Co-Directors:**                      **Brian Torrey Scott**                      **Mary Walling Blackburn**

**Performers:**

	<b>Jeff Harms</b>	<b>Father, Son, Steady</b>
	<b>Dan Mohr</b>	<b>Father, Son,</b>
<b>Steady</b>		
	<b>Brian Torrey Scott</b>	<b>Ruined Colonial Sot</b>

**Live Orchestration:**                      **Sam Wagster**

**MUSIC, recorded and live.**

**Sam Wagster**, original compositions.

Top Gun Theme Song

Gavin Bryers. The Sinking of the Titanic “Woodblocks”

Arnold Dreyblatt. Animal Magnetism

Rutgers University Music Dictation Series (...ear training).

Soul of Music U.S.A: The Sound of Magnificence

(“The folk music of North America was born in the expressions of unsophisticated people who faced the raw and untamed beauty of mountains, plains, and river beds...”)

The Sherells: “Soldier Boy”,

xxxxxx: “Anchors Aweigh”,

Darryl Worley/ Wynn Varble “Have You Forgotten?”

## GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

We would like to express our gratitude to those who directly contributed to the realization of this production: Rachel Damon, Jeff Harms, Links Hall, CJ Mitchell, Dan Mohr & Sam Wagster

## STRUCTURE

A Series of Phone Calls (landline to landline)

The Laughing Owl (Last Record: July 1914)

Apache Dance

Pro War Song (...Aweigh My Boys...)

Pro War Song II (...Don't You Tell Me Not To Worry About Bin Laden...)

Hunting Dance, Bunny Dance

When I Was a Child (recording)

Impossible Economy Symphonic Auction

Father, Father (a heterosexual duet)

Apache Dance II

Therapy and Blind Fugue

Animal Karaoke (Thanks, Animals. Thanks, Extinction.)

Hunting Dance, Bunny Dance II

Apache Dance III

Ghost Accordia, Bird Accordion

The Last Pro War Song (...I'll Be True To You...)

## NOTES

**a. APACHE DANCE:** The Apache dance was popular in the dance halls of Paris in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One dancer performs the prostitute and the other, the prostitute's pimp. (Its naming has absolutely nothing to do with North American indigenous dances and everything to do with the collapsing of colonial fantasy, sexual pleasure, and the violence of purchase.)

**b. THE LAUGHING OWL:** *Sceloglaux albufacies*

“The Laughing Owl could always be brought from its lurking place in the rocks, after dusk, by the strains of an accordion... the bird would silently flit over the face of the musician, and finally take up its station in the vicinity, and remain within easy hearing till the accordion ceased.” - Sir Walter Buller, bird ornithologist

“More gentle animals there could not be. They allow themselves to be held without any resentment.” G.D. Rowley

A rat, stoat, weasel or cat killed the last laughing owl.  
-Blue Cliffs, South Canterbury, New Zealand. July 1914.

(We tell a hurt| to cool it – Emily Dickinson)

**c.**

These songs have been gutted; they are sung with all consonants removed. Its a form of “versioning”, where all the words have been replaced- not with other words- but into rhythms and sounds that fuse a brand new illogic.

### **PRO WAR SONG I: ANCHORS AWEIGH**

Though we roam the seas  
Far from all we love  
We will drink to the good times  
And this land we fight to defend.

Anchors Aweigh my boys  
Anchors Aweigh  
Farewell to college joys  
We sail at break of day day day  
Through our last night on shore  
Drink to the foam  
Until we meet once more  
Here ’ s wishing you a happy voyage home!

From the Halls of Montezuma  
To the shores of Tripoli  
We fight our country's battles  
On the air, on land sea.  
First to fight for right and freedom  
And to keep our honor clean;  
We are proud to claim the title  
Of United States Marines.  
Blue of the Seven Seas  
Gold of god's great sun  
Let these our colors be  
Till all of time be done.  
By Severn shore we learn Navy's stern call  
Faith, courage, service true with honor over all.

#### **d. HUNTING DANCE, BUNNY DANCE**

This dance is a composite of multiple sources: a bow and arrow hunting gestuary, a Solid Gold dancer ecstasy (circa 1980), and an Alaskan dance where it seemed that the predator became its prey. That dance was witnessed at an intertribal Pow Wow in Fairbanks, Alaska in 2002 and was reconstructed from memory for this performance in 2006.

#### **e. IMPOSSIBLE ECONOMY SYMPHONIC AUCTION (excerpts)**

<b>window displays</b>	<b>wind tunnels</b>	<b>trails &amp; paths</b>	<b>sugar</b>
<b>industry</b>	<b>square dancing</b>	<b>sharecroppers</b>	<b>seaplanes (flight path)</b>
<b>rural schools</b>	<b>relocation camps</b>	<b>pear orchards</b>	<b>Mojave</b>
<b>Desert</b>	<b>morning traffic</b>	<b>levees</b>	<b>junkyards</b>
<b>homesteading</b>	<b>(ice) forts and fortifications</b>	<b>deer bones</b>	<b>crop</b>
<b>dusting (breeze)</b>	<b>children sleeping</b>	<b>barbeques</b>	<b>(daisy-cutter)</b>
<b>bombs</b>	<b>awards</b>	<b>athletes</b>	

(Some Auction Omissions:

warm neck brace	Christian Hardcore	wet loincloth	electric waterfall
habitrail	web cam feed	nosejob/blowjob/handjob)	

#### **f. ANIMAL KARAOKE (longing as entertainment)**

A man takes on the impossible task of singing the love songs of beetles and midshipman fish, and the never again chorus of extinct birds. This desire to sing these animal songs lodges itself beyond human ability, but he will attempt to sing anyway. In front of the performer, a video monitor displays the sound wave of the song he attempts to sing and the sound wave of what he has sung.

##### **1. Three-Pronged Beetle Mating Beat**

##### **2. This Owl's Nocturne**

**3. The Last Kaiwahi ooo:** The last recording of the last kawaii oo calling out and receiving no response.

**4. Midshipman Mating Chorus:** These male fish, in chorus, attempting to attract female members of its species.

#### **h. PRO WAR SONG II: HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN? (EXCERPT)**

I hear people saying we don't need this war  
I say there's some things worth fighting for  
What about our freedom and this piece of ground?  
We didn't get to keep 'em by backing down  
They say we don't realize the mess we're getting in  
Before you start preaching  
Let me ask you this my friend...  
Have you forgotten how it felt that day  
To see your homeland under fire  
And her people blown away?  
Have you forgotten when those towers fell?  
We had neighbors still inside  
Going through living hell  
And you say we shouldn't worry 'bout Bin Laden  
Have you forgotten?  
They took all the footage off my T.V.  
Said its too disturbing for you and me  
It'll just breed anger that's what the experts say  
If it was up to me I'd show it every day  
Some say this country's just out looking for a fight  
After 9/11 man I'd have to say that's right

... Have you forgotten all the people killed?  
Some went down like heroes in that Pennsylvania field  
Have you forgotten about our Pentagon?  
All the loved ones that we lost  
And those left to carry on  
Don't you tell me not to worry about Bin Laden

#### **FOUR TYPES OF LISTENING:**

**APPRECIATIVE**  
**EMPATHIC**  
**COMPREHENSIVE,**  
**CRITICAL**

## THE TITLE

Machines are most often manufactured to suit the ergonomics of the right hand; the right-handed saw is no different; it unabashedly caters to the majority. Statistically, the left-handed do not live as long as the right-handed. But this right-hand tailored world does not seemingly provide enough to satiate the right-hand; some right-handers have appropriated the anomalous left-handed saw. Yet right-handed thieves and clumsy craftsmen fear the left-handed saw. It is not only awkward for them to operate the left-handed saw but dangerous. The safety, that which protects the hand from the blade, is designed to function if the saw is being used with a left hand.

To master the left-handed saw right-handed requires a kind of “listening”... to the saw, the disabled safety, and the compensating gesture. The right-hander must respond to the danger and choreograph a measured response as the saw dirges and the right hand begins to finally *see* the left hand and its awkward half-life. The left-hand returns the right-hand’s gaze. It is a choice moment.

## ADDENDUM:

This history of listening could have been an unrequited love quadrangle. Father, Son, Steady longs to couple with machine, but the other Father, Son, Steady longs for animal. The closest anyone gets is the hybrid Animal Karaoke Machine- and still no coitus. Never any coitus. Listen to the sound of Settling. Ah, You’ve Settled.

“Ouvio Vm. Fallar de Guerra (Have you heard that we shall have the war)?”

“Nada ouvi a esse respeito (I have not understood to speak of it). – from *The New Guide of the Conversation in Portuguese and English, in Two Parts*.

We heard that you will only remember 25% of what you have heard tonight or any night; you’ve been robbed. You neurologically robbed yourself.

That which I see, and do not speak of, frightens me. What I speak of, and not know, delivers me. Do not deliver me. – Jacques Dupin

Bowen Opera House. Burned| Lone Tree Opera House. Burned| Fisher Opera House. Burned. – from *The Opera Houses of Iowa* by G. Glenn and R. Poole

“In my mind, I visualize a life-size map of the United States and in every town, every hamlet, every crossroads, **there was nothing but ears**. And all of these countless thousands of ears were cocked and pointed in my direction. I could see ears sticking out from behind library tables, bookcases and sideboards: the handles were ears, the glass knobs were ears, and they were waiting for me.”

– Early recording artist, Leon Alfred Duthero