

DEAN MOORE

percussion

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In the music of Dean Moore, there is something not normally associated with percussion music: a gentle touch. The Seattle based performer approaches his instruments with grace, knowing that the smallest caresses of resonant metals can reveal rich timbres. In Moore's world of sound, individual actions are given space to breath. Having spent decades exploring the sphere of percussion instruments, this artist has found and extrapolated upon the expanse of subtle detail that can be coaxed from these instruments with delicate care and patience. Hidden among what other performers might have only used as ornamental flourishes, Mr. Moore has revealed an abundant palette which can only be appreciated in the meditative listening environment which his music provides. Here there is room to hear the sounds build and decay in a compositional framework that combines slow movement, silence and resonance. As frantic rhythms are something absent from Dean Moore's percussion work, the listener is allowed to enter another sense of time - one that allows for contemplation of sound itself. Through his great variety of playing techniques and instruments, he is able to provide a generous amount of timbres, yet he never falls into the trap of sampling too many in a single piece.

Because of his diversity and sensitivity to the instruments, Dean Moore is an in demand performer in local ensembles. Therefore, audiences have heard him with Garrett Fisher's opera company, graphic score ensemble Eye Music, the aptly named Seattle Percussion Collective, the carnivalesque Circus Contraption, and Aono Jikken who are best known for their original live scores to silent films. It is with the Aono Jikken Ensemble that Dean Moore has travelled through the USA, Canada, Brazil, France and Poland performing live foley (sound effects) for Guy Maddin's movie *Brand Upon The Brain*. In addition, Mr. Moore performs regularly as a solo artist and in collaboration with various modern dancers and yoga instructors. Furthermore, he has worked with such notables as Bill Horist, Amy Denio, Keith Rowe, Annea Lockwood, Stuart Dempster, Randall Dunn, Rob Angus, Susie Kozawa, and Byron Au Yong. While this may seem like a large number of involvements, it must be remembered that Dean Moore is a full time musician and spends significant time in rehearsal for each performance. Each is a serious project approached with dedication.

It is the devotion to music and percussion in particular that is immediately apparent when speaking with Dean Moore. It is his passion. When at home he studiously listens to and reads about percussion music ranging from Karlheinz Stockhausen to gamelan to Frank Zappa (whose drummer Terry Bozzio gave Dean private lessons in the early 1980's). Familiar with western percussion from the standard drum kit to orchestral tools, he has also purchased less common instruments while traveling in Switzerland, Morocco, Thailand, Burma, China, Japan and the island of Bali in Indonesia.

For his solo performances, Dean Moore concentrates on a collection of resonant metals, in particular gongs, which he supplements with various bells, chimes, bowls, and found objects such as saw blades. This assembly is sympathetic in timbre giving his original compositions an harmonic flow. One aspect that greatly aids the cohesion of Dean Moore's music is his use of multiple extended performance techniques - he plays percussion instruments with hands, fingers, kitchen utensils, superballs, and a double bass bow allowing for greater shading of the resulting timbres. At times he supplements these stunning acoustic sounds with electronic processing via analog synthesis and effects creating a parallel universe of tones. Different enough is this electronic version of his performance that Moore presents the electric and acoustic as two different shows, or at least two distinct sets. Due to the meditative and relaxing effect of his performance method, Dean's music has been superbly suited to complement choreography and yoga instruction. With his careful eye, Moore is able to deftly respond to both motion and stillness, reinforcing the rhythm and breath of bodies in motion.

When listening to Dean Moore, one might think of the instrumental variety of Harry Partch or the compositional arrangement of David Tudor. The wide ranging styles of Andrea Centazzo or the late Max Neuhaus could come to mind. But the mood is closer to English percussionist Frank Perry, Harold Budd and Brian Eno's ambient music, or Stan Ridgway and Pietra Westun's *Blood*. But these comparisons only apply to small details. Dean Moore's music is unique. Where else would you hear diaphanous, contemplative tones played in real time from such visually striking acoustic sources?

— Eric Lanzillotta, *Bixobal magazine*