



Paula Matthusen

Pieces for People



- 1      06.16      **sparrows in supermarkets**  
*For soloist* · Terri Hron (recorder)
- 2      06.14      **limerence**  
*For soloist* · James Moore (banjo)
- 3      06.33      **the days are nouns**  
*For ensemble* · Manta Percussion with Jamie Jordan (soprano)
- 4, 5    05.26, 03.44    **AEG (movements III & IV)**  
*For dance* · Fixed media for the Estonian National Ballet;  
Kathleen Supové & Yvonne Troxler (piano), Molly Shaiken  
& Tiit Helimets (voice), Abi Basch (text)
- 6      12.27      **of architecture and accumulation**  
*For soloist* · Wil Smith (organ)
- 7      15.27      **corpo/Cage**  
*For dance* · orkest de ereprijs, conducted by Wim Boerman
- 8      04.32      **in absentia**  
*For ensemble* · Todd Reynolds (violin) & Yvonne Troxler (piano)

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Over the past ten years, I've had the great fortune to develop a number of pieces for close collaborators, friends, and ensembles whom I admire. *Pieces for People* reflects these relationships. A number of pieces are for soloists (many of whom are also composer/performers), playing idiosyncratically along with customized electronics. Pieces for ensembles and dance were similarly developed, and the pieces selected for this CD are one of a handful of collaborations between myself and the ensembles. *Pieces for People* pays homage to this broad and interlinked community, with whom I've had the great pleasure to work.

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### **sparrows in supermarkets**

In the supermarket down the street from me, a family of sparrows has taken up residence, having found a convenient location above the bakery aisle. I'm intrigued by such moments when the boundaries between different environmental and acoustical spaces are reconfigured. *sparrows in supermarkets* seeks not to convey literal birdsong, but rather to examine snippets of melodic repetition as they inhabit different, and at times surprising, spaces. The piece was commissioned by and is dedicated to Terri Hron.

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### **limerence**

Examining reciprocation is a dangerous act. Even a short glance at the nature of exchange and balance can lead to an interminable dance in which one source overwhelms and is overwhelmed by its surroundings. *limerence* toys with such balances through combinations of noise and pitch, distortion, and preservation of tone by utilizing prepared banjo in combination with explosive electronics. *limerence* was commissioned by James Moore and is dedicated to him. Recorded and mixed by Stephen Griesgraber at Soft Landing Studio.

### **the days are nouns**

*the days are nouns*, for voice, vibraphones, and feedback, explores the resonance of the performance space along with the resonators of the instruments themselves. Small microphones are inserted inside the resonators of the vibraphones, and amplified so as to create feedback with which the percussionists and soprano Jamie Jordan interact to excite different frequencies and create interference patterns. The title is drawn from Naomi Shihab Nye's poem *Daily*, and the sung text is a fragmented Norwegian table prayer. *the days are nouns* was recorded by Al Cerulo, Owen Weaver, and Jamie Jordan, at Traxler Studios (NYC) and Notre Dame of Mount Carmel Church. Special thanks to Jim Keefe.

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### **AEG**

*AEG (movements III & IV)* are two in a series of four pieces for fixed media and dance. Each of the movements examines different means of quantizing various musical and speech rhythms, drawing percussive elements from voice and piano. Seeking juxtapositions between permutations of related ostinati, the pieces create a number of patterns and means of interrupting them. The piece was commissioned by the Estonian National Ballet in 2011, with choreography by Tiit Helimets and original text by Abi Basch. Piano samples were recorded in collaboration with Kathleen Suppové and Yvonne Troxler. Text samples performed by Molly Shaiken and Tiit Helimets. The work itself was composed largely through a generous residency provided by Yaddo.



### of architecture and accumulation

*of architecture and accumulation* (for organ and wine glasses) explores gradually expanding sonorities as they fill the space both in terms of register and spatial distribution. Performers rubbing slightly-detuned wine glasses distributed throughout the space gradually sustain tones introduced by the organ, while creating interference patterns and an accumulation of tones. The piece was written for and premiered by composer/performer Wil Smith. Special thanks to Ron Ebrecht.

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### corpo/Cage

*corpo/Cage* was composed as part of the 2009 Mixed Emotions commissioning project, a project coordinated between Generale Oost, orkest de ereprijs, and ArtEZ Dansacademie. The music was developed in collaboration with choreographer Roberto Zappalà. The piece is dedicated to orkest de ereprijs in admiration of their support of new music. *corpo/Cage* was conducted by Wim Boerman and recorded live in Arnhem by Bert Van Dijk.

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### in absentia

*in absentia* (for violin, piano, and miniature electronics) examines, by way of sonic resonance, ideas of memory, and how repetition forges its own patterns in absence of the thing remembered. This piece was commissioned by Daniella Strasfogel and Clemens Hund-Göschel.

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**Paula Matthusen** is a composer who writes both electroacoustic and acoustic music and realizes sound installations. Awards include the Walter Hinrichsen Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Fulbright Grant, two ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composers' Awards, and recently the 2014 Elliott Carter Rome Prize. Matthusen is currently Assistant Professor of Music at Wesleyan University, where she teaches experimental music, composition, and music technology. [www.paulamatthusen.com](http://www.paulamatthusen.com)

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**Terri Hron** is a Montreal-based composer and performer. She collaborates with musicians, video artists and dancers to create performances for herself (*Bird on a Wire*) and others (*spacemelt*, *Portrait Collection*). Terri studied recorder performance and contemporary music at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, and electroacoustic composition and collaboration at the Université de Montréal. [www.birdonawire.ca](http://www.birdonawire.ca)

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**James Moore** is a versatile guitarist and multi-instrumentalist. A native of the San Francisco Bay Area, he has been active in New York since 2006, earning the titles of "local electric guitar hero" from *Time Out New York* and "model new music citizen" from the *New York Times*. James is a founding member of the electric guitar quartet Dither, and performs internationally as a soloist and ensemble player. [www.jamesmooreguitar.com](http://www.jamesmooreguitar.com)

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**Kathleen Supové** is one of America's most acclaimed and versatile contemporary music pianists. She presents solo concerts under the title of *The Exploding Piano*. In 2012, she received the John Cage Award from ASCAP for "the artistry and passion with which she performs, commissions, records, and champions the music of our time." [www.supove.com](http://www.supove.com)

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**Mantra Percussion** has been hailed by the *New York Times* as "finely polished" and "a fresh source of energy" and by *Time Out New York* as "forward thinking." Committed to honoring the deep past and expanding the far-flung future of percussion music, Mantra Percussion brings to life new works for percussion by living artists from diverse genres and styles, and questions what it means to communicate by making music with and on percussive objects. [www.mantrapercussion.org](http://www.mantrapercussion.org)



**Jamie Jordan** specializes in contemporary music, and has performed dozens of premieres throughout the United States. She has collaborated with Alia Musica Pittsburgh, Bob Becker Ensemble, Ekmeles, Juilliard Percussion Ensemble (directed by Dan Druckman), LA Phil New Music Ensemble, Mantra Percussion, Mimesis Ensemble, and Talea Ensemble. She is a frequent guest with Ensemble Signal. [www.jamiejordansings.com](http://www.jamiejordansings.com)

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**Yvonne Troxler** has been praised for “the fiery temperament of her interpretation” as well as her “soft touch [and] warm sonority” (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*). Swiss-born and presently New-York-based, Troxler has performed piano as well as her original compositions throughout the United States and Europe, both as a soloist and as the director of the Glass Farm Ensemble. [www.glassfarm.org](http://www.glassfarm.org)

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Born in Viljandi, Estonia, **Tiit Helimets** trained at Tallinn Ballet School and began his career as a soloist with Estonian National Ballet. He joined Birmingham Royal Ballet in 1999 and became a principal dancer at San Francisco Ballet in 2005. Helimets choreographed AEG for Estonian National Ballet in 2011.

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**Molly Shaiken** is an actor and mime. Theater, film, television, motion capture and voice-over work include international projects in Germany, Russia, Thailand, and Estonia, and, in the U.S., in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and Atlanta. Molly received her BA in Dramatic Arts and German Studies from Mills College and a Graduate Certificate in Physical Acting from FAS Conservatory.

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**Abi Basch** is a playwright and director whose plays include *Arctic Hysteria*, *Foreign C.*, *Voices Underwater*, *Fear of a Führer*, *Lucy Dies in Fives*, and *Preservation*. Her work has been staged in the U.S., Germany, Russia, Estonia and Thailand, and she has received two Jerome Fellowships from the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis, a Fulbright Fellowship, and an Alexander von Humboldt German Chancellor Fellowship. [www.abibasch.com](http://www.abibasch.com)

**orkest de ereprijs** is the leading ensemble for new music in the eastern Netherlands. The group has made a name for itself both at home and abroad. It initiates new projects, often in co-operation with other disciplines, on both a local and international level. [www.ereprijs.nl](http://www.ereprijs.nl)

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**Wil Smith** is an organist and composer whose work embraces a variety of traditional and popular styles, integrating classical techniques with cutting-edge technology, theatrics, and improvisation. He plays pipe organ, Hammond B3 organ, piano, and keyboards, and currently serves as director of music at Central Presbyterian Church in Denver. [www.wilsmithmusic.com](http://www.wilsmithmusic.com)

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**Todd Reynolds** is known as one of the founding fathers of the hybrid-musician movement and one of the most active and versatile proponents of what he calls 'present music'. For years the violinist of choice for Steve Reich, Meredith Monk, Bang on a Can, and a founder of the string quartet Ethel, his compositional and performance style is a hybrid of old and new technology, multi-disciplinary aesthetic and pan-genre composition and improvisation. [www.toddreynolds.com](http://www.toddreynolds.com)

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