

## **Sight Sound -Phenakistoscope-**

Saburo Hirano

*Sight Sound* comes from the concept of Sight Singing. Visual information is transformed into sound in real-time; sound is controlled by image. A *Phenakistoscope* creates the illusion of moving image by presenting a series of images through a slit. Meanwhile, in the DJ scene, turntables are used not just for music reproduction, but as a musical instrument. In this piece, the turntable has taken on these two functions. It rotates the Phenakistoscope's "sheet" instead of a vinyl record. Here rather than slits, the computer program captures a continuous "roll" of slits at an image sampling rate. I combine these two media (aural, visual) in a new type of musical instrument interface that utilizes moving images. The Phenakistoscope's sheets are captured by a camera to create a moving image, the camera detects specific colors and converts them to electronic percussion sounds. To display the color detection, simple geometric shapes are overlapped with the moving image. We can perform with pre-recorded sounds, percussion sounds, and moving images by playing the turntable.

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## **Mouseketier Praxis**

Mark Applebaum

*Mouseketier Praxis* (2003/2006) is an improvisation for the *Mouseketier*, an original instrument built in the summer of 2001. The *Mouseketier* is the most recent electroacoustic sound sculpture in a lineage that begins in 1990 with the *Mousetrap*, and subsequently includes the *Mini-Mouse*, the *Duplex Mausphon*, the *Midi-Mouse*, and *6 Micro Mice* (constructed for the Paul Drescher Ensemble).

The *Mouseketier* consists of three amplified soundboards—pink, blue, and yellow triangles with piezo contact pickups—arranged as tiers. In addition to its three principal pickups are five that work as switches to trigger external processes or computer functions. Mounted on the soundboards (the three tiers) are junk, hardware, and found objects (combs, squeaky wheels, threaded rods, doorstops, nails, springs, AstroTurf, ratchets, strings stretched through pulleys, twisted bronze braising rods, and, of course, mousetraps) that are played with chopsticks, plectrums, knitting needles, a violin bow, and wind-up toys. The resulting sounds are modified with a tangle of external digital and analog signal processors. The instrument sounds great, but it is intended equally for its visual allure.

Annoyed by the transportation and set-up challenges associated with the behemoth *Mousetrap*, I built the *Mouseketier* as a kind of travel model. Not only does it set up in minutes (instead of hours), its flight case—meeting the airline specifications—was designed first. Thanks go to my wife Joan for contributing the *Mouseketier*'s basic architecture and name.

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## **Children of Grainger**

Bent Leather Band

Joanne Cannon (*Serpentine-Bassoon* and *Contra-Monster*) and Stuart Favilla (*LightHarp*).

*... Music is an art not yet grown up; its condition is comparable to that stage of Egyptian bas-reliefs when the head and legs were shown in profile while the torso appeared "front face" - the stage of development in which the myriad irregular suggestions of nature can only be taken up in regularised or conventionalised forms. With Free Music we enter the phase of technical maturity such as that enjoyed by the Greek sculptors when all aspects and attitudes of the human body could be shown in arrested movement.*

*... It seems to me absurd to live in an age of flying and yet not to be able to execute tonal glides and curves - just as absurd as it would be to have to paint a portrait in little squares (as in the case of mosaic) and not to be able to use every type of curved lines. If, in the theatre, several actors (on the stage together) had to continually move in a set theatrical relation to each other (to be incapable of individualistic, independent movement) we would think it ridiculous, yet this absurd goose-stepping still persists in music. Out in nature we hear all kinds of lovely and touching "free"; (non-harmonic) combinations of tones, yet we are unable to take up these beauties and expressivenesses into the art of music because of our archaic notions of harmony. - Percy Aldridge Grainger 1938*

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