

The No Jazz of Microkingdom lecture recital proposal

This presentation couples live performances by the No Jazz band Microkingdom with a discussion of improvisation, unsystematic notation, digital composition and impressionistic reverse engineering. The band's live performances and recordings are examples of premeditated, spontaneous, and post-performance composition and recomposition. The title of Microkingdom's recent album *Three Compositions of No Jazz* is a tribute to Anthony Braxton's debut album *Three Compositions of New Jazz* and also references the No Wave movement of 1970's NYC. Braxton's visionary improvisations and compositions and the noise-drenched, heartbreaking maelstrom of No Wave bands like DNA and The Contortions are parallel influences on Microkingdom's music. The music on *Three Compositions of No Jazz* consists of recordings of free improvisations and interpretations of Redman's scores (such as the graphically fantastic *Book* and the much more austere *Charts*) digitally edited and processed into a palindromic wordless song cycle. The performances in this presentation will include a venue specific reading of *Book* and adapted versions of album tracks based on *Charts* (*Aire Metal* and *Mytht Of The Rainy Nightt*). Microkingdom can also lead a workshop based on the above presentation, but which also includes student/local performers in the performances.

About Microkingdom:

Microkingdom (Baltimore, MD) is a psychosonic curatorial adventure led by Will Redman (percussion) and Marc Miller (guitar), and usually John Dierker (reeds). The music exists in both the acoustic and electro-acoustic realms. They specialize in zone variance of extra-cognitive spiritual magnetism, or No Jazz. It is transbehavioral, multivalent, history-dependent composition. Their self-released debut album *Wrenches: My Heart/Double Abacus* has been broadcast internationally and written about in publications such as *The Wire* and *Pitchfork*. The next album *Three Compositions Of No Jazz* is due in November 2010 on Friends Records.

Some history: Miller and Redman played together in the mid-'90's in a conceptual art rock band called International Soundscape Internationale, while Redman and Dierker played in a free jazz group together. Redman left Baltimore in 2000 to study music composition in grad school. During that time, Miller recorded and toured with the highly influential Baltimore rock pranksters Oxes while Dierker continued to hold it down as a major figure in Baltimore's experimental and jazz scenes (he's been at it for over 25 years now). In 2006 Redman finished his PhD and returned to Baltimore with plans to start a band with Dierker. It turns out that Miller was also looking for a new project and Microkingdom was formed in a small disused room in an auto body shop on a sketchy street in the middle of Baltimore.

Individual bios:

Marc Miller has been playing shows in Baltimore since he was 14. He studied recording technology at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, but left school to tour the US and Europe with his band Oxes. Oxes have performed on the John Peel show, toured with Wire, played South By Southwest and CMJ, et cetera, et cetera. Marc's guitar playing can by turns whisper the tenderest nothings to your ear and rip you an entirely new one. In addition to Microkingdom and Oxes, Marc also plays in the experimental chamber pop group Ghost Life and as an improviser has collaborated with Susan Alcorn, Mike Formanek, Dave Ballou, among others, and played the High Zero festival.

Will Redman is a composer, percussionist, and teacher based in Baltimore, MD. His music has been performed, broadcast, and written about in the U.S. and abroad; including performances at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, June In Buffalo and the High Zero festival. Will's compositions employ confounding extensions and extrapolations of traditional music notation in order to elicit radical interpretation by the performers; excerpts of a recent composition, *Book*, appear in the anthology *Notations21*. As a percussionist, Will has performed with Steve Baczkowski, Evan Rapport, Mike Formanek, Dave Ballou, Todd Whitman, Tim Berne, Audrey Chen, and Peter Brotzmann, among others. Will

holds a BA, MA, and PhD in composition from the University of Maryland Baltimore County, University of Southampton (England), and SUNY Buffalo, respectively. He has studied percussion with Tom Goldstein and Kevin Norton and composition with Stuart S. Smith, Michael Finnissy and Jeff Stadelman. Will teaches part time at Towson University.

Baltimore's "Most Valuable Player," **John Dierker's** ongoing inspiration covers a huge range of music, from rock-and-roll and surf music to arcane forms of jazz and free improvisation. Unpretentious and extremely passionate, the evocatively high integrity screech and warble of Dierker's horn can be heard most nights of the week at venues throughout the city with groups like The Swingin' Swamis, New Volcanoes, il culo, and The Can Openers. He has a highly distinctive sound and is increasingly known outside of Baltimore in free jazz circles and through collaborations with musicians like Jeff Arnal, Sean Meehan, and Lafayette Gilchrist. Dierker currently leads the improv ensemble at Towson University.

Contact:

microkingdom@gmail.com - Will

bmoremusicallyinformed@gmail.com - Brett

More info:

www.microkingdom.com

[www.friendsrecordsbaltimore.com/releases/](http://www.friendsrecordsbaltimore.com/releases/microkingdom_threecompositionsofnojazz/)

microkingdom_threecompositionsofnojazz/

Press:

The Wire:

"...a kind of shambling, nightclub jazz sway... a hyperactively burrowing noise excavation which displays a squally belligerence before slowing to a crawl..."

Pitchfork:

"...dynamic, challenging, confident...the work of musicians questioning each other's habits so as to bend good ideas into great sounds. ...it's hard

to imagine having more fun with some drums, a guitar, and some reeds."

City Paper (Baltimore):

"... An impatient and aggressive near-rock record that, at moments, dares to be accessible... ecstatic, would-be song...ground underfoot, discordant bleats of saxophone answered flippantly by Miller's even more discordant guitar seizures... It stings, but if nothing did here, you'd be disappointed."

Dusted:

"It's good to hear that the dynamics of a "noise" scene ultimately hasn't torn down an avenue for clean, forward-thinking sketches like in these four pieces, half flying coach in free technique, the other half grounded in structured interplay."