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compositions
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artist's statement

We find ourselves in a period of history which is marked by tremendous speed. Certain aspects of life have reached a velocity that allows evolutionary processes which used to take generations to unfold many times in a human lifespan. As science fiction writer Bruce Sterling explains, “our entire culture has been sucked into the black hole of computation, an utterly frenetic process of virtual planned obsolescence. But you know - that process needn't be unexamined or frenetic. We can examine that process whenever we like, and the frantic pace is entirely our own fault... there's an unexpected delicious thrill in the thought that individual human beings can now survive whole generations of media.” The chosen medium of an artist used to be considered permanent, but as is especially obvious with digital media, artworks created on an outdated operating system can become instantly as dead as the eight-track. How does one produce work in such a landscape that can endure, and, moreover, how does one produce work that can navigate and ultimately reflect upon this landscape? Contemplating these questions is the overarching goal of my work and the purpose of this exhibit.

The contexts in which we view different forms of art have been challenged: music is no longer confined to the concert hall and art no longer needs a gallery. I believe that these fragile and unstable aspects of making art are here to stay and can no longer be ignored or sidestepped. It is the purpose of this exhibition to reflect upon how my “musical” works negotiate this terrain, for many of them have a built-in ability, and perhaps even a need, to defy one singular context or mode of presentation. Some have visual components which are impossible to feature in a concert setting, others have a built in malleability which allows them to adapt to different contexts and others deal with sound in a conceptual way that defies any traditional mode of presentation. This exhibit seeks to feature these “living” aspects of my works, for all works of art are part of an ongoing conversation with time and place. In my work, the adaptable-liveliness which allows these works to be presented in different contexts is an intrinsic and central feature to them - which directly reflects the instability of the time and place in which I find myself working. This exhibit of Compositions would highlight these works by showing them from another angle in another context - solidifying their inherent flexibility.
Jean-Paul Sartre said the following about Alexander Calder's mobiles:

"There is more of the unpredictable about them than in any other human creation. No human brain, not even their creator's, could possibly foresee all the complex combinations of which they are capable." It is my hope to further this tradition of mobile-making by creating works which both physically and sonically live up to this ideal.
This mobile has a custom built synthesizer which features 15 square wave oscillators gated together as its sound source. This sound source attempts to mirror the complex physical properties of object.
As Goethe famously remarked, “Architecture is like frozen music,” and while I agree with this concept, I would also argue that the opposite is true. It is my hope that this piece provides an experience which can be called neither temporal or spatial but one that inhabits a place between the two: where space and time are one.
This installation would display the graphic scores of my string quartet “no news is good news” with headphones beneath each section of the score where viewers could hear the corresponding section of the piece.

The scores are based on the front pages of the New York Times from the week of April 5-10, 2006. Graphic scores are an inexact form of musical notation the purpose of which is to allow the performer more input and freedom in their interpretation. While these are graphic scores, in some respects they demand inhumane exactness. This contradiction is meant to be an analog to the title which has its own inherent paradox, for it can be interpreted as a cliche or quite literally.
In a Rally in Church, Fighting Filibusters

In a videotaped statement at an evangelical Christian rally at Highview Church in Louisville yesterday, U.S. Sen. Bill Frist renewed his threats to change Senate rules to prevent Democratic filibusters of judicial nominees. The telephone numbers of senators encouraged people to call lawmakers. Page 13.

Cellphones in China: A New Voice

Street vendors on a busy street of Chongqing, China, sell the latest Chinese cellphones. As China's economy grows, so do the number of mobile phone users, which is nearly 350 million. However, the number of Internet users is roughly 100 million and growing at 30 percent a year.

The result is a constant tension between a population hungry for free communication and a government that regards information control as essential to its power. Anti-Japanese protesters have been able to spread information and loosely coordinate different marches in a country where political organizing is illegal.

"That has to put the government on guard," said Xiao Qiang, director of the China Internet Project at the University of California at Berkeley. He said the recent organizing effort was even more notable because no one had been able to identify any of the general public as donors or in any way participating in or operating the organizations, but more than a million people did.

They are afraid the Chinese people will think, 'Okay, today we protest; tomorrow, Japan,'" said an diplomat who has watched the protests closely. "But the day after tomorrow, they agree to the money. But the organization is not established.

Four marines were killed in this Humvee with jury-rigged armor when it was struck by a car bomb in Ramadi last May.

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In 1977 Rolling Stone magazine moved from San Francisco to New York. Appearing in their first issue after the move was a piece by John Cage entitled "49 Waltzes for the Five Bouroughs". The accompanying score consisted of a long list of addresses and the following instructions: "for performer(s) or listener(s) or record maker(s)," he then goes on to say in parentheses that "Transcriptions may be made for other cities, or places, by assembling through chance operations a list of addresses."

Cage later wrote a similar piece for Chicago entitled "A Dip in the Lake". The two pieces are collectively known as his "city pieces."
In my transcription of this piece I choose to take Cage's suggestion that the piece can be adapted "for other cities, or places" to an extreme by realizing a version of the piece for the entire world. Such extreme interpretations of Cage's work are not unprecedented and the fact that his work lends itself to such extremes is what keeps his catalogue so relevant and vital.