The making and performance of

Алёна

Co-authored by Rob Godman, David Mapp and Lee Richardson
(University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom)

It is almost a cliché of cultural studies that a division exists between 'popular' music and 'art' music. […] this distinction is being eroded in digital culture.
Andrew Hugill - The Digital Musician, Routledge 2008

[*Alyona*] is a 1-hour continuous set, presented as a live performance of Poetry, Hip-Hop and Immersive Sound. The aim is to engage audiences through performance and documentation by offering unique and unrepeatable live events where the use of technology is transparent and visual. Audience perception of 'liveness' is a central component of the performance. The artists actively combine unlikely juxtapositions of material and style and make no apology for the strong language and material that some may find offensive.

David says:
Jung describes the anima and animus as elements of his theory of the collective unconscious, a domain of the unconscious that transcends the personal psyche. The central concept of the piece is to present acousmatic immersive sound as the anima of hip-hop. The composition of the script then, is a matter of exaggerating those aspects of rap, which the (unbalanced!) narrator perceives as masculine, and counterbalancing them (to use Jung's language) with a prose-style suitable for reciting over the immersive sound. So the hip-hop poetry becomes aggressive, angry, crass, vulgar and, in short, explicit, whilst the prose for the second half becomes contemplative, ambiguous, mysterious and, in short, implicit. The exact same themes are explored in both sections, but whilst they revolve around hatred and vengeance in the rap, they revolve around love and reconciliation in the prose-poetry.

This poster will discuss the interdisciplinary relationships found within [Alyona]; between philosophy and art, between sound and space, and the methods of delivery for linear narrative including aesthetic implications of 'liveness'.

(Pre)recorded music is a two-dimensional medium of the 20th century. It exploits our weakness for nostalgia. Music is breaking away from the shackles of recorded music. Immediacy is lost in recorded music.
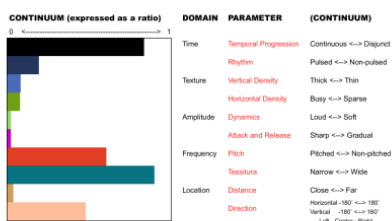Bill Drummond - History of Music Part 19, Night Waves, BBC Radio 3 Broadcast 8 January 2009

Animus ←--→ Anima
[The anima and animus are described by Jung as elements of his theory of the collective unconscious, a domain of the unconscious that transcends the personal psyche]
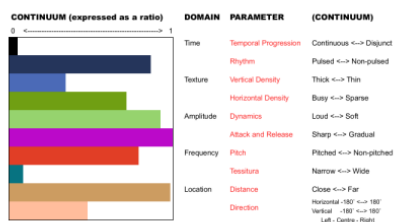
Fundamental Parameters

**Hip-hop
Rap**
[aggressive, angry, crass, vulgar… - explicit]

**Sustained Immersive Sound
Prose-style narrative**
[contemplative, ambiguous, mysterious… - implicit]

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Links to further documentation:

http://www.robgodman.com/RobGodman/Audio_Downloads.html
(audio extract of Alyona)

http://www.robgodman.com/RobGodman/Alyona.html
(further documentation, text and photographs)

http://www.dmandlr.co.uk/
(archive performance audio and video)

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Artist Biographies

David Mapp
Poet, Composer, Pianist and Rapper

David Mapp was born in Chester and hopped between homes in Ellesmere Port and Blacon until he was 18 when he moved to Hertfordshire to study music composition.

"I grew up on a mixed diet of Bowie and Iggy Pop from my father's side and Madonna and ABC from my mother. This has understandably, left me confused and disorientated."

"Aside from song writing, my passions are poetry and philosophy. My ambition is to recluse to a tiny hermitage in the mountains, where I'll rock gently, endlessly reciting Plath, whom I will believe to be occupying the cave next door."

David is an Associate Lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire, specialising in Song Writing, performance and contemporary culture.

Lee Richardson http://www.leeis.co.uk
Composer, Engineer and Producer

Lee Richardson is a producer, composer, engineer, sound designer, DJ and record label owner.

His production career spans Folk music, Experimental Rock, Dance music, Acoustic and Hip-Hop as well as plenty of other more obscure projects.

His band and DJ act "Diverted" has toured the world, played major venues in London and released many singles and remixes culminating in an album in early 2009 on Air Recordings.

Lee is the Principal Music Technician at the University of Hertfordshire, responsible for studio activity and live performance where technology is an intrinsic part.

Rob Godman http://www.robgodman.com
Composer, Sound Designer and Programmer

Working as a composer, sound designer and programmer, Rob has a passionate interest in how sound behaves acoustically and has developed a number of techniques for controlling and building virtual spaces for use within live performance and installation.

An enthusiastic collaborator, Rob has worked on experimental and large-scale commercial music and sound design projects including the interactive installation *The DARK* (http://www.thedark.net).

Rob has received performances from artists such as the Siobhan Davies Dance Company, The BBC Singers, Evelyn Glennie, Gemini, Philip Mead, Xenia Pestova, Vivienne Spiteri, Kate Romano, Andrew Sparling, The Jane Turner Dance Company and the Sackbut and Cornett Ensemble QuintEssential.

Rob Godman is Reader in Music and Programme Leader for Composition at the University of Hertfordshire, a unique BSc honours degree programme focusing on composition with digital technology in the widest sense.