

Artist Statement

Dirk Johan Stromberg

Dirk Johan Stromberg is an American musician and composer whose musical passions are inspired by his nomadic lifestyle. Having grown up in Great Britain, Switzerland and The Netherlands, Dirk now seeks to create music as a common language that transcends cultural boundaries. While living in Texas and in NY, New York, Dirk was struck by the dichotomy of the vast cultural divide and the intolerable similarities between Europe and the United States. Dirk later travelled broadly in Southeast Asia while seeking inspiration for the creation of a musical composition to accompany poetry read from the book, *Tropendrift*, a journey that has profoundly influenced his music and artistic vision.

His compositions explore the concepts of improvisation and chance through implementations of reactive performance, real-time composition and the implementation of technology in acoustic music. His interests in reactive performance and real-time composition have manifested themselves in the creation of intelligent computer programs and alternate notation systems. Dirk uses technology to develop sound diffusion as an intrinsic performance element. As a composer, his fascinations with acoustic instruments and technology have led me to pursue the integration of these two influences, particularly through live sampling and re-synthesis techniques. This unique approach to re-synthesis blurs the line between elements of acoustic performance and computer-aided or computer-generated sound.

He continues to work as a musical production consultant and performer. Dirk has produced several CDs and DVDs of electro-acoustic and acoustic music, and he regularly performs internationally.

His goals are to continue his research with technology as a medium to bring cultures and communities together while challenging concepts of perception of performance ritual and sound through his art, teaching and daily interaction.

About His Music

Dirk Johan Stromberg has dedicated his work to music that is founded in the live performance experience, a passion that stems from his work as an improviser. His compositions delve not only into aspects of improvisation and chance but also deal with reactive performance, real-time composition and the implementation of technology in acoustic music. His interests in reactive performance and real-time composition have manifested themselves in the creation of intelligent computer programs and alternate notation systems. Dirk further implements technology to deal with sound in space in such a way that sound diffusion becomes an intricate performance element and further making a performance a separate experience from a recording.

Noise, and balancing it both sonically and formally, is the primary acoustic element that Dirk concerns himself with. The composer's fascination with acoustic instruments as well as technology has led to his pursuit of trying to integrate the two and hence works mostly with live sampling and re-synthesis. His approach to re-synthesis allows the composer to blur the line between what is part of the acoustic performance and what is computer aided/generated sound.

About His Performing

Exploring the nature of sound and its perception has led Dirk to re-examine his own instrument, the guitar, often by transforming the guitar's sound through acoustic manipulation to mimic traditional Eastern instruments, such as the gamelan orchestra of Indonesia. In recent years, his work with prepared guitar, influenced by the works of John Cage, has been a primary focus in his improvised music. As a jazz guitarist and an improvisational musician, Dirk has launched a solo career and is also currently playing with Islak Kopek, the first electro-acoustic, free-improvisation ensemble in Turkey.