

Jonathan Morris (Matis)

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Note: Last name changed from **Matis** to **Morris** due to marriage in 2003.

COMPOSITION / PERFORMANCE

D.C. Improvisers Collective

December 2002 – Present

Co-founder, guitarist: An ensemble/laboratory exploring the intersection of jazz, contemporary composition, and experimental music. The group's first CD, "here, we are," was released in June 2003. In a review, Frank Rubolino, of All About Jazz, wrote, "The performers delve into remote realms, conjuring up inventive music with sorcerous cunning. Each musician...responds to the circulating spirits of the others on this compelling example of unrestrained group meditation." A second full-length quartet CD, "Meme and Variations" was released on Sachimay Records in 2007. A trio CD, "Triangulation" was recorded in 2006 (funded by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities), and released in 2008.

Low End String Quartet

February 2007 – Present

Founder, Guitarist: A re-imagining of the classical model. The instrumentation differs, adding a bass, dropping a violin, and swapping a guitar where the viola should be. All instruments are amplified. This "new and improved" string quartet lineup is much better suited to alternative venues than the classical model, and is better equipped for rumbling your ribcage. The group has been awarded grants from the Argosy Foundation Contemporary Music Fund and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

Eigenvalues

January 2006 – Present

Co-Founder, Performer: Using the sound of the spoken voice, instrumental accompaniment and electronic processing, Eigenvalues (Cameron McPhee and Jonathan Matis) composes and performs material that blurs the boundaries between music and literary art. Weaving together original and found text with composed and improvised music, Cameron and Jonathan's work is unique, artistically compelling and socially relevant. This is a novel and creative redefining of text-setting, of putting words to music, of putting music to words and transforming the boundary between them.

Fending/Matis Duo

January 2001 – Present

Guitarist: Percussion and guitar duo exploring structured improvisation. Released the CD "Shiny and Round" on the Metatron Press label in 2001. Our second CD, "Three Rocks" was released in 2006 on the Sockets CDR label. Touring has included shows at the Toronto Fringe Jazz Festival, CBGBs, and the DC Vision Festival.

Gray Code

July 1999 – June 2001

Co-founder, guitarist: Electro-acoustic improvisational ensemble that grew out of the vocal trio, "Comma." Other ensemble members included Tom Bickley, Joseph Zitt, Brian Fending, and Matthew Ross Davis. The group explored issues of ensemble improvisation and structures that allowed for elements of form to be determined while still leaving many parameters open to spontaneous decision making. The group worked diligently to avoid having one player assume a leadership role or function as conductor. This egalitarian approach informed the music and administration of the ensemble.

Braxton/Matis Duo

January 1999 – September 2000

Guitarist: Improv electric guitar duo with Tyondai Braxton. Released the CD "Death Slug 2000" on the Metatron Press label and toured the east coast along with computer musician Eric Bernasek.

COMPOSITION

Concert works for string orchestra, saxophone quartet, and various instrumental ensembles and electronics have been performed in venues throughout the United States. Collaborations with dance companies include Step Afrika, The Playground, Jane Franklin Dance, Cross Currents Dance Company, and independent choreographers Jane Jerardi, and Claire Barratt. Incidental music for theater composed for the Tsunami Theatre Company.

RESIDENCIES AND MASTER CLASSES

Sound Exchange, Philadelphia – a residency program with Pauline Oliveros (Spring 2006)
Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium (Summer 2005)

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Argosy Foundation Contemporary Music Fund: Grant awarded in 2007 for commissioning new work for the Low End String Quartet.

DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities: Grants awarded in 2006 and 2007 for the DC Improvisers Collective; also in 2007 for the Low End String Quartet.

FESTIVALS

Capital Fringe Festival: 2006

Transmodern Age Festival (Baltimore): 2005

DC International Improvisation Festival: 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001

DC Sonic Circuits Festival: 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001

Toronto Fringe Jazz Festival: 2002

Philadelphia Fringe Festival: 2000, 1999

ARTS ADMINISTRATION

Improv Arts, Inc.

September 2005 – Present

Founder and Co-Director: A nonprofit organization based on a new model for performing arts, Improv Arts serves as the shared business infrastructure for multiple performance companies including a string quartet, a jazz ensemble, and a modern dance company. Manage all aspects of the business administration including fundraising, board development, marketing and financial management. Also serve as artistic director of the Low End String Quartet and DC Improvisers Collective.

American Composers Forum, Washington DC Chapter

October 2001 - Present

Chapter Director: Responsible for all operations of the local chapter including: fundraising, program development and administration, member services, board development, and marketing. The Chapter works to support the artistic growth of composers while developing new markets for their music. Through community based residency programs and a variety of artist support services, the Chapter links composers with communities.

EDUCATION

B.A. from **Connecticut College**, New London, CT

Graduate studies in composition at the **Hartt School of Music**, University of Hartford, Hartford, CT

DISCOGRAPHY

DC Improvisers Collective: Triangulation (2008, Improv Arts)

DC Improvisers Collective: Meme and Variations (2007, Sachimay Records)

Brian Fending and Jonathan Maltis: Three Rocks (2006, Sockets CDR)

Jonathan Matis with the PlayGround: Buried in the Sky (2003, self-released)

DC Improvisers Collective: here, we are (2003, Snack Records)

Brian Fending and Jonathan Matis: Shiny and Round (2002, Metatron Press)

Gray Code: Live in Philadelphia (2001, Metatron Press)

Tyondai Braxton and Jonathan Matis: Death Slug 2000 (2000, Metatron Press)

Joe Zitt and Jonathan Matis: Even the Widest Aardvark Outdreams the Gnu (1999, Metatron Press)

Jonathan Matis: Four Sculptures (1999, DAM)