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Home > Journal > Essays > UNYAZI

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

EDITOR'S NOTE

GUEST EDITORIAL

ESSAYS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

:: GALLERY

:: RESOURCES

:: ARCHIVE

:: ABOUT

:: CALL FOR PAPERS

Unyazi Special: Welcoming the Year With a Groove

vol 15
issue

01

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Advanced Search

Unyazi

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Supplement to
Leonardo
Music Journal 16[Wired Magazine on LEA](#)**Introduction – Unyazi Special
Welcoming the Year With a Groove**

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Keywords

Leonardo Electronic Almanac, LEA, Unyazi Special, South African electro-acoustic music

Abstract

LEA's first installment of 2007 functions as a special supplement to *Leonardo Music Journal Volume 16 (2006)* (<http://leonardo.info/lmj/lmj16.html>). This catchy collage of essays is ingrained with elements of multimedia that use South African electro-acoustic music as a springboard to further discussion.

Introduction

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In the first piece, Jürgen Bräuninger's editorial succinctly introduces us to UNYAZI, the first South African electro-acoustic music symposium/festival. UNYAZI is the isiZulu word for lightning. Held in Johannesburg last 1-4 September 2005, UNYAZI brought together "an illustrious group of local and international electronic music practitioners", with diversity as "the obvious festival concept."

Several of the authors look at North-South relationships and collaborations. Pauline Oliveros is one of them. In *Pauline Oliveros in the Arms of Reynolds: A Collaboration*, she recalls the nature and history, and philosophical and technical aspects of her encounter with the Argentinean heavy metal band Reynolds, which resulted in three recordings, a couple of concerts and collaborations that "continue to this day."

Lukas Ligeti then "explores the aesthetic and creative possibilities of the combination of African musical forms and electronics" in *The Burkina Electric Project and Some Thoughts About Electronic Music in Africa*.

The topic then swivels over to Latin American contemporary music, as Mexican composer Rodrigo Sigal illustrates the concepts of heritage and identity in this genre, with a special emphasis towards electroacoustic composition. *The Borders of Identity, A Personal Perspective* also discusses the problems of teaching and judging contemporary composition from a European perspective.

In the self-explanatory *Music Technology at Stellenbosch University*, Theo Herbst examines the nascent music technology program hosted at the said university by exploring four lines of thought: The theoretical and philosophical underpinnings which continuously inform the program, an introduction to content and outcomes, non-academic activities and plans for the future.

To close, Matthew Ostrowski's *The Anxiety of the Client: Dilemmas of the Database as*

a Compositional Tool investigates the possibilities and implications of mapping databases on to sound as a compositional technique.

Let this resonating blend of pieces seep into your psyche.

Author Biography

Natra's quest in life is to take insightful snapshots of thoughts in an ever-changing world. She is seldom seen without a notebook and pen, furiously documenting her impressions of the things around her.

After a brief but meaningful career as a media and cultural affairs officer in a particular embassy, and a stint as a media manager in a skincare company, Natra decided to delve into the world of freelancing and has spent the last two years diving into various writing projects.

This versatile communications-trained professional has contributed to various publications such as Asian Geographic, WE (World Environment), LightBox and Today's Manager. She also continues to dabble in the skincare industry as a freelance copywriter.

Her current role as director of media and communications at Julian W. Photography affords her the luxury of exploring Asia's natural wonders with her photography partner. There is a symbiotic relationship where he takes the photographs and she does the writing.

To accommodate a love for nature that runs deep, Natra also engages herself in many of the Singapore Zoo's educational programs. As a part-time facilitator, Natra works with school children, imparting conservation messages through hands-on activities. She also writes regularly for the zoo and was a contributing writer of The Field Guide to Singapore Zoo.

Additionally, she volunteers her time as a Singapore Zoo docent and is a consultant to the Malaysian Elephant Appeal, a non-profit organization that raises funds for an elephant sanctuary in Pahang, Malaysia.

Natra is working on her first book: A collection of anecdotes about the late Sri Utama, the first captive-born elephant in Singapore. She joined the LEA team as its editor in February 2005, and has recently been promoted to managing editor.

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