



JULIUS EASTMAN

THAT WHICH IS FUNDAMENTAL

MAY
4-28

CONCERTS at The Rotunda
4014 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA

Friday, May 5th, 2017 • 8pm

Stay On It + Femenine

+ Gerry Eastman

ARCANA NEW MUSIC ENSEMBLE WITH
CHRISTOPHER MCINTYRE

Friday, May 12th, 2017 • 8pm

Macle, Thruway, Buddha

+ Moor Mother

EKMELES VOCAL ENSEMBLE, EASTMAN COMMUNITY
CHOIR, ARCANA NEW MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Friday, May 19th, 2017 • 8pm

Crazy, Evil, Gay Guerrilla

JOSEPH KUBERA, DYNASTY BATTLES, MICHELLE
CANN, ADAM TENDLER, SONORA GUITAR ENSEMBLE

Friday, May 26th, 2017 • 8pm

The Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc

+ Devonté Hynes

DAVONE TINES, STANFORD THOMPSON AND THE
BOWERBIRD CELLO ENSEMBLE

EXHIBITION at Slought Foundation
4017 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA

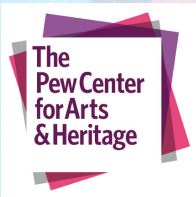
May 4 to 28, 2017

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Gardenhire, Courtney Bryan, Texas Isaiah, and Yulan
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Tickets and more info at:

www.ThatWhichIsFundamental.com



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bowerbird presents

Julius Eastman: That Which Is Fundamental

CURATED BY TIONA NEKKIA MCCLODDEN AND DUSTIN HURT

presented in conjunction with the Eastman Estate, and in collaboration with Slought and The Rotunda

Concert Program #3: May 19, 2017 // Sanctuary of The Rotunda

PROGRAM

JULIUS EASTMAN: INTRODUCTION

Archival recording Eastman introducing a 1980 concert at Northwestern University

JULIUS EASTMAN: EVIL NIGGER (1979)

Joseph Kubera * Dynasty Battles * Michelle Cann * Adam Tendler

JULIUS EASTMAN: GAY GUERRILLA* (1979)

** version for 15 electric guitars by Dustin Hurt*

SONORA GUITAR ENSEMBLE

Michael Lorenz * Quinn Collins * John Pettit * Marc Jaffee
Ben Rosen * Travis Woodson * Joshua Hey * Brian McBrearty *
James Merle Thomas * Alban Bailly * David Middleton * Dylan Reis
George Korein * Matt Hollenberg * Alex Lewis

~ INTERMISSION ~

JULIUS EASTMAN: CRAZY NIGGER (1979)

Joseph Kubera * Dynasty Battles * Michelle Cann * Adam Tendler

assited by Eve Gibson, Quinn Collins, James Merle Thomas, Zaki Hagins, David Middleton,
George Korein, Ben Rosen, Roger Martinez, Jeanne Lyons, and Matt Hollenberg

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Black musician's song titles censored by FMO protest

By Jeff Bloch
Daily Assistant Editor

Composition titles were kept off the printed program for a black contemporary musician who performed on campus Wednesday night because some black students complained about the titles' allegedly racist nature.

Julius Eastman, a musician and composer, performed compositions from what he calls "the Nigger Series." Works entitled "Evil Nigger," "Gay Guerilla" and "Crazy Nigger" were played to an audience of about 110.

Advertisements for Eastman's performance entitled his program, "New Works for Four Pianos." The printed program for the performance at Pick-Staiger Concert Hall listed the performers but omitted the

titles.

TONY THOMPSON, coordinator of For Members Only, said the group objected to the use of the word "nigger" on posters and programs because for black people, the word "has always been a derogatory term. It's always implied racism and inferiority."

Thompson said FMO didn't question Eastman's artistic freedom. However, he said "We do realize we are in a very racist environment here at Northwestern. The problem is not one of conservatism but one of racism."

Eastman said Wednesday "I admire the name 'nigger.' It's a strong name. I feel that it's a name that has a historical importance and even protects blacks."

Eastman said he defined

the word as "the most real part of whatever you're into." If refers to the most basic or fundamental part of something, he said.

"**YOU CAN'T** wear Gucci shoes and be a nigger," Eastman said.

Complaints began last week after Peter Gena, assistant professor of Music Theory and Composition, submitted Eastman's concert program to the School of Music. Eastman was at Northwestern for the past week and a half as a visiting composer and a guest of the Music and Composition faculty. His performance is sponsored by the NU Contemporary Music Ensemble, which Gena co-directs.

Eastman met with FMO representatives last week, to explain his use of the word, Gena said.

Eastman talked with black students at Cornell University when he thought the same objections would develop. After the discussion, the students did not protest the use of Eastman's titles, Gena said.

"**AS FAR** as I'm concerned, it's his artistic freedom," Gena said. "I'm having him here as an artist. Whatever he wants to call them (his compositions) is up to him."

FMO vice-coordinator Neil Boyer said persons seeing the posters could take titles out of the context of Eastman's use of the word, which would "further enhance the stereotypes a lot of people already have."

"His (Eastman's) personal perception is one thing, but we're dealing with the perceptions of a lot of people," Boyer said.

Thompson said the majority of Eastman's audience would be white, and the printed titles would promote stereotypes and insult blacks.

At the concert, Eastman announced the titles and explained their meaning to the mostly white audience.



Composer Julius Eastman: "You can't wear Gucci shoes and be a nigger." (Daily photo by Jennifer Achuck.)

Julius Eastman in the Daily Northwestern campus newspaper Jan. 17, 1980

PROGRAM NOTES

On January 16, 1980, renegade composer/singer/pianist Julius Eastman gave a concert of his works at Northwestern University, in Evanston, Illinois. He had been invited by faculty composer Peter Gena, who, like Eastman, had been a member of the Creative Associates at SUNY Buffalo (a performance group run by composers Lukas Foss and Morton Feldman). Using Northwestern student pianists, Eastman premiered three works for four pianos, with incendiary titles: *Crazy Nigger*, *Evil Nigger*, and *Gay Guerilla*. In response to a protest by the campus African-American student organization, the titles were left off the program, and in a pre-concert talk Eastman explained, in his eloquent deep bass, that he used the offensive word to honor the African-American's role in American history: "What I mean by niggers is, that thing which is fundamental; that person or thing that attains [sic] to a basicness or a fundamentalness, and eschews that which is superficial, or, could we say, elegant.... There are 99 names of Allah, and there are 52 niggers."

C R A Z Y N I G G E R ~ 14-1-80

4 Pianos = 92

First page of Eastman's score for "Crazy Nigger"

Eastman went on to explain that the three pieces were written using a concept he called "organic form," related to the additive process of minimalist music, which was still fairly new: "That is to say, the third part of any part has to contain all of the information of

the first two parts, and then go on from there... They're not exactly perfect yet. There's an attempt to make every section contain all the information of the previous sections, or else, taking out information at a gradual and logical rate." By "not exactly perfect yet" Eastman seemed to mean that the process was not strict, but intuitively shaped. Most often, new material is added one pitch or motive at a time, though subtractions of material are more abrupt.

The scores to these three works are rather sketchily notated, and considerable interpretation is required on the performers' part. *Crazy Nigger*, at 54 minutes the longest of the three pieces by far, is also the most abstract; for much of the piece it is also the most clearly notated, though toward the end it devolves into mere pitch names as Eastman pursues a sound-process that resists clear definition. The piece is largely a long continuum of repeated notes, starting on a Bb, then with an Ab-A-Bb motive thrown in, then an alternating C-Bb, next a D-Eb, then an E alternating with silences, and so on, the pitch combinations changing in leisurely periods of 90 seconds each. Twelve minutes into the piece the texture thins down to just the notes A and B, and a delicate melody spreads downward through the ensemble: B-A-F#-E-D-A-B. Following a brief silence, the repeating Bb returns, and the melody builds back up a half-step lower. The pitches begin to spread out again until all twelve are being repeated at once; perhaps only Eastman, in that era, could use minimalist processes to accumulate into dense atonality. Here Eastman switches from noteheads to a pitch-name notation with numbers whose intent is particularly difficult to decipher without the recording. The music heads into the bass register with some slow octave C#s, and for the last eight minutes a new continuum is built up as a 16-note overtone series on C# (or the equal-tempered approximation thereof), each note in the series being repeated at a tempo proportional to its pitch. In the premiere performance, a group of extra students quietly walked onstage to play all the notes necessary for this final climax. (Kyle Gann)

JULIUS EASTMAN was born in New York City and raised in Ithaca, New York. He studied piano and composition at the Curtis Institute of Music, graduating in 1963. In the late sixties, he moved to Buffalo, New York, where he was invited by composer-conductor, Lukas Foss, to join the prestigious university-based new music group, the Creative Associates, eventually becoming a member of the University of Buffalo music faculty. In Buffalo, his colleagues at the new music center included Petr Kotik, Gwendolin Sims, James Fulkerson, Jan Williams, and Morton Feldman. During his highly productive years in Buffalo, he composed *Thruway*; a ballet score, *The Moon's Silent Modulation*; *Macle*; *Trumpet*; *Colors*; and *Stay On It*; among other pieces. In the summer of 1976, Eastman moved to New York City where he became part of the "downtown" New York music scene. During this period he performed with Arthur Russell, Meredith Monk, Peter Zummo, and others in venues ranging from Carnegie Hall and the Brooklyn Academy of Music to downtown lofts and disco clubs. From 1976 until his death in 1990, Eastman's "model of musicianship," as music historian Ryan Dohoney terms it, "expanded to include free Jazz, improvisation, new wave rock, disco, as well as his own composed music that is marked by intense repetition and political

aggressiveness." This "political aggressiveness" is evident in the series of multi-piano pieces that Eastman wrote with provocative titles such as *Crazy Nigger*, *Evil Nigger*, and *Gay Guerrilla*. Following a series of personal struggles and misfortunes, such as eviction from his apartment for non-payment of rent, and the confiscation of his possessions including his musical scores, Eastman returned to Buffalo, where he died in 1990 at age 49. (Renee Levin Packer)

JOSEPH KUBERA has worked closely with such legendary composers as John Cage, Morton Feldman, La Monte Young, and Robert Ashley. He toured widely with the Cunningham Dance Company, and he has made definitive recordings of Cage's *Music of Changes* and *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*. Mr. Kubera is a core member of S.E.M. Ensemble, and has performed with a wide range of New York ensembles and orchestras. He has recorded for the Wergo, Albany, New Albion, New World, Lovely Music, O.O. Discs, Mutable Music, Cold Blue, and Opus One labels.

DYNASTY BATTLES began studying classical piano at Settlement Music School with Eileen Liebowitz, a protégée of the legendary Natalie Hinderas. Mr. Battles, a recipient of the Esther Boyer Scholarship, went on to study with Harvey Wedeen at Temple University from which he graduated cum laude. Mr. Battles was a featured performer and honoree at the 2010 90th Anniversary Celebration sponsored by the W. Russell Johnson Music Guild. It was at that event that Curtis Institute of Music graduate Blanche Burton-Lyles stated, "Dynasty will be among the major and outstanding concert pianists of the world."

MICHELLE CANN hailed as a "colorist...who can sweep the listener off his or her feet," started the piano at age 7 and since then has gone on to receive top prizes in state, national, and international competitions including the International Russian Piano Music Competition, the Blount Young Artists National Competition, and most recently the 2014 Wideman International Piano Competition. Michelle received her BM and MM degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and went on to receive an Artist Diploma degree from the Curtis Institute of Music. Michelle currently resides in Philadelphia, PA, and maintains an active schedule of teaching and performing.

ADAM TENDLER is a New York based pianist who has been called "...exuberantly expressive.." by the LA Times and an "intrepid... outstanding... maverick pianist" by The New Yorker. Tandler has performed solo recitals in all fifty United States, including artistic landmarks like New York's Symphony Space, The Maverick Concert Hall, The Fisher Center at Bard College, The Rubin Museum, Rothko Chapel and James Turrell's Skyspace in Sarasota Florida, its first musical performer. Tandler's memoir, 88x50, was a 2014 Kirkus Indie Book of the Month and Lambda Literary Award Nominee.

JULIUS EASTMAN: THAT WHICH IS FUNDAMENTAL is a project of Bowerbird, a Philadelphia based non profit dedicated to presenting experimental music and related art forms. For more info visit: www.bowerbird.org