piece lives, how the organs converse and conflict, and where the hinges are. Otherwise the piece is unyielding to rationalized shortcuts, since Tudor's homebrew instruments bear only faint resemblance to their expected namesakes. One doesn't arrive at *Untitled* without inviting the original participants.
— Michael Johnsen

FOREST SPEECH

Forest Speech is a work by David Tudor that uses techniques from the *Rainforest* series, including the use of transduced resonant objects and contact microphones, where the source material is voice-like. It received its first documented performance on March 20, 1977, at a Merce Cunningham Dance Company Event at Barnard College in New York City — one of the spontaneous performances Cunningham had been presenting since the mid-1960s, which Tudor regularly used as a laboratory for new work. Like *Rainforest*, it uses instrumental loudspeakers — objects fitted with transducers — as resonators, but here configured specifically as analogs of the vocal tract, generating what Tudor called "vocal illusions." On September 23, 1978, the work was expanded into a group version for a CIE performance at The Kitchen in New York City, for which Tudor wrote the following description:
"Synthetic voicings & plosive bursts. Formant resonances, produced with the natural comb-filtering action of 'Rainforest' instruments, are used to create vocal illusions. The originating sound materials can be various, & processed with vocoder-like circuit networks."
From Tudor's original notes, the work is for any number of performers. Each performer prepares resonant objects and source material; the performance is an exploration and sharing of those materials. — Phil Edelstein & DH

Artist bios and additional information about our David Tudor project can be found at BOWERBIRD.org

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The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage



FOREST SPEECH AND PIANO

AMY WILLIAMS & COMPOSERS INSIDE ELECTRONICS

FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2026

COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER

PROGRAM

Morton Feldman: *Intermission 6* (version 1) (1953)
Earle Brown: *Four Systems* (1953)
Morton Feldman: *Extensions 3* (1952)
John Cage: *Water Music* (1952)
Morton Feldman: *Intermission 6 (version 2)* (1953)
Amy Williams, piano

~ INTERMISSION ~

David Tudor: *Untitled* (1972)
Michael Johnsen, electronics

David Tudor: *Forest Speech* (1977)
Phil Edelstein
Daniel Fishkin
Michael Johnsen
Victoria Keddie
Eugene Lew
Gianna Santucci

PROGRAM NOTES

THE PIANO SET

The works that open this program date from 1952 and 1953, a concentrated moment in the early New York experimental music world when John Cage, Morton Feldman, and Earle Brown were each developing new approaches to notation and musical form. All three composers worked closely with David Tudor during this period, and these pieces belong to the repertory through which he first became known as a pianist.

The works share a common thread: none of them fix the musical result in the way conventional notation does, and each places unusual demands on the performer as a result. Feldman's *Extensions 3* and *Intermission 6* — performed here in both its versions — work with isolated sonorities, reduced material, and a continuity that resists standard ordering. Brown's *Four Systems* is a graphic score in which horizontal lines in space replace conventional rhythmic notation entirely, requiring the performer to interpret the score rather than execute it. Cage's *Water Music*, premiered by Tudor in 1952, extends the piano into a field of timed actions involving radios, whistles, and water — the instrument becoming one element among many rather than the sole focus.

That these works depend so heavily on the performer's realization is precisely why they belong on a David Tudor program. Tudor's engagement with this repertory was not incidental to its development — his abilities as a reader and realizer of unconventional scores shaped the possibilities composers around him were willing to imagine.

— Dustin Hurt

UNTITLED

"Part of a never-ending series of discovered works in which electronic components are found to be natural objects. A hook-up of components is made, having no initial input signals whatsoever, and having unpredictable inter-relations. All versions are performed live, but differ according to the number of inter-stage components used, to the handling of the final outputs, and according to the presence or absence of control signals in the hook-up. The present version contains no control signals. Because multiple phase-shift stages are present, the series contains works with video outputs as well as audio, or video alone. The entire series is dedicated to Toshi Ichiyanagi." — David Tudor, circa 1972

Untitled is the moment where Tudor asserts the existence of a family of works — still not yet born — which embrace feedback as their essence. It initiates a fertile period of his work in the 1970s whose landmarks include *Microphone*, *Pulsers*, *Toneburst*, and visual works for laser projection. Ironically, the 1972 version was only performed about five times, and the sounds were not generated live at all — prerecorded tapes were used. This performance generates live sounds using accurate recreations of Tudor's instruments, built through direct scholarship on the originals held at Wesleyan University. Tudor often said that his work came out of his electronics. If this is true, his music is best learned by starting at its guts — rebuilding the instruments and eventually the piece. The builder/performer is then afforded a view at the organismal level: one which reveals how the