Heather Reba is studio manager at Firehouse 12 recording studio in New Haven and has directed musicals for the University of New Haven, the Turnpike Players, and many production companies throughout Southern California. Chris Reba is a bassist, composer, audio engineer and Associate Professor of Music and Sound Recording at the University of New Haven. Evan Gambardella is an actor, magician, balloon artist and hypnotist, and will be performing in Yale Rep’s upcoming production of ELEVADA this Spring; BFA Acting, Boston University. Carolyn Rogers is the Director of Academic Services and eTutoring.org for the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium, has sung with Big Bands and in Cabaret throughout her life, and is at long last recording an album with the production team of Chris and Heather Reba. David Ransbottom is a graduating senior from the University of New Haven, with degrees in Theater and Sound Recording, which he would like to continue professionally. Carson Moody is a Brooklyn-based percussionist and performer currently performing with the avant-pop trio, TIGUE. Carson performs with contemporary music group Ensemble Signal and is heavily involved in collaborations with dance. Austin Vaughn is a musician who lives in New York City. He plays the drums with lots of people and he has a day job where he does a bang-up job of sweeping the floor. Noah Rush ’14 is a musician and programmer living in Philadelphia. Toby Summerfield Composer, Improviser, Collaborator; Bassist, Guitarist, Conductor (Occasionally). Ron Shalom MA ’16 retching, ichthyotic tongues lifelessly slobering over and over the bubbling igneous coze of eons, a coarse and indifferent evolution in some incipient outer constellation, furious wheeling globules of hot anion fun ddl <10 only must b discreet two 4 oh 5 oh 6 two 6 one 6 no endless texts bb only can’t host ;) Visiting professor Jonathan Zorn is a composer and performer of electronic music and is currently director of the Toneburst Laptop & Electronic Arts Ensemble. Toneburst promotes knowledge and skills in live electronics performance, cultivates new musical repertoire, and increases public awareness of new forms of working with music technology. Dina MacCubbee is just a girl with a violin and a dream and special roundabout routes to school to avoid the boys who took her violin in case and played keep-away with it. One summer afternoon she was upstairs in her bedroom, alone, practicing her violin. It was very hot, and there was an electric fan in the window, blowing out, acting as an exhaust fan. It produced an odd highpitched vibration, invariant and constant. On this one afternoon, the fan’s vibration combined with some certain set of notes she was practicing on the violin and the two vibrations set up a resonance that made something happen in her head. As the two vibrations combined, it was as if a dark billowing shape came out of some corner of her mind— it was all horror, everywhere, distilled and given form. It rose and grew larger and became engulfing and more horrible than I should ever have the power to convey. Dina dropped her violin and ran from the room.

A Different Kind of Everything

Graduate Thesis Recital
by Dina MacCubbee

Sunday, March 29, 2015
Crowell Concert Hall, Wesleyan University
Program:

Trashghan (video installation)

Cyanide Breath Mint

Suite from Sweet Land:
I. A Land So Sweet
II. Don't Look Back,
III. When We Are Married
IV. Frozen Fields

Folk Songs

Hocket from Facing North

Open String Study

Pennyfarthing 5

Still a Million Miles

THANKS A MILLION:

All the performers and contributors, Ron Kuivila, Paula Matthusen, Neely Bruce, Jane Alten, David Behrman, Jordan Kacowicz, Toneburst, Hania Oravec, Daniel Fishkin, Peter Blais, Stephanie Ho, Stephanie Trotter, Deb Shore, Sandy Bough, John Elmore, Laurie Flanigan-Hegge, Perrin Post, Heath and Chris Reba, Jonathon Zorn, Toby Summerfield, Gentle Whispering, and Dina Maccabee

Still a Million Miles
Dina Maccabee, 2014

"Dear ________,

I've sent an original a song out by email and asked a chain of people to do covers... when you receive the song, you record a cover version within 24 hours and pass it along to the next person. So a giant game of telephone. Song-o-phone. Are you interested?"

The Song-O-Phone project owes its inspiration to the Bay Area’s UnderCover series, in which a different band performs each song from a classic album, back to back in a live performance. Curating the Joni Mitchell Blue edition in 2012 gave me a chance to draw on a large network of colleagues to create a varied and unexpected collage of interpretations. In the Song-O-Phone, this concept is refined to examine the variations in approaches to a single original song. In the results, different understandings of the meaning of “cover” are exposed, from straightforward interpretation to subtle re-imagining to total deconstruction. In this presentation, all thirty versions are heard in an extended collage, with excerpts chosen by the members of Toneburst ensemble using a simple sampler/Looper interface created in Max MSP. The performers follow a video score created using words and imagery from the cover versions, showcasing how the song’s lyrics mutated even further from the original.

Listen to all the versions at https://gamosofooneline.bandcamp.com.

Toneburst Laptop & Electronic Arts Ensemble:
Zora I.I, Gregory Hall, Cleek Schrey, Min Cheol Lee, Jakob Shaw, Alexander Rowland, Will Freudenheim, David Elkin-Girnetti, Hallie Biejawski, Wei Wang

Guest Performers, performing excerpts from their own “Song-O-Phone” entries:
Ron Shalom, Jonathan Zorn, Toby Summerfield, Dina Maccabee

Contributing Artists: Jesse Krakow, Sylvain Caron, Eric Klein, Jascha Hoffman, Brett Hoel, David Janes, Stephanie Trotter, Joe Edelman, Erica Fink, Jesse Olsen, Dan Cantrell, Jonathan Zorn, Irene Sazer, Ben Toward, Karina Denike, Tobin Summerfield, Michael Mellander, Lily Taylor, Pat Moran, Ron Shalom MA '16, Mouzho Yousef Caron, Eric Kuhn, Stuart Bogie, Josh Tillinghast, Dexter Dine '14, Issac Silk '14, Tennessee Mowrey '14.
Suite from Sweet Land

Heather Reba, Soprano
Carolyn Rogers, Alto
Evin Gamberdella, Tenor
David Ransom, Baritone

Chris Reba, double bass
Dina Maccabee, viola

Libretto by Laurie Flanigan-Hegge
Music by Dina Maccabee

Sweet Land: The Musical is a new musical theater work based on the 2005 film by the same name, set in a Norwegian community in rural Minnesota in 1920. A workshop production is scheduled for July, 2015 in Minneapolis.

I. A Land So Sweet

In the opening number, Lars, the present-day grandson of immigrant farmer Olaf Turvik, faces a dilemma. Under pressure to sell the farm his grandparents built, he mourns the loss of their legacy of fighting for acceptance within a small immigrant community.

II. Don't Look Back

After arriving in the U.S., Inge Altenburg travels by train to her new rural Minnesota home, anxious about the commitment she has made to marry Olaf, a stranger.

III. When We Are Married

Inge and Olaf imagine what they might do if only they had the community’s blessing to live and make a home together, despite Inge’s problematic heritage.

IV. Frozen Fields

Inge and Olaf’s farm is in danger of being repossessed. With neighbors Brownie and Frandsen, they affirm their commitments to each other and to their land, despite the disapproval of the community.

Folk Songs
Dina Maccabee, 2015

I. In G
II. Bass Drag
III. Monics

Ron Shalom, MA '16, double bass
Toby Summerfield, double bass
Chris Reba, double bass

It turns out I know a lot of really excellent bass players. The group of people who play a given instrument constitute a kind of “folk” who share and transmit a specific set of knowledge and practices. Yet bassists seldom congregate in non-orchestral performance settings. Fortunately, I was able to resist the call of this piece either “triple bass” or “third bass.”

Hocket from Facing North
Meredith Monk, 1990

Dina Maccabee, viola/voice

Hocketing, a practice of alternating notes to create the illusion of a continuous melodic line, is a virtuosic interaction executed by two performers in an intimate dialogue. This “Hocket” is excerpted from Facing North, which Monk has described as “a chamber music/theater piece about a barren wilderness and the fortitude and tenderness of two people surviving in it.” (Album Notes for Facing North, Meredith Monk and Robert Een. ECM, 1992.) My arrangement, for viola and voice, juxtaposes not two individual performers, but two kinds of musical activities. Singing and playing enact not only contrasting mental and physical activities, but different professional, cultural, and social roles as well, placed here in dialogue. Monk has emphasized the importance of developing her material with and for performers, rather than entrusting nuances of vocal delivery and physicality to printed scores. I treated a recording of Monk and vocalist Theo Bleckmann as a score, remaining as faithful as possible to details of pitch, phrasing and timbre in my transcription.
Open String Study

Dina Maccabee, viola

Open String Study is an ongoing investigation of overtones produced using a “spiccato sul ponticello” technique of bouncing the bow near the bridge. After beginning this exploration in December 2014, I recalled that many of my undergraduate viola lessons were spent developing “core” sound, my teacher’s term for a full, pure, and clean tone. This “core” concept is in part a reaction to differences between violin and viola mechanics: viola strings respond more slowly, require more energy to overcome inertia and excite their full range of frequencies, from the fundamental up through the overtone series. In classical practice, favoring overtones by playing near the bridge is a special effect that often invokes the creepy or surreal. Bow mechanics that unleash non-fundamental frequencies, like changing bow direction or inconsistent pressure, are undesirable and meant to be hidden as much as possible. Of course, there is a limit to how “invisible” a bow change can be. There is also a limit on the other end of the spectrum – how much pure overtone can be coaxied from the open string, without exciting the fundamental. While playing ever closer to the bridge seems to encourage higher and higher overtones to speak, there is a threshold of control at which the bow refuses to engage the tautest final millimeters of the string and simply slips over the bridge. The strings also seem to “warm up” using this technique, offering higher harmonics the longer they are played – but another threshold limits this parameter, which is the length of time before my arm feels like it will fall off.

Pennyfarthing 5

Austin Vaughn, drum set
Carson Moody, drum set
Visualization by Noah Rush ’14

I first developed a crush on hocket writing for two drum sets during Toby Summerfield’s 2005 recording session for his large ensemble Never Enough Hope, featuring eminent Chicago drummers Frank Rosaly and Tim Daisy. Some of the precedents/examples we have discussed while I worked on this piece include Tortoise, Steve Reich, and Mice Parade. Pennyfarthing, named for the old-fashioned bicycle with two different sized wheels, is an attempt to engage with minimalist processes (additive, phasing) while shifting the character of the materials away from an austere minimalist palette toward the rich signification of familiar pop patterns.

Trashghan

Installation – Crowell Lobby

Textile by Dina Maccabee
Videos by GentleWhispering

Made by and for people who experience “Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response,” ASMR videos are meant to cause a tingly relaxing sensation in viewers. Inducing this physical sensation requires not just a complex set of imagined relationships, but the constitution of new communities and socialities to frame and structure them. I am interested in interrogating this particular, contemporary use of the internet with respect to the ways auditory culture is circulated, how DIY art-making is performed, and how surprising confluences emerge between intimate online transactions and experimental art. With Trashghan, I hope to press on some distinctions that come up often in my work: folk vs. art; art vs. craft; virtuosity vs. creativity; mastery vs. productive failure. Using a traditional afghan form constructed from identical squares, the blanket alludes to the role of repetition in traditional art, the transnationalization of “folk” knowledge on YouTube, and gendered conceptions of craft, from knitting to home recording. It also offers a way to enter the discourse of ASMR using tactics outside its conventional channels. The Trashghan, constructed from discarded plastic bags and packaging materials, is made according to the sound characteristics of its materials, rather than visual symmetry or beauty. The culmination of this project was to send the Trashghan to ASMR content creator GentleWhispering to experiment with in a video, thus infiltrating the interactive feedback circuit of YouTube with a material intervention.

Cyanide Breath Mint

Beck Hansen, 1994; arr. Dina Maccabee, 2014

Heather Reba, Soprano
Carolyn Rogers, Alto
Evan Gambardella, Tenor
David Rambottom, Baritone

In 2013, Beck released an “album” in the form of a songbook, recalling historical forms of domestic music making. This arrangement approaches musical participation (vs. consumption) by imagining a song from his early album One Foot In the Grave as a madrigal.