

THE VILLAGE TRIP™

WHERE THE BEAT LIVES ON

International Symposium

MICROTONAL VILLAGE

A series of Papers, Workshops and Concerts focusing on Lou Harrison's microtonal music and the American Primitive.

Concept and overall charge: Agustín Castilla-Ávila

09/19-22/2024

An event of The Village Trip Festival New York

The Sheen Center for Thought & Culture

Greenwich House

DAY I

Thursday September 19, 2024

8:45 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Lectures to be held online via Zoom:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71392112517?pwd=Lww6WhjD1PXNQNgNrbYzp6Djnz0WpA.1>

08:45 a.m.

Welcoming speech

Agustín Castilla-Ávila

Presentations I

Chair: Agustín Castilla-Ávila

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71392112517?pwd=Lww6WhjD1PXNQNgNrbYzp6Djnz0WpA.1>

9:00 a.m.

Georg Vogel (Austria)

Composition and Improvisation in Extended 31-tone Meantone Tuning - Exemplified on the 31-tone Claviton

9:45 a.m.

Ulf-Diether Soyka (Austria)

Microtonal Modulations

10:30 a.m.

Smee Wang (China)

Exploring Microtonal Soundscapes in *Mosaic Miniature*

11:15 a.m.

Break

Presentations II

Chair: Jonathan Dawe

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71392112517?pwd=Lww6WhjD1PXNQNgNrbYzp6Djnz0WpA.1>

12:30 p.m.

Omar Medina (Mexico)

Pre-Hispanic Microtonal Aerophones and their psychoacoustic effect

1:15 p.m.

Felipe Pinto d'Aguiar (Chile)

Two Strategies for Utilizing Microtones in Orchestral Settings

2:00 p.m.

Mario García Hurtado (Mexico)

Lecture-Recital: The Guitar in Sonido 13 and Its Microtonal Evolution

2:45 p.m.

Break

Presentations III

Chair: Agustín Castilla-Ávila

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71392112517?pwd=Lww6WhjD1PjNQNgNrbYzp6Djnz0WpA.1>

3:15 p.m.

Orlando Zavala (Mexico)

Pythagorean Xilophone

4:00 p.m.

Jorge Echevarría Chávez (Mexico)

ITZA KAYUM: Beethoven and Carrillo

4:45 p.m.

Fernando Pérez (Spain)

Lecture Recital: Guitar & Microtonal Music Traditions

5:30 p.m.

Break

7:00 p.m.

Iván Hernández (Mexico)

Lecture-Recital: Expansion of the microtonal Marimba

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71392112517?pwd=Lww6WhjD1PjNQNgNrbYzp6Djnz0WpA.1>

Day II

Friday September 20, 2024

9:00am – 6:00pm

Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St, New York, NY 10014

Presentations IV

Chair: Agustín Castilla-Ávila

9:00 a.m.

Ralph Lewis (USA)

Johnny Reinhard: A Multi-Faceted Microtonal Maven

9:45 a.m.

Leonid Galaganov (USA)

Expressive Affordances of 24-EDO in Christopher Trapani's *End Words*

10:30 a.m.

Luke Villavicencio (USA)

Pitch in High-Definition

11:15 a.m.

Break

Presentations V

Chair: Jonathan Dawe

12:30 p.m.

Katarzyna Daszkiewicz (Poland)

I wrap difficult topics with musical tulle – Microtonality in Agata Zemla's reportage music

1:15 p.m.

Agata Dereń (Poland)

The importance of microtonality in *Lethargy (2022)* for female voice and instrumental ensemble by Alina Dziecioł

2:00 p.m.

Rafał Barcella (Poland)

Notation, sound and rhythm askew: microtonality in *Passacaglia* for strings by Rafał Barcella

2:45 p.m.

Break

Presentations VI

Chair: Agustín Castilla-Ávila

3:15 p.m.

Matthew Sallis (United Kingdom)

Just (Intonation) Stop Equal Temperament Tuning

4:00 p.m.

Faustina Dedūraitė (Lithuania)

Chess Tournament between Strictness and Freedom: Microdimensional Strategies in the Music of Rytis Mažulis

Concert I

4:45 p.m.

Giacomo Fiore (USA). Guest musicians: Margaret Lancaster (flute) and Nick Didkovsky (guitar).

Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St, New York, NY 10014

Three Harmonic Series Pieces by Larry Polansky.

ii-v-i (1997)

Larry Polansky (1954–2024) **(1)**

Piker (1998)

Larry Polansky **(2)**

freeHorn (2006–2016)

Larry Polansky**(3)**

(1) Giacomo Fiore and Nick Didkovsky, electric guitars

(2) Giacomo Fiore and Margaret Lancaster (piccolo)

(3) Giacomo Fiore (with laptop)

This concert presents three pieces by U.S. composer Larry Polansky, who passed away in May at the age of 69. Much of Polansky's music combines procedural and algorithmic methods with an interest in harmonic structures; in these selections, all harmonic materials are directly derived from harmonic series tunings. Several of Polansky's pieces, starting with *Psaltery* in 1978, explore the possibilities of what he called "heterophonic" tunings, where pitches from the "target" tuning are introduced gradually in the context of the original one, generating a variety of "in-between" tuning states in the process. *freeHorn* is in some ways the culmination of this trajectory, employing an ad-hoc computer program (co-developed with Phil Burk) to synthesize any such series of harmonic retunings through an user-specified pathway of fundamentals. Performers are then "free" to accompany (or subvert) the process, ideally highlighting each completed harmonic movement as a kind of arrival point.

A similar concern is in play in *ii-v-i*, where two guitarists continuously retune the strings of their respective instruments to sound out the titular harmonic progression—a nod to the vernacular traditions of U.S. music of which the composer was so fond.

In *Piker*, the central movement of a composition for solo piccolo by the same name, the harmonic series serves once again as the source of musical materials, this time including rhythmic proportions in addition to strict pitch relationship. In a virtuosic tour-de-force, the soloist progressively builds a 17:16:15...6:5:4 polyrhythm using partials 4–17 of a harmonic series on E. The process begins at the midpoint of the (palindromic) rhythm before filling up gradually from the outside in; an optional accompaniment, provided in this performance by the electric guitar, articulates the "downbeat" of each iteration.

I would like to thank Margaret and Nick for joining me in this performance; I am both humbled and grateful for the chance to celebrate the work of our friend together on this occasion.



Credits: Lenny Gonzalez

Italian-born guitarist and musicologist Giacomo Fiore has premiered more than two dozen new works for justly-tuned, electric, and classical guitars, and released several recordings for Populist, Cold Blue, Pinna, Spectropol, Paper Garden Records, and his own impressum. As a scholar his research focuses on U.S. experimental music, intonation, and performance; he has published articles in *Music Theory*

Spectrum, the Journal of the Society for the American Music, and TEMPO, and writes occasionally for Classical Guitar and SFCV. He teaches a wide range of historical and practical music courses at the University of San Francisco and UC Santa Cruz.

Giacomo is a member of Ninth Planet New Music (the chamber group formerly known as Wild Rumpus), and an occasional performer for New Music Works, sfSound, and other Bay Area organizations. He has served as a curator for the Center for New Music since 2019, and as the vice-president of the Northern California Chapter of the American Musicological Society from 2015 to 2019.

“New-music luminary” (*The New York Times*), Margaret Lancaster (flutist/ performance, artist/actor/dancer) has built a large repertoire of interactive, cross-disciplinary solo works that employ electronics and mixed media. Performance highlights include Lincoln Center Festival, Spoleto Festival USA, Santa Fe New Music, Tap City, NIME/Copenhagen and the 7-year global run of OBIE-winning *Mabou Mines Dollhouse* (Helene). A member of Either/Or, Ensemble Ipse and Ghost Ensemble; guest appearances include Argento and the New York Philharmonic. Ongoing projects include collaborations with FETA Foundation, Stockhausen’s KLANG cycle, and touring Morton Feldman’s 5-hour epic *For Philip Guston*...

Nick Didkovsky is a guitarist, composer, and music software programmer. He founded the rock band Doctor Nerve in 1983, and more recently, the metal bands Häßliche Luftmasken and Vomit Fist and the free metal guitar duo CHORD. He is a member of the Fred Frith Guitar Quartet and has composed for Bang On A Can All-Stars, Meridian Arts Ensemble, ETHEL, and others. He has performed with DITHER Guitar Quartet, John Zorn, Billion Dollar Babies, and Blue Coupe. His compositions and guitar work appear on over 50 records. Album credits include Alice Cooper *Paranormal* (2017). With computer music pioneer Phil Burk, Didkovsky created Java Music Specification Language, which he uses to teach algorithmic music composition at NYU. With composer Georg Hajdu, he has created MaxScore, an object that uses JMSL to bring music notation to Max/MSP.

Concert II

7:00 p.m.

John Schneider (USA)

Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St, New York, NY 10014

American Maverick Guitar

<i>Three Jahlas</i> (1972/74)	Lou Harrison (1)
<i>December 1942</i> Come Away, Death (1942, Shakespeare) The Heron (Tsurayuki, Japan 9th century C.E.) The Rose (Ella Young, Irish-American 1867-1956)	Harry Partch (2)
<i>Letter from Hobo Pablo</i> (1943)	Harry Partch (2)
<i>Serenado por Gitaro</i> (1952)	Lou Harrison (3)
<i>Scenes from Nek Chand</i> (2001) The Leaning Lady The Rock Garden The Sinuous Arcade	Lou Harrison (3)
<i>Eskimo Lullaby</i> (2006)	Larry Polansky (3)
<i>Serenade</i> (1978) Round Air Infinite Canon Usul Sonata	Lou Harrison (1)
<i>Men are Men & Mountains are Mountains</i> (2006)	John Schneider (4)
<i>Barstow: Eight Hitchhiker's Inscriptions</i> (1941) 1. <i>Today I Am a Man</i> 2. <i>Gentlemen</i> 3. <i>Considered Pretty</i> 4. <i>A Very Good Idea</i> 5. <i>Possible Rides</i> 6. <i>Jesus was God in the Flesh</i> 7. <i>You Lucky Women</i> 8. <i>Why in Hell did you Come?</i>	Harry Partch (2)

Just Intonation Guitars: (1) Classical (2) Adapted Guitar I (3) National Resophonic (4) Electric



Credits: Paul Pirate

Lou Harrison loved to “borrow” techniques, forms, & tunings from any century and culture that attracted him, but rarely left them in their original state. The Hindustani *jhala*, for example, traditionally closes a classical composition or raga with a fast-paced technique that alternates rapid melodic notes with a drone pitch. The first *Jahla* (sic) uses a European medieval dance as a model and was composed “in the form of a Ductia to please Leopold Stokowski on his 90th birthday.” Those that follow are taken—with the composer’s consent— from his *Suite for Violin & American Gamelan*. Harrison’s emphasis on hybrid music (“because that’s all there is!”) is confirmed by his motto “Cherish, Conserve, Consider, Create.”

Harry Partch was surely one of America's most colorful composers. Though trained as a concert pianist, his dissatisfaction with the scales and instruments of Western Music inspired him to design and build an orchestra of over two dozen handcrafted 'microtonal' instruments that were tuned to his notorious scale of 43 Tones per octave. His second instrument was an Adapted Guitar, re-fretted and re-strung in three octave pairs rather than six single strings. His long-lost song cycle *December 1942* begins with the Fool’s song from Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* (II, 4), followed by two brief nature poems. Though he destroyed the manuscript— not knowing that it had been microfilmed before its demise—he reset the last pair as two of his *Fourteen Intrusions* (1950). *Letter from Hobo Pablo* puts to music a brief note from a fellow transient in the midst of the Great Depression, the text being found in the composer’s diary/memoir *Bitter Music*.

Harrison’s first acknowledged solo guitar piece was the Esperanto-titled *Serenado por Gitaro* (1952) that included these hopeful directions:

“Anyone who just might own a guitar with moveable frets should arrange these to play the “Intense Diatonic” (Syntonon Diatonic), which is the “vocal” major scale. The piece will sound lovely in that tuning.”

No such instrument existed at the time, though he later explained, “...the frets of lutes & gambas have movable frets, so why not guitars!” while admitting that the seed may have also been planted by the strange guitars that he had seen in Partch’s seminal 1949 publication *Genesis of a Music*.

Harrison's last guitar work was inspired by the "outsider" artist Nek Chand, whose Rock Garden in Chandigarh, India is one of the largest sculpture gardens in the world. The composer imagined a new instrument for the work, and a special just intonation scale:

"For years now, I've been writing in 6-tone modes - so I made the discovery, for an idiot like me, that overtones 6 through 12 constitute nature's *own* 6-tone mode. I was astonished to realize that this 6-tone mode is nature's only mode that is continuous in the overtone series - there's no 7-tone that works, and nothing else does - only a 6-tone mode works. It's fascinating! but that's after many years of inventing six-tone modes, I suddenly realized that nature's own is between 6 & 12, and its beautiful too...!"

Since its creation, of over twenty compositions have been written for the Just National guitar, whose 12-pitch octave was filled in with six new notes related to Harrison's original six.

Larry Polansky (1954-2024) was the student, colleague, and lifelong friend of Lou Harrison as well as a mandolinist, guitarist, gamelan player, and co-creator of an early type of AI compositional software. His arrangement of this *Eskimo Lullaby* found in a 1954 volume of *Folk Songs of Canada* is part of a 5-part Suite for Just National Guitar called *Songs & Toods*.

Harrison's *Serenade for Guitar* was composed in an 8-tone mode of alternating half and whole steps of varying sizes, tuned in just intonation: D-Eb-F-F#-G#-A-B-C-D. Hybrids abound as the opening "Round" is yet another *jhala*, married this time to the European ternary form, while the following "Air" recalls a Javanese style melody. The "Infinite Canon" is an homage to the "Canon perpetuus" from Bach's *Musical Offering*, and like that piece, its end seamlessly aligns with its beginning, producing a musical Möbius strip. Harrison's "Usul" salutes the great Ottoman architect Mimar Sinan (1490-1588) whose masterpieces—including Istanbul's own Sehzade and Süleymaniye Mosques—continue to amaze to this day. Its 11-beat cycle consists of a pattern of 3+2+4+2. In closing, the rousing "Sonata" evokes the form and style of the graceful Baroque sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti.

Men are Men & Mountains are Mountains was written in loving memory of the American composer James Tenney (1934-2006), and is a tuning/arpeggio study where the left hand never touches the fingerboard but serves only to retune the open strings in a series of modulating just intonation harmonies. It begins with the G-major triad found on the open 2nd, 3rd & 4th strings of a standard equal tempered guitar, and eventually returns to the same chord which, somehow, is now slightly higher than before, and perfectly in tune. The title paraphrases one of John Cage's favorite Zen *koans* (when Cage was asked who he would study with if he had to start all over again, he said without a moment's hesitation, "Jame Tenney!").

MOTTO:

After James Tenney, Men are Men & Music is Music, only the feet are a little bit off the ground.

Harry Partch's legendary 1969 Columbia recording of *Barstow* imprinted the work in the imaginations of a generation. This is the original version, where hitchhiker graffiti is put to music, telling the tale of eight wanderers - some funny, some sad, but always engaging when seen through the lens of Partch's re-telling. He gives us an earthy and poignant first-hand account that is unique in the world of music, one that is sure to become a permanent part of our American cultural landscape. Taken along with the rest of his Americana from the 1940's, Partch has created a body of work that places him shoulder to shoulder with the two best-loved storytellers of the era, John Steinbeck and Woody Guthrie.

John Schneider is the Grammy® Award winning & four-time Grammy nominated guitarist, composer, author, and broadcaster whose weekly television and radio programs have brought the guitar into millions of homes. He holds a PhD in Music & Physics from the U. C. Cardiff [U.K.], music degrees from the University of California and the Royal College of Music [London] and is past President of the Guitar Foundation of America. He has released over twenty CD's and written dozens of articles on the guitar, while his *The Contemporary Guitar* has become the standard text in the field. He has performed in Europe, Asia, & throughout North America, and been featured by New Music America, the DaCamera Society, Southwest Chamber Music, New American Music Festival, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Other Minds, and the BBC. He is the founding artistic director of *MicroFest*, the music ensembles *Just Strings*, *PARTCH Ensemble*, and founder of MicroFest Records, while his recordings can be found on the Bridge, Cambria, Etcetera, Innova, MicroFest, Mode, New Albion, Other Minds, and Pitch record labels. He can be heard weekly on Pacifica Radio's *The Global Village*, www.KPDK.org. (more at www.JohnSchneider.LA).

Day III

Saturday September 21, 2024

9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p. m.

**The Sheen Center for Thought & Culture 18 Bleecker St, New York, NY
10012**

Studio C

Presentations VII

Chair: Agustín Castilla-Ávila

9:00 a.m.

Giacomo Fiore (USA)

Fluid and Adaptive Tunings in the Music of Larry Polansky

9:45 a.m.

Navid Bargrizan (USA)

Nonexistent Fundamentals and Distant Partial as the Source of Tuning and Pitch Inception

10:30 a.m.

Jonathan Dawe (USA)

Amor nello Specchio: a microtonal Opera

11:15 a.m.

Break

Presentations VIII

Chair: Jonathan Dawe

12:30 p.m.

John Schneider (USA)

Harry Partch: Radical Innovator

1:15 p.m.

Afamia Al-Dayaa (Germany)

Lou Harrison's Piano Concerto

2:00 p.m.

Jacob Elkin (USA)

Lecture-Recital: Technical Considerations for Lou Harrison's *At the Tomb of Charles Ives*

2:45 p.m.

Break

Presentations IX

Chair: Agustín Castilla-Ávila

3:15 p.m.

Bill Alves (USA)

Lou Harrison's Free Style Intonation

4:00 p.m.

Jim Dalton (USA)

Appraisal of Harrison's *Leap*

4:45 p.m.

Joseph Klein (USA) and Elliot Figg (USA)

The Microtonal Harpsichord: Two recent works exploring Just Tuning Systems

5:45 p.m.

Break

Day IV

Sunday September 22, 2024

9:00am – 6:00pm

Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St, New York, NY 10014

Presentations X

Chair: Agustín Castilla-Ávila

9:00 a.m.

Amir Abbas Ahmadi (Iran) and Sarvin Hazin (Iran)

Exploring Tuning Systems in Iranian Dastgah and Maqam Music: A Theoretical and Artistic Presentation

ONLINE VIA ZOOM:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84090936889?pwd=jHyJ4EsSCsb3H21xYbJrXyNK53LEeF.1>

9:45 a.m.

Zoran Šćekić (Croatia)

The Art of Spectral Groups

ONLINE VIA ZOOM:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84090936889?pwd=jHyJ4EsSCsb3H21xYbJrXyNK53LEeF.1>

10:30 a.m.

Vytautas Germanavičius (Lithuania)

Adapting unequal tuning systems to new technological environments and applying them to compositional and performance practices

11:15 a.m.

Break

Presentations XI

Chair: Jonathan Dawe

12:30 p.m.

Agustín Castilla-Ávila (Spain-Austria)

36-EDO microtonal Scordatura for Guitar

1:15 p.m.

Eleni Ralli (Greece)

The transcription process: parameters to consider, challenges, and proposed solutions in Harry Partch's work

2:00 p.m.

Daniel Corral (USA)

Lecture-Recital: *2 of Pentacles*

2:45 p.m.

Break

Presentations XII

Chair: Agustín Castilla-Ávila

3:15 p.m.

Robert Hasegawa (Canada)

Compositional resources of a hybrid seven-note microtonal scale

4:00 p.m.

Can Bilir (Turkey)

Gravitation of Relative Pitch and Tonal Axes

Concert III

4:45 p.m.

Ángel Blanco (Mexico-Canada)

Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St, New York, NY 10014

World and US Premieres - Novaro, Carrillo and Blanco

Methamorphosis to a Vazquez Theme (US Premiere)

Angel Blanco **(1)**

Tribute

Angel Blanco **(2)**

Omaggio a Ligeti (World Premiere)

Angel Blanco **(3)**

Prelude Impromptu (US Premiere)

Julián Carrillo **(2)**

Cadencia (US Premiere)

Julián Carrillo **(2)**

Little Prelude (US Premiere)

Augusto Novaro **(1)**

Guitars: **(1)** 15-EDO Guitar **(2)** Quarter-tone Guitar **(3)** Two Electric Guitars



Credits: @angelblancorocks

A brief yet varied program; Blanco explores the compositional possibilities of Carrillo's *Laws of Musical Methamorphosis* to the challenging Hebert Vazquez piece *Elegía*.

Blanco offers a rendition to the well-known Carrillo's *Preludio Impromptu* and premieres his newly discovered *Cadencia*; which is an example of the influence Spanish guitar playing had on Carrillo due its rasgueado patterns and rapid scalar figurations.

Augusto Novaro's *Pequeño Preludio* (Little Prelude) is just an early exercise on the possibilities of the 15-EDO tuning.

Tribute is an often-performed Blanco's work. Inspired by the piece *Spanish Fly* from Dutch rock guitarist Edward van Halen, Blanco uses the tapping technique as well as plectrodedo to simulate a rock guitar acoustic solo.

Omaggio a Ligeti is inspired by Ligeti's *Continuum* for harpsichord. Extended use of the touch-style technique is required. The electric guitars are tuned slightly different each other.

Ángel Blanco graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors in Music from Bishop's University and has three postgraduate degrees from the prestigious McGill University in Canada, he is currently working on his latest EP *Electric Concertino* as well as booking the upcoming world tour. He stands out as an incredible virtuoso guitarist and as promoter of avant-garde performance techniques within the acoustic and electric guitars, as well as his incursions into electronics and vocal-percussive experimentation.

He has been recipient of several grants from Mexico and Canada's public institutions such as ICOCULT, FONCA and McGill University, including the highly competitive Recording Production Grant from the Mexican state of Nuevo Leon's Ministry of Culture (CONARTE).

Ángel Blanco is a proud Union member of the American Federation of Musicians.

www.angelblanco.rocks