

*Michael McNabb*

*with*

*Liss Fain Dance*

*and artist*

*Egon Dubois*

**Tuesday, October 13, 1992, 8:00 p.m.**

**SJSU Concert Hall**

**San Jose State University**

**San Jose, California**

# Michael McNabb with Liss Fain Dance

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## 1. *The Far and Brilliant Night* (1990, rev. 1992)

Michael McNabb, live computer synthesis and processing, digital tape  
Egon Dubois, multi-image performance photomontage  
Mark Goldstein, Buchla Lightning

*The Far and Brilliant Night* explores the evocative power of aural and visual symbolism. Perhaps there are certain classes of sounds and images which are imprinted on our genetic memories, or which exist in the collective unconscious of our species. They may stir within us memories from ancient times, from before our birth, or even from before the origin of our species. But far from causing a universal experience in the audience, the primitive and basic associations that these sounds and images invoke may clash with or amplify each individual's current emotions and concerns, creating a unique experience for each person.

Pause (5 min.)

## 2. *Sudden Changes* (1991)

Michael McNabb, soprano saxophone, live computer synthesis and processing  
Liss Fain, Choreography  
Ariel Parkinson, Costumes  
Mary Carbonara, Alli Chagi, Jennifer Frees,  
Jeff Porter, Brenda Stine, Dancers  
Tom Kline, Lighting Design  
Kathy Gantos, Stage Manager

*Sudden Changes* creates a musical and physical environment where the experience of loss and diminishment is explored. The movement idiom originates in the choreographer's observations of animal behavior and the effects of land development on the species. McNabb's live soprano saxophone performance and live computer synthesis and processing cause shifts in the dancers' manipulations of space and time, affecting their interactions with each other and forcing them to adjust to altered boundaries.

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Michael McNabb performs his electroacoustic works internationally, and is a frequent collaborator with dance, film, and video artists. He has received awards from the Prix Ars Electronica, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Bourges Electroacoustic Music Festival, and the League of Composers/ISCM, and his composition *Dreamsong* was named as one of the best works of the last 40 years by the San Jose Mercury News. McNabb holds a doctorate in Music Composition from Stanford University, where he studied with composer Leland Smith and computer music pioneer John Chowning, and for two years managed the Sound and Music Software group at NeXT Computer. His latest CD, "Invisible Cities," the product of a collaboration with ODC/San Francisco, is available on the Wergo label, number WER 2015-50. His acclaimed first recording, "Computer Music," will be re-released next year on the same label.

Liss Fain's energetic choreographic style has been seen by audiences on the East and West Coast for the last ten years. Her company, based in Boston before her relocation to the Bay area, has presented works throughout the Northeast, including the Downtown Dance Festival, N.Y.; the Art Culture Resource Center, Toronto; the University of Massachusetts; the Dance Umbrella, Boston, Harvard University; and the Center for Advanced Visual Studies, M.I.T. She is currently creating a series of works (the Alternative Space Project) which explore the way perceptions of a piece change according to the space in which it is performed. *Sudden Changes* is the first piece in this project.

Romanian-born Egon Dubois is a San Francisco-based artist who holds a Master of Fine Arts, and who has had his work widely exhibited in the San Francisco Bay Area and

in Israel since 1984. He asks: "Please view this as an attempt to introduce myself and my visions to a multitude of strangers. Relax. After all, art is nothing more than itself, and you, the spectator, are totally responsible for any experience that art might produce in you."

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#### *About the Technology—*

The music for *Sudden Changes* is entirely generated from the performer's partially improvised performance. The computer music system as a whole acts as a "performance amplifier", allowing the performer to create a far broader range of both sounds and musical material than his solo instrument would otherwise allow. No "sequencing" is done, and no specific harmonic or melodic structures exist in the system except during the performance and as a function of it (a few chordal voicings are preset). The polyphonic accompaniment generated is all based to varying degrees on the harmonic, dynamic, and rhythmic structure of the performed material.

Designed by synthesizer pioneer Don Buchla, the Lightning is a specialized controller that senses the movement of hands in space and transforms this information into MIDI signals for control of electronic musical instrumentation.

The multi-image photomontage performance system was designed and constructed by Gayle Curtis.

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Michael McNabb and Liss Fain would like to thank ICMC chairman Allen Strange, Music Dept. chair Theodore Lucas, Music Dept. staff members Larry Wendt and Karen Barbour; and Don Buchla, and Gayle Curtis for their generous assistance in the preparation of this event.