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PRESS RELEASE

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CALARTS PRESENTS MULTIMEDIA "TELECONCERT" IN THREE CITIES, NOVEMBER 12

CalArts' Center for Experiments in Art, Information and Technology (CEAIT), in collaboration with The Kitchen in New York and the Electronic Cafe International in Santa Monica, will create a "teleconcert" based in three cities on November 12 at 7 p.m., Pacific Standard Time. The event, a celebration of music and present technology, will be a simultaneous event performed at The Kitchen in New York, the Electronic Cafe in Santa Monica, and at Studio X in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The evening has been orchestrated by CEAIT directors Morton Subotnick and David Rosenboom.

The event will feature Morton Subotnick, a composer, electronic music pioneer and CalArts faculty member, who will perform a part of his work in progress, "Angel Concerto." He will be connected in Santa Monica to various sensors, and the motion of his body will in essence play an instrument in New York and be heard in all three locations clearly, thanks to advanced telecommunications.

The night also includes a bicoastal concert. Musicians in New York and Santa Monica, though separated by distance, will play structured improvisations together, connected across America. All instruments will be heard in all three locations. The performers who are not live to each location will be seen on a large screen in high-resolution video. Leo Smith, trumpet, and J.B. Floyd, piano, will perform in New York, and David Rosenboom, keyboards, will join in California.

Another part of the evening will feature Steina Vasulka who, as she plays MIDI violin in New Mexico, will be controlling laser disc players in New York and Santa Monica, creating video images that will be projected in conjunction with her music.

Another unique feature to the evening is that information from a computer and two Yamaha Disklaviers that Rosenboom plays in Santa Monica will be transmitted in digital form to two Disklaviers in New York, which are thus played remotely. Rosenboom is a composer and also the dean of CalArts' music school.

Computer graphic designer Eric Martin, who teaches at CalArts, will provide an overview of the technology to the audiences and explain how this new technology, in the hands of gifted artists, will offer new experiences.

"We're only discovering now what can be done creatively with these new instruments," says Subotnick. "It might be likened to large orchestras when they first came into being in the 18th century. Orchestras first played chamber works, but louder. Then gifted composers



David Rosenboom, left, dean of the School of Music at the California Institute of the Arts, will play a duet with Mort Subotnick, below, who will be in New York. Subotnick displays the sensors that will allow his hand movements to play the piano at the Electronic Cafe in Santa Monica.

CALARTS PHOTOS

In 3 places at once

Concert concept set to be performed in Santa Monica, Santa Fe, New York

By Nick Madigan
STAFF WRITER

It's a far cry from chamber music.

The computerized musical wizardry that David Rosenboom and his cohorts are putting together tonight for a transcontinental concert — simultaneously performed in Santa Monica; Santa Fe, N.M.; and New York City — is the latest leap in a music world increasingly dominated by advances in technology undreamed of in the days of Mendelssohn and Bartok.

Using telecommunications links that incorporate audio, video and computer language, Rosenboom, his colleague Morton Subotnick and three other musicians plan to demonstrate that you need not be in the same place to play a few tunes together.

Starting at 7 p.m. PST, the three locations — Santa Monica's Electronic Cafe, The Kitchen in New York and Santa Fe's Gallery X — will resonate with the same music, the players in some pieces improvising off each other's cues thousands of miles apart.

On Friday afternoon in Santa Monica, just before a full-fledged rehearsal, Rosenboom explained that, in addition, each of the musicians has a special role to play. Subotnick, he said, will perform from New York part of his work-in-progress, titled "Angel Concerto." He will be using a Disklavier, a piano made by Yamaha that has special inputs and outputs for computer data. In response to Subotnick's hand movements, a similar piano in Santa Monica will play the same notes. "His demonstration involves using sen-

sors on the hands to play the pianos remotely," said Rosenboom, dean of the School of Music at California Institute of the Arts in Valencia. "He won't actually strike the keys on the piano."

Following that, violinist Steina Vasulka's performance in Santa Fe will put in motion laser-disc players in Santa Monica and New York, creating images at par with the melody.

Isn't all this a little complicated?

"Yeah," Rosenboom said. "But it works."

After a discussion period — also transmitted transcontinentally — Rosenboom plans to play a piano duet with J.B. Floyd, a pianist on the faculty of the University of Miami who will be in New York for the event. The piece will be "Is Art Is," which Rosenboom composed in 1974.

"The computer information from Floyd's piano will be transmitted to Santa Monica, where another piano will reproduce his performance," Rosenboom said. "Then, a second piano in Santa Monica, played by me, will be transmitted to New York and another piano there will reproduce my performance. It will appear that a duet is taking place in each place but there are only two sets of hands."

A trumpet piece played in New York by CalArts faculty member Leo Smith will be fed into a computer program in Santa Monica called Hierarchical Form Generator, which "imitates some of the ways in which the music is being perceived," said Rosenboom, who wrote the program. "It enables the performer to



recall separate phrases of music at any time in the performance and build on that material. It's designed to respond to the shape and form of what you play."

Computer graphics designer Eric Martin, another CalArts teacher, will explain to the possibly baffled audiences how it all works.

"We're only discovering now what can be done creatively with these new instruments," said Subotnick, a composer who teaches new media at CalArts. "It might be likened to large orchestras when they first came into being in the 18th century. Orchestras first played chamber works, but louder. Then gifted composers figured out new ways to use the orchestra to give a whole new experience. We're now looking for the new experiences."

■ *The interactive music-making begins at 7 p.m. today at the Electronic Cafe, 1649 18th Street, Santa Monica, near Olympic Boulevard. Admission is free.*