

Michael Dessen

& The Michael Dessen Trio



[october 12. 2008]
[mandeville recital hall]
[ucsd]

[8pm]

Musicians:

Michael Dessen - trombone, computer, composition

Christopher Tordini - bass

Tyshawn Sorey - percussion

Program:

Tonight's program will be roughly one hour of mostly continuous music, with no intermission.

About the Michael Dessen Trio:

I first formed a trio with this instrumentation in 2005. I wanted an ensemble that could weave among the riches of cyclic, polyrhythmic flow, but take equal delight in hue, grain, and abstraction. Tyshawn and Chris are extraordinary musicians who play with great precision and nuance, and are fluent with many kinds of compositional material, from complex temporal structures and contrapuntal lines to graphic scores and electronic collage. For me, composing for and with this trio is partly about bringing those kinds of diverse models into dialogue.

Equally important is that they listen and think compositionally, prying open whatever I bring to reveal new possibilities. Like most musicians, I compose partly to amplify something ineffable inside, and compositional choices I make alone (even if we're never really alone) are part of my tool kit. But the past half century has produced a staggering array of improvisational musics that revel deeply in another aspect of the craft: using compositional structures not only as shorthand to bring certain sounds to life,

but also to spark, jostle and nourish intensely collaborative acts of imagination. My music draws energy from overlapping musical communities and histories where nothing is more urgent - or seriously playful - than that collective journey.

- Michael Dessen, from the liner notes for *Between Shadow and Space*

About the musicians:

Michael Dessen (trombone, computer, composition) is a composer-improviser who performs on slide trombone and computer. Drawing on experience across a wide range of contemporary forms, he creates his own unique blend of music and collaborates with some of today's most exciting innovators. His main working ensembles are the Michael Dessen Trio and the collective quartet Cosmologic, and his compositions can be heard on releases by Clean Feed Records, Cuneiform Records, and Circumvention Music. Since the mid-1990s, Dessen has also collaborated regularly on projects exploring interactive technology and, more recently, telematic performance. He has published several articles on late-twentieth century music, with special focus on the role of African American traditions within late-twentieth century experimental music worlds. Dessen's teachers include Yusef Lateef, George Lewis and Anthony Davis, and he is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music, the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and the University of California, San Diego. Equally important, he has been schooled by numerous musicians outside of academia. In 2006, he joined the Music Department at the University of California, Irvine, where he is on the core faculty of an innovative new graduate music program in Integrated Composition, Improvisation and Technology.

Christopher Tordini (bass) is a graduate of the renowned jazz program at the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music in New York City. He is quickly gaining attention as a sideman for Greg Osby, Andy Milne, and other jazz luminaries, as well as for his own collaborative work as a composer and performer with cutting edge younger musicians. He has toured throughout the US and played numerous jazz venues including NY clubs such as the Village Vanguard, the Blue Note, the Jazz Standard, Cornelia St. Cafe, Barbes and many others. Recent performances include a series of concerts at the Jazz Bakery in Los Angeles with Greg Osby, and a southeast US tour with the I.E. Group.

Tyshawn Sorey (percussion), the "iconoclastic drummer and composer who has persistently challenged himself to break new boundaries" (New Languages Festival), is fast becoming a vital voice in New York City's jazz and creative music scene. Originally self-taught in composition, piano, trombone, and percussion, he has worked with chamber ensembles and collaborated with a diverse array of renowned musicians, including Muhal Richard Abrams, Wadada Leo Smith, Steve Coleman, John Zorn, Dave Douglas, and Michele Rosewoman among many others. Sorey's debut release *THAT/NOT* (Firehouse 12) baffled many critics, becoming one of 2007's most critically acclaimed recordings. He is also co-leader of the collaborative trio Fieldwork (with Steve Lehman and Vijay Iyer) whose album, *Door*, is receiving critical praise. Tyshawn is on the faculty of Brooklyn's School of Improvisational Music and New School University's Jazz and Contemporary Music program, and has received grants and commissions from the Van Lier Fellowship, the Jerome Foundation, and Roulette Intermedium, most recently for a multi-chapter work titled "Wu-Wei." Critical

accolades include nominations for Up and Coming Artist and Drummer of the Year from the Jazz Journalists Association and Rising Star Artist and Rising Star Drummer from *Downbeat* magazine.

About the Pieces:

The compositions on tonight's program are by Michael Dessen, including some new works as well others from the trio's recent album, *Between Shadow and Space*. The order and titles will be announced from the stage. Selections will be drawn from the following titles, in addition to new, as yet untitled compositions:

Between Shadow and Space

Chocolate Geometry

Anthesis

Restless Years

Water Seeks (for AC)