

Unheard-of//Ensemble On Climate, Place, and You

By Emmy Hensley



As the ongoing climate crisis continues to grow in severity, artists across all disciplines have turned to their work to bring about a call to action for members of society to do better — or perhaps, to remind them that this issue isn't going to just go away. Brooklyn-based Unheard-of//Ensemble's artistry takes this idea to a new level, inviting their audiences to fully engage with the music, space,

and of course, nature that surrounds them during the evening.

Clarinetist Ford Fourquarean, cellist Issei Herr, pianist Daniel Anastasio, and violinist Matheus Souza make up the electroacoustic ensemble that has been touring together for over half a decade. Most recently, the group played for numerous colleges, universities, and performing arts centers in the southern part of the country. Along with their upcoming concert in Cleveland, the ensemble will return to Bowling Green State University to finish their Klingler ElectroAcoustic Residency (KEAR).

Unheard-of//Ensemble will perform Christopher Stark's *Fire Ecologies* on Saturday, April 2nd, at 8:00 pm at SPACES. This 55-minute, multimedia work views the environment through the lens of climate change, with video and audio captured by Stark and Zlatko Čosić.

"We started this project early on in the pandemic," Fourquarean explained. "Stark drove through Montana, then to Oregon and Northern California, getting footage of the

wildfires that were happening in September and October of 2020... we wanted to have a really interesting, evocative show that also interacts with the nature itself.”

The premiere of *Fire Ecologies* took place at Brooklyn’s Gowanus Canal in September 2021. Fourqurean had been capturing video at the West Dredgers and made a connection with the Gowanus Canal Conservancy. The clarinetist noted that the environment here has its own paradoxical structure. “It’s interesting to see both the industrial waste and pollution, but also the rebuilding that’s going on. There’s actually a lot of wildlife returning.”

The ensemble hadn’t intended on premiering the work at the Canal, but when a friend from the Conservancy suggested otherwise, it felt like the perfect choice for a performance venue. The inlet they scouted allowed for the ensemble to perform on the water on a ten by twenty-foot raft. The location also provided audience members with the opportunity to truly immerse themselves in the concert experience by canoeing in the river thanks to the Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club. The giant white wall on the other side of the Canal made it possible for video to be projected, bringing Stark’s concept to life.

Unheard-of//Ensemble has performed the work numerous times since the premiere in Brooklyn and each has offered a new perspective for audiences and performers alike.

“There’s something to be said about being on the water, experiencing that space,” said Fourqurean. “If you experienced this in a forest, it’d be a different mentality. That said, a concert hall with large speakers, a subwoofer, and a projection screen gives a really immersive experience as well. Different benefits come from each type of installation.”

The group is looking forward to their upcoming Saturday performance at SPACES in collaboration with No Exit. The versatility and customization capabilities that *Fire Ecologies* presents has assured the ensemble that they can deliver a resonating performance no matter where they play. Though having never worked with No Exit, Unheard-of//Ensemble is now partnering with the new music group via their mutual connections through Christopher Stark and Timothy Beyer.

In a world with rapidly shifting environments, climates, societal structures, and art forms, Unheard-of//Ensemble delivers an experience that encourages audiences to find their place in ever-changing landscapes.

As always, No Exit concerts are free and open to the public (masks required). For more information, click [here](#).

Published on ClevelandClassical.com March 31, 2022.

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