

February 20, 2020
for immediate release

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Calendar Editors Please Note

What: *"They Will Have Been So Beautiful"* a 90mn concert
Who: **The Dresher Ensemble Electro-Acoustic Band** with special guest vocalist and live electronics performer **Amy X Neuburg**
When: **Friday and Saturday, April 24th and 25th, 2020 at 8 pm**
Sunday, April 26, 2020 at 3 pm
Where: **Z Space** 450 Florida St, San Francisco
Tickets: \$25 General - \$12 Students and Children - \$50 Support the Artists
Box Office: <http://www.zspace.org/dresher-neuburg>
(415) 626.0453 x 104
boxoffice@zspace.org
Direction: <http://www.zspace.org/directions>
Concert info: <http://www.dresherensemble.org/beautiful/>

They Will Have Been So Beautiful is inspired by photographer Diane Arbus's quest to discover the epic in what is more often seen as commonplace and mundane. As formulated in her 1963 application to the Guggenheim Foundation, Arbus eloquently and poetically defines her then-revolutionary aesthetic, that the commonplace habits, rituals and social spaces of everyday life hold a meaning and importance that will only be understood in the future, because "*they will have been so beautiful.*" This visionary (and then controversial) proposition provides the inspiration for our commissioning project.

The Dresher Ensemble Electro-Acoustic Band and Amy X Neuburg have invited a diverse group of mostly Bay Area composers— [Lisa Bielawa](#), [Jay Cloldt](#), [Conrad Cummings](#), [Fred Frith](#), [Guillermo Galindo](#), [Carla Kihlstedt](#), [Ken Ueno](#), [Pamela Z](#), [Amy X Neuburg](#), and [Paul Dresher](#) —to each select a photograph about the lives of everyday people and inspired by that photo, to compose a new song from 4 to 12 minutes in duration. During the performance of each song, the photograph(s) that inspired it will be projected above the stage so that the audience can explore the interrelationships of image, music, and words, if used. Each song offers a musical and photographic "snapshot" of our world, be it detached or personal, gritty or sublime, political, humorous or intriguingly mundane.

The photographs are very diverse. They include photo of a desolate Drive-In Theater in Las Vegas by Bay Area photographer Robert Misrach, photos of prostitutes at work in Mexican bordellos by Mexican photographer Maya Godet—both included in work samples— and an informal snapshot of one composer's own kitchen window by Conrad Cummings.

In addition of the photographs many of the composers worked with writers. The subject matter of the set ranges from strongly political works like Paul Dresher's setting of a comparative analysis between a Richard Misrach photo and a Hiroshi Sugimoto photo. written by young inmate serving a life sentence—

Michael Nelson—in San Quentin Prison or Guillermo Gallindo’s expose about bordellos on the Mexican American border, text bay area writer Juvenal Acosta) to humorous or intensely personal subjects explored by Amy X Neuburg, Conrad Cummings, Pamela Z, and Ken Ueno to absurd—anglophilic bath fixtures and an infomercial angrily critiquing late-stage Capitalism.

“Wonderful... a dense weave of electric and acoustic sonorities...gritty tenderness and emotional power”. —Joshua Kosman, *The San Francisco Chronicle*

“Don’t miss the spectacular Amy X Neuburg. She’s the best thing to come out of Oakland since Jack London.”— composer John Adams, in his blog

The Concert

Over the course of the 90-minute show, these songs and photos offer audiences ten intimate and intensely personal reflections about the world in which we live.

17 Reasons Why by **Pamela Z**

Text by Pamela Z | Photograph by Donald Swearingen

Ego Sum by **Lisa Bielawa**

Text overheard in transient public spaces | Photographs by Ourit Ben-Haim

At the Window by **Conrad Cummings**

Text and photo by Conrad Cummings

A Picture Screen Stands in Solitude by **Paul Dresher**

Text by Michael Nelson,

Photographs: Richard Misrach, and Hiroshi Sugimoto

What Is Missing? by **Jay Cloidt**

Text by Melody Sumner Carnahan | Photographs by Chris Luckhardt, Michael J. Willis, Matthew Christopher, James C. Farmer, Pablo Gonzalez , maebmij , and Timm Suess.

Secret Meridian by **Ken Ueno**

Text and photo by Ken Ueno

If I Could by **Fred Frith**

Text by Leila Attatoi | Photograph: Heike Liss, *Push*

Blood Bolero by **Guillermo Galindo**

Text by Juvenal Acosta | Photographs by Maya Goded

A Gathering Storm by **Carla Kihlstedt**

Text and photos by Carla Kihlstedt

Is it Conflict-Free and Were Any Animals Harmed in the Making of It? by Amy X Neuburg

Text and images by **Amy X Neuburg**

THE PERFORMERS

The Dreher Ensemble Electro-Acoustic Band is

Beth Custer - clarinet/bass clarinet

Joel Davel - Marimba Lumina

Paul Dresher - electric guitar and bass

Marja Mutru - keyboards

Karen Bentley Pollick - violin and viola

John Schott - electric guitar

Zack Miley - sound engineer

Amy X Neuburg - vocalist and live electronics

Amy X Neuburg -- composer & vocalist -- “A one-woman musical hurricane” (*Otago Times*, New Zealand), Amy has been crafting her own brand of irreverently genre-crossing works for voice, electronics and ensembles for over 25 years. She’s known for her innovative use of live performance technology, her 4-octave vocal range and her colorful—often humorous—lyrics. One of the earliest performers to work with live digital looping, Amy has presented her electronic “avant-cabaret” songs at such diverse venues as the Other Minds and Bang on a Can new music festivals, the Berlin International Poetry Festival, the Wellington and Christchurch Jazz Festivals (NZ), and the Warsaw Philharmonic Hall. Composing commissions include San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, Present Music, Pacific Mozart Ensemble chorus, and Del Sol String Quartet. Her acclaimed song cycle *The Secret Language of Subways* for voice and cellos has played at YBCA, the SF Symphony After Hours and the LA Philharmonic Left Coast Festival. A classically trained singer who loves bringing new vocal works to life, Amy has been featured in contemporary operas and recordings by Robert Ashley, Culture Clash and Guillermo Galindo, among many others. Grants and honors include Arts International, the Gerbode Foundation, The East Bay Fund for Artists, The U.S. Embassy New Zealand, and the Alpert/Ucross prize.

THE ORGANIZATION

Paul Dresher Ensemble believes deeply in the transformative power of artistic expression. For 35 years, the organization has been a creative force and active member of the San Francisco Bay Area as well as the national arts community. Our overarching goal is to produce innovative and engaging performances that reach for the highest artistic standards. We create, produce and tour works of new opera/music theater; we commission and perform new chamber music and we collaborate with other artists and arts organizations; Of equal organizational importance, we provide essential services to the creative performing arts community. We support individual artist's creative work by providing technical, financial, and advisory assistance, we provide both short and long term below-market rehearsal studio space and equipment rentals to over 60 Bay Area artists and/or organizations each year. And through the Dresher Ensemble Artists Residency, we provide free, multi-week studio residencies to Northern California artists working in the time-based arts. In 2019, we have initiated two entirely new intimate and informal performance series –In Studio Performances.

FUNDING

This concert is funded in parts by San Francisco Grant for the Arts, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Bernard Osher Foundation, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Musical Traditions' Board of Directors, and individual donors.

PHOTOS [Link for high definition pictures](#)

The Electro-Acoustic Band performing *Blood Bolero* by Guillermo Galindo.
Still from video by Mark Palmer.



Amy X Neuburg performing *Blood Bolero* by Guillermo Galindo. Still from video by Mark Palmer.





Amy X Neuburg Photo by Liz Payne



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