DBR & THE MISSION: A Civil Rights Reader

Thursday, February 15, 2007

10:00AM Bowker Auditorium

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The Arts and Education Program of the Fine Arts Center is sponsored by Banknorth
Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) is a composer, violinist, and bandleader who seamlessly blends funk, rock, hip-hop and classical music into a new and wildly creative sonic vision. He is a classical-urban ambassador for the next generation and for a widening audience. On a growing national and international scene, he's simply revolutionary.

Voted #3 Best Classical Moment of 2003 by the New York Times and acclaimed by critics from classical and popular music fields alike, DBR has collaborated with Philip Glass, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Vernon Reid, DJ Radar, DJ Spooky, DJ Scientific, Susan Sarandon, Cassandra Wilson, and an array of orchestras and chamber ensembles. His dramatic soul-inspiring pieces range from orchestral scores to energetic chamber works to rock songs and electronica, all embracing modern musical genres woven with a multicolored spectrum of popular music. His 9-piece band, DBR & THE MISSION, features an amplified string quartet, drum kit, keyboards, vocalist, DJ, and laptopist. The orchestras of Dallas, Memphis, San Antonio, and St. Louis have performed or commissioned his works, and Bill T. Jones and the Orchestra of St. Luke's (OSL) regularly collaborate with him—DBR is the Music Director of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company and Assistant Composer-in-Residence of the OSL.

DBR has performed his arrangements of Cassandra Wilson's Glamoured with the jazz vocalist and her quintet while conducting the Seattle Symphony Orchestra and Buffalo Philharmonic; jammed with his band at the celebrated Joe's Pub in New York City; rocked with DJ Spooky at the Lincoln Center Summer Festival; and composed music for and performed in the European premiere of Bill T. Jones' Another Evening at the RomaEuropa Festival in Italy. As Artist-in-Residence at Arizona State University, DBR premiered ROKESTRA: A Hip Hop Music and Dance Party featuring DJ Radar and returned to collaborate and perform with Philip Glass in SEEN AND HEARD: Philip Glass and Daniel Roumain Together on Screen, Stage and in Sound.

Hundreds of people at San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center applauded the premiere of DBR's String Quartet No. 4, Angelou, a musical portrait of Maya Angelou composed for string quartet, turntables and laptop; it's the most recent addition to his on-going series of string quartets depicting leaders from the civil rights era (others include Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Adam Clayton Powell). Current projects include Vision Blinding (his fourth, evening-length solo show) for violin, video, and voice; 24 Bits: Hip Hop Studies and Etudes performed by DBR on piano and laptop; and Blind Date (the most recent Bill T. Jones/DBR collaboration), a large-scale work for multiple video installations, a classical violinist, two throat-singers, and the company.

DBR has been recognized as one of the Top 100 New Yorkers by New York Resident Magazine; appeared on the catwalk for Perry Ellis during fashion week; been interviewed by Tavis Smiley; featured on the pages of XXL magazine and The New York Times; and writes a column, DBR Pulse, for DRUM magazine in London. STRINGS magazine published one of his Hip Hop Studies and Etudes in February 2005.

Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR, violin/laptop) performs with members of his band THE MISSION, including: DJ Scientific (turntables/CDJ, laptop), Earl Maneein (violin), Jessie Reagen (cello), Matthew Szemela (violin), Wynne Bennett (keyboards, groovebox) and Jon Weber (viola).
About the Production: *A Civil Rights Reader*

Charismatic Haitian-American composer and classical violinist Daniel Bernard Roumain and his eclectic team, THE MISSION, perform a series of quartets for strings, laptop, and DJ that honor great heroes of the American Civil Rights Movement. These hip works, performed by DBR and members of his band THE MISSION, celebrate the lives of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. and Maya Angelou in a spellbinding performance by a 21st-century musical pioneer that includes the actual voices of these American giants in excerpts from their famous speeches and poems.

**Notes from the Composer**

String Quartet No 1, X: I was in my early twenties, and had recently read Brother Malcolm's autobiography. I was moved to tears and rage and completely related to his struggles, many of them in his early twenties, too. I wanted this quartet to change my world. I ended up combining the best of Bartok's motifs with my own developing sense of funk.

String Quartet No. 2, King: This quartet is inspired by the controversial phone tapes and other information found on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s adulterous affairs. The music illuminates the pillow talk that might have occurred, and what influence these women might have had on him, and consequently, on the entire Civil Rights movement.

String Quartet No. 3, Powell: Adam Clayton Powell, Jr's., writings and legislative efforts paved the way for the Johnson Administration's eventual passing of Civil Rights laws. Were it not for him, I would not be allowed to be a composer nor would I have had the access to my education and most things I probably take for granted.

String Quartet No. 4, Angelou: Maya Angelou personally knew each of these three men and too often I think we tend to neglect the strong leadership roles Black women have had in the Civil Rights movement. Powerful though her words and poetry are, in this quartet, it is the wondrous timbre of the sound of her voice that forms the source material of the electronic soundscapes generated by me and the ever-revelatory, DJ Scientific.

The American Civil Rights Movement

The *Civil Rights Movement* refers to a set of noted events and reform movements in the United States aimed at abolishing public and private acts of racial discrimination against African Americans between 1954 and 1968, particularly in the Southern United States. By 1966, the emergence of the Black Power Movement, which lasted from 1966 to 1975, enlarged and gradually eclipsed the aims of the Civil Rights Movement to include racial dignity, economic and political self-sufficiency, and freedom from white authority. Several scholars have begun to refer to the Civil Rights Movement as the Second Reconstruction.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century in the United States, racially discriminatory laws and racial violence aimed at African Americans began to mushroom. This period is sometimes referred to as the nadir (or low point) of American race relations. Elected, appointed, or hired government authorities began to require or permit discrimination, specifically in the states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama,
Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, Oklahoma, and Kansas. There were four main acts of discrimination against African Americans that were permitted at this time. They included racial segregation – upheld by the United States Supreme Court decision in Plessy vs. Ferguson in 1896 - which was legally mandated by southern states and nationwide at the local level of government, voter suppression or disfranchisement in the southern states, denial of economic opportunity or resources nationwide, and private acts of violence and mass racial violence aimed at African Americans unhindered or encouraged by government authorities. Although racial discrimination was present nationwide, the combination of law, acts of discrimination, and violence directed toward African Americans in the southern states became known as Jim Crow.

Some people tried to abolish discrimination against African Americans prior to the Civil Rights Movement of 1955 to 1968 through litigation and lobbying efforts by traditional organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). These efforts were the distinction of the American Civil Rights Movement from 1896-1954. However, by 1955, private citizens became frustrated by the gradual approaches to implement desegregation by federal and state governments and the "massive resistance" by those in favor of racial segregation and voter suppression. In defiance, they adopted a combined strategy of direct action with nonviolent resistance known as civil disobedience. The acts of civil disobedience produced crisis situations between those standing up for civil rights and government authorities. Some of the different forms of civil disobedience used at the time include boycotts (as successfully practiced by the Montgomery Bus Boycott in Alabama), "sit-ins" (as demonstrated by the influential Greensboro sit-in in North Carolina), and marches (like the Selma to Montgomery marches in Alabama).

The Civil Rights Movement resulted in many notable achievements that changed the face of life in our country. Some of these include the legal victory in the Brown vs. Board of Education case that overturned the legal doctrine of "separate but equal" and prohibited segregation, passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that banned discrimination in employment practices and public accommodations, passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that restored voting rights, passage of the Immigration and Nationality Services Act of 1965 which dramatically changed U.S. immigration policy, and passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 that banned discrimination in the sale or rental of housing.
Malcolm X

Malcolm X was born Malcolm Little on May 19, 1925 in Omaha, Nebraska. His mother was a homemaker occupied with the family's eight children. His father was an outspoken Baptist minister and avid supporter of Black Nationalist leader Marcus Garvey. Earl's civil rights activism prompted death threats from the white supremacist organization “Black Legion”, forcing the family to relocate twice before Malcolm's fourth birthday. Regardless of the Little's efforts to elude the Legion, in 1929 their Lansing, Michigan home was burned to the ground, and two years later Earl's mutilated body was found lying across the town's trolley tracks. Police ruled both accidents, but the Little's were certain that members of the Black Legion were responsible. Louise had an emotional breakdown several years after the death of her husband and was committed to a mental institution. Her children were split up amongst various foster homes and orphanages.

Malcolm was a smart, focused student and graduated from junior high at the top of his class. However, when a favorite teacher told Malcolm his dream of becoming a lawyer was "no realistic goal for a nigger," Malcolm lost interest in school. He dropped out, spent some time in Boston, Massachusetts working various odd jobs, and then traveled to Harlem, New York where he committed petty crimes. By 1942 Malcolm was coordinating various narcotic, prostitution and gambling rings.

Eventually Malcolm and his buddy, Malcolm "Shorty" Jarvis, moved back to Boston, where they were arrested and convicted on burglary charges, but Malcolm used his seven-year prison sentence to further his education, studying the teachings of Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad. Muhammad taught that white society actively worked to keep African-Americans from empowering themselves and achieving political, economic and social success. Among other goals, the Nation of Islam fought for a state of their own, separate from one inhabited by white people. By the time he was paroled in 1952, Malcolm was a devoted follower with the new surname "X." He considered "Little" a slave name and chose the "X" to signify his lost tribal name.

Intelligent and articulate, Malcolm was appointed a minister and national spokesman for the Nation of Islam. Elijah Muhammad also charged him with establishing new mosques in cities such as Detroit, Michigan and Harlem, New York. Malcolm utilized newspaper columns, radio and television to communicate the Nation of Islam's message across the United States. His charisma, drive and conviction attracted an astounding number of new members, increasing membership in the Nation of Islam from 500 in 1952 to 30,000 in 1963.

Racial tensions ran increasingly high during the early 1960s. In addition to the media, Malcolm's vivid personality had captured the government's attention. As membership in the Nation of Islam continued to grow, FBI agents went undercover to monitor the group's activities.

When Malcolm received criticism after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy for saying, "[Kennedy] never foresaw that the chickens would come home to roost so soon," Muhammad "silenced" him for 90 days. In March of 1964 he terminated his relationship with the Nation of Islam and founded the Muslim Mosque, Inc. That same year, Malcolm went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The trip proved life altering, as Malcolm met "blonde-haired, blued-eyed men I could call my brothers." He returned to the United States with a new outlook on integration. This time, instead of just preaching to African-
Americans, he had a message for all races.

Relations between Malcolm and the Nation of Islam had become volatile after he renounced Elijah Muhammad. On February 14, 1965 the home where Malcolm, Betty and their four daughters lived in East Elmhurst, New York was firebombed but the family escaped physical injury. At a speaking engagement in the Manhattan's Audubon Ballroom on February 21, 1965 three gunmen rushed Malcolm onstage and shot him 15 times at close range. The 39-year-old was pronounced dead on arrival at New York's Columbia Presbyterian Hospital.

Fifteen hundred people attended Malcolm's funeral on February 27, 1965, and his legacy has moved through generations as the subject of numerous documentaries, books and movies, including the famous *Malcolm X* by director Spike Lee.

**Martin Luther King Jr.**

Any number of historic moments in the civil rights struggle have been used to identify Martin Luther King, Jr. — prime mover of the Montgomery bus boycott, keynote speaker at the March on Washington, youngest Nobel Peace Prize winner. But in retrospect, single events are less important than the fact that King, and his policy of nonviolent protest, was the dominant force in the civil rights movement during its decade of greatest achievement, from 1957 to 1968.

King was born Michael Luther King in Atlanta on Jan. 15, 1929 — one of the three children of a pastor and a former schoolteacher. King enrolled in Morehouse College in Atlanta in 1944. He wasn't planning to enter the ministry, but then he met Dr. Benjamin Mays, a scholar whose manner and bearing convinced him that a religious career could be intellectually satisfying as well.

After graduating, King returned South to become pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Ala. Here, he made his first mark on the civil-rights movement, by mobilizing the black community during a 382-day boycott of the city's bus lines. King overcame arrest and other violent harassment, including the bombing of his home. Ultimately, the U.S. Supreme Court declared bus segregation unconstitutional.

A national hero and a civil-rights figure of growing importance, King summoned together a number of black leaders in 1957 and laid the groundwork for the organization now known as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). King was elected its president, and he soon began helping other communities organize their own protests against discrimination.

King's nonviolent tactics were put to their most severe test in Birmingham, during a mass protest for fair hiring practices and the desegregation of department-store facilities. Police brutality used against the marchers dramatized the plight of blacks to the nation at large, with enormous impact. King was arrested, but his voice was not silenced: He wrote "Letter From A Birmingham Jail" to refute his critics.

Later that year King was a principal speaker at the historic March on Washington, where he delivered one of
the most passionate addresses of his career. Time magazine designated him as its Person of the Year for 1963. A few months later he was named recipient of the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize.

In the North, King discovered that young and angry blacks cared little for his preaching and even less for his pleas for peaceful protest. Their disenchantment was one of the reasons he rallied behind a new cause: the war in Vietnam.

Although he was trying to create a new coalition based on equal support for peace and civil rights, it caused an immediate rift. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) saw King's shift of emphasis as "a serious tactical mistake."

But from the vantage point of history, King's timing was superb. Students, professors, intellectuals, clergymen and reformers rushed into the movement. Then, King turned his attention to the domestic issue that he felt was directly related to the Vietnam struggle: poverty. He called for a guaranteed family income, he threatened national boycotts, and he spoke of disrupting entire cities by nonviolent "camp-ins." With this in mind, he began to plan a massive march of the poor on Washington, D.C., envisioning a demonstration of such intensity and size that Congress would have to recognize and deal with the huge number of desperate and downtrodden Americans.

King interrupted these plans to lend his support to the Memphis sanitation men's strike. He wanted to discourage violence, and he wanted to focus national attention on the plight of the poor, unorganized workers of the city.

But he never got back to his poverty plans. Death came for King on April 4, 1968, on the balcony of the black-owned Lorraine Hotel just off Beale Street. While standing outside with Jesse Jackson and Ralph Abernathy, King was shot in the neck by a rifle bullet. His death caused a wave of violence in major cities across the country.

However, King's legacy has lived on. In 1969, his widow, Coretta Scott King, organized the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change. Today it stands next to his beloved Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. His birthday, Jan. 15, is a national holiday, celebrated each year with educational programs, artistic displays, and concerts throughout the United States. The Lorraine Hotel where he was shot is now the National Civil Rights Museum.

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.

Rev. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. was born in New Haven, Connecticut on November 29, 1908. His father, Adam Clayton Powell, Sr. was a Baptist minister and headed the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, New York. His maternal grandfather was white, as were several of his mother's ancestors. He was educated at public schools, the City College of New York and Colgate University. He received an MA degree in religious education from Columbia University in 1931.
During the Depression years, Powell, a handsome and charismatic figure, became a prominent civil rights leader in the Harlem area of Manhattan and developed a formidable public following in Harlem community through his crusades for jobs and housing. He organized mass meetings, rent strikes and public campaigns, forcing companies and utilities, Harlem Hospital and the 1939 World's Fair either to hire or to begin promoting black employees. One of his crowning achievements was his leading of boycotts against stores on 125th Street because of their job discrimination.

In 1937 he succeeded his father as pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church. In 1941 he was elected to the New York City Council as the city's first Black council representative with the aid of New York City's use of the Single Transferable Vote.

"Mass action is the most powerful force on earth," Mr. Powell once said, adding, "As long as it is within the law, it's not wrong if the law is wrong, change the law." According to analysts, he landed in Washington as Congressman armed with a mandate from the grassroots to make a difference.

In 1944 Powell was elected as a Democrat to the House of Representatives, representing the 22nd congressional district, which included Harlem. He was the first black Congressman from New York, and the first from any Northern state other than Illinois.

As one of only two black Congressmen, Powell challenged the informal ban on black representatives using Capitol facilities reserved for members only. He took black constituents to dine with him in the "whites only" House restaurant. He clashed with the many segregationists in his own party.

In 1956 Powell broke party ranks and supported Dwight D. Eisenhower for reelection, saying that the Democratic platform's civil rights plank was too weak.

In 1961, after 15 years in Congress, Powell became chairman of the powerful Education and Labor Committee. In this position he presided over federal programs for minimum wage increases, education and training for the deaf, vocational training and standards for wages and work hours, as well as aid to elementary and secondary education. He orchestrated passage of the backbone of President John Kennedy's "New Freedom" legislation. He would also become instrumental in the passage of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "Great Society" social programs.

Powell Jr.’s committee passed a record number of bills for a single session. That record still remains unbroken. As one of the great modern legislators, Powell Jr. would steer some 50 bills through Congress.

He passed legislation that made lynching a federal crime and bills that desegregated public schools and the U.S. military. He challenged the Southern practice of charging Blacks a poll tax to vote, and stopped racist congressmen from saying the word "nigger" in sessions of Congress.

In June of 1970 he was defeated in the Democratic primary by Charles B. Rangel, who has represented the area ever since. Powell failed to get on the ballot for the November election as an independent. He resigned as minister at the Abyssinian Baptist Church and moved to the Bahamian isle of Bimini. In April of 1972 he became gravely ill and was flown to a Miami hospital. He died there on April 4, at the age of 63. A few days later his ashes were carried aloft by a plane and scattered over his beloved Bimini.
Maya Angelou

Maya Angelou was born Marguerite Johnson on April 4, 1928 in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1931 her parents divorced and Marguerite was sent with her brother, Bailey, to Stamps, Arkansas to live with their grandmother. In 1935 she moved to Chicago with Bailey to live with their mother. When she was only eight years old, Marguerite was traumatized by a sexual assault. The man who assaulted her was murdered. Afterwards, Marguerite refused to speak to anyone but her brother, and was sent back with him to live with their grandmother in Arkansas. After four years of silence, Marguerite began speaking again in 1939 and returned to her mother in San Francisco.

In 1944 Marguerite worked as the first Black cable car conductor in San Francisco. A year later, she graduated from high school and became a single mom with the birth of her son, Guy. In 1952, Marguerite married Tosh Angelos. In 1953, she performed at the Purple Onion nightclub in San Francisco, where she adopted the stage name Maya Angelou. Maya is what her brother called her in childhood, and Angelou was a variation of her married name. From 1954 to 1955, she toured internationally in the chorus with the Everyman’s Opera Company production of Porgy and Bess. In 1959, Angelou began writing lyrics, which turned into poetry and short stories. Her singing career blossomed and she moved to Brooklyn, New York to join the Harlem Writers Guild.

Angelou became the Northeastern Regional Coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1960. In the same year, she appeared in the off-Broadway play, “The Blacks,” produced as a benefit for the SCLC. She directed and performed in “Cabaret for Freedom,” which she wrote with comedian Godfrey Cambridge. Angelou met Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, and married the South African freedom fighter Vusumi Make. Guy, Make and Angelou moved to Africa in 1961. In the following years, Angelou published novels and collections of poetry that characterized her as a major player in the American Civil Rights Movement.

Maya Angelou is hailed as one of the great voices of contemporary literature and as a remarkable Renaissance woman. Being a poet, educator, historian, best-selling author, actress, playwright, civil-rights activist, producer and director, Angelou continues to travel the world making appearances, and spreading her legendary wisdom.

A mesmerizing vision of grace, swaying and stirring when she moves, Dr. Angelou captivates her audiences lyrically with vigor, fire and perception. She has the unique ability to shatter the opaque prisms of race and class between reader and subject throughout her books of poetry and her autobiographies.

Dr. Angelou has authored twelve best-selling books including I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings and her current best-seller A Song Flung Up to Heaven. In 1981, she was appointed to a lifetime position as the first Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University.

In January 1993, she became only the second poet in U.S. History to have the honor of writing and reciting original work at the Presidential Inauguration.
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

The free bird leaps on the back of the wind
and floats downstream till the current ends
and dips his wings in the orange sun rays and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks down his narrow cage
can seldom see through his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with a fearful trill
of the things unknown but longed for still
and his tune is heard on the distant hill
for the caged bird sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright lawn and he names the sky his own.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with a fearful trill
of things unknown but longed for still
and his tune is heard on the distant hill
for the caged bird sings of freedom.

~Maya Angelou

In Their Words

Excerpt from Martin Luther King Jr.’s famous I Have a Dream speech, delivered in 1963 to more than 200,000 civil-rights marchers at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.
Excerpts from Speeches delivered by Malcolm X

The common goal of 22 million Afro-Americans is respect as human beings, the God-given right to be a human being. Our common goal is to obtain the human rights that America has been denying us. We can never get civil rights in America until our human rights are first restored. We will never be recognized as citizens there until we are first recognized as humans.


There is nothing in our book, the Koran that teaches us to suffer peacefully. Our religion teaches us to be intelligent. Be peaceful, be courteous, obey the law, respect everyone; but if someone puts his hand on you, send him to the cemetery. That’s a good religion.


If violence is wrong in America, violence is wrong abroad. If it is wrong to be violent defending black women and black children and black babies and black men, then it is wrong for America to draft us, and make us violent abroad in defense of her. And if it is right for America to draft us, and teach us how to be violent in defense of her, then it is right for you and me to do whatever is necessary to defend our own people right here in this country.


Excerpts from interviews with Maya Angelou

There is a kind of strength that is almost frightening in black women. It's as if a steel rod runs right through the head down to the feet.


The white American man makes the white American woman maybe not superfluous but just a little kind of decoration. Not really important to turning around the wheels of the state. Well the black American woman has never been able to feel that way. No black American man at any time in our history in the United States has been able to feel that he didn't need that black woman right against him, shoulder to shoulder—in that cotton field, on the auction block, in the ghetto, wherever.


Strictly speaking, one cannot legislate love, but what one can do is legislate fairness and justice. If legislation does not prohibit our living side by side, sooner or later your child will fall on the pavement and I’ll be the one to pick her up. Or one of my children will not be able to get into the house and you'll have to say, "Stop here until your mom comes here." Legislation affords us the chance to see if we might love each other.


Art Form: Hip Hop Generation

The music of DBR draws on classical training and structure, combined with a number of elements of modern musical genres, particularly that of hip hop music. Hip hop is more than a mere musical style— it is a cultural movement that reaches into dance, video, art, and fashion design; however music is at the core of the form, and originated in New York City in the early 1970s. Hip hop music is generally composed of two elements: rap and beat. Rap is the delivery of swift, highly rhythmic and lyrical vocals. Rappers actually employ a variety of poetic and literary elements in their work, such as rhyme, consonance, assonance, and alliteration. The vocalist is accompanied by an instrumental element, which is called the beat. The beat is often composed by using a sample section of another song (called “sampling”), by creating sounds on a turntable (“turntablism”), by playing instruments, or by creating music on a laptop computer. DBR uses all of these methods in his music.
**Discussion Questions – Hip Hop**

- People tend to think of hip hop as a modern form that is entirely new. But in fact, hip hop, as a form of poetry, has a great deal of its origins in classic literary devices, including a meter that is derived from Shakespeare’s iambic pentameter. Do you think that poetry audiences in the past got the same types of thrills or messages from poet performers as we get now from spoken word artists? What are the differences?

- Hip hop grew from its inner city origins into a huge cultural movement. Can you think of other musical styles that have swept the country and transformed our culture beyond the realm of music alone? What is it about music that gives it the power to change society?

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**Turntablism**

We’ve all heard of DJs—those masters of the beat. DJs, or Disc Jockeys, create music out of the following:

- Sound recordings (records, CDs)
- A minimum of two devices for playback of sound recordings, for alternating back and forth to create continuous playback
- A sound system for amplification of the recordings

Turntablism is the art of manipulating sound and creating music using phonograph turntables and an audio mixer. Most turntablism emphasizes manipulation of a vinyl record. The term “turntablist” describes the difference between a DJ who just lets records play, and one who actually manipulates the sounds of a record.

Turntablist DJs use turntable techniques like scratching or beat juggling in the composition of original musical works. Turntablism is generally focused more on turntable technique and less on mixing. Turntablists, in their very unique way, are actually musicians capable of interacting and improvising with other performers.
Electric Instruments

The term electric instrument is used to mean instruments whose sound is produced mechanically (in other words it is actually played by a human being) but is amplified or altered electronically - for example an electric guitar. Usually the instrument has controls that allow the musician to modify the sound, by adjusting the pitch, frequency, or duration of each note.

DBR plays an electric violin in his work. Electrically amplified violins have been used in one form or another since the 1920s when pickups and amplifiers were adapted to violins.

Although the violin is an instrument used extensively in classical music, electric violins are generally used by classical performers only in the performance of contemporary classical music, and are more frequently used by non-classical musicians in modern genres such as rock, hip hop, pop, jazz, country, New Age and experimental music.

Laptop Music

Among other things, the term Laptop Generation can refer to the set of electronic music artists who first made extensive use of computers in creating or composing electronic music. Being more accessible and affordable, computers and laptops helped open a multitude of people to electronic music who otherwise would have been deterred. As a result, there is somewhat of a divide in today's electronic music scene: those who came before the easy access provided by computers, and those who came after.

Discussion Question

DBR blends a number of seemingly disparate forms, like classical music and music video. Can you think of other innovators, or any other performances you've seen this year (for example, Luna or Momix), who created new forms out of surprising combinations? Are there any forms you can imagine combining that haven't been tried yet? What do you think would be the results?

Poetic Devices

Alliteration: A succession of words beginning with the same letter.
“Let us go forth to lead the land we love.” - J.F. Kennedy

Consonance: The repetition of consonant sounds. Unlike alliteration, consonance includes repetitive consonants at the end and middle of words. "And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain" - E.A. Poe’s “The Raven”

Assonance: The repetition of vowel sounds. "When I get shocked at the hospital by the doctor when I'm not cooperating when I'm rocking the table while he's operating.” – Eminem
Classroom Activities

Create Original Music! (Grades 2-3)

Each student chooses a rhythmic or melodic sound to utter on command. Listen to the sounds one at a time, and then have students produce the same sound, whenever you ask them with a gesture of your hand. They must be quiet when you do not require their sound. In this manner, you create your own piece of music with the “instruments” available to you. When students understand the system you can choose volunteers to create the pieces of music in your stead.

Then try the exercise without a leader. Each student utters a new rhythmic or melodic sound and ‘tunes up’ his or her ‘instrument’. On the count of four, the students begin to improvise a tune. Rather than looking to one leader to create the tune, each student should strive to complement the other sounds, sometimes taking on a solo role, sometimes working as a group with his or her rhythm/sound.

Spoken Word World (All Grades)

DBR & THE MISSION incorporate many different visual elements and musical instruments in their work, and the noises and images they create combine with one another to make a finished work that was “inspired by” a certain idea, mood, or person. Tell your students that together you are going to make a multi-media creation inspired by a piece of writing. The goal is to imbue the words with your own uniquely original meaning. The music/soundscape you create will create emphasis and help build a mood, by making the piece sentimental, frightening or inspiring, for example.

Choose a poem, speech or a saying which you will be illustrating. You can use some of the quotes on pages 10-11 or something of your own choosing. Discuss what the words mean to you, and what you’d like to communicate with the finished piece. (Ex: the sadness of the poem, the power of a community, the legacy of a certain event or person, etc.)

Decide how the words will be spoken—will there be one speaker, or will different students speak different lines? Do you wish to repeat any words or lines for emphasis? Encourage students to incorporate different vocal qualities into their reading (whispering, yelling, etc.)

Create artwork (a drawing, a video, a photograph, etc.) to serve as a backdrop for the piece, the visual component. Students can change pictures or cut video images in time to the music or the words, emphasizing and/or deemphasizing certain moments, feelings, or ideas.

Create a soundtrack to accompany the words. The soundtrack doesn't have to be played on an instrument live - you can have students record music, record noise or sound effects, or they can actually make sound effects live with their mouths or other tools. Then put all three elements together, and marvel at your creation!
Discussion Question

What did you notice in DBR’s performance that made the ideas he was interested in come alive for you? Was it the visual elements, the spoken words, or the music? Was there something about that art form that has extra resonance for you? Why do you think it spoke to you? Is there a way that form added emphasis, or highlighted ideas that you found interesting?

Resources


http://dbrmusic.com/ DBR’s website

http://www.laptopbattle.org/ Laptop composers compete

http://www.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/library/index.html PBS’s 60s resource library

Credits

This guide was written & compiled by the Education Department at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts. Additional materials were provided by DBR, the Vermont Symphony Orchestra and Wikipedia. The University of Massachusetts Fine Arts Center is incredibly grateful to the Flynn Center for their assistance in creating this study guide.
Evacuation Procedures
Bowker Auditorium

Note: Interior house conditions may necessitate alternate exit routes.

Sections A - K and the Pit exit toward stage.

Sections L - U exit toward lobby.

West side exit stairwell Left.

Balconies

East side exit stairwell right.
NOTICE TO ALL TEACHERS AND CHAPERONES

➢ PERFORMANCES BEGIN PROMPTLY AT 10AM OR NOON.
Many of our performances sell out. This means we can have up to 1,600 students to seat. Please help us by arriving 30 minutes prior to the start of the performance. This will allow our ushers to get everyone seated and for you and your students to visit the rest rooms and get settled. It is important that we begin our performances on time so that all schools can meet their lunch and/or dismissal times.

➢ PLEASE CHECK LOCATION OF PERFORMANCE WHEN MAKING YOUR BUS RESERVATION.

➢ The staff of the Fine Arts Center needs your help! An increasing number of students are coming into the performance space with gum, food, beverages, cell phones and portable music players. None of these items is allowed in the halls for performances. Many of these items are stowed in backpacks and are not easily noticed. Our goal is to offer high quality performances for young people. In order to enhance the experience, we ask for your cooperation in preventing these items from entering the hall.

➢ For the comfort of all concerned, we ask that backpacks, lunches and other gear be left on the bus. Our long-standing policy of no cameras or tape recorders still is in effect.

➢ At the conclusion of the performance please remain in your seats until your school group is dismissed.

We hope that you and your students enjoy your theatre experience!
PARKING AND DIRECTIONS FOR THE FINE ARTS CENTER’S

BOWKER AUDITORIUM

In Stockbridge Hall

School Bus Parking: Students should be dropped-off at the circle near Stockbridge Hall, which is accessed via the road to the Campus Center Parking Garage off of Commonwealth Avenue. University Security will direct buses to an appropriate parking lot during the performance (typically by the football stadium). PLEASE BE SURE YOUR BUS DRIVER KNOWS THAT ALL PERFORMANCES LAST APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR AND THEY SHOULD RETURN A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE ANTICIPATED END TIME. If drivers are not with the buses, they may miss the radio call from security asking them to return for pick-up, resulting in unnecessary delays returning to your school.

Individual cars: We recommend parking in the Campus Center Parking Garage, which is directly next to Stockbridge Hall/Bowker Auditorium. All other available parking during weekdays is at meters. There are few meters available that are close to Bowker Auditorium. Available lots and pricing (current as of 1/1/07) are listed below:

Parking in the Garage is available to our patrons at a discounted rate of $1. To receive this rate you MUST give the Garage attendant a parking pass. To receive your pass, please call our office to let us know that you will be arriving by car. Parking passes are sent with the invoices. (413) 545-2116

Parking meters are enforced Monday - Friday, 7AM - 5PM. Meter rates are $1.00 per hour.

Parking Garage - next to Bowker - accessed across from the Mullins Center off Commonwealth Avenue
Lot 25 - next to Mullins Center with 3 & 5-hour meters

From the North: (Vermont, Greenfield) I-91 south to Route 116. Follow signs on 116 “To the University of Massachusetts.” Exit ramp leads to Massachusetts Avenue. Turn left (east) on to Massachusetts Avenue toward the campus. At first light turn left on to Commonwealth Avenue. At next light turn right and follow signs for the Parking Garage.

From the South: (Springfield, Holyoke) I-91 north to Route 9. Turn right (east) on Route 9 over the Coolidge Bridge and through Hadley. Turn left (north) on Route 116 (across from Staples) heading toward campus. Turn right (east) at first exit at “University of Massachusetts,” then bear right onto Massachusetts Avenue toward campus. At first light turn left on to Commonwealth Avenue. At next light turn right and follow signs for the Parking Garage.

From the West: (Northampton, Pittsfield) Route 9 east through Northampton and over Coolidge Bridge. Follow remaining directions under “From the South”.

From the East: (Belchertown, Ludlow) North on Routes 21, 181 or 202 to Route 9 into Amherst. Right on to North Pleasant Street (main downtown intersection), north through center of town. Turn left at Triangle Street (Bertucci’s Restaurant on your right), rejoining North Pleasant Street. Stay on North Pleasant until it enters campus. Go straight through light – street has now become Massachusetts Avenue. At bottom of hill turn right on to Commonwealth Avenue. At next light turn right and follow signs for the Parking Garage.
For Concert Hall, Rand Theater and Bowker Auditorium – Patrons traveling by car are encouraged to park in the parking garage. Discounted parking is available in the garage for $1. A parking permit is required for discounted parking in the garage. Please call the Arts & Educational Programs Office if you require permits at (413) 545-2116. All other parking on campus is at available meters at the rate of $1 per hour. Parking is enforced Monday – Friday, 7AM – 5 PM.

Buses will drop-off students as indicated on map. Buses will be given parking instructions by Campus Security.