

The Kitchen Center for Video and Music

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Richard Landry Experiments in Saxophone

The saxophone was invented around 1845, but its possibilities have only begun to be examined systematically during this century, principally by jazz musicians and more recently by composer-performers such as La Monte Young, Terry Riley and Richard Landry. Although jazz techniques seem to have had a profound effect on these saxophonists, their music has developed in a different direction, one more concerned with sound and resonance than with traditional melodic and harmonic values.

Mr. Young and Mr. Riley now perform on keyboards rather than on the saxophone, but Mr. Landry, a younger musician who is one of several saxophonists presently working in the ensemble of Phillip Glass, is forging ahead. He presented a concert at the Kitchen on Friday evening that indicated that the combination of saxophone playing and electronics, first explored by Mr. Riley during the 1960's, has much more potential than one might have imagined.

Mr. Landry's "Tape Music for 15 Saxophones" did not stray very far

from the territory mapped out by Mr. Riley, but his long second piece was altogether different. He played the tenor saxophone, alone and in duets with Michael Galasso, a violinist, who also took a solo turn. Both instruments were amplified through an ingenious tape-delay system designed by Kurt Munkaszi; each note resonated around the room and flurries or flutters created orchestral densities.

The saxophone vocabulary utilized by Mr. Landry ranged from arpeggiated pattern-playing to bird-like shrieks, but the pitch and rhythm content of the music was so well ordered, and the effect of the tape-delay system so lulling, that variety was subsumed in a dream-like unity.

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