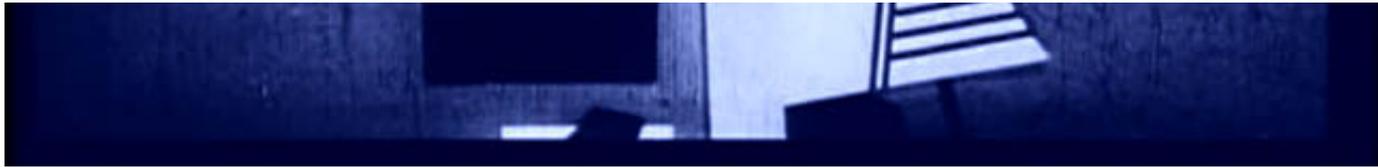


Spring 2021 Visitor Information: Blair is not currently accessible to in-person visitors. If you have a business purpose for entering the school building, please work directly with the person you need to see. For other arrangements, call 615-322-7651. We apologize for the inconvenience. In addition, all on-campus tours and visits have been canceled until further notice. Please see our [Admissions page](#) for virtual opportunities.

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VORTEX and the Bad Boy!





Charlie Chaplin image from *Ballet mécanique*, filmmakers Léger/Murphy, by courtesy of Anthology Film Archives

Blair Percussion VORTEX presents the Southeastern U.S. premiere of George Antheil's restored *Ballet mécanique*, Sunday, April 7

- ◉ 1:30-5 p.m., *Ballet mécanique* mini-symposium, Choral Hall. [Joy Calico](#), symposium organizer and moderator
- ◉ 6:45 p.m., Robotics, Music, New Media Art, Ingram Lobby
- ◉ 8 p.m., VORTEX concert, Ingram Hall

 George Antheil

George Antheil (Photo courtesy of the estate of George Antheil, The Other Minds Archives and Radiom.org)

Witness the southeastern U.S. premiere of George Antheil's restored original [1924](#)

orchestration for *Ballet mécanique*—complete with xylophones, bass drums electric bells, airplane propellers, 13 live musicians, eight synchronized player pianos, and the rarely screened abstract film by French artist Fernand Léger and Dudley Murphy. This masterpiece of 1920s Paris will be introduced by David Kibler, Cultural Attaché to the Consulate General of France in Atlanta.

VORTEX is joined by Tufts University's Paul Lehrman, whose work to restore *Ballet mécanique* through robotics and MIDI processing has been praised by critics:

- ◉ "It was something to behold...a glorious din" — *The Boston Globe*
- ◉ "A fully satisfying hoot of a piece" — *Boston Musical Intelligencer*
- ◉ "Termites running the asylum!" — [Chicago Sun Times](#)

Never realized in Antheil's lifetime. Never performed before [1999](#). Experience *Ballet mécanique* as "the bad boy of music" could only imagine, and as audiences from New York to London have cheered!

An event so remarkable it can only be achieved by humans in league with robots!

 Paul Lehrman

Paul Lehrman (photo by Evan [Kafka](#))

Mini-symposium program, 1:30-5 p.m.

JOY CALICO, SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZER AND MODERATOR

1:30 p.m. *Bad Boy Made Good: The Revival of George Antheil's 1924 "Ballet mécanique."* Documentary film by Ron Frank and Paul Lehrman.

2:30 p.m. Q&A with Paul Lehrman, Ph.D., director of The *Ballet mécanique* Project.

3 p.m. Coffee break

3:30 p.m. "The Painter's Revenge: Fernand Léger For and Against Cinema." Gordon Hughes, Mellon Assistant Professor of Art History, Rice University.

4:15 p.m. "Machine Musicianship: How computers have learned to play along with human musicians." Arshia Cont, Scientific Leader, MuTant Team Project (INRIA/CNRS) Director, Research Creativity Interfaces Department, IRCAM

Robotics and new media art exhibition, 6:45 p.m.

Robots on the plaza!

The **Middle Tennessee Robotic Arts Society** with a variety of small and large robots, plus Vanderbilt University Engineering professor **Julie Johnson** and the **Davidson Academy Middle School Lego Robotics Club**.

In the lobby

Artists **Greg Pond** and **Benton-C Bainbridge** invite the audience into Fernand Léger's *Ballet mécanique* film with an interactive movie installation. New media technologies are used to explore *Ballet mécanique*'s themes, where the everyday is made magical and humans become mechanized.

Guests in Ingram Lobby control scenes from the movie: a motion-tracking lever moves a burden-bearing worker woman up and down a staircase; Chaplin's signature cane dances Léger's puppet back and forth above the lobby doors. Guests are encouraged to bring pocket-sized props to spin on the Kaleidoscopic Turntable.

Sound artist **Liz Scofield** has created interactive audio compositions informed by the aesthetics and concepts of *Ballet mécanique*. Come early and experience *Ballet mécanique* as never before!

VORTEX concert program, 8 p.m.

***Strands of Time*, by Brian Blume**

***Ostinato Pianissimo*, by Henry Cowell**

***Malachite Glass*, by Nigel Westlake**

***Double Music*, by John Cage and Lou Harrison**

***Moving Air*, by Nigel Westlake**

INTERMISSION

***Saltarello-Presto* from *Symphony No. 4 ("Italian")*, by Felix Mendelssohn.**

Arranged by Paul D. Lehrman (1999) for eight robotically controlled Yamaha Disklavier pianos

Film clip: Segments from interviews with Other Minds Artistic and Executive Director Charles Amirkhanian and Dr. Mary Davis, Case Western Reserve University, about the significance of *Ballet mécanique* and its restoration. See rare archival film footage from 1920s Paris, and get a glimpse of an actual Paris concert hall riot. (Courtesy of Paul D. Lehrman, Tufts University.)

SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES PREMIERE

***Ballet mécanique*, by George Antheil**, introduced by David Kibler, Cultural Attaché to the Consulate General of France in Atlanta. *Ballet mécanique* is synchronized to the Fernand Léger/Dudley Murphy film in the original 1924 orchestration, featuring eight robotically controlled pianos and 13 live performers, including two pianos, four bass drums, four xylophones, tam tam, siren, seven electric bells, and three airplane propellers.

About VORTEX





Learn more about [Blair Percussion VORTEX](#) and its artistic director, [Michael Holland](#).

Thanks and credits

This celebration of George Antheil and Fernand Léger is greatly enhanced through the support of the **French Embassy** and the participation of the **Consulate General of France in Atlanta**. In particular, the Blair School of Music and VORTEX thank:

- ◉ **Amélie de Gaulle**, Honorary Consul of France in Nashville
- ◉ **Denis Barbet**, Consul General of France in Atlanta
- ◉ **David Kibler**, Cultural Attaché
- ◉ **Nicolas Florsch**, Scientific Attaché
- ◉ **Arshia Cont**, Director, Research Creativity Interfaces Department, IRCAM — Paris

Ballet mécanique film courtesy of **Unseen Cinema: Early American Avant-Garde Film 1894-1941**, a collaborative preservation project sponsored by Anthology Film Archives, New York, and Deutsches Filmmuseum, Frankfurt am Main, and underwritten by Cineric, Ind., New York. www.unseen-cinema.com. *Ballet*

mécanique is presented by arrangement with **G. Schirmer, Inc.**, publisher and copyright owner.

The performance, symposium, and related events were made possible by the generous support of a Curb Creative Campus Innovation Grant from the **Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy**; **Mark Wait**, Dean of the Blair School of Music; **Jennifer Fay** and the **Film Studies Program** department; **Frank Wcislo**, Dean of The Ingram Commons; **Robert Barsky** and **Virginia Scott**, Department of French and Italian; **Joy Calico** and the **Max Kade Center for European and German Studies**; and the **Department of History of Art, Goldberg Lecture Series**.

Additional sponsorship was provided by the **Office for Science and Technology of the French Embassy in the U.S.**

The Blair School of Music is grateful to **Yamaha Corporation of America** and **Miller Piano Specialists** of Franklin, Tenn., for generously providing eight Yamaha Disklavier grand pianos for this historic performance.

Video projector provided by **DWPLive**, a proud supporter of Vanderbilt University.

Blair thanks the **Hutton Hotel** for providing accommodations for Paul Lehrman.





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