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## Multimedia Performance Explores Anxiety, Transition and Truth

**Performance of new work by UC San Diego Ph.D. student Kyle Johnson scheduled for April 20**

It took much longer to conceive and film than he originally planned, but Kyle Johnson is finally ready to stage his multimedia show. Titled *Still*, it features two performers in scenes that address themes of anxiety, transition and truth – while blurring the line between fiction and fact.

“*Still* is an experiment in musical cinema,” said Johnson, a Ph.D. student in Music Composition at the University of California San Diego.

“Incorporating fiction, documentary scenes of rural Illinois and file footage, it constantly shifts the perspective of the audience as it surrounds them with multi-channel audio.”



*Music Ph.D. student Kyle Johnson calls his new work an “experiment in musical cinema.”*



*MPoster for the work “Still” incorporates fiction, documentary scenes of rural Illinois and file footage.*

Johnson’s work, *Still*, will be presented this Thursday, April 20 at 5pm in the Calit2 Auditorium of Atkinson Hall on the UC San Diego campus. Admission is free, and open to the public. The work is part of the Qualcomm Institute’s Initiative for Digital Exploration of Arts and Sciences (IDEAS), a performing arts series now in its fourth season.

Johnson is a composer, filmmaker and video artist whose work is presented internationally. He completed his M.A. in Music at UC San Diego after receiving his undergraduate music degree from the

University of Maryland. With a background in theater, his multimedia creative works combine elements of music, video and spoken word. As a teacher in the Department of Music and in UC San Diego's Academic Connections program, Johnson brings the inner workings of music to non-musicians, making music clear and understandable. His documentary work has been collected by the Library of Congress and released on Mode Records, including a documentary film, "Passage 9", documenting a 90-minute "intermedia" performance of a work by former QI composer in residence Roger Reynolds, released in 2015. (Excerpts from the video are [available on YouTube](#).) More information on Johnson's work can be found at <http://www.exceptionallydecent.com/>.

In *Still*, Johnson pushes the envelope of musical cinema, featuring performances by Mary Glen Fredrick and Fiona Digney. Both are graduate students at UC San Diego: Fredrick is working on her MFA in Acting, and Australian-born Digney is a graduate student of performance in the Department of Music.



*Music performance grad student Fiona Digney (left) and MFA Acting student Mary Glen Fredrick appear in the new work "Still".*

Throughout the presentation, pre-recorded performances interact with multiple composite video feeds projected onto the giant movie screen in the Calit2 Auditorium. The size of the screen is both impactful and critical, because much of the video material to be displayed was shot in 4K, the ultra-high-definition video format that offers four times the resolution of HD-TV.

"The video component of this piece focuses on using aspect ratio – the relationship between the width and height of a display – as a dimension for creative expression," explained Johnson. "Very nearly all video work today is shot and presented in the standard 16-to-9 HD aspect ratio, and that aspect ratio is maintained throughout the duration of the piece. Because the dimensions of 4K are larger, I have the editing freedom to crop the image to any aspect ratio at any time without any jarring loss of quality."

Filming the video sequences for display on the big screen and the April 20 performance were made possible because of a grant Johnson received from the Qualcomm Institute's Initiative for Digital Exploration of Arts and Sciences (IDEAS). The performance series enables faculty and graduate students from Music, Visual Arts, Theatre and Dance and other departments to stage new or existing works that push the envelope of technology and performance.

Johnson's award also included a residency and the use of Qualcomm Institute equipment and facilities, when he was able to shoot 4K video with support from QI's HD Video Production studio and services.

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