

## Kent Sparling Biographical Notes

Kent Sparling is a visual and recording artist living on the Northern California coast. He was born in San Francisco in 1966, and began composing at the piano after having been asked to leave his elementary school orchestra for inventing harmony counter-melodies on his saxophone. He formed the pop band Eyeland in 1983, acting as singer-songwriter, keyboardist, and co-producer, and the group became popular over the next decade with their cassettes, live performances and radio airplay in the Bay Area.

In 1985 Sparling began composing experimental music, creating longform works of up to 45 minutes, employing the classic musique concrète methods of manipulation and montage. With the use of electronic devices and electro-mechanical constructions such as oil drum reverbs and modified speakers, he alters the sonic character of a broad range of recorded sounds, from environmental noises, raw electronic sound and radio reception, to more traditional 'musical' sounds created by familiar instruments. He has created several 'system music' compositions, where, as the composer, he sets up mechanical and electronic possibilities for sound creation, and then sets the 'system' in motion, allowing it to create the 'musical result'. The pieces created in this manner are recorded 'live', and represent a kind of improvisation, where sound character becomes the principal means of expressing the emotional content of the work. Recently he has been exploring the world of micro-sounds which he calls 'picophonics', vibrations too small to move enough air to be perceived by the 'naked ear', wherein he has found a whole new palette of emotive sounds. He has six CD releases of experimental electro-acoustic music to his name: 1997's '**Route Canal Diary**', 2000's '**Under New Manna**' and '**Camphor and Caraway**', '**Leaf Spring**' from 2003, and '**Evening Air, Freeway Birds, No Wind Birds**' and '**Indian King**', both released in 2006. His music was included in the soundtrack to the Canadian Nation Film Board documentary '**In the Flesh**', and he has composed original scores for Wayne Wang's '**Princess of Nebraska**', '**Seven Fallen Objects**' by AD Liano, and Eduardo Sanchez's '**Seventh Moon**' with Antonio Cora. He has just completed the score for Frazer Bradshaw's '**Everything Strange and New**', in collaboration with Daniel Plonsey.

He continues to collaborate with other artists, including a trio project with poet Mark Neville and bassist Ron Crotty. Their '**Sounds Familiar**' cassette releases saw international distribution through the 'mail art' world, and were aired on experimental radio programs in Italy, Australia, Canada, Belgium, Russia, Cuba and across the US. He is a member of the beatfolk concrète group, Sleepmouse, whose debut 7' single is to be released in 2009. He has produced, mixed and performed on three of the eclectic solo releases by The Bob's founder, Gunnar Madsen; 1997's instrumental album of waltzes, '**Spinning World**'; 1998's '**The Power of a Hat**', and 1999's award-winning children's album '**Old Mr. Mackle Hackle**'. He has produced three albums for singer-songwriter Vanessa Lowe, '**Ten Minutes Past Two Months**' for the band Pillows, and mixed a 5.1 surround version of the 23-minute piece, '**Transpositional Landscapes**', by the San Francisco spoken word group Apes of God, released on audio DVD. In 2006 he restored and mixed the first-ever soundtrack release of Georges Delarue's beautiful score to Caleb Deschanel's 1982 film, '**The Escape Artist**'.

In addition to his composing, performing and producing across many musical genres, he also works in pinhole Polaroid photography, monoprints and direct animation experimental film. His first short film, '**alt\_view**', was created for the SF Film Festival's 'Wireless Media' program; it was produced entirely using handheld digital technologies, and is designed to be viewed on mobile media players such as an iPod or mobile phone.

After stints in theatrical sound and lighting design, Sparling spent three years as Operations Director at Sound Transform, hand-building Serge Modular Music Systems, (one of the finest analog synthesizers manufactured in the US) for musicians such as John McEntire, Richie Hawtin, Cevin Key and many others. He departed Sound Transform to work in film sound in Vancouver, BC, and since 1997 has been employed as a sound designer and re-recording mixer at George Lucas' Skywalker Sound, with credits on Sofia Coppola's '**The Virgin Suicides**', '**Lost in Translation**' and '**Marie Antoinette**', Mike Mills' '**Thumbsucker**', Spike Jonze's '**Adaptation.**', Lance Hammer's '**Ballast**' and Alex Rivera's '**Sleep Dealer**', among many others.