

# Mechanical Air

In Search of AWE

## A Hyper~ Graphic Score

Conceived & Graphically Composed by Michael Mayhew

A Collaborative Practice between  
Avant-Garde Experimental Flautist ~ Gavin Osborn  
&  
Visual Performance Artist ~ Michael Mayhew

By experiencing awe can we let go of ourselves, transcend separations and experience the interconnectedness of our planet itself?

Can we ever get civilization right?

Mayhew & Osborn present a most radical gesture by employing combinations of flute, digital sound, visual art, film, spoken word & movement, **Mechanical Air** takes you above the atmosphere to experience awe.

'People act as if the earth is flat,

when in reality it is spherical

and extremely finite

and until we learn to treat it as a

finite thing

we will never get

civilization right.'

Buckminster Fuller



$$(R+\delta)^2 = R^2 + x^2 \Rightarrow \delta = \sqrt{R^2 + x^2} - R$$

$$\delta = \sqrt{R^2 + x^2} - R \approx R \left( 1 + \frac{x^2}{2R^2} \right) - R = \frac{x^2}{2R}$$



FIG:1

**Mechanical Air**  
A Hyper-Graphic Score

**Introduction**

*'In a universe of spheres, humanity binds its world  
in rectangular industrial formations...'*

Welcome to an introduction to *Mechanical Air* ~ A most radical gesture for the composition of contemporary **music art performance**.

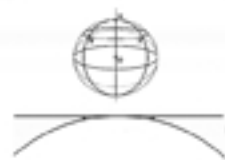
*Mechanical Air* is a collaboration between one of England's most innovative avant-garde experimental flautists Gavin Osborn and performance artist Michael Mayhew ~ 'One of the most original and searching artists presently working in the UK' (John E Mcgrath ~ Director National Theatre of Wales)

This partnership has been arrived at through a desire to offer a new insight into the generation of contemporary music by bringing together dynamic combinational working processes and practices into this new work.

Osborn commissioned Mayhew in 2007 to generate a new collection of Hyper ~ Graphic Scores for Trio Atem, '*The Alchemy Collection*'. This PRSF funded commission led Mayhew to be nominated by PRSF for a **British Composer of the year Award** in 2008.

Mayhew is generating some of the most radical visual notational systems, '*The Hyper-Graphic*', that in turn produce open and revolutionary cross-disciplinary performance.

This document offers you an insight into the *Hyper ~ Graphic Score* as a visual tool for the composition of new **music art performance**.



## Mechanical Air In Search of Awe

### **The Hyper ~ Graphic Score ~**

We realise that we are at a specific point of human transition. We are facing a series of dramatic global Happening political, economic, and ecological.

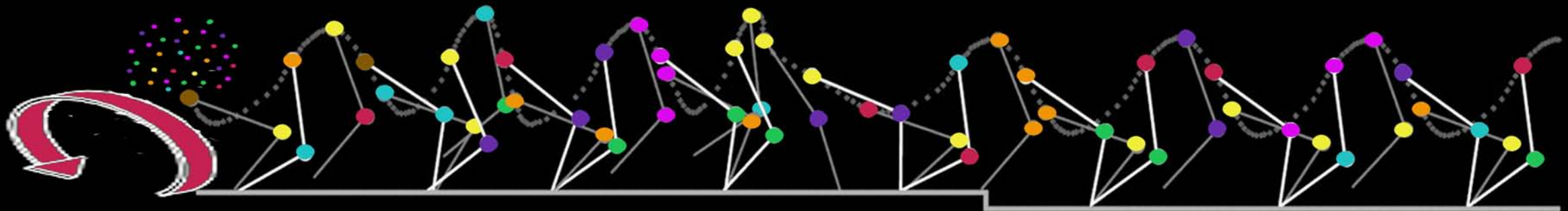
How do we as artists engage with what we as a species are being faced with?

We turned to John Cage for inspiration and reason for an engagement with the Hyper-Graphic Score to offer new, radical and dynamic insights in order to 'change' how we see, interpret, visualise and notate the challenges we face now.

When it comes to traditional musical notation Cage is quoted as saying

*"It has only to do with reading and reading something equivalent to Greek or Latin because the notation is no longer useful for music of the Twentieth Century.*

*It's only useful for previous centuries."*



Graphic score sound & movement:

## Mechanical Air

A Hyper ~ Graphic Score

### The Hyper~Graphic Score

With the rise of visual culture within broader '*hyper-culture*', and the evolution of the language of the visual & its increased dominance over the last 100 years, this quote from Cage is potentially more apt within the 'now' than ever before.

This period of 'now', the early part of the twenty-first century has witnessed an explosion of visual language & communication within the digital, screen based forms of advertising / gaming / software development for sound composition – sound is now a highly visualised form of graphic hyper communication.

- Has this led to a democratisation of sound & image production?
- Has the increase use of technology generated a homogenisation and industrialisation of sound?
- The population has become a sophisticated readership of a visual language that often needs decoding at high speed.
- Does music need classical notation any longer?
- Has notation been challenged?
- Should anyone be able to compose and read music?
- The Hyper-Graphic notational system opens up a series of pertinent and leading enquiries into the authorship of creative notational systems and who is identified as author, composer, or choreographer.
- The Hyper-Graphic as a form of notation does not demarcate between forms but encourages dynamic inter-disciplinary discourse between art practices, dissolving the barriers that often exist between languages of expression.

## Mechanical Air

In Search of Awe

Mayhew's work is leading the way in the conception of a new form of compositional notation that is also being engaged with by dancers and performers as inspiration for choreographic sequencing of the body in space. The Hyper-Graphic Score is the visualisation of sound, movement, texture, pitch, colour and note. It is open to a series of interpretations and choices; its very nature requests all collaborators to negotiate, collaborate, exchange and participate. It encourages for the discovery of a unique voice of expression, specific to space, place and people.

The Hyper-Graphic is a visual language being employed to reveal, expose, translate, patterns, structures, directions, rhythms, transitions, declines, inclines through lines, colour and visual inflections. This enables the player, dancer or performer to shape space and time within performance time in a unique and individualistic manner.

**Mechanical Air** combines and collaborates with live music, dance and the visual image to generate a work that takes influence from the most essential aspects of what it means to be human.

The partnership between Mayhew & Osborn is pushing the boundaries of the Hyper-Graphic into new arenas of collaboration.

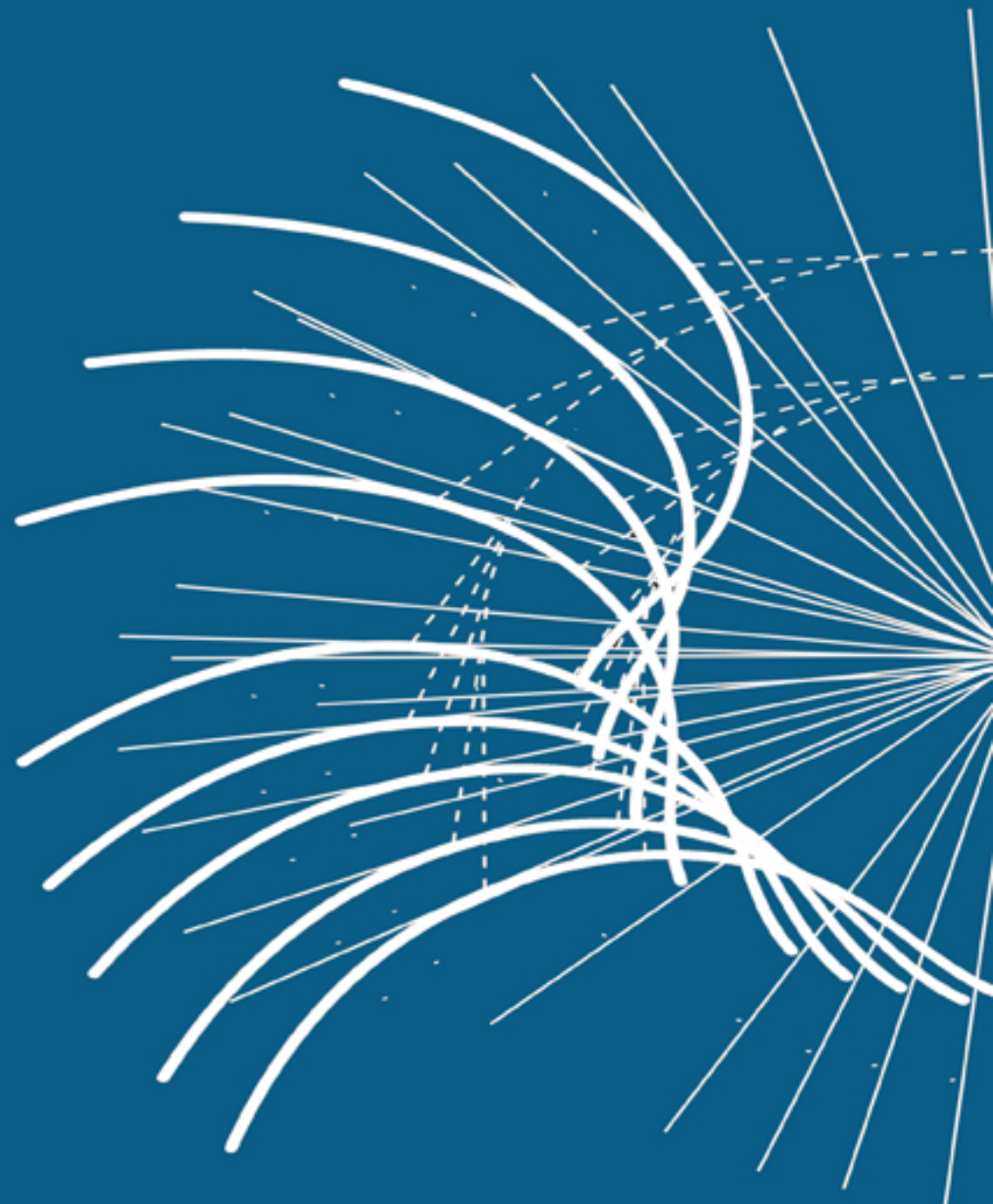


FIG:5

"OK

D | PAD as FOLLOWS

SPS GNN -

45597 -

040 + 157 / 089 / 19 /

1564 + 35189

- 01513 - 00346 / 180 / 45597 /

- 35189 - 0153 - 00346 180 / 007 /

000 + 00186 / 35223 / 318 / 35019 / 42 /

0928 / 253 /

SCORPIO DELTA TO SHUBA

NOW

071 LEFT

45 + 0748 / 16500 / 12995 /

36300 / 146 / 5045 / 129 / 155 / 010

4 QUAD

15 seconds

2.9 DEGREE WINDOW LINE @ -3 29 WINDOW 3."

*"That's Correct Apollo 8"*



Avant-Garde Experimental Flautist Gavin Osborn & Visual Performance Artist Michael Mayhew go in search for a sense of awe knowing our lives have been consumed by mechanical air: an automated sound track, the white noise of technology and industrialisation.

***Air conditioning, escalators, computer fans, cars,  
jets ripping blue skies with trails of white.***

*'Humanity must rise above the earth, to the top of the atmosphere and beyond. For only then will we understand the world in which we live.'*  
(Socrates)

On this search for something awe inspiring we found the visual iconic image of Earth taken from the Apollo 8 spaceflight in 1968: "Those photos reframed everything. For the first time humanity saw itself from outside"

(Stewart Brand).

In a universe of spheres, humanity binds its world in rectangular industrial formations...

*'People act as if the earth is flat, when in reality it is a spherical and extremely finite and until we learn to treat it as a finite thing we will never get civilization right.'*

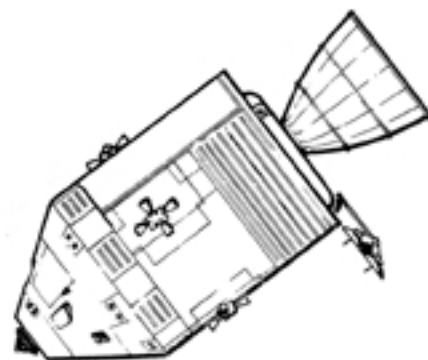
(Buckminster Fuller)

By experiencing awe can we let go of ourselves, transcend separations and experience the interconnectedness of our planet itself?

**Can we ever get civilization right?**

Mayhew & Osborn present a most radical gesture by employing combinations of flute, digital sound, visual art, film, spoken word & movement.

**Mechanical Air** takes you above the atmosphere to experience awe.



**Mechanical Air**

A Hyper ~ Graphic Score



**FIG:6**

## Mechanical Air

In Search of Awe

*In order for us to free ourselves of gravitational anchorage*

*In order for us to experience the volume of sky, the burden of*

*Human*

*Form, weight / mass / volume*

*In order for us to compete with nature's grace*

*We need to invent mechanical air . . .*

*Vapour*

*straight*

*cut*

*tear*

*slice*

*through*

*blue*

*sphere*

*Veiled caped zone*

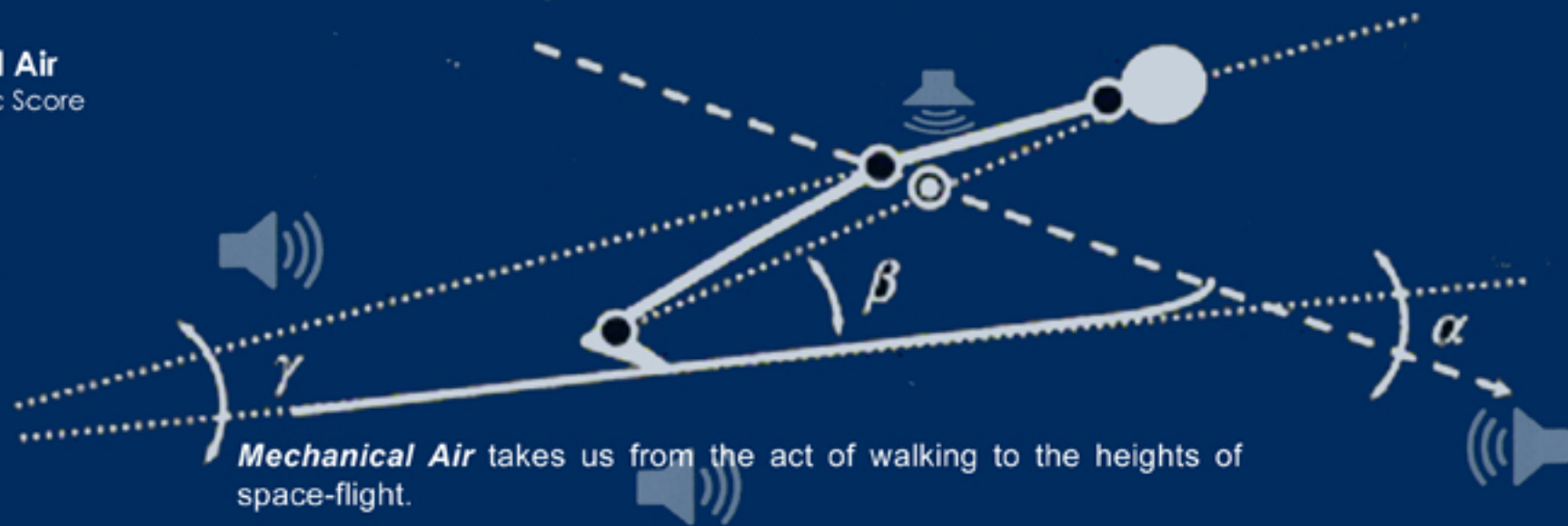
*O*

FIG:7



## Mechanical Air

A Hyper-Graphic Score



*Mechanical Air* takes us from the act of walking to the heights of space-flight.

*Mechanical Air* is located within a acoustic architecture inspired by the map employed to navigate Apollo 8 from earth to the far side of the moon and back.

*Mechanical Air* is set within a meticulous landscape of precision; Osborn plays live within a highly charged electro-acoustic sound/scape; 16mm projectors; slide projection and digital animation generate a landscape of flickering image and mechanical feedback, offering a beautiful, innovative, and thought-provoking performance experience beyond the conventional concert.

Our audience are immersed as opposed too segregated from the experience of live music, art, performance.

*Mechanical Air* asks, 'can we ever get civilisation right?'







## Public Participation Programme: (PPP)

We desire to engage with the public not to pacify an audience but to activate people through participation.

We want to establish a series of **Public Participation Programmes** with people who are curious about compositional and notational systems that are based on the Hyper~Graphic systems being employed in *Mechanical Air*.

These hands-on **PPPs** will give people an opportunity to begin to visualise their ideas ~ whether they are musicians, composers, dancers or writers or people who are searching for an opportunity to access this dynamic liberating process of visually mapping ideas by employing collage, lists, cut & paste, painting & digital manipulation within a process & practice of the graphic visualisation of ideas, within the genre of **Music Art Performance** and the utilisation of the Hyper-Graphic.

### We are offering two forms of PPPs ~

**one:** A PPP that focuses directly on the ideas that are being employed in *Mechanical Air*, moving towards the generation of individual scores. This is open to anyone curious and inspired with developing new skills.

**two:** A PPP aimed @ professional artists who want to investigate their own notational practice within the frame work of the Hyper~Graphic Score.

*'Humanity must rise above the earth, to the top of the atmosphere and beyond. For only then will we understand the world in which we live.'*  
(Socrates)



## Mechanical Air

A Hyper ~ Graphic Score  
In search of awe

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Michael Mayhew** is a visual performance artist, working within a multi-disciplinary praxis.

He is cited by John E McGrath (Director National Theatre of Wales) 'as one of the most original and searching artists currently working in the UK.'

His work has been described thus; "*it moves and changes people's lives ~ it's important, significant and influential.*"

(Lois Keidan, Director Live Art Development Agency).

His praxis has been commissioned at a national & international level, as well as being awarded and nominated by the likes of Dance Umbrella, Manchester Evening News, Time Out, Russian Union of Artists, Barclays New~Stages, PRS Foundation, (British Composer of the Year Award).

[www.madeinart.weebly.com](http://www.madeinart.weebly.com)

**Gavin Osborn** is an avant-garde flautist & composer specializing in new music particularly that which casts itself in new forms, crossing genres & exploring exciting themes & ideas.

A frequent collaborator with composers, visual & performance artists, & dancers, he has performed at many of the UK's premier venues & festivals.

Gavin is a member of Trio Atem.

[www.gavinosborn.weebly.com](http://www.gavinosborn.weebly.com)

[www.soundcloud.com/gavinosborn](http://www.soundcloud.com/gavinosborn)

### And Finally . . .

Many thanks for taking the time to read this document.  
Fig 11 gives practical information on Communication, Touring requirements and costing details for Mechanical Air.

Many Thanks in advance ~  
Michael Mayhew & Gavin Osborn

### Communications:

For further discussions regarding any aspect of  
*Mechanical Air* contact ~:

#### Gavin Osborn

@  
insearchofawe@live.com

#### Web Site ~

where you can find more information.  
[www.mechanicalair.weebly.com](http://www.mechanicalair.weebly.com)

#### FaceBook ~

<https://www.facebook.com/MechanicalAirInSearchofAwe?ref=hl>

#### Twitter ~

@insearchofawe

### For Reference:

Link to short film:

#### OverView

<http://www.planetarycollective.com/overview/>

## Mechanical Air

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### Tour Information:

3 on the road ~  
2 performers plus  
1 Technician

Full technical details on request.

Accommodation to be provided  
by the venue.

### Publicity & Marketing:

We provide A5 cards plus A3 Posters.  
We market the event employing social media networks.

