

CITRUS

Juliet Kiri Palmer

Beginning with a photograph I hold dear of my grandparents proudly displaying bunches of home-grown grapefruit, I set out to make this image resonate through my obsessive expression of this personal icon. I wanted to turn the grapefruit into sound. While approaching the piece with a pictorial method, I hoped that my working process would be derailed and subverted by the unexpected worlds it would reveal. Somehow, through sound, I might find a way back to the people pictured in the photograph...at the very least (or most) I would go *somewhere*.

Grapefruit.

I searched for texts using the words pulp, juice, juicy, grapefruit, squeeze, peel... Then I found and recorded people who seemed 'right' for the scenarios and characters these texts evoked.

I recorded the fruit themselves: cut into pieces, sucked, juiced and drunk.

I listened to the recordings and found that the most interesting moments were when the tape recorder caught people off-guard in their attempts to assume the new identities the written texts suggested. Not only did these 'found' words take me to a place apparently far from my family and the fruit, but my friends' voices and personalities tapped into stories and emotions I had not expected.

I wanted to stage an intense physical interaction with the fruit itself. A cadenza for blender and 75 grapefruit was born and is now the fulcrum of the entire performance piece. During the first 10 minutes I chop feverishly as many fruit as possible into segments which the audience devour before I deal the final electric blow to the remaining fruit. In the end all that remains is to drink deeply and to sing.

Citrus is a performance piece for computer tape and live juicer/singer. The tape part was realized at the Winham Laboratory of Princeton University using NeXT computers and a combination of CARL Cmusic programs and Paul Lansky's Cmix. In concert the piece is performed with a food blender and microphone (processed by a 1970's foot-controlled flanger and a BOSS delay pedal), voice, 75 grapefruit, knife and 2 dissolve slide projectors. The slides were assembled by hand from multiple copies of two separate images enlarged and printed onto acetate.

photographs:

Glad and Frank Boyce, Rosalie Palmer and grapefruit; Havelock North, New Zealand.
Four generations: from my great-grandmother to myself; Nelson, New Zealand.

recorded voices:

Josefina Calzada, Christoph Erlenkamp, Jeff Fourmaux, Juliet Palmer, Janet Parker, Peter Parker, Tom Parker, Chris Penrose, C. Bryan Rulon, Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, Matt Wuolle, Mark Zaki.