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**Live Music for Laptops: NJIT Laptop Orchestra and Ramapo Digital Music Ensemble to Perform at Ramapo College**

(MAHWAH, NJ) – On Tuesday, March 27, at 7:30 p.m., an exciting concert of live electronic music will be presented in H-Wing Auditorium. The concert will feature both the Ramapo Digital Music Ensemble and the New Jersey Laptop Orchestra from New Jersey Institute of Technology. The concert will be repeated at NJIT on April 24.

The Ramapo group, which was formed in 2009 by Professor of Music Industry/Production Ben Neill, will perform three pieces composed for laptop ensemble. “Lathyrus” is a structured, improvisatory game-like piece by composer Paula Matthusen of Wesleyan University. The players travel down various musical paths in search of a suitable ending. Each performance is slightly different depending on the choices the players make.

“Whole Tone Study” is a new piece written for the ensemble by Adjunct Professor of Music Travis Houldcroft. In this work Nintendo Wii game controllers are used as musical instruments via a custom computer program written by Houldcroft. The players in the group all have specific instructions for how to articulate the sounds which Houldcroft has programmed using the various controls and movements of the game devices.

“Nuerplay” is a piece by Neill which is based on the patterns of segmentation in the Nuer tribe of the Sudan. Originally written for an acoustic wind ensemble in the early 1990’s, Neill has adapted the work for laptop ensemble. “Nuerplay” is a rhythmic piece that incorporates structured improvisation and includes a solo instrumental part played by Ramapo student Evan Straley on electric bass. Other student members of the Ramapo group include Michael Castiglia, Josh Haughey, Claude Jaillet and Mike Verba.

The New Jersey Laptop Orchestra from NJIT has been performing for several years and released its first CD last fall, called “The Willingness to be Touched.” Most of the music the orchestra creates is improvised, minimalist and experimental techno. Songs run between three and six minutes and are marked by intriguing vocal samples, spare melodies, processed clanks and sci-fi bleeps that whir into ambient echoes. The 12-track album is available on iTunes and other music sites. NJIT Professor of Music David Rothenberg leads the group.

The concert is free and open to the public. For more information, please contact Professor Ben Neill via email at [bneill@ramapo.edu](mailto:bneill@ramapo.edu).

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Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as fifth in the Best Regional Universities North category, Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is, in part, due to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of approximately 6,008 students and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains on the New Jersey/New York border.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include nursing and social work. In addition, Ramapo College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers six graduate programs as well as articulated programs with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, New York Chiropractic College, New York University College of Dentistry, SUNY State College of Optometry and New York College of Podiatric Medicine.