

Considerations



Written, directed and performed by Fortner Anderson
Original music performed by Alexander MacSween

Genre: Performance

Performers: Fortner Anderson and Alexander MacSween

Duration: 55 minutes

Staging: White or black box

Production: 2018

Language: English

The work is currently seeking touring dates in the spring of 2019.

Considérations is the story of a life. Accompanied by live music, Fortner Anderson recounts, in his inimitable style, fragments from his sixty-plus years: youthful exploits crossing the country on freight trains, acid-drenched parties at UCLA, the slow days at home as house-husband, awakening one morning on a tombstone in a Montreal cemetery, and an appearance on an Armenian morning television show. These and dozens of other episodes combine in a one-hour performance that speaks of small events, of births and deaths, of disappointments and gaffes that fill in a life.

Inspired by the work of French author, George Perec and by the American poet Joe Brainard, *Considérations* was constructed using a number of formal constraints. Each sentence in the monologue begins with the words: "Once I", to which is added the past form of a verb and a memory. Each sentence contains only one verb. No verb is ever used twice. The verbs are amongst the 1000 most commonly used in the English language.

"Once I knew all the state capitals and the names of 36 presidents.

Once I saw on fishing trip to the Lake of the Woods, on my first visit to Canada with my mother, my brother and my stepfather, an impossibly large musky in the murky water beneath our canoe.

Once I looked for solutions, fruitlessly."

Anderson's text evokes a range of emotions from humour to grief. Interlaced throughout the work are episodes which tell the story of his early separation with his father and their eventual reconciliation shortly before his death.

The synth and guitar musical accompaniment by Alexander MacSween closely follows the text. In its turn, the performance of the text also allows moments where the music takes prominence, so as to create a structural fluidity to the musical work.

The show tours with 2 people: Fortner Anderson and Alexander MacSween. Marc Parant, lighting designer, may be attached to the project where funding is available.

Technical specifications

Amplification of voice of Fortner Anderson and guitar and synth of Alexander MacSween.

Fortner Anderson

A poet, media art curator, Fortner Anderson has been active in the Canadian performance scene for several decades. His poems have been recorded on the *Wired On Words* compilation (WOW, 1993), *Millennium Cabaret* (WOW, 1998) et *La Vache Enragée* (Planète Rebelle, 1998), and have been published in several anthologies including *Poetry Nation* (Vehicule Press, 1998). His six solo CDs are *sometimes I think* (WOW, 2000), *six silk purses* (WOW, 2005), *he sings from* (WOW, 2007), *solitary pleasures* (&records, 2011) and *annunciations* (les blocs errants, 2013).

He has presented his performance work at the Berlin poesiefestival, Banff Centre (Alberta), Cabaret (Montreal), the Rivoli (Toronto), and St-Mark's Church (New York). In June of 2002 and in again in 2008, he was invited to Genoa (Italy) to perform at the 8th and 10th editions of the Genoa International Poetry Festival. In April of 2010, he was a featured performer at the Festival des Musiques Actuelles à Victoriaville presenting his poems in the acclaimed multi-media spectacle *La salle des pas perdus*. In 2019, he is invited to the Casino Luxembourg to present the 12 hour and 10 minute reading of his work *Points of Departure*. His website is www.fortneranderson.com

Alexander MacSween

Montreal-based musician and composer, Alexander MacSween, has navigated many musical genres and participated in numerous dance, theatre and film projects. As a composer and sound designer he has worked with Marie Brassard, Daniel Brooks, Paul-André Fortier, Dana Gingras, Brigitte Haentjens, François Girard, Robert Lepage, and Public Recordings. He is active as a drummer and multi-instrumentalist in the fields of rock, electronic and improvised music, having played with Bionic, Foodsoon and The Nils, and in the duo Detention with Sam Shalabi, as well as in Martin Tétréault's Turntable Quartet. Alexander has also created numerous solo musical performances and sound installations.