

W A R

I S

F A M I L Y

**Surviving the Cold War
and the unraveling of
Imagined America**

Konrad Kinard

kk@konradkinard.com

+447577111274

WAR IS FAMILY

(Surviving the Cold War and the Unravelling of Imagined America)

Proposal for installation and music performance.

I was born a Texan. I was born into the Cold War. I was born the year Sputnik circled the earth and shattered the peace in my home. On his ham radio, my father listened in awe and horror to the beeps transmitted from the satellite in space, as it passed overhead. Our lives were to be transformed from that moment. The Russians were at our door, coming to kill us all! So, my father built a nuclear-hardened bomb shelter under our house. As the years progressed we waited, prepared and watched the news with Walter Cronkite. I remember well the nightly ritual at the dinner table, eating to the backdrop of newsreels from Vietnam on a small TV. Close-up shots of dying soldiers, while chewing beef-stroganoff with egg noodles.

(Excerpt of spoken storylines improvised in performance.)

Background

In my neck-of-the-woods (Dallas area) there was a way to express the depth of a friend who was not related, We would say that this person 'is family'.

'War Is Family' speaks of an ever-present and constant war. The Cold War and Vietnam were rammed down our throats daily. War became the only 'family member' that survived. It was a media war that ripped us all apart, destroying my real family and dividing friends. Nuclear annihilation was not a fantasy. It hung over our heads from the moment we were born. We trained for it. We expected it. It colored our decisions. Nihilism pervaded our thinking because we did not expect to live to adulthood. We just were children and we were awash in propaganda.

I present only a story of one experience. Sonic paintings of that time. An expression of my fear and loss and maybe yours.

This assembly of stories, sounds, songs and visuals are the scenes that I remember most often when I think of this lonely time. I guess one could call this a grieving for an Imagined America that, as I get older, I see never existed, but in its wake, leaves a nation bewildered and a family in tatters.

Audio Links

War Is Family Demo

<https://soundcloud.com/konradkinard/project-edit>

Spoken word excerpt

<https://soundcloud.com/konradkinard/sidhartha-goes-to-alabama3/s-5UIWc>

War Is Family Production Realization

Sound Installation

There is a stereo or quad soundscape that fills the room with sounds of a summer night in Texas: cicadas, crickets, frogs, trains, propeller planes, and jets. Ice melts over the course of the concert; it is suspended and, as it melts, it falls into a metal pan (the waterboarding of a generation), which is amplified to catch the drip and the crash of the sound. Performers manipulate the sounds electronically. Trains pass in the night, television and radio sounds slip in and out of focus through the night. Four speakers are preferable; they will also be used to generate ambient feedback sound for the performance. The actual sound of Sputnik fills the room periodically, as well as the sounds emitted from the planets received from space.

Physical Installation

There is a table, round or triangular, set fully for dinner. It is empty, but there is a TV in the corner with a constant bombardment of footage from Vietnam, JFK, the Cuban missile crisis, Martin Luther King, race riots, student riots, Woodstock, etc. – the highlights and lowlights of the time. Most of the visuals are violent and constant and include both local and world events. There is no one eating at the table; the diners are the audience.

There is a projection on the ceiling of the stars, the night sky, or twilight. Sounds of eating are subliminal but audible. Food can be served...

Music Performance

The music performance will be approximately 45 minutes. There will be 2 to 5 performers. Instrumentation includes piano, guitar, voice, percussion, and electronics. A PA system, microphones, and a tuned acoustic piano are required.

The music will be performed in the space as the sound installation continues. The stories, soundscapes, and visual (projections) are the connection between songs.

Note

I am most interested in the sound installation and the music concert. It is possible that the visuals are developed for a later presentation.

The installation can be in place just for the performance, before and after the performance, or remain for an extended period, depending on the venue..

Konrad Kinard Biographical Information

A Texas native, Konrad Kinard was born in Denton, Texas, where he attended the University of North Texas in Music. After leaving university he moved to New York City.

In NYC he started the band 'In the Service Of....' with Bettina Köster, of Malaria (Neu Deutsche Welle) and joined art-rock composer, Rhys Chatham playing in his guitar orchestra, recording 'Die Donnergötter', collaborated with David Linton and toured the dance piece 'The Watteau Duets' with Linton and choreographer Karole Armitage. Afterwards, he composed and toured worldwide with the Montreal company La La La Human Steps for the dance performance 'Human Sex'.

Upon returning to New York Konrad started the left of pop duo Slash Orchestra with drummer James Lo (Live Skull/ Chavez) releasing 'Hypothetical World' on Bean Creek Recordings, and two releases on Sub Rosa Europa (Brussels). Two tours in Europe and performing at festivals and small venues Konrad decided to stay in Berlin to recover and write new material. There he worked with Set-a-Lite producer Frank Osterland producing music from East Berlin bands and singer Nitzametin, a Kurdish singer/composer in exile from Turkey. Later moving to London Konrad decided to start again with his first instruments of voice and guitar in addition to electronics and started finding his way back to the music he grew up with, and write new material. He became interested in country music and released 'MAST ERSO FWAR' with steel guitarist B.J. Cole under the name ZeroPing. Additionally, he was the female keyboard player with London's The Woodentops, when they reformed in 2006 (until they finally found a female to take his place)

After time away due to injury and illness and raising young children in Berlin and Leeds, Konrad Kinard is returning to performing with 'War Is Family (Surviving the Cold War and the unravelling of Imagined America)

Konrad Kinard kk@konradkinard.com +447577111274

