

# VELA 6911 - AN ANTARCTICA DIARY

Victor Gama

with:

Salomé Pais Matos

a multimedia concert for  
ensemble and contemporary instruments



"Vela 6911 is stunning and effected me very deeply."

Ian Harwood,  
Executive Producer  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra

"VERY GOOD JOB TONIGHT"

Cliff Colnot,  
principal conductor,  
MusicNOW

"In two years running these concerts,  
I have not seen anyone get a standing ovation at  
MusicNOW. The piece is extraordinary,  
and the video worked seamlessly with it."

Mason Bates,  
Composer Residente, curador  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra

"We don't see often such a perfect match between visuals and  
music, both of outstanding quality."

Gabriele Lucht  
Programme Coordinator  
House of World Cultures, Berlin





## VELA 6911 - An Antarctica Diary

a multimedia concert composed by Victor Gama

commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra  
MusicNOW and the Caloust Gulbenkian Foundation.

for eight musicians: 2 violins, 2 violas, 2 cellos,  
timpani, basson.

Victor Gama plays: Acrux, Toha and Dino.

Salomé Pais Matos: Toha.

Duration: 1h 30'

Victor Gama's work, "Vela 6911," premiered at Harris Theater as part of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's MusicNOW concert series. Commissioned by the CSO, the piece was conducted by Cliff Colnot and performed by musicians from the CSO, with Victor Gama playing his own instruments, the acru, toha, and dino. The piece debuted in Europe with the Gulbenkian Orchestra, conducted by Rui Pinheiro, and featuring harpist Salomé Pais Matos playing the toha with Victor Gama. It was later performed at Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, Stanford's Dinkelspiel Hall and venues in Angola and Portugal.

"Vela 6911" is inspired by the diary of South African Navy officer Lindsey Rooke, who, during apartheid's regime, participated in a secret atmospheric nuclear weapons test off the coast of Antarctica in 1979.



The test, detected by the US satellite Vela, validated South Africa's nuclear capability and a military power that engulfed the whole Southern African region in a conflict that lasted more than a decade until the late 80s. The piece reflects Lindsey's internal conflict between her love for nature and her obscure mission, which resulted in death, radioactive contamination, and destruction in one of the world's most pristine environments.

The performance features a video projection, shot by Victor Gama and his team in Antarctica, as well as observations from scientific stations based on the frozen continent. The music score, following Lindsey's journey, incorporates field recordings made by Gama, guided by her diary descriptions.



## Chicago Classical review

Michael Cameron

"The centerpiece of the concert was the commissioned premiere of Victor Gama's *Vela 6911*, a work that also explores the intersection of nature and technology in the guise of an atmospheric nuclear test off the coast of Antarctica in 1979.

The best part of the experience was the inclusion of three of Gama's invented instruments, objects that were as striking visually as they were sonically. The Acrux, Toha, and Dino fall roughly in the string/wind/percussion families, and bear some resemblance to traditional instruments from Africa, Gama's native continent. An ensemble of strings, bassoon, and timpani performed admirably under the guidance of conductor Cliff Colnot, ...

There was much haunting and memorable music (especially in the final minutes), and the video montage neatly linked the music with its inspiration. "



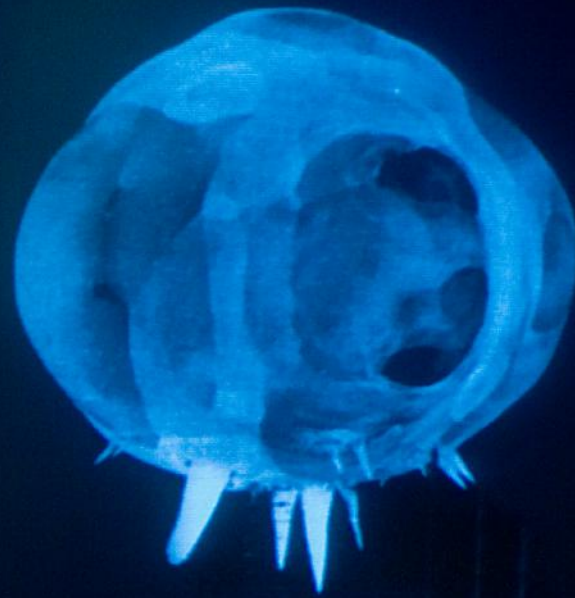




não há como voltar para trás







*captadas pela câmara estroboscópica de Harold Edgerton nos anos 50 e 60.*











Vela is a unique sonic experience with a highly diverse range of sounds and instruments and an engaging narrative that the audience can follow through music, video and text.

Vela 6911 is performed with a local ensemble of eight musicians and a conductor.

- two violins,
- two violas,
- two violoncelos,
- tímpani (4 drums)
- basson.

We are a team of four:

Victor Gama - composer, musician  
Salomé Pais Matos - harpist (playing toha)  
Paulo Machado - sound technician  
Rui Peralta - video control technician





More videos of Vela 6911:

<https://vimeo.com/channels/1371814>

PangeiArt:

[www.pangeiart.org](http://www.pangeiart.org)

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