

PRESS RELEASE

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***Midnight Bill* on WREK, 91.1 FM**

**Artist Project circulates archives from the Atlanta History Center's gay and lesbian collections;
adjunct text to be displayed simultaneously on radio receivers and internet streaming players**

Collaboration between Joey Orr & Chris Campbell

Sunday night, December 18 through Wednesday night, December 21, 2011, Midnight-12:15 AM

ATLANTA, GA – (December 10, 2011) –Originally composed in response to an Experimental Texts graduate course at Emory University, *Midnight Bill* was conceived as a radio program that enabled researcher, Joey Orr, to construct a memorial narrative that explored connections between archived letters, music, sound, and personal narrative.

The relationship between two men, Jack Strouss and William Deveaux Wilson, in the 1950s is filled with larger cultural potential. Whether recounting being fired from the post office in downtown Atlanta for being a homosexual during the McCarthy era, tracking correspondences with actress Agnes Moorehead, or watching over the artists' book collection at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the program maps out a space in which characters from different situations are strangely intertwined. Some original 1950s recordings paired with contemporary writing creates a digital mashup of several technologies that creates varied sound qualities in an overlaying of past and present documents.

While the form of the radio program means to reference the tone and cadence of the 1950s, the collaboration with Chris Campbell and WREK signals the influence of more recent digital technologies. WREK is Georgia Tech's student radio station, and transmits at 91.1 FM in the Atlanta market and worldwide via the internet.

During the event each night, related text will be transmitted by WREK alongside the audio program. For FM radios, the text will be sent via the Radio Data System (RDS) subchannel. RDS is typically used by radio stations to show artist and song title information, but for this event WREK will be "hacking" its RDS stream to provide the dynamic text. Modern car radios typically have RDS capability – if you see song title and artist information on your radio when tuned to an FM station, your radio already has RDS capability. If you have a smartphone with an FM radio receiver built into it, it likely also supports RDS.

WREK's HD radio signal will also carry the text data. HD radio is a newer FM technology that has arisen in recent years to allow stations to offer multiple programs within their one assigned "carrier" (e.g. 91.1 FM for WREK). Nearly all of the FM stations in the Atlanta market now have HD subchannels available –

at WREK, their “HD2” channel runs 24/7 with a mix of all of their music formats, from jazz and classical to punk rock and ambient.

Finally, WREK's live internet stream will also carry the text data live. Software support for the text data is more limited, but has been confirmed to work in the Apple iTunes player.

The text data itself will not be a straight transcription of the words being spoken in the audio program. Rather, the text will at times identify the speakers and dates, at times support the narrative with extra details. The text will even occasionally ask the listener to consider theories of memorial forms more generally.

To pull off the RDS “hack” and execute the technical changes behind the scenes, the help of WREK alum Jim Evans was invaluable and is greatly appreciated.

Airing at midnight each night, referencing Jack and Bill’s late night meetings, this series of short, 15-minute segments invites listeners to tune in to a serial narrative that unfolds over the course of four evening broadcasts, yet with a literal subtext running parallel to the audio program, visible on compatible radio receivers and internet streaming players.

Thanks to the Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center for permissions.

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Midnight-12:15 AM

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reference information:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radio_Data_System

<http://www.radiorocksmyphone.com/find.asp>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HD_Radio

<http://www.hdradio.com>

<http://www.hdradio.com/stations/Georgia-GA/Atlanta-5>

<http://www.wrek.org>

<http://www.wrek.org/radio/> – listening via the Atlanta airwaves

<http://www.wrek.org/listen/> – internet streaming options

<http://www.wrek.org/listen/mobile/> – listening via your radio-capable smartphone

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