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An Interview with Marcel Wengler

ANTON ROVNER

Marcel Wengler is the Artistic Director of the Luxembourg Society for Contemporary Music.

ROVNER: Could you describe your activities at the Luxembourg Society for Contemporary Music?

WENGLER: The Society was established in 1983 to promote the music of Luxembourg composers and to make Luxembourg's musical legacy better known in other countries. It was established by five composers, myself included. Before that, there had not been any society of this kind in existence, and Luxembourg composers had very few chances of having their music performed in their native country. The Luxembourg Society joined the ISCM in 1985. Initially the financial situation was modest. Our committee had to conduct its activities in a freelance form. Today we have an agreement with the Ministry of Culture, which guarantees financial support for our activities. Since 1994, I have been head of the Society and we have put on numerous concerts and issued CDs of contemporary composers. Among our activities is an annual festival, *Classiques du 20-ieme Siecle*, in the fall (October or November). Each year the festival is devoted to one well-known composer. The last few festivals were devoted to the music of, respectively, Alban Berg, Arnold Schoenberg, Bohuslav Martinu, Béla Bartók, Igor Stravinsky, Aaron Copland, Karl Amadeus Hartmann, Hans Werner Henze and Maurice Ohana. The next *Classiques* will be devoted to Allan Pettersson. There are also three festivals, devoted to a wider array of composers from Luxembourg and other countries. There have been many concerts of contemporary orchestral music, organized by the Society, performed by the Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by me. We also have *Editions-LGNM*, which publishes scores and recordings. One of the latest achievements of the Society was the establishment of the Luxembourg Sinfonietta in 1999. This is an ensemble of about 10 to 15 instruments -- including tuba, accordion, mandolin and harpsichord. The ensemble performs only premieres. The Sinfonietta's CD (*Editions-LGNM 401*), features chamber music by eight different composers from various countries. One of our recent guests was Jean-Luc Darbellay -- who came over with his wife Elizabeth (who plays the English horn) his son Olivier (who plays the cello and French horn), and the saxophonist Marc Sieffert. We have had many similar exchanges, for example with Israel and Portugal in 1995. Finally, I could mention the Luxembourg Music Information Center (which is part of the International Association of Music Information Centers), whose aim is to publish catalogues of works by Luxembourg composers, and to participate in a world-wide joint data bank for new music on the Internet.

ROVNER: Who are some of the other Luxembourg composers that are involved in the Society?

WENGLER: Rene Hemmer, Luc Rollinger, Johny Fritz, Jeannot Heinen, Steve Kaspar, Camille Kerger, Claude Lenner, Georges Lentz, Marco Pütz, Marcel Reuter, and Roland Wiltgen.

ROVNER: Tell us about the role of Luxembourg in the ISCM.

WENGLER: Up to very recent times, Luxembourg -- the smallest ISCM section -- has not had enough of a voice at the ISCM. The first time that a work by a Luxembourg composer was performed in a *World Music Days Festival* was in 1996 in Copenhagen, the *String Quartet* by Rene Hemmer. The second time was my *Violin Concerto*, performed in Romania in 1999. This year, in the *World Music Days 2000* at Luxembourg, it was my intention as artistic director to have represented *all* the ISCM sections in the festival. It was quite a surprise when in 1997 it was decided to have the *World Music Days Festival 2000* in Luxembourg. Originally, the *Festival 2000* was planned for Israel, but the Israeli government was making severe budget cuts in the arts, so their local section was forced to turn down the project. The plan then was to reschedule the 2001 Japanese festival to 2000. However, the Japanese section declared that it needed more preparation time, and they had already keyed their budget and activities accordingly. The only thing left was for one of the other countries take over the initiative. The General Secretary of the ISCM, made a joking remark to me "How about it if Luxembourg would volunteer to put up the festival?," to which I answered in all seriousness, "I will propose the idea to the Minister of Culture of Luxembourg, and see if she agrees." One day later, I was able to give the ISCM committee a favorable reply. We started preparing for the festival virtually from zero. In the first few months, I came up with a schedule and a budget. This festival was the first time in which the French Ensemble Intercontemporain and the German Ensemble Modern have performed at *World Music Days*. The festival has turned out to be a great success.

ROVNER: What are your plans for the future? Will *World Music Days* be successful in having an impact on future musical events in Luxembourg?

WENGLER: The festival has proved that Luxembourg can be a fine place for conducting major international musical events. I want to see Luxembourg not as just a small country in Europe, but as a full-fledged, active member of the European musical community. I want Luxembourg to make its own waves and to establish its own resonance in the musical world.

ROVNER: What could you tell us about your own music? What is your overall approach towards music and what are the genres in which you write?

WENGLER: I have mostly concentrated on orchestral music, including concerti for solo instruments (oboe, violin, viola, cello) and pieces featuring voice. But I also have written music for numerous Luxembourg films. My *Symphony No. 2*, a large-scale, dramatic work in one movement, was recorded with the Luxembourg Symphony Orchestra (LGNM Anthologie de Musique Luxembourgeoise Vol. 2 & LGNM 541). My music generally follows a more-or-less traditional approach, without using any special extended techniques or avant-garde trends, and the harmonic language in my music -- for the most part atonal -- freely incorporates tonality at will. I like to work with the orchestra, since it presents a very supple and broad instrument for the most varied forms of expression. Music does not explain itself, nor does it have a need to do so, but it in itself is an explanation. Most of my compositions are in one movement. My music has a strong narrative element to it; though it does not get into the literal recounting of concrete extra-musical events. I often have an imaginary landscape in my head. I like to utilize the varied colors of instruments in the most varied and dramatic way.

ROVNER: Tell us about your development as a composer. Which composers influenced you most?

WENGLER: In my early years as a composer I was profoundly influenced by the music of Mahler -- the broad symphonic thinking, the dramatic development and, foremostly, the orchestration. Once somebody asked "With

whom did you study orchestration?," to which I answered "with Mahler!" I was also influenced by the film music of the time of my youth -- its broadly descriptive musical language -- as well as its dramatic and orchestral possibilities. Of course, I was influenced by Beethoven. Then Schoenberg: first of all early Schoenberg, such pieces as *Pelleas and Melisande*, but also his later pieces like the *Variations for Orchestra*, op. 31 and *Music to a Film Scene*. Among the later composers, Karl Amadeus Hartmann and Hans Werner Henze were strongly influential in shaping my own musical language. In the 1970's, Henze's music was not as well known as today. For me music is not something that should be calculated in one's head or mathematically; it is something which should be stated directly, not constructed.

ROVNER: I know you not only as a composer, but also an esteemed conductor. With whom did you study conducting?

WENGLER: I studied at the Brussels Conservatory, where my teachers were Jean-Marie Simonis, Jacques Leduc, and Marcel Quinet. My mentors for conducting were Igor Markevitch and Sergiu Celibidache, who in 1951 was the conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (after which Herbert von Karajan took over the position). For many years I have been Henze's assistant at the Cologne Music Academy, and during this time I have conducted orchestras in London, Paris, Cologne, Hanover, and Munich. With Henze, I recorded film music with the Munich Philharmonic.

Concert Reviews

Home of the Brave

FELICIA SANDLER

Are You Brave Too? Festival, with Chris Younghoon Kim. April 22, 2000, Ann Arbor, MI. Through April 30.

A very impressive new music festival, *Are You Brave, Too?* was presented -- beginning on April 22, 2000, in Ann Arbor, MI -- by Brave New Works, the new-music chamber series and ensemble founded in 1997 by Chris Younghoon Kim, Eli Shapiro, and Chris Froh, and directed by Kim. *Are You Brave, Too?* was the second festival produced by Brave New Works. Consistently throughout the series, the mission statement of the ensemble rang true: "Brave New Works is dedicated to presenting, promoting and performing contemporary classical music for a broad audience without compromising artistic integrity." By and large, however, the concerts were strong, compelling and very exciting.

The new music ensemble KYLIX was the featured ensemble for the concert on April 26 at First Baptist Church. This program was rich and varied, and the KYLIX Ensemble is made up of strong performers whose program selections clearly showed off their versatility and skill.

Dorothy Chang's *Bloom* for solo cello is a beautiful work, which Andre Gaskins executed with incredible dexterity. The compound melody of movement one featured very rapid register shifts. Gaskins made the work look easy, presenting a smooth, seamless performance. Chang's choice of an array of pizzicatos in the second movement were colorful and her pacing exquisite. Arco came just in the nick of time, and only when needed. Chang's sense of gesture is very strong; and Gaskins understood the composer's intentions and made the few intonation problems in the performance easy to overlook.

Yellow Pages, by Michael Torke, was the low point. What began as "feel-good" music quickly became music that was obviously going no-where. Its melodic patterns were placid and lifeless, with nothing substantial to keep one's interest. The listener could imagine how the interlocking rhythmic patterns -- so wonderfully executed -- could have been engaging if they had not been so reliant on the downbeat.

Peter Maxell Davies's *Eight Songs for a Mad King* was the high point. Not only is this composition one of the most phenomenal and challenging works ever composed for voice and chamber ensemble, but the performance was incredibly expressive and technically wondrous. One would guess that singer Andrew Hendricks has perfect pitch. If not, he has impeccable pitch memory, consistently pulling the right notes out of thin air. What a performer! Hendricks was the mad king!

April 29 brought another concert, at Britton Recital Hall. Forrest David Pierce's *Sea Changes* received its world premiere in the able hands of the Brave New Works Ensemble. The texts by William Shakespeare, Pablo Neruda, Walt Whitman, Odysseas Elytis, and an anonymous author were rich in symbol, passion, love, and death. Pierce's music was engaging and moving. Unfortunately there were some balance problems at some key moments in the cycle, having more to do with chosen range for the singers and the activity of the instrumental parts than with dynamics and the performance. Still, the performance was quite engaging. Anne D'Oyley Adams and Jennifer Goltz were especially captivating in their expressive singing.

Tim Christie and Andrea Yun next performed Pierce's *Artifacts*, a quasi-theatrical piece for viola, cello and narrator. The piece was playful, with much humor and colorful musical effects depicting various adventures and mishaps of the fictional characters in Pierce's tale. The overall effect was imaginative and engaging. Unusual techniques, such as the use of brushes on the strings for example, produced sounds and effects that kept the attention.

What a talent guitarist Matthew Ardizzone is! He was the featured performer for the rest of the program. Of particular beauty were the pieces by Leo Brouwer, works masterfully rendered.

The April 30 concert was subtitled *Celloholics!* and -- aside from soprano Emily Benner, conductor Chris Younghoon Kim, and an electronics technician -- the 12 performers were. This was a very imaginative program and for the most part full of rich fare. The cello ensemble arrangement of Josquin Desprez's *Deploration sur la mort d'Ockeghem* was beautiful, and the kindred quality of voices and strings was evident.

Thomas Gregory's *Music for Four Cellos* was quite lush, romantic, and very idiomatically conceived for the ensemble. Gregory exploits the low register of the instrument excessively and without apology -- something that is very refreshing. Christine Chu, Katri Ervamaa, Vivian Sunnarvik, and Gregory performed with precision, investment, and great skill. This piece was a delight.

Sunderland's *Dark Heaven Angel* was a bit of a disappointment. Colin Meek came on stage with his cello and with two bows. Considering the title of the work, the electronics, and the dual bows, anticipation was high, but, within the first few minutes, it became apparent that the piece had no sense of direction. Unfortunately, the work was long... 25 minutes long. Leo Eguchi's solo performance of Berio's *Les Mots Sont Allés* was exquisite. Another solo performance was the definite highlight: Katri Ervamaa's rendition of *Petals*, by Kaija Saariaho.

How Not to Do New Opera

JANOS GEREBEN

Adriana Hoelszky's *Giuseppe e Sylvia*. November 17, 2000, Staatsoper, Stuttgart, Germany.

Adriana Hoelszky's *Giuseppe e Sylvia*, which had its world premiere in the Staatsoper here Friday night, should have had a warning label: "If you prefer your opera with music, don't bother." An 80-minute work, to Hans Neuenfels's novelty 70-years-ago type convoluted libretto (and in his direction), *Giuseppe* has atonal bits, noises, speaking, yelling, sprechstimme, and -- confusingly -- a pre-recorded soundtrack played from speakers in the back of the auditorium, so the noise attacks from all around. Amazingly, the *Sylvia* -- Evelyn Herlitzius -- managed to display an impressive voice, even without anything to sing.

The story is about Giuseppe Verdi and Sylvia Plath, both dead, keeping an appointment to discuss why one committed suicide and the other didn't. They come together on the set of a film crew, with a nervous director hovering over the scene, and in the company of a young waiter who is killed by his father at his request to take part in the encounter. It is unclear what makes the difference, but the waiter appears at times with his apparently make-believe two-foot penis tied in a knot. Had enough? I'm sure you've seen this all, too many times.

Little to Hyde

MARK ALBURGER

Frank Wildhorn's *Jekyll & Hyde* (libretto by Leslie Bricuse), starring Simon Relph, Maggie Gish, and Megan Ross, with Danielle Levin, directed by Andrew Holtz. January 29, 2001, Willows Theatre, 1975 Diamond Blvd, B-230, Concord, CA 94520.. Through March 17. Reviewed February 13.

"It's such a fine line between a good man and a / bad," the promo has it. And the same thing can be said for musicals. I'm not sure on which side of the line Frank Wildhorn's *Jekyll & Hyde* is on. The critics slammed it in New York, but librettist Leslie Bricuse laughs all the way to the laboratory: "Bwah-ha-ha!" Certainly Simon Relph -- as the title character (s?) in this production by the Willows Theatre Company which opened on January 29 in Concord, CA -- is a major marvel in keeping this production on the fine side of the fine line. His voice is in excellent form, and he dramatically convinces in his casebook schizophrenia ("bwah-ha-has" not withstanding). He is admirably supported in his endeavors by the good girl / bad girl performances of Maggie Gish and Megan Ross. The sets and lighting for this production are first rate.

Would that all the songs followed suit. One memorable number in the second act, "Murder! Murder" endures in the mind, but, unfortunately, the often-strident quality of the choral rendition remains as well.

Rocking the Boat at Bedford

MARILYN HUDSON

Waves, for Blue Boat and dancers, composed by Sarah Michael with Anandha Ray and dancers from the Moving Arts Dance Collective, as part of the exhibition *Adrift*, March 3, Bedford Gallery, Walnut Creek, CA.

Composer Sarah Michael and dancer/choreographer Anandha Ray presented *Waves*, a new composition for Blue Boat, a stringed instrument created from an abandoned boat by artists Judith Blankman and Marilyn Hudson. *Waves* is composed in three movements, with sections titled "Ice Lakes," "Autumn Pond," and "Sonoma Coast." The piece an abstract quilt of repeating musical textures. There was a subtle sense of unfolding, the motivic reiterations filling the room with a many layered mix of sound broken by sharp cracks and creaks, themselves repeating in a pre-set pattern, yet the separate divisions were highly differentiated.

In the gallery setting, surrounded by art about boats, the visual and aural images together created an unusually strong fusion. The audience at the Bedford Gallery that cold and windy Saturday afternoon were treated to something that, by anyone's guess, they had never experienced before.

The boat, with its 28 tuned steel strings, was the principal sound source. The 8' dinghy's sheer size creates a presence that might be daunting, but its inherent sound qualities tempt the composer who will take up the challenge. And it is a test for the dancers who must navigate in the limited space of the gallery. The results of the combined labors of the composer and dancers, the grace and imagination with which they solved the inherent problems of instrument and space, were truly remarkable.

Due to the shape of the boat's cavity, its sound is emitted in rolling waves. Various implements were used to strike, stroke and bow the strings (5' to 8' in length), the resulting intonations then being fed into a digital processor (the Lexicon PCM81) utilizing the delay function. For the entire piece, the composer used a delay pattern of 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60 seconds, the sound getting progressively softer each time.

The three dancers improvised movements, smooth and seamless, meshed with the overlapping sound waves in nearly perfect union. They heightened the kinetic energy by floating large strips of filmy mylar (actually space blankets) and playing the Bell Net (fish net with small bells attached). The mylar sounds wafted through the air in a sonorous stream, a very effective adjunct to the boat's resonance.

An American in Russia

JOSEPH PEHRSON

Music of Belobedovsky, Hardish, Pehrson, and Rovner. March 12, Bryansk, Russia. Through March 21, Moscow.

At 500 thousand persons, Bryansk, Russia, is not really a small town, but it isn't thoroughly cosmopolitan, either. Surprisingly enough, there is a very active contemporary music festival every year, which draws an international cadre of composers and performers. How does this happen? Basically, through the energies of *one* individual, Mark Belodubrovsky, composer / violinist / concert organizer extraordinaire.

Belodubrovsky is able to organize a contemporary music festival that spans close to a week -- and draws performers from Moscow and St. Petersburg. Very satisfying were performances of two of the writer's compositions, *Chromotions* for two pianos and *Panoply* for solo flute. Particularly impressive was the concentrated energy of the dedicated two-piano team, Vladimir Dubinin and Irina Askerova.

The accomplished Belodubrovsky was violinist in *Sonorities II*, by Composers Concordance co-director Patrick Hardish. Anton Rovner also had his new solo flute piece *Ante Lucem* played by Leonty Savkin.

As for Belodubrovsky's own compositions, they are quite contemporary and make for a curious contrast when heard in such a relative backwater as Bryansk. The timbres of *Four Poems of J. Eichendorff* initially sounded electronic, but proved to be behind-the-bridge playing. Belodubrovsky uses many special effects, including whistling, but his work is never trite -- it creates a captivating mood and is "cutting edge" in its orientation. There are passages, also, of extreme virtuosity, which he executes with ease, being a violinist of exceptional accomplishment.

A concert on March 16 at the Club of Sergey Berinsky, Moscow, featured this writer's *Chab* for solo cello (with impressive playing by Olga Galochkina) and *Stringing* for violin and piano. Rovner's *Ante Lucem* and *The Desert Shall Rejoice* for solo viola were also heard. The next day brought a presentation, organized by Rovner, consisting entirely of the author's works. This took place at the Dom ("House") concert space which is an "alternate" avant-garde space more akin to a nightclub, along the lines of New York's Kitchen. The concert included three electronic compositions in alternate tunings, danced by Linda Past, as well as the premiere of a new piece for viola and electronics, also in an alternative tuning system. Vassily Soloviev performed my *Profundo* for bass flute and *Panoply* with an exceptional virtuosity. Eleonora Teplukhina, likewise, did a powerful version of *Three Pianopieces*, a difficult work which taxes the dexterity of the performer. Another exceptional performance was by clarinetist Mikhail Butyrin, who realized the quixotic *Doodle Doo*.

The Moscow Conservatory Therman Center hosted a presentation which included the writer's *Wuuuu* and *Violahexa*, both featuring alternative tunings.

Standing O(vation) for 30 years of New Music

WILLIAM SUSMAN

San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in Kui Dong's *The Blue Melody*, Steve Mackey's *Micro-Concerto*, Ellen Harrison's *Seven Devilish Pieces*; Pablo Ortiz's *Raya en el Mar*. March 26, Yerba Buena Center, San Francisco, CA.

Concluding the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' 30th-anniversary concert at Yerba Buena Gardens on March 26, a near-capacity crowd gave a standing ovation lasting several minutes. Its founder Jean-Louis LeRoux conducted a brilliant evening of new works that showed off the virtuosity of the players.

It should be mentioned that LeRoux is still probably one of the top new-music conductors on the scene today. As the former artistic director and conductor of the Players, we remember him finessing works like Stockhausen's *Zeitmasse* with grace. As a conductor, LeRoux is at once transparent yet always there for the music-- letting the composer's voice come through first and foremost.

In between pieces, founding musicians and board members reminisced about the ensemble's humble beginnings from the BYOP (bring your own pillow) concerts to the glorious current home at Yerba Buena Center. Michelle Winter gave a glowing testimonial about administrator Adam Frey.

A discussion preceded the concert, which included the composers and maestro LeRoux. The majority of the time, composer Steven Mackey gregariously commented with thoughts like "I try to create music from a vernacular that doesn't exist" and "I see myself in the tradition of Mozart...taking from many things...and putting them together" and so on...

Kui Dong's *Blue Melody* opened with flute, clarinet, violin and cello evoking the sounds of Chinese instruments. It was a bit of China meets Igor, riffing on pentatonic motives and gestures à la the opening of *Le Sacre*. This score was a well-crafted Western approximation of erhu and bamboo flute with the right mix of microtonal inflections and glissandi. Says the composer, "This piece was a reflection of witnessing a group of women singing in a funeral march in a remote village in Southern China." Adding to the emotion, powerful two-handed "Rachmaninoff" chords in the piano were followed by crafty fluttering and filigree in the winds.

Mackey's *Micro-Concerto*, a work in four movements, for percussion soloist and ensemble followed in the tradition of Cage's *Construction in Metal*. Opening with splashes of sound in the piano and scattered percussion gestures, periodicity crept in with unison flute and clarinet screaming a pentatonic line reminiscent of some Ninja movie fight scene. A welcome shot of adrenaline. Movement II began with sweet dabbling in the vibraphone, an overtly dulce melody. Moving on, the violin and cello sounded lyrical lines followed by a strong unison ensemble melody with the percussionist busily riffing on a truckload of percussion instruments surrounding the players in a semi-circle. Movement III starts with a minor mode marimba arpeggiation, and leads into a duet with the cello that the composer calls "co-dependent." Eventually, the percussionist builds from seemingly random gestures to a pop groove and satisfying finish to close out movement IV of this eighteen-minute "micro-concerto."

In what appeared to be a "changing of the guard" as far as the musicians were concerned, the second half of the program began with Ellen Harrison's *Seven Devilish Pieces*, a formal 12-tone composition. Harrison composed a clear and well-structured work in the familiar dodecaphonic genre. A dramatic ensemble opening, with piano tinkles interspersed, this work grew from its concise seven movements. Sweet sounding strings were juxtaposed with spiky winds. One movement lasting around a minute brought to mind the humor of Carl Stalling's ingenious cartoon scores: sneaky little "Wily Coyote" pizzicatos punctuated by ensemble jabs of "Road Runner" racing away. This movement "cooked!" *Seven Devilish Pieces* was a pleasing homage to the second Viennese School as sinuous winding licks passed back and forth among the players leading to an unpredictable ending of the ensemble quickly fading away.

Closing the evening was Pablo Ortiz's *Raya en el Mar*, a beautifully orchestrated ensemble work for string quintet, wind quintet, percussion and piano. Dark, low opening chords undulating like a stormy sea, gave way to fast noodling in the marimba, oboe, and bassoon. A steady bass drum boom and some aptly placed tam rolls developed the drama as the composer writes: "describing the fate of a North African immigrant in Europe." The stunning ethereal ending, with string harmonics against brushed cymbal rolls, was pregnant with metaphor.

Once again, the Players demonstrated their commitment to the rarified and under-appreciated art of chamber music. Their presence in San Francisco should not be taken for granted. As with many well-established ensembles, aesthetic changes according to the artistic director in charge. Noted in their anniversary booklet, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players programmed many adventurous and crossover concerts over the years. Hopefully, we'll see more of those events with the advent of a new artistic director or, better, with a return to LeRoux at the helm.

Good Things in Threes

JEFF DUNN

Composers Inc. presents its final 2000-2001 season subscription concert, featuring Victoria Neve, piano, and the Jupiter Trio in works by George Crumb, Jeffrey Miller and Martin Bresnick. April 10, Green Room, Veterans Building, San Francisco CA.

Three composers, three works, two trios and a spooky, three-part prepared-piano extravaganza proved to a lucky few that good things come in threes thanks to Composers Inc.

The first half of the program was devoted to George Crumb's 1972 *Makrokosmos, Volume I*, superbly realized by pianist Victoria Neve. This Age-of-Aquarius-spawned suite was organized by, in Crumb's words, "... recurrent haunting images [of] the 'magical properties' of music, the problem of the origin of evil, the 'timelessness' of time," the signs of the Zodiac, and spacey lines of Pascal and Rilke. Furthermore, Elgar-Enigma-like, Crumb added initials to each of the 12 movements to represent a person born under the respective sign. G.H.C. himself got the Scorpio movement, "The Phantom Gondolier." Perhaps an idea for an alternative career? At any rate, the work offered a wide range of variety between the twin poles of Messiaen on the fast twinkly side, and Cowell's *Banshee* on the scary bump-in-the-night side. Neve's intonings over the sounding board of oohs, ahs, eeuus, hahsses, whistles, and ironic Latin concepts such as *veritas*, *tempus*, and *animus* added much to the atmosphere -- but what of the Chopin *Fantasia-impromptu* quote in the penultimate movement labeled "Dream Images (Love-Death Music): Gemini [F.G.L.]"? Was Crumb, with all the falderal, just chasing rainbows?

Solid compositions comprised the second half of the program: a six-minute gem by Artistic Co-Director Jeffrey Miller and the substantial *Trio* by Martin Bresnick. Miller is one of the Bay Area's great, unsung composers, deserving of far more recognition. His work, entitled *Meditation*, was a rondo in an unusually varied and passionate, almost neo-Romantic guise, beautifully conceived and executed. *Trio* was a winner of Composers, Inc.'s 1989 annual composition competition. The re-performance of this profound, superbly structured work was a welcome event. This reviewer could only quibble with the directions for the third movement, *parlando affettuoso*: there seemed to be plenty of anger in this music "spoken tenderly." It sounded more like conversation between ex-lovers -- with their lawyers in the room to keep things from getting out of hand.

The Jupiter Trio of violinist Robert Waters, cellist Julian Hersh, and pianist Aglika Angelova did a fine job of articulating the Miller and Bresnick. Their playing was so good, the potential distraction of Waters's leopard-stained, blonde-butch haircut failed to materialize. At this rate, they could certainly pull off their next concert in the nude without anyone noticing. Three cheers!

Erling Wold's *Queer*

D.C. MECKLER

Erling Wold's *Queer* (text after William Burroughs), with Trauma Flintstone and Ken Berry. April 11, ODC Performance Gallery, San Francisco, CA.

I certainly enjoyed Erling Wold's opera based on William Burroughs's *Queer*, which was given at ODC Performance Gallery in San Francisco. It is a super show.

One point that stood out was the way in which the central character, Lee, sang both in first person and as a third person narrator, commenting upon his own actions. This made sense, in that Lee was William Burroughs's alter ego, so that character Lee onstage was simultaneously Lee and William S. Burroughs. It is also facilitated the preservation of literary nuance and description in the transfer of the novel onto the stage. Words beautifully describing a street scene would probably sound rather ineffective in dialogue, but they worked quite well as narration. This device also deepened the sense of the character's alienation and aloofness from himself. It was an excellent notion for libretto construction.

The actor that played Lee, Trauma Flintstone, was absolutely terrific. I would imagine that Wold felt very lucky to find such a performer so well suited to the piece; his acting, singing, his appearance all serve the piece extremely well. I also imagine that Trauma Flintstone must feel thrilled that a piece was written that used so many of his abilities. One suspects that the composer wrote the piece with this performer in mind.

The direction by Jim Cave was also excellent. The little details of actors' business in the background were well chosen and added to the piece.

The music worked extremely well, too. With the piece being set primarily in Mexico, the opportunities for Latin pastiche were many, but Wold very tastefully only used a rhythmic suggestion here and there, and just one delicious moment of mariachi flavor.

Congratulations to all involved.

Rooting for the Home Team

MARK ALBURGER

Marin Symphony, with Richard Stoltzman, in music of Gershwin and Bernstein. April 22, Marin Veterans Auditorium, San Rafael, CA. Repeated April 24.

Dorothy Gale was right: there's no place like home. And this was driven home at the Marin Symphony's musical travelogue on April 22 at Veteran's Auditorium, when the most compelling music was that of our artistic backyard.

Renowned clarinetist Richard Stoltzman was the globetrotting soloist with guest conductor Alasdair Neale in a concert that began with Italian sweets and closed with a Spanish-flavored Russian delicacy. But the main courses were three light American originals -- George Gershwin's "Promenade (Walking the Dog)," a sensitive arrangement of the traditional hymn "Amazing Grace," and Leonard Bernstein's spirited *Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs*. The Gershwin could have been subtitled "Walking the Richard," as Stoltzman himself promenaded about the stage among the violins. His easy steps were as light and lithe as his playing, and he gracefully and gently brought this ostensible trifle to light in a way that underscored just how hard easy is... and how serious the frivolous can be. Here was a rhythmic flexibility and sensitivity to tone and dynamics that is not found every day, in a work that again held up what a melodic genius its tragically short-lived composer was.

Genius for melody and arrangement was also in evidence in the "Amazing Grace" setting, which was given neither the courtesy of an arranger's credit nor the dignity of explanatory notes in the program booklet (one suspects that this is Stoltzman's own). Nevertheless the rendition wonderfully allowed the tune to simply be, in Stoltzman's gentle series of improvisations over a steady, almost Ivesian "Unanswered Question" accompaniment of stilled strings.

Bernstein's "Riffs," in this fine orchestration (one guesses that, strictly speaking, this is not an arrangement, as listed) by Lukas Foss, allowed this assemblage of two clarinets, brass, percussion, and strings to jazz out in an effervescent, mid-20th-century "third stream" manner. Stoltzman furiously danced and wailed about, as caterwauls of trumpets blared out the incessant and compelling closing motive (the riff, as advertised). The walls came tumbling down.

MTT goes Magyar-ish

JANOS GEREBEN

San Francisco Symphony, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas, in Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta* and Ligeti's *Atmosphères*. April 25, Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA. Through April 28. Reviewed April 27

Michael Tilson Thomas, a fine conductor of great practicality, led a San Francisco Symphony subscription concert of (mostly) contemporary Hungarian music on April 27, but he packed Davies Hall by placing a nice Polish piece in the middle of the program, featuring a French pianist who no longer wears red socks. It's a vexing mystery why Jean-Yves Thibaudet gave up his trademark hosiery, but now he wears standard black - like everybody else. (Except Kennedy, of course.)

Yes, Thomas programmed György Ligeti's *Atmosphères*, followed by the Chopin *Piano Concerto No. 2*, then the Bartók *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta*, ending the evening with the great bang of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, the one described by Sitwell as the work whose "influence on popular music during the last hundred years has been vast, and generally disastrous," responsible for "the proletarian modernities of American music." (Michael Steinberg, who dug up that quote, says Sitwell wrote that "in a true loony-tunes fit," but doesn't contradict it.)

Thomas must have deliberately dilapidated his lithium reserves for the occasion because the evening was wildly uneven, up-and-down, in the true Magyar manner. The highs were very high, and the lows were... well. pretty low. *Atmosphères* was seamlessly, uniquely right -- right up Thomas's alley, and he took the orchestra with him, even the audience: conducting silence for a minute after the conclusion of the 10-minute work, willing the whole, full house (minus one unfortunate soul coughing her heart out) into the "atmosphere" of this fabulous work sans harmony, sans rhythm, but not sans everything; it has "sound color" to the max, an engrossing, lovely work.

The Dr. Jekyll band launched into the Bartók, taking my breath away. The Andante's fugue (bridging Western music from Bach to Bruckner, and yet completely of the 20th century), with its irregular rhythms, came across as a major statement from MTT and the orchestra, a challenging, difficult work flawlessly played, and from the heart. The two inside movements were not on the same level, and the Allegro's impossible syncopation fell apart. Still, the Andante and *Atmosphères*, made this into a Hungarian red-letter holiday.

Of course, one almost cannot talk about the Ligeti work without mentioning *2001*, which made it among the most widely known works of contemporary music at one time, and the San Francisco Symphony does it well by going to the composer's own notes, written for a performance here 30 years ago:

"I hate this French salad of *2001* with Strauss (both Johann and Richard and Khatchaturian and Ligeti). The true history was the following: I never thought of writing music for such a purpose, and my music was included in the film without my knowing it. In the summer of 1968, I heard from friends in New York that they had seen a film with much music of mine [*2001* uses Ligeti's *Lux aeterna* for a cappella mixed chorus as well as *Atmosphères*] combined with the Strausses (nota bene: I love Johann, but for dancing or promenade concerts or so; I admire-medium degree-Richard, without loving him, as the composer of the fantastically constructed dramas *Salome* and *Elektra*; I hate especially the beginning of *Zarathustra* as one of the most German, most Reich-like, pathetic Edelkitsch --the idea of mixing the Strausses and Ligeti is incomprehensible to me). ["Edel" is German for "noble"; a piece of Edelkitsch, therefore, is kitsch that gives additional offense by being highfalutin'.]

"In September 1968, the European premiere of the film *2001* was in Vienna, so I went to the film theater to see it. It was a shock to me. The film itself: the first part a "Kitsch"; the middle a quite well-made science fiction film given some tightening, near the end, a fantastically turned sequence of speed, these 20 minutes are very fine; the end, with the pseudo-deep, pseudo-philosophical matters is very unclear to me, I am unable to understand the meaning, that is, I am able, but the meaning is rather a pseudo-mystical Kitsch.

"The whole film is rather feeble, each of the three parts being of a very different nature. My music, as background for the apes and mystical stone or metal blocks, is transformed into Kitsch. After seeing the film I consulted the two editors to which my music belongs and then I spoke to a Berlin law firm specializing in artists' rights. They contacted MGM, noting that my music was being used without my knowledge or permission. Then, for a long time, there was a rather complicated discussion between my lawyers and those of MGM.

"My lawyers wanted to make a trial, but after one year of discussion they came to an agreement with MGM -- MGM was to pay me a small royalty fee for using the music (about a tenth of the usual fee for film music) and the matter was finished without a trial. There were some records from the soundtrack of the film--first I wanted to stop these records, they are in part very badly made, but later I resigned myself to it. I must say that I have some money from these records, they were sold in great numbers in the USA, but in principle I did not like the whole matter. This, in brief, the history of the film. (P.S. A New York editor, preparing a book on the film *2001*, asked me how it was to work with Kubrick, how I participated in the film -- I answered him that I do not know Kubrick, was never asked to make the music and did not participate at all.)"

I, for one, am glad that Ligeti turned to composition instead of becoming a film critic.

Record Reviews

From the Mysterious Mountain

MARK FRANCIS

Alan Hovhaness. *Music Of Hovhaness*. Yolanda Kondonassis, Harp. Telarc DSD CD-80530 2000

The Telarc release *Music of Hovhaness* features five of the Alan Hovhaness's compositions involving harp as duet partner or featured instrument. The works comes from as early as 1951 and as late as 1983.

Spirit Of Trees, op. 374, is a sonata with guitar (David Leisner), in five movements. This mood music begins with a gentle walk in the forest before a rapid canonic second movement. The ternary third features a fugue in the middle section and harmonically static outer sections. The fourth movement is almost monodic, while the fifth returns to the sylvian mood of the opening.

Another five-movement work, the *Concerto*, op. 267, is scored for strings. The harp has few solos and no cadenzas and is simply present, rather than featured. The three inner movements -- a Shostakovich-like Andante, the brief pizzicato accompaniment of the third, and the romantic "Dawn In Paradise" -- are the most striking.

Upon Enchanted Ground, op. 90, no. 1, is a brief work with flute, cello, and tam-tam. Though the earliest work represented, it has much in common with the later works.

The neoclassic *Sonata*, op. 127, is in three movements having much greater harmonic motion than the other compositions. The third selection is the most unpredictable, with stops and starts and unusual rhythmic figures.

The Garden Of Adonis, op. 245, is a suite of seven short movements with flute. Like the other pieces, repetition is favored over development. The movements alternate fast and slow with pentatonic scales utilized in an improvisatory fashion.

20 Years Hence

MARK FRANCIS

Pierre Boulez. *Repons and Dialogue de l'ombre double*. Alain Damiens, clarinet; Ensemble InterContemporain; Pierre Boulez, conductor. DG 289 457 605-2 1998.

A recent Pierre Boulez CD (DG 289 457 605-2) features *Repons (Response)*, an antiphonal work in ten sections (c. 42 minutes) for chamber orchestra. There are three groupings of performers:

- 1). soloists, playing pitched and unpitched percussion,
- 2). an ensemble of 24 musicians of woodwinds and strings,
- 3). an electro-acoustic system of a computer and 6 speakers.

The composition, written between 1981 and 1984, comes off as complex set of variations. Two striking features are the static harmonic background of most of the sections and the colorful orchestration, the latter bearing a certain commonality with Joseph Schwantner or Christopher Rouse. Other interesting aspects of *Repons* are the use of repeated notes and scalar passages in the seventh section; the driving, American-sounding rhythms of the eighth; and the comic mien of the ninth.

Dialogue de l'ombre double (Dialogue of the Double Shadow, 1985), for solo clarinet and tape, is virtuosic work of six strophes, intermingled with five transitions and a coda. Acoustic and electronic components alternate in ongoing variations.

Calendar

June 1

Tempo: Berkeley Festival of Contemporary Performance. Hertz Hall, Berkeley, CA. Through June 9.

Barber's *Adagio for Strings*. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

June 2

Empyrean Ensemble. Julia Morgan Theater, Berkeley, CA. Repeated June 3, University of California, Davis.

Elizabeth Brown, Mario Davidovsky, Julia Wolfe, and Tan Dun. Dia Center, New York, NY.

June 5

North/South Chamber Orchestra in Sellars's *Bassoon Concertino*, Sparr's *Carnal Node*, Weirmeir's *Prometheus Unbound*, and Lifchitz's *Danzas Rebeldes*. Christ and St. Stephen's Church, New York, NY.

June 6

San Francisco Symphony, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas, in Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*. Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA. Through June 10.

June 7

Alla Elana Cohen. St. Botolph Hall, Boston, MA.

June 8

Citywinds in the San Francisco premiere of Belinda Reynolds's *Turns*. Old First Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, CA.

June 9

Reich's *Clapping Music*, Nancarrow's *Etude No. 1 and 4*, Ligeti's *Etude No 4, 8, and 18*, and Donatoni's *Cloche 3*. Salle Olivier Messiaen, Paris, France.

American Composers Forum. Pacific Film Archives, San Francisco, CA.

June 11

75th birthday of Carlise Floyd

June 12

Bob Barraz and KT Niehoff. Jack Straw Productions, Seattle, WA.

June 15

California Composers' Consortium in music of JJ Hollingsworth. Old First Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, CA.

June 16

Nancy Bloomer Deussen's *In These Delightful Pleasant Groves* performed by the San Francisco Choral Artists. Unitarian Universalist Church. Kensington, CA. Through June 24, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto (CA).

June 17

Nancy Bloomer Deussen's *The Voyage of Christopher Columbus* performed by the Foothill College Symphonic Wind Ensemble. Cubberly Theater, Palo Alto, CA.

June 19

Music of Kurtág and Carter. Cité de la Musique, Paris, France.

June 23

Lutoslawski's *Concerto for Orchestra*. Roundtop, TX.

Sonos Handbell Ensemble in *Runaway Child*. St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Saratoga, CA. Through July 1, First Unitarian Church, San Francisco.

June 24

Patti Deuter plays music of Debussy, Poulenc, Rzewski, Antheil, and Axtmann. Dance Palace, Point Reyes Station, CA.

Lutoslawski's *Concerto for Orchestra*. Aspen, CO.

June 26

73rd anniversary of the birth of Jacob Druckman.

Chronicle

April 1

Ives Quartet in Thomas Oboe Lee's *Morango, Almost a Tango*. Noe Valley Ministry, San Francisco, CA.

Schuller's *Journey into Jazz* performed by the Colorado Symphony. CO.

Benjamin Hoadley. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Corigliano's *The Red Violin: Chaconne* performed by the Michigan Pops Orchestra. MI.

Lang's *Cheating, Lying, Stealing*. Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY.

April 2

Berkeley Contemporary Players present music of Don Aird, Jonathan Kramer, and Edward Cone. Hertz Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

Menotti's *The Medium*. Towson University, Towson, MD.

Clearfield's *Three Songs for Violin and Double Bass*. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Stravinsky's *Histoire du Soldat* performed by Perspectives Ensemble. New York, NY.

April 3

Tribute to Andrew Imbrie in Celebration of His 80th Birthday, with music of Imbrie, Bauer, Kirchner, Rosen, Aird, Wilson, and Del Tredici, performed by the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, with Gilbert Kalish and Fred Sherry. Wyatt Pavilion, University of California, Davis, CA.

Kitchen House Blend. The Kitchen, New York, NY.

Juilliard Orchestra in music of Shostakovich. Avery Fisher Hall, New York, NY.

Heard Said by Stuart Keeler. Jack Straw Productions, Seattle, WA.

April 4

Chen Yi's *Dunhuang Fantasy*. Arizona State University, Phoenix, AZ.

April 5

Stravinsky's *Neoclassic Period*. Museum Amphitheater, Cité de la Musique, Paris, France.

Christophe Eschenbach leads the Orchestre de Paris in Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*. Concert Hall, Cité de la Musique, Paris, France.

San Francisco Symphony in Sviridov's *Small Triptych* and Prokofiev's *Symphony No. 7*. Davies Hall, San Francisco, CA.

Adams's *The Chairman Dances*. University of Southern Maine, ME. Through April 21, by the Allentown Symphony, Allentown (PA).

NEC Percussion Ensemble. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Music of Lachenmann and Nono. Columbia University, New York, NY.

Surinach's *Flamenco Cyclothymia* and *Ritmo Jondo* performed by Perspectives Ensemble. New York, NY.

April 6

30th anniversary of the death of Igor Stravinsky.

György Kurtág. Cité Internationale Universitaire, Paris, France.

Nono's *A Pierre*. IRCAM, Paris, France.

Glass's *Concerto Fantasy for Two Timpanists and Orchestra* performed by the St. Louis Symphony. St. Louis, MO.

Juilliard Composers. Alice Tully Hall, New York, NY.

April 7

Amy Denio: An Evening of Spoot Music. Mills College, Oakland, CA.

American Composers Forum Bay Area Chapter celebrates its 4th anniversary. 430 Lake Street, San Francisco, CA.

Gould's *Tap Dance Concerto* performed by the Elmhurst Symphony. Elmhurst, IL. Through April 15, by the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Hong Kong (China).

FLUX Quartet in works of Zorn, Duchamp, and Xenakis. Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York, NY.

Rodriguez's *A Colorful Symphony* performed by the Dayton Philharmonic. Dayton, OH.

April 8

80th birthday of Andrew Imbrie. Berkeley, CA.

Renee Fleming in four songs of Joseph Marx. Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA. "Four songs of Joseph Marx -- 'Nocturne,' 'Nachtgebet,' 'Selige Nacht,' 'Pierrot Dandy' -- proved a revelation. This long-lived Austrian composer (1882-1964) is scarcely a concert staple. Yet his voluptuous, neoStraussian line suits Fleming's temperament and resources almost ideally. One wondered how this singer would take to the more famous setting of Albert Giraud's *Pierrot* poem, by Arnold Schoenberg" [Allan Ulrich, San Francisco Chronicle, 4/10/01].

Orchestra 2001. Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA.

Premiere of *Navigating the Light*, by Janice Giteck and Judith Roche, performed by the Seattle Philharmonic Orchestra. Meany Hall, University of Washington, Seattle, WA. Repeated May 6, ArtsWest Playhouse and Gallery.

April 9

Multimédia. Salle Olivier-Messiaen, Paris, France.

Penderecki String Quartet in Górecki's *Quartet No. 2*, Scelsi's *Quartet No. 4*, and Crumb's *Black Angels*. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA. A second program is given April 11.

A Musical Festschrift to Andrew Imbrie, including new works by Imbrie, John Harbison, Gunther Schuller, William Smith, Wayne Peterson, Robert Helps, Hi Kyung Kim, and Mario Davidovsky. Hellman Hall, San Francisco Conservatory, San Francisco, CA. "[F]erociously virtuosic performance" [Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle, 4/11/01].

Berg's *Lulu*. Metropolitan Opera, New York, NY.

American Accent. Gould's *Patterns No. 1* and *7* and *Prelude and Toccata* and Ives's *Children's Hour* and *Memories*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

Vocal Arts Honors Recital. Alice Tully Hall, New York, NY.

Elliott Schwartz composer-in-residence. *Rainbow*, *Chiaroscuro*, and *Aerie*. Appalachia State University, Boone, NC.

April 10

Composers, Inc., presents Crumb's *Makrokosmos, Vol. 1*, plus music of Miller and Bresnick. Green Room, Herbst Theatre, San Francisco, CA.

Vassily Primakov. Alice Tully Hall, New York, NY.

Mina Miller. Jack Straw Productions, Seattle, WA.

April 11

Ensemble Intercontemporain in Dallapiccola's *Canti di prigionia*. Cité de la Musique, Paris, France.

Thomas Buckner and Joseph Kubera in Robert Ashley's *Yes, but is it edible?*, plus music of Wadada Leo Smith, Ushio Torikai, and David Wessel. CNMAT, 1750 Arch Street, Berkeley, CA.

San Francisco Symphony, with Evelyn Glennie, in MacMillan's *Veni, Veni Spiritus*. Davies Hall, San Francisco, CA. "Glennie lavish[ed] her explosive skills on a huge arsenal of percussion instruments and the Symphony sound[ed] superb" [Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle, 4/13/01].

Erling Wold's *Queer* (text after William Burroughs), with Trauma Flintstone and Ken Berry. ODC Performance Gallery, San Francisco, CA. "Wold [has a] fluid, evanescent style, in which the instrumental writing implies more than it states, and lyrical vocal melodies are tethered only lightly to their rhythmic underpinnings. . . . Wold crafts music whose delicate beauty glides in just below the listener's critical consciousness. His harmonic language, if examined carefully, is bone-simple, and the melodic palette equally limited. Yet precisely because of the music's deceptive familiarity -- and because of the ease with which it mixes song and spoken words, rhapsody and recitative -- it has some of the shimmery emotional tenacity of a dream state" [Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle, 4/14/01].

Andrew Imbrie's *Spring Fever*, Schuller's *Paradigm Exchange*, Robert Helps's *Post Cards*, and Hi Kyung Kim's *Orange Pastel*. Recital Hall, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA.

Gordon's *Hague and Weather* choreographed as *Mending*. New York, NY. Through April 18.

April 12

The Lab presents Miya Masaoka's *The Sound of Naked Men*. Yerba Buena Gardens, San Francisco, CA.

Beyond the Machine. Juilliard, New York, NY.

April 13

Prokofiev's *Symphony No. 5* performed by the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. Salle Pleyel, Paris, France.

Mark Alburger's *The Little Prince*, with David Saslav, Harriet March Page, Heather Gavin, Deirdre Lobo, and Melissa Smith. Meadowlands Assembly Hall, Dominican University, San Rafael, CA. Through April 28. "Most satisfying . . . and most concentrated was . . . Alburger's opera of St. Exupery's *The Little Prince* -- 'Schoenberg for kids,' as [the composer] called it, but no child's play. With a charming evocation of The Little Prince himself by Heather Lukens Gavin and good staging and performance by director Harriet March Page and singers David Saslav (The Aviator, St. Exupery's personal role), Deirdre Lobo, Jasmine Ebenhoch, Jessica Rizzo, and Alburger himself as The King, The Egotist, and the Business Man (all astroid dwellers), but most of all as The Fox; the script by Annette Lust, Alan Robinson and Alburger rang clear for children and adults alike" [Ken Bullock, Commuter Times, 4/26/01].

Zappa's *Dog Breath Variations*, *Uncle Meat*, *The Girl in the Magnesium Dress*, *Outrage at Valdez*, *Be-Bop Tango*, and *G-Spot Tornado*, Mackey's *Banana Dumptruck*, and Janssen's *Verstelwerk*. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Gordon's *Yo Shakespeare* New York, NY. Through April 21.

April 14

Morton Subotnick's *TV Lunch No. 2*. The Kitchen, New York, NY.

April 15

Left Coast Improv Group. Tuva Space, Berkeley, CA.

Death of Joey Ramone, of lymphatic cancer, at age 49. Weill Cornell Medical Center, New York, NY. "The musical insurgency launched by the Ramones has become rock's most conservative revolution" [John Pareles, The New York Times, 4/22/01].

April 16

Earplay celebrates Andrew Imbrie's 80th birthday with his *Earplay Fantasy*. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA.

Juilliard Percussion Ensemble presents Reich's *Nagoya Marimbas*, *Drumming Part III*, and *Sextet*, and Wuorinen's *Ringling Changes*. Alice Tully Hall, New York, NY.

April 17

Kernis's *Musica Celestis* performed by Ensemble Orchestra de Paris. Paris, France.

John Corigliano wins the Pulitzer Prize in Music for his *Symphony No. 2 for String Orchestra*.

Tavener's *To a Child Dancing in the Wind*. Iowa City, IO. Through April 26, Portland (ME).

Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and Martino's *Piccolo Studio*. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Gordon's *I Buried Paul* choreographed as *nodrog doggo*. New York, NY. Through April 18.

New Juilliard Ensemble. Alice Tully Hall, New York, NY.

April 18

California E.A.R. Unit in *Circuit Breakers*. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA.

Morton Subotnick's *Gestures: It Begins with Color*. The Kitchen, New York, NY. Through April 21.

April 19

Lutoslawski's *Concerto for Orchestra* performed by the Tucson Symphony. Tucson, AZ.

Thomson's *The Mother of Us All*. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

Premiere of Mel Brooks's musical *The Producers*, based on his 1968 film. New York, NY.

Ives's *Three-Page Sonata*. Paul Hall, New York, NY.

April 20

Schuman's *The Mighty Casey* presented by the Whitewater Opera Company. Richmond, IN.

Brant's *Invisible Rivers* and Mackey's *Indigenous Instruments*. Longy School of Music, Boston, MA.

Corigliano's *Symphony No. 1* performed by the Utah Symphony. Salt Lake City, UT.

April 21

Death of Giuseppe Sinopoli (b. 11/2/46, Venice, Italy), after collapsing on the podium during a performance of Verdi's *Aida*, at age 54. Deutsche Opera, Berlin, Germany. "The performance was stopped and shocked audience members were sent home" [Associated Press, 4/22/01]. "He preferred extreme tempos -- his Mahler slow movements could be glacial and his Schubert Allegros remarkably speedy -- and he tended to encourage the brass and percussion to sing out over the strings. . . [H]e had much in common with Leonard Bernstein. . . . Medicine interested him, as did philosophy. . . . This year he completed a degree in archaeology, with Egyptology as his specialty, at Rome University. He was to have been awarded his diploma [on April 23]. . . . He studied . . . composition with Bruno Maderna and Franco Donatoni in Darmstadt . . . He joined the composition faculty of the Venice Conservatory in 1952, and in 1975 he founded the Bruno Maderna Ensemble It was as a composer that Mr. Sinopoli had his first hearing in New York. In 1978, his *Souvenirs à la mémoire* -- an ambitious work scored for everything from a harpsichord to four percussionists, two sopranos and a mezzo-soprano -- was performed in a new-music concert at the Juilliard School. . . . [H]is biggest [compositional] success was *Lou Salomé*, an eclectic two-act opera" [Allan Kozinn, The New York Times, 4/25/01].

Michael Tilson Thomas's *Agnegram* performed by the Santa Barbara Symphony. Santa Barbara, CA.

Virgil Thomson inducted into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame. Cincinnati, OH.

April 22

Nancy Bloomer Deussen's *Reflections on the Hudson* performed by the Kona Community Orchestra. Kona, HI.

Schuller's *A Bouquet for Collage* performed by Collage New Music. Boston, MA.

Death of Robert Starer (b. 1/8/24, Vienna, Austria), of congestive heart failure, at age 77. Kingston, NY. "Starer's music was steeped in the Expressionism of 1930's Vienna. He experimented with electronic music and serialism but never fully adopted either. Yet his musical language, rich with chromaticism and pungent dissonance, was distinctively modern. Some critics noted traces of Arabic and Jewish music in his work. He wrote several pieces for the stage, including three ballets for Martha Graham -- *Samson Agonistes* (1961), *Phaedra* (1962), and *The Lady of the House of Sleep* (1978) -- as well as *Pantagleize*, an opera.[which] had its premiere in 1973. Mr. Starer also wrote several dramatic works with his companion, the novelist Gail Godwin. These include *The Last Lover*, a chamber opera (1975), and *Apollonia*, an opera in two acts, which was given its premiere in 1979 They also collaborated on a major concert work, *Journals of a Songmaker* . . . in 1976. . . . Starer attended the Palestine Conservatory. . . . After the war, he came to New York to continue his education at the Juilliard School. In the summer of 1948 he studied composition with Aaron Copland at the Tanglewood Institute. The next year he was appointed to the faculty at Juilliard, teaching there until 1974. . . . Starer left an engaging account of his life in his 1987 memoir, *Continuo: A Life in Music*. . . . His other works include a cello concerto . . . and a violin concerto composed for Itzhak Perlman and the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Seiji Ozawa" [Anthony Tommasini, The New York Times, 4/24/01].

Music of Weill, Eisler, and H.K. Gruber performed by the Eos Ensemble, New York, NY. "Mr. Gruber sang [Weill's] 'Klopslied,' 'Berlin im Light,' and . . . 'Die Moritat von Mackie Messer.' . . . *Der Neue Orpheus*, composed in 1925, catches Weill with one foot in the theater and the other in the conservatory [T]he setting, for soprano and orchestra, with prominent violin and harp parts (representing Orpheus and Eurydice, respectively) offers a hint of the arch, dark-hued theater style that would make Weill's name. But there is also a sharper harmonic edge here that give the music a kinship with Eisler's *Kleine Sinfonie*, composed a few years later. Eisler took similar influences to greater extremes in his four-movement work, which includes everything from 12-tone writing to a Gershwin-esque jazzy urbanity yet hangs together remarkably well. Mr. Gruber's music draws on an almost identical array of influences, although those on the pop side are more up to date. And like Weill and Eisler, he finds ways to make his eclecticism work. His *Nebelsteinmusik*, a violin concerto . . . balances Serial techniques with unabashed lyricism. And his *Photo-Fit Pictures* -- to keep the chain of influences adequately complicated -- is a set of colorful variations on a theme that Bartók composed in the style of a Bach Invention" [Allan Kozinn, The New York Times, 4/24/01].

Hollywood, with the American Composers Orchestra. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY. "It's endearing to think of Igor Stravinsky in 1942 trying to compose a score for a film called *The Commandos Strike at Dawn*, about a Nazi attack on Norway. That project didn't work out for Stravinsky But from that rejected score he managed to salvage a lighter yet appealing concert work, *Four Norwegian Moods*. . . . Dmitri Tiomkin's score for the 1951 horror film *The Thing* works . . . thanks to Patrick Russ's effective arrangement and the unusual scoring for brass, woodwinds, pianos, percussion and four extra support string basses. . . . Paul Chihara's . . . *Clouds (...From Out of the Past)* . . . is atmospheric and spacey with hazy, astringent harmonies. Just when you are wondering where the music will go, Mr. Chihara introduces a sultry solo for jazz saxophone, and echoes of a 1930's dance band" [Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times*, 4/14/01].

April 23

48th anniversary of the death of Sergei Prokofiev.

Taverner's *Akhmatova Songs* performed by the Nieuw Ensemble. Moscow, Russia.

Luiz Mantovani. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Kid 606 and Matmos. Tonic, New York, NY.

Death of Genji Ito (b. New York, NY), at age 54. New York, NY. "A prolific composer, Mr. Ito created scores for more than 25 theatrical productions at La Mama [H]is father Yuji Ito, was a composer and designer; and Teiji Ito, an older brother, was also a composer" [Jack Anderson, *The New York Times*, 4/27/01].

Hovhanness's *Prelude and Quadruple Fugue* performed by the Seattle Symphony. Seattle, WA.

April 24

Death of Al Hibbler (b. Tyro, MS), at age 85. Holy Cross Hospital, Chicago, IL. "[He was a] blind baritone singer who came to prominence with Duke Ellington's orchestra in the 1940's and then scored a hit with his version of the Alex North song 'Unchained Melody' Hibbler's singing voice was mannered and strange. He used a fast, muscular vibrato; growled and crooned; put on an English accent; and turned songs into emotional rides. Ellington called it 'tonal pantomime.' Mr. Hibbler was blind at birth He first tried out for Ellington's band in 1942 . . . got a good audience response, and then celebrated by getting drunk. The next day Ellington told him . . . 'I can handle a blind man . . . but not a blind drunk'" [Ben Ratliff, *The New York Times*, 4/27/01].

North/South Consonance and the American Composers Alliance present Blank's *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, Michael Dellaira's *Colored Stones* (a song cycle on a poem by Richard Howard), Bell's *Millenium*, Pleskow's *Tre Ballati*, and Hall's *Water: Two Poems of W.S. Merwin*. Christ and St. Stephen's Church, New York, NY.

Ensemble 21 presents Jason Eckardt's *Tangled Loops* and *Polarities* and David Rakowski's *Etudes*, *When the Bow Breaks*, and *Songs on Poems of Louise Bogan*. Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York, NY.

April 25

San Francisco Symphony, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas, in Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta* and Ligeti's *Atmosphères*. Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA. Through April 28. "[T]he austere, cerebral beauty of Bartók's music emerged as the surprise crowd pleaser . . . The opening fugue . . . picked up echoes of . . . *Atmosphères* This 1961 score is still best known for its use by Stanley Kubrick (without Ligeti's knowledge or approval) in *2001*, so perhaps its inclusion . . . was a sly jest. . . . *Atmosphères* was . . . [a] brilliant 10 minutes" [Joshua Kosman, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4/27/01].

Peabody Conservatory Orchestra in music of Hersch and Barrueco. New York, NY.

Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. Juilliard Theater, New York, NY. Through April 29.

NEC Chorus and Chamber Singers in Thompson's *Odes of Horace*. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Better Than It Sounds: The Musical Mark Twain. Great Hall, Cooper Union, New York, NY.

April 26

Richard Rodney Bennett's *Reflections on a Sixteenth-Century Song* and Colin McPhee's *Concerto for Piano and Winds*. New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Marina Rosenfeld's *The Sheer Frost Orchestra*, featuring 17 women playing electric guitars and laptop computers. Whitney Museum of Art, New York, NY.

Barber's *Vanessa* presented by the Curtis Institute of Music. Philadelphia, PA.

April 27

Shostakovich's *Piano Concerto No. 2* performed by the Orchestre National de France. Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, France. Repeated April 28.

Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France in Stravinsky's *Firebird* (1945 version). Salle Olivier Messiaen, Paris, France.

Andrew Frank's *Ballade* (1999). University of California, Davis, CA.

Schuller's *Double Quintet for Wind and Brass Quintets*. New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Menotti's *The Medium*. University of Akron, Akron, OH.

April 28

Nyman's *The Commissar Vanishes* performed by the Michael Nyman Band. Zagreb, Croatia.

Ives's *The Fourth of July* performed by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. The Hague, Netherlands.

Wolfe's *Lick*. Minnesota State University, Moorhead, MN.

Tavener's *Glory to God for this Transient Life*. 92nd St. Y, New York, NY.

Steven Gerber's *Fantasy for Solo Violin, Three Songs Without Words, Elegy on the Name "Dmitri Shostakovich," Three Pieces for Two Violins, and Gershwiniana*. Trinity Urban Center Arts, Philadelphia, PA.

April 29

New Music from Davis. Davis Art Center, Davis, CA.

Quintet of the Americas. Kosciusko Foundation, New York, NY.

April 30

San Francisco Contemporary Players in *Hungarian Trios*. Ligeti's *Horn Trio*, plus music of Bartók, Kurtág, and Veress. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA

ASCAP Foundation announces the 2001 Morton Gould Young Composer Awards, including one given to Jason Eckhardt.

Comment

Boola Boola Revisited

ORLANDO JACINTO GARCIA

Slightly more than 15 years ago, soon after finishing my doctoral studies, I had the great fortune of studying with Morton Feldman for three intensive weeks. These sessions proved to have a great impact on my career as a composer and pedagogue and I was fortunate to be able to count Morty as a friend as a result of those three weeks. One day not long after his death in 1987, I came across an article he had written entitled "Boola Boola," published in a collection of his essays by Berlinger Press, in which he strongly criticized academia. At first this seemed a bit contradictory; he was after all a Professor of Composition at SUNY Buffalo when I met him. However, the article, written much earlier, was still consistent with the criticisms he continued making even after he was in academia. Given my own continual strong criticisms of the composition world in the U.S. (which consists of large numbers of people involved with academia), I have been challenged by several colleagues to write a short article expressing my concerns at the end of the 20th century. The following is a summary of these concerns.

As we cross the millennium, unbeknownst to many of the participants, we find the art-music world in the U.S. in a state of disarray and chaos, mired in a mediocrity few eras have known. Perhaps we the composers/teachers are at fault; the victim of our efficient technology where all kinds of information is made available to everyone with an immediacy not known before. We will try to teach almost anyone just about anything (after all, who needs talent when you have technology?). Unfortunately, the result has been that those without talent, musicianship, musicality, or imagination, have been invited to join and subsequently invaded our ranks. This situation is the accumulation of decades of work by the composer mills around the country propagating and justifying faculty teaching positions at the expense of quality while at the same time graduating mediocrity. This situation has reached a point where the majority of the 20,000-30,000 so-called composers of Art music in the U.S. (figures compiled by the American Music Center); many of whom have or have had some affiliation with a university, are "successfully disseminating" their technically barren, unimaginative works throughout the university systems of our country and to some extent even parts of the rest of the "world."

I use the term "successfully disseminating" in quotes because a large percentage of my colleagues don't live in the real world and, as such, successful dissemination is a relative term. Unknown to many of my colleagues, a performance by the university choir or the faculty pianist at their or another university does not generally constitute a performance in the real world, pedagogical relevance notwithstanding. Concerts where the audience consists of composers listening to composers is not the real world. Concerts where the audience consists of music students listening to composers is not the real world. Concerts where students are performing these works, generally, is not the real world. Unfortunately, due to the overwhelming numbers of mediocre composers pushing their wares, any university performance can and is considered successful dissemination by my colleagues since much of this music would rarely, if ever, be performed outside of the university system. Please note that by this I am certainly not implying that music needs to be dumbed down to exist outside of academia, but more on this later.

When I read the bios of many of the so-called relatively successful university composers in the US, they are chock full of citations about performances at this university or that university. In short, the art-music scene in the U.S. has been brought down to amateur standing by the university composer. The university has become the Triple A Ball, the NCAA of the art music world, and the composer organizations and their conferences most often basically provide the tournament or world series. Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on your perspective), most composers never leave the minor leagues. The alternative to being presented at these events for many is not writing and/or receiving performances. In some ways this may be preferable given what I am hearing around the country.

The so called post-modern culture in which we live -- where synthesis, a look at the past, a plethora of styles, points of view, aesthetics, etc. are all viable -- has also been another catalyst for the opening of a Pandora's box of mediocrity. There is no better place where this is evident than in the conferences/festivals of so-called art music (whether it be acoustic or electro-acoustic or both) around the country where out of more than 100 "curated works" that are being performed you are fortunate if you hear one or two with anything to say. Most of the works consist of a "gray" blend of aesthetics with each composers presenting his or her "mix." Professional, high quality soloists and ensembles who do live in the real world, do not become interested in someone's works because those works were played at numerous university conferences. They often become interested because the music has something to say (regardless of aesthetics or style). Of course all of the composers that I am discussing in this article will assume that they have something to say and that I am addressing someone else. If your music is not traveling among the professional world, whether it be Festivals abroad or professional first rate ensembles in the US (and I don't mean the wind ensemble at a university in Texas or the hand bell choir at some school in Maine) then I am talking about you. This is not to say that a composer's music should not be heard at a university. Many of us are pedagogues and, as such, students should be exposed to our work. Nevertheless, with extremely few exceptions, if that is where the majority of a composer's works are being performed, then something is wrong.

In the age of government cut backs, anti-quality, and anti-substance (whether it be in education, the arts, or elsewhere) -- many of my university colleagues are on the pseudo-ethno, pseudo-jazz, pseudo-Mozart, pseudo-Strauss populist bandwagon. Let's write a music that will sell to the new NEA or its eventual new version, regardless of substance, imagination, or craft. Pretty melodies are back. Let's reach out to the condo-commandos at the retirement home; they do so love nice chamber music. Let's see what we can appropriate from another culture-probably Hispanic, Asian, or Native American folk music since these seem to be a big hit today. How about recent popular culture? The 50's, 60's, and 70's are quite in vogue today. Let's extract some tunes/quotes from the pop icons and TV shows of the time and try to add a few "twists."

Recently at a national festival, one of my colleagues whose music does travel, exclaimed to me while listening to piece after piece of mediocre "gray" conglomeration of aesthetics, "Haven't any of these composers ever heard of Stravinsky, Varèse, Webern, or Cage?" I briefly replied, "if they have (and who knows), in these composers' minds those aesthetic won't fly today, that music is not "catchy" or "pretty" enough, so why should it be considered." Of course, there is and has been the other side of the coin. The ultra pseudo-sophisticated technology, pseudo-ultra abstraction folks listening to their own and their colleagues' works since no one else will. Finding solace in their schematics, diagrams, algorithms, software and hardware, rather than in their music. Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending on your point of view), to some extent the post-modern aesthetic climate has more or less diminished their relevance (except amongst themselves) although one never knows when the next "New pseudo-ultra abstraction" movement will flare up. But let's be honest, an individual with some real imagination and craft can create a work of Art whether it be by using total serialization, chance procedures, minimalism, a neo-Strauss, neo-ethnic, avant-garde jazz aesthetic or whatever. The problem is not necessarily in the style or procedure, but rather by the fact that many composers feel that the style or procedure that they employ validates what they do, whether what they create in that style has anything to say musically. How many times can people write works based on *4'33"* or *Pierrot Lunaire*? Not many, given that the original version just about said it all, conceptually and otherwise.

What is lacking in American Art Music? Auto criticism. It doesn't exist. Why? Because a great many of the composers that I am citing have been brought up in a period of time where you're O.K. and I'm O.K. and everything is great. We are all just great artists. We can all do whatever we want, no matter how bad. None of these composers ever ask themselves if what they do has any merit or benefit. Some basically just did what they had to do to finish graduate school and once they got out, kept doing it. For others it was rebel against what they were doing in graduate school, now that post-modern times are here, let's let it all go and Rock and Roll no matter how bad the result may be. Others were having post-modernist fun by letting it go before they graduated. How many of my colleagues and their students have ever tried to detach themselves from their work objectively and rigorously critique it? Few at best and as a result we are all suffering.

To add to the confusion in post-modern times, a tango, a rock tune, and a Mozart symphony are all the same. "Music is Music," everyone says (I'm O.K., you're O.K., again). Very few stopped to consider that Art music may be different due to something other than stylistic considerations. People stopped asking themselves what is Art (not an easy question) and decided to take the easy route and say it's all the same. The Beatles, the Rolling Stones, rap tunes, hip hop, Stravinsky, Wynton Marsalis, Cage, Hootie and the Blowfish, the Art Ensemble of Chicago -- it's all the same. Let's all just write nice tunes. Well friends, I am afraid that it is not all the same. Art music has always been more abstract and challenging than functional music. It is not entertainment, although many would like to market it as such, and those that can't take this fact should get out of the business and focus on writing arrangements for the Boston Pops (if they have the chops). Just like Michael Crichton is not James Joyce, neither is listening to Madonna like listening to Webern, and we as educators are guilty of not dealing with this and/or challenging our students and ourselves with these notions. Is it better? Are apples better than oranges? Probably not, but how many of my colleagues have discussed these questions with the faculty teaching music appreciation at their university? From the papers and presentations I hear around the country relative to this issue, not many. Elvis and Varèse: it's all the same. Morty would have loved it (in fact Morty would have said we need more lame uneducated composers like the mediocre majority that exist today so his work would stand out even more).

So, as we continue into this brave new 21st Century, what is in store? More mediocrity, I am afraid. Until composers find a way to be auto critical and universities find a way to limit the number of student composers they take in and graduate (and base this on quality and not numbers), I am afraid that the current state will continue. The word "composer" in the later years of this century will not mean very much given the current trend (not that the word means much today). There just is not enough of a need for 20,000-30,000 composers of art music in the United States, especially when the majority have nothing to say and the U.S., as a country, is not interested in supporting the arts. It will take a truly concerted effort by teachers to really think about quality and, if they can, overcome their own shortcomings. The greatest thing I received from the composers that had an impact on my own musical consciousness was the importance of self-criticism and the great responsibility that the creation of Art brings with it. Hopefully, this trend will "flare up" somewhere in the future.

By the Numbers

Total number of articles on contemporary popular music in Time magazine, April 2001 (five issues)

2

Number of articles on contemporary classical music in Time magazine, April 2001 (five issues)

0

Number of articles on classical music in Time magazine, April 2001 (five issues)

0

Total number of articles on contemporary popular music in the San Francisco Chronicle's Sunday Datebook, April 2001 (five issues)

10

Number of articles on contemporary classical music in the San Francisco Chronicle's Sunday Datebook, April 2001 (five issues)

0

Number of articles on classical music in the San Francisco Chronicle's Sunday Datebook, April 2001 (five issues)

1

Number of United States Company Members of *Opera America* in 1999

116

Number of Canadian Company Members of *Opera America* in 1999

17

Number of premieres presented by United States Company Members of *Opera America* in 1999

9

Number of premieres presented by Canadian Company Members of *Opera America* in 1999

7

Items

It happened again last month. For what may well be the last time, serious classical music vanished from the Bay Area's increasingly impoverished airwaves, leaving listeners to choose among the same old insipid melange of talk, Top 40 and Baroque-era wallpaper.

After a little more than a year on the air, KMZT (1510 AM) was yanked by its owner and replaced with a Christian-themed format under the call letters KJQI (pronounced "K-Joy"). Saul Levine, president of the Los Angeles-based Mount Wilson Broadcasters, said the classical format was a money loser.

So there went our chances of turning on the radio and hearing any but the narrowest, most anodyne subset of the classical repertoire.

KMZT (K-Mozart) . . . provided local listeners with our only alternative to the blandly indistinguishable fare championed by the commercially successful KDFC (101.1 FM)). KMZT's programming included repertoire not written by Mozart or Haydn -- some of it from the 19th or even the 20th centuries. It included a range of chamber music beyond concerti grossi. . .

In recent years, KDFC's carefully engineered sound has placed it consistently at or near the top of the ratings chart -- an unheard-of achievement for a classical station.

But for anyone with musical tastes beyond the 18th century, KDFC is a classical station in the same sense that McDonald's is a restaurant. That is to say, it's not a shoe store -- you can buy something to eat there -- but for all its financial success it offers a severely limited repertoire. . . .

KQED (88.5 FM) owes its current all-talk format to a monumental shift in 1987, when classical music was dumped (and a vast record library was summarily disassembled).

Joshua Kosman
San Francisco Chronicle, 4/18/01

Four two years in a row, the Academy Award for best film score has gone to a classical composer: first John Corigliano for *The Red Violin*, then Tan Dun for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. . . . Hollywood may really be ahead of New York in acknowledging that the opposition between film music and concert music is a phantom of the last century. . . . Philip Glass's music for *Koyaanisqatsi* made Minimalism an essential component of any film composer's stylistic vocabulary

David Schiff
The New York Times, 4/22/01

I usually try to describe [what I do] in terms of function, as in "I play concert music"-- that is, I like to play in a good concert hall with people sitting there in a rather conservative fashion facing forward and listening to me. People also treat me differently if I am described as a "concert pianist" or a "jazz pianist." I figure that's there problem, but I'm likely to get paid more if I say "concert pianist," and that's what the name is really all about anyway- pigeon-hole for marketing, or some other power play.

In more obnoxious terms, I've been asked if I play "free jazz" and have been known to mouth off "no, I usually play cheap jazz" or "affordably priced."

Matthew Goodheart
Bay Area New Music, 4/30/01

Writers

MARK ALBURGER began playing the oboe and composing in association with Dorothy and James Freeman, George Crumb, and Richard Wernick. He studied with Karl Kohn at Pomona College; Joan Panetti and Gerald Levinson at Swarthmore College (B.A.); Jules Langert at Dominican University (M.A.); Roland Jackson at Claremont Graduate University (Ph.D.); and Terry Riley. Alburger writes for Commuter Times and is published by New Music. He is Editor-Publisher of 21ST-CENTURY MUSIC, and has interviewed numerous composers, including Charles Amirkhanian, Henry Brant, Earle Brown, Philip Glass, Lou Harrison, Alan Hovhaness, Meredith Monk, Pauline Oliveros, Steve Reich, and Frederick Rzewski. An ASCAP composer, he recently was awarded first prize at the Dominican University Festival of New Plays and Operas for his setting of *The Little Prince*. A nine-evening run of his *Henry Miller in Brooklyn* has just concluded in San Francisco.

PATTI DEUTER is Associate Editor of 21ST-CENTURY MUSIC and a Bay Area pianist.

JEFF DUNN is a freelance critic with a B.A. in music and a Ph.D. in Education. He is an avid collector of recorded performances of new music, a dedicated operagoer, and a composer of piano and vocal music. His post-modernistic career has included stints as a ranger-naturalist, geologic explorationist, and geography professor. He now serves on the board of directors for New Music Forum and is a Bay Area correspondent for 21ST-CENTURY MUSIC.

MARK FRANCIS is Lecturer of Music at Mississippi State University. He has previously held positions at Centenary College, Northwestern State University and the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts. He holds a D.M.A. in composition from the University of Kentucky. A recipient of 6 ASCAP Standard Awards his compositions include works for chamber, orchestral and choral ensembles, electronic music and 50 art songs. His compositions and arrangements are published by Connors Publications and Little Piper Publications. He is President of the Southeastern Composers League and the composition board member for the College Music Society-South Chapter.

Cuban/American composer, conductor, music educator, and new music advocate ORLANDO JACINTO GARCIA is Professor of Composition and director of Composition Programs for the School of Music at Florida International University (FIU) in Miami where he was recently named the Director of Graduate Music Programs. He is the founder of the FIU Electronic Music Studio and the FIU New Music Ensemble and recently founded the NODUS ensemble, a professional chamber group based at FIU dedicated to the presentation of new music. Born in Havana, Cuba in 1954, García emigrated to the US in 1961 and has resided in Miami since 1977. García's composition teachers include Morton Feldman, David Del Tredici, Dennis Kam, John Corigliano, Donald Erb, and Earle Brown among others. He received his DMA in composition from the University of Miami in Florida

in 1984. With more than 90 works in his catalog, García's music is performed throughout the Americas, Asia, and Europe by a variety of distinguished ensembles and soloists.

JANOS GEREBEN is the Arts Editor of the Post Newspaper Group.

Composer, sound sculptor, and experimental instrument maker MARILYN HUDSON received her MA in Composition from California State University at Hayward in 1996. Her latest musical instrument is the bridge harp, now on display at the Fremont Library (CA).

D.C. MECKLER holds a doctorate in composition from the University of California, San Diego. He writes regularly for Paris New Music Review and 21ST-CENTURY MUSIC.

JOSEPH PEHRSON, composer-pianist (b. Detroit, 1950) has written works for a wide variety of media including orchestra, chamber works, and pieces for solo instruments. His works have been performed at numerous venues including Merkin Hall, Weill Recital Hall, and Symphony Space in New York, and throughout the United States. Since 1983 Pehrson has been co-director of the Composers Concordance in New York. He studied at the Eastman School of Music and the University of Michigan (DMA 1981). Pehrson's teachers include composers Leslie Bassett, Joseph Schwantner, and, informally, Otto Luening and Elide Siegmeister in New York.

ANTON ROVNER was born in Moscow, Russia, in 1970 and has lived in the United States since 1974. He studied piano at the Manhattan School of Music, Preparatory Division, then, composition at the Juilliard School, Pre-College Division, with Andrew Thomas and the Juilliard School (undergraduate and graduate programs) with Milton Babbitt, graduating in 1993 with an MM. In 1998 he received a Ph.D. degree from Rutgers University, where he studied with Charles Wuorinen. Rovner received a BMI Award in 1989 and an IREX Grant in 1989-1990. He attended the Estherwood Music Festival studying composition with Eric Ewazen. He studied music theory at Columbia University with Joseph Dubiel for two years. Since 1992 he is the artistic director of the Bridge Contemporary Music Series. His music has been performed in New York, Moscow, Paris, Kiev, Lvov, Kazan, Nizhni-Novgorod, Chisinau, and Bucharest. He has participated and his music has been performed in such music concerts and festivals as the Composers' Concordance contemporary music series in New York, the Moscow Autumn Music Festival, the Alternativa festival in Moscow, the International Forum for Young Composers in Kiev, and the Nicolai Roslavetz Music Festival in Bryansk.

FELICIA SANDLER is a music critic based in Ann Arbor, MI.

WILLIAM SUSMAN is a post-minimal composer based in Palo Alto, CA. His works include music for orchestra, brass quintet, woodwind quintet, and film.