

# 21ST CENTURY MUSIC

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AUGUST 2004

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# 21ST CENTURY MUSIC

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# Notation and Compositional Techniques Since the Second Half of the 20th Century

ELENA DUBINETS

Correlation of notation and compositional techniques has been a major issue for contemporary music -- both its composition and performance. The method of notating music which the composer chooses determines the way the performer and listener interpret the ideas. "Notation" is used here in its contemporary sense, extended to include both the written code of the music itself and the signs representing the composer's techniques: notation as a visual representation of the composer's ideas.

Compositional techniques and the ways they are notated cannot, of course, directly depend on each other: experimentation in musical notation follows innovations in compositional techniques; its function is to reflect and represent them. However, in contemporary music there is space for a reverse course of development: notation itself can create opportunities for compositional innovations. Thus, notation becomes an act of composition.

The function of notation is not merely to represent the time and pitch (or any other) parameters of sound; to a certain extent it can also reflect the composer's musical concepts, a vision of music. This is because a new music needs a new notation, unlimited by tradition. The changes in music, in turn, are caused by the changing of the world.

The value of music as an art grew considerably in the second half of the 20th century and the idea of synthesis in art reached an apogee. Music has become "dissolved" in the surrounding visual and sensory phenomena and has entered life itself -- unpredictable, natural life -- which resulted in such developments as "happenings" and other multimedia projects. The creative process itself changed: art was no longer merely a means of reflecting life and expressing the artist's emotions; art creates new worlds, a new cosmos.

Contemporary composition techniques serve to select the material and arrange it in time. "Material" here includes not merely the expressive aspects and thematic content, but also the physical, acoustic aspects of music, too. Thus the material of thematic content includes:

- the sounds produced by acoustic and electronic instruments, modulated or amplified by electronic means.
- various modified timbres (such as John Cage's prepared piano).
- various noises - aleatory (e.g. street noises) or background (such as radio transmission).
- silence.

The revolution in musical consciousness became by mid-century a fertile soil for new notation, producing an unprecedented number of notational innovations. These innovations range from a tendency to detail the intention of the composer in every possible way, both through notation and through realization (e.g. serial music), to a complete annihilation of the traditional "piece" concept with its fixed text. "Piece" here stands for a certain musical whole, performed in an acoustic space and possessing a structure that depends not only on the composer's will but on the performer's imagination, too. The same sheet of music may inspire an indefinite number of acoustic phenomena. In this case notation is a text, a "semantic field" that stimulates the process of its decoding.

Thus, the origin of codes in contemporary notation is varied, and these codes range from a determined notation that fixes the composer's intention and requires a precise implementation by the performer, to an indeterminate notation that possesses an aleatory factor, which prevails in the implementation of the intention notated with a varied degree of detailing and precision. The different approaches determine the composer's selection of a notational system and therefore employ different *Categories of Contemporary Notation*. In our description of the categories we sum up the universally accepted ideas about notation and contribute a few of our own. We also reveal the correlation (in both directions) of compositional techniques and methods of their notation; we revise the accepted notational terms and introduce some new ones to achieve a better approximation.

## *Categories of Contemporary Notation*

I. Determined notation as one entailing monosemantic implementation.

The term "determined" (Latin *determino* -- to settle, decide) implies stable, static relations between the components of notation that is not intended for arbitrary and imprecise performance or sequence of musical events. Notation in this case has the pragmatic function of instructions for the performer to act in a certain way.

### 1. Traditional notation and its variants.

"Traditional notation" is used to denote the European staff writing that dates back to the 17th century and was used almost without change until the 20th. Such notation also has been used (with a few contemporary modifications) by those recent composers who seek to make their intention as clear to the performing musician as can be.

## 2. Microtonal notation.

Despite the possibilities for varied interpretation provided by evasive microtonal relations, microtonal and cluster systems of notation both belong to the determined category: most composers who use these systems do not reject standard pitch.

## 3. Clusters.

Much cluster music is indebted to the work of Henry Cowell, who utilized both 12-note tempered and microtonal agglomerates.

## 4. Notational systems for new instrumental techniques. Tablatures.

Notation of fingering is a major type of contemporary tablature (Latin *tabula* - board, table). "Tablature" acquires a second meaning in recent times: tables and charts not for the fingers but for the instrument -- showing how it should be prepared for the performance, perhaps the best known examples being "preparation tablatures" for the prepared piano..

II. Indeterminate (partially or completely) notation is polysemantic and calls for varied implementation.

Indeterminate notation (Latin *in-determinatus* - indefinite, unlimited) does not use the static relations between components of the text; it allows a flexible implementation that draws not only from the composer's intention but also from the performer's creative initiative. Such notation can produce an infinite number of variants: each rendition may be a strikingly different sound form of the notated structure.

## 1. Fluctuational ("proportional") notation.

This kind of notation in its "time-notation" version tells the performer to abandon the traditional metric and rhythmic parameters and adopt dimensions of real time. It coordinates segments of the score and has a flexible system of signs for notes of variable duration within the segments, allowing for a low approximation of correlations among the voices.

"Score" is used here in an extended sense: to denote not only a means of notating all the simultaneously sounding voices by any kind of signs, but any fixation through notation of any music with any number of voices and any combination of instruments. Scores may include any manner of presentation, including one-line notation, and graphic and verbal instructions.

"Proportional notation" can distort the meaning of the phenomenon, since often the symbols describe only a certain approximation to standard units of time. Therefore, we suggest the term "fluctuational" (cf. Latin *fluctuation*, which H. Lachenmann has used to describe certain textures in contemporary music) to describe such notation, an early example of which is Earle Brown's system (which he designates as "time-notation").

## 2. Frame or zone (Russian "zonnaya") notation.

"Zone" describes a limited space allowing the performer to select any sound features within boundaries. "Zone notation" will also include Morton Feldman's "graph notation."

## 3. Mobile notation.

"Mobile" (French *mobile* - open) implies possibilities for chance selection of components of musical form and sequence. Isolated fragments are selected and combined by performer and conductor;; the result is a notation "mobile" which represents a musical form with aleatory sequence in time. The major feature here is that forms are non-linear, structured spontaneously.

## 4. Graphic notation.

Graphic notation stimulates the performer's creative imagination and one's desire to make music independently. Notation in graphic music has been emancipated, and the score has become an aim in itself, both for composer and recipient; notation is now a part of the creative process which may or may not be translated into sound.

Time in a graphic score is no longer given a linear treatment; it is not "measured" or "counted," it does not correlate with the size of the music sheet. One page of graphic notation may occupy any time, from zero to an eternity. Space is also modified. Instruments no longer have definite positions in the ensemble, score coordinates disappear, and performer is no longer completely guided by notation.

## 5. Verbal notation.

Like the graphic, verbal notation no longer uses notes, either, and the score's function is similarly to stimulate the performer. Such a score uses only words to formulate its messages. The two main kinds are "instructive" and "associative," the former specific and the latter poetic.

## 6. Notation of "action music."

"Action music" includes "instrumental theatre" and "happenings," and refers to extramusical elements introduced into the music, such as visuals (light, slides, cinema, and video), movements (dancers and actors), creative use of the physical space (stage and auditorium), and audience participation in the performance and creation of the piece.

## 7. Notation of electronic music.

Electronic music has a number of specific features: its performance may be exclusively electronic (prerecorded in the computer's memory or on tape/CD), or it may combine live (acoustic) sound with prerecorded music. The sources of the sounds may be natural or artificial (electronic or non-electronic). The sounds to be used in the piece may be produced before the music is composed or in real time. Much electronic music uses untempered or microtonal scales, rendering tempered pitch notation difficult, or more often impossible.

Electronic music is often notated after the composition or performance, describing what has been produced. Completely pre-recorded pieces are stored in the memory of a computer; live performance is not possible and a traditional score is not needed, since there is no potential human performer. Some composers have made schematic scores representing the general structure of pieces, or fragments thereof. Some kind of score is required for coordinating performers' actions in pieces that combine human and mechanized performances.

Scores are also produced to provide possibilities for reproducing the technological process of creating the piece.

Next we discuss the three semiotic aspects of notation -- the context as a certain visual situation that is to be realized in sound; the code, as an agreement about particular meanings; and the contact, as a physical channel and psychological means of communication between the sender and receiver. The functions of notation are:

1. Fixation: preservation of the composer's intention, including the following considerations

- the impact of notation on the process of composition.
- impoverishment of an original idea in the process of production and reproduction of the text.
- possibilities for the reader of the text to contribute to the creative process.

2. Communicative function: code and decoder. Interpretation dependent on the method and detail of the fixation.

3. Aesthetic function: not only to preserve intention and establish communication, but to create a visual image conveying artistic meaning.

Aesthetic functions of notation are related to psychological factors. When traditional symbols are absent, whatever notes and graphic images are utilized can have the effect of stimulating the "reader" to create musical images, "pictures in sound."

The features of contemporary notation, testifying to its semiotic nature, are clear: not only all the signs borrowed from traditional notation are systemic, but also some of those which have been introduced more recently. All the idiosyncrasies of an individual composer's notational system can be described as "composer-systemic," but as soon as such become more generally accepted they become "extrasystemic."

A sign can be mono- or polysemantic, since many individual notational signs have more than one meaning for interpreters. While some ambiguities may be resolved, others may not.

Similarly, there is the problem of what is necessary and what is superfluous in notation. Some composers have invented different signs for what amounts to the same basic concept. Some signs last, others do not. Meanwhile performers have much to remember.

Finally, concerns about the relative importance of parameters and just how fixed such parameters are can remain up in the air in many notations. Given all the above, many contemporary notations can be acknowledged to be dynamic semiotic systems.

Post-1950 American contemporary classical music is a rich field in which to examine recent notational practices, particularly since many innovations have been introduced on this side of the Atlantic. Works of John Cage, Earle Brown, and George Crumb foreshadow many developments in Europe. Each of these composers made important discoveries in compositional techniques and notation.

Cage's notated scores can be regarded as artistic objects in and of themselves. While his "chance" music defines a genre, many of his indeterminate overlappings and permutations result in clearly structured relations, akin to serial works. Cage modeled a kind of synthetic action, in which both performer and listener can participate. His inexhaustible fantasy put him in a unique position -- music as an expression of ideas and aspirations, of communication, of philosophy.

Cage's associate Brown wrote experimental, electronic, and aleatory music. His major contributions were time notation, graphic notation, and mobile -- at times directly inspired by his American artist contemporaries Jackson Pollock, Alexander Calder, and Robert Rauschenberg.

Much of Brown's important music written after 1952 was recorded in "time notation" (Brown's own term), a kind of fluctuational notation. The composer suggests that the performer interpret traditional notes and lines as references to pitch, taking into account the symbols' positions in the pace of the score and the realizer's own sense of time. Brown's time notation determines the exact time-length of the piece and each system within, as well as the pitch relations between tones in each voice -- but the notation does not determine the minor time gradations and the vertical relationships between voices.

George Crumb has been a proponent of a number of new instrumental techniques, and has found original methods of representation. A Crumb score page resembles a fine, subtly woven, almost unreal web of similarly subtle and mysterious sounds. Musical phrases in traditional notation occupy discrete lines on the white page [related to Stravinsky's late notational practice], surrounded not merely by standard terms and symbols, but also by numerous, often superfluous, verbal instructions. Virtually every piece is supplied with front material, in which the composer gives detailed recommendations about the interpretation and performance of his notation.

By the beginning of the 21st century many specifically American avant-garde notational practices have been accepted by the new-music community worldwide, and some forgotten. Clusters and preparation-tablatures survive, and fluctuational notations remain popular. Mobile, action, graphic, and verbal notations have become standard as well.

## In Memoriam

Meyer Kupferman, a prolific composer whose music embraced both jazz and 12-tone techniques, died on [November 26, 2003] near Rhinebeck, NY. He was 77 and lived near Rhinebeck.

The cause was heart failure, said William Anderson, a guitarist who has performed Mr. Kupferman's music and is a friend of the family.

Mr. Kupferman embraced virtually every form available to contemporary composers, writing 12 symphonies, nine ballets and seven operas, along with electronic pieces, works that combine taped sounds and live instruments and soundtrack music for films. He composed 10 concertos, dozens of picturesque orchestral works and more than 200 chamber and solo works.

He was omnivorous stylistically, too, a quality he traced back to childhood memories of his father singing Yiddish and Romanian songs to him, which he would imitate on the clarinet, an instrument that he also used to imitate solos in the big band jazz he heard on the radio.

He embodied some of these influences -- as well as elements of the serialism that fascinated him later -- in *The Garden of My Father's House*, a vibrant 1972 work for violin and clarinet dedicated to his father's memory. . .

Kupferman was born in New York on July 3, 1926. After a brief encounter with the violin at age 5, he was drawn to the clarinet when he was 10. He studied at the High School of Music and Art and at Queens College, but although his formal studies embraced music theory and orchestral and chamber performance he regarded himself as a self-taught composer. . .

Working as a jazz clarinetist in clubs on Coney Island, he began scoring arrangements . . . .

By the late 1940's, when he was in his early 20's, he began concentrating on concert music. He wrote the first of several piano concertos in 1948, also the year he completed his first opera, a one-act children's work, *In a Garden*, based on Gertrude Stein's *First Reader*.

To hear his music performed, he persuaded some of his colleagues to form an orchestra, called Composers Workshop. Among the members of the ensemble who eventually became well-known composers were Morton Feldman, Allan Blank, and Seymour Shifrin.

When Mr. Kupferman became interested in 12-tone composition in the 1950's, he sought ways to retain the lyricism that had been an attraction of his earlier music. One solution was to develop a single tone row that through repetition in several works would become familiar. Another was to temper it with some of the influences that had always given his music its particular accent.

These solutions propel *The Cycle of Infinities*, a set of more than 30 works, composed between 1961 and 1983. All 30 were based on the same tone row, but the works could hardly have been more different. Among them were full-length recitals for solo instruments, chamber pieces, a cantata and a three-act opera, *The Judgment* (1966). . . .

Several works -- including many of the *Infinities* - call for a jazz ensemble. His *String Quartet No. 6* bore the title *Jazz Quartet*, and when his *Jazz Symphony* was given its premiere by the Hudson Valley Philharmonic in 1988, he said it was a piece that he had been wanting to write for 40 years. . . .

Kupferman taught composition and directed an improvisatory ensemble at Sarah Lawrence College from 1951 to 1993. He also published *Atonal Jazz* (Dorn), a two-volume study of chromatic techniques in contemporary jazz, in 1992.

Mr. Kupferman is survived by his wife, Pie Fen; his daughter, Lisa Pitt, of Putnam, NY, three stepsons, Fung Chin and Sung Chin, of Westfield, NJ, and Yung Chin, of Chappaqua, NY, and five grandchildren.

Allan Kozinn  
The New York Times  
12/3/03

Jack Paar, the prickly, often emotional and always unpredictable humorist who turned late-night television into a national institution when he was host of the Tonight Show from 1957 to 1962, died [January 27] at his home in Greenwich, CT, his son-in-law, Stephen Wells, told The Associated Press. He was 85. . . .



Long before David Letterman," [William] Rimes [said], "Mr. Paar had an anarchic streak that inspired him to pair guests like Liberace and Cassius Clay, or Jayne Mansfield and Zsa Zsa Gabor, or to get in the ring with a professional wrestler or to shuffle the cue cards in the middle of a Robert Goulet - Judy Garland duet." . . .

"Everyone thinks Ed Sullivan discovered the Beatles," he once complained. "That's not true. I had them on before he did. I did it because I thought they were funny, not because I like the music. I'm a Muzak kind of guy -- my home's like living in an elevator."

Richard Severo  
The New York Times  
1/28/04

## Chronicle

June 1

John Adams wins the first biennial Michael Ludwig Nemmers Prize in Musical Composition, which includes a \$100,000 cash prize. Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.

Governing board of the Pulitzer Prizes announces a broadening of the category for the award in music that opens the door to musical theater scores, film scores and works containing large elements of improvisation. New York, NY.

June 3

Orchestra of the S.E.M. in Phill Niblock's *Three Orchids for Three Orchestras*, Peter Kotik's *Quiescent Form*, Christian Wolff's *Spring*, Roscoe Mitchell's *Non-Cognitive Aspects of the City*, and Alex Minck's *Few From Many*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY. "It was startling -- and invigorating -- to hear the sound of actual experimentation . . . *Three Orchids for Three Orchestras* was wonderful. The orchestra was divided into three distinct ensembles, and each played a single note, varying it by infinitesimal degrees, for more than 20 minutes. The description can't convey the beauty or the richness of what happens inside a room where this is going on for that span of time. The sound is full of activity; the overtones conjured up phantom human voices. Then a single instrument would suddenly emerge, and the fabric of the piece would separate into its individual threads. All the while Petr Kotik, who founded the S.E.M. Ensemble in 1970 and the orchestra that bears its name in 1992, conducted by moving his arms slowly in a big circle, like the hands on a clock. Mr. Niblock has been writing music like this for decades, and the piece, from 2003, felt as if it had been written in the 1960's, perhaps to be listened to while stoned. . . . Kotik's *Quiescent Form*, his first orchestral composition, began with nearly lyrical playing from the strings and winds.

A percussion section eventually broke into this with such violence as to make the listener jump, ultimately splintering the whole work into an episodic series of convulsions. Christian Wolff's *Spring*, the first orchestral piece by this self-taught composer, similarly moved from evocations of melody to a tangle of individual interactions between instruments" [Anne Midgette, *The New York Times*, 6/5/04].

June 8

Mark Morris's *All Fours* choreographed to Béla Bartók's *String Quartet No. 4*. Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York, NY.

June 10

Death of Ray Charles [Robinson] (b. 9/23/30, Albany, GA), of acute liver disease, at 73. "[He was] blind at age 6 and orphaned at 15. . . . His family moved to Greenville, FL, when he was a few months old. He was playing a neighbor's piano at the age of 5, but when Charles was 6, he contracted glaucoma, which by age 7 had robbed him of his eyesight. Charles always associated his blindness with the trauma of watching his brother drown in the backyard laundry tub his mother used to wash the family's clothing. 'Strangely enough, losing my sight wasn't quite as bad as you'd think, because my mom conditioned me for the day that I would be totally blind,' he wrote in *Brother Ray*. Telling her son he was 'blind, not stupid,' she enrolled him as a charity student at the St. Augustine School for the Deaf and Blind, where he learned to read Braille, read and write music in Braille, and play piano, organ, clarinet and trumpet. After his mother's death in 1946 (his father had died several years earlier) Charles dropped out of school at age 15 and hit the road for Seattle, simply because it was as far away from Florida as he could get. He was living alone in his own apartment and working in bands at age 16 when he first met his lifelong friend Quincy Jones. Charles taught the future producer to read and write music. 'It was like somebody forgot to tell Ray he was blind,' Jones wrote in his 2001 memoirs, *Q*. 'In fact, Ray Charles never acted blind unless there was a pretty girl around. He dropped his last name in deference to boxer Sugar Ray Robinson. . . . [H]e did not emerge on his own until his contract with the small West Coast record label Swingtime was purchased by New York's Atlantic Records in 1952. . . . Charles left Atlantic for ABC-Paramount in 1959 for an unprecedented million-dollar deal that guaranteed him financial security at a time when most black entertainers were struggling just to get paid. . . . In addition to the unimaginable hardships of growing up black, poor and blind in the Depression-era South, he spent 20 years as a heroin addict, quitting cold turkey in 1965, according to his autobiography, after an arrest at the Boston airport. . . . 'We started calling him ['The Genius'] simply because we genuinely thought of him as a genius,' said Atlantic Records founder Ahmet Ertegun" [Joel Selvin, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 6/11/04].

June 12

Pandit Pran Nath performs Ragas Pat Dipak and Darbari, Time Warner Cable Channel 56 and RCN Cable Channel 108, New York, NY. "The performances of Ragas Pat Dipak and Darbari to be aired on Mantra TV were part of *A Concert of Evening Ragas* presented by MELA Foundation at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine on October 18, 1991. Pandit Pran Nath was accompanied by La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela and Terry Riley, voices and tamburas, Michael Harrison, tambura, and Krishna Bhatt, tabla" [MELA Foundation release].

June 13

Pandit Pran Nath Memorial Tributes. Concert of Pre-recorded Tapes of Evening Ragas, curated by La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, who present commentary on the music during the event. MELA Foundation Dream House, 275 Church Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY.

"Pandit Pran Nath[s] . . . 1971 morning performance at Town Hall, New York City, was the first concert of morning ragas to be presented in the U.S. Subsequently, he introduced and elaborated to Western audiences the concept of performing ragas at the proper time of day by scheduling entire series of concerts at special hours. . . . He performed frequently in New York City, and in 1972 established his own school under the direction of his disciples La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, the Kirana Center for Indian Classical Music, now a project of MELA Foundation. In Fall 1993, Pran Nath inaugurated the MELA Foundation Dream House with three Raga Cycle concerts and continued to perform here annually during his lifetime. Pran Nath's majestic expositions of the slow alap sections of ragas combined with his emphasis on perfect intonation and the clear evocation of mood had a profound impact on Western contemporary composers and performers. In addition to Young and Zazeela, minimalist music composer Terry Riley became one of his first American disciples. Fourth-world trumpeter Jon Hassell, jazz all-stars Don Cherry and Lee Konitz, composers Jon Gibson, Yoshimasa Wada, Rhys Chatham, Michael Harrison, and Allaudin Mathieu, Sufi Pir Shabda Kahn, mathematician and composer Christer Hennix, concept artist and violinist Henry Flynt, dancer Simone Forti, and many others took the opportunity to study with the master" [MELA Foundation release].

June 15

Institute and Festival for Contemporary Performance. Marc Ponthus and Rolf Schulte in Pierre Boulez's *Sonata No. 2*, Steven Gerber's *Fantasy*, Elliott Carter's *Four Lauds* (Aaron Copland, Goffredo Petrassi, Roger Sessions, and Robert Mann), and Anton Webern's *Four Pieces* (Op. 7). Mannes College of Music, New York, NY. Festival through June 20.

June 17

Kaikhosru Sorabji's *Piano Symphony No. 5* (1930, 2'30"), whose three parts unfold through four and a half hours. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

June 18

Krzysztof Penderecki is announced as the winner of the Praemium Imperiale prize in music. Tokyo, Japan.

June 20

Kaikhosru Sorabji's *Opus Clavicembalisticum* (1930), whose three parts unfold through four and a half hours. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY. "Alistair Hinton . . . once met a woman who had heard Sorabji play *Opus Clavicembalisticum* in Glasgow in 1930 and could testify to the music's charisma: 'It was the most terrifying experience of my life, musical or otherwise,' he quoted her as saying. 'I hated it, but I could not tear my ears away'" [Paul Griffiths, *The New York Times*, 6/13/04].

Institute and Festival for Contemporary Performance. Music by Charles Wuorinen, performed by member of Speculum Musicae. Mannes College of Music, New York, NY.

June 26

Death of Naomi Shemer, after a long illness, at 74. Tel Aviv, Israel. "[She was] an Israeli poet and a prolific composer whose popular songs include 'Jerusalem of Gold,' which became interwoven with the culture of the Jewish state" [Wolfgang Saxon, *The New York Times*, 6/29/04].

# Comment

## Items

All those entering the Brooklyn Academy of Music on [December 3] had to empty their pockets and pass through metal detectors set up right inside the four door to the spacious lobby. The reason behind the heightened security was the opening-night performance of John Adams's opera *The Death of Klinghoffer*, which had its United States premier in 1991 at the academy, six months after its world premiere in Brussels. .

Few works in recent years have ignited more controversy than this audacious, multi-layered opera about the 1985 hijacking of the Achille Lauro, an Italian cruise ship, by a group of Palestinian terrorists, which resulted in the brutal murder of Leon Klinghoffer, a disabled American Jew. As the critic Michael Steinberg points out in his liner notes for the 1992 Nonesuch recording, Mr. Adams began composing *The Death of Klinghoffer* in 1989, when the United States was lavishing support on Saddam Hussein. By the time of its 1991 premiere, he adds, America was "dropping 'smart bombs' down Baghdad ventilator shafts."

Just months after 9/11, the Boston Symphony Orchestra canceled a series of performances of excerpts from the opera, including the 'Chorus of the Exiled Palestinians,' in deference to a member of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus whose husband was on one of the planes that was crashed into the twin towers. As the work is presented again, the age-old hatreds in the Middle East continue to rage.

Most of those offended by the opera have pointed to what they consider its sanctification of the Palestinian struggle and its suspiciously sympathetic depiction of the terrorists. They have parsed Alice Goodman's libretto and analyzed Mr. Adams's music to uncover the supposed biases of the creators, including the director Peter Sellars, whose idea the opera was. Such reactions have brought anguish to these artists, who have never claimed any special insight into these intractable conflicts. Their opera, as they have said repeatedly, is a reflective work, more in the spirit of the passions of Bach, which mix storytelling and commentary, than a traditionally dramatic opera. Major events -- the takeover of the ship, the murder of Klinghoffer, who is pushed overboard in his wheelchair -- are not even enacted, only recalled."

Anthony Tommasini  
The New York Times  
12/5/03

[M]ost people who think about such things assume [Carl Orff] was a Nazi. Before *Carmina Burana* got so popular in [America], it was vastly popular in late-1930's Germany. Nazi propagandists trumpeted it as a celebration of German folk vitality and hence of the Aryan spirit. . . .

*Carmina Burana* was first staged in Frankfurt in 1937, and was violently attacked by the Nazi Party newspaper, *Der Volkishche Beobachter*, as degenerate music akin to Negro jazz (which some upper-level Nazis enjoyed avidly in private). This disapproval did not constitute an outright ban, however, and several notable conductors, among them Karl Bohm and Herbert von Karajan, championed the score. . . .

The traditional nationalist conservatism of Alfred Rosenberg, reflected in the initial *Carmina Burana* review, gave way to the more modern trendiness of Joseph Goebbels. The Nazis needed composers they could crow about after so many of Germany's good ones, Jewish and non-Jewish, fled the country. Eventually Orff's score began receiving good reviews from the German press, and by 1939 it had attained a popularity equal to the status it now enjoys worldwide.

Orff was not a Nazi, although he collaborated with party members and even, egregiously, consented to write new incidental music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* after the beloved score by Mendelssohn, a Jew, was deemed tainted. After the war he clearly exaggerated his anti-Nazi activities to American interrogators.

But politically he seems more guilty of careerism than racial fanaticism. (Michael Kater, the author and scholar, documented that Orff was one-eighth Jewish.) The American musicologist Kim Kowalke has shown that a decade before *Carmina Burana* Orff used the same vigorous, supposedly Aryan musical idiom in settings of left-wing political poems by Bertolt Brecht and others.

After the success of *Carmina Burana* Orff turned out *Catulli Carmina* (1943) and *Trionfo di Afrodite* (1953), forming a trilogy first performed at the Salzburg Festival in 1953. Neither successor lived up to the popularity of *Carmina Burana*, however, and neither is often heard outside of Orff-central, which was the Salzburg Festival but in recent decades has been his native Munich. Lamentably, more interesting Orff compositions are less known, and taken together they suggest a powerful and individual sensibility that easily transcends charges of undue indebtedness to Stravinsky.

There are versions of Monteverdi operas and ballets from the 1920's, and the ravishing *School Work*, composed with Gunild Keetman, an unapologetic Nazi. This music is so charming and pedagogically sound that it is still used worldwide today, limited only by the expense of the required instruments, largely xylophones and percussion. Years ago Anel Records released a now out-of-print album called *Music for Children*, consisting of selected *School Work* songs in English; it was so lovely that I gave it to all my friends for Christmas.

But Orff's heart was on the stage. His catalog contains all manner of stage works, oddly none designated as operas. Some are ambitious and strange, like *De Temporum Fine Comoedia*, which had its premiere at Salzburg in 1973. Some are quirkily Bavarian, and others are still popular in German opera houses, like *Der Mond* (1939) and *Die Kluge* (1943). . .

For me Orff's greatest works are the three settings he made of Greek tragedies for chanting opera singers and huge, percussion-dominated orchestras: *Antigone* (1949) and *Oedipus der Tyrann* (1959) were sung in Holderlin's German translations of Sophocles; *Prometheus* (1966) was in the ancient Greek of Aeschylus.

These were honorable attempts to evoke the actual performance of Greek tragedy, which we know to have been sung. The tragedies gain awesome power when done this way; the cosmic, measured outpourings of the orchestra and the stately chanting of the singers, rising up impassioned cries, are constantly gripping. You can hear all this for yourself either in Ferenc Fricsay's febrile, intense live recording of *Antigone* from the 1949 Salzburg premiere, the microphone placement oddly favoring the singers, or from the Orff-supervised studio recording of the same work under Ferdinand Leitner, which is more balanced.

When I directed the Lincoln Center Festival, I found a fellow Orff enthusiast in Kurt Masur. In the 1990's the festival was locked into an arrangement with the New York Philharmonic. Mr. Masur and I wanted to do *Antigone*, but the strange instrumentation proved intractable; most of the Philharmonic would have had to be paid for doing nothing. *Antigone* is scored for six pianos and four more played by two people each, 16 mallet instruments, six flutes, six oboes, six trumpets, nine double basses and all manner of exotic percussion, including six large Javanese gongs.

So enjoy yourselves guilt-free . . . [listening to *Carmina Burana*]. It is perfectly legitimate to like this music. But if you do like it, you might want to venture further into Orff's world. The rewards there are great.

John Rockwell  
The New York Times  
12/5/03

He's 60, still singing, and now he's Sir Mick.

That pouting, posturing icon of rock rebelliousness Mick Jaguar officially joined the British establishment [December 12, 2003] -- and hardly anyone objected.

Rolling Stone Keith Richards was a rare dissenter as Jagger -- the group's raffish, womanizing front man -- accepted a knighthood from Prince Charles at Buckingham Palace. Richards said Jagger's accepting the honor was a disgrace, a comment Jagger laughed off.

"I think he would probably like to get the same honor himself," Jagger told reporters. "It's like being given an ice cream -- one gets one, and they all want one. It's nothing new. Keith likes to make a fuss."

Times have changed since 1965, when some outraged dignitaries returned their gold medals in protest after the Beatles were made Members of the Order of the British Empire, or MBE.

Since then, ex-Beatle Paul McCartney, Beatles' producer George Martin, Elton John and Cliff Richard have become rock knights.

Two other senior rockers -- Gerry Marsden of Gerry and the Pacemakers, and Gary Brooker of Procol Harum -- were at the palace Thursday to collect MBEs for their charity work.

Other than the profanity-laced criticism from Richards, the announcement last year of Jagger's honor brought only a couple of angry letters to the Daily Telegraph. A Canadian woman whose husband, mother and grandfather received honors wrote: "By giving a knighthood to a rogue like Mick Jagger, the prime minister has denigrated all the worthy recipients of honors from Her Majesty the Queen."

Born Michael Philip Jagger in a London suburb, Jagger studied at the prestigious London School of Economics, where he started playing with Richards and Brian Jones.

They made their first public appearance at a jazz club in 1962, taking the name Rolling Stones from Muddy Waters' 'The Rolling Stone Blues.' Bass player Bill Wyman and drummer Charlie Watts joined later.

Jagger came to the ceremony with his 92-year-old father, Joe -- who decades ago chided his son's passion for 'jungle music' -- and daughters Karis, 32, and Elizabeth, 19.

Sue Leeman  
Associated Press  
12/13/03

On [December 22, 2003, Phil Kline's] *Unsilent Night* will premiere in San Francisco, as members of the ensemble plan to carry boom boxes on a 40-minute walk from Mission Dolores Park through the Mission, Noe Valley and Castro [Districts]. The ensemble will include Kline himself, a New York experimental and contemporary classical composer, and anyone else who shows up at the park with a portable cassette player. . . .

The performance, held every year in New York City since 1992, has evolved into an eclectic holiday tradition in the East Village. There also has been a Sept. 11, 2001, tribute walk. [On December 13] more than 100 boom box bearers and twice as many spectators gathered in the freezing air of Washington Square Park to take part in Klein's annual procession.

The crowd included youthful anarchists, art students from nearby NYU, parents with their children and more than one gentleman in a suit and tie.

Kline . . . mounted a concrete planter and handed out cassette recordings of *Unsilent Night* to his performers. He instructed everyone to put a finger on the 'play' button before beginning a countdown to the simultaneous start time.

The 43-minute composition, inspired by composers like Glenn Branca and Charles Ives, includes a range of sounds from bells and harps to synthesizer effects. It also incorporates vocal tracts and antique Christmas hymns, one reportedly written by Martin Luther in the 16th century. That not everyone presses 'play' at just the same moment only adds to the potential for cacophony, yet Kline's piece is so melodic that the discord sounds almost spiritual.

As music filled Washington Square Park . . . the 300 participants and spectators formed up behind Kline and managed to remain a cohesive group . . . After a few leisurely circles around the central fountain, the mobile symphony set out over the city streets towards Tompkins Square Park, a mile to the east.

The horns of angry taxis and buses melded with the sounds of *Unsilent Night* as the group crossed the streets of the East Village en masse. At other moments, no sound could be heard but the cadence of footsteps and the melody of Kline's music echoing from all directions.

"At first it feels like some kind of cult ritual, and there is this sense of connection with all the other people around you," said 25-year-old participant Urs Ross. "But after a while it's just a cool New York moment." . . .

*Unsilent Night* will be performed in seven cities this season. In 2001, Kline took his cassette tapes to Berlin for a New Year's show, and he is planning another boom box piece for the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy.

Most shows outside New York are organized independently by fans that dub their own cassettes. . . . Kline . . . won't be leading the procession in Vancouver [on December 21]. . . .

"After writing pieces for boom boxes for 12 years, you develop a sense for what even a simple sound will become when multiplied by 100," he said. "I've used sliding harmonic movements so that when you step into it, even a truck going around the corner will sound like a total musical event."

Justin Silverman  
San Francisco Chronicle  
12/20/03

The Sunday Times published a list [in the] week [of December 21, 2003] of 300 well-known people -- including singer David Bowie, comedian John Cleese and actors Albert Finney and Kenneth Branagh -- who had declined [British] honors since 1945. . . .

Bowie turned down a CBE -- Commander of the British Empire -- and was quoted as saying he would never accept a knighthood. "I seriously don't know what it's for," he said.

Jill Lawless  
Associated Press  
12/26/03

If he were to write the story for this moment in his life, it would probably begin, "When I was 71," tell the tale of his final *American Top 40* broadcast this week [of January 4] and end with the thought "And so I learned that I don't have to feel sad, but excited about a new opportunity." From the announcement in 1970 of his first No. 1 hit -- "Momma Told Me (Not to Come)," by Three Dog Night -- to this weeks' No. 1 -- most likely "Hey Ya!" by Outkast -- whatever [Casey] Kasem has said in his warm, mellifluous and wholly distinctive voice has been invariably serious and positive.

As radio formats splintered and musical genres waxed and waned, Mr. Kasem (pronounced CASE-um) remained unshakable, unifying all of popular music with the sound of his voice. It didn't matter whether a song was acid rock or disco, hip-hop or honky-tonk, new wave or new metal: if it was popular enough to make the charts, it was valid. He never gave an opinion or shared a word of gossip. That was not his role. It was simply to count down the hits, tell the stories of the artists who made them (usually with a cliffhanger at the commercial break) and, in his long-distance dedication segment, read a moving letter from a listener. . . .

Shortly after recording his final program, Mr. Kasem sat down for his only print interview about his departure from *American Top 40* in the studios of Premiere Radio Networks in Sherman Oaks, CA, which syndicates his shows to 350 radio stations around the world. A creature of 34 years of habit, he said that he had done absolutely nothing special on the show to commemorate the occasion.

"When I signed off, I just said, 'And don't forget, keep your feet on the ground and keep reaching for the stars,'" he said, repeating the catchphrase that he has recited at the tail end of every show.

"I just didn't want to say goodbye. Every station I was at, I never said goodbye -- when I was in Detroit, Cleveland, Buffalo, Oakland, and L.A. I don't know why." . . .

Though Mr. Kasem is leaving *American Top 40*, he has no plans to leave the broadcasting world. He will continue as the host of his 12-year-old show, *American Top 20*, with one version oriented to stations with the "adult contemporary" format and another for stations with the "Hot adult contemporary" format. (What is the difference? "Hot" mixes in more current hits, and is geared toward a slightly younger audience.) . . .

Meanwhile, Ryan Seacrest, the host of *American Idol* on Fox television, will become the new host for *American Top 40*. The show's format will change, which means, among other things, that long-distance dedications will be replaced with interviews with musicians. Mr. Kasem said he was leaving the show to "really go after the No. 1 radio format, and that's adult contemporary," though one cannot help feeling that he is being put out to pasture.

"It's sad that he's leaving," said a friend of mine who preferred to be quoted anonymously for reasons that will shortly become apparent, "because it was so reassuring to know that when I'm coming home Sunday morning after getting wasted the night before and sleeping with a guy I shouldn't have, that I could turn on the radio and somewhere on the dial, I could find the voice of Casey Kasem."

What has made *American Top 40* such a milestone is that through all the great cultural upheavals of the last three decades, it has hardly changed at all.

"*American Top 40* allowed me to be current without my having to force change to keep up with things." Mr. Kasem said. "The new songs kept us up to date, so every show sounded fresh." In comparison, he said, D.J.'s known for playing a certain type of music often disappeared along with that type of music.

Though he said he did smash Elvis Presley records in the folly of his youth as an ill-advised publicity gimmick, he was wiser by the time rap came along. "When I first heard rap, I wasn't quick to be critical," he said. "I couldn't understand what they were saying, but I had a feeling it was a reflection of what's been happening in the ghetto." . . .

Though he refrains from mixing his personal life with his on-the-air persona, away from the studio Mr. Kasem, who is of Lebanese ancestry, is an advocate of animal rights, environmental preservation and improvements in Arab-Jewish relations, in addition to being a committed vegan. . . .

Every week he works meticulously on his show, even listening to the final broadcast for any hiccup in his delivery, any phrase spoken too loudly. What he describes as a rare tantrum once found its way out of the studio, where the sound of his iconic voice reeling off expletives about U2 and a long-distance dedication about a dog named Snuggles became an underground radio hit of its own.

Mr. Kasem didn't know the blooper had been made public until 10 years later. "I'm not proud of what I did, but it is funny," he said.

Aside from that aberration, consistency has been his forte. Not once has he varied from his "keep your feet on the ground" tag line.

"If I were going to change it, I'd change it to something that would help people in a lot of ways," he said. "I'd say, 'Be sure you use your seat belt.' Because my father would have lived another 15 years if at that time they had seat belts in the car that his housekeeper was driving when they got in an accident. Four days later he died. He was going to see me in my first play." The year was 1954. The play was *The Curious Savage*. . . .

He was, to the best of my knowledge, America's first V.J. In 1980, he went on the air counting down the hits with *America's Top Ten*, showing videos before MTV and before network shows like *Friday Night Videos*.

Videos were also part of Mr. Kasem's undoing. The rise of MTV ate away at the importance of his radio show as the fan's rite of passage in comprehending the music, the lives of the stars who made it and their chart positions. Now, with the Internet, any song, video, chart or factual tidbit is available instantly, so that no one needs Mr. Kasem to explain what is No. 1 anymore.

Though he is constantly asked his opinion on music, Mr. Kasem is not necessarily a music fan. Don't confuse the man with the message. His eyes don't light up at the mention of Beyonce or Celine Dion, but they do at the mention of pioneering disc jockeys like Mad Daddy or Alan Freed. He is a fan of the disembodied voice of the radio announcer.

Today, he still keeps one foot in the acting world, doing regular cartoon and commercial voice-over work, with over 10,000 spots to his credit. His best-known role is that of Shaggy, the bumbling beatnik pal of Scooby-Doo, for which he recently recorded 30 new episodes.

It could even be argued that, over the decades, Shaggy has exerted as great a cultural impact as Mr. Kasem has. When asked which persona -- Shaggy or Casey Kasem -- has had a bigger influence on society today, Mr. Kasem went quiet for a moment.

"Let's see," he finally said. "Shaggy is one of my claims to fame. But I think Casey surpasses him a little bit. However, one will last longer than the other, and Shaggy will go on forever.

"They are going to be playing Shaggy and Scooby-Doo for eons and eons, and they're going to forget Casey Kasem -- unless they happen to step on his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. I'll be one of those guys people say 'Who's that?' about. And someone else will say, 'He's just some guy who used to be on radio.'"

Neil Strauss  
The New York Times  
1/4/04

# Publications

*The Complete Lyrics of Frank Loesser*, edited by Robert Kimball and Steve Nelson. New York, Knopf.

Mark Kurlansky. *1968: The Year That Rocked the World*. Ballantine.

Ringo Starr. *Postcards From the Boys*. Genesis Publications. "On one side of the postcard is a picture of a solemn Windsor Castle guard playing a drum in his wooly fur hat and bright red tunic. On the flip side is a hand-scrawled message: 'You are the greatest drummer in the world. Really.' It is addressed to Ringo (no last name necessary) from Paul McCartney, and it is one of a trove of postcards that Ringo Starr received from his fellow Beatles, tossed in a drawer, forgot about, then rediscovered last year inside an unlabeled box. Guessing that people would be intrigued by the cards, and their intimate, sometimes cryptic messages, Mr. Starr selected 53 of them and turned them into a book, *Postcards From the Boys*. With his trademark wit and droll humor, he interprets the snippets on the back of the cards. He rattled his brain for specifics about the place and state of mind, speaking spontaneously into a tape recorder, and those musings, some of them non-sequiturs, make up the book's text. 'Memories -- what little is left of them,' said Mr. Starr, during a visit to the offices of Apple, the Beatles' company. 'Half of the cards, I still don't know what they're about. It may have something to do with the 60's,' he said, grinning and flashing a peace sign. The postcards in the book are often amusing, sometimes touching and occasionally trite. But in their whimsy, they offer a fresh, unfiltered look at the goings-on of the Beatles at the peak of their popularity and beyond. . . . Sometimes they just doodle on the cards, or in one case, send a photo negative of a sheepdog, as Mr. McCarney did. 'It was Martha, my dear, the dog,' Mr. Starr writes. The Windsor Castle drummer, Mr. Starr explains in the book, was sent after the *White Album*. The band had hit yet another bad patch, and Mr. Starr had abruptly quit, in part after learning that Mr. McCartney had recorded drum parts of his own. 'After I walked out,' he writes in the book, 'I kept getting these postcards -- telegrams, actually -- from John and George: 'Come on home! You're the best!' And when I did come back, George had the whole studio decorated in flowers. It was just a beautiful moment.' Mr. McCartney's card was a year late. 'He was just making up for lost time,' Mr. Starr writes. The thing was, Mr. Starr explained, his bandmates loved the drums. Drove him mad. 'Every time I went for a cup of tea, Paul was on the drums. I had three -- three -- frustrated drummers.' . . . The oldest John and Yoko postcard in his collection, a picture of whales jumping in a tank, unleashes another, altogether random memory in the book: 'I can say this now (if he was here John could tell you) but suddenly we'd be in the middle of a track and John would just start crying or screaming -- which freaked us out at the beginning.' . . . One postcard reminds Mr. Starr of the time he ordered fish and chips during a holiday he took in Sardinia in 1968 to get away from the Beatles. He was brought fried squid. . . .

Later, the captain of the boat briefed him on octopus: 'How they put, like, shiny things that had been tossed over boats around their cave, like a garden, and I thought that's the best thing I've heard. So I went and wrote the song just because of that,' he said. 'I wrote it on the boat. Because at that moment, mentally, spiritually and physically, I wanted to be under the sea.' Then he broke into song: 'In an octopus's garden, in the shade.'" [Lizette Alvarez, *The New York Times*, 12/7/03].

James A. Pegolotti. *Deems Taylor: A Biography*. Boston: Northeastern University Press. "Deems Taylor is almost unknown today, except by older folk or winners of the ASCAP / Deems Taylor Award for music criticism. In his heyday, in the 1920's to the 40's, Taylor was a famous composer. He wrote the first opera commissioned by the Metropolitan, *The King's Henchman*, which received 17 performances, then a record for an American opera. His second, *Peter Ibbetson*, racked up 22 Met performances. An orchestral piece, *Through the Looking Glass*, was played by nearly all the great conductors and all the great American orchestras, and some in Europe. Before that, he had been an influential music critic for *The New York World*, and later the editor of the magazine *Musical America*. In the mid-30's he became a famous radio personality, the voice of the New York Philharmonic and a host of, or guest on, innumerable programs. He was also the tuxedoed master of ceremonies of Walt Disney's *Fantasia*, chosen because no one better represented the intelligent populist outreach of classical music. He was the president of the American Society of Composers and [Publishers] . . . during the crucial years of its grudging accommodation with radio and television. He was an impassioned pursuer of female beauty, and friends or lovers with the wittiest, smartest, most beautiful people in New York -- starting with the Algonquin crowd and continuing through Edna St. Vincent Millay (his *King's Henchman* librettist), countless actors and writers, wives (three) and mistresses (more than three) and a Miss America, and ending with, of all people, Ayn Rand (not a romantic entanglement). He had an elegant apartment on Fifth Avenue with a Monet *Water Lilies* over the mantel. He died in 1966, at the age of 80. But after all that success and fame, nothing. Well, not quite nothing, for now there's this biography, the first. . . . Some composers are more famous posthumously than in life. Taylor basked in the glory of the moment, though his music was less of his moment than of the recent past, prone to tidy late-Romantic, quasi-impressionist musings laced with comfortable folk tunes.. He recognized an inherently derivative quality in his music, for all its craft: 'Nothing that hasn't been said a million times,' he lamented about one of his works. However much his music appealed to middlebrow listeners and organizations like the Met, it seemed old-fashioned to progressive composers and critics. American modernist composers, for all their diversity (Roger Sessions's Germanic dissonance versus Aaron Copland's Francophile populism versus Virgil Thomson's quirky abstraction), promoted themselves as a group.

Taylor, in Pegolotti's account, was an emotionally repressed loner in his social and romantic life as well as in his contacts with fellow composers. If they were Ivy Leaguers, he was New York University. If they studied with Nadia Boulanger, he studied for a few months with crusty old Oscar Coon. Furthermore, and this meant something, Taylor was enthusiastically heterosexual when a large number of the most influential American composers were homosexual. . . . In his youth he oscillated between Broadway and Carnegie Hall (which won out only when his melodic gifts proved less than fecund). He was close to Jerome Kern and George Gershwin and Rodgers and Hammerstein, about whom he wrote an admiring critical study. . . . He never developed any sort of sympathy for post-swing jazz or 'race music' or rock 'n' roll. ASCAP, during his presidency, allowed Broadcast Music Inc. to sign up the younger, livelier, darker-skinned composers. Taylor said BMI stood for 'Bad Music Indefinitely.' . . . By the mid-30's, after the popular success of his two Met operas, his love for the good life got the better of him, Pegolotti contends. Composition faded away -- to the disappointment of his longest-lasting wife, Mary Kennedy, who divorced him when he stopped writing music. . . . Thompson wrote disparagingly at the time of the industry he called 'the music-appreciation racket.' But in those days, longhairs and corporations (NBC, CBS) alike cared enough about the classics to feel a duty to preach culture to the masses. . . . [E]ven Thomson agreed that Taylor's commentaries were not only amusing and thoughtful but musically rock-solid. . . . If one looks back on his achievements . . . it seems Taylor had a pretty good time. He was often happy and contented, and he gave people pleasure and edification. Perhaps suffering obscurely in expectation of possible posthumous reward is not the only, or even the best, way to lead a life" [John Rockwell, *The New York Times*, 12/7/03].

Most significantly, George Balanchine, as a young man, danced in it at the Maryinsky Theater, where it had had its world premiere some two decades earlier. Although *The Nutcracker* had its first full American performance at the San Francisco Ballet in 1944, it entered the pantheon of American culture when Balanchine staged a production at the New York City Ballet in 1954. Walt Disney's 1940 movie *Fantasia* -- including portions of an animated *Nutcracker*, with Tchaikovsky's music conducted by Leopold Stokowski -- had helped, but it was the City Ballet that realized the extraordinary possibility of enchanting everyone from young children to their great-grandparents. Then, in 1957 and 1958, Balanchine himself danced in the role of Drosselmeier in live television broadcasts on Christmas. Four times during the 1958 broadcast, June Lockhart, who played the mother on *Lassie*, welcomed the audience after the commercials and read from a book of children's stories to the ballet's Clara, clad in a bathrobe. Lockhart also did voice-overs during the performance to explain the plot. Fisher . . . teaches dance history, theory and ethnology at Pomona College and the University of California, Irvine" [Nicholas Fox Weber, *The New York Times*, 12/7/03].

Jennifer Fisher. *"Nutcracker" Nation: How an Old World Ballet Became a Christmas Tradition in the New World*. New Haven: Yale University Press. "Ivan Vsevolozhsky, director of the imperial theaters, based his libretto on E.T.A. Hoffmann's 1916 tale *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King*, as retold by Alexandre Dumas *pere*. The ballet master Marius Petipa, who choreographed it, further developed the story. Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky, already a prominent composer, was given precise commands for the score: 'eight bars of mysterious and tender music; 48 bars of fantastic music with a grandiose crescendo.' . . . When Tchaikovsky wrote the music, he was mourning the recent death of his sister. Fisher points out that the adagio in the second act is similar to a prayer from the Russian Orthodox funeral service for which the text is 'and with the saints give rest' -- and that this was intended for his beloved sibling. Nonetheless, Tchaikovsky supposedly loathed his own score -- he felt it did not rival his *Sleeping Beauty*, written two years earlier -- and the critics in 1892 were not favorably predisposed either. . . . The czarist-era ballet had enough charm to survive the Russian Revolution and re-emerge in an updated, socio-political version staged during the early years of the Communist era. Its future was further secured with Serge Diaghilev, Anna Pavlova and Vaslav Nijinsky were all involved in *Nutcracker* productions.