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The Paul Dresher Electro-Acoustic Interview

MARK ALBURGER

Composer / guitarist / ensemble director Paul Dresher has been long active on the West Coast and around the world as a progressive voice in both music theatre and the concert hall.

I drove the winding road to Paul Dresher's Berkeley Hills home on February 8, 2000. The maids were cleaning the house, so we took shelter from the noise (and lamentably, the spectacular view of San Francisco Bay) in Dresher's cluttered, cold, windowless garage studio, where the real work is done. I brought a collection of CD's and tapes, and we began there.

ALBURGER: The earliest music I have --

DRESHER: '79.

ALBURGER: '79, the songs --

DRESHER: *Night Songs*.

ALBURGER: Yet I hear a definite consistency of personality the whole time.

DRESHER: I would say that, yes. I'd say the first piece that I wrote which was within what I would consider the lineage that I think about using now was actually written in '74 -- *Guitar Quartet*.

ALBURGER: You would have been at Berkeley at the time?

DRESHER: No, I was hanging out at Mills College. I was never officially a student at Mills -- I was an undergraduate student at Berkeley and a graduate student at U.C. San Diego. I first went to Berkeley in 1970, and tried to do a combination of music and anthropology, or ethnomusicology, and, at that point, the music department was so conservative that they could not conceive that music from a non-classical Western culture had any validity or value! I dropped out of school in the spring of '70, after about four quarters at U.C. Berkeley. And I just played music and started studying world music. I had actually been playing in some rock bands, and had done well -- really well, at least for a 19-year-old, in pop music. But after my first foray into commercial rock-and-roll, where we were doing record contracts and traveling, I quickly came to hate the commercial music world, because their motivation for doing what they were doing was completely different from my own. And I first heard Terry Riley's music in 1968, and I was absolutely in love with it. When I came back from being in New York and Los Angeles (doing the pop music thing), I came back to the Bay Area, and I heard that Terry Riley was teaching at Mills College, in '71. So I instantly ran over there and just started hanging out (I didn't get to be a student) at the Center for Contemporary Music. And Bob Ashley was the director of the CCM.

ALBURGER: It would have been day and night: Mills compared to Berkeley, at that time.

DRESHER: Oh yes. It was day and night.

ALBURGER: How much of Terry Riley would you have heard in '68? *In C*? *A Rainbow in Curved Air*?

DRESHER: I first heard *In C*, and then I heard *Rainbow*, and they both changed my life. I had applied to Cal Arts the year it opened, and I got into Cal Arts the same time that I got into a very "big" band -- a band that was doing stuff. I was replacing Jerry Garcia, actually, in this band.

ALBURGER: What was the band's name?

DRESHER: The band was called The Rubber Duck Company. They used to open for The Grateful Dead.

ALBURGER: Hmm, Rubber Duck... I've been Duck blind!..

DRESHER: That's a different duck!

ALBURGER: We'll duck that issue!

DRESHER: Yes! So that was a big opportunity. I had to decide whether to go to Cal Arts, or take this gig with the band and move to New York. We were having a show produced at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

ALBURGER: And you were 19.

DRESHER: Yes. So I moved to Brooklyn to do the show, and lived in total, abject poverty. But I was having fun.

ALBURGER: In Brooklyn.

DRESHER: Yes. So we did the show for five or six weeks at the Brooklyn Academy. The band was made up of a lot of people who had been successful in bands like Joy of Cooking, Country Joe and the Fish, and Sea Train.

ALBURGER: Anyone we would have heard of?

DRESHER: Tom Constantin was the keyboard player and leader of the band.

ALBURGER: Oh, yes.

DRESHER: Of course, Tom has a very, very unusual musical history.

ALBURGER: He does, indeed, and he has some Mills associations, too.

DRESHER: Yes. Before he joined The Grateful Dead, he had been at Darmstadt for four years, and studied with Henri Pousseur and Boulez and Berio. In fact, Berio came to one of our shows in New York in 1970.

ALBURGER: And Tom had a connection with Steve Reich.

DRESHER: Yes, and he had a connection to that whole music community at Mills.

ALBURGER: And the other Grateful Dead member--

DRESHER: Phil Lesh. So Tom had been in Europe, and Phil got into the Grateful Dead, and Phil said to Tom, "You have to come be in this band." Tom was always the odd man out, because his musical world was really not dance music. Tom's world was the serious contemporary classical-music world. In fact, much of that unusual music in the Dead's second album, *Anthem of the Sun* -- all the prepared-piano passages and all the weird electronics -- is Tom.

ALBURGER: And, of course, Tom didn't stay for the long haul.

DRESHER: Tom left the band in 1970, and then formed The Rubber Duck Company to do this music-theatre piece. How the new band began was that Tom, Mickey Hart, and Jerry Garcia would improvise with this mime -- between Grateful Dead sets or as an opening set. And the mime, Joe McCord, had a street-theatre piece.

ALBURGER: Was he part of the San Francisco Mime Troupe?

DRESHER: No, this was very different. So this new band was being formed for Joe's theatre piece, and it was really time for Tom to leave the Dead, because he was really not fitting, and the Dead wanted to rock more, they were getting less psychedelic. Well, they always stayed psychedelic, but.... So Tom was the composer for Rubber Duck when I got in the band, but I started writing some of the music for the show, too. So that was my entry into the commercial-music world.

ALBURGER: The name of the show was?

DRESHER: *Tarot*, based on the tarot cards. There's an album. There's a vinyl LP out there, which is actually in the Grateful Dead history books as a weird offshoot of their activities.

ALBURGER: So you're part of that weird offshoot of the Grateful Dead output.

DRESHER: Well, I was, at a very early age. And I do have to admit that Jerry Garcia was my inspiration for a number of years.

ALBURGER: As a guitarist.

DRESHER: And for what the Dead did, in terms of where they would go sonically. As much as people like to disparage the Dead, magic things happened. Things happened on stage that were clearly unlike anything that had ever happened in rock and roll, before or since: the feedback, just dealing with the ambience of the moment, making transitions and going places that were very special. That's part of why people love that band. Performances were very unpredictable. Even before the death of Jerry, I hadn't seen the Dead for a number of years. But I've seen the Dead be completely boring and awful, and then I've seen moments that were astonishing. Sometimes in the same set! That was part of the whole Grateful Dead experience.

ALBURGER: You'd hang around long enough, and you'd see the face of God. But sometimes it was a long hangout.

DRESHER: Sometimes it was really boring.

ALBURGER: What was your inspiration for becoming a guitarist?

DRESHER: I hadn't heard the Dead when I took up guitar. The inspiration was probably folk blues first.

ALBURGER: Not every L.A. kid would have been so inspired.

DRESHER: Well, there was a folk club there called the Ashgrove, which was a major venue for left-wing political activity and roots music.

ALBURGER: So there was an environment.

DRESHER: A very good environment. And I heard Taj Mahal almost every weekend when he was playing. He played my senior prom!

ALBURGER: Wow! We just had a DJ.

DRESHER: Ry Cooder and Taj had a band called Rising Sons, back around '65.

ALBURGER: So that's how you started on guitar.

DRESHER: Yes. And then also, really, the Second British Invasion: hearing the Blues Breakers and Eric Clapton. I was already playing the guitar when I first heard Jimi Hendrix in 1968. And hearing Hendrix changed my life, too. Hendrix was a real epiphany. And the Yardbirds were really amazing.

ALBURGER: So Hendrix was more of an inspiration than Clapton?

DRESHER: Yes. Nothing prepared the world for Hendrix.

ALBURGER: Being inspired by Hendrix, you were in good company.

DRESHER: Oh yes. Almost every guitarist living nowadays would agree. On so many levels, Hendrix was amazing: just the sheer virtuosity, and what he did with the instrument, but also in the recording studio -- using the guitar in an orchestral way. The multi-tracking, the range of timbres that he would use on the guitar was unprecedented. Most guitarists back then had one sound, and they used that sound, and it was a great sound, if it were B.B. King, Albert Collins, or Clapton. They had a single sound, usually. But in virtually every tune, Hendrix would use his guitar in very, very different ways.

ALBURGER: And yet, despite the Hendrix influence you decided against becoming a rock god.

DRESHER: Well, I tried to juggle both classical and popular music. I dropped out of school just to play music and teach myself music. I graduated from high school in the spring of '68, and moved to Berkeley in the fall.

ALBURGER: And that was moving just to move here, rather than to go to school.

DRESHER: Yes, just to be here.

ALBURGER: That was right after a certain summer, wasn't it?

DRESHER: Yes, it was really great. It was fabulous.

ALBURGER: 17 and the Summer of Love!

DRESHER: But I was always doing non-pop music, too. I was always doing extended improvisational things. I was always doing things influenced by Indian music. I started studying sitar when I was 16.

ALBURGER: You had been exposed to a lot beyond...

DRESHER: We're kind of working backwards in my history! I grew up with a very strict classical-music education. I grew up with piano lessons from when I was 7 years old. This I thought was typical, but it's not. I had very substantial music-theory lessons as a piano student, so, when I took up the guitar, I could read music, write music, and I knew all about harmonic theory and chord structure. I just assumed that every piano student got that. I could hear, "Yes, that's a minor ninth chord with a #4. So what?"

ALBURGER: But that wasn't what every student guitar player or pianist was hearing or getting.

DRESHER: Only in the last few years did I realize that piano isn't always taught that way.

ALBURGER: Who was that piano teacher?

DRESHER: Sara Lee Halperin.

ALBURGER: No relation to Anna and Lawrence Halprin in the Bay Area.

DRESHER: No.

ALBURGER: So you probably had had some exposure to contemporary classical music as well?

DRESHER: Oh yes. The other thing was that my sister played the cello and was in orchestras, my mother played the piano, and my father played the record player and the radio all the time -- all the time -- and he was a classical-music freak. My father was a mathematician. He taught at UCLA part-time, and so there was Schoenberg Hall. Schoenberg was dead of course.

ALBURGER: At least Boulez felt that way!

DRESHER: Well he was really dead when I began composing! But I saw Stravinsky conduct when I was a kid. He conducted *The Firebird* at the Hollywood Bowl with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and I saw that when I was seven or eight.

ALBURGER: Would that have been influential, too?

DRESHER: No! No, uh-uh! And I was dragged to opera. I saw my first opera; when I was five or six I saw *Aida*. That's a tough opera for a five- or six-year-old.

ALBURGER: That was about my age and my opera.

DRESHER: Really? I saw it at Shrine Auditorium, which is huge. Of course, until recently there was no opera company in Los Angeles. This was a San Francisco Opera production, and they had live elephants onstage. That was O.K.! That got my attention. So I had a very substantial background, but I had no connection. It didn't actually mean anything to me emotionally, until I could play guitar. It was when I started to play guitar that I was doing something that had meaning to me, because I was making up my own songs.

ALBURGER: You never composed as a piano player?

DRESHER: Well, I would write these things called *Sonata* or *Prelude*, and I didn't know what those forms were! But there were these big Rachmaninoffian chords! They never went anywhere. I really didn't have an identity with them. But I was very well exposed from an early age to the idea that composition was an activity where you pushed the envelope. I knew who John Cage was, and Stravinsky. And actually, even when I was a teenager, I was exposed to Harry Partch. I started building instruments when I was in high school. And so my mother, who is a newspaper-clipping fanatic -- anything I would get interested in, she would start clipping things about it. And Partch did some residency at UCLA, and there was the ethnomusicology center there, so I started seeing and being exposed to a lot of different threads that actually became very important to me later in my work.

ALBURGER: So L.A. wasn't a bad place in which to grow up.

DRESHER: It was fine. The L.A. Phil is a great orchestra. Stravinsky was there. At that point, he wasn't super-active because he was pretty elderly.

ALBURGER: Sure. Of course, his last pieces were from the mid-60's. But jumping ahead, there you were in New York doing *Tarot*, and that wasn't going anywhere for you.

DRESHER: Spiritually, it was completely empty. Plus, we did an instrumental record. Well, nobody did an instrumental pop music record back in 1970. That was right when jazz was making a major transition. That was after *In a Silent Way*, *Bitch's Brew* by Miles Davis, and then John McLaughlin started doing his Mahavishnu Orchestra -- that was the next big epiphany for me.

ALBURGER: It was large-scale instrumental --

DRESHER: Virtuositic on a level that I'd never heard -- that I never thought was imaginable -- and very unusual musical structures, both in terms of the harmonies and the meters. That was the time in pop music when, if you wanted to push the envelope, you did something in seven or 13. That was the way to be experimental! The Mahavishnu Orchestra was better at that than anyone had ever been. I first heard Mahavishnu Orchestra in New York. There were multiple tracks in my experience. Even through all the playing of pop music, I was voraciously consuming anything I could listen to, from any part of the world, from any part in history. I just wanted to know, and I was doing this through buying used records, because that was all I could afford. Back in Berkeley, there were all these great record stores on Telegraph Avenue. I used to play for spare change on the street, play guitar and my weird invented instruments on the street, take the money, and go buy records.

ALBURGER: What kind of weird, invented instruments did you have? Were they Patch inspired?

DRESHER: No, these were before. I started really doing Patch work in about '73-'74. Before that, I started building string instruments that were derived from guitars and ethnic instruments. Sitar had a major influence on my sound.

ALBURGER: And from Indian music you went to other world musics.

DRESHER: Yes. I saw my first Balinese shadow play in 1969 and my first Javanese gamelan in 1970. I remember I went down to Cal Arts to have an admissions interview. I met Mel Powell and Morton Subotnick, and the night before there was a concert that the L.A. Phil did with Frank Zappa at UCLA. And on the program, they also had a tape piece by Mel Powell. The program was *The Rite of Spring*, this Mel Powell piece, and the second half of the program was Zappa. Virtually the whole audience was there for Zappa, and Mel Powell was so upset, that he pulled his tape and walked out. Then I had the interview with him the next morning.

ALBURGER: You didn't hear Mel's piece.

DRESHER: He refused to have his piece played. He thought it was a travesty of serious music to have Zappa and his audience. I don't know if Powell ever came to recognize Zappa as a more significant artist than what he perceived him to be back then. They certainly co-existed in the same town for a long time, and Zappa, certainly by the time Mel died last year, had pretty much established his credentials when the Ensemble Intercontemporain was playing his pieces. He was also working with Ensemble Modern, and I'm sure Mel would have liked that himself!

ALBURGER: So perhaps Mel must not have been at his best that next day for the interview, I would think.

DRESHER: He was really pissed! And it was very interesting, because I loved the Zappa concert, and I thought there was no reason why Mel's music and Zappa's music couldn't co-exist. And Mel was really on a tirade about debasement, and he was really mad at Zubin Mehta for bad programming. To be honest, the audience probably wouldn't have been that receptive to Mel's piece.

ALBURGER: Possibly not. The only unusual programming like that in the Bay Area was that famous "surviving members of The Grateful Dead / John Cage" improv of a few years ago. But the Dead audience was a pretty good audience for the first half of the concert -- they just took in whatever.

DRESHER: Really?

ALBURGER: Well, they were a little antsy...

DRESHER: Well, Mel's piece was only about eight minutes long.

ALBURGER: But it was a tape piece.

DRESHER: Tape and orchestra.

ALBURGER: Possibly, people would have gotten into it. After all, Zappa's music always had that experimental edge to it.

DRESHER: I wouldn't want to call it pastiche, but it was that weaving of really hardcore-interesting music, and then doo-wop and pop tunes!

ALBURGER: "Hardcore-interesting music!" Would that characterize what you do?

DRESHER: Hardcore-interesting music? I hope so! Softcore-interesting music.

ALBURGER: Doo-wop as well?

DRESHER: Doo-wop was never as interesting to me. Motown is interesting to me. I love the song structures, and I love the interplay of lyric and musical form. The peak of Motown is a real achievement in American popular music. So, anyway, I was in L.A. and had also been over to UCLA for the Javanese shadow play, with gamelan.

ALBURGER: So all these influences. And New York and the pop band.

DRESHER: It was pretty fringe pop. Pop culture never accepted it. As a band, Rubber Duck was not commercially successful. We had *Tarot*, which was successful as an Off-Broadway show. We did the soundtrack album. It was an instrumental piece. It was all instrumental; no story on the LP. United Artists signed it, and the person who signed us immediately got fired. So we were orphaned, and we got passed off to someone else in the company. Even before the record came out, our A&R contact out of L.A. didn't have a clue who we were and had no interest in this weird thing. We couldn't even get them to answer our phone calls.

ALBURGER: You got buried.

DRESHER: Yes, buried. And that was a very, very, very good education about how that world worked: what were the values of the people I was dealing with.

ALBURGER: Did any of that provide experience for running your own ensemble?

DRESHER: Well, I've always naturally been inclined towards being the bandleader. When the band came back to the Bay Area, we really changed. We lost the drummer. Tom and I and the bass player came back, and auditioned drummers, and in fact, met the drummer I work with now. We added another guitar player (we had a violin in the band originally) and started gigging around in clubs. We were an instrumental band playing in dance clubs, playing in 17/8 time signatures and 10/4, and it wasn't going to make it. But the record came out, and we did some dates, and we quickly realized, "This is not happening," and we just wanted to play the music, and we just wanted to jam. We started doing these extended jams that were sort of half Grateful Dead, half Mahavishnu Orchestra. Pretty soon it dissipated into just having fun. It wasn't about making any money. That was right when I was hanging out at Mills College. That's when I really hooked up with a whole different group of people, and I realized instantly, "These are people who are doing music for the same reasons that I'm doing it." I got into their tape archive and was listening to really early Phil Glass, and all this great electronic music that had been done around the Tape Music Center. They had all these recordings from Europe. I said, "This is my home. I'm here." Between Terry and Bob Ashley, I had two amazing musical minds to be inspired by.

ALBURGER: Did you actually study with them, or just hang out?

DRESHER: Nobody really studies with either of them. You just hung out. With Ashley, it was just talking in the hallway. Letting Bob go off, and Bob is an amazing talker, and he has such amazing ideas about what music is, and what sound is, and how it fits into much broader aesthetic, artistic, and social issues. And with Terry, you don't talk about it, you just do it. Terry taught Indian music. By that point, I had already been studying Indian sitar music with Krishna Batt. I took vocal lessons with Terry for about a year and a half.

ALBURGER: Were you enrolled at Berkeley at the same time?

DRESHER: I enrolled in Berkeley in '75. I studied with a great sitarist, Nikhil Banerjee, at the Center for World Music in Berkeley. I had a two-hour lesson with him five days a week. Basically, I spent the rest of my day practicing, because you weren't allowed to write notes during your lesson. It was the most astonishing ear training that one could have!

ALBURGER: Yes!

DRESHER: The whole sophisticated ornamentation system: it's not so simple. The essence of the music is much more elaborate than just the notes you play. It's how you connect the notes, how you inflect the pitch, as you know. That summer changed my life, and it was then that I wrote my first piece that I consider to be a piece by Paul Dresher, a personality that I can still connect with -- *Guitar Quartet*, which I wrote in the winter of '74-'75. It's a very rudimentary piece, heavily modeled on *In C*, with a few more structural, architectural elements in the score. Each of the four parts is a separate score, but you progress through your part at your own pace.

ALBURGER: More of a *Shaker Loops* approach, where there are modules, but then the entire music...

DRESHER: There are certain points where everyone has to come together, and make a transition at the same time.

ALBURGER: Inspired by *In C*, but also by the study of Indian music.

DRESHER: Not in the sound of the music, but in the discipline. There's nothing "Indian" about the piece, per se -- certainly nothing about ornamentation. It's all very relatively straight-ahead guitar playing.

ALBURGER: Is the piece recorded?

DRESHER: No, but it's been performed a lot. Guitar quartets still pick it up. The L.A. Guitar Quartet played it for years. It was actually the first piece of mine that John Adams heard. He programmed it, actually. We premiered it in '75. I was in the East Bay New Music Ensemble, and we did John's *American Standard* and my *Guitar Quartet*. I didn't know John, and that's when we met. *American Standard* was recorded on Brian Eno's Obscure label. That was John's first record, I think. About the time of *Guitar Quartet* I realized there were big gaps in my education. I had never studied counterpoint or form. I didn't have a really thorough grasp of the complete lineage of Western music history. I basically thought, "I need to go back to school. I need to be serious about it. I'm not fully equipped. I need to fill in the gaps."

ALBURGER: As an undergraduate, you weren't a woman, so you couldn't go to Mills.

DRESHER: I was done with Mills. I wasn't tempted. I knew that I had gotten what I wanted out of Mills.

ALBURGER: So even Pauline Drescher might have gone to Berkeley.

DRESHER: Yes. And I was here, and it was here. If I were to choose schools... I wasn't willing to leave Berkeley. I was having such a great time in the musical community here, which included associates at Mills. But I wanted more rigorous disciplined training than I would have gotten there. So I went to U.C., and I got very vigorously disciplined and trained. But I loved it; it was great; and I did the whole four-year music program in two years.

ALBURGER: And you didn't get any sort of aesthetic shock?

DRESHER: I had no desire to get aesthetic nourishment from U.C. Berkeley. It was very evident that Berkeley was no place to do my own music. I had my musical life outside the university. Within, however, this was boot camp.

ALBURGER: Two different situations. Somewhat like Philip Glass making a similar assessment when he worked with Nadia Boulanger, as many did. The rigor was one place, the creativity was in another place -- keep them apart.

DRESHER: Yes. And I had great teachers at Berkeley. I had a fabulous time, because I had no expectations of doing my music. At that point, the department's program in composition seemed very atrophied by today's standards. A student was not even considered a composer. Students were larval -- completely. They had not matured enough. There was no even potential discussion of undergraduate composition. Even through the master's degree, there was no composing in contemporary musical styles, or your own style. It was "Write a fugue in the style of Bach," "Orchestrate a Beethoven Piano Sonata in the style of Beethoven's orchestration." That's what they taught you.

ALBURGER: And you learned that.

DRESHER: Those were graduate studies. I did counterpoint, music history, theory -- and I loved music theory. I just adored it. I loved harmonizing chorales! I still like it!

ALBURGER: You have a traditional, beautiful side of your output, so I can imagine that.

DRESHER: I love harmony! One of my CD's has *Chorale Times Two*, a piece that started out as a portion of chorale harmonization using the strict contrapuntal rules. I didn't use the same harmonic alignments, but I used the same kind of voice leading. So I still adore harmony. And I had a fabulous music history teacher: Tony Newcomb. I just loved music history.

ALBURGER: As I do.

DRESHER: Yes. There was nothing I didn't like. Tony revealed history to me in such a dynamic way, that I actually went back and took courses that I'd never have imagined myself taking, like a course in art song. As it turned out, I loved art song.

ALBURGER: And the earliest work of yours with which I'm familiar is that series of songs -- *Night Songs* -- which are gorgeous.

DRESHER: But they're not really song forms there. That's an extended form -- developmental forms there.

ALBURGER: But yet the interest in vocal music.

DRESHER: Oh yes. I came to vocal music kicking and screaming, because two of my best musical colleagues -- Rinde Eckert and John Duykers -- were singers, and they just said, "Write for us." And they were willing to do anything I asked them to do.

ALBURGER: When did you meet both of them?

DRESHER: My first music theory teacher was Janice Giteck.

ALBURGER: She's up in Seattle now!

DRESHER: And she quickly recognized me to be someone who was a student but also a potential colleague. In fact, the first week of school, I had a big concert at the University Art Museum with the East Bay New-Music Ensemble. So she brought the class over there for a preview of the concert. This was much more hardcore contemporary than even the work she was doing at that time. So she treated me extremely well.

ALBURGER: "Hardcore contemporary?"

DRESHER: Well, at that point, Janice's musical language was more closely aligned to her work with Darius Milhaud, who had been her teacher.

ALBURGER: So at the time she was somewhat of a late neoclassicist.

DRESHER: Yes, that was really where she was moving out from. I was coming from a very extended minimalist, electronic, long-time-frame, live-electronic-processing-of-sounds, building-musical-instruments orientation.

ALBURGER: So you would have been arguably much more cutting edge than she at the time.

DRESHER: Yes. And she recognized my work as a very interesting and different direction. And she also saw that I was good at music theory, and that I enjoyed it. Her group at the time was called the New Port Costa Players, which was another contemporary-music ensemble with great, great musicians.

ALBURGER: John Duykers was in it.

DRESHER: John was in the group. Toyoji Tomita was in the group. He was Peter Tomita then, but now he's Toyoji.

ALBURGER: I understand the name change.

DRESHER: He changed pretty early.

ALBURGER: There's an extra panache.

DRESHER: It was the beginning of identities, of asserting identities. Some people changed their name to "Rainbow Flower Wreath," or something.

ALBURGER: You were never tempted?

DRESHER: I was never tempted. Actually, for a while, my name was Slim Creep. I was a guitar player!

ALBURGER: Why not! And what about Rinde?

DRESHER: Well, then I started working with John in '77. Actually, my very first real commission was from the Port Costa Players to write the piece that was *Night Songs*. I got that commission when I was finishing graduate school. But then that was right when John left the Bay Area and moved many key players from the Port Costa Players up to Seattle to the Cornish Institute. I took a year off and went to Asia and spent a year just studying music and listening to music in India and Indonesia.

ALBURGER: That was what year?

DRESHER: '79-'80. I finished graduate school --

ALBURGER: Right after U.C. San Diego

DRESHER: Yes. Finished graduate school, and went off to Asia for a year. John offered me a job before I left; I said, "No, John, I've been promising myself a trip to Asia for too long." But part way through the year -- in the spring of 1980 -- John and I were still in communication, and he said, "I've got a job for you if you want." So, towards the late spring, I said, "O.K., well, do I stay in Indonesia indefinitely for years, or do I come back and take this job in Seattle with these great friends and wonderful musicians?" I was running out of money in Indonesia, and so I took the job. Rinde showed up there.

ALBURGER: Some of your pieces, I notice, have a fairly long gestation period. *Night Songs*, for instance, evolved over a number of years.

DRESHER: I started the piece when I was in graduate school in '79. Then I taught summer music camp. Before I went to Asia, I wanted to finish the piece. I had my first really big concerts at Festival d'Automne in Paris. Then I went and lived in London with one of my graduate student buddies. This is all pre-Seattle. So I wrote most of *Night Songs* in London. The progression was graduate school / Paris / London / Asia / Seattle.

ALBURGER: So to go to Asia, you went farther east from London. So you kept going east until you got back west.

DRESHER: All the way around.

ALBURGER: Round the world tour.

DRESHER: It was great. I wish I had the time to do that now.

ALBURGER: Perhaps it will happen again sometime.

DRESHER: Now I don't think I'll ever have a year to kick around. But anyway, I wrote most of *Night Songs* in the fall of '79, and then I put it away when I went to Asia. I sent the score home. I hadn't quite finished the last movement, and I was uncertain about the last movement, frankly. When I got back here in the fall of '80, the piece was scheduled to premiere in the spring of '81. So I set to work back on the piece in the fall of '80, and I finished it over Christmas vacation, because it was hard to write during school. I was teaching for the first time, and I had so much course preparation. I was able to design my own courses, and I made up interesting courses, but it was a lot of work. I taught a course called "Rhythm and Time." I basically wanted it to be a high-level survey course in how to organize time on the smallest level and the largest level.

ALBURGER: So you were working all through music history and --

DRESHER: -- and all parts of the world. Cyclical Indian or Javanese forms, versus sonata form.

ALBURGER: The amount of research and choice.

DRESHER: Oh, it was so exciting to me, because it was what I was interested in personally.

ALBURGER: But the preparation takes a lot of time.

DRESHER: Yes. I took a lot of long train rides in India, because India's a big country, and the easiest way to get around is to take trains. Train service in India is very good, compared to everything else in India, like hygiene, air quality.

ALBURGER: Part of the English background.

DRESHER: Yes. That's a whole other subject: the marriage of the British and Indian system, and why it works reasonably well in India, and not so well in other places. So what I did on these long train rides was keep a journal about my musical thoughts, and I started really focussing on time issues, and time organization: long disquisitions on time organization on these long train rides. I had the time. I used that as the starting point for the course I did. So I did no composing work during the fall. Christmas vacation came, and I spent two weeks and finished the piece -- revised the whole last movement, which I pretty much tossed out and started again. Some of the ideas had been right, but I got the piece correct this time. I had done some things wrong.

ALBURGER: Would that be typical of some of your other pieces that have a double date -- a beginning date and an end date -- that there were so many things going on in your life?

DRESHER: For some pieces that has been true, some of them not.

ALBURGER: Do some just need that gestation period?

DRESHER: Yes. Some of them I write, and I listen to them and say, "You didn't do what you wanted. You knew what you wanted to do, and you didn't achieve it." That was a really classic thing that happened in *Slow Fire*.

ALBURGER: That's '85 to '88.

DRESHER: Yes. There were three completely different manifestations of the piece, before we got it right. The first version was a one-act version that we did in 1985. We premiered it at the New Music America Festival, and we knew it was great. While we were making it, we said, "You know, this is not a short one-act, this is a whole opera, but we don't know what's going to happen next. Let's just make our closed 35-minute piece, but we know we're going to blow this thing open."

ALBURGER: It was a provisional finish.

DRESHER: Well, it was a finished piece. If you look at it, it's complete in and of itself. But we wanted to do more with the character. We knew there was more to do there. The success of *Slow Fire* got us money to finish the piece. So we got a commission from the American Music Theatre Festival, and Rinde and I went to work on it in the spring of '86. We premiered the new version in October '86. It was a two-act piece, where we added a second character: a woman, Rinde's character's sister. We concocted this elaborate story for the second act. So the first act was just "Bob," and the second act was "Bob" and "Sis."

ALBURGER: Bob.

DRESHER: All the names are palindromes! There's Bob, Dad, Sis, and Mom.

ALBURGER: ...Wow!

DRESHER: We did it, and it didn't suck, but it wasn't what we wanted. We did about 20 or 30 performances of it. Rinde and I said, "You know, it's not right. It's nowhere near as good as the first act was by itself." We sat on it, and pondered for over a year, sitting around saying, "I don't know, we've really got to fix this." We managed to say, "We're going to do it." We didn't have any money, but we got a tour booked. We went back to work on it in the fall of '87 (we took off a year from it) and worked on it for about four or five months, and then we premiered it in February of '88.

ALBURGER: Third time was a charm?

DRESHER: The third time and it was brilliant. I'm very proud of that piece. It's had over 150 or 200 performances. We've taken it to Europe three times. There have been numerous tours in the U.S.

ALBURGER: Has that been your biggest work, in terms of the reception, number of performances, and weightiness.

DRESHER: Yes, definitely at this point. *Ravenshead* may get close. *Ravenshead* is doing very well.

ALBURGER: Right. The difference there, though, of course, is that...

DRESHER: I'm not the composer!

ALBURGER: Which is a pretty big difference!

DRESHER: Yeah, but it's my baby.

ALBURGER: It's your baby nonetheless.

DRESHER: I commissioned it, I produced it. Steve Mackey and Rinde wrote it. It's their piece, aesthetically. But it would not exist without... I put the team together. I put Rinde together with Steve. Steve came to me with the story, and I said, "That's perfect for Rinde." They didn't know each other before that.

ALBURGER: And you and Steve met because you're two guitarist-composers?

DRESHER: When I formed the Electro-Acoustic Band in '93, I asked, "Now, who are the composers?" I always formed groups with the idea that I wanted to play other players' music. All through the 70's, I was playing in new-music ensembles other people's music and my music. It was a cooperative thing: "I'll be in your piece, you be in my piece," that kind of thing. I loved playing other people's music. It was so instructive about different approaches to how music could be organized.

ALBURGER: And we see that in your efforts to the present day.

DRESHER: But then from '79 to '93, I just played my music. All my company did, all my performances were just my compositions.

ALBURGER: Were this company the Paul Dresher Ensemble?

DRESHER: Yes. I formed the Ensemble in '85.

ALBURGER: For *Slow Fire*.

DRESHER: Actually, Rinde and I made a little study piece before that called *Was Are Will Be*. Rinde and I had started making pieces together with George Coates in 1981. That was a very important phase. While I had always been the leader of my rock band and handled the booking and did the logistics, it wasn't until I started working with George Coates that I started working in music theater regularly and started to understand that larger scale. Even though I had worked in music theater back with Tom Constantin in 1970, I didn't understand how theater was pulled together. I was fascinated by it. I understood that music did a completely different thing when you put it into a dramatic context, and it was something for which my own music seemed very appropriate. But, until I worked with George, I didn't see how to build a piece from the inside, where you deal with both music and dramatic issues. And also how to build and maintain a company. Now some of the things I learned from George was what not to do, because George is a difficult artistic director. And so, when I formed my company, I said, "I'm not going to do all these things that George did."

ALBURGER: What things?

DRESHER: Oh, how you deal with individuals. The stories you tell people about who's in charge. George called it a "collective," because he needed it to be a collective, so that he didn't have to pay people. But the reality was that he wanted to be the boss. When I formed my company, I said, "Look, you guys, I'm the boss. I love your artistry, but..."

ALBURGER: At least the situation was a little more up front.

DRESHER: It was very up front. And I said, "I'll do everything I can to pay you well." And I'm proud of my relationships within the company, because most of the people who work with me stay together.

ALBURGER: So you were in Seattle when you met Rinde.

DRESHER: He sang in *Night Songs*.

ALBURGER: And the years in Seattle were.

DRESHER: '80 and '81.

ALBURGER: And then you were back in San Francisco.

DRESHER: In the summer of '81, we made *The Way of How*, and that was with John Duykers, Rinde Eckert, myself, Leonard Pitt, and George as director.

ALBURGER: In San Francisco.

DRESHER: In San Francisco, and we put it together there in the summer of '81 and premiered it in September of '81.

ALBURGER: Had you just recently met George?

DRESHER: I met George in the summer. John pulled us together. I had seen George's work -- two pieces: one with Leonard Pitt called *2019 Blake* and the other called *Duykers The First*, and I thought they were both great pieces. So I was anxious to work with this guy. *2019 Blake* astonished me. It was a kind of performance art, but it was based on a very highly disciplined physical performance, because Leonard Pitt is a very skilled physical performer/mime.

ALBURGER: You've been associated with mimes through your career?

DRESHER: Yes! And opera singers! Go figure!

ALBURGER: The extremes. Some never talk, the others won't shut up!

DRESHER: I basically took a leave from Cornish for the fall. So for two years after that -- 81-82 and 82-83 -- I took the fall off to make work, and I went back to Cornish and taught in the spring.

ALBURGER: What were you teaching there?

DRESHER: Well, let's see. I taught musicianship, African drumming, higher-level theory courses like the *Rhythm and Time* course, gamelan, harmony, instrument building.

ALBURGER: You got around.

DRESHER: Yes, you had to teach a lot; it was a heavy load. I was commuting. I was teaching a full-time load in three days: about 20 contact hours with students in three days -- which was intense. Then I'd fly out on Thursday night, wherever I was doing shows, either in San Francisco or New York. Then I'd fly back on Monday and be ready for class on Tuesday morning. The last time I taught was the spring of '83.

ALBURGER: There was enough work in performance to keep you going.

DRESHER: I made a go of it. The pieces I did with George were very successful. *The Way of How* was extremely successful. We did a second piece called *Are Are*. We sold out three weeks; we were doing two shows a day, even on Monday nights.

ALBURGER: Did you have other instrumentalists with you?

DRESHER: No. Those two pieces were me and the tape-loop system.

ALBURGER: A piece on one of your CD's dates from that time.

DRESHER: *Dark Blue* started as the overture to *Are Are*. But then it had a different tempo, different structure all together -- didn't go where this one goes, but the kernel of it is there. Those pieces were so successful that we started having more serious money for our projects. I was getting a salary of about \$400 a month to be full time composer / music director. And I could live on \$400 a month.

ALBURGER: That's many composers' dream: to be making it as a composer and not have to teach.

DRESHER: I love teaching. I had no problem teaching.

ALBURGER: And indeed, there is nothing wrong with teaching, but it's --

DRESHER: It's time consuming. So we did this piece called *See Hear*, which was the first piece that George did where the set was all projected. After making *Are Are*, George said, "Well, what do you want to do?" I said, "Well, George, I'm sick of doing these pieces with me as the only performer and tape loop. I want to do chamber music." So George was very accommodating. He said, "O.K., I'm going to make a piece about chamber music performers." I said, "What I want is an ensemble of solo instruments." So we had 13 musicians -- a "one each" ensemble.

ALBURGER: Was it a mini-chamber orchestra?

DRESHER: Well, no. I had two flutes (actually flute and piccolo), oboe, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, horn, trombone, violin, viola, cello, percussion, and piano.

ALBURGER: Yes, it was a small orchestra!

DRESHER: Yes! So George designed this set of bleachers upon which the musicians would all be seated (instead of risers), so that they would all be visible. The whole set was projected. I think it was the first projected piece, by the same designer who then Phil Glass worked with: Jerry Sirlin.

ALBURGER: For *1000 Airplanes on the Roof*.

DRESHER: And also *Hydrogen Jukebox*. But the first piece that did that was *See Hear*, which premiered in spring of 1984, and was wildly successful. We did two nights at Zellerbach Hall in Berkeley. It was pretty stunning. No one had ever seen anything like that before. It was a 90-minute, through-composed score. There were three singers but no words -- just all vocalise. I had John, Rinde, and Rinde's sister Thomasa Eckert, and a Japanese mime named Hitomi Ikuma. By that point, Leonard had gotten tired of working with George and being a victim of opera singers.

ALBURGER: Another mime!

DRESHER: One of Leonard's protege's became the mime. And Roger Nelson was the conductor. He was from the Cornish Institute and had also been in the Port Costa Players. After that, George and I had a big falling out.

ALBURGER: *Are Are* had a longer run.

DRESHER: *Are Are* we did for three weeks running at Theater Artaud. *Are Are* could only be done in a space like Theater Artaud, because it used a full 125 feet of depth from the front of the stage to the back wall -- a brilliant idea of George's. Fairly stunning to have that much depth on stage. But after *See Hear*, George and I had a falling out. George said, "I want to just do this. I want to make these projected, visual feasts." I said, "Well, you know, it was great, but I want to do more..." Rinde and I were doing these improvisations to come up with material for both *Are Are* and *See Hear* that were heading towards character and language, and a much more aggressive, less beautiful, more physical performance style. "Beautiful pictures, beautiful music": that's what George wanted to do.

ALBURGER: You wanted more of an edge.

DRESHER: I wanted an edge, I wanted more aggressive music, I wanted a more "in your face" performance style, and I knew that Rinde and I could do it. There were all of these things that Rinde and I were coming up with improvisationally. So, when I left the company, I started writing music, and I invited Rinde over, and we got the kernel for *Slow Fire*.

ALBURGER: *Slow Fire* didn't have anything to do with George Coates.

DRESHER: It was the antithesis of my work with George. It was when I first put my company together, it was when I was collaborating with Rinde and a tape loop system. It was about character, about language, about aggressive styles of physical performance. And Rinde kept wanting to do slow motion. I said, "No, I'm not having any slow motion." Robert Wilson --

ALBURGER: Robert Wilson has covered that base very thoroughly.

DRESHER: I want to move this piece along.

ALBURGER: You were fast motion.

DRESHER: I was moderate motion.

ALBURGER: It was not *Moderate Fire*, it was *Slow Fire*.

DRESHER: It was *Slow Fire*. That was about the subject.

ALBURGER: About fires.

DRESHER: It was about firearms. It's actually a term used in the converting of an automatic weapon, from, say, 600 rounds per minute to 900. We started researching this in *Soldier of Fortune* magazine. We had the idea for a kernel for a character, and that's how the idea for *Slow Fire* came about -- working with our director, Richard E.T. White, who turns out now, by a completely circuitous route, is Chairman of the Theater Department at the Cornish Institute.

ALBURGER: Is there a libretto -- a book -- for *Slow Fire*?

DRESHER: Yes, but nothing came together in a traditional way. A musical idea would trigger a text idea, a text idea would trigger a musical idea. I would write a tune with no words, Rinde would write words to it, I would change the melody to fit the words -- hopscotching back and forth. Truly collaboration. 100 per cent collaboration.

ALBURGER: So the book would be by Rinde and you -- the concepts.

DRESHER: Well, the words are by Rinde and the music is by me, but the words and music are totally, mutually interwoven in their creation. There are certain places where there are through-composed vocal melodies. But there are a lot of places where Rinde is declaiming in "arrived-at" melodies that have become fixed in the piece.

ALBURGER: So those "arrived-at" melodies would be his contribution.

DRESHER: Definitely.

ALBURGER: So a musical collaboration, to an extent.

DRESHER: Oh, of course, absolutely.

ALBURGER: And did you have text contributions, in terms of shaping the libretto?

DRESHER: Yes, but certainly less significantly than the way Rinde influenced the music. I set the aesthetic, I chose the people. That's how I run the company. When I do theater, I say, "I'm going to choose the people, choose the project, and then let the artists do their thing." I've got to choose people who are strong personalities, and if there's a fight within the collaboration, which there often is, about an aesthetic issue, I'm not the boss. I might be the final decision, but I really hope that a consensus is reached. I don't like saying, "O.K., we're going to do it this way, because I say so." I really prefer an artistic consensus to be reached if at all possible.

ALBURGER: Would the example of Bob Ashley been in the back of your mind as you were developing your own management style?

DRESHER: No. I would hate to think of Bob as a manager. I think Bob would be a mismanager. Fortunately, Bob married Mimi Johnson, who is a fabulous manager. Bob was an important icon for me, as an iconoclast, as a person who really more profoundly questioned how to make a performance than I ever have. But I'm not interested in that for me. It's not my task. Bob is making a unique contribution and is very influential on many people, some in obvious ways, some in not very obvious ways. In fact, as a composer, for years I had what I called my "ghosts," that talked to me over my shoulder, and critiqued my work as I was doing it. Fortunately I've banished these ghosts, but Bob was definitely one of those ghosts -- one of those people for whom I had an image -- their aesthetic, what they created in the world, and what they would say looking over my shoulder and seeing what I was doing.

ALBURGER: It can be that one of the advantages of age is that, if we go along a certain path, we perhaps become a little more confident in what we're doing.

DRESHER: At a certain point, you accept yourself. You either love who you are or you don't, but you accept. This is who I am, this is the work that I do, this is what I'm good at, this is what inspires me. Maybe it is or isn't popular, successful, fashionable, whatever. But it's what it is. And so, fortunately, the ghosts are gone for me at this point. But, for writing a piece like *Night Songs*, I had "conversations" with Ashley, with John Cage, with Boulez.

ALBURGER: Some of the minimalists I would guess.

DRESHER: Yes, Reich was over my shoulder. Steve was definitely over my shoulder.

ALBURGER: So as the manager of your company with *Slow Fire*, you hadn't become a pop composer, but you certainly achieved some measure of popularity.

DRESHER: That was very successful. For a contemporary music composer, doing the kind of music I'm doing, I shouldn't complain. Of course I complain. Everybody complains. I would love to have John Adams's success, in terms of having the resources for his kind of performances. I listen to recordings he's had of his orchestral pieces, and they're stellar. I've got pieces that I think aren't any more difficult. But John, with Edo de Waart and the San Francisco Symphony -- man, they got it right. The musicians, the recordings, the time they had to rehearse and record... sounds great. The rhythm of the ensemble was great. When I have an orchestral piece played, it's going to be off, because they're only going to rehearse two-and-a-half hours.

ALBURGER: The recording of your piece with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra sounds fine. Of course, John is conducting.

DRESHER: But they still had two-and-a-half hours. You can follow the score. Many things work there, and they certainly did many good things. But I can show you sections that are wildly, rhythmically out of sync.

ALBURGER: There's success and there's success. Certainly by now you're comfortable in the Berkeley Hills.

DRESHER: Well, this house is a mixture of both my wife's success and my success, and the fact that when my father died, I was left enough money to buy this house.

ALBURGER: She was a record producer?

DRESHER: She was a performing arts producer. She produced the Music America Festival in San Francisco in 1981. She was a music theater producer. She produced the George Coates company. That's when we first worked together. She started the *Speaking of Music* series at the Exploratorium that Charles Amirkhanyan had for a long time, but Robin started it. Robin was the administrative director for the Center for Contemporary Music at Mills College for ten years, from 1970 through 80.

ALBURGER: And you met through George?

DRESHER: No, we knew each other at the Center for Contemporary Music when I was hanging out at Mills. But she didn't give a damn about me! I was this longhaired, skinny hippie who would go into the Moog studio and work with all these other weirdos at the CCM. We had some friends in common. She liked the bass player who was in the band that I was working with. And she liked "Blue" Gene Tyranny, who was also the piano player in our band. Sometimes she'd drop one of those guys off at my house. But she was the liaison for a Paris festival in '79. The festival was bringing lots of West Coast artists one year -- that was their theme. They bring the aboriginals one year, they bring the West Coast artists one year.

ALBURGER: The primitives from yonder!

DRESHER: Not too far off! Not too far off! They brought over Bob Ashley, Laurie Anderson... Robin showed up the night of my concert. I had cut my hair --

ALBURGER: You had taken a bath!

DRESHER: She liked the music. Turns out, I was cute. I shaved.

ALBURGER: Certain positives associated with the waning of the hippie era!

DRESHER: Actually! So she scheduled me in the *Speaking of Music* Series in the fall of 1980 when I got back, and then she programmed me in *Music America*, and that was when we started socially hanging out.

ALBURGER: A long courtship and collaboration -- like your pieces!

DRESHER: It was tumultuous. It was up and down. When I started being in a relationship with Robin, I was also in another relationship that was very intense and important to me, and I juggled these two relationships, and hurt many people.

ALBURGER: You will want to look at this transcript, I'm sure! We haven't talked about your time at San Diego.

DRESHER: I had a fabulous time. My two years at San Diego were musical heaven.

ALBURGER: Even better than Mills?

DRESHER: Mills wasn't exactly total immersion for me, because I was playing music outside in the community and I was making a living playing rock-and-roll or doing carpentry and moving-and-hauling. But when I went to San Diego, I was a graduate student. They gave me a nice fellowship and an incredible amount of opportunity to do what I wanted. When I applied to graduate schools, I wrote to all of these different music departments saying, "I want to do ethnomusicology and I want to do contemporary composition." And nobody could deal with that. Wesleyan said, "Well, you have to choose one or the other." And San Diego said, "We don't have an ethnomusicology department, but you're welcome to do whatever you want, and we'd be interested in supporting your work in that way." They gave me money to start an African Music and Dance Ensemble. They gave me a whole room and a grant to build musical instruments, including an American gamelan, and to teach a section of an Introduction to Music class that dealt with musical physics and acoustics.

ALBURGER: You were a real hard-working graduate student.

DRESHER: Yes. The instrument-building activity became the written part of my master's thesis, which was called "The Design and Construction of an American Gamelan." I did a whole detailed treatise with drawings and constructions plans and transcriptions of music. My thesis composition was completely different. That was a work for soprano, six percussionists, and electronic tape.

ALBURGER: That was called?

DRESHER: Z.

ALBURGER: Z! I guess Pamela hadn't copyrighted her name yet!

DRESHER: No! This was inspired by the political movie Z.

ALBURGER: San Diego's department was different then than now.

DRESHER: The department was fabulous. They had composers from all different genres and backgrounds and approaches to composition. There was a very lively, argumentative -- at times, contentious; at times supportive -- environment for diverse musical styles. Diverse styles were very much supported. Pauline Oliveros, Robert Erikson, Roger Reynolds, Will Ogden, Bernard Rands. There was also John Silber, who was interested in improvisation, but improvisation not even remotely coming from jazz -- coming from some modernist approach that was very, very different from the free improv that happened in jazz. There was support for instrument building, low-budget and high-budget electronic music, and virtuosic chamber-music performance.

ALBURGER: You certainly would have connected.

DRESHER: At that point, I wasn't that strong a performer of fully-notated music on guitar. I played Bach, but I really brought myself up to speed much later, in terms of playing other people's music and dealing with the guitar in a fully-noted way.

ALBURGER: Do you have particular reminiscences of your teachers there?

DRESHER: Well, Erikson was my closest teacher. I did a lot of work in the electronic music studio. This was, of course, in the days of analog electronics. We had a Buchla 200 Series machine there and a lot of tape recorders, so we had a lot of tape manipulation -- that kind of thing -- and high-quality signal processing of the time: filters, gates, compressors, and so on.

ALBURGER: You worked with Erikson in the studio?

DRESHER: In the studio I worked by myself. I knew the studio already. There were Buchla machines at Mills College, too.

ALBURGER: Don Buchla lives right around here, doesn't he?

DRESHER: Buchla's down the hill here. Don and I have become friends. I think Don is a brilliant designer -- a genius -- a vastly underappreciated musician -- a very unusual man who has amazing ideas. He doesn't seem to come from an electrical engineering background, he comes from a more artistic background. I love what he builds into his machines.

ALBURGER: Did you work with Pauline?

DRESHER: Pauline used to produce these events.

ALBURGER: The meditations.

DRESHER: I did sonic meditations with her, and I went into them with enormous skepticism, and had very transcendental experiences. Sometimes things would happen that would be glorious. Things happened, and you can't deny it. I'm a pretty skeptical, urbane guy. I'm very skeptical of the overt relationship between spirituality and music, and spiritual practice being pursued through music. I feel that music and spirituality have an incredible connection, but that the more direct, overt new-age approach to music-as-spirituality is disturbing to me. I'm not comfortable with it. So I came into some of Pauline's exercises with that skepticism, but I found amazing things happened on a sonic level that created transcendental experience. I do believe that music creates transcendental experiences, but I believe that, if you set out to create a transcendental experience with music, you demean the power of music.

ALBURGER: Except if you're Pauline Oliveros.

DRESHER: Who knows? Something really worked with Pauline's meditations.

ALBURGER: But usually, it seems like a variant of the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle: the very act of measuring -- the very act of trying -- alters the experience or the intention. But if a transcendental experience happens, it happens.

DRESHER: Pauline has very simple sets of instructions, and if you listen and follow the instructions, things happen that can be quite remarkable.

ALBURGER: But in contrast to Pauline --

DRESHER: Erikson was my key person.

ALBURGER: You worked closely with him.

DRESHER: Yes, arguing with him. That was our favorite activity. We argued a lot. His timbre seminar was one of the most revealing bits of education that I ever had. Bob didn't teach you the facts or truth. Bob approached the world musically as a playground -- as an experimental playground. He wanted to know, "What would happen if you did this?" And Bob would be the first person to tell you that some of his pieces didn't work. They were experiments that didn't yield interesting results. But sometimes his experiments were marvelous. In fact, he was the reason I went to San Diego more than anything else. When I was doing radio programming at KPFA in the mid-70's, and when I was applying to graduate schools, I looked at the interesting departments that had composition faculty, and I got tapes and recordings out of the station's library of those faculty members, so I could see what their music was like. I found a tape by Robert Erikson, who I really didn't know anything about. I didn't find out until later that he was the original music director at KPFA. The new-music tradition there was started by Erikson, who was quite an innovator and maverick in all kinds of ways. I heard a piece he had done back in 1967 called *Pacific Sirens*. I couldn't believe it! This was an academic who took the sounds of oceans and ran them through filters, and composed a graphic score with which you improvised. You matched pitch with the filters. It was just gorgeous. Then I found out that he had been a teacher to both Pauline and Terry Riley, both of whose work I knew from recordings. Well, Terry I knew personally at that point.

ALBURGER: At Mills.

DRESHER: Actually, I even knew Terry earlier, in 1968 or '69. He was doing music with a very unusual experimental theatre group called the Floating Lotus Magic Opera Company.

ALBURGER: Something he didn't tell me about in his interview.

DRESHER: I doubt if he'll even remember! I knew some of the people in Floating Lotus, and they had an open call for musicians for this one piece in which Terry was music director -- I think it was called *Bliss Apocalypse*.

ALBURGER: That sounds about right.

DRESHER: I went to a few of those sessions, and I met him, but I couldn't have made any impression on him whatsoever.

ALBURGER: Other people from San Diego that we should touch upon briefly...

DRESHER: Roger Reynolds. I took a fabulous composition seminar with Roger, in which he proposed one of the most challenging compositional problems. His daughter was a championship figure skater. He took it upon himself to edit together classical pieces for her to do her figure skating to. He found, in the process of doing that, that a very high percentage of music in most classic/romantic pieces, is, from one perspective, "unnecessary." It's not the key information that defines the composition's idea. There's a lot of spinning-out elaboration: music that is not core to the ideas of the piece. He edited these well-known classics into three-minute versions. Our assignment was to take a classic or early romantic work and edit it into a two- or three-minute piece. I took a late Beethoven string quartet, op. 127 (I dealt with the first two movements). Even now, I still think in my own work, "What is going on at this moment? What is the key information that is being given to the listener at this moment? What do I expect listeners to understand or to follow? What is the logic? The dialog? The argument? What is the thread that the ear follows?"

ALBURGER: Top 40 composers have this way beyond us! In and out...

DRESHER: Well...

ALBURGER: You were in and out pretty quick from San Diego.

DRESHER: Two years. I had wonderful friends there, who I'm still close to -- people like Brenda Hutchinson and Richard Zvenar. Brenda and Bun Ching-Lam and I shared a house the second year.

ALBURGER: The student colleagues can be just as important.

DRESHER: Absolutely. We had a punk band and wrote our own songs. We did 12-tone and process-oriented composition in a punk rock context. It was a lot of fun.

ALBURGER: The kind of things that need to be done! But what we need to do now is return to the time of *Slow Fire* -- 1985 -- and the punks at the beginning of the Paul Dresher Ensemble: you and Rinde.

DRESHER: Rinde was the only on stage performer. Besides myself, there was the drummer Gene Reffkin, the drummer I've worked with since 1972 as the electronic drummer / percussionist. Director Richard White was an equal collaborator, because Rinde and I didn't know how to make a theatre-piece. One thing I knew was that I that I needed a director. I knew that a director played a very critical role in watching from the outside and giving the piece a long term arc of intelligence and logic. George Coates is very good at that. George is remarkable, and I learned a great deal from George about developing logic -- even if the work is non-language based logic. George always had a visual logic to his pieces.

ALBURGER: All the adventures of *Slow Fire* -- the three different versions -- take us to 1988.

DRESHER: And a company that now had national credibility, a lot of bookings, and the ability to raise money for larger projects. So Rinde and I started to envision larger projects, with Robin, who by this time had become my wife (we had gotten married in 1986) and was our producer. There was a lot more money around back then.

ALBURGER: In the late '80's.

DRESHER: At that point, collaboration and new "opera" were very hot subjects for funders. It was before multiculturalism had hit so hard. Collaboration included multiculturalism, but something happened in the early 90's where funders basically said, "We want to give priority to funding that does more social activism," which seemed to be defined pretty much by race and culture.

ALBURGER: Does that continue to the present day?

DRESHER: Yes. It doesn't mean that I can't get funding for my work by any means. It means that I'm at a disadvantage at a lot of funding agencies. But, to be honest about it, I have certain other advantages. I have my education as an upper-middle-class white person. I have communication skills, I have analytical skills that I received through my education that enable me to be very competitive in grant writing. There's all kinds of balancing and trade-offs.

ALBURGER: So these bigger-ticket projects...

DRESHER: The first one was called *Power Failure*, and the second *Pioneer*. *Power Failure* was the same core team that made *Slow Fire*, but was a multi-character work. I had a four-member ensemble. Miguel Frascioni played keyboards; Ned Rothenberg played woodwinds; I played guitar, keyboards, and bass; and Gene Reffkin played percussion. We had four singers. It was Rinde's first foray into writing a multi-character work, and it had problems. He didn't have the playwriting skills to create viable characters, at that point, that didn't have to speak his personae. There are many wonderful things in the music and text that I feel really strong about, but there's still something in the piece that makes Rinde and I say, "We didn't really achieve what we wanted."

ALBURGER: But this time, rather than doing another version, you went on.

DRESHER: Well, we did two versions of it, but that was normal. Operas need to be workshopped. If you don't have much opportunity for a non-public workshop, your first performances are your workshop! *Power Failure*'s revision was not on the huge scale of *Slow Fire*'s. *Slow Fire* was architecturally a completely different work in its second and third manifestations.

ALBURGER: *Power Failure* was a better piece the second time?

DRESHER: Yes, oh definitely.

ALBURGER: Giving you the confidence to go on to *Pioneer*.

DRESHER: *Pioneer* was already in process. *Pioneer* was a more of that open-ended "create a piece in an intensive six- to eight-week rehearsal process." I managed to convince a director who I had worked with and who I adore, Robert Woodruff, to work with us. I had done scores for a couple of his productions -- although they weren't traditional productions.

ALBURGER: Of course not!

DRESHER: We did a *Tempest* together. We did a piece called *Figaro Gets a Divorce*, which follows up on the Figaro stories.

ALBURGER: And you did the music.

DRESHER: Yes. Those were in '86 and '87 at the La Jolla Playhouse in really big productions that were really nice. So Robert was the director for the new piece, which looked at the American West. The idea came out of discussions that John Duykers and I had about really loving country music. And how it was not O.K. to love Patsy Cline, Hank Williams, and Merle Haggard. It was roots country music that we really enjoyed. John said, "There's something incredibly poetic about the means of expression, in the directness and the low-brow metaphors. Let's do something about the American West." John's from Montana. John is from the American West, even though you'd never know that from his career path. I grew up in the West -- the Southwest. Robin said, "We really need to have some people who's work is identified with the West in some way." She had known Jo Harvey and Terry Allen for a long time. Terry is a visual artist and songwriter, who uses a country music format (they're from Lubbock, Texas), but he writes songs that are atypical in their lyric content. Jo Harvey is a character-based performance-artist actress, who has a waitress, white-trash personae. She's been in a number of movies, such as *Fried Green Tomatoes*. Terry, Jo, Robert, John, Rinde, Robin, and I were the key people. That piece we made in 1990 and premiered at the Spoleto Festival. It was a wonderful piece, and it offended everybody, because it's full of profanity. There was one scene that Robert wanted, which Terry wrote that was basically an historical diatribe from a white racist perspective, done in the style of an Andrew Dice Clay nightclub act. There was something to offend everyone.

ALBURGER: In *Pioneer*, then, Rinde was an actor, not a writer.

DRESHER: He wrote scenes and made a lot of musical contributions as well. I really wanted to deal with American vernacular style in a very explicit way. *Power Failure* had been a much more abstract piece with an abstract harmonic structure that defined the arcs of the work and what the musical materials were. In *Pioneer*, I wanted to go back to vernacular. So we did references to Tex-Mex music and country music. Terry wrote a couple of songs. Rinde played accordion and would come up with basic riffs. He did a vocal piece that was a take-off on 20's music, through a megaphone!

ALBURGER: Gene was the drummer.

DRESHER: Yes. This time I had Craig Fry on violin and Phil Aaberg on keyboard. And both Phil and Craig became musicians in the Electro-Acoustic Band, when I formed that in 1993.

ALBURGER: This is starting to sound like the kernel of the present ensemble.

DRESHER: This is the kernel.

ALBURGER: Compared to your present six-person ensemble, you were at four-out-of-six -- over the half-way point.

DRESHER: The piece we did after that was another theatre piece that Rinde decided he wanted to direct and write but not perform in: a two-person piece called *Awed Behavior*.

ALBURGER: Your pieces often have unexpected titles.

DRESHER: My titles often have some sort of word play.

ALBURGER: Is that the influence of your lyric people, or is that something inherent to you?

DRESHER: The way you title your pieces -- just like the album cover that you would put on an LP -- is your opportunity to contextualize something about the piece: your opportunity to give the first orientation towards what you want the listener to focus on.

ALBURGER: It's a door, so you might as well make it a nice one.

DRESHER: You might as well use it.

ALBURGER: And the band for *Awed Behavior*?

DRESHER: I formed a band there with Gene the drummer, Phil the keyboard player, and Paul Hanson the bassoon-saxophone player who's in the current group. And that piece again had some wonderful score elements, but Rinde and I felt that we didn't achieve what we wanted dramatically.

ALBURGER: *Pioneer* was much more successful. Interesting that by that point more than 50% Electro-Acoustic Band, and yet came out of country music.

DRESHER: Well, I choose musicians based on their range of abilities. The reason I work with Phil, for instance, is that he can sight-read a piece by Carter (he's that good a musician), and he can make music out of it. And he can play it like D.C. House style, circa 1996, and he knows what that means, in terms of how to voice chords and how to have a rhythmic feel.

ALBURGER: After *Awed Behavior* in 1993...

DRESHER: It was clear to Rinde and I that our aesthetics had diverged. We each needed to work at different things. I was desperate to get back to chamber music. I had done so much music theatre since 1981 -- all of it with him, and so much of it wildly successful -- but I had reached a point where I felt that my musical language was stagnating. The problems of music theatre and opera are so interesting and compelling, but they didn't allow me the time to go back and do basic research on musical vocabulary: the evolution of musical ideas. Things happened in *Power Failure*, which were important musical steps for me, stylistically, but I didn't have the opportunity to go further with them and dig deeper, because of my involvement with solving dramatic issues.

ALBURGER: What were those breakthroughs?

DRESHER: I desperately needed a much richer harmonic vocabulary than what minimalism offered, and I needed to understand the implications on time and atmosphere. I needed to understand how to deal with a different sense of time of development when you started to have much more pungent harmonic material. I still considered myself (and probably still do today) a modal composer. But what the modes are is very different. My modes are not necessarily tonally focussed -- they're just fields of notes. I tend to look at my music linearly. I don't like to look at music as just chords. I make up almost all of my work out of linear motion, of single lines moving and creating a harmony determined by the mode. The perception of a tonal center comes through how I emphasize, how I voice, and how I put material in the lower register.

ALBURGER: Returning to chamber music brought these influences to the fore.

DRESHER: I often overlapped dance works with theatre works and chamber works. I will often work out an idea in a dance context, but it will sometimes take a different form determined by the choreographer's needs, then I will go back and re-examine the idea. I had a dance commission in 1988 called *Loose the Thread*, and that work became the musical material for the trio *Double Ikat*, which is one of my more successful pieces. It's modal, but not easily reducible. A similar process occurred with *Power Failure*. I desperately needed to get back to that material after the vernaculars of *Pioneer* and *Awed Behavior*. There was a feeling of completion of a 12-year period of working very closely with Rinde -- not from any disrespect. We kept doing *Slow Fire*, and, in fact, soon commissioned Rinde and Steve to do *Ravenshead*.

ALBURGER: That's when you formed the Electro-Acoustic Band.

DRESHER: Yes. I had been invited to do a festival tour in Japan (previous years artists had been Terry Riley, the Kronos Quartet, the Abel-Steinberg-Winant Trio with Lou Harrison). So I used this opportunity to form my own group, to envision a new ensemble to perform the kind of chamber music that I couldn't get done by anyone else, to use the electronic experience that I'd gained from doing the music theatre pieces, to pick my favorite players to do the work of others and myself. My new group premiered in the fall of '93 in Tokyo.

ALBURGER: Interesting that a band that strikes me as quintessentially art-music American unveiled itself in Japan

DRESHER: Nobody in America gave us the opportunity. We rehearsed for about two months and had vast systemic problems, all of which we've incrementally solved over the last few years. So we now have a system that's pretty foolproof -- or, I wouldn't say "foolproof" (no technology is "foolproof"), but is much more consistent. And we have a system for how we integrate new repertory into the company, which is that I always start with a period of just technical work, where I don't have everyone there at once and solve problems one-on-one. We do hours of technical work before the first rehearsal. If we don't do that, we waste everyone's time.

ALBURGER: Originally you also had to solve the problem of what you were going to play.

DRESHER: We did *Double Ikat*. I transcribed the John Adams work, *Disappointment Lake* (it took me three times longer to transcribe it than John had taken to compose it). We did pieces by Peter Garland and Lou Harrison.

ALBURGER: These would have been mostly transcriptions at this point.

DRESHER: All were transcriptions, except that Carl Stone and two Japanese composers were commissioned to write pieces for the group. We raised some commissioning money, and Carl Stone wrote us an algorithmic piece.

ALBURGER: But by now you have a number of commissioned pieces.

DRESHER: We've commissioned about 20 pieces by now. We did Erikson's *Pacific Sirens*, which is an open scoring. Eve Beglarian wrote a very successful piece for us --

ALBURGER: With a rock influence.

DRESHER: The piece didn't hide from the influence. She used it, integrated it, made sense out of it.

ALBURGER: It was something genuine coming from her, rather than something imposed.

DRESHER: Yes, instead of "I wanna do the rock piece, because I think it's a cool idea to do rock and roll. I think it's hipper to do rock and roll than to do something else."

ALBURGER: You don't want to do pieces like that.

DRESHER: Not usually.

ALBURGER: People like Steve Mackey and yourself can address their background in ways that seem genuine.

DRESHER: Steve went through a similar evolution. He studied with Donald Martino. He wrote pure 12-tone pieces for years. That's how he got the position at Princeton. Then they think he's like some "Spy in the House of Love" sort of guy, because, all of a sudden, he's doing pieces that acknowledge rock and roll. If you listen to music from *Ravenshead*, it's so complex. It's gnarly stuff.

ALBURGER: Gnarly is a word that comes up.

DRESHER: It's not rock and roll, or new-age.

ALBURGER: How did you and Steve meet?

DRESHER: I'd seen Steve play with the Kronos a few times. I saw three different pieces that the Kronos did with Steve.

ALBURGER: Which was fairly recent.

DRESHER: Well, the first one was in the early 90's. The first piece of his that I heard was the one that the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players commissioned from him -- *Indigenous Instruments* -- and I loved that piece. I think it's a great, great piece. I met him back stage a few times, and then I asked Jay Cloidt, who's one of my best friends and used to be Kronos's sound engineer (as well as mine) "Jay, what kind of guy is Steve?" He said, "Steve's a really great guy. He's really easy, he's not a prima donna."

ALBURGER: And he isn't.

DRESHER: Right. So I invited him to hear a performance that we were doing with the Margaret Jenkins Dance in Lincoln Center in '94. He knew who I was, he knew my guitar work and admired it, and was very complimentary. He knew me as a composer and as a guitarist. I said, "Steve, I've got this group. Think about writing for us. I think you could do really well." He called me up a few months later. He said, "Well, if you pay me twice as much money as we were talking about, I'll give you ten times as much music."

ALBURGER: So you got a bargain.

DRESHER: Because he knew I did music theatre. And his ideas fit perfectly into my long-term plans for this group. My plan always was to bring this band back into music theatre. I really didn't have a piece that I wanted to do myself. So when Steve told me the story of *Ravenshead*, it was immediately clear that it was perfect for Rinde. Rinde and I had stopped working together, not because we didn't love each other's work. And I still love him as an artist and respect him as a writer and as a performer. And when Steve told me the story, I said, "That's perfect for Rinde to be the writer and performer."

ALBURGER: Do you imagine any time in the future where you might go back to being a composer of music theatre?

DRESHER: Oh yes, I expect to get back to music theatre. I have two projects that I want to do. One of them is with Chen Shi Zhing, who is the director who did the *Peony Pavilion* which was so controversial. We worked together for two summers at UCLA. We have a piece that we started making together, which neither of us has had time to finish.

ALBURGER: Does it have a title?

DRESHER: Right now it's called *Myth of the Hero*.

ALBURGER: And the other project?

DRESHER: I'd like to do an opera (I've had this opera on my list of opera's to do). It's a subject on which Katherine Shao already did a theatre-piece or opera. I didn't see it, and my take on it will be, I'm sure, quite different: *The Death of Anton Webern*. It was reviewed in 20TH-CENTURY MUSIC.

ALBURGER: It was local, too.

DRESHER: I'll do a take on it that's a little bit like *Pale Fire*.

ALBURGER: Not *Slow Fire*.

DRESHER: A formal structuring device that's used in Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* will be combined with *The Death of Anton Webern*.

ALBURGER: If I know your work, there will be a broad palette, which will include where Webern was --

DRESHER: Well, Webern's an inspiration.

ALBURGER: But there will be quite something else, too.

DRESHER: I realize there is a burden of taking on a subject matter like this, which is like taking on the story of Christ.

ALBURGER: For a contemporary musician, yes!

DRESHER: The perspective on it will be very loaded. But, in fact, that's part of what I want to do. I want to deal with Webern as a religious icon, as a religious figure.

ALBURGER: Oh, it's very natural. Certainly he has his disciples to this day. He's not dead. And may the Paul Dresher Ensemble never become so either, nor your other work. There's a great future continuing.

DRESHER: It's hard to keep up. It's a constant, constant financial juggle.

ALBURGER: Is it?

DRESHER: Oh, well, that's why my output is less now.

ALBURGER: Because the ensemble is another side.

DRESHER: It's not the side. It's a reality in my face all the time. I am a business man: keeping this group together, getting it on tour, getting the money for commissions. I'm proud of my list of commissions for this group. These are real commissions. I'm paying these composers real money.

ALBURGER: You have to pay your musicians.

DRESHER: I hope they feel they are paid reasonably.

ALBURGER: There are *L'Histoire* pieces and *Pierrot* pieces. I'm certainly one to hope there will be Electro-Acoustic Band pieces. Do you see that happening?

DRESHER: I think that the nature of technological media is going to continually force an evolution. I think there will be hybrid groups. As I mentioned earlier, I didn't choose the instrumentation, I chose the players. That was a key element. What might mitigate away from what you suggest... Bassoon is not my favorite instrument, but Paul Hanson is so compelling that I wanted him in the group. I would love to have a cello player in the group. Initially I didn't have a cellist who fit the bill. Now we're doing a project with Joan Jeanrenaud (Joan, of course, would fit the bill).

ALBURGER: Will this be your music?

DRESHER: I'm doing a piece and we've commissioned Anthony Davis as well. And in the next season we will have a commission from Terry Riley. Terry will be the soloist in a piano concerto he's writing for the ensemble. And Martin Bresnick is writing us a piece. And we also have pieces commissions coming in from Richard Einhorn and Lois Vierk.

ALBURGER: There's a certain accidental quality in the *L'Histoire* ensemble -- the shrunken whatever-we-can-get orchestra -- and there's a certain accidental quality in the players that you wound up hiring. There's an accidental quality in the typewriter keyboard, but sometimes these accidents have unexpected consequences.

DRESHER: Well, I hope the repertory has life!

Serving Two Masters: Leonard Rosenman's Music for Films and for the Concert Hall

SABINE M. FEISST

Leonard Rosenman (born 1924 in Brooklyn) is best known for his unconventional and provocative scores for films like *East of Eden*, *Rebel Without a Cause* and *Fantastic Voyage*, as well as for his ingenious adaptations of period music in the scores for *Barry Lyndon*, *Bound for Glory* and *Cross Creek*. But Rosenman was also a classically trained composer and had already enjoyed successful performances of his concert music before he seriously embarked upon film composition. Throughout his career as a film composer he has continued to produce concert works, even though the brand of "film composer" has hindered performances of his concert music and his recognition in the concert world. While occasional film-scoring engagements in Hollywood did not detract from the concert career of Aaron Copland, George Antheil, Leonard Bernstein, or Ernst Toch, it undoubtedly affected the reception of Rosenman, Erich Korngold, Bernard Herrmann, Alex North, and Paul Chihara as serious composers. Film composers are still stigmatized by the prejudice of "selling out to Hollywood," and film and concert music remain worlds apart; thus, figures like Rosenman tend to fall between two camps. Books on 20th-century music omit the discussion of film composition, and treatises on film music omit the consideration of film composers' achievements in the concert world. What follows will shed more light on Rosenman's output in both domains, film and concert music.

Rosenman originally started his artistic career as a painter, but in his late teens he became more and more attracted to music. From 1940 to 43, thanks to Lukas Foss's advice, he took lessons in piano and music theory with Julius Herford. When he joined the Air Force in 1943, he absorbed books on harmony and counterpoint in his leisure time. But most important, in the service he met the fledgling composers Leon Kirchner (b. 1919) and Earl Kim (1920-98), both students of Arnold Schoenberg and Roger Sessions, who proved to be models for Rosenman's further development. Kirchner in particular had a strong impact on Rosenman, elucidating processes of musical composition and introducing him to Schoenberg. In 1947 Rosenman enrolled in Schoenberg's harmony, counterpoint and analysis classes at the University of California, Los Angeles. Although he did not study composition with him, he got Schoenberg's opinion on some of his youthful pieces. He actually received some good comments on them, even though Schoenberg pointed out that passages of Rosenman's *String Quartet* involved problematical violin fingering and criticized the use of the saxophone per se looking at Rosenman's *Saxophone Concerto*.¹

After one semester, Rosenman took his leave of Schoenberg's classes desiring more intensive instruction in composition, but unable to afford private lessons with Schoenberg, whom he considered one of the greatest teachers, he entered the University of California in Berkeley. There he studied with Sessions and Ernest Bloch and also participated as a pianist in performances of contemporary music. While at Berkeley, Rosenman composed a number of dissonant and highly complex works involving 12-tone techniques which placed him in the forefront of advanced music. Among those works were *Concertino for Piano and Woodwinds* (1948), *Piano Sonata* (1949), *Three Piano Pieces* (1950/52), *Violin Concerto I* (1951) and *Six Songs* (F. Garcia Lorca) for mezzo-soprano and piano (1952/54). Although some of these compositions such as the *Concertino for Piano and Woodwinds* and the *Piano Sonata* were withdrawn, the *Six Lorca Songs* and the *Three Piano Pieces* have been frequently and successfully performed. The latter work, divided into "Grave Misterioso," "Allegro Molto Capriccioso," and "Theme and Elaborations," was performed and critically acclaimed at Tanglewood in 1952. It reveals Rosenman's command of, and accomplished writing for, the piano. Slow, expressive and intense, the first piece uses a wide range of registers and extended chords occasionally spread over three staves. It shows a great variety of rhythmical units and figurations as well as diverse dynamics, avoiding a steady flow. In contrast, the second piece with its pulsing eighths and sixteenths, its limited pitch gamut and absence of multi-voiced chords, appears more relaxed and transparent. The last and lengthiest of the three pieces, "Theme and Elaborations," which can also be performed separately, presents five contrasting "elaborations" on the opening theme. Most of the "elaborations" are characterized by vivid and gripping rhythms, the fourth incidentally showing a jazz-inspired treatment. The Finale, again an industrious section, recapitulates and condenses material of the previous "elaborations" and closes with an expressive statement of the theme. In 1952, Rosenman won a Margaret Lee Crofts scholarship to study with Luigi Dallapiccola at Tanglewood. A year later, he became composer-in-residence at Tanglewood and received a Koussevitzky Foundation commission for a one-act opera based on a libretto by Thomas Mann. But the opera project came to nothing after Mann died and the opera department at Tanglewood was shut down. Rosenman, however, stayed on the East Coast and immersed himself in its contemporary-music scene, enjoying more and more successful performances.

I am thankful to Leonard Rosenman for his generous information in numerous interviews and phone conversations and to Todd Vunderink at Peermusic Classical, New York, for his assistance. I am also very grateful to Cole Gagne for comments on earlier drafts of this essay.

¹ These two pieces did not survive. See Michela Robbins, "A Schoenberg Seminar," *Counterpoint* 17/2, 1952, 10-11.

By 1954 he was concertizing and making a living as a piano teacher in New York, and so his first assignment to write a film score took him by surprise. One of Rosenman's piano students was James Dean who had been chosen for his first starring role, in *East of Eden* (Elia Kazan, 1955). Dean persuaded Kazan to engage his piano teacher for the film's music. Reluctant to give up his thriving career in New York, yet encouraged by his friends Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland, Rosenman took the plunge into film scoring with no experience whatsoever: "Surprisingly perhaps, I had no difficulty in making the transition from concert works to film scoring, or adapting to the time constraints of film composition. Of course I had to write faster, but I found the whole process was and still is quite wonderful. I learned a great deal about writing for the orchestra and was also able to try out (as long as they fitted the film) a lot of the elements of my compositions that I was writing at the time."² As an outsider in Hollywood, Rosenman was certainly swimming against the tide by opposing 19th-century music and Hollywood clichés and by introducing exceptional ideas and unconventional sounds.³ The music for *East of Eden*, for example, was written and played for the actors before and during the shooting, and their characters -- Abra, Aron, and the father -- in some instances even whistle their tunes in the film. "This was an eccentric approach, the Hollywood convention was -- and still remains -- that composers only begin to work when a rough cut of the film has been completed."⁴ The score for *East of Eden*, a psychological drama, was path-breaking. As in his concert works, Rosenman was not sparing with dissonances, chromatic motifs and thematically and contrapuntally complex passages; but here he also used simple folk-tune-like themes where appropriate.⁵ The score also features "very dramatic silence" which was exceptional at that time. Most films "had music from the first frame to the last frame."⁶

² Rosenman quoted in Mark Walker, "East of Hollywood," *Gramophone*, September 1997, 128.

³ Rosenman's scores were even considered a "booster for the future use of modern stylistic devices in Hollywood." See Thomas Karban, "Kaum Chancen für Modernes. Filmmusik in Hollywood," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 156/4, 1995, 38. Yet, Rosenman's dissonant scores had precursors: George Antheil (*The Plainsman*, 1937), Bernard Herrmann (*Citizen Kane*, 1941), Hanns Eisler (*Hangmen also Die*, 1943), David Raksin (*Force of Evil*, 1949), and Alex North (*A Streetcar Named Desire*, 1953).

⁴ This approach was known as the Russian method. Bernard Herrmann, however, had also composed the music for *Citizen Kane* while present on the set.

⁵ Kazan originally objected to Rosenman's thoroughly dissonant score. "A bargain was made finally to score the children simply, and the adults in a dissonant fashion. There were exceptions dictated by dramatic necessity, of course." Leonard Rosenman, "Notes on the Score of *East of Eden*," *Film Music* 14/5, 1955, 3.

⁶ Rosenman quoted in Royal S. Brown, Liner Notes for "Leonard Rosenman: *East of Eden/Rebel Without a Cause*. John Adams conducts the London Sinfonietta" Nonesuch Film Series 79402-2, 15.

"In many cases I tell filmmakers that they do not need music -- or that they do not need so much of it. Sometimes silence is the most wonderful sound they can have. But they rarely understand it."⁷ For the next Dean picture, *Rebel Without a Cause* (Nicholas Ray, 1955), again a film with tense scenes and an ambiguous ending, Rosenman provided a similar musical treatment.⁸ Besides lyrical and indubitably tonal passages ("Love Theme"), the scoring of the scenes of the "Planetarium," the "Knife Fight," the "Hunt" and "Plato's Death" show an abundance of dissonance. Whereas the music for the "Planetarium" scene with its contemplative atonal texture and subtle and visionary instrumentation is reminiscent of Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, the "Knife Fight" music, in contrast, displays polytonality, atonal motifs, strongly accented, gripping rhythms and elements of Big Band jazz. Dean's premature death left behind a legacy of three films; the last, *Giant* (George Stevens, 1956) was scored by Dimitri Tiomkin), but Rosenman was rightly credited for having created a specific "James Dean sound," a music of revolt and dissonance.

Between the two Dean films, Rosenman scored *The Cobweb* (Vincente Minnelli, 1955), where he paid tribute to his former teacher Schoenberg by making considerable use of dodecaphonic techniques. Hanns Eisler had provided 12-tone scores for the experimental films *Regen* and *Eis* in the early 1940's, and Scott Bradley used 12-tone techniques in the cartoon *The Cat That Hated the People* (1947), but Rosenman was the first composer to use dodecaphony in a score for a Hollywood feature film.⁹ The drama is based on the neuroses of the patients and staff of a mental institution (Former Schoenberg student Oscar Levant is included in the cast). The main theme consists of a 12-tone row, which also largely determines the harmonic structure of the score. Influenced by Schoenberg's *Piano Concerto*, op. 42, the mostly atonal score is composed for large orchestra often divided into smaller chamber-like ensembles featuring solo piano. Rosenman commented on this particular score: "I felt that the film really could have used this kind of treatment. . . . It was my intention not to 'ape' or mimic the physical aspect of the screen *mise en scène* but it was more my intention to show what was going on inside the characters' heads. . . . The movie was a very refined and very slick and very well-produced film.

⁷ Jørn Rossing Jensen, "The impact of music on film," www.filmfestivals.com/ghent/gnewsil.htm 9/20/99.

⁸ Ray, a friend of Kazan's, met Rosenman during the recording sessions for *East of Eden*. Christopher Palmer actually suggested that *Rebel Without a Cause* influenced Bernstein's *West Side Story* composed shortly afterwards. See Christopher Palmer, *The Composer in Hollywood* (London: Marion Boyars, 1990), 320.

⁹ In his score for *The Lord of the Rings* (1978), Rosenman again used serial techniques to a certain degree. Dissonances and serial procedures are combined with triadic harmonies. See Leonard Rosenman, Liner Notes to *The Lord of the Rings: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack*, Intrada FMT 8003D.

But I wanted more neurosis; much more of the inner workings of the people which, I think, were a bit lacking in the overt action of the film."¹⁰

For *Fantastic Voyage* (Richard Fleischer, 1966), a science-fiction film in which scientists in a submarine are shrunk to microscopic size and injected into a human body, Rosenman wrote another novel and unconventional score. With the exception of an introductory suite of sound effects consisting of musique concrète and electronic sounds (amplified heartbeat, clicking teletype machines, etc), the first four reels of the film are not scored at all. When in reel five the crew of scientists enters the body, long musical cues accompany the lengthy scenes, which could be considered as movements for an "inside the vein symphony."¹¹ The atonal, multi-voiced and colorful music for large orchestra is based on a four-note motive, which is continuously developed through gradual changes in rhythm, harmony, counterpoint, and timbre. The dissonant concept with its frequent dramatic intensification appears highly effective in the mysterious and suspenseful scenes. At the end when the scientists grow to normal size again, the score displays tonality. Due to the highly effective use of contemporary musical means comparable to those employed by Berg, Schoenberg, Nono, Ligeti, Berio and Rihm, Rosenman has been often in demand for scoring such fantasy, science fiction, war and monster films as *Combat!* (TV series, 1962-66), *Countdown* (Robert Altman, 1968), *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* (Ted Post, 1969) *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* (J. Lee Thompson, 1973), *The Lord of the Rings* (Ralph Bakshi, 1978), *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* (Leonard Nimoy, 1986), and *Robocop 2* (Irvin Kershner, 1989).

Rosenman has also proved equally successful with his adaptations of various existent musical materials -- such as Native American music; works by classical composers of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries; and folk music. In *A Man Called Horse* (Elliot Silverstein, 1970) he drew on musical resources of the Sioux tribe in South Dakota's Black Hills. Visiting the Sioux reservation, he transcribed the songs as they were performed by a group of men. Although Rosenman and director Stanley Kubrick disagreed about the use of cut-and-paste scores in *Barry Lyndon* (1975), he skillfully arranged and adapted compositions by Handel, Bach, Vivaldi, Mozart and Schubert, for which he earned his first Oscar. His Oscar-winning score for *Bound for Glory* (Hal Ashby, 1976), or his music for *Cross Creek* (Martin Ritt, 1983), serve as examples of masterly adaptations of folk music of the 1920s and 1930s. In *Bound for Glory*, based on the early life of the folksinger and songwriter Woody Guthrie, Rosenman wove musical textures alluding to a wealth of folksongs by Guthrie ("This Land Is Your Land," "So Long, It's Been Good To Know You," "Goin' Down The Road," etc.). In the course of the film the songs crystallize out of those textures and at dramatic moments are contrasted and subtly counterpointed by Rosenman's highly original dissonant sounds.

¹⁰ Roy M. Prendergast, *Film Music. A Neglected Art* (New York and London: 1977), 119.

¹¹ Leonard Rosenman, Liner Notes for *Fantastic Voyage*, Silver Age Classics, Film Score Monthly Vol. 1, No. 3, 2.

Rosenman's non-conformist approach to film scoring, and especially his use of dissonance was validated and encouraged by audiences' positive responses: "I have personally had the experience of hearing musically unenlightened people comment positively and glowingly on a 'dissonant' score after seeing the film. . . . It is therefore more than ever possible, in today's film of contemporary and even experimental images and words, for the composer to write stylistically the kind of music he would write for the concert hall. The important qualification to this statement is that the whole problem of musical style must be viewed strictly within the context of the functional field."¹² While he did not shy away from using uncompromising and sophisticated concepts in his film scores, his concert music has been influenced by his work for the films as well. Yet he has rarely transformed film scores into concert pieces, "because in the time it would take to refashion the score into a concert piece it would be far simpler to write a new work."¹³

Nevertheless, Rosenman has made concert suites out of his most famous film scores, such as *East of Eden*, *Rebel Without a Cause*, *Fantastic Voyage*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* as well as an arrangement of *Rebel Without a Cause* for piano solo. He contends that one of the major differences between film and concert music is the compositional approach to "form": "The propulsion [of film music] is not by musical ideas, but by literary ideas. In any other art form inspired by literary ideas, such as oratorio, opera, or art song, the composer is free to manipulate the form according to the musical concept. In films, however, the composer must manipulate the music to fit the image."¹⁴ In 1973 he stated: "Working with film gives me an understanding of the relationship between sound and image, and more and more my bag in concert work is mixed media."¹⁵ At that time Rosenman worked on the mixed-media piece *A Short History of Civilization or the Death of Vaudeville* (1972) for actors, singers, dancers, tapes and movie clips. While he discarded that composition, one finds many other works for the concert stage featuring theatrical elements. Rosenman frequently used his composing for the films as a kind of "laboratory" where he could try out, rewrite and record new sound techniques. While writing the score for *Fantastic Voyage*, in which he employed *Klangfarben* techniques, he worked on *Chamber Music II* for soprano, chamber ensemble and tape involving a wide range of unconventional timbres. Thus he was able to write certain passages of that piece with assurance about the results. While writing his score for the TV film *Sybil* (Daniel Petrie, 1976), he experimented with microtonality to illustrate musically the drama of a young woman's split personality. He used a string orchestra, two harps and two pianos tuned a quarter-tone apart, four children's voices and electronics.¹⁶

¹² Leonard Rosenman, "Notes from a Sub-Culture," *Perspectives of New Music* 7/1, 1968, 131.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Mark Evans, *Soundtrack. The Music of the Movies* (New York: Da Capo, 1979), 266.

¹⁵ Rowland Barber, "Could Dr. Welby Practice Without Music?" *TV Guide*, 19 May, 1973, 52.

¹⁶ Rosenman won an Emmy Award for scoring *Sybil*.

Immediately thereafter Rosenman employed similar microtonal techniques in his highly energetic, three-movement *Double Bass Concerto* of the same year.¹⁷ The strings, which are divided into four quartets and distributed in the concert space, display frequent use of multifarious glissandi and microtonal differentiation up to 1/6 tones. The solo double bass incidentally communicates with the separately positioned tutti double bass.

Rosenman's *Double Bass Concerto*, also entitled *Chamber Music IV*, is part of a five-part series of works. Each of the *Chamber Music* pieces features a different scoring.¹⁸ *Chamber Music I* (1959) for 16 instruments, including woodwinds, brass, percussion, strings, harp and piano, represents Rosenman's own "Kammersymphonie," yet in its instrumentation and division into four movements (I. Toccata, II. Lento, III. Dance, IV. Theme and Six Variations), the work is not modeled on Schoenberg's opus 9. *Chamber Music I* was used as a film score for Haskell Wexler's semi-documentary of Los Angeles, *The Savage Eye* (Ben Maddow, Sidney Meyers, Joseph Strick, 1959). Although cut to fit the film, the piece kept its symphonic quality due to long cues. *Chamber Music II* (1968) is a one-movement setting of Garcia Lorca's poem "Your Childhood in Menton" for soprano, ten players and tape. Containing recorded Lorca text fragments and various electronic sounds, the tape is an integral part of the ensemble and is operated by a sound engineer who is cued by the conductor. In *Chamber Music II* Rosenman also uses other avant-garde techniques such as microtonality and performer's choice of the pitch order indicated by graphic notation.¹⁹ *Chamber Music V* (1979, rev. 1980), scored for piano and six players (including two percussionists), can be considered a small-scale piano concerto in one movement.²⁰ The piece opens with a brief piano introduction, providing the material which determines the entire composition. The first section is marked by a great deal of interaction between piano and ensemble with the percussion emerging in the course of the piece with a lengthy cadenza. After the recapitulation, the piano regains prominence in the coda.

Besides the *Chamber Music* series, Rosenman's concert oeuvre embraces a number of engrossing vocal works. *Looking Back at Faded Chandeliers* (1990), commissioned by the Arnold Schoenberg Institute (University of Southern California) as part of the "Pierrot Project," is based on three rondels from Albert Giraud's *Pierrot Lunaire*.²¹ Rosenman selected "Die Estrade" ("The Platform"), "Moquerie" ("Mockery"), and "Absinth" ("Absinthe") complying with the Project's directive not to choose poems already set by Schoenberg. Employing the same ensemble used in Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, the three songs are tonally and intervallically linked. Rosenman's three harlequinades allude musically to the French *fin de siècle*-spirit and to the unsteady pre-World War I atmosphere. The final song even demands that the singer be sipping from a glass of absinthe and gradually shifting into a state of inebriation. The musical flow is likewise corrupted by more and more superimposed bits of "other" musical pieces, suggesting a world out of joint. *Lorca Revisited: Prelude and Four Scenes* (1990-91) for soprano solo and eleven players reveals (together with the *Six Lorca Songs* and *Chamber Music II*) Rosenman's predilection for Federico Garcia Lorca's poetry and for unusual formal concepts.²² The settings of "Gacela del amor con cien años," "Casida de la muchada dorada," "Fabula," and "De así que pasen cinco años" imply, as Rosenman explains, specific dramatic ideas: "Writers refer to the imaginary events that take place before and after a work of literature or drama as 'back stories.'" In *Lorca Revisited I* have attempted to take four poems of Lorca and create musical rather than literary back-stories and extended epilogues for them. The resulting relationships between the vocal and instrumental parts play the roles of the vocalist's fellow characters in an almost operatic drama. As in an opera overture, the material of the Prelude suggests some of the motifs within the body of the work.²³ In *Time Travel: Hugo Wolf to "Song at Sunset"* (1996) for soprano solo and eleven players, Rosenman arranged four Wolf songs ("Auch kleine Dinge," "Mein Liebster ist so klein," "Lebe Wohl," and "Lied vom Winde") and set "Song at Sunset," (an excerpt from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*). Each of the Wolf songs is sung in its entirety and linked by newly composed parts in which the soprano is treated instrumentally and sometimes seated with the woodwinds, sometimes with the brass instruments.

¹⁷ The *Double Bass Concerto* was commissioned by Neville Mariner and dedicated to Buell Neidlinger.

¹⁸ Rosenman withdrew *Chamber Music III* and VI. He is at present working on a new version of *Chamber Music VI*.

¹⁹ *Chamber Music II* was premiered at the Monday Evening Concerts in Los Angeles on 7 October 1968 under the direction of Rosenman. It was recorded on Delos Stereo S Del 25432 SQ by the New Muse with Sue Harmon as the soprano soloist and Rosenman himself conducting.

²⁰ *Chamber Music V* was commissioned by Collage (the Contemporary Music Ensemble of Boston) in 1979 and premiered that year in Boston with Christopher Oldfather, pianist, under the direction of the composer. It was recorded by the above-mentioned ensemble under Charles Fussell for CRI (SD 486) in 1983.

²¹ The "Pierrot Project," involving a number of prominent composers, was initiated by Leonard Stein, then director of the institute.

²² *Lorca Revisited* draws on Rosenman's *Six Lorca Songs* of 1952/54.

²³ See foreword to the score of Leonard Rosenman, *Lorca Revisited: Prelude and Four Scenes*, Peermusic Classical, New York, 1992.

The instrumental parts can be viewed as intermezzi to the Wolf songs, or rather the Wolf songs serve as introductions to Rosenman's original sections. In the final part of *Time Travel*, based on Whitman's poetry, Rosenman "summarizes and develops the literary and structural aspects of the preceding sections, attempting to emulate the qualities of the Wolf songs and exploring how nature and the emotions are bound by time, interpreting and mixing elements of the past and present, and creating the present from the past."²⁴

His major orchestra works of the 1990's include *Violin Concerto II* (1991), *Double Concerto* for oboe and clarinet solo and orchestra (1993), and the *Symphony of Dinosaurs* (1999). The *Second Violin Concerto* commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra, Washington D.C., yet premiered by Elmar Oliveira and the American Composers Orchestra under James Paul in 1997, is a vigorous and technically demanding work in three movements involving virtuoso sections for both the solo violin and the orchestra. Unlike the *Double Bass Concerto* where Rosenman occasionally allowed the soloist and other instruments to improvise, this concerto, including its cadenza, is fully notated and written in a more conventional vein. Evoking Bartók's and Shostakovich's violin concertos at times, the form too displays traditional features: the first movement in a "musical arch" that concludes with a cadenza and coda, the second using a ternary form, and the third a rondo. The instrumentation for large orchestra, however, requires in the second and third movements four instrumentally treated female voices placed with the woodwinds. Rosenman's comments about his *Second Violin Concerto* imply that this work was inspired by specific music-drama ideas: "This is my first work of its style: a combination of both concert form and elements of music drama in the best of my film scores (although none of the music I have written for films is in this work). It is also a continuation of the style in which I composed in the mid-1950s, before I scored my first film. In that period, I still utilized 12-tone techniques, but my harmony was no longer atonal. This is an important work for me because it destroyed my musical 'multiple personality,' divided between film and concert music, and created a single musical personality."²⁵ The *Dinosaurs Symphony*, a unique example of program music involves taped sounds of birds and a paleontologist, who prefaces the work with a fifteen-minute lecture about the history of dinosaurs. The work consists of five movements: I. "Water to Air," II. "Crawl, Walk, Run," III. "Chase," IV A. "Explosion and Extension," B. "Dirge for Dinosaurs," V. "Evolution to Birds." Several themes developed by Rosenman's specific root progression technique (marked by very slow-moving harmonic progressions) run through the whole piece and bring about unity.²⁶

A significant figure in the history of American film music, Rosenman's more than one hundred film scores which embraced atonality, dodecaphony, microtonality, musique concrète, electronic music, elements of jazz and non-western music, challenged scoring for Hollywood and TV films. Rosenman's continuous engagements in the Hollywood film and TV industry may have slowed down his output of concert works, but composing for films never brought his activities as a classical composer to a standstill. In fact the 1990's saw him again more actively involved in concert music, as he withdrew from frequent film-scoring assignments. His late concert pieces have been highly original and attractive works, penetrated and enriched by his experience in film scoring. Rosenman has proved his versatility and commitment not only as a composer, but also as a pianist, conductor, director of the contemporary music groups The New Muse and the Isom Ensemble, and teacher championing new music. Yet his oeuvre still awaits more frequent performances, recordings and the attention of scholars.

²⁴ See foreword to Leonard Rosenman's score, *Time Travel: Hugo Wolf to Song at Sunset*, Peermusic Classical, New York, 1996.

²⁵ Leonard Rosenman quoted in David Wright's "Program Notes of the American Composers Orchestra Concert" at Carnegie Hall on 11 May, 1997, 20.

²⁶ The *Dinosaurs Symphony* has not yet been performed. Rosenman is currently working on *Walk in New York*, a work for chamber orchestra, inspired by the idea of imaginary

scenes which are musically evoked. The piece will embrace various sounds of the City including Chinese, Spanish, and Jewish songs, a blues and a siren.

List of Concert Works:

| | | | |
|---------|--|---------|---|
| 1948 | Concertino for piano and woodwinds (withdrawn) | 1990/92 | Lorca Revisited: Prelude and Four Scenes for soprano solo and 11 players |
| 1948 | Piano Sonata (withdrawn) | 1990 | Violin Concerto II |
| 1950/52 | Three Piano Pieces (including Theme and Elaborations) | 1992 | Exposition and Elaborations for violin and piano |
| 1951 | Violin Concerto I | 1992 | Double Concerto for Oboe, Clarinet, and Orchestra |
| 1952/54 | Six Songs (F. Garcia Lorca) for mezzo soprano & piano | 1996 | Time Travel: Hugo Wolf to "Song at Sunset" for soprano solo and chamber orchestra |
| 1959 | Chamber Music I for 16 players (Chamber Symphony) | 1996 | When Alpha Met Beta for string quartet |
| 1960 | Duo for clarinet & piano | 1996 | Rebel Without a Cause for piano solo |
| 1968 | Chamber Music II for soprano, 10 players, and tape | 1997/99 | Symphony of Dinosaurs for orchestra and paleontologist |
| 1970 | Duo for violin & piano | | |
| 1970 | Fanfare for 8 trumpets | | |
| 1970 | Threnody on a Song of K. R. for jazz ensemble & orchestra | | Concert Suites: |
| 1970 | Short History of Civilization or the Death of Vaudeville for actors, singers, dancers, tapes and movie clips (withdrawn) | | East of Eden |
| 1970 | Foci for orchestra and tape | | Fantastic Voyage |
| 1976 | Two Grand Pianos for two amplified pianos (Duo for two pianos) | | Lord of the Rings |
| 1976 | Chamber Music IV (Double Bass Concerto) for double bass solo, four string quartets, double bass | | Rebel Without a Cause |
| 1979 | Chamber Music V for piano and 6 players | | Star Trek IV (About the Whales) |
| 1980 | Foci I (rev. 1983) for orchestra | | Forthcoming: |
| | Foci I, version for chamber orchestra | | Walk in New York |
| 1990 | Looking Back at Faded Chandeliers for soprano solo and chamber ensemble | | Chamber Music VI |
| | | | Trio for violin, piano & cello |
| | | | Publisher: Peermusic Classical, New York |

List of Film and Television Scores:

| | | | |
|---------|---|------|---------------------------------------|
| 1955 | East of Eden | 1976 | Sybil (TV) |
| 1955 | The Cobweb | 1976 | Langian's Rabbi (TV) |
| 1955 | Rebel Without a Cause | 1976 | Kingston: The Power Play (TV) |
| 1956 | Edge of the City | 1976 | Gibbsville (TV) |
| 1957 | Bombers B-52 | 1976 | Holmes and Yojo |
| 1957 | The Young Stranger | 1977 | The Car |
| 1957 | The Big Land | 1977 | 9/30/55 (TV) |
| 1958 | Lafayette Escadrille | 1977 | Mary White (TV) |
| 1958 | The Hidden World | 1977 | The Possessed (TV) |
| 1959 | Pork Chop Hill | 1977 | Rafferty (TV) |
| 1959 | The Savage Eye | 1978 | An Enemy of the People |
| 1960 | Twilight Zone (And When the Sky Was Opened) | 1978 | The Lord of the Rings |
| 1959-62 | Law of the Plainsman | 1978 | The Other Side of Hell |
| 1960 | The Bramble Bush | 1979 | Prophecy (TV) |
| 1960 | The Crowded Sky | 1979 | Promises in the Dark |
| 1960 | The Plunderers | 1979 | Friendly Fire (TV) |
| 1960 | The Rise and Fall of Legs Diamond | 1979 | Nero Wolfe (TV) |
| 1961 | The Outsider | 1980 | Hide in Plain Sight |
| 1961 | Hell Is for Heroes | 1980 | The Jazz Singer |
| 1961-65 | The Defenders (TV) | 1980 | City of Fear (TV) |
| 1962 | The Chapman Report | 1980 | Joshua's World (TV) |
| 1962 | Convicts Four | 1981 | Making Love |
| 1962 | Reprieve | 1981 | Murder in Texas (TV) |
| 1962-66 | Combat! (TV) | 1982 | The Wall (TV) |
| 1964 | Alexander the Great (TV) | 1983 | Cross Creek |
| 1966 | Fantastic Voyage | 1983 | Miss Lonelyhearts |
| 1966 | Attack (TV) | 1984 | Heart of the Stag |
| 1966 | The Road West (TV) | 1984 | Celebrity |
| 1967 | A Covenant with Death | 1984 | The Return of Marcus Welby, M.D. (TV) |
| 1967 | Stranger on the Run (TV) | 1984 | Heartsounds (TV) |
| 1967-68 | Garrison's Gorillas (TV) | 1985 | Sylvia |
| 1968 | Countdown | 1985 | First Steps (TV) |
| 1968 | Shadow over Elveron (TV) | 1986 | Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home |
| 1969 | Hellfighters | 1988 | Promised a Miracle (TV) |
| 1969 | Any Second Now (TV) | 1990 | Robocop 2 |
| 1969-70 | The Virginian (TV) | 1990 | Where Pigeons Go to Die (TV) |
| 1969-76 | Marcus Welby, M.D. (TV) | 1991 | Ambition |
| 1970 | Beneath the Planet of the Apes | 1991 | Keeper of the City |
| 1970 | A Man Called Horse | 1991 | Aftermath: A Test of Love (TV) |
| 1970 | Man from Shiloh (TV) | | |
| 1970 | The Todd Killings | | |
| 1971 | Primus | | |
| 1971 | Banyon (TV) | | |
| 1971 | Vanished (TV) | | |
| 1971 | Skipper (TV) | | |
| 1971 | In Broad Daylight (TV) | | |
| 1972 | The Bravos (TV) | | |
| 1973 | Battle for the Planet of the Apes | | |
| 1973 | The Cat Creature (TV) | | |
| 1974 | Nakia (TV) | | |
| 1974 | Judge Dee and the Monastery | | |
| 1975 | Murders (TV) | | |
| 1975 | Barry Lyndon | | |
| 1975 | Race With the Devil | | |
| 1975 | James Dean – The First Teenager | | |
| 1975 | Sky Heist (TV) | | |
| 1975 | The First 36 Hours of Dr. Durant | | |
| 1976 | Bound for Glory | | |
| 1976 | Birch Interval | | |

Concert Reviews

A Bolcom View from the Opera House

JAMES L. PAULK

Chicago Lyric Opera presents the premiere of William Bolcom's *A View from the Bridge* (libretto by Arnold Weinstein and Arthur Miller, after the play by the latter), conducted by Dennis Russell Davies, directed by Frank Galati, with Kim Josephson, Catherine Malfitani, Gregory Turay, Juliana Ramboli, Mark McCrory, and Timothy Nolen. October 9, Chicago, IL.

Chicago Lyric Opera has done better with new opera than its peers, and it isn't because they've been lucky. Excellent judgment has gone into the selection of composers and material. The organization has a huge commitment to new stuff, usually performing a new work every season, even though its season usually consists of about 12 works. This season, we see yet another factor. Recognizing that opera composers have historically done their best work after gaining experience with a series of operas, Lyric Opera returned to William Bolcom, whose *McTeague* had its premiere here in 1992, for a new commission, which will be followed by two more in the future. This piece, *A View from the Bridge*, based on the blockbuster play by Arthur Miller, was one of the most successful operas of the last few years, and represented significant progress since *McTeague*.

The big-house opera audience seems to have indicated that it wants strong drama with good, safe music, including occasional arias. More abstract or complex texts, with similarly complicated or modernist music, is not as well tolerated, except in the smaller, more fashionable venues. But some of the big traditional opera houses have managed to sneak the latter into their schedules, gradually building an audience with a more sophisticated palate. There is no better example of the latter than Luciano Berio's *Un Re in Ascolto*, done in Chicago two years ago. And there is no better example of the former than *A View from the Bridge*. For if this is the formula people want, it's nice to have someone of Bolcom's skill filling in the music.

View is one of the greatest American plays. And as such, it has the kind of dramatic power that often makes it difficult for a score to stand up and be noticed. Fortunately, in adapting it to the opera house, the librettist, Arnold Weinstein (assisted by Miller himself), has honed it down to a taut "morality and honor" verismo vehicle, ready for big-emotion arias and ensembles. Bolcom delivers, for the most part. As always, he is Mr. Accessibility, with a large catalog of musical styles, especially those with roots in mid-century pop and jazz. Perhaps Bolcom isn't the most original composer, or the most up-to-date. Just a little of this, and a little of that, bound together with some slightly modern chromatic mood music. But he is clever, clever. And he cranks out some fine tunes, arias, and ensembles. There's a sort of Greek chorus, which Miller insists he had wanted for the original play, but was forced to drop for budgetary reasons.

The budget was apparently not a problem here. The production, said to cost \$1.4 million, makes excellent use of black-and-white photographic projections (of mid-century Red Hook), which are integrated into a unit set with abstract elements. The set is sumptuous, powerful, and perfectly integrated into the opera; costumes and lighting are state of the art. And rarely do we see singers moving and acting this naturally. Frank Galati was the director, and Santo Loquasto designed the production, with lighting by Duane Schuler and projections by Wendall K. Harrington.

Baritone Kim Josephson is simply riveting as Eddie Carbone, the tragic figure at the heart of this opera. He doesn't really get to sing much, and that's the point (sort of like Schoenberg's Moses). But Josephson has such a stage presence that he makes his character front and center in the audience's field of view, and this, reinforced with Bolcom's orchestral commentary on him, makes his tragic undoing more effective than in the original play. Catherine Malfitano's voice might have been rubbed raw -- the beauty is gone -- but she is such a formidable actress, and she uses her voice so well as an instrument of drama, that she is really quite extraordinary when cast in a role like this one -- a woman whose life is coming apart at the seams as her husband (Eddie) self-destructs. The rest of the cast is of a similar high level, especially soprano Juliana Rambaldi as the young niece who is the femme fatale of the opera.

What else can one say about Dennis Russell Davies? He conducts so many new operas in so many places that it would be easier to point out the ones that he doesn't conduct than the other way around. And the reason is that he is so good at it. Rarely has the orchestra here sounded so fine. This was a moving, effective night. The opera may be better than the original play. And that is saying a lot.

More Nemtin Concerts

ANTON ROVNER

Nemtin Concert. December 3, Scriabin Museum-Apartment, Moscow, Russia. A related program is given on December 26 at the Dom Center..

On December 3 the third concert devoted to Alexander Nemtin's music took place at Moscow's Scriabin Museum-Apartment, Scriabin's last home. It was here that the Moscow Electronic Music Studio was based, which Nemtin frequented and where he and other composers experimented with the ANS synthesizer in the 60's.

Eleonora Teplukhina's performance of *Sonata No. 1* was just as dazzling as in several earlier Nemtin concerts. Mezzo-soprano Jane Tiik's performance of two early songs of the composer, "Look my sister" and "Among the flowers" provided an adequate lyrical point of contrast, with an equally qualified piano accompaniment by Vyacheslav Poprugin.

Pavanne for cello and piano (1970) was subsequently arranged by the composer in versions for solo piano and duo pianos. The rather traditional harmonies, reminiscent of Ravel, were greatly enhanced by delicate, expressive textures, ranging from sparse to robust, revealing elements of the avant-garde in the context of a rather traditional style and genre. Cellist Dmitri Cheglakov and pianist Iraida Yusupova displayed a vibrant virtuosity, blended with a delicate sense of texture and emotional input to bring out to a greater degree Nemtin's compositional design.

Soprano Evgenia Sheveliova demonstrated a great amount of enthusiasm and musical input in her performance of four songs, accompanied by Vyacheslav Poprugin. In addition to songs sung in previous concerts ("I hear the bell tolling" and "What do I want, what?"), she added "I wait for you" on the text of Ivan Aksakov and "On the hills of Georgia" of Pushkin, the latter being the first composition by the composer, written at age 13. Though an early and derivative song, it nevertheless demonstrated mastery of compositional technique.

Vyacheslav Poprugin demonstrated his strong skills in *Three Poems* (1987) written to the memory of Scriabin. The pianist showed great taste and skill, marking sharp contrasts of dynamics and textures.

Next came a unique recording of *Tears*, realized on the ANS synthesizer with an additional layered recording of Walt Whitman's words translated into Russian. This text was the composer's original inspiration for the work and was originally meant to be read live on stage during the synthesizer performance. Though the composition in its original form (without the poem) was familiar to specialists, this particular recording provided for a new and inspiring experience; the combination of the poetry recitation and the rather outlandish ANS textures of the piece added an additional dimension of experiment and synthesis of the arts -- very much in the spirit of Scriabin.

Flautist Anna Smirnova's technically masterful and lyrically expressive performance of *The Flute of Pan* provided for a nice lyrical contrast.

A world premiere of the *Poem* for piano subtitled "Cat Waltz" (1994), was possibly one of Nemtin's very last pieces (perhaps the very last piece, discounting his realization of Scriabin's *Prefatory Action*, completed on September 1, 1996). *Poem* combined naively gentle and lyrical waltz-accompanimental textures with texturally fuller and harmonically bolder music in the right hand, involving an abundance of parallel major sevenths and sharp harmonic twists in the intricate melodic writing. Oksana Koshkina's performance, both emotionally expressive and technically brilliant, brought out these contrasting features of simple and complex music. The audience was amused that "Cat Waltz" was performed by one whose last name is derived from the word "koshka," meaning "female cat."

The concert concluded with baritone Yuri Baranov and pianist Anna Sitnikova performing the first half of Nemtin's song cycle for baritone and piano *The Stars are Falling from the Sky to the Earth* on the poems of Hungarian Sandor Petefy in an adequately masterful and expressive manner, providing a more elegiac conclusion.

The fourth and final concert of the series devoted to Nemtin took place at the Dom Center on December 26. The date chosen had a special significance, since it marked the 50th anniversary of the beginning of Nemtin's creative activities, when at the age of 13 he composed his first composition (he had celebrated that anniversary every year). The concert was markedly different from the preceding ones in both form and conception, first of all, being aesthetically adapted to the more extravagant artistic needs of the Dom Center and secondly, presenting music which had not been given enough attention in the previous concerts: the electronic and musique concrete works.

The concert began with a demonstration of about seven minutes of music of the very beginning of *Prefatory Action*. This was followed by the very short but concise vocal and instrumental music section. An early song -- "Over the Lake," a setting of a text by I. Golenischev-Kutuzov -- was performed by bass Yuri Vustin and pianist Iraida Yusupova. An entirely tonal, romantic work with a somber, heavy mood, the song followed the best traditions (though the composer did not in the least imitate directly) of Moussorgsky's songs, many of which were likewise settings of the same poet.

Pavanne (1970) was performed in a brilliant and virtuosic manner by cellist Dmitri Cheglakov, with Yusupova, both of whom brought out the sharp contrast between the loud and dramatic on one hand, and the soft, subtle and intricate on the other.

Next, the program switched to the electronic music of Nemtin and his two closest colleagues, Stanislav Kreichi and Eduard Artemiev. Written on the ANS synthesizer in the 60's and 70's, most of the works heard here were published in the first LP record of music for the instrument.

Nemtin's 15-minute *Voice* for the ANS synthesizer with the tape of a soprano voice, sounded in a solemn and austere manner. The five-minute *Tears* provided a sharp contrast of textures, though maintained much of the same solemn, austere mood.

Kreichi's two-minute *Flavor from the East* provided a more extrovertively exotic and colorful music. It featured an unstandard microtonal scale performing elegantly suave melodic gestures. The Kreichi and Artemiev jointly composed 12-minute *Music for the film "Space"* presented another large-scale spectacle with exotic acoustically vibrant textural effects depicting outer space and recurrent melodic and textural elements suggesting elements of traditional forms. By contrast, Kreichi's two-minute *Intermezzo* demonstrated the ANS synthesizer a light popular style of the 60's.

Next was a recorded simultaneous improvisation by Nemtin, Kreichi, and Artemiev, which was done at the Scriabin Museum back in 1961, entitled *Symphony-Concerto*. This was an exotic, extroverted example of musique concrete, one of the first of its kind in Russia, featuring brilliant parodies. The piece was "performed" on all sorts of instruments that were present at the time at the Scriabin Museum: the inside of the piano, a violin, a trombone, a xylophone, an assortment of flutes and toy whistles and other metallic objects. The *Symphony-Concerto* was in four movements -- which, though presented without pauses, were nevertheless easily discernible: a "Sonata Allegro," Gavotte, funeral march in memory of a hero, and a Finale Allegro. The latter opened up with a hilarious solo trombone, followed by more droll music, ending with a bang.

Contrasting Concerts of Pleasure in Artaud and Justice

MARK ALBURGER

Other Minds Festival. Peter Garland's *Three Strange Angels*, David Lang's *Memory Pieces*, Leroy Jenkins's *Solo Improvisation for Violin and Viola*, Hamza el Din's *Greeting and Escalay*, and the premiere of Annie Gosfield's *Flying Sparks and Heavy Machinery*, with the Onyx Quartet. March 16, Theater Artaud, San Francisco, CA. Festival through March 18.

Other Minds Festival. The premiere of Jacob ter Veldhuis's *String Quartet No. 3* ("There Must be Somewhere Out of Here") (with the Onyx Quartet, Hyo-shin Na's *Rain Study* (with pianist Thomas Schultz) and the premiere of *Blue Yellow River* (with cellist Joan Jeanrenaud), Peter Garland's *Bright Angel - Hermetic Bird* (with pianist Aki Takahashi), and Christian Wolff's *Burdocks* (with the Wolff Band). March 17, Theater Artaud, San Francisco, CA.

Other Minds Festival. scanner's *Electro Pollution* and D.J. Spooky's *Synchronia*. Justice League, San Francisco, CA.

The first piece was for piano banger, bass drum, and bullroarer -- it was that kind of concert and that kind of a festival. Yes, it's a cliché, but the sixth Other Minds Festival (caretakered this year by Carl Stone for an in-Bellagio-on-artistic-retreating Charles Amirkhanian), which opened on March 16 at Theater Artaud, began with a bang, or rather a series of bangs. American expatriate (now living in Mexico) Peter Garland's *Three Strange Angels* offered the holy figures of the composer standing aggressively at the piano and the manic William Winant on bass drum smacking the heavens out of their respective weapons. There wasn't much more to the music than this -- and there didn't need to be; the hard, lonely strokes punctuated by silence were only contrasted with the eerie aerial gyrations of the bullroarer, which Winant sailed surreally overhead toward the work's denouement.

The great Nubian oud (lute) player Hamza el Din next took the stage in this his adopted homeland and hometown. His "Greetings" and "Escalay" ("Water Wheel") were antidotal and anecdotal, gentle microtonal meanderings calmly set against his melancholy voice. His occasional tuning problems were rumored to have been caused by sympathetic vibrations from the vibrant bass drum during the previous music.

Memories of any turmoil were banished during David Lang's *Memory Pieces*, poignant works which challenged the fine pianist Aki Takahashi. The eight almost-Bach-prelude-like-yet-minimalist vignettes, six of which were played here, memorialize composers and associates of this New York-based Bang On A Can Marathon co-founder in unexpected ways. Chancy only in its rhythmic coordination, the first, "cage" (in memory of the indeterminate John), was a series of widely-spaced tremoli, where the lower and higher notes were assigned to the left and right hands in a lovely chord cycle. "spartan arcs" (to the influential keyboardist Yvar Mikhashoff) cascades downward in a series of changing meters; "grind" (could it have been the academic kind, given its homage to the late Jacob Druckman?) insistently pounds away in low dissonant rhythmic contrapuntal collisions of five against four. Each piece, and indeed all the music on the first half of the program was a little like Harry Partch's characterization of his invented instrument, the Blo-Boy: "It does one thing. But it does that one thing exceedingly well."

Violin and viola improviser Leroy Jenkins, on the other hand, attempted a multitude of musics -- and he occasionally succeeded. His jazz-minimalist intensity was engaging, as he sang-sighed along with the amplified music, but he overstayed his welcome on violin. "Pick up the viola," was a thought that came to mind. He finally did, only to pick up the violin yet again for yet two more improvs for a total duration that seemed like a half-hour or more.

The world premiere of Annie Gosfield's *Flying Sparks and Heavy Machinery*, gave the bruitism of 1920's futurism a new spin. The gongs and thunder sheets of the percussion quartet Redrum were set against the more subdued timbres of the Onyx Quartet in a clearly structured fling.

Jacob ter Veldhuis utilized the excellence of the latter force in the U.S. premiere of his *String Quartet No. 3* ("*There must be some way out of here*"). Despite his avowed rock-and-roll and pop culture enthusiasms, this proved a fairly mellow though engaging two-movement exercise, with minimalist but little overt Dylan or Hendrix overtones.

Hyo-shin Na was represented in two works: the ruminating, standard-coin-modernist *Rain Study*, in an animated performance by pianist Thomas Shultz; and the world premiere of the quiescent, intriguing *Blue Yellow River* for two kayageums (Korean zithers), cello, and double bass. It was impossible not to enjoy the happy sounds of two sets of wooden wind chimes, the sparkly kayageums, and the sensitive interplay between eastern and western traditions which rarely pandered. The celestial soloists were Ji Young Yi, Joan Jeanrenaud (late of the Kronos Quartet), and Richard Worn.

Peter Garland redeemed himself (if he needed redeeming -- at least for the minority "that's not music it's pointless noise" section of the audience, which the night previous had included at least two critics) with a shining *Bright Angel - Hermetic Bird*, a lovely, pictorial work, with striking ascending octave-displaced octaves resoundingly performed by Takahashi.

Elder chance music statesman and Cage-associated Christian Wolff was his own performer in a whimsically rebellious *Melody* played on a melodica. Q: What's an old-timey avant-gardist doing playing a melody? A: Screwing around with it rhythmically. Q: Why is he playing a melodica with a tube in his mouth and the keyboard in his lap? A: He likes it that way (normally the melodica is held vertically, rather than horizontally, with the little keyboard played sideways like the keys on an oboe or clarinet). Wolff then re-established his radical-pinko credentials with a vibrantly prickly *Burdocks* (1970-71), named after an irritating weed of the Northeastern U.S. The realization of this chance score became a sonic party for seven great composer-performers: French hornist Gordon Mumma, electric guitarist Fred Frith, electric kotoist Miya Masaoka, computer-sampler performer Bob Ostertag, pianist Wolff, Winant, and Jeanrenaud. Even this comparatively earlier work shows Wolff moving in a melodic direction. Lovely motives sometimes sail about the performers like a drunken, denatured *In C*.

The third evening found the festival decamped for Justice League, a divy club on Divisadero, where certain audience members looked as out of place in a kind of inverse manner as the Deadheads had at Davies Hall several years ago. OK, I was one. Luckily for such grouches, there was a V.I.P. section cordoned off tastefully in crepe paper, where there were actually a few chairs. The rest of the audience made due in the mosh pit, but there was surprisingly little movement. Indeed, the more animated the space music / alternative hip-hop-music-concrete artists Scanner and DJ Spooky became, the more rapt and paralyzed the listeners. The haunting/haunted house music was fine though a little rhythmically predictable, with root in the vernacular and arty overtones that spoke of Cage and Varèse in its enthusiastic celebration of noise. But it was the beat that held the audience. One suspected that half of the crew would have abandoned the scene immediately if Spooky's graceful scratching had not been supported by the underlying funky ostinati. What remained was thoughts of the contrast in venues that couldn't have been more striking. In place of a few empty seats, there was standing room only; no drinks in theater became a bar in the dance floor; no smoking became Clintonesque no inhaling; listen to the announcements became shout over the music; ushers became bouncers; a deserted entrance way became a line that still hadn't succeeded in entering the club by the time I gave up.

415 Batting 1000

MARK ALBURGER

Other Minds presents the Common Sense Composers' Collective's *Opus415 No. 5*. David Del Tredici performs his *3 Songs for Baritone and Piano* (*Quietness*, *A Saver*, and *Matthew Shepard*); Jay Cloidt's *Life Is Good and People Are Basically Decent*, Paul Drescher's *Din of Iniquity*, Cindy Cox's *Into the Wild*, David Lang's *Follow*, Paul Hanson's *Pull of the Gold Rope*, and Randall Woolf's *Angel Dust*, performed by the Paul Drescher Ensemble; Joan Jeanrenaud and Mark Grey in the latter's *Blood Red*, Gamelan Sekar Jaya performing I Dewa Putu Berata's *Sekar Gadung*; John Bischoff's *Quarter Turn*; the Ashley Adams & Danielle DeGruttola Duo's *Song of the Bottomfeeders*; Dan Plonsy's *Sunburst (scenes 1-7)*; Elinor Armer's *Shivaree*; Katherine Shao's *Judgment Day*; Matt Ingalls's *Crust*; Dan Becker's *Tamper Resistant*; Melissa Hui's *Lacrymosa*; the Flandreau-Goodheart-Powell Trio in *No Melody for Wadada*; Brian Reinbolt's *Respirateur*; Michael Fiday's *Slap Back*; Mathew Burtner's *Portals of Distortion*; and Belinda Reynolds's *YAWP*. March 19, Theatre Artaud, San Francisco, CA.

The Opus415 Marathon, now in its fifth installment, keeps getting better and better. This year found them yet again presented by Other Minds and featuring composers and performers ranging from the locally emerging to the world renowned, including Cindy Cox, Davids Del Tredici and Lang, Paul Drescher, Joan Jeanrenaud, and Christian Wolff. What seems like an ominous 10-hour show is made manageable by ingeniously breaking up the affair into four 2 1/2-hour concerts separated by breaks. That the event nevertheless passed so quickly and pleasantly is a testimony to the quality of the compositions and performances. And, oh yes, the free martinis at the half helped, too.

The program ranged from the immediate to the traditional, as well exemplified by the opening two acts: jhno's ominous *Ambient Interludes* for live electronics (are there dead electronics?), and the Gamelan Sekar Jay performing I Dewa Putu Berata's shimmering *Sekar Gadung*. Folks like John Bischoff and Dan Becker, meanwhile, split the difference -- the former offering a classic example of pure tones and modulated noise in *Quarter Turn*, the latter hilariously, intriguingly, and rather beautifully denaturing Telemann in *Tamper Resistant*, as lovingly performed by the free-thinking American Baroque Ensemble.

The rest of what amounted to the first concert, or set, were various commentaries on chamber music, beginning with the remarkable *Blood Red*, by Mark Grey, performed by the very remarkable Joan Jeanrenaud. Here cello and electronics were in close consort, building up to a level of high emotion. The antics were high in Elinor Armer's *Shivaree*, but these of the frivolous kind, in a work (designed for amateurs, but played quite professionally) for flute, French horn, two violins, viola, and piano designed to disturb couples on their wedding night. No couples were in evidence.

Citizen Band (Xopher Davison, Thomas Day, and Gregory Lenczycki -- what kind of a name is Xopher, anyway?) brought evidence of an affinity for John Cage and David Tudor. It was almost as if the old guys were there themselves -- sittin' at the table, M-E-S-S-I-N-G around with the electronics. Nice. But nothing like the messing around in the concluding and disarmingly titled *Sunburst (scenes 1-7)* by the mad Dan Plonsey. Napoleon-like, bedomed with a colander, he played saxes and clarinets to Sarah Wilner's violin and erhu, and Tom Yoder's yodeling trombone. All played toys. Plonsey frantically made great efforts to pick up certain instruments, occasionally only to play single notes before abandoning them for other noisemakers. Nice. Meanwhile Plonsey's wife Mantra Ben-Ya'akova (what kind of a name is Mantra Ben-Ya'akova, anyway?), Susan Volkan, Nancy Clark, and Paul Schick treated all to quadruple contrapuntal vocal overload. They talked a lot about a lot of things. One videotaped the event. Plonsey's son Cleveland got in what was supposed to be a pond and then wandered around the stage. Nice. And very funny. Finally Orpheus appeared, in the person of guitarist John Schott. He evoked fake electric raga then intoned an incredible, painful song with wild multiple octave displacements. Nice. It all meant something, but it's a secret.

It was no secret, however, when the second set began, that we were in the hands of very electro-acoustic professionals with the Paul Drescher Ensemble, the "house band" for the event. They funk'd (as in funky, not flunky) out in two animated works: Randy Woolf's drug-induced *Angel Dust* and a surprisingly lyric and engagingly rhythmic *Pull of the Gold Rope* from their bassoonist-composer Paul Hanson. Performers can compose, too.

That was also true of the gifted performer-composers (or composer-performers, whatever) in the Flandreau-Goodheart-Powell Trio. A look at the program might have suggested jackhammers ahead, knowing the percussionists often madman performance capabilities, but no, here was the utmost in sensitivity. Pianist Goodheart began on tuned glasses, to Flandreau's sustained violin and Powell's spare bow strokes on eastern gongs. The percussionist switched to musical saw and proved to be one of the most capable performers I have ever heard on this arcane folk "axe" (not that I've heard all that many). The music built up to be some haunting, improvisational take on Crumb (the glasses and violin of *Black Angels* married to the saw of Ancient Voices of Children). Violin and saw were wed in a heavenly ascension, made clearer as Goodheart switched to piano for some Messiaen like sustained and repeating chords. It was called *No Melody for Wadada*, but it could indeed have been what has been its misprint: *Noh Melody*. I was impressed.

Ditto for the unassuming Katherine Shao, harpsichordist for American Baroque, in her appealing and biting *Judgment Day*, that featured early-music minimalism (a repeated two-chord progression), a catchy urban rhythm of sixteenth notes arrayed 3+3+3+3+4 over a straight ahead 4/4 rock beat, and the voices of the roll call at the recent impeachment trial. Nice. Shame on you, Bill, and thanks for the nice music.

The spirit was also high in a crazy trio of composers Kui Dong, Larry Polansky, and Christian Wolff -- a large electric-guitar sandwich with grand-piano bread heels. The feverish flurry of responses led to a conclusion equally enigmatic for audience and improvisers ("Are we done yet?" "Sure"). Two high-volume electronic endeavors wrapped up the set: Wobbly's *Wild Way* pop deconstruction (or rather pop destruction) with John Leidecker, and the Vazuvilla quartet (alto saxophonist Bob Dowling, guitarist composer Michael Grandi, bassist Ashley Adams, and percussionist Michael Pukish). Perhaps the best description of the latter's output is their own:

Point Taken is a pointillistic syncopated whole-tone meditation in 11. *Emotional Ventriloquist* is a psychedelic waltz in a made-up key; you know, a metaphor.

The Paul Dresher Ensemble Electro-Acoustic Band (long name) returned for what seems like the now classic *Life Is Good... And People Are Basically Decent*, a dizzy series of episodes brimming with the good humor that the title suggests. David Lang's *Follow*, also performed by the Band, was a stunning, stripped down-minimalist invention with intimations of thrashy pop (particularly a climbing motive of 1-2-b3-4) that exploited the potentials of the ensemble to its fullest.

There followed three solo endeavors: Silvia Matheus's *Cloy* for tape; Brian Reinbolt's *Respirateur*, which found the composer circling mysteriously about the performance space with his digital horn; and Michael Fiday's *Slapback*, with a sassy performance of altered licks from electric guitarist Paul Binkley.

Electric cellist Danielle Degruttola and electric upright bassist Ashley Adams next graced the stage in *Song of the Bottomfeeders*, a deep boogie full of good-natured blues rumbling and pattering, with a remarkably clear structure. Melissa Hui's lovely *Lacrymosa* provided the still contrast -- in a sensitive, pure-toned, and gorgeous trio of soprano Jennifer Shyu, clarinetist Peter Josheff, and pianist John McGinn. The set concluded crashingly in the electronic consortium of Fuzzybunny, with the animated Chris Brown, the laconic Tim Perkis, and Scott Gresham-Lancaster splitting the different tones and difference tones.

By now it was Set Four, final, and finale -- martinis all gone -- lifting off *Into the Wild*, Cindy Cox's multivalent work for the Paul Dresher Ensemble. Dresher himself then contributing stunningly as both composer and guitarist in *Din of Iniquity*, which lives up to its name and comes to a sudden conclusion in a flurry of electric guitar improvisation.

There was nothing else to do but bring The Metasaxophone Ensemble onstage: nine male tenor saxes (including composer Matthew Burtner), reeds firmly implanted in their chops, conducted by Claire Schneeberger. Burtner's *Portals of Distortion* purportedly depicts melting ice, and the atmosphere indeed warms, but these sustained tones added up to a monumental block of sound that seemed impervious to destruction.

What could be more of a contrast to this than the traditional-yet-up-to-date *Three Songs for Baritone and Piano* of David Del Tredici? With the composer accompanying, Richard Lalli led the way deftly through the varied moods of "Quietness," "A Savor," and "Matthew Shepard." Del Tredici's accompaniments were lushly arpeggiated and quirkily sprightly, depending on the mood. He has a keen ear for text setting and an unexpected sense for when a text should simply be delivered and when it should suddenly be repeated and ornamented at length.

Belinda Reynolds's *YAWP* brought yet another guitarist onstage (if last year's Marathon was the year of improv, this one was that of guitar). This time it was David Nadal (and this time it was acoustic, rather than electric -- a first for the day -- albeit amplified) who carried off the detailed writing of this work in fine style.

Matt Ingalls's appropriately named *Crust* proved a craggy work for the composer-clarinetist. The computer-generated sounds made a positive din that took the theater by force; Ingalls responded with shrieks and wails of his own in a powerful performance.

Tin Hat Trio (violinist Carla Kihlstedt, guitarist Mark Orton, and prepared-pianist Rob Burger) concluded as one of the finds of the evening. This appealing ensemble combines popular and classical musics from a variety of traditions into a crisp and hearty whole. Emphasis was on catchy riffs, clear structures, and tight ensemble -- what's not to like? The clipped sounds of the prepared piano (is this the first use of Cage's invention in such a poppy arena? Aside from his own calypsoesque usage in one of the *Sonatas and Interludes*?) was met by similar truncations in the violin and guitar. Short, sweet, and full of good humor. We look forward to their upcoming CD.

As we look forward to further Opus415 Marathons.

Record Reviews

New Voyages from New Albion

CRYSTAL ELIZABETH

Stefano Scodanibbio. *Voyage That Never Ends*. New Albion.

Steven Scott. *New Music for Bowed Piano*. New Albion

We all know what double basses and pianos sound like, right?

Wrong, perhaps, unless we have heard all manners of music including Stefano Scodanibbio's *Voyage That Never Ends* and Steven Scott's *New Music for Bowed Piano*, two recent releases from New Albion.

Scodanibbio's appropriately-named album pulses and flows with phasing overtones, almost more of a wash that discrete notes. There are more traditional pizzicato passages and long sustained arcos that also dip heavily into harmonics. Occasionally he plucks and strums a la Bartók, but he adds a heavy South Asian Indian element that is quite moving. There's a dark jazz element at work, too -- all rather amazing, sometimes sounding like two or more players simultaneously or in call-and-response.

As for the Scott? Wow! Sounds like bells and car horns and accordions and harmonicas and OK... bowed piano, very minimalist in both its crisp ostinati (particularly Reichian in the steady metrics overlain with hocketing rhythms) and later sustained sections, all remarkable and very beautiful. And this music, while sounding effortless, comes after great effort and experience

During the first rehearsals of *Music One for Bowed Strings* I found that the nylon bows I was using (each about 30 inches long and made up of six to eight strands of rosined nylon fish lines) could not be controlled well enough to produce the staccato sounds I wanted for the hocket figures, so I began experimenting with various "rigid" bows which could be rubbed against the piano strings with short flicks of the wrist. I settled finally on popsicle sticks to which were glued many strands of rosined horsehair of the type used for violin bows. . . .

Many specialized performance techniques have had to be developed to make the pieces work. Besides having special training in the manipulation of the bows, my musicians must learn to move about the piano in carefully choreographed patterns, so as to stay of each other's way, to recognize pitches and registers inside the piano by means of color-coded markers, and to play together as a group in a unique way. As Tom Johnson put it in an article on my music in the *Village Voice*, "in short, the composer has worked out a very special kind of ensemble playing that is not quite like any other.

Yup. Definitely Reich in the pseudo-paradiddling of *Music Three for Bowed Strings* (nice title), especially when the sustained sounds then soar atop. But certainly also like Guillaume de Machaut and Central African music (inspirations for Reich as well, of course). But what Scott does with them here is extraordinary, and well worth a listen and a return.

The Late Great Shostakovich

PHILLIP GEORGE

Dmitri Shostakovich. *Symphony No. 15 in A Major. Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 2*. Russian All Star Orchestra and The Symphony Orchestra of The Moscow Philharmony, conducted by Kirill Kondrashin, with violinist David Oistrakh. Icone.

While he was wronged in life, you can't go wrong with Dmitri Shostakovich, as a recent re-release on the Icone label proves. Kirill Kondrashin conducts the Russian All Star Orchestra and The Symphony Orchestra of The Moscow Philharmony in two older recordings -- from May 27, 1974, and February 21, 1967 respectively -- of *Symphony No. 15 in A Major*, op. 141, and *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 2*, op. 129. The former recording compares well, for instance, to the 1990 London release by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy. Both conductors capture quite well the whimsy and the ominous irony of Shostakovich's last sad, silly, strange symphony.

And the *Violin Concerto No. 2*, what can we say? David Oistrakh performs fabulously, and the searching, ruminative quality of the accompaniment (reminiscent of the opening of the composer's *Symphony No. 10*) is sonorous and grim. Shostakovich's clichéd "short-short-long" rhythms are here in full force, but he uses them to excellent effect.

The program notes to the album, however, are a little stilted. But who cares what's written about the music, after all? Wait, I didn't say that....

Society of Composers, Capstone

BRYCE RANKIN

Society of Composers, Inc. *Chamber Works* [Belet. *Four Proportional Preludes*. Rindfleisch. *Tears*. Juusela. *Ilta Palta(a)*. Delgado. *Fugaz*. Epstein. *Piano Variations*. Rudajev. *Sonata*]. Capstone.

Society of Composers, Inc. *Connections* [Phillips. *String Quartet No. 2*. Beck. *Songs Without Words*. Miller. *Duo Concertante*. Epstein. *Palindromic Variations*. Eidschun. *Bantam Massai*]. Capstone.

Society of Composers, Inc. *Contra-Punctus* [Marin Rokeach. *Sonata*. Allen Brings. *Duo Concertante*. Cynthia Folio. *Developing Hues*. John Davison. *Sonata Pastorale*]. Capstone.

Society of Composers, Inc. *Evocations* [Jackson Hill. *Rhapsody*. Jan Krzywicki. *Snow Night*. Dennis Kam. *Fantasy Variations*. Alex Lubet. *Shabbat Shalom*. Margaret Fairlie-Kennedy. *Windrider/Final Ascent*. Harry Bulow. *Contours*. Brian Fennelly. *Scintilla Prisca*]. Capstone.

Society of Composers, Inc. *Illuminations* [H. Bielawa. *Stone Settings*. Boyadjian. *Googleegoo*. Bestor. *Of Time and Their Places*. Richey. *Variations for Piano*. Hutchison. *Poe-Songs*. Chen. *Echo*]. Capstone.

Society of Composers, Inc. *Grand Designs* [Argersinger. *Concerto*. McCarthy. *Harmonizer*. Mendoza. *RainForest*. Schwendiger. *Chamber Concerto*. Lentini. *Music for Brass*. Bevelander. *Syntheticisms No. 4*]. Capstone.

Society of Composers, Inc. *Intimate Thoughts...* [Constantinides. *Intimations*. Lauer. *Seven Songs on Poems of James Joyce*. Eastman. *Just Us*. de Marez Oyens. *Three Hymns*. Cacioppo. Wolf]. Capstone.

Society of Composers, Inc. *Potpourri* [Emmanuel Ghent. *Five Brass Voices*. John White. *Sonata for Cello and Piano*. Elliott Schwartz. *Reading Session*. Leo Kraft. *Second Fantasy for Flute and Piano*. Victor Saucedo Tecayhuatzin. *Fluxions*]. Capstone.

Goodness the folks at Capstone and the Society of Composers, Inc., have been busy. This slew of releases bear different titles, but the concepts are related; there's a bit of *Potpourri* in each album.

We'll start with the chamber works on *Chamber Works*, and Brian Belet's *Four Proportional Preludes*. These are astounding takes on the old "prelude in a different key" conceit, specifically E-Major, E-Minor, F-Major, and F-Major, commissioned as part of an eclectic multi-composer compilation on the 24 keys. Guess one Bach or Shostakovich ain't sufficient these days. And neither are the keys.

The compositional challenge therefore involved structuring each prelude to center on the essence of the designated major or minor key without resorting to the now exhausted conventions (melodic, harmonic, or formal) of traditional European tonality.

Well, these preludes aren't exhausted (tell it to the rockers, by the way -- are tonal conventions exhausted?... nope), these are pretty inventive in their inside-the- and prepared-piano ways. Janis Mercer carries off the various challenges in fine style.

Also inventive (like the connection? tired of it yet?) is the flute playing of Jean DeMart in Andrew Rindfleisch's *Tears*, and the guitar work by Stephen Robinson in Karl Henrik Juusel'a *Ilta Palata(a)*, whatever that means. What it means, is "tasty snack" in Finish, and it is.

Meanwhile, there's pretty wild stuff going on in the amplified tenor saxing of *Fugaz*, by Carlos Delgado. What's it mean? It's not what you think (what were you thinking? "Fugue" -- sure you were), it means "passing quickly." Well it could mean that, I guess, but it doesn't pass so quickly that you can't get a sense of an exciting slamming-about of sound, of sonic collisions that at times seem vaguely digeridoo-like. Dig it. René Morgansen is the dizzying performer.

Pretty stern and classically motivic by comparison are David Epstein's *Piano Variations*, sympathetically read by Abbott Ruskin. The *Sonate pour piano et violon*, by Czech-born American citizen Alexandre Rudajev, concludes. So why the French title? Because it was written in France in 1992, and maybe because there's an *idée fixe*, and he studied with Nadia Boulanger and Olivier Messiaen from 1962 to 1969, and because he has a certain *je ne sais crois*. Suffice it to say that pianist Daniel Wesner and violinist Pavel Eret (note that it is not *pour violon and piano, after all*) are très anime, heroic, et magnifique. But if I hear any influence, it may be little soupçons of Bartók.

Also rather Bartók-informed is the *String Quartet No. 2* ("Another Lark Quartet") of Mark Phillips, the first piece on the album *Connections* (we can relate). But the opening motive could be Vaughan Williams (*Symphony No. 4*) or Varèse (*Density 21.5*), the classic descending minor second, ascending major second (1-7-b2). The snaky mass rises and falls of the dexterous Lark Quartet (it's *Another Lark Quartet* not *Another Lark Ascending*, you see) speak of the serpentine world of *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta* finale, and the cello double stops have that Eastern European fiery folkish flair. The second movement features an ascending synthetic scale à la the Act III Scene IV music of Berg's *Wozzeck*. The final finds Bartókian and Stravinskian repeated pounding rhythms in consort with cyclic folk melodies and downward jazz glissandi.

There follows Jeremy Beck's quiet, beautiful, and lyrical *Songs Without Words*, which unfolds in three charming movements (despite the first song's ominous title of "Irresistible Death") delivered by flutist Elizabeth Sadilek and harpist Gretchen Johnson. Maybe it's the instrumentation, but there's something unmistakably French (particularly Debussy, Ravel, Satie) in all of this, plus perhaps a little Francophiled Stravinsky in the stately Orpheus-like second song, "...mists of brightness..." and even Robert Moran in the tremolo section. The third "Night Watch" pours out more gently minimalist than Rembrandtesque.

The Duo Concertante for Violin and Piano, by Edward J. Miller, with Richard Young and William Koehler is pretty rough, gnarly, halting stuff by comparison, and it cuts its own strong figure, as do the *Palindromic* (whoops! misspelled on the CD's back cover as *Plaindromic* -- kind of an interesting notion, really) *Variations* of Paul A. Epstein. But the second is almost classic, bouncy, tragic-happy minimalism in the expert hands of Flutist Cynthia Folio, cellist Jeffrey Solow, and pianist Charles Abramovic. ("I was making a pun." "A pun?" "No, what's that thing that reads the same way backwards as forward?" "A Palindrome?" "Yeah, that's it." "The palindrome of Bolton is Notlob, it's not Ipswitch!"). Poignant harmonics and engaging interlocking interplay make this a fine listen, with stout bassy crunchiness reminiscent of the Reich *Octet* and undulating seconds a la Glass (what are they doing together?).

Whoa! Another party concludes in Robert Eidschun's *Bantam Masai*, a rush for Eb-clarinet, trumpet, percussion, violin, cello, electric bass. Very frantic, funny, irreverent, unpredictable -- in short, very well put together.

I distinctly remember thinking of at least six musical "sources" while writing *Bantam Masai*: King Crimson, Messiaen, Bill Bruford, Scriabin, Schoenberg, and Led Zeppelin [another misspelling here, incidentally, as "Zeppein" -- we should talk...]. I won't give away their exact roles, but they're listed in "order of influence" as the piece progressive [sic - "progresses" shall we?]. Tremendous instrumental energy is called for in *Bantam Masai* and thus it's aggressive, like a Bantam fowl from Java; and although relatively short, it comprises several distinct sections and thus it's 'big,' like a Masai warrior from Kenya.

He done got that right. We look forward to more from this talented composer.

The album *Contra-Punctus* gets down with Martin Rokeach's Sonata for violin and piano (Nathan Rubin and Ellen Wasserman) in a land the straddles the tonal and the a-, with careful intervallic interrelations. Allen Brings leans to the latter sensibility (i.e. atonal) in his strident *Duo Concertante*, where the pugilists are Allen Brings and Morey Ritt.

This blitzes into the folds of Cynthia Folio's *Developing Hues*, a striking work for the flutist-composer and her husband, bass clarinetist Larry R. Thompson. Like a challenged marriage (we're certainly not suggesting this one), these musical partners are at opposite ends of the spectrum, and the artists exploit these differences to the max. There are unfolding arpeggios, comedic touches that could be from a certain *Bachianas Brasilieras* of Villa Lobos, Stravinskian low rumblings out of *The Rite of Spring*, hints of Eastasia, and telling jazz influences. There's a dueling shout off as to who can hit the highest note at one point (the flute wins -- cheater!). John Davison closes as pastorally as advertised in a four-movement *Sonata Pastorale* for flute, violoncello, and piano, with the songful Huntington Trio. His closing Allegro [ah, another misspelling as "Alegro"] manages to be simultaneously folkish and urbane.

The *Evocations* album immediately evokes Japan, with a little smidgen of downtown music (at least I hear it that way) in Jackson Hill's Rhapsody, with the flute and piano team of Mary and Barry Hannigan. *Snow Night* is relatedly evocative in the calm tremoli of marimbist Anthony Orlando and pianist Susan Nowicki. All bets are off, however, when the music gets rolling. While the ten-minute work traverses a varied snowscape, the gentle falling tremolo flakes never really totally melt away.

And despite all the talk of uptown-downtown splits, much of the purported "academic" music in this Capstone series samples widely from many sources. Case in point: Dennis Kam's *Fantasy Variations*, with flutist Monserrat Cadiz and the composer at the piano, has minimalist drive and classic overtones, making it one classy piece.

Still more beasts are in this house. Here Alex Lubet blesses us with *Shabbat Shalom* from pianist Jeffrey Jacob, in an artless piece that has much in common with the immediate above. *Shabbat* however, has its moments of fiery ornamented Eastern European virtuosity and dips surprisingly into the dronal well of India as well. This makes for a smooth transition to *Windrider/Final Ascent*, by Margaret Fairlie-Kennedy, an exotic piece for flutist Laura Campbell and pianist Christopher Morgan.

Clarinet-composer Harry Bulow and pianist-composer Brian Fennelly are represented by their respective *Contours* and *Scintilla Prisca*, where the latter artist is joined by violoncellist David Moore.

Grand Designs does make its case as truth-in-advertising, beginning with a truly grand piano Concerto, by Charles Argersinger, in a commanding performance by David Schrader, with members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Contemporary Players of the University of Chicago (quite a mouthful), under the direction of Clifford Colnot.

Next is a not-so-grand work -- how about a solo violin, scarecrow? (Roger Zahab), in Daniel McCarthy's *Harmonizer*. Make no mistake, though. There are still plenty of big sounds here, thanks to McCarthy's funky electronics. This composer's sound is quite distinct. Having heard music by McCarthy in the past, the fine sounds here were no surprise. It's obvious, really. In recent times it should be no big deal to have such evocations as Jean-Luc Ponty, George Duke, and Frank Zappa -- and it isn't here. It just happens, and is very convincing. The Zappa evocations (no, that was another album, wasn't it?) include frantic chromatic passages reinforced by pounding drumbeats on each quick change of note. Just add a vocalist, and we may have another crossover artist a la Laurie Anderson here.

Emilio Mendoza's *RainForest* is only grand in concept. His is actually a rather gentle timberland, where the only precipitation comes in mild showers, as represented in turtle shell, woodblocks, maracas, claves, and agogo bell where the interval of a major second is pronounced. Laura Elise Schwendinger returns us to a big sound in a stern *Chamber Concerto*, with prominent chime strokes, big timpani, and piercing where pianist Donald Berman and ALEA III are conducted by Theodore Antoniou.

The personnel required in *Music for Brass*, by James Lentini, has to impress, if for no other reason, because there are so many of them -- them being The Michigan State University Brass Ensemble, conducted by Stanley E. DeRusha. Maybe it's the resounding echoic acoustics of the Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, East Lansing Michigan. No, it's more than that; *Music for Brass* is a well-constructed piece (with big wobbling, arching tones) that features plenty of strikingly original brass writing in an intelligent package. Brian Bevelander's *Syntheticisms* (no, not Synchronisms) No. 4 goes for the full sound of orchestra, that being the Aarhus Symphony under Soren Hansen, and then pits two talented pianists Philip Mead and Stephen Gutman (apparently straight from Tennessee Williams's *Camino Royal*). The orchestral writing is colorfully varied, the four-hand piano technique demanding, and the pre-recorded tape rather subtle.

Some of the CD *Illuminations* are indeed illuminations of texts; other music is purely instrumental. As with Martin Rokeach, fellow Bay-Area composer Herb Bielawa walks a line between the tonal and atonal in the intimate *Stone Settings*, gracefully sung by Marian Marsh, to the composer's accompaniment. There is grace, as well as pungency, in the New England Reed Trio's rendition of *Googleegee*, by Hay Boyadjian. As the name might suggest (the piece's, not the composer's), this is a work brimming with activity and good humor, often expressed in an insistent rapid-fire single-note figure. The conclusion is a robust, folkish shout from ensemble members.

Charles Bestor is doubly illuminated by *Of Times and Their Places*, with soprano Paulina Stark and pianist Estela Olevsky, and *Variations for Piano*, with John Richey and Michael Zuraw.

These are followed by the remarkable *Poe Songs*, by Warner Hutchison, which can be easily misread by the far-sighted as *Pop Songs*. But while these are hardly such, they are certainly appealing in their varied timbres. Soprano Martha Rowe's emotive performance is permeated by the buzzy vibrato of vibraphonist Fred Bugbee, and punctuated by the happy sounds of hornist Nancy Joy, who sounds sax-like or as a wailing whale in this unusual work. Ling Chao Chen's short, stately *Echo*, with baritone Paul Tsai, conductor Dinos Constantinides, and the Louisiana State University New Music Ensemble (sounding quite orchestral) treads its measured path with fairly traditional call-and-response.

Constantinides leads off as composer on the all-vocal *Intimate Thoughts* disc with *Intimations*, a one-act opera for two voices (Susan Faust Straley and Cynthia Dewey) and a rich Frenchy quartet of clarinet, violin, harp, and percussion (LSU New Music Ensemble). This leads nicely into Elizabeth Lauer's *Seven Songs on Poems of James Joyce*, a song cycle performed by soprano Alice Marie Nelson, accompanied by Elizabeth Lauer. Here the rising and falling whole tone fragments in the accompaniment have a sensibility akin to Bartók.

Join Us, by Donna Kelly Eastman (lots of three-named women on this album), reduces the textures to the lonely gentle duo of mezzo-soprano Lee Beaudoin and flutist Linda Eagleson.

Then we're back to piano-vocal, with soprano Madelon Michel and Tera de Marez Oyens (four names!) in the latter's *Three Hymns*. These ambiguous, evocative settings are so admirable, one wishes for four. *Wolf* howls its way to an exciting conclusion from the inventive composer-pianist Curt Cacioppo, who is joined by soprano Janice Fiore and cellist David Geber.

The final disc -- yes, we're there! can it be that time already? -- is the *Potpourri* previously noted. This is a stew beginning in the funny computer sounds of Emmanuel Ghent's *Five Brass Voices* -- funny as in harkening back to the classic sine waves of Milton Babbitt. Like Babbitt, there's plenty of math in this piece with a bit of whimsy as well.

With composer-cellist John White, the action turns live again, in *Sonata for Cello and Piano*. There are widely-spaced Shostakovichian octaves for Carolyn Bridger to intone, and plenty of opportunities for White to show off his idiomatic artistry, such as in a two voiced drone-and-melody section. Bartók is here as in the last album, now in tight ostinati and brusque ascending and descending phrases. There's Crumb in some repeated, damped-piano-string notes.

Varied damped-piano strings are a part of Elliott Schwartz's *Reading Session*. But this outrageous finished piece (it is a "reading session" only due to its spoken component) requires clarinetist Phillip Rehfeldt and the late pianist-composer Barney Childs to deliver multiple vocal transformations of Cage's famous line: "I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY AND I AM SAYING IT." With Schwartz, just about anything goes, and these fine players clearly "HAVE NOTHING TO PLAY AND ARE PLAYING IT." Wish there were a video of these two, because they probably were as engaging to watch as to hear.

Leo Kraft brings us back to earth the single-movement, though sectional *Second Fantasy for Flute and Piano*, as performed by Sue Ann Kahn and Andrew Willis. Victor Saucedo Tecayehuatzin (how's that again?) concludes in a computer-generated *Fluxions*, which rounds the total number of selections on the album archly as follows

Computer
Sonata
Reading
Sonata
Computer

Fluxions indeed relates back to *Five Brass Voices* with humor and intelligence yet again, the complete work being based on a series and its permutations.

Goodness, we've made it. Lots of CD's. What remains is a sense of the vast amount of creativity, and that, from a mostly academic group of composers, there is much that is not "academic" here.

Calendar

May 1

Master Class with George Crumb. Birmingham-Southern College, Birmingham, AL.

Austria. Pianist Marino Formenti in Webern's *Variationen*, Haubenstock-Ramati's *Catch 2*, and Haas's *Hommage à G. Ligeti*. Los Angeles County Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA.

Soprano Beatrice Broadwater sings Berg's *Seven Early Songs*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

May 4

New Century Chamber Orchestra in Ives's *The Unanswered Question*, Musgrave's *Orfeo II*, and Copland's *Quiet City*. First Congregational Church, Berkeley, CA. Through May 7, Jewish Community Center, San Rafael, CA.

America. Pianist Marino Formenti in Cage's *One*, Feldman's *Piano*, Stalvey's *Changes*, Ives's *Piano Sonata*, and Antheil's *Airplane Sonata* and *Sonata Sauvage*. Los Angeles County Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA.

New York Philomusica presents Shostakovich's *Quartet No. 11*, Kodály's *Intermezzo*, and Schoenberg's *Trio*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

May 5

Merce Cunningham Dance Company. Zellerbach Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA. Repeated May 6.

San Francisco Electronic Music Festival, with Alvin Curran, Miya Masaoka, Carl Stone, and Dan Joseph. CellSpace, San Francisco, CA. Festival through May 7.

May 6

American Composers Salon. Kingman's *Songs of Solitude and Exultation*, Deussen's *The Pegasus Suite*, Wold's *Albrechts Flügel*, Meckler's *Apollo 14, A Space Opera*, and Erickson's *Prayers of Thomas Merton*. Trinity Chapel, Berkeley, CA.

Pacific Sticks premieres Ilana Cotton's *of Women's Voices, Women's Words*, with Laurie Amat. Twin Pines Cultural Center, Belmont, CA. Repeated May 21, San Mateo County Historical Association Museum, Redwood City.

San Francisco Electronic Music Festival, featuring Steev Hise and Pamela Z. CellSpace, San Francisco, CA.

Orchestra 2001 in Bright Sheng's *Two Poems from the Sung Dynasty* and PDQ Bach's *The Stoned Guest*. Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA. Repeated May 7, Philadelphia.

May 7

Kronos Quartet, with Dawn Upshaw. Zellerbach Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

San Francisco Electronic Music Festival, with Donald Swearingen, Laetitia Sonami, Kenneth Atchley, and sensorChip. CellSpace, San Francisco, CA.

May 9

Brice Pauset performs his *Six Preludes*. Ircam, Paris, France.

Composer Spotlight: Janice Giteck. Jack Straw Productions, Seattle, WA.

May 10

84th birthday of Milton Babbitt.

Michael Tilson Thomas conducts the San Francisco Symphony in Schoenberg's *Five Pieces for Orchestra*. Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA. Through May 13.

Elizabeth Keusch presents Britten's *Les Illuminations*. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Avalon String Quartet performs Berg's *Lyric Suite*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

May 11

Ensemble Intercontemporain in Zender's *Hölderlin Lesen I and II*. Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France. Repeated, with Berg's *Lyric Suite*, May 13.

Interpretations: Tom Hamilton. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

May 13

New Music Works presents Ives's *Violin Sonata No. 4*, R.C. Seeger's *Music for Small Orchestra*, Harrison's *Suite for Violin, Piano, and Small Orchestra*, Feldman's *I met Heine on the rue Fürstenberg*, and the world premiere of Brant's *Glossary*. University of California, Santa Cruz, CA.

Bang on a Can All-Stars perform *The People's Commissions*. Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York, NY.

May 14

83rd birthday of Lou Harrison.

John Beeman's *The Answering Machine*, *Law Offices*, *Foam*, and *Dear Composer*. Art Center, Palo Alto, CA.

The Studio Club presents William Grant Still's *From a Lost Continent*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

May 15

Left Coast Chamber Ensemble in the premieres of Bauer's *Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano* and San Martin's *Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano*, plus Horst's *Serenade for French Horn, Strings, and Piano* and Harbison's *Woodwind Quintet*. Green Room, San Francisco, CA. Repeated May 15, University of California, Davis.

Mosaic. Los Angeles County Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA.

May 17

Violist Jeanne Mallow in Milhaud's *Sonate*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

May 19

Michael Tilson Thomas conducts the San Francisco Symphony in Prokofiev's *Violin Concerto No. 1* (with Sarah Chang) and Varèse's *Ameriques*. Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA. Repeated May 20.

May 20

Empyrean Ensemble. Arts Center, Davis, CA.

Nancy Bloomer Deussen's *Ascent to Victory* performed by the Kona Community Symphony Orchestra. Kona, HI.
ZOOM. Golijov's *The Passion According to St. Mark*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

May 21

Lee Chai in Stravinsky's *Three Pieces for Solo Clarinet* and Copland's *Clarinet Concerto*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

May 22

Berio/Boulez 75th Birthday. Berio's *Linea* and the West Coast premiere of Boulez's *Sur incises*. Yerba Buena Center, San Francisco, CA.

Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble in Hindemith's *Symphony in B-Flat* and Holst's *First Suite*. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

A Tribute to Earle Brown. Orchestra of the S.E.M. Ensemble performs *Modules I and III*. Alice Tully Hall, New York, NY.

May 23

Ensemble Intercontemporain in Berio's *Tempi concerrtati*, Dusapin's *Granum Sinapis*, and Kyburz's *The Voynich Cipher Manuscript*. Cité de la Musique, Paris, France.

Melanie Almiron performs Prokofiev's *Piano Sonata No. 6*. Williams Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Composers Concordance presents Hardish's *Sonorities VI*, Rhoads's *Highwire*, Luening's *Duo for Flute and Viola*, Schwartz's *Tapestry*, Wendy Mae Chambers's *Endangered Species Song Cycle*, and Foss's *Central Park Reel*. Loewe Auditorium, New York University, New York, NY.

Prometheus Chamber Orchestra in Copland's *Clarinet Concerto* and Sibelius's *Symphony No. 4*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

May 24

California EAR Unit presents *Bongo Lesson!* Los Angeles County Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA.

Conservatory Camerata presents Kodaly's *Matra Pictures* and Schickele's *After Spring Sunset*. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

May 25

Michael Tilson Thomas conducts the San Francisco Symphony in Scelsi's *Konx-Om-Pax*. Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA. Repeated May 27.

Maria Benotti presents the world premiere of Serkebayev's *Fantasy for Violin and Piano*, plus Prokofiev's *Violin Sonata No. 1* and Stravinsky's *Histoire du Soldat*. Williams Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

ASCAP Concert Music Awards, hosted by Peter Schickele. Concert Music 2000 Honorees: Lauren Flanigan, John Duffy, Ned Rorem, and Morton Subotnick. Paul Hall, The Juilliard School, New York, NY.

May 28

The Mountain Play presents *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Mt. Tamalpais Theater, CA. Through June 18.

May 29

79th birthday of Iannis Xenakis.

May 31

Inoue Chamber Ensemble in Baksa's *Sonata for Accordion* and Stravinsky's "Danse Russe" from *Petrushka*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

Chronicle

March 1

Nancy Bloomer Deussen's *Parisian Caper* performed by Soundmoves. University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. Repeated March 5.

Soloists of l'Ensemble Intercontemporain in Webern's *Six Bagatelles* and *Five Movements*, Benjamin's *Viola*, *Viola*, and Huber's *Ecce homines*. Goethe-Institut, Paris, France.

Erling Wold's *A Little Girl Dreams of Taking the Veil*. ODC Theater, San Francisco, CA. Through March 5. "What keeps it all together . . . is Wold's beautiful, moody score, a fluent succession of vivid dramatic strokes and gentle minimalist thrumming from the seven-member instrumental ensemble" [Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle, 3/4/00].

Violinist Charles Libove and pianist Nina Lugovoy in Bacewicz's *Sonata No. 4*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

Boston Symphony Orchestra in Britten's *War Requiem*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY.

Emerson String Quartet performs Shostakovich's *String Quartet No. 15*. John Jay College, New York, NY.

March 2

100th anniversary of the birth of Kurt Weill.

Death of William Colvig (b. 1917, Medford, OR), of pneumonia, at age 82. Capitola, CA. "He first climbed Mount Shasta as a teenager and developed a love for the outdoors that later took him to Canada, where in 1939 he joined an expedition to find a rumored paradise of hot-water springs amid the tundra. The expedition was a failure, but Mr. Colvig was able to raft out of the Yukon on his own and found work as a journeyman electrician in Fairbanks, Alaska. His later travels took him to South America" [San Francisco Chronicle, 3/10/00]. "[He was] an instrument builder who collaborated with . . . Lou Harrison on gamelans and other percussion instruments and who was Mr. Harrison's companion for 33 years. . . . [H]e studied the piano, trombone, baritone horn and tuba while he was growing up in Weed [CA] and won a scholarship to study music at the University of the Pacific in 1934. But he soon decided to study electrical engineering instead, and in 1937 he transferred to the University of California at Berkeley. He continued his studies at Berkeley for two years before joining an expedition of naturalists traveling in the Yukon. During World War II, he served in the United States Army on radar installations in Alaska. He returned to California after the war and worked as an electrician in San Francisco. He also became involved at the time in the Sierra Club, and later became a guide and leader of backpacking expeditions . . . Colvig and Mr. Harrison met after a concert of Mr. Harrison's works in 1967 and . . . they quickly discovered they had common interests in music, acoustics, and politics. They had both been early supporters of KPFA Radio . . . A few weeks after they met, Mr. Colvig moved into Mr. Harrison's woodland cabin in Aptos. Mr. Harrison had by then become interested in the sound of the Indonesian gamelan . . . but had found that importing an authentic gamelan was prohibitively expensive. Together, Mr. Colvig and Mr. Harrison began building a gamelan of their own, based partly on traditional Indonesian designs, [furniture tubing], and partly using found objects. Aluminum slabs, tin cans, electrical conduit and empty oxygen tanks, cut to various sizes and struck with sawed-off baseball bats, replace the gongs of the Asian gamelan. Mr. Colvig and Mr. Harrison called their instrument the American gamelan. It was first used in Mr. Harrison's work, *La Koro Sutro* in 1972. Mr. Colvig and Mr. Harrison built several other gamelans, as well as harps, bowed stringed instruments and percussion instruments. . . . Two of their gamelans were purchased by San Jose State University and Mills College" [Allan Kozinn, The New York Times, 3/15/00].

New Music for a New Century, conducted by John Harbison. Premiere of Halle's *Operation Chaos*, New York premiere of Sur's *The Unicorn and the Lady*, Currier's *Vocalissimus*, and Birtwistle's *Ritual Fragment*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

March 3

Andrew Shapiro. BUILD, San Francisco, CA. Through March 5.

Meredith Monk's *Magic Frequencies*. Memorial Auditorium, Stanford University, CA. "It's safe to say that the comic potential of corn on the cob -- particularly five people eating it at once with various degrees of expertise -- has never been exploited with such quiet zest The fugue for com-chompers concludes the hilarious and beautiful first scene of this 90-minute 'science-fiction chamber opera'" [Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle, 3/6/00].

Danish National Symphony in Ruders's *Concerto in Pieces*. Carnegie hall, New York, NY.

March 4

ACF Salon. Ilyas Iliya's *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, Gilda Taffet's *Downtown Diary*, Brenda Schuman-Post's *Cranes, Whales, Golly Be Flat!*, *On the Spot*, and Keeril Makan's 2. Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA.

NACUSA Concert. *Composers Can Play, Too*. Jo Anne Carey's *La Soledad*, Carolyn Hawley's *The Chase*, John Beeman's *Dear Composer*, Ilana Cotton's *Improvisation*, Sondra Clark's *More Odd Meters*, Mark Alburger's *Quadruple Concerto ("Metal")*, and Nancy Bloomer Deussen's *The World Is a Butterfly's Wing*. Art Center, Palo Alto, CA.

Stanford Symphony Orchestra in the U.S. premiere of Berger's *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*. Dinkelspiel Auditorium, Stanford University, CA.

Daniel Barenboim conducts the Chicago Symphony in Boulez's *Notations I-IV* and the New York premiere of his *Notations VII*. New York, NY. Through March 6.

Violinist Kyung Sun Lee in Hindemith's *Sonata for Solo Violin* and Prokofiev's *Sonata No. 1*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

Orchestra 2001 in Schnittke's *Piano Concerto*, plus a viewing of the film *Orchestra 2001 in Russia: A Passion for New Music*. Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA.

March 5

U.C. Alumni Chorus in Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Argento's *Odi et Amo*. Hertz Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

Napa Valley Symphony in Korngold's *Theme and Variations*, Vaughan Williams's *English Folk Song Suite*, Françaix's *Clarinet Concerto*, and Pärt's *Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten*. Napa, CA.

Pianist Stephen Prutsman in a program including his arrangement of Ravel's *Bolero*. Mills College, Oakland, CA.

St. Paul Chamber Orchestra in Daugherty's *Sunset Strip*. Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA.

Kitka in Pauline Oliveros's *The Space of Spirit: Unfolding the Newborn Lotus*. Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, CA.

2000 Bonk Festival of New Music. Tampa, FL. Through March 11.

Nancy Bloomer Deussen's *Reflections on the Hudson* performed by the Southeast Kansas Symphony. Pittsburg, KS.

Chicago Symphony in the New York premiere of Elliott Carter's *What Next?*, and Falla's *The Three-Cornered Hat*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY.

The Chamber Players of The League/ISCM. *An Evening with Mario Davidovsky*. *String Quartet No. 4*, *String Quartet No. 5*, *Chacona*, *Biblical*

Songs, Synchronisms No. 3, and Junctures. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

March 6

Cygnus Ensemble. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA.

Earplay presents Martino's *Notturmo*, the West Coast premiere of Laurie San Martin's *Threshold*, Ives's *Largo*, Crumb's *Processional*, and Imbrie's *Impromptu for Violin and Piano*. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA.

Profiles: Harbison, Kirchner, Pinkham, Schuller. Harbison. String Quartet No. 3, Four Songs of Solitude, and Quintet for Winds. Williams Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA. Festival through March 9.

North/South Consonance presents Meltzer's *Trapset*, Bell's *Les Neiges d'Antan*, Swack's *String Quartet No. 3*, Quilling's *Piano Quintet*, and Lifchitz's *Affinities*, with Patti Monson, Renee Jolles, Max Lifchitz, The West Side String Quartet, and The North/South String Quartet. Christ & St. Stephen's Church, New York, NY.

Daniel Barenboim conducts the Chicago Symphony in Boulez's *Notations I-IV and Notation VII*, and Mahler's *Symphony No. 5*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY. "The Notations have worn well. They started life as 12 aphoristic piano works composed in 1945 during Mr. Boulez's student years. When Mr. Boulez began orchestrating them in 1977, he expanded on their materials as well, but kept them fairly compact. Mr. Barenboim conducted the premieres of the first four in 1980 and commissioned four more for Chicago, only one of which, *Notations VII* (1997), has been completed. Heard together, they are a stunning exploration of orchestral timbre; they are colorful and seductive enough to undercut the sense of imposing braininess that clouds perceptions of Mr. Boulez's works" [Allan Kozinn, *The New York Times*, 3/8/00].

Profiles: Harbison, Kirchner, Pinkham, Schuller. Unusual Forms. Harbison's *Viola Concerto* and Russell's *Vertical Form VI*. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

March 7

Cygnus Ensemble in Halle's *Spooks*, Braxton's *Composition No. 189*, Varah's *Cygnificant Other*, Scelsi's *L'Ame Ailée*, Takemitsu's *Toward the Sea*, and Currier's *Broken Consort*. San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA.

Profiles: Harbison, Kirchner, Pinkham, Schuller. Pinkham. Up at Dawn, Nocturnes for Flute and Guitar, Quarries, and String Quartet. Songs. Williams Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Profiles: Harbison, Kirchner, Pinkham, Schuller. Inspired by Soloists and Singing. Premiere of Liang's *Extend*, Kim's *Caprices*, Pinkham's *Music for an Indian Summer*, Fletcher's *An American Song*, and excerpts from Harbison's *Full Moon in March* and Weeler's *Democracy*. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Pittsburgh Symphony in Stravinsky's *Petrushka* (1947 version). Carnegie Hall, New York, NY.

Weill and Lenya: A Centennial Celebration. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

Israel Philharmonic in Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 5*. Avery Fisher Hall, New York, NY.

March 8

Profiles: Harbison, Kirchner, Pinkham, Schuller. Choirs. Premieres of Gawlick's *Sinfonietta* and Navok's *Nocturne*, plus Kim's *Where Grief Slumbers* and Peyton's *From "Apostroph."* Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Profiles: Harbison, Kirchner, Pinkham, Schuller. Hearing Beyond. Brown Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Profiles: Harbison, Kirchner, Pinkham, Schuller. Kirchner. Fanfare, Illuminations, Five Pieces, Trio II, and The Twilight Stood. Williams Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Houston Composers' Alliance presents *When Night Came...* (1994) for clarinet and piano, by Karen Thomas; *Creeley Songs* (1999) for soprano and piano, by Anthony Brandt; *And What Rough Beast...?* (1995) by Marc Satterwhite; and *Settings from Pierrot Lunaire* by William Kraft. Houston, TX.

Chitose Okashira in Messaien's *Préludes* and *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus*; Takemitsu's *Rain Tree Sketch*, *Rain Tree Sketch II*, and *Les yeux clos*; and Okashiro's *Moon* and the U.S. premiere of his *Toward the Stars*. Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York, NY.

Ilana Cohenca-Levy in Pehrson's *Three Piano Pieces*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

March 9

Ensemble Intercontemporain in Nancarrow's *Piece No. 2* and Grisey's *Le temps et l'écluse*. Centre Georges-Pompidou, Paris, France.

Premiere of Jonas Muller's *Mass No. 1* for seven voices, with percussionist Garth Powell and bassist Claire Hafner. Concert Hall, Mills College, Oakland, CA.

Profiles: Harbison, Kirchner, Pinkham, Schuller. Saxophones. Harbison's *Saxophone Sonata*, Schuller's *Saxophone Sonata*, McDonald's *Big Crunch*, and Pinkham's *Up and Down. Conversation* with the four featured composers. Williams Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Profiles: Harbison, Kirchner, Pinkham, Schuller. Schuller. Sonata-Fantasia, String Quartet No. 3, Six Early Songs, and Concerto for Viola. New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

New York Philharmonic in Bernstein's *Suite from "A Quiet Place*, the New York premiere of Pugh's *Trombone Concerto*, and the world premiere [!] of Weill's *Street Scenes*. Avery Fisher Hall, New York, NY. Through March 11.

Kevin James's *Portraits*. The Kitchen, New York, NY. Through March 11.

Interpretations. Premiere of W. Parker's *Songs for Mary Lou, Thomas, and Bessie* and the New York premieres of S.S. Smith's *Blue, Sings*, and *Family Portraits*, plus Smith's *Links No. 6*, *When Music is Missing*, and *Music*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

John Zorn and Paul Schoenfield. Schoenfield's *Piano Trio*, *Three Country Fiddle Tunes*, and *Three British Folksongs*, and Zorn's *Amour Fou*, *Le Momo*, and *Untitled*. Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York, NY. Through March 14.

Shostakovich's *Lady MacBeth of Mtsensk*. Metropolitan Opera, New York, NY.

Philadelphia Orchestra in Shostakovich's *Festive Overture*, Prokofiev's *Piano Concerto No. 3*, and Copland's *Symphony No. 3*. Academy of Music, Philadelphia, PA.

March 10

Ensemble Court-Circuit [!] in Sandred's *Amanzule Voices*, Dalbavie's *In advance of the broken time*, Spahlinger's *Gegen unendlich*, and Grisey's *Vortex Temporum*. Centre George-Pompidou, Paris, France.

Douglas Ewart's *3 on 3 Music is the Game: A Ritual Game Piece*, with Leo Wadada Smith and the Mills College Basketball Team. Haas Pavilion Gymnasium, Mills College, Oakland, CA.

The Shuffle Show, with Sarah Cahill, Miya Masaoka, Amy X Neuberg, Donald Swearingen, and Pamela Z. Theater Artaud, San Francisco, CA.

Stanford Chamber Chorale in Barber's *Adagio* and Biebl's *Ave Maria*. Memorial Church, Stanford University, CA.

Pierre Boulez conducts the London Symphony Orchestra in Bartók's *The Wooden Prince*, Eotvos's *zeroPoints*, and G. Ligeti's *Violin Concerto*, with Christian Tetzlaff. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY. Programs through March 13. "[Boulez's] conviction has not been shaken, not even stirred. . . . Bartók's *Wooden Prince* . . . [is a] favorite . . . of Mr. Boulez's and . . . succumb[s] readily to his present conducting style, in which his characteristic gifts for clarity of texture and precision in detail and turning are joined by a grand spaciousness. . . . Much of [the Ligeti] is played in high registers; much of it tricks and delights the ear by giving the impression that the soloist is performing on several violins at once, or that marimbas and other percussion instruments are tucked under the strings. The sounds are like light beams playing through glass, and also like memories of folk music. The abstract and fantastical merges into the earthy and particular. . . . The concerto was all spinning brilliance or, in the first slow movement, puzzlement. it was also good to hear that a modern violin, made by Peter Greiner last year, can perform so spectacularly. . . . Peter Eotvos's *zeroPoints* had been the wacky opener, beginning from an imitation of an electronic bleep and shooting off in all kinds of directions, from explosive fanfares to a lugubrious passage for low wind, everything finely imagined" [Paul Griffiths, *The New York Times*, 3/13/00].

Guitarist Andrew Zorn. St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, Houston, TX. Repeated March 11, First Unitarian Universalist Church. "[H]e invoked the instrument's Spanish heritage in a group of Manuel de Falla pieces (including a transcription of the familiar *The Miller's Dance* from *The Three-Cornered Hat*), Three Venezuelan Waltzes of Antonio Lauro and a dance and prelude by Argentine Jorge Morel" [Charles Ward, *The Houston Chronicle*, 3/12/00].

March 11

Steven Schick performs James Dillon's *La coupure*, for percussion and electronics. Ircam, Paris, France.

Ensemble Itinéraire in Murail's *Mémoire / Erosion* and Grisey's *jour, contre-jour*. Centre Georges-Pompidou, Paris, France.

Pierre Boulez conducts the London Symphony Orchestra in Berio's *Notturmo*, Sciarrino's *Recitativo Oscuro* (with pianist Maurizio Pollini) and Schoenberg's *Pelleas und Melisande*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY. "Pollini . . . was typically vivid and alert, but seemed not fully sure of his role in plying chill, bright fragments and explosive chords, while some of the orchestral players wanted to find humor in the music more than unsettling oddity and malaise. Even so, the weird soundscape of scratches, wheezes and whistlings came across. So did the disturbing regular gray tread of a funeral march through much of the piece, and the sense of piano and orchestra as two great animals circling each other in the same cage, about to fight" [Paul Griffiths, *The New York Times*, 3/13/00].

Voices of the Century. New York Virtuoso Singers in 20th Century Choral Masterpieces -- A Retrospective: Germany / Austria / Switzerland. Schoenberg's *De Profundis*, Webern's *Entflieht auf Leichten Kähnen*, Hindemith's *Five Songs on Ancient Texts*, Martin's *Songs of Ariel*, Henze's *Orpheus Behind the Wire*, and Krenek's *Lamentations of Jeremiah*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

Philadelphia Orchestra in Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*, Davidson's *The Selkie Boy*, and Debussy's *La Mer*. Academy of Music, Philadelphia, PA.

March 12

Soloists of l'Ensemble Intercontemporain in Birtwistle's *Harrison's Clocks*, Reich's *New York Counterpoint*, and Feldman's *Why Patterns*. Centre Georges-Pompidou, New York, NY.

London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Pierre Boulez, in Berg's *Three Pieces for Orchestra*, Neuwirth's *Clinamen/Nodus*, and Mahler's *Symphony No. 6*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY. "[T]he Berg belonged where it was, for in Mr. Boulez's taut and propulsive interpretation, it related intimately to the closing work, Mahler's Sixth Symphony even beyond the obvious: the sledgehammer blows in each. So intimately, in fact, that something was probably needed to separate the two, and Olga Neuwirth's *Clinamen/Nodus*" certainly accomplished that.

The title refers to Freudian concepts -- the clarity sometimes achieved through trauma or the like, and its opposite, the knot -- and this lovable bear of a piece starts where Varèse left off in *Amériques* (which started where Stravinsky left off in *The Rite of Spring*), right down to wailing sirens and a lion's roar. Ms. Neuwirth, an Austrian, seems determined to show that the Old World can be just as big and brash and tough and postmodern as the new worlds Varèse was seeking to depict in 1922. Although Mr. Boulez does not normally favor such gleeful chaos, he led a blistering account here and made it all seem a delight. The Mahler Sixth, though not blistering in the way I recall Mr. Boulez's account of the work in 1972 with the New York Philharmonic, was excellent. (I am willing to grant by now that my pickled memory of that performance may bear no relation to reality, past or present, but I would still like to hear such a reading.) Mr. Boulez presided everywhere with his usual dynamism and lucidity, and this most chameleonic of orchestras sounded like the ideal Boulezian instrument, lean and incisive" [James Oestreich, *The New York Times*, 3/16/00].

North/South Consonance presents Joel Chadabe's *Extensible Expressions*, Hilary Tann's *Nothing Forgotten*, Elliott Schwartz's *Vienna Dreams*, Richard Wilson's *Character Studies*, Nils Vigeland's *Mirela Variations*, David Shohl's *The Distant Bell*, Max Lifchitz's *Transformations No. 1*, and Aaron Copland's *Songs of Emily Dickinson*. Christ and St. Stephen's Church, New York, NY.

Cygnus Ensemble in Saariaho's *NoaNoa*, Scelsi's *Rucke di guck*, Crumb's *Canis Mundis*, Marc Mellits's *Etudes for Two Guitars*, Chien-Yin Chen's *Wogen -- Brandung -- Wonne*, W. Anderson's *Glance to the Side*, and Wuorinen's *Epithalamium*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

March 13

The Moscow Soloists, with violist Yuri Bashmet, in Shostakovich's dark but accessible *Chamber Symphony*, based on his eighth string quartet, and *Sinfonia for Viola and Strings*, (arranged from the String Quartet Number 13). Music Center, Los Angeles, CA. Repeated March 14, Seattle, WA. "[T]he adaptation of Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 13 . . . is an altogether more vulnerable work than the Chamber Symphony, its sorrows distilled virtually into ether" [John Henken, *Los Angeles Times*, 3/15/00]. "Representing one of the composer's forays into the 12-tone row, always more popular among composers than listeners, [*Sinfonia*] is still written as music, and not mere cold mathematics" [John Sutherland, *The Seattle Times*, 3/15/00].

Pianist Jennifer Hymer in a program of new works for piano and electronics, including Schnebel's *Zwei Studien*, Harvey's *Le Tombeau de Messiaen*, C. Brown's *Sparks*, S. Clark's *A Song and Prayer*, and Lockwood's *Ear-Walking Women*. Ensemble Room, Mills College, Oakland, CA.

Daniel Barenboim performs Schoenberg's *Piano Concerto*, with Pierre Boulez conducting the London Symphony Orchestra, plus Boulez's *Original* from *...explosante-fixe...*, George Benjamin's *Palimpsest*, and Stravinsky's *Petrushka*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY. "Boulez is composer in residence at Carnegie, and these concerts, mingling masterworks of the 20th century with United States premieres, were part of his season-long Perspectives series, which intersects with those of Maurizio Pollini and Daniel Barenboim. Mr. Boulez's own contribution as composer was modest: *Original*, the conclusion of *... explosante-fixe* . . . , a work that like many of his others has continued to evolve since its first performance, in 1973. Although the latest version retains computer electronics to disperse the sound of three flutes, Mr. Boulez performed *Original* without electronics, a version he clearly sanctions. Hardly "explosive" even with that element, the piece emerged here as a lovely lyrical effusion, with fine work from Paul Edmund-Davies, the orchestra's principal flutist. The new work on Monday was *Palimpsest*, by the English composer George Benjamin. Heavy on winds and light on strings (with no cellos), it deftly drew angular, colorful variations from a wisp of song. In a program exceedingly well integrated, like the others, color was amply carried through in Stravinsky's *Pétrouchka*, as was angularity in Schoenberg's *Piano Concerto*. Mr. Barenboim gave a blazing yet thoughtfully conceived performance of the concerto, to which Mr. Boulez and his forces responded in kind. . . . [T]he players seemed to enjoy it all. And so did Mr. Boulez, who may finally have found a second home in New York. Here's hoping he moves in to stay" [James Oestreich, *The New York Times*, 3/16/00].

Houston Symphony in Adams' *Century Rolls*, a concerto for piano and orchestra with Emanuel Ax as soloist. Houston, TX. "*Century Rolls* carried a humorous face. The second movement is called *Manny's Gym* -- that is, a gymnopedie for Manny Ax, as the pianist is affectionately known to virtually everyone in the classical music business. . . .

Century Rolls needs players to have a sense of rhythm similar to a "click track," that metrical tick-tock a conductor has in his ear to keep an orchestra aligned with a film in live performance. Beats and divisions of beats have to be precise; they can't bend or be even microscopically off. Otherwise, it's impossible to know whether the performance is accurate -- whether, for example, Adams really did write an appoggiatura involving two sets of instruments, or whether one of the groups was inaccurate. Introducing the work, Ax described the form as often being like a puzzle -- small tiles of music that, as they slowly assemble, reveal a complete picture. [Here] the tiles had very plastic edges. Numerous times, the first violins took a second or third repetition of a motive to get it completely accurate, to go from smudged to clean. That did not produce an accurate, let alone musical, portrait of *Century Rolls*" [Charles Ward, The Houston Chronicle, 3/14/00].

March 14

Kristi Martel's *Fingers and Teeth*. Venue 9, San Francisco, CA.

Miró Quartet in Ginastera's *String Quartet No. 2*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

Washington Composers Forum and Jack Straw Productions present Michael Shannon. 4261 Roosevelt Way, Seattle, WA.

Pianist Dubravka Tomsic. Meany Theater, Seattle, WA. "Tomsic showed a great affinity for Prokofiev, whose seldom-heard Sonata No. 4 emerged in all its wistful, mordant glory - complete with bursts of thrilling virtuosity in the final Allegro . . . Tomsic was recalled to the stage for three encores: the first one from a set of *Five Macedonian Dances* by her husband, Alojz Srebotnjak; the second a *Polcinelle* by Villa-Lobos" [Melinda Bargreen, Seattle Times, 3/14/00].

Martha Argerich plays Prokofiev's *Piano Concerto No. 3* with Charles Dutoit and the Philadelphia Orchestra, on a program with Shostakovich's *Festive Overture* and Copland's *Symphony No. 3*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY. "The Prokofiev is something of a signature work for Ms. Argerich, who has played it several times in New York, and perhaps the most immediately striking aspect of her performance . . . was the intimacy of her relationship with it. With Mr. Dutoit and the orchestra providing solid, richly hued support at casual but by no means lethargic tempos, Ms. Argerich toyed with the work's phrasing the way a cat plays with a ball of yarn. But there was something deeper and more fascinating going on as well, and what made Ms. Argerich's account of the Prokofiev so fascinating, both as a reading of the piece and by comparison with her own past performances of it, was the degree to which she illuminated a poetic and at times even gentle side of the work. These are not qualities one normally looks for in the Prokofiev, a concerto that thrives on spiky, explosive virtuosity. And it is not as if Ms. Argerich held back on the flashy parts. But where the piano line typically sounds brittle and bright, Ms. Argerich produced a gracefully rounded tone, and where the music can seem monochromatic -- mainly because pianists have enough of a job getting the notes under their fingers without worrying about coloration -- Ms. Argerich provided a wealth of shading and texture. Who could blame an audience for wanting more?" [Allan Kozinn, The New York Times, 3/16/00]

Sarah Rothenberg in *Music and Poetry: Shadows and Fragments, Time and Memory*, including *Sonata No. 2* (1949) for piano by Galina Ustvolskaya, and music of Schoenberg and Schaf. Menil Collection, Houston, TX. "An unfinished Scherzo of Schoenberg (1880) -- a true fragment -- led to his Three Piano Pieces, Op. 11 (1909). Rothenberg's performance of the Three Piano Pieces was exemplary. She has a particular affinity for knotty, 20th-century music, performing these works with relaxed, understanding authority. So, too, Ustvolskaya's sonata and *Anathema* (1969) by Dutch composer Peter Schaf" [Charles Ward, The Houston Chronicle, 3/15/00].

March 15

Pat Metheny. Knitting Factory, New York, NY. "Metheny is an astonishing jazz guitar player with a rapid stream of ideas; he uses the whole range of the instrument, working wide glissandos into tight, focused improvisations" [Ben Ratliff, The New York Times, 3/20/00]

March 16

Death of baritone Roy Henderson (b. 7/4/1899), at age 100. Bromley, Kent, UK. "[He] became a distinguished teacher with Kathleen Ferrier and John Shirley-Quirk. . . . He sang on the first recording of Delius's *Sea Drift*, and gave the premiere of the composer's *Idyll*. He also sang in the first performances of Vaughan Williams's *Dona Nobis Pacem*, *Five Tudor Portraits* and *Serenade to Music*. As a recitalist he was regarded as a superb interpreter of English art songs, and made recordings of works by Butterworth, Vaughan Williams, Stanford, Warlock and Dyson" [Allan Kozinn, The New York Times, 3/21/00].

Different Trains and Ensemble Green in premieres of Brennan's *Blue-Gray* and Mosko's *Darling*, plus Hiel's *The Affirmation*, Hoey's *SpectraLines* and *Coloratura*, Weimeir's *Circular Garden*, and de Silva's *Para Clarinete*. Zipper Concert Hall, Colburn School for the Performing Arts, Los Angeles, CA.

Other Minds Festival. Garland's *Three Strange Angels*, Lang's *Memory Pieces*, L. Jenkins's *Solo Improvisation for Violin and Viola*, music of Hamza el Din, and the premiere of Annie Gosfield's *Flying Sparks and Heavy Machinery*, with the Onyx Quartet and Reddrum. Theater Artaud, San Francisco, CA. Festival through March 18. "The lineup for the sixth annual contemporary-music festival features as provocative a mix of artistic voices as ever. *Flying Sparks and Heavy Machinery*, for string quartet and percussion quartet, announces its subject matter unambiguously in the title. For 15 minutes, Gosfield pits her two ensembles against each other in a flurry of engaging cacophony, with the strings fearlessly facing down the percussion clangor. . . . The piece was played with considerable verve by the Onyx String Quartet and percussion group Reddrum. The evening's other chief reward came from Lang's *Memory Pieces*, superbly played by pianist Aki Takahashi. These are single-idea (though not always concise) etudes, each written in memory of a friend and pursuing one aspect of piano technique. Among them were 'Grind,' a memorial to composer Jacob Druckman that involves heavy Mussorgskian chords in five-against-four rhythms, and 'Diet Coke,' a beautifully dappled stretch of gamelan-like interlocking rhythms written in memory of arts administrator Bette Snapp. . . . Nubian-born Hamza el Din was on hand with his oud (a North African lute) to sing two numbers tinged with traditional strains. The evening began with *The Three Strange Angels*, a pointless series of loud crashes on piano and bass drum written by Peter Garland. And just before Gosfield's piece, Jenkins commandeered the stage for a series of solo violin and viola improvisations that went on for what seemed like an eternity" [Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle, 3/18/00]. "What Will the 21st Century Sound Like?" queries the poster for Other Minds VI, the alternative contemporary music festival running in different venues in town through Saturday. If Thursday evening's opening concert at Theater Artaud is representative, it will sound like much of the alternative music of the waning days of the last century; it will, in turn, be eclectic, self-indulgent, inspired, punishing. . . . Hamza el Din, a master of the oud (a stringed instrument capable of surpassing eloquence) commands enough artistry to mellow out an army. His gentle virtuosity and melismatic, Arabic vocals in two of his repertory standards - *Greetings* and *Escalay (Water Wheel)* - and his courtly manner (how often have you heard a musician apologize for making a mistake?) served as rebuke to the prevailing trendiness. . . . Lang spotlights various devices, like arpeggios or dramatic use of the pedal (in "grind," the most epigrammatic of the lot). . . . Jenkins, who evidently boasts a large following, would have been more striking if he had performed for 10, rather than 30 minutes. His improvisations on violin and viola fuse Bach with bluegrass, and exploit the instrument to its fullest, and ugliest, too. Gosfield's *Flying Sparks and Heavy Machinery* will not strike you as original if you've heard Alexander Mosolov's *Iron Foundry*, Arthur Honegger's *Pacific 231* or sundry downtown Manhattan exercises. . . . At least, the work diverted, though the suspicion lingers that this can has already been banged into submission before. [Allan Ulrich, San Francisco Examiner, 3/21/00]. "New music, in the old-fashioned definition, is a web-like entity embracing a broad range of idioms. Contemporary classical, adventurous jazz, experimental noise and musics from around the world have a happy home in the new music realm, where they can interact and enjoy mutual influence, or so goes the idealistic premise. . . . These days . . . new music festivals in the U.S. are in short supply, which makes San Francisco's Other Minds Festival, at the ripe old age of 6, an event worth trumpeting, and copying (in Los Angeles, for instance?). Its founder and director is composer Charles Amirkhanian, who is in Italy on a Rockefeller Foundation grant. Enter Carl Stone, this year's interim artistic director. . . .

Annie Gosfield's *Flying Sparks and Heavy Machinery*, inspired by sounds and rhythms from the industrial and factory worlds, pits a string quartet, the Onyx, and a percussion quartet, the Cal State Sacramento-based Reddrum, in a blithe collision of tones and outbursts. From tender buzzing sounds to bracing clangor, it's all about life in the Machine Age, but, refreshingly, using acoustic instruments. . . . Pianist Aki Takahashi performed six of David Lang's eight *Memory Pieces*, intriguing short works with varying and specific technical and emotive strategies, brought bracingly, and unsentimentally, to life by the pianist. From the non-notated end of the spectrum came Hamza el Din, the Nubian oud player and troubadour now based in San Francisco, exhibiting organic grace in his brief solo performance. Leroy Jenkins, from the avant jazz scene, offered a fascinating and raw solo improvisation embodying a private violinistic world, defying refinement and polish and suggesting a folk tradition as yet unnamed" [Josef Woodard, Los Angeles Times, 3/21/00].

Louis Armstrong: One Hundred Years, with the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY. "West End Blues was the show-stopper, with mottled Ellingtonian chords in the reed section, brass-heavy crescendos and then a few great cutaway moments: one duet between the trombonist Steve Turre and the bassist Todd Coolman and another in which a tender, forthright Frank Wess tenor saxophone solo had only the merest clicking to accompany it" [Ben Ratliff, The New York Times, 3/20/00].

New Sounds Live: New York Guitar Festival. After Hendrix: The 21st-Century Guitar. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

New York Philharmonic in Prokofiev's *Piano Concerto No. 3*. Avery Fisher Hall, New York, NY. Repeated March 17.

Warren Zevon. Bowery Ballroom, New York, NY. "Zevon joked that he hadn't 'grown or evolved, musically or morally' since he wrote 'Poor Poor Pitiful Me' in the early 1970's. But back then, he had it easy. All it took to establish him as the wild man of Los Angeles songwriting were terse hints of gallows-humored mayhem: bulletins about a werewolf in London, glimmers of international intrigue in *Lawyers, Guns and Money*, matter-of-fact harm reports in 'Excitable Boy.' He didn't have to write too many details; he didn't have to pretend to be living the parts of his characters. But in the intervening decades, hip-hop and heavy metal have upstaged him, and by now his tales of gunmen, wastrels and sociopaths seem far less jolting. His response has been to dig in his heels musically, sticking with the kind of stolid marches he has always written. Meanwhile, he has been finding more comedy in his tales of human folly, though it's comedy with calamity, deterioration and death as bitter punch lines. His new album is called *Life'll Kill Ya* (Artemis), and to open his set, he sang, "I was in the house when the house burned down." Mr. Zevon's songs change radically depending on whether they're for guitar or piano. His guitar tunes hark back to Appalachian music, often using a dulcimerlike drone and just a handful of circling chords. In two songs, he made the chords a tape loop while he played lead guitar solos. On piano, he uses more elaborate harmonies, by way of Copland and gospel, to back what might be parlor songs for a highly unsavory parlor" [John Pareles, The New York Times, 3/21/00].

Philadelphia Orchestra in Dutilleux's *Timbres, espace, mouvement, ou La Nuit étoilée*, Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*, Ibert's *Escales*, and Debussy's *La Mer*. Academy of Music, Philadelphia, PA. Through March 21.

Seattle Symphony in Gershwin's *Piano Concerto* (1925). Benaroya Hall, Seattle, WA.

March 17

Seiji Ozawa's performance of two Brahms symphonies with the Vienna Philharmonic last Friday in Paris is interrupted by a politically motivated bomb scare. Théâtre des Champs Élysées, Paris, France.

Menotti's *The Medium* and Barber's *A Hand of Bridge*. Goat Hall, San Francisco, CA. Through April 2.

Other Minds Festival. The premiere of Jacob ter Veldhuis's *String Quartet No. 3* ("There Must be Somewhere Out of Here") (with the Onyx Quartet, Hyo-shin Na's *Rain Study* (with pianist Thomas Schultz) and the premiere of *Blue Yellow River* (with cellist Joan Jeanrenaud), Peter Garland's *Bright Angel - Hermetic Bird* (with pianist Aki Takahashi), and Christian Wolff's *Burdocks* (with the Wolff Band). Theater Artaud, San Francisco, CA.

"Onyx Quartet . . . gave the first U.S. performance of Jacob ter Veldhuis' String Quartet No. 3 ("There must be some way out of here"), an accessible but artful work. Korean American composer Hyo-shin Na's natural East-West synthesis "Blue Yellow River" zooms in on the delicate allure of timbre in a different way. . . . The work elicits an airy quality of stillness with inventive structural signposts along the way. Pianist Aki Takahashi is a rare gift to the field of contemporary music interpretation. Her work here leaned toward the coolly elegiac, including Peter Garland's "Bright Angel-Hermetic Bird," a moving, minimalist-like memorial to her late husband. . . . Improvisation . . . played a prominent role in the work *Burdocks*, from veteran composer Christian Wolff. The Wolff Band, a sort of all-star new music outfit made up of guitarist Fred Frith, sampler Bob Ostertag, cellist Joan Jeanrenaud, koto player Miya Masaoka, hornist Gordon Mumma, percussionist William Winant and Wolff on piano . . . produced a smattering of spare gestures on a sonic canvas. Structure appeared in deceptive ways, and the sound actions, though seemingly indeterminate, were cued between musicians and occasionally tethered to melodies that bubbled in and out of consciousness" [Josef Woodard, Los Angeles Times, 3/21/00]

San Francisco Symphony in Takemitsu's *Tree Line*. Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA. Repeated March 18.

Nancy Bloomer Deussen's *The Pegasus Suite* performed by flutist Lissadell Greene. University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, LA.

Houston Symphony Hans Graf, music director of orchestras in Calgary, Alberta, and Bordeaux, France, was the guest conductor with a pair of works offering radically contrasting challenges. (Graf also will lead the symphony's upcoming four performances of Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* beginning Friday in Jones Hall.)

March 18

Musical Explorations 2000! Alvin Curran. Walt Disney Modular Theatre, Valencia, CA. "In his big pieces, Alvin Curran's music can seem to operate like a sonic vine that grows over a listener. And that metaphor works for at least a while in thinking about Curran's "Music Is Not Music," . . . Here the leaves of Curran's vine were chords sung by a small chorus of CalArts students, conducted by Marc Lowenstein. One chord followed another in the plodding rhythm of a vacant never-cadencing chorale, each chord more a sound than a harmony. Instrumentalists from the Institute's New Millennium Players were mixed in with the chorus. For about the first half hour, a string quartet, saxophone and trumpet blended in and supported the chorus, creating a kind of quiet drone of distant insects (further enhanced by percussion and Curran rubbing a string along the strings of a piano) and by William Roper's haunting, slow tuba solos. In a later section, the instrumental buzz was more radical with crunchy, odd, live sounds in the foreground. In between, Curran performed a riveting 10-minute piano solo. As an epilogue, he added electronics. The vine metaphor, of course, goes only so far. The nature part is useful. Curran is an environmental composer. He is a gatherer of sounds and has produced, over the past three decades, remarkable multimedia pieces that have the effect of placing the listener into what feels like a downright physical environment. There is another important side to Curran's music. He is a captivating pianist who can give semi-improvised performances that spin one thing after another--waltzes, blues tunes, Minimalist patterns in complex rhythms, exotic chordal drones--for fascinating hour upon hour. That one is never exactly sure what is worked out and what is not is always an intriguing mystery, since the music is so well-controlled compositionally. The CalArts piece had both this quality of composed music and the creation of something for the specific players and environment in which Curran found himself. Under the "Music Is Not Music" umbrella, Curran fashioned for his available resources a single, uninterrupted sequence of two choral pieces, the titular *Music Is Not Music* and "When My Feet Felt the Path That My Eyes Could Not See," separated and concluded by a work in progress, "Endangered Species," for piano and sampler. The choral works took their texts from the Charles Eliot Norton Lectures that John Cage gave at Harvard a dozen years ago. Cage had used chance operations to transform into fragmented poetry various texts drawn from newspapers and favorite authors such as Thoreau. Curran picked and chose fragments with monosyllabic words that suited his own style of setting one word to one chord. Not a single word, however, was intelligible as sung. But what Curran did marvelously capture was the monotone of Cage's reading voice as it hung in the air in his lectures. As a pianist, Curran is comparable to no other. The first "Endangered Species" solo was all fast, hypnotic tremolo. His torso rigid and hands beating out a mechanical wave in gradually changing chords, he seemed to take the flat chords sung by the chorus and add dimensions--three and even a psychedelic fourth.

For the segue into the second solo, the chorus' relentless march of chords started to break up, while the instruments began making fluttering noises and Curran began beating out weird patterns on the piano. Suddenly the entertaining electronics came to life blaring the sounds that included opera tenors and elephants and Cage's voice. Although it only functioned as a wild epilogue, it nevertheless unleashed something so powerfully new and unforgettable that it seemed as if the musical vine had now been planted in the listener's imagination. And it wasn't about to stop growing just because the music stopped" [Mark Swed, Los Angeles Times, 3/20/00].

Other Minds Festival. Panel discussions: *The 21st-Century String*, with Hamza el Din, Joan Jeanrenaud, Miya Masaoka, Ji Young Yi, and Sarah Cahill; and *Cultural Identity and Music in the Post-Modern World*, with Annie Gosfield, Paul D. Miller, Robin Rimbaud, Eddie Def, and Herman Gray. George Coates Performance Works, San Francisco, CA.

Other Minds Festival. scanner's *Electro Pollution* and D.J. Spooky's *Synchronia*. Justice League, 628 Divisadero Street, San Francisco, CA. "It was another world, and volume level, when the festival moved to the Justice League on Saturday night. A plunge into the vibrant zone where "art" and hip-hop meet, this was the night of the "a.k.a." crowd, between New York's Paul Miller a.k.a. DJ Spooky and London's Robin Rimbaud a.k.a. Scanner. They teamed up to create an experiential wash--a two-hour wall of sound built from samples, manipulated digital sounds and turntable gymnastics, while a dizzy swirl of visuals gushed by on screens above them. Their work is an ideal bedfellow for the embracing, style-mashing spirit of new music at its most interesting" [Josef Woodard, Los Angeles Times, 3/21/00].

Pacific Mozart Ensemble in Poulenc's *Figure Humaine* and Martin's *Messe*. Trinity Episcopal Church, San Francisco, CA. Repeated March 19, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Berkeley, CA.

Steve Lacy / Roswell Rudd Quartet. Noe Valley Ministry, San Francisco, CA.

Alea III performs Christopher Rouse's *Compline* (1996), Mario Davidovsky's *Simple Dances*, Henri Lazarof's *Solo*, Antoniou's *Concerto*, Lowell Liebermann's *Soliloquy*. Boston, MA. "'Compline was Rouse's musical response to his first trip to Rome -- 'An American in Rome.' Apparently he chose the title, which refers to the seventh canonical hour, simply because he likes it. The piece has no religious dimension beyond an evocation of the church as a part of the bustle of the eternal city. The piece, scored for seven bright-toned instruments, opens with a driving rhythmic ostinato figure that returns midway, but with the instrumentation reversed (the strings play the figure first, later the winds); two slow movements suggest lopsided chorales, and at the end, all of the thematic activity coalesces into a chantlike unison line. Like all of Rouse's music, it is vivid and energetic; unlike most of the rest of his work, this piece feels more cheerful than angry. Mario Davidovsky's *Simple Dances* aren't all that simple; the seven dances so far collected are part of a suite as yet unfinished. Davidovsky's agenda is to make each dance (waltz, sarabande, tango, etc.) not just another example of the genre but a kind of portrait of the dance that, in his words, "comments on the historical or social context that nurtured it." How the music moved into such extramusical dimensions was hard to hear, but the pieces compelled attention because of Davidovsky's amazing ear and the way he has assimilated once avant-garde sounds and textures (prepared piano, bowed marimba, etc.) into a personal expressive vocabulary. Leonard Rosenman's *Lorca Revisited* was not played because the parts didn't arrive in time. Instead Julia Scolnik played Lowell Liebermann's *Soliloquy* for solo flute and Henri Lazarof's *Solo* for alto flute. Both are quiet, reflective pieces in which everything depends on the concentration, phrasing, and tonal enchantment of the soloist; Scolnik has all of these in imaginative abundance. Antoniou's *Concerto*, like much else on the program, and in the 1990s, is a 'roots' piece - but Antoniou's deep roots stretch in many directions, into musical history (the slow movement is a stately passacaglia) and into his own past in Greece (the finale, and by far the longest movement, is a set of variations on an urban dance, the *zeibekiko*). The concerto may be scored for piano and chamber orchestra, but it is a big piece, full of splashy sounds and expansive gestures, but with the feeling and meaning to back them up. Under Antoniou's direction, most of the players who had excelled throughout the evening did so again, and he was very fortunate indeed in his soloist, Anthony di Bonaventura" [Richard Dyer, The Boston Globe, 3/20/00].

Shostakovich's music for an apparently bizarre 1932 Soviet production of *Hamlet* performed by the New York Chamber Symphony. Alice Tully Hall, New York, NY. "It is not that the work's 13 movements are entirely without redeeming value, but the nuggets are few and far between.

Mostly this is clichéd, circuslike clutter, hardly the imagery one thinks of in relation to *Hamlet* and worse than music associated with Shakespeare has any right to be. If there is one thing to be said for scores like this, it is that even when the musical materials are third-rate, Shostakovich's orchestration is masterly and gives an ensemble ample opportunity to show its strengths. [Allan Kozinn, The New York Times, 3/24/00].

New York City Opera presents Virgil Thomson's *The Mother of Us All* (libretto by Gertrude Stein -1947). "Thomson and Stein went much of the way toward circus themselves. But the opera's most affecting moments depend on a clarity and sincerity of gesture to affix emotional point and focus when literal meaning remains elusive, and here the distractions were many" [James R. Oestreich, The New York Times, 3/21/00].

Earth. The Esoterics in Copland's *In the beginning*, Ross Lee Finney's *Spherical madrigals*, Schoenberg's *Friede auf Erden*, Asplin's *In nature's charm*, and Skirvin's *New earth*. Christ Episcopal Church, Tacoma, WA. Through March 25, Pilgrim Congregational Church, Seattle.

March 19

Other Minds presents the Common Sense Composers' Collective's Opus415 No. 5. David Del Tredici performs his *3 Songs for Baritone and Piano* (*Quietness*, *A Saver*, and *Matthew Shepard*); Jay Cloidt's *Life Is Good and People Are Basically Decent*, Paul Drescher's *Din of Iniquity*, Cindy Cox's *Into the Wild*, David Lang's *Follow*, Paul Hanson's *Pull of the Gold Rope*, and Randall Woolf's *Angel Dust*, performed by the Paul Drescher Ensemble; Joan Jeanrenaud and Mark Grey in the latter's *Blood Red*, Gamelan Sekar Jaya performing I Dewa Putu Berata's *Sekar Gadung*; John Bischoff's *Quarter Turn*; the Ashley Adams & Danielle DeGruttola Duo's *Song of the Bottomfeeders*; Dan Plonsky's *Sunburst* (scenes 1-7); Elinor Armer's *Shivaree*; Katherine Shao's *Judgment Day*; Matt Ingalls's *Crust*; Dan Becker's *Tamper Resistant*; Melissa Hui's *Lacrymosa*; the Flandreau-Goodheart-Powell Trio in *No Melody for Wadada*; Brian Reinbolt's *Respirateur*; Michael Fiday's *Slap Back*; Mathew Burtner's *Portals of Distortion*; and Belinda Reynolds's *YAWP*. Theatre Artaud, San Francisco, CA. "The idea may seem counterintuitive, but there's something immensely appealing about a new- music marathon. Listeners come and go as they please, sampling from a smorgasbord of offerings; when the inevitable yawner surfaces, it's easy to wait it out until the next piece comes along. . . . [T]he fifth installment of *Opus 415* [was] the excellent . . . marathon . . . For 10 hours at Theater Artaud, the ever-morphing audience was treated to electrified funk and recent art songs, world music and ambient sounds, tape pieces and instrumental ensembles and group improvisations and obscure theatrical concoctions. As artistic director Dan Becker revealed after a wonderful opening performance by Gamelan Sekar Jaya, the organizers wanted to 'see how many different centuries, cultures and technologies (they) could cram into the first hour.' They did fine. As one piece gave way to the next . . . the overall effect was to build up a diverse portrait of some of the many currents at work in today's compositional landscape. . . . The musical rewards during the first two of the four 90-minute sets were as vibrant as they were disparate. They included two energetic, hard-driving pieces performed by the six-member Paul Drescher Ensemble's Electro-Acoustic Band, which adopted the title of house band for the duration of the event. Randall Woolf's *Angel Dust* mixed spacey, free-floating interludes with some jittery rhythmic grooves in an eloquent effort to capture what the composer called the 'terrifying and attractive' nature of the drug. *Pull of the Gold Rope*, by the ensemble's bassoonist Paul Hanson, overlaid a sinuous array of 7-beat meters, both slow and fast, with jazzy, melodic textures. Cellist Joan Jeanrenaud (late of the Kronos Quartet) was a superb soloist in Mark Grey's *Blood Red*, which mixed live and electronically processed sounds in a slow-fast one- two punch that drove to a great and deeply moving conclusion. Other pleasures included the appearance by Gamelan Sekar Jaya, playing two lustrous pieces by guest artistic director I Dewa Putu Berata; the latter, *Sekar Gadung*, included some magnificent stretches for pitched bamboo rattles. Becker's own *Tamper Resistant*, played by the splendid ensemble American Baroque, turned a faceless excerpt from Telemann into musical saltwater taffy . . . *Sunburst*, Dan Plonsky's dramatic scene for three colander-wearing instrumentalists and a handful of singer-actors, managed to be oddly entertaining despite being essentially a string of in-jokes. A handful of incomprehensible displays of live electronics served only to raise the question of why, in the year 2000, composers are still dithering about with the sterile burbles and squeaks that served the pioneers in this area decades ago. Experimental strains were better served by the Flandreau-Goodheart- Powell Trio, with its luminous study for violin, water glasses and musical saw.

And Katherine Shao's tiny tape piece *Judgment Day*, with its cunning use of the roll-call vote from Bill Clinton's impeachment trial, demonstrated that the shameful episode was not entirely without its productive aspects" [Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle, 3/21/00]. "[A] wildly varied and generally impressive parade of music unfolded . . . Most of the music was Bay Area-based, with highlighted works by guest composers from New York, David del Tredici and Lang, a co-founder of the event's clear antecedent, the Bang on a Can marathon. In culture and beyond, what goes around apparently comes around, a point that this admirable little festival underscored" [Josef Woodard, Los Angeles Times, 3/21/00].

Czech Philharmonic in Martinu's *The Frescoes of Piero della Francesca* and Janáček's *Suite from "The Cunning Little Vixen."* Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA. "Tempos were brisk, dynamic levels insistent, and the overall character of the performance was spirited without sounding overwhelming. Some of that zest is simply characteristic of Ashkenazy's way of doing things. As he's shown in previous appearances with the San Francisco Symphony (most recently last February, when he led Alexander Nemtin's re-creation of part of Scriabin's profoundly weird blowout *Mysterium*), Ashkenazy is never so engaged as when he's operating at full blast. . . . The . . . orchestral suite assembled by Vaclav Talich (formerly the orchestra's chief conductor) from Janacek's opera *The Cunning Little Vixen*. . . . is a model of artistic repackaging, in which the brilliant, folk-like melodies of Janacek's score find new life in a new context without sacrificing their essential nature. Under Ashkenazy's ebullient, hyperkinetic leadership, the orchestra invested the music with a heightened sense of purpose, giving the dance-like sections in particular enough gusto to make them sit up and shine. . . . Ashkenazy opened the program with a fascinating rarity, Martinu's 1955 orchestral triptych *The Frescoes of Piero della Francesca*. Inspired by the 15th century master's cycle of paintings at Arezzo, this is a richly drawn and often evocative score, full of clashing melodies and bravura strokes of orchestration. The connection to the paintings is not easy to make out -- Martinu's writing, abuzz with energy and incident, contrasts pretty starkly with Piero's static serenity -- but the music stands proudly on its own. Ashkenazy and the orchestra gave it all the advocacy it needed" [Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle, 3/21/00].

Marin Symphony in Mechem's "Blow Ye the Trumpet" from *Songs of the Slave*. Veterans Auditorium, San Rafael, CA. Repeated March 21.

March 20

Adam Lane's Full Throttle Orchestra. Yoshi's, Oakland, CA. "I felt like I was inside of a jet engine" [Hafez Modizadeh]. "Don't you guys play any normal music? I'm trying to drink here" [audience member]. "The Orchestra combines influences from Mingus, Ellington, Captain Beefheart, Xenakis, 50's sci-fi soundtracks, and sounds of large machinery into a scintillating sonic stew" [Adam Lane's mother].

The Chamber Players of the League ISCM in Dembski's *Out of My System*, Rindfleisch's *Three Songs*, S. Jones's *Time Shifts*, and Levy's *West of Nepal*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

March 21

Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival Ensemble in the Southern California premiere of Augusta Read Thomas' *Invocations* (1999) Irvine Barclay Theatre, Irvine, CA.

The CalArts New Century Players, in an entry of its *Musical Explorations 2000* festival, serves up Ben Johnston's microtonal *Invocation* as a centerpiece in a *Green Umbrella* concert. "Microtonality, using scales that slalom between the 12 notes of the standard western scale, is one idea whose time has never quite come, at least for the general public. . . . Soprano Jacqueline Bobak articulated [*Invocation's*] winding text over an ensemble that bravely maneuvered in "extended just intonation." For the microtonally intrigued but still agnostic, the effect was that of deliciously, persuasively broaching a taboo. It was played twice, for good measure, and it sounded great, both times. . . . The sweetest work, no doubt, was James Fulkerson's ephemeral Guitar Concerto. . . . Fulkerson's work called upon the ensemble to issue very soft long tones--and overtones--while the guitar "soloist" (Stuart Fox) plinked harmonics or gently scraped the wound strings. In all, it was transfixing, a painterly wash of timbres that defined its own structure as it went. Violinist Mark Menzies met the challenge of Roger Redgate's cerebral-yet-raucous . . . of *Torn Pathways*, egged into a frenzy by percussionists David Johnson and

Eli Shapiro. Ruth Lomon's dissonant, color-conscious *latiku* charmed via odd instrumentation, including harp, harpsichord and bass clarinet.

And Stephen Hoey's emotionally mercurial *Artifact*, a solo piano piece played boldly by Bryan Pezzone, signaled a strong compositional voice. Last but not least, jazz-cum-new-music figure Vinny Golia's *E.plemiste* [sic] was a thorny score for a mid-sized ensemble. Befitting Golia's stylistic restlessness, echoes of Carter and Zappa ran through it, as did themes masquerading as riffs" [Josef Woodard, Los Angeles Times, 3/24/00].

Robert Ashley, Alvin Lucier, and Christian Wolff. Goethe-Institut, New York, NY.

Glass's collaborations with the filmmaker Godfrey Reggio. *Anima Mundi* (1991) and *Evidence* (1995). Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York, NY. Their soundtracks, which have no dialogue, are put entirely at Mr. Glass's disposal. . . . The composition of the film is almost musical: visual sequences become returning leitmotifs, and the opening and closing shots are identical. As in *Koyaanisqatsi*, Mr. Glass's music makes Mr. Reggio's slow-motion and hyper-speed sequences seem balletic, and his palette of timbres and textures -- including assertive African drumming patterns -- nearly mirrors the variety of Mr. Reggio's wildlife images. "Evidence" is a compilation of children's faces, most of them staring blankly and with little emotion or animation as they watch television. At 10 minutes, *Evidence* is long enough to make Mr. Reggio's point about the mind-numbing qualities of the medium. But he cheated a bit: in an interview, he said that they were watching *Dumbo* . . . How different would their expressions have been if they had been watching one of Mr. Reggio's productions? Mr. Glass cheated slightly as well: instead of composing a new score, he gave Mr. Reggio *Facades*, an appealing slow-moving piece from 1982. [Glass's] innocuous music for *The Truman Show* (1998), for example, may barely have registered on most filmgoers' ears. . . . A segment from *Hamburger Hill* (1987) combined military percussion with plangent dissonances. The *Escape to India* sequence from *Kundun* (1997) uses Tibetan throat-singing, deep percussion and low winds to create a haunting atmosphere that is gradually brightened. Music from *Mishima* (1984) was more nightmarish still. By contrast, a selection from *The Secret Agent* (1996) was enlivened by an almost Bachian counterpoint. Mr. Glass was one of four keyboardists in his deft ensemble, which otherwise included winds and percussion, and was directed, also from the keyboard, by Michael Riesman" [Allan Kozinn, The New York Times, 3/23/00].

Yehudi Wyner's *Horntrio* and Ezra Laderman's *Duetti for Flute and Clarinet* played by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Alice Tully Hall, New York, NY. "Generations of horn players have been indebted to Brahms for bequeathing them one of the few great chamber works involving their instrument, the Trio for Horn, Violin and Piano, Op. 40. In 1982 György Ligeti wrote a trio for the same ensemble, intending it as a homage to the Brahms work. . . . Wyner's piece is imaginative and effective. *Horntrio* is in three movements, the standard succession of fast, slow, fast tempos. . . . Wyner's musical language is spiked with pungent atonal harmonies and zigzagging pointillistic lines. Yet there are long episodes of wistful lyricism, especially in the ruminative second movement. Sometimes the players are put at cross purposes, as in the first movement, when a flighty violin and plaintive horn try to converse over the intrusions of gritty piano clusters. At the end of the slow movement, a subdued horn solo, like a soulful jazz trumpet, begins. The jazzy bits that follow, the composer has said, crept into the piece as he wrote it almost by themselves, and from the subtle way the music starts to stir and ripple, it's easy to believe him. The perpetual-motion third movement continues in this jazzy vein, though with unwaning rhythmic rigor. The concert offered the New York premiere of another 1997 work, Ezra Laderman's "Duetti for Flute and Clarinet." There is constant musical humor in this suite of 10 contrasting short movements. In the first, a scrambling flute is nudged by a jabbing clarinet. At more than 20 minutes, this lighthearted work may be too long. But the performance by the flutist Ransom Wilson and the clarinetist David Shifrin was engaging. The concert began with a buoyant account of Haydn's Trio for Flute (Mr. Wilson), Cello (Colin Carr) and Piano (Lee Luvisi), and ended with an elegant performance of Schumann's mercurial Piano Trio No. 2. [The New York Times, 3/27/00]

March 22

Shockwaves and Freeways. California EAR Unit in a program including Ernesto Diaz-Infante's *Separare*, and music of Malcolm Goldstein, Steve Mackey, Lawrence Ball, and Josep Franssens. Los Angeles County Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA.

NEC Honors Brass Quintet in selections from Bernstein's *West Side Story*, and Barber's *Adagio* [no longer for strings...]. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted Dennis Russell Davies, in Kurt Schwertsik Sinfonia-Sinfonietta and the "Adagio" from Mahler's unfinished *Symphony No. 10*. Boston, MA. "[A]t 65 [Schwertsik] is probably the leading living Austrian composer. . . . At 31, the Vienna Radio Symphony is the youngest of the city's orchestras. It focuses on 20th-century and now 21st-century music, with an emphasis, of course, on music from Austria; this allows an approach to the Viennese classics from a different direction. For years, Schwertsik supported his composing habit by playing horn in the Vienna Symphony - which makes his career curiously parallel to that of our own Gunther Schuller, also once a prominent horn player. Schwertsik's music does share one quality with Schuller's; the man knows how an orchestra works and how to make it sound terrific. The *Sinfonia-Sinfonietta* from 1996 comes from a period when Schwertsik had returned to tonality, after various other adventures that affected his handling of tonality, which is both lively and unsettling. The five movements of this work are character pieces of great energy and charm, and the second movement, an out-of-synch series of dances, is funny, too (the composer describes it as "an old coffee grinder that has seen better days and finds our conversations tasteless"). Piece and performance were thoroughly enjoyable. Davies followed with the *Adagio* from Mahler's 10th Symphony, the only movement Mahler completed in full score" [Richard Dyer, *The Boston Globe*, 3/24/00].

The Festival Chamber Music Society in Prokofiev's *Violin Sonata in D Major* and R. Clarke's *Piano Trio* (1921). Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

Guy Klugevek presents *Squeezeplay*. The Kitchen, New York, NY.

The Cult of the Ecstatic. Pianist Steven Mayer performs Stravinsky's *Firebird*, Szymanowski's *L'île des Sirens* from *Metope*, and the New York premiere of Sorabji's *Le Jardin Parfumé*. Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York, NY.

March 23

Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Coliseum, London, UK.

Berkeley Symphony in Benjamin's *Antara*, Harvey's *Scena*, and Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 8*. Zellerbach Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

Dana Reason performs her *Circles*. Chamber Arts House, Berkeley, CA.

Atlanta Symphony in Respighi's *Pines of Rome* and Debussy's *La Mer (The Sea)*. Atlanta, GA.

Boston Symphony Orchestra in Christopher Rouse's *Isariot* (1989) and Stravinsky's *Petrushka*. Symphony Hall, Boston, MA. "*Isariot* is a powerful, effective, violent, and conflicted piece. From the terrifying opening drumbeat, parts of it are also very loud, and one could see earplugs going in and out of players' ears. Constructed as a series of 'strophes,' *Isariot* presents a series of contrasts, glowering string clouds alternating with others floating serenely by; woodwind chamber music, with tears from the celeste; percussion attacks. Off in the far distance, somewhere, lies Bach's chorale 'Es ist genug' . . . Zinman closed by leading a lively, colorful, storytelling performance of Stravinsky's *Petrushka*" [Richard Dyer, *The Boston Globe*, 3/24/00].

newEar presents Frizzell and Aber's *Oranogenesis*, Xenakis's *Rebonds*, Mobberley's *Going with the Fire* and *Shebam*, Stölzel's *Lights Out*, Henry's *Ephemerization No. 1*, and Rzewski's IV. St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Kansas City, MO.

Glass's *Powagqatsi*. Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York, NY. Repeated March 24.

American Brass Quintet in Druckman's *Other Voices*, the premiere of Fennelly's *Velvet and Spice*, Sanders's *Quintet in B-Flat*, and Sampson's *Quintet '99*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

Lloyd Webber's *Jesus Christ Superstar* (lyrics by Tim Rice). Ford Center for the Performing Arts, New York, NY.

Composer Portrait: Bernard Rands. *Canti Lunatici*, *Canti dell'Eclissi*, and *Canti del Sole*. Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York, NY.

Moscow Soloists in Shostakovich's *Sinfonia for Viola and Strings*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY.

March 24

Ensemble Intercontemporain in Boulez's *Pli selon pli*. Cité de la Musique, Paris, France.

Oakland East Bay Symphony in Kelley's *The Breaks*, the West Coast premiere of M. Wagner's *Concerto for Flute, Strings, and Percussion*, and Milhaud's *Concerto de Printemps for Violin and Orchestra*. Paramount Theatre, Oakland, CA. "Wagner's 25-minute work is in the traditional three movements, with a songful slow movement surrounded by two more brisk sections. . . . The finale, though it tends to start and stop at odd intervals, sustains an air of breezy charm. . . . Anthony Kelley's [is a] tribute to Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington and Dizzy Gillespie. Kelley takes off from the ragtime and jazz practice of leaving rhythmic breaks between phrases, which can either be filled with individual solos or simply left silent. The piece proceeds as a series of homages to individual composers, punctuated by distinctive interpolations -- a sequence of harmonically unmoored noodling one time, a big cadenza for the percussion section the next" [Joshua Kosman, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 3/27/00].

The Museum of Contemporary Art celebrates the 70th birthday of American maverick composer George Crumb in concerts featuring three decades of his vocal and small ensemble pieces. Chicago, IL. Also March 25.

Philadelphia Orchestra in Weill's *Suite from "The Threepenny Opera,"* Gruber's *Frankenstein*, and Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 6*. Academy of Music, Philadelphia, PA. Through March 28, Carnegie Hall, New York (NY).

March 25

Los Angeles Philharmonic in Zimmerman's *Trumpet Concerto* and Hartmann's *Symphony No. 6*. Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Los Angeles, CA. "Among the Nazi war ravages was the destruction, likely permanent, of German and Austrian dominance over music. Eminent composers were forced to flee, were executed in concentration camps, lost their lives in the war or were forever tainted by their Nazi associations. The best hope for Germany, it thus appeared in the early '50s, was in its composers too young to have been involved with World War II. And the greatest and most visible of them were intent on blazing a new path into the future that overthrew the past. Karlheinz Stockhausen became the great futurist of the second half of 20th century music; Hans Werner Henze presented us with a vision of a new society in his politicized left-wing music. But in the dazzle of the new, it became easy to forget--especially for audiences outside of Germany--the composers who could not forget the war. . . . Zimmermann, who was born in 1918, fought in the war and then spent the rest of his life fighting that. Of philosophical mind, he wanted, through music, to bring the past and present together to make a newly synthesized future. In his *Trumpet Concerto*, written in 1954, that past was the jazz and the African American spiritual--forbidden music a decade earlier. The concerto has the subtitle "Nobody Knows de Trouble I See," and it attempts to mesh a cool jazz sound with some of the more advanced 12-tone techniques of the day, as the spiritual tune works its way out of an atonal soup. It expects the clarinet, trumpet, trombone and drums to cook. It even includes a semi-cheesy part for a Hammond organ. Unfortunately, Zimmermann proved too humorless, haunted and arrogant to carry off such a bit of appropriation (his final work before his suicide 16 years later is a requiem based upon texts by poets who committed suicide), but he had an unmistakable flair for dramatic instrumental writing. The trumpet part is brilliant, and the soloist, Hakan Hardenberger, a versatile player with a flabbergasting technique, held a listener spellbound. . . . Hartmann, born in 1905, was the rare anti-Nazi German composer who withdrew from public life and grimly waited out the war years in internal exile (he had a wealthy wife). But his seclusion also meant the burning of an internal emotional fire in his music. His starting point was Mahler at his most angst-ridden. His favorite compositional technique was intensification. He was primarily known as a symphonist, and his symphonies are among the most explosive ever written. The Sixth Symphony, completed in 1953, is in two mighty movements: big and bigger.

The second is a series of three massive fugues turned into a riotous concerto for orchestra, with a particularly inventive and puissant role for the percussion (a great night for drumming)" [Mark Swed, Los Angeles Times, 3/27/00].

Behzad Ranjbaran's *Seven Passages*, a 14-minute work commissioned by the Long Beach Symphony, is premiered, in a concert also featuring Roussel's *Suite No. 2 from "Bacchus et Ariane."* Terrace Theater, Los Angeles, CA. "The music, in one continuous, episodic movement, is based on an 11th century epic by Persian poet Ferdowsi. It vividly depicts the trials of the poem's hero in fighting and defeating everything from wild beasts to witches, demons and dragons" [Chris Pasles, Los Angeles Times, 3/27/00].

Nancy Bloomer Deussen's *Woodwind Quintet* performed by the Stanford Woodwind Quintet. Spreckles Auditorium, Rohnert Park, CA.

Women's Philharmonic in music of Francis Price and the premiere of Higdon's *Fanfare 2000*. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA. "African American composer Florence Price . . . died in 1953. *The Oak*, a broad and wonderfully dark tone poem, and *The Mississippi River Suite* both date from about 1934, although the historical details of both are sketchy -- [this] may even have marked the world premiere of *The Oak*. It is, on first hearing, by far the more interesting of the two, a gleaming and slow-moving stretch of music whose thick orchestration may owe something to Price's career as an organist. Built around a few distinctive melodies, the piece proceeds with unassailable grandeur and depth. *The Mississippi River Suite* is what its title says -- a collection of familiar tunes (including 'Go Down Moses,' 'Deep River' and 'Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen') stitched into a sort of musical quilt. The orchestration is often ingenious, and Price combines the melodies in surprising ways . . . The most affecting moment was principal cellist Nina Flyer's lustrous solo rendition of "Deep River," answered by concertmaster Iris Stone. The world premiere of Jennifer Higdon's zippy, enchanting *Fanfare Ritmico* started the concert off with a bang. Written for the orchestra as one of a series of commissioned fanfares, Higdon's score is a brisk, sharp-edged concoction, full of rhythmic pizzazz and blunt orchestral writing (aside from one splendidly played solo for the concertmaster)" [Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle, 3/27/00].

San Francisco Symphony in Martinu's *Rhapsody Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*. Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, CA.

San Jose Symphonic Choir in Sondra Clark's *Requiem for Lost Children* and Morten Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna*. St. Joseph's Cathedral Basilica, San Jose, CA.

Martha Argerich plays Prokofiev's *Sonata No. 7* in her first major solo appearance in 19 years. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY. "Over the last decade Ms. Argerich, now 58, has been treated, apparently successfully, for melanoma, or skin cancer, which spread to her lymph nodes and lungs. And then came a work seemingly tailored to her fearless, eruptive style, Prokofiev's B flat Sonata (No. 7), in which she savored the haunted moments as well as the clangorous ones. Again, with any deliberation at all she could have made more of the manic ostinato figure that sets the finale in motion, but her blistering romp through that movement carried a logic of its own, or would have if one had had time to think, or even breathe. [The New York Times, 3/27/00]

Ensemble Sospeso performs György Ligeti's *Fragmente, Horn Trio, and Cello Concerto*. Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York, NY.

March 26

75th birthday of Pierre Boulez. Paris, France.

Nancy Bloomer Deussen's *Parisian Capers*. Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA.

New York Philharmonic Ensembles in a concert including Copland's *Piano Quartet*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

March 27

Sting. Royal Albert Hall, London, UK.

James Buswell and friends in Martinu's *String Quartet No. 6*. Williams Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA.

March 28

Composers, Inc. presents Martin Rokeach's *Can't Wait*, Allen Shearer's *Strokes for Violin*, Robert Greenberg's *Rarified Air*, Elinor Armer's *Beast*, Deniz Ince's *Trio*, and Frank La Rocca's *In This Place*. Green Room, Veterans Building, San Francisco, CA.

North/South Consonance presents Weimann's *Vespona*, Roseman's *Partita for Flute*, Bell's *Perne in a Gyre*, Pleskow's *Chamber Setting*, Waschka's *Xuan Men*, and Howe's *Quintet*. Christ and St. Stephen's Church, New York, NY.

Prometheus Chamber Orchestra in Berg's *Chamber Concerto for Piano, Violin, and 13 Winds*. Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY.

Composer Portrait: György Ligeti. Fragmente, Horn Trio, and Cello Concerto. Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York, NY. Arnold Schoenberg Choir in their namesake's *De profundis* and *Friede auf Erden*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY.

March 29

Terry Riley and Stefano Scodanibbio. Freight and Salvage, San Francisco, CA.

Orchestra of St. Luke's in Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler Symphony*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY.

March 30

Philadelphia Orchestra in Fauré's *Masques et bergamasques*, Poulenc's *Concerto for Two Pianos*, and Prokofiev's *Symphony No. 5*. Academy of Music, Philadelphia, PA. Through April 4.

Celluloid Copland. Eos Orchestra in the world premieres of suites from *The Cummington Story* and *The North Star*, plus a suite from *The City*, and *Appalachian Spring*. New York, NY.

Schoenberg Choir, pianist Maurizio Pollini, and the Juilliard String Quartet in a program including Schoenberg's *Quartet No. 2* and *Five Pieces for Piano*, and Nono's *Ha Venido, Canciones para Silvia* and *Coro di Didone*. Carnegie Hall, New York, NY.

March 31

New Music 101 presents Kagel's "Four Jazz Pieces" from *RRRR*, Gruber's *Four Songs*, Larsen's *Slang*, Adès's *Life Story*, and Daugherty's *Lounge Lizards*. Lefort Recital Hall, College of Marin, Kentfield, CA.

Stanford Woodwind Quintet in Janáček's *Maláda* and Schulhof's *Trio*. Dinkelspiel Auditorium, Stanford University, CA.

Comment

Kinds of Literary Magazines

RICHARD KOSTELANETZ

Cyril Connolly long ago distinguished "coterie" literary magazines from "eclectic." As he saw the difference, the former were founded by a closely entwined group of people, existing to publish their work primarily, if not exclusively. Coterie magazines are designed to serve writers who, for one reason or another, are reluctant to submit their work to editor-strangers. They typically discourage "unsolicited submissions," if not all the time, at least during part of the year, for lack of any concern with what others might be writing. In our time, L-A-N-G-U-A-G-E and the mimeos associated with the St. Marks Poetry Project would be examples of coterie journals. "Eclectic" magazines publish work from a variety of sources, purportedly selecting the best from what appears in their mailboxes, regardless of the reputation, nationality, or professional affiliation of its authors. *Poetry* and *Partisan Review* would be examples of successful eclectic journals. One charm of Connolly's distinction was allowing to each side the possibilities of both editorial integrity, albeit of different kinds, and literary influence.

In the age of grants and institutional rewards, especially in America, a third kind of literary magazine has emerged that superficially appears to be a synthesis, publishing a limited group of lesser-knowns along with celebrities, generally regardless of the quality of the latter's work. Since the celebrities often come from different, if not contrary, directions, while the lesser-known writers strive for unexceptional acceptability, such magazines forbid themselves the kinds of literary influence typical of great magazines in the past. They too discourage unsolicited submissions, since the two circles of possibly acceptable contributors are circumscribed in advance.

What are they doing, you often wonder? My suspicion is that they are designed explicitly to please Very Important People, whether they be academic administrators, officials at funding agencies, or other dispensers of favor. The editors of this third kind of magazine fear integrity and thus controversial contributions and contributors, especially from lesser-knowns, for the simple reason that such moves, however acceptable they might be to both eclectic and coterie magazines, might offend the VIPS. Indeed, their editors necessarily become solicitous of the celebrities' opinions of the lesser-knowns, for fear of losing not any of the latter but one of the former from their pages. Neither eclectic nor coterie, such magazines would most appropriately be classified as "butt-kissy." I can think of one in America whose name begins with a C, another with a P, a third with an S, a fourth with an A; and though their editors might publicly object to such characterizations, you know as well as I that they would be personally pleased to know that their ultimate motives were not misunderstood. (The first time I put the previous sentence into print, someone responded with a completely different set of names from those I had in mind, indicating that the critical principle had broader applicability.) To measure how unique such magazines are to literature, consider that no publication primarily about visual art can be characterized in this way.

Kissing up is a cynical strategy, to be sure, assuming that even "distinguished intellectuals" can be more impressed with supplicants' flattery than their excellence or integrity. However, not unlike other cynical strategies, it has distinct practical limitations, being first of all vulnerable to changes in power. Kissers frequently discover that the object of their attentions have been replaced by someone else who, since kissers instinctively treat those above them differently from those below, was incidentally slighted in the past. That accounts for why kissing up can work only so long, as practitioners past the age of 55, roughly, inevitably discover that nearly all the recipients of their focused affection have been replaced or retired. (Does anyone still flatter John Leonard? Theodore Solotaroff? Daryl Hine?) Disillusioned idealists can be bitter, to be sure; but nothing can equal the anger and self-loathing of the disillusioned cynic. He or she can't "go public" with his story, because no one, absolutely no one, will respect his or her history or sympathize with his or her plight, while younger kissers are already, you see, puckering their lips elsewhere.

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Though the above was written about literary magazines, the categories seem applicable to music journals as well, with *Modern Music* as the epitome of an eclectic journal and *Score*, *Vanguard Music*, and the early issues of *Perspectives of New Music* as examples of coterie publications. What among publications past and present would epitomize the third stre

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 College (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 20TH-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 is currently at work on his Symphony No. 5.

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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, the Nicolai Roslavetz Music Festival in Bryansk, Russia, the 3rd International Contemporary Music Festival Europe-Asia in Kazan, Russia, the Contrasts festival in Lvov, and the Moscow Forum/Dutch-Russian Music Festival in Moscow. His theoretical articles, interviews with various composers and reviews of contemporary music concerts and festivals have been published in such music journals as *Myzykal'naya Akademiya* and 21ST-CENTURY MUSIC. He is a member of the American Music Center and the Composers' Guild of New Jersey.