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From the Editor

All of a sudden, Portland State University has a journal of music. Thanks to the combined efforts of the people named on this page, you now hold in your hands a collection of writings and conversations by PSU students and faculty. Thus have we made an immediate leap from zero issues to one.

The musical term *subito* simply means “suddenly,” indicating an abrupt, striking shift in dynamics or tempo (it’s also the “S.” in “V.S.”—*volti subito*—indicating a quick page turn). The Italian word, like the Latin word from which it descends, emerges from the union of *sub-* (“under” as in “submarine”) and *-ito* (“to go” as in “Romani ite domum”), and carries two layers of meaning.

In one sense, *subito* suggests an undertaking, an ordeal which one undergoes, as in Nietzsche’s *untergehen* or the French *subir* (cognate with the English “suffer”). The second layer of meaning evokes immediacy, quickness, and the uncanny sensation of incipient epiphany, a lightning bolt of astonishment sneaking up on you, leaping out from behind a blind corner like the proverbial thief in the night.

All of which brings us back around to the primary musical meaning: a dramatic change which arrives, seemingly, out of nowhere. And yet the best *subito* experiences, in music as in life, are those in which the shocking revelation seems inevitable, even familiar.

In these pages, dear reader, you will find conversations, interviews, book and album reviews, musical analysis, and varied perspectives on Schubert’s *Winterreise*, American composer Lou Harrison, and the impact of War on Artists. We are especially pleased by our extensive, exclusive interview with the newly appointed Dean of the College of the Arts, Dr. Leroy E. Bynum, Jr., on page 27.

I hope you will enjoy reading our journal as much as we’ve enjoyed creating it.

Matthew Neil Andrews

Editor-In-Chief

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Art and Armistice

Matthew Neil Andrews

This year (2018) we celebrate the centennial of Armistice—the moment, symbolic and political, when the leaders of the nations involved in The Great War of 1914-18 decided the fighting would officially end. During those four years, the world had been utterly transformed by the deaths and injuries suffered by millions of soldiers and civilians; by the concurrent revolutions, civil wars, genocides, famines, and epidemics which spread all across Europe; by the astonishing horrors of modern mechanized warfare, war profiteering, and war crimes; and by the uneasy imbalances of global power which tilted and shifted along fault lines created by centuries of tension, conflict, and mistrust.

Swept up in all of this, along with everyone else, were musicians whose names are familiar to us all. Debussy and Ravel. Schoenberg and Webern. Holst and Vaughan Williams. Stravinsky.

Eight Portland State music students tackled six subtopics, approaching the subject from

unique perspectives. Each one focuses on a different country impacted by the war. *Subito* Copy Chief Harlie Hendrickson opens the section with her overview of *King Albert's Book*, surveying its contents and placing them in their socio-historical context. Assistant Editors Christina Ebersohl and Bailey Paugh consider, respectively, the responses of artists in France and the German-speaking countries. Patrick Rooney examines musical shifts in Great Britain during and after the Great War, and Ricky Chan analyzes Stravinsky's shift from nationalist to neoclassicist during the composer's wartime years in Switzerland. Finally, Aaron Shingles and Ian Cooper join Aaron Richardson in discussing the works of U.S. composer Charles Ives.

Ebersohl's article contains a remarkable phrase: "throughout the chaos, humanity fought to understand and overcome the devastation with weapons of art." As we hold on to hope in this strange, troubled year (2018), let us remember to always keep such spiritual armaments near to hand. 🎵

The Bludgeon, Grief, and Pride of War

KING ALBERT'S BOOK

Harlie Hendrickson

Belgium was thrown into the first World War on August 5, 1914, despite taking a neutral position in the brewing conflict, with no revenge to seek and no benefit in taking up arms. The first altercation came when Germany forced entry through France. Germany had delivered an ultimatum to Belgian King Albert I: allow Germany to pass safely or be subject to its sword. Belgium, jealous of its independence and neutrality, assumed in honorable defiance the burden of war—to devastating effects. The country did not wish to be the battleground for France and Germany, yet the result was a pillage through Belgium, the loss of many of its capitals of culture, and the deaths of many Belgian civilians. As morbid as the thought may be, great and profound art can emerge from such gruesome extremes as the tremors of war.

As a formal ally of Belgium, Britain was compelled to declare war on Germany the day the invasion started. British writer Hall Caine, moved to pity and admiration, compiled and edited *King Albert's Book: A Tribute to the Belgian King and People from Representative Men and Women Throughout the World*—a

gift of reverence from allied European countries to an unfairly devastated nation. Europe was greatly shaken by the war, and from its people came a huge crop of rich, patriotic art born from the bludgeon, grief, and pride of war. For our little plucky Belgium, peoples from far-reaching places contributed their poems, art, music, and other supportive sentiments as a way to raise money for Belgian refugees and the ravaged land where they once peacefully lived. *The Daily Telegraph* published the book four months after Germany's invasion, on Christmas Day 1914.

Belgian artists contributed poetic accounts of national pride—pride of persistent morality and brave defeat. Particularly notable is Belgian writer Emile Cammaerts' poem "Carillon" (English translation by Cammaerts' wife, Tita Brand):

Sing, Belgians, Sing!
Although our wounds may bleed,
Although our voices break,
Louder than the storm, louder than the guns,
Sing of the pride of our defeats
'Neath this bright Autumn sun,

*And sing of the joy of honour
When cowardice might be so sweet.*

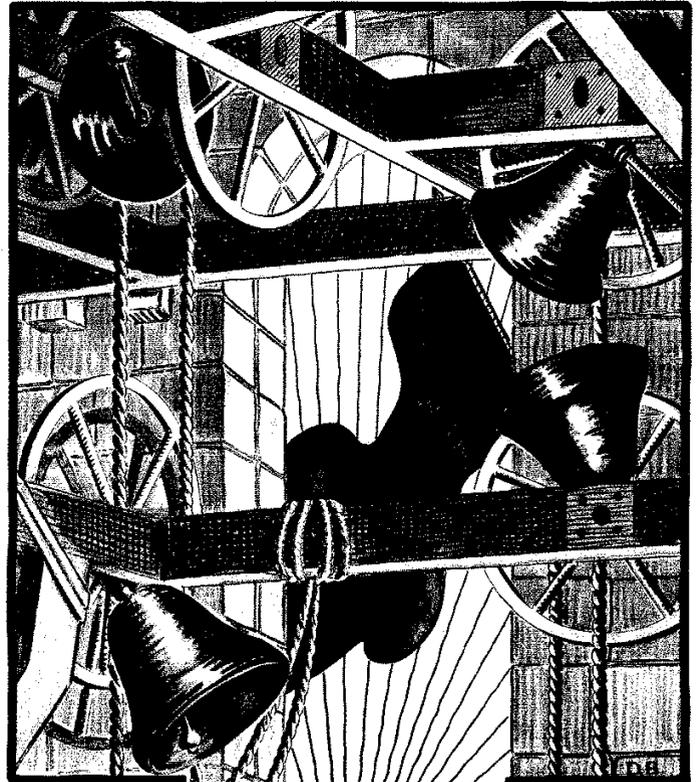
British composer Edward Elgar composed an orchestral accompaniment for the recitation of "Carillon," with ringing bells memorializing Belgian bell towers destroyed by German raids. Elgar captures the rapturous pride of the poet's words with energetic march sections, weaving in somber passages for lines about children slaughtered by merciless German soldiers. *Carillon*, Op. 75 was performed to great acclaim in November, 1914 at the Queen's Hall in London, a month after Elgar wrote it. Elgar toured Britain performing *Carillon* with different reciters, and contributed all profits to Belgian charities. [for more on Elgar and the Great War, see Patrick Rooney's article on page 13]

Many other artists from Britain contributed works. Suffragist Ethel Smyth published her solo piano composition *The March of the Women*. Smyth dedicated her music, originally written in dedication to the Women's Social and Political Union, to the King and people of Belgium who "fought against overwhelming odds in defence of their honour and freedom—even as women in England are fighting to win theirs."

One of the most curious and intriguing works came from the British actor and playwright Herbert Tree, who wrote a short play—*THE ULTIMATUM; or, Every Man Has His Price*—for King Albert's Book. The lead character, chiropodist to "The Ruler of a Great People," speaks against "war for the vanity of the King who made God in his own image." The play captures the ponderings and ulterior motives of this German king's servant as he sees through the purported glory of war as nothing more than

mangled bodies in trenches, famine, and ultimate folly. He believes he can stop the war by poisoning his master and preventing "the ultimatum"—the fateful meeting with the Belgian king demanding safe passage for the German military. Just as the chiropodist is about to poison the king's drink and save millions of lives, a royal duke enters and offers him a prominent post. A badge is

CARILLON EDWARD ELGAR



ARRANGED
for the
ORGAN
Price 75¢

by
HUGH
BLAIR
may be performed in

pinned to his uniform, securing the servant's future and dooming Europe's.

Many individuals and leaders had reservations about offering their words to the book for fear of retaliation. America could not help but offer sympathy, though, even as it was a neutral power at the time and remained so until April of 1917. Former president William H. Taft contributed his sentiment:

The heart of the world should go out to the poor people of Belgium. Without being in any respect a party to the controversies of war, their country has been made the battleground of the greatest, and in some respects the most destructive war in history. Any movement to relieve their distress has my profound sympathy.



KING ALBERT'S BOOK

A TRIBUTE TO THE BELGIAN KING AND PEOPLE FROM REPRESENTATIVE MEN AND WOMEN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD



THE DAILY TELEGRAPH
IN CO-OPERATION WITH
THE DAILY SKETCH THE GLASGOW HERALD
AND LODDER AND STOUGHTON

From within French territory, Claude Debussy contributed his *Berceuse héroïque*, the first piece he wrote after the start of the war. [see Christina Ebersohl's article on page 7] As he battled colon cancer, his quiet life away from the war front gripped him with guilt. Debussy wrote *Berceuse héroïque* in nostalgic and mournful

improvisation; a berceuse is a type of lullaby, but Debussy's piece is simultaneously heroic in its quotation of the Belgian national anthem.

French musicologist Romain Rolland noted that Belgium's tragedy revealed the true soul of the country and its people, characterized by outstanding sophistication and peaceful idealism in the face of a powerful enemy. "Their soil, watered by the blood of millions of warriors, is the most fertile in Europe in the harvests of the soul. It has given us the great poetic efflorescence of our time; and the two writers who most brilliantly represent French literature in the world, Maeterlinck and Verhaeren, are sons of Belgium." Rolland's stance was aligned with Belgium: as a neutral pacifist he did not support war actions, including France's. He was labeled a traitor and spent the war in Switzerland, where he joined the Red Cross and created the literary magazine *Europe*. Rolland won the Nobel Prize in literature in 1915.

Belgium's resistance conjures images of the 300 Spartans holding up the Hot Gates of Thermopylae against the Persian army of thousands—images of honor and steadfastness. The compilation stands as an artistic timepiece capturing this terrible, rapturous moment in history.

Caine writes, in his introduction:

[T]he immediate object of this Book is to offer, in the names and by the pens of a large group of the representative men and women of the civilised countries, a tribute of admiration to Belgium, on the heroic and ever-memorable share she has taken in the war which now convulses Europe, and at the same time to invoke the world's sympathy, its help and its prayers for the gallant little nation in the vast sorrow of its present condition. ☛

A Reflection of Broken Humanity

FRENCH COMPOSERS RESPOND TO THE GREAT WAR

Christina Ebersohl

Art reflects the world in which it is created: it can never be separated from politics, war, great pain, and great triumph. It is an echo of the human experience, whether obscured or apparent, a lasting remnant of the world in which it was born. The Great War's four years of devastation, death, and terror left a lasting mark on humanity and indelibly scarred the world. But throughout the chaos, humanity fought to understand and overcome the devastation with weapons of art.

Tensions had been brewing throughout Europe for many years before the assassination of Franz Ferdinand in June of 1914 set the world ablaze with mayhem and madness. In the end, World War I took the lives of more than 9 million soldiers, with another 21 million wounded and nearly 10 million civilian casualties. Invisibility became a weapon. Airplanes entered combat for the first time, raining destruction from clear blue skies. Submarines hid like predators in silent threat under still waters. With the innovation of poisonous gases and high-powered guns, war suddenly became a depersonalized game, an experiment to end humanity as we knew it.

Claude Debussy was 52 when war broke out. He was initially indifferent to the political on-goings of his country, but quickly developed a vehement attitude against the Germans as they pillaged his homeland. However, had his age not disqualified him from military service, his health quickly would have. Debussy was diagnosed with colon cancer in 1910, and his condition rapidly deteriorated. He was bed-bound by 1918 and died a mere eight months before the French declared victory.

During his final years, Debussy rose to become one of France's few nationalist composers. Debussy was torn between hatred for the German offensive, disdain for those who eluded military service, and self-loathing for his own inability to join the war efforts. The conflict caused his work to suffer, both in creative integrity and in quantity. Debussy contributed his first wartime composition to *King Albert's Book*, a collection of artistic, literary, and political works, dedicated and presented to Belgian King Albert I and his people in support of the Belgian war relief effort. [for more on *King Albert's Book*, see Harlie Hendrickson's article on page 4]

More than 200 contributors from all branches of the arts submitted their work. Debussy described his contribution, *Berceuse héroïque*, as “melancholy and discreet ... with no pretensions other than to offer a homage to so much patient suffering.” His dedication reads: “In tribute to his majesty King Albert of Belgium and his soldiers.” The piece contains a musical quote from the Belgian national anthem *La Brabançonne* (Example 1). The excerpt is obscured rhythmically and elongated over 5

EXAMPLE 1 *La Brabançonne*

opening

Allegro feroce.

a) O — Bel - gi - que, ô mè - re ché - ri - - e A —
 b) O dier - baar Bel - gië, o hei - lig land der vaa - - d'ren On - ze

toi — nos cœurs à toi nos bras!
 ziel en ons hart zijn u ge - wijd!

EXAMPLE 2 Debussy, *Berceuse héroïque*

mm. 37-45

Plus calme

p fièrement *espressif* *p*

measures, but maintains the same harmony as the original. He lets the melody echo twice more in brief fragments before it fades into the ambiguous harmonic background (Example 2).

The composition was not well received. Glenn Watkins, author of *Proof Through the Night*, called it “a somewhat jolting and banal citation of the Belgian national anthem.” Debussy continued to stand behind his work; a year later, he wrote his final thoughts on the piece to music critic Émile Vuillermoz, declaring: “there is no way of writing music in wartime...there’s no such thing as war music, as you know.”

Debussy composed *En blanc et noir* (In Black and White) for two pianos in 1915, dedicating each of the three movements to a

different honoree. The first movement was dedicated to Sergei Koussevitzky and the third to Igor Stravinsky; the second was dedicated to Jacques Charlot, a lieutenant in the French army and nephew of Debussy’s publisher Auguste Durand. In a letter to Durand, Debussy wrote: “My further congratulations to Jacques Charlot! [If] fortune continues to favor him, [he] will come back a general! More simply, we must just hope he comes back...in one piece!” Charlot was killed in action in March 1915.

The composer also attached a motto to each of the three movements. The first movement’s motto is, “He who stays in his place and does not dance quietly admits to a disgrace,” from Barbier and Carré’s libretto to Charles

Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*. It is an unobscured glimpse into Debussy's self-directed scorn at his inability to join in his patriotic duty to defend his country. The third movement's motto is derived from a poem by the French medieval poet Charles of Orleans, and translates "Winter, you are nothing but a villain." Debussy had earlier used Orleans' poem in an unaccompanied choral arrangement contrasting the harshness of the winter villain against the pleasantness of summer. Equating war's brutality with winter's, Debussy found another use for this outburst against a formidable foe.

The second movement opens with an excerpt from another medieval French poet, Francois Villon. The motto comes from the end of Villon's "Ballade cunter lo Anemi francor" ("Ballade against the enemies of France," in the translation by Swinburne): "For worthless is he to get good of us / Who could wish evil to the state of France!" This movement is also notable for Debussy's quotation of Martin Luther's hymn *Ein feste Burg ist Unser Gott* (Examples 3 and 4). Originally written around 1529, during the violent years of the Protestant Reformation, here it vividly portrays the turmoil between France and Germany. Stravinsky responded by alluding to *Ein feste Burg* in the "Chorale" section of his own war-time work, *L'Historie du Soldat*. [for more on Stravinsky, see Ricky Chan's article on page 18]

The English music critic W. H. Mellers wrote that "the note of the macabre is most easily examined in that most mournfully vivacious war-music, *En blanc et noir*," and praised the music's authentic French qualities of "elegant simplicity" and "grace and plastic beauty."

Noël des enfants qui n'ont plus de maison (Christmas carol for homeless children) for voice and piano was one of Debussy's most personal wartime statements. He shines a light

not only on his own fragile condition but on the children living in the German-ravaged areas of the war, with the refrain "revenge the children of France" echoing ominously across the eloquent harmonies.

Debussy composed his last two wartime works in 1917, during the last year of his life. The first, *Les soirs illuminés par l'ardeur du charbon* (Evening lit by the burning coals), is a short, 23 measure piano piece, composed to pay the composer's coal dealer in exchange for some much needed heat during the villainous wartime winter. The last work, the cantata for soprano, chorus, and orchestra *Ode à la France*, was left unfinished upon the composer's death

EXAMPLE 3 Martin Luther, *Ein feste Burg*



and was not premiered until the tenth anniversary Debussy Gala in 1928.

Debussy confided to a friend that he had composed these wartime pieces alongside his final sonatas "to work not so much for myself, but to give proof, however small it may be, that not even 30 million 'boches' can destroy French thought."

Like Debussy, Maurice Ravel was fiercely patriotic when war reared its ugly head. Having failed to win the Prix de Rome, Ravel was despondent and craved national acceptance, and the war gave him an opportunity to prove his patriotism. The composer was 39 when war broke out, and he dreamt of being a bombardier who would maintain proper gentlemanly attire while

EXAMPLE 4 Debussy, *En blanc et noir*quote from *Ein feste Burg*, mm. 79-90

34

79 $\left(\frac{2}{4}\right)$ *lourd*
p poco marc.
pp

83 $\left(\frac{6}{8}\right)$ *pp* $\left(\frac{2}{4}\right)$ *p poco marc.*
plaintif un peu en dehors

87 $\left(\frac{6}{8}\right)$ *Sempre animato*
p marc.
rude sempre pp

$\left(\frac{6}{8}\right)$ *Sempre animato*
p marc.
rude sempre pp
pp

E. P. 12729

flying thousands of feet over the madness below. His attempt to join the French infantry initially failed, however, due to his small stature. Instead, he began to care for wounded soldiers as a civilian in St. Jean de Luz. He learned to drive, and eventually the military found him fit for duty and assigned him as a truck driver. He was stationed on the front lines of the German offensive, reclaiming abandoned trucks and petrol supplies, surrounded by a never-ending torrent of death and terror. In 1916, Ravel was diagnosed with a heart condition and relieved of duties.

During his short years in the war, Ravel was able to compose *Le Tombeau de Couperin*,

to comprehend and describe the world that he had seen during his service. His music became more stripped-down and shifted away from the harmonic richness that had once been his signature. *Frontispiece* for two pianos showed the disarray of fragmentation his mind had become following the war, the melody swaying between off-kilter rhythmic outbursts and a constantly deteriorating harmony that evades resolution.

Ravel had originally composed *La valse, poème chorégraphique pour orchestre* to represent the period of the Imperial Court of Vienna in 1855, but the final version feels deeply rooted in the horrors of the war. The fantastical and

*But throughout the chaos, humanity
fought to understand and overcome the devastation
with weapons of art.*

a piano suite in six movements. "Tombeau"—which translates "tomb"—is a 17th-century term for a musical memorial, traditionally paying tribute to a single person. Each of Ravel's six movements is individually dedicated to friends killed during the war, beginning with the first movement's dedication to the same Lt. Jacques Charlot of Debussy's *En blanc et noir*. The music itself is free from the anguish of war, with no trace of the hellish nightmare he endured as a soldier. Instead, *Le Tombeau de Couperin* creates an escape to an altered world of childlike wonder, color, and ambivalence. When critics complained that his music wasn't somber enough for the war, Ravel replied, "the dead are sad enough in their eternal silence."

After the war, Ravel used his compositions

fatal whirling of the music creates an utter antithesis to the elegant Viennese waltz. It paints the picture of the end of the world as Ravel experienced it, and seems to be home to his nightmares. Ravel denied its connection to the war, but it leaves us to wonder: how much of the world is unconsciously fused into music and embedded in its notes?

Camille Saint-Saëns is often the forgotten French composer of the Great War era. His music, historically described as conservative during a time when romanticism was sweeping the world, emphasized form and polished craftsmanship. Saint-Saëns vocally opposed Debussy's music and reportedly told music critic Pierre Lalo, "I have stayed in Paris to speak ill of *Pelléas*."

Perhaps it was Saint-Saëns' fixed gaze on Europe's past that so angered other composers, and his unwillingness to evolve with the troubled times. Whether out of fear of rebuke or disinterest in challenging his status, most of his music seems to have been purposefully shel-

tered from the pain and torment of the war. Ravel said of him: "if he'd been making shell-cases during the war it might have been better for music."

Saint-Saëns was a reactionary character, penning controversial critiques about the war but keeping his music as neutral and free from conflict as he could. His strong opinions about German influence on French music following World War I angered both French and Germans

when he published a series of articles mocking Wagner's influence on modern composers. One especially acerbic passage reads:

For the Wagnerian, music did not exist before Wagner, or rather it was still in embryo—Wagner raised it to the level of Art. Bach, Beethoven and occasionally Weber announced that the Messiah would come and thus have their importances as prophets. The rest are of no importance. Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn, none has written a single bearable note. The French school and the Italian school have never existed. If a Wagnerian should hear music other than Wagner's, his face shows only disdain. Any of the Master's works, even the ballet music from Rienzi, plunges him into an indescribable state of ecstasy.

Despite his divisive commentary, Saint-Saëns was still one of the most beloved living French

composers throughout Europe and America. All too aware of this admiration and affection, he composed *Honneur à l'Amérique* for voice and piano, with lyrics in both English and French, speaking of the alliance between the two nations during the war and proclaiming the two countries "comrades in arms." The song does not exactly present itself as a patriotic statement, nor does it reflect any nationalism or propaganda. By contrast to Paul Fournier's libretto, the music does not even seem to reflect the war at all. Instead, it feels like a shallow attempt to be a part of the wartime compositional movement, an attempt to maintain his beloved stature.

American journalist Wendell H. Luce, writing in *Musical America* as "WHL," took notice of the composer's lackluster composition. His scathing critique notes that "[T]he business of writing a patriotic song seems simple enough. The time is ripe, flags are unfurled everywhere. America is at war; what more natural than to express in song the roused sentiment of the day?" But Luce continues by proclaiming he cannot forgive "the composer of the *B-minor Violin Concerto*," insisting "we have the right to expect more." He finally dismisses *Honneur à l'Amérique* as "the most poverty-stricken example of music by a famous composer that we know, uninspired from either a melodic or harmonic basis, with a piano accompaniment so empty that a second-year student in composition should be ashamed to sponsor."

The music of World War I warns us of the toll such conflict has on the human soul. Musicians, like all artists, are simply recorders of history: they can't change the horror, nor can they avoid the destruction. But they can describe it, weave it into their work, and leave it as a tribute and a caution to the world. A warning about the horrors that are possible, and the indelible mark it leaves on humanity. The question is: are we listening? 🎧



CLAUDE DEBUSSY

Conflict and Folk Music

BRITAIN'S MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT DURING AND AFTER THE GREAT WAR

Patrick Rooney

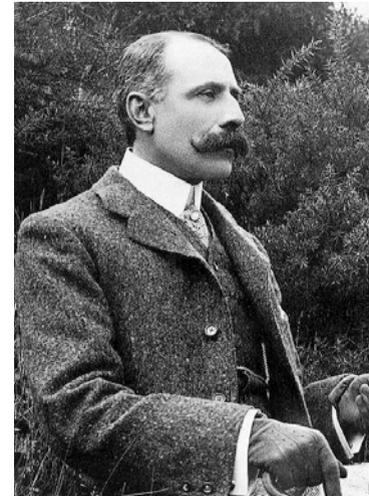
The music created by British composers Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, and Edward Elgar in reaction to World War I breathed life into the nation's musical culture and helped codify a uniquely British style. These works revolted against the traditional Germanic dominance of English concert music, the rise of twelve-tone serialism, and other novel European developments, in favor of triadic, modal, and folk-inspired music.

Gustav Holst could not serve in the war due to medical issues. In the absence of other composers who were serving, Holst was thus cast in the role of holding together art music in Britain. Holst wrote his most famous work, *The Planets*, between 1914 and 1916, having been introduced to astronomy and astrology while traveling in Spain with astrologer Clifford Bax, brother of composer Arnold Bax. Adrian Boult conducted a private premiere in 1918, and the work received such critical acclaim that Holst eventually became overwhelmed and disinterested in it.

The first of the work's seven movements, "Mars: The Bringer of War," is a bellicose and dramatic movement with a driving rhythm in the



GUSTAV HOLST



EDWARD ELGAR

asymmetrical meter 5/4. The dissonant march and discordant conflict between sections of the orchestra encompasses the fear and destruction of the Great War in progress. "Venus: The Bringer of Peace" follows after the thunderous and ir-resolute climax of "Mars" as a hopeful gesture against the war, and the remaining movements orbit the hymn at the center of "Jupiter: The

Bringer of Jollity," which Holst later adapted to Sir Cecil Spring Rice's patriotic "I Vow to Thee, My Country."

Edward Elgar composed his recitation-with-orchestra *Carillon* in 1914 on a text by Belgian poet Émile Cammaerts. The work alternates instrumental interludes with orchestrally accompanied reciter, in something like a concerto for spoken word. The music has a dance-like quality in triple meter, its lyrical and expansive melody marked by varying tonal stability. Elgar employs the same large orchestral sound Holst used for *The Planets*, musical depictions of war competing with the stirring dances. A version for piano and voice was included in *King Albert's Book*, its words of patriotic sentiment and sweet victory an attempt to raise the spirits of the British and Belgians. [for more on *King Albert's Book*, see Harlie Hendrickson's overview on p. 4]

Ralph Vaughan Williams was a young man when World War I began, and growing up in this age of increasingly strong nationalistic tendencies influenced his later style significantly. Vaughan Williams served in the war, and later joined Holst in creating a large body of music with a folk-inspired, British character.

Some years after the Great War, during the troubled 1930s, Vaughan Williams composed the anti-war cantata *Dona Nobis Pacem*, a unique setting of texts in Latin and English. These texts include selections from the poetry of Walt Whitman, verses from the Bible, bits of a political speech, and portions of the Ordinary of the Latin mass.

The opening "Agnus Dei" begins "Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi / Dona nobis pacem" ("Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world / Give us peace"). The music is largely tonal, with dynamic forces

creating the work's aggressive essence. The second movement, "Beat, Beat Drums," sets a Whitman poem and features the large orchestral sound of *Carillon* and *The Planets*, heavy brass and percussion supporting the chorus' relentless fortissimo with war-like rhythms. The third movement, "Reconciliation," opens with a flowing melody passing from orchestra to baritone soloist. This movement is more pensive, with conflict arising from polyrhythmic counterpoint instead of loud dynamics and dissonant harmonies. Whitman's refrain, "Word over all, beautiful as the sky," leads to a choral closing on the words "Dona nobis pacem."

The fourth movement, "Dirge for Two Veterans," returns us to the battlefield with Whitman's story of a son and father who pass away fighting in the war, ending with the words "and my heart, o my soldiers, my veterans, my heart gives you love." The fifth and sixth movements, both untitled, set a text by English politician John Bright alongside the biblical books of Jeremiah and Daniel ("O man, greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee") before closing on Gloria and a final plea of "Dona nobis pacem." The majestic chanting of Latin text resolves to a low major chord, leaving a sense of peace.

As we remember the Great War on the centennial of Armistice, we may learn from the music inspired by the drastic events that unfolded in the years of intense violence. In response to the war, Holst, Vaughan Williams, and Elgar all created pieces with nationalistic and patriotic purposes, their grandiose modal sound rooted in folk melodies and large orchestral textures. Breaking free of Germanic influences, these composers went their own unique, nationalistic direction in response to the Great War. 🎵

Expressionism, Hope, and Horror

AUSTRO-GERMANIC PAINTERS AND COMPOSERS OF THE GREAT WAR

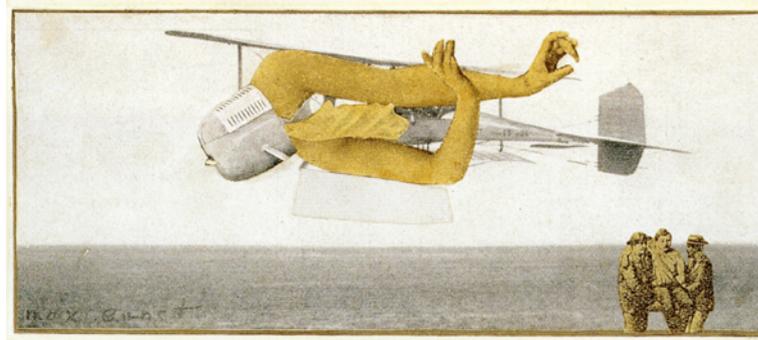
Bailey Paugh

When war erupted over the summer of 1914, many Austrian and German artists and intellectuals saw the conflict as an opportunity to establish the cultural superiority of German-speaking lands and bring about a new era for art. Arnold Schoenberg hoped the war would rid Europe of French Impressionism, and Alban Berg hoped the war would do away with vapid popular music. Others saw the coming war as a divine, spiritual struggle. Anton Webern, eager to serve, wrote to Schoenberg in 1914:

Day and night the wish haunts me: to be able to fight for this great, sublime cause. Do you not agree that this war really has no political motivations? It is the struggle of the angels with the devils.

Franz Marc, a painter and one of the co-founders of the Munich-based art movement known as Der Blaue Reiter, wrote to his fellow artist Wassily Kandinsky that the war would prepare and purify Europe for the future.

As the war went on, these visions of cultural empire faded in the face of the realities of military service, the interruption of artistic work, and the violence of modern, mechanized warfare.



MAX ERNST, *MURDERING AIRPLANE*, 1920

Schoenberg parodied these ideas of heroism and war in his piano quintet *Die eiserne Brigade* (The Iron Brigade). Despite his age and poor health, Schoenberg served twice in the Austrian army, December 1915 to October 1916 and September to December 1917. Though frustrated by a lack of time for composing, he did quickly write this piano quintet during his service in 1916, a skill of which he was proud. "As if he were writing a letter"—this is what my comrades in the Austrian army said admiringly," Schoenberg wrote in his 1946 essay "Heart and Brain in Music." He continued, "I personally

belong to those who generally write very fast, whether it is 'cerebral' counterpoint or 'spontaneous' melody." The prominent descending bass line and overly-dramatic fanfare figures in the piano distort the traditional heroic military march in a sarcastic response to the changed nature of warfare in World War I. His title reflects the new focus on machinery that so transformed the nature of armed conflict.

Distorted reality was a common theme for many artists in the final years of WWI and after Armistice. Otto Dix, who served at both fronts, used cartoon-like figures in his post-war paintings. In *The War Cripples* of 1920, Dix depicts a group of soldiers on a street, limbs missing, their faces distorted and skull-like. These soldiers have returned from the Great War, physically no longer whole, and their twisted faces reveal their warped psyches, reflecting the lingering influence of Expressionism. The cadaverous face of the first man is a reminder of the omnipresence of death, blurring the reality between those who lived and those who died.

In Alban Berg's opera *Wozzeck*, audiences experience this conflict between real and not real, inner world and outer world, as it unfolds in the mind of a soldier and eventually drives him mad. Berg had expressed his desire to write an opera based on Georg Büchner's play earlier in 1914, but the outbreak of war delayed his work; his subsequent wartime experiences shaped his interpretation.

Berg was drafted into the army in August of 1915. He was asthmatic, and after only a few months of training his health broke down and he was reassigned to the War Ministry office in Vienna. This gave Berg a particular affinity for the character Wozzeck, who is subjected to an army doctor's experiments and forced to eat only peas. Psychologically traumatized by these experiments and the further abuse of a superior officer, Wozzeck slowly loses his ability to distinguish reality from fantasy, leading him to murder his lover and commit suicide.

Berg's choice of subject—the trauma of an individual soldier—turns away from pre-war ro-



OTTO DIX, *WAR CRIPPLES*, 1920

manticized military portrayals, reflecting Berg's distaste both for vapid turn-of-the-century operettas and the new kind of warfare the Great War brought.

For painter Max Ernst, blurring reality and unreality was not enough: he chose to abandon it altogether in his embrace of Dada. Ernst served briefly at both Western and Eastern fronts, and even as late as 1917 wrote about the freedom that lies in the creative willpower of the artist—a viewpoint rooted in the political, nationalistic ideal of the superiority of German-speaking peoples. After the war, Ernst saw this connection between art and political ideology as having fueled the terrible violence of the war, and positioned himself against his past artistic self and against those of his contemporaries who still connected art and politics.

Ernst turned to the budding Dada and later Surrealist movements, with their critiques of established forms and ideologies through the abandonment of reason, and began creating painterly and sculptural collages. His 1920 painting *Murdering Airplane* combines human and machine, depicting an airplane constructed of human arms flying over two soldiers helping a third wounded soldier. The disembodied arms and mechanistic imagery show the human not as an individual but as an object, a tool used for destruction and murder.

Many artists portrayed the general horrors of the war, but Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's artistic response was very personal. Kirchner volunteered for service in 1914 but soon began to suffer from "war sickness," which he later admitted was largely faked. In 1917 Kirchner was admitted to a sanatorium to recover, and while there, he completed a series of apocalyptic drawings on the backs of cigarette boxes. Preceding these Apokalypse sketches (based on the book of Revelations) was his *Self-Portrait with Death*, also on a cigarette box.

Self-Portrait with Death pictures Kirchner sitting contemplatively, a spectral skeleton at his right shoulder reflecting the artist's preoccupation with his own death following his military service. Taken together in context, Kirchner's depictions of death and biblical apocalypse are a reflection of the war's destruction of Europe's external landscape and Kirchner's internal one.

Conspicuously absent from Kirchner's works are sketches of the ultimate triumph in the biblical Revelation—the return of Christ and the ascension of his followers—reflecting Kirchner's disillusionment and belief that there was no possibility of triumph after WWI. After his release from the army, Kirchner continued to suffer from physical and psychological illness, committing suicide in 1938 as another war loomed on the horizon.

Anton Webern, despite his original enthusiasm, began to see in the Great War not the struggle of good and evil, but the struggle of the individual soldier. The poems he chose to set in his *Vier Lieder, Op. 13*, composed between 1914 and 1918, deal with loneliness and a longing for home. In the first, "Wiese im Park" (Lawn in the Park), the speaker surveys a park, declaring "This was my country," the past tense indicating the change in both land and speaker so that neither can relate to the other as they once did. The second and third poems, "Die Einsame" (The Lonely One) and "In der Fremde" (In Strange Lands) depict lonely wanderers longing for home; the fourth, "Ein Winterabend" (A Winter Evening) is a wanderer's homecoming. A second set of songs, *Sechs Lieder, Op. 14*, which Webern worked on from 1917-1921, sets poems by Austrian Expressionist Georg Trakl, who had died in 1914 following a traumatic experience on the Eastern front.

Trakl's poems feature contemplations of nighttime, stillness, and death, and Webern's setting of them differs starkly from the *Op. 13*

set. Rather than using a chamber orchestra in the tradition of Mahler's songs (as he had in *Op. 13*), Webern uses clarinet, bass clarinet, violin, and cello—an ensemble similar to the one Schoenberg had employed for *Pierrot Lunaire* in 1912. The solemn, stark instrumentation emphasizes the emotional distance the speaker feels from the world. This is not a Romantic separation (as in Friedrich Rückert's "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen," famously set by Mahler), but a separation brought on by a world and people completely transformed.

World War I did not result in completely new artistic styles in Austria and Germany, but a turn to new subject matter. Painters and composers alike explored the new relationship between humans and machinery, and the trauma experienced by soldiers returning from the front, using artistic language that had begun developing in the late 1800's. The Great War was not the cultural revolution that many Austrians and Germans expected, but it did, in its horrific way, fulfill turn-of-the-century Expressionist trends and create a further break with the German-speaking world's Romantic past. 🎭

From Nationalism to Neoclassicism

IGOR STRAVINSKY'S WARTIME STYLE SHIFT

Ricky Chan

Igor Stravinsky was guided by the tumultuous events of the Great War to a refuge to Switzerland, marking the end of the composer's Russian period and the beginning of his neoclassical phase. The Russian period peaked with the three ballets composed for Sergei Diaghilev (*Firebird*, *Petrushka*, *Rite of Spring*) and ended around 1919 with the first version of *Les Noces*; the neoclassical phase gestated throughout the war years and started in earnest around 1920, eventually featuring such great works as *Apollon musagète*, the *Octet*, *Persephone*, and *Symphony of Psalms*. This shift from nationalistic to neoclassical thus occurred precisely during the wartime Swiss years.

Because of the Great War and the Russian Revolution, Stravinsky found his funds and sources of income cut off, and he started composing for smaller ensembles, as in *L'Histoire du soldat* (1918) and the cham-



IGOR STRAVINSKY

ber opera *Renard*. To understand Stravinsky's stylistic evolution during the Great War we will analyze two works from that time, *L'Histoire* and *Souvenir d'une Marche Boche*.

In September 1914 Stravinsky wrote to his friend, Ballets Russes designer Léon Bakst: "Lord, what a terrible and at the same time magnificent period we are living through! My hatred for the Germans grows not by the day but by the hour." A year later he composed the solo piano piece *Souvenir d'une Marche Boche*, expressing his disdain for the titular German troops ("boche" comes from the French "al-boche," an epithet with the literal meaning "cabbage head.")

Eric Walter White, a cataloger of Stravinsky's music, described *Souvenir d'une Marche Boche* thus: "Thirty-seven bars of a brash sort of march in C major are followed by a jaunty trio, sixteen bars long, in F major. The C major march is then repeated *da capo al fine*. A work of small importance." *Souvenir d'une Marche Boche* is not a traditional march but, as the title suggests, a sort of memory or impression; it presents the march in a crude, sarcastic and mocking tone. Stravinsky parodies the coda of the last movement of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, a quotation discovered by musicologist Richard Taruskin and described, by him, as "a heavy mockery of everything Teutonic." Beethoven's music was often used for political purposes, and to boost the morale of German troops. Stravinsky's feelings here were complex, as he admired Beethoven's works but disliked the blind following and base treatment of his music.

L'Histoire du soldat (The Soldier's Tale) was among the last works Stravinsky composed in the Russian style as he moved toward neoclassicism. No longer working for Ballet Russes and in need of income, he sought patronage to compose works that could be easily performed by small groups. Swiss philanthropist and ama-

teur clarinetist Werner Reinhart agreed to fund the work's creation, supporting Stravinsky through its premiere and sponsoring several concerts of his chamber music. Stravinsky dedicated *L'Histoire* to Reinhart and composed the *Three Pieces for Solo Clarinet* in gratitude.

L'Histoire's libretto, adapted by Swiss poet Charles-Ferdinand Ramuz from a folk tale collected by Alexander Afanasyev, tells the tale of a soldier who trades his violin to the Devil for unlimited economic gain. When the soldier realizes wealth does not lead to happiness, he tricks the Devil, gets his violin back, and rescues the nearest princess. The story ends on an ironic note, as the soldier returns to his old hometown where he is captured by the Devil. The "Grand Chorale" narrates the morale: "You must not seek to add / To what you have, what you once had / You have no right to share / What you are with what you were."

The "Grand Chorale" borrows from J. S. Bach's cantata *Ein feste Burg*, BWV 80, based on the Lutheran hymn Debussy quoted in his *En blanc et noir* of 1915 [see Christina Ebersohl's article on page 7], while the "Dance du Diable" and the "Triumphal March" have elements reminiscent of *The Rite of Spring*. The work as a whole thus presents us with two different versions of Stravinsky: the tail end of his Russian style and early hints of the coming neoclassicism. Stravinsky's music had already shown signs of an objectivist aesthetic, wherein construction precedes and produces expression rather than the other way around. He borrowed from both Bach and Beethoven, who often wrote such structurally absolute music, and his dislike for music's misuse in support of war and his departure from nationalism to neoclassicism can be interpreted as a desire for clarity, simplicity, and order. ♪

The US Enters the War. Ives Reacts.

Aaron Shingles and Ian Cooper

At the beginning of WWI, the United States adopted a neutral position. German naval forces had a policy of firing on all ships suspected of military involvement, including civilian ships, and on May 7, 1915, a German U-Boat torpedoed the British ocean liner *Lusitania*. High fatalities and further attacks put international pressure on the U.S. to enter the war.

On April 2, 1917, President Wilson appeared before Congress and delivered an impassioned speech in favor of entering the war. On April 6, the U.S. declared war on Germany. The U.S. provided immediate naval and financial support to Allied forces. Ground combat reached a major turning point when General John J. Pershing arrived in France with the 16th Infantry Regiment. By war's end, 2 million American soldiers had served in Europe. Over 50,000 were killed.

At the outset of war, Charles Ives had been bitterly resistant. By the time America entered the war he comprehensively embraced it, inverting his stance from zealous pacifist to war crusader. Just days after the U.S. declared war, a friend encouraged Ives to compose a song based on the poem *In Flanders Field*, by Canadian Army doctor John McCrae. The piece was musically tame by Ives' standards, balancing the simple patterns

and hymn harmonies with his trademark dissonance. The song walked the conflicting line of emotions from patriotism and sacrifice, presenting less of a sermon on heroism and more of a delicate eulogy to fallen soldiers.

With his next song, *Tom Sails Away*, Ives presented an impressionistic moment with nostalgic lyrics of his own. The least jingoistic of his three war songs, it paints a wistful and quietly dreamlike portrait of childhood before revealing that Tom has left for war. Instead of coming to a heroic conclusion, the song fades away on George Cohan's famous words, "Over there, over there, over there."

One month before the first American infantry arrived in France, Ives penned the tune *He Is There!*—a simple exercise in patriotism he hoped would be picked up by American soldiers in Europe. It is an enthusiastic tune, but in the end was perhaps too elaborate for the average Yankee soldier.

Ives' nephew would later report (after being recruited to sing *He Is There!*) that if he didn't sing with enough spirit or gusto, Ives would pound his fists on the piano. "You've got to put more life into it!" he'd say. "Can't you shout better than that?! That's the trouble with this country, people are afraid to shout." 🎵

Wartime Songs. *Concord Sonata.*

Aaron Richardson

I entered Lincoln Recital Hall for one of the School of Music's Noon Concerts and saw on the program: Charles Ives—*Concord Sonata*. I recognized it from a music history course and wondered if it would be as bewildering the second time. Pianist Thomas Otten specializes in illuminating lecture-recitals on various musical subjects, and I hoped to understand the thorny solo piano textures better in live performance.

After a tear-jerking rendition of Debussy's *Clair de Lune*, Otten explained his take on the *Concord Sonata* and what it meant to him, so audiences hearing it the first time wouldn't be confused as to where the piece was going. The point, Otten said, was not to simply listen to the music, but to understand where the music came from. It is the musical homages the audience must grasp: direct musical quotations (from Beethoven in particular) and references to the five American philosophers after which the four movements are named ("Emerson," "Hawthorne," "The Alcotts"—Bronson and Louisa May—and "Thoreau"). Otten's explanation and playing made the piece make a lot more sense. To hear it in this context made me appreciate Ives' music so much more.

I contacted Dr. Otten after the performance, and we spoke by phone about the transcendentalist motifs. Otten told me he had been inspired by a former student's paper on the *Concord Sonata*, and said that his lecture-recital helps audiences cement their understanding by giving nonmusicians something to hold on to. Thomas called the piece strong and timeless, and said that more people should be able to listen to it and understand Ives' innovation.

Tom Sails Away, part of the song cycle, *Three Songs for the Great War*, recounts an idyllic memory of America in the narrator's youth. The song focuses on the American Dream and the peace that prevailed before the Great War started, with Ives' text speaking finally of Tom sailing away to war "in freedom's cause."

He Is There!, from the same cycle, is something of a transcendentalist fanfare. There are 14 different motifs and quotations in the four minute song, paying homage to several dixie marching tunes and the popular wartime song *Over There* in an attempt to raise morale for soldiers going to war. ♪

Dying Together in the Snow

A WINTERREISE CONVERSATION

Angelica Hesse and Chris Poulakidas, with Harry Baechtel and Chuck Dillard

In February, we sent two of our contributors, Angelica Hesse (soprano) and Chris Poulakidas (tenor), to Portland Opera's production of Franz Schubert's song cycle *Winterreise*. Baritone David Adam Moore performed alone on stage, accompanied by Portland Opera's Assistant Conductor Nicholas Fox on piano. The unique production featured sets and 3D projections designed by GLMMR (a multimedia collective co-founded by Moore and his wife, opera costume/set/production designer Vita Tzykun), and lighting design by Maxwell Bowman.

A year earlier, PSU professors Harry Baechtel (baritone) and Chuck Dillard (collaborative pianist) performed *Winterreise* in Portland State's more intimate Lincoln Recital Hall, with less elaborate visuals. Hesse and Poulakidas were there. [as was Dean Leroy Bynum; see our interview on page 27] We brought Baechtel, Dillard, Hesse, and Poulakidas together and asked them to talk about *Winterreise* and the visuals in art.

Angelica Hesse: What struck me initially is that it felt like [Moore]—who's an opera singer—was holding his voice in, trying to be tender, intimate, in a very small space. This was in

Hampton Opera Center's black box theater. You had the feeling that there was much more to his voice, but he was having to harness it, or choosing to harness it. It was incredibly controlled. Later, there were points when his voice was allowed to bloom and we got the whole full range of him.

Chuck Dillard: I would imagine that is why Nick was saying he was so exhausted. Once you separate pianist from singer, that would cause me to just get wiped out by trying to have to listen and blend and see what the sound is like from 10, 20, 30 feet away. But having a piano in the visual of the media backdrop would probably be distracting.

Chris Poulakidas: With the visuals being central, it seemed the music was like a soundtrack to this movie type of thing. It was different, it was its own thing. I don't know if that compromises the integrity of Schubert's music or not, but it was interesting.

Hesse: It was. He approached the whole thing like a stage production, a mini one-man opera. And he used the space that way as well. He sang one song leaning against the backdrop, sitting on the floor. I've talked to one person



DAVID ADAM MOORE STARRED IN
PORTLAND OPERA'S PRODUCTION OF
SCHUBERT'S *WINTERREISE*.



Photo: Chad Lanning

who thought the multimedia was distracting. Compared to [Portland Opera's 2017 multimedia production of] *Così*, I thought this worked really well! A few early visuals seemed irrelevant. But later, he was able to create the environments in which the poems happened: a neighborhood passing through night and day, time passing, the snowy road, sunlight under the trees. It created the mood of the piece in a way that can otherwise be hard to grasp. This could be a powerful thing for audiences that don't normally listen to art song. Also, I was struck that often the pacing and rhythm of the changing images matched what was happening rhythmically in the music: if there was a franticness to the accompaniment, that kind of motion happened in the video and vice versa.

Poulakidas: Yes, it was really thoughtful. He was holding a notebook and as he sang he was writing and then casting the pages off. At the end, with the poignant moment in "Der Leiermann" (The Hurdy-Gurdy Man), he collected all the pages from the ground and gestured to the screen as if to offer his songs for the image of the man to play with his frozen fingers.

Dillard: The first time I heard *Winterreise*, I was

turning pages for a house concert with a mezzo-soprano. I knew some of the songs, but not all of them, and I wasn't really prepared for what I was getting myself into. There were three house concerts, three days in a row, and I was behind the pianist, not really knowing what the singer is saying. It was absolutely infuriating to me because the music just spoke to me more and more and I knew something really important was happening, but I didn't know what she was saying. I vowed to never let an audience have that experience when I was involved. When I came here and met Harry and realized he'd be perfect to sing the cycle, we just had a conversation one day about doing it and bringing in images of Portland.

Harry Baechtzel: It's about atmosphere. It's such a meditative piece, which is part of why I think it works with a visual atmosphere. It really just puts you in this intense, depressive place which is served by a big atmospheric situation.

Dillard: And everyone these days is so visually stimulated, always looking at some sort of screen; asking an audience to be only aurally stimulated for 45-50 minutes is potentially asking a lot.

Baechtzel: Definitely. I heard it in the concert hall for the first time and loved it, it was a really good performance. I can't remember who, but I didn't feel the need for a visual. It hits me that I am possessed of an usually long attention span, so I have an obsession with Mahler. If it is longer and bigger, if the ends are more epic, I'm like, "yes." So that was not my issue necessarily. But it has been my issue, and part of my issue in life is how to get people to go on that journey with you. If I'm in someone's house drinking a good beer and in an atmosphere essentially with a bunch of people I know who are having their own interactions and relationships, in the way it would have been when Schubert first played this thing, there is just this entirely different connec-

tion and ability to enjoy a piece of music in that environment which is really what it was written for. So, to me, there is no scandal in trying to take it out of the concert hall in some fashion. Chamber music in general is over churched, you know? I think that it is important to try and counteract that tendency.

Poulakidas: Then again, in church you are often in an optimal space for acoustics, so that's kind of special. I'm of the mind that in this day and age it's good for people to sit in the hall with no visual effects and experience historical music. Even though there may be some audience suffering involved, being detached from their cell phones for an hour and experiencing the music whether they like it or not, I think it's good for us to be reminded in a traditional format that old school emotions and affections haven't changed in the modern day. I think there is something wholesome about that live reminder.

Dillard: There's a good amount of suffering in *Winterreise*. It is a suffering oriented piece. It's probably ok.

Hesse: So I wonder if, as one starts to add visuals to concerts, there is a fine line somewhere between giving people so much that their inner imagining is taken away—or not required—versus creating enough of an atmosphere that you help put them there and the picture can build. Your performance was the first time I heard *Winterreise* in its entirety, and I remember [the song with] the hurdy-gurdy man just totally choking me up. It didn't have the same effect in this recent one, perhaps because I knew it was coming or perhaps because I was given too much of a picture of the man, so I didn't get to slip into his skin.

Poulakidas: Moore's was perhaps too literal.

Baechtel: I think that is a really important point. We aren't trying to tell the story with the images, it's atmosphere. An empty street can say a lot about what the man is going through without showing the guy walking down the street. I

think you have pieces that can really work that way, but at the same time, picking up on Chris' point of view, making the audience deal with it whether they enjoy it or not. I'm thinking of seeing it in the hall with Mahler symphonies—you're on minute forty-five and some dude has been trying to stay awake for ten minutes. I've seen this a number of times. Here at Oregon Symphony, they were doing *Symphony No. 5* and this guy is starting to get into it, and then getting seemingly upset, and maybe even a little pissed off part way through, then almost falling asleep. He went through the whole gamut. And by the end, the finale comes and it's building and he is sitting closer and closer to the edge of his chair and the thing finishes and he stands up and "BRAVO!" He was just freaking out. That's why the suffering matters: he went on the whole ride. He will probably tell people about it. He may even tell it that way. I think there is something to that.

Poulakidas: *Winterreise* has that ability for sure. If you're watching a movie while hearing it, 70 minutes seems a lot less long. For me, it's less about the suffering and more about the informative potential of historically representing the tradition. But maybe that's the mindset for decades down the road when we've tired of visual things and people are like, "you guys have gotta go see this thing where the singer stands still the whole time and there is no movie!"

Baechtel: Should it just be in houses? That is the question. Does chamber music belong in the hall at all? Or are we just screwing up trying to do that?

Dillard: To put it in a concert hall is absolutely what we should be doing, as long as we are able to give the audience the full experience. If they are going to walk away from *Winterreise*, which doesn't end with a big ending, I need to make sure that they are thrilled by what they saw. Sadly, standing and singing in a foreign language, I

don't feel like it's enough these days for something as massive as that.

Baechtel: When I thought about doing this piece, I thought about doing it where you would actually travel, like go to people's living rooms and do a chunk of it, then take a walk with your coffee or whiskey or whatever. I've always wanted to do that. You just need enough houses in close proximity. But it would be fun. Maybe with different singers in different spaces to tell the story.

Dillard: There is a NY duo that has a program called Winterize, like you winterize your car, and the pianist Timothy Long recorded all the recordings on little transistor radios they pass out to audience members, and the singer, Chris Herbert, a baritone, takes them on a walking tour of Central Park, in the winter, in the snow. And they all hold the piano accompaniment in their hands while he sings the songs and they walk through the park.

Hesse: That is so trippy.

Dillard: And it has become such a huge success that they do it every year. It's similar to your progressive thing.

Baechtel: So he does it once a year?

Dillard: Around Christmas time, outside in the NY winter.

Baechtel: I like that, as a yearly installment. You might have to have that much time in between each time you do it. Once a year we all go die together in the snow.

Dillard: But it also proves that this piece has just been manipulated and molded and transformed by so many different people. It's been recorded on accordion. It's just wacky how much staying power it has.

Poulakidas: Would you say this is the greatest of song cycles?

Baechtel: I think so.

Dillard: I would say it is the greatest song cycle ever written, and using every definition of the

word greatest. It's kind of perfect. It hits every note, it is a complete journey and arc. I mean just the key relationships for the Schubert, everything is just so seamless. We did it and everything was transposed down equally; many transpositions are not equal, in order to satisfy the pianist. It still satisfied this pianist. It puts some of the pieces in really gnarly keys for me, but I think that the song-to-song key relationships are really important.

Baechtel: *Winterreise* is such a monster. Also, if you read through the poems without the music, he just chucks the punch line on the end. "Oh, the world is so green and everything is so wonderful—if only death wasn't stopping me!" What's interesting about it is the degree to which Schubert molds that into this unbelievable statement where you don't really worry about that fact. I think that is part of what makes it a great cycle. He just kept that musical vision going all the way through and just sort of takes the warts out.

MNA: What would you recommend, recording-wise? What are your top one or two recordings we could recommend to our readers?

Dillard: Matthias Goerne with Alfred Brendel. And Anthony Rolfe Johnson—anything he sings is amazing.

Baechtel: Well, you can't not say [Dietrich Fischer-] Dieskau. You know what is interesting is that you mentioned a tenor in there and you almost never mention a tenor in this work. There is a really fascinating recording with Peter Pears and Benjamin Britten in which they do things in terms of phrasing and shape and the way they're delivering texts that is like no one else. And it's great. I don't know that I would make those choices, but holy crap, it's fascinating.

Dillard: It's not a recording necessarily, but Liszt transcribed, I think, the entire cycle on solo piano. It is amazing. Each song is around ten minutes. You don't do it as a cycle, but they're amazing. 🍷

Where Luck Meets Preparation

AN INTERVIEW WITH DEAN BYNUM

Matthew Neil Andrews

Where at *Subito* feel it bodes well for Portland State and its community of artists that our new dean is no mere administrator but an accomplished lyric tenor trained in both opera and Lieder. Dean Leroy E. Bynum, Jr., came to us by way of two Albanias: the one in New York, and before that the one in Georgia. Bynum was named Dean in April 2017 following a stint at The College of Saint Rose, before which he had spent two decades at Albany State University. Before that he was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship and studied in Berlin with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. Dean Bynum graciously invited me into his vibrant office in Lincoln Hall, where we spent the remains of an afternoon chatting about Southern weather, music in academia, desert island discs, the secret of success, and—serendipitously—not one but two local productions of Schubert's *Winterreise*.

Subito: Can you start by telling us about an early teacher who made an impression on you?

Dean Leroy Bynum: My best theory teacher was somebody whom many of the students of theory disliked. This guy was about the nuts and bolts

and dissecting the whole business of theory down to the basic components. And he over-explained everything. And while that drove all my classmates crazy, I was all over it. Theory was something I really never cared for until it got interesting. You know, there is no book on the face of this earth as boring as Walter Piston's *Harmony*. Learning basic theory there at Chapel Hill using that Walter Piston book, I had no point of comparison. That was theory—that was the theory standard at the time—so getting through that was heartbreak enough.

And then, after you got that whole year of basic theory, they started again from day one. You go pre-Baroque theory, and then Baroque theory, and then Classical theory, ending with 20th century. You had a semester of all of those, then you got into the weeds of 18th-century counterpoint, and if you did Pre-Baroque you got a smattering of 16th-century theory. Just enough to know what it was. In graduate school you got full courses on that, and you're writing motets. That's where I had that great theory teacher in 16th-century counterpoint.

Subito: The over-explainer?

Bynum: The over-explainer. I mean he actually

called the whole notes “snowmen,” you know? You can see anyone who is a musician, how that would drive them nuts, talking to a bunch of adults that way. But I was all over it.

Subito: “If it works, it’s not stupid.”

Bynum: I hung on that man’s every word. And he over-explained everything, which is exactly what I needed because I can grasp concepts easily, but they get confused in my mind.

Subito: You have to take it in first and churn it around.

Bynum: My questions always come later. I need someone to keep me from confusing them in my head, and he was very good about that. So, I actually enjoyed writing motets and species counterpoint. I absolutely fell in love with it. Learning to write in the style of other composers, I find fascinating. It is wonderful for me to learn theory in that way and to get a glimpse into Bach’s genius or Beethoven’s genius.

Subito: And there are always those little nuggets that just don’t make sense, right? Like ok, I can mimic the basic Mozart style, but there is this bit of grit where you’re like “where did this come from?” And it is invariably the best part.

Bynum: You put your finger right on it. That’s where the genius comes in. That’s where Leroy leaves off and Mozart takes over. I can mimic the style, I can come up with a textbook piece of music that would get a hundred on the theory exam—because you don’t have parallel motion and everything moves like it is supposed to—but it is bereft of soul. And that is where composition comes in.

Subito: Who are some of the motet composers you liked?

Bynum: The High Renaissance people. Of course, Palestrina is gorgeous, it’s beautiful. But it is so governed. By the time Palestrina was writing, there were so many rules and regulations involved in writing, restricting that crea-

tive flow, that it is just this wall of sound that comes at you. It wasn’t until people felt the freedom a little further away from the watchful eye of the church, to expand some of that, which is why the people beyond Palestrina really strike a chord with me. Gabrieli; de Victoria in Spain; the French, they came up with great stuff.

I love Thomas Tallis. There is a flexibility to his compositional style that I find refreshing and not as restrictive. And then some of the later composers that straddle the fence between early Baroque and late Renaissance. A lot of their music really, really speaks to me. The Purcells of this world. I find his music wonderful. The early oratorio writers, that is a very favorite period of mine. After that, it jumps.

St. John’s Passion, that’s one of those pieces that would show up in that hypothetical island I would be sentenced to, where I only have five pieces I could bring.

Subito: What would be the others?

Bynum: My tastes have changed in my old age. I have rethought that. The constant is the *St. John’s Passion*. And I think the other that was there before would be Verdi’s *Requiem*.

The piece that was on the list that has since come off was Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*. I think I could live without it now. I mean, there was a time I couldn’t. When I was singing it, it was definitely there. And a lot of Mozart’s music comes close. I think the piece I would put back where *Don Giovanni* was is Mozart’s *Requiem*.

Subito: Oh yeah. Were you here already last fall when Portland Baroque Orchestra performed it?

Bynum: I was right there, listening to it. The soloists were wonderful. They did an excellent job. Now, if I were to be honest, they did it a little faster than I like. It was like Mozart on steroids. Mozart was like, “where are they going? We got nowhere to go! I’m here!”

But that was one of the pieces. The other pieces come and go. When I was 25, Beethoven’s

Photo: Chad Lanning



Ninth Symphony was on the list. It's not anymore. Even though it is a great piece, it's not on the top five. Verdi's *La Traviata* would also be on the list. Absolutely. I couldn't live without that one.

So that's about it. And believe me, that list has changed. That took some consideration. You ask me tomorrow, one of those may come or go. Everyone once in a while I hear something on the radio that reminds me of its greatness. Then it goes back on the list.

And there is a reason the masters are the masters. You think "oh, Beethoven's *Eighth*, it's so done," or the Mozart or the Bach, and then

you hear them and you're like, "that's why." It's just great. And one of my big joys, being here this year, is I've gotten to hear so much of it. I've gotten to hear so much that I had forgotten how good it was. I just hadn't heard it in a while, up close and personal. And the thing about being Dean, people are like, "oh my god, your job is so difficult, because you have all these obligations, you have to go to all these concerts." I'm like, "wait a minute, I don't have to, I get to go to all these concerts."

This has been great, to be in Portland where there is the Portland Baroque, and the

Symphony, all these wonderful groups that turn in these wonderful, fantastic, phenomenal, recording-quality performances each and every time. I mean, how great is that?

I can go downstairs in any direction and find something really worthy going on. I know that's not unique, and I know there are music schools all over this country where the Dean can do exactly what I do, and find great music being played or sung. But that doesn't make it any less special.

Subito: What are some that have struck you this last year? You mentioned pieces you maybe haven't heard in a while that you appreciated anew.

Bynum: One of my first experiences was when I was here, when I got the position—no, before that. I'll take you back almost a year ago today. I came on the 10th or 9th of March to interview for this position. And I didn't know much about Portland, except I had been here before.

I'm a runner. I came here in 2009 and ran the Portland Marathon with some friends, and we spent a few days out here because you don't just come this far and run and then go home. So we hung out for a few days and explored the city. And what I saw, I fell in love with. I said out loud to one of them, "Ok, Portland is on the bucket list. If I ever get the opportunity to move here, I am going to seriously consider it."

And I put it out into the universe because one of those very friends took me up on it. He happened to be looking at a position that he thought I would be interested in. I looked at it and it didn't take any more than a quick [tap tap] to send my resume and see what happens. And sure enough I got a hit, and then more interest precipitated a visit here, and I still didn't know much about this area, except I liked the city. I didn't know much about PSU, except what I had heard. The first thing I checked when the position announcement came was if they had a music program, for one, and what it was like.

And I found all of that out, that they had an opera program and graduate degrees, so it was all cool from there and I figured I'd learn the rest in time.

So I got here for the interview and fell in love with the campus again. I had remembered from my running days, running down the Park Blocks I came to this building where it was just booming, with all kinds of wonderful music going on. Looking at the music department's web page, I saw that they had a performance of Schubert's *Die Winterreise* scheduled for the time I was going to be there. And I thought "Oh, they're doing *Winterreise*! One of my favorite pieces! Oh my word." And I'm a tenor, and tenors don't even sing *Winterreise*, but it is still a wonderful piece. I love listening to *Winterreise*. My teacher, when I was in Berlin in 1990, was Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. He did *Winterreise* several times while I was there. One time he actually did half of it and told everyone he didn't feel good and was going home. And he left. I think that was the first time I had ever seen a singer leave his own concert. But I digress.

So, I mentioned while I was here, I read on your website you're doing *Winterreise*, which happens to be one of my favorite pieces. I sat in this very room, and Suzanne Gray heard me say it, and she set out getting a ticket. She said, "if you would like to go see it, you'll be done for the day, I know you'll be tired and you're probably just being nice, but I arranged for a ticket if you want to go." And I said of course! I was having dinner at South Park restaurant with the Provost, and I told her, "if we finish in time, I'd like to go and see this concert." She was very gracious and very kind and said, "well it's time for you to go if you really want to go." And she pointed me in the right direction, because I still didn't know the area very well, and I came to the concert, and there stood, as I sat down, Harry Baechtel, who I did not know. And it was one of those multimedia productions, with photography in

the back. I fell in love again with that piece of music because he sang it so beautifully.

I was like, ok. This is the place. They've got a baritone on that faculty who is amazing, and the faculty sings this kind of stuff. And when I came back after I got the job, I had read that the opera company—the Portland State Undergraduate Opera program—was doing Puccini. One of the things that impressed me so about PSU is that they had a developed opera program with mostly undergraduate students in it who were doing extremely well. That is unheard of in almost every school in the country. Most schools in this country—the Julliards, the Cincinnati, the Indianas, you name them—those schools with those incredible programs for singers are for graduate students. You have incredible undergrads in those programs who then grow up to be graduate students in those incredible roles, but as an undergraduate student, you live in the shadows. You don't get to do what these graduate students get to do. So to have an opera program this mature for undergraduate students where they get to have this lab experience, this professional experience with an orchestra and staging and the whole ball of wax just blew my mind. So I said, I got to come and see how they're handling all of this.

And I made it a point to come back. I had to do some board things when I officially got the position. I needed to look for a house. So I scheduled all that around the time they were doing the opera here and I came and got to see those productions. And they were phenomenal. And I lucked out because I came during the second week when the orchestra was cooking.

It's been a wonderful ride from that moment on. I've seen other professionals perform. Chuck Dillard is phenomenal. Anytime he is performing anywhere, I look for that. Also, Susan Chan. Amazing. I got the opportunity to perform with Karen Strand just recently, the oboist. I happened to mention I loved the oboe. If I had

been an instrumentalist, I would have learned to play the oboe. I think it is the sweetest most beautiful sound in the whole wide world. A very close contender for that disc five—except it is so pedestrian that I would be ashamed to admit it—would be Vivaldi's *Gloria*. It's a glorious piece of music, but one of the reasons it is such a glorious piece of music is because of the aria with the oboe obbligato. It tears my heart out.

So Karen heard me say that out loud when I was meeting everybody and she remembered it and invited me to go to her recital recently. It was a lovely experience.

One of the coolest things I've seen since I've been here has been the masterclasses that our own Carl Halvorson has done. I went to his Lieder masterclasses, thinking, you know, I'm a Lieder man. I lived in Berlin, I've sung every Schubert Lied that tenors sing. And I went and heard Lawrence Brownlee this week just to see how well he did *Dichterliebe*, because that is one of my signature pieces, and in true tenor fashion I ripped him a new one! Because you know, I know the piece so well. He's got a voice I can't even compete with, but he had someone in the audience listening to him with a very critical ear.

I'm being a little facetious because he didn't need me to be kind to him. He did a marvelous job, but I listened very intently and with a critical ear for what I could learn—and also for what I could share if the opportunity presented itself. I fashion myself an expert in German Lieder because that's an area I've really carved out for myself in my career. I found myself in that world of a recitalist and then a specialist in German art song. And so I was quite surprised to come here and sit in on a masterclass, by a professor, that was as fresh and lively as I could ever have given.

And the students learned so much. That's the big kicker for me. I learned something from that masterclass, from him and how he related to the students, and his own perspective and his own eye.

Subito: Did you make it to Portland Opera's *Winterreise*?

Bynum: Oh, yes!

Subito: What did you think of that one?

Bynum: I thought that the performer, the use of his voice, was marvelous. The color that man had! It was another multimedia production, where you have a bunch of stuff going on behind that I found distracting. But the production, the performance itself, the singer—spot on. Beautiful diction, wonderful interpretation, and the colors he added to the pieces. He gave them a uniqueness that I would say rivals what I learned at the feet of Dieskau. I don't throw that out very lightly or easily, but I thought he was that prepared.

Subito: What did you think of the accompanist being far away, out of sight?

Bynum: Where I was sitting, he was not out of sight. I could see him, if I looked. But my sightlines were on the singer and what he was doing. He worked the stage. He did it as sort of a dramatic reading, and I don't know how I feel about that. The dinosaur in me says "he should have stood still." But there was something there. I think the piano is such an indispensable and important partner in that work, that the communication between those two artists has to almost be telepathic. I can't figure out how you can create that type of relationship that works with your collaborator—your pianist—unless he is there, and unless he is close, or she.

I would not have done that. Simply because I don't know if I could have pulled it off. And obviously, there is a way to do it. You do the work and you do it long enough with the same collaborator; you can think each other's thoughts and complete each other's sentences and have that telepathic relationship—even if you are not standing right here at the bend of the piano. So obviously it can be done. And so, I didn't let that worry me so much. I probably could have. And

had it not worked so well, I probably would have.

Subito: Was there a specific developmental moment that brought you into music, that made you think this is something you could do all the time? Was there a concert or a recording in particular that was especially illuminating?

Bynum: Yes. There are a couple of those moments. The moment I look back on now, I was 4-5 years old. My mother and father are lovers of music. Neither is a musician by profession. My mother loves singing in the church choir. She grew up singing in the church choir. She grew up loving music, and all of her children love music. My own brothers and sisters were musicians—not by profession, again, but they love music.

We all sang as children. My father was a marvelous singer, absolutely marvelous. Gorgeous baritone. My mother says the marriage was preserved because he was able to wear her down with singing. He had one of these mellow Brook Benton-type voices that charms the birds out of a tree. And he would sing at church every now and then—probably when he got in trouble and needed to get out of the dog house he would offer to sing at church.

I remember him singing this hymn in church; he practiced it at home and sang it in church. It was "His eye is on the sparrow," and I remember him singing it, and singing it myself, and learning what I considered the words. When you're four years old you mimic sounds, and the words I put with it were probably not the exact words, but close. I remember sitting there that Sunday morning he decided to sing that in church, and not long after that, when I was sitting in church and my mother was sitting in the choir stand—so she could get to me in time—I decided I wanted to sing a solo, like my daddy does.

I went up to the organist and I said, "I wanna sing," and my mother saw that happening, so she tried to intercept me, but she couldn't get to

me quick enough. She said, "Baby, no, you go sit down," and the organist—I had already spelled out what I wanted to do—the organist said, "Ruth! You let that boy sing!"

She grabbed me and set me up on the organist bench beside her. Stood me there and she began to play. And I belted "His eye is on the sparrow" extemporaneously in church that Sunday morning, to my mother's immense embarrassment. And of course, I was a hit, this child singing in church. And a star was born! I got my taste of stardom and adoring fans. As they say, the rest is history.

We had a lot of music in our house, all kinds of music. I remember coming home from school, hearing people like Beverly Sills and Robert Merrill. There were talk shows during the daytime, and they would have these singers

was a nurse. Every year of my life that I have any recollection of Christmas—any recollection—every year of my life, no matter what I asked for, sitting on top of whatever it was I asked for was a doctor's kit.

So you can imagine it became quite a surprise and, I would say, even a bit of a disappointment to my dad. Because he did, at one point, say, "but why you want to do that? Sing! Boy, you have a gorgeous voice, you obviously have a love for it. Sing, take lessons, take piano lessons, no one can stop you from doing that. No one can take that away from you. Be a doctor. Go to medical school. No one is going to keep a doctor from singing."

It must have done his heart a world of good when I announced I was going to go to the University of North Carolina. I had applied

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on. I remember coming in, putting my books down from school, about to do my homework, and there would be Beverly Sills in the middle of something. She would sing "Una voce poco fa," and at the time I didn't know what it was, but it stopped me in my tracks every single time. I had to stop and stand there until they were done. And so, even without knowing it, those were the moments I knew this was something I had to do. And needed to do. And this was not something my mother and father encouraged in me. They didn't discourage it, it was just there.

Quite honestly, if my mom and dad had had their way, I would have gone to medical school. My dad studied child psychology and my mother

to Brevard in North Carolina. I had applied to Juilliard and Oberlin, and I had applied to other places that were just for the performing arts, and he didn't stand in my way of that. And I applied to the University of NC Chapel Hill, because if you're a young student, that's the school. And when I decided that's where I was going to go, he was elated. Because they have an incredible medical school. And he thought...

Subito: Right, as long as he's there, then maybe...

Bynum: ... he'll take some science courses and then he'll—it never happened. And he was perfectly fine with it. He came to my recital, Junior and Senior, and was as proud as a peacock. Both my parents were. As I tell my own students, "If

this isn't something you wake up needing to do every day, if this is something you can be talked out of, be talked out of it. Because it is much too hard, much too difficult and demanding and competitive a field for you to not be all in."

Subito: That sounds right.

Bynum: You have to be all in. Or you will be full of disappointment and regret the whole time. I hear students saying, "Well, I'm going to get this degree and that degree to fall back on." Then fall back. Because this is very, very difficult. And I never looked back.

I have a student in New York right now. He will make it one day. He's not going to stop. Someone is going to let that boy in somewhere to sing, and he is great, he is wonderful. He has the chops and he has the will. It's just a matter of time. Truly. Someone is going to have to hear him or he is going to worry all New York to death.

But you have to have that, that kind of drive and that type of determination to make it. If you want to be a singer, if you want to be a performer, then you have to go where you can do that. That is one of the lessons young singers and young performers have to learn: to put themselves out there and dedicate themselves. To put themselves out there for their craft.

The reality of it is, you have to be in a city that can support you in what you do. Because people in your hometown love you to death, but they're not going to pay \$100 a ticket to see you. They're not. You get to sing for free there. And they'll love you and they'll clap and cheer, but they're not going to pay \$100 to see you. So you gotta go to where someone will.

Subito: It has to be the right city.

Bynum: It has got to be the right city, you're absolutely right. You have to go to the right city that supports artists. And you have got to be prepared. You know? A professional career is where luck meets preparation.

Subito: "Where luck meets preparation." A good motto.

Bynum: It's a tough life, but it is one that is incredibly fulfilling. That's a thing that has fueled me all these years, to watch students who have that fire burning in them, or to awaken it in others. Who know there is something there but don't know what it is. To help them prepare themselves.

One of the things I had to get over: I have left some of the most incredibly talented, some of the most talented people in the world right there in Albany, Georgia, who are amazingly gifted singers. I mean, blow you away. There is one woman who comes to mind immediately, she was a contralto—a bass. This woman could sing lower than I could. And I mean gorgeous, incredible instrument. But she had absolutely no work ethic. She had absolutely no real sense of the talent that was in her body, and she was her own worst enemy because she feared her own success. So she sabotaged it at every juncture, and I could not break through that. And it breaks my heart even to think about it today.

Subito: How do you break past that?

Bynum: You can't. You can't unless you can. Some students let you in, but some never do. So many people had a hold of that young lady. She was smart and intelligent and did well in school despite a very non-supportive background in terms of her education, and she had this incredible voice, even in high school. I noticed it in high school, which is why I recruited her. I would get her on this path, but inevitably something in her would say, "you may succeed, so you got to do something." She'd throw some roadblock in her way, she'd disappear for months at a time, or her mother would go into a tailspin and, "I have to work, or I have to do this," a thousand excuses why she couldn't focus on being in school. And she tried at it many, many times until she gave up.

What I love about this environment, is that when I watch Christine work, I watch Chuck work, they don't put up with that. You got to put in the work. And the students, they buy into that. They understand that. So that's not an issue here. The issue is getting from here to here and being the best you can be. And I think this is a great environment for that.

I can't claim this saying because it was told to me: "You have to rise before you can shine."

Subito: Something a lot of students struggle with, at this school, is too many things. There are so many opportunities. So many things we could be doing, or should be doing.

Bynum: Well, there are a lot of distractions, unless you're at a conservatory. Even there, there are distractions, especially if you're very good. Because this friend wants you to perform in this

bid, you're still a student and you've got homework to do.

I've been there. Oh my god, it can get overwhelming. With an institution like Portland State, even though you do have a supportive community here at the College of the Arts, there are other pulls that can take your attention. Students have varying interests. Nowadays, I don't know how anyone does it. Your generation and younger, you grow up with so many opportunities and so many interests and so many ways to go. How does anyone make these decisions?

Subito: We all walk around with chronic decision fatigue.

Bynum: Yeah! So, I absolutely do get that. This world is full of distractions. And musicians have to sacrifice. Those great musicians, the violinists

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chamber piece, and this friend wants you to do a quartet or duet. One of the things we are called to do early on is not only discernment but to budget our time and learn to say, "no." Because, if you happen to be dependable, and a good reader, and a thorough musician where you learn what you need to learn, and you're a collaborative musician, everyone is going to want you. Then what you have to learn to do is pick and choose, so you don't get overwhelmed. So you're not in ten choruses and three ensembles and this and that and no life and you wake up and you have four performances and you're trying to manage a schedule, and then heaven for-

and pianists who give up childhoods to commit to those instruments early on. Fortunately, I've known singers who discovered their talent—and go on to great careers—who discovered it as late as college.

Subito: Tony Arnold was here recently, and that's what happened with her. She was a conductor first and then, bam, it's time to be a soprano. She said the singer had to catch up with the musician.

Bynum: But with some instruments, you don't have that luxury. And even with those who come into it late, there is a sacrifice of time that has to go into that in order to be successful. And it's

hard to block out this world, especially if you're a social human being. I get it. I give all respect and props to students who are focused enough in this world to hone in on music as a career path and stick to it. Goodness me. That's incredible.

Subito: I wanted to ask what you're excited about here? What plans do you have for us?



Photo: Chad Lanning

Bynum: I can't tell you all my secrets! 'Cause I got some! Some I've said out loud and some I haven't shared. I said this earlier, when people ask me about my vision and "where do you plan on taking the College of the Arts?"

First of all, the College of the Arts at PSU was just fine before I got here. This was not a community of individuals who had their heads down on their desk before I got here. When I got here, they had ideas in all the schools. I think where I fit in is hearing those dreams, hearing what they have to say, hearing those aspirations, helping them shape a vision as a whole college, one that meets the individual needs of the school but one that is also collaborative and

encourages even more collaboration.

To provide, to be a thought leader. To provide the opportunity for my colleagues in the School of Music to dream beyond the here and now, to dream what they would like to become.

Is this it? Having a very good program in instrumental music and an excellent program in voice, does that float your boat? Is that enough? Having some grad programs, is that enough? Dare you dream to terminal performance degrees? Are there others? Let's dream. We don't want to have a doctorate degree just because it is prestigious. That's a waste of time. But having a doctorate degree because there is a demand for it, and because it energizes the faculty around heightened levels of inquiry and study and pedagogy, I'm all cool with that.

And you're in an environment for that. One of my challenges, because it is a pinnacle of frustration, is that I have come to PSU and found that the College of the Arts is one of the best I've seen anywhere. But I had to discover it. I didn't know it was here. And I'm discovering that people who live next door to you don't know that. People in Portland for god's sake. A very cultured, vibrant community. PSU is great and wonderful and this program is great and wonderful, but we need to be able to reach out to the community in very reciprocal ways, to celebrate that greatness, not to set ourselves aloft.

One of the other things I've discovered—there is artistic and cultural excellence in various communities. Portland's ethnic communities celebrate themselves in very impressive ways that PSU is not connected to. So those are things I think about in the places I have found. I would like, as the Dean, to really expose the College of the Arts more, and more to the community at large, and to connect us with our community partners. 🍷

Syncretism and Universality in Language and Music:

ESPERANTO IN LOU HARRISON'S *LA KORO SUTRO*

Christina Ebersohl

Portland-born Lou Silver Harrison (1917-2003) was a modernist composer, music journalist, poet, painter, and Esperantist whose works often married Eastern compositional techniques and instruments with Western tonality and structure. His *La Koro Sutro* (The Heart Sutra)—composed in 1971 for mixed choir, percussion, organ, and harp—integrates American gamelan with an Esperanto translation of the popular Buddhist text. My research analyzes *La Koro Sutro* in reference to Eastern-Western tonal syncretism, historical textual inference, and Esperanto construction, syntax, and inflection. I hypothesize that, due to Harrison's strong philosophical belief in nonviolence and universal inclusion, the impact of Esperanto can be discerned beyond the text and inferred from the musical setting.

L.L.Zamenhof created Esperanto in 1887 as a simple, planned language that could be learned with minimal effort and complexity, attempting to make it as accessible as possible. Because it is an artificial language, it originated with written, proposed rules rather than naturally-developing oral traditions; contradictions, exceptions, and informal slang are therefore rarer than in natural languages. This leads to a

consistency in syntax and meter that lends itself well to analysis and scansion.

For example, Esperanto only has one definite article, *la*, used for all genders, cases, and numbers. Nouns in Esperanto have the ending -o for the singular form and -j (pronounced like y) for the plural, while all adjectives end in -a. Compare the English article *the*, which does not change to accommodate number, and the gendered articles of Romance languages such as Spanish and Italian.

As an agglutinative language, Esperanto uses stems and affixes, or morphemes, to modify root words and denote plurality, tense, and other meanings. Other grammatical rules essential to scansion in *La Koro Sutro* involve the pronunciation of the language: the accent, or stress, of any word is fixed to the next-to-last syllable, with no exceptions. Thus, the final vowel of any noun or article can be dropped and replaced by an apostrophe without any effect on the word's stress. All of this follows Christopher Zervic's *The 16 Rules of Esperanto Compared With English*, published by Esperanto Society of Chicago.

La Koro Sutro is the fourth in a series entitled *Peace Pieces* and was conceived in the

early 1960s during one of Harrison's trips to Asia. In 1969, he commissioned a translation of the Buddhist *Heart Sutra* from Esperantist Bruce Kennedy. The *Heart Sutra* is especially beloved in the Mahayana Buddhist religious tradition, where it has been recited daily by millions of devout Buddhists since the time of Christ. *Sutra* is a Sanskrit word meaning "thread"—the Buddha's words strung together in a dialogue to serve as a sermon.

Harrison's strong beliefs regarding pacifism and brotherhood are well-documented in biographies and interviews with friends and colleagues. Translating the *Heart Sutra* into Esperanto allowed Harrison to create a melodic and harmonic atmosphere matched to the musical nature of the language as well as the sutra's message. With his background in (and appetite for) Eastern culture and music, Harrison imbued *La Koro Sutro* with a syncretic idiom, using pentatonic scales derived from a Western D major tonality, applying familiar Western harmonies (triads and tertian chords) to penultimate moments in an otherwise quartal harmonic texture, and using recurring rhythmic and melodic figures borrowed from Indian music.

The text reflects Buddhist teachings about non-permanence and the attainment of Nirvana. Harrison communicated these ideas by

composing a palindrome, focusing the center on the message: "form is empty," and stripping down the music to a minimum while creating a feeling of weightlessness.

Brotherhood and universality appear in *La Koro Sutro* with Esperanto's influence on melodic construction. Harrison treated his musical materials ("melodicles") like Esperanto's agglutinative word formations, where suffixes and affixes are added to root words with minimal alterations to the foundation. Treating his melodicles the same way, Harrison repeats a three- or four-note motive throughout each stanza ("paragrafo"), adding small suffixes of two or three notes. Harrison uses fifths to mimic the language's pure vowel sounds, warming the sound and creating a piercing quality. The stressed syllables in the Esperanto text—always the second-to-last syllable—are rhythmically elongated to reflect the musical character of the language's rhythm and meter.

It is clear that Harrison intentionally crafted every detail of his composition as a vehicle for his beliefs. His powerful message will live on through *La Koro Sutro* and continue to spread the love and universality that he so badly wanted the world to have. ♪

This article is an excerpt from a longer academic paper of the same title.



[14]

6a Paragrafo

Ĉiuj Budhoj triepokdevenaj,
la fidintaj al la
Saĝo Pluirinta,
plenvekiĝas al la Plej Perfekta Ilumino.

[15]

7a Paragrafo

Sciu, do: la Saĝo Pluirinta estas eminenta
mantra,
grandascia mantra, la plej alta mantra,
senkompara mantra,
mildigil' de ĉia suferado, senfalsaĉa vero!
Per la Saĝo Pluirinta jen la mantra
eldiriĝas:

Sixth Paragraph

All the Buddhas of the three world-ages,
having placed their faith in
Transcendental Wisdom,
full awake are they to Perfect Great Illumination.

Seventh Paragraph

Know then this: the Transcendental Wisdom is a
mantram of true greatness,
mantram of great knowledge, yea the utmost
mantram, mantram without equal,
remedy for every ill arising, truth, no deviation!
By the Transcendental Wisdom has the mantram
been delivered:

Mixing Melodicism with Experimentation:

LOU HARRISON AND THE CLASSICAL GUITAR

Adam Brooker

In the world of twentieth-century art music, Lou Harrison is recognized as a champion of short, melodic works emphasizing compositional clarity. One might think this would make the composer naturally inclined to write for classical guitar, as the instrument experienced a renaissance led by virtuoso Andrés Segovia during Harrison's early career, but Harrison only composed two works for the solo classical guitar: *Serenade for Frank Wigglesworth* in 1952 and *Serenade for Guitar and Optional Percussion* in 1978. (Harrison did compose a final piece for solo guitar, *Scenes from Nek Chand*, in 2002; it was written not for the traditional nylon-stringed classical guitar, but for a specially designed steel-string resonator guitar).

These two compositions from wildly different artistic periods provide insight into some of the processes he explored during his long and illustrious career.

Serenade for Frank Wigglesworth (1952)

The better-known of the two is *Serenade for Frank Wigglesworth*, or *Serenado por Gitaro*¹, or simply *Serenade*. Harrison included it in a let-

ter to fellow composer Wigglesworth, and it was not initially intended for publication. It is an excellent example of an early "voluntary" composition, a term Harrison coined to designate works he wrote for pleasure or the enjoyment of his friends. The title *Serenado por Gitaro* is Esperanto [see our article on Esperanto in Harrison's *La Koro Sutro* on page 37]. This one-off composition found its way to the public and "guitarists circulated photocopies of the piece in Harrison's beautiful calligraphy"² for years before it was officially released by publication.

It is a deceptively simple piece. The published score contains only one page, its form is rounded binary, and its pitch content is a boisterous G Ionian mode from which it never strays. To facilitate the mode, Harrison asks for the guitar's A string to be tuned down a whole step to G.

Because *Serenado* is written without meter, some of the most crucial insights lie in how Harrison structures the rhythmic elements of his melodic fragments. The A section contains two phrases of varying lengths, the first phrase (Example 1) containing thirty-eight notes, the second phrase forty-six. These phrases are fur-

EXAMPLE 1 Lou Harrison, *Serenade for Frank Wigglesworth*

opening phrase

ther subdivided into groupings of two, three, or four eighth notes. Despite these clear groupings, performers generally interpret the A section in a triple meter. Judging by the written score, this appears to be against Harrison's intentions, as he clearly made a distinction in how the rhythms are notated.

Consider the first two groupings of three eighth notes (Example 1). Many guitarists play the first note of the second grouping as a pick-up into the second note of that group, which makes the two fragments sound like a measure of 3/4. The notation, however, calls for a slight emphasis on the first note of each grouping, so as to maintain the rollicking character of the work. It is simply a matter of switching from simple to compound and back again while remaining in duple meter.

Section B, marked *Ritmico*, consists of four short phrases. It begins with a descending linear line from G to D followed by a forceful chord on the three lowest strings of the guitar, recalling the large gongs of the gamelan orchestra. In gamelan music, large gongs act as phrase delineators by accenting the last beat in each phrase—unlike most European music, in which emphasis is normally placed on the beginnings

of phrases. [for more on Harrison's relationship with gamelan music, see our analysis of his *Double Concerto* on page 42]

The last two phrases are simple developments of the first two: phrase three combines phrase one's melody with phrase two's chords, and the final phrase expands phrase three's range to an octave. *Serenado* proves to be a simple piece of music; its merits lie in its ability to charm without confounding, and there are several musical devices the composer employs to give the work a greater sense of depth and adventure.

This *Serenado* was not intended to be played in concert tuning. Guitarists with adjustable frets are instructed to move them into intense, or syntonon, tuning,³ but because most guitarists are not able to move their frets, it is more common to hear it in standard equal temperament. In 1952 the tuning had been a mere suggestion, but as Harrison's interest in other tunings increased the guitar became a less likely candidate for new works.

Serenade for Guitar: With Optional Percussion (1978)

Harrison's second piece for solo guitar, *Serenade*, is a five-movement suite consisting

of: "Round," "Air," "Infinite Canon," "Usul," and "Sonata." It was originally intended as the first in a collection of five solo guitar suites, which Harrison conceived when the Luthier Tom Stone showed him designs for a guitar with interchangeable fingerboards.⁴ The new design would allow Harrison to specify the ratios for his preferred just-intoned modes, and he planned to compose each of the five suites in a different tuning. In the end, he completed only this *Serenade*, having grown tired of Stone's constant delays in delivering the fretboards. He added an optional percussion part and published the suite in 1988.⁵

All five movements of *Serenade* use the same octatonic scale: D, Eb, F, F#, G#, A, B, C. The pitch material remains in this scale, with two notable exceptions in "Air" (Example 2) and "Infinite Canon" (Example 3). In "Air," Harrison strays from the scale in order to fill the inner voices with fifths during static moments. In "Infinite Canon" the upper voice enters second and uses the same scale transposed up a fifth. This creates an intriguing counterpoint with charming and clangorous dissonances throughout.

Harrison's suite sticks to a mostly conservative rhythmic structure. "Round" oscillates between 6/8 and 3/4 with only one measure of 3/8, "Air" varies between 2/4 and 3/4, and "Infinite Canon" and "Sonata" are solely in 2/4. The most interesting rhythmic pattern comes in "Usul," in which Harrison mimics traditional Turkish rhythms⁶ with a pattern alternating 3/4, 2/4, 4/4, and back to 2/4. The movement's subtitle, "Little Homage to Sinan," pays tribute to Mimar Sinan,⁷ a Turkish architect who designed the Suleiman Mosque in Istanbul.

Like much of Lou Harrison's work, these classical guitar pieces deftly mix melodicism with experimentation in a way that was entirely

EXAMPLE 2 *Serenade for Guitar: With Optional Percussion*

"Air" | m. 14



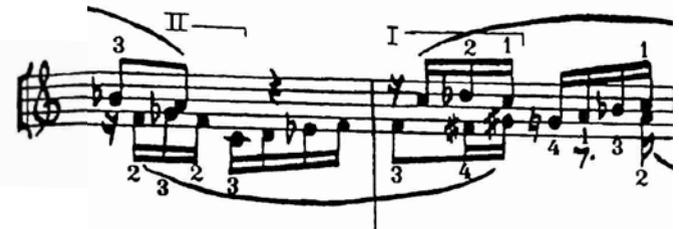
unique in their time. The inherent charm of these compositions makes them a vital component of Harrison's output and of modern classical guitar repertoire as a whole. Those interested in modern compositional techniques would be well advised to engage with these works for the jewels of ideas lying just below the surface. ♪

NOTES

- 1 Lou Harrison, *The Lou Harrison Guitar Book*, ed. David Tanenbaum (Bryn Mawr: Columbia Music Co., 1994), 2.
- 2 David Tanenbaum, Liner notes for *Serenade*, 2003, New Albion Records, 2003, CD.
- 3 Lou Harrison, *The Lou Harrison Guitar Book*, 2.
- 4 Bill Alves and Brett Campbell, *Lou Harrison: American Musical Maverick* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 343.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 462.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 344.
- 7 *Ibid.*

EXAMPLE 3 *Serenade for Guitar: With Optional Percussion*

"Infinite Canon" | mm. 3-4



Compositional Practice as Expression of Cultural Hybridity

IN LOU HARRISON'S *DOUBLE CONCERTO
FOR VIOLIN, CELLO, AND JAVANESE GAMELAN*

Matthew Neil Andrews

Modern artists face a creative dilemma: styles and traditions from around the world are available to all, but in the post-colonial era it can be difficult to discern the propriety of artistic borrowings. I propose that cultural hybridity, defined as genuine investment in another artistic culture's traditions and respect for its practitioners, can provide an Ariadne's thread to guide the interculturally sensitive artist through the labyrinth of world musics.

Lou Harrison's long relationship with Indonesian gamelan music (*karawitan*) provides an enlightening example. From his initial exposure to Asian music all through his decades of intensive study and instrument-building, Harrison's development as a composer of multicultural music demonstrates some key aspects of cultural hybridity: curiosity, respect, discipline, and devotion. Harrison's compositions for gamelan and Western instruments show the composer at his most hybrid.

This brief analysis of his *Double Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Javanese Gamelan* aims to show how one particular non-Western tradition can be combined with Western instruments to create a work of intercultural beauty, respectful to both musical traditions and to the artists who practice them.

Harrison was cynical about people calling him an East-West composer. In 1992, he told Richard Kostelanetz: [a]ll they are saying is that I live in California and know Asian music. I should say my knowledge is of Korean classic court music and of Chinese late chamber music and of Javanese court and folk music."¹ He was well aware of the living, evolving nature of even the oldest traditions, and had a special love for the gamelan orchestra, telling Kostelanetz:

As far as I'm concerned, the gamelan is probably the most important and the most beautiful of the orchestral traditions on the planet, there being very few: the Sino-Javanese, the northwest Asian

one,² and the Southeast Asian one. Of that, the blossom is the central Javanese gamelan, which is sensuously the most beautiful music on the planet and intellectually the most exciting.³

Given the problematic nature of "East-West," a better word might be *hybrid*, a term Harrison picked up from his teacher Henry Cowell, whom he quoted in his *Music Primer*: "don't underrate hybrid musics because *that's all there is*."⁴

Harrison's approach to hybrid musics evolved over the course of his career. His earliest musical experiences show a total embrace of the novel and unfamiliar, as he enthusiastically latched onto whatever caught his interest. Many early enthusiasms, such as Korean, Chinese, and Indonesian music, stayed with him for decades following first contact, waiting for the right conditions in which to bloom and ripen.

Having heard gamelan in the 1930s on his roommate's Indonesian records and at the 1939 Golden Gate Exposition, Harrison did not specifically reference gamelan until 1951's *Suite for Violin, Piano, and Small Orchestra*. Two of the *Suite's* six movements are titled "First Gamelan" and "Second Gamelan," using tack-pianos and celesta to approximate the gamelan's metallophones. In interviews with biographers Leta Miller and Fredric Lieberman, Harrison described the features of this work as "aural imitations of the generalized sounds of gamelan" in which he "simply selected from...limited research those elements he found attractive," a habit he described as "musical tourism." His 1961 *Concerto in Slendro* was much the same in this regard, intonational considerations notwithstanding.

In the early 1970s, Harrison and his partner William Colvig built their first percussion orchestra, a set of just-intoned aluminum instruments, initially dubbed "American Gamelan" and later renamed "Old Granddad." The set was used in

1974's *Suite for Violin and American Gamelan*, again with little reference to Indonesian music.

Up to this point, Harrison had explored his initial curiosity, invested time in study and self-education on the subject, and had even devoted himself to building gamelan-inspired instruments. However, he still had not formally studied gamelan in any traditional sense. This changed following the 1975 Berkeley World Music Festival when Harrison met and began studying with Javanese composer-performer K.R.T. Wasitodiningrat (popularly known as Pak Cokro) and American gamelan expert and composer Jody Diamond. This period culminated in several works for gamelan and Western instruments, including the *Concerto for Piano with Javanese Gamelan* and the *Double Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Javanese Gamelan*.

The *Double Concerto* was commissioned by the Mirecourt Trio in 1981 and premiered at Mills College the following year. Harrison had been asked for a piano trio (violin, cello, piano) but found that his ears, so attuned to his just intonation preferences, were unwilling to compose for an equal-tempered piano. He wrote new violin and cello parts for two earlier gamelan pieces and added a middle movement for violin, cello, and drum. The *Double Concerto* is the first large-scale expression of Harrison's mature gamelan style, marking a turning point in his decades-long pursuit of sensual beauty complemented with intellectual excitement.

The work's three movements are "Ladrang Epikuros" (named for the Athenian philosopher), "Stampede" (an inside joke aimed at percussionist William Winant), and "Gending Hephaestus" (named for the Greek god of blacksmiths). "Epikuros" uses *laras pelog*, the Javanese gamelan's seven-tone scale, and "Hephaestus" uses *laras slendro*, a fairly typical anhemitonic pentatonic.

Neither scale is quite commensurate with Western scales. Harrison describes *slendro* as

“the one you would recognize as a kind of pentatonic,” while *pelog* is “minor sounding with small intervals and a complicated tuning system” and can be very roughly approximated as a minor scale with a raised fourth scale degree and a second scale degree hovering somewhere between natural and flat. The “Stampede” movement is entirely octatonic, treating the synthetic scale as a sort of compromise between *pelog* and *slendro*.

The most important point of comparison between Harrison’s *ladrang* and *gending* and their Indonesian inspirations is in his attention to—and reliance upon—the supporting and elaborating instruments. The drumming is done along traditional lines, and the performance notes even indicate which regional drum styles will work best with each section. Both “Epikuros” and “Hephaestus” have *balungan* (central melodies) which can be readily interpreted by the players, and although some phrases are unusual in structure (especially the implied triple meter in “Hephaestus” and the cross-rhythms created by the placement of rests in “Epikuros”), for the most part the elaborating *kembangan* figures can be calculated and performed by moderately experienced players.

Only one *kembangan* part is explicitly notated: the *bonang obligato* used in “Gending Hephaestus.” Even this is not unheard of in traditional *karawitan*, especially for unconventional

balungan. Although the part is unusual (and very difficult) it does make use of the *bonang*’s rows of pot gongs in ways that recall traditional *sekarang* (flowering) cadential figures.

The use of *bonang mipil* and *gendér cengkok* figures is especially important. *Mipil* and *cengkok* are types of *kembangan*, and in normal practice, they are ostinato patterns prefiguring important cadential tones, which therefore appear in these parts before they appear in the rest of the orchestra. In the *Double Concerto*, these anticipatory tones often create a degree of friction between the Western instruments and the gamelan. Such anticipations and frictions are all normal elements of gamelan: they weave the entire tapestry of sound together, embodying the essence of the metric end-weighting which is so central to the sound and structure of gamelan music.

In a 1986 interview with filmmaker Eric Martin, Harrison explains the guiding principle behind his cultural hybridity:

*I developed a motto of my own, which is, in order: cherish, conserve, consider, create. It seems to me that that’s a general course of any enthusiasm. First, you find something that you love, and you cherish it. Then, of course, if you love it you want to conserve it, save it. And then, in doing so, you consider it in all of its parts and aspects. And out of that you may be moved to create something.*⁵

In our encounters with the plurality of cultures and traditions available to us as twenty-first-century artists, may each of us be so moved. ♪

This article is an excerpt from a longer academic paper of the same title.

NOTES

- 1 Richard Kostelanetz and Lou Harrison, “A Conversation, in Eleven-Minus-One Parts, with Lou Harrison about Music/Theater,” *The Musical Quarterly* 76, no. 3 (Autumn 1992), 398.
- 2 Harrison’s term for Europe.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 400. Note Harrison’s appreciation for the gamelan’s sensual as well as intellectual qualities, an important point which has sometimes been overlooked.
- 4 Lou Harrison, *Lou Harrison’s Music Primer: Various Items About Music to 1970* (New York: C.F. Peters Corporation, 1971), 45.
- 5 Eric Marin, *Lou Harrison: “cherish, conserve, consider, create.”* Videocassette, FVM Media, 1987.

ITEM  **CHERISH,
CONSERVE, CONSIDER,
CREATE.**

A Tale to Warm the Heart and Stimulate the Mind

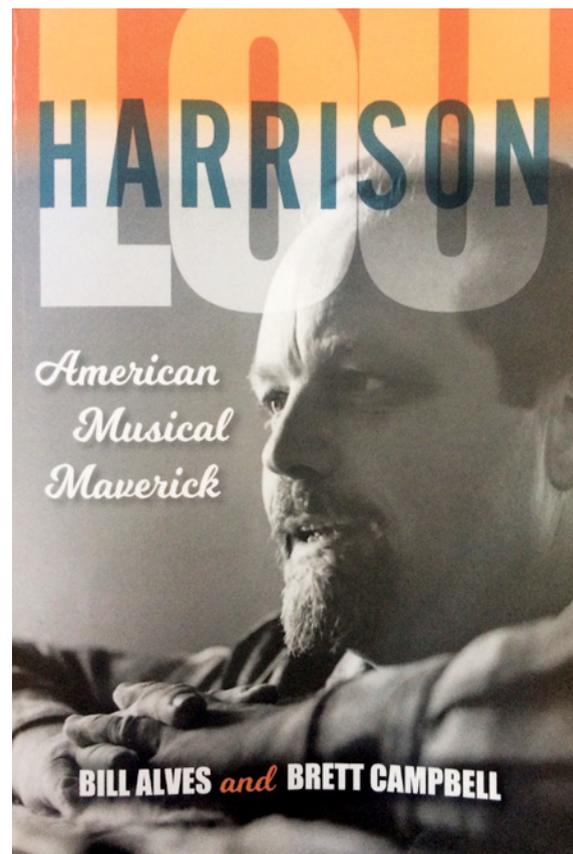
REVIEW OF *LOU HARRISON: AMERICAN MUSICAL MAVERICK*,

By Bill Alves and Brett Campbell, Indiana University Press, 2017

Adam Brooker (with commentary by Matthew Neil Andrews)

In their recent book *Lou Harrison: American Musical Maverick*, Bill Alves and Brett Campbell paint a nuanced picture of one of the twentieth century's most vital and interesting composers. Although he was considered an outsider for much of his professional career, Harrison has been steadily gaining recognition for his innovations in melody, alternative tuning systems, non-European musical traditions, and homemade instruments. *[plus Lou's music itself is great, and more listeners than ever are being exposed to its charms—Editor]* The combined efforts of composer Alves and journalist Campbell allow the story to unfold from both a theoretical and historical perspective.

One of the book's strongest aspects is the historical context in which it places Harrison. In early chapters, *Lou Harrison* reads almost like a text on American art music in the first half of the twentieth century. *[I frequently thought of Alex Ross' gripping, encyclopedic The Rest Is Noise]* Through Harrison's story, readers are presented with a portal into the world of the avant-garde circles in which he traveled, from his time under



the tutelage of pioneers and luminaries Henry Cowell, Aaron Copland, Charles Ives, Virgil Thomson, and Arnold Schoenberg to his interactions and collaborations with contemporaries Leonard Bernstein, John Cage, and Harry Partch. These early chapters are densely populated by the overlapping cosmopolitan circles of artists and activists in which Harrison traveled. *[many of whom were friends, lovers, artistic collaborators, or all three; the breadth of personality here is breathtaking, almost Byzantine]*

At times, reading these chapters can be as overwhelming as Harrison felt during his anxiety-ridden New York years, but at this point, the authors pull back—just as their subject did when he retreated into relative hermitage at Black Mountain College and later during his decades in rural Aptos, California. Upon this foundation, Alves and Campbell build the reader back up, as Harrison did in his personal and professional life. *[in Lou's case, it was with the help and support of his partner and collaborator Bill Colvig, and the book's heartfelt account of their long, beautiful relationship is one of its greatest merits]* On the whole the book reads as an enlightening and uplifting tale about the merits of perseverance and dedication to craft.

The only aspect of the historical portion of the book that could be said to fall flat is its framing of many of Lou Harrison's works. The music is all given appropriate historical and theoretical context, but the authors often interject hyperbolic terms regarding one or the other of Harrison's many compositions as either one of his greatest successes or one of his worst failures. Such framing lessens the impact of other major works we encounter later in the book; the reader has, by that point, a diminished frame of reference for what is important. But this is a small complaint in a thoroughly nuanced telling of Harrison's life story.

Musicologically speaking, *Lou Harrison* is a key primer for the uninitiated. The composer's

body of work is vast and encompasses a plethora of styles. Alves and Campbell have left none out, providing a guide to the many techniques Harrison incorporated into his oeuvre: modal and dissonant counterpoint, synthetic scales, free atonality and twelve-tone rows, motivic melodics, interval control methods, alternative tuning systems, homemade and unorthodox instruments, non-European approaches to melody, form, and rhythm, all alongside common Western classical techniques like fugues and sonata forms. *[I was especially impressed by how well Alves and Campbell present Harrison as an inheritor and curator of the entire classical tradition, from Scarlatti and Handel to Ives and Schoenberg]*

Part of the book's heft comes from its 138-page appendix, which includes a helpful glossary of musical terms, a superb index, extensive notes, and a detailed catalog of the hundreds of compositions Harrison produced in his lifetime. *[and a very useful appendix it is; more than once have I gone looking for information on a specific piece and found well more than I needed, all perfectly organized by year, category, and format, with concise analysis and, often as not, a charming and memorable quote]*

As we may gather from even this brief description, tackling Harrison's output from an analytical perspective is a monumental task. Alves provides illumination on many essential Harrison techniques without bringing the book's pace grinding to a halt; in most chapters he goes into detail on only one or two compositions, allowing for an in-depth examination of the genius of Harrison's work.

These analyses may not be for every reader. Readers with minimal musical education or without previous knowledge about Harrison's musical techniques may find the descriptions dense and hard to follow. *[although that glossary helps]* Dedicated readers will have no difficulty with these passages, and may even be inspired

to further research, but readers seeking a more straightforward historical account may be turned off. However, performers, musicologists, and composers interested in understanding Harrison's music and techniques will find the book a vital resource. *[my own copy is already well dog-eared and highlighted]*

To the casual fan or the obsessive follower, *Lou Harrison: American Musical Maverick*

provides an entertaining and informative glimpse into the life of a revolutionary in American art music. Alves and Campbell have woven a compelling narrative that will keep new music fans turning its pages. Though its size may be intimidating to some, it is well worth the read, and those who finish it will be rewarded with a tale to warm their hearts and stimulate their minds. ♪

Lou Harrison Recordings

FOUR GOOD ALBUMS FROM THE VAST ACREAGE

Matthew Neil Andrews

Getting into Lou Harrison's music can be like getting into Terry Pratchett's sprawling *Discworld* series—where do you start? Over the course of his seven-decade career Harrison composed hundreds of pieces, a vast acreage drastically varied in scope and instrumentation, and although only a fraction of it has been professionally recorded and released, that fraction still amounts to quite a lot of music.

Worse still, all too many of these recordings are "greatest hits" type albums, cobbling together a bit of percussion music and a slice of gamelan and a smidge of choral music, almost always the same several works, usually with no sense of coherence. Interested readers can (and should) find all those on the internet.

But there do exist several albums which hang together as complete, unified musical statements, the way albums are supposed to, and here are four of the best.

Abel–Steinberg–Winant Trio, *American Gamelan*, Choirs of UC Berkeley:

La Koro Sutro

NEW ALBION, 1988

This one was recorded in UC Berkeley's Hertz Hall on a November weekend in 1987. Combining the titular choral work (composed 1972) with the *Suite for Violin and American Gamelan* (composed 1974 with Richard Dee) and the *Varied Trio* (composed 1987), the recording offers a cohesive but—ahem—varied statement of the composer's mature style. David Abel shines on



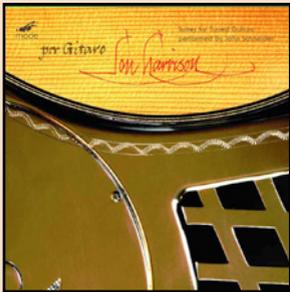
violin, performing on both the *Trio* and the *Suite*. Harrison and Colvig's aluminum instruments and the Berkeley choirs all sound magnificent. It's gorgeous from beginning to end, and it has a little of everything. This is the one Harrison disc I would take to that fabled island. [for more on *La Koro Sutro*, see Christina Ebersohl's article on page 37]

John Schneider:

Por Gitaro: Suites for Tuned Guitars

MODE RECORDS, 2008

Schneider spends part of his time directing an ensemble of replica Harry Partch instruments, so it's hardly surprising to hear him devoting an album to performing Harrison's guitar music (and several pieces adapted to guitar) in their intended intonations. Using the Switchboard system originally developed by Tom Stone, Schneider is able to swap out fingerboards and use a different tuning for each piece. Composer and Harrison biographer Bill Alves was kind enough to write up an extremely detailed explanation of it all, which is available online. The less mathematically inclined needn't worry, though: the music, recorded in the great hall of Harrison's straw-bale home in Joshua Tree, sounds amazing. [for more on Harrison's guitar music, see Adam Brooker's article on page 39]



Mirecourt Trio, Mills College Gamelan Ensemble:

Double Concerto & Piano Trio

MUSIC & ARTS, 1992

Combines smashing performances of Harrison's two works for the Mirecourt Trio: the *Double Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Javanese Gamelan* (in which the gamelan fills the piano's role) and the *Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano*. A ten-year gap separates the two compositions, and they make a nice contrast, the *Double Concerto's* grandeur matched by the *Trio's* intimacy. Both show off the composer's unique blend of profound emotion, exquisite melody, and playful good cheer. [for more on Harrison's *Double Concerto*, see our article on page 42]

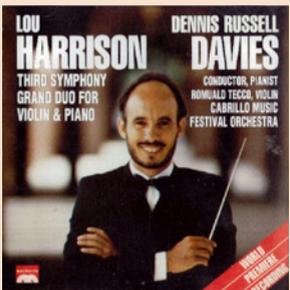
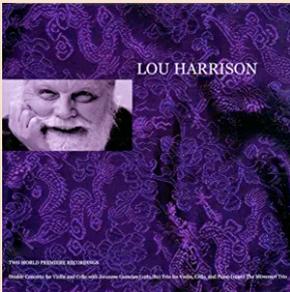
Dennis Russell Davies, Romuald Tecco,

Cabrillo Music Festival Orchestra:

Third Symphony / Grand Duo for Violin & Piano

MUSICMASTERS, 1991

Like the Mirecourt disc, this one combines a large-scale work with a smaller one. Davies, who commissioned both pieces, takes to the piano himself for 1988's *Grand Duo*, joining violinist Romuald Tecco for one of Harrison's finest chamber suites. The equally grand and glorious *Symphony*, composed in 1982, contrasts well. 🎵



The Space Between Us

ALBUM REVIEW

Alexis Deona (with commentary by Matthew Neil Andrews)

T

he Space Between Us, released in 2017, is the third album by chamber ensemble Akropolis Reed Quintet. The quintet—oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, and saxophone—hails from the University of Michigan and was featured as Chamber Music Northwest's Artists in Residence in 2016 [which is how the quirky quintet first came to our attention—Editor].

This collection starts with Jacob TV's *Jesus is Coming*, made up of pre-recorded speech layered on top of conventional chamber music. [in other words a typical *ter Veldhuis*] Four commissioned pieces follow: David Biedenbender's suite *Refraction*, Rob Deemer's *Gallimaufry*, Gregory Wanamaker's *The Space Between Us*, and John Steinmetz's *Sorrow and Celebration for Reed Quintet & Audience*. All five showcased the group's skillful, collaborative spirit, with sharp, energetic rhythms and modern textures.

I really enjoyed this album, as it's very different from the music we are used to hearing in music school. It was especially interesting to hear elements of various musical influences throughout the compositions. I was intrigued and curious as to how Biedenbender would execute his "Kyrie for Machaut and Pärt" in the second movement of *Refractions*. Guillaume de Machaut is generally regarded as the most important composer of the 14th century; Arvo Pärt is known for his medieval-inspired music, and is the most-performed living composer in the world. [measurably and rightly so]

Listening to it, I felt Biedenbender's tribute to these great composers demonstrated quite well the quintet's ability to blend and create an intimate atmosphere. I appreciated the effect of the "Kyrie's" imitative counterpoint, played so seamlessly between the different instruments. [when they played this one at CMNW, part of the group went out in the hallway for a bit of antiphony]



Overall, this is an album filled with very well-written pieces performed by incredibly talented musicians, and I would recommend it to anyone looking to dive deeper into modern wind chamber music. [plus it's a nice sounding album, not just a compendium of recent stuff but a real opus in its own right. I recommend listening to the whole thing, very loudly, in one sitting—or on a long walk] 🎧

David Ludwig's *Pangæa*

OVERVIEW—LISTENER'S GUIDE—INTERVIEW WITH THE COMPOSER

Matthew Neil Andrews and Charles Rose

I happened upon a delicious new chamber concerto earlier this year at a concert put on by Chamber Music Northwest, brain-child of world class clarinetist David Shifrin and Portland's greatest classical music festival. It hasn't been formally recorded yet, but if you feel inclined to plug yourself into the Matrix for twenty minutes of sublime music you can hear David Ludwig's *Pangæa*, premiered at the 2017 Bravo! Vail Music Festival by thirteen string players (three quartets plus double bass) and the legendary Anne-Marie McDermott on piano.

It's a strange piece, full of aleatory and extended techniques and nearly all of the 20th century's most fascinating musical developments (no serialism though). McDermott performed it right here in Portland State's Lincoln Performance Hall this January with a reduced string orchestra (an octet, per Shifrin's suggestion). I was there, and it blew my damn mind.

Pangæa is in two movements: "Panthalassa: The Ancient Sea," named for the primordial ocean out of which we all evolved, and "Pangæa: The Ancient Earth," named for the corresponding primordial mega-continent. Ludwig has studied composition with Danielpour, Higdon, Rorem, and Corigliano, and now teaches at Curtis Institute. He's a nice man with glasses

and an apparently encyclopedic understanding of 20th-century classical music, and most of his work has some socio-political element (his choral work *The New Colossus*, based on the Emma Lazarus poem, was written just after 9/11 and was later performed at Barack Obama's inauguration). *Pangæa* is no different, using a nearly comprehensive compendium of modernist compositional techniques to express an environmentally conscious mysticism and ask uncomfortable questions about the fragile Anthropocene epoch and ongoing sixth extinction.

The work stands on its own, though, as all good programmatic music must. My fellow PSU composer Charles Rose and I took a long look at Ludwig's score, and came up with this handy listening guide.

Three things to listen for in David Ludwig's *Pangæa*:

1. ASYNCHRONOUS ALEATORISM

Much of the concerto's intricate texture emerges from aleatoric and semi-aleatoric asynchronous processes, especially in "Panthalassa," the opening of which is marked "inchoate" (a nod to George Crumb's *Vox Balaenae*). At first this just means a whole lot of cascading glissandi, but these soon crystallize into ascending runs on

an acoustic scale (see below). Often these asynchronous patterns are internally quite precise, expanding via additive processes. Sometimes these are not aleatoric but precisely notated polymeters, and there are moments where the strings lock together for tightly synchronized patterns. Other times one instrument will echo another at the sixteenth or eighth note, as with the solo viola and piano near the beginning of "Pangæa" and the left-hand piano with basses and cellos near the beginning of "Panthalassa." Ludwig alternates drift and stasis with the deft touch of a well-educated 21st-century composer writing for highly skilled modern classical musicians.

2. MAJOR THIRDS, TRITONES, AND SYNTHETIC SCALES

The first sixteen measures of "Panthalassa" contain four notes (not counting the glissandi, which contain infinite notes). The opening C drone is ornamented with inversions around a simple pair of tritones a major third apart: C-F# and E-Bb (Example 1). These dyads remain when the acoustic scale (C-D-E-F#-G-A-Bb) starts showing up at measure 17, and tritone / major third relations color the entire piece. Massive triads on F# and C start cascading through the piano, slippery ostinati emerge on a six-tone scale built from alternating F major and B major triads (F-F#-A-B-C-D#, Example 2), and the second movement's passacaglia fills in its descending line (G-F-E-D-Db-C-B-Bb) with tritone neighbors of every other note (G-C#, E-Bb, Db-G, B-F).

One especially striking gesture recurs in the strings, the instruments gliding from one major triad to the next (Example 3) and crossing voices to spell out nominally consonant sonorities—which nevertheless shimmer with an uncanny sense of ambiguous tonality. This effect works, in part, because of the tritone relationships between these major chords.

EXAMPLE 1 David Ludwig, *Pangæa*, "Panthalassa"

tritones and major thirds, m. 11

EXAMPLE 2 David Ludwig, *Pangæa*, "Panthalassa"

two uses of paired F major and B major triads, mm. 47-48, mm. 90-93

EXAMPLE 3 David Ludwig, *Pangæa*, "Pangæa"

sliding triads, mm. 30-33

Charles Rose provides an overview of the acoustic scale (Example 4).

The acoustic scale is a diatonic scale consisting of scale degrees 1-2-3-#4-5-6-b7. It is roughly derived from the overtone series (hence the name "acoustic scale"), and due to the #4 and b7 it is also sometimes called "Lydian-Mixolydian." It appeared first in the works of Franz Liszt and Claude Debussy, was codified by Alexander Scriabin through its connection with his famous Mystic Chord, and is now particularly associated with Béla Bartók.

The scale is, in this context, an equal-temperament approximation of partials eight through fourteen of the harmonic series. The 12-EDO tuning system, also called 12-tone equal temperament, sacrifices accurate tuning of each overtone to allow harmonic relationships to be preserved across different keys. As the result of this compromise, equal temperament's logarithmic basis creates mathematically irrational frequencies which prevent instruments to ever be truly in tune compared with pure integer ratios derived from the overtone series (also known as just intonation).

Although the acoustic scale is not a perfect 12-EDO representation of the overtone

series—such a representation is mathematically impossible—it is still a welcome alternative to the major scale, and well-suited to Ludwig's approximation of pre-human musical possibilities.

It must be said, of course, that one is not limited to this solution: instrument-builders like Lou Harrison and Harry Partch and spectralist composers such as Gerard Grisey and Tristan Murail expand the chromatic scale to include quarter-tones, sixth-tones, and beyond, all of which allows natural ("just") harmonics to be more reasonably approximated. Electroacoustic music, freed from the physical limitations of acoustic instruments, can avoid this problem altogether.

3. THE QUESTION

At the CMNW concert, Ludwig explained (paraphrasing T. S. Eliot) that his piece ends "not with an answer, but with a question." The passacaglia in "Pangæa" (which we've already considered above) outlines this question motive, which first appears near the end of the first movement and ultimately closes

EXAMPLE 4 David Ludwig, *Pangæa*, "Panthalassa"

appearance of the acoustic scale, m. 17

the second. The motive's modal character suggests the acoustic scale, but with important chromatic additions which destabilize the implied tonality and add a question mark to the phrase. Its final statement occurs in the piano (Example 5) against a backdrop of repeated Db's and strings glissandoing a *niente*:

Considered tonally (in the "key" of Db), the line Bb-Ab-G-F-Fb-Eb-D is a clear variant on the acoustic scale (with shades of octatonic), outlining scale degrees 6-5-#4-3-b3-2-b2. It works as a question largely because the ear has been prepared to hear that D-natural against D-flat not as a harsh dissonance but as a perfectly normal modal minor 2nd, such as might appear in a Hindustani raga or a folk song collected by Bartók.

That D really wants to resolve to Db. It resolutely fails to do so.

Thus does Ludwig construct a perfectly open-ended conclusion for his chamber concerto: with a catchy bit of incongruous melody that sent this listener humming The Question out into the cool January evening. 🎧

EXAMPLE 5 David Ludwig, *Pangæa*, "Pangæa"

mm. 197-204

Music Asks More Questions Than It Answers:

AN INTERVIEW WITH COMPOSER DAVID LUDWIG

Matthew Neil Andrews

Subito: How much theoretical, analytical, music nerd stuff goes into the planning of a work like *Pangæa*?

David Ludwig: I plan a lot around the writing. I mean a lot. I wouldn't say that I'm steeped in the theoretical so much, but I do use lots of processes in my music. Bartók is a great model. I aspire to that kind of idea where there is a great deal of planning and intentionality but still a de-

sire to sound organic, to not sound like it's been planned. In this piece in particular, there is a lot of Fibonacci, and I thought a lot about what kind of rules of physics and acoustics would have existed 250 million years ago and how that is the only thing we have in common with that world—our natural laws. So I thought a lot about using the Fibonacci sequence and the acoustic scale and all these things which are connected

to the science of music that I thought would be fruitful.

Every choice we make in music is arbitrary in a sense, and that's actually really discouraging and difficult. It's like an abyss we are looking into, thinking, "what the hell do I do?" That's why we need to create our own parameters and limitations to create work, because if we didn't, and it was just a blank page, we would be screwed. We wouldn't be able to write anything. So, because of the nature of this piece, these were materials I wanted to work with.

Subito: Do you prefer having some sort of narrative catalyst? Some composers can't work with it, and others can't work without it. Neither Joan Tower nor Ellen Taaffe Zwilich has ever written an opera, whereas you take someone like Puccini or Wagner and they're not exactly known for concerti and symphonies. Same deal with film composers, theater composers, and so on.

Ludwig: The story often comes first, and it's not necessarily super programmatic. I wrote a string quartet that was a very specific narrative, but a lot of it is just impressions or ideas like this one. Story is a good word for it, because I see composing as an opportunity to tell stories and that's where my interest is. Throughout history there are composers that wrote *Piano Quartet No. 2 in G Major*, or whatever, who were just writing purely music. That's never been so much my interest, even my first pieces. Hell, there are pieces I wrote when I was 9 years old that have some story or some motivating idea behind them. And for me, that gives a frame to the piece and it gives a dramatic form and it really speaks to it.

Part of growing into your voice is realizing what your voice is and what kind of person you are. So for me telling stories through my music is where my interest and, honestly, my ability is. I think it is much harder for me to write a piece, like, you know, "Trio."



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DAVID LUDWIG

Rather than have the music serve the notes, have the notes serve the music. Everything points in the direction of the subject matter or the drama of the piece and informs it. I had a really clear image of these murky depths of the ancient ocean, and the sound of sea creatures, and all that stuff rumbling and bubbling up. We don't know what's in the ocean, you know. That ancient mystery and darkness were really fascinating to me as a starting off point for the piece.

Subito: This seems to play into your approach to aleatoric writing. The score is so precisely laid out: sometimes explicitly notated, other times just stacks of asynchronous repeated patterns bracketed in boxes and stacked on top of each other with a repeat sign or a duration. Yet the ef-

fect is not chaos but a sort of free cohesion, quite in keeping with the work's evolutionary theme.

Ludwig: I arrived, years ago, at making this kind of aleatory, and then I start studying with John Corigliano. I studied at Juilliard and worked with him, and he uses this stuff a lot, and he helped me really refine my approach to this aleatory. Even the approach to the words you use is so important, to be concise but specific. Because players don't love reading a novel about how to make a sound or play something.

Subito: But then you don't want to go the other way, with too little direction.

Ludwig: Right. So there is a sweet spot there. You know, Corigliano, Lutosławski use these kinds of things a lot. [Lutosławski's] music is very in-

the piece doesn't seem polystylistic at all. Is it just a matter of having listened to all this music, having soaked it all up and integrated it? Where do you see yourself in the context of 21st-century music?

Ludwig: Part of our time is that people are not as much belonging to a school. Of course, there is plenty of that too. But the idea that there are composers who become amalgamations of their influences—like Messiaen and Ligeti—and then there are composers like minimalists, or on the other side of things like Carter, who are really belonging to certain schools and very specific integrated processes. I'm definitely a member of the former. There's just a lot of different sounds rattling around up there. And I want to capture whatever I feel is required of the piece, so if in

*It's like an abyss we are looking into,
thinking "what the hell do I do?"*

fluential to me as well. It's funny because Ligeti also gets a lot of these textures, but he notates them. This idea of sound masses and polyphonic webs or tapestries, these textures, it's definitely Eastern-European. It all started with Penderecki. He gave us those kinds of sounds. And I never use aleatory unless there is no other way to get that particular sound. I try to really limit myself about that. Because we have a thousand years of notation we have access to. And if I can't get a particular sound, then I'll use that texture or that box.

Subito: *Pangæa* is such a compendium of 20th-century musical practices, from Expressionism on down to the Polish School composers you just mentioned, George Crumb, Corigliano, all of that larger-than-life symphonic music. Yet

that moment, the piece needs this kind of sound or idea, I'll try to use that or apply it.

Subito: Could you tell us a little about how the work came about, how it's evolved, and what sort of thinking went into its development?

Ludwig: Anne-Marie [McDermott] commissioned it for Bravo Vail, for an anniversary; she wanted this for piano and strings to be played with different groups. So the first version of this had triple strings, three string quartets plus bass, and I'm trying to get a full string orchestra to do it. David Shifrin asked for an octet to make it manageable [for Chamber Music Northwest].

I think probably in this case, I've thought a lot about Colorado and some of the conservation efforts there and some of the fossils there and

the mountains. That sounds like a pretty likely prompt for me. And then I was probably reading something about extinction and where we are at with that, and I think that's how it all evolved.

Subito: Given the grand-scale socio-political nature of the work, is there anything you want the audience to take away from the experience?

Ludwig: I don't want to beat people over the head. I just want to bring attention to whatever I'm writing about. If that provokes thought, that's awesome. If it provokes action, that's even more

awesome. There is definitely an angle there. I gave an interview to Colorado Public Radio that was pretty clear about global warming, and this extinction period is the same in intensity as that extinction period. So, it's not like I'm Switzerland, you know? I have a definite viewpoint.

I think sometimes music asks more questions than it answers. Maybe most of the time. If this piece can if this piece can ask some questions and get even a few people to think a little about these issues, then that's great. 🍷

What we've got cooking

FOR THE NEXT ISSUE...

- A celebration of the Leonard Bernstein centennial
- Lesser-known works of Aaron Copland
- Composers of the Americas
- The future of classical music
- Plus more conversations, interviews, reviews, analyses, reflections, musings, and ponderings.



Matthew Neil Andrews
 MAJOR: MA MUSIC
 INSTRUMENT: STAFF PAPER



Andrei Morelos
 MAJOR: ETHNOMUSICOLOGY
 INSTRUMENT: CLARINET



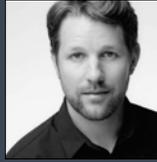
Adam Brooker
 MAJOR: MM PERFORMANCE
 INSTRUMENT: CLASSICAL GUITAR



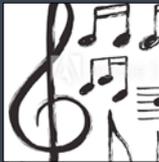
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