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From the Editor

Listen—

Our world is full of sounds—an invisible auditory richness to which you contribute your breath, your heartbeat, the rustling of these pages in your fingers. Perhaps music buzzes through your environment, or the environment itself may be a kind of music. People may be talking, or listening, or both. Test yourself: how deep an ocean can you drink with your ears, your body, your mind?

Listen—this is the second issue of *Subito*, and it's full of voices.

One new feature, The Oval Table, gathers a score of Portland-based composers, performers, and teachers to discuss the future of classical music. You'll find these five conversations scattered around the issue. In our exclusive Faculty Spotlight, Portland State Head of Theater Karin Magaldi praises playfulness and failure. Our new Research Resort section contrasts two very different scholarly perspectives on the meanings and purposes of vocal music.

Here, even the instrumental music is conversational. Our album reviews include an oratorio and a pair of instrumental recordings which treat their genres as living organisms, responsive to the listeners and musicians who breathe them to life. A symphony concert unites Americana with Italian Romanticism. Californian Gabriela Lena Frank composes a string quartet in dialogue with her Peruvian heritage. Jennifer Higdon tells a fresh viola joke.

We are particularly proud to feature the multi-composer new work *I Spat in the Eye of Hate and Lived*, based on the poetry and experiences of PSU student Micah Fletcher. The composers opened their minds to us, and in their collaborative creativity we hear one possible future of classical music.

This country has produced a wild diversity of voices, mavericks all, listening to the world their own way, making audible their invisible universes of sound. The future begins on the next page, with profiles of six U.S. composers.

Listen—

Matthew Neil Andrews
Editor-In-Chief

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Photo Courtesy of the Center for Contemporary Music Archive at Mills College

Make Peace More Exciting than Violence

PAULINE OLIVEROS AND COMMUNAL MUSIC-MAKING

Daniel Vega

The political and spiritual beliefs of a composer can challenge the premises of the musical establishment. The work of avant-garde composer Pauline Oliveros (1932–2016) exemplifies this phenomenon by opening a way for non-musicians to participate in musical performances. Oliveros' *Sonic Meditations* (1971), a small collection of prose compositions guiding audience participation, serve as a quintessential example. These rituals of intensive listening—what Oliveros calls Deep Listening ("Introduction I & II" in *Sonic Meditations*)—developed into a spiritual path toward healing as individuals and communities. Her efforts were an intentional subversion of U.S. social contracts, which she viewed as thriving on division and terrorization. Her perspective on music-making invites musicians and non-musicians to reflect on their humanitarian social roles in regards to gender equality, community building, and world peace.

Oliveros boldly faced identity politics as a lesbian composer. She broadened conversations on gender inequality to address non-consensual roles throughout society, arguing that politics, feminism, and activism are intertwined (see "A Conversation about Feminism and Music," a 1994 interview with Fred Maus). In her landmark article "And Don't Call Them Lady Composers," published in *The New York Times* in 1970, she argued that the "greatest problems of society will never be solved without an egalitarian atmosphere utilizing the total creative energies among all men and women." She was a proponent of equality between genders, and considered women to have enormous dormant creative potential. In an interview with Geoff and Nicola Smith (for their 1995 book *New Voices: American Composers Talk about Their Music*), Oliveros discussed her intention to create an exclusively female ensemble—the ♀ Ensemble—to encourage women to express themselves creatively despite opposing cultural forces.

Oliveros and the ♀ Ensemble recognized their potential to engage marginalized communities internationally, and they were invited to present the *Sonic Meditations* to countless women's groups in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. In 1972 they presented *Meditations* to the California Institution for Women, a state prison. The composer remarked on this powerful opportunity in an interview with Martha Mockus: "it was more of a listening meditation for me" (see Martha Mockus, *Sounding Out: Pauline*

Oliveros and Lesbian Musicality). While visiting the prison, rather than facilitating *Meditations* the ensemble listened to inmates' stories.

Oliveros started presenting *Meditations* to gay and lesbian communities as early as 1971, eventually leading 6,000 queer women in *Meditations* at the 1986 Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. In "Rags and Patches," included in Oliveros' prose anthology *Software for People*, the composer summarized her feelings: "How many of you out there think you are in the minority? If everyone came out of the closet, the world would change overnight—Rattle them bones! Rattle them cages!"

The composer's perspective on music changed forever when George Winne, Jr.—a student at the University of California San Diego, where Oliveros was teaching—self-immolated in protest of the Vietnam War, pouring kerosene on himself and burning himself alive in UCSD's Revelle Plaza. Oliveros later wrote about the experience in her essay "My 'American Music': Soundscape, Politics, Technology, Community," relating how she responded to Winne, Jr.'s suicide with a year-long retreat in which she turned inward in pursuit of healing. In *The New Yorker*'s article on Oliveros, Kerry O'Brien described this period as a journey of isolation which led to Oliveros' philosophy of Deep Listening, a necessary pause before thoughtful action. (see O'Brien's "Listening as Activism: The *Sonic Meditations* of Pauline Oliveros"). Oliveros recognized this as an attempt to heal a sick U.S. culture through listening, to each other and to our own bodies, making a strong case for listening as activism. Her *Sonic Meditations* were crafted with this intention: society is alleviated when people learn to feel connected to each other.

In her preface to the *Sonic Meditations*, Oliveros detailed her seminal thoughts: "*Sonic Meditations* are an attempt to return the control of sound to the individual alone, and within groups especially for humanitarian purposes; specifically healing." Deep Listening is the envisioned state of consciousness, exercised when a person intentionally combines two or more of the following: listening to sounds, remembering sounds, making sounds, and imagining sounds. Each meditation invites participants to exercise these facets of listening as a group. She gave four reasons participants feel psychologically and spiritually healed: they feel a common bond with others through a shared experience; their inner experiences of consciousness are manifested and accepted by others; their awareness of the surrounding environment is increased; and their memories or values are integrated with the present and understood by others. Oliveros believed hearing the unheard could remedy culture, remarking in "My 'American Music'" that "being heard is a step toward being understood. Being understood is a step toward being healed. Understanding is a step toward building community." Oliveros continued:

> *Will peace win in the end? Well, either people will move in that direction and stop the violence in their own hearts and minds, or else we will all die and then it will be very peaceful. We should think about this question: what is your relationship to peace? Do you want to live in peace or do you want to live in violence? One of these things we want to do according to my partner and co-teacher in Deep Listening is 'make peace more exciting than violence.' That is the process we are attempting.*

The practice of listening and understanding one another always requires dedication and patience. Conscious musicians and composers have a responsibility as global citizens to create participatory music which challenges oppressive culture and war. Sonic meditations like these could become a viable form of protest music. History is rich with examples of innovative uses of organized sound for civil resistance and war, and the academic musical establishment has yet to explore the potential of joining direct political action with audience participation music.

Shall We Think or Listen?

STEVE REICH'S CHORAL SETTINGS IN *THE DESERT MUSIC*

Jeffrey Evans

When voices sing, people listen. For millennia, singers have been vehicles for words, shared with a congregation, a village, an audience, a royal court, or a room full of beer-drinking pub-goers. Humans are drawn to the musical sounds of the voice, with or without words. Although text is important in communities and cultures, composers have considered the voice itself an essential tool for translating musical ideas. The choral settings in Steve Reich's *The Desert Music* challenge the notion that words are essential in music which ought not be obscured.

The Desert Music was written in 1983, by which time Reich had long since been categorized as a minimalist composer along with Philip Glass, Terry Riley, and La Monte Young, all foundational in the development of early minimalistic music. Writer Christopher Abbott scrutinized the 1985 Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra premiere orchestral recording: "one can't make out a lot of the text." Our question, then, is this: did the composer intend us to understand the text?

The composer reveals, in his liner notes, that a focus is "that constant flickering of attention between what words mean and how they sound when set to music." Reich hopes the meaning of the text and music speaks for itself, telling German media group BR-KLASSIK (in a 2016 interview): "I don't think about atmosphere or feelings or anything like that, ever, in any piece."

Reich worked to bring his narrative to life with guidance from U.S. poet William Carlos Williams. *The Desert Music*'s text includes excerpts from Williams' poems "Theocritus: Idyl I–A version from the Greek," "The Orchestra," and "Asphodel, That Greeny Flower." Reich selected poetry from Williams' late period, which Reich characterized as "a period after the bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki." In his program notes, he writes:

> *Dr. Williams was acutely aware of the bomb and his words about it, in a poem about music entitled "The Orchestra," struck me as to the point:*
>
> *'SAY TO THEM: Man has survived hitherto because he was too ignorant to know how to realize his wishes. Now that he can realize them, he must either change them or perish.'*

In her book *The Sounds of Place*, musicologist Denise Von Glahn writes that "Reich has captured the pace of millennial America using the speech rhythms and cadences of its people," and "Williams commandeered American English, with its

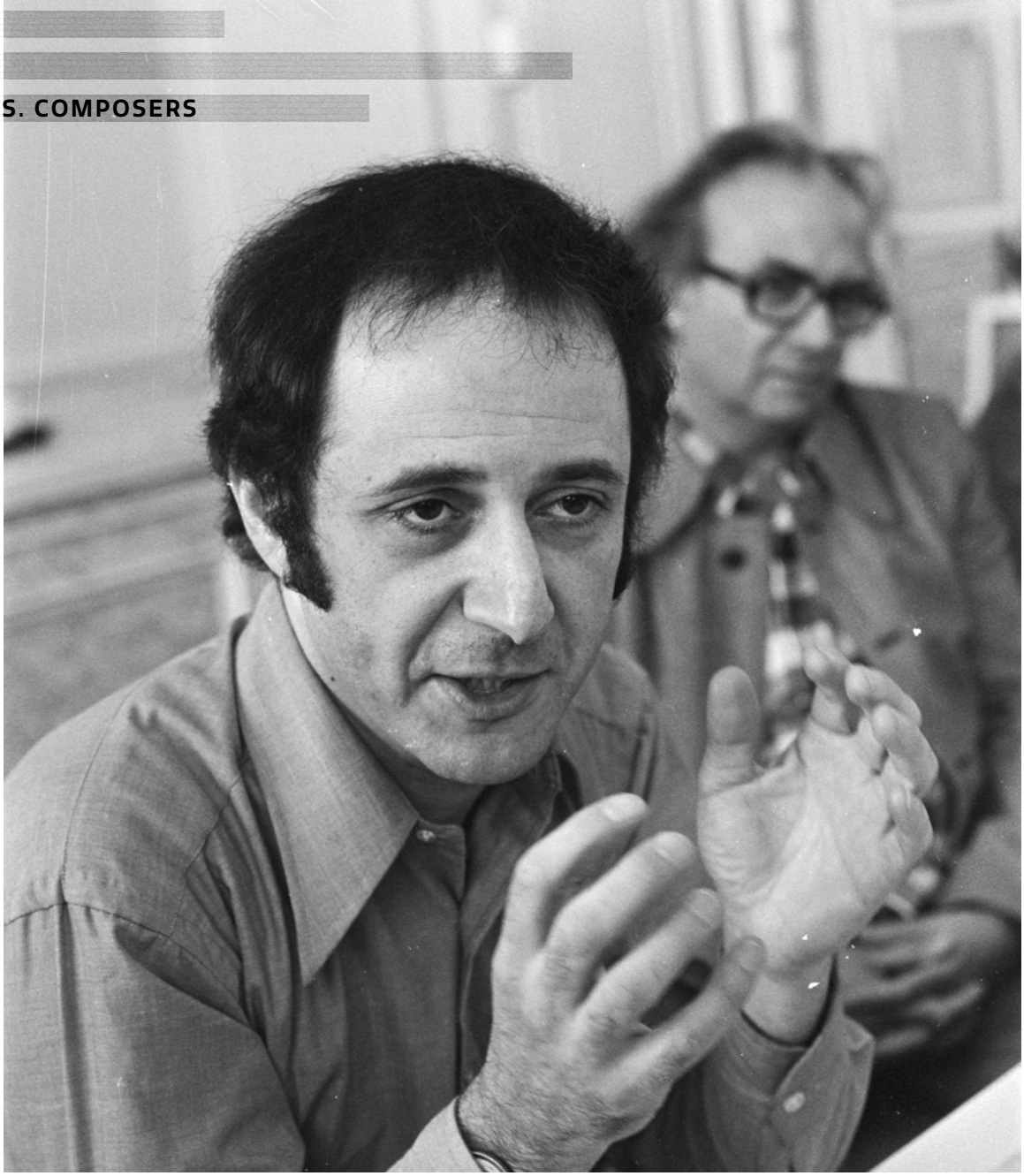


Photo: Hans Peters / Anefo

percussive attacks and short bursts of sound." The technique of using non-text-based syllables in choral settings is rare, but it's one that Reich commonly has used in his works for singers, starting with *Drumming* in 1970 and *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ* in 1973. In a 1984 interview with Jonathan Cott, Reich explains:

> *The chorus begins wordlessly. You know, a voice can sing words—but does one hear the voice or the words? At certain points in* The Desert Music *there's no more to be said—there are things that can only be said musically. So the voices continue, without words, as part of the orchestra. The text emerges out of a completely non-verbal, totally abstract sound into something that says, 'Begin, my friend…' Maybe it's fitting that the piece begins and ends with a totally abstract use of the voice, going into a text and then out of it again.*

The first sung sound in *The Desert Music* is "dee," an uncommon non-text syllable for choirs. The syllable serves as a textural element, a "pure sensuous sound" in the composer's words. In movements IIIa and IIIc the choir fades in on an "eee" sound, fading out as the brass fades in on an altered chord, creating an ambiguous timbre that blurs the line between human voice and brass horn, a mysterious and haunting effect.

In the book *This Is Your Brain on Music*, Daniel Levitin explains Pierre Schaeffer's cut bell experiments of the 1950s, which revealed our inability to distinguish different instruments without the onset, or attack, of a note. Here, Reich gets his mysterious and haunting effect by hiding the brass section onset under the singers.

During movement IV, the choir sings "The mind is listening" followed by the return of "dee-dee-dee-dee." In Reich's description, "it goes into something completely non-verbal, it leaves language behind."

Repetition is a fundamental characteristic of Reich's music. In one common technique, a musical pattern repeats against itself at different rates, causing the overlapping iterations to realign, bringing out new rhythmic and harmonic relationships. For the central section of *The Desert Music*, Reich selected the text: "It is a principle of music to repeat the theme. Repeat and repeat again."

The section begins with the sopranos divided into a three-part canon and the altos singing a countermelody on the second statement of the theme. The resulting six-part canon cycles through 11 repetitions before moving on. The next canon shares the same voicing, cycling through ten repetitions of different melodic material. Finally the vocalists sing, "as the pace mounts the theme is difficult," culminating in a canon which is both emotionally and technically difficult. Here the text painting is clear, and the listener is faced with the reality of humanity's ongoing negligence concerning our survival.

Reich seems comfortable with the idea that listeners might not understand the words. In his BR-KLASSIK interview he says, "If the music grabs you, then you may not even understand the words. When I first heard Bob Dylan, I had no idea what he was saying, and I speak English."

Much of the beauty of choral music comes from the meeting of music with text, poetic meaning, or a story of some sort—a distinction that sets it apart from instrumental music. Yet meaning doesn't need to be put forth through text, as evidenced by choral performances sung in languages foreign to their audience. *The Desert Music* explored these ideas in the context of contemporary minimalist compositional technique, setting new boundaries in choral-orchestral music that didn't focus specifically on accentuating the poetry in the work. The result is a composition that has proven its resilience and continues to be performed today.

Reich did obscure the clarity of the text, but *The Desert Music* still tells a clear story, and can draw the listener in. Contemporary compositional techniques for voices have continued to move beyond textual clarity, embracing explorations of all sorts. With composers like David Lang, Meredith Monk, Caroline Shaw, and Julia Wolfe continuing to write new music for voices, we are hearing an insurgence of minimalist textures and non-text-based vocal music. As composers and singers across disciplines continue to explore new ideas we can look to works like *The Desert Music* as examples of innovation and progress that challenge listeners to hear music in a new way.

The FUTURE of "CLASSICAL" Music

OVAL TABLE 1

The word "classical" just bugs me!

Texu Kim | Bonnie Miksch | Nicholas Yandell | Charles Rose

Texu Kim: Do you know Jacob Collier? He is a jazz pianist, singer, everything. He is a YouTube star. Self-recorded *a cappella* art is not a new thing, but the way Jacob Collier marketed himself, I was like, "Well, ok. That's cute."

Nicholas Yandell: Other strains of music are getting more interested in larger, more intricate artistic projects. Like the Pulitzer Prize going to Kendrick Lamar: his music stylistically has come to a point where it's getting much more intricate and complex. Brockhampton—I was listening to that thinking, "this is so intricate," and connected to that. This is when the need to be conventionally commercial started evaporating. People are like, "We just want to create a larger, more complicated version of this." I think the future of classical music is the beginning point—the genre is going to matter less than the end point. It's just going to be a larger vision, begun from the same place.

Bonnie Miksch: I agree with that. Genre is starting to unravel. Music that is interesting to people now combines so many different approaches and so many different musics it's just ridiculous. Our students are exploring world music traditions, they're exploring jazz, and they're exploring classical traditions. Look at what our choirs are doing. At some point, we are going to be calling it "music."

What is more important is the intention. I use the term "concert music" versus "recorded medium" when I describe, for instance, the difference between our compositional program and the SAMP (Sonic Arts & Music Production) program. Even the SAMP program has its live electronic music component, as well. The lines are blurred between what is what, but that distinction of how it is intended to be experienced might be more important than whether it is high art, low art. The word "classical" just bugs me.

Charles Rose: I like "contemporary music." I've mostly experienced classical music through recordings. I found clips on YouTube or Spotify and listened to them obsessively before I started going to concerts. That to me is more important. Recording versus live performance.

Kim: You can't go to a concert more than five times a day, but you can listen to recordings for 24 hours.

Rose: A lot of composers write music that is so obsessively detailed you would never be able to understand it in a single concert. If you listen to Webern for example, the piece goes by in two minutes and you're like, "That just happened." But when you listen to it with headphones you can start getting into the rhythm of it. Recording has changed the way we experience classical music. A lot of the composers who are the future of classical music are obsessively detail-oriented. You can sit with headphones and listen to it over and over and over again. It is very conducive to headphone listening versus concert hall listening.

Miksch: Are you asking about the future of what is being written, or the future of stuff that was written a long time ago?

Rose: All of it.

Miksch: Historic preservation is not going away. I'm not interested in historic preservation, and I'm fascinated by people who are. It takes a lot of effort to do that. It has so much meaning to people who are concerned about things going away, or us losing touch with certain things. The institutions that have been innovative have seen the most success. There is a lot of pressure to not be the abstract thing music has been, but to connect with human ideas. That's why we see so many themed concerts right now, from Micah's concert to issues relating to race and gender, poverty, homelessness, you name it. Concerts are connecting to that and I think that's helping. People want that connection.

Celebrating the Viola

JENNIFER HIGDON'S GRAMMY-WINNING CONCERTO

Christina Ebersohl

If you've ever been around orchestra musicians, you've heard jokes like this one:

What is the difference between a viola and roadkill?

No one backs up to run over the roadkill a second time.

Violists have been the butt end of jabs and jokes for decades. This is partially due to the misguided belief that failed violinists, beginners, and lesser players take on the viola, and partially due to the awkward physical comparison by audience members to its sister instrument, the violin. But the viola has also developed its lackluster reputation for the role it plays in many chamber and symphonic works. The alto range instrument—known for its warm, rich tones and beloved, rumbling C string—is often relegated to little more than a textural role, filling in harmony or providing a rhythmic pulse behind the more prominent violin and cello lines.

While this role is essential in collaborative musical works, it is also one reason the viola has not often graced the stage as a soloist. Certainly, solo repertoire has been written for the instrument: Telemann, Hoffmeister, and Stamitz all produced beautiful concerti. But according to violist William Primrose (as reported in David Dalton's *Playing the Viola: Conversations with William Primrose*), it wasn't until the early 1900s when virtuosos like Lionel Tertis and Primrose himself came to the stage—unabashed with violas in hand—that the tides began to turn for the instrument.

Photo by Shaun Miller

The 20th century suddenly exploded into action, with Bartók, Walton, Hindemith, and Rózsa all adding their contributions to the viola repertoire. And it seems as though the 21st century is promising to be just as prolific.

[The author corresponded by email with Higdon in February 2019. All direct quotes are from this correspondence unless otherwise indicated].

Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962) composed her *Viola Concerto* in 2015, working closely with Roberto Díaz, who premiered the work the same year. Higdon admits that she "always had a fondness for the instrument." She listened to Díaz play the viola he would use for the premiere, and asked him what he wanted. "The particu-

lar viola did not play harmonics well ... he asked me not to use harmonics in the solo part, so I didn't." Higdon found herself digging through the entire viola solo literature, from sonatas to concerti, and found an unusual commonality amongst them:

> *I noticed that for viola, in particular, all of the music seemed kind of dark. So it became my goal to write a concerto that sounded very 'up'—a positive, joyous sound. I just think composers had never really thought about the fact that we seem to be creating a dour sounding world for the viola, and they deserve some positive and celebratory music.*

That's exactly what Higdon created. The concerto produced such waves amongst viola critics and fans alike that Higdon won the 2018 Grammy for Best Contemporary Classical Composition.

Jennifer Higdon was not always a viola lover. In fact, classical music was hardly on her radar as a child. Higdon enjoyed an artistic childhood full of short stories, poetry, and homemade Claymation. "Writing poetry and stories taught me about rhythm and pacing," Higdon said in a 2005 interview with Karen Rile. "For me, musical themes are like the characters in a play." It wasn't until she was 14 that Higdon first turned toward music, beginning as a percussionist in her high school marching band—an influence heard in her rhythmically-driven compositions. She later taught herself how to play a flute she discovered in her family's attic. Encouraged by her mother, who bought her books to help her continue learning the instrument, Higdon rose to principal in marching band and continued with flute as her primary instrument into college.

Higdon went on to Bowling Green University but was insecure about her lack of musical foundations and knowledge. "My background is completely different than most classical musicians ... very, very little classical, and a lot of everything else ... I listened to the Beatles so much, as well as Simon & Garfunkel, the Rolling Stones, Peter, Paul and Mary, reggae, bluegrass, and country..."

Higdon had her first composition experience at Bowling Green, when one of her professors encouraged her to write a work for a masterclass with U.S. flutist-composer Harvey Sollberger (b. 1938). "I found it fascinating to put sound together," Higdon said in a 2005 interview with Michael Anthony. "I don't know why that hadn't occurred to me before. I could tell that was something I was going to be doing down the road." Following her undergraduate flute studies, Higdon continued to Curtis Institute of Music for graduate studies in composition before attempting to transfer to the University of Pennsylvania. Despite being rejected twice, Higdon pushed ahead and was accepted on her third attempt, eventually completing her M.A. and D.M.A.

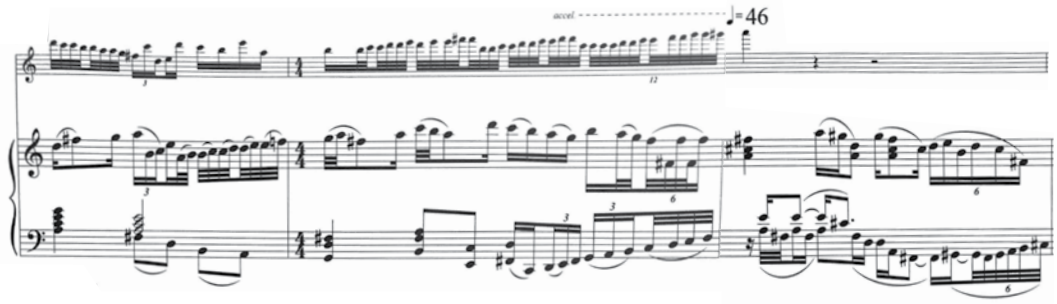
Defining Higdon's compositional style is difficult, as it often is with modern composers. The United States is a mix-match of different cultures and styles, making it impossible to discern one style. Eclecticism is the rule. "I often turn ideas over very quickly in my music (moving on to a new melody, or harmony, or orchestration color)," Higdon says. "I think this is because the ideas in pop music turn over quicker, so my brain is wired to change things quickly."

Like Higdon's other orchestral works, such as *Concerto for Orchestra* and *Blue Cathedral*, the *Viola Concerto* hinges on a strong rhythmic drive and quintal harmonies. The first movement sets the tone with busy rhythms, the solo viola entering unabashedly on a monotone theme. Higdon doesn't think about keys and tonality when she composes, but many of her pieces have tonal centers. In this case, a bright and bold C tonality is clearly established from the beginning. Higdon did write the concerto with the viola specifically in mind, and this tonality celebrates the warm and bold C string for which the instrument is so beloved .

The C Lydian tonality continues until the first accidental sneaks into the viola line in m. 19, followed by the addition of a C# in m. 23, and finally a G# in m. 24. Through the driving 16th

EXAMPLE 1 Jennifer Higdon, ***Viola Concerto,*** **mov. I**

mm. 63–65



notes and triplets, we suddenly find ourselves thrust into a world of shifting tonalities.

By m. 46 we've returned to the C tonality, with a long, open C in the solo viola. Higdon drives the orchestra forward and the viola upwards to the pinnacle of the piece—a breath-takingly high A in the viola (Example 1). Higdon uses the instrument's range with finesse: from the dark, sultry open C to the atmospheric A, she truly allows the instrument to sing its glory.

Higdon's compositions lack descriptive guidelines, eschewing even the traditional markings of "Allegro," "Moderato," and "Vivace," giving only tempo markings for each movement. In the *Viola Concerto*, she goes even further, breaking out of the standardized tempo pattern fast-slow-fast used for three-movement concertos. In this case, Higdon began slowly, the first movement tempo a stolid 46 bpm, next moving the second movement up to a brisk 102 bpm. This movement begins with the same rhythmic drive as the first, with a solo flute on a repeating Bb. The orchestra enters in m. 2, beginning with the pulse on each beat, letting the beat develop complexities as it continues.

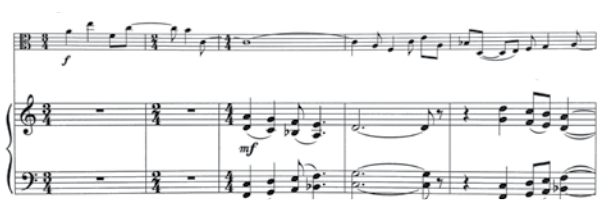
This driving 16th note pulse is heard throughout the movement, accenting the tonality it appears in. This happens first with that opening Bb, then in m. 24 shifts to a D tonality, m. 42 back to Bb, m. 49 a shift to G. The final push in m. 112 leads back to a proud and boastful D tonality. It is here that we hear the concerto's first viola double stops, starting with two-octave Ds and ending with single-octave double stops, unfolding into a final off-kilter rhythmic gesture as the movement comes to a conclusion.

Higdon builds momentum during these sections by thickening the orchestra's tonal contributions. In m. 119, Higdon builds up the drive to the end, starting with a single C on the first beat, adding Bbs and Ds which continue to blossom in 16th notes until the powerful and sudden end.

The final movement returns to a slower tempo and opens again with the solo viola. In a reflection of the first movement, Higdon returns to quintal harmony, in which she favors harmonies in fifths, which allows the tonality to remain more ambiguous and open (Example 2). Here, the orchestra plays a chorale under the soloist.

EXAMPLE 2 Jennifer Higdon, ***Viola Concerto,*** **mov. III**

mm. 1–5

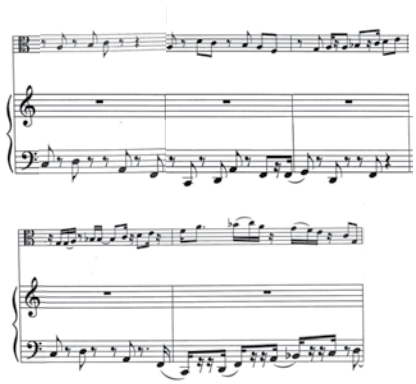


The movement shifts across multiple characters, none more prevalent than the bouncy, ambitious voice that emerges at measure 32. In Example 3, the back-and-forth relationship between the viola and the orchestra becomes clear, one jumping off the other, resulting in a theme that remains rhythmically significant but seems to drive forward, uninhibited.

Characters from earlier in the concerto dance across this rondo-like movement in short glimpses, and the rhythmic push from the second movement is heard in repetitive monotones during the 16th note runs between the third movement's bouncing new theme. Even the theme from the first movement resurfaces in measures 108-113 (Example 4).

EXAMPLE 3 Jennifer Higdon, ***Viola Concerto,*** **mov. III**

mm. 33–37



Finally, the viola reclaims the rhythmic motive from the first movement, m. 167 to the end (Example 5). The viola strikes a high F# pulse while the orchestra winds up running sextuplets and triplets before meeting the viola in an F# tonality, ending the concerto with a feverish final bang.

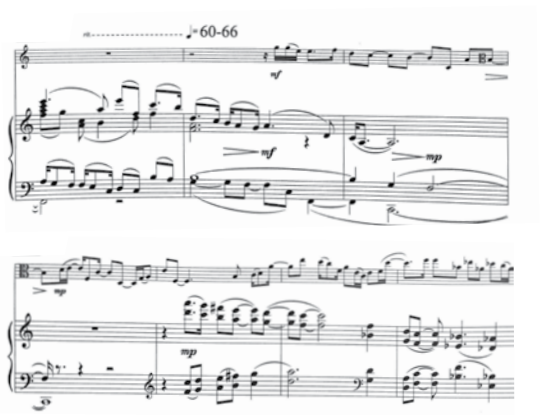
Higdon may not have a self-proclaimed style, but one thing is for certain: her music is a triumphant hit. Tonal, exciting, unique, and full of character, her *Viola Concerto* is a sparkling addition to the viola repertoire. The award-winning concerto is already scheduled on seven professional programs in the 2019 season, surely a sign that this year is to be a monumental one for both composer and viola.

We asked Higdon her advice for those struggling on this uncertain path of music. She takes pride in her unconventional background, and encourages students to do the same:

> *Learn the rules, and then when it comes time to [do] something (if it's not a class assignment), feel free to step away from the rules and follow your ear. You'll find your way, and all of your learning will help you to make your own path, and create something wonderful and unique.*

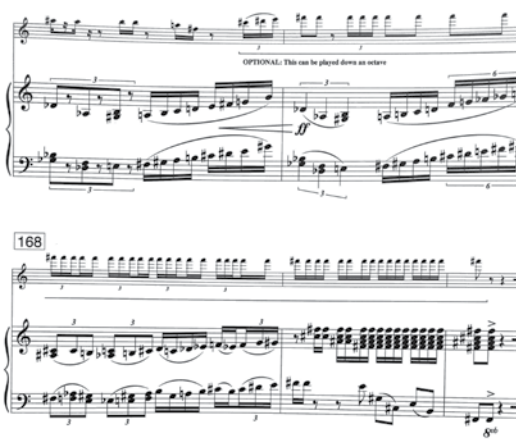
EXAMPLE 4 Jennifer Higdon, ***Viola Concerto,*** **mov. III**

mm. 107–113



EXAMPLE 5 Jennifer Higdon, ***Viola Concerto,*** **mov. III**

mm. 166–170



Alive and Able

DANNY ELFMAN'S *VIOLIN CONCERTO "ELEVEN ELEVEN"*

Matthew Neil Andrews

In 1938, British composer William Walton turned down an offer to score the film *Pygmalion*—he was more interested in composing a concerto for violinist Jascha Heifetz and didn't have time for both. Walton, who had already scored four films and later scored several more, wrote to his publisher: "It all boils down to this: whether I'm to become a film composer or a real composer."

In 2017, violinist Sandy Cameron and conductor John Mauceri premiered U.S. composer Danny Elfman's *Violin Concerto "Eleven Eleven."* Cameron and Mauceri have been performing and championing Elfman's work for years, with Cameron playing an especially Oistrakh-like role in the concerto's development. You can hear the results on their 2019 recording.

Listeners will have to decide for themselves whether this is real music. The ear catches Shostakovich right away (Elfman called Shosty's first violin concerto "the holy grail"), and that gorgeous, sarcastic, bittersweet flavor can be almost overwhelming. But Elfman can never really hide the glow of California sunshine, and his work has always borne the mark of fellow percussion-loving Californian mavericks Harry Partch and Lou Harrison.

Harrison's personality in particular animates this concerto, perhaps even more than Shostakovich's does. Playfulness and excitement illuminate even the darkest moments, and throughout we hear a joyful exuberance which would sound manic coming from an unhappier composer. Elfman's long waves of melody ("the audience's take-home pay," in Lou's witticism) all have a sly catchiness that will break your heart while you hum them in the car. One violin cadenza is accompanied by nothing but percussion, an homage to Harrison's *Concerto for Violin with Percussion Orchestra*. Here is a composer who's not only still getting better—he's still having fun!

Elfman's career has been pretty abnormal, at least compared to Walton's. Legends of fire-breathing and other devilry surround his early years as a singer-songwriter, and the prolific film composer has often joked, "if I were to die today, my tombstone would read 'Here lies Danny Elfman: he wrote *The Simpsons* theme." In his album liner notes, he describes his journey to the concert hall as one of creative necessity:

> *A few years ago I came to the conclusion that I didn't just* want *to write orchestral music totally free from the influence of film, I virtually* had *to in order to keep my sanity. Finally, I came to the decision that I would take time off from my film work to write something for the concert hall every year, for as long as I'm alive and able.*

Reviews of the concerto have been enthusiastic, and new concert works are already planned, including a percussion concerto for Colin Currie and (as Elfman recently told BMI), "a 'semi-secret' personal project that involves a chamber orchestra and my own voice."

A Completely Natural Dissonant Composer

RUTH CRAWFORD SEEGER'S *FIVE SONGS*

Fedja Zahirović

During her lifetime, U.S. composer Ruth Crawford Seeger (1901–53) played the role of student, teacher, wife, mother, performer, composer, arranger, and musicologist. Better known for her achievements in transcribing, cataloging and preserving American folk music, Crawford Seeger also left a number of compositions in an ultra-modernist U.S. style. In 1921, she enrolled in the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, where she studied theory and composition with the composer Adolf Weidig (1867-1931), prompting a shift toward serious composition.

Crawford Seeger earned her master's degree while studying piano with Djane Lavoie-Herz (1889-1982), a student of Alexander Scriabin (1871-1915) and the most prestigious piano teacher in Chicago. As a concert pianist in Herz's circle Crawford Seeger met other influential U.S.-based modernist composers, including Dane Rudhyar (1895-1985) and Henry Cowell (1897-1965). At this time she was also teaching piano to the children of her friend, the poet

Carl Sandburg. He was a musician himself, and a good enough guitarist to study under Andrés Segovia. Crawford Seeger set five of his poems to music shortly before moving to New York in 1929, where she studied composition with future husband Charles Seeger (1886-1979).

Five Songs thus marks the end of Crawford Seeger's Chicago period. The songs—"Home Thoughts," "White Moon," "Joy," "Loam," and "Sunsets"—are short works for contralto and piano. As was the fashion in Lieder of the time, the piano accompaniment is minimal, giving ample space to the lyrics and allowing the poet's natural speech rhythms to flow freely. Seeger artfully played with dynamics and color to bring each lyric to life. Despite their brevity, the songs are dense, dramatic, and intellectual, the words a mixture of beauty, melancholy, love, and loss, a complex mosaic of dissonance and free-form rhythms.

SUNSETS

There are sunsets that whisper a goodbye.
There is a short dusk and a way for stars.
Prairie and sea-rim they go level and even
And the sleep is easy.

There are sunsets that dance goodbye.
They fling scarves half to the arc,
To the arc then and over the arc.
Ribbons at the ears, sashes at the hips,
Dancing, dancing goodbye.

And here sleep tosses a little with dreams.

Critics later remarked that Crawford Seeger was capable of "slinging dissonance like a man," which in the highly patriarchal society of the 1930s was meant as a form of praise. Crawford Seeger biographer Judith Tick reports that Henry Cowell considered her "a completely natural dissonant composer." Journalist Thomas Larson writes, in his San Diego *Troubadour* article "Fanfare for an American Maverick: Ruth Crawford Seeger" (February 2018):

> *In her twenties, the conservatory-trained Crawford … wrote a couple dozen chamber works and song cycles, each with a snappish atonal bite buttressed by the jagged, additive rhythms of jazz. Lines and counterpoint get going, barely develop, and are soon over—like poetry. The core idea is, non-triadic chords and chromatic counterpoint are beautiful in their own right—if we can lose our prejudicial expectations. Clashing sonorities, say, a chord built on two tritones (C-F#—D-A#), ground the music in sonic, not progressive, time, forgoing harmonic resolution. Resultant dissonances are fueled by polyrhythms, serial rows, and a monkish avoidance of major/minor chords. A music that has so much going on in each present moment need not try and get anywhere.*

Dissonance thus became a trademark of Crawford Seeger's ultra-modernist style, which we hear in these songs and her other chamber works. Her *String Quartet*, composed in New York in 1931, is well-known and generally considered her finest work. Her *Suite for Woodwind Quintet*, composed in 1952, features those "jagged, additive rhythms," and sounds even more mature and progressive by comparison with her early work. Her early works are full of modernist techniques and textures—serialism, polytonality, tone clusters, dissonant counterpoint—which have since become commonplace.

In 1936, the Seegers moved with their children to Washington D.C., where they worked at the Library of Congress with John and Alan Lomax, arranging and cataloging field recordings and composing original folk music—a sharp departure from Crawford Seeger's dissonant classical works. Between her modernism and her role in the preservation of American folk music, Crawford Seeger helped shape and capture two sides of 20th-century U.S. music.

Sound of a Walkabout

MIMESIS AND FOLKLORE IN GABRIELA LENA FRANK'S *LEYENDAS*

Aaron Shingles

In 2001, Californian composer Gabriela Lena Frank (b. 1972) was commissioned by the Chiara String Quartet to compose *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout*. The 24-minute work stands as a significant example of multiculturalism in American composition. Across six movements—captivating examples of cultural awareness and synthesis—Frank embraces Peruvian folklore and instruments, and the spirit of *mestizo* culture. The seeds of *Leyendas* were sown during Frank's time at the University of Michigan and her first trip to her mother's ancestral country of Peru. After her teacher William Bolcom encouraged her to connect with her roots for inspiration, in 2000 she traveled with her mother to the Andean city Huánco.

Other compositions following this trip have some of the same Andean-inspired elements as *Leyendas*. Most significant are *Sonata Andina* for piano (2000) and the orchestral tone poem *Elegia Andina* (2000). Both pieces are impressive in their own right, but seem like precursors of a more ambitious concept. For example, *Sonata Andina*—like *Leyendas*—contains programmatic elements in its movement titles and simulations of Andean instruments. The *Elegia Andina*, Frank's first orchestral work, demonstrated her ability to score instruments outside her personal comfort zone.

Frank's inclusion of Andean elements involves technical issues, as there are no existing symbols to express certain sounds or instruments—and her exclusive publisher, G. Schirmer, was unwilling to create new notation. Speaking to Jennifer Kelly for the book *In Her Own Words: Conversations with Composers in the United States*, Frank says: "They may not have a symbol for a particular way I want to break a guitar-inspired chord … we'll spend months trying to work this out before we'll use something new." There is additional value in successfully capturing and representing these instruments within our system of notation: it's a way to accurately communicate the music of other cultures.

Some of Frank's main inspirations are: the instruments and native musical traditions of Andean Peru; Western classical music; and the writings of Peruvian writer and anthropologist José María Arguedas, whose views on *mestizo* culture are the most important influence on *Leyendas*. The term *mestizaje* designates a racial mixture of native Andean peoples from the mountainous regions, the wealthy Spanish-descended landowners along the coast, and descendents of Africans originally brought as slaves. Arguedas argued that the combination of Andean, European, and African peoples would

Photo by Mariah Tauger

ultimately create a *raza cósmica*, or cosmic race, and wrote that music and sound are means for sharing knowledge, hypothesizing that music contributed to the blending of cultures in a post-colonial world. Societies free from domination and conquest could create new music and art representing both local and global cultures.

The first movement of *Leyendas*, "Toyos," is slow and deceptively complex. It uses the entire string quartet to create a composite reproduction of a single instrument. The *toyo* is a subset of the *siku* panpipe family, which originated with the Aymara people. They are often heard in ensembles of two.

Any given instrument's timbre is made of two components: the musical and the transient. The *toyo*'s musical sound is breathy and open, with greater force at the beginning of each blown note. Frank gives this sound to the viola and first violin, which play a melody in the diatonic parallel fourths characteristic of *toyo* ensembles. Transient sounds come from the physical interaction of two objects, such as the impact of a drumstick, the buzz of a reed, or the stroke of a bow. These occur in fractions of a second and are very easy to miss, but are extremely important for accurate timbral reproduction. Here, the percussive sound made by lips on *toyos* is recreated in cello and second violin, which play a melody in parallel minor seconds *pizzicato*, close to the bridge.

"Tarqueada" bears the tempo marking "wild, free" and invokes these feelings from the first note. The title refers to an Aymara dance, which is accompanied by the *tarka*, a hexagonal duct flute. The first violin plays the fortissimo *tarka* melody in rapidly ascending high-pitched fourths while the remaining instruments combine *crescendo-decrescendo* and fast tremolo to recreate the sound of the *charango*, an Andean

adaptation of the Spanish guitar. The movement becomes a rapid, impressionistic vision of the area, a rising and dissipating wind on an Andean mountainside.

"Himno de zampoñas" takes its name from the Spanish word for the *siku* panpipe family, *zampoña*. The first violin imitates the panpipe's transient sound, with the musical sounds exchanged between the remaining parts. Frank mimics *zampoña* hocketing techniques with ricocheting pairs of 16th notes leading to melodic quarter notes, and introduces a percussive element by instructing the viola and cello to play *col legno battuto*, beating the strings with the wood side of the bow.

"Chasqui" is based on the legend of the Incan runners: *chasquis* were messengers gifted with tremendous speed and agility, able to cover thousands of miles of well-developed Incan roads. Rapid 16th notes express this athletic archetype, occasionally interrupted by changes in rhythm and the return of the *charangos* in both violins. At certain points along their routes the *chasqui* would stop at signal stations, lighting fires to communicate even greater distances to other messengers, and Frank represents these stations with *charangos* and temporary shifts in mood. "Chasqui" imitates another wind instrument, the *quena* (*qina* in Quechua), a straight, end-blown traditional flute found throughout Peru. The second violin simulates this instrument with a fast tremolo resembling the *qina*'s fluttering sound.

"Canto de Velorio" combines Western modernism and sacred music with the curious *lloronas*, or professional crying women. The movement opens with violins playing a major-second tone cluster. In a direct reference to *mestizo* influence, and her own background in Western music, Frank introduces recurring blocks of the *Dies Irae* chant—with rhythmic interpretation left to the performers. The crying women appear just after the first chant cycle and recur through the movement, represented by descending glissando fourths played by violins and later echoed by cello.

The final movement, "Coquetos," is named for a romantic folk song traditionally sung by a group of men called *romanceros*. The main *romancero* melody starts in the violins and—like the weeping *lloronas*—later repeats in the cello. The violin parts imply guitars, and for the ending Frank specifies a "*vendaval de guitarras*" (storm of guitars) in the viola and second violin, created with *crescendo-decrescendo* tremolos and gliding octaves.

As a major U.S. composer, Frank shows the wealth of creative expression that comes from connecting with personal and cultural history. *Leyendas* also represents a major turning point: Frank has since composed several pieces expanding on Andean Peru and *mestizo* culture. Following a second trip, Frank composed *Adagio para Amantani* (2007) for cello and piano, depicting both the Lake Titicaca island of Amantani and its inhabitants. *Hilos* (2010) is a multi-movement work for clarinet, violin, cello and piano that travels further into native Peru. The title ("Threads") is a reference to Andean textiles, and each movement represents features of Quechua culture, from bowler hats and spinning tops to native dances and more of those *charangos* and *zampoñas*.

Frank's work has many dimensions and combines diverse stylistic elements, from Baroque to Bartók to post-modern and multicultural. By connecting to her personal heritage, she discovered a wellspring of rich history and native tradition to draw upon. The Americas contain many cultures, a rich, mixed history flavored with centuries of interaction between Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans. As we mature further away from oppression and conquest, American artists like Frank use *mestizaje* to tell a new story celebrating cross-culturalism in American art.

The FUTURE of "CLASSICAL" Music

OVAL TABLE 2

Creativity is the most important.

Lisa Marsh | Liz Kohl | Christine Meadows

PSU WELLNESS PROGRAM

Lisa Marsh: This separation and elitism that has followed classical music is probably going to be its death. I've worked with piano students that have classical with me and jazz with George [Colligan] or Darrell [Grant]. I've had a lot of jazz players in my Body Mapping class, and there is this unspoken awe, "oh, the classical person is playing today, I don't know if I want to play." There is this unnecessary division between what some people perceive as respect for the different styles and challenges of each. What I'm hoping for in the future is that we allow students to develop as many of these skills as possible.

Liz Kohl: There is always this [idea that] there are the people who are serious and there are the people who have fun. And you can seriously have fun, but there is a seriousness put on classical musicians.

Marsh: There was an article that described this future world. There would be this upper echelon of rich people that would have artificial intelligence doing most things for them, and there would be a very low level who couldn't get a job because artificial intelligence has all the jobs. They're on welfare, they're getting a stipend in this imaginary world. Then there is a middle, the service people, serving the very rich. They had a list of jobs that would not ever be able to be taken over by artificial intelligence and one of them was piano teacher!

[Laughter]

Kohl: The thing that can't be replaced by AI is connection. Someone can learn piano online, but they can't connect and have their body and technique assessed. They can't have their personality or their learning style adapted to in the same way.

Marsh: That's where musicians have a leg up. We live and breathe this human existence and this creative existence that could not be replicated by a machine, and in that sense we are responsible to preserve classical music—and all forms of music—into the future, so that the human race has that memory, that connection with this vital element. I can't imagine the world without music that was created by human beings.

Christine Meadows: I think creativity is the most important. In your training, whether you are training someone to be a classical musician or working on wellness in how that person sings, creativity is really the goal. And that's the goal in the future. Let's do this Mozart as deliciously refined and classically as we can—but is it creative? It seems like that is the core, for me, going forward with music.

Marsh: Absolutely. Preserving the creative.

Meadows: And letting it be more.

Marsh: Enhancing people's creativity.

Meadows: Cultivating it.

Kohl: In my yoga class we talk about taste in music. I pose the question: "What is classical music?" I call myself a classical musician, because I know it gives someone else I don't know a picture of what I kind of do. But that means anything. It could mean John Williams. I struggle with that term, because I think it is meaningless, but it means everything, but it means nothing.

Marsh: It comes with a certain amount of baggage. Most people wouldn't consider John Williams a classical musician. John Williams to me is more like a popular musician, and that's a great thing. He has more people that know his music, sing his music, play his music. I think the terms are helpful as long as we don't attach some sort of arbitrary value to popular musician versus classical musician versus jazz musician. I don't know that I would call myself a classical composer. I'm a 21st century composer. I used to be a 20th century composer, and now I'm a 21st century composer.

Musical Sincerity

GABRIEL FAURÉ AND PAUL VERLAINE'S *LA BONNE CHANSON*

Chris Poulakidas

The historical identity of the French mélodie can be traced through a lineage of composers spanning two hundred years: Hector Berlioz (1803-69), who laid the groundwork for the French song cycle with *Les nuits d'été* in 1840; Claude Debussy (1862-1918) and Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), whose songs evoke impressionistic moods of French ingenuity; Henri Duparc (1848-1933), whose mere seventeen songs display a gift in prosody that served future composers with a timeless sonic rubric for the *mélodie*; Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947), whose charming parlour songs fused traditional French elegance with the blossoming cosmopolitan spirit of Paris; and Francis Poulenc (1899-1963), whose collection of songs has been hailed as paramount among 20th-century songwriters.

Above all, it is Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) who affirms the essence of the genre. Fauré was constantly reinventing himself with candor and experimental exploration while remaining loyal to traditional standards. Carlo Caballero defines *musical sincerity* as: "[t]he translation of personality or a personal sensibility, the translation of the artist's inner life into music by force of innate creative necessities,"[1] and by this light Fauré appears as the most sincere French composer of his time.[2] Over a hundred songs make up his vocal oeuvre, the song-cycle *La bonne chanson* (1892-94) representing the crowning achievement and arguably the most sophisticated composition of his career.

At the time of *La bonne chanson*'s creation, Fauré's marriage was in turmoil. Fauré had earlier proposed to Marianne Viardot—daughter of the famous mezzo-soprano Pauline Viardot—and entered a long period of depression when she called off their engagement in 1877. When Fauré then married Marie Frémiet in 1883, his motivations were somewhat arbitrary: in the words of Fauré specialist Jean-Michel Nectoux, the composer chose to get married "as if playing roulette."[3] In 1892, in the quaint artist's community of Prunay near Bougival on the outskirts of Paris, Fauré met Emma Bardac, a neighbor of the composer's in-laws. According to biographer Robert Orledge, "Fauré's attraction towards Emma Bardac was more than just a 'new fancy' and *La bonne chanson* is the expression of his passion for her."[4]

Fauré's artistic agenda was inspired in part by his general appreciation for the feminine form, specifically in his work with female musicians. Graham Johnson observes: "His songs had always been a kind of refined seduction. Performing songs with women meant rehearsing songs with women, goodness knows how many other opportunities for intimate colloquy and private discussion."[5] Fauré was a man

of reputable principle in society, and due to his temperamental grace—not unlike the distinguished sensitivity that adorns his music—his likability largely overshadowed criticisms of his infidelities.

In an interview with fellow composer Jean Roger-Ducasse (1873-1954), Fauré revealed that he composed *La bonne chanson* in the charming soprano's home. Fauré did most of his composing during the day, and in the evenings he and Bardac (an excellent sight-reader) would try out the songs together. The rapport between them was such that she felt welcome to impart her opinions, at times suggesting musical revisions,[6] convincing Fauré to rewrite entire measures of "La lune blanche."[7] Fauré told Roger-Ducasse:

> *I never wrote anything more spontaneous than* La bonne chanson, *and I was aided by the spontaneity of the singer who remained its most moving interpreter. I have never known any pleasure to equal that which I felt as I heard these pages coming to life, one after the other as I brought them to her.*[8]

Bardac and her husband Sigismond retained autonomous lifestyles, and the wealthy banker was not preoccupied with the romantic freedom explored by his wife. Bardac possessed a striking charm that drew the attention of many musicians of the time, less by way of natural beauty than by her alluring personality and elegant musical gifts.[9] In 1905 Sigismond granted Emma a divorce, and shortly thereafter she became the second Mrs. Claude Debussy. In the final line of a letter responding to condolences sent by Fauré following Debussy's death, Bardac wrote: "He was so happy last summer to study *La bonne chanson*. People were unaware of his kindness, his sincerity, and his affection for 'the music.'"[10]

La bonne chanson takes its texts from a collection of twenty-one poems by Paul Verlaine (1844-96) written during a troubled period following the deaths of his father and his cousin Elisa Moncomble in 1865 and 1867. Of Moncomble, Verlaine biographer A.E. Carter wrote, "[s]he fitted perfectly into the childhood paradise, being as much a part of it as the good-natured father and the indulgent mother."[11] Moncomble was a key early influence on the poet's tender sensibility for delicate imagery. Following their deaths, Verlaine's absinthe habit became fully indulgent, and the troubling drink-fueled disturbances that decorate his now infamous persona had become common practice.

In July 1869, at the peak of his dissolution, Verlaine met Mathilde Mauté, the sixteen-year-old half-sister of his good friend, the composer Charles de Sivry (1848-1900).[12] About one month after his brief first meeting with Mathilde, Verlaine awoke in a brothel following a disheartening absinthe binge and spontaneously wrote to de Sivry asking for his sister's hand in marriage. Carter remarks, "to Verlaine, with years of course debauchery behind him she appeared like virginity itself, untouched and unsullied."[13] With the arrival of a promising response, the poet began the first poem of *La bonne chanson* and, "[t]ransformed with joy, Verlaine set to work ... the record of a 'purified heart.'"[14]

Shortly after his marriage to Mathilde and the birth of their son, Verlaine began his storied affair with the young poet Arthur Rimbaud. After attempting to shoot Rimbaud in Brussels in 1873, Verlaine was imprisoned for two years—not for criminal violence, but for the act of homosexuality. Even before his exploits with Rimbaud, Verlaine's penchant for carousal and excess was well-known, and he likely grappled with the spiritual, societal, and legal complications of his sexual duality long before the composition of *La bonne chanson*. "Verlaine felt that [marriage] would cure him of his ambiguity,"[15] Carter writes. "Each passionate attachment was an evasion of himself."[16]

Fauré's song cycle is a seamless partnership of music and poetry, drenched in French sensibility and unveiling the conspicuous humanity of its creators. Ravel called it "an incomparable symphony...embracing a vast and perfect lyric."[17]

Unlike Verlaine, Fauré was not creatively inclined toward symbolist rhetoric, yet his song cycle is sculpted with an aesthetic palette that seems to metaphorically renovate an otherwise simple collection of texts. Many—including the majority of Fauré's contemporaries—have found the music excessively complex, and listeners who admire and expect the melodic styles of earlier Fauré songs like "Après un rêve" and "Au bord de l'eau" are in for a surprise. Camille Saint-Saëns, the most imposing musical figure in Fauré's life, strongly disapproved of the music, claiming that Fauré had gone "completely mad."[18] Graham Johnson explains:

> *[T]he adoration that Proust [one of the cycle's early admirers] felt for the work is ignited in the heart of the listener rather less often than its composer deserves. It is perhaps its performers who love this work the best, those who have been lucky enough to experience at first hand something of the excitement and energy, life-enchanting joy, that first went into the making of this masterpiece—and there is no other word for this cycle, no matter what anyone says.*[19]

Five cyclical themes appear throughout *La bonne chanson*, most often in the accompaniment and occasionally in the vocal line. According to Johnson, "[t]he deployment of these motifs in different songs is the musical glue that gives this work its astonishing cohesion, as well as an obsessive, almost disturbing, single-mindedness."[20]

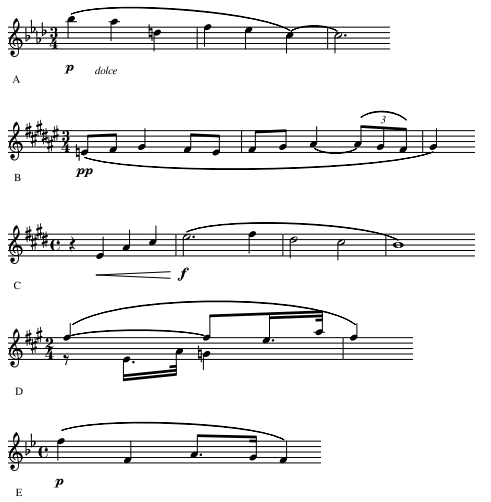
Cyclical thematic occurrences according to Orledge:[21]

Theme A, *Carlovingien*. First heard in "Une sainte en son auréole," mm. 15-16, and 79-80.

Theme B, *Lydia*. First heard in "Puisque l'aube grandit," mm. 3-4, in the vocal line. Its most prominent occurrence is a full melodic gesture in song "La lune blanche luit dans les bois," mm. 9-12, leading to the climactic statement "O bien aimée!"

Five Themes from *La bonne chanson*

from Nectoux[22]



Theme C, *Que je vous aime*. First heard in "J'ai presque peur, en vérité," mm. 65-68, an ascending unaccompanied vocal arpeggio marked *crescendo*, one of the most ecstatic moments in the cycle.

Theme D, *Birdsong*. One of the most important themes in *La bonne chanson*'s cyclical unification, despite arriving halfway through the cycle in "Avant que tu ne t'en ailles."

Theme E, *Sunrise*. First heard setting up the climactic ending "Avant que tu ne t'en ailles." Heard again at the beginning of "Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été."

The cycle begins in peaceful reverie with "Une sainte en son auréole" (A saint in her halo). Fauré paints a spiritual portrait of Verlaine's initial fondness for Mathilde in this opening song, as the poet likens her patrician grace to that of a noblewoman in the age of Charlemagne. Dovetailing lyrical phrases in the accompaniment interlace with the vocal line's gentle motion, while subtle contrasts of modal and pentatonic harmony highlight the delicate pastels of Verlaine's lyric. Charles Koechlin de-

scribes this melding of sacred textures as "a stained-glass window where the musician's art follows step by step each word."[23]

Excitement pours forth in Fauré's setting of three of the original seven strophes of Verlaine's poem, "Puisque l'aube grandit" (Since dawn is rising). The poem pairs the radiance of a new dawn with the arrival of new love. The song erupts with arpeggios rippling through both hands in the accompaniment, moving ceaselessly through a number of subtle key changes. A motive in ascending Lydian mode introduces the melody, portraying sunrise and the poet's escalating happiness. The *Lydia* theme is heard most pointedly in the next song, "La lune blanche luit dans les bois" (The white moon shines in the woods). The urgency of "Puisque l'aube grandit" comes to a tranquil resolve in this setting, the music flowing with ethereal harmony and tender dynamics akin to the serenity heard in Fauré's famous piano *Nocturnes* (composed 1875-1921). Lilting accompaniment triplet figures glide in and out of diatonic and chromatic colors, arousing an aura of exoticism in Verlaine's evening landscape. Atop the texture floats a patient lullaby where the narration pauses for contemplative exchanges between singer and pianist.

"J'allais par des chemins perfides" (I walked along treacherous paths) displays the first poetic depiction of anguish, as Verlaine recalls his destitute bachelorhood. Fauré expresses the tension immediately in the opening statement, obscure chromatic textures creating a striking disparity following the pastoral sentiment of "La lune blanche luit dans les bois." It is not until the final melodic phrase that the music arrives in an identifiable key center (F# major) as the poet's suffering gives way to "love, the delightful vanquisher."

Fauré continues his intuitive depiction of Verlaine's uneasy nature with brilliant design in the fifth song, "J'ai presque peur, en vérité" (I am almost afraid, in truth), the quickest in the collection. Its fervent pulse is accentuated by percussive accompaniment syncopations, melodic accents illustrating emotions of agitation and excitement. With its full dynamic range and central placement in the cycle, this song marks a significant emotional peak in the storyline. "Avant que tu ne t'en ailles" (Before you vanish), is an exuberant *aubade*, completely unique in structure and motivic sequence, and unlike anything in Fauré's catalog of *mélodies*. The song alternates two distinctive tempos, mirroring the lyrical structure of Verlaine's original text, comprised of two sets of couplets that stand alone respectively as single poems. Both poetic themes convey a landscape in half-light, not unlike the lyrical symbolism heard in the second, third and seventh songs. Fauré once again captures Verlaine's underlying restlessness, with fragmented melodic phrases and avoidance of harmonic resolution.

The *Birdsong* theme's arrival in "Avant que tu ne t'en ailles" marks the cycle's most functionally significant thematic moment. The theme's decisive dotted-rhythmic figure—similar to 'bird-call' themes heard in songs by Beethoven and Schubert—returns later as the final song's introductory motive.

"Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été" (So it will be on a bright summer's day)—seventh in the cycle, but the first song Fauré composed—begins with a sonorous flow of ascending arpeggios recalling "Puisque l'aube grandit." As the melody unfolds, with a vocal crescendo announcing the "glorious sun," the accompaniment recalls the *Sunrise* theme heard beneath the lyric "here is the golden sun!" at the close of "Avant que tu ne t'en ailles." In the first half of "Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été," the poet imagines a triumphant summer scene on his wedding day. The musical texture is full of excitement, with wide dynamic contrast and a higher vocal tessitura. In the second half, *Molto più lento*, Fauré conjures a moment of sensual bliss from the poet's iridescent evening portrait,

Avant que tu ne t'en ailles,
Pâle étoile du matin,
Mille cailles
Chantent, chantent dans le thym!

Tourne devers le poète,
Dont les yeux sont pleins d'amour,
L'alouette
Monte au ciel avec le jour.

Tourne ton regard que noie
L'aurore dans son azur;
Quelle joie
Parmi les champs de blé mûr!

Et fais luire ma pensée
Là-bas, bien loin, oh! bien loin!
La rosée
Gaîment brille sur le foin.

Dans le doux rêve où s'agite
Ma mie endormie encore…
Vite, vite,
Car voici le soleil d'or.

Before you vanish,
pale morning star,
A thousand quails
Are singing, singing in the thyme!

Turn towards the poet,
Whose eyes are full of love,
The lark
Soars to the sky with the coming of day.

Turn your gaze which drowns
The dawn in its blueness;
What joy
Among the fields of ripe wheat!

And make my thoughts shine
There, far away, oh! Far away!
The dew
Gently glistens on the hay.

Into the sweet dream of my darling
Who is sleeping still…
Quickly, quickly,
For here is the golden sun.

(Translation by Chris Poulakidas).

in a section of music perhaps more tender than any in the cycle. "N'est-ce pas?" (Is it not so?) follows, with hints of the poet's idealistic naiveté and hidden hesitations. Harmonic tension sustains the melody, making this setting among the cycle's most lyrical and intimate.

Johnson describes the finale, "L'hiver a cessé" (Winter has ended), as a "quasi-symphonic conclusion, a miniature *Rite of Spring* that celebrates a cosmic pantheism."[24] The music unfolds rapturously, reprising and unifying all of the cycle's thematic material, weaving a sense of wonder into the intricate floral colors of spring's coming. The cycle comes to rest with a calm epilogue, shifting into slow triple meter, an octave motif in the melody harkening back to the climactic ending of "La lune blanche luit dans les bois."

This article is an excerpt from a longer academic paper titled "Gabriel Fauré's La bonne chanson*: Interpretive Details for Performance (in practice).*

NOTES

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11 A. E. Carter, *Verlaine, a Study in Parallels* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 33.
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18 Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré: A Musical Life*, 187.
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22 Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré: A Musical Life*, 184.
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The FUTURE of "CLASSICAL" Music

OVAL TABLE 3

Exploring music itself is endless.

Leah Addington | *Julia Kinzler*

PSU STUDENT COMPOSERS

Julia Kinzler: There was a concert, *Fire and Ice*, with all Portland composers like Lisa Marsh, and there were all these visual elements collaborating with the music. They had an acrobat who works with ropes and draped fabric hanging from the ceiling. So while one of these original compositions was being performed, also this *acrobat* was performing. And it was *amazing*. It gave me options about what to engage in my brain: I can really get into the performance of what I'm seeing, or I can turn my ear to what is being done.

Leah Addington: Musicians are becoming actors. On another concert Lisa Marsh was a part of, *Burn After Listening*, there was a political piece about Trump by Jennifer Wright. Before they start playing everyone puts a helmet on, and a covering over their eyes. They start playing—and it is definitely obnoxious—and at the very end the first violinist takes her violin and smashes it to the ground, and keeps smashing and smashing. In terms of where classical music is going, I think it is going to the extremes. I don't mean destroy your instrument, but definitely bring everything to a performance.

Kinzler: Were you there for Daniel Vega's *Meat Grinder*? When they brought the BBQ sauce? The olfactory experience really pounded in that meat sensation. Completely new for me. An olfactory/musical experience. There's lots to bring in when you think about the other senses. Visual and audio are super commonplace in music, but what about taste? What about for movement one, this particular thing is being served with this particular texture, and then for movement two you have another entree.

Addington: I'm all about crossing genres, because then you get to hear the 1700s, the 1920s, and create this whole new universe, like a time out of time. Exploring music itself is endless. Growing up I would listen to a lot of film scores. Our very first DVD set was *Superman*, so that was my first film score. Next was *Fellowship of the Rings*, and that opened a whole new world for me. I'm not a video gamer but my siblings are, and I would always watch them play *Legend of Zelda* or *Final Fantasy*. If I'm talking about music, that's where I go to.

Kinzler: I was a Danny Elfman fan. I would watch *Edward Scissorhands* every day until I finally realized—and I didn't realize this until I was in high school—it wasn't so much the movie I was excited about, it was the score. And I'm recently into this meditation music, just long droney stuff, and because it goes on for like five hours it has a meditative quality. I could get excited about fusing classical music with funk, meditation, trance music—because I'm personally excited about it, because I have a personal investment.

There has to be a personal investment for anything to feel authentic and reach audiences on a deep level. Classical music isn't as available to a lot of people without there being some intention there. I think it is important to introduce them to music that is happening right now. What are composers in Portland churning out? At the very minimum, an annual field trip where schools are bussed in to listen to a concert could do just that. And it would be really cool if there could be some funding so schools wouldn't have to pay for this on their own, because they simply don't have the money.

Addington: What is important is that not just music students are sent, but that all students go.

Kinzler: That's the important thing about sustaining the future of classical music: exposure at a young age and regular exposure.

Addington: It would be super neat if there was a festival that combined orchestra and pop music. That would fuse so many different communities together. It would be awkward at first, but the more it is done, the more it would have this sense of invitation. This sense of "I feel like I hear pop elements in classical music that I've never heard before."

Kinzler: I would definitely go to that festival.

Death without Resurrection

THE CONTEMPORARY PASSION AS INCOMPLETE RITE OF PASSAGE

David Walters

The majority of the world's population professes some sort of religious belief. Death is a perennial mystery inspiring fear and compassion, horrific violence and merciful acts of forgiveness. The sordid history of what humanity has done to itself out of that fear is too long and repulsive to account for. The Passion—one of many attempts made over the centuries to understand our human nature—is the narrative of a single individual's suffering and death, most often that of Jesus of Nazareth. Many composers treat the story as a microcosm of the human condition, a subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle indictment of our own species.

The Passion's first recorded liturgical use was in the 4th century, exclusively in religious ceremonies,[1] primarily during the Holy Week leading up to Easter. It wasn't until the 12th century that this text was ever sung (monophony), and it wasn't until the 15th century that multiple singers were involved (polyphony). There was never any question as to its sacred intent.

Yet the Passion continues to fascinate composers today. To commemorate the 250th anniversary of the death of Johann Sebastian Bach in 2000, the International Bach Academy commissioned four new Passions from a diverse group of composers:[2] *Johannes-Passion* by Sofia Gubaidulina (b. 1931); *Deus Passus* by Wolfgang Rihm (b. 1952); *Water Passion after Saint Matthew* by Tan Dun (b. 1957); and *La Pasión según San Marcos* by Osvaldo Golijov (b. 1960). These compositions consider the Passion within a modern setting and illuminate the continued interest in this sacred text, notable in a society that often uses music for primarily secular purposes.

Setting Death to Music

One of the few scenes common to all four gospels is the death of Jesus. When considering the corresponding movements in these four Passions, it becomes clear that two of the composers follow more closely in Bach's footsteps, the others going further afield. Rihm's *Deus Passus* and Gubaidulina's *Johannes-Passion*, while being blatantly modern in their harmonies, still resemble generations of oratorios that came before them. Tan's *Water Passion* and Golijov's *La Pasión según San Marcos* venture into realms of non-traditional performance techniques, water-based percussion, elaborate staging, and dance. Helmuth Rilling, who commissioned all four works, asked the conductor at the dress rehearsal of *La Pasión* if the piece was really a passion at all.[3]

Golijov's movement of death is by far the simplest. It is also the shortest and the most straightforward. As in much of *La Pasión*, Golijov sets up an ostinato that continues throughout the movement. Over this, the alto playing Jesus sings the grito de muerte ("cry of death"): "Elohí, Elohí Lama Shabajtaní!" ("My God, My God why hast forsaken me?")

Tan's title is equally to the point: "Death and Earthquake."[4] After several measures of anguished figures in the cellos, the chorus comes in with nonsense syllables on a sighing figure. The text comes in with soprano and bass soloists sharing the role of Jesus.

The phrase "They gave him vinegar" alludes to the Roman soldiers at the cross giving Jesus vinegar to drink as a joke after he cries out "I thirst!"

Water Passion begins and ends with sounds and images of water, a theme which permeates the entire work, and at the moment of death Tan juxtaposes water with this bitter, acidic liquid. To depict the earthquake that followed the death of Jesus, Tan instructs all players and singers to "improvise on earthquake sounds," including screams, wind, and "tearing" (in Matthew's gospel, the curtain of the temple in Jerusalem was split in two at the moment of Jesus' death).

Rihm gave his *Deus Passus* (Passion of God) the fuller, more explanatory subtitle *Fragments of a St. Luke Passion*. Like Tan, Rihm ventures beyond his assigned gospel, setting two lines from the Gospel of St. John: "And Jesus cried out: Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" and "It is finished."

Rihm's movement, like Golijov's, includes a repeating accompaniment figure. Incessantly repeated notes in the strings, *detaché*, form a stark background against flowing, angular lines split between woodwinds and soprano, alto and tenor soloists. The chorus interjects sporadically with exposed and unresolved chords full of angst. Rihm creatively varies this pattern, offsetting the strings by half a beat for a short moment, then breaking the pattern with a *subito forte* run of 32nd notes that shocks the listener out of complacency.

So far, Rihm is the only one to capture not only what was said and what happened, but the moment of death itself. As the woodwinds descend and the strings disappear into harmonics, the harp—largely unheard until now—makes its presence known with a deep cluster of close, indistinguishable notes. The movement ends with chorus and alto soloists singing "It is finished" over a low F in the string basses. The finality of this moment is readily evident in Rihm's text setting. It is the darkest of the three considered so far, not simply because of Rihm's post-tonal harmonic language but because of the structure of this movement and the gravity he gives to every word.

Gubaidulina's "Way to Golgotha" is the most violent and complex of these four death movements. Not only does it vividly depict the final moments of Jesus' life, it intricately weaves together passages from both the Gospel of St. John and Revelations.

Like Golijov and Rihm, Gubaidulina uses a repeating rhythm: a broken march. As in Tan's "Death and Earthquake," the rhythm is stilted in irregular intervals and permutations, with a chromatic figure extending across multiple measures by augmentation and varied iterations of the theme layered through extensive divisi in the lower strings. There are multiple "hunting calls" in the lower brass, accompanying the prophetic voice of the baritone soloist.

The text from Revelation is given exclusively to the baritone, while the bass tells the story of Jesus' last moments as depicted in the Gospel of St. John. The chorus sings the other perso-

nae, *sprechstimme*, making their way through the repudiations of the Sanhedrin, the dialogue among the Roman guards, and various admonitions by minor characters from throughout the Gospel.

All of this builds to a brutal climax: the coming of the four horsemen of the apocalypse and the condemnation of Jesus by the people of Jerusalem. The movement proceeds into a long coda depicting Jesus's last interaction with his mother, two texts from the Gospel of St. John juxtaposing Jesus' human frailty and his divinity: "I am thirsty" and "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Musical Death in Modern Times

Even as late as the early 1800s, the Passion text was used only within the bounds of a church service for sacred purposes. It was during this time that the walls between sacred and secular music began to break down, to the point that today many performances of works titled "Mass" or "Passion" have little to do with living religious tradition. Why then has there been a resurgence of interest in sacred forms? In a musical environment with almost no limits on the composer's imagination, why use these texts?

Using a distillation of ritual theory, anthropology and musicology, Jennifer Kerr Budziak theorizes that the Passion occupies its unique niche among musical forms because rites of passage are so central to the Western psyche.[5] A rite of passage is much more than a young hunter making his first kill in a tribal culture: it is a fundamental process by which an individual faces a major conflict (separation from their previous state), goes through a journey to confront it (the liminal period), and returns with a new identity (introduction of their second state), undertaking the subsequent task of redefining their place in society. Even the familiar sonata form follows this same pattern, with its exposition, development, and recapitulation.

The unique place the Passion inhabits in post-modern society is that it often stops short of the final step—Easter and Resurrection. It lives in liminal space. The ambiguity of its conclusions is well-suited to a society seeking and confronting the fundamental reasons for its own behavior and modes of thought. This is further amplified by the ever-increasing secular commissioning of sacred music. When Resurrection is not the expected answer to the questions posed by a Passion setting, the listener is left wrestling with those questions on their own. The four composers under discussion all sought to the give listeners a liminal framework within which they might arrive at their own answers.

Immediately following "Muerte," Golijov ends his Passion with a *kaddish*: a Jewish prayer sequence that dates back to antiquity and is regularly recited in synagogue services, specifically during times of mourning. Golijov combines the traditional *kaddish* text with "O Vos omnes" and further repetitions of "Elohi, elohi, lama shabachtani." This takes us from the relentless D minor of "Muerte" to the soft, "infinitely slow" (Golijov's term) E Major of the epilogue.

After the earthquake, Tan returns to the sound of water, but now Christ's baptism has been mixed with tears. Using original text and a paraphrase of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 ("There is a time for everything..."), a melodic ostinato takes shape and slowly fades into a rhythmic ostinato of water drumming.

Where Passions of past centuries have alluded to the Resurrection of Jesus, Rihm curtails any hopeful impulse with the inclusion of a non-biblical text, Paul Celan's *Tenebrae*. Celan was a survivor of the Holocaust, and much of his work speaks to God's culpability in the atrocities committed during World War II. It is a dark turn to take at the end of what was already a dark piece of music, and Rihm's *Deus Passus* perfectly illu-

strates the concept of living in liminal space: there is no conclusion.

Gubaidulina takes us to a grander place in the final movement of her *Johannes-Passion*. She continues to incorporate Revelation into the traditional Passion text from the Gospel of St. John. Unlike the other Passions, which seem to have a personal story to tell in their final moments, Gubaidulina takes us to Armageddon—the end of the world—violently translating the prophecy of the seven bowls of God's wrath, poured out on humanity, with strident rhythmic figures and braying glissandi from the organ.

Inconclusion

Each of our four composers has revelled in the second step of the rite of passage—the liminal journey—and in leaving the answers up to the listener. We are confronted with our own culpability for having asked the questions in the first place. The Passion is unique, even among sacred works, in that it unashamedly portrays humanity's violent nature and our tendency toward duplicity and betrayal. In doing so, it becomes an ideal crucible through which we must psychologically pass in order to claim who we might become on the other side. We must be aware of our shortcomings in order to ever have a hope of resolving them. Works of this nature and depth are necessary, not only for the growth of the choral genre but for the betterment of the human condition. Is there resurrection? That remains to be seen.

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

ENDNOTES

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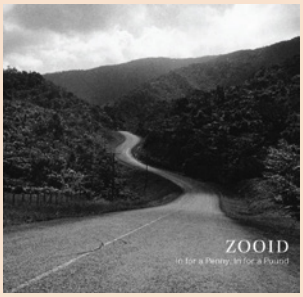
Album Reviews

Henry Threadgill: *In for a Penny, In for a Pound*

PI RECORDINGS, 2015



Henry Threadgill's experimental approach to instrumentation and composition exists in the space between jazz and classical music, and flourishes on the 2015 album, *In for a Penny, In for a Pound* (Pi Recordings). When awarding Threadgill the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2016, the Pulitzer committee recognized the album as "a highly original work in which notated music and improvisation mesh in a sonic tapestry that seems the very expression of modern American life."

To say I enjoyed the entire album would be an oversimplification. My attention span for experimental music is tenuous, at best. On the other hand, I find it impossible to turn away after discovering something new and exciting,

which accurately describes my first listen through *In for a Penny*. The first track offered seemingly aimless and utterly independent thoughts, all voiced at the same time, challenging my desire to stay actively engaged. However, a vague sense of tonality and mostly steady rhythm overrode my cynicism and encouraged me to keep going.

For over forty years, flutist/saxophonist/composer Threadgill has been tearing down boundaries with bands like X-75 and Very Very Circus, bringing together unusual combinations of instruments (tuba, electric guitar) to create music defying analytical observation. Threadgill composed *In for a Penny* for Zooid, his current and longest-running ensemble. Joining Threadgill are Jose Davila on trombone and tuba, Liberty Ellman on guitar, Christopher Hoffman on cello and violin, and Elliot Humberto Kavee on drums and percussion.

On the album's Bandcamp page, Threadgill describes the six-track album as an "epic": introduction, four long movements, and an exordium (a type of introduction, more often associated with literature). Each of the longer movements is a kind of concerto, focusing on each of the group's musicians, from "Ceroepic (for drums and percussion)" to "Unoepic (for guitar)."

Musically, the album represents a full realization of Threadgill's compositional system. Each musician is assigned, or chooses, three notes of a triad—these form the launchpad of their performance. Improvisation is based on the pitches available within the harmony at any given moment, while the harmony itself moves without traditional resolution. Instead, chords are based on specific intervals and the pitches of the set.

Threadgill's own explanation, in a 2016 interview with jazz critic Howard Mandel, does little to elucidate specifics, instead offering a characteristically surreal description:

> *Everything that happens melodically, harmonically, and counterpoint-wise is a result of the intervals, which are in existence for a specified length of time. When the improvisation part comes up, the same process is applied. It creates a gravity field. If you break it by playing something that doesn't fit, you throw confusion into the air.*

In the same interview, he says, "there is a system and there is no system." If describing Threadgill's system/no-system is confounding, the resulting music is doubly so. *In for a Penny* not only blurs lines between genres, it outright challenges the separation of predetermined composition and improvisation. The "epic" movements are where the fruits of Threadgill's system are on full display. Out of disorderly instrumental expression, perfect unions of melody and harmony create poignant cells of group cohesion. Although the music can sometimes seem eminently dissonant and chaotic as the performers discover new locations on their respective journeys through the composition, there are mo-

ments of serendipitous reunion throughout the wanderings, when the divergent paths of each musician merge into clear harmony.

Over the course of 80 minutes, Threadgill's group oscillates between outright experimental improvisation and more stable passages. The music always moves forward, and never repeats itself. Listeners should allow themselves to be swept away from start to finish, free to follow any number of constantly developing lines in the process. Whether it's the light-hearted tuba carrying the low-end through "Ceroepic" or the frenetic guitar lines of "Unoepic," there is sure to be something to capture the attention of jazz aficionados and casual listeners alike.

— Aaron Shingles

Andy Akiho: *The War Below*

NATIONAL SAWDUST TRACKS, 2018

U.S. composer and steel pan player Andy Akiho (b. 1979) has become an increasingly innovative voice in the contemporary music scene over the last decade. Akiho came to the attention of Portland audiences via Chamber Music Northwest, where he has lately been something of an informal composer-in-residence.

The War Below (2018), his second album, consists of two multi-movement compositions. The first of these, *Prospects of a Misplaced Year*, is a quintet for strings and prepared piano, pairing the Friction Quartet with pianist Jenny Q Chai. *Septet*—a collaboration with LA Dance Project and choreographer Benjamin Millepied—brings together members of Grammy-nominated orchestral collective The Knights with Akiho and two of his frequent collaborators: percussionist Ian David Rosenbaum and Bang On a Can All-star pianist Vicky Chow.

The first movement of *Prospects*, "The War Below"—a reference to Friction Quartet violist Taija Warbelow—jumps straight in with a theme on Warbelow's viola. Akiho masterfully utilizes silence and syncopated rhythms to build tension. Prepared piano plays percussive sounds in a call and response with the viola, and as the other instruments enter the texture their dialogue blossoms into a heated exchange, almost an argument, which devolves into complete chaos, a musical battlefield.

The second movement, "Matchbook Aria," paints the battlefield after the battle, with a transparency that gives the movement a mysterious and grim atmosphere. The pairing of slow sweeping cello gestures and low piano chords imparts an ominous feeling. "(K)in(e)sthetic (V)ar(i)atio(n)s," a lively movement whose title cleverly spells the first name of violinist Kevin Rogers, has an unsettled and agitated feel. What makes this battle different is its dance-like feel, a more refined and calculated vibe compared to the chaotic first movement.

The final movements—"Palindromic Queue" and "On The tIdeS of november"—complete a transition from prepared to unprepared piano notes, which

have drifted over time from diverse percussive sounds to a more traditionally pianistic texture. It often sounds as if several different percussion instruments are being played, but the percussion effects are nothing more than dimes and poster tacks stuck in the piano strings. The final movement paints a picture of resolution, the end of Akiho's story. To me the piano part represents a soldier, the string parts symbolizing different stages of his psychological healing process.

Septet is scored for percussion (proper percussion this time), piano, strings, and steel pan. Akiho builds tension with strategic silence, a quiet and eerie feeling. The music alternates fast-paced, high-energy sections—some consonant, others jarring and dissonant—with moments of mystery and repose. Akiho's steel pan adds a fresh timbre to an already complex ensemble sound.

What's notable about Akiho's compositions is the way they groove in a way that makes it easy for the listener to sink their teeth into them, no matter the complexity. His style has evolved considerably from the synesthetic color compositions of his first album *No one To kNOW one* (2011) to the darker textures of *The War Below*, and his future looks bright. Rosenbaum and the Dover Quartet have been working on a recording of Akiho's revised *LIgNEouS* for string quartet and marimba, and in October 2019 the Oregon Symphony Orchestra will premiere his *Percussion Concerto* with superstar percussionist Colin Currie.

— Alexis Deona

Julie Wolfe: ***Anthracite Fields***

CANTALOUPE MUSIC, 2015

Julia Wolfe's *Anthracite Fields*, an oratorio scored for mixed choir and sextet (bass clarinet, guitar, percussion, piano, cello, bass), was commissioned and premiered in 2014 by the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia. The music was recorded in 2015 by the Choir of Trinity Wall Street and the Bang on a Can All-Stars, was released the same year by Bang On A Can's label, Cantaloupe Music, and was subsequently awarded the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for Music. The hour-long composition is an homage to the Anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania where Wolfe was raised, and highlights the difficult lives of the miners while acknowledging how the industry supported the modern conveniences of American life in the twentieth century.

The first movement, "Foundation," sounds like a sonic facsimile of the Vietnam War Memorial: the text is derived from the Pennsylvania Mining Accident index of 1896-1916, which catalogues the names of workers who perished in mine accidents. For most of the movement, Wolfe sets only the names of miners with monosyllabic last names and the first name John, an effect which becomes increasingly disorienting as the ensemble's momentum builds. Names fly by, giving listeners the overwhelming impression of running down

a hall displaying the morbid list of names. "Foundation" ends with a haunting whistling passage, recalling a whistle closing a day in the mines.

If there is any problem with this opening movement, it is simply that it causes the oratorio to peak early. The musical devices and text are relatively simple, but their disturbing effect casts a shadow over the rest of the work.

In the energetic second movement, "Breaker Boys," instruments bounce syncopated rhythms against a regular drumstick click. The text, adapted from old children's street rhymes, feels jaunty and almost joyous—an ironic effect when juxtaposed over the struggles of child laborers in the early days of the Industrial Revolution. In the middle section, bustling rhythms dissipate into a thin texture while the male choir sings a new text, taken from an interview with former child worker Anthony Slick. The movement is drastically stark, directly confronting the listener with the harsh realities of these boys' working conditions. However, the movement's final section undercuts the harsh severity of its middle passages with the addition of a full drum kit. The all-too-basic beat makes the music sound cheesy, like a rejected number from a Broadway musical.

In the *recitative*-like middle movement "Speech," the tenor soloist sings the words of labor leader and former United Mine Workers of America president John L. Lewis: declarations like "we owe protection to those men and we owe the security to their families if they die" are pronounced by the soloist and repeated by the chorus, amplifying Lewis as a conduit for the voices of disenfranchised coal miners (the text is taken from Lewis' 1947 testimony before Congress). The movement is musically the most sparse of *Anthracite Fields*, allowing Wolfe to clearly articulate Lewis' message.

By contrast, fourth movement "Flowers" is texturally the most dense. From a delicate beginning—solo acoustic guitar and female choir—Wolfe gradually weaves more instruments into the texture, cultivating a layered, garden-like sound. The text quotes Barbara Powell, the daughter of miners, and depicts life in mining communities where all the families helped maintain communal gardens. The luscious soundscapes of "Flowers" provide a much needed reprieve between the first three bleak movements and the mechanical final movement.

"Appliances" is Wolfe's nod to the ways the coal industry continues to affect our daily lives. Angular lines and jagged rhythms bustle against one another, building to a cacophonous climax representing the overwhelming stimuli of modern life before gradually receding to a final whistle on a major third recalling the conclusion of "Formation."

Anthracite Fields is a colossal piece of music and a fine modern recording, at once haunting and beautiful, reflective and urgent, playful and devastating. Wolfe demonstrates her mastery of orchestration, text setting, and musical symbolism, and repeated listenings reward the ear and heart with new layers of sound and meaning.

— Adam Michael Brooker

Breathing Together in the Same Room

AN INTERVIEW WITH KARIN MAGALDI

Matthew Neil Andrews

Subito: What was your aha moment? What's the thing that made you realize this was not just some thing but a thing you wanted to do?

Karin Magaldi: Well how far back do you want to go? What popped in my head was not so much that I saw something—because I didn't—but when I was 12 I lived in Hawaii and my dad was in the military. We lived really close to Pearl Harbor, and you could walk around Pearl Harbor and still see bullet holes from the war. I was in parochial school at that time, and I wrote poetry. Doesn't everybody write poetry? The nuns encouraged me to write a play, so I did. I'd never seen a play. I don't think I'd read a play. But I adapted parts of *Day of Infamy* [written by Walter Lord and published in 1957], about December 7th, 1941. We made props, we made one of those WWII-era radios, and we had the radio report. It was great. It was my very first play.

I was not in theater in high school, I was in the Chemistry Club. But then when I was in college in L.A. I was asked to write a play—again somebody saw something in me, and I don't know what that "something" was. I adapted a Tolstoy short story and it was performed at the college. I adapted it for radio play that was then broadcast in Chicago. So this is the beginning of what I did. After I graduated, I worked as a graphic designer, and then I wrote off and on, but playwriting is a very difficult field. It's hard writing plays anyway but chances are you're just not going to make much money doing it. But I still wrote anyway.

Interspersed with all of that, I'm also a musician. Believe it or not, I was a choir director at a couple of different churches. I cantored and played percussion for years both dumbek and congas.

Subito: Composers have a similar deal to the director-playwright thing. If you don't do your own music it's hard to get other people to do it. But it's a delicate balance. You've got the intimacy, but you don't get the outside perspective.

Magaldi: To make sure that you know what you know comes through. It's similar. When you write a play, you're writing a score. You're writing for the ear, and words are music. This is how I teach writing: words are music, and words have sounds that come out of the body. You play

your body as an instrument, whether it's the vowel sounds or the percussive sounds.

So a director has to have an ear, but the director also has to have an eye because you're dealing with space and geometry. The words lead you not only into the intention of the actor, but also the intention in the script itself: what are these characters, and who are they, and where would they stand? When you're listening to the words themselves, where does that sound live in their bodies? Singers do this.

So it's the same thing with the words, and I think you have to have a really good ear to write plays and poetry. When you're directing you have to find all of those things in the dialogue. Not the stage directions, but within the text itself. We're counting time too, as playwrights. We have our measures, we have our phrases, we have our movements.

Subito: The beats.

Magaldi: Yeah, we have the beats. The beats are a little bit different though. There are actor beats, and there are director beats, and they're different. An actor's beat is predicated on the action: What does the character want in this moment? They have strategies, and when they hit an obstacle, they have to go in a different direction in order to get around that obstacle. Those are the beats.

Subito: So it's inherently responsive?

Magaldi: It's a shift in the movement. Which is slightly different in music.

Subito: Not necessarily physical movement though—no shift in the direction?

Magaldi: The intention, the strategies, the negotiations. The director beats are often just larger measures. You might have a whole scene and say: "Well what are the strategies in the scene? What is the arc? How does it resolve, to go into the next one?"

Subito: There's beats within beats, then?

Magaldi: There's beats within beats. It's a lot like music. That's why I'm glad I'm a musician.

Subito: Do you think there's a parallel universe where you're directing choirs and people say, "Did you know that Karin Magaldi also writes and directs plays?"

Magaldi: Only people who know me! For me being a choir director is a very different thing

because it is, dare I say it, a spiritual realm. It's about bringing us all up together.

Subito: It's a different purpose.

Magaldi: It's a very different purpose.

Subito: In both cases it's an embodied experience of art. What's the difference between directing a play and directing a choir? There's the spiritual space, sure, but how about the mechanics?

Magaldi: I think it's the same. I directed three different choirs for an ordination mass. You've got the vocalists, and then the hand bells, and then the instrumentalists over there. I was directing all of them—although I had to hire somebody to play off me so they could get the instrumentalists over there. It's this whole balance thing. If you're conducting, you're having this section rise and this section quiet, and it's the same thing when you're working with actors in space. This is the focus, this is where lighting designers get their cues, scenic designers in terms of colors on a stage, costume designers in terms of costumes. The colors of sound and space. Whenever I would conduct a choir, I always felt like there was this ship that I was trying to hold up, and all the voices were one voice, and I'm trying to get them to sing together.

Subito: Whereas in drama you want conflict.

Magaldi: Or tension. But you're still balancing that tension. If you can't balance it or work with it then everything just collapses. So it's still this physical thing, to hold it in balance. With directing for stage, you're thinking about all the geometry. I love geometry, I love volume, I love levels, I love all of that. And that is like conducting an orchestra too, in a way. Bodies in space. It's a physical something you put your hands on. You can't put your hands on space, but you know what I mean. It's measurable.

Subito: UCLA, Europe, Canada, Berkeley, Portland. What stimulated these transitions? What led you to these experiences, and what are some of the things you took away?

Magaldi: I just wanted to keep writing theater. When I was in Canada I was working in children's theater, which is a very positive thing in Canada. Children's theater in the States is usually relegated to *children's* theater, and it's in some ways considered second class. It's entirely different in Canada. I was an actor, and we were touring shows in Manitoba. I lived in Winnipeg and I was writing for them, teaching, writing, doing all of this stuff. And I had a great time. I loved it. I loved it.

When I came back to the States and applied to Berkeley and got in, it was because I wanted to teach. Get your PhD, you can teach. I got to do a lot of directing [at Berkeley] because it was a directing program. I got to direct during the summer, did some really fun stuff some of the other graduates didn't. One of the positive things wasn't because of Berkeley, but because of where I lived. I worked at American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, in the young conservatory, because of my work in Canada. And none of the grad students were working in local theater, which just blew me away.

Just before we came [to Portland] I was the education outreach manager for Shakespeare Santa Cruz (SSC), a festival right on the UC Santa Cruz campus. I wrote for them. Here's another case where they asked me to adapt: I adapted Ibsen's *A Doll's House* and—dare I say this in the interview—Bryan Cranston was my Torvald. The man. As the Education and Outreach Manager I was also writing for SSC, I was doing the 90-page program every year and I directed Shakespeare-to-go touring troupe up and down the coast in California. It was all positive.

I was doing music at the same time during all this time. Then this job came up [at PSU], and I applied, and I didn't think I'd get it, but the job opening was for a playwriting-directing posi-

I'm more of this school of asking questions so the writer can see what they're writing, rather than tell them what to do. Because in playwriting there is a formula, but it's not formulaic.

tion. And you don't see those. It's unusual. I won the lottery and I got it. I've been here ever since. I work locally and I teach. That's my life.

Subito: You're also a professional dramaturg. It seems a lot of us don't know what that entails.

Magaldi: There's a whole history of it but the simple version is that we are like senior editors. We're script doctors for new plays. That's one aspect of it. Another aspect is that often the director's notes, or even the notes about a production, are written by people like me. This is what I was doing at SSC. We're also considered scholars. We'll sit in our rehearsal room and advise the director, or if you're working with a new playwright you're asking what I call the prickly questions about their text.

There's a whole spectrum of dramaturgs. There are some who are trained to tell the writer how to do it. I'm more of this school of asking questions so the writer can see what they're writing, rather than tell them what to do. Because in playwriting there is a formula, but it's not formulaic. It's not like screenwriting—you know, on page 5 you're supposed to have this, page 10 this, all that stuff. But there's so many different kinds of plays. You have to work with a writer to see where they're at, and they may need to see where they're at themselves by somebody asking questions. I've been doing that professionally in Portland since I got here.

And that's my whole dramatic writing sequence here at PSU. I teach it just like that. I just push them, I don't tell them how to write, but I ask questions and then they learn how to critique each other in a constructive way.

Subito: Could you describe something you've done recently that made you think, "this is peak dramaturg. This is the job in a nutshell."

Magaldi: Some of it just depends on the playwright. You know, not everybody even in theater knows what a dramaturg does. Every summer for the past 15 years I've worked at Portland Center Stage, and they have a playwrights festival every year called JAW: Just Add Water. These are nationally known playwrights, some of them international. We have two weeks of rehearsal, four hours a day, each play. Every year I do at least two plays, so I'd be in rehearsals for two weeks, eight hours a day. They feed you really well!

One year, I had a playwright from New York, and I think he was probably used to the playwrights of an unnamed university on the East Coast that tells you what you should fix. When I introduced myself—"Hey whatever you need me to do I'm here, I can listen, I can ask questions"—he says, "I don't need a thing from you." That was not a good experience.

On the other hand, there was one playwright in particular. We went to lunch a couple

of times, we'd sit down, we'd go through the text bit by bit, and he'd ask "well what do you think, does this work?" You're really getting into the weeds with them. Others would want you to just see the whole picture and then ask questions.

Subito: Let's talk about the big ideas. What do you think is the most important thing? What is something everyone should know? What wisdom would you impart to aspiring playwrights, aspiring directors, students of theater?

Magaldi: I think in terms of writers, it depends on if they're undergrads or grads. When I was in grad school at UCLA, Eugène Ionesco was still alive. UCLA had a lot of money, so they could bring in people: they brought in Ionesco, they brought in Edward Albee, they brought in Tennessee Williams. I remember sitting at a long table in a seminar room, Ionesco's at the other end, and I was at this end, and he first asked us: "Why are you here? Why don't you just listen to your dreams?" I thought that was good advice.

We miss something in our educational system if we don't listen to our dreams. That's what I tell my students. Don't forget yourself. Don't forget your dreams. Just write. Because it's very difficult to do playwriting. I would imagine it's difficult to compose music as well. I think the young students especially—and I did this—tie up their self-worth so much with their writing. If you write something and people don't like it: "Oh my God, I'm a terrible person."

And the thing is, *they're not*. In music you have to play your scales. That's what I tell my students: you're playing scales. They want to write the great play right away, and it doesn't help them. So I tell them listen to your dreams, and just write and try stuff out. And try it from many different perspectives.

There's an exercise I got from Erik Ehn. Five years ago I went to a retreat in Italy where he was teaching at La MaMa [Umbria International, a cultural center outside Spoleto]. I thought "Oh my God this is a revelation." I've used it ever since.

We wrote a 14-line poem, and the poem can be on anything. It can be what your day yesterday was like, it could be an ode to a flower—it doesn't matter. Just write 14 lines. And then once you've written them, rearrange the lines. No seriously! First line, fourteenth line, and then the third line will be the second line. Arrange it by line length, arrange it by syllables, arrange it by energy, arrange it by whatever. Suddenly you see what you really have, because you're taking it apart.

You're writing for the ear, and words are music.

You can do that with a play as well—if you've got these little scenes, what do you do? Rearrange and put them in a different order and what do you really have? Do you really need this particular scene? If you pull it out, will it collapse? If it collapses then leave it there. If it doesn't, do you need it? Our writing is not precious.

So I think between "listen to your dreams," "don't worry about the degree," "your writing is not precious," and "you're playing scales": that's what I tell students, and that's what I tell myself.

I have to tell myself that my self-worth is not predicated on if people like what I've written.

Subito: I love that 14-line thing. That's genius.

Magaldi: I always say who I got it from and I'm sure he got it from somebody else. You've got a scene, you play it one way, then you have to play around with it. "What do you want from each other? Why don't you try this in terms of your wants from each other?" There's not just one way to play a scene, ever. Including Shakespeare. There are too many people who look at Shakespeare and say, "this is how you do it." At SSC, we brought in Claire McEachern—she is a professor at UCLA—to be a dramaturg for *Much Ado About Nothing*. She was a scholar, and she'd also been tapped to write the introduction to a new Arden edition of the play.

Being in rehearsal was a revelation for her, because she was seeing the actors and the director try different scenes in different ways than what the scholars said the meaning was. She wrote that in her introduction, and she got some pushback from other scholars because, you know, they would see Shakespeare as "This is what this line means." Well it's a play, so you play around with it. Each night, each day a performance happens, it's different.

That's thinking about theater as an art, directing as an art, playwriting as an art. I think it's the same thing with music. It's ephemeral. The sound goes out and then fades and it's gone forever. It's great because it's a living thing. It will never occur again. It's live, it's life, it's immediate, it's human.

That's why I like theater. People ask me—you know, because I lived in L.A.—"why didn't you go into film?" I think if I lived in L.A. now I might go into TV, because TV and playwriting have an affinity for each other, in terms of the long form but also in terms of character. But I still like theater better because it's live. TV actors and screen actors, they'll go back to theater, which is their first love, because it's immediate and you and the audience are breathing together in the same space. There's nothing else like it.

Subito: Physical proximity makes a difference for everything.

Magaldi: Well, we're people. We're made to touch each other, we're made to be together, you know?

Subito: What are your thoughts on how theater, music, and dance interact with each other, in general and on the concrete "next-year-at-PSU" level?

Magaldi: All three have an affinity because they're performance based. And it's live performance. Obviously dance is the body in space, it goes with music and it's creating its own physical music, a visual music. Theater marries the music of the words with the spatial—with geometry—and with actual live music and then movement. We also have the scenic elements, costumes that convey character, color, and shape and movement. The theater has all of these art forms in it. That's another reason why I like it.

It's not "you do this part of it and you do this part of it." No, we collaborate together in all these areas. We have to think about tech, because everything that goes on backstage is what realizes what's on the stage. If you don't have the crew or the props, if you don't have the scenic elements, if the actors don't know where they're supposed to go, if you don't have wardrobe to dress them, it's not gonna happen. You need all of that, and you need the stage manager to call cues, you need the designers, lighting, costumes, and scenery, to be able to create a world for the actors to walk in.

Subito: That gets into the question of the frame. Where is the frame? How far forward is the frame? Because sometimes you're leaning right in, and the frame is behind you practically. It's another thing musicians don't think about that much.

Magaldi: The frame is incredibly important because it conveys a world view. The Greeks were open to the sky. They were open to the gods. Then when you started having theaters that were closed in the Renaissance, it's like there is no transcendence anymore. It's all about what's on that stage and who you are. Then the difference between indoor and outdoor in the modern era, or a proscenium where you're looking into the diorama, or thrust, or in the round. I've directed in all those spaces, and each one says a different thing about the world of the play.

I directed this play called *Beau Jest* and it's about a non-Jewish guy who is hired to be a Jewish boyfriend by the daughter for a Seder [ritual Passover meal]. I directed this in a synagogue, and we rotated the dining table in each scene. The audience got to see all different perspectives of the Seder dinner. That was the funny part of this thing: you can move the stage, you can put a stage on revolve within a proscenium space, you can have the audience seated all around, or thrust proscenium, all of those things, and it says different things about the role of the play. If you're in the round you're looking across, not only seeing the action but also seeing the audience. That's part of what you're saying about this world.

This is basic directing. I know my colleagues will read this and they'll go, "Karin, everybody knows this!"

Subito: But it's good to let people backstage sometimes, right?

Magaldi: When I was at SSC I would do backstage tours as part of my job. And of course everybody wants to get in on the secrets backstage, but so many people who go to theater don't really know all that goes into it. And it's a lot. You have to be smart to do theater. People think, "oh, I'm just going to act." Well, no, you're not just going to act. You have to have some skills. There are tools. Not tricks—tools. Skills.

Subito: What's new and exciting in PSU theater?

Magaldi: Two years ago there was a group of women—the 1917 Drama Reading Group—and they've been together since 1917. In 2017 they wanted to celebrate their 100-year anniversary. Most of the women in the group, their grandmothers were in it. It's that kind of a group. They put together a pool of money and approached us and said "we would like theater and film students to write a play, and the winning one will get a prize."

So we did that two years ago, and it was a one-off. This year they came back and said, "we would like to commit to you guys for five years." It's a $2500 prize for writing a play. There was one that rose to the top (*Man of the Year* by Raz Mostaghimi), there were two runners up (*Honey Lips* by Ashlee Radney and *Office Hours* by Ross Showalter), and there was one we're considering maybe a curtain raiser. These will all be in the new play festival (May 16th to June 2nd in LH55, the Boiler Room Studio Theater). Five years they're going to do this for us. It's amazing.

Subito: Was this the thing you wanted to share but not before March 31st?

Magaldi: No, I wasn't thinking about this until just now. Do you want to know what I wanted to share?

Subito: Yes!

Magaldi: Next year Artist Repertory Theatre has to move out of their building for two to three years for renovations, and they are going to be, as they say, "on tour." They've been looking for different spaces around town to do their season. What's exciting about it is we are going do a co-production with ART and Profile Theatre. It's an incredible opportunity for our students. It's going to be the winter show in Lincoln Performance Hall, and our students are going to be able to audition. There's no promise, there's

no guarantee, but Acting professor Devon Allen is going to work with the students and really mentor them.

The play is *Indecent* by Paula Vogel, a preeminent American playwright. It was on Broadway last year. This is a big deal. Our students are going to be involved on all levels. ART/Profile are going to be in residence, and we'll be working with the professionals. Students are going to be able to work with designers, be able to work tech, crew etc..

"In order to learn and get better and communicate, we have to fail." — that's what I tell students

This will be a fully professional production, not a student production. Fully professional. Our students will be able to study with the big guys, and I think that is an incredible opportunity. The music program will be involved. We're hoping the music director will come from the School's music program, and some of our musicians would be involved. The script calls for clarinet, accordion, and violin—Klezmer music.

It's a win-win for everybody. I think ART is going to get a different audience. It's a bigger space than they've usually been in. And we're going to get their audience. I think magic can happen between the two groups. I'm just so excited for this opportunity with them in residence. Of course there are lots of logistics to work out. Who cares? We're gonna do it. It's very exciting.

Subito: Our favorite last question: What would you ask Karin Magaldi? What is a question you wish somebody would ask, or something that no one ever asks about? What don't you usually get to say?

Magaldi: One thing I think often gets lost in our discussion about the arts in general—but I think theater in particular, in our capitalist culture—is that the arts express our humanity. Whether we partake of it, whether we listen to music, whether we are actors, or whether we're writing plays. This is so key to who we are in the world. And when we're a commodity, when we can be bought and sold, we lose that. We lose the spirit.

My students and I get caught up in this. "Is it good enough to sell? Is it good enough to get an audience? Is this going to be successful?" That diminishes it, squeezes the life out of it. Just like in life, we need to fail. I think we forget that. In order to learn and get better and communicate, we have to fail. And we're so scared of it. We have something we want to express. We want to communicate. There's a tune that's in our head that we need to share with somebody else. A line from a play. Watch us while we act something so we can all learn. Being on stage you pick up the energy from the audience and it's one big conversation that's happening. When I'm in a choir it's the same thing. When you're performing it's the same thing.

We're all breathing that one breath together. That one heartbeat. I think that's something we don't talk about enough, how the arts are so necessary for us to be fully human.

What Kind of Music Do You Listen to for Pleasure?

AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID SCHIFF

Charles Rose

Subito: The identity of music in the U.S. is very broad. How do you conceive of American music? Do you think there is an American identity that is expressed musically?

Schiff: In your life, there are accidents of where and when you were born, what you heard and what you didn't hear, and those have a certain effect on you. Then there's stuff that you try to do willfully. With so much music there are many aspects that interest me, and some place along the line I gave myself permission to be eclectic. In many ways the most important person to my music was Charles Mingus. I saw him perform many times and his music had a directness to it, an expressive punch that has always been something I aspire to. He was a creative person and he was also totally his own thing.

Subito: An iconoclast.

Schiff: Very courageous in that way. I grew up being exposed to the Bernstein-Copland line. I met Copland, and he was the most charming person I've ever met in my life. I like the lonely, middle-of-the-night Copland. He had these different sides to him. We celebrated July 4th, 1978 at Elliott Carter's country house. Aaron was

the guest of honor, and I was given the place of honor next to him, and he gave me a lot of good advice. The best advice he gave was, "conduct your own music—you know it better and you care about it more." And he was right. So, I owe a lot to Aaron.

Being American is an accident, and one of the most liberating things in my life is that I was given this great opportunity to study in England for two years. I went to Cambridge, and I was fortunate to meet two young composers there, both of whom had studied with Stockhausen: Roger Smalley and Tim Souster. Even though I was studying English, I'd hang out with them all

the time. At Columbia, this uptown scene in New York, I'd go to every concert and Milton Babbitt was there, Stefan Wolpe was there, Varèse was there until he died, Elliott Carter was there. I got to England and they had a completely different sense of who was important. That's when I realized that there wasn't one list and that I could decide for myself. Having that perspective was very helpful to me.

Virgil Thomson said that to be an American composer is to live in this country and write music. I think that's right. Certainly compared to Europe, American composers tend to be less boxed into a classical mindset, more open to other stuff. Other than that I don't feel particularly American as opposed to something else.

Subito: Maybe these are things that come afterwards, rather than thought about in the moment. Composers write based on what they hear around them, and that develops their sense of musical identity.

Schiff: It's a question of who's heard and who is not heard. In the '30s and '40s, there was a group of composers, Copland and Virgil Thomson, who set out to define American music in a certain way. They were somewhat successful, but to me their music was much less interesting than Ellington's. Hardly anybody noticed him at the time, or at least in very different terms.

One aspect that is troubling to me is cultural amnesia. When I was younger than you are now, if you asked who the most important American composers were I'd say Copland, Roy Harris, Walter Piston, and William Schumann. How much of them have you heard lately?

Subito: Not much. I've read the Piston books though.

Schiff: So what happened? The fifth person would be Samuel Barber, but his music has come back. It was lost for a period of time. So what creates that sense of the past? Who decides who is visible and who isn't? The most perplexing one is Harris, because he was considered the king.

Terry Riley and Steve Reich had a huge influence on me. I performed Riley's music in England, and when I got back I started hearing a lot of Reich and Glass. Reich spoke to me more because I had done a lot of West-African drumming. I had this experience very typical of my generation, around 1975. It was the day atonality died, and we all had that moment. I'll never forget hearing *Music for 18 Musicians*. That was a life-changing moment. Right around when Reich's first album came out, his musicians gave a concert at Columbia, and it was in the student union rather than the concert hall. They started with *Clapping Music*, then *Six Pianos*, then *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices, and Organ*, and word got around that something interesting was happening. At the beginning of their concert, there were about fifty people there and by the end it was packed. It was the only new music concert I've been to where there were more people at the end than the beginning. I said, "this guy is on to something."

But I didn't sign up as a minimalist at that point. What I got from his music is that Reich gave me permission to be Schiff. I would go to concerts at Columbia surrounded by Babbitt and Wolpe, and there was usually some Schoenberg or Webern at the concert, and some Wuorinen, people like that. I was particularly intrigued by Wolpe's music because it was particularly hard and you had to admire that. He was a very sympathetic figure, his students would carry him into concerts, due to his Parkinson's. His music would test you. Though it was also interesting to hear music like Reich's which didn't test you.

Subito: Why did you study English at Columbia if you knew that you wanted to be a composer?

Schiff: There were no musicians in my family, or in my family's circle, so I couldn't imagine a life in music. And somehow in my junior year of high school, I became the star English student.

It was very easy for me to do. Literature was a way of finding out about myself—which is not a good reason to study it, but that's why. I picked up from my parents that they were concerned about the future, as parents are, and they didn't know anybody in the business, and particularly my mother felt very inadequate even though all of my friends were in music and their parents knew more. I never thought I could have a life where music would be at the center. It took me until I was about twenty-five to figure it out.

When I got to Columbia, as with wherever I go, I sought out people who knew a lot about music, particularly contemporary music, and none of them were music majors. When I met music majors, they seemed to know less about music than anybody else on campus!

Subito: Do you mean in the sense of contemporary music?

Schiff: I found a lot of music majors at a liberal arts college really were more into humanities, because if they were really pursuing music they'd be in a conservatory. Usually these sorts of people—who are really fun to teach—are eighteen, nineteen, and suddenly they find that they're interested in music and have to start learning about it. But most musicians had been studying for ten years before then. I had friends in seventh grade who became musicians. One of my best friends became the timpanist in the Minnesota Orchestra for thirty-five years. We were in a dance band together, and he knew everything about jazz. It was unbelievable, our parents would let us take the train into Manhattan on a Saturday night, we were twelve, thirteen years old. We'd hang out outside the clubs just to listen. We were constantly listening to stuff, so we were six years ahead of music majors because we were doing it on our own.

Subito: With the rise of the internet there is a community interested in contemporary music, but it seems the world of people who go to the conservatory and the world of people who read Pitchfork are two completely separate worlds. It's interesting that people who study music in college might be aware of things going on in hip-hop or rock or jazz or popular music in general, but it doesn't seem that they collide a whole lot.

Schiff: That's one thing I've fought against ever since I came to Reed, as a reaction against this very doctrinaire way that was in fashion when I was in school. The first thing I ask in my composition class is, "what kind of music do you listen to for pleasure?" And I tell them to write that kind of music. You know what good is, you are an expert on that, you know where the target is. And you can listen to other things and see what you like.

One of the reasons I've worked with jazz musicians is because they know more about music than anybody. And they are working outside the confines of classical music. One thing that strikes me about contemporary music is that composers are trying to find new sounds and new music with musicians who are trained to play old music. These musicians have great skills and abilities, but their instincts to know what a good sound is, what expressive is, or even what playing in tune may be, are very limiting. That creates a problem, and I've dealt with it by working with jazz musicians.

This is something that was very important to the models of Glass and Reich starting their own ensembles, because they wanted their music to sound like them and that was a very important lesson for me. I've found ways of either tricking or cajoling classical musicians into making my sounds. David Shifrin can do anything and he's very open to it, so I write for him. Sometimes there are musicians who aren't as open, so I know they're not the right fit for me.

The notion that there is a contemporary music that is just in the academy and listened to by other composers—at the very least it's un-

appealing. It certainly doesn't pay the rent. It's a kind of fake security when you are working within these confines and getting a certain degree of support, but you can't take it anywhere else and you aren't listening for other possibilities that are out there.

Subito: It has become its own world that shares music for each other's enjoyment but has been uninterested in engaging with a broader musical community.

Schiff: I've been very lucky as a composer to cultivate a group of performers who understand my music. I've been fortunate to work with jazz musicians. Working with Regina Carter was the thrill of a lifetime. I didn't know her, we got fixed up by accident. And it would have been crazy if I had written a piece that she couldn't play. She's such an improviser that every time she plays my concerto it's different. I ask her if she could do certain things and she's like "nah." It's always going to be different.

Subito: Composers in the jazz world are seen so differently. Studying jazz in high school, we just knew the tunes and were expected to improvise on them. Composers were more like songwriters, creating templates for improvisation. But if you look at Ellington charts, they were mostly fully composed. He conceived the entire arrangement.

Schiff: The notion that jazz is just playing the changes is just one way of thinking about it. I discovered that working with the Ellington material at the Smithsonian. It was astonishing to see how much was written down, and yet at the same time, it was written down for very specific players. He never wrote an alto sax part. In fact, the parts weren't labeled by instrument but by the player's name.

Subito: So he would write solos specifically for, say, Johnny Hodges?

Schiff: Right. And no one sounded like Hodges. He did that with every member of the band. The two parts that weren't there were the piano part, which he himself was playing, and the drums, which would have been Sonny Greer. But everything else, including the bass, was written out. I'm impressed that, having spent so much time with Ellington—about three years working on the book and teaching courses on him—I still listen to his music with so much pleasure. There's just so much more there that I'm not even aware of. There's tons of music, and if you could imagine what he was up against on a daily basis, all the indignities. He's at the top of my list.

Subito: Certainly there's this current of anti-elitism in U.S. culture, this skepticism towards anything that reminds us of European aristocracy. And Duke Ellington seems to be much the opposite of that, which plays into this idea of American identity.

Schiff: He has these two senses about him. He asked: "How do you keep a band going? How do you pay the rent?" And he figured it out. One of the ways to do that is to write a hit tune every year. That generates income. He didn't start out a songwriter, but became a songwriter once he understood the economics of it, when he saw that it was essential. He created a songbook and that became the basis for his income.

The other thing is that he was religious. The other extreme was God for him. He and his mother didn't go to a single church, they went to different churches, since there's something to learn from every church. He ends his life with three sacred concerts: Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, St. John the Divine, and Westminster Abbey. Talk about elitism! This is thinking as high as you can think, this is writing music for an exalted purpose. When you think of who's like that in music history, there's Bach, Beethoven, Mahler. Ellington's thinking that way. For an African-American composer to say that his music belongs in Westminster Abbey, it takes your breath away.

The FUTURE of "CLASSICAL" Music

OVAL TABLE 4

Craft music.

David Bernstein | Ted Clifford | Cynthia Gerdes | Greg Steinke | Jeff Winslow | Linda Woody

MEMBERS OF CASCADIA COMPOSERS

Ted Clifford: When Cascadia Composers were in Cuba there was this venue, La Fábrica del Arte Cubano. It's a maze. There are several levels, art installations, pictures everywhere, and they have three music venues. You could get simultaneous concerts in a number of different genres that wouldn't be interfering with each other. There was a bar there, but it didn't feel like playing at a bar. It was set up to draw people in for a variety of reasons and make it a place that facilitates something new and different and innovative. We need to get something like that in Portland.

Jeff Winslow: As long as the music being performed is cognizant of what kind of venue it is, there can be a wide variety of satisfying experiences. Frankly, I love traditional concerts. You go in, the lights go down, everyone gets quiet and you listen to this great music. I'm still fine with that.

Clifford: That's kind of the hard rub with classical music. You don't want people to feel like they can't breathe, but you want that level of focus on the music.

Linda Woody: I love doing house concerts and I wish we had more people doing it in the community. You get your neighbors in, you get people in who may not be crazy about classical music but say, "I know Linda," or "I know your house." People come. It's short, it doesn't have to go on for two or three hours, people can socialize, have a glass of wine and go home.

Cynthia Gerdes: In California, I participated in a concert at the Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society, and it was great fun. It was right on the ocean and it was such a mixed crowd. Maybe 50 people in the room, and a lot of pillows on the floor. I think there was dope smoking—you know, because the ocean is there, and it was California in the mid-'70s. The quartet played Beethoven, and this young gal, after we clapped and it was quiet enough to hear the ocean, she said "I didn't know classical music was like that." And she was blown away. It was a great experience for her. We don't have something that brings the outdoors in quite the same way. Nature having a part had something to do with it.

Greg Steinke: There is a long tradition of that informal presentation of very serious music. I experienced a streaming concert from the Berlin Philharmonic, and heard one of the most stupendous performances of *Pierrot Lunaire*. They had totally different lighting, very low, like being in a nightclub or a bar. The audience loved it. Of course the performance was something. What I'm arguing for is having truly outstanding performances: there is no substitute for having top-flight musicians doing the music, who are really dedicated to it, and have a good understanding of the repertoire.

David Bernstein: It always bothers me to hear the word "classical music." At this point we are 100+ years away from the innovators of the early part of the 20th century. I don't know that classical contemporary music scares people the way we think it might at this point in time.

Winslow: I've been auditing one of these Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music classes, and I was a little surprised by this: Gabriela herself, almost more than the young composers who were there, was really negative about the word "classical." Sometimes I've used "art music," but sometimes people take that wrong and they go, "You mean this other kind of music doesn't have any art in it?" A solution she recently heard which she liked was "craft music."

Woody: Like craft beer.

Winslow: Like craft beer!

Photo by Seth Nehil

The Rudimental Necessity of Love

AN ANALYSIS OF *I SPAT IN THE EYE OF HATE AND LIVED*

Charles Rose

In the last few years Portland has been a center of political conflict: violent street clashes between Patriot Prayer and Antifa; the shooting of Quanice Hayes by Portland Police; the shooting of Jason Washington by CPSO officers at Portland State University; the recent rise in hate crimes; the city's status as the epicenter of the #OccupyICE movement; the push to unionize local fast-food chain Burgerville; homelessness, continued gentrification, and the displacement of communities of color; and above all the city's apparent inability to humanely handle any of this.

In such times of crisis, people often turn to

artists for answers—or distractions. Four local composers recently collaborated on an evening-length chamber work that provided neither, instead confronting questions raised by the May 26th, 2017 MAX train attack near Hollywood Transit Center in Northeast Portland—a shocking incident that left two men dead and PSU student Micah Fletcher with a scar across his face. The victims came to the defense of two Muslim women who were being harassed by the assailant, who pulled a knife and stabbed them. In the aftermath, Fletcher recovered, won a seat on his neighborhood association board, and wrote poetry. Local chamber music ensemble 45th Parallel Universe commissioned Kenji Bunch, Texu Kim, Bonnie Miksch, and Nicholas Yandell to compose music inspired by four of Fletcher's poems.

The composers worked closely with Fletcher and 45th Parallel, each composer basing their music on one of the poems. The hour-long work—titled *I Spat in the Eye of Hate and Lived* after a poem composed shortly after the attack—was premiered at the Old Church Concert Hall in Southwest Portland on February 15th, 2019 by the Pyxis Quartet (Ron Blessinger, Greg Ewer, Charles Noble, Marilyn de Oliveira). The concert was a big success: The Old Church was packed, the performances were exquisite, and the audience responded enthusiastically both to the music and to Fletcher, who read from the stage between musical performances.

Although the four composers worked separately, their music came together with Fletcher's poetry as a complete work with a coherent narrative arc. *I Spat In The Eye of Hate and Lived* thus joins a growing roster of multi-composer works premiered in Portland recently, such as Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble's live score for *Night of the Living Dead* and Third Angle's Elliott Smith adaptation *A Fond Farewell*.

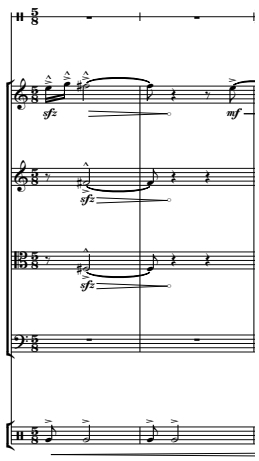
Crisis Actor

Yandell's *Crisis Actor* is based on Fletcher's poem of the same name. The title refers to right-wing conspiracy theories about mass shootings and other acts of terrorism being staged using "crisis actors." In answering the implication that the attack could be faked, Fletcher's poetry shows an ironic detachment from the event and his blurring of fantasy and reality. "My new found free face lift is not fiction," Fletcher writes. *Crisis Actor* is the only work to incorporate the text itself into the music, with Yandell reading the lines at points indicated in the score, and the only one to include percussion: a drum set and a repurposed loop of scrap metal suspended from a tripod serving as an alarm bell.

The piece opens with Yandell clanging the alarm bell and the bass drum playing a heartbeat rhythm. The heartbeat slowly accelerates through diminution, from measures of 9/8 to 4/4 down through 2/4, and the first violin's *forte* F# (m. 7) establishes the harmonic framework.

EXAMPLE 1 Nicholas Yandell, ***Crisis Actor***

m. 11



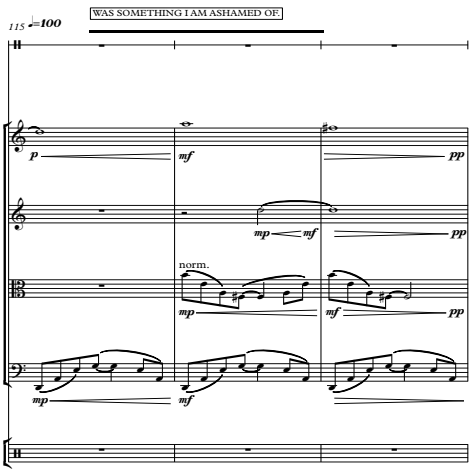
At m. 11 (Example 1) upper and lower neighbor tones ornament the F#, a scale fragment in Phrygian mode. The resulting pitch class set [0 1 3], is heard throughout the piece as a chromatic ornamentation of a central pitch—we might call it an "agitation" motive. This motive reappears in mm. 26, 43, 113, 151, and 159, as a punctuation-mark on the text.

Much of the harmony flows from such chromatic agitation, letting the music's simmering dissonance serve as a background for the poetry. Starting at m. 35, drones on and around the pitch D begin dovetailing in the strings, creating an evolving texture through overlapping crescendo-diminuendos between instruments, distributing the note across four octaves, continually ornamenting it with C#s and Ebs (mm. 35-37; 192-95). Close sonorities like these run all through the score, and other passages expand the chromaticism into polytonality and octatonic scales.

The work's contrasting secondary motive is first heard in the cello at mm. 21-24. Leaping fifths and a minor third spell out the pitch class set [0 2 5 7], yielding an expansive and ambiguous sound. This motive also recurs throughout the work, sometimes in inversion with itself (mm. 115-17; see Example 2).

EXAMPLE 2 Nicholas Yandell, ***Crisis Actor***

mm. 115–17



Despite the third on top, this is a fundamentally quartal chord which evades simple major or minor tonality—fitting for the text's detached tone. In "Crisis Actor," Fletcher talks about "One of the first poems I was ever proud of," a poem called "The Journey of a Razor" which describes a suicide from the razor's point of view. Fletcher's matter-of-fact admission expresses a dark irony: "I find it funny that even before the stabbing, I liked using blade imagery for poetry." This grim sensibility pervades all four poems.

Folie à Deux

Bunch's *Folie à Deux* ("Shared Delusion") is scored for for three violins: one onstage (Greg Ewer) and two offstage (Ron Blessinger, Paloma Griffin Hébert). Bunch had long wanted to write something inspired by *Sonata in eco con tre violini* by Italian composer and violin virtuoso Biagio Marini (1594-1663), and this concert gave him the chance. The performance logistics of coordinating the offstage violins were among the more difficult aspects of the process, according to Bunch, who expressed dissatisfaction with traditional notation and often prefers to use graphic scores and guided improvisation.

That approach gives him freedom when performing his own works—Bunch often composes on his viola—and before opting to fully notate the offstage violin parts he had considered giving the players no score at all, in which case he would have simply instructed them to imitate and intentionally misrepresent the onstage violin. After settling on full notation as a more pragmatic solution, Bunch used the music program Logic to experiment with placing the

echoes he was hearing into a notated framework. (Compare this to Ives' approach in *The Unanswered Question*, in which offstage instruments are given their own tempi independent of the main stage tempo and are simply instructed to enter at specific times.)

The music consists of two alternating musical ideas: a chromatic descending-ascending melody over a pedal tone on the open E string, and a lyrical section in B minor. The first idea, marked *grave*, alternates with the second *con moto* theme. The open string E forms tight minor and major second dissonances against the *grave* theme, and the main *con moto* melodic motive is the ascending scale fragment B-C#-D, with an ambiguous tonal function that could imply B minor or D major. Incidentally, this is the same scale fragment heard in *Crisis Actor*.

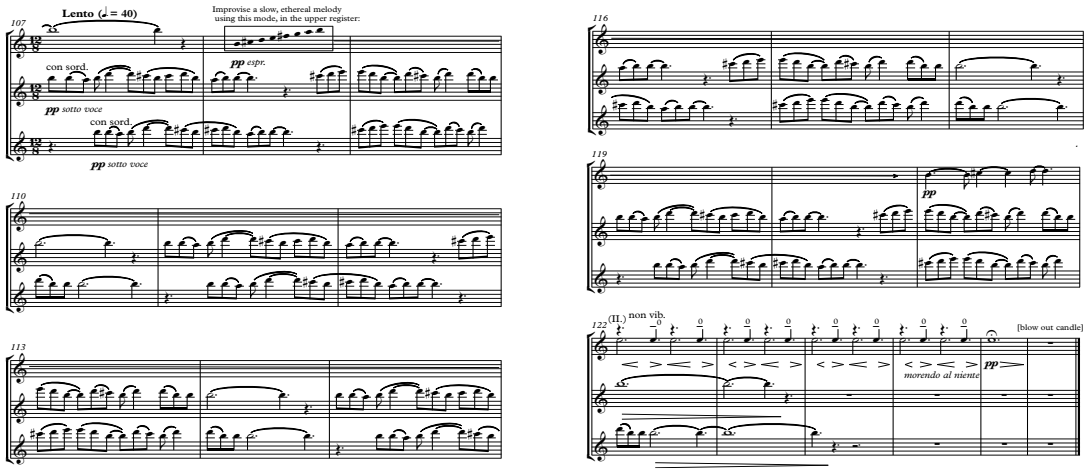
Until m. 53, the offstage violins simply echo brief phrases from the onstage violin, in canons at six, four, and five beats respectively. At m. 53, offstage left plays the *grave* motive while the onstage violin plays a leaping melody centered around an Amaj #11 harmony.

The *grave* motive has a pitch content and contour similar to the Gregorian chant *Libera Me* ("Liberate me"), which Bunch then quotes directly in the closing *lento* (mm. 107-123, see Example 3). The offstage violins play the plainchant melody in a canon at the dotted quarter note while the onstage violin improvises in B minor.

Formal plan for ***Folie à Deux***

Section	A (*grave*)	B (*con moto*)	A	B	A	B	*Lento*	A
Measure	1–21	22–31	32–40	41–52	53–72	73–106	107–121	122–127

EXAMPLE 3 Kenji Bunch, ***Folie à Deux***
mm. 107–26



Dusty Books

Kim's *Dusty Books* opens with filtered pink noise and creaking bows, evoking dust and running water. The most striking feature of Kim's score is its unusual *scordatura*: violin I and the viola tune to A=442 Hz; violin II and the cello tune to A=438 Hz. This sixth-tone difference is small enough to yield a chorus-like effect rather than a sharp dissonance, which strengthened the resonance of the strings in the Old Church. Kim explained that he used the detuning not only for the chorus effect, but for the off-kilter distortion it lent the diatonic melodies, creating a hallucinatory atmosphere.

If *Dusty Books* represents a psychedelic trip, it is not a good trip. While some drugs can open the doors of perception when used properly, they can also mask and distort realities that are too difficult for us to handle with sober minds. Fletcher's poem ambiguously refers to a "liquid rage antidote" that he offers to his younger self, a self whom he finds in old yearbooks but no longer recognizes:

> *That kid died a long time ago.*
>
> *And it is my recollection that I asked him to hold onto my good will, to take good care of it.*
>
> *I gave him simple instructions:*
>
> *Water it regularly.*
>
> *Feed it the right nutrients.*
>
> *Make sure it sits in the window, so that it can know the balance of day and night.*

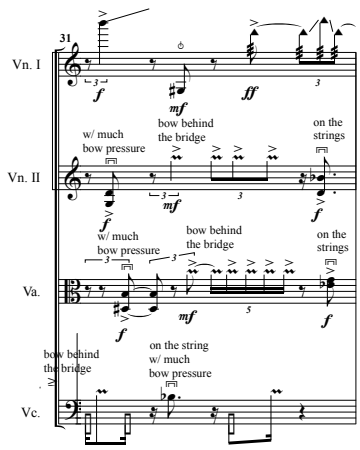
The first identifiable pitch in *Dusty Books* is an E harmonic in the cello in m. 16, played *tremolo* on the C string. Measure 24 marks the first identifiable pitches in the viola, an E major triad with a flat ninth. The noise effects slowly coalesce into the main motive, E-B-D, at m. 36. The violins play the motive in unison, but the tuning effect yields a tense sound, marked in the score as "*tense, nostalgic and hipnotic*."

A close canon commences at m. 63, and the two violins echo each other for the duration of the passage.

Rhythmically, *Dusty Books* is saturated with close polyrhythms. Measure 15 demonstrates this early on, with simultaneous eighth notes, eighth-note triplets, and quintuplets forming a dense, ambiguous sound. The effect is not so much a discernable polyrhythm but a crescendo of morphing noise climaxing at m. 33 (see Example 4), where each instrument follows an independent rhythmic path anchored by the 4/4 meter. The effect is similar to the simultaneous tempos in Elliott Carter's string quartets, but in *Dusty Books* the rhythmic layers are traded between instruments rather than remaining confined to one each.

EXAMPLE 4 Texu Kim, ***Dusty Books***

mm. 33



The formal trajectory is towards increasing volume and rhythmic complexity, coming to an end at m. 153 when the arpeggios return with a clear declaration of E major after a brief violin cadenza. These arpeggios fade into *col legno*

triple stops, signaling the return of noise, ending unresolved as the sounds fade away.

I found this flower

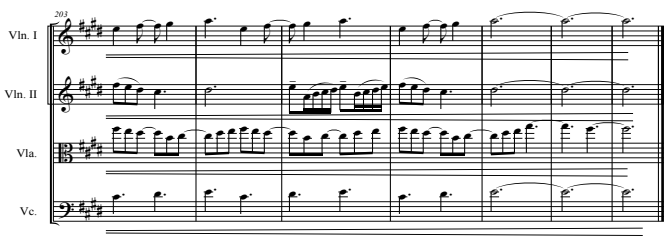
Miksch's *I found this flower* closed the program with a clear, unresolved, open-ended tonality. The title comes from a line in Fletcher's poem "Silence":

> *But beneath all of the agony, I found this flower*
>
> *That will sing* Clair De Lune *as much as you want.*

Miksch tried to be as intuitive as possible in her compositional process, and let the music unfold with as little pre-planning as possible. The title hints at the music's flower-like growth, and Miksch's intention was to let the music breathe and express itself unencumbered, regardless of how "cheesy" a passage may seem. This expressiveness encourages the audience to breathe and feel again, after the more abstract and harsh pieces that came before.

This intuitive compositional process informs the score's linear progression. There is surprisingly little thematic connection between sections—changes of mode rather than thematic development give the music its flow. A near-constant eighth-note line cascades upwards and downwards, pervading most of the piece.

EXAMPLE 5 Bonnie Miksch, ***I found this flower***
mm. 203–09



The music ends on a sort of half-cadence in A major, an ambiguous dominant (mm. 203-09, see Example 5), reflecting the final lines of Fletcher's poem:

> *They will get off the train. Arrive at work right on time.*
>
> *They will punch a clock, and go back home to the family that loves them.*
>
> *And that night, they will dream the same eucharist of love they always have.*
>
> *In that moment. Love will win.*
>
> *Even if it didn't this time.*
>
> *I have to believe*
>
> *That someday*
>
> *It will.*

Collaborative Creation

The four compositions comprising *I Spat in the Eyes of Hate and Lived* display a fair degree of intertextuality and similarity despite their independent creation. The composers themselves felt the whole concert was a collaborative, multi-movement work, connected by Fletcher's poetry, rather than four separate works. Indeed, several musical elements are common to all four, suggesting something like a shared aesthetic between these living, Portland-based composers.

Folie à Deux and *Dusty Books* achieve chorus-like effects by different means: Bunch uses antiphonal displacement and glissandi against the open E string to exploit acoustic and intonational differences, while Kim detunes instrument pairs for an ensemble-wide resonant shimmer. Canons and hemiolas appear in almost all the works, often inverted or at very short durations like an eighth-note. Rather than being heard as a polyphonic texture, these close canons produce an echo-like sound.

Almost all of the works feature simple melodic motives suggesting tonal centers of some

sort while avoiding traditional tonic-dominant relationships. If we were to consider these connected movements as a single large-scale work with a clear tonal scheme akin to symphonic structure, the harmonic progression would be D minor, B minor, E major, A major. This of course is oversimplifying: *Crisis Actor* and *Dusty Books* in particular are sufficiently chromatic and noisy that any attempt to fit them into a key would be misleading, and Miksch's pandiatonicism evades clear tonal resolution.

Nevertheless, the overall trajectory is from tension and pain through terror and chaos toward resolution and a fragile, uncertain peace. Our ersatz symphonic structure might make more sense if we consider the progression from a post-tonal narrative standpoint: the listener travels from the shocking noise of *Crisis Actor*'s opening alarm bell and Yandell's darkly colorful harmonic ecosystem, to the ghostly effects of *Folie à Deux*'s echoing violins and Bunch's intense use of sparse melodic material, to Kim's disturbing and psychedelic hypermodernism, to Miksch's concluding consonant embrace.

With these four very different compositions contextualized together by a single narrative theme, the whole spectrum from noise to beauty forms a dramatic kaleidoscope, eschewing clear genre and style boundaries in favor of a freer, more expressively human idiom. As with film music—with its higher tolerance for dissonance in service of meaning and emotional effect—these chamber works connect music which is both academically stringent and emotionally authentic with the raw, fleshy, human experience of life and death on the streets, in our city, in our time.

In "Silence," Fletcher places value on the unanswered questions all this raises:

> *And even if I don't understand half of what I found,*
>
> *It means we are trying.*
>
> *We are all practicing the rudimental necessity of love.*

Layers and Petals

A CONVERSATION WITH THE COMPOSERS

Kenji Bunch, Texu Kim, Bonnie Miksch, and Nicholas Yandell

Nicholas Yandell: Micah gave a lot of background about what he was feeling at the time of writing "Crisis Actor", and the emotional weight of that specifically. He was conflicted about that poem, even after he had written it, because he didn't feel exactly that way about it. That made it really interesting to me: the words themselves present these contradictory emotions, because he had changed how he felt. The poem is very aggressive. That was one of the things I wanted to capture in the music. Anybody in his situation would be like: "How do I feel? Do I feel angry? Do I feel sorrow? Do I feel regret? Do I feel responsible?" I want it to feel like it has all these contradictory motions in sequence, like eight minutes of what it feels like to be him.

Bonnie Miksch: I was frightened about this project. I was frightened before I saw any poems, and then I was frightened when I saw the first two poems. I didn't think that I could be

as generous as Nick in creatively residing in the world of Micah's despair. That's incredible what you did, and I think it is incredible that you chose that poem. I'm grateful too. I'm the kind of person who can take 20 minutes of the news and then I turn it off. I've never done a project like this where I was trying to get inside the mind of someone who is suffering from PTSD, suffering anxiety, suffering a lot of the time. When the other two poems came I was excited to choose the poem that was hopeful, because I felt like I could reside here. The flip side of despair and crisis is resilience and hope.

The flip side of despair and crisis is resilience and hope.

Texu Kim: Which ended up being a good way to wrap up the concert.

Yandell: Greg [Ewer of 45th Parallel] didn't request the poems be a certain way—it just ended up that way. Even from talking to Micah, when he was in the beginning of "Crisis Actor," I think he definitely had changed his own feelings.

Miksch: Because he didn't write them all at the same time, which was awesome. That was one of the best things, that he grew as a person after getting different perspectives.

Yandell: I'm not sure if Greg looked at Micah's other poems beforehand or anything.

Miksch: They had "I Spat in the Eye of Hate." That poem was from right after the incident and I'm sure that had reached their notice because that was in the press.

Subito: The arc of the concert as a whole was very effective. Is that another one of those happy accidents?

Kim: It is. Actually, very accidental.

Kenji Bunch: It kinda was. But it worked like a four movement piece.

Yandell: The week before, when I came into rehearsals, they said they didn't know which piece would start it. When I came in with the alarm bell, they were all looking at it and that's when I think Greg decided, "That would be a great way to start it, to have that thing."

Subito: Where did that alarm bell come from?

Yandell: I just had in mind something that had a discordant sound somehow related to the sound of a train bell, a loud, clamorous, discordant bell to start it off. When you hear something like that, it's the feeling of alarm. That's what the piece represented, and it needed to start with that feeling. I had a specific sound in mind, but I didn't know how to create the sound.

Then I found the ring in some trash my roommate was getting rid of—my husband pulled it out and said, "What about this?" And he just hit it. I was like, "Oh wow. That is good!" So we used an easel and strung it from there and tried out stuff. I had this rusted metal stake I pulled out of a train yard. This combination was like, "Yeah, this is perfect." Another happy accident.

Subito: Kenji, could you talk a little bit about what inspired the reflective violins, why you decided to use that technique in this piece, and how you worked out the logistics?

Bunch: A long time ago, I had heard the Marini *Echo Sonata*. I said to Greg, "hey, do you know anything about this *Echo Sonata*, with two violins off stage?" And he says "Yeah, Marini." For a long time I had this idea to write something for that same combination. When this poem surfaced, it seemed like the perfect occasion for it, because the poem is all about perceptions of reality and the misleading narrative about this incident the press ran with.

One thing about meeting with Micah, it was intense. He is an intense guy. There was something oddly comforting about his clear discomfort with his role in this whole incident and how, of course, in the press it is a tidier story to present this clear dichotomy of good versus evil and this heroic guy, and he's not comfortable with that and sees more grey area and the humanity involved in all of it. I like the way his poem dealt with that. Even if everyone saw the exact same thing, they would have a totally different understanding of that reality.

I was late with this score, and that's not unusual for me. The holdup—and this happens with alarming frequency lately—is a dissatisfaction with traditional notation. I've written a number of graphic scores over the years, and I like writing something with an open element and elements of improvisation and guided improv. It's hard to express those ideas in a clear way for the performers that is going to make them comfortable doing what I want them to do.

Kim: The special effect really worked. People didn't know where the sound was coming from.

Subito: Bonnie, could you talk about composing melodies on top of each other, and how you approached things like harmonic rhythm and tonal flow?

Miksch: *I found this flower* was very diatonic, but never stuck in one diatonic. Micah said, "Underneath all this agony, I found this flower"

Photo by Milton Bliss

—the flower as a symbol of strength and beauty. A flower is never the same. It doesn't necessarily last that long but another one will come along. I was thinking about not trying to have a very structured approach in the compositional process, trying to have as much intuition and as much composing in the moment as I could. I was working with these different melodic ideas, harmonic ideas, connecting them together. I love—to a fault—connecting things. I say "to a fault" because in my music I almost never have a clear break. This moment moves to this moment which becomes this moment, which is like a kaleidoscope for me, and I love that so much. It felt fitting for it not to be overly structured or planned in any formalistic way, but to really come from my playing with the

ideas. That helped me connect and be present with Micah in some sense. I was trying to connect with all the elements of humanity that were good in this moment of crisis and in all the moments of crisis that we have ever had as humanity. They are all connected in a way. I was following my ears, I was singing, I was sitting at the piano, played stuff, I'd sing, I'd see where things wanted to go. I didn't know how I was going to end the piece, actually. And then it occurred to me that I really shouldn't have an ending that was too—I wanted it to *end*, not *resolve*, because there is nothing resolved about any of this.

Kim: Didn't you have some kind of half cadence at the end?

Miksch: ... Maybe?

[Laughter]

Miksch: It's open. It's harmonically open. I don't know if I'd call it a half cadence, in terms of harmonically closed or harmonically open. I like that, as a way to keep the possibility of things continuing. I didn't need as much as I thought I needed, and it really wanted to settle here, and it doesn't matter. It really doesn't matter what key area it ends in. Not anymore.

Bunch: My ending completely surprised me. I didn't intend to end with this extended quote of the *Libera me* in canon. I see Greg every week because our kids have cello class together. He knew I was writing this offstage violin thing, and he asked me if my concept was that the two offstage violins represented the two men who were killed in that attack. That never even occurred to me. He planted that seed somehow.

Subito: Bonnie, at Chamber Music Northwest a couple of years ago somebody asked, "how do you know when a composition is done?" Your answer was: "When you finally accept that it is not what you thought it was going to be."

Miksch: You do have to come to terms with it in the end. The clock is ticking, the score is due. I didn't really get good chunks of time until the holiday, so I was sitting down and composing for 25 minutes. It was weird. My kids were more aware of me composing, because when they were younger I would just escape, would not compose around them at all. When I brought [my son] to the concert it was perfect. He's 13 and he was really struck by your piece, Nick. He said "so, classical music can be edgy!"

I was going for something that expressed beauty, but I was somewhat self-conscious: "Wow, this is really triadic. It's not just tonal, but it is triadic all over the place. Am I writing something cheesy?" And that got me thinking: "What is cheesy?" I had this very interesting conversation with Darrell Grant about what is cheesy, and he tells me he really hates that word. He said "I don't let my students use that word in class because when they say something is cheesy, usually it means there is something in them that is resisting feeling something."

But then I was thinking about that horrible theme they used on NPR. There are things that are just plain *cheesy*. It's not that I don't want to go somewhere emotionally, I just cannot stand that morning edition music at 8 a.m. It's definitely something to think about: what we allow ourselves, how self-conscious we are, and how vulnerable are we willing to be. I think it pays off when we don't worry about the external stuff and just go with where we are feeling it.

I realized I don't have a climax in my piece. In the same way that there isn't an ending, there isn't this one moment of triumph either, or greatest complexity even. It is just the image of the flower. There is no peak there. Just layers, petals.


Photo by Seth Nehil

Industrial Blue

by Micah Fletcher

For years I made myself machine.
just pushing blue pills in my slot
and spitting out labor and focus,
and after eight years, I am again a disciple
at the church of Adderall.

This is a magic steeple, ya see.
    This is blue wafer blessing.
You will never know rest,
you will not need it. Never even bemoan it
until the sun god leaves your world in the black blanket
    of Ever.
Blankets play God Sky in the comfort of Dream World,
you do not live Dream World,
you live in effort
in labor
in the grind of gear, the exhaust pipe steam scream of
    tomorrow
your mind is filled jagged with blue lightning hymnal,
dreams are for those who can sing in the key of Georgia,
    you city slicker heathen.

Like all religions, it carries gospel orthodox heavy as
    tome.
You will take sacrament twice a day, and never worry
    prayer.
Prayer will happen, jitterbug through your body,
ask the catholics. Real Gods don't ask for consent,
that's why they act through you,
not with you,
their perfect sermon, electric spit of active vibration
you will thrum to the harmony of production,
your heart pumping piston,
your limbs hydraulic hose through the day despite
    fatigue,
your hands tick-tick-tick with the tension of drive
    spring,
you will push pencil like time is inevitable,
like teeth must mesh,
like God please stop.

This God is just as unmerciful as the rest.
just as silent,
like dead men
telling no tales,
like engines only know combustion,
like you can't talk to bullets, firing pins only speak trigger
    finger,
this cup, this water,
this wafer, your sacrament
you will sacrifice, a myriad of things in the name of being
    productive,
when you are the product that produces the products
for consumption.

And as white coat clergy
speak sermons to you,
congregation of the needful,
apostles of the can't stop won't stop,
disciples of dysfunction,
you will memorize verses to repeat to the gentiles,
the functioning,
they will question your faith; sacrament is destructive
    verbiage
to those with something to lose,
you will open your exhaust port
and unload vent heat into their face
burn the lines your eyes use to trace through the air
before they were taught to stare with intent
by a higher power
beyond their understanding.

Americana *with* Edgar Meyer

Amy Hakanson

On January 19th, 2019, the Oregon Symphony Orchestra presented the concert "Americana with Edgar Meyer," starring the renowned bass virtuoso (b. 1960). The program featured *Double Bass Concerto No. 2 in B Minor* by Giovanni Bottesini (1821-89), *Symphony No. 1, "Afro-American"* by William Grant Still (1895-1978), and Meyer's own *Double Bass Concerto No. 3 in E*.

The program opened with *Appalachian Spring* by Aaron Copland (1900-90), maybe the most recognizable orchestral work by an American composer, with its now-famous Shaker hymn "Simple Gifts." The suite captures the essence of Americana, evoking an image of the American spirit filled with hope, wilderness, and simplicity.

Meyer took the stage to perform the Bottesini concerto. His execution of this challenging piece was flawless, his technical abilities shining most during cadenzas in the first and third movements. Meyer rewrote both cadenzas to better fit his style and flair, using the familiar elements of his idiomatic style: dramatic glissandi, challenging double stops, and extreme high and low registers. Bottesini was himself a pioneering bass soloist, and it is likely that without his innovations and virtuosity the double bass would never have been recognized as a solo instrument.

The highlight was OSO's performance of Meyer's *Double Bass Concerto No. 3 in E*, composed in 2011. The concerto is a thrilling composition in three movements, demonstrating that Meyer, like Bottesini, is not only a fantastic performer but also a brilliant composer. The orchestration was unconventional, with Meyer including less-common woodwind instruments like bass flute, contrabass clarinet, and contrabassoon. These instruments all have ranges similar to Meyer's own instrument, adding a dark and rich flavor. Many of Meyer's melodic and harmonic choices reflected his passion for world and folk music, and those familiar with his work outside the classical realm would recognize the similarities.

William Grant Still's *Afro-American Symphony*, premiered in 1931, was well chosen for an Americana program, both in terms of its musical content and its significance as the first symphony ever composed by an African-American and performed by a major orchestra. Still's symphony is reminiscent of works by Grieg and Smetana, late Romantic nationalist composers greatly influenced by the folk traditions of their homelands. Still wove traditional African-

Photo by Jim McGuire

American music into his classical symphony, presenting the tradition to a new audience in a way which legitimized and elevated it. Modern U.S. audiences are more accustomed to hearing blues and jazz music than they were 1931, so the *Afro-American Symphony* does not administer quite the shock as when it premiered, but the OSO's performance remained impactful due to its historical significance and Still's daring choice to include music which was at the time considered lower-class.

Traditionally, the worlds of classical and folk music have been separate, and each of the U.S. composers highlighted during the concert had a unique and innovative approach to melding genres. Although Bottesini's concerto wasn't composed by an American—and thus hardly bears hallmarks of Americana—Meyer's inventive changes gave it new life and led seamlessly into the performance of his own concerto.

It was a delight to see Meyer perform again, having had the privilege of attending his last appearance with the Oregon Symphony, when he performed with banjo virtuoso Béla Fleck and tabla legend Zakir Hussain in 2009. The Americana program was, in many ways, more conventional than his concert with Fleck and Hussain, showing a nuanced approach to integrating folk traditions and classical form.

The FUTURE of "CLASSICAL" Music

OVAL TABLE 5

Forget all the boundaries.

Jennifer Arnold | *Ron Blessinger* | *Greg Ewer* | *Amelia Lukas* | *Nancy Ives*

MEMBERS OF OREGON SYMPHONY, 45TH PARALLEL, PYXIS QUARTET, MOUSAI REMIX

Nancy Ives: One of the fundamental differences between classical music and popular styles is embedded in the values the music is expressing. I don't mean moral values, I mean aesthetic values. An experience that crystallized it for me was playing all this highly cerebral, intellectual music that did not care if the audience liked it or not, and after rehearsing a Milton Babbitt piece 20-something times I started to hear the emotion in it! It took me dozens of rehearsals sometimes to hear it, and I was doing it.

Then I recorded on Lenny Kravitz's first two albums. I remember being in the studio with him literally on his knees right in front of me, directing me, and I realized the level of musician he was—even though he had forgotten how to read music. It came home to me that popular music, which I had no interest in at the time, had its own set of values. It could have amazing quality. It could have rigor and all these amazing things. It just had a different set of values.

That was my perspective, from someone who rebelled and crossed to downtown. The last couple years I lived in NY I wanted to have both. I wanted the complexity and intellectual stimulation of the uptown music, but I wanted the emotion and beauty and drama and flexibility and openness and ability to be multimedia and all those elements we almost take for granted now. That was not well-accepted in the classical realm back then.

When people look back in 100 years at the last 20 years, people are going to say, "that's where boundaries were blurred." Our society now is eclectic. Forget all the boundaries. Forget it. We don't need them. There is so much more we can say and so much more we can express without them.

Ron Blessinger: I keep thinking about Mozart and Beethoven in terms of their improvisatory chops. When I put on jazz ears and think of them as master improvisers, the music works differently. Maybe the commercialism has been persistent and deadly to the point where it has streamlined and commercialized classical music away from its roots of improvisation.

Jennifer Arnold: I am not bothered by the term classical. I don't think it is a negative thing at all. If anything bothers me, it is people trying to define what they play. I grew up playing music. I was trained classically, but I also played jazz, I also played gospel. In the end I played music, right? I think that's exactly what the old-timers did. They played everything. Only when everybody became specialized in the '60s, '70s, and '80s did they want to define, because they couldn't do the other.

Ives: Improvisation is probably the biggest piece of the puzzle that classical musicians are missing. I've tried to improvise—it's really hard!

Arnold: I think that's your age group, and I hate to say that. I'm dead serious. I teach a lot of young people and they are not afraid to improvise. Some of the best classical musicians in the '40s, '50s, '60s were arranging music their own ways, adding things: "I'm going to add this to the Mozart. I'm going to write this cadenza." It's always been there; for a 30-year period, it disappeared. The masters did more of that than we ever did.

Amelia Lukas: Jen and I are products of this microgeneration, Xennials, which means we grew up without the internet and came of age at the time email and Facebook were happening. My teachers were very in the box: I had conservatory training, and the way you played Mozart didn't veer. Now with the hyper-availability of online content you can see so many different versions of the same thing, connect to so many different teachers and approaches. I think it gives people permission to give voice to themselves.

We are living in a world that is, for better or worse, post-genre. Putting this label "classical music" on something ever-morphing, ever-changing, ever-influenced by different styles and approaches, is frankly very confusing for audience members and the people we're trying to attract.

When music first came into being, it was a source of healing and communication. We've gone far away from that.

This deep transcendent experience that each of us has with music is so individually responsive. Classical music is starting to come back to that place of wanting to serve society, and our society is in such need for connection and communication and healing.

Classical music can provide something that other categories of music don't. Bringing people together around these concerts and providing a safe space for them to feel that visceral connection that is more spiritual and connected to nature is a key component to the success of classical music.

Ives: When people say, "classical music, your audience is dying out," I'm like, "no." I used to say it's the same age it's always been: people hit a certain age in their life where they have a longer attention span. They don't want to just rock out. It's a different stage of life.

Actually I think it's getting younger. I think younger people want that community. They are more aware and tuned into the value of experiencing something in person with other people, because of having grown up in the internet age.

Blessinger: "Classical music" may be a flawed term, but it's the best that we got. I think we are going to have to proselytize one person at a time.

Greg Ewer: What I see is a lot more concerts that are reactions to the political climate, or to #metoo. Social justice music. It doesn't feel very classical. It feels very contemporary. When I was learning music in the '80s, it was—to a fault—about perfecting the phrases and thoughts and musical ideas of composers from a long time ago.

And that's great, but it has felt very isolating at times. At the moment, it doesn't feel so isolating. That is some indication of classical musicians reacting to this slow isolation. It's been increasingly isolating to call yourself a classical musician. Maybe in the last decade, but especially in the last five years—one could even say especially since the last presidential election—there has been a huge push on the part of classical musicians to connect with their communities.

Lukas: A huge part of the future of classical music is breaking down these preconceived ideas of what classical music is, connecting with individuals, connecting with audiences, and speaking about it in a way that captures attention and interest and gives people permission to have their own experience with the music.

Arnold: The music industry, in terms of album sales, is not great, right? I work with young people that are playing music all the time. From all backgrounds, they love music. They love learning instruments, they love playing music, and they love listening to music. What I worry about is, they don't buy music. They don't buy anything. And that's where I worry about the future of classical music.

Ives: There is an elephant in the room. What do we even need professionals for? You are talking about people who just love doing it, like students.

Arnold: Some people just love playing. I'm not worried about that. I think young people these days know what careers are. Granted, they think differently about things—young people today are not going to work the 60-hour week that people our age would, because they're like, "I want to have a balance, a good life balance." That's great, we should learn from that. You can't sacrifice your whole life for work. But I worry about people paying for tickets.

Ives: How much of that is just the ability to pay for things?

Lukas: Classical musicians talk about the tradition of being funded through royalty. Where is the royalty today? It's corporations. There is such a disconnect between the corporate world and the arts world, and that is one thing I'm actively interested in: finding ways to make connections, helping corporations see the value of the arts and finding innovative ways to partner.

Blessinger: Where is the win-win? I think that corporations have decided, for the most part, that there is no win for them.

Lukas: It's up to us to remind them.

Ewer: Corporate responsibility, the whole idea of that has changed so much in 20-30 years.

Ives: How much are they investing in their communities, now?

Ewer: It's all about CEOs and shareholders. They're not going to pay their middle-class, blue-collar people any more than they need to. They're also not necessarily looking to garner points with their communities.

Ives: These are not disconnected problems.

Blessinger: One big shift I've seen—music schools have recognized this too—is the need for performers to have business chops and understand non-profit management, boards, fundraising. Claire Chase is the poster child for that: A phenomenal flutist who graduated from Oberlin and has a lot of ways she can go with her career decides to go out on her own and learn how to write grants. You have to understand the business world, how to talk to people with money, how to explain what the win-win is—other than just a guilt trip.

Ewer: This entrepreneurial spirit we're seeing now reflects the idea that you don't need to be given a stamp of approval by the industry. You can set off on your own. If you value variety and versatility, you can make a statement about that. If you desire connection to the political issues of our time, you do something.

Blessinger: People find their way back to us, to classical music, because of everything great about it. We become interesting in a sea of boredom. The novelty of classical music is going to remain, and become even more novel given the saturation of the rest of the world.

Ives: When recordings started to become more engineered, I think audiences started to expect perfection. And we performers started to feel the need to live up to that. That's part of our pathological perfectionism. The antidote is authenticity. There is a dark side to it, but it means there is an appreciation of the individuality of it. Maybe we are starting to give ourselves permission.

Moving Healthy Musicians

PSU'S COORDINATE MOVEMENT WELLNESS PROGRAM

Christina Ebersohl

Musicians move for a living. We are reliant on our bodies to be consistent, resilient, strong, and flexible for decades, in some lucky cases nearly a century. Unlike other movement professionals such as athletes and dancers, musicians are often expected to continue moving and performing well beyond their golden years. Retirement at 30 is not an option. But with so much movement involved throughout the profession, why have we been so neglectful to our bodies?

According to a 2017 study by the National Institute of Health, as many as 70% of musicians report performing while in pain or while injured. How can this be? Playing the violin looks so effortless, and sitting at the piano surely doesn't seem taxing. "It's the lack of kinesthetic awareness," says Wellness Program Coordinator and Body Mapping instructor Lisa Marsh. "The number one thing students lack when they come to me is kinesthetic awareness." Marsh is referring to our sixth sense: our ability to perceive our own bodies, how they feel, and what they are doing. You may not remember hearing about your kinesthetic sense when learning the five senses in grade school, but as a neglected sense it is one of the most important for musicians to train.

The Wellness Program at Portland State University is a place where musicians can do just that: students learn how the body moves, how to raise awareness of problems, and how to prevent injury. The program centers around Body Mapping instruction, developed in 2002 by husband-and-wife team Barbara and Bill Conable. The Conables started as teachers of the Alexander Technique, a method of retraining body movement and posture, but became frustrated at the limitations of what the technique could offer musicians. Knowing they could help more musicians and save many more careers, they founded Andover Educators and created a practical application, now called Body Mapping.

The Andover Educators website defines Body Mapping as "the conscious correcting and refining of one's body map to produce efficient, coordinated, effective movement." Understanding how each person perceives their body's construction—systems of bones, muscles, joints, and connective tissue—aids in healthy and free movement, prevents career threatening injuries, and can also be the key to students unlocking long-held limitations.

Classical guitarist and PSU instructor Jesse McCann, a contributing member to the Wellness Program, talks about his discovery of Body Mapping. "I never had pain," McCann says, "but when I returned to graduate school after a break, I suddenly found that my shoulder would tighten and squeeze up near my ear

while I performed." McCann, also a certified personal trainer, was flummoxed by the sudden change in his performance habits. "I would finish a performance and have to physically drop my shoulder back down," he said. "It was starting to affect my hand and what it could do." By developing his kinesthetic awareness and his understanding of how the arm structure is supported by connective tissue, McCann was able to address his anxiety-related tension and avoid injuries like strains and tendonitis.

McCann now looks for mapping errors and tension in his students, and tries to address problems as soon as he notices them. "I'll point it out in the first lesson and explain all the anatomy to them. Having that information to back up what I'm saying really seems to drive it home for a lot of students."

But by the time many students get to the university level, they have been playing for years, and many of their mapping errors are already bad habits. "There wasn't any sort of [body movement] training when I was younger," says pianist Todd Marston, another program contributor. "We just didn't talk about it." Marston, a Berklee–trained jazz pianist, came to PSU specifically to study with Lisa Marsh. "The first time I had experienced anything like Body Mapping was a class in Alexander Technique at Berklee, but it didn't really sink in then." After graduating, Marston performed across China for the better part of a year before learning about Marsh and her program in Portland. "I met her and knew I had to study with her. Everything just seemed to fall into place."

Marston brings his experience to the Wellness Program each spring, when he and Marsh co-teach Wellness for Musicians. The class uses instruction in proper nutrition, exercise, and even meditation to replace music's traditionally competitive and driven atmosphere with a more balanced and holistic one.

Music as a profession has deep roots in unhealthy expectations and habits: long hours of unrelenting practice; high-stress environments; performing without breaks or proper ear protection; and developing an overly critical internal voice. In this tech-forward age, perfection is heard on professionally mastered recordings and rare child prodigies are plastered across YouTube for every musician to envy. Without context, musicians fall prey to anxiety, overpractice, and depression.

That's why Body Mapping and the Wellness Program aim to address the musician as a whole. And in some cases, it is reaching students just as their training truly begins.

"Vocalists are different than instrumentalists," says Christine Meadows, vocalist and certified Body Mapping instructor. "Singers' voices don't mature until they are about 18, and most of them don't really start their vocal training until they come here." Because of this, Meadows is able to reach vocalists at an opportune time, teaching them strong foundations in the mechanisms of the voice and throat just as they are beginning the core of their vocal training. "I incorporate Body Mapping into all my pedagogy classes and lessons," Meadows says. It shows: PSU boasts award-winning choirs and

a nationally recognized Opera program. But it isn't just about the voice.

"Vocalists often come to class without the necessary body map for their breathing and their arm structure," says Marsh. "They've heard so often to 'breathe from their belly' from choral directors, but they don't really understand what is moving or how." Not knowing can cause problems. "If you try to breathe from your belly, without understanding that the lungs inflate, the ribs expand, the spine gathers, and the diaphragm flattens, you won't achieve the freedom and fullness of breath you are capable of."

But we all breathe—not just as musicians, but as humans. That isn't lost on the minds of the Wellness Program. "Being aware in everyday life is important," says Marsh. "How you sit at the computer, how you feel when you are sitting in class, what your body feels like when you walk to the bus ... our everyday movements are just as important to our well-being."

With so much history of neglect and self-abuse, is it possible for the musical community to embrace these healthier and more sustainable changes? It looks promising so far.

"We started with four people in my first class," says pianist Liz Kohl, who teaches PSU's Yoga for Musicians course. "This last quarter, we had over 20 people. We are nearing capacity of the room. It's really wonderful!"

Kohl isn't the only one to see the tide changing. "You see more [movement] programs in universities now than there ever was: Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais, Body Mapping," says Marston. "The new generation of musicians seems to understand that pain and injury aren't acceptable." McCann agrees, arguing that "the older generation thinkers, those who don't understand or don't want the change, will eventually have to accept this new, healthier change—or get out of the way, because it isn't going away."

It is true: programs focusing on movement and musicians' health are popping up across the country. Taboo topics from early generations—hearing loss, tendonitis, anxiety—are being talked about more openly and freely. Musicians everywhere are working towards the change found here at PSU.

"The Program is doing great—I have more trainees than ever before," laughs Marsh. "It's great to see the climate change. It's great to see more awareness. I can't wait to see where we are in a few years. We've already come so far."

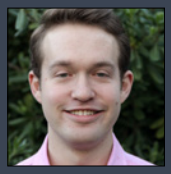
What we've got cooking

FOR THE NEXT ISSUE...

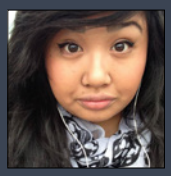
- George Crumb's amplified string quartet *Black Angels* turns 50: analysis, conversations, attitudes
- More Oval Tables, this time with a focus on Portland "classical" audiences and a challenge for its arts institutions: should students be admitted to concerts free of charge?
- Another new section: Popular Jazz Folk Cafe, featuring book and album reviews, an interview with Jeff Coffin, articles on John Coltrane and Chris Thile, and much more!

Meet Our Team

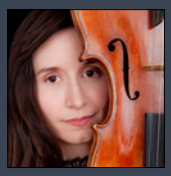
Matthew Neil Andrews
MAJOR: MA MUSIC
INSTRUMENT: VOICE (BASS)



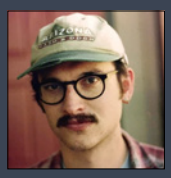
Adam Brooker
ALUMNUS
MAJOR: PERFORMANCE
INSTRUMENT: CLASSICAL GUITAR



Alexis Deona
MAJOR: PERFORMANCE
INSTRUMENT: FLUTE

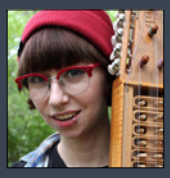


Christina Ebersohl
MAJOR: PERFORMANCE
INSTRUMENT: VIOLA

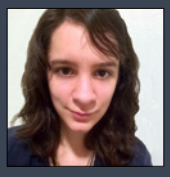


Jeffrey Evans
MAJOR: MM CONDUCTING (CHORAL)
INSTRUMENT: VOICE (BASS)

Micah Fletcher
MAJOR: PERFORMANCE
INSTRUMENT: PERCUSSION

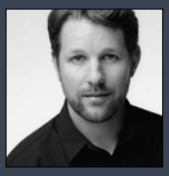


Amy Hakanson
MAJOR: MUSICOLOGY
INSTRUMENTS: VIOLIN, NYCKELHARPA



Harlie Hendrickson
MAJOR: MUSICOLOGY
INSTRUMENT: TRUMPET

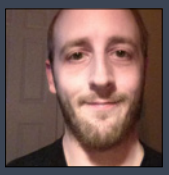
Angelica Hesse
MAJOR: PERFORMANCE
INSTRUMENT: VOICE (SOPRANO)



Christopher Poulakidas
MAJOR: MM PERFORMANCE
INSTRUMENT: VOICE (TENOR)

Bailey Paugh
MAJOR: MM PERFORMANCE
INSTRUMENT: TRUMPET

Charles Rose
MAJOR: SOUND ARTS & MUSIC PRODUCTION
INSTRUMENT: PIANO



Aaron Shingles
MAJOR: MUSICOLOGY
INSTRUMENT: GUITAR

David Walters
MAJOR: MM CONDUCTING (CHORAL)
INSTRUMENT: VOICE (BASS)

Daniel Vega
ALUMNUS
MAJOR: COMPOSITION
INSTRUMENT: SAXOPHONE

Fedja Zahirović
MAJOR: MUSICOLOGY
INSTRUMENT: GUITAR

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