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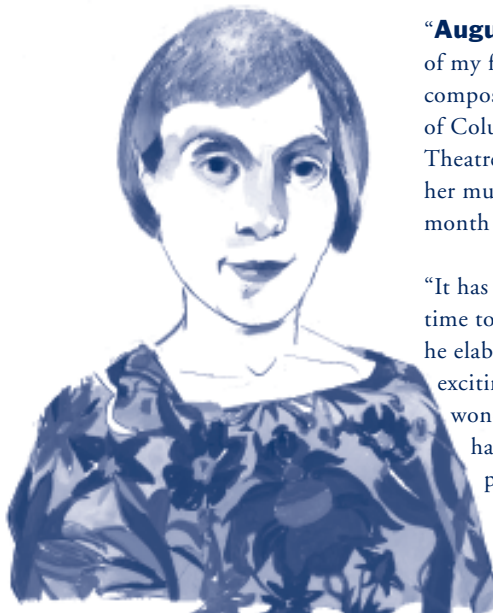
April '05

G. Schirmer *News*

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A Pair of Composer Portraits

Augusta Read Thomas at Miller Theatre



Augusta Read Thomas

illustration: Richard Vecchio

“**Augusta Read Thomas** is one of my favorite living American composers.” George Steel, director of Columbia University’s Miller Theatre, declares his enthusiasm for her music as she is featured this month in its portrait concert series.

“It has been my wish for a long time to have a portrait of Augusta,” he elaborates. “Her music is exciting, vibrant, colorful, and wonderfully made. I think we have put together a diverse program — with a great ensemble, Alarm Will Sound (conducted by Alan Pierson) — that will show off many different sides of her work.” The concert



Alarm Will Sound

highlights a number of premieres: the first performance of her new work *Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour* (written especially for Alarm Will Sound for this concert); and the New York premieres of *In My Sky at Twilight*, *Silver Chants the Litanies*, and *Spirit Musings*.

Also this month: the Metropolitan Museum of Art hosts the choral

group Chanticleer as they present the New York premiere of *Purple Syllables*, and Thomas’s cello compositions are the subject of an article in *Strings Magazine*.

Next month, Thomas expands her catalogue with four world premieres: the San Diego Symphony presents *Credences of Summer*; the Lincoln Trio performs *Moon Jig*; the Newman and Oltman Guitar Duo introduces *Memory: Swells*; and violinist Rachel Barton Pine premieres *Caprice* at the Musicorda Festival (MA) and then takes the work to DC for the annual US Supreme Court Musicale, a private concert which will be later broadcast on NPR’s “Performance Today.”

Michael Tilson Thomas at Carnegie Hall

“I have been writing solo and chamber pieces for the last year or so while sketching and gathering thoughts towards something new. ‘Rilke Songs’ [is] an examination of the curious way in which Schubert, Mahler, and cowboy songs overlap — something my father pointed out to me when I was child. Imagine a Jewish pianist in a cowboy bar in Durango who channels Mahler and Schubert.

‘Notturmo’ is my take on old-fashioned étude de concert [inspired by flutists Paula Robison and Paul Renzi, the San Francisco Symphony’s principal flutist for nearly 50 years]. It has the shape of a big operatic scene...

Five or six years ago, [press representative Margaret Carson] came to tea and I demonstrated for her my new Sibelius composing software. We sat down together and started to impro-

...vise using three sounds from the sound-bank of that computer... What [we] improvised was a monstrous concoction, but I’ve returned to it from time to time, and the result is this piece of pure music conjecture. [‘Tea with Maggie’] is my tribute to the kind of music I performed a good deal in my younger days, an affectionate send-up of a certain severe, bygone style that was formerly known as ‘avant-garde.’ ”

— As told to James M. Keller

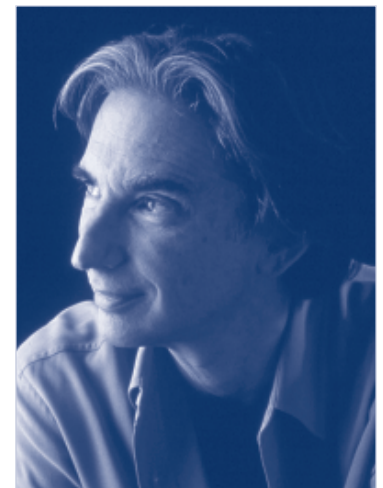


photo: Susan Schelling, courtesy San Francisco Symphony

Rilke Songs

Baritone, piano
(three songs of the five-song cycle will be premiered)
“Ich lebe mein leben”
“Lied des Trinkers”
“Immer wieder”

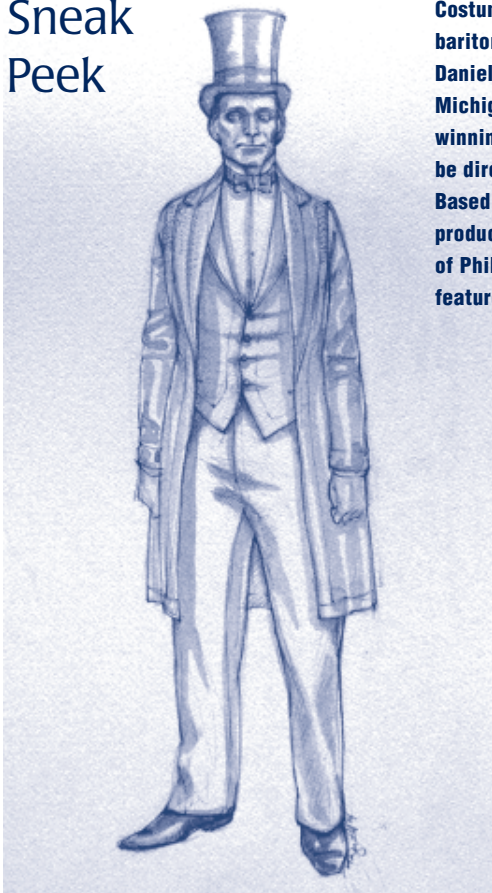
Notturmo

fl; hp, 2vn, va, vc, db

Tea With Maggie
electronics

In 1997, Carnegie Hall’s “Making Music” concert series debuted. Since then, 13 of our composers have been featured on these portrait programs. On 10 April, **Michael Tilson Thomas** takes center stage as number 14 for an evening of informal chat and performances that includes the world premieres of three new chamber works: *Notturmo*, *Rilke Songs*, and *Tea with Maggie*. Moderated by Carnegie’s artistic advisor Ara Guzelimian, the concert also highlights Tilson Thomas’s recent percussion work *Island Music*.

Sneak Peek



costume design: Paul Tazewell, courtesy Michigan Opera Theatre

Costume design for the character of Edward Gaines, whom baritone Rodney Gilfrey brings to life on 7 May in Richard Danielpour's opera "Margaret Garner," presented by the Michigan Opera Theatre. With a libretto by Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison, Danielpour's first opera will be directed by Kenny Leon and conducted by Stefan Lano. Based on an historical incident, "Margaret Garner" (a co-production with the Cincinnati Opera and Opera Company of Philadelphia) runs for five performances, and is a featured highlight at the 2005 Opera America Conference.

Subsequent performances at Cincinnati Opera in July 2005 and Opera Company of Philadelphia in February 2006.

Margaret Garner (2004) full evening
3(pic).2(ca).3(bcl).3(cbn)/4.3Ctpt.2+btbn.1/
timp.3perc/hp.pf(cel).stage pf/str
Principal Roles:
Mezzo-soprano, Lyric Baritone,
Dramatic Soprano, Lyric Baritone
Secondary Roles:
Dramatic Tenor, Light Lyric Soprano,
Tenor, Lyric Tenor
SATB Black Chorus, 32 voices suggested
SATB White Chorus, 40 voices suggested

"Ghosts in the Dream Machine"

"I've long had a deep, and private, enjoyment of my dream life." **Gabriela Lena Frank** lures us into her inner sanctum of inspiration, as she contemplates the 10 April world premiere of her new two-movement piano quintet *Ghosts in the Dream Machine*, performed by pianist Simone Dinnerstein and the Chiara String Quartet in Philadelphia.

Ghosts in the Dream Machine is inspired by two sources: the studies of Malcolm Godwin, a noted expert in the field of dream research, and the artwork and creative mind of Simon Dinnerstein (the father of the pianist). Frank continues, "Godwin's concept of dreams refers to the transitory, hallucinatory images and impressions from our waking life, which visit us in our dreams...Simon's work is

fantastically evocative, casting ordinary subjects in a decidedly unordinary light. He accesses that imaginative spirit tucked away in the recesses of our dream world, and the recurring themes of mystery, night and wonder are what drives this quintet. Originally, I held Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* as a blueprint — [Victor Hartmann's] pictures of Russian daily life are straightforward and pictorial. But Simon's work is complex and even elusive without being coy, much like a dream. One minute, it is serene; the next, highly disturbing. This chimera-like quality cries out for music that is psychologically rich, and in reworking my initial ideas, I wrote a work which focuses intensely on mood and color." On the 12th, Dinnerstein and the Chiara String



photo: Astral Artistic Services

Simone Dinnerstein

Quartet bring the work to the Aaron Copland School of Music in Queens for its New York premiere.

More Frank news: This month, she also travels to Lincoln Center where she is featured in a portrait concert at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. Next month, Frank goes to Brazil for the Orquesta Sinfonica da Bahia's South American premiere of *Illapa: Tone Poem for Flute and Orchestra*.

Ghosts in the Dream Machine c. 16'
2vn, va, vc, pf

Review

John Corigliano

Circus Maximus 35'

...[the] wild ride...is spatially conceived, with a huge ensemble onstage, eleven trumpets ringing the first tier, a saxophone trio at the edge of the second tier immediately above, and directly across from them, a horn duo. Additional



photo: Chris Lee

percussion could be heard from upstairs, somewhere in the back....Oh, I neglected to mention the small marching band that entered from the back, paraded up to the front of the stage and then returned via the other aisle...

New York premiere

For three bands
On-stage band: 4(2pic).4(ca).3+2bc+cbcl.3+cbn/
4.4(2Dtp).4.2+2euph/timp.4[=5]perc/pf.hp;
Surround band: 0.0.1.2asx+tsx+barsx.0/
2.11.0.0/3perc/db;
Marching band: pic, Ebcl, 2trpt, 2tbn
University of Texas Wind Ensemble/Junkin
27 February 2005; Carnegie Hall, New York City

Those trumpets began the slightly mad diversions with a unison blast that seemed to circle the auditorium...the result was as if blinding searchlights had been flipped on, which spread feverishly through the ensemble until all sections of the group were in full cry, including some impressively braying clarinets. And as in his First Symphony (and perhaps his score to Ken Russell's "Altered States"), Corigliano's language is eclectic...and wisely taps this excellent group's youthful exuberance, without sacrificing discipline....The audience reaction was almost as humorously over-the-top as some of Corigliano's ideas, but bully for them: it's always heartening to see people standing to cheer a new piece.

— Bruce Hodges, *MusicWeb.uk.net*

Review

Mark Adamo

Lysistrata, or The Nude Goddess 135'

A sumptuous love story, poised between comedy and heartbreak....It works: a minute after the music began, I knew that I was in the hands of a brilliant theatre composer. Adamo's effortless expertise was on display in his 1998 maiden effort, *Little Women*,

but he has taken several big leaps forward, particularly in integrating his proudly tonal melodies with more dissonant connective material. Adamo's accompaniments would make a good primer for any young

Premiere

a tragicomedy for singers and orchestra
English libretto by the composer after Aristophanes
Michael Kahn, stage director
Stefan Lano, music director

Principals: 17 to play 24 characters
4S, 3Mz, 2C, 4T, Bar, Bar[=B-Bar], 2B-Bar
1(pic).0.1.asx(barsx).1/1100/timp.2perc/hp/str (4.4.3.3.2)

composer learning to write for and around singers. Each strand of the vocal line is punctuated by some perfect short gesture: the orchestral writing is often little more — or nothing less — than a play of light around the voices. Slow dotted rhythms, reminiscent of Britten in his ceremonial mode, give the music a sudden grandeur; as the cities work their way toward reconciliation, the women sing radiant, flowing chorales....It's almost shocking how deep this seemingly lighthearted opera goes.

— Alex Ross, *The New Yorker*



photo: Brett Coomer, Houston Grand Opera

(Re)view — William Schuman: “A Free Song, Secular Cantata No. 2”

In April 1943, American composer **William Schuman** won the first Pulitzer Prize ever awarded for musical composition for his work, *A Free Song, Secular Cantata No. 2*. This was not a bad achievement for the recently appointed Director of Publications of G. Schirmer, and former professor of music at Sarah Lawrence College, who, though an established composer at the time of his award, had earlier showed no great interest in serious music at all, being enthralled, like so many young American men, by jazz and popular song.

This vitality served the more mature composer well. Leonard Bernstein, who famously recorded numerous Schuman works, including all of his symphonies, observed William's “lust for life,” his “vigor and propulsion” and his “buoyancy and energetic drive,” traits reflected time and again in

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the three-movement work using poems taken from Walt Whitman's *Drum-Taps*, written in response to a previous, emotionally-fraught battle, the Civil War. Matched perfectly in Schuman's cantata, the poems “Long, Too Long, America,” “Look Down Fair Moon,” and “Song of the Banner at Daybreak,” successively build to a climactic cry of hope.

the exuberant, life-affirming voice which marked Schuman's music.

A Free Song was completed in October of 1942, as the tide was beginning to turn in the Second World War and the Allies were just beginning to experience their first glimmers of success. National sentiment was high on the side of the boys fighting in the war. So it is no accident that Schuman, an experienced choral composer, built

A Free Song, Secular Cantata No. 2 (1942) 22'

Text: Walt Whitman

Chorus; 3(pic)3+ca.3+Ebcl.3+cbn/4331/timp.perc/str
Premiere 1943; Boston Symphony Orchestra;
Serge Koussevitzky, conductor; Harvard Glee Club;
Radcliffe Choral Society

Since 1943 the Pulitzer Prize has honored excellence in musical composition. G. Schirmer is endowed with a generous legacy of Pulitzer Prize winning works:

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1943 | William Schuman | <i>A Free Song, Secular Cantata No. 2</i> |
| 1947 | Charles Ives | <i>Symphony No. 3</i> |
| 1949 | Virgil Thomson | <i>Music for the film Louisiana Story</i> |
| 1950 | Gian Carlo Menotti | <i>The Consul</i> |
| 1955 | Gian Carlo Menotti | <i>The Saint of Bleeker Street</i> |
| 1956 | Ernst Toch | <i>Symphony No. 3</i> |
| 1958 | Samuel Barber | <i>Vanessa</i> |
| 1960 | Elliott Carter | <i>String Quartet No. 2</i> |
| 1961 | Walter Piston | <i>Symphony No. 7</i> |
| 1963 | Samuel Barber | <i>Piano Concerto No. 1</i> |
| 1967 | Leon Kirchner | <i>String Quartet No. 3</i> |
| 1969 | Karel Husa | <i>String Quartet No. 3</i> |
| 1973 | Elliott Carter | <i>String Quartet No. 3</i> |
| 1983 | Ellen Taaffe Zwilich | <i>Symphony No. 1</i> |
| 1985 | Stephen Albert | <i>RiverRun</i> |
| 1987 | John Harbison | <i>The Flight Into Egypt</i> |
| 1990 | Mel Powell | <i>Duplicates: A Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra</i> |
| 1994 | Gunther Schuller | <i>Of Reminiscences and Reflections</i> |
| 1995 | Morton Gould | <i>Stringmusic</i> |
| 1998 | Aaron Jay Kernis | <i>String Quartet No. 2 (musica instrumentalis)</i> |
| 2000 | Lewis Spratlan | <i>Life is a Dream, Act II, Concert version</i> |
| 2001 | John Corigliano | <i>Symphony No. 2 for String Orchestra</i> |

The opening lines of “Long, Too Long, America” sound a summons and a challenge that goes straight over the footlights.

— *Boston Herald-Tribune*, April 1943

The composition is clear cut, finely felt and expertly fashioned, and found immediate favor with the listeners.

— *Musical Courier*, April 1943

Of William Schuman's *A Free Song* let it be said here is a work of significant meaning. He paints with bold vivid strokes and has a particular leaning toward choral music.

— *Music News*, June 1945

Mr. Schuman understands how to handle voices and orchestra and there are moments of poignant beauty in this score.

— *Musical Leader*, May 1943

Review

Kirke Mechem

Songs of the Slave 34'

What a work it was. With 130 voices...and two vocal soloists...Strickler led the singers and musicians in performing *Songs of the Slave*, a suite that the Wichita-born, Topeka-raised composer Kirke Mechem drew from his opera, *John Brown*.

...*Songs of the Slave* proved stirring. And it was not just for the lush and lively score by

Soprano, Bass-baritone; SATB
3(pic).2+ca.3(bcl).2+cbn/4331/timp.4perc/hp/str
Alternate: 2(pic).2.2(bcl).2/
4.2.1+trbn.0/timp.2perc/hp/str
Sheila Judson, soprano;
Wayne Shepperd, bass-baritone
Topeka Symphony and Chorus/Strickler
5 March 2005; Topeka, KS

Mechem but also for the text he chose from history....The fiery abolitionist John Brown arrived 150 years ago in what was "Bleeding Kansas."...But slavery's legacy didn't end with the South's defeat.

When Shepperd sang...words from a speech by Frederick Douglas, the former slave who championed liberty for his race...it served as a reminder of another moment decades later that put Topeka's name in the history books....Mechem cemented that historical connection by closing his cantata with a phrase from the Declaration of Independence....That wasn't the suite's only dramatic moment....Mechem [composed] a movement based on a letter that a slave, Harriet Newby, wrote to her husband. She tells him she fears she will be sold if he doesn't soon return. [He] was killed in Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry. She was sold.

...a memorable concert.

— Bill Blankenship,
The Topeka Capital-Journal



Kirke Mechem
Songs of the Slave
Vocal score 50482274 \$8.95



To an Absent Love — Song Cycle
The first song is Harriet Newby's letter of her husband, from "Songs of the Slave"
Soprano and piano
Vocal score 50482690 \$5.95

Max Attack

London's Royal Festival Hall is the place to be when **Peter Maxwell Davies** is feted as "A Musician of Our Time," 17–30 April.

This festival underscores his distinct and far-reaching influence on contemporary music, not only in Britain but worldwide. "A Musician of Our Time" presents lectures, informal discussions and concerts performed by such groups as the Philharmonia Orchestra and ensembles of the Royal Academy of Music. Also featured are two world premieres: *A Dance on the Hill* given by mezzo-soprano Pamela Helen Stephen and the City of London Sinfonia led by Richard Hickox, and the Maggini Quartet's first performance of *Naxos Quartet No. 6*. The composer's *Assunzione Beatae Mariae Virginis* receives its UK premiere by the London Sinfonietta conducted by Oliver Knussen.

Max (as he is affectionately known) made his mark in the 1960s and 70s with his expressionist scores, biting film music and provocative theatre pieces. Since then, he has prolifically expanded his catalogue with operas, ballets, concertos, symphonies, chamber music, and works for voice. He has also spent much of his career as an educational advocate and has composed a number of engaging works for children.

Maxwell Davies currently serves as Master of The Queen's Music, and is in discussions with Buckingham Palace about new pieces and events.

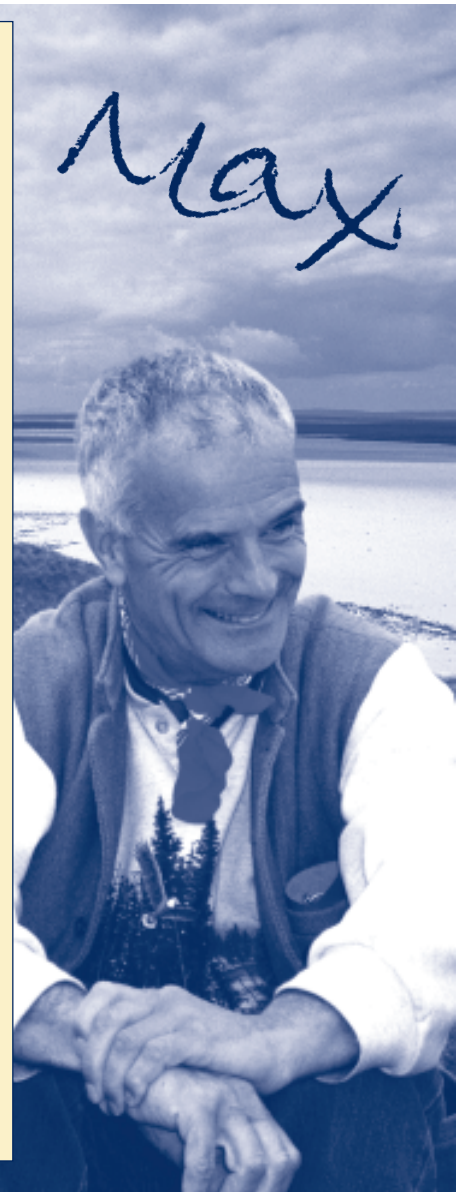
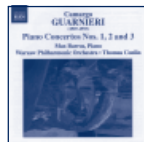


photo: Gunnie Moberg, courtesy: Royal Festival Hall

Recent Recordings



George Antheil
Complete Works for String Quartet
Lithuanian Night
Six Little Pieces for String Orchestra
String Quartets Nos. 1, 2, and 3
Del Sol String Quartet
Other Minds OM 1008-2



Camargo Guarnieri
Piano Concerto No. 2
Max Barros, piano
Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra/Conlin
Naxos CD 8557666



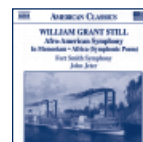
Hans Werner Henze
L'Upupa und der Triumph der Sohnesliebe
(*The Hoopoe and the Triumph of Filial Love*)
Dieter Dorn, stage director
Brian Large, film director
Salzburg Festival
Various soloists
Vienna Staatsopera Choir
Vienna Philharmonic/Stenz
Euroarts DVD 2053929



Charles Ives
Piano Sonata No. 2, "Concord"
Steven Mayer, piano
Naxos CD 8559127



Dmitri Shostakovich
Jazz Suites Nos. 1 and 2
The Bolt (Ballet Suite)
Russian State Symphony/Yablonsky
Naxos SACD 6110104



William Grant Still
Afro-American Symphony
Fort Smith Symphony/Jeter
Naxos CD 8559174

Reviews

Poul Ruders

Kafka's Trial 105'

Ruders is a prodigiously skilled and daringly imaginative craftsman, and *Kafka's Trial* is a brilliant achievement: a grotesquely comic, bitterly satirical and, ultimately, deeply moving work that hooks you for two onrushing and uninterrupted hours...

...Bentley...and Ruders settled on the ingenious device of combining the novel with elements of Kafka's life...In 1912, Kafka, living in Prague, met Felice Bauer of Berlin and started a two-year courtship through letters. This conflicted correspondence took a bizarre turn when Bauer's best friend, Greta Bloch, entered the picture as a go-between but wound up getting involved with Kafka. Naturally the truth came out, with recriminations on all sides. Kafka channeled his torment and guilt into *The Trial*.

In the opera, scenes from Kafka's three-way relationship with Bauer and Bloch are seamlessly interspersed with episodes from the book...The lead tenor plays both Joseph K. and Kafka, and as Bentley

hoped, you care about the hapless and beleaguered author, who lives only through his agonized writing.

But what makes you care and shakes you up is Ruders's stunning score. Stylistically, as usual, he is all over the place. The madcap scenes are driven by garish, frenzied music that nods to Prokofiev. Elements of

Johnny van Hal and Marianne Rørholm in "Kafka's Trial"



photo: Martin Mydtskov Rønne, Royal Danish Opera

spiky atonality mix with Minimalistic riffs. When characters snipe at one another, the orchestra erupts in pugnacious bouts of counterpoint. Kvetching bureaucrats are captured through whining woodwinds and sniveling strings.

But every time the ranting energy and pummeling dissonance get out of hand, the score turns momentarily pensive as Ruders captures a character's reflections through luminous, quietly sustained and weirdly beautiful music...

— Anthony Tommasini,
The New York Times

Premiere

Libretto by Paul Bentley
(available in English or Danish)
S, 2 Mz, 4T, 3 Bar, B; SATB
4.1+ca.3+bel.sx.3+cbn/6441/
timp.4perc/hp.epf.kbd.acn/str
Francisco Negrin, stage director
Royal Danish Opera/Schönwandt
12 March 2005; Copenhagen, Denmark

Yehudi Wyner

Piano Concerto, "Chiavi in Mano" 20'

Spook a thoroughbred, see how fast it runs...composer Yehudi Wyner sent a jolt through the Boston Symphony Orchestra...with his world premiere piano concerto, *Chiavi in Mano*. "Chiavi in Mano" — it's a phrase stolen from Italian salesmen: basically, "if you got the keys, you own it." The keys here are both under the soloist's fingers and in the musical suggestiveness, which hints at the work's eventual outcome, but subtly...

Premiere

Piano; 2(pic).2.2.2/4231/timp.perc/str
Robert Levin, piano; Boston Symphony/Spagno
17 February 2004; Boston, MA

Chiavi offers many chances for admiration. From its simple beginning, it expands to larger explorations, all following a thread that comments on previous material and moves quickly on. In one movement...Wyner's *Chiavi* brings Ives, the great incorporator of popular idiom, to a new generation.

— Keith Powers, *Boston Herald*

Michael Gordon

Gotham 30'

Gotham...will undoubtedly be the most discussed piece of new orchestral music played in London this year. Like its spiritual ancestor, Edgard Varèse's epic 1922 ear-basher *Amérique*, its theme is the New World in all its brash, brilliant, multifarious intensity — and particularly, of course, New York. But this is no lullaby of Broadway.

UK premiere

2(afl.pic).2.0.0/2320/pf/2perc/
egtr.5str-ebgtr/str(min 33331)
London Sinfonietta/Brabbins
11 March 2005; Queen Elizabeth Hall,
London, England

True, the first movement is comparatively mild. Rising and falling scales shift in and out of sync in...minimalist fashion, while, on the big screen behind the orchestra, Bill Morrison's collage of newsreels flickers and shudders through primordial footage of sheep in Central Park. But the second and third movements are a different matter. As skyscrapers, subway trains and crowds whirl across the screen, Gordon's score crashes...

Imagine a dozen police sirens, each a quarter-tone apart from the next....Add a pounding beat. And then, just when you think that the heavily amplified orchestra can't produce anything more...imagine a kind of danse macabre for our times: a relentless, ferocious jig that starts with a single fiddle, then splinters into a myriad different lines, none quite aligned with the next, until the whole band is spinning in a mega-decibel vortex.

— Richard Morrison, *The Times* (London)

New Publications



Robert Kapilow
from "03, This New Immense,
Unbounded World"
*the mississippi river
empties into the gulf*
for SATB and chorus
Octavo 50485592 \$1.60



W.A. Mozart
ed. Paul Badura-Skoda
Piano Concerto No. 26, "Coronation Concerto"
reduction for two pianos
Set 50483628 \$14.95



Proverb
for SATB and chorus
Octavo 50485591 \$1.60

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Deborah Horne, Editor
 Ed Matthew, Managing Internet Editor

Reviews

Leon Kirchner

Piano Sonata No. 2 14'

Jonathan Biss, piano
 8 March 2005; Zankel Hall, Carnegie Hall,
 New York City

There was the Berg *Sonata*...and as a counterbalance, Leon Kirchner's *Sonata No. 2* in all its crowded, heart-on-sleeve passion.

Mr. Kirchner is well into his 80's and the piece here only two years old, but its languid, limpid periods bear the seeds of an enormous eruptive energy. The music surges and expands from states of calm into great rushes of complexity.

— Bernard Holland,
The New York Times

Dmitri Shostakovich

The Bolt full eve.

Ballet in Three Acts
 3333/6331/timp.perc/hp/str
 Alexei Ratmansky, choreography; Bolshoi Ballet
 25 February 2005; Moscow, Russia

The choreography, sets, costumes and, above all, Shostakovich's masterful score conspire to make *The Bolt* one of those theatrical events that can cause even the most jaded viewer to stand up and cheer. Despite the ballet's inauspicious theme — industrial sabotage during the early days of Stalin's rule — it comes across as rollicking good fun, with delicious satirical overtones that can be grasped by anyone with even the vaguest notions of Soviet life in that tumultuous era.

— Raymond Stults,
The Moscow Times

with admiration and gratitude to Alan Pierson and members of the Alarm Will Sound Ensemble

FINAL SOLILOQUY OF THE INTERIOR PARAMOUR
 (for Mezzo-Soprano, Countertenor and Chamber Orchestra)

Wallace Stevens Augusta Read Thomas

Dramatic ♩ = 104 rit.

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