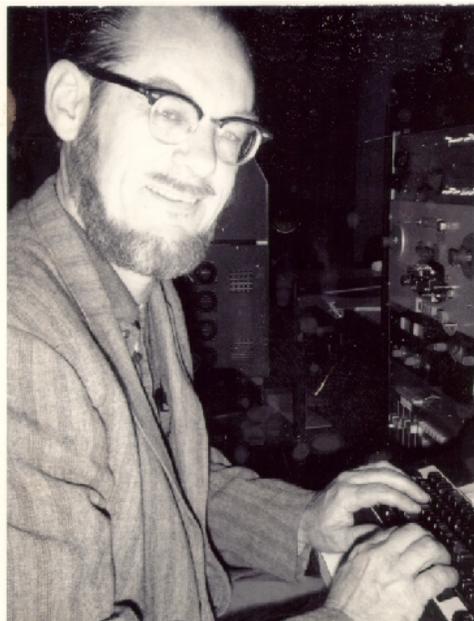


LIVING MUSIC

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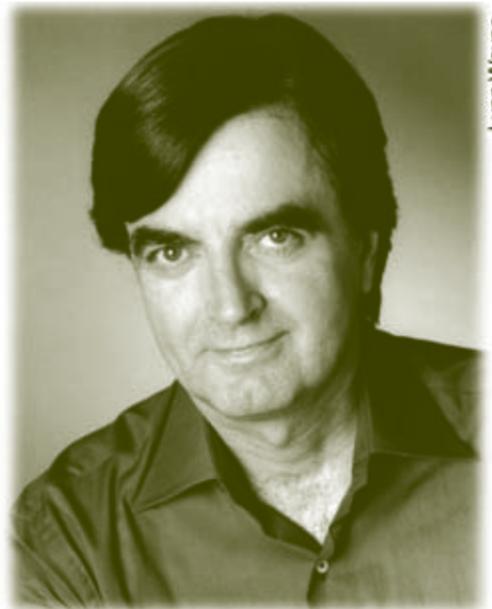
Fall 2008/Spring 2009



FROM THE EDITOR

Living Music's composer feature in this issue is an interview with Karl Korte, conducted in celebration of his 80th birthday.

CD reviews cover discs of Larry Thomas Bell, Leland Smith, and an American sampler performed by the intrepid trio Palisades Virtuosi.



Lynn Wayne

from top: Leland Smith,
Larry Thomas Bell

Six Questions: Seven Answers
an interview with Karl Korte
by Gerald Warfield

1.) Some have said that “loss of audiences” is actually the composers’ own fault, in that music (the only kind there was, at the time) began removing itself from the people in the late 19th century, and that popular music’s rushed in to fill the vacuum. In other words, concert composers stopped writing what the majority of the people wanted to hear. Do you think that is a fair statement, and do you think concert music can ever gain back the majority of the listening public again?

(“The only kind there was, at the time”)

Not so! There has always been religious, folk and dance music, totally unrelated to what later become known as “Concert” or “Art Music.” The concept of the artist as anything more than a “craftsman” or worker in a skilled trade is a relatively new one. We tend to forget that for hundreds of years, if the artist (composer) didn’t please his patrons by writing what his benefactors or church wanted to hear, he didn’t work. As we all know, the concept of the *Artiste* as someone outside, removed from, or even above the working classes, is the result of cataclysmic 19th century social and philosophical changes that out of necessity created the idea that artistic organisms very *raison d’etre* should be the manifestation of emotion, rather than a purely subjective means of expression. Once that *Pandora’s Box* had been opened the never-ending search and demand for “*The New*” took over: The *Lingua franca* of common-practice ended and “Individual uniqueness and innovation” – at all costs – became the mantra.

It has been said that works of art are messages dispatched to constantly changing addresses. While in the past there was usually never any doubt as to what kind of music would

appeal to devout churchgoers or royal palace quests, during much of the 20th century, many composers deviated enough from convention and tradition that audience comprehension dwindled. The message may have been sent but it was no longer addressed. But while the gulfs in art are much harder to bridge than ignore, it has been a positive and welcome change that so many younger composers are now openly and often successfully expressing themselves in ways that are more comprehensible - even attractive - to audiences.

2.) Do you think concert music can ever gain back the majority of the listening public again?

I don’t think *classical concert music* ever constituted a majority of the listening public. And while the ingredients of Mass Culture and Consumerism (with its concomitant loss in attention spans) plus the neglect of serious instruction and exposure to classical music in our schools will mediate against much change, there are some small but positive signs.

“There are stirrings of a gold rush in the world of classical music, and it comes from an unexpected quarter: the web. In a market whose consumers have been written off as so doddering they have barely got over the loss of 78s, the statistics are striking. Proportionately, classical sells better digitally than on CD. Whereas classical accounts for about 3%-4% of total sales of music in shops, on iTunes it accounts for 12% of sales.”

— Charlotte Higgins,
arts correspondent, Tuesday March
28, 2006, *The Guardian*

3.) What would you say to a student who wants to enter a university course of study in music composition who has little more than a “Guitar Hero” background?

I would say to our “Guitar Hero”: Are you sure that you know what you are getting into? What *kind* of music you want to write? What *kinds* of music do you like and listen to most? What is your vision of where and what they might be doing ten to fifteen years from now? Since so many terms such as “concert”, “classical”, and “modern” have lost their traditional meaning, there has never been a time when as many and as varied answers are possible. *XM Satellite Radio* lists about one hundred different categories of music ranging from Classic Alternative, Classic, and Classical Vocals to Classic Country, Classic Soul, Classic Rock, Classic Dance and Classic Contemporary. Even if you exclude the redundancy factor, this last category has nothing to do with the kind of music readers of this article will have in mind. Even the term “Serious”, used in connection with *new music*, poses problems: Can anyone say that *Radio Heads*, Jonny Greenwood’s score for *There Will be Blood* isn’t serious?

So exactly what kind of music does our “Guitar Hero” have in mind when he says he wants to study music composition at a university? Is the university or music school the best place to go in order to prepare for a career as a composer? An answer to that query may not be easy but my concern is that the question might not be being asked as much as it should be. In the past, music school and conservatory curriculums were developed on the basis of generally agreed upon skills that a working musician would be called upon to provide. As long as one assumes that the music of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries represent our *permanent* heritage, the models for traditional curriculums, were and still can be valid to a limited extent. In

the past, the problem was that – at least in retrospect - scholastic needs sometimes produced rather myopic results: In the 1950’s the Eastman School used Mchose: *Basic Principles of the Technique of 18th and 19th Century Composition*. As a student in the 50’s at Juilliard, we used George A. Wedge: *Keyboard harmony: a practical application of music theory*. While it can be argued that in some cases the systems of rules outlined in these texts were limited due to a bias towards statistical analyses of interval use in the Bach four-part chorales, the fact remains that the ability to “realize” a figured bass was *de rigueur* for most 18th, 19th and early 20th century musicians who wanted a job which - more often than not - was connected with a church. (Is working out a *figured bass* really so different than working from a *Lead Sheet* or *Fake Book*?)

Having lived through polemic days of pedagogical change at Juilliard where George Wedge was replaced by “L&M” (The *Literature & Materials of Music*), I was later, in the 1960’s, involved with the Ford Foundation’s CMP and its *Comprehensive Musicianship Program*. Since then I’ve witnessed considerable restructuring in the ways and methods of teaching Music Theory and - from what I’ve seen - the subject is now being taught with far greater perspective than when I was a student.

However, today we must add technological skills to the mix. I can’t imagine anyone functioning efficiently as a composer, now or in the future, without computer “chops”, and here the university environment can provide access and training that might not be so easy to obtain otherwise. We now live in an exponentially expanded musical world and assuming that Counterpoint is still part of the curriculum, should it be required of our aspiring composer? Does he need it? The issue here is complicated by the fact that counterpoint’s emphasis and greatest achievements occur, almost exclusively, in Western music. On the

other hand, we are faced with the reality that for several generations now, many would define “polyphony” as two or more ~~radios~~ *iPods* playing at the same time. (“Thank you John!”) But wouldn’t it be great if someone were to rediscover the idea that different simultaneous voices might somehow be able to **interrelate** with one another. This brings us to the now ubiquitous subject of *World Music*. How much exposure to the music of non-western cultures should a prospective composer have? (I have no answer to that but am confronted with the thought that in the future any truly *comprehensive* course in music theory might have to be entitled *Literature & Instruction in the Music of all Peoples*. ((LIMP.)) Allow at least eight years to get an undergraduate degree in this field.)

As to the subject of making a living as a composer I would tell our student that in the 1950’s, when I was a student at Juilliard, it was almost unthinkable that any composer could make a living by writing “Concert” music. (Excluding Hollywood, and radio.) Teaching was just about the only option and even Schönberg had to do that in order to survive in America. But since my student days, the population of the United States has doubled. So has the GNP. I believe it is the latter (more discretionary income) that now makes it possible to thumb through a list of American composers from Adams to Zwillich and discover upwards of a dozen composers currently enjoying prosperity and success without the need of *academic patronage*. Any study will show, almost without exception, that all these composers have been exposed to rigorous training and study in the practices of TWA (Traditional Western Art) music. If you want to include successful composers from Europe as well, exposure to TWA would be even greater since it is possible there to begin rigorous training at an earlier age.

Even with the above positive information a few caveats are in order: We are a nation of 300 million and for every composer who might turn up on this list there are thousands more who must teach or do unrelated work in order to survive. Unfortunately, (with fear of stirring up a hornet’s nest) talent alone has never been enough to guarantee this kind of success. Luck as well as individual temperament always play a part. So does geography. In the United States the continued concentration of power in BOSNYWASH often results in composers from other parts of the country being ignored or, at the least, not receiving the recognition they may well deserve.

So to our “Guitar Hero” considering entrance to a university course in music composition, I would say: “Think carefully about what your goals really are. Do you really want to be a composer of concert music (Symphonies, Operas, Chamber Music)? Do you really have an objective view of what this entails?” There are 42 registered Schools of Music in the US as well as 4140 Colleges and Universities, almost all of which offer some kind of courses in music. If you decide that this is the route for you, choose among the best and most comprehensive programs and - since teaching will probably be where you must start - choose a school with a good track record of job placement?

On the other hand, if our “Guitar Hero” has dreams of stardom as a performer and/or songwriter in the immense and lucrative world of popular entertainment, stay away from academic environments. Go out into the world, play your instrument. Sing your songs before as many people as possible. Listen to what other people are doing and above all, learn about publicity and self-promotion.

4.) What would you say to the teacher who increasingly faces this kind of student?

See above.

5.) You've talked about the training of composers, and the different skills that that can entail. What about the relation of the performance experience to composing? Since "performance" can be synthesized now (i.e., programmed, not in real time), is it necessary, any longer, for a composer to be a proficient performer? Is the composer that spends his or her formative years at a computer console and no time in a string quartet or a chorus or an orchestra missing anything essential?

"What about the relation of the performance experience to composing? ...is it necessary, any longer, for a composer to be a proficient performer?"

The answer to that would depend upon what kind of composer we are talking about and what is meant by proficiency? During my student days at Juilliard, piano proficiency was minimally defined as the ability to sight-read a Bach Chorale. (For Irving Berlin - who began his career playing no instrument at all - sight-reading "*Es ist Genug*" on his later purchased, specially designed "transposing" piano might still have proved a challenge.) The history of American popular music is full of examples of songwriters who could not or can not read music: Joni Mitchell is among those who can not and is famous, among studio musicians, for her attempts to describe the chords she wants in terms of colors. Several of the *Beatles* do not read music. (Paul McCartney gets by with a little help from his classically trained friends.) While *Radiohead's* Jonny Greenwood is conservatory trained, Thom Yorke (vocals, rhythm guitar, piano) does not read music and was reportedly asked by Greenwood **not** to learn how. Sometimes the "untrained ear" hears

things that the "trained ear" does not. No matter how naturally talented a student may seem, not every student who applies for admission to a College or University music program belongs there.

On the other hand, those who compose songs but cannot write them down must rely on those who can. There are many examples of contributions made by so-called "transcribers" who should ultimately and rightly have been named as co-composers. (I remember many "composers" of songs - even -"operas" who came to Juilliard searching for someone who would write out for them what they were hearing in their heads. (Often an agonizing and, sometimes, futile exercise.)

Assuming that a composer/song writer can read and notate music, but expecting that he or she may never need or desire to write for actual acoustic instruments, real-time performance experience may not be so essential. How would such experience help a composer who writes music for computer games? On a somewhat higher level, does someone who writes film music utilizing programs such as *Native Instruments* ABSYNTH, BATTERY, etc. - where so many musical decisions are based upon computer algorithms - need to have had live performance experience? Probably not - but I can't believe that any composer's work would not benefit from such real-time, hands-on exposure. (How do you choose between a down-bow and an up-bow from your string sample library if you don't have some idea of the way the instrument is physically played?)

In regard to the training needed by composers in the world of "commercial" music (advertising, television, film, etc.) I am grateful for input provided by my son Eric who for many years has been VP and Music Director for Saatchi & Saatchi in NYC.

His experience in New York, Los Angeles and London has been that while there are people in the business who are largely self-taught and have

had little training in traditional musical skills, most of the highly successful ones - those that work the most - are well trained and educated professionals, often with degrees from well known schools of music.

In the event that a student aspires to become a composer of concert music (Symphonies, Operas, Chamber Music), I can't imagine anyone writing well for any musical instrument without having first developed some skill on an actual acoustic instrument. There was a time when some conservatories actually required that potential composers have at least elementary training on a stringed instrument, a woodwind and, of course, the piano. This goes far beyond the mechanical issue of what is technically possible on an instrument and cuts to the very core of what the musical experience is (or at least used to be) about: breathing, body movement, and group cooperation. (On a personal note, as a former trumpet player; I deeply regret not having spent more time on the development of my keyboard skills.)

6.) Is the composer that spends his or her formative years at a computer console and no time in a string quartet or a chorus or an orchestra missing anything essential?

It would be hard to imagine any composer today in his formative years and beyond who does not spend a great deal of time at a computer console. Once one becomes reasonably proficient at a program like *Finale* or *Sibelius*, it is difficult to imagine anyone wanting to go back to pen and ink. (Anyone out there remember the "fun" of erasing ink on onionskin with razor blades?) However, there is always a price to be paid for what is referred to as technological progress. ("Technological progress is like an axe in the hands of a pathological criminal." - Albert Einstein) In the case of computer notation programs, I have often been concerned with the

extremely small amount of music you can see at one time, even with the largest monitors. I remember, as a student, visiting one of my Juilliard teacher's apartments and discovering pages of manuscript carefully taped around the room where he worked. (I recently read that Tan Dun uses several ping-pong tables for this purpose.) Of course it can be argued that the computer's ability to give instant playback compensates for the myopia of a single screen shot but, somehow, I'm not sure that it achieves the same thing as forcing your "eye's ear" to listen to a composition in its entirety.

Not asked for questions on the subjects of technology, progress and electronic music.

The whole question of technological "progress" raises profound issues when dealing with the idea of advancement in the arts. Historically, disbelief in an unceasing advance in all spheres of human knowledge and civilization is nothing new. In the 18th Century, Rousseau had questioned whether the concept of progress could or should be applied in the purely intellectual sphere. From the standpoint of history, can anyone honestly say that the passage of time has improved values in music? I am sincerely convinced that enrichments in musical syntax have been bought at the expense of other elements. (I like the comment made by François-Joseph Fétis in 1830: 'l'art ne progresse pas, il transforme'.)

Although my interest and activity in electronic music goes back almost fifty years and I have written dozens of compositions using electronics in one way or another, I must confess to a love/hate relationship with technology. Perhaps an anecdote or two from my past can best describe my feelings: In 1956, while still a graduate student at Juilliard, I also studied with Otto Luening. He was at that time working with live-recorded sound in conjunction with tape manipulation. He was

very excited by the attention his work was receiving and was actually receiving a fair amount of 'fan mail'. Some of that excitement apparently rubbed off on me, for shortly thereafter, I purchased my first tape recorder (I believe it was a Tandburg) and began my first efforts at tape composition. (Oh, those 32nd inch splices!) A few years later, as a Tanglewood Fellow working with Aaron Copland, I asked him what his thoughts were on the subject of "Electronic Music." He replied that although he didn't know much about it, he had reservations because electronic music, by its very nature, "is already what it shall become". (This was apparently a phrase Nadia used to describe one of her students, whose name – mercifully – was not passed along.)

There is a dichotomy here that I am still attempting to deal with after all these years: (And I'm sure that many young composers today must face these same issues.) The challenge and excitement of working with the seemingly never-ending possibilities of digital technology can't be denied. However, almost eighteen years ago, *Keyboard Magazine* devoted much of the issue to the past fifteen years of technological achievement in music: the remarkable accomplishments of sound sampling, MIDI, computer notation and printing, parts extraction, the marvelous variety of power available on present day synthesizers, and the potential for inter-action between performer and computer. The article concluded (almost as an afterthought): "Of course, there are no true virtuosos on any of these instruments because none of the technologies involved stays around long enough for any to develop and, of course, it is highly unlikely that truly great art will be produced by these technologies because, in the past, great artistic achievement (in all cultures-western and non-western) has grown out of common shared practice. Today, as far as the existence of any sort of 'common practice' or language is concerned, quite the opposite is

true." Twenty years later can it be said that much has changed? Technological development in digital sound manipulation is still occurring with such rapidity that it is simply impossible to keep up with all developments except on a very superficial level.

In addition, there are other concerns: Outside of academia, performances of compositions using live performers and digital (tape) accompaniment are difficult to come by. Many (most?) conductors do not like the experience of dealing with an ensemble in which at least one participant is "already what it shall become." (I have been fascinated by the fact that so many music program developers discovered that the way to make a MIDI performance sound more "human" was to add a certain amount of "*programmed randomness*". What an interesting oxymoron!)

Conductor Hermann Scherchen in the late 1960's wrote "Technology, rather than talent, will determine the music of the future. We do not live in an age of great creativity." The last part of that statement need not concern us since we've seen since then that no decade has lacked creative genius. But the idea that technology can be more important than talent is with us still. There probably never will be a completely satisfactory answer to the question "What is this change that emphasizes technology over artistry?"

I have spent most of my career attempting to live in both the acoustic and electronic worlds. Probably most aspiring young composers today are, or should be, equally at home in both. But, hopefully, it will not be forgotten that when it comes to composing music for breathing, sometimes perspiring, live human beings, the traditions of hundreds of years have produced masterpieces capable of countless acts of rediscovery and reinterpretation and, at their greatest, represent some of the "highest degrees of group cooperation achieved in Western civilization."

(Paul Henry Lang on the subject of Chamber Music at it's best.)

CD Reviews

Larry Thomas Bell: *String Quartet No. 3 (Homage to Beethoven); Celestial Refrain; Tarab*; Albany TROY986; Borromeo Quartet, John Muratore, Tarab Cello Ensemble

A number of recordings are available of the chamber and orchestral music of American composer Larry Bell (b. 1952). However, this new Albany disc, containing three works, is the best single-disc introduction to his work currently available. It is a magnificent release that displays well the vitality and creativity of Bell's music. Resident for many years in Boston, Larry Thomas Bell is on the faculty of the New England Conservatory and the Berklee College of Music and taught for a number of the years both at Boston Conservatory and the Juilliard School. A student of Vincent Persichetti and Roger Sessions, Bell has been awarded the Rome Prize and fellowships from the Guggenheim and Rockefeller Foundations. Though he has composed a number of orchestral works, he is best known for his personal and compelling works for chamber ensemble and solo forces (particularly his own instrument, the piano), some of which such as his *Mahler in Blue Light*, *op. 43* (1996) have become modern classics.

Each of the three works on this Albany release represents one of the musical "strains" that runs throughout the composer's entire catalogue and comprise the elements of Bell's personal style. *String Quartet No. 3 (Homage to Beethoven)*, *op. 71* (2004) showcases the stylistic connection that Bell's music makes with the past, particularly the music of the Romantic period. *Celestial Refrain*, *op. 24* (1985) for solo guitar, draws upon the sounds and idiom American

folk hymnody, particularly those hymns of the South that Bell heard as a child and began incorporating into his music (both through direct quotation and through original material in a similar style) in the 1980's. Finally, *Tarab*, *op. 66* (2003) for double cello quartet, draws upon the complexities of rhythm and temporal proportions (inspired, in Bell's case, by the music of Elliott Carter, but presented within a more accessible, and largely diatonic musical language than Carter uses). Nearly every one of Bell's compositions draws upon these different elements to greater and lesser extents, and this single release showcases three of Bell's pieces in which these elements are each presented clearly and synthesized into Bell's stylistic voice.

The extended *String Quartet No. 3 (Homage to Beethoven)* pays tribute to Beethoven's music (particularly the late string quartets) in its structural and developmental complexities. The seven movements of the work, however, explore a very different emotional terrain from Beethoven's own late quarters. In his notes on the work, Bell remarks on the sense of "lightness and humor" that pervades the work. It is a piece full of rich, beautiful textures that is performed exquisitely by the Borromeo Quartet.

Celestial Refrain, performed by guitarist John Muratore, is a set of "double" variations upon folk-like hymn material (two contrasting ideas, one slow and one fast), originally from the composer's orchestral work *Sacred Symphonies*. In this work, Bell achieves a perfect balance between stasis and activity and presents musical material that is tuneful and memorable.

Tarab is named after its commissioners, the Tarab Cello Ensemble, and takes its title from the term within Islamic music implying a sense of ecstasy, usually derived from the rhythmic experience of music. Bell describes the piece as articulating his interest in "high-ratio

polyrhythms”, which he exploits by setting up a contrasting and referential textures between the two cello quartets. As is true with the best of Bell’s “rhythmic experiments”, they are deployed in service of an exceptionally musical impulse; the listener needs to know nothing about polyrhythms to enjoy the “sacred space” that Bell creates.

These three superlative works are representative of what this reviewer believes is the best sort of new music being written today—accessible, yet sophisticated. On a first listen, the listener is seduced by the beauty of sounds and melodies and clarity of textures. On subsequent listens, one continues to discover further treasures in the unfolding of internal references and the organic sense of musical development that Bell employs.

This disc was a highlight of the myriad new discs of American released in 2007 and certainly the best new release of chamber music that I heard all year. Strongly and urgently recommended.

— Carson Cooman

Palisades Virtuosi: *New American Masters, Vol. 2*; Albany TROY1022

Palisades Virtuosi is a New Jersey-based flute, clarinet, and piano trio whose members are Margaret Swinchoski, Donald Mokrynski, and Ron Levy. Each of the ensemble’s live concert programs contains a commissioned new composition for their instrumentation, and this CD is the second volume containing a selection of these compositions. The composer represented are Caroline Newman, Frank Ezra Levy, Gary Eskow, Allen Shawn, and Carlos Franzetti.

The strongest pieces on the album are the substantial works by Allen Shawn and Carlos Franzetti. Longtime professor at Bennington College in Vermont, Shawn has written many excellent pieces that are not nearly well-enough represented on CD. His trio, *Three Nightscapes*, is a substantial addition to the repertoire: darkly lyrical and filled with distinctive musical ideas and textures. Franzetti’s *Four Movements for Virtuosi* is a characterful suite, incorporating the Latin American elements for which his music is well-known.

Frank Ezra Levy’s *Trio No. 2* is the most straightforward piece on the disc and its careful craftsmanship is appealing. Gary Eskow’s *Not a Sonata!* is a set of humorous movements that have a great deal of character. They are just the right length and do not wear out their welcome. Only Caroline Newman’s *Fantaisie* disappoints: this brief work comes across as wandering and undeveloped.

The three members of the trio play superbly, and it is wonderful to see an ensemble engaged in such a vibrant, essential, and frequent commissioning project. I hope that they are able to continue this vital work for many years to come. Recommended, along with volume 1, also available on Albany.

— Thomas Abbott

Leland Smith: *Chamber Music*; Naxos 8.559351; Sarah Darling, violin, and viola, Jeffrey Grossman, piano

Leland Smith (b. 1925) is not a well-known name, but this new release on Naxos of mid-20th century chamber works for violin, viola, and piano presents an attractive portrait of the composer. According to the liner notes, Smith is known for his creation of the “Score” music

software program, the world's first computer notation system. After the development of this software in the 1960s, Smith turned more and more to focus on computers (though maintained a music professorship at Stanford University) and stopped composing. Thus, most of the works on this disc date from the 1950s (with one each from the 40s and 60s).

Smith's music sits at an intersection between traditional and modernist languages. Though there are aspects of the style which are reminiscent of early 20th century Germanic chamber idioms (notably Hindemith), the harmonic language is substantially more dissonant, though not off-putting. Though many aspects of its harmonic practice come from the world of atonal mid-century composition, the formal structures are clearly audible (and traditional), including elements such as transposed recapitulations. The liner notes point out the "humorous" aspects of the writing; indeed a witty surface is the order of the day for all the pieces. Those who are looking for the "grand statement" will be disappointed. This is music of entirely puckish and delightful character, almost an "atonal Poulenc" in many places.

Most notable is the *Concert Piece for Violin and Piano* (1951), which packs an enormous number of moods into its short duration, transforming from its lyrical introduction. The latest piece on the disc, *Six Bagatelles* (1964) for piano, is also memorable; each piece has a readily defined, idiosyncratic character.

The performances by violinist/violist Sarah Darling and pianist Jeffrey Grossman are superb, with a great deal of character and rock-solid accuracy. In particular, Grossman's performances of the solo piano works, including the quirky *Piano Sonata* of 1954, are excellent in every respect, traversing this seemingly difficult

repertoire with tremendous musicality and vibrant technique. (In this regard, Grossman's playing calls to mind the great American pianist Ursula Oppens, with passionate and compelling approaches to the modernist repertoire.) I hope he will record more piano literature in the future.

Naxos's "American Classics" series continues to do good service in bringing to light recordings of worthwhile repertoire which has not been previously heard. Those listeners who continue their explorations with this CD will not be disappointed.

— Thomas Abbott

Members' News

Daniel Adams received the world premiere of *Distancias Cambiantes (changing distances)* for string orchestra at the Jack C. Bradley Scholarship held on the campus of Texas Southern University, April 6, 2008. The composition was performed by the TSU Orchestra conducted by Professor Anne Lundy. Adams composed the piece especially for Prof. Lundy and the TSU Orchestra for the occasion of Fine Arts Week. Adams's *Diffusion One*, a work for marimba quintet, received its world premiere at the Marimba Magic Festival held at the University of South Florida (Tampa) on January 26, 2008. The performance was repeated on March 3. Both performances featured the USF Marimba Ensemble conducted by Robert McCormick. *Where Does It End?*, a piece composed for Houston-based tenor Jason Oby received its world premiere on "A Long Way from Home", a concert remembering the homeless on May 18, 2008 at the First Unitarian Universalist Church in Houston, Texas. Dr. Oby was accompanied by pianist Bob Fazakerly. *Diffusion Two* for snare drum quartet received its premiere performance at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) on May 21, 2008. The CSULB Percussion Ensemble was conducted by David Gerhart.

Brian Belet writes:

It is with sadness that I inform you all that **Allen Strange** died this past Wednesday, February 20, 2008, in a Seattle hospital. To many of us, Allen was a dear friend, musical mentor, and artistic co-conspirator. For all of us he created waves that influenced how we think about and create our own music. He approached all of his activities with a wonderful balance of focused dedication and child-like playfulness. We hear this in his music, we taste this in his cooking, we find this in the layout of his studio, and we read this in his writings.

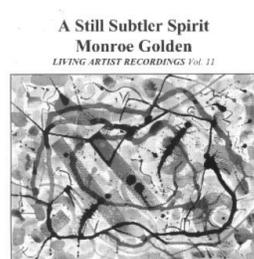
The passage of time will illuminate his deep impact on the development of American music in the late twentieth century, and we will have the luxury to consider how he influenced our lives and our work. For now, we have suffered a great loss.

Allen Strange
b. Calexico, CA, 26 June 1943
d. Seattle, WA, 20 February 2008

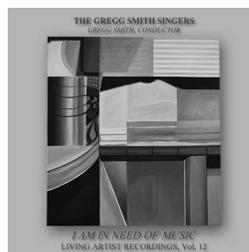
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