

SAN FRANCISCO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYERS

David Milnes, Music Director

Monday, January 27, 2003 at 8 pm

Center for the Arts Theater

JOHN CAGE RETROSPECTIVE

The Perilous Night (1944)

(in six movements)

Julie Steinberg, piano

Four⁶ (1992)

Fred Frith, guitar

Joan Jeanrenaud, cello

Peter Wahrhaftig, tuba

William Winant, percussion

~ INTERMISSION ~

String Quartet in Four Parts (1949-50)

I. Quietly Flowing Along

II. Slowly Rocking

III. Nearly Stationary

IV. Quodlibet

Ives Quartet

Ryoanji (1985)

Hall Goff, trombone

William Winant, percussion

Third Construction (1941)

Christopher Froh

Daniel Kennedy

David Rosenthal

William Winant

*Tonight's performance of The Perilous Night is sponsored
in part by the Ross McKee Foundation.*

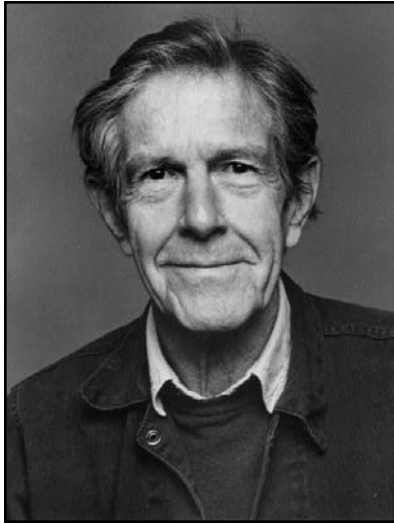
*Tonight's performance of String Quartet in Four Parts is sponsored
in part by A.Robin Orden.*

*We thank David Wessel, Ali Momeni, and the Center for New Music and Audio
Technologies (CNMAT) at U.C. Berkeley for help with tonight's performance of Ryoanji.*

Please join us for a reception in the lobby immediately following the concert!

JOHN CAGE (B. 1912-92)

“I continually made it clear in my discussions of art that I prefer laughter to tears,” said John Cage in a 1965 interview: “Now how did I come to that view? I came to it partly through recognition that if art was going to be of any use, it was going to be of use not with reference to itself, but with reference to the people who used it, and that they would use it not in relation to art itself, but in relation to their daily lives; that their daily lives would be better if they were concerned with enjoyment rather than misery...”



This is not one of Cage’s better-known statements; in fact, it is rather mild mannered from a composer famous for polemics and musical radicalism. Yet its combination of utter earnestness and surprising whimsy seem characteristic of this most influential of twentieth-century American artists. Composer and essayist, philosopher and poet, mentor and mushroom hunter, Cage changed the musical world around him. Tonight, a little more than ten years after the composer’s death, we have the chance to look back at the impressive and multifaceted legacy of a man whom Arnold Schoenberg once declared was “not a composer, but...an inventor—of genius.”

Along with Henry Cowell, Schoenberg was one of two crucial mentors for the young Cage, who was born in Los Angeles and traveled abroad before returning to study composition. Cowell’s ideas about rhythm, his interest in music from around the world, and particularly his sound experiments (for example, tone clusters and strumming or striking the strings within the piano) were to have far-reaching consequences. Perhaps equally important, Cowell suggested Cage’s first

trips to New York City, where he would prepare himself for study with the magisterial Schoenberg back in Los Angeles. Schoenberg exerted a huge influence on Cage’s ideas about musical structure and the transformative power of art. Cage never shared the older composer’s appreciation for harmony, but his earliest compositions involved extending the serial principles associated with the Viennese emigre.

Cage had always shown an eclectic approach to art, combining his interest in music with his efforts in literature and the visual arts. Beginning in 1937, he took a job as a dance accompanist, first at UCLA, and then at Seattle’s Cornish School, where students were encouraged to broaden their areas of expertise. This interactive environment was fruitful for Cage. In addition to solidifying his views on the evils of overspecialization, it brought about his first meeting with Merce Cunningham, with whom he would maintain a lifelong artistic and personal relationship. The Cornish School also supported Cage’s initial explorations into music and electronics (through radio), and it was the site of his most famous invention: the prepared piano.

While working with dancers, Cage had become increasingly preoccupied with the potential of the percussion ensemble. At first, the primary attraction of percussion instruments was the wide variety of timbres they made available. Cage had probably heard Edgard Varèse’s pioneering percussion piece *Ionisation* in 1933 when it was performed at the Hollywood Bowl, and he certainly knew Cowell’s percussion work *Ostinato Pianissimo*. Rather than the “old” sounds of the symphony orchestra, these works made music with gongs and tin cans, sirens and scrapers, drums and rattles from around the world. Cage was immersed in percussive projects when African American dancer and choreographer Syvilla Fort asked him to compose a score for her solo piece *Bacchanale* (1940). The performance space would accommodate only a piano. Undaunted, and unwilling to relinquish the sonic possibilities of the larger ensemble, Cage modified the piano instead. Recalling Cowell’s example, he tried inserting objects into the piano’s body. Pie plates bounced around too much, nails slipped through the strings, but wood screws, metal nuts, and weather stripping seemed to do the trick. Eventually erasers, cloth, pieces of bamboo, glass, and other objects joined the mix, muting and modify-

ing the timbre of individual piano pitches. Now Cage could compose as he pleased—a one-man percussion orchestra.

Cage's percussion ensembles were amenable to expansion—both socially and sonically. From a pragmatic point of view, he found that he could employ a wide range of musicians—not just virtuosos who specialized in traditional instruments. Cage observed in 1948, “I have met very many [American composers] who have grown bitter and lonely in their studios.... I solved this problem for myself by writing music which could be played by a group of literate amateur musicians, people who had not developed instrumental skills on a professional level and therefore still had time to enjoy playing music together with their friends.” Together with Lou Harrison, Cage gave concerts all throughout the West Coast relying on a changing roster of instrumentalists. Perhaps more importantly, writing for percussion allowed Cage to introduce new sound sources without disrupting his creative strategies. In 1942, for example, he added “radio/phonograph” to the list of performing forces in his dance score for Cunningham, *Credo in Us*, treating them as sound sources equivalent to cymbals or drums.

Hand in hand with Cage's percussion experiments came philosophical reflections on the nature of sound. In the late 1930s, his famous lecture “The Future of Music: Credo” proclaimed: “Percussion music is a contemporary transition from keyboard influenced music to the all-sound music of the future. Any sound is acceptable to the composer of percussion music; he explores the academically forbidden ‘nonmusical’ field of sound insofar as is manually possible.” Like the Italian futurists led by Luigi Russolo at the turn of the century, Cage was committed to redefining music to include formerly “non-musical” sounds. “Wherever we are,” he remarked, “what we hear is mostly noise. When we ignore it, it disturbs us. When we listen to it, we find it fascinating.” As he conceived it, the “liberation” of noise (like the use of non-western music) could serve as an antidote to the complacency of modern audiences, defying or denying old habits and startling listeners into new ways of hearing: “Just as I would recommend not keeping on one's walls pictures which one no longer sees,” he proclaimed, “so I would recommend not listening at all to music which one no longer hears.”

Cage's campaign against what he called “the prejudiced ear” was based on the idea that truly modern listening required abandoning traditional concerns with the relationships between sounds (form, motivic development, and even harmony) in favor of paying attention to the sounds themselves. This axiom found many musical corollaries, beginning with the timbral explorations of his percussion pieces. Cage felt that, in order to put musical and non-musical sounds on an equal footing, rhythm and more specifically duration would have to be the organizing principle underlying his works. Between 1939 and the early 1950s, most of his compositions rely for their structure on series of numbers that dictate the lengths of sections or phrases and the proportions between them. Drawing inspiration from Erik Satie and Anton Webern, as well as from his own music for Cunningham and other dancers, Cage constructed these durational, non-developmental frameworks before deciding what sounds would fill them. During the fifties, he chose more and more frequently to express the structures of his works by using clock time rather than numbers of measures and metronome markings.

In the mid-forties, having moved to New York City's Lower East Side, Cage underwent a number of spiritual and personal crises coinciding with his separation from his wife Xenia in 1945 and his increasing closeness to Cunningham. After considerable distress about his marriage and his sexuality and a very brief attempt at psychoanalysis, Cage discovered new sources of strength in his study of Asian philosophy. In 1946, he was introduced to the writings of Indian historian Ananda Coomaraswamy by fellow musician Gita Sarabhai. This was a revelatory experience, and Cage paid homage to it in his compendium of prepared piano pieces, *Sonatas and Interludes* (1946-48), designed to depict the eight “permanent emotions” of Indian aesthetics. He soon expanded his reading to encompass the Zen Buddhism of Daisetz Suzuki and the medieval mysticism of Meister Eckhart. Cage felt a deep affinity for all these sources' emphasis on openness, tranquility, and attention to the natural world. They suggested to him an aesthetic of renunciation which would become more pronounced as the composer grew older.

A crucial element in this new aesthetic involved the celebration of silence and acceptance that the goal of art is “to quiet and sober the

mind, thus making it susceptible to divine influences.” Cage’s exploration of silence culminated in his famous “Lecture on Nothing” (“I have nothing to say and I am saying it and that is poetry as I need it”) and his infamous “silent” piece, initially titled “Silent Prayer,” but eventually published with the impersonal designation *4’ 33”*—the combined length of its three movements at the premiere given by pianist David Tudor in 1952. Similar in many ways to the “white” paintings of Robert Rauschenberg (whom Cage had met while teaching at North Carolina’s Black Mountain College in 1948), *4’ 33”* provides a frame for its audience but insists that the images or sounds filling that frame must come from the listeners’ own physical environment. Creating a formidable controversy even within the avant-garde, the piece affirmed that silence was not the absence of sound but the purposeful negation of authorial intent which had become Cage’s artistic ideal. As he put it: “Art is not an attempt to bring order out of chaos...but simply a way of waking up to the very life we’re living, which is so excellent once one gets one’s mind and one’s desire out of its way and lets it act of its own accord.”

Excising one’s mind and desire from the creative process was easier said than done. The music Cage wrote during his last four decades documents his idiosyncratic and thought-provoking means of achieving sounds that would appear independent of composerly volition. His experiments flourished in the New York apartment that served as studio and meeting place for Morton Feldman, David Tudor, Christian Wolff, and later Earle Brown, who gathered to share their ideas about improvisation, indeterminacy, and chance operations. Feldman was one of the first to allow (and require) performers to choose precisely which sounds to use in performance. In the early 1950s Cage began to use the Chinese “Book of Changes” in his compositional process. Through this ancient text, simple stick- or coin-tossing could generate elaborate results through the construction of hexagrams linked to Taoist wisdom. Both the methods of the *I Ching* and the philosophy behind it helped the composer create a randomness that he could then apply to the selection of sounds (as in his piano solo *Music of Changes*), to the ordering of sound events (as in his *Imaginary Landscape no. 4* for twelve radios), or to the ways in which sound events were articulated (as in his pioneering tape piece *Williams Mix*).

As Cage’s fame grew through the fifties and sixties, so did the variety of his “chance operations”—seeking out imperfections in staff paper, rotating or superimposing transparencies of musical instructions, and selecting sounds and symbols from favorite writers such as Thoreau or James Joyce, among others. When detractors critiqued his chance pieces as an unfortunate abdication of responsibility, Cage had a ready reply: “Most people who believe that I’m interested in chance don’t realize that I use chance as a discipline. They think I use it—I don’t know—as a way of giving up making choices. But my choices consist in choosing what questions to ask.” Moreover, Cage reasoned, replacing “choices made” with “questions asked” might provide a less intrusive way of being in the world: “I use [chance operations] in a way involving a multiplicity of questions which I ask rather than choices that I make. So that if I have the opportunity to continue working, I think the work will resemble more and more, not the work of a person, but something that might have happened even if the person weren’t there.”

Cage will always be remembered for expanding the horizons of what we consider musical sounds and musical actions—for granting the status of art to the rumble of a truck or the sound of one’s heartbeat and for designating meditation or recourse to a star chart as potentially valuable steps in the process of composition. Paradoxically, Cage’s embrace of the momentary and ephemeral is another compelling aspect of his artistic legacy. When asked in 1978 whether he was concerned that his works would outlive him, Cage responded with his characteristic mixture of striking individuality and self-conscious self-renunciation—the mixture that had allowed him to blur the boundaries between choice and chance, to divide his time between mushrooms and music, and to copyright certain periods of silence: “I’m afraid they will [survive]. I’ve now done so much work in so many different directions that it would be very hard to.... I mean writings, graphic work, and the music. All of that would be hard to get rid of now. Even for me, say I decided I wanted to get rid of it, that would be impossible—there’s too much, and now too many copies of it. I’m afraid it’s here for a long time.” We can be thankful that Cage’s assessment was correct.

The Perilous Night (1944)

for prepared piano

In a book edited by Joseph Campbell, Cage came across the tale of a hero doomed to spend the night on a dangerous wheeled bed that rolled unnervingly on a floor of slick jasper, exposing its occupant to monsters, the arrows of enemies, and other frightening images. The story caught Cage's eye; in fact, it seems to have had biographical resonances. *The Perilous Night* thus constitutes a rare "personal" statement from a composer who later prided himself on excising the personal from his artistic creations. Written during the winter of 1943-44, when Cage was struggling in his marriage and beginning his study of Indian philosophy, the piece was meant to evoke "the loneliness and terror that comes to one when love becomes unhappy." Lou Harrison called it "a set of whispers about some unknown plot in some other-worldly bedchamber." Not all listeners got the message, however. When one critic remarked that the final movement sounded like "a woodpecker in a church belfry," Cage was both startled and disappointed. He recalled: "I had poured a great deal of emotion into the piece, and obviously I wasn't communicating this at all. Or else, I thought, if I were communicating, then all artists must be speaking a different language, and thus speaking only for themselves. The whole musical situation struck me more and more as a Tower of Babel." This disappointment, and subsequent performances of the piece, helped shape Cage's ideas about creative communication.

The Perilous Night requires more elaborate pre-performance preparations than many of Cage's other works. The keyboard must be muted with a variety of materials, including nuts and bolts, weather stripping, and even slivers of bamboo. This gives the six movements of the suite a wide range of timbres in addition to their distinct moods. Alternating between rhapsodic utterances and the types of perpetual motion typical of his dance works from the same years, *The Perilous Night* is by turns strangely "vocal" (almost recitative-like) and purely percussive (evoking the instruments of the Indonesian gamelan).

Much of the impact of *The Perilous Night* depends on Cage's painstaking instructions about how and where to modify the piano's strings. Although he remembered his distress at certain early concerts where pianos were poorly prepared and failed to bring the desired tone col-

ors to light, Cage eventually drew far-reaching lessons from his inability to control these crucial performance details: "When I first placed objects between piano strings," he observed, "it was with the desire to possess sounds (to be able to repeat them). But, as the music left my home and went from piano to piano and from pianist to pianist, it became clear that not only are two pianists essentially different from one another, but two pianos are not the same either. Instead of the possibility of repetition, we are faced in life with the unique qualities and characteristics of each occasion. The prepared piano, impressions I had from the world of artist friends, studies of Zen Buddhism, ramblings in the fields and forests looking for mushrooms, all led me to the enjoyment of things as they come, as they happen, rather than as they are possessed or kept or forced to be."

Cage's signature freedom from repetition has found many admirers over the years. Beginning in 1982, his friend and colleague Jasper Johns created a series of artworks called *Perilous Night*, one of which will be projected tonight.

*Four*⁶ (1992)

for four performers

Between 1987 and his death, Cage wrote a series of forty-three pieces whose titles designate only the number of performers required, with superscripts used to distinguish different pieces that happen to employ the same number of musicians. Ranging from *One* (for solo piano, 1987) and *Two*⁴ (for violin and Japanese mouth organ, 1991) to *Fourteen* (for piano and chamber ensemble, 1990) and even *101* for orchestra (1988), these pieces share a compositional technique that brings together Cage's interest in silence, his commitment to letting sounds "be themselves," and his preoccupation with indeterminacy bounded by carefully controlled parameters.

*Four*⁶ was written "for Pauline Oliveros to celebrate her sixtieth birthday and for Joan La Barbara, William Winant, and Leonard Stein." The score leaves much to its performers. Unlike *Four* for string quartet, *Four*² for four-part chorus, *Four*⁴ for four percussionists, and *Four*⁵ for saxophone ensemble, *Four*³ and *Four*⁶ may be played by anyone. Each player's part begins with the instructions: "Choose twelve different sounds with fixed characteristics (amplitude, overtone structure,

etc.)” These sounds are then integrated into the durational framework of Cage’s devising. Performers must begin and end every sound within given periods of time, or what Cage called a “time brackets.” Though Cage prescribes the order of each performer’s sounds, the duration of these sounds remains up to the player (provided he or she stays within the relevant “time bracket”). Thus each incarnation of *Four*⁶ brings its own, partially improvisatory play of single sounds, overlapping sonorities, and unpredictable pauses. Given Cage’s fondness for the visual arts, this result might be compared to the shifting patterns of color and shadow created by a mobile.

James Pritchett, author of a monograph on Cage’s music, is one of the few writers to have commented on the significance of the “number” pieces within the composer’s oeuvre: “His last works—as with the last works of any composer—will have a certain gravity for us because we know that he will compose no more—they are Cage’s last words as a composer. But I also believe that they are genuinely some of his very best work. He was in his element—discovery and invention—in these compositions, and was openly delighted and joyful in his last years as he explored the possibilities the time bracket method opened up to him. These works are so beautiful because they return to John Cage’s compositional strengths: concentration, spaciousness, simplicity. Because each bracket contains a single sound, there is an intensity to each and every note, a focused concentration to every event. Nothing here is ‘filler,’ every note is meant deeply.”

String Quartet in Four Parts (1949-50)

In his private correspondence with Pierre Boulez, Cage once wrote: “There is no counterpoint and no harmony. Only a line in rhythmic space....” While this could be a statement of Cage’s artistic philosophy, he was in fact referring to a specific piece, the *String Quartet in Four Parts*. The quartet was begun while Cage was in Paris in 1949 but finished upon his return to the United States. According to the composer, its movements evoke both time and space: “The subject of the *String Quartet* is that of the seasons, but the first two movements are also concerned with place. Thus in the first movement the subject is summer in France whilst that of the second is fall in America. The third and fourth are also concerned with musical subjects, winter being expressed as a canon, spring as a *quodlibet*.” There is little direct

depiction of summer in the first movement, “Quietly Flowing Along,” but from its opening bars, one can hear the influence of Erik Satie in the quartet’s utter suspension of forward motion—and perhaps even a hint of Aaron Copland in its open intervals and sparse textures. The gentle “rocking” of the second movement yields to the intense stillness of “Nearly Stationary”—the quiescent and palindromic heart of the work. Only in the brief fourth movement does the icy stillness break into an eerie, almost modal dance whose title, “Quodlibet”—literally “as you please”—refers to Renaissance pieces that combined a hodgepodge of texts or musical allusions.

The *String Quartet in Four Parts* is dedicated to Lou Harrison, with whom Cage had collaborated on pieces for percussion ensemble, and in some ways, it resembles these earlier pieces more than it resembles a conventional string quartet. Each instrumental part is formed from a restricted range of sounds—between two and three dozen pitches, each in a fixed register, on a specified string. Any melody or repeated pattern that arises does so through the cooperation of instrumentalists who are treated as absolute equals, without the typical “leading” or “following” roles of the classical quartet. While the work predates Cage’s use of chance operations, it shows some of his attempts to expunge personal expression from his oeuvre. The sense of stasis produced in the quartet thwarts any attempt to hear emotional or psychological impulses in its unfolding. Furthermore, Cage included a number of non-expressive or even anti-expressive performance indications; most notably, he prohibited vibrato because it “is associated with literature that moves toward climaxes, whereas this Quartet does not.”

Ryoanji (1985)

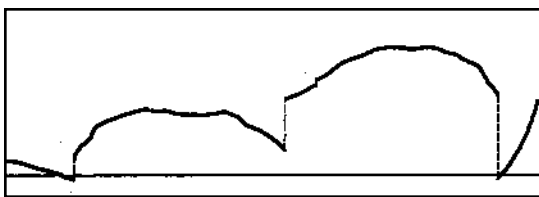
for trombone and percussion

“Each two pages are a ‘garden’ of sounds.” Few scores could plausibly begin with such a statement, but these few words beautifully encapsulate the conception and execution of Cage’s *Ryoanji*. When Cage visited Kyoto in 1962, he was profoundly affected by the ancient Zen garden of rocks and raked gravel called “Ryoan-ji” (Peaceful Dragon). Nearly twenty years later, he recalled the fifteen stones and white pebble background and made his own “garden”: a series of drawings called *Where R = Ryoanji*. Having chosen fifteen stones, Cage traced around them in pencil according to procedures deter-

mined through chance and the *I Ching*. With this graphic representation in hand, Cage soon began creating musical evocations of the Buddhist garden for solo instrument and percussion. In addition to the piece we will hear tonight, written for trombonist James Fulkerson, *Ryoanji* exists in its original version (written for an oboe player planning a tour of Japan), as well as versions for flute, acoustic bass, and voice.

To transform sights into sounds, Cage took fragments of his rock tracings and placed them on a type of musical staff, where the traced lines would indicate changes in pitch. As a result, the solo line consists entirely of slides

or glissandi, which Cage indicated should resemble “sound events in nature rather than sounds in music.”



Excerpt from *Ryoanji* score.

Occasionally, Cage’s chance operations produced overlapping glissandi, in which case pre-recorded fragments accompany the live performer. Within each two-page portion of the score, the pitch range is narrow when measured by traditional standards but infinite if one takes into consideration all the microtonal intervals between the usual half-steps of the chromatic scale. Surrounding the solo part are the sounds of percussion, which are notated, but completely irregular. According to the composer, “These sounds are the ‘raked sand’ of the garden. They should be played quietly, but not as background. They should even be imperceptibly in the foreground. They should have some life (slight changes of imperceptible dynamics) as though the light on them is changing.” As befits a “sonic garden,” the sounds of *Ryoanji* are carefully planted, to some extent cultivated, but then left to flourish or perish in the environments of the performer’s efforts and the listener’s imagination.

Third Construction (1941)

for four percussionists

Like the *String Quartet in Four Parts*, the *Third Construction* involves a strict rhythmic structuring based on patterns of duration, in this case, twenty-four segments of twenty-four measures each. Unlike the aus-

tere *String Quartet*, however, this foursome is riotously energetic. Some of the sense of motion springs from Cage’s manipulation of the durational structures. The twenty-four-bar segments are divided into component phrase lengths of 8, 2, 4, 5, 3, and 2 measures. But rather than letting the four players’ phrases coincide, Cage shifts or “rotates” his numeric series so that each part begins at a different point in the string of numbers. Only after twenty-four bars do the players seem to breathe together. While Cage’s *First Construction (in Metal)* was written “with the single objective of making the rhythmic structure...clear,” in the *Third Construction* the beginnings and endings of phrases overlap among the players, making its internal patterns almost impossible to perceive.

Instead of trying to detect structural proportions, the *Third Construction* invites listeners to revel in a changing array of tone colors that is extravagant even for a percussion ensemble. In addition to the familiar members of the percussion section, Cage calls for twenty metal cans tuned in four groups of five. These are enveloped by a multi-ethnic instrumentarium including claves and maracas, as well as the lesser known *quijada* and *teponaxtle*, African log drums, three distinct rattles—a Northwest Indian Rattle, and Indo-Chinese Rattle, and a homemade rattle using tacks within a tin can—Chinese Tom-Toms, and (as the piece progresses) Polynesian cricket callers and a conch shell. Drawing on these diverse timbres and the interlocking textures of African drumming, the piece creates its own imaginary landscape.

While many of Cage’s pieces celebrate sound, it is fitting that the exuberant close to this celebratory concert should feature the percussion ensemble—a group so closely linked to the composer’s career, philosophy, and influence. As Cage told composer Stuart Smith in a 1983 interview: “I remain a percussion composer whether I write for percussion instruments or not. That is, my work is never based, structurally or as an instance of process, on frequency [pitch] but rather on duration considerations. Within time I write for friends who are virtuosos, strangers who play in orchestras, myself growing old, indeterminately or determinately, always nonintentionally.”

—Program notes by Beth Levy

Guest Artists

Fred Frith, guitar, was raised in England in a musical household. After early violin lessons, Frith taught himself rudimentary piano, sang in the church choir, lurked at the back of the school orchestra, and eventually picked up a friend's guitar which changed everything. He began exploring all forms of guitar playing, from The Shadows to Villa Lobos via the blues, flamenco, and Balkan folk music. At Cambridge University, he co-founded the group Henry Cow as a Dada Blues Band, but sudden exposure to contemporary music transformed them into an influential rock collective whose European tours provided Frith with a formative musical and political education. In 1974, he released *Guitar Solos*, a collection of improvisations now recognized as a landmark in the history of the electric instrument. Since that time Frith has led parallel lives, one as improviser and the other as composer and songwriter. His improvisations have included solo performances as well as collaborative work with individuals such as John Zorn, Hans Reichel, Tim Hodgkinson, and Tenko, and groups such as Derek Bailey's Company and Eugene Chadbourne's 2,000 Statues. He has played on dozens of albums, tours regularly, and is currently the bass player in John Zorn's Naked City. Frith's own group Keep The Dog was assembled in 1989 to perform selections from his own oeuvre, which includes three albums of songs with Chris Cutler and Dagmar Krause, commissions for dance and theater pieces, and contributions to animated and feature films. Frith is also the subject of an award-winning documentary film by Nicolas Humbert and Werner Penzel, *Step Across The Border*.

Cellist **Joan Jeanrenaud** became interested in contemporary music while playing principal in the Memphis Youth Orchestra. This commitment deepened during her work with Fritz Magg at Indiana University, where she was a founding member of the I. U. Contemporary Music Ensemble. After studying with Pierre Fournier in Switzerland, Jeanrenaud joined the Kronos Quartet and relocated to San Francisco. For two decades she worked with hundreds of composers and musicians including John Cage, Astor Piazzolla, Franghiz Ali-Zadeh, Morton Feldman, Philip Glass, Witold Lutoslawski, Joan Armatrading, Pauline Oliveros, Steve Reich, Gabriela Ortiz, Sofia Gubaidulina, Foday Muso Suso, David Byrne,

John Zorn, Osvaldo Golijov, and many others. She performed more than 2,000 concerts throughout the world and made over thirty recordings with Kronos, most of which were released on Nonesuch Records. Jeanrenaud left Kronos in 1999 to pursue solo and collaborative projects in composition, improvisation, electronics, video, and multi-disciplinary performance. She was Artist-In-Residence at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in the 2000-01 season where she created an evening-length solo work called "Metamorphosis" and the installation piece "Ice Cello," inspired by the work of Fluxus artist Charlotte Moorman. Her collaborations have involved such diverse artists as Yo-Yo Ma, Pamela Z, Miya Masaoka, Larry Ochs, and Eiko and Koma, who participated in performances of her work "Be With" at the Kennedy Center, Joyce Theater, and Yerba Buena Center during the 2001-02 season. Jeanrenaud is currently composing music for a multimedia piece with Bay Area artist Tom Bonauro, and several composers have recently written or are currently writing new works for her, including Terry Riley, Kevin Volans, Karen Tanaka, Paul Dresher, Mark Grey, Anthony Davis, Hamza El Din, and Steve Mackey.

The **Ives Quartet** has won critical and popular acclaim for the depth and diversity of its programming, with repertoire ranging from recognized classics and neglected masterpieces to new commissions and collaborations with a wide variety of distinguished guest artists. Drawing upon the talent and expertise of its four members—violinist **Robin Sharp**, violist **Scott Woolweaver**, and members of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players **Susan Freier**, violin, and **Stephen Harrison**, cello—the Quartet has performed in prestigious venues including the Kennedy Center, New York's Alice Tully Hall, and St. John's Smith Square in London. After fifteen years in residence at Stanford University, the Quartet became a fully independent touring and recording ensemble in 1998. They now perform home season concert series in San Francisco, Palo Alto, and Oakland. They have given concerts in Europe and Asia and serve as quartet-in-residence at both the Rocky Ridge and Telluride Music Festivals in Colorado. Their success in commissioning such distinguished artists as Pulitzer Prize-winning composer William Bolcom resulted in a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to support a compact disc of contemporary American quartets:

Bolcom's String Quartet no. 10, Ben Johnston's String Quartet no. 9, and Marc Neikrug's *Stars the Mirror* (Laurel). Their recording of works by California composer Donald Crockett (Laurel) won support from the Aaron Copland Fund for Music. In recent seasons the Ives Quartet has premiered commissioned scores by Johnston, Bolcom, Crockett, Henri Lazarof, and Mark Volkert.

Featured Performers

Hall Goff, trombone, received his B. A. from Oberlin College and M. M. from the Yale University School of Music, where his principal teacher was John Swallow. Other teachers include Tom Cramer, Douglas Edelman, Tyrone Brenninger, and Ned Meredith. Goff has been a member of the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra since 1977, and a member of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players since 1981. In addition, he has performed locally with such orchestras as the San Francisco Symphony and San Francisco Opera, nationally with the Eastern Brass Quintet, the Wall Street Quintet, and the New York City Ballet, and internationally at the Spoleto Festival and the Macerata Opera of Italy. Raising his bell in the popular realm, he has performed with the likes of Frank Zappa, Ella Fitzgerald, Bob Hope, Nelson Riddle, Diane Carroll, Vic Damone, and Manhattan Transfer. Recordings include music by Earle Brown and Morton Feldman with the Contemporary Music Players, Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* and Paul Chihara's *The Tempest* with the San Francisco Ballet, and occasional recordings for film and television.

Pianist **Julie Steinberg** performs regularly as a soloist and chamber musician. An active proponent of new music, her critically acclaimed performances including a diverse repertoire of music by Olivier Messiaen, Lou Harrison, John Cage, Frederic Rzewski, Henry Cowell, and John Zorn. Joined by violinist David Abel and percussionist William Winant, she is also a member of the Abel-Steinberg-Winant Trio, a virtuoso ensemble specializing in new music from the Americas and Pacific Rim. The trio has commissioned over twenty-five works and has recordings on both CRI and New Albion. At the Library of Congress, David Abel and Julie Steinberg have premiered works commissioned through the McKim

Fund by Ernst Bacon, John Harbison, Steve Mackey, and Paul Drescher. Since 1980, Ms. Steinberg has appeared many times with the San Francisco Symphony in such world premiere performances as John Adams' "Grand Pianola Music," and in April 2000 she was a soloist in Arvo Part's "Tabula Rasa." Since 1996, she has appeared in Michael Tilson Thomas' Mavericks concerts, most recently performing the music of George Antheil. Ms. Steinberg has appeared at New Music America, the Ravinia Festival, Japan Interlink, Berlin Inventionen, Lincoln Center Outdoors, and the Salzburg Festival. Other performances include "Le Sacre du printemps" with the Paul Taylor Dance Company in San Francisco, Seattle, and Paris, and a highly praised solo recital on the Bay Area Pianists series. As an assisting artist, she has performed in master classes with Jean-Pierre Rampal and Mstislav Rostropovich. Julie Steinberg holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from Stanford University and is on the faculty of Mills College. She joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1989.

William Winant, percussionist, has collaborated with some of the most innovative musicians of our time, including John Cage, Iannis Xenakis, Keith Jarrett, Anthony Braxton, James Tenney, Cecil Taylor, Steve Reich, Frederic Rzewski, Ursula Oppens, the Kronos String Quartet, and the John Zorn Chamber Ensemble. Since 1995 he has played with the avant-rock band Mr. Bungle, touring the world and making two recordings with the group. In 1997, he participated in the world premiere of Lou Harrison's "Rhymes with Silver" with cellist Yo-Yo Ma and the Mark Morris Dance Group. Many important composers have written works for Winant, including Cage, Harrison, Zorn, Peter Garland, Alvin Curran, Chris Brown, Gordon Mumma, Alvin Lucier, Terry Riley, Fred Frith, Somei Satoh, and Wadada Leo Smith. He has made over 100 recordings, including his performance of Harrison's *La Koro Sutro* (New Albion), which won the *New York Times* Critic's Choice for best contemporary recording of 1988. His recent disc of 20th-century avant-garde composers with the influential rock band Sonic Youth (*Goodbye 20th-Century* SYR4) was hailed by both the *Los Angeles Times* and New York's *Village Voice* as one of the best compendiums of its kind. Winant has performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the Berkeley Symphony, the Philharmonia

Baroque Orchestra, the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, and the Ravinia Music Festival, as well as at festivals and recitals worldwide. He teaches at the University of California at Berkeley and Santa Cruz, and is Artist-in-Residence at Mills College with the internationally recognized Abel-Steinberg-Winant Trio, which has commissioned over twenty-five new works for violin, piano, and percussion. He has been a member of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players since 1988.

Pre-Concert Speaker

David W. Bernstein is professor of music at Mills College. In 1995 he organized a conference/festival entitled “Here Comes Everybody: The Music, Poetry, and Art of John Cage” which took place at Mills College. He co-edited (with Christopher Hatch) and contributed to a book of essays stemming from this event entitled *Writings through John Cage’s Music, Poetry, and Art* (2001). He has also contributed essays to several new books on Cage and his contemporaries: *The Cambridge Companion to John Cage*, ed., David Nicholls (2002); *John Cage: Music, Philosophy, and Intention, 1933-50*, ed., David Patterson (2002); *The New York Schools of Music and the Visual Arts* ed., Steven Johnson (2002).

Music Director

David Milnes is a conductor of extraordinary breadth and long-standing commitment to contemporary music. In his early years, he studied not only piano and organ, but also clarinet, cello, and voice. Before he turned twenty he had played piano and saxophone at professional jazz gigs in New York in addition to his classical training. Milnes continued his education at SUNY Stony Brook during which time he continued to expand his musical horizons, playing clarinet in symphony and opera orchestras, performing with jazz musicians at night, and even conducting his own baroque ensemble.

In 1984, at age 27, Milnes won the prestigious Exxon Conductor position with the San Francisco Symphony, where he worked closely with Edo de Waart and Herbert Blomstedt, conducted on the New and

Unusual Music Series, and contributed to the Symphony’s recording of John Adams’s *Harmonielehre* in 1986. Milnes was also Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra, leading them on a European tour (1986) during which he was awarded the Prize of the City of Vienna for the group’s performance Bartók’s *Concerto for Orchestra*. Having solidified his orchestral experience by working with such renowned conductors as Leonard Bernstein, Erich Leinsdorf, Otto-Werner Müller, and Michael Tilson Thomas, he returned to earn his doctorate in conducting from Yale University in 1989.

Since that time, Milnes has served in a variety of conducting posts across the nation and the world. Since 1994, he has appeared frequently in Russian and the Baltics with the Novosibirsk Philharmonic, the Latvian National Symphony, the Latvian Chamber Orchestra, the Riga Independent Opera, and the Riga Chamber Orchestra, whom he directed in a memorable performance of Steve Reich’s *Desert Music*. Milnes has recently conducted the Oregon, Columbus, Anchorage, and Cheyenne Symphonies, and has performed at the Tanglewood, Aspen, Monadnock, and Killington Music Festivals. He has also conducted operatic repertoire ranging from Mozart to Weill, and he maintains a keen interest in jazz, which has led to appearances on jazz saxophone and piano with Gene Krupa, Chuck Mangione, John Pizzarelli, and Billy Taylor. Milnes’s recording of John Anthony Lennon’s *Zingari* for Bridge Records was nominated for a Grammy Award in 1994.

In 1996, Milnes joined the music faculty at the University of California, Berkeley, where he has directed its symphony orchestra and won praise for his programming of twentieth-century works. He has also conducted the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players since 1996, leading them in concerts including a celebration of the music of Olly Wilson and a performance at the Tempo Festival of Contemporary Music.

Milnes first conducted the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1997, leading the Players in three concerts with soprano Dawn Upshaw. Later, he conducted the ensemble’s CD of music by James Newton, *As the Sound of Many Waters*. He was selected to be Music Director this past summer.

The Ensemble

The **San Francisco Contemporary Music Players** (SFCMP), now in its 32nd year, is a leader among America's most distinguished and successful chamber music organizations, championing, commissioning, and presenting the music of today's composers. The group presents works written for both large and small chamber ensembles. SFCMP is an eight-time winner of the prestigious national ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music, having commissioned 62 pieces and performed over 980 new works, including 44 U.S. and 117 world premieres.

Each season the ensemble performs a six-concert series at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. It has also toured widely throughout California, with performances on such concert series as San Francisco Performances, Cal Performances, the Stern Grove Festival, the Other Minds Festival, Los Angeles' Monday Evening Concerts, the Ojai Festival, and the Festival of New American Music in Sacramento. SFCMP made its European debut at the Cheltenham Festival of Music in 1986 and its East Coast debut at the Library of Congress in 2001. The ensemble has recorded eight albums of its own and contributed to eight others. Its ambitious musical outreach programs involve over 20 educational events, including a new music evening course for adults to be launched in February 2003.

Staff

Executive Director **Adam Frey** obtained his B.A. in Music from Harvard University, and his M.B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley, with emphasis on marketing and planning. He joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1991 after six years with Sherman, Clay Co., then the nation's largest keyboard instrument retailer, where he was Vice President in charge of Merchandising. He served on the Board of Governors of the C. G. Jung Institute of San Francisco from 1991 to 1997. Mr. Frey is also a writer; his work has been published in *The Mississippi Review*.

Artistic Administrator **Elaine Ng** received her B.A. in Music from the University of California, Davis and her M.B.A. and M.A. in Arts Administration from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX. Along the way, she has worked with the Empyrean Ensemble, the Dallas Opera, the Dallas Symphony, and, most recently, the Studio Arts Centers International in Florence, Italy.

Michele Fromson, Associate Director, Educational Outreach and Development, holds a Ph.D. in music history and theory from the University of Pennsylvania and a certificate degree in non-profit management from the University of San Francisco. As a music historian, she has published many academic articles on Renaissance sacred music and has received four fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities. As a non-profit manager she led the new music ensemble EARPLAY as its executive director for five years and has done management consulting for the Empyrean Ensemble, Berkeley Opera, and Left Coast Chamber Ensemble.

Robert Shumaker, Recording Engineer, has been recording the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' concerts and CD releases for over fifteen years. Most recently, he recorded the ensemble's album of compositions by Andrew Imbrie. Starting out as an engineer for rock concerts and recordings in San Francisco in the late 1960s, Shumaker went on to tour the Soviet Union twice with the Rova Saxophone Quartet, as well as making a tour of nine countries with the David Grisman Quartet. He has engineered over four hundred commercial recordings of artists ranging from Diamanda Galas to Pete Seeger to the Klezmerim to Henry Brant. During the 1970s and '80s, he recorded the complete works of Conlon Nancarrow for 1750 Arch Records and Wergo. He has been twice nominated, in 1994 and 1998, for a Grammy Award in the traditional folk category.

SAN FRANCISCO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYERS

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Website: www.sfcmp.org

THE PLAYERS

Roy Malan (1976), violin I
Susan Freier (1993), violin II
Nancy Ellis (1975), viola
Stephen Harrison (1982), cello
Steven D'Amico (1979), contrabass
Tod Brody (2001), flute
William Wohlmacher (1995), clarinet
Rufus Olivier (1991), bassoon
Lawrence Ragent (1981), French horn

Charles Metzger (1976), trumpet
Hall Goff (1979), trombone
Peter Wahrhaftig (1989), tuba
Karen Gottlieb (1990), harp
Paul Binkley (1981), guitar
Julie Steinberg (1989), piano
Thomas Schultz (1994), piano
William Winant (1988), percussion
Daniel Kennedy (1993), percussion

**Dates indicate year of joining*

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Elaine Ng, *Artistic Administrator*
Michele Fromson, *Associate Director, Educational Outreach and Development*
Anna Reynolds, *Intern*
Beth Levy, *Program Note Writer*
Robert Shumaker, *Recording Engineer*

California



Arts Council

EVENING COURSE ON CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players is pleased to offer a new evening adult course on contemporary chamber music. Led by Music Director David Milnes, this course will focus on contemporary chamber music written since 1980. Presented in partnership with the Extension Division of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, classes will be held on six consecutive Wednesdays beginning February 19, 2003.

The course will feature live performances, visits by working composers, presentations on historical context, and class discussions. Musical repertoire introduced will feature works scheduled for public performance in San Francisco during February and March. Class participants will be eligible for reduced-price tickets for those performances.

Topics explored in the course will include:

- * Listening strategies for contemporary music
- * Recent trends in composition
- * Contemporary performing techniques
- * Women composers today
- * Cross-cultural influences in contemporary music
- * The economics and politics of new music performance

We invite you to join us for this exciting new venture!

To reserve a place, please call the Conservatory Extension Division at 415/759-3429.

Dates: Wednesdays, February 19 - March 27, 2003, 7:30-9:30pm

Location: Ortega Street campus of the SF Conservatory of Music

Fees: \$115 + \$25 registration fee

Enrollment is limited to 35.

This course is underwritten by a grant from the Walter & Elise Haas Fund.