

San Francisco Contemporary Music Players

David Milnes, Music Director

Struck, plucked, scraped & shaken

Monday, 6 October 2008, 8 pm
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum



The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players is pleased to announce the recent release of a recording of music by Edmund Campion.

“Outside Music: Music of Edmond Campion” (Albany) is available at major online retailers, and in the lobby at this concert.



Yiorgos Vassilandonakis, *Cochleas* (2005)

World Premiere

(Approximate duration: 10 minutes)

Christopher Froh, percussion

Maki Ishii, *Image in the Forest* (2001)

(Approximate duration: 10 minutes)

Karen Gottlieb, harp

Franck Bedrossian, *Digital* (2003)

(Approximate duration: 13 minutes)

Richard Worn, contrabass

Daniel Kennedy, percussion

↻ *Intermission* ↻

Maki Ishii, *Fourteen Percussions* (2000)

(Approximate duration: 14 minutes)

Daniel Kennedy and Loren Mach, percussion

György Ligeti, *Síppal, dobbal, nadihegedűval*

(With pipes, drums, fiddles) (2000)

(Approximate duration: 14 minutes)

Mary Nessinger, mezzo-soprano

Christopher Froh, Daniel Kennedy, Benjamin Paysen
and William Winant, percussion



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and the Wells Fargo Foundation.*

Program Notes

Yiorgos Vassilandonakis [b. 1969]

Few contemporary composers can boast as varied a background as Yiorgos Vassilandonakis. He got his start studying classical guitar, music theory and composition in Greece. In 1989, prospects of a career in jazz and recording engineering drew him to Southern California where he thrived as a film composer and arranger in Hollywood. Independent films, television commercials, an ESPN special, several theater pieces, and even a pre-ride show at Universal Studios—all these include compositions bearing his name. Yet his musical journey was only beginning. After graduating from U. C. L. A. in 2001, he moved north to U. C. Berkeley, spent two years in France, and earned his Ph. D. in 2006, producing some scintillating works along the way.

Vassilandonakis views his Hollywood experience as a “learning process” about working under some unusual constraints. On the downside are “insane deadlines.” “I have composed entire scores in the past in as little as a week,” he recalls. And rehearsals? “Another non-entity in Hollywood.” On the other hand, one can sense in Vassilandonakis’s scores a clear sense of drama and a sophisticated interplay of elements that also seem to have parallels in the world of film: a “layering of sonic material that can create additional associations with the visual” and musical material that “operates on several levels simultaneously, which at times are filtered in and out of the foreground, as if adjusting the lens of the camera.” In 2006, he composed music to be performed live by the U. C. Berkeley Symphony Orchestra under David Milnes during the screening of David Green’s silent film, *The Flyer*. His new opera *Chorevoume* (Dance with me) can also be considered, in the composer’s words, “cinematic...like a live montage.” Here, as reported in the Greek press, stock characters are “pre-programmed, like puppets” and placed on a “kind of ‘merry-go-round’ narrative” mobilized with “exceptional inventiveness and control.” Even in works with no visual component, like the symphonic score *Thalassinó* (2006), one can hear an epic or filmic sweep in the rush of air and strings, the expert scoring, and the almost overwhelming dynamic power.

Whether because of his multi-media experiences or apart from them, Vassilandonakis has developed a keen interest in the way listeners understand the passage of time in music. He speaks of pieces where “repetitive figures or process-based passages intentionally ‘distort’ the perception of time,” and the careful coordination of “layers of material”: this is true in his 2004 score *Le Métèque*, which also includes a certain theatrical stage play as some members of its brass quintet move, are “ostracized,” and “re-integrated” into the rest of the chamber ensemble. A related emphasis on varied rhythmic patterning

also seems to drive *6x6x6*, where six amplified classical guitars explore six distinct styles ranging from the rustling activity of a flamenco-style movement to the aptly named *chorales*, and from the pointillist passagework of *arpa-eggios* (which develops into a kind of change-ringing) to the ghostly slides, string-slapping, and pizzicato effects of *glissy-glassy*.

As *6x6x6* suggests, Vassilandonakis has a gift for bringing individual instruments (or groups of instruments) to life. In the string sextet *A sort of Homecoming* (2004)—one of the composer’s most frequently programmed scores—a single process (“the stringing and unfolding of [certain] chords into scales, which undergo constant transformation”) serves as a unifying factor. Yet the resulting sound-worlds are strikingly different. The contrapuntal action sometimes heard in Béla Bartók’s quartets rubs shoulders with lush “stringy” sounds worthy of Samuel Barber and a noisy episode of special effects that recalls more contemporary scores like George Crumb’s *Black Angels*. Distinctively contemporary performance techniques also inform his woodwind trio *Air-scapes* (2006); for example, performers on the flute/alto flute, alto saxophone, and baritone saxophone create a deft sketch out of key clicks, tremolo clicks, breath effects, and the gradual transformation of pitches (into other pitches, into silence, into the whistling of breath).

Vassilandonakis counts among his teachers Philippe Leroux, Edmund Campion, Richard Felciano, Cindy Cox, John Thow, Jorge Liderman, Paul Chihara, Paul Reale and (from his Hollywood days) Jerry Goldsmith. In addition to fellowships awarded by the U. C. Berkeley Music Department, he has won 1st Prize at the Composition Competition of the Mediterranean Music Centre, awards from the Hellenic Composers Union and SCION/ASCAP, a Henry Mancini Prize, and an AMC composer assistance grant, as well as residencies at Cité des Arts, Yaddo, and I-Park. His music has been commissioned and performed by the National Opera of Greece, ALEA III, the New York New Music Ensemble, Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, the Athens Camerata, the Alexander S. Onassis Foundation, the Meridian Arts Ensemble, Ensemble Cairn, and the French Ministry of Culture. He has been invited to attend the Wellesley Composers Conference and his music has been featured at the Aspen, Ernest Bloch, Domaine Forget, and Patras Contemporary Music Days Festivals, among others. Vassilandonakis is composer-in-residence with the Worn Chamber Ensemble in San Francisco and Visiting Lecturer in Composition at U. C. Berkeley. When *Chorevoume* was performed recently in Athens, Greek newspapers called it “truly original,” “captivating,” and “a fresh take on the operatic genre.” He is presently working on a percussion ensemble score called *Anakrouseis*; a commission from the Meridian Arts Ensemble called *Skins and Metals*, for percussion and brass quintet; a new percussion duo for Doubleplay; and a recording project with clarinetist Jean Kopperud.

Vassilandonakis, *Cochleas* (2005)

for solo percussion

The composer writes, “*Cochleas* is a study in the timbral possibilities of metal percussion, on one hand, and in the ways in which a sonic particle can exponentially grow within a given space to the point of consuming it, on the other.

“The narrative of the work is built upon the spiral unfolding of a confined rattling gesture, initially played on muffled metal. Its gradual expansion takes place simultaneously on several levels, besides the obvious (register, texture and temporal space). It incorporates physical space by manipulating the resonance of metal percussion, which increases by gradually unveiling cloth-covered instruments, as well as by controlling the performer’s physical presence, as he moves around his set-up in a visually theatrical manner, in a perpetual attempt to saturate his surrounding environment in every manner possible.”

Maki Ishii [1936-2003]

Japanese composer and longtime resident of Berlin, Maki Ishii lived and wrote with a strong sense of his position between traditions, and between eras. The son of Bac Ishii, one of the key figures in bringing modern dance to Japan, he recalled hearing plenty of “Chopin, Debussy, and Stravinsky” as a child and perhaps even while “still in the womb” of his mother, the actress Yae Ishii. In 1992, he observed: “During their formative years, most Japanese composers of my generation and earlier received an education in western music, attended concerts by foreign performers, and listened to western music on records and on the radio through the Far East Network.... it would hardly be exaggerating to say that composers such as myself trained in western music viewed traditional music as little more than an accompaniment to wedding ceremonies and Shinto shrines and funerals at Buddhist temples.” Yet in the space of less than twenty years after his coming of age, Ishii would find himself in good company among a handful of composers with strong ties to the most avant-garde of western traditions and the most ancient of Japanese ones.

After spending his first twenty-two years in and around Tokyo, Ishii moved to Berlin to study composition with Boris Blacher (director of Berlin’s Music Academy) and Josef Rufer (a pupil of Arnold Schoenberg). He retained strong ties to Germany and its historical capital throughout his life. His earliest scores show quite clearly the major trends in circulation during his student years, particularly the structural principles of serialism and

the austere textures associated with Anton Webern. Yet with the passage of time even these works have allowed for reinterpretation in light of traditional Japanese culture. The composer described his Four Bagatelles for Violin and Piano (1961): “Although these were the first pieces of mine composed employing twelve-tone technique that I had had the chance to hear... I experienced a feeling of *déjà vu* while listening to them. Looking back I realized that I was being put in mind of the ever so faintly remembered sounds of *gagaku* [Japanese court music], sounds which had remained with me in distant recesses of my memory.... Having been raised on western music and considering myself a disciple of twelve-tone technique, this was something I had not even remotely foreseen.”

What was latent in Ishii’s memory soon became an object of concentrated study, as the composer sought out new ways to engage and juxtapose the sounds of East and West. Upon returning to Japan in the early 1960s, he attended numerous Buddhist ceremonies and found himself inspired by the intense religiosity of *Shōmyō* chanting, by the ceremonial use of empty space and silence, and by the juxtaposition of simultaneously unfolding ritual acts. These would become significant features of many of his works. His orchestral *Dipol* (1971), for example, is best known as one half of the composite score *So-gu II* (Encounter II), in which it is played at the same time as the composer’s *Shikyō* for *gagaku* ensemble. *Gagaku* is one of the world’s oldest “orchestras,” consisting of wind instruments like the *sho* [bamboo mouth harp], the *kakko* and other drums and gongs, and sometimes strings. While *Dipol* seems to suggest an independence of cultural poles, other scores emphasize the interaction or cooperation between supposed opposites. *Polaritäten* (1973) features Japanese instruments in solo roles (the *biwa* [lute] or the *shakuhachi* [flute] or both) set against the backdrop of a western orchestra. In this piece, as musicologist Paul Griffiths points out, Ishii blurs the boundaries between East and West by treating his instruments in complementary pairs: “...the harp, for example, acts as a kind of interpreter for the biwa, joining it in its solos and translating its material into a form that can be picked up and developed by the orchestra.”

Though Ishii was quick to acknowledge his close ties to the music of Japan, he rightly pointed out that “by far the greater part of [his] creative output” involves western instruments. Works like *Black Intention* (1977) and *Lost Sounds* (1978), as well as the pieces we will hear tonight, explore unusual performance techniques, and he gained particular fame for his percussion ensemble scores, including *Monochrome* and *Monoprism* (1976). “My creative consciousness is alive with both eastern and western sounds,” he reflected, “nor have I deliberately aimed to create a fusion between East and West.... Indeed, I find the relative importance of East and West for my own music swinging back and forth like a pendulum. This is perhaps also a reflection of the way in which I lead my own life.”

It is fitting that a man so devoted to building cultural bridges also achieved fame in the 1980s and 1990s as an advocate of world peace and nuclear disarmament. In addition to this international recognition, he was honored with awards including the Otaka and Nakajima music prizes, a German Critics Prize, and the Kyoto Music Grand Prix, and in 1999, he was decorated with a Medal of Honor by the Japanese Emperor. Ishii's scores (<http://ishii.de/maki>) have been performed throughout the world at the Autumn Festival in Paris, the Berlin Festwochen, Eté Japonais in Geneva and at several exhibitions in Tokyo and the Netherlands; he also traveled the world as a conductor, appearing with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the New Japan Philharmonic Orchestra and Radio Symphony Beijing, and the Hong Kong Symphony Orchestra. Among his best known later works are the ballet *Kaguyahime*, which saw performances in Japan and Europe from 1988-1993, and his opera *Tojirareta Fune* (The Sealed Boat), performed in Utrecht in 1999. In 2004, shortly after his death, the ensembles TaikOz and Synergy Percussion offered a memorial concert in Ishii's honor, featuring *Monochrome*, *Monoprism*, *Drifting Island* (1979), and *Thirteen Drums* (1985).

Ishii, *Fourteen Percussions*, op.119 (2000)
for two percussionists

As its title suggests, Ishii's *Fourteen Percussions* involves a certain amount of number play. "In this work," he points out, "two players each play seven percussion instruments, which they have chosen from within some given constraints: each player selects two metal, two wooden, and two membrane percussion instruments with short reverberation, and one percussion with long reverberation." One player must choose instruments of high to medium pitch, while the other takes the lower end of the spectrum.

Unlike the composer's earlier *Thirteen Drums*, which is more uniform in its tone color, *Fourteen Percussions* can be riotous in its variety of sounds, yet its overall structure is still quite carefully controlled. A refined, almost regal procession of ideas gradually gives way to gestures of ever greater speed and exuberance. Though the total intensity waxes and wanes in a series of cycles, the overwhelming effect is a textural and balletic crescendo.

Ishii, *Image in the Forest* (Mori no Shinshō), op. 120 (2001)
for solo harp

The composer wrote: "Berlin (the former West Berlin), my second home, is full of parks and other green spaces, including a dense forest inside the city. And with the German unification, vast forest areas of the former Eastern Germany became accessible. Walking in these forests, with the chirp-

ing of birds, and the running of small animals, and the sound of the wind rustling through the trees, was something that I could not miss in my daily life there."

A deep respect for nature has always been part of Ishii's aesthetic, as can be heard in the orchestral scores of his *Floating Wind* series (1989-92) and in other works that reference the seasons and the elements (earth, air, fire, water, stone, and the like). In *Image in the Forest*, premiered in 2001 by harpist Ayako Shinozaki at Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, Ishii explores the entire range of harp sounds, from the most delicate textures to moments of surprising force. All in all, he explained, "this harp solo is not meant to imitate the concrete sounds of the woods, but rather seeks to capture the impression of forest, that is, the forms of the inner consciousness born out of the various sounds of the woods, or the musical fragments mentally floating around."

***Franck Bedrossian* [b. 1971]**

In an interview with Alexander Pham of the online magazine *Res-Musica* (July 2005), Parisian-born composer Franck Bedrossian described his entry into the multiple worlds of contemporary music: "I came to twentieth-century music through the piano, notably with the works of Debussy. At the same time, other musical expressions have touched me—mostly through the medium of recording. In this way I discovered not just the Velvet Underground, but also Cecil Taylor and Charles Mingus. This recording-culture has been extremely important. It allowed me to discover the music of oral traditions and to learn about a culture of sound that has nothing to do with academia. Simultaneously, I was becoming totally passionate about writing and the space for experimentation that it provides. Then I began to study composition seriously with Allain Gaussin, who gave me confidence in my intuitions." Linking all of these role models is what Bedrossian calls "the very direct, physical, sometimes even violent way in which these musicians approach the phenomenon of sound."

While still at the Paris Conservatory, Bedrossian studied with the late Gérard Grisey and with Marco Stroppa each of whom fostered his interest in "sonorous phenomena in their most concrete dimensions": matters of attack, decay, resonance, distortion, and the gradual transformation of sonic properties. Taking these preoccupations with him, he worked at IRCAM, where he studied with some of the most exciting French composers of recent years, including Philippe Leroux, Tristan Murail, and Philippe Manoury. Bedrossian's participation in the 2001-02 Courses in Composition and Computer Music at IRCAM [Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique] culminated in *Transmission*, for bassoon and electronics, which was premiered

at the Resonances Festival in 2002 and has since been heard at IRCAM, the Villa Medici in Rome and Vienna's Festival Modern. He has also studied with Helmut Lachenmann at the Centre Acanthes (in 1999) and the International Ensemble Modern Akademie (in 2004).

Balancing his scientific emphasis on sound, Bedrossian expresses a deep devotion to the relationships between music, the human voice, and language. "I find fascinating the idea of an 'original language' prior to the language of words," he says. Human speech has entered Bedrossian's oeuvre in a variety of surprising ways—even, perhaps especially, when he is writing for instruments alone. His string quartet *Tracés d'ombres* (Shadow Lines) (2005), for example, has in its origins a meditation on the seven last words of Christ. Bedrossian often speaks of the influential role of playwright Samuel Beckett, recalling in particular a moment in the monologue *Not I* (1972), which features a gigantic mouth lit up against a dark stage (the actress typically performs cloaked and inside a box, with only her lips, teeth, and tongue showing). The composer explains: "You can feel the clear speech, without discontinuity, an unedited language, centered on the speed, the breath, the effort of emitting the sound, all the physical manifestations of speech without the words that would render it intelligible. This very poignant extramusical experience would prove to be essential." One can hear Bedrossian's preoccupation with "parts of speech" in such works as *L'usage de la parole* (The Power of Speech) (1999, for clarinet, cello, and piano), and particularly in the recent score *Lamento* (2007, for voice and electronics).

Bedrossian's scores have been taken up by some of the most important contemporary music ensembles in France and abroad: Itinéraire, Ensemble Intercontemporain, 2e2m, Ictus, Ensemble Court-Circuit, Cairn, Alternance, Ensemble Modern, and the Orchestre National de Lyon, among others, and has been featured at such festivals as Agora, MANCA, RTÉ Living Music, Nuova Consonanza, le Printemps de Arts de Monte-Carlo, Suona Francese, Wien Modern, and Ars Musica. In addition to winning grants from Fondations Meyer and Bleustein-Blanchet, he has also received the Hervé Dujardin prize of the French publishers organization SACEM and the Pierre Cardin prize from L'institut de France/Académie des Beaux-arts. From 2006-08, Bedrossian was composer in residence at the Villa Medici in Rome. This fall, he joined the composition faculty at the University of California, Berkeley. He is currently working on a piece for eleven musicians, commissioned by the Southwest German Radio Orchestra for the Ictus Ensemble, scheduled for a premiere at the Donaueschingen Festival, Germany, in October 2009.

Bedrossian, *Digital* (2003)

for contrabass, percussion, and electronics

When Bedrossian's *Digital* was performed at the famous Centre Pompidou in Paris, the composer was credited with opening up "new angles on technology-enabled mediation" in which the performer's subtlest gestures are magnified and modified to generate new harmonies and even to shape the large-scale structure of the piece. Bedrossian himself has described the significant role that "gesture and virtuosity" play in his scores—particularly as a common ground between the worlds of new music, jazz, and rock.

In a way, *Digital* represents one such common ground. Its title calls attention to the connection of fingers and strings, fingers and drumsticks, fingers and numbers. In addition, as musicologist Omer Corlaix has observed, the instrumentation of *Digital* reveals boundary-crossing connotations as the piece unfolds. "Near the end of the piece," he writes, "the contrabass and percussion reveal their identity as a 'rhythm section' wandering in a world of excess." Even the shape of *Digital* can be seen to bridge the gap between moments that give the impression of improvisation and an overall structure that aims, in Corlaix's words, "toward a total fusion between the instrumental world and the electronics."

Digital was commissioned by CIRM in Nice, one of the seven Centres National de Création Musicale founded by the French government in 1997. The work was premiered at the November 2003 MANCA Festival by bassist Didier Meu and percussionist Jean Geoffroy of Ensemble Court-Circuit. Robin Meier assisted with the electronics, and the work is dedicated to François Paris, whose *12 Preludes pour Quatre Pianos Imaginaires* the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players featured in (2005).

György Ligeti [1923-2006]

The passing of György Ligeti in June 2006 has given many musicians occasion to pause and reflect on his position at the crossroads of contemporary music. In conversation with Richard Dyer of the *Boston Globe*, pianist Anthony di Bonaventura confided that "Ligeti heard things that no one else had heard before.... His music was highly organized, but it gave the impression of a near-chaotic assemblage of sounds, and nothing was too wild for him. One thinks of him as operating in a totally different sphere of music, the innovator par excellence, yet it was all solidly based on the music of the past." These two poles, the radical and the traditional, defined his career more starkly, more forcefully than his sometimes idiosyncratic music suggests. "I am in a prison," he explained. "One wall is the avant-garde, the other is

the past. I want to escape.” Ligeti did not have to wait for death to provide such an escape; on the contrary, his life and his works attest to the adventurous paths he traveled, moving ever farther away from the constraints imposed by any ideology.

Ligeti’s life was profoundly transformed by personal and stylistic migrations caused by mid-century upheavals in the politics of his native Hungary and of Europe at large. Unlike his father and brother, Ligeti survived the concentration camps of World War II and went to Budapest in 1945, where he studied with Ferenc Farkas and Sandor Veress among others, inheriting from them a love both for Bartók and for folk music. Though he wrote a great deal during these years, he disavowed many of these works as “pre-historic” and artificially isolated from what he later considered the modernist mainstream of Western Europe. Like Veress, he eventually chose to emigrate to the West rather than complying with the demands of a socialist government. In the fall of 1956, as Hungarian intellectuals pushed for a more flexible communism whose priorities would be set in Budapest rather than Moscow, Ligeti was secretly studying music by such “bourgeois” composers as Arnold Schoenberg and Karlheinz Stockhausen. When Soviet tanks put an end to the attempted “revolution,” the aftermath was terrifying for intellectuals with any liberal leanings, and Ligeti planned a dramatic escape—crossing into Austria on foot in the dead of winter—that would forever color perceptions of his character and career.

Within a few months of his arrival in the West, Ligeti was already working with electronics at the forefront of new music research in Cologne—for a while he even lived in Stockhausen’s apartment. Two tape pieces, *Glissandi* (1957) and *Artikulation* (1958), illustrate his experiments with layering and distortion—experiments that he soon carried into the realm of non-electronic orchestral music in the works that made him internationally famous: *Apparitions* (1958-59) and *Atmosphères* (1961). In these pieces, melody and rhythm are blurred beyond recognition through the creation of “sound complexes” or “clusters” made up of many independent but overlapping musical lines—tiny units of sound that are superimposed to create what Ligeti famously called “micropolyphony.” The intensity of the resulting clusters waxes and wanes, but their precise pitches and rhythms remain obscure and often cannot be captured in normal music notation. As Ligeti remarked in a 1978 interview, “My idea was that instead of tension-resolution, dissonance-consonance, and other such pairs of opposition in traditional tonal music, I would contrast ‘mistiness’ with passages of ‘clearing up.’ ‘Mistiness’ usually means a contrapuntal texture, a micropolyphonic cobweb technique.” Ligeti transferred these concepts to a vocal medium with impressive effect in his famous *Lux Aeterna* (1966) for sixteen soloists and chorus—a work made famous by its appearance in Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

After making a name for himself in the avant-garde during the sixties, however, Ligeti gradually changed course, finding (or recovering) an appreciation for more conventional sounds and textures. As musicologist Paul Griffiths puts it, “all kinds of memories began to float on the surface: consonant chords, melodies that might suggest folk song (especially Hungarian folk song), pulsed rhythms.” Perhaps, he was building on his works like his Second String Quartet (1968) which makes many allusions to music of the past. Perhaps he was exploring the similarities between the shapes of his micropolyphonic works and the compositional processes created by American “minimalist” composers such as Terry Riley or Steve Reich, whose music he encountered while serving as a Visiting Professor at Stanford University in 1972. In any case, his music became much more eclectic in style and technique. The opera *Le Grand Macabre* (1974-77), performed by the San Francisco Opera in 2004, subsumes allusions to Monteverdi, Rossini, and Verdi together with traffic noises, Schumann, Offenbach, and so many other sources that Ligeti himself has referred to the opera as a kind of musical “flea market.”

Beginning in the mid-1970s, Ligeti acknowledged a vast variety of influences, from the classic repertoire (Bach, Beethoven, Debussy, and especially Conlon Nancarrow’s experiments with player piano music), to world music (African drumming, Balinese percussion music), to jazz (Thelonius Monk, Bill Evans), to fractal mathematics. With his two harpsichord works of 1978, *Passacaglia Ungherese* and *Hungarian Rock*, he even reconnected with elements of his pre-1956 existence: traditional forms and the asymmetrical rhythms of Hungarian folk music (as understood by a composer now familiar with jazz, Latin American music, and rock). These reincorporations of familiar sounds suggest not a retreat from the avant garde but a rebirth of interest in conventionally communicative music. To quote Griffiths again, “Whereas once in Eastern Europe these [basic musical materials] were imposed...as elements of a state policy of ‘music for the people,’ now they come sounding from the ethnic music of the world. And the lesson Mr. Ligeti draws from this international chorus is salutary: not that we must return to some presumed tradition, but rather that the basic data of music can be taken up again and reinterpreted, in works that belong to no tradition except that of humanity in general.”

Since 1964, when *Apparitions* won him first prize at the ISCM Composition Competition in Rome and he was made a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, each decade brought Ligeti new honors and new champions among the most prestigious of performing ensembles. He was a member of many distinguished societies—Berlin’s Akademie der Künste (1968), the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, the International Society for New Music (1984), and the Ordre National des Arts et Lettres (1988). The titles of his many awards testify to his truly international acclaim: Koussevitzky Foundation Prize, Beethoven Prize (Bonn), first place

Kuli öreg.
Kuli babszem mákszem kis gyerek
ver kis Kuli nagy rossz emberek.
Csak guri-guri

Riksa
Autó
Sárkányszekér

Ki húz riksa?
Ki húz autó?
Ki húz sárkányszekér?
Ha Kuli meghal?
Kuli meghal.
Kuli neem tud meghal!
Kuli örök

csak guri-guri

*Coolie old.
Coolie bean-sized poppy-seed-crumb-sized
little child
Little coolie beat big bad people,
and rolling and rolling*

*Rickshaw
Car
Dragon-coach*

*Who pull rickshaw?
Who pull car?
Who pull dragon-coach?
If coolie die?
Coolie die.
Coolie can noooooo die!
Coolie forever*

just rolling and rolling

V. Alma Álma (Tizenkettedik Szimfónia)

alma ágon
alma ring az ágon
alma ring a
lombos ágon
ring a ring a
barna ágon
ringva
ringa-ringatózva
inga
hinta
palinta
alma álma
elme álma alma
álmodj alszol?
mozdulatlan lengedezve
hús szélben árnyban
álom ágon
ágak alma
ringva
ringa-ringatózva
ingadozva
imbolyogva
itt egyhelyben elhajózik
indíába afrikába holdvilágba
álmodj
alma alszol?

V. Dream (Twelfth Symphony)

*An apple on the branch
an apple swings on the branch
an apple swings
on the leafy branch
swings-swings
on the brown branch
swinging
rocking
pendulum
swing (hinta)
palinta
a dream of an apple
the mind's dream an apple
dream dream?
motionlessly swinging
in the cool wind in the shadows
dream
on the branch
dream of the branches
swinging
rocking
swaying
staying in this spot it casts off
to India to Africa to the moonlight
dream
—apple, are you sleeping?*

VI. Keserédes (67. Magyar Etüd)

Szántottam, szántottam hét tüzes
sárkánnyal,
hej, végig bevettem csupa gyöng-
virággal.
Szántottam, szántottam szép gyémánt
ekével,
hej, végig bevettem hulló könnyeim-
mel.
Száz nyiló rózsáról az erdön álmodtam,
hej, többet nem aludtam, félig ébren
voltam.
Hajnalban fölkeltem, kakukszót szá-
moltam,
hej, visznek esküvőre kedves galam-
bommal.

VI. Bitter-Sweet (67th Hungarian Etude)

*I plowed, I plowed with seven fiery dragons,
Heigh-ho, I sowed nothing but lilies of the
valley.
I plowed, I plowed with a beautiful dia-
mond plow,
Heigh-ho, everywhere I sowed my tears.

In the forest, I dreamed of a hundred blos-
soming roses,
Heigh-ho, I slept no longer, was half awake,
In the early morning I got up, counted the
cuckoo calls,
Heigh-ho, they are taking me to be wed to
mysweetheart.*

VII. Szajkó

VII. Parakeet

[This text cannot be translated.]

Translation: © Sharon Krebs



Please join us for a reception in the lobby
following the concert. Scores from tonight's program
are also on display there.

The Performers

Specializing in new music for percussion, **Christopher Froh** is a member of sfSoundGroup and the Emyrean Ensemble. In addition to appearing as soloist with the Berkeley Repertory Theater, he has performed with Earplay, Gamelan Sekar Jaya, Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, Santa Cruz New Music Works, and has played at the Percussive Arts Society International Conventions and the Other Minds and Pacific Rim Festivals, as well as Festival Nuovi Spazi Musicali in Rome. Froh maintains close ties to Japan, touring annually with marimbist Mayumi Hama and appearing as a soloist with his former teacher Keiko Abe. He is currently on the faculty at U. C. Davis and joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 2003.

Daniel Kennedy is a specialist in the music of the twentieth century, and is a member of Earplay and the Emyrean Ensemble. He received his M.F.A. degree from the California Institute of the Arts and his D. M. A. from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Kennedy has recorded widely and is both Instructor of Percussion and Artistic Director of the Festival of New American Music at California State University, Sacramento. He joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1993.

Karen Gottlieb performs regularly as second harpist for the San Francisco Symphony and has traveled with the orchestra on American, European and Asian tours. Since 1992 she has performed with several of the Symphony's Adventures in Music ensembles including *4 Sounds, Strings & Things* and *Silver & Gold, Plus*. In addition to appearing with the San Francisco Opera and Ballet orchestras and the Kirov Ballet Orchestra, she has performed at the Cabrillo Music Festival and as soloist with the San Francisco Girls Chorus, Pacific Boy Choir, and the San Francisco Boys Chorus. Gottlieb has recorded many major movie, video game, and TV soundtracks with Skywalker Recording Symphony, and she served as principal harpist with the California Symphony for twenty years. She is presently a member of the faculty at San Francisco State University and Mills College.

Percussionist **Loren Mach** is passionate about the arts as they relate to our 21st-century world and all who inhabit it. A graduate of the Oberlin and Cincinnati Conservatories of Music, he has premiered countless marimba and percussion solos as well as chamber and orchestral works. Mach is a member of ADORNO Ensemble, Worn Chamber Ensemble and the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra. He has appeared with the San Francisco Symphony, Emyrean Ensemble, sfSound, Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players and most of the Bay Area's regional symphony and opera orchestras. In the summer he performs at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music

and was guest artist with Dawn Upshaw and eighth blackbird at the 2006 Ojai Music Festival. This is Mach's first performance with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players.

Mary Nessinger is rapidly gaining attention for her critically acclaimed performances of some of last and this century's most dynamic works. She has enjoyed a close working relationship with such contemporary composers as John Harbison, Hafliði Hallgrímsson, Harold Meltzer, Earl Kim, George Rochberg, Bernard Rands, George Crumb, Simon Bainbridge, Mathew Rosenblum, Jason Eckardt, Pia Gilbert, and Ezra Sims, among others. She has appeared as soloist in Carnegie, Alice Tully, Avery Fisher and Merkin Halls, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Freer Gallery in Washington D.C.; Jordan Hall and the Gardner Museum in Boston; and she has appeared internationally in London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Berlin. She has been invited to perform with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the New Millennium Ensemble, and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and has participated in the Tanglewood, Ravinia, Aspen, and Santa Fe Chamber Music Festivals. Nessinger has also collaborated with renowned artists including Peter Serkin, Misuko Uchida, Robert Spano, and David Shiffrin, and together with pianist Jeanne Golan she has inaugurated a series of commissioning projects called "Cycles and Sequels," which pairs works from the standard repertoire with songs newly composed for the occasion. Nessinger is currently on the voice faculty of Princeton University and Vassar College and she is looking forward to the imminent release of no less than three monodramas written specifically for her: Lee Hyla's *Lives of the Saints* and *Suma Beach*, and Eric Moe's *Tri-Stan*.

Richard Worn, bassist, holds degrees from California State University, Northridge and the New England Conservatory. After holding a three-year fellowship with the New World Symphony in Miami Beach, he returned to San Francisco, where he has performed with many ensembles including the San Francisco Symphony and Opera Orchestras. Worn is Acting Principal Bass of the Marin Symphony and Principal Bass of the San Jose Chamber Orchestra, and he was Principal Bass with the New Century Chamber Orchestra for two seasons. An avid promoter of contemporary music, he is the director of the Worn Chamber Ensemble and performs frequently with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and other new music ensembles.

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. Milnes received his undergraduate education in music at SUNY Stony Brook. In 1984, at age 27, he won the prestigious Exxon Conductor position with the San Francisco Symphony. He remained as the Symphony's Assistant Conductor and Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra until 1986, working closely with Edo de Waart and Herbert Blomstedt. Following study and collaboration with such renowned conductors as Leonard Bernstein, Erich Leinsdorf, Otto-Werner Müller, and Michael Tilson Thomas, he earned his doctorate in conducting from Yale University in 1989.

From 1994-2002, Milnes was Principal Guest Conductor of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra and also guest conducted numerous orchestras across the United States. He has conducted at the Tanglewood, Aspen, and Monadnock Music Festivals, and has led operatic repertoire ranging from Mozart to Weill.

In 1996, Milnes joined the music faculty at the University of California, Berkeley, where he directs its symphony orchestra and the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players. He first conducted the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1997, and joined the ensemble as Music Director in 2002.

The Ensemble

The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, an ensemble of highly skilled musicians, performs innovative new music of exceptional interest. It attracts and engages audiences through concert events in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond, and nourishes the creation and dissemination of new work through commissioning, recording, and outreach.

The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players (SFCMP), now in its 38th year, is a leader among America's most distinguished and successful chamber music organizations, performing, commissioning, and recording the music of today's composers. The group presents works written for both large and small chamber ensembles. A ten-time winner of the prestigious national ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players has won this award more times than any other ensemble. It has commissioned 68 pieces and performed over 1,000 new works, including 66 U.S. and 136 world premieres.

Each season the ensemble performs a subscription series in the Bay Area. 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 eleven albums of its own and contributed to nine others. Its musical outreach programs include presentations in public high schools and its new *Contemporary Insights* series of intimate performances with conversation.

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., the nation's largest keyboard instrument retailer, where he was Vice President in charge of Merchandising. He has served on the Board of Governors of the C. G. Jung Institute of San Francisco. Mr. Frey is also a writer; his work has been published in *The Mississippi Review*.

Carrie Blanding, Director of Operations and Marketing, joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 2007, after six years as co-owner and Administrative Director of Next Big Thing Children's Theatre, a popular performing arts camp for children in the East Bay. She has also worked at the Mountain Play Association and trained through internships at the San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Performances. An avid singer, Ms. Blanding has performed with the San Francisco Symphony Chorus and was a soloist with the UC Jazz Ensembles. She obtained her B.A. degree in Comparative Literature from the University of California at Berkeley, where her work was honored with the department's academic achievement award.

William Quillen, Project Developer, is a Ph.D. candidate in musicology at the University of California, Berkeley, writing a dissertation on contemporary Russian music. He earned a master's degree in musicology at UC Berkeley and a bachelor's degree in history and music at Indiana University, Bloomington. During 2007-08, he was a Fulbright scholar at the Moscow Conservatory, where he spent the year working with contemporary Russian composers. He has been the assistant director of the University Chorus at UC Berkeley, an intern with the San Francisco Symphony, and has co-organized symposia and concerts in California and Moscow. He joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in September 2008.

Audio Engineers

Robert Shumaker, Recording Engineer, has been recording the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' concerts and CD releases for over twenty years. Most recently, he recorded the ensemble's new album of compositions by Edmund Campion, and the ensemble's Pablo Ortiz album. He has engineered over five hundred commercial recordings of artists ranging from Judy Collins to Diamanda Galas and from Van Morrison to Henry Brant. During the 1970s and '80s, he recorded the complete works of Conlon Nancarrow for 1750 Arch Records and Wergo. His work has been twice nominated for a Grammy Award.

Gregory T. Kuhn (sound engineering) is a creator and collaborator in the performing and fine arts as sound engineer, designer, composer, visual artist and installation designer. Current projects in the performing arts include a new work by Paul Drescher, Rinde Eckert, and Steven Schick, "Aria" by Joan Jeanrenaud and Alessandro Moruzzi, and ongoing projects with Zakros InterArts. Originally from Philadelphia, he lives in Oakland, CA. (gtjk@earthlink.net)



The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players would also like to acknowledge the invaluable technical contribution of the crew at the Yerba Buena Center, headed by Guy Brenner.