

Performers:

Tod Brody, flute  
Kyle Bruckmann, oboe  
Peter Josheff, clarinet  
Rufus Olivier, bassoon  
Lawrence Ragent, horn  
Hall Goff, trombone  
Peter Wahrhaftig, tuba  
Keisuke Nakagoshi, piano  
Karen Gottlieb, harp  
William Winant, percussion  
Roy Malan, violin (Boone)  
Graeme Jennings, violin (Furrer)  
Susan Freier, violin (Boone, Furrer)  
Nanci Severance, viola  
Stephen Harrison, cello

*Student performers on In C:*

Matthew Holmes-Linder and Carolyn Smith, guitar  
Chis Golinski, Lydia Martin, Sam Ospovat, and Daniel Steffey, percussion



Robert Shumaker, recording engineer



Tonight's performance of music by Beat Furrer is supported  
in part by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia,  
and by a grant from The Ross McKee Foundation.

Tonight's performance of music by Salvatore Sciarrino  
is made possible in part by the Istituto Italiano di Cultura.



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San Francisco Contemporary Music Players

# 40th Anniversary Gala Concert

Monday, April 4, 2011 - 7:30 pm - Herbst Theatre

Sara Jobin, conductor

## CHARLES BOONE

*Elementary Particles, Part I* (2011)

World Premiere

Approximate duration: 20 minutes

Roy Malan and Susan Freier, violins

## SALVATORE SCIARRINO

*Il silenzio degli oracoli (The silence of the oracles)* (1989)

Approximate duration: 4 minutes

## BEAT FURRER

*Spur* (1998)

West Coast Premiere

Approximate duration: 17 minutes

*Intermission*

## TERRY RILEY

*In C* (1964)

Approximate duration: 40 minutes

## Program Notes

### CHARLES BOONE (b. 1939)

In an influential essay collection, *Zeitgeist in Babel: The Postmodernist Controversy* (1991), composer Charles Boone was asked to reflect on a century or so of modern music making. He wrote: “Multiplicity, diversity, and pluralism are catchwords in new music in these closing years of the twentieth-century, as they are in all the other fields of creative endeavor.... It is now easier to acknowledge that all these many aspects of style and direction in music have been important in many ways over the entire century; but only now at the beginning of the last decade of the 1900s are we starting to come to terms with this fact in some creative ways. We also realize that out of this Babel of possibilities a new period of postmodern style could be emerging. For sure, many diverse streams will continue to flow side by side, but more significantly, at certain points some will begin to run together, causing something completely unexpected and fresh to happen.” Boone himself has been present at a number of the later twentieth-century’s creative confluences, and tonight we celebrate his career with the world premiere of his violin duo *Elementary Particles, Part 1*.

In 1994, when the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players premiered Boone’s *Usuyuki* (inspired by the art of Jasper Johns and incorporating a poetic text by Clark Coolidge), the composer stated: “The visual arts and architecture have long played roles in my musical thinking and compositions. Since music is the ultimate abstract art form – it can refer only to itself in its own immutable terms.... connections are impossible to make, yet they are there for sure.” In fact, Boone’s music has always been evocative, relying to different degrees on the careful patterning of texture, instrumental color, and pitch. In an hour-long interview with Charles Amirkhania, associated with the Other Minds Festival and available online, Boone describes two of his works from 1966. *Starfish*, originally written for the Cabrillo Music Festival, takes its title from the poetry of e. e. cummings as used in a serigraph by the artist Sister Mary Corita: “Starfish: Six legs, an important metaphor.” The title of *A Cool Glow of Radiation* describes a vision of our planet returned to “that pure state from which everything once began,” but it does so in a deliberately “funky” musical language conditioned in part by Boone’s then-serial inclination and in part by the “primitive” tools available for electronic composition in that era and in this place.

Though born in Cleveland, Boone has been strongly associated with California since his student days, which included time spent at San Francisco State College and the University of Southern California, supplemented by study at the Academy of Music in Vienna plus many years in Paris and Berlin. His major teacher was Karl Schiske, with additional training from Adolf Weiss and Ernst Krenek. Beginning in 1963, Boone was one of the Bay Area's own contemporary music impresarios, while at the same time launching a career in composition. Almost exactly forty years ago, he initiated the now-famous B.Y.O.P ("Bring Your Own Pillow") Concerts that form the first chapter of San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' history. On March 25, 1971, those pillow-toting pioneers heard the performance of his oboe and piano duo *Zephyrus* by "Mr. and Mrs. LeRoux" (Jean-Louis and Marta Brachi-Leroux); others on the program included Jerry Rosen (composer and clarinet), Daniel Kobialka (violin), Patricia Taylor Lee (piano), and Jerome Neff (percussion). Other activities included associations with the San Francisco Composers' Forum and Mills College Performing Group and Tape Music Center.

Boone's experiences as a composer and producer of new music have given him a unique sense of perspective on contemporary concert life: "There is... a concert life out there for the great variety of what our composers are writing, though it must be acknowledged that not all of that music is intended for the masses. New music groups are scattered all over the country, and in the major centers, at least – New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles – most new music events are well attended by knowledgeable, enthusiastic listeners.... Just try getting a ticket for a Glass concert or for an appearance of Laurie Anderson or Steve Reich and you will see what it means for a composer in the late twentieth century to have an immense public success with his or her new music." Boone himself has had a share of this success and, what's more, through his work with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and other groups, he has for decades been instrumental in broadening and deepening the stylistic spectrum of composers who can achieve their own "public success" in the twenty-first century.

Boone's music has been performed by the San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Oakland Symphony, Nouvel Orchestre Philharmonique (Paris), Mexican National Orchestra, the Avignon, Berlin, and Ojai festivals, Washington's Contemporary Music Forum, and many others. Performers have included Seiji Ozawa, Edo de Waart, Michael Tilson Thomas, John Adams, Phyllis Bryn-Julson, and

Bertram Turetzky, to name but a few. His scores have been a staple of San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' concerts from the very start, including performances of *A Cool Glow of Radiation* (1966), *Vocalise* (1972), *Raspberries* (1973), *The Watts Towers* (1981), *The Khaju Bridge* (1986), among others, and the world premieres of *Linea Meridiana* (1976), *Streaming* (1979), *Trace* (1983; supported by a grant from the National Endowment of the arts), and *Usuyuki* (1994). Boone was a two-year DAAD [German Academic Exchange Service] composer-in-residence in Berlin, and a guest artist at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program. He has lectured widely in the U. S., Europe, Mexico, and Korea. In keeping with his wide-ranging expertise, for more than a decade Boone served as an associate professor at the San Francisco Art Institute where he taught studio and academic courses that related sound and music to other art forms.

**Boone, *Elementary Particles, Part 1* (2011)**

*for violin duo*

The composer writes: “I had long wished to write a piece for two like instruments and since my catalog includes a fair number of pieces for flute, that’s what I thought it should be. Then, quite by chance while browsing in a North Beach bookstore, I heard snatches of Bartók’s wonderful violin duos and realized on the spot, ‘No, no, not flutes: violins!’ This work is highly sectional in form – brief to very brief sections of contrasting but closely related materials – and each of these bears the name of a teacher, friend, former student, colleague, violinist, or other admired person whose path I have crossed. All of my compositions are dedicated to specific people, but there is a long list of others who have been meaningful to me whom I wanted somehow to acknowledge. (Of course, there is a section for one of tonight’s performers, Roy Malan; the other dedicatés are listed below.) Funnily enough, and completely unknown to me as I set off on this adventure, is the fact that Luciano Berio did exactly the same thing when he wrote his violin duos. It is an odd and innocent coincidence, but there it is. Maybe ours is the beginning of a new tradition.

“A work such as this with its many smaller sub-divisions continues a long-standing practice of mine. In the realm of literature, parataxis has to do with the placing side-by-side of materials not joined by connectives or transitions, but such ideas are found in music as well. The scores of Stravinsky and Xenakis are loaded with choice examples. The

many sections of *Elementary Particles* are closely linked, however, and their order is fixed. Bartok's duets, on the other hand, can be played in whatever order the performers choose.

"*Elementary Particles* (the title is borrowed from the world of physics) is a work in progress. Part I, twenty-one sections, was completed just a couple of months back and I am presently at work on Part II, which will have about an equal number of sections. To this torso and for this performance, I have appended what will be the closing section for both parts when the full composition is finally completed. It was originally a short song for soprano and violin written as a hundredth birthday present for the poet Carl Rakosi that featured one of his texts. For the present piece, I have arranged it in the way that you will hear it tonight."

The sections of *Elementary Particles, Part I* are dedicated to: Berta and Karl Schiske, Josefa Vaughan, Dorrance Stalvey, Brigitte and Wilhelm Meissel, Jane and Jean-Louis LeRoux, Margaret and Karl Kohn, Leo Steinberg, David Ireland, Annie Cheung, Pia Gilbert, Vernie and Arthur Ourieff, Valérie and Francis Brière, Megan Roniger, Jon Beacham, Nelly Boufathal, Peggy Dorfman, Roy Malan, Gertrude and Friedrich Cerha, Betsy and Ivan Ditmars, Jeanne Foss, and Jisun Bae. A number of these friends are here tonight.

## SALVATORE SCIARRINO (b. 1947)

Oceans of delicacy with islands of violent power—this is one way of encapsulating the oeuvre of Salvatore Sciarrino, widely believed to be the foremost Italian composer of his generation. Sciarrino himself has likened his music to “an erupting volcano seen from a distance,” and his metaphor aptly captures the fact that one’s perception of the composer’s works depends radically on one’s sense of perspective. From up close, the energy of his atomistic writing explodes into its constituent tone colors. From a distance—even from the typical distance between stage and seat in a concert hall—his compositions appear exquisite, delicate, and rarefied almost to the threshold of human comprehension.

The more one gets to know Sciarrino, the more astonishing it becomes to realize how little of his music is known in the U.S. This is a composer with more than fifty recordings to his credit, a host of influential European performers among his admirers, and students throughout Italy, especially in Rome, Milan, and his home-town Città di Castello. Beginning in the late 1990s, Sciarrino’s dramatic works gained him a foothold in New York—the *Aspern Suite* (1978) and *Luci Miei Traditrici* (O My Betraying Eyes) (1998) were heard in 2001, and his retelling of *Macbeth* (2002) reached Lincoln Center only a year later. Now, an ever-greater number of audiences are making the acquaintance of the composer whom critic Kyle Gann calls “modest in his aims yet not self-effacing, highly expert yet whimsical, accessible in a certain way, yet also an enigma.”

Sciarrino had the good fortune to be born in Palermo when it was a hotbed of activity for the musical avant-garde. A child prodigy in music and the visual arts, he began composing at age twelve and was featured at Palermo’s International New Music Week when he was only fifteen. Then and after, he was largely self-taught, though subsequent years involved brief periods of study with Turi Belfiore and Franco Evangelisti (at Rome’s Accademia di S. Cecilia); far more important was the influence of well-established contemporary composers, particularly Luigi Nono and to a lesser extent György Ligeti. One could say that Sciarrino’s most important training came instead from performers, whose “extended techniques” (unusual performance effects such as string harmonics or flute key-clicks) form the fabric of many of his works, and less formally from philosophers, whose ideas have left their traces on Sciarrino’s ideas about nature, tradition, sound and silence.

The most immediately striking aspect of Sciarrino’s aesthetic is his

preference for soft sounds; his music is quiet but never still. In vocal and instrumental pieces alike, his exploration of the noisy frontier on the edge of audibility seems linked (intentionally) to an understanding of the ordered chaos of nature and (perhaps unintentionally) to the ruminations of American experimental composer John Cage. Beginning in the early 1970s, Sciarrino explored this musical philosophy with great consistency. It is especially apparent in his solo works, where extended techniques predominate and every sound is valued. For example, the *Six Caprices* (1975-76) for solo violin and the *Three Brilliant Nocturnes* for solo viola take shape through a loosely patterned recurrence of particular gestures or textures—trills, tremolo figures, harmonics, and broken arpeggios. Among the highpoints of Sciarrino's oeuvre is his impressive series of pieces for solo flute—including *Hermes* (1984) and *Canzona di ringraziamento* (Song of Thanks) (1985)—replete with breath sounds, key clicks, multiphonics, and implied polyphony. Written during the 1980s for flutist Roberto Fabbriciani (who had also collaborated with Nono) and during the 1990s with Mario Caroli, these works create what musicologist Luciano Chessa describes as “a natural language made out of extended techniques.”

No matter what the medium, Sciarrino's art involves the decomposition of conventional sound. But in many cases, it also involves the re-composition of elements from past styles in western music, including Renaissance vocal music, baroque counterpoint, and even American popular song. Especially in his works for the piano, Sciarrino seems to have felt the weight of countless “classics” from the 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century repertoire. His first Piano Sonata (1976), for example, adopts the distinctive keyboard mechanics of Franz Liszt, and his playful *Anamorfosi* (1980) takes its skeleton from Ravel's *Jeux d'eau* while sporting the melody of “Singing in the Rain”!

What does such musical punning have to do with the ethereal, barely audible Sciarrino? Writer Gavin Thomas suggests an answer: “Sciarrino's disembodied works...ignore all that is normally considered the substance of music, stripping away everything except the very extremities of sound, the residue, the noise of bow on string, the sound of breathing, as though the whole of western musical tradition had been filtered down to its constituent atoms... [His] music is an art of submerged nostalgia... whether for the primeval innocence of nature or the extinguished traditions of western music”—a nostalgia whose honesty is “too clear-sighted to be entirely comfortable.” Not comfortable, perhaps, but unfailingly stimulating, and ultimately unforgettable.

**Sciarrino, *Il silenzio degli oracoli* (The silence of the oracles) (1989)**

*for flute, oboe, clarinet, French horn, and bassoon*

Given the composer's tendency to treat every instrument as an idiosyncratic individual, it is perhaps jarring to think of Sciarrino's *Il silenzio degli oracoli* as a "woodwind quintet." Surely it possesses none of the melodic, harmonic, or contrapuntal play of the more conventional twentieth-century repertoire. Instead, like so many of Sciarrino's scores, it is composed through the accretion and decay of sound fragments that offer up a mostly quiet but sometimes voluble dialogue of unusual performance techniques, neatly outlined in the opening pages of the score. By invoking in its title the preternaturally sensitive eyes and ears of the oracle—ever attuned to enigmatic signs from the "beyond"—Sciarrino gives programmatic resonance to a landscape of made up of breath, voices in the air, winds through mountain valleys or sea-swept caves. By making his oracles plural, Sciarrino invites us to share in the experience of prophesy.

## BEAT FURRER (b. 1954)

Perhaps it is appropriate that our fortieth anniversary concert should also honor the work of a composer responsible for initiating one of the most vibrant of European contemporary music groups, Klangforum Wien. To mark its twenty-fifth year on the scene, it chose to give the world premiere of *Xenos-Szenen* (for eight voices and ensemble) by Beat Furrer, who co-founded the group and served as artistic director for its first seven years. Furrer's own music, unsurprisingly, shares many of the ensemble's ideals: a commitment to new sounds, a keen awareness of how things come together or fall apart, and a willingness to push players to their technical limits.

Furrer is a painstaking composer. His works are carefully crafted and re-crafted and often subjected to still further refinements, whether through actual revisions or through a process of re-composition and arrangement that he has sometimes called "overpainting." As a result, his scores often exhibit chiseled surfaces and, for all their inherent dynamism, great control of resources. Musicologist Daniel Ender, who has published frequently on Furrer's music, observes that the composer's works tend to "establish several musical processes at once, with harmonic and rhythmic developments remaining mostly in the background and becoming evident only from time to time." His Piano Concerto of 2007 is a case in point, as patterns in different pitch registers (low, medium, high) or timbres (from dull to metallic) slip in and out of audibility.

Beginning in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Furrer has expressed a deepening interest in the borders between sound and noise and in various methods for filtering sound. In *Stimmen* (1996, for chorus and percussion), he plays on both gradual transitions between pitch and noise and a myriad of possible echo effects, while *Nuun* (1995-96, for two pianos and ensemble) involves the overlaying of different schemes for organizing time, sound, and pitch. As described on the Universal Edition webpage, "the mass of events that occur in *Nuun* initially renders the reception of motions and structures in the music well-nigh impossible. During the course of the work, layers are removed one after the other, but their energy continues to be there in the background, ready at any moment to re-emerge to the surface. Furrer sees his work as a composer partly as the realization of different levels of energy."

Many of Furrer's most impressive scores are either operatic works or instrumental music derived from them. From the start, he has tended to take the literature and mythology of classical antiquity as a fanciful

point of departure. Composers from the seventeenth-century to the present have treated the Orpheus myth as an operatic vehicle, as it comes ready-made with a central character who sings and a love story that can be turned to various ends. Unlike many others in this venerable line, however, Furrer's *Begehren* (Yearning) (1999-2001) pushes the plot until it teeters on the edge of abstraction, reduced to an essential story that is as much about the sonic conflict between a man's voice and a woman's voice as it is about Orpheus or Eurydice. Moving one step further into the realm of sound is Furrer's *Orpheus' Bücher* (Orpheus's Books), an arrangement of the opera's opening scene. Here, in the composer's words, "The initial sound of the word 'Schatten' ('shadow'), a patch of white noise, gives rise to an orchestral sonority spinning on several levels: the ensemble of solo vocalists, electronically amplified and projected in continuous motion around the auditorium."

As Furrer's description suggests, the spatialization of sound has been very important for him, especially in his dramatic work, and nowhere more than in his award-winning *FAMA* (2004-05), which takes its inspiration from the "House of Fame" described in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and bears the unusual subtitle "a piece for large ensemble, eight voices, an actor and a sound structure." For its much anticipated premiere, a large box was built to contain not the stage but the audience, while most of the performers play on the other side of its walls. Heike Hoffmann (artistic director of the Salzburg Biennale festival) described the effect: "The space becomes an instrument, a sound transformer, though entirely without electronic aids; only through the precisely composed opening and closing of adjustable flaps at regular openings in the wall and ceiling of the box can subtle sounds penetrate the interior." Since this first performance at the Donaueschingen Music Festival, *FAMA* has been heard in several European capitals and in 2006 it won the Golden Lion prize at the Venice Biennale.

Although born Swiss and a frequent presence in Switzerland (composer-in-residence at the Lucerne Festival in 1996 and at the Basel Hochschule für Musik in 2007-08), Furrer has made his career primarily in Austria, with frequent performances around the world. He now teaches in Graz at the Hochschule für Music. In 2004 he won Vienna's Music Prize, and two years later a concert was devoted to his music at the Wien Modern festival. His opera *Die Blinden* (The Blind) was a festival prizewinner at the Young Composers' Forum in Cologne in 1989, and other honors include the Music Prize of the City of Duisburg, a fellowship from the Siemens-Foundation, and membership in the Academy of Arts in Berlin.

**Furrer, *Spur* (1998)**

*for piano, 2 violins, viola, and cello*

Given Beat Furrer's linguistic proficiency, it's hard to ignore the potential pun in his title. English speakers are likely to hear a musical mirroring of urgency, a call to action, or a kicking against the pricks of complacent listening. Translated literally from the German, however, "Spur" means track or trace—an apt metaphor for a piece that picks its way painstakingly through a thicket of rhythmic and performance intricacies. (Ancillary translations include "clue," "scrap," "scent," or even "[highway] lane.")

Whatever its connotations, *Spur* has an incredibly active musical surface, cobbled together (but ever so carefully) in a variegated clockwork of interlocking rhythms. In its propulsive momentum and shifting textures, it resembles the chamber scores of the so-called minimalists, Philip Glass or Steve Reich. But only to a degree. Furrer's selection of pitches and patterns is by and large unpredictable to the average ear—giving an impression more of fractured overlapping than of gradual unfolding. Although he was speaking of his operatic arrangement *Orpheus' Bücher*, Furrer's description nonetheless seems apropos: "Linear, discursive relations are no longer the sole constitutive factors of the form: instead, their separate elements occur in ever-new combinations around a center of gravity or between two antipodes [bright vs. dark] to create a narrative in embryo."

## TERRY RILEY (b. 1935)

“I feel it’s my field to try to create magic in sound. Magic in the sense of transcendence of this ordinary life into another realm. An awakening....” Few composers could utter these words with such powerful spiritual overtones as Terry Riley. Recorded in William Duckworth’s interview-book *Talking Music*, they testify to Riley’s status as inspiring musical mystic and guru of the so-called “minimalist” movement.

A long-time resident of the Bay Area, Riley has retained strong Californian ties, despite a career that is “global” in many senses. He studied composition in San Francisco and Berkeley during the 1950s with Wendell Otey, Seymour Shifrin, William Denney, and Robert Erickson; and in the early 1970s, he became the disciple of classical Indian vocalist Pandit Pran Nath, with whom he worked for more than twenty-five years. While at Berkeley, he met La Monte Young and the two embarked on an enduring and productive friendship. Although Riley’s very earliest scores display some of the complexities of Karlheinz Stockhausen and the European avant-garde, he was soon enthralled by Young’s “long-tone” pieces, which sometimes involve the prolongation of a single harmony, or even a single interval. Following the example of John Cage, Young and Riley collaborated on found-object and tape music for dance and worked on the earliest stages of the San Francisco Tape Music Center.

Although Riley has taught Indian classical music at Mills College and more recently at the California Institute of the Arts, the Nairopa Institute, and New Delhi’s Christi Sabri School, he has more often supported himself by performing, improvising, and composing. In the 1960s, his formidable skill at the keyboard enabled him to spend nearly two years in Europe, performing at piano bars and U. S. Air Force officers’ clubs. As noted by Edward Strickland, this European sojourn gave Riley the opportunity to attend the Summer New Music Courses at Darmstadt and to use the electronic music resources at the ORTF (l’Office de la radiodiffusion-télévision française), where he produced a score for Ken Dewey’s play *The Gift* (1963) that took Chet Baker’s recording of Miles Davis’s *So What* and further transformed it with a variety of over-dubbing and time-lag techniques. The resulting echo effects represent some of Riley’s earliest experiments with the aural intricacies of inexact repetition, experiments brought to a riotous and history-making climax with *In C* in 1964.

Riley spent the next five years in New York, performing with Young and making a name for himself as an able and eclectic improviser conversant in western and non-western melodic construction. By the time he returned to the Bay Area in 1969, he was devoting his time primarily to improvising, a practice also fostered by his studies with Pandit Pran Nath. It is no exaggeration to state that members of the Kronos Quartet were responsible for coaxing Riley out of his compositional “retirement” and back into the realm of notated scores. Only after repeated encouragement from David Harrington and other Kronos members in the 1980s, did Riley compose what have since become some of his most widely known works, including the concert-length *Salome Dances for Peace* (1986) and no less than twelve others involving string quartet. More recently, Riley has also composed for the orchestra: *Jade Palace* (1990), written for the Carnegie Hall centenary; *June Buddhas* (1991), commissioned by the Koussevitzky Foundation.

There is a peace-making strain in Riley’s recent music that seems both linked to and more distinctly political than many of his earlier scores. In *The Sands* (1991), he united string quartet and symphony in a reflection on the first Gulf War. His steel guitar solo *Quando cosas malas caen del cielo* (When bad things fall from the sky), performed by David Tanenbaum for the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in February 2009, was the indirect outcome of an anti-war protest in Nevada City shortly before the Iraq War in 2003. In this instance, the detuning of the guitar signals a profound and uncanny discomfort with current events. No matter what the medium, Riley places great emphasis on the connectedness of different musical traditions and the power of the subconscious mind to communicate meaning across time and space.

### **Riley, *In C* (1964)**

*for any combination of instruments*

No treatment of Riley’s career would be complete without recounting the reputation-making, style-changing, piano-hammering premiere of *In C* in 1964. Even though Riley himself has always maintained a certain distance from the “minimalist” label, Strickland points out that, “*In C* defined the minimalist style of modular repetition and was the first work to bring minimalism into the mainstream.” Since its first performance in San Francisco—where the players included Steve Reich, Jon Gibson, Pauline Oliveros, and Morton Subotnick—the piece has been reincarnated by an astonishing variety of ensembles, including

a participatory performance led by Michael Tilson Thomas at Davies Symphony Hall and a performance in Shanghai using traditional Chinese instruments.

Easily adaptable to these new contexts, the score of *In C* lists fifty-three fragments or melodic cells that players take up in turn, repeating each as often as desired before moving on to the next. The result is an ordered but unpredictable pile of overlapping canons and rhythmic patterns that so teetered on the edge of chaos at its first performance that Reich added a continuously iterated C in the piano's upper register to function as a kind of metronome and to hammer home the piece's provocative title.

In a 1987 interview with Edward Strickland, when asked whether *In C* bore any relationship to Arnold Schoenberg's surprising comment that, despite his own atonal works, "good music remained to be written in C major," Riley responded: "I didn't even know he said that! All these things have meaning.... When I started singing Indian classical music later we began in C—we tuned the tamburas there, the key Pandit Pran Nath always sang in.... Maybe when Schoenberg said that he was thinking *In C* was going to be written.... What goes on in the subconscious is, I think, very important." Together with his innovative treatment of repetition and his extraordinary improvisations, that faith has made Riley's a prophetic and sometimes political voice, not just for "new age" musicians, but for those of many ages and persuasions.

—*Program Notes by Beth E. Levy*

## The Performers

Conductor **Sara Jobin** has won wide acclaim particularly in the realm of opera. She has conducted performances of *Tosca*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Norma*, and the world premiere of Philip Glass's *Appomattox* for San Francisco Opera, and she led a production for that company of Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince* in 2008-09. She has also led productions for the San Francisco Opera Center including Conrad Susa's *Transformations*, *The Bear*, *Dr. Heidegger's Fountain of Youth*, and *Egon und Emilie*. Recent credits elsewhere include another Glass world premiere, *The Bacchae*, with the New York Shakespeare Festival; *Carmen* with Anchorage Opera; a live recording of John Musto's *Volpone* with Wolf Trap Opera; *Faust*, *Carmen*, *La Bohème*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and an upcoming *Figaro* with Tacoma Opera; performances of *Der fliegende Holländer* with Arizona Opera, and a fire opera version of *The Seven Deadly Sins* at the Crucible in Oakland. With Frederica von Stade, she issued the world premiere recording of Chris Brubeck's *River of Song*, which was written for her and the Tassajara Symphony. Recent orchestral debuts have included Symphony Silicon Valley, the Dayton Philharmonic, and the Bochum Symphoniker in Germany. In 2009, she led the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in several programs, including appearances in Nice.