

SAN FRANCISCO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYERS

David Milnes, Music Director

Monday, 30 April 2007, 8 pm
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum

PERSONAL ENCOUNTERS

Performers

Carey Bell, clarinet
Laura Griffiths, oboe
Mark Izu, sho
Shoko Hikage, koto
Ellen Ruth Rose, viola

KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN *Vibra-Elufa* (2003)

(Approximate duration: 8 minutes)

William Winant, vibraphone

IANNIS XENAKIS *Okbo* (1989)

(Approximate duration: 14 minutes)

Florian Conzetti, Christopher Froh, and Daniel Kennedy, percussion

DAI FUJIKURA *Okeanos Breeze* (2001; revised 2005)

(Approximate duration: 8 minutes)

United States Premiere

~ INTERMISSION ~

DAI FUJIKURA *Okeanos Breeze* (2001; revised 2005)

MANOLIS MANOUSAKIS *Sickert* (2005)

(Approximate duration: 6 minutes)

United States Premiere

Rufus Olivier, bassoon

EDMUND CAMPION *Losing Touch* (1994)

(Approximate duration: 11 minutes)

Christopher Froh, vibraphone

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KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN
(B. 1928)

In a 1971 interview during a visit to London, Karlheinz Stockhausen declared: “I respond to sounds. Directly. Sound is my air. Whenever I deal with sounds, they organize themselves, so to speak. They respond very well to me, and I to them.” At mid-century, few major composers fell entirely outside his sphere of influence as he did pioneering work in European serialism and electronic music. Since that time, he has participated in the development of such aesthetic trends as “chance” or “indeterminate” music, graphic notation, and computer music. The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players has performed works representing every aspect of Stockhausen’s varied career—from his ringing Piano Piece IX (programmed in 1976 and again in 2005), to the masterworks *Kontakte* and *Stimmung*, to the massive *Mantra*, for two pianos percussion, and electronics (featured in 1996). Tonight we hear one of the composer’s most recent scores, an outgrowth of his operatic cycle *Licht*.

Little in Stockhausen’s early music education suggested that he would catapult to the center of attention as he did upon enrolling in the Summer Music Courses at Darmstadt in 1951 and completing his first widely recognized work, *Kreuzspiel* (Cross-play). Here he associated with key figures in contemporary music: Herbert Eimert, who introduced him to the serial methods of twelve-tone writing championed by Schoenberg and Webern; and Olivier Messiaen, whose *Mode de valeurs et d’intensités* (Mode of Values and Intensities) showed that these serial methods could be used to organize elements other than pitch. Inspired to study with Messiaen in Paris, he quickly met Pierre Boulez, whose own work with serialism and electronics would develop in counterpoint with Stockhausen’s for decades, and Pierre Schaeffer, whose experiments with tape-recorded sounds, *musique concrète*, were challenging relationships between composition and performance, and between music and noise.

Returning to Cologne in 1953, Stockhausen took a job with Eimert at the new Studio for Electronic Music housed by the West German Radio. “I became very interested in the differences between sounds,” he recalled in 1971: “what is the difference between a piano sound and a vowel aaah and the sound of the wind—shhh or whsss. It was after analyzing a lot of sounds that this second thought came up (it was always implied): if I can analyze sounds which exist already and I have recorded, why can I not try to synthesize sound in order to find new sounds, if possible.” He started by using sine waves, the most elemental of electronic sounds, in two *Elektronische Studien* (1953, 1954). More influential were his works of the later fifties: *Gesang der Jünglinge* (Song of the Youths) (1956), which incorporates a boy’s disembodied voice, chanting text from the biblical *Book of Daniel*, and *Kontakte* (Contacts) (1959, 1960) which began as a purely electronic piece but soon became the composer’s first experiment in combining live performance and tape-recorded sound.

Of course, ideas born in the realm of electronic music could easily spill out into acoustic works, as in the gigantic score *Gruppen* (Groups) (1955-57) for three independent orchestras, which project their sounds, like speakers, from different parts of the stage or concert hall. More striking still is the unaccompanied, amplified voices work *Stimmung* (Tuning) (1968) which sustains for more than seventy minutes a single chord, enlivened by the singers’ shifting emphasis on different vowel sounds and individual components of the overtone series, and by the insertion of “magic names” taken from a whole world of sacred traditions.

Despite their intricate mathematical construction, works like *Stimmung* exhibit a spirituality that has become more and more pronounced during Stockhausen’s career—particularly after his mental breakdown in 1968. Among the immediate results of this difficult period were a series of texts-for-performance, collectively known as *Aus den Sieben Tagen* (From the Seven Days). Responding to such instructions as “Play a vibration in the rhythm of dreaming / and slowly transform it / into the rhythm of the universe / Repeat this as often as you can.” the composer’s own recorded realization blurs the boundary between composition and improvisation in a hybrid practice that Stockhausen calls “intuitive music.” Beginning in 1977, and relying on close collaboration with trusted friends and family members, Stockhausen has devoted himself almost exclusively

to composing an epic, multimedia, cycle of seven operas known as *Licht* (Light). With one opera named for each day of the week, the whole production involves video, dance, mime, long passages without singing, and even scenes written in an invented meta-language.

Stockhausen’s worldview embraces an extremely fluid boundary between life and art, and a vision of the artist as both agent and conduit. He believes that a true composer, one who transcends self-expression, “tries to discover a universal language which is vibration and rhythm—that’s what everybody has in common. He wants to become a musician of the world. But the stars, too, are sounding.” Such a broad conception of art has had its unfortunate moments, most notably in the composer’s widely reported remark that the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 constituted “the greatest work of art there has ever been.” But for the most part, Stockhausen has trained his mysticism on more uplifting matters: “People usually think that the arts should only entertain, but that is not the role of the arts at all. The role of the arts is to explore the inner space of man; to find out how much and how intensely he can vibrate, through sound, through what he hears, whichever it is. They are a means by which to expand his inner universe.”

Vibra-Elufa (2003)

for solo vibraphone

Vibra-Elufa is one of the many solo and chamber works drawn from Stockhausen’s massive cycle *Licht*, in this case, from the final scene in *Freitag* (Friday) called “Elufa,” originally for bass horn and flute (1991-94). *Freitag* differs from the operatic days of the week in that it features a continuous tape part running all the way from its ritual “Greeting” to its “Farewell,” both of which are usually played in the foyer of the hall. The intervening stage action—loosely describing the temptation of Eve by Lucifer—is organized into scenes featuring live performers and instrumental or electronic meditations like “Elufa.”

Premiered in 2004 by Michale Pattmann at the seventh concert of the Stockhausen Courses Kürten, *Vibra-Elufa* delights in a process of creative transcription. The composer explains: “On the vibraphone, the microtonal

glissandi originally played by the woodwind instruments become bands of sound with distinct timbres through the blending pedalwork and the richly varied mallet techniques. This verticalization of horizontal lines gives *Vibra-Elufa* a unique poetic fascination.” Though its overtly theatrical context has melted away, the vibraphone solo retains the peculiar “vocality” of its instrumental original. Indeed, Stockhausen speaks of its opening as “a moment for one voice”; later passages feature “mirrored voices” in different registers and a conclusion for “single voice,” with dramatic “interjections.” As always in the composer’s oeuvre, specific theological messages can be difficult to disentangle. Yet whether it is demonic or divine, *Vibra-Elufa* is clearly luminous, otherworldly speech.

IANNIS XENAKIS (1922-2001)

Not long after the death of Iannis Xenakis in 2000, Paul Griffiths paid tribute to the composer in the *New York Times*, commenting that his music retained a “primitive power” despite its origin in “highly sophisticated scientific and mathematical theories.” This unusual juxtaposition—of the very old and very new, of the very basic and the highly refined—is crucial to understanding Xenakis’s music and his influential theories about mathematics and composition.

Growing up in Romania and Greece, Xenakis was fascinated by ancient literature and philosophy, and his formal education was devoted to mathematics and engineering rather than music (although he received rudimentary vocal and keyboard lessons). Perhaps because of this threefold distance—in space, time, and training—from the compositional trends of Western Europe, he developed strikingly original methods of musical creation. While fighting with the Greek resistance during World War II, Xenakis was wounded, captured, and sentenced to death. With the end of the conflict, he escaped to France, where his death sentence was revoked and he became a citizen. Throughout his life, however, he retained strong ties to his homeland and the political ideals that had forced him into exile.

Shortly after arriving in Paris, Xenakis found a job in the architecture studio of Le Corbusier. He was deeply involved in designing the Philips Pavilion, which would become the spatial home for Edgard Varèse’s pioneering tape piece, *Poème électronique*. During this time, he also worked to refine his compositional skills. Though Nadia Boulanger turned him down as a pupil, he received guidance from Arthur Honegger and Annette Diudonné, who quickly sensed that he had little interest in traditional harmony. She sent him to study with Olivier Messiaen and Darius Milhaud, whose open-minded approaches to pitch organization inspired him to explore parallels between music and architecture.

This experimentation bore fruit in his first major orchestral work, *Metastasis* (1953-54) which took even the avant-garde by surprise when it was premiered at the 1955 Donaueschingen festival of contemporary music. Xenakis compared this watershed work to the Philips Pavilion, noting that each represents an exploration of continuity: “parabola shapes” in the building, and glissandi (slides) in *Metastasis*. His replacement of specific pitches with sonic shapes reached an even greater extreme in *Pithoprakta* (1955-56) which took theories about the movement of gases and applied them to music, resulting in “clouds of sound”: continuously changing conglomerations of tiny sound-events, such as the plucking of a stringed instrument.

Implicit in *Pithoprakta* was a conjunction between music and mathematics that grew ever more technical through Xenakis’s career. He codified his ideas under the rubric “stochastic music,” a term that invokes probability theory and the laws of “large numbers” or “rare events.” His fascinating but formidable writings, many of which are collected in *Formalized Music* (1963, rev. 1992), reveal the depth of his engagement with the sciences. Intuitively drawn toward natural sounds that are both complex and unpredictable (thunder, wind, insect noises), Xenakis began to create similar sounds synthetically. Underlying this fascination was a desire to escape the determinism of serial or twelve-tone music without abandoning its scientific rigor. “I have tried to inject determinism into chance,” he once observed.

As electronic technology improved, computers became a natural and perhaps an indispensable tool for Xenakis. Beginning with *Achorripsis* of 1956-57, he used computer programs to link certain musical parameters

(timbre, duration, intensity, etc.) with mathematical operations derived from calculus and game theory. By separating non-temporal parameters (like pitch) from temporal ones (like rhythm) in his calculations, Xenakis achieved extremely intricate constructions in pieces such as his sextet *Eonta* for piano and brass (1963-64), *Nomos Alpha* (1965-66) for cello, or *Tetras* (1983), dedicated to the Arditti String Quartet.

Xenakis viewed composition as an endeavor based on rules and variables, suggesting a moral and aesthetic stance that he summed up: “This is my definition of an artist, or of a man: to control.” Such a statement reveals the distance Xenakis placed between expression and composition: “sentimental effusion of sadness, gaiety or joy,” he wrote, “I don’t think that this is really admissible in my music.” Yet this ostensibly anti-expressive philosophy has roots in Xenakis’s personal history, and in connecting his musical style to his wartime experiences he acknowledged a desire for the transcendent: “For years I was tormented by guilt at having left the country for which I’d fought. . . I felt I had a mission. I had to do something to regain the right to live. . . I became convinced—and I remain so even today—that one can achieve universality, not through religion, not through emotions or tradition, but through. . . a scientific way of thinking. But even with that, one can get nowhere without general ideas, points of departure. . . These ideas are born of intuition, some kind of vision.”

Okho (1989)

for three djembés (West African hand drums) and a large bass drum

Along with John Cage, Xenakis is celebrated by percussion players around the world for his seminal contributions to the repertory. (San Francisco Contemporary Music Players’ audiences may recall his balletic percussion solo *Psappha* or the clattering stones that accompanied his choral *Medea Senecae*.) Steven Schick—percussionist at U. C. San Diego, long-time member of the Bang on an Can All-Stars, and founder/Artistic Director of the percussion ensemble “red fish blue fish”—observes that by its very nature, the percussion ensemble appealed to Xenakis’s twin identities as “logician” and “magician.” He writes, “The foundational grammar of percussion music is inherently contradictory, based in part on the specificity of attack (tending to

amplify modernist values of rhythmic complexity and intellectual precision), but it is also rooted in the deeply physical language of ritual (a signature of more ancient traditions).” As Schick observes, Xenakis’s early percussion pieces emphasize a kaleidoscopic variety of tone colors, while later works are built on changes in texture and ensemble interplay.

Xenakis’s *Okho* falls emphatically in the latter camp, shaped as it is by a move from steady unison playing to more fractured interaction, from measured “conversation” to a superimposition of irrational (even impossible) rhythms and a dithyrambic coda. The piece was conceived in the company of Trio Le Cercle, in whose studio the composer first encountered the djembé and began experimenting with its sounds. French musicologist Daniel Durney relates that Xenakis requested the drums to be played upside down, to give greater resonance to their lowest notes, and he describes the six methods of sound production that Xenakis indicates in his score: three for the edge of the drum and three for its center. Each location may be struck with the fingertips or the hand, allowing overtones to resonate or muffling them. Even unison passages thus display a multi-layered patterning of sounds that Tom Kolor, percussionist of New York’s Ensemble Sospeso, calls “at once tribal and modernistic.”

Okho was commissioned by the Paris Festival d’Automne and the Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations, with the support of the French government for the celebration of the bicentennial of the French Revolution.

DAI FUJIKURA (B. 1977)

“I’ve always been a film-buff,” writes composer Dai Fujikura: “When I write I always feel each note and section of the music as movements of colors, camera tracking, or even edits of a film. Sometimes it seems as if I have a cinematographer, director and editor living in my head. Often their collaboration is not particularly amicable.” Cinematic allusions—from *Jams* to *The Matrix*—pepper Fujikura’s program notes, yet this is just one side of Fujikura’s creative persona. If his heroes include Martin Scorsese and David Lynch, his champions include composer-conductors Pierre Boulez and Peter Eötvös. Whether he takes his inspiration from the film festival or the contemporary music festival, Fujikura has a knack for finding and realizing imaginative musical metaphors.

Born in Osaka in 1977, Fujikura moved to England at age fifteen where he studied composition with Daryl Runswick at Trinity College, Edwin Roxburgh at the Royal College of Music, and George Benjamin at King’s College London. One finds occasional Japanese elements in Fujikura’s music, not only in the instrumentation of the work we will hear tonight, but also in such pieces as *Half-Remembered City* (2002), which captures something of the busy life of an Osaka schoolboy. Still, Fujikura’s reputation to date rests not on such national or cultural allusions, but rather on his ideas about the spatialization of sound and analogies between music and cinema.

From 2002-04, Fujikura was an invited participant in the London Sinfonietta’s Blue Touch Paper project, which provides young composers with a commission, a composer-mentor, and a budget for hands-on sessions with expert instrumentalists. From the beginning, he knew that the resulting work, later titled *Fifth Station*, would take as its topic “spatial elements.” As he told Nick Reyland in a 2002 interview, “I’ve always been interested in spatial elements, for example, in the last piece I wrote for the Sinfonietta [*Blue Sky Falling*, 2001], I wanted to have the sound coming from the back of the audience. I heard [Stockhausen’s] *Gruppen* when I was 21, 22 years old, but before that I was already experiencing that kind of sound system from cinema. Here as well as in Japan, the THX stuff

was coming out. . . Every time I go to the cinema, surround sound, and nowadays people have it at home, TV, video games, all sorts of things.” Taking full advantage of the experimental spirit of Blue Touch Paper, Fujikura placed the cellist center stage, used the trumpet as a visual and musical “shadow,” and scattered his other eight players around the hall. As he explained to interviewer Elizabeth Heyland, “The conductor faces the public, which makes them feel more involved in the actual performance, as though they were in a cinema.” A similar dispersal of instrumental forces occurs in *Stream State* (2005), written for the Lucerne Music Festival and given its premiere under the baton of Boulez. Even in *Okeanos Breeze*, the work we will hear tonight, the careful placement of the performers on stage is crucial to Fujikura’s conception.

Given Fujikura’s interest in film, it is not surprising that he has produced several important video pieces, including *teki* and *moromoro* (2003, with video by Tomoya Yamaguchi). Cinematic metaphors have also infiltrated other aspects of his creative work. His orchestral score *Vast Ocean* was inspired by film versions of Stanislaw Lem’s novel *Solaris* (Andre Tarkovsky, 1972; Steven Soderbergh, 2002) and he compares his miniature *Touch of Breeze* to a “movie trailer” for *Okeanos Breeze*. More substantially, Fujikura describes his working process on *Stream State* as akin to movie editing, whereby an overall storyboard is subjected to cuts, mutations, flashback or flashforward, and various kinds of creative layering. The success of Fujikura’s musical cinematography can be measured in the fact that after the performance of *Stream State*, a commission quickly followed for *Code 80* (2005), performed by Ensemble Intercontemporain at the celebration of Boulez’s eightieth birthday.

Fujikura’s honors and awards have outpaced his years. He has won the International Vienna Composition Prize, the Royal Philharmonic Composition Prize, and First Prize in the Serocki International Composers’ Competition. In 2003, he was runner up for the Toru Takemitsu Award for *Calling Timbuktu* (2001) which was performed by both the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Tokyo Philharmonic. In 2006, the BBC Concert Orchestra premiered his *Crushing Twister* at the BBC Proms, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra featured his *Eternal Escape* (2001) (with cello soloist Katinka Kleijn) on their

“Music Now” concert series. Fujikura is currently working on commissions for Ensemble Intercontemporain; BIT20, Norway; and orchestral work with electronics for IRCAM/Radio France; and a piano concerto for London’s Philharmonia Orchestra.

Okeanos Breeze (2001; revised 2005)

for koto, sho, viola, oboe, and clarinet with ocean drum and antique cymbals

Describing his chamber work *Okeanos Breeze*, the composer writes, “This piece is particularly special to me, because it was the first time I had ever written for Japanese traditional instruments. You may think that, because I look Japanese, I must have been playing these instruments since I was born. But the truth is, I had never seen and hardly ever even heard them until I went to a concert at the Darmstadt summer school when I was 20 years old. Since that summer I have been fascinated with writing for these instruments. A few years later I was delighted when Ensemble Okeanos asked me to write for them. The instrumentation of this piece wasn’t up to me, I was just asked to write for these particular instruments. Not only that, but the leader of the ensemble told me that she wanted to use some antique cymbals that she had bought from Hong Kong, and also the Ocean Drum. She demonstrated them to me (over the phone!) and I started writing.

“I remember that the piece came very smoothly and I had great fun studying the instruments. Both the sho and the koto suited me very well and inhabited my imagination very naturally. For instance, I usually hate vibrato, and the sho does not use vibrato. I also enjoy the sound of harsh attacks and they are very easy to achieve on the koto. *Okeanos Breeze* was commissioned to celebrate Japan 2001 and was performed in parallel with the Textural Space textile exhibition. I was asked to complete the piece at such short notice that I did not dwell much on all that clichéd ‘crossing-the-border,’ ‘east-meets-west’ rubbish that I see in a lot of publicity material for performances using Japanese instruments. I was born in Japan but I spent my crucial teenage years in the UK and feel myself to be an equal mix of both cultures.”

MANOLIS MANOUSAKIS (B. 1975)

The Athens-based multimedia consortium Medea Electronique has several things going for it. First, its “guiding spirit,” the mythological Greek sorceress Medea, known for her independent and even violent passions. Second, the word-play suggested by “Medea” and “media.” And most important, the creativity and enthusiasm of Manolis Manousakis, one of the most striking voices among his generation of Greek composers. Yet to characterize Manousakis’s creative persona as a “voice,” may actually do him an injustice, for almost all of his pieces involve the visual as well as the musical—his work is shot through with theater.

Manousakis gained his footing in live theater while at Columbia College in Chicago, where he studied composition with Gustavo Leone before returning to work with Tim Ward and Andreas Mniestris at the Ionian University in Corfu, Greece. Prior to his sojourn in Chicago, Manousakis had already composed the music for a short film called *Angel* (1994) and was deeply engaged in both independent avant-garde theater and in the popular theater of his native country. Since that time, he has rarely been without a film or stage project and as a result has embraced a wide variety of stylistic influences. He notes, “I found that, through composing for music for the theater, I could explore different paths of writing—from baroque music when composing for Shakespearean plays to hard core electronica when composing for independent shows.” In addition to these disparate sound worlds, Manousakis cites as important influences the music of Cage, Schoenberg, Webern and Berg, as well as (not surprisingly) Xenakis and the works of a lesser known countryman, Yannis Christou, who produced theater scores and experimental music during the 1960s and early 1970s.

When asked to compare the theater and concert audiences, Manousakis replies: “I am pleased to say that the concert audience is younger and more eager to experience new music. Contemporary music in Greece is mainly being presented in small concert halls and independent productions find their way to the audience through small theater spaces that are dedicated to electronic and avant-garde music.” Increasingly, Manousakis has also made his works known internationally via video and DVD pro-

duction. Chief among these works are *Tetrachromia* and the twelve-video project *Stench on a White Shirt* (2005). The sound-world of *Tetrachromia*, which includes the subsections “Black” and “Blue,” involves the composer’s electronic manipulation of sound clips from performers (especially the Macedonian Saxophone Quartet) engaging in free improvisations that are in turn loosely based on the composer’s own scores. *Stench on a White Shirt*, which brought together the co-founders of Medea Electronique (Art Director, Christos Laskaris, and programmer/engineer of interactive systems Panagiotis Tsagarakis, later joined by video artist Yannis Lolis), is a more extended treatment of romantic love (in the first half) and international politics (in the second half, which bears such subtitles as “Middle East of Eden,” “UN Resolution,” “Big Talk,” and “World Trade”). To give his political vision musical force, Manousakis has crafted what he calls a “musical imagery” of air bombardment, army attacks, the incessant and impotent rhetoric of world leaders, and the pulsing response of crowds incited to violence.

Manousakis currently makes a living by writing for Greek television, which gives him both economic freedom and the facilities to produce his own shows. In addition to helping found the Chicago Greek Film Festival, he has participated in the Chicago International Children’s Film Festival, the East Lansing Film Festival, and the Chicago Cultural Center’s “World in a Weekend” concert series. In 2006, Manousakis won an honorable mention for *Stench on a White Shirt* from Forecast Music, a New York City new music ensemble, and among his recent projects is an experimental theater piece called *Peirama 1* (Experiment 1), scheduled for performance in 2007 at the Benaki Museum of Modern Art in Athens. Based on the myth of Medea, this work takes shape through sound and video designed to incorporate audience interaction, as a Greek chorus (of sorts) attempts to forestall Medea’s murderous rage before it engulfs her children. This “modern day Medea,” according to her co-creators, “has been listening to different music, has memories of televised wars, Reuters pictures in her mind. Recorded, radio-phone sounds are reproduced in parallel to her inner voice, . . . bits of audiovisual information fly around her head affecting her judgment.” For Medea, alas, these scattered sounds drown out the voice of conscience, but for Manousakis, they coalesce into an art that invites technological and political contemplation.

Sickert (2005)

for solo bassoon and electronics

In 1934, Virginia Woolf described her experience of the artworks of English impressionist painter Walter Richard Sickert (1860-1942), a friend of Degas and Whistler, and a man who shared Woolf’s eccentric relationship to Edwardian society: “To me Sickert always seems more of a novelist than a biographer. . . He likes to set his characters in motion, to watch them in action. As I remember, his show was full of pictures that might be stories. . . The figures are motionless, of course, but each has been seized in a moment of crisis; it is difficult to look at them and not to invent a plot, to hear what they are saying.” Manousakis seems to have engaged in a similar process in his own “conversation” with Sickert’s *Mornington Crescent* nude.

In fact, stories have circulated around Sickert’s paintings since the 1890s. This particular canvas is one of many he painted after the murder of a prostitute in north London’s East End, and together such works have fueled speculation (recently rekindled by mystery writer Patricia Cornwell) that *Sickert* was the notorious “Jack the Ripper.” Whatever the facts of the case—and they are hotly debated—Sickert captured his model prostitute’s attitude of sordid nonchalance. Manousakis’s *Sickert* is neither sordid nor nonchalant, but it does seem to mirror the painting’s subtitle “contre-jour,” or “lit from behind,” in the electronic halo that often surrounds the solo bassoon part without revealing its source. Written for Georgios N. Faroungias, the bassoon part exists in an uneasy space between foreground and background, as Manousakis himself observes: “The performer is at times autonomous and at times so much involved in the tape part that you cannot really distinguish the sound of each medium. That is my intention in *Sickert*—a game of dominance between the two realities.”

EDMUND CAMPION (B. 1957)

Edmund Campion is known for his imaginative approach to music technology. As he put it in an interview with fellow-composer Keeril Makan (Computer Music Journal, 2004): “Emerging technologies have been the generative source for most of my musical explorations.” Yet Campion continues, “There is nothing new here. For Chopin, it was the modern piano, and for Schaeffer, it was the tape recorder. Finally, there is no distinction between acoustic sound, natural sound, or electronic sound. Everything is integrated with the full spectrum of all possible sounds. Bach’s *Art of the Fugue* and the noise of Niagara Falls both have a place in my compositional thinking. The site of the concert hall has become exciting again, and writing for acoustic instruments alone is just another part of the work. I hope I am coming full circle, back to the essential musical material, to music that is made just for hearing.”

A native of Dallas, Texas, Edmund Campion did his doctoral work at Columbia University with Mario Davidovsky before attending the Paris Conservatory where he studied with composer Gérard Grisey. In 1993 he was selected to work at the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique [IRCAM] and the following year he produced *Losing Touch*, which we will hear tonight. Its success brought him new IRCAM commissions including his first large-scale piece for live, interactive electronics, *Natural Selection* (premiered in 1996 with the composer at the MIDI grand-piano keyboard), and the evening-long video and dance production *Playback* (1998-99), choreographed by François Raffinot.

After his return from Paris, Campion joined the composition faculty at U. C. Berkeley, where he is also Co-Director of the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT). He has thus had ample opportunity to reflect on the uses and abuses of music technology. Campion observes: “Technology has unwittingly suppressed live music practice, one of its big downsides. Nevertheless, I think we are learning to better handle the fruits of our discoveries. The IRCAM/Boulez model of the grand concert with massive electro-acoustic forces has been replaced by portability, performability, and performer-sensitive work. The performers need reliable systems to rehearse, just as they do with the music of Brahms.

They need to feel renewed by the difficult new instruments they are required to learn. All this helps define a new class of musical activity. That’s the positive side.” This side was on display in *Outside Music* (2005), co-commissioned and given its world premiere by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players with Julie Steinberg at the helm of a new keyboard instrument designed to exhibit pianistic virtuosity and to generate a dazzling array of computer-based sounds, modified in immediate response to the performer’s touch.

Campion’s embrace of new electronic environments is always thoughtful, never headlong. As a result his music offers more than a celebration of technology. As titles like *Natural Selection* might suggest, connections between music and the natural world are major themes in his oeuvre, which includes such works as *A Treasured Collection of Eddies* (1992) for sextet and an offshoot of *Playback* called *Corail* (Coral, for saxophone and live electronics), which had its world premiere in 2001. In a pair of works written in collaboration with his brother, the poet John Campion, the composer offers artistic reflections on subjectivity: *ME* (for baritone and electronics, 2002-03) offers up a “patriarchal parody” of *l’Autre* (the Other, for mezzo soprano, ensemble, and tape, 1997-98), in which the female voice is diffused throughout her instrumental accompaniment to suggest a “struggle between consciousness and the unconscious” and a “fear of ‘the Other’ race, culture and gender.”

Like *l’Autre*, many of Campion’s works explore relationships between sound and space. In his ambitious cycle for instruments and quadrophonic tape *Quadrivium* (1995-98), premiered by David Milnes and Earplay, the composer surrounds his audience with sound sources, enveloping them in the piece. In some cases, his sonic experiments have been crafted for specific events in such sites as New York’s Union Square and an abandoned aquarium in Rome. For example, in *Flood Stage*, a collaborative project with John Campion and sculptor Terrisa J. Mabrey, he developed a framework of expanding and collapsing rhythmic phrases to meet the challenge of writing music that audience-participants would enter and exit at will. *Domus Aurea*, performed by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 2001, involves a more historical relationship between music and place—in this case, a vibraphone rumination on the “grotesque” inspired by the fantastic, fifteen-hundred-year-old frescoes adorning the walls of Emperor Nero’s Roman villa.

Among Campion's honors are the Rome Prize, the Nadia Boulanger Award, the Paul Fromm Award at Tanglewood, a Charles Ives Award given by the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a Fulbright scholarship for study in France. In June 2001, the TEMPO Festival at U. C. Berkeley devoted an entire concert to his music, including the newly commissioned *Sons et Lumières* for video, player piano, and eight channel tape. He has received commissions from IRCAM, the Centre National de Création Musicale, Radio France, the American Composers' Orchestra, the Percussion de Strasbourg Ensemble, and the Center for New American Music, among others. In addition to *Domus Aurea* and *Outside Music*, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players presented Campion's piano duo *A Complete Wealth of Time* (1990) in 2005.

***Losing Touch* (1994)**

for vibraphone and tape

Dedicated to John Harbison, *Losing Touch* was Campion's first composition using computers. It nonetheless possesses remarkable continuities with the works that came before and after it. As the composer himself remarked, "Everything [in the piece] was an expansion of what I had done before, crossing the fruits of improvisation and formalized composition. . ." Using computer tools developed at IRCAM—Patchwork, AudioSculpt, Additive, Mosaic, and the like—provided new resources for the development of ideas about harmony and articulation that had also animated Campion's earlier scores. Premiered in 1994 by Daniel Ciampolini of the Ensemble Intercontemporain, *Losing Touch* has since won favor with percussionists for its colorful, ear-opening, and jazzy rhythmic patterns.

Campion began by constructing a "sample-based orchestra" made up of different "instruments," each of which manipulates or re-synthesizes recorded vibraphone sounds in a different way—focusing in on the noisy instant of attack, isolating the ethereal harmonic overtones that resonate when a pitch is struck, or mimicking the vibraphone's distinctive tone color while altering or "bending" its pitches. Like most of Campion's later works, especially those using live electronics, *Losing Touch* also invites interpretation about the interdependence of man and machine. A pre-recorded "click-track" enables the soloist to coordi-

nate his performance precisely with the tape part, resulting in what Campion calls "synchronization and the illusion of integration." By the end of the piece, however, "the tape degenerates into a mechanical sequence that the musician cannot and does not care to follow. The fiction of cooperation is shattered as the human performer and the tape part lose touch with each other."

—Beth E. Levy

The Performers

Specializing in new music for percussion, **Christopher Froh** is a member of sfSoundGroup and the Empyrean 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.

Rufus Olivier is the principal bassoonist with the San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Ballet, and former bassoonist with the San Francisco Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. He is a founding member of the Anchor Chamber Players, the Midsummer Mozart Orchestra, and the Stanford Wind Quintet. He has been guest soloist with numerous orchestras throughout the United States, Japan, and France, and has premiered many new works for the bassoon. A member of the music faculties of Stanford University, Azusa Pacific University and Mills College, he is also known for his many movie and TV soundtracks including the Grammy-winning soundtrack *Elmo in Grouchland*. In 1993, Olivier received the Seal of The City and County of San Francisco, as a recognition of “Exemplary Accomplishment on the Occasion of Black History Month.” In 2005 he won the Award of Merit from the United States Postal Service and was featured in a cover story for the magazine *International Musician*, published by the American Federation of Musicians. Olivier joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1991.

William Winant, percussion, has collaborated with some of the most innovative musicians of our time, including Cage, Reich, Xenakis, Anthony Braxton, Alvin Curran, Danny Elfman, Fred Frith, Keith Jarrett, Gordon Mumma, James Tenney, Christian Wolff, John Zorn, and the Kronos Quartet. In 1984, along with violinist David Abel and pianist Julie Steinberg, he founded the Abel-Steinberg-Winant Trio, a virtuoso ensemble specializing in new music from the

Americas and the Pacific Rim. The Trio has commissioned dozens of works and has recorded for CRI and New Albion. From 1995 to 2001, he recorded and toured extensively with the avant-rock group Mr. Bungle. In 1997, with cellist Yo-Yo Ma and the Mark Morris Dance Group, Winant participated in the world premiere of Lou Harrison’s *Rhymes with Silver* and has since performed the piece around the world. In 1999 he worked with Sonic Youth to produce *Goodbye 20th Century*, a highly acclaimed recording of avant-garde composers, and since 2003 he has been percussionist for the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. Winant teaches at U. C. Berkeley and U. C. Santa Cruz, and has been a member of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players since 1988.

—Beth E. Levy

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

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 36th 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 56 U.S. and 130 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 ten 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.

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 June 2002.

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 forthcoming album of compositions by Edmund Campion, and the ensemble's Pablo Ortiz album. 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 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 Engineer) is a multi-disciplinary and multi-media artist who freelances in the performing and fine arts as sound engineer, designer, composer, installation designer, collaborator, and fine arts photographer. His work is experienced by audiences around the world, often in contemporary music contexts, multi-media performances, and new and experimental media exhibitions in galleries and museums. His upcoming projects in the performing arts include the New York premiere sound design for Rinde Eckert's *Horizon*, a new multimedia performance work by Joan Jeanrenaud, *Aria*, and a new multimedia/performance work with Randall Packer and tenor Charles Lane, *A Season In Hell* -a culminating performance of an eight year project by the US Department of Art and Technology. His most recent collaborative art installation, *Narcissus' Well* premiered last September at Midwestern State University in Texas. He has just released a CD recording of his 2005 collaboration with the master didjeridoo player, Stephen Kent. Originally from Philadelphia, he lives in Oakland (gtjk@earthlink.net).

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 serves 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*.

Director of Operations and Marketing, **Matthew Schumaker** studied music and philosophy as an undergraduate at Dartmouth College and continued as a graduate student at Princeton University, where he received an MA in music composition. While at Princeton, he took part in coordinating concert production for the university's new music ensemble. He subsequently studied composition in Holland with Louis Andriessen. He joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' staff in 2004.

Kate McLoughlin, Production Associate, earned her M.M. in Orchestral conducting at McGill University in Montréal, Canada, where she also completed undergraduate work in bassoon performance and music theory. She is currently the assistant conductor of the Oakland Civic Orchestra, and manager of the Berkeley Youth Orchestra. She joined the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' staff in 2006.