

**Welcome to the opening concert of  
the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players'  
1999-2000 season!**

Now in its twenty-ninth year,  
the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players  
is a leader among ensembles in the United States  
dedicated to contemporary chamber music.

A five-time winner of the prestigious national  
ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award  
for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music,  
SFCMP has performed over 850 new works,  
including 126 U.S. and world premieres,  
and has brought 50 new pieces into the repertoire  
through its active commissioning efforts.

Each season the ensemble performs a six-concert series  
at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

SFCMP has toured widely throughout California  
with performances on such eminent concert series as  
San Francisco Performances, Cal Performances,  
the Stern Grove Festival, Los Angeles' Monday Evening Concerts,  
and the Festival of New American Music in Sacramento.

SFCMP made its European debut  
at the Cheltenham Festival of Music in 1986  
and was featured, in 1990, at the Ojai Festival.

In addition to its active performance schedule,  
the ensemble has recorded six albums of its own and  
contributed recordings to eight others.

*This concert is made possible in part by  
a generous gift from  
Mrs. Ralph I. Dorfman*

*The performance of Kicking and Screaming  
is made possible by a grant from the  
Ross McKee Foundation*

Cuco Daglio, sound consultant (Mays)

Barbara Chaffe, flute/piccolo;  
William Banovetz, oboe/English horn;  
William Wohlmacher, clarinet/bass clarinet;  
Mark Shannon, clarinet (Mingus)/alto and tenor saxophones;  
David Henderson, baritone saxophone;  
Rufus Olivier, bassoon; Lawrence Ragent, French horn;  
Charles Metzger, trumpet; Hall Goff, trombone;  
William Winant, percussion; Scott Bleaken, timpani;  
Smith Dobson, Jr., drums (Mingus, Davis);  
Karen Gottlieb, harp; Paul Binkley, guitar;  
Anthony Davis, piano;  
Roy Malan, Susan Freier (Moe), violins;  
Nancy Ellis, viola; Stephen Harrison, cello;  
Steven D'Amico, contrabass

Donald Palma, Music Director

## **San Francisco Contemporary Music Players**

**Monday, September 27, 1999 • 8 pm**

**Center for the Arts Theater**

**ANTHONY DAVIS**

*Dance (1994)*

**CHARLES MINGUS**

*Revelations (1957)*

— INTERMISSION —

**LYLE MAYS**

*Somewhere in Maine (1988)*

**Roy Malan, violin**

**Daniel Kennedy, marimba**

**ERIC MOE**

*Kicking and Screaming (1994)*

I. with great energy and sweep

II. Andante

III. extremely incisive and energetic

**Julie Steinberg, piano**

## **CROSSING OVER**

From its earliest origins, jazz represents the most extensive and fruitful intertwining of disparate musical worlds in the history of sound. All by itself, it is a “cross over” medium par excellence. The two nearest antecedents of jazz—blues and ragtime—were themselves already intricate meldings of cross-cultural elements. Blues combined African field hollers, work songs, and primarily pentatonic melody with Anglo-Saxon hymn harmonies. Ragtime commingled African asymmetrical rhythmic patterns and performance inflections (“ragging”) with the forms (march, quadrille), timbre (piano, marching band), meter and harmony of European music.

From the first two decades of the twentieth century, when “jazz” finally emerged in the red-light district of New Orleans, through its successive expansions to Chicago, Kansas City, New York, Europe and finally the rest of the world, each new generation and locale of jazz artists has seen fit to transform, sometimes radically, the sound and substance of jazz—often leaving many “traditional” fans shaking their heads, even as younger ones buzz with fresh excitement. Such dynamism has not failed to stir the imaginations of countless “classical” creators as well—artists such as Igor Stravinsky, Maurice Ravel, Aaron Copland, Darius Milhaud, Henry Brant, Gunther Schuller—and their work in turn has sparked fresh new directions within the medium. It

seems jazz is a constant state of becoming. “Waiting for something new” remains a quintessential part of the experience.

## **ANTHONY DAVIS (B. 1951)**

Alongside early studies in classical piano, the young Anthony Davis developed a fascination with jazz from hearing recordings of Art Tatum, Erroll Garner, Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker, Charles Mingus and John Coltrane. By the time he entered Yale University in 1969, his jazz aspirations were firm. While this made for occasional clashes with the Music Department, which tended to emphasize traditional European concert music, Davis was intrigued by the isorhythmic structures of pre-tonal music and by the operas of Wagner and Strauss. Even more engaging at the time were courses he took at Wesleyan University, exploring South Indian music.

Landing in New York in 1977, Davis arrived at an exciting juncture in jazz experimentalism, centered on the compositional ideas of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians in the wake of the so-called “free jazz” revolution of the ‘60s. He collaborated with such avant-gardists as Anthony Braxton, Wadada Leo Smith, Leroy Jenkins, James Newton and George Lewis. In 1981, he founded the ensemble Episteme (Greek for “knowledge”) as a laboratory in which he could freely combine and explore his myriad stylistic interests—notational and improvisational, African-American,

European and non-Western. In 1982, he composed his first orchestral piece, *Still Waters* (which was performed by the New York Philharmonic on the Horizon Festival), followed by *Hemispheres*, a five-movement ballet score for the choreographer Molissa Fenley. He then wrote a series of works, all bearing the title *Wayang*, inspired by the layered mathematical polyrhythms of the Indonesian gamelan. One of these, *Wayang V* for piano and orchestra, was premiered by the San Francisco Symphony in 1984 and subsequently nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

It was with the spectacular premiere of *X (The Life and Times of Malcolm X)* at New York City Opera in 1986, that Davis was recognized as an innovator in the world of opera. Davis was adamant with his collaborators on this project that he did not want to create a mere “jazz opera,” but something far more gripping and substantial. And while *X* does indeed draw upon several distinct styles of jazz (big band swing, blues, Coltrane-inspired modal jazz, structured thematic improvisation), the underlying model is in fact the continuously unfolding, through-composed drama of Wagner and Berg. One of the first modern operas to be based on a contemporary political subject (it predates John Adams’ *Nixon in China* by a year), *X* was widely hailed as a breath of fresh air in the medium. The opera was recorded for Gramavision in 1989 (see *Where To Find It*, p. 20).

Davis shifted gears yet again with his next opera, *Under the Double Moon*, a science-fantasy set on the water planet of Undine,

and swirling in lush, sensuous colors and hypnotic repetitions. And again with *Tania*, a surreal, pop-soaked, darkly comic chamber opera loosely based on the Patty Hearst kidnapping. His epic fourth opera, *Amistad*, premiered in 1997 at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, recalls the 1839 rebellion aboard a slave ship and subsequent trial. With a steady flow of orchestral, chamber, solo, vocal and choral works, Davis has continued to establish himself as a remarkably talented, original and unpredictable creator.

In addition to professorial duties at Yale, Harvard and the University of California at San Diego (where he has been on the composition faculty since 1998), Davis has enjoyed commissions from the American Music Theater Festival, the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Carnegie Hall, MIT, the American Composers Orchestra, and the San Francisco, Kansas City, Houston, Atlanta and Pittsburgh Symphony orchestras. He has been composer-in-residence for the Detroit and Mississippi Symphony orchestras. He is also the recipient of numerous grants and honors, including those from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the New York Foundation of the Arts, Columbia College, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Massachusetts Arts Council, the Carey Trust, Chamber Music America, the Meet the Composer Lila Wallace Fund and Opera America.

#### **Dance (1994)**

*for clarinet, vibraphone/marimba, drums,*

*piano, violin, viola, cello and bass*

The composer writes: "This piece represents my ongoing interest in creating music with a seamless interplay of the composed and the improvised. The composed music must serve the individuality of the improviser as the improviser finds his voice in the language of the composition." Davis manifests this ideal admirably, laying down a rough carpet of polyrhythms and then guiding his performers to twirl above it in exhilarating solo and group improvisations.

What is especially fascinating for listeners is trying to sense precisely what is notated and what is being created spontaneously by the players. To both enhance, and at the same time somehow hide, this duality lies at the very heart of Davis' experiment. Some passages are fully notated. In others, just one or two of the instruments playing (most commonly the clarinet, violin or piano) are improvising. Indeed, there is but a single passage in the work where all instruments improvise simultaneously. One moment of pure magic occurs just near the end, when the driving, incessant rhythms are suddenly halted as by some unseen force, and the piano floats up, ethereally improvising, into its upper reaches ("like a peek into other musical worlds," says Davis).

Originally appearing as *Pale Grass and Blue, then Red*, the work *Dance* was commissioned by Jose Limon Dance Company of New York, for a choreographic work by Ralph Lemon.

## **CHARLES MINGUS (1922-1979)**

Charles Mingus was born in 1922 in Nogales, Arizona, near the Mexican border. Following his mother's untimely death from illness two years later in Watts, CA, he was raised by a kind, ambitious stepmother who was half Indian, adding to an already diverse family heritage that could claim Chinese, British, Swedish and African roots. While his father was a religious traditionalist, his stepmother was a devotee of the Holiness Church, the passionate sermons and electrifying hymn and gospel singing of which made a strong impression on the young Mingus. He would later claim these as a major source of inspiration for *Revelations*, tonight's work.

A dawning interest in music seemed to wane after unsuccessful lessons on the trombone, but then rekindled when the adolescent Mingus befriended Britt Woodman (who would later become a trombonist for Duke Ellington). The watershed moment came when Woodman took him to hear the Ellington band in person. Looking back on the experience, Mingus remarked, "I never heard music like that in church. I nearly jumped out of the bleachers. Britt had to hold me." Ellington—that master of innovation, who had pushed the boundaries of jazz again and again with his complex and extended compositional forms—became the major influence in Mingus' life. Charles took up the bass, discovering at last his true instrumental

voice. He began to compose, and was gratified to win a school contest with two Ellington-style arrangements.

At the same time, his high school training brought him into increased contact with recordings of classical music, and he quickly developed a special fondness for Debussy and Ravel, and for Richard Strauss' tone poem, *Death and Transfiguration*. He began studying music theory, orchestration and composition with Lloyd Reese. At seventeen, Mingus completed his first large-scale composition, *Half Mast Inhibition* for twenty-two piece orchestra. Though this work would have to wait twenty years for a performance (Gunther Schuller finally recorded it in 1960), it embodied an essential "cross over" spirit that would persist in Mingus' work throughout the wild, jazzy career that followed.

Much can, and should, be said of the struggles and challenges that Mingus faced during that career: the double-edged racism that accompanied both his mixed blood ("too light to be black, too black to be white," muses his widow, Sue Mingus) and his eclectic stylistic pursuits; the decline of interest in his work as rock-'n-roll began to conquer the airwaves; his exhausted withdrawal from music during the latter half of the '60s; his slow, wasting death by Lou Gehrig's Disease in the late '70s (during which he continued to direct recording sessions from his wheelchair and to compose with the help of his wife and friends).

But glittering successes were also his lot. For more than a decade, starting in the early '50s, he maintained a position of tremendous respect and authority in the jazz world—performing, composing, arranging, leading, delighting in spectacular collaborations with the likes of Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, Bud Powell, Dizzy Gillespie, Art Tatum, and even the great Duke Ellington himself. Closer to the classical fringes, Gunther Schuller and others championed his notated scores through concerts and recordings. In the end, Mingus achieved a level of national and international recognition that would be any musician's dream, being honored in his final years with awards from magazines and societies, invitations to teach at institutions, commissions for compositions, as well as grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Smithsonian Institution and the Guggenheim Foundation.

Most of Mingus' over one hundred recorded albums, many produced through his own company, Chazz-Mar Inc., are still readily available. The Library of Congress now houses his enormous output of about 300 notated scores, including the epic suite, *Epitaph*, "discovered" among his papers after his death (actually he had tried, without success, to have it recorded in 1962). Several performing groups, including the Mingus Big Band, have devoted themselves to presenting his works to live audiences around the world. Books and films continue to appear celebrating his life and work.

Mingus attributed his talent to God and his successes to plenty of hard work. Of his eclecticism: “There’s the ocean and there’s a million waves and each piece is like one of the waves and different as each wave. A creative person is not one thing.” And: “I don’t write in any particular idiom. I write Charlie Mingus . . . I don’t want to act any parts, to worry myself about being hip. I’m only concerned with communicating what I feel.”

Mingus died in 1979, at the age of 56. His ashes were scattered in the Ganges River in India.

***Revelations (1957)***

*for flute/piccolo, clarinet, alto/tenor and baritone saxophones, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, harp, vibraphone, electric guitar, piano, percussion and bass*

According to Mingus, this work recalls vivid and enduring impressions from his years of worship in the Holiness Church as a youth. That the piece utilizes both jazz and classical elements is clear enough, but what astonishes is the stark, dramatic manner in which Mingus wields these distinct forces.

The opening evokes a profound sense of awe and wonderment (upon entering the hallowed house of the Lord)—solemn, chromatic, intense, broken only by a few brief, searching solos in the brass. It bears little, if any, trace of jazz influence. Once inside, however, an

abrupt shift to a bright, jazzy “old church style” piano solo in 3/4 signals commencement of the service. In the pages that follow, Mingus’ daring structural imagination abounds, as the flow of energy alternately advances and recedes, melodiously surges forth and breathlessly suspends itself in air. The sense of restraint is at times almost unbearable.

A shift to 4/4 meter changes all this, and a bouncy, almost comical, piano solo clears the ways for what Mingus regarded as the “preaching” session. From this point forward, the momentum builds continuously. With it, the improvisational element, delicately placed in earlier passages, increases, as one instrument after another leaves the realm of notated music to sway and “shout” in improvisatory fervor over a simple repeating alternation of two chords—a famed Mingus hallmark. At length, the entire group is caught up in ecstatic improvisation.

We’ll let your ears “reveal” the rest.

*Revelations* was commissioned by the Brandeis University Festival of Creative Arts. The premiere performance was conducted by Gunther Schuller.

**LYLE MAYS (b. 1953)**

Born into a musical family in Wausaukee, Wisconsin, Lyle Mays was encouraged from an early age to explore new and different forms of musical expression. While still quite young, the budding pianist and composer discovered a strong affinity for jazz and pursued it, first in jazz camps during the summers and then in private lessons with Rich Mattson and the “First Lady of Jazz,” pianist Marian McPartland. Mays’ abilities developed rapidly, and while he was in attendance at North Texas State University, a composition for the university’s big band earned the twenty-two-year-old his first of many Grammy Award nominations. It was around this time that Mays met, while performing at the Wichita Jazz Festival in Kansas, a musician whose career would intertwine felicitously with his own: jazz guitarist Pat Metheny.

After touring with clarinetist/saxophonist Woody Herman’s Thundering Herd, Mays met up with Metheny again in Boston in 1977, and the two, sensing a strong creative kinship, decided to join forces. The resulting Pat Metheny Group—enriched in its twenty-two-year history by such superb jazz talent as bassist Steve Rodby, drummer Paul Wertico and vocalist/multi-instrumentalist Mark Ledford—has enjoyed a stunning artistic and commercial success, winning seven Grammy Awards in the Jazz category (as well as one in Rock) for such albums as *Imaginary Day*, *We Live Here*, *The Road to You*, *Letter From Home* and *Still Life (Talking)*. Alongside his keyboard contributions, Mays has co-composed much of the music, lending his innate sense of melody, crystal-clear virtuosity, and keen ear for instrumental timbre to the group’s distinctive sound.

“My main concern is the study of music, so I don’t think of myself as an ‘artist’ as much as I do a student. I try to pursue projects that have an internal meaning for me,” Mays says in a 1993 interview. And indeed, projects with Pat Metheny represent only one side of May’s manifold musical activities. His two solo albums, *Street Dreams* and *Lyle Mays*, much admired for their sophisticated compositions and flowing improvisations, each received a Grammy Award nomination for Best Jazz Fusion Album. At the other end of the spectrum, Mays voices a particular fondness for several music video projects for children completed during the 1980s for the Connecticut-based Rabbit Ears Productions, including *The Lion and the Lamb*, narrated by Amy Grant and Christopher Reeve, *Moses the Law Giver*, narrated by Ben Kingsley, and *The Tale of Peter Rabbit and Mr. Jeremy Fisher*, narrated by Meryl Streep. He even boasts a few Hollywood credits, including the movie, *The Falcon and the Snowman* (1985), whose musical soundtrack he co-wrote with Pat Metheny.

The duo, *Somewhere in Maine*, represents yet another facet, one inspired by contemporary chamber music. Mays acknowledges the work as “something that might never be heard by fans of the Metheny group,” but also calls it “incredibly rewarding.” Into this category also fall such works as *Varying Lengths* for seven percussionists and synthesizer, which was premiered by members of the San Francisco Symphony, *Balances*, performed by the Boston-based Composers in



Red Sneakers, and *12 Days in the Shadow of a Miracle*, commissioned by the Debussy Trio in 1994.

***Somewhere in Maine (1988)***

*for marimba, violin and tape*

In the process of composing, Mays says he tries to find forms inherent in the materials, as opposed to imposing forms on them from without. This approach is clearly evidenced in the organic, evolutionary nature of *Somewhere in Maine*. There is but a small handful of motivic ideas in the piece, most of them stated in embryonic form in the first few measures: a soft rolled fifth, a mysterious pitch bend, a rapid repeated-note gesture, a sudden dazzling scurry of notes upward. It is in the elaboration and development of these ideas that Mays reveals the sparkling ebullience of his imagination.

A passion for subtle variation is everywhere, as the violin, marimba, and their electronic counterparts (also derived from violin and marimba, both synthesized and digitally sampled) chase each other across a smooth, resonant soundscape. Interaction is abundant and finely honed. The form of the work is essentially intuitive, with the violin's alternation of joyful kineticism and slow, rich lyricism providing perhaps the clearest structural markers.

*Somewhere in Maine* was written for the instrumental duo, Marimolin (marimba player Nancy Zeltsman and violinist Sharan Leventhal), and was premiered in East Cambridge, MA in 1988.

**ERIC MOE (B. 1954)**

Called “music of winning exuberance” by the New York Times, Eric Moe’s works have dazzled and delighted audiences around the county. Embracing a wide expressive range, they stylishly navigate the border between humor and seriousness, “crossing the frontier at will, often without incident” (American Record Guide). They have been variously described as “maximal minimalism” and “Rachmaninoff in hell.” One will get no argument from Moe, who himself likes to refer to them as music that “can turn on a dime and bite you in the rear when least expected.”

Moe hails from a primarily classical background. Already a talented young pianist, he pursued his calling as a composer first at Princeton University, where he studied with Paul Lansky, and then at the University of California at Berkeley where he received his doctorate in 1982. One dominant characteristic to quickly emerge in Moe’s music was a compelling sense of temporal motion and drive. This in turn led him to a growing fascination with the rhythmic complexities, especially in terms of syncopation, that abound in the jazz palette: “The rhythmic sensibility is clearly distinct from that of older classical music. In up-

tempo bebop, the sense of sheer velocity exceeds that of any music I know. I'm still studying exactly how this is achieved, and looking for ways to create similar excitement in a very different context." He singles out an extended passage for piano and drums in the first movement of *Kicking and Screaming* as being a clear homage to Cecil Taylor, and also cites Bud Powell, who "created some of the most exciting music I've ever heard," as a major influence.

Beyond stylistic leanings, Moe is intrigued by music's uncanny capacity to exist in several different time layers simultaneously—gesture, phrase, section, form—in effect allowing us to "step outside the clock and ourselves. Sometimes it's like catching a wave in the ocean, getting flung headlong; sometimes it's like taking a hike in the mountains, where you can simultaneously observe and calmly enjoy the different time worlds in force: the birds and insects in one (where time flows much more quickly than in ours), the larger animals (including ourselves) in another, the trees in yet another, the mountains themselves in still another."

On timbre: "I prefer to write for a heterogenous ensemble rather than, say, a string quartet. In *Kicking and Screaming*, I was finally able to maximize the dramatic possibilities inherent in pairing a piano with almost anything, and pitting it against almost anything else. I'm particularly fond of the places where the piano and percussion team up to butt heads with the rest of the ensemble."

Moe began his professorial career at San Francisco State University in the early 1980s, and was a founding member of the Earplay ensemble. He currently directs the graduate composition program at the University of Pittsburgh, where in addition to founding the digital electro-acoustic music studio, he is the founder and co-director of the contemporary music series, Music on the Edge. He continues to perform frequently as a pianist and keyboardist, both in concert and on numerous recordings.

His works have earned him many honors, including fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Wellesley Composer's Conference and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. He has received commissions from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Fromm and Koussevitzky Foundations and others, and is currently working on a trio for the Rascher Saxophone Quartet of Germany and a work for flute and synthesizer for Rachel Rudich. He has been in residence at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Bellagio, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Ragdale Foundation, and the American Dance Festival.

***Kicking and Screaming* (1994)**

*for piano, flute, oboe/English horn, clarinet/bass clarinet, bassoon, horn, percussion, two violins, viola and cello*

The composer writes: "*Kicking and Screaming* is a concerto for piano and a pocket orchestra of ten instruments. The relationship between piano and ensemble throughout is considerably thornier than

it is in most classical concerti. From the beginning, the piano and the rest of the ensemble are on different rhythmic wavelengths: in general, the piano favors duple subdivisions while the ensemble prefers triplet subdivisions. The piano does occasionally drag an unwilling instrument (kicking and screaming?) into its rhythmic orbit, and in turn is sometimes persuaded to cooperate with the ensemble. For the most part, however, piano and ensemble go their separate ways, with moments of uneasy compromise and collaboration.

“The opposition is continued in a different way in the lyrical second movement. In the final movement, linked to the second and sharing melodic material with it, the piano finally succeeds in persuading the ensemble to join it in a rhythmic field containing both duple and triple elements.”

*Kicking and Screaming* was commissioned by the Fromm Foundation and is dedicated to pianist Aleck Karis.

—program notes by John McGinn



### *The Performers*

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**Roy Malan**, violinist, has amazed audiences of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players for twenty-three years with his stunning virtuosity and the clarity and brilliance of his interpretations of 20th-century music. Born in South Africa, he began studying the violin at the age of four, playing his first concerto with an orchestra when he was ten. Malan pursued studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London, the Juilliard School in New York and the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia; his principal teachers included Yehudi Menuhin, Ivan Galamian and Efrem Zimbalist. A resident of San Francisco since 1974, Malan is concertmaster and solo violinist for the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra. He has appeared as soloist at the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, and in such diverse cities as London, Paris, Johannesburg, Mexico City, Munich, Brussels and Sydney. Performing on numerous recordings, he is the featured soloist on the Contemporary Music Players' CD of music by Earle Brown, *Centering*. He has taught at Ithaca College, the San Francisco Conservatory and San Francisco State University, and currently teaches at the University of California at Santa Cruz. Malan is founder and co-director of the Telluride Chamber Music Festival in Colorado.

**Dan Kennedy**, percussionist, has been performing with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players since 1993. He holds a master's degree from the California Institute of the Arts and a doctoral degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. His principal teachers include Raymond DesRoches, John Bergamo and tabla maestro Swapan Chaudhuri. Focussing on the solo and ensemble music of this century, Kennedy has performed with such groups as the Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society, the Group for Contemporary Music, the New York New Music Ensemble, the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, Earplay, the Emyrean Ensemble and Music Now, and at festivals across the country as well as in Europe and Japan. He is the founding member of several contemporary music ensembles, including the California E.A.R. Unit, Tabla Rasa, and the Talujon Percussion Quartet. Extensive recording credits include projects with such renowned artists as Tod Machover, David Starobin, Fred Sherry, Harvey Sollberger, Charles Wuorinen, Paul Hillier and Dennis Russell Davies. Kennedy has also explored the music of a variety of other cultures, including India, the Middle East and Indonesia, and is an active performer of these musical styles. He is currently on the faculty at California State University, Sacramento, where he is Instructor of Percussion and Artistic Director of the Festival of New American Music.

**Julie Steinberg**, pianist, first appeared with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1981 in Pierre Boulez's *Improvisations*

*sur Mallarmé*, and has been a member of the core ensemble since 1989. Holding a doctorate in music from Stanford University with a specialty in Twentieth Century Music, Steinberg has performed contemporary music extensively, both as a soloist and a chamber musician. She won high praise for her outstanding performances of music by Olivier Messiaen and John Cage on the Bay Area Pianists series. Timothy Pfaff wrote in the *San Francisco Examiner*: "Julie Steinberg, one of the Bay Area's most active and versatile musicians, played a magical recital . . . that served as a potent reminder of the towering musicianship that makes her so invaluable to seemingly countless ensembles." As assisting artist, she has performed in master classes with Jean-Pierre Rampal and Mstislav Rostropovich, and she has been soloist with the Oakland Symphony Sound Spectrum, San Francisco Symphony Mostly Mozart Festival and the Berkeley Symphony. Since 1984, she has commissioned, premiered, and recorded numerous contemporary works with her own ensemble, the acclaimed Abel-Steinberg-Winant Trio. Steinberg is currently on the faculty of Mills College in Oakland.

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***Music Director***

**Donald Palma**, a long-time advocate of the music of our time, is well-known throughout the international new music community for his work as conductor and contrabassist with such celebrated ensembles as Speculum Musicae (of which he has been a member for twenty-seven years), the Group for Contemporary Music and Parnassus. In

recent years, Palma has taken a leading role in the artistic direction and conducting of *Speculum Musicae*, premiering works by eminent and emerging composers at such distinguished venues as the Geneva Festival, the Warsaw Autumn Festival, the Wigmore Hall in London, the Library of Congress, the Kennedy Center, the New York Philharmonic Horizons Festival and on BBC London and Radio Cologne broadcasts. He has also conducted the Da Camera Society in Houston, the White Mountains Festival Orchestra, the Toho School in Tokyo, and is Music Director of the New England Conservatory Chamber Orchestra. Palma's vivid, insightful conducting has drawn high praise from the press, including a concert of Ligeti's fiercely challenging *Chamber Concerto*, about which the New York Times raved, "a superb performance."

Palma has performed on nearly one hundred recordings, including numerous premiere recordings. His conducting of Elliott Carter's *A Mirror On Which To Dwell* on the Bridge label attracted critical acclaim, and of his recording of Poul Ruders' *Psalmodies*, *Fanfare Magazine* proclaimed, "We aren't likely to hear a better new music disc in 1993." In addition, he has recorded the Wagner Ring Cycle with the Metropolitan Opera and was principal bassist for Leonard Bernstein's recording of *West Side Story*.

A virtuoso contrabassist, Palma is soloist for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, with whom he tours worldwide. He has been a member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, principal bass of the

American Composers Orchestra and the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa and has appeared with the Juilliard Quartet, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Nash ensemble, and in recital with such luminaries as Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Jean-Pierre Rampal and Jan DeGaetani. Palma is currently on the faculties of the New England Conservatory and Yale University.

**Staff**

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**Adam Frey**, Executive Director, obtained his B.A. with honors from Harvard University, where he majored in Music, and an M.B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley, with emphasis on marketing and planning. He joined SFCMP in 1991 after six years with Sherman, Clay Co., then the nation's largest keyboard instrument retailer, where he was Vice President in charge of Merchandising. Frey served on the Board of Governors of the C. G. Jung Institute of San Francisco from 1991 to 1997, and chaired the Institute's Development Committee.

**John McGinn**, Administrator, is a composer and pianist, a former pupil of Leon Kirchner at Harvard University and of Jonathan Harvey at Stanford University, where he recently received his doctorate in composition and will be teaching theory and piano starting early next year. Locally, he is perhaps best known as a performer, having appeared with several Bay Area new music groups, including SFCMP and Earplay, and in numerous recordings, among them a just-released CD of twentieth-century solo piano works (plus three improvisations) on

the AmCam label. In addition to his own compositions, which have won many awards, McGinn has created piano arrangements of several scores by John Adams, including the two operas, *Nixon in China* and *The Death of Klinghoffer*, for publication by Boosey & Hawkes.

**Brian Current**, Intern, grew up in Ottawa, Ontario, on the border between English and French-speaking Canada. A composer and conductor, he studied music at McGill University and is now completing a Ph.D. in Twentieth Century Music at the University of California at Berkeley. Current's music has been performed across Canada as well as in the United States and Europe, and has been broadcast on the BBC, the CBC, and on Polish National Television. His orchestral work, *This isn't silence*, will be performed by Michael Morgan and the Oakland East Bay Symphony in their 2001 season.

### **Where To Find It**

**Anthony Davis'** sizable discography comprises CDs on the Gramavision, India Navigation, Sackville, Moers Music, Rykodisc, Music & Arts, and CRI labels. Notable performers include flutist James Newton in *Hidden Voices* (India Navigation) and *Crystal Texts* (Moers), pianist Ursula Oppens in *Middle Passage* (Music & Arts), singer Dora Ohrenstein in *Lost Moon Sisters* (CRI), the String Trio of New York in *Happy Valley Blues* (Music & Arts), and Mr. Davis' own ensemble Episteme in *Episteme*, *Hemispheres* and *Undine* (all Gramavision). His first two operas, *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* (Gramavision) and *Under the Double Moon* (Pausa) are currently available, while the third, *Tania*, was recently recorded on the Koch label and will be released next year.

The original 1957 recording of **Charles Mingus'** *Revelations*, conducted by Gunther Schuller, appears on the CD, *The Birth of the Third Stream*, recently released by Sony/Columbia. Many of Mingus' over one hundred recorded albums—including such legendary and inimitable titles as *Pithecanthropus Erectus*, *Fables of Faubus*, *The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady*, *The Clown*, and *Mingus Ah Um*—are readily available in record stores or online at such sites as amazon.com. His psychologically compelling (if not scrupulously accurate) autobiography, *Beneath the Underdog*, is published by Vintage Books.