

*"Music is sometimes characterized as 'process.' . . . I prefer to think of music as discourse. The energies. . . —the contrasts, the proportions and resolutions—are deployed in time in such a way as to attempt to meet the listener's requirements as he reacts to what is happening, and to engage him in the drama."*

*—Andrew Imbrie*

## San Francisco Girls Chorus

Susan McMane, Artistic Director

### Soprano I

Teresa Cheng  
Jenny Ireland  
Christina Lee  
Joanna Lin  
Alyssa Mathias  
Sydney McClune  
Momo Nakamura  
Alexandria Wood

### Alto I

Sara Epstein  
Katharine Kendrick  
Alicia Mastromonaco  
Megan McQuillin  
Stephanie Moy  
Leila Novotny  
Danielle Robin  
Stacy Rutz  
Lauren Statman  
Amy Strauss

### Soprano II

Arianne Abela  
Caitlin Austin  
Tanya Bulloch  
Andrea Butler  
Christina Cole  
Samantha Fong  
Pia Ghosh  
Elizabeth Hewitt  
Liz Hounshell  
Vanessa Lammers

### Alto II

Elena Butler  
Ashley Corpuz  
Annie Downs  
Anne Heminger  
Chloë Jensen  
Laura Corbett Jones  
Allison Kane  
Mikiayla Killebrew  
Crystal Kwan  
Leslie Oesterich  
Alison Stumpf  
Mary Townsend

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## San Francisco Contemporary Music Players

Jean-Louis LeRoux, Interim Music Director

Barbara Chaffe, Tod Brody, flutes  
Andrea Plesnarski, oboe  
William Wohlmacher, clarinet  
Julie Steinberg, Thomas Schultz, piano  
William Winant, Scott Bleaken, percussion  
Roy Malan, Susan Freier, violins  
Nancy Ellis, viola  
Stephen Harrison, cello  
Steven D'Amico, contrabass  
George Thomson, guest conductor

## San Francisco Contemporary Music Players

Monday, September 24, 2001 at 8 pm

Center for the Arts Theater

# ANDREW IMBRIE-NOW

### *Spring Fever* (1996)

- I. Maestoso - Allegro
- II. Allegretto
- III. Allegro con brio

### *Chicago Bells* (1997)

- West Coast Premiere
- I. Allegro
  - II. Vivace
  - III. Lento

**Roy Malan, violin**  
**Karen Rosenak, piano**

— INTERMISSION —

### *Songs of Then and Now* (1998)

Commissioned by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players  
and the San Francisco Girls Chorus

- I. Singing
- II. who knows if the moon's a balloon
- III. Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind
- IV. anyone lived in a pretty how town
- V. Come Unto These Yellow Sands
- VI. Full Fathom Five
- VII. hist whist
- VIII. The Land of Nod

**San Francisco Girls Chorus Chorissima**

**ANDREW IMBRIE (b. 1921)**

For decades, Andrew Imbrie has enriched the Bay Area's contemporary music scene, beginning at mid-century with the seminal concerts and workshops of the Composers' Forum and continuing through his more than forty years at U. C. Berkeley. Last April, as Imbrie reached his eightieth year, composers from the region and their colleagues from across the nation expressed their appreciation for his inspirational presence with two concerts of new music, much of which was written in his honor. Tonight we pay tribute to the creative component of Imbrie's legacy in a concert dedicated to his own compositions. All three works on the program were written during the last six years.

Imbrie has often described his compositional activity as a creative and critical reflection on the possibilities inherent in a musical motive, phrase, or idea: "Composing for me is a matter of drawing out the consequences (as I perceive them) of an initial idea. The idea may present itself as a contour, rhythm, gesture, or some combination of these; and the first step for me is to pin it down, to give it more definite shape and character. Once the idea has become specific enough, it begins to generate its own continuation. This is possible because every idea worthy of the name is fraught with potential energy; its components interact so as to create an expectation of forward movement." As his words suggest, Imbrie's approach is both carefully crafted and intensely intuitive—a mixture of intellectual control and emotional release.

While committed to achieving a sense of organic growth and natural development in his pieces, Imbrie argues cogently against viewing music as a "process": "the term carries with it the unpleasant connotation of a manufacturing method (the pigs go in here, the sausages come out there)." He prefers to emphasize music's communicative power as a discourse in which composer and listener engage in a dialogue with its own sense of drama. As Imbrie has often told his students, the reactions of an imaginary but attentive listener should never be far from the composer's mind while he is writing: "he

must, while composing, try to hear his own piece as if he were someone else."

In addition to grounding his musical explorations within the framework of human communication, Imbrie has also discussed his fascination with the physical presence of sound and the impossibility of a truly musical abstraction. As he remarked in a 1998 interview with SFCMP Board Member Caroline Crawford, "To me, music is the most concrete of all the arts. It's the least abstract." Even with his superbly trained ear and expert musical literacy, Imbrie still finds it inspirational to compose at the piano. His fluency at the keyboard springs from his early training as a pianist with such teachers as Ann Abajian, Pauline and Leo Ornstein, Olga Samaroff, Rosalyn Tureck, and Robert Casadesus.

These performers (and a summer studying with Nadia Boulanger in France) did much to nurture Imbrie's interest in theory and composition, but it was not until just before he enrolled at Princeton University in 1937 that he found his most significant musical mentor: Roger Sessions. Following Sessions from Princeton to U. C. Berkeley after service during World War II, Imbrie got his master's degree in 1947 and was immediately offered a faculty position, which he postponed for a two-year sojourn at the American Academy in Rome. Meanwhile, Imbrie's First String Quartet, written as a senior thesis at Princeton, won a prestigious New York Critics' Award in 1947 and was quickly recorded by the Juilliard String Quartet. Thus Imbrie's professional career had already been auspiciously launched by the time he returned from Rome in 1949 to join the Music Department at Berkeley, where he would remain until his retirement in 1991.

Imbrie's compositional output is diverse in genre, including five string quartets and other chamber music, three symphonies, several concertos, solo works for instruments and voice, several choruses, and the opera *Angle of Repose*, which was commissioned and performed by the San Francisco Opera in 1976. Each work is painstakingly polished. Like Sessions, who cautioned Aaron Copland against striving for a self-consciously "American" sound, Imbrie has generally not sought to give his works particular regional

accents. "My music does not strive to be American like my nationality, nor Scottish like my ancestry," he noted. "It is neither experimental nor conventional." Instead, the composer has focused on giving the musical language of each piece a communicative clarity that will be at once beautiful and self-sufficient. "I don't mind borrowing from other cultures, or quoting once in a while," Imbrie has admitted, "but I won't do it unless I can make it work within my own music." This urge to integrate lets Imbrie encompass a wide variety of musical styles without sounding eclectic. In listening to the Third String Quartet (1957), for example, one is struck more by the stylistic consistency of the work than by the contrast between the twelve-tone writing of the first movement and the evocation of Japanese instrumental techniques in the finale.

In contrast to composers such as Copland or Charles Ives, who make use of borrowing or musical allusion to evoke distant sounds or scenes, Imbrie writes from within—guided, as he puts it, by a desire to "let the ideas shape themselves as they must." This does not result in a sterile distancing from the rest of the world, but rather a thoughtful filtering of musical material through the composer's own intelligence and idiosyncratic habits: "the composer must constantly resort to innovation—yet he is influenced by the other music that he loves, both old and new. Without such participation he would be powerless. Originality, if indeed present at all, is the style with which the composer characteristically chooses, weighs, shapes, and distorts. It is to be found not in his polemics, but in his voice and manner."

An important component of Imbrie's compositional manner is his love of counterpoint. In the tradition of twentieth-century masters such as Bartók, he favors music in which distinct melodic lines interact with each other to produce a rich and variable texture. Indeed, Imbrie's account of Sessions's First Symphony—part of a substantial article for *Tempo* (1972)—could apply equally well to many of his own works: "The inner nature of the music is polyphonic; any detail of motivic or rhythmic design seems ever about to be swept on by a powerful tide of melody, and, if not to be dissolved by it, at least to undergo a sea change." In a work like the Fourth String Quartet (1969), written for the Pro Arte Quartet, coun-

terpoint takes place on many levels—from the performers' aggressively independent exchanges in the opening movement to the more elaborate fugato moments in the central "Quasi scherzando." To some listeners, the active textures that this kind of writing engenders have seemed daunting, "thorny," or "uncompromising." Yet, as critic Mark Lehman of *The American Record Guide* reminds us, "The complexity of Imbrie's music is a reflection of the complexity of its emotional meaning—a deeply humanistic meaning that refuses to oversimplify or exaggerate, but instead seeks to balance: clarity with mystery, strength with grace, purity with surprise, restraint with abandon, sweetness with sorrow, light with dark." Achieving clarity amidst these intricate contrasts and balances requires a keen sense of proportion and phrase structure—matters that have occupied Imbrie as both a theorist and a composer. He encourages his listeners to interpret what they are hearing as a play of gestures that are unequal in force, giving his music an ebb and flow that can be exhilarating.

Partly because of his attention to articulation and partly because of his generous melodic gift, Imbrie's music is singable, even when he is writing for instruments alone. Critic Robert Commanday (friend and colleague of the composer since their World War II days) has noted that Imbrie's "melodic impulse is a vocal one" and has described the "singing lyricism" of such works as the Serenade for Flute, Viola, and Piano (1952) and the "cantabile" of the sextet *Pilgrimage* (1983). This same lyricism characterizes Imbrie's vocal music. In addition to the nationally acclaimed, *Angle of Repose*, based on Wallace Stegner's novel and written for the SF Opera's Bicentennial celebration, Imbrie has composed numerous choruses for both sacred and secular occasions. Commanday observes: "He has an unerring and sensitive ear for the chorus as a complex and human instrument, achieving a sound that is distinctive, apart, and expressive."

Beyond his preference for English, Imbrie's taste in texts is wide ranging—from his sparkling setting for vocal quartet of poetry by madrigalist Thomas Campion (1980) to his lovely song cycle on texts by Theodore Roethke (1981). The more recent cantata, *Adam* (1994), which was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, draws upon texts

from the late medieval and American Civil War eras. Imbrie's most moving work may be the Requiem (1984) written in memory of his younger son, John, and premiered by the San Francisco Symphony. The Requiem uses portions of the Latin Mass for the Dead, but, as in similar works by Brahms and Britten, non-liturgical texts—in this case, poetry by William Blake, George Herbert, and John Donne—are used to reflect on the liturgical ritual. From the austere "Kyrie" to the climactic outburst of "Death Be Not Proud," the Requiem spans the spectrum of emotional responses to life's own *grande ligne*.

The works on tonight's concert illustrate Imbrie's freshness, elegance, and energy. Whether by chance or by design, they are more light-hearted than much of his earlier music without abandoning his earlier compositional preoccupations. In the past, Imbrie's rhythmic language has sometimes sported the delightful irregularity of jazz; however, *Spring Fever* (1996) is one of the few works in which jazz references are intended to come to the forefront. Implicit in the first two movements' jaunty pizzicato passages for double bass, such references take center stage in the middle of the finale, where bass and rhythm section—complete with high hat—usher in a series of virtuosic solos for individual performers or instrumental groups. After the premiere, Richard Buell of *The Boston Globe* hailed the "sure craft" of the first two movements and the "whimsicality, mischief, and delight in surprise of the third": "Tiny explosions, riffs, asides, and tintinnabulations took over. How bracing, how tonic! Spring had arrived."

*Chicago Bells* (1997), though not the newest work on the program, had the most recent premiere when Roy Malan and Karen Rosenak played it at the Library of Congress during the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' concert there in May 2001. Its exploration of bell sounds forms a luminous background for lyric lines that show exactly how expressively vocal Imbrie's instrumental writing can be.

Finally, *Songs of Then and Now* (1998), co-commissioned by the Players, combines Imbrie's longstanding expertise in text setting with a new concern for the voices and perspectives of young adults,

in this case the members of the San Francisco Girls Chorus. Framed by Robert Louis Stevenson's poetic reflections on music and childhood, settings of Shakespeare and e. e. cummings explore the ebullience, disillusionment, love, and magic of growing up. As Imbrie himself reminds us, coming of age is an ongoing experience. Capturing and making sense of its diverse moods, *Songs of Then and Now* is one of his most significant musical legacies. According to critic Mark Lehman: "No one surpasses Imbrie in synthesizing transparency, lapidary detail, timbral sensitivity, rhythmic suppleness, density of idea, and perfection of form. Yet for all the intricacy and chromatic richness of his music, its emotional impact is warm, human, imbued with a thoughtful nostalgia and autumnal serenity all his own. There is joy, sweetness, wisdom, nobility, mystery, and grandeur in this music, but never excess. In language Imbrie's music is not distant from Berg's, but in spirit it is closer to Mozart's."

Beginning in the late forties with the New York Music Critics' Award (1944), Imbrie has garnered numerous honors, including the Alice M. Ditson Award (1947), a National Institute of Arts and Letters Grant (1950), the Boston Symphony Merit Award, the Brandeis University Creative Arts Award (1957), two Guggenheim Fellowships (1953 and 1959), the Walter Hinrichsen Award (1971), and the Berkeley Citation (University of California, 1991). His national prestige and close ties to Bay Area musical organizations have led to numerous commissions from such organizations as the New York Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Opera, the Pro Arte Quartet, the Francesco Trio, the Ford and Naumburg Foundations, and the Halle Orchestra. In 1969 he was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters and in 1980 to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Koussevitzky Foundation.

Within and beyond the Bay Area, Imbrie has served as musical mentor to countless composers ranging across the stylistic spectrum, from the experimentalist Larry Austin to the mischievously "traditionalist" David Del Tredici. He taught composition at the San Francisco Conservatory for many years during his tenure at U. C. Berkeley. While on sabbatical, he spent a year as visiting professor at Brandeis University. Since his retirement, he has held visiting

professorships at the University of Alabama, New York University, the University of Chicago, Northwestern, and Harvard Universities. He has also taught for Gunther Schuller's summer program at Sandpoint, Idaho, and was composer-in-residence at the Tanglewood Music Center in 1991.

### ***Spring Fever (1996)***

*for flute/piccolo, oboe, clarinet, percussion, piano, two violins, viola, cello, and bass*

The composer writes: "This work was commissioned by, and dedicated to, the Collage Ensemble of Boston. It was begun in Berkeley and completed in Chicago on November 26, 1996. The title reflects, perhaps, my sense of the onset of winter in that city, and my yearning for spring, with its varying excitements and instabilities.

"The first movement begins with a *maestoso* ushering-in of the clarinet first, then the flute and oboe, then the violin which proceeds to a duet with the flute. This introduction culminates with a return to the 'ushering-in' music. The main body of the movement, *allegro*, then leads off with an incisive statement by the piano, supported by short cluster-like chords. This is expanded and briefly developed until it culminates in an espressivo melody in octaves, which in turn leads to a faster section based on a quintuplet pattern. A climax leads to a condensed recapitulation, which this time calms down until the original *maestoso* comes back. In a sense, then, the entire movement can be regarded as an introduction to what follows.

"The second movement, *allegretto*, begins as if it were going to be a scherzo, with a pizzicato theme in the cello, answered by a gentler, somewhat whimsical response by the first violin. The woodwinds then enter with their own contribution, whereupon the strings conclude the section, gradually disappearing into the lowest register until the drums take over very softly. There is a sudden, violin piano cadenza, to which the marimba responds. Both are calmed down by the rest of the group, until the oboe comes in with the original first theme, this time much slower and quite lyrical (as

opposed to the original cello pizzicato). The flute responds, then the clarinet. The strings bring the movement to a close by descending gently, in four-part harmony, to the final two notes, which are extended, while a fragment of the original pizzicato returns in the cello as a ghostly reminder.

"The finale begins with a forthright statement by the piano, lightly accompanied by the strings, to which the entire ensemble then responds. A second theme is announced by the clarinet, *misterioso*, but with no let-up in the rhythmically punctuated motion. This idea, too, is then taken up by the ensemble. A kind of brief development follows in 7/8 time, which soon disintegrates until a spread-out chord is reached. From this point on, a succession of individuals and groups are highlighted: after the double bass comes the string quartet, then the marimba, the woodwind trio, and finally the piano. The original statement returns, played by the entire ensemble, somewhat in the manner of the recap in a jazz arrangement. Elements from what was called the second theme are embodied in the final cadence."

*Spring Fever* received its premiere in 1997 from Collage New Music (Boston) led by David Hoose.

### ***Chicago Bells (1997)***

*for violin and piano*

Imbrie recalls: "This work . . . was composed in 1997, while I was serving as a guest professor at the University of Chicago. I would walk through the campus on my way to meeting with my students; and as I proceeded through the myriad quadrangles I would occasionally hear the sound of bells in the towers, echoing and clanging. This sound was the inspiration for the opening of the work and influenced it in various ways.

"The first movement begins with bell-like sounds in the piano, which serve as an introduction to the opening violin melody. The music soon expands to a fast and busy texture, which culminates in a *maestoso* statement by the piano, followed immediately by the

violin in double stops, leading to a brief solo. This then ushers in a recapitulation of the original melody which, after reaching a high climax, subsides. The second movement is a very fast scherzo in quintuple meter. The middle section maintains the same basic beat, but this beat is frequently subdivided so as to produce an even more hasty and busy effect. After the return of the original idea, the music soon evaporates.

"The last movement is slow and lyrical, beginning with an extended song-like melody for the violin, whose second large phrase culminates in the highest register and re-states the original violin melody from the first movement, while the piano accompaniment consists of a series of big chords and rapid arpeggios: perhaps an "apotheosis" of the bell sound. The piano continues, getting softer and lower. When the violin re-enters, it is muted and is soon accompanied by the piano playing its own version of the violin melody that opened the movement."

*Chicago Bells* was commissioned by the McKim Fund in the Library of Congress, as part of a project initiated by Frank Taplin. Roy Malan and Karen Rosenak premiered the work in May 2001 at a San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' concert in the Library of Congress's Coolidge Auditorium, Washington, D. C.

### ***Songs of Then and Now (1998)***

*for girls chorus, flute/piccolo/alto flute,clarinet/bass clarinet,  
piano, percussion, violin and cello*

According to the composer: "The title of this group of songs can have two meanings: one that draws attention to the variety of texts used, from Shakespeare to the twentieth century; the other referring to the ages of the singers, who have just crossed the threshold and are now young adults. 'Then' refers to vivid memories of recent childhood; 'now' suggests a wide-open world of discovery. 'Singing' (Robert Louis Stevenson) acts as an introduction, perhaps as an excuse for starting the journey through music. 'who knows if the moon's a balloon' (e. e. cummings) is a fantasy of total happiness. 'Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind' (Shakespeare) gives us pause in its

description of newly discovered human frailty. The fourth song, 'anyone lived in pretty how town' (cummings), is a kind of center-piece: I chose it because it picturesquely portrays the lives of an ordinary, but loving, married couple named 'anyone' and 'no-one,' and their relationship with other people. It is the longest and most substantial song of the group. 'Come Unto These Yellow Sands' (Shakespeare) is essentially a dance by a group of young women, and is followed by 'Full Fathom Five' (Shakespeare) with its intuition of mortality and magic. 'hist whist' (cummings) is not sung, but whispered, spoken, and shouted. It attempts to portray everything scary that nevertheless makes one giggle. The final song, 'The Land of Nod' (Stevenson) brings back musical ideas from the opening song but develops them further. The journey is not over, of course, but night is falling, and it is time to dream."

*Songs of Then and Now* was commissioned by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and the San Francisco Girls Chorus with funding from the Creative Work Fund, a collaborative initiative of the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, the Columbia Foundation, the Miriam and Peter Haas Fund, and the Evelyn Walter Haas Jr. Fund. The work received its premiere in September 1998 with Nicole Paiement leading the Contemporary Music Players and the San Francisco Girls Chorus under the artistic direction of Sharon Paul.

—Program notes by Beth Levy

### ***Songs of Then and Now***

#### **I. Singing**

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

Of speckled eggs the birdie sings  
And nests among the trees;  
The sailor sings of ropes and things  
In ships upon the seas.

The children sing in far Japan,

for she knows the devil    ooch  
the devil            ouch  
the devil  
ach    the great

green  
dancing  
devil  
devil

devil  
devil

wheeEEE

### **VIII. The Land of Nod**

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

From breakfast on through all the day  
At home among my friends I stay,  
But every night I go abroad  
Afar into the Land of Nod.

All by myself I have to go,  
With none to tell me what to do-  
All alone beside the streams  
And up the mountain-sides of dreams.

The strangest things are there for me,  
Both things to eat and things to see,  
And many frightening sights abroad  
Till morning in the land of Nod.

Try as I like to find the way,  
I never can get back by day,  
Nor can remember plain and clear  
The curious music that I hear.

## *Guest Conductor*

**George Thomson** is Assistant Conductor of the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra and producer of its "Under Construction" new music reading concerts. He was for many years a member (and also conductor) of the new music ensemble EARPLAY, and has appeared as a guest conductor with the Marin Symphony, the Orchestra of the San Francisco Conservatory, the Empyrean Ensemble, and the normally conductorless New Century Chamber Orchestra. He first conducted the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1997. Also a violinist and violist, Thomson is a member of Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and American Bach Soloists, and has performed in many recordings with both ensembles. He is currently Director of the Music Conservatory at San Domenico School in San Anselmo, where he directs the Virtuoso Program, a unique opportunity for high school-aged string players to combine a college preparatory curriculum with intensive orchestral and chamber music training. He was recently appointed Music Director of the Marin Symphony Youth Orchestra.

## *Featured Performers*

**Roy Malan**, violinist, has amazed and delighted audiences of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players for twenty-six years, both as a soloist and as a member of the ensemble, 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 orchestra when he was ten. In 1960, he moved to London to pursue his studies at the Royal Academy of Music, and was a pupil of Yehudi Menuhin. In 1963, he was awarded a grant to study at the Juilliard School in New York and the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, where he studied with Ivan Galamian and Efreim 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 Washington's Kennedy Center and Lincoln Center in New York, as well as in such diverse cities as London, Paris, Johannesburg, Mexico City, Munich, Brussels and

Sydney. He has taught at Ithaca College, the San Francisco Conservatory and San Francisco State University, among others, and has appeared as a guest lecturer throughout the United States. He currently teaches at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Malan is founder and co-director of the Telluride Chamber Music Festival in Colorado.

**K**aren Rosenak, pianist, is a specialist both in 20th-century piano and chamber music and in fortepiano repertoire of the late 18th and 19th centuries. A performer in the San Francisco Bay Area for many years, she was a founding member of the new music groups EARPLAY and Empyrean Ensemble. She earned her Bachelor of Music and Master of Arts degrees at San Francisco State University, where she studied piano with Carlo Bussotti, and her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Stanford University, where she studied modern piano with Nathan Schwartz and early piano with Margaret Fabrizio. She has played with members of the San Francisco Symphony in the Symphony's Chamber Music Sundays, and has performed in the Berkeley Early Music Festival, with the Berkeley Symphony, the Women's Philharmonic, Composers Inc., Alea II, and the New York New Music Ensemble. She has taught piano at Stanford University, and music history and music theory at Mills College and San Francisco State University. Since 1990 she has been on the faculty of UC Berkeley where she teaches musicianship and contemporary chamber music, and is involved in the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players concert series.

**T**he 325-member **San Francisco Girls Chorus**, now in its twenty-third season, has helped to establish girls' choral music as an art form in the United States. **Chorissima**, the organization's concert and touring ensemble, has represented the City of San Francisco and the United States on eight international tours and performs throughout California as a member of the California Arts Council Touring Program. The Chorus has commissioned many new works for young women's voices, including compositions by Jake Heggie, Chen Yi, Kirke Mechem, and Elinor Armer. Chorissima appears and records with Bay Area ensembles (including the San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco

Symphony) and has released four CDs as solo artists.

The Girls Chorus's Music Education Program has been called "a model in the country for training girls' voices" (California Arts Council). SFGC's Chorus School, a four-level music training and performance program for singers aged seven through sixteen, has rehearsals based in San Francisco and in Oakland. A faculty of twenty-four teaches vocal technique, music theory, and performance skills to more than three hundred young musicians from 167 schools in 47 Bay Area cities. Graduates of the Chorus School are eligible to audition for Chorissima.

The San Francisco Girls Chorus has received numerous awards, including two Grammys for performances with the San Francisco Symphony, the Margaret Hillis Achievement Award for Choral Excellence, and the ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music. Chorissima has performed with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, appeared on camera in the Robin Williams film *What Dreams May Come*, and recorded music for the sound track of the movie *The Talented Mr. Ripley*.

**S**usan McMane is the new Artistic Director of the San Francisco Girls Chorus. Dr. McMane most recently served as Visiting Director of Choirs at the University of North Dakota. The Founding Artistic Director and Conductor of the St. Louis Women's Chorale (1995-2000), Dr. McMane has extensive experience training the female voice and has won numerous awards for her work, including the 1999 University of Missouri-Kansas City Women's Council Fellowship Award with Outstanding Merit for a recital of Magnificat Settings for Women's Voices. Dr. McMane also was named Music Educator of the Year by the St. Louis Chapter of the American Guild of Organists in 1998. She earned a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting from the Conservatory of Music, University of Missouri-Kansas City.

## *The Ensemble*

**T**he San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, now in its thirty-first year, is a leader among ensembles in the United States dedicated to contemporary chamber music. A six-time winner of the prestigious national ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music, SFCMP has performed over 940 new works, including 39 U.S. and 99 world premieres, and has brought sixty-one new pieces into the repertoire through its active commissioning efforts. The instrumentalists who make up the Players are recognized virtuosi in new music performance. Each season the Players performs a six-concert series at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. SFCMP 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 seven albums of its own and contributed recordings to eight others. Its innovative education programs for students at San Francisco's School of the Arts and Lowell High School include performance/presentations and master classes.

**J**ean-Louis LeRoux, who co-founded the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, is serving as the ensemble's Interim Music Director this season. LeRoux previously led the ensemble as Music Director from 1975 until 1988. A native of France and a graduate of the Paris Conservatoire, LeRoux joined the San Francisco Symphony as Principal Oboist in 1960. In 1975, he became Conductor of the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, a position he held for seventeen years. LeRoux has been named *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, France's highest cultural honor. In recent years, he has been active as Principal Conductor and Music Director of the Alberta Ballet. This season, in addition to his work with SFCMP, he will be Guest Conductor of the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra.

## Where to Find It

**A**mong the many fine renderings of **Andrew Imbrie's** compositions, I would recommend the recording of Symphony no. 3 (London Symphony Orchestra under Harold Farberman), the Serenade for Flute, Violin, and Piano (Louise Di Tullio, Walter Trampler, and Lois Brandwynne), and the Cello Sonata (Robert Sayre and Roy Bogas) on CRI (#632). On another fine disc, the Pro Arte Quartet plays String Quartets nos. 4-5 along with the Impromptu for Violin and Piano. The ensemble Parnassus, under Anthony Korf, performs Imbrie's chamber music on an excellent recording called *Dream Sequence* (New World Records 80441-2). In addition to the title work, it offers a sampling of Imbrie's vocal music (*Five Roethke Songs, Champion Songs*) and instrumental works (*Three Piece Suite* and *To a Traveler*). Collectors may also find Collage New Music's performance of the highly acclaimed *Pilgrimage* (GM), conducted by Gunther Schuller.

Of particular local interest, is an expert recording of Imbrie's Second Piano Trio by the Francesco Trio (Nathan Schwartz, Miwako Watanabe, and Bonnie Hampton), for whom the work was commissioned (*Music & Arts #756*). In addition, the San Francisco Symphony under Enrique Jorda performs *Legend*, together with orchestral works by Bernard Rogers and Charles Cushing (Citadel). Most recently, Imbrie's Requiem and Third Piano Concerto have been recorded by George Rothman, the Riverside Symphony, and the New York Virtuoso Singers with Alan Feinberg (piano) and Lisa Saffer (soprano). This *Bridge* CD (#9091) has been nominated for a Grammy award.

The **San Francisco Girls Chorus** has released four CDs ranging from baroque to twentieth-century repertory and from folk music to contemporary compositions. Their most recent release is a disc called *Crossroads*, featuring Chorissima and cellist Emil Miland in music from around the world and excerpts from Chen Yi's *Chinese Poems*, the first work commissioned for *Chorissima*, *Virtuosi*, and Chorus School ensembles together. They have also issued *I Never*