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SAN FRANCISCO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYERS

David Milnes, Music Director

Monday, February 4, 2008, 8pm

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum

STRONGBOX OF AMERICAN MUSIC

STEVEN MACKEY, *Indigenous Instruments* (1989)

I. Swinging, crisp, rhythmic

II. Floating, as if improvised

III. Mesmerizing, strange, dark, funky

Co-commissioned by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players
with funding from Meet the Composer

(Approximate duration: 17 minutes)

DAVID SHEINFELD, *Dear Theo* (1996)

Leroy Kromm, baritone

Commissioned by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players
with funding from the Koussevitzky Foundation

(Approximate duration: 12 minutes)

~ INTERMISSION ~

MORTON FELDMAN, *Bass Clarinet and Percussion* (1981)

Carey Bell, bass clarinet

William Winant and Christopher Froh, percussion

(Approximate duration: 17 minutes)

JORGE LIDERMAN, *Furthermore...* (2006)

World Premiere

Carla Kihlstedt, violin

(Approximate duration: 15 minutes)

Performers:

Tod Brody, flute

Carey Bell, clarinet (Feldman)

Peter Josheff, clarinet (Mackey, Liderman)

William Wohlmacher, clarinet (Sheinfeld)

Jeff Biancalana, trumpet

Hall Goff, trombone

Karen Gottlieb, harp

Julie Steinberg, piano (Mackey, Sheinfeld)

Michael Orland, piano (Liderman)

William Winant, percussion (Feldman)

Christopher Froh, percussion (Feldman, Sheinfeld)

Benjamin Paysen, percussion (Liderman)

Graeme Jennings, violin (Sheinfeld)

Roy Malan, violin (Mackey)

Nanci Severance, viola

Stephen Harrison, cello (Mackey)

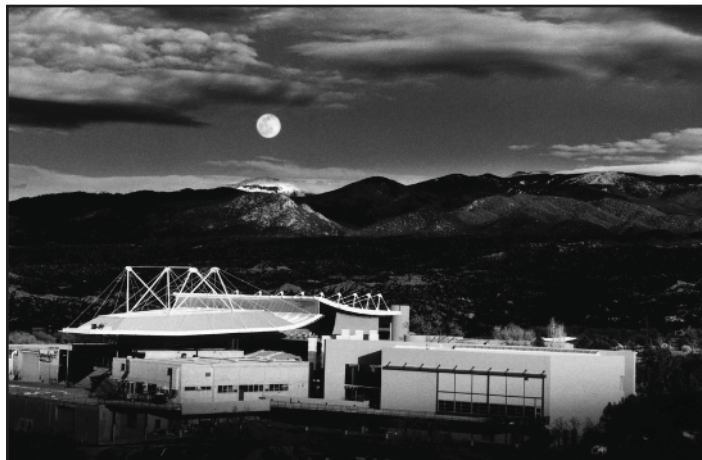
Leighton Fong, cello (Liderman)

Richard Worn, contrabass

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in part by a gift from Mrs. Ralph I. Dorfman.*

Steinway Piano provided by Sherman Clay Concert Event Series.



STEVEN MACKEY (B. 1956)

When the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players commissioned Steven Mackey's *Indigenous Instruments* (1989), the composer was just coming into his own. A year after its premiere, the piece was chosen to represent the United States at the International Rostrum of Composers in Paris, and the remainder of the 1990s was filled with prestigious performances and collaborative projects that have made Mackey and his music familiar to East and West Coast audiences alike. Once heard, Mackey's music tends to be remembered. Composer Paul Lansky describes a typical encounter with the music of his friend and colleague: "The qualities of his music—its originality, freshness, dazzling invention, a certain impertinence—strike the listener like an unusual stone discovered on a rock-strewn beach; we are not quite sure where it came from, it really catches the eye... On closer examination we start to marvel at its features. Who would ever have thought to combine these particular qualities—this is not how things are usually made, but what a good idea for a rock."

Mackey grew up in Northern California, gaining musical experience by playing electric guitar in local rock bands, and discovering the world of classical composition at U. C. Davis, where he studied with Andrew Frank and Richard Swift, among others; he also counts the late Andrew Imbrie among his teachers. After doing his doctoral work at SUNY Stony Brook and Brandeis University with Martin Boykan, John Harbison, John Lesard, David Lewin, and Donald Martino, he joined the faculty of Princeton University in 1985. These streams of influence—the rough and ready sound world of the garage band and the rigors of the University music department—are thoroughly mingled in Mackey's oeuvre. He is perhaps best known for building bridges between genres and styles—from classical chamber music to experimental music theater and from the Renaissance to rock 'n' roll. Indeed, Mackey has managed to create a virtually new musical genre (a rare feat): contemporary "classical" music for electric guitar. Beginning in 1991 with *Myrtle and Mint* (for electric guitar and narrator), continuing with his internationally successful works for string quartet and electric guitar, *On the Verge*, *Troubadour Songs*, and *Physical Property*, and culminating perhaps in the "psychedelic" suite *Heavy Light* (conceived in collaboration with choreographer Donald Byrd and the chamber ensemble MOSAIC), the composer has unabashedly collided

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the rhythmic energy and exuberance of soloistic guitar with the complex ensemble work of classical chamber music.

Throughout his tenure at Princeton, he has maintained fruitful relationships with many Californian ensembles, including the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, which invited soloists Bill Frisell and Joey Baron to share in its 1997 performance of Mackey's concerto for electric guitar and drum set, *Deal* (1995), and co-commissioned his mercurial *Micro-Concerto* (1999) in which percussionist Daniel Kennedy was featured as soloist. The San Francisco Symphony under Michael Tilson Thomas gave the world premiere of Mackey's orchestral score *Lost & Found* (originally written for four guitars) in 1996 and his organ symphony, *Pedal Tones*, in 2002. Mackey was featured at the Symphony's American Mavericks Festival in 1997 and 2000, and his *String Theory*, commissioned by the Kronos Quartet for its 25th anniversary season, received its premiere on the San Francisco Symphony's contemporary music festival.

In 1999, Mackey's award-winning musical theater piece *Ravenshead* (a collaboration with tenor-actor Rinde Eckert and the Paul Drescher Ensemble) enjoyed a month-long run at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Eckert has since written about Mackey, describing his quixotic imagination, and the artistic momentum that his works always seem to create: "Steve Mackey's music has muscle. It behaves like an animal. It's not polite, this music. It's not music as math by another means. This is emotional music; this is dance music—at times angry, at times mysterious, at times ethereal, at times primitive, always intensely searching, and yes, at times heady (that too is part of moving about in the world). This music doesn't wait for us. It isn't looking back to make sure we're following, or stopping to explain why it's moving as it does. Even when it's still, almost placid, it isn't waiting."

Mackey has won Guggenheim, Lieberson, and Tanglewood Fellowships and a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, in addition to awards from the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, BMI, the International Society of Contemporary Music, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and the Miami Performing Arts Center. Among those who have commissioned his works are the Chicago and San Francisco Symphony Orchestras, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Kronos Quartet, soprano Dawn Upshaw, cellist Fred Sherry, the Concord String Quartet, and the Fromm and Koussevitsky Foundations. Mackey is presently Professor of Music and

co-director of the Composers Ensemble at Princeton University.

Mackey, *Indigenous Instruments* (1989)

for flute/piccolo/alto flute, clarinet, violin/scordatura violin, scordatura cello, and piano

The composer offers a memorable description of the quasi-anthropological genesis of his seminal quintet: "*Indigenous Instruments* is vernacular music from a culture that doesn't actually exist. I fantasized about a culture and their uses for music, did thought experiments to invent the kind of instruments they might play, and wrote 'folk melodies' idiomatic to those instruments. The exercise was silly but did in fact succeed in leading me to sounds and textures that I would never have thought of in my mode as a serious concert-music composer.

"My starting point was to re-tune or de-tune the ensemble; the cello has a radical microtonal scordatura [mistuning], the violin's G string is tuned down an octave and a quarter tone, the flute is pulled out a quarter-tone flat, and one note of the piano is prepared... The inspiration for this came from looking at transcriptions of the mbira (Africa thumb piano) in an ethnomusicology dissertation. I couldn't really get a sense of what the sound was because these transcriptions seemed so exotic with microtones and odd chord voicings, but the look intrigued me and it fascinated me all the more that this indecipherable notation was somebody's vernacular music... I like the sense of a music that seems to obey some natural or, at least, culture-specific laws that are consistent and immutable but completely mysterious to me.

"Associated with my need to shake up the Pierrot ensemble [named for Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*] is a slightly rebellious attitude toward the piano as tyrant of equal temperament. This led me to open the piece with a microtonal string figure which makes the piano, upon its entry, sound like a broken toy; this piece was fun to compose! In order to compose the cello part, I borrowed a cello and put pieces of Scotch tape where the frets 'should' be (remember, I'm a guitarist) and learned how to play that pizzicato part in the last movement. Because I was flying by the seat of my pants with the microtones and no codified or familiar harmonic system at my disposal, I could not think of anything to go with the cello part; none of the 'normal' notes sounded good. I played it over and over, waiting for inspiration until a UPS truck with its low moan and slow pitch-bend pulled into my driveway and I had a Eureka moment. It was

the counterpoint between that big brown truck and that dark, funky cello part that led me to tune the [violin] G string down an octave.

“I realize I’m probably sabotaging my credibility as an artist by revealing so much about the lucky accidents that inform my working method, but then again I have always felt an affinity for the tradition of American crackpot inventor/composers like [Henry] Cowell and [Harry] Partch.”

DAVID SHEINFELD (B. 1906-2001)

Any overview of American composition should include a few figures like David Sheinfeld, whose remarkable career reflected so many of the phases of musical life in the United States. Born to immigrant parents in St. Louis in 1906 (while Charles Ives, Claude Debussy, and Gustav Mahler were flourishing), he took up the violin as a child and began to teach himself composition as a teenager. Though largely self-taught, Sheinfeld did experience some of the European training so typical for American composers of his generation—though his destination was Italy, rather than France or Germany. When the venerable composer-conductor Ottorino Respighi was touring Chicago, Sheinfeld captured his interest (after the young musician mustered the courage to present some of his scores to Respighi’s wife); as he later told *San Francisco Examiner* critic John Krich, “Since the maestro didn’t speak English, it was Signora Respighi who later came down to tell me that I was accepted as one of only six students.”

After spending 1929-31 at the Academia Santa Cecilia in Rome, Sheinfeld returned to Chicago in the midst of the Great Depression. He found work as a violinist and an arranger first for NBC radio broadcast and later for the Federal Theater and Music Projects of the Works Progress Administration, which served as lifelines for so many underemployed musicians during the 1930s. By the mid-1940s, Sheinfeld was playing with the Pittsburgh Symphony under Fritz Reiner, and the following year Pierre Monteux (who had heard him play in Maine and with whom he had studied conducting in Chicago) brought him to San Francisco to play with the Symphony. He held his position in the first violin section from 1945 until 1971. When he reached the mandatory retirement age of sixty-five, Sheinfeld retired from the orchestra, but he continued to teach at the San Francisco Conservatory and elsewhere until the late 1980s.

Sheinfeld’s music displays a steadfast refusal to acknowledge the often-proclaimed divide between tonal and atonal music—a gap which found its strongest proponents during the years of his first major compositions: the *Adagio and Allegro* and *Concerto for Orchestra* (premiered by Monteux and the San Francisco Symphony in 1947 and 1950) and the *Violin Concerto* of 1955 (premiered by Anshel Brusilow and the Philadelphia Orchestra). The composer later rejected these—along with all but two of the pieces in his catalog that were written before 1962—in favor of such later scores as the second String Quartet, commissioned by the Kronos Quartet and three orchestral works that pay homage to his abiding interest in astronomy and particle physics: *The Earth is a Sounding Board* (1978, with chorus), *Polarities, Symphony no. 1* (1990, premiered 1997), and *E = MC², Symphony no. 2* (1998, with string quartet). He completed what would become his last work, *Different Worlds of Sound*, after he had turned ninety-four. “I just don’t think of myself as old,” he told *Examiner* critic Krich. “Here I am, and while I’m alive it’s my obligation to be as creative as I can. I remain very interested in all the questions of the cosmos and the microcosmos.”

What frame of reference can we bring to a composer who considered Albert Einstein “a real influence” on his creative process? How to evaluate a catalogue of works from which the composer chose to delete most of what he had written before reaching the age of sixty? His works were commissioned and premiered by the Kronos and Alexander Quartets, the San Francisco, Chicago, Berkeley and Oakland Symphonies, and the Philadelphia Orchestra; his life and works inspired such individuals as harpist Marcella DeCray and violinists David Abel and Roy Malan. Over a twenty-year period, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players presented five of his works, including the premieres of his *Dualities* for solo harp and *Dear Theo*, which was commissioned by the ensemble with the help of the Koussevitzky Music Foundation. Sheinfeld was the winner of important prizes, including an American Academy of Arts and Letters Composer Award and a National Endowment for the Arts Composition Grant. Perhaps conductor Kent Nagano, long a champion of Sheinfeld’s music, sums it up best: “David really ha[d] a brilliant mind, a genius—even though the word is so overused in the U. S. He reminds me of composers of the romantic era, with his breadth of knowledge in terms of music, astronomy, the visual arts. It’s sophisticated and very thoroughly composed... He’s the real thing ... someone, in his dedication, who embodies the artistic tradition.”

Sheinfeld, *Dear Theo* (1996)

for baritone voice, piccolo/flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, piano, percussion, violin, viola, and double bass

Sheinfeld's *Dear Theo* takes its text from letters that Vincent van Gogh wrote to his brother. "I chose excerpts that fitted my plan for this work," the composer recalled. "They are van Gogh's words, but they are not always in the actual sequence in which he wrote them." Indeed, Sheinfeld has selected and shaped van Gogh's writing into a three-part structure: the first section describes the artist's intoxication by color and the importance he placed on originality, the second treats his dire financial straits, and the third depicts his succumbing to despair and mental illness.

As a reflection of van Gogh's descent from the articulation of an aesthetic credo to the inarticulate utterances of madness, in the final section the composer "allowed [him]self some liberties with the text. Some words are what Vincent actually used, but some are thoughts that we know he must have had." Moreover, in crafting the score, Sheinfeld frequently chose to reflect the painter's inner life rather than the details he chose to convey to Theo: "The music functions on two levels. It often is not illuminating or emphasizing Vincent's words of the moment. But, rather, beneath those words, it concerns itself with his sadness, his intensity, his passion, and his incipient and eventual madness." At the time of his own death, Sheinfeld was developing *Dear Theo* into a one-act opera—a fitting medium for its dramatic trajectory and its play in the grey areas between insanity and ecstasy.

Text to Dear Theo

Dear Theo: Color, color! Black, violet, fiery red. Cobalt, cobalt! Cobalt is a divine color.

I often think that the night is more richly colored than the day. One night by the sea, in the deep blue depths of the sky, the stars were sparkling: greenish, yellow, white, rose. And one evening I saw a red sunset shooting its rays onto the trunks and foliage of pines, coloring them a fiery orange. Color, color, Theo. The painter of the future will be a colorist such as has never yet been seen.

Dear Theo: My work is going very well. I am absorbed with all my strength in painting. Painting is in my very blood and marrow. Color! Color! I am absorbed in color. I know for sure that I have an instinct for color. I am finding things that I have sought in vain for years. To catch the real, the essential, that is the most difficult.

The worm-eaten official tradition is still alive, but really impotent. The new painters, alone, poor, treated like madmen, and because of this treatment actually becoming so.

Dear Theo: I am in a continual frenzy of work. I am often in the greatest misery, but I want to get on with my painting at all costs; show by my work what there is in the heart of such an eccentric man, of such a nobody. And I want to be myself. I do not care any more what people say about me, or about my work.

Dear Theo: Doubly and twice doubly I appreciate your helping me so faithfully and in such measure. Yet I must tell you that life is cruelly hard for me, and so expensive. I suffer for it. But it does not matter. I continue.

Dear Theo: I am back at the asylum. I have been here several times now. Face to face with these attacks, I feel very frightened. I have put aside the hope that they will not come back again. I will be back, and back, and back! In and out! In and out! In and out! I will always be back again. Always, always! Always!

Crows! Fiery stars! Poison! They are poisoning me!

Dear Theo, dear brother: I have failed in everything that I have done.

MORTON FELDMAN (B. 1926-87)

Writing in the early 1990s, Mark Swed, critic for the *Los Angeles Times* and expert on music of the later twentieth-century recalled composer Morton Feldman as a man of paradoxes: “He was a big, garrulous, friendly man with a raucous sense of humor. He had an inexhaustible supply of ideas and theories—some brilliantly illuminating, some hilariously off-the-wall—about music, about art, about philosophy, about life. He was an occasionally gruff and always overpowering presence who spoke with a memorably thick New York accent. Yet he wrote a music of refined, exquisite, prismatic beauty unlike any other, a music of floating tone and mesmeric harmony and gorgeous sounds, surrounded by elegant, mysterious silences. He was a man often short of breath who wrote, in his later years, the longest-breathed phrases in all music, pieces that can go on, unbroken, for hours.”

Since its inception, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players has recorded or performed nearly a dozen of Feldman’s works, ranging from the early vocal solo *Only* (1946) to the chamber orchestra piece *For Samuel Beckett* (1987), written the very year of the composer’s death. Tonight’s performance of Feldman’s *Bass Clarinet and Percussion* (1981) represents not just the predilections of the composer’s last decade but also the elegiac tone for which he was justly famous throughout his life. His most famous score, *The Rothko Chapel* (performed by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in 1986) was written in 1971 as a tribute to Mark Rothko’s fourteen vast, almost monochrome canvases, commissioned by John and Dominique de Menil to grace an octagonal space that Feldman calls “a place for contemplation where men and women of all faiths, or of none, may meditate in silence, in solitude or celebration together.” A similar purpose shapes Feldman’s other commemorative pieces—*For Frank O’Hara*, *For Stefan Wolpe*, *Christian Wolff in Cambridge*, *DeKooning*—whose titles also reflect some of the most important influences on his life and work: American literature, compositional modernism, the musical experiments of the so-called “New York school” (John Cage, Christian Wolff, Earle Brown, David Tudor) and especially the art of the abstract expressionists.

For students of Feldman’s music, there are important distinctions to be made between the phases of his career. In the 1940s and early 1950s, with scores like *Projections* (1950-51), he concerned himself particularly with

innovations in musical notation: graphic scores, boxes that suggest only the general register of musical events, and depictions of textural density, with or without the representation of specific pitches. After 1953, his musical experiments centered on the creative treatment of rhythm and time, leaving many decisions about duration (and therefore about coordination of musical events) up to the individual performers, but in the 1970s he began a gradual move away from improvisatory moments and toward more conventional notation. However distinct Feldman’s methods were at different periods of his life, listeners to a representative selection of his works are apt to discover more continuities than disjunctions in his oeuvre, as musicologist Steven Johnson observes: “Throughout his career, [Feldman] adhered with remarkable consistency to a few tenets he learned from [New York’s abstract impressionist painters]: a dislike of intellectual system and compositional rhetoric; a hostility to past forms of expression; a preference for abstract gestures set in flat ‘all-over’ planes of time; an obsession with the physical materials of art; a belief in handmade methods; and a trust in instinct.”

Like Cage, Feldman calls attention to individual sounds—and to the silences that separate them. His works grow like crystals: modular, at first glance even random, yet often highly structured. In her writings on American experimental music, Elena Dubinets has observed that “The sounds in [Feldman’s] music should flow gently and be heard out to the end, without being interrupted by other sounds. His works are full of many singular ‘sound-lives’ which are intended to sound out until their complete decay.” But more than Cage, Feldman seems to have cultivated his garden of sounds to create an atmosphere that is distinctly devotional, perhaps even therapeutic in quality. As a result, even familiar sounds invite, or maybe require, a spirit of re-discovery. “All I ask,” Feldman once explained, “is that composers wash out their ears before they sit down to compose.”

Feldman, *Bass Clarinet and Percussion* (1981)

for bass clarinet and two percussionists

Bass Clarinet and Percussion. Feldman’s title alone suggests an austerity, a sense of mystery that is nonetheless down-to-earth about its origins. In the manner of his other late chamber works, including *Piano and String Quartet* (1985), Feldman’s two-part title reveals the twofold division of labor between its instrumentalists: the two percussionists act as one to

create a shimmering background for the bass clarinet. Musicologist and critic Elena Dubinets observes that the notation itself reflects a deep ambivalence about the coordination and autonomy of musical sounds: “even though visually the notation seems to be completely traditional ... Feldman [has] invented a specific type of synchronization between the instruments... They must start and end the work simultaneously, but soon after the piece opens the two timbral groups gradually begin to lose touch with each other.” Though the bass clarinet is in a sense the ‘soloist,’ its part is characteristically delicate and elusive. At points, it seems about to coalesce into a ‘line’ that suggests direction toward a goal. These moments are fleeting, however, as Feldman tends instead toward spiritual stasis and transparency.

JORGE LIDERMAN (B. 1957)

I think contemporary music has been divorced from the audience for quite a long time,” composer Jorge Liderman told a reporter for the *Berkeleyan* in 2005. “We’ve been living in a ghetto of composers writing music for other composers... [I want] to write music that is visceral, that can move you not just intellectually but also emotionally and physically. I think something has to grab you on a subconscious level in the music. In my case, it’s usually the music’s rhythm.” Given Liderman’s appreciation for the psychological power of rhythm, it should come as no surprise that his music frequently evokes such adjectives as “pulsating” “energetic,” “exuberant,” “ebullient and irresistible.” Yet Liderman’s scores also exhibit a melodic appeal, harmonic inventiveness, and textural layering that reflect both his fertile imagination and his creative exploration of the many musical worlds in which he has participated.

Born in Buenos Aires, Liderman studied with Mark Kopitman at Jerusalem’s Rubin Academy of Music before receiving his doctorate from the University of Chicago, where his principal teachers were Shulamit Ran and Ralph Shapey. Not long after his graduation, he joined the composition faculty at U. C. Berkeley where he has thrived, mentoring a diverse group of graduate students and producing a series of works that were celebrated earlier this season in a Cal Performances concert devoted entirely to his music: *Tropes IV* (1990), String Quartet no. 3 (1994), Piano Quintet (2002), Trio (2006) and *Aged Tunes* (2007). The concert also brought together some of the performers for whom Liderman has written, notably guitarist David Tanenbaum, the Cuarteto Latinoamericano, and pianist

Sonia Rubinsky.

Taken together, this collection of pieces represents many of Liderman’s longstanding preoccupations. *Tropes IV* displays his contrapuntal skill and interest in canonic procedures often associated with the Middle Ages and Renaissance. The String Quartet no. 3, built on a fragment from Beethoven’s Quartet op. 59, no. 1, shows his predilection for borrowing and reinventing melodic material—a trait also to be found in his 1993 sextet *Notebook*, which builds upon Moroccan-Jewish wedding songs and in his numerous works on Sephardic themes (*Sephardisms*, *Aires de Sefarad*, and others). And then there is the spirit of dance (sometimes riotous, sometimes reserved) which animates so many moments in the Piano Quintet, the Trio, and *Aged Tunes*, in which Liderman allows the flamenco-style gestures of the guitar gradually to overtake and inflect the accompanying string quartet.

To this list may be added the dramatic flair so evident in Liderman’s large scale works. In 1992, he won the BMW International Music Theater Prize at the Munich Biennale for *Antigona Furiosa*, an operatic retelling of Sophocles’s *Antigone*, transplanted by librettist Griselda Gambaro to the most turbulent years of military rule in Argentina. Liderman’s memorable setting of *The Song of Songs*, premiered by the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and the U. C. Berkeley Chamber Chorus in 2002 and recorded in 2005, unites a reverence for the ancient text with a musical language perfectly suited to the features the composer found in Chana and Ariel Bloch’s translation: “joy, warmth, and color;” “passionate intensity;” “richly sonorous language and strong supple rhythms.”

Liderman has received awards from the Fromm Foundation, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Argentine Tribune of Composers, ASCAP, and Radio France, as well as a University of California Presidential Research Fellowship. In 2003, he received a Guggenheim Latin American and Caribbean Fellowship to create a new opera whose libretto (by Mexican playwright Carlos Elizono Alcaraz) is based on the life of seventeenth-century Mexican nun and mystic-political poet Sor Juana Inéz de la Cruz. Among those who have commissioned and performed Liderman’s scores are the Arditti String Quartet, the London Sinfonietta, the American Composers Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Tanglewood Orchestra, Radio France, the Netherlands Wind Ensemble, the Arditti String Quartet, and Boston Musica Viva, as well as Hans Werner Henze, conductors Oliver Knussen and Esa Pekka Salonen, and

pianist Gloria Cheng.

Liderman's relationship with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players dates back to 1986, when the ensemble performed his *Cantar de los Cantares*. In 1990, the ensemble performed his *Contours* (written for Chicago ProMusica), and it has since given the world premieres of two of his most important works, *Ancient Tales* (1997) and, of course, *The Song of Songs* (2001). Tonight they continue this tradition with the world premiere of *Furthermore...*, featuring violin soloist Carla Kihlstedt, who has also performed and recorded Liderman's *Many Moons* on a CD of the same name.

Liderman, *Furthermore...* (2006)

for solo violin, flute, clarinet, harp, percussion, piano, cello, and double bass

The composer writes of his chamber concerto *Furthermore...*: "After several collaborations with violinist Carla Kihlstedt, I wrote the piece specifically for her and the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, taking into account their technical and expressive qualities. The music for the most part has a very rhythmic nature, and it alternates between slowly unfolding processes and sections where contrasting materials are juxtaposed to each other. For the most part the violin plays in rhythmic counterpoint to the ensemble; the instances in which both join forces are more isolated and usually have a climactic character. Toward the conclusion of the piece there is a one minute violin solo, which I left totally open for Carla to sketch or improvise her own cadenza."

Baritone Leroy Kromm specializes in oratorios of all eras, having performed most bass and baritone oratorio roles in concert throughout the United States and Europe. A strong advocate for new music as well, he has worked closely with some of the most prominent composers of our day, including George Crumb, Lou Harrison, Jake Heggie, Kirke Mechem, Henry Mollicone and Ned Rorem. He has performed with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Aspen Music Festival, Anchorage Festival of Music, Carmel Bach Festival, and Midsummer Mozart under Maestro George Cleve. Among his numerous opera roles are the title roles in *Tartuffe* by Kirk Mechem and Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, as well as musical theater and one-act contemporary operas produced for PBS television. Mr. Kromm has recorded on various labels including Harmonia Mundi and Musical Heritage Society and he continues to serve as a clinician and consultant nationally in academia as well as in the film industry in Hollywood.

Kromm brings a broad range of experience to his conducting, singing and teaching. He is Professor of Voice and Co-Chair of the voice department at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music as well as the Music Director of the San Jose Symphonic Choir and the Monterey Symphony Chorus. Since 1985, he has conducted most of the major choral works with orchestra and has led concert tours in more than ten countries.

In March, Kromm will be singing performances of Henry Cowell's *Atlantis* with the Parallel Ensemble, conducted by Nicole Paiement, and this summer, he will be on concert tour in Ireland and Scotland.

Though trained in the classical canon, violinist, vocalist, and composer Carla Kihlstedt has expanded her experience of music far beyond the classical stage. With like-minded musicians, she founded the adventurous music collective Tin Hat ("purveyors of subtle melody and filmically evocative texture"), and she has deployed her singing skills in the wildly divergent groups Sleepytime Gorilla Museum (a Dadaist rock cabaret specializing in home-made instruments) and 2 Foot Yard (a song-based trio which will release its second CD, *Borrowed Arms*, next month). Outside of her roles with these bands, Carla has worked as a composer both in collaboration and alone. She has written and re-

corded two full-length scores to accompany the dance performances of Jo Kreiter and Flyaway Productions: *Flying Low* (written with Shahzad Ismaily) and *Ravish* (with Matthias Bossi, funded by a grant from Meet the Composer).

In addition to tonight's performance of Liderman's *Furthermore...*, Kihlstedt will premiere Lisa Bielawa's double violin concerto together with violinist Colin Jacobsen and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project this March. In her diverse endeavors, Kihlstedt has had the opportunity to work with such musicians as Tom Waits, Satoko Fujii, Ben Goldberg, Carla Bozulich, and Fred Frith, whose new band Cosa Brava will tour Europe in April. She was an Artist in Residence at the Headlands Center for the Arts in 2002, and at the Civitella Ranieri Institute in Umbria, Italy in 2006. Kihlstedt has recently been awarded a generous grant from the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation to work on a new piece for the Rova Saxophone Quartet, and last November she was the guest curator of the Wels Music Unlimited Festival in Austria, where she encountered what she describes as "endless bouts of inspiring music."

-Program notes by Beth E. Levy

David Milnes is a conductor of extraordinary breadth and long-standing commitment to contemporary music. In his early years, he studied not only piano and organ, but also clarinet, cello, and voice. Milnes received his undergraduate education in music at SUNY Stony Brook. In 1984, at age 27, he won the prestigious Exxon Conductor position with the San Francisco Symphony. He remained as the Symphony's Assistant Conductor and Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra until 1986, working closely with Edo de Waart and Herbert Blomstedt. Following study and collaboration with such renowned conductors as Leonard Bernstein, Erich Leinsdorf, Otto-Werner Müller, and Michael Tilson Thomas, he earned his doctorate in conducting from Yale University in 1989.

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

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

The 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 37th 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 62 U.S. and 133 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.

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*.

Carrie Blanding, Director of Operations and Marketing, graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, with a B.A. in Comparative Literature. For six years, she co-owned and served as Administrative Director for Next Big Thing Children's Theatre, a performing arts summer camp in Danville, California. She has worked for the Mountain Play Association and for San Francisco Performances, and sings as a volunteer member of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus. Ms. Blanding is new to the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players' staff this season.

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.

Audio Engineer

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. 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.

For online reviews of the
San Francisco Contemporary Music Players'
concerts and other music events around the Bay Area, visit
www.sfcv.org.

For New Music on the radio, tune in to
FM 91.7, KALW's radio show,
"Then and Now"
Sundays, 8-10 pm
hosted by Sarah Cahill.

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

The San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of the
American Composers Forum
sends email announcements of new music related events
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