“We, the Futurists, declare as invalid the concepts of consonance and dissonance. From the innumerable combinations derived from the chromatic scale there must blossom forth a Futurist Melody... a synthesis of harmony, similar to an ideal line formed by the incessant flowering of thousands of ocean waves with unequal crests. We must break out of the narrow circle of pure musical sounds and conquer the infinite variety of noise-sounds. Let us therefore invite young musicians of genius and audacity to listen attentively to all noises. Out of this will come not merely an understanding of noises, but even a taste and enthusiasm for them.”

from Manifestoes of Futurist Music (1913)
THE SAN FRANCISCO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYERS

JEAN-LOUIS LE Roux, Music Director
MARCELLA DE CRAY, Executive Director
GUEST CONDUCTOR: FRANK ZAPPA

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1983 8:00 PM
WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE
WITH INTRODUCTION BY GRACE SLICK

PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION
Grace Slick, Mistress of Ceremonies

IONISATION (1931)
for percussion ensemble of 13 players
Edgard Varèse

SIX LIEDER, Opus 14 (1917-21)
for soprano, clarinet, bass clarinet, violin and cello
Anton Webern

VARIATIONS FOR PIANO, Opus 27 (1936)
Anton Webern

OFFRANDES (1921-22)
for soprano, piccolo, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, harp, two violins, viola, cello, contra-bass and six percussionists
Edgard Varèse

INTERMISSION

POEME ELECTRONIQUE (1957-58)
for magnetic tape
Edgard Varèse

THREE LIEDER, Opus 25 (1934)
for soprano and piano
Anton Webern

FUGA (RICERCATA) a sei voci, No. 2 (1934-35)
Anton Webern

from the "Musical Offering" by J.S. Bach for flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, harp and string quintet

INTEGRALES (1924-25)
for two piccolos, oboe, Eb clarinet, Eflat clarinet, horn, trumpet in D, trumpet in C, tenor trombone, baritone trombone, contrabass trombone and four percussionists
Edgard Varèse

No photography or recording equipment permitted.

All proceeds benefit the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players.

PLAYERS: Judith Clute, soprano; Marvin Taktak, piano; Roy Malan, Dan Snell, violins; Ruth Freeman, viola; Bonnie Hampton, cello; Steven d'Amico, bass; Janet Lawrence, Barbara Chaffee, flutes; Deborah Henry, oboe; Marilyn Coyne, English horn; Jim Dukey, Tom Rose, clarinets; David Bartoletta, bassoon; Larry Rargent, French horn; Charles Metzger, Ralph Wagner, trumpets; Hall Golf, McDowell Kenley, John E. Williams, trombones; Marcella DeCray, harp; Danny Montoro, timpani; David Rosenthal, Todd Manley, Richard Kiviat, William Winant, Raymond Froelich, Perry Dreiman, Tyler Mack, Pat Scott, Hay Bachand, Kevin Neuhoff, Marvin Taktak, Jean-Louis LeRoux, percussion.

Frank Zappa, Jean-Louis LeRoux, conductors.
NOTES ON THE COMPOSER

EDGAR VARESE (1883-1965)

Edgar Varèse said, “I do not write experimental music; I write musique concrète, the music of the future in the form of industrial, electronically produced music.” Afterward, he is the listener who must experiment.”

For nearly a century Varèse has been acknowledged a musical revolution at a unique and original approach to music, particularly of course, in America. He rejected in American city life, in its excitement, kaleidoscopic variety, and independence from the European burden of history.

The recent Greeks believed that all human disciplines could be reduced to two in number: gymnastics for the body, and music for the mind. It was in this spirit that Varèse spoke of music as an “art-science.” In fact, he declared the term “music” and preferred that of “organized sound.” His term for music has a parallel in the German word “tonkunst,” a synonym for music meaning “sound-art.” Varèse’s organized sound is both more aesthetic in its moral and more in expression.

This brings us to a feature of Varèse’s music that touched the very essence of his art: his use of sound. Varèse uses sound in a way that is both rare occasions that he himself played one of his works on the piano for a small circle of friends. He once said, “I am not interested to be a source of wonder.”

Anton Webern (1883-1961)

During the 1920s and 1930s, and again at the end of his life, Varèse enjoyed enormous efforts to his music. Not so for the Austrian composer Anton Webern. During his lifetime Webern was regarded as a fine teacher and as a choral and orchestral conductor of the highest artistic merit. He made several successful tours as a conductor and was esteemed as an interpreter of the com- poses of the Classical era. The current popularity of the works of Gustav Mahler is due in part to Webern’s interpretive performances of Mahler’s symphonies.

But we had a quiet moment in his gift as a teacher. For the first time in his life, he was able to devote himself to the serious, to the music he loved. The second moment in his life was Webern’s war, and it was for a mistake that he was not able to finish the music he loved. He was not able to enjoy the enormest esteem he earned for his legacy of music compositions, his compact gems of genius.

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NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

EDGAR VARESE (1883-1965)

Like Webern, Varèse was first directed toward an engineering career by his father. Although he became a musician, Varèse retained an ardent interest in technical matters, using terms from the scientific vocabulary. He felt that these terms were inexpressible in the language of music, and that he was helped to express them by the use of sound.

MUSIQUE CONCRÈTE

“Musique concrète” is an approach of a very new and innovative aspect of music. Varèse used sound as a raw material from which he could create music. He made his own instruments, using found objects, and he composed music that was not written down but was created through electronic means.

One of Varèse’s most famous works is “Poème électronique” (1957-58), composed in 1957. This work is an exploration of the possibilities of electronic music, and it is considered one of the most important works in the history of electronic music.

The last work on tonight’s program, Integrales, is the first composition by Varèse that Frank Zappa heard. It was band one side of that beat-up recording record that Zappa found in the store. It was one of the earliest recordings of Varèse’s most remarkable compositions. In it, one can hear clarinets, cymbals, ever-present “sound- masses,” and an overall sense of space, as well as some remarkable percussion instruments, and instrumental harmonies coordinated with percussion instruments in such a way that there is a sense of some hitherto unimaginable instrument can be heard: Edgard Varèse’s “Dream instrument.”

Varèse, an extremely melodically confined artist with dense coloristic choirs, gradually these inter- act with one another. At times the texture is alive with vital and at times the instruments engage in agreeable dialogues and in a few cases, in a few phrases, play together. In the last composition, Varèse’s last work for voice and piano, was completed in November 1954, immediately before work on the Bach transcription was begun. They contain some of the composer’s most serene and flowing music; the second is marked with one of Webern’s favorite interpretation marks, “flowing.” Like most of Webern’s melodies, these are elegant yet diaphanous. Such melodies have mixed with them: the highest, middle, and lowest registers of the vocal line each forms its own melodic pattern.

J.S. Bach

Webern follows J.S. Bach in his music, with his contrapuntal, polyphonic style.

FUGA (MUSICAL OFFERING) (1934-36)

As a visit to Frederick the Great, J.S. Bach was a great influence on Webern’s music. The theme (he the King) provided Bach did so, and upon returning home wrote out a set of poly- phonic variations. Webern selected this theme. This work was then presented to the King as a “Musical Offering” in 1936. Webern completed a transc- rscription for five harpsichord of the most sub- stantial of these pieces, Webern made attempt to simply “dress up” the Bach transcription.

SOUND IMAGES

Webern’s transcription is probably the perfect example of how to demonstrate the harmonies between tonal and contemporary polyphony.

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The rain holds the tropics in a crystal cage.  
It is the hour to stride over the duck  
Like a Zebra toward the Island of Yesterday  
Where the murdered woman woke.

Weber: Three Lieder, Opus 25  
Text by Hildegard  
I. Wie bin ich weh  
noch einmal wird mir alles grün  
und deutlich wohl  
noch überblühen die Blumen mir die Welt  
noch einmal bin ich ganz ins Werden  
hingestellt und bin auf ich  
II. Des Herzens Purpurveil fliegt durch Nacht.  
Der Augen Faltner, die im Hellen gaukeln,  
sind vor uns, wenn sie im Tagen schaukeln.  
Und doch ist es der sie ans Ziel gebringt.  
sie fahren fort, die bald sich um spannen  
zum neuen Flug. Doch raschelt endlich er  
Ach der Tod des Todes, mid und Flügelzweiler,  
dann müssen sie zum letzen Glück verbraten.  
III. Sterne, ihr silbernen Bieren  
Der Nacht um die Blume der Liebe  
Wabrih, der Honig aus ihr  
hängt schimmernd an Euch.  
Lasset ihr trupfen uns her,  
in die goldenen Wabe,  
füllen sie an bis zum Rand.  
Ach, schenkt brüft sie über,  
seelig und bis ans Ende mit  
ezwiller Stöm durchdränkt.  
I. What great delight!  
Once more all the green’s unfurled  
and shines so bright!  
And all is thronged overgrown with flow’rs!  
Once more I creation’s portal live my hours,  
and yet am mort.

II. The heart’s purple eagle flies by night.  
The eyes, like daylight’s butterflies that Nieves  
flutter ahead and fly before it ever;  
Yet it’s the bird that brought them to their goal,  
They often rest who soon must raise to heaven  
To fly again! Yet finally he rests  
on death’s grey branches, tired with heavy  
wings.  
III. Stars. Ye little bright bees of night  
round the flower of love!  
Truly the honey from it  
hangs humming to the bird.  
Let it then drop in the heart,  
in the gold comb of honey;  
fill up the comb to the brim.  
Oh, the heart tumbled over,  
happy and full for ever.  
full of the greatest sweetness of love.
FRANK Zappa

"I have been asked to write about Edward Varèse. I am in no way qualified to. I couldn't even pronounce his name right. The only thing I have agreed to is because I love his music very much, and it is by some chance this article can influence much of my readers near his works, it will have been worthwhile."

With those lines Frank Zappa began "a reminiscence and appreciation" of Varèse, whom he described as "idol of my youth," for a 1974 issue of Stereo Review Magazine. This charming account of his personal discovery of Varèse and his music refutes Zappa's protest that he is not qualified to write about Edward Varèse ... and it is a perfect example of that unpretentious, unassuming composer-who has made more than 30 albums both idiomatic and Varèse and his music-says about his music being combined.

"I ran over to the suitcase and pulled out the Joe Houston records back in '47. I laid around in my pocket to see how much money I had under (about $4.30). I knew I had to make a lot of money to buy a record. Only $4.00 was enough, and money to buy albums. I've never bought an album before. I sneaked over to the guy at the cash register and asked him, "How many records do I have to buy?" I told him $3.80. He scratched his neck. "Use that record to demonstrate the hi-fi's with, but nobody ever buys one when we use it... you can have it for $3.80. I want you that bad."

"I couldn't imagine what he meant by 'demon-strating it with his hi-fi.' I've never heard a hi-fi, I only knew that old people bought them. I had a genuine hi-fi... there was a little box about 4 inches deep which contained a mechanism which left each corner (sort of brass-plated) that elevated from the table top because the speaker was in the bottom. It was kept in my apartment. She used to listen to the 78 of the Little Shoemaker on it. I took off the 78 of the Little Shoemaker and when I put it back on, it had never been there before, turned the volume all the way up and played all the parts that followed on it. If I had a music school in California, I would have an orchestra for that record on the living room ever again."

"In order to listen to The Album, I had to stay in my room most of the time. I was really frightened. It was the first time I had ever heard such a strange music."

"I went to the library and tried to find a book about Mr. Varèse. There wasn't any. The librarian told me he probably wasn't a Major Composer. She suggested I look in books about new or un-popular music. I found a book about a little trash in his pants... THERE IT WAS EMS 4! The Complete Works of Edward Varèse Volume I, "Integrantes, Darwins, Molyneux, Etc." by John Cage, Le Roy, the Y. N. Wind Ensemble, the Juilliard Percus- sion Orchestra, Frederick Wildman Conducting... John Cage, Louis Fiskellet, etc."

"I've never got to meet Mr. Zappa. I have been able to grant your request. I am leaving for Europe next week and will be gone until next spring. I am hoping however to see you on my return. With best Sincerely, Edgard Varèse"

Jean- Luis Le Roux

Music Director Jean-Louis Le Roux was born in France to a family of musicians and has recently returned to attend the Paris Conservatoire National. His teachers there included Pierre Fageol in oboe and Jean Fourieut in composition. Le Roux subsequently studied in Cambridge under Leszek Duszynski and UW on a government scholarship and won a composition prize in the San Francisco International Competition. At the same time, he was music director of the Modesto Symphony Orchestra and the Mills Performing Group. In 1975, Jean-Louis Le Roux was appointed conductor of the Performing Arts Orchestra of the San Francisco Ballet. In 1974, he decided to commission works to establish the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation devoted to the promotion and establishment of contemporary chamber music, drawing upon a core of Bay Area professional musicians. In 1978, the ensemble began to present an annual concert series at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art which continues to draw audiences to the informal atmosphere, innovative programming and moderate ticket prices, as well as the synergy of experience of the joining of modern and traditional music.

Music Director Jean-Louis Le Roux's dedication to providing the finest artistic performance of today's music in San Francisco reflects the importance of American and European compositions, the music of the great 20th Century masters and the music of our time. An artist who has been written in the last few years. American and world premieres are given each season, several of which are commissioned by San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. The ensemble has recently completed its first recording, to be released in February on the Granada label. The orchestra has been consistently highly praised, giving the group's dedication to New Music, excellent programming and standards of artistic performance. Our audiences are open-minded and willing to experiment. They represent all ages, professions, and interests. They are truly a community of music lovers who welcome the opportunity to hear unfamiliar music through the ears of contemporary composers and to broaden their artistic scope. They take home with them minds and spirits awakened by the expressive power of modern music.

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