

Disclaimer

We of The Composers' Cafeteria have no common ideological basis for our music, beyond the proposition that each composer (except for Chris Maher) be granted complete artistic freedom, and that no attempt be made to determine a group ideology. However, even this proposition has been subject to debate, and the composers have therefore requested that it be made clear that "the opinions expressed by any one composer do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Composers' Cafeteria, or any of its constituent composers." Presumably, this disclaimer applies to itself as well, for there is currently some question about whether we can, in fact, "grant complete artistic freedom."

Tonight's Cafeteria

Among painters as among writers there are those who stick to their guns, who follow the scent like bloodhounds, as it were, and there are others who sit like birds of prey on some imaginary limb or ledge, ready to pounce on the happy accident which will lead them to some unknown, undreamed of, destination. Each one, in following his native bent, talks a different language. In the end, no matter what language they talk, we get — pictures. And eventually the dealers and critics will inform us into which categories the pictures fall, even those which defy categorizing. The astonishing thing is that those who were mocked and jeered at, particularly by their fellow painters, sometimes turned out to be the foremost painters of their time. Usually they were the laughingstocks of the academy, the ones who couldn't be taught, who lacked talent, as they say.

— Henry Miller, *To Paint is to Love Again*

It's nice to have a choice, so we made a Cafeteria. We are all feeding each other by being here tonight. The idea is that a composer who can also perform gets together with other similarly studded musicians and they put together these concerts. In our meetings, I've seen auto-, techno-, demo-, and poly-crats as well as other [free-floating] ideologies. But we always come together to make these great concerts. To date, we have performed 30+ works by 17+ composers. There are about 30 performing members of the Cafeteria Ensemble, and we are still interested in expanding.

Thanks for coming. By your presence here tonight, you too are a Cafeterian.

— Kathy Geisler

Tonight's Composers

Stephen Mays: *Sounds Between.*

David Adeo, Piano; Randy Porter, Guitar; Jennifer Rycenga Plonsey, Viola; Dan Plonsey, Eb Clarinet

THE IMAGINAL MUSICIAN

(edited by Stephen Mays)

harmonica

cow

gnats.

low grass

mice

Mozart

egrets green

white;

raspberry eggs

chunky

black

spine.

Elaine Schnaidt: *Songs from Chinese Love Poems*

THE WHITE FROST

The white frost covers all the arbutue trees
like powder on the faces of women.
Looking from my window I consider that a man
without women is like a flower
Naked without leaves.
To drive away my bitterness I write this
thought with my narrow breath on the white frost.

FIFTH WATCH

Look my love,
The waning moon still sheds
its fading light.
Do you hear that frightened bird
calling for the dawn?
How mournful is its cry,
How lonely for its nest and mate.
Not yet my own,
Cling to me.
I cannot let you go.

“Fifth Watch” is by Chien T’ang, from the Ch’ing Dynasty. The author of “The White Frost” is anonymous. Both poems were translated from the Chinese by Arthur Waley.

Randy Porter writes about *Goodbye Mr. Greenjeans; a Logical Occurrence*:

Had this piece been about Mr. Reagan it would have been called “C’s in College in Eureka.” However, it does not make reference to a villainous viper, but to one who has helped to shape many of our lives in a subtle way. Mr. Greenjeans left the living last week and left us with fond memories of harmless antics and learning about nature.

The ensemble of eleven players is divided in the familial way: mandolins, bowed strings, and winds. These work sometimes as independent ensembles and sometimes are juxtaposed to create overlapping textures. A bit of retuning in the mandolin family has occurred, and it seemed to be a most logical occurrence; as was the appearance of Mr. Greenjeans on the Captain’s show.

Tom Statler is a full-time astrophysicist, specializing in the dynamics of galaxies, and a part-time composer, specializing in the irritation of performers. A recent event in his life — the sudden realization of how fortunate he is to be able to devote essentially all of his time to science and art (except for those special moments spent washing dishes or sorting socks) — has brought his latent Romanticism to the surface. While his latest work in this vein, “NGC 5128’s Savage Fury,” was rejected by the *Astrophysical Journal*, a slightly older composition, the *Chamber Concerto*, will receive its first performance tonight. The composer adds the following comments:

The piece is in one movement, comprised of three main sections enclosed by an introduction and a conclusion. The introduction presents a contrast between the “tranquil” theme in the ensemble and the more aggressive music played by the violin. After a moment of indecision, the first section begins “warmly”, becoming more agitated and culminating in a repeat of the first violin entrance. The tension relaxes, leading to the second section, a scherzo in uneven meter that gives both the soloist and the ensemble a chance to show off. At its climax, the scherzo abruptly falls apart and is succeeded by the slow and melancholy third section. At a crucial moment the violin is left abandoned by the ensemble on a high F; the response, a bitter cadenza, becomes a preface to the conclusion. In the end all conflicts are resolved, as the two opening themes are merged and motifs from the entire piece are recalled. Finally, a short coda gives the soloist the last word.

Irene Sazer is well known in the area as a violinist and violist. Among other things, she is soon to be recording with the *Turtle Island String Quartet* on the Windham Hill Jazz label, and can be heard weekly with the San Francisco Jazz String Trio. She was a solo guest artist at the Cabrillo Music Festival last summer.

I See the Fog Clearly Now is a piece (a piece? ... hopefully a whole...) about working through to the other side of personal global, and/or universal conflict, to start anew on the next project. This is Irene’s Opus 2, meaning she ain’t done writ much yet.

This may be **Dan Plonsey**'s sixth string quartet, but the fact is that numbers "3" and "5" are lost—may never have existed—and No. 1 was only recently uncovered and was found, to his chagrin, to be less than thirty seconds long. He is hard to understand sometimes, especially when he is let loose at the keyboard:

How the Mighty May Have Fallen is a three-part question/exclamation, depending upon how we break up the title. But "we cannot break Life into parts; if the total was Life, the fragment is not," etc.

Newton's insight was that "The Fall" is equally of the apple and of the moon; and (I suppose) also of the "mighty" (as in "mighty senile") politician, but more pertinently, the fall is the falling in love, and also as in "falling for it" (i.e., the suspension of disbelief). "The unity is in this way saved from the local division of the things in which it appears... if its fixed seat were shaken, all the rest would fall with the fall of their foundation," says Plotinus; whether this "division" refers to the myth of creation by division I can't say, but keep that in mind until you finish the next paragraph.

Falling/Knowledge/Apples: the music may emphasize the "May" and the "How" (as in, "but *how* could the music do that?"). The sliding-around stuff that you will hear (sigh) has to do both with falling and with [the making of] *apple-sauce*, which is the answer to the riddle of "How can that which cannot be divided be divided?"

Tenderness of Mind Slope is the given definition of the word "Karaivu" in Tamil. In the context of this composition, it refers to the angles of metaphysical inclination imagined. The work is in two movements: the first considers the attraction of rhythmic motion, serving as a prelude to the second movement, in which contrasting theories of light provide the prism for viewing contemplation and determination (an alternative to action).

The instrumentation explores the possibilities of doubled instruments, and manages to include both orchestral and chamber music effects.

Tenderness of Mind Slope is dedicated to the late Rev. Norman C. Mealy, professor of music and religion at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific and the Graduate Theological Union, an advisor and friend.

Jennifer Rycenga Plonsey is a thoughtful Ph.D. student and a determined composer. This piece is intended to demonstrate this (as the law says) beyond a reasonable doubt.

.....

MORE!

The Composers' Cafeteria will present its next concert on Sunday, May 24, probably at that warehouse on Gilman Street which doesn't have a name exactly but has developed a reputation. That concert will feature works by many of the Cafeteria's newer members.

The Composers' Cafeteria also hopes to launch a newsletter/journal-thing which will *keep you informed like never before*. The first issue will be sent to everybody on our mailing-list as well as everybody on everyone else's mailing-list, so please sign a mailing-list *now* while there is still time!