

Disclaimer

The compositions you will hear tonight were not composed by jerks as an adjunct to their crummy little piddling careers as academic musicians or professional charlatans. Either the spirit really moved them, or someone probably forced them to do it, which might be even better.

Tonight's Cafeteria

We used to play just anything, and that was a kind of extreme. Now maybe we're moving towards a different extreme. This world demands a fresh approach to programming, a new sophistication. "Who'd have thought that snow falls?" (Frank O'Hara) We don't know how far we'll be able to take this, but be prepared for dismaying changes in standards and practices.

Tonight's Composers

It's Just Intonation

This piece is iconoclastic and the icons are the enemies of western music. Equal temperament-bashers, or who would not admit a scale composed of a series of precisely tuned demodulation frequencies (5, which are played on a radio with 5 "presets", such as a car radio), who would say that Schönberg was the first composer to realize the failure of tonal music of twelve tones that modulates necessitating as it does "something close to equal temperament", and who would then turn around and ask, upon hearing some pitchpoor piece in hopeful anticipation, "are the intervals just?" You know who you are. Though it is not a "Caprice Classic" in the strict sense, this work is somewhat classical in approach: the traditional Balinese composition is altered only through reinterpretation of its melodies in terms of alternate tuning systems. The great performers you will see this evening, subgroup of the USA's most prominent Balinese gamelan orchestra (which will remain nameless), are ideally suited to the task of translating melodies as they normally play them to tablatures for performance on the exotic instruments you hear them using tonight, extending the tonal range of music for five pitch classes to include all tunings, all modes!!! Please applaud wildly to show your appreciation for the dazzling artistry and consummate musicality of these players whose great excesses of virtuosity in such tasks as, for example, playing a baroque recorder and a TV set at the same time, are nothing you are likely to witness soon again.

Special thanks once again to Dan, Jenny and Evan.

— Chris Maher

Paper Pieces

Well, some music is inspired and some is hard won and some is programmatic and *some* music ain't nothin' but notes on a page. This suite of pieces was utterly uninspired, was written with very little thought, and meant nothing to the composers as it was being composed. This was a frightening experience for the composers, especially for Johanna, as it brought into question the validity of their creativity. What scared them the most was the fact that they put practically no effort into writing these pieces and yet they agreed that the end result, i.e., the sound of the played music as described by the notes written, was as good as anything they had written (collectively or alone) before. Earlier works had been sweated over, cried about, and agonized for and for what if there was no noticeable difference between belabored music and a heap of notes? Flynn offered the suggestion that music had finally reached his subconscious and as such no longer needed to be clawed at but rather just let to flow from his soul to the page, bypassing the brain. The weasel fiercely argued that it was all for naught and that writing music was superfluous and that the monastic life was starting to look pretty good. Johanna sat very still and thought about it very quietly and finally she sighed, shrugged and said "whatever." I rambled on about a lot of things too tedious to go into and in general agreed with each of the other three. After a great deal of soul searching a conclusion was reached that all music is good and so we offer you this suite and hope you'll agree.

— Johanna Johnson, Flynn Fahey McCarthy, Ωεααεελ Τατερ, and me

The Flood and Rain

The text to *The Flood and Rain* is on a separate page.

— Joy Krinsky

The Fall: Genesis 1–3

This collaborative work contains four distinct strata, consisting of 1) a pre-recorded tape, 2) music, 3) a three-part recitation, and 4) a single-person recitation. In addition to dual creatrices, the project also owes thanks to myriad others. These include a joyous group of Cafeterians whose voices you hear on tape—Carol Adee, Tony Celaya, Mantra Ben Ya'akova, Stephen Mays, James Jacobs, Adrienne Kerrebrock Richter, Dan Plonsey, Peter Adler, Shira Cion, Ruth Charloff, Joy Krinsky, Bon Brown, Johanna Johnson, and Randy Porter. Earlier 'research' sessions involved Mantra, Peter, Carol, Randy, and Dan. It should also be noted that the music calls for co-operative skills from the performers. Electronics help was gratefully forthcoming from Randy, Peter, and Steve Horowitz. In short, this *is* a Cafeteria piece, folks, and “Amen to that, sister!”

— Jennifer Rycenga Plonsey & Thea Farhadian

Bootless Ragpicker

Two friends of mine were annoyed when someone recently asked them whether they were “going together.” What’s wrong with their being *friends*? Nevertheless, this question of “going together” is on a lot of minds, and sometimes curiosity gets the better of propriety. When composers ask *what* lines will go with *what*, they are asking the same question, and thus *before* asking are consequently faced with the same moral dilemma. Under what circumstances can one ask others about the nature and intimacy of their relationships? How does “going together” describe or qualify a relationship? Specifically, in the case of *Bootless Ragpicker*, you may ask (or refrain from asking) whether the melody goes with the text. You may ask (or refrain from asking) whether the bass line goes with the marimba line. Go ahead and ask—if you think it’s any of your business. Personally, I would rather not know. Compositionally, the (unchallenged) assumption was that *there would be going together when there was going*. And going there is. I tried to limit my compositional input to this piece to that which was necessary to make it *go*. The underlying melody is not the result of any compositional process. It was improvised, hummed into a tape recorder. The story came from another story whose “sense” gradually went as words were substituted, a few at a time, until only the underlying *movement* of the original story remained. Of the imagery which surfaced during this process, I kept those images which evoked some of the many possibilities of compositional and improvisational *music in language*. That is to say, the images stayed which rolled off the tongue. I have copies of both the original and eventual stories for anyone who’d like to ask for one.

— Dan Plonsey

Open Up!

What, you may ask, is an eight-year-old rock song doing on a Cafeteria concert? “Every piece deserves to be performed once.” Ha, ha, *suckers*!

— James David Jacobs