Making the Right Choices

A John Cage Centennial Celebration

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

New World Symphony
America’s Orchestral Academy
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John Cage genuinely wanted to open up the beauteous experience of sound for everyone. Much of his work could be described as kits to be used in the creation of a performance that relies on the perceptions, imaginations and choices of the musicians. It was a spiritual mission for him to create the opportunity for the performance to exist while at the same time to interfere with it as little or as subtly as possible.

It's a fascinating conundrum that rehearsing a Cage piece from the '70s that has few or no notes or set specifications can take as long or longer than a piece by Stockhausen or other similarly blisteringly notated works of the same period. With Cage's pieces, it's not a question of "getting it right" (meaning congruent to the notation), but rather getting it in the right spirit. The preparation of a Cage piece feels less like rehearsing and more like sensitivity training.

But there is another telling aspect of Cage's work that has been little commented upon in this centennial year... the choices that he did make. Cage wrote a lot of notes and up until the '60s they were chosen by him very, very personally. There are definitely recognizable moods in these pieces...confrontational, zany, hyper, parodistic, but most frequently whimsical, poetic, exotic and vaguely melancholy.

Cage wrote that emotions, even emotions like love, disturbed him. This perspective caused him to search for less emotional ways to determine what the notes, sounds or actions of his pieces would be. Perhaps he found the achy territories of his personally chosen works too costly to sustain, but I know he hoped that their sensitivity might serve as examples for others to discover and explore in their own ways.

However, even in his later works, where much of the music is the result of random procedures, Cage nevertheless seems to return to the haunted and spiritual quality that characterized much of his early work. Pieces like Seventy-Four, Dance 4/Orchestras, Litany for the Whale and Ryoanji all share in it. It's difficult to have an overview of these pieces because so many of them have no scores and involve

Making the Right Choices:
A John Cage Centennial Celebration
by Michael Tilson Thomas, Artistic Director
highly variable time factors. You can’t look at them and know what they’ll sound like. It’s only by playing them and entering into their “playspace” that one can discover what they are all about. In these pieces the role of the conductor—when there is one—is unusual. Sometimes he is simply an indicator of the passing of time, but more importantly he needs to be a kind of coach or guide who in rehearsals must help keep the ever-varying activities and events of the piece somehow consistent with the particular aesthetic of that piece and with Cage’s work in general. John was clear that he did not want his pieces to be “anything goes” or recklessly messy situations. Rather, he was giving the performers suggestions in notes, symbols and words of a situation they might explore together with him. The mindset of the performer for him was vital.

Often the scores of his pieces are accompanied by written instructions. These “explanations” are themselves mysterious and puzzling. It’s very common to read a sentence of his in which one understands every word clearly but has no idea, at first, of what those words in that particular sequence might mean. You have to ponder the instructions. I approach them like Zen parables. Somehow he means for us to consider and work our way through them as a part of discovering his unusual take for the work at hand. I think he delighted in creating puzzlements for us to work through. He doesn’t want to make it too easy at first.

When Cage was alive, he and his close collaborators created and communicated the sense of what the pieces were about. Now, only 60 years after his most pioneering works of the ’40s and ’50s and his death in 1992, there are very few living witnesses to his process. This festival has been programmed to give the musicians of the New World Symphony a chance to collaborate. It has also given the members of the orchestra the opportunity to perform many pieces in which John chose every elegant note and sound and then, inspired by those works, move on into pieces in which they must become responsible for making more of the choices that will determine what the pieces will sound like.

There are some moments in this festival that are exactlying aware of the “period instrument” aspect of much of Cage’s early works. We’ve gone to some effort whenever possible to assemble vintage sound materials from radio broadcasts, percussion and other instruments that Cage would have used and the archaic electronics which have the sound of his first performances. But, in keeping with Cage and Cunningham’s aesthetic, we have also created quite new “staging,” “installations” and renderings of several works.

The most complex of these is Renga, a piece written to celebrate the American Bicentennial, which was performed at that time with another piece, Apartment House 1776. I sat with John at rehearsals and performances of this work in New York in 1976. In the page of instructions that accompany the piece, it says that the work could be “appropriate to another occasion than the bicentennial of the USA, an occasion, for example, such as the birth or death of another musically productive nation or person or the birthday of a society concerned with some aspect of creation productive of sound.”

I remarked to John that following his instructions, one day it might be played in his memory. He gave me his customary smile and laugh. When he died I began to think more and more about the possibility of doing just this. Essentially Renga is a rainforest of orchestra sounds and Apartment House 1776 is a montage of American revolutionary era music and also the contributions of four soloists who represented the religious traditions of the country at that time. The soloists were a gospel singer, a cantor, a Native American shaman and a singer of Protestant hymns. I began to imagine that the piece could be done by keeping the “orchestra rainforest” of Renga as it was, but replacing Apartment House 1776’s original material with sounds and songs both in audio and video formats of the America of Cage’s life. Then the role of the four original soloists would be taken by vocal and instrumental performers doing works of Cage himself. The memorial portrait would be completed by using John’s voice speaking parts of his most famous “Lecture on Nothing” as a kind of commentary on the cultural flotsam and jetsam of his life.

It was also a new decision to use graphic works of art made by Cage as the sources for a video installation to accompany Dance 4/Orchestras. Dance 4/Orchestras is a piece in which time and space are used to suggest the relationship between the future, the present and the past. Creating a visual dialogue for what is happening in the music seemed an attractive idea.

Developing this festival has been a real adventure. We sought it as the opportunity to explore and even push the boundaries of our hall’s flexibility. The whole New World Symphony team has been involved in this process, which has included video, lighting design, sound design and serious logistical planning as we figured out how the hall itself could be reconfigured for different nights or even in some cases for different pieces. My thanks go to the leaders and the members of these teams whose names you will find in this program book, and to the wonderful guest artists who have joined us in collaborations on specific pieces. I want to thank especially Laura Kuhn, Executive Director of the John Cage Trust, for her enthusiastic partnership and sleuthing that made realizing so much of this possible. My special thanks also to Alberto Ibarburu, who was a longtime friend of John Cage and Merce Cunningham, and to the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, which made the leading grant that caused this festival to be possible here in Miami and also available online to people throughout the world in the future.

No other organization would attempt such an ambitious project as this. I am happy that it will be a tribute to how musical and beautiful John’s music can be and also an example of how a major part of the New World Symphony’s mission is to carry out research and development for the classical music world.

As I write this, we have just started rehearsals and I’m already thrilled with how my young colleagues are taking to the creative challenges this music presents. We can’t wait to share it with you.

—Michael Tilson Thomas
John Cage (1912-1992)

John Cage (1912-1992) was a singularly inventive, highly influential and much beloved American composer, writer, philosopher and visual artist. Beginning around 1950 and throughout the passing years, he departed from the pragmatism of precise musical notation and circumscribed ways of performance. His principal contribution to the history of music is his systematic establishment of the principle of indeterminacy: by adapting Zen Buddhist practices to composition and performance, Cage succeeded in bringing both authentic spiritual ideas and a liberating attitude of play to the enterprise of Western art.

Philosopher and visual artist. Beginning around 1950 and throughout the passing years, he departed from the pragmatism of precise musical notation and circumscribed ways of performance. His principal contribution to the history of music is his systematic establishment of the principle of indeterminacy: by adapting Zen Buddhist practices to composition and performance, Cage succeeded in bringing both authentic spiritual ideas and a liberating attitude of play to the enterprise of Western art. His aesthetic of chance produced a unique body of what might be called “once-only” works, any two performances of which can never be quite the same. In an effort to reduce the subjective element in composition, he developed methods of selecting the components of his pieces by chance, early on through the tossing of coins or dice and later through the use of random number generators on the computer, and especially IC (1964), designed and written in the C language by Cage's programmer/assistant, Andrew Culver, to simulate the coin oracle of the I Ching.

Cage's use of the computer was creative and procedural. I Ching (1984), designed and written in the C language by Cage's programmer/assistant, Andrew Culver, to simulate the coin oracle of the I Ching, resulted in a system of what can easily be seen as total serialism, in which all elements pertaining to pitch, noise, duration, relative loudness, tempi, harmony, etc., could be determined by referring to previously drawn correlated charts. Thus, Cage's mature works did not originate in psychology, motive, drama or literature, but rather were just sounds, free of judgments about whether they are musical or not, free of fixed relations, free of memory and taste. His most enduring, indeed notorious, composition, influenced by Robert Rauschenberg's all-black and all-white paintings, is the radically tacet 4’33” (1952). Encouraging the ultimate freedom in musical expression, the three movements of 4’33” are indicated by the pianist's opening and closing of the piano key cover, during which no sounds are intentionally produced. It was first performed by the extraordinarily gifted pianist and long-time Cage associate David Tudor at Maverick Hall in Woodstock, New York on August 29, 1952.

“A Composer’s Confessions” (1948)

by John Cage

An address given before the National Inter-Collegiate Arts Conference, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York, February 28, 1948

I am going to tell you the story of how I came to write music, and how my musical ideas and my ideas about music developed.

I remember that when I was eight years old, in Santa Monica, California, I saw a sign – PIANO LESSONS – two doors away from where my mother and father and I lived. It was love at first sight. I remember that running and eating became faster and day-dreaming became longer and slower. It made no difference to me what I was taught: the exercises, a piece by Victor Herbert called Orientale, and Für Elise. I was introduced to ‘neighborhood music,’ that branch of the art that all the world loves to play, and I did too.

My new teacher was my Aunt Phoebe, and she taught me to play Brahms’ Hungarian Dance No. 5, and I was introduced to ‘neighborhood music,’ that branch of the art that all the world loves to play, and I did too.

Neither my mother nor my father took this turn of events with the passion and the intensity that I did. Having before them the examples of two of my aunts and one uncle, they were aware of the economic difficulties which musicians can run into. And deeper than this, my father, who is an inventor and electrical engineer, would have preferred to see me follow in his footsteps, I am sure.

However, they were indulgent and practical; they bought a piano; nothing could have pleased me more. We moved to another neighborhood in Los Angeles and I remember that when the movers were bringing the piano into the house, before they had its legs on, I was walking along with them playing already by heart Victor Herbert’s evocation of the Orient.

My new teacher was my Aunt Phoebe, and she taught me how to sight-read. This was her particular interest, and I am grateful to her for it. She also extended my awareness of the music of the 19th century, avoiding, however, that century’s masters. Together we played Moskowski’s Spanish Dances and alone I played Paderewski’s Minuet in G. Music appeared to be divided according to the technical difficulties it presented to performers: it was first year, second year, third year, and fourth year. Later on I studied with a teacher who was also a composer, Fannie Charles Dillon. She taught me to play Brahms’ Hungarian Dance No. 5, but my Aunt Phoebe did not agree with Miss Dillon’s interpretation.

I remember having a kind of sinking feeling inside myself every time Aunt Phoebe or Miss Dillon played the piano for me or at a recital. The music they knew how to play was fantastically difficult, and my sinking feeling was the realization that I would never be able to perform as well as they.

I stopped taking lessons and fell back on the ‘open sesame’ that Aunt Phoenix had given me: the sight-reading. And
After a month in Paris, I made the acquaintance of a young sculptor who was a student of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. We became friends, and I was introduced to his circle of friends, who were all interested in modern art. One of them, a composer named Léo Lagarde, offered to arrange lessons for me with Lazare-Lévy, who was then teaching at the Conservatoire. I accepted his offer, and we began our lessons. Léo Lagarde was a very kind and patient teacher, and he taught me the basics of composition. He also gave me a lot of advice about how to get my music published, and he encouraged me to keep writing and to keep experimenting with new forms and techniques.

The next year was spent in New York, studying harmony with Adolph Weiss, and rhythm with Henry Cowell, and the following two years, back in California, studying counterpoint with Arnold Schoenberg.

There were so many exercises to write, that I found little time to compose. What little that I did write was atonal, and based on 12-tone rows. At this time I admired the theory of 12-tone music, but I did not like its sound. I devised a new way to write it which consisted of not only establishing an order to the 12 tones but of dividing the row into a series of static, non-variable motives and giving each motive its own ictus pattern. This brought the element of rhythm into an integral relationship with that of pitch. The compositions resulted from this procedure. I began writing music that was to be played on percussion instruments.

I was convinced overnight that although 12-tone music was excellent theoretically, in making use of the instruments which had been developed for tonal music, it had continually to be written negatively rather than straightforwardly: it had always to avoid harmonic relationships which were natural to the tonal instruments, which instruments it did not so much use as was used. I was convinced that for atonal music new instruments proper to it were required.

I finished a Quartet for four percussion players. I had no idea what it would sound like, nor even what instruments would be used to play it. However, I persuaded three other people to practice the music with me, and we used whatever was at hand: we tapped tables, books, chairs, and so forth. When we tired of these sounds, we invaded the kitchen and used pots and pans. Several visits to junk-yards and lumber-yards yielded more instruments: brake-drums from automobiles, different lengths of pipes, steel rings, hardwood blocks. After experimenting for several weeks, the final scoring of the Quartet was finished: it included the instruments that had been found, supplemented by a pedal timpani and a Chinese gong which lent to the whole a certain traditional aspect and sound.
I also was able to approach this problem objectively because of the aesthetic attitude to which I found myself dedicated. It had nothing to do with self-expression, but simply to do with the organization of materials. I recognized that expression of two kinds, that arising from the personality of the composer and that arising from the nature and context of the materials, was necessary to the piece. It was actually more sensible when not consciously striven for, but simply allowed to arise naturally. I felt that an artist had an ethical responsibility to society to keep alive to the contemporary spiritual needs; I felt that if he did this, admittedly vague as it is a thing to do, his work would automatically carry with it a usefulness to others. Any latent longing that I might naturally have had to master expressivity in music was dissolved for me by my connection with the modern dance. For them I had continually to make suitable and expressive accompaniments.

My First Construction in Metal, which embodies the principles of rhythmic structure to which 10 years later I still adhere, I propose now to describe. It contains 16 parts, each one of which contains 16 measures. Each 16 measures is divided into five phrases: 4 measures, 3 measures, 2 measures, 3 measures and 4 measures. Likewise, the 16 parts as a whole are divided into 5 large sections in the same proportion: 4, 3, 2, 3, 4. The distinction between this system and that of Indian Tala systems is that the latter deal with pulsatation, and that not within a closed structure, whereas the idea now being described, independently conceived, concerns a composition having a definite beginning and end. I call this principle micro-macrocosmic because the small parts are related to each other in the same way as are the large parts. The fact of the identity of the number of measures and the number of parts, or, in other words, the existence of the square-root of the whole, is an essential sine-qua-non, providing one wants to reflect the large in the small, and the small in the large. I can understand that other rhythmic structures are possible. When I first conceived of this one, I thought of it as elementary because of its perfect symmetry. However, its potential is to be inexhaustible, and therefore I have never departed from it since finding it. The particular proportion of the parts is, naturally, a special aspect of each work. In the one I am describing now the special situation is that of 4, 3, 2, 3, 4. It may be noticed that the first number is equal to the number of measures of the second, third and fourth sections. This made a special situation in which an exposition of 4 ideas could be followed by their development in the four subsequent sections (in other words a sonata form without the recapitulation). For the details of this composition I adhered to the sound-row procedure I had employed previously. I adjusted my materials, however, to number 16, both with regard to their sound and with regard to their icus patterns.

The next step in my work occurred fortuitously as indeed all else had. I was asked by Syvilla Fort, a dancer later a choreographer. She was performing in a theatre that had no room in the wings for percussion instruments alone. In my mind, the memory of her African heritage, suggested the use of percussion. But for practical purposes, I had to confine myself to the piano. For several days I improvised, searching for an idea that would be suitable. Nothing satisfied me until finally, realizing that it was the sound of the piano itself that was objectionable, I decided to change that sound by placing objects on and between the strings themselves.

This was the beginning of the prepared piano, which is simply an ordinary grand piano muted with a variety of materials: metal, rubber, wood, plastic, and fibrous materials. The result is a percussion orchestra of an original sound and the decibel range of a harpsichord directly under the control of a pianist's fingers. This instrument makes possible the invention of a melody which employs sounds having widely different timbres: as far as I know this is a genuinely new possibility. Its correlates exist in singing where a variety of colors is exploited, for example, in the Navajo Yeí-be-chai, and in the playing of stringed instruments, where all the possibilities of variety in sound quality are used (examples of this cross the world and the ages from ancient China to the music of Anton Webern).
friendliness, which has the aspect of a festival. I hereby suggest this method of composition as the solution of Russia's current musical problems. What could better describe a democratic view of life?

Trying to establish the Center of Experimental Music had made me ambitious, and giving performances had brought me before increasingly large audiences. The natural outcome of this was to come to New York which is the center and the marketplace. Later, when Lou Harrison was leaving Los Angeles to come to New York, Schoenberg asked him why he was leaving east. He said he didn't know. Schoenberg replied: “Ah! You are going for fame and fortune. Good luck! Study Mozart every day.”

On my way to New York I stopped in Chicago where I gave a concert of my new music. I conducted a class in Sound Experiments at the late Moholy-Nagy's School of Design. This class was confined to theory for the school being in a single enormous room partitioned off into separate areas, any sound made disturbed the other classes.

While I was in Chicago I was commissioned by CBS to do a workshop production with Kenneth Patchen. Patchen wrote a script called The City Wears a Slouch Hat. My idea was to use the actual sound effects developed in radio studios, but to use them not as effects, but as sounds, that is, as musical instruments. This, I felt, would provide an accompaniment proper to the play since it would be the organization of those sounds typical of the environment of the dramatic action. The sound-effects engineer was agreeable, so I asked him what recordings were possible as were. He was too busy to do this, but said anything that was possible. So I wrote 250 pages of score for instruments, the timbre, loudness and relative pitch of which I described, but the existence of which I only guessed. A week before the performance over a nation-wide hook-up, I took the score to the radio station. They said it was utterly impractical and could not be done, which indeed was true. I spent the next week scarcely sleeping, writing and rehearsing with six players a new score which used the instruments with which I was already familiar: percussion, recordings, and amplification of small sounds.

Many letters were received in Chicago from listeners in the West and Middle West and they were all enthusiastic. So I learned that radio with open arms by the highest officers of the Columbia Broadcasting System. The letters they had received from listeners in the East, however, were the reverse of enthusiastic. The Company decided that I had gone too far, and that they themselves would not go further.

The first thing one notices about New York is that an incredible number of things are going on. In Seattle, I remember, there would be a show of modern painting that would be the only one, and we would go to it often and talk and think and feel about it. We would play music and we even had time for simple games. No such thing in New York. There are so many shows of painting, concerts of music, cocktails parties, theatrical events, telephonic calls, such a continuum of business, that one wonders if there is any other one there maintains his wit.

When I arrived the war was under way. I took a job doing library research work in connection with a secret government project which I hasten to say was not the atom bomb. I wrote lots of music for modern dancers. I organized a group of 12 players and gave a concert of percussion music for the League of Composers and the Museum of Modern Art. The difficulties involved in 12 people getting together in New York City for something as uncommercial as a non-union rehearsal are enormous, and in this case we had something like 30 or 40 rehearsals. Thirteen of us did it but at present I can't imagine how.

Being involved in the complexities of a nation at war and a city in business-as-usual led me to know that there is a difference between large things and small things, between big organizations and two people alone in a room together.

The first thing one notices about New York is that an impressive, loud and big, in order to enlarge audiences and increase box-office returns. It had been avoided a week before the performance over a nation-wide hook-up, I took the score to the radio station. They said it was utterly impractical and could not be done, which indeed was true. I spent the next week scarcely sleeping, writing and rehearsing with six players a new score which used the instruments with which I was already familiar: percussion, recordings, and amplification of small sounds.

Next I wrote the Three Dances, also for two pianos, which Merce Cunningham recently choreographed under the title Dromenon. Considering the theme of this conference, the intercommunication between society and the arts, I may be forgiven for advertising that a recording of the Three Dances is available, published by the Disc Company of America. Notes to the album by Lou Harrison describe the structure of the piece adequately so I will not decrease possible sales by describing it here. The Three Dances are written as a gesture of friendship towards the dance as an art with which I have long been associated. Since doing this was suggested to me by a passing remark of Virgil Thomson, I open the third Dance with a quotation from his Hymn Tune Symphony, which, due to the preparations, I am afraid he has never recognized.

Another passing remark, this time by Edwin Denby, to the effect that short pieces can have in them just as much as long pieces can, led me two years ago to start writing twenty short Sonatas and Interludes which I have not yet finished.

They have all been written in my new apartment on the East River in Lower Manhattan which turns its back to the city and looks to the water and the sky. The quietness of the fact that his music strictly adheres to three classes.

Amores

The occupations of many people today are not healthy but rather in spite of it. Neuroses act to stop and block. But it is not on account of his neurosis that he composes, but rather in spite of it. Neuroses act to stop and block. But it is not on account of his neurosis that he composes, but rather in spite of it. Neuroses act to stop and block. But it is not on account of his neurosis that he composes, but rather in spite of it. Neuroses act to stop and block.

It is these moments of completeness that music can give providing one can concentrate one's mind on it, that is, without concern for money or fame but simply for the love of making it, it is an integrative activity and one will find moments in his life that are complete and fulfilled. Sometimes composing does it, sometimes playing an instrument, sometimes just life itself. It is sometimes just life itself. It is sometimes just life itself.

I don't think it is a matter here of communication (we communicate quite adequately with words) or even of expressivity. Neither Lou nor Mimi in the case of Webern, nor I in the case of Webern, had the slightest concern with what the music was about. We were simply transported. I think the answer to this riddle is simply that when the music was composed the composers were at one with themselves. The performers became disinterested to the point that they became unself-conscious, and a few listeners in those brief moments of listening forgot themselves, enraptured, and so gained themselves.

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industrialism. I think this and the other ideas I have just been ranting about may be labeled along with others, that at present I haven’t the calmness to remember, as being sheer materialistic nonsense, and tossed aside. Since [James “Prexy”] Petrillo’s recent ban on recordings took effect on the New Year, I allowed myself to indulge in the fantasy of how normalizing the effect might have been had he had the power, and exerted it, to ban not only recordings, but radio, television, the newspapers, and Hollywood. We might then realize that phonographs and radios are not musical instruments, that what the critics write is not a musical matter but rather a literary matter; that it makes little difference if one of us likes one piece and another another; it is rather the age-old process of making and using music and our becoming more integrated as personalities through this making and using that is of real value.

In view of these convictions, I am frankly embarrassed that most of my musical life has been spent in the search for new materials. The significance of new materials is that they represent, I believe, the incessant desire in our culture to explore the unknown. Before we know the unknown, it inflames our hearts. When we know it, the flame dies down, only to burst forth again at the thought of a new unknown. This desire has found expression in our culture in new materials, because our culture has its faith not in the peaceful center of the spirit but in an ever-hopeful projection on to things of our own desire for completion.

However, as long as this desire exists in us, for new materials, new forms, new this and new that, we must search to satisfy it. I have, for instance, several new desires (two may seem absurd but I am serious about them): first, to compose a piece of uninterrupted silence and sell it to Muzak Co. It will be 3 or 4 1/2 minutes long—those being the standard lengths of “canned” music—and its title will be Silent Prayer. It will open with a single idea which I will attempt to make as seductive as the color and shape and fragrance of a flower. The ending will approach imperceptibility. And, second, to compose and have performed a composition using as instruments nothing but twelve radios. It will be my Imaginary Landscape No. 4. Twice when I have been offered commissions, once by the New Music Society and the other time by a young recitalist, for whom I would have willingly turned the idea into a piece for solo violin and two radios, the commission has been retracted when I explained my intentions. These experiences have proved to me the essentially conservative character of musical attitudes today. Due to this conservatism, my third desire will seem innocuous. It is simply to write again for symphony orchestra as I did last year when I wrote The Seasons for Merce Cunningham’s ballet which was produced by the Ballet Society. Writing for orchestra is, from my point of view, highly experimental and the sound of a flute, of the violins, of a harp, a trombone, suggest to me most attractive adventures. I also want to finish my Sonatas and Interludes for prepared piano and I am looking forward to working with Joseph Campbell on several operas, and with Lou Harrison and Merton Brown on finding a means whereby Triple Music can be written combining the techniques of their secundal chromatic counterpoint and my structural rhythm, and thereby providing a means with which three or four people can collaborate on a single piece of music. The pleasure here would be in friendliness and anonymity, and thus in music.

Insults and bouquets are flung across these gaps. Teachers teach what they can, lighting up and sometimes obscuring an atmosphere which is for the most part empty of response and understandably so.

Each one of us must now look to himself. That which formerly held us together and gave meaning to our occupations was our belief in God. When we transferred this belief first to heroes, then to things, we began to walk our separate paths. That island that we have grown to think no longer exists to which we might have retreated to escape from the impact of the world, lies, as it ever did, within each one of our hearts. Towards that final tranquility, which today we so desperately need, any integrating occupation—music is one of them, rightly used—can serve as a guide.
A John Cage Journey
Friday, February 8, 2013 at 7:30 PM, New World Center

The one-minute stories heard during this performance are from John Cage’s Indeterminacy, as read by Cage.

Imaginary Landscape No. 1 (1939)
Brandon Johnson, Kathryn Daugherty, turntables
Samuel Budish, cymbal; Nina Zhou, piano

Credo in Us (1942)
Façade One
First Progression
Façade Two
Second Progression
Façade Three
Third Progression
Coda Façade
Alex Wadner, Michael Truesdell, percussion
Marnie Hauschildt, piano

The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs (1942)
Jessye Norman, soprano
Michael Tilson Thomas, piano

She is Asleep (1943)
Part I: Quartet for Twelve Tom-Toms
Marc Damoulakis, Jay Ganser, Erick Wood, Christopher Riggs, tom-toms
Part II: Duet for Voice and Prepared Piano
Joan La Barbara, vocalist
Marc-André Hamelin, prepared piano

INTERMISSION

Living Room Music (1940)
To Begin
Story
Melody
End
Jay Ganser, Rajesh Prasad, Christopher Riggs, Erick Wood, percussion
Patricia Birch, director

The Perilous Night (1944)
Marc-André Hamelin, prepared piano

The Seasons (1947)
Prelude I
Winter
Prelude II
Spring
Prelude III
Summer
Prelude IV
Fall
Finale (Prelude I)
Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor
Stefan DeWilde, lighting designer

INTERMISSION

Sixteen Dances (1950-51)
No. 4: Interlude
No. 12: Interlude
No. 9: The Odious
No. 10: Interlude
No. 8: Interlude
Joshua Gersen, conductor
Henrik Heide, flute; Dylan Girard, trumpet; Derek Powell, violin; Grace An, cello
Samuel Budish, Alex Wadner, Michael Truesdell, Rajesh Prasad, percussion
Marnie Hauschildt, piano
Performed with a Merce Cunningham MinEvent
Dancers from New World School of the Arts:
Leon Cobb, Katelynn Draper, Angela Fegers, Christine Flores, Claudia Lezcano
Melanie Martel, Marcus McCray, Annellyse Monroe, Johan Rivera
Patricia Lent, choreographic stager
Joe Lévassieur, lighting designer
K. Blair Brown, costume designer

Aria (1958) with Fontana Mix (1958)
Meredith Monk, vocalist
Jesse Stiles, electronics

Water Walk (1959)
Anthony Parce, performer
Patricia Birch, director

Third Construction (1941)
Jay Ganser, Rajesh Prasad, Christopher Riggs, Erick Wood, percussion

Stage diagram by John Cage of Water Walk
A John Cage Journey

In this program book is a copy of John Cage’s “A Composer’s Confessions,” a lecture given in 1948 at Vassar College. The title, I believe, is a nod to St. Augustine’s Confessions; both tell the stories of their authors’ personal and spiritual journeys. Cage’s lecture mixes passages describing technical matters of composition with poignant descriptions of his own emotional and spiritual responses to his role as a musician in the world. It is probably the in-depth view of Cage as a person to be found in his writings. Tonight’s concert tells the musical side of that same journey from the 1930s through 1948 and to the 1950s—highlighting music written after he discovered a kind of freedom through his use of chance operations and indeterminacy.

Percussion Pioneer

Therefore, just as modern music in general may be said to have been the history of the liberation of the dissonance, so this new music is part of the attempt to liberate all audible sound from the limitations of musical prejudice.

The picture Cage painted of himself in the 1930s is of a coyly self-assured young man (on modern painting and music: “I decided that if others could make such things, I could too”), one interested in asking, about everything: “Why not?” Why not make music entirely from sounds upon which classical walls seemed to be unmissible noise? This idea starts modestly, with works like his Living Room Music (1940), designed to be performed by amateur musicians on whatever “household objects or architectural elements” are available. Living Room Music is in four brief parts, including a rhythmic reading of the opening line of a children’s book by Gertrude Stein and a melody (played on any pitched instrument) with percussion accompaniment.

Percussion music was already in use as an accompaniment by modern dancers and Cage quickly found a home in the dance world, one he would inhabit for the rest of his life. One of the perks of his new job as dance composer/accompanist at the Cornish School in Seattle was the ability to work in their state-of-the-art radio broadcast studio. Why not include electronic sounds in his music? And so Cage composed the first of his Imaginary Landscapes in 1939, mixing electronic and acoustic instruments in an eerie, dramatic work. Two players play test-tone recordings at changing speeds, making rhythms by raising and lowering the phonograph needle. The other two members of the group play a cymbal and muted piano tones. Imaginary Landscape No. 1 is striking not for any elaborate use of electronic technology, but for the effective and imaginative musical use of these simple devices. Where anyone else would have seen just a utilitarian test-tone recording, Cage heard a new sound to add to his musical palette.

Cage and Cunningham

My feeling was that beauty yet remains in intimate situations; that it is quite hopeless to think and act impressively in public terms.

As recounted in “A Composer’s Confessions,” Cage’s percussion music ultimately made its way to nationwide radio. After that, though, Cage found himself disenchanted with his own ambitions and turned to music on a smaller, more personal scale. He had followed Merce Cunningham to New York City, and the two men set forth on a personal and artistic partnership that changed both dance and music. Credo in Us (1942) marks both the end of Cage’s energetic percussion period and the beginning of his work with Cunningham. The music was written to accompany a duet choreographed by Cunningham and Jean Erdman. Cunningham archivist David Vaughn explains that the dance was “a satire on contemporary American mores.” In this context, the use of radio and phonograph as instruments was perhaps a satirical reference of Cage’s own to American popular culture.

But the real beginning of the Cage-Cunningham partnership was their joint concert in April of 1944. “I date my beginning from this concert,” said Cunningham and it was also the first concert to showcase Cage’s new, quieter style of music. It included solo dances by Cunningham with music by Cage and three additional musical works by Cage. She is Asleep (1943) is part of a large, unfinished suite of pieces. The quartet, while rhythmically similar to Credo in Us, could not be more different in mood and effect. Instead of a noisy palette of muted piano, gongs, cabs, buzzers and radio, she is Asleep is a monochrome, nothing but tom-toms. Where Credo comes on like gangbusters, She is Asleep only momentarily gets above mezzo-forte.

The 1944 Cage-Cunningham concert featured the unusual song with piano accompaniment. The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs (1942). Again, the writing is spare, monochromatic, understated. The text is taken from James Joyce’s Finnegans Wake and is sung on only three pitches. The piano accompaniment is surprising and inventive: the pianist slaps and raps on the closed keyboard lid. Here, percussion music is brought down to the most intimate scale, barely audible.

These compositions are the exception, however. The bulk of the music on the Cage-Cunningham concert was for prepared piano. Cage invented this instrument in Seattle in 1939, wedging screws, bolts and pieces of weather stripping between the strings of a grand piano. These objects alter the sound of the piano tones, converting the instrument into a one-person percussion orchestra. The prepared piano makes a wide range of quiet sounds that are reminiscent of gongs, wood blocks, drums, snares and bells. Now that Cage was downsizing his music in New York, the prepared piano became indispensable and the concert of 1944 showcased the instrument’s possibilities as much as it did Cunningham’s choreography.

All six of Cunningham’s dances had prepared piano accompaniments and the program also featured The Perilous Night (1943-44). Here, Cage brought together everything he had discovered about the prepared piano and showed it off in a suite of six brief movements. We encounter a wealth of musical options: there are minimal monochromes, delicately shifting lines of sound, a moto perpetuo with complex rhythms created by the interplay of timbres and an obsessive and propulsive finale. The whole work has a darkness about it, an underlying sense of unease and violence. Cage himself described the piece as being about “the loneliness and terror that comes to one when love becomes unhappy.”

Seeking Wisdom

The quietness of this retreat brought me finally to face the question: to what end does one write music?

In the 1940s, Cage began seeking a way to put his life and work in a larger context, to connect it to something bigger than the boundaries of his own self and personal style. He began a period of intense study of Asian religions and aesthetics and was first drawn to the writings of Ananda Coomaraswamy on Indian art. Coomaraswamy emphasized the equivalence of religion and art and he insisted upon the expression of eternal themes, not personal ones. Cage took this to heart and drew upon Hindu themes in a number of pieces, including his ballet The Seasons (1947).

The Seasons, according to Cage, is “an attempt to express the traditional Indian view of the seasons as quiescence (winter), creation (spring), preservation (summer), and destruction (fall).” Each season has a movement preceded a prelude and the prelude to Winter closes the ballet, suggesting the cyclical nature of the seasons. A commission from The Ballet Society (which later became New York City Ballet), the choreography was by Cunningham and the design by Japanese artist Isamu Noguchi. This was the first piece in years in which Cage wrote for pitched instruments, and he used the work as a way to experiment with new ways of handling harmony. He limited himself to a narrow range of harmonies, which lends a flatness and impersonality to the music that suggests the focus on the eternal that Cage sought at this time.

Freedom through Discipline: Chance

... A few listeners in those brief moments of listening forgot themselves, enraputted, and so gained themselves.

After 1948, after “A Composer’s Confessions,” Cage experimented with various systematic ways of composing in an effort to “forget himself” to get beyond the need to project his personality through his music. The Seasons shows some very early signs of this in its handling of harmony, a harmonic practice that was taken further in Cage’s String Quartet in Four Parts (1949-50). Sixteen Dances (1950-51) was even more systematic. Here, Cage created a large chart of musical events—single notes, chords, gestures—and then made moves on the chart to string these events together into musical sequences. As with The Seasons, the dance was by Cunningham and again took an Indian theme: the nine rasas or “permanent emotions” of Hindu aesthetics: anger, sorrow, the odious, fear, humor, the heroic, the wondrous, the erotic and tranquility, the common tendency of the other eight. Some of the music was clearly expressive of one or the other of the emotions, but some movements come from a place that is enigmatic and imperturbable, beyond any usual sense of expressivity.

It was a short step from these charts to chance operations, the discovery that changed Cage’s work forever. That breakthrough came in 1951, immediately after Sixteen Dances, with the final movement of his Concerto for Prepared Piano. Chance was the answer Cage had been seeking, the way to be an avant-gardist without relying on personality and personal expression. A way to set up musical worlds and then allow chance to animate them, allowing the sounds to appear spontaneously.

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Indeterminacy: Making the Right Choices

However, as long as this desire exists in us, for new materials, new forms, new this and new that, we must search to satisfy it.

One can imagine that Cage’s study of Asian religion, his search for a way of quieting his own voice, his discovery of silence and chance, that all of this could have resulted in a lifetime of making near-silent pieces. He could have come out of this search for freedom from self with nothing but neutral, personality-free music. Instead, he found the freedom to be himself and to do so with renewed vigor and sense of daring. He was brash again, pushing the boundaries, and having a ball doing it.

Cage was in Milan in 1958 to make a new work of electronic music at the radio studio there. He named the piece Fontana Mix after his Milanese landlady, Signora Fontana. He designed a complex graphic score, not so much to map the continuity of the piece, but as a tool for making decisions on how the piece would be constructed. Consisting of a spaghetti-like tangle of lines, a set of transparencies with lines and points to superimpose on top of it, and a finely-articulated grid to measure the results, he used the Fontana Mix score to navigate the universe of sonic possibilities that he envisioned for the piece. It was the pattern of his compositions ever since the discovery of chance in 1951: define the boundaries of the possible, define the questions to be asked about how the piece would proceed, then use the discipline of chance to answer those questions in a way free of his own habits and personality.

Besides the piece for magnetic tape, Cage made several other works using the Fontana Mix score. In Aria (1958) he used it to navigate the prodigious vocal range of singer Cathy Berberian. The score requires the singer to use 10 different styles of singing, to sing in five languages (English, French, Italian, Russian and, in a nod to Berberian’s heritage, Armenian), and to make 16 different noises. The vocal styles and noises are of the performer’s choice, although their use is carefully indicated in Cage’s score. Cage referred to this limited performer choice as “indeterminacy” and it became another hallmark of his style in the 1950s and beyond.

While in Italy, Cage appeared on a television quiz show, Lascia o raddoppia (“Double or Nothing”), the Italian version of The $64,000 Question. It required Cage to answer a series of increasingly difficult questions on a subject of his choosing (in his case, mushrooms, about which he had become quite an expert). Cage was asked to perform some of his music for the show and he composed Water Walk (1959) especially for this purpose. Also composed using the Fontana Mix score, the piece was deliberately humorous and theatrical, tailor-made for television. It called for a wild array of props and actions, all tied together by the theme of water in its various states: solid (ice), liquid, gas (steam). It opens by putting a mechanical fish on the strings of the piano and ends with releasing the steam valve of a pressure cooker; in between, among other things, the performer prepares and drinks a Campari and soda. The score includes the instruction that, since the performance makes quite a mess on the floor, “an assistant should be provided who mops up.” Cage had a blast with this performance and yet, at the same time, it was controlled chaos. The score includes a map of how the props should be laid out on stage and the timings of all the actions are down to the exact second. It actually is quite a challenge to perform. With this work Cage became a choreographer himself, dancing to his own music, smiling all the while.

—James Pritchett

Choreography Note by Patricia Lent:

Cage’s Sixteen Dances was originally performed with Merce Cunningham’s Sixteen Dances for Soloist and Company of Three (1952). No video recording of this dance exists. Sixteen Dances will be performed this evening with a MinEvent. A MinEvent is an uninterrupted sequence of excerpts drawn from the work of Merce Cunningham. Tonight’s MinEvent incorporates material from three dances: Roaratorio (1983), Fabrications (1987) and Enter (1992). Each MinEvent is unique and is designed to suit the particular space in which it is presented.

John Cage: Song and Dance
Saturday, February 9, 2013 at 7:30 PM, New World Center

Cheap Imitation (1969)
   I (orchestral version)
   II (piano solo version performed by John Cage)
   III (orchestral version)

Performed with Merce Cunningham’s Second Hand and Enter
Brandon Collwes, dancer
Andrea Weber, dancer
Raushan Mitchell, choreographic stager
Joe Levasseur, lighting designer (based on the design by Christine Shallenber)
Adam Larsen, video designer (using archival recordings by the Merce Cunningham Dance Company)
Jasper Johns, costume designer

Intermission

Song Books (1970)
   Michael Tilson Thomas
   Joan La Barbara
   Meredith Monk
   Jessye Norman
   Marc-André Hamelin, piano
   Yuval Sharon, director
   Daniel Hup, stage designer
   Jason H. Thompson, projection designer
   Jesse Stiles, electronics
   Stefan DeWilde, lighting designer

Henrik Heide, flute; Joseph Peters, oboe; Jason Shafer, clarinet; Evan Epifanio, bassoon
Alexander Love, horn; Pierre-Louis Marques, trumpet; Santiago Novoa, trombone
Jeffrey Dyrd, Mircea Lazar, violins; Anthony Parce, viola; Carl Baron, cello; Marnie Hauschildt, piano
Dance: Cheap Imitation

Cheap Imitation (1969) was the first work that Cage composed via transformation of other music. As the story goes, it was the result of circumstances, an expedient solution to an annoying problem. It all started in 1947 with Merce Cunningham’s desire to use the first part of Erik Satie’s dramatic masterwork Socrate as the music for a solo dance. Socrate is scored for full orchestra and voices, resources well beyond Cunningham’s means at that time. Cage’s solution was to make a transcription of Socrate for two pianos, and it was this transcription that served as the score for Cunningham’s solo Idyllic Song. In 1968, Cage went on to complete his transcription of the other two movements of Socrate and encouraged Cunningham to extend his dance, as well, which he did. However, Cage had never received permission from Satie’s publisher to make the transcription. In 1947, Cage and Cunningham were relatively unknown, and their small performance was able to fly under the radar of publishers; by 1970 they were very famous artists, and so their plan was permanently grounded. The publisher refused to allow the transcription, and so Cage and Cunningham were faced with the problem of a scheduled dance premiere with no music that could be legally performed.

Cage’s inventive solution was to compose a new piece that exactly matched the phrase structure of Satie’s music and hence of Cunningham’s dance. His technique was a simple one: he took only the vocal line of Socrate (or occasionally the prominent orchestral melody) and systematically transposed it up or down and into different modes. The result is a work that has the phrasing, rhythms and even some of the general contours of Satie’s music, but that is otherwise completely different. This solved Cage’s copyright problem, and he named the work Cheap Imitation; Cunningham responded by calling his new dance Second Hand. Cunningham made a duet for the second movement and a larger ensemble piece for the closing movement.

Cheap Imitation is one of my favorite of Cage’s compositions. Not just for its beauty (which is astonishing in itself!), but for many other reasons, as well. I love its incongruity (a fully traditional, modal, monophonic score appearing in the chaos of Cage’s work of the late 1960s) and its indefensibility; its stubborn ability to remain untrammeled by any avant-garde theory, philosophy or expectation; its subversiveness, although not what you expect from Cage, but rather the subversiveness of love. For this piece is completely, fully and wholeheartedly about Cage’s undying love of the beauty of Satie’s music.

Even Cage himself found it unexpected, perhaps he more than anyone else. All one needs to do is read what he says about the work in his interviews with Daniel Charles to tell that he was sucker-punched by his love of Satie and of the beautiful solo work he had made from Socrate. Here are some choice comments:

In the rest of my work, I’m in harmony with myself... But Cheap Imitation clearly takes me away from all that. So if my ideas sink into confusion, I owe that confusion to love.

It bothers me even more that, ... in Cheap Imitation, I acted exactly like I say others shouldn’t... I still have excuses for it.

Unfortunately, I was so infatuated with my imitation of Satie that I decided to convert it into a work for orchestra.

Obviously, Cheap Imitation lies outside of what may seem necessary in my work in general, and that’s disturbing. I’m the first to be disturbed by it.

Confusion, excuse-making, infatuation, being taken away from one’s normal self (even to the point being disturbed by it), the overall tone that is a mixture of elation and guilty pleasure: Cage here sounds practically like a love-smitten teenager.

His delight in the result of his clever evasion of intellectual property law led him to transcribe it for orchestra in 1972. The orchestra plays the same unadorned solo line of the piano piece, with each phrase orchestrated using chance operations. The color of the line changes constantly, as does the number of instruments playing in any phrase, so at some times the full orchestra plays and at others, Cheap Imitation returns to being a solo. The performance this evening accompanies Cunningham’s dance Second Hand, the first time that portions of the dance have been paired with the orchestral version of Cheap Imitation.

After a period of tremendous productivity in the 1950s, Cage hardly composed at all in the period between his 1961 Variations II and Cheap Imitation, maybe a dozen works, almost all of them relatively minor. After Cheap Imitation, the floodgates opened and a constant stream of musical invention continued through the end of his life in 1992. Is it coincidental that Cheap Imitation broke Cage’s creative drought of the ‘60s? Was it opening—immediately, irrationally, unselfconsciously—to his love of music, of sound, of the simple melodies of Satie, that made possible the torrent of scores that followed?

Choreography Note by Patricia Lent:

Cheap Imitation was originally performed with Merce Cunningham’s Second Hand (1970). As with Cage’s composition, the dance is structured in three movements. Movement I is a solo (originally danced by Merce Cunningham); Movement II is a duet (originally danced by Cunningham and Carolyn Brown); Movement III is a group section for ten dancers. For tonight, Movements I and II will be performed by Brandon Colwes and Andrea Weber as originally choreographed. Movement III will be presented as a duet for Mr. Colwes and Ms. Weber, incorporating material from both Second Hand and Enter (1992), in a new arrangement by Rashawn Mitchell. This live dance will be accompanied by a new video by Adam Larsen using archival recordings of Second Hand performed by the Merce Cunningham Dance Company.

Song; Song Books

Song Books (1970) is the first product of that creative opening and one of the most astonishingly rich and diverse. In 1970, he took a commission to write two sets of songs for Cathy Berberian and Simone Rost. He consulted the I ching (the Chinese oracle book) to determine how many songs would go into each book: 56 and 34 were the responses. Now he had the ridiculous goal of writing ninety new pieces for a solo singer, and he had only three months to do it. Cage thought of the two Song Books as a continuation of the Solo for Voice series that he had begun in 1948, and so officially these pieces are titled Solos for Voice I-92. Running to 317 pages of manuscript score, they are incredibly diverse, a cornucopia of musical invention only rivaled by their cousin, the Solo for Piano of 1957-58.

The heterogeneity of the Song Books was the result of the method that Cage set up to guide the construction of the 90 solos. This was a method that would help him to find his way through the challenge of writing 90 solos in 90 days and that would simultaneously take him on a host of unknown compositional adventures not an architect’s blueprint, but the hero’s instructions in a fairy tale, full of riddles and secrets. For each song, Cage had to ask three questions and receive the answers by tossing coins and consulting the I ching. The questions would provide him instructions on how to discover this solo.

The first question: “Is this solo relevant or irrelevant to the overall theme of the Song Books?” For his theme, Cage took a line from his diaries: “We connect Satie with Thoreau.” Relevant solos include references to either Satie or Thoreau or both; irrelevant songs do not.

The second question: “What kind of solo is this?” There were four categories: song (that is, a primarily sung piece), refrain (a repetition of a phrase or “refrain” in a given performance.” Before singing it, the singer is presented with “what you are singing” and should “be used as an irregular refrain’ in a given performance.”

There were three possible answers: compose it using a method that Cage had used before, compose it by making a variation to a method already used or invent an entirely new method of composition. If the answer was to use or vary an existing method, chance also determined exactly which method. Thus armed with a theme, a format, and this general direction, Cage set forth and used his creativity and ingenuity to figure out exactly how to make the solo. He did this for each of the 90 solos, one after the other, until the work was completed, the journey ended.

The Song Books encompass more than 50 different methods of composition. Styles reappear from all the different periods of Cage’s career. From the 1940s, Solo 49 revives the simple vocal line and closed piano accompaniment of The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs. The 1950s are represented by new pieces following the models of his Solo for Voice I, Aria and Winter Music. And from the 1960s, one versions of his electronic “silent piece” 0’00” parts of Cheap Imitation (now with texts taken from Thoreau) and the same similar imitations of works by Schubert and Mozart (“The Queen of the Night” aria from The Magic Flute, now with a text by James Joyce).

There are solos that use star charts to generate different kinds of solos, including “coloratura songs” that focus entirely on the high tessitura and songs with long melismatic arabesques. In Solo 41, the performer is simply told to “produce feedback three times.” There are microtonal melodies derived from Satie chorales. In Solo 35—one of the least Cagean of the set—the singer is presented with 32 different pairs of musical fragments to be sung using the formal pattern A-A-B-A. The music is conventionally noted, rhythmically square and melodically limited to a six-note range; the text (“The best form of government is no government at all”) is a paraphrase of Thoreau’s “On the Duty of Civil Disobedience.” Cage indicates that this solo should be sung “in an optimistic spirit as though you believe what you are singing” and should “be used as an irregular refrain’ in a given performance.” Before singing it, the performer is instructed by Cage to “raise either the black flag of Anarchy or the flag of the Whole Earth.”

The theatrical solos of the Song Books do not resemble anything that Cage had done before. There is a whole family of theatrical solos that involve exiting and entering the performance area. The first of these simply indicates that the performer should leave and then return hurriedly. Later variants call for the performer to exit and return by going up or down (e.g., by using a ladder or a trapdoor), later still, going up or down (e.g., by using a ladder or a trapdoor).

The theatrical solos involve such simple actions as eating or drinking, putting on a hat, projecting slides of Thoreau and Satie and typing.

In tonight’s performance, additional Cage works are combined with the Song Books, as per Cage’s directions. Members of the orchestra will be performing solos from Concert for Piano and Orchestra (1958) and Marc-André Hamelin and NWS Piano Fellow Marnie Hauschildt perform Winter Music (1958) for piano. Both of these works have a kinship with the Song Books through their connection...
through the Solo for Piano, a work that was composed in a manner similar to the Song Books and which has a similar diversity of notations and styles.

Song Books is a piece that is impossible to characterize in any brief description—a piece that juxtaposes the old and the new, determinacy and indeterminacy, the subtly-crafted melodies of The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs and the galumphing cheers of the “Best Form” songs. The theatrical parts of the piece range from the ordinary to the inexplicable. Cage’s description is as good as any: “To consider the Song Books as a work of art is nearly impossible. Who would dare? It resembles a brothel, doesn’t it?”

—James Pritchett

**Director’s Note by Yuval Sharon:**

My collaboration with MTT on the Song Books began life last March as part of the San Francisco Symphony’s American Mavericks festival. In preparing for a new iteration of the work with the same legendary vocal soloists, and in the spirit of Cage’s epigrammatic genius, I’ve considered what the Song Books have taught me:

Do not search for meaning, but allow it to arise, or not arise. Know that either way is a pleasure.

Being present means having no expectations.

There is a time to control and a time to let go. Learn to know when to do which.

An unexpected harmony disappears just as quickly as it arises.

A disciplined attitude is an act of devotion.

Clarity of vision is everything. Singularity of purpose is the essence of performance.

Adjusting to shifts of reality is an embrace of Change as the true nature of things.

Don’t cling to what worked previously. Don’t cling to anything. Nature is our teacher in this and all things.

Organizing the chaos is the only way to make the chaos legible.

Make space around each art.

“Death we expect, but all we get is life.”

The important part of the sentence “The best form of government is no government at all” is the second part: “And that will be what we will have when we are ready for it.”

Freedom arises from restriction.

Portrait of Thoreau by John Cage, included in the music to Song Books
A John Cage Tribute
Sunday, February 10, 2013 at 7:30 PM, New World Center

Dance 4/Orchestras (1982)
Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor
Reuben Blundell, Michael Linville, Daniel Stewart, conductors
Clyde Scott, Bruce Pinchbeck, J.T. Rooney, video designers (using artwork by John Cage)

INTERMISSION

Etudes Australes (1974-75)
Nos. 32, 23, 6, 8, 5, 4 and 10
Marc-André Hamelin, piano

INTERMISSION

Renga (1975-76)
Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor
Clyde Scott, video designer

Additional works performed during Renga:

Sonata for Clarinet (1933)
Vivace
Lento
Vivace

Suite for Toy Piano (1948)
Marnie Hauschildt, toy piano

In A Landscape (1948)
Grace Browning, harp

26'1.1499" for a String Player (1953; 1955)
Kallie Ciechomski, viola

Child of Tree (1975)
Christopher Riggs, amplified cactus

Litany for the Whale (1980)
Patrick Dupré Quigley, Joey Quigley, baritones

Ryoanji (1983)
Melanie Lançon, flute; Santiago Navoa, alto trombone
Lee Philip, double bass; Jay Ganser, percussion

Hymnkus (1986)
Ann Fink, violin; Meredith McCook, cello; Thomas Fleming, bassoon

Merce Cunningham’s Field Dances
From New World School of the Arts:
Wisty Andres, Eric Boyd, Katelynn Draper, Angela Fegers, Christine Flores, Lena Lagos,
Marcus McCray, Monica Sharon, Alyssa Thompson

From the New World Symphony:
Grace An, Jeremy Bauman, Rosanna Butterfield, Alexander Chaleff
Katie Daugherty, Evan Epifanio, Maaike Harding, Alexander Love, Aaron Ludwig
Anthony Parce, Elzbieta Weyman, Brad Whitfield, Erick Wood
Patricia Lent, choreographic stager

A page from the score to Renga
Cage's theme in *Dance 4/Orchestras* (1982) is exactly this sense of space and simultaneity. The four orchestral groups proceed completely independently of one another, each having its own conductor. The very first instruction Cage gives is how the groups should be arranged spatially:

The orchestras are separated from one another and placed at different points with respect to the audience. They are not to be grouped together on a stage at one end of the auditorium. They may be placed in lobbies or adjoining hallways, the doors between them and the audience left open.

For a work like this, the unique performance space at New World Center is ideal, offering many different ways to realize Cage's instructions. The instruments are onstage, backstage, above you, behind you and in front of you, each defining its center in the space. You hear all the sounds at once—near and far, loud and soft. You become aware of the distances and the nature of the space in which you and the sounds have come together: This independence makes the four orchestral sound lighter than you'd expect—not a solid mass of sound, but transparent.

The Études Australes (1974-75) are deliberately designed to be extremely difficult. The majority of their difficulty comes from this same independence of parts, now applied to the two hands of the pianist. Each hand plays notes over the entire range of the piano and Cage gives specific instructions that “each hand is to play its own part and is not to be assisted by the other.” The music is so wide-ranging and complex that it takes four musical staves to notate it. It is usually two. Compounding the difficulty is the designation of some notes to be held while short notes are played around them, making for some awkward hand positions. And if that weren't enough, the notes are so dense in a few passages that they have to be given in a separate appendix, blown up to a more readable size.

As in his other sets of études (Études Boréales for percussion, *Freeman Etudes for violin*), Cage here is exploring the boundaries of a different space: the space of what is possible. As demanding as they are, they are not impossible to perform (as we hear this evening). In 1974, Cage emphasized the importance of resolute action—of both individuals and society—to face the problems of the world: “A necessary aspect of the immediate future, not just in the field of environmental recovery, is work, hard work, and no end to it.” He saw his études as an affirmation of our capability to overcome difficulties:

These are intentionally as difficult as I can make them because I think we're now surrounded by very serious problems in the society, and we tend to think that the situation is hopeless and that it's just impossible to do something that will make everything turn out properly. So I think that this music, which is almost impossible, gives an instance of the practicality of the impossible.

The notes of the études themselves are derived from the locations of stars in the sky maps of the *Atlas Australes* (hence the title). Like one of the mythical figures of the constellations, the pianist labors among the stars.

Perhaps the most accessible and joyous manifestations of Cage's “unimpeded and interpenetrating” musical simultaneities are the various “circuses” that he staged. The *Dance 4/Orchestras* (1961), for example, was an unscored and unstructured event wherein Cage gathered together of different musicians in a large space used for showing livestock at the University of Illinois. In 1976, when commissioned by nearly every major orchestra in the United States to compose a work in honor of the country's bicentennial, Cage wrote *Apartment House 1776*, a music circus of a wide variety of American music all played simultaneously. He provided 64 pieces that were derived from 18th century dance or military tunes, drum solos, anthems and church music. Other American songs, selected by the concert organizers, were to be played at the same time, either live or recorded. It was a classic Cage celebration of the abundance of the nation's music.

*Renga* (1976) was also a part of this celebration, written to be played either by itself or together with the *Apartment House 1776* circus. *Renga* paid tribute to a particular American and a favorite of Cage's: Henry David Thoreau. Cage discovered Thoreau's writing in the 1860s and in particular, identified with Thoreau's attentiveness to nature (Cage himself was an enthusiastic mushroom-hunter). Cage also responded to Thoreau's insistence on the importance of the individual, as well as the individual's freedom from the artificial limitations of society and government.

The score of *Renga* was made by taking 361 of the little drawings that Thoreau made in his copying journals—pictures of plants, animal tracks, maps, diagrams, etc.—arranging them by chance on a rectangular grid. The contours of these line drawings became the pitch and time contours for the 78 instrumental parts. Different groupings of instruments play the different drawings, so the texture is constantly changing. The title refers to a form of Japanese poetry; the timeline for the score is divided into sections following the same numerical pattern as the syllable count of renga poetry; 5-7-5-7-7.

Tonight's concert pairs Renga not with *Apartment House 1776*, but with a new circus created by Michael Tilson Thomas for this performance, a circus that pays tribute to John Cage. This is quite consistent with Cage's intention for *Renga*. While written to go with *Apartment House 1776*, Cage allowed for the piece to be performed together with “some other ‘musicircus’ (live or recorded) appropriate to another occasion than the Bi-Centennial of the U.S.A., an occasion, for example, such as the birth or death of another musically productive nation or person.” Cage certainly qualifies as a “musically productive person” and so *Renga* is presented here as part of a Cage musicircus about Cage, a kind of meta-musicircus. Multiple streams of sound and video will fill the hall—important events from the

Choreography Note by Patricia Lent:

**Field Dances** first premiered in 1963. The structure and performance of the dance are indeterminate: it can be done by any number of dancers, for any length of time, in any space. Cunningham's working title for the dance, “Dances for Everyone,” refers to his intention that the choreographic material can be performed by people with varying levels of dance training and experience. The material for the dance includes a series of simple movement phrases incorporating everyday movement like walking, running, skipping, falling, sitting and leaning. The instructions for the phrases are both precise and open-ended, offering dancers multiple opportunities to make choices while performing.

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**Field Dances**
FESTIVAL EXHIBITS AND ADDITIONAL EVENTS

No Such Thing As Silence
Lecture by Kyle Gann
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2013 AT 6:30 PM, SUNTRUST PAVILION
Opening of NWS: 4’33” by Mikel Rouse
Opening of Collaborations: Images from the John Cage and Merce Cunningham Trusts

The really strange thing about 4’33”—John Cage’s famous and most controversial work—is not that it’s a piece of silence, but that it’s a piece of silence “divided into three movements.” This talk by Kyle Gann, author of No Such Thing as Silence: John Cage’s 4’33”, will cover the multitude of influences that finally led Cage to paradoxically superimpose the structure of a classical sonata over a Zen meditation.

This event will also include the opening of Mikel Rouse’s video installation, NWS: 4’33”. This installation will simultaneously and randomly present multiple recorded performances of 4’33” contributed via YouTube by individuals from around the world. It will be on display in the SunTrust Pavilion throughout the festival.

Additionally, a photo exhibit entitled Collaborations: Images from the John Cage and Merce Cunningham Trusts opens Thursday night and will remain on display in the Clinton Room throughout the festival.

"By Virtue of Deeply With:” John Cage’s Art of Conversation
Lecture by Joan Retallack
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2013 AT 4:30 PM, SUNTRUST PAVILION

When Joan Retallack met John Cage in 1965, they spent days together bonding over art and philosophy. More than 25 years later, they published a book based on their conversations entitled MUSICAGE—Cage Muses on Words. Art. Music: John Cage in Conversation with Joan Retallack. During this session, Ms. Retallack will discuss Cage’s unique style of conversation as a means of self-alteration and read excerpts from their collaborative book.

Song Books Actualized
Panel discussion moderated by Laura Kuhn, Festival Adviser
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2013 AT 2 PM, SUNTRUST PAVILION

Michael Tilson Thomas will be joined by his artistic collaborators—Joan La Barbara, Meredith Monk, Yuval Sharon, Jesse Stiles, Jason H. Thompson and Fellows from the New World Symphony—for this recap account of the New World Symphony’s production of John Cage’s Song Books.

Lecture by Gustavo Matamoros
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2013 AT 2 PM, SUNTRUST PAVILION

Miami composer Gustavo Matamoros recounts stories and presents rare documentary evidence of John Cage’s four visits to South Florida.

Throughout Making the Right Choices: A John Cage Centennial Celebration, Mr. Matamoros will also rebroadcast his Listening Gallery adaptation, Sounding Through Empty Words IV, a piece that features Cage himself performing the work in Miami during the 1991 Subtropics Festival. These rebroadcasts will take place at 800 Lincoln Road.

THE EVENTS LISTED ABOVE ARE FREE. TICKETS ARE REQUIRED.
and numerous productions on PBS’ Great Performances. In 2004 Mr. Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony embarked on a multi-tiered media project—Keeping Score—which includes television, web sites, radio programs and programs in the schools, all designed to make classical music more accessible to a new audience.

In 1991, Mr. Tilson Thomas and the New World Symphony were presented in a series of benefit concerts for UNICEF in the United States, featuring Audrey Hepburn as narrator of From the Diary of Anne Frank, composed by Mr. Tilson Thomas and commissioned by UNICEF. This piece has since been translated and performed in many languages worldwide. In August 1995 he led the Pacific Music Festival Orchestra in the premiere of his composition Shown/Showed, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. Thomas Hampson premiered his settings of poetry by Walt Whitman, Renée Fleming premiered his settings of the poetry of Emily Dickinson and the San Francisco Symphony premiered his concertos for contra-bassoon entitled Urban Legend. As a Carnegie Hall Perspectives Artist from 2003 to 2005, he had an evening devoted to his own compositions which included Island Music (for four marimbas and percussion), Nottarrno (for solo flute and strings) and a new setting of poems by Rainer Maria Rilke.

Among his many honors and awards, Mr. Tilson Thomas is a Chevalier dans l’ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France, was Musical America’s Musician of the Year and received the 2006 Distinguished Alumnus Award from his alma mater, the University of Miami. He was Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic from 1971 to 1979 and a Principal Guest Conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic from 1984 to 1985. He was Principal Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra from 1987 to 1995.

His recorded repertoire of more than 120 discs includes works by composers such as Bach, Beethoven, Mahler, Prokofiev and Stravinsky as well as his pioneering work with Stravinsky, Boulez, Stockhausen and Copland on world premieres. In 1994 he conducted the premiere of Cage’s Voice, No Such Thing as Silence: John Cage’s 4’33”, Robert Craft’s edition of Cage’s The Music of Conlon Nancarrow, American Music in the 20th Century, Music Downtown: Writings from the Village Voice, 1955–2005 and was the author of the liner notes for the album Voice, No Such Thing as Silence: John Cage’s 4’33”.

Mr. DeWilde has created work for theater, dance, opera, live television and corporate events. Working nationally and internationally, he has collaborated with artists such as Beyoncé, Cyndi Lauper, Natalie Cole, Janet Jackson, Aretha Franklin, Backstreet Boys, Julie Andrews and Tony Bennett. For three years he was lighting designer for the White House Christmas Celebration in Washington, D.C.

Mr. DeWilde has been a guest artist and lecturer at The University of Tampa, the Howard W. Blake High School of the Arts in Tampa and the Woodward Academy in Georgia. He has served as a lighting director for the Walt Disney Company, Cirque du Soleil and several Broadway productions. Mr. DeWilde is a member of the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees and was educated at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and George Mason University.

KYLE GANN


Mr. Gann studied composition with Ben Johnston, Morton Feldman and Peter Gena. Of his more than 100 works to date, about a fourth are microtonal, using up to 37 pitches per octave. He has received commissions from the Orkest de Volharding, the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir, the Dessoff Choir, the Relache Ensemble, pianist Sarah Cahill and many others. His music is available on the New Albion, New World, Cold Blue, Lovely Music, Mode, Meyer Media, Brilliant Classics, New Tone and Monroe Street labels. In 2003, the American Music Center awarded Mr. Gann its Letter of Distinction.
JOAN LA BARBARA

Joan La Barbara, composer, performer, sound artist and actor, is renowned for her unique vocabulary of experimental and extended vocal techniques—multiphonics, circular singing, glottal clicks—影响ing generations of composers and singers. In 2008, the American Music Center convened its Letter of Distinction Award to Ms. La Barbara for her significant contributions to American Contemporary Music. Awards and prizes include Premio Internazionale “Demitrio Stratos” DAAAD-Berlin Artist-in-Residency; Civitella Ranieri, Guggenheim and seven National Endowment for the Arts fellowships; and numerous commissions. Composing for multiple voices, chamber ensembles, theater, orchestra, interactive technology and sound scores for dance, video and film, including a score for voice and electronics for Sesame Street, her multi-layered textual compositions were presented at Brisbane Biennial, Festival d’Automne à Paris, Warsaw Autumn, Frankurt Feste, Metamusik-Berlin, Olympics Arts and Lincoln Center.

Ms. La Barbara was Artistic Director of the multi-year Carnegie Hall series “When Morty Met John” and the New Music America Festival in Los Angeles, and co-founded the performing composers collective Ne(x)tworks. She has produced and still performs on acclaimed recordings of music by John Cage, Morton Feldman and Earle Brown, and has premiered landmark compositions written for her by Robert Ashley, David Behrman, Cage, Feldman, Philip Glass, Alvin Lucier, Steve Reich, Morton Subotnick and John Tavener. She has also collaborated on projects with artists Matthew Barney, Judy Chicago, Christian Marclay, Bruce Nauman, Stein, Woody Vasulka and Lawrence Weiner.

Recordings of her work include “ShamanSong” (New World), “Sound Paintings” and “Voice is the Original Instrument” (Lovely Music). 73 Poems, her collaboration with text-artist Kenneth Goldsmith, was included in The American Century Part II: Soundworks at The Whitney Museum. The award-winning interactive media/performance work Messa di Voce premiered at Ars electronica festival in Linz.

Exploring ways of immersing the audience in her music, Ms. La Barbara recently placed musicians and actors throughout Greenwich House Music School for her music/theater piece Journeys and Observable Events, allowing the audience to explore the building, unveiling theatrical and sonic events. In March 2011, she seated musicians of the American Composers Orchestra around and among the audience in Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall, building her sonic painting In solitude this fear is lived, inspired by Agnes Martin’s minimalist drawings. Ms. La Barbara is developing a solo performance work, Storefront Diva, for pianist Kathleen Supové, and composing a new opera exploring the artistic process, interior dialogue and sounds within the mind.

For more information, visit www.joanlabarbara.com.

ADAM LARSEN

Adam Larsen is a filmmaker and projection designer. He has designed nearly 100 productions both on and off Broadway, including Hal Prince’s Love/Match (Broadway); The Gospel of Colomos (Athens, Edinburgh and Spoleto Festivals); The Wind Up Bird Chronicle (Edinburgh Festival); Brief Encounters and My Fair Lady (Shaw Festival); The Women of Brewer Place (Alliance/Arena Stage); Christmas Carol 1941, Light in the Piazza, The Book Club Play (Arena Stage); 26 Miles (Alliance); big (Atlanta Ballet); Carmina Burana, Love Lies Bleeding and Pummeling Towards (Tutu Kickin’ Butt Ballet); From the House of the Dead (Canadian Opera); Lily Plants a Garden (Mark Taper); Quartet (Aspen Santa Fe Ballet); Seed (Cedar Lake); Black White (BMC&Co/Moog Music); and recently Peer Gynt (San Francisco Symphony).

Mr. Larsen holds a bachelor of fine arts degree in cinematography from the North Carolina School of the Arts and just completed his first feature-length documentary about autism entitled Neurotypical.

PATRICIA LEVENT

Patricia Lent was a member of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company from 1984 to 1993 and White Oak Dance Project from 1994 to 1996. She was on the faculty of the Merce Cunningham Studio for more than 20 years, teaching technique classes and repertory workshops. Ms. Lent has staged Cunningham’s work for numerous schools and companies, including Fabrications for Ballet de Lorraine, Scramble for Repertory Dance Theatre, Duets for American Ballet Theatre, Channels/Inserts for Lyon Opera Ballet, Beach Birds for North Carolina School of the and created Cunningham’s Legacy Tour. In 2009, she was named a trustee of the Merce Cunningham Trust, and currently serves as the Trust’s Director of Licensing.

JOE LEVASSEUR

Joe Levasseur is a New York City-based lighting designer and production manager. He has collaborated with many dance and performance artists including John Jaspers, Rose Anne Spradlin, Sarah Michelson, David Dorfman, Jodi Melnick, Beth Gill, Maria Hassabi, Ishmael Houston-Jones, Lee Saar the Company, Palissimo, Anna Sperber, Megan Sprenger and Christopher Williams. He has received special design awards for his design work, including one with Big Dance Theater for Come Together Here I Stand. In 2009, his Drop Clock installation was featured in the lobby of Dance Theater Workshop (New York Live Arts). In 2010, he showed a collection of original paintings at Performance Space 122. His upcoming engagements...
include lighting from onstage for Jennifer Monson at the Kitchen, and projects with Tamar Rogoff and Wendy Whelan. For more information and a selection of his ringtones, visit www.joelevasseur.com.

MICHAEL LINVILLE
Pianist, percussionist, conductor, arranger and educator, Michael Linville is currently New World Symphony’s Associate Dean for Chamber Music. Mr. Linville is also the artistic coordinator of the New World Percussion Consort, an ensemble dedicated to the performance of contemporary chamber music that features percussion.

As a soloist, Mr. Linville has performed with the San Francisco Symphony, New World Symphony, Breckenridge Music Festival Orchestra and National Repertory Orchestra. He has also performed with the Honolulu and Pasadena Symphonies, Florida Orchestra and Florida Philharmonic. His playing has been heard on a number of recordings, including New World Jazz, A Night in the Tropics, Orchestral Music of Bernstein and White Mares of the Moon, which Mr. Linville also produced.

GUSTAVO MATAMOROS
Born in Caracas in 1957 and a Miamian since 1979, Gustavo Matamoros is a composer/sound artist who received two Venezuelan National Composition Awards before completing his bachelor of music degree at the University of Miami in 1983. Since then, his work has mostly consisted of projects that address situations where sound is used, less as a vehicle for expression of artistic intent and mostly as design tools for community problem-solving.

Some of his major works include Breezeaway (2004), a permanent 160-foot public art sound installation at Florida International University’s School of Architecture; Cars & Fish (2005), a large-scale performative installation commissioned by is now the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts; and most recently, Listening Gallery (began in 2010), a continuing public art project supported by the Knight Foundation and at 800 Lincoln Road, which offers the experience of sound art to millions of Miami Beach visitors annually under the awnings of ArtCenter/South Florida.

Mr. Matamoros considers his community activism part of his creative output, having curated 22 Subtropics Festivals as Artistic Director of SFCA [saw+subtropics] since its inception in 1989. Currently he runs Audiotheque from his studio at 924 Lincoln Road and is Adjunct Professor of Applied Critical Listening at Miami International University.

RASHAUN MITCHELL
Rashaun Mitchell is a Brooklyn-based choreographer, performer and teacher, recently listed in Dance Magazine’s “25 to Watch.” Since graduating with a bachelor of arts degree from Sarah Lawrence College in 2000, he has worked with an array of dance artists, including Chantal Yeremans, Donna Uchizono, Pam Tanowitz, Risa Jaraslov, Sara Rudner, Jonah Boakea, Richard Colton, Deborah Hay, Rebecca Lazier and Silas Riener. In 2007, he was the recipient of a Princess Grace Award Dance Fellowship, and in 2011, he received a New York Dance and Performance Bessie Award for sustained achievement in the work of Merce Cunningham (2004-12). After the Cunningham Company’s closing, he became a 2012 Fellow of the Cunningham Trust and continues to stage the work of Merce Cunningham.

Mr. Mitchell’s own work has been presented by Danspace Project, La Mama Moves Festival and Mount Tremper Arts in New York; and with writer Anne Carson at the Skirball Center at New York University, Summer Stages/The Institute for Contemporary Art in Boston, the O, Miami festival in Miami, the College of St. Elizabeth, Wellesley College, University of Minnesota and Princeton University. In 2012, he was awarded a Bessie for Outstanding Emerging Choreographer and is also a recipient of the 2013 Foundation for Contemporary Art Grants to Artists. He is currently on the faculty at the Tisch School of the Arts and will premiere his next piece, Interface, on March 14 and 15 at the Baryshnikov Arts Center.

MEREDITH MONK
Meredith Monk is a composer, singer and creator of new opera and music-theater works. A pioneer in what is now called “extended vocal technique,” she has been hailed as a “magician of the voice” and “one of America’s coolest composers.” Recently Ms. Monk was named recipient of the 2013 Founders Award from New Music USA, the 2012 Composer of the Year by Musical America, a 2012 Doris Duke Artist and one of NPR’s 50 Great Voices.

In 1965, Ms. Monk began her innovative exploration of the voice as a multifaceted instrument, composing mostly solo pieces for unaccompanied voice and voice and keyboard. In 1979, she formed Meredith Monk & Vocal Ensemble to further expand her musical textures and forms. In addition to numerous vocal, music-theater works and operas, Ms. Monk has created vital new repertoire for orchestras, chamber ensembles and solo instruments, with commissions from Michael Tilson Thomas and the Kronos Quartet, the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra and the Los Angeles Master Chorale. Her music can also be heard in films by Jean-Luc Godard and the Coen Brothers, among others. Celebrated internationally. Ms. Monk’s work has been presented by the Lincoln Center Festival, Houston Grand Opera, London’s Barbican Centre, and at major venues in countries from Brazil to Syria.

Meredith Monk’s numerous honors include a MacArthur “Genius” Award, two Guggenheim Fellowships, an American Music Center Letter of Distinction, an ASCAP Concert Music Award, a Yoko Ono Lennon Courage Award for the Arts, and induction into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She also holds honorary Doctor of Arts degrees from Bard College, the University of the Arts, The Juilliard School, the San Francisco Art Institute and the Boston Conservatory. Ms. Monk has made more than a dozen recordings, most of which are on the ECM New Series label, including the 2008 Grammy-nominated impermanence and Songs of Ascension, named the No. 1 new music release of 2011 by WNYC/New Sounds host John Schaefer.

Ms. Monk’s 40th year of performing and creating new music was celebrated in 2005 by a four-hour marathon at Carnegie’s Zankel Hall that included performances by Björk, the Bang on a Can All-Stars, DJ Spooky, John Zorn and Alarm Will Sound. In March 2012, she premiered Room Variations for six voices and small ensemble, commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony. Her new music-theater work, On Behalf of Nature, premiered in January at UCLA and will tour to the University of Maryland and Edinburgh International Festival later this year.

JESSYE NORMAN
Born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Jessye Norman was a singer who defied expectations and shattered barriers. She became one of the most renowned sopranos of her generation and a rare artist of her time. Her voice, a powerful contralto with a remarkable ability to convey depth and emotion, was a defining feature of her performances. Her repertoire included operas, oratorios, cantatas, and songs, each one showcasing her charismatic and versatile abilities.

Norman’s versatility extended beyond her musical career. She was an advocate for women’s rights, education, and the arts. She served as a spokesperson for The Partnership for the Homeless, all of which speak to her concern for the larger community and the citizenship she credits her parents for having shown her from early childhood through their own community service.

In March 2012, she performed songs of John Cage with Meredith Monk and Joan La Barbara under the auspices of the San Francisco Symphony and conductor Michael Tilson Thomas. This fully-staged production of Cage’s songs presented yet another opportunity for Miss Norman to scale new heights and broaden her artistic palette while enjoying another wonderful collaboration with artists whom she admires.

Her work with several not-for-profit organizations includes the New York Public Library, the Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Howard University and Carnegie Hall Boards of Trustees, a graduate fellowship program and master class series in her name at the University of Michigan, and spokesperson for The Partnership for the Homeless, all of which she admires. Please find out more about the school at www.jessyenormanSchool.org.

Miss Norman’s collaborations with some of today’s most exciting and creative artists of many different disciplines enliven her own exploration of the arts in all its glorious forms. Most recently, her work with four-time Grammy-winning composer Laura Karpman produced a thrilling new multi-media musical theater piece, Ask Your Mama: Twelve Moods for Jazz, to poetry by LangstonHughes, which has its premiere at Carnegie Hall in March 2009 as a part of the HONO! Festival held that month: a 52-event celebration of the African-American contribution to the culture of the world, curated and directed by Miss Norman. Ask Your Mama was also presented at the Hollywood Bowl in the summer of 2009.

The Jessye Norman School for the Arts in her hometown of Augusta, Georgia is a tuition-free arts program for talented school-age students who want to be able to enjoy private tutoring in the arts. The school is entering its ninth academic year and is not only a source of great pride for Miss Norman, but a reaction to the need and understanding that students given the opportunity of having the arts as a part of their education, and this positive meaning of self-expression, perform better academically all round and grow up to be more involved and caring citizens. Please find out more about the school at www.jessyenormanSchool.org.

Miss Norman’s latest recording, Roots: My Life, My Song, shares with the listener what she refers to as a part of her personal universe, some of the soundtrack of her life, which offers her the opportunity to pay homage to some of the many who influence and encourage her ceaseless curiosity and what she feels is an obligation to offer musical expression outside the traditional Classical canon, as she wishes to reach as many ears as will hear and as many hearts that are open to taking this often surprising musical journey with her.
NEW WORLD SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

The distinguished history of New World School of the Arts began in 1984 when the Florida State Legislature established the institution to provide artistically talented high school and college students the means to achieve both an academic education and artistic training. In September 1986, NWSA opened its doors to students in grades 10 through 12. NWSA’s audition-based programs, accredited by the National Association of Schools of Arts, Dance, Music and Theater, offer the high school diploma school as a four-year B.F.A. or B.M. college degree. South Florida’s premier eight-year arts program, NWSA has built a strong reputation through an intense, progressive program. Conservatory-style training from an internationally recognized faculty of distinguished dancers and choreographers prepares students for the professional world of dance. The rigorous curriculum includes ballet, choreography, modern dance and world dance.

New World School of the Arts is an educational partner of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami Dade College and the University of Florida.

JAMES PRITCHETT

James Pritchett was one of the first musicologists to deal with John Cage's music on its own terms—as music. His research presented the first clear documentation of Cage's chance operations of the 1950s and provided a model for the analytical study of this work. Mr. Pritchett is the author of The Music of John Cage (Cambridge University Press, 1992), the first critical study of the whole of Cage’s work. He has also written on the work of pianist/composer David Tudor and is currently trying to find a way to write about the music of Morton Feldman. He has joined to the composer Frances White, and they have collaborated on various works. He designed and built the software for her interactive installation Resonant landscape and he created the text and video for her instrumental theatre trilogy The Old Rose Revisited in Night Falls and The Book of Roses and Memory. You can read more of his writing on music at The Piano in My Life (www.RoseWhiteMusic.com/piano).

JOAN RETALLACK

Joan Retallack’s conversations with John Cage, MUSICAGE: Cage Muses on Words, Art, Music, won the 1996 America Award for Belles-Lettres. (A three-volume Spanish translation is currently appearing in Chile.) She has published widely on Cage, with particular attention to relations between his experimental attitude, contemporary science and utopian aesthetics. Ms. Retallack has performed in and served as dramaturge for several Cage productions, including Lecture on the Weather and James Joyce, Marcel Duchamp, Erik Satie: An Alphabet, in which she played the role of Buckminster Fuller. She has lectured, exhibited and performed her own work internationally, including at the Universities of London, Cambridge, Salamanca, Coimbra (Portugal) and the Sorbonne; the Nabokov Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia; Guggenheim SoHo, Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and MoMA. She is the author of The Poetical Wager; Gertrude Stein: Selections; and a critical introduction to Yale’s 2012 republication of Stein’s Stanzas in Meditation. Among her eight volumes of poetry, the most recent—Procedural Elegies /Western Cinematics /Cinematics /Western Cinematics /Cinematics —was named a best book of 2006. A Mormon, Ms. Retallack is John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Professor of Humanities at Bard College.

MIKEL ROUSE

Mikel Rouse is a New York-based composer, director, performer and recording artist hailed by The New York Times as “a composer many believe to be the best of his generation.” His works include 25 records, seven films and a trilogy of media operas: Falling Kansas, Dennis Cleveland and The End of Cinema. In 1995, Mr. Rouse premiered and directed Falling Kansas, inspired by Truman Capote’s In Cold Blood. This led to an emerging art form he calls “counterpoetry,” which involves the use of multiple unpitched voices in counterpoint. In 1996, Mr. Rouse premiered and directed the modern talk show opera Dennis Cleveland, hailed by The Village Voice as “the most exciting and innovative opera since Einstein on the Beach.” The third opera in his trilogy, The End Of Cinematics, premiered at the Kranzner Center for the Performing Arts in the fall of 2005. Mr. Rouse also tours on a more intimate scale as a solo live performer with a surreally beautiful song-and-video storytelling piece entitled Music For Minorities. His piece for the Merce Cunningham Dance Company (Cunningham’s eyespaces, 2006), entitled International Cloud Atlas, was scored for multiple iPods set to “shuffle” so that each audience member heard a different realization of the score (with 3,628,800 possible permutations). Mr. Rouse has received commissions from the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust and the Meet the Composer/Reader’s Digest Commissioning Program.

JOEY QUIGLEY

Bartone Joey Quigley is the managing director of Seraphic Fire, Miami’s 100-member Grammy-nominated professional chamber ensemble. Mr. Quigley has sung with Seraphic Fire for the past five seasons and has performed numerous operatic roles across the country, including his operatic debut as Sciaroco in Tosca with New Orleans Opera. Additionally, he has served as a master teacher for the Professional Choral Institute, Sing-Sing: Firebird Chamber Orchestra’s professional training program for aspiring ensemble singers, and has taught private voice lessons and professional consultations for the past few years. Mr. Quigley received his master in music degree from Rice University in 2009 as a student of Dr. Stephen King.

PATRICK DUPRÉ QUIGLEY

Patrick Dupré Quigley, baritone, is the founder and artistic director of Seraphic Fire and the Firebird Chamber Orchestra. Mr. Quigley was nominated for two 2012 Grammy awards for his work with Seraphic Fire. He was the only conductor in the world that year to be nominated for two separate projects, and Seraphic Fire was the only choir in North and South America to receive a nomination.

Last year, Mr. Quigley made guest conducting appearances with the San Francisco Symphony’s Community of Music Makers series, Cincinnati’s professional Vocal Arts Ensemble, and two separate appearances with the San Antonio Symphony. This season, he will conduct Seraphic Fire in more than 60 performances across the U.S. Under Mr. Quigley’s direction, Seraphic Fire has released 11 recordings on the Seraphic Fire Media label, with an additional two recordings forthcoming this year.

Mr. Quigley is the recipient of the National Endowment of the Arts 2004 Robert Shaw Conducting Fellowship, and Chorus America’s 2011 Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal, recognizing his artistic and institution-building achievements with Seraphic Fire.

He received his master of music degree in conducting from the Yale School of Music, his bachelor of arts degree in musicology from the University of Notre Dame, and is a graduate of the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy’s Fundraising School.

CLYDE SCOTT

Clyde Scott is a director and digital artist who has created national commercial spots, in-concert visuals for stadium tours, short films and highly synchronized works of video art to accompany classical music. In 1996, Mr. Scott founded Electric Sheep, a Miami Beach-based design boutique specializing in motion-graphics, where he and his team created numerous film and broadcast visuals for clients such as Disney, Shakira, MTV, Sony and Caravan Pictures.

In 2001, Mr. Scott joined the New World Symphony. In the following years he worked closely with Frank Gehry and Gehry Partners on the integration of video and projection technology into the New World Center in an unprecedented fashion. Mr. Scott is now the organization’s Director of Video Production, working with Michael Tilson Thomas, guest artists and the Fellows to find creative ways to merge video and classical music in both education and performance.

Since the opening of the New World Center, Mr. Scott has directed more than 30 live high-definition simulcasts (WALLCAST™ concerts) featuring artists such as Michaelancias, Es-Pekka Salonen, Manfred Honeck, Robert Spano, Gil Shaham and Yefim Bronfman. In addition, he has created original video art for the New World Symphony’s world premiere of Shaun Naidoo’s Sentient Weather, U.S. premiere of Luc Ferrand’s Sxofolalda and performances of Steve Reich’s Violin Phase and Arnold Schoenberg’s Pierrot Lunaire.

Mr. Scott’s team includes videographers Bruce Pinchbeck and J.T. Rooney, with whom he collaborated in creating some of the videos presented in this festival.

YUVAL SHARON

Named a “Face to Watch” in 2012 by the Los Angeles Times, Yuval Sharon has been creating a unconventional body of work exploring the interdisciplinary potential of opera. His productions have been described as “dazzling,” “hyperopera,” “spectacular” (New York Magazine), “magical” (The Village Voice) and “ingenious” (San Francisco Chronicle). His most recent project, David T. Litt’s Soldier Songs at the New Prototype Festival in New York, was called “vivid and harrowing” (The New York Times) and “adrenaline jolt” (Exclaim). Since the opening of the New World Center, Mr. Scott has worked closely with contemporary composers, including the late Karlheinz Stockhausen and particularly Thomas Adès, whom he assisted in preparing the Los Angeles Philharmonic’s world premiere of Adès’ festival in 2011. Daniel Stewart’s own compositions have been performed at venues including the Tribeca New Music Festival, Aspen Music Festival and Verbier Festival, and
ANDREA WEBER
Andrea Weber was a dancer with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company through its final eight years, performing roles in over 25 works. Ms. Weber received her bachelor of fine arts degree from The Juilliard School under the direction of Benjamin Harkarvy. She has danced and taught for Canadian-based Coleman Lemieux & Compagnie, participating in the Manitoba, Gros Morne and Banff Projects. Last fall, she returned to Canada to perform Hymn to the Universe with the Sun Ra Arkestra. Ms. Weber appears as the Dancer in The Dancer Films, a series of very short films based on the cartoons of Jules Feiffer, directed by Judy Dennis and produced by Ellen Dennis, with choreography by Susan Marshall and Larry Keigwin. She has assisted and staged Lila York’s works on ballet companies throughout the U.S. and in Denmark. Ms. Weber was a collaborator in Anne Carson’s Possessive Used as Drink (Me) and has also danced with Jessica Lang, Jonah Bokaer and Charlotte Griffin. She is on faculty for the Merce Cunningham Trust, teaching Cunningham Technique™ at New York City Center, and has taught at Brown University, the American Dance Festival, Salem State College and Dance New Amsterdam. Ms. Weber was a Merce Cunningham Fellow 2012 and will stage Pond Way on ballet at Rhein this spring.

JESSE STILES
Born in 1978 in Boston, Jesse Stiles is a new media artist, composer/musician and designer of electronic instruments. Through the adaptive misuse of emerging digital technologies, Mr. Stiles creates works that are entertaining, disorienting, immersive and transformational. His performances and generative installation work engage with and deconstruct a number of populist formats including electronic music, cinema and the “light show”—pushing these mediums into realms both sublime and subliminal.

Mr. Stiles has exhibited and performed at nationally and internationally recognized institutions including Carnegie Hall, Ars Electronica, Lincoln Center, Eyebeam, the Park Avenue Armory and the American Land Museum. His first solo gallery show, “Automatic Speleology,” was at The Warehouse Gallery in Syracuse in 2010.

In 2010, Mr. Stiles was hired as the Music Supervisor for the the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. Working with the company during its precedent-setting “Legacy Tour,” he produced and performed in concerts featuring the works of many leading figures of the 20th and 21st centuries, including John Cage, David Tudor, Brian Eno, Mr. Stiles has exhibited and performed at nationally and internationally recognized institutions including Carnegie Hall, Ars Electronica, Lincoln Center, Eyebeam, the Park Avenue Armory and the American Land Museum. His first solo gallery show, “Automatic Speleology,” was at The Warehouse Gallery in Syracuse in 2010.

Mr. Stiles resides in Baltimore. For more information, please visit www.jts3k.com.

JASON H. THOMPSON
Projection designer Jason H. Thompson’s Broadway credits include Baby It’s You! and his Off-Broadway credits include Remember Me (Parsons Dance Company, Joyce Theatre/ National Tour) and This Beautiful City (Vineyard Theatre). His recent works have included Tales from Hollywood ( Guthrie Theatre), John Cage’s Song Books (with the San Francisco Symphony in San Francisco and at Carnegie Hall), Crescent City Opera (The Industry, Los Angeles), The Great Immensity (Kansas City Repertory Theatre, TED Conference), Wheelhouse (Theatre Works), No Good Deed (Furious Theatre Company, Los Angeles), Re:Union (Vancouver, Jessie Award Nomination), Venice (Kirk Douglas Theatre, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Los Angeles Stage Alliance Ovation Award) and Bad Apples (Circle X Theatre Company). Mr. Thompson has designed video for Stars on Ice for the last six years and has worked internationally in Taiwan, Singapore, England and Canada. For more information, please visit www.jasonthompsonesign.com.

New World Symphony, America’s Orchestral Academy
The New World Symphony (NWS), America’s Orchestral Academy, prepares highly-gifted graduates of distinguished music programs for leadership roles in orchestras and ensembles around the world. In the 25 years since its founding, more than 850 alumni have gone on to become leaders in the music profession worldwide.

Dedicated to the artistic, personal and professional development of outstanding instrumentalists, the New World Symphony is a laboratory for the way music is taught, presented and experienced. The NWS fellowship program provides intensive post-graduate training and the finest professional preparation through a wide range of performance and instructional activities. Under the artistic direction of Michael Tilson Thomas, the program offers in-depth exposure to traditional and modern repertoire, with the active involvement of leading guest conductors, soloists and coaches. Relationships with these artists are extended through NWS’ pioneering experimentation with distance learning via Internet2. Additionally, Fellows benefit from the innovative and state-of-the-art performance, rehearsal and practice facilities of the Frank Gehry-designed New World Center, the campus of the New World Symphony.

New World Symphony Fellows
2012-13 Season

Violin
Karim Andrae
Kelly Burch
Alexander Chaloff
Hyen Chang
Jane Minejung Choi
Andrea Daigle
Jeffrey Dyda
Amos Fayette
Ann Fink
Thomas Hoffman
Jennine Hwang
Vivek Jayaraman
Joel Luken
Jonathan Kuo
Mircea Lazar
Clara Lee
Colleen McCullough
Heewon Park
Sunjoo Park
Elizabeth Phelps
Constantin Pintea
Derek Powell
Sarah Silver
Foster Wang
Erin Zehngut

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Elizabeth Breslin
Kelin Cechomski
Katerina Istomin
Derek Mosloff
Adam Neeley
Emily Newell
Anthony Parize
Eve Tang
Elizieta Weyman

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Grace An
Carl Baron
Marybeth Brown-Plambeck
Rosanna Butterfield
Maake Harding
Keven Kunce
Aaron Ludwig
Mereditt McCook
Alexandra Thompson

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Enmet Hanick
Emily Honeyman
Owen Levine
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Lee Philip
Noah Reitman

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Henrik Heide
Melanie Lancon
Matthew Rotsstein

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Joseph Peters
Henry Ward

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Jason Shafer
Brad Whisler

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Evan Epifano
Thomas Fleming

Horn
Matthew Eickenhoff
Chris Jackson
Alexander Kienle
Alexander Love
Dominic Rotella

Trumpet
Dylan Girard
Pierre-Louis Marques
Eli Maurer

Trombone
Kathryn Daugherty
Santiago Novoa

Bass Trombone
Jeremy Morrow

Tuba
Joshua Lee

Timpani
Alex Wodnie

Percussion
Jay Ganser
Rajesh Prasad
Christopher Rigs
Erick Wood

Harp
Grace Brown

Piano
Marnie Hanschkeit

Conducting
Joshua Gersen

Library
Jared Rex

Audio Engineering
Brandon Johnson

In the hopes of joining NWS, more than 1,500 recent music school and conservatory graduates compete for about 15 available fellowships each year. The fellowships are awarded on a season-to-season basis for up to three seasons, and 86 Fellows participate in the program in any given year. Fellows are selected based on both their ability and their passion for the future of classical music.

The New World Symphony envisions a strong and secure future for classical music and will redefine, reframe, express and share its traditions with as many people as possible. To this end, NWS is committed to exploring new performance formats. In addition to traditional concert presentations, NWS has experimented with half-hour $2.50 Mini-Concerts, three-hour Journey Concerts, Encounters, and Pulse: Late Night at the New World Symphony. Further, thousands have gathered in Miami Beach SoundScape for NWS free WALLCAST™ concerts displayed on the 7,000-square-foot façade of the New World Center.
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Photographs of John Cage, images of John Cage’s visual art works, and recordings of recorded performances by John Cage provided courtesy of the John Cage Trust. All compositions by John Cage ©Henmar Press, Inc./C.F. Peters Corporation.

Meredith Monk gratefully acknowledges Gary Graham for his contribution of her costumes for Aria and Song Books.

“The first time I heard John Cage’s music, I realized anything was possible.”

Alberto Ibargüen
President and CEO of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation