

## Disclaimer

We of The Composers' Cafeteria have no common tastes in music, but we do share the proposition that each composition deserves to be heard once. Okay, and also that each proposition is true at least once. And *this* is the “once!” However, while this is the ideal toward which we strive—well maybe “lurch” is a better word—in practice some of us can't stand the music by the rest of us, and have asked to be excused from the room.

What, after all, *is* “complete artistic freedom?” I'd say that \$5 may be a steep price for it!

## Tonight's Cafeteria

These notes are being written on Friday afternoon by two composers who are quite obviously out of control. They have therefore asked that someone bail them out—but... *it turns out that that “someone” is them!* So let's go!

What's with this concert anyway? (That's what you're thinking, isn't it?) Who are these people? What are they doing? WHERE THE HELL ARE THE CHAIRS????!!!!

Well, look here, you. Leading some kind of molly-coddled cushiony existence in your '57 Chevy with the 19" color TV, what makes you think you know anything about what concerts should be like, anyway? Who asked you in the first place? These are *our* program notes, dammit, and we can say whatever we want. Call us snide if you must, but please applaud when the sign lights up, because we are recording this concert for rebroadcast on PBS.

The Composers' Cafeteria is known only by reputation, but satisfies all major criteria for true physical existence. The consistency is that of human performers which is, in this case, also that of composers; the two being equivalent, as may be straightforwardly shown: Let  $\xi(\vec{r})$  be the two-point correlation function of composers, normalized to unity at  $r = 18$  ft or so. Further assume that composers accurately trace the mass distribution in the universe, and that  $\Omega_0 = 1$ . But I digress... Instead, consider the following *gedanken* experiment: Two men are observed in Stately Wayne Manor: 1) Batman, 2) Bruce Wayne. However, when the two are weighed together (neglecting the weight of the “utility belt”), the total weight registered is the same as the weight of either weighed singly. The extension of this argument to the general case should be intuitively obvious.

## Tonight's Composers

**Clark Supryniewicz** informs us about *In Sleep a King*, “The title is from Shakespeare. The piece is about insomnia.”

**Joy Krinsky's** *Sketches* for string quartet, according to the composer, “is comprised of six short sections. Each section suggests a form of interaction among the instruments of the quartet, which is primary to the music's evolution. The individual sketches create their own sense of moment, as though the listener is peering in upon a particular music which might not necessarily begin at our point of entry and perhaps extends beyond the final tones heard. In this way, *Sketches* presents us with a corridor of windows through which we can perceive these moments as glimpses of ongoing experiences.”

**Ted Greenwald** explains *Battleship 2600*:

“*Battleship 2600* adapts the arcane architecture of an obsolete electronic musical instrument, the lamented ARP 2600 synthesizer, to the strategies and physical gestures of the Milton-Bradley board game, Battleship™.

“The front panel of the ARP 2600 offers, in the form of electrical jacks, direct input to and output from the hardware components that generate and shape the sound. In normal operation of the instrument, output signals are fed into input using simple cables. For the purposes of the Battleship 2600 match, two instruments are situated opposite one another. Each player sends a number of unspecified output signals to the other: each player is permitted to connect the output he receives to any input which might produce an interesting sound. Of course, without knowing the precise nature of a given signal, it is impossible to

predict the sonic outcome of making such a connection. It might be a gentle gesture of slowly-flowering beauty. It might just as readily be a barrage of metallic grinding and screeching. Either result is equally acceptable. The players' role is to determine, to the degree possible, which aspects of the sound he is capable of influencing (as often as not these determinations will turn out to be wrong, thus introducing new sonic elements into the performance), and to use them to enhance the musical experience.

"Depending on the musician's aesthetic proclivities, he may discover that pushing a particular switch produces a thunderous sonic cataclysm and proceed with great merriment to induce that result repeatedly. In this case he has, in Milton-Bradley parlance, sunk the other player's battleship. Eventually, as the input/output connections become increasingly intertwined to form feedback loops and multiple signal sources and destinations, the machines tend to develop a synergistic mind of their own, producing aural contortions far beyond the control of the players. At this point, the piece is terminated as the performers leave the stage as gracefully as possible."

**Johanna Johnson** sez: "It is said that when Whoopi Goldberg honeymooned in Holland last winter, she was often mistaken for 'Black Peter' (*Schwartzter Pete*), who is a large black man who steals away 'bad' children to Spain at Yuletide, thus punishing obnoxious children for their year's worth of vile acts. Ms. Goldberg responded to the terrified looks she received from the youth of Holland by sticking her fingers in her ears, wagging her dreads, and making some sort of threatening noise. This piece tells of a child's first hearing of the story of *Schwartzter Pete*. His mother tells it to him as a bedtime story—it inspires nightmares."

All **Steve Raoul Rothblatt** will tell us is, "I've already here said too much about the piece."

**Mark Scown** and **H. DeKomposition** add the following to *Textsongs*: "Whose stranger is this? Passionate build-up on the border between music and language. Familiarize the well of surprising experience. Thine would a sting be. Like river like note both bend with the overload. The password is variables. The word is phenomena. Information makes a pass. Now that's news."

**James Jacobs** writes:

"*Back From the War* is an imaginary oratorio in three movements. The material for the first movement was derived numerically from the Hebrew word *Timshel*, one of the most important and ambiguous words in the Torah; frequently translated as 'thou shalt,' it can also mean 'thou mayest,' implying freedom of choice. The second movement is based on some Bulgarian folk tunes I learned from Bob Flexer, a great gypsy violinist. The third movement begins with a tune written by my brother, Ben Jacobs, entitled by him 'Stylistically Inconsistent.' This leads into a ritual exorcism of the demons we have all encountered in our struggles, so that when we get back from the war, a natural conclusion is reached, in which the audience is encouraged to participate.

"I am indebted to the klezmer band *Zeitgeist* for their collaboration on this project. The final tune you will hear tonight was composed by Mattali Brandwine, the great clarinetist of the '20s. I would also like to thank all the composers I have shamelessly ripped off."

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But Wait! There's **MORE!**

The Composers' Cafeteria will begin its next season in early September. They are thinking Big, I believe; there should be lots of incredible music which will change the way that you live and breathe. And if you don't come to The 'Cafeteria, The Composers will be coming to you!

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