

Tonight's Cafeteria

Thus, the new season begins.

Prepare thyself.

Expect the unexpected.

Be hereby braced for heretofore unthinkable acts.

Etc. But these are things you probably expected to hear, so let this be a warning that you not get your hopes up, not too far up, not, at least, above 10000 feet.

It remains to be seen whether David Bowie makes his surprise cameo appearance tonight. It remains to be seen whether we engage in forms of expression not protected by the Constitution. It shall remain for some time unclear whether we are blessed. Whether, in fact, we recreate the Battle of the Bulge, or charter a Chinese airliner.

It is a convention of prefatory remarks that the text assume you've never heard or heard of the ensemble staging the event at hand. One must proceed as if you have not read all prior rationales for why The Composers' Cafeteria exists as such, what it is precisely that sets us apart as a distinct body, why we convene *en banc* to theoretically delight and please you, why, in short, we bother.

In this, too, you might be disappointed, insofar as this writer might spare himself the boredom of rehearsing convenient platitudes. Other members of the group may be tempted to complain about my reluctance, but in fact they can't complain, because as a rule The Composers' Cafeteria cannot complain about anything,* at least not about much, once power is delegated. But there you have it, a convenient distinguishing characteristic of The Composers' Cafeteria.

If you don't know why you're here, I can't tell you, and there is probably none among us who could. If you stay for the length of the program, or as long as you can stand, or sit, then you will almost certainly have some opinion of your own as to why we do or should exist. Your own privatized "Philosophy of the Cafeteria."

For corroborating or dissenting views, consult *Composerama*, our newsletter. I should mention that we now issue a newsletter, the organ of the sleek new Cafeteria, a Cafeteria which imagines itself with a mixture of delight and chagrin as part of the "Bay Area New Music" community. Refer now to the sleek new fold-out calendar. The new Cafeteria is an octopus, its tentacles are manifold and invisible. They will reach inside private philosophies and into the deepest psychic realms. Almost everything is carefully programmed.

We are expanding our operations by cellular telephone. There is one ringing now aboard a Chinese airliner. David Bowie flicks an ash and gazes at the clouds. Somewhere, there is a pontiff with a smile on his face.

In a playground, little children play and think about tubas.

— Michael Macrone

Tonight's Composers

Johanna Johnson, calling from that (213) place, left the following on our editors' friend's fabulous telephone thing-y: "Inspired by my good friend—soon to become companion—Mantra ben-Yaacov, *Mantrauma* is my interpretation of (I kinda like those dots...) It was Mantra's birthday, and I wrote this piece for her. She had upset me... in good and bad ways.

Kathy Geisler writes of her second opus, *First Horizontal* (1. *Waking up in paradise*, 2. *Interlude endless... then a gospel*):

"In this work, I use an instrument from the Javanese gamelan, the *slentem*. Its pitch base is different from our western instruments, as is its scale. I've incorporated a 'form' used in gamelan playing with this instrument in the *Interlude endless...* section. In *Waking up in paradise*, I've used an old song from years ago in Montana and throughout this work I've used scales constructed during that same period. My piece was constructed on a computer, which introduces a contemporary element into this piece. The final section, *then a gospel*, is from the notion 'Take me away from this fools' paradise.' I wrote this piece as a collage of

* We don't complain because we haven't broken any rules, yet! —Ed.

all of these ‘found’ elements and because I enjoy the richness of the polarities of something old, something new, and something altogether different.”

Waking up in Paradise

A dream lies not
 behind or ahead
but keeps pace
 in parallel.
The shadow who
 knowing all,
all too infrequently
 lifts its head.
And we even less
 turn our minds
 to see
 it sharing our bed

Gospel

Wish there was a song
 that could set me free
Wish there were words to
 take me away,
 from this fools’ paradise.
Want so bad to feel
 life’s open door.
Want there to be
 so much more.
Won’t you take me away?
Take me away from
 this fools’ paradise.
Take me, I’m gone, there I go
 from this fools’ paradise.

Kathy Geisler is currently a member of the Bay Wind Quintet, and the Emeritus Orchestra, and is co-creating a sound library for IMC, a division of Akai. She is originally from New York City and holds a M.M. from the Juilliard School. Since joining the Cafeteria she has become inspired to examine and enact her life-long dream of composing music.

Jennifer Rycenga Plonsey declined to comment on her *Narrow Straits*, beyond stating that it was written with these particular performers in mind.

Textsongs texts (texts by **Mark Scown**) follow as the last page(s) of these notes.

Critics have said of **Michael Macrone’s** *Wind Quartet for Lake Resources*:

“[*Lake Resources*] is a step forward in the best possible medium for Macrone’s vision—the grim humor of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, *Lear*, Machiavelli’s *Mandragola* and Jonson’s *Volpone*. . . . Macrone has said the final word to date in the long indictment of ‘special activities’ . . .” *Kenneth Rexroth*

“*Lake Resources* [is] a grotesque and disturbing but wildly comic tune. To be sure Mr. Macrone’s humor is not always of the best kind. Neither is Elliott Abrams’.” *Harold Hobson, London Times*

“Now these voices, sometimes they sang only, and sometimes they cried only, and sometimes they stated only, and sometimes they murmured only, and sometimes they sang and cried, and sometimes they sang and stated, and sometimes they sang and murmured, and sometimes they cried and stated, and sometimes they cried and murmured, and sometimes they stated and murmured, and sometimes they sang and cried and stated, and sometimes they sang and cried and murmured, and sometimes they sang and stated and murmured, and sometimes they cried and stated and murmured, and sometimes they sang and cried and stated and murmured, all together, at the same time, as now, to mention only these four kinds of voices. . .”
Samuel Beckett

Mark Culbertson says, “*Pointed Objects* was commissioned by a friend who played the guitar. A dispute with that friend over whether or not the many pointed objects in the Schönberg room at USC had anything to do with the character of that composer led to my titling this piece *Pointed Objects*. The title itself then led to a breakup of that friendship, and the piece was never performed. Here then, for the first time, in living controversy, is *Pointed Objects: Trajectory for Guitar*.”

Stephen Mays: *Sounds Between: Animal and Landscape Imagery as Musical Topography.*

edited by Stephen Mays

A SHADE DANCING WITH MERCURIUS

Besides, there are woods a
 little further—past the
 field of tall grasses

... You feel it
with each inhalation of
sweet hot air.

Within a rim of jagged trees

Clouds that cool
but not so much as
you'd think

Kaila Flexer: *In Distress, a Regatta in Four Short Movements*

Ships in the navy communicate with radios. When these break down they use flags. One flag, for example, means “the wind is expected to veer,” another: “you may alight on my deck, I am ready to receive you aft.” These flags are listed in the *International Code of Signals*, published by the U. S. Naval Oceanographic Office, and have been adapted into poetry by David Wagoner. Most of the text of *In Distress* comes from this source. The text of the first movement is:

I am abandoning my vessel
I shall abandon my vessel unless you remain by me
My position is marked by fire
My position is marked by wreckage
I do not see any light.

This piece is the result of a collaboration between the four singers and myself. I appreciate everyone’s work and input; thanks especially to Ken Durling for supplying the texts.

.....

The Composers’ Cafeterias’ next two concerts are scheduled for:

Sunday, November 1, 8 PM, at **Mills College** in Oakland

and

Friday, December 11, 8PM, at **The Eighth St. Studio**, 2525 Eighth St. (near Dwight Way), in Berkeley

Works by Carol Adee, Gino Forlin, Kyle Granger, James Jacobs, Joy Krinsky, Chris Maher, Dan Plonsey, Randy Porter, David Sazeradee, Irene Sazeradee, Elaine Schnaidt, Tom Statler, Clark Suprynowicz, Marc Wahrhaftig, & Many Others are being written *right now*—while we go about our daily tasks, even at special times, whether conscious or not, music is *being written*—for those concerts!

The first (?) issue of *Composerama*, chronicle of Cafeteria thought, is available now... Give us money that we may mail future issues to you. Our gratitude will know no serious bounds.