

Disclaimer

Cactus impresarios implanted in tonight's Cafeteria like splattering fifths, the orange orchard standing off to your right, seventeen other intaglios and the ban on inter-American calisthenics: spiritual death.

Lorca in disheveled aerosol-soaked clothing reads the garden outside in peace. Skyscrapers like doves crying in the city. Collapsed in blue skin, angels rush the horizon.

Tonight's Cafeteria

Flowers that bloom in the Spring, tra la, when a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love...

We do not mean to be cryptic, though of course we usually are, especially in this space. There are those who claim that we are grown-ups, or at least should act like we were. So funny metaphors are right out. Tonight we speak directly to the point. As we pass into the era of double-digit concerts, we have important questions to consider: 1) How could we possibly have done so well? 2) How could we possibly have done so badly? The biologists, who know all sorts of things about population growth, could have tried to predict the tumultuous history of the Cafeteria. But would they have gotten it right? I think not; we certainly didn't. Besides, the Cafeteria is not possessed of a sufficient squishiness to be of interest to most biologists. Our population is down. Why is that? Is it a food problem? Personally, I think it's because of a lack of *PREDATORS*. Jenny sometimes asks, "Can he compose his way out of a paper bag?" What I want to know is, can he compose his way out of an encounter with five huge hairy creatures with great leathery wings, razor-sharp claws, and row upon row of fangs dripping with green venom? This is exactly why we need MORE CRITICS at our concerts.

— Tom Statler

Tonight's Composers

Jennifer Rycenga Plonsey says, "*Great Blue Harbor* came to life on the confluence of several things: Cochin harbor, the purchase of an alto clarinet, the numerical proportions of ancient philosophy, the relation of animals to water and foreign words, and Bach's Cantata No. 10. It continues my interest in using like instruments—in this case featuring a clarinet choir from the high Eb to the Bass Clarinet. There are six major sections, which are demarcated by guitar chords. Like the surface of the ocean, both the large-scale events and details are of a single character, yet they are also always varied, unique and specific to their location." Jennifer Rycenga Plonsey is a Ph.D. candidate who still thinks that life has significance.

Michael Macrone supplied the following notes about his composition, *The Devill in the Horologe*: "This duet is based on a fairly simple algorithm whereby various literary fragments have been 'transliterated' to a twelve-tone scale. According to the basic principle, each word occupies one measure, although some measures represent several words at the level either of melody or of harmony. Rhythmic, and some harmonic, decisions were made arbitrarily; and the piece is framed and interspersed with a freely composed 'apparatus.'

"The basic text is from Nicholas Udall's 'school comedy,' *Roister Doister* (1552?):

Then vp to our lute at midnight, twangle-dome twang;
Then twang with our sonets, and twang with our dumps,
And heyhough from our heart, as heauie as lead lumpes;
Then to our recorder, with a toodleoodle poope,
As the howlet out of an yuie bushe should hoope;
Anon to our gitterne, thrumpledum, thrumpledum thrum,
Thrumpledum, thrumpledum, thrumpledum, thrumpledum thrum!

II.i.20–6.

"Other texts include three lines (73–5) from George Chapman's 'gratulatory verse' to Ben Jonson's *Sejanus* and selections from the poetic spew of Rep. Robert Michel (R-IL) on the occasion of the House of Representatives' vote in February on Ronald Reagan's *contra* aid package. A few names are encrypted herein as well."

... What is interesting is that the critics continued to see his work as something apart from the general run; it seemed to them that in some way a corner had been turned even if the results were not always pleasing. We see it in Flint's article in *The New Age* of 6 January, 1910:

Mr Pound is an American, and a hotchpotch of picturesqueness, made of divers elements—in literature, words from divers tongues—is the American idea of beauty. Thank heaven that Mr Pound is a poet also, and that his picturesqueness is only the sauce in the dish. . . One thing is proved by these two little books of his, *Personae* and *Exultations*, and that is that the old devices of regular metrical beat and regular rhyming are worn out; the sonnet and the three-quatrain poem will probably always live; but for the larger music verse must be free from all the restraints of a regular return and a squared-up frame; the poet must forge his rhythm according to the impulse of the creative emotion working through him.

Noel Stock

The Life of Ezra Pound

Stephen Mays discusses *Matterhorn*'s libretto with "Dancing Cloud:"

"The texts for *Matterhorn*'s libretto—a *poiesis*—were culled from *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language* (Second Edition, 1951) and then placed reflectively with an Hermes Rocket—a typewriter made in Switzerland by Paillard.

"If *Matterhorn* were becoming a regional *phantasia* of musical ecology, it would be a dramatic success: animal voices that sing, move and celebrate the soul of the world. A web of theatrical *topoi* whose dramatic significance could evoke the festival of Dionysus Zagreus."

DANCING CLOUD

Dancing be dancing sound
 animal voices in sea, land
 water round
 sense speech rising on the
 drum found
 breath high blowing
 cloud
 dancing be
 dance dancing aloud

Dan Plonsey adds, "*Matterhorn* began for me as a response to the desire to write an opera. In America, *everybody* writes an opera. This is because it is the simple truth that *anyone* can write one. I have wanted to write one myself—with some changes, of course, to the traditional form—for about six years. Perhaps you will imagine that *Matterhorn* is the first or second; it would be very kind of you to do so, but I warn that you will have to impose severe taxes upon your imagination. You will notice that some operatic conventions have been modified or dropped. Sadly, my favorite convention could not be employed tonight: we could not obtain the massive curtain which rises with the purely visual "whoosh." However, if you examine the ceiling somewhat uncritically, you may find skeletal remains of the drawn curtains. The next change is that orchestra, chorus, and *prima donnas* have been made one by the process of algebraic transubstantiation. Then we added at least one spatial dimension to the stage, and perhaps by way of compensation, diminished the significance of time by making most everything happen at once, thereby freeing us from (expensive!) scene changes. Naturally, an opera is not an opera without costumes, it looks like we'll have some of those, but we don't have a conductor or a director. The musicians put the movement, music, words, voices and instruments together. If this is an opera, it is one with political and mathematical overtures.

Raul Rothblatt comments:

"*Aspen Morning* is a simple piece, possibly even trite. It describes the weather in Aspen, Colorado, where I spent the summer. The days almost all followed a pattern: the mornings were calm and cloudless; clouds would form, creating interesting shadows on the mountains; there would be a thunderstorm; the storm would pass." The lyrics, which follow, are by Joanne Stephenson:

A morning
Created
From an exquisite dawn

The air --
Cool,
Crisp.

The sun rises above the clouds
Allowing their shadows to
Caress
The mountains

Off in the distance
The clouds are gathering forces for their
Surprise attack
The downpour
 Torrents of rain
 Lightening!
 Thunder!

The sun
 breaks
 through the clouds

The rain begins to cease

A beautiful rainbow.

Harald Dünnebier writes the following: "*Jedudanony* and *Dadujenony*, anagrams derived from the words jenny, duo, and dan, or dan, duo, and jenny, fall somewhere between the concepts of polyphony and heterophony and are sometimes referred to as *The Five Dujedaon* (*Dujedaon*, in Japanese), *Five Dudajeonny* (*dudagionni*, in Italian), or simply *The Dajedunoy*s—(interpreted by some as dan&jennydonoise). *Dadujenony*/*Jedudanony* is a fantasy in five parts, its advertising slogan is—**Bubblin' up from the depths of the musical subconscious and borne on the wings of sounds, psyche (sigh-key)**. This piece is "about" transference of languages, visual imagination, contour analysis, shared misconceptions, mutual understanding, and coexistent realities. It uses illustrated ideas to stretch the limits of the ink-paper-sound equation by plugging in irrational ratios (such as the Plonz Factor)."

Johanna Johnson sez: "It is said that when Whoopi Goldberg honeymooned in Holland the winter before last, she was often mistaken for 'Black Peter' (*Zwarte Piet*), 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 *Zwarte Piet*. His mother tells it to him as a bedtime story—it inspires nightmares."