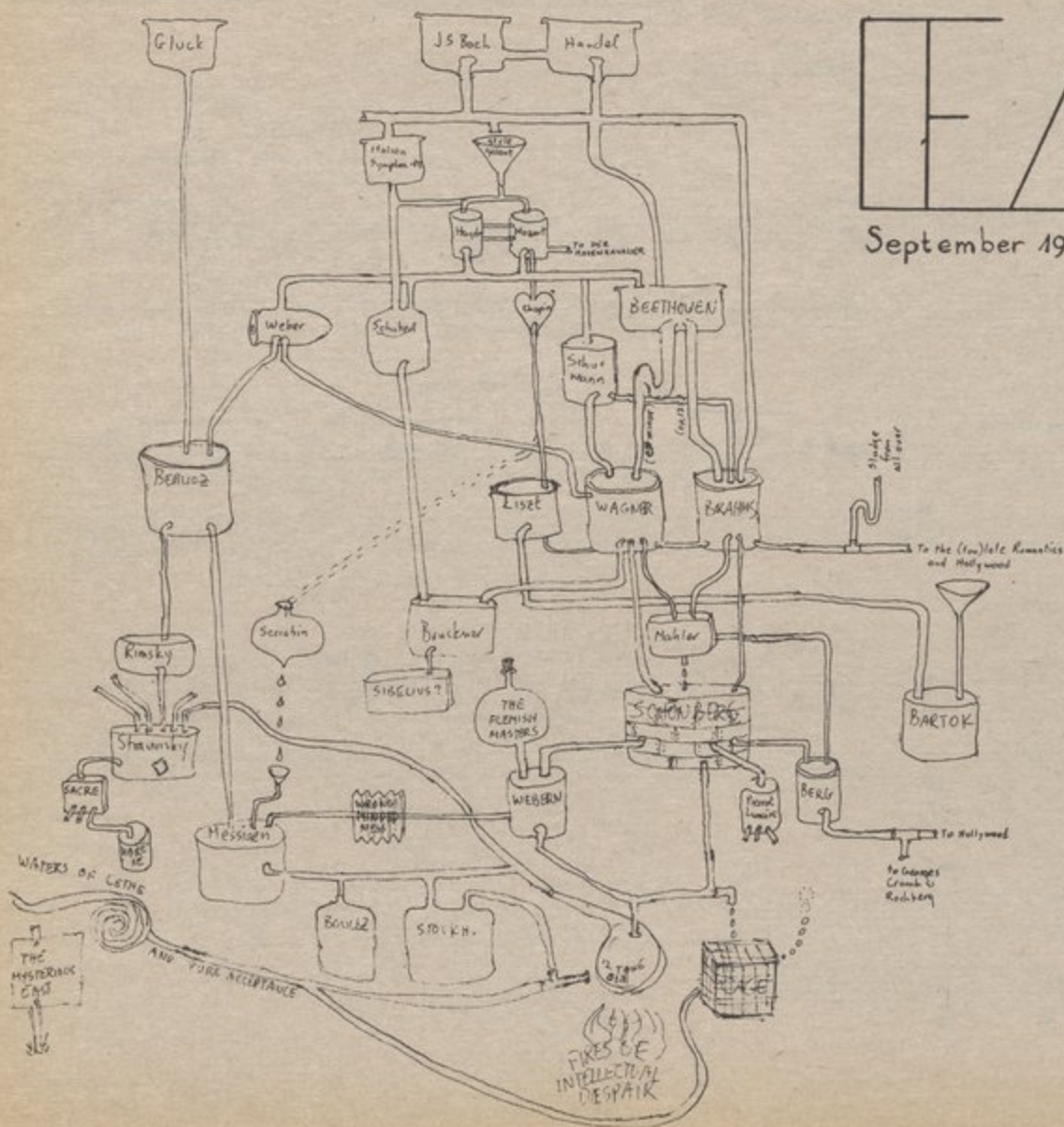


NOTHING IS SIMPLE



September 1975 - Vol 3 no 6

(damn this year)



Who's writing operas in the Bay Area. I'm writing an opera. Janice Giteck is writing an opera. Andrew Inbric is writing an opera. John S wackhamer is writing an opera. Whose operas are scheduled for production in the Bay Area. What area needs more opera companies. Lets take the \$\$ out and put some local responsibilities in.

Bay Area composer 157: Mell Carey Source: SF Boys Chorus

EAR is published monthly except August by Charles Shere, 1824 Curtis St., Berkeley. Available at various Bay Area outlets or by mail. All unsigned and many signed articles are by the editor and are only his opinion.

in this issue:

ALL THE WORDS YOU'LL EVER NEED!

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NO WONDER WE'RE RUNNING LATE!

(but not next time...)

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BEAT THE RUSH!

TWO PIECES FOR PIANO

© 1975
DONALD COBB

♩ = ca 104 *1. 4/4 slower*

1st tempo

rit.

♩ = about 66

poco rall

legato

rall

Donald Cobb

(Robert Erickson is that admirable type: a man who works quietly, intensely, and privately to perfect his own interests, to investigate appealing sounds and ideas, and to improve the quality of the musical life around him. When he was in the Bay Area, especially in the middle '60s, it wasn't hard to hear his music occasionally. I remember the Piano Concerto, with Dwight Peltzer and Gerhard Samuel; the marvelous piece for solo trombone and tape written for Stu Dempster, and a number of other works played at the Conservatory. As a teacher he was devoted to the untried, but his own music is logical and inevitable--not the least the most recent, an orchestral piece I heard in San Diego (where he now teaches) last spring. The soundness of Bob's mind is rather missed hereabouts these days, it seems to me--but then I'm getting older, and, as you'll see, I studied with him a bit, and got a job thanks to him. Herewith the first of two instalments of some reminiscences he gave me last spring--starting with a description of the musical scene in the Bay Area when he first arrived here, in the summer of 1950.)

Roger Sessions' seminar that summer included William O. Smith, Leland Smith, Leonard Rosenman and others. Andrew Imbrie was teaching harmony to undergraduates, and Manfred Bukofzer gave a seminar in the Italian Madrigal. I toyed with the idea of working toward an advanced degree at Berkeley, but I could not bring myself to give up composing for the necessary three or four years. Nevertheless, by the end of the summer we were pretty sure that we wanted to return to the Bay Area. A year spent in New York hardened the decision, and in October of 1954 we were in San Francisco.

I hardly expected to find work in music, but Paul introduced me to Bill Knuth and William Ward at San Francisco State College, and, as luck would have it, they needed someone to teach a beginning harmony course. A few weeks later a faculty member went off to play in the Rochester Symphony, and I took on more classes, three-fifths time. Teaching loads at San Francisco State were computed in fifths, and the next quarter I found myself teaching six-fifths time.

In those days San Francisco State was a band school. Its liveliest faculty member was Wendell Otey, whose interests included show music, jazz and ethnic music. He led the Composers' Workshop there, encouraged young composers and helped them to get their music performed. Loren Rush and Pauline Oliveros were students at San Francisco State, and they soon began to study privately with me.

The Composers Forum, a Bay Area organization, was offering concerts of contemporary music, usually at the San Francisco Museum of Art, so I sent a post card volunteering my services to their letter drop at U.C. Berkeley. At Sunday afternoon envelope stuffing sessions I came to know Seymour Shifrin, Jack Swackhammer, Jerome Rosen, Andrew Imbrie, Bill Smith, Jane Hohfeld, Roger Levinson, and Lou Gottlieb. Neither Levinson nor Gottlieb was a composer. Levinson was our printer and chief organizer, and Lou was then a graduate student in musicology at the university. He earned his living by playing piano at small restaurants and worked for the Composers Forum as a matter of conscience. He had not yet started his career as a stand-up comic, but at any large gathering he was usually our master of ceremonies. Jane came from a well-off Pacific Heights family and was a friend of Roger Levinson and Andrew Imbrie. She was a pianist who had studied with Krenek when he taught at Vassar college. We always hoped that she would lead us to well-heeled San Franciscans who might lift some of our considerable, and mounting, financial burden.

The programs were less adventurous than those of the St. Paul ISCM. When I served on the Forum program committee I took the position that we should always perform a large proportion of works by Bay Area composers, and that each program should include an important work by some internationally known master, as an inducement to the audience. Sometimes we had program committee members who wanted to offer works by such established historical figures as Ravel, Falla and Mussorgsky. I could see little sense in that, but there was a conservative group in the membership which occasionally gained ascendancy. At meetings of the program committee I sometimes was forced into barter and trade--a significant contemporary work for a bon-bon or two. If the voting was turning the programs into rice pudding, I at least wanted the pudding to have a few raisins in it.

In spite of programming differences, and the internal political stresses which plague any composer organization, the Composers Forum was an important force. Young composers and performers were heard, and occasionally one heard a work that made a difference. I remember a fine performance of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, conducted by Piero Bellugi, and a program in 1961 conducted by Gerhard Samuel that presented Richard Swift's cantata *Eve*; Terry Riley's *Spectra*; Bruno Maderna's *Serenata Number 2 for Eleven Instruments*; and *Le Carteau Sans Saitre*, by Pierre Boulez, with soprano Anna Carol Dudley.

In the sixties the rise of the San Francisco Tape Music Center compensated for the decline of the Forum. The Composers Forum had always been a fief of U.C. composers, and as such it began to smell of the academy. All too often audiences were composed of the wives, families and friends of the composers being performed that evening. The faces at the Tape Music Center were far less familiar, the attire less conventional, and the programs far more experimental and daring. A new institution and a new kind of audience was being born.

I was more intimately involved with another Bay Area musical institution, listener-sponsored radio station KPFA. I had heard some programs from KPFA and as soon as we were settled in our flat on Potrero Hill, we purchased an FM radio and subscribed to the station's program folio. In the early summer of 1954 I heard that KPFA was looking for a new music director. I applied for the job. After being interviewed by the assembled staff I was hired, not a moment too soon, because I had been informed by San Francisco State that they had no more fifths for me to teach.

KPFA offered high quality programming in news and public affairs, literature, drama, and poetry, children's programs, and music. Its model was the British Broadcasting Corporation's Third Programme. Some of our offerings were to such a limited audience--complete Moliere plays in French, commentary on the economic theories of Henry George, ninety-minute performances of traditional Bulgarian epic song--that we jokingly called ourselves the Fourth Programme.

KPFA was biased toward intellectual affairs. Politically it was pacifist and liberal, lib-lab liberal, said its critics. It tried mightily to provide a forum for all political views, no matter how tiny a splinter; Socialists, William Buckley Jr., Socialist Workers, Catholic conservatives, Catholic radicals, big and little labor, anarchists, Democrats and Republicans. The public affairs director worked hard at locating articulate conservative voices. Caspar Weinberger was one who often spoke for a moderate Republican view.

In the arts KPFA leaned slightly toward the avant garde. There were literary readings, critiques, panel discussions, and full-length plays from BBC transcriptions. Pauline Kael was the house film critic for a while. Alan Rich and others criticized music and music institutions in the Bay Area. There was a great deal of recorded music, but the station also presented several live concerts each week, some from its studios and others via high-quality balanced phone line from the University of California and the Berkeley Civic Theater. Its FM signal quality was the best in that part of the state.

KPFA was (and still is) owned and operated by the Pacifica Foundation, a non-profit organization founded by a group of conscientious objectors who had hatched the idea in a World War II work camp. Its chief mover and shaker was Lewis Hill, pacifist, poet, heir to an Oklahoma oil family. I never know how or where he acquired his rich, persuasive air voice, a kind of Edward R. Murrow voice that projected aesthetic cultivation, thoughtful, balanced understanding, and a faintly aristocratic air of community responsibility.

Pacifica Foundation comprised a president, a small board of directors, and a larger group about fifty strong, seen only at bi-annual meetings. During my years at KPFA one or more of the staff served on the board of directors. Pacifica's charter was broad enough to allow for projects in radio, television and film, in any sort of educational or cultural context.

In 1954 KPFA was Pacifica's only project; KPFK, Los Angeles, and WBAI, New York, came later. It was staffed by a station manager, a director of programming, directors of each program area, a bookkeeper, a subscription clerk, and a station engineer. Much of the work was done by enthusiastic volunteers. The technicians were bright-eyed adolescent wizards, whose know-how put the station on the air, and kept the balky transmitter going long after it should have been scrapped. Salaries were low; mine was \$72 a month. Hours were long. Listener-sponsored radio had no holidays.

My experience at KPFA was intensely sociological and political: the politics of small groups. The day after I started work the assembly exploded at its bi-annual meeting and a large group resigned, many of them KPFA staff members. To my dismay one of these was Bill Triest, who was supposed to teach me the ins and outs of my job. Power struggles, factionalism and ideological controversy were a part of life at the station, and more and more an interesting part of it. Sometime in 1955 I was elected to the eight-man board of directors of Pacifica Foundation, where I had a good view of the action. Lew Hill was asked to return from Guerneville, where he had holed up after an earlier schism. Robert Schutz, a sometime speech instructor at U.C. and one of our political commentators, took on the day-to-day station management until Lew completed a book about subscription radio, while the board of directors wrestled with budget and our tenuous solvency at frequent meetings...

(to page 7)

the XPERIMENTAL CHORUS begins fall rehearsals Monday, September 8, 7:30 pm.

Location is Mira Vista Church, 7075 Cutting, El Cerrito, about 4 blocks up the hill from Del Norte BART station (if you stand with a sign saying X-CHORUS by 7:15 pm on the south end of the station adjacent to the Golden Gate Bowling Lanes, you can get a lift up the hill).

New members welcome through September (and later by arrangement). There are no auditions: to mix an unlikely pair of metaphors, if X-Chorus is your cup of tea, you can cut the mustard!

Director is Hermann Le Roux, faculty member of the S. F. Conservatory of Music and well-known Bay Area performer.

Music runs the gamut from traditional to proportionally notated, improvisational and theater pieces, from music highly listenable by anyone's standards to far-out sounds with their own kind of beauty.

John Cape's Song Books will form half a program for late October, early November performances. With a number of composers in the ranks, there will be an evening of "Song of the Self" by X-Chorus members, and a number of other concerts, including performances with the Contra Costa Symphony and a tour of colleges in the Northwest later in the season.

For information, call Musical Arts (233-1466) or Contra Costa College (233-7800).

Blue Territory #1

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♩ = 100

piano

violin

piano

10

14

18

22

26

The musical score is written in a handwritten style. It begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 100. The piano part is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs), and the violin part is in a single staff. The score is divided into systems, with measure numbers 6, 10, 14, 18, 22, and 26 marked at the beginning of each system. Performance markings such as 'cresc', 'legato', and 'pizz' are present throughout the piece.

Valerie Samson's Blue Territory No. 1 is named for the Helen Frankenthaler painting which inspired it, and whose intense, sweeping energy it wanted to capture in music. I heard it a few months ago at the Berkeley Piano Club--I hope these first 65 measures inspire other performances...

30 *arco* *p* *f*

35 *drop bow on string let bounce* *pizz* *p* *f*

39 *arco* *dim* *f*

43 *II martell* *very rough* *f*

48 *II glissando/trill* *tap on body of violin percussive* *pp* *f*

53 *arco* *ritard* *f*

57 *♩ = 88* *pp* *f* *cresc*

62 *pp* *f* *cresc* *etc*

WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS: 1) Seiji Ozawa has quit SF Symphony. 2) Timpanist Elayne Jones has been denied tenure again in SF Sym. 3) Boston is up; SF down in the charts. WHY I THINK IT HAPPENED: Ozawa might have kept up his dual orchestras, perhaps slacking guest commitments, although the pace was pretty rough. But what Ozawa wants to do is conduct: that is, stand up in front of that orchestra and make the music work. (And do his homework, which he surely does conscientiously: his beat, the way he makes the music phrase, is prepared and rehearsed with formidable forethought.) But the San Francisco contract requires all sorts of other busy work from him: he has to be in town x days in order to meet y requirement, has to make such and such an announcement in person to give notice for such and such a change affecting the orchestra, has to participate in orchestra committee procedures such as those involving the granting of tenure, etc., etc. Given the nature of the San Francisco Symphony and its contract you can't reasonably complain about any of this. But the requirements are there, and likely to grow more demanding. The fact is that while artistically the conductor may be the most significant (we won't say "important") factor in the orchestral process, in another sense he is the least significant, at least in San Francisco. When it comes to the day-to-day processes which make the band work, it's the musicians, the administration, and the contract that stands between them, uniting them.

Now Ozawa is a performing conductor, an interpreter--I say, probably the best of his generation: a man committed to the music. In Chicago, maybe New York, Berlin, London, and the like, he can just bring his mind and his arms to work and produce the performance. He even does it in San Francisco from time to time. But the S.F. is not that sort of band. It is a provincial orchestra. I personally believe the S.F. musicians are sincere, and that they themselves want to be a better orchestra--want to grow. I believe that's why they denied tenure to Ryohei Nakagawa, the principal bassoon, and to Elayne Jones: members of the orchestra have told me, unprompted, what my ears have told me: that Nakagawa, good as he is in many ways, has an unblending timbre--hard to work with--and Jones plays with deficient intonation--equally hard on her colleagues. Moreover, S.F. musicians have complained to me that Ozawa is too rarely in town, that he doesn't know his orchestra, that in all his tenure he has never once tuned a chord, examining it to find out who's out of tune, correcting him, teaching his band.

The answer to that last complaint is that the band should teach itself, keep itself in order. To an extent that's provided for in the present contract, which requires orchestra agreement to the granting of tenure to new members. The press has been cynical about this, pointing out that plenty of already tenured players are more deficient than the ones they've denied tenure to. But those players have their tenure, and they present a different problem: what to do with a performer who's going over the hill.

If a trumpet player, say, knows damned well that a chord's out of tune, why doesn't he call the conductor's attention to it and ask for a tuning? Well, why should he? He's not the top man. What would his colleagues think of him if he did? More to the point, how can the present system be changed to make it possible for the orchestra to run itself?

WHAT COULD BE:

I have a favorite recurring dream about how the orchestra should work. Given the current problem of sharing the Opera House, I'd have a season like the present one from December to May; a short vacation; a Tanglewood-like series in Berkeley at the Greek Theater emphasizing music of the region; and a fall season (after another vacation) with small-ensemble concerts travelling through San Francisco neighborhoods and into neighboring areas--Marin, Peninsula, East Bay and so on. The present San Francisco Summer Workshop with the S.F. school system might fit better at U.C. Berkeley in the workshop held there for underprivileged but talented student musicians. The musicians would be paid to be musicians, not to be orchestral players. A violinist would be assumed to participate in string quartets as well as 2nd violin parts of

the standard repertory. Those who object that quartets are too transparent a medium for orchestral musicians are merely stating that in an orchestra players can skip the hard parts.

An orchestra that successfully handled a season like that might be able to attract an Ozawa for a chunk of the season--say, commuting between the Greek Theater and Tanglewood--and get by with Principal Guest Conductors and the like during the season. The fall concerts would be handled by a music director who also conducts from time to time. The orchestra itself could handle such problems as discipline, schedule, etc.

This would require an administration that kept its cool, worked on administration, stayed out of internal workings of the band itself. The musicians would have to work with good faith, learn their parts, listen to and correct one another. A music director or music committee would have to be reasonable about all facets of programming, including the responsibility to the future and to the area. Recordings and tours would have to take second priority to the building of a sound band which serves its community.

To the best of my knowledge, the San Francisco Symphony contract with the musicians comes up for negotiation this fall--it has already expired, and a lot of wrangling is going to go into the negotiating sessions. Ozawa is gone, and I hope nobody injects blame for that development into the contract negotiations: he was probably dissatisfied with both parties to the contract; certainly had reason to be. What's needed now, as usual, is completely free and imaginative thinking toward the possibilities of the future, not toward the problems of the past.



Tanglewood

By HUGH CEBICUS

Tanglewood is big business: the Boston Symphony can (and has) played to upwards of ten thousand seated in the Shed and on the lawn. But it is more than a mass appeal manifestation. The listeners tend to be avid, and a shop on the grounds sells scores and records for all the music played--imagine being able to buy the score to an avant garde work at intermission, so as to follow it at the concert!

But apart from the enlightened popularity of the concerts (for which careful programming and orchestral quality are visibly responsible), the Tanglewood Festival is an important educational institution. Student instrumentalists and singers from all over the country attend workshops and participate in concerts. Similarly, composers and composition students flock to the Berkshires to study: this year's composer-in-residence was none other than Olivier Messiaen. And this year a number of music critics from various parts of the country were in attendance, too, guests of the Music Critics' Association, sharpening their ears and pencils--among them myself.

We were there to deal with the criticism of new music, and our activity was focussed on the Festival of Contemporary Music sponsored by the Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard. Seven programs were given the week of August 10, with 22 pieces: ten by little-known composers, six by Messiaen, five by established composers being honored for 50th or 75th birthdays.

The week opened with an all-Messiaen concert: the 1936 rather sentimental but charming *Poemes pour Mi*, sung very well by Judith Nicosia and accompanied by the composer, and the rather syrupy, mystical-religious-cum-salon music 1943 *Visions de l'Amen* for two pianos, a precursor of the longer and much tediouser *Vingt Regards*; for the *Visions* the composer was joined by his wife, Yvonne Loriod, in a curiously loose but no doubt definitive performance. The next night there was a superb performance of *Oiseaux Exotiques* (1955), with

BRILLO MUSIC FESTIVAL

- Sept. 5 Baroque ensemble, OFCA
- 7 Royal Court Brass Ens, 17 & 20c music, Ch Adv
Kazi Pitelka, solo viola; JSB, Reger, Telemann,
Stravinsky: Berk. Piano Club, 3 pm ♪
Handel's Rinaldo; OSF
- Sept. 12 Robt Black, piano; Boulez, Webern, Beethoven,
Chopin; OFCA ♪
SFO: Trovatore (SO) (opening night)
Emilio Osta, piano: Mexican composers; OMA, 8 pm ♪
Pacific Ballet: Takemitsu Textures, Pierrot Lun-
aire, Crumb Whale, Ives. all choreographed by
Pasqualetti; 44 Page St., SF; 8:30 (rpt 9.13) ♪
- Sept. 13 SFO: L'Incoronazione di Poppea
Pacific Ballet (rpt from 9.12)
- Sept. 14 Choral music from Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Russia;
Ch Adv
Wind quintets (& Sextet) by Nielsen, Janacek,
Milhaud, Martinu; OSF ♪!
- Sept. 16 SFO Poppea
- Sept. 17 Trovatore SFO
- Sept. 19 Ronald Galen, guitar, with Armonici String Quar-
tet; Boccherini, Haydn, Ponce, JSB, Berkeley; OFCA
Oakland Ballet: Hughes, Levine, Shankar & al.--
Paramount, Oakland: time? ♪
Couperin Consort, OMA, 8 pm ♪
SFO: Poppea
Pacific Ballet: program? 44 Page, S.F.
- Sept. 20 SFO: Flying Dutchman
Pacific Ballet: see 9.19
- Sept. 21 Charles Ferguson, guitar: Milan, JSB, Villa-L.,
Smith-Brindle; Ch Adv
SFO: Trovatore (SO)
Emilio Osta, piano: Falla, Soler, Larragla,
Donostia; OSF
- Sept. 23 SFO: Dutchman
- Sept. 24 SFO: Poppea
- Sept. 26 Rani Cochran, guitar: OFCA
Oakland Ballet: Ahrold, Ravel, Kahler & al.:
Paramount, time? ♪
SFO: Dutchman
Pacific Ballet: see 9.19
- Sept. 27 Oakland Ballet: Hughes, Ravel, Ahrold & al--
Paramount? time? ♪
SFO Trovatore (SO)
Pacific Ballet (see 9.19)
- Sept. 28 Jas Tevenan, organ: JSB, Buxtehude, Schoeder
& al.; Ch Adv
SFO: Poppea
G. Liddell, R. Stryzich, lutes & guitars; OSF
OFCh Ch Orch, Mark Smith conducting; Branden-
burg 2, Siegfried Idyll, Schubert 4th, OFCA
4:30 p.m.
- Sept. 30 SFO Trovatore
- Oct. 1 SFO Dutchman
- Oct. 3 SFO Trovatore (SO)
Pacific Ballet (see 9.19)
- Oct. 4 SFO L'Elisir d'Amore (SO) ♪
Pacific Ballet (see 9.19)
- Oct. 5 Ron Erickson, ens.: pre-1930 Calif ch music, ♪
OMA

notes: OFCA=Old First Center of the Arts, Van Ness at
Sacramento, S.F., 10 pm, \$1.50
Ch Adv=Church of the Advent, 261 Fell, SF, 7:30;
donation
OSF=Old Spaghetti Factory, 478 Green St., SF,
8:30; \$2.50
SFO=S.F. Opera, Opera House, 8 p.m. (Sun 2 pm)
OMA=Oakland Museum, 8 pm, free

recommendations: ♪ for repertoire,
! for performers

...After only a few weeks I knew that music at KPFA was too much for any one person to handle, and I prevailed upon Lew Hill to hire Alan Rich. I should say rehire, for Alan had been music director before I took over the job. We arranged a division of labor that suited us both. I took care of station politics, live concerts, panel discussions and interviews; Alan programmed recorded music, presented a weekly show of music criticism and announced remote concerts. Alan had such a remarkable memory for record numbers and playing times of performances that planning forty or fifty programs of recorded music each month was a light task, accomplished as fast as he could type. What he really cared about was music criticism, and from the start he was a punishing fighter who chose his targets from the highest and mightiest.

At that time Enrique Jorda was conductor of the San Francisco orchestra. He was not a completely professional conductor, although I heard him do some things well, especially a fine performance of Berlioz' Requiem. The men in the orchestra were often unhappy because they could not read his baton, and because at rehearsals he talked too much in a thick Spanish accent that made everything turn to gabble anyway. Alan attacked Jorda's work brutally. He discussed his interpretations skin to bone, occasionally holding up an especially ugly bit. Then he reconstituted the details and compared the whole to the work of other (better) conductors. His program soon attracted a large listening audience, including a sprinkling of men from the orchestra. Managerial ears must have been listening too, for soon there was a campaign to remove Alan's show. It was easy to withstand the threats and innuendos, some from persons who could have known better; harder for the station to decline anonymous gifts, one for twenty thousand dollars, when the quid pro quo was to axe our music critic; and even more difficult to deal with apparently reasonable arguments to narrow Rich's critical territory, redefine his job, and to add critics who came to other conclusions about the condition of the San Francisco Symphony. We were delighted to add other music critics, and we did find a few, but their findings about the offerings of the San Francisco Symphony did not differ substantially from Alan's.

In this atmosphere I requested that the San Francisco Opera send KPFA's music critic complimentary tickets to the events of its coming season. No answer was forthcoming. I telephoned, and for most of an hour listened to artful and indignant rhetoric whose substance was that if the San Francisco Opera could be sure of the reviews that we would be sure to get complimentary tickets. I pointed out that no critic could be sure of what he would say until he had heard the music. The station purchased the expensive season tickets, and Alan scraped up a little more money to exchange them for better seats. Some productions were panned; others received warm reviews.

Some years later the San Francisco Opera subsidized critics from the New York Times and other important newspapers to cover a major new offering. Alan, who was now writing for the Times, stayed with us while he covered the event. He described the looks of disbelief, astonishment and horror on the faces of the opera officials when he presented his credentials and gave his name. They had not forgotten.

The size of KPFA's studio limited our offerings to solo and chamber music, but within those limits an enormous amount of live music was broadcast. Bernhard Abramowitz played Beethoven and modern music, Maro and Anshid Ajesian played contemporary American works. The G-riller and California string quartets played complementary repertoires of old and new music. Young pianists such as Stephen Bishop, David del Tredici and Dwight Peltzer gained performing experience. Contemporary music was included in almost every concert. Bay Area composers heard their works, and the programs of the Composers Forum were often repeated on the air. Concerts by Gregory Miller's chamber orchestra and the Oakland Symphony under Gerhard Samuel were regularly broadcast to a large listening audience.

KPFA acquired tapes from most of the important contemporary music festivals of Europe, among them Warsaw, Donaueschingen and Darmstadt, and we received tapes from the BBC, Swedish radio and French radio systems. In this way it was possible to hear the music of European avant garde composers soon after the original presentation. Tapes were also used to record lectures and musical demonstrations. I remember a fine talk by Arnold Elston about Webern's music. Elston had studied with Webern in the thirties, so he presented the man along with the music. At that lecture, which was recorded for KPFA, I first heard my favorite Webern composition, his Five Pieces for Chamber Orchestra, opus 10.

Another interesting program (I still have a copy of the tape) was a panel discussion with Pierre Boulez, made on one of his first visits to the United States. Boulez had spoken informally about his music a few evenings earlier at the home of a San Francisco business man. Alan was there with the station's vintage Magnecorder to play a tape which Boulez had brought along of Karlheinz Stockhausen's Gesang der Jünglinge for the forty or fifty guests, not without difficulty, because the machine introduced its own ritardandi and accelerandi into the music. Before the panel discussion at the station began we had an opportunity to hear it again, this time played at a constant speed. Two of the panelists were Arnold Elston and Andrew Imbrie, Elston sympathetic, eager to explain Boulez to Boulez, and Imbrie shooting bursts of hard-edged questions that probed at the fundamentals of Boulez' concepts and beliefs.

Part of the job of music director was to oversee all music programs, even those of program participants who presented a regular series. Anthony Boucher did a weekly show about great opera singers of the past, in a format so stereotyped that any listener could predict Tony's next sentence before it was uttered. Try as I would I could not persuade him to make a single alteration; the scratchy records and mellifluous plug-in commentary droned on, dull but unchanged.

Henry Jacobs had for years presented a program called Music and Folklore, a mélange of ethnic and folk music, interspersed with stories, philosophical asides, and musings from the disciplines of sociology and anthropology. Sandy's music was fine--I heard some great African and Caribbean music on his show--but I thought what he said about it was awful. One evening he interviewed a man he described as a prominent ethnomusicologist, whose chief contribution was a theory that Caribbean music was really the music of a lost tribe of Israel. Apparently he touched an ethnic nerve, maybe two, because angry calls began to come in before his show was over, and puzzled, irate and a few erudite letters poured in for weeks. Once I realized that Sandy's show was Music, Folklore and Humor he received no more static from me. I became a devotee of his imaginary interviews. A few were commercially recorded later, and every now and then I listen to his interview with Dr. Sholem Stein, and to the magnificent limbo of that difficult jazz musician, Shorty Faderstein.

I worked as KPFA's music director for less than a year. The pace was too fast for me. I wanted to participate in the intellectual life, not administrate it. Moreover we could hardly make ends meet on my meager salary, and I hated all the time-gobbling petty detail of administration, which left no moments for composing. I began to get sick and disconsolate. Casting about for a teaching post, I found one of San Francisco State's fifths, a few bits at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and a fulltime position at UC Berkeley. I took some trouble about my successor at KPFA. First Loren Rush took over, then Glenn Glasow, Will Ogdon and Charles Shere. Glenn and Will were colleagues in Krenek's seminars at Esline, and Shere and Rush had studied or were studying composition with me.

(Bob's reminiscences will continue in next month's issue.)



8. TANGLEWOOD (from p. 6)

student Suzanne Cheatham effortlessly and almost brilliantly taking the brittle, forward, assertive piano part. Messiaen's music tends to be either overblown, sentimental, treacly stuff with lots of thick added-note chords, or to be nervous, brash, exuberant and flinty; Oiseaux fits the latter. (In an exercise aimed at descriptive writing we were asked to produce a single sentence summarizing the sound of Messiaen: mine went 'Opulent, rich textures with quiet, spacious background sonorities; thick, lush chords moving around stepwise in limited areas; suddenly bright, impertinent boisterously assertive bird calls; long, languid, vocally melodic lines, strong walls of brasses bounding structural divisions...')(no bonus was allowed for terseness, nor does Messiaen's music encourage one.) Oiseaux Exotiques is all that, and flinty in the extreme, a fine, objective, phenomenological piece recalling the gentler Francis Ponge. The earlier, metaphysical and mystical Messiaen returned with the Debussyesque *The Ascension* (1932, looking back to St Sebastien), played none too well at the beginning of a dismal evening also including Boulez' new piece and Copland's *Connotations*, about which more later. And the well-known *Quatour pour la fin du temps* was played magnificently, its rare integration of the mystical and the methodical sides of this composer made to seem shorter than its 45 minutes by Loriod and Boston first desk men Joseph Silverstein, violin, Jules Eskin, cello, and Harold Wright, clarinet--in tune, as good as Richard Stoltzman! And Ozawa ended the Fromm week with the two-hour lush tapestry of the *Turangalila-Symphonie*, in a performance which quite surpassed his triumphant reading of it in San Francisco last January.

The new Boulez work was a major disappointment. The fascinating tautness, poised motion and grace, and clean spacious textures of *Le Marteau sans Maître* (1955) and *Eli selon pli* (1960)(his two most recent masterworks) are gone; in their place, two blocky sections alternating for 20 minutes through 15 sections of the score, one for various arbitrarily enumerated sections of winds and strings spinning out a loosely forward kind of line, the other a setting of close-set brass dissonant chordal writing, each punctuated by compulsive banging on all sorts of percussion instruments. The intent was a non-flavored ritual--*Rituels* is the name of the work, composed to the memory of composer-conductor Bruno Maderna--but the effect was tedium. The same concert gave a poor performance of *Connotations*, a fatiguing, continually loud, relentless misunderstanding of the 12-tone technique which Copland adapted to his earlier style by simply using more adjacent pitches at a time to get through the 12 in proper fashion. And Stephen Albert's *Voices Within*, which rounded out the program, was a weak amalgam of quotes, parodies and remembrances of march tunes, fanfares, drones, all coming together in a five-movement concerto grosso whose concertante is a country theater band from the turn of the century. Restricted to Ivesian ragtime, marches and the like the piece is appealing, but so many sounds from elsewhere--harp-and-cello sonorities from Debussy, short repeated trumpet figures from Varese, movie music from all over--that the piece is finally just a compilation, and not a very interesting one at that.

Other new pieces were more impressive. Joyce Kekeel's *Serena*, widely anticipated by Eastern critics who regard her as an important figure on the wings, was a very effective dramatic cantata: a narrator stood behind the piano, whispering more and more urgently an enchantment, a seduction to Death taken from Thomas Mann's *Joseph in Egypt*. Mezzo Beverly Morgan stood in front singing short lyrics from five or six different languages, poems about night and sleep, first resisting, then succumbing to the nearly invisible narrator's seduction, joining in with her in the final words. The piano part was coloristic, simple, enormously effective in its punctuation and structural definition or articulation. The piece is very moving: a local performance is justified. (I have the score--anyone want to take it on?)

Another woman composer, Chicagoan Skulamit Ran, presented her *Ensembles for 17*, commissioned (like the Kekeel) for the occasion: it was along the lines of Stockhausen's *Momente*, now a dozen years old, distinguished by the dramatically accurate and powerful, tonally beautiful singing of soprano Daisy Newman. (Singers were quite good at this festival: Newman, Morgan and Nicosia are top rank.)

The old-timers honored were Ernst Krenek, with a witty song-cycle *Austrian Travelbook*, a tonal homage to Schubert's *Winterreise* to his own perceptive, sometimes cynical journal entries while traveling through the Alps; Luciano Berio's 1965 *Folksongs*, popular, lyrical, Canteloube-like settings well but not excitingly presented (LeRoux and Cummings did better last spring at their Grapestake Gallery performance), Gunther Schuller's 1949 *Symphony for Brass and Percussion*, a neoclassical 4-movement concert band-like piece, and the Boulez and Copland.

Earle Brown was present for his *Synergy II*, probably the most substantial and most inventive work from the left wing to be heard at the festival. (Janice Giteck tells me he was at Aspen, too, and promises to let us know about that in our next issue.) Anestis Logothetis' *Odyssey* (not to be confused with Yul Brynner's current vehicle) was realized (it is a graphic score) by Theodore Antoniou and the (student) orchestra; they injected octaves into the end to make a very tonal context, which seemed wholly inappropriate. Antoniou's own *ChoroChronos II*, a dramatic cantata for solo baritone and chamber orchestra to various spiritual texts from the Bible, T.S. Eliot, Lao Tsu, and Brahman, Egyptian and Pythagorean texts on God, Time, Cosmos, Death, Man, Self-Awareness and Being (really). A great deal of percussion is used, especially tam-tam; there's lots of drones, quarter-tones, multiphonic (chord) writing for solo winds (all the young East Coast composers seem to go in for that), bowed cymbals and the like--George Crumb coloration, delicacies, "dramatics," all of which arouses a faint suspicion, like the sauces used to mask unexcitingly prepared foods. And, it's not short.

The other works played were Tibor Puzstai's *Woodwind Quintet* (1974, premiere); Marc Antonio Consoli's *Music for Chambers* (1975); Oliver Knussen's *Trumpets* (1975, premiere); Donald Harris' *Ludus II* (1973); and Preston Trombly's *Chamber Concerto for piano and ten instruments and percussion* (1975, premiere); all were reasonably competent, tended to strong supporting structural forms, developed linear thematic material into strophic arrangements, occasionally went in for chaconne-like treatment, avoided tonal implications, were written effectively for their instruments, and seemed old before their time--safe, academic. One longed for a bit of West Coast.

PERIODICALS RECEIVED
Musical Newsletter v. V no. 2: Robert Levin on improvisation, embellishment in Mozart piano concerti; Mussorgsky's editions; Tom Johnson on junky programming & new music.
Westcoast Early Music July '75: Bay Area concert & workshop calendar, book reviews, Wm. Pepper annotated checklist on baroque performance practice.
Bells, May '75: reviews of recordings of improvised music; interview w/Don Moye.
Intermedia v 1 no 2: scores, articles, art by Richard Kostelanetz, Beth Anderson, Opal Nations, many others; emphasis on new art

. . . & other material read lately: Calif. Art Commission's helpful folder on Writing a Prospectus and Sources of Arts \$\$\$ (from CAO, 808 O St, Sacramento 95814)... Edward Cone's sensible, lucid but partisan toward teleological music *Musical Form and Musical Performance* (Norton, \$2.45) which deals with its subjects toward the clarification of the performance of music, greatly to be wished... Dutton's magnificent *Dictionary of Contemporary Music* (834 pp, \$25, worth every penny): a very nearly definitive reference examining hundreds of composers and the major (and minor) trends and developments of its subject: Robert Morgan's review in the Sept. '74 *Musical America* is worth reading, and the *Dictionary's* a must.