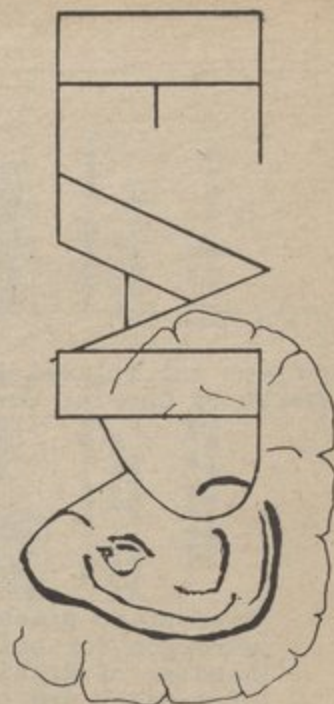


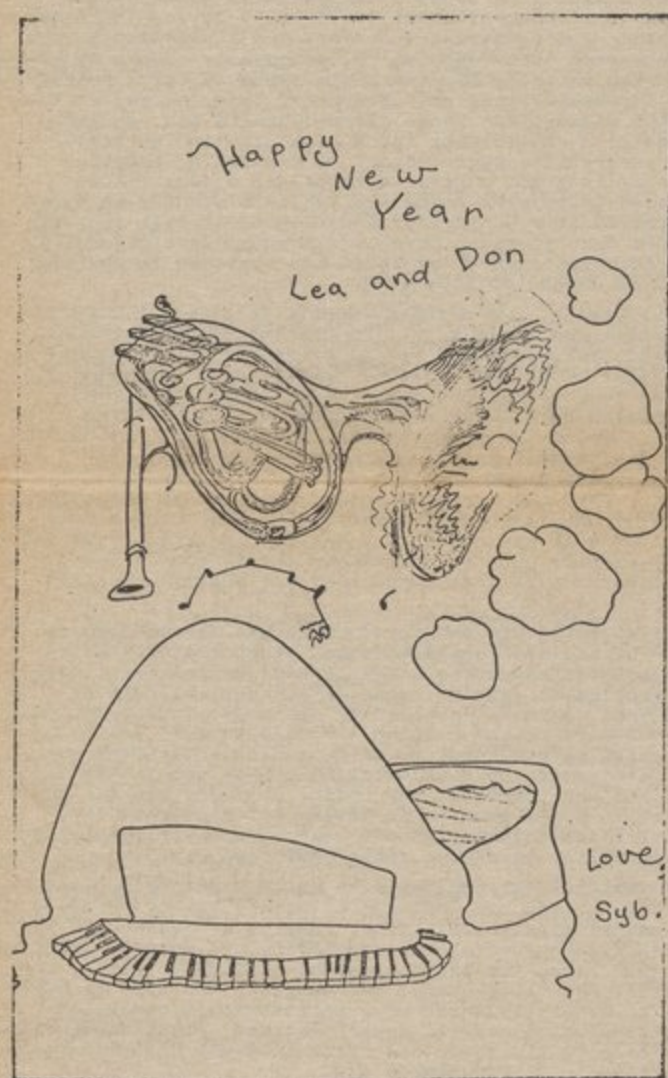
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EAR NEWS FEB 1976 VOL 3 NO 2 FIFTY CENTS A COPY SIX DOLLARS A YEAR



Dear Charles Shere,

It occurred to several of us that Ear West might benefit from a shot of art variation and some tender care in layout. Jan. was like nice to see the Cal. feature but glaring because of the representative shortage in those shifting loci. (something could perhaps be learned from Unky Anton's inheritance-art layout too) Anyway just a little obscure feedback and jab to bolster rather an upper and continued effort for Open Ears, and to prove it I'd like to include Anty Sybe's new years card to us.

Also on the composers list; the opera association might have been delighted but they are all still waiting for the money. Incidentally a couple of us are around now for over 10-12 years basking in our luxurious anonymity and how curious to see the New York opera association filter in-ie, all those Buggers. Also how bout giving those rok n rollers a hand an break in thought flows. Some of them under the disguise of curious beasts have learned not to swallow a banana-just for good measure and to instill a healthy measure of paranoia never again to shirk from the call of Art; we enter this web of frenzy with these tips of humble icebergs waiting for the spotlight of fame in silence not able to really warn passing sails to the nut of humility. Within these eggshells we bow to thee hoping for meager attention and no more lists but rather something to lighten our loads. Thank You and lets keep EAR dynamite an undroll.

the real thing
but thanks anyway
luvs n luck in
those adventures
unsung but still felt

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It is amazing how many people want to see a new approach to layout in EAR, and how many more feel their special area is ignored, and how few help support EAR, and how fewer let us know what they're doing. 250 composers or 50 and 1000 musicians could get one hell of a lot going if they'd cooperate a bit. Last year EAR cost me about \$500 - how much did you help? Put your money - and your typewriter - where your mouth is, and let me know what you're doing: I'm not a mind-reader.

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Clearly, not enough space for adequate treatment of the Oakland Museum "Songfest" by local composers, or of Marilyn Tucker's review of it in the San Francisco Chron. The concert was long and tedious, but it only takes six words to say so; M.T. took maybe 12 column inches, leaving no room to discuss the music--except for a couple of pieces. For the record, F.Y.'s opinions: Barry Taxman's *For Tom*, Elinor Armer's *Pogo Cantabile*, Ivan Rosenblum's *Songs*, Anne Kish's *Songs*: varying pleasant, conservative, appealing to a mass audience. Robert Basart's *Serenade*, Jane Wilkinson's *Movements*: soundly written in an approved academic style, magnificently sung (Anna Carol Dudley). The *Compleynt* from Robert Hughes' *Amo Ergo Sum*: a duet for sopranos using tonal relations which work in a new music context: admirable. Robert Krupnick's *Two Perfect Lovesongs*: imperfect, pleasantly simple, long, not needing the distracting Tai Chi exercise which accompanied it. Charles Shere's *Dirt and Not Copper*: funny, real, pointed, toothy, smiling like a wolf, well performed by John Duykers with bassoon & trombone, the latter occasionally submerged. Janice Giteck's *Messalina*: substantial, real depth of character, music and gesture totally integrated, Nero made real in 10 minutes. Duykers again, and Amy Radner, cello--marvelous. You can put a review like this in only 5½ inches.

ONE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST COMPOSERS.

One of America's greatest composers spent a few days with me recently. Now in his late seventies, he is still vital, clear-eyed and inquisitive; in addition, his age has given him the ability to see quickly through facades and poses; he can see immediately what is genuine, what is superficial.

I don't feel free to disclose his name here. He was, after all, paying a personal visit, and I don't want to trade on our friendship. Suffice it to say that, like many pioneers, he suffers from neglect: his music--and there isn't that much of it--is more often discussed than performed, more often ignored than discussed.

He accepts this state of affairs with an even temper. His music is a personal matter, really; the result of a process of discovery--whether self-discovery is a matter for him to disclose, and he characteristically chooses not to discuss the matter. His music is the result not of treadmill activity to attain position, and certainly not of white-hot divine inspiration (unless at the earliest, first cause level): it develops from his determination to continue any line of investigation which occurs to him clearly, logically, in order to pursue matters as far as can practically be done.

I am writing about him because two or three events which took place in my home during his visit are particularly intense in my memory, and I believe they may have significance beyond their meaning to me. I believe they may pertain to the state of music and the other arts in general, that is, and that I may therefore be justified in submitting them for publication.

As I have mentioned, his age has not debilitated him in any degree. He stands erect, about five foot ten or eleven; his hair is white and thinning somewhat; his eye a clear blue, soft but not watery, inclined to gaze off into the distance but not through an inability to give full attention to the immediate. His speech is quiet, direct, to the point; I suppose he could be called laconic. He is an ineffably kind, quiet man, strong in knowing and following his own way.

We live in the hills, in a house I helped build when I was a boy; he asked with some interest about the town as it was in those days--a sense of the past continues to inform his dedication to the present: he is concerned about continuity, especially across apparent disruptions, such as those his own music seems at first hearing to have created. I remember that one afternoon, late, he was standing in front of the window, his hands clasped behind him, gazing out at the view while I was looking for a book high in the bookcase. I have an inexpensive reproduction of a painting hanging above that bookcase: it's not a great work of art by any means, but I grew attached to it as a young man, while a student at the University. I brushed it reaching for a book, and it fell from its frame. He mentioned that it might have been mounted more carefully, and I blushed at the criticism of my short-cut approach to getting things done: I am no doubt too impatient.

He gets up very early. One morning, unable to sleep, I came downstairs at about three o'clock to find him eating his bacon and eggs, toast and orange juice. The paper hadn't yet arrived: I can't eat breakfast without it, but he rarely reads the paper at all, preferring less transitory information to divert him. I asked if he would mind my playing a recording for him. "Not at all," he replied: he's always eager to hear new music. I put on a piece by Toshi Ichimiyagi, and he listened, absorbed in the music but not commenting on it. There was something I specifically wanted him to hear, but I had trouble finding it on the tape, which was unlabeled. A drone-based piece of LeMonte Young's came next; I explained that it was not what I was looking for. "Doesn't matter," he said, shortly but not unkindly, "let it play." The characteristic acceptance of what comes next and taking it on its own terms.

But nothing distracted his own work. That was why he rose so early, no doubt. We had one long discussion about the difficulty of continuing to compose new music after it had stopped being new. It is a central problem to working these days, when the cult of the new makes it hard to resist abandoning one's own investigations and picking up some more recent fashion. "One's work is one thing, the rest of the world is another," he said, a bit tentatively, as if uncomfortable at drawing up boundaries. "So many people are doing so visibly much, and the journals, the radio, concerts can all be distracting. What it comes down to is having faith or belief--determination, I like to think of it--in one's own activity without rejecting the possibility of others going their own way."

None of this explains the urgency with which I remember his visit. I haven't described his luminous calm; the way he stood in our living room twenty minutes at a time, completely detached from us and our conversation but totally aware of it, and equally aware of the spaces in the room, the proportions of ceiling to walls, the sounds from outside, the temperature, the weather, the time of day--all those things we generally think of quantitatively, but which were to him qualities which carried equal abstract weight along with the sounds which made up his music and which no doubt also occupied his mind at such moments. A remarkable man.

The above was written some time ago, shortly after his visit, but at the last minute not submitted to the publication for which it was intended, owing to the concerns described in the second paragraph. A few years later he died; my concern then was to avoid seeming to clutch his coat-tails. All these concerns seem small matters now, and so, for that matter, is his identification; his presence--and his observations about private work in a public world--matter as much as ever, however, and prompt me to dust off this reminiscence once more.

--Hugh CEBIOUS.

Last night I attended the Oakland Symphony sprawl celebrating the Bicentennial--a Mozart horn concerto, a clutch of ca. 1776 choral pieces (Billings & al.), half a Gottschalk symphony, five Stephen Foster quartets, Ernst Bacon's *Fables*, Brahms fiddle concerto. The Bacon was solidly mitteleurope, late 19th cent., diverting, well played. I took the time to watch Harold Farberman's conducting rather closely, and I think I know why the orchestra has no grace and little warmth: he sways a lot, leans into the music, labors details, throws big cues (even at the four musicians who played the Foster) -- but keeps his eyes in the score; doesn't relate to his band. It figures: you never see him at concerts, either. He may be trying to do too much--why not loosen up, get acquainted with the scene here, forget London?

--Fikret YOUSSEF.

Here is a page from Olly Wilson's *Echoes* for clarinet and electronic tape, to be played at the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players concert on Feb. 9. The work is about twelve minutes long and succeeds well in relating the two parts. The tape sounds are synthesizer-generated. I've heard a tape of a prior performance by the same clarinetist, Phil Rehfeldt, for whom the piece was written; he's remarkably good. *Echoes* continues the work done by Mario Davidovsky in his various *Synchronisms*, developing a dialogue between live performer and tape composer; Wilson approaches the problem from the

direction of similar but independent textures in the two participants (hence the title) which play with tonal displacement, starting with adjacent pitches and a prominent tritone (F-B), then developing strong tonal centers which somehow avoid tonal connotations until the very end, when a minor third-sixth succession sounds very American, very Copland, then fades out in a coda. It's a convincing piece, due soon to be recorded. Wilson currently has three records out on CRI and Columbia, and is working on a piece for tenor and tape which will use spiritual references in a recomposed context.



DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC & COMMITTEE FOR ARTS AND LECTURES
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
BERKELEY

BERKELEY CONTEMPORARY CHAMBER PLAYERS
FEBRUARY 9, 8 P.M., HERTZ HALL

EDWIN DUGGER, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR
SONJA NEBLETT, CONDUCTOR
PHIL REHFELDT, CLARINET
CHARLES MC DERMOTT, ORGAN

* * *

DAVIDOVSKY, SYNCHRONISM 5, FOR PERCUSSION AND TAPE
WALTER WINSLOW, NAHUA SONGS, FOR SOPRANO AND PIANO
OLLY WILSON, ECHOES, FOR CLARINET AND TAPE
ISANG YUN, TRUYAUX SONORES, FOR ORGAN
SESSIONS, CONCERTINO FOR CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

* * *

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VALERIE SAMSON: BETTY WONG

Betty is painting her bathroom when I arrive. She has just knocked over a shelf and there is broken glass on the floor. She is glad that I have come because she has been getting clumsier and clumsier and having more accidents. I go into the studio while she cleans up the glass. She has several large folders, neatly organized, on her work, concerts she has given, and her resumé. She decides to tape the interview herself, too, so that she can get her thoughts together in preparation for reapplying to graduate school at U.C.S.D.

BW: My background and my sister's background is so UNIQUE, because being born in Chinatown, and our parents were not English speaking, it's very strange to stumble onto a piano teacher, a local woman, whose daughter happens to be a great child prodigy. And it's also very strange that my father should have such a liking for European music, but he happens to be a scholar. So what happened was that when we were about 12 years old, my piano teacher --- I don't know how she did it --- convinced my father to take us to this downtown studio to meet this man with thick eyeglasses, thick Russian accent, and for her to take us out of Chinatown was very amazing. We had never left Chinatown before, because we were very much ghetto-oriented. And not only that, who was this European? My father had no contact with Europeans, and it cost \$10 a lesson at the time, and for TWO of us!! Most parents, especially treating daughters, will NOT give you that kind of education. Well, what started our musical careers was my father's gift to us.

While studying with Lev Shorr we met many people. There were so many child prodigies in that house coming in and out!! Now the thing about Shirley and myself is that we had no less training, but I think because of our psychological inhibitions, and not really being a part of that culture, we ourselves could not go on stage. All our little gifted friends running around obviously made it in the concert hall and everything. We would just perform for ourselves, and Lev Shorr would always try to prime us to catch up with them, but somehow we didn't have the social standing that they did, and we didn't have the encouragement from grown-ups and parents which is VERY important.

VS: Where did you go to college?

BW: Mills College. Now that was another phenomenon. Why my father should spend so much money on two girls --- it was very amazing! At the time we were there, do you know who was teaching there? Leon Kirchner! A fantastic musician! and Milhaud! Mort Subotnick was doing graduate work, and we had Nate Rubin, of course, who taught most of the classes. He gave us a most incredible background in ensemble playing. We both think that our piano playing developed because of our work with a STRING player!

At the time we were there, most of the undergraduates were fantastic. We had our own small orchestra playing very well, and piano competitions every year! That place was jumping! At that time, the students were very much self-educated. They didn't wait for the classroom to give them an education. There were people like William Bolcom who were turning out works that were already better than a lot of people twice as old, and Bob Moran was a graduate student then. Let's just say that my generation, for some reason, was very motivated. And I didn't have any of their development when I first went, but when you can be in the company of people of that standing, of Mort Subotnick, you just can't help but soak it in.

Several years after graduating from Mills College I began to start working with dancers. I was just a volunteer, but six months later this particular workshop got an anti-poverty grant and hired me to work with the dancers for pay.

VS: Because you were already there?

BW: (shouting) Yes!! Yes!! Very much so, and she (Gloria Unti) liked my work. It was just a matter of being there at the right time, and that we got along very well. She still has the workshop right now. Her job was to work in the Fillmore district, and that was the first time I've ever worked with the black community. You know, they have MARVELOUS dancers, untrained and unable to teach. Her workshop was to teach them how to be teachers so they could go back into the community and start their own workshops. I was the composer for the whole group, and I didn't even major in composition! But somehow it was the right time, and I was beginning to use tape recorders. At that time I met Pauline Oliveros who came to one of our performances and said "study with me!". It was amazing! I didn't even know who she was. On her own time, she taught me the Buchla at Mills College. She also taught me composition. It was the most amazing thing, because the black people responded to the electronic treatment of sounds that I had collected. They did NOT respond to European music, which is to be expected. They liked their own music but then you can't just have them sit in soul music and not branch out at all, because no one's paying you to do that. So I studied with Pauline in 1966, and in 1968 she called me and said "there's a new department, come study with me", and so we got fellowships to study.

VS: At U.C.S.D.?

BW: At San Diego. I studied with Robert Erickson and her, and out of that came my thesis concert which has these pieces (she shows me programs and photographs) in it, using live performers and sound objects. I used performers playing traditional instruments like violin, trumpet, and piano, but also I used a lot of electronic processing of live instruments. Quiet Places uses a lot of vocal sounds, and How to Grow Your Own Environment had tapes of busy streets in San Francisco, sound sculptures like amplified logs and people making sounds with instruments and stones and their voices. There were a lot of slides and lights.

VS: Did you do your own slides and lights?

BW: Yes. Lights, no. I had visual artists working with me. Dennis Covello happened to be very willing to work with me. A violinist, he helped me build sculptures -- you can see the picture of it. We COMPLETELY transformed the building. We made things where people could reach up and make sounds, hung sculptures.

VS: Where did you get the ideas for these things?

BW: Well, a lot of it had to do with being influenced by John Cage and Japanese composers who were making sounds on objects, and with a lot of study of music concrete. I read articles on music concrete and listened to people like Robert Erickson. I went into nature and recorded a LOT, and tried to fuse the experience of outdoor and indoor.

The kind of department they have down there, you have to teach yourself a lot. No one's going to give you a course and give you ten books to read. Nobody's going to even give you a tape piece to listen to. You've got to be your own resource, and this is what I was taught over and over again. If you want a piece to happen, you must be able to do every single thing yourself. Even if you can't do them all, and you ask different performers to do them, you should be able to project what you want as if you were performing every part. This is the greatest lesson that Pauline gave me. That's why, when I go into a concert hall, I can wire up my own sound system, and make recording. Know EXACTLY what your piece needs and do a study of it WAY before you ask other people to do it for you. A lot of times they don't know how to do it. They're just available people. When you want instrumentalists to play a piece for you, you've got to be able to tell them what you want even if you can't play the instruments. You see, that's why, for the last three years, I have NOT been composing. What have I been doing? Performing! I myself have been learning how to play instruments.

VS: Mostly Chinese instruments?

BW: Yes! Which is like a whole new resource for composition. I have sounds at my disposal that most western composers do not have. I'm not learning it second-hand because I can transmit directly from the language. The piece I showed you, Possible Music for a Silent World, has Chinese instrumentation. What's good about it is that I can tell them EXACTLY how I want those instruments to sound because I've worked with them for three years. I can tell them what kind of sounds go best with this particular piece, what kind of sounds to avoid, what combination of sounds create certain moods, and it's not strange to me. It's VERY familiar to me!

VS: And you use them in ways that traditional Chinese would not think of?

BW: Yes, but I have both! I can say "Play a traditional sound", and know what that is, and I can also say "Play a non-traditional sound", and know what that is too. It's like a pianist who knows how to play inside-out. I'm concerned with bringing VERY carefully, these traditional instruments into a non-asian world.

VS: In other words, you're combining your experiences in both worlds?

BW: Yes. Audiences have never thought of the possibility of sounds like these. Also, I'm very visually oriented. This piece is based on slides of underwater life. I'm carefully guiding these ideas so that they don't lose direction. It might take me an entire year to realize that piece, but it doesn't bother me because I'm basically a performer, so while I'm not actually completing a composition, my group of performers and I are actually coming closer to doing it all the time because our skills are improving.

Another thing I'm doing is working with non-musicians: set designers, environmentalists, projectionists, story-tellers, dancers,.... I'm composing using movers who tell ME how the sound would make them want to move. I'm working with set designers and costume designers who can tell me how they want to make costumes, and how it would affect my music, and how my music would affect them. We're all learning all the time because none of us has ever done it, but that's the exciting part of our project.

We're using very ancient, mythological themes, like the symbol of the dragon. We're doing research on how the symbol of the dragon has been used in different cultures: Asian, Medieval, European, wherever it appears. The legends are so full of fantasy and imagination that we don't feel tied down to a specific definition. We don't have to be real. Why should the art world ever have to be real? And we don't have to stick to factual information.

VS: So your research is just to stimulate you?

BW: Yes. And what we're going to do is use a lot of unexplored kinds of collaboration and a lot of SPACE. We're very interested in how to start a stimulus for an audience and then let them complete images, let them complete the sound that we project. We project a moment of sound, then suddenly discontinue it. The audience has to pick up and imagine what the continuity is. A lot of the continuity will NOT be expressed by us, so there's a lot of audience completion of ideas. That doesn't mean that they make sounds. What they have to do is to bridge the moments of silence, moments when they will sometimes see visual things and sometimes they won't. If we do a dragon, you will see only, perhaps, the eyes of a dragon, the claws or the tail. You will not see the entire body. You have to imagine how large the dragon is. Is it so large that you can't POSSIBLY bring it into a space? And the sound of a dragon, is it so enormous and so amazing that you can only make a moment of the sound, and imagine what the rest of it is? We're leaving a lot to the imagination, a lot unexpressed. I think a lot of unknown qualities are lost in completed composition, in completed dance...

VS: Which is what most western music has been?

BW: Yes! There is never an end to any particular performance of Balinese music, because the music is ALWAYS existing. The music you do not hear is always reciting in the instrument. It's an incredible concept!

VS: You learned this at the Center for World Music?

BW: Yes. I heard someone tell me this. The idea a lot of times reaches into my subconscious and will affect my own compositional inspiration. When you go to these instruments, you are just a tool. The instrument isn't the tool, you are!

VS: The instrument is the music?

BW: Yes!! And it's not waiting for you to make the music. It's already in the atmosphere. You may say it's superstitious, but it's fantastic superstition. So I myself hardly ever go to concerts unless it's something very phenomenal. I might go to hear a lot of South Indian music, which helps to expand my music. But I will seldom go to hear music recreated. I want my consciousness to be floating, and I don't float when I go to hear music that is exactly 40 minutes long. You can't inject something into music that already has a beginning and an end. I would more likely go to see a performance of multi-media than I would of an all-music or all-dance concert.

VS: Do you think there will be more multi-media programs in the future?

BW: I haven't experienced that much, and what I did see was disappointing. We have to remember what works and what doesn't.

I'll say this about concerts of new music: audiences do NOT get the kind of education they need. My friends and family who came (to a recent concert) not only did not understand other people's pieces, but they didn't understand my piece! They were very disturbed. They were saying to each other (whispering) "What is it about?" and they're TRYING to understand. Composers and musicians can't just say, "Well, they have to take their chances, they have to be receptive, and they have to know that music keeps moving and isn't going to sound like what it did 50 years ago". That's not enough! If you use a tape recorder you have to say, "The way I use the tape recorder brings out this particular kind of sound, and everytime you hear something change, I'll TELL you how it changed. I'll tell you WHY it changed. I'll tell you why I WANT it to change." Just go into the minds of non-musicians and try to understand why they need all this information.

VS: Do you think this could be done with program notes?

BW: No! Not at all!! We rely too much on program notes. We should organize workshops and invite small audiences to come and just have a gab session. I'm not interested in giving one concert after another and have audiences come and say "I don't understand why I have to come and hear this". And I think more and more now that we can't just turn our backs away from people who don't understand, and say, "well, we'll get a better audience next time". You BUILD your own audiences.

VS: People will come if they learn something?

BW: Sure. They may not even like what they're hearing, but they're learning something. They should be allowed to ask questions. After you perform you should turn the lights on the audience, get up, go to them, and say: "Do you have any questions about any of the things you've just heard?" I don't think that performers or composers should be afraid of talking through a piece with an audience.

(continued next page)

- VS: I think they are, though. They're afraid of getting questions they can't answer. They'd rather not be in a position where they have to defend themselves.
- BW: Of course, if the composer is going to be afraid, the audience is never going to get a chance. You're never going to get across to the audience what you want if you don't TRUST the audience. Pauline tried her methods many times, and they failed many times, and do you think she gave up? Never! Her pieces have gone through A LOT of transition and a lot of versions. And her pieces work well because she always has experienced people who know her work in the audience! They're put in the audience to help control it, and she's WISE. It helps the audience bridge the uncertainty of not knowing how to do something, because people take them by the hand. That's what happened with the snake piece she did at Mills (1974). Do you remember how it ended up in the lobby? THAT'S the kind of thing people remember! And they're all a part of it. Why aren't more composers conscious of that kind of need?
- VS: So you are, yourself, now working on multi-media projects with the intent of involving the audience in open-ended kinds of pieces?
- BW: Also, the working process of the artist is as much THE product, as, say, a theme that has a beginning and an end. The process itself is witnessed and experienced throughout, and the magic is exposing the internal workings with the audience. I have a feeling that that is even more magical than the end result. This is what I'm working for.
- VS: So you are really writing for the audience?
- BW: In a way, but I'm not writing FOR the audience. I'm trying to actualize a concept. You see, the concept itself has to be very well rehearsed and expressed by experienced and very skilled artists. I'm NOT working with amateurs. They have to be convincing and dynamic, whether they're doing light, movement, sound or verbalization. The audience is not going to be activated unless this is projected ok. (getting excited, whispering) It's like we're the projectors and the audience is the screen. The audience must act as a screen to give definition to our imagery. They have to receive it in a form that is recognizable, and we have to be so focused that they will receive it without question. It's not enough to have a projector and a slide. You must focus it, and THEN the imagery becomes clear. What we have to do is become so focused that the screen which is passive receives the imagery and understands it. But we go beyond understanding. We expect them to respond. The screen doesn't do that, but the audience looking does that. The audience responds and the audience is a screen at the same time. And what happens is that we're going to leave it open-ended enough so that they're drawn into the piece. This is what I'm working for!! Just like in the Possible Music for a Silent World. The world exists without you, and what you want to do is not interfere with that silent world, but to understand it so that what you project into it has some meaning with what you see. The music must take on the aspect of NOT DISTURBING, but almost awakening. That's why I'm so cautious about it, because I don't want to be superimposed on a world that's already complete.
- What I might do, in order to get the performers into the preparation of the piece is to ask them to go without talking for a single week, so they know how it feels to be absolutely silent. Or I might say to them "Spend one day without sound whatsoever". In other words, impose silence, and THEN they might start to figure out what kind of sounds would go into a world like that.
- VS: So if you were teaching musicians to be composers, you would teach them by having them do these experiments?
- BW: Yes. I wouldn't be conceptual about it and say, "Use your head and just imagine"... A lot of us are so lazy that we don't do the kind of preliminary experimentation when we compose. Don't you feel that way about a lot of people, especially those who make electronic music? They don't LIVE in the world 24 hours a day, and don't know what to sort out. There's so little selection in what I hear! What I'm saying is that I'm not in a hurry to compose, and I'm not in a hurry to let someone work with my pieces, because I want to live with them LONGER, so I know EXACTLY what it is I want. I don't expect anyone else to understand it until I understand it.
- VS: Would you say that your education was appropriate for what you're trying to do? Did studying the piano help you in any way?
- BW: What helped me was not so much the instrument, but the kind of awareness and sensitivity in understanding how sounds work. Not even how a particular kind of music works, or how your technical ability expresses the sound. NONE of that! What really helps me is to ask, "Am I really excited by sounds?". We're so bombarded that we don't even ask ourselves that question any more. What if we had 20 times less sound than we have right now? How would it affect us? Pauline has influenced me more than anybody else when it comes to hearing. Her influence has put me in a place where I am more able to make decisions that will produce works, rather than to keep collecting ideas that I am stimulated by but never getting around to completing compositions.
- VS: What are your goals?
- BW: I would say, to KNOW for myself why I'm still a musician, to know for myself what kind of music I am selective about now, to sort out what STAYS with me from what just excites me, to determine what excites me to the point that I will spend years on it. If I can define this for myself, THEN I might make some music. I'm contented not to make music except for myself, and when I go to play for an audience, I go to play them the music that I'm LIVING with. I tell them what is in this music and I try to, through the music, communicate what I feel about it. I do give program notes, but I think it's not disturbing to the presentation to say why this music means so much to you, and why you want to share it. It's important for us to be more personable.

(Betty talks at length about the problems of working with other people)

What we assume is so outrageous! Because we can talk together doesn't mean we can make music together! And because we are skilled doesn't mean that we can collaborate together. I insist that unless we feel personally involved in each others' music, with each others' ideals about music, we shouldn't work together!!

Don't you think it's honest to say why we respond or do not respond? It's all right to be honest, to say, "this piece, frankly, I don't identify with". The other person should learn something from this and say, "Why don't you?". It's not group therapy. It's open communication, because we want to work together. Why shouldn't we let each other know what we think? And if I say to you "I'm not interested in western instruments", I'm not putting it down at all! I'm just saying that I've done it, I'm not in it right now, but I'm glad you're doing it. And you might say to me "I don't understand your instruments. What kind of instrument is that sitting over there? Why are you using that sound?" And then I'll exchange with you and say that what she happens to be playing expresses something that a western instrument can't possibly express. (sound of an oriental instrument drifts in from the next room all the while.) Couldn't I say that? And is there any argument about it? Well then, why are we so afraid to talk about it?

VS: How has being a woman influenced your work?

BW: I feel more the singular experience of being a woman in western music than I do in my own music. In oriental music I feel that there is no distinction, because it's such a rarity to begin with. When it comes to having my compositions performed or participating in a women's group, I have a particular PRIDE about being a woman doing it. It gives me more motivation.

VS: So you prefer to work with women?

BW: I like the challenge. I don't know that we work better, but I like the challenge. It also gives us a reason to stay with it. People do think differently of you because there are so few of you. If I had gone to India to pursue the study of the South Indian Tambourine, they wouldn't have taught me! I've been very fortunate because I'm still in America.

I'm very, very affected by the few women artists who have been very good friends of mine. I'm very affected by Lynn Lonidier, a first-rate powerful feminist poet. She speaks out constantly, her writing is disciplined and sharp, and she DARES to excel in her field. Now that's the thing, that she dares to study all that she has to move about and leave her environment, to go where she has to be to get the skills. I'm timid still, --- now this is what I wonder, whether it's a problem with a lot of women. They're not encouraged to travel, they're not encouraged to go into other cultures, and they're timid about leaving home, about leaving family behind. Now, I've never had to do that, because my sister is a musician and we always went together. But if I were given an opportunity to leave my family and go to China by myself, I'll tell you right now, it makes me shiver! And yet, if I were given that opportunity, is it because I'm a woman and I'm afraid to travel alone that would stop me?! (agitated) That's a question that we should face.

VS: Has it been a good thing for you to live here in San Francisco?

BW: Well, it has to do with a community of artists. I don't care where it is, so long as there's a community of artists. I don't even care if there's no audience. Like at U.C.S.D., we had no audience. They didn't understand us at ALL! But we had such an incredible community of performers and composers that we stimulated each other. I grew ENORMOUSLY down there, and it really shaped my whole experience as a musician. Here, there's a larger audience, but much less concentration of a supporting environment. (raising voice) There's nothing up here comparable to U.C.S.D.!

VS: What about Mills College?

BW: Not at all! There are a lot of people running around full of ideas and full of energy, but it's very dispersed... It bothers me that so much of their equipment is isolated into little closet spaces.

VS: But you don't regret being here?

BW: Well, if it weren't for Chinese music, I think I might be very unhappy here. But because of what I'm exploring in my own culture, this would happen ONLY in the Bay Area and not at U.C.S.D. You might say that I'm where I need to be as long as I'm in this area of music.

At U.C.S.D. I had a lot of support. You could do ANYTHING you wanted! I had a water music that consisted of dripping from a ladder, dropping pebbles into a bucket, someone else frying water. You could wet the whole place and have someone swish around with a mop! Pam Sawyer drove a motorcycle right into the concert hall as a part of my piece, stopped, --- and nobody was bewildered, they were all laughing --- took out a trumpet, and blew the Star Spangled Banner into a bucket of water. You just did whatever you felt like. People made music by attaching electrodes to Bonnie Barnett wearing a bikini! Right behind you on the postcard. She has electrodes attached to her that make electronic sounds when men come and feel her up. And that's a piece.

Anyway, even if you're put in a position of being able to do everything you wanted, you still need people around you to give you the OK and say to you: "If it pleases you, if it turns you on, I'm not going to get in your way. I'm not going to tell you it's not music." And that's the first thing you need: an environment of support.

VS: Do you feel any support here?

BW: I don't know if people CARE enough to give you that support. It's nonchalance: "I don't really care if you don't make music or not" or "as long as I'm making music I really don't care if you're making music, and whether what you're making is music". Maybe I just don't know where the support is, that I felt in my own small music department. This city is so big, I really don't know what's going on.

VS: Would you like to know what's going on?

BW: I would like to know, yet there's so much stimulus in the area, I find myself putting it off constantly.

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A Peek At What History Forgot

7.

Aaron Copland has for so long been identified with American music in general that a celebration of his 75th birthday year might well be observed by extricating him from the history of American music, rather than identifying him with the Bicentennial. Recently, after all, much American music has evolved a different path from his.

And yet Copland's career inevitably invites reflections on his milieu. Some men are properly subjects of biographies; others need a *Life and Times of*, and the overriding characteristic of Copland's creative life has been its--well, its historicity, its property of recalling and standing for all the winds of influence and change that blew around it while yet standing quite firm and steadfast for its own course.

This seems a particularly appropriate approach to Copland now. In his youth the musical situation must have seemed as confused as our own, though now the general patterns of serialism, Neoclassicism and the late romanticism have covered most of the details of the new music wars of the 1920s. Inevitably the welter of styles and approaches prevailing today will settle down similarly, probably into their own Left and Right--Crumb and Carter, perhaps, with the Cage school persisting to develop a Center, perhaps. And someone will emerge, no doubt, to span with his own work the next few decades, as Copland seems to span the gap from Ives to the postwar period.

Copland himself is responsible for some of his own nationalizing. If he's thought of automatically as The American Composer there must be a reason. His characteristic long-lined lyrical phrases, the "jagged" angularities of his dissonance-framed tunes, his nervous, "jazzy" rhythms are cited on dozens of record jackets as descriptive of our plains, our mountains, our cities. His titles declaim his American-ness: *Rodeo*, *Billy the Kid*, *Piano Blues*, *A Lincoln Portrait*, *Appalachian Spring*. He has written opera for our public schools, music for our films and playwrights, a concerto for Benny Goodman.

Others have been similarly devoted to their country in their music, with less distinguished results. Copland's best music is strong and interesting because it expresses a personal vision of a generalized, perhaps national quality--and expresses that vision in an abstract, objective statement accessible to any attentive listener, not merely to enthusiasts. Beethoven universalized Austrian traditional music, making its songs and periods express less particularized, loftier feelings in his late quartets and the Ninth Symphony; in a way Copland has done something similar.

Like Beethoven--the comparison is presumptuous, but attractive--Copland has not dealt with this musical process without producing lesser works. But it's dangerous to dismiss the popular works as nothing more. *El Salon Mexico* is modest in its ambition, to be a recollection of a Mexican holiday, but the score is meticulously crafted.

There remains the more serious problem about Copland's music--the problem which arises from his popularity and his eclecticism, and which is perhaps responsible for his current rather unfashionable aura among younger American composers. This is of course the two-directioned attitude his music takes, toward the popular taste and toward the smaller audience. Half his music--not quite quantitatively--is for the pops concert; half is for contemporary music events. He has not solved the problem of making developed tastes immediately appealing. This problem is particularly visible in this country; it expresses the impossibility of a democratic culture in a culturally revolutionary time.

An early work like the *Piano Variations* (1930) addresses this problem by referring to the sound of one system--nervous rhythms, dissonances, block textures which many relate to jazz--while maintaining the structural procedure of the other. From then on, until the end of the war, the emphasis was on the dissociation of the two kinds of pieces, and the dance and theater music--*Billy the Kid*, *Quiet City*, *Our Town*, *Rodeo* and the like--seemed to prevail against the more "abstract" *Sextet*, *Piano Sonata* and the like.

By 1950 Wilfrid Mellers could state (in *Grove's Dictionary*) that "in Copland's most recent 'absolute' works there are indications that the human tenderness of the ballets and film music is being absorbed into the incisive metallic precision of the earlier manner." He cites the *Third Symphony* of 1946 as an example, but it's tempting to suggest that it is precisely in not compromising the distinct values of the two styles that Copland is most admirable, and that the *Third* is a more uneasy piece than either the *Dance Symphony*, a 1925 score, or *Connotations*, the twelve-tone orchestra piece written 37 years later for the dedication of Lincoln Center.*

Charles Ives grows out of the Transcendental heritage of 19th century New England, and his music can express the universalization of the particular. This is what his *Fourth Symphony* is really all about, and his *Second Quartet*, whose finale unites disparate voices in a common, though not unison, statement.

Copland speaks for midcentury America, whose diverse strains are not nearly so susceptible of integration. They can be personalized, then used abstractly; but they cannot be combined so as to remain individual while yet expressing a fuller, larger unity. Their threads can be woven into a narrative tapestry, if you like, but not a fine broadcloth.

It's no good asking a man to stand for values alien to his time. Copland's achievement has been to express the vigor, the intelligence, the industry of his time; and he has tempered that achievement often with a rare dedication and focus of his own uncompromising sense of line and structure--notably in the solo piano music.

He has been urged too often to a synthesis which has resisted him, and the pieces which have resulted--the *Third Symphony*, the *Dickinson songs*, *Connotations*--seem self-conscious as a result.

From the innovations of the '20s, which he helped introduce to a wider audience, his own interest properly narrowed in focus to his unique compositional needs, while continuing to acknowledge the tastes of his countrymen. A parallel to the career of Shostakovich is tempting, but the Russian climate proved too oppressive for the latter composer to resist. (It would be too bad to see *El Salon Mexico* censored here by a similarly oppressive academic disapproval.)

With his interest in serial implications, and the evolution of the *Connotations* style, the direction of Copland's career is fully stated. It's unthinkable that he would suddenly issue a work like Stravinsky's *The Owl* and the *Pussycat*, a sad example of declining energy.

What is needed now is what will inevitably come: the gradual re-direction of attention toward the most characteristic, most fully integrated music, and the objectification of critical assessment of Copland's historical position. It would be a proper honor to Copland to see these processes in fuller swing during his lifetime.

—Charles REMOLIF.

EAR hears... from Lee McRae, who represents Frans Bruggen here and who disagrees with the negative review Bruggen's group, *Sour Cream*, received in West Coast Early Music last December. Perhaps. But what we liked in Jeremy Yudkin's review was his treatment of the morality of music, concern with which has led Bruggen to the avant garde as well as renaissance music. "Will people demonstrate against injustice because of my playing?" Bruggen asked Yudkin, and Yudkin responds: "The morality of music lies in its resonant humanity, its unique ability to express undefined effect, unspecific universality of emotion." True, Yudkin goes on to lament that a lost opportunity to hear Bruggen play the standard repertoire (renaissance and Baroque, in his case) is "an especial sadness," demonstrating that he can't recognize "resonant humanity" in music of our own time--which EAR finds an extraordinary sadness. ... We ran in to Lee at the Chamber Music Society concert last month, at which Gerhard Samuel premiered his *Sun-like*, a dramatic chamber cantata for soprano, three clarinets, string quartet, piano/celeste and percussion. Two stanzas: one on the glow of the first atom bomb at the New Mexico testing grounds, the other a Pacific sunrise on July 4, 1976. The piece centers--at least the first stanza does--on the Armed Men choral-prelude from *Zauberflöte*, and the quote was imbedded in its new texture rather convincingly. Much of the time the sax--soprano, alto and tenor--played the original melody in octaves against figurations in voice and other instruments, producing a stern sound reminiscent of the crane duet in *Mahagonny*. The piece is slow-moving, steady-state, occasionally consonant at first, then more so in the polynesian sunrise section which almost aches with a kind of nostalgia--(for what?) then, at the end, an unfinished kind of tonal cadence. It is part of a trilogy, apparently; the complete hearing is to be looked forward to. ... Another extraordinary concert was an all-Shostakovich affair at Diablo Valley College, where an ensemble apparently made up of first-deck players from that Orchestra gave the early Cello Sonata, the Blok songs for soprano and piano trio, the Concertino for two pianos, and, most interesting, the American premiere of the last (15th) String Quartet. We think the chamber music--that is, the quartets, the Piano Quintet, the Trio--are the part of Shostakovich's output which will endure, particularly works like this 15th. In six movements, all a flat minor, most all in very slow tempi; that rarefied part-writing he likes, first violin way above the staff, octaves, a piece very much marked by the late Beethoven quartets, meditative, written a year before his death. The score was brought from Russia by the cellist of the ensemble, Mrs. Jovanovich (we haven't the program with us); the performances were amateur but respectable: in time they might have an impressive quartet out there, and they could do a lot worse than to give the Shostakovich cycle--maybe in tandem with the Milhaud! ... The first issue of *Pro Musica* has arrived, the new bimonthly replacing the aforementioned *West Coast Early Music*, a splendid glossy new periodical filled (this time) with Angene Feves' plea for the attention due Italian dancers in the French Renaissance, and with a long, involved, neither scholarly nor accessible piece by Todd Barton on the Pythagorean notion of the "music of the spheres," *Musica Mundana* and *Musica Humana*, a convoluted exposition which will grab folkie freaks and those who can follow astrology charts ... we met Aaron Copland the other day: he was in town for an honorary degree at the San Francisco Conservatory, and talked a bit to the students; asked if he liked the avant garde, he allowed as he did, but warned that tape music was repetitious because the tape always sounds the same. A student asked if he'd heard that electronics were used in live situations, and he seemed startled at the notion. Assured that it went on all the time, and that it was odd he hadn't heard, he explained that he lived out in the country and they didn't have that sort of thing out his way ... the Contemporary Music Newsletter of Nov.-Dec. reports on the Computation Music Conference (Susan Burrows wrote on it last EAR) at great length, as they pronounce it out there, on music presented at Univ. Illinois (one delicious paragraph wants to be quoted here:

All in all, it was an entertaining afternoon. The Contemporary Chamber Players of the University of Illinois are convincing performers and compare favorably to New York based groups of the same type as well as other groups outside New York that I have heard. Their repertoire is somewhat different in scope, however, consisting mainly of University of Illinois composers. The works were played very well by the group, whose members include the composers of several of the numbers on this and the following program.

close quote and parenthesis), on various items about new music in and around the nation's cultural capital, and interviews Fred Sherry, cellist with Peter Serkin's group Tashi: the comments on new music--read Lesslie, Vuorinen and Xenakis--are disturbingly near condescension for a man who's devoted to it (why can't we stop apologizing for it and just play it?) RECORDS: Command has issued a recording by the Lontano Trio with works by Per Norgard, Barney Childs and Daniel Lentz: Norgard's *Spell* is a big piece, romantic drones and mantras, post-Riley, a little soft; Lentz' *Song(s)* of the Sirens is a breathy close-miked cantata, words read from Homer (in English), sound-on-sound noodling and lyrical melodic stuff from the instruments; Childs' *Trio* is solid, substantial, well-made: the trio (clarinet, cello, piano) is good, in tune, fine tone. (Command 9005).

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- Feb. 1
 ♪ Silver string macedonian, Spag, 8:30
 Univ. Chorus, HH, 8
 John Robinson, lute, Ch Adv, 7:30
- ! Feb 3: WPA Music: J Bischoff, P DeMarinis,
 P Harmonic, A Revolution, B G Tyranny; Ecology
 center, 13 Columbus, S.F., 8
- Feb 5
 ! Ingram Marshall, live lectronix, UAM, 8
 Live elec video dance, Rainbow, 8
- Feb 6
 ♪! Bartok Quartet: nos. 1, 3, 5; HH, 8
 Wind music by Beethoven, Strauss, Gounod,
 Mozart; St John's Church, Berkeley, 8
- Feb 7
 Berk Chamber Ordh: Franco, Moore, Bangs,
 Wagner; P Schwimley (Berk. High), 8:15
 ♪! Margaret Fabrizio, harpsichord; Anneberg, 8
 WPA (see Feb 3): 80 Langton St, SF, 8
- Feb 8
 ! Suzanne Lake, French chansons, Spag, 8:30
 Calif Wind Ensemble: Stravinsky, Old 1, 4:30
 ♪! Bartok Quartet: nos. 2, 4, 6; HH, 8
 trios by Mendelssohn, Mozart, Beethoven; Dink, 3
 Continuum: improvisation; Ch Adv, 7:30
- Feb 9
 ! Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, HH, 8
 (see p. 3)
- Feb 10
 ♪Marie Gibson, Nathan Schwartz: songs by Deb-
 ussy, Wolf et al.; Dink, 8
- Feb 11
 ! Monteverdi's Orfeo, Rainbow, 8
- Feb 13
 ! New Music Ensmble, SF Conservatory, 8: music
 by Farley, Marshall, Felciano, Gnazzo & al
- Feb 14
 ! Viennese waltzing with Berk Prom Orch, Pauley
 ballroom, U.C. Berkeley, 9
 Joan Benson, clavichord; Dink, 8
- Feb 15
 ! New Beginnings, contemporary music, a great
 program which I've forgotten, Spag, 8:30
 John Burke, organ, 1st Congregational, Berk, 5
 SF Chamber Orch: Mouret, Mozart, Manfredini, HH3
 ! Masayuki Koga, shakuhachi, Ch Adv 7:30
- Feb 17
 Cat Sym: Tchaikovsky 5, Baker cello con., Bloch
 Schelomo (Starker), Paramount, Oakland, 8:30
 (repeats Feb 18, 19)
- Feb 18
 Walter Hewlett, organ, Stanford Mem Church, 8
- Feb 19
 ! Offenbach: La Perichole, Curran, 8
- Feb 20
 Lascagni: L'amico Fritz, Curran, 8
- Feb 21
 La Perichole, Curran, 8
 Univ Rep Chorus: Handel, Britten, HH, 8
 Elizabeth Kaete, Mgt Fabrizio, harpsichords,
 music by Couperins & Bachs, Anneberg, 8
- Feb 22
 Handel: Admeto, Spag, 8:30
 Univ rep chorus, HH, 8 (see 2/21)
 Britten, Prokofiev, Haydn & Blanco for
 voice, harp & organ; Ch Adv, 7:30
 L'Amico Fritz, Curran, 2
- Feb 23
 ! Herbert Bielawa, piano: Ives, Austin, Biel-
 awa, Albright, Speis, Powell; SF State.
- Feb 24
 Baroque chamber music (Houle), Dink, 8
- Feb 26
 ! Joan La Barbara, voice, composer, UAM, 8
 L'Amico Fritz, Curran, 8
 Aesop Jazz, Rainbow, 8
- Feb 27
 ! Beaux Arts Trio: Haydn, Ravel, Brahms; HH 8
 ♪ Francesco Trio w. A Crowden, J Graham: Mozart
 Imbrie Dvorak, Dink, 8
 ? "Meeting Mr Ives" Curran 8
 Zoila Munoz, mezzo, Eugene Gash; songs; Rainbow 8
- Feb 28
 Berk Prom Orch: Mozart, Chopin (Karasik), Lusso-
 rsky-Ravel; Zellerbach Aud, UC Berkeley, 8
 Stanford Wind Ens Thomson, Gould, Copland,
 Harris; Dink, 8
 L'Amico Fritz, Curran, 8
 ! New music by Texas composers, SF Museum, time?
- Feb 29
 Stanford chor & orch: Haydn Paukenmesse, Hennegin
 mixed-media piece; Dink, 3
 Univ Sym, HH, Schoenberg Stravinsky Schubert, 8

notes: ♪ means good performers, ! means good repertoire.
 Spag: Old Spaghetti Factory, S.F. HH: Hertz Hall, U.C. Berkeley. Ch Adv:
 Church of the Advent, 261 Fell, S.F. UAM: Univ. Art Museum, Berkeley.
 Rainbow Sign, Grove St., Berkeley. Anneberg & Dink(elspiel) are at Stan-
 ford. Old 1st is on Van Ness, S.F. See also 1750 ad, of course. All times are p.m.

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February Schedule 8:30pm

Saturday: Friday:

6	13	20	27
Allaudin William Mathieu 1st public appearance as a piano soloist	Gwendolyn Lytle, soprano Aileen James, piano 20th Century Walker, Smith, Carter, Poulenc and Barber	Neal La Monaco, cello Marilyn Thompson, piano Beethoven, Boccherini, Brahms & Crumb 11:30 pm - Dreamsound	Lieder Recital Miriam Abramowitsch, mezzo-soprano Bernhard Abramowitsch, piano Wolf, Brahms, Mendelssohn
7	14	21	28
Lea Neiman, pianist Bach, Beethoven, Ravel, Albeniz, Granados and Barber	The Silver String Macedonian Band Valentine's Day music from Bulgaria, Roumania & Yugoslavia	Rubisa Patrol Art Lande, piano; Bill Douglas, bass; Mark Isham, trumpet; Glenn Cronkhite, percussion	New Port Costa Chamber Ensemble Instrumental and Vocal works

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