

MindReader

the newsletter of Other Minds
spring 2001



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Pianist Eve Egoyan makes her first West Coast appearance performing the work of Alan Hovhaness and Alvin Curran at Other Minds Festival 7. See page 8 for more on the Festival's Tribute to Alan Hovhaness.

What's inside

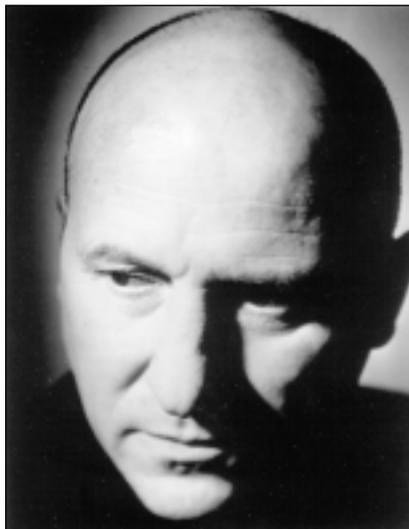
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Gavin Bryars and 7 Other Minds Descend on Bay Area

by Charles Amirkhania

What exactly is an "other mind" in contemporary music? As you can see from the line-up for the seventh Other Minds Festival, Other Minds annually searches out a wide variety of individuals who add spice to the modern music scene by their tendencies to subvert the status quo while exercising an irrepressible intellectual curiosity. No one style of music has a monopoly on ingenuity and our staff has spent some sleepless nights trying to summarize each year's offerings into some memorable little marketing phrase to draw in the uninitiated. "Skin, Slammers, and Squish: Drumming the Outer Limits!"

But I always end up saying, "We're not going to do a year just about percussion instruments or electronic composers only. The theme is that we have no theme—we have variety! We're going to have young and old, local and global, instrumental and electronic, conservative and avant-garde, and all of them are going to be special, not to mention tall and short. Each one will have investigated something wild that nobody else bothered to do. And the emphasis will be on good-sounding music, not music which just proves a point."



Gavin Bryars

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After living and working a year in Italy, where the new music scene seems so bottled up by the conventional Western European model, I've found it refreshing to return to the West Coast where anything can and does go. I'm very grateful to the Rockefeller Foundation for letting me compose for a year at their Bellagio Conference Center and to composer Carl Stone for working with our fabulous staff and board to keep Other Minds rolling along during my absence.

Now I'm very excited to be back for another Other Minds Festival that will build on our brief but distinguished history by bringing you one of our most ambitious events ever on March 8, 9, and 10, 2001, at the Cowell Theater at Fort Mason in San Francisco.

The featured composers this year are Chris Brown (Oakland, CA), Gavin Bryars (England), Alvin Curran (Italy, b. U.S.A.), Andrew Hill (New York, NY), Hi Kyung Kim (Santa Cruz, CA, b. Korea),

Jim Tenney (Valencia, CA), Glen Velez (New York, NY), Aleksandra Vrebalov (Ann Arbor, MI, b. Yugoslavia), and percussion virtuoso William Winant (Oakland, CA). We'll also

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

In a music environment increasingly dominated by Napster and other means of instant digitized access to audio sources, Other Minds continues to provide yet another reason why we still prefer to hear music live and played by the great musicians of our time. The rich timbres of Alan Hovhaness's trumpet quartet chorales, the scampering arpeggios of jazz composer/pianist Andrew Hill, the resonant palette of Gavin Bryars' meditative percussion music, and the affecting bass-baritone and boy soprano voices in the rare music of Ezra Pound — none can be recreated adequately over two (or even five) loudspeakers. For that reason, and for the joy of meeting an unusual number of composers all in one place at one time, we want to see you at Other Minds 7 this March. We'll bring you the cutting edge of new music with the very individuals who keep sharpening the blades.

The past year was highlighted by the sixth edition of the Other Minds Festival, which was sold out all three evenings and garnered our highest level of international and national press coverage to date, ranging from the *Los Angeles Times* to the *London Independent*. Carl Stone ably filled in as Guest Artistic Director during Charles Amirkhanian's year-long Rockefeller Foundation fellowship in Italy. In June 2000, Charles made a special trip back to San Francisco to help introduce "The World of George Antheil," a concert that was one of the highlights of the San Francisco Symphony's American Mavericks Festival. Presented by the Symphony in cooperation with Other Minds, the concert was tremendously successful, attracting nearly 3,000 people, and bringing renewed attention to the spectacular work of the "Bad Boy of Music." For comments by Carl on his experiences last year, look further on in this issue.

For 2000-2001, we offer yet another round of significant programs. In addition to Other Minds 7, we are planning a historic CD release on the music of Ezra Pound. We are also in the planning phase of two groundbreaking commissions: a major collaboration with the San Francisco Symphony to present a new work for multiple orchestras by Henry Brant (to be premiered this December); and a commission by Ellen Fullman that will involve building her extraordinary invention, the 90-foot Long String Instrument, to be performed by her in collaboration with the Kronos Quartet at Other Minds Festival 8 (March 7-9, 2002).



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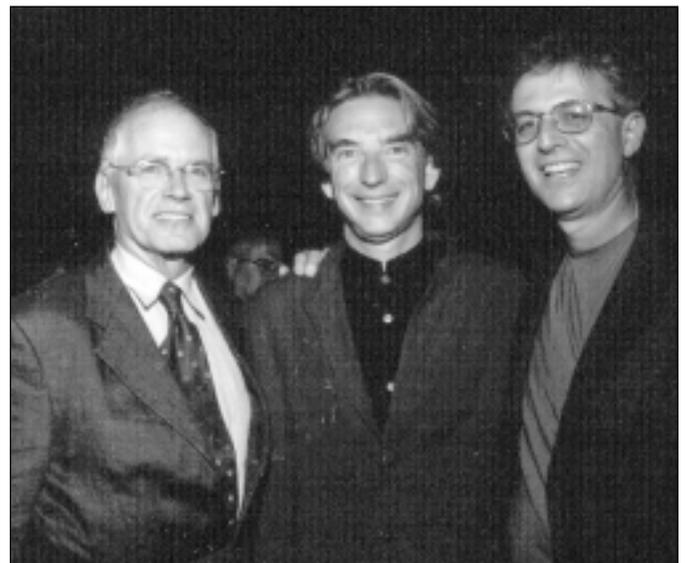
OM is also in Phase I of a new Web Music/Net Radio Initiative, which would create a 24/7 new music listening station on the internet, as well as offer experimental composers a state-of-the-art webcasting facility in San Francisco. Our project gained a considerable boost when we recently acquired more than 40 years' worth of music archives from KPFA-FM, providing a virtual chronicle of the evolution of music in the later half of the 20th century. The collection of 6,000 tapes includes the Cabrillo Music Festival (1964-1995); the New Music America Festivals (early 1980s); the first American interview with Pierre Boulez (1957); interviews with Steve Reich, Meredith Monk, Pauline Oliveros, Laurie Anderson, and John Adams long before they became well known; the Exploratorium's Speaking of Music series; and the list goes on. We are now engaged in securing funding to restore these priceless tapes and organize them so they are accessible to audiences, critics, and scholars worldwide. First to join us in this important effort has been the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, which has played such an important role in ensuring the health and vitality of arts groups in the Bay Area.

This is an incredibly exciting and fast-moving period of growth and accomplishment at Other Minds. Many thanks to our loyal donors and adventurous audiences for helping us to make it new, year after year.

See you at OM 7,



Jim Newman



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Jim Newman, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Charles Amirkhanian (left to right) at the post-performance reception hosted by Other Minds following the San Francisco Symphony's "World of George Antheil" concert on June 11, 2000.

Singing The Words: Ezra Pound and His Music

by Margaret Fisher

For one of the pioneers of modernism, subverting the rules of established art and culture could not be confined to words alone. The author of the forthcoming *Ezra Pound's Radio Operas* (MIT, 2002), Berkeley/Emeryville-based Margaret Fisher, offers her own perspective.

Why would a poet compose music? In the case of Ezra Pound, the reasons are many. Pound's "The Cantos," one of the 20th century's most important literary works, is a poem that contains music and bears a title that could be translated as "The Songs"—though it never is. Pound's ear was tuned to the "motz el sons" of troubadour poetry where, as musicologist John Stevens has noted, "melody and poem existed in a state of the closest symbiosis, obeying the same laws and striving in their different media for the same sound-ideal—*armonia*."

In his essays, Pound wrote of rhythm as "the hardest quality of a man's style to counterfeit." He challenged young poets to train their ear with translation work to learn how the choice of words and the movement of the words combined. But having translated texts from ten different languages into English, Pound observed that translation did not always serve the poetry: "The grand bogies for young men who want really to learn strophe writing are Catullus and Villon. I personally have been reduced to setting them to music as I cannot translate them." While he habitually wrote out verse rhythms as musical lines, it should be noted that Pound did not set his own poetry to music.

In 1919, when he was 34, Ezra began charting his path as a novice composer, writing privately that he intended a revolt against the impressionistic music of Debussy. An autodidact, Pound described his working method as "...improving a system by refraining from obedience to all its present 'laws'..." With only a few formal lessons in music composition, Pound produced a small body of work, including a setting of Dante's sestina, "Al poco giorno," for violin. His most important output is the pair of operas: *Le Testament*, a setting of François Villon's long poem of that name, written in 1461; and *Cavalcanti*, a setting of 11 poems by Guido Cavalcanti (c. 1250-1300). Pound began composing the Villon with the help of Agnes Bedford, London pianist and vocal coach. Though

the work is notated in Bedford's hand, Pound scholar Robert Hughes has been able to determine that Pound was artistically responsible for the work's overall dramatic and acoustic design.

During the fecund Paris years of 1921-1924, Pound formed close friendships with the American pianist and composer George Antheil, and Antheil's touring partner, the American concert violinist Olga Rudge. Pound championed Antheil's music and asked his help in devising a system of micro-rhythms that would more accurately render the vitalistic speech rhythms of Villon's Old French for *Le Testament*. The

resulting collaboration of 1923 used irregular meters that were considerably more elaborate than Stravinsky's benchmarks of the period, *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913) and *L'Histoire du Soldat* (1918). For example, "Heaulmière," one of the opera's key arias, at a tempo of quarter note = M.M. 88, moves from 2/8 to 25/32 to 3/8 to 2/4 meter (bars 25-28), creating for the performers ferocious difficulties



Olga Rudge, Ezra Pound (center) and George Antheil in the early 1920s.

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in hearing the current bar of music and anticipating the upcoming bar. Rudge performed in the 1924 and 1926 Paris preview concerts of *Le Testament*, but insisted to Pound that the meter was impractical.

In *Le Testament* there is no predictability of manner; no comfort zone for singer or listener; no rests or breath marks. Though Pound stays within the hexatonic scale to evoke the feel of troubadour melodies, modern invention runs throughout, from the stream of unrelenting dissonance in the mother's prayer to the grand shape of the work's aesthetic arc over a period of almost an hour. The rhythm carries the emotion. The music admits the corporeal rhythms (the score calls for human bones to be used in the percussion part); scratches, hiccoughs, and counter-rhythms lurch against each other—an offense to courtly etiquette. With "melody against ground tone and forced against another melody," as Pound puts it, the

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Pound

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work spawns a polyphony in polyrhythms that ignored traditional laws of harmony. It was a test of Pound's ideal of an "absolute" and "uncounterfeitable" rhythm conducted in the laboratory of someone obsessed with the relationship between words and music.

After hearing a concert performance of *Le Testament* in 1926, Virgil Thomson praised Pound's accomplishment. "The music was not quite a musician's music," he wrote, "though it may well be the finest poet's music since Thomas Champion... Its sound has remained in my memory."

Robert Hughes has remarked that where *Le Testament* explores a Webernesque pointillistic orchestration and derives its vitality from complex rhythms, *Cavalcanti* (1931) thrives on extensions of melody. Based on the lyric love poetry of Guido Cavalcanti, the opera's numbers are characterized by a challenging bel canto, into which Pound incorporates a number of tongue-in-cheek references to Verdi and a musical motive that gestures to Stravinsky's neo-classicism. By this time the relationship with Antheil had considerably cooled, and Pound, in his gradual acquisition of technical self-sufficiency, was free to emulate certain aspects of Stravinsky. *Cavalcanti* demands attention to its varying cadences, to a recurring leitmotif, and to a symbolic use of octaves. The play of octaves creates a surrealist straining against the limits of

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Workshop Orchestration

by Ezra Pound

In this little-known article from an issue of the left-wing journal New Masses (March 1927), Ezra Pound speculates on the potential of a new industrial music and the radical vision of George Antheil's First Sonata for Violin and Piano (1923). Antheil's work will be performed the second night of Other Minds Festival 7, on March 9, 2001.

Laying aside all questions of technique, new "theory" etc., there is the reason why the MASSES, new and old, should take note of Antheil. I mean that he has taken, or at any rate has found a means that can take, music out of the concert hall.

The savage has his tribal ceremonies, primitive people have their sea chanteys and labor songs. Modern man can live, and should live, and has a perfectly good right to live in his cities and in his machine shops with the same kind of swing and exuberance that the savage is supposed to have in his forest. The tenement is no more uncomfortable than the cave, and no more verminous. Neither is there any reason why the city intuition should be any deader than that of the savage.

As for the machine shop, the boiler works, Antheil has opened the way with his *Ballet Mechanique*; for the first time we have a music, or the germ and start of a music that can be applied to sound regardless of its loudness. The aesthete goes to a factory, if he ever does go, and hears noise, and goes away horrified; the musician, the composer hears noise, but he tries to (?) "see" (no, no), he tries to hear what kind of noise it is.

"Music" as taught in the academies deals with the organization of smallish bits of sound, of sounds having cer-

tain variations inside the second, organized into forms, or bits of form having differences inside a minute or ten minutes, or in the "great forms," half an hour.

But with the grasp of the longer durations we see the chance of time-spacing the clatter, the grind, the whang-whang, the gnnrrr, in a machine shop, so that the eight-hour day shall have its rhythm; so that the men at the machines shall be demechanized, and work not like robots, but like the members of an orchestra. And the work will benefit, yes, the overlords needs not worry; a half minute's silence here and there, the long pause of the lunch hour dividing the two great halves of the music, this will not diminish the output or pegiorate the quality of the product.

Say there are forty small stamping presses in a room, let them start not one at a time, raggedly, but kk! on the snap of the baton; and stop, and then the periods of sound grow gradually longer, and the rests ever so slightly longer in proportion, but so graduated that the difference of ten seconds in the rest is a sensible, appreciable division.

Needless to say each shop, each sort of work will have its own compositions; and they will be made by the men in the shops, because no outside orchestral player will know the sound of the shop as well as the people in it, or know what sounds lie in the nature and needs of the work.

The actual measurement of sounds, the mathematics of a new theory does not present any great difficulty, I mean it would not if one were dealing with mere theory; it is easy enough to find out how many times an asphalt drill hits the pavement per minute, and to work out its octaves and fifths, etc. [i.e., octaves lower, for what we will come to

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Pound

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established compositional laws, of history and fate, of physiology, of reason, and especially against the limits of a love born of desire. The audience is asked to strain to hear a political cipher hidden within the music.

Pound's statement, "Rhythm is a FORM cut into TIME,"

distinguishes his 20th century medievalism from Antheil's SPACE/TIME theory of modern music, which sought pure abstraction. Antheil's system of time organization is inherently biased for complex, asymmetric, and fast tempi; it thrives on innovation and surprise. Pound's more open system allows for any sequence of pitches; it can accommodate older styles of music with their symmetry, repetition, and more uniform tempi, as well as newer methods, such as the asymmetrical micro-metrical divisions of rhythm created for *Testament*.

Pound's iconoclastic music can be compared to that of his contemporary, Charles Ives. Both subjected melody to sophisticated techniques of juxtaposition and layering, Pound shaping melody with literary textures and Ives with harmonic and contrapuntal textures. Each experimented with the combination of different genres placed into a single complex work. Ives selected from among hymns, folk tunes, ballads and minstrely, as well as instrumental pieces. Pound selected from a vocal gamut of plain chant, homophony, troubadour melodies, bel canto and nineteenth century opera clichés, as well as 20th century polyrhythms and cabaret style singing.

Pound's music theories are reactionary and revolutionary, irascible and philosophic. His reach passes through the physical science of sound to offer many epiphanies. ♦

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Other Minds to Offer World Premiere Performance and Historic CD Release of Pound's Forgotten Musical Works

Nearly 80 years after its composition, Pound's musical oeuvre has yet to be performed in its entirety. Only a few pages of it have been published. This will soon change with the issuing of Robert Hughes' recently completed performance edition and technical study of Pound's second opera, *Cavalcanti*. Also forthcoming is *Ezra Pound's Radio Operas* by Margaret Fisher (see article on page 3), an analysis of Pound's two complete chamber operas, *Le Testament* and *Cavalcanti*, that he scripted for BBC radio broadcasts between 1931-1933.

To celebrate the resurgence of interest in Pound's music, Other Minds Festival 7 is collaborating with Fisher and Hughes to present selections of his works. The Friday, March 9th concert will offer the world premiere of the entirety of *Fiddle Music First Suite*, performed by a Bay Area musical treasure, the concert violinist Nathan Rubin. Then, on Saturday, March 10th, at 11 a.m., OM will host a free panel discussion, "Pound and Music," at the George Coates Performance Works theater, featuring Hughes, Fisher, Rubin, as well as Pound scholars Hugh Witemeyer and Michael André Bernstein.

Later this spring, Other Minds will release a historic CD recording of selections of Pound's music. This will be the first and only available CD of its kind, as the two previous LP recordings of *Le Testament* have been out of print for years. (Collectors, take note!) *The Music of Ezra Pound* (OM #2005) will feature an international selection of excerpts from the operas. Not to be missed is Anna Myatt's performance of "Heaulmière," the whore's aria from *Le Testament*. Myatt's thrilling portrayal of "Heaulmière" turns the bygone art of the diseuse into heart-stopping music theater. ♦



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OM 7 PREVIEW

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have segments of music by Alan Hovhaness, George Antheil and Ezra Pound—yes, the poet!

Our Other Minds 7 guest artists are led by English superstar



Tammy Jenkins

Gavin Bryars, who will be present for performances of his works and perform on string bass in one of them. During my years at KPFA Radio, Gavin's work *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet* undoubtedly was one of the favorite pieces of new music we broadcast. Now he's back with a wonderful work for soprano and six instruments called *Adnan Songbook*, based on the writings of the Lebanese-American writer Etel Adnan, who lives in Sausalito. The soloist will be the radiant young soprano Tammy Jenkins, recently seen in various starring roles with the San Francisco Opera.

You can also hear Gavin's ravishingly beautiful percussion quintet, *One Last Bar Then Joe Can Sing*. And don't miss Gavin's comments during the pre-concert Artist Forum on opening night, Thursday, March 8th. He's one controversial and savvy mind who never fails to let the fox in with the chickens. In that sense he reminds one that the English educations of Brian Eno and other seemingly mild-mannered individuals always leavens the American tendency to make nice in panel discussions rather than plumb the depths of a big question.



James Tenney

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Our most senior composer this year is the legendary James Tenney (b. 1934, Silver City, New Mexico). His teachers include Edgar Varèse and John Cage, and his music hails from an area of experimental cerebralism lying outside the dodecaphonic orthodoxy dominant during Tenney's youth. A pioneer in electronic and computer music, he has written two pivotal books on music theory. This past year he was appointed to the Roy E. Disney Family Chair in Musical Composition at Cal Arts. At OM 7 we'll hear some of his surprising works for violin and piano performed by the distin-

guished Canadian Sabat/Clarke Duo, including an extended piece in which the piano is re-tuned into just intonation.

Another distinguished guest will be composer and pianist Andrew Hill (b. 1937, Chicago) who is credited with helping evolve the "Blue Note sound" via his striking early recordings on that distinguished record label in the 1960s. His early inspiration was the playing of Bud Powell, Thelonius Monk, and Art Tatum and he made a point to take composition lessons from the late Paul Hindemith. He gigged early on with Johnny Griffin and Miles Davis and then formed a trio which backed Dinah Washington before working with Roland Kirk, Kenny Dorham and Jackie McLean. Recently he has resumed his recording career with the sensational CD, *Dusk*, much of



Andrew Hill

which he performed in 2000 at the San Francisco Jazz Festival. At the March 10th concert he will present the world premiere of "Bellezza Appasita" (Faded Beauty) from a work in progress, *Pinocchio*. Conceived during a fellowship at the Italian artists' residence program Civitella Ranieri, it portrays



Hi Kyung Kim

scenes from the life of a fellow resident from Russia so paranoid that he trusts only trees (and spent much of his time there hugging them, to the alarm of the other guests).

A more traditional instrumental composer is Hi Kyung Kim who studied with Andrew Imbrie, Olly Wilson and Gérard Grisey and now teaches at University of California, Santa Cruz. Her project for Other Minds will feature the work of a remarkable Korean percussionist-shaman-dancer, Eun-Ha Park, who will travel from Seoul to perform the world premiere of *Rituel*, accompanied by percussionist William Winant and a trio consisting of clarinet, violin,



Eun-Ha Park

and cello. Ms. Pak, whose work must be seen to be believed, combines the energy of a folk dancer with the precision of a percussion virtuoso. This work appears on the second concert on Friday, March 9th and is coupled with music by Jim Tenney and the poet Ezra Pound.

“Pound!” you say? Yes, Mr. Modernism—Mr. “Make It New.” The man who led American poetry out of the 19th century and married a Shakespeare (Dorothy) also had a lifelong relationship with the violinist and musicologist Olga Rudge. In Paris in the early twenties, Pound commissioned the young American composer George Antheil to write three violin and piano sonatas for Rudge. One of them will be heard at this concert. (For more details, see our “Special Report” on Pound in this issue.)



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Aleksandra Vrebalov

Aleksandra Vrebalov writes dramatic music. Now, at age 30, her work is beginning to be performed widely by the Kronos Quartet and other ensembles in many countries across Europe, from the Netherlands to Russia. Now residing in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where she is completing a doctorate in composition, she happened to be visiting her parents in her home town of Novi Sad, Yugoslavia when air bombings by U.N. forces broke out and continued for 78 days. I had the pleasure of meeting her in the winter of 2000, during my stay at the Bellagio Center, where she was a guest fellow of the Rockefeller Foundation. I was struck by her diplomatic demeanor, her kindness and her engaging conversations, mostly with much older academic colleagues.

Aleksandra’s studies in music began at universities in Novi Sad, Belgrade, and Prague, with a brief visit to the San Francisco Conservatory in 1995-96 where her mentor was Elinor Armer. Vrebalov’s String Quartet No. 2, written for Kronos, will be played on our opening night by the Onyx Quartet of San Francisco. Those wishing to hear some of her music beforehand should take a listen to Kronos’ recording of her *Pannonia Boundless* on their new Nonesuch CD, *Caravan*.

Our other “V” this year is Glen Velez, the Grammy award-winning percussionist who began his career with Steve Reich & Musicians and Paul Winter. Today, Glen tours six continents on a furious international schedule, exhibiting his specialty of playing on the “frame drum”—an instrument with only one skin head, not two. Velez’s solo performances, with such low tech means, are mesmerizing in the extreme, and he will provide the opening act of our opening concert, drawing

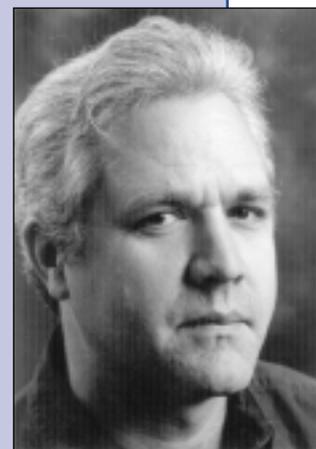


Glen Velez

on traditions from a variety of cultures and playing, in sequence, the bendir (Moroccan frame drum), bodhran (Irish frame drum), voice overtones, and the riq (Egyptian Tambourine).

Also that evening, March 8th, OM will pay tribute to an outsider composer

who would have been 90 years old that day. Alan Hovhaness (1911-2000) was one of the first composers to launch the sound of New Age music with his lovely consonant chorales and sinuous melodic lines reminiscent of Armenian liturgical and folk music as well as Western classical models from medieval times to the present. (See my Hovhaness interview in this issue for a sample of his iconoclastic approach to life and music.) The brilliant young pianist Eve Egoyan of Toronto will be making her first West Coast appearance in the solo role in Hovhaness’s lovely *Khaldis* Concerto for Piano, Four Trumpets and Percussion, with William Winant holding forth on the convoluted timpani part. Other Minds alum Linda Bouchard will conduct.



Chris Brown

Chris Brown is a man of many surprises. For the Festival’s closing night concert he will collaborate with percussionist William Winant and turntablist Eddie Def in the world premiere of *Invention #7* (2001). Brown, a virtuoso pianist himself, will play a Yamaha Disklavier grand piano, partially computer-controlled. (For more on his new work, see page 11.)

One of Chris Brown’s fellow faculty members at Mills College is the indefinable Alvin Curran, whose musicality and courage never fail to astound. Born in 1938 in Providence, he was involved in piano lessons, trombone, marching bands, synagogue chants, jazz, and his father’s dance bands from an early age. He studied at Brown and Yale (with Elliott Carter and Mel Powell) then left for Rome in 1963 and never

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Alvin Curran

Archaic and Avant-garde: A Tribute to Alan Hovhaness

Alan Hovhaness wrote music that was both unusual and communicative—one of our working definitions of an “other mind.” In his work, the archaic and the avant-garde are merged, always with melody as the primary focus. His farflung borrowings of medieval melody, baroque harmonizations, traditional Armenian liturgical monody and modes, the musics of Asia, and his flare for unconventional but richly inspiring instrumental combinations, have given enormous pleasure to generations of concert-goers. By the mid-forties, he was one of the first Western composers to return to a kind of deliberate tonality that was later embraced by the Minimalists.

Virgil Thomson described his work in 1947: “Each piece is like a long roll of hand-made wall paper. Its motionless quality is a little hypnotic. There is a resemblance here to the early ceremonial pieces of Erik Satie... Its expressive function is predominantly religious, ceremonial, incantatory, its spiritual content of the purest.” When he died in Seattle on June 21, 2000, at the age of 89, his catalogue of works exceeded 500, including over 60 symphonies. His survivors include his wife, soprano Hinako Fujihara, and his daughter Jean Nandi, of Berkeley.

On what would have been his 90th birthday, March 8, 2001, the Other Minds Festival will feature a memorial tribute to Alan Hovhaness. One of his most dazzling chamber works, the *Khaldis* Concerto, for Piano, Four Trumpets, and Percussion (1951), will be performed by the brilliant Canadian soloist Eve Egoyan (whose brother happens to be filmmaker Atom Egoyan) and the Other Minds Ensemble conducted by Canadian composer Linda Bouchard, now a resident of San Francisco and herself a past composer guest at Other Minds Festival 5 in 1999.

In 1981, Mr. Hovhaness was a featured resident composer at the Cabrillo Music Festival in Aptos, California. On August 28th of that year, he appeared onstage in a panel discussion I moderated along with Dennis Russell Davies, the Festival’s music director at that time. The interview was transcribed by Jennifer Lay Shyu which I then edited for this edition of *MindReader*. —Charles Amirkhanian



Alan Hovhaness

Charles Amirkhanian: *Mr. Hovhaness, you have said that the function and the purpose of your music is quite different from that of other composers. In addition to the fact that your music has an origin in some deeply felt spiritual beliefs, you have said that in regard to science, especially, that society is going in a dangerous direction. Could you talk to us about these matters?*

Alan Hovhaness: Well, this is difficult because of course I don’t directly write with any known purpose to me; I write because I have to write; because ideas persecute me if I don’t write and I have ideas every day of my life. So I have notebooks of thousands of pages of material, and I know I write too much for most people, especially for publishers. I sympathize with them.

But I’ll print some music of my own as I get a little money and help out because I really don’t care; I’m very happy when a thing is performed and performed well. And I don’t know, I live very simply; I have certain very strong feelings which I think many people have about what we’re doing and what we’re doing wrong.

I’m very much against atomic energy in any form because I think we’re poisoning the world and a composer naturally has a selfish interest in his future; if he likes his work, he feels that if people don’t like it now, they will later. But if there are no people, then what’s he writing for? And so I’m very much against some of the scientific things. I’m all for space travel, for space exploration and that sort of thing, but I’m very much against our wasting things.

I was just thinking when we were in Lou Harrison’s house, “This is important to me, what they’ve done with solar energy is amazing.” And I was just thinking of all of the deserts. If we converted this into electricity, we’d have energy to do everything we need, and we wouldn’t be borrowing from the earth.

It’s hard to talk about music because music is something that’s personal and it’s religious. John Cage and I were friends at the beginning. He came all the way to Boston when I gave a concert there. He was at my first concert in New York, he and Lou Harrison. We made good friends then because they both came backstage, or rather Lou Harrison didn’t come

backstage because he was a critic and he gave me the best—the first good criticism I'd ever had. I have always kept it. It was beautifully written and a great encouragement.

So I met him the next day, but John Cage came back stage, so we worked together with dancers and things like that in New York and we knew each other. But later, some things that John Cage said that he felt may have meant something to him then—that music should not communicate—I feel that music could and must communicate. I feel just that, as much as I respect John Cage for his originality and for many of his works. Actually, I invented much of the so-called aleatory technique which John Cage took up after he heard my music in New York and saw it, and I did that in 1944. [*Hovhaness composed textures in which instrumentalists played specified notes in random fast patterns, with each instrumentalist out of phase with the other.* —C.A.]

I think that one trouble is that perhaps we've tried to imitate science so much that we've tried to only communicate with some professional colleagues—some other composers that feel the same—and I don't write for composers, I write for people everywhere. And that's perhaps the difference between some contemporary composers and myself.

CA: *What about the time that we're living in now? Are you particularly concerned that your music is developing some new areas at all or do you see it as being in a sort of a timeless state. I mean, do you want it to be appreciated as much 200 years from now?*

AH: I feel that I think in terms of thousands of years rather than five and 10 years and that sort of thing. I'm interested in modern music of the last thousand years. And if I can find more, go back a little further, for instance, yes I do go back further—Gagaku, which is one of the finest orchestral musics in the world, better than many of our European ancestors, was perfect before 600.

CA: *Was that the first orchestral music?*

AH: No, I believe Egyptians had great music which Plato praised very highly, and we don't know a thing about it. There've been some fake attempts, but obviously, we don't know a thing about it. Because we can't read it. We've lost the language. And actually, that's one of the problems in the world. Of course, civilizations don't last very long, and as Francis Bacon said, "Perhaps there were much greater civiliza-

See **HOVHANESS**, page 10

OM 7 Preview

continued from page 7

came home permanently. To this day he lives half the year in Italy and half in the Bay Area where, since 1991, he has been the Milhaud Professor of Composition at Mills.

For this event, Curran's new work for solo piano, *Inner Cities 8* (2000), will be given its world premiere by Eve Egoyan, for whom it was composed. Curran calls it, "the most beautiful piece I've ever composed," and it's a cinch it'll be a far cry from the primal wailings he produced with his pioneering live electronic music improvisation group MUSICA ELETTRONICA VIVA in the sixties.

Although he has been a frequent performer at past Other Minds Festivals, this year we are putting a brighter spotlight on the virtuoso percussionist William



William Winant

Winant, who is the Festival's featured guest artist. Winant's career has acknowledged no boundaries; he has collaborated with music legends ranging from John Cage and Frederic Rzewski to groups like Oingo Boingo and Sonic Youth. Many people who attended the George Antheil concert last June at the San Francisco Symphony's American Mavericks Festival will recall William's assured (and barefooted) performance in Antheil's Sonata No. 2 for Violin with Piano and Drums.

We're often asked what is the secret behind the "chemistry" of the Other Minds Festival. Audiences never fail to notice the camaraderie and collegiality among the invited artists. At least part of the answer lies in the artist residency portion of the Festival—OM's creative, utopian version of the t.v. series, *Survivor*. Prior to the public concerts, all the Festival composers share a bucolic four-day retreat at the Djerassi Resident Artists' Program, located in the Santa Cruz Mountains. During the residency, each composer gives a presentation on his or her work, followed by freewheeling discussions where everyone has a chance to address questions in depth and to get to know one another on a more personal basis than is the case with most music festivals. Many Festival composers tell us that the retreat, followed by three days of exciting concerts, combine to form an unforgettable, career-changing experience. OM thanks the Djerassi Program for their generous cooperation in this work and we urge you to support their organization as well as ours for the betterment of artists and the arts. ♦

For the Other Minds Festival 7 program schedule and ticket information, see back inside cover. Festival updates and changes can be found at the Other Minds website (www.otherminds.org). More information on the Djerassi Resident Artists Program can be found at www.djerassi.org.

Hovhaness

continued from page 9

tions before Greece and even before Egypt.” And perhaps there was much greater music before then—we don’t know. But we should keep an open mind and try to discover, and I’m very much interested in music of the Orient because music of the Orient was misunderstood and nobody paid much attention to it.

When I started, I know they thought I was crazy, so I didn’t associate with musicians. I found painters who were much more open-minded. So I used to play for painters almost every night in my little room . . . But I remember one of the big criticisms of [an] intellectual friend was—he was not intellectual in the snobbish way that some people are—he said, “This is city music. I don’t like city music.” So I tried to create—at least always to keep in mind—a universal language and I like to write what I like anyway, and I’m very happy if somebody else likes it, but I don’t mind if anybody doesn’t like it, and I don’t have any respect for critics.

Dennis Russell Davies: *I have a question. What music do you like to listen to?*

AH: Gagaku, ancient Armenian music, troubadour music, I like the music of, well let’s see, for our European composers, I love Handel very much, Mozart, Schubert, and Sibelius and many others, of course. I’m not snobbish; I have bad taste in many respects. I like what I like, and in spite of the fact that everybody complains about people who say, “I like what I like,” I like people to say that. If my cat likes something, I’m very honored. And I think that a cat’s opinion is often times better than a person’s. I don’t have a cat at the moment, but I’ve had some very good ones.

CA: *I think you told me once that Stokowski, when he asked for Mysterious Mountain, wanted an opus number attached to it, and you just subjectively picked one out of the air. Is that true?*

AH: Well actually, he picked it out of the air, of course, this was—he was wonderful to me anyway, I remember he, out of the blue, he suddenly did my *Exile* Symphony and nobody knew my music then. Stokowski was the first conductor to do my music in this country seriously. I didn’t meet him then—I didn’t meet him for 10 years afterwards. But when I did meet him, he invited me immediately . . . of course, he called me up many times and talked to me about various things he wanted me to write and he said, “Does it have an opus number? People like opus numbers. You know how dumb they are.” So I

said, “No, it doesn’t have an opus number. I haven’t catalogued my work.” “Well how would 132”—or something like that, I think—“how would that be, do you think that gives you enough room for the things you’ve written?” And I said, “Sure, that’s okay. I’ll start making a catalogue.” And he said, “I like your titles, give it a title.” And so I gave it the title, *Mysterious Mountain*. Which I felt was mysterious enough.

DRD: *Was that after the piece was . . .*

AH: . . . after it was finished. I always give titles after they’re finished anyway.

DRD: *Good idea.*

CA: *So the titles are not especially related to your process in writing the music.*

AH: Not at all, no, the music may suggest something to me, but if it can suggest something to somebody else which is quite different, then I’m very happy if it does.

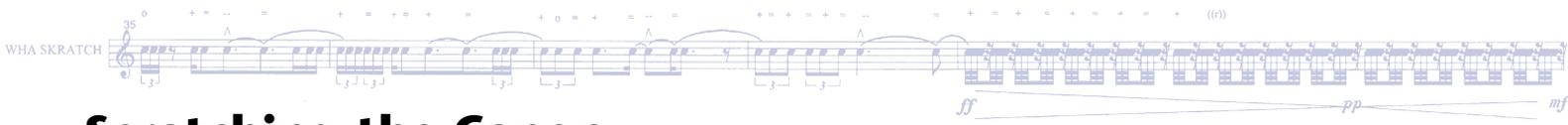
DRD: *The only problem is that after you give the title, then you tend to lead people to go in the direction that . . .*

AH: That’s a difficulty, I know. Many of my symphonies, I just call Symphony Number 43 or Number 49 or something like that. The thing is, that that bores some people, and I know that publishers complain about it. But I just don’t have that many titles; I have much more music than I have titles.

CA: *Now when I talked with you in 1975, you had written your 26th symphony for the San Jose Symphony, and you said that that would be your last symphony. What happened?*

AH: I don’t know what happened, but something—I got crazy—and I’ve been writing symphonies every year, and I’ve had some commissions too. Well, I’ve needed them. We have to add to the house, we have so much music, no place to put it, so I finished my 48th symphony for a commission, which is very nice, and that will be played in June in Miami, Florida, and I think they call it the New World Festival. So I’ve given that a title because I was thinking of the tremendous galaxy Andromeda which is bigger than our galaxy and so beautiful and has some galaxies around it that rotate around it. And, so I call it something about Andromeda I think, *Vision of Andromeda* and it has some, it could suggest that, possibly seeing it from a tremendous distance because I use

See **HOVHANESS**, on page 18



Scratching the Canon

How turntablists are notating their environments

by Amanda Piasecki

Turntablism’s exponents have led its evolution into a serious, boundary-breaking art form, as seen in last year’s Other Minds Festival, which featured composer Paul D. Miller (a.k.a. DJ Spooky that Subliminal Kid) and DJ Eddie Def (guest panelist at the Festival’s Artists’ Forum, *Cultural Identity and Music in the Post-MODEM World*), who appeared alongside new-music elder statesmen like Christian Wolff and Peter Garland. And recently, the development of a number of systems of scratch notation has further extended the notion that the lexicons of “popular” and “serious” musics have overlapped. Q-Bert Scratch, an established voice in the Bay Area hip-hop community and founding member of the celebrated Invisibl Scratch Picklz, has observed that scratch DJs “...play turntables like a musical instrument. We take sounds that are pre-recorded, and we manipulate them with our hands by touching the record.” (Interviewed in the *SF Bay Guardian*, July 19, 2000.)

Notation of western art music remained relatively stable from the 17th century until convention was blown apart in the 20th century by innovative composers like John Cage, Conlon Nancarrow, Steve Reich, and Karlheinz Stockhausen. Twentieth century music’s divergence into serialism (the assignment of numerical values to any and all musical elements: pitch, note length, silence, texture, volume, and so on) and aleatoric (chance) music called for the adaptation of notation styles to communicate more precision (in serialism) and less precision (in aleatoric music). Cage’s book *Notations* (originally published by Something Else Press, 1969) assembled the manuscripts of 269 composers at the Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts, documenting the radical changes in notation that took place in the mid-20th century. Cage had the foresight to include examples of notation from “popular” sources like The Beatles, foreshadowing the gradual dissolution of boundaries between “serious” and “popular” music happening before our eyes in the 21st century—and the evolution of notation along with it.

Today, in an attempt to document and disseminate scratch music, several systems of scratch notation have been devel-

oped, most notably a modified version of western art music’s staff system created by DJ Radar of Phoenix, AZ. In the liner notes to his 12-inch record *Antimatter* (OM Records—not to be confused with Other Minds records), Radar explains that he “...used the lessons of jazz in its early days of conception to guide me through this developing process. Primarily, [jazz musicians] had to establish that they were credible musicians, with knowledge and mastery in their fields, and secondly, they had the burden of provide that this was a true form of music that required a separate classification from anything else musically known.” Radar goes on to explain in the *Phoenix New Times* (August 24, 2000) that his effort to establish a scratch notation system is also motivated by a desire to have turntablism recognized as legitimate.

Radar uses an additional set of symbols set above the staff, in addition to recording the flurry of scratch rhythms with conventional sets of (often) 32nd and 64th notes. He reports that “O” means that the performer’s hand should be off the record and should continue the rhythm until another change is notated; “+” means the hand should be pushing the record a little faster than normal; “-” is the opposite; the hand should slightly drag the record; “=” means the record should be pulled backward; and “((r))” signifies the repetition of a hand movement until the next articulation change.

Radar’s *Antimatter* was composed prior to its recording. Then, the nine staves in the score were each recorded separately into a multitrack recorder to create the finished product. The process and tools Radar uses are clearly evocative of the process employed by many new music composers using electronic media. Despite the frequent cultural and class differences between DJs and new music composers, there is a significant amount of common ground occupied by the denizens both worlds.

For example, at Other Minds Festival 7, Bay Area composer Chris Brown will be performing his new work, *Invention #7*, for piano (with a MIDI attachment) and computer, percussion, and turntables. Joining Brown for this performance will

Examples from “The Key to Antimatter”

See **SCRATCHING**, on page 16

When I was Other Minds' Guest Artistic Director (a.k.a. OM GAD)

by Carl Stone

It was a pleasure and an honor to serve as the Guest Artistic Director for the sixth Other Minds Festival, which took place March 11-18, 2000 at the Djerassi ranch and then at various venues in San Francisco. The eclectic tradition of the Festival, along with its ever-curious audience, provided the perfect



At OM's reception for the SF Symphony's George Antheil concert of June 11, 2000, Carl Stone (right) with Susan Feder of G. Schirmer (publisher of Antheil's autobiography, *The Bad Boy of Music*).

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basis for the wide-ranging festival I envisioned.

The artists came from eight countries and three generations, and we had a chance to hear everything from seminal works such as Peter Garland's *Three Strange Angels* and Christian Wolff's *Burdocks* (masterfully performed by Wolff

himself, joined by local luminaries Fred Frith, William Winant, Miya Masaoka, Bob Ostertag, Gordon Mumma and Joan Jeanrenaud), next to works where the ink was barely dry on the page. In the latter category was Annie Gosfield's *Flying Sparks and Heavy Machinery* (commissioned by Other Minds and performed by the Onyx Quartet side-by-side with percussion ensemble Reddrum), and the world premiere of Hyo shin Na's *Blue Yellow River*, a delicate and deep work for double bass, cello and kayageum, the traditional Korean instrument that was played by Seoul-based virtuoso Ji Young Yi joined by Jeanrenaud and Richard Worn.

Although a familiar and controversial figure in his native Holland, Jacob ter Veldhuis is a new discovery for most American ears. Other Minds presented the U.S. premiere of his String Quartet #3, a work that seemed to draw as much from masters of the 19th and early 20th century as it did from its dedicatee, Jimi Hendrix. In addition to ensemble pieces, numerous solo performances showed the many facets of creative music life today: Leroy Jenkins performing his music on violin and viola, Hamza el Din on oud, Aki Takahashi interpreting the works of David Lang and Peter Garland, and Thomas Schultz presenting another piece of Na's. For the final event of OM 6, the festival moved from the traditional concert venues of Theater Artaud to the Justice League, a club chosen to best set off the music of Paul D. Miller, better

Rugged Individualist

By Leta Miller

Bill Colvig, known for his work as an instrument builder, gay rights activist, and champion of environmental justice causes, accompanied his life partner, Lou Harrison, to the second Other Minds Festival in 1995. Leta Miller remembers his special spirit.

From his earliest years up to his death in March 2000, Bill Colvig remained a country boy at heart. Despite two world tours, numerous radio and TV interviews, and appearances with Lou Harrison (his partner for 33 years) in some of the most prestigious concert halls in the nation, Bill's greatest pleasure still lay in communing with nature. A long-standing member of the Sierra Club, he treasured his daily walks from his home at the top of Viewpoint Road down to the flats of Aptos Center and back up the steep incline. Even after undergoing two knee replacements, he talked to me in the hospital about his dream of resuming his mountain-climbing adventures. Thus his long illness, which began with these operations and stretched through a series of increasingly acute ailments into a prolonged period of forced inactivity, was like a death sentence for the rugged outdoorsman.

William Colvig (b. 1917 in Medford, OR.) was nothing if not an individualist. He cared little for social convention, even less for personal acclaim. He devoted his life instead to a few chosen passions: music, instrument-building, acoustics, gay rights, ecology, and meaningful human interaction.

Bill's father first stimulated his musical talent. A bandmaster in the tiny town of Weed, CA at the base of Mount Shasta, Donald Colvig made sure his sons were musically educated. Bill played piano, trombone, baritone horn and tuba. In 1934 he matriculated at the University of the Pacific on a music scholarship, but soon changed his focus to electrical engineering. After transferring to Berkeley in 1937, he tired of the academic life and moved to Fairbanks, Alaska, to indulge his love of the wilderness. There he played baritone in the town band.

By the 1960s Colvig was working as an electrician in San Francisco, satisfying his musical curiosity vicariously by attending concerts of new and unusual music. In February 1967 he was in the audience at the Old Spaghetti Factory for a performance of Harrison's innovative theater kit, *Jephtha's Daughter*. The two men met after the concert and within an hour had discovered mutual interests in music, acoustics, aesthetics and politics. Both, for instance, were early supporters of Berkeley's nonprofit radio KPFA (founded in the 1940s by pacifists)—an electronic gadfly that had no hesitation about broadcasting controversial viewpoints. Likewise, both were members of San Francisco's Society for Individual Rights

A Phrenology of Other Minds

What's new with our composer "alumni"

Over the course of six Other Minds Festivals dating back to 1993, OM has played host to an amazing variety of artists from all over the world. From time to time, we hear from them and are happy to pass on their latest doings to our readers who have supported their appearances in San Francisco. Special thanks to Jennifer Lay Shyu for helping to compile and edit these notes. —Charles Amirkhonian

Laurie Anderson made a 50-minute score for *Dark Side of the Moon*, a theater work by Robert LePage, and is working on a collaboration with the dancer David Neuman. Her next recording will be issued in March by Nonesuch.

Ashot Zohrabian, living in Yerevan, Armenia, is the featured composer on a new CD from Le Chant du Monde's Musique aujourd'hui series. Five works, including his String Quartet No. 1, *Narcisse*, performed by the Kronos Quartet at OM 2 in 1995, have been recorded by members of the Moscow Contemporary Music Ensemble under the direction of Alexei Vinogradov.

With A-Z out of the way, we're free to report that **Scanner (aka Robin Rimbaud)** recently performed a live improvisation with **Annie Gosfield** in New York. Currently he's an Artist-in-Residence with BBC Radio and making a series for national airing. He's also collaborating with Italian composer Salvatore Sciarrino on a project in Rome and producing a public art project, "Needle Cut," in Washington, D.C.

Annie Gosfield is recording her 2001 Tzadik CD *Combustion Chamber*, which will feature *Flying Sparks* and *Heavy Machinery*, a double quartet for strings and percussion commissioned by OM and premiered at OM 6, and *EWA7*, which combines acoustic and sampled sounds performed by her own ensemble. **Charles Shere** invites his fans to view his new website at www.shere.org. **Ionel Petroi** just finished music for the imaginary ballet *Techno of the Balkans* (15 pieces/49 minutes) and a work for nine instruments played by the Budapest ensemble Wall Street.

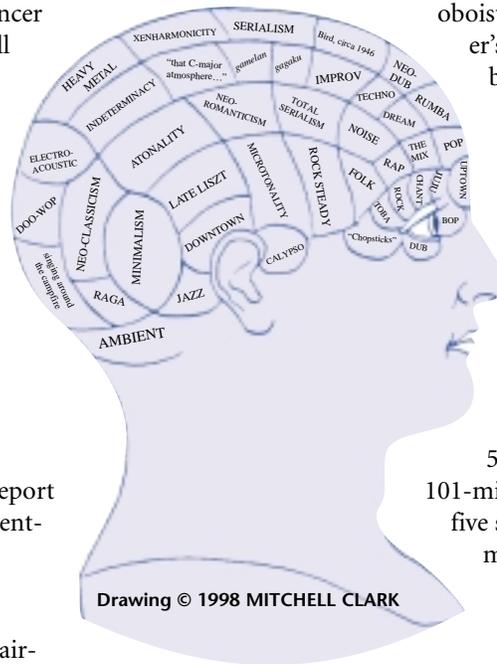
Guy Klucsevsek premiered **Mary Ellen Childs'** *Margin Release* for solo accordion at New York's The Kitchen. Her percussion ensemble CRASH presented a full-evening performance in St. Paul in September 2000, premiering *Missing Link* (for three ocean drums) and *Stone Tongue* (for berimbaus). London composer **Errollyn Wallen** spent the year doing post-graduate

work at King's College Cambridge, learning to row, and singing in the King's Voices choir. After having written for **Margaret Leng Tan's** toy piano at Other Minds 5, she now has composed a work for the largest member of the keyboard family. *Tiger*, for solo organ, was recently premiered in King's College Chapel. **Ingram Marshall's** *Kingdom Come* for tape and orchestra was recorded by the American Composers Orchestra for Nonesuch, along with *Hymnodic Delays*, performed by Paul Hillier and the Theater of Voices. An upcoming New Albion CD of Marshall's music will feature

oboiist Libby van Cleve, who played the composer's music at the OM 2. **Frances White** has been studying shakuhachi and has incorporated this instrument in her ongoing work with instruments and tape. *Birdwing*, for solo shakuhachi and tape, has been recorded on Centaur and One World Records. White will have another work for shakuhachi duet and tape premiered this winter at the Music and Anthology Festival in New York.

One of OM's most visible alumni, **Philip Glass** introduced his new Symphony No. 5: *Requiem, Bardo, Nirmanakaya*, an epic 101-minute composition in 12 movements for five soloists, an 80-person mixed chorus, a 40-member children's choir, and orchestra, conceived as a millennial celebration honoring the well-being of all people. The Brooklyn Philharmonic, conducted by Dennis Russell Davies, premiered and recorded the work. In

December 2000, pianist **Gloria Cheng** of Los Angeles premiered a new work, *Dichotomies*, written for her by Esa-Pekka Salonen, and then performed the work at New York's Carnegie Weill Recital Hall. Tenor **Thomas Buckner's** upcoming season includes new works by a host of innovative composers, including Stephen Dickman, Bun Ching Lam, Beth Anderson, and Annea Lockwood. He is scheduled to appear with Lockwood at Other Minds 8 in 2002. He also is preparing an evening of Charles Ives songs and collaborations with The Roscoe Mitchell New Chamber ensemble and composer David Behrman. **Jai Uttal** continues to compose, play, and chant his ecstatic Bengali/West Coast hybrid devotional music outside the traditional concert hall and club scene. A recent California tour found him performing with Geoffrey Gordon at the Whole Life Expo in the Los Angeles Convention Center, the Santa Barbara Yoga Center, and other diverse venues.



See **PHRENOLOGY**, next page

Phrenology

continued from previous page

Kui Dong was a resident at the Bellagio Study & Conference Center in August 2000 and is now completing a five-movement solo piano piece commissioned by pianist Sarah Cahill with support from the Peter S. Reed Foundation. Kui is also composing a work for mixed chorus and three percussionists for the Dale Warland Singers.

Lisbon-based **António Pinho Vargas** recently recorded two pieces with the Northern Sinfonia, conducted by Baldur Broniman for release on Naxos. He also wrote *A Impaciencia de Mahler*, Four Pieces for Orchestra, commissioned by the Gulbenkian Foundation and Estudos e Interlúdio for six percussionists, as well as “D’Escrito a vermelho,” a cycle of seven songs on texts of the poet Albano Martins. **Hyo Shin Na’s** Piano Study II for Thomas Schultz will be premiered at Vienna’s Schoenberg Center this May. She is also working on a book of interviews with kayageum master /composer Byung-ki Hwang, to be published in a bilingual edition by Pulbit Publishing. Na’s *Blue Yellow River*, which premiered at OM 6, was performed at the Asian Art Museum and UC Santa Cruz in February.

French electronic music superstar **Luc Ferrari** was feted in August 2000 with a composer portrait at the Belin Akademie der Künste. His *Symphonie déchirée*, to be played at the Marseille Festival in May 2001, is intended as a cry of revolt against purity, racism, and nationalism, in favor of hybrids and balance (“between revolt and voluptuous pleasure, realism and abstraction, and electro and acoustic,” as he puts it.) In October 2000, composer/violinist **Mari Kimura** performed Toru Takemitsu’s *Spectral Canticle* in Japan with the Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. Five days later, she improvised a set at Tonic, in New York, with Jon Rose, violin, Tomas Ulrich, cello and Mark Dresser, bass.

Alvin Lucier installed his *Music on a Long Thin Wire* in Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts as part of their Guitar Show this winter. He’s now composing a work for small orchestra for the Donaueschingen Festival in the fall of 2002. **David Raksin’s** *Quintet for Clarinet and Strings*, “Swing Low Sweet Clarinet,” was performed at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival by Eddie Daniels and Quartet. In April, he will conduct a concert of his film music in Milan. That same month, Dennis Russell Davies will conduct his suite from *The Bad and the Beautiful* with the American Composers Orchestra in Carnegie Hall.

Amsterdam-based Greek composer **Calliope Tsoupaki** has produced a number of new works. This year, her *Locus Alius* (Another Place) is to be premiered in by the Lucky Stardust Recorder Quartet of Amsterdam, augmented by a train whistle; *Escher*, for five saxophones and five strings, will be pre-

miered by the Escher Ensemble. **Jacob ter Veldhuis’s** 50th birthday will be feted with four days of concerts in Rotterdam at the Jacob ter Veldhuis Festival. For more information, visit his new website at www.xs4all.nl/~jtv1.

A major retrospective of **Meredith Monk’s** work at the Lincoln Center Festival (summer 2000) recreated such early works as *Dolmen Music* and *Turtle Dreams*. At last June’s American Mavericks Festival she trained members of the SF Symphony Chorus to perform her songs, which are not conventionally notated. “I think some of the performers were filled with sheer terror before going onstage. They had to move about during the performance and also bounce up and down—something completely foreign to them. And they did a fabulous job!” Michael Tilson Thomas has commissioned her to write a 20-minute work for his New World Symphony, in addition to which Monk is beginning a collaboration with artist Ann Hamilton. “Ann’s work is installation-oriented and we haven’t yet figured out how we’ll adapt it to the theatrical realm. We both work slowly, and both love each others’ work, but we have no idea yet what’s going to emerge!” says the composer.

Alvin Singleton is a survivor of a summer 2000 residency at Civitella Ranieri, one of the newest European artist residency programs, located in Umbertide, Italy. He reports, “It was just fantastic. There I was very productive. I wrote *Jasper Drag* for violin, clarinet, and piano for the Verdehr Trio and it was premiered October 16, 2000 at Festival Miami.” **Laetitia Sonami** received a Creative Work Fund award for a collaboration with Nick Bertoni, The Tinker’s Workshop, and a group of East Bay teenagers. The project, entitled *BAGS*, is a musical environment in which animated kinetic sacks become “performers,” revealing surprising sonic elements. It will be presented at New Langton Arts in San Francisco in 2002.

Olly Wilson’s *Hold On* (Symphony No. 3) was premiered in 1999 by the Chicago Symphony (which commissioned it) under the direction of William Eddings. Wilson now is working on *Episode*, a commission for the Detroit Symphony, and another for Orpheus, the chamber orchestra in New York. And last but not least, **Lukas Ligeti** just returned from a month in Burkina Faso, where he has been engaged in recording a new young pop singer in Ouagadougou, including producing arrangements for their forthcoming release. He also is working on a new solo percussion CD and composing a work for fifteen instruments for the Austrian ensemble Die Reihe. Ligeti recently obtained American citizenship and now is living in New York City. ♦

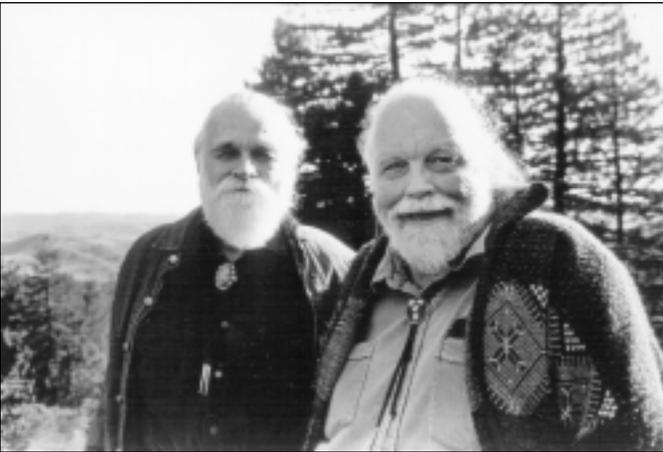
For RealAudio samples of many of these composers’ works, a photo gallery by John Fago of their appearance at past Other Minds Festivals, and hyperlinks to their home pages, visit the Other Minds website at www.otherminds.org.

Colvig Remembrance

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(S.I.R.), established in 1964 to promote gay rights.

In a matter of weeks Colvig had joined Harrison in Lou's tiny cottage in the Aptos woods. "It was my lifelong dream," he joked when I interviewed him in 1995, "to live in a little cabin out in the woods with a dirty old man. I'm joking, of course. Lou wasn't dirty. The cabin was, though, and I could see he needed some help."



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Bill Colvig (left) and Lou Harrison at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, during the residency portion of Other Minds Festival 2, in 1995.

Over the next quarter century, Colvig helped out in far more significant ways than cleaning the cabin. He immediately became absorbed in Harrison's musical projects in tuning and instrument-building. A skilled craftsman, Colvig soon began constructing instruments: harps, plucked and bowed strings, and most importantly, metallophones. These he tuned to Lou's specifications, at first by ear ("Lou's ear," Bill hastened to add) and later more precisely with an oscilloscope he assembled from a \$90 kit. The small projects soon grew into a larger one: constructing a set of keyed metallic instruments hit with various types of mallets and tuned in pure interval ratios specified in ancient Greek theoretical sources. For the keys of the various instruments, Colvig used aluminum slabs or steel conduit tubing. As resonators for the larger instruments he chose #10 tin cans. When Harrison expressed an interest in adding gongs to the ensemble, Bill put in a call to the Crystal Ice Company in Watsonville in search of empty oxygen tanks. "Sure, we have a few discarded ones," they told me. I bought three or four, and we cut them to random lengths and suspended them from a wooden rack. We hit them with baseball bats and they made beautiful inexpensive gongs." When their new percussion orchestra was complete, Harrison and Colvig dubbed it "an American gamelan" after the traditional Indonesian ensembles Harrison had first heard in the 1930s.

In Harrison's presence, Colvig was often quiet, electing to take a back seat even in conversations on instrument building. But this reticence could be deceptive: he was in fact intensely alert

to the intellectual activity around him. Once, as Fred Lieberman and I were talking with Harrison about John Cage, we were certain Bill had drifted off. His eyes closed, chin resting on his chest, he seemed to be in another world. But as the topic turned to Cage's notorious 4'33", a piece comprised entirely of silence, Bill's head suddenly jerked up: "The second movement is my favorite part," he said, immediately resuming his former somnolent position.

We will miss you sorely, Bill, but we are comforted by the richness you have added to our lives and inspired by your stubborn, unpretentious dedication to principle. ♦

Leta Miller is a professor of music at UC Santa Cruz and, with Fredric Lieberman, is the author of Lou Harrison: Composing a World (Oxford University Press, 1998). This article was adapted from the original, which first appeared in Metro Santa Cruz on March 8-15, 2000. Reprinted by permission of the author and Metro Santa Cruz.

Amirkhanian Returns

After a year away as the Rockefeller Foundation's first Ella Walker Holbrook Fellows at the Bellagio Conference Center in northern Italy, OM Executive Director Charles Amirkhanian and his wife, artist Carol Law, are slowly becoming used to life without 24-hour maid service, bocce, and grappa by moonlight. During his sabbatical, Charles completed *Pianola (Pas de mains)*, a 40-minute tape work incorporating sounds from historical player piano rolls, to be premiered on the Westdeutscher Rundfunk in Cologne in March 2001.

Recent Funders and Sponsors

OM gratefully acknowledges a \$50,000 project grant from **Thendara Foundation** to support a collaboration with New **Albion Records**, one of the foremost independent music labels devoted to new music. The grant will help underwrite a series of recordings by leading experimental music composers. In fall 2000, the **San Francisco Arts Commission** awarded OM an \$18,000 grant to support a major commission by **Ellen Fullman**, in collaboration with the **Kronos Quartet**, that will feature her extraordinary invention, the 90-foot-long Long String Instrument, to be featured at Other Minds 8 in 2002. The **Asian Cultural Council**, a consistent supporter of OM's Asian projects, awarded \$2,600 to help underwrite the appearance of Eun-Ha Park, of Seoul, at Other Minds 7. Other recent grants include \$1,500 from **Meet the Composer Fund** to support the educational activities of OM 7 composers, and \$1,000 from the **Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts**. OM 7 welcomes the renewed sponsorship of **Amoeba Music**. Our visiting artists often make a beeline for Amoeba's record stores to track down rare finds. We're happy to hear that Amoeba is soon opening a new store in Los Angeles.

Workshop

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© ESTATE OF EZRA POUND

A previously unpublished photograph from the scrapbook of Homer Pound (the poet's father) shows Ezra Pound (right) and George Antheil posing in Frankfurt in 1930, before the world premiere of Antheil's first opera, *Transatlantic*. This still image was taken from digital video footage shot in July 2000 by Charles Amirkhanian during a visit with Mary de Rachewiltz, daughter of Ezra Pound, who resides in Merano, Italy.

call the 'great base,' vide by book on Antheil.] But one is not thinking into a vacuum; the abstract mathematics might give a good scaffolding, or it might not. It probably would; but one is dealing with the effect of these sounds on human beings; and here as in other musical invention, the work must be done by the man who can hear, who can hear the time in his head. It is work for the musician on the floor of the factory. And

the ultimate sound of this percussive music will be vastly better than the sobbing of tubas.

I have said that the germ is in the *Ballet Mechanique*; perhaps I should have said it is Antheil's First Violin Sonata, but I doubt if anyone would have found it there. The sonata has still a relation to older music; but after hearing the Ballet one can recognize the roots in the Sonata.

As a simple and practical tip I suggest that people who want to get what I mean (that is, to hear what I mean) as a further step from merely assenting to a general idea, should listen to the *Ballet* with simply the Pleyela and the "reduced sonority," that is, wood and metal buzzers, and the electric amplifier for the third movement. It may be nicer music with the attendant xylophones and pianos, but after all it was written originally for 20 Pleyelas, and until the perfect synchronization of 20 Pleyelas is obtainable, the main idea, the division of the great time-spaces, shows up more clearly from the bare, austere, rigid outline.

As for the rest: there is no use waiting for millennia; primitive man cries out to God; the proletarius cries out to Social Justice. In the meantime there are certain things that can be done, made constructed, without waiting for a millennium. ♦

From Antheil and the Treatise on Harmony, by Ezra Pound, first American edition of the book originally published in 1924 by Three Mountains Press, Paris; Pascal Covici, Publisher, New York, 1927.

Scratching

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be DJ Eddie Def, a virtuoso turntablist and former member of the pioneering scratch group the Bullet Proof Scratch Hamsters, and percussionist William Winant.

When I spoke with Brown in November 2000, he reported that his piece will be partially notated and partially improvised, with the piano and percussion parts traditionally notated, but in such a way that the performers are given room to freely vary upon their parts. Additionally, the score will be programmed into the computer's memory and will interact with the performers using genetic programming algorithms that "listen" to the performance and "grow" musical responses that are unique to each performance. The variability of the computer's response is meant to encourage further variation from the performers. Although Brown is not currently planning on notating the turntables part, he plans on creating cohesive sections within the piece where the turntablist plays in particular ways with specific sound materials. Brown was not aware of scratch notation before I spoke to him, but said that he may consider notating the turntables part as the piece develops.

While Chris Brown will deliberately use and not use notation to give his performers creative power within his work's established structure, DJ Radar's use of notation in *Antimatter* begins to document an organizational framework that already exists within the highly improvisational world of turntablism. Both artists use notation in their works in fascinating ways as a tool to push and pull the traditional boundaries between compositional control and improvisation.

Is scratch notation then an effective way for turntablists to obtain legitimacy? Is it important to prove that improvised music and composed music can co-exist? Perhaps John Cage best summed up the use of notation as a means to an end for both types of composers when he said, "We are living in a period in which many people have changed their minds about what music is or could be for them. Something that doesn't speak or talk like human beings, that doesn't know its definition in the dictionary or its theory in the schools, that expresses itself simply by the fact of its vibrations. A music that transports the listener to the moment where he is." ♦

Chris Brown's Invention # 7 will be performed at Other Minds Festival 7. See Festival schedule on inside back cover for details. Learn more about DJ Radar at www.djradar.com.

Writer/musician/composer Amanda Piasecki is a 1997 graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory with a degree in Trumpet Performance. Amanda is about to muscle her way through her second Other Minds Festival as Program Coordinator.

A Gathering of Other Minds 2000-2001

What does it take to present adventurous, surprising music, year after year? How can today's most innovative composers find an annual showcase in Northern California before attentive audiences? For Other Minds, the answers are found in the list of names below, which represents the individuals and institutions who helped to underwrite our work during the 2000-2001 fiscal year. We are deeply grateful for the generous and visionary support of this Gathering of Other Minds. (*Reflects gifts and pledges received between July 1, 2000 and February 12, 2001.*)

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Hovhaness

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the percussion in Oriental manners, lot of bell sounds and starlike sounds.

CA: *What was the early evolution of your wanting to compose?*

AH: It's hard for me to remember. I threw away so much that I can't really recall too much about, I started composing without any help from anybody because I had ideas going through my head and I thought everybody did, but then when I was 7 years old, I heard a classical piece of music for the first time in school, and I thought, "That's written by Schubert apparently", and so I started writing down my ideas. I never can understand when people tell me they don't know how to write music. It's much easier than writing a letter as far as I'm concerned. And I don't see any difficulty. If you love music, you can write it. If you can read it, you can write it.

DRD: *There's a—Virgil Thomson says that composing should be like writing a letter.*

AH: Yeah, well, it is, but I enjoy composing more. ♦

Carl Stone Looks Back

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known as DJ Spooky, and Robin Rimbaud, performing under his customary alias of Scanner.

As always, discussion played an important role alongside the music at Other Minds. Two Artist Forums were held at George Coates Performance Works, ably chaired by Sarah Cahill and Herman Gray. In the OM tradition, the featured artists also met in seclusion for four days at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, in their mind-bogglingly beautiful campus in the Santa Cruz Mountains above Woodside. It was there that I was honored to join them as we shared conversation, demonstrations, food, coyote calls, and sunsets, as the artists met and re-met to discover the similarities and differences in their aesthetic worlds that make new music in the 21st century as vital as it is. My thanks to Charles Amirkhanian, Jim Newman, and the board and staff of Other Minds for giving me such a great opportunity! ♦

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Other Minds Festival 7

Guest Composers: Chris Brown (Oakland, CA); Gavin Bryars (England); Alvin Curran (Italy/USA); Andrew Hill (New York); Hi Kyung Kim (South Korea/USA); James Tenney (Valencia, CA); Glen Velez (New York, NY); Aleksandra Vrebalov (Yugoslavia/USA); William Winant, percussionist (Oakland, CA). Charles Amirkhanian, Artistic Director. Pamela Wunderlich, choreographer & costume designer, performs each evening in the Cowell Theater lobby before concerts and during intermissions

Thursday 8 March

Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center

7 pm Artists' Forum I

Informal discussion with Eve Egoyan, Aleksandra Vrebalov, Gavin Bryars, Glen Velez, and Chris Brown. Moderated by Charles Amirkhanian

8 pm Concert

Glen Velez: *Ancient World* (2001), solos for frame drums and voice
Velez, Moroccan bendir, Irish bodhran, overtone singing, and Egyptian riq

Tribute to Alan Hovhaness: In honor of the 90th birthday of the late composer *Khaldis* Concerto for Piano, Four Trumpets & Percussion (1951)
Eve Egoyan, piano; William Winant, percussion; Linda Bouchard, conductor, Other Minds Ensemble

Aleksandra Vrebalov: String Quartet No. 2, *Sketches on Pendulums, Loss, Autism, and Nine Places* (1996-7)
Onyx Quartet

Gavin Bryars: *Adnan Songbook* (1996), on poems by Etel Adnan
Tammy Jenkins, solo soprano; Other Minds Ensemble, with Gavin Bryars, contrabass; Linda Bouchard, conductor

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Friday 9 March

Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center

7 pm Artists' Forum II

An informal discussion with Alvin Curran, Hi Kyung Kim, Andrew Hill, James Tenney, and William Winant. Moderated by Charles Amirkhanian

8 pm Concert

Ezra Pound: *Fiddle Music First Suite*, in six movements (1923-24) violin solo. World Premiere. Nathan Rubin, violin

Cavalcanti, excerpts from the opera (1931-3)
Nathan Rubin, violin solo; David Cox, bass-baritone; Tammy Jenkins, soprano; Michael Bannett, boy soprano; The Other Minds Ensemble, Robert Hughes, conductor

George Antheil: Sonata No. 1 for Violin & Piano (1923)
Sabat/Clarke Duo (Marc Sabat, violin; Stephen Clarke, piano)

James Tenney: Chorale (1974); *Diaphonic Toccata* (1997); *3 Pages in the Shape of a Pear* (1995); *Diaphonic Trio* for Violin & Piano (1997)
Sabat/Clarke Duo

Hi Kyung Kim: *Rituel*, for violin, cello, clarinet, percussion and Korean shamanistic dancer-drummer (2000) World Premiere
Other Minds Ensemble: Eun-Ha Park, percussion/dancer; William Winant, percussion; William Barbini, violin; Jean-Michel Fonteneau, cello; John Sackett, clarinet

Saturday 10 March

11 am Panel

Ezra Pound & Music
George Coates Performance Works, 110 McAllister Street/Leavenworth
With Robert Hughes, editor of Pound's opera score, *Cavalcanti*, and author of *Ezra Pound's Cavalcanti*; Margaret Fisher, author of *Ezra Pound's Radio Operas*; Michael André Bernstein, UC Berkeley, author of *Tale of the Tribe*; Nathan Rubin, violinist, author of *John Cage and the 26 Pianos of Mills College*; Hugh Witemeyer, author of *The Poetry of Ezra Pound: Forms and Renewal (1908-1920)*. Moderated by Charles Amirkhanian

8 pm Concert

Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center
Chris Brown: *Invention No. 7* (2001) World Premiere
William Winant, percussion; Eddie Def, turntablist; Chris Brown, Yamaha Disklavier piano and computer

Andrew Hill: "Bellezza Appasita" (Faded Beauty) (From *Pinocchio*, 2001) World Premiere
Hill, solo piano

Alvin Curran: *Inner Cities 8* (2000) World Premiere
Eve Egoyan, solo piano

Gavin Bryars: *One Last Bar Then Joe Can Sing* (1994)
Reddrum (percussion quintet)

Ticket Information

Other Minds Festival 7
March 8-10, 2001

Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center

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*A metamorphosed
Pamela Wunderlich will wander
through Other Minds Festival 7...*



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