Journal of the Conductors Guild

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. . . Advancing the Art and Profession

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The publication date of the present double issue of the *Journal of the Conductors Guild* is May, 2007. Effective Volume 13, the *Journal of the Conductors Guild* has been published semi-annually, the two issues being numbered 1 and 2; its length remains unchanged. Seasonal references cease with Volume 26. The Conductors Guild reserves the right to approve and edit all material submitted for publication. Publication of advertising is not necessarily an endorsement and the Conductors Guild reserves the right to refuse to print any advertisement. Library of Congress No. 82-644733. ISSN: 0734-1032.

Commentary

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Watching a conductor in a concert is deceiving. The conductor just stands there, waving his or her hands like a clown. It seems as if it is a joke that he or she has any power over the musicians, who are hard at work stringing their bows and blowing in their horns. However, any of us who have sat in a large ensemble know much better. Conductors are magicians. A twist of a wrist or the raising of an eye can result in a completely different sound, if not approach, to the music. The best conductors, I've found, are ones who have worked with children. A conductor's ability to be able to connect with young musicians as a mentor and bring out an excitement and quality of music while teaching discipline at the same time is nothing short of magic.

This is why it is so exciting for me to be the editor of the Journal of the Conductors Guild. Any one who contributes to this publication has a passion for conducting, in all its beauty and detail, and is giving of their own knowledge and talent to better the field. In each article, there is the same care in how the information is presented as would be if the conductors were standing in front of an ensemble with their baton ready for a downbeat. And, though I'm merely a musician who has learned the vocabulary of a conductor through the masses of sound around me, I know that my own perception of music has been largely changed by the wonderful, world-class conductors I've worked with. As the editor of the Journal, I hope that I can put together a Journal for you that can be true to your passion for conducting as an art form.

Editor Jonathan Green has stepped down from his excellent post as editor for the Journal, and though I do not hope to replace the wonderful work he has done, I hope to bring my own unique skills to the Journal, drawing from both music and journalism training.

The Guild has prepared a double issue for your enjoyment and education to help us all catch up on our reading. The first Journal touches on a wide array of subject matters. It opens with an interview with one of the finest living American composers, Samuel Adler. Here is an opportunity to learn about this composer's music, straight from the horse's mouth. We leave Adler to delve into a score from another great American composer, William Grant Still. We are lucky to have these two contributions handed down from Jonathan Green's editorship. As additions, we will visit the lives and works of two international musicians, both highly popular and lesser known. We have an opportunity to learn something new about Mozart's Requiem and the legends that surround its existence, and also a chance to take a historical look at one of Shostakovich's contemporaries, Evgeny Mravinsky.

We are always accepting submissions for the Journal. If you are interested in contributing, please feel free to contact me to discuss your ideas. I encourage you all to find a topic that excites you and share your own thoughts and research with us all. Any and all feedback on the Journal is welcomed; I want to make sure this Journal is servicing you, as conductors, in the best way possible.

Happy reading!

Anna Reguero, Editor

An Interview with Samuel Adler

By James Setapen

Samuel Adler was born March 4, 1928, in Mannheim, Germany and came to the United States in 1939. He was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters in May 2001. He is the composer of over 400 published works, including five operas, six symphonies, twelve concerti, eight string quartets, four oratorios, and many other orchestral, band, chamber, and choral works and songs, which have been performed all over the world. He is the author of three books: *Choral Conducting* (Holt Reinhart and Winston 1971, second edition, Schirmer Books 1985), *Sight Singing* (W.W. Norton 1979, 1997), and *The Study of Orchestration* (W.W. Norton 1982, 1989, 2001). He has also contributed numerous articles to major magazines and books published in the U.S. and abroad.

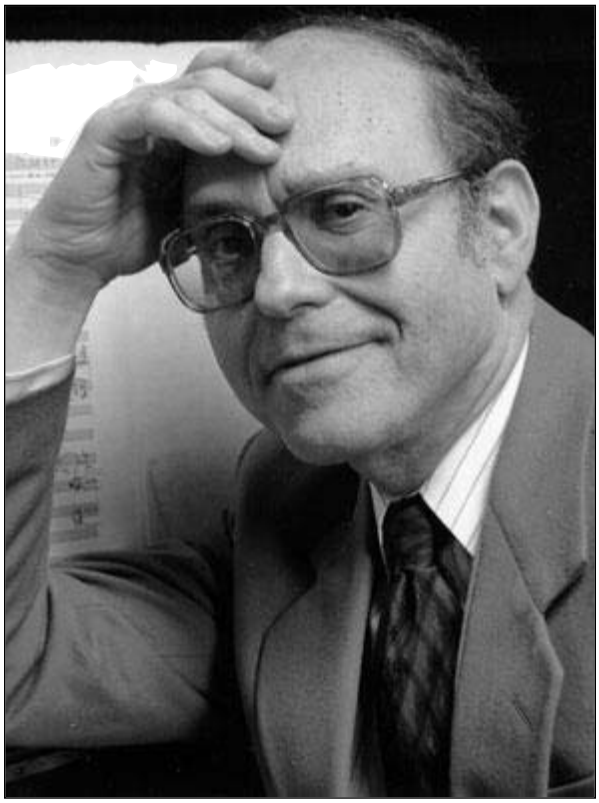
Adler was educated at Boston University and Harvard University, and holds honorary doctorates from Southern Methodist University, Wake Forest University, St. Mary's Notre-Dame, and the St. Louis Conservatory. His major composition teachers were Herbert Fromm, Walter Piston, Randall Thompson, Paul Hindemith, and Aaron Copland; in conducting, Serge Koussevitzky.

He is Professor Emeritus at the Eastman School of Music where he taught from 1966 to 1995 and served as chair of the composition department from 1974 until his retirement. Before going to Eastman, Adler served as professor of composition at the University of North Texas (1957-1977), Music Director at Temple Emanu-El in Dallas, Texas (1953-1966), and instructor of Fine Arts at the Hockaday School in Dallas, Texas (1955-1966). From 1954 to 1958 he was Music Director of the Dallas Lyric Theater and the Dallas Chorale. Since 1997, he has been a member of the composition faculty at the Juilliard School of Music in New York City. Adler has given master classes and workshops at over 300 universities worldwide, and in the summers has taught at major music festivals such as Tanglewood, Aspen, Brevard, Bowdoin, as well as others in France, Germany, Israel, Spain, Austria, Poland, South America, and Korea.

Some recent commissions have been from: the Cleveland Orchestra (Cello Concerto), the National Symphony (Piano Concerto No. 1), the Dallas Symphony (*Lux Perpetua*), the Pittsburgh Symphony (Viola Concerto), the Houston Symphony (Horn Concerto), the Barlow Foundation/Atlanta Symphony (*Choose Life*), the American Brass Quintet, the Wolf Trap Foundation, the Berlin-Bochum Brass Ensemble, the Ying Quartet, and the American String Quartet to name only a few. His works have been performed lately by the St. Louis Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the Mannheim National Theater Orchestra. Besides these commissions and performances, previous commissions have been received from the National Endowment for the Arts (1975, 1978, 1980 and 1982), the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, the Koussevitzky Foundation, the City of Jerusalem, the Welsh Arts Council, and many others.

Adler has been awarded many prizes, including a 1990 award from the American Academy of Arts

and Letters, the Charles Ives Award, the Lillian Fairchild Award, the MTNA Award for Composer of the Year (1988-1989), and a Special Citation by the American Foundation of Music Clubs (2001). In 1983, he won the Deems Taylor Award for his book, *The Study of Orchestration*. In 1988-1989, he was designated "Phi Beta Kappa Scholar." In 1989, he received the Eastman School's Eisenhard Award for Distinguished Teaching. In 1991, he was honored by being named the Composer of the Year by the American Guild of Organists. Adler was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship (1975-1976); he has been a MacDowell Fellow for five years and during his second trip to Chile, he was elected to the Chilean Academy of Fine Arts (1993) "for his outstanding contribution to the world of music as a composer." In 1999, he was elected to the Akademie der Künste in Germany for distinguished service to music. While serving in the United States Army (1950-1952), Adler founded and conducted the Seventh Army Symphony Orchestra which was recognized for its great psychological and musical impact on European culture.



Adler has appeared as conductor with many major symphony orchestras, both in the U.S. and abroad. His compositions are published by Theodore Presser Company, Oxford University Press, G. Schirmer, Carl Fischer, E.C. Schirmer, Peters Edition, Ludwig Music, Southern Music Publishers, and Transcontinental Music Publishers. Recordings of his works have been issued by RCA, Gasparo, Albany, CRI, Crystal, and Vanguard.[1]

The following interview took place in November of 2003 at the University of Texas in Austin while Dr. Adler was spending a week as a special guest of the music department.

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Since you are, besides being a composer with a large and varied catalog of works, a very accomplished conductor, why don't we start with some performance related questions. Do you always use metronome markings? Have they remained relatively constant for you or have you revised them when you've looked over earlier works?

My metronome marks (in my own works), I'm sorry to say, change every time I look at a piece—and they usually get faster. However, when I'm not conducting and somebody else sticks to the metronome marking, I, at first, do not correct the person because it may be better than I "feel it."

The metronome markings have to do with a lot of factors. For instance, they have to do with the hall, with the medium itself—that is, "Is this orchestra up to that tempo or isn't it?" I just heard a performance of the Seventh Beethoven by the Tonhalle Orchestra with David Zinman. It blew me away! It is the most fantastic thing I've ever heard! Very, very fast—but only that orchestra or an orchestra like that could do it. If it were played by a secondary orchestra, an orchestra that doesn't have that finesse and sophistication, it would be terrible. This was absolutely perfect—it was so transparent and translucent that it was a fabulous experience. And that's what I mean. Every performance is different, every orchestra is different, and so therefore a composer, I think, has to be very careful how he or she handles this kind of situation.

The metronome is a very dangerous instrument. Let's say I have a metronome marking of a quarter note equals 132 and it's a very difficult piece and that marking is way beyond anything anybody could do, even the best orchestra. If I were a conductor of that piece the first thing I would say is, "The guy's out of his mind to mark it this way; on the other hand, I know what he means. It's supposed to be done as fast as possible. And so I will use my judgment to do it clearly—especially if it's a contrapuntal piece. If it's a static piece [I don't like too much static music], then it would mean that the static should move. It shouldn't be a piece where you feel bored after two minutes." And so the metronome marking is dangerous, but very important to illuminate for the conductor what is meant by it.

As a corollary question, how do you come up with the metronome marking? Do you sing it to yourself when you're composing the piece? Or do you actually wait until the rehearsal or performance and then revise it?
No. I do it right away after I write the entire piece, not at the beginning. I just finished a new orchestra piece. It has very difficult things in it, rhythmically. And therefore I was very careful. I'm not sure whether the metronome marking will last through the first performance, but I know that it's what I want. Brilliant or ecstatic or whatever. I will be at the rehearsals and performance, and I'll see that it will be as fast as it's possible to do and really come out without sounding frantic.

Let me read you this beautiful sentence that Verdi placed at the beginning of his Te Deum. Tell me if you agree with this. Verdi says, "The entire piece should be performed in one tempo as indicated by the metronome, quarter note = 80. This notwithstanding, it will be appropriate to broaden or accelerate in certain spots for reasons of expression and nuance, coming back however, always to the first tempo." Does this work for your music or are you able to notate your music in a more exact way than Verdi did?
No. I think that is a wonderful statement. And I hope for the musicality of the person that's playing or conducting it, to not do it in a mechanical way. And that's what Verdi meant, I think. That piece especially is one of the most sublime pieces that he ever wrote. And there are nuances in the text, for instance, especially in vocal music, which demand freedom. Vocal music is even more volatile than orchestral music when it comes to rubati. Even in music like Baroque music, you have this whole idea of *Empfindsamkeit*. When you feel the text doing something, you can broaden it. I'm sure Bach wouldn't have cared. He would have loved it. I'm sure he didn't play his music mechanically.

It's a beautiful quote, and I think a very apt one.

What are the principal performance problems of your music, or any special performance problems?
Well, one of the problems is that I like to conduct. And I like to conduct pieces that are challenging. And I think that my pieces, even the less-complicated ones, are challenging—rhythmically, and conducting-wise.

One common characteristic of my pieces is changing meters. Now, the changing meter business, I feel like Stravinsky: It means that it is because of changing accents. It's much easier to [perceive the notes that should be accented] if you write it with changing meters than if you write it in 4/4 and mark in accents. Leonard Bernstein tried it in the last dance of *Sacre du Printemps*, and I'm sorry to say it worked for him because nobody cared. They did it because it was Bernstein and they were going to be fired otherwise, but it really doesn't work. It works the way Stravinsky notated it.

You know that it looks fearsome, but once you get into it, it's the most natural thing, and that's the way I feel about my meter changes.

Yes, if you understand the melody and the shaping of the melody, the meter changes feel natural.
That's it! Yes, and the fundamental rhythm.

Look, suppose you have all eighth notes and it's 6/8, 7/8, 3/8, whatever. If you feel the eighth note, it doesn't make any difference. You can do it mechanically almost. But rhythmically, it's very important that you're steady.

Stravinsky, of all people, has taught us that it can be done with élan. It doesn't have to sound in any way mechanical—or wrong.

How about pitches? Is there a pitch and intonation problem specifically in some of your music?
My music after 1960 is difficult because I use a more jagged linear language, and that is difficult when you have to make big leaps for intonation. I mean, look at that fearsome passage in the *Meistersinger Prelude*, where you have to skip two octaves. That's difficult. And that's the kind of difficulty, even more so, in contemporary music because often you can't easily hear it in context. You don't skip two octaves; you skip maybe an octave and a seventh or something like this, which makes it difficult. That is the difficulty in my music—I can't see any other.

Tuning chords—I use quite open chords and there's always a problem with that because of the different ranges and the overtone series. The wind players especially have to be very careful when they're tuning.

There's one more thing, I will say. I will quote somebody. I just wrote a horn concerto for the Houston Symphony and Bill Vermulen. Bill said to me, "You know, Sam, when I first got the music, I thought the first movement was written for solo clarinet instead of solo horn."

The idea for me is that I'm writing for a person and I think I know what that person can perform. And I will write anything I think that person can do. It isn't too difficult or too stressful or terribly stretched. And therefore, I write the music I want to write, that I feel will sound best on that instrument.

For that specific person. So that's an old tradition. It goes back to Mozart if not before: he had to hear the singer before he would write their aria.
That's exactly right, and that's why he wrote the way he did. Look at "Marten aller Arten" [from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*]. That is the most difficult aria ever written, never mind the 20th century. And the range—from low B to high D. Ridiculous! But…he had a girlfriend who did this. And so therefore, why not do it?

The other thing is this. Nobody who's a horn player will go out on a limb. I, who am not a horn player, will go out on a limb because I'm saying, "This is what I hear, and you can do it." It's the idea of Bartók—stretching the technique of the string quartet. Nobody who was a string player would have done that. Now everybody does it. It is for the composer to break the boundaries of technique.

When somebody says, "You know, this is not idiomatic." What does that mean?

It means,"What people are used to do."
I think idiomatic has to do with idiot.

There's that funny story about Richard Strauss, listening to a horn player warm up before a rehearsal. Strauss, talking to the concertmaster, says, "Listen to that horn player. If I wrote that for him, he would say he couldn't play it."
That's right. His father told him he couldn't play the first horn concerto.

You see, the reason horns play as well as they do is because they have to play Strauss. I even want to say Beethoven, because that fourth horn solo in the Ninth Beethoven is incredibly unidiomatic for the fourth horn. I mean, it's ridiculous, but they play it. Conductors used to break it up between the first and fourth horn. Today nobody would do that.

What have you learned as a conductor that's helped you as a composer?
Oh, a lot, I have to say. In the first place, I have learned, in both ways, to respect the people sitting in front of me. That is as important for the conductor as it is for the composer. We just had a class here [at the University of Texas] with young com-

posers. One of the composers wrote a piece that used every possible effect that could be produced on a string instrument. Most of them were ugly. I feel that the alienation that has existed and sometimes still exists between the composer, performer, and orchestra is that the composer is writing something that the performer would rather not play because it makes him look and sound bad. "All my life I've learned how to play this beautiful line on the oboe, and all I have to play is [strange noise]. Well, some kind of a horrible sound, I'm not going to play. I don't want to play it. I can play anything on the oboe, but I want to play something that will make me sound good."

Now, that does not have anything to do with twelve-tone music, fifteen-tone music, anything. It has to do with style, with the respect for the instrument, and the player. That's the first thing I've learned.

The second thing I have learned is there are certain perceived limitations of what an orchestra can do and how to break those. Because most orchestra players are—I don't want to use the term lazy—they are lethargic. They don't want to do it. I think there is a difference between an American orchestra and a European orchestra, especially German orchestras. I've conducted both American and European orchestras, and especially the orchestras that used to be behind the iron curtain in Germany. And I've come to the conclusion that American orchestras are far better, but they're not enjoying playing.

You watch the Berlin Philharmonic and the guys are living the music! And the audience lives with them! Now, the Berlin Philharmonic is as good as, though not certainly better than, the Cleveland Orchestra, Pittsburgh, New York, or Boston. But they love to play; they love the music! Even if they've played it a million times. I just saw the telecast with Haitink conducting a Brahms symphony. Well—I mean, I know every note, but they make me feel it again. This is a big difference, and I feel if we as conductors could give that spirit to our orchestras, without put-on. You know, just say, "Love it!" "Come on! We're playing the greatest music in the world. If you don't love the music, get out of the business."

I feel that way about composition. I would like to have my performers, even though it's very difficult—a horn part like a clarinet part—I want them to enjoy it. To me, the greatest compliment anybody can give me is not, "This is the greatest piece since sliced bread!" but, "You know Sam, this was the hardest piece I ever had to learn, but now that I know it, I just love it." But if they say, "This is the hardest piece and it's not worth it,"that's the biggest defeat of a composer.

That's another thing I've learned: it's too bad, as far as I'm concerned, that orchestras can't enjoy doing something new. You know, their attitude goes right beyond the curve. They look bored; they look almost adversarial when they play a new piece, instead of saying to the audience, "Guys! Let's have this wonderful experience together!" That's what I miss. Now, I'm happy to say I've seen it in some orchestras.

Is that what you saw when Koussevitzky did a new piece?

Absolutely! Because of him! Look—here's the great thing. Koussevitzky worked this way. He did a concert Friday afternoon, Saturday night, and mostly Sunday afternoon.

OK. Monday morning, every paper in Boston, and I think there were three, had an interview with Koussevitzky about the new piece for next Friday. "It's the greatest piece in the world written by the greatest composer!" Now how do I know that? Because when I was a little boy, I went to the first performance of the Concerto for Orchestra of Bartók with my father on Friday afternoon. After the performance I went back to the green room to get an autograph. He was in very bad shape [Bartók] and he was sitting there just as if he was about to die. It was really pathetic. Koussevitzky came back off the stage—energized to the hilt and all red in the face—and there were 50 reporters. "Boys, there sits the greatest composer in the world." Bartók looked up and said, "Sergei, I

thought last week you said it was Prokofiev." "Last week it was Prokofiev because I premiered here in Boston the Fifth Symphony." That's the way he felt—it was the greatest piece in the world. And that's what he said to the paper. But he said it differently each time. "This piece does this for me and this does that, etc."

The second day there was some kind of an interview with the composer. For the second and third rehearsals he had every critic come with a score. And afterward he pointed out to them how great this piece is. On the third day—Wednesday—there was an article about the piece. "It's fantastic, it's wonderful, and this is how you feel," and so on. By Thursday you couldn't get a ticket. That's the way it was.

Look—our problem is PR. We don't do it. We don't do it right. And we're not enthusiastic about anything. How can you be enthusiastic about the 10th performance of the Beethoven Fifth Symphony, no matter how great a piece? It is the greatest piece—I love every note of it! But I don't really want to hear it every season. You know, one Beethoven cycle after another…and the same thing with recordings. And that's why nobody's buying. Do you have at least one set of Beethoven symphonies? I'm sure you have three sets, if not five. Another set?

You see, what has happened to music—and I think conductors have to realize it—is that music changed when the composer was secondary and the conductor became primary. I know a conductor—still alive—who sat next to me at a performance of Strauss's *Don Juan*. I said, "Isn't this a great performance!" And he turned to me and said, "You should hear my Strauss." No, I want to hear Strauss—I don't care about his Strauss or your Strauss or whatever Strauss. It's a great piece. Don't give me the business of, it's more important to hear my interpretation than to know the piece.

When the composer was his own conductor, like Beethoven, he didn't do anything else but Beethoven. And so Beethoven was the thing. Brahms played only Brahms. No one cared about who did it, you know. Brahms was a rather poor conductor.

There's a wonderful cameo in a biography by Victor Yellin of George Chadwick, who followed Brahms around everywhere. He tells a story of an early rehearsal of the Third Symphony by Brahms. Chadwick, who was a student, was in the audience. The piece opens (SA sings opening theme) and Brahms—although he knew it, he wrote it—couldn't conduct it. So the concertmaster got up and said, "Maestro, would you do something for us? Just give us the downbeat and we'll do the rest. Stay out of the way." But—but—they played Brahms because they loved it.

This has changed. Now we worry about who the soloist is at the next concert—not, "What's he playing?" He can play anything. Our great soloists—I don't have to mention names—can come and play the same concerto year after year. The audience would love it because they don't have to go and have an experience. That is a problem, and it is a problem for orchestra managers and conductors to break the cycle. Otherwise, we're not going to have great audiences.

I think the problem is the kind of programming. Why should anybody go? I mean, I've got all the music at home in my record collection that I'd ever want to hear. I don't ever have to go to another concert…too bad. And that's mostly what's happening.

And we are in a very good position to do something about it. For instance, I'm talking to a foundation about it now. The idea is to fund all orchestras, large or small, so that they can put out to all their regular subscribers a CD of a new piece that they're going to play two weeks before they're going to perform it. They record it, with comments by the composer, so that everybody can throw it into their car stereo. So after two weeks they know what to expect, they don't come and say, "Hey, what's going on?" And

you know, it would be very inexpensive. It costs very little to burn CD's these days.

So let's say you have a thousand subscribers. Easy. ***We did something similar to that in Amarillo. We would make what we called an "audio guide"—a CD of the whole season where I would talk and play excerpts of the pieces for about ten minutes per concert.***
Excellent! It works. I was in Macon, Georgia. They did my Concerto for Four Saxophones and Orchestra. What do the people in Macon know about my music? So I said, let's do this. I'll come on stage and we'll play the tunes, or pardon the expression, the "gestures" from each of the movements and let the people know. And everyone came up afterwards and said, "We knew what to expect, it was great!"

The fear of new music is the worst. I'd like to say something here about new music. Since we realize that people are afraid of it, let's worry about their fears. You see, I think they understand today's music much better than they do the music of the past. Let me tell you a story. I was for many years, on and off, the program annotator [pre-concert lecturer] for the Rochester Philharmonic. My last time out, they did the following program: Rossini overture, Ned Rorem's English Horn Concerto, and after intermission, Beethoven's Third Symphony. I spent most of my time with Ned Rorem. It's not a horrendous piece that people wouldn't like. I played the themes for them (there was a recording we could use). And everyone said, "What a beautiful piece, just great." And then I talked about Beethoven, a little about Rossini, and that was it. A man came up afterwards and said, "You know Sam, I'm so sorry you're retiring from Eastman, that you're leaving. This has been such a wonderful experience [hearing you discuss the music]. But, when they play new music I don't like it. Why can't you write pretty music like Beethoven's Third Symphony? That I understand, your music I don't understand."

I don't have to tell you musicians that Beethoven's Third Symphony is a watershed. It is a piece the likes of which had never been written before or maybe since. It's so contemporary—of that period. It has all the pathos and the ethos of the early 19th century. It was impossible for people to understand it then. I just imagine myself trying to hear this piece in the 19th century—it was the most shattering experience. But my friend has heard it a million times; he's got five recordings of it at home. What does he know about Napoleon or any of the ramifications of this revolutionary period that is reflected in there? He says he understands Beethoven.

I'd like to turn it around. He understands my music very well. It makes him a little uncomfortable and so forth. That's our life today, you know. And Beethoven really expressed his time.

Let's continue on with interpretive questions. What's important to you from your interpreters and what's less important?
I want my conductors to <u>know</u> the piece. By knowing, I mean biblically, from the inside out. If they have questions, ask <u>real</u> questions—about form, about harmony, about progression, about line. Not about, "This is too difficult." That doesn't mean anything. I want people to know the music. I don't want anybody to do a piece that they can't love because I just don't see it. I don't see somebody suffering to perform a work. That doesn't make good music.

And to me, musical knowledge and insight into the piece are important. I know that there are people who understand my music better than I do because they understand it differently. And that's fine! And they perform it because it does something to <u>them</u>. I'm not going to say to them, "Hey, this is ridiculous what you're doing..." unless they completely distort it.

So, you mean they found something in it that you didn't know was there.
Exactly! Now, do you think Beethoven or, especially, Mozart knew everything that we now know about it? Never! In the first place, Mozart didn't analyze his music—it just came so naturally.

Imagine the last movement of the *Jupiter* Symphony. Every time I hear it, I hear something new, and I've analyzed that piece 20 times! I've written about it, I've conducted it many times—I know it perfectly! Every time I hear it, there's something new. That's the greatness of music.

If somebody sees something new in a piece of mine, that's a great compliment for me. It shows that there is some lasting quality in it.
I don't think that my interpretation is the only one. You know, Stravinsky was very funny about that. He was always saying, "I know how the music goes." Well, I must say, there is something to Stravinsky's recordings. There really is. I mean, the guy had an insight into his own music. But, at the same time, there are versions of it that are more exciting and that see something differently.

Well the conductor has to love the piece. That's number one because if the conductor doesn't love the piece, he can't convince the orchestra to love the piece, who then can't convince the audience to love it.
Unfortunately, I've had experiences like this. An orchestra commissions a piece. The first performance is done by a guest conductor, who has this piece thrust on him. I had such an experience three years ago with my Viola Concerto, and it left a scar.

I'll tell you what happened. After intermission the orchestra played *Pelleas und Melisande* of Schoenberg, which is a very difficult piece. Wonderful piece, but very difficult. This conductor was so paranoid about that piece that he spent almost all the time on it. This was the program: Brahms' *Tragic Overture*, Adler's *Viola Concerto*, and after intermission, Schoenberg—terrific program.

The orchestra (a major orchestra) had just played the Brahms on tour. They knew it by heart. The Schoenberg they had played two seasons ago. It was not a new piece for them. It was a new piece for the conductor, and he didn't know it. And he's a good conductor. My piece was very easy to conduct, and I'm telling you, the orchestra played it perfectly the first time they read it. I'm serious. He gave it—in all—40 minutes. In all. The piece is 20 minutes long. At the dress rehearsal, he didn't even play it through. Now—the soloist was perfect, the orchestra was perfect, I'm not complaining. But the guy didn't put one ounce of effort into it.

Then, the scene shifts. After the concert, he said, "You know, Mr. Adler, I didn't realize how good a piece this is." That hurt. Because who the hell is he to tell me this. It was, if I may say so, a real success, not only with the people on stage, but with the audience—they loved it! The critics loved it. This guy, if he had spent a little more time, he could have shaped it. He didn't know the piece—he beat it through because it was easy. A monkey could have beat it through because there's only one change of meter.

And that hurt. A conductor shouldn't do this. It's not just a job!

Compare that to Koussevitzky's attitude!
Koussevitzky, Stokowski, Mitropoulos—there are many. Even conductors today, Leonard Slatkin, David Zinman, or Gerry Schwarz, and many others, get a new piece and will say, "I can't do this piece; it doesn't speak to me." But if the piece speaks to you, do everything possible to make it a success.

If you had five minutes with a conductor to discuss a piece of yours, what would you talk about?
I'd talk about shape. How to shape it and how to bring it off. Where the climax should be and where one's own expression could come through. You know if somebody says, "I feel this could be stretched." Fine! Try it out and let's see if it works. As long as there's some musical reason for doing something. Not, I'll look better if I do a portamento than if I do staccato.

It's not important for me if the locks of hair fall just right. It's important what's going on between the orchestra and the conductor. I would discuss the form and what I consider should be the out-

come of this piece. I mean, some pieces are *ecstatic*. The audience needs to feel ecstatic afterwards and if the conductor doesn't feel ecstatic, the audience won't. If the orchestra feels nothing, if they're sitting there dead, then the effect of the piece is dead. Even as great a piece as the *Eroica*.

***Yes, we've all sat through boring performances of the* Eroica.**
Absolutely boring! It's sometimes the conductor's fault, sometimes the orchestra's fault. But it's somebody's fault, not Beethoven's.

We've discussed the ideal composer-conductor relationship for a premiere. For a work that has already been performed, would you welcome a conductor writing you a letter or calling you on the phone with these kinds of questions about a piece?
Yes. If it's been performed, I wouldn't mind a conductor learning the piece, and then listening to a recording. That's fine. And then saying, that's not a very good performance. I would then ask why. If they say the orchestra is out of tune, then do something about it. Or if they say, "I don't like this conductor." But if they say, "Here the interpretation is strange," then we have something to talk about.

I don't like it if someone calls me up and says, "Sam, this piece is so difficult—why did you do this, and why did you do that." There are lots of [people who] ask such impossible questions.

What's the point of such a question?
Exactly! Exactly! It's like when I was a student at Tanglewood; I always remember when Copland was the moderator on the Sunday afternoon concerts. They played a horn sonata of mine. First question: Why did you write this piece for horn? "Because I wrote it for a horn player and not a piano player." He always sort of damped those questions down. It was always those kinds of questions, and I don't want to have that with a conductor. The questions should be about very specific musical problems.

For me, and I'm sure I'm not alone— and I hope I'm not even in a small minority with this—working with a living composer is the greatest thing we can do.
Should be.

It's the greatest thing. I mean to talk to a composer, to hear what they were really thinking about, to ask how to shape the piece, and then to bring your own personality to bear within the framework of that is why I went into music.
Exactly. I mean a few years ago there was an article—I think it was in *USA Today*—an interview with Yo-Yo Ma. It was very interesting to me because he said something that was very obvious and that has been told by him and every other great artist over and over again. That is that when you play a lot of contemporary music, you play the old repertoire, the traditional repertoire, with a new vision. That's it. That's why the major orchestras that play only the traditional standard repertoire play it often without inspiration. If they played a lot of challenging new works and then went back…

Let's talk about your music now. Perhaps a helpful question for Conductors Guild members is: Which of your orchestral, wind ensemble, and choral works could be performed well by a good community orchestra, or something less than, say, the Boston Symphony?
Oh, I have a lot. For example, number one—*Summer Stock Overture*. A larger work would be *Shadow Dances*, which are really accessible and exciting and playable because they were actually written for a youth orchestra. It could easily be done by a college orchestra. *The Fixed Desire of the Human Heart* is a piece that could be done by any orchestra, and really would be meaningful at this time. [This work is subtitled *An Homage to Woodrow Wilson's Vision of World Peace*].

I have a piece for Hanukkah that should be playable by everybody, called *To Celebrate a Miracle*. This also exists in a band version. [Another work for band or orchestra is Adler's *American Airs and Dances*. It is a 15 minute work based on Revolutionary War tunes.]

My concertos—the second and third piano concertos— could be done very easily. The viola concerto has been done. The Juilliard Orchestra did a fantastic job on it. It's easily learnable. The flute concerto is a little more difficult because it takes such a big string section, but technically it would be possible.

Actually, my first symphony, which is 50 years old [2003], was commissioned by the Dallas Symphony and the University of Texas. The Dallas Symphony is going to do it again next season. It's a very Coplandesque piece, and very doable by any orchestra.

If you will have a Kennedy memorial, *Requiescat in Pace* was written for the Dallas Symphony when President Kennedy was assassinated. Certainly *City by the Lake*, which is a portrait of Rochester, New York—but could represent any city by a lake— can be done. That was written for the Rochester Philharmonic and it's doable.

A chamber orchestra could easily do *Joi, Amor, Cortezia*, which is a sort of very elegant piece based on Medieval and Renaissance dances.

If you have a good string section, I have three really effective pieces, I think. They are the *Elegy*, which was written for Lynn Harrell's mother, who unfortunately died in an automobile accident, and the Second and Third Concertinos for String Orchestra, which are actually available to be bought.

If you have a singer, *Time in Tempest Everywhere* for soprano, oboe, piano, and chamber orchestra, is absolutely doable.

A community orchestra could also do a large piece [28'] called *Beyond the Land*, which was written for an anniversary of the Oklahoma City Symphony.

Recordings are available for all these pieces.

Now, let's talk about wind ensemble pieces. My first wind ensemble piece is *Southwestern Sketches*, which I'm happy to say has sort of become a standard piece for all bands. There is also the *Festive Prelude*, which is going to be redone now by a different publisher. *Double Visions* is also very playable, though a bit more difficult. And a piece that might be of interest is *The Force of Credulity*, which is based on the first American opera, for which I wrote the music, in the style of the times, with tunes of the times.

Of course my Third Symphony for wind orchestra—that's hard. It can be done either by orchestra or by wind orchestra—winds in fours, brass in fours.

I have one piece for chorus and orchestra that would be very easy to do, and it would be attractive from this point of view: it is based on folk songs from around the world. It's called *Rogues and Lovers*. It was written for the Air Force Band and the Singing Sergeants, and they made a wonderful recording of it. We're recording it again with the Michigan Band this year.

That leads us into the choral area. I think I've written as much choral music as anybody, especially settings of psalms. I have at least 30 psalms that I've set. People might start by looking at the *Psalm Trilogy*, which was commissioned by the ACDA and has been recorded on their record label. It has also been very beautifully recorded by the Gloria Dei Cantores chorus.

I have pieces for chorus and orchestra, such as *The Binding*, which is the story of the binding of Isaac—a large oratorio. I also have a setting of the Jewish Sacred Service, called *B'shah Riv Tillah*, meaning "In the Gates of Prayer," and several more works including: *The Vision of Isaiah*, *Choose Life*, and *Jonah*.

Some people may look for pieces of Jewish interest. Another I can also recommend, since we always do things around Christmas time, is a setting of the *Kol Nidrei*, which is very simple and only seven minutes long. It's for large orchestra, and I think it would be a very effective piece. It is different from the Bruch *Kol Nidrei*. Same

melody, but the Bruch is really not a setting of the *Kol Nidrei*; it is a fantasy on it. It's a very good piece, I'm not saying anything against it, but it has nothing to do with *Kol Nidrei*. That second part, the D major part, always disturbs me because it's sort of the opposite. However, it's always played because it's Bruch and it's available.

Are there any other special favorite pieces you want to mention?
Well, if someone wants to be really adventuresome, I have a symphony that's never been played. It lies at the bottom of my stomach that it's never been done. It's my sixth symphony. Never been done. It was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Foundation and was written for the Baltimore Symphony and unfortunately there was a change of Music Directors after it was finished and it's never been performed. I think it's a work that should be heard. [It was completed in 1985].

Nobody has ever dared do it. The last movement is very difficult, I admit that, but, you know, a major orchestra or any orchestra that wants to do it could do it. That is the only sadness of my life—that I've never heard this piece. And I'd love to hear it before I die. Whether I will or not I don't know.

I'm not complaining. I have had so many commissions by so many major orchestras. I am not the neglected composer. But, you know, if a work is commissioned by a specific orchestra and it's not played by them, nobody will look at it. And that's a disease in our culture.

Also, it's so hard to get second performances. It isn't if you write a concerto. That's why so many concertos are being written. If the guy it was written for loves the piece, he's going to play it! And he's going to badger everybody to play it.

I really enjoy doing second, third, fourth, whatever, performances. There isn't the cachet of the premiere, but it's certainly a lot cheaper; and I feel if a piece had a good first success, why not?
Exactly, exactly. You know, there was that very important Philadelphia Orchestra project—they had a big grant to do second performances.

Also, I feel that if a conductor loves a piece he should do it again in a season or two. If you love the Beethoven Fifth you would, even the next year. If people liked it and you liked it and the orchestra liked it, it would be great to do it again.

Like Koussevitzky.
Exactly. I have a story. At the premiere of my viola concerto, when I was doing a pre-concert talk, a man asked me a very important question. "Mr. Adler, do you mind that people do not leave the hall whistling a tune of yours? If I hear the *Unfinished* Symphony, I go out singing [famous theme in first movement]." And that question, of course, comes to composers all the time, so I have a ready-made answer. This time I changed it. I said, "Look, you know the *Unfinished* Symphony. It's in the back of your mind. You don't always sing it, but when you hear it you remember the tune—you've heard it a million times. You have it at home, you play it on your stereo, and so on and so forth. So when you leave the concert, you whistle the tune because we've just been reminded of it." I said, "You've never heard my music. You don't know what to expect. I'm going to tell you something. The first theme of that concerto you can remember and whistle when you go out. I'm going to play it for you." I played it on the piano and on a tape. And I said, "This happens NINE times in the first movement, exactly the way you hear it. I'm going to play it for you again." I did. "At the party afterward, come up to me and sing it to me and I'll give you a prize." Everybody laughed.

Well, the party came. Everyone was very nice, and said they enjoyed the piece, etc. All of a sudden these 10 people came up to me and said, "Mr. Adler, there is a convention here of the American Choral Directors Association. We came to the concert, and we'd like to sing the tune." And they sang the tune from beginning to end perfectly! There were some lollipops around; I gave them each one. This tune is actually singable.

Well, if you hear it this year and you hear it again next year, you say, "Hey, I'm going to buy that record." (It happens to be out commercially). And then you go to the concert and you say, "I know that piece! I can sing the tune."

To me it's not important that you can sing the tune, what's important is that you have something memorable there. You say, "When I heard this piece, I felt something." That's what's important.

I listen to a lot of new music. I look at a lot of scores. What is important to me is the initial reaction, the first hearing because that's the only thing most of the audience is going to get. And if I don't get some emotional impact from the piece—on the first time —with all my sophisticated training and musical experience, I'm not interested. If I don't feel something that first time, I won't investigate farther.

And you're right. Vincent Persichetti, who was a good friend and a great composer, once said to me, "You know, Sam, I go to a concert to hear a new piece with an attitude like this. I want to like it. If I can't love it, there's something missing." Now, loving would also mean I'd like to hear it again.

I agree with you that you have to feel something the first time. That's terribly important. I agree also that that's what the audience's reaction is going to be.

On the other hand, a very good reaction would also be, "It didn't quite make sense to me, but there is something there that I want to hear again."

Yes, absolutely. You want to hear it again. And again.

How is the situation for living composers now different from what it was in the 1940s and '50s when you were starting out?

There are two differences that I see. Number one: there are more composers, and many more good composers, because we have succeeded in training a lot of very good composers. At the same time, I also think that there are more opportunities than there were in my time. Then, nobody would consider commissioning young composers. Nobody. Today a lot of people would rather commission young composers than established composers.

So that you'll get fewer performances today, if you're a composer like myself. I feel lucky if I get two orchestra performances a year. Well, I get more. I don't get more major performances—that means my symphonies and concertos are not necessarily done over and over, but the little pieces get done. And a piece like *To Celebrate a Miracle* every year has at least ten performances. Well—you have to feel satisfied that you are getting some performances.

There are composers that are very dissatisfied, and there's a lot of complaining going on. I don't think we should complain because there are so many of us, and so many really good composers. On the other hand, I find that what I regret is the inability to rev up conductors enough to be interested in digging. Most conductors are too busy to dig. That's their problem. They have six orchestras; they can't possibly do it.

I'm going to shift emphasis to the kind of orchestra. I'm very interested in youth orchestras. Starting in the spring of 2005, I'm hosting a program on NPR called, "Youth Orchestras of America." It will feature one youth orchestra every week. This to me is very exciting. If somebody says to me, "There's nothing going on in this country," he is absolutely wrong. There is more going on in this country than any other place, but if we only concentrate on New York City, then there's not.

In this country there are thousands of kids playing music. That to me is exciting! As a composer, I want to write music for them. That's why I've written so much for youth. I'd like to now shift it to the [youth] orchestra world. I want to tell you, Jim, there are 14 orchestras on the first season. They are as good—almost—as any major symphony orchestra. And the repertoire they play is what's important. I blame some of these conduc-

tors for only wanting to show off. I do not believe that a youth orchestra ought to play Mahler Five—no matter how many times they can play it beautifully—because they can't. You know. And it's not important for them to play Mahler Five.

One of the things I look for when I'm investigating new composers is, "Do they know how to talk to an audience?"
That's right!

I always try to bring them in to work with the orchestra and talk with the audience so everyone sees that they're real people.
And what do they say? You see, I think we have to concern ourselves with what they say. You don't analyze your piece. I mean, who cares? You think if Shakespeare were to speak before *Hamlet*, he would start analyzing the soliloquy? Or analyzing any part of it? He would talk about *Macbeth* in visceral terms, not about the witches. The witches are easy to understand.

Let's get down to the nitty gritty. Assuming that a conductor really wants to get to know the composers—among the hundreds and hundreds active today—that he or she can really connect with, what would you advise such a conductor to do? What in very practical terms could this person do?
Well, the major publishers have published the major composers. And I think it could be by word of mouth. You do a piece by— let me mention two of my colleagues at Juilliard—a piece by Corigliano and a piece by Rouse. They're not hurting for performances.

You get into a conversation with them: "Which composers do you consider important?" So you get a different list from a composer's point of view. "You should look at this composer." Or, "This is the hottest young composer I know." Well, you look at him and you say, "Not for me." Or, "Wow! This is for me!"

There are so many composers that you have to trust a few people. When you talk to somebody, especially somebody who is in a teaching situation, or who gets around, who is in the mainstream—not someone who's had one or two performances in their lifetime—you get a list, and you take that list seriously. Then, that composer leads to another composer. I think by word of mouth and by this kind of association, you get a very good list of composers. They may work for you or not.

I think the worst thing to do sometimes is to ask another conductor because conductors have favorites in what they like to conduct, not in what the music is. I have noticed that over and over again or they'll recommend what is pleasing to the audience. Now I think that is important, but it is not the criterion to judge a composer.

I know a composer who was extremely popular, got performances by almost every orchestra, and has suddenly vanished. Now I'm using an abstract, but I could use many examples of that. The reason is that it was pleasant for the audience the first time, and then the composer repeated himself exactly the same way, and the audience said, "That's nice, but what is it?"

Of course you will always have favorites, but you want to have a smorgasbord. And there's a prejudice. It's a subjective judgment. You can't look at music objectively. I don't see how you can because you love it, and you can't love everything, but you can spin off, for instance. I feel that there are so many good composers.

The other thing is, look at programs. I'm sure you get them from all over. And you say, "This sounds interesting." Listen to that composer and see if she suits you. I think Koussevitzky, speaking of the old man again, had a stable. He did not do everyone.

And Bernstein, unfortunately, had the same stable as Koussevitzky. Now I'm all for doing a lot of Copland, because he's one of our great composers, but enough already, you know! I can listen to it every day, but I don't want to do that all the time because it is, again, like eating spinach. I love

spinach, and I think it's very good for you, but not every day.

A mutual friend of ours, who is very old now, when he was Music Director of the Dallas Symphony, had fantastic ideas of programming. It was Walter Hendl. I was his sort of assistant in Dallas. For instance, he would say, "Let's have a real experience. Let's bring in Martha Graham and in the second half of the program I'm going to do *Judith* by William Schuman with Martha Graham dancing it in front of the orchestra." They put up a tent and Martha Graham did the entire ballet (It's a one-woman ballet). It was a smash success!

Look, we are living at a time of visuals. And I don't mind every once in a while doing a piece that will excite them. I have a piece that I wrote for a German publisher. It is a setting, with narrator only, of a book that European children know by heart, in their own language. It's called "Max und Mortiz," by Busch. It's about two bad boys. There are translations in every language, especially in English.

Emily [his wife, Emily Freeman Brown] and I went to Bochum, where this was first done. There were two performances with a thousand kids and parents at each. There were visuals and [a] narrator—Busch was also a cartoonist. The kids were at the edge of their seats. They knew every word. It was one of the great experiences of my musical life! Next month it's being done in Latvian in Riga. Then it's being done in Russian, and so on.

Here, children's concerts are Halloween concerts with people doing pieces that nobody gives a damn about. I mean, *Danse Macabre* [is] a wonderful piece, but the kids need to see something. They don't know what that chord means, the G-D-A-E^{b}. This dance of death with skeletons going around—I would have visuals for this.

I think children's concerts are where we fail, in many cases. Now I'm sure some people do a great job, but the thing is, what are we trying to do? We're trying to excite the kids. And they have no basis of judgment, so we have to excite them with gimmicks. But good gimmicks. Do the best music.

Gimmicks that help the music.
That's right.

Your knowledge of music is extraordinarily broad. Could you give us specific examples of how that has helped you as a composer, or how it has hurt you, if it has?
It hasn't hurt me, I'm happy to say.

In other words, you don't have trouble getting someone else's notes out of your head when you try to write?
I did have that trouble when I was a full-time conductor. When I was conducting a lot, my head was so full of the music I was conducting that it really hurt. And my father is the one responsible for my not being a professional conductor. As you know, in the service I founded the Seventh Army Symphony and conducted every day. In ninety days we did a hundred ten concerts; a hundred different pieces. And they were all in my head and I never used the score. I couldn't write a note. I didn't write a note. And when I got back, Alexander Hilsberg, who was retiring from the New Orleans Philharmonic, said, "Sam, I want you to be my successor." My father said, "You have to make up your mind—are you going to be a composer or a conductor?" And I made up my mind then, and he was right. And that's why even though I do still conduct, I conduct mostly my own music.

I love those other composer's pieces so much that [when] I conduct, I have them swimming around in my head, and I just can't afford to do that.

On the other hand, I think a composer needs to know more music than anybody else because you don't have to reinvent the wheel. It helps you to know this music because it has an effect on you that you want to have your music have on other people.

Can you give me a specific example of that in a piece of yours? Something that you got from Brahms, say, a specific emotional impact or

<u>something</u> in a piece of Brahms that you brought to a piece of yours.
Well, I don't want to do Brahms because Brahms is too great. Although, you know, I've just made the arrangement of the Brahms F Minor Viola Sonata into a viola concerto. This was wonderful for me because as an orchestrator, I think I should know how to write a piece that sounds exactly like Brahms, and I'm happy to tell you, it sounds <u>exactly</u> like Brahms. It is different from the Berio version, which does <u>not</u> sound exactly like Brahms.

I'll give you an example—my viola concerto, since it's new. One of my favorite pieces in the solo literature is the Sibelius Violin Concerto. I think it is the most genius kind of opening. My viola concerto was very much influenced by that opening. And I'm not ashamed of it. It was purposely done. The tune is very different, but the idea of the shimmering strings and the way the viola comes in can be traced back to Sibelius because it's a wonderful effect—and I'm not stealing anything. I'm not stealing his notes. I'm stealing the emotional effect.

As a matter of fact, there are several places in larger pieces that are influenced by the pieces I love. One of my favorite piano concertos is the Schumann. Also Chris Rouse did this, but he uses it exactly, he quotes from it. I don't. But my First Piano Concerto—the form of it is almost exactly like the Schumann Concerto. Now you'll never know it from hearing it. But for <u>me</u>, it worked that way. And that's the way I use the past.

So, one would have to say, it would be a good idea to know how much a composer knows because the more they bring to it—like Bach—the more they are likely to give us. If they know relatively little new music, or old music…
I want to tell you, as a teacher of over 50 years, I can tell by looking at a score whether the kid knows a lot of music or doesn't. And I would say that 90 percent of our young composers don't know enough music. And they're reinventing the wheel when the wheel is already dead! That's the problem. And I think the more you know, the better it is.

I studied with, essentially, five composers. All five—Herbert Fromm, Paul Hindemith, Walter Piston, Randall Thompson, and Aaron Copland—were conversant with every piece that was important from the past. I mean, there was never a question—when you went astray, they would say, "Why don't you listen to such and such a piece. You come prepared next week." And I do that in my teaching.

You know there are two of my former students on this faculty [at the University of Texas]. And I'm proud to say, every piece I mention, these guys know. And know from the bottom up and down. At lunch today we mentioned something that happened in class, and we <u>all</u> thought of the same piece—the Waldstein Sonata of Beethoven—because of the key relationship of the first and second subjects. You know—these kids didn't know. And so they're missing the point. Well, everybody says, "It's in C major and then it goes to E." Why? Well, because the first C major chord emphasizes E, and the next note is an F$^{\#}$.

So the whole idea of knowing these things intimately is very important. Look, I am not ashamed of being called "eclectic." That's not a dirty word because the most eclectic composers were Mozart, Brahms, and Mahler…

Who knew a little bit about the music of their time and of the past…
Very eclectic people.

It's very helpful to cite examples. We've heard this—how it's important to know music thoroughly—but specific examples show us why.
If this kid had known the Stravinsky Octet, his piece would have been great. This way it was good, but he missed the point of this kind of jaggedness. The beginning of the Stravinsky Octet is the most genius kind of handling of rhythm, the most sophisticated. That's what they need to know.

What interests you now in composing, and what interested you 10, 20, 30 years ago (if those inter-

ests are different)?
It's a hard question to answer. I think the same things interest me, but I think I've grown a little. I think I've matured in my attitude towards things. I'm not so anxious about novelty. You know, I'm not really concerned that the next piece is so new, that it's just the latest thing. I'm interested in whether the next piece is a good piece; does it communicate what I really feel in my soul? And in that way, the anxiety of novelty has been eliminated, I'm happy to say. I'm much calmer about writing a new piece.

And there's one other thing. It's a little off the subject but it's true. It gets harder and harder to write, but it's more and more fun. That seems to be a dichotomy but it really isn't. It's harder to write because I want to say so much, but I want to limit myself and not say it all at once.

And number two: I'm just so ecstatic about writing music, so passionate about writing the next piece. And you know I have never taken two commissions for the same medium, one following another. And happily, it's never happened. I've just written an oratorio, a new orchestra piece, and before that, a piece for piano and string orchestra. Well, those are very different media. And now I'm looking forward to an organ sonata, a big woodwind quintet, and a band piece. Well, you couldn't get more diverse—and I couldn't be happier about doing all these pieces.

So it's partly not solving the same compositional problem again…
No, it isn't about that. That's one of the good things. The other thing is, you know, everybody says, "Oh, Adler, he writes a piece a day." That's not true. I have to have almost a year to think about a piece—then I write it quickly. But then it's there. I need that time. I never accept a commission unless I have a year to do it, at least. Now, a little piece I can write—an anthem or something—a short piece for violin solo.

This is my 75th year, and I don't want to change anything. It didn't start well [a reference to his childhood in Nazi Germany].

I just wrote a piece for the 300th anniversary of the Mannheim Orchestra, the place where I was born. They asked me to write a piece for them. That is a kind of a triumph of the twentieth century.

How has your harmonic style evolved or changed over the years?
Well, it's changed quite a bit. As a matter of fact it's zigzagged. At first it was very tonal, almost in a traditional sense…

Like* Summer Stock Overture*?
Well *Summer Stock* is in the Hindemith tradition, it's very Hindemithian. And that was the case for quite some time. Then that mixed with Copland—more open harmony and so on. Stravinsky was a great influence. And Piston was a great influence.

Then, from 1967 to 1977, which is from the Fourth Symphony to especially the first movement of the Flute Concerto, I was serializing. Every piece. That includes the opera *The Wrestler*, part of *The Binding*, and so on.

But I think I used this serializing in a way that makes sense—to me anyway—so that one thing leads to another, and you can feel it leading to the next event. To me, that's important; arrival points are crucial.

Inevitability.
That's right. The harmony needs to go someplace. Even if it's very difficult harmony, something needs to come out of it. And when you get to the end, it needs to be convincing.

Between 1977 and 1980 I sort of decided this wasn't for me. I learned a lot from serialism and I still do a great deal of it technically, but not really. It's a purely private matter now with me. And I would never say to an audience, or to a conductor even, "Now you see, this is a serial piece." It doesn't make any difference! It's nobody's business.

My harmony now is still not the kind you would expect from a 19th century composer, or even an early 20th century composer. It still has an edge, but it is definitely in a tonal language.

Beyond the harmonic style—this is a risky question—but can one describe your music in general, or only talk about specific pieces? I mean, if I would describe your music in general, the first thing that would come to mind is this tremendous energy and rhythmic drive.
Well, you know, I have been called by somebody doing a dissertation on my work, "the athletic composer." Whether that's true or not, I don't know, but I'd agree with you. I would say two features I try to have in my music are, one: lyricism. I am very much absorbed by the idea of writing melody. Now we're not talking about every melody necessarily being singable, but having a lyric quality. And the other is the energy I feel in life—I mean, the excitement about rhythm, and I think it comes from sort of being a survivor. That has a great deal to do with it. I am always thankful to be alive, and that has followed me all my life.

In many other activities in life too, not only in music, but especially in music because that's my way of expressing it.

I consider beauty, not just a C major chord and an F major chord, but beauty has to be constructed out of something— has to come naturally to you. Now, beauty is in the eye of the beholder—not everybody likes my chords. But I would hope that at least they'll give them a chance to express a new beauty.

I know that today a lot of people are being sold into New Age and that kind of stuff. They don't like to be jarred by a lot of energy. Then they shouldn't listen to my music because my music has a lot of energy.

It certainly does.

Do you compose every day or almost every day? Do you set aside a specific time of day for composition? How would you describe your own personal moments of inspiration—do they tend to come when you're working or when you're not working?
I am happy to say I think I'm a disciplined person. Some people think I'm too disciplined. I usually get up at the same time.

Now my life has changed. When I was teaching full time it was very difficult to write every day, and I didn't. But I thought about the work every day, and I still do that. And now that I only teach about two days a week, I have the rest of the time to write. And I can concentrate for about four hours, and I can only do that when I start in the morning. I'm a morning person; I cannot do things at night. I can read and can do all kinds of other activities at night, but not composing. I have never been able to compose at night, and this is too bad because sometimes you have time at night.

As far as inspiration is concerned, I really have no insight into it. I get inspired by all kinds of things. I get inspired by the people I'm writing for. And that comes from an experience with Hindemith. I once had writer's block. He didn't believe me because he could write any time, anything. And so he said, "OK, Sam…" First, he threw me out. The next time I called in sick. The third time I said, "Mr. Hindemith, please. You've got to help me." So he said, "How do you write?" I said, "I sit down at the desk." If I said, "I sit down at the piano," he'd throw you out.

He said, "How boring. The way you write is this. You sit down, and the phone rings. It's Jascha Heifetz. He says, 'Sam, I want you to write a sonata for me for next week's Town Hall recital.' And he hangs up. Now, you have two choices: you can call him back and say, 'I'm sorry, I can't do it,' or you can call him back and say, 'Great! I'll have it!' You must do the latter. And how do you do it? You're a violinist. You know how Heifetz stands—he stands holding the fiddle up. Now, you see that in your mind's eye, and you say, what is the first thing you want to come out of this fiddle that's by me? (SA sings a slow, lyrical melody). You write that down. That's the piece."

You know, it helped tremendously, and I still do it. I have written every piece either for somebody or some group. I wrote a piece for woodwind quintet and orchestra. This piece was written for a specific woodwind quintet. They sent me their latest record, and it was incredible—what they did, and how they sounded, how they worked together, and the rhythmic things and so on. That turned me on to the piece. I was very much afraid of it, but…that's most of the answer, and then just living.

What can one teach a composer? Was Copland's very specific method—"This two bars is good" or "This instrument is wrong."—the best way to help a composer? Give a specific example or two of how teaching has affected your own composing.
Well certainly [Copland's method of teaching] helped me. I don't know about other composers. You know, some people have a great relationship with a teacher because it helps them. Other people can't relate to a composer because what he or she says means nothing to them. To me it meant something because I think pitch is important. And so when Copland said, "I think this pitch is wrong," and didn't, like Hindemith, correct the pitch, that helped.

Hindemith would say the same thing, "This passage is wrong." And then he would rewrite it, and it would sound like *Mathis der Maler*. It was great, you know. But it wasn't me. Copland would then say, "Go home and fix it." And he was always right that it was a wrong passage.

I can write a piece in very good Hindemith style because he showed it to me every day. But Copland was very specific: "Sam, this chord is wrong." You'd go home and say, "What's he mean?" Pretty soon you saw what was wrong with the chord. It may not have been his solution, but it was your solution. I hope that my teaching of young composers does that for them, that it makes them aware that there can be such a thing as a chord that doesn't fit, or a note or a passage or a rhythm that doesn't fit.

So you're acting on an intuitive level, on a highly sophisticated background of knowledge about a lot of music when you make that kind of statement.
Exactly.

You can also now, in 2003, talk about very basic ideas like proportions, sense of arrival, punctuation. But that's about all. In other words, you don't try to make anyone compose in Sam Adler's style, or in Copland's or Stravinsky's style, right? You're trying to help them find their own voice.
Right. I am, but I also realize that a young person cannot do that right away. Perhaps the most original voice in the last 40 years has been somebody like George Crumb. But if you hear his early cello sonata, it doesn't sound like George Crumb. I mean, we have to come from someplace. It takes time to find your own voice. I mean, I've written now for at least 60 years. That's a long time. I don't think I've found my voice yet. But that doesn't matter to me. Now some people say I have. You want to describe the lyricism and energy—that is certainly part of it. But to say you hear a chord…You hear the last chord of the *Symphony of Psalms* of Stravinsky [and] you know it's Stravinsky. It's the way it's spaced; it's the way it's orchestrated and everything else. I don't think you can say that about my music or most people's music. You can about George Crumb. He has a whole repertoire of pieces that sound like him.

Now I have a large repertoire, but one piece doesn't sound like the next. And that is not what I would say is "a voice." I think I have a voice, but it's not only my own, it's a voice hopefully for the good—for good music.

I think the members of the CG would be interested in the Seventh Army Symphony. How was it founded? What was the essence of the experience? What did it mean to you as a conductor and as a composer, doing so much repertoire in so short a time?
The Seventh Army Symphony was a phenomenon because it was the only such thing that ever was in

the American armed forces. I was stationed in a very out-of-the-way place in Germany, Baumholder. Because of the difficulties between the occupation forces and the local population, and since I spoke the language, our commanding officer called me in one day and said, "Couldn't you use a German to do the accompanying for your chapel choir?" I was doing all the Protestant and Catholic services there—I had a wonderful choir. I said sure. So we sent somebody down into the town and found an organist at one of the churches. I went to see the church administration. They were scared to death. I said in my best Mannheimer German, "Don't worry about anything." It immediately opened the door. They said, "Ach, he's from Mannheim!"

You know, I had been the assistant to Bob Shaw in my youth. He took me around New England, and I would prepare the chorus for him. This was a great experience. So my choral conducting was really wonderful. These Germans loved it. So the organist said, "You know, nobody's ever done anything in our town. The Germans destroyed the town. Then the French came, and the English. Now you're here destroying the town. We've never had anything. [It was the largest American camp—27,000 in a town of 2,600.] Could you do something for this town?"

I said, "Well, we could form a civic choir." In those days (this was 1951), they were still fighting the Thirty Years' War. The Catholics and the Protestants didn't speak. One Catholic and one Protestant Chaplain—I went to see the Minister and the Priest, brought them chocolate, coffee, etc. They spoke to each other for the first time since the Thirty Years' War. So we decided to combine the Catholic and Protestant church choirs together, plus anybody else who wanted to come.

Well, the first time we met, we had a hundred people! And we sang, you know, Schubert lieder that were arranged in four parts, etc. Then during the week I met with this organist and I said, "You know, Christmas is coming. Why don't we prepare parts of *Messiah*?" And, out of the clear blue I got an invitation to conduct the Pfalz orchestra, which was the Palatinate Orchestra, which was based in Ludwigshafen. I said, "I can't accept because I can't take money from a local organization, but I'll come and conduct <u>if</u> you'll come and be the orchestra in Baumholder for *Messiah*, and we'll do some other pieces." They said, "Fine."

I went there and I found that my first violin teacher has been the concertmaster of that orchestra—Albert Levy. He was a wonderful man. He used to come to my house every day to practice with me because my mother fed him. The orchestra and I had fun. It was fantastic! We did the first part of *Messiah* and ended with the Schubert *Unfinished*.

The Germans had built a hall on the base that seated 2,800 people. We filled it twice. And unbeknown to us, the German equivalent of the Associated Press was there. The next day every major German paper had a headline: "Dresden and Buchenwald were forgotten." The Seventh Army Headquarters went berserk! General Lowy received a call, "What's going on there in this hellhole of Germany?" He was smirking.

He called me in and said, "Adler, I want another concert next week!" I said, "Sir, it takes time!" So we decided on an Easter concert. There was a GI piano quartet going around the whole European zone. I said, "Why don't we invite the pianist to play *Rhapsody in Blue* and we'll sing some things in the first half." So we called him and he didn't want to do the Gershwin, but preferred to play the Grieg Concerto. Well, another orchestra, the Rhine Philharmonic, had called and asked me to conduct. I did that, and this time the violinist, violist, and cellist from the GI piano quartet came and wanted to play with the orchestra. I asked the management and they had no objection. So they did.

Afterwards we went out and had a beer in the non-commissioned officers club, and they said, "Sam, what are you trying to do?" I said, "Look, all the Germans think of us is that we're rapists and drunkards. We have the greatest culture in America and they don't know about it. What I'd like to show them is that we can do it, and for them

to have a psychological experience artistically with us. You guys are at headquarters. Suggest what I would like to do so we can go around and create good feelings. Let's try it at least!"

Well, I pushed the right button. The next day—the next day!—I had a call: Come to Stuttgart. It was the seventh day of Passover. I'll never forget this. The Jewish Chaplain in Heidelberg had to go away and do a wedding in Iceland and he had asked me some weeks before to go and do services for him. I did, and they brought a staff car and took me to the headquarters in Stuttgart. In five minutes, we had arranged it.

They got me out of my outfit, the Second Armored Division, and said, OK, you can go any place in Europe and search for members of an orchestra. So we went all over Europe auditioning. Every band director took his band as far away from the base as possible so we wouldn't take his best players. Nevertheless, we got 70 players.

I'll never forget, one night at two o'clock in the morning, these four guys came in and shook me awake. "You're Adler, aren't you?" "Yeah." "Let's go down to the basement, we're your trombone and tuba section." So they played *Till Eulenspiegel*. I hired them on the spot!

There were violinists, violists, and cellists scattered in the bands playing triangle and things like that. They came out of the woodwork.

We rehearsed the 70 piece orchestra the entire month of April 1952. Every day eight hours—no union rules. We learned a hundred pieces. Most of the players were from major symphony orchestras. On May 1, we gave our first concert, which was a farewell concert to General Eisenhower, who was going back to the States. He was just overwhelmed.

I can tell you the program. It was the *Dance Overture* of Persichetti, the Third Symphony of Harris, and Second Brahms. It was a smash success. He came back to me afterwards and said, "Corporal, you know I don't like the jacket you're wearing. "I was wearing an Ike jacket, like everybody." For a conductor of this magnitude of an orchestra, you shouldn't wear that. You come to my office tomorrow, and I'll have my tailor make you a proper outfit." That tailor made me a white general's uniform with corporal stripes. And every conductor after me—James Dixon, Ken Schermerhorn, John Canarina, all those guys—got two general's uniforms to conduct in. And that was the beginning of the Seventh Army Symphony.

You know we did a Mozart festival with three operas—*Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Cosi Fan Tutte*. We had Seefried, Domgraf-Fassbender, George London, Schwarzkopf—I mean, unbelievable! John Canarina wrote a book about it, "Uncle Sam's Symphony."

How long did the orchestra stay in existence?
Eleven years. I conducted it only nine months. Then my time was up. They wanted me to stay for four years. They were going to make me a Captain if I re-enlisted, but I wanted to go home.

Every day we did a concert. Sometimes two a day because we sometimes played for the troops and then at night played a big concert. And we played 10 concertos, because 10 people in the orchestra played concertos. Also double concertos—Brahms and Mozart. And we did an American piece on every program, for example: Piston Second and Fourth, Harris Third, Schuman Third, Copland Third—I mean, big pieces.

So this had the effect, then, of easing the tensions in post-war Europe and showing the Europeans that Americans could be as artistically accomplished as anyone.
Jim, you could not get a seat because they couldn't believe an American army orchestra would play great music! I mean we did these operas in Passau in the house where Mozart himself conducted the first performances of some of his Italian operas in the German language.

What are the main influences on your music,

being a child in Germany in the thirties, your father's work as a cantor and composer of Jewish liturgical music, your work with Koussevitzky, and these five great composers with whom you studied? Speak about what made you the composer you are.

Well, the influences are varied. At first it was my father, and then Herbert Fromm, whom I studied with several years before going to college. Since Fromm was a student of Hindemith, I got the Hindemith influence already, before I went to college. The pieces that I did write before college—of course they don't exist any more—their contemporaneousness came from Hindemith. When I went to college that was still true since I studied with Hindemith. Walter Piston also had a definite influence, and the choral music of Randall Thompson. I also studied with Thompson, who was not a good teacher, but of course his choral music was wonderful, and I always loved it.

And then came the big influence, and that was Aaron Copland. Through that also came a little bit of a Stravinsky influence. But Aaron Copland, I think, influenced me more, in my early work, than anybody else.

Well now, Copland taught many, many people, as you have. What particularly was it that Copland taught you, how did he particularly influence you?

Two things. One, he influenced my orchestration, because to him, orchestration was an ear training exercise. For instance (this was two years at Tanglewood) he would give us a piano piece of his. And he would say, "You know my music, right? You take this piece and orchestrate it exactly as if I were orchestrating it." Now, of course we all knew his music—there wasn't anybody who didn't know his music. And so, we tried to come as close as possible, by ear. Fortunately, the Boston Symphony read all of our pieces. They were short—one minute. And then he orchestrated the same excerpt. And you know, there were a lot of good guys in that class—Jacob Druckman, etc.

He also had us orchestrate piano pieces by Debussy, I think also Poulenc. And he said, "I want it to sound exactly like these composers." This taught me so much about orchestration, I can't tell you. As you know, I've written an orchestration book, and that's the basis of it. The basis is you hear first and then you know what to write.

What was the second thing?

The second thing was, he was able to identify wrong notes in the piece. He would say, "Sam, this chord is wrong. I would look at this rhythm again." And he was right every single time!

Did Copland talk about Nadia Boulanger's "grand line?"

Always. With them, it's a really big deal. I took one lesson from Nadia Boulanger because Irving Fine, who was my friend and mentor, and too much of a neglected composer—one of the great composers of the 20th century—said, "Oh, you've got to take a lesson. She's here at the Longy School." Well, here's the lesson. I had a chamber orchestra piece I had just written. She put it on the piano. And she said, "Sing zees line." It was an English horn part, and I sang it. Then she said, "Sing zees line." I did. "Sing zees rhythm." I did. "You know what you are doing." That was it. That was my lesson with Nadia Boulanger.

This is the French way of teaching—you just know everything. If you don't, you shouldn't be a composer.

Do you want to mention anything about your father, Hugo Adler's influence?

Yes. My father's influence was two-fold. First was the passion for music that he showed. You know, he was a cantor, and many cantors worry about the service and they worry about their voice and so on. He never did. He worried about music. He and I were not father and son; he and I were best friends. Every day, from the time I was 11 until I went to college, we played sonatas. He was a fantastic pianist. He could read anything. We played everything from Bach to Bartók. Even Biba. He bought any piece for violin and piano so that we could play it together.

He encouraged me to start a group of eight people who played on Saturday night. My mother fed us, and after we worked all day in the shoe store, we came and played chamber music until two o'clock in the morning. And every week we arranged something for the eight strings—an overture, *La Dame Blanche*, or *The Caliph of Baghdad*—I mean anything! And that's why we knew everything then, especially the 19th century literature, because we just arranged it for ourselves.

That was my father. To the end, he was enthusiastic about everything. He did study with Ernst Toch, but only later in life, so he never had this formal education that I had. So when I came home from school every day, he'd say, "What's the counterpoint exercise today?" He did it, and I did it. Every day.

He wrote more music for the American Reform Synagogue than anybody else. Much of it is thought of now as traditional, when he really wrote it.

What did you learn about composing from Koussevitzky?

Nothing really. I learned a lot about conducting, especially watching him. The man had an electric personality. That was it. I mean, technically he was not the greatest conductor. Who cares? He knew the music; he had the enthusiasm that just gave it to them. And he had a great concertmaster, Richard Burgin, who took care of the little details. And Koussevitzky was the spiritual head. In those days, that was it.

What I learned from him was detail. I remember the first score we studied—*Egmont Overture*…

I still remember this story that you told us at Eastman thirty years ago! He stopped a student conducting the orchestra and said, "What's the next chord?"

That's right. And, you had to know! And you had to give every entrance. "You're not going to do that when you're a professional conductor, but right now I want to see that you know this piece." Someone forgot to give the clarinet entrance in the 12th bar. He was seventy years old; he jumped over the stand, went to the clarinetist, shook the guy, and said, "These boy does not know these piece, why you play? If he not give you a cue, why you play?" The clarinetist never played again without a cue, I'll tell you!

It was unbelievable. Every detail he knew. He only used pieces that he knew absolutely completely. If a student came in and had to use a score, don't come in.

If you gave an inappropriately overly large gesture, if you wanted to emote, he said, "Vat's dat? Vat's going on in dee music?" You really had to choreograph yourself. That's what he wanted. He said, "Stand in front of a mirror and practice." Boy, did you come prepared! It was wonderful.
And of course, you had such a good orchestra too. They really played. But sometimes he would encourage them to play wrong notes. The conductors had to immediately correct the wrong note. And if you didn't he would actually go to the conductor and shake them. He was cruel.

With the overwhelming influence of pop culture dominating the media, the ghettoization of most serious music criticism to the internet, the loss of music education in many public schools, even the perception by much of the population of what music is—a three minute song—what can we as performers do to excite the public about music by serious, living composers?

In the first place, we can start playing them. That's the number one thing. And we can play them without excuses. The main thing to do is to go and propagandize. Going back to how Koussevitzky did it—we can't do that any more because we don't get the newspaper space. But most cities and towns have access to National Public Radio. I think it's those radio stations that should be used by local symphony orchestras constantly.

The best thing to do is PR. And it needs to be positive PR. Never tell them that they're not going to like this piece, or that it's difficult, or it's this or

it's that. Let them hear it, as much as possible. In our town the symphony does not take advantage of it in this way.

If you play a new piece, I would encourage...I would even pay the station every day to play a piece by that composer, at least once a day; or the same piece three times a day, like they do with a popular song. Let's take a leaf out of popular music's book. You know, when you go to most rock stations, at a certain time every day they play the same song. That's how they make money. We don't do that. We're above these things. Let's be below it.

The other thing is, let's not be discouraged. Of course there are problems. But look, it's a different world. We also need to concern ourselves with music education in the schools. We have enough clout to do these things. I'm constantly working on this. I told you about my radio program with the youth orchestras. We've got to do things like that. We've got to get the parents to badger the school system. That's the only way.

Thank you, Sam, for the wisdom and enthusiasm you have brought to music, and to this interview. I hope our members who are less familiar with your music will be encouraged to investigate it.

ENDNOTE

[1]Biography from: http://www.presser.com/Composers/info.cfm?Name=SAMUELADLER

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James Setapen was a student at the Eastman School of Music when Dr. Adler taught there. He is now Music Director and Conductor of the Amarillo, Texas Symphony.

Scores & Parts

William Grant Still's *Wood Notes*

By Jon Ceander Mitchell

William Grant Still (1895-1978) was certainly the preeminent classical African-American composer of his generation. Born in Woodville, Mississippi, he attended Wilberforce University and Oberlin Conservatory. During World War I, he played violin in the U.S. Army and in the post-war years, played oboe in the orchestra for Eubie Blake and Nobel Sissle's musical, *Shuffle Along*. His composition teachers included George Whitefield Chadwick and Edgard Varèse. W. C. Handy should also be mentioned here, since Still was not only employed by him, but also found a basis for much of his own style in Handy's blues. Still's creative output was substantial, including nine operas, five symphonies, three ballets, numerous tone poems, incidental music (for plays, radio, and television), and orchestral suites.

Still's only orchestral work that is offered for purchase, through Luck's catalogue (#06027), is *Wood Notes*, a suite in four movements. It was originally published in 1959 through a joint venture by Southern Music Publishing Co. of New York and Peer Musikverlag G.M.B.H. of Hamburg, Germany. Problems for the conductor begin long before the first page of the full score, with the inadequate background information provided in the preface. The work is described on its cover as a "suite for small orchestra inspired by poems of J. Mitchell Pilcher," and on the first page of the full score are the words, "Dedicated to F. J. Lehmann." Yet, aside from simply giving us the names of these two people and providing us with the texts to Pilcher's poems, there is no additional information provided in the introductory pages of the score that would begin to indicate the extraordinary extra-musical significance of this composition. There are some performance notes included on the inside cover of the score, but these are not program notes. For information about the suite itself, one must go to the program notes of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.[1]

Wood Notes was composed in the early part of 1946, 13 years before publication. Its dedicatee was Professor F. J. Lehmann, Still's composition teacher at Oberlin Conservatory. The poetry that inspired the work was provided by J. Mitchell Pilcher, a white man born in Marksville, Louisiana on December 4, 1896. Pilcher studied for the ministry and, at the time of the premiere performance of *Wood Notes*, was a social worker. He had held government positions and was also a military journalist. William Grant Still comments:

> Wood Notes *has a social significance because it is a collaboration between a Southern white man and a Southern-born Negro composer, in which both of the participants were enthused over the project. I liked Mr. Pilcher's poems as he sent them to me, and wanted to make use of them in music.*[2]

The four published movements all bear the titles of the corresponding Pilcher poems, which served as their programmatic inspiration; the texts of

each are included with the score:

I. Singing River
II. Autumn Might
III. Moon Disk
IV. Whippoorwill's Shoes

The work's premiere was given by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on a pair of concerts held on the 22nd and 23rd of April 1948. *Wood Notes* was the opening work. The remainder of the program included Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* and Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3 in D Minor with Vladimir Horowitz as soloist. The symphony's embattled music director, Artur Rodzinski, conducted the performance.

Perhaps the most amazing revelation of the printed Chicago Symphony program is that *Wood Notes* was originally composed as a five movement suite. The available Southern (Luck's) publication reprint leaves out the final movement, V.: *Theophany*: "The forest speaks of the Creator." Pilcher's poetry for it is as follows:

> The radiant noonday air, the emerald leaves
> Of water oaks along the river bank
> Dream in the amber summer sun,
> And glades are quiet as an empty church.
> Far off the mocking bird calls hauntingly,
> And winding pathways cool themselves
> Among the shadowy trees…
> The silent river's looking glass
> Mirrors white clouds that hurry by
> For the glad nuptials of earth and sky.
> And time and place
> With quietness and vivid beauty,
> Declare the handiwork of God.[3]

Reasons for elimination of this undoubtedly slow movement from publication are not known to this researcher. Still may have felt it to be anticlimactic, for the fourth movement of the suite, *Whippoorwill's Shoes*, does serve as a suitable finale. Another possibility is that the publishers may have eliminated *Theophany* for spatial considerations.[4] Whatever the case, the Chicago Symphony Rosenthal Archives have no traces of Still's music to this movement.

Score

The first problem with the score lies with the instrumentation listing on the inside cover:

1st Flute
2nd Flute
1st Oboe
2nd Oboe
1st B Flat Clarinet
2nd B Flat Clarinet
1st Bassoon
2nd Bassoon
1st F Horn
2nd F Horn
1st Trumpet[5]
2nd Trumpet
3rd Trumpet
1st Trombone
2nd Trombone
Timpani
Percussion
- Vibraphone
- Suspended Cymbal
- Snare Drum
- Triangle
- Bells
- Drums

Harp
Celeste
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Contrabass

The doublings, Flute II to piccolo (in portions of the first and fourth movements) and Oboe II to cor anglais (used in the second movement) are not indicated here.

The "Performance Notes," which occupy the bottom half of the same inside cover page, may or may not have been written by Still. The following

is stated:

> •2nd Flute, 2nd Oboe, and 2nd Bassoon may be omitted without impairing the effectiveness of this composition.
>
> •Straight mutes, cup mutes, and "soft hats" will be needed for the trumpets and trombones.
>
> •The horn parts are cued in the brasses. In the absence of horns, these passages are to be played with "soft hats" over the bells of the brasses.
>
> •A piano may be used in absence of a harp.

These notes are not entirely accurate. Losing the piccolo and cor anglais timbres, from the absence of 2nd Flute and 2nd Oboe players, does indeed impair the work's effectiveness; perhaps the term "playability" could have been used here instead of "effectiveness." The same could be said for performing the work without horns. Replacing the harp with a piano is commonplace in many school and community orchestras; however there is a caveat for this particular instance. At the bottom of each page of the score, a piano reduction is supplied. This part, however, should not be used as a substitute harp part since the harp line is often excluded. Instead, the pianist should play directly from the harp part.

One problem with the score that affects all movements is the lack of visual continuity from one page to the next. Often, the number of staves remains the same, but parts divide in different ways (the clarinets are sometimes on one staff, sometimes on two) and the spacing between the staves is inconsistent.

I. Singing River

m. 1	The Piano Reduction has "(Strings and Bassoon)" written above the treble clef, which is somewhat misleading, since both bassoons do not have the treble clef figure, but rather, sustained tones. The 2nd Bassoon and Contrabass pitches do not appear in the piano reduction.
mm. 3-4	The flute and clarinet figures should not be slurred in the piano reduction. Such non-agreements in phrasing/bowing in the piano score are commonplace.
m. 9	Horn I: *p* is missing.
m. 11	Bassoon II: *smoothly* is missing.
m. 12	Bassoon II: *mp* is missing.
m. 15	Violins I and II: *div*. should probably be one measure earlier.
m. 22	Hp. (Harp) staff should be labeled Cel. (celeste).
m. 22	Violins, Violas, Violoncello: Triplet is marked, but bowings are ambiguous here; also m. 144
m. 25	Clarinet I: Dynamic should be *mp*; *divisi* missing over Viola staff.
m. 29	Violins I and II, Violas: *unis*. is missing. In general *unis*. is not marked in the score after divisi measures. Violas: reminder E flat and G natural missing. Contrabass: *p* is missing.
m. 41	Trombone I: *mp* is missing from cue.
m. 45	Bassoon I: Dynamic over the half note should be *mp*.
m. 51	Violoncello: *p* is missing. Contrabass: *pp* is missing.
m. 57	Bassoon I: Dynamics should read *cresc*. under the quarter note, *mp* under the half note.

m. 59 Bassoon I: First note should be a second-space C.
mm. 68-70 Bassoon II: All E flats appear one octave higher in the part.
m. 69 Harp dynamic should be *mp*.
mm. 70-71 Percussion: Nomenclature is ambiguous here. The composer probably meant for the roll to be played on the suspended cymbal since it is the first instrument named. The roll is positioned on the third space; however, this is where the snare drum part is usually located. The same problem exists in mm. 78-79.
m. 71 Bassoon II: The first note (D) is one octave higher in the part.
m. 76 Bassoon II: The quarter note D's (in this measure only) are one octave higher in the part.
mm. 76-87 "Clar. I" and "Clar. II": The parts are switched.
m. 89 Viola: 2nd note should be A flat; 2nd Bassoon: part doubles the Viola, not the 1st Bassoon.
m. 91 Clarinet II: *f* is missing; Violin I note should be a half note.
m. 95 Horn parts include an initial *f* marking before the *cresc*.
m. 110 Flutes: Final note should be a half note.
m. 141 Bassoon I: *f* and *decresc*. missing.
m. 157 Bassoon I: Half note low A flat missing; replaced by two quarter rests.
m. 169 Horn I: *f* is missing.
m. 172 Violins I and II, Viola, Violoncello: The words "Mutes on" appears over the last chord. In all likelihood, this indication was probably meant to follow this chord, as the next movement begins *Con. Sord*.

II. Autumn Night

m. 6 Contrabass: *Quasi, con sordino* is indicated here. A warning at the end of the first movement was given to the other strings, but not to the basses.
m. 9 Contrabass: *p* is missing.
m. 17 Viola, Violoncello: *pp* indication before the second beat is missing.
m. 24 The Clarinet staff is labeled "Clars.2, " a mislabeling since Clarinet I has the first two mm. (24-25) here. Clarinet II alternates, then plays the material at mm. 26-27.
m. 25 The Horn I line is doubled by the cor anglais, though it is mentioned only by "(E. Horn col Horn 1.)" over the blank Oboe staff and not mentioned in the cue on the Viola line. The cor anglais also doubles Horn I at mm. 41-43 (with no mention of it) and mm. 69-77 (indicated again in parentheses on the blank Oboe staff).
m. 25 Violins I and II: *Divisi* is missing.
mm. 25-27 Horn I line is cued in the Trombones; no mention of this is made in the score; also 69-71.
m. 33 Clarinet II: The last note should be a B flat.
m. 40 Harp: *mp* is missing.
mm. 41-43 Cue appearing on the Trombone staff is for Horn I.
m. 50 Horn staff: missing *decresc*. to a *p* on the third beat.
m. 55 "Clars. 1": The material here and in the following measure is played by Clarinet II.
m. 62 Horn I should be B natural; Horn II should be C Sharp.
m. 92 Violas: Second note should be a half note.
m. 93 Flute II: The word "solo" is missing; also m. 97.
m. 96 Flute I: Third beat dynamic should be *mp*, not *p*.
m. 107 Flute I: Second note should be a D natural.
m. 108 Contrabass: *Senza Sord* indication is missing.

III. Moon Dusk

m. 1 Contrabass: *Senza Sord*. is missing.
m. 6 Clarinet I: The final note should be a half note.
m. 8 Horn I: Final note should be a half note.
m. 20 Clarinet I: The C sharp should be a half note.
m. 32 "Trpt. II" staff should be labeled "Trpts. II, III" ("III" below "II," as on the previous pages).
m. 42-5 "Clars. 1" and "Clars. 2" parts are switched.
m. 48 Oboes: Initial quarter rest is missing.
m. 55 Violin II: Lower part's second note should be F natural.
m. 61 Harp: Initial quarter rest missing from both staves.

IV. Whippoorwill's Shoes

m. 5 Horns, Trombones, and Violins: Initial quarter rest is missing.
m. 21 Trumpet I: *Staccato* marking over the last note is not in the part.
m. 45 Violoncello: Reminder G natural is missing.
m. 53 Trumpets II and III: *Staccato* dots are missing.
m. 87 Violoncello: *divisi* is missing over the last note.
m. 92 Violins I and II: *divisi* is missing.
m. 112 Violin II: *Arco* is missing.

Parts

All of the parts are somewhat difficult to read. Unlike the score, the parts are printed manuscript copies. A rather thick pen was used and all quarter rests are a bit difficult to decipher initially, since each merely resembles a wide "V." Tempo fluctuations that occur during lost rests, for the most part, are not included in the parts.

Flute I

I	m. 65	The word "Solo" is missing.
I	m. 73	This measure is missing.
II	m. 88	*decresc*. missing following the *mf* marking.
III	m. 60	The word "gradually" should follow the word "retard."
III	m. 61	Fermata over the final half rest is left out.
IV	m. 5	Reminder natural sign for D is left out. Also mm. 13, 99, 107.
IV	m. 63	This measure is missing.

Flute II

I	mm. 35-39	This passage is not presented in the score. There are two possibilities: (1) The notes are meant to be cues notes. Flute I has this passage printed an octave higher, thus cues for the piccolo could be printed an octave lower. The problem here is that "Ch. To Flute" has already been printed. (2) The part is meant to be played as written, the resultant sound being that the 2nd Flute would double the first an octave lower.
I	m. 166	The word *loco* is missing.
II	m. 93	The word *solo* is missing; also m. 97.
II	m. 107	The entire measure should be an octave higher. Also, the slur should cover the entire measure.

IV.	mm. 134-5	*Crescendo* is missing.

Oboe I

III	m. 24	*Crescendo* is missing.

Oboe II

II	m. 74	This measure is missing.
III	mm.34	*In tempo* is missing.
IV	mm. 134-5	*Crescendo* is missing.

Clarinet I

I	m. 171	*Rit*. missing. This is also missing in 2nd Clarinet, Bassoons, and Horns.
III	m. 60	The word *gradually* is missing.

Clarinet II

II	m. 75	Missing *p* dynamic.

Bassoon I

I	mm. 91-92	Part marked "a2" in score, but omitted here; replaced by 2mm. rest.
II	m. 25	Dynamic should be *p*.
III	m. 60	The word *gradually* is missing.
IV	m. 135	Dot missing on final eighth rest.

Bassoon II

III	m. 15	Note value should be a dotted half tied to an eighth.
III	m. 15	The word *gradually* is missing.

Horn I

I	m. 71	*Boldly* should be replaced with *Broadly*. Also at m. 79.
I	m. 171	*Decresc*. missing under the last note.

Horn II

IV	mm. 74-75	Notes should be second-line G's.

Trumpet I

II	m. 44	The designation "Cup mute" is missing. This is also missing in the 2nd and 3rd Trumpet parts.
III	m. 45	Missing *decresc*.
IV	m. 52	"Cup mute" reassurance is in the score, but not in the part.
IV	m. 89	*f* for the last note is missing.

Trumpet II

I	m. 75	*mp* reassurance is in the score, but not in the part.
I	m. 80	Marking should be *p*, not *mp*.
II	m. 44	Last note should be a dotted quarter, followed by a dotted-quarter rest.
II	m. 79	Initial *p* marking is missing.

TRUMPET III

I	m. 80	Marking should be *p*, not *mp*.
II	m. 44	Last note should be a dotted quarter, followed by a dotted quarter rest.
II	m. 79	Initial *p* marking is missing.

TROMBONE I

II	m. 25	The cue given is for Horn I.
II	m. 69	The cue given is for Horn I and Trumpet I.
III	m. 38	Slur is not indicated on the score, though it does appear on the harp staves. Also m. 40.
IV	m. 131	Final note is tied into the first note of the next measure.

TROMBONE II

II	m. 25	The cue given is for Horn I.
II	m. 69	The cue given is for Horn I and Trumpet I.

TIMPANI

I	m. 82	*f* and accent below the last note are missing.
I	m. 115	Dynamic should be *f*, not *mf*.

PERCUSSION

I	mm. 70-71	Nomenclature is ambiguous here. The composer probably meant for the roll to be played on the suspended cymbal since it is the first instrument named. The roll is positioned on the third space, however, which is where the snare drum part is usually located. The same problem exists in mm. 78-79.
III	m. 46	The designation "Vibraphone*"* is missing.

HARP

I	m. 115	Reminder E flats and B flats are missing from third beat.
IV	m. 105	*f* is missing.
IV	m. 134	*cresc*. Should start halfway through this measure (2 beats earlier than marked).

VIOLIN I

I	m. 10	The word *divisi* is missing.
I	m. 14	The word *divisi* is missing.
I	m. 24	This measure is missing.
I	m. 41	Reminder D flat, written on the score, is not included here.
I	m. 56	Reminder B flat, written on the score, is not included here; also m. 58
I	m. 83	*f* is missing.
I	m. 87	The last note "C" should be an eighth note followed by an eighth rest.
I	m. 100	The word *divisi* is missing.
I	m. 112	*f* and "evenly" are missing.
I	m. 123	Natural sign missing.
II	m. 5	Natural signs are missing .
II	m. 32	Reminder B natural is missing; also m. 42.
II	m. 45	Reminder C natural is missing.
II	m. 77	Rests on the third beat are missing.

II	m. 95	Reminder B natural is missing.; also. m. 99.
III	m. 61	Fermata is missing over the third and fourth beats.
IV	m. 39	Reminder A natural is missing; also m. 40 missing reminder C natural.
IV	m. 63	Reminder B natural is missing.
IV	m. 77	Awkward configuration of subdivision; it is better in the score; also at m. 81.
IV	m. 92	*Divisi* is missing.
IV	m. 121	Reminder C natural is missing.

VIOLIN II

I	m. 10	*Divisi* is missing; also m. 14
I	m. 96	Slur is ambiguous; it should go to the first low G.
I	m. 104	*mf* and *evenly* are missing; also m. 108 and m. 112.
I	m. 120	Reminder G natural is missing,
II	m. 26	This measure is missing.
III	m. 60	The word *gradually* is missing.
IV	m. 27	Extraneous *dim*. marking.
IV	m. 44	Reminder C natural is missing.
IV	m. 77	Awkward configuration of subdivision; it is better in the score; also at m. 81.
IV	m. 120	*mf* missing.

VIOLA

I	m. 58	Print unclear; the last quarter note should be a B natural.
I	m. 71	*Boldly* should be *Broadly*; also m. 79.
I	m. 83	*f* is missing.
II	m. 69	*Divisi* is missing.
III	m. 12	*p* is missing.
III	m. 60	*Gradually* is missing after *retard*.
IV	m. 27	There should be no *dim*. marking.
IV	m. 77	Awkward configuration of subdivision; it is better in the score; also at m. 81.
IV	m. 120	*mf* is missing.

VIOLONCELLO

I	m. 141	Reminder E flat is missing; also m. 145.
II	m. 21	*pp* is missing.
II	m. 41	Reminder B natural is missing.
II	m. 12	*p* is missing.
III	m. 25	According to the score, the first tone (two notes tied) should be a second-line B.
III	m. 60	*Retard gradually* is missing.
IV	m. 4	Redundant *mf* is missing.
IV	m. 75	Measure should be marked as a measure of rest, not as a repeat measure.
IV	m. 81	Awkward configuration of subdivision.
IV	m. 86	Reminder G natural is missing.

CONTRABASS

I	m. 79	Accent missing over the final note.
II	m. 7	*pp* is missing.
II	m. 21	Harp cue should be on middle C.

II	m. 75	Reminder B natural is missing.
III	m. 1	*Senza sord*. is missing.
III	m. 60	*Gradually* is missing.
IV	m. 4	Redundant *mf* is missing; also m. 12.
IV	m. 75	Measure should be marked as a measure of rest, not as a repeat measure.

ENDNOTES

1 Program, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, April 22 and 23, 1948. Rosenfeld Archives of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

2 *Ibid*.

3 *Ibid*.

4 Ralph Vaughan Williams's quickstep march *Sea Songs*, originally the second movement of his *Folksong Suite*, nearly suffered a similar fate; however, it was published as an independent march-sized composition.

5 Though not listed as such on the inside cover, the trumpets are in B flat.

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Requiem KV 626 by W. A. Mozart
Conductor's Notes to Performing Musicians
Completed by Robert Levin

In Preparation for Performances April 23 and 24 2005
Vesper Chorale and Vesper Chamber Orchestra

By Wishart Bell

The more I prepare for this set of concerts the more deeply I am moved by this masterful work and the desperate life of its composer. I want to share some insights with the performers, in the hope of making their experience of this poignant piece more meaningful and accurate. I have written the following notes hoping to accomplish several purposes:

- Provide some historic background to the work.
- Briefly explore the work itself, looking at the particular structural models followed by Mozart, as well as his textual treatment, and the unique expressive qualities of the work.
- Discuss some of *Requiem*'s completion history.
- Suggest certain stylistic and performance practice ideas.
- Impart some sense of the composer's humanity.
- Help musicians come to a deeper under standing of the work, its musical and its spiritual message.

BACKGROUND

Two conflicting traditions dominated liturgical music in the early 18th Century. The conflict had to do with whether church music was to be celebrative or penitential. Does the music that proclaimed liturgical texts support their message of contrition or celebrate the overriding joy of worship? The controversy was most clear in the opening and closing movements of the Mass with the texts "Lord have mercy" and "Lamb of God…Grant us peace." Charles Rosen in his book *Classical Style* writes that the celebrative approach was more modern and allowed for stylistic innovation, whereas the expressive view looked back to Palestrina.[1] Joseph Haydn took the happier approach, composing Mass settings that were bright and forward looking. For those who took the historic approach, the Baroque style provided a useful model, one that fused the disparate ideals of joy and repentance. Its weight, unique rhythmic qualities, counterpoint, and ever developing phrases provided an essential expressive vocabulary. Bach, says Rosen, was the one composer who was able to write a Kyrie that was "at once grandiose and supplicatory."[2]

Through extensive study and performance, Mozart knew the music of Handel, Bach, and Michael Haydn; he had performed the latter's C minor Requiem in the early 1770s.[3] Mozart's re-orchestration of Handel's *Messiah* is still in print. Further, he had made an extensive study of *Israel in Egypt, Messiah, Art of the Fugue* and *Well-Tempered Clavier*.[4] These and other works provided models and thematic ideas for much of his church music. For example, the "Gloria" in Mozart's C Minor Mass quotes "Hallelujah Chorus" from *Messiah*, and the "Qui tollis" movement uses material from *Israel in Egypt*. The opening *Kyrie*, while not quoting a specific work, is based on Bach: the ground bass in the first double chorus incorporates a Baroque figure of lament. Mozart's student and colleague Abbé Maximilian Stadler wrote, "…in the last years of his life, Mozart still had such respect for the great masters that he preferred their ideas to his own."[5]

Mozart likewise turned to the high Baroque for models and themes for his requiem. Christoph Wolf, in his book *Mozart's Requiem*, lists a number of Requiem's thematic and structural sources: [6] the Introit motive is adapted from the opening chorus of Handel's *Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline*. Both subject and countersubject in the Kyrie fugue are from the closing chorus of Handel's *Dettingen Anthem* HWV 265 (as is the "cum sanctis tuis" in Michael Haydn's Requiem. A variation of the same idea forms the subject for the fugue "And with His stripes we are healed," from *Messiah*.) Mozart not only quotes Handel but also uses his structural ideas. Following the lead of Handel's oratorios, Mozart gives the choir the central expressive place and uses three particular styles or textures developed in Messiah: homophonic (choral), cantabile (melodic), and polyphonic, going further than fugal writing to incorporate broader techniques of imitation. Polyphony interchanges with homophonic textures between movements and within movements, often abruptly. While there seem to be no direct quotes from Bach, a certain number of his techniques find their way into the Requiem. For example, the high and low contrasts in the "Confutatis" imitate the *St. Matthew Passion*. Cries of "Rex, Rex, Rex" in "Rex tremendae" emulate Bach's setting of "Herr, Herr, Herr" in the same passion. Mozart's musical structure and thematic developments hint at those of Michael Haydn in his Requiem. Descriptions of the dualities of heaven and earth, pain and peace, and sorrow and comfort, which are common in Baroque practice. He employed contrasting high and low voices as well as the textures of the instrumental families. Furthermore, Wolff writes, "The choral writing, in its compact, block like structure and [Mozart's] tendency to assign the melody to the top line, even in polyphonic passages, is modeled primarily on Handelian oratorio."[7]

INSTRUMENTATION

Eighteenth-century church music had become so lavish that, beginning in about 1783, Emperor Joseph II placed strict limits on allowable compositional techniques. Under these restrictive rules many composers abandoned church music in favor of opera and other secular forms. Upon the Emperor's death in 1790, the requirements were lifted and sacred music provided important opportunities once again for composers. The Requiem was one of Mozart's first attempts following the Emperor's death. While he was clearly looking back to an earlier time for this piece, Mozart made several innovative moves. He omitted French horns, flutes, and oboes (the higher, brighter winds), and scored the piece for small orchestra—small enough to be considered merely an ensemble by classical terms. This included basset horns, trumpets/timpani, trombones, and strings. Trumpets and timpani were expected in a work the stature of a Requiem,[8] but basset horns were unusual. Their dark sound added to the funereal character of the music.

Mozart assigned the orchestra several roles: doubling the voices, punctuating the choral declamation with rhythmic announcements, adding tone color, and contrasting the voices with counter rhythms. Trumpets and timpani provided cadential reinforcement. Upper strings in particular took the roles of providing rhythmic energy and dramatic emphasis to the chorally dominated texture, such as the syncopated octaves in the first violins during the "Introit", the dramatic wind and string patterns of the "Dies irae," and the rhythmic establishment of royalty in "Rex tremendae." Mozart has the violins almost weep in "Lacrimosa."

TEXT

The historic Requiem Mass takes much of its character from the first phrase, *Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine* (Rest eternal grant them Lord), which has its origins in the Hebrew traditional prayer "that the immortal souls of the just might have *requiem aeternam* (rest eternal)."[9] Requiem texts date to the second century and the Requiem Mass had evolved to its liturgical form by the 14th century.[10] While it takes the form of the Mass, the requiem eliminates "Gloria in excelsis," "Credo," and "Alleluia," adding the "Introit," "Requiem aeternam" (Rest eternal grant unto them), "Absolve Domine", and the lengthy poem *Dies irae.*[11] The large sections of the traditional

Requiem are: "Introit" (Rest eternal grant unto them), "Kyrie" (Lord have mercy), "Tract" (Absolve, O Lord), "Sequence" (Day of Wrath), "Offertory" (Lord Jesus Christ), "Sanctus" (Holy, Holy, Holy), "Benedictus" (Blessed is he who comes), "Agnus Dei" (Lamb of God), "Communion" (May eternal light shine on them), "Responsory" (Deliver me, O Lord), and "Antiphon" (May the Angels lead you into paradise).

Mozart saw his Requiem as a funeral setting and worked to express the "pathetic"[12] emotions of the text. Wolff finds Mozart more sensitive to the text in those movements that are particular to the Requiem than those that are part of the "Ordinary."[13] "…the setting of the Kyrie and the Sanctus are what might be termed more neutral, while the musical expression in those parts of the liturgy that belong to the [Requiem] alone is incomparably more fervent."[14] Mozart's treatment of the poem *Dies irae* (Day of Wrath) serves as an example. The story of the day earth falls apart and burns to ashes and humanity trembles in terror before the judge is told syllabically, with homophonic choral writing in rhythms that match the strict meter of the poetry. Strings initiate trembling in anticipation of terror; winds and brass punctuate the cry with quick blasts and short rhythms. Trembling becomes particularly human through the choral bass voices in bar 41.

Continuing the poem into the next movement, "Tuba Miram" tells of the trumpet call at the time of judgment. In contrast to Handel's triumphal picture in "The trumpet shall sound" (*Messiah*), Mozart maintains the profound soberness of the text describing the events of the judgment.

He turns to the dotted rhythms of the French overture to describe the King in "Rex tremendae" (King of terrifying majesty). The petition "salva me" (save me) to the fount of pity is sung with almost breathless weakness. In his extreme sensitivity to textual expression, Mozart brings back the dotted rhythm in the Offertory, for the words "Rex gloriae" (King of glory).

About "Confutatis" Wolff writes, "Mozart paints the flickering flames in the intense interplay of the four-part choral writing and the unison instrumental counterpoint."[15]

STYLE

(*The following paragraphs were written to specific players and singers with regard to specific performances. They might hold value for other readers*.) Bearing in mind that Mozart wrote his church music in the style of the high Baroque, I urge performers to use their best understanding of Baroque style. While specifics will be discussed in the case of each movement throughout rehearsals, the following are some general principals on which many of the rehearsal comments are based.[16]

Execute clean, late Baroque rhythmic articulations:

- Create rhythmic motion: feel an underlying eighth note pulse.
- Think "short to long, weak to strong."
    - Shorter notes (16th and 8th) often act as springboard to longer notes (quarter and half).
    - Weak beats (2 and 4) often spring to stronger beats (1 and 3).
- Emphasize smaller note values.
- Decay following strong accents .
- Treat dots as rests of either partial or equal value depending on the pace or character of a given passage.

Follow the late Baroque Italian (*messa di voce*) style of phrasing:

- Swell to the center of the phrase, decay to the end (in most cases).
- Swell slightly through a long note, decay at the end (in most cases).
- Even short notes, to the extent possible, receive a quick crescendo/diminuendo treatment.
- Follow the natural inflection of the text with strong and weak nuance.
- If there appears to be a conflict of principles (and there will), let the text prevail.

Daniel Gottlob Türk writes in his 1789 pamphlet about the dotted note and how execution changes with the style of the music.[17] Dotted notes in serious, solemn music (therefore slower) are performed with "weight" and are somewhat sustained. In music that is gay or cheerful (and therefore faster), the execution is lighter and the dot is shorter, making the space between the dotted note and the shorter one that follows, longer. Passionate music, or music marked staccato, would be articulated with an even shorter dotted note and a longer space.

LEGENDS

Mozart had been paid half the fee for the Requiem. His widow wanted to retain that sum as well as collect the remainder. Therefore a complete score had to be provided to the patron. She hired a series of his students to complete the task: Franz Jacob Freystädtler, Joseph Leopold Eybler, Abbé Maximilian Stadler (mentioned elsewhere in this presentation), and finally Franz Xaver Süssmayr. The first three made their attempts and dropped the project. It was at last Süssmayr who was able to complete the work, preparing two copies of the completed score for Costanze Mozart, who kept one and delivered the second to the patron, Franz Count von Walsegg (whose identity was not known until some years later). The count, somewhat of a musician himself, had a habit of performing private concerts of music that he claimed to be of his own composition but often was not. He hoped to eulogize his recently deceased wife with a masterfully crafted Requiem that would be introduced as his own.[18] This ruse explains the secrecy surrounding the communication. An unidentified servant had transacted the commission and negotiated the fee. Legend has turned this servant into "the Grey Messenger who, in bringing Mozart the anonymous commission… conveyed a warning of the composer's own impending death."[19] The rumor that jealous rival Salieri (central character to the play by Peter Shaffer that was made into a film in 1984) had poisoned Mozart took on many forms over many years. In fact, Mozart likely died of rheumatic fever, an illness that plagued him repeatedly beginning in 1762.[20] A more modern story tells that Süssmayr and Mozart's wife Constanze were romantically involved. Mozart actually received the commission in the summer of 1791 to be completed before the end of Lent. After doing some preliminary work on it in September, he laid it aside, not beginning serious work until November. He was already busy with other projects that had more immediate deadlines.[21] As was his practice, he composed most of the music mentally, having it fully organized before writing any of it down. He began the process of notating the Requiem, apparently dictating some to his students, as well as writing other ideas on scraps of paper and sketching others in a separate folio, all of which were found later. On November 20th, he went to bed with the illness that would take his life 15 days later.

The larger question of just how much of the Requiem Mozart himself wrote has been disputed by generations since. The lack of clarity is made worse because the attempts by students to complete the work were added to the very pages Mozart had already begun, sections that Mozart dictated. The completed scores that were delivered to Costanze were in Süssmayr's handwriting. He had taken great pains to match Mozart's script because Mozart had entrusted him with the dictation of other music.[22] The controversy ultimately led to questions as to whether Mozart had composed any of the music at all. Publisher Breitkopf and Härtel sought to issue the first edition of the Requiem in 1800 and needed to resolve these questions of origin. Among other efforts to settle this matter, they contacted Süssmayr, who responded in

a letter of 8 February, 1800. Wolff summarizes the letter in this way:

> Süssmayr had modestly described his work as "unworthy" of the name Mozart. The most important points he made were: (1) that Constanze had first asked "several masters" to complete the work, but they were unable to undertake it for various reasons, or they were not prepared to put their own work at the side of Mozart's; (2) that the request was finally made to him because he had often played and sung through the music with Mozart during the last weeks of his life, and Mozart "had frequently talked to me about the detailed working of this composition and explained to me the how and wherefore of his instrumentation"; (3) that "of the [Introit, Kyrie, Sequence] and Domine Jesu Christe, Mozart completed the four vocal parts and the figured bass" (except for the "Lacrymosa" after the line "qua resurget ex favilla"), while he "indicated only the motivic idea here and there" in the instrumentation; (4) that he, Süssmayr, had completed the Sequence, while the Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei were entirely by himself, and (5) that "in order to give the work greater uniformity he had taken the liberty of repeating the "Kyrie" fugue from the start, with the words "cum sanctis tuis" at the end of the work.[23]

Additional clarity came out of a meeting in the offices of the Count's attorney, called by the Count who hoped to learn just who had composed what. Stadler, present at that meeting and who had the most intimate knowledge of Mozart's manuscripts and handwriting, marked with pencil those sections that he deemed as Mozart's.[24] Questions remain, and likely will remain, about authorship.

THE LEVIN COMPLETION

Continuing criticisms of Süssmayr's completion began shortly after Mozart's death, centering on the comparative quality of the writing, grammatical errors in Süssmayr's work, as well as the lack of consistency and un-Mozartian thickness of the orchestration.[25] There also seemed to be sections in Süssmayr's work that appear to connect with Mozart's ideas, as if the motivic material might be Mozart's but developed by someone else.[26] Additionally, Mozart left a sketch leaf in his papers, which contained contrapuntal ideas for the "Rex Tremendae", the opening of an "Amen" fugue that would be attached to the "Lacrimosa," as well as ideas for *Die Zauberflöte*, whose composition was simultaneous with the Requiem.[27] These motivic fragments, clearly relating to the Requiem, were for unknown reasons not incorporated by Süssmayr. A number of attempts at revisions or outright new completions have taken place, and are well known, but none of these seems to have come into popular usage. Robert Levin prepared the completion under study for these performances, commissioned by Bach specialist Helmut Rilling.[28] In the forward to his conductor's score, Levin sets forth his goals, which in part grow out of his respect for the original work and for the long tradition of performances based on the collective efforts of Süssmayr and company.

- Revise as little as possible, out of respect for the 200 year tradition of performance.
- Fix what needed to be fixed of compositional problems.
- Thin out the orchestral texture in keeping with Mozart's practice, allowing solo and choir to have the central expressive place.
- Incorporate a non-modulating *Amen* fugue after "Lacrimosa," using intricate, difficult counterpoint with prominent dissonances based on Mozart's sketch. This treatment completes the description of the Last Judgment.
- End every major section with a fugue.
- Base the "Sanctus" and "Hosanna" fugue on that of the C minor Mass.
- Refer to earlier movements where possible to bring unity (specifically "Recordare" and "Hostias").
- Bring textual treatment in last movement into line with 18th century practice.

MOZART

The opening paragraph of this paper referred to the desperate life of this profound genius. Maynard Solomon has made a detailed study of the family systems that surrounded Mozart.[30] Solomon con-

cludes that the brashness, incivility, and even the inability to function as a financially and emotionally responsible human that so characterized this tragic being, were the result of dysfunctional, exploitive treatment by Mozart's father Leopold from Mozart's earliest days until the elder's death. Mozart was a driven child; a genius who taught himself the piano and violin, who stayed up all hours of the night practicing. At the keyboard he showed remarkable capacity for accuracy, speed, and rhythm, and by the age of six could extemporize a fugue. His father, Leopold was also an important church violinist whose treatise on playing the violin had been translated into Dutch and French, and whose name was mentioned in dictionaries and pedagogical publications of the time. However, Leopold had a streak in his personality that caused him to stop short of his best and to reshape facts to suit his purposes. He became Mozart's teacher, then his impresario, engaging the child in concert tours throughout Europe, playing before nobility, royalty, and religious monarchy.[31] Cash rolled in. In one week Leopold pocketed more than two years worth of his violinist's salary. And young Mozart developed as a child a love for the finest of clothes, of being center stage and being doted upon.[32]

Leopold saw his child as the goose that had laid the golden egg and began to place the responsibility of the entire family's support on the child's shoulders, a responsibility that grew as the boy became a teenager and then a young man. The elder became wealthy but hid the wealth from everyone and conveyed the impression of poverty. He kept track of concert tour expenses and charged them to an account in Mozart's name, pocketing the money while discharging none of the debt. When the teenaged Mozart began to talk of leaving home and seeking his own life, Leopold showed him the ledger and forbade him to leave without paying off the obligation, which continued to grow with every tour.[33] When Mozart finally did break free and move to Vienna on his own, he carried with him recriminations and guilt at abandoning an aging father during his time of need, and running from perceived legitimate arrears that he could never hope to pay.

Narcissism, manipulation, and fear defined Leopold's character, making it the family's responsibility, long before cash was involved, to build his ego, stroke his self worth, and live their lives to fulfill his happiness. Mozart's older sister abandoned her own prodigious talent for the care of her father. The children were never to leave home, marry, and develop alliances that might compete with total loyalty to the family.[34] Solomon writes of Leopold's response to a letter by the now 22 year old Mozart, away on a concert tour that included among other stops, Mannheim and Paris, proposing that he abandon Paris in favor of continuing in Mannheim, where he had developed an attraction to a young woman and her family:

> The twin prospects of being displaced by a surrogate father and of being deprived of his son's future income naturally enraged Leopold Mozart, who now vehemently insisted that his wife and son leave immediately for Paris. "I have read your letter of the 4th with amazement and horror," he wrote to his son. "For the whole night long I was unable to sleep and am so exhausted that I can only write quite slowly." With heated rhetoric he marshaled his arguments into a dramatic narrative of innocence corrupted yet capable of redemption. He recalled the "happy moments" of earlier times when the boy Mozart unquestioningly loved and obeyed him; he described their difficulties in Salzburg – "my wretched income, why I kept the promise to let you go away, and all my various troubles;" he reminded Mozart of their agreement concerning their goal: "The purpose of your journey was twofold – either get a good permanent appointment, or, if this should fail, to go off to some big city where large sums of money can be earned. Both plans were designed to assist your parents and to help your dear sister, but above all to build up your own name and reputation in the world." …he alerted his son to the hazards of marriage and urged him to avoid ending up in a garret full of starving children…you must consider first of all the welfare of your parents, or else your soul will go to the devil. Think of me as you saw me when you left us, *standing beside the carriage in a state of utter wretchedness* (italics mine). Ill as I was, I had been packing

> for you until two o'clock in the morning, and there I was at the carriage again at six o'clock, seeing to everything for you. Hurt me now, if you can be so cruel![35]

They went to Paris. Leopold applied weighty emotional punishment when Mozart's mother, Anna Maria, died on this Paris trip. Leopold had not accompanied them because he was unable to be released from his duties in the orchestra. In poor health before embarking on the journey, she gave in to her husband's demand that she travel with Mozart for the better part of the year. During the Mannheim incident described above, she would have been happy to have returned to Salzburg to regain some strength. Leopold offered no sympathy for her physical condition, kept them to a minimalist budget, and refused to consider her early return to Salzburg.[36] She died at the age of 57, away from home, and was buried in the presence of her son.

Leopold immediately laid the burden of her death at his son's feet, with the thought that her deadly sacrifice on Mozart's behalf had begun "at the very moment of his birth."[37] Had Mozart been trustworthy, she would not have had to take this trip. Had he not gotten entangled with this family in Mannheim, she would have been able to come home and recover. Later, when Mozart again broached the subject of romance and marriage, Leopold abruptly pronounced that Mozart had killed his mother and was trying to kill his father too.[38]

Ultimately, Mozart's marriage to Costanze finished off any hope of gaining Leopold's love, and when the old man died, Mozart inherited nothing.[39] His financial affairs were already not good. The lavish life he had been taught to lead as a child prodigy was the only life he knew: expensive clothes, fancy meals, and parties. He never learned to live within his means. Meanwhile the prodigious child who could dazzle royalty had grown up and now needed to make a living as a composer. His income might have been adequate, had he learned to manage his budget. As it was, he repeatedly borrowed from patrons and friends to support the life that he could not afford. Moreover his personal lifestyle upset his conservative constituency, as did his refusal to compose in popular styles, choosing rather to write music that was arduous, virtuosic, and emotionally challenging. Commissions were therefore sporadic. The meager amounts he could make as an orchestral performer were not enough, and his debts mounted. So did his depression. The loss of his mother, his father, and essentially his childhood, filled him with a desperate sadness.[40]

If the theory that great pain brings forth great art bears any truth, then explanations for the profoundness of Mozart's expression lay in part within his tormented soul. Solomon explores in detail Mozart's capturing of human longing, along with his artistic cycling from joy to sorrow back to joy. He describes how Mozart's outer movements, particularly in the serenades, typically "exhibit an exuberant, festive brilliance," while the slow movements convey an "unaccustomed inwardness of expression…underscoring a thoughtful pathos…developing in the direction of a deepened world of feeling."[41] Mozart's maturing serenade style provided fertile ground in which he grew his skill of stretching boundaries—both structurally and emotionally, experimenting with "irregularities of structure and whimsicalities of invention…[in a] constant metamorphosis."[42] "Mozart's serenade–style concertos have the character of an amorous quest tinged with melancholy. The irony in Mozart's music lies in the very substance of classical style: the composer was to [purge] subjectivity in the service of a perfected, classical objectivity."[43] Indeed, Mozart's work has long been used as the benchmark in transcending individuality and vulnerability.

Solomon asserts that beneath the objective surface of Mozart's maturing classical style, the form gives way to hints of "storm, dissonance, anguish, anxiety, danger—and this in turn is succeeded by a restoration of the status quo… now suffused with and transformed by the memory of the turbulent interlude."[44] Solomon continues, describing the A Minor Piano Sonata, written when Mozart was 22,

"We have entered a self-contained, windowless protected space within which…we quietly experience sensations of surpassing intensity. But now, without raising his voice or quickening his pace, Mozart opens a trapdoor through which flood disturbing and destabilizing powers, threatening to annihilate what has gone on before."[45] Not intending to dwell for long on dark moods, Mozart slowly returns to the happier theme with which the sonata began. This pattern of beginning in peaceful states and moving, for a time, into darkness, then returning to the brighter beginnings evolved through Mozart's slow movements, became the archetype of Romantic instrumental music.[46]

In all of this, Mozart could not compose without encapsulating beauty. Solomon again writes:

> Mozart's mature instrumental music represents our civilization's sign for the beautiful. We cannot think of him without thinking of beauty; we cannot refer to beauty without recalling his music…I think this is so because he created – or brought into the forefront of aesthetic consciousness – a special kind of musical beauty, one that thenceforth came to exemplify the idea of superlative beauty itself…the excruciating, surplus quality that transforms loveliness into ecstasy, grace into sublimity, pleasure into rapture.[47]

When the Grey Messenger commissioned the Requiem, Mozart commented to friends that he believed he was writing it for himself. This piece, capturing Mozart's inevitable quest for beauty, bears all the dark qualities of Mozart's serenades. It neither starts in, nor returns, to happy places. Rather, it goes deep into the valley of the shadow of death. One wonders whether, being a funeral piece, it allowed him to explore his deepest grief. The work seems to summarize the pain that was his life. Its agonizing prayers for eternal salvation might well represent Mozart's heart-rending plea for healing now. A memorial piece does not necessarily begin with or return to happier times. Rather, it goes to those places in the soul where grief has taken deepest root and there deposits comfort. This funeral piece goes to the heartache of Mozart's existence and thereby goes to our own. In its very grief it anticipates the happier place wherein Mozart—and perhaps all of us—will be bathed in eternal light.

It may well be that in the end Mozart did write this Requiem for himself.

APPENDIX

I. Notes on *messa di voce.*

Following are several quotes from the literature of the period.

Johann Quantz:

> If you must hold a long note for either a whole or a half bar, which the Italians call *messa di voce,* you must first tip it gently with the tongue, scarcely exhaling; then you being pianissimo, allow the strength of the tone to swell to the middle of the note, and from there diminish it to the end of the note in the same fashion, making a vibrato...keep the tone from becoming higher or lower during the crescendo and diminuendo.[48]

> The singing notes that follow a long note may be played a little more prominently. Yet each note, whether it is a crotchet, quaver, or semiquaver, must have its own Piano and Forte, to the extent that the time permits. If, however, several long notes are found in succession where, in strengthening the tone, the time does not permit you to swell each note individually, you can still swell and diminish the tone during notes like this so that some sound louder and others softer.[49]

Leopold Mozart:

> Every tone, even the strongest attack, has a small, even if barely audible, softness at the beginning of the stroke... Begin the down stroke or up stroke with a pleasant softness; increase the tone by means of an imperceptible increase of pressure; let the greatest volume of tone occur in the middle of the bow, after which, moderate it by degrees by relaxing the pressure of the bow until at the end of the bow the tone dies completely away.[50]

> And who is not aware that singing is at all times the aim of every instrumentalist; because one must always approximate to nature as nearly as possible.[51]

II. Notes on rhythm
Following are several quotes from the literature of the period.
C. P. E. Bach:

> What comprises good performance? The ability through singing or playing to make the ear conscious of the true content and affect of a composition. The subject matter of performance is the loudness and softness of tones, touch, the snap, legato and staccato execution, the vibrato, arpeggiation, the holding of tones, the retard and accelerando.[52]

> The keyboard lacks the power to sustain long notes and to decrease or increase the volume of a tone...or to shade. These conditions make it no small task to give a singing performance of an adagio.[53]

> In general, the briskness of allegros is expressed by detached notes and the tenderness of adagios by broad, slurred notes.[54]

> Performers ... must try to capture the true content of a composition and express its appropriate affects.[55]

> ...in general it can be said that dissonances are played loudly and consonances softly, since the former rouse our emotions, and the latter quiet them.[56]

> Short notes which follow dotted ones are always shorter in execution than their notated length."[57]

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PERFORMING SCORE

Mozart, W. A. *Requiem d-moll/ D minor KV 626*
Completed by Robert Levin, Hänssler, 1994.

ENDNOTES

[1] Rosen, Charles. *Classical Style*. WW. Norton & Company, New York, 1997.

[2] Rosen, op. cit. p. 367.

[3] Wolff, op. cit. p. 87.

[4] Rosen, Ibid.

[5] Stadler, *Nachtrag zur Vertheidligung, 12f.* quoted in Wolff. *Mozart's Requiem*, University of California Press, Berkley, 1994, p. 83.

[6] Wolff, Christoff. *Mozart's Requiem*, University of California Press, Berkley, 1994 pp 74-78.

[7] Wolff, op. cit. p. 87.

[8] Woff, op. cit. pp. 87-88.

[9] Jeffers, Ron: *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire Volume 1: Sacred Latin Texts*. p.62.

[10] Ibid. p. 64.

[11] Ibid p. 62.

[12] The "pathetic" style was incorporated into the higher forms of church music, so called because of the pathos that it stirred, particularly dark emotions. For more see Wolff pp. 72-73 and p. 107.

[13] The Ordinary of the Mass included those texts that were used throughout the liturgical year, no matter what the season. The Proper texts changed with the season or specific purpose.

[14] Wolff, op. cit. p. 105.

[15] Wolff, op. cit. p. 108.

[16] For more information, see the Appendix to this paper, in which are quoted important sections from Quantz, Leopold Mozart and C. P. E. Bach, concerning articulation, *messa di voce* and other topics critical to performance practice.

[17] Türk, Daniel Gottlob. *Klavierschule*, orginally published 1789, translated by Raymond H. Haggh. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1982.

[18] Wolff, op. cit. pp. 2-3.

[19] Wolff, op. cit. p. 1.

[20] Solomon, Maynard. *Mozart*. HarperCollins Publishers, New York, 1995, p. 302.

[21] Wolff, op. cit. pp. 114-115.

[22] Both Süssmayr's and Freystädtker's handwriting is easily confused with Mozart's, and it was not until the 1970's that some questions of whose hand had written certain instrumental parts were cleared up. Wolff pp. 17 and 22.

[23] Wolff, op. cit. p. 16.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Wolff, op. cit. pp. 50-52; Cf. also, the conductor's score of Robert Levin's completion of *Requiem*, Hänsler, 1994, pp. XXIII –XXXIX.

[26] Both Wolff and Levin discuss these in detail. Cf. Wolff pp. 1-84, and the Forward to the conductor's score in the Levin completion.

[27] Wolff, op cit. pp. 28-37.

[28] I was privileged to have studied this work with Rilling and Levin at the Oregon Bach Festival in the summer of 2000. The subject of Rilling's commissioning this completion by Levin was part of several conversations and lectures during that study.

[29] Levin, op. cit.

[30] Solomon, op. cit.

[31] Leopold played in the orchestra of the Archbishop of Salzburg. His book, *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing,* published in 1755, was an important book not only on violin technique, but also on performance practice, and is quoted elsewhere in this presentation.

[32] Solomon, op. cit. pp. 23-41.

[33] Solomon, op. cit. pp. 156-157.

[34] Solomon, op. cit. p. 212.

[35] Solomon, op. cit. p. 143.

[36] Ibid. pp.180-181.
[37] Ibid. p. 183.
[38] Ibid. pp. 184-186.
[39] Ibid. p. 262.
[40] Ibid. pp. 455-471.
[41] Ibid. p. 126.
[42] Ibid. p. 132.
[43] Ibid. p. 115.
[44] Ibid. p. 187.
[45] Op. cit.
[46] Ibid. p. 191.
[47] Ibid. p. 363.
[48] Quantz, Johann, translated by Reilly, Edward, *On Playing The Flute*, (first published 1752), Schirmer Books, 1966. p. 165.
[49] Ibid. p. 166.
[50] Mozart, Leopold, trans. Knocker, Edith, *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing*, (first published 1755 - 1756; revised and reprinted 1769), Oxford University Press, 1951, p. 97.
[51] Ibid. pp. 101-102.
[52] C. P. E. Bach, translated by Mitchell, William J. *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments.*
[53] Ibid. pp. 149-150.
[54] Ibid. p. 149.
[55] Ibid. p. 153.
[56] Ibid. p. 163.
[57] Ibid. p. 157.

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Evgeny Mravinsky: Conductor Devoted to Shostakovich's Music

By Ernst Zaltsberg

There are few examples in the history of music when the same conductor leads an orchestra during several decades. Such a long collaboration has both positive and negative effects that mainly depend on the talent and personality of the conductor. Evgeny Mravinsky was a principal conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra for almost 50 years, and under his leadership, it became one of the finest orchestras in the world.

Mravinsky was born in Saint Petersburg in 1903 into an aristocratic family; both his parents were music lovers. Evgeny graduated from the high school in 1920 and studied natural sciences at the Petrograd University. At the same time he worked as a supernumerary in the Opera and Ballet Theatre (the former Mariinsky Theatre). In this capacity, he participated in several performances of Modest Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov,* in which the famous Russian bass Fyodor Chaliapin sang the title role. When Evgeny was not busy on the stage, he listened to opera performances conducted by Albert Coates[1] and Emil Cooper[2], and took special attention on their conducting technique. The actor Nicolai Cherkasov, who, like Mravinsky, worked as a supernumerary at the same theatre, recalled:

> I cannot forget heated disputes, passionate dreams to which both of us were devoted. These youth dreams pushed us to do the incredible thing. With permission of security guards, we spent the whole night in the theatre to enjoy in full its specific atmosphere. During this night E.Mravinsky took a podium and conducted the imaginary orchestra, and I, being on the stage, declaimed and sang. It was absolutely quiet around but we imagined sounds of beautiful music.[3]

In 1921, Mravinsky dropped the University and started to work as a pianist in the famous Vaganova Ballet School. As many other great conductors, Mravinsky did not avoid passion for composition. In 1924, he entered the Petrograd Conservatory where he studied composition with Mikhail Chernov[4], Christophor Kushnarev[5] , and Vladimir Sherbachev[6]. Some of Mravinsky's compositions had been performed at student concerts. However, being a self-critical person, Evgeny did not overestimate his composer talent and decided to utilize his musical gift in the other field. In 1927, he started to study conducting with Nicolai Malko[7]. When the latter emigrated from Russia, he continued study with Alexandr Gauk[8].

Upon graduation from the Conservatory in 1931, Mravinsky conducted *Carmen*, *Faust* and *Rigoletto* at the Conservatory Opera School. At that time, he also worked as music director in the Vaganova Ballet School where he conducted *The Seasons* and *The Concert Divertissment* by Alexandr Glazunov.

In order to polish his conducting technique, Mravinsky worked with the amateur symphony orchestra and gave several public performances which received favorable press reviews. Besides this relatively low profile orchestra, Mravinsky occasionally conducted such highly professional ensembles as the Leningrad Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Leningrad Philharmonic.

In the fall of 1931, Mravinsky was appointed as assistant conductor at the Opera and Ballet Theatre where he started his career a decade ago as a supernumerary. One year later, on September 20, 1932, he

conducted *Sleeping Beauty* by Tchaikovsky with Galina Ulanova and Konstantin Sergeev dancing the leading characters.

During the following years, several other ballets were performed under Mravinsky's baton including *Nutcracker* by Tchaikovsky, *Giselle* and *Le Corsaire* by Adolphe Adam, *The Bacchisaray Fontaine,* and *Lost Illusions* by Boris Asafiev. As a ballet conductor, Mravinsky revealed in-depth interpretation of scores as well as a refined understanding of choreography. It was not long until he also made his operatic début conducting *Mazeppa* by Tchaikovsky.

It seemed that the young conductor became well established in the theatre. However, a meeting with Dmitri Shostakovich would drastically changed Mravinsky's career. In the fall of 1937, the composer played to the conductor his recently completed Fifth Symphony. They decided to start rehearsals of this composition in order to perform it at the Decade of Soviet music to be held in November, 1937, in Leningrad. Shostakovich remembered:

> I got to know Mravinsky well during our work on my *Fifth Symphony*. It seemed to me that he was delving into too much detail, that he paid too much attention to the particular and it seemed that this would spoil the overall plan, the general conception. Mravinsky subjected me to a real interrogation on every bar, on my every idea, demanding an answer to any doubts that had arisen in him. But by the fifth day of our collaboration, I understood that his method was undoubtedly correct. A conductor should not just sing like a nightingale. The talent should be combined with the lengthy and intricate work.[9]

Mravinsky has also left his reminiscences of these rehearsals:

> Initially, when we started rehearsals of the *Fifth Symphony*, I could get no information about anything including tempo indications. I then had recourse to cunning. During our work together I sat at the piano and deliberately took incorrect tempi. Dmitri Dmitryevich got angry and stopped me, and showed me the required tempo. Soon he caught on my tactics and started to give me some hints himself. In doing so he avoided "literary" clarifications of music or graphic explanations.[10]

Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony was premiered on November 21, 1937, at the Grand Philharmonic Hall by the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Mravinsky. The premier was a great success of both the composer and conductor, and received a highly enthusiastic critical response. A composer and musicologist Valerian Bogdanov-Berezovsky[11], who attended this performance, captured the audience's mood:

> The concert hall was packed and the audience was excited… At that evening Mravinsky walked on the stage rapidly and with confidence; his face was enigmatic. He stepped onto the podium radiating power and serenity which lended confidence to the composition he was about to perform. This confidence was fully confirmed when the performance started. The element of sensation which was felt prior to performing had completely disappeared. All of us understood that we witnessed the premier of the great philosophical composition which reflected the composer's suffering and possessed enormous influential power…[12]

Shostakovich was very satisfied with Mravinsky's performance. He wrote:

> The first performance of a composition is always or very often a decisive one with regards to its future. I think that a hearty welcome given to the Symphony is mainly due to Mravinsky's merit in its first interpretation.[13]

In 1938, the First All-Union Conductor's Competition was held in Moscow and Mravinsky was among its participants. In the final third round he performed Mozart's *Overture Impresario*, the second movement from the Third Symphony by Vissarion Shebalin, the first movement from the Piano Concerto by Aram Khachaturian, the *Symphonic Fantasy Francesca da Rimini* by Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony. Heinrich Neuhaus[14], who attended the third round, remembered on this performance:

> Due to Mravinsky's interpretation of the Shostakovich *Fifth Symphony*, it was presented to the audience as a masterpiece of extreme power and persuasiveness. After Mravinsky's performance it became clear to everybody that diverse movements of this Symphony constitute a unity as it happens with the genuine work of art. Mravinsky's performance was a great event to me. It has eventually convinced me that Shostakovich's composition is a genius one… The Shostakovich *Fifth Symphony* reminds me of the antique art, and Mravinsky reveals perfectly this feature of the Symphony.[15]

The competition jury unanimously awarded Mravinsky the first prize. Soon after, he was appointed as principal conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, the leading Soviet Symphony at the time. In a few pre-war seasons, Mravinsky conducted several monumental compositions of Mahler (the Fifth Symphony) and Bruckner (Symphonies four, seven and nine). In this regard, he continued a good tradition of his predecessors, A.Gauk and Fritz Stiedry[16], who led the Leningrad Philharmonic from 1930 until 1937. Mravinsky's rendition of Bruckner's Fourth Symphony received high appraisal from Ivan Sollertinsky[17,] whose review of this concert was entitled, "The Great Victory of the Soviet Conductor".[18]

Creative cooperation between Shostakovich and Mravinsky also continued, and on November 5, 1939, the conductor premiered the composer's Sixth Symphony. It was so successful that the whole finale was encored—a rare occurrence at a premiere of a symphonic work.

When the war erupted in 1941, the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra was evacuated in the distant Siberian City of Novosibirsk. Despite war hardships the cultural life in the city flourished due to tremendous efforts of Mravinsky, his assistant Kurt Sanderling[19,] and the Philharmonic's artistic director, I.Sollertinsky. Sollertinsky remembered:

> The symphonic season was opened in the beginning of October (of 1942 _ E.Z.). We were trying to keep untouched our Leningrad repertoire style; it included many works of Mozart (the anniversary cycle consisting of refined collections of his compositions), Brahms, Mahler, Stravinsky and Shostakovich. Concerts were well attended.[20]

In June of 1942, availing Sollertinsky's invitation, Shostakovich arrived to Novosibirsk. Not long before, on March 5, 1942, his Seventh (*Leningrad*) Symphony was premiered in Kuibyshev by the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra under Samuel Samosud.[21] But the composer wanted to listen to his latest work to be performed by Mravinsky. Intensive rehearsals started in the end of June, 1942. After the first rehearsal, Shostakovich wrote:

> No other orchestra that performed my works was able to reach such perfect realization of my conception… I do not have any doubt that the orchestra (the Leningrad Philharmonic _ E.Z.) will deliver my conception with the high degree of accuracy.[22]

The Novosibirsk premiere took place on July 9, 1942, and was a triumph. During next two seasons the new composition was performed seven times, and at each occasion, the concert hall was packed. Shostakovich wrote in 1942:

> The Symphony was performed in many cities of our country. In my native Leningrad it was conducted by Eliasberg. Moscovites listened to it on several occasions under the Samosud baton. In Frunze and Alma-Ata it was performed by the State Symphony Orchestra under N.Rakhlin. I thank all Soviet and foreign conductors very much for their love and attention given to my Symphony. However, as a composer, I consider as the most authentic performance of this work those given by the Leningrad Philharmonic under Mravinsky's baton.[23]

Mravinsky became recognized as one of the best interpreters of Shostakovich's symphonic works. It was not surprising that the composer dedicated his Eighth Symphony to the conductor. Mravinsky gave the world premiere in Moscow on November 3, 1943; on February 5, 1944, he performed it at the first time in Novosibirsk.

Following the lift of the Leningrad siege, the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra returned to its

home city in 1944, and shortly after, performed Shostakovich's Seventh and Eighth Symphonies. Understandably, Shostakovich asked Mravinsky to premiere his next Ninth Symphony. The composer's close friend and confidant, the musicologist Isaak Glikman remembered:

> In the fall of 1945 I and Shostakovich attended rehearsals of the *Ninth Symphony*, and the very excited composer whispered in my ear that E.A.Mravinsky is still "wandering in dark". To tell the truth, everything was in a good shape at the premiere.[24]

The exuberant growth of Mravinsky's creativity occurred in the post-war time. In May, 1947, he and Shostakovich participated in the Prague Spring Festival. It was the last time when the conductor toured abroad without his orchestra. On May 20 and 21, 1947, the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra under Mravinsky performed Shostakovich's Eighth Symphony. The remarkable success was above all expectations, and after the first performance, the standing ovation continued for more than a half an hour.

In 1960s and 1970s, Mravinsky and his orchestra toured Europe regularly; in 1962 and 1973, they made extensive American tours; in 1958, 1970, 1973, and 1975 they were on tour in Japan. From 1946 until 1982, the Leningrad Philharmonic under Mravinsky toured internationally 33 times.[25]

The old tradition of collaboration with Shostakovich continued: Mravinsky made premieres of the composer's 10th and 12th Symphonies, the Oratorio *The Song of the Forests*, the First Violin Concerto (soloist David Oistrach), the First Cello Concerto (soloist Mstislav Rostropovich), and The *Festival Overture*.

The relationship between the conductor and composer went sour in 1962 when Mravinsky, after several delays, refused to premiere the 13th Symphony of Schostakovich. In the first movement of this work, the composer used Evgeny Evtushenko's poem *Babi Yar* in which the poet condemned anti-Semitism in general and particularly its Russian version. As an excuse, Mravinsky told to the composer that he would prefer to perform pure symphonic works rather than those in which poetry has been used. However, it is more likely that the conductor did not want to take any risk associated with the politically heated subject of Evtushenko's poem. As a result, Mravinsky never conducted either 13th or 14th Symphonies of Shostakovich.

Despite this estrangement, the composer continued to consider Mravinsky as one of the best interpreters of his works. It is not by chance that, answering the question of who were the composer's favorite interpreters, his widow Irina said in 1996, "Well, first of all, it was Mravinsky with whom Dmitri Dmitrievich was collaborating during the entire life and who… premiered his symphonies."[26]

Shostakovich's Symphonies were always in Mravinsky's repertoire. Thus, at the Festival dedicated to the composer's 60th birthday, which was held in Leningrad in June, 1966, the conductor performed his Sixth and 10th Symphonies. In 1976 to commemorate the 70th birthday of Shostakovich who passed away in the previous year, Mravinsky performed his Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, 10th, and 15th Symphonies.

For many years, Mravinsky successfully combined the extensive performing activity with teaching. In 1963, he became the full professor at the Leningrad Conservatory; among his graduate and post-graduate students were Edward Serov[27] and Alexandr Dmitriev[28].

Mravinsky was awarded the Lenin and Stalin prizes, he received gold medals of the Hero of the Soviet Union and the Hero of Socialist Labor, and the title of People's Artist of the USSR. In the former German Democratic Republic, he received the Artur Nikisch prize and in Austria he was named an honorable member of Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde.

Mravinsky's repertoire was impressive but not com-

prehensive. Throughout his musical career, he was particularly attached to pure symphonic works and rarely performed compositions for the orchestra and voices. Among symphonic compositions, symphonies of Haydn, Schubert, and Schumann did not appear very often on his programs. On the other hand, the conductor performed regularly all symphonies of Beethoven and Brahms, symphonic fragments from Wagner's operas, and symphonies of Mozart, Bruckner, and Sibelius. Mravinsky was also comfortable conducting compositions of modern composers such as Debussy, Ravel, Honegger, Hindemith, and Stravinsky.

Mravinsky's programs contained numerous works of nineteenth century Russian composers such as Glinka, Mussorgsky, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Tchaikovsky. Conducting Tchaikovsky symphonies, in particular the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth, the conductor emphasized their tragic character and avoided any trace of sentimentality and emotional breakdowns, which often dominate interpretations of these masterpieces by many conductors.

Mravinsky was in love with Tchaikovsky's suites from *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake,* and *Sleeping Beauty,* and often included them in his concert programs. The conductor was able to reveal their dramatic depth rather than the applied dance character.

Mravinsky championed the Soviet symphonic music. Among 15 Shostakovich's symphonies he had made premieres of six (Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, Ninth, 10th, and 12th). He also performed the composer's Seventh, 11th, and 15th Symphonies. From year to year, he introduced works by Sergei Prokofiev, Nicolai Myaskovsky, Reinhold Gliere, Vladimir Scherbachev, Vadim Salmanov[29], Galina Ustvolskaja, and many others.

A very tall and ascetically skinny man with slightly supercilious facial expression, Mravinsky's stage appearance was always impressive. His conducting style was monumental and concise. The characteristic features of his interpretations were strong logic in development, rhythmical firmness, and self-limitation in emotional expression; all of which were very compatible with Shostakovich's music.

Mravinsky's gesticulation and facial expressions were restrained to such extent that sometimes they seemed to be dry. However, his glance was so demanding and hypnotizing that it was a good substitution of many gestures. Although his body movements were reduced to a minimum, Mravinsky's climaxes were effective and impressive. The actor Oleg Borisov remembered old Mravinsky conducting the ballet suite from *The Nutcracker* sitting in a chair:

> In a moment Mravinsky get up from the chair, stood up straight, raised his left clenched fist above the orchestra, took a ferocious glare at trumpeters - and they blared!... We got used to his economical and restrained gesticulation, to the almost imperceptible use of his eyebrows, to his cool semi- or even quarter-smile which made one's skin creep. All these gestures were assembled as a subtle pattern, and suddenly there was such a blow, a climax. For Masha, according to the program, it was the end of her dream, visions; for listeners it was not less than the end of the world.[30]

Mravinsky did not like to improvise at concerts; all fine details were worked out at rehearsals. His ideal was perfection in everything—in the sound of each group of instruments, the balance between various groups, and in the interpretation of compositions he performed. Usually, during rehearsals he avoided literary analogies and examples from other arts. However, when he broke this rule, his explanations of the composition's concept were evocative and meaningful. In this regard the former violinist of the Leningrad Philharmonic, Yakov Milkis, remembered:

> During a rehearsal of the *Fifth Symphony* (by Shostakovich - E.Z.) in the third movement, in the episode where the oboe has a long solo over the tremolos of the first and second violins, Mravinsky turned around to the violin section and said, "You've playing this tremolo with the wrong color, you haven't got the necessary intensity. Have you forgotten what this music is about and

> when it was born? Your tremolo sounds too self-satisfied!" I remember another occasion when he was rehearsing the *Finale* of the *Ninth Symphony* (by Shostakovich - E.Z.). He objected to the character of the sound in the celli and double basses when they play in unison with the trombones. "You have the wrong sound. I need the sound of the trampling of steel-shod boots". (We knew that he was not referring to ordinary soldiers, but to the KGB forces.)[31]

Mravinsky did not like studio recording and the total number of records made during his life time was not large. After his death many of his records and tapes were re-issued on CDs and presently more than 100 Mravinsky's CDs exist. On almost all of them (with a very few exceptions) Mravinsky conducts the Leningrad Philharmonic. There are various CD versions of Mravinsky conducting Shostakovich's Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, 10th, 11th, 12th and 15th Symphonies; Tchaikovsky's Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, and his symphonic poem, *Francesca da Rimini*.

Only in his last years, when the conductor was seriously ill, a few TV movies and documentaries on him had been produced. His last stage appearance took place on March 6, 1987 at the Grand Philharmonic Hall in Saint Petersburg where he conducted the *Unfinished* Symphony by Schubert and the Fourth Symphony by Brahms.

Mravinsky passed away on January 19, 1988. On May 14, 1992, the memorial plaque dedicated to him, was unveiled on the Philharmonic Building in Saint Petersburg. To commemorate his 95th birthday, the 2nd Mravinsky International Festival, "Young Talents," was held in Saint Petersburg in May, 1998. It was accompanied by various events including a conference on Mravinsky's role in music culture of the twentieth century. During this festival, the Mravinsky museum containing the musician's archive was opened in his native city.

In 2004, Mravinsky's Diaries were published in Russia.[32] In this huge 600 page volume, not many pages are devoted to music, its interpretation, and the art of conducting. However, when he wrote on these subjects, his thoughts and observations are profound and intriguing. The Diaries give understanding of the man's character, his hobbies and interests, his relationships with the orchestra, and the Soviet musical authorities.

Mravinsky's creative achievements were remarkable, and for almost 50 years, he was a towering figure in the Russian musical life. In the history of the modern music, his name is closely associated with the name of his great compatriot and contemporary Shostakovich.

ENDNOTES

[1] Coates, Albert (1882-1953), English conductor and composer, studied at the Leipzig Conservatory with Artur Nikisch. He worked in Germany (1906-1910), Russia (1911-1919), England (1919-1946), and South Africa (1946-1953). Compositions: two operas; one symphonic poem; and others.

[2] Cooper, Emil (1877-1960), Russian conductor, studied in Vienna with J.Hellmesberger and in Moscow with S.Taneev. From 1900, he worked in various Russian cities including Petrograd. He emigrated from Russia in 1922 and worked at the Chicago Opera (1929-1932) and the New York Metropolitan Opera (1944-1950).

[3] Nicolai Cherkasov. Notes of the Soviet Actor. Iskusstvo, 1953, p.30.

[4] Chernov, Mikhail (1879-1939), composer, teacher. He studied with N.Rimsky-Korsakov at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. He taught at this Conservatory from 1910 and became its professor in 1918. Compositions: three symphonies; one oratorio; chamber and incidental music.

[5] Kushnarev, Christophor (1890-1960), composer, teacher, and musicologist. From 1925, he taught composition and polyphony at the Leningrad Conservatory and became its professor in 1939.

[6] Sherbachev, Vladimir (1889-1952), composer and teacher. He studied with Maximilian Shteinberg and Anatoly Lyadov at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. He taught at this Conservatory from 1912 until 1948 and became its professor in 1923. Compositions: five symphonies; one opera; one operetta; two piano sonatas; and chamber and vocal music.

[7] Malko, Nicolai (1883-1961), Russian conductor. He studied with Nicolai Cherepnin at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, and taught at this Conservatory in 1925-1928. He emigrated from Russia in 1928 and worked in Chicago, Yorkshire, and Sydney.

[8] Gauk, Alexandr (1893-1963), conductor, composer, and teacher. He studied with N.Cherepnin at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. He taught at this Conservatory from 1927 until 1948 and at the Moscow Conservatory in 1939 until 1963.He founded and conducted the State Symphony Orchestra in Moscow (1936-1941). Among hid students were Alexandr Melik-Pashaev, Konstantin Simeonov, Edward Grikurov, Evgeny Svetlanov, and Nicolai Rabinovich.

[9] Contemporary Conductors. Sovetsky Kompozitor, 1969, p.182.

[10] Sofia Khentova. Shostakovich in Petrograd-Leningrad. Lenizdat, 1979, pp.136-137.

[11] Valerian Bogdanov-Berezovsky (1903-1971), composer, musicologist, teacher, critic. He published about 250 papers and monographs, including a monograph on E.Mravinsky entitled "The Soviet Conductor" (Muzgiz, 1956). Compositions: three operas; three ballets; three symphonies (the unfinished Third Symphony dedicated to E.Mravinsky); and chamber, vocal and incidental music.

[12] Sofia Khentova, pp.137-138.

[13] Ibid, p.138.

[14] Neuhaus, Heinrich (1888-1964), pianist, teacher. He taught for decades at the Moscow Conservatory where his pupils included Sviatoslav Richter, Emil Gilels, Radu Lupu, and others.

[15] Neinrich Heuhaus. Evgeny Mravinsky. Sovetskoe iskusstvo, Oct.18, 1938.

[16] Stiedry, Fritz (1883-1968), Austrian conductor. From 1933 through 1937, he was a principal conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra. From 1938, he worked in the USA and returned to Europe in 1958. He was highly regarded as an interpreter of Brahms, Wagner, Bruckner, and Mahler.

[17] Sollertinsky, Ivan (1902-1944), musicologist, educator, and critic. He was artistic director of the Leningrad Philharmonic (1927), professor at the Leningrad Conservatory. From 1927, he was a close friend of Shostakovich.

[18] Ivan Sollertinsky. The Great Victory of the Soviet Conductor. Krasnaja Gazeta, Dec 19, 1938.

[19] Sanderling, Kurt (1912), German conductor. He immigrated to the USSR in 1936 and worked as Mravinsky's assistant with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1960 through 1977, he was the principal conductor of the Berlin Symphony Orchestra.

[20] In Commemoration of I.Sollertinsky. Memoirs, Materials, Studies. Sovertsky Kompozitor, 1978, p.55.

[21] Samosud, Samuel (1884-1964), Russian conductor. He studied in Prague with Carel Kovarovic and in Paris with Vincent d'Indy and Edouard Colonne. From 1918 until 1936, he was the artistic director of the Maly Opera Theatre in Leningrad; in 1936 through 1943, he was the artistic director of the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. He was the principal conductor of the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra in 1953 through 1957. He gave premiers of many operas of contemporary Russian and western composers.

[22] Sofia Khentova, p.193.

[23] Contemporary Conductors, p.184.

[24] Isaak Glikman. Letters to a Friend. Sovetsky Kompozitor i "DSCH", 1993, p.115.

[25] Vitaly Fomin. Mravinsky Conducts the Orchestra. Muzika, 1976, pp.159-160.

[26] Argumenty i Facty, #38(161), 1996.

[27] Serov, Edward (1937), conductor. He studied with Mravinsky at the Leningrad Conservatory. In 1968 through 1977, he was the principal conductor of the Ulianovsk Symphony Orchestra. From 1985, he was the conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra.

[28] Dmitriev, Alexandr (1935), conductor. He studied with Nicolai Rabinovich and E.Mravinsky at the Leningrad Conservatory. From 1971, he was the principal conductor of the Maly Opera Theatre in Leningrad. In 1977, he became the conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic.

[29] Salmanov, Vadim (1912-1978), composer, teacher. Compositions: four symphonies (the First Symphony dedicated to E. Mravinsky, the Fourth Symphony dedicated to E. Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonic); and chamber and vocal music.

[30] Oleg Borisov. Without Punctuation Marks. Artist, Rezhisser, Theatre, 1999, p.74.

[31] Elizabeth Wilson. Shostakovich. A Life Remembered. Prinston University Press, 1994, p.315.

[32] Evgeny Mravinsky. Notes for Memory. Dieries.1918-1987. Iskusstvo-SPB, 2004.

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