

The Penderecki Quartet was founded in Poland in 1986 at the urging of the pre-eminent Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki. The fruit of their association includes Penderecki's complete works for String Quartet on CD (United Records, England). To this day the Quartet is a devoted champion of the music of our time, and has performed a wide range of repertoire from Bach to Brahms, Bartók to Ligeti, Frank Zappa to John Oswald, as well as premiering over 100 new works from numerous composers including Brian Cherney, Linda C. Smith, Randolph Peters, Harry Freedman, Glenn Buhr, Alice Ho, Peter Hatch, Omar Daniel and Gilles Tremblay with assistance from the Canada Council, the Laidlaw Foundation, the CBC, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council.

Described by *Fanfare* magazine as "an ensemble of formidable power and keen musical sensitivity", the Penderecki Quartet's large discography includes over 20 recordings including the chamber music repertoire of Johannes Brahms on both the Marquis and Eclectra labels, as well as a new release of the six Béla Bartók quartets under the auspices of Chamber Music in Napa Valley. The Quartet has also recorded discs for CBC, CMC, EMI, United, and Artifact labels among others.

The Penderecki String Quartet devotes much of its time to Quartetfest, an intensive spring-term seminar held at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario where guest faculty have included the Tokyo Quartet, the Ying Quartet, and the Colorado Quartet. The Penderecki Quartet's involvement in education is a year-round commitment as they enter their 16th year as Quartet-in-Residence at Waterloo's Wilfrid Laurier University. Under the Quartet's direction, the string program has become one of the top programs in Canada, attracting an international body of students.

The Penderecki String Quartet wishes to thank the Ontario Arts Council for its ongoing support through the Presenter/Producer Project Grant Fund.

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

February 17–18: Awaji Puppet Theater

February 19: The Necks

February 20: CalArts New Century Players: Contemporary Dutch Music

March 21: The California E.A.R. Unit: Young Americans

PENDERECKI STRING QUARTET

February 14, 2009

8:30pm

presented by

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater

California Institute of the Arts

CALARTS



PENDERECKI STRING QUARTET

February 14, 2009, 8:30pm

Penderecki String Quartet

Jeremy Bell and Jerzy Kaplanek, violins

Christine Vlajk, viola

Simon Fryer, cello

PROGRAM

midaregami (tangled hair) (2009) U.S. première

Text by Akiko Yosano; video design by Robert Drummond

Jacqueline Bobak, mezzo-soprano

Veronika Krausas

Commissioned by the Penderecki String Quartet with funds from the Canada Council for the Arts.

Black Angels (Images 1) for Electric String Quartet (1970)

George Crumb

I. DEPARTURE

1. Threnody I: Night of the Electric Insects
2. Sounds of Bones and Flutes
3. Lost Bells
4. Devil-music
5. Danse Macabre

II. ABSENCE

6. Pavana Lachrymae
7. Threnody II: Black Angels!
8. Sarabanda de la Muerte Oscura
9. Lost Bells (Echo)

III. RETURN

10. God-music
11. Ancient Voices
12. Ancient Voices (Echo)
13. Threnody III: Night of the Electric Insects

INTERMISSION

Finale from String Quartet No. 2, in F sharp minor, Op. 10 (1907–08)

Arnold Schoenberg

Entrückung; sehr langsam

Video presentation of art works by Arnold Schoenberg: *Blue Self-Portrait*, *Mathilde Schoenberg*, *Brown Self-Portrait*, *Burial of Mahler*, *Gaze* (c.1907–1910), compiled by Stefan Rose

Jewl Mosteller, mezzo-soprano

Ung, Frederic Rzewski, William Brooks and Ivo Medek; and has recorded for New World. As an advocate for new vocal music, she held a Lorado Taft Visiting Artist residency at the University of Illinois, and has given presentations and masterclasses at the Lake Placid Seminars, the International Summer Music School (Ogre, Latvia), and at universities in England, the Czech Republic and United States. She holds MM and DMA degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a BM degree from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. Since 1991 she has taught at the California Institute of the Arts, where she is Associate Dean for Academic and Special Projects in the School of Music.

CalArts Strings is an ensemble from the CalArts Strings Performance Program, which prepares students for the emerging career pathways of the 21st century, now characterized by a remarkably diverse spectrum of professional practices. It is one of a number of CalArts performance ensembles which draw on an array of musical traditions from around the globe. Such ensembles include chamber groups, chamber orchestras, early music groups, vocal ensembles, opera companies, jazz and experimental ensembles, various world music groups, and specialized crossover ensembles that link different program areas. The CalArts Strings Performance Program faculty includes Erika Duke-Kirkpatrick, cello; Lorenz Gamma, violin; Mark Menzies, violin, viola, conducting; Peter Rofe, contrabass; and Nancy Uscher, viola. Thanks to Program alumni Eric km Clark, Orin Hildestad, Andrew McIntosh, Andrew Tholl, and Ashley Walters, who are joining the students this evening.

Soprano **Jewl Mosteller** is a performer of opera, oratorio, musical theater, and performance art. As a soloist she has appeared in Carnegie Hall, New York with the New England Symphonic Ensemble in Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and Camarata New York in Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*. In Europe she has performed with the Neukoelner Oper (Berlin) in *Macbeth*, the Berliner Kammeroper in *Mr. Emmet Takes A Walk*, with Opera Aegean (Greece) in *Orfeo et Euridice*, Svedsky Divadlo Opava (Czech Republic) in *Die Fledermaus*, and the Accademia Italiano di Canto (Italy) in *La Clementina*. She has recorded vocals with the platinum-selling German pop group E Nomine and is featured on several of their singles. She has also performed leading roles in regional musical theater companies in productions such as *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Who's Tommy*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, and *Once Upon a Mattress* among others with PCPA Theaterfest, the Village Theater, Seattle, and the Seattle Civic Light Opera. She is a seven-time song award winner for her original compositions, including a first place award from the Billboard Song Contest. She is a graduate of PCPA Theaterfest's Professional Actor Training Program; she holds a BFA in Theater from Cornish College of the Arts, and a diploma in Audio Engineering from SAE Australia, and she will receive her MFA in Vocal Performance and Integrated Media from CalArts in May of this year.

The Penderecki String Quartet, approaching the third decade of an extraordinary career, has become one of the most celebrated chamber ensembles of their generation. These four musicians, each originating from a different country—Poland, Canada, USA and the UK—bring their varied collective experience to create performances that demonstrate their “remarkable range of technical excellence and emotional sweep” (Toronto, *Globe and Mail*).

The Quartet's performing schedule takes them annually to the great concert stages of North and South America, Europe and the Far East. Recent appearances include New York, Madrid, Amsterdam, Prague, St. Petersburg, Rome, Paris, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Indiana University, Wieczory Arsenale Festival in Poland, Is Arti Festival in Lithuania, Rive-Gauche Concerti in Italy, the Festival Internacional de Musica in Venezuela, Casalmaggiore Festival and Incontri in Terra di Siena in Italy, Musicarama Festival Hong Kong, and the Shanghai International Arts Festival. The PSQ appears extensively in Canada, giving numerous performances in all the major centres from coast to coast and participating in that country's foremost concert series such as the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, Festival of the Sound, Festival Vancouver and Music Toronto.

The Penderecki Quartet collaborates regularly with eminent and diverse artists such as Martin Beaver, Atar Arad, Antonio Lysy, Luba Dubinsky, Jeremy Menuhin, James Campbell, jazz saxophonist Jane Bunnett, pipa virtuoso Ching Wong, choreographer David Earle, New York turntable artist DJ Spooky, and actor Colin Fox.

ABOUT THE VIDEO ARTISTS

Robert Drummond is a Los Angeles-based video performance and installation artist who integrates his work with site-specific architecture, sculptural components, and interactive video. Drawing from his experience in film and stage lighting, sound design, material fabrication and video production, Drummond shows work internationally and performs live onstage using real-time video mixing techniques. His installations have opened in London, numerous video festivals in Los Angeles, and national architectural venues such as the Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill-designed Virginia Beach Convention Center and the Morphosis-designed Caltrans Plaza. Robert’s experimental videos have also been featured in the New York International Independent Film/Video, Director’s Guild of America Firstlook, Not Still Art, Mill Valley and Williamsburg Brooklyn Film Festivals.

Recent installation exhibitions include: “Living Systems” at the Contemporary Art Center of Virginia (2006), “Decoding Highlights” at VTO gallery (2004), “Memory Prismatic” at Ground Zero in Marina del Rey (2003), and “Emotion Anamorphic” at DCA gallery in Venice, California (2003). His performances include video backgrounds for members of Cirque du Soleil, the Erato Philharmonic Orchestra (2005), and Hysterica Dance Company. In March of 2006, Drummond worked with the University of Southern California and faculty at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, streaming real-time video environments for pioneering research into the possibilities of video and music performance using Internet 2.

Stefan A. Rose is an artist interested in creative and documentary forms, using photography, videography, and poetry, who resides in Waterloo, Ontario. He graduated from Mount Allison University, with both a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Fine Arts. Stefan is documentary photographer for the Open Ears Festival of Music and Sound, and New Adventures in Sound Art, and uses a large-format banquet camera among others for his creative work. He has exhibited his photographs in numerous solo and group exhibitions, and has received the New Brunswick Arts Award and the Equinox Emerging Video Artist Award. In 2008 Stefan’s book of poetry *The House That Stands* was published by Anchorage Press. He has collaborated with other artists across many media; his collaborative works include *Townsend Retraced* (2004), *City Life* (2005), *Death By Chocolate* (2008), and several video works commissioned by the Penderecki String Quartet. These video works to accompany their performances include *The Rope Dancer* (2001), *Different Trains* (2003), *Flying Sparks and Heavy Machinery* (2003), *Prayer for Hydrogen* (2005), and *Weather* (2007/2009).

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Jacqueline Bobak, mezzo-soprano, performs repertoire ranging from opera to chamber works, from the traditional to the avant-garde, with the majority of her work focusing on the performance of newly written and emerging music. Recent performances and work in progress frequently incorporate interdisciplinary and multi-media aspects and she currently is involved in a large-scale project with John Cage’s *Song Books*. Ms. Bobak has appeared on the Los Angeles Philharmonic Green Umbrella series, the Monday Evening Concerts at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Pacific Contemporary Music Center Festival, the Moravian Autumn Festival and New Music Exposition (Brno, Czech Republic), the York Spring Music Festival (UK), and at REDCAT, the Getty Center, Richard Wagner Hall (Riga, Latvia), The Roxy (Prague), Maybeck Hall (Berkeley), and on numerous festivals and conferences. She also has appeared as a soloist and ensemble member with Xtet, the California E.A.R. Unit, Electric Phoenix (with the Minnesota Orchestra and Chicago’s Grant Park Symphony), and the CalArts New Century Players, and currently has a duo ensemble with Czech percussionist Dan Dlouhy. She has premiered works by Wadada Leo Smith, Chinariy

Michael Gordon

Weather: Part I (1997)

Video design by Stefan Rose, 2007

CalArts Strings: Eric km Clark, Georgi Dimitrov, Luke Fitzpatrick, Orin Hildestad, Andrew McIntosh, Aniela Perry, Lacy Rostyak, Albert Romero, Derek Stein, Andrew Tholl, Jennifer Thomas, Ashley Walters; Elisabeth McMullin, laptop;
Mark Menzies, conductor

Funded in part with generous support from Abby Sher.

Text for *midaregami (tangled hair)*

Akiko Yosano (1878–1942)

#13

I see drops of rain
On the floating leaves of white lotus;
In the small boat
Where my lover paints,
I hold open an umbrella.

#76

Hair all tangled this morning—
Shall I smooth it
With spring rain
Dripping from the jet-black
Wings of swallows?

#21

Whispering goodnight
This spring evening
And leaving the room,
I take from the rack
His kimono and try it on.

#66

Morning wisteria
Soft murmurs of love,
His hand on the back of my neck,
O powerless to detain him,
My lover of one night!

#40

Restless night,
My tangled hair
Sounds against my koto!
Is it three months of spring
And not one note struck?

#44

With this ax
I strike my koto!
Listen!
The sound of life's end!
Of God's will!

#151

They don't deserve
The name Love,
But I had sweet dreams,
Once of a poet,
Once of a painter.

Translation by Sanford Goldstein and Seishi Shinoda, from Tangled Hair: Selected Tanka from Midaregami. © 2002 Sanford Goldstein. Available from www.cheng-tsui.com, by mail, or call 800-554-1963. Permission granted by Cheng & Tsui Company, 25 West St., Boston, MA 02111.

Entrückung

Stefan George (1868–1933)

*Ich fühle luft von anderem planeten.
Mir blassen durch das dunkel die gesichter
Die freundlich eben noch sich zu mir drehten.*

*Und bäum und wege die ich liebte fahlen
Dass ich sie kaum mehr kenne und du lichter
Geliebter schatten—rufer meiner qualen—*

*Bist nun erloschen ganz in tiefern gluten
Um nach dem taumel streitenden getobes
Mit einem frommen schauer anzumuten.*

*Ich löse mich in tönen, kreisend, webend,
Ungründigen danks und unbenamten lobes
Dem grossen atem wunschlos mich ergebend.*

*Mich überfährt ein ungestümes wehen
Im rausch der weihe wo inbrünstige schreie
In staub geworfner beterrinnen flehen:*

*Dann seh ich wie sich duftige nebel lüpfen
In einer sonnerfüllten klaren freie
Die nur umfängt auf fernsten bergesschlüpfen.*

*Der boden schüttert weiss und weich wie molke.
Ich steige über schluchten ungeheuer,
Ich fühle wie ich über letzter wolke*

and original footage of New York with Laurie Olinder's photographic projections of the urban landscape.

He has worked extensively with London's Icebreaker. His work *Yo Shakespeare* was recorded by Icebreaker on their debut Argo/Decca recording *Terminal Velocity*, recently re-released by Cantaloupe Music. Gordon's work *Trance* was written for Icebreaker with the additional component of eight brass players. The 52-minute work was also originally recorded for Argo and was released in the autumn of 1996; a new re-mixed version is subsequently on Cantaloupe. *Link* was written for the group in 1998, in collaboration with David Lang, as a complementary piece to *Yo Shakespeare* and Lang's *Cheating, Lying, Stealing* for a new ballet by Ashley Page for The Royal Ballet in London, subsequently revived by Page at Scottish Ballet.

May 2004 saw the release of *Light Is Calling* (Nonesuch), an album of tracks created with producers R. Luke DuBois and Damian le Gassick, and scored for a small ensemble of musicians (most notably Todd Reynolds on violin) with complex electronic arrangements orchestrated by DuBois and le Gassick. He has since collaborated with DuBois extensively on the electronic backing arrangements for subsequent pieces, including *All Vows* for cellist Maya Beiser (2006, for which DuBois also served as a video artist), *Sad Park* for the Kronos Quartet (2006), and the opera *What to Wear?*, libretto by Richard Foreman (2006).

Gordon's music has been presented at the Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, The Kitchen, the Kölner Philharmonie, the Royal Albert Hall, the Bonn Oper and the Jewish Museum in Vienna; at the Rotterdam, Edinburgh, St. Petersburg, Holland, Adelaide, Huddersfield, Settembre Musica and Dresden music festivals; in the choreography of Eliot Feld, the Royal Ballet, emio greco/pc, Heinz Spoerli and other dance companies; and as a featured artist in the repertoires of Ensemble Modern and the Kronos Quartet. The 2003–04 season saw seven concerts of Gordon's music in New York alone including three world premieres and three American premieres, most notably the world premiere of *Gotham* at Carnegie's Zankel Hall and the American premiere of *Weather* by Ensemble Resonanz at Columbia University's Miller Theater.

Recent commissions have been supported by the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, Meet the Composer, the BBC Proms, The Siemens Kulturprogram, BAM's Next Wave Festival and the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival. In 1997 he worked with playwright Anna Deavere Smith on *House Arrest, First Edition*, which premiered at the Arena Stage Theater in Washington, DC.

Veronika Judita Krausas has had her works performed in Canada, the United States, Australia, Germany, the Netherlands and Romania.

She has received commissions from the Canada Council for Continuum Music, Ergo Projects, the Penderecki Quartet and several commissions for Motion Music (Canada) including a Millennium Project Grant, and grants from the American Composers Forum.

In 2006, ERGO Projects, led by conductor Alex Pauk, premiered *Analemma* for chamber orchestra at the Glenn Gould Theatre in Toronto. In 1996, musikFabrik, conducted by Johannes Kalitzke, premiered her chamber orchestra piece *Spirals of Sense* at the Darmstadt New Music Festival. Since 1998, she has directed, composed for, and produced numerous multi-media events in Los Angeles, incorporating her works with dance performances and video presentations by local Los Angeles artists. These artists include former and current Cirque du Soleil creators and performers. In 2002, she was awarded two Arts Initiative Faculty Grants at the University of Southern California for interdisciplinary projects. The first, *The Courtyard*, with acrobats, video and music, was presented during the USC Spring Arts Festival in 2002. The second, *Asymptote*, was presented at the Brewery Art Center in Los Angeles and involved the Arts, Architecture, Physics, English and Music Departments.

The Bestiary/Le Bestaire (a collection of children's piano pieces) was published by Frederick Harris Music Publishers in Canada and two of the works are in the Royal Conservatory of Music's piano syllabus. A CD of her chamber music was released in 2002 by Motion Ensemble in Canada. Her works for duo guitar appear on the CD *FOOD: New Works for Duo* Guitar. In 2008 she produced The Player Piano Project, a CD and concert that featured 22 composers from 6 countries with works for player piano. Her book of photography *in + on* is available at lulu.com.

Krausas is currently on faculty in the Composition Department at the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

Tonight’s performance includes only Part One of Gordon’s ambitious four-movement work. As the original video design by Caplan is not for hire, the new video design by Stefan Rose is made by special permission from Michael Gordon and Schirmer/Red Poppy Publishing.

ABOUT THE COMPOSERS

Michael Gordon was born in Florida in 1956 and grew up in Nicaragua and an Eastern European community in a jungle on the outskirts of Managua. His music is an outgrowth of his experience with underground rock bands in New York City and his formal training in composition at Yale where he studied with Martin Bresnick. Tuneful, rhythmic and raw, Gordon’s music has embraced elements of dissonance, minimalism, modality and popular culture in what has been considered by some people as a bold and direct sound.

Since 1991 he has worked extensively with video. His work, *Van Gogh Video Opera*, a collaboration with video-artist Elliot Caplan, was premiered to critical acclaim in New York in 1991 and received its European premiere in Vienna in 1992. Other works with Caplan include *Grand Dairy*, based on a diner on New York’s Lower East Side, which was produced in Vienna in 1996 and *Weather* (German Tour 1997), in which the 16 string players of Ensemble Resonanz perform on a vertical stage surrounded by video panels. The recording of *Weather* is available on Arthrob/Nonesuch.

Gordon is one of the founders and artistic directors of New York’s Bang on a Can Festival, alongside fellow composers Julia Wolfe and David Lang. He has collaborated with them on several projects. The opera, *The Carbon Copy Building*, a collaboration with comic book artist Ben Katchor, received the 2000 Village Voice OBIE Award for Best New American Work. A projected comic strip accompanies the singers, interacting with each other so that the frames fall away in the telling of this story. Gordon, Wolfe and Lang have subsequently collaborated on the ‘oratorio’ *Lost Objects*, the recording of which was released in summer 2001 (Teldec New Line).

Their latest project is *Shelter*, a multi-media work that was commissioned by the ensemble musikFabrik and features the ethereal Scandinavian vocalists Trio Mediaeval in a staged spectacle that, in the words of librettist Deborah Artman, “evokes the power and threat of nature, the soaring frontier promise contained in the framing of a new house, the pure aesthetic beauty of blueprints, the sweet architecture of sound and the uneasy vulnerability that underlies even the safety of our sleep.” Shelter was premiered in Köln in Germany in spring 2005, and received its US premiere in November 2005.

Both *Shelter* and *Carbon Copy Building* were staged by New York’s Ridge Theater, in collaboration with Laurie Olinger (visual graphics), Bill Morrison (film-maker) and Bob McGrath (director), with whom Gordon has often worked. The opera *Chaos*, with libretto by Matthew Maguire, premiered at The Kitchen in New York in autumn 1998 with stage direction by Bob McGrath. The work, which opened to rave reviews and packed houses, is a fast-paced science fiction spectacle in 25 short scenes.

Decasia, a large-scale symphony with projections, commissioned by the Europäischer Musikmonat 2001 for the Basel Sinfonietta, was also staged by the Ridge Theater. The orchestra sits on a triangular pyramid structure that surrounds the audience, whilst Bill Morrison’s film of black and white ‘found’ footage in various states of deterioration is projected onto scrim draping the structure. The ensuing Bill Morrison film, *Decasia*, cut to Michael Gordon’s complete score, was shown at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival and has been screened at film festivals worldwide.

A further collaboration with Ridge Theater, *Gotham*, a commission from the American Composers Orchestra, incorporates film, projections, lighting and an orchestra of 35 musicians to explore the ‘other’ New York City. Again directed by Bob McGrath, the work premiered at Carnegie’s Zankel Hall in February 2004 with the American Composers Orchestra and combines Bill Morrison’s stunning archival

*In einem meer kristallinen glanzes schwimme—
Ich bin ein funke nur vom heiligen feuer
Ich bin ein dröhnen nur der heiligen stimme.*

Rapture

I feel the air of another planet. The friendly faces that were turned toward me but lately, now are fading into darkness.

The trees and paths I knew and loved so well are barely visible, and you beloved and radiant spectre—
cause of all my anguish—

You are wholly dimmed within a deeper glow, whence, now that strife and tumult cease, there comes a soothing tremor of a sacred awe.

I am dissolved in a swirling sound, am weaving unfathomed thanks with unnamed praise, and wishless, I yield myself into the mighty breath.

A wild gust grips me suddenly, and I can hear the fervent cries and prayers of women prone in the dust and seized in pious rapture

And then I see the hazy vapors lifting above a sunlit, vast and clear expanse that stretches far below the mountain crags

Beneath my feet a flooring soft and milky, or endless chasms that I cross with ease. Carried aloft beyond the highest cloud,

I am afloat upon a sea of crystal splendour

I am only a sparkle of the holy fire, I am only a roaring of the holy voice.

PROGRAM NOTES

midaregami (tangled hair) (2009) U.S. première

Veronika Krausas

Midaregami (tangled hair) is the title of a collection of tankas (poems) by the Japanese poet Akiko Yosano (1878–1942). Her works are from the period of the new school of tankas—the move of Yosano and her husband Tekkan to a more overtly sensual style of Japanese poems.

This song cycle and the performance with video are all about the senses and spectra: visual, aural, olfactory, and psychological. The order of the selected tankas weaves a loose narrative that follows the path of an affair: the beginning, the fleeting moments as it ends, the disappointment and anger that follow, and finally the sweet memories.

Tankas have a syllabic count of 5-7-5-7-7. There are 7 songs in this song cycle. The first and last are essentially a prelude and postlude, and the middle 5 are representative on the macro-level of a five-line tanka. There are many metrical and rhythmic references to 5 and 7 throughout the work.

Tankas were originally sung and the melodic line follows a minor pentatonic scale, the tuning of the koto, the instrument used to accompany the “performance” of tankas, which is featured in several of the poems. The main pitches of the koto are used as the pitch centres of each of the songs.

The spectrum of smell is used for the source of the basic pitch selections. The currently accepted theory of smell is that it is generated by molecular shape. Luca Turin has hypothesized and proven that it is in fact the frequency of the molecule that determines actual smell. He graciously provided me the

frequency spectrum of rose geranium that I used as the basic pitch structure/frequency spectrum for the pieces.

The role of the voice is quite brief, with minimal text repetition to mirror the brief and delicate nature of the tankas, which present epigrammatic moments in time.

The accompanying video by Robert Drummond follows a visual color spectrum that reflects the psychological states in the progression of the affair. —Veronika Krausas

Inspired by early conversations with Veronika Krausas on the subject of spectra, I have been investigating various methods of spectrum analysis and scientific imaging technology. With the generous assistance of Los Angeles artist David Scharf, I have had the opportunity to record images of microscopic landscapes using an electron microscope. Traversing into worlds beyond our visual spectrum and then returning to more recognizable visual forms, the piece seeks to augment the score, as performed by the Penderecki String Quartet, visually exploring abstract imagery and the concept of emotional spectrum in relationship to others and our surrounding landscapes. —Robert Drummond

Black Angels (Images 1) for Electric String Quartet (1970)

George Crumb

Black Angels is probably the only quartet to have been inspired by the Vietnam War. The work draws from an arsenal of sounds including shouting, chanting, whistling, whispering, gongs, maracas, and crystal glasses. The score bears two inscriptions: “in tempore belli” (in time of war) and “Finished on Friday the Thirteenth, March, 1970.”

Black Angels was conceived as a kind of parable on our troubled contemporary world. The numerous quasi-programmatic allusions in the work are therefore symbolic, although the essential polarity—God versus Devil—implies more than a purely metaphysical reality. The image of the “black angel” was a conventional device used by early painters to symbolize the fallen angel.

The underlying structure of *Black Angels* is a huge arch-like design which is suspended from the three “Threnody” pieces. The work portrays a voyage of the soul. The three stages of this voyage are Departure (fall from grace), Absence (spiritual annihilation) and Return (redemption).

The numerological symbolism of *Black Angels*, while perhaps not immediately perceptible to the ear, is nonetheless quite faithfully reflected in the musical structure. These “magical” relationships are variously expressed; e.g., in terms of length, groupings of single tones, durations, patterns of repetition, etc. An important pitch element in the work—descending E, A, and D-sharp—also symbolizes the fateful numbers 7–13. At certain points in the score there occurs a kind of ritualistic counting in various languages, including German, French, Russian, Hungarian, Japanese and Swahili.

There are several allusions to tonal music in *Black Angels*: a quotation from Schubert’s *Death and the Maiden* quartet (in the “Pavana Lachrymae” and also faintly echoed on the last page of the work); an original “Sarabanda”, which is stylistically synthetic; the sustained B-major tonality of “God-Music”; and several references to the Latin sequence “Dies Irae” (“Day of Wrath”). The work abounds in conventional musical symbolisms such as the “Diabolus in Musica” (the interval of the tritone) and the “Trillo Di Diavolo” (the “Devil’s Trill”, after Tartini).

The amplification of the stringed instruments in *Black Angels* is intended to produce a highly surrealistic effect. This surrealism is heightened by the use of certain unusual string effects, e.g., pedal tones (the intensely obscene sounds of the “Devil-Music”); bowing on the “wrong” side of the strings (to produce the viol-consort effect); and trilling on the strings with thimble-capped fingers. The performers also play maracas, tam-tams and water-tuned crystal goblets, the latter played with the bow for the “glass harmonica”. —G.C.

Finale from String Quartet No. 2, in F sharp minor, Op. 10 (1907–08)

Entrückung; sehr langsam

Arnold Schoenberg

“I am accustomed to reading scores on 30 staves,” the composer and conductor Gustav Mahler said to

Arnold Schoenberg. “But the four staves of your Op. 7 have given me infinitely more trouble.” Op. 7 was Schoenberg’s first official string quartet and had been given its première in Vienna after an unprecedented 40 rehearsals, in February, 1907. To many people at the time, Mahler himself already had taken tonality to its limits, well beyond the rich, heady perfumed harmonies of Wagner to a point where many musicians thought music itself had reached an impasse. Schoenberg, however, had other ideas. For the first decade of the 20th century, he explored late romantic harmony, producing music on a vast scale. Such works as his huge choral work *Gurrelieder*, the string sextet *Verklärte Nacht*, the First Chamber Symphony, the symphonic poem *Pelleas und Melisande* and the first two string quartets all took up the challenge of late romantic harmony by finding new solutions. Looking back on this time of artistic ferment, Schoenberg wrote: “I must admit that in 1905, the music sounded confusing to the ears of my contemporaries... What made it so difficult to understand was its complicated, contrapuntal style. And the most embarrassing circumstance was that the harmonies produced by those independently moving parts changed so fast and were so advanced that the ear could not follow their meaning.”

Certainly the heady, late-romantic sound-world of Mahler permeates Schoenberg’s Second Quartet of 1907–8. It may also have been Mahler’s precedent (in the Second Symphony) that led Schoenberg to take the revolutionary step of introducing a soprano into its third and fourth movements. It’s here, in these two movements, that the harmonic and thematic development in the quartet becomes most intense and pushes the medium to its limit. Paradoxically enough, though the Second Quartet is generally viewed as a revolutionary work, it may, at first glance, appear to present a more classically oriented approach to the medium. Its first movement is a compressed sonata form which stays largely within the bounds of F sharp minor. The second is a scherzo and trio in D minor, while the third is a theme and variations in E flat minor. The scherzo provides the most autobiographical moment in the quartet by quoting the Viennese street song *Ach, du lieber Augustin* especially the phrase “Alles ist hin” (All is lost). This reflects not only Schoenberg’s personal loss (while composing the work, Schoenberg’s wife had left him for the painter Richard Gerstl who, shortly afterwards, committed suicide) but also, perhaps, the impending loss of tonality itself. We hear this most acutely in the opening of the *Entrückung* fourth movement, a movement without key signature, where, in a cold and eerie landscape, all sense of tonal underpinning is lost. The music is a prelude to one of the most celebrated of all musical lines, “I feel the air of another planet.” The text is by the visionary German poet Stefan George who came under the influence of Baudelaire and Mallarmé. The music enters a world that is far removed from Mahler’s Vienna, with its waltzes, folksongs and familiar everyday comforts. It explores feelings of alienation and isolation and opens a gateway to Schoenberg’s future development as a composer. Ultimately, however, he brings about a transformation, as an instrumental coda resolves into a more familiar F sharp minor. —Keith Horner, 2005

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Weather: Part I (1997)

Michael Gordon

Weather was conceived with visual artist Elliot Caplan over a period of one minute on the train from Munich to Hamburg in the dead of winter. Elliot took a napkin and drew a picture of an orchestra straight up in the air. I looked at it, and it looked terrifying, undoable. How could an orchestra play like that?

Weather was originally performed by an orchestra (Ensemble Resonanz) seated vertically in scaffolding. A vertical orchestra turned out to be perfect for *Weather*. The elevator goes up to eight, where you find Vivaldi, then down to four, where there’s a fuzz box, back up to nine for some intense down bows, and back to two for samples of sirens. For those who think the history of art is in some way ordered, please consider the weather: a seemingly random, chaotic, uncontrollable force.

The first rehearsals with Ensemble Resonanz were more similar to working with a band of angels than a group of classical string players. At the end of rehearsal, they would simulate the vertical configuration by turning around, facing the wall, and playing again. When they finally got up on the scaffolding, they were surrounded by video monitors, screens, speakers, wires, microphones, and Elliot’s stunning images.