

The Harry Partch Collection

Volume 3

1. *The Dreamer That Remains—A Study in Loving*(1972) 10:29
The Harry Partch Ensemble: Harry Partch, intoning voice, narrator; Mark Hoffman, Brash Musician, The Voice; Danlee Mitchell, Second Musician; Katherine Bjornson, Alexis Glatly, Michael Crosier, Chorus.
Instrumentalists: Ron Caruso, Gourd Tree; David Dunn, Adapted Viola; Dennis Dunn, Jonathan Glasier, Harmonic Canon I and New Harmonic Canon I; Jean-Charles François, Quadrangularis Reversum; Randy Hoffman, Eucal Blossom, Mbira Bass Dyad; Danlee Mitchell, New Kithara I; Harry Partch, Adapted Guitar II; Emil Richards, Cloud-Chamber Bowls; Jonathan Szanto, Ektaras, Bamboo Marimba II, Mbira Bass Dyad; Duane Thomas, Harmonic Canon III; Francis Thumm, Chromelodeon II; Jack Logan, conductor
2. *Rotate the Body in All Its Planes—Ballad for Gymnasts* (1961) 8:51
Freda Pierce, soprano solo; Elizabeth Hiller, Barbara Baker, Janet Campbell, Patrick Ann Eichelberger, Haven Palmquist, Joan Platt, Margaret Sprehe, Diamanda Tomaras, Betty Zinser, women's voices; Jack Bert, Coryl Crandall, Keith Davidson, Bruce Foote, Jeff Foote, Joel Klein, Anthony Zeppetella, men's voices; Frank Bowen, Robert Ruckrigel, piccolos; Thomas Knox, Kent Hermsmeyer, Michael Esselstrom, trumpets; Melaniusz Gienko, William Brahms, trombones; Aaron Johnson, tuba; James Vandament, Eddie Allen, drums; Mark Johnson, Danlee Mitchell, Harmonic Canon II; Adrienne Kole, Adapted Guitar I; Thomas Turner, Chromelodeon I; James Weaver, Chromelodeon II; Thomas Wardlow, Cloud-Chamber Bowls; Thomas Hall, Spoils of War; Dorcas Ann Newton, Diamond Marimba; Thomas Siwe, James Stutsman, Marimba Eroica; Lyndel Davis, Crychord; Norbert Cieslewicz, string bass; John Garvey, conductor
3. *Windsong*(1958) 11:36
For Harmonic Canon II, Kithara II, Adapted Viola, Surrogate Kithara, Chromelodeon, Boo, Diamond Marimba, Cloud-Chamber Bowls, Spoils of War, Bass Marimba
All instruments played by Harry Partch.
- Water! Water!—An Intermission with Prologues and Epilogues* (1961) (excerpts selected by the composer) 37:49
4. The Opening Prologue, and the Second Prologue, in which the instruments attack the Producer 2:59
5. Water Criers and lead-in lines, *O What Could He Do But Pick Her Up?* (Jazzmen) 4:04
6. Water Criers and lead-in lines, *Witch for Water* (Witches)
The Aldermen's *Fugue on No. Wanda the Water Witch* (Jazzmen) 5:59
7. *Santa Mystiana the Beautiful* (Her Honor and Conductor) 2:39
8. Water Criers. Visitors from strange and foreign places: the Singer from Spoleto, and an Alabama mockingbird—*Dear Old Alabama* 2:02
9. *We Really Love Each Other. In 43 Whines to the Octave* (Aldermen, Ladies' Auxiliary, Jazzmen, Witches) 1:41
10. Water Criers. The baseball game is called on account of *Rain*:3:17
11. *To Hell With the Game! Rain! Rain! The Highest Goodness Is Like Water* (whole ensemble) 2:26
12. Opening Epilogue (after three days of rain). *Ghosts, Undele, Oomph!*
(The Indian Ghosts dance over Clarence's body and play on liquor bottles) 2:56
13. Water Criers. Intervening dialogue. *We'll Sue You for a Million!* (Her Honor and Jazzmen) 3:03
14. *Do-lo-do-lo --- doom!* (Aldermen, Ladies, and Ghosts)
Phoebus bids farewell. The Indian Runners bring news. The final song and dance, *Gone, Man, Gone!* (whole ensemble). With the descending moan of the siren Phoebus plunges wildly into nothingness. 4:55
15. Eighth Epilogue—the Producer finally silences the instruments.
Final Epilogue: "The highest goodness is like water." 1:48

Cast:

John Garvey, The Conductor, Jazzmen solos, Alderman in *Fugue on No*, Scott Meland, Arthur, the God of Rain; Indian Runners; Aldermen; Jazzmen; Alan Gossard, Phoebus the Disk Jockey and Emcee; Paul Cooper, Producer; Patrick Day, Clarence; Steven Allen, Aquarius; Jane Daily, Singer from Spoleto, Wanda the Water Witch; Stephen Farish, Water Crier, Alderman; Nina Cutler, Water Crier; Cynthia Schwartz, Her Honor; Kathleen Roche, Visitor from Alabama; Carolyn Burrill, Pura; Helen Curley, Dianne Layden, Jane Daily, Kathleen Roche, Ladies' Auxiliary; Lynette Barry, Janet Campbell, Elizabeth Coney, Geraldine Jones, Carolyn Burrill, Witches

Instrumentalists:

Eddie Allen, clarinet; John Ginther, bass clarinet; Cecil Bridgewater, trumpet; Uni Thomas, Mark Cleghorn, violins; Howard Osborn, viola; Elizabeth Krohne, cello; Edward Krolick, string bass; Donald Andrus, Chromelodeon II; William Parsons, jazz percussion; Thomas Wardlow, Alan Davis, Castor and Pollux; Michael Ranta, Surrogate Kithara; Lyndel Davis, Kithara II; Thomas Hall, Spoils of War; Danlee Mitchell, Diamond Marimba; Michael Combs, Bass Marimba; Arthur Schildbach, Marimba Eroica; Max Murray, soprano saxophone; Aaron Johnson, tuba; Melaniesz Gienko, trombone; John Garvey, conductor

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The four works on this CD are eloquent testimony to Harry Partch's aesthetic of *corporeality*. The music he composed for *The Dreamer That Remains*, for *Rotate the Body in All Its Planes*, for *Windsong*, and for *Water! Water!* was intended as only one component in the total artistic experience. In these works music joins with drama, with film, with dance, even with gymnastics—all integral parts of the composer's vision.

Although Partch readily accepted the "sad compromise" that to him recordings and films represented, he insisted nonetheless that the only investigation of his work which had "genuine integrity" was the "seen and heard performance." He attached great importance to the multifaceted nature of his oeuvre, to its status as music integrally bound up with text, drama, or dance, to the sculptural beauty of his hand-built instruments and to the meaningful physical presence of the performing musicians. He declared himself in sympathy with the theater traditions of the ancient world, as well as those forms of Chinese and Japanese theater that he had the opportunity to witness in California. He had no liking for the "specialized theater of dialogue" of contemporary Europe and America, which he rejected as artificially cerebral and which, he believed, had sacrificed—in the interests of greater formal sophistication—the redemptive value of the older forms of ritual theater. His own works attempted to recapture something of this lost value. "I do not aim toward *interesting* music—structurally, thematically, formalistically," he wrote to a friend in 1952. "If it is, this is incidental, because I aim at convincing drama, dynamism, spontaneous emotional reactions."

The Dreamer That Remains was Partch's last composition. It was written in 1972 as the result of a commission from Betty Freeman, a long-standing supporter of his work and his principal patron. It was conceived for a film with the same name to be produced by Freeman herself and directed by Stephen Pouliot. The resulting film, completed early in 1973, is a deeply moving and dignified portrait, part documentary and part performance, that captures the passionate intensity of Partch the man and something of his distinctive brand of humor. The close-up impact of his rage and zest as he recounts childhood memories and hobo stories, together with the imposing images of the dark wood, and the bright orange, green, tarnished plum red, and violet of the instruments, makes for a powerfully emotive experience.

The music Partch wrote for the film seems like a postscript to his life's work. The title comes from a poem by Roy Campbell, which Partch found at the beginning of Laurens van der Post's book *The Lost World of the Kalahari*. The autobiographical implications are inescapable, and the first part of the work, used at the beginning of the film, focuses on Partch himself as the "dreamer" of the title. This first movement, Partch wrote,

. . . might be called organic. It developed without preconceived structure. A plan would have been—to my mind—inherently wrong—First, because of time limitations of the film, and—second—because of my own requirements (or insistence) in using a certain set of instruments.

Every instrument has its *sui generis* character. Not one of them is easily thought of as diatonic. Given these facts, or limitations, or—considered as a bright potential—they do not fit into a pre-determined structure.

The second movement, "entirely narrative and satirical, contrasting memories of my childhood (1905–10) with the present," was intended for the end of the film. The ostensible subject is simply the increased tempo of modern life, which is symbolized by the "Do Not Loiter" signs that adorn modern post offices, public buildings, and parks. These are contrasted with the slower pace of life the Narrator recalls from his boyhood in Arizona. The punchline is that, today, only by becoming one of the "congregated corpses in the funeral parlor" is one finally "permitted to loiter."

The second movement also has an equally strong sub-theme: a protest at the prohibition of public displays of homosexuality. In this light, the concern with “loitering” has quite different connotations. During the making of the film Betty Freeman raised an objection to the line, “Even in public parks, where a couple of people want to improve the darkness with a little loving,” which Stephen Pouliot had staged with two young men sitting together on a park bench. Partch defended the sequence, telling Freeman that it was “light-handed satire,” “not *seriously* homosexual . . . we must be allowed our wry humor!” The composer Lou Harrison, seeing the completed film, also found this sequence rather “out of the closet,” feeling that “the clear implication of the work is that Partch was objecting to modern barriers against casual male-male sexual encounters.” *The Dreamer That Remains* as a whole, Harrison feels, is “a fairly public and if-you-will political ‘coming out.’” (personal communication, 1990)

Rotate the Body in All Its Planes came into being as a spin-off from Partch’s large-scale music theater work *Revelation in the Courthouse Park* in 1961. During rehearsals of *Revelation* at the University of Illinois Charles Pond, the gymnasts’ coach at the University, liking the “Tumble On” sequence in Chorus Three (which uses mat tumblers and a trampolinist), asked Partch if the scene could be performed “with added music” at the National Collegiate Gymnastics Championship meeting, which was to be held that year in Illinois. Partch wrote a script and some new music, and titled the result *Rotate the Body in All Its Planes—Ballad For Gymnasts*. Before composing the “added music” he visited the gymnasium to measure, with a stopwatch, the rhythms of the gymnasts on the trampolines. He put the piece together in February and it was given its first (and to date only) performance at the Huff Gymnasium at the University on April 8, 1961. In the program booklet for the event he wrote that he had tried to forge a link with the meaning and place of gymnastics in the ancient world.

Gymnastics, in ancient times, grew with the arts of music, dance, and drama, in rituals, festivals, and fairs. This situation prevailed even into the Middle Ages, and still prevails among peoples generally, outside the West. The Greek word gymnasium implied a center for the development of both physical and mental disciplines, a place for acquiring understanding through philosophical discussion. In this modern era of specialization gymnastics have largely been confined to the modern gymnasium, implying only physical competition, and creative music has generally been confined to the modern concert hall, implying—more and more frequently—remote and intellectual art.

The present idea tends to fill a mutual need: the need of music to rediscover a creative meaning in the daily activities and the common rituals of our lives; the need of gymnastics to rediscover a rightful place in music, dance, and drama—in shows and extravaganzas.

Rotate the Body in All Its Planes was preserved for posterity by Madeline Tourtelot, who made an elegant film of the exhibition which she showed at the 1961 Edinburgh Festival and as far afield as New York and Czechoslovakia the following year. It was one of Partch’s favorites of their collaborations. The program of *Rotate the Body* as recorded here is as follows: 1. Fanfare; 2. Free Exercise; 3. Side Horse; 4. Parallel Bars; 5. Still Rings; 6. Horizontal Bar; 7. Tutti (all the above simultaneously); 8. Mat Tumbling; 9. Trampoline; 10. Salute.

Windsong was also written for film, this time as the soundtrack for a black-and-white film by Madeline Tourtelot. It was the first of a series of collaborations between the two, and was perhaps the closest Partch would come to the true interdependence of music and film for which he was always searching. He met Tourtelot in the summer of 1957, when she was only beginning to establish herself as an independent filmmaker. In showing Partch her work, she screened the rushes for a film in progress, begun some weeks earlier at a summer school in Michigan. She and a sculptor friend had been amusing themselves filming each other in black and white in the sand dunes on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, and it was Partch—not Tourtelot herself—who saw in these unfinished fragments the theme of the Greek myth of Daphne and Apollo. Greatly taken by her use of nature symbols and “the intense insight they bring into a dramatic incident,” Partch proposed he write the music for the film.

Ten years later, in his preface to a “re-copying of the score” of *Windsong* (under the new title, *Daphne of the Dunes*) Partch described the “subject of the film” thus:

In the myth, or at least the Roman version of it, the god Apollo is enamored of Daphne, virgin daughter of a river god. Apollo pursues her. This is most natural—it is what he knows how to do. The story makes no sense whatever unless one remembers that almost any virgin, either male or female, automatically resists seduction, however beautiful and otherwise desirable the would-be lover. Apollo pursues, and

Daphne calls on her father river-god for help. At the crucial moment—when she is only an inch away from becoming a non-virgin—her father changes her into a green laurel tree. Apollo, both appalled and frustrated—with arms clasping the rough bark of a tree—nevertheless regains his sexual sobriety, and decrees that henceforth all victors in any area of competition are to be crowned with green laurel leaves.

The story is at least some indication of the Greek sex ethic. But the film *Windsong* deals in fact with the Puritan American sex ethic, and Madeline Tourtelot, in a stroke nothing less than brilliant, turns the virgin American Daphne into a white, bare-limbed, dead tree at the top of a sand dune.

Perhaps the most beautiful sequences in the film are the nature shots, for which Partch believed Tourtelot had a gifted eye. Yet these images are charged with symbolic, often erotic, significance: “the eroding sand is female, the snakes wriggling up the sand male. The waving grasses female, the gulls flying overhead male.” Interspersed among these sequences are shots of a man and a woman—Tourtelot herself and her sculptor friend—enacting parts of the Daphne and Apollo legend. The story is thus represented in three ways, more or less equal in importance: by the nature shots; by the man and the woman; and by the music. In his score, Partch uses the percussive timbres of his ensemble to symbolize Apollo, and the strings, both plucked and bowed, to symbolize Daphne. The protagonists are assigned their characteristic pitch centers: 16/9 (F) becomes associated with Apollo, 3/2 (D) with Daphne. (For tuning enthusiasts, the symbolism of this is quite revealing: The two pitches are separated by the narrow and, in Partch’s terms, dissonant “minor third” 32/27, and are not found together in any of his consonant Otonalities or Utonalities: This implies that the two characters, like the two pitches, will never be able to achieve consonance or unity.) The story is played out as a musical drama, moving unpretentiously through its several stages: the introduction of the characters, the pursuit, the encounter, the attempted seduction, and the transformation. In the liner notes to *Thirty Years of Lyrical and Dramatic Music*, Gate 5 Records, Issue A, Partch wrote of *Windsong*

The music, in effect, is a collage of sounds. The film technique of fairly fast cuts is here translated into musical terms. The sudden shifts represent nature symbols of the film, as used for a dramatic purpose: dead trees, driftwood, falling sand, blowing tumbleweed, flying gulls, wriggling snakes, waving grasses. Ten instruments are used, and Partch plays nearly all the parts, through the well-known device of adding sound track to sound track, one part at a time.

Partch began composing the music in January 1958. It was conceived using no more than four instruments simultaneously, so he could play and record all the ten instruments himself. He made demo recordings first on Tourtelot’s two Pentron machines and, with the music nearly completed, began to record the final soundtrack early in February on a multi-channel Berlant. Watching the process, Tourtelot had the idea to make a documentary on the making of the soundtrack for *Windsong* and toward the end of February she began shooting footage of Partch miming the instrumental parts: This was later released as a twenty-minute color documentary, *Music Studio*. With the music recorded Partch made an ink copy of the score, adding the triumphant colophon: “Written, rehearsed, recorded, edited, and copied at 1801 North Orleans St., Chicago, January 16 to March 2, 1958.” *Windsong* itself was first shown on WTTW-TV in Chicago on March 19 the same year.

The largest of the works on this disc is ***Water! Water!—An Intermission with Prologues and Epilogues***, an evening-long theater work first produced at the University of Illinois in March 1962. The work’s subtitle expresses Partch’s rather cynical belief that it was the intermission, when the audience rushed with “eager anticipation and outright relief” for a drink, that constituted the focal point of any concert or theatrical event: The actual contents of the two halves were only the “prologues and epilogues” to this central social ritual. (As though in revenge, all of his own full-length theater works play continuously, with no intermission.)

Water! Water!, with its farcical story and its frequent excursions into silliness, is as close as he ever came to writing a Broadway musical. Set in a mythical American city, Santa Mystiana, and the countryside nearby, the story alternates between the two locales, which represent respectively the world of progress and the world of regress (this latter a characteristic Partchian theme). The two locales are caricatured mercilessly for comic effect. The half of the stage to the audience’s left, Partch writes,

. . . represents a world in which there is only a casual interest in what is called progress. It is a world of intuition, spontaneity, of unspoken reconciliation with the powers of a mysterious nature. The half of the stage to the audience's right, Santa Mystiana, represents social order, duty, law, convention, and progress. It is a world which probes and analyzes and exploits nature to the point that it has virtually lost reverence for its mysteries.

In the liner notes to the Gate 5 Records disc of excerpts from the work, Partch provided the following synopsis:

Water! Water! is a satirical farce with dolorous undertones. A much publicized international exposition is about to open in the imaginary city of Santa Mystiana. Her Honor, the mayor, is a strong stereotype of both a city and a national narcissism, and the Santa Mystiana Dam—from which the city gets both power and water—is a symbol of the “timelessness” and the “indestructibility” of an attitude. The city is beset by drought, and seeks relief so desperately that Her Honor hires Arthur, a bandleader, who is reputed to have brought rain through jazz. But the Jazzmen, and the ancient water witches who appear with them, resent Her Honor, the Aldermen, and the Ladies' Auxiliary, because they feel that the gods (themselves) have not been properly propitiated.

Drought persists through most of the eleven prologues to the intermission, but at the end of the Tenth Prologue the day's baseball game is called off. Rain has finally come. The Final Prologue is the celebration. The epilogues—after the intermission—open three days later. Rain has fallen continuously, roads are washed out, and disaster threatens. Her Honor confronts Arthur, then brings him and Wanda—leader of the witches—to trial. These proceedings are halted by power failure—floods in the power plant. Throughout the epilogues the ghosts of Indian runners bring news of progressive calamity to the white man's world, and with the final disaster—the cracking of the “indestructible” Santa Mystiana Dam—comes the abandonment and the deluge.

The music of *Water! Water!*, with its popular feel and with few microtonal demands, was a new departure for Partch. So too was the use of a jazz band, which produced its own version of some of the songs in the show (these were arranged and directed by Jim Knapp, a jazz musician at the University of Illinois, but are not heard on this excerpted version). Partch's ever-evolving vision of the function of his instruments on stage here received a comic twist, in that six of them were placed on low platforms with casters so that they could move around on stage, “propelled by the player or by designated helpers.” At one point in the Second Prologue they start to attack the Producer, who tries to order them down to the pit (“where you belong!”); and in the Fifth Epilogue, when Arthur (leader of the jazz musicians) is on trial for causing a flood, Her Honor orders the Bailiff to arrest the noisy Bass Marimba for contempt of court.

As rehearsals for the work were in progress Partch began to see, as he put it some years later, that *Water! Water!* “is not a finished work. The two or many more years really needed to ponder and develop such an idea were not available, nor was there time to evolve, through long rehearsals, the techniques of farce, which in some ways are infinitely more exacting than straight drama or tragedy.” And yet, while perhaps the least characteristic of Partch's creations, *Water! Water!* is not at all the lemon he had thought it was; it stands as a flawed but highly enjoyable curio item in its creator's output.

The recording session for *Water! Water!* took place at the University of Illinois a few days after the work's final performance, on March 17, 1962, at the Studebaker Theater in Chicago. Several of the student performers were absent and their roles were taken by the principals; only parts of the work were recorded, and not all of them adequately. The extracts selected here by the composer were released as Issue G of his Gate 5 Records series in 1962. Several times thereafter he determined to withdraw the record as a statement of his dissatisfaction with the work but, “being human and impressionable,” changed his mind. The record was finally withdrawn from sale later in the year, but Partch would occasionally send a copy, free of charge and with an apologetic covering letter, to buyers of his other records. This compact disc release thus lets us hear the rarest of Partch's rarities.

—Bob Gilmore

Bob Gilmore is the author of *Harry Partch: A Biography* (Yale University Press, 1998).

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

17 Lyrics of Li Po. Stephen Kalm, voice; Ted Mook, tenor violin. Tzadik 7012.

Enclosure Two. Historic Speech-Music Recordings from the Harry Partch Archives. innova 401 (4 CDs).

Enclosure Five. Contains *Ulysses Departs from the Edge of the World, Revelation in the Courthouse Park, King Oedipus, The Bewitched.* innova 405 (3 CDs).

Enclosure Six: Delusion of the Fury. innova 406.

Revelation in the Courthouse Park. Tomato Records 2696552.

The Wayward. Newband, Dean Drummond, director. Wergo 6638.

The Harry Partch Collection Vol. 1. Contains *Eleven Intrusions, Castor and Pollux, Ring Around the Moon, Even Wild Horses, Ulysses at the Edge.* New World Records 80621-2.

The Harry Partch Collection Vol. 2. Contains *U.S. Highball, San Francisco, The Letter, Barstow, And on the Seventh Day Petals Fell in Petaluma.* New World Records 80622-2.

VIDEOS

Enclosure One. Four films by Madeline Tourtelot with music by Harry Partch (*Rotate the Body in All Its Planes, Music Studio, U.S. Highball, Windsong*). innova 400.

Enclosure Four: Delusion of the Fury. innova 404.

The Dreamer That Remains: A Study in Loving. Directed by Stephen Pouliot and produced by Betty Freeman. New Dimension Media, Inc.

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For more comprehensive information on Harry Partch, please visit the official Partch Web site, *Corporeal Meadows*, www.corporeal.com.

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Rotate the Body in All Its Planes was recorded in 1961 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign by James L. Campbell. First released on Gate 5 Records, Issue G, 1962.

Windsong was recorded in 1958 in Chicago by Harry Partch and Madeline Tourtelot. First released on Gate Five Records, Issue A, 1962.

Water! Water! was recorded in 1962 at the University of Illinois by James L. Campbell. This version is as excerpted for Gate 5 Records, Issue G, by the composer.

Front cover: Harry Partch with Gourd Tree, Del Mar, California, 1965.

Back cover: Madeline Tourtelot and Harry Partch, recording *Windsong* Chicago, Illinois, 1958.

Tray card:

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HARRY PARTCH (1901–1974)

THE HARRY PARTCH COLLECTION VOLUME 3

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Bar Code

File Under: Classical/Contemporary/Partch, Harry

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4–15. *Water! Water!—An Intermission with Prologues and Epilogues* (1961)

(excerpts selected by the composer) 37:49

Cast, chorus, and Gate 5 Ensemble; John Garvey, conductor

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