

## Christian Wolff: An Aesthetic of Suggestion

George E. Lewis

When Christian Wolff and Robyn Schulkowsky came to my Columbia University office in October 2012 for a chat about this project, I greeted them with a YouTube video they had never seen before: a performance of the concluding work on this CD, *Duo 7* from 2007. After some discussion it was determined that the video was apparently made by an audience member from a 2011 performance in Buenos Aires. “We’ve played this piece many times,” Schulkowsky laughed. “That’s a funny little piece.”<sup>1</sup> Indeed it was, and the performance was a fortuitous introduction to a conversation that I’ve reflected upon here.

Robyn Schulkowsky’s path to new music seems as fortuitous as one could imagine. Since the early 1990s she has lived in Berlin, but her musical career began in South Dakota. She applied to the Eastman School of Music, but “my parents wouldn’t let me go because it was in New York State.” So she ended up going to “new music school,” as she fondly recalled. “I wasn’t expecting anything. I didn’t know anything. I just wanted to be a percussionist. I’d had maybe twenty private lessons.” But she wound up as an undergraduate at the University of Iowa, one of the most exciting scenes in the emerging American new music of the 1970s, where fellow percussionist Steven Schick was a classmate, along with the trombone-violin duo of Jon English and Candace Natvig, clarinetist Michael Lytle, percussionist Will Parsons, and the African-American electronic music composer Richard McCreary, who later taught synthesis techniques to Muhal Richard Abrams and me at Governors State University near Chicago before becoming an ordained minister.<sup>2</sup>

Moving to New Mexico, Schulkowsky teamed up with saxophonist Tom Guralnick, doing improvised music concerts and organizing a concert series that brought in Anthony Braxton and Alvin Lucier, among others—“Besides us, there was *nobody* doing that kind of thing there”—as well as performing with the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra and teaching at the University of New Mexico. But in the midst of a 1980 European tour with the Chamber Orchestra of Santa Fe, Schulkowsky more or less defected from the ensemble: “I felt like, I’m 27, and I have to do this now, and I just jumped ship.” She moved to Cologne, where she began studying with percussionist Christoph Caskel:

I thought that if I went to Cologne and hooked up with Stockhausen, it would change my life—which in fact it did. I went there and started learning *Zyklus*, I played with Markus [Stockhausen] for years, I did some of the recordings for the operas, I did *Kontakte*. It was because of that music, actually, that I thought I should get to that source. Europe had Xenakis—*Psappha* was written by then. It had Lachenmann. I knew about the music, but I wanted to meet the people who did it. I couldn’t speak German and I was trying to learn it. The weather was awful, but Cologne was a great scene. We had Clarence Barlow, the Westdeutsche

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<sup>1</sup> Except as noted, quotations from the artists come from Christian Wolff and Robin Schulkowsky, “Interview With the Author” (2012).

<sup>2</sup> About Richard McCreary, see Aaron Horne, *Woodwind Music of Black Composers* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1990). Also see Illinois General Assembly, “Proclamation of the Illinois General Assembly, 2009–10,” <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/96/HR/PDF/09600HR08871v.pdf>. Accessed January 9, 2013. A legendary recording from the period that includes Lytle, Schick, English, Natvig and Parsons et al is “Iowa Ear Music,” Vinyl disc

Rundfunk, Walter Zimmermann and the Beginners Studio. We were close to Paris and everybody was going to Paris all the time, and Cage was there all the time.

“I was going to go back,” Schulkowsky remembered, “but it got easy to not want to go back. I realized I could actually exist there as a percussionist playing new music. I could research and practice and work with people and pay the rent. That was unheard of in this country.”

Percussionists are perhaps the most ardent of any instrumentalists in their articulation of space, and after three years in Cologne, Schulkowsky, ever in search of sufficient room and sonic isolation for practice and research with the thousands of instruments that percussionists inevitably accumulate, located a rehearsal space in an abandoned (and decidedly illegal) vinegar factory outside Munich. At the same time, she had made a breakthrough in mastering the difficult German language, and was developing a series of concerts at one of the major museums in the area, the Neue Pinakothek. She suggested that the museum invite Wolff, whom she had never met, for two evenings of performances. The pianist Marianne Schroeder had already asked Wolff to create a work for her and Schulkowsky, and the result was *Rosas*, one of Wolff’s most enduring politically themed works.

*Rosas* was commissioned by the city of Witten, Germany, for the Wittener Tage für Neue Kammermusik 1990. According to the score, “The indicated tempi are suggestions only. Dynamics are free, should be worked out by the performers, and of course be variable from performance to performance.”<sup>3</sup> There are more suggestions. In *Rosas* 5, “The notation of durations for percussion may suggest kinds of attack . . . or relative resonances of materials (instruments) chosen.” In some passages of the piano part, despite appearances, “pitches of notes on the staff are free (and variable).”<sup>4</sup> The pianist on this recording, Frederic Rzewski, is a former Harvard classmate of Wolff’s and an esteemed fellow traveler in the realms of experimental music. On this recording, Rzewski’s expression of performer agency consists in essentially strict adherence to the written pitches, performed with his incomparable sound and touch.

In *Rosas* 1’s percussion part, pitch is approximate, but suggested by the resonances of the instruments; the higher lines and spaces are specified as metallic (gongs, cymbals), and the lower portions are for drums. The percussionist is asked to create her own interpretation of the staff, and one strategy deployed by Schulkowsky was to choose instruments that suited both her image of the piece and her understanding of Wolff’s music more broadly. That understanding has only deepened over the more than twenty years of their association.

As Wolff has noted, this five-part work “draws, usually somewhat indirectly, from two spirituals, “Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho” and “O Freedom,” and from the “Prayer for Africa,” also known by its Xhosa title, “Nkosi sikeleli I Afrika.”<sup>5</sup> In a text written at the behest of Schulkowsky for a 1993 festival, Wolff wrote, “The songs provide a kind of ‘content’ for the music, that is, finding them both musically and politically congenial I have them as a point of expressive reference, and I hope that recalling a song will be an opportunity to recall its political occasion.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Christian Wolff, “*Rosas*,” (New York: C.F. Peters, 1990)

<sup>4</sup> Wolff, *Rosas*.

<sup>5</sup> Christian Wolff, “Program Notes,” in *Cues: Writing and Conversations*, ed. Gisela Gronemeyer and Reinhard Oelschlägel (Cologne: Edition MusikTexte, 1998), p. 516.

<sup>6</sup> Christian Wolff, “Changes and Continuities,” in *Cues: Writing and Conversations*, ed. Gisela Gronemeyer and Reinhard Oelschlägel (Cologne: Edition MusikTexte, 1998), p. 314.

But what makes *Rosas* a “political” work? The way in which its musical materials are deployed offers little in the way of direct sonic articulation of a political text. What we have from Wolff’s score is an epigraphic dedication, an intention—a suggestion: “The music is intended also as a tribute to two Rosas, Rosa Luxemburg, and Mrs. Rosa Parks.”<sup>7</sup> Wolff’s politics are sensitive to gender as well as race, and this epigraph features a quote from Mrs. Parks on her famous 1955 refusal to accede to an Alabama bus driver’s demand that she give up her seat in favor of a white person, an act that sparked the U.S. civil rights movement. Her remarks on the matter, as has been noted before, were a model of gracious understatement, but as quoted by Wolff, seem also to address notions of agency in experimental music: “I just didn’t feel like obeying his demand.”<sup>8</sup>

The politics of these works are emergent from the sound, and there are no easy prescriptions to be taken away from an encounter with these pieces. Unlike Rzewski’s own classic set of piano variations, *The People United Will Never Be Defeated*, no ringing manifestoes appear.<sup>9</sup> The *Rosas* never seem to exhort, but to persuade, and the main thing being persuaded is not that things must proceed in such-and-such a way, but a more powerful message—that things could be different than they are, and that it is up to both musicians and listeners to create the conditions for change. “The way the music is made and presented becomes a metaphor for a social situation,” Wolff ventured to Schulkowsky during our interview.

“I really love the percussion duos,” Schulkowsky said, “but they are so abstract” —

“You mean musically abstract, but sonically not,” Wolff interjected. “You present something which suggests to people the possibility of change, which starts from a feeling that what we have now really won’t do.” Indeed, what this music communicates is the necessity of challenge to the comfortable assumptions of this or any era. Once you start down that road, thoughts inevitably turn to what else might need fixing—ideals of beauty, or chimeras of control.

In fact, composition as a discourse is never far from discussions of control—how to achieve it, how far to take it, when to eschew it, and who in the musical network exercises it and to what degree. Composition, conceived in this way as a zero-sum system, offers a rather stereotyped matrix of received possibilities, and for those who regard the art as mainly about the working out of complex symbolic systems, the music of Christian Wolff must baffle, or seem enigmatic, distant.

In these duos, however, in which instrument choices are often left up to the percussionist, mutual trust becomes crucial, and Schulkowsky’s own forays into composition and improvisation provide the ground for a fertile collaboration in which she is called upon to create the sound of the pieces in ways that resonate with Wolff’s aesthetic of modest suggestion, rather than simple constraint or limitation. That way, each piece establishes its own sound world for that moment of its realization, while at the same time taking part in both Wolff’s larger musical history and that of experimental music more generally.

“I get this feeling that there’s a continuum between your practicing and improvising,” Wolff said to Schulkowsky. “As long as I can remember I’ve done that,” she replied. “There’s never been a lot of repertoire, so maybe that gets us to the point. I went to Cologne because of a lack of

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<sup>7</sup> Wolff, 1990. Music score, #17

<sup>8</sup> Wolff, 1990. Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Hear Frederic Rzewski, “The People United Will Never be Defeated” in *Piano Works, 1975-1999* (Nonesuch 79623-2, 2002). Compact disc

repertoire—[drums a simple, march-like rhythmic figure on the table] —how many years can you do that?”

I use the problems of a specific piece to create another platform to get better—especially in Christian’s music. The thing that’s frustrated me but has also always freed me is that he says so little about what I need to play, what the actual material has to be. So I can’t really start his music by playing on a table. I can’t really start the music until I can imagine something that’s going to make it come alive, and I can’t always imagine it unless I can try it out. And because we collaborate, he might not say anything, and if I have a table full of stuff, all that stuff has to work together, and of course I’m going to improvise first to see if I can do things with that material, and then I’m going to learn the music.

According to Michael Hicks and Christian Asplund, a kind of freedom attracted Wolff to percussion as a compositional substrate: “First, it was in a midground between fixed and open instrumentation: the type of *player* was determinate, but often could orchestrate at will (within loose parameters).”<sup>10</sup> As Wolff put it in our interview,

“It’s a physical process. You have to make your own keyboard, and you do it partly by making physical moves, even before you know what the sounds are going to be.”

“But you’re also creating a new instrument every time you do a new piece,” Schulkowsky added, turning to me. “He writes the music and then I have to sweat it out [laughs]. I have to figure out what to do.”

“Percussion is unusual that way, because you really don’t know what you are going to get,” Wolff observed.

You know a general category, but you don’t even know what the quality of sound of a given drum is going to be, unless you spend a lot of time in the studio with a particular percussionist with whom you’re going to work. I think of it—it’s bizarre, but like organ music. You never know what kind of registration is going to be available. I recently realized that Bach gives no registrations at all for all that organ music.

“You can do it generically—there’s clearly a difference in the kind of sound you’re going to get from skin as opposed to metal, but after that? You have degrees of resonance, relative pitch. If you’re into pitch you can tune the drums”—

“But they don’t hold for the whole piece,” Schulkowsky pointed out.

“And I’ve never been interested,” Wolff agreed. As Hicks and Asplund noted, with percussion “Wolff could bypass issues of pitch—always vexing in this late hour of Western harmonic vocabulary.”<sup>11</sup>

“Pitch is a drag sometimes,” he laughed. “The trumpet piece (*Pulse*, 1998) and the viola piece (*Violist and Percussionist*, 1996, premiered by Kim Kashkashian and Schulkowsky in 1998) have no specified pitch material at all in the percussion part. I can get pitch any time I want from all kinds

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<sup>10</sup> Michael Hicks and Christian Asplund, *Christian Wolff* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), p. 76.

<sup>11</sup> Hicks, *Ibid.* p. 76.

of stuff.”<sup>12</sup>

The discussion reminded me of a well-known story from Cage’s *Silence*:

Once in Amsterdam, a Dutch musician said to me, “It must be very difficult for you in America to write music, for you are so far away from the center of tradition.” I had to say, “It must be very difficult for you in Europe to write music, for you are so close to the center of tradition.”<sup>13</sup>

Indeed, the contemporary percussionist has models and even tradition, to be sure, but the absence of nineteenth-century virtuosi, virtually peering over one’s shoulder, can serve to further liberate the percussionist relative to her counterparts, say, at the piano.

While Wolff felt that improvisation was not really a factor in their collaborative process, Schulsky noted that performers who aren’t familiar with improvisation seem to have a more difficult time realizing pieces such as *Violist and Percussionist*. Responding to Wolff’s suggestion, Schulsky cited drummer Joey Baron, who performs on two of the pieces on this recording: “People who aren’t used to—as Joey would say, ‘you have to be able to give it up’ have a really hard time trying to decipher your symbols.”

Some of the pieces, such as *Violist and Percussionist*, use versions of the interactive, indeterminate notation made famous in works such as *For 1, 2, or 3 People* (1964). “A lot of—especially conservatory trained musicians just totally freak out when they see this notation,” Wolff recalled.

The first thing that’s missing is—well, everything’s missing. Pitch, and the other thing is rhythm. There’s no pulse, and that seems for some people to be unsettling. They don’t know what the beat is. So they don’t know what to play, instead of playing—well, actually, playing whatever you want, and then stopping when you hear the next sound. Or, waiting for a sound, and as soon as it stops, that’s when you play.

“The first time I did it I was puzzled, but I like to be puzzled,” Schulsky remarked. “You’re not telling them what to play.”

Universally in your music, it doesn’t matter who the instrumentalist is, as soon as you have to wait for a sound before you’re allowed to play—it’s a concept people have a really hard time with. And, you have to be able to hear the complex combination in what’s coming in, and because he doesn’t tell you what note it’s going to be, you can’t say, oh, when the A stops I’m going to play another note because it might not always be an A.

Again, the discussion recalled a passage from *Silence* in which Cage compares the role of the performer in Wolff’s 1958 *Duo II for Pianists* to the work of “a traveler who must constantly be catching trains the departures of which have not been announced but which are in the process of being announced. He must be continually ready to go, alert to the situation, and responsible.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Stephen Chase and Philip Thomas, ed. *Changing the System: The Music of Christian Wolff* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), p. 229.

<sup>13</sup> John Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings by John Cage* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1974), p. 74.

<sup>14</sup> Cage, *Ibid.* p. 39.

Similarly, dance historian Danielle Goldman, in her 2010 book, *I Want to Be Ready: Improvised Dance as a Practice of Freedom*, finds parallels between contact improvisation and the techniques of falling and slack musculature that 1960s Freedom Riders trained themselves in, becoming what Goldman called “creative improvisers . . . putting their bodies on the line.”<sup>15</sup>

In these cases, at the nexus of improvisation, agency, and indeterminacy, readiness becomes key to Wolff’s music, and many younger composers attempted to follow up on what they saw as the social and political implications of this aspect of his work. But in our conversation, in response to a direct query as to whether he was thinking about these implications, Wolff replied,

No, certainly not initially. I’m just writing music, making material for people to play music from. At the time I had almost zero political consciousness. I don’t know why. Partly it was that post-World War II period, McCarthy and the rest of it. It wasn’t until the 60s, when a lot of people woke up.

“Chamber music is the model,” Wolff concluded. “The idea is that there is this smaller group of musicians who interact, and who are all, as it were, on the same level—it’s not a hierarchical situation.”

“But that is you,” Schulkowsky responded. “I would say you live that model, so maybe it’s not consciously trying to be political, but because you live that way, it becomes sociopolitical. Obviously we’re all involved, and we need to be responsible, and questioning, and we respect each other.” In that light, where Michael Nyman in 1974 said of similar processes, “The composer gives the performer freedoms,”<sup>16</sup> what is clearly implied by both Goldman’s scholarship and the experience of Wolff and Schulkowsky is that no one can “give” freedom to another; the adversarial, class-based notion of composers as great emancipators seems less interesting today than the idea of composers, performers, and audiences working together to take advantage of opportunities to act in concert.

The Fluxus artist Dick Higgins’s term “Games of Art” has been applied to Wolff’s work,<sup>17</sup> and composer David Behrman’s classic article, “What Indeterminate Notation Determines,” which discusses early Wolff and Feldman pieces, tells us this about the task of the performer in these works:

The player’s situation might be compared to that of a ping-pong player awaiting his opponent’s fast serve: he knows what is coming (the serve) and knows what he must do when it comes (return it); but the details of how and when these take place are determined only at the moment of their occurrence.<sup>18</sup>

But in a December 2012 seminar at Columbia University, Wolff appeared to downplay the metaphor:

People have mentioned games in connection with these pieces. I’ve never been

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<sup>15</sup> Danielle Goldman, *I Want to be Ready: Improvised Dance as a Practice of Freedom* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), p. 97.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond, Second Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 18.

<sup>17</sup> Nyman, *Ibid.* p. 18.

<sup>18</sup> David Behrman, “What Indeterminate Notation Determines,” *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 3, no. 2 (1965), p. 67.

that interested in the notion of these things as games. I understand how people would get to that, but that seems too restrictive somehow. Music isn't really like chess. So we get back to the aesthetic issue, which is making a certain kind of sound, and that does matter to me.<sup>19</sup>

Quite apart from the game metaphor, however, Behrman's description of the performer's situation could be applied in equal measure to the listener; in both cases what is being foregrounded is the immediacy of the situation, as Wolff affirmed in a subsequent remark in the same seminar:

What matters with Cage and also with my music—not always, but in some cases—is momentary. It's just what's going on right at this moment. It may be just one single sound, or it may be a rather complicated thing, but that's it. There's no interest in how it got there or where it's going. It's just it, and then the next one, and the next one, and the next one. The reason why I use these particular procedures is because they produce a certain kind of sound, a sound that I want—not because it's socially . . . a thing to do. Maybe I'm overstating it, but you mustn't forget that the music is what's motivating the thing in the first place.<sup>20</sup>

In our interview, I explored possible affinities between Wolff's work and that of experimental theater director Augusto Boal, who worked extensively with radical educator Paulo Freire on the relationship between art, politics, pedagogy, and social interaction.<sup>21</sup> “Partly it's pedagogical,” he affirmed.

I spent all my life teaching, and I have no interest in lecturing. Basically, the so-called Socratic method was what I was interested in, which is an exchange. You want to find out what kind of head you're dealing with over there, and what kind of communication you can have with them, and you do it in a way that gets the best out of the other person that you can. Probably that mindset is what's at work in the music.

“But when we started off, early on, in the Fifties,” Wolff laughed, “we had such negative responses to our music that I thought, the hell with it, I'm just not going to worry about what people think, I'm just going to do it. But nowadays, kids find it cool. I'm amazed at the turnaround from that early period.”

Christian Wolff's is a spare, prosaic music, with little interest in straining after sonic novelty. Recalling the memorable title of philosopher David Rothenberg's book on improvisation, we can hear in Wolff a “sudden music” of emergent simultaneities, where both intuitive and fortuitous moments are bathed in an eternity of timelessness.<sup>22</sup>

But what does this kind of music offer us right now?

To paraphrase Benjamin Franklin, it offers us freedom—if we can keep it.

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<sup>19</sup> Christian Wolff, “Seminar at Columbia University” (2012).

<sup>20</sup> Wolff, *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> See Augusto Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (New York: Routledge, 1992). Also see Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1970).

<sup>22</sup> See David Rothenberg, *Sudden Music: Improvisation, Sound, Nature* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2002).

**George E. Lewis** is the Edwin H. Case Professor of American Music at Columbia University. He is the recipient of a 2002 MacArthur Fellowship, a 1999 Alpert Award in the Arts, a 2011 United States Artists Walker Fellowship, and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts. His widely acclaimed book, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (University of Chicago Press, 2008), received the American Book Award and he is the co-editor of the forthcoming two-volume Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies.

**Christian Wolff** (born 1934, Nice, France) is a composer, teacher, and sometime performer. Since 1941 he has lived in the United States. He studied piano with Grete Sultan and composition briefly with John Cage, in whose company, along with Morton Feldman, then David Tudor and Earle Brown, his work found inspiration and encouragement, as it did subsequently from association with Frederic Rzewski and Cornelius Cardew. He also had a long association with Merce Cunningham and his dance company. As an improviser he has played with the English group AMM, Christian Marclay, Takehisa Kosugi, Keith Rowe, Steve Lacy, Larry Polansky, and Kui Dong. Academically trained as a classicist, he has taught at Harvard, then, from 1971 to 1999, in music, comparative literature, and classics, at Dartmouth College.

**Joey Baron**, born in 1955 in Richmond, Virginia, started playing at age nine. Largely self-taught, a leader in his own right, Mr. Baron has over the years developed a unique approach to making music with the drum set. Presently, his activities include solo concerts, workshops, master classes, and drum music collaborations with percussionist Robyn Schulkowsky (*Dinosaur Dances*), as well as ongoing projects with Jim Hall, John Zorn, Steve Kuhn, Ron Carter, Bill Frisell, Lee Konitz, John Abercrombie, Joe Lovano, and Dave Douglas.

**Rohan de Saram** studied Western music (piano and cello) and Eastern music (Kandyan drum) as a boy in Sri Lanka. His parents then brought him to Europe where he studied with Gaspar Cassado, and then at sixteen won the Suggia Award in London, which led to work with Pablo Casals and then performances internationally with major orchestras. Interest in contemporary music followed with performances of Britten, Shostakovich, Cage, Feldman and many others, including Berio, Xenakis and Wolff, who wrote pieces especially for him. In 2005 he left the Arditti Quartet after many years to perform a wide range of musics—Western classical, contemporary and non-Western—and to improvise with a variety of instrumentalists. He has recorded widely for a number of labels. [www.rohandesaram.co.uk](http://www.rohandesaram.co.uk)

**Reinhold Friedrich** studied at the Hochschule für Musik Karlsruhe, where he is now professor of trumpet. Since his success at the ARD competition in 1986 he has appeared on all the major stages of the world, performs as a soloist with distinguished orchestras, and works regularly with Claudio Abbado. Mr. Friedrich's repertoire ranges from early music on period instruments to recent literature for solo trumpet, with a strong commitment to performing works of contemporary and living composers. He has made several recordings on the Capriccio (now Phoenix) label. The Friedrich/Schulkowsky duo has been performing new music together since 1998.



**Kim Kashkashian** has performed in recitals throughout Europe and the United States, with duo partners Robert Levin and Robyn Schulkowsky. She has played as a soloist with major orchestras in Berlin, Milan, Tokyo, Vienna, Chicago and Cleveland, under conductors including Mehta, Muti, Harnoncourt and Eschenbach. She has worked closely with such composers as György Kurtag, Luciano Berio, Giya Kancheli, Betty Olivero and Tigran Mansurian, whose works, along with those of Brahms, Bartók and Hindemith, she has recorded for ECM. She teaches at the New England Conservatory of Music, and she plays a leading role in the “Music for Food” project, an initiative by musicians to combat hunger in their communities.

**Frederic Rzewski** is a composer, pianist, and improviser. In the 1960s he followed in David Tudor’s steps as the premiere pianist for new music, and with Alvin Curran and Richard Teitelbaum co-founded Musica Elettronica Viva. He also worked with such jazz composer-improvisers as Steve Lacy and Anthony Braxton. His many compositions include *Coming Together*, *Les Moutons de Panurge*, *The People United Will Never Be Defeated*, *De Profundis*, and *The Road*. He has taught at numerous institutions, including Yale University, the University of Cincinnati, the California Institute of the Arts, and the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin, and from 1977 until his recent retirement, was professor of composition at the Conservatoire Royal de Musique in Liège, Belgium.

Percussionist **Robyn Schulkowsky** (born 1953) has been an innovator and collaborator throughout her life. From her studies in Iowa and Germany to her solo tours around the world, Schulkowsky has dedicated herself to revealing the wonders of percussion to people everywhere. An active musician on five continents, Schulkowsky moved to Germany during a heyday of experimental and adventurous classical composition. She has premiered and recorded some of the most important works of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, working with such composers as Sofia Gubaidulina, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Christian Wolff, John Cage, Morton Feldman and Iannis Xenakis, presenting their works in tours over most of the planet. Schulkowsky’s virtuosity has been captured on more than twenty recordings, including CDs with violist Kim Kashkashian and trumpeters Reinhold Friedrich and Nils Petter Molvaer, and seminal recordings of compositions by Christian Wolff and Morton Feldman.

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*Exercises*. New World Records 80658-2.

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Producers: Robyn Schulkowsky and Christian Wolff

Recording, mixing and mastering: Adrian von Ripka, except *Violist and Percussionist*, recorded by Matthieu Petitmangin

Recorded in Robyn Schulkowsky's studio in Berlin, October 5–6, 2011, March 15–16, August 28, and October 8–10, 2012.

Digital mastering: Paul Zinman, SoundByte Productions Inc., NYC

Cover art, including size, gallery credit, date, format of art (pastel, etc):

Photo credits:

Design: Bob Defrin Design, Inc.

All works published by C.F. Peters, Inc., except *For a Medley* and *Percussionist 5*, which are unpublished.

**This recording was made possible by grants from The Aaron Copland Fund for Music and the Francis Goelet Charitable Lead Trust.**

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Francis Goelet (1926–1998), *In Memoriam*

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CHRISTIAN WOLFF (b. 1934)  
*8 Duos*

ROBYN SCHULKOWSKY, PERCUSSION

80734-2 (2CDs)

DISC 1 [TT: 64:41]

1. *For Morty* (1987) 6:03  
w/ Frederic Rzewski, piano

2. *For a Medley* (2012) 11:32  
w/ Joey Baron, percussion

3. *Violist and Percussionist* (1996) 13:30  
w/ Kim Kashkashian, viola

4. *Percussionist 5* (2002) 9:12  
w/ Joey Baron, percussion

*Rosas* (1990) 11:20

5. No. 1 1:31

6. No. 2 3:17

7. No. 3 1:22

8. No. 4 1:36

9. No. 5 3:26

w/ Frederic Rzewski, piano

10. *Pulse* (1998) 12:26  
w/ Reinhold Friedrich, trumpet

DISC 2 [TT: 33:09]

*One Coat of Paint* (2004) 26:57

1. Part 1 6:38

2. Part 2 2:12

3. Part 3 18:01

w/ Rohan de Saram, cello

4. *Duo 7* (2007) 6:05  
w/ Christian Wolff, melodica