

*If my personal history during the eight years 1935–43 could be frozen in space, it would become a finely detailed mosaic of federal works jobs and transient shelters mingled with hordes of wandering Okies in the fruit harvests and an incredible number of dirty dishes.*

Words of the composer Harry Partch (1901–1974), writing about the eight-year period in his life he called his “personal Great Depression,” which began in the midst of the 1930s, and which “rolled along oblivious to world events, in its merrily confusing and grueling way,” until 1943. During those eight years he lived on and off as a hobo, working in orchards on the Pacific coast picking fruit, and occasionally seeking refuge in temporary jobs with the Works Progress Administration, the New Deal initiative established by Roosevelt to combat the Depression. Not an ideal career path for a composer, but then Harry Partch’s life is almost as extraordinary as his music.

His eight years of transient existence came to an end in March 1943 with the award of a Guggenheim Fellowship, which enabled him to devote himself full-time to composition. Among the results are the first four works on this disc, all but one of which spring directly from Partch’s hobo existence: *U.S. Highball—A Musical Account of a Transcontinental Hobo Trip*; *San Francisco—A Setting of the Cries of Two Newsboys on a Foggy Night in the Twenties*; *The Letter*, a setting of a letter Partch received from a hobo pal in 1935; and *Barstow—Eight Hitchhiker Inscriptions from a Highway Railing at Barstow, California*.

Partch’s compositions of the 1940s—and to some extent his work in general—have remained until recently an unwritten chapter in the history of American music. And yet it was these very pieces—the collection of four works he would later collectively entitle *The Wayward*—that brought him to the attention of the New York musical world. His concert of these pieces for the League of Composers (April 22, 1944, at Carnegie Recital Hall) established for him a small but permanent reputation as a musical maverick who had wandered off well-worn tracks and had developed a sort of lateral extension of his art, independently of any of the main circles of American music. For not only is all his music written for instruments of his own design and construction, but those instruments are tuned to a microtonally extended just intonation scale completely different from the equal temperament of the piano keyboard. A few of the instruments have been duplicated, but there remains to this day only one complete set, the original. Partch’s work is inseparable from his own hand-built instrumentarium—and not just in its sound but in its visual impact, which he considered crucial to his work in performance.

The musical starting point of the compositions of *The Wayward* is the inflections and rhythms of everyday American speech. From the beginnings of his mature output in 1930 Partch had been devoted to what he called “the intrinsic music of spoken words,” and these four works capture something of the spontaneous musicality of the conversations of the hoboes he befriended during the Depression. In their original form these pieces used only the small collection of instruments Partch had built or customized by 1943: Adapted Viola, Adapted Guitar, Chromelodeon, and Kithara. The versions recorded here are all later reworkings, sometimes with only small changes (as in the case of *San Francisco*), and sometimes involving a substantial amount of recomposition (as in the case of *U.S. Highball*). [Note: For comparison, recordings of *U.S. Highball*, *San Francisco*, and *Barstow* made in 1945 are available on *Enclosure Two*, a four-CD set of recordings from the Partch archives (innova 401)].

Partch returned to California in the spring of 1935 after a period of study in Europe to find the country in the grip of economic recession. Rather than “resume begging under the apology of my music,” he took to the road. With shelters for homeless men established by the Roosevelt administration, vagrancy seemed to have the ghost of government approval, a necessary evil while the Depression lasted. Although this life “in hobo jungles and skidrow rooming houses” was a wrenching ordeal for him, there were aspects of that way of life that had their own virtues, at least in retrospect. The first eight months of this “gypsy existence” in 1935–36 are chronicled in a journal he entitled *Bitter Music*. Besides sometimes humorous and sometimes despairing diary entries on the vicissitudes of the itinerant lifestyle, the journal contains musical notations of the speaking voices and the songs of his fellow hoboes. Quite uncharacteristically, these passages are notated in a conventional manner with piano

accompaniment, and do not use any of his own instruments—this may be one reason Partch later destroyed the journal. Although not published or performed in Partch’s lifetime, *Bitter Music* is clearly prophetic of his compositions of the early 1940s. [Note: Happily, a microfilm copy has survived, and *Bitter Music* has now been published and even performed. The text and musical notations are included in Partch, *Bitter Music: Collected Journals, Essays, Introductions, and Librettos*, edited with an introduction by Thomas McGeary (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991); and the drawings are published in *Enclosure Three*, a book of facsimiles of documents from the Partch archives (innova 402)].

The most substantial of the compositions of *The Wayward* is *U.S. Highball*, which records the thoughts and experiences of a solitary hobo on a long journey. It is an autobiographical piece, based on the musical inflections of the voices of the hoboes Partch encountered on a cross-country trek from San Francisco to Chicago, mostly by hopping freight trains, in September 1941. *U.S. Highball* is a musical bringing-to-life of jottings from the pocket notebook he carried with him on this trip, which still survives among his papers. From it he fashioned a text that flits between direct representation and symbolism. In the liner notes for the original release of the present recording on his Gate 5 label in 1958 he wrote:

The text consists of railroad station names whimsically distorted, a few of Mac’s (the protagonist’s) thoughts, bits of boxcar conversations, signs in havens for derelicts, and hobo inscriptions—all as Harry Partch thought, or heard, or saw them in 1941. The words were not consciously censored; obscenities were simply omitted or transmuted by whimsy when they became boringly repetitive.

The work proper begins with Mac’s line: “Leaving San Francisco—.” Before this, each of the ten instruments is introduced, one sound at a time (last two excepted), in the following order: Kithara, Surrogate Kithara, Chromelodeon, Pollux, Castor, Bass Marimba, Cloud-Chamber Bowls, Boo, Diamond Marimba, Spoils of War and Blo-boy (together).

Ostensibly telling the story of a hobo’s journey across America (Partch’s own journey), *U.S. Highball* contains little more than the skeleton of a linear narrative. But it is not a dimly remembered event viewed through the panes of later wisdom or disillusionment: It is much closer to the real thing, more like a disjointed musical diary. In this way he makes more vivid the aimlessness and haphazardness of the existence he is re-creating. Yet *U.S. Highball* is still not simply a musical travelogue; rather it is, in the composer’s words, a work of art

. . . that surges up and out of the strictly literal, the experienced narrative, even out of the abysmal. And because it is art, the strictly literal time and place of its concept form merely the flight deck for what follows. . . . The intensity of the experiences preceding it and the intensity of my feelings at the time forced me into a different welter of thought—one that I had to mold in a new way.

The second work on this disc, *San Francisco*, is a musical memory of the voices of two boys selling newspapers on a street corner on a foggy night in the 1920s. The choice of papers—the *Examiner* and the *Chronicle*—may be slightly tongue-in-cheek, as both those papers reviewed Partch’s San Francisco concerts in the early 1930s, and not always favorably. Around the newsboys’ cries the voice, Adapted Viola, Kithara, and Chromelodeon weave, in Lou Harrison’s words, “a spell of about the foggiest and dampest music I have ever heard.”

*The Letter* was originally written in 1943 for voice with Adapted Guitar and Kithara, and rewritten several times for expanded ensembles. The present version dates from May 1972, and was made on request for inclusion in the film *The Dreamer That Remains: A Portrait of Harry Partch*. In a note on the piece, which is a setting of a letter he received from a hobo pal in 1935, Partch commented:

The piece is stylized, partly to underline the perverse humor and the obviously warm regard, but mostly to convey—through sound and rhythm—the delight of reading a very unexpected letter from an old companion for the first time.

This 1972 version was made to be performed by Partch himself in front of the camera. The voice lines, with re-scored accompaniment, were to be done “live,” and the brief instrumental interludes (taken from the 1950 recording of the work) were to be played back on tape. An extract from *The Letter*, in this form, is included in *The Dreamer That Remains*; no final mix of the performance was made at the time, and the present version, never before released, has been reconstructed from the original recordings by Jon Szanto. One of the last recordings of Partch as performer of his own work, this performance has a rawness and intensity which make it of more than simply documentary interest. [Note: Partch’s 1950 recording of *The Letter* for his Gate 5 Records is available on CRI’s *The Composer/Performer* (CD 670)].

*Barstow* is a setting of hitchhiker graffiti that Partch copied down from a railing along the highway just north of the Mojave Desert junction of Barstow, California, in February 1940. The graffiti immediately suggested to him musical possibilities and, “thoroughly aroused by this sudden fountainhead of Americana,” he copied down all the legible inscriptions, eight of them, into a little notebook. Their appeal lay in qualities they shared with the hobo lore he had recorded in *Bitter Music*—an uncensored stream of consciousness, sprinkled with expletives, recording the small frustrations and the unpretentious sensibility of his fellow travellers; but there was the difference that, unlike the inscriptions in *Bitter Music*, or his attempt in *The Letter* to re-create the imagined voice of a long-lost hobo pal, this graffiti came without voices attached, thus leaving his musical imagination free to approach the texts as he pleased.

*Barstow* was written in April–May 1941 originally for voice and Adapted Guitar, with the intention that he could perform it as a solo work. Partch set the eight inscriptions with only slight editing of the texts as he had found them. Even the most prosaic scribbles from the highway railing—addresses such as “530 East Lemon Avenue,” “118 East Ventura Street,” “915 South Westlake Avenue,” or curses, “To hell with it,” “Damn it anyhow,” “Why in hell did you come anyway?”—are given distinctive and often funny musical treatments. Sometimes this takes the form of unexpected microtonal inflections in the voice part; the resources of Partch’s scale here add new qualities of sourness or quasi-drunkenness to familiar harmonic and melodic patterns. Despite the new departures in this piece, Partch himself stressed that it was “spiritually allied” to “the songs of the medieval troubadours . . . *Barstow* is simply ‘speech-music,’ or a music based on speech, in which every syllable and inflection of the voice is harmonized by the accompanying musical instruments . . . it thus combines a harmonic music with the pristine concept of melodic word forms.” New versions of *Barstow* for Partch’s ever-expanding ensemble are scattered throughout the next decades: He reworked the piece in 1943, in 1954, and (the present version) in 1968. *Barstow* was one of the core repertoire items of the San Diego–based ensemble that Danlee Mitchell formed in 1972, and which continued to exist after Partch’s death, until 1987; the present recording is from a live performance in 1982.

The final work on this disc dates from twenty years later than the compositions of *The Wayward*, and represents one of the high points of Partch’s later instrumental idiom. *And on the Seventh Day Petals Fell in Petaluma* was composed in Petaluma, California, in March–April 1964, and revised at various times and places until the completion of the final copy of the score in San Diego in October 1966. It marks a radical departure from the theater works he had written at the University of Illinois in the early 1960s (two of which, *Rotate the Body in All Its Planes* and *Water! Water!*, can be heard on CRI CD 753 [soon to be reissued as New World Records 80623-2]), and shows a renewed concentration on technical innovation and on fusing his activities as composer and instrument-builder within the context of a single composition.

The work’s less-than-metaphysical title was never intended to be mysterious: The “seventh day” is a reference to the new year dawning after a period of six years in which he had been absent from California. In September 1962 he visited a prospective new studio—a vacated chick hatchery—in the small town of Petaluma; as Partch later recalled, that very first visit gave rise to a musical concept. “On the day I looked the place over, I walked down the lane that led to the hatchery, and the way was strewn with petals—roses, camellias, and many others. Since I had these studies [which would become *Petals*] in mind for some time, and considering my strange

absence from California, twice, for exactly six years, the title came to me almost immediately.” In a “Statement” on the work written for CRI in 1966 he added rather cryptically: “However sentimental or Oriental it may sound, the fact remains: it was the time of falling petals, and this music followed.”

The work was conceived partly as “studies in preparation” for the dance-drama *Delusion of the Fury* (1965–66). Coming as it did after some two years of compositional inactivity, the music of *Petals* is both exploratory—the audible manifestation of a period of preparation in which new ideas were allowed to assemble themselves under the horizon—and reflective, in gathering those ideas, like falling petals, into an array. It was his intention to “exploit the instrumental resources to the full, exploring new techniques and . . . untried rhythms and polyrhythms.”

*And on the Seventh Day Petals Fell in Petaluma* is one of Partch’s rare excursions into “absolute music”: a thirty-six-minute instrumental work, radical in form, apparently unrelated to text or programme. Looking beneath the surface and delving into the folio of sketches Partch kept on the work, we find that, conceptually, *Petals* is not as “absolute” as it first appears; and in fact the music had not one but two essentially different layers of extra-musical significance both during and after the period of its composition. The first is Partch’s insistence that the instrumental “verses” of *Petals* were studies for the music of *Delusion of the Fury*, which he was already planning; during the composition of *Petals*, he wrote, “the placement of these musical ideas in the larger dramatic work . . . was constantly anticipated.” The second substratum of extra-musical significance is even more specific: Partch regarded the verses as musical portraits, in miniature, of various scenes and events of his daily life in Petaluma. In his sketches the verses were given titles, “verbal concepts” reflective of such everyday matters. Although these titles were ultimately abandoned, Partch announced them in his introduction to the concert premiere of *Petals* at UCLA in May 1966. On that occasion he remarked:

A small town, and Petaluma is a small town, tends to be introspective. It retains a kind of indigenous individuality—this despite TV waves from the nearest urban center. Little irritations become fantastically exaggerated, and it seems easier and more natural to observe small things, such as a fly getting dejuiced in a spiderweb in the corner. This is a commentary on my habits as a housekeeper, but it is also a commentary on the instability of life in traps—for men and nations . . . I generally work with verbal concepts, and not unlike others at least as far back as Aristophanes my concepts are often whimsically satiric.

Following are the titles that Partch announced, as taken from his typescript for the UCLA lecture, with the corresponding numbers appended:

*And on the Seventh Day Petals Fell in Petaluma—*

(1) They had been blooming for six days; (2) On the seventh they were tired of blooming; (3) They fall on historic ground; (4) An ant slept here, a spider died there; (5) Music for our times; (6) Pure music for pure people; (7) Nude at noon; (8) Transfigured on the postoffice steps; (9) Alleyoop in A Street (it is in A major); (10) Bubbalo in B Street; (11) Recognition Scene in the Pioneer Hatchery; (12) Pity! Pity! the white leghorn cockerel! (13) Good grief in G Street (it is in G major); (14) Delight in fright at night; (15) Sad! Sad! (16) With crickets in the hedges; (17) And mating calls of attic ghosts; (18) Andante cantabile in F Street (it is in F minor); (19) Death in Cobweb Corner; (20) And climax—in the public library; (21) The egg is wondrous! (22) It desires only to get fertilized; (23) Stay tuned for biology.

In its final version, *Petals* is a sequence of thirty-four one-minute instrumental verses. Verses 1–23 are duets and trios: They are played through first singly, then pairs of verses (in sequence) are played simultaneously to form quartets or quintets, Verses 24–33. After ten of these “double exposures,” the final three verses of the original sequence of twenty-three are combined to form a concluding septet, Verse 34. A complete listing of the verses is given below.

Verse 1	Zymo-Xyl, Crychord	}	—Verse 24
Verse 2	Surrogate Kithara, Bass Marimba	}	
Verse 3	Harmonic Canon I, Blue Rainbow	}	—Verse 25
Verse 4	Chromelodeon II, Koto	}	
Verse 5	Mazda Marimba, Boo	}	—Verse 26
Verse 6	Cloud-Chamber Bowls, Diamond Marimba	}	
Verse 7	Chromelodeon II, Bloboy, Kithara II	}	—Verse 27
Verse 8	Zymo-Xyl, Spoils of War	}	
Verse 9	Harmonic Canon I, Kithara I	}	—Verse 28
Verse 10	Diamond Marimba, Boo	}	
Verse 11	Kithara II, Marimba Eroica	}	—Verse 29
Verse 12	Koto, Spoils of War	}	
Verse 13	Harmonic Canon I, Cloud-Chamber Bowls	}	—Verse 30
Verse 14	Surrogate Kithara, Diamond Marimba	}	
Verse 15	Chromelodeon I, Kithara I	}	—Verse 31
Verse 16	Koto, Castor and Pollux	}	
Verse 17	Adapted Guitar II, Mazda Marimba	}	—Verse 32
Verse 18	Harmonic Canon I, Marimba Eroica	}	
Verse 19	Drone Devils, Gubagubi, Castor and Pollux	}	—Verse 33
Verse 20	Koto, Crychord	}	
Verse 21	Spoils of War, Bass Marimba	}	—Verse 34
Verse 22	Chromelodeon I, Boo	}	
Verse 23	Zymo-Xyl, Blue Rainbow, Gourd Tree and Cone Gongs	}	

On the title page of the final score Partch described the work as “Studies in techniques, timbres, double rhythms, double tonalities.” The extremely complex nature of the instrumental textures thus created results in his most virtuosic ensemble writing, especially from Verse 24 to the end. Overall, the music is so obviously designed to make full use of all his instruments that it seems as though Partch was determined that this work should vindicate his continuing activity as an instrument builder. Six new instruments built since 1960 are used in the final version, which uses a total of twenty-two instruments (all of them his own, with no “extras”); the only major omission is the Adapted Viola, which was, however, used in the first version. Fully two-thirds of the instrumental timbres in *Petals* are percussive in nature.

In the decade before the composition of *Petals*, the increasing dominance of percussion in Partch’s ensemble had led to fundamental changes in his musical language. The complex timbres of instruments like the Cloud-Chamber Bowls and the Boo (and later the Zymo-Xyl, the Mazda Marimba, and the Gourd Tree), together with their inability to produce sustained tones, obscured the prominence and the relevance of pitch as an organizational factor in the music written for them. His percussive idiom—of which *Petals* and *Delusion of the Fury* are the culmination—thus represents the furthest point on his musical spectrum from the voice and Adapted Viola works of the early 1930s, in which subtlety of intonation was paramount.

The rhythmic language of *Petals* is highly adventurous. Verses 1–23 make use of seven different metrical patterns. These range from regular ones notated in 3/4, 4/4, or 5/4, through the less common 20/16 (four quintuplets in the measure) or 18/16 (three sextuplets in the measure), to unusual repeating patterns of lengthening measures. From Verse 24 onward, when these verses are combined, a staggering array of polymetric combinations result (only two of the later verses —25 and 26—are not polymetric, but merely polyrhythmic). Some of these polymetric verses are relatively straightforward—Verse 31, for example, has a proportional relationship of 3:5 within the measure—while others are highly complex. Verse 24 (a superimposition of Verses 1 and 2) combines a lengthening-measure sequence in Zymo-Xyl and Crychord with a constant 20/16 rhythm in Surrogate Kithara and Bass Marimba, with only the very fast sixteenth-note pulse, constant in both layers, providing a common reference. The composer whose work most readily springs to mind in connection with these radical explorations in rhythm is Conlon Nancarrow; but although Partch had met Nancarrow by this time, we have no evidence whatsoever that Partch knew any of Nancarrow's *Studies for Player Piano*, which are concerned with similar kinds of rhythmic complexity. The connection may thus be purely coincidental.

This recording was made in three stages. Some of the verses were recorded in Partch's studio in Petaluma in April 1964 by the composer, Danlee Mitchell, and Michael Ranta. The recording was left incomplete when Partch was forced to vacate his studio (Danlee Mitchell recalls that more than one take had to be abandoned because of the noise of the bulldozer that had come to begin the demolition of the building Partch occupied). Recordings of the remaining verses, some of which had been rewritten in the interim, were completed in Partch's studio in Venice, California, in July 1966, with an ensemble consisting of Partch, Mitchell, Emil Richards, Wallace Snow, and Stephen Tosh. The synchronizing of tapes to realize the quartets, quintets, and septet was executed under supervision of the composer by Cecil Charles Spiller who, Partch wrote, "spent many hours, including wee small hours, with three Magnecords and some other equipment that he designed specially for this job." The result is still imperfect, but Partch decided it was acceptable within the limits of the technical sophistication of the time. The recording was released, with help from a grant from the National Institute of Arts and Letters, by CRI in 1967. Thus *Petals* was the first of Partch's works not to appear first as a private release, and CRI was the first "commercial" label to release his music.

It is striking that, in this first composition following his return to California in 1962, Partch should have reanimated the experimental, exploratory thrust of his earlier work. The image of the lane strewn with petals, which had stayed in his imagination since the day he had first set foot in Petaluma, is more apt than he himself perhaps realized. While on the one hand the array of fallen petals symbolizes the idea of a momentary pattern, and gives a sense of the arbitrariness of the attempt to grasp and fix those petals into an "ideal" configuration, there is also the sense that *Petals* was itself a pathway to something else—that even in the autumn of his compositional life the solitary path still held its old fascination.

—Bob Gilmore

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## **U.S. Highball**

*A Musical Account of a Transcontinental Hobo Trip*

Leaving San Francisco, Californi-o—  
I got a letter and the letter said—May God's richest blessings be upon you  
Dtuh dtuh dtuh-duh-duh-duh-duh-duh-duh  
Dtuh dtuh dtuh-duh blessings be upon you  
And that's why I'm going to Chicago  
Leaving Sacramento, Califor-nigh-o—

Going east, mister? Going east, mister? Going east, mister?  
It's the freights for you, boy.  
Leaving Colfax, Californi-ax.  
Let'er highball, engineer!  
Na na Na Na na-na-na-na-na-na—  
Leaving Emigrant Gap, Californi-ap!  
If you wanta stay in one piece sleep on the back end of the oil tank, buddy—  
She's tough goin' down the other side o' the Sierras.  
Na na Na na Na-na-na-na-na-na-na  
Leaving Truckee, Califor-nigh-ee-ee—  
Leaving Reno, Neva-a-a-a-a-a-a-do-o-o-o-o-o-o-o O—o-o-o-  
La la La la la-la-la-la-la-la-Lo—La la la-la-la-la-la-la Lo—lo-lo-lo  
Lo—lo-lo-lo  
Hey Mac, you'll get killed on that oil tank. There's a empty back here.  
Leaving Sparks, Neva—darks!  
I ain't got no matches, ain't got no tobacco, ain't got no chow, ain't got no money.  
Hey, Mac, is that blanket big enough for two?  
Hey, don't sleep with your head against the end of the car.  
You'll get your neck broke when she jerks.  
Leaving Lovelock, Neva-dock—  
She's gonna hole in to let a coupla passengers by.  
There she jerks again. That engineer don't know how to drive this train.  
Leaving Imlay, Neva-day—  
Freeze another night tonight, goin' over the hump.  
That's another bad hump this side o' Cheyenne. 'Tsa bitch.  
That Cheyenne, huh. That used to be a bad town, but not any more, so much.  
They used to have a school there for railroad bulls. But the school's moved to Denver.  
It moves back and forth, from Cheyenne to Denver. Stay out o' Denver, Mac!  
Leaving Winnemucca, Neva-ducca—  
They've gone and sealed up our empty, and all the rest are sealed refrigerators.  
Sh—not even a gondola.  
Moleen, Neva-deen—  
Wait for the next drag—there'll be lots a empties on it.  
Too cold to ride outside this weather.  
Look at them northern lights. See them long streaks up in the sky?  
You can't ride outside in weather like this.  
We'll build a fire so when the next drag stops all the 'bos'll come runnin' over to get warm.  
Then we'll know where there's a empty.  
Leaving Elko, Neva-do—  
There she jerks again. I can stand everything but them jerks. They make me nervous.  
And the dirt, too.  
Yesterday I washed all my clothes in the Roseville Jungle.  
And I looked so good when I put 'em on that I took a walk, up into town.  
Now look at me! Look at all the guys on this drag,  
Not only dirty, but they're old before their time.  
Ridin' freights'll make an old man out of ya, Mac.  
Still, I can stand that, and the dirt. Can stand everything but the jerks.  
Crossing Great Salt Lake, U-take—  
Any thirty-nine hundred engine is going east. That oil tank's a tough one to ride, though.  
Leaving Evansting, Wyoming—  
Watch out for those jerks the next fifteen miles, Mac.

You've got to hang on every second, or you'll go under when she jerks.

He really balls the jack goin' down the grade.

Green River, Wyo-mer—

Can stand everything but the jerks.

Rock Springs, Wyo-mings—

Going east, mister? Going east, mister? Going east, mister?

There are lots of rides but they don't stop much, do they, pal?

Back to the freights for you, boy.

And, since the drags don't stop at Rock Springs, back to Green River, Wyo-mer!

There are rides on the highway at Green River, but they go right on by.

There are rides on the freights at Green River too, but the Green River bull says:

You exclamation mark bum! Get your semicolon asterisk out o' these yards,

and don't let me catch you down here again, or you'll get thirty days in the jail house.

Green River, Wyo-mer—S-s-s-s-tuck! in Green River!

Little America, Wyo-ma—

Did I ever ride freights? Huh!

One time I was in the yards in Pueblo, sitting with some other 'bos around a fire,

waiting for the hotshot on the D and R G. Pretty soon an old man with a long white beard come out of a piano box on the edge of the yards and come over to warm his hands by our fire. He didn't say anything until some of the boys left to catch a drag that was just beginning to move out. Then the old man, who just come out of the piano box, says—

It's purty tough to be ridin' the drags on a night like this. I know. I was a bum once myself.

Leaving Little America, Wyo-ma—

I have a letter and the letter says, May God's richest blessings be upon you.

Dtuh-dtuh-dtuh-duh-duh-du-duh-du-duh-duh-duh-duh

Dtuh-dtuh-dtuh-duh blessings be upon you.

And that's why I'm thinking—Chicago—

Going east, mister? Going east, mister?

Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago

Leaving Laramie, Wyo-mie—Yih! hoo—

Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago

Leaving Cheyenne, Wyo-manne!

Chicago-cago Chicago-cago Chicago-cago

Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago

Leaving Pine Bluffs Wyo-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-muffs!

Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago Chicago

go-Chicago go-Chicago go-Chicago go-Chicago go-Chicago go-Chicago

Leaving Kimball, Nebras-kall!

North Platte, Nebras-katte—

Notice to transients: This city allows you two meals and bed for one night only.

Do not leave this place after six p.m. By order of the chief of police.

Praise the Lord O praise the Lord O praise the Lord O praise the Lord O praise the Lord

O praise the Lord O praise the Lord

Leaving North Platte, Nebras-ass-katte—

Praise the Lord

I can't a ride! To hell with Nebraska. Also to hell with Idaho, Wyoming,

Colorado, California, Nevada, and Utah.

Chicago go-Chicago -cago go-Chicago Chicago go-Chicago -cago go-Chicago

Leaving York, Ne-bras-kork—

ogo ogo aga ogo Chicago aga aga ogo aga Chicago

ogo ogo aga ogo Chicago aga aga ogo aga Chicago ogo ogo aga ogo Chicago

Leaving Lincoln, Nebras-kon—

Na na na na na—Na na na na na—Na na na na na—Na na na na na—

Na na na na na—Na na na na na—Na na na na na—Na na na na na—

Leaving Iowa City, Io-wuffs!

Jack Parkin—One-eleven West William Street, Champaign, Illinois.

Telephone Eight-Four-Two-Six—if hungry when there—

Yih! hoo—

Leaving Davenport, I-ee-o-u-wort!

Dah dah dah blessings be upon you Dah dah dah dah

Chicago

## **The Letter**

*A Depression Message from a Hobo Friend*

Cincinnati Ohio, October second, nineteen thirty-five,

Hello Pal—

Gee! I was glad to hear from you, believe it or not Pal I just received your letter today it must have followed me all over the world but it got to my wife and she broke it open and read it and sent it to me this morning. Well, I came back east and run into a shotgun wedding and I was the goat. So back on the bum again. Well, Pal, I had a swell time in Cincy till my wife's father found out I was back, and then the little lamb was led up to the altar. So now I'm just out of jail and feeling fine and I think I have a job starting the twelfth of October and I truly hope my dear little wife is dead by then. Give Kaintucky my best regards and tell him I'm not doing so well, but looking to score before long in fact I've got to or get in jail again, for it is cold out here, and I'm not good looking enough to get by that way do you get the drift. So I'll say goodnight and good luck, hoping to hear from you at once and tell me all the news.

Your pal,

Pablo

## **Barstow**

*Eight Hitchhiker Inscriptions from a Highway Railing at Barstow, California*

### *Number One*

[spoken] It's January twenty-six. I'm freezing. Ed Fitzgerald, Age nineteen. five feet ten inches, black hair, brown eyes. Going home to Boston, Massachusetts. It's four, and I'm hungry and broke. I wish I was dead. But today I am a man.

[sung] Going home to Boston, yuh-huh, Massachusetts. It's four p.m., and I'm hungry and broke. I wish I was dead. But today I am a man—Oh—O I'm going home—to Boston, yuh-huh, Massachusetts.

### *Number Two*

[spoken] Gentlemen, Go to five-thirty East Lemon Avenue, Monrovia, California, for an easy handout.

[sung] Go to five-thirty East Lemon Avenue, in Monrovia for an easy handout, gentlemen. Yo-ho-ho—Yoo-hoo-hooo—Ya-ha-ha—Yee-hee-hee—go to five-thirty East Lemon Avenue, in Monrovia for an easy handout, gentlemen. Yo-ho-ho—Yoo-hoo-hooo—Ya-ha-ha—Yee-hee-hee—

### *Number Three*

[spoken] Marie Blackwell. Age nineteen. Brown eyes, Brown hair, Considered pretty. One-eighteen East Ventura Street, Las Vegas, Nevada. Object, matrimony.

[sung] Age nineteen, Brown eyes, Brown hair, O but I'm considered pretty. Here's where I live— Dah-dah-dah-dah—One-eighteen East Ventura Street, Las Vegas, Nevada. Ta—Ta-ta-ta- ta-ta-ta-ta—ta-ta-ta- ta-ta-ta—My object is—Yoo-hoo-hoo—Matrimony!

### *Number Four*

[intoned] Dear Marie, a very good idea you have there. I too am on the lookout for a suitable mate. My description—No description follows, so he evidently got his ride.

### *Number Five*

[intoned] Possible rides: January sixteenth, fifty-eight. January seventeenth, seventy-six. January eighteenth, nineteen. January nineteenth, six. January twentieth, eleven. To hell with it—I'm going to walk!

### *Number Six*

[ad lib] Jesus was God in the flesh.

[sung] Hey hey hey—Jesus—Jesus was God in the fle-esh Hey hey hey—Hey hey hey—Hey hey Jesus was God in the flesh. Hey hey hey—Jesus—Jesus was God in the fle-esh Hey hey hey— Hey hey hey—Hey hey Jesus was God in the flesh.

### *Number Seven*

[intoned] Looking for millionaire wife. Good looking, Very handsome, Intelligent, Good bull thrower, Etcetera. You lucky women! All you have to do is find me, you lucky women—Name's George.

[sung] All—you have to do is find me—You lucky women—Name's George.

### *Number Eight*

[spoken] Here's wishing all who read this, if they can get a lift, and the best of luck to you. Why in hell did you come, anyway?

[sung] Damn it anyhow—Here I am stuck in the cold—I've come, Twenty-seven hundred miles from Chi—Illinois—Slept along the highway—slept in open boxcar without top—Went hungry for two days (raining too)—Dah dah dah dah—But they say there's a hell—What the hell do they think this is? do they think about this? Dah dah-dah dah-dah—Dah dah-dah dah-dah—Dah dah-dah dah-dah—Doh doh-doh doh-doo—I'm on my way—one half of desert to the east—Then back to El-lay—to try once more—Car just passed by, Make that two more, three more. Do not think they'll let me finish my story. Here she comes, a truck, not a fuck, but a truck. Just a truck. Hoping to get the hell out, here's my name—Johnnie Reinwald, nine-fifteen South Westlake Avenue, Los Angeles. Do—dee-dee do dee-do-dee Do—dee-dee-do—do—dee Do—dee-dee-dee—do-dee-do-dee Do—dee-dee-dee-do—Here's wishing all who read this, if they can get a lift, and the best of luck to you—Dah dah dah dah dah dah—dah dah dah—Why in hell did you come, anyway?

## 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.

## VIDEOS

*Enclosure One*. Four films by Madeleine 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 Stephan 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](http://www.corporeal.com).**

Originally produced by Joseph R. Dalton, Executive Director, Composers Recordings, Inc., and Danlee Mitchell, President, The Harry Partch Foundation

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*U.S. Highball* was recorded in 1958 in Evanston, Illinois, by James Cunningham. First released on Gate 5 Records, Issue No. 6, 1958.

*San Francisco* was recorded in 1958 in Evanston, Illinois, by James Cunningham. First release.

*The Letter* was recorded in 1972 in Encinitas and San Diego, California, by Mark Hoffman and Peter Middleton. First release.

*Barstow* was recorded live in 1982 at Mills College, Oakland, California, by Mark Hoffman. First release.

*And on the Seventh Day Petals Fell in Petaluma* was recorded in 1964 in Petaluma, California, by Mike Callahan, and in 1966 in Venice, California, by Cecil Charles Spiller. Original tape edited by Harry Partch and Cecil Charles Spiller. First released on CRI SD 213 in 1968.

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**HARRY PARTCH (1901–1974)**

**THE HARRY PARTCH COLLECTION VOLUME 2**

80622-2

**The Wayward**

1. I. *U.S. Highball—A Musical Account of a Transcontinental Hobo Trip* (1943, rev. 1955) 25:20  
Gate 5 Ensemble (Evanston, Illinois): Thomas Coleman as “Mac,” Dick Borden, Melvin Britton, Michael Colgrass, Elizabeth Gentry, Danlee Mitchell, Harry Partch, David Reid, Melvin Wildberger; Jack McKenzie, conductor
2. II. *San Francisco—A Setting of the Cries of Two Newsboys on a Foggy Night in the Twenties* (1943, rev. 1955) 02:28  
Harry Partch, Adapted Viola, voice; Danlee Mitchell, Kithara II; Elizabeth Gentry, Chromelodeon
3. III. *The Letter* (1943, rev. 1972) 02:48  
Harry Partch, intoning voice, Omicron Belly Drum; David Dunn, New Kithara I, Surrogate Kithara; Dennis Dunn, Harmonic Canon III; Randy Hoffman, Omicron Belly Drum; with dubbed-in interludes from the 1950 recording by Harry Partch, Ben and Betty Johnston, and Donald Pippin
4. IV. *Barstow—Eight Hitchhiker Inscriptions from a Highway Railing at Barstow, California* (1941, rev. 1968) 9:57  
The Harry Partch Ensemble, Danlee Mitchell, music director: Ron Caruso, Randy Hoffman, Gary Irvine, Alan Silverstein, Francis Thumm
5. **And on the Seventh Day Petals Fell in Petaluma** (1963–64, rev. 1966) 35:50  
The Gate 5 Ensemble, Harry Partch, director: Danlee Mitchell, Harry Partch, Michael Ranta, Emil Richards, Wallace Snow, Stephen Tosh

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