

DAVID ROSENBOOM

How Much Better if Plymouth Rock Had Landed on the Pilgrims

(Composed and developed during the period 1969–71, new realizations and revisions made in 2004 and 2008.)

DISC 1 [TT: 61:31]

1. ***Section I (essential tension to universe)*** 2:22

Erika Duke-Kirkpatrick, twenty cellos in harmonic and sub-harmonic rational tunings
Studio recording: October 11, 2008

2. ***Section II (symmetrical harmonies in chaotic orbits)*** 13:03

David Rosenboom, computer. On excerpt from historical recording (1973): David Rosenboom, Neurona Company Omnivoila electronic music modules. On excerpts from historical performance (1969): David Rosenboom, chaotic frequency divider circuits, Eico waveform generators, Heathkit analog computer, Heathkit Malmstadt-Enke analog/digital designer, and three-deck tape accumulation system. On excerpts from historical performance (1970): Thomas G. McFaul, wah-wah piano; Lynn David Newton, electric bass; David Rosenboom, Neurona Company Omnivoila electronic music modules, Vox organ, dumbek, and tape accumulation system. On excerpt from historical performance (1970): David Rosenboom, Vox organ, Gerald Shapiro, ARP 2500 synthesizer; Michael Slevin, tambura
Studio recording: January 10, 2009

3. ***Section III (world)*** 2:17

Vinny Golia, five Tubaxes (contrabass saxophones) and giant underground water cistern
Studio recording: January 2, 2009

4. ***Section IV (life)*** 9:08

Erika Duke-Kirkpatrick, cellos; Vinny Golia, G and C piccolos, flute, E-flat and B-flat contrabass clarinets, soprillo and soprano saxophones, and 1.4 shakuhachi; David Rosenboom, field recordings of wildlife in Central Park, New York (2007)
Studio recording: October 7, 2008

5. ***Section V (humanity)*** 34:38

Swapan Chaudhuri, tabla; Vinny Golia, piccolo, flute, bass flute, and C soprano saxophone; Aashish Khan, sarode; Daniel Rosenboom, trumpet; David Rosenboom, piano and computer; I Nyoman Wenten, pemade. On excerpts from historical performance (1979): Donald Buchla and David Rosenboom, two Buchla Series 300 Electric Music Boxes
Live performance ensemble: November 1, 2008

DISC 2 [TT 55:54]

1. **Section VI (culture)** 16:52

Double rock bands, PLOTZ! and DR. MiNT: Tony DiGennaro, electric bass; Caleb Dolister, drum set; Sam Minaie, electric bass; Alex Noice, electric guitar; Daniel Rosenboom, trumpet and arrangement; David Rosenboom, piano; Gavin Templeton, alto saxophone; Jake Vossler, electric guitar; Brian Walsh, baritone saxophone; Austin Wrinkle, drum set

Live performance ensemble: October 26, 2008

2. **Section VII (impression)** 13:37

David Rosenboom, piano in expanded pelog tuning; I Nyoman Wenten, pemade; William Winant, jegog and calung

Live performance ensemble: December 14, 2008

3. **Section VIII (unification)** 12:45

Daniel Rosenboom, piccolo trumpets, cornets, and bass trumpets; David Rosenboom, piano, drawbar organ, and computer

Studio recording: December 6, 2008

4. **Section IX (links) (aka Piano Etude I)** 12:41

David Rosenboom, piano and computer; I Nyoman Wenten, kendang; William Winant, marimba

Live performance ensemble: December 14, 2008

Revisiting Plymouth Rock

Chris Brown

Like the country whose colonization its title mocks, David Rosenboom's *How Much Better if Plymouth Rock Had Landed on the Pilgrims* evolved over many years into a richly complex musical organism. Created by a young pilgrim exploring the new musical land of drones, tape delay, and live electronics in the 1960s, Rosenboom's approach to the territory began with the intention of correcting the errors of musical Puritanism, by casting down a new type of "rock"—a composition that is at once strict but also very free, harmonic but also subharmonic, based on order but inclusive of chaos, and embracing a wealth of musical styles and influences. Unwinding the potential of the structure he defined at its outset, his rock reveals itself to be more a *seed* than a boulder, and the piece's real subject becomes the observation of the varied trajectories of its own evolution.

The first four sections of . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . . were written in early 1969, five more emerged soon thereafter, and all were developed further over the next two years as part of a musical practice that included both the invention of analog electronic music circuits and intensive improvisation with drones, modes, and polymeric melodic phase patterns. The music drew freely on influences from American blues, jazz, and rock, Indian ragas, and free improvisation, and was performed in immersive sonic and visual environments that included live electronics, light shows, dance, and audience interactivity. In Rosenboom's words, the work was "more like a 'way of life' than a 'piece,' developed through aural tradition, collaboration, and emergence . . . that was somehow allowed to spring into reality without benefit from or restriction by predefinition."¹ It asserted that the purpose of composition was less the creation of preconceived, fixed forms than the prescription of processes that evolved through extended periods of practice and growth. At its core, it aimed at a spiritual musical practice, based on technology and science but not limited by them, toward the discovery of "all sorts of things humans can sense, though not explain."

Section I (essential tension to universe) is described by Rosenboom as "a compositional koan," whose simple instructions are: "Start with one tone. Proceed to the next tone when you know what it should be." In realizing this piece, he has selected tones from what he describes as "a kind of *universe chord* for . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . . , which consists of ten notes from each of the harmonic series and a coincident subharmonic series, in which the first harmonic is the same note as the 16th subharmonic. This chord can be considered as the metaphoric *Plymouth Rock* (seed) itself, since "the musical forms in the sections to follow might be thought of as having origins in the matrix of tonal relationships contained in this chord."

The *harmonic series* is quite familiar to most musicians—it consists of pitches whose frequencies are integer multiples of a starting frequency, also called the "fundamental." So, if the fundamental frequency is 1, then the other notes in the series have frequencies defined by the ratios 1/1, 2/1, 3/1, 4/1, 5/1 . . . etc., ad infinitum. The notes of the series form a chord whose pitches rise in progressively smaller intervals over the previous one in the series. Dividing strings or air columns by integer lengths easily produces its lower notes, and the vibrations of these "partials" combine in changing amounts to create the recognizable tone-colors of string and wind instruments. The harmonic series also forms the basis for major tonalities, what the American composer, theorist, and instrument builder Harry Partch called the "otonality" (over-tonality), made up of interval ratios with odd numbered numerators and even denominators. It is also often identified with "natural" or "just" tunings, and experimental composers from Partch to La Monte Young have based their musics on this principle. Rosenboom played in Young's Theatre of Eternal Music ensemble in the late 1960s, where he became intimately acquainted with the upper regions of the harmonic series: "This ensemble was able to achieve a degree of perfection in tuning drones which allowed us to concentrate on the musical action that would emerge in the extreme upper-harmonic region of the drone chord. Minute phase differences in these harmonics would cause reinforcements and cancellations, producing a rich melodic texture that could only be achieved if the lower harmonics of each musician's chord tone were tuned with very high accuracy. . . . I became extremely interested in making music out of the *inaccuracies* emerging from highly disciplined and effortful human practices."²

On the other hand, the *subharmonic series* has traditionally been considered as a purely theoretical construct, being simply the inverse of the harmonic series, as defined by the *divisions* (1/1, 1/2, 1/3, 1/4, 1/5 . . . etc.), instead of multiples of the integer series. Its intervals are of the same size, but the pitches grow downward, resulting in a very different set of frequencies, whose ratios with respect to the fundamental pitch have even numbers in their denominator and odd numbers in their numerator. Partch called these "utonality" (under-tonalities), and their intervals are associated with minor tonalities. Since this series cannot be found by dividing the lengths of strings or tubes, many theorists have asserted that its intervals are "less natural," and that therefore major tonalities are "more natural" than minor ones. Conventionally, major harmonies are often described as happy, minor ones as sad; major keys are associated with light, and

minor ones with darkness; going further, major might represent the overworld (heaven) and minor the underworld (hell)! During the Baroque musical era, which began roughly around the same date that the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock (1620), pieces in minor tonalities conventionally ended with a final major chord, requiring that good triumph over evil.

Rosenboom's . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . . chord combines both aspects of this tonal and mathematical duality in a single universe. It is a mixed-up chord, made of equal parts darkness and light, in which the lower regions are dominated by the subharmonic and the higher regions by the harmonic intervals. In his realization of *Section I* for this recording, he treats the whole chord as a kind of prism—twenty cello tracks glissando from the center 4th harmonic to refract equally through all ten *harmonic* (above) and ten *subharmonic* (below) notes of the chord. The resulting character is emotionally ambiguous, containing the possibility of infinite combinations of sweet and sour. In the rest of the pieces in the series, he mines this mixed-up palette to create different flavors for each piece.

His compositional decision to base . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . . on overlapping subharmonic and harmonic series was inspired less by the abstraction of its mathematical symmetry than on his real-world experience with electronic music circuits. Experimenting with basic, yet newly available solid-state components (operational amplifiers and zener diodes), he hit upon a circuit that could readily produce the subharmonic series, which for him contradicted the assumption that these relationships could not occur in nature. “We know now that this view is erroneous. Subharmonic phenomena have been and are now increasingly deeply studied in the fields of non-linear dynamics and chaos. They have been found to occur . . . in acoustics (especially in the vibration of stiff media with limited degrees of freedom) . . . physiology, neuroscience, human vocal sound production, and a host of other humanistic and scientific fields . . . human auditory perception is acutely sensitive to detecting these unique phenomena . . . we can hear things we often can't explain.” Feeding a sine wave into this frequency-divider circuit while changing a DC control voltage connected to another point, he produced an output pulse wave that swept through the subharmonic series of the sine wave. Combining other oscillators with the output of his frequency-divider circuit, the . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . . universe chord came into being, and he spent long hours listening to it play against drones. Sending these electronic arpeggios through tape-delay systems produced rhythmic symmetries for framing the improvisations, and built up thick harmonic textures. This is the music that can be heard in *Section II* (*symmetrical harmonies in chaotic orbits*), with electric organs, effects processors, and acoustic instruments joining in to create sustained, yet driving and ecstatic performances that would go on for hours.

But there was another discovery provided by the divider circuit's behavior—it was imperfect, and its imperfections became another important aspect of . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . . 's musical character. “Fascinating instability regions were obtained around particular reference voltage thresholds, for which the output signal would become chaotic . . . the output would flip from one integral frequency division to another in a complex fashion”.³ “. . . [T]he circuit enabled one to *perform* these instabilities in a dynamic fashion. Now, much later, after decades of developments in the field of non-linear dynamics, we know this circuit behavior to be a prime example of the mathematics of chaos, which is so central to natural processes in life and the cosmos.” So, in addition to its role in providing the tonal underworld to the composition, the electronic circuit also pointed the composer in the direction of noise, and thus toward a model for his music that was open to non-linear forms of realization. In effect, it pointed away from an emphasis on stability and purity toward an acceptance of instability and hybridity, which came to represent a “way of nature” reflected in his music. Paradoxically, the ability to work with imperfections in the system came only from highly disciplined pursuit of its perfections; but that pursuit was no longer bounded by a desire for purity, but opened to the emergent chaotic behavior that was revealed. Thus the acceptance of, and balance between elements of order and disorder became the touchstone, the Plymouth Rock of the piece, as well as a primary theme in his work in the decades that followed.

Each of the remaining seven sections of . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . . projects a holistic acceptance of these dualities by variable means. Their musical materials were selected for different performance situations, but all emerged from intensive observation of processes first developed while playing with the *universe chord*. *Section III (world)* prescribes pieces tuned to “ecological and geographical resonances of the areas in which they are to be played.” An underground water tank provided the location for the realization on this recording, and its resonances are explored by five tubaxes (a rare type of contrabass saxophone). Using the strongest resonant frequency of the tank as a fundamental, each sax part begins playing a note from the very low range of the subharmonic series (the 9th, 10th, 11th, 13th, and 15th subharmonics), and then improvises a brief transition to the fundamental. This piece is thus a retrograde of the form of *Section I* using only the subharmonic half of the universe chord. *Section IV (life)* is “A piece tuned for Central Park (72nd Street, West Side area).” Rosenboom transcribed drones, a mode, and glissandi from sounds of wildlife he heard in the location near where he lived in 1969; nearly forty years later, he created a realization using a recent recording of the same New York location, to which winds and strings add improvisations based on what they hear in the recordings and the materials in the score.

Section V (humanity) became one of the most often performed parts of . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . . It requires its performers “to learn how to play a set of melodic patterns with tremendous fluidity and agility and to work with them until the form and structure emerges from shared listening and performance practice.” The melodic patterns are derived from a simple mode that includes a major 3rd, perfect 4th and 5th, and minor 7th. The 3rd and 5th are found in the harmonic, and the 4th and 7th in the subharmonic series, thus the mode is balanced between the two poles of the *universe chord*. (It also could be thought of as a *shadow* of *Rags Abhogi* and *Bageshri*.) The realization on this recording includes an *alap* (in Indian classical music, an introduction of the mode played without pulse) shared between four instruments, two each from the West and from Asia, underscoring the goal to celebrate “idealized, global, undifferentiated humanity.” Then the pulsed section begins based on melodic patterns generated from phased permutations of overlapping five- and six-note figures. Synthesizers, piano, a Balinese *pemade*, and *tabla* provide a complex temporal ground woven from both symmetrical and asymmetrical subdivisions of beats, over which the melodic instruments improvise with a set of patterns provided in the score. *Section VI (culture)* is subtitled “*Traveling music version of V*,” and is based on a similar mode, adding a “blue note” minor 3rd in the ascent and using the 4th only in the descent. The score contains parts written explicitly for piano and guitar (unlike *V*, in which the patterns are generically available for any instrument to adapt), referencing funk, blues, and metal idioms. The rhythmic cycles also use simultaneous patterns in four, as well as five and six beats. The realization for this recording is arranged for two rock bands led by Rosenboom’s son, the trumpeter and composer Daniel Rosenboom.

Section VII (impression) had never been realized until the present recording. Its ground is a six-note ostinato figure that cycles continuously while a higher-pitched line specifies longer patterns to play against it. It is set here as a duet for piano and Balinese gamelan instruments, and the score was extended to accommodate the traditional *pelog* scale, with the piano retuned to match. The ostinato occurs here in two forms, the first one using the intervals most commonly used in *pelog*, and the second, heard first just after two minutes into the performance, in a mode closer to a Western sensibility; the piece alternates in a rocking fashion between them.

Section VIII (unification) uses a mode similar to that of *Section VI*, but focuses more clearly on the “blue” minor 3rd’s relationship to the major 3rd, using each with equal frequency and duration—(also thought of as a *shadow* of *Rag Jog*). Otherwise the music lingers on the dominant 7th chord, emphasizing its potential to suggest motion, without ever taking that direction. The rhythmic mechanism in this section is perhaps the simplest yet; no specific overlapping of melodic fragments is specified, just simply the instruction: “Follow

the leader, or *raga* canons . . . Human delay chain. Each person follows the person ahead of him, playing exactly what that person did a specified number of beats later. One person is leader. . . .” When realized as a solo, tape delay was often used to create the canons; here, that principle is enhanced with the addition of electronic resonators tuned to the mode that supports an extended *alap* improvisation by solo trumpet. The rhythmic section is marked by the introduction of digital delays that gradually accumulate in number and density over an organ and piano accompaniment moving steadily and deliberately like a mantra.

Section IX (links) moves to the smallest possible pitch motives—two and three notes—with the fastest tempo in the series, providing a driving and insistent finale. The tonal materials are predominantly utonal (minor), and the emphasis is on the interlocking of different individual tones from the motives inspired by the *gamelan* techniques of *imbal* or *imbalan* in Javanese music and *kotekan* in Balinese music, where individual players on separate instruments produce composite, linked patterns. The piece was originally written as a fiendishly difficult piano etude for the pianist J.B. Floyd. Its rapid, repeated-note style resulted from exercises invented in an effort to apply *tabla* drumming techniques to the piano keyboard. In this realization piano and marimba interlock using these techniques accompanied by Balinese drumming in “a final dance celebrating the vibrating loops of life and cosmological forms.”

Ending with the most mechanically concentrated piece in the entire series, Rosenboom emphasizes an important aspect of his work as a whole: While his materials are often discovered algorithmically and frequently realized first in the electronic medium, they migrate consistently toward embodiment in acoustic instruments played with virtuosic physicality. Mechanism as a source of inspiration is a seldom-emphasized aspect of the American minimalist movement, to which Rosenboom’s music is a clearly related, yet singular branch. Where tape-delays, electronic drones, and mechanical compositional processes were used by many composers who have played a role in the music revolutions of the 1960s, the most prominent of these moved sooner or later away from emphasizing them, instead transforming their harder edges into more palatable, even sentimental, vehicles for soothing the relationship of composer to the marketplace. Not Rosenboom—here there is an insistence on the electromechanical as a discipline—as a way toward discovery and freedom. Emulating the machine becomes a way to emerge through it into a newer state of being. Algorithms and improvisation are never isolated from each other in his music—it is in butting heads with each other that music is created! . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . . is a magnum opus demonstrating that a process beginning with an electronic circuit can be codified, practiced, and permuted over the course of forty years to encompass a whole world of musical styles, techniques, and experiences. Composition is a prescription for a process that one may follow with full freedom, one in which music retains its primary role, not as an object, but as an activity designed to enhance human perception, as a physical and social ritual, that reflects the world as it is, while also changing it.

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¹ David Rosenboom, private communication, February, 5, 2009. All of the quoted passages that follow without footnotes are also taken from this source.

² David Rosenboom, “B.C.–A.D. and Two Lines: Two Ways of Making Music While Exploring Instability In Tribute to Salvatore Martirano,” *Perspectives of New Music*, Volume 34, No. 1, Winter 1996, p. 214.

³ *Ibid.* p. 214.

“The ’60s” as an Intellectual Monster

Sande Cohen

Historical representation has limited ways to put perspectives on something as singular *and* malleable as “the ’60s.” Everything, so to speak, “counts” here. As the American historiographer Hayden White pointed out, some “pasts” offer to their future experiences that are matrix and force, cause and condition, almost *sui generis*, difficult to synthesize—even impossible to narrate into fixed conventions of beginnings and endings, without making serious distortions. At the same time, consciousness of historical reality can be insightful when it is made from conflict and reflection—the defeated Thucydides offered a powerful narrative interpretation of failure. Being “wrong” in judgment can have felicitous outcomes, just as being dominant can have nothing to do with truth and knowledge. Hence, a past that is not past and a present that must radically scour itself for prejudice: is this already continuity of, and with, “the ’60s,” insofar as the latter is where event and language parted company again, as they had many times before, defining the future-present as a place of challenge to representation and to the past?⁴

“The ’60s” is subject to extreme disputes, saturated in such super-terms as progress and decline. The latter terms are a historiographic classification, shaped by ideations, thought-forms, and images of victory/defeat, and figured forth in every manner possible, e.g., scholarly books, manga, journalism, high-end magazines, doorstep-sized reference works: take your pick, as the cumulative representational apparatus can overwhelm the referent called “the ’60s.” Concepts such as progress/decline *contain* and control representation. For instance, some commentators insist that “the ’60s” be seen as an era of liberation(s) and violent schizzes—two million Vietnamese murdered as civil rights and related legislation integrated many more millions of American citizens. Forty years after serious critiques were made against the hierarchies and privileges of university-based arts and humanities (self-policing writing and evaluation processes politicized to serve institutions), the latter have more cultural “prestige” just as the lives of even arts and humanities professors, students, *et al.* are more difficult than ever (rise in prestige = waning of tenure and decent posts?). The ideal of meritocracy has given way to a widespread acceptance of mediocrity—for some, forty years of cultural warfare centered in the universities has ensured more art and culture = a larger indifference. In short, “the ’60s” is an intellectual monster because there is no credible narrative that can incorporate its violence, contention, upheaval, *and* its contributions (e.g. MRI machines); it is not possible to join its avant-garde practices to the hardly less spectacular re-routing of banality into American life—consumerism melted into mass-psyche.⁵ Perhaps the discourses of progress/decline are not the right “fit,” and certainly “the ’60s” cuts across political territories—Nixon expanded welfare, Clinton contracted it. Did it culminate earlier notions of progress and kick-start new ones by thriving on the “cloudiness of reference” in relation to decline/decay, the latter weak because still steeped in affects of the natural? It can be noted that in trying to figure forth “the ’60s” as progress/decline or in related terms, progress once upon a time referred to the past, not to the future—for ancient writers, Rome could offer duration and security, but no movement to a better future, thus senses of decline were frequently represented in contest with progress, unlike today, where decline is a right-wing obsession and progress assumed by *any* political group that wields authority. Is “the ’60s” a case of progress without decline, e.g., progress something general and constant and the negative something partial, so decline/regression is no longer credible—“the ’60s,” when “the system” really came into its own? Many groups then thought notions of perfection had switched from a goal to a process, i.e., progress *is* perfecting, a collective singular, universalized, “the ’60s” an objective genitive—progress and perfection its agent/agency, unforeseeable innovations incomparable with the past.⁶

I was stunned a couple of years ago when I heard the music historian-critic Greil Marcus in conversation with Jon Wiener, on the latter's radio show, on L.A.-based KPFK. Two solid progressives busy making "the '60s" return as an object of importance, Marcus was selling a book and the two of them waxed up the following proposition: Bob Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone" was *the* song that encapsulated "the '60s," the one that holds its "all," here the spirit of '60s displacement of social-political repression. How could two informed historians still draw from the well of representation in which a temporal moment, "the '60s," is swallowed whole by one song, out of countless other songs? For instance—to keep to the sense of selecting a representation that is representative—what about a song such as Country Joe's "Who Am I," more psychedelic rock than country flavored *à la* Dylan, but with insistence that "the '60s" is already a failure, a moment of self-deception *and* liberation? Isn't "Like a Rolling Stone" in fact also representative of a dated and redundant naturalism signaled by "like" and "stone"? Our Good Left incarnated here as Marcus and Wiener does not acknowledge a more schizo 60s—Country Joe—but Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* (1968) insisted that flows, fluxes, and refluxes of Capital and Culture moved into each other, intensifying every aspect of desire, both positive and malevolent. They made hash out of cultural uni-dimensionality. It's just amazing, actually, that "the '60s" receives such decisive judgments, as with our radio interlocutors, when "the '60s," at least in the top two tiers of universities in the U.S., was a rolling cloud, not stone, of contested epistemologies, e.g., Donna Haraway's argument that "situated knowledge" was a political-epistemic *problem*. She asked how decisive judgments are cast—"this is the one"—when they come from the language of the despotic expert, contested all the way through "in the '60s"? Thus, first published in 1967, Roland Barthes's essay "historical discourse" reminds us that to make something singular into something representative, like Dylan's music, we fall back on notions of *vividness*, or rhetorical forms presumed to be continuous with what comes after them. Yet it is important to say that one can hardly think of any event and process out of "the '60s" that has been settled except by critical fiat, despotic imposition of completeness and finality that, for sure, many *in* "the '60s" saw as something to oppose and evade. David Rosenboom's *How Much Better if Plymouth Rock Had Landed on the Pilgrims* is at once a title and a concept and it is unclear if it is parody and irony toward ordinary historical representation or if its use of "much better" (e.g., how much?) and counter-factual ("if") announces something else.

According to the very directed arguments of Jean Baudrillard (Mister All-Too Clear of '60s theory?), "the '60s" saw the collapse of the Left and the complementary if asymmetrical emergence of a "Silent Majority," which Baudrillard thought of as the only social referent left standing within a society of ceaseless simulations. Overall "the '60s" was part of the "collapse of poles, orbital circulation of models." Baudrillard seemed to celebrate "the '60s" ability of the Silent Majority to slip the noose, sometimes, of Capital, when it "*refuses to be spoken for in its name.*"⁷ Did the Masses of nineteenth-century History with a capital H become a Silent Majority released from subjection to the historical, and so were neither spoken for nor alienated—the Silent Majority absorbs and implodes, showing us beneath the drama of events ". . . the involution of the social through inertia," an exceeding of the "critical mass"? Simultaneously, "the '60s" are when the system came into its use of tools and apparatus to troll everything via diagnosis, information a constant emulsion, as Capital multiplied its ability to liquefy anything in its way. Now came the time where it is "sign exchange value which is fundamental." New discriminations and criteria of assigning prestige intensified as the post-war "boom" delivered confusions between sign (reading) and symbol (relation), with a full-bore middle-class interest in its own legitimacy, or how to give intrinsic value to an acquired situation (which is, if anything, more intense than ever today—see any consumer list of choices). An immense distortion of private and public, in every direction, occurred—the confusion, famously noted by Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* over how "desire" *invests* in different orders of things, e.g., the brand-new = free from branding *and* even its own self-destruction.

Of that group called French Theory, Baudrillard really raised the ante on “the ’60s.” In the face of a “display of antagonism,” even progressive methods such as psychoanalysis and semiology reduced ambivalence and the symbolic (in his interpretation, existential-challenge-reciprocity). These new treatments of cultural experience “constitute the ideological process.”⁸ University based art-practices produce ideologies, including the ideology of opposition. In some sense, . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . ., with its insistence on sharing “listening practices” or making a process of connection available for *another listening*, a perpetual displacement of musical meta-language, is already in 1969 a resistance to what Baudrillard will call art as gesture. The latter time-witnesses not by making extensive allusions or thoroughly negating a systematized world (no saving grace for the dialectic to return as master-code), for gesture testifies to this system—art “homologous and collusive: and thus, ambiguous.” Gesture is marked by seriality and the repetition of renaming the Same—and that consciousness becomes part of fashion, not an occasion for criticism. Of course Baudrillard would conclude that art and American pragmatism would fuse in the “terrorism of the useful, blackmail of interrogation,” an “omnipotence of manipulation,” what he nominated as the hyper-real, often to restore reality-affect and effect, “in a society that cannot terminate its mourning,” which is “no longer that of history,” “a twisted advent, a perverse event, an unintelligible reversion . . .,” “violence without consequences . . .,” survival but a “stake without stakes.”⁹ “The ’60s” indeed.

“The ’60s” saw the transformation of History into a “lost referential, that is to say it was becoming representational myth” as it was happening. So many new practices, liberations, and re-repressions occurred at once that “the” History of “the ’60s” became a void, more like a “leukemia of history and of politics . . . all content can be evoked pell-mell . . . all previous history is resurrected in bulk—a controlling idea no longer selects, only nostalgia endlessly accumulates.” The new social histories from “the ’60s” would strenuously object. The prediction by Alexandre Kojève in the 1930s that intellectuals were put out of work and would mostly function as operators of reduced political ideas was re-cast by Baudrillard and others as privatization, a larger domestication or integration of society into Capital, thus giving artists and intellectuals an excuse for politics, to be political, a “. . . final somersault of the intellectuals to exalt insignificance, to promote non-sense into the order of sense.”¹⁰ Does Cultural Studies start here? What cut across “the ’60s” was a shift from production to *reproduction*, a “gigantic combinatory where all values commute and are exchanged according to their operational sign,” which is tantamount to saying that a “desublimation of productive forces” is the rule.¹¹ Such freedom is for self-expression, not for creative social transformation. Unfortunately, desublimation is easily pulled into “social emotionalism,” the over-psychological investments made in the arbitrary, including art and scholarship.¹² In any case, what is still stunning about Baudrillard’s work—that written “in the ’60s” and after—turns on arguments that “the ’60s” was part of a larger *deterrence* and *catastrophe*—even the breakdowns of the system generate the energies that bind the social to itself, every attempt to perfect a problem, to set it right only accelerating the intensity of a larger, more inclusive, control. Well-along processes in the globalization of art, dependent on a dozen or so key terms endlessly reiterated, are a sign of art’s perfection of its own insignificance.¹³ Thus, *How Much Better If Plymouth Rock* . . . asked for no “predefinition” as its own articulation of a “larger” historical interpretation was offered—music on American Puritanism both a “loss of spirituality” and our “redefined tyranny.” Calling for music as “solidity” and “not permanence,” *How Much Better*. . . testifies to the ubiquitous sensibility everywhere “in the ’60s” about “transformation and evolutionary change,” suspending as it uses historical judgments about “the times.” Its composer describes *How Much Better If Plymouth Rock* . . . as belonging to and extending “a complex adaptive system,” using “brain” and “proprioceptive” events and “hardware-software,” and insists “we are listening to evolution itself,” which its composer compared to the emergence of a new “discipline.” What could be more “’60s” than trying to *straddle* both *emergence and institution* at the same time?

The real economy of “the ’60s” made it inexpensive to make art and this was joined with challenges to “representation” and “discourse;” of course the low rents at the time were subsidized by American military brutality and more Capitalist expansion to the big “everywhere.” Some artists and intellectuals moved away from political economy (i.e., Marxism) or toward the “cultural turn,” which reconceived questions of domination in narrative and linguistic terms. “The ’60s” is an intellectual monster: across genres, new critical work relied on expanding American Domination to hold domestic costs down, but within the larger culture, a few deconstructionists argued against every kind of “identity” and “presence,” and took withering blasts from the Left (e.g., holding University positions as if they were Forts) who did not hesitate to use tactics of *misrepresentation*. Paul de Man’s radical argument that language is both blessing and curse emerged in “the ’60s” and was annihilated by the end of the Eighties; even today such distinguished authors as Richard Wolin insist that critical-experimentation in representation was linked to some messianic fervor instead of critical-analytical methods, thus folding “the ’60s” back into some “unshakable character of American pluralism and the *normalizing influences* of American university life.”¹⁴ Strange to see reactionary pluralism defended forty years after its heyday: “. . . if students and professors could no longer rely on the powers of reason to raise critical questions, muster evidence, and critically think through problems, one might as well shut the entire enterprise down.” If “the ’60s” contributed to critical experimentation in the arts and humanities, well, “Derrida’s writing reveled in the joys of linguistic slippage, textual fissures, and uninhibited play. By the same token, his dazzling displays of interpretive bravado “. . . seemed merely to foster a new breed of *textual formalism* . . . ,” “the ’60s” forty years on just as bad as “Derrida’s impenetrable writing.” Spiro Agnew could not have said it better in 1968: the critique of reason (in “the ’60s” and now) is itself impenetrable (loathed) since reason in America wisely took harbor within our institutions, an “internal political self-transformation that nondemocratic societies fundamentally lack.” Our culture of political liberalism could weather “the ’60s,” including the delayed transportation of radical French theory to America. In effect “the ’60s” and all radical events/movements are irrelevant in America before they happen, owing to America’s compass being set to the default of a “vital center.” Evidently, some persistent and indigenous American pragmatism makes deconstruction = “the ’60s” and its voyages of “undecidability” seen as a state of self-canceling judgmental paralysis. The fact that in 2008 such writers as Wolin could say such frankly stupid things is part of what some in “the ’60s” saw as a condition of motivation.

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⁴ Hayden White, Preface, in Reinhardt Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History* (Stanford, 2002), p. xii.

⁵ See the careful work of the cultural theorist/critic David James, e.g. *Power Misses* (Verso, 1996).

⁶ See Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 221.

⁷ Jean Baudrillard, *In the Shadow of the Silent Majority* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), p. 22, p. 39.

⁸ Jean Baudrillard, *For A Critique of the Political-Economy of the Sign* (St. Louis: Telos, 1981), p. 98.

⁹ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulations* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1994), p. 26, p. 32.

¹⁰ Baudrillard, *In the Shadow of the Silent Majority*, p. 40.

¹¹ Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production* (St. Louis: Telos, 1975), p. 130.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 98.

¹³ Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death* (London: Sage, 1993), p. 4; Jean Baudrillard, *Selected Writings*, ed. by Mark Poster (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), p. 123.

¹⁴ Richard Wolin, “French Theory’s American Adventures,” *The Chronicle Review*, June 13, 2008.

David Rosenboom (born 1947) is a composer-performer, interdisciplinary artist, author, and educator. Since the 1960s he has explored ideas about spontaneously emerging musical forms, languages for improvisation, new techniques in scoring for ensembles, cross-cultural collaborations, performance art, multi-media, the interactive music of the infosphere, an approach to compositional modeling termed *propositional music*, and extended musical interface with the human nervous system. His work is widely published, recorded, distributed, and presented around the world, and he is known as a pioneer in American experimental music. Since 1990 he has been dean of The Herb Alpert School of Music at California Institute of the Arts where he now holds the Richard Seaver Distinguished Chair in Music and has also been a conductor with the New Century Players, co-director of the Center for Experiments in Art, Information and Technology, and board member with the Center for New Performance. He has worked in numerous innovative institutions, including the Center for Creative and Performing Arts (SUNY, Buffalo), Electric Circus (New York), Aesthetic Research Centre (Canada), Banff Centre, Simon Fraser University, San Francisco Art Institute, California College of Arts and Crafts, Bard College, Center for Advanced Musical Studies at Chosen Vale, and Ionian University (Greece). In the 1980s he held the Darius Milhaud Chair at Mills College where he was also director of the Center for Contemporary Music, head of the Music Department, and a professor of music. In the 1970s he was a co-founder of the Music Department at York University (Toronto) where he became a professor of music and interdisciplinary studies. He studied at the University of Illinois in the 1960s with Salvatore Martirano, Lejaren Hiller, Kenneth Gaburo, Gordon Binkerd, Paul Rolland, Jack McKenzie, and Soulima Stravinsky, among others, where in 1995 he was awarded the George A. Miller Professorship in conjunction with a residency celebrating the centennial of the School of Music.

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Swapan Chaudhuri, award-winning Indian classical music phenomenon, is regularly heard as a soloist and accompanist with such maestros as Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Ustad Vilayat Khan, Pandit Nikhil Banerjee, Ustad Amir Khan, Dr. L. Subramaniam, and many others. His recordings with Asha Bhosle and Ali Akbar Khan received Grammy nominations. Beyond classical, he has worked with Stevie Wonder, L. Shankar, Mark O'Connor, John Handy, Alizade, Malenga, Miroslav Tadic, and many others. He is director of percussion at the Ali Akbar College of Music and chairperson for World Music Programs in The Herb Alpert School of Music at CalArts. Website: www.swapanchaudhuri.com

Erika Duke-Kirkpatrick, a specialist in contemporary music, has given premier performances on international stages for nearly three decades. She is a founding member of the renowned California E.A.R. Unit and a faculty member in The Herb Alpert School of Music at CalArts. Her principal studies were with Cesare Pascarella, and Mischa Schneider; William Pleeth and Pierre Fournier have coached her. She is known for outstanding recordings of music by many composers of our time, including Elliott Carter, whose *Enchanted Preludes* was written for her, and Morton Subotnick, with whom she has toured since 1981 and recently recorded his *Jacob's Room*. Website: www.earunit.org/ErikaDuke-Kirkpatrick.htm

Vinny Golia fuses the heritages of jazz, contemporary classical, and world music into a unique style. He has presented his music internationally and won awards and grants for solos, large ensemble pieces, and multi-disciplinary collaborations. He has performed with Anthony Braxton, Henry Grimes, John Carter, Bobby Bradford, Joëlle Léandre, Wadada Leo Smith, Horace Tapscott, John Zorn, Tim Berne, Bertram Turetzky, George Lewis, Barre Phillips, Eugene Chadbourne, Peter Kowald, John Bergamo, Misha Mengelberg, Han Bennink, Harry Sparnaay, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and many others. He is on the faculty at The Herb Alpert School of Music at CalArts. Website: www.ninewinds.com/Artists/golia.html

Aashish Khan, long regarded as a true master of North Indian classic music, also pioneered cross-cultural genres with his Indo-American Jazz-Pop group SHANTI (1969–70). He has continuously developed the music of his family’s heritage, which includes the legendary Acharya Baba Allauddin Khan Sahib, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan and Smt. Annapurna Devi, received many awards and a Grammy nomination, collaborated with Western musicians, such as George Harrison, Ringo Starr, Eric Clapton, Charles Lloyd, John Handy, Alice Coltrane, and others, conducted orchestras, and composed music for film and stage. He is a faculty member in The Herb Alpert School of Music at CalArts.

Daniel Rosenboom is a trumpet virtuoso, improviser, composer, producer, and creative artist. He has released two solo albums, two albums with his band PLOTZ!, two albums with his band DR. MiNT, appeared as a soloist and collaborator on festivals all over the world, and performed on many other projects with notable artists and groups including The Industrial Jazz Group, Vinny Golia, Irmin Schmidt, Markus Stockhausen, Wadada Leo Smith, Collage Dance Theatre, Harris Eisenstadt, Boston Brass, Kai Kurosawa, David Veslocki, the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group, the Grande Mothers of Invention, and the California E.A.R. Unit.

Website: www.danielrosenboom.com

I Nyoman Wenten, one of Bali’s most accomplished and versatile dancers and musicians, is known for both traditional Indonesian music and dance and for creative East-West fusions. Celebrated as a teacher and performer, he is a long-time faculty member in The Herb Alpert School of Music at CalArts, where he holds the Nicholas England Chair. He has collaborated with many renowned artists, including Morton Subotnick, Elaine Barkin, George Lewis, Dr. L. Subramaniam, Sardono W. Kusumo, Linda Sohl-Donnal Elison, and others. He performs and lectures worldwide and is a producer and musical consultant for a highly regarded series of gamelan recordings on CMP Records.

William Winant, a multifaceted percussion artist with more than 130 recordings, has collaborated with such renowned artists as John Cage, Iannis Xenakis, Anthony Braxton, James Tenney, Cecil Taylor, George Lewis, Steve Reich, Frederic Rzewski, Joan LaBarbara, Oingo Boingo, Kronos Quartet, Sonic Youth, Mr. Bungle, Yo-Yo Ma, Mark Morris, Merce Cunningham, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, and the Abel-Steinberg-Winant Trio. Composers who have written for him include John Cage, Lou Harrison, John Zorn, Alvin Curran, Chris Brown, David Rosenboom, Larry Polansky, Gordon Mumma, Alvin Lucier, Terry Riley, Fred Frith, and Wadada Leo Smith. He teaches at Mills College and the University of California at Santa Cruz. Website: <http://williamwinant.com>

DR. MiNT is dedicated to the art of spontaneous composition. This process involves a combination of improvisation and spontaneous music notation creating coherent, concert-length works. The name DR. MiNT is an anagram of the members’ last names—Caleb Dolister, Daniel Rosenboom, Sam Minaie, Alex Noice, and Gavin Templeton. DR. MiNT’s debut recording, *Visions and Nightmares*, released on pMentum in 2008, has received international critical acclaim. In early 2009, DR. MiNT released their highly anticipated follow-up album, *A New Symphony*, on SNP Records, boldly presenting an alternative view of symphonic form. DR. MiNT is currently working on their third album and performing on the West Coast. Website: www.drminmusic.com.

PLOTZ! blends the sounds of Eastern European folk music with creative improvisation and rock. Dedicated to a unified and harmonized world-view, **PLOTZ!** draws inspiration from styles, stories, and experiences the world over, from ancient Greek mythology and Iceni history to modern city life and surfing. **PLOTZ!** is Daniel Rosenboom, Gavin Templeton, Brian Walsh, Jake Vossler, Orest Balaban, and Austin Wrinkle. Formed in March of 2005, **PLOTZ!** performs all over Southern California. In 2007, they released their first studio album, *Extraordinary Renditions*, on their own **PLOTZ!** Music Productions label. This CD won international acclaim, receiving Best International Instrumental CD in the 2007 Toronto Exclusive Magazine Music Awards, and Best Instrumental CD and Best Instrumental Song in the 2007 M.A.V.R.I.C. Awards in Ventura County, CA. **PLOTZ!** recently released *Live 2008*, in association with SNP Records. Website: www.plotzmusic.com

On historical recordings:

Donald Buchla is a renowned and influential developer of electronic music systems for live performance and composition. Since the early 1960s he has collaborated with many composers and performers on performances, recordings, new compositions, and instrument designs. He has also appeared as a performer and has produced original compositions, such as his theatrical music piece, *Q*. Website: www.buchla.com

Thomas G. McFaul studied music theory, performance, and musicology at the University of Illinois in the 1960s, formed the rock-new music group, *Time* (with Newton, and Rosenboom), and became an innovative, influential composer of commercial music—collaborating with many of the top jazz and pop artists of our time—and original classical works, such as his large-scale *Mass in C Minor*. Website: www.tommcfaul.com

Lynn David Newton studied composition at the University of Illinois with Salvatore Martirano and others in the 1960s, composed innovative contemporary pieces, formed the rock-new music group, *Time* (with McFaul and Rosenboom), and became an accomplished software engineer with several major corporations. Website: www.lyndavidnewton.com

Gerald Shapiro is a well-known composer of instrumental, vocal, and electronic music and unique interactive installations. He studied with Darius Milhaud, Morton Subotnick, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Nadia Boulanger, and in 1967 moved to Brown University where he has served in many important positions and remains today as a professor of music.

Michael Slevin became acquainted with Rosenboom's and Shapiro's work in 1970 and generously offered to produce presentations of it on the campus of George Washington University, where Rosenboom invited him to play tambura accompaniment in a performance of *How Much Better if Plymouth Rock Had Landed on the Pilgrims*.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Bloodier, Mean Son. Daniel Rosenboom, trumpet. Includes *Zones of Coherence*, *Music for Unstable Circuits (+ drums + trumpet)*. Ninewinds Records NWCD 0238.

Brainwave Music. EM Records 1054CD.

Chanteuse. Jacqueline Humbert, vocalist. Includes *Attunement* and *Oasis in the Air*. Lovely Music LCD 4001.

Future Travel. New World Records 80668-2.

Invisible Gold: Classics of live electronic music involving extended musical interface with the human nervous system. Pogus Productions 21022-2.

Suitable for Framing. David Rosenboom, J.B. Floyd, pianos; Trichy Sankaran, South Indian percussion. Mutable Music, 17517-2.

Systems of Judgment. Centaur Records CDC 2077.

Two Lines. David Rosenboom, MIDI grand piano, HFG-influenced sampled piano; Anthony Braxton, saxophones, clarinet, and flute. Lovely Music LCD 3071.

Project co-producers: Daniel Rosenboom, David Rosenboom

Recording tracking and mixing engineer: John Baffa

Additional mixing: Daniel Rosenboom, David Rosenboom

Piano technician & special tuning: Alan Eder

Software instrument designs used in *Sections V & VIII*: Martijn Zwartes

Additional software & circuit designs used throughout: David Rosenboom

Technical assistance: Stephen Rusch & John Aspinal

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

Design: Jim Fox

All 2008–2009 recordings were made in the Dizzy Gillespie Digital Recording Studio and Roy O. Disney Recital Hall Recording Studio at The Herb Alpert School of Music, California Institute of the Arts, and in the composer's personal studio. All compositions are published by David Rosenboom Publishing (BMI).

Recordings of *Sections V, VI, VII & IX* are single-take, live performances without editing or overdubbing. Historical performance excerpts in order of appearance were taken from:

Section II

It Takes a Year One Earth to Go Around the Sun tour: George Washington University, University Center Ballroom, Washington, DC, with Gerald Shapiro and Michael Slevin, June 19, 1970

Frequency Divider Chord Studies: Maple, Ontario, David Rosenboom, 1973

Electric Ear multi-media concert series: Electric Circus, New York, May 19, 1969

Electric Ear tour: Austin Gallery, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT, with Thomas G. McFaul and Lynn David Newton, (included light show by Anthony Martin), April 7 & 8, 1970

Section V

Music Gallery, Toronto, April 7, 1979, with Donald Buchla

A work like . . . *Plymouth Rock* . . . , which manifests through process and emergence, depends on the generous co-creative engagement of master musician friends and heroes open to discovery through freely exploring a *propositional* musical world. All those named elsewhere in this package are such friends and heroes, and heartfelt thanks goes to all. In addition, the support of others close by at the time the work began in the late 1960s was invaluable, particularly Terry Riley, La Monte Young, Morton Subotnick, Thais Lathem, Carol North, William Rouner, Katrina Krinsky, Jon Hassell, and others who participated in early and subsequent performances, especially Lynn David Newton, Thomas G. McFaul, Richard Stanley, Gerald “Shep” Shapiro, Anthony Martin—(who added inspiring light compositions), J.B. Floyd, Michael Byron—(who also published parts of the score in his book, *Pieces*)—, Donald Buchla—(with whom an earlier recording of *Section V* was released on 1750 Arch Records in 1978), and Jacqueline Humbert—(with whom earlier versions of *Sections VI* and *VIII* were released on the album *J. Jasmine . . . My New Music* in 1978).

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