

MUSICA ELETTRONICA VIVA

MEV 40 (1967-2007)

80675-2 (4CDs)

DISC 1

1. **SpaceCraft** 30:49

Akademie der Künste, Berlin, October 5, 1967

Allan Bryant, homemade synthesizer made from electronic organ parts

Alvin Curran, mbira thumb piano mounted on a ten-litre AGIP motor oil can, contact microphones, amplified trumpet, and voice

Carol Plantamura, voice

Frederic Rzewski, amplified glass plate with attached springs, and contact microphones, etc.

Richard Teitelbaum, modular Moog synthesizer, contact microphones, voice

Ivan Vandor, tenor saxophone

2. **Stop the War** 44:39

WBAI, New York, December 31, 1972

Frederic Rzewski, piano

Alvin Curran, VCS3-Putney synthesizer, piccolo trumpet, mbira thumb piano, etc.

Garrett List, trombone

Gregory Reeve, percussion

Richard Teitelbaum, modular Moog synthesizer

Karl Berger, marimbaphone

DISC 2

1. **Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Pt. 1** 43:07

April 1982

Steve Lacy, soprano saxophone

Garrett List, trombone

Alvin Curran, Serge modular synthesizer, piccolo trumpet, voice

Richard Teitelbaum, PolyMoog and MicroMoog synthesizers with SYM 1 microcomputer

Frederic Rzewski, piano, electronically-processed prepared piano

2. **Kunstmuseum, Bern** 24:37

November 16, 1990

Garrett List, trombone

Alvin Curran, Akai 6000 sampler and Midi keyboard

Richard Teitelbaum, Prophet 2002 sampler, DX 7 keyboard, Macintosh computer

Frederic Rzewski, piano

DISC 3

1. **Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Pt. 2** 44:05

April 1982

Steve Lacy, soprano saxophone

Garrett List, trombone

Alvin Curran, Serge modular synthesizer-processing for piano and sax, piccolo trumpet, voice

Richard Teitelbaum, Polymoog and MicroMoog synthesizers with SYM 1 microcomputer

Frederic Rzewski, piano, electronically processed prepared piano

2. **New Music America Festival** 30:51

The Knitting Factory, New York, November 15, 1989

Steve Lacy, soprano saxophone

Garrett List, trombone

Richard Teitelbaum, Yamaha DX 7, Prophet sampler, computer with MAX/MSP, Crackle Box

Alvin Curran, Akai 5000 Sampler, MIDI keyboard, flugelhorn

Frederic Rzewski, piano

DISC 4

1. **Ferrara, Italy** 67:03

June 9, 2002

Steve Lacy, soprano saxophone

George Lewis, trombone, computer

Garrett List, trombone, voice

Alvin Curran, keyboard, computer, MAX/MSP, Kontakt-sampler, piano, flugelhorn, shofar (ram's horn)

Richard Teitelbaum, Kurzweil K2000 sampler keyboard

Frederic Rzewski, piano, voice

2. **Mass. Pike** 10:57

Festival of Contemporary Music, Tanglewood Music Center, Lenox, Mass., August 2, 2007

Alvin Curran, MacBook Pro, Kontakt-sampler and MIDI-keyboard, shofar, toy boom-boxes.

Frederic Rzewski, piano, prepared piano, small instruments

Richard Teitelbaum, Kurzweil K2000 sampler keyboard and MacBook Pro with Ableton Live, Crackle Box, small instruments

“The Spontaneous Music of Musica Elettronica Viva”

Something extraordinary began to take form in the spring of 1966 when some American composers living in Rome presented a concert of experimental music in the crypt of St. Paul’s American Church. The following fall, the same group participated in “Avanguardia Musicale 1,” a festival at the Accademia Filarmonica Romana with an impressive program: instrumental music by Morton Feldman, John Cage, Cornelius Cardew, and Alvin Lucier; “action music” by Giuseppe Chiari; Fluxus “events” by Takehisa Kosugi and George Brecht; and electronic music by Karheinz Stockhausen, Vittorio Gelmetti, Mauricio Kagel, Pietro Grossi, Luc Ferrari, David Behrman, Jon Phetteplace, Frederic Rzewski, and Allan Bryant. There was a substantial number of performances with live electronic music, including Rzewski’s *Composition for Two Performers*, in which Richard Teitelbaum used flashlights and a homemade photocell mixer to control the amplified output from Rzewski’s scrapings on a large glass plate; and Bryant’s *Quadruple Play* for performers playing microtonal intervals and aperiodic rhythms on amplified rubber bands. Several of the works employed indeterminate notation and improvisation. The festival concluded with a performance by Franco Evangelisti’s free improvisation ensemble, the Gruppo d’Improvvisazione “Nuova Consonanza” di Roma.

“Avanguardia Musicale 2” followed quickly on the heels of the first festival in March 1967. Its program also featured an exciting variety of music, from traditional works by Charles Ives and Arnold Schoenberg, to more recent compositions by John Cage, Cornelius Cardew, Nicolò Castiglioni, and Ivan Vandor. Live electronic music was once again prominent. There was an entire concert devoted to performances by the Sonic Arts Union (David Behrman, Alvin Lucier, Robert Ashley, and Gordon Mumma) and an evening of music by a new ensemble called Musica Elettronica Viva (MEV).

During the 1960s, the ancient Mediterranean city of Rome was, as Frederic Rzewski observed, “unlike any other place on earth.” Its artistic community included The Living Theater and Giacinto Scelsi, the mystic, playboy, nobleman, and self-taught visionary composer; Federico Fellini and Michelangelo Antonioni were making revolutionary changes to the art of filmmaking; Don Cherry, Gato Barbieri, Ornette Coleman, and Steve Lacy were involved in the city’s lively free jazz scene; and performances by avant-garde dancers and musicians—Trisha Brown, Yvonne Rainer, Simone Forti, La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela, Terry Riley, Charlotte Moorman, and Nam June Paik, to name but a few—took place at Fabio Sargentini’s Galleria L’Attico and the Feltrinelli Bookstore. Rome provided the ideal creative environment for MEV, which in its earliest period consisted of the composers and musicians who took part in the initial concert at St. Paul’s American Church.

Rzewski, a composer and virtuoso pianist, had returned to Rome in the spring of 1966 with an assortment of contact microphones, Lafayette mixers, and electronic circuitry he had obtained from his friend and fellow Harvard graduate David Behrman. Rzewski, along with Alvin Curran and Richard Teitelbaum, became the nucleus of MEV. Curran had met Rzewski while on a DAAD fellowship (*Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst*) to study with Elliott Carter in Berlin and had moved to Rome in 1965; Teitelbaum, a composer who in 1964 received a Fulbright to study in Italy, first with Goffredo Petrassi, and in the following year with Luigi Nono, was Curran’s roommate while both composers were graduate students at Yale. Jon Phetteplace, a cellist and composer who had traveled to Italy to study with Pietro Grossi was also an original member of MEV; as were Allan Bryant, a composer and instrument builder who made stringed instruments with rubber bands and weird tunings and constructed his own homemade synthesizer; Carol Plantamura, a soprano specializing in new music, known for her performances of works by John Cage, Luciano Berio, and Luigi Nono; and Ivan Vandor, a composer, tenor saxophone player, and member of “Nuova Consonanza.”

The founding of MEV was in part a reaction against the acrid academicism of what Curran calls the “twelve-tone church” and the institutions that promoted its music. Inspired by John Cage and David Tudor, who in the early 1960s were performing works such as *Cartridge Music* (1960) and *Variations II* (1961) using live amplified sounds, MEV’s artistic credo emphasized live electronic music rather than music recorded on magnetic tape. For the most part, in its early days, the musicians in MEV used inexpensive unorthodox “homemade” electronics rather than elaborate circuitry. Their instruments consisted of found objects, often amplified by contact microphones, and a variety of acoustic instruments. Curran performed on a five-liter tin can made by AGIP, one of the principal producers of motor oil in Italy. It had the three bands of Italian colors, white, red and green, a contact microphone, an African thumb piano taped on the top, and was a very effective resonating box, which could produce extremely loud drum-like sounds. He also played a twisted old trumpet with a contact microphone in the bell with which he would use breathing, vocal sounds, and trumpet tones to distort the diaphragm of the microphone. Rzewski, who at that time had renounced the piano as a bourgeois instrument, performed with a thick piece of window glass cut in the shape of a piano to which he also attached a contact microphone. Using plastic scrapers, he created shrieking high frequency sounds; and with his fingers played his glass plate as if it were a percussion instrument. He also had a collection of amplified springs of various kinds, which he plucked, bowed, scraped, and struck and could produce an array of thunderous and shrill sounds. In addition to an amplified cello, Phetteplace played amplified coat racks, and other objects he found at various concert venues. Vandor contributed high-energy tenor saxophone playing to the group, often using multiphonics and other extended techniques.

In MEV’s early period, Allan Bryant and Richard Teitelbaum comprised the group’s synthesizer “section”; Bryant’s instrument was a modified electric organ with a maze of wires, which, as Curran recalls, emitted “sputtering grunts and blats,” making it sound almost human. In 1967, after a trip back to the United States to explore “biofeedback music” utilizing electronic interfaces with human neurological and physiological systems, Teitelbaum returned to Rome with the first Moog synthesizer played in Europe along with a brainwave amplifier also designed by Moog that made it possible for him to use alpha wave signals produced by the brain as control voltages for his synthesizer.

Pursuing a different approach to live electronic music from that explored by Cage and Tudor, MEV embraced a form of spontaneous music now termed “free improvisation.” Interest in free improvisation, like its political and social corollaries, “free jazz,” “free speech,” “free love,” and “freedom rides,” began to take root in the 1960s in the new music scene. As did other groups and ensembles such as Franco Evangelisti’s Nuova Consonanza, AMM, The Spontaneous Music Ensemble, New Phonic Art, QUAX, and Larry Austin’s New Music Ensemble, MEV turned away from written music to free improvisation, inspired by the indeterminate scores and “open forms” of John Cage and others as well as the omnipresent background of the jazz tradition. Just as the free jazz of such giants as John Coltrane, Coleman, Charles Mingus, and Albert Ayler was an outcry by African Americans against centuries of racial oppression, free improvisation, for MEV, was an act of defiance by members of the liberated white majority, a revolt against bourgeois values in a capitalist/consumer society. All of these artists sought to unleash the elemental power of spontaneous music-making. Improvised music was a means to combat oppression by creating new worlds through the medium of sound.

The members of MEV turned their backs on mainstream professional careers. This decision had serious economic consequences, but allowed MEV to pursue its own unique artistic vision. It also made it necessary for the group to develop a communal lifestyle with a strong sense of collective responsibility—very much in the same spirit as its music—which fostered strong artistic and personal ties that still exist today. Moreover, MEV’s independence from such affluent institutions as the electronic music studios in Cologne and Milan, inculcated a certain “do-it-yourself” self-sufficiency that yielded highly original results despite often limited resources.

MEV diametrically rejected musical tradition. As Rzewski declared in his “Parma Manifesto” in 1968, improvised music “must be concerned with creation out of nothing. Its decisions cannot be governed by structures and formulas retained from moments of past inspiration.” It must be “free to move in the present without burdening itself with the dead weight of the past.” MEV’s members were, in a sense, compelled, as Curran recalls, “to strip off their clothes and run naked in a musical world free from the pall of tragic history.” Tradition was purged. The results were ecstatic for some, incomprehensible and even terrifying for others.

But MEV’s approach to spontaneous music, despite its endorsement of radical freedom, did not entail an “anything goes” attitude. They often began an improvisation with some form of conceptual basis; and they cultivated their craft during many hours of practice and group discussions. Rzewski described one approach to free collective improvisation in his “Plan for SPACECRAFT,” an essay on MEV’s first major group improvisation:

Each performer considers his own situation as a sort of labyrinth. Each begins by making music in the way in which he knows how, with his own rhythms, his own choice of materials, et cetera, setting up some kind of simple ensemble situation, without particular regard for the others. This primitive ensemble, however, is superficial, and has nothing to do with the fundamental unity, which is the final goal of the improvisation.

Once the performers have asserted their own individuality, they may free themselves from the labyrinth and a new music may emerge:

The secret of the labyrinth is that the way out is not forward or backwards, to the left or to the right, but up. To go up it is necessary to fly. . . . If the magic takes over, and the music happens, the entire space and everything in it will be transformed.

Free improvisation was a transformative process for MEV, which embraced certain transcendental qualities, an interest that reflected the growing appeal of mysticism during the 1960s. Rzewski had read Gershom Scholem’s and Martin Buber’s writings on Jewish mysticism while studying with Jacob Taubes at Harvard. The ancient Jewish Kabbalah particularly fascinated Teitelbaum. He also described SPACECRAFT from a more contemporary perspective as a form of surrealist automaticism, which unleashed the creative energies of the unconscious mind. His own work with brainwaves and biofeedback was certainly a means to this end, and was an integral part of MEV’s early music. Teitelbaum’s *In Tune*, a work first performed by MEV in 1967 in St. Paul’s American Church, used the artist Barbara Mayfield’s heartbeats, brainwaves, and breathing to control his Moog synthesizer. Particularly striking were the thunderous sounds produced by opening and shutting her eyes (a movement that generated higher levels of brainwave activity).

In order to achieve a transcendental music, MEV cultivated a unique sensibility based upon dialogue and humility. A strong sense of collective music making was at the heart of MEV’s aesthetic and practice. Their musical anarchism was dependent upon, as was its political counterpart, a balance between individual freedom and social responsibility. The musicians in MEV could join together in creating staggering walls of sound; they also knew when and how not to play. What Curran calls a “counterpoint without sound” was as much part of MEV’s musical dialogues as were their ecstatic outbursts.

MEV’s improvisations increasingly involved audience participation. In 1967 the group established its own studio in an old converted foundry in Trastevere, which became a resource for both musicians and non-musicians alike. The entire public was invited to participate in their concerts. As Rzewski proclaimed in 1968:

We are all “musicians.” We are all “creators.” Music is a creative process in which we can all share, and the closer we can come to each other in this process, abandoning esoteric categories and professional elitism, the closer we can all come to the ancient idea of music as a universal language.

In September and October 1968, MEV organized performances of a work entitled *Zuppa* (or *Soup*) that included audience participation at their studio every night for six weeks. There was a growing interest in eliminating distinctions between performer and audience throughout the 1960s. Other artists and groups, such as Cornelius Cardew’s “Scratch Orchestra,” for example, practiced similar participatory performances during the same period. The Living Theater was active in Italy at that time; several of its members, particularly Steven Ben Israel, were closely associated with MEV. It is likely that their now-legendary theater piece *Paradise Now*, which both confronted and included the audience, was a major influence on MEV. In *Zuppa*, MEV served as a catalyst, which provoked the active participation of the audience in spontaneous music-making. The goal was to inspire the audience to listen carefully, and to respond responsibly, and to partake in the communal, collective form of improvisation that the group had cultivated since 1966.

Zuppa resulted from MEV’s growing commitment to an egalitarian form of music involving composer, performer, and listener. *Sound Pool*, which MEV first performed in 1969, was another step in that direction. A free improvisation without pre-determined limits, it instructed audience members to “bring your own sound and add it to the pool.” Performances of *Sound Pool* took place all over Europe, and often led to moments, as Curran recalls, “of unbelievable harmony and intensity.” It unleashed a powerful collective impulse, which for some was a Dionysian revolt against a cold-blooded technocracy and stultifying social mores. The communal instincts and “mass togetherness” inspired by MEV were phenomena resembling spectacles staged on a larger scale, including the Summer of Love, which took place in 1967, and rock music festivals at Monterey, the Isle of Wight, Woodstock, and other venues; and like some of these events *Sound Pool* could get out of hand, such as during the performance at the University of Louvain when members of the audience set the furniture in the room on fire, causing MEV to make a hasty retreat.

As was the case for *Sound Pool*, MEV’s activities in the late 1960s took place within a broader socio-political context, during the rise of the counterculture and the New Left, urban riots, and student activism. In Italy, 1967 was a year proliferated with student protests against the class biases of the Italian educational system and international issues, particularly the Vietnam War. Virtually every university in Italy had experienced some form of student strike or occupation by the end of 1967. “Hippies” from Northern Europe—or *capelloni*—had, since about 1965, migrated to Rome, presumably because of the warm climate, good food, and wine. By the late 1960s this phenomenon became more and more Italian; thousands of long-haired Italian youth were in evidence in such cities as Rome and Milan. The intense political and social climate in both Europe and in the United States which, in 1968 as a result of assassinations, riots, strikes, and student protests had become increasingly intense, certainly had a profound effect on MEV, inspiring the group to bring its music into the streets and to perform in occupied universities and factories.

In 1970, after a tour in the United States cut short by the turmoil following the protest at Kent State University when four students were shot and killed by the Ohio National Guard, Rzewski and Teitelbaum decided to remain in the United States and Curran returned to Rome. As a result, MEV became three separate ensembles, residing in New York, Rome, and Paris (where Ivan and Patricia Coquette, two musicians who had played with MEV in Rome, had formed a group using its name). In the 1970s, the political and social climate in the United States and Europe began to change. The counterculture began to dissipate; the anti-war movement disappeared after the fall of Saigon in 1975 and the end of the Vietnam War. As the political landscape changed, so did MEV. Although MEV never renounced its anarchist ideals, the group evolved into a professional ensemble in the 1970s and at various times performed with an impressive list of musicians including Anthony Braxton, Maryanne Amacher, Garrett List, Gregory Reeve, Steve Lacy, Karl Berger, Roscoe Mitchell, George Lewis, and many others. Today, MEV's core members pursue their own compositional careers, but have continued to perform together, and have developed into one of the world's finest free improvisation ensembles.

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The recordings contained in this box set provide a stunning documentation of the group's evolution over forty years beginning with a performance of SPACECRAFT at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin in 1967, a year during which the group toured Europe, performing in Italy, West Germany, Holland, Belgium, and France. MEV's performances were not always well received, particularly at the more conservative venues like the Akademie der Künste, where Curran recalls that members of the audience jumped on the stage and tried to stop the group from playing. The recording of this concert introduces the listener to MEV's early world of sounds created by Rzewski's amplified glass plate, Curran's amplified tin can, thumb piano, and mangled trumpet, Plantamura's amplified voice, Vandor's wailing tenor sax, and a synthesizer section with Byrant and Teitelbaum (the latter triggering his Moog both manually and with his brainwaves and toes). Experiencing SPACECRAFT strikingly demonstrates that gifted musicians using primitive means can make extraordinary music as rich as that created with today's most advanced digital technologies.

The performance aired on WBAI, a progressive radio station in New York City, on December 31, 1972 features trombonist Garrett List and Gregory Reeve and Karl Berger on percussion, three musicians who joined the group in New York, along with Curran, Rzewski, and Teitelbaum. This New Year's Eve live broadcast took place at a time when Richard Nixon had ordered the "Christmas" bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong during the Vietnam War. Its allusions to the war consist of quotations from "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," "Taps," and "Bandiera Rossa," an early twentieth-century labor movement song sometimes called "Avanti Popolo." Following the performance, the station aired a tape loop created by Steven Ben Israel with both audience and musicians singing, "Stop the War! Stop the War!" to the tune of "Taps."

In 1982, Eddy de Wilde curated a monumental exhibition entitled "'60 '80: Attitudes/Concepts/Images" at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, which, in his own words, "attempted to relive the memory of two decades that are among the most turbulent of twentieth-century art." In addition to visual art, the exhibition included dance, performance art, video, film, and music by John Cage, Brian Eno, Charlemagne Palestine, David Tudor, Meredith Monk, Elliott Carter, and performances by Frances-Marie Uitti and MEV. The two tracks from the Amsterdam concert feature the five-member MEV, which had emerged since the late 1970s. The group now included Steve Lacy, a composer and a soprano saxophone player who had played

with Cecil Taylor, Gil Evans, and Thelonius Monk, and with MEV in the late 1960s. Lacy brought his own broad musical vision ranging from Dixieland to free jazz to the group. MEV's performances with Lacy often incorporated his own compositions, as in the second part of the Amsterdam performance. His eclecticism meshed well with MEV's own stylistic pluralism. Listeners will immediately realize that this is collaboration between master improvisers traversing a vast musical terrain. MEV did not limit itself to abstract electronic sounds, which often gave way to or engaged in a counterpoint with more diverse musical styles, from the folk and workers' songs in the WBAI recording to Lacy's jazz "licks" and Rzewski's prepared piano in the Amsterdam performance. The recording from the Tonart Festival at the Kunstmuseum, Bern, also presents a variety of musical quotations and stylistic allusions. Over the years MEV has developed a seemingly unlimited sonic palette integrating electronic and acoustic sounds—as heard in the track from the 1989 New Music America Festival at the Knitting Factory in New York, its lightning fast duets by Lacy and List joined by flurries and whirlwinds of melodic material and thick clouds of harmonies from the synthesizers and the piano.

The performance from Ferrara's Aterforum Festival in June 2002 was Lacy's last concert with MEV; he died from liver cancer two years later. The music, punctuated by samples from Curran's synthesizer ranging from cantorial singing to a loop with the phrase "talkin' about your mama," revolves around a written composition by Lacy, and features solos by trombonists George Lewis and Garrett List (who also sings "You Are My Sunshine"), and a duet with Lacy on soprano sax and Curran playing the shofar. Certainly the eclecticism characteristic of this performance resembles MEV's earlier work. Yet it also takes MEV's stylistic heterogeneity to a new level, reveling in what Curran calls today's "new common practice"—the enormous reservoir of musics available at the turn of the twenty-first century. But perhaps most impressive is the extent to which the musicians integrate their diverse material.

The most recent performance in this collection took place at Tanglewood in August 2007 in the Seiji Ozawa Hall. MEV, which for this concert consisted of only Curran, Teitelbaum, and Rzewski, had to face the challenge of playing for a conservative audience in an iconic space. The group's decision to play, for the most part, as quietly as possible resulted in a beautiful mix of Curran's haunting samples of ship horns, serene drones from Teitelbaum's synthesizer, and a simple broken triad on the piano, all of which must have magically resonated in the vast wood-paneled hall. The audience was gently introduced to MEV's radical sound world, but not without a political message. Listeners may notice that Rzewski's triad is in fact "Taps," and that later on he plays passages from "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," recasting the antiwar message from the WBAI performance to protest yet another war twenty-five years later.

Over a period of more than four decades, Musica Elettronica Viva has set a very high artistic standard for improvised music based on trust, discipline, a certain courage and willingness to take risks, and above all, a commitment to collective music. Today, perhaps more than ever, the avant-garde remains a political and an artistic necessity. I hope that MEV will perform together again and again and, as Curran and Teitelbaum jointly declared in an open letter written for the 1989 New Music America Festival, continue to

call for an open revolt against the encroachment of governmental ignorance and corporate speculation in the arts and call instead for a program of massive proportions to regenerate dignity and real work places for American artists whose unfettered experimentation may take place. Let the artists make aircraft invisible and let them raise their poetry, music, and dance on the flagpoles.

—David W. Bernstein

David W. Bernstein is a Professor of Music at Mills College. His publications include books and articles on John Cage, the San Francisco Tape Music Center, Arnold Schoenberg, and the history of music theory.

COMPOSERS' NOTES

ALVIN CURRAN

MEV, at 42, is the microcosm of an age—born smack dab between analog and digital life, on the banks of the Hudson and Tiber rivers, on the fault line running down the middle of the late 20th century, where St. Vitus dances convulsed atonally with stark-naked minimalisms and where the avant-garde heavies drank beer with the ultra-cool postmodernists. Where Jazz, Rock and indigenous experimentalists dated seriously for the first time. Where the license to kill the “father” and even the “mother” of all things was regularly granted. These were the times.

Composers all, nurtured in renowned ivy gardens; some mowed lawns. They met in Rome, near the Cloaca Maxima—and without further ado, began like experimental archeologists to reconstruct the origins of human music. They collected shards of every audible sound, they amplified the inaudible ones, they declared that any vibrating object was itself “music,” they used electricity as a new musical space and cultural theory, they ultimately laid the groundwork for a new common practice. Every audible gurgle, sigh, thump, scratch, blast, every contrapuntal scrimmage, every wall of sound, every two-bit drone, life-threatening collision, heave of melodic reflux that pointed to unmediated liberation, wailing utopias, or other disappearing acts—anything in fact that hinted at the potential unity among all things, space, and times—were MEV’s “*materia prima*.”

Then and ever since, MEV has theorized and demonstrated that there is no relevant difference between composing music and making it spontaneously. . . . Bred on Mozart, the Second Viennese School, and hand-me-down avant-gardisms, we sprang with zeal into the revolutionary trenches where Marx, Buddha, Boulez, Braxton, Buber, Amacher, AMM, Scelsi, Moog, Mao, Ornette, Zappa, Feldman, and Zorn sit in with DJ Karlheinz and Snoop Dog. MEV—which unlike me never dropped a name—was like your neighborhood encounter-group: it cost next to nothing, laid no trip on anyone, was strictly a door-affair, promised nothing, and gave away everything it had: its youth, confusion, exile, charisma, optimism, chutzpah—not to mention its mastery of the latest music linguistics and a shared desire to bury them alive in the hope they would quickly rot, forming a rich compost from which a new musical lingua franca would grow. This language would enable the conquest of time, the abolition of ego, and the democratization of all audible sound, musical action, and memory. It would reclassify silence as an obligatory ethical act and embrace the raw, the primal, and the transcendent as the unequivocal rudiments of music.

These were lofty, necessary goals, ones that have since guided our personal lives and careers, ones that say—huh? —early MEV continued where Beethoven’s anarchic last sonatas ended. . . . That is, in spite of all of our carryings-on we still openly embraced our European musical heritage even as the latter morphed before our eyes into a world gamelan jamboree with Ghana car-horn orchestras, conch-shell hippie bands, and phase-vocoded string quartets. At this party all we wanted was to make Cage’s inspired acts of purification swing!—and at the same time drink the healing toxins of free jazz! while lyrically, mystically stopping time like Morty! Do not be deceived, these plain-clothes improvisers were always composers in drag, but by the mid-80s nobody could tell the difference, nor could they care.

By then MEV had long become a stable but intermittent act including Steve Lacy and Garrett List among the regulars; this made the group resemble a kind of Kabbalistic Dixieland band, needing only a tuba and a banjo to complete the instrumentation. The meaning of this music as in the beginning years was a staunch affirmation of the original MEV premise: that music resides in all things, all one needs is the will to release it.

So what about the electronics? Electronics, only yesterday considered the musical antichrist, are now the universal subtext of our time. In less than half a century, regardless of genre, all music has become electronic, and the term “electronica” has now come to mean wacky looped dance beats. Anyhow, our prominent use of self-made circuitry, synthesizers, and sampling only partially define the group’s music throughout its 40-year cycle. MEV, while enthralled by Tudor’s “circuitry”—its extreme otherness, its magical powers, its endless home-made promises—never lost sight of the sound-quality and musical potential of a piece of found junk, and never seriously considered abandoning conventional acoustic instruments. *Musica Elettronica Viva*—Vittorio Gelmetti’s brilliant moniker for MEV—and our determined mission, just happened to coincide with the initial historic practice of live electronic music and its technology.

Maybe MEV now hauls its frayed history book around in a knapsack designed for 70-year-old veterans of the last century’s art-wars. But in today’s interminable sonic traffic jam—the cool jumble of musical practices and the manic eclectic polyphony, liberated from anything and everything but stalled on the freeway—maybe if you listen hard you can hear an old broken horn from MEV’s ’68 Volkswagen bus.

Postscript: this bit of flying-whale overview could use a couple of anecdotes to bring it back to Earth:

At the prestigious Festival d’Avignon in 1968—the one where the complete nudity of The Living Theater delighted and affronted the residents of the Palais des Papes—MEV gave a performance of which I remember only that Cornelius Cardew was playing with us. We did a sound-check in the hot afternoon—all onstage; but at the concert, Cornelius decided to perform unseen from under the huge outdoor stage . . . as I remember he put a contact microphone on the “tubi Innocenti”—the stage’s steel supporting structure, and played the entire concert from “down under”. . . I remember this because it disturbed me; I did not mind that someone dissociated themselves from the main group-attraction on stage, I minded that a music was being made with a component whose origin nobody but us could possibly be aware of . . . and at the time, seemed to be a sanctimonious act of self-denial . . . but therein lay Cornelius’s genius.

Shortly after the MEV group began to meet in the late afternoons at John Phetteplace’s apartment, on the fourth floor of a building which overlooked Hadrian’s magnificent Pantheon building—Takehisa Kosugi was in town and decided to do a living-room performance at Phetteplace’s. Then I had only vague notions of the avant-garde, the Dadaists, and their post-Fluxus/Situationist propagations, but to this day watching Kosugi slip himself into a large leather gym bag, with an acoustic guitar . . . have himself zipped up and then slowly/inexorably roll across the floor, “playing” the guitar however his churning body happened to contact it, is an event which, musically speaking, changed my life.

A comparable epiphany was on hearing Giuseppe Chiari—another unsung master of the Fluxus world—perform his “Maria” and a number of epigrammatic pieces, at a solo concert sponsored by MEV at the American Episcopalian Church in Rome. . . . A piece reduced to an incessant sequence of varied enunciations of the word “Maria” struck me as a potent creative model. Around this time in the same cultural center we all played in Rzewski’s brilliant “Requiem” for chorus, pianos, jew’s-harps, and bull-roarers, another genetic experience in which hard-core atonalism—in flying buckets of roman shards and personal pain—is swallowed alive by the sheer magic of the surrounding archaic instruments. It was in the same church, where Reverend Bill Woodhams gave us free rein, that Teitelbaum inaugurated his custom-made brain-wave machine—a psycho-musical device mystically triggered by the beautiful Barbara Mayfield’s blinking eyelids.

The MEV soundtrack for Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point*—primarily done in post-production by Richard (shining on the Moog and the cutting table at Antonioni's house) and myself—was one of those youthful encounters, common in Rome in those days, centimeters away from real fame and glory; and when Antonioni in all earnestness declared that he liked our versions of the main scenes more than those of Pink Floyd, but that he had to give into the big-boys at MGM, we knew we had genuinely pleased the “maestro”—it conferred on us somehow a “touch of class” even if our music ended up being used, in bittersweet achievement, mostly under the opening titles.

* * *

WHY MEV? Because MEV—in its collective fluidity, its illegitimate, never-defined body and sprawl, its crumbling but stubborn 40-year history and its proud refusal to die—wrote the first draft of a genuine democratic musical constitution. This draft—like Steve Lacy's claim of having put thousands of notes into the walls of the MEV studio—was inscribed in brick and mortar. Revolutionary in spirit, MEV, from day one, was imbued with American pragmatism. So if one sifts through remnants and shards of the group's material legacy, they will find signs that our immaterial flutters, plucks, wallops, howlings, and lyric screechings were all transformed into monetary donations, which were in turn transformed into *pizza ai funghi* at the Obitorio (the Morgue)—our favorite Trastevere pizzeria . . . putting us and our music into a pleasing equation of socio-economic utility. So one could say the first law of the new constitution was: assure that the energy one puts into making the music can be translated into caloric energy to keep the body well and the mind in an optimal creative condition.

In a democratic musical state, as MEV imagined, there are no hierarchical structures (hence no leaders or followers, no agreed compositions, conductors, no scores, plans or goals, and no beginnings or endings), only the appreciation of a collective “flux” and the demands of its unknowable genetic structure.

So this was a practical constitution which not only stipulated that all human beings were musical beings, but encouraged anyone who so wished to prove this, with or without us. This self-evident premise, notwithstanding, led to predictable human troubles such as electrical blackouts, mid-concert venue shutdowns, near-riots, threats, fights, police intervention, fires, theft, cuckolding, ecstatic states, and a bill from Brown University for damages to their physical plant.

The MEV constitution also stipulated that all authentic musicians are created equal regardless of gender, race, religion, musical instrument, or education. While this law was not revolutionary in itself, MEV practiced it with much fervor, and took humble inspiration from all the great musics of Asia, Africa, Europe, and North and South America.

For a brief period MEV professed that anyone could be a musician and could participate with anyone else, musician or not. This radical clause, as practiced under the title of the Sound Pool project, provoked an endless debate among the group's original members; the debate focused ultimately on questions of competence, elitism, and legal ownership of the music—dogged questions which to this day our constitution has never adequately resolved.

Most delicate, elusive, and difficult to practice was the MEV constitutional law about human trust. This law, unspoken in MEV circles, is the fundamental premise of any spontaneous collective musical essay. In this context, it implies that in an ideal state, all performing musicians will listen with equal intensity and understanding to every audible sound and musical gesture as if it were their own, and respond only when they must. An important corollary allows this agreement of trust to be momentarily voided, in cases of inspired autism. Furthermore, this premise, while centered on an instinctive understanding of creative risk and the benefits of increasing it progressively, did not make us—the MEV group—immune from getting screwed or from making lousy music, but it did help in getting us to some unimaginable spaces—territories on the other side of time, density, chance, ego, silence, ordinary societal demands, technique, technology, and occasionally to the other side of our own crude and sublime animal behavior.

MEV also constitutionally stipulated that music has no beginning and no end—a no-brainer, but one which might explain why the original MEV core continues today to practice what it has always preached.

This is for me, WHY MEV.

Grateful thanks to Susan Levenstein and her superb literary contributions.

FREDERIC RZEWSKI

WHY MEV? At its best, like the weather. Clouds pass over, a burst of sunlight, stars. Sudden storms. Like life, unpredictable, sometimes making sense, mostly not.

It's unclear whether there ever was a "theory" of MEV. Words have been written, but words cannot express the unique experience of playing in this group.

(The entire sequence across forty years could be heard as one continuous Song without Words.)

It's unclear too how MEV came into being, how it evolved, whether it has a direction.

If this music is about some one primary thing, I'd say flight: flying, fleeing, fleeting.

But in that case, why has it persisted?

My mother told me, when I was about seven, that life is "hard work and suffering." I thought, Wait a minute. There must be something else.

So I found music. And we found each other, partly because we all had this notion of music as a way out. We pooled our resources in order to find another way, beyond the Establishment.

And we still share this idea. We make music for love. Real love persists. This form of spontaneous music-making, which has certainly been around for thousands of years, will certainly continue beyond the Century of Recording, when there was confusion between art and its electronic image, to an age of clarity in which music is a creative act, rather than a commodity to be passively consumed.

But why persist in thousand-year-old traditions? Why not pursue the technological dream?

Gadgetry goes in and out of fashion. When Edison invented his gramophone, he didn't think at all of recording music. This machine, with its relatively simple mechanical design, could easily have been developed a hundred years earlier. Mozart, with his love for automata and watches, might have liked it. There is no technical reason why we couldn't have recordings of Beethoven's improvisations. It's simply that nobody was interested. The electronic dream that seems to lure so many artists today could easily fizzle, just as we might return to horses and sailing ships.

Furthermore, art is no longer in advance of technology, as it might have been ninety years ago, when people like Tatlin imagined futuristic cities that were partly realized decades later. In the 20th century artists may have inspired architects and engineers, but in the 21st the roles are reversed. Science has advanced with accelerating velocity, while art has remained locked into older, traditional concepts, such as that of the “avant-garde,” itself a creation of the 19th century. Artists who today turn out the latest gimmicks seem not so much to produce new and original work as rather to turn out advertising jingles for the entertainment industry (which could also fizzle). The two colonoscopies I had last year, when I travelled in real time through my own incredibly beautiful bowels, were incomparably more meaningful than any kind of “video art” I have ever seen. The early electronic works of Pierre Henry and Stockhausen are more interesting (and more advanced) than the academic exercises of “computer music” today.

So where does that leave MEV?

High and dry, as usual. MEV has always been out of both the commercial and the academic grids, and on the few occasions when it came dangerously close to success in one of these areas, somebody invariably ran off with the cashbox (sometimes literally, as Alvin can attest).

And yet, here we are. Whatever the significance this music might have to future listeners, it is a document of what results when people make that fateful decision to live and work together as artists over decades. I remember hearing Judith Malina say once about The Living Theater’s ups and downs: We always did what we wanted to do. This notion has served as a model for MEV as well. We’re still here because we are stubborn believers in this principle, which has surely been solidly implanted in human society for at least thirty thousand years. And I’m sure it will carry on for a long time yet, with or without our help.

RICHARD TEITELBAUM

MEV has always been about openness, acceptance, tolerance, inclusiveness, reconciliation. As American expats in Rome, we in MEV were uniquely positioned to draw inspiration from both sides of the pond, and we did not hesitate to delve as deeply into European expressionism as into American experimentalism, where John Cage was an important influence. Furthermore, from the American side, we also received much inspiration from the African-American experimental tradition, (not of much interest to Cage), which was undergoing a tremendous creative surge in the 60s, ranging from the anarchic free counterpoint of Ornette’s *Free Jazz* album to the dense, screaming New Thing “noise” music of late Coltrane and others. In part it was that influence that encouraged MEV’s music toward interaction, stimulus, and response rather than the cooler, non-reactive independence espoused by Cage.

Over the years, MEV has continued to be based on friendship and trust, but in the early days it often seemed more like a family, or even a clan, with various roles, relationships, and group dynamics played out both inside and outside the music. This doubtless contributed to the intensity of feelings and emotions the music frequently expressed. Unlike the Cage-Cunningham collaborative strategy, MEV wasn’t clever enough to establish ground rules that restricted each family member to work in independent isolation. Nor, really, was that what we were all about. By privileging the group rather than the individual we established a very different means toward diminishing personal identity, taste, and ego, through the merging of the individual into the collective. The tensions created by this integrative process often provided the sparks that heated, and occasionally enflamed, the music.

In this endeavor, electronics provided a vehicle and catalyst, by mixing, inter-modulating, equalizing, integrating, and transforming individual gestures into a group sound that was physically displaced in space, surrounding the players and audience from distant loudspeakers. By not supplementing the remote quad PA with nearby individual monitors, we “played” the whole space in a way that contributed to sensations of interpenetration and out-of-body experience such that it was frequently difficult to identify who in the collective web of sound was doing what (and to whom).

In its inclusiveness, MEV brought together and integrated many seemingly contradictory and incompatible streams of activity: introverted mysticism and socio-political activism; high tech synthesizers with found objects and cheap junktronics; new electronic technology combined with (to paraphrase the poet Jerome Rothenberg) ancient “technologies of the sacred”; academic training and virtuosity with untutored non-musicians. A typical concert in the late 60s might start with a highly focused, meditative piece exploring the performer’s internal psychic and physiological states, and end with an anarchic free-form Sound Pool that welcomed all present (sometimes a hundred people or more) to join in and participate in whatever way they saw fit. The results were often chaotic, stretching the Cagean challenge to “accept whatever eventuality” to new extremes.

Perhaps my fondest memory of an unexpected “eventuality” of this sort was the MEV concert at the 1968 Palermo Festival on the night before New Year’s Eve, (with both Cage and Feldman in the audience). The concert began with my brainwave piece, Barbara Mayfield half-reclining on a large inflatable plastic chair, bathed in mysterious blue light as I mixed her amplified heartbeats, breathing, and brainwaves, “orchestrating” them with the Moog synthesizer. It ended quite differently, when a group improvisation that included Frederic, Alvin, Steve Lacy, myself, and a special guest, the late Giuseppe Chiari, disintegrated into utter chaos. Before the concert, Chiari told me: “Rzewski wants this to end in peace and love, but I don’t.” Toward the end of the final improv, Chiari began to perform a famous piece of his by repeatedly shouting the word “Luce!” (“light” or “lights”) through his electric megaphone. Either by accident or design, this triggered a wild sequence of events: the people controlling the stage lights abruptly cut them and the power and turned up the house lights. With his power cut, synthesizer designer Paul Ketoff, who was doing sound for the concert and had joined in the improv by playing sounds by fast forwarding and rewinding a 10-inch open reel tape machine at high speed watched helplessly as masses of loose tape flew all over the control room. Then stagehands started pouring onto the stage, carrying away the instruments while we were still playing. I’ll never forget Alvin swinging a mallet at a set of tubular orchestral chimes just as they were pulled out from in front of him, so that he hit nothing but air. It was like a scene out of a Marx Brothers movie.

By the end of the Rome period, MEV had grown from a close-knit family to a floating commune of musicians and non-musicians, spouses, fans, and camp followers. Though memories on this differ, several of us recall dividing our fee among some eighteen people when we played at the notorious Amougies Festival in Belgium during the summer of 1969. When MEV was reconstituted in New York in the early 70s, it became a different kettle of fish: a small ensemble, more melodic, harmonic, tonal, and acoustic. Electronics remained a constant element, although the electronic sounds have continued to evolve. MEV music has retained much of its original character, still structured in an intuitive way, based on listening and dialogue, but always leaving space for individual initiative and surprise.

MEV’s music continues to be spurred by current political and social concerns. Our efforts are buoyed by a new hopeful spirit among the young, as well as by the current enthusiasm among many young musicians for much that MEV has always stood for. Ideas and musical tools championed by MEV and others in the 1960s (which still spark MEV’s current music making) have become integral to younger composer-performers. We seek for what first excited us, using open and improvised forms, and combining acoustic objects and instruments with live electronics, ranging from found objects and low-cost electronic circuits to computers.

So it’s on to the next forty years!

Alvin Curran's music career spans nearly fifty years as a composer/performer and teacher in the American Experimentalist tradition—his work readily embraces all the contradictions. Born in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1938 into a Yiddish-speaking family of popular musicians, he studied piano from the age of five and learned trombone by himself, opening up to early formative experiences playing jazz, dance music, orchestral, choral, and band music. He studied composition with Ron Nelson at Brown University (in the American symphonic style) and with Elliott Carter at Yale School of Music, earning an M.Mus. degree in 1963. Since 1964 he has resided in Rome, Italy, where he taught briefly at the Accademia Nazionale d'Arte Drammatica, and was the Milhaud Professor of Composition at Mills College (1991–2006). His work is a kind of handbook to music-making in the late 20th–early 21st-century, seen through his innovative pursuits of live electronic improvisation (founding member of MEV); solo performance (*Songs and Views from the Magnetic Garden*, *Electric Rags for Diskklavier*, *Endangered Species*, *TransDadaExpress-Extraordinary Renderings*); and radio art (NPR's *Maritime Rites* radio series, *Crystal Psalms*, *Erat Verbum*, *I Dreamt John Cage Yodeling in the Zurich Hauptbahnhof* . . .). His expansive composition with natural sound and acoustic and electronic instruments in theatrical and sculptural sound installations (*Maritime Rites* on the Laghetto of Villa Borghese [1978] and on the Thames River at the Tate Modern [2007]; *The Twentieth Century*; *Gardening with John*, a sounding garden shed; *Oh Brass on the Grass Alas*, with 300 local brass band players, Donaueschingen; *Beams* . . .) has led to the creation of a form of new musical theater with masses of musicians in large architectural and natural spaces. His chamber music includes abundant music for solo piano (*Inner Cities 1-14*, a six-hour piano cycle) and numerous works for ensembles, small orchestras, and chorus, many in collaboration with choreographers Trisha Brown, Joan Jonas, Margy Jenkins, Achim Freyer, Nancy Karp, Wanda Golonka, and Yoshiko Chuma. Numerous awards include DAAD residencies in Berlin, two NEA grants, and a Guggenheim Fellowship (2005) for the FakeBook project; Tonspur residency–Museums Quartier, Vienna 2005. He writes ebulliently and critically (*Musiktexte*, *The New York Times* . . .) and is in the process of assembling a collection of compositional materials from the past forty years in *The Alvin Curran Fakebook*, a source-work conceived as music for all occasions.

www.alvincurran.com

Born in Westfield, Massachusetts, in 1938, **Frederic Rzewski** studied music at first with Charles Mackey of Springfield, and subsequently with Walter Piston, Roger Sessions, and Milton Babbitt at Harvard and Princeton universities. He went to Italy in 1960, where he studied with Luigi Dallapiccola and met Severino Gazzelloni, with whom he performed in a number of concerts, thus beginning a career as a performer of new piano music. Rzewski's early friendship with Christian Wolff and David Behrman, and (through Wolff) his acquaintance with John Cage and David Tudor strongly influenced his development in both composition and performance. In Rome in the mid-sixties, together with Alvin Curran and Richard Teitelbaum, he formed the MEV (Musica Elettronica Viva) group, which quickly became known for its pioneering work in live electronics and improvisation.

The experience of MEV can be felt in Rzewski's compositions of the late sixties and early seventies, which combine elements derived equally from the worlds of written and improvised music (*Les Moutons de Panurge*, *Coming Together*). During the seventies he experimented further with forms in which style and language are treated as structural elements; the best-known work of this period is *The People United Will Never Be Defeated!*, a 50-minute set of piano variations. A number of pieces for larger ensembles written between 1979 and 1981 show a return to experimental and graphic notation (*Le Silence des Espaces Infinis*,

The Price of Oil), while much of the work of the eighties explores new ways of using twelve-tone technique (*Antigone-Legend*, *The Persians*). A freer, more spontaneous approach to writing can be found in more recent work (*Whangdoodles*, *Sonata*). *The Triumph of Death* (1987–8) is a two-hour oratorio based on texts adapted from Peter Weiss's 1965 play *Die Ermittlung* (*The Investigation*). Rzewski's largest-scale work to date is *The Road*, an eight-hour "novel" for solo piano.

From 1983 to 2003 Rzewski was Professor of Composition at the Conservatoire Royal de Musique in Liège, Belgium. He has also taught at the Yale School of Music, the University of Cincinnati, the State University of New York at Buffalo, the California Institute of the Arts, the University of California at San Diego, Mills College, the Royal Conservatory of the Hague, the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin, and the Hochschule für Musik in Karlsruhe.

Richard Teitelbaum was born in New York City in 1939. He holds a B.A. degree from Haverford College and a Master of Music from Yale, where he worked with Allen Forte and Mel Powell. In 1964–66 he studied with Goffredo Petrassi and Luigi Nono on a Fulbright in Italy. In 1967 he brought the first Moog synthesizer to Europe and helped to found Musica Elettronica Viva in Rome. In 1970 he returned to the United States to found the World Band, one of the first intercultural improvisation groups, with musicians from non-Western traditions teaching in the World Music Program at Wesleyan University. In 1976–77 he spent a year studying traditional Japanese music in Tokyo, composing *Blends* for shakuhachi, synthesizers and percussion for his teacher, the great master player Katsuya Yokoyama. The recording of this piece on New Albion Records was named one of the ten best classical recordings of 2002 by *The Wire*.

Among his many works are two operas dealing with Jewish mystical expressions of redemptive hopes: *Golem: An Interactive Opera* (1989); and his ongoing project *Z'vi* (2002–), based on the true story of the 17th-century "Jewish-Moslem" messiah Sabbatai Z'vi, which has been performed at Bard College's Fisher Center, the Venice Biennale, and the Center for Jewish History in New York.

He has received numerous grants and awards, including a Prix Ars Electronica from the Austrian Radio and Television, two Fulbrights and a Guggenheim, and composed commissioned works for pianists Aki Takahashi, Ursula Oppens, and others. His work has featured long-standing collaborations with leading jazz musicians such as Steve Lacy, Anthony Braxton and George Lewis, and he has collaborated with leading artists in other disciplines, including Nam June Paik and Joan Jonas. In 2008 he received a commission from the Merce Cunningham Dance Company and performed with them at the Dia Beacon Art Center.

Teitelbaum has performed his music at the Berlin Jazz Festival in Philharmonic Hall, the Pompidou Center in Paris, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, The Almeida Theatre in London, the Kennedy Center in Washington, the Tanglewood Music Center in Massachusetts, the Experimenta Festival in Buenos Aires, the VI International Festival of Electroacoustic Music in Havana, Super Deluxe in Tokyo, and in many other venues throughout the world.

A new work commissioned by the Fromm Music Foundation for instruments and computer will be premiered in New York City in 2009 by the Da Capo Chamber Players. His music has been recorded on New Albion, Tzadik, Hat Art, Silkheart, Music and Arts, Victo, Matchless and other labels. Teitelbaum is a professor of music at Bard College, where he has been teaching for twenty years.

<http://inside.bard.edu/teitelbaum>

Karl Berger (b. 1935), the co-founder and director of the Creative Music Studio and six-time winner of the *Downbeat* Critics Poll as a jazz soloist, has been a highly respected artist in contemporary music for several decades. He has recorded and performed with Don Cherry, Lee Konitz, John McLaughlin, Gunther Schuller, the Mingus Epitaph Orchestra, Dave Brubeck, Dave Holland, Ed Blackwell, Ray Anderson, Pharoah Sanders, James Blood Ulmer, and many others at festivals and concerts in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Africa, India, the Philippines, Japan, Mexico, and Brazil. His recordings and arrangements appear on the Atlantic, Axiom, Black Saint, Blue Note, Capitol, CBS, Douglas Music, Elektra, EMI, Enja, Island, JVC, Knitting Factory, MCA, Milestone, Polygram, RCA, Sony, Stockholm, and Vogue labels, among others.

Steve Lacy (1934–2004) was the first avant-garde jazz musician to make a specialty of the soprano saxophone, an instrument that had become almost completely neglected during the Bop era. Indeed, he is credited with single-handedly bringing the instrument back from obscurity into modern music of all types. Throughout his career, Lacy was widely admired for the beauty and purity of his tone, for his incisive melodic sense, for keeping his music uncompromising and fresh, and for his eagerness to play with a wide variety of musicians while retaining long-term musical relationships. He regularly received awards from *DownBeat* magazine as the premier soprano saxophonist and in 1992 received a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship. In 2002, he was made a Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government. A prolific recording artist, Lacy is represented on many labels, including Universal, hat Hut, RCA, Verve, Label Bleu, New Albion, EMI, CBS/Columbia, and Denon.

George E. Lewis (b. 1952) is the Edwin H. Case Professor of American Music at Columbia University, and the Director of the Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia. The recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship in 2002, an Alpert Award in the Arts in 1999, and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Lewis studied composition with Muhal Richard Abrams at the AACM School of Music, and trombone with Dean Hey. A member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) since 1971, Lewis's work as a composer, improviser, performer, and interpreter explores electronic and computer music, computer-based multimedia installations, text-sound works, and notated and improvisative forms, and is documented on more than 120 recordings. His book, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music*, was recently published by the University of Chicago Press.

Garrett List's (b. 1943) apprenticeship as a trombonist was completed at The Juilliard School of Music; as an artist, with the likes of John Cage and friends, Karl Berger and the Creative Music Studio, and MEV in its NYC version. The wildly eclectic atmosphere of downtown New York City in the '60s and '70s, where he met and played with poets, dancers, painters, and composers in a bewildering assortment of musics, from classic and contemporary to blues, salsa, and jazz, was a marvelously fertile place for creative energy. But it was the free improvised music in those days that finally set him on his own path as a composer. The A-1 Art Band (1975–80) was his orchestra of this period. Living and working in Belgium for the past thirty years, he has been able to expand upon this foundation: working in the theater with Max Parfondry and Jacques Delcuverrie; as a performer, creating different ensembles; and as a composer, with works such as the 24-composition suite *Music for Trees* (1986–89) and a series of cantatas.

Carol Plantamura (b. 1941) is Professor Emerita of Music at the University of California at San Diego. Plantamura was born in Los Angeles, graduated from Occidental College and was an original member of the Creative Associates at SUNY Buffalo under the direction of the composer Lukas Foss. She spent twelve years living in Italy and was a founding member of Musica Elettronica Viva, Rome; Teatro Musica, Rome; 2e2m, Champigny Paris; and performed many times with Gruppo Nuova Consonanza, L'Ensemble Intercontemporain, as well as in opera houses and with symphony orchestras throughout Europe. She founded and performed for fourteen years with The Five Centuries Ensemble, a group that specialized in the performance of 17th- and 20th-century music. She has appeared on more than 25 recordings on Wergo, Deutsche Grammophon, "Italia" Fonit/Cetra, CRI, Leonarda, and many smaller labels.

Gregory Reeve was born in New York City and has lived there all his life. He has a BA from Hunter College where he studied for his music degree with Donald Lybbert, Herbert Inch, H. Wiley Hitchcock, and Sherman van Solkema. His compositions include works for chamber ensembles, symphony orchestra, and electronic resources. Over the years he has performed with the Tone Roads Ensemble, Fluxus, SEM Ensemble, SEM Orchestra, and MEV. He has written and performed music for many dance companies including the Nancy Meehan Dance Company, James Waring, Elaine Summers, the Judson Memorial Dance Series, and the Grand Union Dance Co. As a recording artist he can be heard on Opus One, Wergo, Pablo Records, and Sean Fine Arts Editions, among others.

Ivan Vador, born in Hungary in 1932, moved to Rome in 1938. In 1959 he graduated in composition with Goffredo Petrassi at the Santa Cecilia Conservatory of Music in Rome. The following year he studied in Paris with Max Deutsch. In 1971 he earned his Master's Degree in Ethnomusicology at the University of California in Los Angeles, followed by research in the Himalaya regions on the music of Tibetan Buddhism. He succeeded Alain Danielou as Chair of the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies of Berlin, remaining in charge until 1983, then taking over the Scuola Interculturale di Musica in Venice. He is the author of the book *La Musique du Bouddhisme Tibétain*. Since 1983 he has taught composition at the conservatories G. B. Martini of Bologna and Santa Cecilia of Rome.

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Cyberband. Carlos Zingaro, violin, electronics; Tom Cora, amplified cello, electronics; Fred Frith, guitar, prepared guitar, electronics; George Lewis, trombone, electronics, computer; Richard Teitelbaum, synthesizer/sampler keyboard, Disklavier, computer; Michel Waisvisz, The Hands, synthesizers, computer; Otomo Yoshihide, turntables, CD-player. Moers Music 03000. (Mini Disc)
Double Clutch. Andrew Cyrille, percussion, Richard Teitelbaum, PolyMoog and MicroMoog synthesizers, microcomputer. Silkheart SHCD 146.
Duet: Live at Merkin Hall. Anthony Braxton, reeds; Richard Teitelbaum, Kurzweil keyboard sampler/synthesizer, computer. Music and Arts CD 4949.
Golem. David Moss, voice, electronics, percussion; Carlos Zingaro, violin, electronics; Shelley Hirsch, voice; Richard Teitelbaum, sampler, synthesizer, computer; George Lewis, computer, trombone, electronics. Tzadik 7105.
Run Some By You. On *Computer Music Currents 8*. Richard Teitelbaum, piano with Digital Piano System. Wergo WER 2028-2.
The Sea Between. Richard Teitelbaum, keyboards, sampler, computer; Carlos Zingaro, violin, electronics. Victo CD 03.
Times Zones. Richard Teitelbaum, Moog synthesizers; Anthony Braxton, winds. Freedom 32JDF-194.

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