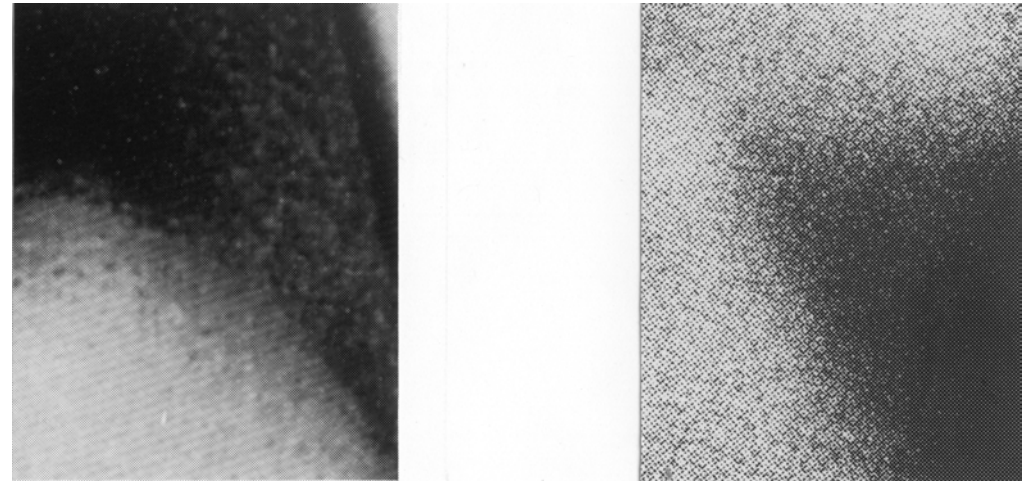


VARESE BOWLES GARLAND



what is good is given back

ESSENTIAL MUSIC

with Aki Takahashi

SYMPHONY SPACE, NYC
Friday, December 1, 1995

P r o g r a m

Dance for Burgess (1949) ♣

Edgard Varèse

Etude for Chorus, Percussion, and Piano, revised (1947) ♣

Edgard Varèse

Charles Bornstein, conductor

Sonata for Two Pianos (1945)

Paul Bowles

1. Allegro
2. Molto tranquillo
3. Motoric

Aki Takahashi and Judith Gordon, pianos

I n t e r m i s s i o n

Concerto for Two Pianos, Winds, and Percussion, (1947)

Paul Bowles

1. Allegro
2. Presto
3. Andante
4. Galop

Aki Takahashi and Judith Gordon, pianos
John Kennedy and Charles Wood, percussion
David Kossoff, oboe and english horn Bohdan Hillash, clarinets
Alex Jokipii, trumpet

Another Sunrise (1995) ♥

Peter Garland

1. Madrid (NM) Mambo - !Dos Muertas!
2. The Things I Wish I'd Said (Ballad)
3. "On Entre O.K. - On Sort K.O." (Rumba - Elegy)
4. Voy a Hablar de Esperanza (Bolero)
5. Chupando la Rosa (coda)
6. Another Sunrise (Gospel Medley)

Aki Takahashi and Judith Gordon, pianos
Maya Gunji, John Kennedy, Mark Suter, and Charles Wood, percussion

♣ First known performance ♥ Premiere

Stage Management by Detour Productions.

Special thanks to Brian Brandt and Mode Records, Lori Gum and Betsy McClelland, Eric Kivnick, Olivia Matthis, Rozella Floranz Kennedy, Penny Leudtke, and Henry Wood.

Essential Music's series of concerts this season in New York is made possible, in part, with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts. These concerts, and other activities of Essential Music, are also made possible through the very generous support of the *Friends of Essential Music*.

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ESSENTIAL MUSIC is devoted to the advocacy and development of new creative work which explores the nature, limits, and contexts of music and the arts, and the ways in which music and the arts can participate in the development of new spiritual, ethical, and ecological paradigms.

To address these goals through a primarily musical context, Essential Music presents new and/or neglected music from a movement that has its roots in the early 20th-Century avant-garde and American Experimental Tradition, and that has through the years spawned a vital body of experimental music throughout the world. We seek through our programming to define, advocate, and provide a forum for this movement among our contemporaries in New York and beyond, as well as to help define its historic lineage.

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UPCOMING EVENTS!

The Kitchen

Saturday, January 13, 1996

Essential Music participates in The Kitchen's **TONE** Happening, performing works of John Cage, with Ben Neill.

Heroes of the Gridiron III

Thursday, April 25, 1996

Our annual celebration of the classics of experimental music, this year featuring work by Robert Ashley, at Washington Square Church, 135 West Fourth Street, NYC

Premieres

Wednesday, May 15, 1996

Premieres of new work composed for Essential Music by Mitchell Clark, John Kennedy, Jerome Kitzke, Larry Polansky, and Charles Wood, at Washington Square Church, 135 West Fourth Street, NYC

Spoletto Festival USA

May 30 - June 5, 1996

Essential Music returns to Charleston, South Carolina for the Twentieth Century Perspectives series, including a presentation of John Cage's Europera 5 at the historic Dock Street Theatre.

Lincoln Center Festival 96

July 30 - August 4, 1996

Essential Music expands to a 112-musician orchestra to perform the New York premiere of Ocean with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, under the stars in Damrosch Park.

August 3, 1996

Essential Music performs For Samuel Beckett in the Walter Reade Theatre as part of the Festival's Morton Feldman retrospective.

UPCOMING CD RELEASES!

William Russell: Made in America

The (nearly) complete works of William Russell, experimentalist and contemporary of Henry Cowell, John Cage, and Lou Harrison. "a superb recording" - N.Y. Times. Currently available from Mode Records.

John Cage: Rare Early Work

First recordings of Cage's Fads and Fancies in the Academy and the long-lost Cage/Patchen radio drama The City Wears a Slouch Hat. Mode Records, March 1996.

John Cage: Five, Seven, Thirteen

Recordings of the late number pieces Five, Seven, and Thirteen. Mode Records, May 1996.

Cornelius Cardew: The Great Learning

The first complete recording of Cornelius Cardew's major work, an epic 7-hour rendering of Cardew's improvisational score after Confucius. Mode Records, Fall 1996.

ESSENTIAL MUSIC ON THE INTERNET!

Essential Music now has a web site under construction! For information on upcoming events and CD releases, or for information on experimental composers and musicians, come visit us at:

<http://chelsea.ios.com/~cwood/emus/emus.html>

Notes on Tonight's Program

Tonight's concert unites the work of three composers who might be labeled American experimentalists, but who were never entirely comfortable with being American or with their means for musical experimentation. Tremendously creative personalities, each has struggled with a means of expression for visions that often seemed to seek to strive beyond the capacities of music. Yet it is in their music that a purity of idea speaks clearly and with heart.

Edgard Varèse, while one of the most visionary and influential composers of this century, is sometimes cited for having composed only twelve complete works. After Ecuatorial in 1934, Varèse composed sparingly and directed his energies towards the possibilities of electronic instruments and the establishment of a center for their study. He endured tremendous frustration in this quest, and became increasingly depressed by the notion of composing in the vocabulary of his past for the instruments and means available to him, instead of those he imagined and wished for.

One of his imagined and unfinished projects was to be the large-scale work Espace, which would be simultaneously broadcast from various points in space combining acoustic and electronic sound. The Etude for Chorus, Percussion, and Piano heard tonight is thought to have been intended as a fragment of this work, and has sometimes been referred to as Etude pour Espace. In fact, Varèse conducted the premiere of a work with the same title used tonight at a concert at the New School on February 23, 1947. It featured the Greater New York Chorus, a chamber chorus he founded in 1943 to perform renaissance and baroque music. The text for the Etude is nonsense syllables, a meta-language of sorts which Varèse derived from Artaud and which he employed in several works.

According to colleagues, Varèse was unhappy with the piece and felt the vocal lines needed more solistic presentation. In the ensuing months, he made revisions to the work, including re-ordering some of its sections. It is this revised version presented tonight, in what may be its first performance. The Etude is in any case an unfinished, fragmentary work, which reveals some of the direction Varèse hoped to take with Espace.

The Dance for Burgess is dated December 9, 1949, and signed by Varèse, suggesting he considered it a complete work in spite of a sparse and sometimes capricious scoring that perhaps suggests a half-hearted or frustrated effort. The work was written for his friend Burgess Meredith, who Varèse worked with as the composer of an ill-fated Broadway production, "Happy as Larry". It is not known if the Dance for Burgess, which is in the Library of Congress, was intended as part of the show or if it was composed as an aside. Tonight's performance is believed to be its first.

These works, as awkward as they may seem given the Varèse we know, nevertheless speak to Varèse's intense concern with finding a means of expression. In a lecture at USC in 1939, Varèse spoke of this concern and quoted Romain Rolland's novel Jean Christophe, the title character of which was modeled after different composers including Varèse:

The difficulty began when he tried to cast his ideas in the ordinary musical forms: he made the discovery that none of the ancient molds were suited to them; if he wished to fix his visions with fidelity he had to begin by forgetting all the music he had heard, all that he had written, to make a clean slate of all of the formalism he had learned, of traditional technique, to throw away those crutches of impotency, that bed, all prepared for the laziness of those who, fleeing the fatigue of thinking for themselves, lie down in other's thoughts.

Paul Bowles, on the other hand, solved his creative dissatisfaction by writing novels and moving to Tangier. From 1933 to 1947, Bowles lived in New York and wrote a tremendous amount of music for theater and film as well as a number of pieces of "concert music". After the publication of his first novel, The Sheltering Sky, in 1949, Bowles composed very little music. His music has in recent years seen a resurgence of interest in spite of his lack of advocacy on its behalf, and was the subject of a major retrospective by the Eos Ensemble in September that brought Bowles to New York.

The two works heard tonight are perhaps Bowles' strongest, and deserve their place in the great American piano repertoire that emerged during this period. Both works were commissioned by the duo pianists Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale. The Sonata, whose date of composition in 1945 is often confused with its date of premiere and publication (1946 and 1949, respectively), is tremendously percussive and is Bowles' most extended effort into some of the avant-garde compositional styles of the day.

The Concerto was composed in 1946 and 1947 and premiered by Gold and Fizdale at Town Hall in November, 1948, with Lukas Foss conducting. Bowles later expanded the orchestration to a version for accompaniment by full orchestra which lost the intimacy and vitality of the original chamber version heard tonight.

The Likely Suspects

Bowles wrote of these pieces and his dissatisfaction with music in his autobiography Without Stopping: "It is true that I 'produced' during those years, but in such a way that I always seemed to find myself doing what someone else wanted done. I furnished music which would embellish or interpret the ideas of others; this is taken for granted, of course, in the writing of functional music. The obvious remedy was to seek refuge in the writing of one's own music. I did; the works were two commissions from Gold and Fizdale. It was great fun composing them and, of course, even more listening to them when they were played. But when I had finished them, I did not go on working on my own music. On the contrary, I accepted more theatrical commissions and consequently never attained the state of freedom I sought. To my way of thinking I was only marking time...I was made aware of a slowly increasing desire to step outside the dance in which inadvertently I had become involved."

A less well-known composer and writer is the contemporary Peter Garland (born in 1952), who has off-and-on based a nomadic and hermetic lifestyle in New Mexico. For many years he was the editor and publisher of the music journal Soundings, in which he wrote many essays on a wide spectrum of Twentieth Century music, and published lost or unpublished scores, including those of Bowles (among others, the Concerto heard tonight). In fact, Garland was a pioneer in the effort to resurrect interest in Bowles' music, and his essay "Paul Bowles and the Baptism of Solitude" from his book Americas: Essays on American Music and Culture, 1973-80, is a wide-ranging examination of Bowles' music, writing, and persona. It explores as well Bowles' efforts as an ethnographer of music and advocate for translation and publication of Moroccan literature, while boldly exploring the changing nature of cultural colonialism.

Garland's music, the subject of a major retrospective by Essential Music in February, 1991, is like Bowles', unabashedly tuneful and direct. Of Another Sunrise, Garland writes:

Another Sunrise was written for long-time friends and musical collaborators Aki Takahashi and the ensemble Essential Music. The instrumentation conforms to that of the performers, of course; but was also inspired by their intention to play together the Concerto for Two Pianos, Winds and Percussion by Paul Bowles. So this was written to be a companion piece on that program -- an honor for me, as I admire Bowles' music very much.

Emotionally and spiritually, this is a very complex and intense piece (for me). It was written during the first six months of my return to New Mexico, after a tumultuous three and a half years living and traveling abroad. A lot of experience and memories, and current emotions, found their way into this. Rarely have I felt such an intense necessity to compose a work. I hope this, plus the musical skill of the performers, will create a musically powerful conjunction.

In every domain of art, a work that corresponds to the need of its day carries a message of social and cultural value. Preceding ages show us that changes in art occur because societies and artists have new needs. New aspirations emanate from every epoch. The artist, being always of his own time, is influenced by it and, in turn, is an influence. It is the artist who crystallizes his age - who fixes his age in history. Contrary to general notion, the artist is never ahead of his own time, but is simply the one who is not way behind.

- Edgard Varèse, 1939

...We are the first generation ever to have access to all the world's cultures. This is perhaps the single-most important fact: the entire world is open to view, our culture and its attitudes are placed in a proper perspective amidst a multitude of others. 'World music' ceases to be exotic or peripheral: it becomes the heart of a search for a re-casting of values...And this is the key: not only that we are one among many (equals), but that we are all ethnic music, ethnic, the music is rooted in the land, and in us.

- Peter Garland, 1974

Notes by John Kennedy and Charles Wood

Charles Bornstein graduated from the Julliard School in Conducting and before he turned twenty, was chosen by Leopold Stokowski to become Assistant Conductor with the American Symphony Orchestra. He has served as Music Director of the Newfoundland Symphony from 1982-84, London Canada Mozart Festival from 1985-87, Rockford Symphony from 1986-92, and the Woodstock Mozart Festival from 1987-92. He has guest conducted the Krakow Philharmonic and Chorus in Krakow and Vienna, the Haydn Symphonietta Wein, and the Belgrade Philharmonic. He has conducted extensively in Eastern Europe and champions the music of Xenakis with his ST-X Ensemble.

Judith Gordon gave her New York recital debut at the Metropolitan Museum of Art *Introductions* series. She has concertized extensively in the U.S., Spain, Switzerland, Austria, and Mexico as soloist and partner to outstanding instrumentalists in recitals and chamber music. Festivals have included Tanglewood, Marlboro, Spoleto, and Mendocino. Recently, Ms. Gordon made her debut as solist with Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops.

Maya Gunji performs with many of New York's leading musical organizations, including the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the New York Philharmonic, and the Metropolitan Opera. On Broadway, she played the production of "The Threepenny Opera" featuring Sting, as well as "Man of La Mancha", and is a member of the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra.

John Kennedy founded Essential Music with Charles Wood in 1987. Since 1990, he has been Director of the 20th Century Perspectives new music series at Spoleto Festival USA. He performs with many area musical ensembles including the Orchestra of St. Luke's. He has authored and led many educational programs for New York Young Audiences including their Classical Music Month programs. His compositions have been performed at many venues in New York including the Kitchen and Here, and at festivals throughout the U.S. and Europe. He is Associate Editor of the Johanna Beyer Project for Frog Peak Music.

Mark Suter has performed with the Costa Rica National Symphony, as well as at both the American and Italian Spoleto Festivals. In New York he performs with the Stamford Symphony, on Broadway, and is a member of the Manhattan Samba Group and various other Brazilian/Cuban music groups.

Aki Takahashi is one of the world's most acclaimed performers of new music. She has toured extensively throughout the U.S., Europe, and Asia, appearing in numerous recitals and international festivals including the Berlin Festival Week, the Paris Autumn Festival, the Holland Festival, New Music America, Berlin's Meta Musik, and the First New York Festival of the Arts. Composers who have created works for her include John Cage, Morton Feldman, Isang Yun, Joji Yuasa, Toshi Ichiyonagi, Carl Stone, Maki Ishii, and Takehisa Kosugi. She is also active as a member of Sound Space ARK, a contemporary music ensemble, and as director of the "New Ears" concert series in Yokohama since 1983. She received the first Kyoto Music Award in 1986.

Charles Wood is a composer and designer of new musical instruments and sound installations. His work has been presented at the Spoleto Festival USA, Aspekte Salzburg Festival, Zurich June Festival, at The Kitchen, at Roulette, and at The Performing Garage in New York City, Minneapolis' Southern Theatre, by Los Angeles' Antenna Repairmen, and by The California Ear Unit. His instruments have been exhibited at Lincoln Center's "Out Of Doors", and at the Walker Gallery in Seattle.

Varèse Musicians

Strings	Percussion
Irina Karlin, violin Glenn Loontjens, viola Alexandra Sterlin, cello Steve Moran, bass	Joe Gramley Maya Gunji John Kennedy Mark Suter Charles Wood
Winds	Piano
Janet Axelrod, flute and piccolo Suzanne Gekker, clarinet Joan Porter, clarinet Bohdan Hillash, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet Eric Bell, horn Alex Jokipii and Jack Sutte, trumpets David Begnoche, trombone Marcus Rojas, tuba	Judith Gordon
Vocal Soloists	Chorus
Penny Luedtke, soprano John Maldonado, countertenor Neal Harrelson, tenor Keith Spencer, bass	Karen Burlingame, soprano Patti Onorato, soprano Bernadette Lafond, mezzo Bill Easterling, tenor Jim Javore, bass Richard Crist, bass