

New Tonality II— Postminimalism

It used to be, if you asked composers what one piece made them decide they wanted to become a composer, dozens of them, as diverse as Conlon Nancarrow and William Schuman, would reply: "*The Rite of Spring*." Today, ask the same question to composers born after 1940, and you'll often get one or both of two answers: Terry Riley's *In C* and Steve Reich's *Come Out*. The music of the forties and fifties, often characterized by rampant complexity and daunting analytical pretensions, was not very inspiring for the young. Suddenly, *In C* and *Come Out* seemed to cut through the Gordian knot of contemporary compositional problems and offer music a chance to be fun again. Between them, *In C*'s idea of repeating modules and *Come Out*'s arithmetic of phase-shifting provided both the melodic and structural starting points for a new musical language. That language has grown into a lingua franca across the country. We still have no better name for it than postminimalism.

Clearly, the term says more about where the music came from than about what it is like. Postminimalism can be characterized as an idiom of mostly diatonic tonality, usually with a steady and sometimes motoric beat. Often the music is written according to strict contrapuntal or rhythmic procedures, with an underlying numerical structure. Postminimal composers are fond of taking minimalism's out-of-phase loops or additive forms (A, AB, ABC, ABCD) as a structural background, which they then disguise with a wealth of surface contrapuntal activity. The music is not necessarily static, but neither is it volatile, and a movement of post-minimal music will generally, like a Baroque work, have the same texture and possibly dynamics from beginning to end. Emotional expression in postminimal music tends to lie in qualities of the entire piece, not in moment-to-moment swings of mood. It is this inability or unwillingness to shift moods within a passage, occasionally felt as a limitation, that makes postminimalism seem like possibly an early classic phase of a new

musico-historical era. But postminimalism is also, in this respect, a continuing reaction against the ugly discontinuity and fragmentation of academic music of the twelve-tone school.

Criteria distinguishing postminimalism from minimalism are bound to be subjective. One problem dogging postminimal composers is that newspaper critics tend to keep calling them minimalists, incorrectly writing them off as Johnnie-come-latelies of an earlier style. Following a cue from Tom Johnson, the postminimalist composer Paul Epstein claims that the correct distinction is simply "the amount of intervention the composer makes in the process";¹ in effect, he says, music of strict, "discovered" processes is minimalist, whereas music in which the composer has altered the results of a process to suit his or her taste and expression is postminimal. By that stringent rule, Riley's *In C* would have to be considered postminimal, since its process is neither linear nor predictable.

The criterion I apply, however, is that minimalist music is synonymous with audible structure; a listener can tell from listening how a minimalist piece is put together. Works like William Duckworth's *Time Curve Preludes* and Janice Giteck's *Om Shanti* share minimalism's diatonic modality and additive processes, but aurally they are more mysterious, and some examination of the score is usually necessary to figure out what the music's processes are. Repetition in postminimal music is rarely completely absent, but it is also rarely immediate, and is often elaborately disguised. Minimalist composers, Reich and Glass in particular, were interested in creating processes to listen to. Postminimalist composers may often use strict processes, but rarely at an audible level; the listening focus lies elsewhere.

By this criterion, postminimalism began clearly, I think, as a change in emphasis within the new tonality around 1980, starting with Duckworth's *Time Curve Preludes* (1978–1979), Giteck's *Breathing Songs from a Turning Sky* (1980), Peter Gena's *Beethoven in Soho* (1980), and the works of Daniel Lentz's Los Angeles period (such as *The Dream King*, 1983). Suddenly, music one would once have called minimalist was no longer so predictable or easy to follow; though still melodically lucid, it had acquired a kind of mystically impenetrable surface, and a tendency to take surprising turns. Equally suddenly, composers who had earlier found minimalism too simplistic now abandoned conceptualism (as Duckworth and Giteck both did) or twelve-tone music (as Jonathan Kramer did) to plunge into the new, stripped-down but now contrapuntally subtle diatonic tonality.

Postminimalism and the New Romanticism have not been carefully distinguished by critics, but the two represent extremely different phenomena and attitudes. The New Romanticists explicitly return to a pre-serialist past: "This is a very exciting transition moment in music—the looking backward" (Druckman); "I embrace the whole musical past" (Adams). Postminimalism has nothing to do with the past, least of all with

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European Romanticism; it builds on minimalism and looks forward. The New Romanticists work within the convenient categories of mainstream classical music, writing concertos and pieces for conventional orchestra; following the minimalists, the postminimalists build up their own ensemble concept often involving electronic keyboards. The New Romanticists have returned to a nineteenth-century manner of volatile emotional expression, based on climaxes and a wide and ever-changing dynamic range. Postminimalism is a cooler, more objectivist style, capable of great nuance of feeling, but subtle.

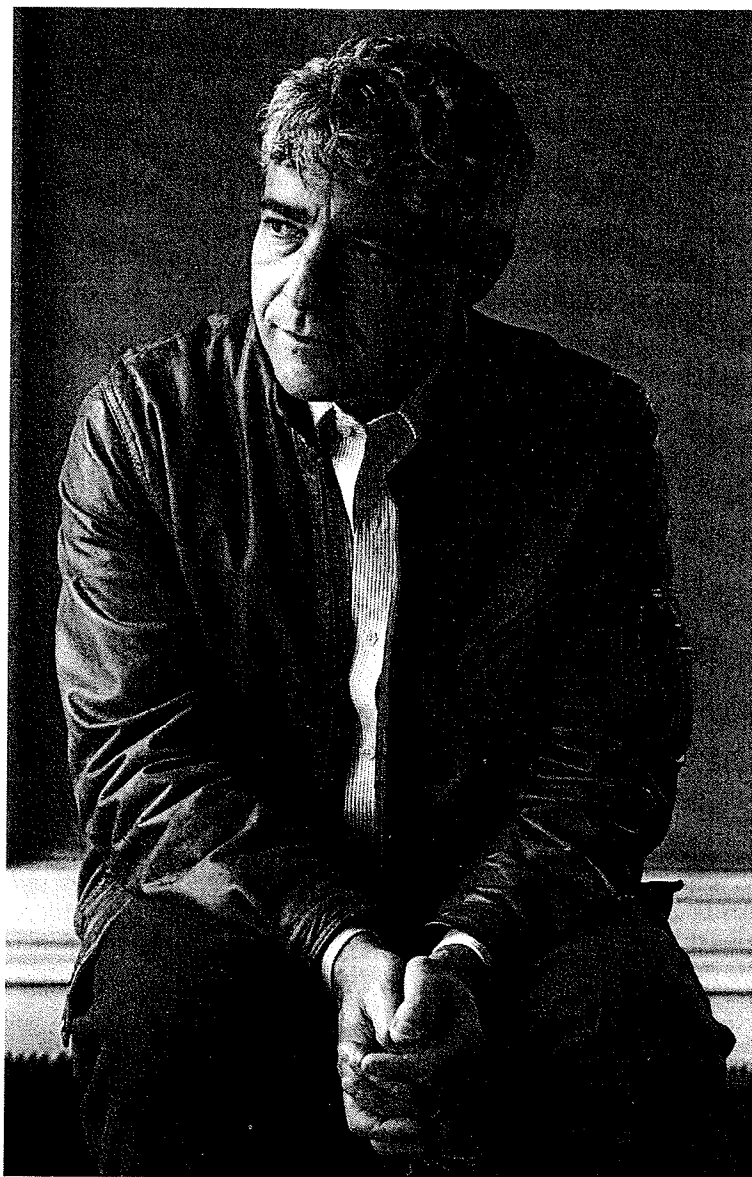
Like the serialists, the postminimalists have striven to create a consistent and coherent musical language, though this language is usually as smooth and linear as the serialist language is abrupt and fragmented. Although postminimalism has drawn inspiration from African music, Japanese koto, Balinese gamelan, medieval European motets, and even bluegrass, it integrates such inspirations into a self-contained musical language in an organic, seamless way that rarely (aside from dramatic exceptions such as Lentz's *wolfMASS*) suggests pastiche or even eclecticism. Some of the postminimalists offer the impression that music began with a clean slate in 1964 with *In C*, as though the world of new composition had been leveled by a nuclear apocalypse.

While most of the postminimal composers are older than those of the preceding chapter, their music emerged later as a public phenomenon. One could take the second performance of Duckworth's *Time Curve Preludes* at New Music America in 1980 as the onset of public recognition, but it wasn't until the late eighties that it became obvious that a new style had emerged with distinct and generalizable characteristics. This is partly because, unlike minimalism and conceptualism, postminimalism does not have a "scene," with composers performing together and borrowing each other's ideas; it consists of a set of individual, usually isolated responses to the new opportunities minimalism offered. Given that, it is astonishing how similar many of the responses are among composers who are totally unaware of their postminimal colleagues.

Within postminimalism's clearly definable characteristics, however, the style leaves tremendous room for differentiated personal expression, as much so as minimalism and more. Another interesting aspect of postminimalism is its geographic diversity, involving composers from Alaska to Florida and Hawaii to Maine, with special emphasis on the West Coast; the one place the style *hasn't* flourished is New York, which nurtures more aggressive sonic archetypes.

William Duckworth

No composer offers the qualities of postminimalism in purer concentration than William Duckworth, whose *Time Curve Preludes* (1978–1979)



William Duckworth. Photo by Terry Wild.

might be said to be the movement's first classic, if not indeed its starting point. Smooth and cool with an understated rhythmic liveliness, Duckworth's music always achieves a convincing musical logic, often through the use of numerical rhythmic structures whose closure is instinctively felt rather than consciously understood. In fact, beneath Duckworth's limpid textures runs an undercurrent of mysticism akin to that of medieval music, one of his early interests. Yet Duckworth was also exposed to bluegrass music as a child, and all his music has a lightly sprung syncopated feel distilled from American vernacular traditions.

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This trademark syncopation, along with a bluesy and ambiguous alternation of the major and minor thirds of the scale, make Duckworth's style recognizable at first hearing.

Born in North Carolina in 1943, Duckworth came from blue-collar surroundings; his father played bluegrass guitar. He entered East Carolina University intending to become a band director and absorbed there a Howard Hanson-ish Americana tradition from Martin Mailman (b. 1932, well known in the band-music world). This background later fused with a Cagean influence at the University of Illinois, where Duckworth studied with fellow Southerner Ben Johnston between 1965 and 1972. Between Mailman and Johnston, Duckworth never formed any attraction to the European serialist music so much in the air at the time. In fact, an early conceptual piece of Duckworth's called *Pitch City* (1969) pokes fun at serialism, requiring players to wend their way slowly through sustained pitches in a twelve-tone row matrix.

Duckworth's early style involved graphic notation, often filled in with pitches to be used. *Gymel* of 1973, for example, for four mallet percussionists or keyboards, contains pitch patterns connected by lines in a web, through which the performers can move at will in a minimalistically tonal and pulsating texture. Its method of performance, of course, shows the influence of Riley's *In C*; however, while attracted to minimalism, Duckworth had no wish to copy what seemed like Glass's and Reich's easily identifiable styles. Instead, he turned to the French composer Olivier Messiaen, borrowing what Messiaen called "non-retrogradable rhythms," that is, rhythms that are the same forwards as backwards. Duckworth had also been interested in the numerical rhythmic structures of medieval music, ever since organizing a college early music performance group in the sixties. In 1976, with the chamber piece *A Book of Hours* and *The Last Nocturn* for piano, he began writing in a new, simpler style, marked by hidden rhythmic structures and quotations of Gregorian chant.

By now, all the elements were in place for Duckworth's early magnum opus, his major piano cycle *The Time Curve Preludes*: a piece that summed up all his ideas about rhythmic structure, additive structures, reductive structures, and rhythmic cycles. The *Preludes* are a cycle of twenty-four piano pieces, each pursuing a melodic, rhythmic, or textural idea through a brief form that usually curves in on itself through some accelerative or reductive process. Except for No. 6, the only movement which contains repeat signs, Duckworth repudiated the repetition of Reich and Glass and moved away from minimalism's externalized structure toward a mysterious background logic.

Duckworth followed *The Time Curve Preludes* with a similarly ambitious vocal cycle. At Illinois, his friend Neely Bruce (a composer and pianist who premiered the *Preludes*) had reintroduced Duckworth to shaped-note singing, the rural tradition that East European immigrants

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had nurtured in Appalachia, a tradition of rough-hewn but vigorous hymns notated with different-shaped notes for didactic purposes. (Many of the best shaped-note hymns were written by William Billings.) For months Duckworth locked himself up with the old American hymn collection *Southern Harmony*, and he selected twenty of the hymns to de- and reconstruct. He abstracted phrases, repeated melodies, built hymns up through additive processes, changed meters according to numerical systems, and colored vocal lines with his trademark major-minor ambiguity. The result, *Southern Harmony* (1980–1981) is a massive and beautiful choral cycle unlike anything else produced out of the minimalist tradition; in fact, its only predecessor in downtown music is an early choral piece by Philip Glass, *Another Look at Harmony*.

Over the next decade, Duckworth consolidated his achievement in *Time Curve* and *Southern Harmony* by extending his mature style in several directions, yet all recognizably in his personal style. *Simple Songs About Sex and War* (1983–1984), on poems of Hayden Carruth, was a smooth attempt to write postminimal “pop songs.” *Imaginary Dances* (1985/1988) was a follow-up to the *Preludes*, seven piano dances graced by a mild pop influence, engaging in their intricate rhythms and bitter-sweet tonalities. Duckworth’s tendency toward cycles of brief movements in all these works gives him something of the image of a modern Robert Schumann, his *Imaginary Dances* being analogous in genre and weight to Schumann’s *Carnaval* or *Dauidsbründler Tanze*.

Duckworth’s early music had been inspired by Cage via Johnston; in 1976 Duckworth met Cage, and he studied chess with him as Cage had with Duchamp. Cage’s influence survives in Duckworth’s late music in an intriguing way, for he still uses the *I Ching* to make certain kinds of decisions. In late works such as *Their Song* for voice and piano (1991), *Gathering Together/Revolution* for percussion ensemble (1992–1993), and *Mysterious Numbers* for mixed chamber group (1996), he has used the *I Ching* to chance-determine scales, time lengths, the order of precomposed passages, and even texts. What makes his use of chance so unusual is its integration into a technique so smooth that nothing in the result sounds random.

Duckworth’s magnum opus of the 1990s is an ongoing multimedia piece created for the internet which opened June 10, 1997, and is planned to run through 2001. Called *Cathedral*, the piece is based on texts surrounding five seminal moments in human history: the building of the Great Pyramid, the groundbreaking for Chartres Cathedral, the founding of the Native American Ghost Dance religion, the detonation of the first atomic bomb, and the creation of the World Wide Web. The work contains an interactive component as well as sections that will be coordinated with live performances, and the project promises to be a grand culmination of Duckworth’s smoothly contoured mysticism.

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Listening Example: The Time Curve Preludes (1977–78)

It is quintessential to the postminimal aesthetic that, although several strands of musical reference are woven into *The Time Curve Preludes*—quotations from Erik Satie's *Vexations*, the medieval *Dies irae* chant, bluegrass plucking patterns, Indian ragas, Fibonacci rhythmic patterns, occasional minimalist repetitions—they are so closely interwoven that the twenty-four preludes seem almost variations on a theme, delicate, bristling, sad, and reassuring by turns. The Fibonacci series is the series of numbers of which each is the previous two added together: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55 and so on. The series occurs commonly in nature, as in the arrangement of seeds in certain flowers, and, before Duckworth, was used by Béla Bartók as a rhythmic structuring device.

The pianist in *Time Curve Preludes* precedes each prelude by pressing down silent drone notes to be held with weights; after each prelude, the pianist pauses to allow the sympathetic vibration of lower strings to be heard. In Prelude I one can hear the influence of bluegrass guitar playing, in the frequent alternation of notes back and forth between hands. Prelude IX is based on the bass line from Satie's *Vexations*: an enigmatic piece that Satie marked with the instruction that it should be played 840 times. (Something of a modern-music icon, *Vexations* has been played many times in eighteen- to twenty-four-hour marathon concerts, the first organized by Cage in 1962.) After an introduction with both hands in unison, the bass line appears in the left hand in an accelerating pattern: first in half-notes, then double-dotted quarters, then dotted quarters, and so on, subtracting a sixteenth-note duration per note until the hands are swept back into a unison conclusion.

Prelude XIII (example 12.1) gives an idea both of Duckworth's trademark alternation of the major and minor third (A in the scale on F is flatted at about every other appearance) and his use of the Fibonacci series as a structural device. The piece is divided in phrases of 8, 13, 21; 13, 8, 13, 21, and 34 beats. On a more detailed level, the melody sometimes uses Fibonacci numbers of eighth-notes separated by pairs of sixteenths; two eighths, then three, then five, then three, as shown in the diagram. Prelude XV (example 12.2) evinces Duckworth's modality and

EXAMPLE 12.1 William Duckworth, *The Time Curve Preludes*, No. XIII.

EXAMPLE 12.2 William Duckworth, *The Time Curve Preludes*, No. XV.

his fluidly unpredictable sense of almost-repetition. In a scale of two flats dotted with frequent F-sharps, the melody runs up and down with very much the feel of an Indian raga. It also creates medieval-sounding cadences with the left hand drone, which shifts between E-flat and D, making the scale sound either Phrygian or Lydian by turns. Such irregularities should give the prelude a nervous feel, but it seems calm and centered, smoothed by Duckworth's streamlined sense of composition.

Janice Giteck

Only sometimes a postminimalist, Janice Giteck is difficult to pigeonhole. Theatrically, however, she's quite consistent: her music has a basic concern with ritual. She has written that the three basic components of ritual, regardless of culture, are "people coming together (gathering), the intended activity (performing), and the going away (leaving/dispersing)." "This format may be completely obvious," she continues, "but . . . the ritual frame has not lost its charge. . . . It is, quite innocently, a function of our being human, something we *need* to do."² Consequently, she brings into her music anything that will reinforce a ritual atmosphere and offer the possibility of collective transformation: American Indian chanting, East European folk melodies, Balinese melodic patterns, performance art, pantomime, earthy comedy, colored lighting, even periods of silence. Hers is also a postminimalism heavily informed by more different world musics, perhaps, than that of any other composer of her generation.

Giteck (born 1946) grew up in New York near Coney Island, exposed on a daily basis to Orthodox Jews chanting their daily prayers on the boardwalk and Hasidic cantorial chant at her parents' synagogue. She composed at eight, and when she was twelve she discovered the indigenous music of Indian America—primarily Pima, Papago, and Yaqui—when her family relocated to Tucson, Arizona. At a high school

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program at the University of Arizona, she studied with composer Barney Childs (b. 1926), then teaching in the English department. Childs had been a creator of contrapuntally modernist symphonies, but by 1961 when Giteck met him, he had come under Cage's influence and had begun writing freely notated chance scores. While he offered a freeing influence, from the beginning Giteck gravitated toward modal composition, with little interest in atonality or even modulation.

Giteck's next important teacher was the French composer Darius Milhaud, whom she met at Aspen and went to study with at Mills College. Here, between 1964 and 1969, she attended Morton Subotnick's theory classes and was exposed to Oliveros, Luciano Berio, Robert Ashley, Terry Riley, and most of all Cage. After she graduated, Milhaud convinced her to study in France, where she attended Messiaen's classes at the Paris Conservatoire. Studies with Milhaud, Messiaen, and Xenakis (who frequented Messiaen's class) did not efface Giteck's eclectic Americanness, but they did lend her a European polish and fluidity of technique that few minimalist-influenced Americans can boast.

Back in America in 1971, Giteck immersed herself in theater and native American materials with *Magic Words* (1972), songs on native American texts for mezzo-soprano, baritone, piano hand percussion, and flute. Her theater pieces of the seventies, such as *Thunder, Like a White Bear Dancing* (1977) and "Callin' Home Coyote" (1978), are eclectic, integrating repetitive textual elements of American Indian ritual into frameworks partly operatic, partly reminiscent of Javanese gamelan and the ritual theater of Harry Partch. In 1979 Giteck took a job at the Cornish Institute in Seattle, and her first Seattle piece, *Breathing Songs from a Turning Sky* (1980), is a classic postminimal statement based on the Hebrew Kabala and alluding to Javanese music through its motoric textures. The piece comprises ten meditations on different states of enlightenment, and the seventh—"Majesty"—consists of silence: like 4'33" only with attention to inwardness instead of ambient sounds.

In the mid-eighties Giteck went through a creative crisis during which she didn't compose for three years. She took a Master's degree in psychology and began working at the Seattle Mental Health Institute dealing with AIDS patients, schizophrenics, and geriatric cases. She considered the five-and-a-half-year experience a hands-on laboratory for her interest in music as ritual healing. With schizophrenics she practiced nonverbal communication, trying to prove that music is more primal than language. She enticed the aged to tell her the stories of their lives, and what the wish of their lives had been. "I was trying," she has said of the period, "to strip music down to as primitive an experience as I could. I wanted to ask where does music come from? What's the common denominator for being a human and being a musician?"³

Out of this experience came *Om Shanti* (1986), one of her most deeply moving works, which she wrote in a two-month burst of inspira-



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tion that broke her several-year silence. This became the first in a series of "healing ritual" pieces which now includes *Home* (1989), for male chorus, gamelan, cello, and synthesizer, in which the chorus sings a chant on the word "home" (which, significantly, includes "Om"); *The Screamer* (1993), for soprano and six instruments; and *Sleepless in the Shadow* (1994), for mixed ensemble, a theater piece based on East European folk music. All of these pieces step outside the framework of conventional musical performance to confront the audience, for, unlike the other postminimalists especially, Giteck has no interest in formalist musical patterns for their own sake. "I'm still trying," she has often said, "to reach people's hearts."

Listening Example: Om Shanti (1986)

Dedicated to people living with AIDS, *Om Shanti* is the first work in Giteck's "music and healing series." *Om* is the primordial human tone used in yogic meditation; *shanti* means "peace" in Sanskrit. Scored for soprano, flute, clarinet, violin, cello, percussion, and piano, the work is typical for Giteck in the way it fuses elements of Javanese, Hasidic, and Buddhist musical traditions into a joyous unity. In the first moment, the soprano sings a Sanskrit text by the poet Shankaracharya:

I am without thought, without form. I am all pervasive,
I am everywhere, yet I am beyond all senses.
I am neither detachment nor salvation
nor anything that could be measured.
I am consciousness and bliss. I am Shiva! I am Shiva!

The soprano's ethereally floating line repeats certain modal formulas over and over in the pitches G, E, and A, though without strict repetition. Meanwhile, the other instruments softly enter over a drone on D, with melodic arabesques from the D mixolydian scale.

The second and fourth movements borrow heavily from Javanese gamelan, particularly the thumping eighth-note beat in the synthesizer and piano and the half-step alternation in the clarinet and synthesizer (example 12.3). The third movement, the work's emotional center, is a rhythmically free duo for violin and cello in a mode of two sharps, reminiscent of Hasidic cantillation. The two lines intertwine the first time through, but when the violin repeats the opening of the movement, the cello merely drones on a low B, its lower string tuned down a half-step. The cello's absence in melody (though it is still present in spirit through the drone) creates a poignant sense of loss.

Movement four bears the inscription "Sound floats in space, in some way perhaps we draw comfort in acknowledging our own death while we are still alive." The piano opens with a rhapsodic line patterned after the flute improvisation with which Javanese ensemble works begin.

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EXAMPLE 12.3 Janice Giteck, *Om Shanti*, third movement.

This is the most gamelan-inspired movement, with rapturous melodies doubled among the different instruments over a modal ostinato (example 12.4). The sounds “floating in space” presumably include the pairs of octaves on F doubled in the piano and antique cymbals. After such joyous energy, the final movement is stunning in its sad, motionless ecstasy. As the instruments drone on E and B, the soprano sings “Om Shanti” over and over in nonrepeating chants using only the pitches C, B, E, and G, with “shanti” repeated over and over on either B or G. *Om Shanti* is a beautiful example of postminimalism’s ability to mediate between forward motion and stillness.

EXAMPLE 12.4 Janice Giteck, *Om Shanti*, fifth movement.

Daniel Lentz

When Daniel Lentz began writing, in 1970, what he aptly calls his “pretty pieces”—only fellow West Coaster Harold Budd can match Lentz for sheer voluptuousness—he had not yet heard of minimalism. Among those who have used minimalist processes, Lentz is unusual for his straightforward return to conventional tonality. His music pulses with energy through simple chord progressions, depending for its considerable originality on bright electronic timbres, vibrantly nervous textures

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Lentz (born 1945) is a professor at St. Mary's University in Milwaukee and has helped account for the success of counterpoint in his masses. Later to be wielded less influentially, his point of view is, in this advice, Lentz's.

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In 1970, ing “pretty” changed his r The pieces of low, tinkly, allenth chords.” one of the few *Umbrarum*—“glasses with n

of repeated notes reverberating via digital delay, and a strong element of rhythmic surprise. No other postminimalist seems so forthright and unselfconscious.

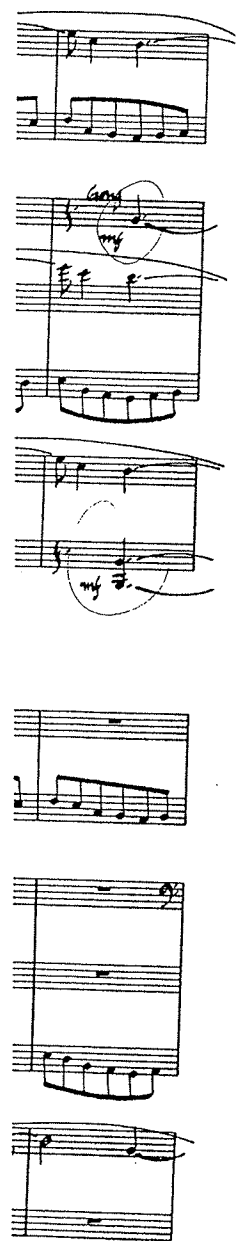
Lentz (born 1942) grew up in rural western Pennsylvania. Interestingly, his most formative influence was Rembert Weakland, his professor at St. Vincent College, later the liberal Archbishop of Milwaukee and also the world's leading expert on Ambrosian chant; this helps account for the frequent appearance of chant and Renaissance counterpoint in Lentz's works and also for his composition of two masses. Later teachers at Ohio University, Tanglewood, and Brandeis wielded less influence: Sessions, Berger, and Harold Shapero. As Lentz explains it, his mother had always told him, "Whatever the teacher's point of view is, take the opposite—at least you'll be noticed."⁴ Following this advice, Lentz gravitated toward conceptual and theatrical works.

Lentz's early music, some of it published in *Source*, aimed at outrageousness, giving a negative view of ecclesiastical and political authority. His *Anti-Bass Music* includes graphic notations with pictures of guns, tanks, and explosions, and concludes with a reading of a list of American composers not killed in Vietnam (which includes virtually all of them, so far as is known). In a statement published at the time, Lentz made his connection between musical and military authoritarianism clearer:

I too am sad. In fact, I am very sad. Men are still fighting wars and playing music. Some are guerrilla wars, and some are guerrilla compositions. But they are, nevertheless, war and music. They are fought with weapons and instruments. There is so little difference. One type is used for the defense of an army or nation; the other, for the defense of a vestigial culture. Do we need the protection of generals and composers?⁵

Gospel Music (1965) features a cigar-smoking preacher who glares at audience members as electronic tapes play and ushers take up a collection by passing tambourines through the audience. Other pieces are only thoughtful, or humorous. In *Hydro-Geneva: Emergency Piece #3*, the performer pours drops of hydrogen peroxide in the audience members' ears, asking them to listen to the melting of their own ear wax.

In 1970, however, Lentz abandoned conceptualism and began writing "pretty pieces." Calling himself "very space-conscious," he has changed his musical style each time he's changed geographic locations. The pieces of his Santa Barbara, California, period (1968–1982) are mellow, tinkly, almost too pretty in their dreamy melodies over major-seventh chords. The magnum opus of this period is *Missa Umbrarum* (1973), one of the few avant-garde masses suitable for liturgical use. The *Missa Umbrarum*—"Mass of Shadows"—requires the singers to strike wine glasses with mallets and rub the rims with wetted fingers to create ethe-



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real drones, changing pitch occasionally by sipping the wine. The singers deconstruct the mass text phoneme by phoneme, echoing each one from one singer to another. The result is slightly similar to vocal pieces made in Europe at the time by people like Penderecki and Dieter Schnebel, but far more lovely and meditative.

Structurally, *Missa Umbrarum* also presents one of Lentz's primary compositional archetypes: as each phrase or cycle of the piece is sung, the previous cycle is played back on tape, so that each cycle is an accumulation of previous cycles. (Julius Eastman played with a similar structure.) Other Santa Barbara pieces include *Okewa* (1974) and *Lullaby* (1977); the latter is composed of plinked major triads on harp and synthesizers, with notes sustained by voices. In 1982 Lentz moved to Los Angeles and formed his own ensemble. The major work of this period is *The Crack in the Bell* (1986), an engaging rhythmic essay for small orchestra on a poem by e. e. cummings, still centered, however, on Lentz's electric keyboards and digital delay. Lentz's second mass, *wolfMASS* (1986–1987) is an extravagant collage, weaving together wolf howls, a rondeau ("Ma fin est mon commencement") by the fourteenth-century composer Guillaume de Machaut, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again," "Yankee Doodle," and that Renaissance favorite "L'homme armé" into a free-association free-for-all. Though hardly typical, *wolfMASS* makes more explicit than Lentz's other works the stream of consciousness that underlies his compositional thinking.

In 1991, Lentz left Los Angeles to take a teaching job at Arizona State University at Phoenix, and so changed style once again. His most recent large work, *Apologetica* (1992–1995), exemplifies his Arizona style: mournful, slow, darker than the Los Angeles period, almost impressionist in its lush tonality, yet enlivened by cross-rhythms and slow glissandos within the harmonies. Scored for choir, vocal soloists, strings, MIDI keyboards, and percussion, the piece is an hour-long lament in fifteen movements for the native peoples killed by the Spanish explorers under Cortez, with a text from a Mayan book of prophecies.

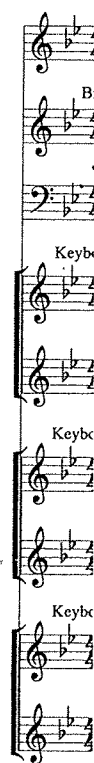
Listening Example: The Crack in the Bell (1986)

The Crack in the Bell is one of Lentz's most popular works, and a classic of postminimalism. Scored for his ensemble with augmented instrumentation—female voice and electric keyboards plus flute, brass quartet, percussion, piano, and string quartet—the piece is based on a mock-patriotic poem by e. e. cummings, *next to of course god*. The most unusual effect is a digital delay applied to the voice, so that the singer's lines often combine with themselves in canonic counterpoint. In addition, the singer sings through a vocoder which splits her voice into three-note chords, whose pitches she controls by playing a synthesizer. (It frequently sounds as though there are three sopranos, but there is only one.)

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The work's pretty three-minute introduction is set in triadic arpeggios in the three electric keyboards, piano and percussion, often with the same pitches at different speeds in each instrument for an indistinct, feathery effect. Where Cummings quotes American songs and clichés, Lentz provides the appropriate musical quotations as well (example 12.5; some instruments are omitted):

next to of course god america i
love you land of the pilgrims' and so forth oh
say can you see by the dawn's early my
country 'tis of centuries come and go
and are no more . . .

(Coincidentally, in the same year Duckworth used the same poem, with the same melodic quotations, in his *Music in the Combat Zone*.)

Next a rousing, steady eighth-note pulse begins in the keyboards and continues until the end. Throughout the work the meter changes fluidly among 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4 in a smooth and natural way, yet so irregularly that the rhythmic continuity still sounds lively after many hearings. Especially effective is the tendency of Lentz's melodies to return at different speeds, say, in half notes in 4/4 and then in dotted halves in 3/4.

The musical score for Example 12.5, Daniel Lentz, *The Crack in the Bell*, measures 16–22. It is written for three staves: Brass, Keyboard 1, and Keyboard 2. The Brass staff contains the lyrics: "Oh, say can you see by the". The Keyboard 1 and Keyboard 2 staves play a steady eighth-note pulse. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ff* (fortissimo) and *mf* (mezzo-forte), and articulation marks like *8va* (octave up). The time signature changes from 4/4 to 5/4 and back to 4/4.

(Continued)

EXAMPLE 12.5 Daniel Lentz, *The Crack in the Bell*, mm. 16–22.

The musical score for Daniel Lentz's *The Crack in the Bell* is presented in a multi-staff format. The top staff is the vocal line with lyrics: "Why talk of beauty what could be more beautiful". Below the vocal line are staves for Trumpets, Trombones, Piano, Keyboard 2, and Keyboard 3. The Piano part features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The Keyboard parts provide a steady, rhythmic foundation. The score is written in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature.

EXAMPLE 12.6 Daniel Lentz, *The Crack in the Bell*, Renaissance-style canonic counterpoint.

the original poem, but added by the composer. Despite Lentz's limiting himself to triadic harmonies and a consistent pulse, *The Crack in the Bell* possesses a wild, whimsically wandering beauty and kaleidoscopic rhythmic variety.

Elodie Lauten

If Pauline Oliveros and Janice Giteck devote their music to the greater benefit of humanity, Elodie Lauten seems to bypass humanity to direct her work to the cosmos itself. Her music has a vague, introvertedly musing quality to it, as though we are overhearing music meant for other ears. Since the early seventies she has composed within what she calls "universal correspondence systems," in which correlations are drawn among Indian Vedic cosmologies, hexagrams of the Chinese *I Ching*, astrological signs, scales, keys, and rhythmic patterns. Her pieces tend to maintain the same scale, texture, and mood throughout a movement in a kind of antigravity stasis, though the materials involved may be considerably complex, even polytonal. She often claims that the goal of her music is to achieve the "soundless sound" of Buddhist meditation. Her music has never quite seeped into public attention, partly because after each major work she retires from view to incubate the next one.

Lauten was born in Paris, France, in 1950, the daughter of the jazz pianist and drummer Errol Parker; however, while much of her music is improvisatory, it shows little resulting jazz influence. After playing in art-rock bands in Paris, she came to New York in 1972, where she quickly became part of the fashionable underground drug culture of seventies Manhattan, singing female lead for a band called Flaming Youth, shaving her head before it was fashionable, and performing with the cult poet Allen Ginsberg. Meanwhile, she studied with La Monte Young and the mystic musician Shri Chinmoy, and she began to produce recordings of her own music.

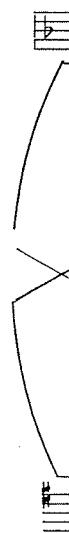
Lauten's early works were minimalist piano pieces in a Terry Riley-ish vein, mostly improvisatory and based on scale and ostinatos; sometimes she would notate them after recording them. *Cat Counterpoint* and *Imaginary Husband* (1983), for example, feature repetitive piano patterns played over electronic backgrounds. Some of her nonelectronic pieces, like *Adamantine Sonata* (1983) and *Sonate Ordinaire* (1986), have a neo-classic flavor, squeezing traditional melody-and-accompaniment textures into a meditative mode. One of Lauten's most lovely works is her *Concerto for Piano and Orchestral Memory* (1984), a rambling, eight-movement form in which the piano takes the lead by playing patterns over an electronic tape with a burbling beat. The "memory" consists of a group of instrumentalists whose reminiscences of the piano's material surround the piano's melodyless musings with a halo of sustained tones.

Lauten's first major work to receive much attention was an opera, *The Death of Don Juan* (1987). Hardly operatic in any conventional sense, the piece features static textures with soft, rhythmically free chants by multiple voices, as Don Juan, back turned to the audience, watches video images of his life in which Death comes to him in the form of a woman:

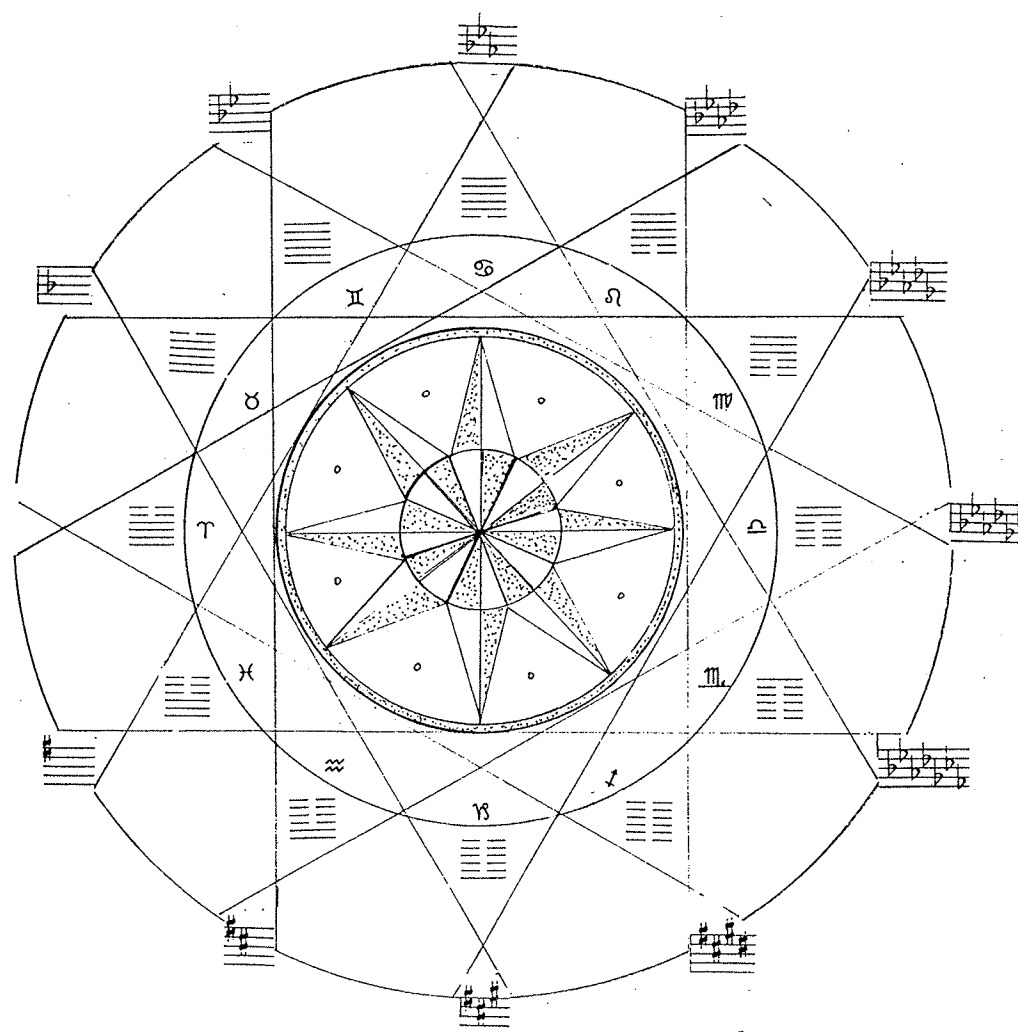
I am your Death
 Death am I I
 Your Death am I
 Your faithful Death. . . .
 The human in me says
 You are forgiven
 Death in me says
 You will suffer
 The Supreme in me says
 You will forget your past

In the end, Don Juan dies from a mental and spiritual breakdown. An even more abstract later opera, *Existence* (1990), attempted to sum up all of reality, with a vocal quartet singing texts from Pythagoras, Pascal, and the Indian *Dhammapada* as Lauten played piano patterns, ending with the vapid sitcom pattern of a tiny TV as electronic drones died slowly away.

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Example 12.7 gives a chart of part of Lauten's universal correspondence systems, called "The Gaia Cycle Matrix." The keys go around the circle from no sharps or flats to six flats, then back; twelve hexagrams from the *I Ching* go from all straight lines to all unbroken lines and back; and these are correlated with the astrological signs from Aries to Pisces. These correlations partly explain the choices of key and mode in Lauten's *Tronik Involutions* (1993), a cycle of twelve electronic pieces improvised in eight tracks on the Proteus synthesizer. In the mid-nineties, Lauten began a large, operatic opus that sums up decades of her work, called *Deus ex Machina* and scored for a quasi-Baroque ensemble of two sopranos, baroque flute, cello, and harpsichord, augmented by synthesized and computer-sequenced electronics. Fusing her mystic and neoclassic tendencies with universal texts about the mystery of existence, *Deus ex Machina* may be Lauten's most profound work yet.



Lauten 3/94

EXAMPLE 12.7 Elodie Lauten, *The Gaia Matrix*.

Paul Dresher

Paul Dresher is kind of a Philip Glass for the younger generation: i.e., a good musical businessman (by his own admission) and a prolific writer of theater music. He first became known for three theater works he wrote with the theater director George Coates: *The Way of How* (1981), *Are Are* (1983), and *See Hear* (1984). Further collaborations with the extraordinary singer, actor, and writer Rinde Eckert—*Slow Fire* (1985–1988), *Power Failure* (1989), *Pioneer* (1990), and *Awed Behavior* (1993)—confirmed his reputation as perhaps the premiere theater and dance composer of his generation. In recent years, though, the Paul Dresher Ensemble has concentrated more on concert music, both Dresher's own and that of other composers. Meanwhile, Dresher's music has moved from strictly permutational, almost minimalist simplicity to a more polytonal and world-music-influenced complexity.

Born in Los Angeles in 1951, Dresher played guitar from the age of eleven and spent his teenage years playing rhythm and blues and writing his own songs. He dropped out of the University of California at Berkeley for five years to do studio work, play in Steve Reich's ensemble for a few months in 1974, sit in on Terry Riley's composition seminar at Mills, and study with a sitar virtuoso, Mikhil Banerjee. He returned to Berkeley to gain experience in African drumming and in Berkeley's Balinese gamelan. Upon graduating, he moved to the University of California at San Diego to study with Reynolds, Oliveros, Bernard Rands, and, most importantly, Robert Erickson. In 1979–1980 he spent time in India and Indonesia, taping environmental sounds that he eventually processed through delays and harmonizers to create the ambient-sounding tape work *Other Fire* (1984).

Dresher's theory teacher at Berkeley had been Janice Giteck, during her brief teaching stint there; and it was through her husband, the singer John Duykers, that he began working with Coates. "When I write for theater," Dresher has said, "I'll often make more explicit appropriate use of recognizable styles that the audience will have some connection with. When I write chamber music, I try to make it more abstract, and use more consistent strategies."⁶ Dresher's early chamber works, most characteristically *Channels Passing* for seven instruments (1981–1982) and *Casa Vecchia* for double string quartet (1982), are indeed fairly abstract; one step removed from minimalism, they churn with repetitive diatonic patterns run through strict procedures, slowly changing and playing with aural tricks such as (in *Channels*) a melodic line being passed quickly from instrument to instrument. Starting with *See Hear* in 1984, he abandoned rigorous procedures for a more intuitive approach, though as he says, "Every piece requires a backbone of formal rigor in at least one parameter."⁷

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Double Ikat for violin, piano, and percussion (1988–1990) is a strong example of Drescher's recent style: propulsive, heavily indebted to gamelan for its rhythmic style but mercurial in its formal twists and turns. Instead of existing within a diatonic stasis like his earlier music, the piece weaves several pentatonic scales sometimes in polytonal combination; *Blue Diamonds* for piano (1995) moves even further in this direction, virtuosic and at times atonal. Interestingly, given his guitar background, Drescher's only piece to use rock idioms is *Den of Iniquity* (1994), for the Drescher Ensemble, for good reasons: "I found rock more useful in theater," he explains, "and most chamber musicians can't play rock and roll."⁸

Other Postminimalists

Postminimalism has so far received so little recognition as an important stylistic current that many postminimal composers, several well into mid-career, have not yet received due attention. One of the most unjustly neglected is Peter Gena, Chicago's premier exponent of the style. Born in 1947 in Buffalo, New York, Gena studied at SUNY at Buffalo with Lejaren Hiller and Morton Feldman. Soon after minimalism appeared, Gena became fascinated by drones, partly because Hiller had gotten him involved in computer music and drones were something early computers could do easily. Gena's *Egeria* (1972), for computer tape, was a turning point, soft, postminimal, and based detail for detail on a Scandinavian rya rug. From here he moved to Feldman-influenced works like *Stabiles* (1976), for piano with long-sustained sonorities, sometimes timing sonorities according to the number of beats among overtones of a sustained chord.

Gena's early postminimal works have political overtones. Particularly dashing is *McKinley* (1983), for violin, piano, and drums, a rousing process piece based on three folk songs about the assassination of President McKinley. In 1980, Gena wrote *Beethoven in Soho* to express his conviction that, "were Beethoven alive today, he would be playing in the lofts of Downtown Manhattan rather than at Lincoln Center." For two pianos and electric bass, the piece runs the Allegretto from old Ludwig's Op. 54 Sonata, through lightning-quick minimalist-style processes. In the nineties, with the assistance of the geneticist Charles Strom, Gena began drawing computer music from digitally synthesized DNA sequences, the first example being *Beta Globin* (1994). The point of such music is not simply to generate melodies according to biological algorithms, but to translate biological behavior into musical behavior in meaningful ways. *Red Blood Cells* (1995), for example, mimics the tendency of bone marrow to randomly create antibodies until one matches an invading virus. Gena's current project is to map the entire immune system in music.

One of the most popular postminimalists is Ingram Marshall, whose dark, moody music is the closest American analogue to the East European mystic composers such as Arvo Pärt and Henryk Gorecki. While minimalistically tonal, Marshall's music rarely contains driving momentum or a steady beat; its delicate textures blur into one another like a slow cinematic fade. He has often been associated with John Adams, with whom he shared a house from 1976 to 1980 in San Francisco; during the early years of Adams's *Shaker Loops* and Marshall's *The Fragility Cycles* (1976) some mutual influence was apparent. But Marshall's music, set in motion by tape delays and often pervaded by recordings or samples of natural sounds, is Romantic only in mood, not structure, and his flat, meditative, nonclimaxing forms are far from any European aesthetic, despite his frequently-noted quotations of Sibelius.

Born in Mount Vernon, New York, in 1942, Marshall studied electronic techniques at Columbia with Ussachevsky and Davidovsky, but he found more congenial the New York scene around Palestine, Chatham, and Maryanne Amacher. In 1970 he went to CalArts, where he became Morton Subotnick's teaching assistant and studied gamelan. He spent time in Bali and in Sweden; his music seems like a fusion of these two influences, static Indonesian patterns plus Nordic gloom. His first piece to gain popularity was *Fog Tropes* (1979/1982) for prerecorded foghorns, ambient sounds, and brass sextet run through a delay system. Tape delay reappeared, along with background recordings of Corsican singing, in *Gradual Requiem* (1979–1981), for mandolin, piano, synthesizer, and gambuh (Balinese flute), and of ambient sounds in *Alcatraz* (1984), which incorporates boomy recordings of the slamming of great prison doors among minimalist-type arpeggios. Because of the filmy indistinctness of his gestures, Marshall's use of tape delay doesn't create melodic repetitions like Terry Riley's, but rather melancholy, atmospheric textures.

One of the finest postminimal composers is Philadelphia's Paul Epstein, who was born in Boston in 1938—putting him virtually in the same generation with the original minimalists—and who teaches at Temple University. Like Lentz, Epstein studied at Brandeis with Shapero and Fine, but in graduate school at Berkeley he fell under more freeing influences as a costudent with La Monte Young and Terry Riley. Through the seventies he worked much with theater music; his postminimal period took off upon first working with Philadelphia's Relache ensemble in 1981. Epstein is fascinated by the algorithmic aspects of minimalist processes, and with keeping those processes hidden behind a smooth musical surface. He employs formal devices such as palindromes—audible in his *Palindromic Variations* for trio (1995)—and intricate canons, such as those in his *Solstice Canons* (1995). Borrowing from Tom Johnson, Epstein has developed the idea of self-replicating melody, that is, a melody in which the pattern of notes is duplicated by taking every other note, or every

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third note, and so on. "I like to set up procedures," he has said, "that will give me a level of unpredictability."⁹ Some of Epstein's best music has used texts by poet Toby Olsen, including his chamber opera *Dorit* (1994) and his song cycle *Chamber Music: Three Songs from Home* (1986): a vocal setting for winds and keyboards of great contrapuntal beauty.

Mary Jane Leach (born 1949 in Vermont) started out as a minimalist, a composer of austere, unchanging textures. Her first characteristic pieces, starting with *Note Passing Note* for vocalist and two taped vocalists (1981), were scored for multiples of the same instrument (or voice), usually performed by a soloist who had recorded the other lines on multitrack tape. These pieces, including *4B.C.* (1984) for four bass clarinets (three on tape) and *Feu de Joie* for eight bassoons (1992), take advantage of carefully calculated psychoacoustic phenomena of beats, difference tones, and combination tones, employing pitches not exactly in tune. Beginning in 1985 with *Green Mountain Madrigal*, however, Leach has increasingly composed for choir, usually of female voices only. Once she started down the choral trail, her aesthetic broadened to include quotation and reworking of earlier music, especially that of Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643), though she also used a chord progression from Anton Bruckner's Eighth Symphony in *Brückstuck* (1989). Such virtuosic choral pieces as *Mountain Echoes* (1987) are remarkable for their permutational echoes among pairs of voices situated in opposite corners of the performing space.

Like Conlon Nancarrow, Stephen Scott (born 1944 in Corvallis, Oregon) has based most of his output on an eccentric medium, the bowed piano. He began as a jazz-influenced neoclassicist, but his allegiance switched to minimalism after he went to Ghana to study African music in 1970 and met Steve Reich the first day there. Around 1977 Scott heard a work called *Ordres* by Curtis Curtis-Smith (born 1941), who had invented a technique of playing the piano by pulling nylon threads threaded through the strings. The technique clicked with Scott's desire to find an ensemble style based on hocketing, and he wrote *Music One for Bowed Strings* in 1977.

Scott has taught since 1969 at Colorado College, where his student ensemble learns to play his music by pulling nylon threads across and underneath the piano strings—a labor-intensive performance medium since, as with handbells, each player can be responsible for only a few pitches. In some of Scott's pieces the bowed-string effect is slow and droning, but he also uses rhythmically active hocketing effects with a vivaciousness that made his *Rainbows* (1981) one of the most popular new-music works of the early eighties. The unconventionality of sound in Scott's droning, rasping, almost attackless music is compensated for by his formal lucidity. Pieces like *Minerva's Web* (1985) and *The Tears of Niobe* (1986) fan outward from simple motives slowly developed, and each

piece achieves as much contrapuntal complexity by the end as it can, given the medium's severe limitations. In *Vikings of the Sunrise* (1995), Scott expanded his repertoire of effects, adding muted keyboard playing, strings struck with piano hammers by hand, and drumming on the outside of the piano.

Mary Ellen Childs is young enough (born 1957 in West Lafayette, Indiana) to be included with the totalists in Chapter 13, but she is one of the few of her generation uninfluenced by rock, and her music is classically postminimalist. Growing up as a dancer had a strong effect on her sense of composition, for several of her works have a choreographic element, notably *Click* (1988), for three claves players whose rhythms flow from the intricate permutational tapplings of each other's claves, and *Crash* (1994–1995), scored for six crash-cymbal players riding on roller blades and handcarts.

More characteristically, though, her works move through a somewhat repetitive or permutational diatonic pitch language changing so gradually that you don't notice the changes until after they've happened. That's not to say that there aren't dramatic gestures, such as the exciting point in *Parterre* (1988) at which the soprano and drums suddenly enter over a texture of winds and accordion. But Childs uses such stark contrasts sparingly. In *Carte Blanche* (1991), she begins with a spare, soft, repetitive texture—in this case small, high chromatic clusters with sighing glissandos in the flute and viola—as introduction to an irregularly repetitive syncopated bass. Her note-to-note procedures are often strict, but her overall strategy, if smooth, is unpredictable.

The music of David Borden (b. 1938 in Boston) tends to rely on relentless streams of steady beats and reiterated patterns and has mostly been written for the Mother Mallard Ensemble, a synthesizer group that he founded in 1969 and ran until 1991. Borden's magnum opus is his monumental three-hour work in twelve sections, *The Continuing Story of Counterpoint* (1976–1987). Each section of *Continuing Story* spins out of a characteristic rhythm; for example, part 4 begins with a lovely 7+7+6+5 metrical pattern, part 6 with a five-beat pattern variously divided 4+1, 3+2, and 2+3. Part 9 contains a canon between soprano and basset horn, and Borden's obsession with counterpoint even extends to the texts of the vocal movements, which repeat names and phrases from the history of counterpoint like "Gradus ad Parnassum," "hocket," and "Orlando di Lasso." Borden tends toward long series of pieces, the most recent example being *Notes from Vienna*, a group of chamber concertos for guitar, cello, and so on, in which the soloists quote classical works by Haydn, Beethoven, and Schubert.

Jonathan Kramer (born 1942 in Hartford) is an interesting case; he began as a postminimalist but in recent years has spun off in a very different direction. Kramer has written some important books, among them *The Time of Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1988), an investiga-

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tion of linear time versus timelessness in music; and his own music has often fused a linear time sense with a non-Western sense of timelessness, usually by having a variety of rhythmic activity take place within static harmonic fields that use only five, six, or seven pitches. Kramer's seminal work, *Moving Music*, for twelve clarinets and solo clarinet (1975–1976), is drawn from a melody using only the pitches F, G, A-flat, C, and D, and has a drone on F running throughout the piece. Above this drone all sorts of textures ebb and flow: pointillistic notes, repeated-note melodies, dense contrapuntal textures, virtuoso solos of agile leaps. Likewise, Kramer's *Music for Piano Number 5* (1979–1980) is a Terry Riley-ish romp in 11/16 meter within a six-pitch mode, and *Moments in and Out of Time* (1981–1983), a big, growling orchestra piece that might sound like Mahler were it not for its stubborn adherence to the unadorned E minor scale.

By the time he wrote *Atlanta Licks* (1984), however, Kramer was using the six-pitch conceit as a way of unifying a wide variety of musics in one piece. From here it was a short step to the style clashes of post-modernism, which he explored in *Notta Sonata* (1992–1993) for two pianos and percussion, an intended companion piece to Bartók's *Sonata* for the same instruments. *Notta Sonata* intercuts sharply among imaginary styles, sometimes abruptly returning to where the piece had left off long ago. Passages of the work sound like Baroque counterpoint on mallet instruments, tonalized fragments of Boulezian serialism, piano horn calls from a Weber opera reworked by Stockhausen with raucously ringing glockenspiels. The combinations of idioms that never really existed before give the piece the remarkable feel, not of a collage, but of disconcerting fractures within a single musical subjectivity.

If the accordion has played a disproportionate role in postminimalist timbre (in works by Duckworth, Childs, Epstein, and others), the reason is primarily Guy Klucevsek, an accordionist who has worked with many of these composers and whose own music has a whimsical logic. Klucevsek (born 1947) grew up in the outskirts of Pittsburgh, where playing accordion was part of the local Polish culture. Impressed by *Come Out* and *In C*, from 1972 to 1985 he wrote what he called "take-no-prisoners minimalism," until working with John Zorn showed him how he could incorporate the vernacular styles he grew up with. As a result, Klucevsek writes works for solo accordion and for ensemble, usually postminimalist and based on vernacular sources. His *Stolen Memories* and *Tesknota* (both 1993) are based on simple but not obvious quasi-minimalist processes, and many of his works play off of ethnically derived metrical irregularities; *Viavvy Rose Variations* (1989), based on melodies from Madagascar, is a charming example. He has also written pieces in popular and East-European folk idioms with crazy titles like *Transylvanian Software* and *Flying Vegetables of the Apocalypse*. All of Klucevsek's music is unpretentious, audience-pleasing, and superbly musical.

Neely Bruce (born in 1944 in Memphis) is a prolific composer and one difficult to classify, except that the majority of his works are vocal. In works such as *Eight Ghosts* (1989), he has been one of the few postminimalists to create a viably madrigalistic choral style. Based on texts of concrete poetry, *Eight Ghosts* includes electronic vocal processing and references to rock and jazz. A larger theater work, *The Plague* (1983–1984), eclectically mixes Renaissance polyphony, unusual vocal techniques, and a rock idiom to create an apocalyptic metaphor for our time. Teaching at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, Bruce has been one of the premier pianists and conductors for American music, both recent and historical.

One of New York's most popular composers is Rafael Mostel, director of and composer for the Tibetan Singing Bowl Ensemble—not really a postminimalist, but influenced by minimalism and not really fitting any category at all. Born in Passaic, New Jersey, in 1948 (the nephew of the great comedian Zero Mostel), Mostel grew up with an intense musical background of Eastern European synagogue chants and Broadway showtunes. At Brown University, he, Stephen Scott, and others gave the New England premiere of *In C* in 1968. In 1973 Mostel studied briefly with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, though she was by then too old to be of much help. Then, back in New York in 1983, Mostel walked one day into a handicraft shop, saw a Tibetan bowl, thumped it with his finger, and heard an entire career in its rich, enduring ring.

Mostel gave the first concert of his Tibetan Singing Bowl Ensemble in Central Park in 1984 in the middle of the night. His works, often evening-length, tend to be ritualistic and meditative yet rough in timbre, with drones emanating from the rubbing of the Tibetan bowls. *Nightsong* (1989) is a motionless meditation for the bowls with a soft solo on the lyzarden, an obsolete wind instrument. Other works, like *Swiftly, How Swiftly . . .* (1987) are noisier yet as calm as a night in the jungle, with the mournful wails of Tibetan thighbone trumpets, the rattle of rainsticks, and slow drumbeats reminiscent of Japanese *gagaku*. Performed in such grand spaces as the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, his larger works like *Ceremonial for the Equinox* (1985) conjure up an archetypal sonic power.

There are many other postminimalists whose music, though powerful, has achieved only regional significance so far. Of these one might mention Phil Winsor (born 1938 in Illinois) at North Texas State University, whose music has included acoustic works written via computer algorithms; Joseph Koykkar (born 1951 in Milwaukee) at the University of Wisconsin, whose postminimal chamber works have a propulsive drive; Thomas Albert (born 1948 in Lebanon, Pennsylvania), whose *A Maze (With Grace)* (1975) turns the song "Amazing Grace" into a beautifully meditative process piece; Wes York (born 1949 in Portland, Maine), a Feldman-influenced postminimalist of delicate structures; and Sasha Matson (born 1954 in Seattle), a student of John Adams, whose *Steel*

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Chords, a triple concerto for pedal steel guitar, violins, and strings introduces into new music a timbre usually associated with country and western music. Such a legion of highly individual composers is indicative of a fertile style that deserves more public recognition than it has received.

Notes

1. Interview with the author, October 23, 1996.
2. Janice Giteck, "Beyond Performance: The Ritual Frame," unpublished paper to be published in *Contemporary Music Review*.
3. Ibid.
4. Interview with the author, July 23, 1996.
5. Quoted in David Cope, *New Directions in Music* (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1971), p. 102.
6. Interview with the author, October 27, 1996.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Interview with the author, October 1996.