

Music by Stephen Travis Pope, 1978-2007



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As to why I make music, I can only paraphrase Joseph Campbell, "Just as anyone who listens to the Muse will hear, you can work out of your own intention, or out of inspiration; yes, inspiration, there is such a thing; it comes up and talks to you. Those who have heard the rhythms and hymns of the angels, who have understood any of the words of the angels, will try to recite these hymns in such a way that the angels will be attracted."

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[WAKE: Ten Tangents for Dance](#) - Toronto, 1979/80, 18 minutes.

The Program Notes

Ora penso invece che il mondo...

Three Quick Snapshots of a Really Beautiful Enigma for String Quartet and Two Pianos, 10:00 minutes, 2006
Full title:

"Ora penso invece che il mondo sia un enigma benigno, che la nostra follia rende terribile perchè pretende di interpretarlo secondo la propria verità."

"Today, however, I think that the world is an enigma, a benign enigma, however, which is only rendered terrible by our folly of trying to interpret it according to some personal truth."

"Heute aber, denke ich, dass die Welt ein Rätsel ist, ein harmloses Rätsel aber, das nur furchtbar gemacht wird durch unseren Versuch, es nach einer eigenen Wahrheit zu interpretieren."

Umberto Eco, "Il pendolo di Foucault" (*Foucault's Pendulum*)

Sections

- Andante con brio - 4:26
- Larghetto, cantabile - 2:42
- Andante molto - 2:42

When I was invited to write a piece for string quartet and electronics for a festival in Cologne marking the 50th anniversary of the first computer-composed music (a string quartet), the title of this piece, and its basic form, sprang immediately to mind. This is very rare for me. During the composition, I used the title to steer my decisions, and, as a result, what started out to be a complex and dynamic piece became ever simpler and more directly lovely. As I repeated "Ora penso invece che il mondo..." it came strongly into focus that the world-enigma in which we live is quite beautiful and accessible, even if we can't always understand its underlying mechanisms. This is the basis of the subtitle "Three Quick Snapshots of a Really Beautiful Enigma"; the piece's three

movements are separate scenes or venues taking place at the same time all the time. Ora penso invece che il mondo... is dedicated to my parents Phil and Polly Pope (who taught me to see the world in many different ways), and to my dear wife Barbara.

Jerusalem's Secrets

Music in 5 movements for samples from "Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae" and "My Life in the Bush of Ghosts" - 19:40 minutes, 2006

The movements

- Introduction (De Lamentatione Jeremiae Prophetae) -- 0:56
- Part1 (Jerusalem) -- 4:02
- Part2 (Recordare, Domine) -- 5:20
- Part3 (Plorans ploravit in nocte, et lacrimae ejus in maxillis ejus) -- 4:18
- Part4 (Convertere ad Dominum, Deum tuum) -- 4:42

JS Cover For many years I've wanted to make a tape-based "musique concrete" style composition using Latin chant from Ernst Krenek's 1941/2 choral piece "Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae" (The Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremias) together with source samples from the 1981 album "My Life in the Bush of Ghosts" by Brian Eno and David Byrne. This became possible with the release under a liberal copyright of the original source tracks of the songs "Help Me Somebody" and "A Secret Life" from "My Life in the Bush of Ghosts." Each of the five movements of "Jerusalem's Secrets" presents a short phrase from "Lamentatio" over a backdrop of percussion textures, synthesizer drones and pedal tones. All of the sounds in "Jerusalem's Secrets" come from these sources, which were processed in the simplest ways (splicing, pitch shifting, time stretching, looping, etc.) and layered to make the composition in the style of tape-based "musique concrete." This music is intended for multimedia accompaniment (dance or video).

Eternal Dream

Realized: Santa Barbara/Stockholm, 2002; 19:10 min. Computer-processed voices, percussion samples, Speak'n'Spell, and synthetic sounds. Video produced 2004-5.

Eternal Dream is a mixed-media piece for music and video based on an extended "remix" version of *Gates Still Open* augmented by sounds taken from several of my other pieces. There are several different videos to accompany the piece, one edited from the documentary *Lucky People Center: International* by Erik Pauser and Johan Söderberg. First performance: Santa Cruz, August, 2002.

Leur Songe de la Paix (Their Dream of Peace)

Realized: Santa Barbara, 2003, 10:34 min. Music in three movements for voices, bells, analog synthesizer, orchestral samples, and Morse-code program. Text by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-68).

The motivation for "Leur Songe de la Paix" was to provide the simplest possible setting for several excerpts from Martin Luther King's famous "A Time to Break Silence" speech, delivered in New York exactly one year before his assassination. The title reflects the discouraged hopes of many in the peace movement over recent (2003) events that make Reverend King's words from 1967 even more poignant. In addition to his voice, the material comes from the melody of the Gregorian chant "Ubi caritas" and the "Farewell" movement of Gustav Mahler's "Song of the Earth." The texts of these two sources are only heard as Morse Code (thanks to a program by Nitin Solanki). Formally, the piece is a traditional Concerto Grosso in three movements (fast-slow-fast). Released on DVD by the Association for Global New Thought and the Gandhi/King Season for Nonviolence.

Gates Still Open

Realized: Santa Barbara/Berlin/Havana, 2000-02; 13:38 min. Computer-processed voices, percussion samples, Speak'n'Spell, and synthetic sounds

About the title and the text: Paragraph 31 of the constitution of the Kingdoms of Elgaland/Vargaland (KREV) is "All Gates are Open." This is also the title of my 1992 national anthem for KREV, which is based on the poem *Sol och Guld* (Sun and Gold) by Michael von Hauswolff and Leif Elggren. My favorite two words of the text are "Evig...dröm" (Eternal Dream), though they do not appear in that order in the poem. The final line of piece is from the title of an exhibition by Johanna Ekström, and is "Ingen har dott av Kärlek" (loosely: "You know, no one has died of love; no one has ever died of love"). The voices are those of Michael von Hauswolff and Leif Elggren, Ingeborg Raggob, Susanne Engberg, and from a "circuit-bent" Speak'n'Spell toy speech synthesizer courtesy of Brent Lehman. As with most of my music, *Gates Still Open: Eternal Dream* has a strict classical form (exposition, development 1, development 2, recapitulation) so that it could be called *Sonata in A for Voices and Percussion, opus 18. Gates Still Open: Eternal Dream* is dedicated in gratitude to my favorite monkey. Commission for Touch Records. First performance: Stockholm, May, 2002. Released on CD by Touch Music, London (KREV + 10 Anniversary CD).

Sensing/Speaking Space

Realized: Santa Barbara/Havana, 2001-02; 9:06 min. Computer-processed voices, bells, and natural sounds *Sensing/Speaking Space* is an interactive installation developed in collaboration with the video artist George Legrady and premiered at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in February, 2002.

It was our intention to make a contemplative space or "Zen garden" in the gallery space. The music consists of several layers (drone, singer, water sounds, bells, speakers, etc.); these are "conducted" by the visitors to the installation via a video camera and computer vision program, which send messages over a network to a SuperCollider program that controls the sound synthesis

and mixing. The music is projected over a 6-channel sound system. The CD version of *Sensing/Speaking Space* is a stereo mix of the layers. It was "played" live to illustrate the interrelationships of the layers and their responsiveness to user input. The constant chanting bell sound is reading the poem "Ywe Ye, Yi Jr Di" by the T'ang dynasty Chinese poet Tu Fu. Details of the realization of *Sensing/Speaking Space* and of the software tools used can be found on my web site at <http://HeavenEverywhere.com/SeSpSp>. Commission for the "23:5 Activating the Media" festival. First performance: San Francisco, February, 2002. Released on CD by Disc0 Records (Compilation 2).

Four Magic Sentences: A Mantra

Realized: August - October, 2000 at the Electronic Studio of the Technical University of Berlin and the CREATE studio in Santa Barbara. 1:00 Minute.

Four Magic Sentences is based on voices speaking four languages (English [Justin Bennett and Stephen Pope], Swedish [Michael von Hausswolff and Leif Ellgren], German [Ingeborg Eva de Fontana], and T'ang Chinese [Ernest Chin]). It is a study for a larger work-in-progress entitled "...nor shall my sword sleep in my hand." The piece is intended to be listened to several times in succession (as in a mantra chant). First performance: Santa Barbara, November, 2000. Commission for the "State of the Union" CD produced by Elliott Sharp and released by the Electronic Music Foundation.

All Gates are Open-A National Anthem for Elgaland/Vargaland

Realized at the EMS Studio and the Swedish Institute for Computer Science (SICS) November, 1992-April, 1993, 26 minutes. The text of the poem "Sol och Guld" (Sun and Gold) by Michael Hausswolff and Leif Ellgren serves as the basis for this text-sound piece that uses the voices of the two poets in a tongue-in-cheek four-movement divertimento/suite filled with Swedish-language puns and word-plays. All Gates are Open serves as one possible national anthem for the imaginary or virtual nation of Elgaland/Vargaland. Commission of the kings of Elgaland/Vargaland. First performance: Stockholm, April, 1993.

Celebration: Laments and Simple Truths for a Quiet Spiritual Place

Spiritual ritual in four movements based on four texts: (1) Kombination XI (text by H. Heissenbüttel); (2) Ywe Ye, Yi Jai Di (text by Du Fu); (3) To My Younger Brother (text by Du Fu); and (4) Simple Truths-Hymn (text by Albert Goldbarth). Realized at the composer's home, the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA), Stanford, and the Stichting voor Elektro-Instrumentale Muziek (STEIM), Amsterdam, 1989-1992, 60 minutes (work in progress, first movement finished 4/1990). Commission of the STEIM Institute. The four parts of this ritual piece use live and processed voices together with actors carrying out various ritual processes. First performance: (Kombination XI), STEIM, Amsterdam, May, 1990.

Kombination XI: A "Ritual Place" for Live and Processed Voices based on the Poem by Helmut Heissenbüttel

Realized at the Vienna Music Academy, CCRMA/Stanford, ParcPlace Systems, Inc., and the QuickSilver studios, 1978-90, remastered 1998, 15 minutes.

Kombination XI is a ritual or a place where one goes--a mood and an environment described in sound. Kombination XI can best be listened to as liturgical music; it is the first part of a trilogy of laments which is the prime component of a new sacred ritual for the 21st century. All of the sound material for the piece (with the exception of the pedal tone), is derived from the recorded voices of two people speaking the text of Heissenbüttel's poem Kombination XI. These sounds are processed and mixed in the style of musique concrète collages. Kombination XI consists of 6 sections--a prelude, the four stanzas of the poem, and a postlude. The musical form is that of a rondo. First performance: STEIM, Amsterdam, May, 1990. Released on CD by the CDCM (The Virtuoso in the Computer Age, CDCM Vol. 13) and by Touch/OR records (Or Some Computer Music Volume 1).

Day: Installation

Realized at Xerox PARC, ParcPlace Systems and the composer's home, Palo Alto, 1987, 12 hours. Algorithmic composition to be performed live (by computer and MIDI equipment) as an installation in multiple city environments (busses, subways, plazas, etc.). The concert version consists of a tape of three 4-minute segments from different parts of the day.

Requiem Aeternam Dona Eis

Realized at the CMRS and PCS GmbH, Munich, 1984/85, 14 minutes. Computer-generated tape music with flexible form for dance.

Three sections that map onto the three special parts of the Requiem Mass (Dies Irae, Dies Illa; Lux Aeterna; and Libera me), are repeated twice with variations. Dedicated to my late friend and colleague Stephan Kaske.

Variations for Drago's Pictures - Music for an Installation

Realized at the CMRS, 1984, 60 Minutes. Computer-generated tape music for installation (one week long) at an exhibit of paintings of the artist Drago Drusković. Commission of the artist. First performance: Gallerie BIMC, Paris, June, 1984.

Bat out of Hell: Stories for Dance

Realized at the CMRS, Salzburg, 1983, 6 minutes. Computer-generated tape music for ballet.

This is envisioned as a solo percussion piece for a virtuoso with 168 microtonally-tuned bells. The two short sections of the work

are intended to evoke certain gestures and shadows in dancers. First performance: Vancouver, Canada (International Computer Music Conference), August, 1985. Available as a recording from Perspectives of New Music (Vol 24) , SBC Records (II SBC&M), and the MIT Press (1997 Computer Music Journal Sound Anthology).

Terpsichore: 2 Dances from Michael Praetorius (1612)

Realized at the CMRS (ComputerMusik Rechenzentrum Salzburg) at the Mozarteum, 1983, 3 minutes. Computer-generated realization of two of Praetorius' dances. Commission for the opening of the CMRS. First performance: Salzburg, August, 1983.

4: Ballet Music for my Siblings

Realized at the IRCAM, Paris and the studios of the Mozarteum, Salzburg, 1980/82, 3 versions between 23 and 64 minutes. Mix of (minimalist) computer-generated and recorded concrete tape music.

Realized with the support of the Salzburg State Cultural Council. Dedicated to my 4 siblings and presented to them as a gift. First performance: Venice (Biennale di Venezia/ICMC 1982), September, 1982.

WAKE: Ten Tangents for Dance

Realized at the SSSP (Structured Sound Synthesis Project) studio, University of Toronto, 1979/80, 18 minutes. Original score for organ solo; computer-generated tape music version for dance accompaniment with projections of the score.

Realized with the support of the Canadian Council for the Arts and the University of Toronto. The performance is meant to suggest the cross-relations of different dimensions of sounds. The sound fragments are taken from spoken tones and are processed and spatialized according to phonetical as well as musical grammars. First performance: Toronto, May, 1980

[Stephen Travis Pope, 2007]