

RICHARD TEITELBAUM

Electro-Acoustic Chamber Music

February 27, 28th, 1979 8:30 p.m.
The Kitchen Center for Video, Dance & Music
\$3.50/\$2.00 members/ TDF Music

925-3615
484 Broome Street

PROGRAM

I. BLENDS was written in Tokyo in 1977, in partial fulfillment of a commission from the National Endowment for the Arts. It is the second piece I've written for shakuhachi in traditional "Kinko" style, the first being the solo work Hi Kaeshi Hachi Mi Fu which was performed by Shudo Yamato at The Kitchen in 1974. In Blends, I attempted to combine the traditional Kinko School idiom with those of contemporary shakuhachi music, and also with my own interests in electro-acoustic interactions.

In Tokyo I was fortunate to be able to continue my shakuhachi studies (begun at Wesleyan in 1970 with Katsuya Yokoyama, one of the foremost exponents of both traditional and contemporary style, and to perform Blends with Yokoyama and Toshi Ichiyanagi at the Seibu Gallery in Tokyo, as well as in Kyoto and Sapporo. This is the first performance in the U.S.

The Kinko style opening solo is joined by the synthesizer in a unison duet, employing the pitch-bending ribbon controller and glide to closely match the microtonal inflections of the shakuhachi. Gradually the two instruments "detune" to create beatings, aural harmonics and heterodyne effects. Structural analogs between special shakuhachi techniques and electronic modulations provide a basis for improvisational development in an increasingly dense and dissonant texture. This gradually smooths out into a sustained and calmer mood, ending with a reference to the initial "Japanese" style of the opening.

II. SHRINE (1976-78) is a piece I have performed in a number of guises since 1976. It is a kind of suite made up of several shorter pieces, including Ohnesorg (1976), On the Lam (1977) and an arrangement of a traditional Chinese children's song about a river. Each of these melodies are in differing, but intersecting, scales or modes--the first chromatic, the last diatonic and the middle one combining both whole and half steps.

The piece as a whole is a kind of narrative and a meditation on violence, referring to some recent and not so recent events in Europe, particularly Germany, and my own experience of them. The words to the concluding song, from Hunan Province are:

The water in the River
Clear and Long
Beneath the Shallow Water
Lies deep quick sand

Brother has gone fishing
Then let me cast the net
Papa, dear, come hold the helm
while I row, you row
hey, ho, let me row.

III. Variations and a Theme in A ("Asparagus")

This music was composed in the fall of 1978 and first presented in solo performances in Rotterdam, Cologne, and Groningen in November. It was used as the soundtrack for the film Asparagus by Suzan Pitt, which recently premiered at the Whitney Museum. The score makes extensive use of the PolyMoog synthesizer, which facilitates the extremely dense textures and rich timbres. The basically "minimalist" approach helps focus attention on the acoustic interactions resulting from the thick sonorities and rapid modulations of frequency, pulse width and phase which characterizes the sound. Within the sound mass, numerous melodic patterns and fragments derived from the theme are "hidden" --occasionally rising above the general level but quickly sinking again to the threshold of the overall harmonic texture. The theme--a sentimental melody--is heard only at the end, and even then in a similarly disguised manner. In writing a piece in a romantic vein, I decided to carry the heightened sentimentality which I took as the essence of romanticism to the extremes which good taste would allow, and even, perhaps beyond. As accompaniment to the film, this hyper-charged emotionalism served both to compliment the sensuous warmth of the visual detail and to provide a kind of bitter-sweet irony, since the heroine's ultimate romantic gratification consists finally in no more than sucking a stiff stalk of asparagus.

IV. IMPROVISATION

RICHARD TEITELBAUM was born in New York City in 1939. In 1964 he received the Master of Music degree from Yale University, studying theory and composition with Allen Forte and Mel Powell.

From 1964-66 a Fulbright grant enabled him to continue his compositional studies with Luigi Nono and Goffredo Petrassi in Italy. At this time he became interested in the idea of "orchestrating" brainwaves, heartbeats and other organic signals of the human body by electronic means, and this led him to seek out Robert Moog and his newly invented music synthesizer. Teitelbaum returned to Europe in 1967 with one of the first Moog synthesizers. From 1967-70 he toured Europe, performing with his own biofeedback music and participating in live-electronic collective improvisations. Many of these concerts were with the composer/performer group Musica Elettronica Viva, which he helped to found, together with Frederic Rzewski, Alvin Curran and others in 1966.

Teitelbaum has studied Japanese, Javanese and West African Music under resident native masters at Wesleyan University. He founded the World Band, a performance group made up of master musicians from Japan, Korea, Java, India, Ghana, the Middle East and elsewhere. Based on the principles of collective improvisation, this group performed at Town Hall and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace at the United Nations in 1972 and 1973.

Teitelbaum has taught at the California Institute of the Arts, the Art Institute of Chicago, York University in Toronto and Antioch College. In 1976 he received a commission from the N.E.A. to compose a piece combining "world" musicians with advanced electronic technology. At that time he was also awarded a Senior Fulbright Grant as a Research Artist to Japan, where he studied the ancient Gagaku (Court) music and shakuhachi as well as collaborating with contemporary Japanese composers and performers, Yuji Takahasi, Takehisa Kosugi, Toshi Ichinyanagi, Masahiko Togashi and others. He has also worked extensively with composer/performers Steve Lacy, Anthony Braxton, Jimmy Garrison, Leo Smith, Roscoe Mitchell, George Lewis and others.

Teitelbaum's two recent albums, Time Zones, for synthesizer and winds (with Anthony Braxton) and Hiuchi-ishi for synthesizer, piano, winds and percussion were released by Arista-Freedom and Nippon Columbia respectively. His composition Via della Luce is featured in a recently released album, United Patchwork, by the M.E.V. group on the Italian Horo label, and a duet album with Steve Lacy is scheduled for release later this year.

REIHI SANO is one of the active shakuhachi players of the younger generation. He is a devoted student of Reibo Aoki II. In 1972 he was granted a professional name and teaching licence by his master. In 1974 he gave a concert of traditional shakuhachi music in Berlin, West Germany, in conjunction with the Metamusik Festival. In 1975 he gave his first recital of both traditional and contemporary shakuhachi music in Tokyo.

Since the fall of 1977, Mr. Sano has been teaching the Kinko style shakuhachi in the World Music program at Wesleyan University, and also performing widely on the East Coast. He is on the board of directors of Shakuhachi Reibo Kai. He has recorded for Victor (Japan) and Island Records (USA).

GEORGE LEWIS (b. Chicago) has been a member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (A.A.C.M.) since 1971. He studied philosophy at Yale University and music at the A.A.C.M. School and with private teachers. Mr. Lewis has performed most recently with Muhal Richard Abrams, Jacques Bekaert, Anthony Braxton, Douglas Ewart, Anthony Davis, Roscoe Mitchell, Phill Niblock, Richard Teitelbaum, and the Count Basie Orchestra among others.

Mr. Lewis' compositional output includes works for voice and percussion, a cycle of pieces for solo instrumentalist, live-electronic music, and the Shadowgraph group of new music for traditional "big band" (1975-78). His discography includes: The George Lewis Solo Trombone Record (Sackville) and Shadowgraph (Black Saint- Italy).

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