Alex Waterman

1. Robert Ashley, Concrete, La MaMa E.T.C., New York This year's appearance of Ashley's autobiographical opera was a departure in more ways than one. The superb cast sang the stories of people from his past, Ashley's work continues to transport us to another plane of the American experience.

2. Walter Marchetti, Utopia is just a village (Ariga Marcetti, 2006) This year's summer season in New York would have felt incomplete without this timelessly fresh record by Marchetti. The first CD fuses recordings of a piano, metal, and rainstorm; the second features the same piece rearranged. As the heat and humid air rose, I would take a musical journey away and back again.

3. Awanai Gray, Some Gray Stuff (Decembrism) A treasure of an album by the Scottish poet and author of the epic Glengarryjörn novel Loras: A Life in Four Books. Gray here reads from selected stories and poems, his voice a resonant tenor that wistfully suggests humanity.

4. David Tudor, Iceforest IV, performed by Composers Inside Electronics, The Kitchen, New York. A two-day program of performance and installation in September included this continually evolving work by Tudor. The players included some of his old collaborators and some new faces, including Phil Edelstein, John Driscoll, Stephen Vitiello, and Matt Regen. Interaction between audience and musicians was often marked by conversation and laughter, missing for a playful and spirited event.

5. Anthony Coleman The past year belonged to one of the hardest-working men in New York show business, whose work possesses an extraordinary intimacy and urgency. Coleman's latest orchestra and ensemble pieces, which he performed around New York this past year, is music that shakes and seduces.

6. New Rational Music, Rational Rec., Bethnal Green Working Men's Club, London. This monthly event, curated by Russell Martin, Matthew Shinnowitz, and Cecilia Weak, highlights avant-garde and experimental music but also features readings, performances, and a fair amount of noise. The name comes from Rational Recreation, a late-nineteenth-century attempt to civilize the English working class via Working Men's Clubs.


8. Charles Curtis. Curtis is one of the great cellists, and his performances of Morton Feldman, Alvin Lucier, and Le Monte Young's music have been among my favorites. This summer I included him in "Age of" at Miguel Abreu Gallery in New York—he performed Elaine Radigue's solo piece, Naftalim, and completely transported the room.

9. Thomas Meadowbornett, Crazy Jack Plus One of the Berlin-based Australian composer's finest ensemble works received its New York premiere at Cornelia Kliff in November. Written for Hammerensemble Neue Musik Berlin, Meadowbornett's piece is closely and cleverly linked to a sequence of video stills showing illustrations from Carla Javette's children's book The Snowy Day.

10. Lovely Music (www.lovely.com) Where else can you one-stop-shop for recordings by Elissa Radigue, Alvin Lucier, Anna Lockwood, and many others? Almost all of my top ten most-listened-to discs of the past year were put out by Mind Johnson's label.