

PROGRAM NOTES Introduction

The main purpose of this work is to provide program notes for all my compositions, or, to be precise, all those I consider worthy of retention. Others not mentioned here have been withdrawn, and I do not wish them to be performed. I have not provided details here for the theatrical works in the Patria cycle, but have merely listed them in the order in which they were composed. They have been discussed in detail in the book *Patria: The Complete Cycle* (Coach House Books, Toronto, 2002).

The works are listed chronologically by the year in which they were composed or completed. An index will list the works alphabetically giving the number of each work for easy reference.

In an appendix, I will provide a list of errata in all published scores, at least those errors that performances have revealed to date.

I am frequently asked by performers and publicists to provide program notes to my works. Some works have notes in the scores, others do not. In this catalogue I shall say something about each work, so that the collection as a whole could be taken as an evolution of my thinking as a composer. A word of warning. I am not always careful about bibliographical details such as dates of composition or performance. This information is presumably accurate in Stephen Adams biography up to 1981, when the book went to press.¹ One might expect this list to have been updated by some ambitious doctoral candidate at one of the Canadian beaneries, but these students are evidently applying their talents to more glittering projects.

If Canada were another country, the composer might not be so much alone. An assumption that the nation's lustre might be enhanced by autochthonous musical creativity would result not only in more income for the creative personality (perhaps even a living wage) but would also stimulate musical services of benefit to the circulation of his or her

creations.

Through most of my musical life I have been my own music copyist, editor, publisher, publicist, agent and promoter — there being no publishers of serious music in Canada, no serious music periodicals, few serious staff music critics on the major newspapers, little serious study of Canadian music in our universities, no serious commitment to Canadian music by our major performing organizations, no policy on the presentation of serious Canadian music on radio or television... which is why the present document or any other attempts to present, publicize or preserve Canadian music must be the result of personal incentive.

The works below are listed by the date composed. I have given each work a number for convenience. I can only hope that this present document may help to correct the hundreds of inaccuracies currently appearing on the Internet referring to or featuring my music: "He has written over 70 works"... "he is the author of three string quartets," etc.

Following Adams's example, entries will provide the following information where applicable: title, date of completion, duration, instrumentation and publisher.

Publishers' addresses:

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1. Polytonality, 1952; 4 min; pno; Arcana.

My first independent musical enthusiasm (that is, independent of the repertoire chosen by my piano teachers) was for the unsophisticated music of Les Six, with Jean Cocteau as their pamphleteer. In *Rapelle à l'Ordre* Cocteau said, "Musical bread is what we want." In other words, simplicity. "Aim sharp and shoot fast" was another of his maxims. Les Six sought to do just that and I loved the ingenuousness of their style, Milhaud and Poulenc in particular.

Polytonality is an obvious silhouette of Poulenc but, suppressing some immature attempts to imitate Mozart, it is the first composition I'll let stand.

2. A Music Lesson, 1953; 4 min; voice, pno; Arcana.

The didactics of Cocteau's maxims plus Stravinsky's notion of music as a non-emotional medium are the influences in this little opus, written when I was twenty. The first performance was at a young composers' workshop in Toronto. I accompanied Phyllis Mailing (later to be my wife) with as deadpan a sound as the piano could produce. Afterwards I mouthed Stravinsky's credo on emotionless music. "Is that the way you feel about it?" someone asked from the audience. "That's how I feel," I said. Everyone laughed. I have never forgotten the humiliation of that day.

3. Concerto for Harpsichord and Eight Wind Instruments, 1954; 21 min; hpscd, 2 fl, ob, cl, bass cl, 2 bn, hn; Arcana.

The Harpsichord Concerto was written in the winter of 1954-5, my last year of study with John Weinzweig. I was also studying harpsichord at the time and had become fascinated with the contrapuntal and rhythmic possibilities of the instrument. Wind instruments were chosen for the accompaniment rather than the more traditional strings because of their incisive clarity in contrapuntal textures. My aim was to compose a two-dimensional study. Depth was not so much a concern as surface etching. I had

developed an enthusiasm for the early etchings of Paul Klee at the time, and dedicated the second movement to his memory.

The style of the work reflects my sustained interest in Les Six and the neo-classicism of Stravinsky (with a couple of conspicuous thefts from Da Falla and Janacek). The generosity of John Weinzweig's teaching shows in that the piece does not mimic his style. He never expected his students to copy him, unlike many other notable teachers. John was also instrumental in arranging the first performance-recording of the work by recommending it to the International Service of the CBC in Montreal.

The first movement begins as a toccata, which is interrupted, first by a march-like section and then by a chorale. The second movement consists of a series of free variations on the chorale theme. Beginning in a subdued

manner, it rises to an astringent climax in which the theme is stated in biting staccato chords separated by long rests. From this point the movement moves backward to the peaceful material of the opening. The final movement is bright and transparent, a sort of Mediterranean baroque, with snatches of Scarlatti woven into a lively polytonal and polyrhythmic counterpoint.

The Concerto was my first attempt to write a long piece and, of course, suffers from the same deficiencies as countless other attempts by young composers. The principal problem in extending music into longer forms is in the bridging of ideas. This is particularly conspicuous in the first movement, where the toccata is interrupted without warning by the march and then the chorale, neither of which bear relationship to the opening material and merely detract from the momentum of the movement. Some years after it was written I abbreviated the first movement, which was too long, though the faults I mentioned are still evident.

4. Three Contemporaries, 1956; 10 min; medium voice, pno; Arcana.

The subjects of these songs, written in Vienna, were Benjamin Britten, Paul Klee and Ezra Pound. The Britten song is a short biography of the composer with a deadpan neo-classical accompaniment. I sent a copy of it to Britten requesting a meeting. He wrote back, and eventually we did meet when I interviewed him for the book *British Composers in Interview* (Faber, 1963).

The text for the Klee song comes from the composer's diaries, which I was trying to read in German. The style is expressionistic, reminiscent of the young Schoenberg but much less dense.

The Pound text is my own and is a bitter satire on Pound's incarceration at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington after his famous trial for treason. Pound was an early enthusiasm of mine, and I wrote an article on him about this time, later published in *The Canadian Music Journal* (Summer 1961). In the same magazine (CMJ, Summer 1958, p. 55) John Beckwith

reviewed the 1958 concert at which *Three Contemporaries* was premiered by Phyllis Mailing and Weldon Kilburn. "Three Contemporaries was the success of the concert, and is as original a work as this commentator has heard from the pen of any Canadian lately." Shortly after this concert, I decided to return to Europe, where I remained for another couple of years, mostly in London.

5. *Minnelieder*, 1956; 29 min; mezzo-soprano, wind quintet; Arcana.

This cycle of thirteen songs was written in 1956 while I was in Vienna. I was trying hard to learn German, mostly by reading novels and poetry, and this led me back to the Minnesinger (German minstrels) of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. "Minne" is the medieval German word for "love", and the poems of the period, like those of the French troubadours, deal with love

in all its states: impassioned, unfulfilled, bruised, unrequited, jealous, etc. At the University of Vienna I met a scholarly woman who offered to teach me *Mittelhochdeutsch*. The only English she could speak was Anglo-Saxon, and for some reason known only to academics she was engaged in translating *Beowulf* into medieval German. But she was a generous teacher, and from her I learned both the vocabulary and the presumed pronunciation of the ancient language. The translations of the texts, given in the printed score, are mine.

Minnelieder is the only early composition of mine that still receives fairly regular performances and has been recorded several times. Some critics have noted traces of Mahler, which is quite possible, considering the despairing nature of some of the texts and the loneliness of my first year in Vienna. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

6. *Kinderlieder*, 1958; 17 min; soprano, pno; Arcana.

Most of the texts for *Kinderlieder* are by Bertold Brecht, the socialist poet and dramatist. Two of the texts (5 and 9) are German nursery poems. My faith in socialism was strong at this time; in fact a year after these songs

were written I was to visit several East-European communist countries, which discouraged any enthusiasm I might have felt for the more extreme forms of socialism without damaging my faith in a welfare state that looks after all its people, including artists. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

7. Sonatina for Flute and Harpsichord (or Piano), 1958; 10 min; Arcana. My friend, the flutist Bob Aitken, was only nineteen when I wrote this little sonatina for him, but he was not the first to perform it. The first performance took place in London in 1959, while I was living there. I remember the harpsichordist very well. Celia

Bizony was a voluptuously senescent woman whose florid caressing of the harpsichord keys prevented her small, indulgent audience from discerning whether they were listening to Scarlatti or Chopin. In Madame Bizony's whirling presence all music was delirious, and I believe the little première was quite successful, though I have no memory of a flute player being present.

8. In Memoriam Alberto Guerrero, 1959; 8 min; str orch; Arcana. The Chilean pianist Alberto Guerrero (1886-1959) settled in Canada in 1919, where he became a leading exponent of Debussy, Ravel and their contemporaries, as well as a celebrated piano teacher. His most famous student was Glenn Gould (who took pains to ignore his teacher's influence, preferring that the world should know him as an autodidact), but he also taught other important Canadian musicians including John Beckwith and Bruce Mather. I studied with him for about a year in 1959. He knew I would never become a pianist and our lessons usually consisted of talks about philosophy (I recall discussing Comte, Husserl and Sartre with him) or the modern painters and poets, particularly the French, who were his favourites. He was one of the few musicians from whom a student could get a vista of ideas beyond music, and it was with great regret that I learned of his death while I was in Europe in 1959. In

Memoriam was written in November of that year.

Evidently this is the only composition I wrote in 1959. During this period I was attempting to support myself as a freelance radio producer and music journalist. To be frank, I was not sure I wanted to devote my life to music composition. I was considering a career in writing or the media. It would still be a few years before music would dominate my life.

9. Protest and Incarceration, 1960; 13 min; 2 songs, mezzo- soprano and orch; ms.

In 1959 I visited several countries behind the Iron Curtain (Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia), ostensibly as a radio

producer and folk music enthusiast, though my real purpose was to experience communism first hand. My socialist leanings helped to procure the necessary visas, by no means easy in those days. This is not the place to describe that eventful trip except to say that a young Romanian woman exposed the dismal side of communism by reading me some poems then circulating on mimeographed sheets by anonymous or incarcerated poets, and since she was a student of English, translating them for me.

Protest and Incarceration is a setting of two of these poems. It is my first attempt to write a sustained atonal work, but has only been performed once (March 10, 1968, by Phyllis Mailing with the CBC Toronto Orchestra), and I am not sure whether it deserves to be performed again. Failing the music, here are the texts.

PROTEST

Birthday Wishes for a Dictator

What shall I bring you for your birthday?

I know not what to give.

Bruised upon my bones, my skin alone do I have. Since I have sighed in the yoke,

Since I have pulled in the harness,

All that was plenteous has melted away as snow.

The darkness deepens,
The nails upon my hands grow long with retribution. Grow, my timid
voice,
Grow as a daemon,
Grow as a great bird,
Gather in your flight,
And bring to the oppressor
The cry of orphans,
The suffocating voice of mothers, drowned with grief, Hate of the whole
country, rise up now,
Muster your curses,
Doom this day!
Curse it with fire and brimstone for the savage beast that it bore,
The beast that would overthrow the world with his horns!
Now you must grow, my voice, little by little,
Like the spring grass, in volume increasing As down the mountainside it
falls.
Swell out of the forest,
Swell from the felled woods,
Grow out of the deserted villages,
Grow out of the ruins,
Grow from the depths of dungeons,
Where all that still lives is about to die!
INCARCERATION
Sunday... Tuesday... Friday...
Empty days, without form...
A great fog over the landscape...
I stand in time, terribly naked,
My soul in liquid eternity,
like an atoll in an ocean, beaten by waves... Tuesday... Monday... What day
is it?

My week is dead amassment,
 My months pass through no calendar,
 Sunday... The devil take you!
 Stinking days! Stagnant days!
 Here in the jaws of eternity, who shall count...

10. Brébeuf, 1961; cantata for baritone and orch; Arcana.

St. Jean de Brébeuf, the first missionary among the Hurons, came to Canada in 1625. He spent a winter in the woods with tribes near Québec City and the following spring he paddled up the long waterway to establish his mission on Georgian Bay, Lake Huron. He was martyred there in 1649 by the Iroquois.

In constructing the libretto I drew on Brébeuf's own account of his voyage up the St. Lawrence to establish his second Huron mission (1643), as described in Volume 8 of *Relations des Jésuites* — the official report sent annually by the North American Jesuits to France. I also incorporated into the work several of the saint's visions and premonitions of his own martyrdom, as collected from other sources. The result is a descriptive narrative of a spring canoe trip up the Great Lakes, interrupted by a series of hallucinatory outbursts.

I had been looking for a cantata subject with a Canadian theme, but it was Harry Somers who suggested Brébeuf, one day while we were walking together in the Jardin des Tuileries in Paris. Returning to London, I prepared the libretto and wrote the work quickly, May 1-30, 1961. Brébeuf was an important work for me, first of all because of its length and its emotional complexity, but also because it was the first time I tackled a Canadian theme, and that was something destined to grow in future years. I drew an excellent cover for the score and published a thousand copies of it, but the work has only been performed twice to date (2001).

11. Partita for String Orchestra, 1961; 8 min; Arcana.

Two works for string orchestra were written in 1961, of which this is the

only survivor. A much more complex Dithyramb was also completed; but I later withdrew it and the score has been lost or destroyed.

The Partita is atonal, but its most significant feature is that each of its four movements is twice the length of its predecessor: the first movement is a mere thirty seconds, the second a minute, the third two minutes and the last four minutes. With a stipulated thirty-second pause between them, the whole work should be eight minutes. There is nothing remarkable about this but it reflects the influence of the material Peter Racine Fricker had me studying at the time.

I had gone to Fricker, not because I felt the need of a teacher, but merely to comply with the conditions of a Canada Council grant I had received.

Fricker understood this. We met in pubs mostly. But the contemporary and medieval works he set me to analyse had a decisive influence on the works I now began to compose.

12. Canzoni for Prisoners, 1962; full orch; Arcana.

Canzoni for Prisoners was my first purely orchestral work, written in 1961-62. The prisoners I had in mind were prisoners of conscience — that is, non-violent objectors in any land who are imprisoned merely for their beliefs. I had become a founding member of Amnesty International, the organization devoted to ridding the world of this intolerance. The issue had been brought close to me, having visited several communist countries, though no country is free of this injustice since rulers everywhere would like to mute the opposition.

The work consists of five interconnected sections performed without a break. It is based on a series of seventy-six notes, which forms the material from which each section is constructed.

This work, and several others that immediately followed it, were very much influenced by my discovery of the music of the fourteenth-century composer-poet Guillaume de Machaut. Machaut's techniques were rigorous and mathematical, but his music is daring and at times ecstatic, more so because of the constraints out of which it seems to burst. I would

like to think that this spirit invades Canzoni for Prisoners — freedom bursting out of constraint.

The first performance was given in 1963 by the Montreal Symphony Orchestra in a concert sponsored by the Canadian League of Composers. I remember the enthusiasm of Serge Garant, whom I met for the first time then. He had been a member of the program committee and had argued vigorously for the inclusion of Canzoni over the offerings of older, more conservative members.

I also remember something that today seems ridiculous, almost funny. Canzoni contains several slow glissandi in the string section. At the first rehearsal the concertmaster came up to me and said: "Monsieur Schafer, evidently you know nothing about the violin. You can't be in two places at once. Which note do you wish us to play?" I told him I wanted the strings to start on one note and slowly slide to the next over the allotted time. "But Monsieur," he said, raising his violin to demonstrate, "either you are in this position or you are in that position. Which position are we in?" I repeated my wish. He brusquely turned and called to the orchestra, "No glissandi!" Of course what I had written was technically possible, but the concertmaster's traditional training blocked his mental comprehension and made it impossible for him to execute. It shows something of the difficulties of presenting new music at the time.

When I walked on stage to take a bow, the applause trickled out just as I was shaking hands with the conductor, Victor Feldbrill. I made the long exit in silence, except that as I passed the violin section I was greeted with a long sotto voce hiss.

13. Five Studies on Texts by Prudentius, 1962; 10 min; soprano, 4 fl; Arcana.

The texts for these songs are taken from Prudentius's Scenes from History (Tituli Historarium) and were intended to accompany paintings of important biblical events on the walls of churches in the Middle Ages. The five episodes chosen here form a miniature Bible in themselves, from the

story of Adam and Eve to the revelation of John, with the birth of Christ occurring in the centre.

All five studies are canonic; some quite strict, others quite free. Sometimes the voices of the canon are distributed between two instruments. This is the case in the second song where a three-part rhythmic canon at the distance of one bar over a melodic canon at the unison is distributed between two pairs of flutes in alternate corners of the room. Each of the songs is characterized by a restricted set of intervals: for instance, in "Adam and Eve" the intervals are a perfect fourth, a minor second and a minor third plus their inversions, while in "Moses has received the Law" the intervals are a minor third, a major third and a major seventh, and so forth.

The composition is intended for spatial performance with the singer on stage and the flutes in the four corners of the room. The spatial movement of the music is accordingly centrifugal in "Adam and Eve," diagonal in "Moses has received the Law," and circular in the crab canon "The City of Bethlehem," which the text describes as "the centre of the world."

As for influences, the discipline of the work was prompted by my admiration for Guillaume de Machaut. I had also heard a cycle of songs by Luigi Dallapiccola for voice and clarinets that I found inspiring. It was Peter Racine Fricker who turned me towards Prudentius. He had also set some of his texts.

14. Untitled Composition for Orchestra No.1, 1963; 5 min; chamb orch; Arcana.

This short, simple, quiet piece is another of several works inspired by the rigorous techniques of the fourteenth-century Ars Nova composers. It is a canon at the unison in perpetual diminution, that is to say, each new entry is faster than its predecessor. The quiet nature of the piece and its brevity distinguish it from its predecessor, *Canzoni for Prisoners*, with which it is, nevertheless, related.

15. *The Geography of Eros*, 1963; 10 min; soprano, chamb orch; Arcana.

The following is the complete program note that accompanied the première of *The Geography of Eros* on a Ten Centuries Concert (April 5, 1964) in Toronto. Ten Centuries Concerts was begun by a group of Toronto composers and musicians to introduce both new and little-known ancient music to the public. (See my article "Ten Centuries Concerts: a recollection" in *On Canadian Music*, Arcana Editions, 1984.)

The Geography of Eros is an aria for soprano and percussion instruments. It was written last winter in Newfoundland while I held the position of Artist in Residence at Memorial University in St. John's. The work bears the subtitle: "from an untitled composition — editing unit eight." That untitled composition might eventually bear a remote similarity to opera. Remote, I am inclined to think, because the completed work I envision would be too diffuse to fit even the loosest definition of that genre. Visual images and spoken and written texts would form as important a part of the composition as the music. However, since very little of this work has yet been committed to paper, further prognosis here would be untimely and possibly embarrassing.

More immediately, *Geography* bears a definite relationship to my *Five Studies on Texts by Prudentius* (for Four Flutes and Soprano), first performed last year. *Geography* is an antipode to *Prudentius*. *Prudentius* was one of the strictest works I ever composed. By contrast, *Geography* is completely free and almost contrivedly athematic. The text for *Prudentius* was religious, narrative and descriptive; the text for *Geography* is lyric, incantatory and sexy. Both spiritually and musically *Geography* was a necessary reaction to the rigorousness of *Prudentius*.

Prudentius was written for no singer in particular. After several singers had declared it unperformable, Mary Morrison performed it. After hearing her performance I immediately wanted to write another work especially for her voice. *Geography* is that work.

Although in recent years most instruments have been exploited to the limits of their sound-producing capabilities (often with freakish results),

the one instrument that has undergone little or no exploitation at all is the human voice. Today much is made of the difficulties of modern vocal music, the fragmentary Webernesque line with its angular and ecstatic leaps; yet this type of vocal technique is little more than an elaboration of Wagner and represents but one of many traditions of vocal technique available. For one thing, we have today two mutually exclusive traditions in the classical singer and the jazz or pop singer. The folk singing of numerous cultures shows us further techniques. Here we learn the effectiveness of such devices as the yodel, the glottal stop, the expressive use of quarter-tones, unusual forms of vibrato and the production of whistling, clicking and other sounds. A whole new world of vocables remains to be explored by the classical composer.

Mary Morrison's interest in jazz and pop music (her husband, Harry Freedman, began his musical career in jazz) made it possible for me to include in *Geography* a certain number of vocal embellishments characteristic of that field. My own study of certain forms of folk music, particularly that of the Balkan minstrels, has led to other incorporations which have by now, I feel, become part of my own musical language. The text for *Geography* is my own and consists of phrases and words drawn at random from adolescent love poems. Textual obscurity is partly intentional. Flavours are sought — suggestions and mysteries; meaning is ancillary. I wanted to create an aura in half-lights, allusions, confused vibrations and nocturnal thoughts, to decorate the experience of physical love with a net of sounds and word-sensations.

Formerly *The Geography of Eros* was called *Primavera*, and in a way it was inspired by Botticelli's painting of that name — or more especially by one of the young ladies in it, though I do not find her sexy. But there is something about that painting that suggests to me a nascent and insouciant erotic sensitivity, with just the right touch of lasciviousness. This brings up a further aspect of *Geography*. Like many of my recent works, *Geography* has undergone a number of transformations before

reaching its present state. It began as a haphazard collection of poetical fragments, cut out and strewn on a page — a verbal collage, if you like. Later it became a large decorative pen drawing in which the drama and dynamics of the poem-fragments assumed graphic shapes. This in turn suggested its musical dimensions, and it is in this form that it remains at present. In the back of my mind, however, I see the possibility of its ultimate performance being somehow the sum total of all its forms and taking place in surroundings more like those of an art gallery than a concert hall.

All these observations are, nevertheless, tentative, and much — everything — depends on the relationship of *Geography* to the other units of that larger composition I referred to at the beginning. It is my plan to compose that work in a number of self-contained “editing units,” which might be performed independently, but always keeping the ultimate large-scale architecture in view. However, for the moment *Geography* will have to be judged on its independent merits.

16. *Statement in Blue*, 1964; 5 min; youth orch; *Arcana*.

In the summer of 1964 I was invited to join the teaching staff of the North York Summer Music School to teach a class called “Musicianship,” and was given a free hand to engage students in discussion, exercises and improvisation. It was here that I began to develop my ideas in musical creativity for young people, later published in a series of pamphlets and eventually collected in *The Thinking Ear*. I believed that music education without creativity is sterile. My own dismissal from the music education program at the University of Toronto in 1955 had proved that, but it took me ten years to develop a counter program.

In the fall of 1964 I was chosen as one of fourteen composers to write compositions for schools in a program sponsored by The Canada Council and administrated by the Canadian Music Centre. *Statement in Blue* was written at this time. It is the first of several pieces in which young performers are required to participate in shaping the music.

The score is graphic so that the notes chosen are free. A series of shapes and suggestive words help stimulate the imagination. Actually the piece could be performed tonally or atonally at the discretion of the performers and the guiding teacher. It is intended for a beginners' orchestra of young performers but has also been performed by adult orchestras of amateurs. 17. *Loving*, 1965, 75 min; 4 voices, 2 actors, dancers, chamb orch, tape of electronic and pre-recorded sounds; Arcana.

Loving was composed in 1963-65 while I was Artist in Residence at Memorial University in Newfoundland. The *Geography of Eros* and some other sections of the work had been completed when Pierre Mercure phoned with a proposal that *Loving* be commissioned for production on television. The only complication was that it would have to be produced in French since the producer would be the French network of the CBC. I went to Montreal and met with Pierre and Gabriel Charpentier. The result was that we decided to make *Loving* a bilingual production so that it could be broadcast on both the French and English networks. And so its official title became *Loving/Toi*. But the production was never completed and it was shown in an abbreviated version. The story of why this occurred has never been told before. For what it's worth, this is what happened.

From my diary, Montréal, June 8, 1965:

Much trouble. Pierre behaving strangely. Very nervous. Domestic split imminent. Gabriel worried too. Pierre drinking heavily, missing deadlines in rehearsals and failing to check with technical people.

A few days later Pierre disappeared. Total chaos at Radio Canada as rehearsals and technical affairs were rescheduled. Then, one day Pierre called saying he wished to see me alone. I went to the hotel address he gave me. He was behaving very strangely. He said: "You see, I rumple the bed up so they will think I sleep here, but I don't sleep here." I begged him to return and he promised to do so the next day. But the next day no one saw him. He called again and asked me to come, now to a different

hotel. This time his supervisor came with me.

The room was dark. Pierre was wearing sunglasses. Before we could say anything he took us by the arm and led us around the room where he had pinned up cartoons from the daily papers. "Look at this one, isn't it funny? And now over here..." Finally we sat down and his supervisor gently persuaded Pierre that he needed medical attention.

The problem now was what to do with the production. Eventually it was decided that all the music would be recorded since the singers and musicians had been contracted. The visual images would have to be added later, after Pierre's recovery.

Montréal, July 12, 1965:

Too fatigued to write anything about the taping of *Loving* yesterday. Satisfactory and even good in places. Assemble and listen to tapes tomorrow objectively. Kind letter from Pierre with apologies.

Pierre returned to the CBC in the fall of that year to add the visuals. As I was then teaching at Simon Fraser University, I couldn't be present. He called me one day and said the work was complete and he was going to France for a holiday. In January 1966 he was killed in an automobile accident in France.

During my next visit to Montreal I saw what Pierre had done. There were some beautiful scenes and experimental effects little-known in television at the time. But the work was only about forty-five minutes long. Nearly half an hour of music had been omitted. When the work was shown on the English network of the CBC I was asked to introduce it and speak about Pierre. Neither then nor until now was the complete story of the production ever revealed.

(For a discussion of *Loving* see *Patria and the Theatre of Confluence*, Arcana Editions, pp.13-26. The libretto is printed in R. Murray Schafer: *A Collection*, Arcana Editions, pp. 49-64.)

I have waited since 1965 for a stage production of *Loving*. It could easily be done since the resources are not extravagant and projections could be

used for décor. About 1978 a concert version was undertaken by Robert Aitken's New Music Concerts and toured from Toronto to Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax. But Canada has no interest in reviving its cultural history. It seeks to live exclusively in the present tense and a work performed once is simultaneously dead.

18. *Requiems for the Party Girl*, 1966; 19 min; mezzo-soprano, chamb orch; Arcana.

This work, written for Phyllis Mailing and consisting of ten short arias, was later to become the source of *Patria 2*, the first of the *Patria* works to be completed. The narrator is a young woman, very disturbed, describing various states of her existence including, at the end, her own suicide. It is a serial piece and uses for the first time the all-interval row that occurs in all *Patria* works:

C natural, B natural, C sharp, B flat, D natural, A natural, D sharp, A flat, E natural, G natural, F natural, F sharp.

(For an analysis of the work see: Bruce Mather, *Notes sur "Requiems for the Party-Girl," Les Cahiers canadiens de musique*, Spring-Summer 1970, pp.91-97.) (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

19. *Threnody*, 1967; 18 min; youth orch, choir, narrators, tape; Arcana.

The texts, spoken by the young narrators in *Threnody*, are eye-witness accounts by children of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. The orchestra and choruses illustrate this terrifying scene.

I had received a commission to write a piece for the Vancouver Junior Symphony Orchestra shortly after arriving to teach at Simon Fraser University. I wanted to write a piece for those young performers that would make them think about social issues. The Cold War was in high gear in 1967 and the stockpiles of nuclear weapons were rapidly growing. I knew that these extremely graphic accounts of suffering and death would affect both the performers and their parents, forcing them to consider seriously the consequences of nuclear war. Since there were numerous passages where the performers were required to create their

own music to the accompaniment of particular texts, they had a more serious role to play than if they had just inherited a ready-made expression from the composer.

There were tears after the performance. But I also remember one man coming up to me defiantly and saying, "We'd drop it again!" It bothered me for months that a work devoted to the cause of peace should have provoked such angry sentiments. But thank God, no atomic bombs have been dropped since. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

(See also the article "Threnody" in *The Thinking Ear*, Arcana Editions, pp.277-81.)

20. *Gita*, 1967; 14 min; choir SATB, 3 tr, 3 hn, 3 trm, tuba, tape; Universal. *Gita* was commissioned by the Fromm Foundation for performance at the Tanglewood Festival in August 1967. The inspiration to choose the Bhagavad-Gita for a text came to me one crystalline January morning during a walk in the cold air of Isle Bézard, near Montreal. I was visiting a friend and had been reading the Gita the night before. The passage on serenity and the forces ranged against it (II 55-64) had left a deep impression. That morning I imagined a choir, as serene as newly-fallen snow, being hectorred by a group of brass instruments. The choir would sing in the original Sanskrit, aloof and victorious.

The work employs the all-interval "Patria" tone row. For a brief moment towards the end of the tape of electronic sounds there is a short choral section from one of the motets in the *Geistliche Chormusik* (1623) of Heinrich Schütz: "Denn Jesus Christus, Gottes Sohn..." It seemed appropriate that the most serene figure ever seen on earth should blend with the ancient Hindu text.

The same work was eventually to form the concluding scene of *Patria 1: Wolfman* in which the innocent young girl (Ariadne) touches the heart of the immigrant Wolfman.

21. *Epitaph for Moonlight*, 1968; 6 min; choir SATB; Berandol Universal. One of my exercises for children was to ask them to invent onomatopoeic

words in their own secret language that sounded the thing they represented: raindrops for instance, or bells sneeze or a kangaroo. Once I asked some eleven-year-olds to invent some words for moonlight. Here are their words:

SLOOFULP

NESHMOOR

SHALOWA

NU-U-YUL

NOORWAHM

MAUNKLINDE

SHIVERGLOWA

SHEELESK

MALOOMA

SHIMONOELL

The words were so beautiful I decided to set them to music. The piece was written in graphic notation but it is also an ear-training exercise, for the singers must pitch the notes by interval from the preceding notes, so that one performance does not differ from another to the extent one might expect. People who don't read music are always delighted to discover that this is the first piece they are able to follow because the graphic shapes correspond so closely to the musical sounds.

Curiously enough, I once planned to destroy this little piece, thinking that it had served its purpose. But the librarian at the Canadian Music Centre, Henry Mutsaers, pulled it out of the pile destined for the furnace. I'm glad he did. It is probably my best-known choral piece.

Why did I call it Epitaph for Moonlight? In 1969 American astronauts landed on the moon to the excitement of the whole world. But something died then. No longer would the moon be a numinous and mythogenic symbol; it threatened to become a piece of property covered with neon. That hasn't happened yet, but in today's polluted cities with their twenty-four-hour glare, no one even notices the moon anymore. The

moon is dead. I saw her die.

22. *Son of Heldenleben*, 1968; 11 min; full orch, tape; Universal.

One day in 1967 I received a telegram from The Montreal Symphony Orchestra. It read: "Congratulations! Have been awarded commission by the MSO. Wire acceptance immediately." I wrote back that, flattered as I was by their surprising offer, no discussion had yet taken place concerning the length of the piece, the deadline date, and of course, the fee they were offering.

I have always liked the music of Richard Strauss. And one evening, just after the details had been worked out with the MSO, Jack Behrens and I were listening to Strauss's tone poem *Don Juan*, counting the number of erections of the main theme. The next morning I awoke knowing that I wanted to do a rewrite of one of Strauss's poems. This was not a particularly original idea. Several composers had done rewrites of classical works. Nevertheless, I knew what I wanted to do, and the work I chose was *Ein Heldenleben* (A Hero's Life). The hero of this work is not just Strauss, but it is Man at the centre of the universe, dominating all other living creatures. I saw *Heldenleben* as a typical exhibition of the nineteenth-century concept of progress and human imperialism, and so *Son of Heldenleben* would have to be, to some extent, a send-up of Strauss's ideas.

Asked to provide a program note for the concert, I knew I couldn't explain why I was defacing Strauss's glorious, empurpled masterpiece, so I wrote a preposterous one-line program note as follows:

Who, having forgiven the grammatical difficulties of its polyglottal title, can surrender himself to speculations of the possibility that the hero may indeed have had a son, may, recalling the old hero's majestic presence, at first rejoice in the simple news of rebirth, shortly thereafter, however, to ponder the matter and its grave consequences, at first, perhaps in an opacity of Freudian imagery, seeing by no means an innocent resurrection of a great man in a quite natural filial disguise, but rather a jealous

competition for possession of the mother-wife (who in our case would be none other than Madame Strauss) — but these people would be badly mistaken, for I have no designs on the fair lady; and equally mistaken would be those who see the attempt to reconstruct a great narrative masterpiece as an act of crude plagiarism, for the question of the prior discovery of ideas rests on the very disputable philosophy of time as a rectilinear development, so that if one could be persuaded to accept another idea of time — say a circular time as conceived by the Greeks — the question of plagiarism has no meaning, or at least can be argued to work in both directions, so that the son and the father are interchangeable, which is to say, and I am sorry if the idea appears offensive to some people, that Strauss may indeed have borrowed numerous musical ideas from me (though if this is the case he has rather discourteously admitted nothing about it); and thus I would ask you, dear reader, to speculate with me momentarily on the inspiring case presented to us by Jorge Luis Borges in his story of Pierre Menard, who devotes his life to the noble occupation of reconstructing the vast story of Don Quixote word for word, exactly as Cervantes gave it to us, for here, as Borges is concerned to make clear, the question transcends the copyright of ideas; Menard is not copying Cervantes, he is laboriously discovering his thought-path word by word so that in the end the reader must decide for himself the intriguing question of whether the precisioned work of Menard would perceptibly resemble the original, or perhaps be its negative image, that is to say, a transposition of figure for ground or vice versa, so that in our own case we might, taking Strauss's *Heldenleben* as a model, set about to fill in the interstices between the notes of the original masterpiece, thus rendering the whole picture palpable and thereby saying some things left unsaid by Strauss; an activity which would, however, leave us with a puny thread for a fabric during those frequent passages where Strauss's texture is distinctively fat (Strauss having apparently wished to hog as many notes as possible for himself) — if I am not overbearing in applying

these porcine metaphors to the memorable masterpiece I have chosen as my model; and accordingly, abandoning this approach altogether, I developed at length another of which it is now my purpose to inform my dear readers, and if they are capable of following my thought-excursion, I am confident that they will find this interpretive approach the most profitable; for this method rests on the identification of the memorable tune as it winds its way slowly, ever so slowly, through the combustions, clouds and constellations of sound which surround and adorn it, and having once firmly grasped it in the mind's ear, never to relinquish hold of it, but rather to hear it as a melodious Ariadne's thread and guide through the labyrinthine corridors of this orchestral minotauromachy, for any listener having accomplished this will now immediately realize that, his memory having been stimulated by the thought of Ariadne, he will be thinking of none other than the hero Theseus himself, who, with Ariadne's precious thread-gift like a borrowed theme which one both possesses and does not possess but certainly cannot disown, proceeds throughout the time and space of darkness until at last he meets face to face the dreaded Minotaur, there to do combat with him in the echoing corridors of Minos's dreaded palace, until the monster is dead at his feet and he, exhausted totally, goes home to bed (that is, to the delicate bed of his beloved Ariadne) knowing that he has after all had an experience which he will not directly forget.

The Ariadne's thread of *Son of Heldenleben* is the opening sixteen-bar melody of the Strauss tone poem, rhythmically augmented (almost exactly) at the rate a half note per sixteenth note in the original score. Around this cantus firmus groups of instruments dance and pulse atonally. There are occasional references to other Strauss melodies from *Heldenleben* and a final swelling up of the main theme at the end, before it is cut short by an electronic chord. Owing to the inclusion of a tape of electronic sounds, I decided to notate the entire score in 4/4 time with the metronome set at sixty.

I sent the entire package, score, tape and program note off to the MSO and heard nothing for some time. Then one day I got the summons to come to Montreal to meet Maestro Franz Paul Decker, one of those majestic foreigners to whom we have entrusted all our major orchestras. I went (at my own expense) and waited outside the door until Maestro could spare the time to see me. Everywhere Decker goes he is followed by two stooges who punctuate all his statements with "C'est juste" or "C'est ça." "You know, Mr. Schafer, only last veek ve are performing zee rrrreal Heldenleben! Now zis... foolish joke vil not reflect vell on us, not at all." "C'est juste," etc. "First I vould ask you to consider changing ze title," "No." "But zis is impossible title!" "Impossible, impossible," echo the two stooges. "Audience vill laugh, but ze vill not be laughing at me, ze vill be laughing at you, Mr. Schafer." "At you, at you, c'est juste, c'est juste!" At one point one of the stooges asks Maestro whether he would like a cup of coffee; then goes and returns with (so help me) three cups of coffee, which they drink. It then emerges that Decker hasn't looked at the score yet. He opens it and asks, "Vat is zis at bottom of page?" "That's the notation for the tape of electronic sounds. I sent it to you four weeks ago." "I have no tape recorder." "That's right, Maestro has no tape recorder." "C'est juste, c'est ça." "Well, get him one," I announced with sudden impatience. A very strange thing happened at the first rehearsal. The MSO manager, Pierre Beïque, came up to me and said, "Monsieur Schafer, Maestro is ill today. You will have to take the rehearsal." "Me?" I'm no conductor. The orchestra will kill me." "Then we will have to change the program and perform Tschaikovsky's Francesco da Rimini." "I'll do it." And I stepped up to the podium. With the concertmaster beside me we began the rehearsal.

“There’s a mistake in my part,” says the bassoonist. “And in mine,” says the clarinetist.

I know they’re trying to unnerve me but I address their concerns patiently and accurately, scarcely looking at the score. The atmosphere calms down, grows intensive. Everyone works hard. By the time we get to the outbreak of the Heldenleben theme in its original form I am sweating enthusiastically.

A break. And then what happens? Maestro miraculously appears and without a word to me, steps up on the podium. Obviously one of the stooges had called to tell him that the piece wasn’t that difficult and the orchestra wasn’t in revolt.

The night of the concert, Montreal is hit with a blinding snowstorm. The concert is cancelled. The première will take place tomorrow. The next evening I am to fly to England. I go to the airport. The flight is delayed one hour, two hours, four hours.... I phone István Anhalt to see how things went. He is ecstatic. He reports that he listened with four ears and all ears enjoyed it.

And finally: A few years after the printing of *Son of Heldenleben*, Strauss’s publisher in Munich got in touch with Universal Edition in Vienna, demanding royalty compensation for borrowing the Strauss theme. Eventually a deal was struck by which 50 percent of all performance royalties go to the Strauss heirs; but I doubt whether they’ve been able to buy much beer with the proceeds.

23. From the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, 1968; 8 min; soprano, choir SATB, fl, cl, tape; Universal.

The text chosen for this work occurs at the beginning of the death process as recorded in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*.

O nobly-born, the time has now come for thee to seek the Path. Thy breathing is about to cease. Thy guru hath set thee face to face before the Clear Light [O Ariadne]; and now thou art about to experience it in its Reality in the Bardo state, wherein all things are like the void and

cloudless sky, and the naked, spotless intellect is like unto a transparent vacuum without circumference or centre. At this moment, know thou thyself; and abide in that state. (Trans. W.Y. Evans-Wentz, Oxford, 1960, p.91)

The choir sings this text in the original Tibetan, which was chanted for me by a Tibetan Lama (W.G. Surkang) in residence at the University of Seattle. I had in mind that the work would eventually fit into *Patria 2: Requiems for the Party Girl*, which I had begun to assemble. (See below: *Dream Passage*)

24. *Dream Passage*, 1969; 80 min; mezzo-soprano, choir, actors, chamber orch, tape; CBC radio program.

I list this work simply because it was the prototype of *Patria 2: Requiems for the Party Girl* (see item 36). In fact almost all the material was there and so was the form. The work was commissioned by a very adventurous director of music at the CBC, the like of whom has long since disappeared. It was John Roberts who gave Glenn Gould a studio and an engineer to make a whole series of radio programs, and it was John Roberts who accepted my proposal for an experimental program combining music, electronic sounds and foreign languages. The foreign-language speakers were employees of the CBC's International Service in Montreal. The music was recorded in Vancouver, and I put it together in the Sonic Research Studio at Simon Fraser University.

25. *Minimusic*, 1969; duration variable; any small combination of singers or instrumentalists; Universal.

Minimusic is a chamber piece for five or six players. It is an extension of the work I had begun in music education by conceiving pieces that would stimulate creativity. The score consists of thirty-seven boxes, three per page. When they are cut loose one can proceed from box to box in a variety of directions. Each box specifies a special effect, sometimes a calculated improvisation, sometimes a response to another performer, so that the players or singers must be constantly listening to each other.

When rehearsing it I would often clap my hands and ask any one of the players to tell us which boxes the other players are playing. So while the work stimulates spontaneity it is at the same time a serious ear-training exercise.

I conceived the piece originally for a group of high school students at a summer camp in Maryland. We worked on it a couple of hours a day for a week before performing it. The camp instructors were bowled over and asked to perform it. But they didn't practice long enough and the performance was unremarkable.

Perhaps the total number of boxes in the printed score leads to a complexity beyond the skills of some performers. A reduced number of boxes might result in a simpler and clearer performance.

26. String Quartet No.1, 1970; 16 min; Universal.

My first string quartet was commissioned by the Purcell Quartet of Vancouver in 1970. I really didn't want to write a quartet at that time, considering the medium passé. I recall leaving the composition until the very last moment, when I shut myself in my brother's apartment in Toronto while he was on vacation, and wrote furiously, completing the work in about a week.

The quartet is in one movement though there are well-defined sections. It is based on a series, though not a twelve-note series, rather a chromatic scale which gradually opens to introduce other intervals. The chromatic chord of the opening defines the first section. It is as if the players are locked together, trying frantically to break free. Finally freedom is achieved by the second violin, introducing the second section, a quiet and open-interval melody played by the first violin with slowly shifting chords played by the other three instruments. A phase-shifting pizzicato section leads to a long arching refrain in unison and octaves played by all the instruments. It begins very slowly and quietly, then gradually increases in tempo and intensity until it reaches a fury that explodes into the opening chromatic cluster again. The final section is a recapitulation of

all the preceding material, now in fragments, signalled by irregular snaps on the cello. At the end, the cello snaps are followed by periods of silence, as if the “camera” goes on clicking even though the “film” has run out. Note: The printed score (Universal Edition) contains several brief cuts which have been omitted in the two recordings of the work to date (by the Orford and Molinari quartets). Although I made the original cuts, I now feel the work flows better when they are restored. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

27. No Longer than Ten (10) Minutes, 1970; 10 min?, full orch; Arcana.

The title was derived from the wording of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra contract commissioning the piece: “It is agreed that the work shall have a minimum duration of approximately seven (7) minutes and no longer than ten (10) minutes.” It was the standard Canadian contract for what we composers came to call a *pièce de garage*, intended for performance while the patrons were parking their cars.

Emile Durkheim has somewhere said that we define the law by breaking the law — therefore crime is necessary. No Longer than Ten (10) Minutes defines the ritual of the concert by breaking it. I have often wondered why a work of art must be finished and framed, why, on the contrary, it might not proceed out of chaos, gradually emerge into clarity, then return again to chaos.

The management of the TSO had informed me that the new work would have the distinction of being first on the program “when the audience was fresh.” I determined to screw them up by agglutinating my piece to the next piece on the program so that there would be no opportunity to open the doors between numbers, and late-comers would have to wait outside until the intermission. As the second number on the program was to have been Brahms B^b minor Piano Concerto, played by Claudio Arrau, I was quite pleased with this plan. My piece would be a vast introductory modulation to it, and at the same time would leave the Brahms fans

standing in the foyer. I went around and carefully explained the situation to all the ushers.

No Longer than Ten (10) Minutes begins out of the tune-up. The conductor enters and begins beating time, but nothing much changes; only gradually does the work gain definition. The climax is reached after a long crescendo precisely at ten minutes. Then the conductor signals the orchestra to cut and turns to leave the stage. But the orchestra continues to hold the last chord, only gradually fading down. Now the instructions are to go back to the beginning of the crescendo if there is applause from the audience and to continue repeating the crescendo to the climax for as long as the applause continues. When the applause finally subsides, the last desk of each string section is instructed to sustain very softly a dominant-seventh chord in the key of the following piece until the conductor returns and gives the down beat.

Smelling trouble, the management altered the program, saving the Brahms until after the intermission and substituting Kodaly's "Peacock Variations."

The percussionists, who were my friends, were totally on side, but the conductor, Victor Feldbrill, had reservations. He said, "It's a great idea Murray, marvelous, but there's just one thing — when do I return to take my bow?" "You don't," I replied. I think his interest in my music, if there ever had been any, flickered out at that moment.

The performance was hilarious. The orchestra tuned up. The conductor entered. A smattering of applause. Only gradually did the piece gain coherence. As ten minutes approached, the huge crescendo of sound grew, and Victor managed to get it building up effectively. When he turned to leave, the patrons, reacting predictably, applauded, and the huge wall of sound began again. Just to make sure that things went according to plan, I had brought about thirty students from York University and instructed them carefully to keep the waves of applause coming. Also, my friend Arnold Rockman, anxious to demonstrate the Durkheim dictum, had

brought along another thirty students from his sociology class, many of whom, to my delight, had come with garbage-can lids and other objects to beat.

From my seat in the first balcony I could see everything. I stood up, bowed and began to bravo vociferously. The percussionists began a third crescendo. Rockman was now running around the upper balcony leading the claue in more stormy rounds of applause. By now several of us were bravoing at the tops of our voices. The percussion rose to another climax. In the centre of the orchestra I could see the puzzled faces of several violinists, continuing to noodle their instruments, because the score required them to continue playing, but not, of course, playing what I had asked them to play. The audience had by now quite realised the cybernated situation and were beginning to join in the fun too. More crescendi from the orchestra. More applause. The off-stage door opened a crack and I could see someone through the crack gesticulating desperately towards the percussionists, trying to get them to stop. It was the orchestra manager.

At length Victor Feldbrill returned, waltzing along, trying to look normal and buoyant again. The regular subscribers applauded. This triggered another final crescendo from the percussion but Victor had by now reached the podium and plunged right into the "Peacock Variations." Kodaly's music unfolded sullenly. It occurred to me that the Kodaly should be renamed "A Lot Longer than Ten Minutes." It was curious how thoroughly contaminated it was by my prelude, and I am sure every member of the audience must have felt it, for there was a lot of shuffling and coughing.

Of course the critics were unkind. They attacked me for being insincere. Not a word about the fraudulence of others. Bang, Schafer gets it right over the head. One critic even suggested that I appeared to be finished as a composer. My poor mother almost believed him.

28. *Divan i Shams i Tabriz*, 1970; 23 min; full orch, 7 voices, electronic

sounds; Universal.

During a trip to Iran and Turkey in 1969 I discovered the writings of Jalal al-Din Rumi, the thirteenth-century Sufi mystic, whose work was to have a profound influence on me, affecting this and several other works. The title is that of a collection of mystical poems by Rumi, but the texts sung by the solo singers are from the opening of the poet's Masnavi and are sung in the original Persian.

Shortly after returning from the Middle East I had met a young Persian scholar, Guity Nashad, at the University of Chicago. A rarefied romance developed between us and she provided the original Persian texts and a lot of additional material about Rumi and the Sufi tradition. We met only two or three times. I had rented a cottage for the summer on Georgian Bay and it was there that most of the *Divan i Shams i Tabriz* was written. When the Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran, Guity also returned to participate in the redemption of the country from iniquity. I never heard from her again.

The *Divan* was soon to be followed by *Music for the Morning of the World and Beyond the Great Gate of Light* to form *Lustro*, a work of symphonic dimensions lasting over an hour.

The *Divan* opens with a great blaze of electronic sound through which groups of instruments struggle to be heard. Over the first page of this very graphic score I wrote a line from Rumi: "A face like fire... the soul was wailing, 'Where shall I flee?'"

After this fiery surge subsides, various groups of instruments and voices begin to be heard from around the hall, at first quietly, then gradually becoming stronger and more connected. After several dramatic eruptions a long unison line binds all performers together. The melody rises to a climax and sustains over a repeated percussion motif, gradually fading away, and the work ends with a tape-recorded *nei* (Persian flute) sounding as if from nowhere.

Divan i Shams i Tabriz was commissioned by the Vancouver Symphony

Orchestra, though it was never performed by them. As mentioned, there were to be groups of musicians situated throughout the hall as well as on stage. This would involve removing some of the seats. A dubious manager accompanied me with a seating plan showing which seats belonged to regular subscribers. "But we can't move Mr. and Mrs. X! They've been patrons of the orchestra for fifty years!" I countered: "I've always wanted to move people with my music and I'm not going to give up now!" But in the end a confederation of pedestrian regulations and managerial timidity defeated the planned première. The English conductor was visibly relieved. His program of hatching Edward Elgar's cuckoo eggs would go undisturbed for another season.

Divan i Shams i Tabriz was eventually performed with the two accompanying movements in Toronto in 1973.

29. *Music for the Morning of the World*, 1970; 28 min; soprano, electronic sounds; Universal.

The text sung by the singer is a conflation from different poems and discourses by Jahal-al-Din Rumi. The work is contemplative with ecstatic outbursts. It takes the form of an extended meditation for solo voice, surrounded by a four-track electronic accompaniment. At the beginning of the performance the lights are slowly extinguished to total darkness. The soloist lights a single candle, the only illumination for the aria, and extinguishes it at the conclusion, invoking a mood of spiritual transcendence, appropriate to the Rumi text.

30. *Zoroaster*, 1971; 45 min; 150-voice choir (divided); Arcana.

Like many of my works from this period, *Zoroaster* is a setting of religious texts of mystical character, this time from the *Zend-Avesta* of Zoroaster and other works inspired by his teaching. The arrangement suggests a history of Zoroastrianism, originally a proud monotheism, which later broke into a confused polytheism full of magic formulas and practices. In the composition the pantheon of the gods is united again at the close under the supreme authority of Ahura Mazda.

The work begins in total darkness. The choristers slowly enter, humming the tone of Cosmic Unity. As the work unfolds, the chief priest, Srosh, leads the singers in the worship of Ahura Mazda. Candles are lit to celebrate the coming of light. When Srosh collapses, the forces of the evil god Ariman temporarily take over, performing blasphemous rituals, but with Srosh's return these are swept away in a final chorus of jubilant voices and bells.

My original idea was for Zoroaster to be performed without an audience as a celebration for singers alone. In this sense it was an early prelude of the epilogue to *Patria: And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon*.

Zoroaster (originally entitled *In Search of Zoroaster*) was commissioned by Dartmouth College for performance by the Dartmouth Glee Club (with audience) in 1972.

31. *Okeanos*, 1971; 90 min; quadraphonic tape; Arcana.

Okeanos is a study in sound of the symbolism of the sea, using natural and electronic sounds with voices reciting texts by many authors — Homer, Hesiod, Melville, Pound — who have written about the sea. The work was composed by Bruce Davis, Brian Fawcett and myself in the Sonic Research Studio at Simon Fraser University.

The Greeks had two words for ocean: *pontos* was the navigable sea and *okeanos* the wild, untamed, stormy ocean. When I first approached the CBC with the idea of creating a portrait of the sea in sound and words, I was asked how long the program would be. I thought twenty-four hours would be suitable. How could we suggest the limitless magnitude of the ocean in a stingy half-hour show? We were eventually given ninety minutes, and the CBC attempted something I believe they had never done before: they broadcast the program quadraphonically by using the stereo systems of both networks (1972).

32. *Miniwanka, or The Moments of Water*, 1971; 4 min; choir SA or SATB; Arcana.

Miniwanka is an imitative piece, describing the various states of water. In

this sense it is a sequel to Epitaph for Moonlight. The text consists of words for rain, stream, waterfall, lake, river and ocean in several North-American Indian languages. It is not a difficult piece and can be performed by a children's choir or by a mixed choir, as explained in the score.

The first performance of Miniwanka was given by the Children's Opera Chorus of Toronto conducted by Lloyd Bradshaw, who sent me an amusing account of a command performance before Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip during their visit to Toronto in 1973.

Conversation between the Queen and Lloyd Bradshaw, on presentation of the score of R. Murray Schafer's Miniwanka to Her Majesty.

Mayor Crombie introduced Lloyd Bradshaw to the Queen. The Queen said: "How do you do Mr. Bradshaw?"

Lloyd said: "How do you do Your Majesty?"

Lloyd looked at the Queen.

The Queen said: "They were singing Indian words, were they not?"

Lloyd said: "They were Indian words describing the forms of water, such as rain, stream, lake, waterfall, and so on." There was a pause.

Lloyd filled it with "When we sang this out-of-doors once before, it brought on a rainstorm. I'm glad that it didn't do that today."

Pause.

Lloyd continued with "We thought you might like to see the score since the notation is not traditional."

Whereupon Lloyd showed the score to the Queen.

The Queen said: "Oh yes, I saw some of the children moving like that."

Lloyd replied: "That is the storm at sea, and those are the chords demonstrating it."

There was a brief pause, then Prince Philip said, "Will you please extend our congratulations to the choir," and Lloyd said, "I will, thank you."

That seemed to be the cue to end the conversation so Lloyd turned and left the platform as he had been instructed.

33. *Lustro*, 1972; 70 min; full orch; 8 voices, electronic sounds; Universal. Comprising three works, *Divan i Shams i Tabriz*, *Music for the Morning of the World* and *Beyond the Great Gate of Light*, the first performance of *Lustro* was given in Toronto, May 31, 1973, conducted by Marius Constant.

Beyond the Great Gate of Light was commissioned by the CBC in 1971 in order to complete the mystical triptych by bringing back the orchestra and singers who had been silent during the middle movement. As in the *Divan i Shams* the orchestra is spread in the auditorium as well as on stage. The final movement follows *Music for the Morning of the World* without pause as the lights are slowly restored to the hall. As the title suggests, the final movement is a paean of praise to light in which the seven singers in the hall join the soloist on stage in a text by the great Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore: “*Alo amar alo ogo bhubon-bhora*” — “*Light, my light, the world-filling light,*” from the poet’s famous collection *Gitanjali*. I was to turn to this beautiful poem again many years later, setting it in English, but here it is sung in the original Bengali. After a lengthy introduction, the tonality settles into a shifting G major triad in both the electronic tape and the orchestra while the singers embellish it singing the complete Tagore poem.

The immediate inspiration for the work was the death of an eleven-year-old boy, Stevie Mailing, the nephew of my wife Phyllis Mailing, who sang the solo part at the première.

34. *Psalm*, 1972; 9 min; for large choir SATB, also playing percussion instruments; Arcana.

Psalm is a setting of Psalm 148. It was commissioned by the Cathedral Church of the Redeemer in Calgary, but I don’t think they ever performed it. I revised it in 1976 and later incorporated it into *Apocalypse*. It is a joyful, almost militant song of praise to the Lord in which the singers clap, snap their fingers, stamp and even play a variety of percussion

instruments.

35. *Arcana*, 1972; 17 min; 14 songs for middle voice and chamb orch (or full orch); Universal.

Arcana derives its name from its text, which is in Middle Egyptian hieroglyphs, and was discovered near Memphis by the Arabian explorer Al Mamun at the beginning of the ninth century. The fragmentary text is remarkable because it bears little relationship to any other surviving Egyptian hieroglyphs of the period; but it seems to possess a religious significance and perhaps relates to the secret initiation ceremonies conducted in the labyrinth by the Egyptian priests. It was translated for the composer by Professor D.B. Redford of the Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Toronto.

The compositional method was as follows: each phoneme of the text was given two notes within a range of two octaves, including a few quarter tones. Thus each phonemic element always has the same note or notes associated with it. Often the singer sings one of these notes while the instruments play the other. The frequency with which each phoneme recurs in the text gives the melodic line its character, even a sense of tonality. Motives result from frequently repeated digraphs and trigraphs. The accompaniment is never free but forms "words" on its own. When the singer sings "I search for the formula of six words," (Song 4) the instruments scurry about trying out various combinations of letters which may provide the formula the singer is seeking. In the song entitled "When the labyrinth is deciphered it will disappear," (Song 12) the orchestra elucidates the compositional method by singing or speaking the phonemes and playing the appropriate notes simultaneously.

Arcana was commissioned as the test piece for the Montreal International Competition 1973, which that year was for singers. The composer was asked deliberately to avoid setting a text in a contemporary language, which, it was felt, might give singers of particular nationalities an advantage over others.

The text in English is as follows:

1. I have become an enchantress (enchanter).
2. The poison of the serpent spreads throughout my body.
3. I purify my God with my tongue.
4. I search for the formula of six words.
5. I have closed the passage of the lips and opened the secret way.
6. One of us is a phantom. I do not know which of us is a phantom.
7. You will eat no opium tonight.
8. Questions for midnight.
9. I am dreaming the world away to escape the four dimensions.
10. The more the seekers, the fewer the finders.
11. Whomsoever deciphers the labyrinth will be my friend.
12. When the labyrinth is deciphered it will disappear.
13. Many sacred fires are profane.
14. He comes with a sword and dismembers me according to the laws of harmony. His eyes are as blood. He tears my flesh with his teeth. I am transfigured.

The above notes are from the printed score. Of course, the text was not discovered by the explorer Al Mamun. I wrote it, or adapted it from spurious magical sources and had Don Redford translate it into (not out of) ancient Egyptian. Many of the songs were taken over for *Patria 4: The Black Theatre of Hermes Trismegistos*, where they are sung by Melusina and Ariadne.

36. *Patria 2: Requiems for the Party Girl*, 1972; 80 min; mezzo- soprano, choir SATB, actors, dancers, chamb orch, electronic and pre-recorded sounds. For information see: *Patria: The Complete Cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

37. *East*, 1973; 9 min; orch; Universal.

East is a meditation on a text from the Isha-Upanishad.

"The self is one. Unmoving it moves faster than the mind. The senses lag but self runs ahead. Unmoving it outruns pursuit. The self is everywhere, without body, without shape, whole, pure, wise, all-knowing, far-seeing,

self-dependent, all- transcending. Unmoving it moves far away, yet near, within all, outside all.”

The work employs the same technique I had used in *Arcana* where the letters of the text are each assigned a different note. In this case I used a quarter-tone scale for the twenty-four letters that appear in the English translation. Recurring groups of letters therefore take on the character of short melodies. The forty-eight words of the text are punctuated by forty-eight gongs sounding approximately every ten seconds, and the orchestra hums the same pitches to form a quiet meditation. I had also positioned some instrumentalists at the back of the hall and on the corners of the stage, asking them to pivot as they played, like slowly-circling dervishes. This provoked the conductor, Mario Bernardi, to say: “We can’t have the orchestra spread as you want it because the next piece on the program is Mozart and we have to have the right seating for Mozart.” I told him to ignore whatever staging presented problems and he was greatly relieved. The rehearsal went well, and the orchestra took it on tour to Europe, though I don’t know whether the staging was observed. In any case, it was the first of several works Mario Bernardi would commission for the National Arts Centre Orchestra over the next few years.

38. *North/White*, 1973; 9 min; full orch, snowmobile; Universal.

North/White was commissioned by the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. Here is the original program note:

I call this piece *North/White* because, like white light, which is composed of all visible frequencies, it combines all the producible notes of the symphony orchestra from the deepest to the highest instruments.

The North is not described by the adjective “pretty” and neither is this piece. *North/White* is inspired by the rape of the Canadian North. This rape is being carried out by the nation’s government in conspiracy with business and industry. The instruments of destruction are pipelines and airstrips, highways and snowmobiles.

But more than the environment is being destroyed by these actions, for,

just as the moon excursions destroyed the mythogenic power of the moon (it ceased to be poetry and became property), Canadians are about to be deprived of the "idea of North," which is at the core of the Canadian identity. The North is a place of austerity, of spaciousness and loneliness; the North is pure; the North is temptationless. These qualities are forged into the mind of the Northerner; his temperament is synonymous with them.

There are few true Canadians and they are not to be found in cities. They do not sweat in discotheques, eat barbecued meat-balls or watch late movies on television. They do not live in high-rise apartments, preferring a clean space to the smell of neighbours' spaghetti.

But these few remainders from an authentic time are apparently to be sacrificed and the North, like the South and the West and the East, is to be broken by men and machines. That, at least, is the design which the little technocrats of progress have planned. They seek not only to civilize the North but to civilize the imagination of the North. They do not realize that when they chop into the North they chop up the integrity of their own minds, blocking the awe-inspiring mysteries with gas stations and reducing their legends to plastic dolls.

The idea of North is a Canadian myth. Without a myth a nation dies. This piece is dedicated to the splendid and indestructible idea of North. The real idea for North/White came to me during a polar flight from Europe to Vancouver over Greenland and Baffin Island. The myriad tints of green and blue in the ice caps suggested a full chromatic spectrum of white sound that would be filtered to reveal certain changing hues. I decided to place a snowmobile in the percussion section as a symbol of noise and pollution generated by technology. While this attracted a good deal of press attention at the première, North/White has rarely been performed, and never by a major orchestra. The reason: capitalist patrons might find it insulting.

North and East are the only directions that interest me: the East for

sunlight, warmth, history and mythology; the North for purity and austerity. For me the West is just cowboys and chopsticks, and the South symbolizes tropical humidity and laziness. And so, having written East and North/White, I let matters stand.

39. *Patria I*: Wolfman, 1974; 90 min; soprano, choir SATB, actors, chamb orch, electronic and pre-recorded sounds; Arcana. For information see *Patria: The Complete Cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

40. *String Quartet No. 2 (Waves)*, 1976; 19 min; Arcana.

In the course of the World Soundscape Project we recorded and analyzed ocean waves on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Canada. The recurrent pattern of waves is always asymmetrical but we noted that the duration from crest to crest usually falls between 6 and 11 seconds ninety percent of the time. Only ten percent of the time are they of longer or shorter duration. It is this wave motion that gives the quartet its rhythm and structure. The listener will readily hear the dynamic undulations of waves in this piece, and as the piece develops several types of wave motion are combined. Aside from this, I have sought to give the quartet a liquid quality in which everything is constantly dissolving and flowing into everything else. That is to say, the material of the work is not fixed, but is perpetually changing, and even though certain motivic figures are used repeatedly, they undergo continual dynamic, rhythmic and tempo variation. Although the work has waves as its theme (or rather its form) no program is intended. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

41. *Train*, 1976; 19 min; youth orch; Arcana.

In the days when Canada still had an efficient passenger train service from coast to coast I often took the train from Vancouver to Toronto or Montreal, a three-and-a-half day trip each way. It gave me a good opportunity to relax and think. For many years, in fact, I refused to fly at all as a protest against the noise pollution of the aviation industry. In those days the CPR printed a schedule showing the distance between stations and the altitude of each station. This was the inspiration for *Train*,

which was composed during a trip from Vancouver to Montreal. It was intended for a student orchestra and had to be quite simple.

The total distance (4,653 km) determined the duration, with each 1,000 km taking up a minute of the piece. The station stops were punctuated by the percussion. Stations passed at night were played on bell instruments (lights in darkness), while stations passed during the day were played on drums and wood instruments. Generally the size of the city determined the loudness of the playing, but I also tried to give a personal impression of each place: thus, ugly cities got dissonant sounds.

The string instruments provided the altitude, soaring from sea level up the Pacific mountains at first, then leveling off across the Prairies, becoming bumpy over the Canadian Shield before descending again to sea level at Montreal.

The brass and woodwind are offstage performing the distinctive Canadian train whistle, tuned to sound an E-flat minor triad with a fundamental at 311 Hertz. In fact, one might say that the level-crossing signal of the Canadian train, consisting of two longs, a short and a long is the most distinctive Canadian soundmark, though with tunnels and overpasses it is disappearing in cities. But country people still know it well. And, incidentally, it rhymes rhythmically with the opening of the Canadian National Anthem.

42. *Adieu* Robert Schumann, 1976; 20 min; contralto, full orch, pno, pre-recorded pno; Universal.

Adieu Robert Schumann was one of the first works written after I left teaching at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia and moved to the farmhouse in Monteagle Valley (Ontario). The commission was to write a piece for Maureen Forrester and came from John Roberts, then Director of Music at the CBC. I was glad to have it since from this point on in my life I was going to have to rely on commissions and short teaching or lecturing invitations for all my income.

The composition is concerned with the last days of Robert Schumann,

from the time of his first hallucinations until his death in the Eendenich asylum in 1856. The narrator is Clara Schumann, and the text consists of selections from her diaries, freely adapted. Passages of many of Schumann's own compositions are incorporated into the total work, in particular, sections of several of his *Lieder*, as well as fragments from the piano pieces, *Carnival* and *Kreisleriana*. The quotations have been introduced to suggest the conflicts in his mind during the days of his final collapse. There are also signature motives: C—A for Clara and B^b—E for Robert — a device of which Schumann was especially fond.

I included a backstage piano piece in the middle of the work, playing the melody Schumann wrote down the night of his first dramatic hallucination — the melody he claimed was dictated to him by the angels. During his illness, Schumann kept hearing the note A ringing in his ears, and so towards the end of *Adieu Robert Schumann* the note A is increasingly stressed in the orchestra. While Clara sings an obligato to the song *Dein Angesicht*, which is in D-flat major, the A-natural sustains, distorting it strangely. The song fades. Only the A remains, and Clara is alone.

When the work was performed by the Bonn Symphony, I visited Eendenich and, with the help of the curator, prepared a German version of the text directly from Clara's diaries. This is given in the Appendix.

43. *Hymn to Night*, 1976; 16 min; soprano and chamb orch (or full orch), tape delay and recorded sound; Universal.

The text for *Hymn to Night* comes from Novalis, one of my favourite German authors. The poem begins with a paean to light before turning to "the holy, ineffable night" and the eternal sleep that accompanies it. A recording of an Aeolian harp was added to the orchestra to help create the mood. Many are the descriptions and wild imaginings suggested by this instrument in the writings of Romanticists such as E.T.A. Hoffmann, Novalis and Berlioz. Placed outdoors and set in motion by the wind, it

sighed like a mysterious stranger in a breeze but wailed painfully in a storm. It was precisely the right instrument to accompany the nocturnal voyage of the soul depicted by Novalis.

Additionally I worked out a system for a twofold tape delay on the voice, four and six seconds after the live voice had sung certain lingering phrases.

I remember the night I began work on Hymn to Night. I couldn't sleep and got up to read something. Novalis's poem was close at hand and before I had even finished reading it I had set the first stanzas to music. It was one of those rare experiences when music surges out unstoppably. The whole work took form that night.

Hymn to Night is to be incorporated into *Patria 7: Asterion*. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

44. *Cortège*, 1977; 15 min; orch; Universal.

I have never been very happy with a seated orchestra. When the National Arts Centre commissioned *East* I had moved some of the players to the corners of the hall and had them pivoting as they played in order to deflect the sound. With *Cortège* I decided that the entire orchestra would be in motion. The work would begin out of darkness with only the conductor and timpanist on stage, the latter giving a slow ceremonial beat for the entry of the string players, moving in slow precision, one step to each timpani stroke. I thought the image of the players in black suits would be enhanced if they all wore white face masks, so I requested this. And after the violinists had slowly raised their instruments to play, they would suddenly begin to spin like dervishes. Other instruments, clarinets and oboes, would emerge from the wings and come down the aisles from the back of the hall passing phrases across to one another. Later the brass would enter doing a quickstep march and the bassoon players would perform a little jig together. After it was all over, the orchestra would slowly leave the stage as if it had all been a dream, and the lights would fade to darkness.

To their credit, the National Arts Centre went along with the plan. The masks were ordered and rehearsals began. But a chance remark by the conductor, Mario Bernardi, that the tune played by the goose-stepping brass resembled the Nazi national anthem (it didn't) shocked the largely-Jewish violin section and the union threatened a walkout. There were articles about it in the press and I was asked to comment, but as I had not yet arrived in Ottawa I had no idea what the problem was. Eventually the matter was resolved. I personally directed the staging and tried to get the strings to move as gracefully as possible. The work was a huge success with the audience, and always has been if the precise instructions in the score are followed. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

45. *La Testa d'Adriane*, 1977; 14 min; soprano, free-bass accordion; Arcana. For some time my friend Joe Macerollo had been after me to write a piece for accordion. Simultaneously Mary Morrison wanted a new piece for voice. But her voice was past its prime and I resisted until it struck me that I could put these two "misfits" together in a kind of carnival attraction. What resulted was the first piece of what was eventually to grow into *Patria 3: The Greatest Show*.

The accordionist, dressed in a tattered tuxedo and top hat, opens with a happy tune to attract an audience. Behind a curtain he claims to have the bodyless head of a woman, saved at the instant before death and preserved by the fantastic art of leger demain. When he pulls the curtain of his little booth, we do indeed see a woman's head on a table without a body. She appears to be sleeping, but the barker awakens her with music and she sings a strange aria of gurgles, trills, whispers and pops, finally ending in laughter that descends into weeping before she subsides again into her comatose state. In vain the showman tries to revive her with his accordion. Finally he pulls the curtain shut. The show is over.

46. *Apocalypse: Part 1: John's Vision*, 1977; 65 min; solo actors, singers and dancers, choirs (SA, TB, 2 SATB, boys, speech), winds, brass; Arcana.

The first part of *Apocalypsis* describes John of Patmos' vision of the end of the world, as described in Revelation. To depict this epochal event I knew I would need enormous forces. For two or three years I had been involved in the Dayspring Festival at Metropolitan United Church in Toronto, and it was to this church that I made my proposal. My idea was that the new work would be undertaken by a consortium of churches, each providing choirs, soloists, actors and volunteer help of all kinds as they were able. We were off to a good start; women were sewing banners, and choirs and dancers were rehearsing in various church basements when the minister at Metropolitan left for a new appointment. His successor had no interest in the arts; the Dayspring Festival withered, and my hair was turning grey trying to keep the momentum going. When I began to receive angry letters from church wardens about untidy rehearsals, and one of the ministers complained that the Apocalypse was not "Christocentric"(!), I knew that my original production plan would have to be given up.

Apocalypsis: Part 2: Credo, 1976; 48 min; 12 SATB choirs, double basses, filtered bells pre-recorded; Arcana.

In the book of Revelation the end of the world was to be followed by the founding of the New Jerusalem, but the Bible is meager on details. It was left to the Renaissance painters to illustrate the happy singing and harp-playing survivors of the destruction, and from them I drew the notion of a vast choral work and began to hunt for a suitable text, eventually discovering a description of the universe by Giordano Bruno, the sixteenth-century Italian philosopher and astronomer, that was very close to my own belief and so, in adapting his text, I decided to call the work *Credo*.

My diary note shows that I had begun work on *Credo* in February 1976 (at the same time as I was composing my second string quartet). My musical inspiration was Thomas Tallis's 48-part motet *Spem in alium*, a copy of which I had in hand; but *Credo* would be much longer, consisting of twelve Invocations proclaiming "Lord God is Universe" together with

twelve Responses defining what this implied, and corresponding to the twelve gates of the New City, each inlaid with a different precious stone. In fact, I gave the twelve choirs the names of these stones and planned to have them totally surround the audience so that the sound could be passed around or across the hall from one choir to another.

At first I worked on graph paper and I recall how giddy I felt with the mathematical plan I had conceived for this enormous undertaking. From my diary:

The feeling is by no means unpleasant, rather like a slightly drunk sensation in which the eyes won't come to focus on anything but look straight into the distance... At the beginning the nude white page dances before the thought and away from it. At the end it leaves the fingers all scratched and grubby... the debris of a struggle with some archangel; yet this twisted wreckage gives me a certain satisfaction, really the only satisfaction in this unsatisfactory world, in which we can only brandish the scars of impossible hopes.

I once had a dream in which I was standing on a stepladder putting the final touches on a choral piece that seemed to reach to the heavens. Credo was that work.

Credo received a performance by the Mendelssohn Choir before the staged production of Apocalypse. This was to be a CBC broadcast, without audience. In retrospect it was a very funny event, though it didn't seem so at the time. For whatever reason, the producer, Clark Kent, failed to tell me when the taping was to take place. When I called him he hummed and hawed and finally said it would be best if I didn't attend. I hit the roof and demanded to be there. I suspected that the conductor, Elmer Iseler, preferring dead composers, had asked for me to be locked out. Anyway, I was allowed to attend provided I sat quietly and promised that I would in no way interfere with the proceedings. They had decided to record the work in short sections, leaving the tape of bells to be mixed in later. To help Elmer keep to the timing a lighted stop clock had been

rigged up, but he ignored it. Elmer came into the recording booth after each take and announced whether it was good or not, looking out of the corner of his eye to detect whether I agreed; but when I once said I thought it could be improved, he ignored me and went on to the next section.

We ran out of time with three sections still to be recorded. Elmer came into the studio with the choir managers and said: "Go and tell the choir that the conductor is prepared to continue but only if every member agrees to stay." While this was being done his wife, Jessie, massaged his shoulders and someone brought him a bottle of pop. The managers returned delightedly and said that everyone would stay. Elmer, however, was not pleased. "You used the word 'demanded'," he said, "I did not say demanded." So they had to go out again and repeat the request in a mollified manner. Finally, after wasting half an hour we were able to continue, completing the taping at close to midnight.

I worked hard to edit in the bell track, which was almost impossible because Elmer's timings were totally askew. Strangely, Credo was never broadcast and I was never able to find out why. Clark Kent had produced another donut.

The full production of both parts of *Apocalypse* was given in London (Ontario) in November 1980. The performers included the sound poets bp Nichol, Paul Dutton and Steve McCaffery, who helped create their own parts as John, Archangel Michael and the Antichrist, respectively. Numerous local choirs were involved, and the musicians were from Orchestra London and the University of Western Ontario. I directed the staging of the work myself. Two performances were given and were sold out. Strangely, I was told that had we given a third performance we would have made money for the University. Certainly we would have filled Centennial Hall, the huge horseshoe building where the production took place. The story of how the CBC's Superman, Clark Kent, tried to sabotage this production is not worth telling, though I have not forgotten

it.

In true Canadian fashion, *Apocalypse* has never been repeated, though *Credo* was revived in 2001 in Toronto, without staging.

47. *The Crown of Ariadne*, 1978; 20 min; harp, perc; *Arcana*.

The harpist Judy Loman had been asking me to write a harp work for some time. It was Toru Takemitsu who suggested that such a work might include bells, played by the harpist. Judy and I quickly set to work devising ways for the harpist to play a variety of bells and several other small percussion instruments together with the harp.

At the time I was beginning to plan *Patria 5: The Crown of Ariadne*, which would tell the story of Theseus and Ariadne, the Minotaur and the Labyrinth. The work would be a dance drama and Ariadne's instrument would be the harp. The various titles of the movements indicate Ariadne's involvement in the story.

1. Ariadne Awakens
2. Ariadne's Dance
3. Dance of the Bull
4. Dance of the Night Insects
5. Sun Dance
6. Labyrinth Dance

In 1995, at Judy's request, I added another movement (between 4 and 5) called "Ariadne's Dream."

48. *Jonah*, 1979; 40 min; choir SATB, actors, children, fl, cl, organ, perc; *Arcana*.

A year or two after moving to Monteagle Valley, my wife and I began to attend the Lutheran Church at Maynooth. When the pastor discovered I was a musician, he persuaded me to form a choir. A choir practice was called and four or five people showed up, only one of whom claimed to be able to read music. I began by teaching them hymns, concentrating on proper breathing and accurate pitch. I also taught those who wanted to learn to read music. The choir grew. A year or so later the girls from the Catholic church wanted to join us and actually did so. We were now

singing plainsong in Latin and simple motets in German. We decided to make the core choir non-denominational and the Maynooth Community Choir was born. *Jonah* was first performed by the Maynooth Community Choir in Christ Lutheran Church, Maynooth, on August 29 & 30, 1979. It was a community undertaking, involving about forty people. Considering that the total population of the Maynooth area is probably about two hundred, the per capita participation in this cultural endeavour probably exceeded the national average.

Jonah is based on the well-known Bible story. Much of what developed was improvised into existence by the participants. The sailors built up their conversation with Jonah from improvisations, and the storm at sea was created the same way. The king's speeches and the text of his song were written by twelve-year-old Tony Fitzgerald, who played the king. Terry Wilton, who played Jonah, modelled his speeches over basic material I had sketched out. With the exception of two borrowings from hymn tunes, the choral music is mine, though since its conception depended on the capabilities of the choir, most of it was written or revised during actual rehearsals.

The detailed story of the creation of *Jonah* is told in "Jonah and the Maynooth Community Choir," in *The Thinking Ear*, pp. 302-317, Arcana Editions.

49. *Gamelan*, 1979; 3 min; choir SATB or SASA or TBTB; Arcana. *Gamelan* was written for a small group of singers, members of the Maynooth Community Choir who used to gather in various homes to sing madrigals.

The Balinese have a pentatonic scale (C D F G B^b) with the names dong, deng, dung, dang, ding, clearly imitative of the sounds of a gamelan orchestra with the hard attack and the ringing of gongs and idiophones. I decided to create this little piece using the Balinese names for the tones

as a text and attempting at the same time to suggest the rhythms and sounds of the gamelan orchestra. It has proven to be one of my most popular pieces, and with the current rage for world music, I notice that it sometimes appears on programs as an authentic example of Balinese choral style!

50. *Hear Me Out*, 1979; 5 min; 4 voices; Arcana.

Written for a group of soloists from the Maynooth Community Choir, *Hear Me Out* was first performed in Maynooth in July 1979 on the same program with Gamelan. The text consists entirely of well-known aural figures of speech, juxtaposed in ridiculous and often humorous ways. Somewhere between music and theatre, *Hear Me Out* invites a wide range of interpretations.

51. *Felix's Girls*, 1979; 14 min; 9 songs for vocal quartet and/or choir SATB; Arcana.

In 1954 I was given a large number of poems and aphorisms by the Polish-Jewish immigrant poet Henry Felix. From these I selected nine, each of which describes a feminine type. There are girls here from the Middle East, Central Europe, France, England and America, presented with biting wit and sarcasm. The music accordingly shifts in style for each song — from a Lutheran hymn to jazz, to a French folk song, to expressionism.

The popularity of this little collection of satires has been substantially diminished by the reluctance of modern women to see anything humorous about themselves.

52. *Music for Wilderness Lake*, 1979; 15 min; 12 trombones around a lake; Arcana.

Music for Wilderness Lake is the first of my environmental compositions. The two sections are called *Dusk* and *Dawn*, and my idea was that we would play *Dusk* as the sun was setting, then camp at the lake and play *Dawn* as the sun rose the next morning. I had arranged for the work to be broadcast on CBC Radio and recorded on film.

The lake was not far from my farm, and the time was mid-September. After a rehearsal in my barn, we drove to the lake in the late afternoon and performed *Dusk* in the evening. I conducted it with coloured flags from a raft in the centre of the lake, from where the CBC was also recording it. The flags were necessary because of the distances separating the players (500 metres or more), but actually the score is written in such a way that the players take cues from each other aurally most of the time. The next morning I drove back to the lake at 4:30 a.m. The performers were just up and were slapping themselves to keep warm. The boatmen were ready to ferry them to their positions with the first glimmer of dawn. The recordists began to take up their positions in canoes, looking fantastically surrealistic with their wind-socked microphones rising above the gunwales as they paddled silently in the misty water.

We were just ready to run when the mist rolled in and we had to delay the performance for an hour. But finally the mist rose to reveal a sunny morning. The whole experience was very beautiful and very strange with the mist drifting across the water and the trombone chords slowly circling and rising over the hills.

Since we were recording simultaneously from the raft and from canoes moving about the lake, we were able to mix the takes to zoom in on different soloists so that within a second or two we could hear them from the distance to close up or in reverse. I think this panning and zooming at such great distances must have been a first for sound recording, but, of course, most of the effect was lost when it was all mixed onto the optical film track.

While it was not performed very frequently, some unusual performances of *Music for Wilderness Lake* have taken place, once on a lake in the centre of an urban park in Wiesbaden (Germany) and once on the Amstel river in Amsterdam, with the audience standing on the bridges while I was on a tug boat in the centre of the river.

53. *Beauty and the Beast*, 1979; 28 min; contralto, string quartet; *Arcana*.

Beauty and the Beast was written mostly in the brief spell of a week in November 1979. The performer was to be Maureen Forrester and Montreal was to be the venue of performance, so I had my friend Gabriel Charpentier prepare a French version of the text, and the score is therefore printed in both English and French.

Madame Leprince de Baumont's story is considered a children's fairy tale, but like many fairy tales it has a deep psychological significance as well. Thus we see how, at the outset, the young virgin (Beauty) lives contentedly at home under the protection of her father, whose powers to care for her are, however, weakening. The moment comes when she must leave home; her father knows this and even to some extent assists in her departure. When she leaves, she encounters another kind of male personality: Beast, whose bristling masculinity immediately threatens her. Even though Beast appears to have attractive qualities beneath his frightening appearance, Beauty fears him and flees back to the protective care of her father. But her subconscious mind (i.e., the figures in her dreams) forces her to realize that she cannot remain here but must return to Beast and tame his brutish masculinity with her love. As soon as this is done, Beast is transformed into a charming prince, and the two lovers embark on their life together as young adults.

At the time I wrote Beauty and the Beast I was beginning to create a variety of pieces for Patria 3: The Greatest Show, and I intended that Beauty would eventually be incorporated into that work.

Beauty and the Beast is a miniature opera for solo voice with hand-held masks. The work has successfully been presented like this by numerous performers. I say "successfully" even though the work has seldom been favoured by critics. On one occasion a Lesbian critic for the Globe and Mail attacked me for resurrecting this nasty anti-feminist story and suggested that my name should be excised from all music encyclopedias throughout the world.

In the Greatest Show the work is performed in the Rose Theatre, one of

the “restricted” entertainments to which one must win admission by playing a game or in other unorthodox ways, and it amused me enormously to see quite ordinary people competing furiously to win entry to an entertainment that, under normal circumstances, they would never attend. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

54. *Wizard Oil and Indian Sagwa*, 1980; 14 min; speaker, cl; Arcana.

This humorous work recreates an old-time medicine show in which the speaker, alias Johnny Mailloux, endeavours to sell a cure-all called Wizard Oil, while the clarinettist, alias Chief Sam Padoopi, dressed in Indian costume, endorses the product with his playing and occasional dancing. The work was originally written for the poet bp Nichol and was performed several times by him before his early death. Like many other pieces of the time, it was eventually incorporated into *Patria 3: The Greatest Show*.

55. *The Garden of the Heart*, 1980; 24 min; mezzo-soprano, full orch; Arcana.

The inspiration for *The Garden of the Heart* was a description of a paradise garden from the thirty-fourth night of the *Thousand and One Nights*. I had used this description before in the novel *Ariadne*, where I had copied it out in swirling arabesques. This time the description became the basis for a narrative: a woman has returned to the garden where she and her lover used to meet, knowing she will die there, and beseeching her lover to return one last time to listen to her voice in the dancing water of the fountain.

The Garden of the Heart was written for Maureen Forrester, who was, by this time, past her prime, but would, I hoped, give the vocal line just the right touch of senescence to stimulate sympathy — in the same way as the declining voice of Julius Patzak singing Mahler’s *Das Lied von der Erde* resulted in a better recording of that decadent work than any other made since.

I first composed the vocal line from beginning to end. I intended the

accompaniment to consist entirely of the same material with the instruments anticipating and recalling phrases sung by the singer, overlapping and underweaving like the arabesques of Persian art. I wanted the score to shimmer like a garden full of flowers and birds and fountains, surging forward to greet the singer then hesitating and falling back to make room for other voices. The orchestration of this piece is one of the most delicate and sensuous I ever achieved. The work was written over the summer of 1980 when the birds in Monteagle Valley were at their most joyful, and the evening air was filled with the scent of the earth. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

56. *Patria Prologue: The Princess of the Stars*, 1981; 80 min; soprano, 3 actors, 6 dancers, 2 choirs SATB, 12 instrumentalists, canoeists. For information see: *Patria: the Complete Cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

57. *String Quartet No. 3*, 1981; 30 min; Arcana.

When I began the third string quartet I had the notion to join it somehow to the second, and this idea was to be sustained through the composition of the next five quartets, giving them an organized unity.

At the end of the second quartet the three upper players have left the stage, leaving the cello alone. The third quartet begins with a long cello solo, referring back to material the cellist had played at the end of the previous work, most significantly a very slow rendition of the song of the White-Throated Sparrow, a bird commonly heard all summer long in the woods around my Monteagle Valley farmhouse. The other three instrumentalists begin playing from places backstage and in the hall where they had gone at the end of the second quartet and gradually return to join the cellist on stage.

The second movement is fast and rhythmic and includes vocalizations reminiscent of oriental gymnastic exercises. I have always been amazed at the physical energy required by string players during vigorous playing and decided to allow them to release this energy by making vocal sounds similar to those in karate.

The final movement is a long, quiet meditation in unison, at the conclusion of which the first violinist slowly rises, repeating a simple phrase over and over, and departs backstage, carrying the phrase into the distance so that in the end we don't know whether we are still hearing it or if it is only lingering in our memory.

This was the first instance in my work of what I might call phantom sounds, that is, sounds that seem to remain in a space from which they have departed, a sensation of significance in later works, such as the aubades and nocturnes written for the Wolf Project.

58. Sun, 1982; 9 min; choir SATB; Arcana.

Sun was commissioned by the Mendelssohn Choir for the opening of Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto, in 1983. The text consists of words for sun in forty different languages, beginning in Japan and travelling across Asia, Africa and Europe to America.

I did not attend the premiere of Sun in Roy Thomson Hall. I had requested an opportunity to hear the work in preparation but the conductor, Elmer Iseler, ignored my requests until the dress rehearsal, when he welcomed me like a brother in front of the multitude, had a chair brought out for me to sit in next to his podium, told me to interrupt him whenever I felt like it, as the choir would be immensely grateful to hear pearls of wisdom from a living composer — and then totally ignored me. In any case, nothing much seemed wrong with the piece, so at the conclusion of the run-through I shook his hand, the choir applauded, and I retired.

In slightly different forms Sun reappears during the arrival of the Sun Disc in *The Princess of the Stars* and again during the invocation to the sun to warm the earth in *Patria 10: The Spirit Garden*.

59. *Patria 6*: RA, 1983; 10 hrs; 25 solo singers, actors and dancers, male chorus, chamber orch including Middle Eastern instruments; Arcana. For information see: *Patria: The Complete Cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

60. *Theseus*, 1983; 18 min; harp, string quartet; Arcana.

Theseus was commissioned by the wonderful harpist Judy Loman.

Having written *The Crown of Ariadne* for her, I decided to make this a companion piece, and, in fact, some of the *Ariadne* music is revived in *Theseus*. The piece also contains a descending series of notes, S (E flat) C H (B natural) A F E, as a kind of signature, a device Shostakovich was also fond of; and, in fact, the

Shostakovich influence is easily detectable in *Theseus*. Later I orchestrated the work and incorporated it into *Patria 5: The Crown of Ariadne*, where it almost assumes the importance of a harp concerto. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

61. *Snowforms*, 1983; 7 min; choir SSAA; *Arcana*.

Sometimes I have given children "sight-singing" exercises in which they are asked to "sing" drawings or the shapes of the distant horizon.

Snowforms began as a series of sketches of snowdrifts, seen out the window of my Monteagle Valley farmhouse. I took these sketches and traced a pentagram over them. The notes of the piece emerged wherever the lines of the sketch and the stave crossed. Of course I modified the drawings as necessary since the work is primarily a piece of music and only secondarily a set of sketches. I printed the work so that the shapes of the snow were in white over a pale blue background.

The text consists of Inuit words for various kinds of snow: *apingaut*, first snowfall; *mauyak*, soft snow; *akelrorak*, drifting snow; *pokaktok*, snow like salt, etc.

The entire piece is soft, and I wanted the voices to slide from note to note just like falling or drifting snow. *Snowforms* is related to *Epitaph for Moonlight*, *Miniwanka* and *Sun*; they are all descriptions of nature. Later I was to add *Fire*, *A Garden of Bells* and *Once on a Windy Night* as further celebrations of natural phenomena. As the urban populations of the world grow, the forces and charms of nature are more distanced from increasing numbers of people. But I do not write such works out of nostalgia; they are a very real part of my life.

Snowforms was actually preceded by a much more complex work of the

same name which was performed once by the Vancouver Chamber Choir, but I am glad I withdrew it, substituting this simpler and purer expression of one of nature's most beautiful elements.

62. A Garden of Bells, 1983; 10 min; choir SATB; Arcana.

In A Garden of Bells I had in mind a scene which does not really exist; a soniferous garden filled with bells of all shapes and sizes, through which the traveller might wander at leisure, and be entertained by a tintinnabulation of sounds, not loud but beckoning, sometimes near, but more often far, like the voices of distant friends, which soft breezes barely bring to the ears.

Some of the bell words that make up the text are those of real languages: Sinhalese, Spanish, Serbo-Croatian, Hungarian, Indonesian and Swahili. Others are onomatopoeic inventions by friends and members of the Vancouver Chamber Choir for whom the work was written.

63. Concerto for Flute and Orchestra, 1984, 25 min; fl, full orch; Arcana.

The Flute Concerto was written for my friend Robert Aitken, who gave the first performance with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. In those early years, I often experienced scornful, or at the very least, uncooperative treatment at the hands of conductors, and Maestro Charles Dutoit was no different. The work was placed at the beginning of the program and thus became what we new music composers called a *pièce de garage*. It gave time for people to park their cars and arrive after the first piece had been performed, allowing them to settle down and enjoy the 'real' music. But Bob and I both survived the experience that day and went on to follow our respective muses.

Speaking of which, I wrote this piece when my beautiful muse, Eleanor/Mignon, now my beautiful wife, had just come into my life and love was turning our lives upside down. I was holed up in a beautiful basement apartment, overlooking the Avon River in Stratford, Ontario, hoping to find the peace and quiet to compose the work, when Eleanor

came to visit me. Needless to say, it was difficult for me to concentrate on composition with Hasroet, the Goddess of the Necropolis (the part she created in my PATRIA work, *RA*), near me. So I gave her the use of my car and she went off to Ottawa for a week. The Flute Concerto's opening movement reflects my state of mind and heart at that tumultuous time. But, in spite of my agitation, when Bob Aitken played the work through for the first time, he said, "This is the greatest flute concerto of the 20th century." Thanks, Bob. Thanks, Alex. We've come a long way, my friends.

64. Sun Father, Earth Mother, 1984; 15 min; solo voice; Arcana.

In the fall of 1984 I went to St. Gallen, Switzerland, to live with the singer Eleanor James, and the first piece I wrote there was Sun Father, Earth Mother. That summer I had been at Banff, where we were planning a production of *The Princess of the Stars in the Rocky Mountains*, and had been researching a variety of lakes, some with amazing echoes. I wanted to write a work celebrating those echoes and created a text that would help to do that.

O Sun

Father,

Light of the World, I come to you,

I sing to you,

My spirit soars,

I am one with you.

Earth Mother, Cradle of the World, I come to you,

I sing to you,

My spirit clings,

I am one with you.

When the singer sings "I come to you... I am one with you." the song echoing back would blur the distinction between soundmaker and the soundscape, as if the mountains and the forest were addressing the singer

as much as the other way around. I wanted to create the impression that the whole universe is full of mysterious and supernatural presences, each with its own voice awaiting evocation.

Years later when I was in the Andes in Argentina a peasant was to say to me: "The mountains have no voice, but we give them a voice by calling to them."

Sun Father consists of nine invocations. In addition to the sun and earth the singer sings to the moon, to the stars, to the mountains, to the birds, to the fish, to the forests and to the animals. In each case the singer's voice folds into the echoes, amplifying and modifying them.

In the summer of 1985 I made a recording of the work with Eleanor James in the Rocky Mountains, in which she moved to a different location for each song, singing skyward, or through forest tunnels, across a lake, into a stream, mixing with the dawn birds and distant animals...

Sun Father has also been sung by a soprano and mezzo-soprano alternating, some distance apart. In any case, it needs the participation of the natural environment and should be kept out of concert halls.

65. Letters from Mignon, 1984; 25 min; mezzo-soprano, full orch; Arcana. Everyone has heard of Mignon, the enigmatic young girl of Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*. She appears to have come from the south and sings several famous poems such as "Kennst du das Land..." which have been set to music by several celebrated German composers. In the novel, Wilhelm Meister buys her freedom from a troupe of circus tight-rope dancers and in return she follows him devotedly but in the end mysteriously dies. There is little doubt that she loved Wilhelm Meister though the exact nature of their relationship is never fully revealed.

In these letters we imagine Mignon in all her girlish womanhood pouring out her affection for the man she loves.

That was the program note that accompanied the premiere given by Eleanor James with the Calgary Philharmonic in 1987. The texts might have bewildered the audience, for passages in Italian and a very curious

German are mixed in with the English. In fact, the Letters from Mignon were letters from Eleanor to me. We were celebrating our love for the first time in public with only the barest of disguises. John Roberts, who attended the performance, likened them to Wagner's *Wesendonk Lieder*, and he was right, since "Mignon's" letters had inspired me in the same way Matilda Wesendonk's poems had inspired Wagner.

66. *The Star Princess and the Waterlilies*, 1984; 15 min; narrator, contralto, children's choir SA, perc; Arcana.

The Star Princess (contralto soloist) visits a world populated by children to ask them whether the stars might come to live on earth. The children help her to find the right place, in this little music drama for children's choir, soloist and narrator.

The Star Princess is the same Princess of the Stars who appears in the prologue to *Patria*. At one point, in the early stages of planning *And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon*, I thought of transposing the whole work to the forest, but good sense prevailed. It is better left in the concert hall.

67. *Ko wo kiku (Listen to the Incense)*, 1985; 30 min; full orch; Arcana.

Ko wo kiku was commissioned by the Kyoto Community Bank for performance by the Kyoto Symphony Orchestra in celebration of the thousandth anniversary of the founding of Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan. It was hoped that the composition would have something to do with Kyoto and to assist in the inspiration process, I had been invited to spend a week in Kyoto in 1984, hosted by the Bank and filled with visits to shrines, palaces, gardens and excellent restaurants. This was my first visit to Japan and I found it incredibly exotic. Toru Takemitsu had also been invited to write a celebratory piece, and he helped interpret this strange culture to me. (In fact, Toru had recommended my name for the commission.)

One of the activities planned by the Bank was the ancient ceremony known as "Ko wo kiku." Like its companion, the tea ceremony, it is both complex and simple. Small jars of burning incense (Ko) are passed about,

each bearing a different name and odour. As the title of the ceremony implies, the incense may also be listened to by moving the jar towards the left ear before it is passed on. The ceremony is truly synaesthetic since the various types of incense bear visual titles such as “The river in the mist,” or “Cherry blossoms falling”...

I resolved to write an impressionistic piece suggesting various kinds of incense and to actually incorporate the incense ceremony in the performance. Beginning with the conductor, incense jars would be passed through the orchestra from player to player and each player would enter according to the inspiration received from the perfume. The four contrasting movements bear the titles Sagano, Nonomiya, Shigure and Higashiyama.

I returned to Kyoto in 1985 for the premiere of *Ko wo kiku*, conducted by Seiji Ozawa. Having spoken frankly about various conductors' attitudes to my music, I would like to say what a pleasure it was working with Seiji Ozawa. Before the first rehearsal he said, “Let me have this rehearsal to sort out problem areas. Make your notes and we'll meet after to discuss them.” After the first rehearsal we went to his dressing room and he listened to all my comments. He also asked questions about tempi or dynamics and was respectfully frank about awkward passages he was finding difficult to comprehend. Of course his respect for the contemporary composer stemmed from his longstanding friendship with Toru Takemitsu, but through that friendship it extended to us all. Seiji Ozawa was also the only conductor who ever invited me out to dinner, both in Kyoto and again in Boston, when he performed the piece with the Boston Symphony.

68. *Buskers*, 1985; 12 min; fl, vln, vla; *Arcana*.

Buskers was commissioned by Robert Aitken for performance on a New Music Concert in Toronto in 1986. When the commission came I was busy completing *Patria 3: The Greatest Show* and decided to write a piece that could be incorporated into that work.

The three buskers are Man (violin), Life (flute) and Death (viola). The Man, dressed in a tattered tuxedo, enters and places his top hat, upside down, before the audience. He plays. He looks in his hat. Nothing. He plays again. In the distance Death is heard, mocking him. The Man rushes off in pursuit. Life enters, plucks a flower from the hat, plays a pretty solo and departs. The Man returns, visibly older, more stooped, and plays a lament while Life and Death duet off stage. Eventually Life and Death return to accompany the Man in a vigorous finale. They have made their peace together.

69. *Fire*, 1986; 4 min; choir SATB; Arcana.

Fire is yet another in the cycle of short choral works dealing with the various elements of nature that I have written over the years. *Fire* is a short spectacular piece in which the choir accompanies itself with wooden or metal clackers.

70. *Tantrika*, 1986; 15 min; mezzo-soprano, perc; Arcana.

Tantra is a cult of ecstasy, focused on a vision of cosmic sexuality. A tantrika is an adept in the arts of Tantra, one who successfully attains sadhana, the ultimate knowledge through meditation combined with sexual rites.

The text for *Tantrika* consists of words associated with the Tantric arts. I wrote the work for Eleanor James, accompanied by percussion instruments. The premiere took place at the Sound Symposium in St. John's, Newfoundland, in 1986. I later incorporated the work into a production of *Zoroaster* in Toronto (2001), where *Tantrika* becomes the temptress Jahi.

71. *Minnelieder*, 1986; 30 min; mezzo-soprano, full orch; Arcana.

This is an orchestration of my *Minnelieder*, originally written for mezzo-soprano and woodwind quintet in 1956. Nothing has been substantially changed, but I added one new song, "Unter den Linden," to a text by Walter von der Vogelweide. This version of the *Minnelieder* was prepared for Eleanor James, who performed it with the Quebec

Symphony Orchestra in 1986. While the chamber version of Minnelieder continues to get performances, it does seem strange that the orchestral version does not.

72. Dream Rainbow Dream Thunder, 1986; 12 min; full orch; Arcana.

Dream Rainbow Dream Thunder is a fantasy for orchestra, derived for the most part from a single evening's improvisation on the piano. Although I don't normally compose at the piano, I sometimes find late evening inspirations helpful in releasing ideas. These will then be worked out in detail the next morning at the drawing table.

On the occasion when I improvised what I subsequently notated in this piece, I was living in Switzerland. I had just returned with Eleanor James from a visit to Neuschwanstein, King Ludwig's castle in the Bavarian mountains. Rain and mist shrouded the mountain as we hiked up to pay our respects to this strange edifice, conceived out of love for the music of Wagner. Wagner is detectable in my improvisation, but so are a lot of other influences. I don't think it matters much. Dream Rainbow Dream Thunder joins yesterday with days of long ago and tomorrow with days that will never be.

_ Note: Richard Wagner was fifty-one when he was rescued by King Ludwig of Bavaria who from then on sponsored his music dramas. I was fifty-three when for a brief moment I thought I had met my benefactor. A Halifax lawyer, Brian Fleming, had made a fortune on the stock market. One day he came to see me and told me he had always wanted to do something important for music and asked me what grand project I'd like to undertake. I told him about the incomplete Patria cycle, mentioning in particular Patria 5, the dance drama on the story of Theseus, Ariadne and the Minotaur, which I was then thinking about seriously. He was fascinated, particularly because his wife had been a professional ballet dancer. "Where do we start?" he asked. I told him I'd like \$5,000 and I'd begin work at once. He wrote me a cheque and invited

me to spend a week in his beautiful Halifax home. We visited beaches in search of the ideal one for *The Crown of Ariadne*, since I wanted it to be performed at the edge of the ocean. I went home thinking my fortune had been made and set to work.

About three months later I received a strange letter accusing me of having deceived him, claiming we had talked about a short work for indoor performance by a small dance company. He wanted his money back. I sent it to him. Somewhat later I learned that he was experiencing significant financial problems.

73. *Patria 3: The Greatest Show*, 1987; 3 hrs; about 150 actors, singers, dancers, musicians and carnival people; Arcana. For information see *Patria: The Complete Cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

74. *Le Cri de Merlin*, 1987; 17 min; solo guitar; Arcana.

Many are the stories told of Merlin, wizard at King Arthur's court. He was alleged to be the offspring of a virtuous woman and an incubus, which accounts for his amoral character. "Among other endowments," says Bullfinch, "he had the power to transform himself into any shape he pleased. At one time he appeared as a dwarf, at others as a damsel, a page, or even a greyhound or stag." After serving King Arthur, it is said, he returned to the forest with the fairy Viviane and was never seen again. His cries were still heard but were increasingly less understood as society gradually exchanged its faith in magic for faith in technology.

Le Cri de Merlin was written for Norbert Kraft. I recall visiting him at his cottage in Muskoka to discuss the piece, and sitting outside enjoying the carolling of the birds as the sun set. I thought of the distant cries of Merlin in the darkening forest. That would have been the right place to perform the work, but Norbert wanted to tour with it and record it. We then decided to make a tape of the birds and play it back with the guitar during the final moments of the piece. My hope is that every performer of *Le Cri de Merlin* will record the birds of his or her native land and play them at the end as a testament to the strange and wonderful voices of

nature everywhere.

75. Concerto for Harp and Orchestra, 1987; 28 min; harp, full orch; Arcana. I began the harp concerto in California in the spring of 1987, while I was teaching a term at San Diego State University. It was a strange experience. I recall the evening I arrived, walking down one of the main streets of San Diego looking for a place to eat. I decided any restaurant with tablecloths would do. I never found one. I never found my students in the class either; they were always at the beach. There was a pool outside my apartment and all day long long-legged girls lay in deck chairs, reading books on sociology and wiggling their painted toes. The university was only a few blocks away and I used to walk up to my windowless office and brood while someone next door whacked Rachmaninoff on the piano. Perhaps this explains why the harp concerto, which the Toronto Symphony had commissioned for Judy Loman, was giving me so much trouble.

From my diary:

This business of writing for orchestra is so time consuming. After the devotion of every available hour to the concerto I am now in possession of forty pages of trash which is supposed to be the first movement. Its triviality astounds me. Is it because I have grown tired of this instrument that I am so bereft of ideas? Additionally it must be confessed that the construction of a work which has as its sole purpose the inflation of a soloist's vanity disgusts me no end. Nor is the harp particularly well-suited to this kind of boastful display. It seems an effrontery to place before the orchestra an instrument whose role has traditionally been little more than the sonorous gush. Even half the orchestra, going about their normal business, is enough to smother this little water baby. An amplified harp is an obscenity — but I may be driven to that.

Eventually I did finish the harp concerto, and during the final moments I did amplify the harp, giving the soloist the exquisite pleasure of triumphing over the orchestra at full throttle. Of all my concertos (and

despite my disinclination towards the medium, there were to be many more commissions for them) the harp concerto has been performed most frequently and was, a few years later, even adopted as the test piece for the Israel International Harp Competition.

One bright event occurred while I was in San Diego. I won the Glenn Gould Prize. Excitedly I told a colleague that with the \$50,000 I wouldn't have to teach for awhile, perhaps ever again. "Canadian dollars," he snivelled.

76. *Patria 4: The Black Theatre of Hermes Trismegistos*, 1988; 2 hrs; 7 solo singers, mixed chorus, 11 actors, chamb orch; Arcana. For information see: *Patria: The Complete cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

77. *The Death of the Buddha*, 1988; 15 min; choir SATB; Arcana.

The Death of the Buddha was written for the BBC Singers for performance at the Toronto International Choral Festival in 1989. The text comes from the *Mahaperinibbana Sutta*, one of thirty-four discourses forming the *Digha Nikaya*, the earliest Buddhist canon of sacred writings. It is a litany of Buddha's rising from one state of trance to another until he finally passes into Nirvana.

I wanted the music to illustrate the passive quality of the text. The sopranos and altos repeat a series of eleven notes, consisting of an identical number of upward and downward intervals, which undergoes continual modification by semi-tone augmentation or diminution. Beneath this line the basses sing eighteen evenly-spaced Oms and hums. Om represents the ascent towards universality and hum is the descent of universality into the depth of the human heart; 18 is the number of dhatus or elements in the Buddhistic canon.

The tenors sing the text, rising and falling by semitone degrees. The basses are accompanied by two pitched gongs that sound each time they pronounce an Om or a hum. During the performance a bell tree is sounded three times, once at the beginning, once in the middle, and once at the end of the composition.

In conception *The Death of the Buddha* is related to *Credo*, which is also rigorously structured according to numerical symbolism, but it has nothing of the emotional power of the earlier work. Among my many choral pieces it exists in a category of its own. The austerity of the music and the motionlessness of the text will, no doubt, continue to prevent *The Death of the Buddha* from receiving many performances.

78. *Magic Songs*, 1988; 12 min; choir SATB or TTBB; *Arcana*.

Magic Songs leads us back to the era of "tone magic," when the purpose of singing was not merely to give pleasure but was intended to bring about a desired effect in the physical world. In spirit culture, everything has its voice, and the aim of the singer is to unify himself with this voice, "For anyone who knows and can imitate the special sound of an object is also in possession of the energy with which that object is charged... by sound-imitation the magician (musician) can therefore make himself master of the energies of growth, of purification or of music without himself being plant, water or melody. His art consists first of all in localizing the object in sound and then co-ordinating himself with it by trying to hit the right note, that is, the note peculiar to the object concerned." (Marius Schneider, "Primitive Music," *The New Oxford History of Music*, 1966, Vol. 1, pp 43-4).

There are nine chants in the cycle: 1. Chant to bring back the wolf

2. Chant to make fences fall down 3. Chant to make fireflies glow

4. Chant for clear water

5. Chant for the spirits of hunted animals 6. Chant to keep bees warm in winter

7. Chant to make bears dance

8. Chant to make the stones sing

9. Chant to make the magic work.

The aim of these songs, with magic texts in a language spoken by no human, is to restore aspects of nature which have been destroyed or neglected by humanity. To the extent that the performers and the audience

believe in them, they will be successful.

Magic Songs was commissioned by the male voice choir Orphei Dränger of Sweden. I have heard the work sung by many choirs and it is quite obvious whether the performers believe or not that they can change the world with their voices. The modern belief that the purpose of singing is merely to provide pleasure for the ears inhibits the grander theme of Magic Songs. If choirs were to sing them in the dancing light of campfires in the wilderness, they would get closer to the magic power these songs can release. In fact five of the songs are adaptations of chants I composed for the Wolf Project and are sung in precisely this manner each year during "Wolf Week."

79. String Quartet No. 4, 1989; 25 min; Arcana.

I had just begun working on the Fourth String Quartet when Paul Dutton called to tell me that our friend bp Nichol had died quite suddenly. Having just seen him at a performance of *The Greatest Show* a week or so before, hobbling on his crutches and obviously in great pain, but cheerful as he always was, the news that he had so quickly been taken from us affected me profoundly. I was alone on the farm at the time, and as I worked I kept thinking of the many times we had been together and the projects we had worked on.

Curiously, I had begun playing with a theme from *The Princess of the Stars*, thinking to incorporate it in the new work when I suddenly realized that it was part of the chant bp had delivered in his performance of that piece at Banff three years before. Aside from this, there is probably little in the work to remind anyone of one of Canada's greatest poets, but the work is dedicated to his memory with the hope that, wherever he is, it may give him some pleasure.

In 1987 I had bought a farm near Indian River (Ontario) and had been living there alone, which may also have influenced the lonely mood of the Fourth Quartet. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

80. String Quartet No. 5 (Rosalind), 1989; 23 min; Arcana.

The Fifth String Quartet was commissioned for the Orford String Quartet in 1989 by Toronto businessman Stan Witkin for the fiftieth birthday of his wife, Rosalind. The work extends the lyrical qualities already present in the Fourth Quartet: in fact, it begins by repeating the final phrase of the previous work; but it is really based on two themes, surrounded by numerous other motifs: the first is a loose transcription of the howl of a wolf; the second might be called the “Ariadne” theme, since it occurs in *The Crown of Ariadne* (for solo harp) and also in *Theseus* (for harp and string quartet). The work is in one continuous movement with rapid changes of tempo and energy, ending with a final statement of the “Ariadne” theme in which string harmonics and bowed crotales provide a delicate and shimmering accompaniment.

The moods of the “Rosalind” quartet change constantly. I have no idea whether they correspond to the moods of the woman for whom the quartet was commissioned, since I scarcely know her. My intention was to write a work that expressed the normal existential shifts of mood we all experience every day. One moment I am happy, the next reflective, then I am hungry or I get a headache. And yet we are usually incapable of detecting the exact instant when the change occurs. That is the kind of music I wanted to write — music that moves the listener from one state to another without the listener detecting when or how the changes take place. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

81. Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra, 1989; 23 min; solo guitar, chamb orch; Arcana.

Written for Norbert Kraft, the Guitar Concerto consists of six short movements, played without a break. While writing the work I was conscious of the Fibonacci number series by which each number is the sum of the two preceding numbers, thus: 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55.... This series affected the shaping of the piece to a certain extent and can be sensed immediately in the guitar line of the opening toccata.

Of all my concertos, this is the most neglected, having only been

performed once, which is strange since I consider it to be better than most twentieth-century guitar concertos. As one of the two orchestras participating in the original commission, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra was supposed to play it but never did. I complained both to the MSO and to the Canada Council who imposed this condition when they provided the funds, but I received no satisfaction from either the commissioner or the patron. As a result I prohibited any of my works from being performed by the MSO, a resolution in force now for many years without grief to either party.

82. Scorpius, 1990; 9 min; orch; Arcana.

Scorpius was commissioned by Alex Pauk for the Esprit Orchestra of Toronto. As frequently happens, the publicity had to go out long before the piece had been written. Pressed by Alex for a title I said it would be called "Brian Mulroney's Early Morning Whackoff." As the worst prime minister Canada has ever had, Mulroney was really getting on my nerves at the time with his unctuous and empty chauvinism. Of course, that title was impossible. Alex explained that the theme of the concert was outer space, so, consulting our star-gazers' manuals, we decided to call it Scorpius. But when I thought about it, there was something intriguing about the first title: the fast jerky rhythm, the panting, the pauses for breath, renewed excitement and finally the climax — a dribble. Sometimes during rehearsals I divulge the real title to the orchestra. The piece is always played better after that.

But you can't print that in a program, so you better use this.

One of the advantages of living in the country is that one is less troubled by noise pollution and light pollution. The dome of escaped and unproductive light that arises over every city at night is the visual equivalent of the swill and swell of ambient noise released in the city by day. Night-time lighting has expanded much faster than the population in Western countries; by one estimate it has quadrupled in intensity every

decade since 1960 as new human settlements are lit and overlit. Like noise pollution, excessive lighting chokes off all appreciation of distance. It shrinks the world; everything seen or heard becomes finite, close and human-made. Only in the dark country sky are the stars released to their infinity. They appear so tiny; they make us feel smaller. They draw us into another universe, one we will never dominate, or destroy or even understand.

I have no idea why the present piece is entitled Scorpius, or what its relationship might be to the constellation of stars which barely rises above the southern horizon on summer evenings. With Antares at its head, it appears vigorous and resilient, shaped like a fish hook. Is that why “my” Scorpius is barbed and unsettled? The Greeks said Scorpius stung Orion to death, since he sets as Scorpius rises. Am I trying to sting someone with “my” Scorpius? I’ll let the listener decide.

83. *The Darkly Splendid Earth: The Lonely Traveller*, 1990; 22 min; solo vln, full orch; Arcana.

While I have written several concertos for solo instruments, I have always been suspicious of the medium that entices flashiness in the composer and meretriciousness in the performer, while the loyal orchestra is reduced to enthusiastically applauding everything uttered by the soloist.

I wanted to write a piece that would challenge these habits, so I decided to let the orchestra and the soloist each go more or less in their own way. Having given the work a title was helpful; the orchestra would be the “Darkly Splendid Earth” and the violinist would be the “Lonely Traveller” passing across its surface. The result was a dual rhapsody in which the orchestra and soloist would touch one another but never be controlled or influenced by one another’s activities. I avoided fixed moods, galvanized rhythms, rhetorical arguments and somnambulistic duets. I wanted nothing of the so-called “pathetic fallacy” in which nature is made to parallel human moods — a favourite device of opera composers: the heroine weeps and it rains, the hero draws his sword and

it thunders. I wanted the soloist to live a life of isolation without reinforcement from the multitude, without the idiotic imitations and repetitions found in all conventional music. If there are friends in this music, they are remote. Only at the close does a solo horn distantly echo a few phrases pronounced earlier by the violinist. A friend?... Too late. The soloist moves off into the twilight.

84. *Gitanjali*, 1991; 23 min; solo soprano and orch; Arcana.

This joyful work for lyric soprano and orchestra is a setting of five of the poems from Rabindranath Tagore's ecstatic collection entitled *Gitanjali*. I had set one of these poems, "Light, my light," in the original Bengali in the third movement of *Lustro* (1972). In fact I once had a recording of Tagore singing this and other songs from *Gitanjali*, but my settings are very different. Tagore translated *Gitanjali* into English, with help from W.B. Yeats and advice from Ezra Pound. The success of the English version won him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913; he was the first non-European to win this prize, and when he heard the news he said, "So, they give it to a Hindu?"

Of all my works for solo voice, *Gitanjali* is undoubtedly the most ecstatic. The influence of Richard Strauss is perhaps more felt than actually present in the tonalities of the songs. I wrote the work for Donna Brown, a soprano with a serene and flexible voice.

The premiere was conducted by none other than my old friend Franz Paul Decker, who wasted no time in insulting both Donna and me. First he recalled *Son of Heldenleben*: "Let me see... ven vas dat? I did it in Montreal and in Rotterdam. It had a disgraceful reception. Zay didn't like it at all!" He then picked out some passages in the new score that he thought should have been notated differently. He tore into Donna when she hummed a wrong note. "Do you have perfect pitch? No! Shall we ask za composer what he wants? He ought to know."

Donna sang the work three times: at the premiere in Ottawa, for a CBC recording and with Esprit Orchestra in Toronto, but my hopes for a wide

acceptance of the piece were premature.

85. *Patria 5: The Crown of Ariadne*, 1991; 2 1/2 hrs; 8 solo actors and dancers, extras, chorus SATB, full orch; Arcana. For information see *Patria: The Complete Cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

86. *Musique pour le parc Lafontaine*, 1992; 25 min; 4 concert bands; Arcana.

Le parc Lafontaine is about six blocks square in east Montreal with large old maple trees and a spacious pond on one side. In 1992 there was a festival of new music and sound sculptures there, and I was commissioned to write a piece. I chose to write for four brass bands, and I wanted them to move throughout the park while they played. Often they would split into sections so that all the trombones would gather together or all the flutes and clarinets would encircle the pond.

Musique pour le parc Lafontaine employs four fragments of material that might be said to be part of the acoustic history of the park and of Montreal. The military drumming at the opening of the work is reminiscent of the year 1888 when the ground was first purchased by the colonial government to be used as a military training ground. More distant history is suggested by the antiphony of the saxophones playing fragments of Indian melodies as notated by Marc Lescarbot in his *Histoire de la Nouvelle France* (Paris, 1609). This was the first attempt by a European to record the music of Canadian Indians. The presence of the Calixa Lavallée Pavillion in the park suggested a passing reference to this composer's most famous tune, the Canadian National Anthem; but an older quotation comes from Montreal's first composer, Charles Ecuier (born in 1758). This is from his "Sanctus," not a particularly inspired composition but suitable to my purpose since I wanted the whole work to close on a quiet note to suggest that whatever else a park may be, it is ultimately a sanctuary of the natural environment and a token of the tranquility lost in modern life. In this sense a park is always a sacred place.

87. Concerto for Accordion and Orchestra, 1992; 26 min; solo accordion, full orch; Arcana.

The accordion concerto was commissioned by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Following the success of the harp concerto and the violin rhapsody I dared to suggest that I might write a new work for my friend, the accordionist Joseph Macerollo, to coincide with an international accordion convention to be held in Toronto in 1993.

The music director of the TSO at the time was the foreigner Günter Herbig. "I hate zis instrument!" was his first response. To be frank, I was not sure myself whether this buffoon of an instrument could be turned into an upstanding gentleman, but I knew how much Joe would like — just for once — to put on his tuxedo without everyone smiling or smirking. I managed to arrange a meeting for us with the maestro, and when Joe illustrated the many tone colours available on the free bass accordion, the maestro's antipathy cooled sufficiently so that I could begin work. A lucky suggestion from the orchestra players that the new concerto might feature instruments normally neglected in the concert repertoire (contra bassoon, bass trombone and English horn) provided precisely the colours that would blend best with the accordion, and I was glad to favour these instruments in the orchestration.

The summer of 1992 was tumid with accordion-mania. Joe visited me several times, tried out sections of the new work and showed me some new effects he had devised. By October a very romantic yet dignified concerto in three movements had been completed and was successfully performed. I even received a note from Maestro Herbig complimenting me on the work, though he never deigned to perform it again.

88. Tristan and Iseult, 1992; 10 min; 6 voices (AATTBB); Arcana.

My search for a text for the work The King's Singers had asked me to write for them was long and seemingly futile, until one night I found myself reading Gottfried von Strasbourg's Tristan in the elegant translation made by Andrew Lang sometime towards the end of the

nineteenth century. Lang's rather empurpled prose was very different from Gottfried's robust original in rhyming couplets of medieval German, which I also had beside me. I once studied this language and for a moment thought of setting the original text, though a little reflection convinced me that the King's gentlemen might be happier to find themselves pronouncing Lang's fine English rather than Gottfried's *Mittelhochdeutsch* — not to mention the opportunities for greater satisfaction among contemporary audiences.

Everyone knows the story of the passion that arose between Tristan and Iseult after they had drunk the love potion on their passage from Ireland to Cornwall, where Tristan was to have delivered Iseult to King Mark as his bride. Lang's phrases rise and fall here in a manner that suggests both the motion of the waves and the swelling of passion, so that as I read the text aloud I felt each phrase as a physiological unit, held together under a single breath; and after two or three readings I found that I had composed the entire story — or rather it had composed itself — into a work for six interweaving voices, where rhythms, swellings and contractions of the syllable or phrase were shaped into a kind of triple counterpoint between breath, heart and waves. My diary says that the work was composed August first and second, 1992, and allowing for a little editing, which occurred after I had met the performers and discussed the work with them, everything I have described happened on those two summer days. In its simplicity this *Tristan and Iseult* is closer to Gottfried's original than to Wagner.

89. *String Quartet No. 6 (Parting Wild Horse's Mane)*, 1993; 18 min; *Arcana*.

The quartet was originally inspired by watching my wife, Jean, do T'ai Chi exercises while we were vacationing in Costa Rica. T'ai Chi ch'uan is a set of physical exercises that employs flowing and rhythmic movements with carefully prescribed stances and positions suggesting modes of attack and defense. In origin it dates back to medieval China, and

although it is a martial art its real inspiration derives from Taoist philosophy where T'ai Chi (the "Great Ultimate") consists in effecting a balance between the yang (active) and the yin (passive) principles of life. The T'ai Chi ch'uan set I used as my model contains a total of 108 moves. Each move is accompanied by a motif or cluster of motifs drawn from the previous five quartets. In fact, there is scarcely an extraneous note in the work that does not come directly from one of the previous scores — the only real exception being the motif for the move entitled "Ward Off Monkey," which will appear in the seventh quartet. Though these fragments of material have been connected differently, much will sound familiar to those who know the other works. Several methods for binding the quartets together have already been employed, and this is merely one of the more meticulous.

I have always been interested in taking models from other realms of experience and applying them to music. In this case we have a kinaesthetic model with its own structure of repetitions and variations guiding the shape of the music. The work could be performed with or without the T'ai Chi movements, that is, as an accompaniment to them or as an abstract parallel in sound alone.

The Sixth Quartet was commissioned by Michael Koerner for his wife, Sonja. The Koerners were to become generous patrons of my music over the following years, commissioning *Shadowman* and *Four-Forty* as well as assisting in the production of *The Princess of the Stars* and *The Palace of the Cinnabar Phoenix*.

90. *Patria 9: The Enchanted Forest*, 1993; 15 solo actors and singers, children's choir SA, girl's choir SA, chamb orch; *Arcana*. For information see: *Patria: The Complete Cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

91. *Three Songs from The Enchanted Forest*, 1996; 15 min; treble voices SA; *Arcana*.

The first of these three songs, "Sweet Clover," is sung by Earth Mother and the children's choir at the beginning of *The Enchanted Forest*.

The second song, "Ariana's Lament," is sung by the girl's choir after Ariana has been transformed into a birch tree.

The third song, "Lu-li-lo-la," was originally written for Erkki Pohiola, director of the Tapiola Children's Choir of Helsinki, on the occasion of his retirement. I decided to incorporate it (in a simplified version) during the long lantern-lit hike out of the "Enchanted Forest" at the conclusion of the production.

92. Beautiful Spanish Song, 1994; 4 min; choir SA; Arcana.

This little piece for treble voices was written following a workshop I gave to music educators in Costa Rica in the winter of 1994. One of the assignments to the class was to make a list of what they considered the most beautiful words in the Spanish language. Just previously I had been teaching a class of music educators at Brandon University and had left them with the assignment of listing the most beautiful words in English and faxing it to us in San Jose. The list they sent was: luscious, syphilis, moon, ocean, lilac, splash, kiwi, whisper, echo, bumblebee, cigarette, tickle, zipper. I gave this to the Costa Ricans and asked them to create vocal improvisations on these words, most of which were unknown to them. As can be imagined, some of the improvisations were quite strange and funny. When I got back to Canada I decided to create a little piece employing the Spanish words I had been given. I don't speak Spanish so what came out was simply my reaction to the words as sounds. The result was Beautiful Spanish Song. I imagine it may also be strange and funny.

93. Manitou, 1994; 23 min; full orch; Arcana.

The commission for Manitou had been arranged by my friend Toru Takemitsu for the International Program for Contemporary Music Composition at Suntory Hall, Tokyo, and was premiered there in 1995 by the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra. The idea for the concert was unique and could be repeated elsewhere. The commissioned work was to be the centrepiece of the program; but the composer was to choose the whole program, which was to consist of a composition from past repertoire that

had influenced him and a work by a young contemporary composer of promise. I gave them the option of performing Janacek's *Tarus Bulba* or Nielson's *Inextinguishable Symphony* (they chose the latter); and for the young composer I selected Chris Paul Harmon, who accompanied me to Tokyo.

For my own composition I wanted to create something with a distinctly Canadian theme. Manitou is the Algonquin word denoting the "mysterious being" who, for the woodland Indians of North America, represents the unknown power of life and the universe. Sometimes Manitou is associated with the sun to suggest omnipotence, though, like the Christian God, he is unseen. When I discussed native spirituality with a Manitoba Indian he kept using the word "monster" to describe Manitou and mentioned that his people used to believe that lightning was a serpent vomited up by him.

I spent the winter months of 1993-4 in Manitoba, the province of Canada that takes its name from this "mysterious" god. In Manitoba the winters are long and harsh. Sometimes the thermometer remains at twenty degrees or more below zero for weeks on end. But the days are sunny, and over the relatively flat and treeless landscape the skies seem enormous. It was during these times, in the pleasant studio provided by Brandon University, that I sketched out Manitou, and I have no doubt that the climate, the geography and the "mysterious being" contributed strongly to the shape and character of what was written there.

Jerrard Smith Jul 27, '16, 2:57 PM

94. *The Falcon's Trumpet*, 1995; 25 min; solo trumpet, solo soprano (optional), full orch; Arcana.

The Falcon's Trumpet was written for Stuart Laughton, who had been a member of the Wolf Project for many years, and therefore shared with me a love for the Canadian wilderness. Most of the work was written while I was giving a course at the University of Strasbourg and I have no doubt that my nostalgia for the Canadian lakes and forests strongly influenced the conception of this piece, in particular its unusual layout, with groups

of instruments spread on stage in the wings and in the auditorium behind the audience. I had done this before (for instance, in *Lustro*), but my intention was different here; I was trying to catch something of the spacious resonance when a trumpet plays across a lake at dawn or sunset causing the whole forest to echo and vibrate. At the end of the work I added a soprano, Wendy Humphries, another “Wolf” who frequently sang aubades and nocturnes with Stuart (see *Wolf Music*) and also the Princess’s aria in *The Princess of the Stars*.

Of course, the sources of inspiration are never entirely pure, and one day I found myself incongruously adding the sound of a telephone in a Strasbourg bank to the texture, but it seemed inoffensive, so I left it there among the birds of the forest.

95. *Once on a Windy Night*, 1995; 15 min; choir SATB; Arcana.

I wrote this piece for Jon Washburn and the Vancouver Chamber Choir, who were celebrating their twenty-fifth anniversary in 1995. Over the years Jon had faithfully performed many of my choral pieces and had introduced them to many other choral directors through workshops and lectures.

Like many of my other choral pieces, *Windy Night* is an evocation of nature. I had written about the sun, moonlight, fire, a garden, water, and now I wanted to write about air. But the paradox about air is that you only hear it when it moves, when it touches other objects and sets them vibrating. So the subject had to be the wind.

You want to write a piece about the wind: no easy task. You listen to the wind. But what you write is not the wind, rather a piece of music. Tear it up. Go and listen again. Still it is not the wind that your composition expresses. Is it because you can’t hear the wind or because you’re afraid to write down what you hear?

This ambivalence is in the character of the wind itself, for its sound is devious. The Greeks imagined Typhoeus as a god with a thousand heads, each with a different voice: dogs, bulls, lions, snakes..., voices defying

arrest or transcription.

I was trying to find a way to join breath sounds with sung notes when I recalled a passage from Victor Hugo's *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*, where the poet conjures up a scale of values for the various states of this equivocal noise. Hugo's vocabulary is rich and suggestive. I decided to borrow a few words or word fragments to incorporate into the fabric of my own tone poem: *rafale* (gust), *bourrasque* (squall), *orage* (storm), *tourmente* (gale), *tempête* (tempest), *trombe* (whirlwind), and a few verbs: *courent*, *volent*, *s'abattent*, *sifflent*, *mugissent*. But these words just contribute to the texture of *Windy Night* and are not intended to be comprehensible in themselves.

96. *Deluxe Suite for Piano*, 1995; 13-14 min; Arcana.

Deluxe Suite for Piano was commissioned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for Janina Fialkowska, who premiered it on January 14, 1997, in Toronto.

It is my first piece for solo piano since *Polytonality*, written in 1952.

Although I studied piano in my youth, it never appealed to me as a solo instrument after I began composing seriously. Perhaps this was because I felt there was already enough repertoire written for it.

I do occasionally improvise at the piano but have never written anything down. The present suite has a lot of this improvisatory quality about it.

Although it is a suite in the sense that it consists of contrasting movements it is also a rhapsody in the sense that the movements are all connected, the mood shifting sometimes gradually, sometimes suddenly.

Within this framework there are also several brief recurrences of material.

When I heard Janina play the piano, the word "deluxe" occurred to me as appropriate to her powerful technique. Curiously enough, she never played the *Deluxe Suite* for me before the premiere though I had asked her frequently to hear it. As a result, several of the tempi were wrong.

Standing up from the piano after the premiere, she shook her hands in front of the audience as if to imply, "that's enough of that." I think she was trying to be funny but it didn't strike me that way,, and our meeting in her dressing room after the concert was brief.

97. *A Medieval Bestiary*, 1996; 21 min; choir SATB; Arcana. 91

The texts of these songs are based on T.H. White's translation of a Latin bestiary dating from the twelfth century in Lincolnshire, England, now to be found in the Cambridge University Library.

In the Middle Ages bestiaries were serious works of natural history. They were anonymous compilations of what was known or presumed about the characteristics and habits of animals, both real and mythological. Because they were compiled by churchmen, the behaviour of animals frequently seemed to point up an instructive moral for humans. A modern audience may find these connections strange or humorous; but at the time they were intended in all seriousness.

The music roams through various styles (a technique I also used in *Felix's Girls*). "Leo the Lion" is partly derived from Guillaume de Machaut (with a flash of Mendelssohn in the middle). "The Elephant" has the resonance of Russian Orthodox chanting. The end of "Castor the Beaver" is reminiscent of Baptist gospel song. "The Weasel" is Notre Dame style (i.e., 12th century), while "The Bonnaçon" veers into baroque and the finale returns to medieval organum.

One wonders about the extent to which the authors and scribes of bestiaries were conscious of the risks they were taking in some of the associations they made, for instance, when they wrote: "Jesus Christ is also a unicorn, for in the psalms it is written: 'He hath raised up a horn of salvation.'" This comes just after the unicorn has jumped into the lap of a virgin and is followed by the unicorn-Christ proclaiming "I am the one." *A Medieval Bestiary* was commissioned by the Uxbridge Chamber Choir. It has received frequent performances by various choirs and always works best when the choir acts out some of the texts while singing. (See

Appendix for corrections to score.)

98. *Patria 10: The Spirit Garden Part 1: Spring*, 1996; 2 hrs; 11 solo actors and singers, extras, adult choir SATB, children's choir SA, gardeners, orch. Part 2: *Harvest*, 1996; 45 min plus banquet; 8 solo actors and singers, extras, adult choir SATB, orch; *Arcana*. For information see *Patria: The Complete Cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

99. *Two Songs from the Spirit Garden*, 1996; 6 min; children's choir SA; *Arcana*.

The two songs are entitled "Raking Song" and "Spring Child," and they come from *Patria 10: The Spirit Garden*. The work takes the form of a ritual planting of a real garden of herbs and vegetables. The "Raking Song" draws our attention to the relationship between the planters' feet and the soil. In many languages, as widely separated as Latin and Chinese, the sole of the foot is semantically related to the word "planting," later becoming "season." The earth hears and feels the moving feet above it and knows that soon it will be called on to be fruitful.

In "Spring Child" the children beg the spirit of spring to awaken and join them in song.

100. *Vox Naturae*, 1996; 17 min; choir SATB; *Arcana*.

When Chifuru Matsubara asked me to write a piece for The Tokyo Philharmonic Chorus, he suggested that the theme of the text might be nature, and the language Latin.

I immediately thought of Lucretius's long poem *De Rerum Natura* (On the Nature of Things) which, as well as being one of the great monuments of Latin literature, is also an explanation of nature from the point of view of Epicurean philosophy.

In Book IV Lucretius describes the various senses and how they operate. His discussion of how sound is engendered and heard is especially interesting. For him, sound flows out of the speaker's or singer's mouth to the listener's ear, not (as currently believed) in the form of waves, but rather as a string of atoms.

Those that miss their mark are carried away by the breezes and disappear unless they strike a surface that reflects them back, sometimes in a muddled or distorted form. Today we reject the “atomic theory” of sound, forgetting, perhaps, that light is explained as consisting of both waves and particles, and there are equations in which either theory can be made to work.

Lucretius was both a scientist and a poet. Having explained matters scientifically, he extends his work in vivid poetry, for instance, when he describes echoes as the voices of nymphs, satyrs and fauns, led by the god Pan, mocking the world of humans from hidden places. In moments like this his poetry is charged with a fantasy seldom attained by others who have sought to explain the world of nature.

My treatment of lines 549-595 of *De Rerum Naturae* is illustrative in the same way Monteverdi and others frequently illustrated the texts they employed. For this purpose three choirs are used: the stage choir which states the scientific theories; a choir in the hall, reflecting or distorting the statements of the stage choir in illustration of the theory being described; and a backstage choir of satyrs and nymphs.

For this reason I call the work *Vox Naturae*, literally “the voices of nature.”

101. Concerto for Viola and Orchestra, 1997; 30 min; solo vla, full orch; Arcana.

The best way to describe my Viola Concerto might be to quote a couple passages from my diary, written while I was writing the concerto.

June 11, 1997. Last night I took out the few sketches I had made some months ago for the Viola Concerto. Though I had carried a pleasant memory of them, I was surprised at how inappropriate they now seemed. I was reminded of the foolish statement in Chapter Two of *Don Quixote*, “It was with great contentment and joy that he saw how easily he had made a beginning toward the fulfillment of his desire.” That’s how I had

sustained the belief that the first four pages of the concerto were valid. Really they were just a shot in the dark that went nowhere. So this morning I sat down and tried to begin again. That was a mistake. It's impossible to begin something just because one wishes to begin it. So after an hour of skirmishing I turned to other matters. But the day amounted to nothing. I jumped from one thing to another every half hour: wrote a letter, watered the garden, slept... all the time haunted by the obsession that sooner or later I have to make a valid start on this new work.

June 22. Plodding on with the Viola Concerto. "Episodic" is the only word I can think of to describe it. Moments flash past, moods change rapidly. Will any of them return. Why should they? And so I let the work slide on without the slightest idea of where it will go or what I am doing.

June 26. Chaotic would be a better word to describe the Viola Concerto. I work at it ceaselessly and recklessly, diving from one thought to another like a fugitive running to a different hotel each night in an attempt to escape the law, really half wishing he would be caught to put an end to the squandering of energy. But the end will come, I can see it now, about two weeks away, looming up with an appalling display of tommy-guns and trumpets — the final shoot-out before the game is over. Then at least I'll put the first trashy draft aside and return to civilian life for a while. For diversion I've been going through some old diaries. I came across a little fragment, a squeaking sound I once heard on a train with a kind of fractured rhythm; it amused me enough to throw it into the concerto. (It's announced first by the xylophone, then later taken up by the piccolo and woodwinds half way through the piece.)

September 16, 1997. After the production of *The Princess of the Stars* I returned home and at once set to work on the Viola Concerto, though without enthusiasm, and only because a deadline has to be met. Now, two weeks into it, I am still dissatisfied. It seems to have disappeared into a fog, without discernible outline or substance. Not only do I have no idea where it is going, but I have no idea where it has been, since I haven't

even the curiosity to look back at what has been written.

October 16, 1997. And so I have finished the rewrite of the Viola Concerto, precisely one month from the day I recommenced it. It is a long piece, half an hour, or perhaps a bit more. There are a few moments of relaxation in it, but with Rivka Golani as the soloist, I wanted to produce a vigorous, sensual sound, for such is the personality of the woman. It's as if she is coming at you all at once. I have never known a musician so obsessed with her instrument. She talks about her viola as if it were her lover, and her appetite for new works is insatiable.

The whole work is based on a descending and ascending scale announced quite simply in the opening thirty seconds. I adhered to it vigorously, trying to find new ways of giving the sequence rhythmic vitality. It is the only unifying device in what has turned out to be a rather lengthy work.

102. *Wild Bird*, 1997; 7 min; vln and harp; Arcana.

Wild Bird was written for Jacques Israelievitch, for whom I had written *The Darkly Splendid Earth: The Lonely Traveller*. It was commissioned by his wife, Gabriella, for his fiftieth birthday. At some point since we'd last met he had begun to dye his hair a rather vivid orange and this is what prompted the title.

103. *Seventeen Haiku*, 1997; 26 min; choir SATB; Arcana.

Seventeen Haiku was written at the request of Nobuyuki Koshiha for the Japanese Choir Utaoni, which had previously won an all-Japan choral contest singing my work *Magic Songs*. I thought it would be interesting to set some poems in Japanese and began reading the *Man'yōshū* as well as the haiku poems of Bashō, Issa and others.

Gradually I began to assemble a group of haiku, each of which described an acoustic event: the singing of birds, crickets, the wind, the tolling of a bell, the sound of a stream or fireworks at a festival.

It occurred to me to ask the choir members to help me find suitable haiku, and I also asked them to write some of their own if they wished. From them I received not only a selection of traditional haiku, but also

twenty-nine new poems written especially for the pleasure of the prospective composer. Many of these new poems were chosen as well as more traditional haiku to form a collection that takes us from sunrise through to sunset and a festival after dark, closing with the stillness of night.

I wanted to set the poems in Japanese, a language I do not speak. To make this possible I called on my friend, the Japanese composer Komei Harasawa, who very generously prepared translations for me, and read the poems on cassette. To him I am totally indebted, though, of course, I accept full responsibility for any misunderstandings or distortions in the settings.

One of the most pleasant times of my life was attending the all- Japan choral contest where the Utaoni choir won the grand prize for the second year in a row, this time performing Seventeen Haiku and then travelling with them to Tsu City where they gave an entire concert of Schafer choral works to a large and appreciative audience. (See Appendix for corrections to score.)

104. String Quartet No. 7, 1998; 30 min; Arcana.

I had made sketches for a seventh quartet several years ago, but the incentive to complete the work came when the Molinari Quartet of Montreal dedicated themselves to performing all previous six quartets and commissioned the Seventh.

My original conception was to write a work in which the individual members of the Quartet would be in more or less continual motion on and off the stage, sometimes playing together, sometimes echoing one another from different points in the hall.

The commissioners suggested the incorporation of an obligato soprano. At first I thought of having the soprano sing a wordless melisma that would drift in and out of the instrumental texture like a dreamer's delirium, but the fortuitous discovery of some texts by an anonymous twenty-one-year-old schizophrenic patient changed my mind. The texts

would give the singer a strong, if confused, identity, providing a context for her irrational appearances and disappearances during the work. I set these texts with only a few slight changes and transposition of lines.

During early discussions with the Molinari group, who have taken their name from Québec painter Guido Molinari, we considered the possibility of costumes in strong primary colours, similar to the stripes of colour in Molinari's paintings. The following colours were chosen:

First violinist: red Second violinist: blue Violist: yellow Cellist: green

I decided that the singer should be dressed in white, a colour associated with both the holy and the hospitalized. Thus the performers became symbols of energy suggested by their colours. I imagined the cellist, whose colour is green, symbolizing some kind of forest numen, like Tapio of the Finnish Kalevala.

As mentioned, the score is full of suggested movements on and off the stage by all the performers. To accomplish this, the cellist would have to have some kind of harness for the cello that would permit playing while moving. Extending the identification with Tapio, and recalling that Tapio was a capricious spirit and often appeared in different forms, I had the idea that the cellist might wear some kind of headdress that would snap open at the back to reveal a startling second face.

We had some difficulties before the premiere, which was to take place at the Strings of the Future Festival in Ottawa in 1999. The singer, Donna Brown, backed out, claiming it was unsuitable for her voice. A substitute was found but we had to omit most of the staging. Actually the quartet worked quite well with the singer simply entering and departing while the string quartet remained seated on stage.

The proper staging had to wait until the marathon concert in Montreal (December 1999) when the Molinari Quartet performed all seven quartets in one evening. In the staged version the performers are in almost perpetual motion. I was struck by the daring of certain moments, for instance, when no one is on stage and the sound seems to drift in from

nowhere, or the whirlwind excitement when the four players are playing very rapidly in unison, but from the four corners of the hall.

105. *You Are Illuminated*, 1999; 8 min; children's choir SA; Arcana.

Many years ago I set a text from the Bhagavad-Gita (II 55-64) on the attainment of serenity. The piece was called *Gita* and it was eventually incorporated into *Patria I: Wolfman*. That setting was in the original Sanskrit. But I have often reflected on it, and one day I decided to set it again, this time in English and for a children's choir. Of course it is above a child's level of comprehension (but then so are many portions of the Mass that boy sopranos — and I was one — used to sing every Sunday). I wanted "pure" voices to explain the illumination to be obtained by putting aside all desires. Eventually the work was incorporated as unit 20 of *The Fall into Light*.

106. *Alleluia*, 1999; 6 min; choir SATB; Arcana.

One day I had a letter from Susan Frykberg, a composer I had known only slightly in Vancouver, telling me that she had decided to enter a nunnery. She had found God, and her revelation was so clear and touching that I sat down and wrote this little *Alleluia* for her, almost at one sitting.

107. *Four-Forty*, 1999; 29 min; string quartet, chamb orch; Arcana.

Four-Forty was commissioned for the St. Lawrence Quartet to perform at the Vancouver Festival in August 2000. I was not very excited at the prospect of setting a string quartet against an orchestra. With the whole string section surrounding them, it would be hard to give the quartet real definition and the independence necessary for soloists. I decided that the members of the quartet would obtain greater identity if they were to enter individually, perhaps from different places. The work opens with only the cellist on stage in front of the orchestra. After an opening elegy, which quickly accelerates in tempo, the cellist's solo is echoed from the back of the hall by the first violinist, who enters playing and moves down the aisle. The second violinist is seated at the back of the string section and makes a startling display of suddenly standing up and playing an

extended solo. The violist has been hidden in the percussion section playing a drum until suddenly the drumstick is thrown away and a viola is substituted. The theatricality of the first movement gives the quartet the personality necessary to survive the next two movements seated normally without being too submerged by the orchestra.

The title Four-Forty came to me when I totalled up the number of players that would be involved in the performance of the piece: four soloists plus forty in the chamber orchestra accompanying them. Since A440 is the frequency at which contemporary orchestras perform, the note A becomes the anchor note of the entire composition, returning frequently, right to the end of the piece where it slowly evaporates in harmonics.

108. *Patria 8: The Palace of the Cinnabar Phoenix*, 2000; 2 hrs; 5 solo singers, actor, puppets, choir SA, chamb orch, including Chinese instruments; Arcana. For information see: *Patria: The Complete Cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

109. *Shadowman*, 2000; 36 min; 5 solo perc, full orch; Arcana.

Shadowman was written for the Nexus percussion ensemble and the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra. It was commissioned by Michael Koerner. The piece celebrates soldiery, or rather the futility of soldiery. The five percussionists are divided: two players impersonate the Forces of Darkness; two the Forces of Light; while one, dressed in a tattered military uniform, impersonates the individual soldier as he drums his way through victory and defeat on the battlefield.

The orchestra accompanies this crusade of courage and folly with a number of tunes from military musical history. In the end, the soldier, mentally deranged, plays a variety of toy instruments and even tries to teach a teddy bear to play a toy drum. The valour and pathos of soldiery is exemplified in the piece, but the anti-war theme is unmistakable throughout the work. To my regret, the work has not achieved the popularity I had hoped for. We need more anti-war demonstrations in music.

For a full discussion of *Shadowman* see the introduction to the full score or the article printed in the collection *Papers, Arcana*.

110. *String Quartet No. 8*, 2001; 23 min; *Arcana*.

One winter day in 2000 I was visited by Ellen Karp and Bill Johnston who wanted to commission a piece to celebrate the fiftieth wedding anniversary of Ellen's parents, Fred and May Karp. We discussed what might be suitable and I suggested the possibility of a new work for the Molinari String Quartet, who had just successfully presented the seven previous quartets on a marathon concert in Montreal. They liked the idea and I began the work during a sojourn in Munich.

I had no idea whether Fred and May Karp, whom I had not met, even liked music, let alone the atrocious brand a contemporary composer was likely to deliver. But imagining how much in love they must have been at the time of their youthful marriage, and the achievement of sustaining something of that romance over fifty years, I planned a two-movement work. The first movement would be lively and energetic — and of course it would begin with the same motif that had ended the seventh quartet. The second movement would be slower and more gentle but with outbursts of passion. Both movements would be based on the same material.

For the second movement I decided to double the quartet with pre-recorded material, both to add to the richness of the texture, but also to suggest memories of the past. As the playback of the recorded quartet is behind the live group, and therefore a little fainter, I hoped the distance would give something of the sentimental experience of looking through an album of old photographs.

111. *Imagining Incense*, 2001; 15 min; choir SATB; *Arcana*.

Imagining Incense was commissioned by the Toronto International Choral Festival for performance by the Tokyo Philharmonic Choir in June 2002. *Incense* has a long and important history in Japanese culture. There is even a ceremony known as "Listen to the Incense" (*Ko wo kiku*), similar

in its elaborate simplicity to the more famous Tea Ceremony, both of which date from the fourteenth century. It was the incense ceremony that served as the inspiration for the orchestral piece *Ko wo kiku* that I wrote for the Kyoto Symphony in 1985.

In the sixteenth century a group of connoisseurs attempted to describe the characteristics of the most popular kinds of wood incense then in use:
 manaka — light and enticing — a woman of changing moods
 manaban — sweet, coarse, unrefined — a rather vulgar person
 kyara — gentle, elegant, dignified — an aristocrat
 sumotara — similar to kyara but rather sour — a servant disguised as an aristocrat
 sasora — cool and sour — a monk
 rakoku — sharp and pungent — a warrior

It was these descriptions that inspired the six movements of *Imagining Incense*. The piece is dedicated to the Tokyo Philharmonic Choir and its conductor, Chifuru Matsubara.

112. *Rain Chant*, 2001; 8 min; choir SATB; *Arcana*.

In its simple form, *Rain Chant* is one of many songs from *And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon*, the Epilogue to the *Patria* cycle, where it is sung on rainy days both to celebrate the rain and to encourage it to pass. Perhaps it derives from a native American chant, though I haven't been able to trace it. Normally, I don't like arrangements of folk songs because they always seem weaker than the originals. But with time running out on a commission to compose a piece to be sung by the Taipei Philharmonic Choir for the World Symposium on Choral music (Minneapolis-St. Paul, 2002), I broke my own rule and made an extended arrangement of the original chant.

113. *Winter Solstice* was commissioned by Diane Loomer and Chor Leoni of Vancouver with funds provided by The Canada Council for the Arts for performance on December 21, 2001.

The original title was *Chant to Bring Back the Light*, but I changed it in

order to avoid confusion with *The Fall Into Light*, which followed it two years later.

The words are suggestive of darkness and light. Some come from real languages. *Tatqiniqqaq* is the Inuit word for the moon of the shortest days. *Noce oscura* is Spanish for dark night; *duister* and *mörker* are Dutch and Swedish words for darkness. *Shadion* is suggestive of shadow. As for light, *lustrum* and *lumina* are from Latin, while *alo amar* is the opening, in Bengali, of Tagore's poem "Light, my Light" from *Gitanjali*.

I suggest that the first part of the chant be performed in darkness or near darkness by two groups of singers, perhaps entering from either side of the stage. The light could grow as the chant develops.

114. *The Fall into Light*, 2002-3; 62 min; 6 choirs SATB, children's choir SA, 6 perc; Arcana.

The Fall into Light is a syncretic work based on texts from a wide variety of sources, gnostic, hermetic and mystical for the most part, but also with texts by Rilke, Nietzsche and some personal reflections. The basic theme is Manichean, the fall of the soul from its heavenly home of light to the darkness of the earth and its attempt to escape from the archons who rule there and to pass through the aeons of space back into the pleroma of light. The direction of this passage may be up or down since the earth is surrounded by starry light, hence the title. Since the soul in Manichean thinking is also a drop of light, the whole work is a study of light within darkness as well as darkness within light. Sometime after *Credo* (the multi-choir second part of *Apocalypse*) was performed in Toronto in November 2000, the producer, Lawrence Cherney, asked me to consider another large-scale multi-choir work. His idea was to bring six of Canada's best professional choirs together for a week of concerts, to culminate in a combined event at which the new work would be the centerpiece. I began writing *The Fall into Light* in November 2002 and finished it in May 2003.

115. *Thunder: Perfect Mind*, 2003; 12 min; mezzo-soprano, orch; Arcana.

Commissioned by the CBC, *Thunder: Perfect Mind* was written to fill out the time on a proposed CD featuring Eleanor James singing two of my other works for voice and orchestra, both written for her: *Letters from Mignon* and the orchestral version of the *Minnelieder*.

The text of *Thunder: Perfect Mind* comes from a papyrus discovered at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945. It is a revelation discourse delivered in the first person by a female theurgist. The tone is forceful throughout and full of deliberate antitheses and paradoxes, viz.: "I am the whore and the holy one, I am the wife and the virgin." The text also contains exhortations to hear and reflect on these antitheses, revealing that the narrator believes herself to be, and wants us to believe her to be, a seer intimate with all the incomprehensible forces of the cosmos. This seemed to be a perfect text for the dramatic voice of Eleanor James, and I wrote the piece quickly, finishing it just in time for her return to Canada.

116. *Wolf Music*, 1991–; variable instruments and durations; *Arcana*.

Wolf Music is a collection of pieces for voice and various instruments from *Patria: The Epilogue: And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon*. The various pieces in this collection are aubades and nocturnes, performed in the forest or across the water either early in the morning or late at night. They are not really intended for concert performance, although some of them have been performed this way.

Included in the collection are the following:

Aubade and Nocturne for solo trumpet

Aubade and Nocturne for solo clarinet

Aubade for two voices or trumpet and voice

Tapio for Alphorn or French Horn with echoing instruments
Departure for trumpet with echoing instruments

Sunset for natural trumpet

Aubade and Nocturne for solo flute
Aubade and Nocturne for solo voice

Ariadne's Aria for solo voice

Sun Father, Earth Mother for solo voice.

In Tapio and Departure the solo instruments lead, followed by the others echoing fragments of phrases from different positions and distances. In the Wolf Project this takes place in the forest for Tapio and around a lake for Departure. The echoing instruments are flute, recorder, clarinet, oboe and trombone — but of course others could be substituted.

Other music for instrumental ensemble, performed annually during “Great Wheel Day” of *And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon*, is reserved for that occasion and is not intended for public performance.

117. *Patria: The Epilogue: And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon*, 1988–; 8 days; 64 adult members; Arcana. For information see: *Patria: The Complete Cycle* (Toronto, 2002).

118. *Tanzlied*, 2003; 18 min; mezzo-soprano and harp; Arcana.

Tanzlied was written for mezzo-soprano Eleanor James and harpist Judy Loman and was first performed at the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival in July 2004.

The text of *Tanzlied* is from the Third Part of Friedrich Nietzsche’s *Also Sprach Zarathustra* and is sung in German. In it Nietzsche (Zarathustra) confronts and struggles with Life.

O Life, I looked into your eyes recently... My heart stood still with delight.

At my dance-maddened feet

You threw a laughing, questioning glance. Twice you raised your rattle,

Then my feet tossed in a dancing rage.

Throughout the poem the narrator dances with Life, sometimes advancing, sometimes retreating, as Life surges ahead down unknown paths both ecstatic and mysterious.

This is a dance over hill and dale.

I am the hunter. Are you my dog or the game? You malicious acrobat!

The singer stumbles, gets up and rushes on, sometimes whipping Life mercilessly until Life cries out:

O Zarathustra, don’t crack your whip so terribly. You know: Noise kills thought!

And even now such tender thoughts are coming to me.

You know that I have been good to you, and often too good, And the reason is that I am jealous of your wisdom.

Ah, this crazy old fool, Wisdom.

I know that you are thinking of leaving me soon. Listen...there is a bell that sounds the hour at midnight...

The final section of Tanzlied is peaceful. Zarathustra and Life embrace one another and weep. To support this reconciliation I have introduced some of Nietzsche's own music, a very tender and passionate music, inspired by his idol, Wagner.

The work ends with the twelve strokes of the midnight bell, while the singer comments:

The world is deep. Deep is woe...

Joy, deeper than heart's agony...

All joy wants eternity; wants deep, deep eternity.

In 1889 Nietzsche suffered a mental collapse and spent the last eleven years of his life insane.

119. String Quartet No. 9, 2004; 23 min; Arcana.

My ninth quartet was commissioned by Bill and Shirley Loeven for performance at the New Music Festival in February 2005, sponsored by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. The performers were the leaders of the string sections of the orchestra: Gwen Hobig and Karl Stobbe, violins; Daniel Scholz, viola; and Yuri Hooker, cello.

The quartet is in one movement and is predominantly elegiac in character with abrupt outbursts of enthusiasm, stimulated by the laughing and screaming voices of children, prerecorded in a playground. I find the turbulence of children's voices affects me more strongly as I grow older, the happiness and the fear, the sweetness and the cruelty.

The quartet opens with the "Ariadne" theme that may be found embedded in several of the previous quartets as well as in other works.

This is followed immediately by a tranquil motif consisting of a half note,

two quarter notes and a whole note, over which the recorded voice of a boy soprano is heard, slowly repeating and expanding one of the principal themes of the eighth quartet.

The moods that follow are directly stimulated by the children's voices, and when they are not present the elegiac character predominates, although the last appearance of the boy soprano at the close stimulates a happy ending in a sped up version of the half–two quarter–whole note motif that introduced the work.

120. *Flew Toots for Two Flutes*, 2004; 5 min; Arcana.

This little piece for two flutes was written for my friend Bob Aitken for performance on a celebration concert to mark his retirement from the music department at the University of Freiburg, Germany.

121. *String Quartet No. 10 (Winter Birds)*, 2005; 17 min; Arcana.

My tenth string quartet (*Winter Birds*) was commissioned by Radio France for the Molinari String Quartet, who has performed all of my quartets on various occasions and has recorded the first eight of them commercially for ATMA Classique.

The quartet was written during January and February 2005 at my farm in central Ontario. This is the quietest time of the year, with snowy fields outside my window and temperatures that descend at night to 20 or 25 degrees below zero Celsius. There are few birds at the feeders: chickadees and sparrows, and a few blue jays and woodpeckers. As a result, the texture is thinner than in most of the previous quartets. Occasionally there is a suggestion of swirling snow or a flock of turtle doves. The wolf howl from the Fifth Quartet is taken over and echoed by all the instruments as if by a pack of distant wolves, and the strongest moment in the work is a depiction of sunrise on the glistening snow at dawn.

122. *The Death of Shalana*, 2005, 12 min; Arcana.

The Death of Shalana was commissioned by Patria Music Theatre Projects with funds provided by the Laidlaw Foundation for performance in Metropolitan United Church in Toronto by Soundstreams Canada in June

2005.

Shalana is the leader of the Human Clan in the *Patria Epilogue: And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon*. But Shalana has deserted the Human Clan and gone to live in the forest with the other animals. He dies in the forest, but his voice lives on and can be heard in the wind and in the rain and in the changing seasons. Eventually *The Death of Shalana* should be sung across a lake with the four choirs on different shores.

123. *Isfahan for three brass quintets*, 2006; 12 min; Arcana.

Isfahan was commissioned by Soundstreams Canada with funds provided by the Ontario Arts Council.

During a visit to Iran and Turkey in 1969, I spent several days in Isfahan. One of the most beautiful buildings of that city is the Shah Abbas Mosque, completed in 1629. But the building is not only famous for its visual beauty since it also possesses a unique acoustic effect. Standing directly under the main cupola a hand clap will return precisely seven echoes. Move a step away in any direction and a hand clap will return no echoes at all.

The memory of this experience returned to me when I visited St. Anne's Church in Toronto, proposed site for a concert of brass music organized by Soundstreams Canada. Perhaps it was prompted by the appearance of St. Anne's, which is modeled on the famous domed church of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, now an Islamic mosque.

I wanted to create a piece configured around the number seven. Seven tones and seven pulses. I wanted also to create a piece that would linger in the space as if it belonged there and would remain forever. Marshall McLuhan somewhere commented that the medieval room was furnished when it was empty: that is, its sound would be its furnishings. Architects once created with both stone and sound in a manner that was planned, predictable and effective. It was a glorious time for both architecture and music, and their separation has left each discipline deficient and incomplete.

The three brass quintets in Isfahan are in different positions in the church and each group will move to different positions during the performance. Co-ordination is provided by a leader who signals a seven-stroke motif from time to time on a slapstick or drum.

124. Six Songs from Rilke's "Book of Hours," 2006, 20 min; Arcana.

These songs were commissioned by Stacie Dunlop, who had previously sung in productions of *Princess of the Stars* and *The Enchanted Forest*. The first performance was given by her and the Land's End Ensemble of Calgary.

My interest in Rilke goes back a long time, to the days I spent in Vienna (1955–57). One winter, in an attempt to escape the cold (coal was very scarce at the time), I decided to go to Trieste. There I stayed for a few months with an elderly Austrian woman who was well-connected with the Austrian aristocracy, since titled guests frequently descended to spend a few days with her. (At one time I shared a bathroom with Prince Windischgrätz.) Another guest was the Princess of Thurn und Taxis, whom I recognized immediately since Rilke's *Duino Elegies* were dedicated to a woman of that name. That was her mother. Rilke had stayed alone one winter in the castle at Duino, a few kilometres from Trieste, and it was there that he began the *Elegies*. The Princess invited me to visit her in the castle – an offer I regret I never took up.

When I was commissioned by Stacie Dunlop to write a work for her, I immediately thought of Rilke, not of the *Elegies* but of the collection of poems known as the *Book of Hours*. In these short poems the moods vary a great deal. The dialogue with God continues as it does in much of Rilke, but the texts are simpler and even at times achieve a tone of levity that is rare in this poet.

I wrote the songs quickly, I would almost say, one every day, which is certainly the way Rilke must have written these concise but opalescent poems.

125. Trio for Violin, Viola and Cello, 2006, 15 min; Arcana.

Although I have written a number of string quartets, I had never considered writing a trio until I received a commission from the Arizona Friends of Chamber Music.

While a trio may seem to be a more balanced ensemble than the top-heavy string quartet, it has never proved to be as popular. In fact there is something unsettling about a trio, like a marriage plus one – a triad of tensions – or at least that is the way I found myself thinking about it when I began to write the piece.

Everything moves smoothly at the beginning; the violin plays a melody in the Lydian mode to a simple accompaniment in the viola and cello, but after a few bars the mood becomes agitated, and remains agitated, except for a few quiet intervals, through most of the single movement work. The climax is reached with a powerful descending scale in the cello on the notes E-flat (s) C H (B natural) A F E... followed by a surprising modulation into a Gustav Mahler adagio, which leads back to the gentle opening theme to bring the work to a peaceful close.

126. Eleventh String Quartet, 2007; 24 min; Arcana

The Eleventh String Quartet was commissioned by the Lafayette Quartet. Unlike most of my quartets, the Eleventh is divided into five distinct sections or movements, though I have specified the duration of the pauses between them to create a feeling of continuity. There is continuity in the music also since the work is dominated by a recurring theme of eleven notes with the character of a passacaglia. It came to me one night in a dream, but I wouldn't be surprised if it existed somewhere in Bach or as a Renaissance ground bass.

The first movement begins with Angst and passion on the solo violin; the other players gradually join in, and the work takes on a rhythmic character in which the passacaglia theme is repeated several times. In the second movement the same theme is sounded very softly over which the viola plays an elegiac obligato. This leads directly into the third movement which is a musical description of a sunset, from the sun's

blazing descent into deep shadows as it passes below the horizon. At the end, two loons fly over head into the darkening sky.

The fourth movement is a romance between the second violinist and the cellist, with some excited emotions involving all the players. In the last movement the strings suggest the soft throbbing of an Aeolian Harp. This instrument used to be placed in gardens where it would catch the wind, producing an eerie chromatic wailing sound that infatuated the romanticists, (Schumann, Berlioz, E.T.A. Hoffmann).

127. *The Children's Crusade*, 2007; 90 Min; Arcana

The Children's Crusade was a commission from Soundstreams, Canada, or, to be more specific, from its energetic Artistic Director, Lawrence Cherney. One day, in the summer of 2005, Lawrence took me to see the quadrangle at University College in Toronto and asked me if I could imagine creating a work for that space. The open quadrangle is surrounded by the tall windows and stone walls of classrooms, with a raised walkway around a grassy centre, giving it something of a medieval quality – or at least the closest thing to the Middle Ages that one might expect to find in Toronto. The walkway suggested a processional work and I immediately thought of the Children's Crusade.

I sketched out a libretto and drew a series of charts showing how the story might be staged, employing the balconies and towers of University College, as well as the belfry tower of the adjacent Hart House. The audience would accompany the children on their journey, both indoors and outdoors. Lawrence liked the idea but, unfortunately, University College did not. Unshaken we decided that I should begin to write the work while the search for an appropriate site went on.

There were two children's crusades, one originating in Germany and the other in France; both took place during the year 1212, quite independently of each other. Both were inspirations of children and both were dedicated to liberating the Holy Land with love rather than force. Both ended in disaster.

I based my text on the French story which tells how a young boy named Stephen had a vision about leading a crusade, went to see King Phillip and, although he was laughed at by the court, nevertheless was given free passage to Marseilles when it was pointed out to the King that Stephen's followers were mostly orphans and gutter children so that the proposed crusade would result in a social cleanup.

The children walked to Marseilles where they expected the waves of the Mediterranean to part as the Red Sea had parted for Moses. The chroniclers are not very precise about how many children reached Marseilles but most mention a figure in the thousands. Of course, the waters did not part and the crusade ended in disaster. Many of the children drowned; others were sold into slavery, and many starved to death as they attempted to return home.

As I mentioned, I wanted the work to move from place to place and be accompanied by an itinerant audience. I wanted also to mix medieval people into the audience: jongleurs, beggars, lepers and dancers, such as we see in the medieval manuscripts and paintings of Breughel and others – thus placing the audience inside rather outside the set as in traditional opera and theatre. The work was to become a spectacle from all angles with the actors mixing with the audience above, below, far, near, and never from a fixed position.

128. Duo for Violin and Piano, 2008; 18 min; Arcana

The work was commissioned by the CBC and the Tukamore Festival for Nancy Dahn and Tim Steeves. This is a quite conventional piece, essentially tonal with a deliberately borrowed chord sequence from Brahms Fourth Symphony in the second movement. And yet the piece seems to live in a world of its own, with sudden rhythm changes and cascades of sound, like confetti thrown in the air, and melodies not quite predictably harmonized. The third movement employs aksak rhythms found in Balkan music and ends with an actual Romanian dance tune which I accidentally heard on the radio, supporting a news

event from somewhere between Bucharest and Sofia.

129. *The Searching Sings*, 2008; 3-4 min; Arcana

This is a setting for choir of a poem by my friend Rae Crossman. I believe the poem was inspired by the experience we share as members of the Wolf Project (nickname for *And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon*, epilogue of the PATRIA cycle) which we have been performing each summer for more than 20 years in the Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve. Rae's poem, a paean of praise for the wilderness, seemed to sing itself into existence and the work was written almost at one sitting.

130. *Make Room for God*, 2008; 5 min; Arcana

Make Room for God was commissioned by the Tangeman Sacred Music Centre at the College Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati. I was asked to select a religious text for this commission and while I could have chosen one of the many I have on file, I decided to write my own. I imagined the choir inviting God to come and join them in their singing – a whimsical idea perhaps, but one that must surely be in the mind of all singers the moment they open their mouths.

131. *Spirits of the House*, 2008, 15 min; Arcana

Spirits of the House was commissioned by Michael and Sonja Koerner for the inaugural concert in the Koerner Concert Hall of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto in September 2009. Although I studied piano and composition in Toronto, my piano degree was with the Royal Schools of London and my composition lessons were with John Weinzweig in the old Faculty of Music building on College Street. Nevertheless, the rubicund old Conservatory building was very familiar to me and I attended many concerts there during my student days and later.

I am not a spiritualist, but I have often thought, along with Madame Blavatsky and many others, that sounds do not die but continue to echo

forever in the dark spaces and starry skies. Then could we imagine all the music that has been performed in the Royal Conservatory still lingering between the rafters and the stones of this resonant building, so that with the stethoscope of our imagination we might hear them still mingling together imperishably?

What I have written could be described as a quodlibet – a musical form consisting of snatches of various pieces strung together in a loose formation so that each piece rises momentarily, only to be submerged again in a texture of new sounds. From the rafters and cellars of the old building I have strung together fragments of pieces written by some of the Conservatory's most celebrated composers and teachers over three generations, conjoined with thoughts and reflections of my own.

The first work we hear is the final chorus from *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, a cantata based on Longfellow's poem by Arthur E. Fisher (1848 – 1912). The work received its first performance on the opening concert of Massey Hall in 1894. This is introduced by a suggestion of the storm at sea that took the lives of all passengers and crew of the fatal ship.

A short interlude leads to the opening of a Sonata for Cello and Piano by Leo Smith

(1881- 1952), himself an accomplished cellist. The sonata is somewhat whimsically interrupted by the

Butterfly Waltz, a work by the pianist Ernest Seitz (1892 – 1978) who is best known as the composer of the ballad "The World is Waiting for the Sunrise". Seitz's work is quickly invaded by a short snatch of Samuel Dolin's Prelude for John Weinzweig. I knew Samuel Dolin (1917 – 2002) as a diligent teacher of several well-known composers, including Brian Cherney, Moe Kaufmann, Michel Lontin and Ann Southam, among others. This short piano piece echoes the brevity of the Viennese atonal school that Dolin and Weinzweig were bringing to Canada in the 1950s. Sir Ernest MacMillan (1893 – 1973) was better known as an organist and conductor than as a composer. Perhaps the earlier compositions were

more adventurous and interesting but, by the time he was conducting the Toronto Symphony, his works took on a pompous diapason quality that we were trying to escape. Typical is the anthem, "The King Shall Rejoice in Thy Strength, O Lord", which sounds like an exercise for the buttocks. Another composer in the British tradition was Healey Willan (1880 – 1968) who is best known for his choral music; and one of his most beautiful choral pieces is the anthem "Rise Up, My Love, My Fair One". We hear the work in the distance with a slight wash of sound from harp and strings.

The last piece I chose was by my teacher John Weinzweig (1903 – 2006). It is an early work, *The Red Ear of Corn*, which I remember hearing at its premiere as a ballet in 1949. John was probably the first Canadian to regard himself as a composer rather than a musician who also composed, and this new attitude made it possible for many of his students to take up composing as a serious career.

My quodlibet ends abruptly in the middle of *The Red Ear of Corn's* "Tribal Dance", vanishing into a peaceful slumber, which is my last memory of John in the nursing home shortly before his death. We had eaten a light lunch together with his wife, Helen, and I had accompanied them upstairs and helped John into bed where he soon drifted off to sleep.

132. *Dream-e-scape*, 2009; 18 min; Arcana

Dream-e-scape was written in a streak of twenty-six days, scarcely without looking back or trying to remember what had been written the day before. I wanted to try to capture the dream experience of incoherence in which everything is shifting and blurred together. Now we witness one image, now another – shocking, alluring, repellent, voluptuous, risible – totally without consistency or order.

Nothing in our education prepares us for a nightmare. And yet such an event may be more memorable than anything experienced in our rational lives. Is there anything coherent in a dreamscape? Yes, perhaps a few recurrent notes, an incipient melody or a monumental chord from which

the sleeper may awaken enriched by the experience or desperate to escape from the memory of it.