

**THE
POSTINDUSTRIAL
PLAYERS**

IN

**MUSIC BY
MICHAEL
KOWALSKI**

**BOOK BY
KIER
PETERS**

**STILL
LOVE**

Michael Kowalski studied composition with Richard Hervig, Herbert Brun, Ben Johnston, Salvatore Martirano, and Betsy Jolas. His chamber music has been performed throughout Europe, Japan, and at dozens of universities in the U.S. and Canada. He has been presenting his music and text-based performance art in New York since 1980. In 1995 his Einstein Records CD "Gringo Blaster" was praised as "one of the year's most enjoyable recordings" by critic Dwight Loop of the *Santa Fe Sun*.

Playwright **Kier Peters** is the author of "The Confirmation", "Intentional Coincidence", "A Dog Tries to Kiss the Sky", "Family", and the musical "Flying Down to Cairo". Under the name Douglas Messerli, Kier is a well-known poet and the publisher of Sun & Moon Press.

Soprano **Karen Grahn's** roles include Silberklang in Mozart's *The Impresario* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and Eudora in David Clenney's *La Contessa di Vampiri* at the Kennedy Center. She has also appeared in John Adams' *Nixon in China* and *The Death of Klinghoffer*. She sings with Musica Sacra and has recorded with Meredith Monk. In 1995 she made her European recital debut at the Chateau Chambord in France.

Baritone **Gregory Purnhagen** has worked extensively with Philip Glass, for whom he created the roles of la Bête, Avenant, and le Prince for the world premiere of *La Belle et la Bête*. He was also a featured performer in the 1992 world tour of the Glass/Wilson opera *Einstein on the beach*. As a member of the avant-garde *a capella* quartet Toby Twining Music, he has performed throughout the U.S. and Europe.

Cellist **Yari Bond** studied with Leonard Rose at the Juilliard School. She is a founding member of the Carnegie Chamber Players. Her recordings on the CRI, Opus One, and Classics Masters labels include several premieres of contemporary works. She teaches cello at Columbia University and Queens College.

"Still in Love" was recorded on February 27 and 28, 1996, at Sorcerer Sounds in New York. It was engineered and edited by David Avidor. Sound engineering in the live shows was under the supervision of Ben Manley.

SPECIAL THANKS TO Constance McCord, Julie Nichols, Ben Manley, Barbara Mensch, Nancy Meli Walker, Gerhard Schlanzky, Nora York, Charles Krezell, Janet Clancy, Laura Drawbaugh, David Weinstein, Dino Goulianos, Gary Norden, April Greenberg, Mette Bahde, Nancy Donner, Roulette Intermedium, Jim Staley, and Sailfish Systems, Ltd.

The **Postindustrial Players** are a small band of singers, instrumentalists, and theatrical professionals devoted to bringing the translucency and cultural immediacy of television and film to live music theatre. The music theatre we imagine might be thought of as a theatre of close-ups, normally played to audiences of no more than a couple hundred people. Reliance on grandiose or spectacular effects is replaced by confidence in the compelling power of innovative dramatic scenarios seamlessly coupled to crystal clear, harmonically dynamic melody. Our project is a little bit reminiscent of the early opera experiments of the Renaissance Italian courtiers, when they tried to marry Greek classic tragedy to the then-ultra-modern style of lightly-accompanied melody. Like our Renaissance models, we are trying to offer an antidote to an overabundance of complexity, artifice, and irony. We are concentrating on the development of portable, hour-long pieces which emphasize elegant writing, deft acting, and music which never obscures the clarity of dialogue. It doesn't matter so much whether a particular script is non-narrative and free of recognizable characters, or whether it scrupulously observes the Shakespearean dramatic unities. Some of our books may resemble Ionesco, others Arthur Miller, still others a TV sitcom—they will all probably cross boundaries. In every case the group will be devoted to achieving a standard of readability in the theatre which we frankly believe is only given lip service today on Broadway and in the opera house. As an alternative to the theatre of special effects and overamplification on Broadway, and as an alternative to the theatre of subtitles at the opera, we've taken as our models the TV soap opera, the delivery of 1940's American big band singers such as Frank Sinatra and Helen Forrest, and the brilliant efficiency of film composers such as Nelson Riddle and Nino Rota.

The group is currently involved in the development of a cycle of three one-act chamber music dramas. The first, *Still in Love*, is based upon Kier Peters' short dramatic triptych, "Past, Present, and Future Tense". It is a literal transcription of the original text of the play to music, with only a phrase here and there adjusted for rhythmic effect. The musical version was previewed at Context Studios in New York in July of 1995. After substantial revision, the work premiered at the experimental music space Roulette in New York in January and February of 1996.

Within forty-five minutes, the unnamed, erstwhile-separated-and-reunited couple of *Still in Love* live through their checkered erotic lives three times: first as a narrated flashback, then in a curiously realistic present, and finally in a surreal and cataclysmic dream of the future. All three acts are characterized by brilliant verbal sparring which repeatedly turns from gentle humor to lacerating sarcasm without ever losing an uncanny aura of empathy. One of our primary goals in the production was to capture the quicksilver shifts in mood and emotional balance of the original play, adding a musical gloss without altering the dramatic pace. Our two dramatic directors, Julie Nichols in the previews, and Constance McCord in the premiere run, deserve much of the credit for the success we had in this respect.

— Michael Kowalski
February, 1997

He... Gregory Purnhagen
She... Karen Grahn
Betty... April Greenberg

Prologue (band 1)

Act I (band 2)

Tulips: An Elocutionary Piece

In Philadelphia there stands a cardboard table, doily covered, on which is centered a vase of real tulips. To the sides of the table are matching, rather handsomely upholstered cardboard chairs. Near one she stands. In the other sits a not unattentive man.

She: The whole house smells of tulips.

He: Yes.

S: I'm allergic to pollen, you'll recall.

H: Oh?

S: I'm certain to be having an asthma attack.

H: Really?

S: And headaches. You know how bad they get.

H: No.

S: Remember last year?

H: I guess

S: Migraines. Even the doctor couldn't cure them.

H: Oh, yes.

S: I get cross.

H: Oh dear.

S: And in June it gets worse.

H: Oh, my!

S: I'm nearly dead by the end of July.

H: That bad?

S: Then hayfever August creeps in.

H: Good Lord!

S: And I can hardly breathe.

H: Horrible!

S: I collapse.

H: (*gasp*)

S: You call the doctor.

H: Help!

S: I'm rushed to the clinic.



H: Hurry!

S: Oxygen is desperately pumped into my lungs.

H: Ah!

S: My pulse returns.

H: Thank heaven!

S: Miraculously, I live.

H: Of course.

S: So?

H: You must recuperate!

S: Well?

H: We run away to Arizona.

S: Certainly not.

H: To France?

S: Perhaps.

H: We have reservations at the Claridge.

S: We do?

H: We fly into Orly.

S: Obviously.

H: We taxi into Paris and rush up to our suite.

S: Yes?

H: We follow the porter across the room as he swings open the doors of our veranda.

S: Fine.

H: Below is the Champs Elysees.

S: Very good.

H: The sun is setting over the city.



S: Marvellous!

H: We order dinner, champagne.

S: Not bad.

H: It's terribly expensive.

S: Better be!

H: I suggest a walk.

S: You do?

H: In the Tuileries.

S: Alright.

H: It's so lovely this time of year, this hour of night.

S: Ummm.

H: I take your hand. Your head falls to my shoulder.

S: It might.

H: Lovers surround us.

S: Yes.

H: The air is scented with the perfume of roses.

S: How could you?

H: I forgot!

S: I leave you.

H: No!

S: I take a night train to Nice.

H: Please!

S: I sit, tapping the anger out through my fingers.

H: Forgive me!

S: A man is situated across.

H: Who?

S: A Frenchman. He smiles. I become self-conscious. My fingers stop.

H: Don't!

S: He smiles again.

H: How rude!

S: I smile back.

H: You're cruel!

S: He nods and leans towards me.

H: Outrageous!

S: Madame, is something troubling you? he asks.

H: Improper!

S: I do not mean to pry, he adds. I say, yes, I'm desperate.

H: Evidently!

S: My husband tried to kill me.

H: A lie!

S: He gasps. How could anyone have even thought to harm such a beauty?

H: Unoriginal beast!

S: I blush.

H: Never!

S: He introduces himself.

H: Finally!

S: He is the Count de Marquis.

H: A fake!

S: He has a villa on the Riviera.

H: Big deal!

S: He suggests I change my plans, that I come visit his magnificent estate.

H: You agree?

S: I tell him that I'll consider it.

H: He pressures?

S: Why shouldn't he?





H: Whore!

S: **In his arms, I'm protected from such crude remarks.**

H: And reality.

S: **Can't hear.**

H: I've completely forgotten you.

S: **Good.**

H: I return to Philadelphia.

S: **Fine.**

H: I flounder for a bit.

S: **Nothing new.**

H: But soon I find a job with a law firm.

S: **Without schooling?**

H: As a clerk.

S: **Dreamer!**

H: They like my work, put me through nightschool.

S: **Fools.**

H: I study long and arduously. Soon, I'm ready for the bar exam.

S: **You fail.**

H: The second time, I pass.

S: **With help.**

H: I'm all alone.

S: **No women?**

H: I gave them up.

S: **You're celibate?**

H: For awhile. One night, however, I'm invited to a party where I meet an old friend.

S: **A tart!**

H: We talk. We've a lot in common. I fall in love.

S: **Mousy thing!**

H: Black hair. Olive skinned.

S: **Cheap.**

H: His name is Paul Durand.

S: (*gasp*)

H: I don't expect that you could ever understand. But it doesn't matter. For all I know you may be dead.

S: **I'm not!**

H: At any rate, we're very happy.

S: **Pansy!**

H: He's athletic.

S: **You make me sick.**

H: In Nice?

S: **François and I take a trip.**

H: Philly?

S: **London, for awhile.**

H: You're bored.

S: **A bit.**

H: With François?

S: **With everything.**

H: Another woman?

S: **He could never do that!**

H: And you?

S: **Not without his knowledge.**

H: His approval?

S: **We're a modern couple. We've a mature relationship.**

H: But now ...?

S: **I can't explain how I feel. Depressed.**

H: Rejected.



S: I haven't heard about you being queer.

H: That's safe.

S: But then I decide to return to Philadelphia.

H: Alone?

S: For a visit.

H: Miss me?

S: To see my mother.

H: In Indiana?

S: She's moved out here since.

H: Convenient.

S: I stay with her for a few days.

H: My regards.

S: She's in good health. I'm rather enjoying myself.

H: Until?

S: Susan—you remember her—calls one night and suggests we go out dancing.

H: No husband?

S: She's been divorced.

H: Watch out!

S: She frequents a very nice singles' bar.

H: For pickups.

S: Susan, I say, I'm not really the singles' bar type. She says, Oh, you're so hung up. Your ex-husband



has stripped away all of your confidence.

H: Same bitch.

S: So I join her. It's a little place not far from where I used to live.

H: My house.

S: I dance for a little, and then I wander over to the bar.

H: Your usual?

S: Martini on the rocks ...

H: Three olives.

S: You remembered!

H: Prosit!

S: To us!

H: *(laughs)*

S: Suddenly I see this man looking in the mirror.

H: At himself?

S: Our eyes meet.

H: You wink.

S: I look away.

H: You flirt.

S: But then I think, he's not so bad. And being a modern woman, I go up to him and ask if he wants to dance.

H: You castrate.

S: He smiles, but declines. He seems so shy.

H: Terrorized.

S: But he does ask me to join him. And although Susan and I soon have to leave, he gives me his number.

H: A conventioneer?

s: He's a Philadelphian.

H: He's doomed.

S: So the next afternoon, I call and we make a date.

H: And London?

S: François's gone on to Rome.

H: Fortunate.

S: I'm surprised to find how really shy my new friend is. He's so humble, so gentle. I suspect he's married. And when I ask, he admits.

H: Tsk tsk.

S: But, of course, one thing leads to another.

H: I expect.

S: And we find ourselves getting to like each other.

H: Not love?

S: And finally, it's love.

H: Once more!

S: My friend decides to leave his mate. It's only then I find out. His name is Paul Durand.

H: Damn you!

S: So François--whom I never married--receives a telegram.

H: Savage!

S: And Paul and I rent a house on Society Hill.

H: With what?

S: I help him get a job--a publishing firm.



H: He's illiterate!

S: You always berate him, deny his talents! Underrate his worth.

H: You're mistaken!

S: I love him.

H: Prove it!

S: I won't give him up.

H: You must!

S: He won't go back to you.

H: But he will go back to men.

S: No!

H: So we're back where we started from.

S: Don't!

H: It's destiny.

S: Please.

H: You crawl home to me.

S: I refuse!

H: You've no money, no job, nowhere else.

S: It's unfair!

H: Isn't it?

S: I hate you.

H: I know.

S: I loathe the very sight of you.

H: Of course.

S: I can't even say your name without wanting to vomit.



H: No doubt.

S: You humiliate me.

H: Impossible.

S: You torture me.

H: Perhaps.

S: You've never loved anyone.

H: Once.

S: *(For an instant, she's speechless. Then, recovering, she points her finger at the tulips.)* Get rid of them!

H: You're right.

Interlude (band 3)

Act II (band 4)

Lies: A Drawingroom Farce

She is moving now. She is taking a position. She straddles a chair. She is going nowhere tonight. He is standing. He looks at the

ocean. She crosses to him. He does not observe, back to her, lost in reverie. She sits down. She stays seated. Turning, he comes back.

She: What are you thinking about?

He: Nothing. The sea.

S: Oh, I see.

H: It is such a pretty sight.

S: Really.

H: Yes, come look.

S: Yes.

H: Isn't it a pretty sight?

S: Yes.

H: You didn't sleep last night.

S: Oh I slept. Some.

H: I'm going out for a swim.

S: It's almost time for dinner.

H: Then I shall have an appetite.

(He goes out. She stays in her chair. She stands. She paces, impatient for him to come back. He comes back, shaking his face. He towels his body off. She sits to wait.)

S: It is time to go to dinner.

H: Then we shall go.

S: You must dress.

H: Must I?

S: You must dress.

H: Then I shall.

S: Good.

(She waits. She stands. She paces. He comes back into the room. She sits.)

S: Now it is time to go.

H: I must put on some



cologne.

S: Must you?

H: Yes.

S: Then do.

S: Now it is time to go.

H: Mightn't we stay and cook a steak?

S: We promised to join our friends.

H: We could call them.

S: They're expecting us.

H: You could say I was ill.

S: I could not.

H: You might.

S: Are you ill?

H: No.

S: Then we must go.

H: Mightn't we lie a bit?

S: I don't like to.

H: But you have?

S: Yes.

H: And I have too.

S: Yes.

H: And you to me?

S: Yes.

(She stands. She goes to the window. Yes, the sea is quite nice. But it is getting dark and difficult to witness it. The waves roll in.)

S: It is getting dark.

H: Yes.

S: And growing late.

H: And we shall be.

S: Yes.

H: Was it serious?

S: What?

H: The lie.

S: There have been many.

H: Many lies?

S: Many.

H: I have told many too.

S: But I do not like to.

H: Neither do I.

S: So let us go.

H: I want to know.

S: It is very difficult.

H: Yes, it is very difficult.

S: I have had an affair.

H: Yes. I have also had one.

S: Yes. I guessed you had.

H: With whom?

S: Does it matter?

H: No. It does not.

S: And with whom did you?

H: You can imagine.

S: Yes, I can. But I don't care really.

H: Neither do I.

S: I care only about us.

H: And so do I.

S: But we are not here. Not here really.

H: I am.

S: No you are not.

H: I am. But it is so very difficult.

S: Then I am not.

H: You have been.

S: But I have tried.

H: *(He goes to the bar.)* A gin?

S: Yes. A gin.

(He makes a scotch.)

S: I have tried to come back.

H: Did I prevent you?

S: Yes.

(He makes a gin. He brings her the gin. He drinks, and she.)

S: We better call them.

H: If you must. *(She phones.)*

S: Betty, we will not be joining you tonight. We are having an important talk.



Betty: Oh, we were so counting on the two of you.

S: But we need to be together. Just the two of us tonight.

B: It sounds romantic.

S: But it's not.

(She hangs up. He is at the window again. But he can no longer see through the dark.)

(band 5)

H: Are you still in love?

S: No, I am not.

H: Were you?

S: No, I don't think I was.

H: With me?

S: Are you still in love?

H: With you?

S: Yes.

H: I think I am.

S: I think you want to be.

H: And you?

S: No.

H: Do you want to be?

S: I'm not sure. I have tried.

H: Unsuccessfully.

S: Yes.

H: Do you think you can again?

S: No, I don't think so.

H: You're thinking of leaving then.

S: Do you want me to?

H: No. I don't want you to go.

S: Then I shan't.

H: Good.

S: Yes.

H: But eventually.

S: I might. I think I can live without loving someone. But can you?

H: But I do love you.

S: **You want to. But I need to know can you live without me loving you?**

H: I think I can.

S: **You'd be free, of course.**

H: Yes.

S: **To see him. Or anyone.**

H: I'm not sure I want ...

S: **You shall be free, in any event.**

H: Do you want to?

S: **No. But I might.**

H: You might.

S: **So, what shall we do?**

H: I'll get the steaks.

S: **Yes. It is dinner time.**

(She sits. He rises. He leaves the room. He comes back.)

H: I put the steaks on the countertop.



S: **I'll start the barbecue.**

(She stands. He sits.)

H: But I'm not really hungry.

S: **I'm sorry.**

H: I know.

S: **Still, I am.**

H: And I am also.

S: **Yes.**

H: Can I ask, when did you stop?

S: **Stop?**

H: Loving?

S: **Oh, I suppose when I realized you didn't love me.**

H: But I do love you. I did.

S: **You wanted to. You desire it.**

H: Why to you keep saying that?

S: **Because it's true.**

H: No, I refuse to believe you.

S: **It's not just the sex.**

H: That's nonsense.

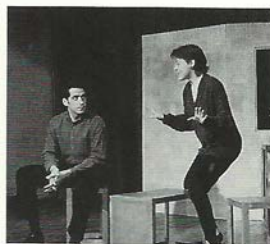
S: **It's the personality. Just being in the same room.**

H: I don't think that's true. I hate almost all of his habits.

S: **That's what's said.**

H: I don't comprehend.

S: **You don't mind if I smoke?**



H: No.

S: **You hate him for jingling his keys.**

H: It drives me crazy.

S: **Me too.**

H: Yes?

S: **Don't you see?**

H: See what? *(He goes to the window.)*

S: **I think I'm going to be sick.**

H: Really?

(He comes over to check her pulse.)

H: Do you have a fever?

S: **No.**

H: It's probably just the stress.

S: **Yes.**

H: You need an aspirin.

S: **Could you get me one?**

(He leaves the room and brings one back. She takes it, sips.)

S: You laid him down on the couch and stroked his head.

H: Who?

S: You turned him over and rubbed his back.

H: Well, he was really ill!

S: So his wife said. I think she might have wanted to take him home.



H: I shouldn't wonder.

S: What do you mean?

H: With you playing foot tag with him under the table the entire night.

S: Do you think she noticed?

S: Poor Betty.

H: Yes.

S: He's not very attractive.

H: No, he's not.

S: You're much better looking.

H: Thank you.

S: And I think I've got it all over Betty.

H: Oh, you do. You do.

H: Would you like another gin?

S: Yes.

(He makes another gin. He makes another scotch.)

S: And those terrible children!

H: Brats!

S: I should turn on the barbecue.

H: Are you feeling up to it?

S: Yes. *(She stands.)* Both of us are fools.

H: Yes. But you're right.

S: I am?

H: About my being in love.

S: You are in love then.

H: I want to be.

S: With him?

H: With you.

S: But you're not.

H: No. Evidently.

S: And you are with him?



H: I can't answer that. *(He goes to the bar.)*

S: You must. If I'm to stay, you must.

H: He has a big penis.

S: Yes.

H: And we did have good sex.

S: So did we.

H: That stands for something.

S: Not very much.

H: No. I guess.

S: He's a good conversationalist.

H: Excellent.

S: And he makes you feel you're at the center of his thoughts.

H: Yes.

S: It's horrible to watch Betty try to keep up!

H: Poor Betty. So, do you still love him? *(He drinks.)*

S: No.
H: Are you certain?
S: Oh, I think of it from time to time. Think of him. Like a ditty you can't get out of your mind.
H: That serious.
S: No, it's not serious.
H: I think it is.
S: Besides, he's hot for you!
H: No he's not.
S: No? Everytime you're in the room his eyes begin to flutter.
H: I never noticed.
S: When he's looking into you eyes, they stop.
H: Sounds like an affliction.
S: It is.
H: *(He drinks.)* I'm not the cause.
S: And then, when he gazes at you that way, I suddenly feel this wave of love pass right through me.
H: For him?
S: For you.
H: You do?
S: But only then. At this very moment I couldn't care less.
H: I was jealous.

S: When?
H: Whenever I thought of the two of you.
S: Jealous of me?
H: Jealous of him.
S: Really?
H: With the way he could have you, while I couldn't ever satisfy you as much.
S: No.
H: I know. You don't have to explain.
S: I wasn't going to.
H: I wish you would.
S: What?
H: Explain. Not why he is better than me. I know all about that. But why I could never satisfy you.
S: Who said?
H: What?
S: I wasn't satisfied?



H: It's obvious.
S: To whom?
H: To me. To him. Even to Betty.
S: Really. *(She stands.)* But it isn't, wasn't your fault.
H: I don't understand.
S: I mean, with him it wasn't much better.
H: *(He stands.)* I'm sorry. With us it was so good.
S: You mean, with you and him.
H: Yes. And for me, with you.
S: But one has to choose.
H: Choose?
S: It has become necessary.
H: But I was the one who loved you.
S: So you said.
H: And you were the one who wanted out.
S: Yes.
H: And you no longer do? *(He stands. She sits. She stands. She sips her drink.)*
S: No.
H: It is time for the steaks.
S: Yes. I shall start the barbecue.

STILL IN LOVE

Music by Michael Kowalski

a chamber music drama
Text and scenario by Kier Peters

Based upon the play, "Past, Present, and Future Tense", by Kier Peters

"Cool yet blistering, all imaginable boundaries collapse as terms of psychic warfare are drawn, leaving the listener to sift through the rubble of passionate postmodern love." —Kenny Goldsmith WFMU-FM

"A beautifully constructed, sad, sexy, and witty music theatre piece. It's quite a wonderful work"

—Arnold Weinstein

playwright, librettist for William Bolcom's "McTeague", "Casino Paradise"

THE POSTINDUSTRIAL PLAYERS

Karen Grahn, soprano

Gregory Purnhagen, baritone

Yari Bond, cello

Michael Kowalski, synthesizer

Recorded in conjunction with the premier staging at Roulette in New York City, January - February, 1996. Stage direction: Constance McCord. Scenic design: Gerhard Schlanzky.

Musical direction: Michael Kowalski.

Prologue (1:28)

Act I Tulips: An Elocutionary Piece (12:50)

Interlude (1:32)

Act II Lies: A Drawingroom Farce (19:42)

Act III The Matador: A Romance (6:35)

Total duration (42:11)

Produced by: Postindustrial Productions, Inc., Executive producer: Michael Udow,
Liner notes: Michael Kowalski, Kier Peters, Design: Jean Andreuzzi, Equilibrium logo: Rita Blit,
Photography: Barbara Mensch.

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