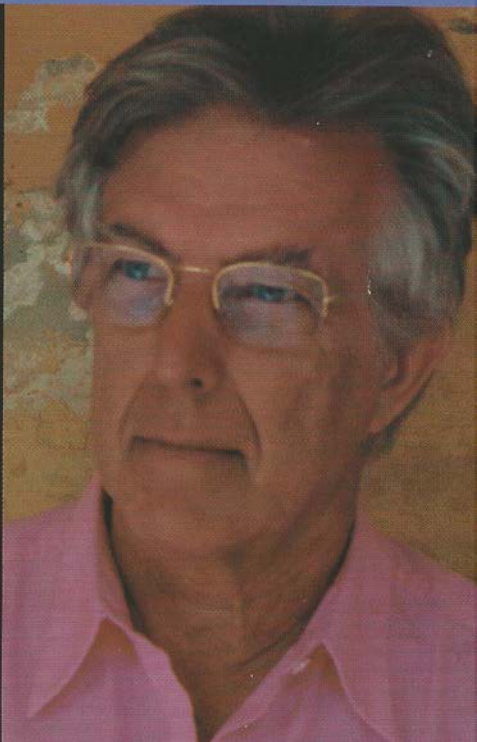


Three Circuitous Paths to the Music

of
Roger
Reynolds

 NEUMA



Three Circuitous Paths

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to the Music of Roger Reynolds

1 TW III 34:44

Rachel Rudich, flute

June in Buffalo Ensemble

Harvey Sollinger, conductor

2 AMBAGES 8:11

Rachel Rudich, flute

3 MISTRAL 19:47

June in Buffalo Ensemble

Jesse Levine, conductor

4 LOUDEST PASSAGE 8:05

of MISTRAL

Three Circuitous Paths to the Music of Roger Reynolds

ONE

Roger Reynolds was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1934. He studied composition with Ross Lee Finney and Roberto Gerhard both at the University of Michigan and at Tanglewood. He was cofounder of the ONCE Group for performance of new music in Ann Arbor, Michigan and remained active with it from 1960 to 1963. In 1962-63 he worked at the Westdeutscher Rundfunk Electronic Music Studio in Cologne, and from 1964 to 1965 he lived in Italy under a Guggenheim fellowship. In 1967-69 Reynolds went to Japan as a Fellow of The Institute of Current World Affairs and co-organized there (with Karen Reynolds, Joji Yuasa, and Kuniharu Akiyama) the Cross Talk concerts and festivals of Japanese and American music in Tokyo. He has taught at the University of California at San Diego since 1969. It was there that he became the founding director of the Center for Music Experiment and Related Research. Reynolds is the recipient of the Pulitzer Prize and a citation from the National Institute of Arts and Letters. He has had commissions from the British Arts Council, Radio France, the BBC, the Suntory and Koussevitzky foundations, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and the National Endowment for the Arts, to name but a few.

A prolific composer, Reynolds has composed over 85 works to date and has been recorded commercially on nearly 50 LPs and CDs. He has written extensively on music, most notably about his own compositional processes in three books — *Mind Models: New Forms of Musical Experience* (1975); *A Searcher's Path: A Composer's Ways* (1987); and *Form and Method: Composing Music* (2002).

TWO

It is impossible in such a short space to adequately explore the many unique structural paths to be found in the music of Roger Reynolds. But a brief glimpse of just one of these paths is enlightening. This particular path — a rock path — begins in Japan.

In 1966 Roger Reynolds was standing on the eastern shore of Honshu gazing at *Futami ga ura*, a natural rock formation peeking out of the water — two giant rocks with a third smaller rock between them. Depending on the sea and tides, at times the middle rock is visible, at times submerged. Some centuries ago this natural formation was given a symbolic significance by priests who joined the two large rocks with a huge rope, conceptually forming a *torii* — the familiar, traditional gate found along the path leading to a Shinto shrine. In any case, many interpretive stories have grown up to “explain” this formation. The left rock is usually a male figure and the right is female. In some stories this makes the formation into husband and wife “wedded” by the rope, with the small rock between them representing their child. In other stories they represent a separated brother and sister reunited by the three-strand braided rope. Often the small rock, which appears and disappears, is thought of as the “spirit rock” in which resides the essence of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu who rules weaving and agriculture.

Reynolds takes in the sight, and the mythology connected with it, makes a sketch in his notebook, and then forgets it. Almost twenty-five years later, he comes across his sketch among his papers, and *Futami ga ura* becomes the basis for a significant portion of the formal plan for his 1990 work *Symphony[Myths]*. The male rock is 29 feet high, the female rock 13 feet; abstracted, the proportion 29:13 becomes compositionally formative. Both “rocks” — now becoming music — are conceived as having 13 strata, or, more specifically, as 13-layered *ostinati*. The connecting rope But this is enough to get the idea. “Reality” — an unremarkable rock formation — was transformed centuries ago into a more abstract “reality” — a *torii*; and this “reality” was then transformed by Reynolds into a set of form-inducing proportions for a piece of music.

Is *Symphony [Myths]* then a story about a "family"? No, Reynolds insists this is not his "domestic symphony." Rather it is all about what he calls "form and method," a category of compositional music "theory" (a word he dislikes unless it leads to *praxis*) that has received short shrift in the past century.

While this sort of reality-inspired impetus is not always necessary, it nevertheless demonstrates one fundamental aspect of the way Reynolds goes about the creative process — and the importance of proportion in all of his works. Yet a glance through the titles of his works does suggest a fondness for natural objects and events (*Sky; Quick are the Mouths of Earth; Fiery Wind; Eclipse; Archipelago*).

The three works in this CD are linked in various ways, not the least of which is the common element wind. *Ambages* and *Transfigured Wind III* both feature a wind instrument, the solo flute. But *Mistral*, while it also employs wind instruments (brass) with strings and harpsichord, is more fundamentally "wind-built" in the same sense that *Symphony[Myths]* might be called "rock-built" — its construction principles originating in Reynolds' form-musings on the famously brutal wind in the south of France.

Ambages was written for Roger Reynolds' flutist wife, Karen Reynolds, during a 1965 residency at the Rockefeller Foundation's Villa Serbelloni in Bellagio, Italy. It was premiered by her at the villa in the fall of 1965. The composer writes: "As the title suggests ('circuitous paths'), I was concerned with impermanence, tenuous states of balance, the ambiguity in a note (or phrase) falling or rising to a further level after the expectation of such a change has been lulled."

In the approximately twenty years separating *Ambages* and the set of pieces *Transfigured Wind (I-IV)* composed in 1984-85, Reynolds' approach to form and method gradually deepened and coalesced into a "principled" approach to composition accompanied by his development of technical innovations which he has termed "editorial algorithms." This period also saw his increased use of electro-acoustic resources in support of these innovations as well as other techniques such as the spatialization of sounds.

Transfigured Wind I-IV began with Reynolds composing a four-part piece for solo flute. This "seed" composition was then recorded as performed by Harvey Sollberger. The recording was, via computer, subjected to further manipulations to form the basis for the final work — in the case of *Transfigured Wind III* (represented here), a dialog between the computer-manipulated Sollberger performance and the live performers (solo flute and chamber orchestra). Of this dialog-form, Reynolds writes: "These same solo flute passages, as actually played live in a performance, function as four proposals, each longer and with a new character. To them, the ensemble responds with its own supportive materials and transformations. The tape contributes for its part a rather 'painterly' montage of the soloist's lines, providing otherworldly reflections of and upon the soloist's specifics." Working with tape this way allows "prefiguration as well as recall, and simultaneous overlays that dimensionalize the temporal aspects of this work's ongoing fabric."

Written at about the same time as *Transfigured Wind*, *Mistral's* impetus came from Reynolds' encounter with its numbing namesake in the south of France. While, again, Reynolds insists the work is neither illustrative nor programmatic, it nevertheless makes use of four wind-derived performance behaviors: ripples, flutters, swaying, and bending. "Both the brass and the string choirs have an *outward* (assertive, unanimous, blustery) and an *inward* (reflective, individualistic, quiet) behavior." As noted above, the "real" mistral appears in abstract form more than in actual content. The piece is "a series of gradually expanding outbursts of fiercely intense music." This episodic succession of assaults upon the energies of the performers begins about 7 minutes into the work and continues to the end. In fact, the work closes with an outer-directed, 'incandescent line.'"

THREE

Russian poet Anna Akhmatova, near the end of her life, posed her own version of an ancient puzzle:

The poet is not a person, he is only a spirit —
Even if he is blind, like Homer, or, like
Beethoven, deaf —
He sees everything, he hears everything,
And he possesses and uses all of it . . .

[Anna Akhmatova, *Poems*, 1957-1965]

"Everything" includes, for the most part, art-less things. We stumble on a rock and forget it back into a vast background of invisible objects. The poet stumbles over the same rock — then moments, days, perhaps years later shouts (or sings or dances) "cruel stone," rendering that rock immortal.

But what happens between the poet's seeing and his *using* of a rock or anything else included in "everything"? And further, reading "cruel stone" in some context (a poem, a painting, a dance, a musical work), what is it that we then see in the now-poetized rock? Do we recognize it as a common rock? Or has it now become something else?

The problem is this: how does something we normally take for granted — call it "reality" — become transformed by someone — an "artist" — into something — a "work" — with the latent power to rearrange our mental and emotional furniture *if we are vulnerable to it*?

Found in some form in every creation myth, this water-to-wine problem is very old (significantly making an early appearance at a wedding in Cana). It's at the heart of Plato's cave metaphor where the philosopher struggles to reconcile *theoria* and *praxis*. We find it in Goethe who instructed the young Eckermann, "... reality must give both impulse and material.

... Reality must give the motive, the points to be expressed – the kernel; but to work out of it a beautiful animated whole belongs to the poet."

And the problem still looms large today even in the wake of advances in cognitive science. Most psychologists studying the nature of creativity agree that, at a minimum, creative thought processes involve "transformations of the external world and internal representations by forming analogies and bridging conceptual gaps." Still, Akhmatova, Plato, Goethe and a thousand others have said more by exemplification than science can yet say by dissection and definition. Anyone who has opened his or her self to a work of art knows that art is much more than "forming analogies" and "bridging conceptual gaps."

Soetsu Yanagi, pupil of Daisetsu Suzuki and father of the Japanese crafts movement, said: "To 'see' is to go direct to the core; to know the facts about an object of beauty is to go around the periphery. Intellectual discrimination is less essential to an understanding of beauty than the power of intuition that precedes it." Yanagi would say to us: As interesting as all these circuitous word-paths may be, what you really should do is just listen to Roger Reynolds' music – right now.

Stephen Soderberg
Music Division
Library of Congress

Live from June in Buffalo

With this release, the June in Buffalo Festival initiates a series of planned publications representing its activities in sound and text. The sound will present first recordings of important repertoire composed by our resident senior artists; the texts will be transcriptions of significant lecture presentations by these same resident composers.

Roger Reynolds has been an important and continuing presence at the Festival since 1986, one whose contributions have been among the most substantial and generous. Therefore it is with considerable pride that we embark upon this new endeavor, "Live from June in Buffalo", featuring these important compositions by Reynolds in superb live performance by our resident soloists and ensembles.

David Felder

Birge-Cary Professor of Composition

SUNY at Buffalo

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Rachel Rudich has achieved distinction as a performer of brilliance and sensitivity who brings her virtuosity to the solo and chamber music repertoire of the twentieth century. She has appeared with The New Music Consort, The Group for Contemporary Music, Speculum Musicae, Parnassus, The Composers Conference Chamber Players, and The Los Angeles Philharmonic's New Music Group. She performs as a solo recitalist throughout the United States, and appears regularly at the June in Buffalo Festival in New York and the Composers Conference and Chamber Music Center at Wellesley College in Massachusetts. Rudich has premiered works by Pierre Boulez, Elliott Carter, George Crumb, Mario Davidovsky, Robert Dick, David Felder, Karl Kohn, Mel Powell, Roger Reynolds, Harvey Sollberger, and Preston Trombly.

Her awards include First Prize in the National Association of Composers' Young Performers Competition, the Kreauter Musical Foundation Award for Outstanding Achievement in Chamber

Music, the Artists International Young Musicians Award which led to her New York debut at Carnegie Recital Hall, and appointment to the roster of Affiliate Artists. She has received recording grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Alice M. Ditson Fund, and the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, and can be heard on Bridge Records, Centaur, CRI, Koch International, Newport Classic, New World, Opus One, Perspectives of New Music, and Sony Classical. Her latest compact disc is *The Universal Flute*, on the Music and Arts label.

Rachel Rudich received her B.A. degree from Goddard College and her M.M. and D.M.A. degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with Thomas Nyfenger and Harvey Sollberger. She is currently a faculty member at Pomona College and is Professor of Flute at California Institute of the Arts, where she is also solo flutist with the CalArts New Century Players.

Harvey Sollberger is currently Music Director of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus and a member of the faculty of the University of California, San Diego. Throughout his career he has been active as a composer, conductor, flutist and organizer of concerts. His work in composition has been recognized by an award from the National Institute of Arts and Letters, two Guggenheim Fellowships and by commissions from the Koussevitzky Foundation, Fromm Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Walter W. Naumberg Foundation, Music from Japan and the New York State Council on the Arts. His most recent work (2002) is an "epic" for solo clarinet, *Tri(e)ste*.

Currently represented on over 100 commercial recordings, Sollberger has worked with or been performed by such groups as the New York Philharmonic, Speculum Musicae, the San Francisco Symphony, Pierre Boulez' Domaine Musical, the San Diego Symphony, June in Buffalo and the New York New Music Ensemble. He has taught at Columbia University, Manhattan School of Music, Indiana University, Amherst College and, most recently, UCSD, where he often conducts the new music ensemble, Sonor.

Jesse Levine, conductor/violist, is Professor of Viola and Chair of the String Department at the Yale School of Music. He is Conductor-in-Residence of the Conservatory of Music's Purchase Symphony Orchestra at State University of New York, Purchase. He has, in addition, been a faculty member at the State University of New York at Buffalo, State University of New York at Stony Brook, and Peabody Conservatory of Music, Baltimore.

A noted violist, Levine has been Principal Violist of the Buffalo, Dallas, Baltimore, and New Jersey symphony orchestras, and he has appeared as conductor, viola recitalist, and chamber musician in Europe, South America, Israel, Australia, Mexico, and throughout the United States.

From 1981 to 2001, Levine held the positions of Music Director and Conductor of the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra. He has also conducted the Orquesta del Principado de Asturias in Spain, the Chappaqua Orchestra, the orchestra of the Elliott Feld Ballet, the Puerto Rico Symphony, Granada Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Brooklyn Philharmonic, Buffalo Philharmonic, Orchestra of the Kennedy Center, Orchestra of São Paulo, Orchestre Symphonique Française, and the New York Chamber Symphony at Lincoln Center. Levine is known for his work in contemporary music, and has been frequently invited to conduct the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in its annual North American Music Festival, as well as to participate in the annual June in Buffalo Festivals.

Roger Reynolds was educated in music and science at the University of Michigan. His compositions incorporate elements of theater, digital signal processing, dance, video, and real-time computer spatialization, in a signature multidimensionality of engagement. The central thread weaving through Reynolds' varied career entwines language with the spatial aspects of music. This center first emerged in his notorious music-theater work, *The Emperor of Ice Cream* (1961-62; 8 singers, 3 instrumentalists; text: Wallace Stevens), and is carried forward in the VOICESPACE series (quadraphonic tape compositions on texts by Coleridge, García-Márquez, Borges, Issa, Beckett, Stevens, and Joyce), *Odyssey* (an unstaged opera for 2 singers, 2 recitants, large ensemble, and multichannel computer sound; bilingual text: Beckett), and *JUSTICE* (1999-2001; soprano, actress, percussionist, computer sound and real-time spatialization, with staging; text: Aeschylus).

In addition to his composing, Reynolds' writing, lecturing, organization of musical events and teaching have prompted numerous residencies at international festivals (Darmstadt, Music Today (Tokyo), the Helsinki and Zagreb Biennales, Why Note? (Dijon), Time of Music (Viitasaari), Musica Viva (Munich), the Agora Festival (Paris), and the Bath and Edinburgh festivals in England. He was co-director of the New York Philharmonic's Horizons '84, has been a frequent participant in the Warsaw Autumn festivals, and was commissioned by Toru Takemitsu to create a program for the Suntory Hall International Series. Reynolds' regular masterclass activity in American universities

(Yale, Columbia, Princeton, Harvard, CUNY, MIT, UCLA, UC Berkeley, etc.) also extends outward, internationally: to the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Ircam in Paris, to Latin America and Asia, to Thessaloniki. His extensive orchestral catalog includes commissions from the Philadelphia, Los Angeles and BBC orchestras. In 1971, Reynolds founded the Center for Music Experiment (now the Center for Research in Computing and the Arts) at UCSD with support from the Rockefeller Foundation. He also serves regularly on international juries including those for the Prix de Rome, the Ircam/EIC Reading Panel, the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne's International Forum, the ISCM, and the International Computer Music Conference.

In 1988, perplexed by a John Ashbery poem, *Self Portrait in a Convex Mirror*, Reynolds responded with *Whispers Out of Time*, a string orchestra work which earned him the prestigious Pulitzer Prize. Critic Kyle Gann has noted that he was the first experimentalist to be so honored since Charles Ives. Reynolds' writing -- beginning with the influential book, *MIND MODELS* (1975), and continuing, most recently, with *FORM AND METHOD: Composing Music* (2002) -- has also appeared widely in Asian, American and European journals. His music, recorded on Auvidis/Montaigne, Mode, New World, Wergo, Lovely, and Neuma, among others, is published exclusively by C. F. Peters Corporation, New York.

In 1998, Mode Records released *WATERSHED*, the first DVD in Dolby Digital 5.1 to feature music composed expressly for a multichannel medium. "As in all art making, there is a kind of 'alchemy' going on [producing] a richly nuanced and authentic result," wrote Richard Zvonar in *Surround Professional*. In the same year, The Library of Congress established the Roger Reynolds Special Collection. Writing in *The New Yorker*, Andrew Porter called him "at once an explorer and a visionary composer, whose works can lead listeners to follow him into new regions of emotion and meaning."

Credits

All recordings were made, live, at June in Buffalo concerts by staff recording engineers.

Richard Boulanger was Mr. Reynolds' Musical Assistant for *Transfigured Wind III*.

Editing (in the case of *Transfigured Wind III*) was done by Chris Mercer, enhancements and mastering by Josef Kucera, both in the facilities of the University of California, San Diego.

Ambages was written in Boswil, Switzerland, in 1965, and is dedicated to flutist Karen Reynolds.

Transfigured Wind III was written in the Spring of 1984, for the Los Angeles Cultural Olympics, and is a reworking of materials first essayed in *Transfigured Wind II*, composed earlier for the New York Philharmonic's *Horizons '84*. Its creation was supported by funds from The Systems Development Foundation, and the Center for Music Experiment at the University of California, San Diego.

Mistral was written, jointly, for Harvey Sollberger, Charles Wuorinen and Odaline (Cha Chi) de la Martinez, and their respective ensembles: The Group for Contemporary Music (New York), and Lontano (London). It was underwritten by a consortium of radio stations in the New York City area.

Roger Reynolds' music is handled exclusively by C. F. Peters Corporation, New York.

For further information: <http://www.rogerreynolds.com>