

My teacher, Sylvia Marlowe, felt strongly, as I do, that the harpsichord, notwithstanding its past glories, was a 20th century instrument. I think we agreed too that the *harpsichordist* is also a contemporary instrument, a conviction that prevented neither of us from devoting our lives to the revitalization of the great literature of the 18th century. The *avant garde*, for Sylvia, was as much the generation of Bach, Scarlatti and Couperin as the generation of Stravinsky and Bartók, and later, Virgil Thomson, Henry Brant and Elliot Carter; she lived to see some of the works of these latter composers become classics, especially the pieces she commissioned. There is no doubt that she helped create a 20th century consciousness of the harpsichord. More than that: she was deeply interested in having wonderful, spicy, "modern" music to play.

We both felt that there were qualities in 20th century music that greatly benefitted from harpsichord performance. Harpsichords sharpen the focus of cubist elements, for example - clean edges, straight lines, primary colors - and the sharp contrasts of the various registrations can underline and spotlight such textures as balalaika-strumming, bagpipe-wheezing, calliope-creaking, foot-stomping, drum-rattling and fly-buzzing. Some of the more exotic registrations we used - and composers expected - are now fading from fashion. I remember the harpsichord builder William Dowd, among others, preferring to purge these lusty modernities rather than repair them; and I remember Elliot Carter "reminding" me (in Avery Fisher Hall) about a spot in his Double Concerto where he asked for a 16' stop, and my "reminding" him that my harpsichord didn't have one.

Our collection outlines the revival of the harpsichord in the 20th and into the 21st century, perhaps its second childhood. We are constantly astonished how some of the greatest composers realized the potential of this fascinating new toy. (A fine account of the revival is given, with excellent scholarship and lots of gossip, by Larry Palmer in his *Harpsichord in America*, 1989). The present selection is not complete in any way. All the recordings are from live performances except for the complete *Peculiar Plants*, Bartók's *Adieu, Staccato and Fly*, Debussy's *Sonata "#4"* and Sylvia's version of *Pine Top's Boogie*. In addition, all are premieres either of the works or of the arrangements, except for the Falla and Ligeti pieces and Brant's *Divinity*. I definitely admit to bias here - these are among my favorite contemporary harpsichord pieces. I hope some of them will become yours.

Kenneth Cooper, New York 2019

Warm thanks to Peter Weitzner for his many hours editing and digitizing the audio as well as the written sources, and creating the website.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS:**

### **CHAPTER I: REVIVALS (1874-1907)**

- 1. Mussorgky: *Pictures at an Exhibition* (Two Harpsichords)**
- 2. Sousa: *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (Two Harpsichords)**
- 3. Saint-Saëns: *The Swan* (Gamba, Harpsichord)**
- 4. Massenet: *Thérèse - Menuet d'amour* (Harpsichord, Ensemble)**

## **CHAPTER II: NEO-CLASSICS (1917-1926)**

5. Debussy: *Sonata "No. 4"* (Oboe, Horn, Harpsichord)
6. Krenek: *Concertino, Op. 27* (Flute, Violin, Harpsichord, Strings)
7. Falla: *Concerto* (Violin, Oboe, Flute, Clarinet, Cello, Harpsichord)

## **CHAPTER III: NEW REPERTOIRE FOR CHILDREN (1908-1948)**

8. Busoni: *Sonatina ad usum infantis* (Harpsichord solo)
9. Stravinsky: *Three Easy Pieces; Five Easy Pieces* (Two Harpsichords)
10. Kabalevsky: *14 Childrens' Pieces, Op. 27* (Harpsichord solo)
11. Bartók: *Evening in Transylvania* (Harpsichord solo)
12. Bartók: *Staccato* (Harpsichord solo)
13. Bartók: *From the Diary of a Fly* (Harpsichord solo)
14. Bartók: *Harmonics* (Harpsichord solo)
15. Bartók: *Ostinato* (Harpsichord solo)
16. Bartók; *Adieu* (Banjo, Harpsichord)
17. Thomson: *Walking Song* (Two Harpsichords)
18. Moore: *Said the Piano to the Harpsichord* (Piano, Harpsichord, Narrator)

## **CHAPTER IV: CONCEPTS AND PORTRAITS (1954-2008)**

19. Thomson: *The Harp* (Harpsichord solo)
20. Shostakovich: *The Gadfly - Tarantella* (Piano, Harpsichord)
21. Ligeti: *Continuum* (Harpsichord solo)
22. Flynn: *Drive* (Harpsichord solo)
23. Brant: *Divinity* (Harpsichord, Brass Quintet)
24. Rieti: *Trittico* (Two Harpsichords)
25. Starer: *Yizkor/Anima Aeterna* (Flute, Harpsichord)
26. Hamley: *The Unveiling* (Piano, Harpsichord)
27. Bond: *Peculiar Plants - Interview* (Harpsichord, Narrator)
- 27a. Bond: *Peculiar Plants* (Harpsichord, Narrator)

## **CHAPTER V: RAGTIME, SWING, STRIDE and FOLK (1897-1973)**

28. Brant: *Boccherini's Minuet* (Piano, Harpsichord, Flute, English Horn, Cello, Bass, Percussion)
29. Brant: *Country Dances in Swing* (Harpsichord, Bass, Percussion)
30. Krell: *Mississippi Rag* (Four Harpsichords, Strings)
31. Joplin: *The Easy Winners* (Harpsichord solo)
32. Joplin & Marshall: *Swipesy - Cake Walk* (Harpsichord solo)
33. Johnson: *Carolina Shout* (Two Harpsichords, Bass, Percussion)
34. Smith: *Pine Top's Boogie Woogie* (Harpsichord, Bass, Percussion)
35. Crofut: *The Wind* (Vocal, Banjo, Harpsichord)
36. Cooper: *The 78 rpm Rag* (Harpsichord solo)
37. Joplin: *Maple Leaf Rag* (Harpsichord solo)

## **CHAPTER VI: VIDEO**

38. Paget: *Romania!* (Flute, Harpsichord)

## CHAPTER I: REVIVALS (1874-1907)

### 1. 1874 Modeste Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition* (arr. Kenneth Cooper & Gerald Ranck, 1987).

Kenneth Cooper & Gerald Ranck, harpsichords.

Gardner Museum, Boston (11/29/1992).

Harpsichords: Eric Herz (GR), Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer (KC).

**Promenade - Gnomus - Promenade - Il Vecchio Castello - Promenade - Tuileries (Children Quarrelling After Play) - Bydlo - Promenade - Ballet of the Chicks in their Shells - "Samuel" Goldenberg and "Schmuÿle" - Limoges, the Market Place - Catacombae (Sepulcrum Romanum) - Con Mortuis in Lingua Mortua - The Hut on Fowl's Legs (Baba-Yaga) - The Great Gate of Kiev**

The impetus to play Mussorgsky's *Pictures* on two harpsichords arose from a well-lubricated gathering after a duo concert in which Gerald Ranck and I probably played the Couperin Duets and the Bach C major Concerto. Or it might have been after we "re-lived" the famous Handel-Scarlatti competition at the Metropolitan Museum (he was Handel). We had been friends since the 1960s, fellow students of Sylvia Marlowe and frequent collaborators, most notably in the duel scene of Milos Forman's *Valmont*. At that party, as I recall, he said "we need another piece to play", and I said "How about Beethoven's Ninth?" and he said "How about *Pictures at an Exhibition*?" His idea was the better one and you can hear the result of two quite different harpsichords dealing with a quite new orchestrational challenge. We tried to capture a Russian chant style in the various *Promenades*, the requisite humor in the *Ballet of the Chicks*, and as much noise as we could conjure up for *Baba-Yaga* and *The Great Gate of Kiev*. The demands of the latter prompted us to use our new technique of playing inside the harpsichord. Special thanks to Richard Taruskin for affording us insight about the Samuel-Schmuÿle duet, that the reason for Mussorgsky's simultaneous combination of the two motives - the pompous one and the whimpering one - was to indicate that these two qualities reveal different aspects of the *same* person, that underneath every pompous braggart is a whining complainer. This sort of person, of course, exists in all ethnicities, as do the gossipers in the marketplace, the quarreling children and the wicked gnome.

### 2. 1896 John Philip Sousa: *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (arr. Kenneth Cooper & Gerald Ranck, 1992).

Kenneth Cooper & Gerald Ranck, harpsichords.

Gardner Museum, Boston (11/29/1992).

Harpsichords: Eric Herz (GR), Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer (KC).

Having just performed *The Great Gate of Kiev*, the inevitable question arose:

"What could we possibly do as an encore?"

- 3. 1886 Camille Saint-Saëns: *The Swan* (arr. Richard Taruskin, 1971).  
Richard Taruskin, viola da gamba; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.  
Columbia University, New York (4/26/1971).  
Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

In 1971, Richard Taruskin, now America's most brilliant musicologist, but then an amazingly energetic cellist and conductor - and high school friend - agreed to play a gamba-harpsichord recital with me. I don't think there was anything that wasn't on the program that night. Of course, we needed an encore, although we were prepared to play that "Pergolesi" *Scherzando* with all the Stravinsky "wrong" notes, and one of the Webern cello-piano pieces, which the composer might even have preferred on gamba and harpsichord. But one day Taruskin showed up with his new immaculate French Baroque version of the Saint-Saëns classic, *inégales, agréments* and all, and life was changed forever.

- 4. 1907 Jules Massenet: *Thérèse - Menuet d'amour* (arr. Kenneth Cooper).  
Ani Kavafian, violin; Walter Trampler, viola; Fred Sherry, cello; Howard Van Hyning, percussion; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.  
92nd St. YMHA, New York: *Harpsichordiana III* (1/29/1980).  
Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

The first use of a harpsichord in a 20th century work occurred in Massenet's opera *Thérèse*, in a scene where Armand tries to convince Thérèse to run away with him and "remember that summer night in Versailles [before the revolution], when we opened the ball with that tender Menuet, the *Menuet d'amour*." The use of a delicate harpsichord minuet overlaid with the *verismo* vocal style characteristic of the rest of the opera [omitted here], not only accentuates the unrealistic lover's expectations, but also sends a political message: after the French revolution (1789), minuets were reminders of aristocracy and could get one into, as they say, hot water. Massenet's harpsichordist was the celebrated pianist and pedagogue Louis Dièmer.

## **CHAPTER II: NEO-CLASSICS (1917-1926)**

- 5. [1917] Claude Debussy: *Sonata "No. 4"* (Reconstruction by Kenneth Cooper, 2011).  
*Hobocord*: Ann Ellsworth, horn; Keve Wilson, oboe; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.  
Manhattan School of Music, New York (7/5/2012, premiere recording, produced by Andrew Bove). Harpsichord: David Jacques Way.  
Ellsworth CD: *Late Night Thoughts*.**

**Prélude - Scherzando - Mouvement**

Debussy only lived long enough to complete the first three of a projected set of six sonatas. On the last page of his third (violin) sonata, completed in 1917, he wrote: "the fourth will be for oboe, horn and harpsichord." His biographer Leon Vallas wrote (1933) that "This interesting blend of sonorities...would have been the first instance in modern music of the use of that old double-keyboard instrument which composers and interpreters are endeavoring to revive today." There were a few precedents, which Debussy may not have known (Massenet, Busoni, Vaughan Williams and Stravinsky - 1st version of *Les Noces*), but unlike his colleagues, he was planning a major chamber work in a new style, one in which, as Paul Dukas reported (1926), he "felt the need to simplify and purify his music, to remove from it all the marks of professional virtuosity." Debussy had previously (10/23/1915) written to Poulenc, "At this moment we should try to regain our old traditions: we have abandoned their beauties, but they are still there."

Our reconstruction of the fourth sonata transcribes three Debussy works. The first movement is drawn from the opening section of *Le Boite à joujoux* [*The Toy-Box*, 1913], which informs us how the various toys awake in the morning. Referring to Debussy's eight-year-old daughter, his publisher Durand noted (1925) that the composer "was getting himself in the mood for the ballet by extracting secrets from Chouchou's dolls." Debussy had discovered (1913) that "The soul of a doll is mysterious...it doesn't easily tolerate the kind of clap-trap so many human souls put up with." Our second movement is the mischievous *Etude #9* (originally #10) "*pour les notes répétées*" (1915); as he wrote to Durand (1915), "There's no need to make technical exercises more somber just to appear more serious; a little charm never spoiled anything." For a finale we feature the perpetual motion *Mouvement* from *Images I* (1901). A full account of Debussy's sonata plan - which Pierre Boulez (1997) called "a fantastic idea" - can be had in my edition of his *Sonata "No. 4"*, published in 2011 by International Music Company (#3651).

**6. 1924 Ernst Krenek: *Concertino for Flute, Violin, Harpsichord & Strings*, Op. 27**

**Judith Mendenhall, flute; Sonya Monosoff, violin; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord; Westchester Chorale Orchestra/Daniel Paget. Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York (5/17/1986, US premiere). Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

**Toccata (Im Tempo sehr frei) - Sarabande (Largo) - Scherzo (Allegro) - Air [Canon] (Molto moderato) - Finale (Allegro moderato)**

Krenek writes that "the revival of the concerto grosso style was [often] based on...wishful thinking: that by restoring the outward appearance of [18th] century music, one could also restore the harmonious social organization that supposedly existed at that time and had produced a happy relationship

between the composer and his public." Krenek's *Concertino*, therefore, takes the content of Baroque music more seriously than did, say, Stravinsky, who was more concerned with its outer trappings. A neo-classical toccata by Ravel or Prokofiev, for example, is an essay in perpetual motion a la Scarlatti; but Krenek's *Toccat*a, the *Concertino's* opening movement, allows the power and fantasy of the great Bach and Buxtehude organ toccatas to be its inspiration. Not only is its tempo "very free" but texturally, tonally, rhythmically and in other ways, improvisatory freedom is the order of the day, as it was for Bach in his exploratory organ works. "Unpredictability", Krenek wrote in 1947, "is one of the most jealously guarded prerogatives of genius." The *Sarabande* is infused with tremendous pathos, perhaps stirred by the mighty sarabande that closes Bach's *Saint Matthew Passion*. Here the flute and strings play the "simple", the violin, harpsichord and continuo (celli and bass) play the "double" (ornamented variation). In the *Scherzo*, the flute seems to be getting even with the others for not allowing her to play any of the ornaments in the sarabande; she plays them anyway, constantly disrupting the scherzo to do so. In the beautiful *Air*, the flute and violin dialogue in a passionate canon, soaring over a one-chord *ostinato* "borrowed" from the second of Arnold Schönberg's *Sechs kleine Klavierstücke* (Op.19, 1911). The virtuoso *Finale* is primarily playful, sometimes tying loose ends together, and occasionally loosening those ends deliberately (such as at the very end). As noted in our 1986 program note, "we are proud to be able to restore, after 62 years, a classic to the repertoire. We could not have done this without the generous assistance of The Harpsichord Society, Sylvia Marlowe, founder."

#### **7. 1926 Manuel de Falla: *Concerto***

**Ani Kavafian, violin; Henry Schuman, oboe; Carol Wincenc, flute; Charles Russo, clarinet; Frederick Zlotkin, cello; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**92nd St. YMHA, New York: *Harpsichordiana I* (11/14/1979).**

**Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

#### **Allegro - Lento - Vivace**

Falla's effervescent *Concerto*, composed for Wanda Landowska, always struck me as re-invented Scarlatti bordering on the satiric, as Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony*, for example, does for Mozart. When I played it in Ottawa with Eduardo Mata (1986), he said "nothing of the sort. This is Falla's greatest work, and it is a very serious, very contemporary work." While still processing why a contemporary work had to be serious, I learned quite a bit from him about how dissonant the piece really is, and how that element outweighs some of the others. The middle movement portrays (in five minutes) a 3-hour procession celebrating the June 3, 1926 holiday *In Festo Corporis Christi*. In this display of brilliant color, dazzling design and spiritual excitement, the immensely heavy floats are carried by dozens of burly men,

to the accompaniment of singing and chanting. The effect is riveting, and the apparent appearance of the body of Jesus (the cello solo), the climactic point.

### **CHAPTER III: NEW REPERTOIRE FOR CHILDREN (1908-1948)**

**8. 1916 Ferruccio Busoni: *Sonatina ad usum infantis Madeline M. Americanae pro Clavicimbalo composita [Sonatina (#3) for the use of the young American Madeline M., composed for harpsichord]* [BV 268].**

**Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**92nd St. YMHA, New York: *Harpsichordiana I* (NY premiere, 11/14/1979). Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

**Molto tranquillo - Andantino melancolico - Vivace (alla Marcia) - Molto tranquillo - Polonaise (un poco cerimonioso)**

In 1910, the great composer-pianist Ferruccio Busoni visited America and discovered the world's finest harpsichord builder, Arnold Dolmetsch, gainfully employed by the Chickering Piano Company in Cambridge, MA. He thought Dolmetsch's English harpsichords were "magnificent" and had one sent to Berlin. (There exists a lovely photograph of Busoni sitting at this harpsichord in his Berlin studio.) When he returned to the U.S. in 1915, he taught in New York and among his students, apparently, was the young American girl Madeline M., for whom he composed his 5-movement harpsichord *Sonatina*. The work is a gem of neo-romantic eclecticism, beginning with a prelude and fughetta in the style of Puccini, a witty but satiric Mahleresque march, and finally a Chopin-like polonaise stretching the capabilities of the harpsichord to its utmost. The work is playful and humorous, but like all wit, has its core somewhere near the truth.

**9. 1914-17 Igor Stravinsky: *Three Easy Pieces; Five Easy Pieces* (arr. Kenneth Cooper & Sylvia Marlowe, 1976).**

**Sylvia Marlowe & Kenneth Cooper, harpsichords.**

**Carnegie Recital Hall, New York (3/30/1976).**

**Harpsichords: William Dowd.**

**Harpsichord Music Society LP 901: *Two Harpsichords Live*.**

**March - Waltz - Polka; Andante - Espanola - Balalaika - Napolitana - Galop**

Stravinsky's *Three Easy Pieces*, although dedicated to Alfredo Casella, Erik Satie and Serge Diaghilev, were composed in 1914-15 with Diaghilev's piano-playing in mind. Diaghilev, the great Russian ballet master, did not play the piano. Hence the *secondo* part is not only easy but totally static, a minimalistic effect enabling Stravinsky to take satiric shots at some of his friends and their popular styles. The *Five Easy Pieces*, composed in 1916-17 for his children Theodore and Mika, have easy tops rather than easy bottoms,

and were dedicated to Eugenia Errazuriz, the wealthy Chilean who had introduced him to Picasso. Sylvia Marlowe, aware of the "many years pianists have been playing harpsichord music", enjoyed the "switch" of doing the opposite, and found these early works of "my long time friend Stravinsky" to be "enchanting."

**10. 1935 Dmitri Kabalevsky: *14 Childrens' Pieces, Op. 27* (arr. Kenneth Cooper).**

**Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**Grand Canyon Chamber Music Festival, Arizona (9/16/1994).**

**Harpsichord: Robert Walker.**

**Quick March - A Little Song - A Little Fairy Tale - An Old Dance - A Little Joke - Scherzo - A Little Waltz - A Little Sad Tale - Having Fun - The Horseman - Dance on the Lawn - Etude - Sonatina - Scherzando**

Many of us have played these gems as little kids - the *Horseman*, the *Dance on the Lawn*, the scary Russian fairy tales, the 21-second *Etude*, the *Little Joke*. There is genuine mastery in creating one-minute stories, scenes, songs and dances, playable by a child and dazzling to an adult. In this connection, Kabalevsky (London, 1988) quoted writer Maxim Gorki, who was asked "How should books for children be written?" to which he replied, "The same as for adults, only better!" (Cf. Sayaka Kanno, 2008). We met Kabalevsky when he visited New York in 1959 and found him to be a genial gentleman with a big smile who spoke to us in excellent English. In returning to this repertoire in mid-life, transitioning from piano to harpsichord, I definitely experienced a second childhood, finding fascinating new angles in these familiar pieces. The final piece (*Scherzando*) appears as No. 2 in Kabalevsky's 1943 collection of *Preludes, Op. 38*; it is a setting of a Russian folk-tune (**На Иванушке чапан** - *Na Ivanushke chapan* - *Little Johnny's wearing a big coat*). The harpsichord, decorated with a Native American design, was built by the physicist Robert Walker as a gift for his lovely wife, Dorothy.

**11. 1908 Béla Bartók: *Ten Easy Pieces - Evening in Transylvania* (arr. Kenneth Cooper).**

**Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**Harpsichord Recital, WNCN, New York (11/22/1983).**

**Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

Transylvania, notwithstanding Count Dracula fans, is a beautiful country with gentle rolling hills in northern Romania (formerly Hungary). I remember it well, having toured there in 1963, and as our touring company mistakenly sent the harpsichord to Warsaw instead of Bucharest, I had several nights off as the Clarion Orchestra toured this lovely area. Dinner one night, I recall, consisted only of delicious pastries. In a WNYC radio interview on the *Ask the Composer* series at the Brooklyn Museum in New York City (7/2/1944),

Bartók explained that "*Evening in Transylvania* is an original composition, that is, themes of my own invention, but it's in the same style as a Hungarian Transylvanian folk-tune. There are two themes - the first one is a *parlando-rubato* rhythm and the second one is more in a dance-like rhythm. The second one is more or less an imitation of a peasant flute playing, and the first one, the *parlando-rubato*, is in imitation of a vocal melody. The form is A-B-A-B-A."

**12-15. 1926-39 Béla Bartók: *Mikrokosmos* (arranged by K. Cooper).  
Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**12. #124 *Staccato***

**Kenneth Cooper Studio, New York (5/6/1999), produced by Silas Brown.**

**Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

**Classic Raps CD: *Mother Goose and More*.**

**13. #142 *From the Diary of a Fly***

**Kenneth Cooper Studio, New York (5/6/1999), produced by Silas Brown.**

**Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer**

**Classic Raps CD: *Mother Goose and More*.**

**14. #102 *Harmonics***

**Harpsichord Recital, WNCN, New York (11/22/1983).**

**Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

**15. #146 *Ostinato***

**Harpsichord Recital, WNCN, New York (11/22/1983).**

**Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

In the preface to Béla Bartók's six-volume piano cycle *Mikrokosmos*, the composer writes that "a number of pieces...are suitable for cembalo." If Bartók had known really fine harpsichords, he might have exploited the instrument much as he did the piano and the string quartet, seeking new sounds and new methods of playing. The fabric of *Staccato*, for instance, is similar to that of the *pizzicato* movement in his 4th string quartet, which, incidentally, might sound terrific on harpsichords. In *Staccato*, I use a hand cluster where the composer might have employed his famous "Bartók" *pizzicato*, snapped off the fingerboards of his string instruments. In preparing *From the Diary of a Fly* for publication, Bartók recommended an illustration to help us visualize the fly's stimulating day, which, needless to say, didn't turn out too well. But by distracting the listener with such an amusing personality, he conceals a phenomenal little essay in polytonality. *Harmonics*, on the piano, requires a technique of holding down some notes quietly so

that their overtones (harmonics) can be heard. As this lovely effect is not possible on the harpsichord, I have invented another way to play the piece - a Henry Cowell-like technique we used later in our 1987 performance of *The Great Gate of Kiev* (see #1 Mussorsgky: *Pictures at an Exhibition*).

**16. 1908/9 Béla Bartók: *For Children II [Slovak Songs]* - 38. *Adieu* [At Parting](arr. Kenneth Cooper).**

**Bill Crofut, tenor banjo; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**Produced by Michael Whiton; Hellerman Studio, Weston, CT (6/3/1975).**

**Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Bill Crofut.**

**Crofut LP: *Folk and Baroque*.**

I toured with folksinger and banjoist Bill Crofut for many years with our bizarre program *Folk and Baroque*, which combined harpsichord and banjo in a varied repertoire - Bach, Vivaldi, Ragtime, Folk and, yes, Bartók. It was in the latter's works that the harpsichord most resembled the enchanting Hungarian *cymbalom*. Our 1975 session, engineered by Michael Whiton, was recorded at the studio of that famous member of the Weavers, Fred Hellerman, which he bought, according to his son Caleb, "with Alice's Restaurant money". This plaintive *Adieu* is an authentic Slovak folksong [*Este sa raz obzriet mam*], listed as #80 [*Bucsu*] in the complete *For Children* collection, and variously translated as *I look back upon you once more* or *Have a look again*. [A version can be found on youtube, sung by Janko Blaho.] In Bartók's setting, Bill always played his tenor banjo, a huge monstrosity that looked awful but sounded gorgeous. One night he turned up without it, explaining to me that it was too heavy to carry. Bill, the genius story-teller, however, told quite a different tale to the audience - they heard about how he had left the tenor banjo in his barn and how his horse had stepped on it.

**17. 1945 Virgil Thomson: *Walking Song* (arr. Sylvia Marlowe & Kenneth Cooper).**

**Sylvia Marlowe & Kenneth Cooper, harpsichords.**

**Carnegie Recital Hall, New York (1/12/1972).**

**Harpsichords: William Dowd.**

**Harpsichord Music Society LP 901: *Two Harpsichords Live*.**

The *Walking Song* originated in the 17-minute documentary *Tuesday in November*, made by John Houseman and Nicolas Ray for the United States Office of War Information in 1945. The film explains how the American election process is supposed to work. Sylvia Marlowe's long-time friend Virgil Thomson, who wrote the music for the soundtrack, was in the audience the night of our concert in 1972. In the movie, the *Walking Song* [beginning at 9:10 and lasting 2'18"] is sweetly orchestrated, with a lovely clarinet solo over pizzicato strings (there's even a quiet fugal setting of *Yankee Doodle*),

and is somewhat more up-tempo than Sylvia's lyrical version, suggesting that American elections may have been a cheerier affair back then.

- 18. 1948 Douglas Moore: *Said the Piano to the Harpsichord*  
Wendy Young, harpsichord; Kenneth Cooper, piano; Josephine Mongiardo, narrator.  
Carnegie Recital Hall, New York: *A Tribute to Sylvia Marlowe* (concert premiere, 12/10/1985).  
Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Hendrik Broekman.**

Douglas Moore, who in the 1960s was one of my professors at Columbia University, wrote the scenario for this delightful children's record in 1948. It was originally released on one of those yellow Vinylite 78rpm discs by Young People's Records (#411). [See the brilliant book by David Bonner: *Revolutionizing Children's Records*, Scarecrow, 2011.] Sylvia Marlowe was the harpsichordist on that record - which we know because she told us - but neither she nor Moore could remember who the pianist was. Promoted as "Pre-tested for children", the liner notes read: "The Piano is set forth in a charming story, as an instrument contrasted with its forerunner, the Harpsichord. The mechanical and technical make up of the instruments is presented on a musical level that indicates the source of the instrumental color." In the course of writing this little tale, Moore composed possibly the only piece ever written for piano and harpsichord alone (*The Old Grey Mare*). [The Shostakovich and Hamley pieces in this archive (##20 & 26) are our arrangements.] The performance in 1985, its concert premiere, appeared on our concert *A Tribute to Sylvia Marlowe* and features harpsichordist Wendy Young and soprano Josephine Mongiardo, who here delivers her inimitable Wanda Landowska imitation.

#### **CHAPTER IV: CONCEPTS AND PORTRAITS (1954-2008)**

- 19. 1954 Virgil Thomson: *The Harp* (arr. Kenneth Cooper).  
Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.  
Loeb Drama Center, Cambridge, MA (7/22/1981).  
Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard.**

Virgil Thomson never admits it, but there is only one harpist he could possibly have been admiring and poking fun at here. We all know Harpo Marx, that astonishing comedian who always provided the necessary non-comic relief in a context that kept us laughing often to the point of pain. There is sophistication in this writing, but it would be cruel to reveal it.

- 20. 1955 Dmitri Shostakovich: *The Gadfly* - #12 *Tarantella* (arr. Kenneth Cooper & Gena Raps, 2000).  
Gena Raps, piano; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.  
Harpsichord unidentified.**

**Kerrytown Concert Hall, Ann Arbor, MI (1/23/2000).**

In the film *The Gadfly*, the Italian rebels mount a *Tarantella* to distract the Austrians, who are about to invade their quarters. I played this exuberant dance on a piano-harpsichord program in 2000 with my high-school pal, Gena Raps, now a celebrated pianist and faculty member at the (New School) Mannes College of Music.

**21. 1968 György Ligeti: *Continuum***

**Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**Gershwin Theatre, Brooklyn College, New York (3/25/1973), recorded by David Hancock. Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

Ligeti's *Passacaglia*, *Hungarian Rock* and *Continuum* might well be considered the century's most original solo harpsichord works. The composer relates in an interview (10/23/1978) that "I often work with acoustical illusions...for example, creating the illusion of a certain rhythmical succession which is not actually played. In...*Continuum*, the harpsichordist executes a succession of extremely rapid notes, if possible at the rate of 15 or 16 attacks per second. After a moment, one forgets this first speed, and one hears a second layer, a second rhythmic stratum, which is the result of the frequency of the appearance of certain notes...The distribution [of these notes]...becomes in the flow of time a pattern, a rhythmical Gestalt, which is not actually performed as such." [Published in *Interface VIII* pp11-34; trans. Josh Ronsen, 2003]. According to harpsichordist Elizabeth Chojnacka, "The fast tempo tends to fuse the successive sounds in such a way that the *prestissimo* gives an impression of near immobility." [Philips LP 6526 009]. The use of two keyboards to create a fusion or confusion of sonorities had been successful in the works of Couperin, Rameau and occasionally Bach (*Goldberg Variations*), but here Ligeti creates an astronomical effect (the closest we'll ever get to experiencing the "music of the spheres", if there is any), asking listeners to forget they are hearing a harpsichord. Even harpsichordists have to admit that is a good thing once in a while.

**22. 1973 George Flynn: *Drive* (Composed for Kenneth Cooper, 1973).**

**Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**Gershwin Theatre, Brooklyn College, New York (3/25/1973), recorded by David Hancock. Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

My Columbia colleague George Flynn is a superlative pianist and composer who wrote some very alarming piano works, among them his *Three Preludes* in which clusters were played by hands, wrists and forearms. "Flynn doesn't make the journey easy," according to David Jackson (Chicago Reader, 1/2/1987): "He doesn't give you a tune to whistle, or a rhythm to tap your feet to. He fills the air with clouds of sound, strange twisted shapes, murmurs and turbulent flurries. It's mind-expanding stuff." I commissioned *Drive* from

him for my Tully Hall recital debut (February 2, 1973), and it arrived, as I recall, about a week before the concert. Knowing George's reputation for strong political statements, I ventured to ask him what "Drive" meant in this context. He explained that the piece (his only work for harpsichord) depicted the adventurous experience of starting a car.

**23. 1973 Henry Brant: *Divinity***

**Annapolis Brass Quintet: David Cran & Robert Suggs, trumpets; Arthur Brooks, horn; Wayne Wells & Robert Posten, trombones; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**Harpsichord unidentified (courtesy of Gene Jarvis).**

**Anne Arundel Community College, Annapolis, MD (1/18/1987).**

The music of Henry Brant, one of America's greatest composers, is best heard live rather than recorded. "Space doesn't record", he said. One aspect of Brant's genius was his extraordinary sense of space, i.e. the positioning of instruments in a hall, hence the following warning for performance of his delightfully irreverent conversation-piece *Divinity*: "The above prescriptions for positioning players are *not optional*, they are *obligatory*." The five brass players are placed at various corners of the hall, "the trombones...as far away from the trumpets as possible" and the horn player out the back door; at certain points they change positions. On my 1987 tour with the amazing Annapolis Brass Quintet, Brant's work was the only piece on our program in which the harpsichord did not need to be amplified. Meeting Brant on the occasion of his visit (3/16/1998) to the Manhattan School of Music, I was able to ask him who the eight little sketches in the *Divinity* were meant to represent. He replied, "That's ancient history now."

**24. 1982 Vittorio Rieti: *Trittico "In memory of Sylvia Marlowe"*.**

**Wendy Young & Kenneth Cooper, harpsichords.**

**Carnegie Recital Hall, New York: *A Tribute to Sylvia Marlowe* (12/10/1985, world premiere).**

**Harpsichords: Frank Hubbard (WY); Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer (KC)**

**Andante tranquillo - Allegretto / Andante tranquillo - Dolcemente moderato / Andante tranquillo - Allegro**

Vittorio Rieti, a close friend of Sylvia Marlowe's for many years, was an old-fashioned gentleman, soft-spoken, intelligent and gracious. He was nice enough to visit my apartment in 1985 to coach Wendy and me in his new harpsichord duet, *Trittico (Tryptich)*. Probably he just wanted to make sure we were doing it right, as any composer would reasonably wish to do. The work is an unabashed portrait of Sylvia in which he demonstrates with amazing perception her passion for (and possible confusion between) past and present and her unique mixture of rhythmic and melodic elements; there

are also brief snatches of a definite Russian flavor in memory of her loving husband, the exquisite painter Leonid Berman.

- 25. 1990-91 Robert Starer: *Yizkor/Anima Aeterna* (Composed for Paula Robison and Kenneth Cooper in memory of Naomi Robison).  
Paula Robison, flute; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.  
Spoleto Festival, Charleston, SC (5/25/1991, world premiere of complete work). Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

In March 1961, when I was pianist for the Columbia University Chorus, I had the pleasure of working with composer Robert Starer on one of his stirring choral works (*Kohelet*). It was some years later that Starer composed the poetic elegy *Yizkor* (*Remembrance*) in memory of Naomi Robison (Paula Robison's mother), which Paula and I premiered at Woodstock, NY (8/5/1990). The piece then consisted only of the one movement. For the Spoleto Charleston premiere, Paula asked Starer to add a second movement, *Anima Aeterna* (*Eternal Life*). According to the Charleston Metro/State (5/25/1991), "Starer...was present to offer a short explanation of his writing of the scores (the second one getting its world premiere)." On the title page of the Southern Music Company publication of the work in 1992, Starer generously inscribed "To Kenneth Cooper with thanks for a superb premiere". Starer once said (in a 3/21/1987 interview) that he expects the public to "listen to [my music] and give it the kind of attention that I think people should give music; that they should try to hear what I'm doing. There is an anecdote about Beethoven, who played a piece and then somebody said to him, 'Now would you tell me what your piece is all about?' and he sat down and played it again."

- 26. 1998 Derrick Hamley: *The Unveiling* (arr. Kenneth Cooper, 1999).  
Gena Raps, piano; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.  
Kerrytown Concert Hall, Ann Arbor, MI (1/23/2000).  
Harpsichord unidentified.**

Derrick Hamley's friend Nina Hogue wrote to me (11/20/1999): "I did relay your question: The unveiling of what? Derrick laughed and said, 'it was up to the listener.' My own opinion (knowing the perils of his childhood) is his perspective on life - how it looks good on the outside, only to be "masked" by an evil reality - thus life being a blend of contradictions."

- 27. 2004 Victoria Bond: *Peculiar Plants*  
Victoria Bond, composer & narrator; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**Interview: Victoria Bond with Kenneth Cooper at Symphony Space, NY -  
Strangler Fig - Venus Flytrap (4/1/2004)  
Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

Working on *Peculiar Plants* with Victoria Bond was one of the most engaging and fascinating projects I've ever been involved with. Here was a marvelous musician - charming, witty and bubbly, like a real person - who, once we had decided on this strange subject matter, produced wonderful ideas, which needed only 'how do we make these work on the harpsichord'. In fact, she found new ways for me to play the harpsichord and got me much worried about the private lives of plants.

Once the pieces had been composed, it was clear that they would make a deeper impact if the listener knew something about the plants and what their bizarre agendas were. Much research went into this; she knew way more about botany than I did, although my wife and I had visited Linnaeus' garden in Stockholm in 1969, and had admired the fastidious labeling the great botanist had attached to each plant. But as part of any performance of *Peculiar Plants*, this research had to be entertaining as well as instructive, hence the rhymed couplets she and I devised to accompany each plant-portrait. When the cycle was published in 2009, we engaged the daring and ingenious artist Lauren Wisbauer Nuzzi to illustrate these exciting and dangerous plants, and we much appreciated Peters' willingness to feature them in the published edition (Henmar-Peters #68297). A fortuitous coincidence accompanied our performance of *Peculiar Plants* at the Deering Estate in Miami, Florida (1/16/2009). The sponsors were most interested in this piece, as the park, in fact, is a celebrated arboretum with expert botanists in residence. Then an extraordinary thing happened - the sixth plant in our cycle, *Ghost Orchid*, is a recalcitrant plant that blooms very rarely. It did so when we were in Miami, and the botanic photographers dashed out to the woods to grab a long-awaited shot. The gorgeous result is on the cover of our CD (Albany Records, 2009). The complete cycle of *Peculiar Plants* is included below (#27a). These are playable on the piano, but they sound creepier in the original harpsichord versions.

**27a. 2004-08 Victoria Bond: *Peculiar Plants* (Composed for Kenneth Cooper). Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord; Victoria Bond, narrator Academy of Arts and Letters, New York (9/8/2008, premiere recording, Albany Records, produced by Max Wilcox, engineered by David Merrill, released 2009). See notes to #27 above. Harpsichord: Jacob Kaeser (courtesy of Robert Turner).**

**Introduction and Strangler Fig - Venus Flytrap - Creeping Moss - Blushing Violet - Deadly Nightshade - Ghost Orchid - Ragweed**

Victoria has written as follows: "Development is a part of a plant's nature, but the Strangler Fig develops in a bizarre manner. It innocently alights on its host tree, a tiny seed that lodges in the crotch of a branch and sends out delicate tendrils in both directions. These slender stalks grow stronger and woodier, like thick vines. They grow down towards the tree's roots and up into its highest branches. Gradually, as these vines thicken, they strangle the

host tree, sucking out its vital nutrients until it becomes merely the scaffolding around which the Strangler Fig weaves its dense and intricate web. Though despicable in its method, the Strangler Fig nonetheless develops into a plant of extraordinary beauty, its design so sculptural and graceful that it can resemble the liquid architecture of Gaudi. I was intrigued by this combination of beauty and treachery. The *Strangler Fig* was the first piece that I composed, and it began a suite of character studies for harpsichord written for Kenneth Cooper called *Peculiar Plants*. Since then, the garden has grown and Ken and I had great fun writing short poems to introduce each plant. Here are the offshoots." (Albany Records, 2009)

## **CHAPTER V: RAGTIME, SWING, STRIDE and FOLK (1897-1973)**

- 28. [c. 1944] Henry Brant: *Boccherini's Minuet* (arr. Kenneth Cooper, 1985). Wendy Young, harpsichord; Kenneth Cooper, piano; Samuel Baron, flute; Ronald Roseman, english horn; Alexander Kouguell, cello; Robert Renino, bass; Mark Sherman, percussion. Carnegie Recital Hall: *A Tribute to Sylvia Marlowe* (12/10/1985, concert premiere). Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard.**

I also mentioned to Henry Brant that I had studied with Sylvia Marlowe, whom I knew (thought) he had been friendly with. "Oh, Sylvia", he said, "she fired me, you know." I said I couldn't think why; he said "I wasn't commercial enough for her." This version (in 4/4 time) of Boccherini's famous *Minuet* might give us some context for that remark. [The original scoring was for harpsichord, piano, trumpet, clarinet, saxophone, drums and bass.] Brant, interviewed in 2002 by American Mavericks, explained that "During the 1920s there was a fair amount of experimentation among American composers to write unusual music in various ways...Then came the stock market crash of the Depression, and it became difficult to get any non-popular music played at all. So the choice among composers was: write a more easy-going kind of music, or a conventional kind of music, or stop writing, or find some third way out of it. Composers like Aaron Copland and Virgil Thomson found a good way. They got interested in American material and found ways to simplify their music in such a way that this could be incorporated in it without using the clichés of 19th century concert music by doing it. That was one way and they did it with success. Now, I found there was another way. I could use satire or caricature. That was acceptable. Nobody objected to that..."

- 29. 1942 Henry Brant: *Country Dances in Swing* Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord; Robert Renino, bass; Mark Sherman, percussion. Carnegie Recital Hall: *A Tribute to Sylvia Marlowe* (12/10/1985, premiere). Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer.**

We have largely forgotten the fashion in the pop world for re-composing the classics. There was Benny Goodman's version of Paganini's *24th Caprice*, Jimmy Dorsey's *Blue Danube*, Clement Doucet's much needed *Isoldina* (a stride style version of Wagner's *Liebstock*) and Zez Confrey's *Humoresque*, among many others. Brant's ingenious contribution was discovered among Sylvia Marlowe's papers after her death in 1981. Special thanks in these Brant numbers (and in Carolina Shout, #33 below) for the delicious improvisations by our master bass-percussion team of Robert Renino and Mark Sherman.

- 30. 1897 William Krell: *Mississippi Rag* (arr. Kenneth Cooper, 1992).  
Kenneth Cooper, George Shangrow, Robert Kechley, Thomas Eckert,  
harpsichords; Orchestra Seattle).  
*Dueling Harpsichords, Seattle, WA (1/12/1992).*  
Harpsichords unidentified.**

George Shangrow, until his tragic death in an auto crash in 2010, was "Mr. FM Radio Seattle", a suave radio host and a superb musician. He invited me to play the Vivaldi-Bach *Concerto for 4 harpsichords* with his orchestra in 1992. It wasn't until I was on the train chugging comfortably through the wilds of Montana that I remembered that Bach's "quad" was difficult to rehearse, difficult to set up, expensive to produce and lasted only ten minutes. Of course an encore was needed, but no other piece existed for four harpsichords and strings. The only useful book I had with me on the train was the ragtime collection, so the choice was obvious. Krell's piece, the very first published rag (1/27/1897), is actually a patrol march, depicting a band approaching from a distance, coming close, and disappearing again - something I thought risky but probably quite humorous when played on harpsichords. The little Dixieland riff heard after the climactic moment was not a Cooper invention, but a delightful improvisation by Mr. Kechley, who I did not know was a jazz pianist.

- 31. 1901 Scott Joplin: *The Easy Winners - A Ragtime Two Step*  
Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord  
Loeb Drama Center, Cambridge, MA (7/22/1981).  
Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard.**

The connection between Joplin and Scarlatti may not immediately be evident, but aside from any musical resemblances, there is a technical factor. Both artists' works depend on an artistic decisiveness about articulation, texture (how many notes played at the same time), ornamental activity, rhythmic sensibility (timing) and dissonance, rather than actual dynamic variety. The dynamics (piano, forte, crescendo, diminuendo, accent, etc.) must be created illusively on the harpsichord, and must be carefully orchestrated on the piano, so as not to sound too Brahmsian. All these features make the harpsichord a natural instrument for playing ragtime. My

first harpsichord teacher, Fernando Valenti, while he never played ragtime (to my knowledge), was a master of all these elements, and a powerful influence in my first years of harpsichord playing. His playing of Scarlatti, of course, was legendary, and became more and more rhythmically daring over the years. He would have been a great ragtime player. But he did know the great jazz pianist Johnny Guarnieri, who made spectacular jazz harpsichord recordings in the 1940s. In fact, on a taxi ride in Ithaca, NY (1978), sitting in the back seat with Valenti and Bill Dowd (the harpsichord builder), I heard Valenti admit to Dowd that he had rented his harpsichord to Guarnieri for those sessions and made more money from that than he ever did from his concerts.

**32. 1900 Scott Joplin and Arthur Marshall: *Swipesy - Cake Walk*  
Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord  
Loeb Drama Center, Cambridge, MA (7/22/1981).  
Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard.**

In 1899, the 31-year-old Joplin agreed to help the 19-year-old high school student Arthur Marshall develop his musical skills by collaborating with him in the writing of *Swipesy Cake Walk* and probably also other rags. According to Rudi Blesh (1971, xxi), "Joplin was encouraging [Arthur Marshall and Scott Hayden] to compose, was helping them to arrange and write out their material, and himself writing themes to fill out his conception - all to assist them in getting publication."

**33. 1926 James P. Johnson: *Carolina Shout* (arr. Kenneth Cooper, 1985).  
Wendy Young & Kenneth Cooper, harpsichords; Robert Renino, bass;  
Mark Sherman, percussion.  
Carnegie Recital Hall, New York: *A Tribute to Sylvia Marlowe*,  
12/10/1985).  
Harpsichords: Frank Hubbard (WY); Frank Hubbard-Edward Brewer  
(KC).**

With a thumbs-up to James P. Johnson, the acclaimed master and perhaps the inventor of Harlem stride style, Wendy and I acknowledged Sylvia Marlowe's lively interest in American jazz. She apparently never played stride style, however, even during her years with The Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street - her forte was the Boogie-Woogie repertoire of Meade Lux Lewis and "Pine Top" Smith. A sample follows.

**34. 1928 Clarence "Pine Top" Smith: *Pine Top's Boogie Woogie*  
Sylvia Marlowe, harpsichord; bass and percussion unidentified (Nov.  
1969). Harpsichord: William Dowd.  
Decca LP SM 001 (Limited edition, released 2/5/1971).**

"Pine Top" Smith (1904-1929), so nicknamed because of his proclivity for climbing trees, is given credit for having invented Boogie Woogie, although the term was probably coined by his mentor, "Cow Cow" Davenport, to suggest places too raunchy for nice people to go to. Sylvia's arrangement is totally authentic - one can compare it to Pine Top's original piano recording (12/29/1928), which sports a slightly less pronounced swing and features his lively overlay of verbal instructions for dancing, or as he calls it, "messing around". Sylvia's 1940 recording (General Records G-13) is virtually the same arrangement, but at a slightly slower tempo.

**35. 1973 William Crofut: *The Wind***

**Bill Crofut, vocal & banjo; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.  
Cleveland Institute of Music, Cleveland, OH (12/13/1974).  
Harpsichord: William Dowd.  
Crofut LP: *Folk and Baroque*.**

On our album *Folk and Baroque* (1975), Bill and I wrote short bios of each other. I submit mine of him: "Bill Crofut is one of those guys whom you believe no matter what he tells you, and since he's been all over the world (concerts in 34 countries), he figures he has a few things to say...He thinks Colorado is somewhere near North Carolina, but when he gets to each town he recognizes the people and the places as if he'd been there all his life. He is the world's worst bookkeeper, but one of the world's great story-tellers; he can't spell, but he has an amazing sensitivity to language...I haven't known him all that long - only since the day I was rehearsing in Carnegie Hall when he appeared, sporting a hare-brained scheme - something about banjo and harpsichord playing folk and baroque music. Before long he'd convinced not only me and our hard-nosed agent, but thousands of people all over the country. Who would have thought, for example, that Bartók on banjo and harpsichord would end up evoking the fabulous folk instruments of the Hungarian and Rumanian countryside? Who would have dreamed that Robert Louis Stevenson, whose poems you used to have to recite in the 8th grade, would have hit potential? The answer is Crofut...". Stevenson is the author of *The Wind* and I have to admit that I am the author of the delicate but sneaky harpsichord obbligato to Bill's folk-like setting, which so many audiences seemed to know even before he sang it. The song was published by Atheneum Press (1975) with my very simplified piano arrangement, in a collection of his songs entitled *The Moon on the One Hand*.

**36. 1968 Kenneth Cooper: *The 78 rpm Rag***

**Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.  
Loeb Drama Center, Cambridge, MA (7/22/1981 encore).  
Harpsichord: Frank Hubbard.**

It was at Columbia in 1968 that Dan Paget introduced me to ragtime. I can't believe I'd never heard the *Maple Leaf Rag* before, or any of the other

fabulous ragtime classics. Conductor, composer and arranger Daniel Paget, one of America's finest ragtime pianists, discussed with me - that is, he told me - the right way to play it: 4-beats-to-a-bar and no swing. (Swing arrived during or after the war.) I was, and still am, a 78-rpm (old recordings) addict, and I went promptly to my catalogues in search of any pre-1914 ragtime piano disc recordings. There were (to my knowledge) none. So one had to be created, hence *The 78 rpm Rag*. The idea was to give a fair sample of old ragtime style, as heard on a scratchy record with all the flaws - repeating grooves, slipping pitch and distorted sound quality. I later discovered that the piece created even more confusion on the harpsichord. After I played this rag for the first time in 1968, my composition teacher, Otto Luening, came backstage and offered me a great compliment: "I didn't know you could write REAL music."

**37. 1899 Scott Joplin: *Maple Leaf Rag* (arr. Kenneth Cooper, 1968)**

**Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**92nd St. YMHA: *Harpsichordiana II* (12/18/1979 encore).**

**Harpsichord: John Houston [1794]-Hugh Gough-Hendrick Broekman.**

To be redundant in the light of my brief spoken introduction, I can say that there is little reason for playing *Maple Leaf Rag* on the harpsichord, except that my old English harpsichord (built in 1794 by John Houston of the Shudi workshop, restored in the 1940s by Hugh Gough and again in the 1960s by Hendrick Broekman), has a range extending to high A and A-flat, above the usual high G, as does the *Maple Leaf*. So it seemed to me that the opportunity should not be wasted, as this is the only harpsichord the *Maple Leaf* can be properly played on.

**CHAPTER VI: VIDEO**

**38. 1979 Daniel Paget: *Romania!* (Composed for Carol Wincenc & Kenneth Cooper). Carol Wincenc, flute; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord.**

**Harpsichord: Jacob Kaeser (courtesy of Robert Turner).**

**New York Flute Club (10/16/2011).**

It was one day in 1978 that flutist Carol Wincenc discovered some captivating Romanian folk tunes and asked me to make an arrangement of them for us to play at her forthcoming Naumberg recital (4/23/1979). I certainly loved this music and the idea of this project, but I thought that Daniel Paget was the right person for the job. What he accomplished was nothing short of magnificent, using the actual tunes but creating all the instrumental color, ornament, rhythm and texture around them and building the whole into a monumental virtuoso entertainment. To re-live this world of improvisatory folk music on flute and harpsichord with Carol has been a rare pleasure. One of the delights and challenges of *Romania!* is the uninterrupted *accelerando* that drives the last half of the work. In three decades - dozens of

performances - it has never been the same twice. I measure Carol's magnetic attraction to it by the ride back to New York City from a performance we did in Long Island some years ago. Carol was driving and we were listening to the tape in the car; I was watching her foot slowly press the accelerator closer and closer to the floor.

**INDEX OF COMPOSERS:**

**Bartók, Bela ##11-16**  
**Bond, Victoria ##27, 27a**  
**Brant, Henry ##23, 28, 29**  
**Busoni, Ferruccio #8**  
**Cooper, Kenneth ##36**  
**Crofut, Bill #35**  
**Debussy, Claude #5**  
**Falla, Manuel de #7**  
**Flynn, George #22**  
**Hamley, Derrick #26**  
**Johnson, James P. #33**  
**Joplin, Scott ##31-32, 37**  
**Kabalevsky, Dmitri #10**  
**Krell, William #30**  
**Krenek, Ernst #6**  
**Ligeti, György #21**  
**Marshall, Arthur #32**  
**Massenet, Jules #4**  
**Moore, Douglas #18**  
**Mussorgsky, Modeste #1**  
**Paget, Daniel #38**  
**Rieti, Vittorio #24**  
**Saint-Saëns, Camille #3**  
**Shostakovich, Dmitri #20**  
**Smith, Pine Top #34**  
**Sousa, John Philip #2**  
**Starer, Robert #25**  
**Stravinsky, Igor #9**  
**Thomson, Virgil ##17, 19**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR GREAT ARTISTS AND FRIENDS:**

**Annapolis Brass Quintet**

**David Cran, Robert Suggs, Arthur Brooks, Wayne Wells, Robert Posten**

**\*Samuel Baron**

**Victoria Bond**

**Andrew Bove**

**\*Henry Brant**

**Edward Brewer**

**Hendrick Broekman**

**Silas Brown**  
**\*Bill Crofut**  
**\*William Dowd**  
**Thomasa Eckert**  
**Ann Ellsworth**  
**Allan Evans**  
**George Flynn**  
**\*Derrick Hamley**  
**\*David Hancock**  
**\*Fred Hellerman**  
**\*Eric Herz**  
**Nina Hogue**  
**\*Frank Hubbard**  
**Jacob Kaeser**  
**Ani Kavafian**  
**Robert Kechley**  
**Alexander Kouguell**  
**Roan Ma**  
**\*Sylvia Marlowe**  
**Judith Mendenhall**  
**David Merrill**  
**Josephine Mongiardo**  
**Sonya Monosoff**  
**\*Douglas Moore**  
**Orchestra Seattle**  
**Daniel Paget**  
**\*Gerald Ranck**  
**Gena Raps**  
**Robert Renino**  
**\*Vittorio Rieti**  
**Paula Robison**  
**\*Ronald Roseman**  
**\*Charles Russo**  
**\*George Shangrow**  
**Mark Sherman**  
**Fred Sherry**  
**\*Henry Schuman**  
**\*Robert Starer**  
**Richard Taruskin**  
**\*Virgil Thomson**  
**\*Walter Trampler**  
**Robert Turner**  
**\*Howard Van Hyning**  
**\*Dorothy Walker**  
**\*Robert Walker**  
**\*David Jacques Way**

**Peter Weitzner  
Michael Whiton  
\*Max Wilcox  
Keve Wilson  
Carol Wincenc  
Wendy Young  
Westchester Chorale Orchestra  
Frederick Zlotkin**

**\*In Memoriam (as of October 2019)**

