

11-30-1989

## Cradle Falling

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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### Recommended Citation

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THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND  
**ORCHESTRA**

FRED COHEN *CONDUCTOR*

AND

**CURRENTS**

FRED COHEN *ARTISTIC DIRECTOR*

PRESENT

THE WORLD PREMIERE OF  
DAVID COPE'S OPERA

***CRADLE  
FALLING***

November 30, 1989  
Camp Theater, University of Richmond  
8:15 PM Free Admission

## PROGRAM

Symphony No. 35 "Haffner" K. 385 (1782) W. A. Mozart  
(1756-1791)

I. Allegro con spirito

Violin Concerto No. 2 BWV 1042 (1717-23) J. S. Bach  
(1685-1750)

I. Allegro

II. Adagio

III. Allegro assai

Sarah Towner (W'90) *violin*

\*\*\*\*\*intermission\*\*\*\*\*

**CRADLE FALLING** (1985) David Cope  
(b. 1941 )

World Premiere Opera

1. When I was a little girl
2. Pretty girl smiling
3. He's got something
4. I walk along the highway
5. Leaves falling, red, brown, beige
6. Blow wind, blow.
7. White snow falling

*Please refrain from applause during the course of this performance and at its conclusion. Certain elements of the work fall outside of concert traditions.*

PERSONNEL  
University of Richmond Orchestra  
Fred Cohen *conductor*

Violin

Sarah R. Towner *concertmistress*

Michael T. Burnette

Heather L. Carlson

Jill Foster-Woodburn

Leah Griffen

Charles Lindsey

Sunny Morris

Katherine Short

Karan Anne Wright

Elissa Ellen Zadrozny

Viola

Sandra Parrott\*

Jan Murray

Cello

Stephanie Wahlgren\*

Kirstin Coe

Ann Bakker-Stokes

Contrabass

Leslie Rose\*

Robert Wendell

Timpani

Simon Shapiro

Flute

Teresa Comunale\*

Cary Fridley

Jocelyn T. Johnson

Oboe

Susan Butz

Clarinet

Doug Hurt\*

Gene Anderson

Bassoon

Shari Adams\*

Anne Samuel

French horn

William Spears\*

Linnea Petty

Trumpet

Michael Davison\*

Barbara Anderson

## CRADLE FALLING

Lisa Edwards Burrs *soprano*  
Teresa Comunale *flute, piccolo, bone-flute*  
Susan Butz *oboe*  
Doug Hurt *clarinet, bass clarinet*  
Bruce Hammel *bassoon*  
MaryLynne VanDeventer *French horn*  
Pamela Barton *trombone*  
Steven Barton, Simon Shapiro *percussion*  
Lynne Abbey-Lee *harp*  
Christopher Marks, Homer Rudolf *pianos*  
Sarah Towner *violin*  
Sandra Perrott *viola*  
Stephanie Wahlgren, Anne Bakker-Stokes *cellos*  
Leslie Rose *contrabass*  
Fred Cohen *conductor*

Reed West	<i>designer, technical director</i>
Channing Mentzer	<i>master carpenter</i>
John Nichols	<i>stage manager</i>
Edward Pierce	<i>lighting board operator</i>
Susan Steward	<i>effects operator</i>
Lauren Boyer, Laura Dolan, Elizabeth Foley, Chris Ann Gillig, Mike Hoernig, Mosa Kalele, Sarah Mapp, Susan Steward	<i>construction crew</i>

This concert is co-sponsored by the University of Richmond Music Department and CURRENTS. Partial funding was provided by the Cultural Affairs Committee at the University of Richmond.

## TEXT OF CRADLE FALLING

1. When I was a little girl  
I had a rag doll.  
That was the only doll I owned.  
I used to love it  
Like a robin loves to sing.  
I loved my rag doll.

*Lolita Chavez, 1972*

2. Pretty girl smiling.  
I saw her smiling at me.  
I smile back to her.  
Beautiful long hair, brown eyes.  
Slowly walking far away.

*Alfredo Largo, 1972*

3. He's got something  
That moves my soul.  
He knows I love him.  
But he belongs to a thousand gals.  
Can't make him mine.  
I want him all for myself.

*Lolita Chavez, 1972*

4. I walk along the highway.  
All I want is a ride.  
A ride that will take me home.  
A ride is all I need.  
Please, a ride.  
If it were me, I'd pick anybody up.  
Anybody walking along the highway.  
If only they would stop.

*Harrison Tsosie, 1970*

5. Leaves falling, red, brown, beige,  
Few still green.  
Leaves falling, wilting, crumbling,  
Throwing gliding shadows beneath your feet.  
Leaves falling—I must go,  
Not here motionless  
To wilt as falling leaves.

*Emma Rose Albert, 1972*

6. Blow wind, blow.  
Blow the leaves.  
The leaves that make the silent sound,  
Blowing leaves across the ground.

Blow wind, blow.  
Blow my soul.  
My soul that makes the silent sound,  
Blowing across the ground.

Blow wind, blow.  
But in the night protect them,  
Save them from the wind,  
Blowing across the ground.

*Theresa Lopez, 1970*

7. White snow falling.  
Covering everything so soft.

In my younger days,  
I still can remember  
The coming of sunrise.  
And my people  
Would go outside  
And face the East  
With corn pollen,  
Praying to our Gods.

Never makes a sound.

*Merlin Yazzsie, 1971*

## PROGRAM NOTES

*Cradle Falling* was commissioned by Fred Cohen and the Cornell New Music Ensemble in 1985. Scored for soprano and chamber orchestra, the work is cast in seven principal movements with six intervening interludes. The texts were written in English by Navajo school children (Wingate High School, Arizona) in the early 1970's.

David Cope chose the texts and order of presentation based on analogous histories of the Navajo people of Northern Arizona and Eastern New Mexico.

Whispered and chanted Navajo words follow the texts of each movement:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| #1: b́enáshnih naahné daané'é<br>I remember playing with toys                   | #5: ch'il'titsxoof,titso<br>orange, yellow |
| #2: danizhóní at'ééd nish'í naniná ákóó<br>pretty girl, I see her walking there | #6: níyol<br>wind                          |
| #3: askhii, miil at'ééké t'áá sáhí<br>boy, a thousand girls, alone              | #7: tin, yas, haigo<br>winter, snow, ice   |
| #4: chidí, chidíigai<br>car, bus  |  |

The set is an integral part of the work. The cylindrical circular light with a **sipapu**-like hole in its center creates an intense magnification of the transformation which takes place during the work. Movement to or from this area represents significant characterization and ritual central to the ceremonial nature of the work. Costumes also play a critical role. The necklace worn by the soprano during the last three movements is particularly special. Not only have the bones in it been chosen from unique places, but there exists only **one** (David Cope's) authorized for performance of *Cradle Falling*.

Among the many allusions to Navajo ritual in this work, two seem most essential:

1. Group Navajo singing often includes wide variance between different singers' versions of the piece creating a kind of heterophony (counterpoint based on different versions of the same material played at the same time). *Cradle Falling* takes this to the extreme. Melodies are often recounted simultaneously in different tempi producing deep contrapuntal textures and consequent harmonies from the melodic pitches.

2. The integration in each movement of one or more Navajo melodies (principally from the **Enemy Way**) infuses actual ceremonial pitch content into the work.

As well, **anasazi** (Navajo: the Ancient ones) cultural and religious elements such as the **kiva** and associated **sipapu** have been woven into the stage set and dramatic elements of *Cradle Falling*. The dark center of the *Cradle Falling* set represents an **anasazi sipapu** or hole through which man first emerged and through which all manner of good and bad pass to earth from the center of the universe.

It should be pointed out, however, that while these many references occur, *Cradle Falling* does not parallel any Navajo or **anasazi** ceremony. Rather, it builds its own ritual and circumstance through the words of children; the metaphorical history of a people.

Composer David Cope was born in San Francisco in 1941. He studied composition with Grant Fletcher at Arizona State University, and later with Hasley Stevens, Ingolf Dahl and George Perle at the University of Southern California. Professor Cope has taught at a number of universities, including the Cleveland Institute of Music and Miami University of Ohio. He is currently Professor of Music at the University of California at Santa Cruz, where he recently held the position of Dean of the Arts. He has won numerous awards, including two National Endowment of the Arts Fellowships, and his music has received more than three thousand performances. In addition, Professor Cope is well known as the author of *New Directions in Music* (now in its fifth edition) and as the editor of the magazine, *The Composer* (1969-81), in which he conducted landmark interviews with Pierre Boulez, John Cage, and others. We are pleased to honor Professor Cope as the first recipient of the Music Department's Swanson Residency.