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# CURRENTS

THE ENSEMBLE FOR NEW-MUSIC  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

Fred Cohen *Music Director*  
presents

## DREAM MUSIC MUSIC BY AND WITH COMPUTERS

Wednesday, February 12, 1992  
Free Admission

North Court Recital Hall

## Program

### *Trumpeting*

Fred Cohen  
for Trumpet, MIDI Valve Instrument, and synthesizers  
Michael Davison *trumpets*

### *Hearing Things*

Judith Shatin  
for MIDI keyboard, violin, and computer  
Tannis Gibson *MIDI keyboard*  
Mark Rush *violin*

### *Of Mice and Men*

Bruce Mahin  
for percussion and computer  
Greg Giannascoli *percussion*

*Sonata* in the style of Mozart  
*Rag* in the style of Joplin

Experiments in Musical Intelligence  
Experiments in Musical Intelligence  
Russell Wilson *piano*

## NOTES

*Trumpeting* was commissioned in 1989 by the Virginia Music Teachers Association. Michael Davison gave the first performance on November 4, 1989 at the Shenandoah College and Conservatory of Music. *Trumpeting* is dedicated to Michael Davison.

*Trumpeting* explores some of the relationships between the acoustic trumpet and its MIDI companion, in this case the AKAI EV-1000. This work stipulates that the AKAI MIDI valve instrument be connected to a Yamaha TX-81Z that has been programmed for the sounds required.

The taped portion of *Trumpeting* was realized at the University of Richmond electronic music studio on a Kurzweil 250, Yamaha TX-81Z and assorted tone generators and effects processors.

*Hearing Things* explores the dynamic range between human and machine performance. The piece involves a trio of performers: violinist, keyboardist, and computer. The latter two both play various electronic instruments: a Yamaha TX-802 synthesizer, a DEP5 Digital Effects Processor, and a Roland S-550 Sampler. The violin plays into a microphone that feeds a Roland VP-70 voice processor.

The computer's part is written in HMSL (Hierarchical Music Specification Language, by Burk, Polansky, and Rosenboom), with major innovations by UVA systems engineer Peter Yadlowsky. There is a traditional score from which the performers play, though it includes non-traditional instructions such as the velocity of key strikes for the keyboard.

The electronic music consists of sampled violin sounds and timbres generated using FM synthesis. The sampled violin sounds span a spectrum of recognizability, at times sparking confusion as to their origin and at times extending the realm of the violin in a hallucinatory manner.

The keyboardist mediates between the violinist and computer by controlling certain tasks of the computer. For example, depressing a footswitch puts the keyboard into a function mode, with different pitch classes mapped to trigger the computer to change device settings as well as to change sections and perform its own musical parts.

There is a strong tension between visible performance activity and perceived sound that makes one wonder if one is indeed "hearing things." The rate at which the piece unfolds also plays with live versus machine performance. Since the keyboardist triggers different sections, there is flexibility of tempo where the computer is not involved. However, in this piece, the computer is set to perform its music in the same way each time. Again, there is a tug between the two ends of the continuum.

The pitch builds gradually, with small collections coalescing, and with a long-term slight sinking of register. The 25'-piece is one continuous movement, opening from a quiet, mysterious, transformed violin timbre, moving to its most explosive point in the third and fourth sections, and finishing with a trio that integrates the mysterious timbre of the opening, now played by the computer, with transformed responses from the violin and keyboard.

*Of Mice and Men* reveals a typical day in the house of a person being terrorized by a mouse (electro-mechanical or otherwise). The protagonists attempt to outsmart one another in various ways until the two finally come together in one final meeting of the minds. The percussionist is accompanied by a computer, which follows the performer's actions, makes decisions about tempo, duration and other musical parameters, before then performing its own part on a synthesizer.

The use of machines in producing musical sounds is nothing new. Though mechanically impressive, the succession of portative organ to piano to player piano, or of electric analog organ to digital electronic synthesizer, does not alter the use of machines as imitators and reproducers of human created musical statements. The use of machines as participants in the process of creating music--helping to choose the placement of sounds within a work rather than merely making sounds--has both a shorter history and is a more controversial tangent in the evolution of musical machines. *Experiments in Musical Intelligence* (EMI) is a computer software program that composer David Cope began to develop in 1981 in response to certain musical problems. EMI employs a linguistic approach to musical intelligence in that it studies musical compositions in an attempt to understand and analyze all relevant stylistic choices, and then creates and applies a grammar of music according to these discoveries. Says Cope, "EMI is an object-oriented system written in LISP (LISt Processing, a computer language often used by researchers in artificial intelligence). It was designed to assist composers in their creative work. Based on natural language processing augmented transition network parsing (NLP-ATN), it assigns syntax definitions to dictionaries containing rules about when and where intervals may exist. A motive engine guarantees that composition will produce logical structures. Message passing and inheritance add depth by allowing the implications of a choice in one part of the composition to affect the nature of another. The use of "knowledge-lines" for timbral development significantly reduces sampling and synthesizing rates by accurately tuning harmonic coordinates to conform to remembered object events."

## PERFORMERS

Michael Davison currently teaches jazz, trumpet, and music education at the University of Richmond. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has performed as a member of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater faculty brass quintet, Milwaukee Ballet, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra and Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. In addition, Dr. Davison has performed with such artists as Michael Brecker, Chris Vadala, Gene Bertoncini, the Temptations, and both the Canadian and Empire Brass Quintets. Dr. Davison is in great demand throughout the country as a classical and jazz teacher and performer. He is also sought after as a performer and clinician on the Akai Electric Valve Instrument.

Mark Rush, violinist, is a member of the Monticello Trio, ensemble-in-residence at the University of Virginia. With the trio he has toured extensively in the U.S. and Canada and has appeared at major festivals including the Bath International Festival in England, Banff Center for the Arts in Canada and New York's Bang-on-a-Can Festival. Mr. Rush has collaborated with such artists as Zara Nelsova, Michael Tree, Sydney Harth and the American Quartet and Muir Quartet. He received his M.M. from Yale University as a student of Szymon Goldberg and later studied with Arthur Grumiaux as a Fulbright scholar to Brussels.

Tannis Gibson, pianist with the Monticello Trio, studied with Sascha Gorodnitzki at the Juilliard School and also with the Eduardo del Pueyo in Belgium. In demand as a chamber musician, she has appeared in recent concerts with the Lark Quartet, the American Quartet and the Franciscan Quartet. She has been active in the commissioning of new works with the Monticello Trio and has received grants from the Koussevitzky Foundation in the Library of Congress, and Meet the Composer-Reader's Digest Commissioning Program and the Virginia Commission for the Arts. The Monticello Trio has released their first CD with the CRI label which includes works by Ives, Shatin and Bresnick.

Russell Wilson, a native of Memphis, Tennessee, is an outstanding classical and jazz pianist who was educated at Memphis State University where he received his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees. Formerly a member of Virginia Union University's music faculty, he now teaches piano at Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Richmond. He has performed as recitalist on the Centre Hill Mansion Concert Series; at the Richmond Public Library and the Jewish Community Center; at the Smithsonian Institution with the Trio Pro Viva; and with his own jazz quartet at the Virginia Museum's "Jumpin' in July" concert series. As principal pianist of the Richmond Symphony Orchestra and the Richmond Sinfonia, he has performed as soloist and has worked with many world class artists including Mel Torme, Richard Hayman, Cab Calloway, Chet Atkins and Carol Lawrence. He enjoys a distinguished career as a solo and chamber music performer, recent performances being with the Petersburg Symphony Orchestra performing Beethoven's Concerto No. 1 in C major and with the New River Valley Symphony Orchestra at Virginia Tech performing "Duke" Ellington's *New World A'Comin*.

## COMPOSERS

A composer and conductor living in Richmond, Fred Cohen received his doctorate in music composition from Cornell University where he studied with Karel Husa and Steven Stucky. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of California. Mr. Cohen has been the recipient of a number of composition awards, including the ASCAP Grant to Young Composers, First Place in the Westfield State College Inauguration Composition Competition, First Place in the Virginia Music Teachers Association Commissioned Composer Contest, an Artist Grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts, and multiple grants from Meet the Composer. His works have been commissioned and performed by organizations such as the Richmond Symphony, the University of Richmond Dance Company, the El Cerrito Youth Orchestra, the Richmond Jewish Community Federation, the Richmond Camerata, and such artists as soprano Christine Schadeberg, performance artist Claudia Stevens, and violinist Sonya Monosoff. His works have been performed throughout the United States and in South America.

Judith Shatin is a composer equally at home with the exciting technology of electronic music and the dramatic potential of acoustic music. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Douglass College, Ms. Shatin holds the MM from the Juilliard School and the PhD from Princeton University. Additional studies were undertaken as a composition fellow at Tanglewood. Ms. Shatin is currently Professor of Music at the University of Virginia where she founded and directs the Virginia Center for Computer Music. Her many awards include four NEA Composer Fellowships, a composer award from the Virginia Commission on the Arts, multiple grants from Meet the Composer and an award from American Music Center. Her commissions include those from such organizations as the Barlow Foundation, Virginia Chamber Orchestra, Roxbury Chamber Players, Ash Lawn Opera Festival, Monticello Trio, and the Garth Newel Chamber Players. Active in a variety of music organizations, Ms. Shatin is President of American Women Composers, Inc., with national headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Bruce P. Mahin is an Assistant Professor and Director of the Radford University Center for Music Technology. His work has been performed in North and South America at major festivals of new music, and he is the recipient of numerous awards for music composition. For a number of years, Mahin's works have explored interactions among live performers and computers making performance decisions in real-time.

David Cope completed degrees in composition at Arizona State University and the University of Southern California where his teachers included George Perle, Halsey Stevens, Ingolf Dahl and Grant Fletcher. His over ninety published compositions have received thousands of performances throughout the U.S. and abroad, including performances by the Vermont, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, and Santa Cruz symphonies. His works have been featured in many festivals such as the Holland Festival in Amsterdam, the Autumn Festival of New Music in Como, Italy, the Cornell University Bicentennial American Music Festival, the Warsaw Autumn Festival, the Bialystok (Poland) Festival of New Music, Festival de Avignon (France), and the Berlin New Music Festival. Twenty-one of Cope's works appear on recordings. Complete albums of his music appear on Folkways (2), Opus One and Discant Records and include a wide diversity of works from large ensembles to soloists with electronic and computer generated accompaniment.

Papers on EMI (Experiments in Musical Intelligence) research have been presented at the International Computer Music Conference (Champaign, Illinois, 1987) and its resultant proceedings, at the International Symposium: *Charles Ives and the American Music Tradition up to the Present* (Cologne, Germany, 1988), the American Association of Artificial Intelligence (St. Paul, 1988), and AIM, First International Workshop on Artificial Intelligence and Music (Bonn, Germany, September, 1988), as well as articles in the *Computer Music Journal* (Winter, 1987), *Computer* (July, 1991) and *AI Expert Magazine* (March, 1988). His book *Computers and Musical Style* is based on his ten-year research project with EMI and describes the interdisciplinary forging of music, computer programming, linguistics and artificial intelligence techniques to create novel new works in the styles of classical and popular composers. Cope is currently Professor of Music at the University of California at Santa Cruz, where he teaches music composition and theory.

The CURRENTS new-music ensemble is an ensemble of professional musicians devoted to outstanding performances of the music of our time. Founded in 1986 by Dr. Fred Cohen, Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Richmond, CURRENTS has introduced concert music of regional, national and internationally noted composers to the central Virginian community in formats ranging from chamber music to orchestra works to opera. CURRENTS has performed American premieres by such composers as György Kurtág, Sofia Gubaidulina, Alfred Schnicke and Edison Denisov, and has commissioned and offered first performances of works by a number of American composers, including Thomas Albert, Allan Blank, Joel Feigin, Jonathan Kramer, Ben Johnston and Walter Ross.

CURRENTS is co-sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the Sydney and Frances Lewis Foundation, the University of Richmond, and private donations.

#### Upcoming CURRENTS Concert

**March 27, 1992      8:15 PM      North Court Recital Hall**

#### Featuring:

first performances of works by Thomas Albert and Fred Cohen  
guest soprano Christine Schadeberg  
guest composer Fred Lerdaahl  
other works by P. Maxwell Davies and Luigi Dallapiccola

