Symphonic Winds
FRAGMENTED MEMORIES
11 November 2006

> I think it would be so satisfying to crystallize one of those moments at the time in some beautiful expression—but I don't believe it's often done—I think inspiration—in art—seems to be almost a consolation in hours of sadness or loneliness & that most happy moments are put into expression after they have been memories & made doubly precious because they are gone.
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> -Harmony Ives, wife of composer Charles Ives

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As musicologist Jonathan Dunsby has written: "It is impossible to escape from the fact that, without the practice and use of memory, music is literally unthinkable.... Since music is a temporal phenomenon, it relies completely on our ability to store and relate musical 'information.' Human memory, however, is a profoundly mysterious entity over which individuals seem to have little conscious control. It can seem to be difficult, perhaps impossible, to decide not to remember something; and it is impossible to decide to remember something one believes one has forgotten." The five American composers whose works constitute the program, though, have extended this notion even further: in provocative and divergent ways—whether it be through quotations, stylistic assimilations, rhetorical structures, parodies, or other techniques—each composer has directly confronted ways that music can reveal postmodern concepts of memory (present utterances juxtaposed with and consciously informed by the memories of past musics, creating music that is simultaneously both "old" and "new")—or in a word, music that is about memory.

In addition, with the inclusion of a pre-concert piano recital, featuring performances of Ives's "The Alcotts" and Corigliano's *Gazebo Dances* in their original forms, another sense of musical memory may be experienced when the works are heard again—in their wind ensemble arrangements—during the concert-proper. We hope you find this music as fascinating and enjoyable as we do—and that you find the juxtapositions of these twentieth-century works stimulating and provocative!

-SDB

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> A great man quotes bravely, and will not draw on his invention when his memory serves him with a word as good. What he quotes, he fills with his own voice and humor, and the whole cyclopaedia of his table-talk is presently believed to be his own.
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> We cannot overstate our debt to the Past, but the moment has the supreme claim. The Past is for us; but the sole terms on which it can become ours are its subordination to the Present. Only an inventor knows how to borrow, and every man is or should be an inventor. We must not tamper with the organic motion of the soul. 'Tis certain that thought has its own proper motion, and the hints which flash from it, the words overheard at unawares by the free mind, are trustworthy and fertile when obeyed and not perverted to low and selfish account. This vast memory is only raw material. The divine gift is ever the instant life, which receives and uses and creates, and can well bury the old in the omnipotency with which Nature decomposes all her harvest for recomposition
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> Ralph Waldo Emerson, from "Quotation and Originality"

John Corigliano: *Gazebo Dances* (1972, arr. for wind ensemble in 1973)

> Every music, everywhere; it's the age of iPod, in which sounds from past and present, near and far, compete for attention outside the laws of time and space. What composer can ignore the omnipresent past? What composer can pretend the past is all there be? Perhaps no composer has danced with this issue as elegantly as has the American master John Corigliano.
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> -Mark Adamo

> You must understand the importance of the past. But if you don't realize the importance of the present and the future, you don't nourish that—and our art form does not—then it's like a tree that grows no new shoots. Without new shoots the tree dies.
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> -John Corigliano

Simply put, **John Corigliano** (b. New York, 16 February 1938) is one of the finest and most widely recognized American composers writing today. He has won just about every major award: a Guggenheim Fellowship (1968), the Grawemeyer award (1991) for his *Symphony No. 1*, the Pulitzer Prize (2000) for his *Symphony No. 2*, two Grammy awards for Best Contemporary Composition (1991, 1996), the Composition of the Year award from the International Music Awards (1992) for his wildly popular and critically acclaimed opera *The Ghosts of Versailles* (the first Met Opera commission in over 30 years), the Academy Award for his score to the film *The Red Violin* (1999) (and an Academy Award nomination for his score to *Altered States*), and in 1992, Musical America named him "Composer of the Year." He has taught at the Manhattan School (1971–86), the Juilliard School of Music (1992–) and Lehman College, CUNY (1973–), where he was named distinguished professor in 1984. The surprise, however, is that, for all of Corigliano's mainstream credentials, no composer has done more in his own catalogue to challenge and deconstruct tradition as to continue it. While he has been criticized over the years for his seemingly conservative (quasi-tonal?) approach, Adamo believes that Corigliano "will be remembered as one of the great mavericks of his generation, the artist who took generic, traditional notions like 'symphony' or 'concerto' and within them found a language all his own, an amalgum of his American forebears crossed with the exploratory spirit of the post-war European avant garde." Pianist Emanuel Ax praised just this characteristic of Corigliano when he wrote: "The amazing thing about John's work is how distinctive to him it is, even when it is based on Beethoven or Mozart.... I don't know anyone else who can so strongly remake other music in his own image." Corigliano acknowledged his belief in the necessity of historical continuity when he wrote:

> Starting from nothing is very good because you're not inhibited by the past. But starting by understanding the past and then being able to go into the future is even better. It's everything. It's the past. It's the present. And then you must think to the future. Now getting caught in the past, that's a problem, and I know composers and artists who are caught, but you don't have to be. And in this day and age, the whole idea of information and multiplicity of inputs is tremendously important because the 21st century is the Age of Information. We can go to this computer and we can access any music or any art or anything else from any part of the world, from any generation from the beginning of recorded time to the present. How can we then box ourselves in so that we do this but not that? It's so limiting. The way of inclusion rather than fundamentalist exclusion is the way for me.

In terms of style and temperament, Corigliano believes that he is a descendent not of the highly chromatic, German Romantic tradition, but rather of the lineage of the "clean" American romanticism of Samuel Barber, Roy Harris, Aaron Copland, and Leonard Bernstein. As Corigliano remarked: "My remoteness from the German tradition stems from my aversion to the egocentricity that I think is very much a part of German art—particularly the idea that the image of the artist is all-important. I don't believe that. I prefer 18th-century values: clarity, communication, an architecture of ideas, and emotion as a part of that." Corigliano would reassert this position, stating: "I think music is architecture" (perhaps playfully alluding to Elvis Costello's remark: "Writing about music is like dancing about architecture—it's a really stupid thing to do!").

Born into an auspicious musical family—his father, John Corigliano, Sr., was concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic during the Bernstein years—John (Jr.) decided to become a composer when he had a sort of epiphany as a high school junior: while listening to Copland's *Billy Budd* on his new, mono, hi-fi LP, he realized: "I couldn't figure out how Copland had gotten a triad to sound so unusual; he took the simplest chord and spaced it to make it sound completely fresh." He then went to study at Columbia (B.A. 1959), where all his teachers save one—Otto Luening—thought him too conservative. Since then, however, Corigliano has defined simple labels and categories. As Adamo writes: "Corigliano is neither a tonal nor an atonal composer, neither Romantic nor neo-Romantic, neither modernist nor post-modernist, though his music has partaken of materials fairly described by these labels.... His redefinition of various kinds of music—triadic, dodecaphonic, microtonal—as techniques rather than styles, subverts conventional views of music history in which only one current fashion of composition, be it serial, minimalist, or something else, is valid. All musics are still valid to Corigliano." In fact, Corigliano addressed the same topic in a 2000 interview in *New Music Connoisseur* when asked what label did *he* thinks belongs to him and his music:

> Eclectic, neo-Romantic, postmodern—you know, take your pick. I think that most people are past modernism [as a philosophy] in this country; not in Europe. Certainly not in France.... "Modernism" is a kind of philosophy of a work of art being an object divorced from the past, not building on it, not partaking of the creator's necessarily conveying his feelings or intent to anyone, but just as an object. I'm not that. But I do like to create a well-made object. In fact, I like to be intellectual, and my works are extremely intellectual. But I try to lead an audience through the labyrinth that will get them to understand something of what I am doing, and that is definitely a modernist trait. "Post," after: well, I guess you could call it that, But then there are so many other things. The trouble with labels is, I don't want anybody to think they...I certainly don't know what I'm going to write next. I don't think anybody should tell me what I am.

Whatever his label(s), perhaps the New York Times has expressed it best, describing Corigliano as "one of America's most important composers;" Corigliano's boyhood idol Copland expressed this sentiment in even more concise terms: "He's the real thing."

As with much piano four-hand music, Corigliano wrote his perky, extroverted ***Gazebo Dances*** to amuse and entertain amateur pianist-friends. This nostalgic suite is modeled after Samuel Barber's *Souvenirs*, and like *Souvenirs*, which Barber rescored for orchestra and released as a ballet, Corigliano subsequently recomposed *Gazebo Dances* for wind band (1973) and orchestra (1974). The *Gazebo Dances* comes from Corigliano's early compositional period, reflecting his trends of the time. While his works in this period are generally tonal, the tonality is often obscured through the use of polychords and chords built on intervals other than thirds, in this case, predominantly seconds and fourths. Corigliano indicates "the title comes from the gazebo-like band stands found in town squares across rural America where town bands played their concerts. The sense of summer joy and exuberance form the inspiration for this suite." (To explain why many of his fellow composers had not composed for wind band, Vincent Persichetti once whimsically remarked about the associations of the traditional bandstand experience that here inspired Corigliano: "I know that composers are often frightened away by the sound of the word 'band,' because of certain qualities long associated with this medium—rusty trumpets, consumptive flutes, wheezy oboes, disintegrated clarinets, fumbling yet amiable baton wavers, and gum-coated park benches! If you couple these conditions with transfigurations and disfigurations of works originally conceived for orchestra, you create a sound experience that's as nearly excruciating as a sick string quartet playing a dilettante's arrangement of a nineteenth-century piano sonata.") And so Corigliano has written a work that re-imagines these sorts of entertainments that one might have experienced at a gazebo concert. This set of dances (although, really only the second and fourth movements are actually dances), in Corigliano's words, "begins with a modern Rossini-like Overture, [and] is followed by a rather peg-legged Waltz, in which the um-pah-pah sometimes lacks a pah—then comes a long-lined Adagio and a

final spirited Tarantella, which alternates movements of a great pseudo-seriousness with bouncing spirit." The "Tarantella" has been further resurrected, in a grander if more horrifying context, in the grim Scherzo of Corigliano's *Symphony No. 1*. As Corgliano indicates: "The second movement (of *Symphony No. 1*) was written in memory of a friend who was an executive in the music industry. He was also an amateur pianist, and in 1972, I wrote a set of Dances (*Gazebo Dances* for piano, four-hands) for various friends to play and dedicated the final movement (tarantella) to him. This was a jaunty little piece whose mood, as in many tarantellas, seems to be at odds with its purpose. For the tarantella, as described in Grove's Dictionary, is a 'South Italian dance played at continuously increasing speed [and] by means of dancing it a strange kind of insanity [attributed to tarantula bite] could be cured.' The association of madness and my piano piece proved both prophetic and bitterly ironic when my friend, whose wit and intelligence were legendary in the music field, became insane as a result of AIDS dementia."

> A composer should, at the very least, provoke us to listen. If someone is validly communicating ideas, emotions, and skills, this ought to capture our attention. Some do, some don't. John Corigliano definitely does. His music is synonymous with all that is positive about American music."
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> Mark Yacovone, WQED-FM, Pittsburgh, PA

Dana Wilson: *When I am gone away* (2006)

Remember me when I am gone away
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you planned:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve;
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far that you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

Remember, Christina Rosetta

Dana Wilson (b. Lakewood, OH, 1946) is currently Charles A. Dana Professor of Music in the School of Music at Ithaca College, where he teaches theory, composition, and jazz. While his music typically displays a fusion of classical and jazz styles, Wilson believes that: "In music composition, as in life, we desire both order and change, unity and variety. The composer's challenge is to invite the listener into a provocative sound world, establish patterns that provide order and unity, and periodically send the material in unexpected directions so that the listener's interest is sustained." His primary teachers include Samuel Adler and Hale Smith, and he holds a doctorate from the Eastman School of Music. In addition to having written numerous articles on wide-ranging musical subjects, Wilson is co-author of *Contemporary Choral Arranging*, published by Prentice Hall/Simon and Schuster. He has been a Fellow at Yaddo (the artists' retreat in Saratoga Springs, New York), a Wye Fellow at the Aspen Institute, and a Fellow at the Society for Humanities, Cornell University. He has received several awards—including the 1987 Sudler International Wind Band Composition Prize (administered by the John Philip Sousa Foundation) and the 1988 Ostwald Prize (from the American Bandmasters Association) for his *Piece of Mind*, a movement of which was performed by the Symphonic Winds in February 2006—and grants from institutions such as the National Endowment for the Arts, New York Foundation for the Arts, New England Foundation for the Arts, New York State Council for the Arts, Arts Midwest, and Meet the

Composer. He has written solo works for renowned artists including hornist Gail Williams, clarinetist Larry Combs, trumpeter James Thompson, and oboist David Weiss, and he has been commissioned and performed by ensembles including the Chicago Chamber Musicians, Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings, Buffalo Philharmonic, Memphis Symphony, Netherlands Wind Ensemble, and Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra.

Wilson writes the following about his latest wind band piece, ***When I am gone away***:

> As this work was commissioned in honor of Bill Rowell upon his retirement, it seemed appropriate that it be a meditation upon our collective memories of his fine contributions as both conductor and educator. To facilitate this, I set out to write a wind work by first composing a choral setting of the wonderful poem *Remember* by Christina Rosetta, then "erasing" the text—leaving only the musical essence—and then letting the work grow from there. I hope the piece that the piece captures the spirit of the premiere's occasion, while also reflecting Bill's warmth, gentleness, and intensity. I also hope it suggests the bittersweet nature of the event—celebrating a career while already missing his guiding hand.

When I am gone away was commissioned by a consortium of twenty-five schools/ensembles, including Drury High School in North Adams (Carl Jenkins, band director) and the Williams Symphonic Winds. The work was premiered this past July by the South Shore Conservatory Summer Festival Wind Ensemble, conducted by Frederick Harris; as Bill Rowell was Steven Bodner's conducting mentor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1999-2002, we are pleased to present the work's second performance.

Charles Ives: "The Alcotts," movement III from Piano Sonata No. 2
"*Concord, Mass., 1840-1860*," transcribed by Richard Thurston

> The best of Ives is a kind of American Impressionism: a visual, tactile, sensual stream of images and events that lay embedded in memory. His is an art of deep recall, dreamlike, chaotic, at times banal and sentimental, but also unexpected and shocking in its power to juxtapose sensation and memory. Remember that Proust, Mahler, Freud were his contemporaries! Ives was the first to attempt a musical representation of random simultaneity. Decades before such techniques were made possible in film, in multi-channel mixing and in digital manipulation, Ives was already creating a polyrhythmic universe of startling activity. The greatness of his achievement, moreover, lies not merely in the novelty of his invention, but in the way he placed invention at the service of a vast and humane vision of life.
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> John Adams, "Ives: The Amount To Carry"

Regarded as one of the leading American composers of the 20th century, **Charles Ives** (1874-1954) is one of the most extraordinary and singular figures in the entire history of Western art music. For much of his life, Ives composed in relative isolation. By day, he worked in insurance for thirty years, first with Mutual Insurance until he formed his own insurance company, Ives & Co., in 1907; in fact, Ives's humanitarian innovations in the domain of life insurance are still celebrated. By night and on the weekends, though, Ives composed a body of works that, although most lay unperformed for decades, would plant the seed for a truly indigenous American music. Ives scholar (and President of the Ives Society) J. Peter Burkholder tidily sums up Ives's musical career, stating: "His music is marked by an integration of American and European musical traditions, innovations in rhythm, harmony and form, and an unparalleled ability to evoke the sounds and feelings of American life." However accurate, this statement conveys little of Ives's remarkableness.

Through his father George E. Ives, himself an accomplished instrumentalist, retired Civil War bandmaster, and musical experimenter, young Charlie was exposed to the entire range of music-making in his hometown of Danbury, Connecticut. He studied the piano and organ from a young age with a series of teachers and was playing in recitals by his early teens. He became an accomplished performer and composer in two musical traditions, American vernacular music and Protestant church music, and

gained his first exposure to a third, European classical music. His first publicly performed piece may have been the march *Holiday Quickstep*, written when he was 13; the review in the Danbury Evening News of the January 1888 premiere called him "certainly a musical genius" and declared "we shall expect more from this talented youngster in the future." Later that year, Ives began his "first" professional career as a musician—one that would last for a decade and a half—when he became the youngest salaried church organist in Connecticut—at the age fourteen. Although he had many teachers for performance, his father taught him harmony and counterpoint and guided his first compositions. Ives's father had an open mind about musical theory and practice and encouraged his son's compositional experiments, such as bitonal harmonizations of "London Bridge," polytonal canons and fugues, and pieces with whole-tone collections and triadic parallelism. When Ives went to Yale, he studied composition with Horatio Parker; while he did gain a solid foundation in German art music, Ives found Parker a bit stuffy. As such, Ives's compositional voice was still influenced to a far greater degree by his father. As Joseph Horowitz has written: "Ives drew inspiration from his father's world: from the Danbury, Connecticut, of his childhood; from the 'common' and 'familiar,' 'natural objects and pleasures,' from chapel hymns and corny theater tunes. To a degree uncanny and extreme, the preserved memories of father and childhood anchored his creative identity—as did his surrogate Transcendentalist fathers Emerson and Thoreau." Forgoing regular performance—since, with his work in insurance providing more than ample financial security for his wife Harmony and him, he never even attempted to make a living as a composer—Ives had the freedom to explore his musical creativity without having to please anyone but himself. His major works often took years from first sketch to final revisions, and most pieces lay unperformed for decades. He used a wide variety of styles, mixing tonality with atonality, traditional with experimental procedures, direct quotation with paraphrases and original melodies, even in pieces written during the same period. As Burkholder observes in his impressive book *All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing*: "Charles Ives is famous for using borrowed material in his music. Almost two hundred individual works or movements, spanning his entire career and representing more than a third of his output, incorporate music by other composers or from his own previous work." Denise Gahn has postulated that Ives's use of familiar tunes was an enduring reference to cherished ideas and values in American places: "Memorializing places subdued the passage of time and enabled Ives to traverse the distance from powerful events of the past to potent experiences in the present, both for himself and for the nation. Musical evocation of places could amplify and suspend single moments in time and compel listeners to reconsider their awareness of experiences associated with places, both personal and national experiences."

Having developed an impressive range of tools, Ives used them all in his mature works, choosing whatever was appropriate to fit the image, event or feeling he was attempting to convey. Ives wrote in 1925: "Why tonality as such should be thrown out for good, I can't see. Why it should be always present, I can't see. It depends, it seems to me, a good deal—as clothes depend on the thermometer—on what one is trying to do." Though this eclecticism has been criticized by those who value systems, refinement, and homogeneity more than rhetorical power, many others have found the mix of elements in Ives's music an apt expression of the heterogeneity of modern, especially American, life. Commenting on Ives's unique relationship to past musics—and by extension to the notion of musical memory—in his essay "'The Things Our Fathers Loved': Charles Ives and the European Tradition," Robert P. Morgan offers a compelling portrait of Ives relative to his unique view of inherited tradition:

> Despite his extraordinary originality, he was deeply grounded in his own particular historical moment and inescapably confronted with its larger musical and cultural issues. Properly viewed (and heard), Ives's music reflects the musical turmoil of the years immediately following the turn of the century as accurately as that of any composer of his generation—indeed, perhaps more so. This is most apparent in his peculiar attitude toward musical conventions inherited from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, conventions associated with functional harmonic tonality and the musical forms with which it was joined.

> Consideration of Ives's music reveals that at a remarkably early moment he came to view traditional tonality as a 'historical' language—that is, as having become in some basic sense consigned to the past. This is not to say that he viewed the language of tonality as invalid, or obsolete; rather, he grasped, with what now seems remarkable foresightedness, that it could no longer function as Western music's mother tongue.... Though he still frequently employs the language of traditional tonality, Ives no longer uses it as a natural, "living" language but as an essentially artificial one. He does not so much use it, in fact, as appropriate and manipulate it, exploiting it for his own particular purposes without regard for how anomalous (or non-tonal) the result may be. For Ives the language of common-practice Western music, having passed into history, had been neutralized. Though the remnants of common-practice music are still everywhere evident in his work, their meaning has been fundamentally transformed. They are treated as available material, as elements to be refashioned at will without consideration for their origins or previous implications. He fashioned his own compositional voice largely by rehearing the voices of his musical past.

By about 1920, most of Ives's major works were completed—but now his "second" public career—as a composer—was just beginning. His self-publications brought a small group of admirers who worked passionately to promote his music, most notably the composer Henry Cowell, whose quarterly *New Music* printed several of his works, starting with the second movement of the Fourth Symphony in 1929, and who wrote a series of appreciations of Ives's music emphasizing its pioneering use of innovative techniques. The first work that Ives chose to publish, in 1920, was his most ambitious solo composition, the *Second Piano Sonata*, subtitled "Concord, Mass., 1840-1860," and an accompanying book that he called *Essays Before a Sonata*. (Ives's dedication— "These prefatory essays were written by the composer for those who can't stand his music—and the music for those who can't stand his essays; to those who can't stand either, the whole is respectfully dedicated."—may be as infamous as the works themselves!) By the time they were published, the *Essays* took up more pages to print than the *Concord Sonata* itself, having expanded from an attempt to explain the character of each of the four movements of the sonata to include what was to be Ives's most definitive statement of his aesthetic philosophy and purposes.

Ives described the Second Piano Sonata as "an attempt to present (one person's) impression of the spirit of transcendentalism that is associated in the minds of many with Concord, Mass., of over half a century ago." Each movement is a character study of a person or family—Thoreau, Hawthorne, the Alcott family, and Emerson—important in the literary life of Concord in the two decades before the Civil War. The result lies somewhere between an impressionistic character piece and an overtly programmatic work. Performed this evening in a transcription by Major Richard E Thurston (who also conducted the first performance of this version by the Tactical Air Command Band in 1968), **"The Alcotts,"** the third movement of the *Concord Sonata*, was adapted by Ives around 1914-1919 from a lost, unfinished *Orchard House Overture*. This is the shortest, most accessible movement of the sonata, an interlude both reposeful and majestic, capturing the sound and feel of family music-making as a way to evoke the house and its occupants. The style at the beginning of the first and middle sections is reminiscent of home piano playing of the pre-Civil War era, and the borrowings are historically appropriate, for the two hymns—Charles Zeuner's *Missionary Chant* and Simeon B. Marsh's *Martyn*—date from the 1830s and the 1840s. Of course, the most famous and obvious quotations are from two works by Beethoven: the opening motive of the Fifth Symphony and the "Hammerklavier" Sonata, although both are stated initially as harmonized hymns. As Ives viewed himself as the legitimate heir to Beethoven, a modern composer capable off utilizing "the sounds that Beethoven didn't have," it was important for him to integrate Beethoven into the Transcendental world of Concord. As Geoffrey Block writes: "For Ives, as for most of the musically educated nineteenth-century public, Beethoven represented the summit of musical achievement. In particular, the Fifth Symphony, on which Ives hangs his *Concord Sonata*, had been regarded by the *cognoscenti* as the crowning glory of the orchestral repertoire.... Thus, Ives made a fortunate choice when he asked Beethoven to speak musically for the Transcendentalists." Most

analyses and reviews (Elliott Carter's 1939 review in *Modern Music* withstanding) of the *Concord Sonata* have praised it as the brilliant work of transcendent genius, including this review, by New York Herald Tribune critic Lawrence Gilman after John Kirkpatrick's New York Town Hall premiere, 20 January 1939: "This sonata is exceptionally great music—it is, indeed, the greatest music composed by an American, and the most deeply and essentially American in impulse and implication. It is wide-ranging and capacious. It has passion, tenderness, humor, simplicity, homeliness. It has imaginative and spiritual vastness. It has wisdom and beauty and profundity, and a sense of the encompassing terror and splendor of human life and human destiny—a sense of those mysteries that are both human and divine."

Since Ives was adamant that his ideas and words accompany this music, below are excerpts from "The Alcotts" chapter of his *Essays Before a Sonata*:

> If the dictagraph had been perfected in Bronson Alcott's time, he might now be [considered] a great writer. As it is, he goes down as Concord's greatest talker. "Great expecter," says Thoreau; "great feller," says Sam Staples, "for talkin' big...but his daughters is the gals though---always DOIN' something.'" Old Man Alcott, however, was usually "doin' somethin'" within. An internal grandiloquence made him melodious without; an exuberant, irrepressible, visionary absorbed with philosophy as such; to him it was a kind of transcendental business, the profits of which supported his inner man rather than his family. Apparently his deep interest in spiritual physics, rather than metaphysics, gave a kind of hypnotic mellifluous effect to his voice when he sang his oracles; a manner something of a cross between an inside pompous self-assertion and an outside serious benevolence. But he was sincere and kindly intentioned in his eagerness to extend what he could of the better influence of the philosophic world as he saw it. In fact, there is a strong didactic streak in both father and daughter. Louisa May seldom misses a chance to bring out the moral of a homely virtue. The power of repetition was to them a natural means of illustration. It is said that the elder Alcott, while teaching school, would frequently whip himself when the scholars misbehaved, to show that the Divine Teacher-God-was pained when his children of the earth were bad. Quite often the boy next to the bad boy was punished, to show how sin involved the guiltless. And Miss Alcott is fond of working her story around, so that she can better rub in a moral precept—and the moral sometimes browbeats the story. But with all the elder Alcott's vehement, impracticable, visionary qualities, there was a sturdiness and a courage—at least, we like to think so. A Yankee boy who would cheerfully travel in those days, when distances were long and unmotored, as far from Connecticut as the Carolinas, earning his way by peddling, laying down his pack to teach school when opportunity offered, must possess a basic sturdiness. This was apparently not very evident when he got to preaching his idealism.
> ...
> Concord village, itself, reminds one of that common virtue lying at the height and root of all the Concord divinities. As one walks down the broad-arched street, passing the white house of Emerson–ascetic guard of a former prophetic beauty—he comes presently beneath the old elms overspreading the Alcott house. It seems to stand as a kind of homely but beautiful witness of Concord's common virtue—it seems to bear a consciousness that its past is LIVING, that the "mosses of the Old Manse" and the hickories of Walden are not far away. Here is the home of the "Marches"—all pervaded with the trials and happiness of the family and telling, in a simple way, the story of "the richness of not having." Within the house, on every side, lie remembrances of what imagination can do for the better amusement of fortunate children who have to do for themselves-much-needed lessons in these days of automatic, ready-made, easy entertainment which deaden rather than stimulate the creative faculty. And there sits the little old spinet-piano Sophia Thoreau gave to the Alcott children, on which Beth played the old Scotch airs, and played at the Fifth Symphony.
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> There is a commonplace beauty about "Orchard House"—a kind of spiritual sturdiness underlying its quaint picturesqueness—a kind of common triad of the New England homestead, whose overtones tell us that there must have been something aesthetic fibered in the Puritan severity—the self-sacrificing part of the ideal—a value that seems to stir a deeper feeling, a stronger sense of being nearer some perfect truth than a Gothic cathedral or an Etruscan villa. All around you, under the Concord sky, there still floats the

influence of that human faith melody, transcendent and sentimental enough for the enthusiast or the cynic respectively, reflecting an innate hope–a common interest in common things and common men—a tune the Concord bards are ever playing, while they pound away at the immensities with a Beethovenlike sublimity, and with, may we say, a vehemence and perseverance—for that part of greatness is not so difficult to emulate.

We dare not attempt to follow the philosophic raptures of Bronson Alcott—unless you will assume that his apotheosis will show how "practical" his vision in this world would be in the next. And so we won't try to reconcile the music sketch of the Alcotts with much besides the memory of that home under the elms—the Scotch songs and the family hymns that were sung at the end of each day—though there may be an attempt to catch something of that common sentiment (which we have tried to suggest above)—a strength of hope that never gives way to despair–a conviction in the power of the common soul which, when all is said and done, may be as typical as any theme of Concord and its transcendentalists.

Lukas Foss: from *Renaissance Concerto* (1986)

Described by percussionist Jan Williams as “a musician of gigantic stature in the annals of American contemporary music,” **Lukas Foss** (b. Berlin, 15 August 1922) has enjoyed a long, varied, and celebrated career as a composer, conductor, pianist, and teacher. As Music Director of the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Buffalo Philharmonic and the Milwaukee Symphony, Foss has been an effective champion of living composers and has brought new life to the standard repertoire. In I986, the New York Times praised his adventurous and eclectic combinations of traditional and contemporary repertoire, asserting that Foss led "the most engrossing and unusual programs in town.... Our musical life would be richer if Lukas Foss...could hire himself out as a sort of 'programmer at large.' He seems incapable of a mechanical idea." As a conductor Foss has directed most of America's major symphony orchestras including those of Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco; abroad, he has led the Berlin Philharmonic, the Leningrad Symphony, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Santa Cecilia Orchestra of Rome and the Tokyo Philharmonic, among others. He has taught composition at Tanglewood, and has been composer-in-residence at Harvard, the Manhattan School of Music, Carnegie Mellon University, Yale University, and most recently, Boston University. In 1983, he was elected to the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, of which he is now a Vice Chancellor.

As a composer, Foss has created a body of well over one hundred works that Aaron Copland called, in 1974, "among the most original and stimulating compositions in American music." Tom Johnson in the *Village Voice* went further: "Little by little he is knitting together a body of work which may actually speak for contemporary culture as a whole more eloquently than any other." Precociously gifted (and described as a musical “wunderkind”), he began composing at the age of seven, had his first works—a series of piano pieces written mostly on the New York subway—published by G. Schirmer when he was fifteen, and graduated with honors from the Curtis Institute at the age of eighteen. He rose to national prominence when he received the New York Music Critics’ Circle Award in 1944 for his cantata *The Prairie*; the following year, at the age of 23, Foss became the youngest composer to ever be awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship. In 1953, after two years spent as a Fulbright recipient and as a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome, Foss succeeded Arnold Schoenberg as professor of music (composition and conducting) at UCLA. While there, he founded in 1957 the Improvisation Chamber Ensemble—a quartet (clarinet, piano, cello and percussion) that improvised music in concert, working not from a score but from Foss's ideas and visions—and formulated what he called “system and chance music,” a kind of controlled improvisation. (As part of an 80th Birthday Concert for Lukas Foss, on 12 November 2002, the Symphonic Winds performed Foss’s *For 24 Winds*, one of a series of three graphically-notated, “controlled improvisation” pieces that were “based on the idea of a score containing on every page a sum total from which a different selection is extracted for each performance.” In addition, the birthday concert also featured the premiere of Foss’s *Concerto for Band*, his first and only work for wind band, which was commissioned by a consortium including the Symphonic Winds.)

The effects of these experiments led to a profound change in Foss's compositional techniques: he abandoned tonality and fixed forms and opted for serialism, indeterminacy and graphic notation. Even time itself came up for scrutiny in the 1960 work *Time Cycle* for soprano and orchestra, a setting of texts about time by Auden, Housman, Kafka and Nietzsche, that was first performed by Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic, with interludes by Foss's Improvisation Chamber Ensemble. At the premiere, Mr. Bernstein, in an unprecedented gesture of respect, performed the entire work twice that same evening. Described by critic Lester Trimble as one of "the most inspired compositions by a contemporary American," *Time Cycle* received the New York Music Critics' Circle Award for 1961, and has remained Foss's most performed and recorded work.

Foss's compositional language, however, has evolved considerably over the last several decades. Since about the mid-1980s, Foss has striven "to be as crazy as I was in my avant-garde music and yet tonal." So, while he has revisited the neo-classicism and Americana from his earliest works, he has not forgotten the experimental techniques he helped to develop during the 1960s and 70s; for example, his guitar concerto, *American Landscapes* combines folk guitar styles and tunes with novel plucking and percussion techniques in the solo part. In particular, Foss's compositions demonstrate that a love for the past can be reconciled with all sorts of innovations, as he explains in his lecture entitled, "A Twentieth-Century Composer's Confessions about the Creative Process:"

> People are still clinging to the Hollywood idea of a genius, say, Beethoven walking in the midst of a thunderstorm. There comes suddenly the great melody, the inspiration. We would never do this to a scientist. We would not imagine Einstein walking through a thunderstorm and suddenly the Theory of Relativity appearing to him. If we know better when it comes to scientists, why are we so naive about artists? Because art is supposed to be emotional and science intellectual? I don't dare postulate about science, but I know that it takes both emotion and intellect in order for art to happen.... It is obvious that anything a scientist discovers or invents is based on previous discoveries and inventions. The same applies to the arts. Invention does not fall upon a blank mind. Any creator owes a debt to past creation. The artist falls passionately in love with art that already exists. This is the first step.... Most people think an artist tries to be original, but originality is the last thing that develops in the artist. Nor is the artist concerned with expressing himself.... An artist who knows what he wants to do never said, "I want to express myself." He wants to do what he loves. For years that may mean imitation. Then, one day, it is like a door opening, and a new thought comes in. Why not try this instead? Suddenly he is doing something original, almost in spite of himself. Even at this point he does not give up being influenced by what he loves, by the music that has made him a musician. Rather, he uses it in the light of his recent discovery. He makes it his own. This is a wonderful English expression that exists in no other language I know: "to make something one's own." Stravinsky probably did not know this expression when he said, "One must always steal, but never from oneself." Right on the mark! Why make something my own that is already my own? Stealing from oneself is indulgent, and one doesn't learn anything new. If I steal from another source, I enrich my vocabulary.... There is another interesting paradox here: by immersing ourselves in what we love, we find ourselves. We do not lose ourselves. One does not lose one's identity by falling in love. The paradox is most striking in the performing arts. Does the actor stop being himself as he becomes "Hamlet" on stage? He doesn't. The greater his acting, the more likely he becomes himself in the act and finds himself. So does the pianist when he immerses himself in a Beethoven sonata. Through love we find ourselves. That is why we study masterworks.

The essential feature in Foss's music is the tension, so typical of the 20th century, between tradition and new modes of musical expression, nowhere more explicit than in his *Baroque Variations* for orchestra (1967). "Deconstructing" works by Handel, Scarlatti and Bach, the surrealist variations are intended to be "dreams" in which the original music is fragmented and distorted; about Variation III (*Phorion*), on Bach's Partita in E for solo violin, Foss described its desired effect as "torrents of baroque semiquavers...submerging into and emerging out of inaudibility."

Almost twenty years later, Foss wrote a companion piece to the *Baroque Variations*—the ***Renaissance Concerto***. When asked in 1985 by his friend, the flutist Carol Wincenc, to write a flute concerto for her, he was faced with the problem confronted by every composer in this genre: how to create an orchestral texture that would not overwhelm the solo instrument. Recalling that the flute "was a favorite instrument in the Renaissance and Baroque eras," he sought the sound he wanted in early music—although Foss would describe the elegant sound of the Concerto as "the invention of a Renaissance sound that never was. It's not modernizing the Renaissance, but dreaming yourself back to it and making a piece out of that." The wistful and antiquarian work, says Foss, is "an homage to something I love, a handshake across the centuries," and is written for an ensemble that can range in size from 19 to 62 instruments, depending on the number of strings; this evening's performance, featuring the final two movements from the four-movement concerto, uses the minimum number of string players: a double string quartet plus bass. The third movement, "Recitative (after Monteverdi)," is a reworking of "Tu Se' Morta" from Monterverdi's *Orfeo*—the critical moment in the opera when Orpheus, realizing his beloved Eurydice is dead, resolves to seek her in the underworld. As David Wright indicates: "Time seems to stop in this movement.... One body of strings gently echoes the other from offstage (canon of the harmony) and the orchestra's flute also picks up a phrase or two from the soloist"—perhaps Eurydice answering her Orpheus?—"the overlapping effect is disorienting, trance-like." The fourth movement, "Jouissance," is a rondo with a refrain built in canon on a motive attributed to David Melville's 1612 madrigal "Musing." Digressions feature evocative and often ghostly effects including flute key clicks played in unison with a Renaissance drum and haunting harmonics in the cello and double bass. In addition, as musicologist Joshua Berrett has written: "Interspersed are spectral melodic fragments of Galilei, Gesualdo, and Peri. Surrealism pervades the closing measures as well, with key clicks suggesting the vanishing of the Pied Piper within an eerie string glissando atmosphere." The work closes with a gentle chime stroke announcing the end of the séance.

Jeffrey Wessler *is a senior chemistry major from Andover, Massachusetts. He is currently pre-med and is pursuing a thesis on HIV/AIDS in South Africa. This past summer Jeff spent three months in South Africa working with HIV-positive women. In his free time, other than practice flute, Jeff is a member and captain of the Williams Mens' Squash Team. Jeff studies flute with Floyd Hebert and is a member of the Symphonic Winds and the Berkshire Symphony.*

John Adams: *Grand Pianola Music* (1982)

While each of the other composers performed tonight illustrated a narrow or limited concept of memory in music—Wilson dealt with memory not as a musical concept, but simply as a psychological/social one; by incorporating fleeting remembrances of specific musical/historical objects spanning styles and genres (e.g. Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*), both Foss and Ives dealt with the ephemerality of our musical memories, juxtaposing past musics in symbolic fashion to convey an idealistic transcendentalness; and, as if looking through a prism, Corigliano offered a fragmented reminiscence of a specific type of musical experience, the 1930s gazebo bandstand concert, viewed from a late 20th-century perspective—**John Adams** (b. Worcester, MA, 15 Feb 1947), instead, is not so conscripted. Rather, his ***Grand Pianola Music*** may be the pinnacle postmodern creation: memories of every past music are permitted to coexist here, all in an attempt to better construct what for Adams it means to be a composer in the late twentieth century, and now twenty-first century. (One gets the feeling, perhaps, that if Ives would have been born fifty years later, this may have been the piece he would have written—or at the very least, *Grand Pianola Music* could not have been conceived by a composer who had not lived with and loved Ives's music. Ives was postmodern before postmodernism was a concept!) The work is 100% Adams—there are no direct quotations here—but, conversely, the whole of music history is on display here, filtered through Adams's distinctive, almost vulgar, post-minimalist lens; in Adams's own opinion, this is his musical autobiography, since as he mentioned in

1996: "unconscious absorption of other music is one of the engines that runs my creativity." Adams has written the following about his 30+-minute *Grand Pianola Music*, which was commissioned by General Atlantic Corporation and premiered 26 February 1982 by the San Francisco Symphony, with the composer conducting:

> Of all my works, *Grand Pianola Music* has the most checkered past. It suffered through a tortured beginning, endured endless rewrites, has on all too many occasions been subjected to excruciatingly bas performance, and continues, even after [twenty] years, to arouse the most divided responses from audiences. The piece, as the saying goes, seems to have something to offend everybody. Even so, and without being coy, I can say quite frankly not to *epater les bourgeoisie*, but rather for the sheer pleasure of hearing certain musical "signals"—one could call them clichés—piled up one against one another. Dueling pianos, cooing sirens, Valhalla brass, thwacking bass drums, gospel triads, and a Niagara of cascading flat keys all learned to cohabit as I wrote the piece.
> ......
> When *Grand Pianola Music* was first performed in New York (in 1982 in a festival of contemporary music organized and conducted by the composer Jacob Druckman) the audience response included a substantial and (to me) shocking number of "boos." True, it was a very shaky performance, and the piece came at the end of a long concert of new works principally by serialist composers from the Columbia-Princeton school. In the context of this otherwise rather sober repertoire *Grand Pianola Music* must doubtless have seemed like a smirking truant with a dirty face, in need of a severe spanking. To this day, it has remained a weapon of choice among detractors who wish to hold up my work as exemplary of the evils of Postmodernism or—even more drastic—the pernicious influences of American consumerism on high art. In truth I had very much enjoyed composing the piece, doing so in a kind of trance of automatic recall, where almost any and every artifact from my musical subconscious was allowed to float to the surface and encouraged to bloom. The piece could only have been conceived by someone who had grown up surrounded by the detritus of mid-twentieth century recorded music. Beethoven and Rachmaninoff soak in the same warm bath with Liberace, Wagner, the Supremes, Charles Ives, and John Philip Sousa.
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> But *Grand Pianola Music* genuinely upset people, doubtless due to the bombastic finale, "On the Dominant Divide," with its flag-waving, gaudy tune rocking back and forth between the pianos amid ever-increasing cascades of B-flat major arpeggios. I meant it neither as a joke nor a nose-thumbing at the tradition of earnest, serious contemporary music nor as an intended provocation of any kind. It was rather, in its loudest and most hyperventilated moments, a kind of Whitmanesque yawp, an exhilaration of good humor, certainly a parody and therefore ironic. But it was never intended, as has since been intimated, as a "political" statement about the state of "new music." Nevertheless, I was alarmed by the severity of its reception, and for years I found myself apologizing for it ("I've got to take that piece down behind the barn and shoot it"). Now, though, I'm impressed by its boldness.
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> As with *Harmonielehre*, which began with a dream of a huge oil tanker rising like a Saturn rocket out of the waters of San Francisco Bay, *Grand Pianola Music* also started with a dream image in which, while driving down Interstate Route 5, I was approached from behind by two long, gleaming, black stretch limousines. As the vehicles drew up beside me they transformed into the world's longest Steinway pianos...twenty, maybe even thirty feet long. Screaming down the highway at 90 m.p.h., they gave off volleys of Bb and Eb major arpeggios. I was reminded of walking down the hallways of the San Francisco Conservatory, where I used to teach, hearing the sonic blur of twenty or more pianos playing Chopin, the *Emperor Concerto*, Hanon, Rachmaninoff, the *Maple Leaf Rag* and much more.
>
> Despite the image that inspired it, and despite the heft of its instrumentation, *Grand Pianola Music* is, for the most part, a surprisingly delicate piece. The woodwinds putter along in a most unthreatening fashion while waves of rippling piano arpeggios roll in and out like slow tides. Three female voices (the sirens) sing wordless harmony, sometimes floating above the band in long sostenuto triads while at other times imitating the crisp staccato of the winds and brass.
>
> The principle technique of the piano writing was suggested to me by the behavior of tape and digital delays, where a sound can be repeated electronically in a fraction of a second. The two-piano version of this kind of delay was accomplished by having both pianists play essentially the same material, but with

one slightly behind the other, usually a sixteenth or an eighth note apart. This gives the piano writing its unique shimmer.

Grand Pianola Music is in two parts, the first being in fact two movements joined together without pause. Of these the second is a slow serene pasture with grazing tuba. The finale, "On the Dominant Divide", was an experiment in applying my Minimalist techniques to the barest of all possible chord progressions, I-V-I. I had noticed that most "classical" Minimalist pieces always progressed by motion of thirds in the bass and that in all cases they strictly avoided tonic-dominant relations, relations which are too fraught with a pressing need for resolution. What resulted was a swaying, rocking oscillation of phrases that gave birth to a melody. This tune, in the hero key of Eb major, is repeated a number of times, and with each iteration it gains in gaudiness and Lisztian panache until it finally goes over the top to emerge in the gurgling C major of the lowest registers of the pianos. From here it is a gradually accelerating race to the finish, with the tonalities flipping back and forth from major to minor, urging those gleaming black vehicles on to their final ecstasy.

John Coolidge Adams is one of America's most admired and respected composers. A musician of enormous range and technical command, he has produced works, both operatic and symphonic, that stand out among all contemporary classical music for the depth of their expression, the brilliance of their sound and the profoundly humanist nature of their themes. Known particularly for his operatic works on contemporary subjects (particularly his collaborations with director Peter Sellars, poet-librettist Alice Goodman, and choreographer Mark Morris: *Nixon in China*—which received both an Emmy and a Grammy award, and the recording of which was named by Time magazine as "one of the ten most important recordings of the decade"—and the immensely controversial *The Death of Klinghoffer*), he is one of the most frequently performed living composers. Among numerous awards and honors, he won the Grawemeyer Award (1995) and was named "Composer of the Year" by *Musical America* (1997). Revealing his status as, perhaps, the unofficial *composer laureate* for the U.S., in 2002 Adams was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to write a work commemorating the first anniversary of the World Trade Center attacks. His *On the Transmigration of Souls* received the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Music, and the Nonesuch recording won a rare "triple crown" at the Grammys, including "Best Classical Recording", "Best Orchestral Performance", and "Best Classical Contemporary Composition."

After studies at Harvard (1965-71, M.A. 1972) with Leon Kirchner, Earl Kim, Roger Sessions, Harold Shapero and David Del Tredici, Adams moved to California, teaching at the San Francisco Conservatory for ten years (1972-82). When he left the East Coast, Adams made a conscious decision to break away from both the European postwar aesthetic and the American academic avant-garde of the time. He quickly became involved in the Bay Area's thriving new music scene and began to forge associations with local composers and musicians. As the conductor of the Conservatory's New Music Ensemble, he commissioned and introduced new works by important experimental composers. In 1978 he became new music advisor to the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra. With music director Edo de Waart, he created the orchestra's highly successful and controversial "New and Unusual Music series," introducing major American and European avant-garde composers to San Francisco audiences. His collaboration with the orchestra served as the model for the Meet the Composer residency program, through which he was appointed the Symphony's composer-in-residence (1982–5). Several of Adams's landmark orchestral works—that established his reputation on a national scale—were written for and premiered by the San Francisco Symphony, including *Harmonium* (1981), *Grand Pianola Music* (1982), *Harmonielehre* (1985) and *El Dorado* (1992).

Even before he found his compositional voice, he had already integrated aspects of popular American culture into his work. His first major compositions, *Phrygian Gates* (1977) and *Shaker Loops* (1978, rev. 1983), are minimalist in their hypnotic pulsation, slowly unfolding modulations and ecstatic levels of energy. Yet of those composers who have been categorized as minimalists, Adams is by far the most

anchored in Western classical tradition. Roving tonal centers, fluid tempos and complex formal schemes make his brand of minimalism distinct from that of composers like Reich or Glass. The other minimalists, for all their insistence on basic chords, shied away from textbook progressions, such as I-V-I; as Alex writes: "*Grand Pianola Music* lands on that sequence with a vehemence that borders on the absurd," mixing a startling transparency with sweetness, sadness, madness, and joy. (Representing the over-the-top absurdity of "On the Dominant Divide," the only words he has the sopranos sing—"For I have seen the promised land"—occur when the typical tonal resolution, which has seen increasingly bombastic presentations, is finally avoided. In works like *Harmonium* and *Harmonielehre*, he fused repetitive motifs with a lush, highly expressive 19th-century symphonic language; tonal and emotional, but still elusively complex, they predated the onslaught of the immediately appealing, post-minimalist concert works that appeared in the late 1980s and 90s. Adams has often remarked on a kind of split personality that emerged in his music during the 1980s. During this period he alternated, with astonishing regularity, between two stylistic polarities: he composed irreverent, almost confrontational "trickster" works (e.g., ***Grand Pianola Music***, *Fearful Symmetries*) meant to entertain and amuse (and not just "seriously elevate"), and more sober, introspective compositions (e.g., *Harmonielehre*, *The Wound-Dresser*). Behind the mischief—what Adams calls his "Mark Twain American wit"—of the "trickster" pieces is his characteristic celebration of American vernacular music—the fox-trots, marches and big band music of his youth. In this regard, Ives and Copland are his predecessors; like them, he manages to dissolve boundaries between "high" and "low" art by drawing freely on the vast and fertile American tradition.

Currently Composer in Residence at Carnegie Hall, John Adams maintains an active life as a conductor, appearing with the world's greatest orchestras and with programs combining his own works with composers as diverse as Debussy, Stravinsky, Bartòk and Ravel to Zappa, Ives, Reich, Glass and Ellington. As a guest conductor and as director of music festivals in the US and Europe he has appeared with orchestras that include the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, the Concertgebouw Orchestra and the London Symphony. Earlier this year Adams curated the hugely popular "Minimalist Jukebox" for the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The official John Adams website is www.earbox.com.

Joe Shippee *is a senior philosophy major from Des Moines, Iowa. He has played classical piano for seventeen years and is currently studying under Doris Stevenson. In addition to Symphonic Winds, he has performed with the Berkshire Symphony, accompanied various student vocalists, and participated in numerous piano institutes across the U.S. and abroad. He is an active member of Williams Catholic and enjoys food photography in his spare time. Upon graduation, he will pursue a career in finance.*

Scott Smedinghoff *is a Williams sophomore who grew up in Wheaton, Illinois. Scott studies the piano with Elizabeth Wright and the organ with Edwin Lawrence at Williams and plans to be a music and mathematics double major. While not playing either of his instruments or doing math, Scott enjoys singing in both the Concert and Chamber Choirs, and playing timpani in the Symphonic Winds, at Williams.*

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"If a thing is memorable, it will be remembered."

-Anthony Burgess, composer