

**SONIC BLOOM**  
**NOVEMBER 3, 2007**

**KENNETH FROELICH: POCKET KNIVES, PAPER FOOTBALL (2002)**

When I was first approached to write this piece by flutist John Rush, I was asked to write a trio in the form of a “romantic sonata.” What exactly made a sonata “romantic” or not was unclear to me — later on I would find out that the term was simply a descriptive one that my friend John had used, with no definite form implied. Nonetheless, the idea had been placed in my mind — regardless of how I was to write the work, I could not shake the idea of a “romantic sonata.” The end result of this thought process is that the style of the two outer movements borrows greatly from earlier music, particularly from the late classical and early romantic eras; the style of the contrasting middle movement is anything but romantic.

This contrast of tradition vs. non-tradition is the main idea of this work. Classical textures (Alberti bass) and forms are juxtaposed against aleatoric passages. Diatonic melodies quickly shift to atonality and back. Harmonies begin quite stable, only to be completely turned on their side by unexpected transitions.

The rather unique title to this work likewise contrasts two unlike objects against one another. The thought of a paper football came to me while watching an oft-repeated commercial on television that featured the toy in an office. It took me a while to think of a contrasting item that would work alongside the playful image of a paper football. Eventually, the pocket knife came to mind, a symbol of childhood violence. The juxtaposition of the pocket knife and a paper football worked far better than I wished, considering that they both could be found on the playground. This title is not programmatic, but rather representative of the juxtaposition of uncommon elements in a common realm.

*Commissioned by The Delicato Ensemble*

**KENNETH D. FROELICH** (b.1977) was born in Chester, PA and raised in San Diego, CA. He received his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Southern California, and both his Master of Music degree and Doctor of Music degree from Indiana University. His principal composition teachers include Claude Baker, Don Freund, Sven-David Sandström, Eugene O’Brien, and Donald Crockett.

Froelich has received several national awards and recognitions for his compositions from ASCAP, the National Association of Composers/USA, the California Association of Professional Music Teachers (in conjunction

with MTNA), the Percussive Arts Society, the New York Youth Symphony, the American Composers Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Society of Composers, Inc., and IDEAS (Interactive Digital Environments Arts and Storytelling).

Froelich's music has been performed by many world renowned performing ensembles, including the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the American Composers Orchestra, Duo46, the University of New Mexico Percussion Ensemble, the Fresno State Wind Ensemble, the University of Southern California Symphony Orchestra, the California EAR Unit, the Indiana University New Music Ensemble, and the Orpheus Ensemble of Fresno. Works of his have been recently programmed on the Bakersfield Symphony New Directions Concert Series and the Ashland, Oregon New Music Festival, as well as recent international performances in Germany, Italy, and China. His work *Clockwork Automata* is scheduled to be released this November on a new CD of saxophonist Alan Durst, published by Centaur Records.

Kenneth currently lives in Fresno, CA with his wife Jennifer, where he is appointed as Assistant Professor in Music Composition at California State University, Fresno. Prior to his appointment at CSUF, he taught at Ball State University in Muncie, IN, and at the Sewanee Summer Music Festival in Sewanee, TN. His music is available through his website at [www.kennethfroelich.com](http://www.kennethfroelich.com), and through C. Alan Publications.

#### **CURT VEENEMAN: WINDMILLS FOR SOLO ELECTRONICS**

Traveling on Interstate 580 in northern California, one is struck with the powerful visual impact of the wind turbines of the Altamont Pass wind farms. Posed dramatically on these hills are more than 7,000 rotors that spin as the Pacific Ocean's cool air funnels into the Central Valley. There is myriad variety: some rotors have two blades and some three — while others slice the air on a vertical axis, resembling nothing more than 100-foot-tall eggbeaters. But it is not until one gets far enough away from the highway that another dimension becomes apparent: these machines not only dance, they sing! When I first had an opportunity to walk amongst the wind turbines, I became enthralled with the complex polyphony of sound they produced. I imagined a computer work comprised entirely of the rare acoustic environment of Altamont Pass, and *Windmills* is the result.

The opening section of *Windmills* explores the natural sounds of the wind farms, layered and contoured to depict the landscape made up of flowing curves. At the same time the dramatic stance of the wind turbines is evoked by digitally sampled, computer-transformed turbine sounds with

iterations that decrease logarithmically, much as the lines of actual towers on the Altamont Pass visually diminish toward a vanishing point. Soon, the dramatic roar from inside the tower of a spinning rotor carries the listener into a more active sound environment. Now the sampled sounds of various wind turbines are further transformed and re-juxtaposed in a demonstration of the powerful essence of the turbines — it is a ride on electrons.

Gradually, striving toward the surface of this brutal activity is a celebration of a precursor of the modern wind turbine — a Dutch folksong about windmills. At first lending itself only to the intervalic structure of the composition, and then dissolving again after its atoms are arranged into a recognizable state, the folksong creates the underlying chiastic form of *Windmills*. In this sense, the musical design forms an X (as in the Greek letter chi, hence chiastic) by gradually progressing from a general to a specific and back to a general disposition of the folksong. After the wind turbines' celebratory rendition of the folksong (complete with blade-knocking klompen), the music begins a journey backward through time. Remaining at work's end is the sound of a lone, multi-vented pump windmill. Sadly, this pump windmill no longer stands among its high-tech counterparts. However, its last song is preserved as a part of *Windmills*.

*Special thanks go to Jeff Crawford for engineering assistance and to Bill Chapman of WindMaster USA, Inc. This work was made possible by a Scholarly Activity Grant from the University of the Pacific.*

**CURT VEENEMAN** (b.1953) received his Ph.D. in composition in 1989 from the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied with Andrew Imbrie. He received his M.A. in 1985 from the University of Iowa, where he studied with Donald Martin Jenni and Richard Hervig. He has spoken and/or his works have been performed throughout the United States, in Canada, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Bulgaria. He is the winner of several awards, including the ASCAP-Hubbell Award for composition.

Veeneman has been very active in promoting new music. At the University of Alberta, Canada, he directed the new music ensemble Sonor Borealis, and at the University of the Pacific he founded and directed the concert series, PACIFIC MARKET: Fresh Music From Around The World. Veeneman also directed the Society of Composers Region VIII conference in 1995 and the Talloires International Composers' Conference in France in 1996.

Veeneman's works include *Les Cloches* for orchestra (based on the life of Joan of Arc; premiered last year by the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra), *The Wiry Concord* for 5-string banjo, dulcimer, cimbalom,

harp, harpsichord, piano, viola and percussion (available on Capstone Records), *Mountain Thyme*, based on Bulgarian folk music (recorded by the Sofia Symphony Orchestra), *Hommage à Martin Jenni (multum amas)* for voice, flute, 'cello, piano, and percussion, and *Pneuma* for solo flute, performed last year by Earplay and of which Gérard Condé wrote in *Le Monde* (Paris), "J'ai beaucoup apprécié le lyrisme et la rigueur de *Pneuma* pour flûte de Curt Veeneman . . ." (I greatly appreciate the lyricism and the precision of Curt Veeneman's *Pneuma* for flute . . .). As a performer, Veeneman is recorded on Music and Arts.

### **LAURIE SAN MARTIN: DANCES (2004, 2007)**

I began this piece with *Tangozilla* written for Amy Dissanayake as part of a tango project where Amy requested 3-minute tangos from a variety of composers. After writing *Tangozilla*, the first movement in this set, I felt that the tango need a companion piece or two and began working on the second movement, *Zambra?*, also for Amy. It was not until the EARPLAY ensemble approached me looking for a piece "with piano" that I became inspired to write the final movement *Ziozuki* for pianist Karen Rosenak.

In writing *Tangozilla*, I was mostly inspired by William Bolcom's *Dead Moth Tango* and an assortment of tangos by Astor Piazzolla. I felt most attracted to the dark and playful character of these tangos. *Tangozilla* maintains a tango-esque rhythm throughout and gradually moves from the lowest register of the piano to the highest.

*Zambra?* begins by descending from the high register where *Tangozilla* left off. Irregular and off-balance rhythms give *Zambra?* give a nervous quality. The piece creates pedal points and uses flamenco-like rhythms to decorate these repeated notes. Compared to the first movement, the second movement is less focused, giving the impression of wandering.

*Ziozuki*, for pianist Karen Rosenak, recapitulates many of the ideas from *Tangozilla*. Like *Zambra?*, it is more episodic and less centered than the first movement. The episodes, or digressions, grow longer as the piece progresses and often sound either like Conlon Nancarrow's off-centered canons, or some of the more persistent moments of David Rakowski's piano etudes.

**LAURIE SAN MARTIN** (b. 1968) is a faculty member in the UC Davis Music Department where she teaches music theory and composition and co-directs the Empyrean Ensemble. A native of Berkeley, she holds degrees from U.C. Davis, U.C. Berkeley and Brandeis University where she studied composition, clarinet, and conducting. Her principal teachers include Ross Bauer, Martin Boykan, Eric Chasalow, David Rakowski,

Olly Wilson and Yehudi Wyner. Her music has been performed in the US and in Italy by such ensembles as Speculum Musicae, eighth blackbird, EARPLAY, the Warebrook Contemporary Music Festival, the Left Coast Ensemble, and the SF Contemporary Players. She has received awards from the International Alliance for Women in Music, the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer's Awards, the Margaret Blackwell Memorial Prize in Composition and a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Her music includes solo, chamber and orchestral music, and she has collaborated with other artists in multimedia and video. Most recently she has enjoyed writing for virtuoso soloists including percussionist Chris Froh and pianists Lara Downes and Amy Dissanayake. Her next two projects continue her work with soloists. These include a solo piano piece for Marilyn Nonken to be performed on the Chamber Music Now Series in Philadelphia and a cello concerto for David Russell and the UC Davis Symphony Orchestra to be performed in the Mondavi Center for the Arts in February, 2007.

#### **ROBERT COBURN: IN STILLNESS (2005)**

The world stretches out to an unimaginable distance. The sun sinks quietly towards night. A flower drops to the grass. The stones echo the soft humming of a child while rain ripples gently on the water's surface. *In Stillness* captures moments of quiet amid suspended time and space. Constructed of sounds and images collected in Japan and throughout the Central Valley, *In Stillness* reflects my recent use of technology as a means to capture an expressive moment.

Located at the intersection of three elements – violin music, computer music, and image – none is primary, each is dependent upon the other for completion.

**ROBERT COBURN** (b. 1949) is a composer and sound artist. His creative work includes concert music, both acoustic and electroacoustic; live, interactive computer music pieces with video; temporary sound environment installations; and permanent soundworks as public art. His music has been performed throughout North America and Europe. Recent compositions include *Fragile Horizon* for viola, speaking voice, computer, and video, commissioned by the Dave Brubeck Festival 2007; *In Stillness* for violin, computer, and video; *Tranquil Turmoil Dreaming* for computer and video; and *Patterns Luminous* for shakuhachi and computer.

His permanent soundworks are installed across the landscape of the Oregon Convention Center (Portland, Oregon) and along the Avenue of the Arts (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania). In 2002 his installation piece *between...beyond* was exhibited at the Marjorie and Richard Reynolds

Gallery. Documentation of his soundworks was exhibited as part of “nada – an experience in sound” at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, India.

He has presented papers about his work at a wide variety of conferences including the Music Cognition and Behavior Symposium (Rome); the Australasian Computer Music Conference (Melbourne); and the SoundAxis, Architecture/Music/Acoustics Conference and Festival in Toronto where he spoke on “Music in Architectural Time.” In May 2007 he was a guest of the Intermedia Institute of the Tokyo National University (Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku).

Dr. Robert Coburn is Chair of the Music Studies Department and Program Director of Music Composition and Theory at the Conservatory of Music, University of the Pacific where he also directs Conservatory computer music studios, Ensemble 20/21, and the SoundImageSound Festival.

### **KURT ROHDE: DOUBLE TROUBLE (2002)**

*Double Trouble* is a chamber concerto for two violas and small ensemble, lasting 17 minutes. The work is scored for two solo violas, flute (doubling piccolo), clarinet in A (doubling bass clarinet), piano, violin, cello. The piece is as much a virtuoso show piece for the ensemble as it is for the two soloists.

*Obsessive Compulsive* opens the concerto. As is characteristic of my recent music, the movement is thrust along, propulsive and convulsive in nature. The two instruments play a single melodic line that is divided between the two solo players, adding a rhythmic component that would not be possible using only a single player. Throughout, there is a repetitive, regular pulse pattern, which shifts at irregular intervals in the phrase. As for the title, it reflects one of the few obsessive rituals that I practice; composition. The fact that the four minutes of music which are in this movement took over 13 weeks to compose gives an idea of the type of “running in circles” I tend to do when I compose.

*Double* is a more exotic movement, languorous at times. Loosely based on the Baroque concept, the double is a separate movement or section that is based harmonically on the previous section or movement. Usually in a different tempo and with a different rhythmic scheme, the result is a type of extended variation. In the case of this movement, the soloists weave a melody that is derived from the rapid repeating patterns that they played in the first movement.

The work closes with a fast and furious finale called *Spazoid*. This

movement is rhythmic and harmonic in nature, rather than melodic. It features a number of gestures and technical displays which pay homage to the age old myth that the violist is a “lesser” string player. In this version, however, the music of written out spastic and nearly “out of control” character is in reality extremely virtuosic, requiring tremendous finesse and technical control. It also requires a little humor.

The work was written for the Empyrean Ensemble’s 2002-03 concert season, and was composed at my home in San Francisco during the Spring and Summer of 2002. The work is dedicated with fondness to my friend and colleague Ellen Rose, for whom I have the highest regard, respect and admiration. –K.R.

**KURT ROHDE’s** (b. 1966) music has been described as “...filled with exhilaration and dread. It’s a mirror of our times, It’s dark music, lit up by peckings, clackings, snaps and slides. It sounds eerie, but lyrical; sustained, but skittish; free-form, yet dancing.” (*San Jose Mercury News*, Richard Scheinin)

Mr. Rohde has received the Charles Ives Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He received commissioning awards from the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition (2003, 1999), a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (2003), the 2002 Berlin Prize from the American Academy in Berlin, a commission from the Hanson Institute for American Music (2001), the Hinrichsen Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters (2001), a Guggenheim Fellowship (1999-2000), and commission awards from the Koussevitzky Foundation of the Library of Congress, and the Fromm Foundation of Harvard University. He was the winner of the Lydian String Quartet Composition Contest and received First Prize in the 2004 International Society of Bassists Composition Contest. The New Century Chamber Orchestra received a grant from the Aaron Copland Fund for Music to record a compact disc of Rohde’s music for strings.

Mr. Rohde was guest composer at the Wellesley Composers Conference in 2006, and composer in residence at the Yellow Barn Music Festival in the Summer 2004. His new work for violinist Iris Stone, *Seeing Things*, was premiered in November 2006, and Mr. Rohde premiered his new viola concerto, *White Boy/Man Invisible*, with the American Composers Orchestra in March 2007. Upcoming commissions include a new work for violinist Axel Strauss in 2007-08, and work for the Volti choral ensemble in February 2008, a work for solo violin for Iris Stone in the Spring 2008, a new string quartet for the Cypress String Quartet in the Spring 2008, and a piano concerto for pianist Sara Laimon and the ensemble Sequitur in 2008-09. In addition, Mr. Rohde has been composing a set of etudes for

solo piano for different pianists.

Mr. Rohde is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and SUNY Stony Brook. He studied composition with Donald Erb, Ned Rorem and Andrew Imbrie, and viola with Karen Tuttle, John Graham, and Caroline Levine. He has attended the Yaddo, MacDowell, and the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, and has participated as a Fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center and the Wellesley Composer Conference. Kurt Rohde is the Artistic Director of the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, based in San Francisco. Kurt Rohde has taught at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and is Assistant Professor of music composition at the University of California, Davis.

Originally from New York, Kurt Rohde currently resides in San Francisco with his partner, Timothy Allen. He is an active violist, performing a wide variety of new music.

## PERFORMERS

**EARPLAY's** mission is to nurture new chamber music. EARPLAY links audiences, performers, and composers through concerts, commissions, and recordings of the finest music of our time.

EARPLAY is a San Francisco-based chamber music ensemble devoted to the performance of new music. Founded in 1985 by a consortium of composers and performers. EARPLAY exists to cultivate and promote American contemporary classical chamber music with an emphasis on performances of compositions drawing primarily from the diversity of Bay Area composers. EARPLAY concerts feature the EARPLAYers, a group of seven artists who, as a group, have developed a lyrical and ferocious style. Mary Chun conducts the group of six outstanding Bay Area musicians: Tod Brody, flute and piccolo; Peter Josheff, clarinet and bass clarinet; Terrie Baune, violin; Ellen Ruth Rose, viola; Thalia Moore, cello; and Karen Rosenak, piano.

**TERRIE BAUNE** (violin): In addition to being a member of EARPLAY, Baune is Associate Concertmaster of the Oakland-East Bay Symphony, and a member of the Empyrean Ensemble. Her professional credits include concertmaster positions with the Women's Philharmonic, Fresno Philharmonic, Santa Cruz County Symphony and Rohnert Park Symphony. She was a member of the National Symphony Orchestra for four years. She spent two years as a member of the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra of New Zealand, where she toured and recorded for Radio New Zealand with the Gabrielli Trio, and performed with the New Zealand Symphony

Orchestra.

**TOD BRODY** (flute) has been in the forefront of contemporary music activity in northern California, through his performances and recordings with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, EARPLAY, and the Emyrean Ensemble. He maintains an active freelance career, teaches at the University of California, Davis, and directs the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of the American Composers Forum.

**MARY CHUN** (conductor/Music Director): Mary Chun has created the premieres of many composers, including John Adams' earthquake romance *I was Looking at the Ceiling and then I saw the Sky*, which she conducted in Paris, Hamburg and Montreal. In demand as a collaborator of new lyric work in addition to traditional operatic repertoire, she frequently guest conducts with opera companies in Europe and the United States, including the Kosice State Opera, Cleveland Lyric Opera, Hawaii Opera Theater, the Texas Shakespeare Festival and Opera Idaho, to name a few. In Fall 2007 she premiered a new chamber opera based on the life of writer Jack London written by Libby Larsen and librettist Philip Littell, commissioned by the Sonoma City Opera.

**PETER JOSHEFF** (clarinet): Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, Josheff is active both as a composer and musician. He is a founding member of EARPLAY, a member of the Paul Drescher Ensemble, the Emyrean Ensemble and the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players. He has performed with most of the new music ensembles in the Bay Area, including the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and Composers Inc.

**THALIA MOORE** (cello) attended the Juilliard School of Music as a scholarship student of Lynn Harrell, and received her bachelor's and master's degrees in 1979 and 1980. Since 1982, Ms. Moore has been Associate Principal Cellist of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, and in 1989 joined the cello section of the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra.

**ELLEN RUTH ROSE** (viola) relocated in 1998 to the Bay Area after having spent several years in Cologne, Germany, where she first became immersed in contemporary music. As a member of the experimental ensembles Musik Fabrik and Thürmchen Ensemble, and frequent guest with Frankfurt's Ensemble Modern, she toured throughout Europe, premiering and recording countless works. She has performed as soloist with the West German Radio Chorus and appeared at the Cologne Triennial, Berlin Biennial, Salzburg Zeitfluß, Brussels Ars Nova, Venice Biennial and Budapest Autumn festivals. Ms. Rose holds degrees in viola performance from the Juilliard School and the Northwest German Music

Academy in Detmold, Germany; and a degree in English and American history and literature from Harvard University.

**KAREN ROSENAK** (piano) is an almost native of the Bay Area. She was founding member/pianist of the Bay Area new music groups EARPLAY and the Empyrean Ensemble, and currently performs with those groups as well as with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. She studied modern piano with Carlo Bussotti and Nathan Schwartz, and credits Margaret Fabrizio with introducing her to and teaching her the fortepiano during her graduate work in early music at Stanford University. She has found the balance between old and new music and old and new pianos to be an ongoing, most satisfying pursuit. She has been on the faculty at UC Berkeley since 1990, where she teaches musicianship and contemporary chamber music.