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West Coast Legacies 2: March 16, 2015



Earplay's 30th anniversary season proceeds on Monday, March 16 at San Francisco's ODC Theater, with world premiere performances of works by Ross Bauer, Christopher Wendell Jones, and Richard Festinger. Also on the program will be Terry Riley's *String Trio*: the composer's early 60's graduate thesis, and one of his his initial ventures into tape looping. To round out the evening, Earplay will perform Daniel Tacke's *Im Rückblick*, the winner of the 2014 Aird Competition, and the concert will culminate with Chen Yi's *Happy Rain on a Spring Night*. The 7:30pm concert will be preceded by a 6:45pm pre-show dialogue with composers.

Conducted by Mary Chun, the core members of Earplay are Terrie Baune, violin; Tod Brody, flutes; Peter Josheff, clarinets; Thalia Moore, cello; Ellen Ruth Rose, viola; and Brenda Tom, piano. Concert 2 will also feature Karen Rosenak, guest piano and Dan Reiter, guest cello.

The 2015 season finale will take place on May 18, and include a dynamic selection of works, ranging from Lou Harrison's *Threnody*, performed in collaboration with the [UC Davis Gamelan Ensemble](#), as well as world premieres by Carla Lucero, Guillermo Galindo, and Nicolas Tzortzis.

More info on both concerts here: [Season 30](#). Tickets available [online](#) and at the door.

The Earplay Shapes the Future Campaign

Earplay is excited to announce that we have neared 80% of our campaign goal, thanks to the generosity of the many foundations and individuals who have already participated by

making a donation. The good news? It's not too late! Help us to raise the remaining \$4,500 by making your tax deductible contribution today. Your gift will help us to sustain a musical legacy for coming generations: [Earplay Shapes the Future Fund](#).

Conductor's Corner (ok, not really a corner)

by Mary Chun, Earplay Conductor



"That was such a terrific Earplay concert tonight, Mary, but why weren't you conducting?" I heard this question several times at our opening concert at ODC celebrating the 30th anniversary season last month and my answer? **"I LOVE being an audience member at Earplay! The music is fantastic!!** Oh.... and I just returned from a 2-month sojourn to Beijing last night."

As you know, the Earplayers are a phenomenal band of musicians who put our all into the wild and crazy new music that makes the Earplay sound so unique, but we also put that same ferocious lyricism to work in all the other projects we are involved in. Each of us wears a dizzying panoply of hats in our musical lives, and one of my multiple hats is music directing opera and musical theater. About 18 months ago while I was in the middle of a rehearsal for Bizet's *Carmen* I received an email from the producer/CEO of the Seven Ages Investment Company in Beijing (yes, THAT Beijing!) inviting me to music direct the Beijing premiere of a new, all-Chinese production of the hit Broadway musical *Avenue Q*, book and music by Marx and Lopez, and when could she call me to discuss further details? Fast forward to last February when I boarded a United flight for the first of four flights to China in 2014 *et voilà* — not only have I worked on a tremendously successful *Avenue Q* but was also invited to music direct Seven Ages' next show: the premiere of a new, all-Chinese production of Frank Loesser's *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. *Avenue Q* was named Beijing's "Best Musical Production" in 2014 and its popularity is such that it continues to play in cities throughout China. *How to Succeed in Business* opened in the Beijing Century Theater last month to strong reviews and continues to play in Beijing until the Chinese Lunar New Year (Spring Festival). After the Spring Festival holiday period the production moves to Shanghai where it will play for another 6 weeks simultaneous with the touring production of *Avenue Q*.

How can I be at Earplay in January when I am music directing a show in Beijing at the same time? And how can I have two shows playing at the same time in 2 different cities? Much like here with Broadway shows, both the Stage Director and the Music Director work with the cast, crew and orchestra during the initial rehearsal period polishing and fine-tuning every note, word, chord and all the other details that go into performance—much like how we prepare an Earplay concert. The difference is that with Earplay we prepare a piece of music to be played in a single concert, usually. After the Director and I get a show up and running to our satisfaction, our work is finished and the company goes forward wowing

audiences 7 shows a week with their amazing talent (and the help of very, very good assistants).

I LOVED being an audience member for the first concert but promise I will be onstage to conduct Chen Yi's exuberant mixed quintet *Happy Rain on a Spring Night* at Earplay's next concert March 16 at ODC Theater. I'm also looking forward very much to unwrapping the Earplay birthday celebration pieces by Ross Bauer and Rich Festinger in addition to the world premiere of a new trio by Christopher Wendell Jones.

I want to especially thank David Milnes for guest conducting Eliane Aberdam's *Figurines* last month while I was away. Beautiful performance. Thank you, David!

Gung Hay Fat Choy to you All! May good health, wonderful music and peace follow you and your families every day in the year of the Ram!

A Bountiful Buffet of New Music

by R.Wood Massi, Earplay Director of Education & Documentation

For three days last month San Francisco's Center for New Music and the Conservatory of Music held the first annual New Music Gathering (newmusicgathering.org), a conference of performances, presentations, and discussions – and it was a blast. Four working musicians – Matt Marks, Lainie Fefferman, Daniel Felsenfeld, and Mary Kouyoumdjian – co-founded the gathering to establish a way of “simply being in the same place at the same time to exchange ideas . . . on topics of current music made in the classical music tradition.” There were concerts, talks, panels, demos, and good advice aplenty.

The concerts were fabulous with presentations ranging from works by Conservatory students to those by world-class composers and performers, especially from Northern California. We were treated to pieces by Henry Cowell, John Cage, Morton Feldman, Edgard Varese, Pauline Oliveros, George Lewis, Aaron Jay Kernis, Vinko Globokar, Brian Ferneyhough, Ken Ueno, Luciano Chessa, and many others. I was unable to attend all the events, but one concert that stood out for me presented ninety minutes covering the complete solo piano works of Pierre Boulez performed from memory (!) by Taka Kigawa. Another was a solo performance by Sarah Cahill of works honoring Terry Riley, who was present, on his eightieth birthday. The Kronos Quartet, Volti, Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, Wild Rumpus, The Living Earth Show, Claire Chase, and Eve Beglarian were among the other performers presenting. Meanwhile there were dozens of works and performances by younger artists.

The panels, talks, and lectures were wide-ranging and interesting. They included presentations about women in new music, various computer hardware and software elements, composing for and performing with live electronics, managing various types of arts organizations, music publishing, singing new music and new opera, works that explore landscape, place, human geography and ecology, practical strategies for taking stock of where we are with our artistic practice, theatricality, using social media to grow an audience, new music journalism, crowdfunding, audience development, and economics, technology in new music, and including the audience in the compositional process.

Additionally, there were new music therapy sessions provided by experts from various new

music fields and organizations as well as anyone who wanted to volunteer their advice. And there was composer/performer speed dating to encourage collaborations. The biggest glitch – in this reviewer’s opinion - was that there were almost no hardcopy programs to follow which pieces were being played during the concerts. The organizers relied on the audience members to use their smart phones or other devices to see what was being played and to read about the performers and presenters. This certainly saved a few trees as the online program notes were extensive, but it left those who did not have the right devices out in the cold. Also, it would have been better to have the gathering more widely publicized ahead of time. I almost missed it; and I am definitely am glad I did not. I can hardly wait until next year when the second New Music Gathering, in some other city not yet announced, will surround us again with the beauty and fascination of the music of our time.

Other Upcoming Events

02.20-22.15

Earplayer Tod Brody is also the executive director of Opera Parallèle, a company that will mount Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. The productio also tours to Santa Monica's Broad Theater in early March. More info [here](#).

02.27.15

For our northeastern CA friends: Earplay is looking forward to participating in Chico State's New Music Symposium on February 27. A free performance by Earplayers Terrie Baune, Peter Josheff, Thalia Moore, and long-time friend and collaborator Karen Rosenak will culminate the symposium. More info [here](#).

02.26-03.08.15

Earplay pianist Brenda Tom performs with the SF Ballet Orchestra in Liam Scarlett's *Hummingbird*, set to Philip Glass' *Tirol Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*. More info [here](#).

02.28-03.08.15

Other minds Festival. In celebration of the Bay Area’s heritage as a pioneering stronghold of arts and culture, OM presents, for the first time ever, an entirely Northern California cast of composers, including Mark Applebaum, John Bischoff, Donald Buchia, Joseph Byrd, Charles Celeste Hutchins, Myra Melford, and John Schott. [Info](#).

03.09.15

Bay Area Theater Critics Circle Awards at SF's historic Victoria Theater, for which conductor Mary Chun has been nominated for best music direction in the small theater category for 2 productions: *Marriage of Figaro* and *Fiddler on the Roof*, both with Cinnabar Theater. More info [here](#).

03.19-22.15

Don't miss Composers' Inc. production of *Middlemarch in Spring*, a new chamber opera by Allen Shearer on a libretto by Claudia Stevens, based on the George Eliot novel, *Middlemarch*. Performances will take place at Z Space in San Francisco. More info [here](#).



The Earplayers:
Thalia Moore, Ellen Ruth Rose, Terrie Baune, Peter Josheff,
Mary Chun, Brenda Tom, Tod Brody

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