

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA  
GRADUATE COLLEGE

RIDING *THE WINDS OF DESTINY*: AN ORAL HISTORY OF GEORGE  
CRUMB'S FOURTH SONG CYCLE IN THE *AMERICAN SONGBOOK*  
*COLLECTION*

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
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By  
CATHERINE R. CARR  
Norman, Oklahoma  
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CRUMB'S FOURTH SONG CYCLE IN THE *AMERICAN SONGBOOK*  
*COLLECTION*

A DOCUMENT APPROVED FOR THE  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

BY

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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degree and document were possible. The completion of this DMA degree is evidence that God has directed my life in ways I never would have imagined.

*Riding the Winds of Destiny* is dedicated to Liz Crumb, who has silently contributed more than any of us can imagine to George's life and career.

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**Riding *The Winds of Destiny*: An oral history of George Crumb's fourth song cycle from the *American Songbook Collection***

**ABSTRACT**

The proposed study will provide insight and factual documentation of the conception, rehearsals and premiere performances of George Crumb's latest (fourth) song cycle, *The Winds of Destiny*. Mr. Crumb has been a renowned composer since the late 1960's and has composed chamber works for soprano and chamber ensemble which have won him multiple awards. This work is one of four song cycles which comprise a unit called the *American Songbook Collection*. It is written for soprano, percussion quartet and amplified piano in which Mr. Crumb set traditional, patriotic and familiar American ballads to an unusual array of percussive sounds without disturbing the original melodies.

*The Winds of Destiny* includes such popular melodies as "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory," "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," "Twelve Gates Into the City," "Go Tell It On The Mountain," and "Shenandoah," and was premiered by Orchestra 2001 and soprano, Ms. Barbara Ann Martin. The premieres took place on August 4, 2005, at the Salzburg Festival in Salzburg, Austria and at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in the United States on September 17, 2005. Crumb's cycle was the only work composed by an American to be performed at the 2005 Salzburg Festival, and these settings mark new territory for him since he has traditionally set poetry from composers such as Federico Garcia Lorca to his own original melodies. An oral history which will detail the events that

led to the composition and its introduction to the public will aid generations of singers, instrumentalists and composers for years to come if Mr. Crumb and the participating musicians consent to giving their detailed account of the rehearsals and performances.

The methodology employed in the gathering of data for this study will include personal interviews with Crumb, selected ensemble and family members, and a review of any publicly available materials (published books, journal articles, newspaper articles, concert program notes, recordings and radio broadcasts). Crumb will also be invited to provide the researcher with any unpublished writings, recordings or other pertinent data that he believes would be beneficial to the study.

Mr. Crumb's new settings of familiar American and patriotic ballads will strike a chord with singers, pianists and conductors alike, and the song cycle has been premiered at an unusual time in our country's political history. His settings of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" and "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory" speak to the listener of Crumb's very personal feelings about the United States' present involvement in the Middle East. The purpose of this study will be to document this work by transcribing an oral history in order to record the facts surrounding the creation and performances of his latest published song cycle.

## CHAPTER ONE

### The Winds of Destiny: An Overview

*The Winds of Destiny (Songs of Strife, Love, Mystery and Exultation)* was written in 2004 and is the fourth songbook in George Crumb's *American Songbook Collection*. It follows *The River of Life (Songs of Joy and Sorrow)* (A Cycle of Hymns, Spirituals and Revival Tunes), *A Journey Beyond Time (Songs of Despair and Hope)* (A Cycle of Afro-American Spirituals), and *Unto the Hills (Songs of Sadness, Yearning and Innocence)* (A Cycle of Appalachian Songs). *The Winds of Destiny* was premiered by Ms. Barbara Ann Martin, soprano and Philadelphia's premiere contemporary ensemble, Orchestra 2001, conducted by Jim Freeman. All four songbooks require a singer, percussion quartet and amplified piano.

The idea for the whole *Collection* started when Crumb's daughter Ann asked him to write a cycle for her, utilizing songs she heard while growing up in their native state of West Virginia. Together, they researched popular American folk tunes, church hymns, spirituals and patriotic songs, finding pieces that would form a common thread in her song cycle. They found so many songs that after composing the first cycle, *Unto the Hills* (which thematically became the third cycle in the *Collection*), Crumb could not resist continuing the idea which became the *American Songbook Collection*.

*The Winds of Destiny* like the other *Songbooks* is a nine-movement cycle that includes the songs, "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory," "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," "Lonesome Road," "Twelve Gates to the City," "De Profundis: A Psalm for the Nightwanderer (Instrumental Interlude)," "All My Trials (Death's

Lullaby),” “Go Tell It on the Mountain!,” “The Enchanted Valley” (Poem by Ann Crumb), and “Shenandoah.” Crumb used two large-scale structural devices to tie all of the Songbooks together. Each songbook has the same overall construction: The first four movements and last four movements are vocal arrangements, and the fifth movement is always an instrumental interlude. Program annotator for Orchestra 2001, Eric Bruskin wrote,

First, each of the four *Songbooks* is associated with a stage in the diurnal cycle: *The Winds of Destiny*, as the end of the cycle, is the nighttime. It opens on a moonlit battlefield, closes with a musical evocation of a starry night, and touches upon night and darkness at several other points throughout... Second, Crumb completes a tonal plan in which the song settings encompass all of the major keys from seven flats to seven sharps including enharmonic equivalents, and all of the minor keys but without enharmonic equivalents (the composer’s own analysis of the tonal structure appears above). Crumb thus pays tribute to his beloved Bach and Chopin and their respective monumental keyboard cycles. (It is only in a spirit of happy exhaustion, perhaps, that Crumb has called the *American Songbook* his “Ring Cycle.” Certainly there is no structural parallel implied or intended.)<sup>1</sup>

Given the opening songs (and their unique arrangements), one could assume that Crumb purposely wrote *The Winds of Destiny* as a personal anti-war protest. However, that wasn’t necessarily the case: “Sounds are intuitively assembled from everyday observations, processed and arranged for maximum visceral effect, and then notated with picturesque precision. The same process applies to the piece’s non-musical subtext: Crumb didn’t set out to write a protest against the Iraq war, ‘but that was in the back of my head’ he says. ‘I feel very, very strongly about the war...’”<sup>2</sup> Crumb’s comments about the current political situation will be discussed further in Chapter Two of this document.

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<sup>1</sup> Bruns, Steven, Ofer Ben-Amots and Michael D. Grace, ed. George Crumb & The Alchemy of Sound (Essays on His Music). (Colorado Springs: Colorado College Music Press, 2005), 342.

<sup>2</sup> *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 2005. 2 August.

The first movement, “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory” or as some call it “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” is so popular in the choral realm, that many singers relate to performances of the piece from their high school and college choir experiences. Crumb’s setting differs from the traditional because it opens with an Australian Bull’s Roar (also called an Australian Aborigine thunderstick), an instrument that he saw and heard in the famous movie, *Crocodile Dundee*. This war song by Julia Ward Howe<sup>3</sup> has several verses but he chose not to include all of them. The allusion Crumb creates with the instrumentation begins the piece (and the start of the whole cycle) with sadness and a sense of finality. The performance indications at the beginning of the score are marked “Eerie, uncanny, spectral; like a deserted battlefield under full moonlight.”<sup>4</sup>

The next movement, “When Johnny Comes Marching Home” continues the war theme, but Crumb hints to the listener that this song had its origins in the antiwar song, “Johnny, I Hardly Knew Ye,” in which one of the verses says: “Where are your legs that used to run, huroo, huroo... Where are your legs that used to run when first you went for to carry a gun? Alas, your dancing days are done, och, Johnny, I hardly knew ye.” This cynical view of a wounded soldier coming home and unable to forget what he has just experienced is echoed clearly in the instrumentation:

... the verse is accompanied by light wooden percussion that rattles and rasps like a skeletal army on the march; later this is transformed to a more sepulchral sound of membranous drums and tubular bells. (It could

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<sup>3</sup> Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910). Best known for writing the lyrics for *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* and *John Brown’s body*. She received public acclaim as a writer, cultural arbiter, and social activist and has gained recognition amongst American feminists for her contributions to women’s suffrage during the Victorian era.

<sup>4</sup> Crumb, George. *The Winds of Destiny (Songs of Strife, Love, Mystery and Exultation.)*. (New York: C.F. Peters Publishing, 2004), 1.

almost be called “Slouching Towards Gettysburg”) Most extraordinary, however, is Crumb’s downward extension of his quartet of bass drums from the previous song: below the “very large bass drum” he calls for a “Cannon Drum,” a bass drum membrane fitted to a section of industrial heating duct twelve feet long and 30 inches in diameter! ... In an ironic coda, Crumb introduces a fragment of the funeral march (the famous minor-key “*Frère Jacques*”) from Mahler’s First Symphony.<sup>5</sup>

“Lonesome Road” was originally arranged by female composer, Ruth Crawford. Carl Sandburg included her piece in his own collection of songs entitled *American Songbag*<sup>6</sup>. This song marks the third movement, and as pessimistic as the text seems, Crumb utilizes arpeggiated thirds and open fifths in the vibraphone and tubular bell parts which make the song seem much more bittersweet than just bitter. Crumb also employed the use of extended technique on the vibraphone by way of pitch bending to give the song an “otherworldly” ambiance. As usual, he included specific instructions within the score for the percussionists: “The bending effect on the vibraphone is achieved by placing a hard stick an inch or so from the end of the metal key and immediately after the key is struck with another stick, pulling the hard stick towards the end of the key (while exerting considerable pressure on it). A successful execution of this technique causes a beautiful downward bending of the pitch.”<sup>7</sup> George learned this from a percussionist, John Bergamo in Buffalo, NY, who invented it about forty years ago when the two men collaborated as part of composer project in Buffalo.

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<sup>5</sup> Bruns, Steven, Ofer Ben-Amots and Michael D. Grace, ed. George Crumb & The Alchemy of Sound (Essays on His Music). )Colorado Springs: Colorado College Music Press, 2005), 342.

<sup>6</sup> Ruth Crawford Seeger (1901-1953) First American woman composer to win the Guggenheim Fellowship where she studied in Paris and Berlin. Renowned for her contributions to the field of folk anthology, she contributed to her friend Carl Sandburg’s collection of folksongs entitled *American Songbag* by composing musical arrangements for his songbook. Crawford transcribed over six hundred American folksongs from field recordings in the Library of Congress and composed over three hundred accompaniments for those song.

<sup>7</sup> Crumb, George. The Winds of Destiny (Songs of Strife, Love, Mystery and Exultation). (New York: C.F. Peters Publishing, 2004), 343.

“Twelve Gates to the City” marks the fourth movement, which opens with a “joyous and ecstatic” prelude from the marimbas and vibraphones. This song is an African American spiritual in which the title refers to the twelve gates mentioned in the books of Ezekial (Chapter 48) and Revelation (Chapter 21) of the Holy Bible. Both the prophet Ezekial and the Apostle John were commanded by God to write down how the Holy City would be constructed, and what the citizens of Heaven would see after the Tribulation. The song quotes the location of each of the gates – three gates to the east, three gates to the north, three gates to the south and three gates to the west. The Apostle John describes in detail what materials would be used to make the twelve gates, and in Chapter 22, verses 25 and 26, he wrote, “On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.”<sup>8</sup> While the extent of these details is not included in the text of the song, the idea that gave the slaves comfort is still evident and Crumb sets the piece triumphantly:

These visions were a source of comfort and inspiration to African-American slaves in pre-Civil War America... The singer’s melisma on “alleluja!” – which appears with more elaborate modal alterations in later verses – is heard with quietly soaring chords in the vibraphones and towering chains of fourths in the bells and piano part. The *pp* vibraphone chords rhythmically echo the slow triplet of the word “beautiful” and melodically trace out a version of the hummed melisma figure, a motive that has reappeared in various forms since the first song.<sup>9</sup>

*De Profundis: A Psalm for the Night-Wanderer*, the fifth (instrumental)

movement evokes the mood of nighttime. It is also visually constructed on the page

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<sup>8</sup> Scofield, C.I., D.D., ed. Oxford NIV Scofield Study Bible. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.

<sup>9</sup> Bruns, Steven, Ofer Ben-Amots and Michael D. Grace, ed. George Crumb & The Alchemy of Sound (Essays on His Music). (Colorado Springs: Colorado College Music Press, 2005), 344.

so that the percussionists are reminded of that time of day: the page is black and the print is white. Reading the music from this color alteration can be a challenge for the percussionists, and Crumb has recommended that the musicians create copies with the print colors reversed for performance.

At this point, the soprano steps back into the picture to sing movement six, “All My Trials” which opens with the sound of the African udu. This Nigerian instrument is a clay pot drum that is used in particular ceremonies to represent ancestral voices.

This is just one of the subtle, delicate evocations of death (always a potent subject in Crumb’s music) in this tenderly devastating song that may have originated in the Bahamas... In the breaks between verses, one can hear a bird or a soul flying free, and a melody in the vibraphone that recalls “La luna esta muerta” (“The moon is dead”) from Crumb’s 1969 work, *Night of the Four Moons*. Finally, in the break between the second and third verses, at the center of the setting, the recurring hummed-melisma figure [sung by the vocalist] is briefly suggested in a chorale-like phrase in the vibraphones, ending with the rhythm of “muerta, muerta” just before the ancestral Udu reappears.<sup>10</sup>

The seventh movement, “Go Tell It on the Mountain,” is a fine example of the Ivesian style Crumb claims to have emulated with these songbooks. “My inspiration was Charles Ives<sup>11</sup>, whose approach to folk music was to get underneath it, to get inside it in a strange way.”<sup>12</sup> Crumb, like Ives has his own harmonic and rhythmic language in which he sets the basic melody. He also humorously expressed an

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<sup>10</sup> Bruns, Steven, Ofer Ben-Amots and Michael D. Grace, ed. George Crumb & The Alchemy of Sound (Essays on His Music). (Colorado Springs: Colorado College Music Press, 2005), 344.

<sup>11</sup> Ruth Crawford Seeger (1901-1953). First American woman composer to win the Guggenheim Fellowship where she studied in Paris and Berlin. Renowned for her contributions to the field of folk anthology, she contributed to her friend Carl Sandburg’s collection of folksongs entitled *American Songbag* by composing musical arrangements for his songbook. Crawford transcribed over six hundred American folksongs from field recordings in the Library of Congress and composed over three hundred accompaniments for those song.

<sup>12</sup> *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 2005. 2 August.



alternate title due to his choice of instrumentation and dynamic levels, "Maybe we should call it Hell's Bells," he said jokingly during an interview with critic, David Patrick Stearns of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. In this familiar spiritual, Crumb changed the rhythm by using a brisk 5/8 meter, making the piece sound slightly syncopated. He also created an "Alpine echo effect" by having the singer repeat phrases such as "tell it on the" over and over, to reinforce the echo effect. (Ex. 1-1)

Crumb requested that his daughter Ann write the poetry for the eighth movement, entitled "The Enchanted Valley." The melody was composed before Ann wrote the text. Bruskin says, "The words evoke night, darkness and death, set to a simple Dorian melody with an expressive flatted octave ornament that is its only chromatic inflection. By contrast, the only pitched material in the extremely spare accompaniment is entirely chromatic..."<sup>13</sup> The text is expressed by the singer alternately singing and speak-singing the verses which adds to the eery, mysterious mood of the piece.

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<sup>13</sup> Bruns, Steven, Ofer Ben-Amots and Michael D. Grace, ed. George Crumb & The Alchemy of Sound (Essays on His Music). (Colorado Springs: Colorado College Music Press, 2005), 344.



Freeman said, “Well, I think that [“Shenandoah”] was a big surprise for everybody. ... I said to [him] even before we started, “George, I am not sure this piece really works because it’s so static,” and of course, it does work because it is static. ... that it works is amazing, and another tribute to George’s genius.”<sup>14</sup>

The text of “Shenandoah” was originally written about the daughter of an Indian chief named Shenandoah who lived along the Missouri River. The singer of the ballad represents a sailor who is in love with the chief’s daughter. Crumb’s inspiration to arrange the piece came from the text, and from having grown up in that part of the country. As mentioned previously, *The Winds of Destiny* completes the four cycle series that Crumb calls his *American Songbook Collection* and “Shenandoah” reminds the listener that the day has ended:

But this is still the nighttime -- except for the vocal line, almost nothing rises above an almost subliminally murmuring *pppp*. The piano’s rolled chords (like waves lapping against the shore) trace out the hummed-melisma figure. Large gongs and a rumbling figure in the lowest octaves of the piano are the only low sounds in the piece, perhaps suggesting the roar of the river as heard from afar. And there are the Japanese Temple Bells, which Crumb reserves for moments of the most profound mystery. In the last measure, a massive terrestrial bell tolls once- with the players simultaneously striking eight different gongs -- and Crumb closes his *American Songbook* at the river, where it began.<sup>15</sup>

*The Winds of Destiny* rehearsals were held on July 24-28, 2005 ending the day before Orchestra 2001 members and George Crumb and his family left for Salzburg, Austria where the songbook was premiered. Ms. Martin, being an instructor at the Mozarteum, was instrumental in securing the European premiere. The world

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<sup>14</sup> Freeman, Dr. James, Conductor of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 16 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>15</sup> Bruns, Steven, Ofer Ben-Amots and Michael D. Grace, ed. George Crumb & The Alchemy of Sound (Essays on His Music). (Colorado Springs: Colorado College Music Press, 2005), 345.

premiere of *The Winds of Destiny* took place on August 4, 2005 as well as another of Crumb's songbooks, *The River of Life*, performed by his daughter Ann Crumb. The Annenberg Center for Performing Arts at the University of Pennsylvania was the venue for the U.S. premiere on September 17, 2005. Reviews by the Austrian and American press corps were favorable and can be found in the Appendix of this document.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Evolution of *The Winds of Destiny*

*The Winds of Destiny*, like the rest of the songbooks in the *Collection*, is the result of the family's deep and cherished roots in their native West Virginia. Consequently, it would follow that George's daughter, Ann, and his wife, Elizabeth "Liz" Crumb, would assist in the selection of songs for the fourth songbook. Since the original idea behind the *Songbook Collection* actually came from "daughter Ann" as Crumb calls her, let us begin with the conception of *The Winds of Destiny* and follow its evolution through the comments of the composer himself. (At my very first face-to-face meeting with the composer about this project, he requested that I call him "George" instead of Mr. Crumb, so he will be addressed on occasion by his first name throughout the document.)

### A Family Affair

George's response to my question of how and why he decided to do these songbooks was: "The stimulus for this whole thing came from my daughter Ann who suggested that I might consider designing some Appalachian folk tunes for concert performance. She loved this music. She was born in Charleston, West Virginia also, and she got me interested in [the idea]. (Ex. 2-1) At first, you know, I wasn't sure

quite how I could use these well known tunes. I thought about it quite a while and started sketching some of them.”<sup>16</sup>



**Example 2-1:** George and Ann Crumb, Charleston, West Virginia. Ann was around one year old according to Liz Crumb. Courtesy of the Crumb family.

Upon visiting Crumb in November 2005 to observe the recording session for *The Winds of Destiny*, the composer gave me permission to copy some of the pages from his sketchbooks for my files. We sat in his office together while he scanned the books and he explained his system for sketching. The songs are not in order and one will find ten measures on one page, while the following page will contain completely

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<sup>16</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

unrelated material. Crumb tediously finds the last sketch he has made for a song and records the corresponding page number on the continued sketch for reference. (Ex. 2-1a,b,c,d)

When I watched Ann and her father work together for the first time, it was hard to remember that these unpretentious people were international figures in the music and theater world. She calls him “Dad” and I could sense that they had an intimate relationship from the first time I saw them interact. Ann travels from her home in New York to see her parents about every two weeks. They cook, shop and eat together. Liz Crumb takes care of Ann’s dogs when she takes long trips.

While visiting the Crumb family home, I noticed that the most common areas of family interaction were the kitchen, dinner table and the two family rooms in the bottom of their split-level ranch-style house. George gave me a tour of the house on my first visit to Media in July 2005 and showed me the two additions that he and Liz had built onto the house: a large music room that was originally intended to be George’s room for composing and working on his scores. The room holds one of the family’s grand pianos at one end, but is commonly used as the “internet café” for them and their guests. A room no larger than a master bathroom *is* his official office. A baby grand piano is wedged in the corner, directly behind his desk so he can turn around and play the ideas he’s just sketched on paper.











259 Another short simple song

**The Lonesome Road** (in blues style)

Moderately, with a languid "blues" feeling

see 221 for scheme

percussion only (with out piano)

Look down, look down that lonesome road, Hang down your head and cry;  
The best of friends must part some time,  
Then why not you and I?

Look down, look down that lonesome road,  
Hang down your head and cry;  
The best of friends must part some time,  
Then why not you and I?

True love, true love, what have I done  
That you should treat me so?  
You caused me to walk and talk with you,  
Like I never done before,

You won my heart, you won my love,  
You made me fall in love with you,  
Far more than you can know,

Look down, look down that lonesome road,  
Hang down your head and cry;  
The best friends must part some time,  
Then why not you and I?

avoid repeat If you must leave me for another,  
Then why not let me die?

Example 2-1c: Early sketch of "Lonesome Road."



25,

*# the harmony of Quest?*

*plus stream of slow wavy chords*

Oh, Shenandoah, I long to hear you,  
 Away, you rolling river,  
 Oh, Shenandoah, I long to hear you,  
 Away, I'm bound to go,  
 'Cross the wide Missouri.

*(page 126 - Fricke, also compare lower page)*

*contemplating*  
 Slowly - vast, lonely, transcendent  
 (as if under a star-lit sky at the  
 midnight hour)

*Chorus (much use of Japanese bell)*

Oh Shenandoah, I love your daughter,  
 Away, you rolling river,  
 Oh Shenandoah, I'll come to claim her,  
 Away, I'm bound away,  
 'Cross the wide Missouri.

Oh Shenandoah, I do grieve her,  
 Away, you rolling river,  
 Oh Shenandoah, I do grieve her,  
 Away, I'm bound away,  
 'Cross the wide Missouri.

Oh, Shenandoah, I long to hear you,  
 Away, you rolling river,  
 Oh, Shenandoah, she's bound to leave you,  
 Away, I'm bound away,  
 'Cross the wide Missouri.

*The above stanzas occasionally telescope elements of two separate verses.*

**Example 2-1d:** Early sketch of "Shenandoah" and proof of Crumb's contemplation of utilizing his harmonic structure in "Quest" for the new, unrelated piece in Songbook IV.

George explained the process of choosing songs: “My daughter Ann worked very closely with me, especially on the business of the text. We found so many variances of the text and had many sessions where we chose our favorites. It was really a question of reducing the sheer volume of the text and maybe using only two or three verses since it was a whole cycle of songs. We took the best verses from each song. It involved a good bit of choice so that the sense of the poetry was still intact even though it was somewhat shorter than the usual number of verses. Aside from that, even with the shorter songs, the variety was still [evident because of] the different versions and combinations we chose. I think there were some cases where [Ann] was making a case for some words that she liked very much and didn’t want to omit, so it was a question of the composition, the actual notes, and how the thing is spanning out in time. In some cases, I had to convince her that I was adding a lot of non-vocal moments. The instruments come into their own, too, with introductions, interludes and commentary. This tends to spread the song out in time, and so it wasn’t always possible to include all of the words that Ann wanted to include, or even that I wanted to do. It was something we worked with as the music began to develop a little.”<sup>17</sup>

Ann really seemed to enjoy the whole process of working with her father. She is straight-forward in her speech and has a keen sense of humor. Whether it is rescuing canine victims of Hurricane Katrina, or singing over her father’s shoulder as he works on song sketches, she voices her opinion with confidence and wit. When I asked Ann about her involvement with the original project she said, “I very much did

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<sup>17</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

[have a role] in the selection of songs. ‘All My Trials’ is one Dad didn’t know of, and I found the song for him because it was one of my favorites. I can remember my mother [and me] mentioning ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home’ and saying that we thought that would be wonderful. And of course everybody thought of ‘Shenandoah’ and ‘Battle Hymn of the Republic.’ With all the books, we would look at different songs, he would find out which ones were his favorites and what would work harmonically, and we always discussed keys. Even with *The Winds of Destiny*, I sang through a little bit when I was there. The thing is Dad very much had certain tonal qualities he wanted for different songs.”<sup>18</sup>

As Ann mentioned in her interview about the choosing of the songs, her mother was also involved in the process. As a matter of fact, from my observation, Liz is a silent partner to George. Her modesty was evident in our interview: “...We did a lot of talking about different songs, but mostly [George] did it himself. Ann and I both gathered together a lot of folk song books that we had and some old hymn tune books. I did not help any except just talking about it and suggesting songs that might work well with others.”<sup>19</sup>

### **Birth of *The Winds of Destiny***

It is difficult for Crumb to talk about *The Winds of Destiny* without mentioning the songbooks that came before it when describing how he decided to format the latest songbook: “Originally, I was thinking only in terms of one songbook

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<sup>18</sup> Crumb, Ann. Interview by author, 21 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>19</sup> Crumb, Elizabeth. Interview by author. 16 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

that would include Appalachian songs, and the first version was only six songs plus an interlude. Then I added one more song, and then finally added another song, which made eight songs plus an instrumental interlude, and decided that that would be the format for all of the books. I kept to that, and all of the *Songbooks* have the structure of four songs, [followed by] an interlude, and then the final four songs. But, when I was doing the Appalachian songs [*Unto the Hills*], I wasn't thinking that far ahead yet. There was probably a little time in there where I got to thinking that I should go ahead and do the spirituals for the same [instrumental] combination. I finished *The Winds of Destiny* in August of 2004.

The difference between *The Winds of Destiny* and the other three songbooks is that this latest one includes an original song written by George and Ann. George had a melody in mind and asked Ann to write a poem based on the idea of "The Enchanted Valley." George explained that, "I had the idea of a text about 'The Enchanted Valley' and I commissioned [Ann] to write some words on the title, you know, just a few short stanzas, and I liked those when they were finished [so] I wanted to include that."<sup>20</sup> Ann recalled, "My father said that he wanted to include one new piece that he wrote in [*The Winds of Destiny*] which was written for Barbara. He wanted to know if I'd write the poem, so I said, 'Gee, I haven't been writing but I'd give it a try.' Ann suddenly forgot the name of her own poem. She wrestled with the title during our phone interview and kept saying, "'What's the poem called?' 'Hidden Valley?' 'The Valley of Dark Shadows?' (she laughed heartily). She went on to say "I think the words, 'valley of dark shadows' would apply to wartime, but I

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<sup>20</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author. 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

didn't think of that when I was writing it. Dad had done a light sketch of the melody and helped to direct me.”<sup>21</sup>

George knew he would dedicate the fourth songbook to Barbara Ann Martin when he began the first sketches. He had already written two books for Ann; *Unto the Hills* and *The River of Life*, and one for Barbara; *A Journey Beyond Time* which was the book of African-American spirituals. George describes Barbara's voice as having a “Mother Earth” sort of sound, and because timbre has played such a large role in all his compositions, Barbara's voice lingered in his mind as he began arranging the patriotic tunes and ballads.

I asked him about his relationship with Barbara and how he came to know her well enough to write and dedicate two songbooks to her. He said, “I have known Barbara since the very early 70's. [We met] on a trip to Asia and Australia because the Arthur Weisberg Group was going over there to do some of my music (and music of other composers) and Jan DeGaetani<sup>22</sup> was along as the singer. Barbara was very young then; she was sort of an understudy to Jan and did a few things on her own too, and that is where I first heard her sing. She had done my music over many years in many countries. I heard some of the performances of course, and she had asked me a long time ago if I would do something for her.”<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Crumb, Ann. Interview by author, 21 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>22</sup> Jan DeGaetani (1933-1989). American mezzo-soprano who specialized in avant-garde music and was the premiere soloist in Crumb's *Ancient Voices of Children* in 1970 at the Library of Congress. Ms. DeGaetani taught at Eastman School of Music and performed frequently with the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble led by Arthur Weisburg with whom she made her celebrated recording of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*.

<sup>23</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

He went on to explain how he had her voice in mind as he was writing. The problem was that Barbara lives in Chicago, and George didn't have the luxury of calling her into his study to go over the music as he wrote it. He said, "I had Ann [sing her part] as we tried little passages here at the house as I was working on the pieces so the voice was there. Actually Barbara's voice has a very earthy sound and I had that in mind. You know, she knows my style so well and she worked pretty much on her own. There were a few little suggestions, but she had it down basically as I wanted [at the first rehearsal in July 2005], and she followed the indications pretty literally. In the case of Ann, I knew that she did a little improvisation of notes that weren't written in the score, and I was glad that she did this with my music. [Ann] had a very free manner, which I liked. Barbara did not do that, but I loved the quality of her voice."

Crumb welcomed the task of choosing percussion instruments for the songbooks. When I inquired about his inclination toward percussive sounds he quickly responded, "My first combination of those components would have been in my *Music for a Summer Evening*<sup>24</sup> [which called for] two pianists and two percussionists. Basically, the sound and combination idea of treating the piano like an extension of the percussion instruments was there. I think in a way it is a beautiful combination because the piano serves as kind of a 'super bass' to the percussion ensemble which lacks a true bass. Even the new extended marimba only reaches the

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<sup>24</sup> "Music for a Summer Evening" (*Makrokosmos III*) 1974 for two amplified pianos and percussion (two players). Commissioned by the Fromm Foundation and the third piece in a trilogy of cycles for amplified piano. "Music for a Summer Evening" differs from the other two cycles in that the percussionists have been added and the piece is written in five movements instead of three multi-segmented "parts."



cello C [c°]. So the piano can give you an orchestral bass and it gave me a chance to integrate it with percussion for additional coloration possibilities.”<sup>25</sup>

The initial idea of uniting percussion instruments with the piano was not Crumb's. In his own words, he explained in his program notes for *Music for a Summer Evening*: “The combination of two pianos and percussion instruments was, of course, first formulated by Bela Bartok in his *Sonata of 1937*,<sup>26</sup> and it is curious that other composers did not subsequently contribute to the genre. Bartok was one of the very first composers to write truly expressive passages for the percussion instruments; since those days there has been a veritable revolution in percussion technique and idiom and new music has inevitably assimilated these developments.”<sup>27</sup> Crumb began his own trend of marrying exotic percussion instruments with the more traditional in *Music for a Summer Evening* though the quantity was much smaller. He used instruments such as Tibetan prayer stones, African log drum, quijada del asino (jaw-bone of an ass), African thumb piano and guiro in addition to the more traditional xylophone, vibraphone and tubular bells.

It would follow that the American Songbook Collection would utilize the same instrumental combination, but with a greater variety and number of instruments. Crumb said, “I would also say that I became so fond of the combination that I chose [for *Unto the Hills*]: the percussion quartet plus the amplified piano. It is a rather

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<sup>25</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>26</sup> Bela Bartok (1881-1945) Hungarian composer, ethnomusicologist and pianist. His *Sonata of 1937* was one of two pieces that musicologist recognize as a turning point in Bartok's compositional career. In comparison to his earlier works, *Sonata of 1937* and *Music of Strings, Percussion and Celesta* showed his music to be “less rigorous, less strictly organized, more fluid... more marked with extremes.”

<sup>27</sup> Bruns, Steven, Ofer Ben-Amots and Michael D. Grace, ed. George Crumb & The Alchemy of Sound (Essays on His Music). (Colorado Springs: Colorado College Music Press, 2005), 311.

unusual instrumental apparatus. It enables the piano to hold its own, to have its presence in the middle of that sea of percussion, and I found that that made almost an orchestral effect; it was like composing songs for voice and orchestra, although it was only five instrumentalists. The way the instruments are spread out over the stage and the volume and variety of colorations that you could evoke from that combination was very orchestral. Once I heard the first set that was ringing in my ear, it lead me on to find other songs.”<sup>28</sup>

The battery of traditional and exotic percussive instruments Crumb chose for his previously written songbooks was a germ for *The Winds of Destiny*. Because my knowledge of his use of exotic instruments was limited to my experience with his first songbook, *Unto the Hills*, I wondered if he had actually heard all of the ones he had chosen for the songbooks, or if he only took a chance on including them in the score before hearing them with the rest of the ensemble. He said, “...there are actually two or three that I had only heard descriptions of like the thunderstick (sometimes called the Bull’s roar) which is an Aborigine instrument. Actually, the only place I heard the sound of the thing was in a movie.... I hadn’t heard it live in a hall in anybody else’s composition. There are a couple of little Brazilian carnival instruments called reco-recos<sup>29</sup> - a funny little instrument. I read a description of [them] and the sound turned out to be exactly what I imagined. I had a rather complete book on percussion which gave wonderful descriptions of the instruments. Then there is a case like the Chinese opera gongs, which I had heard only in traditional Chinese opera. I hadn’t used them in [my music], although other western composers probably have used them.” An

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<sup>28</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>29</sup> A Brazilian wood or bamboo scraper or rasper. It is sometimes called a querêquexé.

exhaustive list of the instruments used for *The Winds of Destiny* is included in the Appendix.

One of the most fascinating aspects of *The Winds of Destiny* is the visual appearance of so many instruments intricately arranged on the stage. Crumb was frank about the demands on the performers and the beauty of the performance: “I should say that I allowed an enormous arrangement of percussion instruments and I think it is a little daunting for some players when they see these instruments listed.... It does have that visual element. Percussionists have always been fascinating even in an orchestra context. They are like dancers moving between the instruments... but [in *The Winds of Destiny*] the whole stage is covered with [them]. You can see that the surf drum is difficult to play and it is interesting to watch or the Aborigine thunderstick... there is poetry in movement.”<sup>30</sup>

Another unique and rare instrument used in this cycle is the cannon drum, which was constructed by Dr. Dan Bukvich, Professor of Percussion at the University of Idaho, in Moscow. George saw it when he visited the university and remembered it when he was composing the aforementioned cycle. In my second interview with him, he said, “This was the first one I had run into – this young student out in Moscow, Idaho had constructed this darn thing...”<sup>31</sup> George was confused about who invented it, but was definitely not confused about using it. Because the other musicians tell the story of acquiring this gigantic instrument much better than he or I, this story will be covered later in the document. (Ex. 2-2)

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<sup>30</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>31</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 16 June 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.



**Example 2-2:** Barbara Ann Martin and the cannon drum. The drum is positioned for performance so that Bill Kerrigan can easily reach over and play it. Picture taken at Swarthmore College, Sunday, September 18, 2005. Courtesy of the author.

Enthusiastic about expounding upon his successful instrumental combination in addition to the knowledge of Barbara’s unique vocal timbre, Crumb set about the task of arranging the fourth songbook in the *Collection*. He said, “A lot of my thinking involved setting up a sequence; constructing some kind of an overall expressive curve to the work. If you are doing a song cycle, that is always a consideration, of course. Schubert faced that with *Die Winterreise* and Mahler with any of his sets of songs. The sequences are very important. There are certain obvious

things, like you can't have too many slow songs in a row; you want some variety of tempos."

He continued, "[In *The Winds of Destiny*] I think 'Shenandoah' is one of my favorites of all time. It is the last song of the four books that comprise the completed four books, which makes a unit. I should say I tried to include only songs that to me were superior in both the poetic and the melodic sense. You know, there are a lot of folk songs that aren't musically as good as maybe others, and I did choose the ones that struck me both for their haunting, expressive lyrics, and their distinguished musical qualities. All of those songs are thematically just as strong as any of the themes in Beethoven's music. They are wonderful melodies, and are so beautifully shaped and molded. Those were the things that appealed to me, and psychologically too, I wanted contrast. I wanted to add those Civil War tunes. So, [for example] I gave [the first movement] its title using the [words of] the first verse, 'Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory.' I subtracted the march rhythm altogether from the song. You know the usual way you hear it done is suspended, and the melody is occurring over that suspension, so given the way I began the work I felt the next piece had to have a strong contrast to that. [For the second movement] I used 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home' with a faster tempo and lots of drums. The third movement, 'Lonesome Road' is a folk song where I subtracted the piano [and used] a few delicate percussion instruments. So, I think you will find that principle throughout the piece; contrast in both conception and the sense of the poetry and music."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

As in every newly composed work, modifications can be expected once the composer hears his music come alive. Some minor adjustments were made during the July 2005 rehearsals, such as in the last measure of “Go Tell It on the Mountain,” where Percussionist Number 3, plays a final triplet on the large bass drum and George couldn’t hear it well enough to suit him once he heard it in rehearsal. He requested that the triplet be played slower with more accent, but by the end of the Philadelphia premiere in September (after the European premiere in August), he changed the rhythm altogether from the triplet to two eighth notes.

George discussed other changes that he liked such as the vocal effects that Barbara added in “When Johnny Comes Marching Home.” She mimicked a vocal color that famed singer, Lotte Lenya utilized in many of Kurt Weill’s operas.<sup>33</sup> (Lenya added zest and rawness to her characters with a cynical and whining cabaret style of singing achieved by using a speech-like singing voice and the absence of vibrato. These 20<sup>th</sup> century techniques along with Lenya’s mezzo range created a sound that became specific to some of Weill’s insidious female opera characters.) George was very pleased with the idea. “I thought it worked just beautifully. It was really loaded with irony, which was what I wanted.”<sup>34</sup> The published score will indicate these performance notes, which will be located directly over the beginning of the last verse.

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<sup>33</sup> Kurt Weill (1900-1950). German composer who gained critical acclaim with his 1928 opera, *Die Dreigroschenoper* translated as *The Three Penny Opera*. His wife, Lotte Lenya sang the leading role of Jenny, which showcased her raw, cabaret style vocal technique. The opera included popular style songwriting (carried out by Lenya’s vocal approach to the music) and provided access to a new audience for Weill.

<sup>34</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

Regarding instrumental changes in the *Songbook*, he recalled, “There may have been a couple of tiny little things like a vibraphone bending effect. It was placed a little high on the instrument and I lowered it so it would be more effective. There may have been some tiny things like that, but also because this was the fourth book, my ear was pretty honed to this group by that time. The sounds in my imagination came pretty close to what I [actually heard]. What was interesting about the final song “Shenandoah” is that it is based on one chord. I thought, ‘Can this really work? Nothing changes, it is one chord for the whole song...’ but I liked it. It turned out the way that I wanted it to.”<sup>35</sup>

### **Political Implications**

It was clear to me after hearing the very first rehearsal of “When Johnny Comes Marching Home” that Crumb was speaking his heart to the public through his own arrangement. The version I heard in elementary school was certainly in a minor key, but the rhythm was upbeat and I felt like cheering when Johnny got home at the end of the song. In my young mind, I didn’t consider the apparent undertones of the minor key and its implication that a wounded soldier was hobbling home, never to be the same again after what he had experienced on the battlefield. Crumb’s adaptation woke me up. Barbara’s dripping, cynicism followed by actual tears of pity and horror during the U.S. Premiere changed my mind.

When asked if he meant for any of the movements of the *The Winds of Destiny* to resound with political undertones, George replied, “I think in music it

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<sup>35</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

comes out automatically you know. My earlier *Black Angels* was always a response to that Vietnam period. When I was doing 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home,' of course, I had in mind the casualty lists that we got practically every day on our TV. So, you know it is impossible that music doesn't pull in the environment, what is happening, and things that are going on into the music. I think it would be hard to keep it out... It is probably fairly direct. It is probably pretty unambiguous I guess in that song setting."

Several conversations arose about the war in Iraq during my visits to Media, and when I initiated the first formal phone interview, George freely stated his opinion. I purposely followed up on that portion of the interview to ensure that I transcribed his comments with accuracy. He said, "...it was different I think with the Afghanistan thing, because that is where Osama bin Laden was based....but we had no excuse to invade Iraq. That was a war of choice, and not in our American tradition. I think we were way out of our traditional mode in that adventure, and I think it was very bad. I don't think we have paid the full cost of that yet."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 7 August 2006, San Angelo, TX.



## CHAPTER THREE

### From Crumb's Pen to Our Ears

#### The Musicians

When asked about first impressions of *The Winds of Destiny*, the musicians consistently began with something akin to, “it wasn’t as hard as I thought it would be.” They were so familiar with the score preparation from playing the previous songbooks, that this fourth cycle was easier to learn. Their only concern was what new, exotic instrument had been added to their part. While I was searching for an answer regarding their impressions of George’s artistry, they immediately verbalized their inclinations on how to approach the new cycle. George’s music is so demanding that even months later, the musicians remember the specifics of receiving yet another large score that needed “de-coding,” and each of them wondered if they might be the lucky one who had to play an exotic instrument that George saw in a movie somewhere. Their memories did not immediately drift to the first collaborative rehearsal, but to their impression of their own parts. They all believe the cycle is another masterpiece in *The American Songbook Collection*, but first impressions differ according to who’s looking at and listening to the piece for the first time.

Barbara Ann Martin had her score for about a year before they began rehearsals. When she received it in the mail at her home in Chicago, she was elated. “I was beside myself because I had seen the other three books, and I thought that this one was the best one. I couldn’t believe it because it had so many different colors [for the voice]. I think he chose magnificent tunes, some of which were very important to

me; ‘All My Trials,’ ‘Shenandoah’ and ‘Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory.’ I was absolutely thrilled at the choices that he had made...”

She continued, “I realized that although everything fit my voice well, I could see I was up against tremendous balance challenges with the instruments, because as George has told me in the past, he likes the sense of struggle sometimes with the voice against the instruments. I could see in many of them that the effects he wanted were probably going to be really overwhelming. I have a substantial voice, but I wasn’t sure about how I was going to carry, for example, in ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home’ or ‘Twelve Gates To The City,’ or ‘Go Tell It On The Mountain.’”<sup>37</sup>

Ann Crumb’s statement will be encouraging to vocalists who fear contemporary music, but want to extend their repertoire list to include Crumb’s works: “What I love is that these songs are so accessible to people who may not have had much experience with contemporary music, particularly my father’s work. On the other hand, they’re completely his vision and his style. They’re immediately identifiable as his work.”<sup>38</sup>

After speaking with Jim Freeman, conductor of Orchestra 2001, it was apparent that *The Winds of Destiny* contained specific pieces that struck him immediately. While he wanted to introduce his impression of the fourth cycle as a partner to the other three songbooks, he could not help mentioning a few pieces that moved him beyond words, even during rehearsals. He said, “Each [cycle] has an

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<sup>37</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann, soprano. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>38</sup> Crumb, Ann. Interview by author. 21 February, 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording, San Angelo, TX.

incredibly beautiful ending, and I think endings are very important for George as a composer. This one does too, but I think the other three also have very powerful endings, of course, *The Winds of Destiny* especially, because it is the last of the four. This cycle represents the night, and thus, if we ever get a chance to do all four together, this would be the last. In terms of the strength of this particular cycle, I think the last song, ‘Shenandoah,’ is a very special and very unusual piece. Of course, I think ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home’ is an unbelievably powerful piece, and both stand out for me. What my sense of the song had always been is that it is a sort of celebratory song. George makes it into anything but a celebratory song, and it is very moving.”<sup>39</sup>

It must be mentioned that Freeman failed to remember that during the Salzburg Premiere in Austria, he encouraged Crumb to keep writing more songbooks for the *Collection*. During my initial interview with the composer, he mentioned, “Maybe [Jim Freeman] should wait until I complete two more books and head down with the whole thing, and then he could have three evenings of music you know.... two books each evening. That would be something if I ever finish all of that!” George chuckles. He went on to say, “So, I am working away at it, little by little, but I feel like I am walking through deep mud right now. It is not clear yet just how things are going to go.”<sup>40</sup>

As the pianist for *The Winds of Destiny*, Marcantonio “Tony” Barone’s experience with Crumb’s *Songbooks* is significant since he premiered all four and

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<sup>39</sup> Freeman, Dr. James, Conductor of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 16 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>40</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX

recorded them as well. He will discuss later in the book how he looks at all of the parts in each piece when trying to learn his own. Because of this practice, he immediately spoke about the emotional intensity of the cycle: “Well, I guess the very first impression was that it by all means stacks up to the other three, and in many ways, maybe even surpasses them... Just the sheer, emotional power of some of the settings in this particular cycle - I am obviously thinking of ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home,’ which I think is one of the most emotionally charged settings of any song or text that I know of. George’s music has the capacity in general to move me to tears from time-to-time, but I don’t think that I have yet gotten through a performance of that movement with dry eyes. It has to do with both George and Barbara because she brings something incredible to that song. I think that he has an understanding of the trajectory of that song, from what seems like a militant and somewhat optimistic opening and a completely defeated end. That is the true meaning of that song as far as I am concerned, and he has captured it in a way that makes it perfectly obvious to the listener. That is not only what this song is about, but that is inevitably what war is about.”<sup>41</sup>

After playing the previous three cycles, percussionist Sue Jones said to herself, “Gee, this seems much easier than any of the other three books, so there must be something else that I’m missing.” As we discussed her part of the music, she said, “You know, I was looking for all the incredible things you have to do – stand on your head or whatever, and they weren’t there... After playing the first three books you really knew how he wrote. You knew the tone clusters, you knew what instruments,

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<sup>41</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

you knew what techniques, and it was all there... I knew exactly what to write, how to do the set-up with the instruments, the sticks that would be required... all of a sudden, it fell into place. I was the calmest about this last book than any of them. I felt like I could relax, and really play instead of being on the edge of my seat every second.”<sup>42</sup>

David Nelson is also a percussionist for Orchestra 2001. He said, “I will say that starting four years ago when I got *Unto the Hills*, that was the first cycle that we did from the collection and it was such a new task to do with four percussionists. I had never seen George’s writing for percussion the way he did for these pieces, so the first one for all of us was a real eye opener. I can honestly say that each one has gotten easier; one, because you obviously know what to expect, but two, there’s the benefit of having George around all of the time. When he writes for something now, I know what he means when he has written it on the page, whereas in the first couple of cycles, George had to explain things to us. Now I know the sounds that George wants to achieve. Although musically [*The Winds of Destiny*] may not have been the easiest, I think it was the easiest for the all of us just because we had done three of them previously.”<sup>43</sup>

Angie Nelson admitted that there was no immediate reaction when she got the music because she had no chance to play her own parts until the first rehearsal. Fortunately for her, she is married to Dave Nelson and he assisted with her acclimation to these particular pieces. “With any of George’s pieces, it’s just always

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<sup>42</sup> Jones, Sue. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>43</sup> Nelson, David. Interview by author, 19 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

hard to imagine. I know both Dave and I draw little graphs which is the way we practice our parts at home if we don't have our instruments... Even looking at the score, it is impossible to tell how George's music is going to sound because of his wide range of colors and textures. It is incredible, and it is something that comes so naturally to him.”<sup>44</sup>

**David Starobin, Producer  
Bridge Records**

David Starobin heard these pieces early on, but because of the amount of music he hears on a daily basis, it was hard for him to recall his first impressions. Therefore, he was shy to make too many comments. “There were some movements that I just thought were fantastic; ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home’ is just great. I remember when George first wrote the piece, he was sending me a movement at a time as he finished them. When I got that one, I think I just kind of collapsed in laughter at how brilliant it was, and how different it was from the other pieces in this cycle. It's really kind of a wild movement, and you know, very much appropriate to the song itself. I loved the spoken cannons that the percussionists were doing and the actual cannon shots that you hear throughout the piece with the cannon drum. I think it's very evocative of the song itself... It's a great setting and one of my favorites in that cycle.”<sup>45</sup>

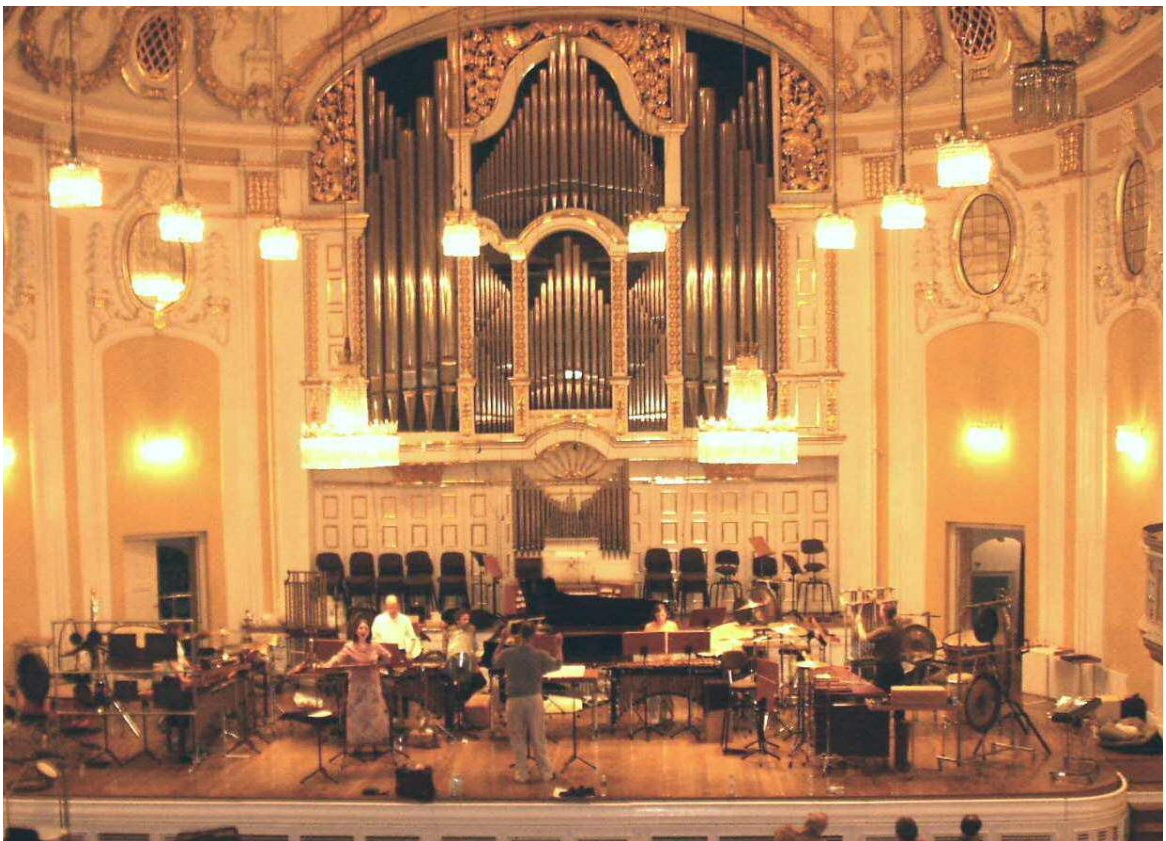
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<sup>44</sup> Nelson, Angie. Interview by author, 19 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>45</sup> Starobin, David, Producer, Bridge Records. Interview by author, 2 June 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

## My Own Impression

The experience of hearing and seeing *The Winds of Destiny* for the first time is a little foggy for me. Because I was video taping the whole rehearsal that first day, I cannot say what struck me about the song cycle when I initially heard it; however, the U.S. premiere brought everything full circle to my eyes and ears. The visual effect of the percussion instruments alone created an almost museum-like background for the performance of the song cycle (Ex. 3-1).



**Example 3-1:** Salzburg, Austria rehearsal photo of rehearsal before the August 4, 2005 premiere, courtesy of Jim Moskowitz, Orchestra 2001.

Barbara Ann Martin and Jim Freeman were surrounded by a horseshoe of instruments that fulfilled their true function, but coincidentally seemed like stage props in a contemporary opera. The percussionists moved about very silently which

was impressive due to the demands on some of them to command over forty instruments on their own during the performance. I had performed one song from *Unto the Hills*, and we only needed about forty instruments for the entire piece, which were divided among five players. In this case, as with all the cycles performed in their entirety, each percussionist had their own “station” of instruments that actually surrounded them like a small fortress.

I believed this cycle to be Wagnerian in concept because I saw it as a step forward in the world of chamber music if one were to look at the piece from that perspective. However, George corrected me in our second interview about the ensemble category in which I had assigned it: “In the *Songbooks*, it’s a misnomer to call it chamber music because the spread on the stage is so large. It has a little bit of an orchestral effect and even though there are only five instrumentalists, one singer and one conductor, the thing occupies a normal size stage and so the sound (like an orchestra) is coming from quite a number of different places on the stage. The writing sometimes tends to be a little more orchestral; sometimes it reverts to chamber music, but it also has the possibility of sounding pretty large, especially with amplified piano.” He then went on to give me a brief history lesson, citing examples of Beethoven’s music: “You can’t tell me that a work like the *Hammerklavier* sonatas was anything but a symphony for one pianist” he said with a laugh. Proving his point about the size of an ensemble, he explained that “there are moments in Mahler symphonies where Mahler pulls it down to chamber music dimensions. Suddenly, you’re hearing chamber music from this enormous mass of performers. Composers love to fool around with those concepts but it’s not always so cut and dried... don’t forget too, early Mozart symphonies probably were a couple of stands of each of the



stringed instruments, two oboes and two horns - that was symphonic. You know there might have only been sixteen, eighteen or twenty people on stage, but it was always called a symphony.”<sup>46</sup> Nothing can compare to receiving a concise history lesson from George Crumb, while in the comfort of my own surroundings.

The percussion orchestra for *The Winds of Destiny* includes over one hundred, twenty-five percussion instruments, and the wide variety of sounds one hears from rare or one-of-a-kind instruments is a feast for the ears. The new sounds were immediately noticeable, even if I couldn’t immediately see the instruments I was hearing. While Bukvich’s cannon drum was not designed particularly for this cycle, it is a new invention and was the only one of its size and type in the world at the time of the premieres. When I first saw it, I had no idea what it was. I did find out that it is a very large drum constructed from commercial grade heating duct approximately ten to twelve feet in length and thirty inches wide with a bass drum head fitted on one end. The projection of sound is very powerful as one can imagine, and sounds almost identical to a cannon shot which was perfect for the piece “When Johnny Comes Marching Home.”

I recall that I had a clear visual image in my head by the end of several of the pieces upon hearing them, and the mental images were not what I had imagined in other arrangements of the same songs. For example, I knew the story behind the text of “Shenandoah,” but the visual George conjured in my mind was a very misty river with tall mountains to either side in which the boat neither sped up nor slowed down as it moved gently down the river. The composer and I both grew up in the Blue

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<sup>46</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 16 June 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

Ridge Mountains, and I felt as if he recalled an exact scene from somewhere in my past.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Singer's Advice**

This chapter has not been written solely for singers even though its content focuses specifically on the comments and advice of two vocalists. Instrumentalists interested in chamber performances which include a singer can learn a great deal from individuals whose jobs require them to produce correct pitch and accurate rhythms while interpreting the text with superb artistry. Many jokes have circulated the intellectual music world about the errant ways of singers. One stereotypical joke goes something like this: Question: "Why can't many vocalists get through the door?" Answer: "They either can't find the key or don't know when to come in." In truth, vocalists who are dedicated to the performance of contemporary music must be skilled at learning oddly-written scores, performing extended vocal techniques effectively, conquering rhythmically complex melodies where the score includes multiple meters, and hearing their part within an atonal musical language. Those musicians working with singers will benefit from hearing the comments of Barbara Ann Martin and Ann Crumb; seasoned singers who have cultivated their own system of score study, rehearsal techniques and vocal production.

### **Words from the Composer**

Crumb explained how he sees the voice melding with the rest of the ensemble using *The Winds of Destiny*, as the primary example. He said, "Music has a hierarchy. Normally the instruments are sub-ordinate to the voice, but sometimes the instruments can be in dialogue with the voice. There can be equivalence at times.

Other times the voice is completely pre-imminent, and the instruments are what you might call ‘back up support.’ There are such things as interludes and preludes and postludes, and instrumental occasions where the voice is not operating at all. There are times in some of my music where the vocalist can become an instrumentalist. But there are places in the songbooks where the instrumentalists become vocalists and they perform vocal syllables or they shout or whisper. [The instrumentalists] contribute to the vocal situation [by underlining] what the singer does, or with canonic repetition of words. By definition, the vocalist is normally pre-imminent or subject to other situations.”<sup>47</sup>

### **Score Preparation and Technical Issues**

Since Ms. Martin premiered the featured work of this document, it is paramount for all to learn about her own personal journey with *Winds*. The first area we discussed was preparation for rehearsals and how she went about marking her score and learning the music. She commented, “I would go through [the score and] mark the meters. I saw places where I wanted to be in tune with a particular instrument, whether I was doubled or whether there was a half step difference [between me and the instrument]. There were diction considerations that needed to be clarified, such as places that required my consonants to come earlier, otherwise, I sounded late when I came to a down beat. One has to know the timbres of the instruments that you are working with so you can start matching them. Sometimes George wants the vocal timbre to contrast with the instruments; sometimes he wants

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<sup>47</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 11 August 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

you to blend. Very often you are not going to know that until you get into a rehearsal situation.”<sup>48</sup>

Because Crumb’s scores are so large and at times, awkward to work with, she had several suggestions for marking her scores with artistic and technical reminders: “You have to put down anything that is going to make your score come alive for you. I find I have to put in little mind tricks; things to manipulate my imagination. [In one song] George told me [to think of], “crickets,” or whatever sparks a color in me.... Because in the heat of battle [performance situations] you can’t remember everything, see everything, and these pages are loaded with information, I always put a color around my meter changes or change of key signature, tempo marking, or meter marking. In this particular case, it is bright rose; remembering of course that if you are under lights you have to make sure you pick a color that is going to show up. Martin also commented on handling page turns to help with pitch or movements that have a fast tempo: “One of the things that I find very helpful is I will extend the staff out at the bottom of the page and write the notes that are on the next page so that I see them before the page turn. [In addition] there are technical markings of how to sing this stuff all over the place”<sup>49</sup>

Staying in tune with the instruments can be difficult since pitched percussion instruments all have such different colors or timbres. Throughout this songbook, Crumb gives the singer hints about her starting pitch; however, the first movement, “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory” seems to be the trickiest. It begins with around ten un-pitched percussion instruments, along with a ‘hooting owl’ performed by one of

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<sup>48</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

the percussionists hooting into the bass drum, the pianist creating huge tone clusters by striking the strings with his palms and then the singer suddenly gets a low, rolled arpeggio constructed from a low A flat, B natural, and D flat. She must enter on a G flat and is only supported throughout the next nineteen measures with un-pitched instruments (along with that same rolled arpeggio at the beginning of each measure) singing the first verse *sotto voce* without going flat. Crumb is kinder in the following movements, but this one opens the cycle, sets the tone and is meant to send chills up our spines. Barbara said, “You might find the basic tonality [of the piece] from some of the plucked piano parts to hear what the harmonics sound like... Do they sound as notated or do they sound different?”<sup>50</sup> Again, the tone color of the strings on the inside of the piano is different than hearing them struck by a wooden hammer.

Ann Crumb was very optimistic for future performers of this piece because the recordings have already been made and will soon be available to the public. She said: “I think it’s going to be different for future singers because they will have the recording available to them. If there isn’t a recording available, they’ll just have to do what I did - I was in a panic!” Ann said as she laughed out loud. “I would sit there at the piano and do my best to figure out the rhythms. I always highlight the words, and in a different color, do all of key and time signature changes because they’re constant, otherwise, if you’re looking down at the words and not the conductor, you can look up and not remember where you are. It’s very tricky. I actually had a pianist try to put down a little bit of the percussive sounds, with rhythm so I could

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<sup>50</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

hear it. You're operating in a world where you don't hear [the other parts] until you're there and it's very, very different."<sup>51</sup>

### **Learning the Songs**

Since one purpose of this document is to provide insight and practical applications for learning newly composed music, vocal production cannot be excluded. Ms. Martin was very insightful about some of her techniques throughout the songbook, and she talked about her physiological approach and/or her use of imagery for tone production. She started with the second movement: "I knew I was going to need help on 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home' because the instruments are so remarkably present and the voice part is basically in the cracks; you know it is kind of in the lower passaggio, and it is moving very fast. [George] likes impeccably fast tempos on these pieces, but it means that the vocal quality can be lost because you don't really have much time to sustain the tone, so there has to be a crispness of executing the consonants to keep the rhythmic vision going. Whenever you have a legato note, you hold onto it, so I knew that the microphone issue was going to be something here. George had a quality that he wanted from me and I understood it, but it is another thing to execute it in an honest way. Being an actress (because one of the things that George demands is that the singer be an actress), you still have to get all the pictures right, you have to mark all of your rhythms and all of that, but it comes down to selling the message that he has here; mainly that Johnny is coming home in a box and I found this one particularly challenging."

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<sup>51</sup> Crumb Ann. Interview by author, 21 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX

When I asked Barbara about the “color” issue, she explained, “In one of the rehearsals, George had talked about wanting a particular color in ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home’ where it gets somber. I thought the tone he wanted was something akin to Kurt Weill or Eisner. It sounded like something satirical and grotesque, but at the same time I wondered if that color was going to work. So, I did something in the rehearsal in Philadelphia that he was excited about. Ann came to one of those rehearsals, and when I had started to [sing that way] she came to me privately and said, ‘Okay your voice is working but the intention isn’t right.’ [She asked], ‘What is the intention behind the color?’ ‘Who are you?’ ‘What are you doing here because you are getting this color, but it is not working.’ So, I was worried because I understood where she was coming from, and I wasn’t comfortable with it yet. Jumping forward to Salzburg, [in rehearsal] one night something clicked. We got to [page 11] which is totally instrumental, and we have this impossible instrument, this cannon drum [that sounds like a] machine gun. All of a sudden I turned around and I felt as if I had been shot because the sound in the hall was extremely resonant, very percussive. I had not connected it with gunfire before. That is how I heard it, and all of a sudden when I turned around to sing the last part of the song, I had the vocal sound because it made me aware of things that I had only understood intellectually before. That whole hall went quiet and Jim [Freeman] was wiping tears away from his eyes. Later on, Ann came up and put her arms around me and said, ‘That was it.’ So, something came together that could have only happened [in Salzburg]. I think under the circumstances of being there on the stage, almost like a performance, I then understood. I think that is one of the reasons why that song became so powerful, and my critics on both sides of the Atlantic kept talking about



that particular movement. It was a wonderful moment for all of us, and George was really pleased too - he was beaming and I was crying... They say you are not supposed to get involved in the emotion of what you are doing if you are a good actress, but I couldn't help it at that moment."

"'Lonesome Road' was tough because of where one ends up emotionally with the previous song," said Barbara. "It is so devastating how George ends ['When Johnny Comes Marching Home']: there are tears, there is heart wrenching emotion from the realization of the futility of war and relaying personal experience of grief. Suddenly, you have to go into this languid, swinging 5/8 meter singing, 'Look down, look down, that lonesome road...' in this very simple, so-called folk song. It is quite a color contrast, emotional contrast, and vocal contrast... It is very poignant coming after the previous movement. I found it very difficult to maintain certain control of the sound, and again, sometimes I had to close my mouth quite a bit just to take the vibrato out of the voice to make it folksy, simple, to have a totally different character, and to make it legato where the other piece is definitely not that."

She went on to talk about "Twelve Gates to the City." Ms. Martin commented that, "There is a lot going on in this piece. I was a little concerned about the voice carrying over the vibraphones and marimbas, although when the voice enters, very often the other instruments come down quite a bit in volume. George spent a lot of time with this particular piece. He wasn't always happy with the dynamics that he had chosen. He made some changes in terms of what instrumentation would be underneath it, and changed my dynamics quite a bit throughout. He had some wonderful melismatic sections, a wonderful atonal coloratura, which is a whole lot of fun. Even in that first rehearsal, he was starting to look at ways to embellish the

vocal part, so we did a number of things to figure out what he wanted, and he did put a couple of extra grace notes in and an extra high note on page 19, measure 28.”<sup>52</sup>

(Ex. 4-1)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a piece titled "Go Tell It On the Mountain". It consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics "I'm going to sing- and shout!". Below it are three instrumental staves. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f* (forte) and *ffz* (fortissimo). There are also performance instructions like *(l.v.)* (live), *(loco)* (loco), and *8-7*. Pencil markings indicate changes made during rehearsals, including additional grace notes and an extra high note in measure 28. The score is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 5/8 time signature.

**Example 4-1:** The addition Crumb made to the score is shown here from the author’s personal copy rendered in July 26, 2005 from a photocopy of Crumb’s original draft. The pencil markings indicate the changes made during the July rehearsal.

Crumb’s “Go Tell It On the Mountain” is a lively arrangement, as discussed in Chapter One. Ms. Martin was quick to discuss the issues associated with the composer’s choice of meter which is not traditionally used in other versions of the piece. She said, “...it is in five [5/8 meter] instead of the normal ‘Go Tell It On the Mountain,’ so you have to be coordinating with [the instrumentalists] like mad. Not all of them are in the same key as you are, and the voice requires a brilliant tambour; but then he has those quiet sections, and the meter changes in and of themselves really are a big challenge to keep your diction natural.”

<sup>52</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

She continued, “George originally wrote those lines in “Enchanted Valley” to be spoken, whispered, and without contour. They were notated on a flat line, in precise rhythmic patterns following the inflections of the text. However, at the first rehearsal, no matter what I tried to do, I couldn’t do it as ‘flat’ as he had first written it. It felt boring, unexpressive and not true to the poem. I automatically began to insert a more varied pitch level to try to color the words to make them more atmospheric. He liked what I was doing, so I suggested an even more pronounced variation with greater highs and lows, which was more like the *sprechstimme* techniques used in Schoenberg’s *Pierrot Lunaire*.<sup>53</sup> I exaggerated the high points of certain phrases using more ‘head voice.’ He liked it a lot because the percussionists were chanting part of the text in a low monotone, and with my voice sailing above them, it made a better contrast of colors. He actually changed the notations in the score to match what I had come up with!” Crumb confirmed that the change to *sprechstimme* from a stage whisper occurs only at rehearsal 51 on page 36. The other phrases are to be sung in a stage whisper which will differ in color and timbre with each singer.

The last movement of *The Winds of Destiny* is the beautiful American folk song, “Shenandoah.” Martin was thrown off a bit by the performance indications George wrote at the beginning of the piece: “When I got it and I looked at it, I said, ‘Okay... luminous, incandescent, like Van Gogh starry night... but what in the world

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<sup>53</sup> *Pierrot Lunaire* (1912) is an Expressionist song cycle for chamber group and mezzo-soprano. The cycle was written by Jewish born Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951) and is the most well-known representative of atonal music language in his output. The cycle consists of 21 poems in which the vocalist uses *sprechstimme*, which is vocal production that sounds halfway between song and speech resulting in a spoken melody, unlike recitative. The musical notation is written on a staff by means of *x*’s written over the stems (not the notehead) while the rhythms are notated exactly.

does that mean to me?’ Fortunately, all of [the performance indications] were for the instrumentalists mostly, and the shimmering remarkable quality that they get (I can’t even describe it) was absolute magic. That is one of the moments in the rehearsal where my hair stood up because it was beyond anything that I could have imagined, and then to sing this piece totally legato with vibrato so perfectly... not easy! The notes [I wrote] in my score are more for technical things to keep myself relaxed...”<sup>54</sup>

### **Use of Vibrato and Straight Tone**

People who have worked closely with George Crumb will say that he has a very distinct preference of voice quality for his music. When I interviewed David Starobin, who has recorded almost all of Crumb’s vocal music, we discussed the voice types that he felt were best suited for *The Winds of Destiny*. He said, “There are several movements that are definitely more dramatic; that can take a bigger voice. But I don’t think (in general) in George’s music, that he’s looking for someone that tends toward the operatic style of singing. I think he really appreciates voices that blend well with instruments, and are really, very much centered pitch-wise, and have good diction.”<sup>55</sup> Timbre has always been a primary concern in Crumb’s compositions and blending with many instruments requires the use of straight tone in order to meld with the rest of the ensemble. Straight tone is defined as vibratoless tone, and “can be achieved by mental imagery process instead of physical manipulation”<sup>56</sup> Most

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<sup>54</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>55</sup> Starobin, David. Producer, Bridge Records. Interview by author, 2 June 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>56</sup> Mabry, Sharon. Exploring Twentieth-Century Vocal Music (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) 46 .

percussion instruments are not capable of producing vibration with pitch and even the slightest quaver of the human voice can obscure the effect Crumb is looking for in certain pieces he has written.

Barbara Ann Martin has a large and very present voice, and she has performed quite a bit of traditional classical music that requires the use of vibrato. Her efforts in changing the quality and color of her voice for *The Winds of Destiny* were certainly commendable, because not every singer has the ability to do such a thing. When I asked for her opinion about the matter, she said, “Well you have to be able to acceptably use both. It has to be under your control to go from one to the other. There are some pieces that are very traditional like ‘Go Tell It On the Mountain’ and ‘Twelve Gates to the City.’ But, ‘Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory’ is too, [however], it has to be a different kind of transparent sound... almost a non-vibrato sound. ‘Shenandoah’ is more classical than folk simply because of where it lies in the voice - it is right in the *passaggio*. I don’t know about [other sopranos] but when I have been singing a lot my voice gets higher, so I have to go back into that area of my voice. I had to really sing it classically. That is not addressing the fact that whenever you are using a particular vocal color for an interpretive reason that the sound quality is going to change. [The color] is in response to your thought, so emphasizing individual pictures or words can change one’s timbre.”<sup>57</sup> After hearing “Shenandoah” and particularly observing the recording session on this particular piece, I do not believe Crumb’s intention is for the singer to view it classically in terms of style. It is of

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<sup>57</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

utmost importance to sing freely, but without much vibrato so as not to interfere with the vibraphones on this song. Ms. Martin is correct in saying that the piece hovers around the second *passaggio* in a soprano's voice, but one must be all the more intelligent in their technical approach to the song for that reason.

Ann Crumb's advice is imperative to anyone who wants to sing music from *The American Songbook Collection*. Her father commented on her spontaneity when rehearsing the newly formed arrangements, and he has always appreciated her interpretations which include color and quality changes in her voice. Unlike Ms. Martin, Ann never had formal voice training until she began working on Broadway, and her approach is a very natural one, unaffected by any strictly regimented ideals of vocal production. She said: "I personally feel that the voice should be simpler because they are folk songs or spirituals, songs that were popular songs at one point. Many classical musicians in the past have thought there was one kind of sound for the voice; a very dark, covered operatic sound. There is a natural, pure voice and many people today study very hard to achieve that kind of sound. You certainly hear it in gospel music and in different national styles of singing. The human voice is a very pure, beautiful instrument in its own right, and my personal feeling is that with a well-trained voice, the technique is very similar for different styles of singing. It's just a matter of slight variations in placement. If you have good technique, in theory, you should be able to, for instance, use a straighter tone or bring a vowel forward."

### **Using a Microphone**

Amplification is another extremely important issue for singers regarding *The Winds of Destiny*, as well as the rest of the songbooks. I noticed at the premiere

rehearsals that I couldn't hear Barbara very well over the percussionists in many sections without her microphone. Amplification can also be a sticky issue depending on how much experience the individual has on the job. George originally intended that the singer only use a microphone on certain songs, but it didn't work from the listener's standpoint. The voice was covered by the percussion too often to not be amplified on every song. It should be noted that new editions of all the songbooks will be revised regarding this issue. Crumb's comment on the matter was: "One thing I found early on is that the voice should be amplified throughout. I remember the first performance of the [*The River of Life*] where we had only two of the songs amplified and the effect was very bad to suddenly have the amplification cut in, so I suggested to them that with all of the songbooks that the microphone be there. The singer can pull back and even step back a little ways. Even in the soft moments [the singer] is picked up in the mic so it doesn't suddenly become amplified. The very loudest songs are so incredibly powerful with that instrumentation that [the singer] is sure to need amplification for those moments. Also, it is within the context of amplified piano, so the amplified sound is already there."<sup>58</sup>

A perfect example of a movement where the voice must be amplified is "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." At rehearsal number 11, the soprano must follow the cannon drum (the largest and loudest drum made to sound like a cannon shot) which is being played at a triple forte dynamic level with her own phrase marked double *forte*. (Example 4-2) While she is singing the phrase "Get ready for

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<sup>58</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

the jubilee, Hurrah!” there are four additional drums being played and the pianist is striking the strings of the piano with his palms.

**Example 4-2:** Cannon drum entrance preceding the beginning of the third verse of “When Johnny Comes Marching Home.”

Barbara said, “When we got to *Winds*, [and the movement] ‘Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory,’ there was a very strong possibility that I [would need a mic] because that particular song needed the most ethereal, other-worldly, ‘hanging over the instruments’ sound, and my voice is very, very present. I found in even doing the premiere it wasn’t just enough to back away from the mic, I had to almost sing it with my mouth closed or half opened, so that I had a sense of transparency.”<sup>59</sup>

Because Ann had experience using a microphone in many professional settings, she was able to guide Barbara during her rehearsal in Salzburg when they encountered an inexperienced sound technician. Ann recalled the event and said, “I came in and there was a big discussion about microphones. They had been working

<sup>59</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX



with the amplification system, and somehow the way the microphone was angled, the percussion was way too hot. Barbara was very clear, but it was hard to hear the clarity [in her diction] at some points because there was this ‘whoosh’ going through her mic as well. Since I’ve had more experience using microphones, I made some suggestions and they used those which worked really well.”

She continued, “With all the percussion instruments right there, it should be stated that the reason why amplification is used in these cycles is not because the voice would not be able to carry; it’s because there are certain sections where the percussion is so tremendous. The piano is amplified and the percussion is ringing wildly. No matter how powerful the voice is, it’s almost impossible to have clarity or to hear it at times. I did the whole first book without amplification the first few times, but since the other cycles used it, we decided for uniformity’s sake it would be better [to use it]. But you make adjustments... There are points when you stand further away, and it all depends too if you have somebody who’s a really good sound person. They will adjust the microphone based on what’s required of the song. Most of the time what we did was literally stand to the side of it when we didn’t want much amplified presence, and on the really loud parts in some of the numbers, I moved in a little bit closer to the mic. I think Barbara needed to do that in a couple of sections of *The Winds Of Destiny*. I think it’s better to have the microphone coming from below, and to glance down at the pages because it’s very important to be able to see the face. Also, when the microphone is coming from above, the percussion sound goes in.”<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Crumb, Ann. Interview by author, 21 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

### **Collaborating with the Composer and Conductor**

Ann has a very relaxed and workable approach to collaborating with composers who give her new projects, as well as the conductors who are conducting the first rehearsals. While she didn't discuss openly the confidence a singer should have when tackling new music, I noticed during rehearsals for her own songbooks that she certainly exudes an air of self-assuredness, ease and humor with her music colleagues. After we discussed this issue in her interview, I wanted to include her insights. She said, "I've done so many new projects. I've done straight plays that are brand new, and most of the musical theater pieces I've done have been new projects. As a result, I've learned that it's very important to explore and make sure that one's performance is satisfactory for all involved. Jim [Freeman] is such a wonderful conductor. He will let you be a participant in the creation as opposed to demanding that 'You have to do it this way.' When nobody has done it before, you don't have anything to listen to. I think it's very important to try [different techniques] especially with pieces that are vocally demanding, as a lot of the work is in contemporary music. You want to explore the sounds that your voice can make and come out with one that you're happy with and certainly one that the composer wants."

Ann went on to say, "Sometimes young composers are not familiar with the human voice. I find sometimes that male composers will write where it's comfortable for them, but it's totally not comfortable for the female. I think [one should] be honest and say, 'I want this to sound the best it can.' 'I'm struggling with this,' or

‘I’m wondering if I approach it this way, or got this kind of a tone... Would that be acceptable to you?’ or something like that.”<sup>61</sup>

The key to open communication with a composer or conductor is knowing the music so well from the start, that comments or questions are relayed intelligently and efficiently. Ms. Martin and Ann Crumb (Ex. 4-3) did not expect Jim Freeman or George Crumb to know when they had a problem vocally, artistically or otherwise, but they appeared to have the confidence to assert themselves for the sake of the music and the composer’s confidence in their artistry.



**Example 4-3:** Photo taken after final rehearsal on July 29, 2005 at the Settlement School in Center City (Philadelphia). From left to right; Barbara Ann Martin and Ann Crumb, courtesy of the author.

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<sup>61</sup> Crumb, Ann. Interview by author, 21 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### How Orchestra 2001 prepared themselves

There are many aspects to consider when preparing an orchestral piece like *The Winds of Destiny*, and premiering a work of this caliber includes working through the initial “kinks” in the music. Therefore, the refinement of score preparation before rehearsals was imperative and allowed time for any fine-tuning Mr. Crumb deemed necessary. In this case, the first challenge was to find the obscure or non-western instruments that could not be obtained by their Philadelphia-based percussion supplier. Secondly, the players in Orchestra 2001 had to learn nine movements of music that couldn’t necessarily be rehearsed at home on an individual basis.

### Locating Instruments

Percussionist Bill Kerrigan was the task-master of collecting all the instruments. Readers be forewarned that I purposely limited my editing of his stories because the way he told them was completely metaphorical of his real life experiences in acquiring the instruments. Starting with the Bull’s Roar story, he said, “I’m the principal player for Orchestra 2001 and I’m responsible for getting this equipment together - it’s a huge undertaking. For example, the Australian Aborigine thunderstick that George has in Percussion IV for this piece - that didn’t mean anything to me when I saw it listed on the instrument list. So, I asked all around if anyone knew about it and I went online and actually found an Australian Aborigine who made these things. I’m looking at the pictures that he had online and I’m thinking, ‘I don’t think that’s what George has in mind.’ He’s talking about a wind

thing that whirled around and this object looked completely different. So, I asked a number of people what they thought that meant, and I asked Jim Freeman since he had to talk to George anyway. That's when George told Jim he saw it on a *Crocodile Dundee* movie. Jim asked him, 'can we tell what it is if we rented the movie? Is there good light?' And [George] said, 'Well, actually it's kind of dim...' So I thought, 'oh man!' I called around and found a fellow here, Steve Ferraro, who has a percussion store. I knew he had done a lot of ethnic playing [like] hand drumming things and Latin percussion. He said, 'I think I know what it means...I think he's talking about a Bull's Roar. I used to sell them but no one was buying them so I discontinued them. But I think I have one left in my basement...' That's how I came up with the Bull's Roar. We went back to George and he said, 'Oh, by the way, it's sometimes known by a different name: a Bull's Roar.'" Bill groaned at this point and said, "So, I told George that I would suggest putting that in the score because people are going to be looking for the wrong thing."

Kerrigan continued, "The cannon drum was another interesting story and quite time consuming to get together. [George] had a description in the instrument list so I had contacted a couple of custom drum manufacturers to ask if they were interested in making it. First they said 'yes,' then 'no,' then 'they didn't have time,' and 'where did George see this?' So I asked George, 'do you have a number or a name?' and he said, 'Well, it's the percussion man at University of Idaho.' So I called and tracked down the percussion teacher, Dan Bukvich at the University of Idaho and he said, 'George was out here and was shown a lot of things and I was actually surprised that he was taken by this cannon drum – I thought he might want to write for some of the other things I showed him.' So he described it more in detail and I went back to the

custom drum manufacturer in this area. They said they could do it and then after a while they threw their arms up and said they didn't have time... So, I called Dan back and said, 'Is there any way you could make this?' He said, 'I'm going to send you one – I'm going to put it on UPS and you can take it on the plane to Salzburg. Probably not much is going to happen to it – it's pretty indestructible.' Dan's first shipment got sent back by UPS because they said he didn't have the right tags on it so he apologized, re-sent it and finally we got it. George said, 'I saw one that was much larger than this in Idaho.' (Ex. 5-1, 2).” In light of the shipping escapade, Bukvich shipped the smaller cannon drum and allowed Orchestra 2001 to keep it. While it was a generous gift, George was not about to be fooled because he knew he'd seen a bigger one during his trip. When Bill inquired about the matter, Dan told him to tell George, “just tell George that's the one he saw.” Bill said of the story, “of course George said no, he'd seen a much larger one...”<sup>62</sup> as he chuckled aloud at the memory of the whole thing.

### **Learning a New Score**

The comments from the members of Orchestra 2001 are invaluable to future percussionists of *Songbook IV*. Vocalists can also gain something from the chapter by learning how instrumentalists mark their own scores. The way a percussionist, pianist or conductor views the parts in a score is imperative to the singer since she

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<sup>62</sup> Kerrigan, William, Principal Percussionist of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.



**Example 5-1:** A profile of the large cannon drum constructed by Dan Bukvich.. This is most likely the drum Crumb originally saw and heard during his visit to the University of Idaho. Courtesy of Dan Bukvich.



**Example 5-2:** A close-up of the same drum, showing the bass drum head strung on to the end of the conduit. Courtesy of Dan Bukvich.

will need to decide on vocal coloration, learn difficult rhythms, and notice pitch indicators within in the instrumentation in some cases. The concerted effort of the singer to think from an instrumentalists' perspective will lend in the overall cohesiveness within the ensemble. Therefore, no time need be wasted in learning about the instruments, what they look like, how they sound when played and how Crumb has integrated their individual sounds within each movement.

Conductor, Jim Freeman had a “no nonsense” approach to learning the score for *The Winds of Destiny*. He had already conducted the first three songbooks so his routine was established for the preparation of this one. He said, “I think there are various things that one does as a conductor. First of all, there are a certain amount of pure idiot jobs that one does first. Mark meter changes so that they are clear, and then to go through all the parts, that is the singer's part and all four parts, and make sure that one knows what every player is doing at every time. And, of course, you are always working on getting a sense of the piece, of its flow and meaning, and of its phrases and phrase lengths, though they are both very menial tasks and very thought provoking tasks too.”<sup>63</sup>

Pianist, Tony Barone had a fixed approach to learning the new material. He said, “Regarding score study, I do very little note making at that early stage. If I am working with a clearly tonally functional piece, I usually do some kind of superficial harmonic analysis of the piece right at the outset. In these songs, although they are all tonal, that seems a little bit less applicable because not a whole lot of what I am playing in any of these cycles is tonally functional. So, that is a step that I haven't

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<sup>63</sup> Freeman, Dr. James, Conductor of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 16 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.



taken with these. I guess the very first thing I do on a purely pragmatic level when I

**Example 5-3:** “De Profundis,” p. 22, m. 5.

am looking at a new piece of George’s is to glance through the score and find out if there is anything really unusual that he is going to have the pianist do.”<sup>64</sup>

A good piece of advice Barone had for all young musicians pertained to being very familiar with all of the parts when working in an ensemble. He said, “I do not like to come unprepared to a first rehearsal, not knowing what is going on in every other part. That includes the other percussion parts in this piece and the vocal parts, notes, and words. I just need to know what is there. Otherwise, I

don’t know how I fit in. I don’t want to waste my colleagues’ time figuring that out in their presence.” He continued, “I can tell you from my experience as a player and as a teacher, the more you can break things down in your mind to the simplest possible patterns, the better capacity you have to learn them. It is something that I wish I had understood while I was still in theory class at Curtis, but better late than never. Like the instrumental movement in this piece, ‘De Profundis’ (Ex. 5-3), the

<sup>64</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

chords that start there are much easier to play and retrograde around if you realize that what [you're playing] is always two minor triads, a tritone apart.”<sup>65</sup>

Besides locating the instruments and devising a plan to prepare his own score, Kerrigan is responsible for overseeing the set-up and transport of the instruments so that rehearsals run smoothly. He said, “We all go over [the score] in great detail and map out our own setups. Of course I trust all my other guys so much that everybody draws their own setup, and we figure out who needs to share what and where, and who needs to be next to whom. So, we bring some of our own instruments, ask what Swarthmore [College] has, find out what we need to rent, and so forth. It certainly is a job to try to figure out how much space we need, where Tony will be, and will he be able to see through our set ups with the piano behind us, and so on. We make lots of notes with arrows and remind ourselves to ‘now go to xylophone’, ‘now go to chimes’, etc. Sue [Jones] took her part and blew it up because the notes are very small. I actually took all my pages and put them on cardboard so they were a little sturdier. I know Tony [Barone] did the same thing.”<sup>66</sup>

Sue Jones, also a seasoned percussionist and long time member of Orchestra 2001 has a very specific routine for score preparation and rehearsal. She commented, “The first thing I look at is the list of instruments to see what they are and if I have even heard of them or know how to play them. There are always a couple that are a complete surprise. Then I start looking at the score and follow my line, and I am usually playing the second part. I see how it is laid out, and I start formulating. The

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<sup>65</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>66</sup> Kerrigan, William, Principal Percussionist of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

next thing that I have to do is figure out a set-up for all the instruments, and I think that takes the most time because it is the strategy of the layout, what we call the ‘road-mapping’ of where to put everything so I can reach it, see the score and see the conductor with as little moving around as possible. I start sketching out what instruments I have to play and how fast the changes are from one to another, and then what mallets to use. There is a lot of mental work preparation before you even touch an instrument to even try the part.”

She added, “The next thing that I have to do is enlarge my music because I have to play instruments that are very far away from the music stand. I do not have duplicate sets because there is hardly enough time to turn the page, so you have to be able to see the music from very far away. I will use color coding for when I actually have to turn the page (that might be green), then I might use orange to circle the different instruments, red to tell me what sticks or chains I have to pick up, then I might use blue to signify a move from this instrument to that. When I see the color flashing, I know what the next change has to be because you have to be two steps ahead of yourself or you have lost it.”

She continued, “I start to make a mock set up of what I have done with most of the instruments that I have and start learning the part by figuring out stick changes. A lot of times I have ended up making most of the sticks that I use to play his pieces because I might be playing with a certain type of soft mallet that has yarn wrapped around it, but then play on a steel brake drum, and after playing so loudly I have already gone through the yarn within two times of rehearsing. He will [also] go from very loud with a metal stick to very soft with a yarn stick. You do not have time to put one pair down and pick another one up, so I have actually had to glue brass

plumbing fixture parts on the end of other mallets so all I have to do is flip them over. Everybody at Home Depot® or any kind of a hardwood store knows me very well because I am always coming in and fitting different things to try to figure out how to get the sound he wants with one pair of sticks.”<sup>67</sup>

Marriage might be a convenient union for Dave and Angie Nelson since they were able to share ideas on how to prepare for Crumb’s rehearsals. I had asked them how long they had the scores before getting together and Dave responded, “I don’t know if we had it a year in advance. When we get a piece like this, it is just so hard to actually practice it. As you have seen the size of our set-ups, you can’t really do that in your house. So, when we get these pieces, we do things in little segments. The real bulk of looking at it, practicing it and seeing if things work is when you actually start rehearsing it with the group. It is not like taking a symphony piece for orchestra and learning it on a snare drum before you rehearse. I hate to say this, but even if we did have [the score] in a year in advance, that really doesn’t matter until the rehearsal starts. There is only so much you can do without the full set up, and obviously without the other musicians there is only so much you can do on your own.”

Dave continued, “...Something that I found really works for me (and Angie) is at the beginning of each movement, I write exactly what instruments I need and exactly what mallets I need at the top of the page. That helps obviously with the recordings, but in the performance too so you are not surprised at what comes up in that movement. You have such a large set up around you, but you don’t use every

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<sup>67</sup> Jones, Sue. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

single instrument in every movement... there are some where you may use only three instruments, but there may be some movements where you use ten instruments or even more. That list really kind of helps you stay in check with what is coming up and what you need...”<sup>68</sup>

Angie agreed and said, “It is easier to go into rehearsal if you have some sort of mental note on where your instruments will be so you can mentally run through where you are going from one instrument to another. Even if you are not familiar with how things sound, you can at least have some sort of idea of the size in your graph. [*The American Songbook Collection*] actually seems to have grown in size at least from some of his earlier works. I don’t know if each piece grows more and more, and of course he comes up with new ideas. It is always a challenge to picture and write some sort of graph as to where your instruments will be... [At] your first rehearsal, you think that something would work, but then you realize that the timpani are so much bigger than you would have ever imagined, and you know you have this gigantic marimba in front of you... Sometimes the hardest part of playing George’s pieces is actually figuring out a set up that will work where you can move smoothly from one instrument to another. A lot of his work requires grace and finesse in moving around... Once you figure that out, you are about ninety percent there.”

“Shenandoah” was a perfect example of the precision she had to master. Angie said, “It might be impossible for a listener to tell the subtle changes that [George] wrote amongst our parts, and that made it difficult to pull off. [“Shenandoah”] in particular was my most difficult movement because it was

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<sup>68</sup> Nelson, David. Interview by author, 19 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

repetitive, yet it was never exactly the same, and I wanted to make sure that I wasn't ever caught off guard when I was grabbing a mallet. I have five Japanese temple bells, a couple of tam tams, some temple gongs, wind chimes, and glass wind chimes. I had to bow at least three cymbals and I also played them with yarn mallets. It is tricky also because in a movement like this, all of the instruments require different mallets, and you can't hold five mallets in each hand. You can only hold a couple, but usually, you are throwing some down and picking up some other ones. Trying to do that smoothly *and* without dropping things all over the floor is the challenge.”<sup>69</sup>

Graceful, unobtrusive movement between the instruments is an important challenge to consider for all of the songbooks. A couple of the percussionists who played with me on “Poor Wayfaring Stranger” from *Unto the Hills* took their shoes off in order to move quietly among their instruments.

### **Extended Techniques**

Upon receipt of their new scores, all of the members reviewed them for the “latest” exotic instrument or extended techniques Crumb had devised. Bill Kerrigan said, “I had to play the Jew's harp for *The Winds of Destiny* for the first time. So always the new instrument gives you the most anxiety because you've never approached it. The cannon drum I didn't get to play until the first rehearsal and wondered ‘what's that going to be like and do we need to mic it or not mic it...’ We had it on chairs at first and I didn't know if it would be loud enough, so we then raised it up higher.” Bill began recalling everyone else's assignment as well. He

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<sup>69</sup> Nelson, Angie. Interview by author, 19 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

continued, “Sue, with her owl’s voice, for example, the African udu drum which we had shipped and Dave set up... We had to whistle while were playing in ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home.’ We have to sing and use our voices, and because we don’t do it everyday, it keeps us on the edge of our seats.”<sup>70</sup> Future percussionists for *Winds* might consider seeking pedagogical advice from the vocalist with whom they work if they are anxious about singing during this movement.

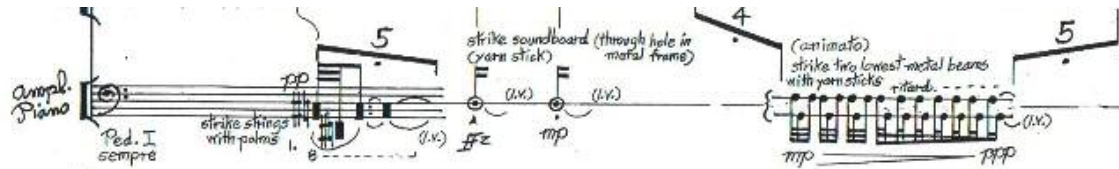
The piano has never been excluded from being used non-traditionally in Crumb’s music. Mr. Barone commented on this last songbook and the particulars about handling some of the composer’s directions for extended techniques. He said, “In this particular cycle, there was nothing that scared me, having gotten through the problem of playing something on the shofar in *A Journey Beyond Time*. So, that was something really new for me. I am not born to be a wind player... I would say there are some difficulties or inconveniences in all of George’s piano writings, but either I am getting better at it or he is making the parts a little easier as time goes by. I find less and less trouble with what he is writing. You know, there are always some little adjustments that I end up making to a brand new piece of his. I always ask his permission if I can do this instead of that, and he is always very amenable to anything I can do to get the effect he wants.”

Barone explained what he meant by adjustments: “A really simple example of how a little adjustment can be made: The fourth note that I play [in “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory”] is a strike to the sound board with a yarn stick through a hole in the metal frame. (Ex. 5-4) You can’t get a very powerful sound hitting the sound board

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<sup>70</sup> Kerrigan, William, Principal Percussionist of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

through the hole of the metal frame, so what I have come up with is to hit the sound board to the left of the metal frame; to the left of the very lowest bass string. That gets a much better sound and once George heard the difference, he agreed with me that that sounded fine. It didn't matter where I was hitting the sound board as long as I got the dynamic that he wanted."



**Example 5-4:** "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory," page 1, m. 1.

He continued, "Regarding the use of yarn mallets, I would just encourage any pianist playing the piece to try all the different crossbeams and try to find the two that give a resonant sound and a little bit of pitch contrast. We experimented each time we did the piece and I always asked Jim's opinion and George's (if he is there) as to which makes the best pair of crossbeams to hit. Each piano is a little different even within the same model of piano. Sometimes that part of the frame will produce a slightly different sound when you strike it. So, you want to be open to changing where you're hitting the frame."

He went on to say, "Sometimes, one has to make little accommodations to the particular piano that you are playing. [In "When Johnny Comes Marching Home"] there is a glissando near the end of the string that is activating the two tritones in the box to the left of the piano staff. (Ex. 5-5) Well, on a Steinway D, which is the piano best suited for the performance of George's music, there is a little bar in the way of the glissando, so I do that with two hands going opposite directions out from where that bar is, and the chord comes out perfectly clear. I never told George about that and



he never objected to it, but you just have to work around the construction of the piano sometimes.”<sup>71</sup>



**Example 5-5:** “When Johnny Comes Marching Home,” page 12, m. 2.

Crumb uses several percussive techniques in which the pianist’s hand strikes the instrument instead of using another object. Barone brought up the issue without my urging: “The question of striking the strings with the palms comes up right at the beginning [of the first movement in this piece] and I have found over the years that I usually have slightly better control if I use my left hand for all of those bass strikes. [George] notates right, left, right for that opening gesture, and I do it all with the left hand because I can get a more even volume that way. There is less risk of my doing something I shouldn’t do or making a sound I don’t need from my hand by using the technique of extending the fingers a little bit upward so that it is really only the palm that is hitting the strings, not the fingers. Fingers tend to make a brighter and more rattled sound than the palms do. Right at that moment and similar moments that crop

<sup>71</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

up through the whole cycle, you want a kind of a gentle muffled sound not a bright sound.”<sup>72</sup>

### Modifications and Tweaks

Like Freeman’s experience with the other songbooks, certain movements stood out immediately as the conductor studied them. While the grand total of instruments can be an indicator of extended rehearsal or preparation for a certain movement, so can the presence of a five-page song based solely on one chord. Jim commented, “The last piece [‘Shenandoah’] was a big surprise for everybody. As you know, I said to George even before we started, ‘George, I am not sure this piece really works because it’s so static,’ and of course, it does work because it *is* static. That it works is sort of amazing and another tribute to George’s genius.”<sup>73</sup>

Mr. Barone was also perplexed upon his first reading of “Shenandoah.” It didn’t sound like the same harmonic language he had heard in Crumb’s previous compositions. “...When I first started playing [‘Shenandoah’] my reaction was that this does not sound like a typical ‘George Crumb’ chord. Since then, my friend, colleague and George’s former student, Gerald Levenson has pointed out to me that there is a similar chord in *Quest*.<sup>74</sup> But, that was my first thought, ‘wow’ this is something different. Of course George has jokingly said that he had written the

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<sup>72</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>73</sup> Freeman, Dr. James, Conductor of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 16 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>74</sup> *Quest* is a composition dedicated to David Starobin and Speculum Musicae, commissioned by Albert Augustine, Ltd. The piece, divided into three refrains was begun in 1989 and completed in 1994. It is written for solo guitar, soprano saxophone, harp, contrabass, percussion (two players). Starobin performed the work in Amsterdam as early as 1989 as a work in progress.

whole piece on one chord because he couldn't think of another one. It is really amazing how [the melody] just sort of wafts around on the same harmony for the entire song. At a certain point, there are some new notes that come in, but it is really the same sonority all the way through.”<sup>75</sup>

George Crumb is always open to modifications if they improve upon his original intentions. Freeman noticed the necessity for augmenting one of Crumb's musical figures in “The Enchanted Valley.” He said, “In the eighth movement, at least at the opening of the piece, I thought that the Jew's harp parts ought to be more extended than he had written because they went by so fast. They are so quiet that I thought to myself, ‘the audience isn't going even to be aware of this,’ so I think I talked George into adding (I can't remember exactly what it was) to a five note group to make it into a seven note group (or something).”<sup>76</sup> The conductor asked me to look in the score to confirm his memory, and George confirmed that the part called for a seven note phrase and two more notes were added to make nine-note phrases. The additional notes gave precedence to the Jew's harp within the context of the piece and created more time for dynamic changes.

“Tweaking,” is the term Sue Jones uses regarding improvements to Crumb's original ideas. It is actually a perfect word for what happens to new music once it is lifted off the page by voices and instruments. Sue mentioned “Shenandoah” as an example: “I think there was a lot of tweaking because some things were totally impossible. [We had] the wrong sound behind the mood that Barbara created like in

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<sup>75</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>76</sup> Freeman, Dr. James, Conductor of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 16 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.



Regarding score modifications to the instrumental parts, Barone gave the most realistic picture of what actually happens during the first rehearsals of Crumb's new compositions: "We always have questions right away, but I don't want to give the impression that a lot of changing of George's music ever takes place. What each of us is to do is calculated so beautifully. It's almost never necessary to make a substantial change in what he has written; just occasionally the question of how to get from one instrument to another for the percussionists. They need sometimes to make revisions as to who plays what, so that the transition from one instrument to another can be smoother. Once in a while, George will not be entirely happy with the way something sounds. It doesn't quite agree with what he had imagined, and therefore, he will ask us to make a little change. Usually, if we tell him something is impossible, he comes over and shows us how to do it..."<sup>78</sup>

### **Camaraderie**

What was interesting about the suggested score modifications during those July 2005 rehearsals was not the changes themselves, but that Jim Freeman's professional relationship with Crumb gave him full license to suggest anything he deemed necessary for the success of the composition. It was a privilege to observe their working relationship. Freeman later made the comment that, "[Orchestra 2001] has worked an awful lot with George, so we know each other. We all got along and like each other, and that is an important part of Orchestra 2001 actually."

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<sup>78</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

I was still a student at the time I was observing their first collaborations on *The Winds of Destiny*, and I distinctly remember watching the musicians interact as they set up their instruments and then left for the evening. They were seasoned professionals who were clearly concerned with the greater good of the ensemble – there were no divas or divos amongst them. Tony Barone said, “With this particular set of colleagues, [rehearsals are] first and foremost always fun. We always have a great time doing this. The four percussionists who have been the core of all four of these *Songbooks*, and Ken Miller, who was playing in the premiere of the first book, were also great to work with. So, it is always just a load of fun to get together and try these new things and see how it all fits together, and I think we are always pretty patient with each other. I know that the percussionists are always tolerant of me and my occasional stupidities. It is a very smooth process and with Jim at the helm, it can’t help but be well run and fun to do. Jim is a very unusual conductor in that he actually treats his players as if they had brains and does not dictate things to us. He is very open to suggestions. He always wants input from all of us, and he always lets us know that he has real trust for our musicianship as well as his own. So, it is a very warm, friendly and enjoyable atmosphere.”<sup>79</sup>

### **Instrumentalists and Singers**

During my interviews with the instrumentalists, the response to one question would occasionally lead to another subject and with Mr. Barone that was certainly the case. As a singer, I greatly appreciated his perceptions about the interdependence

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<sup>79</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

between the human voice and the instruments in chamber music. He has worked with singers throughout his whole career, but in particular he has been the pianist for all the songbooks and has rehearsed and performed with both Barbara Ann Martin and Ann Crumb. Singers will appreciate his point of view: “I think we need to be listening to the singer at every moment and every instant. Even in rehearsal when we are not amplified, we keep our ears trained to her. The clear evidence that we do that is that sometimes when we have to rehearse [a section] without the voice, for a moment we all get terribly confused. Although Jim’s conducting is absolutely clear, we are so used to depending on the vocal line that it is confusing to try things without it at first. You know, we get over that, but we are training our ears to the vocal line in these songs at all times.”<sup>80</sup> His comments make a perfect case for the singer to learn her music cold before the first rehearsal instead of relying on the instruments for assistance.

Sue Jones added, “One particular piece that really struck me and I could never stop singing or humming it was ‘Lonesome Road.’ The melodic line was very haunting and I could not get it out of my head. The words, ‘if you would leave me for another then why not let me die’ were so beautiful. It was just two pages long and very simple, but so eloquent in the way it rose to the middle and then tapered off. It is the kind of piece that when we really got it, we made it work, but sometimes it just did not feel right because if you worked at it too hard, you lost it. I was playing the second vibraphone part, so a lot of my part involved answering Bill who was playing

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<sup>80</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

the first vibraphone part. When Barbara comes in, it was the same idea.”<sup>81</sup> Sue’s last comment is stellar. Young singers should remember that it is imperative to learn the accompanying parts to their music because the instruments compliment the text, and vice versa in some way or another, regardless of the musical genre. For example, contemporary music often calls for many timbre changes and conversational exchanges between the voice and instruments as Ms. Jones mentioned. In classical music, coloraturas sometimes play tag with a flute in *bel canto* arias, Schubert sets up the spinning wheel for Gretchen in the piano accompaniment for *Gretchen und Spinnrade*, and now, Crumb wants the singer to blend with a vibraphone one moment and mock an un-pitched instrument the next.

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<sup>81</sup> Jones, Sue. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.



## CHAPTER SIX

### Premiering *The Winds of Destiny*

The world premiere of *The Winds of Destiny* took place in Salzburg, Austria on August 4, 2005 during the internationally acclaimed and historic Salzburg Festival in which George Crumb was the only American composer featured during the entire run of events (Ex.6-1). Less than two months later, the musicians met again for the U.S. premiere at the Annenberg Center for Performing Arts. The Center is a part of the University of Pennsylvania which is where Crumb spent the final and longest chapter of his academic career. The U.S. premiere occurred on Saturday, September 17, 2005 and the following Sunday night the same concert was repeated at Swarthmore College where the group has rehearsed for years.

I began this portion of the interview by asking each person what they remembered about each concert, any memories about their personal performances, i.e., beautiful moments, mistakes, humorous experiences, etc., and primarily everyone was overcome by the beauty of the Mozarteum and the atmosphere in which they rehearsed and performed. The predicament of playing on European percussion instruments will be an interesting story for all to read. Audience response was another topic addressed by some of the percussionists. The acceptance of and enthusiasm for new or intellectual music was noticeable in Salzburg, and some of the musicians felt a new level of respect they had not necessarily encountered before their trip. After their trip to Europe, the American premiere was a welcome performance for the musicians, and they faced it with relatively more technical ease and confidence.

## Salzburg Premiere

Directly after the July 2005 rehearsals at the Settlement School in Central City (Philadelphia), Barbara Ann Martin loaded up her bags and left on Friday, July 29<sup>th</sup> for Austria to fulfill her teaching engagements there. The rest of the group left on Saturday and Sunday respectively, and that was the last I would see of the family until September. George and I spoke several times about the Salzburg performance before I ever formally recorded his comments. From our taped interview in February 2006, he recollected the conditions in which the orchestra performed. “Well, there is always a certain excitement about the very first time you know, and that was there. The acoustics were just incredible. The Grosser Saal at the Mozarteum in Salzburg [Austria] is one of those great European halls so you could hear everything (Ex. 3-1, p. 38). It is also like a chamber hall and the most intimate [moments] projected beautifully. We had amplification - it took us a while to get the amplification right, but eventually that all worked out. [The audience] did a good job of filling the hall and [their] reaction seemed very good.”

Crumb could not help bragging about his daughter’s performance in Austria. He chose to premiere not only *The Winds of Destiny*, but also Ann Crumb’s songbook, *The River of Life* since it precedes the fourth book in the *Collection*. Crumb said, “The performances were great with Ann and Barbara there. They were edgy performances and we started with Ann’s set, *The River of Life*, so that turned out to be a beautiful beginning for the concert with that first mystical [movement] with all



**Example 6-1:** The Grosser Saal at the Mozarteum. George, Liz and Peter Crumb are sitting on the front row (bottom right corner of the photograph). Courtesy of Jim Moskowitz, Orchestra 2001.

the water bending. The people would get drawn in, and then when Ann socked them with ‘Will There Be Any Stars in My Crown,’ with all that metallico percussion, [it] blew the roof off the hall practically.” George chuckled as he spoke, “They were knocked over by that, and that set the tone for the concert. There were a lot of young composers there that were studying at the Mozarteum.”<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

Jim Freeman took part in several interviews and a press conference to help Crumb promote his premiere, which he felt was an honor. While the surroundings were awe-inspiring to the conductor, he quickly remembered how the concert actually began. He said, “The premiere was very exciting because it is an absolutely beautiful hall and it was filled with an international audience. I think one of the funny stories was that during the dress rehearsal on the premiere day, it must have been in the morning, Ann Crumb had left a couple of pages of her music backstage, and we got to the time of the performance that evening and the pages were gone. She didn’t realize it until we were about to go on stage, and of course, in that particular concert, her piece came first. So, there was a mad scramble, ‘what the hell do we do now?...’ Finally, Jim Moscowitz, our stage manager, ran out into the audience to find George who fortunately had another copy of the score with him, so she used those two pages from George’s score. That was the most hair-raising incident at the concert. Other than that, the musicians all had a great time.”<sup>83</sup> Freeman detailed the trip in essay form for Orchestra 2001’s website. The full story is included in the appendix of this document.

It is the opportunity of a lifetime for any performer to premiere a work during the Salzburg Festival. Barbara Ann Martin had earned the respect of George Crumb and Jim Freeman by singing and promoting George’s vocal pieces in Russia and America throughout her career. It was helpful to her and the success of the premiere that she had been teaching for the Summer Academy at the Mozarteum since 1992, so many of the professionals there already knew her work. She commented, “Well, I

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<sup>83</sup> Freeman, Dr. James, Conductor of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 16 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

was there teaching a course at the Mozarteum at the same time, so I was doing double duty in terms of having all of my students come to the rehearsals when they could. I had started to teach on Monday of that week. We had a rehearsal that Monday night. We were already feeling jet lag, dealing with travel, and not all of our instruments had gotten there as soon as we had hoped, so Monday night's rehearsal was very important in terms of our getting ready. Rehearsals are very different and this was as close to a run through as we were going to get before Wednesday... I found that other people had been rehearsing in the hall [Monday night] and then we were late in getting there. It took us hours, and by the time we were done with [the sound check and rehearsal] I was absolutely pooped. That was alarming and difficult, but overall, once we got into doing the performance I thought it was very effective.”<sup>84</sup>

Sue Jones wondered how Crumb's music would be accepted in Europe before she got there, and was pleasantly surprised by the reception they received from the public: “I think in a way that the audience was receptive to Barbara because she teaches [at the Salzburg Festival] so there was ground work laid out for the piece... I think it helps to have a little bit of familiarity with the music because the types of instruments he uses are very different.”<sup>85</sup>

Readers of this document may have observed that concert etiquette and foreknowledge of classical or intellectual music is an issue with American audiences. For example, Angie Nelson frankly confirmed those observances in her statement about the Salzburg concert. She said, “I was really impressed. I hate to say this, but

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<sup>84</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording, San Angelo, TX.

<sup>85</sup> Jones, Sue. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

audiences everywhere else are so much more considerate, and they are appreciative of anything artistic or musical. I think they are exposed to other cultures [in comparison to] Americans who are exposed to sports and McDonald's®. Not saying that the Philadelphia audiences aren't appreciative, but [to me] it was more special to be [in Austria]. I know I personally was really attuned to everything that was going around me just because I just felt so proud to be there playing George's music. I could just feel that there was a lot of positive energy and that people were really interested in what we were doing, even though they might not have been familiar with it.”<sup>86</sup>

Not all of the percussionists had visited Austria before the August 2005 trip. Dave Nelson was smitten with the beauty of the country, but even more so, it was an opportunity to bond with the rest of the group. He said, “First of all, I had never been to Salzburg before. We (Jim Freeman, Tony, and the four percussionists) would go out for almost all of our meals together. That was such an experience too. There were plenty of times when we would say, ‘I want to do this today,’ but we would almost always say, ‘all right, let's all meet for lunch, or let's all meet for dinner,’ and there were plenty of sightseeing things that we did together as well. It was just neat to be in a performing situation with all of these people and then to interact with them all week long in everything that we did.”<sup>87</sup>

### **The Subject of Instruments**

The European debut of the piece required a great deal of logistical planning

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<sup>86</sup> Nelson, Angie. Interview by author, 19 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>87</sup> Nelson, David. Interview by author, 19 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

and some rearranging of the instrumental set-up in comparison to the U.S. Premiere. Jim Freeman remembered clearly, “In Salzburg, the first big concern was that we would have all of the percussion there, and eventually it did get there. One of the biggest hassles involved moving all the percussion instruments from a storage room in the Mozarteum through a courtyard, into another building and into a very tiny elevator, which then led up to the stage. It took the percussion players and some of us who helped around thirty or forty trips to get all that stuff.”<sup>88</sup>

Sue Jones was shocked when she arrived in Austria. Her intricate score markings and choreography between instruments did not prepare her for oversized instruments she would have to play. Ms. Jones said, “[In Austria] it looked like all of their instruments were exposed to plutonium! In ‘All my Trials’ where I had exactly one footstep to make between two instruments with solo parts, I had to use three footsteps because of the size of the instruments. Each time that I made it, I just looked up, grinned, and thought, ‘I hope nobody sees that, but I can’t help it.’ I have to memorize a lot of his music. There is no time to look at the parts, and you are running from one thing to another so fast that you can’t look at the music. You play, then drop the sticks and run someplace else.”<sup>89</sup>

Bill Kerrigan said, “I think Salzburg was the least comfortable [performance situation] because we were all playing on strange equipment.... [Much] of the equipment over there was a lot larger than what we were used to, so we had to change

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<sup>88</sup> Freeman, Dr. James, Conductor of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 16 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>89</sup> Jones, Sue. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

our setups and change our approach a little bit. [In addition], the accidentals and the naturals on their marimbas were not all the same height as what we were used to.”<sup>90</sup>

Overseeing the transport of so many percussion instruments on an international trip is no picnic. Jim Moskowitz, concert manager for Orchestra 2001 and the tour/stage manager for *The Winds of Destiny* trip kept a journal about his experience which is featured on the Orchestra 2001 website. Moskowitz’s angle on the trip is an interesting one; he began his journal entry by saying, “It’s bad enough to have to take something called a ‘cannon drum’ through Customs so soon after the London bombings; and it doesn’t help that the five-foot-long, 18”-diameter metal cylinder was stuffed with six-foot-long heavy metal pipes sticking out from the end of the heavily bubble wrapped package looking too much like the exhaust pipes on a primitive rocket. But somehow it got through—it helped that I had taken photos of the assembled cannon drum and percussion stands in use at our rehearsals in Philadelphia, and taped them to the outside of the wrapped package. Everything got to Munich, thence to Salzburg, then used in the concert, then back to Munich, then home, safely.”<sup>91</sup> Moskowitz’s full account has been included in the appendix of this document.

### **Amplification**

The importance of amplifying the singer in these songbooks cannot be stressed enough for several reasons, and the point is proven by the group’s Salzburg

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<sup>90</sup> Kerrigan, William, Principal Percussionist of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>91</sup> Moskowitz, Jim, Concert Manager of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 13 February 2005, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.



experience. Specifically, Crumb's *Songbooks* and the music of many other contemporary composers use amplification not only for dynamics purposes, but to aide the singer in blending and coloring her voice as an additional affect along with the instruments. This means that the microphone should be a good quality instrument and fit for the particular voice type and size that it is amplifying. If a traditional hand-held microphone is used (on a microphone stand only), the physical placement of it on stage and minor volume adjustments made during the performance must also be mapped out and rehearsed with great care. One could compare the practice of this extended technique of singing to learning to play a new instrument. The technician needs to learn how to "play" the mic since it is place in front of the singer *and* the percussion orchestra (as explained by Ann Crumb in Chapter Four), unlike the microphone for the piano which is placed very close to the inside of the piano (with the lid up), and is pointed away from the rest of the instruments. In addition, the soprano's particular voice quality and color must also be considered by the sound technician when setting the levels on the sound board. With all that said, precious time must be taken to secure the consistency of amplification for this songbook and the others as well.

Freeman recalled that, "the biggest concern was the amplification of the two sopranos which took all of one rehearsal to straighten out, and I do not think it ever really was completely satisfying to everybody. We were at the mercy of the sound technician there, and I think one of the troubles was that he was supposed to come to our first rehearsal and work on the sound. He showed up for about five minutes and said, 'Well I am here and I have all of the equipment, but I have to go now.' So then the only time we had to work with him was during a dress rehearsal on the day of the

concert. He was not nearly as good we hoped he would be, and it took a long time to straighten out.”

He continued, “The only thing I remember about Barbara’s singing was that she wasn’t happy with the amplification. For instance, in ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home’ the soprano really has to have a microphone in order to be audible. At the same time, [it] can’t be in front of her face so that she isn’t visually hidden from the audience. The soprano has to have had time to work with the mic so that she knows how far to step back for the other pieces, how close to the microphone she needs to get for the loud pieces, and there just wasn’t time for that because of the sound technician who didn’t do his job and didn’t prepare appropriately. So, I know she was unhappy, although I think it came across to the audience pretty well....”<sup>92</sup>

Tony Barone had few concerns about his instrument because he fortunately got to play another Steinway D. He said, “Obviously, the acoustics were very different in the two halls or three halls I should say, because we did the piece twice in Pennsylvania. So much of the adjusting where my part is concerned is done for me by the sound crew. It’s their ears more than mine, plus George’s in these phases because he was always there to help us set levels. Since the piano is amplified, I have to place some trust in the hands and ears of the people who are in charge of the amplification.”<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Freeman, Dr. James, Conductor of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 16 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>93</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

## **Political Message**

George Crumb admitted that his music has an underlying political message as previously discussed in Chapter Two. This element was a matter of discussion between Tony Barone and me when I interviewed him last March about the Salzburg Premiere. He said, “Well, [the Salzburg audience was] incredibly receptive.... This piece can be seen as a reflection of George’s immediate reaction to political circumstances in this country at this moment. But, I am absolutely convinced that this piece has a universal message that will be as applicable centuries from now as it is presently. I think it’s important that we get past this local view of things. It has a local message, but more importantly, it has a global message. I remember a newspaper article pointing out this immediate connection between this piece and the war that is being waged right now. I acknowledge that connection and that is something George has spoken to himself, and I accept the fact that this is something that he had in mind as he was writing it. The piece goes beyond that...”<sup>94</sup>

## **U.S. Premiere and Swarthmore College**

The weekend of the U.S. premiere provided an additional chance to familiarize myself with the Crumb family, and observe the musicians preparing for another premiere. George and I went to the final soundcheck before the U.S. premiere at the University, and he gave me a quick tour by car around the campus. We entered the hall as the percussionists were finishing checking over their set-up. Lighting for the concert was an issue and I actually got to help make the decision on

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<sup>94</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

the lighting effects for George's piece which ended the second half of the concert since I was the only one looking down on the stage from the audience during the rehearsal. I don't recall the individual colors they used, but a wash of pale, reddish-orange light illuminated the stage which really showed off the percussion instruments made of copper or brass. The ambiance was perfect for the subject matter of George's songbook. Ms. Martin finally had a chance to work with the sound technician and was much more pleased with the amplification that night. Her interpretations of the text were much stronger and the music had really settled in her voice since I had heard her the previous July. The air conditioner vent that blew onto the stage was a nuisance which Sue Jones and Bill Kerrigan will describe in their comments.

As we were leaving the rehearsal, George introduced me to Tan Dun<sup>95</sup> who made a special trip to Philadelphia since a couple of his pieces were preceding Crumb's premiere on the program that night. On the way out of the door, George explained how they knew each other: Crumb had gone to China about twenty-five years prior and taught the young composers at the Beijing Central Conservatory, and Tan Dun happened to be a student there at the time. He never forgot Crumb and would later credit the older composer's compositional style as "the first viable alternative to twelve-tone composition to that first generation of composers to emerge

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<sup>95</sup> Tan Dun (b. 1957). Chinese born composer who currently resides in New York City. While growing up in the Hunan Province of China, Dun was not exposed to Western music until the age of twenty. His influences include local kunqu theater [Chinese opera] and shamanistic ritual used for weddings and funerals. Dun spent two years of "re-education" in the paddy fields during the Mao Cultural Revolution and collected folk music and conducted important music celebrations during that time. His western influences (besides Crumb) include Hans Werner Henze, Alexander Goehr and John Cage. All of his music exudes theatrical qualities whether instrumental or vocal/chamber. The world premiere of Dun's most recent Metropolitan Opera House commission, *The First Emperor*, takes place at the Met on December 21, 2006 starring Plácido Domingo as Emperor Chin and Elizabeth Futral as Princess Yue-yang.

from the creative darkness of Mao's Cultural Revolution.”<sup>96</sup> Though the exchange was brief between the two composers after the rehearsal, George was beaming as we stepped onto the sidewalk outside of the Annenberg Center.

The concert hall was packed by eight o'clock that night and the first half of the concert began with Tan Dun's *Concerto for Pizzicato Piano and Ten Instruments* (1995) and *Circle with Four Trios, Conductor and Audience* (1992). The concerto was played by a good friend of both composers, Ms. Margaret Leng Tan.<sup>97</sup> Dun's compositions on that program were clearly a product of Crumb's influence which Jim Freeman was perfectly aware of when he programmed the music for that concert. The audience participation on *Circle with Four Trios* was humorous at first, and Jim Freeman's encouragement of our part of the music helped immensely as the piece progressed. The release of energy from the audience and the performers was the perfect close to the first half of the program. Consequently, *Circles* would be an excellent choice to program on a university contemporary ensemble concert.

The Annenberg Center itself is a dark venue and the seats ascend gradually to the top of the hall. It felt cramped there even though I had second or third row seats, just a few rows below George and Liz. At intermission, Eric Bruskin, Development Director of Orchestra 2001 (and their program annotator) conducted a group interview with Crumb, Dun, Freeman, and Tan, which was included in the broadcast

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<sup>96</sup> “News,” 13 June 2006 < <http://www.orchestra2001.org/>>.

<sup>97</sup> Margaret Leng Tan, the “diva of avant-garde pianism” was born in Singapore and currently resides in Brooklyn, NY. She is the first woman to graduate from Juilliard with a Doctor of Music and is best known for her interpretations of John Cage's piano music. Tan is also the world's only professional toy pianist and appeared at major festivals such as BAM Next Wave, Ravinia, Spoleto USA, New Music America, Bank on a Can, Wien Modern, Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors and Serious Fun Festivals. Her legitimizing of this instrument can be heard on her CD, *The Art of the Toy Piano* (Point/Universal). In 2004, Mode Records released Tan's latest DVD which includes a performance of Crumb's *Makrokosmos I & II* along with her Carnegie Hall tribute that honored Crumb's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. The pianist owns 3 Steinways and 16 toy pianos (as of 2005).

of the concert on WRTI-FM, November 6, 2005. The audience was unreservedly approving of Crumb's latest songbook at the end of the night. The piece that stuck out, as usual, was "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." I think one could have heard a pin drop at the end of that movement; Barbara was in tears and I felt as if we had all been transported to Iraq that night, some of us willingly, and some of us reluctantly. There was a long standing ovation after it was over in which Crumb went down to take a bow with Jim Freeman and Barbara Ann Martin. His black shirt, black pants and red belt matched the uniform color scheme of Orchestra 2001's dress code. (Ex. 6-2) Unfortunately, there was no way to take pictures of the whole group that night.



**Example 6-2:** Liz, George and Kate Carr after the U.S. Premiere at the Annenburg Center for Performing Arts on September 17, 2005. Courtesy of the author.

The following night, Liz and Peter Crumb picked me up for the concert at Swarthmore College. I discovered that this small but elite school had a very enviable concert hall. The construction of Lang Hall purposely allows the whole audience to look down at the stage so that an entire ensemble can be observed at any given moment. It made the arrangement of the percussion instruments all the more beautiful and one could see the movements of each player. The stage floor is hard wood and the backdrop of the Hall is nothing but floor to ceiling glass windows that face a forest of trees in the daylight. Unfortunately, it was dark by the start of the concert (Ex. 6-3a,b).



**Example 6-3a:** Group bow at Swarthmore College on September 18, 2005. From left to right, Marcantonio Barone, George, Barbara, Sue Jones. Courtesy of the author.



**Example 6-3b:** The rest of Orchestra 2001. From left to right:: Jim Freeman, Angie Nelson, Dave Nelson, Bill Kerrigan (behind the recording microphone) and Marcantonio Barone. Courtesy of the author.

Regarding the music, I thought Barbara’s vocals were stronger the previous night but once again, there were terrible problems with the sound. Her microphone was literally cut off for one song and she desperately needed it due to the dynamics of that particular movement. She handled it beautifully and sailed through the rest of the songbook. Audience response that night was just as enthusiastic as the previous night and it seemed that several Orchestra 2001 patrons set the tone for the standing ovation at the end of the concert.

When I asked George to recall the U.S. premiere he said, “...we just did it once in Annenberg Performance Hall. That was an exciting occasion and I had my colleague from China, Tan Dun, add a couple of pieces on so I think it made it a nice program. You know, it seemed to flow very nicely. I liked the feel of the whole



thing, and the hall is not known as being a very great hall (just acoustically) but somehow with the amplification, it seemed to work okay.”<sup>98</sup> Everyone involved in the performance would agree that the acoustics at Swarthmore’s Lang Hall are markedly more suitable for the music. George didn’t make any profound comments about the Swarthmore performance except that he prefers Lang Hall for performances when his music is played in the Philadelphia area.

After the Salzburg experience, Jim Freeman was appreciative of the comforts of home in Philadelphia: Orchestra 2001 had their own instruments, and they had a sound technician at the Annenberg Center who was interested in performing his job with a high degree of integrity. It was also an opportunity for George to tweak his piece a little bit more. Jim said, “I think that the biggest difference [between Salzburg and the U.S. premieres] was that we had time to work with the amplification in Philadelphia and at Swarthmore. I think there is one piece that George is still sort of working on, ‘Twelve Gates to the City,’ which he keeps saying, ‘I am not really happy with that.’ I am not even sure why, but there are things about that piece that I wouldn’t be surprised if he eventually makes some alterations in them.”<sup>99</sup>

Barbara Ann Martin had time to make more adjustments and consider her interpretations of the pieces. She said, “In some respect because we had the time to rethink the piece and let it set for awhile, we put [the Philadelphia Premiere] together much more easily because we had already worked out a lot of the details. I think a

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<sup>98</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>99</sup> Freeman, Dr. James, Conductor of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 16 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

consistent problem will always be the balances between the voices and the instruments.”<sup>100</sup>

Sue Jones’ calmness and ease during the actual performance was admirable. She said, “I personally had a problem with the performance at the Annandale Center. I was situated where there was a vent that hit only my music. The pages were flying and I had to know what to play. I spoke to one of the other percussionists and she said she looked over and all of a sudden she saw me playing with one hand. My other hand was holding the music on the stand... But, it was one of those cases where you have to do what you have to do. There was one part where I could not get over to the other instrument so I had to play one part on the crotales instead of the xylophone and George did not even realize this... That is where memorizing it really helped, thank God! When we went to [Lang Hall, Swarthmore College], for the second performance, everything was fine.”<sup>101</sup>

“Dealing with different acoustics wasn’t so bad. I’d say [that] we were the most comfortable at Lang Hall because we were so used to rehearsing there.” Bill Kerrigan said. He continued, “In Philadelphia, we had stage hands that were assigned to each one of us [during the performances], and they had diagrams of where things would go so they could help us out and immediately try to get things set up in the right position. We just had to fine tune it from there... When we played at Annenberg, I think Sue had some wind problems with her pages. Sometimes if the venue is a little drafty, the original pages can blow around. It was a drag for her. The

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<sup>100</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>101</sup> Jones, Sue. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

scores are quite large as you know, and to get them positioned where we can see them, with the notes being somewhat small too, we're not right on top of the scores because we're looking at them from a distance..."<sup>102</sup>

Although the European audiences seemed to be better prepared to receive Crumb's music, American audiences had certain advantages for Angie Nelson. She said, "Philadelphia was nice because it's George's hometown, so I think people know that he is local and writing some amazing music. His name attracts the people who want to listen and they are there because they want to hear something great in George Crumb. The audiences that we generally get know what is coming so they are not turned off, whereas maybe a general audience might not understand his music. I think it is special, like I said, because he lives here now. I know we have gotten some great reviews from the Philadelphia papers because the reviewers also seem to appreciate George and particularly his writing for percussion..."<sup>103</sup>

In conclusion to this historic event in the world of contemporary music, it is obvious that premieres are a culmination of hours, if not years of toil and sweat wrapped up in one forty minute performance. And, for many reasons this type of music is never heard again. Crumb has, in fact, re-arranged tunes that America has heard time and again. But these are different. His interpretations might strike a chord deep within the heart of Americans, because the composer sketched the convictions of many anti-war civilians and soldiers on staff paper at a time in history that will not long be forgotten. He seems to have set to music the agony that war brings through

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<sup>102</sup> Kerrigan, William, Principal Percussionist of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>103</sup> Nelson, Angie. Interview by author, 19 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

his unique, extended techniques for voice and instruments. It will be very difficult for the average university to locate all the percussion instruments required to perform the songbook; however, this is not an immediate concern of Crumb's. These logistical hindrances may, in fact, make future performances more significant.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### The Recording Session

Since the modern age of recording, musicians have had the advantage of hearing much twentieth and twenty-first century music exactly the way a composer intended. A professional recording of *The Winds of Destiny* was made during the Thanksgiving holiday in 2005. Produced, recorded and distributed by Bridge Records, the CD will be invaluable because the musicians who originally premiered the songbook performed on the recording. In addition, Mr. Crumb's coaching and production advice will give it a degree of authenticity that future recordings may not have. The recording occurred shortly after their two live concert premieres, so the music was still fresh in the minds of the performers.

#### David Starobin, producer

Recording contemporary music is an art unto itself, and George Crumb is very fortunate to have a producer and record label that are devoted to this task. David Starobin, executive producer of Bridge Records, and an avid fan of Crumb's style, appreciates his work primarily because he has played it for over thirty years and specializes in recording avant-garde music. Bridge Records will set the bar for accurately performing the American Songbook Collection in the future, because George has been right beside Starobin during every session, giving feedback as to whether or not he's hearing exactly what he intended the audience to hear when he wrote the piece. Nuances in recorded music are so important since the live audience

element is not there, and those subtleties cannot entirely be written into the score.

Therefore, Crumb's ears are of utmost importance during the recording sessions.

Starobin and I had a discussion about live performances versus recordings, and he reminded me of a concept I had forgotten. There is a difference in doctoring a recording to make it sound perfect, and making a recording with the composer at hand for future performance practice reference. He explained: "What we were doing was attempting to make the first recording of a new composition. In doing that, you're first goal is to attempt to come as close as you can to the composer's intention. That has very little to do with live performance because there are details that you're trying to establish in the recording that are never dealt with in the live performance. This is much more highly detailed work because it's representing the piece for the first time and essentially is there for posterity, so, you want all of the detail of the score to come through as clearly and accurately as possible. Hopefully, within the process of [recording], you do not lose the spontaneity of the live performance. I will not say that has not happened on some occasions in recordings – we have all heard recordings that are note-perfect and absolutely boring, but in a recording you're definitely trying to achieve what is on the page as successfully as possible. Very often in order to do that and to keep the endurance of the performers at a level where they can continue to produce successfully throughout the whole session, you have to record smaller segments of music at a time."<sup>104</sup>

Crumb elaborated on the necessity of recordings because they permanently preserve a composer's intentions. He said, "Well, you know nowadays, just about

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<sup>104</sup> Starobin, David. Interview by author, 2 June 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

everything of mine has been recorded so even people in other countries that want to do my work can always consult a recording. A recording is just an extension of a publication, or another way that gives you even more information, particularly if the composer was in on the recording session. You can [assume] that the general style is shown in that recorded performance. But you know that's the ordinary thing that happens in music of any style; it's been remembered and passed along. The German call it performance practice, and it means that it's a tradition that's passed along. Like the Beethoven piano sonatas, Beethoven taught some of the same pieces to students of his, and those were handed on in turn and the word got around about how those pieces go. This is beyond what you can put on the page. We're talking about nuances, rhythmic nuances, dynamic nuances – it's impossible to get all that stuff on the page. So that's where the tradition of performance practice comes in. I think all composers, today's composers, depend on that too. They know that earlier pieces of theirs will form the sense of what their present music is about.”<sup>105</sup>

### **Preparing to Record**

Much like Orchestra 2001 whose score preparation was routine by the time they got Crumb's fourth songbook, Starobin has his own routine for setting up a recording. Becky Starobin, David's wife and business partner, attended every recording session for *The Winds of Destiny* but was unable to be interviewed for this document. Her contribution to the company both on site and off makes what can be a

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<sup>105</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 11 August 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

very stressful job much easier. After observing their teamwork last fall, Becky is first on his list of necessities.

Timing and set-up are the two primary aspects of recording. Starobin reviews the scores in addition to listening to the music, if possible, before the session. He explained, “I try to listen to the performances [but] I’m not always able to get to them. Of the *American Songbook* cycles, I heard the premiere of [*A Journey Beyond Time*] and I think I heard *Unto the Hills*. I did not hear the premiere of *The Winds of Destiny* although I was able to hear a recording of the performance of it early on. With *The River of Life*, which in my mind is the finest of all these cycles, I was able to conduct the piece in another performance. So, as far as score study goes, I definitely take a look at all of these scores in terms of what the problematic things are going to be [during the] recording session. These pieces have a huge dynamic range, and very often we have to do things like separate the singer from the instruments in order to manage the balances successfully. Often in these performances, the singer is amplified which you don’t want to do in a recording because that just introduces distortion. We have had to invent all sorts of strategies to record these pieces.”

He went further to discuss his approach to *Winds*: “The instruments themselves have to be miked effectively and that’s a very big challenge in pieces where you have one hundred percussion instruments spread out across the stage. That issue is something that requires more than just our ears during a session. As far as the placement of the singer goes, again, we are using our ears and experimenting with how to create an aural picture coming through a couple of speakers that duplicates George’s intention in the score. You have to sometimes go to great lengths, let’s say, in terms of separating the singer from the instruments, or arrange for greater amounts



of [physical] distance between the microphone and the singer [to replicate] what George has in the score. This is typical of a lot of new music, but George's pieces tend to be extreme so you have, perhaps, more extreme solutions to that kind of problem that you have to implement... You have to use your ears and that's what we do. I'm working with a really terrific engineer, Adam Abeshouse (Ex. 7-1), and



**Example 7-1:** Adam Abeshouse in the “recording booth” which was a converted choir room. Courtesy of the author.

we’ve worked together for many years. I think we essentially know how to work together to get a particular aural concept. Initially, we set things up as close as we can to what we imagine we want, press the record button, listen to what we’re getting, and then make adjustments according to what our ears tell us.”

Starobin did not need to mark his score ahead of time like the others did for their rehearsals; however, he always reviews Crumb’s music for the purpose of timing and organizing the order in which the whole piece will be recorded. He said, “All of my notation is made as I go along [during the recording session]. I mean I’ve

looked at the score in terms of process because a lot of times in George's pieces, there are specific ways of dealing with certain aspects of his music. For instance, if he has long repeating ostinatos, they can be pre-recorded and mixed separately. An example would be the circle music in *Star-Child* that is played continually throughout the thirty-five minute duration of the piece. We wouldn't want to record the strings along with everything else over the course of four days or the string players would go absolutely nuts playing those long slow chords. So, you look at each score and you find ways of recording that are going to be practical within the restraints of the particular recording session - I do that with all of George's pieces beforehand. I basically know how many minutes of music we have to record each day, when we're behind schedule and when we're on schedule. I gauge the session in terms of where we are and how people are doing, and try to keep things on schedule as closely as I can."<sup>106</sup>

### **Lang Hall, Swarthmore College**

Venues make a difference in the quality of a recording as much as the equipment and the musicians do. Starobin mentioned the layout of Lang Hall and how it was used to replicate the effects George liked to hear during live performances. He said, "At the end of the first movement where there's an attempt to gain greater distance [aurally] between Barbara and the orchestra, she would be physically moved to the back of the hall as the piece required more distance. The hall is fairly moderate sized and I would say it seats maybe six hundred." As David

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<sup>106</sup> Starobin, David. Interview by author, 2 June 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

would say, “It’s rigged up very extremely” meaning Barbara was standing against the back wall, at or behind the last row of seats which put her about a story above the orchestra. He continued, “Also, we used an isolation room in some of the movements that had extremely loud percussion because the sound from their instruments created leakage into the soprano microphone. You don’t want the percussionists to hold back just so the singer can be heard. You want them to be able to play full out as they would in a real performance. In a normal performance, George uses amplification to take care of the imbalance that occurs with the louder pieces, but in a recording you don’t want to do that because amplification tends to introduce distortion. So, we needed to separate her, and there was a little isolation room in the hallway that we that we used,” David said as he chuckled about their ingenious set-up. Starobin and his engineer intuitively created this “room” for Ann Crumb back when they were recording her two songbooks and put it together again for Barbara when she needed it. The hallway that became the “isolation booth” was in between the entrance of the choir room (recording booth) and the entrance of Lang Hall where the orchestra was located. (Ex. 7-2)

The cold climate was an issue, and one that will be addressed several times throughout this chapter. Luckily for the musicians, the performance hall warmed up by the second day. We were not so lucky in the booth, as it never rose above fifty-six degrees Fahrenheit. David said, “You’re not always in ideal conditions, but the temperature seemed very extreme... we have photographs,



**Example 7-2:** Barbara in her “isolation room” between Lang Hall and the choir room. Courtesy of the author.

and I’m sure you do too of all of us bundled up trying to get through it all. [The cold air] did not make things easier, that’s for sure, but it all comes down to the end product. You forget the conditions so it was something we dealt with, but it was pretty extreme. I think everyone was actually very focused on getting the job done, and while the temperature was definitely an inconvenience, it probably had no bearing on the actual overall results...

Sometimes in many ways, cold is easier

to deal with than extreme heat.”<sup>107</sup>

### Editing a Recording

Artists in the popular music industry might consider legitimate singing a handicap in the sense that very little, if any, adjusting to the quality of a singer’s voice is done during the editing process of a recording. The same goes for instrumental performances. This means a musician needs to be physically, technically and artistically at his or her best. Starobin explained, “When you’re producing a recording, you’re dealing with what happens at the time, and so you’re dealing with

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<sup>107</sup> Starobin, David. Interview by author, 2 June 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

human frailty and human superiority. You try to get the most that you can out of any performer, but there will always be things that perhaps, you want to be done better or the performer wants to be done better, and you never can quite get there. There are all sorts of electronic tools that one uses to help along a performance both in terms of editing and after editing, but essentially, you're basically going to get the performance that a person can give at any given time. And that's what makes the range of performances we listen to so big. Some people are fantastic artists and know music really well, and can go into a recording session and present something that's both technically clean and artistically satisfactory. People who are not always prepared to do that in one way or another fall somewhere below that level. So, it's the producer's job to try to elicit from the performer the most artistically satisfactory performance that they can get, both from an interpretive and technical standpoint. Anywhere where you fall short of that, you have to live with that essentially because we're all human.”<sup>108</sup>

### **The Composer's Input**

George Crumb has a great perspective about the recording process. He said, “I think any good performer is constantly changing their performances. That was true of Jan [DeGaetani] always... she told me once she never listened to her recordings because her idea of the piece was changing after she had recorded it.... You know it is always in motion. I thought Barbara did a marvelous performance [during the

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<sup>108</sup> Starobin, David. Interview by author, 2 June 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

recording session], you know, very expressive and with all the things I wanted.”

When I asked him about this particular recording session, the first thing he said was

“Well, we were freezing remember?” He continued, “We never got heat in our room, so it was one of those weird sessions that way. But, once Barbara really got into it, things started going more easily for her.”<sup>109</sup>

### **Barbara Ann Martin and Orchestra 2001**

While the instrumentalists appreciated the assistance of multiple “takes” and segmented recording sessions, Barbara Ann Martin, who delivered the melody and text of the music, was responsible for conveying the same type of energy and spontaneity as if she were performing for a live audience. In addition, all of the musicians had to maintain the same level of artistic integrity throughout approximately sixteen hours of recording sessions, as opposed to the actual forty minutes it takes to perform the songbook in concert. Because a recording *is* in a sense a performance, I asked the musicians to compare their experiences of live concerts versus a recording session. One aspect to consider in this particular situation is that the group was unable to hear playbacks every time they did a take for the engineer. In recording studios, each person has a headset or at least a speaker in the studio that allows them to hear the playback, which helps them improve the next take. However, venues not set up for professional recordings can inhibit this part of the process, so the group had to come into the booth on occasion to hear what they had done.

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<sup>109</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

Starting with Ms. Martin, she commented, “Both the recording media and the performance media have different challenges. Let’s take the performance first: You are exposed, you are wearing a pretty dress, you have your hair fixed and your makeup on, and you are *supposed* to make it look easy. You have a distance to cover, people are looking at your expressions, there is the sonority in the hall, and there are so many things that make up the atmosphere of a live performance. However, you don’t have the luxury of ‘take two.’ In performance, you don’t have the luxury of [technical] perfection either because you have to sell the product. At least it is my experience with George that communication comes first, and then ideally you get all of the imagery, the relationships of the players, the rhythms, and everything [that goes with that]. For me, the communication element is necessary to establish a rapport with the audience...their energy also helps you to do that, and you can feel their response. After ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home,’ you can always feel that they have been stunned, they have been touched, they are not the same as when they walked into the hall. That is something that goes beyond the five senses and any performer gets a sense of that element.”

She continued, “In a recording studio, there are [special] moments, but you have to create your own atmosphere. You have to use your mind a great deal more, but in some respect it is easier because you can wear your comfortable shoes, wear your eyeglasses, and you can wiggle your hips if you need to relax. I remember once with some particular note, I extended my arms up above my head because I needed a better connection to my sternum, and you can’t do that in a performance. Of course, recording multiple ‘takes’ is tremendous. It is wonderful, but the difficulty is that most of the time you can’t hear the playback, so you don’t know whether you’re

getting closer [to what the producer wants] or not. You really have to have people in the booth that have good ears. So, regarding live performance versus recording, they are both very gratifying but very different.”<sup>110</sup>

Martin was quick to comment on the temperature in the hall. She said, “I was in the back of the [Lang] hall and I could practically see my breath when I was exhaling! My voice never got together... There was that trip to Marshall’s where I got these delicious boots that I wore successfully for the rest of the sessions, and it changed the quality of my singing.”

Pianist, Tony Barone was comfortable with the process since he had had numerous experiences with recording. He did not have to make any particular adjustments to his performance last fall other than what David Starobin would occasionally suggest. He said, “You know there are some things that sound one way in the hall, and sounded a different way over microphones. Again, that is not something that I can hear well as I am sitting at the piano. When I go and listen to a little playback, I can often immediately hear something that I need to do in a slightly different way to make it sound right in the recording. But, those are things that I think anybody with a good pair of ears can figure out for him or herself. [Regarding expression], I don’t feel a whole lot of difference emotionally or artistically between a performance and a recording. I always feel that I am communicating with the people

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<sup>110</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.



in that control room just as I would with an audience sitting in the theater with me.”<sup>111</sup>

As principal percussionist and player of the esteemed cannon drum, Bill Kerrigan had to deal with equipment logistics before he played for the recording the first day. He said, “We have to get quite a head start on these [events] to pull them together. Actually, when we got the cannon drum back from Salzburg, it was pretty heavily damaged - the rim got really bent. George was very kind and at the first rehearsal for the recording session, we had to fix the drum. Thankfully there was another rim at Swarthmore that we were able to use, so we had to take the head off, straighten it out and restring the head all the way around...” He continued about the recording session: “We’re so used to having the singer be a part of the ensemble that when they recorded the vocals separate from us or in a different space, there was a noticeable difference [to me]. The one good thing about recording instead of playing live is that we can rearrange our setup. [We can] make it comfortable for that particular movement, rather than think of the overall performance and what’s going to take the least amount of time going from movement to movement”<sup>112</sup>

“To be very honest with you, recording is so much easier,” said Sue Jones. She continued, “You have a chance to do things in sections, so you have more time to really add finesse to the part and polish it. You don’t have to worry about page turns because they don’t want to hear that, so you play up to a point then turn the page and

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<sup>111</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>112</sup> Kerrigan, William, Principal Percussionist of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

then they would splice it. You can spend more time really playing the part the way you want instead of worrying about the little tiny problems of turning pages.”

Sue wisely understood the difference in her situation and Barbara Ann Martin’s. She said, “I think you cannot duplicate a vocal situation in recording like a live performance because we did so many different takes. With us there is a certain amount of physical work involved, but it is nothing like the voice. Our hands or arms are not going to tire as easily as the voice does, so that is a real problem. Plus, they are singing to the audience and they can see and feel that, and in recording you don’t have that.”<sup>113</sup>

As mentioned earlier in Chapter Three, watching the percussionists glide between instruments was beautiful to witness. However, the sounds of their footsteps or page turns can be troublesome if they are audible on the recording. Angie Nelson said, “With George’s music, not only is there this gigantic landscape of sound, but there is some element of moving back and forth on the instruments. The visual aspect is so important [during live performances], but we all try to avoid any sort of fast or jerky movements, especially in ‘Shenandoah.’ That movement, it is just so surreal. You just have to glide from instrument to instrument... Recording in this respect is easier because nobody is watching. You have to be quiet because they will hear your footsteps, but you don’t necessarily have to be as graceful. For the layout of each movement, both Dave and I paired down put everything right in front of us because our setups were so big. It made playing a movement like this easier because obviously, if we all took ten minutes in between movements during a concert, the

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<sup>113</sup> Jones, Sue. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

piece would take four hours to perform. [In concert], we all had to have one set up and do our best to stay within it. Jim also gives you a couple of minutes to collect your thoughts about what you have to play next, because each movement is so different. Quite often, you are using a completely different set of instruments and mallets.”<sup>114</sup>

### **Author’s Recollection**

First, I was chilled to the bone, literally, for four days. George and I arrived at Lang Hall together on Wednesday to find that the heat had been turned off for the holiday, and everyone was freezing. The outside temperature never reached forty-five degrees in Philadelphia those first few days, but the hall itself warmed up for the musicians. Sue Jones and Dave Nelson loaned me their coats to drape around my body and legs in addition to my own coats, gloves, scarf and cowboy boots. The first day of the session, we huddled together at the engineer’s table until the recording booth microphone shorted out and the engineer, Adam Abeshouse, could not communicate with the musicians in the hall during the session. We moved from the table and he yelled through the door to Jim Freeman when necessary. It became comical after a while, but the next day the problem was solved. Our basic set-up for the next three days was a line of desks; practically touching so that our body heat would work together to keep us warm. (Ex. 7-3)

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<sup>114</sup> Nelson, Angie. Interview by author, 19 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.



**Example 7-3:** David Starobin, George, Kate Carr, Andy Rider and Becky Starobin standing behind George. Courtesy of the author.

As George and David mentioned earlier in the document, recording music like this captures all of the intricacies of the vocal part that might otherwise be missed in a performance. Barbara experienced some diction issues that weren't audible in the live performances. Because a recording microphone catches every detail of the human voice, Ms. Martin had to be especially attentive regarding issues such as vibrato rate, pitch, and vowel production. Starobin and Crumb were pleased with the final product and George was especially pleased with Barbara's voice timbre in each movement. In a situation like this one, it became much more obvious how to color one's voice to really blend with the percussion.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### The Musicians Who Made It Happen



**Pictured from left to right:** David Starobin, Angie Nelson, Dave Nelson, Barbara Ann Martin, George Crumb, Bill Kerrigan, Sue Jones, Marcantonio Barone, Adam Abeshouse, Jim Freeman. Courtesy of the author.

At the end of each interview I gave, the musicians had the opportunity to share information about their family history and personal achievements. Some of their biographies are more detailed than others, but all of their stories intertwined with Crumb's career in some way or another. The following individuals do not represent an exhaustive list of people who contributed to *The Winds of Destiny*, only they were able to participate in this project when approached last year. Since personal accounts are always told better by the person than summed up by the author, their stories are printed in full, with the exception of deleting repetitious phrases, and piecing incomplete sentences together where necessary.

## BARBARA ANN MARTIN

Ms. Martin, the singer to whom *Winds* is dedicated began her story with, “I grew up in Astoria, New York which is a part of Queens. I started my college education at Syracuse, and found that it wasn’t quite what I wanted for college. So, I came back [to New York City] and went into what was then [called] the Extension Division at Juilliard since it was midterm [at the time]. I then started Juilliard in the fall of that next year. I went there for both my Bachelor’s and my Master’s Degrees.”

She continued, “I started playing the piano when I was four and a half years old because I had a family who saw the importance of it. I was in every church choir and school chorus from day one. They always put me in the alto section because I could read the harmony and stay on the pitch. I did not have any formal vocal training until a friend of the family, Ellen Alberini, came over (she was a professional singer and pianist), and she said ‘Let’s see what you’ve got in there.’ I opened my mouth at three octaves, and she said, ‘This lady should be having lessons.’ I think I started voice lessons when I was about ten and a half or eleven years old. It is interesting because I didn’t realize that I was different from anybody else instantly, since music was always a part of me.”

“My father started out as a singer, but he contracted tuberculosis and had to stop singing. They removed one of his lungs and he had to become an optician, but the love and appreciation of music was always there, and [my parents] passed that on to me. My mother was a nurse but she also had a very strong singing tradition coming from a Norwegian family, and my dad was Armenian. So, between the two of them, they were hoping that the music lessons they were providing for me were going to be

enough to, as my father used to say, ‘Just play some Christmas Carols or whatever,’ but it went a little further than that.”

“It was this woman, Ellen Alberini, who heard *Ancient Voices of Children* first, and she taped it for me off the radio. I had never heard anything like it, because at home my parents were very traditional in the music that they listened to; they listened to Strauss, Italian opera, easy listening stuff, and often, the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts on Saturday afternoons. When I was with Ellen listening to *Ancient Voices*, I was at Juilliard and at that point even working on piano was unusual. You were really supposed to be an opera singer or you learned Schubert Lieder and the classics.”

Fate would have it that a couple of Barbara’s teachers were composing avant-garde music and saw potential in her to perform it successfully. She said, “I had a composer, Jacob Drukman, who was teaching me ear training and theory, and I was apparently doing very well in his classes. His teaching assistant, Thomas Pasatieri, also a wonderful composer, came up to me one day and asked if I would do an improvisation for him, so I went up to the Columbia Laboratories. Three hours later, he came around, absolutely exhilarated with all the ideas that became *Ominous II*, which is a wonderful piece for voice, two percussionists and electronic tape. To this day, I am still on that electronic tape that goes with the performance.”

Through Drukman, Ms. Martin was able to cover for Jan DeGaetani when her schedule became full. She said, “Jacob played some of the improvisation stuff for Jan DeGaetani. Around the same time, she hit it big with *Ancient Voices of Children* and had commitments with Arthur Weisburg, conductor of the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble. She could not fill those for some reason, and somehow through Jacob, my

name came up. She recommended that I get in touch with Arthur Weisburg, which I did, and that is what started everything rolling.”

“Another connection was to Seymour Lipkin who was from Long Island. He was a pianist, but he was also head of some 20<sup>th</sup> Century Group out there. I don’t know whether it was connected with Stonybrooke or another university, but he actually asked me to sing *Ancient Voices* with them, so I did since I had already taught myself the piece. Later, I was with Arthur Weisburg doing ‘show and tell’ at the Library of Congress. We had an educational program to do in conjunction with our concert, and boy, I couldn’t do it today, but I had the chutzpah then to get up and say, ‘Okay let me show you what the human voice can do ...’ I wasn’t doing it for Arthur; I was doing it for the audience’s sake. This was the first time I sang the whole first page of *Ancient Voices* and Arthur’s mouth dropped wide open because nobody else had done it but [Jan DeGaetani]. At that point, I think there were only two of us in the world who were singing *Ancient Voices*.” So, Jan got really busy, and then Arthur started to take me on tour doing that piece.”

Barbara continued, “I had never met George, but because Arthur had worked with George so intimately on *Ancient Voices*, he knew what George wanted and transmitted that to me. A couple of years later, I was at the Bowdoin Summer Festival in Brunswick, Maine and I sang it without any contact with [George]. He was in the audience, and Louis Capland, Director of the festival, was sitting next to George when he said, ‘Jan has met her match,’ and that was the beginning of my association with George. Liz, Peter, Ann and David [were] there. I met them all that summer and I couldn’t believe they were as down to earth as they could possibly be and that was our association. I think I probably met them more than 30 years ago. I



have stayed in contact ever since. In fact, it is more than just a professional relationship because I almost feel that I grew up with them. It was like I was an adopted daughter in a way. You know, Ann and I were about the same age and Peter and I have the same birthday, and as you know, they are just so wonderful.”<sup>115</sup>

### **JIM FREEMAN**

Jim Freeman, Artistic Director of Philadelphia’s acclaimed Orchestra 2001 is a modest man and not one to boast about his personal achievements. He began our interview by saying, “I went to school at Harvard College, then after graduating from there as an undergraduate, I got a Harvard grant to study piano in Vienna for a year. I came back to Harvard and completed a Master’s and Ph.D. in musicology actually. I then got a job at Swarthmore College, and I have been around here ever since. I had no formal conducting training; I have learned that on the job. I suppose I picked up my training as conductor of the Swarthmore College Orchestra for about ten years early on, and then Orchestra 2001 got started because I saw that there was a great cultural gap in Philadelphia...that is the brief story.

When I asked Jim to elaborate on his experience at Swarthmore, he responded, “I had just come to Swarthmore College as a new musicologist, and the college orchestra students resigned under protest with the present conductor. I was asked if I would be willing to take his place, and I was. So, I said, ‘Yeah, sure. I have no conducting experience whatsoever, but I will do it.’ and that is what happened. By the way, in my training, I spent three summers at Tanglewood; not as a

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<sup>115</sup> Martin, Barbara Ann. Interview by author, 22 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

conductor, but as a bass player actually.” Due to his humility, he left out the fact that he has won numerous awards, and conducted over seventy world premieres through his work with Orchestra 2001.

The conductor has been a visionary for Crumb’s music for over thirty years, propelling his music into the public both here and abroad. When I asked him about his first memories of the composer, he said, “I met George when I first came to Philadelphia. I was asked to play in an ensemble called the Philadelphia Composers’ Forum, and we were doing Books I and II of George’s *Madrigals* -- about 1967. I did several pieces as a bass player with either the Philadelphia Composers’ Forum or the *Penn Contemporary Players*. In 1974, George was commissioned by the Fromm Foundation to write a piece for the inauguration of the Lang Music Building at Swarthmore College. That piece turned out to be *Music for a Summer Evening*, of which I was one of the pianists, and Gilbert Kalish was the other. So, we rehearsed that piece a lot with George and took it around to various places and recorded it. I suppose that was the next important meeting with him. Shortly after that, we did a concert at the Whitney Museum in New York ... I think it was around his fortieth birthday, in which the program included *Madrigals*, *Lux Aeterna*, and *Music for a Summer Evening*. That was sort of a major cue for me because I played bass in *Madrigals*, sitar in *Lux Aeterna*, and I played piano in *Music for a Summer Evening*.”

He continued, “I think [Orchestra 2001] has done way more music by George Crumb than any other composer in the sixteen or so years of our existence. So, I have worked a great deal with George since the first concert in 1988. In 1993 and 1994, we gave concerts in Moscow, and in 1997 we gave concerts in St. Petersburg and Moscow doing both *Music for a Summer Evening* and *Ancient Voices*; George came

with us on [both trips]. Then we did *Ancient Voices* in a couple of different places in Denmark. We have just done an awful lot of George's music because I think he is the greatest composer in the world. So, when he decided to start working on the first *American Songbook: Unto the Hills*, which was written for Ann [Crumb], he thought Orchestra 2001 should be involved in this too. So, he dedicated it and all of the other three as well to the two singers and to Orchestra 2001.”<sup>116</sup>

During my first interview with George, I asked him how he met Jim Freeman. In person, the two men exhibit a great deal of respect for one another's talents. George said, “I have worked with Jim since about the late 60's, so it goes back at least forty years. Jim is quite a contrabass player in addition to being an accomplished pianist, and he played my *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death* on the contrabass and the bass parts on *Madrigals*. He did the sitar part in *Lux Aeterna* and did the premiere of *Music for a Summer Evening* with Gill Kalish and New York percussionists. So I have worked with him, and he has done my music at Swarthmore over the years pretty consistently. He knows [my] style inside out. He knows my special approach to the piano. He has performed that himself. [We met] in connection with the rehearsals for *Madrigals*, and he did the first recording for the *Madrigals* too.”<sup>117</sup>

### **David Starobin and Bridge Records**

The producer of Bridge Records remains an active performer when he is not

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<sup>116</sup> <sup>116</sup> Freeman, Dr. James, Conductor of Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 16 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>117</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

producing recordings of contemporary music. His story started with, “I was born in 1951 in New York City. I started playing guitar at the age of seven, trumpet at the age of eight, and percussion at the age of nine or ten. I studied with a number of guitar teachers in NYC and played a lot of chamber music with my father who was a recorder player. I went to school at Peabody Conservatory of Music, and all during that time from the age twelve or thirteen, I had an overriding interest in contemporary music.” Starobin explained his pre-teen musical interests; he said, “A friend of mine had a brother who was a composer, and he knew a lot of [contemporary] music. He played Edgard Varese’s music for me and that particularly was a major change in my life. I remember when I was a kid, I played in a lot of rock bands and I really loved the energy and the sound, and this [interest] was an analogue to that. It was a way too, of seeing that classical music could also have a lot of contemporary energy and rhythmic drive, so I liked Varese, Stravinsky, Messiaen – composers who were writing really interesting music at that point.”

Bridge Records was another development of Starobin’s myriad teenage hobbies. He said, “I started making recordings, and had a real interest in them from the time I was very young. I actually made my first records when I was about twelve or thirteen in 1963 or ’64; little rock and roll things that I would record for friends, and then they would issue them privately as 45’s. I always had an interest in the recording process and I collected mostly classical records and pop records too. While I was still in college, I started recording professionally for a number of labels, and that carried on for about seven or eight years after I got out of college. I worked for CBS and Fox, and a lot of labels here in NY - smaller labels as well. I got to the point where there were some projects that I wanted to do, that other labels were not so

interested in; mostly contemporary, classical guitar things that I was playing. Finally, after some frustration in trying to move some of those projects to completion, my wife and I explored the possibility of beginning a record label and we just did it. We started Bridge in 1981.” They are not only the sole recording company for George’s music today, but Becky Starobin is George’s personal manager as well.

Due to his hobby of collecting LP’s, Starobin first heard George’s music around 1967 or 1968. “Before I went to school, I was collecting LP’s and I picked up one of George’s. After that, George came down to Peabody Conservatory. I think it was 1971 or 1972, and the new music ensemble did a concert there of his music. I met George, played on that concert, and he invited a good friend of mine, a composer, William Bland and me up to visit him in Media. We went and spent a number of days just hanging out with George, and we heard an early performance of *Black Angels* while we were there... I remember we had a little party, and Richard Wernick was there with a couple of other composer friends of George’s. One of the games played at the party went something like this: someone would say, ‘Here’s a given tune and here’s another tune. Make a transformation going from one tune to another.’ George was fantastic at this. He would sit at the piano and would make transitions from one piece of music to another; it was an exercise, a game. It was a way of sort of testing your skill at making transitions.” When I asked David if he and his friends had to participate in the game, he laughed out loud and said, “No! The better musicians were doing it and the young students just sat there and had their mouths open like me... George has always had this great talent to take material and use it almost as clay. He molds it and he finds ways to bend it into different shapes. In these songbooks where he has taken pre-existing compositional material and given

it life with his own music, he has really found something that he does really well, very easily, and very successfully.”<sup>118</sup>

Like Freeman, Starobin is greatly admired by George Crumb. He said of his producer, “I have known David Starobin for so many years. It was in the late 60’s when he came to my house. He was a student at Peabody and he came up with a friend. He drove up and he didn’t even announce himself. He just came to the door and we invited him in and got to know him. I was having a rehearsal for *Black Angels* at Swarthmore, and he came over there.... I knew that he was a guitarist, but I hadn’t heard him play at that time.”

“Bridge Records goes back quite a few years. He created it -- that is his operation. I had worked with him -- let me put it this way, he played every plucked instrument part I ever wrote. He played electric guitar in *Songs, Drone and Refrains of Death*, he did the mandolin all those early performances of *Ancient Voices*, he played the sitar many times for *Lux Aeterna*, he played [acoustic] guitar [too] and I wrote two works for him. He has played all of [my] things over the years. He has embarked on the scheme now of re-recording all of my music, that is, except the juvenile stuff that I wouldn’t want anybody to record.”<sup>119</sup> The “juvenile stuff” is a term George used for his compositions that were written during his educational career that he believes are not beneficial to his professional career.

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<sup>118</sup> Starobin, David. Producer, Bridge Records. Interview by author, 2 June 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

<sup>119</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

## **Marcantonio Barone**

Marcantonio “Tony” Barone was born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania in 1962. His personal story lends a great deal of understanding to his fervor for contemporary music. He explained, “My father was, and mother is a musician. He was the founder and director of a music school here in Pennsylvania, the Bryn Mawr Conservatory of Music. Actually, this is where I grew up; we had living quarters in the school. By the time I was born, this was the second marriage for my father. His first wife had died after a very long illness. My mother was twenty-two years younger than he. Both of them had made a firm commitment that they were going to be full-time parents and were going to be involved full-time with the Bryn Mawr Conservatory. Therefore, both of them had decided to give up their performing careers. The odd thing is that I never saw either of my parents on stage or heard either of them perform.”

“My mother still directs that school, and I am [currently] on the piano faculty, so there has been a lifelong connection with [the conservatory] for me. I was surrounded by music as a child, very literally so, and took an interest in trying to pick out tunes on the piano by about age three. At that point, my parents thought it would be a wise thing to give me some kind of formal instruction. So, although my mother is a singer not a pianist, she was able to start me with my first piano lessons at about age three and a half. I continued with her for another year or so, and then began studying with other teachers at the conservatory; first Harriet Elsom Rothstein, and later Taylor Redden, and then at age ten, I won my first audition to appear with the Philadelphia Orchestra at a children’s concert. The following year I auditioned for the Curtis Institute and was accepted. I started at Curtis as a student of Eleanor Sokoloff in 1974, just a few weeks shy of my twelfth birthday and continued with her for eight

years, which were really very informative years for me. Later on, I studied with Leon Fleisher at the Peabody Conservatory. Susan Starr was an important teacher as well, because I worked with her every summer during my Curtis years. I have to mention Leonard Shure as I feel that he was a profound influence on my way of thinking about music.”

Again with Tony, many questions arose due to the abundance of information he shared, and I asked him when he was first exposed to contemporary music. He said, “...My father and mother were both involved with what was their generation’s contemporary music. My father was the music director of something called the American Little Symphony Orchestra of Philadelphia, and then later on, the New York Little Symphony. Both of these were chamber Orchestras primarily devoted to giving opportunities to young American performers and composers, so a lot of people who really went on to important things made their debut performances with one or the other of those orchestras. Robert Merrill made his debut with the New York Orchestra and Lucas Foss made his New York piano and conducting debut with my father’s orchestra. [Both organizations] did a lot of important new works. In fact, I just recently sent a recording to George Crumb that I compiled from performances of both my parents. My mother gave in the 1950’s, what I believe was the first ‘all Ives’ recital to be given in Philadelphia or anywhere in the country. A few of those songs were recorded. My father’s orchestra gave the World Premiere of Ives’ *Third Symphony* under Lou Harrison’s direction. [My father and Harrison] shared that program, and my father was constantly active with the performance of new pieces.”

Barone first heard George’s music at a very early age. He said, “This is actually a rather amusing story, but it is absolutely true. I remember being in bed late



at night, I would have been nine years old at the time, and I had a little portable radio that I used to listen to when I was not supposed to. I fell asleep with the radio on and woke up and heard the most unusual, and to me, terrifying sounds coming out of the radio. I had no idea what it was. I hadn't ever heard anything like it before. It didn't even occur to me at first that it was a piece of music. I thought that I had been on the way to some other dimension of experience, and it was really rather frightening to me. I remember being absolutely paralyzed with awe and a certain fear, and not even being able to reach up and turn off the radio. There was a part of me that wanted to do that, but another part was so fascinated by what I was hearing that I didn't want to [turn it off]. It turned out that it was a performance from the Library of Congress of *Vox Balœnæ*. And, I think that may have been the world première that was being broadcast. Anyhow, I then heard the announcement that this was a piece by a composer named George Crumb, and my first reaction, I have to confess, was that there should be some sort of a law against writing music that would frighten children in this way! I have never told George this story. We will have to let him in on the joke at some point."

"Anyhow, time went on, and I kept hearing George's name. I then saw a television program in which George was interviewed, and it showed him in one of his characteristically down-to-earth moments. He was very quietly walking beside some body of water, tossing stones into the water, and then [he] looked straight at the camera and, with characteristic simplicity, just said, 'I like to throw stones,' and I thought, 'This guy is really cool!' So, again, that dates back to probably my early teens at the very latest. So, that was sort of a second exposure to George. The other thing I found out years later is that, completely unawares, I [had] heard both George

and David Crumb play at a concert at which some of my parents' students were also playing. David Crumb played cello and George accompanied him. I still have that program, and, just a couple of years ago, I got them both to sign it for me, very belatedly. The funny thing is, I don't really have a vivid memory of having ever heard that performance or having been aware of who these two guys were." It was in, I guess, the early '80s that I really began to take a more direct interest in what George's music was all about, because my former piano teacher Harriet Elsom Rothstein, who at that point was in a Master's program at Temple University, was playing some of *Makrokosmos*, and she invited me over to her house to hear her play these amazing pieces."<sup>120</sup>

### **William Kerrigan**

William "Bill" Kerrigan is unassuming, humble and certainly one of the most patient individuals I have ever met. His story is this: "I was born in Cleveland, Ohio. I'm a twin, and being influenced by the Beatles, my twin brother and I decided to start a band as youngsters. He decided to play guitar and I decided to be the drummer in the band. Our parents were interested in jazz, so I also started to play jazz. My high school band director made sure that the percussionists took lessons, so I started studying some classical music. From there I studied with someone in the Cleveland Orchestra, and their old teacher was teaching here at Temple University in Philadelphia. He was principal percussionist in the Philadelphia Orchestra which is the reason I got to Philadelphia." Bill now teaches at Temple, as well as Eastern

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<sup>120</sup> Barone, Marcantonio, Pianist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 9 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

University and Community College of Philadelphia. He actually taught David Nelson when Dave first arrived in the mid 1990's. When I asked Bill how his position evolved with Orchestra 2001, he explained, "Glenn Steel was the main percussionist with them and then he left the group. I guess my involvement was partially based on my previous work with them. Jim Freeman liked what he heard, and Glenn put in a recommendation for me when he left the group. It was kind of a combination of both of those things."

Interestingly, Bill learned of Crumb's music as a student at Temple. He said, "My teacher at Temple at the time, Alan Abel, told me that he heard that George was writing a new piece for two pianos and two percussionists. There was another senior looking to program her senior recital and we thought it would be good if we could play it on each of our recitals. So, sort of like the Bartok sonata for two pianos and two percussionists, I think George had that somewhat in his mind when he initially wrote the piece. I think we were the third group of musicians to actually play *Music for a Summer Evening*... The first time I met George was at my senior recital – he did come."<sup>121</sup> It is somewhat ironic that Jim Freeman, unbeknownst to young Kerrigan at the time, was about thirty minutes away at Swarthmore College, had recently premiered that same piece for the opening of Lang Hall.

### **Sue Jones**

Jones' personal story is one of persistent determination. She said, "I grew up on Long Island in New York and I went to a place called Hicksville High School,

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<sup>121</sup> Kerrigan, William. Principal Percussionist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 3 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

where it was a big marching band kind of town. I can remember as a little child going to a lot of parades. I used to love to hear the percussion section, especially hearing the bass drum come through because you'd feel the pulse of it in the pit of your stomach. I remember marching around my basement with a toy glockenspiel and that's how I started. When I was seven, I started taking lessons in school, and one thing lead to another learning all the percussion instruments... We're talking many years ago, back in the 50's when it was not common for a woman to be a musician, but definitely never a percussionist."

I asked Sue if she suffered any discrimination and she answered, "Absolutely, from day one. In fact, I studied privately with my first teacher in junior high; he pulled my mother aside and said, 'She doesn't have what it takes, she'll never be a musician, especially being a girl – so, just want to let you know that.' But, my mother never told me that, so I just kept going. Actually when I was in high school, I studied at Juilliard in the prep division there. I was playing in orchestras with my band directors, and even then, they said, 'You should go to a teaching college because you can't play professionally. You're a woman, and women teach.'

So, I followed suit and went to Ithaca College in upstate New York and I got my teaching degree up there. Luckily, there was a percussion teacher from Philly who would commute up there. Until he opened up the world of musical percussion playing, I didn't even know about that because with Juilliard and NY school it was all technique and notes. They left a lot of the musicality out. I would go to the music festivals at Temple University in the summer, and started studying with Charlie Owen from the Philly Orchestra. So, when I graduated with my teaching degree, I decided to come down to Temple. I had a full scholarship/assistantship to study there for my

Master's, and I studied with Alan Abel - that's when I finished. When I came to Philly, I started playing small jobs here and there professionally, and not thinking of playing professionally as a career. I started teaching vocal music in an elementary school, which I had only taken six weeks of a [vocal] course in college and I was [teaching] full time! I did a lot of percussion playing with the kids, and from that point on, more jobs started opening up. Then I thought, '[Teaching] is really *not* what I want to do,' so I [started] trying to play professionally, and it just took off from there. I auditioned for the Pennsylvania Ballet Orchestra, and that was my second audition ever, and I got that job, so, it was really funny...."

She continued, "As a woman, you had to be not one hundred or two hundred percent better, but four hundred percent better than any man before you would even be looked at. I was one of the first females that Alan Abel ever taught, so I was an oddity even for him. It was a very uphill struggle that entire time, but I just kept at it. The one thing that I have to admit is that I never went after any jobs, but people would come and hear me play, then call me up and hire me. It was not even word of mouth, but when they heard you, they hired you. That is [basically] how I have gotten all of my work."

When asked about her current responsibilities, she said, "Right now, I'm principal percussionist and timpanist with the Philadelphia Ballet Orchestra, and also percussionist with the Opera Company of Philadelphia. I'm with the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia percussion and then I teach on the faculty of Settlement Music School. I teach at three different branches there. Then I just do other work – whatever comes up with church recordings and things like that. I've done a lot of

shows and theater work, but now, that is by the wayside with canned music or computers, so the demand has cut back quite a bit.”

She continued, “It’s funny, I had never really been exposed to contemporary music at all growing up on Long Island. When I went to college, they started introducing more 20<sup>th</sup> Century Music, and it was very challenging and I liked that. I liked the challenge because that’s what I had to do to fight my way ‘upward through the glass ceiling’ so to speak, and contemporary music was a different avenue for me. I liken it to ‘taking your brain off the shelf’ because it’s the most involved type of playing I think there is. It just pushes your limits all the way, which is what I like.”

Around 1972, Sue played her first Crumb piece. “Way back before Bill [Kerrigan] was playing, we were doing *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death*. I remember it was incredibly difficult because we were shouting and screaming and having to play softer and then louder than you could imagine, and it was really intense for me... It was years before I played another piece. The next thing that I can remember was *Ancient Voices of Children* and we went to Russia with that [piece] I remember playing other [pieces] of George’s, and how it requires a whole different mindset to play his music. We made a movie in Moscow and St. Petersburg and that’s the first time I ever met him. This gentleman shows up in a flannel shirt and a sweater with holes in it, and I had no idea who he was. I thought maybe he was going to help with the instruments or something because he was so nice and unassuming. I definitely stayed way in the background because I didn’t even know how to talk to him, and that’s how that relationship started. While on tour in Russia, we were in restaurants and buses together making small talk. It was mind-blowing to realize what he did with his music, how much of himself he puts into his music, and then all

of a sudden realize that it's him right there with you.”<sup>122</sup>

### **Dave Nelson**

Nelson, the former student of Bill Kerrigan and an amateur micro-sprint racecar driver, is one of the newest members of the percussion orchestra. He said, “I grew up in Bucks County Pennsylvania which is about an hour northeast of Philadelphia. Actually, the town that I grew up in is called Richboro, and it is near Washington’s Crossing where George Washington actually crossed the Delaware. My parents grew up there, and they were both school teachers. My mother taught physical education and my father taught music.” His family had always been very musical and having a father as a band and church music director, music was always present in his life. He continued, “I think I got my first drum when I was four years old. My father at that time was teaching junior high and he also did some summer programs. Honestly, a lot of times he just brought me in, and we have pictures of me playing a bass drum that was much larger than I was. He would basically say, ‘Play this piece’ and I would do it, or he would put me behind a drum set and say, ‘Play this for the entire song’ and I would do it. I never actually took lessons until I was ten or eleven years old. I also took piano lessons, which helped with the mallet playing.”

“I took [percussion] lessons from different teachers until finally, one of my teachers said, ‘I have taken you as far as I can go from my knowledge. If you want to go into classical percussion you need to contact these people,’ and I ended up taking lessons from Glenn Steele who is the undergraduate teacher at Temple University.

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<sup>122</sup> Jones, Sue. Percussionist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

After high school, I attended Temple for my undergraduate work in percussion performance from 1992 to 1996. [During] my freshman year of college, there were so many undergraduate students that [the department] needed assistance in percussion teaching. Since Glenn had already taught me for a while, he gave me to this new guy, and that was Bill Kerrigan. So, I finished up my undergraduate there, took a year off, and then returned there for my Masters under Alan Abel who is a retired Philadelphia Orchestra Percussionist. There are three percussion students accepted each year and Angie and I were two of the three.”

Dave had the unique experience of working for Steve Weiss while beginning his career as a professional percussionist. Dave talked about his experience with the business owner, which directly preceded his first experience with George’s music. He said, “As you saw, we rented most of the equipment for all of the recordings and performances from Steve Weiss, so he has quite a business. He is a gruff man on the outside, but he is such a kind, gentleman on the inside. He really understood [my situation], helped me out, and took care of me. This was around the time when I was right out of school, and Bill Kerrigan [recommended me] to Dotty Freeman.<sup>123</sup> I received a call from her saying that Orchestra 2001 was doing a piece called Quest by George Crumb. I had heard of him, but didn’t really know too much of his work. She asked me, ‘Do you play hand hammer Appalachian Dulcimer?’ and I said, ‘No,’ and she said, ‘Are you willing to learn it?’ and I said, ‘Yes.’ That was my first experience with Orchestra 2001. I believe there are two percussion parts on that, and the one part consisted mainly of this Appalachian hand hammer dulcimer. I got this

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<sup>123</sup> Jim Freeman’s wife and wind player for Orchestra 2001.



instrument [to learn] how to play the part, and found out later on that it was George's personal instrument. So, that made me a little more nervous about learning it and I realized that George was going to be at the performance. You know, I was a kid just out of my Masters and this was my debut with Orchestra 2001... I was so happy be introduced to George that way both through his music, and to him personally."

David has played enough for Crumb now that he is not quite as nervous about George's presence. Regarding *The Winds of Destiny* project, he laughingly commented that, "There were plenty of times when we would play an instrument a certain way that makes a strange noise, or we'd accidentally pull something across the stage that made a noise, and we would look up and say, 'Don't let George hear that.' That is something that kind of goes on every time we get together. We always joke about what is going to be the next big thing that George writes for, and how many instruments are going to be in the next set up that we have."<sup>124</sup>

### **Angie Nelson**

The youngest and newest member of Orchestra 2001 didn't have the same professional challenges as her female counterpart, Sue Jones, which is an encouraging sign for today's female instrumentalists. Angie said, "I grew up in the suburbs outside of Chicago. I actually started with piano lessons when I was five and got into percussion through the mallet instruments first. The band director in junior high school needed a mallet player and he knew I played piano, so he introduced me to the marimba and xylophone. I played in the junior high band and orchestra, and then got

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<sup>124</sup> Nelson, David. Percussionist, Orchestra 2001. Interview by author, 19 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital recording. San Angelo, TX.

interested in the rest of the percussion instruments in junior high and high school. I went to Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois and then came to Philadelphia and went to Temple for my Masters degree. Now, I am a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra where I am section percussionist and Associate Principal Timpanist.”

When I asked her how she landed her position with Orchestra 2001, she responded. “Actually, it was because of Dave. I think Dave approached Jim [Freeman] and said, ‘Angie would really love to play if you would let her,’ and Jim was happy to keep it ‘in the family.’” She had also never played any of Crumb’s music before her employment with the orchestra. She said, “My first piece was with Orchestra 2001 and would have been *Unto the Hills*. That was maybe two or three years ago.”<sup>125</sup> Unless she quits within the next couple of years, she has two more songbooks from the American Songbook Collection to learn and premiere.

### **Jim Moskowitz**

Behind every great music organization like Orchestra 2001 is a dedicated and organized concert manager. Jim Moskowitz graduated from Swarthmore College in 1998 with a degree in astrophysics, but music was always his hobby. Sometime in the mid 1990’s, he became a volunteer for a contemporary music group called Relâche, which peaked his interest in volunteering for other contemporary music organizations. He later began volunteering for Orchestra 2001, and by 2002, he became their concert manager in addition to the volunteer coordinator position he has held since he started with them. As concert manager, he secures venue locations,

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<sup>125</sup>Nelson, Angie. Interview by author, 19 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

confirms the availability of instruments, and handles logistics for guest performers as well as the orchestra if they are traveling outside of Philadelphia. Jim is a behind-the-scenes guy who has not had close contact with George Crumb like the musicians have, yet *The Winds of Destiny* rehearsals and performances could not have run as smoothly without him.

## CHAPTER NINE

### The Crumb Family



**Pictured left to right:** (clockwise) Peter, George , David, Ying Tan Crumb, Liz and Ann Crumb. Courtesy of the Crumb family.

### George Crumb

I knew George for about one year before I called him for his official interview. One of the challenges of recording oral history is to get to know the individual one would like to interview so that he or she feels comfortable enough to answer in-depth questions. It was plain to see by the end of my first visit that this would not be an issue. Crumb stated, “Oh well, as you know, we are living in Media, Pennsylvania. We have lived here in this area since 1965 - that was the year I took a position at the University of Pennsylvania. I have been retired now for a few years, but we have been, as a matter of fact, in the same house since 1965. Before that, I had a year in Buffalo on a special foundations project, a Contemporary Music

performer/composer endeavor that involved twenty people maybe. That was when I was on leave from the University of Colorado where I taught for a few years in Boulder. That was my first real job. I had a lead position earlier at Hollins College in the Roanoke, Virginia area. That pretty much spells it out - I should say I am from West Virginia. I was born in Charleston in 1929.”<sup>126</sup> In fact, George was born on October 24, 1929 which historians call “Black Thursday,” since it was the day the Stock Market crashed and started the Great Depression. Fortunately for him, the reality of America’s economical strife did not prevent him from receiving a college education and he ended up graduating with his doctorate in composition from the University of Michigan.

The first thing he talks about with any newcomer at his home is his dogs. Charlie, the cocker spaniel and Yoda, a Bijon mix will always greet everyone at the front door of the Crumb’s split level ranch style house. They become much friendlier with each subsequent visit as I found out, and Yoda is George’s main responsibility while Charlie tends to favor Liz. George occasionally works in the yard, mowing, raking, whatever needs to be done, unless he’s running to Kinko’s located nearby in Swarthmore, or making a trip to downtown Media.

George likes nothing more than a cheese sandwich for lunch and enjoys a five o’clock toddy before dinner. He loves old shows like *Gunsmoke* and adventure movies, including all of the *Crocodile Dundee* movies, which he watches from his big recliner in the family room. On occasion, he needs help from Liz when picking out his outfits but doesn’t always take her advice after asking. This was the case before

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<sup>126</sup> Crumb, George. Interview by author, 10 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

the American premiere in Philadelphia. He was very quick to show me the stone wall that he and Liz's brother from Houston built back in the '70's. It is crumbling in a few places, but frames the yard nicely. Neither he nor Liz is pretentious; their northeastern friends never turned them into vegetarians, they don't drive expense cars – they are a Toyota-driving family.

### **Elizabeth Crumb**

It is only natural that George was attracted to Liz in 1947 since she had big eyes, dark hair, a slim figure and could sing and play the piano. While her specific musical contributions to *The Winds of Destiny* were minimal in this case, her role in George's life seems to be immeasurable.

Our conversation began with her upbringing. She said, "I was just a baby when my family went to Michigan to try to find work. This was during the Depression, and my dad didn't find work so they came back to West Virginia. My mother was a school teacher and my dad worked at DuPont most of his working life. [He] was very musical and he played just about any instrument he could get his hands on, so I played guitar when I was really young and took some lessons. Then, I switched to piano, and later on piano and voice."

She continued, "I actually met George in high school English class. We knew each other because we were in the same class and we talked a lot. Our senior year, we both took a harmony class together and we also were going to the same conservatory pre-college, Mason College of Music. Later, it was taken over by Charleston University (I think it is called now), and we both graduated in 1947 and then got married in 1949... I was young... We both went to Mason College after

high school, and then George wanted to go and get his Master's at Illinois. By that time, we had Ann and I dropped out of school because I had to get a job to help with the financial situation. Then, we went to Illinois when Ann was a year old or less. I stayed home that year, but I worked; I mean, I took care of people's children and I did house work to earn some extra money. I even played for a ballet class for a while."

Liz was a pianist and singer by trade before she dropped out of college to be a full-time wife and mother. She was a soprano who began taking formal voice lessons during high school and continued into college. George wrote his *Three Early Songs* for Liz. She said, "I did sing them. I sang a couple of them on a radio station actually [with George playing the piano]. It probably would have been in 1947 or '48."

When I asked if she found herself missing her own music career she said, "No, not really, I was just too busy, I had a little girl, and a lot of things that I had to do. George went to the University of Michigan and I stayed home one of those years -- I can't remember which one. I guess it would have been when Ann was four years old. That would have been in 1954, and my mother took care of Ann so I could work. We couldn't make it with me trying to work and take care of a child while George [attended] school. He did some jobs [like] dance bands and he played the organ in the church. The organ job was steady, but it was very low pay." Liz remembered that those churches were all Baptist, which laid the foundation for some of his song choices for the *Collection*. When this subject came up, consequently, I found out about her own church employment. She said, "...During high school and after high school I played piano for the church. Also, I had a choir that I did [in] a little tiny Baptist church -- I loved it."

“Later, George got the Fulbright [while studying in Michigan] and we went to Germany. That was probably the worst year I ever had in my life.” Liz said. Most people, particularly a young couple in the mid 1950’s would be thrilled at the chance to live in Europe. That is, if the surroundings were remotely conducive to raising a small child. Liz continued, “Well, we had no money. I saved as much as I could when I was working, but it was a lot more expensive than we thought it would be. There were three of us trying to live on a Fulbright for one person, and I couldn’t work because I wasn’t allowed to. George accompanied a modern dance class on the side, which he was not supposed to do, but he did anyway. She just paid him under the table, and that helped a little bit, but it was a really bad year. We lived in conditions that were not very nice, and we lived with some people that were really nasty. I wasn’t very assertive, so I never said anything; I was miserable.” Like any young couple, they talked about the situation, but there wasn’t much to be done. She said, “...Well, George knew and he was involved in it too, but there was nothing we could do about it. We were over there for a year unless we came home...” Liz explained further about their housing situation. She said, “We rented two different places. One was rather nice because we had the apartment at a very low amount of money since [the owner] was staying with some family member that needed her. She rented it out to us, but then she came back so we had to move. Then, we rented a room; it was just one room and we had the use of the kitchen, and Ann had a little closet that she slept in... She was five then and she spoke German like a German.”

Since the Fullbright trip took place in the mid-1950’s, I wondered if their nationality had anything to do with the foul treatment they received, and what the woman’s political affiliations were at the time. Liz responded by saying, “I don’t



know, but a lot of people over there were really nasty to us. There was still a lot of resentment, *a lot of resentment*, and they always assumed that George was a soldier. Sometimes when they found out he was a Fulbright Scholar, they were a little nicer, but not much. We were in the English sector. It was still divided into sectors.” They were in Berlin and George was the only Fulbright Scholar there. After he fulfilled his duties in Germany, they went to Michigan.

George was admitted to the University of Michigan with a graduate assistantship, and the three Crumbs lived there for two years. Liz continued, “The first year I worked in the music store. I managed it actually, and then the second year I worked in the physiology department, which I liked a lot. I liked the people [and the work]. It was really interesting, and I got so involved by the second semester that I was actually helping with some of the experiments ...” After Michigan, George was teaching at Interlochen when he heard about the job at the University of Colorado. Liz said, “...Some other teacher from Colorado, who taught at Interlochen, helped him get the job teaching piano, which he [admittedly] hated. But, we loved it in Boulder, and we were there for five years.” Fortunately for the Crumb’s, the cost of living was much more affordable in those early years, and they made great friends while living there. Liz continued, “Of course, I had David, and then we went to Buffalo, New York for a year with David and Ann because George had a grant. This was the first year for that Contemporary Music project. The funny thing is, the second year [of the project], they kept some of the performers, but they were going to have another composer. It was really funny because the guy said something like, ‘you had to change the manure.’ In other words, the manure was the composer of the year... When he told George that, and George told me, we just roared with laughter.

It was so funny! We weren't going to stay there anyway, but it was such a funny thing." In fact, the story was so funny to Liz that she had to compose herself for the next question I asked.

She continued, "Anyway, George got the job at Penn, so we went back to Colorado, had Peter, and came across country in that horrible trip with a new baby, and Ann had broken her arm falling from a horse. She had to have surgery. We were lucky we still had insurance with the University of Colorado, and then we got some medical insurance through Penn. That was a good thing because Ann had a lot of problems with her arm. She was in a cast for a year and they finally did a bone graft... *Do want to hear all of this?*" My response was "Yes." I assumed if I was interested in her story, other readers would be as well. Like so many success stories, one hears accounts of the person in the spotlight, but not the story of the person waiting in the wings for them. Therefore, I urged Liz to keep talking.

The subject of Germany came up again, and she said, "I lost so much weight. I must have been down to about eighty-five pounds. I mean it was just nervousness. I didn't want to eat because I was so tense all of the time. George lets things roll off of him more than I do." I asked Liz if she knew back then that her husband would have such a successful career. She said, "Well, no. I mean it was just sort of something I knew that he was going to do because it was the most important thing for him. Of course, he was lucky that he was able to get a college job. You know, I tell you, if you are a young composer and you have no money and you can't get a teaching job, you have a lot of problems. I think so many people probably give up composing because they don't get a job."

“The other thing [about George] was that he met David Burge at Boulder. Now, I think [his success] would have happened without David Burge, but David was the one that started playing [George’s music] in different states and colleges. I think the Buffalo Composer’s project, although it wasn’t the greatest living experience for us, was the first time that George was able to have people perform his music, since he was the resident composer and they were the resident musicians. Then when he came to the [University of Pennsylvania], I guess things kind of took off. For one thing, he won the Pulitzer and that helped a lot I think. I remember because Peter was a baby. That was the Fall that Peter had all of the problems.”

Peter Crumb is mildly developmentally disabled; however, he was not born that way. Pete was diagnosed with cancer when he was barely four months old. George had just started his new job at the University of Pennsylvania, David was three years old, and Ann was fifteen, trying to fit in to a new high school. Liz recalled the incident, “He was such a small baby. There was nothing wrong with him - he was the most gorgeous baby I had ever seen. He was happy and doing everything that he was supposed to do at that early age. I just took him for his regular shots, and the doctor felt a lump in his stomach. I could tell he was worried... suspicious... Of course, it was kidney cancer.”

They sent Peter to surgery the very next day because he had a Wilms’ tumor on his kidney. Liz continued, “That is the second, at least it used to be, the second leading cancer that causes death in children. Leukemia is first, and then Wilms’ tumor is the second. We were just lucky that a cyst had grown around it. That is why they were able to discover it so early.” The doctors in the 1960’s were accustomed to using both chemotherapy and radiation on cancer patients, including babies. Now

they know better, but Peter suffered permanently and the Crumb's wouldn't know the extent of the damage until later. Liz continued, "They don't do the radiation. It damages the spine. It damages the central nervous system, so they just don't do that anymore... We just dealt with it, that's all. I mean when those things happen you just do what you have to do."

After she said that, I wondered aloud about what George was like with the children when they were young. Liz said, "He was good with the kids. He was always good with kids. You know he played with them and he would play outside with them. I will never forget one day here [in Media], there was a lot of snow on the ground and one of the neighbor boys came and knocked on the door and said, 'Can Mr. Crumb come out and play?'" Liz and I had a good laugh over that story...

We picked up the subject of Peter again and Liz continued, "Peter went to a really good school and I still worked with him all of the time. Reading, math, and all sorts of things; it was easy to work with Peter. I did a lot of volunteer work too. For two to three years, I worked at the Elwyn School, and I worked with preschool children. It was a private school for handicapped children. It has changed a lot since Peter went there. I mean, they have people that live there all of their lives mostly. It is a beautiful school situation where they have little homes all over the grounds, individual homes with maybe four people in each. They also have a day program, and they have different levels. We had to put Peter in that, because he was too advanced for the special education program in the public school and they had nothing to offer him. They said so because I had already taught him to read some, to spell and to do a little bit of easy math. He can tell you how much change he should get back [by figuring it out] in his head. I think it is amazing..."

Peter loves music. One step into his bedroom and it's obvious by the shelves and shelves of CD's he has on every wall. Ann bought him an iPod for his birthday during the summer of their Salzburg trip, and Peter still keeps it in his ear when he's not working or helping Liz with something at home. Liz said, "He took guitar for a year and then he took piano for a year from somebody else. He learned to read music, but physically, once he got into something that was a little more difficult, he could not do it because his coordination was so bad... He got frustrated. Once he was putting his hands together, and he couldn't do it. He couldn't get three fingers on one hand to go down and keep two fingers up. It just wouldn't work."

Before Peter was born and while the Crumb's were in Boulder, Liz did have her own piano studio and was able to teach privately from their home for the duration of their stay in Colorado. She said, "I started [teaching] in Boulder because I could do it. I did not have time to do it before. But this way, George had a job and we bought our first house in Boulder with my money because I just put all of it aside. One of the piano teachers had a lot of students, and for some reason she decided she was going to take a break and not teach for awhile. So, I had right away, about thirty students." After the move to Media where they still reside, it took Liz a while to build up a studio. She said, "I had all of this work to do with Peter too, so I just gradually took students. I think I probably had between twelve and fifteen students. I taught for about ten years or more. I stopped because the kids' parents were mostly working, and they wanted the lessons late, and I couldn't keep that schedule."

Live music had not ceased on Kirk Lane even though the piano lessons had. Ann was in high school, David was around the third grade, and they were old enough to play chamber music. In fact, the family had "Crumbiads" for many years. Liz

remembered, "...We had chamber music here all of the time as the kids got older.

Ann was an excellent violinist. The first thing that happened was when David started the cello. George would take some easy trios, and he would write the cello part easier for David when he first started, and then he and Ann would play the regular parts. As David got really good, they were playing chamber music, trios and quartets. People came here all of the time. That is one of the things I really miss because we have a lot of friends from Swarthmore College. Another friend of David's who played the piano used to come over a lot, and he is the one that plays with *Lion King* in New York. He also travels with Steely Dan. [This guy] was one of my piano students. His family came over a lot and there were a lot of other people around the area that came over as well.

By this time, Liz was an enthusiastic listener while the rest of the family played. "In the meantime," Liz said, "Peter pretty much did his own thing. He was more into pop. Did I ever tell you the funny story about somebody sending George a tape? The composer was working on his music [on the tape] and wanted [George's] feedback. So, after George listened to the cassette, he would give those cassettes to Peter a lot of times, and Peter would record over them. He thought it was something Peter would like, so he took it up to his room. Peter came marching back downstairs and he said, 'You can have this. That is your music and I don't like it.'" Liz and I both laughed very hard about that story. Peter is the sweetest, most gentle human being a person could meet, but he is a connoisseur of music. When I asked what Peter thought about the American Songbook Collection, she said, "He likes it. He identifies very much with it, and he even said to David, 'David, since dad has been writing music for these songs, why don't you do some too?'" Peter relates to these

songs. He has [different] outlets, mostly the Beatles. He knows everything about music and even folk music. He is just amazing. He can listen to an orchestra and tell you what instrument is playing. He is really good at that sort of thing, and he even likes country music... that is his latest interest.”<sup>127</sup>

### **Ann Crumb**

Ann Crumb looks at least ten years younger than her true age, and has a larger-than-life personality. She currently resides in New York City with her dogs, Buddha and Rhonda, but visits Media regularly. Her canines are always in tow and they love the Crumb’s fenced-in back yard. When I called her in February of 2006, we started her interview by talking about life before college. She said, “I grew up all over the place. I either say I’m from nowhere or everywhere. I was born in West Virginia, but I moved everywhere with my parents when I was living at home. We lived literally all over the country; Illinois, Virginia, West Virginia, Michigan, New York, Colorado, Pennsylvania, and then we lived in Germany when dad was there on a Fulbright Scholarship. I went to the University of Michigan, but I went to eleven different schools before I went to college. That’s how much we moved.”

She continued, “I got my Bachelor’s in English and I got one in Theater and got my Master’s in Speech Language Pathology. I did lots of hospital and clinical work, and also theater simultaneously. I did my internship [in Speech Pathology], and I’m nationally certified. I did practice for quite a while, but I haven’t for a long time now. I’m doing just theater and singing. I didn’t start singing (I was a straight

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<sup>127</sup> Crumb, Elizabeth. Interview by author. 16 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

actress first) for many, many years. It was when I heard the album of *Evita*, because I wanted to perform the role of Eva Peron, so I decided to start singing. I mean I sang a little bit before but not much, not professionally. At any rate, I started studying with my one and only teacher who is quite well known and his name is Bill Schumann.”

I asked Ann about the shows she had done and she said, “I did tons of straight theater and Avant-garde European theater. You know everything from avant-garde, classic, modernist plays and musicals. I started studying with Bill and very shortly thereafter, there were auditions for *Evita*. It was a small production since it had long since closed in London and on Broadway, but I got the role which started this music theater career... That was going on simultaneously with my straight theater work. Very shortly after that, I all the sudden was doing these big mega shows, so that’s how it came about.” Her first big break in New York was her role in *Les Misérables* with the original Broadway cast, where she worked her way from the role of a factory girl to the role of Fantine. Ann has received a Tony nomination, a Barrymore Award, a National Broadway League nomination and an Arts Recognition Award. When I asked her if George and Liz saw any of her shows, she said, “My parents came to see most of the shows, mostly after I started doing the big ones.” One doesn’t have to be around the family for very long to see that her parents adore her and that they have very strong friendships with each other.

Ann recalled hearing her father’s music at home, as well as his premieres and concerts. She said, “I went to many, many concerts. I heard his music from the time I was an infant, so I was very in tune with his style since I actually heard his music being created. I played the violin, and I had a little microphone for it so he asked me



on *Black Angels* how I would make an electric insect sound. I basically always loved his work. There were some pieces which I wanted to be wilder. So, when there were ones like *Black Angels*, I got very excited.”<sup>128</sup>

### **David Crumb**

David Crumb, like his father and younger brother, doesn't talk as much as his sister and mother. However, when he does speak, he sounds almost identical to his father in speech and delivery. He very willingly did an impression of George for me at the end of his interview, which he allowed me to record, but I told him that it did not sound much different than his own, normal speech pattern. Like the rest of the Crumb family interviews, we ended the interview laughing. He began his bio by saying, "I was born in 1962 in Boulder, Colorado. I guess I started studying piano from eight years old. I started cello a year later and continued playing piano through high school, but I decided to focus mainly on the cello." When I asked David if he took piano lessons from his mother, he said, "I actually took a few lessons from my dad when I was first starting out, but unfortunately, they ended up being rather irregular. In terms of scheduling, I think there was the idea they could happen any time and sometimes they just didn't happen. So, it wasn't long thereafter that I studied with a very good piano teacher in the area there." Tony Barone's interview reminded me about David's music competitions in Philadelphia. I asked him if he remembered those and he replied, "For a while there, I was doing competitions and that sort of thing... [Dad] used to accompany me quite a bit."

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<sup>128</sup> Crumb, Ann. Interview by author, 21 February 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

College brought about a new focal point in David's music career. He said, "I went up to Eastman School of Music to study cello. While I was there, I discovered composition and changed over, so I actually ended up getting my main degree in composition there. I applied to a couple of graduate schools and ended up going to the University of Pennsylvania. As you know, my dad taught there, so it was maybe slightly unusual in that sense, but actually, I really didn't study directly with him for some obvious reasons. There is something about studying composition that is a little... you know... you want perhaps a more objective sort of person, somebody that is outside of the family for that. I think that was sort of mutually understood. So, I studied with a variety of other teachers there; Chinari Ung, Jay Reise, and Richard Wernick. I also had an opportunity to study during that time with Steven Jaffey, who was actually a visiting professor at Swarthmore, but they had worked out some sort of exchange. I also went over to Israel and studied with Mark Kopytman who I first met at Penn where he was a visiting professor. I had quite a wide range of opportunities to study with various people." David followed in his father's footsteps. He is currently an Associate Professor of Composition at the University of Oregon.

David, like Ann, remembers his father's earlier works, albeit he was eight years old when *Black Angels* was premiered. I asked him if he recalled hearing George's pieces before they were introduced to the public. He said, "...Only in rehearsal as they were preparing to premiere the piece. I would get sort of a preview, and obviously, I would follow him around to summer festivals because the whole family went. I had a couple of really incredible summers in my childhood where I was able to spend the summer in Aspen when I was around eleven, and then another summer I spent at Tanglewood. I think I was younger then maybe even eight or nine.

I was always around contemporary music. I don't think you tend to have the awareness at that age, perhaps, you're often more concerned with other things. I mean, I was listening to Beatles music when I was [young]. It always was a very interesting experience, even at that age, because obviously he was doing a lot on the experimental side. It was also interesting to see the theatrics and the ritualistic aspects of the performance of his music. Later on, I began to appreciate his music just as a musician, and eventually, as a fellow composer."

One of my questions for David during our interview was, "What was it like to sit in class and have a professor talk about your father's compositions?" He replied, "Well, it didn't happen as much as you might think. There were survey courses or something like that, where he would be just one of a fairly large number of figures that would be discussed. As an undergraduate at Eastman, I remember a theory professor named Deborah Stein who approached me and asked if I could talk about his *Black Angels*. I always thought it was a little strange that people would assume that I would have special insights. Of course, I can understand now why people would make those assumptions. I don't know what people think... You, yourself mentioned that composing tends to be very personal, and it is not like he would share aspects of his music with his relatives that he wouldn't speak [about] with other people. So, it wasn't as though I had any special insights outside of just having heard a lot of performances, you know, various pieces, but also, I wasn't a theorist. I wasn't somebody who was analyzing his music. I think my recollection was a feeling that

there were expectations [of me] that perhaps I would be able to discuss his music, and not really feeling that I necessarily knew what to say always.”<sup>129</sup>

David has won numerous awards such as a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Tanglewood Music Center Fellowship, and grants from Meet The Composer and the A.S.C.A.P. Foundation. He’s been to the Yaddo and MacDowell artist colonies, and has composed chamber and orchestral pieces. Two pieces of note are *Variations for Cello and Chamber Ensemble*, and *Clarino*, which was commissioned in honor of the Centennial of the Chicago Symphony.

### **Peter Crumb**

Peter Crumb is a man of few words but one who loves music. It is as much a part of his life as it is for his older brother, David, his sister, Ann, and both parents. Instead of making music though, he buys it. When he’s not listening to CD’s or his iPod, he works at the Media Police Station as a custodian, five days a week. In his own words, he “recycles, cleans the bathrooms, sweeps and mops.” The Crumb’s say they don’t have to worry about speeding tickets in town, because the few times they’ve been stopped in the ten years Peter has worked there, the officers take one look at Peter in the passenger seat and tell them to have a nice day. At home, he helps take phone messages, unloads the dishwasher, and keeps up with the Crumb’s daily schedule and appointments. During a couple of my visits to their home in Media, it was Peter who reminded the family of forgotten tasks, errands or phone calls they needed to take care of. Liz and George readily admit that he keeps them

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<sup>129</sup> Crumb, David. Interview by author, 31 March 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

organized. He has also been a competitor in the Special Olympics practically all of his life. He said, “I do Special Olympics; bowling, track and field, and swimming. I used to do tennis, but they’re looking for another tennis coach. I used to play basketball and volleyball too, but that’s a while back.” When I asked him about the dogs, he said, “I play with Charlie. Yoda’s okay.” I personally observed that Yoda definitely has a cranky side. He defecated (on purpose) on Liz’s white living room carpet the first time I entered their house. We laughed later, but it wasn’t funny to her at the time.

When Ann comes to visit, Peter said, “We go shopping at Marshall’s. Not so much for me, like, I go to Circuit City while she shops at Marshall’s.” When I asked him what he does with George, he replied, “Sometimes he goes to Kinko’s and I go to Border’s.” He shops for music while George copies music scores. He said of his favorite genres, “So far it’s country music, and I’m in to Latin pop. I like the old stuff. I love Alabama, I guess they broke up. I like Shania Twain...” Regarding the Latin pop, he said, “I like Maná, it’s a Latin rock group - they’re really big in the U.S. now.” George’s music doesn’t get the same airtime on Pete’s iPod® as the other genres; however, his interest was peaked with all of the folk settings in the American Songbook Collection. His favorite song is from *Unto the Hills* that was written for Ann. He said, “I loved it. I like ‘Poor Wayfaring Stranger’ a lot.” He said of the arrangements, “It has a lot more instruments in it. I like it a whole lot.” Peter, like the rest of his family giggled through much of the answers he gave me to my questions. My personal observation is that Ann makes him laugh very easily and just mentioning their shopping sprees quickly brings a smile to his face.

“Pete” as Ann calls him, was born on July 20, 1965 and has traveled with his parents on every trip they’ve taken as a family for the composer’s concerts. He has been all over the world with his mom and dad, and has one vivid memory that is his favorite among the places he has visited. When I asked him what it was, he said, “I love Paris... my dad and I walked up the Eiffel tower.” He went to the Salzburg Premiere of *The Winds of Destiny* with the Crumb’s and mentioned taking a boat trip and walking around the town. Liz and George both have commented that Peter is a great traveler. I asked him what his favorite food was on the trip and he said, “Greek.” As his mother mentioned earlier, their family has had many visitors over the years during concerts, recording sessions and holidays. I brought up the subject with Pete to find out if he actually liked all of their musician friends in the house. He said, “Yeah, I like it when we have company.”<sup>130</sup> He shows it too. When one meets Peter at the front door, he always offers a hug and smile.

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<sup>130</sup> Crumb, Peter. Interview by author, 4 September 2006, San Angelo, TX. Digital Recording. San Angelo, TX.

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## APPENDIX A

### Percussion Instruments Required

#### Percussion I

Vibraphone  
Glockenspiel  
Small cymbal (suspended)  
Medium cymbal (suspended)  
Small Chinese cymbal (suspended)  
Medium Chinese cymbal (suspended)  
Small tamtam  
Small Chinese temple gong  
Log drum  
Small bass drum  
Bongo drums  
Large spring drum (wire-coil drum)  
Vibraslap  
Indian ankle bells  
Glass wind chimes  
Guïro  
Heavy metal chain  
Claves  
Bell tree  
Cambodian Angklung  
Medium Tambourine  
Flexitone  
Maraca  
Jew's harp  
"Cannon drum" [This instrument must be constructed from a section of heating duct (made of heavy fiber material and used in large buildings). It should be about 10 or 12 feet in length and about 30 inches in diameter. One end should be securely fitted with a bass drum membrane. This instrument will have an extremely powerful projection.]

#### Percussion II

Vibraphone  
Crotales (two-octave set required)  
Medium cymbal (suspended)  
Large cymbal (suspended)  
Medium Chinese cymbal (suspended)  
Large Chinese cymbal (suspended)  
Medium tamtam  
Medium Chinese temple gong  
Xylophone  
Glockenspiel  
Medium bass drum  
Moroccan Bendir (frame drum with snares)  
Owl's voice (this sound can be vocally produced)  
Log drum  
Glass wind chimes  
Sandpaper blocks  
Brazilian reco-reco  
5 Temple blocks  
Claves  
Sleighbells  
Maraca  
Indian ankle bells  
Tiny Japanese bell (with clapper)  
Vibraslap

#### Percussion III

Marimba  
Tubular Bells  
Medium cymbal (suspended)  
Large cymbal (suspended)  
Medium Chinese cymbal (suspended)  
Large Chinese cymbal (suspended)  
Sizzle cymbal (suspended)  
Large tamtam  
Large Chinese temple gong  
Large bass drum  
Conga drum  
Log drum  
Cambodian Angklung  
Flexitone  
Indian ankle bells  
Glass wind chimes  
Maraca  
2 Brazilian (wooden) Agogo Bells  
Finger cymbals  
Very small triangle  
Small triangle  
Slab of stone  
Sleighbells  
Bell tree  
Tiny Japanese bell (with clapper)  
African Udu

#### Percussion IV

Marimba  
Large cymbal (suspended)  
Large Chinese cymbal (suspended)  
Very large Tamtam  
Very large Chinese temple gong  
5 Japanese temple bells  
3 Very small Thai temple gongs (diameters from 5 to 10 inches)  
Very large bass drum  
Snare drum  
Tenor drum  
Rute  
Chinese woodblocks  
Flexitone  
Maraca  
4 suspended metal plates (about 1/8 inch thick)  
2 Brazilian (wooden) Agogo Bells  
Sizzle cymbal  
Small tambourine  
Sleighbells  
Bell tree  
Glass wind chimes  
Metal wind chimes  
Very small triangle  
Small triangle  
Australian Aborigine thunder stick  
Wooden buffalo bell (with two "arms")  
Jew's harp

2 Timpani

7 Almenglocken



## APPENDIX B

Sample Questions for participants of Riding *The Winds of Destiny*: An Oral History of George Crumb's Fourth Song Cycle in *The American Songbook Collection*:

- Where did you grow up?
- How did you become interested in music (singing, percussion, conducting, etc.)?
- When did you first hear / play George Crumb's music?
- When did you meet Crumb?
- What was your first impression of *The Winds of Destiny* when you received the music?
- Does this piece look back on previous compositions of Crumb's?
- How did you prepare and practice before the first rehearsals (or recording) of the songbook?
- Please talk about the rehearsals (memories, significant changes to the music, funny anecdotes).
- Percussionists, what was your impression of the vocal part?
- How do the vocals effect your part?
- Singers, please share knowledge about working with a microphone.
- Were there any extended techniques or new instruments you had to learn for this songbook?
- Tell the story of your trip to Austria: rehearsals, performance, free time, etc.

- Were any changes to your interpretation or technique in playing once you reached Salzburg?
- Compare the Salzburg Premiere to the U.S. Premiere regarding similarities, changes, differences in the venue, audience, etc.
- Compare a recording situation to live performance. Are there differences or similarities?
- Share any additional information or anecdotes about your experiences with *The Winds of Destiny*.

## APPENDIX C

The following excerpt written by Jim Moskowitz was included on the Orchestra 2001 website after the group returned from Austria during the Summer of 2005.

### **How to get a Cannon Drum through Customs Being the recollections of Jim Moskowitz, Orchestra 2001 Concert Manager (and Swarthmore '88)**

“It's bad enough to have to take something called a “cannon drum” through Customs so soon after the London bombings; and it doesn't help that the five-foot-long, 18"-diameter metal cylinder was stuffed with six-foot-long heavy metal pipes sticking out from the end of the heavily bubble wrapped package looking too much like the exhaust pipes on a primitive rocket. But somehow it got through—it helped that I had taken photos of the assembled cannon drum and percussion stands in use at our rehearsals in Philadelphia, and taped them to the outside of the wrapped package. Everything got to Munich, thence to Salzburg, then used in the concert, then back to Munich, then home, safely. Mostly. Here's the story of my trip to Salzburg.”

“My overnight flight got into Munich at 10AM on Sunday July 31<sup>st</sup>, with the cannon drum and two trunks of percussion in the hold of the plane. I had to clear Customs on Monday morning. I'd only managed a few catnaps on the plane, and was now six time zones off my clock (in the bad direction), so dealing with the airport was even more of an ordeal. The entire Orchestra 2001 traveling party was on three separate flights, yet we managed to meet up without difficulty. Finding our way around the airport was a bear. We were looking for the van service to Salzburg, the lovely-named 'Salzburger Mietwagen Service' (yes that's pronounced 'meat wagon'), which we'd been told was at a very small counter. We wandered through the entire airport before we finally found it a hundred yards from our starting point. The others headed off in their Mietwagen, and a short time later I was unpacking in a tiny third-floor hotel room with a lovely balcony in a village a few miles away. After a nap I wandered around the town, which was a nifty blend of red-roofed cottages, a few stores, farmland, and construction cranes -- the area turned out to be a new hotspot for growth. I got dinner and went to bed at 9PM, which was a big mistake because that felt like 3PM on my body clock. I napped for three hours and woke up at midnight, unable to get back to sleep again until just before dawn.”

“The next day, Monday the 1<sup>st</sup>, I returned to the airport at 9:15, whereupon the German firm that was handling the instruments told me they wouldn't be ready until at least noon. Three groggy hours later, they confirmed that the instruments were waiting for me at the freight terminal. The Mietwagen drove me over there, and I found ... nobody. I wandered around the gargantuan loading terminal filled with forklifts zooming around recklessly until I spotted our instruments in a pile. This was where I discovered our one casualty: after spending far too many hours trying to fix and finally replace the wheels on the bottom of our larger instrument trunk, the new

wheels had proven unable to support it. All four were broken and twisted at unpleasant angles. Fortunately I had packed the old wheels, which though broken were in better shape than the new ones. I was able to put them back on, and they worked OK, so we were back to square one. I stood around for five minutes hoping someone would come by, filled with a great sense of being elsewhere, in this huge 'echoey' industrial space with signs I couldn't read and distant voices calling in a foreign language. Finally a forklift stopped and someone pointed me to a small office. We got everything loaded into the van (the driver was agog, not having been told that our cargo would amount to 700 pounds), and headed south.”

“I wish I could tell you about the drive—my first through Europe—but I was literally unable to keep my eyes open for more than a few minutes at a time. I saw many tiny villages like the one the hotel was in, a few giant windmill-like turbines, and eventually the Alps as we neared the Austrian border.”

“At the Mozarteum I was met by the musicians returning from lunch break. It was 3 PM and they had been waiting all day, unable to rehearse without their instruments. Unfortunately, this was the one day we were able to use the hall, because they were presenting other concerts as part of the Festival. We unloaded and assembled everything, rehearsed from 5 PM until the hall closed at 8, and then had to clear the stage, moving everything to a room in the building next door. We had an exhausted dinner and headed to the dorm where the Salzburg Festival had arranged out lodging. Since it was too late for registration I couldn't get into my room and had to sleep in an extra bed in the conductor's room.”

“Tuesday August 2<sup>nd</sup> began with an 11 AM press conference—Salzburg is a very music-oriented city and the Salzburg Festival's guest composer was big enough news to attract two radio stations, a TV crew, and many print reporters. The press conference lasted an hour, during which George (Crumb), the conductor (Jim Freeman), and the Festival director talked about what it had taken to make this concert happen, spending a fair amount of time on the large number of percussion instruments. Jim demonstrated some of the instruments for the cameras while the rest of us went to a rehearsal of the Mozart c-minor Mass, in the Church of St Peter that had originally commissioned the work over 200 years ago. Both the performance and the architecture were breathtaking, the sort of thing that gives you an idea of how powerful being in church could be back then...”

“Wednesday August 3<sup>rd</sup> was more sightseeing, including the Mozart birth house. (We couldn't rehearse in the hall again until Thursday, the day of the concert.) That evening there was a huge dinner in the Till Eulenspiegel restaurant for all of us and the several Board members who were also in town for the concert.”

“Thursday we had a technical rehearsal in the morning, to work out microphone issues, so we had to move from their storage next door back onto the stage of the Mozarteum. This was the rehearsal that turned into Odd Requests hour. A couple of places on the stage had a tendency to squeak when the percussionists moved around

among their dozens of instruments. Could I locate some rugs to put over those spots? The tub of water that several instruments get dipped into in *The River of Life* should be about ten inches above floor level; could I find something that size to rest it on? We need a two-by-four; can I figure out where to get one? I became an explorer of nooks and closets around the Mozarteum, including an amazing alcove up a tiny stairway that happened to have all three of those items, and little else -- was this some karmic bonus prize for all the other headaches, or was a certain Mephistopheles about to present me with a bill? Micha Wieser-Hois, assistant director of the Mozart Festival, helped me with several other problems (including contacting the Mietwagen about the return trip to Munich the next day, which apparently was news to them despite my several emails over the preceding weeks. Micha was the unsung hero of the festival, full of energy and always willing to drop what she was doing when I had a question or problem. The tech rehearsal ended at 2 PM, and I went to lunch with our pianist, Marcantonio (Tony) Barone.”

“After a nap and dinner, I got back to the Mozarteum at 6:30 for the 7:30 concert. At 7:25 I went to Ann Crumb’s dressing room to give her the 5-minute call. (Ann, George’s daughter, is the soloist in *The River of Life* which was first on the program.) She told me that two of the pages of her score were still in the wings backstage where she had left them in rehearsal (one song is sung from the wings). I ran down and couldn’t find them anywhere, so I ran back to ask Ann exactly where she thought she had left them, but ... no dice. I let the conductor know that we had a problem and might have to start a trifle late. Apparently a cleaning person had tossed them or a souvenir-seeker had pocketed them. Fortunately, Ann came up with a good solution: at 7:30 I headed into the audience in search of George, and asked for pages 27 and 28 from his own copy of the score. I ran them back to Ann who then walked calmly onstage with the other musicians, at 7:40, just 10 minutes late—the customary starting time in the US, but not of course in this most punctual of places. The concert went very smoothly after that. The applause at the end of the evening was hard to read from where I was listening; did they really like it, were they just being polite, or what? There was a reception afterwards, which the musicians and I were able to attend only briefly because all of the equipment had to be packed back into the trunks and the cannon drum had to be “reloaded,” and the other instruments we had rented in Europe had to be moved to the ground floor. With a lot of help from the Mozarteum staff, everything was done by 11:30, and we headed home and dropped.”

“Friday August 4<sup>th</sup> Dave, Angie and I were on a bus at 6:45 AM to get to the Mozarteum by 7:30 to meet our Mietwagen. We arrived a little early, which was fortunate because it gave us some extra time to discover that the loading dock gate, which we’d been promised would be left open, was locked shut. We managed to enter the building through a fire escape, but we couldn’t open the gate from the inside either. Dave suggested trying one of the main doors at the front of the hall, and we ended up having to roll everything through the entire Mozarteum from the loading dock to the front door, by which time the Mietwagen had arrived and everything was loaded quickly and off we went to Munich. Dave and Angie had a late morning flight,

after which I escorted our equipment back to the freight terminal where our trusty forklift operator accepted the suspiciously-shaped mound of heavy metal.”

## APPENDIX D

The following excerpt written by James Freeman was included on the Orchestra 2001 website after the group returned from Austria during the Summer of 2005.

### **Our Artistic Journey this July and August**

“It all began on Sunday July 24th, with a first rehearsal at the Settlement Music School in Philadelphia. We had wonderfully warm support from the gratifying number of people who came to hear that rehearsal and to join us for a champagne reception. It was so promising, it made us all consider holding similar “invitational” rehearsals in the future. In many ways rehearsals can be as exciting, informative, and human as the concerts themselves.”

“David Patrick Stearns of the Philadelphia *Inquirer* came to our Tuesday, July 26 rehearsal and wrote an extensive article about the trip and George's Songbooks. He returned for our final rehearsal on Friday, the 29<sup>th</sup>—really just to hear the new pieces again, especially the exquisite invocation of eternity in the final song of *The Winds of Destiny*, ‘Shenandoah.’”

“We arrived in Salzburg by various routes. Four Crumbs (George, Liz, Ann, and Peter), Tony Barone, Bill Kerrigan, Sue Jones, Sunny Herz, and stage manager Jim Moskowitz flew US Air direct to Munich. Dave and Angie Nelson flew British Air. (Dave's scheduled auto race on August 6th required that he return earlier than the rest of us). I had originally planned with Dorothy to go on to Ireland after the concert in Salzburg, our new litter of English Cocker Spaniel puppies scuttled those plans (the puppies are doing quite well.)”

“Jim Moskowitz had to stay on in Munich for another day, waiting for our huge crate of percussion and the cannon drum (itself crammed full of smaller percussion instruments) to pass customs. Jim's job on this trip was really harder in some ways than anyone else's, and he managed it all with joyful aplomb.”

“Barbara Martin, who first suggested this concert last summer to the Mozarteum's directors, had arrived a day earlier than the rest of us. She was already meeting the students in her vocal master class, a class that she has been giving in Salzburg for 13 years. Barbara's students clearly adore her - and with good reason. She is a great teacher.”

“The Mozarteum's superbly efficient and cheerful Micha Wieser-Hois had managed to gather from near and far (Vienna, Zurich, Cologne) all the larger percussion instruments we needed and of course could not bring with us.”

“Monday, August 1 was a very long day. We were in the hall from 8 AM to 10 PM, loading instruments in and trying to determine where and how everything would fit.



Fortunately, we were able to set up the percussion to our satisfaction. At the end of this exhausting 14-hour day, the entire group set off for a recuperative dinner.”

“The morning of Tuesday, August 2, was devoted to a press conference at which George and I tried to field questions from a roomful of Austrian and German critics, reporters, and radio-TV personnel. They accepted my proposal to demonstrate some of the more exotic instruments. Some day I hope to see what Austrian TV did with my ad-lib performances (cameras inches away) on the udu, thunderstick, cannon drum, and tire chains! Later we found the office of the American Friends of the Salzburg Festival and had a good meeting with the charming Brita Millard.”

“Wednesday, August 3, was our free day. Some of us had managed to see Schreker's *Die Gezeichneten* (Kent Nagano conducting) as well as the Muti-conducted *Magic Flute*. (The general consensus was that the Flute was superb musically, with ridiculous and inappropriate staging.)”

### **The Great Concert—and Thomas Hampson!**

“About the concert I can only say that things really went perfectly. Ann and Barbara sang like angels; Tony, Bill, Sue, Dave, and Angie played like gods. It's really easy to conduct an ensemble when the musicians are this good!”

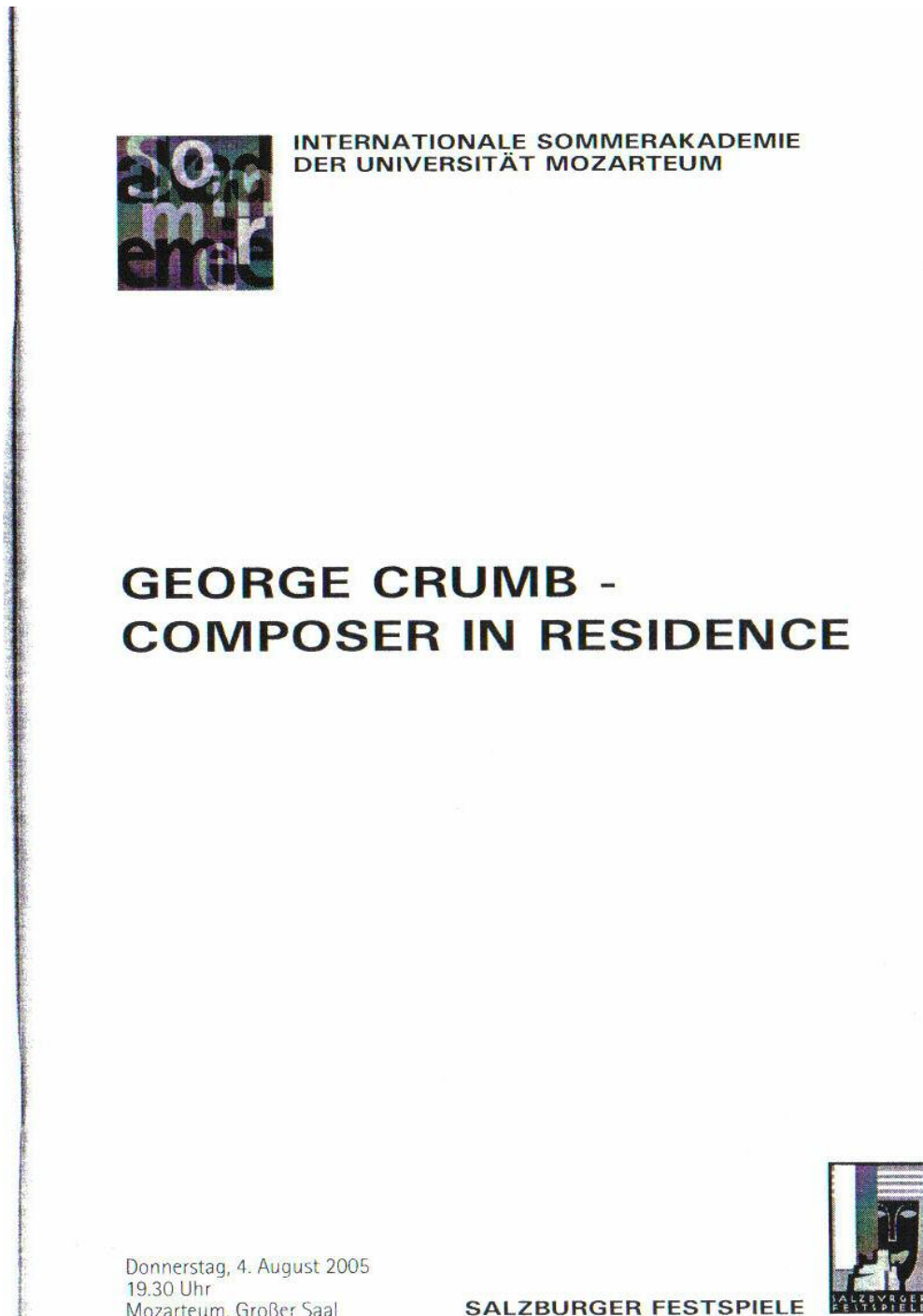
“Three days earlier Lionel had met Thomas Hampson backstage at *Die Gezeichneten* and invited him to our concert. (Hampson was to give a master class on American song the day after our concert, so his involvement with us seemed especially apt.) At the reception following our concert, he was ecstatic about the performances and the music. He is most anxious to be involved in future performances of the American Songbooks, and since George has often said that dividing the songs between female and male singers has always been a consideration, this makes wonderful sense from all points of view! I think with Hampson's involvement in this whole project, there's no telling where it might lead! George already has a tentative invitation for us at Spoleto next summer, and I'm sure there are going to be others.”

“The next morning we all sat in on Hampson's master class. Beginning at 10 AM, he didn't finish until after 2. An amazing class by an amazing musician! His teaching was really superb, insightful, dedicated, often with a good deal of humor, and remarkably generous of his time.”

“In the evening I was part of a round-table discussion (with five German and Austrian critics and musicians) about the problems facing classical music, especially new music. There are some 300 new music ensembles in Germany. Four of them provide full-time work for their musicians! I said, there is, sadly, nothing comparable in America, except for the four-member Kronos Quartet. In any case, I expect that Orchestra 2001 may one day be the first New Music ORCHESTRA in America to have such a season. We can hope!”

## APPENDIX E

Salzburg Festival concert program cover and program page from the world premiere held at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria.



# PROGRAMM

## GEORGE CRUMB

(\* 1929)

### THE RIVER OF LIFE SONGS OF JOY AND SORROW

A CYCLE OF HYMNS, SPIRITUALS AND REVIVAL TUNES  
(AMERICAN SONGBOOK I)

#### EUROPA-PREMIERE!

- I. Shall We Gather At The River?
- II. Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown?
- III. Amazing Grace!
- IV. Give Me That Old Time Religion
- V. Time Is A Drifting River: A Psalm For Daybreak And Morning
- VI. Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?
- VII. One More River To Cross
- VIII. Nearer, My God To Thee
- XI. Deep River

*Ann Crumb, Sopran*

Pause

### THE WINDS OF DESTINY SONGS OF STRIFE, LOVE, MYSTERY AND EXULTATION

A CYCLE OF AMERICAN CIVIL WAR SONGS, FOLK SONGS AND SPIRITUALS  
(AMERICAN SONGBOOK IV)

#### WELT-PREMIERE!

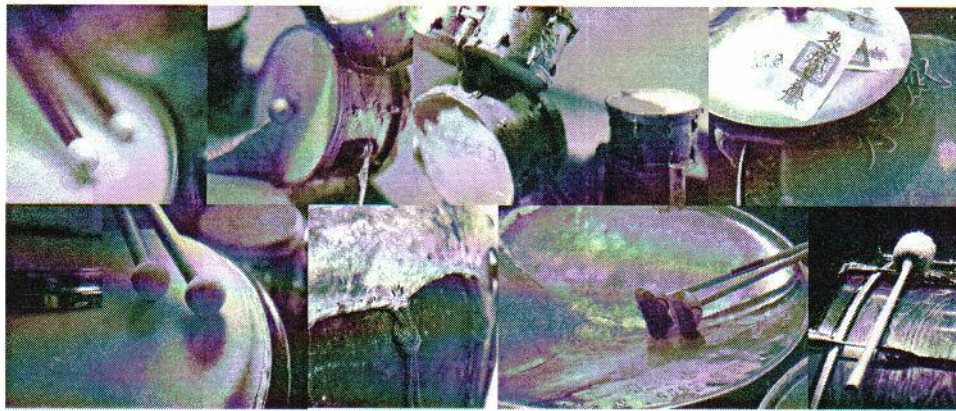
- I. Mine Eyes Have Seen The Glory
- II. When Johnny Comes Marching Home
- III. Lonesome Road
- IV. Twelve Gates To The City
- V. De Profundis: A Psalm for the Night-Wanderer
- VI. All My Trials (Death's Lullaby)
- VII. Go Tell It On The Mountain!
- VIII. The Enchanted Valley
- IX. Shenandoah

*Barbara Ann Martin, Sopran*

3

## APPENDIX F

BOOM! concert program cover and program page from the U.S. premiere in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

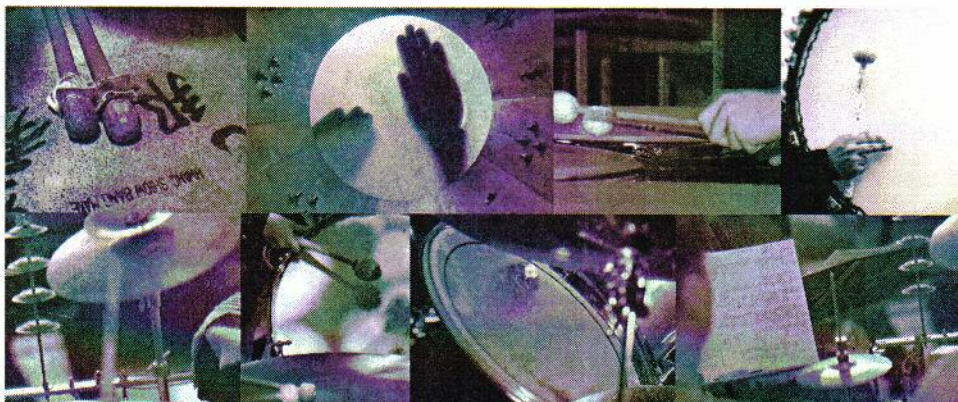


Orchestra 2001 – James Freeman, Artistic Director

# BOOM!

Saturday, September 17th 8pm  
Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, Philadelphia

Sunday, September 18th 7:30pm  
Lang Concert Hall, Swarthmore





- James Freeman, Artistic Director
- Barbara Murray, Executive Director
- Eric Bruskine, Development Director
- Wayne Braddock, Office Manager
- Dorothy Freeman, Personnel Manager and Librarian
- Jim Moskowitz, Concert Manager

## Orchestra2001

*Ensemble for this performance—*

*Violin*  
Emma Kummrow  
*Viola*  
Geoffrey Michaels  
*Cello*  
Lori Barnett  
*Double Bass*  
Miles B. Davis  
*Flute/Piccolo*  
Lois Herbine  
*Oboe*  
Dorothy Freeman  
*Bass Clarinet*  
Allison Herz  
*Mandolin*  
Duane Large  
*Guitar*  
Allan Krantz  
*Harp*  
Sophie Labiner  
*Piano*  
Marcantonio Barone  
*Percussion*  
William Kerrigan  
Susan Jones  
David Nelson  
Angela Nelson

This program is made possible in part by a grant from the Philadelphia Music Project, an Artistic Initiative of The Pew Charitable Trusts, administered by The University of the Arts. Additional funding from the Beneficia Foundation.

Orchestra 2001 receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

Sterling piano selected from Jacobs Music Company.

We thank Swarthmore College for its generous support of Orchestra 2001 and the use of its spectacular Long Concert Hall, percussion and piano.

The Philadelphia Presenting Project is funded by the Virginia S. Mulconroy Fund of The Philadelphia Foundation.

**Philadelphia Presenting Project and  
Penn Contemporary Music  
Department of Music, University of Pennsylvania  
present  
ORCHESTRA 2001  
James Freeman, Artistic Director  
Margaret Leng Tan, pizzicato piano  
Barbara Ann Martin, soprano**

**BOOM!**

**Tan Dun  
Concerto for Pizzicato Piano and Ten Instruments (1995)  
Philadelphia Premiere**

MARGARET LENG TAN, PIZZICATO PIANO

**Tan Dun  
Circle with Four Trios, Conductor and Audience (1992)  
Philadelphia Premiere**

*I n t e r m i s s i o n . . .*

**George Crumb  
The Winds of Destiny (2004)  
Songs of Strife, Love, Mystery and Exultation  
A Cycle of American Civil War Songs,  
Folk Songs, and Spirituals for Singer,  
Percussion Quartet and Amplified Piano  
(AMERICAN SONGBOOK IV)  
American Premiere**

- I. *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory*
- II. *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*
- III. *Lonesome Road*
- IV. *Twelve Gates to the City*
- V. *De Profundis: A Psalm for the Night-Wanderer*  
(Instrumental Interlude)
- VI. *All My Tracks (Death's Lullaby)*
- VII. *Go Tell it on the Mountain!*
- VIII. *The Enchanted Valley*
- IX. *Shenandoah*

BARBARA ANN MARTIN, SOPRANO