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PUSHING TOWARDS ZERO: HAROLD BUDD, NETWORKS AND NEW MUSIC IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (1964–1991)

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

MUSIC

By

Joseph Finkel

June 2026

The Dissertation of Joseph Finkel is approved:

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Dr. Matthew Schumaker

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Peter Biehl
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

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2026

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Abstract

Pushing Towards Zero: Harold Budd, Networks and New Music in Southern California (1964–1991)

Joseph Finkel

Pushing Towards Zero: Harold Budd, Networks and New Music in Southern California (1964–1991) recovers a history of American experimental music obscured by narratives centered on New York, minimalism, and "ambient" music. Using Harold Budd as its central figure, the dissertation reconstructs a Southern California musical ecology formed through universities, museums, concert series, independent publications, friendships, performance collectives, and recording studios. It argues that Budd's music emerged not through solitary stylistic development but through the movement of sounds and ideas across institutions, media, and relationships.

Budd's path begins in Los Angeles, where jazz, Hollywood labor, European concert music, and the landscapes of the American West shaped his early listening. His Army years with Albert Ayler, modernist training at San Fernando Valley State College and USC, and encounters with John Cage, Morton Feldman, and Earle Brown led him toward sparse notation, open form, extended duration, and near-silence. "Pushing towards zero" names this effort to discover how little a composition might do while still transforming perception.

However, reduction was not Budd's endpoint. Within the volatile early culture of CalArts and the networks surrounding independent publications, *Monday Evening*

Concerts, and the Pasadena Art Museum, he redirected experimentalism toward sensuous beauty, tonality, resonance, and harmonic suspension. Barney Childs's correspondence provided a space in which Budd tested his ideas through friendship, humor, and aesthetic argument. Pauline Oliveros, James Tenney, Daniel Lentz, and the composers gathered in *California 99* reveal a dispersed California network organized less by a common style than by collaboration, circulation, and shared resistance to inherited musical authority.

The dissertation places Budd's early-1970s turn toward "pretty" music at the center of this history. In *The Peacock Room*, *The Dragonfly Cymbal*, and *Madrigals of the Rose Angel*, blue light, ornament, floral display, tonal harmony, Pre-Raphaelitism, and "art for art's sake" became experimental materials. Beauty was not a retreat from experimentalism but a challenge to the critical and institutional tendency to equate the avant-garde with difficulty and the refusal of pleasure.

These concerns converge in *The Pavilion of Dreams*, where older vocal traditions and aestheticist imagery meet the spiritual jazz of John Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders. Through performers such as Marvin Hayes and Marion Brown, Budd's suspended harmonic world entered into dialogue with Black sacred, modal, and improvisational practices. Budd's mature language did not originate in London. Collaborations with Gavin Bryars and Brian Eno instead translated an already formed California aesthetic into studio composition, transatlantic circulation, and its later reception as "ambient."

Drawing on correspondence, interviews, scores, recordings, teaching materials, concert programs, and institutional archives, this dissertation reframes experimental

music as a history of conditions: of places, labor, friendship, mediation, and survival. It presents Budd not as a marginal "minimalist" or an "ambient" precursor, but as a composer through whom Los Angeles becomes audible as a major site of postwar musical experimentation.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my committee chair and wonderful advisor, Dr. Amy C. Beal, and to my committee members, Dr. Mark Nash and Dr. Matthew Schumaker, whose guidance, encouragement, and belief in this project shaped it in countless ways. I also dedicate it to Sir Isaac Julien, Distinguished Professor of the Arts at the University of California, Santa Cruz, whose inspiration, generosity, and support made this work possible.

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When I arrived in California in 2019, graduate school quickly became inseparable from crisis, protest, and displacement. The years that followed brought the COLA graduate-student protests, the COVID-19 lockdown, and the CZU Lightning Complex fire, each reshaping the rhythms of daily life and the conditions under which this dissertation took form. Yet the enforced stillness of lockdown also made possible a slower, more patient mode of research. I began writing to archives, following fragments and leads, requesting scans, and tracing Harold Budd and his associates through institutions across California and, as the project expanded, through increasingly unexpected archival paths elsewhere. Much of this dissertation emerged from that strange interval between isolation and discovery. It was sustained, however, by the teachers, mentors, and interlocutors whose generosity, insight, and care gave the work its shape and direction.

I want to begin by acknowledging my committee: Dr. Amy C. Beal, Dr. Mark Nash, and Dr. Matthew Schumaker. This dissertation grew out of years of coursework, independent studies, conversations, close readings, and critical feedback, and I am deeply grateful to each of them for remaining with the project at every stage of its development. Amy accepted me into the program and gave this dissertation a scholarly home before I fully understood what it would become; her guidance, patience, criticism, and support made it possible for me to follow Harold Budd through archives, institutions, letters, recordings, and communities that often stood outside the dominant narratives of American experimental music. Mark offered years of intellectual generosity, friendship, and encouragement, helping me think more expansively about art, film, archives, politics,

and the moving image. Matthew read this work with great care, bringing to it not only a composer's ear and a teacher's patience, but also the perspective of an electronic music scholar; through our conversations about Pauline Oliveros, studio practice, and the relationship between technology, listening, and experimental musical thought, he helped me think more carefully about Budd's work in and around the studio. I am also deeply grateful to Professor Sir Isaac Julien, whose generosity, intellectual presence, and practical help, especially through the Mellon-supported work connected to Mark and the Isaac Julien Lab, sustained me through crucial summers and the final stages of dissertation writing. This project would not have taken shape in the same way without their encouragement and material support.

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isolated figure, but as someone working within a much larger network of composers, publishers, performers, teachers, and friends.

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I also want to acknowledge the people and organizations who made Santa Cruz, London, and experimental music feel less abstract and more lived. At Indexical, I thank Michael Flora, Dr. Michelle Lou, Dr. Andrew C. Smith, and Brooke Wentz, whose work and generosity gave me a place to encounter new music as a living practice rather than only as a dissertation topic. I owe particular thanks to Brooke for the opportunity to help with her 2023 book, *Transfigured New York*. In London, I thank Jackson Burton at Cafe OTO for welcoming me into that world of experimental music and for making it possible to hear so many remarkable performances.

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Introduction

Experimental music after 1960 continues to be narrated through a familiar geography. In the United States, histories of the postwar avant-garde and minimalism have largely centered on New York and, to a lesser extent, the San Francisco Bay Area. European accounts, meanwhile, have tended to privilege Cologne, Darmstadt, London, and Paris as the principal sites where postwar musical modernism was challenged, transformed, or displaced. These narratives have illuminated the development of indeterminacy, live electronics, process-based composition, and new forms of institutional patronage, but they have also left other regional formations only partially understood. Southern California, despite its dense and influential artistic infrastructure, has often appeared as a peripheral backdrop, a loosely defined alternative scene, or a setting for figures whose historical importance was established elsewhere. This dissertation begins from the premise that such a treatment is no longer adequate. Rather than positioning Southern California as secondary to an already established history of experimental music, it approaches the region as a site where experimental practice acquired a distinct social, institutional, and aesthetic form.

The central question, then, is not simply whether Southern California was different, but how that difference was made: through which people, institutions, publications, record labels, and media did new music circulate, and how did those networks shape what experimental music could become?[1] The project's scope is broader

[1] For accounts of postwar experimental music, see Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); David Nicholls, "Avant-Garde and Experimental Music," in *The Cambridge History of American Music*, ed. David Nicholls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 517–34; David Nicholls, "Getting Rid of the Glue: The Music of the New York School," *Journal of American Studies*

than a composer study in the narrow sense, even as Harold Budd (1936–2020) remains its central figure. Budd's career offers a way to examine how labels such as "West Coast," "minimal," "experimental," "pretty" music, and later "ambient" were applied to music shaped by more complex networks of training, friendship, performance, publication, and recording. He moved continuously across those domains, from Los Angeles City College, San Fernando Valley State College, and USC to California Institute of the Arts, *Monday Evening Concerts*, and the Pasadena Art Museum orbit; from small-press publication in *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde* and *SOUNDINGS* to the studio world of Gavin Bryars and Brian Eno. Few figures of the era make the interdependence of those worlds more legible.

The problem of labeling was already visible in early critical attempts to describe West Coast experimental music. Tom Johnson's review of *SOUNDINGS* 1 (1972) shows how a regional lineage could become visible within New York criticism while still being diminished. He recognized that the journal organized its materials around figures such as Lou Harrison, Harry Partch, Silvestre Revueltas, and Dane Rudhyar, offering a genealogy distinct from the New York-based minimal and experimental activity most familiar to him. Yet he described the younger composers associated with the journal through a language of simplicity, innocence, and naivete, reducing a complex regional formation to

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27, no. 3 (December 1993): 335–53; and Benjamin Piekut, *Experimentalism Otherwise: The New York Avant-Garde and Its Limits* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). On the San Francisco Bay Area, see David W. Bernstein, ed., *The San Francisco Tape Music Center: 1960s Counterculture and the Avant-Garde* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008). On West Germany as a major European site for the reception and patronage of American experimental music, see Amy C. Beal, *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

a set of East Coast assumptions about California experimentalism.[2] Michael Nyman, though more alert to the problem of decentralization, likewise hardened West Coast music into a regional type, opposing its supposed stasis, intuition, and tonal directness to the more familiar process-driven narratives of the East Coast.

Budd's work shows why those accounts are revealing but insufficient. His early music was profoundly indebted to the New York avant-garde, especially John Cage, Morton Feldman, and Earle Brown, yet it did not remain within their terms. In Southern California, those models were reworked through a different set of institutional relationships: universities, museums, concert series, composer-run publications, visual-art discourse, and eventually recording studios. The historiographic problem, then, is not how to recover a wholly separate West Coast tradition, but how to describe a regional formation in which inherited avant-garde practices were absorbed, mixed with other priorities, and redirected into new aesthetic and social forms.

Across this trajectory, the dissertation argues that Budd's later association with ambient music did not mark a departure from experimentalism, but a transformation of it. His encounters with jazz, European concert music, and American experimentalism led first toward reduction, indeterminacy, and near-silence in the late 1960s, and then toward an early-1970s redirection of that inheritance into what he and others called "pretty" music. The final chapters follow that aesthetic into the studio, where recording did not simply document Budd's music but reshaped its materials, scale, and circulation.

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[2] Tom Johnson, "Soundings from the West Coast (August 30, 1973)," *The Voice of New Music: New York City, 1972–1982: A Collection of Articles Originally Published in the Village Voice* (Eindhoven, The Netherlands: Het Apollohuis, 1989), 95–98.

"Ambient," in this account, is not the origin of Budd's aesthetic but one of the later frameworks through which it was received.

The chapters that follow use Budd's career as a route through this larger history. They move from his early formation to CalArts, from performance culture to the studio, and from local institutions to transatlantic recording practices. The result is not a biography in the usual sense, but an account of how one composer's work was shaped by the classrooms, concert settings, publications, friendships, labels, and recording environments through which Southern California experimental music took form.

Chapters Overview

Chapter One, "Before 'Pretty' Music" (1936–70), reconstructs Budd's early formation as the period in which his defining compositional concerns first emerged. It moves from the soundscape of his Southern California childhood and his teenage immersion in bebop and cool jazz to his years as an Army musician, where he played alongside Albert Ayler, and his gradual entrance into the world of formal composition. The chapter then follows his studies with Gerald Strang (1908–1998) and Aurelio de la Vega (1925–2022) at San Fernando Valley State College and with Ingolf Dahl (1912–1970) at USC. In doing so, it shows how jazz, military musicianship, modernist discipline, and emerging experimental practices converged in Budd's work before his decisive turn toward "pretty" music.

Rather than treating these years as a preliminary stage, the chapter argues that Budd's early work was already organized around reduction, duration, quietness, resonance, and the construction of listening situations. These concerns emerged from

his encounter with New York experimentalism, especially John Cage (1912–92), Morton Feldman (1926–87), and Earle Brown (1926–2002), as well as from the literary and interpersonal networks surrounding Barney Childs (1926–2000). Childs's role as friend, correspondent, poet-composer, critic, and advocate helps clarify how Budd's early text scores, sparse instructions, poetic titles, and open forms circulated within a broader experimental exchange.

Chapter Two, "Outposts of the Avant-garde" (1960–75), shifts from Budd's early formation to the institutional world in which experimental music in Southern California took collective shape. Centering CalArts, the chapter argues that the school functioned less as a stable conservatory than as a volatile institutional experiment, shaped by Disney patronage, interdisciplinary idealism, administrative conflict, and the improvised conditions of its early campuses at Villa Cabrini and Valencia. East Coast transplants, California-based composers, visiting artists, and students all inhabited this unsettled environment, bringing together practices from New York, Wesleyan, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Southern California.

Within that setting, Budd's position was distinctive. He was part of CalArts, but as a Southern California composer, he also stood somewhat apart from the East Coast networks that shaped much of the early music faculty. The chapter traces the experimental currents that converged there through figures such as Daniel Lentz (1942–2025), Pauline Oliveros (1932–2016), Morton Subotnick (b. 1933), Richard Teitelbaum (1939–2020), and James Tenney (1934–2006), alongside the school's electronic, improvisatory, and world-music programs. Tenney becomes the central case because his relationship with Budd clarifies how personal exchange, pedagogy, and

performance linked different strands of experimentalism at CalArts, especially through Tenney's *Postal Pieces* and his *Tone Roads West* ensemble.

Chapter Three, "New Music, New Networks" (1969–75), turns from formal institutions to the looser networks, portfolios, concerts, and performance situations through which experimental music circulated across California. It begins with *California 99*, Budd's 1969 portfolio of scores by Larry Austin (1930–2018), Barney Childs (1926–2000), Daniel Lentz (1942–2025), Pauline Oliveros (1932–2016), David Sherr (b. 1941), Bertram Turetzky (b. 1933), and others. The collection brought together composers working across UC Davis, UC San Diego, UC Santa Barbara, Redlands, CalArts, and other sites, making visible a dispersed but active California network organized through assembly, friendship, performance, and circulation rather than a single style.

Oliveros is central to the chapter because she clarifies how Budd's interest in drones, sustained sound, and environmental listening developed through California networks rather than simply deriving from East Coast minimalism. The chapter then considers Leonard Stein's (1916–2004) *Encounters* series at the Pasadena Art Museum, which brought figures such as Austin, John Cage (1912–1992), Terry Riley (b. 1935), La Monte Young (b. 1935), Marian Zazeela (1940–2024), and Philip Glass (b. 1937) into Southern California's museum culture. It closes with Daniel Lentz's California Time Machine and the looser affiliation of Budd, Lentz, & Stoerchle, where drones, parody, antiwar spectacle, theatrical performance, and tonal improvisation produced the language of

"post-avant-garde music," "new diatonicism," and "The New Sensuality" that leads into Chapter Four.

Chapter Four, "Pretty" as Protest (1970–72), begins with Budd's CalArts course "Prelude to the Modern Muse: The Poetic Vanguard" and its syllabus on Mannerism, Pre-Raphaelitism, Aestheticism, Arts and Crafts, Art Nouveau, and "art for art's sake." The chapter reads the course as a framework for understanding how "pretty" emerged as a compositional position grounded in visual art, literature, and design rather than in technical models of modernist composition. Its concern with beauty, uselessness, surface, ornament, and display helps explain how Budd came to treat "pretty" not as a casual descriptor, but as a way of organizing sound, notation, staging, and historical reference.

The chapter then shows why "pretty" functioned as a protest. Through *The Peacock Room* (1972), *The Dragonfly Cymbal* (1972), and *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* (1972), Budd uses silence, tonal materials, lighting, page design, early-music reference, and ornamental imagery to challenge what he later described as the expectation that composers accept "really ugly music" as the measure of seriousness. Budd's own comment clarifies that "pretty" was not simply a retreat into pleasing sound, but a response to the institutional and aesthetic pressures surrounding postwar composition. These works make beauty and apparent uselessness into compositional decisions, while *Madrigals* also points toward the jazz-inflected and devotional sound world of *The Pavilion of Dreams,* taken up in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five, "A Search for the Spiritual" (1972–88), examines *The Pavilion of Dreams* (1972–76), the cycle in which Budd's "pretty" music moved into song, modality, devotion, and jazz. *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* (1972), the first work composed for the cycle, connects Chapter Four's art-historical frame to the sound world of *The Pavilion*. The chapter then turns to Albert Ayler (1936–70), John Coltrane (1926–67), and Pharoah Sanders (1940–2022) to show how Budd drew on jazz as biography, memory, harmony, spirituality, and sound. Ayler links the chapter to Budd's Army years; Coltrane enters through Budd's arrangement of "After the Rain," retitled "Butterfly Sunday" (1973); and Sanders becomes the point of contact for Budd's sacred style, especially through "Let Us Go into the House of the Lord" (1974).

The chapter's final sections follow how this world moved through performers, institutions, and recordings. Marvin Hayes (1926–95), the bass-baritone in *Song of Paradise: 17 Illuminations on the Holy Koran* (1974), connects the cycle to Black classical performance and sacred text. Marion Brown (1931–2010) became the chapter's central collaborator: their work on *Bismillahi 'Rrahmani 'Rrahim* (1974–75) brought Budd into contact with post-Coltrane jazz, Wesleyan's experimental music culture, and the musicians surrounding Impulse! Records. Brown's role also changed the terms of Budd's music, requiring the score to make room for improvisation, restraint, and a performer whose practice moved through free jazz, poetry, and spiritual sound. The chapter then follows this network to London, where tapes of Budd's music reached Gavin Bryars (b. 1943) and Brian Eno (b. 1948). The recording of *The Pavilion of Dreams* on Obscure

Records did not invent Budd's aesthetic, but reframed it through studio production and prepared the ground for his later collaborations with Eno.

Methodologies

Methodologically, the dissertation proceeds from the conviction that this story can only be told by moving across multiple scales of analysis simultaneously. It is grounded first in archival research, especially in the extensive correspondence between Budd and Childs, preserved in the *Barney Childs Collection* at the University of Redlands and spanning much of the period from the late 1960s forward. These letters provide more than documentary support for works, performances, and professional affiliations. They register friendship, wit, anxiety, aesthetic declaration, financial pressure, memory, and the textures of ordinary life through which musical thought actually circulated. In one early exchange, Budd moves without strain from technical instructions about tape balance and drone texture to a recollection of listening to college football scores on the radio as a child, then closes with a handwritten note about heading to the Coliseum to watch the Lions and Rams. Moments like this clarify that correspondence was not peripheral to Budd's musical world. It was one of the places where that world was articulated, tested, and shared. The letters, therefore, do more than supply background detail; they make it possible to track how works, relationships, institutions, and everyday experience remained interwoven.

The dissertation also draws on oral history interviews with Budd's family members, including his former wife Paula Bethsebe and his son Terrence Budd, as well as with people from his artistic and institutional circles, including Michael Byron, Gavin

Bryars, Jim Fox, Daniel Lentz, David Mahler, Carl Stone, and others. These interviews extend the archive by recovering forms of memory, pedagogy, domestic experience, and artistic exchange only partly preserved in written documents. They help reconstruct how Budd's music was lived around him: in classrooms, rehearsals, friendships, family life, and studios. Used alongside correspondence, this testimony does more than verify facts. It shows how Budd's compositional life moved across personal, institutional, and transnational settings, and how his work came to mean different things to family members, students, peers, and collaborators.

Other significant repositories extend the dissertation's archival base across the institutional, regional, and transatlantic circuits through which Budd's work moved. These include Peter Garland's correspondence at the Harry Ransom Center; the Marty Walker Collection at Stanford; the Pauline Oliveros papers and concert archives at UC San Diego; the David Cloud papers and related collections at UCLA; the Ingolf Dahl papers and USC Thornton materials at USC; California Time Machine materials at UC Santa Barbara; the Moldenhauer Archives at Harvard; holdings at the Getty Research Institute; University of Memphis recordings; and *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde* and related collections at the University of North Texas. Additional materials were consulted at the Library of Congress, Northwestern, the New York Public Library, the Smithsonian Archives of American Art, the University of Washington, and UC Irvine, while radio and interview sources at the Pacifica Radio Archive, Other Minds, the Oral History of American Music, and the Martin Perlich interviews were crucial for reconstructing performance, reception, and retrospective memory. Taken together, these collections make it possible to follow Budd's activity across universities, festivals, composer-run

publications, concert series, museums, and recording environments, and to situate Southern California experimentalism within wider American and transatlantic formations.

The dissertation also relies on close musical analysis, but not as an autonomous formal method detached from these materials. Rather, analysis shows how Budd's technical decisions about harmony, pacing, dynamics, instrumentation, notation, and performance instruction took shape within the same social and documentary worlds preserved in letters, interviews, teaching materials, and performance documents. Syllabi reveal how visual and literary traditions entered Budd's compositional thought; manuscript scores show that the page itself often functioned as an aesthetic object; reviews, broadcasts, and concert documents record the scandal, confusion, or fascination produced by beauty in spaces where difficulty, complexity, or severity were still expected. Read together, these materials enable synchronization of technical analysis with institutional and social history. Finally, the dissertation draws on reception and media history to track how Budd's work was heard, misunderstood, resisted, and later reframed by critics, programmers, performers, and recording discourse. This combination of methods allows the project to treat Budd neither as an isolated genius nor as a symptom of generalized trends, but as a composer whose work was made in and through the dense material life of a regional experimental culture. The advantage of Budd's archive, broadly understood, is precisely that it preserves this density. It allows the dissertation to show, with unusual precision, how compositional ideas moved through letters, classrooms, rehearsals, performances, publications, family life, and recordings, and how those forms of circulation shaped what the music could become.

Literature Review

The dissertation takes as its point of departure the body of scholarship that has shaped how postwar experimental music and minimalism are understood. Foundational studies by Michael Nyman and David Nicholls remain indispensable for establishing the critical vocabulary through which these histories have been narrated, including indeterminacy, process, anti-teleology, the "New York School," and the emergence of minimalism as both a repertory and a critical category.[3] Even when they acknowledge the decentralization of postwar experimental music, New York often remains the primary site through which that history becomes legible, while California appears as a peripheral extension, a regional aside, or a stylistic variation on developments presumed to have originated elsewhere.

More recent scholarship by Benjamin Piekut, Robert Fink, Christophe Levaux, Kerry O'Brien, and William Robin has been crucial in unsettling those inherited frameworks. Rather than treating experimentalism and minimalism as stable stylistic categories, their work directs attention toward canon formation, documentation, mediation, and the cultural practices through which musical histories are produced and sustained.[4] This shift is central to the present study. Harold Budd appears here not as a

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[3] Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); David Nicholls, "Avant-Garde and Experimental Music," in *The Cambridge History of American Music*, ed. David Nicholls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 517–34; David Nicholls, "Getting Rid of the Glue: The Music of the New York School," *Journal of American Studies* 27, no. 3 (December 1993): 335–53.

[4] Benjamin Piekut, *Experimentalism Otherwise: The New York Avant-Garde and Its Limits* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Robert Fink, *Repeating Ourselves: American Minimal Music as Cultural Practice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Christophe Levaux, *We Have Always Been Minimalist: The Construction and Triumph of a*

marginal addition to an already established minimalist canon, but as a figure through whom the canon's geographic, institutional, and medial instability comes more clearly into view. A second body of scholarship has been essential to reconstructing Southern California experimentalism as a regional formation in its own right rather than as a peripheral outgrowth of East Coast developments. Amy C. Beal's work has been especially important throughout this dissertation, both for its sustained attention to figures beyond the established canon and for its methodological insistence that composer-run publications, independent magazines, concert series, and regional institutions be understood as active forces in the making of musical history. Barney Childs is equally significant here, both as a primary figure within the dissertation and as a critical writer whose essays on American composition and review of Nyman expose the blind spots of Eurocentric and East Coast-centered accounts.[5] Tom Johnson is useful in a related but more limited way. As one of the early critics trying to register minimalism while it was still forming, he noticed that a West Coast scene existed and that publications such as *SOUNDINGS* pointed to a different constellation of names and values than those familiar from New York, even if his descriptions of California music

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Musical Style, trans. Rose Vekony (Oakland: University of California Press, 2020); Kerry O'Brien and William Robin, *On Minimalism: Documenting a Musical Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2023).

[5] Barney Childs, "Directions in American Composition since the Second World War," *Music Educators Journal* 61, no. 7 (March 1975): 34–45; Barney Childs, "Review of *Experimental Music* by Michael Nyman," *Music Educators Journal* 61, no. 9 (May 1975): 79–82.

could flatten that difference into innocence, simplicity, or naiveté.[6] David W. Bernstein's work on the San Francisco Tape Music Center and the wider Bay Area remains essential for reconstructing the broader West Coast infrastructure of experimentalism, even when the present study shifts the regional center of gravity southward toward Los Angeles, CalArts, and the museum and university networks surrounding Budd.[7] Read together, this scholarship does not yet provide a full account of Southern California experimentalism, but it establishes the methodological and regional field in which such an account becomes possible.

A third cluster of scholarship is more directly tied to Budd's immediate milieu and to the institutional and social worlds traced in the dissertation's middle chapters. Dean Paul Suzuki is especially important because his 1991 dissertation appears to be the first dissertation-length study to engage Budd directly, placing him within a broader account of minimalism and experimental practice at a moment when Budd remained peripheral to most scholarly narratives.[8] For the CalArts milieu and its surrounding networks, Ingram Marshall, Peter Garland, Brett Boutwell, and related work on the school's early years have been especially useful. Marshall's contemporaneous writing preserves an unusually vivid sense of CalArts's instability, ambition, and aesthetic range

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[6] Tom Johnson, "Soundings from the West Coast (August 30, 1973)," in *The Voice of New Music: New York City, 1972–1982: A Collection of Articles Originally Published in the Village Voice* (Eindhoven, The Netherlands: Het Apollohuis, 1989), 95–98.

[7] David W. Bernstein, ed., *The San Francisco Tape Music Center: 1960s Counterculture and the Avant-Garde* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

[8] Dean Paul Suzuki, "Minimal Music: Its Evolution as Seen in the Works of Philip Glass, Steve Reich, Terry Riley, and La Monte Young" (PhD diss., University of Southern California, 1991).

in the early 1970s; Garland's unpublished writings on Budd and the early CalArts years offer a rare insider perspective on the musical and social environment from which many of the dissertation's central figures emerged; and Boutwell's work on Terry Jennings and on postwar music's relation to visual art clarifies some of the more elusive presences in Budd's orbit.[9] This scholarship matters not only for supplying background but for helping frame one of the dissertation's central claims: that Southern California experimentalism was sustained through overlapping institutions, pedagogies, friendships, scene-making practices, and useful fictions, rather than through a single style or movement. In that respect, the literature surrounding CalArts, West Coast minimalism, and Budd's contemporaries is most valuable when it helps illuminate the ecology in which Budd's work took shape, even when Budd himself remains only partially visible within it. A fourth body of scholarship has been crucial because the dissertation understands Budd's work not only through musical style but through visual, aesthetic, and medial frames. For Chapter Four, especially, writing by Linda Merrill, Daniel E. Sutherland, Melody Barnett Deusner, and Paul Greenhalgh has helped situate Budd's attraction to Whistler, aestheticism, ornamental refinement, Art Nouveau, cultivated

[9] Ingram Marshall, "New Music at Cal Arts: The First Four Years (1970–1974)," *Numus West* 7, no. 2/1 (Winter 1975): 52–60; Peter Garland, *The Cal Arts Years (1970–1973)* (unpublished manuscript, 2013); Peter Garland, *Harold Budd* (unpublished manuscript, 2022); Brett Boutwell, "Terry Jennings, the Lost Minimalist," *American Music* 32, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 82–107; Brett Boutwell, "A Static Sublime: Morton Feldman and the Visual (1950–1970)" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2006); Philipp Kaiser and Christina Végh, eds., *Where Art Might Happen: The Early Years of CalArts*, trans. Rebecca van Dyck and Michael Stoeber (Hannover: Kestner Gesellschaft, 2020).

surface, and the rhetoric of beauty within a broader art-historical lineage.[10] This literature makes it possible to understand Budd's early-1970s turn toward prettiness, atmosphere, and uselessness not as decorative excess or retreat, but as a historically grounded aesthetic position. At the same time, work by Brett Boutwell and Amy C. Beal on Morton Feldman and the visual arts has helped clarify how postwar composers drew on painting as a model for stillness, abstraction, scale, and perceptual experience, even when Budd's own relation to visual art differs significantly from Feldman's.[11] For the dissertation's final chapter and conclusion, scholarship on Brian Eno, ambient music, and studio production by writers such as David Toop, Mark Prendergast, and Victor Szabo has also been important, though often more as a discourse to be revised than simply adopted.[12] That literature helps explain how Budd was later received, categorized, and absorbed into the ambient history, but the dissertation argues that those studio afterlives can only be fully understood by returning them to the Southern California experimental networks, Black musical modernisms, institutional formations, and compositional problems from which they emerged. Taken together, these bodies of scholarship make it

[10] Linda Merrill, *The Peacock Room: A Cultural Biography* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998); Daniel E. Sutherland, *Whistler: A Life for Art's Sake* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); Melody Barnett Deusner, *Aesthetic Painting in Britain and America: Networks, Systems, and the Aesthetic Object* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017); Paul Greenhalgh, *Art Nouveau 1890–1914* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2000).

[11] Brett Boutwell, "A Static Sublime"; Amy C. Beal, "Time Canvasses: Morton Feldman and the Painters of the New York School," *Music and Modern Art (Border Crossings)*. James Leggio, ed. (New York: Routledge Publishing, 2002), 227-245.

[12] David Toop, *Ocean of Sound: Ambient Sound and Radical Listening in the Age of Communication* (London: Serpent's Tail, 1995); Mark J. Prendergast, *The Ambient Century: From Mahler to Moby: The Evolution of Sound in the Electronic Age* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2003); Victor Szabo, *Turn On, Tune In, Drift Off: Ambient Music's Psychedelic Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023).

possible to approach Budd not as an ambient outlier or a secondary minimalist, but as a central figure within a distinct Southern California experimental formation whose institutions, publications, collaborators, and aesthetic commitments remain understudied in dominant histories of postwar American music.

Reflected in the Eye of a Dragonfly

Reflected in the eye of a dragonfly on a lunar pool
And we will sail away on oceans

And a haze of carillons and juniper spines from the great
valley of humming gongs
On ships that sail away forever

Unexplained light reflected from the spine of a
metallic viper
I'll seal your radiant kiss my lover

Strange rooms engulfed by a halo of alien architecture
Like sun across my eyes forever

And a dark garden of dragonflies encased in sulfur
You'll see me standing there my lover

Through a silent walk through flowered knife shadows
Like trees against the sky forever

Then an unexplained kiss from a lethal angel
Then we will sail away on oceans

Reflected in the eye of a dragonfly in a lunar pool
On ships that sail away forever

Harold Budd *Glyph*, (Brussels, 1995)

Chapter One: Before "Pretty" Music (1936–70)

Listening in Los Angeles

Harold Montgomery Budd Jr. was born in Los Angeles in 1936 and came of age amid the sounds, images, and lingering mythologies of the American West.[13] His father, a successful salesman from Meriden, Connecticut, was nearly fifty when Budd was born and possessed a deep fascination with the nineteenth-century West, collecting rare coins minted across the region. Budd spent long stretches of his childhood traveling with his father and brother through the desert landscapes of Southern California and Nevada, visiting what he later remembered as "ghost towns, old mines, places where things actually happened in the last century, the gun fights."[14]

The family home offered an equally varied musical terrain. His father favored Strauss waltzes, Sousa marches, and glee club records. His mother, Dorothy, who was born in West Virginia and raised on cattle farms in Colorado and Texas, preferred sentimental songs, cowboy ballads, and Mexican music, and played the harmonium at home. Budd's earliest musical world was therefore neither singular nor systematic. It was assembled from domestic music making, records, marching-band repertory, popular song, cowboy ballads, Mexican music, and, eventually, jazz. Long before he entered a

[13] Vincent Plush, "Harold Budd," *Major Figures in American Music, Oral History of American Music, in the Music Library of Yale University* (May 3, 1983), 1.

[14] Vincent Plush, "Harold Budd," 3.

conservatory or composed his first mature works, he learned to hear music as a field of overlapping memories, places, and cultural traditions.[15]

Budd's childhood, however, was far from idyllic. His father's work kept him frequently away from home, and while Budd was still a preschooler, his mother became seriously ill and spent long periods in the hospital. During her absences, the care of Budd and his brother fell largely to a nanny, introducing instability and separation into the domestic world of his earliest years.[16] By middle school, Budd had begun taking drum lessons, less from a love of practicing than in deference to his father's enthusiasm for the percussion lines of New England marching bands. Within the instability of his early home life, recorded music offered a more private refuge. Looking back, Budd recalled how certain records reached emotions that otherwise seemed inaccessible within the household, opening onto what he called "a kind of escapist dreaming in music." The experience was not merely pleasurable but necessary, giving him access to an interior world that felt more expansive than the one around him.[17]

The instability of Budd's childhood deepened after the death of his father. Budd was fourteen, his much older sister had already left home, and his mother was suddenly responsible for raising him and his brother alone. The loss further eroded the family's already precarious middle-class security. As a teenager, Budd showed little interest in school, earning mostly D's and F's while becoming increasingly absorbed in the bebop of

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[15] Ibid, 1–5.

[16] Ibid., 6.

[17] Ibid., 8.

Charlie Parker and Bud Powell. He never completed high school and was reportedly expelled for "insubordination," an early sign of the resistance to authority that would later become a defining feature of his artistic life.[18] During summer school, Budd frequently skipped class and rode with friends along Olympic Boulevard toward Santa Monica, the car radio tuned to Stan Getz's cool jazz. The contrast between bebop's nervous intensity and Getz's languid lyricism proved revelatory. Budd later remembered thinking, "This is the way I want to spend my life; I want to be happy like I am right now forever." Getz seemed to embody an entirely different way of inhabiting music: "he was so cool, he was so laid back, and he was so unlike jazz, it was like butter."[19] In that sound, Budd discovered not only a musical preference but an ideal of ease, beauty, and emotional freedom that would remain with him throughout his life.

After a brief and unsuccessful move to San Francisco, Budd enrolled at Los Angeles City College (LACC) in 1957. He later described it wryly as "the place to go if you didn't get accepted to any other college," yet the school proved decisive in his musical development. Studying with H. Endicott Hanson and Leonard Stein, Budd took his first formal course in music theory, encountered the music of Bruckner and Debussy, and began learning to read orchestral scores with sustained attention. The first score he studied closely was Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (1913), whose dense rhythms and orchestral complexity opened a new world of compositional possibility. Although LACC

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[18] Peter Garland, *Harold Budd: Architect of Longing and Desire* (unpublished essay, 2022), 4.

[19] Akira Rabelais, *Samadhisound Podcast #2: Akira Rabelais Interviews Harold Budd*, April 25, 2007.

offered no formal program in composition, it was there, in his early twenties, that Budd first began to imagine composing not simply as an interest, but as a possible life.[20]

Budd later recalled attending a performance of Silvestre Revueltas's *8 x Radio* (1933) on the LACC campus, part of the eclectic musical world of late-1950s Los Angeles. A compact modernist work built from abrupt changes in texture, color, and mood, the piece seemed to mimic the fractured logic of radio itself. The performance brought together an unlikely constellation of musicians. Eric Dolphy, already emerging as one of the city's most adventurous jazz players, performed the maracas part; Terry Jennings, a young Los Angeles composer moving through experimental circles, sat nearby "in a stupor"; and Leonard Stein listened with visible enthusiasm.

Budd, however, had one eye on the clock. He needed to catch the last Vermont Avenue Red Car to South Broadway, where he was earning extra money playing drums at night with Napoleon Fuller's jazz sextet (Figure 1). The evening ended in chaos when a listener hurled a bottle at the bandstand. For Budd, the collision of modernist concert music, working jazz, public transportation, and unruly spectacle captured something essential about the musical life of Los Angeles and about his own uncertain place within it.[21]

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[20] Plush, "Harold Budd," 26.

[21] "December 1, 1975," Harold Budd to Peter Garland, *Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records*, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 20.5.

Figure 1. Harold Budd Playing Drums (ca. late 1950s). Reproduced from Harold Budd's Facebook page, February 26, 2016.



During these same years, Budd's emerging interest in composition intersected with the informal and often accidental creative networks of Hollywood. He later recalled taking a job at the Pickwick Book Shop on Hollywood Boulevard, only to leave after three hours when a friend entered as a customer and hired him on the spot as a "Boy Friday" for his father's animation company. The episode captures the improvisatory character of Hollywood's cultural economy, in which employment, friendship, and artistic opportunity can converge through a chance encounter.[22] The job drew Budd into a

[22] "December 14, 1977," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1; The phrase "Boy Friday" derives from "Man Friday," Robinson Crusoe's servant and companion in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, and generally denotes a junior all-purpose assistant or errand-runner.

creative milieu that, in his recollection, included musicians and artists such as Paul Bley, Jimmy Giuffre, Mel Edwards, David Novros, and Red Callender.

Budd also remembered composing music for several of the company's short films, suggesting that his earliest practical experience writing for images emerged not from formal academic study but from the informal labor and social networks of Hollywood. Looking back, he described this cultural moment as "pre-Coltrane/post-Tristano": a transitional period in which the cool, linear modernism associated with Lennie Tristano and his circle had already reshaped the jazz landscape, but before John Coltrane's music became one of its defining points of reference.[23] The phrase is approximate, but it usefully locates Budd's recollection in the late 1950s, when he was moving from adolescence into his early twenties. For Budd, these were "the olden days," a period in Los Angeles when jazz listening, wage labor, Hollywood animation, and his first experiments in composition remained closely intertwined.[24]

Military service interrupted this loose, locally rooted formation in 1959, cutting short Budd's studies at LACC while redirecting his musical education along a more disciplined path. Stationed at the Presidio of Monterey, he played drums in the Army band and became increasingly fluent in reading Western notation. Away from his military duties, he spent long hours at the Monterey Public Library, listening widely and studying orchestral scores by composers ranging from Mozart and Beethoven to Bruckner, Mahler, Debussy, Stravinsky, Bartók, Hindemith, and others. What began as an interruption thus became another kind of apprenticeship, joining the practical rigor of

[23] "December 14, 1977," Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

[24] Ibid.

military musicianship with an intensive, largely self-directed encounter with the European concert tradition.[25] At the same time, Budd's immersion in that repertoire did not displace his attachment to jazz. He recalled becoming "an absolute jazz fanatic" as a teenager, first through bebop and later through the more exploratory music of Albert Ayler, Ornette Coleman, and Paul Bley.[26] These informal studies broadened his musical vocabulary, and he began conducting Hindemith for an amateur Army ensemble.[27] He also composed a short piece for the group that drew on the styles of living American composers such as Aaron Copland, Norman Dello Joio, and Alan Hovhaness.[28] The experience proved formative, bringing bebop, cool jazz, European modernism, and American concert music into the same evolving conception of what composition might be.

Against Serialism

Budd's departure from the military and his dissatisfaction with civilian life pushed him to find a place where he could resume his undergraduate studies in music. A friend from the Army band recommended San Fernando Valley State College (SFVSC), now California State University, Northridge, where Gerald Strang had recently established an experimental music program. Strang, a composer closely associated with Arnold Schoenberg, belonged to a lineage Budd already knew by reputation. Still working

[25] Plush, "Harold Budd," 19–20.

[26] Ibid., 18–21.

[27] "Harold Budd's Curriculum Vitae (ca. 1978)," The Harold Budd Estate.

[28] Plush, "Harold Budd," 22.

primarily as a drummer, Budd associated him with an older California experimental tradition, especially the percussion-centered work of figures such as John Cage, Henry Cowell, and Lou Harrison, whose music had already shaped his listening.[29]

Older than many of his classmates, Budd found the atmosphere at SFVSC more conservative than he had anticipated. In the early 1960s, serialism and postwar European modernism still carried considerable authority within university composition circles, but Budd resisted their procedures and orthodoxies. He was drawn instead to the radical sound world of Edgard Varèse, whose *Déserts* (1954) and *Poème électronique* (1958) transformed noise, timbre, and organized sound into vast, architectonic environments. Budd admired Varèse's "massive blocks of sound" and the nonteleological conception of musical time they seemed to embody. Each event, he later observed, appeared to begin "from square one": sound did not emerge as the necessary consequence of what preceded it but remained "rather static," occupying aural space without depending on, as he put it, "some extra-musical notion to generate what happens next." In Varèse, Budd encountered a model of music built less from development than from presence, weight, and spatial force.[30]

Varèse's music did not provide Budd with a direct compositional model, but it offered a way beyond the dominant pedagogical frameworks of the early 1960s. Its emphasis on stasis, mass, and texture also resonated with an earlier musical encounter. Budd later recalled being "stuck in an army band" with Albert Ayler in the late 1950s, where Ayler wanted to "make this wall of sound and then start going." Budd immediately

[29] Plush, "Harold Budd," 23–25.

[30] Ibid., 31.

recognized the appeal: "hell yes, I'd love to do that with you." What attracted him was the possibility of "simply making a wall of sound," of doing something "untoward" that "absolutely freed you up," even if, as he wryly remembered, he was "about the only guy" who found the idea compelling.[31] Ayler offered no more of a direct template than Varèse, but the encounter deepened Budd's attraction to sound as mass, energy, and texture rather than as tightly regulated form or linear development.

While at SFVSC, Budd formed a close friendship with the pianist Peter Hewitt, whose wide-ranging musical interests introduced him more fully to the work of the New York experimentalists. "Before I graduated from that college," Budd later recalled, "I heard Morton Feldman for the first time and saw his scores, and that was revelatory to me. The scores didn't have music paper, the same with John Cage. I was just enthralled with those two guys." The revelation was both visual and sonic. Feldman's and Cage's scores departed from the conventions of staff notation, recasting the page as a field of graphic relationships, spatial cues, indeterminate choices, and instructions for performance. Around the same time, Budd attended a presentation organized by Strang at which Cage introduced several recent works. Among them was *Where Are We Going? and What Are We Doing?* (1961), a text composition that blurred the boundaries between music, speech, and poetry through overlapping language informed by Zen Buddhism and Wittgenstein.[32] Cage and David Tudor also performed *Cartridge Music* (1960), amplifying

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[31] "Harold Budd: Pretty Music, " John Diliberto, and Kimberly Haas, producers, *Totally Wired* I, no. 8. Los Angeles: Pacifica Radio Archive, (Summer 1987): 4:50–5:36, SZ0445.08.

[32] Rob Haskins, *John Cage* (London, UK: Reaktion Books, 2012), 81; This lecture was first published in Cage's influential book *Silence* (1961). John Cage, *Silence* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 194–259.

the minute sounds of feathers, matches, pipe cleaners, and other everyday objects through phonograph cartridges. For Budd, these works demonstrated that composition could begin not only with notes and inherited forms, but with language, objects, space, and the act of listening itself.[33]

Cage's appearance at SFVSC was anything but a conventional lecture. Combining theater, electronic sound, and poetry, the event overturned nearly every expectation of what a university presentation on music might be. Promotional materials emphasized Cage's reputation as an artistic provocateur, quoting Strang's observation that he "has made a career out of doing exactly the opposite of what everyone else is doing."[34] The response, however, exposed the limits of SFVSC's experimental ambitions. To many in attendance, Cage and Tudor's work was not liberating but bewildering. Budd later recalled that Strang had "made the mistake" of bringing them to campus and that the performance was "roundly booed." Cage appearing in Northridge in 1961, he remarked, "must have been like going to the moon."[35] Not long afterward, Strang left the institution, and Budd found himself without the composition teacher whose experimental program had drawn him there in the first place.

The Cuban American composer Aurelio de la Vega joined the faculty in 1959 and helped connect SFVSC to international currents in new music, particularly electronic composition and the serial practices associated with Pierre Boulez, Henri Pousseur, and

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[33] Haskins, *John Cage*, 82.

[34] Plush, "Harold Budd," 27.

[35] Ibid.

Karlheinz Stockhausen. [36] He took Budd on as a student, though their relationship was not without friction. Budd initially felt pressured to conform to de la Vega's stylistic priorities, but over time, he came to value his teacher's exacting discipline, especially in orchestration. De la Vega insisted, Budd later recalled, that he learned to write "directly for the sound." Orchestration was not simply a matter of assigning preexisting harmonies to instruments; it meant shaping timbre, register, weight, and sonority at their source.[37] This conception of sound as primary compositional material resonated with Budd's earlier experiences, from the "wall of sound" he remembered pursuing with Ayler to his attraction to Varèse's static, spatial masses. Under de la Vega, those intuitions began to acquire the precision of a compositional method.

By the end of his studies at SFVSC, Budd faced several possible paths into graduate study. He received a scholarship to study with Alberto Ginastera at the University of Argentina but declined the offer, in part because his wife was Jewish and he understood Buenos Aires at the time to be marked by considerable antisemitic hostility. He was also admitted to the University of California, Berkeley, though its foreign-language requirement proved discouraging. Budd ultimately chose the University of Southern California (USC), where he continued the disciplined study of orchestration even as his musical imagination moved increasingly toward the New York avant-garde

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[36] Gilbert Chase, *America's Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1966), 688–690.

[37] Plush, "Harold Budd," 25.

and toward experimental practices that exceeded the stylistic and institutional boundaries of academic composition.[38]

University of Southern California

From 1963 to 1966, Budd studied composition at USC with Ingolf Dahl, the German-born American composer, pianist, conductor, and scholar. Dahl's music, initially rooted in German modernism, gradually absorbed the influence of his American surroundings and his close association with Igor Stravinsky in Los Angeles. Its formal clarity, motivic precision, and finely controlled orchestration offered Budd a powerful model of compositional discipline, even as his own interests were beginning to move toward more experimental terrain. Budd would eventually reject many of the conventions of academic composition, but his early works nevertheless retain traces of Dahl's insistence on craft, proportion, and instrumental detail. Their relationship also appears warm and mutually respectful. Budd later remembered that "Ingolf was actually one of the good guys."[39] Following Dahl's death in 1970, he attended a memorial concert at USC that drew an "enormous turnout" and featured what he recalled as a "very pleasant program." Michael Tilson Thomas, another former Dahl student, conducted the evening and, Budd added approvingly, "did it well too."[40]

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[38] Ibid, 28–29.

[39] "September 5," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Unknown Year.

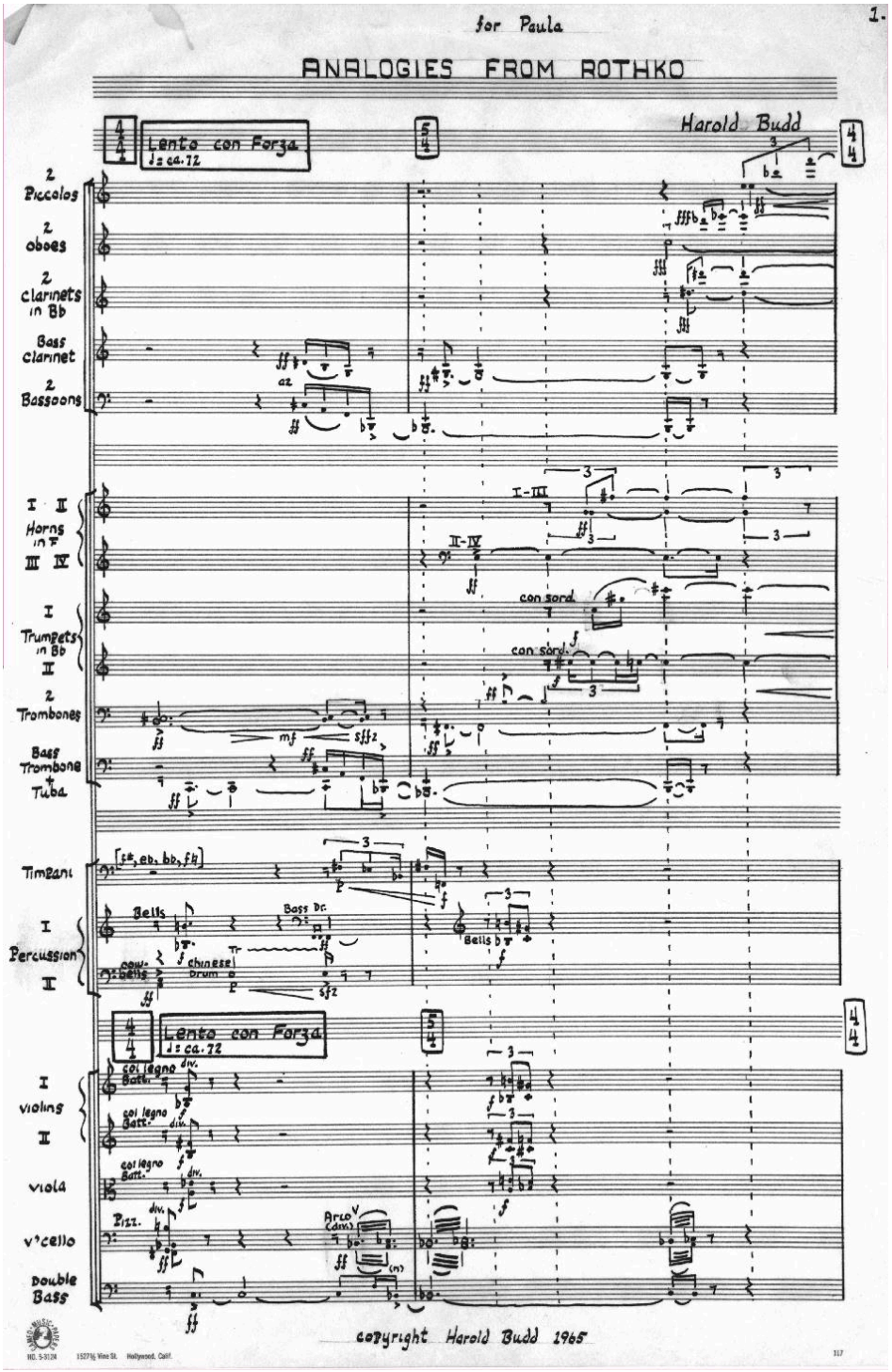
[40] "September 22," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Unknown Year.

During his years at USC, Budd continued to compose fully notated works grounded in the academic discipline of his earlier training, even as his imagination began to turn toward American Abstract Expressionism. This developing dialogue between music and visual art first took substantial form in *Analogies from Rothko* (1965), an orchestral work dedicated to Bethsebe whose title suggests an effort to translate the scale, intensity, and chromatic fields of Rothko's paintings into sound (Figure 2). The relationship, however, was evocative rather than programmatic. Marked *lento con forza* and surging from *forte* to *fortissimo*, the opening belongs more readily to the language of postwar atonal modernism than to the hushed spaciousness Budd would later make his own.

Even so, *Analogies from Rothko* marks an important expansion of Budd's artistic horizon. His attraction to painting was becoming more than a source of titles or imagery; it offered another way of thinking about color, surface, scale, and the organization of time. Budd sent Rothko a letter and a draft of the score through the Marlborough Gallery in New York. Rothko's reply addressed the younger composer's uncertainty about his artistic voice with reassurance drawn from his own experience: "I hope that you are productive in spite of all the disappointment and frustration which you must feel. I do not know how old a man you are, but I think of my generation; and I might say truthfully that the years of rejection were the best of all."[41]

[41] Letter from Mark Rothko to Harold Budd, 1964, reproduced on the Harold Budd Facebook page, posted June 25, 2015.

Figure 2. Harold Budd, *Analogies from Rothko* (1965), first page. Reproduced from Harold Budd's Facebook page, February 26, 2016.



Rothko's reply did not end the exchange. Intrigued by *Analogies from Rothko* but uncertain what to make of it, he asked his close friend Morton Feldman whether the score could be played at the piano. Feldman reportedly replied that it was "not that type of music."[42] Several years later, when Budd traveled to New York and contacted Feldman, the composer mentioned that Rothko wanted to meet him. The encounter took place in Rothko's studio, which Budd remembered as "a big, big place," while the painter was working on the paintings that would eventually occupy the Rothko Chapel. Budd spent the afternoon with Rothko and Feldman "drinking scotch and shooting the shit," an experience he later described as "the most wonderful afternoon for a young composer to confront two of his heroes, Feldman and Rothko."[43] The meeting gave personal form to an artistic connection Budd had already begun to imagine. Composition and modern painting came together not through any literal translation of image into sound, but through a shared attention to structure, surface, scale, duration, and perception. In Rothko and Feldman, Budd encountered two artists who demonstrated how an apparently limited field of materials could sustain enormous expressive and perceptual depth.

Rothko, Tobey, and Visual Analogy

Budd extended his engagement with visual art in *The Edge of August* (1966), a spare atonal work for alto flute and piano whose title echoes Mark Tobey's 1953 painting of the same

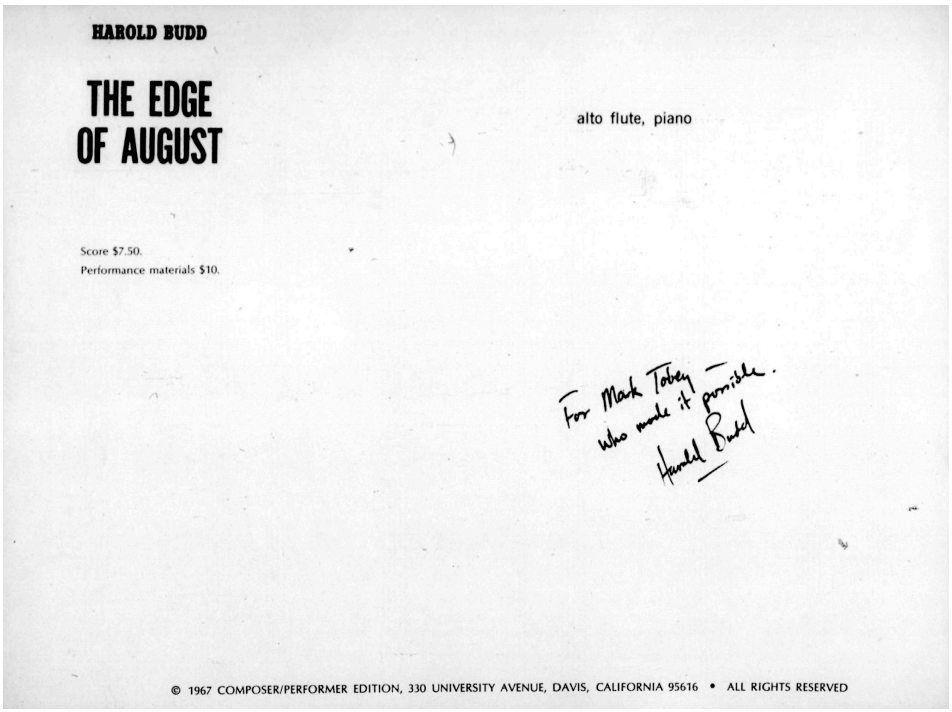
[42] Jason Hoffer, "Harold Budd interviewed by Jason Hoffer, May 3, 2012," *Little Darla Has A Treat For You*, Vol. 28, Lucky 2013.

[43] Jason Hoffer, "Harold Budd interviewed by Jason Hoffer.

name. On the manuscript cover, he dedicated the piece "To Mark Tobey, who made it possible," a gesture that suggests a young composer placing his work in dialogue with an admired artist, even when the relationship remained aspirational rather than direct (Figure 3). The piece does not attempt to translate Tobey's painting into musical terms. Instead, it registers Budd's growing conviction that a title can shape a composition's identity and reception. For Budd, titles were never incidental. They offered listeners a point of entry, directing attention and establishing an imaginative frame before the first sound was heard. As he later explained, "If 'notation' is intended as information to a second party, how about 'titles,' which also, I think you would agree, say something, a tip off to the third party as well (the audience)."[44] The reference to Tobey therefore matters less as a coded visual analogy than as an early example of Budd's increasingly deliberate use of naming as part of the compositional act itself.

[44] September 5," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*.

Figure 3. Harold Budd, *The Edge of August* (1966), title page. Mark Tobey Papers, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections. Series 13: Music Scores, Box 10, Folder 19.



Tobey's *The Edge of August*, rendered in his characteristic "white writing" technique, layers dense, calligraphic strokes across a muted, fog-like ground. Faint traces of green flicker beneath the surface, suggesting the final bloom of summer without resolving into a recognizable scene. The painting hovers, as Tobey put it, around "the thing that lies between two conditions of nature," occupying a threshold between seasons, defined less by representation than by abstraction, vibration, and suspended light.

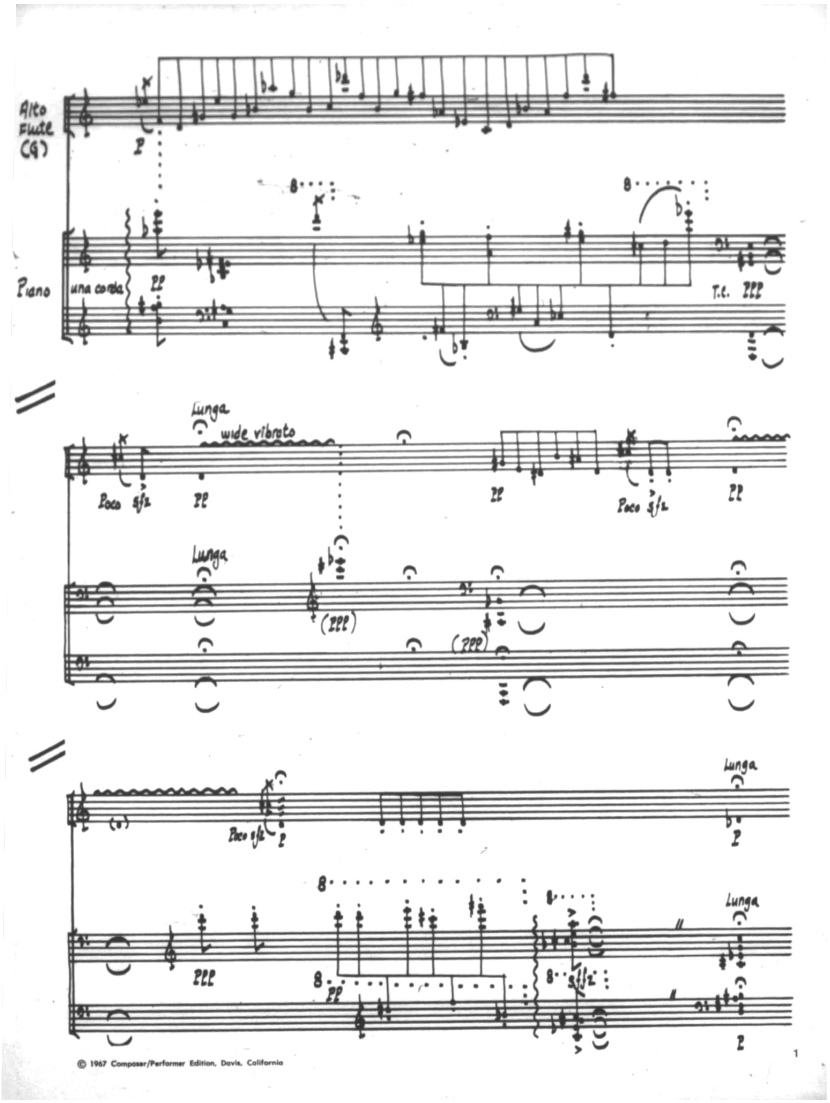
Budd's *The Edge of August* (1966), for alto flute and piano, does not translate Tobey's painting directly into sound (Figure 4). Instead, it unfolds through spare,

predominantly *pianissimo* exchanges between the two instruments, punctuated by occasional *forte* outbursts. Like Tobey's painting, the work creates tension between stillness and activity, but its connection lies less in any precise correspondence than in a shared fascination with delicacy, interruption, and states of suspension.

The score's conventional Italian markings and extensive use of *una corda* show Budd still working within the inherited language of classical notation, even as its muted sonorities anticipate the softened textures of his later music. Rather than depicting Tobey's painting, the piece uses its title to establish an imaginative frame for a sparse atonal composition shaped by abstraction, restraint, and carefully controlled contrasts. As David Mahler later observed, Budd was frequently drawn to independent artistic figures whom he regarded as "heroes."[45] Tobey occupied this role precisely: less a direct compositional model than an admired figure whose name allowed Budd to situate the work within a broader artistic constellation. Read in this context, the "edge" names more than the seasonal threshold suggested by Tobey's painting. It also evokes Budd's own position between European modernist rigor and the experimental directions he would soon pursue. The work stands at that boundary, still grounded in established compositional procedures but already reaching toward a musical language defined increasingly by quiet, suspension, and the imaginative force of naming.

[45] Author Interview with David Mahler, October 22, 2022.

Figure 4. Harold Budd, *The Edge of August* (1966), page one. Mark Tobey Papers, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections. Series 13: Music Scores, Box 10, Folder 19.



Before graduating from USC in 1966, Budd completed *String Quartet* (1965), an expansive two-movement work submitted as his master's thesis and written for a medium to which he would return throughout his life. Like *The Edge of August*, the quartet is atonal and predominantly quiet, its restrained dynamic field punctured by occasional *forte*

eruptions. Its deliberately generic title also recalls the naming practices of 1950s New York experimentalists such as Earle Brown, John Cage, and Morton Feldman, whose scores Budd had studied closely.[46] Considered alongside *Analogies from Rothko* and *The Edge of August*, the quartet clarifies the broader trajectory of Budd's USC years. These works document his negotiation between the discipline of academic modernism and an emerging poetic language shaped by visual art, abstraction, restraint, and the suggestive power of titles. They occupy a threshold in his development: still anchored in atonal technique and formal craft, yet already moving toward the quiet, spacious, and increasingly allusive musical world that would become his own.[47]

Open Form and Experiment

By the late 1960s, Budd's music was beginning to move decisively beyond the academic modernism of his USC training. Although he had first encountered the scores of Earle Brown, John Cage, and Morton Feldman as an undergraduate at SFVSC, their influence took firmer hold during his graduate years. USC's library gave him unusually broad access to Cage's work. As Budd later recalled, "They had a hell of a lot of Cage there, and I bet if you go back to the USC School of Music library these days, you'll see every

[46] For example Earle Brown's Music for Violin, Cello, and Piano (1952), Twenty–Five Pages (1953), Octet II (1954); John Cage's *Haiku*, for piano (1950–51), *Music for Carillon* (1952), *4'33"* (1952), *Aria*, for voice (1958); Morton Feldman's *Piece for Violin and Piano* (1950), *Projection 1*, for cello (1950); *Piano Piece 1952* (1952), *Piano Four Hands* (1958); Christian Wolff's *Duo for Violins* (1950), *For Piano With Preparations* (1957), *For Pianist* (1959).

[47] Harold Budd's thesis committee included Ingolf Dahl, Robert Linn, and Halsey Stevens; Harold Budd, "String Quartet, December 31 1965," University of Southern California, *Ingolf Dahl papers*, box: 93. folder 10.

Cage score there checked out once, by me."[48] That immersion soon extended from study to performance. Budd worked closely with the double bassist Bertram Turetzky to realize Cage's *26'1.1499" for a String Player* (1955), an indeterminate score that Turetzky later recorded for Nonesuch Records. Bertram Turetzky, a double bassist already an important figure in contemporary music circles, provided Budd with a practical point of entry into Cage's performance world. Through their collaboration, Budd encountered indeterminacy not merely as an idea on the page but as a process of interpretation, negotiation, and sonic discovery.

In a letter to Cage, Budd described the months he had devoted to preparing the realization and conveyed his excitement at hearing the recording take shape. The collaboration offered him an early point of entry into the broader institutional and recording networks of American experimental music (Figure 5). Barney Childs's liner notes made Budd's contribution explicit, crediting Turetzky's performance to "a brilliant realization made by the young Los Angeles composer Budd" that, "following one of Cage's suggestions for the piece, superimposes different portions of the score to form a multi-tracked version."[49] After hearing a tape of the first eighteen minutes, Budd responded with characteristic enthusiasm: "pretty goddamn good . . . honest to God, it's played very well . . . a remarkable degree of accuracy—it is the piece." His reaction suggests how fully he understood realization as a creative and interpretive act rather than the merely technical execution of an indeterminate score. Around the same time, Budd

[48] Plush, "Harold Budd," 29.

[49] Barney Childs, "The Contemporary Contrabass: New American Music by John Cage, Pauline Oliveros, Ben Johnston," liner notes to John Cage, *26'1.1499" for a string player*, Bertram Turetzky, Nonesuch H71237, 1970.

sent Cage a program for *4'33" in memoriam: Jack Kerouac*, staged in the year of the novelist's death. Cage replied briefly but warmly: "Thank you for all you are doing. Look forward to seeing you sometime."[50] The exchange points to a cordial correspondence and Cage's awareness of Budd's activities, though not necessarily to an established personal relationship

These experiments and discoveries proved formative. Around 1966, as he completed his degree, Budd began adapting techniques associated with Cage, Brown, and Feldman, including indeterminacy, open form, and the structural use of silence, in ways that moved decisively beyond his earlier student works. He briefly considered pursuing a Ph.D., but Ingolf Dahl urged him instead to "go out and make a name for himself."[51] Budd followed that advice, leaving the university to pursue composition independently while supporting his wife, Paula Bethsebe, and their son, Matthew, through work in social services. Outside the academy, he turned more fully toward the experimental practices that had begun to reshape his musical imagination, treating Cage, Brown, and Feldman not simply as influences but as points of departure for a language increasingly his own.[52]

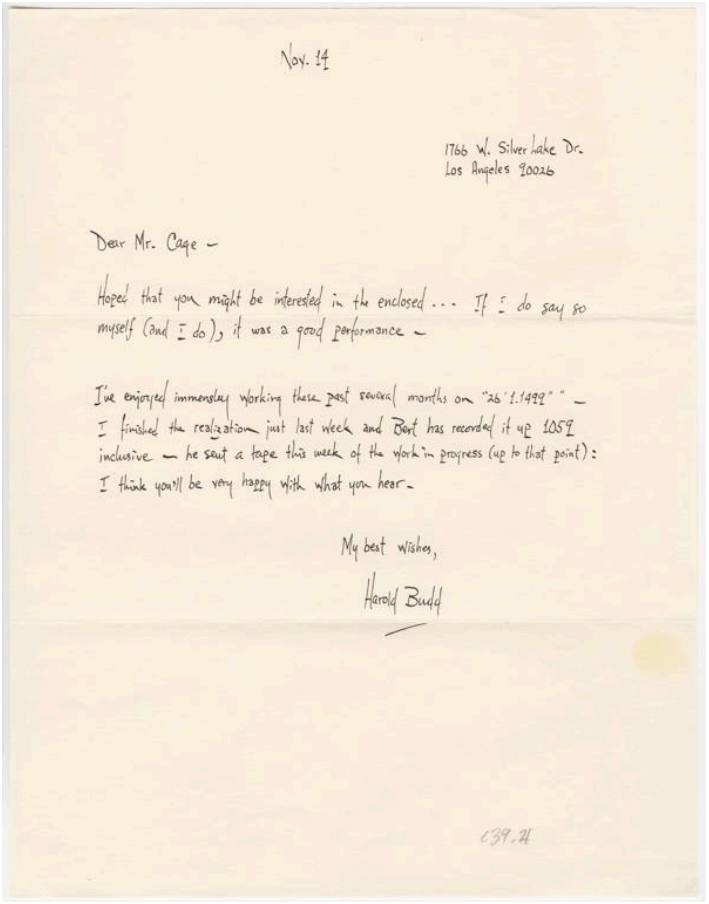
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[50] "November 18," (ca. 1969), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

[51] Author interview with Paula Bethsebe, August 26, 2022.

[52] Ibid.

Figure 5. Harold Budd's 1969 letter to John Cage expressing enthusiasm for his and Bertram Turetzky's work on Cage's *26'1.1499"*. "Harold Budd to John Cage," *John Cage Correspondence*, Music Library, Northwestern University Libraries.



Nov. 14

1766 W. Silver Lake Dr.
Los Angeles 90026

Dear Mr. Cage –

Hope that you might be interested in the enclosed ... If I do say so myself (and I do), it was a good performance –

I've enjoyed immensely working these past several months on "26'1.1499" " – I finished the realization just last week and Bert has recorded it up 105 inclusive – he sent a tape this week of the work in progress (up to that point): I think you'll be very happy with what you hear.

My best wishes,

Harold Budd

C39.21

Earle Brown was among the composers who most clearly shaped Budd's early experiments with open form. Rather than fixing musical events into a single sequence, Brown devised scores that could be read in multiple ways and realized through shifting orders, redistributing formal responsibility to performers and loosening the conventions of linear development. Works such as *December 1952* (1952), *25 Pages* (1953), and *Available Forms I* (1962) treat the score less as a closed script than as a field of possible

relationships.[53] For Budd, the importance of Brown's example lay not in any one procedure but in this broader reconception of form: a composition could establish a flexible set of conditions rather than prescribe a single path through time.

Budd explored this possibility in *New Work nos. 1–5*, composed in 1967. Each piece pairs piano with a different woodwind or brass instrument: oboe in no. 1, bassoon in no. 2, clarinet in no. 3, flute in no. 4, and horn in no. 5. The first three works share the same piano part and may be performed individually or in any combination. Performers enter at a point of their choosing and proceed through the notated material in sequence, producing forms that remain recognizable while changing from one realization to the next. Scored for any member of the clarinet family, *New Work no. 3* further expands the set's timbral range while preserving its quiet, spacious, and durational logic.

New Work no. 5 makes these principles especially clear (Figure 6). Budd assigns each performer "a separate and unique part, related to the other part(s) only in terms of the total texture," replacing conventional coordination with a looser field of overlapping events. Each player begins with a module of their choosing and then proceeds through the score in notated order, while empty modules remain "silent for their full duration."[54]

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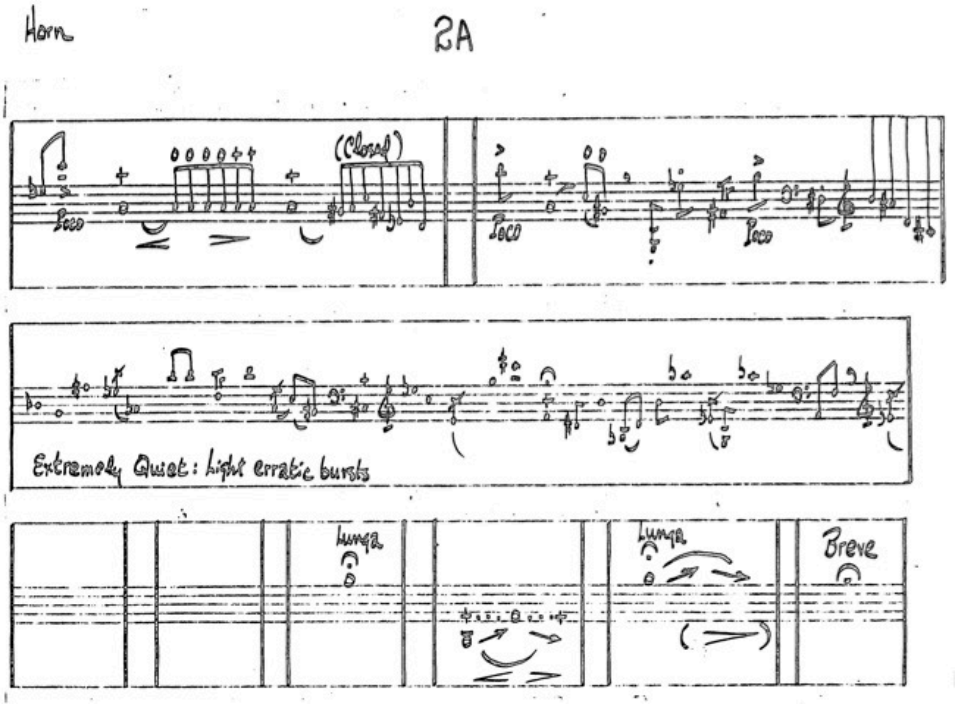
[53] Budd's titles from this period recall Brown's naming practice of using plain temporal markers, as in *December 1952*. Comparable examples in Budd's work include *September Music* (1966) and *November: For Contrabass and Tape* (1967). See Harold Budd, *September Music*, performed by Ronald George and Joan George, UC San Diego Department of Music Concert Archive, October 16, 1971; Harold Budd, *November: For Contrabass and Tape*, performed by Bertram Turetzky, UC San Diego Department of Music Concert Archive, October 27, 1968.

[54] Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "New Work," *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, 1970–74.

The resulting freedom is carefully bound. Silence, soft dynamics, and timbral restraint shape every realization, ensuring that openness does not dissolve into arbitrariness.

Most of the score is marked *pianissimo*, and the pianist is instructed to hold the *una corda* pedal throughout, sustaining a muted and delicately veiled sonority. The horn part is divided into six sections, 1a and 1b, 2a and 2b, and 3a and 3b, from which the performer may choose, introducing a further layer of modular flexibility. In the passage reproduced from section 2a, the third module is marked "Extremely quiet: light, erratic bursts" and consists of brief chromatic figures separated by fermatas marked *lunga*. Budd had already employed similar signs in *Analogies from Rothko* and *The Edge of August*, but here those inherited conventions of Western notation are redirected toward a more experimental conception of musical time. The *lunga* fermatas suspend each chromatic gesture, transforming it from a passing figure into an isolated sonic event, framed by silence and momentarily detached from any expectation of forward motion.

Figure 6. Harold Budd, New Work # 5 (1967), page six. Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "New Work." Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, 1970–74.



Reflecting later on the technical demands of these pieces, Budd responded with amused surprise: "My god: did I say all that? About *New Work*, I mean, to stay away from the sustain pedal, especially on the beamed notes."[55] The instruction reveals how carefully he conceived articulation within this sparse chromatic language. The beamed figures that recur throughout the series depend on clarity of attack and separation; obscured by the pedal, they would lose their identity as discrete sonic events within the surrounding field of quiet, fluid sound.

[55] "Monday" (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

Yet this precision does not produce rigidity. The works already anticipate the durational, "free time" aesthetic Budd would soon cultivate more fully. Expressive cues, silence, and the visual spacing of events shape the pacing of each realization, inviting performers to inhabit the music intuitively rather than submit it to a strict metric pulse. Technical control thus becomes the condition for temporal openness, allowing each sound to emerge with clarity while leaving the larger flow flexible and unsettled.

Noyo, *New Works*, and California Place

Budd's *Noyo* (1966), named after the small Mendocino County community in Northern California, is presumed lost and survives only through archival recordings and scattered descriptions. Even so, these traces allow the work to be reconstructed in broad outline and situated within Budd's developing engagement with indeterminacy and open form. Scored for piano, vibraphone, and chimes, three instruments rich in resonance and decay, *Noyo* unfolds through sparse textures, subdued dynamics, and extended silences, suspending time rather than marking its passage.[56] As in *New Work*, rapid beamed figures emerge with crisp precision as brief, sharply articulated events. The pianist avoids the damper or sustain pedal, preserving the clarity of each attack and preventing the resonant texture from dissolving into a blur. Beneath these fleeting gestures lies a loosely defined, quasi-tonal field, an early expression of what Budd later described as "a love of

[56] Budd's attraction to resonant, slowly decaying instrumental sounds remained central to his later music. The gongs and chimes of the late-1960s works anticipate the piano, marimbas, harp, voices, and other sustained timbres that shape the more mature sound world of *The Pavilion of Dreams* (1972–76), where resonance becomes central to his language of suspension and tonal atmosphere. See Chapters Four and Five.

sounds that are untorn, that seem not to belong together in the classical music sense." Rather than resolving their apparent incompatibility, *Noyo* allows such sounds to coexist within an open, hovering space.[57]

Drawing on Brown's conception of mobile form, Budd described *Noyo* as his "first piece of mobile music," a work whose formal design remains difficult to grasp either on the page or in performance. Yet the piece does more than adopt mobility as a conspicuous experimental device. Budd redirects indeterminacy toward a quieter, more perceptually continuous musical surface, allowing flexible procedures to recede into the experience of listening. Structure remains present, but deliberately unobtrusive, emerging only gradually through the accumulation and disappearance of sound. *Noyo,* therefore, marks a pivotal moment in Budd's early development. Here, the experimental procedure yields to the physical behavior of sound itself: attack, resonance, decay, vibration, and the changing perception of tones as they enter, hover, and fade. Mobility becomes less a formal spectacle than a means of freeing sounds from obvious sequences and allowing them to occupy time on their own terms.[58]

Building on the visual sensibility that shaped his USC years, Budd increasingly treated imagery as a compositional point of departure. His titles did not simply identify

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[57] Harold Budd: "Pretty Music," John Diliberto, and Kimberly Haas, producers, *Totally Wired* I, no. 8, (Summer 1987).

[58] Harold Budd, *Noyo*, performed by Jon Dutton (vibes), Allan Goldman (piano), and Lester Weil (chimes), UC San Diego Department of Music Concert Archive, December 09, 1968; Harold Budd, *Noyo*, recorded at the University of Memphis, Harris Music Auditorium, October 24, 1969, performers: Harold Budd (piano), chimes and vibraphone played by either James Baird, James Smith, Charles Jolley, or William Youhass; liner notes to Harold Budd, *The Oak of the Golden Dreams / Coeur D'Orr*, Advance Records FGR-16, 1972.

places or landscapes; they supplied affective and perceptual frames through which the music could be heard. Naming, however, remained difficult. Looking back on one piece titled *The Sixth Year*, which he later dismissed as "ghastly," Budd remarked that a work might be musically sound while its title remained "absolutely atrocious."[59] Yet he also insisted on the importance of titles, valuing the "poetic thrust of associations" they could generate and their ability to keep "the overall picture in view."[60] In his account, a work's "macroform" often emerged early; composition then became a process of "filling in the blanks," while also preserving the gaps, silences, and open spaces that gave the music its character.[61]

Budd's investment in naming did not mean that titles came easily to him. California place names offered a solution: they could carry memory, atmosphere, and personal association without turning the music into literal landscape painting. They were evocative without seeming contrived, intimate without becoming narrowly programmatic. This distinction matters, since Budd was hardly opposed to atmosphere, landscape, or the suggestive procedures associated with composers such as Delius. What he resisted was not evocation itself, but the assumption that a title like *Noyo* should be heard as a direct musical representation of a particular place.[62] Works such as *Noyo*

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[59] "Monday," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, B*arney Childs Collection*.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Budd's distinction between personal evocation and "tone painting" should not be read as a rejection of programmatic music. His later attraction to Delius, discussed in Chapter Five, suggests instead that he valued evocative, sensuous, and place-inflected musical surfaces, while resisting the idea that titles such as *Noyo* should function as literal scenic

(1966), *Boonville* (1967), *California 99* (1969), *Healdsburg Plum* (1970), and *The Oak of the Golden Dream* (1970) reveal Budd's growing use of California place names as mnemonic and imaginative devices. Rather than assembling a unified portrait of the region, these titles preserve a dispersed geography of places that carried personal meaning for him. They summon California obliquely, through recollection and association, while leaving the music free from the descriptive obligations of the tone poem.[63]

Budd later reflected on *Noyo*'s uneasy reception and on the broader implications of its restraint. He recalled that "the best performance ever of *Noyo*" was met with only hesitant applause, though he took some consolation in knowing that "the performers knew what I was up to." [64] The remark points to a central tension in his emerging compositional thought. Although music is conventionally understood as a temporal art, unfolding through succession and development, Budd increasingly imagined sound in spatial terms, closer to the perceptual experience of painting.

Like the dense, all-over surfaces of Tobey's "white writing," *Noyo* presents musical form less as a directed sequence of events than as a field to be inhabited. Texture, silence, resonance, and harmonic color register through subtle shifts rather than dramatic transformation. The work asks the listener not to follow an argument toward a

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descriptions. "Harold Budd: Pretty Music, " John Diliberto, and Kimberly Haas, producers, *Totally Wired* I, no. 8, (Summer 1987).

[63] Liner notes to Harold Budd, "The Oak of the Golden Dreams / Coeur D'Orr."

[64] "Saturday Afternoon," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection,* University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

destination, but to attend to minute changes within a sound world whose apparent stillness conceals continual movement.

Recalling a later performance of *Noyo* at UC Irvine, Budd admitted that he had been "a priori embarrassed at the minimalism" and had been "sucked into a false need to add theater effects and the like." Only afterward did he recognize that such additions obscured the work's essential simplicity. The realization proved decisive. Budd's emerging compositional identity would depend not on embellishment or theatrical supplement, but on the disciplined reduction of materials, on learning to do, as he put it, "very little."[65] From this perspective, *Noyo* begins to pose a broader question that would remain central to Budd's music: how might sound approach the condition of an image? Its low event density, extended silences, and slowly decaying sonorities weaken the impression of a directed succession, encouraging the listener to perceive the work less as a sequence than as a field. Budd's later reflections on musical time and space would give this compositional tendency a more explicit conceptual form.

[65] Ibid.; In this sense, *Noyo* already points toward the "pushing toward zero" that would define his late-1960s practice. Its sparse textures and recessed structure precede the more radical text scores where reduction becomes not only a sonic procedure but a way of redefining what a score, a performance, or even a musical event might be.

Time and Image, Sound and Surface

Budd once remarked, "The problem for me, as a composer, is not that I'm still uncomfortable in the environment that points out that my art is a temporal one, not a spatial one (not essentially, anyway)." The statement's tangled syntax and layered negations register his discomfort with the conventional distinction between temporal and spatial art. Although Budd conceded that music unfolds in time, the parenthetical qualification, "not essentially, anyway," unsettles that premise. Musical experience, he suggests, might also be apprehended spatially, through density, surface, placement, resonance, and material presence rather than through directed succession alone. In this respect, Budd's work approaches the perceptual condition of painting and sculpture. Form is not simply followed as a linear progression but encountered as a field whose elements appear to coexist, even as they emerge and disappear in time. The aim is not to abolish temporality but to loosen its authority, allowing sound to acquire something of the stillness, presence, and spatial organization of an image.

Budd's reflections on spatiality and temporality invite comparison with Morton Feldman, whose music and scores had become important to him during his years at USC. Feldman repeatedly turned to painting as a metaphorical, structural, and philosophical model for composition. As Amy C. Beal argues, these analogies do not always clarify his compositional aims or correspond neatly to the musical conventions of the period. Even so, they remain compelling frameworks for understanding how Feldman conceived sound in visual and spatial terms.

Feldman's immersion in the New York Abstract Expressionist milieu of the 1950s and 1960s, particularly his friendships with Philip Guston, Mark Rothko, and Franz Kline, brought him into close contact with the materials, procedures, and critical language of painting. His aesthetic consequently came to be described in terms of painterly concepts such as "color, flatness, light, illusion, differentiation, perspective, surface, space, material, and *horror vacui*." Feldman referred to his scores as "time canvases" and often composed with manuscript paper pinned to the wall, approaching the page less as a linear path than as a surface on which balance, texture, gesture, and proportion could be continually assessed. In this working method, composition came to resemble painting: the arrangement of events within a field rather than their progression toward a predetermined end.[66]

Feldman's writings make this visual orientation still more explicit. "The new painting," he acknowledged, "made me desirous of a sound world more direct, more immediate, more physical than anything that had existed heretofore."[67] Brett Boutwell extends this point by suggesting that Feldman's conception of composition aligns not only with painting but also with sculpture. In his 1963 essay, "Vertical Thoughts," Feldman introduced the idea of "time as an image," figured through a weathered sundial fully exposed to the sun yet casting no shadow, a metaphor for time without

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[66]Amy C. Beal, "Time Canvasses: Morton Feldman and the Painters of the New York School," *Music and Modern Art (Border Crossings)*. James Leggio, ed. (New York: Routledge Publishing, 2002), 230.

[67] Quoted in Amy C. Beal, "Time Canvasses: Morton Feldman and the Painters of the New York School," 231.

measurement or direction, vast and static. [68] He later connected this image directly to Rothko, observing that the painter "discovered that the surface did not have to be activated by the rhythmic vitality of a Pollock to be kept alive, that it could exist as a strange, vast, monolithic sundial." As Beal cautions, however, Feldman's painterly analogies are not simple keys to his compositional practice; they are productive precisely because they expose both the usefulness and the limits of translating between media. Their value lies precisely in the tension they preserve, revealing both the generative possibilities and the inevitable limits of translating among sound, image, and material form.

Budd's position makes this tension still more explicit. He insisted that there was "no parallel" between music and visual art, even as he wrote about contemporary painters and remained deeply attentive to their work.[69] The formulation signals less a dismissal of visual art's importance than a wary recognition of the limits of analogy for explaining compositional practice. Budd rejected the idea of direct correspondence, maintaining that music and painting operated in distinct perceptual and material realms. Even so, he developed as a composer within an experimental milieu shaped in part by figures such as Cage and Brown, for whom the visual arts remained an important point of reference. Geography also mattered. In Budd's case, this engagement did not arise primarily from close personal relationships with painters but rather from galleries, museums, and exhibitions that shaped Los Angeles's emerging cultural landscape.

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[68] Brett Boutwell, "A Static Sublime: Morton Feldman and the Visual (1950–1970)" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2006), 158–159.

[69] "Saturday Afternoon," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

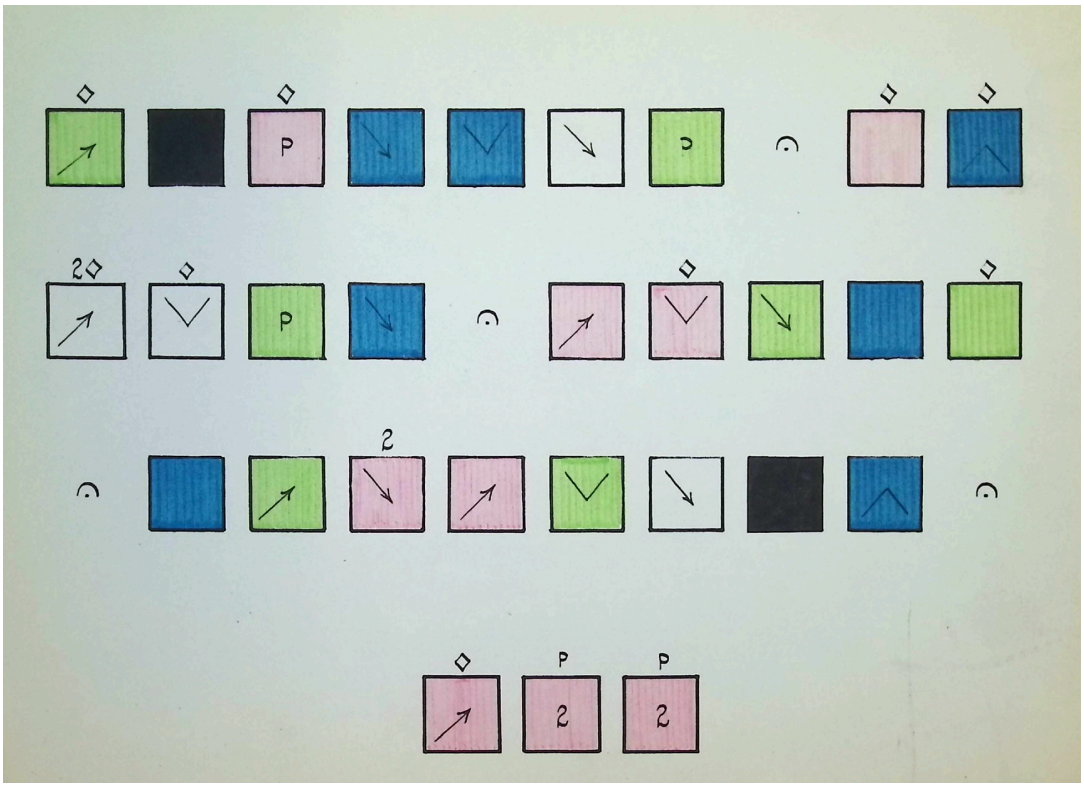
During the 1960s, Los Angeles emerged as a major center of postwar art through a concentrated network of galleries, museums, workshops, and artist-run communities. Ferus Gallery became an especially important venue for artists associated with the city's emerging "Cool School," while the opening of LACMA on Wilshire Boulevard in 1965 gave the region a new institutional center. Figures such as Billy Al Bengston, Larry Bell, Robert Irwin, Ken Price, Judy Chicago, and John McCracken developed practices shaped by industrial materials, immaculate surfaces, perceptual ambiguity, and the changing behavior of light. Although these artists differed substantially from one another, their work helped establish a visual culture invested in sensuous color, material refinement, polished surfaces, and disciplined restraint.[70]

November (1967), one of Budd's most visually graphic scores, offers a vivid example of how color and spatial organization entered his compositional practice (Figure 7). Dedicated to Turetzky, the work consists of six pages, each arranged into four horizontal rows of square event-boxes. Many are hand-colored in pale shades of blue, pink, and green, while others are black or left uncolored. The sequences of boxes are sometimes interrupted by isolated fermatas, creating visible intervals of suspension across the page. Directional arrows placed inside the boxes indicate slow glissandi, while diamond-shaped harmonic signs appear above particular events; other symbols call for pizzicato or the production of two pitches. Each box represents a long-duration event, even when the sounds it contains, such as pizzicato attacks, are extremely brief. The performer assigns the three colors consistently to high, middle, and low registers, while

[70] Reference Hunter Drohojowska-Philp, *Rebels in Paradise: The Los Angeles Art Scene and the 1960s* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2011), xiii–xxii.

uncolored boxes permit sounds in any or all registers. Black boxes carry a separate instruction to "improvise freely," which Budd specifies may include "nothing at all." Two of the three solo parts are prerecorded and projected through separate speakers, while the remaining part is performed live, transforming the score's rows of colored events into a shifting spatial texture of recorded and immediate sound.[71]

Figure 7. Harold Budd, *November* (1967), page three. November 1967, Folder 9, Box: 4, Folder: 8. *SOURCE: Music of the Avant-Garde*, 06-051. The University of North Texas Music Library.



[71] Harold Budd, instructions to *November* (1967), page one, November 1967, Folder 9, Box: 4, Folder: 8. *SOURCE: Music of the Avant-Garde*, 06-051. The University of North Texas Music Library.

The visual surface of *November* is inseparable from its temporal design. Its square boxes give sounds the appearance of discrete objects, while the fermatas and open spaces between them interrupt succession with moments of suspension. Color organizes register, graphic signs determine articulation and movement, and the placement of events across the page distributes sound and silence with almost architectural clarity. The score consequently occupies an uncertain space between functional notation and composed image, demonstrating how musical instructions could acquire a distinctive visual presence without ceasing to direct the production of sound.

Budd later supplied a more specific vocabulary for understanding the visual environment that attracted him. "Here in California," he wrote, "the painters/sculptors with whom I'm familiar are referred to as 'Finish Fetishists,' highly polished, craft-conscious and stand-offish minimalists as opposed to the NYC crypto-Rauschenberg." He admired what he called their "attic grace" and distance: the clarity and refinement of works disclosed through a spare economy of form and often suffused with bright monochrome color.[72] As Budd matured as a composer in Los Angeles, he found himself drawn to a visual culture distinct from, though not simply opposed to, the New York milieu that shaped Feldman. Stillness, luminous color, and monochromatic fields were by no means exclusive to Southern California, but Los Angeles artists joined these qualities to industrial materials, immaculate fabrication, polished surfaces, and an exacting attention to light and perception.

[72] "Saturday Afternoon," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

Read against Budd's later remarks, *November* can be situated suggestively within this environment, though the resemblance should not be mistaken for evidence of direct influence. There is no indication that Budd translated a particular painting, sculpture, or Finish Fetish procedure into the score, and its colors perform explicit musical functions rather than operating as autonomous visual materials. Nevertheless, its bounded forms, pale fields of color, spatial clarity, restraint, and perceptual ambiguity resonate with qualities that had acquired unusual prominence in Los Angeles art. The comparison is therefore not one of equivalence but of proximity: *November* emerged within the same cultural landscape that Budd would later identify as central to his visual imagination.

This attraction was not incidental. Budd's son, Terrence, later recalled that visual art and architecture were major sources of inspiration for his father, especially in later life, and singled out Bengston as an artist his father particularly admired.[73] Budd, he remembered, "was a big fan of Billy Al," almost "like a groupie."[74] His long hours in Los Angeles museums were therefore not peripheral to his musical thinking. They formed part of an aesthetic education that drew him toward subdued luminosity, polished surfaces, and the cultivated restraint he encountered in the work of Bengston, Bell, Chicago, McCracken, and other Southern California artists.[75]

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[73] The cover image for Budd and Brian Eno's *The Pearl* (1984) closely resembles Billy Al Bengston's *1970*. Budd also appears to have used Bengston's work for *Little Windows* (2010), his collaborative album with Clive Wright. He later used Bengston's *Untitled* (2000) as the cover image for *A Song for Lost Blossoms* (2014), another collaboration with Wright.

[74] Author interview with Terrence Budd, November 11, 2021.

[75] Author interview with Paula Bethsebe, August 26, 2022.

What attracted Budd to these artists was not the prospect of translating visual procedure into sound, but a shared investment in beauty, polish, and poise. In this respect, the visual arts offered him less a model for composition than a sensibility, an aesthetic environment rather than a set of techniques. Unlike Feldman, Budd denied any direct correspondence between music and visual art, treating them as distinct modes of perception. Yet the refined minimalism of Los Angeles still paralleled his own pursuit of clarity and reduction. He understood music's difference from visual art as both a limitation and a condition of grace: unlike the painted object, sound could not remain fixed in space, but only emerge, hover briefly, and dissolve at the edge of perception.[76]

Barney Childs and the Poetics of the Text Score

Budd's early attraction to visual art, then, lay less in medium transfer than in the concrete perceptual qualities of objects: surface finish, density, scale, light, and placement in space. The painters and sculptors who mattered to him modeled an art of polished materials, reduced gesture, and controlled illumination. But those qualities do not by themselves explain his growing attraction to language, titles, and text-based forms. Barney Childs proved especially important here. A composer, poet, critic, and teacher, Childs offered a model of experimental practice in which music and literary thought were inseparable. For Budd, whose own work increasingly depended on evocative titles, textual fragments, inscriptions, and carefully staged verbal instructions, Childs represented more than

[76] Harold Budd, *November*, performed by Bertram Turetzky (contrabass and tape,) UC San Diego Department of Music Concert Archive, January 22, 1968.

friendship or professional support: he exemplified a way of thinking across music and language.

Born on February 13, 1926, in Spokane, Washington, Childs moved to Palo Alto, California, in 1939. He earned a B.A. from the University of Nevada and, as a Rhodes Scholar, completed both a B.A. and an M.A. in English at Oxford before receiving a Ph.D. in English and music from Stanford in 1963. Although he studied composition briefly in the early 1950s with Carlos Chávez and Aaron Copland at Tanglewood and later with Elliott Carter in New York, Childs did not undergo sustained conservatory-style training in composition. His work instead drew on several practices, including improvisation, indeterminacy, literary procedure, and formal structure, rather than on a single pedagogical lineage. Childs began teaching English at the University of Arizona in the early 1960s and, in 1965, became dean of Deep Springs College. From 1969 to 1971, he served as composer-in-residence at the Wisconsin College Conservatory in Milwaukee, where he also acted as dean in 1971, before joining the faculty of the University of Redlands later that year.[77]

At Redlands, he taught literature and music, was promoted to full professor by 1973, and remained until his retirement. By the time of his death in January 2000, he had established himself as a major figure in West Coast experimental music: a composer, poet, critic, editor, and teacher whose work joined literary intelligence to musical experiment. A prolific writer and advocate, he helped sustain that world not only

[77] "Barney Childs (b. 1926–d. 2000)." *Society of Composers Newsletter* 30, no. 1 (February/March 2000): 1–11; "Barney Childs," American Composers Alliance, https://composers.com/collections/barney-childs.

through his own compositions but through editorial and institutional labor, including the co-founding of *Genesis West*, an avant-garde literary magazine, and Advance Recordings, an experimental music label that championed composers such as Harold Budd.[78] His music, ranging from solo pieces to chamber and ensemble works, drew variously on improvisation, indeterminacy, and formal structure, while colleagues remembered him as a witty, generous, and sometimes sharply polemical presence whose art and discourse moved easily between poetry, literature, and sound.[79]

Although archival materials do not yet reveal exactly how Budd and Childs first met, they do suggest that Budd's awareness of Childs's music may have predated their friendship. In one undated letter, Budd recalled admiring Childs's *Welcome to Whipperginny* (1961), indicating that Childs's work was already part of his listening world before the two became close correspondents.[80] The archive further shows that they were connected by 1968, when Budd composed *One Sound* for Childs, a string quartet built around a single long, slowly ascending glissando, and that by 1969, both were active within the same broader experimental network through Budd's commission for *California 99*[81].

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[78] Advance Recordings was founded in 1962 by Barney Childs, Jonathan Elkus, and Brook Lee Furr as a nonprofit educational project for the presentation of new American music. Budd's first solo album, *The Oak of the Golden Dreams*, was originally issued on the label as Advance Recordings. See Chapter Three.

[79] "Barney Childs (b. 1926–d. 2000)." *Society of Composers Newsletter* 30, no. 1.

[80] "September 5" (ca. 1970), *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated

[81] *California 99* was commissioned by Memphis State University in 1969 and assembled contributions from Budd's wider California experimental network, including Childs, Lentz, Oliveros, Austin, and Turetzky. See Chapter Three.

Childs, for his part, wrote *Variation on a Theme of Harold Budd* in 1969, "for any number of players," suggesting that the exchange was already reciprocal.[82] By the early 1970s, Childs had become an important presence in Budd's Southern California circle. Based in Redlands, he periodically visited Budd at CalArts, and Budd later recalled that Childs, together with Philip Rehfeldt of the University of Redlands, had asked him for a new composition for their commissioning series *Music for Clarinet and Friend*, a request that became *In Delius' Sleep* and suggests that their friendship had already become musically productive.[83]

Childs emerges here as a friend and intellectual companion, though through a necessarily partial archive composed primarily of Budd's letters to him. Even from one side, the relationship is unmistakable. The letters do not confine themselves to compositions and performances but move easily across music, reading, teaching, domestic life, money troubles, mutual acquaintances, and passing irritations, suggesting a friendship sustained by regular, expansive conversation. Within that larger exchange, Childs also mattered to Budd as a composer whose works occupied terrain close to Budd's own early experiments. Budd's recurring attention to Childs's works, such as *Operation Flabby Sleep* (1968), "for any number of orchestra instruments," *Variations on Night River Music* (1969), "for solo E-flat alto horn," and *Maine Scene* for baritone voice

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[82] Barney Childs Collection, "Compositions," *Armacost Library,* University of Redlands, Barney Childs Collection.

[83] Barney Childs Collection, "Biographical Sketch," *Armacost Library,* University of Redlands, Barney Childs Collection; For a more in depth discussion of *In Delius' Sleep* as a *Pavilion*-era work shaped by "open time," arpeggiated texture, bell-like percussion, and Delius-inflected environment, see Chapter Five;

and piano (1970), suggests a shared investment in works shaped by title, image, sparse procedure, and performative situation.

Of these, *Maine Scene* drew the fullest and most sustained response. In March 1972, Budd called it "very beautiful" and remarked that he could "almost play it," hearing in its softness and restraint something close to his own developing pianistic and aesthetic concerns.[84] By July 1975, after finally hearing a performance, his praise had deepened: he described the piece as "a lovely, lovely work," "full of sentiment and integrity," and as the sort of music he was especially prone to admire because "it is better."[85] Two years later, even while confessing that he was "art-songed out for a while," he added that he wished he were "the author of *Maine Scene*."[86] *Night River Music*, by contrast, appears more elliptically in the surviving exchange, but not insignificantly: in an early letter, Budd asked Childs for "a copy of the fragments for *Night River Music*," pairing it in the same breath with Cardew's *Memories of You* (1964), a juxtaposition that suggests the conceptual and text-based terrain in which he located it.[87]

Variation on Night River Music (1969) shows that Childs's text scores were procedural without being reducible to procedure. As Jim Fox suggests, they move

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[84] "March 4, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[85] "July 30, 1975," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

[86] "May 14 1977," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

[87] September 22," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

beyond the "do this, do that" logic often associated with 1960s indeterminate music.[88] The score certainly gives instructions: the performer must stand at night in a river, apart from people and man-made structures, and play twenty-four short phrases once each, in any order, with long pauses for thought in between. Yet those instructions do more than organize an event. They construct a scene of solitude, darkness, distance, and reflection. The piece therefore unfolds not only as procedure, but as a literary and imaginative situation, one in which performance, environment, and inward listening become inseparable. In that sense, Childs's score does not abandon instruction so much as absorb it into a more environmental and poetic conception of music.[89]

Childs's own writing helps clarify why a piece such as *Night River Music* takes this form. In "Articulation in Sound Structures: Some Notes toward an Analytic" (1966), he proposes that poetry and music be understood together as "arrangements of sound in time" and argues that analysis must attend not only to meter and rhythm but also to a larger governing force he calls "pulse." The piece depends as much on pacing, pause, and the shaping force of silence as on the sounding of its twenty-four phrases. Childs makes

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[88] Jim Fox, "Remarks on Barney Childs's Text Pieces," *Barney Childs Tribute Concert*, December 11, 2020.

[89] See Chapter Three on Budd's *California 99*, especially Daniel Lentz's *Skeletons Don't Say Peek*, dedicated to "Harold Budd and Piano." As Jim Fox recited the work in full during a 2020 Childs tribute concert: "This piece is *Variation on Night River Music* by Barney Childs. *Night River Music* is a piece by Barney Childs for solo E-flat alto horn. The player is to be at night at a river, on the right bank as one facing downstream, on the right bank, at a minimum of 200 feet from any people or man-made structures. The evening should be quiet and clear. The player is to wear only black or black blue bathing trunks or rolled up trousers. Standing in the river no more than knee deep. The player performs the twenty-four short musical phrases, provided. Once each only, in any order, with a pause of up to five minutes after each phrase to think about what has been played. Unless you perform the work you will never hear it except in your mind as you imagine it sounds. Hear it now, in your mind." Ibid.

a related point when discussing works such as Cage's *4′33″* and La Monte Young's *Two Sounds* and *Composition 1960 #7*, in which silence or sustained sound is organized less by conventional rhythmic processes than by pulse and the listener's experience of duration. Although *Night River Music* is neither silent nor continuous in quite that way, it treats pause in a related manner, not as an empty interval but as part of the piece's expressive and formal substance. Just as importantly, Childs treats punctuation, spacing, and typographic disposition as meaningful articulative features, not merely neutral vehicles of notation. Read in that light, the score's literary and environmental character appears less as an eccentric departure than as a practical extension of Childs's broader thinking about how sound, silence, and textual form organize experience in time.[90] That way of thinking also made Childs an especially apt interlocutor for Budd, whose own works would increasingly rely on titles, textual fragments, silence, and visual framing to shape the listener's experience before and beyond the sounding event.

Childs was also alert to the historiographical limits of the discourse on experimental music as it circulated in the 1970s. In a 1975 review of Michael Nyman's *Experimental Music*, he praised the book's value while criticizing what he called the 'great big blank area' on its map of the field, pointing to the omission of West Coast figures and institutions such as Larry Austin, Donald Buchla, Harold Budd, Dan Lentz, Pauline Oliveros, the San Francisco Tape Center, *Soundings*, *Source: Music of the Avant-garde*, and James Tenney.[91]

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[90] Barney Childs, "Articulation in Sound Structures: Some Notes toward an Analytic," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 8, no. 3 (Autumn 1966): 423–25.

[91] Barney Childs, "*Experimental Music* Review," *Music Educators Journal* 61, no. 9 (May 1975): 79–82.

If Childs offered Budd a model of experimental practice shaped by poetry, text, and critical self-awareness, the exchange did not run in only one direction. Jim Fox later recalled that Childs "took some from Harold quite a bit," a remark that suggests less a simple line of influence than an ongoing conversation between two composers working through adjacent problems. What seems to have bound them most deeply was not style in any narrow sense, but a shared willingness to let title, text, sparse instruction, and performative situations carry compositional weight. In that respect, Childs mattered not only as a correspondent, advocate, or elder colleague but as one of the figures through whom Budd could recognize the legitimacy of works that hovered between score, poem, and event. The connection becomes especially clear in a group of Budd's late-1960s pieces whose textual and conceptual procedures bear, if not direct imitation, then at least the stamp of a neighboring sensibility.[92]

Pushing Towards Zero

By the end of the 1960s, Budd was teaching composition at the California Institute of the Arts and making what he described as "essentially a minimal art," music shaped by stasis and sharply reduced means yet still marked by elements of his earlier avant-garde practice.[93] In these years, Budd's move toward text entered a field that Childs's music had also occupied, where sparse verbal framing could itself become compositional substance. As Budd later put it, "Ever since (a long time ago), I've pushed and pushed towards

[92] Author interview with Jim Fox, November 13, 2025.

[93] "Saturday Afternoon," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

zero," "running it all down," through "a kind of ongoing process of removal."[94] During the late 1960s, Budd increasingly moved away from notated instrumental scores toward conceptual works. The open-form procedures associated with Brown had largely fallen away, but the imprint of Cage and Feldman remained. *Intermission Piece* (1968), a text score, challenges concert-hall convention in a manner reminiscent of Cage's *4'33"*: performers are asked to improvise at "barely audible" levels during the intermission while audience members move freely in and out of the performance space. In its loose temporal design, lack of coordinated ensemble time, and even its title, the piece recalls Feldman's early *Intermission* series, especially *Intermission 6* (1953), but relocates that work's indeterminacy and nonsynchronous time into the social space of the concert break.

Budd's work gained visibility beyond Southern California through a small network of experimental music publications. Reflecting on this moment, he recalled: "In 1966, a magazine devoted to avant-garde music started to come out of Davis, California. It was called *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde*. I was invited to kind of jump into that group, and I was delighted to do it because it was the first time that anyone outside of my own little, tiny milieu in southern California gave me any recognition at all."[95] Among the pieces that began to circulate in this context was *Lovely Thing* for piano (1969), a fifteen to twenty–minute text score in which the performer selects any chord, plays it as quietly as possible, waits for the sound to dissipate, then repeats the same chord at an

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[94] Letter from Harold Budd to David Cope, *New Directions in Music* (Dubuque, IA: WM. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1971), 114.

[95] Akira Rabelais, *Samadhisound Podcast #2: Akira Rabelais interviews Harold Budd*, April 25, 2007, Budd's first appearance in *Source: Music of the Avant–Garde* is in Volume 3 (1968) with his work *III*.

even softer dynamic. Once this process is set in motion, it generates both the large-scale form and the "note-to-note (sound to sound) details" of the work. Budd adds a characteristically wry layer of indeterminacy by including his telephone number in the score, inviting performers to call him "for spiritual advice" if they are "in doubt."[96] In one notable SUNY Buffalo performance, Lukas Foss phoned Budd for guidance; Budd suggested a Db major sonority, increasingly serving as a harmonic topos.[97]

Writing in the *Village Voice*, Tom Johnson observed that Budd's scores from this period "go far beyond the kind of minimalism New York audiences have heard in Steve Reich, La Monte Young, or even Charlemagne Palestine."[98] Indeed, Budd's compositions during the late 1960s challenge conventional notions of musical temporality and perception, extending his minimalism toward a domain of near-stasis. *Sun Pieces* (1968) is an outdoor work, comprising the paired sections Khopri/Sunrise and Atum/Sunset, written for any number and combination of sound sources and (optionally) dancers, and is synchronized with the visible movement of the sun. A sustained drone is established, and in Sunrise, the piece begins the instant the sun first appears above the horizon and ends when it has fully disengaged, the sound being "imperceptibly and continually altered" throughout. Sunset inversely tracks the sun's descent, starting when its lower

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[96] In the score, Budd includes a whimsical note on the piece by his composer friend Barney Childs, "About all one can do is trickle hot alcoholic beverages over the afflicted area." Harold Budd, "*Lovely Thing (piano)*" (February 1968), Larry Austin, Stanley Lunetta, Arthur Woodbury eds., *Source: Music of the Avant Garde* 3, no. 2, issue # 6 (July 1969): 36.

[97] Harold Budd, "Lecture at University of Southern California," November 22, 1985."

[98] Tom Johnson, "Soundings from the West Coast (August 30, 1973)," in *The Voice of New Music: New York City, 1972–1982: A Collection of Articles Originally Published in the Village Voice* (Eindhoven, The Netherlands: Het Apollohuis, 1989), 97.

edge touches the horizon and ending at its disappearance. When dancers are used, they begin motionless and then shift their bodies in an almost imperceptible, "beautiful static-like flux," paralleling the slow transformation of the drone and binding sound, movement, and astronomical time into a single, nearly static process.[99]

Mangus Colorado (1969) functions more as a sound installation than as a musical composition. Scored for four or more amplified suspended gongs arranged in an arc facing the audience, each fitted with wind-bell-like objects and miked on both sides, the work relies on sympathetic vibration: the gongs act as resonant bodies responding to external sound generated through loudspeaker feedback. The resulting texture forms a muted field of sustained resonance, illuminated by colored lights that "flood the performance area, preferably from above."[100] Budd's attraction to gong instruments, which he would return to throughout his career, stemmed from their ability to sustain and subtly transform sound over long durations, coupled with the visual elegance of their suspension.

Written the same year for The California Time Machine, a new-music ensemble led by Daniel Lentz at the University of California, Santa Barbara, *Vittorio* (1969) transfers Budd's interest in sustained vibration and theatrical lighting into a multi-media setting.[101] Scored for large gong, chimes, flugelhorn, two or more female speaking voices,

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[99] Harold Budd, "Sun Pieces" (1968), *SOUNDINGS 1*, Peter Garland and John Bischoff eds., (Sylmar, CA: Independent Publication, 1972): 13.

[100] Harold Budd "Mangus Colorado" (January 1969), Larry Austin, Stanley Lunetta, Arthur Woodbury eds., *Source: Music of the Avant Garde* 3, no. 2, issue # 6 (July 1969): 36.

[101] *Vittorio*, Works by Others. Budd, Harold. *Vittorio.* Includes holograph score, 1969. "California 99" (1969). *Pauline Oliveros Papers. MSS 102. Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego*. Box 23. Folder 24; *The California Time Machine* was a UC Santa Barbara–based

string ensemble, and amplification, the work takes place in darkness, with a soft, colored spotlight flooding the gong. As in *Mangus Colorado*, the sound depends on sympathetic vibration: a pp flugelhorn tone, played into a microphone, excites the gong, while muted strings sustain a Db major sonority "for a long duration." Over this static field, two female voices deliver brief stylized lines, one in a "deep, husky whisper, like Lizbeth Scott," the other in a "whisper/cackle like the witches in *Macbeth*," ending with the phrase "There's no time" (Figure 8).[102] Lentz later remembered *Vittorio* as part of Budd's work from "right before" he "transitioned into tonality." The final Db sonority supports that recollection: it does not operate as functional resolution so much as a carefully placed harmonic surface, an early sign of Budd's turn toward sustained tonal fields. Lentz also noted Budd's recurring "fondness for flats," though he admitted that he had "never figured it out" and "never actually asked him."[103]

The gong's visuality becomes both structurally and symbolically central to *Vittorio*. Budd emphasized its essential components: "the physical reality of the gong in view; the lighting; the space of the performance area; the quietude; the long durations; the reality of the gong contributing to an ongoing aural texture."[104] The performers were

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experimental ensemble led by Lentz and associated with a rotating cast of performers, including David Barton, Fred McFadden, Janet Scarberry, Marlene Wasco, Wolfgang Stoerchle, and, at times, Budd. Chapter Five discusses the group's use of electronics, theatrical action, improvisation, and satirical approaches to avant-garde performance.

[102] Harold Budd, "Vittorio" (1969), *SOUNDINGS 1*, Peter Garland and John Bischoff eds., (Sylmar, CA: Independent Publication, 1972): 15.

[103] Author Interview with Daniel Lentz, July 23, 2023.

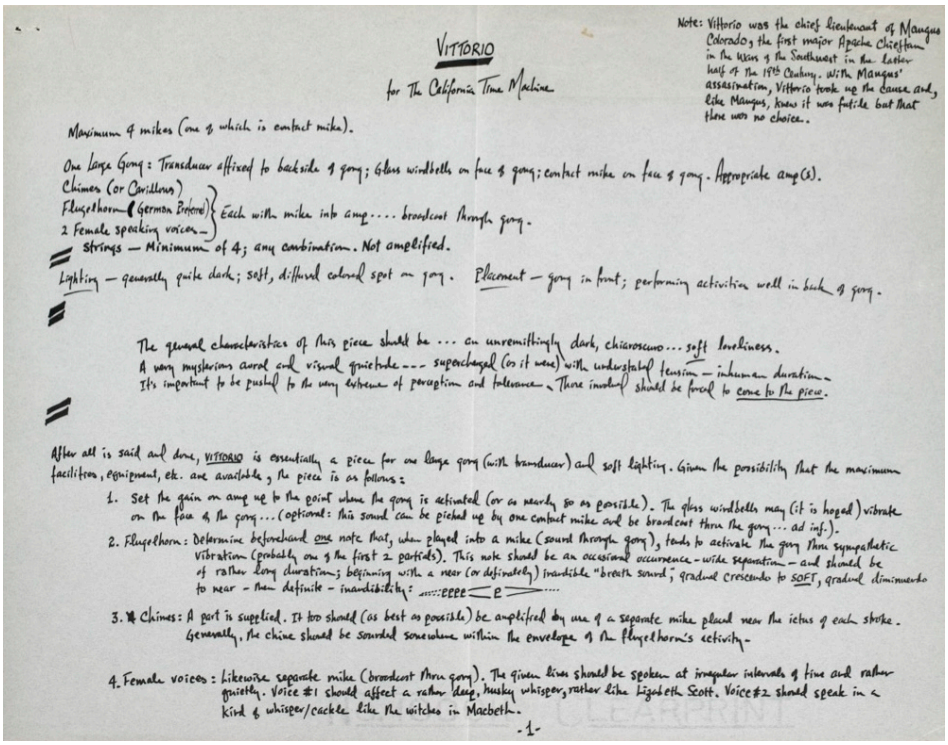
[104] Harold Budd's *Vittorio*, "Letter to Dan, August 1969," works by others, Harold Budd, *Vittorio.* Includes holograph score, 1969, "California 99" (1969), *Pauline Oliveros Papers, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego*, Box 23, Folder 24.

to remain "well in back of the gong," reinforcing the object's sculptural prominence as the visual and acoustic focal point. Budd further annotated the score with a specific description: "A very mysterious aural and visual quietude… supercharged (as it were) with understated tension… inhuman duration. It's important to be pushed to the extreme of perception and tolerance. Those involved should be forced to come to the piece."[105] These remarks clarify that *Vittorio* was not conceived as a composition unfolding in time but as a static visual and acoustic tableau, its force residing in the tension between stillness and intensity. In this sense, the work operates as a phenomenological experiment, testing the limits of perception and endurance by requiring performers and listeners alike to inhabit its duration rather than simply observe it. Budd's emphasis on darkness, lighting, and the gong's "physical reality" shifts attention from musical form to visual experience, transforming performance into an encounter with material presence. *Vittorio* aspires toward what Budd called "an unremittingly dark, chiaroscuro… soft loveliness": an art of light, and suspended perception.[106]

[105] Harold Budd, "Vittorio" (1969).

[106] Ibid.

Figure 8. Harold Budd, *Vittorio* (1969). Works by Others. *Vittorio.* Includes holograph score, 1969. "California 99" (1969). *Pauline Oliveros Papers. MSS 102. Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego.* Box 23. Folder 24.



VITTORIO

for The California Time Machine

Note: Vittorio was the chief lieutenant of Mangus Colorado, the first major Apache Chieftain in the years of the Southwest in the latter half of the 19th Century. With Mangus' assassination, Vittorio took up the cause and, like Mangus, knew it was futile but that there was no choice.

Maximum of 4 mikes (one of which is contact mike).

One Large Gong: Transducer affixed to backside of gong; Glass windbells on face of gong; contact mike on face of gong. Appropriate amp(s).
Chimes (or Carillons)
Flugelhorn (German Bifonne) } Each with mike into amp.... broadcast through gong.
2 Female speaking voices
Strings — Minimum of 4; any combination. Not amplified.

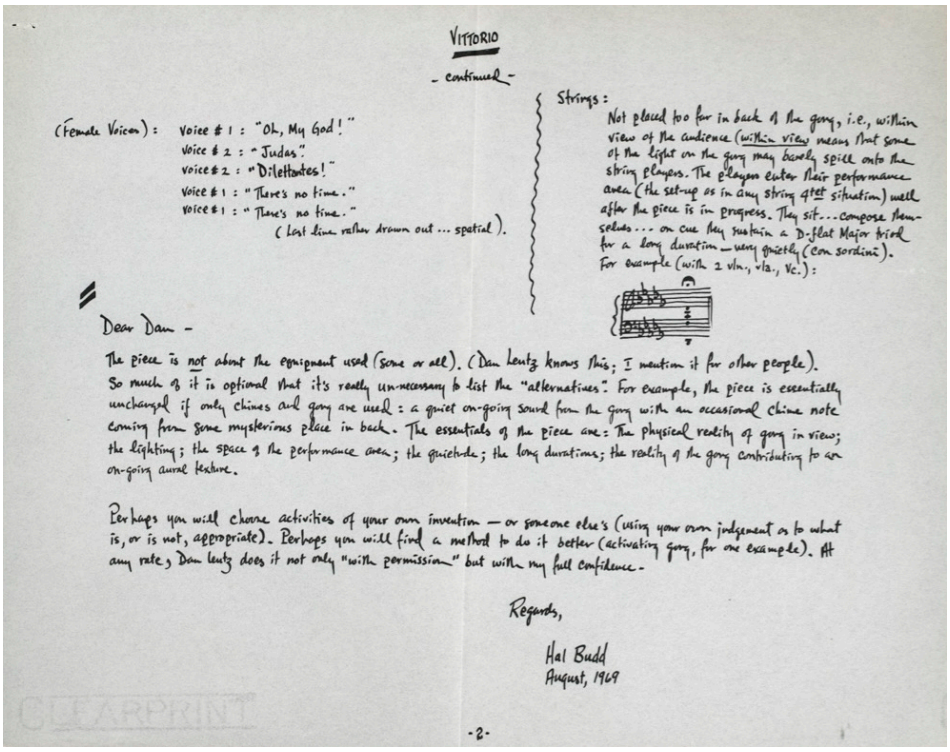
Lighting — generally quite dark; soft, diffused colored spot on gong. Placement — gong in front; performing activities well in back of gong.

The general characteristics of this piece should be ... an unremittingly dark, chiaroscuro... soft loveliness. A very mysterious aural and visual quietude --- supercharged (as it were) with understated tension — inhuman duration. It's important to be pushed to the very extremes of perception and tolerance. Those involved should be forced to come to the piece.

After all is said and done, VITTORIO is essentially a piece for one large gong (with transducer) and soft lighting. Given the possibility that the maximum facilities, equipment, etc. are available, the piece is as follows:

1. Set the gain on amp up to the point where the gong is activated (or as nearly so as possible). The glass windbells may (it is hoped) vibrate on the face of the gong... (optional: this sound can be picked up by one contact mike and be broadcast thru the gong... ad inf.).
2. Flugelhorn: Determine beforehand one note that, when played into a mike (sound through gong), tends to activate the gong thru sympathetic vibration (probably one of the first 2 partials). This note should be an occasional occurrence - wide separation — and should be of rather long duration; beginning with a near (or definable) inaudible "breath sound", gradual crescendo to SOFT, gradual diminuendo to near - then definite - inaudibility: .....ppppp<p>.....
3. ℳ Chimes: A part is supplied. It too should (as best as possible) be amplified by use of a separate mike placed near the ictus of each stroke. Generally, the chime should be sounded somewhere within the envelope of the flugelhorn's activity.
4. Female voices: likewise separate mike (broadcast thru gong). The given lines should be spoken at irregular intervals of time and rather quietly. Voice #1 should affect a rather deep, husky whisper, rather like Elizabeth Scott. Voice #2 should speak in a kind of whisper/cackle like the witches in Macbeth.

-1-



VITTORIO

- continued -

(Female Voices): Voice # 1 : "Oh, My God!"
Voice # 2 : "Judas."
Voice # 2 : "Dilettantes!"
Voice # 1 : "There's no time."
Voice # 1 : "There's no time."
(Last line rather drawn out ... spatial).

Strings:
Not placed too far in back of the gong, i.e., within view of the audience (within view means that some of the light on the gong may barely spill onto the string players. The players enter their performance area (the set-up as in any string 4tet situation) well after the piece is in progress. They sit... compose themselves... on cue they sustain a D-flat Major triad for a long duration — very quietly (con sordini). For example (with 2 vln., vla., vc.):

Dear Dan -

The piece is not about the equipment used (some or all). (Dan Lentz knows this; I mention it for other people). So much of it is optional that it's really un-necessary to list the "alternatives". For example, the piece is essentially unchanged if only chimes and gong are used: a quiet on-going sound from the gong with an occasional chime note coming from some mysterious place in back. The essentials of the piece are: The physical reality of gong in view; the lighting; the space of the performance area; the quietude; the long durations; the reality of the gong contributing to an on-going aural texture.

Perhaps you will choose activities of your own invention — or someone else's (using your own judgement as to what is, or is not, appropriate). Perhaps you will find a method to do it better (activating gong, for one example). At any rate, Dan Lentz does it not only "with permission" but with my full confidence.

Regards,

Hal Budd
August, 1969

-2-

Vittorio (1969) and *Mangus Colorado* (1969) avoid overt political declarations, yet their symbolism is difficult to miss. By invoking figures from the Apache Wars rather than U.S. or Mexican state actors, Budd reframes imperial frontier history as a Vietnam-era parable of endurance and resistance, reflecting the broader climate of conflict and uncertainty that defined the late 1960s. The decision to title the works around Apache figures, rather than dominant military narratives, tilts their sympathy toward Indigenous resistance and aligns with the broadly liberal, antiwar milieu surrounding Budd, while keeping the politics embedded in allegory rather than declared outright.

What is translated into sound is Budd's own pivot: away from New York experimentalism and what Budd defined as "pushing towards zero," often anchored by Db. In this frame, the resonance and suspended time of these works are not evasions of politics but aesthetic counter-stances, with the Db plateau functioning as an idiomatic marker of refusal, an assertion of simplicity and clarity amid what Budd viewed as an experimental musical culture that was preoccupied with complexity, dissonance, and novel compositional techniques, as he sought to find his own voice as a composer.[107] These same concerns converge in *Black Flowers* (1968). If *Vittorio* and *Mangus Colorado* turn suspended time and allegorical naming into large-scale tableaux, *Black Flowers* compresses those strategies into a smaller and more fragile form. The result is a work in which title, ritualized staging, and near-inaudibility become central to Budd's emerging aesthetic.

[107] On Budd's later formulation of beauty, uselessness, and "pretty" music as a form of aesthetic protest against academic modernism. See Chapter Four.

Allegories, Elegies, and *Black Flowers*

Black Flowers, "for clarinet, voice, chimes, and percussion," exemplifies how Budd used titles to register shifts in his creative environment, the work's dual symbolism of death and renewal suggesting not finality, but rather transformation; a quiet rebirth through reduction and restraint. In this sense, *Black Flowers* (1968) mirrors Budd's own move away from the New York experimentalism of the 1950s–60s toward a more distilled, introspective musical language. On November 30, 1970, the program for Los Angeles's longest-running forum for contemporary classical music, *Monday Evening Concerts* (*MEC*), opened with Brahms, featuring selections from the *Deutsche Volkslieder* and the *Drei Intermezzi*, Op. 117 (1892), followed by Hindemith's *Sonata for Flute and Piano* (1936), the first half then concluding with the world premiere of *Labdanum* by Aurelio de la Vega - Budd's former undergraduate composition teacher.[108] After the intermission came the first Los Angeles performance of Budd's *Black Flowers*, which also marked his *MEC* debut; the concert concluded with the premiere of Thea Musgrave's *From One to*

[108] Founded in 1939, *Monday Evening Concerts* is Los Angeles's longest-running forum for contemporary classical music, conceived for émigré modernists; under Peter Yates's performer-centered stewardship it grew from living-room salons to large public programs and by 1965 was housed at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's Bing Theater. Yates, who, with pianist Frances Mullen, developed the Evenings on the Roof series into a crucial West Coast platform for new music, cast himself as the "western representative for the Experimentalists" and, by the early 1960s, was explicitly promoting "the American experimentalists … as the dominant, though still unaccepted strand of the American tradition." Reference, Amy C. Beal, "'Experimentalists and Independents Are Favored': John Edmunds in Conversation with Peter Yates and John Cage, 1959–61," *Notes* 64, no. 4 (June 2008): 659–63; Also see Dorothy Lamb Crawford, *Evenings On and Off the Roof: Pioneering Concerts in Los Angeles*, 1939–1971 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

Another for viola and tape.[109]

Black Flowers quickly became a cause célèbre, and its position within the concert program sharpened the contrast. The first half set an oddly somnolent tone, Brahms's *Deutsche Volkslieder* and the *Three Intermezzi*, Op. 117 (all andante), followed by Hindemith's *Sonata for Flute and Piano*, against which Budd's conceptual rite read as deliberately withdrawn from a European lineage, one he was already intent on leaving behind. He noted, "I worked very hard to get the lighting just right, nearly invisible, but definitely blue," and similar to Lukas Foss, Budd "gave the players lots of spiritual advice" in which "they finally got it at the last run-through."[110] These details underscore the extent to which the work operated as a carefully staged, contemplative intervention. *Black Flowers* unfolded in darkness: a pitch-black hall, a dimly lit platform, and a barely audible quartet of soprano, clarinet, and two percussionists.

The staging invited a kind of taut, inward listening that many in the house resisted, as one critic put it, "having to stare, for what seemed an interminably long time, at the dimly lit stage." The recording captures roughly fifteen minutes of murmurs broken by long pauses, an almost skeletal afterimage of *Noyo*. Contemporary reports, and the tape itself, document restlessness tipping into audible response: boos and hisses answered by scattered applause. It amounted less to scandal than to a scandale d'estime,

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[109] The premiere of *Black Flowers* took place at the Center for the Creative and Performing Arts (Buffalo) in the fall of 1969.

[110] "December 2," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated; Stein's presence here carries added significance given his role not only as Budd's former teacher at Los Angeles City College but also as one of the most important transmitters of Schoenberg's American legacy. See Sabine Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 239–40.

the work's austerity registering without conferring notoriety.[111] As one reviewer put it, "Mr. Budd is not likely to wake up a famous man as a result of it."[112] Stein, Budd's former Los Angeles City College teacher, present that night, took the reaction as a healthy sign, noting that it was "the first booing he's heard since '63 at *MEC* and was "pleased that a piece finally got to 'em."[113] For Budd, the evening landed exactly as intended: the hush held, the room bristled, and the next morning he recalled "the [LA] Times simply roasted me … but it was [the] music-review headline story, so who's to bitch about that?"[114]

Black Flowers also gathers together several threads that have run through this chapter from the beginning. Stein's presence at *MEC* links Budd's emergence as a composer back to his formative years at Los Angeles City College, while Aurelio de la Vega's lesson to write "directly for the sound" quietly informs the work's severe economy. Here, gesture is withheld, near-inaudibility is staged, and timbre and duration carry the force of the piece. What Budd first encountered in the mixed musical life of postwar Los Angeles, modernism, jazz, and unruly audiences, returns in distilled form as a darkened and concentrated presentation. Stein's pleasure at the hostile response confirmed that the work had achieved the friction it sought. In that sense, *Black Flowers*

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[111] "Harold Budd, *Monday Evening Concerts*, *Labdanum* / Aurelio de la Vega; *Black Flowers* / Harold Budd; From *One to Another* / Thea Musgrave; Sonata for Flute and Piano / Hindemith, November 1970." *David Cloud papers*, Box 17, Folder 2; Walter Arlen, "Music Review: 'Black Flowers' Performed," *Los Angeles Times*, December 2, 1970, G24.

[112] Walter Arlen, "Music Review: 'Black Flowers' Performed."

[113] "December 2," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs,

[114] Ibid.

represents less a rupture than a culmination: the point at which Budd's push toward reduction begins to sound fully like a compositional identity of its own. At the same time, it also marks how close that identity had come to its own edge.

By this point, the "pushing towards zero" that had structured Budd's 1960s practice had nearly exhausted itself. Although recognition was beginning to arrive, his later reflections describe an artistic cul-de-sac: "In the late 60s [and] early 70s I was doing work that was so close to being completely conceptual that it didn't have anything but aether around it…. There wasn't anything very much there." Unlike conceptualists "equipped with an intellectual ethic to back it up," Budd felt he lacked the rhetorical scaffolding to defend "doing nothing at all." He later admitted, "I simply got very tired of writing my version of Morton Feldman pieces. I kept minimalizing the language, my own language, down more and more and more and more so, I mean, I virtually minimalized myself out of a career. So what do you do then?"[115] The next step was to use reduction differently: not to approach silence or conceptual emptiness, but to build tonal works around sparse materials, sustained sound, and carefully placed harmonic color.

This redirection did not mean that Budd rejected experimental music outright. His years in West Coast experimental circles had shown him that his impulses were "not… an isolated phenomenon," but they also clarified what he wanted to leave behind.[116] *The Candy-Apple Revision* (1969–70), composed for Lentz's California Time

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[115] Plush, "Harold Budd," 44–45.

[116] Akira Rabelais, "Samadhisound Podcast #2: Akira Rabelais Interviews Harold Budd," audio podcast, April 25, 2007, 10:12.

Machine, made that break unusually plain: a candy-red sheet bearing only the words "D-fl major." Budd later described the piece as political, "anti avant-garde because it was glitteringly pretty, and tonal," explaining that he had "consciously cut [himself] off from what was then the avant-garde." [117] The piece turns reduction toward a different end. Instead of stripping music down toward near-absence, Budd uses a single tonal sonority as a declaration of preference: for color, sustain, and direct beauty. After this, he recalled that he "coasted as a teacher for several years," before returning to composition with tonality at the center of his practice.[118]

That reorientation also gave Budd a new vocabulary for describing his work. If *The Candy-Apple Revision* marked a break with his assumptions about the avant-garde, his letters from around 1970 show him beginning to articulate that break as a distinct aesthetic position rather than simply an act of refusal. Naming what he did best as "essentially a minimal art," Budd linked reduction to tonal beauty, not conceptual emptiness.[119] His joke to Childs that they would be "cosmic comrades for all time, waging the good fight against the likes of Hummel and Cui" placed that shift in a comic historical frame: Budd imagined himself among composers working from the margins of accepted taste.[120] From this point forward, tonality became one of his primary compositional materials. This chapter has traced the conditions that made this shift possible before Budd named the result "pretty" music. The next chapter turns to the

[117] Akira Rabelais, "Samadhisound Podcast #2: Akira Rabelais Interviews Harold Budd."

[118] Ibid.

[119] "Saturday Afternoon," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

[120] "December 2," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

institutional setting in which that new language began to circulate: CalArts, where pedagogy, cross-disciplinary exchange, and competing East and West Coast models gave Budd's work a new context.

Chapter Two: Outposts of the Avant-garde (1960–75)

From Convent to Catalyst: The Birth of CalArts

"It was Juilliard on drugs"[121]

California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) began as Walt Disney's radical proposition: that the American arts education system had failed. "A completely new approach... is needed," he declared; one that dismantled disciplinary boundaries and fused artistic practices under one roof. "That's the principal thing I hope to leave when I move on to greener pastures. If I can help provide a place to develop the talent of the future, I think I will have accomplished something."[122] Disney imagined CalArts not as a conventional college but as a "community of the arts," where music, visual art, dance, theater, and film would exist in sustained proximity. Against the disciplinary separation that characterized many universities, he proposed an institution organized around integrated artistic training and exchange.[123] CalArts was thus conceived as a place that might "do for the arts what Caltech does for the sciences," positioning itself as a national center for rigorous, experimental, and interdisciplinary arts education.[124]

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[121] David Wharton, "A Tradition of Tradition-Be-Damned: CalArts at 20," *Los Angeles Times*, April 15, 1990, Calendar section, 6.

[122] "Arts Institute Will Fulfill Disney Goal," *Los Angeles Times*, June 15, 1967, B1.

[123] "Arts Institute Will Fulfill Disney Goal," *Los Angeles Times*.

[124] Art Seidenbaum, "CalArts: Culture's High Hopes," *Los Angeles Times*, September 19, 1963, C2.

This vision began to take institutional form in 1961–62 through the merger of two Los Angeles schools: the Chouinard Art Institute, founded in 1921 by Nelbert Chouinard, and the Los Angeles Conservatory of Music, established in 1883. Backed by Disney's funding and strategic oversight, the merger consolidated both schools' resources while advancing a radically interdisciplinary model of arts education. Rather than reproducing the hierarchical, discipline-bound training of conventional conservatories and art schools, the new institution embraced experimental pedagogy and cross-disciplinary collaboration. This laid the foundation for CalArts as a site where professional practice, creative freedom, and experimental teaching could coexist under one roof.

In 1970, CalArts began its formative years at Villa Cabrini in Burbank, a former Catholic girls' convent school set behind prim gates amid manicured greenery, olive orchards, and stately buildings.[125] Just beyond the campus lay a very different world, shaped by the aerospace and aviation industries: nearby work on the L-1011 jet transport project, regular tremors from Lockheed's wind tunnels, and the constant noise of adjacent runways.[126] Buildings once designed for cloistered schoolgirls became an unlikely home for artists, teachers, and students.

Teaching and making overlapped continuously through demonstrations, group projects, and events that moved across video, performance, music, and theater.

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[125] Martin Bernheimer, "A Lovely Day at the Villa Cabrini," *Los Angeles Times*, February 7, 1971; Ingram Marshall, "New Music at CalArts: The First Four Years (1970–1974)," *Numus West* 72, no. 1 (Winter 1975): 52.

[126] Craig Hodgetts, "Biography of a Teaching Machine," *Artforum* 12, no. 1 (September 1973): 61.

Disciplinary boundaries remained deliberately porous. Design faculty member Chris Hodgetts recalled the atmosphere as "a cacophony of sounds, from power saws, Moogs, cellos, and aircraft, and of disciplines from touchy-feely to Grotowski."[127] Students remade the site to suit their needs, wiring rooms for sound, converting dormitories into performance spaces, and moving between studio and stage in ways that recalled earlier experimental models such as the Bauhaus and Black Mountain College.

That process of remaking was visible everywhere. Crates and boxes lay scattered through hallways and classrooms, signs of a school still taking shape. Yet that unfinished quality also generated a strong sense of purpose and excitement. Throughout the campus, sound spilled from room to room in what one observer described as a "splendid stereophonic collage," where African drums, operatic arias, piano etudes, and hammering merged into a single atmosphere of restless activity. Students and faculty, often dressed alike in jeans and tie-dye, moved through the space with a casual informality that blurred distinctions between teacher and student, work and everyday life. One room, crowded with wires, buttons, and tapes, still bore a sign from the building's earlier life: "RELIGION." Beneath it, a student had added another: "ELECTRONIC."[128] The altered doorway became a small but pointed emblem of CalArts's irreverent humor, its embrace of new technology, and its determination to remake inherited spaces and values.

The school quickly acquired a reputation, especially among trustees and benefactors, for testing the limits of the institution. Reports of nude swimming and drug

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[127] Hodgetts, "Biography of a Teaching Machine," 61.

[128] Bernheimer, "Music: A Lovely Day at the Villa Cabrini," February 7, 1971.

use circulated alongside stories of theatrical confrontation, including one incident in which a faculty member, defending the practice of nude bathing, stripped before the trustees. [129] To outsiders, CalArts looked less like a conventional school than a volatile convergence of communal living, improvised performance, and artistic experiment. Yet for many faculty, this instability was not incidental to education but part of its method. Maurice Stein downplayed grades and fixed syllabi in favor of open-ended inquiry, while John Baldessari and Allan Kaprow treated teaching as an artistic practice in its own right, insisting that "art cannot be taught, but only situations created in which art can happen."[130] Painter Fred Hammersley described CalArts as "a boon" compared with institutions that treated the arts as "necessary evils," valuing the freedom to "evolve [his] teaching the way [he'd] like" in an environment where "the beads or the beards don't make a difference" and students were judged only "by what they do, by performance."[131]

Yet Villa Cabrini's provisional character was not only cultural or pedagogical; it was also architectural. On February 9, 1971, nature intervened. As composer-performer Carl Stone later recalled, the 6.6-magnitude San Fernando earthquake "destroyed a lot of the convent," forcing the CalArts community to leave Villa Cabrini earlier than expected. What had been imagined as a gradual transition to the new Valencia campus suddenly

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[129] Paul Brach, "CalArts: Myth and Reality," *Art Journal* 42, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 14.

[130] Philipp Kaiser, and Christina Végh, "An Introduction," Where Art Might Happen: The Early Years of CalArts, Philipp Kaiser and Christina Végh eds. (Munich: Prestel, 2021), 8.

[131] *Los Angeles Times*, "Cal-Arts to Concentrate on the Pros," June 15, 1967, E1.

became immediate and unavoidable: "After the earthquake, we had no choice."[132] Composer David Mahler remembered returning the next morning to find a "gaping hole" in the music building, rendering it unusable. Even the equipment registered the shock. One music-notation device continued running through the tremors, leaving behind a jagged, almost seismographic trace of the earthquake on its paper roll.[133]

The move to Valencia, therefore, began not as a planned institutional milestone but as an emergency displacement. In February 1971, the music students were the first to relocate, arriving at the new campus before the rest of the school and spending much of their first year there largely on their own. [134] For some, the move felt like a loss. At Villa Cabrini, an unusual closeness had emerged among people, practices, and ideas, despite the busted plumbing, rats, and hand-scrawled notices pinned over crucifixes. The new campus, by contrast, was technologically sophisticated but struck many as more controlled and impersonal. Percussionist William Winant recalled that the building had "virtually no windows," and that he could practice until three in the morning without realizing how much time had passed.[135] Villa Cabrini was more than a remembered origin point. It was the place where Disney's broad and unfinished idea for CalArts was first tested against the practical realities of governance, pedagogy, space, and artistic freedom.

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[132] Author interview with Carl Stone, September 10, 2022; Also reference Hodgetts, "Biography of a Teaching Machine," 62.

[133] Author interview with David Mahler, October 22, 2022.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Hodgetts, "Biography of a Teaching Machine," 61.

Drafting Utopia

When Walt Disney died in 1966, he left a substantial portion of his estate to CalArts, along with an influential, ambitious, and maddeningly imprecise institutional vision. In the years that followed, his intentions acquired an almost oracular authority: endlessly invoked, variously interpreted, and impossible to verify. "Walt would have wanted it that way" became a familiar refrain as trustees, administrators, and faculty struggled over the institute's identity and direction.[136] In this atmosphere of uncertainty, Villa Cabrini was never simply a temporary campus; it became a drafting table for the institution itself. As students turned dormitories into performance spaces and rewired former classrooms for video and sound, the idea of CalArts took shape as something ambitious, improvised, and internally divided: some imagined a conservatory, others an artist collective.

Robert Corrigan's appointment in 1968 gave that unsettled vision its first sustained administrative form. A former NYU dean known for his unconventional views on arts education, Corrigan rejected standard academic models, arguing that "the structure of the university's just not geared for training artists" and that, in artistic formation, "grades don't mean anything."[137] Instead, he imagined CalArts as a "community of the arts," guided by what he called "the perilous course between adventure and discipline."[138] That same year, Mel Powell joined the faculty as dean of the

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[136] James Real, "When You Wish Upon a School," *Los Angeles Times*, February 27, 1972, W16.

[137] John Weisman, "CalArts Aiming for Magic Kingdom of Creative Education," *Los Angeles Times*, October 4, 1970, Q1.

[138] Martin Bernheimer, *"*Navigating Between Adventure and Discipline,*" Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 1969.

School of Music, arriving from Yale University, where he had chaired the composition faculty and directed the electronic music studio. Powell's administrative experience and commitment to new musical practices made him especially important to the institute's emerging model of arts education.[139]

The Valencia campus was meant to give architectural form to this balance between freedom and structure. Contemporary accounts cast CalArts as a "hothouse for budding artistic talent" and praised the campus plan as a "stroke of genius" for fostering collaboration across fields,[140] while architect Thornton Ladd emphasized the need for careful calibration: too much separation would inhibit exchange, but too much openness could collapse into cacophony. The design, therefore, sought a middle ground, structured enough to support sustained work and porous enough to encourage movement across forms.[141] The 1969 groundbreaking ceremony cast that ambition in national terms, with Robert H. Finch, then U.S. Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, framing the arts as essential to American public life.[142]

But even as CalArts projected this forward-looking vision, institutional and practical tensions were already taking shape. In fall 1969, faculty in the School of Design publicly opposed Corrigan's plan to consolidate existing units into a centralized "School

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[139] "Mel Powell Named to CalArts Post," *Los Angeles Times*, May 30, 1968, E13.

[140] Cecil Smith, "Stage: CalArts Hothouse for Budding Artistic Talent," *Los Angeles Times*, January 7, 1968, D16; Blair Kim, "A Stroke of Genius Benefits CalArts Institute Campus," *Los Angeles Times*, July 1, 1968, E1.

[141] Wayne Warga, "A 20th-Century Art School in the Classic Mold," *Los Angeles Times*, February 16, 1969, B1.

[142] Dorothy Townsend, "Arts Have Become Keys for Aiding the Poor, Finch Says," *Los Angeles Times*, May 4, 1969, B1.

of Art and Design," arguing that it threatened self-governance and departed from the school's commitment to practitioner-led pedagogy. Meanwhile, construction delays and rising costs forced the institute to remain in temporary quarters at Villa Cabrini into 1970.[143] These problems intensified a larger struggle over what CalArts was meant to become: a disciplined professional training ground tied to the entertainment industry, or a more open-ended site of artistic risk, political experimentation, and resistance to hierarchical instruction.

That conflict sharpened before the Valencia campus opened. Provost Herbert Blau, closely associated with the school's theatrical and pedagogical radicalism, was removed, followed soon after by Corrigan himself.[144] Corrigan was replaced by William Lund, Walt Disney's son-in-law, who arrived with a mandate to stabilize the institution. Although Lund initially presented himself as a reassuring figure, his tone shifted quickly. Within a month, he was calling for a more conventional institutional posture, insisting that CalArts needed to become "more traditional in our approach" and dismissing the school as "weirdo" and "X-rated."[145] By the summer of 1971, Roy Disney and other influential board members had reportedly explored transferring CalArts to more established universities, exposing the depth of the Disney family's dissatisfaction with the

[143] John Dreyfuss, "Ouster Fought by Art School Faculty," *Los Angeles Times*, November 15, 1969, B10; Mary Lou Loper, "CalArts Spirits Up Despite Delays," *Los Angeles Times*, May 1, 1970, D1.

[144] David Rosenzweig, "Provost of CalArts Fired in Dispute Over Policies: Disney Family Behind Ouster, Blau Declares," *Los Angeles Times*, September 17, 1971, SF6.

[145] Wharton, "A Tradition of Tradition-Be-Damned: CalArts at 20."

school's direction.[146] As Jack Goldstein later put it, Disney and "all those white Republicans from Orange County" saw the students and faculty as "all raving lunatics."[147] Yet when CalArts formally opened its Valencia campus in November 1971, the *Los Angeles Times* described it as a "Magic Kingdom of creative education," a phrase that captured the period's central tension: the promise of a new model for arts training and the persistent friction between that ambition and the expectations attached to its Disney legacy.[148]

Within that unstable institutional setting, the music program became one of the clearest sites where CalArts's experimental ambitions took shape. Although the visual arts drew the most attention in CalArts's early years and have shaped much of the later scholarship, the music program was equally central to the school's experimental identity. Its development was not simply a local Los Angeles story. Many of the figures who defined the department came from outside California, especially from New York, bringing distinct compositional priorities and models of ensemble-based work. Composers such as Powell, Morton Subotnick, and James Tenney, along with their students, were crucial in establishing these directions.

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[146] Roy Disney and other board members reportedly approached USC and Pepperdine about absorbing CalArts, allegedly offering each institution a ten-million-dollar endowment to take over the school and attach Walt Disney's name to it. Rosenzweig, "Provost of CalArts Fired in Dispute Over Policies: Disney Family Behind Ouster, Blau Declares;" October 31, 1971; Real, "When You Wish Upon a School," February 27, 1972.

[147] Richard Hertz, *Jack Goldstein and the CalArts Mafia* (Ojai, CA: Minneola Press, 2003), 67.

[148] Weisman, "CalArts Aiming for Magic Kingdom of Creative Education."

For students like Mahler, the department's character was shaped less by any strict East Coast–West Coast divide than by a practical question of access: who knew what was happening where, and how quickly that knowledge traveled. CalArts became one site where those channels of exchange converged. Students arriving from New York brought firsthand accounts of downtown venues such as the Kitchen and of electronic-music experiments by figures like Richard Teitelbaum, while others carried West Coast names, including Harold Budd, back into those same circuits.[149] The result was not simply the importation of downtown models into Southern California, but the re-siting of experimental practice within California's particular conditions: institutional instability, intercultural exchange, mobility, and the presence of the entertainment industry.

The Avant-Garde in Exile

For some experimental artists in the 1970s, Southern California offered conditions for work that differed markedly from those on the East Coast. The point is not that artists simply "went West" in search of escape, but that institutions such as CalArts made possible new forms of artistic exchange. In Valencia, experimental practice developed within an environment that was still institutionally unsettled and unusually open to collaboration across media: tape music, improvisation, non-Western instruments, performance, and visual experiment could coexist. For artists arriving from New York and elsewhere, CalArts registered less as a conventional school than as a site where

[149] Author interview with David Mahler, October 22, 2022.

experimental work was being re-situated in relation to the particular conditions of Southern California.

Although CalArts stood at a considerable distance from the Northeast's established cultural centers, Corrigan shaped its early development through East Coast experimental networks. Michael Byron, a young composer who studied with James Tenney during CalArts's first years, later recalled that Corrigan "brought the whole New York avant-garde out to California," naming Nam June Paik, Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, and Subotnick.[150] Ingram Marshall likewise recalled that "there were a lot of people at CalArts who were also New Yorkers," and suggested that the school functioned, in some respects, as "an outpost of New York, downtown New York." At the same time, Marshall, who completed his MFA at CalArts in 1971 and taught electronic music there until 1974, stressed the openness of the environment. The curriculum, he recalled, was "totally experimental," giving students a high degree of autonomy, a condition that some found disorienting but others readily absorbed into their working habits.[151] Tenney, who joined the composition faculty after the move to Valencia, remembered those years in similarly practical terms: "For the few years that I was there, it was very marvelous because I was doing what I wanted to do."[152]

Budd, who taught at CalArts from 1968 to 1976, later reflected on the department's early personnel in blunt terms: "I was the only West Coast avant-garde

[150] Author interview with Michael Byron, October 9, 2025.

[151] Ingram Marshall, "New Music at CalArts: The First Four Years (1970–1974)," 52.

[152] Gayle Young, "Tenney, James, 1988 June 10–1988 June 12," *OHV, Major Figures in American Music, Oral History of American Music, in the Music Library of Yale University,* 33.

composer who was handy at the time. So there may have been some tokenism… They were all from New York or New Haven or something like that."[153] The remark captures a regional imbalance within the school's early music program, as well as a difference in medium and practice. Budd had already absorbed methods associated with Brown, Cage, and Feldman, yet he was less invested in the electronic studio culture through which CalArts was beginning to define itself as an avant-garde institution.[154] His sense of separation also appears in a remark he relayed from Richard Teitelbaum, who had recently arrived from Wesleyan: "To the Barricades or to the Desert." Budd repeated the line with approval, adding, "I like that!"[155] The phrase sharpened the regional and aesthetic divide he perceived at CalArts. "Barricades" suggested the more visible East Coast avant-garde, while "desert" pointed to Valencia as a less recognized setting where inherited experimental practices could be redirected under different conditions.

Elsewhere in the music program, however, CalArts's experimental identity was taking shape through electronic infrastructure. Powell arrived from Yale with experience directing an electronic music studio, while Subotnick worked with California instrument designer Don Buchla to build CalArts's own studios. Together, they gave the department an infrastructure for tape, live electronics, and experimental sound, helping the music

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[153] Akira, Rabelais, "Samadhisound Podcast #2: Akira Rabelais interviews Harold Budd," April 25, 2007.

[154] In works such as *Intermission Piece* (1968), *Sun Pieces* (1968), *Lovely Thing* (1969), *Mangus Colorado* (1969), and *Vittorio* (1969), Budd absorbed methods associated with Brown, Cage, and Feldman, adapting Brown's open form, Cage's theatricalized performance situations, and Feldman's testing of audibility and duration. See Chapter One.

[155] January 8, 1973. Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

program assume a recognizable avant-garde profile. During these years, Subotnick developed what he called "ghost scores" in collaboration with Buchla, whose modular systems allowed him to coordinate live performance with forms of electronic control. The setup depended on control information recorded to tape and routed through custom electronics: these signals were not meant to be heard directly but instead shaped the sound of live instruments in real time. Subotnick described this system as "ghost electronics," an invisible layer of compositional instruction that could govern dynamics, timbre, articulation, and timing as a performance unfolded.[156]

Yet, electronic music was not the only program through which CalArts redefined experimental practice. CalArts's World Music Program was directed by Nick England, formerly of Columbia University, and Robert Brown, who brought experience from Wesleyan University. Brown's introduction of the Javanese gamelan tradition, carried over from Wesleyan along with several of his students, was especially striking within the school's experimental environment. The gamelan quickly generated widespread interest, prompting students, such as the instrument builder and composer Daniel Schmidt, to explore gamelan construction during their time at CalArts. That convergence of global musical traditions and avant-garde experimentation helped lay the groundwork for what would later be called "American gamelan."[157] Although gamelan was not usually classified

[156] Jeffrey S. Hanson, *Morton Subotnick's Ghost Scores: Interaction and Performance with Music Technology* (Master's thesis, San José State University, 2010), 32–48; Vivian Perlis, "Morton Subotnick," *Major Figures in American Music, Oral History of American Music, in the Music Library of Yale University,* New Haven, CT, (March 23, 1983), 12–14.

[157] Jay M. Arms, "Gamelan as World Citizen: American Experimental Music and the Internationalization of Indonesian Arts" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Santa Cruz, 2018), 93.

as "new music," it nonetheless served as a model for younger composers, shaping their work with its ensemble discipline, timbral attention, and cyclic temporality. Students also encountered other musical traditions through visiting artists and teachers, including Ravi Shankar, the Ladzekpo brothers, and T. Viswanathan. By the early 1970s, these networks of exchange extended beyond the campus itself, and by 1973, some students were traveling to Africa for further study.[158]

Postcard to Harold Budd: James Tenney and his CalArts Continuum

Within this broader field of electronics, world music, and cross-disciplinary exchange, Tenney offers another way to understand the CalArts environment that Budd also inhabited. Tenney's work linked perception, American experimental repertory, and pedagogy, and he soon became one of Budd's closest colleagues within the music program. Arriving from the East Coast, where he had been shaped by Cage, Kennith Gaburo, Carl Ruggles, and Varèse, Tenney became a central figure in the CalArts music community. He later described the school as "a very productive environment," where "I was not told what to teach, or how."[159]

Although Tenney's first period at CalArts ran from 1970 to 1975, he later recalled those years as a turning point: "Something was happening in those days that hadn't been happening before." For Tenney, that change was tied to the freedom of the school's early curriculum, where "certain students were really responding" to the absence of fixed

[158] Ingram Marshall, "New Music at CalArts: The First Four Years (1970–1974)," 52.

[159] Young, "Tenney, James, 1988 June 10 1988–June 12," 33.

expectations.[160] This freedom also coincided with a shift in his own work. During these years, Tenney moved away from electronic composition and returned to instrumental writing, developing a practice centered on reduction, perception, and sustained sound. This direction placed him at some distance from the ensemble minimalism he had encountered as an original member of both Philip Glass's and Steve Reich's groups in the late 1960s, while also creating points of contact with Budd's own turn toward tonality and reduced means. Rather than emphasize pulse or repetition as style, Tenney treated minimalism as part of a longer experimental lineage, one that extended from Cage's *4'33"* to La Monte Young's *Composition 1960*. As he put it, "Real minimalism… can be traced back to Cage's *4'33"* or La Monte Young's *Composition 1960*… where it's just a statement about letting butterflies loose in the auditorium or something like that."[161]

Tenney's tape piece *For Ann (rising)* (1969), often considered one of his signature works, layers glissandi structured around the Shepard tone illusion to create the impression of continuous ascent; at CalArts, he orchestrated the piece for strings in 1971. He described it as "truly minimal in that good sense," emphasizing its "distillation down to the simplest possible thing."[162] Budd later remarked that *For Ann (rising)* was his favorite of Tenney's works, calling it "the aural equivalent forever and ever of a barbershop pole: absolutely tirelessly fascinating."[163] This pursuit of simplicity, which Larry Polansky later described as a turn toward restraint, may reflect Tenney's

[160] Ibid., 40–41.

[161] Ibid., 41.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Harold Budd, "[Untitled]," *Perspectives of New Music* 25, no. 1 (Summer 1987): 471.

responsiveness to his changing environment, shaped in part by the quiet radicalism of figures such as Budd and Jerome Rothenberg, whose work had already begun to chart subtler, more modest paths in music and poetry.[164]

Quiet Fan for Erik Satie (1970–71), a tribute to the French composer's clarity and restraint, marked Tenney's early effort to explore soft dynamics and perceptible form. The fourteen-minute ensemble work for winds, brass, and strings unfolds through dynamic swells between piano and mezzo-piano around a four-note fragment dispersed almost pointillistically within related instrumental families, creating a soft, breathing motion in the texture. As part of a systematic process of gradual pitch expansion and contraction, the piece begins with a minor second, then fans outward by half steps around a central pitch until it reaches a major tenth before closing again, a structure repeated several times across the work. Tenney compared this procedure to Picasso's bull lithographs, in which layers of realistic detail are gradually stripped away until only the essential lines remain: "That distillation idea is very powerful," he remarked. "It's not seen very much, it's not predominant in the culture."[165]

Near the end of the piece, Tenney inserts an eleven-measure quotation from Satie's *Three Pieces in the Form of a Pear* (1903), folding it into the surrounding fanning sequence in a gesture that recalls Charles Ives's use of quotation and borrowed material. The work then reaches its clearest point of tonal arrival, settling briefly into A-flat major.

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[164] Larry Polansky, *The Early Works of James Tenney* (Santa Fe, NM: Soundings Press, 1983), 186.

[165] Young, "Tenney, James, 1988 June 10–1988 June 12," 41.

Yet Tenney avoids full closure. A flatted second enters the final sonority, disturbing the cadence and leaving the ending unresolved.

Created with Alison Knowles's help, Tenney's *Postal Pieces* (1965–71) comprise ten short compositions printed on postcards. Because Tenney hated writing letters, the postcard gave him a way to replace ordinary correspondence with short musical works.[166] That practical solution also shaped the pieces aesthetically. In a 1978 interview with Gayle Young, he described them not as dramatic forms but as perceptual tools: "Those pieces have a lot to do with this attitude toward sound … but also with something else, the notion of the avoidance of drama."[167] Rather than moving towards a climax, they establish their terms quickly and invite sustained attention to sound. Once listeners grasp the operative process, they can attend more closely to timbre, resonance, and subtle variation. Rather than moving towards a climax, they establish their terms quickly and direct attention to timbre, sound, and subtle variation. In this sense, the pieces function less as narratives than as exercises in listening.[168]

Some of the techniques Tenney used in his *Postal Pieces* draw on what he called "koans." Across the set, one recurring device is "clang," a sharp percussive attack followed by a sustained pitch or resonance that grows naturally out of the initial gesture. Other pieces explore "swell," a gradual crescendo and decrescendo that Tenney

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[166] Polansky, *The Early Works of James Tenney*, 193.

[167] Young, "Tenney, James, 1988 June 10–1988 June 12," 41.

[168] Robert Wannamaker, *The Music of James Tenney: Volume 2, A Handbook to the Pieces* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2021), 75–96.

understood as one of the simplest geometric forms, a procedure that also shapes the dynamic design of *Quiet Fan for Erik Satie*.[169]

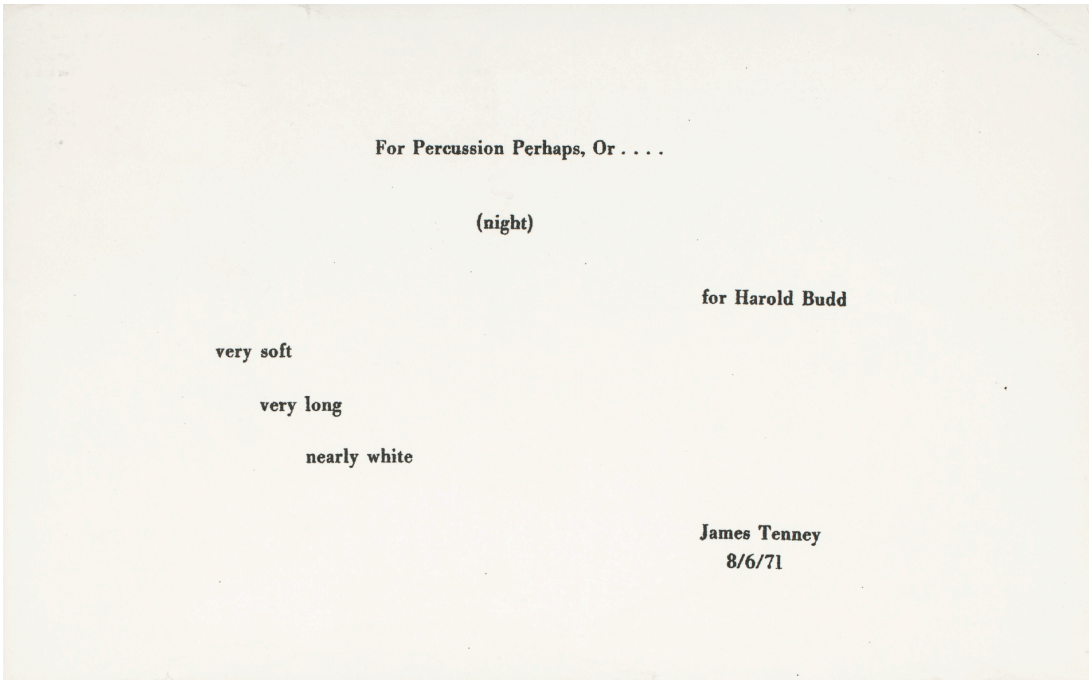
Tenney composed many of his *Postal Pieces* for his colleagues at CalArts, including "August Harp," for harpist Susan Allen (1971); "Having Never Written a Note for Percussion," for percussionist John Bergamo (1971); and "Beast," for bassist Buell Neidlinger (1971). Possibly one of the most unusual works in the set is "For Percussion Perhaps, Or (Night)," addressed to Harold Budd in 1971 (Figure 9).[170] Polansky described the work as "a piece about which little can be said," calling it a poetic evocation of Budd's musical character and noting its singularity within the *Postal Pieces* and Tenney's broader output. Read historically, the piece registers tendencies that were already central to Budd's style by that time: quiet dynamics, sparse materials, and sustained sounds.[171]

[169] Polansky, *The Early Works of James Tenney*, 125–126.

[170] "For Percussion Perhaps, Or (Night)" is not the only piece in the set that departs from the procedures described above. "A Rose Is a Rose Is a Round" also stands apart; dedicated to Philip Corner, it reflects his late-1960s interest in rounds.

[171] Ibid., 196–198.

Figure 9. James Tenney, "For Percussion Perhaps, Or (Night)," for Harold Budd (1971). Series 5) PROGRAMS AND REVIEWS, subseries 5A) Programs. *Pauline Oliveros Papers. MSS 102. Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego*. Box 15. Folder 7.



For Percussion Perhaps, Or . . . .

(night)

for Harold Budd

very soft

very long

nearly white

James Tenney
8/6/71

Budd's dedication strips away the compact procedures that organize much of *Postal Pieces*. But "For Percussion Perhaps, Or (Night)" is unusual in another way. There is no specified instrumentation and no use of the recurring "swell" or "clang" devices. Instead, the score offers only a few spare qualities: "very soft," "very long," and "nearly white." Unlike the pieces written for performers in the CalArts music department, this one was addressed to Budd, Tenney's colleague on the composition faculty. The score thus reads less as a practical performance study than as a spare, suggestive response to Budd's emerging musical sensibility. By 1971, that sensibility was already becoming audible in his attraction to quiet dynamics, suspended duration, blue-lit performance

environments, and percussion functioning as resonant bodies.[172] In that light, the work seems to complement this period of exploration for Budd.

On August 28, 1971, while teaching in Guadalajara, Mexico, Budd composed *Lirio* in a bar (Figure 10).[173] The work reads as Budd's own narrowing of the field. Rather than writing for percussion in any conventional sense, he reduces the instrument to an environmental instruction: "under a blue light, roll very softly on a large gong for a long duration." Even the page layout leans toward stasis: the equals sign functions almost like a graphic brace, suspending the action beside a small insect ornament.[174]

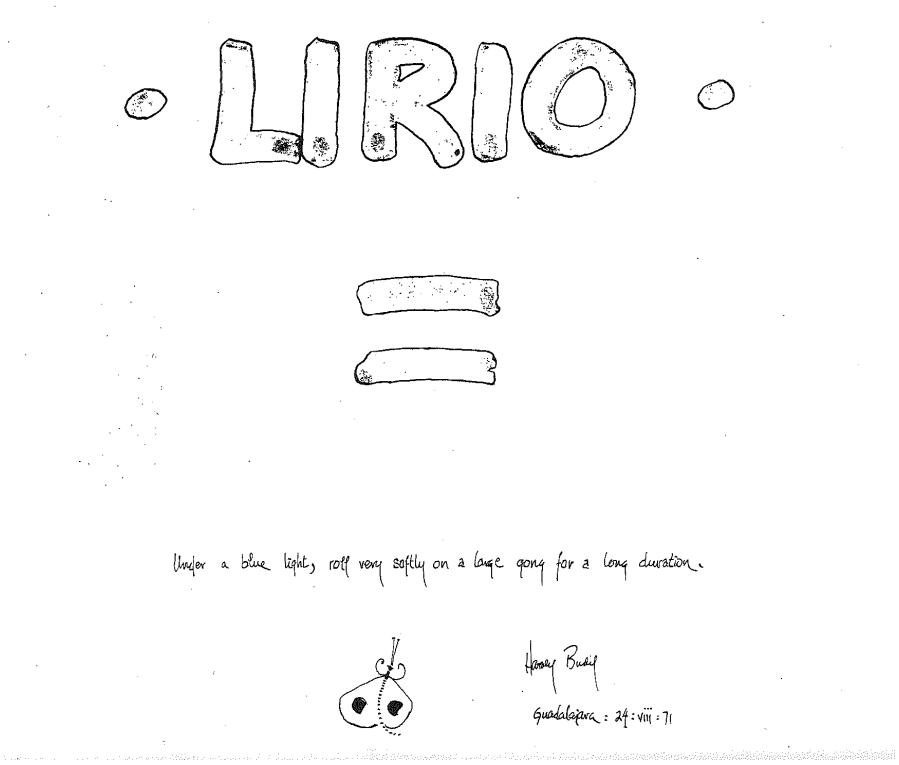
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[172] Michael Pisaro suggests that the word "white" refers to white noise, but it also functions as a visual cue, not only an auditory one. Michael Pisaro, "Writing, Music" *The Ashgate Research Companion to Experimental Music* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009), 59.

[173] Budd dated *Lirio* "Guadalajara, Mexico, August 28, 1971," suggesting that the score emerged during his summer teaching stay there rather than in a formal studio setting. In correspondence from the same trip, he reported that his Mexican composition students were "extremely interested in the music of North American composers" and described the local stylistic climate as divided between Hindemith-like diatonic writing and an "international style via Poland," that he considered "not so different from the States." "August, 17, 1971," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, B*arney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[174] Budd's insect marks, especially the butterfly and dragonfly, belong to his early-1970s turn toward beauty, ornament, and aestheticist self-fashioning. See Chapter Four.

Figure 10. Harold Budd, *Lirio* (1971). August 28, 1971, Folder 8, Box: 4, Folder: 8. *SOURCE: Music of the Avant-Garde*, 06-051. The University of North Texas Music Library.

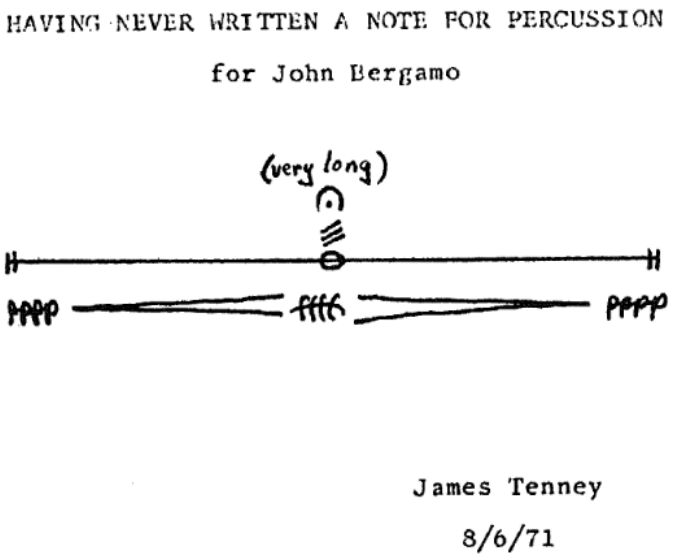


Lirio also clarifies how closely Tenney's percussion postcards were already entangled with Budd's aesthetic, especially Tenney's Bergamo-dedicated postal work "Having Never Written a Note for Percussion" (Figure 11).[175] Tenney's score is spare: a

[175] Sonic Youth's SYR4: *Goodbye 20th Century*, released November 16, 1999, is a double album recorded between March and August 1999 in New York City, presenting the group's realizations of works by avant-garde composers including John Cage, Cornelius Cardew, Yoko Ono, Steve Reich, and Christian Wolff, performed with collaborators from the contemporary new-music scene. "Having Never Written a Note for Percussion" is performed by Kim Gordon, Thurston Moore, Lee Ranaldo, Steve Shelley, Jim O'Rourke, Takehisa Kosugi, and William Winant. Framed as a project to broaden and reinterpret this repertoire, the album helped bring Tenney's postcard piece to a wider audience and remains one of its most widely encountered recordings outside specialist new-music circles.

single tremolo note under a fermata marked "very long," shaped entirely by a symmetrical swell from quadruple pianissimo to quadruple fortissimo and back again. The instrument is unspecified, though performances often gravitate toward tam-tam or gong because the crescendo and decrescendo can unfold audibly within a single pitch.

Figure 11. James Tenney, "Having Never Written a Note for Percussion," for John Bergamo (1971). In *Postal Pieces.*



Unlike Tenney's score, Budd's *Lirio* has no dynamics and depends less on process than on image. Its title means "lily," and the piece turns that floral reference into a frame for stillness, evoking the surface of a lily pond. Tenney's swell, by contrast, moves through a clear arc of crescendo and decrescendo, making change itself the central

event.[176] The comparison, however, is not only textual. Budd and Tenney's affinity also took shape in performance, where reduced materials could become shared events.

An early glimpse of Budd and Tenney's creative rapport at CalArts came during the first public concert on the new Valencia campus, where Budd's "almost drone-like" *Oboe Piece* (undated) was performed before a packed audience of students and faculty. Sustained tones from three oboists formed the work's still center, surrounded by an array of carefully placed sounds that ranged from the delicate and domestic to the abruptly percussive: water wrung from rags, bacon sizzling on an electric skillet, crackers gently crushed in a tin pan, and Tenney hammering nails in the foyer. By carrying the performance beyond the main room, Tenney's contribution expanded the work into a spatially dispersed sonic environment, blurring the boundary between concert, installation, and everyday activity. Budd later remembered it as one of the finest realizations of his music, recalling that it held the room in concentrated attention for twenty-five minutes without a single lapse.[177]

Tenney's participation as a performer, rather than as conductor or composer, reveals the depth of his engagement with Budd's artistic sensibility. If Budd drew Tenney toward softer, more extended textures, he appears to have done so less through aesthetic argument than through the intimacy of shared practice. The personal dimension of that affinity later surfaced in an unlikely venue: *Perspectives of New Music*, a journal more

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[176] Childs's text scores and writing offered Budd a model for treating language, title, and sparse instruction as compositional material rather than supplement. See Chapter One; Budd later expands this miniature approach in *The Dragonfly Cymbal* (1972), where notated piano writing is combined with image and visual design. See Chapter Four.
[177] November 14," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

commonly associated with theoretical rigor and analytical discourse. For its 1987 twenty-fifth-anniversary issue, the journal assembled a tribute to Tenney, and Budd responded not with a formal essay but with a brief, affectionate reminiscence. He recalled that "Jim's skill as a chess player is humbling, but most awesome by far is his skill at slaughtering the competition at pool, particularly in cowboy bars where Jim and I hung out." With characteristic dryness, he added, "I don't know how George Jones and Tammy Wynette have gotten by without us." The anecdote offers a rare glimpse of their friendship beyond CalArts: intellectually serious, casually competitive, and rooted as much in bars, games, and country music as in the experimental concert hall.[178]

Another glimpse of Budd and Tenney's overlap appears in musicologist Robert Morgan's 1973 letter to Budd, written during Morgan's dissertation research on Robert Graettinger. After seeing that Budd had examined some of the materials in Stan Kenton's office, Morgan wrote to ask what he might know. Budd's reply places Tenney squarely in the scene: *SOURCE* had asked him to investigate the archive for a proposed article, and he recalled going to Kenton's office "with Jim Tenney." Among the materials was "a 1948 mini version of [Graettinger's] *City of Glass*," surviving only in parts rather than score, which Budd thought could be reconstructed "if anyone had the energy to do that."[179] The episode is brief, but it shows Budd and Tenney working within the same

[178] Harold Budd, "[Untitled]:" 471.

[179] Budd also set their visit against a longer line of musicians who had tried to make sense of the work, noting that earlier figures such as Quincy Jones and Nelson Riddle had come through Kenton's office but left "in dreadful confusion," confronted with materials that suggested a system yet resisted translation into the practical terms of arrangement or performance. Although Graettinger's charts and color-coded graphs seemed to promise a rigorous compositional system, Budd ultimately suspected that they only created the appearance of one, concluding that "everything looks like there was

culture of recovery, where neglected American repertoires became objects of research as well as performance. That culture had shaped Tenney before CalArts.

In the early 1960s, shortly before leaving Bell Labs in New Jersey, Tenney helped found the *Tone Roads Ensemble*.[180] With collaborators including Philip Corner, George Flynn, Malcolm Goldstein, Dick Higgins, Burton Kaplan, Norma Marder, Elizabeth Monroe, Max Neuhaus, and Carolee Schneemann, he set out to address what participants described as a "serious lack" of performances of contemporary music in New York City.[181] The group initially focused on the largely neglected music of Ives, but it soon expanded its repertory to include other experimental ultramodernists such as Henry Cowell, Ruggles, and Edgard Varèse. They also championed postwar figures including Cage, Feldman, Conlon Nancarrow, and eventually took up works by a younger generation of experimental composers, Tenney among them.[182] This shared archival

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one." "July 14, 1973," Harold Budd to Robert B. Morgan, 1973–1974, Folder 2, Box 1, Folder 2, Stan Kenton Collection, 06-017, University of North Texas Music Library; Almost a week later, Budd told Childs that Morgan's inquiry had made him realize, half-jokingly, that he knew "about as much as anyone could" about Graettinger, adding, "so why aren't I getting the Ph.D.?" He then called himself an "unreconstructed nostalgia buff," a phrase that casts his interest in Graettinger as part archival curiosity, part attachment to neglected musical pasts. "July 20, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974; Also reference Robert Badgett Morgan, *The Music and Life of Robert Graettinger* (DMA diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1974).

[180] Young, "Tenney, James, 1988 June 10–1988 June 12," 19.

[181] Polansky, *The Early Works of James Tenney*, 256.

[182] Polansky described surviving tape performances by the Tone Roads Ensemble as "extraordinary, both in their tremendous attention to detail, and in their real sensitivity to a music that had almost never been heard." Polansky, *The Early Works of James Tenney*, 256–257.

curiosity also points beyond CalArts, toward the wider experimental lineage Tenney brought with him from the East Coast and would soon begin to reshape in California.

In his program notes for a 1963 Tone Roads Ensemble concert, Tenney drew on Ives's experimental chamber works *Tone Roads No. 1* (1911) and *Tone Roads No. 3* (1915), where independent musical lines unfold as separate "roads," at times converging and at others remaining distinct. These lines often produce contrapuntal dissonant writing, not through a single harmonic framework but through the interaction of multiple trajectories.[183] Building on that model, Tenney suggested that some musical roads converge toward shared ideas while others diverge entirely. For him, some of those paths were "rough and rocky," not meant to be traveled too often or too comfortably, yet consequential enough to alter the musical terrain. Although Tenney described this as "a lonely territory," he also suggested that younger composers might feel "a little less lonely" when they encountered the paths earlier Americans had already opened. Southern California had already served as one such site, where Cowell founded *The New Music Society* in Los Angeles in 1925 after finding little institutional support for experimental music in New York.[184]

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[183] I use "contrapuntal dissonant writing" descriptively here, rather than to identify Ives with the Cowell-Seeger technique of dissonant counterpoint. On dissonant counterpoint as a specific technique developed and disseminated through Cowell, Seeger, Crawford, and the ultra-modern network, see John D. Spilker, "Substituting a New Order": Dissonant Counterpoint, Henry Cowell, and the Network of Ultra-Modern Composers (PhD diss., Florida State University, 2010).

[184] Rita H. Mead, "Henry Cowell's New Music Society," *The Journal of Musicology* 1, no. 4 (October 1982): 449–451.

Through a series of concerts, *The New Music Society* presented works by ultramodernist composers such as Leo Ornstein, Dane Rudhyar, Ruggles, and Varèse, helping establish Los Angeles as a center for experimental music.[185] Nearly fifty years later, Tenney renewed that impulse with the founding of the *Tone Roads West Ensemble* at CalArts (1973–75).[186] Although the ensemble drew on repertoires associated with Cowell's earlier efforts in Los Angeles, including works by Ives and Varèse, and extended the legacy of the original New York *Tone Roads Ensemble* through music by Cage and Cowell, Tenney also broadened its scope. At a concert broadcast from KPFK in Los Angeles, he used his own *In the Aeolian Mode* (1973) as prelude, intermission, and postlude music, introduced works by Lou Harrison, and programmed pieces by younger composers emerging from the CalArts community, including John Luther Adams and Peter Garland (Figures 12 and 13). In this way, he linked earlier experimental activity in Los Angeles to contemporary practice, sustaining and reshaping the West Coast experimental music scene.

[185] Rita H. Mead, "Henry Cowell's New Music Society," 449–451.

[186] Polansky, *The Early Works of James Tenney*, 257.

Figure 12. ***Tone Roads West*** **Concert program at KPFK Radio (May 27, 1973).** Courtesy of William Winant.

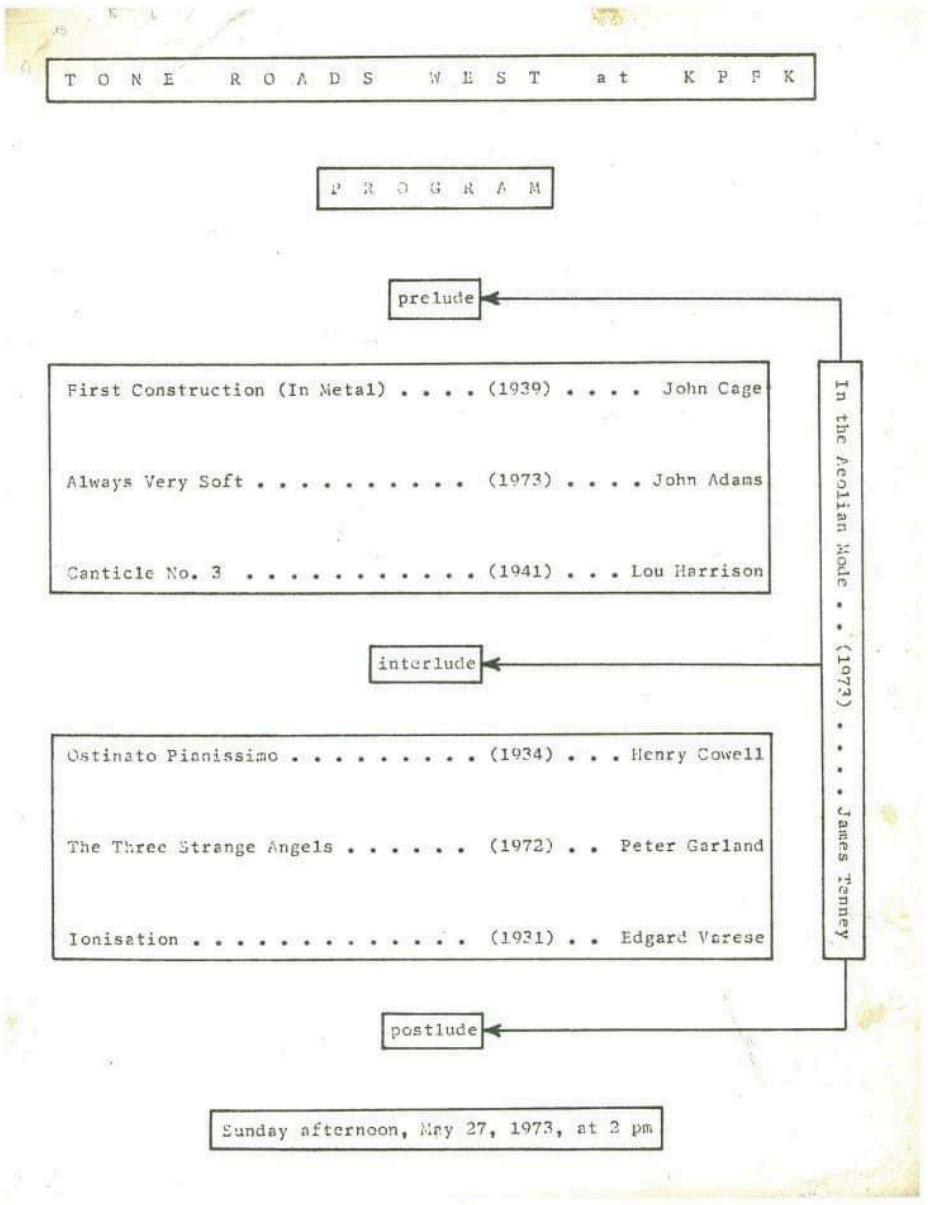


Figure 13. *Tone Roads West* after the KPFK concert (1973). William Winant is seated front left; Harold Budd, front right. Courtesy of William Winant.



At a *Tone Roads West* concert in Santa Monica on October 26, 1973, Tenney presented a program of Scott Joplin rags in his own arrangements, followed by a set of Ives songs. Budd, who attended the concert, responded with a mixture of skepticism and admiration. Although he and Tenney were close colleagues, their artistic priorities did not always align. Reflecting on the program, Budd remarked, "Joplin means nothing to me, what's next? Barbershop quartets?" He also confessed that he was not "the world's greatest living fan of Ives," yet immediately singled out Tenney's performance for praise: "They did a set of six or seven of the songs… two of them are beyond mere laud. What can I say? Don't tell me about Ives' pioneering language, tell me about those two songs!"

Budd's response shows not that he rejected musical heroes, historical lineages, or experimental claims, but that he resisted treating innovation as a sufficient criterion of value. Here, he separates Ives's "pioneering language" from the specific songs that impressed him. The distinction is important because Budd's own criteria were subjective and evaluative: music mattered when it produced a response he could name, whether as "glitteringly pretty, and tonal," "lovely," "corrupting," or "beyond mere laud."[1187] This question of value, who defines it, how it circulates, and what institutions sustain it, also shaped the broader West Coast experimental tradition to which Budd and Tenney belonged.

Pages from the Pacific: *SOUNDINGS* from the West Coast

Harry Partch's 1946 essay "Show Horses in the Concert Ring" casts the twentieth-century concert world as a scripted pageant. His central metaphor, "show horses," refers to entrenched performance practices and repertoires as polished displays of the past that impede the acceptance of contemporary art. He argued that this incuriosity is perpetuated by so-called "serious music" and by training that privileges works by composers who are "mostly long dead," specifically "eighteenth-century Germanic gentlemen."[188] Partch pins part of the problem on music education: "We will get no help from the music schools," he writes, which are "virtually impervious to

[187] Chapter Four develops this point in relation to Budd's "pretty" music, where beauty functions less as a fixed formal category than as a term of evaluation. "Pretty" names a value judgment rather than a style category: it identifies the kinds of musical effects Budd chose to defend.

[188] Harry Partch, "Show Horses in the Concert Ring," *SOUNDINGS 1*, Peter Garland and John Bischoff, eds. (Santa Fe, NM: *SOUNDINGS* Press, 1972): 67.

individualism." He is equally critical of what he calls "an industrialization of music," driven by record companies and the dominance of accepted instruments, reserving his sharpest attack for music publishing and "that accepted repertory, for the same accepted instruments and whatever asinine notation and implied nomenclature they require."[189] Together, these critiques identify the schools, publishers, concert repertoires, and recording systems that limit the circulation of American experimental music. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, Partch's complaint had become a practical publishing problem for West Coast composers.

Major international music publishers such as C. F. Peters and G. Schirmer showed little interest in promoting the experimental ideas and exploratory notations emerging from the younger avant-garde. As Carol Oja notes, West Coast composers had faced this problem since the 1920s, when limited institutional support pushed them toward self-organized concerts, publications, and networks.[190] Building on an American lineage of independent publishing, from Cowell's *New Music Quarterly* (1927–58), with origins in Berkeley, to Charles Shere's San Francisco-based *Ear Magazine West* (1973–82), West Coast composers formed cooperatives and launched self-published journals to share their work and foster community outside the academy and the constraints of commercial publishing. Among these was *SOURCE: Music of the Avant-Garde* (1967–73), founded at the University of California, Davis, by composer Larry Austin. Describing itself as "a medium of communication for the composer, the performer, and the student

[189] Partch, "Show Horses in the Concert Ring:" 67.

[190] Carol J. Oja, "The Soundings of New Music," *I.S.A.M. Newsletter* 13, no. 1 (November 1983): 8–9.

of the avant-garde," *SOURCE* offered a platform for scores, statements, and debates within contemporary experimental music. *SOUNDINGS*, which emerged in California five years later, articulated a different set of priorities.[191]

SOUNDINGS (1972–90) originated in a workshop led by Fluxus artist Dick Higgins at CalArts and was conceived as a "free-form journal of new scores" for emerging composers and better-known figures neglected by commercial publishers.[192] Founders Garland and John Bischoff explained that the journal grew from the conviction that contemporary musicians needed wider circulation than existing publications allowed.[193] Garland looked to the small-press poetry scene as a model, contrasting its inexpensive, widely distributed magazines with the insular and costly world of music publishing. He also challenged the assumption that artistic value depended on continual innovation, arguing that the "static nature" of certain traditional musics, such as the lifelong discipline of a sarangi or rebab player, could be as meaningful as the composer "forever pushing forward into unexplored territory."[194] Byron, who studied alongside Garland at CalArts, recalled that *SOUNDINGS* also grew from Garland's desire to examine his own investment in American music: "If I keep harping

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[191] Larry Austin and Douglas Kahn, eds., *SOURCE: Music of the Avant-Garde, 1966–1973* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 11. For more information on *SOURCE: Music of the Avant-Garde* and its origins, reference, Maya Lisa Ginsburg, "Documenting the American Experimental Tradition: A Historical Examination of *SOURCE* and *Soundings*" (MA thesis, San Diego State University, 2011).

[192] Oja, "The Soundings of New Music," 8–9.

[193] Garland, "Comment" *SOUNDINGS 1,* Peter Garland and John Bischoff, eds. (Sylmar, CA: Independent Publication, 1972): 79.

[194] Garland, "Comment" *SOUNDINGS 1*: 79.

on about American music, I guess I need to find out what that is." Soliciting work from a wide range of composers became, for Garland, a way to ask what American experimental music was and who belonged to it.[195] That question shaped the journal's editorial range.

By 1983, Oja described *SOUNDINGS* as a "family album" linking generations of American musical iconoclasts. Alongside Garland's contemporaries, many of whom worked in minimalist or process-based modes, the journal reintroduced earlier experimental figures, including George Antheil, Johanna Beyer, Paul Bowles, Cowell, Ruth Crawford, Ives, Conlon Nancarrow, Partch, Dane Rudhyar, Charles Seeger, and Varèse.[196] Amy C. Beal extends this point by arguing that the American experimental tradition was held together not only by musical works, but also by independent, composer-driven forms of circulation. In this sense, *SOUNDINGS* did more than preserve repertory. It sustained the networks, exchanges, and affiliations through which American experimental music continued to circulate beyond established institutions and outside the authority of commercial imprimatur.[197] The journal's first issue made that editorial project visible from the outset.

The inaugural issue announced these priorities visually through its cover, designed by the American painter David Salle. Visually spare, it presents the journal's title in calligraphy with a Japanese character placed below.[198] In context, that detail reads as

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[195] Author interview with Michael Byron, October 9, 2025.

[196] Oja, "The Soundings of New Music," 8.

[197] Beal, "Living in the (Publishing) House of Music: A Short History of Composer-Driven Independent Publishing and Distribution in the United States, " 139 and 153.

[198] I am grateful to Mika Sakue for the assistance in translation.

more than ornament: it signals the journal's investment in cross-cultural reference and helps situate the publication within the interdisciplinary and globally minded environment from which it emerged.

That cross-cultural orientation was not limited to the cover. Teitelbaum's "World Band" essay translated these concerns into practice, extending them from Musica Elettronica Viva, his Rome-based improvisation collective, where live electronics and social exchange had displaced the authority of the fixed score. Developed through work at Wesleyan and CalArts, *World Band* brought together Indian, Javanese, Navajo, jazz, electronic, and experimental musicians without precomposed structures. Teitelbaum criticized conventional East-West fusion as superficial, arguing that many attempts to combine traditions operated at "the superficial level of cliché." In place of fusion, he imagined an improvisatory setting in which musical languages could meet through listening and negotiation. In this light, *SOUNDINGS* emerges as a platform for experimental practice conceived as collective and intercultural.[199]

Harrison's presence in the first issue shows that *SOUNDINGS*'s collective and intercultural project also depended on senior West Coast figures. As Beal notes, Garland had secured Harrison's *May Rain* by December 1970, before the issue appeared, making Harrison a key presence in the journal's formation. Harrison recognized its value

[199] Teitelbaum's criticism distinguishes his project from the more tightly framed intercultural procedures associated with composers such as Glass, Reich, Riley, and Young. His objection was not to cross-cultural exchange itself, but to forms of East-West fusion that reduced difference to recognizable stylistic signs. In "World Band," improvisation becomes the means by which different musical languages meet without being fixed in advance. Richard Teitelbaum, "World Band," *SOUNDINGS 1*, Peter Garland and John Bischoff, eds. (Santa Fe, NM: Soundings Press, 1972): 21–27.

immediately, writing to Garland: "About *SOUNDINGS*, the marvelous new one arrived today […] and it is very grand! Could I interest you in my *Peace Pieces*? Not a publisher in this country will touch them (of course!), but they are among my best pieces."[200] *SOUNDINGS* thus circulated Harrison's lesser-known work while also offering a venue for compositions that commercial publishers had refused. From Harrison's senior presence, the issue turns to younger CalArts composers and the piano-centered works through which Budd's influence becomes more audible.

Alongside Harrison's *May Rain*, the first issue also included several piano-centered works. Garland's *a song* is one of the more unusual pieces in the collection. Unlike the graphic or text-based scores that dominate much of the issue, it unfolds through softly repeated chords and a modular structure rather than conventional melodic development. [201] Opening in Db major and marked "lighting should be soft," the piece recalls Budd's early performance practice. Its quiet dynamics and reduced harmonic materials register Budd's emerging influence while standing apart from Ivan Tcherepnin's *Silent Night Mix (X-Mas '69)*, a two-piano reworking of familiar material.[202]

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[200] Harrison's participation in *SOUNDINGS* was not limited to artistic contribution; he also supported other composer-driven ventures, such as Byron's *Pieces* anthologies. Byron, a CalArts classmate of Garland who had studied in Dick Higgins's class on publishing, launched *Pieces* in the mid-1970s with virtually no funding, relying in part on Harrison's financial assistance. Beal, "Living in the (Publishing) House of Music: A Short History of Composer-Driven Independent Publishing and Distribution in the United States," 146–148.

[201] Peter Garland, "a song," *SOUNDINGS 1*, Peter Garland and John Bischoff, eds. (Santa Fe, NM: Soundings Press, 1972): 4–7.

[202] On Budd's earlier use of soft dynamics, blue light, and staged performance environments, see Chapter One. Ivan Tcherepnin, "Silent Night Mix" and "Silent Night," *SOUNDINGS 1*, Peter Garland and John Bischoff, eds. (Santa Fe, NM: Soundings Press, 1972): 60–61.

The issue then moves from piano-centered works to Oliveros's staged text pieces, where performance itself becomes the medium. In *Why Don't You Write a Short Piece?* (1970), the performer enters, extinguishes the lights, announces "This is a short piece!" with a stomp, scream, or other brief sound, and exits. Oliveros later recalled that, when she first presented the work in a UCSD graduate seminar, her stomp was so forceful that she felt it in her right lower jaw; her dentist said he was "glad he was not underfoot." *George Washington Slept Here Too* (1965), by contrast, stages piano, pistol, red-white-and-blue slide projection, and four unsmiling performers. Its discharge of a pistol into the piano strings turns the instrument into a site of political theater, linking Oliveros's concern with body and gesture to a critique of the Vietnam War.[203]

Daniel Lentz, who taught composition at the University of California, Santa Barbara, contributed *Loverrise* (1971), a parody of Schubert's *Winterreise*. Schubert's cycle sets Müller's poems for voice and piano; Lentz recasts the genre for singing pianist, optional 16mm film, four-track tape, and female choir. The work retains traces of early Romantic music, including chromaticism, mediant-related progressions, and arpeggiated figures, but filters them through visual and textual satire. Each page includes a phallic drawing in progressive stages of arousal, ending with an image paired with Schubert himself, whose death from syphilis sharpens the work's link between eroticism and decay. The facetious dedication "to Dorothea Ertmann wherever she may be" extends the joke,

[203] Pauline Oliveros, "Why Don't You Write a Short Piece," *SOUNDINGS 1,* Peter Garland and John Bischoff, eds. (Sylmar, CA: Independent Publication, 1972): 8; Pauline Oliveros, "George Washington Slept Here Too," *SOUNDINGS 1,* Peter Garland and John Bischoff, eds. (Sylmar, CA: Independent Publication, 1972): 9.

invoking Beethoven's favored pianist and dedicatee while mocking the canon's rituals of reverence.[204]

In its debut issue, *SOUNDINGS* offered more than a snapshot of West Coast American experimentalism. It answered the concert culture Partch had criticized by gathering works that were informal, performative, intercultural, and often humorous. Many contributors were teaching at CalArts or University of California campuses, making those institutions important sites where performance, pedagogy, and publishing intersected. Rather than presenting a unified style, the issue assembled a network of practices: text scores, process-based forms, staged actions, political satire, intercultural collaboration, and small-scale tonal pieces.

From the vantage of downtown New York criticism, however, *SOUNDINGS* could appear out of step with the genealogies most familiar in East Coast new-music discourse. Reviewing the journal in the *Village Voice*, Tom Johnson observed that "most young composers today find their roots in Webern, Stockhausen, or Cage. But in *SOUNDINGS*, these names are scarcely mentioned. Instead, the older-generation mentors are composers like Harry Partch, Lou Harrison, Silvestre Revueltas, and Dane Rudhyar."[205] Johnson's point was not that the journal lacked a lineage, but that it claimed a different one. Budd later answered the review with characteristic wit: "New Yorkers are astonished to find that they're out of sync, and then devastated to discover that they

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[204] Daniel Lentz, "Loverise," *SOUNDINGS 1,* Peter Garland and John Bischoff, eds. (Sylmar, CA: Independent Publication, 1972): 17–20.

[205] Tom Johnson, "Soundings from the West Coast (August 30, 1973)," *The Voice of New Music: New York City, 1972–1982: A Collection of Articles Originally Published in the Village Voice* (Eindhoven, The Netherlands: Het Apollohuis, 1989), 95–98.

weren't even an 'influence.' Wonderful!"[206] Budd's response may overstate the geography, but it captures the tension exposed by Johnson's review. From the perspective of one downtown New York critic, *SOUNDINGS* did not fit the post-Webernian and Cage-centered genealogy he expected. Its lineage ran instead through figures such as Partch, Harrison, Revueltas, and Rudhyar, and through the repertory work Tenney had brought to CalArts through *Tone Roads West*. For students such as Garland, that model helped make American experimental music look less like a single line of influence than a field of recoverable affiliations. What sounded to Johnson like innocence or simplicity was, from California, part of a different map of experimental music. The younger music that emerged from this environment carried those priorities forward in ways that, to Johnson, could sound "a little too innocent, a little too simple, even a little naïve, in a highly educated sort of way."[207]

Postminimal Currents in California

If *SOUNDINGS* mapped a West Coast experimental lineage, it also documented a younger cohort whose music sits uneasily within later accounts of minimalism. As Carl Stone suggests, "minimalism" began as a useful descriptor for works built from extremely limited materials, such as those of La Monte Young and Charlemagne Palestine, but quickly expanded into a catchall for repetition and pattern.[208] The broader

[206] "September, 18, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[207] Tom Johnson, "Soundings from the West Coast (August 30, 1973)."

[208] Carl Stone stated, "I think the term [minimalism] was probably appropriate when it started, for the music that La Monte [Young] was doing, Charlemagne Palestine was

term "postminimalism" emerged from that ambiguity. Jonathan Bernard treats it less as a coherent style than as a provisional category for music that either moved beyond minimalism or responded to it from outside.[209] Galen Brown locates the shift in the changing function of process: where early minimalism often treated process as the work's central fact, postminimalism absorbed process into broader formal or expressive aims.[210] Gann later identified a repertory that was diatonic, pulse-based, conventionally notated, and written in standard concert lengths, while drawing on sources ranging from gamelan, folk, pop, and jazz to eighteenth-century chamber music and Renaissance music.[211]

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doing…where you subject just the smallest amount of material, just a couple of words, and use that to create an entire composition that might last twenty minutes or even longer. But then people would pick up on the idea of repetition and patterns. So anything that had repeating patterns was called minimal. Philip Glass was tagged with the term, but as his style evolved, he came to resent a label once apt that no longer applied." Author interview with Carl Stone, September 10, 2022.

[209] To classify composers such as John Adams, Philip Glass, Steve Reich, and Michael Torke as postminimalists while excluding Daniel Lentz, Ingram Marshall, or Peter Garland is to reinforce a narrow genealogy of minimalism's afterlives. These West Coast composers did not simply inherit an already fixed style but developed parallel practices within the same broader field of experimentation. The question is which actors later historiography chose to center. See Jonathan W. Bernard, "Minimalism, Postminimalism, and the Resurgence of Tonality in Recent American Music," *American Music* 21, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 127–31.

[210] For Brown, postminimalism retains minimalist procedures but subordinates them to broader formal or expressive aims; he treats Duckworth's *Time Curve Preludes* and later works by David Lang as examples of this shift. Galen H. Brown, "Process as Means and Ends in Minimalist and Postminimalist Music," *Perspectives of New Music* 48, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 186–190.

[211] Gann describes postminimalism as a repertory that retained minimalist procedures but shifted them into shorter, conventionally notated, often diatonic works written for chamber performance; he dates his use of the term in *Village Voice* criticism to 1988, in relation to Daniel Goode. Kyle Gann, *The Ashgate Research Companion to Minimalist and Postminimalist Music*, Keith Potter, Kyle Gann, and Pwyll ap Siôn, eds. (London: Routledge, 2013), 40.

These definitions help clarify the CalArts repertory, but only partially. Much of the early critical and scholarly discussion of minimalism centered on Manhattan lofts and downtown venues, leaving parallel developments elsewhere underexamined. At CalArts, a related but distinct trajectory unfolded in what Beal identifies as "second-generation minimalism," including composers such as Michael Byron, Garland, Mahler, Thom Miller, and Tom Nixon.[212] Their works share several traits later associated with postminimalism: limited pitch collections, slower pulses, repeated cells, flexible durations, and a reduced performance scale. Yet they developed under different conditions, through *SOUNDINGS*, student concerts, small presses, and the close presence of faculty such as Budd and Tenney.

By the time these student works appeared, Budd and Tenney had each modeled a distinct use of minimal means. Budd's reduction moved through works such as *Noyo*, *New Work*, *Intermission Piece*, *Lovely Thing*, *Black Flowers*, *The Candy-Apple Revision*, *The Peacock Room*, and *Lirio*, where quiet dynamics, sustained sounds, and static visual staging, became compositional materials. Tenney's reduction moved through process and perception, such as *For Ann (rising)* and the *Postal Pieces*, especially *Having Never Written a Note for Percussion*.[213] The student repertory that followed drew from both examples, though not exclusively. These composers also encountered minimal and experimental

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[212] Amy C. Beal, "'Why We Sing': David Mahler's Communities," *Journal of the Society for American Music* 7, no. 1 (2013): 6–11. See also Kerry O'Brien and William Robin, eds., *On Minimalism: Documenting a Musical Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2023), which revises familiar narratives of minimalism but, outside, does not substantially incorporate West Coast and CalArts figures examined here.

[213] See Chapter One and the beginning of this Chapter.

music through tapes, concerts, personal networks, and composers outside CalArts. Beal's term is useful because it keeps this repertoire tied to a specific generational and institutional setting without reducing it to institutional influence alone. This West Coast body of work, therefore, complicates later accounts of postminimalism by showing that minimalism's afterlives were shaped by pedagogy, local circulation, and extra-institutional exchange as much as by the better-known New York repertories.

Garland's *a song*, discussed above, offers the first concrete trace of that setting inside *SOUNDINGS*. Its soft lighting, D-flat tonality, and repetitive piano writing already point toward Budd's presence in the CalArts environment. That connection became more explicit in *SOUNDINGS* 3/4 (1972), for which Budd designed the front cover: a sheet of white stock marked by his signature handwriting and a butterfly sketch.[214] The back cover extended the link, presenting Mahler's short poem *very much it sleeps* in Budd's calligraphy.[215]

If *SOUNDINGS* 3/4 made Budd's presence graphic, *SOUNDINGS* 6 (1973) brought that connection into the student scores themselves. The issue includes several works that echo Budd's early-1970s practice: Western notation, soft dynamics, open harmonic fields, and extended durations. Two of these pieces were dedicated directly to Budd. Eugene Bowen's *Now Old Friends* (1972), for piano and female voice, includes

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[214] On Budd's butterfly insignia and its relation to nineteenth-century aestheticism, ornamental authorship, and the insect imagery of *The Peacock Room*, *The Dragonfly Cymbal*, and *Madrigals of the Rose Angel*, see Chapter Four.

[215] Harold Budd, calligraphy, and David Mahler, poem, *SOUNDINGS* 6, ed. Peter Garland (Saugus, CA: Independent Publication, 1972), front and back covers.

instructions such as "glissando quickly" and "hold whole notes until merely unreadable," emphasizing disappearance and restraint.[216] Guy Klucevsek's *Rain Piece* (1972), scored for high instruments, low instruments, and piano(s), is built from simple one-measure phrases repeated indefinitely: the high instruments sound a descending E-minor seventh chord while the low instruments present the same collection in reordered form. The piano sustains both lines with the sostenuto pedal, and the hands do not need to align rhythmically. Marked "ppppp" and "slowly," the piece produces an extremely quiet texture.[217] In both works, the dedication to Budd is reinforced by the music itself: sustained tones, extreme quiet, open duration, and unresolved harmonic fields.

Other student works in *SOUNDINGS* extend this concern with reduced materials, flexible pacing, and harmonic immediacy. Budd's influence on this sensibility is captured in a vivid anecdote recalled by Mahler. During a lesson, Budd asked Thom Miller to bring in anything he had written or was currently working on. Miller presented a meticulously constructed piece, explaining that the opening theme, repeated at the interval of a sixth, used "every interval possible within an octave." He built new themes from each of those intervals, mimicked the original's rhythmic structure, and created chords based on the intervallic material, all culminating in a retrograde of the original theme. After a long pause, Budd turned from the score and said, "What the hell, Miller. It's only music." For Mahler, it was "Hal's way of saying, we're going to strip everything

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[216] Eugene Bowen, "Now Old Friend (1972)," *SOUNDINGS 6,* Peter Garland, ed. (Saugus, CA: Independent Publication, 1973): 2–4.

[217] Guy Klucevsek, "Rain Piece (1972)", *SOUNDINGS 6,* Peter Garland, ed. (Saugus, CA: Independent Publication, 1973): 10–11.

away" and "it was pretty ear-opening for those of us who came in with a musically theoretical background."[218]

Mahler's anecdote states the pedagogical principle that Miller's *Thornapple Odes* puts into practice: the stripping away of theoretical design in favor of immediate musical effect. Scored for string quartet, trumpet, and clarinet, *Thornapple Odes* is marked by soft dynamics and the directions "smoothly, softly." Its harmonic shifts avoid functional arrival points, favoring motion without resolution. Budd's investment in that kind of writing also appears in his circulation of student work beyond CalArts. In a note to Childs, he wrote, "By the way, I'm asking Thom Miller, a student of mine, to send a String, with 4 flutes piece to you; it's awfully good … has at least one X-rated chord change in it … for a novice Californian, that's a good average, I think." Joke aside, Budd's praise turns on a single arresting harmonic event: the value lies not in technical saturation but in the force of one telling chord change. Here, minimal means concentrated rather than system-bound.[219]

Tom Nixon extends this reduction in another direction. Where Miller's example turns on a single chord change, Nixon's *Scarhead* (1973), for B-flat clarinet, reduces the piece to three short phrases: the first two are diatonic in C major and marked *mp* and *p*, while the final phrase shifts to G minor. Notes are to be "held as long as possible," encouraging breath-based pacing and an expanded sense of duration. Nixon's *Monnaie*

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[218] Author interview with David Mahler, October 22, 2022.

[219] "October 31, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974; Thomas Miller, "Thornapple Odes (1972)" and "Saguaro (1972)," *SOUNDINGS 6,* Peter Garland, ed. (Saugus, CA: Independent Publication, 1973): 21–27.

(1973) is more expansive, lasting ten to fifteen minutes and scored for resonant instruments including vibraphone, bells, piano, voice, and metal objects. Built around an Fm chord with an added M7 and b11, the piece lets performers sound the pitches in any order and combination. Attacks are soft, durations range from long to very long, and rests are left "free" in length. Although the tempo may range from "very very slow" to "medium fast," the score remains quiet throughout; even the lone high A natural is marked "quietest."[220] Neither work is explicitly dedicated to Budd, but both share the concerns traced here: extended duration, restrained dynamics, flexible pacing, and harmonic ambiguity.

The preceding examples foreground Budd's restraint. Garland's *The Three Strange Angels* (1972–73) brings that restraint into contact with Tenney's concern for process and American ultramodernism. Scored for bass drum and piano, the work unfolds in two contrasting sections: in the first, a steady bass drum pulse underlies piano cluster chords; in the second, the drum drops out and the piano writing contracts into clusters of seconds. Garland also introduces a bullroarer, a ritual aerophone made from a flat slat of wood swung through the air to produce a deep whirring sound.[221] The piano clusters and bullroarer suggest an affinity with Cowell's *Three Irish Legends* (1922), though Cowell used clusters across many works beyond that piece. Garland's experimentalism here is neither

[220] Tom Nixon, "Scarhead (1973)," and "Monnaie" (1973)," *SOUNDINGS 6,* Peter Garland, ed. (Saugus, CA: Independent Publication, 1973): 14–15.

[221] Peter Garland, "The Three Strange Angels" (1972–1973), *SOUNDINGS 6,* Peter Garland, ed. (Saugus, CA: Independent Publication, 1973): 16–20.

quiet nor static. It places Budd's reduced sonorities in dialogue with the earlier American experimental traditions that Tenney foregrounded in his teaching and programming.

Arcanum, Garland's collaboration with Byron, extends this double orientation toward history and process into a joint work. Garland composed *Part I,* and Byron contributed *Part II*. Garland's section, scored for flutes, oboes, trumpets, clarinets, and violins, was described as "hover[ing] on the brink of loudness," a pointed contrast to Budd's characteristic softness. The score uses blackened boxes on a treble staff to register dynamic density, with isolated pitches gradually thickening into intervals and larger aggregates. Byron's section, by contrast, favors sustained tones and more restrained dynamics. He introduces a descending five-note scalar fragment resembling D-flat major, perhaps a nod to Budd's favored tonality.[222] Although the two parts differ markedly in sonority, both treat accumulation as a structuring device, drawing on Tenney's process-oriented thinking while pushing beyond Budd's softer, more restrained sound world.

Still Life: Michael Kaempf locates the same overlap in a more restrained setting. Scored for violin, viola, cello, and double bass, Mahler's 1971 work uses long, vibrato-less tones across all four parts and Tenney's swell technique. In doing so, it draws on Budd's emphasis on sustained resonance while engaging Tenney's concern with process and

[222] Peter Garland and Michael Byron, "Arcanum (Part I) (1972)" and "Arcanum (Part II) (1972)," *SOUNDINGS 6,* Peter Garland, ed. (Saugus, CA: Independent Publication, 1973): 37–53.

gradual transformation. The result occupies a space between stillness and motion, showing how both mentors helped shape the emerging CalArts sound world.[223]

The same network did not end with *SOUNDINGS*. Byron's three-volume *Pieces: An Anthology* (1976–77) extended its circulation after the CalArts cohort had begun to disperse, preserving works composed during the early 1970s and after. Mahler contributed several pieces. *Wind Hymn*, for voice, unfolds across four musical lines built from the scalar collection C, D, and E.[224] *Early Winters*, dedicated to Garland, is scored for two pianos and constructed from seventeen cells derived from a C7-flat-6 chord, a design that recalls Feldman's *Piece for Four Pianos* (1957). In Feldman's work, all four pianists begin on the same chord and gradually drift apart according to their own internal tempos, producing an echoing texture rather than strict synchrony. Mahler adapts this principle by dividing the harmony between two pianos: the upper part presents the chord as a sustained four-voice sonority, while the lower breaks the same pitches into an arpeggiated figure. The cells are repeated indeterminately, though the first two and final three measures must be played together, providing structural anchors within an otherwise fluid temporal field.[225]

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[223] David Mahler, "Still Life: Michael Kaempf" (1971)," *SOUNDINGS 7–8,* Peter Garland, ed. (Saugus, CA: Independent Publication, 1973): 14–15.

[224] David Mahler, "Wind Hymn (1973)" and "Early Winters (1974)," *Pieces: An Anthology*, Michael Byron, ed. (Vancouver: A.R.C. Publications Second Edition Revised, 1976): 23–27.

[225] A recording of *Early Winters*, performed by Mahler with composer Martin Bartlett on February 14, 1976, is available in the archives of Western Front, a non-profit artist-run centre in Vancouver: https://westernfront.ca/archives/get/ca_occurrences/977.

Byron's *Song of the Lifting Up of the Head* consists of seven modules performed in sequence (Figure 14). Each module must last at least two minutes the first time it appears. A recurring open fifth, F–C, anchors the work, while the first six modules proceed in a steady quarter-note pulse in duple meter. Above this foundation, the upper voice introduces A and C, completing an implied F-major triad that gradually expands as added scale degrees are introduced. The final module shifts to compound triple meter and presents an unresolved F-major dominant-seventh sonority, loosening the earlier duple regularity at the close. The process of expansion is rhythmic as well as harmonic: the prevailing quarter-note pulse gives way to more active subdivisions, increasing motion without breaking the work's restrained surface. After the first statement of each module, earlier material may return *ad libitum* and be interwoven at the performer's discretion until the final module, after which no previous material may recur. Dynamics remain within a narrow range from *p* to *mf*. The damper and una corda pedals are held throughout, allowing tones to accumulate and fade into one another. The piece ends with both pedals still depressed as the sound dies away, recalling Budd's soft-pedal technique and his interest in sustained, lightly ringing sonorities.

The work's connection to Budd is not only analytical; it was also part of the performance culture around CalArts. Garland premiered the work in spring 1972 at CalArts, where most listeners sat informally on the floor of the music hall, while Budd, who associated performance with a certain decorum, insisted on having a proper chair. "Don't forget Hal's chair," Byron would remind Garland before concerts, a detail that captures both Budd's formality and the communal informality of CalArts performances during this period. Byron later recalled that the piece moved Budd, who perhaps

recognized in its quiet processes, metrical fluidity, and unresolved sonorities an affinity with his own pursuit of what he called "pretty" music.[226]

Figure 14. Michael Byron, *Song of the Lifting of the Head* (1972). In *Pieces: A Second Anthology* (1976). Courtesy of Michael Byron.



[226] Author interview with Michael Byron, October 9, 2025.

This same informality also extended beyond the campus. Byron remembered an evening when he, Bowen, and Mahler gave a free improvisation concert at a country-and-western bar called the Old Corale. In his telling, the venue's rowdy clientele required the group to perform behind glass shields "so people wouldn't beat us up," and "after about fifteen minutes, people started throwing beer bottles." Whether or not every detail is exact, the anecdote captures how Byron understood the period: as a shared scene shaped by his close friendship with Bowen and Mahler and by a spirit of collective experimentation. Reflecting on those years, he remarked that "there was a real California style that we hadn't quite put our finger on, it didn't develop the way we, or I, had hoped, it fizzled out."[227]

The Old Chorale anecdote gives a social form to what the scores suggest. The works gathered in *SOUNDINGS* and *Pieces* show how a younger CalArts-affiliated cohort transformed the lessons of Budd and Tenney into related but distinct practices. Rather than forming a single stylistic school, these scores emerged through student journals, informal concerts, small presses, and pedagogical exchange. Byron's memory of a "real California style" that no one had "quite put [their] finger on" captures the point: what emerged was less a unified style than a set of shared procedures and working conditions, including reduction, perceptual clarity, flexible duration, and local circulation. These tendencies did not remain confined to CalArts, but moved through a wider Southern California network of composers and performers. The next chapter shifts from institutional setting to musical exchange, examining how Budd's work intersected with

[227] Author interview with Michael Byron, October 9, 2025.

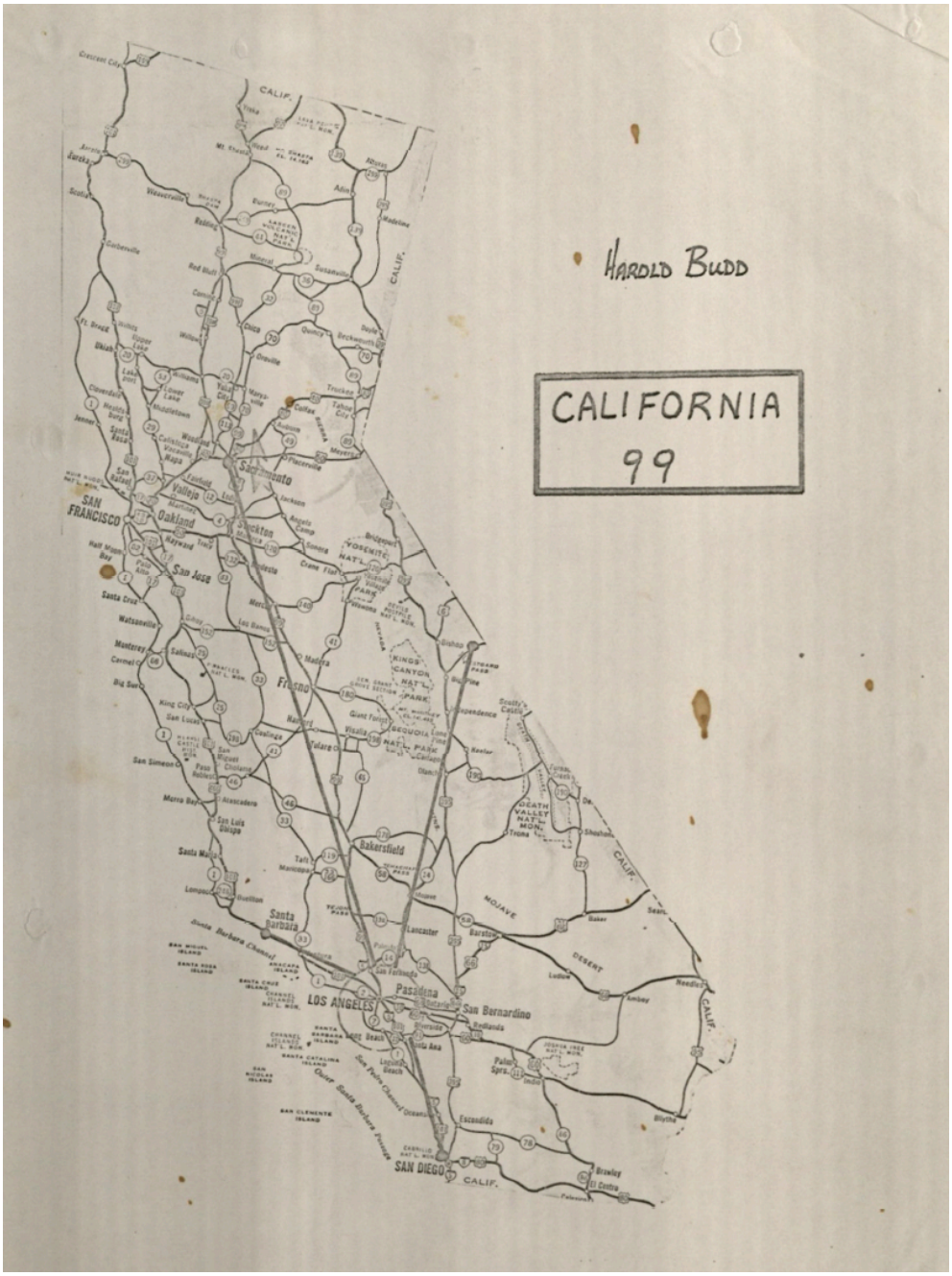
Oliveros, Riley, and Lentz, and how those encounters gave concrete form to the aesthetic directions outlined here.

Chapter Three: New Music, New Networks (1969–75)

California 99

While CalArts cultivated an internal culture of experimentation, it also drew figures from across California and beyond. Budd registered this broader field in *California 99*, a portfolio of scores assembled for Memphis State University's *Oktoberfest: Music of Our Time* festival, held October 22–24, 1969, during which he appeared as a guest composer. He solicited contributions from peers teaching at California institutions, including Larry Austin and his students Dary John Mizelle and Stanley Lunetta at UC Davis; Barney Childs at the University of Redlands; Daniel Lentz at UC Santa Barbara; Pauline Oliveros at UC San Diego; David M. Sherr, then a student at CalArts; and Bertram Turetzky, professor of bass at CalArts. As a collection, the portfolio brought California's experimental networks into a single frame. Its cover, showing the state crossed by straight lines converging on Los Angeles, visualized the exchange between regions and positioned Los Angeles as one point within a decentralized network (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Harold Budd, *California 99*, title page. Harold Budd, *California 99*, holograph score portfolio, *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 3, Folder 18, Oversize FB-402-08.



The collection of experimental scores lacks a consistent formal design, yet the contributors converge on silence and the number 36, each treating them idiosyncratically. Childs offers two tuba lines in traditional notation without bar lines, dynamics, or key signature: thirty-six sound events ranging from a single pitch to a quarter rest. David Sherr compresses the idea into six measures of tremolo between G and Bb, repeated six times at full dynamics. Turetzky contributes a short cello piece of thirty-six measures, each marked either by a fermata or by a specific extended technique, sul ponticello, pizzicato, arco, and so on.

Austin's "For Budd's Halloween Peace" unfolds in three distinct sections, each introduced by the instruction "Choose ONE." *Part I* consists of thirty-six uninterrupted notes formed through repeated alternations of a CM triad. *Part II* begins with a single silent event before returning to further reiterations of the triad. Still, here the count reaches thirty-seven sounds, exceeding the apparent structural limit by one. *Part III* abandons instrumental performance altogether, directing the player to speak into the trumpet, with apostrophes indicating silences: "The ' trum ' pet ' is ' made ' of ' brass ' tubing. ' It ' stinks ' when ' not ' cleaned ' out ' regularly. ' The trumpet is a carrier of disease." Here again, the count rises to thirty-seven events rather than thirty-six.

From San Diego, Oliveros contributed "For Budding HALL-o-ween Peace," a playful title that puns on both Budd's surname and his nickname, Hal, while also invoking the language of peace that resonated strongly in the context of the Vietnam War era. The score unfolds as a sequence of thirty-six events alternating between movement and sound. Theatrical actions, lifting and swinging the saxophone up and down or from left to right at different speeds, function almost like silences, interrupting

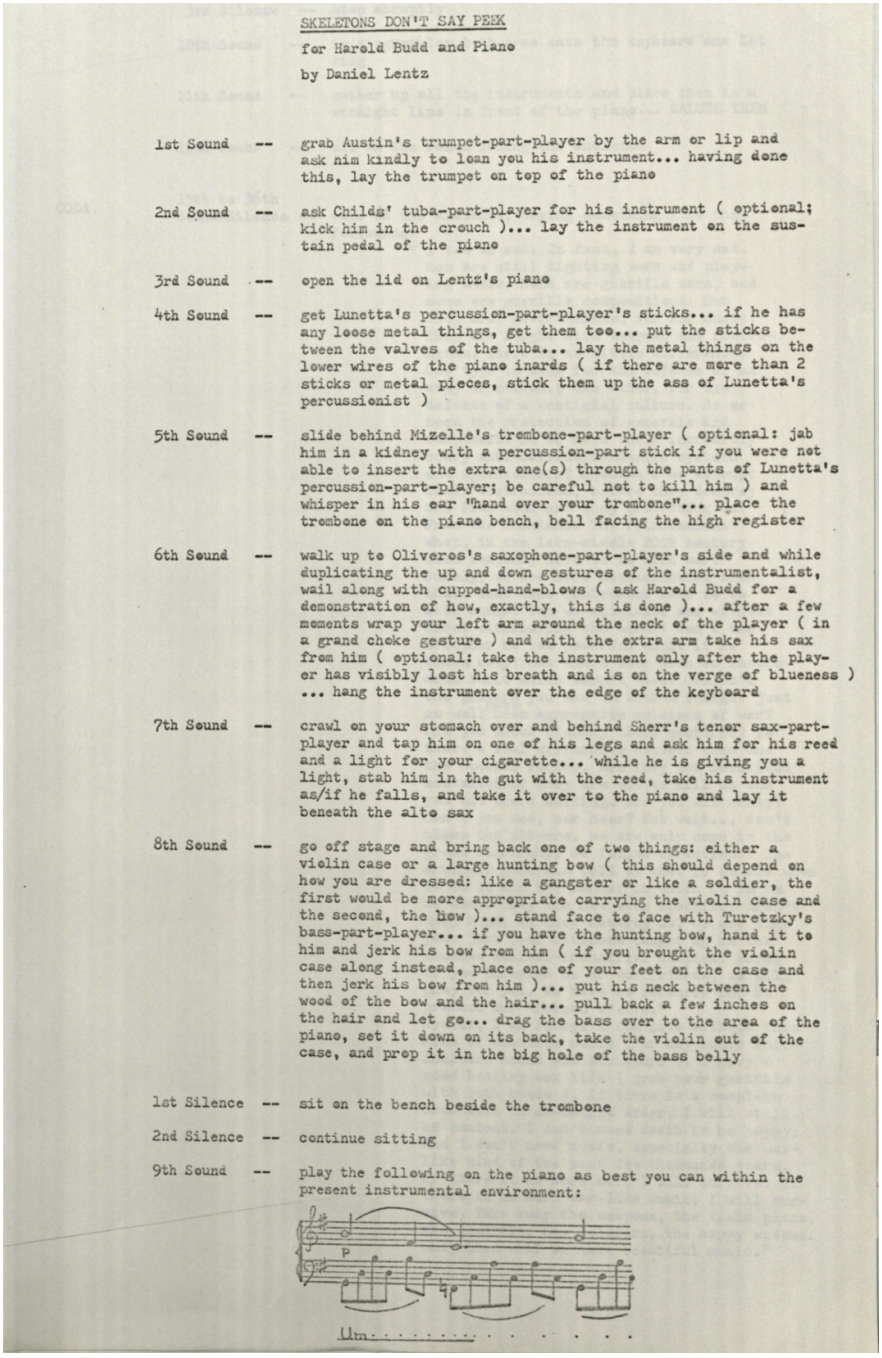
and suspending the musical flow. Each sounding event begins on the instrument's lowest Bb and ascends through the saxophone's range, with dynamics expanding from *pp* to *fff*, producing a chain of glissandi that reaches into the highest register. At the same time, the performer's motions accompany rather than intensify the sound. More often than not, Oliveros reverses the expected relation between gesture and volume: the saxophonist is instructed to move quickly before playing softly and slowly before playing loudly. This playful mismatch undercuts the solemnity of virtuosity. It turns physical display into a wry commentary on performance itself.

Lentz contributed *Skeletons Don't Say Peek*, dedicated to "Harold Budd and Piano" (Figure 16). The score is organized as a sequence of actions, with silences often folded into stage directions such as "sitting on a bench." It instructs the performer to seize instruments from the other players, including trumpet, tuba, trombone, saxophones, percussion, and bass, and to pile them around or on top of the piano. Its violent gestures, including jabbing, choking, and kicking, lampoon ensemble decorum and turn the musicians into characters within the piece. Lentz also echoes Oliveros's saxophone gestures, linking his score to hers. By naming Austin, Childs, Lunetta, Mizelle, Oliveros, Sherr, and Turetzky directly, he places *Skeletons Don't Say Peek* in dialogue with the rest of the portfolio. That dialogue becomes more pointed on the second page, where the score shifts from instrumental disruption to direct address.

After a sequence of abrupt silences and frustrated gestures, including a direction to slam both arms onto the keyboard "in disgust" and to line up the stolen instruments for a mock military salute, the performer delivers a spoken coda to the audience. In this monologue, music becomes a form of warfare: composers appear as generals,

instruments as weapons, and the "musical-industrial complex" names Lentz's critique of concert culture and the avant-garde.

Figure 16. Daniel Lentz, *Skeletons Don't Say Peek* (1969), first page. Harold Budd, *California 99*, holograph score portfolio, *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 3, Folder 18, Oversize FB-402-08.



SKELETONS DON'T SAY PEEK

for Harold Budd and Piano

by Daniel Lentz

1st Sound -- grab Austin's trumpet-part-player by the arm or lip and ask nim kindly to loan you his instrument... having done this, lay the trumpet on top of the piano

2nd Sound -- ask Childs' tuba-part-player for his instrument (optional; kick him in the crouch)... lay the instrument on the sustain pedal of the piano

3rd Sound -- open the lid on Lentz's piano

4th Sound -- get Lunetta's percussion-part-player's sticks... if he has any loose metal things, get them too... put the sticks between the valves of the tuba... lay the metal things on the lower wires of the piano inards (if there are more than 2 sticks or metal pieces, stick them up the ass of Lunetta's percussionist)

5th Sound -- slide behind Mizelle's trombone-part-player (optional: jab him in a kidney with a percussion-part stick if you were not able to insert the extra one(s) through the pants of Lunetta's percussion-part-player; be careful not to kill him) and whisper in his ear "hand over your trombone"... place the trombone on the piano bench, bell facing the high register

6th Sound -- walk up to Oliveros's saxophone-part-player's side and while duplicating the up and down gestures of the instrumentalist, wail along with cupped-hand-blows (ask Harold Budd for a demonstration of how, exactly, this is done)... after a few moments wrap your left arm around the neck of the player (in a grand choke gesture) and with the extra arm take his sax from him (optional: take the instrument only after the player has visibly lost his breath and is on the verge of blueness) ... hang the instrument over the edge of the keyboard

7th Sound -- crawl on your stomach over and behind Sherr's tenor sax-part-player and tap him on one of his legs and ask him for his reed and a light for your cigarette... while he is giving you a light, stab him in the gut with the reed, take his instrument as/if he falls, and take it over to the piano and lay it beneath the alto sax

8th Sound -- go off stage and bring back one of two things: either a violin case or a large hunting bow (this should depend on how you are dressed: like a gangster or like a soldier, the first would be more appropriate carrying the violin case and the second, the bow)... stand face to face with Turetzky's bass-part-player... if you have the hunting bow, hand it to him and jerk his bow from him (if you brought the violin case along instead, place one of your feet on the case and then jerk his bow from him)... put his neck between the wood of the bow and the hair... pull back a few inches on the hair and let go... drag the bass over to the area of the piano, set it down on its back, take the violin out of the case, and prop it in the big hole of the bass belly

1st Silence -- sit on the bench beside the trombone

2nd Silence -- continue sitting

9th Sound -- play the following on the piano as best you can within the present instrumental environment:

The Memphis State program framed this critique in more personal terms. It noted that several of the composers represented in *California 99* were among Budd's closest friends and quoted part of a letter from Lentz, Budd's close friend, collaborator, and former student, who wrote from Santa Barbara, "If you were famous, this piece would be revolutionary."[228] The remark is ironic, since Budd had not written a score for the project but had assembled the collection. It also points to his limited public standing in 1969, before his name carried much authority beyond a local experimental circle. The program thus presented Budd not only as a composer, but also as an organizer of work by friends and associates across California.

In performance, Budd made that organizing role audible. The archival recording of *California 99* makes clear that he had all the parts sound simultaneously, producing a dense cacophony laced with humor.[229] He performed Lentz's score, whose theatrical gestures drew audible laughter from the audience. Yet one moment stands out: Lentz's ninth sound. For roughly ten seconds, Budd

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[228] "Programs Featuring Pauline Oliveros," Series 5, programs and reviews, subseries 5A, programs. *Pauline Oliveros Papers. MSS 102. Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego*. Box 14. Folder 1.

[229] Harold Budd, *California 99* (1969), recorded at the University of Memphis. Harris Music Auditorium. October 24, 1969. Parts composed by Larry Austin (trumpet), Barney Childs (tuba), Daniel Lentz (Piano), Stanley Lunetta (percussion), John Mizelle (trombone), Pauline Oliveros (alto saxophone), David Shere (tenor saxophone), and Bertram Turetzky (double bass). Performers: Andy Woodard and Hillary Layborn (trumpet), William Hebron (tuba), Harold Budd (Piano), James Baird, James Smith, Charles Jolley, William Youhass (Percussion), Russ Shultz (trombone), William McKee (alto saxophone), Al Cochran (tenor saxophone), and David Reilly (double bass).

shifts into a tonal passage, arpeggiating a GM triad, moving to F-natural, then returning to G beneath a simple melody that he sings in unison. The laughter stops as the audience falls silent, apparently startled by the intrusion of lyric tonality. The moment ends just as abruptly when Budd slams the grand piano lid shut and lets the impact reverberate through Harris Music Auditorium. This gesture stages the avant-garde's recoil from the materials he and Lentz were beginning to explore. Budd closes by reciting Lentz's actions fifteen through thirty-six: "I don't need music, especially the warlike kind of the past few thousand years. If there is no more war, I will survive. If there is no more war-like music, I will survive. Take away the weapons, the field plans, the generals, the soldiers, the happy widows. Only then will we have beautiful music."[230]

Lentz's final line turns the portfolio back on itself, making beauty appear not outside the avant-garde but as one of its disputed possibilities. The cover map and the recurring use of thirty-six gave *California 99* points of cohesion, one geographical and the other procedural, but that cohesion did not produce a common style. Several scores draw on recognizable pitch materials, including Austin's CM triads, Sherr's tremolo between G and Bb, and Oliveros's ascents from low Bb, while keeping those materials within experimental procedures. *Skeletons Don't Say Peek* reveals *California 99* as both a gesture of solidarity and an argument over what experimental music in California might become.

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[230] Daniel Lentz, second page of *Skeletons Don't Say Peek* (1969), Harold Budd, *California 99*, holograph score portfolio, *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 3, Folder 18, Oversize FB-402-08.

"Mother of the Pioneers": Pauline Oliveros

By 1969, Harold Budd was already working with drones, static chords, and improvisatory fields. *Sun Pieces* (1968) established sustained sound across astronomical duration; *Mangus Colorado* (1969) used amplified suspended gongs to create a sustained field; *Vittorio* (1969) placed a DbM sonority beneath a sparse multimedia texture; and *The Candy-Apple Revision* (1970) treated a single DbM chord as both score and improvisatory ground.[231] What still needs clarification is how these materials entered a broader California practice, where sustained tones and static harmonies became ways of organizing temporality, listening, and performance. Oliveros is central to that clarification because her work brought together drones, listening practice, bodily perception, electronic mediation, and collaborative performance.

David W. Bernstein's and Maggi Payne's interview with Oliveros presents droning as a Bay Area discourse centered on long-held tones. Oliveros's *Variations for Sextet* (1960) serves as an early touchstone. Bernstein describes the work as built around a long C drone, and Oliveros connects that gesture to a 1958 seminar with Seymour Shifrin at UC Berkeley, as well as to her contact with Terry Riley, Loren Rush, and La Monte Young. She stressed that interest in drones was "very much in the air," treating sustained tone as a locally circulating idea rather than an isolated stylistic invention.[232]

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[231] On Budd's late-1960s use of sustained sound, static fields, and DbM sonorities in *Sun Pieces*, *Mangus Colorado*, *Vittorio*, and *The Candy-Apple Revision*, see Chapter One. On the CalArts context for these reduced materials, especially in relation to Tenney, see Chapter Two.

[232] Pauline Oliveros, "Interviewed by David W. Bernstein and Maggi Payne," *The San Francisco Tape Music Center: 1960s Counterculture and the Avant-Garde* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2008), 99–100.

Light Piece for David Tudor (1965) marks the moment when Oliveros "really took an interest in drones," and her account makes the work's premises unusually explicit.[233] Tudor's task was simply to sustain Db on the piano within a specified register. At the same time, Oliveros prepared a tape part from a recorded piano Db, conceiving it as an ideal form of harmonic reinforcement. At the *San Francisco Tape Music Center*, she ran multiple loops of that pitch and reinforced its overtone field with sine waves. In theory, the center's twenty-four loop machines would run at identical speeds and produce a kind of additive synthesis, allowing the harmonic structure to shift continuously around Tudor's sustained tone. In practice, however, analog playback proved "not that precise": the machines drifted, generating microtonal discrepancies rather than the clean harmonic alignment she had imagined. The drone sonority that emerged was therefore, as she put it, "more accidental" than planned.[234]

Tudor's realization also mattered. Oliveros recalled his use of multiple keyboard techniques, including piano preparation, and situated the work within a multimedia event in which the new media artist Tony Martin projected light through a prism, casting moving rainbows across the space. When the piece traveled to Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland for a Tudor concert with David Behrman and Alvin Lucier, she

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[233] Pauline Oliveros, "Interviewed by David W. Bernstein and Maggi Payne," *The San Francisco Tape Music Center: 1960s Counterculture and the Avant-Garde*, 99–100.

[234] Steve Reich's *It's Gonna Rain* (1965), composed at the San Francisco Tape Music Center, also depended on analog tape-loop drift: slight speed discrepancies between two loops caused the recorded voices to move gradually out of sync, producing the phase-shifting process that became central to Reich's early work. Also see, "Light Piece for David Tudor" *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, Box 4 Folder 9, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego.

remembered it as "really controversial," even provoking near-riot conditions. When one audience member began shouting, Oliveros raised the volume and, as she put it, "drowned him out."[235] The anecdote underscores how a drone could register in performance as a provocation rather than a neutral backdrop. Ramon Sender's recollection of "a series of drone pieces" built from stacked loops further suggests that these procedures were not unique to Oliveros but circulated more broadly within the Tape Music Center's loop-based working environment.[236]

Her move to UC San Diego in 1967 brought this drone-centered practice into a Southern California institutional network that almost immediately overlapped with Budd's emerging professional world.[237] A shared print infrastructure also helped make that overlap visible. Both Oliveros and Budd appeared in *SOURCE: Music of the Avant-Garde* 3 (1968), though their contributions approached experimental sound from different directions. Budd published *III for Double Ensemble* (1965), a fully notated work for two spatially and aurally separated groups: a jazz trio of trumpet, bass, and drum set, and a quartet of flute, clarinet, vibraphone, and cello. After each group enters, the players proceed independently, with no coordination points, and the "slowest" instrumentalist

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[235] Pauline Oliveros, "Interviewed by David W. Bernstein and Maggi Payne," *The San Francisco Tape Music Center: 1960s Counterculture and the Avant-Garde*, 106–107.

[236] Ibid.

[237] Harold Budd was teaching a harmony course at Los Angeles Conservatory of Music around 1968 before being folded into the faculty at CalArts. Vincent Plush, "Harold Budd," *Major Figures in American Music, Oral History of American Music, in the Music Library of Yale University* (May 3, 1983), 40.

finishing last.[238] Oliveros, by contrast, contributed "Some Sound Observations" (1968), a prose text that treats droning as lived acoustics and bodily perception, moving from bulldozer and freeway drones to sympathetic vibrations through a wooden table and low frequencies felt in the stomach. In 1968, Budd and Oliveros were not yet writing the same kind of music, but they were using the same print ecology to rethink sound: Budd through notated spatial procedure, Oliveros through environmental listening.[239]

"Some Sound Observations," also places Robert Ashley's *Wolfman* (1964) at the center of a listening conversion narrative, describing how repeated exposure reshapes auditory threshold so that ordinary sounds return intensified, with "caves" as a recurring metaphor for ears recalibrated by sustained sound and feedback.[240] In this juxtaposition, Budd's score leans toward the procedural indeterminacy associated with New York experimentalism, while Oliveros's text locates the drone within a Bay Area constellation of collaborators and listeners, grounding it in sustained sound and sympathetic vibration, a mode of bodily audition she would later theorize more explicitly in her *Deep Listening* work.

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[238] Harold Budd, "III for Double Ensemble" (1965), *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde*, no. 3 (Davis, CA: Composer/Performer Editions, January 1968), 36–37.

[239] Pauline Oliveros, "Some Sound Observations," (1968), *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde, 1966–1973*, no. 3 (Davis, CA: Composer/Performer Editions, January 1968), 77–79.

[240] Pauline Oliveros, "Some Sound Observations," *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde,* 134–37; Robert Ashley's *The Wolfman* (1964) is described as a wordless amplified improvisation on four components of vocal sound with prerecorded tape. The performance depends on separate amplification and processing for voice and accompaniment, pursued extreme volume as a deliberately "dirty" effect, and could culminate in acoustic feedback. Ralf Dietrich, "ONCE and the Sixties," in *Sound Commitments: Avant-garde Music and the Sixties*, ed. Robert Adlington (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 181.

Budd and Oliveros also met beyond the page and became friends in the late 1960s. Although Oliveros was based at UC San Diego, she regularly programmed beyond her home institution, using sites such as UC Irvine as part of a broader Southern California network through which experimental music circulated. By 1970, Budd noted that "Pauline called a few months ago to ask if I'd do a Budd thing at UC Irvine on the 28th… Pays $100—do whatever I want—it's called ART NOW (naturally), so I'll dream up an evening of something," adding that she was headed to *Expo '70* in Osaka.[241]

In Japan, Oliveros premiered *Music for Expo '70*, commissioned by *Experiments in Art and Technology* for the Pepsi-Cola Pavilion and first performed on April 14, 1970. Scored for two cellos, accordion, three voices, and tape, the work carried her interest in sustained sounds in architectural settings, with the tape component conceived in relation to the pavilion's acoustics. Oliveros and Budd continued to share space in print, most notably in the first issue of Peter Garland's *Soundings* (1972), where both contributed short, text-based pieces. Oliveros's entries lean toward comedy, while Budd's point directly toward drone and improvisation. Improvisation had been part of Budd's practice since his years as a jazz drummer, but sustained droning became explicit only in his late-1960s text works and took on a more overtly tonal form in *Vittorio* (1969).

Pauline Spring Piece (1970), Budd's contribution to the inaugural *Soundings*, brings those threads together. Conceived as a group improvisation, the work foregrounds modal droning within a tightly bounded harmonic field. Scored for accordion, harmonium or electric organ, celli, and singers, an ensemble that recalls

[241] "Saturday Morning Letter," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

Oliveros's Osaka instrumentation, the piece instructs the accordionist to sustain a DbM sonority while the harmonium holds a BM chord for an unspecified duration. The celli alternate between Db and Eb, though never simultaneously, and a solo voice sings within a Db mixolydian scale, introducing Bb as the only pitch not already present in the sustained instrumental sonorities. Additional voices enter ad libitum, imitating the solo line as they join. Heard alongside *Music for Expo '70*, *Pauline Spring Piece* produces a comparable perceptual effect: both works generate sustained drone fields and a dense, yet static, harmonic environment. The relation between them resembles that between Tenney's *Having Never Written a Note for Percussion* (1971) and Budd's *Lirio* (1971): the underlying premise is similar, but Budd pares the process down further by withholding dynamic inflection.[242]

The score is dedicated to Oliveros, whom Budd described in the score as the "Mother of the Pioneers." At the close of the manuscript, he added, "listen to those Candy-Apple Colors," a brief directive that echoes Oliveros's later *Deep Listening* emphasis on attending to the acoustic environment.[243] Oliveros, in turn, seems to have taken the dedication seriously, as she valued the piece enough to program and perform it, prompting Budd to remark: "Hope to god, for once, that

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[242] Harold Budd, *Pauline Spring Piece*, performed by Warren Burt (harmonium), Pauline Oliveros (accordion), Bonnie Barnett (voice), Lin Barron, Lorie Kirkell (cellos), UC San Diego Department of Music Concert Archive, November 8, 1972; Also Reference Pauline Oliveros, *Music for Expo '70*, Bazetta University Press, April 14, 1970. See Chapter Two.

[243] Harold Budd, *Pauline Spring Piece* (1970), *SOUNDINGS 1*, 12.

it was recorded. I like the piece, always have; not as a score, but as a pretty bit of sound. Almost never played."[244]

After *Expo '70* in Osaka, Oliveros began appearing on programs with Budd more regularly. In a letter to his former composition teacher, Aurelio de la Vega, Budd described the five-day *Kairos Arts Festival* in Rancho Santa Fe, beginning on August 21, 1970, as an "incredibly moving experience" (Figure 17).[245] At *Kairos*, Oliveros and Budd led a UC San Diego ensemble in performances of works by Budd, Charles Buell, Alvin Lucier, and Allen Strange. Budd later recalled that sharing the program with Oliveros was especially memorable.[246] His regard for her also surfaces in smaller traces. In 1969, he gave her a handwritten string arrangement of *Lovely Thing* (1969), paired with a photograph of Oliveros smoking a cigarette and picking her nose (Figure 18).[247]

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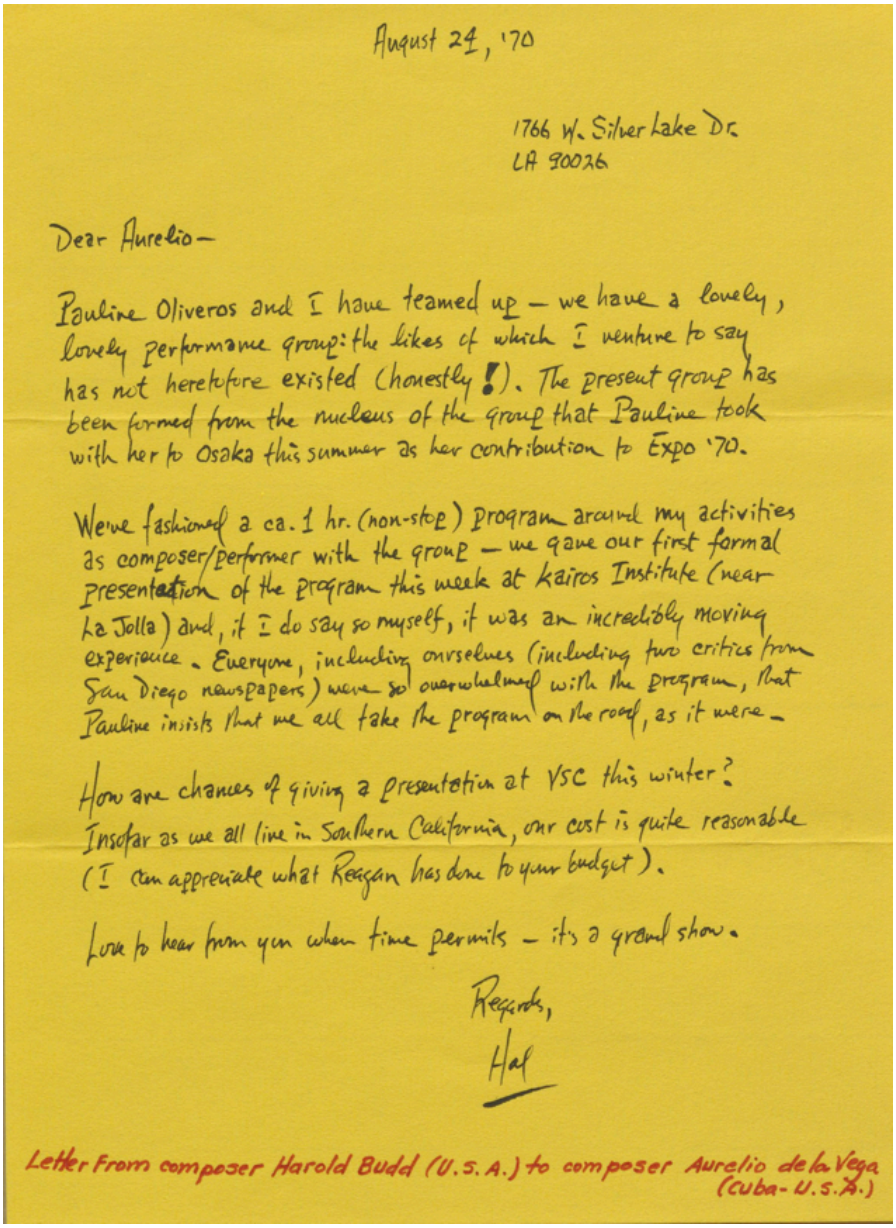
[244] "November 16," (ca. 1974), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

[245] Aurelio de la Vega, "Correspondence with Harold Budd." *Primary Sources for Latin American Composers at the Library of Congress*. Aurelio de la Vega collection, 1948-1990; See Chapter One on Budd's undergraduate study with Aurelio de la Vega at San Fernando Valley State College (1961–63).

[246] "November 3, 1975," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–77.

[247] The original *Lovely Thing* is a piano piece that asks the performer to repeat a single chord continuously, letting the sound fade completely each time before striking the chord again as softly as possible. See Chapter One. *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, "*Lovely Thing*, manuscript score and a collage, (1969)," MSS 102, Box 23, Folder 22, Oversize FB-405-06, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego; *Music for Expo '70* (alternatively titled *Pep-Psi*) is a "single-pitch" work that extends her exploration of controlled tonality which begins with the Oliveros piece *AOK* (1969), Heidi von Guden, *The Music of Pauline Oliveros* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1983), 61–64.

Figure 17. Harold Budd to Aurelio de la Vega, August 24, 1970. "Correspondence with Harold Budd." *Aurelio de la Vega Collection, 1948-1990,* Music Division, Library of Congress.



August 24, '70

1766 W. Silver Lake Dr.
LA 90026

Dear Aurelio—

Pauline Oliveros and I have teamed up — we have a lovely, lovely performance group: the likes of which I venture to say has not heretofore existed (honestly!). The present group has been formed from the nucleus of the group that Pauline took with her to Osaka this summer as her contribution to Expo '70.

We've fashioned a ca. 1 hr. (non-stop) program around my activities as composer/performer with the group — we gave our first formal presentation of the program this week at Kairos Institute (near La Jolla) and, if I do say so myself, it was an incredibly moving experience. Everyone, including ourselves (including two critics from San Diego newspapers) were so overwhelmed with the program, that Pauline insists that we all take the program on the road, as it were—

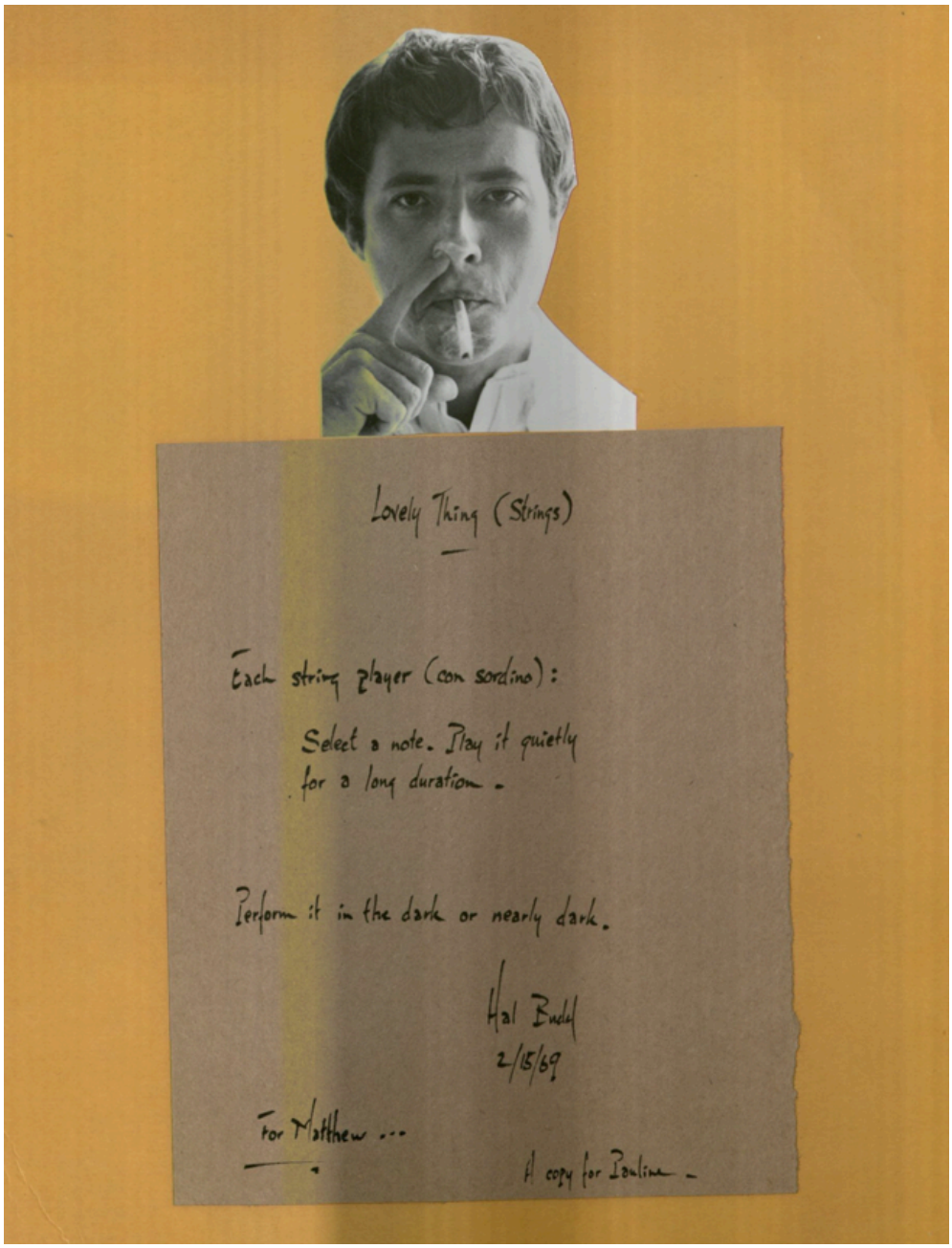
How are chances of giving a presentation at VSC this winter? Insofar as we all live in Southern California, our cost is quite reasonable (I can appreciate what Reagan has done to your budget).

Love to hear from you when time permits — it's a grand show.

Regards,
Hal

Letter from composer Harold Budd (U.S.A.) to composer Aurelio de la Vega (Cuba-U.S.A.)

Figure 18. Harold Budd, *Lovely Thing* (1969), string arrangement with a photograph of Pauline Oliveros. "Manuscript score and a collage, 1969," *Special Collections & Archives*, UC San Diego. MSS 102, Box 23, Folder 22, Oversize FB-405-06,



A separate event that fall shows Oliveros programming Budd within another institutional setting. As composer-in-residence at Hope College in Holland, Michigan, Oliveros headlined a concert at Dimnent Memorial Chapel on October 6, 1970. The program centered on her *Sonic Environment: Bog with Bird Call Patch* (1970), a two-channel tape work with live electronic programming, but also featured Budd's *One Sound* (1969) for string quartet alongside her *Bye Bye Butterfly* (1965) and *To Valerie Solanas and Marilyn Monroe in Recognition of Their Desperation* (1970). The concert offers another concrete instance of Oliveros bringing Budd's music into circulation.[248]

Around 1970, Budd also began programming Oliveros's works. At a summer concert at Moorpark State College titled "Music by Harold Budd," he placed her text work *Why Don't You Write a Short Piece?* (1970) alongside Cage's *4'33"* (1952), Cardew's *Memories of You* (1964), Terry Jennings's *Winter Sun* (1965), and his own *Lecture Plan* (1968) and *The Candy-Apple Revision* (1970).[249] A CalArts concert on March 3, 1970, shows how

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[248] Programs and reviews," *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, series 5. " subseries 5A; In *One Sound*, the quartet sustains a single sonority and then slowly glissandos upward into a final one, unfolding as a clear process of drone and gradual transformation. See Chapter One.

[249] "Moorpark College Summer Music Festival Program," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated; Brett Boutwell frames Budd as one of Jennings's key Los Angeles advocates in the early CalArts orbit: Budd is described as an "enthusiast" who praised Jennings's "naked, tonal" music to his students at the moment Budd's own work was turning toward consonant stasis, helping route Jennings's pieces into the school's informal performance network (especially through Budd's student Peter Garland). Boutwell caps that picture with Budd's later, pointed assessment of Jennings's legacy, reducing it, almost deliberately, to the enduring force of *Winter Trees* (1965). Brett Boutwell, "Terry Jennings, the Lost Minimalist," *American Music* 32, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 98; In Budd's private correspondence, that same Jennings figure functioned as a darkly comic unit of social finality: writing to Barney Childs about Garland, he remarked, "He's on [Robert] Ashley's shitlist, which must be like Terry Jennings telling you he'll never call

Oliveros's music could also appear within a more conventional recital format. The printed program centered on a canonical repertory, including J. S. Bach's *Overture in the French Style*, BWV 831, a double bass concerto by Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf, and a small group of early California-Spanish folk songs, among them Salvator Rosa's "Star vicino." Against that backdrop, Budd's performance of Oliveros's multimedia text work *Please Don't Shoot the Piano Player; He Is Doing His Best* (1969) registers as the program's clearest stylistic rupture.[250] In another CalArts context, Budd recalled putting together a concert in something like a logistical rush: having decided to organize a program "within 3 weeks," he "came across 2 fellows from Yale," Lucky Mosko and Humphrey Evans, who were "forming a thing," so they merged efforts. The resulting lineup included an "oboe piece for J. Mack; Jim Tenney's *Maximusic* for percussion . . . Christian Wolff's *Edges*; a piece by Humphrey Evans; [Budd's] *Lovely Thing,* and/or *One Sound*; Pauline's *AOK*."[251]

These programs show the range of sites through which Budd and Oliveros's work moved around 1970: college festivals, CalArts recitals, ad hoc concerts, and composer-organized events. They also point toward a larger institutional ecology for

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again." "January 21" (ca. 1974) Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

[250] The work was commissioned by Daniel Lentz for *The California Time Machine* and premiered at the University of California, Santa Barbara, in October 1969. Oliveros described it as a "theater piece" or an "ensemble of soloists." The title echoes a saloon notice reported by Oscar Wilde during his 1882 American tour, which he presented as a form of vernacular art criticism. "Curriculum Vitae," *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 29, Folders 11-12.

[251] "Tuesday, 26" (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

presenting experimental music. In Los Angeles, the Pasadena Art Museum's *Encounters* series offered another model: not a composer's private network or a school concert, but a museum-based forum where experimental music was presented, explained, and heard in relation to a broader public.

Encounters at the Pasadena Art Museum

In 1967, Leonard Stein became music director of the Pasadena Art Museum's *Encounters* series (1964–73), one of the museum's principal forums for contemporary music. Intentionally informal and composer-centered, the series placed audiences "face to face" with new music through discussion, performance, and, when useful, the repetition of excerpts so that listeners could hear them again in context. It was designed less as a conventional recital than as a guided event of listening and interpretation. Its roster was overtly modernist and experimental, including figures such as Larry Austin, Milton Babbitt, Luciano Berio, Earle Brown, John Cage, Ingolf Dahl, Morton Feldman, William Kraft, Ernst Krenek, Harry Partch, Henri Pousseur, Mel Powell, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Morton Subotnick, and Toru Takemitsu.[252]

Reviews and notices in the *Los Angeles Times* reveal how the Encounters format worked in practice. Berio's 1967 appearance, for example, was presented as a discussion-performance event built around excerpts from the early *Sequenza* works, with

[252] "*Encounters* to Open Concert Series Sunday," *Los Angeles Times*, November 30, 1967, SG2. *Leonard Stein Papers, 1942-1983* (MSS 219), University of California, San Diego, finding aid, Online Archive of California.

Stuart Dempster on trombone and Stein at the piano.[253] Karen Monson's account of Earle Brown's *Novara* (1962), written for Brown's first West Coast appearance, suggested why such a model had become necessary: in this repertory, composers had to take the "initiative" in explaining a work's underlying thought.[254] Coverage of William Kraft's visit similarly emphasized his *Double Trio* (1966) for tuba and the extended techniques it demanded. Although the museum venue seated about one hundred people, the series regularly drew full houses. Kraft, for instance, took questions and then repeated the program later that same evening.[255] Toshi Ichiyanagi opened the 1967–68 season with new works that foregrounded non-Western instruments and contemporary technique, and subsequent programs paired local European modernists such as Ingolf Dahl and Henri Pousseur.[256]

In 1970, Austin presented one of the series' most explicitly theatrical and media-conscious works. *Bass* (1967), for string bass, tape, and film, cast Turetzky as more than an instrumentalist, making him an actor and dancer as well, set against a color-wash film projection and surrounded by layered taped "rumbles."[257] Turetzky, wearing a

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[253] The news clip also mentioned that Berio was featured at the first *Encounters* program in 1963 although the archive states that the series started in 1964. "Program Will Feature Avant-Garde Musician," *Los Angeles Times*, April 6, 1967, SG3.

[254] Karen Monson, "*Encounters* Open Season in Pasadena," *Los Angeles Times*, December 10, 1968, E28.

[255] Walter Arlen, "Encounter With William Kraft," *Los Angeles Times*, February 28, 1967, D9.

[256] "*Encounters* to Open Concert Series Sunday," *Los Angeles Times*, November 30, 1967, SG2.

[257] "Larry Austin, 1967–70," " Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 3, *Leonard Stein Papers, 1942-1983* (MSS 219), University of California, San Diego.

"diabolical" white mask, was described as doing "wondrous things to his oversized fiddle." A reviewer initially read the piece as a "bitter and appealing putdown" of the "square musical establishment," but the post-concert discussion complicated that interpretation. Austin insisted that the work was meant to showcase Turetzky's unusual abilities and serve as an "illuminating" vehicle for them, while the "angry face," he suggested, was there chiefly to mislead and unsettle.[258]

Budd's account of the concert preserves both its reception and its social atmosphere. He described Austin's Pasadena *Encounters* program as "a good show" and singled out *Bass* as "a superior piece" that "far outshone" the others. He praised Turetzky's playing as "remarkably good" and called the work "scary," while admitting that he was "not nuts" about Austin's *Plastic Surgery* (1969). His response to *Transmission One* (1969) was similarly discriminating: although he found it "very attractive much of the time," he insisted that it was "a TV piece, not a film," a distinction he linked to the problem of documentation reducing an event to "a record of a moment in the past."[259] Budd also registered the audience's unusual social mix, at least as it appeared to him. He described it as "not the usual L.A. concert crowd," but as a combination of young "heavy-freak-out-avant-garde-types" and older "creative weavers and clay potters." The

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[258] Martin Bernheimer, "Austin in Lecture-Concert," *Los Angeles Times*, May 26, 1970, F11.

[259] This concern aligns with Walter Benjamin's argument that mechanical reproduction shifts an artwork away from its singular, time-and-place "presence" (its aura), so that what circulates and is experienced is the reproducible document rather than the irrecoverable, situated event; Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, Harry Zohn trans. (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 217–252.

post-concert discussion offered another glimpse of the room's response. Budd singled out the composer Ellis Kohs, a regular supporter of new music, for asking a "naive, but intelligent" question with "graciousness and perplexity."[260]

Cage's 1970 appearance showed the same format, but with a different kind of experimental attitude. He opened with an "entrance music" tape drawn from his collaboration with Lejaren Hiller, *HPSCHD* (1967–69), then structured the evening around readings from his *Diary: How to Improve the World (You Will Only Make Matters Worse)* (1965–68) and included *Cheap Imitation* (1969), his piano arrangement of Erik Satie's *Socrate* (1918). Reviewing the event for the *Los Angeles Times*, John Rockwell, then newly arrived on the paper's music desk, suggested that the performance might seem "boring" only to someone committed to a simple opposition between the interesting and the dull, while also observing that the *Diary*'s anecdotal passages "provided a hint of sadness at the way things are working out on this planet."[261] Rockwell would continue to cover the series in later reviews, including appearances by Powell in 1970 and Takemitsu in 1972.[262]

Encounters also helped bring New York minimalism into the Los Angeles new-music fold. Stein invited his former Los Angeles City College student, La Monte

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[260] "Monday," May 25, (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

[261] John Rockwell, "Music of John Cage on '*Encounters* '70' Series," *Los Angeles Times*, January 27, 1970, D10; and John Rockwell, "Cage to Open Pasadena Series," *Los Angeles Times*, January 25, 1970, P43.

[262] John Rockwell, "Powell in Museum Series," *Los Angeles Times*, April 7, 1970, F10; John Rockwell, "*Encounters* With Takemitsu," *Los Angeles Times*, February 10, 1972, I17.

Young, and Marian Zazeela to present a four-day event, "La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela: *Encounters* at the Pasadena Art Museum," from January 28 to 31, 1968. Together they presented *Map of 49's Dream The Two Systems of Eleven Sets of Galactic Intervals Ornamental Lightyears Trajectory* (1966–present).[263] Winfred Blevins from the *Los Angeles Times* emphasized that the event operated across multiple senses, including sight, hearing, touch, and smell, and suggested that "ordinary ways of thinking about music" were inadequate to what was on offer. Rather than formal development, Blevins stressed sustained sensory immersion: "no beginning/middle/end," "no development," "no order," and "no pattern." He described a continuous drone to which additional sounds were gradually added, producing subtle harmonic and timbral contrasts. Over roughly the first hour, the drone increased in volume and pitch so gradually that the overall effect approached near-stasis. Low frequencies were felt physically through the metal chairs and into the body, incense shaped the air of the room, and Zazeela supplied a slowly shifting light environment of symmetrical forms in red, orange, violet, green, and pink that drifted in and out of focus, disappeared, and returned in layered overlays. The reviewer concluded by suggesting that, over time, the cumulative effect could become overwhelming.[264]

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[263] In a December 7, 1967 letter to Stein, Marian Zazeela requested that the *Encounters* poster be reproduced in its final "white on black" form and suggested using the $20 poster budget to print color posters, ideally as a two-color silkscreen in green on magenta or magenta on green. She also noted a title change that needed to be reflected in announcements, programs, and news releases. "La Monte Young, 1967," Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 30, *Leonard Stein Papers, 1942-1983* (MSS 219), University of California, San Diego.

[264] Winfred Blevins, "Senses Called On in Museum Event," *Los Angeles Times*, January 31, 1968, C9.

Terry Riley's path to *Encounters* also ran through Young. In 1967, Riley wrote to Stein seeking a West Coast appearance, noting, "I was just talking to La Monte, and he suggested I should write to you to determine if it may be possible to arrange for me a concert on the *Encounters* series at the Pasadena Art Museum next year." He enclosed a copy of a "recently released record," likely *Reed Streams* (1967), and added that he would "be very happy to hear from you" in the hope that they might "work out [a] concert date" to coincide with his next trip to California.[265] The correspondence did not immediately lead to an appearance, likely because of Riley's touring schedule and, later, his study with Pandit Pran Nath in India from September 1970 to April 1971.[266] When an *Encounters* date finally emerged for April 18, 1971, Stein had already begun teaching at CalArts, and the series itself was entering a transitional phase in which events increasingly extended beyond the Pasadena Art Museum. By November 1971, the California Institute of Technology's (Caltech) Committee on Programs had joined as a sponsor, and *Encounters* performances were being staged on the Caltech campus as well.[267]

But the concert's vision seems to have shifted. Writing from India, Riley explained that he had been deeply occupied with work and was preparing to leave on February 26 for a March tour of European cities with Pandit Pran Nath, returning to the

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[265] "March 12, 1967" Terry Riley to Leonard Stein, Correspondence, 1967–71, Box 1, Folder 24, *Leonard Stein Papers, 1942-1983* (MSS 219), University of California, San Diego.

[266] Keith Potter, *Four Musical Minimalists: La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, Philip Glass* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 135–37.

[267] *Leonard Stein Papers, 1942-1983* (MSS 219), University of California, San Diego, finding aid, Online Archive of California.

United States in early April. In the same letter, he asked whether Pran Nath might "sing on my program," arguing that their close collaboration over the previous six months made it "very good for everyone to see and hear the eastern sources to what is often happening these days in western music." He also stressed the universality of Pran Nath's artistry, which he described as speaking "beyond both time and place."[268]

Stein replied on March 4, explaining that he was glad to receive Riley's letter because he had been "beginning to worry" about how to reach him before the April 18 Encounters appearance, for which publicity was already underway. He restated the announced plan: Riley would perform on electric organ and soprano saxophone with tape delay, drawing on selections from *A Rainbow in Curved Air* (1968) and *Keyboard Studies* (1964–65), with the possibility of a new work as well. Emphasizing the series' composer-centered format, Stein declined to add Pran Nath to the already announced event and instead suggested that any appearance by him be organized separately, "under some other auspices." He nonetheless offered to help with contacts and audience building, and asked Riley to respond quickly with travel details so the April program could proceed "with certainty."[269] Writing from Farsta, Sweden, on March 15, 1971, Riley agreed that a separate program "would be best," noted that Pran Nath would remain in Europe until mid-May, and confirmed his own plan to return to San Francisco around

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[268] "Undated" (ca. February 1971) Terry Riley to Leonard Stein, Correspondence, 1967–71, Box 1, Folder 24, *Leonard Stein Papers, 1942-1983* (MSS 219), University of California, San Diego.

[269] "March 4, 1971," Leonard Stein to Terry Riley, Correspondence, 1967–71, Box 1, Folder 24, *Leonard Stein Papers, 1942-1983* (MSS 219), University of California, San Diego.

April 10. He closed by saying that he looked forward to the concert and to seeing Stein again.[270]

Whether *A Rainbow in Curved Air* and *Keyboard Studies* were initially performed remains uncertain. What does enter the public record, however, is Riley's emergent solo keyboard improvisation, *Persian Surgery Dervishes*, preserved in two contrasting realizations: one associated with *Encounters* at Caltech and the other recorded in Paris. Across both, improvisation serves as the work's organizing principle. The Caltech version unfolds more slowly and with a darker cast, beginning in the low register and building momentum gradually, whereas the Paris performance of May 24, 1972, moves at a much faster tempo and projects a brighter, more luminous surface.[271]

Events at the Pasadena Art Museum also extended beyond the formal *Encounters* series. On April 14, 1972, Philip Glass appeared there with an amplified ensemble of six New York musicians as part of his first West Coast tour, an instrumentation centered on two electric organs and four wind players.[272] The program opened with "Part Three" of *Music in Twelve Parts* (1971), which Rockwell described as "brightly animated," with "Morse-code-like signals of sound" moving through cycles of repeated rhythmic patterns across the ensemble. The main work was an hour-long realization of *Music with Changing*

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[270] "March 15, 1971," Terry Riley to Leonard Stein, Correspondence, 1967–71, Box 1, Folder 24, *Leonard Stein Papers, 1942-1983* (MSS 219), University of California, San Diego.

[271] Listing for *Encounters*: Terry Riley, Sunday, April 18, 8:00 p.m., Ramo Hall; Caltech News, vol. 5, no. 3 (April 1971): 4; Terry Riley, *Persian Surgery Dervishes* (Paris: Shandar, 1972), double LP, recorded April 18, 1971 (Los Angeles) and May 24, 1972 (Paris).

[272] The six musicians were Jon Gibson, Philip Glass, Rusty Gilder, Dickie Landry, Robert Prado, and Kurt Munkacsi.

Parts (1970–71), which he characterized through its short, repeatable eighth-note figures and rippling organ sound, producing an "overall effect" that was "formally chaste yet extraordinarily inclusive in mood." He closed by calling it "a beautiful and important concert," one that confirmed "once again, the Pasadena Art Museum's vital place in our local musical life."[273] In the same period, Budd's correspondence shows that this space became more than a venue he attended: it also became a site he imagined for his own collaborative work.

Budd described the Pasadena Art Museum as the prospective setting for a Budd-Allan Kaprow-Oliveros project, noting plans to use the museum's full space and characterizing the proposal as "a group thing." Oliveros and Kaprow approached Budd about a possible collaboration at the Pasadena Art Museum. Budd understood the project as both an aesthetic and social negotiation, but he was wary of simply adopting Kaprow's established vocabulary. If the project were announced as "Let's have a Happening!," he wrote, it would send him "back to the Douglas Aircraft Co. mailing room."[274] The remark is both self-positioning and mild critique: Budd knew that Kaprow's "Happening" already carried a recognizable set of expectations, but he suggested that the label felt too familiar, even faintly dated, for the sonic environment he had in mind.

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[273] John Rockwell, "Composer Glass in Pasadena Program," *Los Angeles Times*, April 17, 1972, F12.

[274] "Monday Evening Letter #1" (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

Budd thought about the project as a room-scale installation. Wall transducers and shotgun microphones would create an "invisible feedback loop"; the gallery would be emptied so that there were "no paintings"; Oliveros would supply very low frequencies; and Kaprow would work with the building's air ducts so that the museum's infrastructure became part of the sounding system. He imagined the result in affective terms: "Can you imagine walking into an enormous, dimly lit room, by all looks of it somewhat sinister but harmless, and then realizing that something's horribly wrong? The idea's really attractive to me. I think it'll work beautifully."[275] In practical terms, the proposal extended Budd's late-1960s experimental practice. Its minimalism is grounded in temporality and the electronic control of architectural space.[276]

The museum's programming also put Budd in the orbit of New York minimalism, raising a separate question about influence. After 1970, Budd's correspondence suggests a growing awareness of East Coast minimalism and the people around it, even if direct contact is harder to document. The paper trail shows recognition before sustained engagement. On May 15, 1972, he pointed to "dreadful omissions" in *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians: 1971 Supplement* and named Glass as one of them.[277] Budd recalled that Peter Garland, his CalArts student (1970–72), told him "who Phil Glass was," a moment Budd described as exposing his own lack of familiarity.[278] In

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[275] "Monday Evening Letter #1" (ca. 1970).

[276] See Chapter One especially *Mangus Colorado*.

[277] "May 15, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–74.

[278] "August 27" (ca. 1974), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

this same period, his own compositional priorities centered on drones and improvisation, rather than the additive and subtractive repetition that structured Glass's works.[279]

One plausible conduit for closer contact was Jon Gibson. Gibson performed with Glass's ensemble at the Pasadena Art Museum concert in 1972, and Budd later recalled that he first heard Steve Reich through Gibson. By that point, however, Budd considered himself "already a fairly well-formed, mature composer."[280] In the same reflection, he placed his work within a minimalist sensibility while distancing it from Reich's branch of the style, treating "minimalism" instead as a term borrowed from visual art and associating it with Los Angeles "Finish-Fetish" painters.[281] By September 28, 1973, Budd referred to Reich in writing, confirming that Reich had entered his vocabulary even if he remained a secondary reference point.[282] Gibson was likely someone Budd met at the Glass concert itself.

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[279] An early effort to map American experimental music as a broad contemporary field appears in Walter Zimmermann's *Desert Plants: Conversations with 23 American Musicians*, which gathered conversations with living composers including Austin, Budd, Glass, Oliveros, Reich, and Tenney. In the introduction, Zimmermann explains that he wanted to discover what these musicians had "in common besides being different," identifying shared conditions of artistic survival or "the ways of subsistence" as a unifying thread. Although Budd is not included among the twenty-three interviewees, the book is useful as evidence that figures active during Budd's own most productive early-1970s years were already being understood within a wider American experimental field rather than a narrow minimalist lineage. Walter Zimmermann, *Desert Plants: Conversations with 23 American Musicians* (Vancouver, BC: A.R.C. Publications, 1976), vi–xi.

[280] Geoff Smith and Nicola Walker Smith, *New Voices: American Composers Talk about Their Music* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1995), 65.

[281] Geoff Smith and Nicola Walker Smith, *New Voices: American Composers Talk about Their Music*, 65.

[282] "September 28, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–74.

In that same retrospective account, however, Budd downplayed direct engagement with "the classic minimalists of the East Coast." Instead, he identified Oliveros as the crucial figure, stating that she was "the one that really got me interested in exploring all the ramifications of drone music," and explicitly rejected La Monte Young as the origin of that interest.[283] This claim is consistent with the Pasadena material. In describing early plans for the museum project, Budd wrote that "Pauline and I arrived at almost identical projects independently, so we're going to collaborate as a twosome," framing sustained sound and spatial conditions as a shared concern.[284] That connection is also visible in Budd's *Lilacs* (1971), dedicated to the percussionist John Bergamo and double bassist Charles Buell, both of whom taught at CalArts (Figure 19). *Lilacs* unfolds as a slow upward drone, with stacked fourths moving against a tam-tam tremolo. The manuscript also includes a photograph of Oliveros attached at the bottom of the page, a small but suggestive acknowledgment of her place in Budd's thinking about drones.[285]

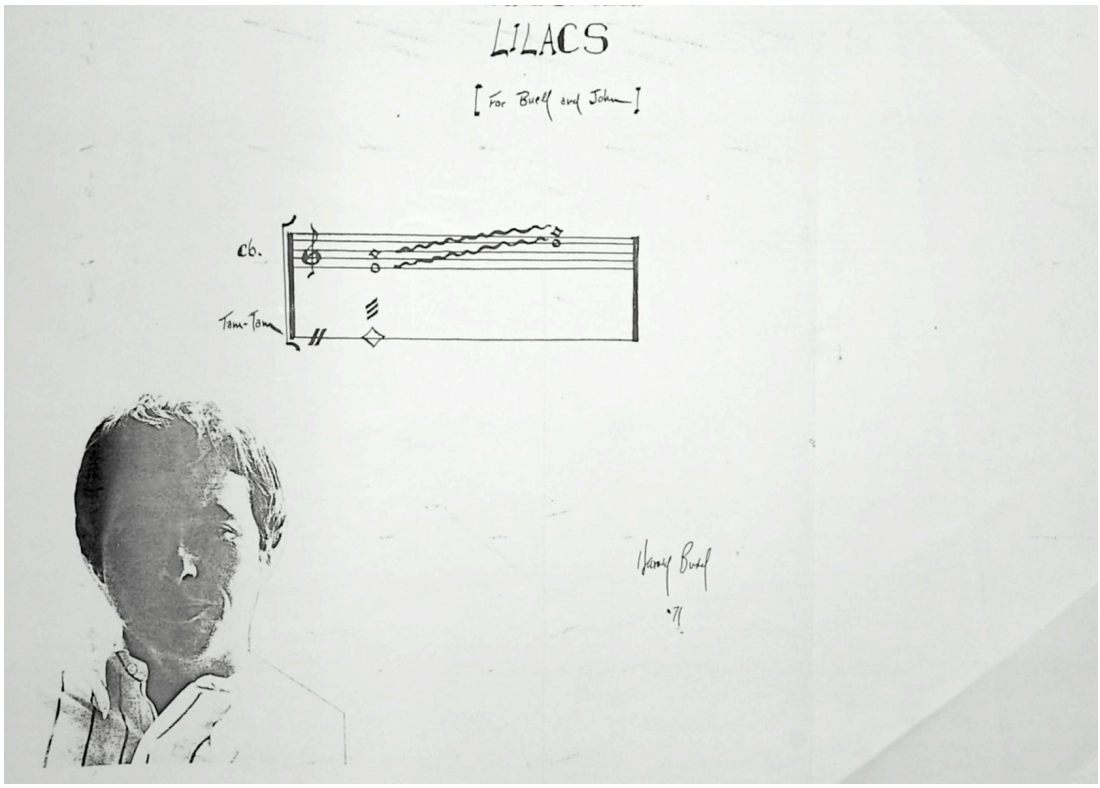
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[283] Geoff Smith and Nicola Walker Smith, *New Voices: American Composers Talk about Their Music*, 65.

[284] "Tuesday Letter, 26" (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs; Victor Szabo characterizes Budd's early experimental practice by writing that, "In the 1960s Budd had followed lines of conceptualism and radical drone minimalism parallel to those drawn by fellow West Coaster La Monte Young…" This formulation is helpful, but he overstates the Young connection. Victor Szabo, *Turn On, Tune In, Drift Off: Ambient Music's Psychedelic Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023), 225.

[285] Budd already explored this kind of gradual upward motion in *One Sound* (1969), a string quartet built around a single long, ascending glissando. See Chapter One.

Figure 19. Harold Budd, *Lilacs* (1971). The University of North Texas, Music Library, *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde*, Box: 4, Folder: 8, 06-051.



Riley occupied a different position in Budd's imagination. He was not the source of Budd's interest in drones, but he represented a model of improvisatory virtuosity within the same California circuit. By 1970, Budd was clearly aware of Riley and encountered him socially in California; he noted, "Tuesday with [Robert] Ashley, ONCE [Group], Dan L. [Lentz], Terry Riley, et al. in Santa Barbara, weird! I'm most uncomfortable in situations where I'm definitely an outsider."[286] He later singled out

[286] "March 28," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

Riley as an exemplar of virtuosity, calling him "the most astonishing" improviser he had ever heard and "an absolutely fantastically gifted artist."[287] Yet admiration did not entail stylistic alignment; Budd later recalled deciding he did not want to be a minimalist, "much as I admired the work of, for example, Terry Riley," even as his 1970s music occasionally reads as an emulation of Riley's procedures.[288]

Budd also began experimenting with new technology, especially Don Buchla's Electronic Music System at CalArts's 1969 Villa Cabrini campus.[289] Describing one such project, he called it a "Buchla-made 'real-time'" piece, meaning it was generated in real time, and reported that on a re-hearing "with Jim Beam," it "sounded awfully nice" to him. At the same time, he acknowledged the skepticism that often met synthesizer music. "If anyone approached me with a tape made on a synthesizer," he admitted, "my first reaction would likewise be 'Fuck off, Pancho,'" before asking for "reserved judgment pending a hearing." The piece, he explained, was "in Eb," using a "kind of pentatonic/Pythagorean tuning arrived at laboriously by ear," which he described as a "private homage to Aptos Lou Harrison." He added, "I think it's called *The Oak of the Golden Dreams*."[290]

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[287] Mark Prendergast, "The Sound-Painted World of Harold Budd," *Sound On Sound* (December 1986): 48–56.

[288] Martin Longley, "Harold Budd: the ambient music master floats again," *The Guardian*, December 15, 2015.

[289] See Chapter Two on CalArts's provisional Villa Cabrini campus and the school's early electronic-music infrastructure.

[290] December 2," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

At the same time, Budd was candid about his uneven mastery of the instrument itself. "I've been trying desperately to learn the big Buchla board," he wrote. "So far, I've only just gotten the basic hang of the thing." For all its status as a "standard sound-maker," he felt it did not "lend itself at all to what it is that I do," and his assessment of its design was pointedly ambivalent. "In one way, the thing is over-developed, over-designed, really," he observed, "and in another it's under-designed," because you cannot get "little intricacies, only BIG gestures." Still, he ended with a shrugging pragmatism: "I've been told that it doesn't eat its clumsier practitioners, so what's to worry?"[291]

The Oak of the Golden Dreams (1970) and *Coeur d'Orr* (1969) mark a turn toward sound grounded in studio work and modality, yet produced through distinctly Californian technologies, spaces, and improvisation. Budd realized *The Oak of the Golden Dreams* in 1970 on the Buchla in real time, as a single performance recorded directly to magnetic tape. Its pitch world, tuned entirely by ear, fixes the "treble cantilena" to scale degrees 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7 on Eb, a self-imposed diatonic constraint. The piece also closes a run of works named for California place names that begins with *Noyo* (1966) and continues through *Boonville* (1967), *California 99* (1969), and *Healdsburg Plum* (1970), situating Budd's emerging idiom within a deliberately local geography.

Coeur D'Orr, originally conceived in 1969 for the sculptor Eric Orr, translates *Pauline Spring Piece* into an electroacoustic equivalent. Budd recorded the eight-track organ tape in April 1970 at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles, with the assistance of Dorrance Stalvey and Robert Chadwick. Two separately recorded drones, one centered

[291] "Tuesday Letter, 26" (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

on Db and the other on BM, were then combined through live, stereophonic playback, producing shifting interference effects that could register as fleeting scalar motion and, in aggregate, a predominantly mixolydian inflection on Db. The performance history also suggests how quickly Budd integrated these works into Southern California performance networks. Charles Oreña first performed a soprano saxophone line to the piece at UC Santa Barbara in May 1970.

Writing about these pieces, Kyle Gann hears Budd using the Buchla "as an electric organ," sustaining an Eb drone beneath rapid modal improvisation closer to Coltrane's "sheets of sound" and the soprano saxophone practices of Riley or Young than to Glass's additive procedures. He reads *Coeur d'Orr* (1969) as a companion work built from a static organ bed derived in part from *The Candy Apple Revision* (1970), over which soprano saxophone improvises. [292] Michael Nyman similarly stresses the drone basis of both pieces, hearing *Coeur d'Orr* as sustained tonal layers beneath a saxophone line moving from sitar-like inflection toward Coltrane-inflected figuration, and *The Oak of the Golden Dreams* (1970) as delicate melodic tracery over a single-note drone. For both writers, Budd's flexible rhythms, modal color, and intuitive permutations mark a clear divergence from Glass's pulse-grid regularity.[293]

But to hear the pieces chiefly through that melodic surface risks underplaying Oliveros's importance. The drone is not simply a backdrop for improvisation. It is the

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[292] Kyle Gann, liner notes to *The Oak of the Golden Dreams: Works by Richard Maxfield & Harold Budd* (New World Records).

[293] Michael Nyman, *Michael Nyman: Collected Writings*, ed. Pwyll ap Siôn (London: Routledge, 2013), 269–70.

compositional ground of the work, establishing a static modal field within which the solo line can test inflection, register, and harmonic color without moving through functional changes. The recorded version was made in Los Angeles in December 1971 for Barney Childs's *Advance Records* label, and when Childs asked whether Budd would release an album, Budd replied enthusiastically, "Well, sir, Advance sounds like a gas of an offer; many, many thanks. What can I say?" Pointing to Oliveros, he signed off, "AOK!"[294]

Sonic Outlaws and Other Useful Fictions: Daniel Lentz and *The California Time Machine*

Oliveros and Riley mark two points of reference for Budd: sustained sound and improvisatory virtuosity. The chapter's opening discussion of *California 99* established another through-line: jokes, puns, staged actions, and critique. Daniel Lentz brought that through-line into sharper focus. Joining the composition faculty at UC Santa Barbara in 1968, Lentz developed a related strain of satirical experimentalism. Wine glasses entered this practice first as a social ritual and then as a sound source. The glasses themselves became instruments: as performers circled the glass's upper edge, friction set the bowl vibrating and produced sustained, drone-like tones. Changing the amount of liquid in the

[294] December 2," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs; The record did not meet with universal sympathy. Reviewing *The Oak of the Golden Dreams*, Stephan Soomil dismissed it as "little more than a euphonious waste of time." Stephan Soomil, "Classical LPs: Alla Breve," *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1973, B43; For a quick, chronology-forward snapshot of early recordings in United States minimalism reference: Terry Riley, *Reed Streams* (Mass Art, 1967; recorded Nov. 1966); Steve Reich, *Live/Electric Music* (New York: Columbia Masterworks, 1968); Philip Glass, *Music with Changing Parts* (Chatham Square Productions, 1971).

glass altered the pitch. Lentz recalled the arrangement with excitement: "I actually got the department to fund it. They bought wine and glassware and everything."[295]

What emerged was *The California Time Machine*, a contemporary music ensemble whose programs combined live electronics, text instructions, and improvisation while cultivating a distinct performance identity. The group performed works by composers then active on the West Coast, including Austin, Barton, Budd, Lentz, Stanley Lunetta, Oliveros, and Roger Reynolds.[296] Its rotating cast included David Barton, Fred McFadden, Janet Scarberry, Marlene Wasco, and, at times, the experimental performance artist Wolfgang Stoerchle, later a CalArts professor. Together they pursued what Lentz described as "lush sounds" and "exciting theatrics" (Figure 20). The group's "Manifesto" gave that orientation a verbal form.

Framed as a conversation among ensemble members, the "Manifesto" unfolds through fragments, questions, and provocations. It treats duration and measurement as open questions rather than fixed givens (Figures 21/22). Barton opens with a riff on *Star Trek*: "Time, the final frontier. But what is it? Is it performance time? Pacific Coast Standard?" The line links sonic exploration to geography, using "Pacific Coast Standard" to place clock measurement, performance practice, and regional identity within a single frame. Scarberry extends the point more directly: "We should be treating time as a concrete or tangible reality," rejecting it as a passive backdrop to musical or performative

[295] Daniel Lentz, interview with the author, July 23, 2023.

[296] Other Composers that were invited "to do art" for *The California Time Machine* include Cage, Cornelius Cardew, Sidney Hodkinson, and Alvin Lucier. "The California Time Machine Intercampus Faculty Artist Exchange, concert, Nov. 19-22, 1969," *University Archives*, UC Santa Barbara, Committee on Arts and Lectures Records. Box 8, Folder 4.

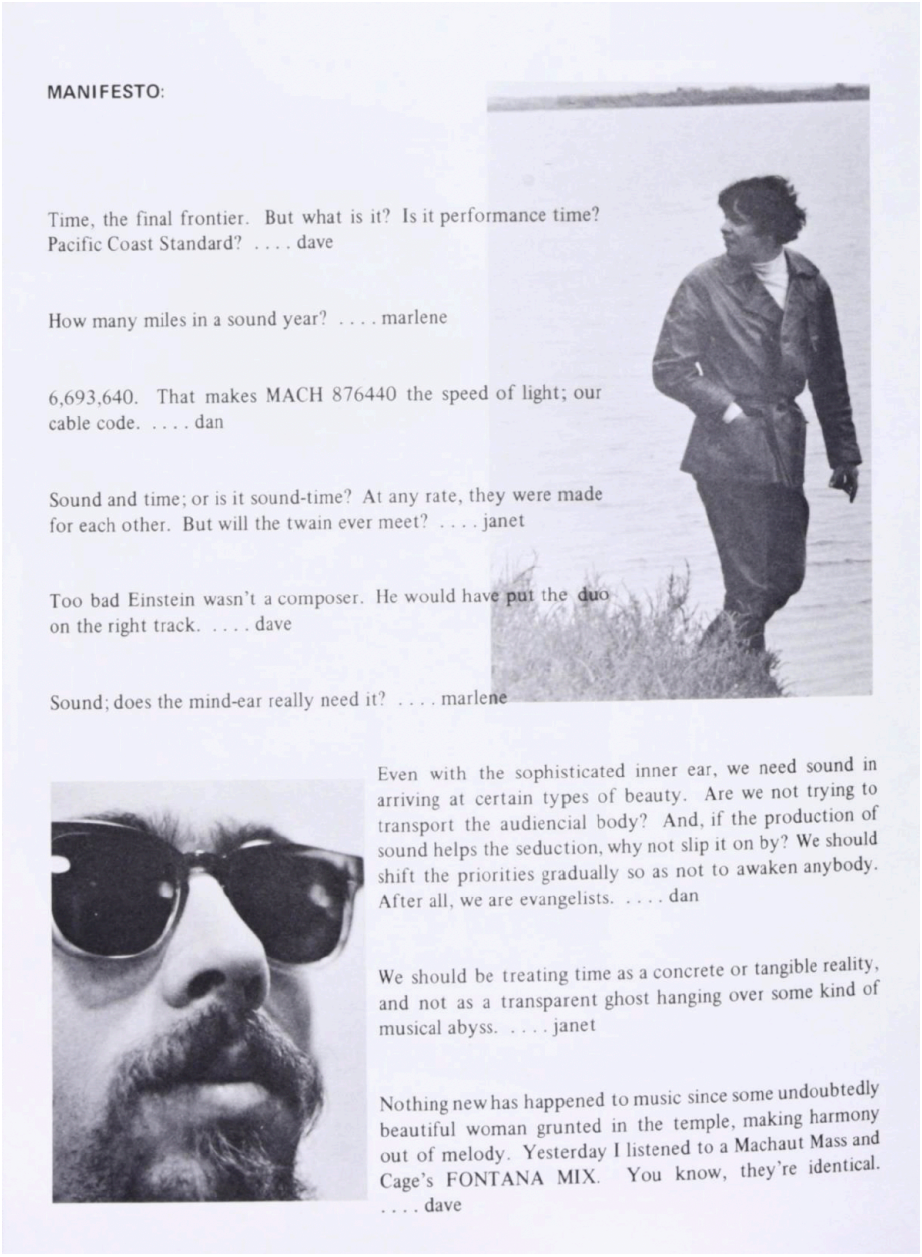
structure. Lentz reframes sound as a form of perceptual displacement: "Are we not trying to transport the audiential body?... After all, we are evangelists." Scientific references surface repeatedly. "Too bad Einstein wasn't a composer," Barton writes, casting relativity as a tool for rethinking musical experience. The "Manifesto" ends as it begins, with a question. "Do you think anyone will take this manifesto seriously?" Scarberry asks. Lentz replies: "Give them time."[297] The document makes no formal argument, but its form and content are inseparable: a temporal experiment rendered as dialogue.

[297] "Manifesto," "The California Time Machine Intercampus Faculty Artist Exchange, concert, Nov. 19-22, 1969," *University Archives*, UC Santa Barbara, Committee on Arts and Lectures Records. Box 8, Folder 4.

Figure 20. Advertisement for *The California Time Machine* (1969). "The California Time Machine Intercampus Faculty Artist Exchange, concert, Nov. 19-22, 1969," *University Archives*, UC Santa Barbara, Committee on Arts and Lectures Records. Box 8, Folder 4.



Figure 21. *The California Time Machine* "Manifesto" (1969), page one. "The California Time Machine Intercampus Faculty Artist Exchange, concert, Nov. 19-22, 1969," *University Archives*, UC Santa Barbara, Committee on Arts and Lectures Records. Box 8, Folder 4.



MANIFESTO:

Time, the final frontier. But what is it? Is it performance time? Pacific Coast Standard? . . . . dave

How many miles in a sound year? . . . . marlene

6,693,640. That makes MACH 876440 the speed of light; our cable code. . . . . dan

Sound and time; or is it sound-time? At any rate, they were made for each other. But will the twain ever meet? . . . . janet

Too bad Einstein wasn't a composer. He would have put the duo on the right track. . . . . dave

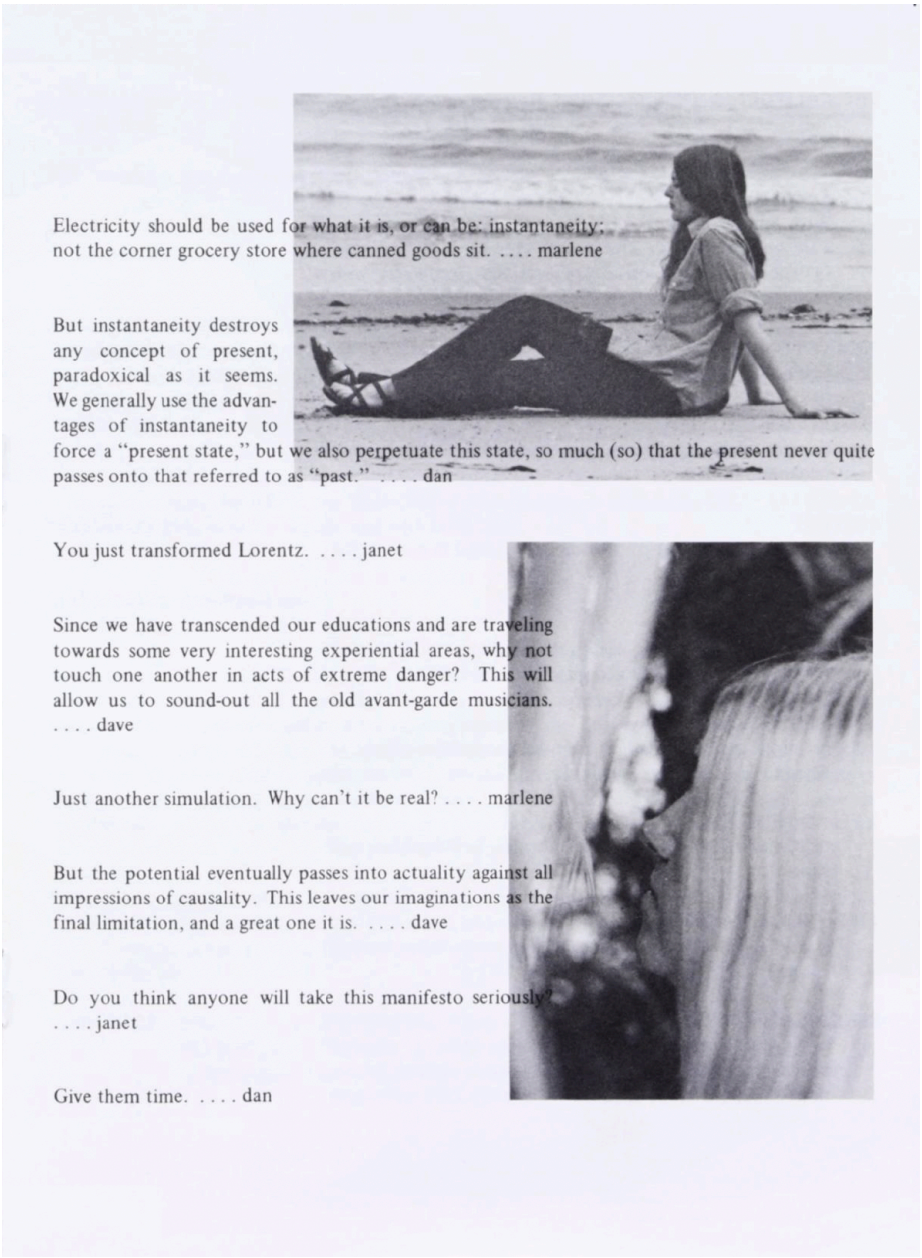
Sound; does the mind-ear really need it? . . . . marlene

Even with the sophisticated inner ear, we need sound in arriving at certain types of beauty. Are we not trying to transport the audiencial body? And, if the production of sound helps the seduction, why not slip it on by? We should shift the priorities gradually so as not to awaken anybody. After all, we are evangelists. . . . . dan

We should be treating time as a concrete or tangible reality, and not as a transparent ghost hanging over some kind of musical abyss. . . . . janet

Nothing new has happened to music since some undoubtedly beautiful woman grunted in the temple, making harmony out of melody. Yesterday I listened to a Machaut Mass and Cage's FONTANA MIX. You know, they're identical. . . . . dave

Figure 22. *The California Time Machine* "Manifesto" (1969), page two. "The California Time Machine Intercampus Faculty Artist Exchange, concert, Nov. 19-22, 1969," *University Archives*, UC Santa Barbara, Committee on Arts and Lectures Records. Box 8, Folder 4.



Electricity should be used for what it is, or can be: instantaneity; not the corner grocery store where canned goods sit. . . . . marlene

But instantaneity destroys any concept of present, paradoxical as it seems. We generally use the advantages of instantaneity to force a "present state," but we also perpetuate this state, so much (so) that the present never quite passes onto that referred to as "past." . . . . dan

You just transformed Lorentz. . . . . janet

Since we have transcended our educations and are traveling towards some very interesting experiential areas, why not touch one another in acts of extreme danger? This will allow us to sound-out all the old avant-garde musicians. . . . . dave

Just another simulation. Why can't it be real? . . . . marlene

But the potential eventually passes into actuality against all impressions of causality. This leaves our imaginations as the final limitation, and a great one it is. . . . . dave

Do you think anyone will take this manifesto seriously? . . . . janet

Give them time. . . . . dan

On October 17, 1969, the group performed at UC Santa Barbara's Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall (Figure 23). The program invoked Karlheinz Stockhausen and Cage as icons of the avant-garde. Their music was performed, but their names, procedures, and authority also became materials for imitation and satire. In "Music Lib," published in *SOUNDINGS*, Lentz recalled writing to Stockhausen soon after arriving in California to request a new work for the group. In Lentz's telling, Stockhausen "wrote a new piece" and sent many of his recent scores and program notes, all autographed. After describing Stockhausen's generosity, he claims that, as a devoted collector of Danish pornography, he sent Stockhausen "some of my best stuff, which I autographed." The anecdote reduces avant-garde prestige to the exchange of signed objects, scores, notes, and pornography within the same absurd gift economy.[298]

The Stockhausen connection becomes clearest in the opening work, *Piece for the California Zero-Timers*, which was also given the mock-German title *SERO Time Code in Breakable, Moveless Gills*.[299] The printed instructions direct performers to produce "extremely long, quiet sounds and extremely short, loud sounds" while gradually seeking synchronization "without visual cues."[300] The formulation echoes the language and

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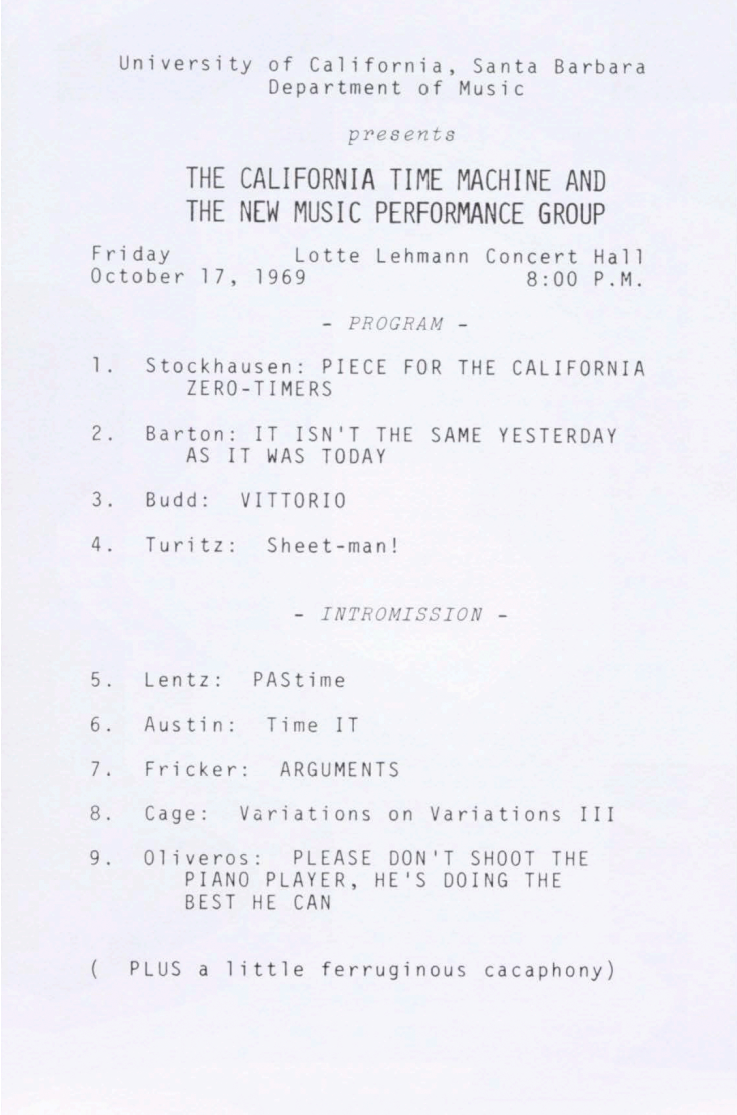
[298] Daniel Lentz, "Music Lib," *SOUNDINGS* 3–4, Peter Garland, ed. (Saugus, CA: Independent Publication), July–October 1972, 24–35.

[299] Program notes to "The California Time Machine and The New Music Performance Group," October 17, 1969, *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 14, Folder 1.

[300] The title and instruction are in nonstandard German. The errors appear to be part of the effect rather than incidental mistakes: "Spiele Extrem lange, Leise Klange Und Extrem kurze, Laute klange. Versuche, immer mehr Klangeinsatzo Mit den Anderen zu Synehron zu spielen (ehne optische zeichen)." Program notes to "The California Time

procedures of Stockhausen's *Aus den sieben Tagen* (1968), a set of text compositions that guide performers through extremes of temporal dynamics and collective awareness.

Figure 23. Music program for *The California Time Machine,* October 17, 1969. "California Time Machine Intercampus Faculty Artist Exchange, concert, Nov. 19-22, 1969," *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 14, Folder 1.



University of California, Santa Barbara
Department of Music

presents

THE CALIFORNIA TIME MACHINE AND
THE NEW MUSIC PERFORMANCE GROUP

Friday — Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall
October 17, 1969 — 8:00 P.M.

- *PROGRAM* -

1. Stockhausen: PIECE FOR THE CALIFORNIA ZERO-TIMERS
2. Barton: IT ISN'T THE SAME YESTERDAY AS IT WAS TODAY
3. Budd: VITTORIO
4. Turitz: Sheet-man!

- *INTROMISSION* -

5. Lentz: PAStime
6. Austin: Time IT
7. Fricker: ARGUMENTS
8. Cage: Variations on Variations III
9. Oliveros: PLEASE DON'T SHOOT THE PIANO PLAYER, HE'S DOING THE BEST HE CAN

(PLUS a little ferruginous cacaphony)

Machine and The New Music Performance Group," October 17, 1969, *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 14, Folder 1.

Placing the Stockhausen-style text scores first gave it programmatic weight, which the title and instructions immediately complicated. The mock-German title and nonstandard German directions imitate the language of the composer, but their errors make that seriousness difficult to take at face value. Cage's presence on the program worked in a related way. Rather than writing a new work for the group, Cage suggested that they perform *Variations III* (1962), a piece in which performers generate materials from randomly dropped transparencies containing circles.[301] The score notably includes no explicit instructions for producing sound. *The California Time Machine* instead presented *Variations on Variations III* (1969), attributing it to Cage in the program. By assigning Cage's name to a work derived from a score that already resists fixed content, the group made authorship itself the point. The piece asks what authorship means when the source work is built from indeterminacy, variable realization, and minimal instruction.

Whether the audience recognized the intervention or accepted it as Cage's work remains unclear, but that uncertainty is central to the piece: in this setting, a name could shape how the event was heard as much as the score itself. A *Los Angeles Times* review reported that *The California Time Machine* performed a work by Budd "(together with some new Stockhausen, Cage, Larry Austin, and Pauline Oliveros at Santa Barbara)," suggesting that the review accepted the program's Cage attribution and Stockhausen connection without qualification.[302]

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[301] Daniel Lentz, "Music Lib," *SOUNDINGS* 3–4, Peter Garland, ed. (Saugus, CA: Independent Publication), July–October 1972, 24–35.

[302] Martin Bernheimer, "Orchestral Woes in San Francisco," *Los Angeles Times*, October 31, 1969, G9.

But the explanation may be more straightforward. In the program note, Lentz joked, "You can get it [a score] from him, and you won't have to pay any ten percent. *Variations 3* satisfy our stimulation: 'human time experience' (Or might). Address all inquiries to J CAGE STONY POINT NEW YORK 10980."[303] The line points to the issue of performing rights and licensing, but it also turns Cage himself into the imagined point of distribution. Rather than moving through a publisher, agent, or rights organization, the score appears as something one could request directly from "J CAGE" in Stony Point. *The California Time Machine* thus lampooned the formal rights system while pointing to a broader experimental culture in which scores, permissions, and performances often circulated through personal contact.[304]

That same culture of informal exchange shaped another California event later that fall. On November 21, 1969, UC Davis hosted MEWANTEMOOSEICDAY, an eighteen-hour marathon "environmental collage" around Erik Satie's music, organized by Austin and Cage (Figure 24).[305] The festival's name was John Cage's playful workaround

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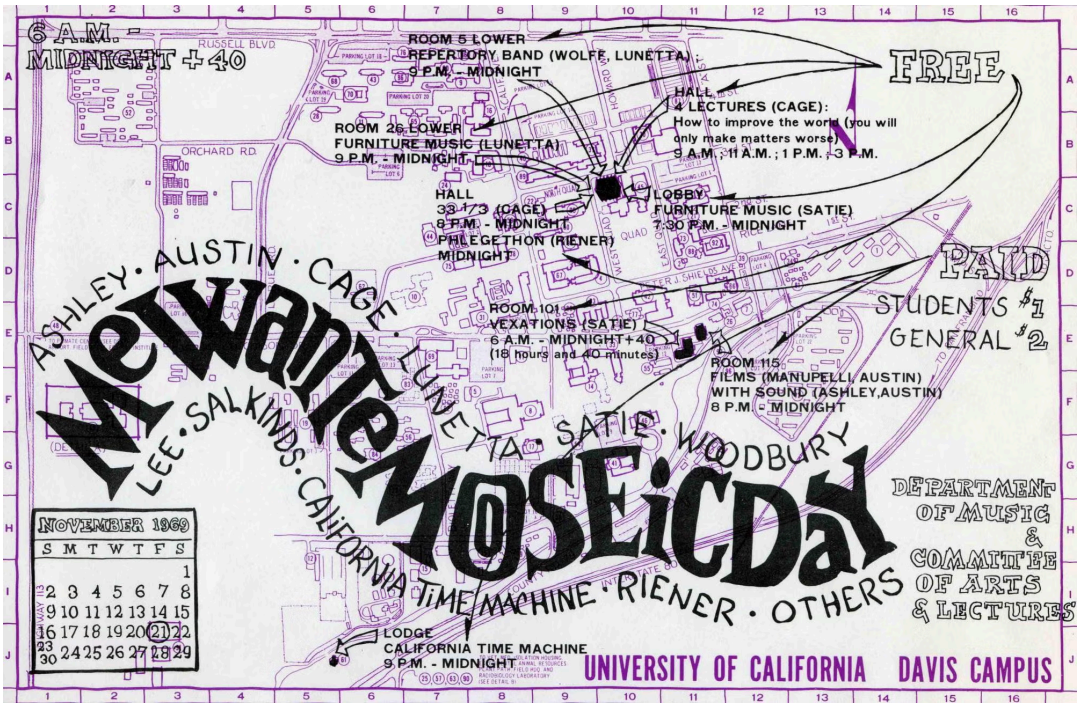
[303] Program notes to "The California Time Machine and The New Music Performance Group," October 17, 1969, *Pauline Oliveros Papers*, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 14, Folder 1.

[304] Amy C. Beal describes Cage's 1960 contract with C. F. Peters as a "decisive and somewhat anomalous break" from the independent publishing practices associated with American experimental music. Peters, a Leipzig-founded firm whose catalog included Beethoven, Grieg, Mahler, and Schoenberg, gave Cage's work international distribution and corporate imprimatur, but also brought his indeterminate scores into a system of copyright, royalties, and legal control. Beal notes that this tension surfaced in 1967, when Peters's lawyers threatened Frederic Rzewski and Jon Phetteplace with legal action for making and broadcasting realizations of Cage's works on Italian radio. Amy C. Beal, "Living in the (Publishing) House of Music," *Rethinking American Music*, ed. Tara Browner and Thomas L. Riis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2019), 141–43.

[305] David Revill, *The Roaring Silence: John Cage – A Life* (London: Bloomsbury Press, 1992), 231.

after university officials rejected his original title, *Godamusicday*, citing concerns over profanity.[306] The day began at 5:40 a.m. with twenty minutes of silent meditation followed by the first of eight hundred and forty repetitions of Satie's *Vexations*, performed in twenty-minute segments by a rotating team of pianists, including Cage himself, who performed a couple of times.

Figure 24. Program for MEWANTEMOOSEICDAY, November 21, 1969. *UC Davis, Music Department Records*, Courtesy of the University of California, Davis Music Department.



Each performer followed a strict protocol: arrive twenty minutes early, sit in contemplative silence to the left of the piano, enter seamlessly into the piece, and then track repetitions from the opposite side. Lentz interrupted that structure from inside the instrument itself. "I went in and wired the piano so I could talk to him while he was

[306] David Revill, *The Roaring Silence: John Cage – A Life* (London: Bloomsbury Press, 1992), 231.

playing." During Cage's performance, Lentz transmitted spoken passages through the piano, drawing on Cage's own writings in ways that contradicted the ritual tone of the event. "He never liked me after that," Lentz teased.[307] That evening, at 9:00 p.m., Budd, Lentz, Alden Jenks, Gene Turitz, and members of *The California Time Machine* gave their own contribution at Putah Creek Lodge. The performance consisted of Red Mountain wine, mushroom and cheese soufflés, and bread fondue. In this setting, concert activity became a form of communal gathering.[308]

Two months later, the group's openness to circumstance took a more volatile form. An infamous concert at Mills College on January 26, 1970, was shaped as much by crisis as by concept. The night before the event, Barton and Lentz were robbed at gunpoint in their hotel room. As Lentz later recalled, "They came in and were there for twenty minutes, with machine guns in my face. It was pretty bad. But anyway, they took all our sound equipment that we were going to use for Janet's [Scarberry] performance."[309]

Forced to improvise, Lentz quickly redesigned the program. In the first half, held in Mills Concert Hall, he placed a prerecorded tape inside the piano after the transducer needed for *Love and Conception* (1969) had been stolen. Stoerchle supplied the visual component. Lentz recalled the solution simply: "So I got Wolf to sit at a piano and

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[307] Daniel Lentz, interview with the author, July 23, 2023.

[308] John Dinwiddie, "MEWANTEMOOSEICDAY: John Cage in Davis, 1969," *Music of the Avant-Garde, 1966–1973*, Larry Austin and Douglas Kahn eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 234–238.

[309] Alice Wüstenhagen and Fabienne Liptay, eds., *Wolfgang Stoerchle: Success in Failure* (Zurich: Daisy Editions, 2021), 114.

pretend he was playing it, without any clothes on, which he loved to do, you know?"[310] He also invited the assailants to the concert, prompting police to surround the venue in anticipation of their return. Inside, he used walkie-talkies to communicate with Scarberry onstage while intercepting live police transmissions: "The cops didn't know we had walkie-talkies in the concert hall… so you could hear all the police's transmissions—we were able to intercept them."[311]

In the performance's second half, the group repurposed an installation by Robert Ashley, Wayne Buckley, and Stoerchle titled *Sound III* in the Mills Art Gallery (Figure 25). The installation's original sonic materials were replaced with a tape of loud war sounds. One hundred white baby rats were then released into the space, while Scarberry, dressed in white, administered hydrogen peroxide into the ears of willing audience members. At the same time, the names of American soldiers killed in Vietnam were read aloud. Scarberry later explained that the hydrogen peroxide was meant to evoke "the sizzling sound of napalm burning flesh."[312] The rats remain less legible. The available account does not say where they came from, nor does it assign them an explicit symbolic function. Rather than forcing a single interpretation, it is more convincing to understand them as part of the work's assaultive sensory field: small, exposed, living bodies set loose in the gallery, heightening the atmosphere of vulnerability, disgust, and helplessness that the performance used to register war as physical and environmental violence. The result was a surreal and unsettling antiwar spectacle.

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[310] Wüstenhagen and Fabienne Liptay, eds., *Wolfgang Stoerchle: Success in Failure*, 114.

[311] Ibid.

[312] Ibid., 102.

After Mills, the group continued to treat circumstances as material. Touring extended that approach into travel, scheduling, and distance. One of the more outlandish and telling episodes in the history of *The California Time Machine* unfolded not onstage, but in the air. The piece was titled *Air Meal Spatial Delivery* (ca. 1969/1970). It was half serious, half prank, and entirely committed to a Cagean notion of bringing the outside into the concert hall and into the folds of daily life. The work was conceived during a logistical conundrum. The group had been booked to perform simultaneously at two venues, one at Simon Fraser University outside Vancouver and another at the Exploratorium in San Francisco, overseen by Frank Oppenheimer, the physicist and museum founder who was also the brother of J. Robert Oppenheimer.[313]

Rather than cancel either appearance, Lentz and company proposed a solution that fit the group's methods. They would perform the Exploratorium concert from the airplane to Vancouver. With the help of Canadian pilots, flight attendants, and artist Mary Ashley, the group created an airborne performance in which their in-flight dinner and exchanges with the flight crew were transmitted through the cockpit radio. Ashley, stationed outside the San Francisco venue, received the transmission by phone and relayed it into the concert hall. Inside, the audience had been arranged in two facing rows so they would have something to look at while the performers were absent, as Lentz quipped.[314]

Despite the elegance of its absurdity, the event was not appreciated by everyone. Frank Oppenheimer refused to pay the ensemble, insisting that no performance

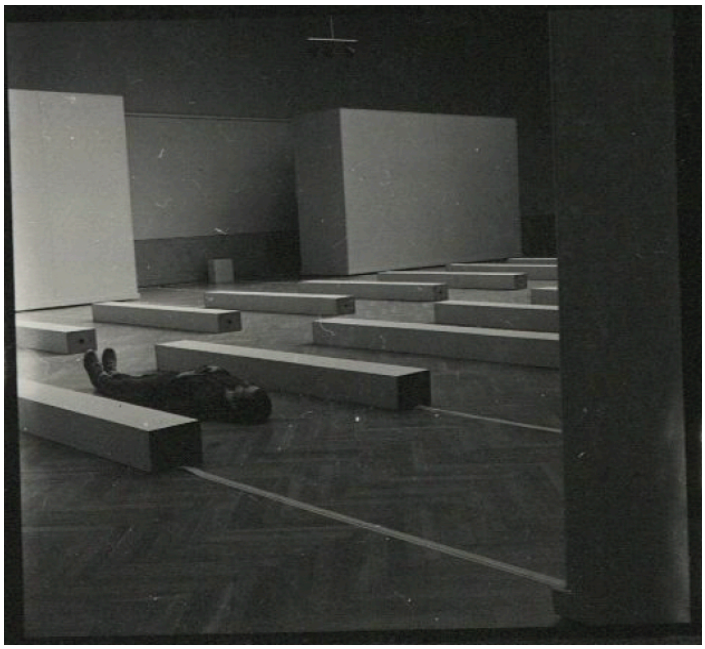
[313] Daniel Lentz, interview with the author, July 23, 2023.

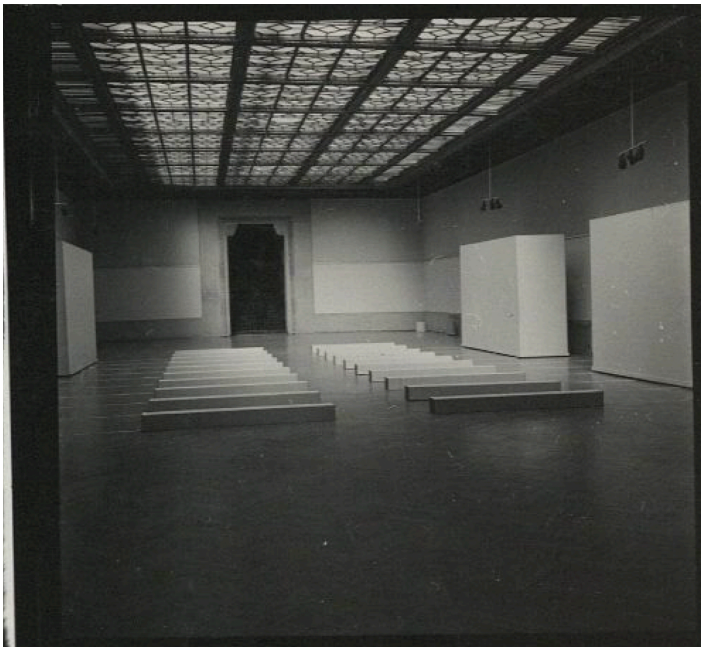
[314] Ibid.

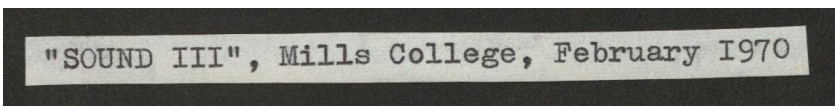
occurred because the performers were not physically present. Lentz was bemused: "You'd think a guy named Oppenheimer would understand time and space. But he didn't."[315] *Air Meal Spatial Delivery* was not simply a stunt. It posed a direct challenge to what counted as performance. What constituted presence? Where did the piece take place: in the plane, in the transmission, or in the concert hall? Could disembodiment itself serve as art? *For The California Time Machine*, these were not abstract questions but practical solutions turned into performance.

[315] Ibid.

Figure 25. Negatives of *Sound III* by Robert Ashley, Wayne Buckley, and Wolfgang Stoerchle in the Mills Art Gallery (1970). "Budd-Lentz-Stoerchle, 1970," *Wolfgang Stoerchle papers*, The Getty Research Institute, 1952–2007, Series II, documentation of artworks, 1968–1975, Box 2, Folder 6.







The California Time Machine lacked access to the concentrated media networks and institutional support systems that helped elevate composers and groups on the East Coast. As Lentz observed, "New York had a much more entrenched media apparatus than the West Coast, and both [Steve] Reich and [Philip] Glass knew how to play it."[316] In 1970 and 1972, the ensemble toured Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, and West Germany, partly out of necessity. For Lentz and his West Coast peers, Europe offered not just performance opportunities but also a kind of validation that was harder to access through the often-overlooked circuits of California experimentalism. His comments point to a broader structural imbalance. Geographic location shaped the material conditions of artistic production and also influenced the mechanisms of historical recognition and canon formation.

However, decentralized geography was not the only factor keeping West Coast composers from broader recognition. This tension came to a head in 1970, when Lentz and *The California Time Machine* joined a cohort of American composers and ensembles, including *The Once Group* and *The Sonic Arts Union*, in signing an open letter denouncing the programming of the Ojai Festival in California under Pierre Boulez's direction. Published in *The Boston Globe*, the letter condemned the festival for excluding American composers entirely, calling it "the same old imperialistic thinking we have had to put up with for years in this country."[317]

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[316] Ibid.

[317] Other composers who supported the letter included Jon Appleton, Larry Austin, David Behrman, Philip Corner, Morton Feldman, Philip Glass, William Moraldo, Gordon Mumma, Pauline Oliveros, Terry Riley, Frederic Rzewski, Michael Sahi, Richard Teitelbaum, James Tenney, Ivan Tcherepnin, David Tudor, and La Monte Young. Robert Ashley and Alvin Lucier, "Music: An 'Un-American' Festival. The Following Open Letter

The authors criticized Boulez for promoting a narrow, outdated vision of contemporary music that ignored the work emerging from American university music departments and experimental circles. Boulez presented four public concerts of early twentieth-century European music, along with two of his own pieces and a work by Stockhausen. His justification, as quoted in the *New York Times*, was that audiences needed to hear early twentieth-century repertoire to be "prepared" for more advanced music. Ashley and Lucier responded sharply: "What the hell is this guy talking about? What are his motives?"[318] Their protest framed Boulez as willfully disconnected from American artistic realities of the time.[319]

This spirit of defiance extended beyond print. Later that year, *The California Time Machine* carried its critique overseas, turning its appearance at Gaudeamus Muziekweek, Rotterdam's annual festival of experimental composition, into an affront to the institutions and postwar European aesthetics that Boulez had come to embody. The 1970 event unfolded as a sequence of actions rather than a conventional concert. After a Boulez sonata, the group opened with a "(fortunately soft) G sharp from a portative

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to Lawrence Morton, Artistic Director of the Ojai (Calif.) Festival, Was Written by the Composers Alvin Lucier and Robert Ashley," *Boston Globe*, June 14, 1970, B60.

[318] Robert Ashley and Alvin Lucier, "Music: An 'Un-American' Festival."

[319] The friction between European prestige and American experimentalism was also felt within CalArts. Michael Byron recalled seeing Stockhausen on campus and asking Lentz who it was. Lentz replied with a malapropism: "Let's just call him tract houses." The misnaming was not a deep critique but a gesture consistent with casual subversion—a measured dismissal of imported authority and an understated nod toward American experimental priorities. As Byron recalled, "He [Lentz] was of the school of 'send European music back where it came from,' and as a young guy I felt the same way. All I was raving about was American music." Michael Byron, interview with author, October 9, 2025.

organ which persisted through the evening," then proceeded through a chain of incongruous acts marked by two recurring elements in their performance style: wine and nudity. In one piece, the ensemble consumed fondue and wine onstage before a performer, likely Stoerchle, dressed as a clown, stripped, and sang "a short French song very badly."[320]

A composition by Lentz titled *Gospel Meeting* (1965), which the composer described as "a piece which will distort your time sense and restore your religious one," was reviewed as "about half an hour of electronic sound gradually rising in pitch and volume until it became painful (in literal, physical fact)," punctuated by spotlights shone directly into the audience's eyes.[321] There was no applause, not after the clown, not after the noise, not even when the performers wandered offstage and left a drone behind like a ghostly calling card. Their methods were seen as crude, but not sublime. One Dutch assistant defended the cacophony by suggesting that the audience's disapproval stemmed from listening "to 20th Century music with 19th Century ears." But as the reviewer concluded, the problem was not temporal. "Its main trouble was rather that we were sitting there with 1970s ears being subjected to a revival of the Dada material which had been relevant in 1917."[322]

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[320] Charles Acton, "A Cradle of Modern Music," *The Irish Times*, October 19, 1970, 11.

[321] Guide to The University of California, Santa Barbara, Arts and Lectures Records. "California Time Machine Intercampus Faculty Artist Exchange, concert, Nov. 19-22, 1969." Box 8. Folder 4; Charles Acton, "A Cradle of Modern Music," *The Irish Times*.

[322] Charles Acton, "A Cradle of Modern Music," *The Irish Times*; The aesthetic divide that was protested in 1970 had deep historical roots. As Amy C. Beal has shown, John Cage and David Tudor's participation in the 1958 Darmstadt Ferienkurse marked an earlier confrontation between American experimentalism and the institutionalized serialism of Boulez, Stockhausen, and Nono. Their lectures and performances introduced

Across these events, *The California Time Machine* treated circumstance as compositional material: theft, travel, institutional refusal, and hostile reception became part of the work rather than obstacles to it. That practice made the group difficult to place within conventional accounts of the avant-garde, since its performances operated through contingency, social friction, and practical improvisation. Yet this same milieu also produced quieter musical consequences. Budd and Lentz's early-1970s turn toward diatonicism shows that the group's disruptions were not opposed to musical beauty or tonal return; they helped create the conditions in which those vocabularies could emerge.

The New Sensuality: *Budd, Lentz, & Stoerchle*

> In the very early '60s, John Cage had an enormous impact on me, but I must say more through his writings and the example of his lifestyle than through his music. He showed us that it was possible to be an artist without selling out to the academy and to go directly into art itself. That was an important heroic posture for almost all American artists at that time.[323]

Cage's importance lay precisely there: not only in specific works, but in a broader model of experimental practice that loosened the authority of the fixed score, elevated performance as an event, and encouraged musicians to organize themselves in more fluid, collective forms. His 1960s collaborations with David Tudor and the Merce

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indeterminacy and performer agency into a milieu dominated by total control catalyzing what Earle Brown later called an "American iconoclastic attitude and the European elitist intellectual organization thing…" Cage's challenge to European authority at Darmstadt thus prefigures the resistance later voiced by younger American composers. Amy C. Beal, *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 94.

[323] Budd quoted in Paul Tingen, "Harold Budd: American Vision: Recording the Luxa Album," *Sound on Sound* (January 1997).

Cunningham Dance Company were central to that shift, helping to legitimate improvisation, indeterminacy, and interdisciplinary performance as viable artistic methods. In that climate, composer-performers increasingly formed ensembles that resembled rock or jazz groups more than traditional chamber organizations. Groups such as the *ONCE Group*, the *Moorman-Paik duo*, the *Sonic Arts Union*, and the *Theatre of Eternal Music*, most of them active in or around New York, embraced varying degrees of improvisation and challenged the authority of the score. As Benjamin Piekut has observed, "Given the manner in which such groups presented and performed music, it makes as much sense to connect them to the Cecil Taylor Unit or the Stooges as to Charles Ives or Arnold Schoenberg."[324] Composer-performers approached music as a collective experiment, rather than a fixed tradition.

Cage's influence, then, was not only compositional. It also helped authorize a mode of practice organized around events, affiliations, and self-formed ensembles. *The California Time Machine* had already given that model a West Coast form. As Lentz began performing more regularly with Budd and Stoerchle, the group gradually shifted to a looser configuration. In its place emerged *Budd, Lentz, & Stoerchle*, a formation whose name recalled *Crosby, Stills & Nash* while recasting the supergroup model within experimental music. Although documentation is sparse and the ensemble did not perform often, this later formation differs from *The California Time Machine,* which functioned more like a repertory group with an occasionally rotating cast and curated

[324] Benjamin Piekut, *Experimentalism Otherwise: The New York Avant-Garde and Its Limits* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), 16; Thom Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music: Technology, Music, and Culture* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 530; Ralf Dietrich, "ONCE and the Sixties," *Sound Commitments: Avant-Garde Music and the Sixties*, ed. Robert Adlington (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 169–186.

programs. *Budd, Lentz, & Stoerchle* operated more as an affiliation of three musicians than as a unified group, traveling throughout the 1970s and presenting their individual work.

The shift from *The California Time Machine* to *Budd, Lentz, & Stoerchle* returns the chapter to Budd and Lentz's first encounter. Although Lentz had already entered Budd's orbit through shared networks and publications, the two composers seem to have met in person around 1969, when Budd accompanied Barney Childs to a conference at UC Santa Barbara. While Childs attended the proceedings, Budd lingered outside eating a sandwich and noticed another figure who seemed similarly detached from the academic scene. When Childs identified him as Daniel Lentz, the name was already familiar: Budd later recalled that he and Lentz had both recently been published in *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde*.[325]

Budd introduced himself directly: "You're Daniel Lentz, and I'm Harold Budd." Lentz replied, "Wow, somebody I know about," and invited him to dinner that night, beginning what Budd later described as one of his closest friendships. That friendship proved consequential not only socially but aesthetically. Budd had already come to regard avant-garde music as "a spent bullet," "dull beyond belief," and no longer vital. Lentz, he recalled, gave that dissatisfaction a name: "post avant-garde music."[326] The term did not

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[325] Frosty, "Harold Budd's Revolutionary Nature," Red Bull Music Academy, June 30, 2017. Budd recalled that he recognized Lentz because they had both appeared in *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde*. See *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde* 3, no. 2, issue 6, ed. Larry Austin, Stanley Lunetta, and Arthur Woodbury (Davis, CA: Composer/Performer Edition, July 1969); Budd, Lentz, and Stoerchle later appeared together in *SOUNDINGS 1*, ed. Peter Garland and John Bischoff (Sylmar, CA: Independent Publication, 1972), 80.

[326] Ibid., Frosty, "Harold Budd's Revolutionary Nature," Red Bull Music Academy, June 30, 2017.

signal a rejection of experimentation, but an attempt to move beyond the mid-century avant-garde, epitomized by figures such as Cage, Boulez, and Stockhausen.

By the early 1970s, that shift was being named through other, sometimes uneasy labels. One of the most telling was "new diatonicism," a catch-all for a turn away from avant-gardism toward harmonic concord and legible tonal reference, and often grouped with terms like "new tonality," "new romanticism," or simply "minimalism."[327] In practice, it functioned more as a provocation than as a unified movement. Childs joked that the "real," "new diatonicism," was not Riley's *In C* or Cage's *Cheap Imitation*, but "string quartets in C major."[328]

Yet the term also circulated beyond such irony. The composer William Albright helped stage an Ann Arbor concert explicitly titled "New Diatonicism" (ca. 1970) that gathered composers "more interested in a diatonic approach to music than a chromatic approach," and that "scandalized the older establishment."[329] Budd picked up the term with pointed understatement. In 1972, he wrote to Childs with a sketch ending in a Landini cadence, the final measure notated in mensural notation: "Here's a snippet of New Diatonism. Knocked out before leaving. I pass it on because it's pretty," adding,

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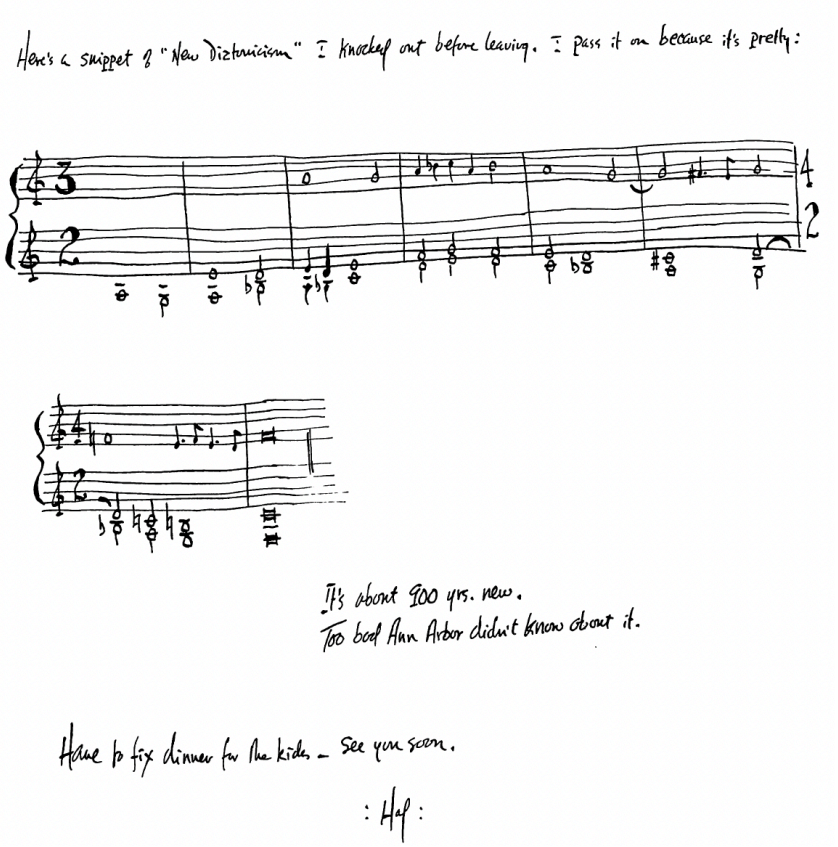
[327] Virginia Anderson, "Introduction" *Interviews with American Composers: Barney Childs in Conversation*, Virginia Anderson, ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2022), 1–14.

[328] "William Albright," *Interviews with American Composers: Barney Childs in Conversation*, Virginia Anderson, ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2022), 28–29.

[329] Albright commented, "it was a very successful concert, a very beautiful presentation of sound. It included *In C*; works of Winsor, Bolcom, Lloyd Rogers, and Douglas Leedy." "William Albright," *Interviews with American Composers: Barney Childs in Conversation*, 28–29.

"It's about 900 yrs new. Too bad Ann Arbor didn't know about it" (Figure 26).[330] By the mid-1970s, Budd and Lentz were naming their work more directly. On a program at Santa Barbara's Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall, they billed their concert "The New Sensuality," a title that effectively locked in their turn toward tonality (Figure 27).[331]

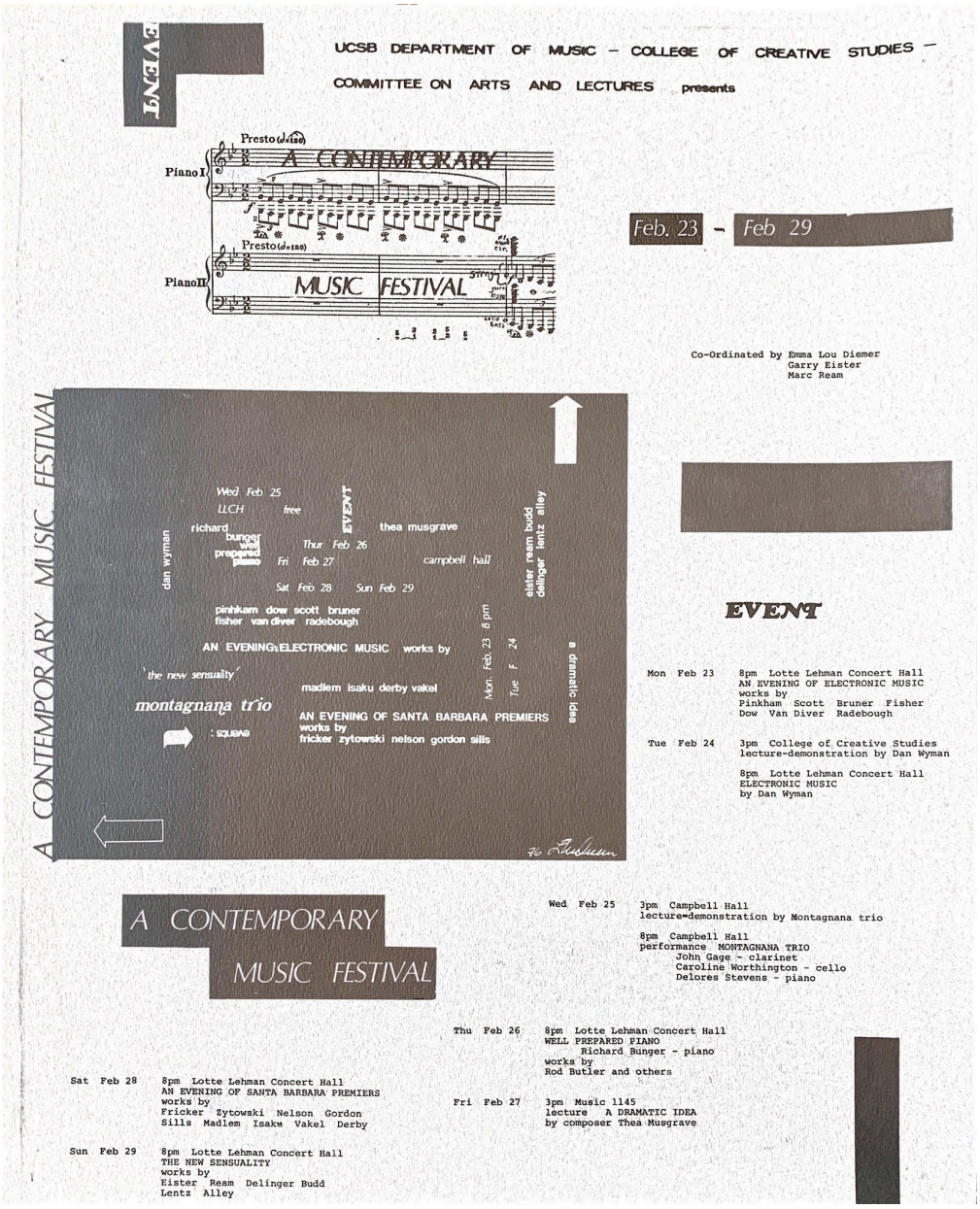
Figure 26. Harold Budd sketch of "New Diatonism." "March 4, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.



[330] "March 4, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[331] A later German analogue appears in Amy C. Beal's account of WDR's 1977 *Musik der Zeit* series, *Neue Einfachheit* ("New Simplicity"), which framed a turn toward "elemental simplification" after serial and post-serial complexity. The context is later than Budd and Lentz's "New Sensuality," but the comparison is suggestive. Amy C. Beal, *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification,* 238–39.

Figure 27. The "New Sensuality" flier, "undated" (ca. 1976). "Committee on Arts and Lectures records," *University Archives*, UC Santa Barbara Library, Special Research Collections, box 2.



One of the few pieces that Budd, Lentz, & Stoerchle performed together, Lentz's *You Can't See the Forest… Music* (1971), was presented during their 1972 Midwest winter tour. If "The New Sensuality" fixed the terms of their shared turn toward tonality, this work shows how that alignment played out in practice, as a rare moment of convergence within an otherwise solo-driven format. Most of their concerts featured separate presentations: Budd's simple tonal piano improvisations, Stoerchle's gestural performance actions, and Lentz's electroacoustics. *You Can't See the Forest… Music*, by contrast, marked one of the few times those approaches came together in a single work. The tour was memorable not only for its venues but also for Budd's first encounter with weather below freezing, which he found nearly intolerable (Figure 28).[332]

[332] Reflecting on that moment, Budd wrote from Los Angeles, overwhelmed by work but committed: "If I can get it done in that time, I'll be back just in time to go to the Midwest with Wolfgang and Dan—and I haven't come up with a piece for that yet… I find myself crippled with tension bordering on terror." "January 19, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974; One documented instance of the ensemble's activity in the Midwest appears in a newspaper advertisement for a performance in the North Hall Auditorium at the University of Wisconsin–River Falls, "February 20, 1972" *Minneapolis Tribune*, Feb 20, 1972, 8D.

Figure 28. *Budd, Lentz, & Stoerchle* performing Lentz's composition, *You Can't See The Forest… Music* in Michigan (ca. 1972). "Budd-Lentz-Stoerchle, 1970," *Wolfgang Stoerchle papers*, The Getty Research Institute, 1952–2007, Series II, documentation of artworks, 1968–1975, Box 6, Folder 7.



"You Can't See the Forest… Music" is scored for three wine glasses, speakers, and tape delay. Lentz used phonemic fragmentation to explore a range of structural and perceptual possibilities. By reducing language to elemental vocal units, he could reconstitute meaning incrementally over the course of a composition. The work begins with a stream of seemingly nonsensical syllables that gradually coalesce into recognizable phrases. The familiarity of the source material enables the listener to anticipate and

mentally reconstruct the text as it unfolds. The effect is one of temporal deferral, a hall of mirrors in which partial reflections of meaning surface before any statement is made explicit. Only in the final moments are the original sayings presented in complete form, fusing vocal presence with tape-mediated process.[333]

By the spring of 1972, Budd and Stoerchle were co-teaching a course at CalArts titled "Performance Work," held Thursday evenings from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. The class gathered an eclectic mix of composers and visual artists, including students like Peter Garland, Michael Byron, and Eugene Bowen, and emphasized collaborative, cross-disciplinary exploration. It focused on "techniques, philosophies, materials and processes, both new and used, of realizing performance-oriented pieces and activities," with attention to rehearsal, planning, execution, and post-performance evaluation. Topics such as risk, monotony, ritual, and environmental aesthetics anchored the course within a broader experimental framework that blurred disciplinary lines.[334]

Budd, Lentz, & Stoerchle show how experimental practice circulated in early-1970s California, carried by institutions, publications, touring, teaching, and friendship. Budd's turn toward diatonicism, tonal clarity, and what he and Lentz later called "The New Sensuality" belonged to that same world. It was neither an isolated stylistic decision nor a retreat from experiment, but part of a broader search for a name for what these composers were doing after the mid-century avant-garde. Chapter Four turns from these networks to the aesthetic position Budd fashioned from them. For Budd, that position

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[333] Daniel Lentz, "You Can't See the Forest… Music" *SOUNDINGS 7–8*, Peter Garland ed. (Danville, CA: The Athenian School, 1973) 148–53.

[334] Alice Wüstenhagen and Fabienne Liptay, eds., *Wolfgang Stoerchle: Success in Failure*, 172.

was not a fuller identification with minimalism or the avant-garde, but a commitment to beauty. The next chapter shows how Victorian aestheticism and the language of "art for art's sake" became central to his understanding of "pretty" music.

Chapter Four: "Pretty" as Protest (1970–72)

> Remember that the most beautiful things in the world are the most useless; peacocks and lilies for instance.[335]

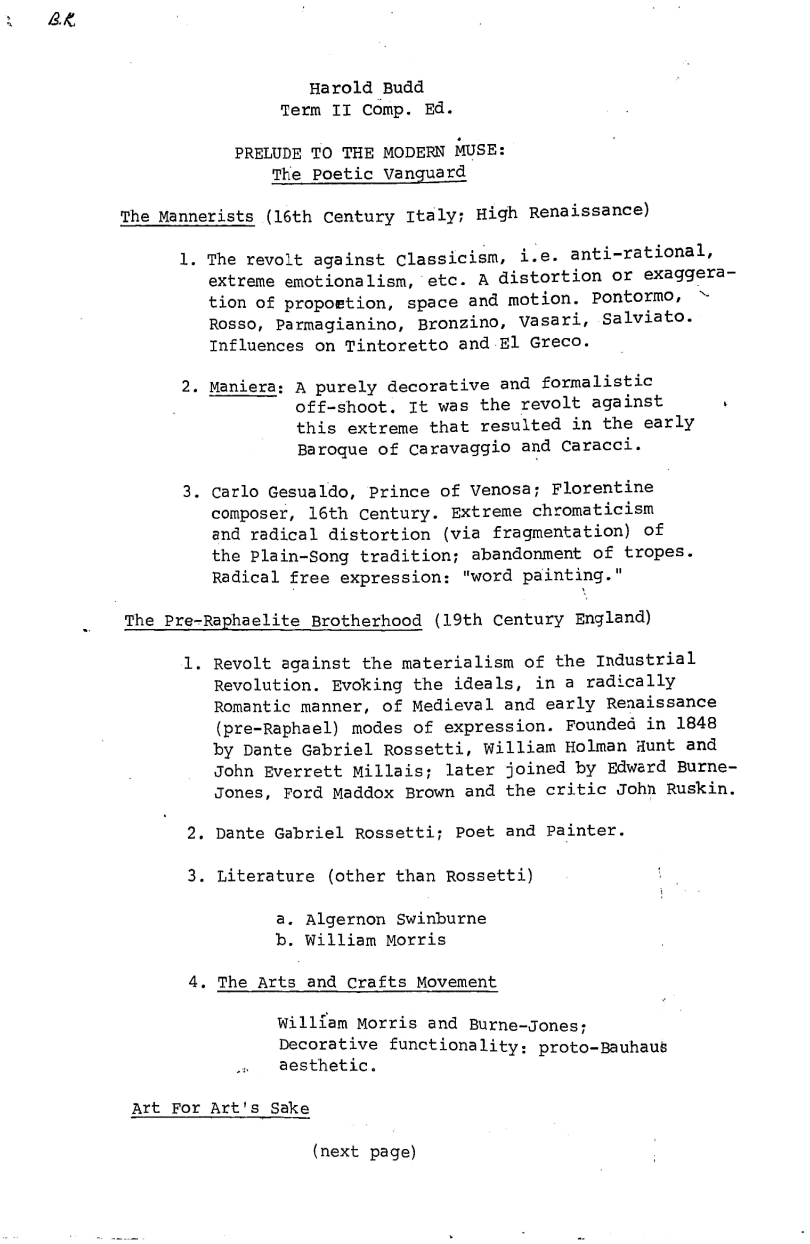
In his early-1970s composition course at the California Institute of the Arts, "Prelude to the Modern Muse: The Poetic Vanguard," Harold Budd adopted a strikingly non-technical approach to teaching music composition. The syllabus reads less like a list of musical skills than a compressed history of European art and Anglo-American literature, ranging from the Mannerist period (1520–1600) through the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (1848–55) and its later offshoots: the Aesthetic Movement (1860s–90s), the Arts and Crafts Movement (1880s–1920s), and Art Nouveau (1890s–1910) (Figure 29/30).

What stands out most in this syllabus is Budd's sustained investment in overlapping Anglo-American art worlds of the nineteenth century, alongside a small number of earlier or adjacent musical figures. Under the heading "The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood," he describes the group as a "revolt against the materialism of the Industrial Revolution," one that returned, in "a radically Romantic manner," to medieval and early Renaissance modes of expression. That heading gathers figures associated with Pre-Raphaelitism and its later orbit, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Edward Burne-Jones, and, in a more design-oriented register, William Morris. John Ruskin enters the same field less as a member of the movement than as one of its major critical defenders, while Morris also points outward toward the Arts and

[335] John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, William C. McKeown, ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2025), 39.

Crafts movement and its commitment to craft, design, and "decorative functionality." In a separate section titled "Art for art's sake," Budd places James McNeill Whistler's *The Peacock Room* beside Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, bringing aestheticism and decadence into the same orbit.

Figure 29. Page 1: Harold Budd, syllabus at California Institute of the Arts (ca. 1970). Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "New Work," *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, 1970–74.



B.K.

Harold Budd
Term II Comp. Ed.

PRELUDE TO THE MODERN MUSE:
The Poetic Vanguard

The Mannerists (16th Century Italy; High Renaissance)

1. The revolt against Classicism, i.e. anti-rational, extreme emotionalism, etc. A distortion or exaggeration of proportion, space and motion. Pontormo, Rosso, Parmagianino, Bronzino, Vasari, Salviato. Influences on Tintoretto and El Greco.

2. Maniera: A purely decorative and formalistic off-shoot. It was the revolt against this extreme that resulted in the early Baroque of Caravaggio and Caracci.

3. Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa; Florentine composer, 16th Century. Extreme chromaticism and radical distortion (via fragmentation) of the Plain-Song tradition; abandonment of tropes. Radical free expression: "word painting."

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (19th Century England)

1. Revolt against the materialism of the Industrial Revolution. Evoking the ideals, in a radically Romantic manner, of Medieval and early Renaissance (pre-Raphael) modes of expression. Founded in 1848 by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt and John Everrett Millais; later joined by Edward Burne-Jones, Ford Maddox Brown and the critic John Ruskin.

2. Dante Gabriel Rossetti; Poet and Painter.

3. Literature (other than Rossetti)

   a. Algernon Swinburne
   b. William Morris

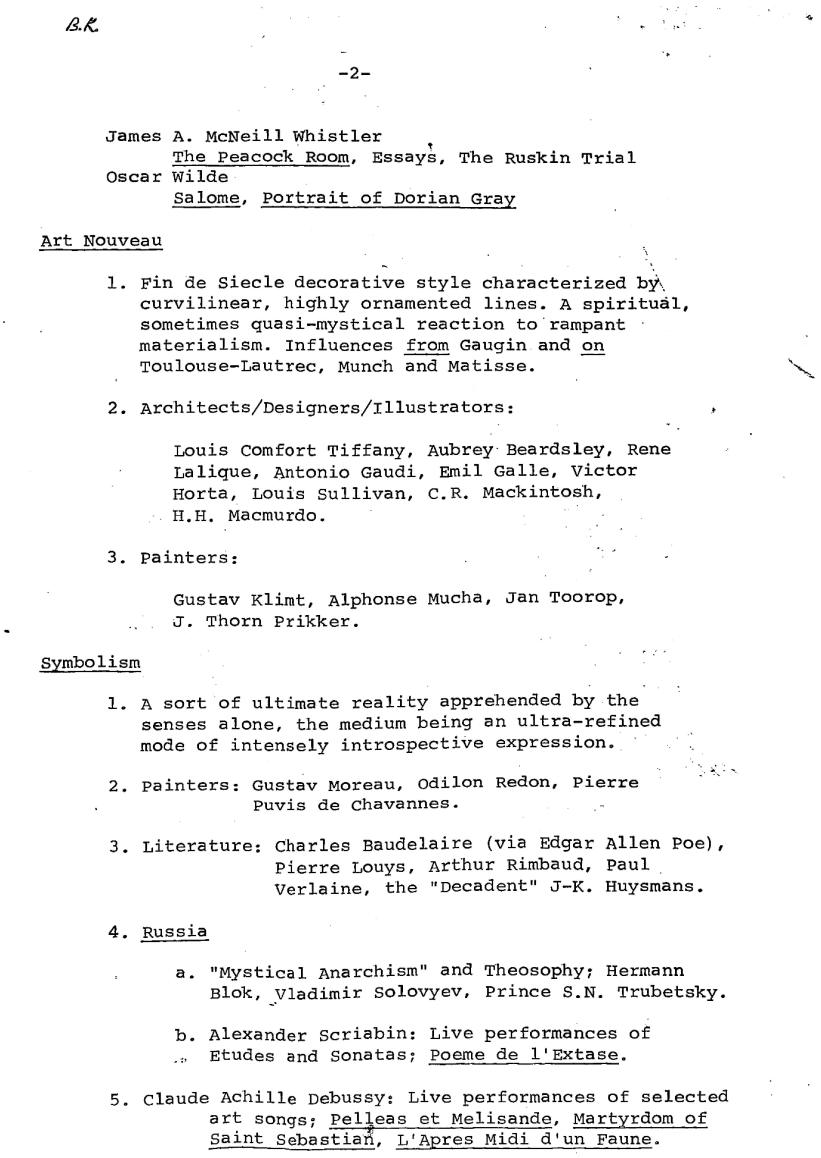
4. The Arts and Crafts Movement

   William Morris and Burne-Jones; Decorative functionality: proto-Bauhaus aesthetic.

Art For Art's Sake

(next page)

Figure 30. Page 2: Harold Budd syllabus at California Institute of the Arts (ca. 1970). Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "New Work," *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, 1970–74.



B.K.

-2-

James A. McNeill Whistler
The Peacock Room, Essays, The Ruskin Trial
Oscar Wilde
Salome, Portrait of Dorian Gray

Art Nouveau

1. Fin de Siecle decorative style characterized by curvilinear, highly ornamented lines. A spiritual, sometimes quasi-mystical reaction to rampant materialism. Influences from Gaugin and on Toulouse-Lautrec, Munch and Matisse.

2. Architects/Designers/Illustrators:

   Louis Comfort Tiffany, Aubrey Beardsley, Rene Lalique, Antonio Gaudi, Emil Galle, Victor Horta, Louis Sullivan, C.R. Mackintosh, H.H. Macmurdo.

3. Painters:

   Gustav Klimt, Alphonse Mucha, Jan Toorop, J. Thorn Prikker.

Symbolism

1. A sort of ultimate reality apprehended by the senses alone, the medium being an ultra-refined mode of intensely introspective expression.

2. Painters: Gustav Moreau, Odilon Redon, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes.

3. Literature: Charles Baudelaire (via Edgar Allen Poe), Pierre Louys, Arthur Rimbaud, Paul Verlaine, the "Decadent" J-K. Huysmans.

4. Russia

   a. "Mystical Anarchism" and Theosophy; Hermann Blok, Vladimir Solovyev, Prince S.N. Trubetsky.

   b. Alexander Scriabin: Live performances of Etudes and Sonatas; Poeme de l'Extase.

5. Claude Achille Debussy: Live performances of selected art songs; Pelleas et Melisande, Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian, L'Apres Midi d'un Faune.

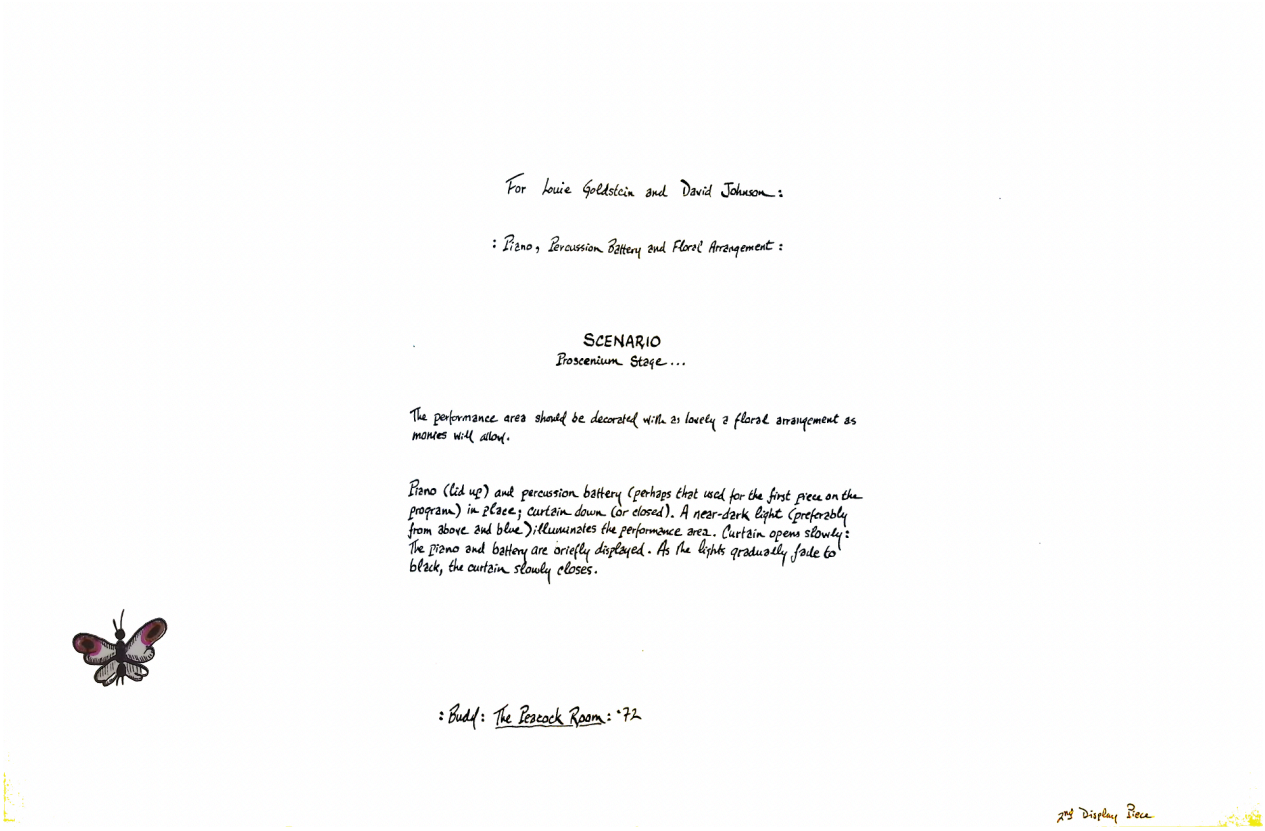
The few composers Budd names in the syllabus, Carlo Gesualdo, Alexander Scriabin, and Claude Debussy, extend this pattern into music without establishing a new technical lineage. Instead, their presence helps frame a problem internal to Budd's own practice. By 1970, the mid-century avant-garde procedures traced in the previous chapters, including open form, text

scores, silence, object-like staging, and extreme reduction, had begun to lose their force for him. He composed relatively little between 1970 and 1971. During that pause, he taught, read, corresponded with Barney Childs, worked alongside Daniel Lentz, and reconsidered the visual references surrounding his music. The syllabus does not explain that change by itself, but it shows one part of the process through which Budd found his way back to composition. By 1972, that process led to works such as *The Peacock Room*, *The Dragonfly Cymbal*, and *Madrigals of the Rose Angel*. The first of these pushed the earlier logic of reduction almost to zero: not toward quieter sound, but toward no sound at all.

Peacocks, Butterflies, and "High Art Uselessness"

The Peacock Room (1972), scored for piano, percussion, and a floral arrangement, presents a visual image of performance in place of performance itself. The score calls for a proscenium stage furnished with "as lovely a floral arrangement as monies will allow," a piano with its lid raised, and a percussion battery in place behind a closed curtain. Under a dim, preferably blue overhead light, the curtain slowly opens to reveal this tableau: the piano standing open, the instruments poised and illuminated as if awaiting players. As the lights gradually fade to black, the curtain closes completely (Figure 31).

Figure 31. Harold Budd, *The Peacock Room* (1972). The University of North Texas, Music Library, *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde*, Box: 4, Folder: 10, 06-051.



For Louie Goldstein and David Johnson:

: Piano, Percussion Battery and Floral Arrangement :

SCENARIO
Proscenium Stage...

The performance area should be decorated with as lovely a floral arrangement as monies will allow.

Piano (lid up) and percussion battery (perhaps that used for the first piece on the program) in place; curtain down (or closed). A near-dark light (preferably from above and blue) illuminates the performance area. Curtain opens slowly: The piano and battery are briefly displayed. As the lights gradually fade to black, the curtain slowly closes.

: Budd: The Peacock Room: '72

3rd Display Piece

No music is played. Instead, *The Peacock Room* presents the piano and percussion as staged objects. Earlier works, such as *Mangus Colorado* (1969), had already begun to treat instruments as visual and theatrical presences. Here, Budd goes further by withholding sound altogether. The instruments are softly flooded with light and prepared to be played, but no performance follows. The result is a work of décor and suspension, one that stops at the threshold where a musical setup becomes a still image.

Budd's *The Peacock Room* takes its title from James McNeill Whistler's *Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room* (1876–77), a Victorian interior in which porcelain, painted surfaces, and design form a single ensemble. Originally made for Frederick Leyland's London dining room to display his collection of Chinese and Japanese blue-and-white porcelain and to frame Whistler's *La Princesse du pays de la porcelaine* (1863–65) above the fireplace, the room was initially designed by architect Thomas Jeckyll before Whistler took control of the project and transformed it into the blue-green and gold interior now known by that name (Figure 32).[336]

The room's decoration also became part of a dispute over payment and artistic control. On the south wall, opposite *La Princesse du pays de la porcelaine*, Whistler added a mural of two peacocks in confrontation: one bird, usually associated with Leyland, appears with coins at its feet and across its breast, while the other, often associated with Whistler, stands apart (Figure 33). After Leyland died in 1892, the room was sold, dismantled, and later purchased by Charles Lang Freer, who reinstalled it in Detroit before leaving it to the Smithsonian. By then, Whistler's room had already shifted from domestic interior to art object. Budd's *Peacock Room* makes a related move in musical terms: it turns instruments away from use and presents them as a staged image. The connection is not one of illustration, but of suspended function. In Budd's piece, the instruments are present, flooded with soft light, and prepared for performance, but they do no work. The piece turns musical equipment into an image and withdraws usefulness before sound can begin.

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[336] Daniel E. Sutherland, *Whistler: A Life for Art's Sake* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 139–40.

Figure 32. James McNeill Whistler, *Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room*, 1876–77, *Princesse du pays de la porcelaine*. Freer Gallery of Art, National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., images courtesy of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art.



Figure 33. James McNeill Whistler, *Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room*, 1876–77, *Art and Money: or, The Story of the Room.* Freer Gallery of Art, National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., images courtesy of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art.



This suspension of use also matches the language Budd used around the time he composed *The Peacock Room*. Writing to his friend David Cope, he claimed "I feel all art to be utterly worthless (no redeeming social values), I'm interested in that what I do is pretty, ('Terrifying,' 'Gripping,' 'Sensitive,' 'Relaxing,' 'Hypnotic,' 'Spiritual' all to the side for a moment), an existential prettiness; a kind of High Art Uselessness…"[337] Rather than standing apart from earlier precedent, this stance aligns him, however obliquely, with the nineteenth-century discourse that gathered around Whistler.

[337] Harold Budd to David Cope, *New Directions in Music* (Dubuque, IA: WM. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1971), 114.

Writing in the 1860s and 1870s, the English critic Sidney Colvin had already singled out Whistler, Burne-Jones, and others as exemplifying a new commitment to the "perfection of forms and colors" as "the prime object of pictorial art," displacing narrative, moral, or topical subject matter as the work's organizing principle, a commitment designated from 1868 by the phrase "Art for art's sake" and subsequently labeled "Aesthetic."[338] A popular expression in Whistler's day, "Art for art's sake" effectively made beauty itself the ultimate justification for art, turning aesthetic value into its own sufficient reason.[339] As Elizabeth Prettejohn has noted, however, the slogan functioned less as a prescriptive theory than as a "non-theory" or "anti-theory," signaling an openness to specifically pictorial beauty, perhaps not conventional, maybe not ideal, in whatever form that beauty might take.[340] Budd's avowal of "High Art Uselessness" and his silent *Peacock Room* do not simply echo Whistler's interior from afar; they actively resituate the older Aesthetic vocabulary, "Art for art's sake," within a "post-avant-garde" musical context.[341] In effect, Budd supplies his own gloss on what his *Peacock Room* is doing: it offers a display and a staged image in place of any redeeming function, social or

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[338] Melody Barnett Deusner, *Aesthetic Painting in Britain and America: Networks, Systems, and the Aesthetic Object* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 10.

[339] Sutherland, *Whistler: A Life for Art's Sake*, vii.

[340] Elizabeth Prettejohn cited in Barnett Deusner, *Aesthetic Painting in Britain and America: Networks, Systems, and the Aesthetic Object*, 10.

[341] By "post-avant-garde," I mean the position traced in Chapters One through Three: Budd's earlier procedures, including open form, text scores, silence, drones, staged events, and extreme reduction, remained available but no longer provided a sufficient basis for composition. In this context, "pretty" names the term Budd used for his next move: not a rejection of experiment, but a way of redirecting it through tonality, softness, and image.

sonic, replicating Whistler's aesthetic without itself committing to explicit commentary, even if subsequent viewers and commentators are inclined to read it interpretively.

Budd's syllabus returns directly to this history. Whistler reappeared on his syllabus under the heading "Art for art's sake." He emerged as the embattled painter at the center of a fascinating moment in legal history: the libel trial of the English critic John Ruskin, a courtroom dispute over the value and limits of aesthetic judgment. In 1878, Ruskin was sued by Whistler over a passage in Ruskin's publication *Fors Clavigera* that condemned Whistler's painting *Nocturne in Black and Gold* as the artist's "ill-educated conceit… nearly approached the aspect of wilful imposture" and that he "never expected a coxcomb to ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face."[342] The jury ultimately decided that, however honest Ruskin's opinion might have been, his language exceeded the bounds of "fair and bona fide criticism," finding for Whistler but awarding only the contemptuous sum of one farthing in damages.[343] As Linda Merrill emphasized, this odd spectacle of a star critic technically losing a libel action became "a critical hour in the evolution of modern art," staging in court the limits of interpretive authority at precisely the moment when Whistler's nearly "abstract" nocturnes, and the

[342] Two hundred guineas, 210 pounds in 1877, would be roughly equivalent to about $35,000–$40,000 in today's U.S. dollars, a very substantial fee. John Ruskin quoted in Linda Merrill, *A Pot of Paint: Aesthetics on Trial – Whistler v. Ruskin* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 47.

[343] A farthing was the smallest unit of British currency, equal to one-quarter of a penny (1/960 of a pound sterling), and by the late nineteenth century it had only token value, underscoring the triviality of the damages awarded. Merrill, *A Pot of Paint: Aesthetics on Trial – Whistler v. Ruskin*, 194–202.

aestheticist claim that paintings are arrangements of color rather than moral narratives, were beginning to reshape what art could be.[344]

Although a pyrrhic victory, Whistler publicly cast the outcome as a "great triumph" and later turned the farthing into a symbolic trophy in his book *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (1890), ending his account of the case with an image of his butterfly monogram clutching the contemptuous coin beneath the caption, "Verdict for plaintiff. Damages one farthing" (Figure 34).[345] In place of legal humiliation, the butterfly holding the farthing stages a sly reversal, converting hostile judgment into a self-authored emblem and asserting the artist's right to define the meaning of his own defeat. Budd's practice in the early 1970s places him in dialogue with this maneuver.

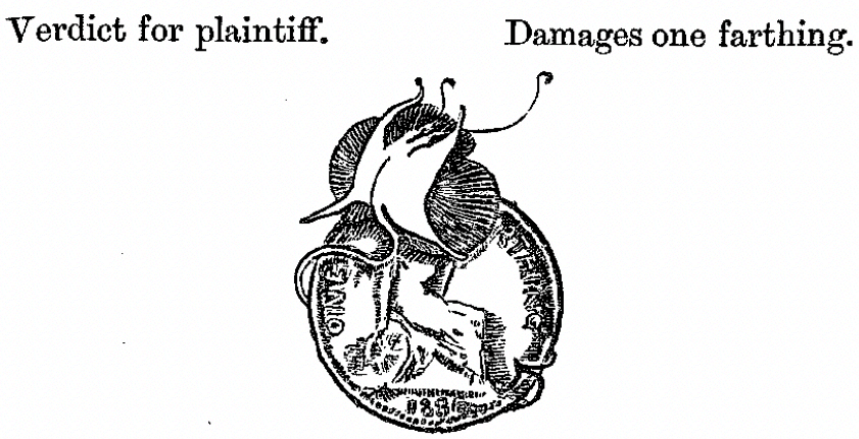
Budd treated the Ruskin trial, under the heading "Art for art's sake," as a key episode in the history of aestheticism. *The Peacock Room* registers the same allegiance on the page. In the lower left corner of the score, he placed a butterfly, not a monogram but a clear allusion to Whistler's emblem. The image suggests an identification with Whistler's effort to turn attack into a sign of artistic self-possession. In Budd's case, that gesture was aimed less at one critic than at the expectations surrounding avant-garde composition itself.

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[344] Merrill, *A Pot of Paint: Aesthetics on Trial – Whistler v. Ruskin*, 6.

[345] James McNeill Whistler, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (New York: John W. Lovell Co., 1890), 19.

Figure 34. James McNeill Whistler, "Verdict for plaintiff. Damages one farthing." From *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (London, 1890).



Budd's *Candy-Apple Revision* (1969–70) sharpens that point. Budd described the piece as "nothing more [than] the D-flat major chord," set down not in a conventional score but on "a little piece of red paper about 4" x 5"" bearing only the words "Candy Apple Revision, D-flat Major, Harold Budd May 1970."[346] For Budd, the work was less a composition in any traditional sense than a defiant gesture, one intended, as he put it, to "[fly] in the face of what I thought at the time—and still do, actually—was a very moribund practice of avant-garde music." He wanted to make something "short, to the point, no analysis needed, that was absolutely devastatingly lovely, and then walk away from it."[347] That stance was already provoking resistance around 1970: *Black Flowers* was remembered as so sparse and quiet that "half the auditorium" booed, while a review

[346] Mark Prendergast, "Harold Budd, Interview: The Sound-Painted World of Harold Budd," *Sound on Sound*, December 1986.

[347] Thom Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music: Pioneers in Technology and Composition* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 236.

dismissed *The Oak of the Golden Dreams* as "little more than a euphonious waste of time."[348]

"Pretty" Music in Blue: *The Dragonfly Cymbal*

When Budd returned to composition, he placed tonal music at the center of his practice, a move that would define the rest of his career. Rather than aligning himself with minimalism or with the more austere strains of the American avant-garde, he described what he was doing simply as "pretty" music, a phrase meant both to sidestep genre labels and to affirm a deliberate investment in beauty.[349] Outside of *The Candy-Apple Revision* (1970), *The Dragonfly Cymbal* (1972) is one of Budd's earliest pieces to adopt an unapologetically simple tonality, yet that simplicity is continually redirected toward a suspended, dreamlike state (Figure 35).

[348] On *Black Flowers*, *Candy-Apple Revision*, and *The Oak of the Golden Dreams* as late-1960s reductionist works and as contested objects within Budd's early CalArts reception, see Chapters One and Three.

[349] Steve Reich's short essay "Beautiful/Ugly" is useful here because he argues that "beautiful" and "ugly" are never neutral descriptors but depend on who is speaking and on the aesthetic and political commitments those words carry. Budd's "pretty" works in a related but more local way: it marks a move away from the mid-century avant-garde procedures traced in Chapters One through Three and toward the beauty, tonality, softness, and historical reference examined in this chapter, as well as the devotional and jazz-inflected materials examined in Chapter Five. Its politics lie less in an explicit program than in the values it refuses and the affiliations it makes possible. Steve Reich, "Beautiful/Ugly" (1994), *Writings on Music, 1965–2000*, Paul Hillier ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 185–86.

Figure 35. Harold Budd, *The Dragonfly Cymbal* (1972). Peter Garland (Soundings) *Budd, Harold*, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 91.5.



Rather than dwelling on a single static sonority like the Db of *Candy-Apple*, *Dragonfly* articulates a compact chord progression. The key signature is Eb Major, and the sequence runs Eb13 (I13), D7 (VII7), D7b5 (VIIø7), Eb#9 (I#9), Bb13 (V13), and then back to the home key of Eb13 (I13). At the broadest level, the frame is conventional: an I–V–I motion softened by added tones on both tonic and dominant. Within that frame, however, Budd introduces altered leading-tone harmonies that shape the passage less through functional propulsion than through local inflection. The progression suggests "home – tension – departure – return," but its effect depends less on directional harmonic motion than on the shifting treatment of F#. In the two D chords, F# marks the strongest point of instability in Eb#9, it is absorbed into the tonic itself, where it presses directly against G as an internal dissonance. By the time the music reaches Bb13, the dominant no longer sounds forceful or goal-driven, but relaxed and suspended. The

return to Eb6, therefore, feels less like a resolution after conflict than like a return to a sonority that has been lightly unsettled from within. In miniature, the passage anticipates traits that would later become more pronounced in the Brian Eno collaborations: a stable diatonic foundation, jazz-inflected extensions, and chords treated less as vehicles of harmonic destination than as states of sonorous suspension.

Marked "Languid (quarter note equals 80)," the seven-bar score presents a straightforward arpeggiated bass in Eb. At the same time, the right hand sits almost entirely on a single C, audibly prominent, but repeated so consistently that it behaves more like a pedal point than a developing melodic line. The repeated C is lightly syncopated against the left hand, anticipating the delayed, off-the-grid attacks of Budd's later improvisations, yet the notation and performance indications work consistently against forward motion: *una corda* throughout, recurring *ritardando*, and dynamics that rarely rise above *p*, repeatedly sinking into *pp* and *ppp* under instructions such as *più pp*, "quieter," and "distant." The page's visual disposition intensifies this sense of withdrawal. The first three and last three measures, in 4/4, frame a narrow 2/4 bar, so that the score visually outlines the body of a dragonfly. Other visual details extend the decorative logic: the title appears in soft gray calligraphy, flanked by two small blue flowers, while the space where a composer's signature might normally appear is occupied instead by a tiny insect figure, perhaps a petite homage to Whistler.[350]

[350] Although the comparison is not one of direct influence, Budd's page layout invites a limited comparison with Feldman's notation as a visual field. Boutwell is useful here not for Feldman's later rug or asymmetry discourse, but for his account of notation as part of a work's visual and formal aesthetic, (see Chapter One). Brett N. Boutwell, *A Static Sublime: Morton Feldman and the Visual, 1950–1970* (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2006), 130–89. On the later association between Feldman's notational style and the asymmetrical patterning of Oriental rugs, Enrique Juncosa notes

The first performance context changes how *Dragonfly* reads. On January 22, 1973, the piece appeared on a *Monday Evening Concert* (*MEC*) program at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's Bing Theater alongside a characteristic mix of recent experimental and modernist works: Carleton Gamer's *Piano Raga Music* (1962–70) for solo piano; John Cage's *TV Köln* (1958) for solo piano; Earle Brown's open-instrumentation cycle *Folio* (1952–53); Barney Childs's prepared-piano work *37 Songs* (1971); Olly Wilson's *Piece for Piano and Electronic Sounds* (1970) for piano and tape; Claude Debussy's *Syrinx* (1912) for solo flute; Henri Lazarof's *Cadence V* (1970) for solo flute, tape, and chamber ensemble; and Alexandre Hrisanide's *M.P. 5* (1966), a quintet for piano, tenor saxophone, violin, viola, and cello.[351]

Within the same concert, Budd's presence was, in effect, split across two works. Pianist Richard Bunger performed *Dragonfly* alongside another Budd work, *Piano Piece* (1972), so that the miniature unfolded within a second, more overtly conceptual frame. In a KPFA broadcast with Charles Amirkhanian on March 17, 1973, Bunger explained that *Piano Piece* is essentially a separate text or installation work whose sole instruction is that "a piano is displayed blue, if possible."[352] For the *MEC* performance, this meant

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that "the impact of Oriental rugs to Feldman's music is a recurring theme throughout the texts" and that Bunita Marcus draws "a direct relationship between Feldman's own notational style and the inherent characteristics of the rugs themselves." Enrique Juncosa, "Foreword," *Vertical Thoughts: Morton Feldman and the Visual Arts* (Dublin: Irish Museum of Modern Art, 2010), 4–5.

[351] Jonathan Hepfer, "*MEC* Complete Chronology: 1939–2020," *Monday Evening Concerts*.

[352] Charles Amirkhanian, "The Well-Prepared Piano by Richard Bunger," radio broadcast, KPFA-FM, May 17, 1973, audio, *Other Minds Audio Archive*, Internet Archive, track: Richard Bunger playing Harold Budd's *The Dragonfly Cymbal*, 16:20–19:20.

leaving a grand piano onstage and open, flooding it with dim blue light, and playing an electric piano elsewhere on the stage. Within that environment, Bunger performed *The Dragonfly Cymbal* on the electric piano and characterized it as "an homage to the beauty of a piano, both for its sound and for its visual aspects . . . quite short but very pretty," adding that Budd is "one of the few contemporary composers who wouldn't mind people talking about his pretty pieces . . . he really does write pretty pieces."[353] The premiere thus reworks a device already central to Budd's late-1960s practice. As Chapter One shows, *Mangus Colorado* and *Vittorio* likewise stage their objects of sound through light. Here, however, the blue-lit concert grand is not the source of the sound but its visual surrogate, while a modest electric piano carries the piece. The result is a more explicit split between display and function.

The page invites reading both visually and musically, placing the notated miniature alongside a title design, flowers, calligraphy, and an insect-like monogram. These graphic elements belong to the visual vocabulary Budd had begun to assemble in his CalArts syllabus. In the unit on Art Nouveau, he identifies a fin-de-siècle language of curving line, plant forms, animal motifs, and designed objects through figures such as Aubrey Beardsley, Victor Horta, René Lalique, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, and Louis Comfort Tiffany. Yet the score does not reproduce Art Nouveau's visual abundance. Its page remains spare, using the dragonfly, flowers, calligraphy, and insect-like signature as selective references to that visual world rather than adopting its style in full.

In Art Nouveau jewelry and metalwork, insects became one of the most frequent animal motifs. Clare Phillips notes that insects were "the most frequently used theme

[353] Ibid.

from the animal world" in Art Nouveau jewelry, marking a shift from earlier uses of jeweled insects as small additions to floral designs.[354] Around 1900, designers increasingly treated insects as primary forms, rendering wings, eyes, bodies, and surface patterns with close attention. Jules Michelet's *L'Insecte* (1858) had already framed insect anatomy as a resource for designers, describing the horse-fly's eye as "a mosaic of jewels" and the cicala's wings as marked with "peacock's eyes." Phillips argues that Michelet's text became more usable by 1900, when new enameling techniques allowed designers to imagine insect bodies as models for jewelry and metalwork.[355]

Dragonflies held a special place in that repertoire because they brought together natural form, fragile structure, translucence, and light. Their veined wings suited *plique-à-jour*, a stained-glass-like technique in which translucent enamel is held within a metal framework. Their long bodies and wings also lent themselves to linear design. Phillips links the motif to Japanese art, where dragonflies and damselflies often appear as calligraphic silhouettes, and to Judith Gautier's *Poèmes de la libellule* (1885).[356] Lalique's dragonfly and damselfly jewelry pushed the motif toward shimmer, metamorphosis, and erotic hybrid form, while Tiffany's dragonfly lamps and jewelry emphasized glass,

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[354] Clare Phillips, "Jewellery and the Art of the Goldsmith," *Art Nouveau 1890–1914*, Paul Greenhalgh, ed. (London: V&A Publications, 2000), 244.

[355] Phillips discusses Jules Michelet's *L'Insecte* (1858) in relation to Art Nouveau jewelry, noting Michelet's descriptions of the horse-fly's eye and the cicala's wings as models for jeweled and enameled design. See Phillips, "Jewellery and the Art of the Goldsmith," 244.

[356] On René Lalique's dragonfly and damselfly jewelry, including the dragonfly-woman corsage at the 1900 *Exposition Universelle*, see Charlotte Ashby, *Art Nouveau: Art, Architecture and Design in Transformation* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021), 138–40.

illumination, and refracted color.[357] Budd's use of the dragonfly draws from this field of associations, but in a much reduced form.

The comparison, therefore, remains limited. Budd's dragonfly lacks the visual ornateness of Lalique jewelry or Tiffany glass. It appears instead as a reduced emblem placed beside a seven-bar score. Budd is not imitating Art Nouveau so much as drawing on a visual world in which insects, flowers, line, light, and small-scale beauty carried artistic value. That context helps explain his choice of the dragonfly without turning the score into an Art Nouveau replica. Musically, *The Dragonfly Cymbal* is also more than a simple return to major-key tonality. Its Eb frame is unsettled by added tones, altered dominant sonorities, and chromatic inflections that loosen functional direction without abandoning tonal reference. This is where "pretty" becomes a compositional position: Budd treats tonal beauty as sufficient, but keeps it slight, suspended, and open to modal inflection.[358] The opening carries into the next section, where *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* expands these small harmonic deviations into a larger vocal and historically inflected form.

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[357] Tiffany's dragonfly lamps and jewelry are discussed in Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, "Louis Comfort Tiffany and New York," in *Art Nouveau 1890–1914*, ed. Paul Greenhalgh (London: V&A Publications, 2000), 407–8.

[358] Paula Bethsebe later recalled the dragonfly as Budd's recurring "symbol" and associated it retrospectively with "Art Deco," a suggestive remark that confirms the emblem's decorative force without fixing its precise historical source or stylistic genealogy. Her recollection is useful less as definitive evidence of authorial intent than as testimony that such motifs had an ongoing place in Budd's visual imagination. Author interview with Paula Bethsebe, August 5, 2022.

"Old Music, New Ears": *Madrigals of the Rose Angel*

"We can be free to go back to old music and listen with new ears. And, guess what? It's lovely!" Budd exclaimed to Barney Childs in 1973.[359] With visual and literary lineages already rerouting his imagination, Budd turned to the Mannerist period and, in particular, Renaissance repertoires. He described giving himself "a crash course in Mannerist aesthetics," and cast his teaching at CalArts as a kind of traffic between disciplines: he tried to steer music students toward Michelangelo and Pontormo while pulling painting students toward Gesualdo.[360] That cross-disciplinary orientation also appears in his correspondence. Around the early 1970s, Budd occasionally employed drop capitals modeled on Medieval and early modern manuscript conventions (Figure 36).[361] The same concern with inscription carries into his scores, where decorative initials, calligraphic lettering, and carefully spaced notation make the page more than a neutral container for musical information.[362]

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[359] "October 27," (ca. 1973) Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

[360] "January 21," (ca. 1974), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

[361] "August 30, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[362] Such attention to inscription was not unique to Budd: composers have often treated the handwritten score as a site of visual design, with Lou Harrison a prominent example. Harrison's interest in calligraphy was shaped in part by Lloyd Reynolds, especially through italic calligraphy and Chancery Cursive. Budd's scores show a comparable concern with the visual form of inscription.

Figure 36. Harold Budd, decorative drop capitals modeled on early modern manuscript practices. *Barney Childs Collection*; Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "August 30, 1973," *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974

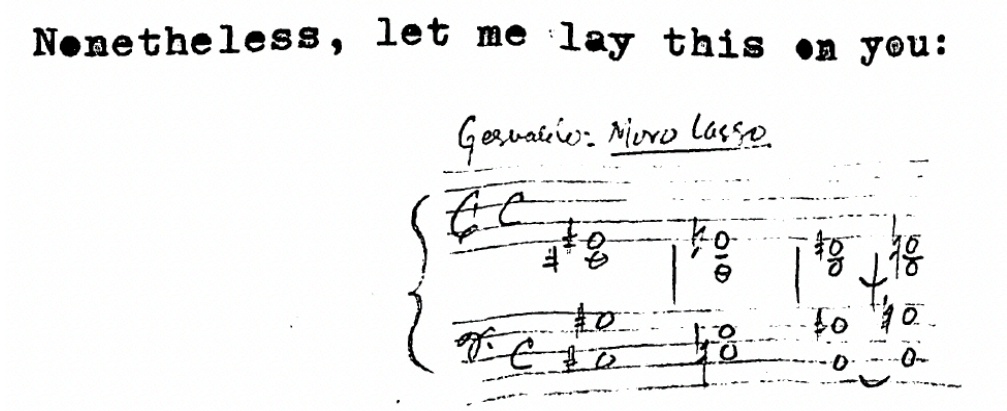


Budd praised Giovanni Gabrieli and, especially, Claudio Monteverdi as "the greatest of our tradition," and gravitated toward composers writing before common practice tonality congealed, above all, Carlo Gesualdo.[363] Gesualdo's madrigals and sacred works, written around the turn of the seventeenth century (ca. 1566–1613), are marked by extreme chromaticism, abrupt harmonic shifts, and frequent departures from expected cadential patterns, propelled by third-related, mediant-leaning motion, qualities that place them between modal practice and later tonal organization. When Budd turned to *"Moro, lasso, al mio duolo"*, a shockingly chromatic five-voice madrigal by Gesualdo published in his *Sixth Book of Madrigals* (*Madrigali a cinque voci, Libro sesto*, 1611), he did so with a striking mixture of analysis and, at the same time, a deliberate refusal of analysis (Figure 37). The madrigal is unusual in opening with a seven-bar, largely homophonic

[363] "January 21," (ca. 1974) *Barney Childs Collection*. Budd recalled hearing madrigals and medieval music "for the first time" at Los Angeles City College and noted that Ernst Krenek "used to come by and conduct things," Vincent Plush, "Harold Budd," *Major Figures in American Music, Oral History of American Music, in the Music Library of Yale University* (May 3, 1983), 26.

cadential block that wanders by mediant turns, C#M–Am–BM–GM–GM–EM7– Am, and does not project the mode in which the work ultimately closes. Sketching a piano reduction of this part, Budd framed the passage not as a musicological curiosity or a harmonic problem to be solved, but as something to be laid on the listener, an expressive fact rather than a progressive developmental argument, and one that resists being assimilated to narratives of innovation, influence, or stylistic progress.[364]

Figure 37. Harold Budd, sketch of a piano reduction to the opening measures to Carlo Gesualdo's five-voice Madrigal *Moro, lasso, al mio duolo* (1611). Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "January 21," (ca. 1974), *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.



This way of approaching *Moro, lasso,* as an expressive event rather than a stylistic placement problem stands in productive tension with an analytical framework developed by Glenn Watkins. Watkins demonstrates that Gesualdo's most chromatically intense madrigals are not acts of harmonic caprice but are grounded in what he calls a

[364] Harold Budd also sketched two measures from Carlo Gesualdo's keyboard work *Gagliarda del Principe di Venosa I* (ca. 1585). "January 21" (ca. 1974), *Barney Childs Collection*. The excerpt points to Budd's interest in Gesualdo's chromatic language and in the expressive harmonic procedures associated more broadly with late Renaissance mannerism.

"conservative but sure control of the contrapuntal element," emphasizing continuity with late sixteenth-century practice even at moments of extreme dissonance.[365] At the same time, Watkins cautions against isolating *Moro lasso* as representative norms. Heard on its own, the madrigal risks appearing anomalous; heard within the Sixth Book as a whole, its chromatic intensity gains meaning through contrast with surrounding works that are markedly more restrained and conventional in style.[366]

From this perspective, *Moro, lasso* does not announce a new harmonic language so much as crystallize a deliberately bounded expressive posture. Budd effectively arrives at a comparable conclusion, though he articulates it in different terms, framing Gesualdo and the madrigal not as innovation but as a "parenthetical" poetics: that he "steps outside of time" while remaining "within the normal framework of the materials used by nearly everyone else."[367] His response does not so much contradict Watkins's view as redirect its emphasis. While Watkins situates the madrigal within a carefully calibrated collection and a coherent compositional practice, Budd seizes on the exact condition of constraint to resist hearing the work as part of a developmental arc. The fact that its extremity arises from shared materials, voices, counterpoint, and inherited forms allows Budd to hear it not as innovation or precursor, but as an expressive concentration held in suspension: technically grounded, yet resistant to teleological explanation.[368]

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[365] Glenn Watkins, *Gesualdo: The Man and His Music*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 210.

[366] Watkins, *Gesualdo: The Man and His Music*, 303.

[367] "January 21," (ca. 1974), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*.

[368] A similar distinction appears in Budd's response to Tenney's *Tone Roads West* Ives concert, discussed in Chapter Two. Budd admitted that he was not "the world's greatest

That distinction provides a useful pivot to Budd's own composing. Budd treats expressive intensity less as evidence of historical advance than as something that can be sustained within constraint, and in 1972, he began to build pieces accordingly. In a subsequent work, he combines the Db improvisational premise of *The Candy-Apple Revision* with the notated pacing and chordal procedures that echo those of *The Dragonfly Cymbal*. He titled the resulting piece *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* (Figure 38). Budd gave it the subtitle "Songs without Words," a formulation that appears to nod, however indirectly, to Felix Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte* (1829–45). Budd recalled that when he started composing, he "came back like a tornado"; that in writing the piece, he "virtually forgot everything" he had done before, realizing he "was not the same person" he "was ever going to be again."[369]

Commissioned by the University of South Florida, Tampa, Music Department, *Madrigals* received its premiere on November 17, 1972, as part of the Florida Center for the Arts' Music Department "1972–73 Series for Traditional, Contemporary and Experimental Music." The premiere took place on the "Orchestra for the New Repertory" program conducted by Lukas Foss at the University Theatre.[370] Other works

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living fan of Ives" and rejected "Ives' pioneering language" as an adequate explanation of value, insisting instead, "tell me about those two songs!" In both cases, Budd separates historical innovation from the effect of particular works. With Ives, he values the songs that affect him rather than the claim of priority; with Gesualdo, he hears *Moro, lasso* less as a precursor to later chromaticism than as a work that intensifies inherited materials from within.

[369] Vincent Plush, "Harold Budd," *Major Figures in American Music,* 46.

[370] Budd later recalled that Foss performed one of his early text composition, *Lovely Thing* (1969) at SUNY Buffalo, a process piece whose instructions jokingly supplied Budd's telephone number for "spiritual advice" if the performer was "in doubt." Foss reportedly called to ask which chord to use, and Budd recommended Db major. Harold Budd,

included Cage's *Cheap Imitation*, Hilton Kean Jones's *It Seems So Quiet*, Varèse's *Offrandes*, and Xenakis's *Anaktoria*; the program also names Elizabeth Wranche as soprano soloist.[371] Yet the performance also revealed a problem that would shape Budd's later practice. After receiving a tape of the premiere, Budd was appalled by the result. The experience pushed him toward greater personal control over performance, including his decision to learn and perform the piano part himself, a shift that, among other influences, helped move him toward piano improvisation by the mid-1970s.[372]

The ensemble version of *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* is scored for female chorus, harp, celeste, electric piano, and percussion, but the source examined here is a piano-and-voice arrangement. That distinction is important because the reduction preserves the work's harmonic plan, vocal writing, and basic pacing while leaving the full ensemble color partly out of view. The work unfolds in three sections: "Rossetti Noise,"

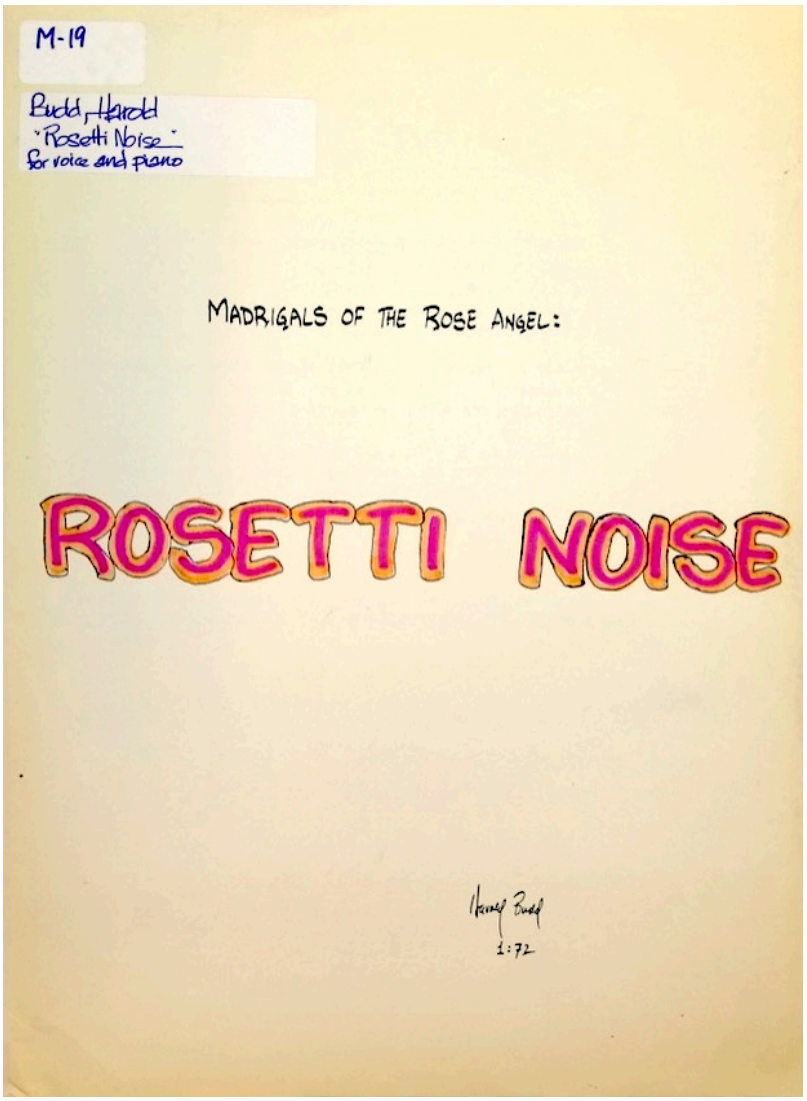
"Lecture by Harold Budd," November 22, 1985, video recording, 41:50, *USC Thornton School of Music Records*, University of Southern California, USC Libraries, Special Collections, 26:50–27:40; The *Madrigals* connection to Foss and The University of South Florida Music Department was made through Larry Austin at UC Davis, "October 31, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[371] Grant Donaldson, "Foss, Oliveira Open USF Concerts," *The Oracle* (University of South Florida), 1972–73 Series for Traditional, Contemporary and Experimental Music" (concert listing/advertisement), November 16, 1972, 5.

[372] Author interview with Terrence Budd, November 11, 2021; In Budd's own words he mentioned of the concert, "I remember there was a performance conducted by Lukas Foss in America. I naïvely thought, "Well, it's written down, just go and do it. You read it." When I heard the tape of that performance I was so appalled that I decided that the only way I can protect myself was to take complete responsibility for it myself. That meant learning to play the part that everyone else was fucking up horribly." Frosty, "Interview: Harold Budd The LA Composer Recalls a Rebellious Youth, Army Buddy Albert Ayler, Wooing Mark Rothko and his Path to the Beautiful Beyond;" See Chapter Five.

"The Crystal Garden," and "Coda." In this source, Budd's notation often reads like a lead sheet, poised between a fully determinate score and guided improvisation. He specifies the harmonies, gestures, and general pacing, but leaves aspects of duration, coordination, and continuity to be shaped in performance. At the level of overall design, the piece follows an AABAC form that loosely recalls the proportional logic of a jazz standard, although it concludes with a tag-like extension rather than a conventional return.

Figure 38. Harold Budd, cover page to "Rossetti Noise" (1972). The University of North Texas, Music Library, *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde*, Box: 4, Folder 10: M-19.



In the piano-and-voice arrangement, "Rossetti Noise" opens at a modest tempo (eighth note = 168) with an arpeggiated EbM7 sonority, instructed to be "repeated again and again… no pause," establishing continuity and reiteration as governing premises from the outset (Figure 39). Throughout the section, Budd uses openly spaced root-position seventh chords, a layout that naturally encourages arpeggiation. Harmonic motion proceeds through seventh chords that avoid functional resolution; instead, sonorities drift by stepwise and mediant-related shifts, with progressions frequently inflected by tritone-linked regions. For example, in the final seven bars of the section, the harmony narrows to an oscillation between EbM7 and BM7, culminating in a last measure marked with a simile and the words "fading… fading…" placed above it. The instruction prepares the repeat of the section and its subsequent transition into "The Crystal Garden."

Figure 39. Harold Budd, piano and voice arrangement of "Rossetti Noise" from *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* (1972). The University of North Texas, Music Library, *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde*, Box: 4, Folder 10: M-19.

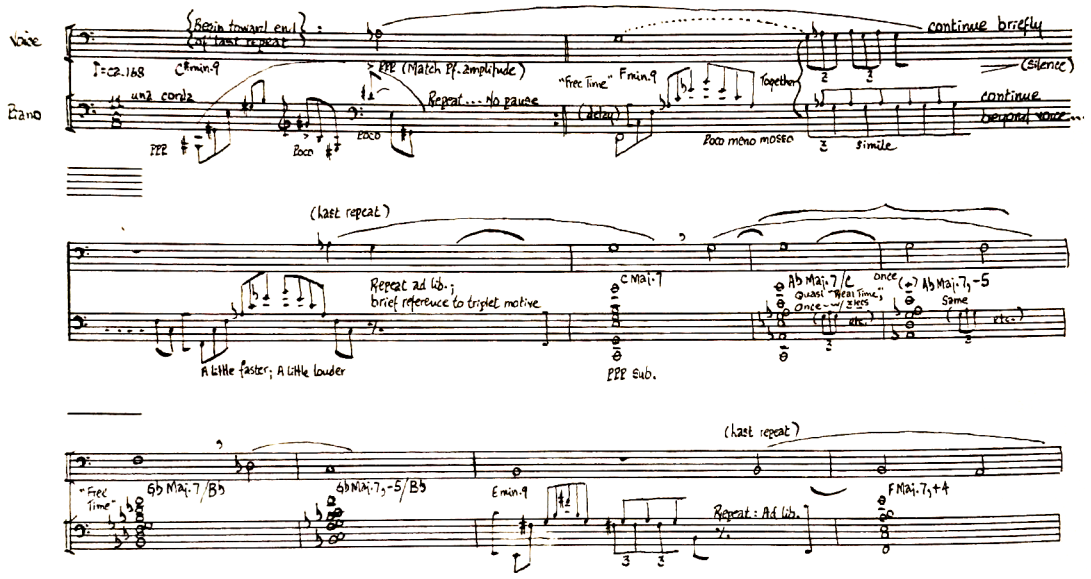


Throughout the work, the voice is treated as a textless sonority, marked senza vibrato and sustained in long tones that relate closely to the piano's prevailing harmonies. The piano's barline-spanning ties create overlapping chord changes that yield an appoggiatura-like leaning at points of shift; together with the score's flexible pacing and

strategically placed breath marks, this basic architectural plan recurs across the remaining sections. Tempo and coordination are intentionally flexible. Budd leaves the pacing open enough that pianist and singer must follow one another in real time, and he supports that interaction with breath marks placed at strategic points that serve as cues for phrasing and alignment. The other two sections of the work follow a similar formula: sustained vocal pitches without text, softly articulated piano sonorities, and overlapping harmonic changes organized through flexible, breath-cued pacing.

In "The Crystal Garden," the tempo remains unchanged, but the meter shifts to 11/8, and the dynamic world stays exceptionally quiet; nonetheless, the section feels markedly moodier. Unlike the more open-ended continuity of "Rossetti Noise," however, the opening here is entirely composed, and Budd provides explicit performance instructions to manage the sectional transition (Figure 40).

Figure 40. Harold Budd, opening measures to "The Crystal Garden" from *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* (1972). The University of North Texas, Music Library, *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde*, Box: 4, Folder 10: M-19.



The vocal writing is pared down and austere: a brief trill, what Budd labels a "triplet motive," circling the semitone G–Ab, appears three times in the span of four measures, functioning less as thematic material than as a localized timbral inflection. Tritone-linked progressions persist, but they are less pervasive than in the preceding section, and the harmonic field becomes correspondingly more exploratory. One clear instance occurs at the transition from "Rossetti Noise," where BM7 moves by semitone into the c♯m9 opening chord of "The Crystal Garden," before pivoting by a tritone to fm9; the added ninth projects the same semitonal "triplet" color that the voice briefly articulates. What is most curious is that Budd begins using inversions to smooth the voice leading. He later describes discovering chord inversions that would "change your life," a hyperbolic but telling way of naming a tonal discovery: inversions allow the same seventh-chord vocabulary to behave less like static sound and more directed voice leading, with common tones retained and semitone motion highlighted.[373] By the end of the section, the tempo relaxes to roughly quarter note equals 56, and the voice drops out; Budd lingers over arpeggiated, extended harmonies before restoring the original 11/8 at the initial tempo, preparing the transition back to "Rossetti Noise."

The final section, "Coda," is the briefest of the three and is fully notated, unfolding at a markedly slower tempo than any previously indicated (quarter note = 36). With an extremely quiet marking, it stays largely within the opening EbM area, sustaining arpeggiated figures for most of its span before turning near the close toward more modal, aggregate-like collections. The ending introduces wind bells and tam-tam, which

[373] "October 31, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*.

function as timbral markers of closure; Budd reinforces that withdrawal through the written directive "quieter… quieter… fading…." (Figure 41). He relished the effect, calling the ending a "winner" and, mock-provocatively, "the most corrupting piece in the literature," adding that Foss's Tampa premiere "would be well advised to reject it on moral grounds outright."[374] In context, the remark turns on Budd's sense of an avant-garde economy of taste. He treats the passage's tonal centering as if it were almost scandalous, precisely because, for him, such qualities could seem out of place in an institutional new-music setting.

That provocation does not end with the sound alone. It also extends to the page, where Budd gives the same aesthetic commitments a visual form. As in *The Dragonfly Cymbal*, he displaces the composer's written signature into ornament, substituting a small insect-like emblem for a conventional autograph in the score's signature field. The figure evokes the natural beauty and decorative delicacy that this chapter has traced throughout Budd's imagery.[375] Read alongside Whistler's butterfly monogram, Budd's insect emblem suggests not simple imitation but a broader practice of aesthetic reworking. As elsewhere

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[374] Ibid.

[375] Budd's composition names and letters from this period repeatedly situate his compositional life within the landscapes of California, not only through his use of place names such as *Noyo*, *Boonville*, *California 99*, *Healdsburg Plum*, and *The Oak of the Golden Dreams*, but also through his habit of folding casual observations of the state's animal life and open roads into correspondence. In one letter, he recalls shooing a coyote away from "a cool water drink in the center of the highway," adding, "My horn didn't phase him in the least! A true desert drinker, by God. My heart went out to him." The same letter turns to a half-comic anecdote about a lone surviving chicken repeatedly making "a running leap at the fence," prompting the dry reflection, "There's something to say about perseverance." Such moments are incidental, but they show how readily California's landscape entered Budd's imagination as a lived environment rather than a picturesque backdrop. Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "July 23" (ca. 1970), Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

in the dissertation, he takes up an existing sign or procedure and retools it within his own idiom, here turning ornament into a visual form of reply. Budd's turn toward tonality reads less as retreat than as repositioning: "pretty" becomes an aesthetic commitment, and such small visual signs make that commitment legible on the page.

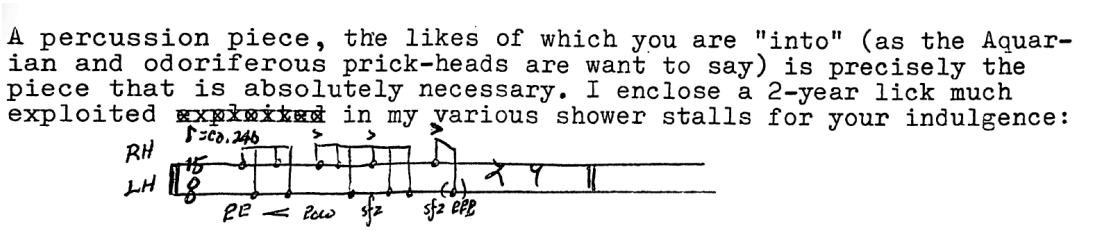
Figure 41. Last four measures to the "Coda" from *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* (1972).



Several of the work's technical premises draw on earlier precedents. Budd describes a 15/8 pattern as a "two-year lick," "much exploited" in his "various shower stalls", an analytically suggestive remark because it treats meter as a repeatable, internalized unit rather than a device tailored to a single context (Figure 42).[376] When *Madrigals* later returns to 15/8 in "Rossetti Noise," the meter appears less as an ad hoc choice than as an inherited container: maintained alongside extreme dynamic restraint (pppp), but slowed (eighth note = 168) and used to articulate an arpeggiated EM7 sonority. The continuity is therefore less "percussion versus piano" than the persistence of a rhythmic unit that Budd redeploys as his surface materials and harmonic focus change.

[376] Ibid.

Figure 42. Harold Budd, origins of *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* opening statement in 15/8. Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "Unknown Year July 23," *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.


A percussion piece, the likes of which you are "into" (as the Aquarian and odoriferous prick-heads are want to say) is precisely the piece that is absolutely necessary. I enclose a 2-year lick much exploited ~~exploited~~ in my various shower stalls for your indulgence:

Another marker of Budd's early practice is his resistance to strict, metrically regulated time. In the mid-to-late 1960s, in works such as *New Work*, he drew on Earle Brown's open-form procedures to cultivate what he calls "free duration" or "open time," where modular units unfold at the performers' own pace rather than under a single governing pulse, so coordination is produced as a shared field of timing and texture rather than synchronized meter. Budd summarizes the resulting technique as "languid melodic" material coupled with an "arpeggiated texture."[377] Sonically, Budd's commitment to threshold quiet, explicit in text compositions *Intermission Piece* (1968) and staged again in *Black Flowers* (1968), returns in *Madrigals* as a baseline condition, reinforced by the same veiling mechanics notably sustained una corda use and predominantly pianissimo writing, already present in *The Edge of August* (1966). Budd also specifies the vocal timbre he was after, calling for a contralto voice "soft to the point of huskiness," an aesthetic preference that recalls the vocal quality he cultivated earlier in his 1969 text piece *Vittorio*.[378] Visually, the piece extends that threshold aesthetic into staging:

[377] "December 3," (ca. 1975) Harold Budd, "In Delius' Sleep," *The Marty Walker Collection*, Box 1, Folder 18; See Chapter One.

[378] "March 10, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

Budd's preference for flooding the performance space with soft, low light recalls the lighting instructions of his earlier text pieces, treating illumination as part of the work's sensory quiet.[379]

Budd is explicit that the title is non-referential, assembled from verbally attractive fragments rather than meant to designate a genre, and he stresses that the piece is "not really a madrigal" in any strict sense.[380] That disclaimer aligns neatly with the historical moment his title evokes: Monteverdi's *Seventh Book of Madrigals* appears as *Concerto: settimo libro de madrigali, con altri generi de canti* (1619), a volume that explicitly folds madrigals into a broader world of monody and continuo practice for one to four voices with basso continuo, alongside larger concertato numbers.[381] Budd's appeal to Monteverdi thus reads less as a claim about Renaissance polyphony than as a procedural borrowing from early-Baroque solo-voice practice, in which a continuo-like harmonic ground frames vocal delivery. He describes the accompaniment as something that can "decorate the place with a chord," while the voice carries expressive pressure through a recitative-like "sing-talk" manner.[382] In Monteverdi's own polemical formulation of the seconda

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[379] See Chapter One.

[380] Vincent Plush, "Harold Budd," *Major Figures in American Music,* 47.

[381] Massimo Ossi, "The Mantuan madrigals and Scherzi musicali" *The Cambridge Companion to Monteverdi*, John Whenham and Richard Wistreich, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 104.

[382] Plush, "Harold Budd," *Major Figures in American Music*, 52, Budd described Monteverdi as "an extremely decorative composer," but the label is ultimately misleading for both figures. "Florid" is a more precise term, since Monteverdi's monodic writing expands the vocal line through sustained, expressive elaboration rather than through localized ornamental additions. Plush, "Harold Budd," *Major Figures in American Music*, 35.

prattica, this shift is captured as a reversal of hierarchy, with the words as the "mistress" rather than the "servant" of the harmony.[383] Budd's wordless version keeps the hierarchy while transferring it from semantic text to vocal sonority: the harmonic layer provides placement, but the vocal line governs the work's expressive inflections.

Madrigals can be understood as a work whose title(s) signal affiliation without genre fidelity. Budd admits that "madrigal" functions less as a strict reference than as a nod, and the music bears this out. The piece foregrounds vocal presence and long-line declamation in a way that recalls early modern practices, even as Budd withholds text, thereby setting aside the Monteverdian premise that verbal rhetoric should govern musical action. Certain harmonic behaviors, especially third-related and mediant drift, also invite comparison to Gesualdo's chromatic practice, where affect is concentrated through unusual successions rather than resolved through functional cadence. At the same time, the work's scoring for a conspicuously modern, resonance-rich ensemble of female choir with harps, sustaining percussion, celeste, mallet instruments, and piano places it far from Renaissance vocal chamber genres. Its harmonic idiom aligns at least as strongly with post-modal jazz as with any early modern model, particularly in the slow unfolding of unresolving seventh chords and suspended intensities that recall the spiritual-jazz continuum associated with John Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders in the mid-1960s and early 1970s, explored in the following chapter. Precisely because *Madrigals* does not belong securely to any one of these lineages, its local reception is revealing.

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[383] Monteverdi quoted in Gary Tomlinson, *Monteverdi and the End of the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 25.

What registered for listeners was not only its Renaissance title or its jazz-adjacent harmonic language, but the blunt fact of its tonality within a contemporary-music setting.

The earliest Los Angeles reception of *Madrigals* shows how readily the work became a recognizable and contested presence within the city's new-music scene. Composer and electronic musician Carl Stone, then a student at CalArts, describes *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* as one of the most overtly tonal works he encountered in a contemporary-music setting in the early 1970s. He frames that experience against a prevailing academic modernism of Babbitt, Carter, and Stockhausen. In Stone's recollection, Budd's extreme tonality produced a polarized reception, less as a gradual stylistic evolution than as a perceived breach in the terms of contemporary seriousness. There were, as he put it, "two camps" of listeners: "those who really dug it, and those who heard it as a kind of Bob Dylan–at–Newport moment, Budd going electric," and therefore (for them) almost unthinkable. "It's just like, what is this man doing? I can't believe it. I respected Harold very much for not giving a fuck about whether his music would be accepted by the academy or not."[384] Read through Stone's account, Budd's "pretty" lands not as a softening for accessibility but as a deliberate break with a milieu in which academic modernism still carried real authority, even at a school as experimentally open as CalArts.

Chaos at The Oxford Union

If *Madrigals* blends stylistic materials at the musical level, Budd also frames it through the time-bound associations carried by its title. "Madrigals" points to the late Renaissance

[384] Author interview with Carl Stone, September 10, 2022.

repertory he was reading and teaching around the same time, placing the work in a Mannerist sound world even as the piece itself resists generic conformity. In parallel, Budd's CalArts teaching materials set Pre-Raphaelite and related nineteenth-century aesthetic formations alongside these earlier repertoires, suggesting that the same cross-period lenses he assigned to students were also at work as he shaped *Madrigals*. Analytical detail is essential for tracing Budd's early-1970s move toward modality, but it does not fully account for these multi-era frames. Mannerism and the Pre-Raphaelites are separated by more than three centuries, yet Budd repeatedly draws them into proximity.

Their significance lies less in stylistic continuity than in their comparable structural positions within their own moments. In Budd's materials, Mannerism appears in late Renaissance Italy not simply as an "after" to High Renaissance ideals of balance, proportional harmony, spatial clarity, and idealized naturalism, but as a practice formed in relation to those ideals, marked by artifice, exaggeration, and self-conscious deviation. The Pre-Raphaelites, by contrast, appear in mid-nineteenth-century Britain in tension with academic classicism, defining themselves against institutional standards of finish, proportion, and idealization while still emerging from the artistic culture they opposed. What links these distant movements is not a shared style but a shared circumstance: both take shape as a canon hardens, and both answer it from within mastery rather than by rejecting it outright. Their coexistence in Budd's thinking thus does not propose lineage or synthesis; it reflects an attraction to parenthetical positions, moments when practice turns sideways from dominant narratives of progress without installing a new teleology in their place.

If Budd used Mannerism as a way of thinking about musical style, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood supplied a complementary visual framework. Formed in London in 1848 by seven young artists and writers, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, William Michael Rossetti, Thomas Woolner, James Collinson, and F. G. Stephens, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was a small metropolitan circle that aimed to "reform the state of the arts in England."[385] William Michael Rossetti later summarized their foundational aims as four straightforward principles: "to have genuine ideas to express," "to study Nature attentively," "to sympathize with what is direct and serious and heartfelt in previous art," and, above all, "to produce thoroughly good pictures and statues."[386] In other words, close observation of nature and a deliberate turn toward earlier art were not merely stylistic preferences but ways of pushing back against a Victorian culture increasingly defined by mechanical power, standardization, and speed.

The Brotherhood's intellectual range is visible in the "list of immortals," compiled in 1848 and pasted up in their shared studio. As Michaela Giebelhausen shows, the list brings together biblical figures, medieval Italians, Romantic poets, scientists, and political heroes in a non-hierarchical assembly of fifty-seven names, with a marked bias toward writers rather than painters. She reads it as a declaration of "secular immortality

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[385] Michaela Giebelhausen, "The Religious and Intellectual Background," *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites*, Elizabeth Prettejohn, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 63.

[386] William Michael Rossetti, quoted in Angela Thirlwell, "William Michael Rossetti (1829–1919)," *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites*, Elizabeth Prettejohn, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 260.

embodied in human endeavour," stressing its mixture of canonical poets and reformist figures such as Rienzi, Cromwell, Hampden, Washington, and Joan of Arc, "historical figures who represent adventure, initiative and varying degrees of revolutionary persuasion." Jesus Christ, tellingly, receives the highest rating.[387] The list helps clarify the Brotherhood's project: art was to be grounded in close observation, intense reading, and admiration for earlier or dissenting models, rather than in academic convention alone.

Rossetti's paintings give that project visual form. *Ecce Ancilla Domini!* (1849–50) compresses the Annunciation into a bare, white, almost monastic room where the shock of the encounter is carried by a few complex signals: an unnervingly human Gabriel who appears without wings, the long-stemmed lily as an intrusive presence, and the strip of red needlework near Mary that reads as a quiet foreshadowing of suffering and blood rather than a decorative flourish. The Virgin's startled inwardness is sharpened by the fact that Rossetti used his sister, the poet Christina Rossetti, as his model for Mary, folding a familial, lived body into a scene that otherwise feels deliberately stripped of academic pageantry (Figure 43). His *Proserpine* (1874) turns a different kind of suspension into an image. Rossetti recasts Jane Morris as Proserpina, bound to Hades after tasting the pomegranate seed, and stages that binding through enclosed space: a muted, corridor-like setting where ivy and fruit function less as accessories than as emblems of captivity, return, and longing for the world above (Figure 44).

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[387] Isobel Armstrong, "The Pre-Raphaelites and Literature," *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites*, Elizabeth Prettejohn, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 15–17.

Figure 43. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Ecce Ancilla Domini* (1850). Tate Britain exhibition, *The Rossettis*, April 6–September 24, 2023, photographs by the author.



Figure 44. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Proserpine* (1874). Tate Britain exhibition, *The Rossettis*, April 6–September 24, 2023, photographs by the author.



That admiration for dissenting figures and older cultural models moved from private conviction into public experiment in the Oxford Union mural project of 1857. In that scheme, Pre-Raphaelite medievalism had to meet the pressures of commission, institutional space, and public visibility, as scenes from Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* (1485) were enlisted to decorate a modern debating society.[388] Under Dante Gabriel Rossetti's leadership, a youthful team that included William Morris, Edward Burne-Jones, Arthur Hughes, John Hungerford Pollen, Valentine Prinsep, and Spencer Stanhope undertook the work, despite having little practical experience of mural technique, in what Rossetti called a "jovial campaign."[389] The romance of that method collided with the realities of materials and process. Later accounts emphasize how chaotic the project could be, and Ruskin was remembered as remarking that the artists were "all the least bit crazy," difficult to manage.[390] More consequentially, they painted directly onto inadequately prepared, dry brick, using tempera with small brushes, choices that ensured rapid decay, so that within a decade the images had become "only a shadow" of their original color and clarity.[391]

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[388] William Morris seems to have been the key figure who brought Malory's *Morte Darthur* into the group's shared orbit, and it was the enthusiasm of Morris and Edward Burne-Jones that helped push Dante Gabriel Rossetti toward choosing Arthurian scenes as the subject for the Oxford Union murals. Richard Barber, *The Holy Grail: The History of a Legend* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2004), 267–70.

[389] Dante Gabriel Rossetti quoted in Wendy Graham, *Critics, Coteries, and Pre-Raphaelite Celebrity: Rethinking the Household Name* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 88.

[390] Clare A. P. Willsdon, *Mural Painting in Britain 1840–1940: Image and Meaning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 258.

[391] Jon Whiteley, *Oxford and the Pre-Raphaelites* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2004), 43.

The Oxford Union murals offer a useful parallel because Budd explicitly invoked them when describing a 1972 CalArts concert that brought together Peter Garland's *By the Stream, Almost Dark Now*, a poetry reading by Robert Kelly, Daniel Lentz's *Loverrise*, and Budd's own *Madrigals of the Rose Angel*.[392] In his letter to Barney Childs, Budd explained that he had dropped labels such as "An Evening of Decadent Art" in favor of "letting the art-stuff do it all itself," then identified the program's central hinge as the moment when Lentz's BbM cadence moved directly into the EbM7 of "Rossetti Noise." He added, with clear satisfaction, "This is an art about 150–200 years behind its time, I'm pleased to say . . . I hope we don't bomb to quite the extent the Pre-Raphaelites did at the Oxford Union." The significance of that transition is not only harmonic. It places Lentz and Budd within the same curated aesthetic world, so that the concert itself begins to resemble, in miniature, the Oxford mural scheme: not a solitary statement, but a small alliance of like-minded figures testing an older style within a modern institution. Read in those terms, "Rossetti Noise" is more than a literary title. It names a musical stance Budd understood as deliberately belated and openly unfashionable, one that values resonance and surface over development or historical newness. Oxford offered him an image of what such art could look like when made collectively, self-consciously, and at the risk of failure.[393]

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[392] Lentz's *Loverrise* (1971) parodies Schubert's *Winterreise* through a mixed-media setting for singing pianist, optional 16mm film, four-track tape, and female choir, retaining traces of Romantic chromaticism and arpeggiated piano writing while recasting them through satire, erotic imagery, and theatrical excess. See Chapter Two.

[393] "March 10, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*.

The Rossettian world resurfaced in a more intimate register after Budd's London sessions for what would become *The Pavilion of Dreams*, the subject of the following chapter. Recalling a visit to the Tate, he wrote, "I went to Tate and saw her: Rossetti's *Proserpine*: my lady of the pomegranates." In this brief, possessive address, syllabus, score, and visual encounter converge, transforming an art-historical reference into an object of private attachment.[394] In the myth, Proserpine is held in Hades after tasting a pomegranate seed: she cannot simply return, but must move between worlds in a cycle of return. That image offers a suggestive analog for the musical condition traced in this chapter. Budd's work of the early 1970s remains suspended between experimental and tonal worlds, between the conceptual spareness of the text score and the sensuous finish of *Madrigals*, between decorative image, like the dragonfly and butterfly, and harmonic surface, between reduction and resonance. His move from tonality toward modality, therefore, does not read as a clean break with experiment so much as a prolonged effort to discover what "pretty" could mean once those earlier procedures had been carried forward into a more consonant, "lovely" idiom. *Proserpine*, then, names not escape but suspension: a music caught between captivity and return, still moving between older experimental disciplines and the aesthetic world it had not yet fully become.[395]

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[394] "December, 3, 1976," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

[395] Proserpine also had a wider modern afterlife beyond Rossetti, across visual art, literary drama, and musical theater. Tamara Levitz traces the figure through André Gide's long reworking of *Proserpine/Persephone*, its eventual staging with Stravinsky, and related visual cultures around Ida Rubinstein and Romaine Brooks, where Persephone remains tied to narcissus, pomegranate, melancholy, desire, and return. See Tamara Levitz, *Modernist Mysteries: Persephone* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 29–32.

This chapter argues that Budd's turn toward "pretty" in the early 1970s was not only a shift in harmonic language. It was also a change in how the work was framed and identified. Titles, staging, silence, calligraphy, insects, and decorative design are treated here as compositional facts rather than as secondary details. *The Peacock Room* redefines the work through display and withdrawal. *The Dragonfly Cymbal* gives "pretty" a concise technical form through tonal centering, chord color, reduced dynamics, and curtailed teleology. *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* extends those procedures into a larger vocal and notational field. Across these works, Budd does not abandon experimental practice; he relocates it within a more consonant and visually coded idiom.

The chapter also argues that this shift was historical and polemical. In this period, "pretty" functions as a protest. Budd's interest in Whistler, Rossetti, Aestheticism, and "Art for art's sake" provided a framework for opposing the prestige systems of academic modernism. He later described that culture in direct terms: "If somewhere along the line you went to college, and you took a traditional academic education as a composer, the pressures to listen to really ugly music were immense. So, somewhere along the line, you just stop doing it."[396] That refusal is legible both musically and graphically: in tonal but non-teleological harmonic writing, in softness and suspended pacing, and in the use of ornamental marks as signs of authorship.

Taken together, these works show that Budd's turn toward "pretty" music was never a simple retreat into surface. His music became a way of reimagining what experimental music might do after the high tide of the postwar avant-garde. But that reimagining did not stop with

[396] Charles Amirkhanian, *Radio Visions: Interviews with Composers*, 1981, https://archive.org/details/RadioVisions.

Whistler, Art Nouveau, or the rhetoric of "Art for art's sake." In the years that followed, Budd carried those same concerns into a more overtly sacred and musical terrain, drawing on vocal repertories, spiritual jazz, scripture, and collaborative performance. The next chapter traces that shift through *The Pavilion of Dreams*, where Budd's aestheticism widened into a devotional and increasingly studio-centered practice.

Chapter Five: A Search for the Spiritual (1972–88)

Albert Ayler, John Coltrane, and Pharoah Sanders: *Two Songs*

After composing *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* in 1972, Harold Budd began what would become the *Pavilion of Dreams* song cycle, a group of works that took shape over the next four years and marked a distinct new direction in his music. During his tenure at CalArts, Budd expanded the cycle with additional movements, including *Three Songs*: "Butterfly Sunday" (1973), "Let Us Go into the House of the Lord" (1974), and a redacted work "Love-Sweetness" (1976), as well as *Song of Paradise: 17 Illuminations on the Holy Koran* (1974), *Bismillahi Rrahmani Rrahim* (1974–75), *Juno* (1975), and *Songs of Past Regrets and Future Fears* (1976) (Figure 45).[397]

Budd composed *The Pavilion* for both vocal and instrumental works. His correspondence likewise shows that twentieth-century vocal music and art song occupied a central place in his listening and teaching, with Debussy serving as a recurring touchstone.[398] That interest extended beyond admiration into close study: in one letter to

[397] For clarity, I refer to the work throughout as *Two Songs*, following both Budd's 1975 curriculum vitae and the later Brian Eno-produced recording of *The Pavilion of Dreams*, rather than *Three Songs*, as it appears on the program bill. Both sources list only "Butterfly Sunday" and "Let Us Go into the House of the Lord," with no mention of "Love-Sweetness," suggesting that Budd later omitted the third song from his accounting of the cycle.

[398] His interest in this repertory also extended to Erik Satie. In March 1974, Budd noted that he had learned the piano part in Satie's *Trois poèmes d'amour* (1914). "March 29, 1974," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974; Less than a month later, he described Satie in strikingly ambivalent terms, as someone he "cannot put [his] finger on," a "sexless creature," and a composer defined by a "lack of worry. Danger!" "April 5,

Barney Childs, Budd copied out a passage from *Trois Chansons* (1898–1908), suggesting a detailed attention to Debussy's vocal writing and harmonic language.[399] As he later admitted, "I keep coming back, back to Debussy's songs; this man is unexplainable."[400] In the same period, Budd folded that repertory into his CalArts pedagogy, reporting that he had "heard some stunners" in his "Vocal Music of the 20th Century" class and highlighting Ravel's *Trois Poèmes*, two Debussy *Verlaine Songs* [sic] (heard live), Vaughan Williams's *Four Hymns*, Ligeti's *Requiem*, Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, and Stravinsky's *Mass* and *Canticum Sacrum*.[401] Budd then singled out Cage, Berio, and Stockhausen as the semester's "lowlights," a judgment that suggests a deliberate distancing from composers who, by the early 1970s, had come to symbolize the institutional prestige of the postwar avant-garde.[402]

1974," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

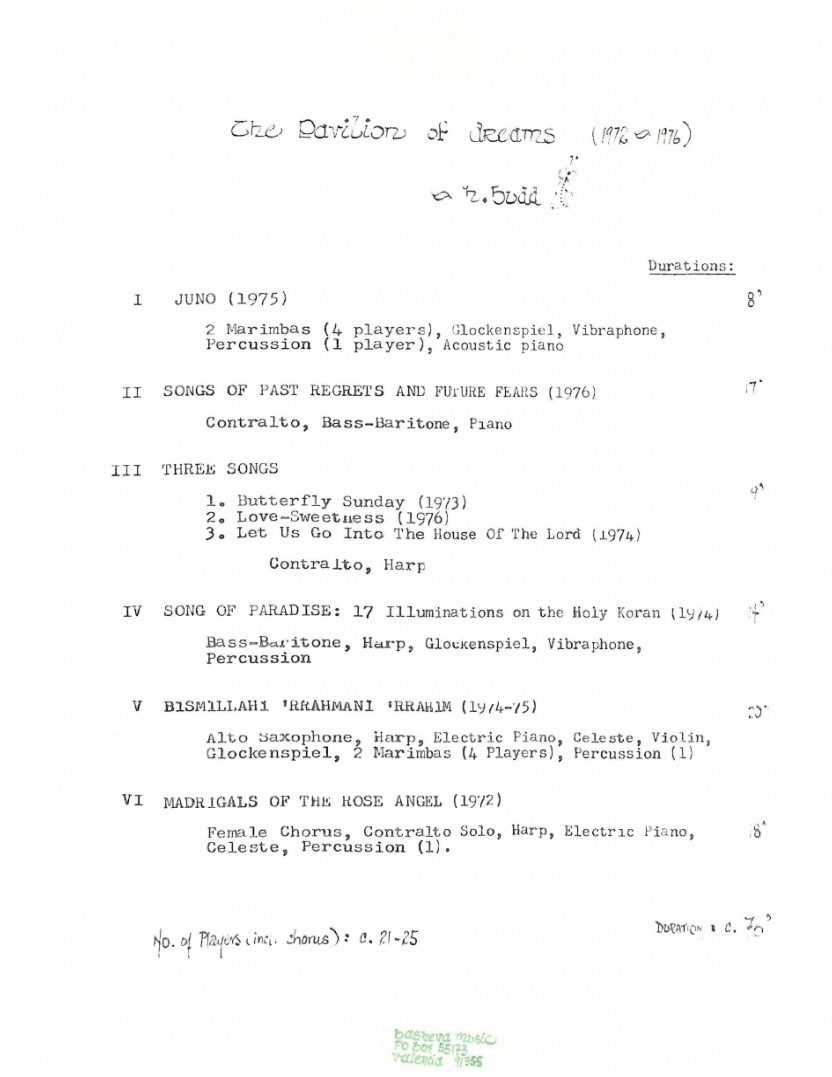
[399] "November 13, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[400] "December 31, 1975," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

[401] Budd's use of "stunners" is suggestive in this frame, since the word also circulates in the Pre-Raphaelite milieu, where Rossetti's "stunners" name a voluptuous female type whose beauty, as Wendy Graham notes, carried a "curious mixture of spirituality and carnality." Budd repurposed the term as an index of sensuous musical beauty. Wendy Graham, *Critics, Coteries, and Pre-Raphaelite Celebrity: Rethinking the Household Name* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 170.

[402] "November 19, 1975," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

Figure 45. Harold Budd, program for *The Pavilion of Dreams* (1972–76). "The Pavilion of Dreams," (ca. 1976), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–77.



The Pavilion of Dreams (1972 ~ 1976)

a H. Budd

Durations:

I JUNO (1975) 8'

2 Marimbas (4 players), Glockenspiel, Vibraphone, Percussion (1 player), Acoustic piano

II SONGS OF PAST REGRETS AND FUTURE FEARS (1976) 17'

Contralto, Bass-Baritone, Piano

III THREE SONGS 9'

1. Butterfly Sunday (1973)
2. Love-Sweetness (1976)
3. Let Us Go Into The House Of The Lord (1974)

Contralto, Harp

IV SONG OF PARADISE: 17 Illuminations on the Holy Koran (1974) 4'

Bass-Baritone, Harp, Glockenspiel, Vibraphone, Percussion

V BISMILLAHI 'RRAHMANI 'RRAHIM (1974-75) 20'

Alto Saxophone, Harp, Electric Piano, Celeste, Violin, Glockenspiel, 2 Marimbas (4 Players), Percussion (1)

VI MADRIGALS OF THE ROSE ANGEL (1972) 8'

Female Chorus, Contralto Solo, Harp, Electric Piano, Celeste, Percussion (1).

No. of Players (incl. Chorus): c. 21-25

Duration c. 70'

basheva music
PO box 56173
Valencia 91355

Contemporary jazz idioms offered another route into the devotional and modal concerns of *The Pavilion of Dreams*. By the mid-1970s, Budd was aligning himself more explicitly with the spiritual modality associated with John Coltrane and, more emphatically, Pharoah Sanders. This music emerged from a mid-1960s context in which Black artists were building new cultural institutions and reframing Black music as a

vehicle for community formation, political consciousness, and internationalist imagination. Iain Anderson locates this shift in the wake of Malcolm X's assassination, when LeRoi Jones, soon to become Amiri Baraka, announced the Black Arts Repertory Theatre/School (BARTS) in Harlem as a cultural center, performance space, and workshop site linking artists and intellectuals to Black community life.[403] Richard Brent Turner reads BARTS within the same historical logic, as part of a Black Arts project that connected free jazz to the exploration of jazz's "Third World roots." For both scholars, Coltrane's music became central to this moment because it made spiritual, political, and anti-parochial horizons newly audible while remaining grounded in jazz materials.[404]

Musically, the language that underlies much of what later comes to be called spiritual jazz is modal practice. Anderson defines modal jazz as "virtually static harmony" that "relied heavily on juxtaposed scales for its progression," a shift that slows the harmonic rhythm and makes the "scale" itself a primary organizing unit.[405] He describes Coltrane's late-1950s work with Miles Davis as adjusting to a style "evident on the seminal 1959 album *Kind of Blue*" that "employed extended scale-based improvisation against minimal chord changes," and he points to McCoy Tyner's quartal voicings and "recurrent left-handed pedal point" as techniques that sustain a harmonic field while blurring classical notions of cadential direction.[406] What "spiritual" adds is not a new

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[403] Iain Anderson, *This Is Our Music: Free Jazz, the Sixties, and American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 93–94.

[404] Richard Brent Turner, *Soundtrack to a Movement: African American Islam, Jazz, and Black Internationalism* (New York: New York University Press, 2021), 13.

[405] Anderson, *This Is Our Music: Free Jazz, the Sixties, and American Culture,* 56.

[406] Ibid., 70.

chord type so much as a religious horizon and a ritualized listening frame for those modal procedures. Coltrane's modal procedures of minimal chordal movement, expanded temporality, and the recurring drone or vamp became audible as an "inner directed search for sanctification," a trajectory made explicit in *A Love Supreme* through its movement titles, incantatory gestures, and prayer poem framing.[407]

Turner pushes this argument further by reading Coltrane's modal turn through religious internationalism and non-Western systems, not simply through jazz-historical style change. He presents Coltrane's spirituality and musical interests as branching out toward India and modal improvisation, quotes Coltrane on Indian approaches in which "particular scales are intended to produce specific emotional meanings," and highlights Coltrane's attraction to the drone and to Ravi Shankar's conception of music as a spiritual discipline.[408] As Coltrane moved further into free jazz, he also reshaped the quartet around him. Tyner left the quartet in late 1965, Elvin Jones followed in early

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[407] Ibid., 115; George E. Lewis places these developments within a broader early-1960s expansion of improvisational practice rather than treating modality alone as the decisive issue. In his account, harmonic and modal schemes became increasingly fluid, with practices ranging across quartal, polytonal, microtonal, and atonal procedures; he cites Bill Evans's "Flamenco Sketches" on *Kind of Blue* as an example in which five modes recur while their durations are determined interactively by the ensemble and soloist. Lewis also emphasizes changes in temporality, ensemble hierarchy, and recorded form: rhythm sections no longer simply accompanied soloists, foreground and background became more mutable, and the long-playing record made extended, multi-movement forms more viable. In this context, Lewis reads *A Love Supreme* as an "integrated work," or, as André Francis announced at Coltrane's 1965 Paris performance, "a composition in several movements." George E. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 38–40.

[408] Turner, *Soundtrack to a Movement: African American Islam, Jazz, and Black Internationalism*, 183.

1966, and Coltrane increasingly relied on Rashied Ali on drums, Alice Coltrane on piano, and Sanders on saxophone, forming a more fluid quintet of his final years.[409]

The ensemble reappears after Coltrane's death in Alice Coltrane's *A Monastic Trio* (*Impulse*, 1968), where she frames the project as an effort to realize "some of the work thought of by John" through recordings, concerts, and community work, in pursuit of a "higher culminating idea" she believed he had been reaching toward.[410] Musicians associated with Coltrane's late quintet, including Sanders, Jimmy Garrison, and Ali, perform on the album, and Alice Coltrane's subsequent tributes, *Cosmic Music* (1968) and *Universal Consciousness* (1971), extend that memorial and devotional trajectory. Sanders then becomes the central figure on the record label *Impulse* in the 1970s, leading a run of albums that includes *Karma* (1969), *Jewels of Thought* (1969), *Deaf Dumb and Blind: Summun Bukmun Umyun* (1970), *Thembi* (1971), *Black Unity* (1971), *Live at the East* (1972), *Village of the Pharoahs* (1973), and *Elevation* (1974).

This wider genealogy clarifies what it would mean for a composer like Budd to "turn toward jazz" in the early 1970s. The attraction was not simply to improvisation or to a generalized jazz vocabulary, but to a spiritual jazz constellation in which modal fields, devotional address, and Black arts contexts had already given the music a particular cultural charge. But this move was not entirely new. As a young musician,

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[409] Contemporary reception of Coltrane's late group was sharply polarized; hostile critics described the music as 'anti-jazz' and reacted to the Sanders, Alice Coltrane, Rashied Ali ensemble as a shocking departure from accepted jazz norms. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music*, 49.

[410] Turner, *Soundtrack to a Movement: African American Islam, Jazz, and Black Internationalism*, 202.

Budd played jazz drums with the experimental jazz saxophonist Albert Ayler while they were both stationed at Fort Ord (1959–61), and he gigged with Ayler's ensemble in Oakland and San Francisco from 1960 to 1961.[411] In later years, Budd continued to invoke Ayler in his correspondence, keeping that early free jazz circle in view even as his priorities shifted toward Renaissance music, and, most decisively, modal jazz.[412]

His reorientation was clear by 1970. Budd described watching a broadcast of *SOUL!*, WNET's Black arts and culture program, which combined performances, interviews, and political expression. One episode paired Sanders with Baraka: Baraka read four poems, and Sanders and his group performed alongside him. Budd called the broadcast a "rare, rare… stunning and unsettling experience," praised Sanders as "inexpressibly great," and framed the event as a challenge to his own compositional habits; that he needed time before he could "impale ideas on the 5 lines," because anything less than what he had just witnessed would feel like "artifice" in his own work. He used the experience to restate a principle he considered fundamental: art depends not on "the systems you construct it with," but on "the essential poetics that you inject into it."[413] In that sense, Sanders is not merely inspirational. Budd is already beginning to take

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[411] "Harold Budd's Curriculum Vitae (ca. 1978)," The Harold Budd Estate.

[412] Budd's early proximity to Ayler belongs to the world of free jazz and Black experimentalism, a field that George E. Lewis treats as central to postwar musical modernism even as it was often misrecognized or cordoned off from dominant accounts of the avant-garde. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music*, xxxii–xxxiii, 510–11.

[413] "Monday Evening Letter #1," (ca. 1970), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

from him, treating Sanders's spiritual modality as both an aesthetic model and a set of usable materials for his own work.

In March of 1972, while struggling to write *Madrigals*, Budd described a musical phrase that kept eluding him, turning the impasse into a joke by remarking that he feared Sanders would "find it first" and even "find a better title."[414] By that October, he described a "divine progression" in his friend Daniel Lentz's music and immediately linked Sanders to the same pursuit, as if Sanders named a harmonic goal that Budd was also chasing.[415] He bought two Sanders albums, but he drew a hard line around Ayler's late work. Even as a devoted fan, Budd wrote that "there's nothing there," and he mocked the fact that the record even had a "producer."[416] The complaint is asymmetrical. Sanders's records had producers too, and so did Ayler's earlier albums. Budd's jab, therefore, reads less as a principled anti-studio stance than as a pointed dismissal of certain late Ayler releases and the direction he heard Ayler's music going. That judgment, however, did not hold for long without qualification. Five months later, Peter Garland played Ayler's 1963 album *My Name Is Albert Ayler* for Budd, who described the

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[414] Budd followed with a maxim he attributed to Odilon Redon: "A title is justified only when it is vague, indeterminate, and even confusingly aiming at the equivocal." In this context, Redon's dictum clarified Budd's approach to naming. Titles did not pin down the music. They preserved ambiguity and invited multiple associations."March 30, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[415] "November 3, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[416] Ibid.; Harold Budd's first recording *Oak of the Golden Dreams* (1972) on Advance Records did not have a producer. "November 3, 1972," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

experience as "outasight (as they say)," and remarked that Ayler's performance on "Summertime" was "beyond telling." Rather than dismissing Ayler wholesale, Budd responded here to an earlier recording with unmistakable admiration.[417]

On March 27, 1973, Budd sat listening to Sanders's "Let Us Go into The House of the Lord" "four times through," calling it "one gorgeous piece of music" and writing out some of the tune's chord progressions.[418] On Sanders's *Deaf Dumb Blind (Summun Bukmun Umyun)* (1970), the piece is a long-form arrangement credited to his pianist, Lonnie Liston Smith, and it sits within a thick halo of percussion, bells, shakers, and keyboard. A sketch to Barney Childs catches that balance.[419] Budd begins by outlining a plain devotional progression, I–IV–V7–I, a hymn-like grammar that establishes a firm tonal center. He then notes a brief harmonic "lean" through I–V7/II –II, which momentarily spotlights II before returning through V7–I, a small tonicizing detour that adds forward pull without breaking the tune's simplicity. Finally, his I–V–bVII–IV–I shows where the music opens into a more modal space, with the borrowed bVII loosening strict dominant logic and nudging the progression toward a plagal cadence.[420]

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[417] "March 27, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[418] Ibid.

[419] For Childs's fiftieth birthday in 1977, Budd rewrote the text of Pharoah Sanders's "Colors," from *Karma* (1969), as a private musical greeting to Childs, himself a poet. The gesture offers another small but telling sign that Sanders's music had entered not only Budd's listening, but also the intimate social world of his correspondence, friendships, and wordplay. Author interview with Jim Fox, November 13, 2025.

[420] "March 27, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

Budd is careful to name what he hears by negation: "not in the 'blues' style at all," but "straight ahead," with "no pulse." By "straight ahead," he appears to distinguish a direct, unembellished chordal syntax from both blues-derived harmonic formulas and the strongly goal-directed cadential procedures of common-practice tonality. The phrase "no pulse" is just as pointed, since it invokes the temporal ideal Budd called "free time": a way of organizing duration that resists steady metric drive, as in works such as *Madrigals*. This was not simply a later development. Budd had already been testing versions of this idea during his earlier experimental minimalist period, especially in drone-based pieces.[421] When he reaches for a timbral comparison, he points to "bell and rattle sounds a la *L'Africaine*," likely invoking the German opera composer Giacomo Meyerbeer's grand opera of that title and its association with bell-like orchestral color, including keyboard glockenspiel.[422]

When Budd began arranging *Two Songs*, he specifically reflected on the spiritual jazz of Coltrane and Sanders. He based the first movement, "Butterfly Sunday" on Coltrane's "After the Rain," originally issued on *Impressions* (*Impulse*, July 1963) (Figure 46). As a composite release that draws together both live and studio performances recorded between November 1961 and April 1963, *Impressions* documents Coltrane across an extended transitional period, expressing the breadth of his emergent language. Across its various configurations, the album presents him working through modality, Indian music, and the blues.

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[421] See Chapters One through Three for the earlier genealogy of these procedures.

[422] "March 27, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

Figure 46. Harold Budd, "Butterfly Sunday" (1973), page one, adapted from John Coltrane's "After the Rain" (1963), Harold Budd "Butterfly Sunday," Item 16, Box: 13, Item: 16, *University of North Texas Archives*, "Merrill Ellis Music Collection," 06-067. Music Library.



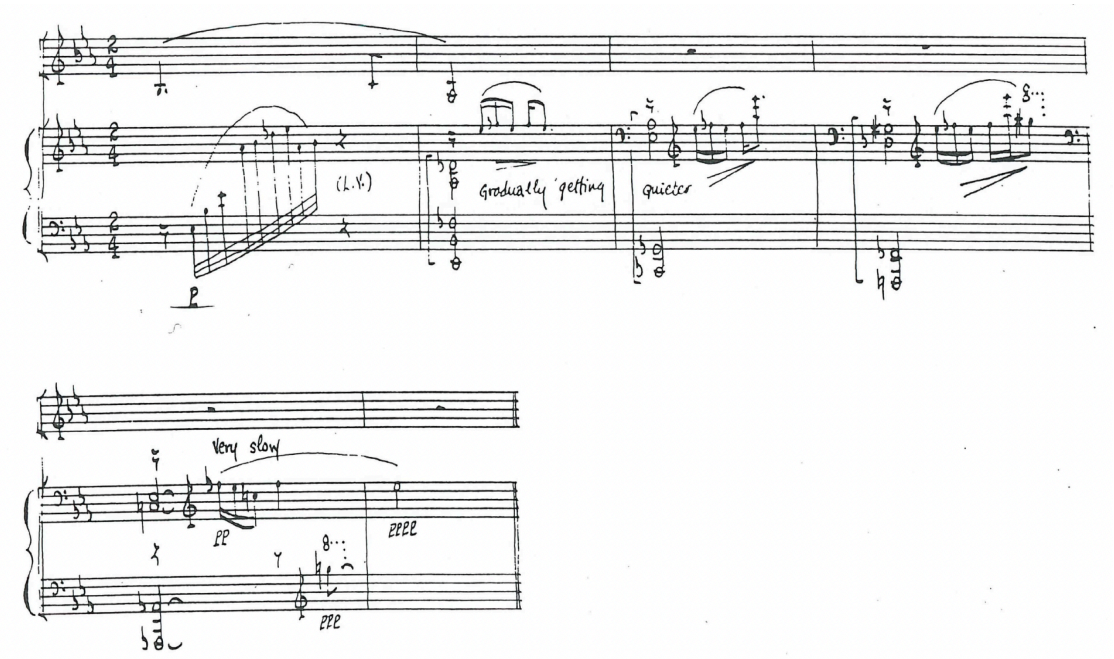
"After the Rain" was performed by Coltrane on tenor saxophone, Tyner on piano, Garrison on bass, and Roy Haynes on drums. The recording unfolds as a slow, lyric ballad shaped by modal practices, stating the theme and then opening into a brief improvised chorus. Budd's revoicing for harp and wordless voice remains fully notated throughout, closer in disposition to a through-composed art song or vocalise. He stays close to Coltrane's melodic profile, but relocates the tonal center to Eb major rather than the original Ab major. Budd's own description of the introduction is telling here: it "introduces nothing beyond the essential nature of the piece," but instead presents "without reserve its point of view."[423] The harmony partially bears out that claim, since the harpist initially avoids a stable tonal profile, dwelling in a two-note oscillation and shifting by chromatic inflection. That written-out detail gives Budd's version, a more harmonically saturated surface than Coltrane's, where performers articulate the underlying field more sparsely and fill it in through performance and improvisational practice rather than fixed notation. A more legible harmonic shape emerges around measure eleven with a Dbm sonority, and the following 3/4 bar unequivocally establishes the Eb tonic. From there, the ending tightens into a distinctive closing turn: the final four measures trace a chromatic cascade from the tonic EbM7-CbM6-AM7 before settling for two bars in AbM; a gesture that reads as a nod to Coltrane's original tonal center at the point of closure, resolving in a way Budd thought, "simply hangs right" (Figure 47).[424]

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[423] "July 20, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*.

[424] Ibid.; Budd also imagined the piece on a larger scale, as in *Madrigals*: "My thoughts are to have the intro scored for full string choir, T&B, and solo tenor sax; I'll add the other stuff as it's written out." He described the piece as "flat-out tough, no equivocation," and

Figure 47. Harold Budd, "Butterfly Sunday" (1973), page two, adapted from John Coltrane's "After the Rain" (1963), the last six measures. Harold Budd "Butterfly Sunday," Item 16, Box: 13, Item: 16, *University of North Texas Archives*, "Merrill Ellis Music Collection," 06-067. Music Library.

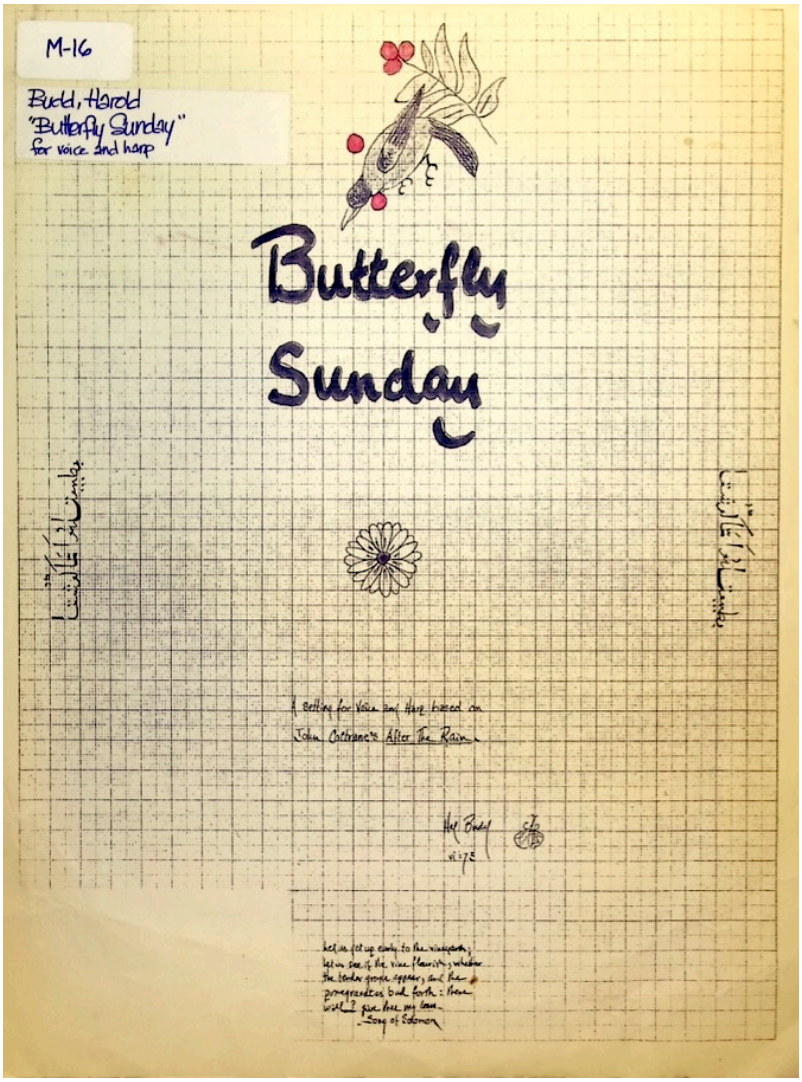


Many of the hallmarks of *Madrigals* come into focus in this arrangement: extended harmonies, a relaxed and flowing surface, extremely soft dynamics, and harmonic turns that arrive without preparation. The title page extends the same aesthetic world. Budd frames the piece with hand-drawn flora and a Victorian decorative sensibility, most notably in the ambiguous insect monogram that recalls James McNeill

joked that its first five minutes would "send the musicologists, snobs, and hippies home (or wherever it is that they go)," a remark that raises the question of what audience, if any, the piece was meant to leave behind, if its opening was severe enough to alienate both academic and countercultural listeners.

Whistler's emblems and, more strikingly, in the prominent reuse of a bird from William Morris's iconic Arts and Crafts wallpaper pattern "Strawberry Thief" (Figure 48).[425]

Figure 48. Harold Budd, "Butterfly Sunday" (1973), adapted from John Coltrane's "After the Rain" (1963), title page. Harold Budd, "Butterfly Sunday," Item 16, Box: 13, Item: 16, *University of North Texas Archives*, "Merrill Ellis Music Collection," 06-067. Music Library.



[425] On Budd's title-page design and its relation to Whistler, Morris, Aestheticism, and Arts and Crafts visual culture, see Chapter Four.

"After the Rain" suggests a kind of washing or clearing, an ordeal passed through, and a world reset, with an almost baptismal undertone. "Butterfly Sunday" translates that cleansing passage into a more emblematic and explicitly devotional frame. The butterfly, already a familiar symbol in Budd's work, makes transformation visible, while "Sunday" situates that transformation in religious time, where change is imagined not only as a natural process but also as a spiritual passage. In the liner notes to *A Love Supreme*, Coltrane casts his music as a devotional offering shaped by spiritual awakening and closes by insisting that "through the storm and after the rain–it is all with God–always and forever."[426] Budd's title folds Coltrane's language of cleansing and renewal into his own symbolic vocabulary, while also marking the broader turn toward devotional and transformative imagery already underway in his music.

A further development here is Budd's interest in the Qur'an and Arabic visual culture. The Arabic writing on the score suggests that this was not incidental. Budd understood the Qur'an less as doctrine than as part of the "marvelous literature" of the world's religions, and described it as a text that remained important to him. At the same time, his attraction to Arabic script seems to have been visual as much as textual: he speaks admiringly of "Arabic manuscripts and Arabic design" and a "love of the curlicue simply because it's simply lovely."[427] The same symbolic logic gathers around the title page: the quotation from the *Song of Solomon* at the bottom, the Arabic writing on the score, and the hand-drawn flower on the front page suggest Budd assembling a layered

[426] John Coltrane, liner notes to *Impressions* (*Impulse* A-42, LP, 1963).

[427] Vincent Plush, "Harold Budd," *Major Figures in American Music, Oral History of American Music, in the Music Library of Yale University* (May 3, 1983), 36.

field of sacred, literary, and ornamental references. The flower drawing seems to echo the biblical language of budding vines, open blossoms, and pomegranates in flower, while the pomegranates themselves briefly recall the Rossettian imagery from *Madrigals*. Yet this accumulation of references also exposes a certain disjunction: Budd draws on Islamic textual culture and spiritual jazz as aesthetic resources while largely sidestepping the political and historical formations that made those materials legible in the first place. For Baraka and other artists in the Black arts movement, by contrast, musical spirituality, African and Islamic reference, and experimental form were inseparable from collective history, material life, and the struggle over African American cultural self-definition.[428]

Sanders's "Let Us Go into the House of the Lord" altered the terms of Budd's engagement with spiritual jazz. The work Budd encountered was not simply a jazz composition, but a traditional Black religious song whose text draws on Psalm 122:1 and whose late-1960s gospel circulation included the Edwin Hawkins Singers' "Let Us Go into the House of the Lord." On Sanders's *Deaf Dumb Blind*, that church repertory is arranged by Lonnie Liston Smith and expanded by Sanders's ensemble into a side-long performance. As Val Wilmer suggests, the achievement of this work lay not simply in

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[428] As context, Frank Kofsky argues that, for Black musicians of the period, Islamic reference and African-derived naming practices often signaled a broader cultural nationalism: by the late 1940s, he writes, some "advanced" musicians were already "renouncing Christianity and their Western 'slave' names for Islam," while the increasing use of Afro-American and African titles marked a growing pride in Black cultural heritage. Frank Kofsky, *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), 46–50, and 100; Amiri Baraka argues that Black aesthetics cannot be severed from "the historical continuum of the blues," from "the lives and history" of African American people, or from the "common material conditions" that shape culture politically and economically, Amiri Baraka, *Digging: The Afro-American Soul of American Classical Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 19–20.

modal jazz as a style, but in a ritualized sonic practice: slow-moving, prayer-like, and shaped by an atmosphere of concentrated listening.[429]

The piece captivated Budd. As noted earlier, he listened to it repeatedly, sketched its tonal design, and singled out its harmonic turns, bell-and-rattle sonority, and apparent lack of a strict pulse. In Budd's hands, Smith's arrangement and Sanders's ensemble performance become something closer to art song: fixed in notation, detached from the collective setting of the recording, and drawn into Budd's own Db-centered vocabulary.[430] Whereas "Butterfly Sunday" shifts Coltrane's tonal center, Budd's notes hear "Let Us Go into the House of the Lord" from Db. That distinction is not only harmonic. It also marks a change in musical address: a Black church song, refracted through spiritual jazz and expanded into a side-long ensemble performance, becomes a notated song in which tonal reference remains clear even as cadence loses much of its governing force.

That claim explains how Budd authorized the practice, but it also defines the terms of his account. By placing Sanders beside "Debussy and Massenet" and "Wagner and Berlioz," while opposing both to the "post-Cage tradition," Budd treated reworking as a problem of compositional lineage, not cultural translation.[431] The language is

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[429] Val Wilmer, *As Serious As Your Life: The Story of the New Jazz*, 1977; reprint (Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill Books, 2018), 36.

[430] Harold Budd, "Let Us Go into the House of the Lord" (1974), from *The Pavilion of Dreams*, in Michael Byron, ed., *Pieces: An Anthology*, 2nd rev. ed. (Vancouver: A.R.C. Publications, 1976), 61–64.

[431] Budd's comment makes clear that his objection was not to Cage as a composer, whom he still regarded as capable of "really sublime music," but to the dogmatic culture that had formed around Cage's authority: "Poor cage! He's been responsible for some really sublime music, especially those pieces where his personality is present, and he's

revealing: he could "gladly admit" his "debt" to Sanders while also insisting that "the more I rework it the more it becomes Hal Budd."[432] Sanders remains audible "nonetheless," but the force of the remark falls on Budd's authorship. His later memory that the Coltrane and Sanders settings "really do belong with" *Madrigals*, because they "complement one another so much," therefore clarifies how he understood *The Pavilion* as a cycle.[433] The coherence did not rest solely on instrumentation, since the expanded versions of these works involve a broader sound world. It rested on a practice of reworking: modal song, sacred reference, notated vocality, and borrowed materials drawn into Budd's modal language.

Marvin Hayes and Sun Ra: *Song of Paradise: 17 Illuminations on the Holy Koran* and *In Delius' Sleep*

By 1973, Budd was not simply gaining wider exposure; he was also beginning to distance himself from the more gritty minimalist-experimental aesthetic of earlier works such as *The Oak of the Golden Dreams* (1970). He makes this shift especially clear. Quoting Stephan Soomil's review of his first album, *The Oak of the Golden Dreams*, Budd repeated the critic's verdict that it was "little more than a euphonious waste of time" and then flipped the phrase into an aesthetic position of his own: he would indeed rather "fritter away the

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ultimately going to be called to cope with his legion of cultists. It seems so terribly unfair. Unfair to his art for sure!" "July 20, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*.

[432] Ibid.

[433] Vincent Plush, "Harold Budd," 48–49.

minutes with something pretty than with something turgid and repellent."[434] Rather than announcing a complete rejection of experimental rigor, the remark registers Budd's willingness, in this moment, to privilege his new song cycle over the more severe aesthetic tendencies he associated with certain strands of his earlier music.

Reviewing the April 24, 1973 "Music of Harold Budd" concert in the *Festival of American Music* at Cal State Dominguez Hills, Daniel Cariaga treated Budd as a composer substantial enough to anchor what he called "a Harold Budd Introspective." The evening, however, was marked by technical failure. An inoperative and apparently irreparable fuse in the hall's sound equipment delayed the concert by sixty minutes and prevented the performance of *Coeur d'Orr* (1969), a work Budd described as "not only soft, but not soft with vengeance."[435] Cariaga characterized *Lirio* (1971) and *Madrigals* as "temporally extensive, and jazz-oriented, or jazz-derived," before adding the qualified judgment that "they are not unpleasant; in fact, in a passive, mild way, they are entertaining." He also noted that Lukas Foss had premiered *Madrigals* in Florida the previous November, placing Budd's work within a broader professional network beyond Southern California.[436]

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[434] "April 29, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974; Stephan Soomil, "Classical LPs: Alla Breve," *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1973, B43.

[435] Daniel Cariaga, "Music Review: Works by Budd on Program," *Los Angeles Times*, April 26, 1973, G29; "Music Festival," *Los Angeles Times*, April 22, 1973, CS8; "April 29, 1973"; For a fuller discussion of *Coeur d'Orr* as part of Budd's early drone-based and electroacoustic practice, see Chapter Three.

[436] Daniel Cariaga, "Music Review: Works by Budd on Program." On the November 1972 Florida premiere of *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* under Lukas Foss, and Budd's later dissatisfaction with that performance, see Chapter Four.

The program also made Budd's engagement with spiritual jazz publicly legible, not merely private or epistolary. Cariaga noted that the evening would include "one by Pharoah Sanders, whom Budd admires," and that Budd closed the program with his arrangement of Sanders's "Let Us Go into the House of the Lord," performed with Charles Orena on saxophone and Budd at the piano.[437] The review places Sanders beside *Lirio* and *Madrigals* within the same concert frame: Budd's turn toward "pretty" music was already overlapping with his turn toward sacred, jazz-derived, and song-like materials. A few months later, on September 18, 1973, Budd reported with unmistakable satisfaction that "Butterfly Sunday" had been performed in Aspen that summer, describing a recording of the performance as "utter confirmation of hunches, guesses, and so forth."[438] Taken together, these reviews and letters suggest that Budd's music was beginning to circulate more widely at precisely the moment he was committing himself to the softer and more overtly lyrical sound world that would crystallize in *The Pavilion*.

That widening circulation also prompted a more deliberate effort to secure institutional support for the new work. Budd began seeking grant money for *The Pavilion*, suggesting that he understood the cycle as a substantial, large-scale work in progress. In a Guggenheim letter of support dated November 27, 1973, Childs pointed to Budd's "already completed focus" on his "proposed large-scale composition," praised *Madrigals* as "a sumptuous and astonishing piece," and predicted that the larger project would

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[437] Ibid.; "April 29, 1973" Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[438] "September, 18, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

define "a musical world all its own."[439] That world soon expanded further as Budd's interest in Qur'anic and Arabic materials grew. By March 1974, he described a new vocal work on a text "from the Koran" as occupying an "enormous amount" of his current thinking, adding that although the scoring was not finalized, the "notes, etc., are close to finish" and would likely involve harp, glockenspiel, bass-baritone, and gong or bells. The letter makes clear that this was not a marginal experiment but a central new work, already folded into the larger *Pavilion* project. Although it remains unclear whether Budd ultimately received the Guggenheim Fellowship, by 1974 he had secured a National Endowment for the Arts grant of $3,500 to complete his next work in the cycle, *Song of Paradise: 17 Illuminations on the Holy Koran*.[440]

For all the grant applications, institutional framing, and long-range planning that surrounded *The Pavilion*, Budd later recalled the origin of *Song of Paradise* in more intimate terms: the piece, he said, "came to [him] while walking through the San Fernando Mission on Easter Sunday."[441] He dedicated it "for Marvin Hayes" and "to the memory

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[439] "November 27, 1973," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[440] "March 6, 1974," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974; Budd teased that anyone who wanted an NEA grant should "write an opera based on the life of Benjamin Franklin for the Bi-Centennial." The joke is pointed: because 1975 applications would fund 1976 projects, the remark mocks the patriotic themes he imagined would appeal to Bicentennial-era arts funding. "March 12, 1974," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974; Paula J. Bishop, *The Patronage of Composers in the United States* (M.A. thesis, Ohio State University, 2005).

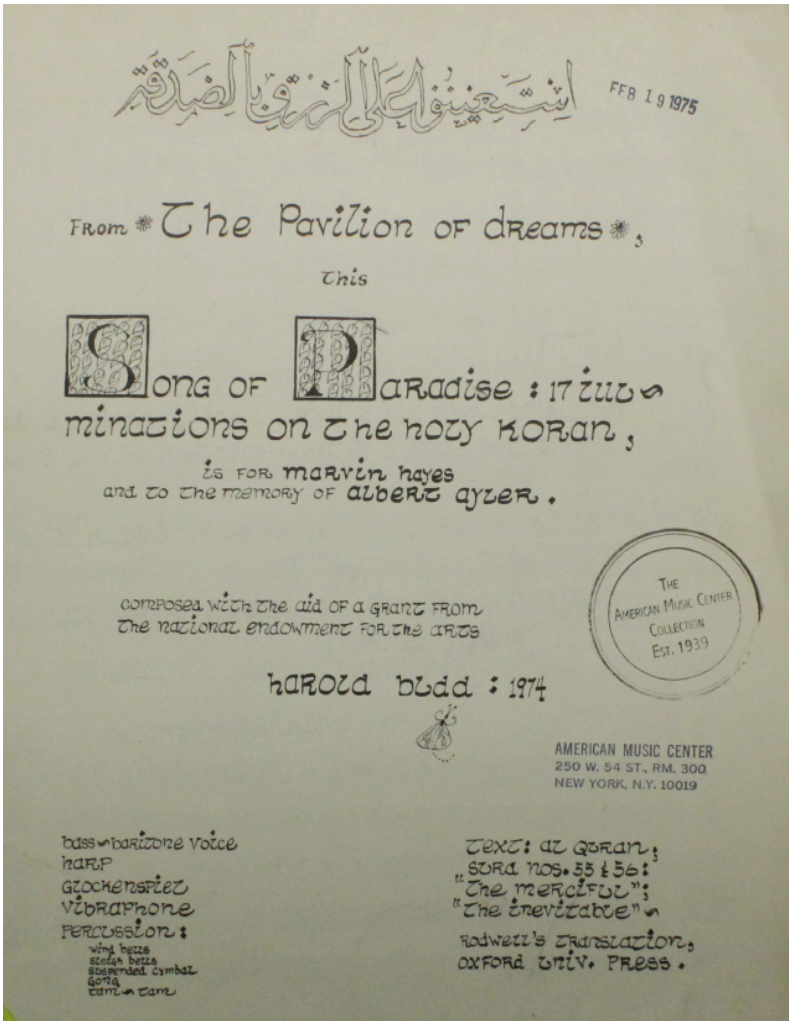
[441] May 4, 1974," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

of Ayler Albert" (Figure 49).[442] Hayes, who taught at CalArts, was an African American bass-baritone trained by Gwendolyn Koldofsky at USC and later by Lotte Lehmann and Pierre Bernac. His career placed him within the European art-song and opera, while his presence in Budd's circle also brought those traditions into contact with the Black vocal and spiritual-jazz references already gathering around *The Pavilion*. In that limited sense, he can be heard in the wake of figures such as Paul Robeson, though not as a direct analog: the available record points to a wide-ranging concert career rather than a repertory centered on spirituals or an explicitly political public role.[443]

[442] In an obituary for Donald Ayler, Wilmer casts the trumpeter's career as inseparable from the legend of his older brother and notes that Albert Ayler's death in 1970 remained unresolved, as he was "found drowned in circumstances that have never been fully explained." Val Wilmer, "Donald Ayler," *The Guardian*, November 16, 2007.

[443] Elaine Murphy, "Alumni Spotlight: Marvin Hayes," USC Thornton School of Music, February 17, 2010; Myrna Oliver, "Marvin Hayes; Bass-Baritone Sang Baroque, Romantic Repertoire," *Los Angeles Times*, January 11, 1996; Budd's support for Hayes extended beyond his own projects. In the same letter in which he says he is "going to the Hollywood Bowl tomorrow night to hear Marvin sing with the L.A. Phil in Beethoven's 9th," he signs off with "oh, Freunde! (yeah: what's up, brother?)," a joke that echoes the *Ninth Symphony's* text while taking on added force in relation to Hayes, a Black singer sounding within one of the central monuments of a predominantly White European classical tradition."July 5" (ca. 1976), Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

Figure 49. Harold Budd, *Song of Paradise: 17 Illuminations on the Holy Koran*, title page. *American Music Center Collection of Published Scores*, JPB 15-64, Music Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.



The score of *Song of Paradise: 17 Illuminations on the Holy Koran* presents Budd's sacred materials as both text and design. Across the top of the title page, he places the Arabic phrase "wa-staʿīnū bi-ṣ-ṣabri wa-ṣ-ṣalāh," "seek help through patience and prayer." He then cites Qur'anic passages from surahs 55 and 56 in A. J. Arberry's English

translation, *The Koran Interpreted*.[444] The score begins, then, with scriptural text, Arabic inscription, memorial dedication, and visual framing before any music sounds. The setting extends this frame through its instrumentation. Scored for bass-baritone, harp, glockenspiel, vibraphone, and percussion, the work places the voice within a small ensemble of plucked, struck, and sustaining instruments. Budd's spacing allows the voice to carry the text without conventional accompaniment or dramatic projection. The dedication to Hayes points to the voice for which the work was imagined, while the memorial to Ayler brings Budd's earlier connection to Black experimental jazz into the work's frame. In this sense, *Song of Paradise* extends the practice of the Coltrane and Sanders arrangements, moving from jazz revoicing to Qur'anic text-setting. The sketch clarifies how Budd made that shift at the level of vocal writing. Budd described himself as composing "a song, a long one" for Hayes on "a text from the Koran," and included a sketch in Db major for baritone voice and harp, suggesting that the work began as a vocal project.[445]

Budd understood the task as new, calling the piece his "first try at setting a text." That draft shows how he approached the problem, though not without hesitation. Budd admitted that, for a first attempt at setting words, he might have preferred "oratorical declamations of threats and cajolings," a formulation that places the task near theatrical speech and outside the wordless vocal practice of *Madrigals* and *Two Songs*.[446] Instead, he

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[444] A. J. Arberry, trans., *The Koran Interpreted* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1955).

[445] "March 29, 1974." Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–74.

[446] "March 29, 1974." Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

writes a narrow, syllabic vocal line over vertically spaced sonorities. The point is not dramatic projection but controlled utterance. That makes the passage significant within the cycle. It marks one of the first moments when Budd submits his language of stasis to the demands of a sacred text. The voice is no longer only a timbral layer. It must carry words, and with them new pressures of pacing, contour, and intelligibility.

A closer comparison shows that Budd did not simply transfer the "March 29 sketch" into the finished score (Figure 50). In the letter, the passage appears in a five-flat signature for baritone and harp alone, unfolding as a short, self-contained unit: the voice sets the line "With large dark eyes kept close / In their Pavilions / Whom Man Hath never Touched" in two brief phrases. In contrast, the harp supports it with a few discrete vertical sonorities. The effect is spare and exposed. In the finalized score, by contrast, the same text reappears without a key signature and within a broader instrumental frame.[447] What had been a compact baritone-and-harp setting is absorbed into a more layered ensemble texture, and the harmony no longer presents itself through the bounded five-flat notation of the sketch. The continuity lies in the basic procedure: in both versions, a low male voice delivers a restrained, syllabic line against struck, sustaining sonorities. But the latter score does not simply copy the earlier passage. It recomposes it, redistributing the material across a broader texture and altering how the musical surface is notated and heard.

[447] Harold Budd, *Song of Paradise: 17 Illuminations on the Holy Koran*, title page, American Music Center collection of published scores, JPB 15-64, Music Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Figure 50. Harold Budd's sketch to *Song of Paradise: 17 Illuminations on the Holy Koran*. "March 29, 1974." Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–74.



Budd was already planning a sequence of public concerts. He wrote to Childs that a "goodly big publicized Budd Concert" was set for May 10 at Wilshire Methodist Church in Los Angeles, sponsored by the American Harp Society. The letter suggests that *Madrigals* would likely appear on the program, even as Budd worried that the new Qur'anic vocal work might not be finished in time. Shortly afterward, he planned a second event at the Santa Barbara Mission, a "Marvin/Rose Angel coupling" that would pair *Song of Paradise* with *Madrigals*, the first work in the cycle. The Santa Barbara concert was conceived as a broader West Coast event rather than a local presentation. The program would also include Daniel Lentz's *Mass* and portions of Lou Harrison's *Mass*,

and Budd added, with characteristic exaggeration, that Harrison would probably come down "along with most of Northern California, apparently."[448]

Although Budd had anticipated Harrison's presence, Harrison does not appear to have been included on the bill. In May 1974, the Old Mission in Montecito provided the concert with a setting that shaped how the program was heard. Read through Stephanie Rocke's account of the twentieth-century concert mass, the event belonged to a moment in which mass-derived and sacred works had moved beyond liturgical use into concert presentation, where religious forms could carry political, ceremonial, and non-Christian meanings.[449] The Mission, therefore, mattered not only as a backdrop but as part of the program's frame. Richard Ames's review suggests that the setting sharpened the contrast between the two works. Lentz's premiere of *Missa Umbrarum* (1973), which he conducted himself, drew on the Latin Mass and, to Ames, sounded like an extension of older church music. Budd, conducting *Song of Paradise*, offered something less continuous with that tradition: a Qur'anic setting for baritone, harp, vibraphone, glockenspiel, and percussion that Ames heard as "lush," "very cloying," and saturated with extended sonorities, though also distinguished by Marvin Hayes's "deep, rich voice" and the "luxurious" color of the ensemble. If Lentz's work recalled an established liturgical past,

[448] "March 6, 1974," Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

[449] Stephanie Rocke, *The Origins and Ascendancy of the Concert Mass* (London: Routledge, 2021), 141–161.

Budd's assembled a different sacred frame from Qur'anic text, low voice, and sustaining percussion.[450]

What Budd wrote the day after the concert sharpens that picture by showing how strongly he identified the event as a breakthrough. Writing in a tone of hyperbole, he suggested that he may have written "the National Anthem of Islam," then described the Mission performance as "the most sensationally lovely concert" he had ever been involved in, with an "absolutely packed house," people sitting in the aisle, and a standing ovation for both works. He singled out Hayes in particular, writing that he "killed them," and called Lentz's *Mass* "simply stunning."[451] Budd's account also places *Song of Paradise* within the post-liturgical performance world Rocke describes for the modern concert mass: a world in which religious forms persist outside church use because they can still organize public events with seriousness and scale. His list of attendees extended well beyond CalArts, including singers, harpists, university people, composers, the press, and "the innocent and the profane." Yet the work itself remained provisional. Budd noted that there was "no tape" because of a last-minute logistical failure, and added that after the rehearsals, he had "re-composed some of it" based on what he heard. *Song of Paradise*, then, was not fixed in advance as a finished work. Even at its premiere, it remained open to revision through rehearsal and performance.[452]

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[450] Richard Ames, "Capacity Crowd Hears New Music at Mission," *Santa Barbara News-Press*, May 28, 1974, B-10; I would like to thank Stephanie Rocke for providing me with this review.

[451] "May 28, 1974," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

[452] "May 28, 1974," Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

Song of Paradise received another major hearing on the *Monday Evening Concerts* series (*MEC*), with Budd conducting and Hayes appearing again as bass soloist. By that point, neither artist was new to *MEC*: Hayes had already appeared there in Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* in 1973 and Monteverdi's *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* in 1975, while Budd had earlier entered the series with his *Black Flowers* in 1970, and then *The Dragonfly Cymbal* and *Piano Piece* in 1973.[453] The significance of the 1975 performance, then, lies not in first institutional recognition but in consolidation. *Song of Paradise* returned to a venue that already knew Budd's work, and Daniel Cariaga's review makes clear that its effect depended in part on its distinctive arrangement: a "pastel-hued," "sparsely scored but finally lush" piece for "singer, harp and three percussionists." Cariaga acknowledged its short vocal range, uncomplicated materials, and brief Qur'anic quotations, but concluded that the result was not merely "simplistic" but "haunting" in this performance he wrote that the "year-old, 13-minute piece seemed perfectly irresistible."[454]

Budd's musical writing became more settled, less overtly conceptual, and closer to that of a composer working primarily through staff notation. By 1974, he composed *In Delius' Sleep* for clarinet and piano, a work commissioned by the University of Redlands and dedicated to Barney Childs and Philip Rehfeldt (Figure 51). The piece

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[453] Jonathan Hepfer, "*MEC* Complete Chronology: 1939–2020," *Monday Evening Concerts*; On Budd's earlier *MEC* appearances, see Chapter One for *Black Flowers* and its reception within Budd's late-1960s reductionist practice; see Chapter Four for the January 22, 1973 *MEC* program, where Richard Bunger performed *The Dragonfly Cymbal* alongside *Piano Piece*, staging a blue-lit grand piano as visual object while the electric piano carried the sound.

[454] Daniel Cariaga, "Final Monday Evening Concert," *Los Angeles Times*, December 17, 1975, H25.

features Budd's characteristic soft, arpeggiated piano writing, while the clarinetist doubles on tam-tam, wind bells, and sleigh bells.[455] Its formal design also recalls *Madrigals*: rather than unfolding through exposition, development, and return, it proceeds through shifts from one sonorous field to another. A performance note preserved with the *In Delius' Sleep* materials makes the connection to *The Pavilion* world more explicit. What follows the opening, Budd writes, moves into "open time," with "languid melodic" writing and arpeggiated texture "in the manner of '…*Rose Angel*' and '*Bismillahi*…,'" placing the work directly alongside the cycle's language.[456]

In Delius' Sleep opens onto two lines of reference. The title names Delius directly, placing the work in a world of European tone poem, nature imagery, pictorial scene, and reverie rather than abstract formal design.[457] Ra enters differently, at the threshold of the piece. Budd describes the opening as "brisk, disjunct," and "completely out of character" with what follows, tracing its "wrong-key" "V13–I cadence" to Ra. Yet the harmony

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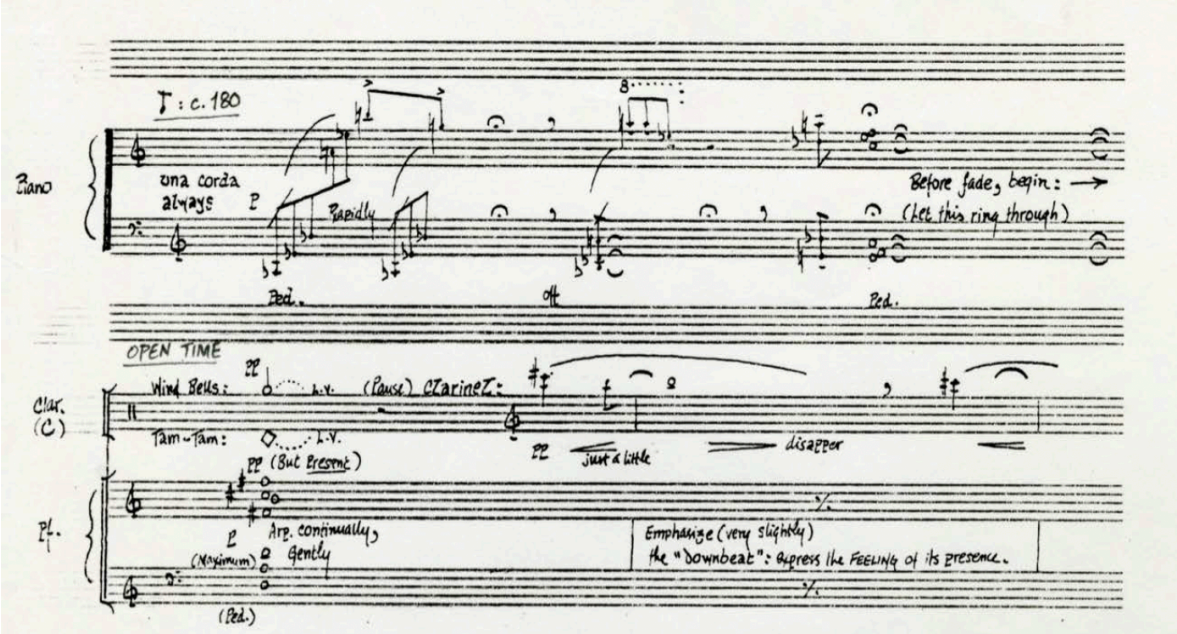
[455] Harold Budd, *In Delius' Sleep*, performed by Barney Childs (piano), and Philip Rehfeldt (clarinet), UC San Diego Department of Music Concert Archive, April 27, 1976; Also reference Marty Walker, *Clarinets*, Advance Recordings FGR-13, LP (1984), Barney Childs (piano), and Marty Walker (clarinet and percussion), recorded at the University of Redlands.

[456] "December 3," (ca. 1975), Harold Budd to Marty Walker, *Marty Walker Collection*, ARS-0221, Stanford Archive of Recorded Sound, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, CA.

[457] Mark Prendergast's account of Delius is suggestive here, especially in its emphasis on Debussyan modality, block-like parallel motion, "Romantic rapture," and a "gift of creating a music of great tranquillity." Prendergast also singles out shorter works such as *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* for their atmosphere of melancholy, rural hush, and sensuous color, even calling the piece an "Ambient masterpiece." While that term is obviously retrospective, it helps clarify why Delius could matter to Budd. Mark Prendergast, *The Ambient Century: From Mahler to Moby—The Evolution of Sound in the Electronic Age*, new ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 2003), 14–15.

does not function as a cadence in any straightforward sense. Budd's remark is more useful as an account of the opening's role than as harmonic analysis. The passage works less as a progression than as a threshold sonority, a brief disjunct gesture that clears space for the more languid, arpeggiated music that follows. Delius names the work's announced world; Ra supplies the opening disruption that unsettles it.[458]

Figure 51. Harold Budd, *In Delius' Sleep* (1974) dedicated to Barney Childs and Philip Rehfeldt, opening measures. Harold Budd, *In Delius' Sleep*, Box 1, folder 18, "Marty Walker Collection," ARS-0221, *Stanford Archive of Recorded Sound*, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, CA.



[458] John Szwed notes that Ra used "space chords" to mark introductions, endings, changes of direction, or shifts into new tonal areas. Budd does not use the term, but his description of the opening of *In Delius' Sleep* as "brisk," "disjunct," "wrong-key," and "completely out of character" suggests a comparable threshold function. John F. Szwed, *Space Is the Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1997), xvii and 214.

That asymmetry also shapes the politics of attribution. Delius is made public in the title, whereas Ra surfaces only in Budd's private explanation of the opening as "chaos for inexplicable reasons giving somewhere entirely foreign," a "musical double-take."[459] The result is not necessarily deliberate concealment, but it does reproduce a familiar imbalance: European influence is displayed as named lineage, while Black influence is absorbed into procedure and effect. In *Delius Sleep*, Delius furnishes the piece's announced world; Ra remains audible mainly in the disruptive force that unsettles its entrance.

Marion Brown: *Bismillahi 'Rrahmani 'Rrahim*

If *In Delius' Sleep* registers an asymmetry between public title and private acknowledgment, the work that followed suggests a more sustained effort to bring Budd's developing "sacred style" into contact with musicians associated with Black experimental jazz. One of the most important of those encounters was with the saxophonist and composer Marion Brown. Budd later recalled that he had long known of Brown as one of the major figures in the East Coast Black avant-garde of the 1960s, alongside Albert Ayler, Don Cherry, Ornette Coleman, Robin Kenyatta, and John Tchicai.[460] In his master's thesis, Brown presented his music as an evolving practice rather than a fixed style. He traced a path from "total 'free' thematic improvisation" to the use of ethnic and miscellaneous instruments, then to structured improvisations on literary

[459] "December 3," (ca. 1975), Harold Budd to Marty Walker.

[460] Plush, "Harold Budd," 53–54.

themes, and finally to standard jazz compositions.[461] What emerges is a self-conscious stylistic pluralism, though one Brown presents as a continuous development rather than a series of unrelated turns.

The meeting came about by chance. Brown was in Santa Barbara in the winter of 1973 to perform with Elliott Schwartz at UC Santa Barbara. Schwartz connected Brown and Budd through overlapping ties: he knew Brown through Bowdoin College, where Brown was completing his undergraduate degree, and he held a visiting appointment at UCSB that year. Brown later recalled that Schwartz introduced him to several composers during the trip, including Budd, and that he first heard Budd's music that same night at Daniel Lentz's home.[462] Budd remembered the episode differently, stressing its improbability. Schwartz, whom he scarcely knew, arrived with Brown after what Budd later called a "mammothly unsuccessful" duo tour, and the pairing struck him as almost absurd, as though Schwartz and Brown belonged to entirely different musical worlds.[463]

Once introductions were made, however, Budd's attention shifted almost entirely to Brown. While others in the room carried on what he later recalled as ordinary

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[461] Marion Brown Jr., *Faces and Places: The Music and Travels of a Contemporary Jazz Musician* (M.A. thesis, Wesleyan University, 1976), 1–2.

[462] Brown writes "Harold Linz," but given the surrounding context and Budd's own recollection, this appears to be a mistaken reference to Daniel Lentz, already a familiar figure in Budd's Santa Barbara circle; Marion Brown Jr., *Faces and Places: The Music and Travels of a Contemporary Jazz Musician*, 190; Childs would almost certainly have known Elliott Schwartz already, since the two co-edited *Contemporary Composers on Contemporary Music* (1968). Elliott Schwartz and Barney Childs, eds., *Contemporary Composers on Contemporary Music* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968).

[463] Budd might be referring to the album *Soundways* (1973) featuring Marion Brown and Elliot Schwartz. Plush, "Harold Budd," 54.

"composerly talk" about works, performances, and grants, Budd spent the evening in extended conversation with Brown, later admitting that he must have seemed "the rudest son of a bitch in the world."[464] The remark suggests less incivility than excitement. Brown was an artist Budd admired deeply, and one he had never expected to meet in person. Brown, for his part, remembered liking Budd's music immediately. After returning to Brunswick, he continued corresponding with Budd and hoped to record the prospective work on *Impulse* records. Budd soon sent him tapes of *Madrigals*, *Song of Paradise*, and his adaptation of Coltrane's "After the Rain."[465]

What gave the meeting particular significance was the speed with which it became a compositional project. Budd recalled that before long the two had agreed on a piece for alto saxophone and ensemble. Brown had already heard a tape of *Madrigals*, apparently played for him by Schwartz, and asked whether the new work might proceed in a similar style.[466] Budd recalled this with evident pleasure, since Brown had already responded positively to the musical direction of the first work in the cycle. The collaboration thus confirmed that Budd's newer, softer, and more tonal idiom could serve as common ground with a musician whose own work had also moved beyond the polarities of the 1960s avant-garde.

In Brown's case, this includes his participation in Coltrane's watershed 1965 recording *Ascension*, with its dense collective improvisation and volatile ensemble texture,

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[464] Plush, "Harold Budd," 54.

[465] Marion Brown Jr., *Faces and Places: The Music and Travels of a Contemporary Jazz Musician*, 190.

[466] Plush, "Harold Budd," 55.

as well as his own experimental jazz recordings of the period, such as *Marion Brown Quartet* (1966), which likewise emerge from the freer musical language of the mid-1960s, and, later, *Afternoon of a Georgia Faun* (1970).[467] But *Georgia Faun* already points elsewhere. Brown calls it "an extended improvisation based on structured sections that flow uninterruptedly into one another like links in a chain," organized not around solos but around shifting instrumental "stations."[468] He described its sound world through nature, memory, and atmosphere: "raindrops, water," animals, distant voices, wind through trees, and remembered Georgia scenes of birds, dogs, crickets, and sanctified church music.[469]

By 1974, the opening and closing movements of Brown's *Sweet Earth Flying* ("Pt. 1" and "Pt. 5") show Brown moving toward a quieter, more spacious idiom, with Paul Bley's playing contributing to an almost prayerlike mood. The title echoes Jean Toomer's "Storm Ending," and the music seems to dwell in the poem's imagery: "great, hollow, bell-like flowers," "rain dripping… like golden honey," and "the sweet earth flying from the thunder."[470] Their connection also appeared in print. When Michael Byron published

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[467] Budd was not an especially political figure in the 1960s, whereas Brown emerged as one of the more explicitly political voices in Black experimental music during that decade. Brown described music as "definitely a part of what's going on in the Black revolution in America," also stressed that such meaning was not guaranteed, since some listeners would hear it only as "a kind of entertainment." Eric Porter, "Reconsidering 'the Revolution in Music,'" *African American Literature in Transition, 1960–1970: Black Art, Politics, and Aesthetics*, ed. James Smethurst and Cheryl A. Wall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 100.

[468] Marion Brown, *Notes to Afternoon of a Georgia Faun: Views and Reviews* (NIA Music, 1973), 1–3.

[469] Ibid.

[470] Brown's setting of Jean Toomer's "Karintha" in his album *Geechee Recollections* (1973) was not his first engagement with the African-American poet associated with the Harlem Renaissance, but here the piece becomes more than a "soundtrack" to the text: narrated

the second volume of *Pieces*, he placed Brown's *Sweet Earth Flying* immediately after Budd's *Song of Paradise*.[471] Budd had been "fairly careful" about where *Song of Paradise* would appear in the issue, since editorial proximity implied aesthetic company. Although he appreciated Byron's decision to "aptly segregate" the work from Robert Ashley, David Berman, David Rosenboom, and others, it remained, in Budd's words, "still too close for my wishes."[472] Budd's response shows how anthology order functioned for him as a form of aesthetic positioning, capable of clarifying or distorting the affiliations he wanted his music to carry.[473]

The connection between Brown and Budd was not only a matter of adjacency, implication, or editorial grouping. It also entered the music itself. Their collaboration was ultimately realized in an eighteen-minute work for Brown titled in Arabic *Bismillahi 'Rrahmani 'Rrahim* (1974–75), conventionally translated as "In the name of God, the Most

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by Bill Hasson over collective improvisation and unfolding in "free time," that is, without a regular pulse or meter rather than direct musical illustration. Jürgen E. Grandt, "The Sound of Red Dust: Jean Toomer, Marion Brown, and the Sonic Transactions of 'Karintha,'" *Textual Cultures: Texts, Contexts, Interpretation* 13, no. 1 (Spring 2020): 131; *October Dreams* (1977), an unpublished cycle of four part-songs or "madrigals" by Budd, makes its literary affiliations explicit on the score itself: the title page dedicates the work to Daniel Lentz, and the surviving manuscript sets texts by Jean Toomer, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Paula Bethsebe, and e.e. cummings, suggesting that Brown was probably Budd's point of entry to Toomer. Harold Budd, *October Dreams* (unpublished manuscript score, 1977), courtesy of Daniel Lentz.

[471] Daniel Lentz's *Sun Tropes* (1974) is published after Budd's work; Daniel Lentz, "Sun Tropes" P*ieces: A Second Anthology*, ed. Michael Byron (Vancouver, BC: A.R.C. Publications, 1976), 17–26.

[472] "September 7, 1976," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

[473] Marion Brown, "Sweet Earth Flying" P*ieces: A Second Anthology*, ed. Michael Byron (Vancouver, BC: A.R.C. Publications, 1976), 1–2; Harold Budd "Song of Paradise" P*ieces: A Second Anthology*, ed. Michael Byron (Vancouver, BC: A.R.C. Publications, 1976), 3–16.

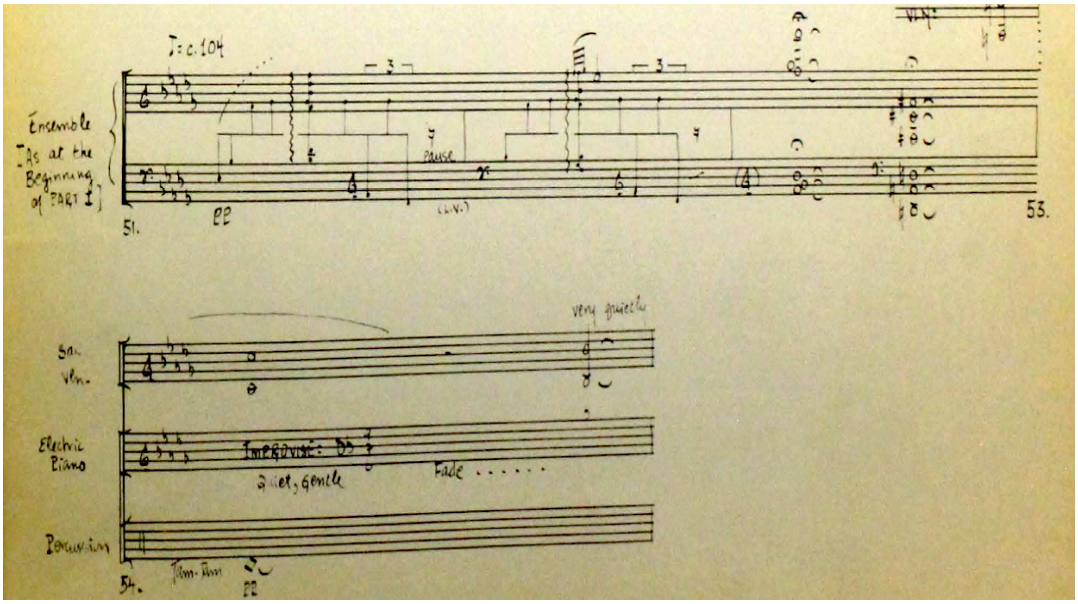
Compassionate, the Most Merciful." The phrase also appears on the cover of *Song of Paradise*, suggesting that Budd understood it as part of a larger constellation of associations rather than as a self-contained sacred citation. On the prefatory page to *Bismillahi*, he places the phrase beside a quatrain from the Persian *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam in which floral beauty emerges from blood and burial. The effect is to pull the Islamic invocation out of a strictly devotional frame and suspend it within a broader poetic field of mortality, beauty, and sacred utterance. The title is significant in another sense as well, since it appears to offer a veiled response to Sanders's 1970 Arabic album title *Deaf Dumb Blind (Summun Bukmun Umyun)*, which included "Let Us Go into the House of the Lord," a piece Budd arranged in *Two Songs*.

Bismillahi unfolds in two sections, each in AB form. In each A section, the soloist states and varies the melody; in each B section, the writing opens into a freer role for the saxophone. Each section is defined by a distinct instrumental grouping, making this the most varied scoring in the cycle up to this point. As in several of Budd's works from this period, the ensemble is built around percussive, bell-like, and sustaining timbres. Part I is scored for solo alto saxophone with glockenspiel, celeste, harp, electric piano, suspended wind bells, gong, and tam-tam. Part II retains the solo saxophone but reconfigures the accompanying ensemble as violin, celeste, two marimbas played by four performers, and electric piano. In the coda, Budd returns to the instrumentation of Part I, adding a violin.

Harmonically, *Bismillahi* remains within Budd's characteristic idiom of arpeggiated extended tertian sonorities and unexpected harmonic turns. The alto saxophone functions as the voice above these sonorities. Temporal organization is similarly loose and expansive, much as in *Madrigals*. The crucial difference is the degree of freedom

granted to the soloist. Rather than carrying a fixed melodic line, the saxophone moves through changes and extends Budd's slow-paced, unresolved musical material, as at measure 34 (Figure 52). There, Budd instructs all performers to improvise over a progression of extended sonorities: EM with added sixth, seventh, and ninth, then BM with the same extensions, and finally DM7. Heard in context, these sonorities function less as directed harmonic motion than as coloristic planes, shaped by voicing, inversion, and register rather than conventional resolution. The ending is also self-referential. Budd recalls the work's opening and brings it to a close with a Db improvisation that folds an earlier conceptual vocabulary back into the piece, most vividly recalling his *Candy Apple Revision*.

Figure 52. Harold Budd, *Bismillahi 'Rrahmani 'Rrahim*, final measures. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. *American Music Center collection of published scores*, Series I: Composers, JPB 15-64, Music Division.



On February 28, 1975, *Bismillahi* premiered at Wesleyan University.[474] The event, however, did not emerge suddenly, but grew out of a more complicated set of personal, financial, and artistic circumstances. Budd initially hoped to bring Brown to California, but when he could not get the money, Brown instead "raised the bread" to bring Budd east, arranging for him to serve as guest composer at Wesleyan during the last week of February. The program was to include the first performance of Budd's new piece for Brown, alongside *Madrigals* sung by an eighteen-member women's chorus. Budd had, by his own account, completed only a "pencil sketch" of the score before sending it to Connecticut. The prospect left him "rigid with fear": he wanted the work to be "very good," and admitted that he remained his own "toughest critic."[475]

By late January, Budd had finished the piece, but completion did not settle his anxiety. What remained was the problem of realization. With the score already in Connecticut, presumably being "rehearsed and mangled," he distrusted the "concert version" unless he could be there to explain it. The written gestures, he explained, were only "that moment's version of what is essentially a print-out of improvisation." To offset this uncertainty, he prepared a separate "chart," or "lead sheet," hoping to clarify the work's underlying shape beyond what standard notation could capture. At the same time, he stressed the piece's directness: it was "the most 'down home'" music he had yet

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[474] The world premiere, was performed by Marion Brown, alto saxophone, with Mark Slobin, violin, Bob Becker and Jay Hoggard, marimbas, Nancy Freeman, harp, Sumarsam and Alex Dea, percussion, and Harold Budd, electric piano; conducted by Neely Bruce, at Crowell Concert Hall. Marion Brown Jr., *Faces and Places: The Music and Travels of a Contemporary Jazz Musician*, 258.

[475] "January 6, 1975," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

written, "structurally as simple AB," and "harmonically less convoluted than *Madrigals*," though still, in his words, a "poetic tour de force," with the celeste largely responsible for what he called his "Metaphysical Conceit."[476]

As the date approached, Budd began to grasp that the Wesleyan visit was being organized on a scale far beyond an ordinary guest-composer appearance. Before leaving for Connecticut, he confessed that he felt "rather anxious," since the organizers were "really going all out" and he wanted to live up to "VERY MUCH their efforts." Wesleyan had drawn up a full schedule of sectionals, full rehearsals, and dress rehearsals for *Madrigals* and the new work, while also bringing in "heavy-weight patrons," advertisements in the Boston and New York papers, a *DownBeat* reviewer, and two *Impulse* record producers. The presence of *Impulse* placed the event within a larger recording network. By the mid-1970s, the label had become a principal home for the spiritually charged and avant-garde wing of Black jazz, its identity forged above all through Coltrane and extended through a wider circle of post-Coltrane saxophonists and experimentalists.[477]

Earlier in this chapter, *Impulse* has already appeared as the label through which Budd encountered Sanders, the late Coltrane circle, and a broader spiritual-jazz milieu that shaped his own listening and compositional turn. Now that the world appeared not as a recorded influence at a distance but as an immediate professional and institutional

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[476] "January 28, 1975," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

[477] Ashley Kahn, *The House That Trane Built: The Story of Impulse Records* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 4–6.

presence around the Brown collaboration itself. By the time Budd arrived, Brown had already recorded the first part of the piece for *Impulse*, in both a full concert version and a reduced "lead sheet" version.[478] The Wesleyan premiere thus stood at a revealing intersection of university presentation, recording culture, and the wider *Impulse* network through which Budd's affinity with spiritual jazz was briefly drawn into concrete public form.

The second performance of *Bismillahi*, given on March 1, 1975, brought together an unusually varied ensemble: Budd on Fender Rhodes and electric piano; Stanley Cowell, celeste; Bob Becker, glockenspiel; José Goico, marimba; Nancy Freeman, harp; Mark Slobin, violin; and a percussion section including Rashied Ali, Sumarsam, Bob Becker, and Ed Blackwell.[479] Of these musicians, Ali and Blackwell had both performed and recorded with John Coltrane in the mid-1960s, while Cowell, though not a direct collaborator, moved within Coltrane's extended circle through figures such as Marion Brown. Their presence underscored the extent to which the performance drew Budd's work into the orbit of post-Coltrane experimental jazz. Later recollections, however, suggest a more uneven response. Ethnomusicologist Mark Slobin later remembered the event as part of a "golden age for new composition at Wesleyan," when "premieres were continuous," and the department's concentration of musicians from Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, African, African American, and other traditions made such crossings feel

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[478] "February16, 1975," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

[479] Harold Budd, USC Thornton School of Music Records, Boxes 81, 86, 87, and 90, magnetic audio reel recording of *Composer's Forum*, December 3, 1976.

almost ordinary. He recalled liking the piece and remembered it as "well received," even if, in Wesleyan's experimental climate, it did not register as avant-garde in quite the same way as the music of Alvin Lucier.[480]

Brown recalled that Budd's work met with a mixed response at Wesleyan, where some listeners dismissed it as too "mushy" and "thick" or faulted it for failing to "swing."[481] Brown was also "surprised to learn after the concert that not too many people liked the music," noting that such criticisms often rested on expectations the piece did not seek to fulfill. Brown instead valued the work for the alternative performance ethic it demanded, describing it in the following terms: "His composition was a challenge for me in the sense that I had to play very quietly, and with total restraint. I do not always play that way. It is a pleasure to do so at times."[482] Budd later cast the Wesleyan trip as a turning point. He described it as "virtually the first time" he had gone anywhere as a composer under the banner of the 'new' sort of music he was

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[480] Mark Slobin email to author, March 12, 2025.

[481] Brown's recollection echoes a familiar jazz side critique of third stream adjacent work. Writing of objections to Gunther Schuller, Stan Kenton, and John Lewis, one account describes a perceived threat to "swing feel and pulse, or 'groove,'" as well as to improvisational freedom; it goes on to note that similar complaints were leveled at the Bill Evans Trio and the Dave Brubeck Quartet when their music seemed to "cease having a groove." Brown's own response, however, shifts the terms of judgment, valuing Budd's piece precisely for the disciplined quietude and "total restraint" it required. David Joyner, "Analyzing Third Stream," *Contemporary Music Review* 19, no. 1 (2000): 81–86; For more on Graettinger and Budd's relation to this West Coast jazz-modernist lineage, see Chapter Two, especially the discussion of Budd and James Tenney's examination of Graettinger's materials in Stan Kenton's office at the request of *Source*. See also "July 14, 1973," Harold Budd to Robert Badgett Morgan, 1973–1974, Folder 2, Box 1, *Stan Kenton Collection*, 06-017, University of North Texas Music Library.

[482] Marion Brown Jr., *Faces and Places: The Music and Travels of a Contemporary Jazz Musician*, 190–191.

beginning to pursue, and he sharply distinguishes that experience from the institutional experimentalism represented at Wesleyan by Alvin Lucier. Budd recalled Brown's question, "You don't want to be like Alvin Lucier, do you?" Budd's answer was "No." Brown then warned him to stop being "so cloistered," insisting that if he continued on this path, "your days as a teacher are doomed."[483]

Brown's challenge was not merely rhetorical. It was embedded in the conditions of the visit itself, which placed Budd in close contact with Brown's household, working habits, and musical circle. Budd's stay with the Brown family made the Wesleyan visit more than a professional engagement, bringing him into a world different from the one he had known in Los Angeles. It also gave him a fuller sense of Brown as both musician and person. Budd admired Brown as a hard-working and serious artist, and he heard in Brown's alto a combination of Johnny Hodges's lyric phrasing and vibrato with Ben Webster's rougher tone. The visit thus gave Budd not only a performer for *Bismillahi* but also a model of the discipline and musical authority he increasingly valued.[484]

Budd's recollection of the visit makes clear that Wesleyan exposed him to two different experimental cultures. Although he described Alvin Lucier as "a pleasant enough person," he added that they had "so little in common" that their conversations were "tedious for both of us."[485] By contrast, his account of the visit is saturated with the names and sounds of Brown's circle: Ali, Blackwell, Cowell, Bill Hasson, Leo Smith, and

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[483] Plush, "Harold Budd," 59–61.

[484] "March 8, 1975," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

[485] "March 8, 1975," Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

Reggie Workman. The distinction was not simply personal. Lucier represented the university-based experimentalism Budd increasingly wanted to avoid, while Brown's circle connected him to the professional networks of Black improvisers and post-Coltrane musicians.[486] Budd's own narrative leaves little doubt which of the two felt like his future.

Los Angeles to London

After the Wesleyan concert, Budd planned to record the second part of *Bismillahi* for inclusion on *Vista* (1975), the new *Impulse* album Brown was then preparing. He wrote that Brown would join him, John Bergamo, and the South Indian violinist L. Subramaniam in realizing the score.[487] Yet the surviving evidence suggests that this plan changed. Brown later recalled *that Vista* was recorded in New York with Cowell on piano, Anthony Davis on Fender Rhodes electric piano, Bill Braynon on celeste, Workman on bass, Jimmy Hopps on cymbals, Goico on finger cymbals, and Allen Murphy on bells.

Budd was not present at the New York session, even though his name appears in the album credits, suggesting he was added in postproduction. Brown's own account of the later Los Angeles work points in that direction. Describing the mixing sessions at Westlake Audio with producer Ed Michel and engineer Baker Bixby, he stressed the precision of the studio's computerized system and notes that, during mixing, one could

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[486] Ibid.

[487] Ibid.

"splice, and manipulate tape" so that it either preserved or transformed the "original sounds," and even "completely remove any part previously recorded, and replace it with another."[488] In that light, Budd may have misunderstood what Brown was doing in Los Angeles: not continuing the recording sessions there, but mixing, editing, and possibly integrating separately recorded material into the final master. Whatever the exact production history, the released album ultimately placed Budd's piece within a strikingly broad and distinguished program: Cowell's *Maimoun*, Stevie Wonder's *Visions*, Brown's *Vista*, and Braynon's *Moment of Truth* and *Djinji*.[489]

If *Vista* shows how Budd's music could be absorbed into a finished studio object through postproduction, the next episode reveals a looser but no less consequential mode of circulation. Beyond the album, the session, and often before publication or release, tapes carried works across the informal networks of the 1970s experimental scene. For experimental musicians working outside major institutions and commercial recording systems, tape trading functioned as an infrastructure of exchange, allowing works to move between regional scenes, reach collaborators and advocates far from the site of performance, and circulate before they appeared in print or on a label.[490]

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[488] Marion Brown Jr., *Faces and Places: The Music and Travels of a Contemporary Jazz Musician*, 192.

[489] Marion Brown, *Vista*, ABC Impulse! ASD-9304, LP, quadraphonic album, 1975.

[490] As noted in Chapter Two, David Mahler later recalled in an interview with the author that magnetic tape altered composers' sense of sonic possibility: it could be frozen, repeated, reversed, transposed, and carried elsewhere. Just as importantly, it made music portable, passing from hand to hand in ways that blurred the line between private study, friendship, and distribution. In that sense, tape exchange formed part of the same experimental ecology as letters, indie magazines, and small labels: a decentralized means of sustaining community, influence, and stylistic development across distance.

In Budd's case, this informal route led from California to Great Britain through Gavin Bryars, a British composer connected to the London experimental scene and to Eno's Obscure Records circle. Eno had asked Bryars and Michael Nyman to advise on possible albums and source material, and Bryars was already listening across the same tape networks that linked John Adams, Martin Bartlett, Peter Garland, Daniel Lentz, Ingram Marshall, James Tenney, and other California-based composers to sympathetic listeners in Britain. Budd's music reached him on "1/4" reel-to-reel tapes," which Bryars then brought into Eno's orbit.[491]

Bryars's later recollection clarifies both the route by which Budd's music reached Eno and the reasons it resonated there. It also helps explain, at least in part, the relative absence of California experimentalists from Nyman's 1974 book *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond*. As Bryars later suggested, Nyman simply "didn't know them," working instead from the London and New York circles already available to him.[492] Barney Childs had identified the same limitation in his 1975 review of Nyman, criticizing the book's narrow account of experimental music and its failure to reckon with the West Coast more broadly.[493] The aesthetic fit was as important as the route of transmission. Bryars recalled that he "got on really well" with Budd's "slow pace and simple but rich harmonies," while for Eno, "it was the static, quasi ambient aspect that attracted him, as

[491] Author interview with Gavin Bryars, May 19, 2023; Gavin Bryars, email to the author, August 28, 2021.

[492] Author interview with Gavin Bryars, May 19, 2023.

[493] Barney Childs, "*Experimental Music* Review," *Music Educators Journal* 61, no. 9 (May 1975): 79–82; See Chapter One.

he was moving towards that territory in his own work." The point, then, is not simply that Bryars mediated Budd's entry into Eno's circle. Tape circulation brought Budd's music to listeners who were already predisposed to value its slow pace, simple harmonies, and static surfaces. What remained unresolved was what that contact would mean for Budd at the moment he was leaving CalArts.

By June 1976, as Budd approached what he believed would be his "last day at CalArts," he admitted, "I really don't have the faintest idea what I'm going to be doing." Teaching offered him a paycheck but not a future; the deeper problem was the scarcity of performances and the sense that institutional life did little to sustain his work as a composer. Against that backdrop, Eno's invitation to record in London appeared less as the arrival of security than as the opening of an uncertain possibility. Budd later remembered Eno calling him to say, "I've just heard this tape of yours. Is this what you do? Why don't you come to London to record it?"[494]

The call, however, was only the visible endpoint of a longer process. Budd traced the trip to a "curious odyssey" that had begun eighteen months earlier, when Garland kept pressing him to send Bryars "some tapes." Budd had "kept saying no," but Garland's persistence, together with the continued circulation of those tapes, meant that the project eventually "came to pass." By then, it was virtually a "fait accompli": Eno would "produce" the album, Budd would retain "publishing royalties plus mechanical

[494] Mike Barnes, "Harold Budd, " *The Wire: Invisible*, Tony Herrington, ed. (London: Quartet Books, 1998), 36; also reference David Sheppard, *On Some Faraway Beach: The Life and Times of Brian Eno* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2009), 226–27.

rights," and arrangements were in place to cover the costs of the trip.[495] What had begun as informal tape circulation had now become a practical itinerary: travel to London, rehearsals, studio time, and a commercially released recording. Crucially, that itinerary also included Brown, whose presence allowed Budd to preserve the saxophone part of *Bismillahi* with the performer for whom the work had been conceived.

Budd reconstructed the trip in detail: he arrived at Eno's "via limousine" on a Wednesday evening, spent the next day with Brown "window shopping and pub-crawling" around Oxford Circus and Bond Street, rehearsed all day Friday, and then plunged into a weekend of intensive studio work. Had anyone told him after the rehearsals that by Sunday they would have "an album of 50' of music," he said, he would have thought they were "fucking nuts." Small wonder, then, that the sessions left him, by his own account, "absolutely beside myself with apprehension and despair." Yet the scale of the operation also astonished him. Island Records' "computerized 24-track studio" seemed to him to work "like it's from NASA." Brown "poured some very, very exotic oils on *Bismillahi*," Budd added "3 or 4 extra minutes of improvisation," and the musicians applauded Brown after the final take. Eno was simultaneously drawing in BBC-recorded percussion and female chorus, and by Sunday night, recording and mixing had yielded what Budd could finally recognize as a finalized product. His characterizations of the British experimental music scene are telling. Bryars was "simply the nicest single cat in God's creation;" Michael Nyman, the "'articulator' of the ethic" and "an awfully good composer;" and Brian Eno, above all, "the fountainhead," whom

[495] "October 29," (ca. 1976), Harold Budd to Peter Garland, *Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records*, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 20.5.

Budd was already prepared to call "the future of new music in England at least."[496] For Budd, the surprise was not only that the future of new music might lie elsewhere, but that "it would be from England."[497]

The Pavilion, the tenth release on Eno's Obscure Records, appeared in 1978, but it did not present the cycle in full. Instead, the album offers a partial selection from the larger project, comprising *Bismillahi*, "Two Songs," *Madrigals*, and *Juno*. Among the label's ten releases, Budd's was also one of only four credited to a single composer rather than to a collective or various-artists format, placing him alongside Bryars, Eno, and Nyman. As Victor Szabo notes, Obscure was intended to "connect with listeners who might not otherwise encounter" such music and even to "enrich the popular mainstream with new music," even if Island Records (Obscure's parent company) barely promoted the series.[498] What distinguished *The Pavilion* itself, however, was that Budd brought East Coast-based Brown to London to perform *Bismillahi*. His presence preserved, within an otherwise London-based production, a link to the American new-music networks and post-Coltrane jazz world from which the project had emerged. As Budd later remarked,

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[496] "December 3, 1976," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977. By "articulator," Budd likely meant a writer who gave language and shape to new music, a role Michael Nyman occupied through his criticism, even if his book *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond* focused more on New York and London scenes; By the mid-1970s, Brian Eno was already well known not only for his earlier work with Roxy Music but also for his solo albums and studio experiments, including *Here Come the Warm Jets* (1974), *Another Green World* (1975), and *Discreet Music* (1975), which helped establish his reputation as a leading figure in experimental and emerging "ambient" music.

[497] "December 3, 1976," Harold Budd to Barney Childs.

[498] Victor Szabo, *Turn On, Tune In, Drift Off: Ambient Music's Psychedelic Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023), 94–195.

this was not especially difficult, since "people on the East Coast and people in England are neighbors anyway."[499]

If *The Pavilion* introduced Budd's music to a wider public through Eno's label infrastructure, it also initiated a more consequential change in Budd's compositional practice. The London recording sessions did not simply document works already written; they exposed Budd to the studio as an active site of transformation, where performance could be extended, reframed, and sonically reconstituted after the fact. This new approach to the recording studio as a compositional tool would become even more central to Budd's work in the years that followed. His first fully realized collaboration with Eno, *Ambient 2: The Plateaux of Mirror* (1980), the second release in Eno's "Ambient" series, exemplified this increasingly studio-centered method.[500] There, Budd performed brief piano improvisations that Eno reshaped in real time through processing, spatial placement, delay, and harmonic treatment. Budd later recalled that this collaborative process with Eno introduced him to "the idea of using the recording studio as a primary compositional tool," and that Eno had revealed "a brand new world of making solo music that was hardly solo."[501] The phrase captures the essential paradox of studio-based composition: music that may originate in solitary keyboard performance. Still, it achieves

[499] Plush, "Harold Budd," 67.

[500] The first album in the series is *Ambient 1: Music for Airports* (1978), the third is *Ambient 3: Day of Radiance* (1980), featuring Laraaji, and the fourth is *Ambient 4: On Land* (1982).

[501] Mark Prendergast, "The Sound-Painted World of Harold Budd," *Sound On Sound*, December 1986.

its final form through a reciprocal interplay with recording technology, electronic processing, and carefully controlled acoustic environments.

Moreover, this exchange ran both ways. Eno later admitted that he learned valuable techniques from working with Budd, describing how he would set up "quite complicated treatments" and then listen as Budd, in playing, discovered "how to manipulate this treatment," how "to make it ring and resonate," and which notes, registers, and tempi activated the system most fully.[502] Eno's broader account of studio practice helps clarify what Budd absorbed from this encounter: the idea that recording takes music "out of the time dimension and puts it in the space dimension," while tape makes sound "malleable and mutable and cuttable and reversible," allowing artists to begin "actually constructing a piece in the studio" rather than merely documenting a predetermined composition.[503]

Their partnership also depended on a real difference in aesthetic outlook. In the liner notes to *Ambient 1: Music for Airports*, Eno famously defined "ambient" music as music that "must be able to accommodate many levels of listening attention without enforcing one in particular," and that "must be as ignorable as it is interesting."[504] Budd, however, never fully accepted that formulation, even as his work became increasingly associated with it. He objected less to the term "ambient" itself than to the fantasy of

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[502] Charles Amirkhanian, *Radio Visions: Interviews with Composers*, 1981, https://archive.org/details/RadioVisions.

[503] Brian Eno, "The Studio as Compositional Tool," *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*, ed. Christoph Cox and Daniel Warner (New York: Continuum, 2004), 127–30.

[504] Brian Eno, liner notes to *Ambient 1: Music for Airports*, Ambient Records / EG Records, 1978.

neutrality behind it. As he later argued, the moment music includes something "arresting" such as a wordless human voice, a bell sound, or some other striking timbral event, "your interest is immediately piqued," so that the claim to facelessness or non-intrusion breaks down. For Budd, music ultimately "speaks for itself rather than to an idea," and his own practice remained committed to precisely that kind of sensuous and evocative presence.[505]

In this respect, Eno and Budd approached listening from different directions: Eno often sought to unsettle perception, drawing on avant-garde procedures that made sound function as environment, system, or conceptual frame, whereas Budd pursued a more imagistic and affective art, one that invited attention through beauty and the suggestion of a loose narrative world. It is in that sense that Eno's alleged description of Budd as "a great abstract painter trapped in the body of a musician" becomes especially apt, since Budd's music does not aim at neutrality so much as at the creation of resonance, spaces, and imagery through sound.[506]

Beginning with *The Pearl* (1984), Budd's work with Eno entered a more settled phase in which collaboration and production were no longer easily separable. *The Pearl* was issued as a Budd-Eno collaboration, produced by Eno and Daniel Lanois at Grant Avenue Studio in Hamilton, Ontario, extending the studio-based method first explored

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[505] Plush, "Harold Budd," 68; Budd was cautious of Eno, stating that he did not want to be understood as a "West Coast alternative to Steve Reich," but as an artist "following [his] own personal angel, wherever she takes [him]." "December 18, 1976," Harold Budd to Peter Garland, *Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records*, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 20.6.

[506] Quoted in Victor Szabo, *Turn On, Tune In, Drift Off: Ambient Music's Psychedelic Past*, 224.

on *The Plateaux of Mirror* into a denser and more cohesive sonic language. Lanois's presence is significant because it places Budd's music within the production environment Eno was developing in the early 1980s, when studio treatment, engineering, and atmosphere became increasingly central to the finished work.[507] But Eno's involvement in Budd's work also continued beyond albums jointly credited to both men. Budd's discography lists *The Pavilion* as produced by Eno. It also identifies *The White Arcades* (1988) and even the track "The Real Dream of Sails" as Eno-produced, indicating that Eno remained an active shaping presence in Budd's recorded output well after their early collaborations.

The White Arcades, recorded in 1987 at locations including Palladium in Edinburgh and the Cocteau Twins' studio in London, also credits individual tracks as engineered by Robin Guthrie and Brian Eno, suggesting that Budd's mature sound in the late 1980s still depended on the transnational studio network first opened by Eno. In that sense, Eno's importance to Budd was not only collaborative but also infrastructural: he helped launch Budd's international recording career, modeled the studio as a compositional environment, and continued to shape Budd's albums as producer even as Budd increasingly worked under his own name. A later photograph of Budd and Daniel

[507] Daniel Lanois's documented work with Budd includes *The Pearl* (1984), a Budd and Eno studio collaboration recorded in Hamilton, Ontario with Lanois, who co-produced the album; Budd later recalled that the sessions took two weeks to put on tape and eight to twelve months to complete in postproduction, using acoustic piano, Yamaha electric grand, Rhodes, and electronic treatments. It also includes *La Bella Vista* (2003), a solo piano album produced by Lanois and Adam Samuels from sessions at Lanois's Los Angeles home; contemporary accounts repeated Lanois's claim that the first five tracks were recorded without Budd's knowledge, though Budd later qualified that account, suggesting that he probably knew he was being taped.

Lentz recording *Music for Three Pianos* (1992) with Ruben Garcia suggests that this studio-centered practice outlasted Eno's direct involvement (Figure 53).

Figure 53. Harold Budd and Daniel Lentz recording *Music for Three Pianos* (1992) in Ruben Garcia's Studio outside of Flagstaff, Arizona (ca. 1991–92). Courtesy of Daniel Lentz.



The home-studio setting also shows Budd carrying that practice into a smaller, more intimate recording environment, one that remained continuous with older California affiliations while widening to include less visible collaborators such as Garcia.

Conclusion

By the late 1970s, Budd still struggled to support himself as an independent artist, cobbling together side jobs to make ends meet. Even after recording with an international figure like Brian Eno and receiving payment for that work, he relied on unemployment benefits and food stamps while supporting his family.[508] His wife, Paula Bethsebe later recalled that the family's precarious finances were managed through a combination of Budd's temporary jobs and her own wage labor: after CalArts, he worked briefly in a liquor store while she took a position in a print shop because, as she put it, "we needed to have income."[509] Budd framed these circumstances with dry humor, but the underlying financial instability remained unmistakable (Figure 54).[510] Between 1977 and 1982, he also served as choir director at a Methodist church in Santa Clarita, where he composed liturgical music, including a Protestant anthem (an introit) and five responsories commissioned by the congregation.

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[508] Budd wrote that he was "trying to get working on a piece for a month's mortgage," before correcting himself: "I beg your pardon, I mean for double-reed quartet." He continued, "Otherwise things go about as they would for anyone on Unemployment and Food Stamps," adding that he had turned down two part-time teaching jobs at CSU Northridge and a local junior college because they would jeopardize his unemployment benefits. "September 7, 1976," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–77.

[509] Author Interview with Paula Bethsebe, August 26, 2022.

[510] By November 1977, Budd reported that he was "manager three days a week" at a local liquor store and was being trained in "rudimentary book-keeping" for the "back office," joking that the job was "like hiring a kid to look after a candy store," "November 27, 1977," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–77.

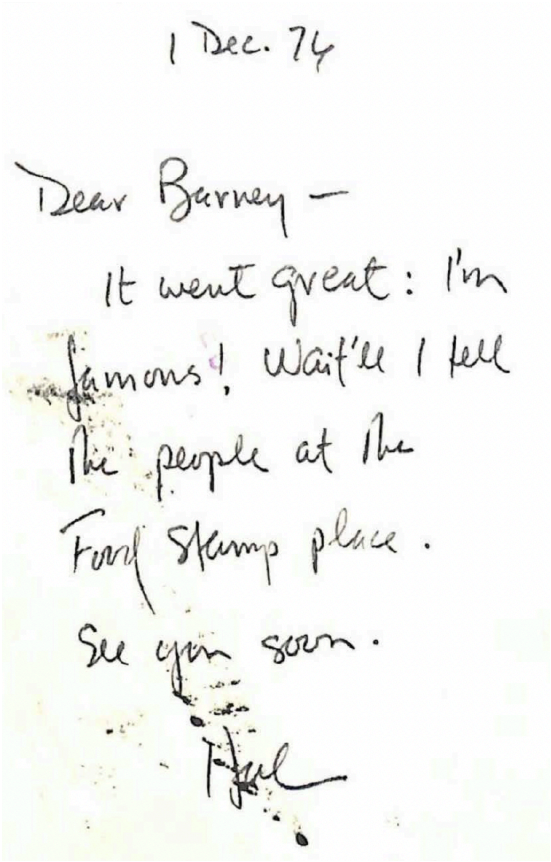
Bethsebe later recalled that Budd "wasn't religious," despite having been raised in both Episcopalian and Presbyterian traditions; rather, he "loved studying about religion," a distinction that helps clarify the irony of his approach to this church work.[511] He described the role with characteristic wit, "I am now the author of a Protestant Anthem," and by the time he resigned in 1982, he was signing letters to Childs with the valediction "Yours in Christ."[512] These years also reveal the widening gap between recognition and livelihood. While he moved between church work, temporary teaching, and unemployment, he noted with amazement that figures such as David Bowie admired *The Pavilion of Dreams* (1972–76), "if you can imagine that," a reminder that international attention did not translate into material security.[513]

[511] Bethsebe remarked that both of her parents were Jewish and that she was raised within Reform Judaism at Wilshire Temple. She described her family as "the solitary Jewish family on the street," and remembered that when she and Budd decided to marry, "both our parents are mothers and the fathers were both dead at that point. They didn't want us to marry one another. They thought it was "too insurmountable." Her account suggests that the objection lay less in personal piety than in the social and familial weight that religious difference still carried for their mothers. Author Interview with Paula Bethsebe, August 26, 2022.

[512] "October 14, 1982" Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–77. "October 19, 1977," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–77.

[513] "January 5, 1977," Harold Budd to Peter Garland, *Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records*, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 20.6.

Figure 54. Harold Budd letter referencing "fame" and "food stamps." "December 1, 1976" Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–77.



1 Dec. 74

Dear Barney —

It went great: I'm famous! Wait'll I tell the people at the Food Stamp place.

See you soon.

Harold

Alongside the church work, Budd returned to teaching for a steadier income. A California State University, Northridge alumnus, he took a post there in the late 1970s out of economic necessity, but only under sharply limited terms. He accepted the job, as he put it, "reasonably anonymously," with two provisos: he would not teach composition, and he would not allow his music to appear on a faculty composers'

concert. "In effect," he wrote, "I would not be a composer at Northridge."[514] The appointment was short-lived. The university dismissed him, officially for "lack of expected enrollment," and noted that colleagues had complained about his "haughtiness," while students found him too hard and too abstract. He concluded, "Back to standing in line."[515] The statement reads with added urgency next to a letter he sent days earlier, "Brian's coming here this spring — I intend inquiring as to my chances of making a living there; I'm not doing it here. Obviously."[516] A year later, after another stay in London, he reported that there was now "a chance… that I can make it alone, i.e., unattached with an institution," and that he had secured management there.[517]

What followed was not immediate stability, but a gradual relocation of Budd's career into broader international and cross-genre networks. The possibility he glimpsed in 1978 of making a life abroad would, within the next decade, become real. By the mid 1980s, he expatriated to Britain with his wife, moving within a musical world far removed from the precarious mix of teaching, church work, and temporary jobs that had

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[514] "September 8, 1977," Harold Budd to Peter Garland, *Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records*, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 20.6.

[515] "September 13, 1977," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–77; "January 20, 1978" Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–77.

[516] "January 17, 1978," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1978–91.

[517] "January 20, 1979," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1978–91.

sustained him in California.[518] Collaborations and associations from this period, with the Cocteau Twins on *The Moon and the Melodies* (1986), with Andy Partridge, with David Sylvian, and in the orbit of albums such as *Lovely Thunder* (1986) and *The White Arcades* (1988), show his music entering a wider field of circulation without abandoning the qualities that had defined it from the start.

By the early 1990s, Budd's British period gave way to what his son, Terrence Budd, remembered as a return to "American" idioms. Speaking of *By Dawn's Early Light* (1991), Terrence recalled that his father was "returning to America after a number of years in England" and had "kind of got back to some of his American roots."[519] The album thus reads as a kind of homecoming, carrying traces of Budd's expatriate years while reengaging the landscapes and associations that had long shadowed his work. What emerged in these years was not a break with the past, but a new scale of visibility.[520] That return also clarifies how misleading the usual story of Budd's career can be. In later interviews, Budd often credited Eno in emphatic terms, even saying he "owe[d] him everything." Such claims, however, obscure as much as they reveal. By Budd's own

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[518] Budd wrote, "Dear Barney, thanks for the phone calls and all that. I like abroad these days; miss your company. We think of you a lot. Hal and Paula; "December 24, 1987," Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1978–91.

[519] Author interview with Terrence Budd, November 11, 2021.

[520] On Budd's later afterlife in popular music, see U2's "Cedars of Lebanon," the closing track on *No Line on the Horizon* (2009), which samples "Against the Sky" from Budd and Brian Eno's *The Pearl* (1984). The connection is particularly fitting: the album's cover features a 1970 work by Billy Al Bengston, one of Budd's favorite living artists at the time.

account, Eno did not supply a compositional language so much as grant a permission: "absolute bravery to go in any direction."[521] His music, with its drones, quietude, and tonal restraint, existed before their collaboration.

Budd's later work points instead to older loyalties. On *Luxa* (1996), he recorded a piano improvisation on Marion Brown's *Sweet Earth Flying*.[522] That return was not incidental. Budd wrote that, after the Canadian pianist Paul Bley, he considered himself "a superb improviser on *Sweet Earth Flying*" and that he was "damned proud" of his self-taught pianism.[523] He returned to the piece on *Little Windows*, his collaboration with Clive Wright, released in April 2010; Brown died later that October. On *Avalon Sutra / As Long as I Can Hold My Breath* (2005), Budd dedicated "Chrysalis Nu" (to Barney's memory) after Barney Childs's death in January 2000, and "Rue Casimir Delavigne" (to Daniel Lentz).[524] These gestures show that Budd's career remained shaped by long-standing attachments that preceded and exceeded the Eno story.

This dissertation treats experimental music in Los Angeles not primarily as a matter of style but as a question of conditions. For Budd in particular, early musical formation was never singular but unfolded through a dense set of affiliations that shaped both his technique and his sense of what a composer could be. Through Gerald Strang at San Fernando Valley State College, where Budd studied from 1961 to 1963, he first

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[521] Harold Budd, interview by Tim Jonze, *The Guardian*, February 25, 2014.

[522] Harold Budd, *Luxa*, CD, All Saints Records ASCD30, September 24, 1996.

[523] "July 22, 1976," Harold Budd to Peter Garland, *Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records*, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 20.5.

[524] Harold Budd, *Avalon Sutra / As Long As I Can Hold My Breath*, 2 CDs, Darla Records DRL285, 2005.

encountered John Cage as a living example of the independent composer-performer, moving through institutions without fully belonging to them. At the same school, Aurelio de la Vega taught him to write directly for sound.

Budd then moved to the University of Southern California, where he studied with Ingolf Dahl from 1963 to 1966 and acquired the technical discipline of academic modernism, above all in orchestration. Yet USC was also where he deepened his engagement with New York experimentalism through the scores of Earle Brown, Cage, and Morton Feldman, available through libraries and publishers such as C. F. Peters. From Feldman, he drew quietness; from Brown, an understanding of form as open and mobile rather than fixed in advance.

Those early encounters with New York experimentalism did not remain matters of private study. By the end of the 1960s, as Budd began teaching at CalArts, he was also making connections across California universities and helping bring a broader experimental formation into view. *California 99* (1969) extended that same institutional world beyond CalArts by gathering Larry Austin, Dary John Mizelle, and Stanley Lunetta from UC Davis, Barney Childs from the University of Redlands, and David M. Sherr and Bertram Turetzky from CalArts, alongside Daniel Lentz and Pauline Oliveros. What linked these works was less a unified style than a shared experimental economy of sparse events, silence, theatrical action, and reduced materials, with tonal and modal reference beginning to appear at the edges. Later that year, Budd carried that California compositional outlook to Memphis State University, presenting a cross section of West Coast experimental practice in the South. The event showed that this music was already mobile and beginning to circulate beyond its points of origin.

Universities did more than employ composers; they concentrated people, technologies, and ideas in the shared spaces where Budd's musical language took shape. At CalArts in particular, Budd's work developed within a pedagogical environment where influence moved laterally through teaching, collaboration, rehearsal, and conversation as much as through finished compositions. His proximity to James Tenney helps clarify the point. The relation between Tenney's *Having Never Written a Note for Percussion* and Budd's *Lirio* suggests not a simple line of influence but two adjacent solutions to the problem of reduction: where Tenney made process audible through crescendo on a tam-tam, Budd pushed further toward stasis by withholding dynamic inflection.

Independent publications such as Peter Garland's *SOUNDINGS*, which emerged from the CalArts milieu, extended university culture into a broader field of circulation. In *SOUNDINGS 1*, Tenney and Budd register different moments of experimental practice: Tenney's contribution comes from his East Coast avant-garde work of 1964, while Budd's pieces belong to his late-1960s turn toward drones and text scores. The issue also reaches beyond CalArts, including Daniel Lentz and Pauline Oliveros. Read in that setting, Budd's shift appears less as an isolated personal move than as part of a wider argument unfolding across campuses, friendships, and print culture. For younger composers such as Peter Garland, Michael Byron, and David Mahler, *SOUNDINGS* offered a concrete site where these possibilities could be encountered side by side and carried forward.

Around 1970, Budd began performing with Pauline Oliveros and programming her work, deepening his engagement with drone through both collaboration and composition. The Pasadena Art Museum's *Encounters* series (1964–73) provided another

crucial venue, situating Budd within a Los Angeles milieu where experimental music and early minimalism were explored through discussion, listening sessions, and public programs rather than exclusively through academic channels. Beyond Encounters, Budd also conceived a collaborative project with Allan Kaprow and Oliveros for the museum, revealing how his thinking about sound, space, light, and installation had begun to converge with other experimental currents in Southern California.

A more expansive performance culture emerged during these same years. Around 1969–1970, Daniel Lentz's *California Time Machine* presented a theatrical, improvisatory, and often satirical approach to West Coast experimentalism, treating concerts not merely as venues for discrete works but as frameworks to be manipulated, subverted, or reimagined. By approximately 1972, this repertory-group model evolved into the looser collective of *Budd, Lentz & Stoerchle*, whose programs emphasized tonal and post-avant-garde materials while preserving each composer's distinct voice. Together, these formations demonstrate Budd's navigation of an increasingly collaborative, itinerant performance world that was becoming more deliberate about how experimental music engaged its audiences.

Yet the same years also mark a turn away from the concert frame alone toward the work's visual and decorative life. Budd's teaching, titles, and scores increasingly drew on nineteenth-century aestheticism, the Aesthetic Movement, and the idea of art for art's sake, while his compositions treated blue light, floral arrangement, insects, and calligraphic design as more than embellishment. In this context, the turn toward tonality appears as only one part of a broader reorientation. Just as important was Budd's growing insistence that beauty, uselessness, and visual display, long associated with

aestheticism and art for art's sake, could themselves serve as aesthetic and even oppositional values.

Those concerns begin to crystallize in the earliest stages of Budd's cycle, *The Pavilion of Dreams* (1972–76), beginning with *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* (1972). The work gathers many of the tendencies traced here: post-avant-garde tonality, older musical and visual lineages, manuscript-like inscription, and a commitment to beauty, softness, and suspended time. It also introduces something more. In its wordless vocality, flexible pacing, and quasi-devotional atmosphere, *Madrigals* opens onto the spiritual horizon that would increasingly define Budd's work in the years that followed. The cycle's beginning, therefore, reads less as a break than as a concentration, where earlier experiments in sound, image, and style were drawn into a more stable poetic environment.

Just as importantly, the inner world of *The Pavilion* was not shaped solely by older European art, literature, and vocal music. It was equally formed through Budd's engagement with Black experimental music and spiritual jazz in the early 1970s, primarily through intensive listening and recording. Albert Ayler occupies a foundational but ambivalent position in this influence: while Budd's admiration was longstanding, his responses to Albert Ayler's music remained uneven, particularly as he measured its freer experimentalism against the more meditative, modal direction he increasingly pursued. John Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders proved more central to the cycle's ultimate shape. Budd transformed Coltrane's "After the Rain" (1963) into "Butterfly Sunday" (1973) and recast Sanders's "Let Us Go Into the House of the Lord" (1970) in his own setting, combining the pair into *Two Songs* (1973–74), demonstrating that these were deliberate acts of translation rather than casual borrowings.

He carried spiritual jazz into the cycle by preserving its modal atmosphere, numinous charge, and suspended temporality while recasting those materials within a more intimate and textually fixed compositional frame. Sanders, in particular, remained a recurring model of poetic directness rather than systematic compositional influence, with Sun Ra providing a more oblique but still suggestive presence. In this sense, *The Pavilion* emerged not only from California experimentalism and aestheticist visual culture, but also from a Black musical tradition.

This dimension of inward seriousness entered the cycle through performers and collaborators, not merely through recordings. Marvin Hayes gave Budd's sacred writing a specific vocal embodiment, especially in *Song of Paradise* (1974), where the bass-baritone voice became central to the work's gravity and ceremonial presence. Marion Brown extended that horizon further still. Their collaboration on *Bismillahi 'Rrahmani 'Rrahim* (1974–75) drew Budd into a post-Coltrane experimental orbit and provided the cycle with one of its clearest connections to Black improvisational practice, as Brown brought modal improvisation into Budd's suspended harmonic world. Brown's contribution was not merely interpretive; he reshaped the music in performance, transformed how it was heard, and helped circulate it through broader institutional and recording contexts. Together, Hayes and Brown demonstrate that *The Pavilion* was realized not only through Budd's compositional vision but through the artistry and interpretive labor of Black performers.

What followed was not immediate stability, but a gradual repositioning of Budd's career within increasingly international and cross-genre networks. By the time he traveled to London in 1976, at age thirty-nine, to record material for *The Pavilion*, the essential

features of his mature musical language were already established. London, therefore, functioned less as a point of origin than as a site of transformation and expanded circulation. Through tape exchange, personal advocacy, and Eno's studio infrastructure, Budd's music entered an international recording network that allowed it to transcend the institutional and regional contexts that had initially sustained it. Eno's significance lay precisely in this recontextualization. He did not provide Budd with a musical language so much as help translate an already formed aesthetic into a new medium, a new audience, and a dramatically enlarged scale of visibility.

Taken together, these histories reposition Budd not as a marginal precursor to "ambient music" or as a regional variation on minimalism, but as a composer formed within a distinct Southern California cultural ecology. Universities, museums, independent magazines, performance collectives, visual art, Black experimental jazz, and later recording studios created the conditions from which his music emerged. Following Budd through these intersecting worlds reveals a history of experimental music shaped by its own institutions, aesthetic priorities, social relationships, and networks of circulation. Within this environment, beauty, visual consciousness, tonal restraint, spaciousness, and ritual intensity could become not alternatives to experimentation, but some of its most consequential forms.

Budd's career therefore illuminates far more than the trajectory of a single composer. It brings into focus a broader West Coast history too often obscured by the established narratives of postwar experimental music and by the composers, institutions, and aesthetic categories those narratives have privileged. His work resisted the terms by which artistic seriousness was commonly measured. It could be gentle without weakness,

beautiful without naïveté, inward without retreat, and rooted in place without becoming provincial. Its quietness was not an escape from history, but a way of moving through it. To hear Budd clearly, then, is not simply to recover an overlooked composer. It is to hear Los Angeles, and the history of American experimental music, with new ears.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Chapter One Letters and Archival Materials

University of Redlands

Barney Childs Collection

1. **"November 18" (ca. 1969)**
   Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
   The tape of the Cage/Turetzky realization of *26'1.1499" for a String Player* becomes the focus here. Budd calls the performance "pretty goddamn good" and emphasizes its accuracy, while Cage's brief reply, "Thank you for all you are doing," gives the episode institutional weight. The exchange shows an early moment when Budd's Los Angeles activity reached into a wider experimental network.

2. **"Monday" (ca. 1970)**
   Harold Budd to Barney Childs, *Barney Childs Collection*, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
   Budd's comment about avoiding the sustain pedal in *New Work* clarifies the precision behind a group of open-form pieces he had composed in 1967. The music may be sparse, but that sparseness depends on clean attack, separation, and carefully controlled resonance, especially in the beamed-note figures. Later in the same letter, Budd reflects on titles, macroform, and the compositional problem of "filling in the blanks."

3. **"Saturday Afternoon" (ca. 1970)**
   Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
   This is one of the chapter's central conceptual sources. The remarks on *Noyo* reveal anxiety about theatrical embellishment and the realization that the strongest work came from doing "very little." The same exchange also supports the chapter's broader argument about music, visuality, and spatial perception, especially through the distinction between temporal and spatial art and the comments on California "Finish Fetishists."

4. **"September 5" (ca. 1970)**
   Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Unknown Year / Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
   Calling Ingolf Dahl "one of the good guys" complicates a simple opposition between institutional discipline and artistic freedom. Dahl represents modernist craft and compositional rigor, but not merely constraint. The same correspondence also supports Budd's reflections on titles as information for performers and listeners. At the same time, his admiration for Childs's *Welcome to Whipperginny* shows that Childs was already part of his musical thinking before their correspondence became central to his emerging aesthetic world.

5. **"September 22" (ca. 1970)**
   Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Unknown Year.
   The memory of Dahl's memorial concert gives the USC discussion a more personal afterlife, especially through comments on the turnout, the program, and Michael Tilson Thomas's direction. Elsewhere in the chapter, this same correspondence places Childs's *Night River Music* within Budd's orbit, since the request for "a copy of the fragments" suggests an interest in Childs's sparse, text-centered compositional world.

6. **"December 2" (ca. 1970)**
   Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated. **Cited in Chapter Three.**
   This letter places Budd's late-1960s reductionism beside his emerging tape and performance practice. He discusses plans for *Coeur d'Orr*, the problem of finding a studio setup, and a Buchla-made real-time piece in E-flat that he associates with *The Oak of the Golden Dreams*. The second half gives *Black Flowers* its theatrical and social context: nearly invisible blue lighting, "spiritual advice" to the players, audience boos and hisses, Leonard Stein's pleasure at the reaction, and Budd's dry response to criticism in the *Los Angeles Times*. The letter closes by framing Budd and Childs as "cosmic comrades" in a shared fight against inherited musical orthodoxies.

7. **"March 4, 1972"**
   Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974. **Cited in Chapters Three and Four.**
   Praise for Childs's *Maine Scene* offers a musical example of the friendship. Budd calls the piece "very beautiful" and says he could "almost play it," placing Childs's work near his own interest in softness, restraint, and piano sound. His notes on piano practice, modal jazz, and playing "soft" also make the letter useful for showing how that sound world was becoming part of his own technique.

8. **"July 30, 1975"**
   Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977. **Cited in Chapter Five.**
   By this point, *Maine Scene* had moved from curiosity to admiration. Budd describes it as "a lovely, lovely work," "full of sentiment and integrity," which helps the chapter show a shared language between Childs and Budd: sentiment, restraint, and seriousness without bombast. The image of chords that "float through the aether the way jellyfish do in water" gives that admiration a more exact musical shape.

9. **"May 14, 1977"**
   Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.
   The wish to have been "the author of *Maine Scene*" is one of the clearest signs of admiration for Childs. Coming after the confession that he was "art-songed out," the remark shows how strongly the piece still registered, even during a moment of temporary exhaustion with the genre.

Northwestern University Libraries

John Cage Collection, Music Library

10. **"November 14" (1967) [misdated; internal evidence suggests 1969]**
    Harold Budd to John Cage, John Cage Collection, Northwestern Music Library, 1967-11, id89999, Box 8, Folder 1, Sleeve 14.
    Budd's letter to Cage explains the realization of *26'1.1499" for a String Player* with Bertram Turetzky and the excitement around the tape in progress. Because the archival date appears misleading, the entry should probably be treated chronologically as 1969, while preserving the archive's assigned date in the citation.

UC San Diego

Pauline Oliveros Papers, Special Collections & Archives

11. **"Letter to Dan" (August 1969)**
    Harold Budd to Daniel Lentz, in Harold Budd's *Vittorio*, "Letter to Dan, August 1969," works by others, Harold Budd, *Vittorio*. Includes holograph score, 1969, "California 99" (1969), Pauline Oliveros Papers, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 23, Folder 24.
    The note lays out Vittorio's performance world: the gong as a visible object, the lighting, the space, the quietude, and the long durations. Its value lies in presenting the piece not only as sound but also as a visual and spatial tableau organized around perception and stillness.

Harry Ransom Center

Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records, The University of Texas at Austin

12. **"December 1, 1975"**
    Harold Budd to Peter Garland, Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 20.5.
    Budd's recollection of the LACC performance of Revueltas's *8 x Radio* brings together several strands of the chapter at once: modernist repertoire, Eric Dolphy, Terry Jennings, Leonard Stein, wage-earning jazz work, and the unruly atmosphere of postwar Los Angeles performance culture. It gives the early biographical section a vivid scene rather than a simple educational chronology.

Reproduced source / online image

13. **"1964"**
    Mark Rothko to Harold Budd, letter reproduced on the Harold Budd Facebook page, posted June 25, 2015.
    Rothko's reply to Budd after receiving *Analogies from Rothko* offers an unusually direct connection between Budd's student composition and the visual-art world he admired. Rothko's advice about productivity, rejection, and artistic frustration helps frame Budd's early visual analogies as part of a broader search for artistic identity.

Published correspondence

14. **"Harold Budd to David Cope" (ca. 1970), *New Directions in Music* (Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1971), 114.**
    The "pushed and pushed towards zero" formulation gives the chapter its conceptual backbone. The passage turns late-1960s reductionism into a self-conscious process of removal, helping explain why works such as *Intermission Piece*, *Lovely Thing*, *Sun Pieces*, *Mangus Colorado*, *Vittorio*, and *Black Flowers* mark a sustained drive toward near-nothingness.

Interviews and Oral Histories

15. **"Peter Garland, *Harold Budd: Architect of Longing and Desire*, unpublished essay" (2022).**
    Garland's essay supports the early biographical frame, including Budd's uneven schooling and expulsion for "insubordination." It is useful less as a neutral chronology than as a sympathetic insider account from someone who knew Budd's music and world closely, and it helps connect the biographical details to the later artistic temperament.

16. **"Vincent Plush, Harold Budd" (May 3, 1983)**
    Plush's interview is the main source for Budd's early biography: childhood in Southern California, domestic instability, early listening, Los Angeles City College, Bruckner, Debussy, Leonard Stein, and the emergence of composition as a serious possibility. It gives the chapter its most sustained retrospective account of Budd before CalArts, especially the sense that recorded music opened a space of "escapist dreaming" unavailable elsewhere in his childhood.

17. **"Akira Rabelais, *Samadhisound Podcast #2: Akira Rabelais Interviews Harold Budd*," (April 25, 2007)**
    This interview supplies the Stan Getz memory that sharpens the chapter's early jazz section. Budd's recollection of riding down Olympic Boulevard toward Santa Monica, hearing Getz on the radio, and thinking that this was how he wanted to feel "forever" gives cool jazz an emotional and bodily force in the narrative, not just a stylistic one.

Appendix B: Chapter Two Letters and Archival Materials

University of Redlands

Barney Childs Collection

18. **"November 14" (ca. 1970)**
    Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
    The first public concert at the new Valencia campus gives the Tenney section a vivid performance scene. In the account of *Oboe Piece*, sustained oboe tones, water wrung from rags, bacon sizzling, crackers crushed in a tin pan, and Tenney hammering nails in the foyer turn ordinary materials into an immersive sound environment. CalArts appears here not only as a school, but as a space where performance could spill into hallways, objects, and everyday noise.

19. **"August 17, 1971"**
    Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.
    Written during the summer teaching stay in Guadalajara, this correspondence places *Lirio* outside the formal CalArts setting. The description of Mexican composition students as "extremely interested in the music of North American composers" frames the score within a broader pedagogical and transnational exchange, rather than as a purely local California work.

20. **"October 31, 1972"**
    Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974. **Cited in Four.**
    Thom Miller enters here as an example of younger CalArts work moving beyond the classroom. The "X-rated chord change" joke turns the praise toward a single harmonic event, which fits the chapter's point that immediacy, color, and one gesture could matter more than theoretical construction.

21. **"January 8, 1973"**
    Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of

Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.
Richard Teitelbaum's phrase "To the Barricades or to the Desert" captures the chapter's larger contrast between established East Coast experimental centers and the more provisional world of CalArts. The approving response, "I like that!" suggests that Valencia was not simply a transplant of New York avant-garde culture, but a place where experimental commitments could be reimagined under different conditions.

22. **"September 18, 1973"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974. **Cited in Chapter Five.**
The response to Tom Johnson's *SOUNDINGS* review sharpens the chapter's historiographical argument. The quip that "New Yorkers are astonished to find that they're out of sync" turns Johnson's review into evidence of a regional mismatch: *SOUNDINGS* was not simply catching up to New York, but articulating a different genealogy of American experimental music.

23. **"October 27" (ca. 1973)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated. **Cited in Chapter Four.**
The reaction to Tenney's Tone Roads West concert reveals both friendship and aesthetic difference. Skepticism toward Joplin and ambivalence toward Ives sit alongside genuine admiration for two of Ives's songs, suggesting that historical "importance" mattered less than immediate musical force.

University of North Texas Music Library

Stan Kenton Collection

24. **"July 14, 1973"**
Harold Budd to Robert B. Morgan, 1973–1974, Folder 2, Box 1, Folder 2, Stan Kenton Collection, 06-017, University of North Texas Music Library.
Budd's reply to Robert B. Morgan places James Tenney directly beside him in the Stan Kenton archive, where they examined Robert Graettinger materials for a

possible *Source* article. The letter is especially useful because it links Budd's CalArts circle to jazz modernism, archival curiosity, and the difficulty of reconstructing Graettinger's compositional method from parts, charts, and color-coded graphs.

UC San Diego

Pauline Oliveros Papers, Special Collections & Archives

25. **"James Tenney, *For Percussion Perhaps, Or (Night)*, for Harold Budd" (1971)**
The Postal Pieces. Series 5, Programs and Reviews, subseries 5A, Programs, Pauline Oliveros Papers, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 15, Folder 7.
Tenney's postcard to Budd functions less like a practical performance score than a concise portrait of Budd's emerging aesthetic. Its spare instructions, "very soft," "very long," and "nearly white," register Budd's movement toward quietness, duration, night, resonance, and percussion understood less as attack than as atmosphere.

University of North Texas Music Library

Source: Music of the Avant-Garde

26. **"August 28, 1971"**
Harold Budd, *Lirio*, Guadalajara, Mexico, August 28, 1971, Folder 8, Box 4, Folder 8, *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde*, 06-051, University of North Texas Music Library.
Although this is a dated score rather than a letter, it belongs in the chapter's archival sequence because it grows directly out of the Guadalajara context. Its instruction to roll very softly on a large gong under blue light condenses many of Budd's early-1970s concerns into a single gesture: stillness, theatrical lighting, extreme softness, and the transformation of percussion into an environmental field.

Interviews and Oral Histories

27. **"Author interview with Carl Stone" (September 10, 2022)**
Stone's recollection of the 1971 San Fernando earthquake helps explain CalArts's abrupt move from Villa Cabrini to Valencia. His comment that the earthquake

"destroyed a lot of the convent" and that "after the earthquake, we had no choice" marks the institutional history with a concrete turning point: the transition to Valencia was not simply a planned modernization, but a forced displacement from one experimental environment into another.

28. **"Author interview with David Mahler" (October 22, 2022)**
Mahler's memory of returning after the earthquake to find a "gaping hole" in the music building adds a second, more material view of the rupture. The image of a notation device continuing to run through the tremors, inscribing the earthquake as an accidental line, fits the chapter's larger account of CalArts as a place where institution, technology, and chance were constantly entangled.

Appendix C: Chapter Three Letters and Archival Materials

University of Redlands

Barney Childs Collection

29. **"Saturday Morning Letter" (ca. 1970)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
Pauline Oliveros's invitation to do "a Budd thing" at UC Irvine gives the Oliveros section an early social and institutional point of contact. The $100 fee and the freedom to "do whatever I want" show how informal university programming could make room for experimental work outside conventional concert formats.

30. **"Tuesday, 26" (ca. 1970)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
A hurried plan for a concert with Lucky Mosko, Humphrey Evans, James Tenney, Christian Wolff, Pauline Oliveros, and others shows experimental music circulating through both practical improvisation and formal planning. Later in the chapter, the same source matters again when Budd says he and Oliveros had arrived independently at "almost identical projects," linking their shared interest in drone, space, and environmental sound.

31. **"Monday, May 25" (ca. 1970)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
Larry Austin's Pasadena Art Museum *Encounters* program gives the chapter a glimpse of the audience culture around Los Angeles new music. Comments on *Bass*, *Plastic Surgery*, *Transmission One*, and the mixed crowd of young "heavy-freak-out-avant-garde-types" and older "creative weavers and clay potters" turn the museum into a social space rather than just a venue.

32. **“Monday Evening Letter #1” (ca. 1970)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
The imagined Budd-Kaprow-Oliveros project makes the Pasadena Art Museum central to the chapter’s account of sound as architecture and environment. Wall transducers, shotgun microphones, invisible feedback loops, blue light, air ducts, low frequencies, and an emptied gallery all point toward a form of music shaped through space as much as through sound.

33. **“March 28” (ca. 1970)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
The Santa Barbara gathering with Robert Ashley, the ONCE Group, Daniel Lentz, Terry Riley, and others reveals an uneasy position inside overlapping experimental networks. The line about feeling like “an outsider” complicates any smooth account of community: connection did not always mean belonging.

34. **“December 2” (ca. 1970)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated. **Cited in Chapters One and Three.**
This letter places Budd’s late-1960s reductionism beside his emerging tape and performance practice. He discusses plans for *Coeur d’Orr*, describes the problem of finding a studio setup, and mentions a Buchla-made real-time piece in E-flat that he associates with *The Oak of the Golden Dreams*. The second half gives *Black Flowers* its theatrical and social context: nearly invisible blue lighting, “spiritual advice” to the players, audience boos and hisses, Leonard Stein’s pleasure at the reaction, and Budd’s dry response to criticism in the *Los Angeles Times*. The letter closes by framing Budd and Childs as “cosmic comrades” in a shared fight against inherited musical orthodoxies.

35. **“January 19, 1972”**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.
Two separate moments in the chapter depend on this source. First, it documents

Max Neuhaus's *Water Whistle* at CalArts. Later, it registers the anxiety before the Midwest tour with Wolfgang Stoerchle and Daniel Lentz, where Budd admits to being overwhelmed by work and "crippled with tension bordering on terror." Together, the two appearances show both the density of CalArts's visiting-artist world and the pressures around touring activity.

36. **"March 4, 1972"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974. **Cited in Chapters One and Four.**
Budd sends Childs a sketch ending in a Landini cadence and calls it "pretty," then jokes that it is "about 900 yrs new." The joke places Budd's tonal turn beside the language of "new diatonicism," while also mocking the idea that tonal return was actually new. The same letter's references to modal jazz, soft piano playing, and fauxbourdon texture help place the tonal turn within a broader search for historical color and restrained sonority.

37. **"May 15, 1972"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–74.
The "dreadful omissions" in *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians: 1971 Supplement*, including "P. Glass," give the minimalism discussion a useful point of reference. Glass is present as a name worth noticing, but not as the center of Budd's formation. The same entry also keeps Peter Garland nearby as someone already thinking through publication, festivals, and new music's institutional machinery.

38. **"December 2, 1972"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.
Robert Ashley and the ONCE Group help frame CalArts as a stop on a broader circuit of itinerant experimentalists. The campus appears less like a sealed institution than a node through which different experimental lineages, personalities, and tensions passed.

39. **"July 20, 1973"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974. **Cited in Chapter Five.**
Publishing, rights, and bureaucracy are the point here. The move from ASCAP to BMI and the decision to establish Basheva Music show Budd trying to keep control over his work rather than leaving it to the usual institutions. His comments on Cage and the post-Cage world also fit the chapter's concern with influence, inheritance, and what he wanted to move away from.

40. **"September 28, 1973"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–74.
The reference to Steve Reich confirms that Reich had entered Budd's vocabulary by 1973, even if Reich remained secondary to Oliveros in his own account of drone and sustained sound. "Steve Reich III has some possibilities" sounds more like a passing identification than a deep lineage claim, which helps keep the chapter from turning Budd into an East Coast minimalist by default.

41. **"January 21" (ca. 1974)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated. **Cited in Chapter Four.**
Mannerism and Gesualdo are the focus here. Budd describes giving himself a "crash course in Mannerist aesthetics," steering music students toward Michelangelo and Pontormo, and bringing painting students toward Gesualdo. The piano reduction of Gesualdo's *Moro, lasso, al mio duolo* shows older art and music becoming part of Budd's argument for beauty, historical return, and "pretty" music.

42. **"August 27" (ca. 1974)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

Peter Garland's role in introducing "who Phil Glass was" reverses the usual minimalist hierarchy. Rather than appearing as a composer formed by Glass from the beginning, Budd encounters Glass through a student and through the CalArts/*SOUNDINGS* network. That detail matters because it makes minimalism look mediated, local, and belated rather than simply imported from New York.

43. **"November 16" (ca. 1974)**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

The latter remark on *Pauline Spring Piece* clarifies the value of the work: "not as a score, but as a pretty bit of sound." That phrase places the piece between notation and sonority, while also anticipating the dissertation's later account of "pretty" music as an aesthetic position.

44. **"November 3, 1975"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–77.

The memory of sharing a program with Oliveros at Kairos gives the Oliveros relationship retrospective emotional weight. Rather than appearing only as a technical influence on drone, Oliveros emerges as a collaborator and colleague whose presence mattered personally.

45. **"April 4, 1976"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela enter here as visitors to Budd's composition seminar at CalArts. Budd praises Young's lecture and says they "got along splendidly," but he also describes Young's music as still belonging to "the '60's." The letter helps maintain the minimalism thread. Budd knew and respected Young, but he was not simply following him. By 1976, Young appears less as a model for Budd's future than as a figure attached to an earlier avant-garde moment.

Library of Congress

Aurelio de la Vega Collection

46. **"August 24, 1970"**
Harold Budd to Aurelio de la Vega, Aurelio de la Vega Collection, 1948–1990, Primary Sources for Latin American Composers at the Library of Congress.
Budd's letter to de la Vega presents the Kairos Arts Festival in Rancho Santa Fe as an "incredibly moving experience." It also places Pauline Oliveros and Budd together in a UC San Diego-centered performance setting, giving the chapter a concrete example of their collaboration outside CalArts and beyond print culture.

UC San Diego

Pauline Oliveros Papers, Special Collections & Archives

47. **"1969"**
Harold Budd, *California 99*, holograph score portfolio, Pauline Oliveros Papers, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 3, Folder 18, Oversize FB-402-08.
This is a score portfolio rather than a letter, but it functions as one of the chapter's core archival documents. The cover map, the gathered contributors, and the individual scores make *California 99* a material record of the California network itself, linking Austin, Childs, Lentz, Oliveros, Sherr, Turetzky, and others through a shared but internally varied experimental project.

48. **"Daniel Lentz to Harold Budd" (1969).**
Daniel Lentz to Harold Budd, quoted in program materials for Budd's collection of scores, *California 99*, Memphis State University, Oktoberfest: Music of Our Time, October 22–24, 1969; Pauline Oliveros Papers, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego.
Lentz's line, "If you were famous, this piece would be revolutionary," gives the *California 99* section a revealing mix of affection, irony, and scene consciousness. The remark acknowledges Budd's limited public standing in 1969 while also suggesting that the work's radicality depended partly on the institutional authority attached to a composer's name. It supports the chapter's larger claim that California experimentalism circulated through friendship, jokes, dedications, and

modest institutional platforms rather than through a fully consolidated movement.

49. **"Daniel Lentz, *Skeletons Don't Say Peek*" (1969)**
Pauline Oliveros Papers, Harold Budd, *California 99*, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 3, Folder 18, Oversize FB-402-08.
Lentz's contribution supplies the chapter with its most pointed satire of avant-garde concert culture. The militarized language of composers as generals and instruments as weapons, culminating in the call for "beautiful music," makes the score a comic yet serious bridge between antiwar critique and the later turn toward beauty.

50. **"Harold Budd, *Lovely Thing* Manuscript and Collage" (1969)**
Pauline Oliveros Papers, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 23, Folder 22, Oversize FB-405-06.
Budd's handwritten string arrangement of *Lovely Thing*, paired with the comic photograph of Oliveros, gives the chapter a small but revealing trace of friendship. It shows Budd and Oliveros not only as names in shared publications, but as people exchanging objects, jokes, and scores.

51. "**Pauline Oliveros, *Music for Expo '70 / Pep-Psi*," (1970)**
Pauline Oliveros, Pauline Oliveros-related materials, UC San Diego Special Collections & Archives.
Although this is not a Budd letter, it clarifies the sonic world around *Pauline Spring Piece*. Oliveros's Osaka work, with its tape component and sustained instrumental/voice resources, gives a nearby model for thinking about drone, environment, and ensemble color in Budd's dedication to her.

52. **"Program Materials" (1970)**
Programs featuring Pauline Oliveros, Series 5, Programs and Reviews, subseries 5A, Pauline Oliveros Papers, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Box 14, Folder 1.
The program materials matter because they place Budd's *California 99* and related

works inside actual performance contexts rather than only as scores. They also support the chapter's discussion of how experimental works circulated through university programs, festivals, and composer-run networks.

53. **"Program Materials" (1970–71)**
Pauline Oliveros Papers, MSS 102, Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, Series 5, Programs and Reviews, subseries 5A.
These materials document Oliveros's programming of Budd's *One Sound* at Hope College and Budd's programming of Oliveros's works in other contexts. They help show a reciprocal relationship: Budd and Oliveros were not simply parallel figures, but actively placed one another's music into circulation.

Leonard Stein Papers

Larry Austin correspondence

54. **"March 13, 1967"**
Larry Austin to Leonard Stein, "Larry Austin, 1967–70," Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 3, Leonard Stein Papers, 1942–1983, MSS 219, University of California, San Diego.
Austin responds to Stein's proposal for an *Encounters* program by outlining two possible concert formats. The first would present several chamber and solo works: *Bass: Theater Piece in Open Style for String Bass, Player, Tape, and Film* (1967), *Piano Set in Open Style* (1966), *Current* (1966), and *Broken Consort* (1966). The second would center on *The Maze*, a larger theater piece for three percussionists, a dancer, tapes, machines, and projections, possibly staged in or around the museum's exhibition space. The letter is useful because it shows Austin thinking of *Encounters* not simply as a recital opportunity, but as a flexible multimedia setting in which music, film, movement, space, and audience placement could be negotiated through Stein's curatorial invitation.

55. **"March 11, 1970"**
Larry Austin to Leonard Stein, "Larry Austin, 1967–70," Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 3, Leonard Stein Papers, 1942–1983, MSS 219, University of California, San Diego.
Austin confirms plans for a May 24 program built around *Plastic Surgery* (1969),

Transmission One (1969), and *Bass: Theater Piece in Open Style for String Bass, Player, Tape, and Film* (1967). The letter turns practical arrangements into a revealing account of the works themselves: Austin specifies performers, fees, travel, a snare drummer, a go-go dancer, film projection, a synthesizer, microphones, speakers, tape equipment, lighting, and an uninterrupted fifty-four-minute sequence that begins before the audience has fully gathered. He also asks that program notes not be printed, preferring to speak informally before, during, and after the pieces. The source helps show Austin's multimedia practice as technically demanding, theatrically staged, and deliberately informal, with explanation and discussion folded into the event rather than separated from it.

La Monte Young / Marian Zazeela correspondence

56. **"December 7, 1967"**
    Marian Zazeela to Leonard Stein, "La Monte Young, 1967," Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 30, Leonard Stein Papers, 1942–1983, MSS 219, University of California, San Diego.
    Zazeela's letter about poster design and the title change for the Young/Zazeela *Encounters* event turns the museum section toward visual presentation. The request for "white on black" and the discussion of color posters underscore how sound, light, typography, and publicity all shaped the public form of experimental music.

Terry Riley correspondence

57. **"March 12, 1967"**
    Terry Riley to Leonard Stein, "Terry Riley, 1967–71," Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 24, Leonard Stein Papers, 1942–1983, MSS 219, University of California, San Diego.
    Riley writes to Stein after La Monte Young suggests that he contact him about a possible Pasadena Art Museum appearance the following year. He encloses a copy of his recently released record. He explains that he is leaving for Europe for concerts and a Swedish Radio commission, asking whether a future museum event might coincide with his next trip to California. The letter shows *Encounters* functioning as a West Coast point of access for experimental composers working between New York, Europe, and California, with opportunities moving through personal recommendation, recordings, travel schedules, and Stein's curatorial role.

58. **"November 23, 1968"**

Terry Riley to Leonard Stein, "Terry Riley, 1967–71," Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 24, Leonard Stein Papers, 1942–1983, MSS 219, University of California, San Diego.

Riley writes after meeting Stein in Cleveland and thanks him for taking time from a busy schedule to hear his music. He also asks whether Stein might support a Guggenheim application, describing a projected long-form work for multiple ensembles organized through repeating modules, tape delay, and carefully coordinated temporal relationships. The letter shows Riley treating Stein not only as a presenter but as a knowledgeable advocate whose support could help translate his performance practice into the language of grants, projects, and professional recognition.

59. **"February" (ca. 1971)**

Terry Riley to Leonard Stein, "Terry Riley, 1967–71," Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 24, Leonard Stein Papers, 1942–1983, MSS 219, University of California, San Diego.

Writing from abroad, Riley tells Stein that he is beginning to take the April *Encounters* program seriously and proposes bringing Pandit Pran Nath into the event. He presents Pran Nath as an important source for currents in his recent music, thereby expanding the proposed program beyond Riley's own organ, saxophone, tape-delay, and keyboard work. The letter is useful because it shows Riley imagining *Encounters* not only as a composer portrait but also as a platform through which the spiritual and pedagogical sources of his musical practice might become audible.

60. **"March 4, 1971"**

Leonard Stein to Terry Riley, "Terry Riley, 1967–71," Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 24, Leonard Stein Papers, 1942–1983, MSS 219, University of California, San Diego.

Stein reminds Riley that publicity for the April 18 event had already circulated and that the announced program centered on Riley as composer-performer. He therefore asks Riley to keep the event focused on his own music: electric organ, soprano saxophone, tape delay, and selections from *A Rainbow in Curved Air*, *Poppy Nogood*, *Keyboard Studies*, and possibly new work prepared for the occasion.

Although Stein respects Pran Nath's importance, he suggests that any Pran Nath program should be arranged separately and under more appropriate auspices.

61. **"March 15, 1971"**
Terry Riley to Leonard Stein, Farsta, Sweden, "Terry Riley, 1967–71," Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 24, Leonard Stein Papers, 1942–1983, MSS 219, University of California, San Diego.
Riley accepts Stein's suggestion that Pran Nath be presented separately and confirms the practical timing of his return to San Francisco. He also asks Stein to let him know whether equipment will be available, noting that he can bring the rest himself. The letter resolves the earlier negotiation: Riley's Pasadena appearance would remain a composer-performer event centered on his own music, while Pran Nath's possible presentation was deferred to another setting.

62. **"April 18, 1971"**
Leonard Stein to Terry Riley / Terry Riley to Leonard Stein, "Terry Riley, 1967–71," Correspondence, Box 1, Folder 24, Leonard Stein Papers, 1942–1983, MSS 219, University of California, San Diego.
The latter exchange around the *Encounters* event clarifies the program's final shape: Riley on electric organ and soprano saxophone with tape delay, possibly drawing on *A Rainbow in Curved Air* and *Keyboard Studies*. At the same time, Pran Nath was deferred to another occasion. This correspondence helps distinguish Riley's actual Pasadena appearance from the broader mythology around his spiritual and musical practice.

UC Santa Barbara

Arts and Lectures Records / Committee on Arts and Lectures Records

63. **"Program and Related Materials" (1969)**
Guide to the University of California, Santa Barbara, Arts and Lectures Records, "California Time Machine Intercampus Faculty Artist Exchange, concert, Nov. 19–22, 1969," Box 8, Folder 4.
The California Time Machine materials give the Lentz section its institutional grounding. The advertisements, manifesto, and program documents show how

the ensemble fashioned itself through humor, lush sound, anti-institutional performance, and a deliberately unstable sense of time.

64. **"Flier" (ca. 1970)**

Harold Budd and Daniel Lentz, "The New Sensuality" flier, University of California, Santa Barbara Library, Special Research Collections, University Archives, Committee on Arts and Lectures Records, Box 2, undated.

The flier matters because it gives the tonal turn of Budd and Lentz a public label. "The New Sensuality" names the move toward beauty, consonance, and bodily immediacy as a shared aesthetic project rather than a private change in Budd's style.

Getty Research Institute

Wolfgang Stoerchle Papers

65. **"Documentation Materials" (1970)**

Wolfgang Stoerchle Papers, 1952–2007, Series II, Documentation of artworks, 1968–1975, "Budd-Lentz-Stoerchle, 1970," Getty Research Institute, Box 2, Folder 6.

These materials anchor the Mills College performance and *Sound III* discussion in visual documentation. The negatives of the installation help support the chapter's account of antiwar performance as an environmental and sensory event involving sound, bodies, images, and gallery space.

66. **"Documentation Materials" (ca. 1972)**

Wolfgang Stoerchle Papers, 1952–2007, Series II, Documentation of artworks, 1968–1975, "Budd-Lentz-Stoerchle, 1970," Getty Research Institute, Box 2, Folder 7.

The photograph of Budd, Lentz, and Stoerchle performing Lentz's *You Can't See the Forest… Music* gives rare visual evidence of their loose trio in action. It helps distinguish *Budd, Lentz, & Stoerchle* from *The California Time Machine*: less a repertory ensemble than an affiliation of overlapping solo practices, touring, and shared sensibility.

Interviews and Oral Histories

67. **"Author interview with Daniel Lentz" (July 23, 2023)**
Lentz's interview is central to the *California Time Machine* and *Budd, Lentz, & Stoerchle* sections. His recollections clarify the wine-glass drones, the group's theatrical humor, *MEWANTEMOOSEICDAY*, the Mills College robbery/performance, *Air Meal Spatial Delivery*, Frank Oppenheimer, European tours, and his sense that New York had media infrastructure unavailable to West Coast composers. The interview gives the chapter an insider account of how performance, parody, touring, and regional frustration shaped the loose post-avant-garde world around Budd.

68. **"Author interview with Michael Byron" (October 9, 2025)**
Byron's recollection gives the Lentz section one of its sharpest anti-European anecdotes. The "tract houses" joke about Stockhausen is more than a throwaway line; it distills a West Coast experimentalist suspicion of European prestige and system-building. It helps explain why Budd and Lentz's turn toward "new sensuality" and tonal directness could feel like a rejection of avant-garde authority rather than a retreat from experiment.

Appendix D: Chapter Four Letters and Archival Materials

University of Redlands

Barney Childs Collection

69. **"*New Work*" (ca. 1970)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, "*New Work,*" Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, 1970–74.
The CalArts syllabus, "Prelude to the Modern Muse: The Poetic Vanguard," frames the whole chapter. Its movement from Mannerism through the Pre-Raphaelites, Aestheticism, Arts and Crafts, and Art Nouveau shows that Budd's early-1970s "pretty" music was shaped through visual art, literature, ornament, and "art for art's sake," rather than through musical technique alone.

70. **"July 23" (ca. 1970)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.
The anecdotes about a coyote drinking on the highway and a chicken repeatedly leaping at a fence widen the chapter's sense of Budd's visual imagination. These details are not major "arguments" in themselves, but they show how California's animals, roads, and landscapes entered his correspondence as lived imagery, helping contextualize the dragonfly and other natural motifs in his scores.

71. **"March 4, 1972"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974. **Cited in Chapters One and Three.**
The sketch belongs with Budd's turn toward "pretty" music. Its cadence, his attention to soft piano playing, and his interest in modal jazz show beauty entering the music through touch, pacing, and harmonic color. Placed beside Whistler, Rossetti, insects, calligraphy, and theatrical display, the source helps show that the aesthetic turn was musical as well as visual and literary.

72. **"March 10, 1972"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.
"Rossetti Noise" is already mapped out here as both sound and historical pose. The E-flat sonority, solo voice, harp, and senza vibrato instruction show *Madrigals* taking shape through texture and restraint. The Oxford Union comparison does more than just add a Pre-Raphaelite reference; it places Budd's tonal turn within a staged, unfashionable group aesthetic.

73. **"October 31, 1972"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974. **Cited in Chapter Two.**
The important material is *Madrigals*. Budd mentions sending the score to Lukas Foss, adding a new coda, and thinking about blue lighting. The letter helps connect harmonic color, staging, and the problem of performance rather than treating the score as a self-contained object.

74. **"August 30, 1973"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.
The decorative drop capitals provide a visual example of Budd's manuscript practice. Calligraphy, layout, and ornamental writing were part of how he understood the page, not just decoration around the music. The "Coyote Thanksgiving" material brings animals, housework, and desert-edge life into the correspondence, adding a trace of California imagery.

75. **"October 27" (ca. 1973)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated. **Cited in Chapter Two.**
"We can be free to go back to old music and listen with new ears," gives the entry its focus. The line supports Budd's return to older repertories without making that return sound like nostalgia or retreat. It also fits the chapter's larger

argument about "pretty" music: older sounds, styles, and images could be taken up again because they opened another route away from academic modernism.

76. **"January 21" (ca. 1974)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated. **Cited in Chapter Three.**
Mannerism and Gesualdo come into focus here. The "crash course in Mannerist aesthetics," the effort to direct music students toward Michelangelo and Pontormo, and the piano reduction of Gesualdo's *Moro, lasso, al mio duolo* all show older art and music becoming material for a new aesthetic position.

77. **"February 16, 1975"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.
The letter moves between desert landscape and performance planning. Budd describes a trip through the Salton Sea, Red Mountain, Copper City, Mexicali, and Borrego Canyon, with washes, cottonwoods, shrubs, grasshoppers, granite, and desert light becoming part of the letter's visual field. That landscape sits alongside practical concerns about the Wesleyan trip, *Bismillahi Rrahmani Rrahim*, Marion Brown, rehearsal schedules, and the event's standards. His proposed lecture through Debussy, Scriabin, Gesualdo, Monteverdi, Symbolists, and Mannerists keeps the Marion Brown collaboration tied to the older vocal and visual worlds that shaped the rest of *The Pavilion*.

78. **"May 26, 1975"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.
Gavin Bryars enters the recording story before the London sessions. Budd notes that Bryars had asked for *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* and *Song of Paradise* for possible recording on a "major label" in an "experimental" category. Still, he warns that neither piece was "conventionally experimental." *The Pavilion* belongs to experimental music, but to a post-avant-garde version of it, one organized around beauty, song, sacred text, and harmonic directness rather than inherited

signs of difficulty. The complaints about EMC, Cage, Cardew, Sun Ra, Ayler, Partch, and "the march of tedium" show how sharply Budd was drawing those distinctions.

79. **"December 3, 1976"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.
London frames this source. Budd records with Brian Eno, Gavin Bryars, and Michael Nyman, jokes that "an album" somehow came out of it, and then visits the Tate, where Rossetti's *Proserpine* becomes "my lady of the pomegranates." The letter links the studio afterlife of *The Pavilion of Dreams* to the Pre-Raphaelite world that had shaped Budd's earlier "pretty" music. It also shows that London extended, rather than replaced, the Southern California aesthetic and social networks through which that music first took shape.

Marty Walker Collection

80. **"December 3" (ca. 1975)**
Harold Budd, "In Delius' Sleep," Marty Walker Collection, Box 1, Folder 18.
This source preserves Budd's own vocabulary for "free duration," "open time," "languid melodic" material, and "arpeggiated texture." It helps connect the open-form techniques of the late 1960s to the softer tonal procedures of *Madrigals*, showing continuity beneath the apparent stylistic turn.

Published correspondence

81. **"Harold Budd to David Cope" (ca. 1970)**
David Cope, *New Directions in Music* (Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1971), 114. **Cited in Chapter One.**
Budd's statement on "High Art Uselessness" serves as the key bridge between Whistler, aestheticism, and *The Peacock Room*. Where Chapter One used the same source for the "pushing toward zero" idea, this chapter draws out its art-for-art's-sake language: "pretty," "existential prettiness," and art without "redeeming social values."

Harold Budd Estate / Terrence Budd

82. **"Harold Budd, *The Peacock Room*" (1972)**
Terrence Budd and the Harold Budd Estate.
This score is not a letter, but it is central to the chapter's archival sequence. A piano, percussion, and flowers placed onstage under dim blue light turn musical performance into décor, display, and suspension. The piece becomes the clearest musical analog to Whistler's *Peacock Room* and to the chapter's claim that "pretty" could function as a protest against utility.

83. **"Harold Budd's Curriculum Vitae" (ca. 1978)**
Terrence Budd and the Harold Budd Estate.
The CV establishes the early jazz background that makes the later Sanders and Coltrane material more than a distant stylistic turn. Fort Ord, Albert Ayler, and Budd's gigging history in Oakland and San Francisco place his spiritual-jazz interests within a longer life history of performance and contact with experimental jazz.

Harry Ransom Center

Peter Garland / Soundings Materials

84. **"Harold Budd, The Dragonfly Cymbal" (1972)**
Harold Budd, *The Dragonfly Cymbal* (1972), Peter Garland / Soundings, Budd, Harold, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 91.5.
The score gives the chapter one of its most compact examples of "pretty" music as both sound and image. Its E-flat tonal center, jazz-inflected chord color, extreme softness, calligraphic title, small blue flowers, and insect emblem show Budd's new style operating simultaneously as harmony, page design, ornament, and staged delicacy.

Interviews and Oral Histories

85. **"Author interview with Terrence Budd" (November 11, 2021)**
Terrence's account of the *Madrigals* performance history helps frame Budd's turn toward taking responsibility for performance. The problem was not simply that

the score was misunderstood, but that the sound world required a level of pacing, softness, and control that notation alone could not guarantee. His recollection supports the chapter's claim that Budd's "pretty" music increasingly depended on performance conditions as much as written materials.

86. **"Author interview with Paula Bethsebe" (August 5, 2022)**
Bethsebe's recollection of the dragonfly as Budd's recurring "symbol" gives the chapter a useful afterlife for the insect imagery. Her association of the emblem with "Art Deco" should not be treated as a precise stylistic classification. Still, it confirms that Budd's small decorative signs had a persistent visual force for those closest to him. This helps support the chapter's argument that the insects, flowers, calligraphy, and ornamental markings are not incidental embellishments but part of Budd's visual imagination.

87. **"Author interview with Carl Stone" (September 10, 2022)**
Stone's "Bob Dylan at Newport" analogy provides the *Madrigals* discussion with its strongest framing. For some listeners, Budd's extreme tonality was not a gentle simplification but a breach of contemporary-music expectation. Stone's respect for Budd's refusal to worry about academic acceptance helps position "pretty" as a risky aesthetic choice within CalArts rather than a decorative retreat.

Appendix E: Chapter Five Letters and Archival Materials

University of Redlands

Barney Childs Collection

88. **"Monday Evening Letter #1" (ca. 1970)**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated. **Cited in Chapter Three.**
A *SOUL!* broadcast with Pharoah Sanders and Amiri Baraka becomes an early marker of Budd's attraction to spiritual jazz. Described as a "rare, rare . . . stunning and unsettling experience," the episode gives Sanders a catalytic role in the chapter: not simply a musician Budd admired, but a figure whose sound world challenged his ideas about poetics, composition, and the limitations of systems.

89. **"March 30, 1972"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.
Anxiety and admiration sit together here. The fear that Sanders might "find" a musical phrase first, and even "find a better title," makes influence feel competitive, comic, and deeply personal. The accompanying Redon maxim about titles being "vague, indeterminate, and even confusingly aiming at the equivocal" also clarifies Budd's naming practice: a title should open associations rather than close them down.

90. **"November 3, 1972"**
Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.
Sanders and Ayler do not occupy the same place in Budd's listening. Sanders lines up with the "divine progression" Budd also hears in Daniel Lentz's music, while certain late Ayler recordings get a harsher response. That distinction matters because Budd was not simply embracing every free-jazz or spiritual-jazz figure. The image of "a string of quiet chords," each one the "correct one in

sequence," and "a highly polished little gemstone," also points toward the harmonic world of the *Pavilion* pieces.

91. **"March 27, 1973"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

After listening four times to Pharoah Sanders's recording of "Let Us Go into the House of the Lord," from *Deaf Dumb Blind (Summun Bukmun Umyun)*, Budd calls it "one gorgeous piece of music". He writes out its simple harmonic motion: I–IV–V7–I, I–V7/II–II–V7–I, and I–V–bVII–IV–I. The point is not only that he liked Sanders. He was listening to harmony, suspended or nearly absent pulse, bell and rattle sounds, and the directness of the progression. Ayler, Harrison, Carrillo, and CalArts humor all sit nearby, so the Sanders connection reads as part of a wider listening life rather than a single influence story.

92. **"April 29, 1973"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

Press criticism gets folded back into aesthetic self-definition. By repeating Stephan Soomil's dismissal of *The Oak of the Golden Dreams* as "little more than a euphonious waste of time," then turning that phrase into a preference for "something pretty" over "something turgid and repellent," the letter shows Budd converting a negative review into a statement of compositional direction.

93. **"July 20, 1973"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974. Cited in Chapter Three.

"Butterfly Sunday" is the central issue in this letter. Budd admits a debt to Sanders and Strayhorn but insists that "the more I rework it, the more it becomes Hal Budd," framing borrowing as transformation rather than imitation. Graettinger appears in a different register: Budd reports that responding to a doctoral inquiry led him to realize, half-jokingly, that he knew "about as much as anyone could" about the composer, adding "so why aren't I getting the Ph.D.?" and calling himself an "unreconstructed nostalgia buff." In this context,

Graettinger is less a direct influence than part of a broader engagement with neglected American repertories and archival knowledge. Cage, Sufism, and jazz modernism (Sanders and Strayhorn) appear alongside this exchange, so the song does not emerge in isolation but within a field of reading, listening, and reworking in which borrowed materials are transformed into Budd's own practice.

94. **"September 18, 1973"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974. Cited in Chapter Two.

A recording of the Aspen performance of *Butterfly Sunday* gives Budd public confirmation of the new song world. Hearing the performance becomes, in his words, "utter confirmation of hunches, guesses, and so forth." The letter marks growing confidence in the emerging *Pavilion* idiom.

95. **"November 13, 1973"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

By copying a passage from Debussy's *Trois Chansons*, Budd makes a close study visible on the page. Debussy is not functioning here as a vague influence; the citation shows Budd working through vocal writing and harmonic color directly, at the level of notation.

96. **"November 27, 1973"**

Barney Childs letter of support/correspondence concerning Harold Budd, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

Childs's Guggenheim support letter shows how *The Pavilion of Dreams* was being framed outside Budd's own correspondence. His description of *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* as "a sumptuous and astonishing piece" and his prediction that the larger project would define "a musical world all its own" confirm that the cycle was already being understood as a substantial, coherent artistic undertaking.

97. **“March 6, 1974”**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

Budd’s Qur’anic vocal work moves to the center of this correspondence. The proposed scoring for harp, glockenspiel, bass-baritone, and gong or bells places *Song of Paradise* inside the shimmering, ritualized sound world of *The Pavilion*, while the projected Santa Barbara Mission event situates the piece within a sacred-concert environment rather than a conventional recital frame.

98. **“March 12, 1974”**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

A joke about grant culture gives the letter its point. Budd’s crack about writing an opera on Benjamin Franklin for the Bicentennial mocks the patriotic themes he imagined would appeal to funding agencies, while also reminding the reader that *Song of Paradise* and *The Pavilion* developed within the practical world of grants, applications, and institutional support.

99. **“March 29, 1974”**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

Older song repertory and sacred text meet in this source. Budd’s reference to learning Satie’s *Trois Poèmes d’Amour* places earlier vocal music within his practical life as a pianist, while the sketch for *Song of Paradise* shows him confronting Qur’anic text directly. The reproduced sketch makes that shift visible: a restrained vocal line and harp sonorities become the first stage of a larger sacred setting.

100. **“April 5, 1974”**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

Satie appears here as both model and problem. Budd’s phrases “sexless creature,” “cannot put [my] finger on,” and “lack of worry. Danger!” suggest fascination without simple reverence. What matters is the mixture of poise, blankness, and risk: qualities that help clarify the kind of restraint Budd was exploring in the vocal and sacred pieces.

101. **"May 3, 1974"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

Budd locates the idea for *Song of Paradise* in an Easter Sunday walk through the rose garden at San Fernando Mission. A California mission, Qur'anic text, Albert Ayler's memory, and Marvin Hayes's voice all enter the work without making it conventionally liturgical. Marion Brown's tapes and interest in a possible collaboration keep the piece connected to both Budd's jazz network and his sacred imagery.

102. **"May 28, 1974"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1970–1974.

At the Santa Barbara Mission concert, *Song of Paradise* appears as a breakthrough rather than a routine premiere. Budd's "National Anthem of Islam" joke, the packed house, the standing ovation, Marvin Hayes's impact, and the absence of a recording all give the event a charged public character. Just as important, his admission that he recomposed some of the work after rehearsal shows that the piece continues to change through performance.

103. **"January 28, 1975"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

For *Bismillahi Rrahmani Rrahim*, this letter is especially valuable because it treats the work as a practical, working piece rather than just a title in the *Pavilion* cycle. Budd describes finishing the Marion Brown work, explains that lead sheets or charts helped performers understand what he meant, and calls the piece improvisational, "downhome," AB in structure, and harmonically simpler than *Madrigals*. The Wesleyan performance setting also shows him preparing for collaboration with Brown and negotiating the relation between written composition, jazz procedure, and performance practice.

104. **"July 30, 1975"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977. Cited in Chapter One.

Here, Budd connects *Song of Paradise*, Delius, and his move toward suspended chordal sound. He notes the planned *Monday Evening Concerts* performance of *Song of Paradise* with Marvin Hayes, asks Childs to hear Delius's *Cynara*, *Sea Drift*, or *An Arabesque*, and describes major/minor chords that "float through the aether the way jellyfish do in water." The letter links *The Pavilion* to vocal repertory, performance planning, and a sense of harmony as something suspended rather than driven forward.

105. **"November 19, 1975"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

Budd's "Vocal Music of the 20th Century" class list maps the repertory behind his vocal writing. Ravel, Debussy, Vaughan Williams, Ligeti, Mahler, Stravinsky, and others become "stunners," while Cage, Berio, and Stockhausen become "lowlights." Around the same time, the *Pavilion* materials were moving toward recording and circulation: Gavin Bryars was interested in *Paradise*, *Bismillahi*, and *Madrigals*, while Marion Brown was working on European possibilities. *Juno*'s performance, Earle Brown's response, and Tenney's visit from Santa Cruz keep the cycle tied to performance and the California network.

106. **"December 31, 1975"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

At this point, the *Pavilion* cycle remains larger and less fixed than the later Obscure Records album. Budd lists it as *Juno*, *Two Songs*, *Song of Paradise*, *Bismillahi*, and *Madrigals*, with the *Madrigals* coda becoming the introduction. Debussy remains part of the frame: "I keep coming back, back to Debussy's songs; this man is unexplainable." The source tracks the cycle through arrangement, recording plans, vocal repertoire, Basheva Music, and a return to Debussy.

107. **"The Pavilion of Dreams" (ca. 1976)**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

A program/listing reproduced on page 3 gathers *The Pavilion* as a cycle before its later association with the Eno-produced album. *Juno*, *Songs of Past Regrets and Future Fears*, *Three Songs*, *Song of Paradise*, *Bismillahi Rrahmani Rrahim*, and *Madrigals of the Rose Angel* appear together as parts of a larger design, making the document crucial for establishing the cycle's original scope.

108. **"January 8, 1976"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

The letter places *The Pavilion* world inside a period of financial strain. Budd discusses *In Delius' Sleep*, a possible "Serenade," Marvin Hayes's arrangement of "The Day of Judgment," Thornburgh's commission, Gustave Moreau, and Byzantine art. But money is never far away. He also describes moonlighting at a junior college and using GI Bill coursework to bring in extra income. Copyright trouble with the Library of Congress, unemployment after June, and the possibility of losing the house make the pressure clear. Sacred sound, visual art, and vocal writing were developing under practical strain, not apart from it.

109. **"July 5" (ca. 1976)**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts Undated.

Marvin Hayes remains central beyond *Song of Paradise*. The note about hearing him sing Beethoven's Ninth at the Hollywood Bowl, followed by the "oh, Freunde!" / "what's up, brother?" joke, brings Hayes into relation with one of the major monuments of European concert music while also registering the racial and institutional charge of that appearance.

University of North Texas Music Library

Merrill Ellis Music Collection

110. **Harold Budd, "Butterfly Sunday" (1973)**

Item 16, Box 13, Item 16, University of North Texas Archives, Merrill Ellis

Music Collection, 06-067, Music Library.

This score anchors the chapter's Coltrane discussion. "After the Rain" becomes a notated work for harp and wordless voice, shifted into Budd's devotional and decorative language. The title page, with flora, calligraphy, Arabic writing, and a Morris-like bird, shows that the transformation is visual and symbolic as much as musical. The PDF reproduces score pages on pages 11, 13, and 14.

New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

American Music Center Collection of Published Scores

111. **Harold Budd, *Song of Paradise: 17 Illuminations on the Holy Koran*, (1974)**

American Music Center Collection of Published Scores, JPB 15-64, Music Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

The title page reproduced on page 24 presents the score itself as a devotional object. Arabic script, Qur'anic text, memorial dedication, and careful visual design appear before the music begins, while the ensemble of bass-baritone, harp, glockenspiel, vibraphone, and percussion extends *The Pavilion's* sound world into sacred text, shimmer, sustain, and ritualized vocal gravity.

Interviews and Oral Histories

112. **"Vincent Plush, Harold Budd" (May 3, 1983)**

Vincent Plush, "Harold Budd," *Major Figures in American Music*, Oral History of American Music, Yale University, May 3, 1983.

Plush's interview is especially important for Budd's later reflections on sacred literature, Arabic manuscripts, ornament, and *The Pavilion of Dreams*. The interview supplies Budd's comments on the Qur'an as part of the world's "marvelous literature," his attraction to Arabic design and the "curlicue," and his understanding of the Coltrane/Sanders settings as pieces that belonged with *Madrigals of the Rose Angel*. It helps explain the cycle as a gathering of song, scripture, visual ornament, and spiritual-jazz translation rather than as a single stylistic project.

113. **"Author interview with Jim Fox" (November 13, 2025)**

Fox's recollection of Budd retexting Sanders's "Colors" for Childs's fiftieth birthday shows Sanders's music entering the intimate social life of Budd's

friendships. This is important because it moves the Sanders connection beyond influence or arrangement. Spiritual jazz becomes material for private address, humor, affection, and commemoration.

114. **"Author interview with Terrence Budd" (November 11, 2021)**

Terrence's recollections help clarify how *The Pavilion* and its related performances were heard within Budd's family and later memory. Where the chapter follows scores, letters, and recordings, this interview adds a personal register to the history of performance, disappointment, control, and the eventual studio afterlife.

Appendix F: Conclusion Letters and Archival Materials

University of Redlands

Barney Childs Collection

115. **"December 1, 1976"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

The "fame" and "food stamps" letter gives the late 1970s one of its sharpest images of recognition without security. The reproduced note makes the joke visible in Budd's own hand: "It went great: I'm famous! Wait'll I tell the people at the Food Stamps place." The same source also supports the liquor-store and bookkeeping details, keeping the glamour of international recognition alongside the practical realities of wage work and public assistance.

116. **"September 13, 1977"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

After the Northridge appointment collapsed, the blunt phrase "Back to standing in line" makes Budd's economic instability concrete. The letter is especially useful because it translates an institutional decision—dismissal for "lack of expected enrollment"—into Budd's lived experience of unemployment and renewed precarity.

117. **"October 19, 1977"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

The Methodist church material introduces a strange but revealing late-1970s chapter in Budd's working life. His line about becoming the "author of a Protestant Anthem" frames church work with irony, but the episode also shows how liturgical composition, wage labor, and his long-standing fascination with religion overlapped during a period of economic instability.

118. **“December 14, 1977”**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

The letter fills in the period between CalArts and London. *The Pavilion of Dreams* is moving toward release on Polydor, and Eno and Ritva Saarikko are expected to promote it in the United States. At the same time, Budd is grading term papers, teaching part-time at Northridge, and remembering older work at Pickwick Bookstore and an animation-film company in Hollywood. A Moorpark gig “for the mortgage” makes the financial pressure clear. The source helps show the late 1970s as a patchwork of recording prospects, teaching, commercial work, and short-term gigs rather than a clean break into an international career.

119. **“January 17, 1978”**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1978–1991.

Whether Budd might make a living abroad enters sharply here: “Brian’s coming here this spring — I intend inquiring as to my chances of making a living there; I’m not doing it here. Obviously.” The letter makes London appear less as a glamorous escape than as a practical possibility prompted by his economic difficulties in Southern California.

120. **“January 20, 1978”**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

This letter reinforces the instability around Northridge and the limits of academic employment as a solution. Placed beside the September 1977 dismissal and the January 1978 London-facing correspondence, it helps show that Budd’s later international turn emerged not from success alone, but from frustration with the narrowness of available work in California.

121. **“January 20, 1979”**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1978–1991.

A year later, the possibility of independence begins to look more concrete. The phrase “a chance . . . that I can make it alone, i.e., unattached with an institution”

marks a crucial shift: Budd begins to imagine a career outside the university system, supported by management and by the international networks opening up around Eno and London.

122. **"October 14, 1982"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1975–1977.

Budd's resignation from the Methodist church, capped by the valediction "Yours in Christ," brings the church-work episode to a wry close. The joke lands because, as Paula Bethsebe later recalled, Budd "wasn't religious" so much as fascinated by religion. The letter, therefore, supports a broader distinction between belief, study, employment, and aesthetic attraction to sacred forms.

123. **"December 24, 1987"**

Harold Budd to Barney Childs, Barney Childs Collection, University of Redlands, Series 1: Correspondence, Box 1, CalArts 1978–1991.

"I like abroad these days; miss your company" gives Budd's expatriate turn a quiet endpoint. By 1987, the possibility imagined in the late 1970s had become an actual life abroad, but the note also keeps Childs in the picture: the international career did not erase the older California friendship network that had sustained Budd's formation.

Harry Ransom Center

Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records, The University of Texas at Austin

124. **"July 22, 1976"**

Harold Budd to Peter Garland, Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 20.5.

The *Sweet Earth Flying* comment keeps Marion Brown in view after the main *Pavilion* discussion. Budd's claim that, after Paul Bley, he considered himself "a superb improviser" on the piece and was "damned proud" of his self-taught pianism helps the conclusion resist an Eno-centered ending. Older jazz loyalties and improvisational attachments remained active well into the later career.

125. **"January 5, 1977"**

Harold Budd to Peter Garland, Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 20.6.

David Bowie's admiration for *The Pavilion of Dreams*, "if you can imagine that," captures the conclusion's central paradox: growing recognition did not necessarily produce security. The letter sits perfectly beside the food-stamps material, showing that Budd could be admired by major international figures while still struggling to make a living.

126. **"September 8, 1977"**

Harold Budd to Peter Garland, Peter Garland Papers and Soundings Records, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 20.6.

The Northridge letter clarifies Budd's ambivalence about returning to academic work. He accepts the post "reasonably anonymously" and insists that he would not teach composition or have his music included on a faculty composers' concert. The extraordinary line, "In effect, I would not be a composer at Northridge," shows how employment could require a kind of artistic self-erasure.

Interviews and Oral Histories

127. **"Author interview with Paula Bethsebe" (August 26, 2022)**

Bethsebe's recollections give the conclusion its domestic and economic grounding. Her account of Budd's temporary jobs, her own print-shop work, and the family's need for income makes the financial instability more concrete than the letters alone can. Her distinction that Budd "wasn't religious" but loved studying religion also clarifies the irony of his Methodist church work: the sacred remained intellectually and aesthetically compelling even when it did not reflect ordinary piety.

128. **"Author interview with Terrence Budd" (November 11, 2021)**

Terrence's comments on *By Dawn's Early Light* help frame the conclusion of Budd's early-1990s work as a return to American materials after the British years. The point is not a simple homecoming, but a return mediated by expatriate experience, recording networks, and a mature language already formed through Southern California experimentalism.

Harold Budd and me during his three-day residency at the Toledo Museum of Art in 2018. At the time, I knew little about his music and could not have imagined that I would one day be living on the California coast, writing a dissertation devoted to his work and the experimental music networks that shaped it. Photograph by Rob Kilman.

