

Through Time and Space
April 5, 2002
The Community Music Center - Boston
John Ranck, flute
Aaron Caplan, guitar
Stephen Yenger, piano

Program Notes



Robert Dick describes himself as "a musician with 21st century skills and 18th century attitudes, being totally at home as a performer, composer and improvisor." With equally deep roots in classical music old and new and in free improvisation and new jazz, he has established himself as a legitimate heir to virtuoso composer/performers like Chopin, Paganini and Jimi Hendrix. Hendrix music has had a great influence on Mr. Dick, as can be heard in the piece on tonight's program.

He writes, "*Techno Yaman* is a piece that blends aspects of the traditional North Indian raga RagYaman with rock and electronica. Like all of Robert's compositions, this one includes multiphonics, or more than one pitch played simultaneously. While he is quick to point out he did not invent multiphonics, they are mentioned in a 19th century treatise) he has explored that aspect of flute playing more than anyone before him, and helped broaden the sonic range of the flute.



C.P.E. Bach the fifth child of J.S. Bach's first marriage. He received all his childhood musical education from his father and by the age of eleven could play Johann Sebastian's keyboard pieces at sight. (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/music/profiles/bachcpe.shtml>). After studying law, he worked for awhile for his father, and in 1738 was accepted as part of the musical establishment at the court of Frederick the Great, who was an accomplished flutist. With Quantz and Leopold Mozart (Wolfgang Amadeus' father), Bach spent the next thirty years as Court musician. In 1768 he assumed the role of Kantor and Director of Music in Hamburg, a position previously held by another famous Baroque composer, Telemann, who had been C.P.E. Bach's godfather. He held that position until his death in 1788.

The solo sonata on this evening's program was written in 1747, the year his father visited Berlin and met Frederick the Great. It is probably no accident that it is in the same key as the solo flute sonata by J.S. Bach.

Jean Françaix has been writing music since he was six years old. Irony and humor are hallmarks of his compositions. The composition on the program this evening is no exception. The suite as a musical form has been with us since Bach's time. Originally a series of dances, Françaix fills the old barrel of this form with some very new wine, indeed. The first example of this is his title of the first movement; traditionally an Allemand, Françaix gives us, instead, a Caprice, with all the imagination, whimsy and humor that that word implies. This movement is marked by an antic, tongue-in-cheek sense, as, indeed, is much of the piece. The Pavan is a dance of Italian origin, popular in the 16th and 17th centuries. It was in simple duple time, and of stately character. The Saltarello was a lively dance from Spain and Italy. It can have various meters (6/8, 3/4, 3/8, 6/4), and incorporated jumps. The Allemande is probably of German origin. It is usually serious in character and in his *Suite*, Françaix follows suit, scoring the movement for alto flute. The Minuet is a dance in triple meter, though I defy anyone to hear that in the opening section of this movement. It is very apparent in the second, Trio, section. Françaix closes the piece with a lively march, marked by offbeat accents.





Ned Rorem is one of America's best-known composers. He began his musical life as a pianist. French music has had a strong influence on him, and he lived in France for eleven years. He has won many awards for his composition, including a Pulitzer Prize in 1976. Best known for his songs, Rorem's music is basically tonal. *Romeo and Juliet*, like many of his compositions from the mid-seventies is comprised of several short movements, a structure similar to Francaix's *Suite*. A prolific and controversial author, he has published several volumes of diaries. Because Mr. Rorem writes prose as well as music, he is perhaps more sensitive than some composers to words' meanings. In *Romeo and Juliet*, each movement's emotion goes to the core of the scene from which the text is taken. Rorem says of his music, "My music is a diary no less compromising than my prose. A diary nevertheless differs from a musical composition in that it depicts the moment, the writer's present mood which, were it inscribed an hour later, could emerge quite otherwise. I don't believe that composers notate their moods, they don't tell the music where to go - it leads them....Why do I write music? Because I want to hear it - it's simple as that. Others may have more talent, more sense of duty. But I compose just from necessity, and no one else is making what I need."

Lucas Foss celebrates his 80th birthday this year. In the mid 1930s, he lived in Paris and studied flute with the world-renowned flutist Marcel Moyse, as well as piano and composition. He has taught composition at such prestigious places as Tanglewood, Harvard, and the Manhattan School of Music, and is currently on the composition faculty at Boston University. In addition to his renown as a composer and teacher, he is a respected conductor and pianist. Aaron Copland called his music "among the most original and stimulating compositions in American music." Like Rorem, Foss studied at the Curtis Institute, beginning at the age of 15. He had been writing music since the age of seven. His music whether serial, aleatoric, neoclassic or minimalist is marked by "the tension, so typical of the 20th century, between tradition and new modes of music expression." (<http://www.newalbion.com/artists/fossil/>).

