

# MARIO DAVIDOVSKY

(b. 1934)

## 1 FLASHBACKS (1995).....(10:06)

*flute (piccolo and alto flute), clarinet (bass clarinet),  
violin, violoncello, piano and percussion*

The New York New Music Ensemble

Jayn Rosenfeld, flutes; Jean Kopperud, clarinets; Linda Quan, violin;

Chris Finckel, violoncello; James Winn, piano; Daniel Druckman, percussion

Jeffrey Milarsky, conductor

## 2 FESTINO (1994).....(10:56)

*guitar, viola, cello, contrabass*

Speculum Musicae

David Starobin, guitar; Maureen Gallagher, viola

Eric Bartlett, violoncello; Donald Palma, contrabass

## ROMANCERO (1983).....(13:29)

*soprano, flute (piccolo, alto flute), clarinet (bass clarinet), violin and violoncello*

### 3 1. Morenica a mi me llaman.....(3:47)

### 4 2. ¡Arriba canes arriba!.....(4:01)

### 5 3. Seguidillas.....(1:41)

### 6 4. Triste estaba el Rey David.....(4:01)

Speculum Musicae

Susan Narucki, soprano

Laura Gilbert, flutes; Allen Blustine, clarinets

Curtis Macomber, violin; Chris Finckel, violoncello

Donald Palma, conductor

## 7 QUARTETTO NO. 2 (1996).....(10:53)

*oboe, violin, viola, violoncello*

Peggy Pearson, oboe; Bayla Keyes, violin

Mary Ruth Ray, viola; Rhonda Rider, violoncello

## 8 SYNCHRONISMS NO. 10 (1992).....(9:25)

*guitar and electronic sounds*

David Starobin, guitar

## 9 STRING TRIO (1982).....(10:47)

*violin, viola, violoncello*

Speculum Musicae

Curtis Macomber, violin; Lois Martin, viola; Eric Bartlett, violoncello

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*They [the surrealists] exchange, to a man, the play of human features for the face of an alarm clock that in each minute rings for sixty seconds.*

"Surrealism: the Last Snapshot of the European Intelligensia"  
— Walter Benjamin

As an epigram for the music of Mario Davidovsky, Benjamin's dazzling précis of surrealism seems compelling—but also perverse. The musical jolts and juxtapositions he conjures are as hair-raising as anything surrealism has produced; but his shock effects are always tempered by a shrewd, ultra-civilized traditionalism. (It's hard to imagine him alongside Breton or Aragon, at the front lines of the vanguard.) But then again, Davidovsky as traditionalist? If so, it's a trickster's traditionalism. His consummately refined music often seems to be dancing near the edge of a black hole—or enacting a primordial, slapstick argument between ancestor worship and irreverence. In

his artistic persona, tradition and subversion are twinned, joined, as it were, at the hip. The intercourse that results may be feisty, comic, or complicitous, but it's the doppelgänger relationship itself that provides the lift off and momentum.

Consider the opening of *Festino* for guitar, viola, 'cello, and bass: On the one hand, proliferant signs of order: linked rhythmic motives, coherent grouping structures, a hint of neo-classicism (and a droll motivic echo of the Schoenberg *Serenade*, another chamber work featuring an "exotic" plucked instrument); on the other, events that insidiously tilt toward anarchy: a tipsy, zigzag bass glissando trailing just behind the polite opening gestures; dueling slap-pizzicato effects and percussive body blows to the guitar; and, not long after, a brief but unnerving threat to skid off its metrical rails in a polyrhythmic argument between guitar and viola. There's a quarrel with aesthetic complacency simmering (and often boiling over) throughout Davidovsky's music. His work achieves its special poise and drive not so much by taking up arms in an aesthetic rebellion, but by playing out its prodigious volatility, constantly subverting (or threatening to subvert) our expectations, and celebrating its affinity for paradox—while remaining taut, coherent, controlled.

Consider another brief example, the closing moments of the song cycle, *Romancero*. The piece ends with a masterfully-controlled, and unusually gradual process: a quiet, ravishing, melismatic vocal line unfolds as an instrumental accompaniment dissipates in several stages, first shadowing the voice in a near-homophonic, rhythmic unison, then giving way to a delicate,

mid-register pedal tone that slips off a half-step just before vanishing altogether—yielding (it appears) to a final, quiet vocal peroration. The music moves delicately (and inexorably?) toward silence. However, at the conclusive moment, the vocal sonority swells ominously; a single, loud and abrupt pizzicato attack cuts off the voice; and a shrill, jarring ensemble shriek (surely an interruption, not a cadence?) abruptly ends the piece.

We are likely to hear this conclusion in relation to the song's text, itself an elaboration of the Old Testament story of David and Absalom: a father's response to the news of his son's death—grief, suddenly overwhelmed by spontaneous, uninflected pain. But the musical effect exceeds its narrative function. It challenges our complacent expectations for formal closure as much as it undercuts our comfortable sense of how the story (and its emotional trajectory) will go. And so it's also compelling to hear the stunning, final chord of *Romancero* as a musical embodiment of Benjamin's surrealist call to arms: *An alarm clock that in each minute rings for sixty seconds*. Of course, Davidovsky's music (unlike Benjamin's ringing alarm) is not invariably cataclysmic. But what better metaphor than the *wake up call* to describe our electrifying encounters with it? In each minute it rivets our attention for sixty seconds.

How does this happen? What other music has been so well admired and often emulated—and yet so resistant to description? And where did this elegantly wild music come from if not surrealism, perhaps via Varese? Or is it Beethoven via Schoenberg? Perotin via the Kabbala? Medieval mysticism? Urban modernity? Cervantes? Zabar's? To say that Davidovsky's artistic

temperament is broadly inclusive while remaining self-contained and *sui generis* is to add little more than another elusive paradox. Certainly, he had the opportunity to develop an eclectic, cosmopolitan sensibility in his youth. Buenos Aires was an important cultural crossroads, a point of convergence for émigré composers as well as internationally prominent performers and conductors. Davidovsky heard more modern music there (including *Wozzeck* and numerous other major works by the Second Vienna School composers) than he would have in almost any other urban musical center. But it is still hard to imagine how the young composer took the astonishingly large leap from his early instruction in Hindemithian formulas as a student of Guillermo Grätzer at the Collegium Musicum to a musical conception that so obdurately challenges formulaic thinking.

There are clues in one of Davidovsky's own preferred images, one that emphasizes self-imposed impoverishment, ingenuity, and radical self-reliance. "I always enjoyed the challenge of being 'left in the desert' for a few days with a knife and a jug of water....I thought it would be important to try to do the opposite of what came naturally to me." He makes it sound like Outward Bound for composers, but his desert is no place for a nonchalant camping trip; and there is nothing casual about his impulse to interrogate "what came naturally." Surely, unexamined habit—whether on the part of composers, performers, or listeners—is, the *diabolus* of Davidovsky's moral/artistic cosmology. However, there are other implications in his desert metaphor—displacement, restlessness, exile—that evoke a personal history as well as an artistic disposition.

**FLASHBACKS, OPENING 8 MEASURES: Track 1 :00-:20**

**1st trajectory:**

*MOTIVE: single long note, soft (calm?, ominous?), no attack, breathy, composite timbre (flute/string): mid-range E...then a second sustained pitch, brighter sonority, a composite attack and timbre (octave over-and undertones, string/piano, bell-like), up a sixth, C#...*

**Are these two sounds connected? Where are we going?**

*a sudden spike: jarring, unanticipated fortissimo vibraphone octave (F#), again an over/undertone attack*

**1st to 3rd note: progression from soft to loud, breathy to bell-like; the third note is connected to the prior two but also stunningly differentiated, and it sets off a jarring flurry of contrasting gestures:**

*INTRUSION/OPPOSITION: three violent aftershocks (note, dyad, chord) compressed into little more than 2 seconds (a third of the time-span of the two preceding events)...pitch identity nearly overwhelmed by violent attacks and noisy articulations; but the field of pitch classes is also gradually expanding...*

**Are the sets of events connected? Where are we going?**

**CONTINUATION:**

*solo clarinet emerges from piano/vibraphone decay, sustaining the final pitch of the motive, then extending it into an uninterrupted (ominous?, calm?), melody. The field of pitch classes continues to expand...*

**Suddenly: lyricism...abrupt contrasts dissipated...Can I relax?**

Leaving Eastern Europe for Argentina, Davidovsky's grandparents set off on a family journey that would typify modern, Jewish diasporic migration: moving (over three generations) from old world shtetl to a new style of village life at the edge of Argentinean urban culture—and then to the urban center itself, the university, and another round of immigration. The family's criss-crossing movements from Lithuania to Buenos Aires to New York (Jerusalem, Boston...) delineate a map of virtually omnidirectional dispersion, encompassing both East/West and North/South polarities. I imagine that these geographical/cultural tensions and displacements must have affected the temper of Davidovsky's aesthetics. Acutely aware that culture may be at once volatile and stable, formidably individualized and yet communal, Davidovsky is also precisely attuned to the paradoxes of modernism, its unresolved, antipodal impulses toward conservation and change. Diaspora may also have provided a model for artistic self-preservation: travel lightly (jettison the heavy baggage of historicism), but carry your heritage within. Indeed, the only "natural" and enduring artistic condition that Davidovsky seems to embrace is "exile," at least from the Promised Land of "common practices" and fixed artistic norms. For him, there is nothing invidious or morose about this situation. It seems to fuel an artistic ambition: to rebuild the Temple (or at least a way-station) in the desert, to reconstruct an artistic vision as completely as possible—not by renovating a solid, pre-existing edifice (or retooling a comprehensive musical language)—but from the ground up, literally

from the smallest possible particles of sound, a few tools ("a knife and jug,") and the spiritual resources of an exile: memory, imagination, commandment.

How and where did his reconstruction of musical aesthetics occur? The composer Eric Chasalow has suggested a precise interpretation of Davidovsky's desert image—one that points us to part of an answer—and to the early '60s, to the corner of Broadway and 125th St. in New York City. Then (and there) Davidovsky walked into an uncharted desert where he would thrive for more than a few days—into what Chasalow has called "the emerging world of electroacoustic music [and its] 'knife and jug' the [technology of the] classic tape studio—the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center." Inevitably, invariably, Davidovsky is cited as a "pioneer of electronic music" in accounts of post-war music. But what drew him into the medium was not the sophistication and prestige of the new technology, or the potential for newly-designed machines to probe the calculus of human cognition (as Milton Babbitt put it, the "transfer of limits" from "the nonelectronic medium and the human performer...to those more restrictive, more intricate, far less well understood limits: the perceptual and conceptual capacities of the human auditor.") Rather, what lured Davidovsky to the "classic" tape studio was a different and far more draconian limitation—the primordial, elemental quality of the building blocks it offered; and thus the challenge it evoked: to rebuild musical structure from ground zero.

**FLASHBACKS, M. 9-22: Track 1 :20-:59**

**2nd trajectory/(compression, elaboration, intensification**

**MOTIVE/INTRUSION (stretto):** Suddenly, a flashback to the first sonority: (flute/string timbre, soft/sustained, mid-range note), but on a different pitch (A) from the first time around

**The moment of repose is undercut by another abrupt change of texture/gesture...but the new event is also a repetition, a memory...**

Violin (again with piano over/undertone attack) moves (a few beats sooner than the first time) to a second, soft note, up a step...then (again) three bursts, this time intruding more impatiently, entering before the three-note motive is completed. A single sonority from the first set of interruptions returns literally, but the gestures here are more intricate, registrally dispersed, and dynamically differentiated than their precedents.

**A jolt!: even more violent oppositions of register, pitch/noise than the first time; even more violent gestures, articulations...but also a relationship across time, an echo, a recollection...**

The three-note motive finishes again (and again on F# in piano/vibraphone octaves), but this time the third note of the motive splits into two separate sonorities, the first entering "prematurely" (within the intrusion), a piano octave, the second a vibraphone octave echoing the piano after the interruption is over).

**Even more radically juxtaposed elements, but they begin to define categories of events (statement, interruption, continuation). Still, the**

***newly-defined functional categories begin to shift around, even before they are solidly fixed...***

*CONTINUATION (expansion, release...): flute this time (rather than clarinet) emerges out of the vibraphone/piano sound, but then (bass) clarinet joins in. The continuation is contrapuntal now, registrally and temporally expansive and extending beyond a few bars: a dense, concentrated interplay of color and articulative combinations (interlocking arabesques in percussion piano and winds/strings, syncopated ensemble chords, a scurrying, upbeat gesture to a sustained, high, chord with a raw, mid-range aftershock). This is the most expansive passage thus far, but, paradoxically, it projects a sense of increasing speed, momentum. Meter definitively kicks in and the passage builds to a strong structural accent...*

***We're on the move...to where?***

Imagine this as a method for producing music: you laboriously record the lackluster blurps and beeps that you can produce with a few primitive electronic devices on electronic tape; you cut the tape into pieces roughly an inch to a yard long (each of which corresponds to roughly 1/10 of a second to a few seconds of recorded sound); you chisel away at each of your tape fragments, literally whittling the articulative nuances of your sounds into the plastic tape, working with a diamond cutter's concentration and precision; you experiment with the tape and electronic devices over and

over until you are satisfied that each sonorous/tape fragment is adequately nuanced and arresting; and, then you construct a huge, linear mosaic of magnetized tape, splicing the small bits together to form a coherent, whole piece which realizes the expressive and structural implications of the minute details you have crafted. You have spliced together literally thousands of small pieces of magnetized plastic; laid end to end, they would be the length of a football field. Your piece lasts a little under 4 minutes. (You call it "Electronic Study No. 1").

What is gained through this singularly maniacal and apparently unpromising method? First and foremost, the possibility not just of contemplating but of manipulating, literally *handling*, the most minute details of sound—the "subatomic" components, music's *pre-syntactical* level. Imprinting a magnetic field onto a scrap of plastic tape, the composer could capture and act directly upon the most fundamental and most ephemeral dimension of music through a physical analogue to air pressure fluctuation itself. It was, Davidovsky has said, not just a matter of "trapping" a sound but (virtually) "walking into it." Once inside, it became possible to work with aspects that previously had seemed invisible and inaccessible, especially sound "color." And thus, such fundamental concepts as "polyphony" could be extrapolated, from streams of pitches organized according to voice leading principles, to streams of timbre or articulations. For Davidovsky this amounted to a quasi-religious experience, by his own description, a "pre-grammatical mysticism of the letter." Splitting apart the smallest syntactical units of music and then resplicing bits of sound to pro-

duce a new musical vocabulary was, for him, like a medieval Kabbalist's exercises in meditating on the alphabet, chanting and recombining letters to reveal hidden essences and to "unseal the soul." This sounds earnest, but Davidovsky has also described the experience in a playful riff on the familiar metaphor of musical organicism: "If I could imagine a cell," he suggests, "then maybe I could figure out how to generate a liver.": Spliced magnetic tape as recombinant DNA; the composer as (Frankensteinian) genetic engineer, producing new musical microorganisms to build a better monster.

Davidovsky has found various ways to transfer his musical/genetic splicing experiments from the tape studio to instrumental and vocal composition. His early electronic studies and well-known series of Synchronisms for live performers and electronic sounds have functioned as training etudes in a Davidovskyan performance aesthetic, providing performers with an audible catalogue—at once wild and precise—of vivid musical articulations, subtle inflections, and instantaneous shifts of dynamics, color, and expressive qualities to play off and match. At the same time, the composer (somehow!) transforms the kinetics of human performance into the contours and intense gestures of his electronic musical inventions. And so the "live" and "electronic" partners engage in an improbable and ever-stunning dialogue of mutual reflection and transformation—never more so than in the *Synchronisms No. 10*, for guitar and electronic tape. Here, Davidovsky subverts his own compositional norms by leaving the solo instrument on its own for almost 4½ minutes of the composition's duration (an astonishing long time in this universe). He rises to this self-imposed challenge by craft-

ing an extended passage of virtuosic music for guitar alone, displaying (and extending) the instrument's capacity to project a polyphony of articulations, colors, gesture types, and contrapuntal lines. And when electronic sound does finally sneak in, we may briefly believe that it's the tamer element in the dialogue. This beguiling possibility is, of course, quickly repudiated, as the electronic "voice" unceremoniously takes on the kind of explosive tendencies already demonstrated by the guitar. A characteristically Davidovskyan rowdiness ensues, leading to a series of turbulent, climactic eruptions and quizzical aftershocks.

In his purely instrumental chamber works, Davidovsky has also developed a repertory of orchestrational analogs to electronic techniques, for example, simulating the technique of spliced tape by grafting together dramatically different instrumental attacks and sustains—e.g., a sharp, loud, and short (often pizzicato) event in one or more instruments that triggers a sustained (often soft) sound in another. Ever since he began to demonstrate the power and utility of this effect, it has been emulated *ad infinitum* by many composers. However, it remains emblematic of his own musical sensibility. Such composite sounds function not only as articulative nuances but as syntactical elements themselves. Operating at the musical surface, they already project the full force of the music's paradoxical impulses and sudden changes of intensity.

Working precisely at the level of the "cell" or the "mystical letter," Davidovsky also became acutely aware of the bluntness and inflexibility of the concepts we use to fix a hierarchy among the aspects of sound. In listening to both his instrumental and electronic works, we need to think of

sounds as not just higher or lower, sooner or later, but also fundamentally organized by affinity and contrast of color and/or articulation. Of course, this condition is hardly unique to his music—experimentation with the so-called secondary parameters of sound has been especially intense through much of this century. But in Davidovsky's musical universe, the experiment is refined and raised to a basic strategy: a sound may slip from "pitch-primacy" to "color-primacy" with a kind of magical spontaneity, so often and so quickly that the concept of a two-dimensional model of pitch structures unfolding across time seems hopelessly reductive. The omnipresent potential for "sound alchemy"—for various aspects of sound, not just pitch, suddenly to focus our attention—adds a robust third dimension. It gives Davidovsky's work a vivid sense of unfolding in a three-dimensional space of fluid proportions, in which foreground and background elements are constantly interchanging.

However volatile the syntactical elements of his music may be, structural harmonies and contrapuntal lines continually surface in his music, at least temporarily governing its continuity and flow. But the dynamics of harmony and counterpoint are ultimately subsumed within a more global dynamic of elastic transformations, whereby "harmony" metamorphoses into "color," "contrapuntal line" into "texture," "texture" into "harmony." Like everything else in Davidovsky's music, a pitch hierarchy tends to function just long enough to set up an expectation that can be undermined—subverted by a spontaneous, alchemical change.

Any verbal translation of this music's volatile surface is bound to be cumbersome and sluggish. But here's a try at a few of the quicksilver transformations that close out the *String Trio*:

- *spontaneous reconfiguration*: a three-line chorale-like texture imperceptibly turns into a two part study in radically contrasting registers, (an almost impossibly high, static element pitted against a succession of explosive, low, gestures)...
- *juxtaposition/superimposition*: several seconds of intense, syncopated moto perpetuo music merge with a quiet, unmetred tremolo—which, an instant later, is superimposed with a lyrical two-part contrapuntal passage, unfolding calmly and expansively for almost a full 10 seconds...
- *metamorphosis*: a quiet instrumental chord suddenly transmutes—via a short, violent crescendo in its inner voice—into a dynamic sonority hurtling through space....

It may seem that such discrete, arresting moments will arrest time itself, reducing music to a chain of disconnected, electrifying moments—a more perfect musical embodiment of Benjamin's ringing alarm clock. But from his earliest electronic studies, Davidovsky has resisted this possibility. However radical his "pre-grammatical mysticism" may be, it is held in check by the require-



ments of global compositional coherence. And however innovative the surface details of his instrumental works, he often derives an overarching dynamic and a quasi-narrative continuity in large part from the qualities inherent in the ensemble forces themselves. So, for example, in the *String Trio* the bowed instruments' capacities for almost seamless long notes, varied modes of sound production, and precise, rapid re-articulations give rise to a particular set of dynamic oppositions (broadly speaking, slow/fast, calm/agitated, contrapuntal/gestural, and so forth), and to intricate textures in which contrasting and discrete elements may be fused in a single dense gesture. Or *Festino*, where the quick decay of the guitar's sound seems to motivate the short, almost breathless grouping structure of the work's opening and its often comic exertions to extend phrase lengths as the piece progresses. Or the *Quartetto* for oboe and string trio, where the dynamic of the relatively homogeneous group (string trio) is counterpoised with the (distinctive, individual) oboe, setting up a dialectic of assimilation vs. autonomy.

**FLASHBACKS, M. 23: TRACK 1 :59...**

**Third trajectory: expansion**

*A hint of a flashback to the quality of the opening: low, soft flute, a long note (middle D)...and quickly a second motivic note in the violin/pizz. piano (B)...but the continuation becomes even more expansive the third time around, so much so that the music breaks free of its tripartite pattern. A dialectic of interrupted continuities is established; the flashback pattern floats into the middleground...*

Even at the larger levels of music form and process, where expansive dynamic relationships and the narrative possibilities they imply are played out, Davidovsky twists the knife. Interruption, surprise, and metamorphosis play too central a role in his compositional rhetoric to allow for any smug statement of formal completion and resolution. In each piece, he sets the conditions of tension and repose (e.g., greater or lesser gestural intensity, congruence of parts in a polyphonic texture, or speed of transformation), finally to demonstrate that "tension" and "repose" are themselves not entirely reliable categories. Even this fundamental dialectic is subject to interrogation by an acutely self-aware and inventive (but never nihilistic) musical mind.

Finally, it is the pressure of the mind at work (inventing, transforming, resisting complacency, challenging itself, challenging us) that astonishes for sixty seconds of each minute of each of Davidovsky's pieces. For him, composition enacts episodes in the life of the mind—but it's the mind *on fire*. And once again, it is Walter Benjamin who provides the adroit aphorism. He is speaking now of another unlikely aesthetic comrade for Mario Davidovsky. But surely, what Davidovsky's music embodies is what Benjamin so passionately admired in Proust: "the constant attempt to charge an entire lifetime with the utmost mental awareness."

— **Martin Brody**

*The composer, Martin Brody, has written extensively for the Musical Quarterly, Perspectives of New Music, and the Journal of Music Theory. Brody is Professor of Music at Wellesley College, where he has been on the faculty for twenty-one years.*

**Mario Davidovsky** was born on March 4, 1934, near Buenos Aires, Argentina. As a child, he studied violin and began composing at the age of 13. While studying composition, theory and history, he had lessons with Teodoro Fuchs, Erwin Leuchter and Ernesto Epstein. His principal teacher was Guillermo Grätzer. In 1958 he studied at the Berkshire Music Center with Aaron Copland, who encouraged him to settle in the United States, where he has lived since 1960.

Davidovsky has taught at the University of Michigan, the Di Tella Institute of Buenos Aires, the Manhattan School of Music, Yale University, City College, CUNY, and at Columbia University where he directed the Columbia Electronic Music Center. In January 1994, he joined the music department at Harvard University. Since 1971, he has served as director of the Composers Conference at Wellesley College. He was composer-in-residence at the Tanglewood Music Festival in 1981 and 1994.

Mario Davidovsky's many honors include two Guggenheim Fellowships, two Rockefeller Fellowships, a Koussevitsky Fellowship, the Brandeis University Creative Arts Award, an American Academy of Arts and Letters Award, the 1971 Pulitzer Prize, a Naumburg Award, a Guggenheim Award, and the 1994 National Seamus Award. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1982. In addition, Davidovsky has received commissions from the Philadelphia Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, the Pan American Union, the Fromm and Koussevitsky Foundations, the Juilliard and Emerson String Quartets, Speculum Musicae, and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, among others.

**Speculum Musicae** is currently celebrating its 30th season as one of America's leading new music ensembles. Based in New York City, Speculum Musicae is in residence at Columbia University, where the group performs and teaches. This album is Speculum's tenth CD appearance on Bridge, a catalog which includes works by Stefan Wolpe, Elliott Carter, George Crumb, Poul Ruders, Karl Aage Rasmussen, Stephen Jaffe, Hans Abrahamsen, and Bent Sørensen.

**The New York New Music Ensemble** has for twenty-two years inspired, commissioned, performed and recorded music of the leading composers of our day. Much of the music involves theater, electronics, and interdisciplinary performances involving graphics, movement, and the spoken word. NYNME's recent recordings include *Electro-Acoustic Music* (Centaur); music of Carter, Davies and Druckman (GM); and Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* (GM).

**Susan Narucki** has become one of the most sought after soprano soloists today. In recent seasons she has appeared as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Netherlands Philharmonic, and the London Sinfonietta, among many others. Her recent recordings for Bridge Records include the soprano solo in George Crumb's *Star-Child* (BRIDGE 9095).

**Peggy Pearson**, winner of the Pope Foundation Award for Outstanding Accomplishment in Music, is Artistic Director of, and oboist with Winsor Music (Boston) and the Greenleaf Chamber Players (in residence at Purchase College, NY). She is soloist with the

Emmanuel Chamber Orchestra, and has appeared with the Boston Symphony as principal oboist, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and Music from Marlboro.

**Bayla Keyes** is a founding member of the Muir String Quartet, with whom she won the Evian and Naumburg Awards. She is an ardent champion of new music, having premiered and recorded works with Boston Musica Viva and Triple Helix. She is Co-Chair of the String Department at Boston University and Director of the Interlochen Chamber Music Conference and the Boston University Tanglewood Institute String Quartet Seminar.

**Mary Ruth Ray** has performed throughout the United States, Europe and Russia. As violist of the Lydian String Quartet, she has been awarded prizes at competitions in France, England and Canada, and is a 1984 winner of the Naumburg Award for Excellence in Chamber Music. Ms. Ray has recorded for CRI, Nonesuch, Centaur, Harmonia Mundi and New World Records, and has been an Artist-in-Residence on the faculty of Brandeis University since 1980, teaching viola and chamber music.

**Rhonda Rider** is a founding member of the Lydian Quartet and piano trio Triple Helix. An advocate for new music, she has premiered and recorded works by Lee Hyla, John Harbison, Steve Mackey, Donald Martino and Elliott Carter.

**David Starobin**, guitarist and record producer, has had more than 300 works composed for him by many of today's leading composers. His most recent solo album, *Newdance* (BRIDGE 9084) was nominated for a Grammy and received AFIM's "Best Solo Classical Album of 1999" award.

**Flashbacks** was commissioned by Meet the Composer/Reader's Digest for the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players in consortium with The New York New Music Ensemble and the California EAR Unit. The first performance was given by The New York New Music Ensemble in New York City.

**Festino** was composed for a Speculum Musicae concert honoring Mario Davidovsky's 60th birthday. The first performance was given by Speculum Musicae in New York City.

**Romancero** was a National Endowment for the Arts Consortium Commission written for Speculum Musicae, the Contemporary Music Forum (Washington D.C.), and the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. The first performance was given by Lucy Shelton, soprano, and Speculum Musicae in New York City.

**Quartetto No. 2** was commissioned by and dedicated to oboist Peggy Pearson. The first performance was given by Peggy Pearson, oboe; Nick Eanet, violin; Lois Martin, viola; and Marcy Rosen, violoncello, at Wellesley College.

**Synchronisms No. 10** was composed for and dedicated to guitarist David Starobin. The work was commissioned by Albert Augustine, Ltd., and was first performed by David Starobin in New York City.

**String Trio** was commissioned by the Guggenheim Museum and given the 1982 Peggy Guggenheim Award. The first performance was given in Venice, Italy, by members of the Arditti String Quartet.

## Texts for Romancero

English Translations by Mario Davidovsky

### **Morenica a mi me llaman**

Morenica\* a mi me llaman yo blanca nací;  
el sol del enverano me hizo a mi ansí.  
Morenica y graciosa y mavromatianí.

Morenica a mi me llaman los casapicos;  
si otra vez me llaman, yo les doy besicos.  
Morenica y graciosa y mavromatianí.

Morenica a mi me llaman los marineros.  
si otra vez me llaman yo me vo con ellos.  
Morenica y graciosa y mavromatianí.

Ya se viste la morena y de amarillo;  
ansina es la pera con el bembriillo.  
Morenica y graciosa y mavromatianí.

Ya se viste la morena y de verdolí;  
ansina es la pera con el shiftilí.  
Morenica y graciosa y mavromatianí.

### **Morenica, they call me**

Morenica they call me. Born white was I;  
The summer sun made me dark.  
Morenica and beautiful and dark-eyed.

The butchers call me Morenica.  
If they call to me again, I shall give  
them tiny kisses.  
Morenica and beautiful and dark-eyed.

The sailors call me Morenica.  
If they call to me again,  
with them I shall go away.  
Morenica and beautiful and dark-eyed.

She is dressing up in yellow  
Like the pear and the quince.  
Morenica and beautiful and dark-eyed.

She is dressing up in green  
Like the pear and the peach.  
Morenica and beautiful and dark-eyed.

*\*Endearing epithet, meaning dark-skinned one.*

### **¡Arriba canes arriba!**

¡Arriba canes arriba!—¡Que rabia mala os mate!

En jueves matais el puerco—y en viernes comeis la carne.

Ay, que hoy hace los siete años—que ando por este valle

pues traigo los pies descalzos—las uñas corriendo sangre  
buscando triste a Julianesa—la hija del emperante

pues me la han tomado moros—mañanica de San Juan

cogiendo rosas y flores—en un vergel de su padre.

Oído lo ha Julianesa—que en brazos del moro está

las lagrimas de sus ojos—al moro dan en la faz.

### **Hell, Dogs, Hell!**

Hell, Dogs, Hell! –  
May a raging fury kill you!

You slaughter the pig on Thursday –  
and on Friday you eat its meat.

Oh, today is the seventh year—that I  
am wandering

through this valley  
with naked feet and bloody nails.

Sad, I am looking for

Julianesa—the daughter of the King

Who was taken by the Moors—  
on the morning of St. John

While gathering roses and flowers –  
in her father's garden.

He was heard by Julianesa—  
while in the arms of the Moor,  
the tears of her eyes hitting  
the Moor's face.

### ***Seguidillas***

A la sierra viene  
la blanca niña  
y en arroyos la nieve  
huye de envidia

Manojitos de hinojo  
coge la niña  
Y sus hojos manojos  
de flechas tiraba.

### ***Triste estaba el Rey David***

Triste estaba el Rey David.  
Triste y con gran pasión  
cuando le vinieron nuevas  
de la muerte a Absalom.

Palabras tristes decía  
Salidas del corazón.

### ***Spanish Dance***

To the hill comes  
the white maiden  
And the snow with envy  
flees to the streams.

Handfuls of sweet fennel  
The maiden gathers  
And her eyes were flashing  
Showers of arrows.

### ***Sad was King David***

King David was in deep sorrow  
And stricken by great grief  
When the news was brought to him  
of the death of Absalom.

The sad words he uttered  
Came forth from his heart.

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