

THE EGGMAN VARIATIONS (2005) (19:17)

1. Pentatonia (6:05)
2. Bent (6:46)
3. A Roiling Worm of Sound (6:18)

Corigliano Quartet

Lina Bahn, *violin* · Michael Jinsoo Lim, *violin*
Melia Watras, *viola* · Amy Sue Barston, *cello*

John Blacklow, piano

TYPECASE TREASURY (2010) (19:05)

4. Where We Begin (2:16)
5. Hurdy Gurdy (2:12)
6. Crackpot Hymnal (2:50)
7. This One Was Supposed to be Atonal... (2:06)
8. Russian Metal (3:14)
9. Intermezzo (2:22)
10. Anthem (3:43)

The Amernet Quartet

Misha Vitenson, *violin* · Marcia Littlely, *violin*
Michael Klotz, *viola* · Jason Calloway, *cello*

Kevin Weng-Yew Mayner, piano

THIS PICTURE SEEMS TO MOVE (1998) (14:39)

11. Twittering Machine (6:15)
12. Those Who Go (8:18)

The Amernet String Quartet

ANOTHER FANTASTIC VOYAGE (2012) (21:39)

13. The Mad King (7:31)
14. Changeling (6:33)
15. An Evil, Evil Carnival (7:26)

Daniel Schlosberg, piano

Illinois Modern Ensemble

Ashley Shank, *flute, piccolo*
Shenghang Hsieh, *oboe*
Yi-Wen Chen, *clarinet*
Michael Morthland, *bassoon*
Stephen Burian, *horn*
Aaron Romm, *trumpet*
Justin Brown, *trombone*
Christopher Butler, *percussion*
William Mullen, *percussion*

Stephen Taylor, conductor

Chen-Yu Huang, *harp*
Hye-Young Kim, *electric piano*
Cristian Neacsu, *violin*
Elaine Li, *violin*
Kimberlee Uwate, *viola*
Laine Longton, *cello*
Stefanie Hendricks, *doublebass*

Total Time: 74:54

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These days, we can carry the whole history of music in our pockets, with Beethoven, Nancarrow, Coltrane and the Beatles rubbing shoulders on our phones. What sort of music should we write? Whatever we want, of course, but for me the answer has to involve this new diversity. I want to make music that weaves between stylistic poles in a way that is unexpected and entertaining—not pastiche, but an attempt to find hidden roads connecting the familiar places we love. A music that takes up the classical disciplines of harmony, counterpoint, and development with just the slightest hint of a raised eyebrow, so that listeners are confronted with a strange superposition of sincerity and irony. This would be a music that eschews grand narratives, playfully constructing something new from the baubles left strewn about by our ancestors.

The Eggman Variations

The first movement, *Pentatonia*, imagines a fictitious land where the music is made of 5-note scales, some familiar, some not. After a slow and gentle opening, in which the same musical elements combine and recombine in ever-changing ways, it gradually builds in intensity to a final climax. The last, repeated chord is the ugliest major chord I know.

The second movement, *Bent*, began as a memorial to my father. It layers rock clichés on top of one another, while the strings slide softly from note to note. The slow opening leads to a hectic, almost random middle section that climaxes with another rock cliché. A little

return, and then, just before the end, the Eggman appears and an En(i)ggma is resolved.

The title of the last movement came to me first. I wrote in my journal a picture of a single thickened, burbling musical line moving up and down the staff—my attempt to capture the idea of a “roiling worm of sound.” If the piece makes you feel like you’re running after a train that is always just beyond your reach, then it is working correctly.

The Eggman Variations was commissioned by Walter Swap and the Arizona Friends of Chamber Music, for the Pacifica Quartet and Ursula Oppens.

Typecase Treasury

When I was young, my parents found a small table made from a printer’s typecase, divided into a hundred little compartments. Each had been filled with a tiny mineralogical curiosity—a strange crystal, a piece of iron pyrite, a shark’s tooth, or a fossilized trilobite. In thinking about how to capture this memory, I hit on the idea of a collection of little movements, complete in themselves but producing a sense of form through their juxtaposition. Most of the seven movements are about two minutes long, just enough to make a coherent statement but not long enough to sustain much development. I tried to stitch the movements together in a way that created a larger trajectory of energy and mood, building structure in an intuitive, associative way, without much recourse to explicit recapitulation.

Where We Begin is influenced by the pulsing rhythms of minimalism as filtered through early Stravinsky. The group plays together in an almost-constant rhythm, cycling through harmonies that variously echo jazz, blues, and twentieth-century modernism.

Hurdy Gurdy is a frenetic, wheezing machine, in which a bluesy melody does its best to stay afloat above the swirling chromatic accompaniment. It is supposed to be lighthearted and somewhat humorous.

Crackpot Hymnal is lurching, loosely synchronized, and improvisatory, combining avant-garde rhythms with gushing Romantic harmonies. It is as if the players were all improvising yet somehow managing to stay together harmonically. As the title suggests, the music is supposed to be elegiac and slightly demented, sincere but also a little disturbing.

This One Was Supposed to Be Atonal began with a series of dense chromatic clusters and was supposed to continue in a more avant-garde direction. Instead, it acquired a goofy jazz solo.

Russian Metal reflects my odd belief that there is an affinity between Russian modernism and heavy metal, both of which favor a darkened ("more minor than minor") harmonic palette. Unable to shake the image of Shostakovich orchestrating Black Sabbath, I decided to exorcise my demons by writing them down.

Intermezzo features a simple melody in high harmonics, shared by the two violins. The harmony is sweet-and-sour, pretty but a little polytonal. I originally wrote a longer and more complicated movement

in its place, but decided that less was more.

Anthem is the longest movement, a kind of Schubertian rock-out finale that returns to some of the harmonic ideas of the opening movement.

Typecase Treasury was commissioned by the Newburyport Chamber Music Festival, directed by my friend David Yang.

This Picture Seems to Move is one of my earliest pieces, written in 1998 when I was a newly recovering refugee from philosophy graduate school. Compared to my later music, it is more straightforward and in the pocket; rather than playing with genres, or drawing on influences from popular music, it is willfully and assertively traditional. Nevertheless, there is something about the piece that I keep coming back to, a kind of unguardedness that I admire more the older I get.

Each movement is based on a painting. *Twittering Machine* (after Klee) is restless and bouncy, combining neo-Romantic harmonies with a more contemporary rhythmic language. My image was of a Frankenstein or Robocop or some other tragic-but-sympathetic animatron. *Those Who Go* (after Boccioni) is more somber, its central theme a slightly exotic 5-against-3 ostinato. At the time, I felt that there was something powerful and systematic about the music of Debussy, Ravel, and the early Stravinsky, something that had occasional echoes in postwar jazz, but was often missing in contemporary notated music. I wanted to write a piece that reached back to the unfinished project of early modern tonality, one that could live in the central core of a concert program rather than jostling to occupy the

slot reserved for “take your medicine” contemporary music.

Another Fantastic Voyage is meant as a musical analogue to literary genre fiction. When I wrote the piece I was feeling that there was something vaguely anachronistic about writing a piano concerto in the twenty-first century. (The poetry critic David Orr jokes that if you were to start talking about contemporary poetry to some generic “person on the street,” the Generic Person would likely reply: “We have poets? Do they wear capes?”) I decided to try to play the role of “classical composer” with a certain theatricality and (I hope) verve, aiming for something playful and serious at the same time—rather like a novelist infusing a pulp or science-fiction scenario with unexpected emotional depth.

The Mad King begins with an obsessive figure that gradually dissolves. The King has sent his knights on a Romantic quest which turns out to be impossible, based on some elementary misunderstanding, and everyone slinks home in embarrassment.

Your *Changeling* needs a whole lot of love—a beautiful baby, promising all sorts of adagio sweetness, but somehow turning out very wrong in the end.

An Evil, Evil Carnival combines a slow introduction with an accelerating second section that builds to a frenetic climax. The goal is a macabre picaresque wherein demons are invoked and souls are stolen, but it all turns out to be in good fun. Sort of a campy *Night on Bald Mountain*.

—Dmitri Tymoczko,
December 2012

CORIGLIANO QUARTET Hailed as one of today’s most exciting and dynamic string quartets, the Corigliano Quartet’s recent Naxos CD was named as one of *The New Yorker’s* Top Ten Classical Recordings of the Year. Founded in 1996, The Corigliano Quartet has held residencies at the Juilliard School and Indiana University. They have recorded for Naxos, Albany, Aguava New Music, Bayer Records, CRI, New Focus Recordings and RiAx. For more information, please visit www.coriglianoquartet.com.

JOHN BLACKLOW, PIANO Hailed for his “powerful and eloquent” playing (*New York Times*), pianist John Blacklow has been presented at the Kennedy Center, Zankel Hall, the Louvre Auditorium, the Concertgebouw, the Mozarteum, Royal Albert Hall, Wigmore Hall, and Vienna’s Musikverein. In 2009, EDI Records released his solo piano CD *Prism*, featuring works by Berg, J.S. Bach, Schumann, and Chopin. He is on the faculty at the University of Notre Dame.

THE AMERNET QUARTET Lauded for their “intelligence” and “immensely satisfying” playing by the *New York Times*, the Amernet String Quartet has garnered worldwide praise. Ensemble-in-Residence at Florida International University since 2004, The Amernet won the gold medal at the Tokyo International Music Competition in 1992, followed by the grand prize at the prestigious Banff International String Quartet Competition in 1995. Please visit www.amernetquartet.com for more information.

KEVIN WENG-YEW MAYNER Kevin's playing has been described as "fabulous" by the *New York Times* while the *New York Concert Review* has noted his "commanding technique." He has performed throughout New York City, in Tokyo, Istanbul, and recorded on the Aeon Label. He continues to explore the process of making music on the bass with Kurt Muroki. In his quest to ever-expand the audience for classical music, Kevin is developing innovative programming for radio and YouTube, as a host at WWFM, The Classical Network.

DANIEL SCHLOSBERG Daniel Schlosberg has been described as an "expert pianist" (*Boston Globe*), and his performances have been praised for their "intellect and passion" (*Washington Post*). His solo album, *Child's Play* (Centaur Records) features works by Schumann, Pärt, Lachenmann and Debussy. He can also be heard in Stephen Andrew Taylor's *Quark Shadows* (Albany Records). He has been Artist-in-Residence at the University of Notre Dame since 2005.

STEPHEN TAYLOR Stephen Taylor, director of the Illinois Modern Ensemble, composes music that explores boundaries between art and science. His *Unapproachable Light*—inspired by images from the Hubble Space Telescope and *the New Testament*—was premiered by the American Composers Orchestra in 1996 in Carnegie Hall. *Paradises Lost*, an opera based on the novella by Ursula K. Le Guin, was premiered in Portland, Oregon and at the University of Illinois in 2012. He is Associate Professor at the University of Illinois.

Recorded by

John C. Baker and Loren Stata (1–3)
Andrés Villalta (4–12)
and Christopher Ericson (13–15)

Mixed by

Adam Abeshouse, Andrés Villalta, and Dmitri Tymoczko

Mastered by

Adam Abeshouse

Tracks 1–12 recorded at Princeton University's Taplin Auditorium.
Tracks 13–15 recorded at the Foelinger Great Hall at the University
of Illinois.

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Becky and David Starobin

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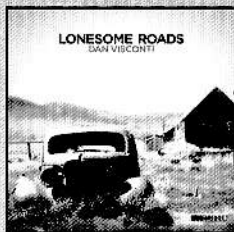
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