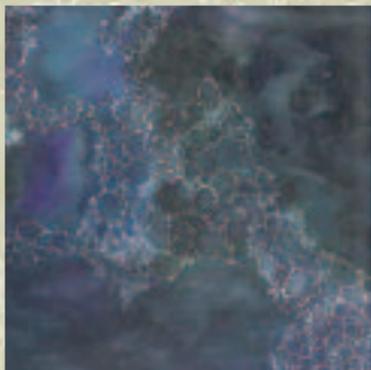


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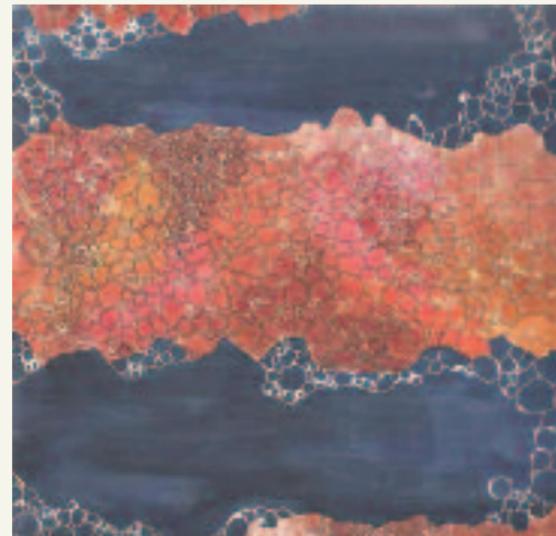
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THE MAPP

MIDWEST AMERICAN PIANO PROJECT



STACEY BARELOS, PIANO

DAVID GOMPPER

JOHN ALLEMEIER

LUKE DAHN

STACEY BARELOS

DAVID MAKI

JOSEPH DANGERFIELD



THE MAPP: MIDWEST AMERICAN PIANO PROJECT

This CD contains the work of six contemporary composers either currently active in, or with some connection to the American Midwest. The works presented here were composed during a six-year span, from 2001 – 2007. The recording took place in Iowa City, November 8 – 11, 2007, Clapp Recital Hall, University of Iowa.

THE MUSIC

David Karl Gompper (b. 1954)

Hommage à W.A. (2001)

The composition is a dedication piece in memory of William Albright, whose untimely death in 1998 robbed the international music scene of one of its most creative personalities. A long-time professor of composition at the University of Michigan, Albright mentored a generation of students who to this day continue the Albright legacy with exceptional careers of their own: and David Gompper numbers among them.

Hommage à W.A. comprises four principal sections, and while each is itself variously divisible, common threads running through the entire eight-plus minute

work bind the whole together in crafty ways. On one count, the constant ebb and flow governing the surface of *Hommage*—where every musical parameter is altered in lock-step fashion—conspires in bringing the work to higher and higher levels of intensity.

Section One commences at a slow and deliberate pace. Two-measure units, each separated by silence, ultimately give over to one-measure gestures. But as the melody in the section becomes more and more fluid, Gompper opens up any number of registral zones—zones that will be explored in greater detail the deeper one moves into the composition. The dynamic levels, too, change in the move toward the section's highpoint. And yet it is in the opening measures that Gompper first reveals the degree to which homage is to play out in the composition, as distinct ciphers based upon letters in Albright's name emerge. The first dozen measures are further concerned with the presentation of the complete aggregate of twelve distinct pitch classes, for it is only in the move to the last of these measures that the total chromatic has sounded.

Section Two brings about a radical change and ushers in the most lyrical portion of *Hommage*. Beginning in the peaceful manner of a lament, complete with the invocation of bell tolls, there is nonetheless something of an “edge” to the affect, and as the section continues, the lament dissipates, to be replaced by a pointillistic flare extending to the highest pitches of the piano. The section draws to a close with the complex rhythmic interaction of several contrapuntal lines, which both serves as a back-reference to the opening portion of the piece, and foreshadows the climactic moment to come.

Section Three is predicated upon a tribute of another kind, for in its move to what is best considered a stylized “bluesy riff,” Gompper acknowledges Albright's mastery over the genre. But even here, specific features that underpin the “riff”—as when motion by parallel tenths takes hold in the bass line—serve cross-referential purposes

accessing differing aspects of Sections One and Two. Any number of collision points in Section Three (in the form of dissonant sonorities) push the line forward, until a second pointillistic episode supplants the blues and in rapid tempo leads to the amalgamation of each contrapuntal line and the ultimate climactic moment of *Hommage*, after which melodic, rhythmic, dynamic, and registral factors abate signaling the approaching denouement of Section Four.

Simply said, Section Four offers time for reflection, and perhaps most notably in the final several measures, where the opening of the composition is recalled, and yet in altered fashion, as though tempered by the events of a lifetime: *pace aeternam*, W.A.

Luke Dahn (b. 1976)

Downward Courses (2006)

Downward Courses is a one-movement work modeled upon an A – B – A' structure, the whole of which is preceded by a brief introduction; the work draws to a close with that which may best be described as a codetta. The form of *Downward Courses* is further enlivened by interjections of material associated with section B in section A, and material associated with section A in section B.

The introduction aptly expresses many of the principal concerns that will be examined over the course of the composition. As the texture progressively changes by taking on greater and greater density, the detached quality of the melodic sweep unfolds in waves of intensity maintained across a significant portion of the piano's complete range.

Section A itself continues quite seamlessly from the introduction and further unfolds procedures encountered in the opening bars of the piece. The many fragmented gestures of Section A are spelled off with pensive moments foreshadowing that which is to be more fully developed in section B. The overall mood established in section A is compelling to the point of being mystical: sustained singleton pitches emerge out

of the many driving rhythmic passages only to become mid-register linking events setting up for the next rushing arch, or “downward course.” The fragmentary quality encountered at the surface, however, is dispelled at a deeper structural level, where particular sonorities are projected in an accretive sense over protracted spans of time and in the lowest register of the piano.

Section B enters at approximately the two-and-a-half-minute mark, and follows a transitional passage. The rhythmic pace is now noticeably slower than is the case in section A, and the dynamic gradient is much less pronounced. Rich chordal passages release into individual lines, which in their turn lead to two-voice wedges opening outward in contrary motion. A late flourish cross-referential to the beginning of *Downward Courses* leads to a retransition in advance of section A'.

The final third of the piece is marked by the return of swelling degrees of intensity, but specific embedded melodic lines hold in check the several energetic flourishes—each of which is underscored in dynamic and registral terms. A misplaced codetta, capped by a *molto allargando* and extended crescendo, is interrupted by one final pass at the principal defining material of section A. *Downward Courses* ultimately collapses into two zones of activity predicated upon specific sonorities, each expressed at unchanging pitch levels and linked by the common tone F: an F major triad; and a four-note derived chord comprising the pitches F – A flat – E – B flat.

Downward Courses was written for the pianist Ryan Fogg (Director of Keyboard Studies at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee) and was given its premier on October 15, 2006. The title of the composition is extracted from the end of verse one of “The Law that Marries all Things,” a poem by the Kentuckian writer Wendell Berry (b. 1934).

David Maki (b. 1966)

Lake Sonata (2007)

Lake Sonata is a four-movement composition. The work, however, is deceptive in its design on two counts: movements one and two (“Flowing” and “Floating, lonely”) are connected in terms of mood and affect; and the division between movements three and four (“Driving, with Intensity” and “Violent”) is glossed over by means of an “attacca”; further, materials from movements one through three recur, to varying degrees, in the finale.

I. “Flowing.” The opening movement comprises three broad sections plus an extended coda. In section one, the principal melody enters below a near ostinato figure in the piano’s upper register. The melody is decidedly uncomplicated, for its intervallic structure is limited principally to a pattern featuring a descending third plus ascending second expressed in sustained note values. The ostinato itself helps to establish an ethereal backdrop not only on registral grounds, but also via phrase structuring, and the use of the sustaining pedal in conjunction with a pianissimo dynamic. Further, some version of ostinato figure—whether fragmented or otherwise altered—appears widely in the movement, and thus serves a binding function. Section changes are often demarcated on textural grounds, and nowhere is such a change more apparent than in the tuneful third section of “Flowing” where the ostinato is presented in a relative low register in support of a slightly out-of-true lullaby.

II. “Floating, lonely.” Although the pacing changes in the second movement, the character established in the first movement is maintained, for each movement is introspective in nature. While arguably divisible into two overarching sections, the multiple returns of the principal tune render a slightly episodic quality to “Floating, lonely.” Throughout, the tessitura is generally quite high, which helps to emphasize certain inversionsal cross-references between melodic materials found here and in “Flowing.”

III. “Driving, with intensity.” With certain noteworthy exceptions, the composite

sixteenth-note rhythm of the third movement borders on a *perpetual mobile*. In point of fact, the forceful rhythmic profile of the movement would not be out of place as supporting music for some Hollywood thriller. The texture principally comprises two voices—either working together, or at cross-purposes—though significant portions of “Driving, with intensity” unfold as a solo line. Moreover, various “braking” motives temporarily interrupt the rhythmic flow and serve as markers for change of one sort or another. Accentual patterns are not always regular, and their differing lengths generate a sense of anticipation that does not abate until the finale bursts forth.

IV. “Violent” emerges as a continuation, or perhaps better, as a culmination of movement three. Longer note values accompany the stratification of left- and right-hand gestures. Equally, however, “Violent” cross-references key events encountered in each of the earlier movements, including the principal melody of movement one (the descending-third, ascending-second motion), which returns against an accompaniment transformed by association with motives encountered in movements two and three. The final portion of “Violent” features a carefully conceived chordal passage wherein cross-rhythms largely set the outer and the inner voices in opposition, and in utilizing the complete register of the piano, lead *Lake Sonata* to an explosive culminating wave.

John Allemeier (b. 1970)

Quiet Music (2006)

Written as a dedication to his son, Allemeier’s *Quiet Music* is an intricate composition whose understated manner is alluring. Moreover, an intimate fusion of numerous contrapuntal concerns is expressed in each of the work’s vividly pronounced sections.

Quiet Music begins at a relatively slow tempo by placing two lines in opposition, one lower and one higher in pitch. These lines unfold in tandem, initially in two- and three-note motives variously set off from one another. Further, each line subtly marks

out its own distinctive character: whereas the lower line is connective in nature—with one pitch leading directly into the next—the upper line has something of a detached quality to it. While the melodic patterning of the first few measures is not maintained for an extended period of time, it serves the measured purpose of carving out separate “edges” of activity in what might be called discrete pitch strata, strata that will assume pronounced degrees of significance later in the piece.

Quiet Music comprises two principal parts, which, together with their respective subsections, are denoted in clearly audible ways via some combination of tempo, textural, and expressive change. For instance, the descending seventh grace-note figure prominently on display in the opening thirty measures of the piece largely disappears when subsection one gives over to subsection two. This later portion of Part One is grounded by a new event, a pedal point on low E that is reiterated until the dying moments of the subsection, and above which the two voices featured in subsection one participate in something of a stylized canon. Subsection two (still in Part One) is further distinguished from the opening of the piece by means of a “swell” in terms of activity and dynamic level that no sooner builds, than it fades. In fact, the performance marking at the conclusion of Part One is “*L.v. a niente*,” that is to say “let vibrate, diminishing to nothing,” after which the “sustain” pedal of the piano, depressed at the head of the composition, is finally released.

Part Two of *Quiet Music* comprises three subsections, and forms an independent A – B – A’ structure, plus coda. A two-voice texture, again distinguished along registral lines and featuring repetitive material in the outer subsections, is maintained throughout Part Two; an ostinato figure governs the lowest voice in subsections A and A’, and is predicated upon a shifting relationship among an intervallic string of perfect fourths. As the ostinato gets underway, the pitches E—A—D—G are focal: later versions of the ostinato feature the strings A—D—G—C, and D—G—C—F. The initial pitch complement eventually returns, but the string is extended one note to the

left, as it were, adding a perfect fourth below E. In fact, Part Two concludes on the pitch B, the second-lowest pitch on the 88 key piano—beautifully, this low B yields to low A for the final 13 measures of the piece.

The upper line accompanying the ostinato is repetitive in its own right, but exhibits a near organic sense of growth. Phrase beginnings are quite noticeable, and yet phrase lengths vary, even if against the context of a limited number of rhythmic patterns. In the middle portion of Part Two, however, the two voices of the texture enter a new and conversational relationship, where they answer one another in a *dux* and *comes* (“leader” and “follower”) contrapuntal relationship. A formal code section—referencing Part One of the composition—brings the whole of *Quiet Music* to a close.

Stacey Barelos (b. 1978)

Free and Unticketed (2007)

For many informed listeners, *Free and Unticketed* is apt to carry associational resonance with the work of several influential composers active during the early years of the twentieth century—some European, and others American. And the matter could hardly be otherwise, for Barelos herself states, “I’m aware of certain elements in this piece that ‘sound like’ the music of others,” and further qualifies the matter thus: “although there are no direct quotations, I felt as though I was still getting something for ‘free.’” In her use of the term “free” Barelos indulges in shrewd word play, for its application extends beyond simple reference to the composition’s title.

Short of representing pastiche, the presence of numerous marquee individuals—including the likes of Schoenberg, Debussy, Stravinsky, Bartók, and Cowell—is nevertheless felt in this clever eight-plus minute composition. The *mélange* has bearing on several parameters of *Free and Unticketed*, where pitch structure, approach to form, elements of pacing, and the use of extended sonic possibilities for the piano all echo procedures entrenched in a not-too-distant past.

Free and Unticketed is centrally concerned with a waltz, which in each of its appearances is subjected to rather peculiar treatment attributable to various forms of interruption. Indeed, although the waltz initially emerges out of a bifurcated introduction where tempo, dynamic level, and accentual patterning are anything but regularized, it is not immediately clear whether Barelos intends to draw focus upon the stylized dance in anything other than a passing sense. The point is only settled in a retrospective manner, for it is as though by will alone that the waltz imposes itself in more and more meaningful ways upon the greater framework of *Free and Unticketed*. In the intervening moments many rich sounds vie for attention—sounds largely generated inside the body of the piano, either by plucking or by gliding the finger along particular strings, by hand muting a certain group of strings, or by percussively striking others. These and additional procedures call to mind effects reified by Henry Cowell, among others.

In terms of pitch, the work draws exclusively upon one of three possible octatonic scales, which further positions *Free and Unticketed* against a particular historical/cultural backdrop. Barelos employs the octatonic scale that, in abstract terms, begins in the following manner: C – C# – D# – E (and *etcetera*). Here, the leaning is toward Stravinsky, though with Bartók peering over one of his shoulders, and Debussy over the other, for this particular collection of pitches is conspicuously placed on display via the so-called “Petrouchka Chord” from the Russian’s famous ballet premiered in Paris in 1911. The point, of course, is worth noting only to the extent that Barelos’ puppeteering carries with it the aural specter of each of the three composers, Stravinsky, Bartók, and Debussy, and especially in the waltz portions of *Free and Unticketed*, where the cross-rhythm between the ostinato bass and melody lines (Stravinsky) undergo numerous changes in meter heard in the context of a folk-like setting (Bartók), replete with interjected patches featuring chordal planing, and arpeggiated flourishes (Debussy).

In the end, however, it is important to remember that *Free and Unticketed* owes no greater debt of gratitude to the past than does any other composition. For as Barelos

herself intimates, recognition that the “quartal harmonies in *Free and Unticketed* sound similar to Schoenberg’s Op. 9” does little to open the listener’s imagination to the unique qualities of this or any other work of art.

Joseph Dangerfield (b. 1977)

Two Geometric Etudes: Eadem Mutato Resurgo and Tryglyph

In the words of the composer, *Eadem Mutato Resurgo* and *Tryglyph* are “piano etudes that establish connections between music and particular geometric shapes.” In the first of the two pieces, Dangerfield set out to explore the manner in which a pentagon might be represented in musical terms, if abstractly; in the second piece Dangerfield turned his attention toward two sources each defined as a “tryglyph”: an aspect of design common to Doric architecture; and three-layered works of art depicting three scenes regarded at three different depths. [Tryglyphs (*viz* triglyphs) represent the series of three smooth vertical bands found above a structure’s functional columns and separating the more ornate tablets known as “metopes.”]

***Eadem Mutato Resurgo* (2003)**

The view into the composer’s workshop aside, *Eadem Mutato Resurgo* [“although changed, I rise again the same”] is a rich composition in a three-part structure where the slower-moving outer sections are strongly related. In point of fact, the Latin title itself is appropriate in more than one sense, for not only is the term affiliated with the 17th-century Swiss mathematician Jakob Bernoulli, and specifically with Bernoulli’s fixation on the geometrical shape known as the “miraculous spiral,” but the term is also directly borne out in Dangerfield’s music via the varied (i.e. “changed”) retrograde relationship of the composition’s last several measures with those of its opening.

Much of what holds this six-minute work together is attributable to its treatment of pitch, and more specifically to the manner in which a particular interval class, I.C.

2, saturates vertical and horizontal relationships alike. At times the specific size of the interval is expressed as a minor second, while at others it is unfolded either in inverted form (as a major seventh), or as some compound equivalent such as a ninth. Further, the interval governs both contiguous and non-contiguous motives such that its use binds together the three distinct registral strata—high, low, and middle—established at the head of *Eadem Mutato Resurgo*.

The projection of each registral stratum, however, is not uniform throughout, for in the longer and rhythmically animated middle portion of the composition one stratum often merges into the next quite purposefully, for here greater weight is given over to melodic concerns. A wonderful transitional moment takes hold near the midpoint of the work, following a marked climactic gesture, where a repeated chord—initially comprised of five pitches related by semitone—both closes off one section, and facilitates the virtual *resurgo* that leads to the close of this piano etude.

***Tryglyph* (2007)**

Although a distinctive composition in its own right, *Tryglyph* is clearly a companion piece of *Eadem Mutato Resurgo*. The degree to which three distinct registral strata are marked out in this later piano etude is compelling, for what unfolds at the extreme higher and lower edges is mediated to a considerable degree by all that transpires in the rather active middle layer.

In point of fact, the intricacies heard in the middle layer of *Tryglyph* give rise to a curious “reversal” between what in most musical contexts represents stable (or consonant) and what represents non-stable (or dissonant) intervals; by way of example, large swatches of the functional bass line are governed by what are generally held to be consonant intervals: namely, vertical tenths. And yet it is the more “gritty” gestures of the uppermost stratum, where on numerous occasions two rhythmically identical lines express I.C. 2, which oddly assumes a stable role, and this at the expense of the bass tenths.

Driven forward by the combination of rhythmic energy and carefully measured changes in dynamic gradation, *Tryglyph* ultimately collapses upon itself, with a drawn out mid-register melodic incipit protruding through the sustaining highest and the lowest two pitches of the piano as these later notes begin to decay.

— Gregory Marion
Assistant Professor of Music Theory
The University of Saskatchewan

THE PERFORMER

Stacey Barelos (b. 1978) is currently a DMA student in piano and composition at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she studies piano with Catherine Kautsky and composition with Steven Dembski and Laura Schwendinger. Barelos holds a MMus degree (piano and composition) from Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, where she studied piano with Robert Satterlee, and composition with Marilyn Shrude, and Elaine Lillios. Barelos also holds a BA in History and Music from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Barelos has won the UW-Madison Beethoven Competition as a performer and the UW-Madison Concerto Competition as a composer. She tours frequently, performing and presenting music of the 20th and 21st centuries, including compositions of her own which have been premiered throughout the American Midwest and in Russia, England, Italy and Croatia. Regarding her performance of Henry Cowell’s *Dynamic Motion* and *The Five Encores to Dynamic Motion*, Gunther Schuller claimed, “it was by far the best performing of Cowell’s piano music I’ve heard in a half a century—or perhaps ever.” (Letter from Gunther Schuller to Richard Teitelbaum, the current head of the Henry Cowell Estate, dated 20 February 2006.)

THE COMPOSERS

David Gompper (b. 1954) studied with William Albright (at the University of Michigan, where he earned a DMA in composition), with Jeremy Dale Roberts, Humphrey Searle, and Phyllis Sellick. Gompper has taught abroad, at the University of Texas–Arlington, and since 1991 has been a member of the faculty at the University of Iowa, where he is Professor of Composition and Director of the Center for New Music. Gompper’s compositions are heard throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. Several of his works appear on the Albany CD label; further, he records and tours widely with the Austrian violinist Wolfgang Dávid, for whom Gompper has composed a Violin Concerto.

Luke Dahn (b. 1976) earned a Ph.D. in composition from the University of Iowa (2006), where he studied with David Gompper. Additional instructors have included C. Curtis-Smith and Ann K. Gebuhr. Currently, Dahn is assistant professor at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, but he has also served as visiting assistant professor at the University of Iowa (2006 – 2007). Dahn’s *Edges* (2006) was recorded by the Center for New Music at the University of Iowa on a CD entitled *Into The Future: the University of Iowa’s Center for New Music at 40* (Albany Records TROY956). Future recording projects include a work for the duo Wolfgang Dávid and David Gompper.

David Maki (b. 1966) is Assistant Professor of music theory and composition at Northern Illinois University. Maki’s music has been performed throughout the United States both regionally and nationally. Maki is also active as a performer of new music, and with the pianist Ashlee Mack is planning a concert tour featuring new works for two pianos. He holds degrees in composition from Northern Illinois University (BMus), the University of Iowa (MA) and the University of Michigan (DMA), where he studied with Evan Chambers, Bright Sheng, and Michael Daugherty.

John Allemeier (b. 1970) earned a Ph.D. in Composition from the University of Iowa, where he studied with David Gompper, a MMus in Composition from Northwestern University, and a BMus in Performance from Augustana College. Allemeier’s publishers include: Carl Fischer Music Publishers, C. Alan Publications, M. Baker Publications and European American Music; in addition to performances at various national and international music festivals, select recordings of his music are available on the Albany, Capstone and Vox Novus labels. Allemeier currently teaches composition and music theory at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Joseph Dangerfield (b. 1977) has studied composition with Michael Golden, John Allemeier, Marilyn Shrude, and David Gompper. He earned a Ph.D. in composition from the University of Iowa, and is currently Assistant Professor of music composition and theory, as well as the director of orchestral activities at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Dangerfield’s compositions are heard both nationally and internationally, and he is recipient of several awards. In addition, select compositions have appeared on the Albany Records label (*The Waves Roll on, Thundering and Shimmering*, TROY882 and 956; and *Dreams of Fin*, TROY937) while others are available through European American Music and PIP Press Music Publications.