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Edited by Peter Garland

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# Musical Chronicle

from *The Dial*, Dec. 1925

Paul Rosenfeld

*Editor's Note: In celebration of Rudhyar's 87th birthday in March and of the publication here of Rite of Transcendence written last year (at the age of 86), SOUNDINGS is reprinting this, one of the very first (and despite small disagreements, still one of the best) articles on Rudhyar and his music. To put this in a proper generational perspective, I might add that my mother was three years old then, when this article was written, and none of my own music teachers had even been born yet. And on Rudhyar goes, producing and inspiring . . .*

In the first stages of a career, Dane Rudhyar stands with the composers pushing the enmired machine of music where the weight lies heaviest. The majority of his tumultuous and mysterious piano Moments, the most recent of his works, release a definite pathos. The feeling is strongly religious and legitimate in the age of steel. Experiences of the great circling impersonal life flash through the achieved pieces, "what was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be" seen in the painful, ecstatic, and fleeting moments of birth into the vaster day. In instances, the quick minutes take shape in expressions of barbaric and machine-like power. In others, they come as gropings into darkness, stirrings of blind hunger passive and submissive. Sometimes the quiet tides of the abyss move stilly, the waters before the spirit brooded over them. Sometimes fires stream upward with joyous vehemence changing worlds in their fierce ascent. Occasionally, in a certain number of the Moments, the spark is faint, the contact vague. These inferior pieces irritate with the monotonous hysteric aspiration and sick yearning characteristic of much unsuccessful "cosmic poetry." The failures are exceptional. The great number of Rudhyar's preludes and poems are filled sufficiently with the power, wild joy, and movement of the impersonal state to give it expression and float us on its tides. This new music qualifies as part of the contemporary spiritual life.

The uncommonness of pathos of a similar intensity is the weakness of the body of ultra-modern music. Without the pathetic, music can have no force. The epochal change of sensibility in combination with the general exhaustion having dried the source, the incidental makeshifts — over-production of the ironic, the satiric, and the grotesque; attempted substitution of surface feelings for feeling; conception of music as a mechanism to be taken apart and put together again upon a formula; introduction of facts of personality and of transient emotions — have not satisfied and indeed cannot satisfy the human need. Talent and audiences not previously disaffected by the universal frost-bite have been disaffected by this poverty of expression. Rudhyar none the less has found himself accepting creative responsibility. Affiliated by birth and training with the generation of new French composers which has discovered no frank pathos and loudly preferred ironic and anti-lyric forms, he has met hours of clarity, and found himself in the presence of positive forces since the beginning of his American residence. The first of his personal pieces, Ravishments (1918), Dithyrambs (1919), The Surge of Fire (1920), possess the musical qualities provoking direct feeling. Scriabinesque and tintured with literature though they are, they sing and sustain an architecture of tones. The tone is passionate, and the building generous. It is significant that it was not Stravinsky, the great influence of the young French school, but Scriabine who focused young Rudhyar's creative impulse with his ritualistic poems. And the manuscript of Moments merely reveals a success in registering the clear periods more distinguished than any hitherto befallen the composer. If other composers possibly maturer than Rudhyar are likewise producing a pathetic music, in aspects larger and more positive even than his,



Dane Rudhyar, March 1977

Photo © 1977 Betty Freeman

neither their number nor their success are sufficiently overwhelming to keep this new recruit from an unfavourable part from rousing wonder; besides, the recent experiments of the young Franco-American show much of the indissoluble combination of the traditional, and the original, personal, and timely which rouses wonder in very years of fecundity. They continue a high line of music from where the past snapped it off.

Again a European has discovered a favourable environment in America. Notwithstanding its inhabitants, the "mountains of my native land" are strong! The original, personal, timely transformation of the ecstatic Scriabinesque piano-style produced by Rudhyar at the close of his first ten years of American residency, wears certain characteristics ultimately American. The better of the Moments, the unnamed second and third of the first cycle, and Reaching Out, The Gift of Blood, Zodiacal Birth, King of Kings, and Moon Ritual of the second cycle, bring together with the traditional tender, shadowy, and sombre lyricism and flighted beat, a sharpness of attack, a forceful spareness of utterance and rigidity of ponderous volumes of sound uncommon to the aristocratic expression from which they spring. Although a force and nudity of utterance related to this austere machine-like edge exists in the later Scriabine, it exists invariably softened by a comparative opulence of harmony and sinuosity of movement. Rudhyar is to be credited with a genuine innovation. Certainly, Ornstein's earlier piano moods, impressions, and dances show similar qualities, mixed as they are with turbulence of movement and turgidity of sound. Contemporary orchestral writing fairly bristles with them: Strawinsky and Varèse, and in second line Ruggles, Prokofieff, and certain of the Six, have achieved shining pages with the "hard gemlike cutting of the Greek." The distinction of Rudhyar's musical art flows from the achievement in the medium of the piano of passages of a sonority at once slender and charged with

force, comparable to the significant pages of modern orchestration; and from the earnest of a fluency in the modern style contained in it. Limited in the range of his ideas, and burdened with literary and theosophic conceptions, he nevertheless moves about in the spare, rich, and metallic style with a naturalness and effortlessness that show him at home. Within the small compass of his Moments, there are strong accents at once rhythmical and precise and free and full, and devoid of the mechanical quality of much of Stravinsky's. There are strong contrasts, nervous and perfectly legitimate changes of mood, sonority, and beat: sudden necessary accelerations and agitations, and equally sudden retardations and calmings. There are full and prodigiously extended chords without thickness; thunderous effects gotten from a single unsupported voice — No. 2 of the first cycle has fine examples; extreme delicacies of the melodic line twisting in mordant-like figures — the tense and penetrating Reaching Out supplies a capital illustration. The precise and bounding rhythms, the many *staccato* and *martellato* notes call for gong-like and metallic sounds; Zodiacal Birth demands piano roars to be gotten only by striking chords of black keys with the entire forearm, after the manner of Rudhyar's Californian neighbour, Henry Cowell.

It is not beside Ozymandias in the Egyptian sand, but beside certain primitive American things made in the arid Southwest, that the grandiose clangours and stony weight of such a Moment as King of Kings demand a place. There is excessive timidity in refusing to recognize Rudhyar's momentary freedom on the austere stylistic plane, and the rigid volumes and barbarous power of his rich affecting music, as products of the American soil. The spirit of the Amerind had the austerity. The Aztec had the rigid barbarous power, before him. The very transplanted life we live is permeated with both. The popular expressions, jazz and movies, contain them in a rudimentary form. Under the lace of inorganic borrowed ornamentation, the mountainous American architecture shows them, and recently they have begun creating a painting, a prose and poetry in their keen likeness. The American plains awaken a kind of grandiosity which the Indians expressed in the picturesque cosmic names they gave themselves; and poets of the cast of Carl Sandburg are moved unconsciously by vague but similar impulses. Doubtless, as Nietzsche noticed, the testimony of composers concerning themselves and their works is not exquisitely reliable. None the less, Rudhyar's personal feelings about the potentialities of American life and the divinity of the land, freely expressed in his letters, his talk, his essays and poems, are worthy of scrutiny for their corroborative witness. To us, Dane Rudhyar's work, in its form and the pathos exhaled by it, in its weaknesses and strengths, bad literature and realizations alike, presents itself quite simply as inspired with the unconscious reality of America. It has analogies in the life of the Pacific seaboard, where they look still further to the West and feel Buddha near. It has analogies not only there. It has them wherever men feel the presence of a new god that is being born, an American God; not the old jealous, fighting, egotistical Jehovah and his suffering, expiating, self-sacrificing son; but a spirit of fire that opens all individual forms, and purifies and merges all souls together, flushing the hills to scarlet, bursting the earth with corn, dancing, and releasing souls in dancing; the god of old American writers — Whitman with his song of the open road, Melville with his wild laugh writing the tragedy of the god of evil, hate, and retribution; the god of the newcomers, too — warm Mr Anderson hearing hallucinating black laughter and the throb of Dionysiac life beneath the stupid crust of the republic; sad Mr Eliot freighted with a god periodically mysteriously defunct; young Mr Cummings intoxicated with a pussy-footed god who cannot quite get the step; the number grows with every year. It is the intuition strong in these men that lives in Rudhyar. His beauty and theirs flow from a common apprehension; and with theirs his art art composes a single ritual.

Rite  
of

Transcendence

Dane Rudhyar  
May 1981

Notes without accidentals  
are natural. Bars of  
measures are merely for  
the convenience of reading

for Yvar Mikhashoff

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with dramatic intensity (♩ = 70 to 75)

mp  
in 8° bass  
mp  
mf

f  
mf  
f  
mf

Riten  
Rit. rubato  
bref  
Rit.  
L 80  
marcato

A tempo  
Poco Rit. rubato  
f  
mf

f  
mf

Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and articulation marks. The bottom staff contains a bass line with chords and rhythmic patterns. A circled '3' is visible in the top right corner of the page.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The bottom staff shows a bass line with chords and rhythmic accompaniment.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff includes a melodic line with slurs and accents. The bottom staff shows a bass line with chords and rhythmic accompaniment. The word "Ritorn." is written above the staff.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff includes a melodic line with slurs and accents. The bottom staff shows a bass line with chords and rhythmic accompaniment. The word "Ritorn." is written above the staff.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff includes a melodic line with slurs and accents. The bottom staff shows a bass line with chords and rhythmic accompaniment. An arrow points to the right at the end of the piece.

Molto

Espressivo

Handwritten musical score for the first system. It consists of two staves: a piano staff (top) and a bass staff (bottom). The piano staff begins with a dynamic marking of *mf* and contains several measures of music with slurs and accents. The bass staff has a dynamic marking of *f* and includes a *ped* (pedal) marking. A dashed line with the number 1480 is written below the bass staff.

Lightning-like

Soft and anxious

Espressivo

Handwritten musical score for the second system. It features two staves: piano (top) and bass (bottom). The piano staff starts with a dynamic marking of *mp*, followed by *fff*, and then *mf*. The bass staff includes a *ped* marking and a dynamic marking of *mf*. A dashed line with the number 180 is written below the bass staff.

Handwritten musical score for the third system. It features two staves: piano (top) and bass (bottom). The piano staff begins with a dynamic marking of *ff* and later has a *mf* marking. The bass staff includes a *ped* marking and a dynamic marking of *mf*. A dashed line with the number 180 is written below the bass staff.

(questioning)

Handwritten musical score for the fourth system. It features two staves: piano (top) and bass (bottom). The piano staff starts with a dynamic marking of *mf* and later has a *f* marking. The bass staff includes a *ped* marking and a dynamic marking of *f*. A dashed line with the number 80 is written below the bass staff.



*ff.* *Poco più vivo* *Rit > molto*  
*mp* *f* *mf*  
*powerful f*  
*yet anxious*

Majestic and singing  
(legato molto)

*mf*  
*mf*  
*mf*

*Espressivo*  
*f*  
*mf*  
*mf*

*Poco vivo*  
 (Restless and questioning)  
*mp* *f*  
*mf*

*f*  
*mf*  
*mf*

*mf* *very sharp*

*mf* *ff*

*calmato subito* *Ritorn.*

*violant* *calmato subito* *very peaceful and expressive*

*(resonant)* *A tempo* *agitato*

Handwritten musical score for the first system, featuring two staves with complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. Pedal markings are present at the end of the system.

Handwritten musical score for the second system, continuing the complex rhythmic patterns from the first system. It includes dynamic markings like 'p' and 'f'.

Handwritten musical score for the third system, showing a transition in mood. It includes dynamic markings such as 'ff', 'mf', and 'f', and performance instructions like 'violent' and 'calmato'.

Handwritten musical score for the fourth system, featuring performance instructions 'very calm', 'agitato', and 'molto legato - expressive'. It includes dynamic markings like 'mp'.

Handwritten musical score for the fifth system, concluding with performance instructions 'violent', 'rather long', and 'Very peaceful yet poignant'. It includes dynamic markings like 'ff', 'mf', and 'p'.



poignant

mf

f

mf

mf

Riten.

mp

pp

pp

Lyrical

mp

mp

p

mf

mf

mp

mp

pp

pp

Handwritten musical score, first system. Treble and bass clefs. Dynamics: *mf*, *p*. Includes a 6-measure rest and a 3-measure rest.

Handwritten musical score, second system. Treble and bass clefs. Dynamics: *f*, *mf*. Performance markings: *intense*, *agitato*, *Riten.*, *Very peaceful*. Includes a 3-measure rest and a 9-measure rest.

Handwritten musical score, third system. Treble and bass clefs. Dynamics: *f*. Performance marking: *agitato*. Includes a 3-measure rest and a 3-measure rest.

Handwritten musical score, fourth system. Treble and bass clefs. Dynamics: *f*, *mf*. Performance marking: *Expressivo*. Includes a 3-measure rest and a 9-measure rest.

Handwritten musical score, fifth system. Treble and bass clefs. Dynamics: *pp*. Performance marking: *Rit.*. Includes a 9-measure rest and a 9-measure rest.

Rehe Alto  
May 1981  
DR.

For Woodley

mark inner melody  
in left hand part

# The Music of Dane Rudhyar

3635 Lupine Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94303



Photo: Betty Freeman

Dane Rudhyar was born in Paris, France on 23 March 1895. He studied briefly at the Paris Conservatoire, and in 1913 Durand published his first short piano pieces and a small book on Claude Debussy. His career and studies were interrupted by the war, but he composed polytonal music for a radically avant garde "multimedia" performance, *Metachory*, featuring abstract, ritualistic dance. Rudhyar came to New York in 1916 for its performance at the Metropolitan Opera (Pierre Monteux, conductor) in April 1917 — the very night America declared war on Germany.

Rudhyar remained in America and reached California in 1920, where he wrote scenic music for the Hollywood Pilgrimage Play (1920-22) and won the \$1,000 W. A. Clark, Jr. prize offered for an orchestral work by the then-new Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. He made an intensive study of oriental philosophies and music in New York and California and was active in the founding and development of the International Composers Guild and the California New Music Society. In 1925 his *Surge of Fire* (for small

orchestra and three pianos) was performed. Throughout the 1920s he wrote articles and books and gave lectures and recitals promoting "world music" (a term he coined at the time), a new approach to music, and the concepts of "dissonant harmony" and "syntonism."

After 1929 the Great Depression, the pressure of personal circumstances, and developments in the musical world stopped Rudhyar's activities as a composer for many years. Although there were brief interludes of composing and performances (especially in New York in 1949-50), his time was devoted to lecturing, painting (between 1938 and 1949), and writing. He has published several books of poetry, two novels, and volumes on esthetic and social criticism. Over twenty books written between 1935 and 1978 pioneered a psychospiritual reformulation of astrology. His most recent books present a new, structural approach to a multilevel, evolutionary psychology and philosophy.

A new period of musical activity began in the early 1970s, after Rudhyar's writings became popular among young people attracted to astrology and Asian philosophies in the mid-60s. In 1972 the Berkeley, California, radio station KPFA produced and broadcast a "Rudhyar Retrospective" that included an exhibit of his paintings and a recital of piano works. Three similar "Rudhyar Festivals" have been presented since, by the University of California at La Jolla (1975), by California State University at Long Beach (1976), and by the University of Minnesota in conjunction with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra (1977). A new generation of musicians and music lovers began to respond warmly to Rudhyar's works, of which seven records have been made.

In January 1976 Rudhyar moved to Palo Alto, California, and began composing a series of piano and orchestral works under grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. In 1978 he received the Marjorie Peabody Waite Award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters for continuing artistic integrity and achievement. John F. Kennedy University and the California Institute for Transpersonal Psychology awarded him honorary doctorate degrees in 1980. In 1982 he was one of six American composers to whose music an entire program was devoted at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. His most recent book on music, *The Magic of Tone and the Art of Music* (Shambhala Publications, 1982) is being translated into French and German. His other books are now published in six languages, twenty of them to appear in French alone.

## RUDHYAR ON MUSIC AND PERFORMANCE

Music is a means to communicate the psychic energy generated by authentic inner experiences; great music is born of great experiences. Most such experiences involve dramatic elements, because they imply struggle, inner confrontation, conflict and overcoming. Hence my use of the term "syntonic drama." But the term, drama, refers to more than the narration of a series of external events or interpersonal conflicts. The musical developments deal with crises of consciousness and are meant to evoke processes of personal transformation and, hopefully, of spiritual growth. It is "syntonic" music because it employs vibrant *tones* rather than abstract patterns of relationship between musical *notes*. A sound becomes a tone only when a musician endows it with a meaning, be it individual or collective and cultural. Music is the organization of tones, not mere sounds. Tones are sounds which convey the quality of being inherent in their producer and thus have a function and purpose. My purpose in composing is to attempt to induce in both performers and listeners the capacity to live more intensely and feel more deeply.

My compositions do not belong to any particular school, nor do they follow the fashion of a decade or two. From the beginning I was unable to accept the neoclassical worship of antiquated forms based on the system of tonality reflecting the way of life of the aristocratic classes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nor could I adopt the rigidly intellectual, neoscholastic procedures of the Schoenberg school. Although I have used the musical heritage and instruments of Western culture, I have endeavored to free them from concepts and procedures which are no longer vital and transformative — and first of all from subservience to a narrow sense of tonality.

Classical European tonality is based on the principle of *consonant relationship* — the relation of many elements to a "root-unity" (the tonic). By contrast my music is inspired by the ideal of *dissonant harmony*, in which unity is to be achieved as the result of a process of integration involving both development in time (melody) and the resonance of musical space. In the former approach chords appear as strong tonal relationships, while in dissonant harmony they become "simultaneities of sound," areas of resonant intensity, the vibratory quality of which is determined by the dramatic process the music endeavors to evoke.

(continued)



Though I was among the first European or American musicians to recognize the value of Asian music and to openly promote an understanding of non-European approaches to the use and meaning of musical tones, I never tried to imitate Asian, African, or indigenously American procedures or forms. I believe that each society has its own integral collective psyche or "cultural soul," the essential character and power of which, at least in its heyday, is released through a specific type of music. Thus I have never believed in musical hybridization. As a culture disintegrates, it becomes open to alien influences which may stimulate musicians to free themselves from subservience to the tradition of the past; but a naive acceptance of the outer forms and products of other cultures is not a truly creative solution. My music flows from the mainstream of the type of Western music which, throughout the nineteenth century, was in tune with the new possibilities of personal transformation engendered by revolutionary social and cultural changes.

The musical process should have *form* in the sense that the totality of musical elements should reveal an inner psychic consistency and internal logic; but the musical process need not be constrained by any of the preordained *musical forms* of a particular tradition or school. I see form in music not as an objective factor expressing standardized, collective responses to life and human experience; rather it is a subjective element of organic coherence inherent in the composer's mind and individuality. My intention is not to compose musical "objects," as external and dependent on style as the making of a chair is to a craftsman. Instead I allow an inner, psychospiritual process to unfold through the combining and development of resonant, vibrant tones endowed with the quality of being which the musical composition seeks to evoke and communicate.

## ORCHESTRAL WORKS

### FROM THE UNREAL LEAD US TO THE REAL (1919-21)

#### *Passion, Struggle, Initiation*

31 minutes

2picc—fl in G—2ob—Eng hn—2cl—Bcl—2bn—dbl. bn—3tpt—4hn—3tbn—tb—timp—tt—b dr—cymb—2pno—clsta—glock—strings

The first section is a condensed version of *Soul Fire* (1922), the composition which won the W. A. Clark Jr. prize from the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra (the composition was never performed by the highly conservative conductor, Walter Rothwell, and the orchestra lost the score).

First performance (incomplete): 1932, Paris, Nicolas Slonimsky, cond.

Score: ACE, Fleisher

Parts: Fleisher

### THE WARRIOR (1920)

9 minutes

pno—2fl—2cl—2ob—Eng hn—2bn—3tpt—4hn—2tbn—tb—timp—cymb—tt—b dr—xyl—strings

First performance: 1976, Contra Costa (California) Symphony, Ron Daniels, cond.

Score and parts: ACE

### POEMS OF YOUTH (1921-33, entirely rewritten 1983-84)

#### *Yearning* (10½ minutes)

#### *Rite of Love* (11½ minutes)

#### *Threnody* (8½ minutes)

2fl—2cl—2ob—2bn—4hn—2tpt—2tbn—b tbn—tb—hp—pno—manimb—glock—vib—xyl—tt—cymb—timp—strings

First performance (*Threnody* only): 1974, University of California, San Diego, Thomas Nee, cond.

Score and parts: ACE

### THE SURGE OF FIRE (1921)

21 minutes

fl—cl—ob—bn—tpt—F hn—tbn—timp—3pno—8vln—3vla—3vcl—2cb

First performance: 1925, New Music Society, Los Angeles, Adolf Tandler, cond.

Score and parts: ACE

### FIVE STANZAS for String Orchestra (1926)

20 minutes

First performance: 1973, Austrian Radio Orchestra, Friedrich Cerha, cond.

Recording: CP<sup>2</sup> 13, Colonial Symphony, Paul Zukofsky, cond.

Score and parts: Presser

### SINFONIETTA (1928, revised 1979)

13½ minutes

3fl—2ob—Eng hn—2cl in Bb—dbl bn—tpt in D—tpt in C—6hn—2bn—3tbn—tb—cl tb—pno—timp—b dr—tt—cymb—strings

First performance: 1952, U.S. Air Force Symphony, Col. George Howard, cond.

Orchestral Works (continued)

Recording: Varèse Sarabande, VC 81046, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Jonel Perlea, cond. (reissue of Remington R199188)

Score: ACE (originally printed in New Music Orchestra Series, 1934)

Parts: Fleisher

**EMERGENCE (1948)**

For string orchestra, in five movements, incorporating the musical material of piano *Tetragram No. 6*

12 minutes

As yet unperformed

Score and parts: ACE

**ENCOUNTER (1977)**

Dramatic sequence in five scenes for piano and orchestra. The piano plays a dominant role but not in concerto style.

21 minutes

2fl—ob—Eng hn—cl—b cl—2bn—2hn—2tbn—tb—2tpt—timp—cymb—gong—solo pno—strings

As yet unperformed

Score and parts: ACE

**DIALOGUES (1977)**

In three movements

20 minutes

2fl—ob—Eng hn—2cl—2bn—tpt—2hn—timp—pno—strings

First performance: 1982, San Francisco, Mostly Modern Orchestra, Laurie Steele, cond.

Score and parts: ACE

**THRESHOLDS (1954-55)**

In four movements. Orchestrated 1975 by George Champion in consultation with the composer.

23 minutes

3fl—2ob—Eng hn—3cl—2bn—dbl bn—2tpt in Bb—tpt in D—3tbn—tb—timp—b dr—cymb—tt—strings

As yet unperformed

Score: ACE

Parts: Fleisher

**COSMIC CYCLE (1981)**

In three movements:

*Formation, Unfoldment, Severance and Release.*

23 minutes

3fl—picc—2ob—Eng hn—2cl—b cl—2bn—4hn in F—3tpt—2tn—tbn—b tbn—tb—perc—timp—hp—clsta—pno—strings

As yet unperformed (A shorter first version for small orchestra, *Ouianos*, now discarded, performed 1951, Columbia University Composers Forum, Maurice Bonney, cond.)

Score and parts: ACE

**OUT OF THE DARKNESS (1982)**

Syntonic drama in five acts for full orchestra

23 minutes

2fl—2ob—2Eng hn—2cl in Bb—2bn—3hn in F—2tpt in C—2 tn—tbn—2b tbn—tb—timp—pno—perc—strings

As yet unperformed

Score and parts: ACE

## VOCAL AND CHAMBER MUSIC

**TROIS POEMES TRAGIQUES (1918, revised 1979)**

12 minutes

On French poems from the book *Rhapsodies* (1918) by the composer

MS or Bar—pno—vln

First performance: 1979, Brooklyn Philharmonia, Lukas Foss, cond., Jan Curtis, MS.

Score: RBT

**TROIS CHANSONS DE BILITIS (1918, revised 1981)**

15 minutes

MS—str quintet—fl—ob—cl—bn—hn—tpt—tbn—hp—clsta—vib—pno

First performance: 1984, California Institute of the Arts, CalArts 20th Century Players, Stephen Mosko, cond., Carol Plantamura, MS.

Score and parts: ACE

**THREE MELODIES FOR FLUTE (1918, revised 1974)**

10 minutes

fl—pno—vcl

First performance: 1974, University of California at San Diego

Score and parts: General Music/Joshua

**COMMUNE (1929)**

3½ minutes

Words, "A Prayer," by Abdul Baha

Bar or MS—pno

First performance: 1942, Colorado Springs

Score: RBT (originally published 1938, Baha'i World Annual)

**THREE INVOCATIONS (1939-41)**

5 minutes

Words by Alice Bailey

MS—pno

First performance: 1942, Colorado Springs

Score: RBT

**AFFIRMATION (1930, revised 1981)**

1 minute

Words from New Thought Literature

MS or Bar—pno

First performance: 1930, Brookline, Massachusetts

Score: RBT

## PIANO WORKS

### POEM for violin and piano (1919-21)

9 minutes

First performance: 1950, New York, Anahid Ajemian, vln.

Score and part: General Music/Joshua

### DARK PASSAGE, Miniature String Quartet

No. 1 (1914)

9 minutes

As yet unperformed

Score and parts: ACE

### SOLITUDE, Miniature String Quartet No. 2 (1926)

10 minutes

First performance: 1951, New York, New Music Quartet

Score and parts: ACE

### BARCAROLLE (1954)

3½ minutes

vln—pno

First performance: 1976, California State University, Long Beach

Score: ACE

### ALLELUIA (1976)

5½ minutes

Carillon

First performance: 1976, University of California at Berkeley

Score: RBT

### ADVENT, String Quartet No. 1 (1978)

21½ minutes

First performance: 1979, San Francisco, Kronos Quartet

Recording: CRI SD 418, Kronos Quartet

Score and parts: ACE

### CRISIS AND OVERCOMING, String Quartet

No. 2 (1979)

20 minutes

Recording: CRI SD 418, Kronos Quartet (with *Advent*)

Score and parts: ACE

### NOSTALGIA (1979-83)

Nonet in four movements

19 minutes

3vln—vla—vcl—cb—alt fl—pno—perc

First performance: 1984, New York, Bowery Ensemble, Nils Vigeland, cond.

Score and parts: ACE

### FOUR PENTAGRAMS (1924-26)

Each in five sections

1. *The Coming Forth* (10½ minutes)

2. *The Enfolding* (13 minutes)

3. *The Release* (12 minutes)

Recording: Orion ORS 7285, Michael Sellers, pno.

4. *The Human Way* (16 minutes)

Also exists in a two-piano version.

Nos. 1, 2, and 3 are revised versions of the three "cycles of tone poems for the piano" published under the title *Moments* (C. C. Birchard, 1930).

Columbia University/Galaxy/Schirmer

### THREE PAEANS (1927)

8 minutes

Recording: CRI SD 247, William Masselos, pno.

Presser/Merion (with *Granites*)

### GRANITES (1929)

9 minutes

In five sections

Recording: CRI SD 247, William Masselos, pno.

Presser/Merion (with *Three Paeans*)

### TETRAGRAMS (1920-28)

Each in four sections

1. *The Quest* (1920 — 9½ minutes)

2. *Crucifixion* (1926 — 9¾ minutes)

3. *Rebirth* (1927 — 9¾ minutes)

4. *Adolescence* (1925 — 8½ minutes)

5. *Solitude* (1927 — 9¾ minutes)

6. *Emergence* (1929 — 10 minutes)

7. *Tendrils* (1924 — 8½ minutes)

8. *Primavera* (1928 — 8 minutes)

Recording Nos. 1, 2, and 3: Serenus SRS 12072, Dwight Peltzer, pno.

Recording Nos. 4 and 5: CRI SD 372, Marcia Mikulak, pno.

Score Nos. 1, 2, and 3: General Music/Joshua

Score Nos. 4 through 8: ACE

### SYNTONY (1919-34, revised 1967)

*Dithyramb* (1919 — 10 minutes)

*Eclogue* (1934 — 4½ minutes)

*Oracle* (1934 — 7¼ minutes)

*Apotheosis* (1925 — 5 minutes)

The musical material in *Apotheosis* has been used and considerably expanded in the last movement of the orchestral work, *Cosmic Cycle*. The composer prefers that *Dithyramb* be performed alone; *Eclogue* and *Oracle* may be performed together.

Recording: Orion ORS 7285, Michael Sellers, pno.

Score: ACE

*Piano Works (continued)*

**New works composed in Palo Alto, 1976-83**

**TRANSMUTATION (1976)**

A tone ritual in seven movements  
27 minutes

First performance: 1977, Palo Alto (California) Cultural Center,  
Marcia Mikulak, pno.

Recording: CRI SD 372, Marcia Mikulak, pno.  
ACE

**THEURGY (1976)**

A tone ritual in five movements  
23 minutes

First performance: 1983, New York, Nils Vigeland, pno.  
ACE

**THREE CANTOS (1977)**

17 minutes

First performance: 1984, Richard Cameron, pno.  
ACE

**AUTUMN (1977)**

A dramatic sequence in four movements  
21 minutes

First performance: 1981, New Arts Music Festival, Saratoga,  
California, Edmund Correia, pno.

ACE

**EPIC POEM (1978)**

20 minutes

First performance: 1982, John F. Kennedy Center, Washington,  
D.C., Robert Black, pno.

Recording: CP<sup>2</sup> 13, Robert Black, pno (with *Five Stanzas*)  
ACE

**RITE OF TRANSCENDENCE (1981)**

11 minutes

First performance: 1982, Copenhagen, Denmark, Yvar Mikhashoff,  
pno.

ACE

**PROCESSIONAL (1983)**

5½ minutes

First performance: 1984, State University of New York, Buffalo,  
Yvar Mikhashoff, pno.

ACE

**COMMENTS ON THE PIANO WORKS**

My work with the ideal of vibrancy and extended resonance is particularly emphasized in compositions for piano. I have likened the piano to a miniature orchestra and have developed the concept of "orchestral pianism." Under sensitive hands the piano can sing like string instruments, boom like brasses, thunder like gongs, or vibrate softly like crotales or small Tibetan cymbals. The seven octaves of the piano keyboard are the raw material which the hands can knead and mold to produce "tone-organisms," free from strict tonality, potentially including the resonance of the whole musical space represented by the piano's one sounding board.

This kind of music is not primarily concerned with technical skill and even less with virtuosity. The pianist and the piano are involved in one another. Touch is the most basic factor because it reveals the deeper relationship between the performer and the multi-colored spectrum of tones which he or she can arouse from the instrument. What matters is the quality of the resonance, the internal dynamism of the tones, and what they evoke within the psyche of the listener as the music flows, transmitting the potential of transformative experiences.

In several of my most recent piano compositions the dramatic element is not only emphasized, but ritualized. As in many of the *Tetragrams* and the fourth *Pentagram*, the basic scenario is the overcoming of suffering and conflict leading to either a glowing conclusion or an extremely peaceful, serene fading into transcendent silence.

*Transmutation* unfolds in seven stages of personal growth and entrance into a vast new realm of consciousness, to which the seventh stage leads. In *Theurgy* the ritual has a more objective character. The music is an appeal to superior Beings who respond dynamically to the call. The luminous presences reveal the fullness of their resonant being in the fourth act; the fifth is a paean of intense jubilation.

In *Autumn* the initial melodic theme is poignantly inclined toward the earth-depth, reflecting the autumnal return of the life-force to the roots. But out of the peace of acceptance, evoked in the last act by a pure monastic chant, the promise of Christmas arises. In *Rite of Transcendence* vivid flashes of symbolic lightning cut away all remaining attachments, and consciousness peacefully accepts and meets the transition. *Processional* evokes a solemn entrance (In-itiation) into a new and transcendent realm of consciousness.

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