

Frederic Rzewski

FREDERIK RZEWSKI:

THE PEOPLE UNITED WILL
NEVER BE DEFEATED!

36 VARIATIONS ON EL PUEBLO UNIDO
JAMA S SERA VENCIDO, BY SERGIO
ORTEGA + QUILAPAYUN.

FOR URSULA OPPENS

$\text{♩} = 106$ With determination

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The musical score is written on three systems of staves. The first system includes a vocal line with lyrics in Spanish and English, and a piano accompaniment. The second and third systems continue the piano accompaniment with various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like *ff* and *mf*. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

fp softer, legato

Handwritten musical notation for the first system, featuring a treble and bass staff with notes and rests.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system, featuring a treble and bass staff with notes and rests.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system, featuring a treble and bass staff with notes and rests.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system, featuring a treble and bass staff with notes and rests.

Handwritten musical notation for the fifth system, featuring a treble and bass staff with notes and rests.

Handwritten musical notation for the sixth system, featuring a treble and bass staff with notes and rests.

una corda

pp

EL PUEBLO UNIDO JAMAS SERA VENCIDO! The people united will never be defeated.

(Record of a Chilean revolutionary folk song, which is the theme of the 36 variations..... See preceding two pages.)

You never heard that?

No. When was it recorded? In Chile?

No, it was done in Italy, this album. There are several Chilean groups in Europe. This is one of them, the INTI-ILLIMANI. They live in Rome.

They left Chile before or after?

They were both touring in Europe during when the coup took place. One is INTI-ILLIMANI. And the other was called QUILAPAYÚN. They've just produced a new album too, this one here.

So they stay in Italy now? I think that's the best place for them.

Currently yes. Well, that's where the Chilean government in exile is located, a lot of the Unidad Popular. There was a recent assassination attempt about three weeks ago in Rome, apparently organized by the Chilean Secret Police.

So you've just come from Rome I heard. How did you find the whole scene there?

In Italy? Well, there are a number of younger people I know who are active. Basically the Italian musical scene is rather conservative. The institutional concert structure is quite conservative and always has been, and probably will continue to be for quite some time. The most that what's happening right now in Italy as far as I can see is in the area of folk music and jazz.

I mean folk music has always been very big in Italy, because it's always been connected with the political left. And now of course there's a very broad based massive cultural campaign underway in Italy, which is mainly being stimulated by the Communist Party, which is part of its electoral strategy, which is to win over as many of the petty bourgeoisie people as possible through the use of culture.

telephone ringing

Hello. Hello, Steve. How are you? I heard you were in town. Okay, I was surprised to find out that you were here. I didn't get to Venice, but I was in Rome of course.

..... Well, I'll be here for the whole month of November.

And then I'm gonna try to get over to Italy again in December at some point. I'm going to be like flying back and forth I think.... Do you know something about this artists' travel bureau that MARK AMMERTON is mixed up with?.... Are you interested in doing COMING TOGETHER at some time? Because we have this group, THE MUSICIANS' ACTION CLUB. And we're supposed to be doing an ATTICA benefit concert, on the 22nd possibly. We have a meeting of MAC tomorrow.... Listen, I have somebody here who's come from Germany who wants to talk to me. So I

can't stay on the phone. Bye bye.

A good friend of mine from the LIVING THEATER.

Are you still doing music with them?

Well, I worked with them a long time while they were working on their new play. And then they moved to Pittsburgh. And even though I did a lot of work for preparation for what they were doing, working for them is a situation where you really ah have to be with them all the time. Because when they do something, they do it collectively, and it takes a lot of time. And so we just decided that there was really no possibility, I mean I couldn't.

They changed too in a similar way that you changed. I remember we were just talking about the MEV group, that it was very anarchistic, that you've from what I've seen from your scores changed to a more constructive and concrete kind of music. Which motivations did you have for this change from anarchism to let's say concrete music which is definitely orientated?

Yeah, well I would call it realism basically.

Do you remember how this change came about in your writing?

Well, I suppose it came on many different levels, both a personal level and on a social level. I think that probably if one is going to talk about styles and things like that, then it's best not to talk about individual, personal styles, but rather in terms of larger movements. Especially in the case of a problem like this, you have to see it from a social and political viewpoint rather than from a personal and aesthetic one. So what has been happening really both in Europe and the United States since 1968 has been this gradual process of maturing, especially those groups of people who acquired their political consciousness through the student movement for instance, which is what is in this country loosely described as the "new left", which has by the way a different meaning in the United States than it does in England. It's not really a good term of use.

Anyway, getting back to your question, the LIVING THEATER has very rigidly adhered to an anarchist viewpoint. They're still very much pushing the anarchist-pacifist line, although they have moved in a certain direction toward accommodation to what you might call Marxist currents. They have attempted to find some way of integrating their whole world view of the other groups. But they're still very much with the anarchism.

Actually this going to a realistic kind of music writing, I know one song you wrote, the APOLITICAL INTELLECTUALS'.

Where do you know THAT from?

From MICHAEL BYRON's anthology, PIECES. So does realistic writing mean for you personally to support a text to its most powerful understanding?

Well, let me see. That's a rather difficult question. First of all, let's say that realism in music doesn't necessarily require text.

That's one of the first questions that always comes up in discussions of this kind. People always say, "Well, how can music be political if it has no text?" And if it requires a text, why is the music political in that case? Well, the answer is of course that it doesn't require a text. It DOES however require some kind of consciousness of the active relationship between music and the rest of the world. And the use of the text is one method of accomplishing that. But it's not by any means the only one.

Yeah, there are of course inner musical decisions you have to make too, to make the music generally more experientable for a broader public. What would you say is required for a kind of realistic writing then?

That would certainly be one condition for realism in music. A conscious employment of techniques which are designed to establish communication, rather than to alienate an audience. That does not necessarily mean that one must be confined to familiar languages. It doesn't necessarily mean an exclusion of what's called avant-garde style, by any means.

Is it then necessary to get close to another established style which is acknowledged as a language by the broader public? Or, do you think it is possible to go beyond writing in styles but feeling what's really basic in music?

Well, let's put it this way. I think that if one were to forbid oneself to use familiar styles in one's music, then one would be imposing a very serious limitation on one's ability to communicate. And so that if one is seriously interested in communication, then I suppose statistically speaking that a rigorous, say formalistic, style such as the style of the serial composers and so on would be at a serious disadvantage.

But on the other side, especially in America, there is music called "popular". And through the repetition of the media it becomes popular. And so you hardly can distinguish what is basic and what is popular.

I know. This is a very serious problem. And it's a very tricky problem, too. And it's very important to become clear on it. It's after all a war that we're fighting. And if you put yourself in the position of someone who's fighting a war or helping to fight a war, then you have to be very careful that you're going to win. And so we mustn't make foolish mistakes.

Ya, but I think you should be careful not to deny yourself. Because I see that as a danger in having just a political goal in mind, but forgetting that the music you actually use is established as popular by people that try to make commercial music.

Yeah, I know. No, we have to find a way of not using that. The important thing is not to speak about people in general, but rather pose the question of who the audience is in particular, what people. Who is your audience. This is the main thing you have to become clear about. See, for a whole generation of music, the generation that I grew up in, we were taught that the most advanced music was abstract, serial formalistic music, which had a kind of universal validity, and that the audience was not important. It was not important to the music

what kind of people listened to it.

No I think the new question that we're coming up with, that composers are beginning to ask themselves, is precisely the first question, WHO is the audience, who am I trying to speak to, and what am I trying to say. Who am I working for, really. Am I working for the bourgeois public? Am I working for ROCKEFELLER or the Arts Council or the banks or the students. Or am I working for, trying to work for an entirely different group of people, you see.

And when you pose a question in those terms, then you stop thinking about music as something universal, in the sense of like BEETHOVEN'S NINTH SYMPHONY is supposed to be "universal". It's supposed to say something to everybody. Well, if you're working in a political direction, you give up that idea. You don't want to talk to everybody. You don't want to talk to the capitalists and the bourgeoisie.

That's what I mean. If you wrote the song APOLITICAL INTELLECTUALS, you wrote for a certain kind of people.. And possibly exactly the people you wrote it for listened to it. The people of the KITCHEN. Did you perform it there?

No, I haven't done it there. But I've done it in a number of different places.

For apolitical intellectuals?

Well, we'll see. I'm doing the concert at the end of the month there. I don't know WHO the audience will be.

I talked to CHRISTIAN WOLFF two weeks ago. And he said that to be "apolitical" for Americans means protest.

I know what he was talking about, sure.

Isn't it very hard here in America to have so many people that still believe in like if they get independent of what the government is doing to believe that they can do it for themselves, to build up something new?

Yes, I think it is very hard, at least among the sort of broad masses of the small bourgeoisie which constitute such a large element of this country. And yet on the other hand, precisely this class of people is extremely crucial, because the future of the world politics may in many ways depend on which direction this class of people decides to take in the next ten years or so. It may go in a progressively left direction, which is a strong possibility. But it may also go in a right direction, which would be an extremely serious development.

You don't see any way besides these categorizations of left and right?

In this country? No, personally I think that the country is going to be more and more polarized toward the left and right. Just like almost every other industrialized country for that matter. I don't think the United States is an exception. But I wouldn't be overly optimistic about any very major changes taking place here. I think that whatever is happening here is bound to be a very progressive kind of happening.

You see I came here like four weeks ago without any fixed conceptions about Americans. I was just really curious about them. The U.S.A. seems to me famous because of its failures somehow, not only because of its failures, but because of the enlightenments happening during the crucial points. Isn't this like a growing toward the right understanding through failures?

Well, I would HOPE so. Whether that's actually true is a big question. I mean, that would be a very optimistic way of regarding America. I think one should be very careful here about being too optimistic about the ability of the American people to take control over the present chaos in the country. I think the proper attitude here must be rather one of constructive pessimism. Working for change but at the same time being very realistic about the enormous problems. And one of the major problems here as you must have observed traveling through the country as you have, if you've been reading the newspapers in any of the large cities, you'll see that the newspapers contain almost NO information. And if you watch the television in America, you'll agree that the television is a form of keeping the people in a state of ignorance.

And as soon as people stand up against it, they get wiped out. Because the power of the police is so strong that the people fear trying it. Like you wrote this COMING TOGETHER piece for Attica. And Attica is a classical example for what happens.

Yes it is. That's why it's a very important milestone in American history. As you know, the issue is still very much alive. The inmates who were indicted at that time have still not come to trial. And it looks now as though many of these inmates may be pardoned by the government, because the government is not able to carry on these trials without revealing itself as the guilty party. So I think Attica is still very much a live issue. I'm sorry that in Europe people don't know about it that much. I've traveled around in Europe. And Europeans do not seem to be terribly informed about this...although Europeans tend to be more informed about American conditions than the Americans themselves.

We have to.

Of course. Well, also your media of information are much better.

Ya, okay. But we still don't feel very good having all this this American commercialism in our countries.

Of course. Seventy percent of your industry is owned by the United States. But here it could possibly change if the gap between what the government is doing and what the people are actually trying to do gets so huge that just the government has to adapt.

Well, I certainly hope so. But again, I think you're very optimistic.

Like in the Attica piece you wrote, IT'S COMING TOGETHER. You had a voice which stated....

The voice was the guy who just called me on the phone, STEVE BEN ISRAEL. He's a long-time actor with the LIVING THEATER.

Why did you write the ATTICA piece?

I felt at the time when the event took place that this was an atrocity that demanded of every responsible person that had any power to cry out, that he cry out. And as it happened, I discovered a text which was published shortly thereafter in RAMPARTS Magazine which seemed to fulfill the conditions. Yet the text itself cried out for some further elaboration. It was simply a piece that had to be written. It was necessary at the time. I don't know how effective it was. Looking back on it I can see that it was, it already belongs to a stage of work that I no longer would do anything like that. It's not really a very clear political statement except in its sort of extramusical connections with the historical event.

So but in the pieces that followed you just try and deepen the connection of music and what you wanted to say.

Yes, I think that I've learned some more about....

What did you write after that?

Well, I did a long Cantata called STRUGGLE, which was based on a text by FREDERIC DOUGLAS, one of the great black leaders of the nineteenth century, which was about how there can be no progress without struggle and this process of liberation may require the sacrifice of life and so on and so forth.

I also did a number of songs and some instrumental music some smaller instrumental music. And just now I've finished working on a lot of piano music. So I've just finished a long series of variations for piano on the theme that I've just played for you, the PUEBLO UNIDO. This piece is going to be done in February at the Kennedy Center. It was written for another pianist friend of mine, URSULA OPPENS. But I think that's, you see, one way of relating your work to the struggles ah that are going on.

Ya, I just remembered this one sentence from your article. "Musicians and artists must listen to the sound of struggle if they are to contribute anything in the way of harmony."

Yeah, I think that this is very important. And the new thing about this development in music is again not confined to a few individuals, not just CORNELIUS CARDEW and CHRISTIAN WOLFF and a few other people. But it's by this time you can see that it's a part of a general cultural movement which is going on all over the world. The important thing about this is it's not just an aesthetic phenomenon.

I heard you're doing benefit concerts for the UNITED FARMWORKERS and so on.

Yes, we have a group of musicians here in New York called the MUSICIANS ACTIVE COLLECTIVE. And this is a group of about forty New York musicians who are ah, perhaps not revolutionary musicians, but they are musicians who are eager to find a political connection between their work and what's going on in the world. It's a very broad kind of group there, people from all kinds of different directions who are working in it. One of the things we're trying to do is we're trying to create a kind of solid base of very high quality professional musicians who are eager to change things. And one of the ways that

we do this is to put on benefit concerts in support of various causes that we want to support.

The first one that we did was in support of the CHILE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE, which was a part of the demonstrations on Chile which took place here. It was of course extremely important here, because every little demonstration We don't have huge demonstrations here like you have in Europe. . . . But even if you can get three or four hundred people together in a hall for a concert in support of the CHILEAN PEOPLES' STRUGGLE, this is extremely important in this country, even if it's a small thing. Because there's almost nothing else that's going on here. The second one we did was in support of the UNITED FARM WORKERS. And now we're doing one this month in support of the ATTICA DEFENSE COMMITTEE. This last, this final project that we have now with the Musicians' Action Collective is to create an Oratorio which tells the story of May Day, which is of course something that most Americans don't know anything about. They don't realize that it started in Chicago in 1886. The first May Day celebration was a demonstration to commemorate the martyrs of Haymarket who were executed as part of the struggle for the eight-hour working day. But now in America nobody knows about May Day any more. It just disappeared, even though it's a holiday that's celebrated all over the world..

This is particularly important this year, because this is the year of the 200th anniversary of the American Revolution. So of course there's a lot of cultural crap going on", a lot of shit which is being handed down by the ROCKEFELLERS and the FORDS and what have you. And although people like us are very few of us in culture who are trying to do something opposed to this, our existence I think is rather important.

So this kind of attitude is reflected in our concerts. And one of the effects that it has is to combine the kinds of music of many different directions, so that a concert of the collective consists not only of new music but also of jazz, Puerto Rican music, and so on and so forth.

What do you think about your personal writing now in forming the necessary evocative power in order to awaken people to an understanding? What musical techniques do you use to achieve this?

Well, there are all kinds of different musical techniques which you can employ for different kinds of situations. Personally, I don't think that I've ever developed what you might call a "style". At least I can't see any style in my music. Every music that I do seems to be very different than the thing that came before; So there's always a new technique available for every specific situation. It depends on your audience again, on who you're writing for and playing for.

I think perhaps that one development that one must be conscious of is the fact that you cannot rely on any one historical tradition anymore. If your background is classical European for instance, as most of us composers have come out of this tradition, we have to become aware of the fact that the future of our music does not lie merely in a continuation of the classical European mode of thinking, that we have to become aware of the cultural influences which have become very strong, which come from other parts of the world, such as Africa, and Latin

America, and Asia.

We have to begin to think in terms of a "world music", kind of global music. And I don't mean by that in the way STOCKHAUSEN talked about a "global" music as a sort of a kind of imperialist concept, but rather a music which integrates, tries to harmonize with some of the most revolutionary developments which have come out of the third world, such as of course in North America the whole idea of jazz improvisation.

But if you take South American music. It has it's evocative power just from the folkloristic background it comes from. And it speaks to people from this geographical area, became it's folkloristic style which developed through generations there.

It's different. It's different from the basic South American music. Of course there are lots of different kinds of South American music. For instance this song that I just played you, the INTI-ILLIMANI song, is known by everybody in Italy. EVERYBODY knows this song. It's become an Italian song practically.

Ya, because it's a revolutionary which fits into the political situation.

Precisely. But not only for that reason. Also for musical reasons. One of the peculiarities about that song is that it's not folklore song. It's not just a folk song. It's a very subtle kind of mixture of different cultural influences.

But it gives at least the recognition for some people that it's THEIR music. These are the people that the musicians want to talk to in this moment. So what I mean is, if it's possible and necessary to find out what the local necessity is for you living here in New York. And your personal background of being a pianist and all this technology of playing new music available for yourself. And from this personal background and from this locality trying to find out what could be revolutionary.

Yeah, that's an interesting problem. And it's very important. Of course a place like New York is a very peculiar place. There's no other place like it on earth. It's not even like the rest of the United States. It's a very unique place. Probably culturally I mean the thing that distinguishes New York from every other place is the vast quantity of different kinds of information that reach you here every day. When you walk the streets, I mean, you are confronted by cultural influences from the entire planet practically. So, if one lives here and listens to the sounds, it's almost inevitable that you develop a kind of a global consciousness. Although I'm not even sure that that's true, what I'm saying. I mean it's also true here that people live very much in boxes.

There seem to be a lot of Puerto Ricans living around here.

Not Puerto Ricans so much as Dominican Republic, Cuba, Haiti, the Caribbeans.

The Taxi driver himself was one of these. You know, he had this music on. They have special radio stations for their music. They don't want to be mixed up so much with the downtown culture. And do you see that this situation

could influence the kind of music here?

Oh, it definitely does. I mean, unless one is completely deaf, of course many of our composers are completely deaf, especially the ones who teach in schools, but the ones that are not deaf, obviously you can't live here without being influenced by the cultural forces at work here. I mean, how can you be a composer in the United States and not be influenced by jazz for instance? Jazz is perhaps the most powerful music that this country has produced, even though it's not regarded as such by the official culture. It's certainly the only kind of music that's universally respected in the rest of the world as a genuinely American music which is worthy of recognition.

But as a music which gets much more and more response in the rest of the world because of the condition of the...

Yes, it's become an international platform.

But I ask again if it's because of its genuine power or because of the mechanism of media.

I think it's because one of the basic ideas of jazz is the combination of the African rhythm based conception with the melodic conception which partly comes from say Scottish ballads of the highlands, which were a part of the American folk tradition. And also the very important contribution that was made by say Russian and eastern European countries who came to this country after the First World War, who wrote many of the popular songs on which jazz compositions then were based. So that the idea of a combination of many different cultures, popular cultures, is really at the heart of jazz, even though the main vanguard of jazz has always been the black people. So in that sense you can say that it's black music. The fact is that the black people of America are not the black people of Africa. They are a people who have been in intimate contact with other cultures on this continent for many generations. And this is what gives to jazz its international character.

It's also the simplicity of jazz, in so far that it's easy to communicate certain kinds of agreements.

Well of course. I think most good jazz is entirely based on communication, yes.

And this fact makes it open to communicate with other people. That's what makes it so necessary to tune into it. But then again I ask if it's really necessary. Is it necessary for instance that people like from Germany, where I come from.... You can say Hawaii if you want....But is it really necessary to tune in on jazz?

Well, of course it's not necessary for me to say what is necessary for Germany. You have to find the answer to that. I have my own OPINIONS about the German musical situation.

Well, we can certainly talk about that too. But what I mean is, we're just talking now about the world-wide availability of this music. Is it necessary? The more I talk to people, the more I'm coming to the point where I see the necessity now to again find out more about the music where you yourself geographically come from. And here we can learn from the Third World. They can be proud of their music. They wouldn't give up their music for any price.

You know? But now countries under strong United States influence did. It might sound ridiculous. But in this sense I feel pretty close to people from Hawaii. So I'm coming more and more to the conclusion that we shouldn't forget the music we come from.

I think if you did something like that, you would probably find that this music that you're talking about is not dead at all. It may not be on the radio in Germany, and there may not be many records of it, but I bet you'd find it if you went to Bavaria, especially to small villages and so on. I bet you would find a lot of music there.

I really ask myself why so many German musicians, if they want to be like spontaneous acting and communicating musicians, why they get addicted to jazz music.

To jazz or to rock music?

To kind of a melange of both.

It's obvious why. Because that's what's offered for sale. If- all you were offered for sale in the stores is shit, you get addicted to shit. It's very simple. But among the younger composers in West Germany there is now for instance in the last few years a very strong renewed interest in the work of HANNS EISLER.

I have to say something about that too. It's becoming more and more an "Entschuldigung"....

excuse.

....excuse for thinking about music. It's rubbish to give up the whole experience of the last twenty years and make tabula rasa with defining music now.

Of course there are fanatics in this movement as there are in any other movement.

Like CHRISTIAN WOLFF is very careful about it in integrating the experiences of the last twenty years into his politically conscious writing. He doesn't just turn 180° now because he's seen that there was something wrong. I think CHRISTIAN WOLFF weighs his musical decisions very carefully.

CHRISTIAN is an extremely careful worker. And his work is one of the most exciting works done in this area. Although it certainly is, none of CHRISTIAN'S music is ever easy to listen to. It always demands some kind of active participation, both on the part of the performer and on the part of the listener. That is part of its strength and it's also part of its weakness.

Because it's part of CHRISTIAN WOLFF. Like CARDEW is an example for a musician who went through being an assistant of STOCKHAUSEN, went through making very exciting things with his SCRATCH Orchestra in London, and now...

I know what you are going to say. You are sceptical.

He made a lot of tabula rasa with his music.

Well, I would say in this connection, that CORNELIUS is a composer who is not afraid to make a mistake.... You're turning off the machine?

No, no. I just look if there is still enough tape.

He is not afraid to make a big mistake and fall flat on his face, as an experiment. He is a real experimental composer. And part of being an experimenter is to create conditions where you can make mistakes. And he certainly made plenty of them. The thing is, he is not afraid to do that. Like for instance, when he started first this new direction years back, making pieces based on Chinese songs and stuff like that. It's not just a musical trick he is doing. He is really profoundly convinced by his whole thinking along these lines. And he is quite a powerful mind.

In my opinion, the latest things that he has been doing in this direction are very successful indeed. The first piece I think was a really good one was the ERNST THÄLMANN VARIATIONS, which he wrote a year ago. And this year he has written several new pieces, including by the way versions of some of CHRISTIAN WOLFF's music. Maybe CHRISTIAN doesn't even know about that. CHRISTIAN wrote a number of songs, based on texts like ROSA LUXEMBURG and MAO TSE TUNG and stuff like that, which are one line, very angular, abstract songs, very difficult to sing. CORNELIUS took these songs and added harmonic components to them, arranged them so they became extremely singable, very melodious. I think they are really fine.

See! Learning from mistakes. We can get back to what I said about failures people go through...

Well, what you say is partly true. I think I agree with you in part. But for instance the Viet Nam War was one of the biggest mistakes this country has made in a long time. It's true that probably it has resulted in some positive developments in this society as a result of the mistakes they have made. However, again I would prefer to err on the side of pessimism than on the side of optimism. It's still true that most Americans care more about the price of meat than they do about the exploitation of Bolivian minors.

Do you think this crisis can be finished by the people?

I certainly hope so. We'll see. I think we're going through the next ten or twenty years in this country to have an extremely crucial period in this country and also for the rest of the world. There is a very great danger here, which is something like perhaps the situation which you had in Germany in the early 1930's. One must be extremely concerned about the directions the things are going to take here. Because most people believe in this country that democracy is very strong. There is a faith in democracy here, which is one of

the strongest things that there is in America. This is the basic belief in democracy. However, it's also a weakness because this faith may not be founded on solid grounds. You know, people all say, "Well, fascism couldn't possibly happen here!" That may possibly be true.

It IS fascist in a certain way.

Well, not YET.

but it is the kind of silent fascism you don't take note of.

Well, certainly there are very strong fascist elements in this country, but I wouldn't say that the country is...

No, not fascistic in that it declares to be. But it has some elements of it. like if you drive through certain suburban areas, you feel fantastically....

You can get a good idea of what American Fascism would be like.

Ya, that you don't have the slightest idea of what's on the back side of the coin. But you drive through it, and you have a feeling of security. And that is a similar feeling that people had in Germany before the war. The German media of that time were "calming" the people down, and giving them good feelings, thinking positively. This mechanism is working here.

Yes, it's very strong here. But fortunately this is a very large country, and we have other things, too. The main problem is that the other thing, whatever it is, is not organized, it has no structure. So it's an extremely precarious dangerous situation. Nobody knows.

I just heard on the phone you're returning to Rome.

I'm trying to organize it. At this moment it's hard for me to think ahead more than one month. My life is very improvisational. My family is European basically. My wife is Belgian. And my children grew up in Italy. So we are straddling both sides of the Atlantic ocean right now without being very clear about where we are.

And do you feel responsible to stay here because you've grown up here?

WELL, that's not the reason. I try not to think in terms of "either-or", EITHER the United States OR Europe, because I've lived so long in both places that I try to think in terms of being in both places. And after all, that is possible today, even though it's not easy. I think it's very important.

Apolitical Intellectuals

Words: Otto René Lastillo
Music: Frederic Rzewski
10/12/74

$\text{♩} = 96$

p

1. One day the a-political in-tel-lectu-als of my coun-try
2. They will be asked what they did when their nation died out

f

will be inter-rogated by the simplest of our peo-ple.
slow-ly, like a sweet fire, small and a-lone.

p

mf

1. No one will ask them about their clothes, their long si-es-tas af-ter lunch,

2. won't be questioned on Greek mytho-lo-gy or their feel-ings of self-dis-gust when

The first system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is the vocal line, featuring two parts: a first part (1.) and a second part (2.). The notes are mostly quarter and eighth notes, with many triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes. The second staff is the piano accompaniment, showing chords and bass lines. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The dynamic marking *mf* is written at the beginning.

or the philo-so-phy of no-thing-ness, or the on-to-lo-gy of money. They

one among them be-gins to die the cow-ard's death.

The second system continues the musical score with two staves. The vocal line continues with the lyrics from the previous system. The piano accompaniment features more complex chordal textures and bass lines. The dynamic marking *mf* is still present.

P

They'll be asked no-thing on their ab-surd jus-ti-fi-ca-tions,

The third system of the musical score consists of two staves. The vocal line begins with the lyrics 'They'll be asked no-thing on their ab-surd jus-ti-fi-ca-tions,'. The piano accompaniment is marked with a dynamic of *P* (piano). The key signature remains one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.

Born in the shadow of the total lie. x (whispered)

On that day the simple people will come, will come, who

had no place in the books and poems of the a-political intellectuals, but

daily de-livered their bread and milk, who mended their clothes, and drove their cars, and

cleaned their houses, and kept their gardens, and worked for them, and they'll ask:

What did you do, What did you do, when the poor suf-fered, when

WHAT DID YOU DO? WHAT DID YOU DO? WHAT DID YOU DO? /

ten-der-ness and life burned out in them?

Handwritten musical score for the first system, featuring complex chordal textures in both treble and bass staves. The notation includes various accidentals and rhythmic markings.

Handwritten musical score for the second system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "A-political in-tel-lectuals of my sweet coun-try,". The word "crescendo" is written above the vocal line and below the piano accompaniment.

Handwritten musical score for the third system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "you will not be a-ble to an-swer.". The word "crescendo" is written above the piano accompaniment.

Handwritten musical score for the fourth system, primarily piano accompaniment. The word "diminuendo" is written above the piano accompaniment. The system ends with a circled number 70.

Handwritten musical score for the first system. It includes a piano accompaniment with chords and dynamics (mp, p, pp) and a vocal line with lyrics: "A vulture of si-lence will eat your gut. Your".

60
 (Spoken)
 Slow
 A vulture of si-lence will eat your gut. Your

Handwritten musical score for the second system. It includes a piano accompaniment and a vocal line with lyrics: "own mi-se-ry will pick at your soul, and you will be mute in your shame." The tempo marking "(Steadily slower to the end)" is present.

(Steadily slower to the end)
 own mi-se-ry will pick at your soul, and you will be mute in your shame.