

Goldstein performs Cage with freshness, sensuality

Professor plays modern composer's 'tribute to directed play' with virtuosity that still seems avant-garde

By SETH BRODSKY
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REVIEWER

As a young child, I had a peculiar fantasy about crawling inside my grandparents' piano. Though perhaps not the typical youth, I still had a very childlike ability to stretch and amplify perspective into the sublime and boundless, along with a tremendous desire to play — with a ball, a toy, yes, but also with ideas, transmuted into words, images and tones.

I imagined the boundless and the playful enjoying perfect synthesis within this massive piano.

Within its endless array of strings and unfathomable resonance, gravity fell away, the finite lost definition, all clocks liquefied into nothing, and I, suspended in space, made symphonies upon the great filaments with my own little hands.



Goldstein

Though much contemplated, the fantasy was never carried out, much to my timid chagrin and the piano's ignorant benefit.

Yet the evening of Nov. 5 in Brendle Recital Hall at the Scales Fine Arts Center, I received a stunning approximation of my youthful dream. Pianist Louis Goldstein, a professor of music, invited the audience, pillows in hand, to lie upon the stage and underneath the great Steinway itself as he performed the complete "Sonatas and Interludes" for prepared piano by the late American composer, theorist, and visionary John Cage.

The entire happening (a more inclusive title than "recital"), which quietly enthralled the audience, beautifully cultivated those two poles of the childish mind so potent in my fantasy: the chaotic order of play and the orderly chaos of imagination.

What more could one hope for from the composer who rediscovered in art the principle of the game, who "composed" from flips of a coin, from astral charts and amplified flora and fauna, whose most famous (or infamous) work bears no parameter more than the title "4'33'" (of silence).

"Mutes of various materials are placed between the strings of the piano keys used, thus

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effecting transformations of the piano sounds with respects to all of their characteristics." So Cage defined his prepared piano, itself a magnificent tribute to directed play.

The result of such toying with nuts and bolts, spoons and wooden blocks, is an utterly shocking redefinition of our Western old standard of instruments — a cross of Balinese and African percussion orchestra and toy keyboard.

Needless to say, Goldstein presented the work magnificently; a tireless champion of American music of our century, he has performed the entire cycle many times and has recently recorded it.

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Strangely enough, these pieces still sound remarkably fresh and strange long after the old avant-garde has become the embarrassing reminder of obsolete stylistic panaceas.

Cage shows us that our juvenile pinings are ultimately redemptive.

The fundamental seeds of childhood: the tinker, the improvisation, the game, the mind and body at play, all embody the creative act, that which in the face of ubiquitous entropy and decay continues to order and synthesize, to give life, to redeem.

Joined to the inimitable chaos of the child's unfettered imagination, this union achieves through art that most eternal of all human desires: a finite way of experiencing the infinite.

Cage's "Sonatas and Interludes" eloquently spoke of this, all the more beautifully in the hands of Goldstein — even more so 'neath the bowels of the very instrument, with eyes closed in ecstatic wonder.

One may now approximate this rapt experience with Goldstein's superb new recording of the work, available at the campus bookstore and Now Hear This in Reynolda Village.

If you find purchasing a Steinway to snuggle under too opulent a venture, Goldstein recommends "laying down with (your) ears close to speakers playing at low volume." Happy redeeming.

CALENDAR

To have your event listed, send mail to P.O. Box 7569, e-mail arts@ogb.wfu.edu or fax us at 759-4561.

ON CAMPUS

Exhibits

Treasures from the Museum of Anthropology. The exhibit features works of art from Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Americas.
When: Through March 1
Where: Museum of Anthropology
Cost and info: Free. Ext. 5282.

Faculty Retrospective. An exhibition of university art department faculty including paintings, drawings, prints, sculpture and film.
When: Through Jan. 29
Where: Fine Arts Gallery
Cost and info: Free. Ext. 5585.

Movies

Trainspotting. 1996. Based on the best-selling novel, this movie graphically portrays the lives of several heroin addicts in Edinburgh, Scotland.
When: 7 p.m., 10 p.m. Fri. and Sat.; 7 p.m. Sun., 8 p.m. Mon.
Where: Pugh Auditorium
Cost: \$2.

Into the Woods. The Stephen Sondheim musical includes the stories of many of the most popular fairy tales.
When: 8 p.m. Fri.
Where: Tribble A3.
Cost: Free.

The Princess Bride. Carey Elwes stars in this romantic comedy about a man who will anything to win Princess Buttercup from the arms of the prince.
When: 10 p.m. Fri.
Where: Tribble A3.
Cost: Free.

The Secret of Roan Inish. Ten-year-old Fiona tries to unlock the secret of her brother's disappearance after she discovers a small boy on the island of Roan Inish.
When: 8 p.m. Sat.
Where: Tribble A3.
Cost: Free.

Music

Collegium Musicum. The university music department will present a concert of 16th and 17th century German music. It will include choral music from Heinrich Schutz including his masterwork, "Historia der Geburt Jesu Christ."
When: 8 p.m. Today
Where: Brendle Recital Hall
Info: 759-5237

Theatre

Holy Ghosts. Columbia professor Romulus Linney's play about how faith and religion inspires a congregation.
When: 8 p.m. today through Sat.; 3 p.m. Sun.
Where: Mainstage Theatre, Scales Fine Arts Center.
Cost and info: \$5 for students. Ext. 5788.

ELSEWHERE

Clubs

This Week's Spotlight: Awakening Records CD Release Party. Three bands will be playing during the party, price includes the CD.
When: Wed.
Where: Cat's Cradle, 300 E. Main St., Carrboro.
Info: (919) 967-9053.

Cat's Cradle. Thurs.: Flicker Night. Fri.: Michelle Shocked and the Casualties of Wah with Pony Stars. \$14. Sat.: Bio Ritmo. \$6. Sun.: John Wesley Harding with CVS and Steven Fearing. \$8. Mon.: Arlo Guthrie. \$16. Tues.: Outhouse Poets, Hipbone, Carbonite. \$3. Wed.: Mark Williams, Big Wednesday, Nickel and Dime Tim Pigman, Awakening Records CD Release Party.
Where: 300 E. Main St., Carrboro.
Info: (919) 967-9053.

Lizard and Snake Cafe. Today: Kevin Kinney. \$5. Fri.: Jamie Block. Sat.: Indian Summer, Greyscale. Sun.: Ruby Falls, Ed's Redeeming Qualities. Mon.: Scrub. Tues.: Days of Rage. Wed.: God Plow, Stress

Magnets, Plastic Applicator.
Where: 110 N. Columbia St., Chapel Hill.
Info: (919) 929-2828.

Ziggy's. Today: Last One Standing with Far Too Jones. Fri.: The Nields. Sat.: Goose Creek Symphony. Tues.: Life in General. Wed.: Uncle Mingo with Big Ass Truck.
Where: 433 Balty Street.
Info: 748-1064.

Theatre

Dracula. The ghoulish play, based on Bram Stoker's novel, opens in Winston-Salem this weekend.
When: 8 p.m. Fri. and Sat., 2 p.m. Sun.
Where: The Little Theatre of Winston-Salem, 610 Coliseum Dr.
Cost and info: \$9 for students. 725-4001.

Exhibits

A Thousand Years of Czech Culture. The collection of over 200 historic artifacts and works of art capture the politics, religion, and folk customs of the Czech Republic.
When: Through March 16
Where: The Gallery at Old Salem
Info: 721-7300

Pictured in My Mind. Works from the Gitter/Yelen collection will be on display along with Winston-Salem artist Sue Moore's work.
When: Through Jan. 5
Where: Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, 750 Marguerite Drive
Info: 725-1904

Confessions of a Cultural Tourist. SECCA will present William Dunlap's work. Dunlap's art reflects his personal history and the stories of his native South.
When: Through Jan. 12
Where: Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, 750 Marguerite Drive
Info: 725-1904

Food, Food, and More Food. Artworks Gallery is presenting an exhibit of food-related oil paintings by Chris Flory and several other artists.
When: Closes Saturday.
Where: Artworks Gallery, 564 N. Trade St.
Cost and info: Free. 723-5890

IN CONGRESS, NOVEMBER 14, 1916

The unanimous declaration of the United Comic Strip Characters of America.

When in the course of fictitious comic events, it becomes necessary for characters to dissolve the artistic bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the newspaper, the separate and equal station to which the laws of free press, and free press Editor entitle them...

We hold these truths to be self evident: that all characters are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are acceptable artistry and story lines, liberty, and the pursuit of wry happiness....



Dagwood Bumstead Phoebe
Hagar the Horrible
Dennis the Menace
Katie Couric M.D.
Cathy
©1916 by Matt Nacher & Ken Perkins

Non Sequitur by Wiley



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