

CHANNEL CROSSINGS
CCS 11898



meridian
ensemble
arts



EAR MIND I

F. Zappa | J. Forsythe | T. Pierson
Su Lian Tan | R. Brecker

EAR MIND | The Meridian Arts Ensemble

Co-winners (with the Kronos Quartet) of the ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming (for the 1996-1997 season)

John Ferrari | Percussion

Raymond G. Stewart | Tuba

Jon Nelson | Trumpets

Daniel Grabois | Horn

Josef Burgstaller | Trumpets

Benjamin Herrington | Trombone



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■ Frank Zappa (1940-1993) arr. Jon Nelson, Josef Burgstaller, Joe Newman

- | | | |
|---|---------------------|------|
| 1 | Lumpy Gravy | 1.01 |
| 2 | Marqueson's Chicken | 3.43 |
| 3 | King Kong | 4.55 |
| 4 | Pygmy Twylite | 2.21 |
| 5 | Hungry Freaks Daddy | 2.41 |
| 6 | The Black Page | 3.15 |

All compositions controlled worldwide by Munchkin Music, ASCAP or Frank Zappa Music, BMI

■ Jason Forsythe (b. 1956)

- | | | |
|---|----------|------|
| 7 | Sanctity | 3.39 |
|---|----------|------|

■ Su Lian Tan (b. 1964)

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|------|
| 8 | Moo Shu Wrap Rap (1996) | 0.32 |
|---|-------------------------|------|

guest rapper: Su Lian Tan

■ Jon Nelson (b. 1966)

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|------|
| 9 | Fanfare for Nothing (1995) | 0.44 |
|---|----------------------------|------|

- | | | |
|----|------------------|------|
| 10 | Sleepless (1995) | 6.40 |
|----|------------------|------|

■ John Ferrari (b. 1965)

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|------|
| 11 | MAE We Strut? (1989) | 2.26 |
|----|----------------------|------|

- | | | |
|----|--------|------|
| 12 | Crunch | 4.18 |
|----|--------|------|

■ Tom Pierson (b. 1954)

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|-------|
| 13 | Brass Quintet (1994) | 14.20 |
|----|----------------------|-------|

Commissioned for the Meridian Arts Ensemble by Chamber Music America with funds from the Pew Charitable Trusts

■ Josef Burgstaller (b. 1971)

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|------|
| 14 | Dr. J Geysler (1996) | 4.44 |
|----|----------------------|------|

- | | | |
|----|----------------|------|
| 15 | Lullaby (1995) | 3.55 |
|----|----------------|------|

■ Randy Brecker (b. 1945), arr. Benjamin Herrington

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|------|
| 16 | Some Skunk Funk (c. 1975) | 7.49 |
|----|---------------------------|------|

Total Time 76.06

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Production & Distribution

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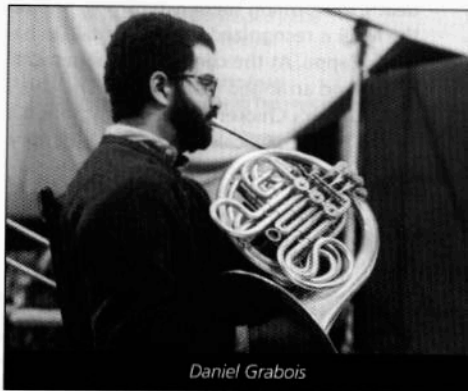
The Meridian Arts Ensemble would like to thank:

The 'Aaron Copland Fund for Music', for making this recording possible, as well as 'Chamber Music America', 'Pew Charitable Trusts', Fort Washington Collegiate Church', Su Lian Tan, Tom Pierson, Jason Forsythe, Gail Zappa and family, Frans Goddijn and family, and the Sacks family.

EAR, MIND, I

Our seventh CD is a seeming hodge-podge with a logic behind it that makes perfect sense to us. How do we choose our music? Through the interaction of the ear, the mind, and the "I" - the personal response the music evokes in us. Through the eleven years of our existence, we have all gotten more involved with composing, and this disc contains works by band members Jon Nelson, John Ferrari, and Josef Burgstaller. We continue to adapt works which have not been conceived for brass (but should have been!), such as the music of Frank Zappa (an enormous and ongoing source of inspiration to us), music from the Caribbean, and rock. Finally, the centerpieces of this album: Tom Pierson's *Brass Quintet*, a work of monumental impact, and Su Lian Tan's *Moo Shu Wrap Rap*, which creates a brilliant brass vocabulary from scratch and which is one of our most appreciated concert works. There is no need here to use your "shuffle" setting - everything is pre-shuffled, thrown into the bowl together. Enjoy the salad. And by the way, by lucky coincidence, 'Ear, Mind, I' when unscrambled spells Meridian.

Meridian Arts Ensemble



Daniel Grabois

Frank Zappa (1940-1993) - Lumpy Gravy, Marqueson's Chicken, King Kong, Pygmy Twylyte, Hungry Freaks Daddy, The Black Page (King Kong arr. by Josef Burgstaller; The Black Page by arr. by Joe Newman and Jon Nelson, all others arr. by Jon Nelson)

Frank Zappa was one of the most prolific and well-known American artists of our time. Recognized internationally as a composer and guitarist, he was also an accomplished film-maker, producer, author, and advocate of First Amendment rights. He composed for his own bands and for orchestras and chamber ensembles, and his music has been performed and recorded by Pierre Boulez, the London Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Ensemble Modern of Frankfurt.

The Meridian Arts Ensemble has created arrangements of over twenty of Zappa's compositions, many of which they played for the composer before his untimely death. Performing them extensively, and having recorded eleven of the pieces, the MAE is recognized internationally as having a direct link to the music of Frank Zappa. At the composer's suggestion, Jon Nelson (MAE trumpeter) transcribed and arranged *Marqueson's Chicken*, *Lumpy Gravy*, and *The Black Page*. [Marqueson's Chicken (solo: Herrington), King Kong (solos: Burgstaller, Grabois), Pygmy Twylyte (vocals: Herrington), Hungry Freaks Daddy (vocals: Herrington, Nelson)]

Josef Burgstaller

Hungry Freaks Daddy-FZ

verse 1

Mister America walk on by
Your schools that do not teach
Mister America walk on by
The minds that won't be reached
Mister America try to hide, the emptiness that's
you inside

When once you find that the way you lied
And all the corny tricks you tried
Will not forestall the rising tide of
HUNGRY FREAKS DADDY

chorus

They won't go- poor no more
Great midwestern hardware store
Philosophy that turns away, from
Those who aren't afraid to say what's
On their mind
The left behinds
Of the "Great Society"

solo

HUNGRY FREAKS DADDY

verse 2

Mister America walk on by
Your supermarket dream
Mister America walk on by
The liquor store supreme
Mister America try to hide, the product of your
savage pride

The useful minds that it denied
The day you shrugged and stepped aside
You saw their clothes and then you cried those
HUNGRY FREAKS DADDY

to chorus

PYGMY TWYLYTE - FZ
(from Roxy and Elsewhere)

Green hocker croakin'
In the Pygmy Twylyte

Crankin' an a-coke'n
In the Winchel's do-nut Midnite

Out of the deep on a 'fore day run
Hurtin' for sleep in the Quaalude Moonlight
Green hocker in a Greyhound locker
Smokin' in the Pygmy Twylyte

Joined the bus on the 33rd seat
By the doo-doo room with the reek replete

Crystal eye, crystal eye
Got a crystal kidney, he's 'fraid to die
In the Pygmy Twylyte
Or the downer midnite
In the Pygmy Twylyte
Or the downer midnite
In the Pygmy Twylyte
Or the downer midnite
In the Pygmy Twylyte
Or the downer midnite

Jason Forsythe (b. 1956) - Sanctity

Trombonist, composer and arranger Jason Forsythe has performed regularly as a trombonist in a variety of jazz, rock, pop and ethnic settings in New York and around the world. His compositions have been featured in performances by Slide Hampton's World of Trombones. In the 1980's, he received two grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, one for composition and the other for trombone performance.

Sanctity is a simple and beautiful ballad in a jazz gospel style. The phrases unfold slowly, seeming to breathe. This piece is a valuable addition to our growing repertoire.

Daniel Grabois

Su Lian Tan (b. 1964) - Moo Shu Wrap Rap (1996)

When writing for the Meridian Arts Ensemble, I feel the freedom to write anything I want because I know they will be able to play it. The guys asked for Chinese hip-hop. My thoughts immediately turned to different kinds of modes, specifically Chinese speaking modes. The vowel sounds are at the forefront of the piece and are explored by the different timbres the ensemble can produce. An Asian marketplace containing extreme juxtapositions is the basis for the rhythm and motion. In such a marketplace, one can go from fish-stand to opera in three paces. About half-way through the piece, we lumber upon a passing dirge - in Malaysia, it is not uncommon to have one's travel impeded by a passing funeral procession. Moo Shu is American-fabricated Chinese food. The rap section is my American-Chinese music. [guest rapper: Su Lian Tan]

Su Lian Tan

Jon Nelson (b. 1967) - Fanfare for Nothing/Sleepless

These two pieces were completed during the summer of 1995, while I was suffering from the flu. Under the influence of various over-the-counter medications, I experienced a two month period of chronic insomnia. At this time I began to assemble numerous sketches that were lying around the house. With no basis of continuity or relation, I discovered that many of the sketches were derived from a common set of ideas. There are two basic principles that are dealt with in these pieces: open intervals vs. closed ones, and the division of the ensemble into smaller groups, each functioning independently with respect to time signatures. The *Fanfare for Nothing* was written last, on August 10 between 3:05 and 3:35 am. [solo: Grabois]

Jon Nelson

John Ferrari (b. 1965) - MAE We Strut?/Crunch

Crunch was written in the spring of 1989 for a short-lived jazz fusion band I was playing in at the time, consisting of drums, electric bass, electric guitar, and trumpet. By the spring of 1995, the Meridian Arts Ensemble had become quite a "calendar-filler" in my already hectic musical life. Because the fusion band had lasted all of about two gigs, I decided to arrange this tune for the



John Ferrari

Meridians so it might actually get played here and there. Played it was on a number of subsequent tours. The tune's melody is based loosely on a tone row (if that is of any interest), and gives outlet to some nifty improvising for Ben Herrington's trombone and Joe Burgstaller's flugelhorn, each with some guitar effects added for good measure. Preceding *Crunch, MAE We Strut?* introduces each "voice" of the group (drums, tuba, trombone, horn, each trumpet) in a layered Dixie-style "jazz-strut-march" in E-minor. [solos: Herrington, Burgstaller]

John Ferrari

Tom Pierson - Brass Quintet (1993)

Tom Pierson's compositions have been performed by the London Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and in major concert halls across the US, Europe, and Japan. His works have also been recorded for CBS, Applause, Inner City, and Adamo Records. Tom Pierson currently resides in Tokyo, Japan, where he leads an active career performing as a jazz musician, composing, and teaching. "Every note is a universe unto itself." This is the essence of Tom Pierson's *Brass Quintet*, as stated by the composer. Today, as musicians and audiences are challenged to absorb and digest musical events that are complex in nature, Tom Pierson has chosen to challenge us to listen to music one note at a time. In this way, the timbres of different notes become structural elements in the composition. The composer also uses silence in his music, as its own timbre, as a palate cleanser, and also as an opportunity to meditate upon what has just occurred. These long periods of silence bring to the piece an element of variation in each performance, with audience noises becoming a part of the piece. This piece was commissioned in 1991 for the Meridian Arts Ensemble by Chamber Music America with funds from the Pew Charitable Trusts.

Jon Nelson

Josef Burgstaller (b. 1971) - Lullaby/Dr. J. Geysler

Lullaby was written in 1995 late one night while I was alone in my apartment. I had recently been listening to my favorite Sting album, "Nothing Like the Sun." In college, I used to put on that CD and play the last track, *Secret Marriage*, over and over again for hours on end. For me, it had that special quality of "connection." It ended the CD in an introspective mood. It was those qualities of connection, introspection and lament that I was trying to capture with this song. For my parents.



I wrote *Dr. J. Geysler* in late 1996. Our tubist, Ray Stewart, had introduced the ska style into the band with his piece *KOHS-Ska*, and I liked the possibilities implicit in this style. The chorales at the beginning and end are slower versions of the B section. During performances, the middle (improv) section turns into a spontaneous jam that sometimes involves the audience. For recording purposes, the length of this section has been pared down. I was trying for a downtrodden, shuffling mood at the beginning, and, in the closing sections after the improv, the realization that everything is going to be all right. For Inalvys. [solo: Burgstaller, Herrington]

Josef Burgstaller

Randy Brecker (b. 1945) - Some Skunk Funk (arr. by Benjamin Herrington)

Some Skunk Funk was one of the most popular pieces in the early development of the Brecker Brothers, a band which was a pioneer in the movement that was first known as "jazz-rock," but came later to be called "fusion." Originally appearing on their first album 'The Brecker Brothers' (1975), the work quickly became a standard of American fusion, combining a driving groove, lightning-fast melodic lines, and a thick and jazzy chordal structure. This arrangement, by Meridian Arts Ensemble trombonist Benjamin Herrington, takes a tongue-and-cheek approach, interspersing elements from American pop culture (and some more esoteric references, including a brief quote from Milton Babbitt's *Counterparts* for brass quintet) throughout the piece. [solos: Herrington, Nelson]

Daniel Grabois

Jon Nelson & Raymond G. Steward



Benjamin Herrington

discography Meridian Arts Ensemble:

- CCS 2191 Hindemith, Lutoslawski a.o.
- CCS 4192 'Smart Went Crazy': Zappa, Hendrix, Nurock
- CCS 6594 'Visions of the Renaissance'
- CCS 8195 'Prime Meridian'
- CCS 9496 'Five': American Composers
- CCS 9796 'Anxiety of Influence'

press quotes:

CCS 4192

(...) One thing's certain: There is nothing standard or even predictable in this program.
(...) maybe even Zappa never sounded better (...) /*CD Review*

CCS 6594

(...) HmmThe Meridian Arts Ensemble is back, this time with a disc of truly classical music.(...) They really can play!!! /*H&B USA*

CCS 8195

(...) The performances are throughout quite stunningly good: all the brilliance one has learned to expect from the best traditional brass groups, plus a whole range of jazz- and rock- and funk- and I-know-not-what-else-derived virtuositities. A close, brilliant recording: play it very loud. /*Gramophone*

(...) If you can remember the first time you had ice cream, this is what this compact disc is like. (...) /*4-Front*

CCS 9796

(...) M.A.E. new release is fair warning for how much passion and life there can be in chamber pieces.../ *Christian Calson*