

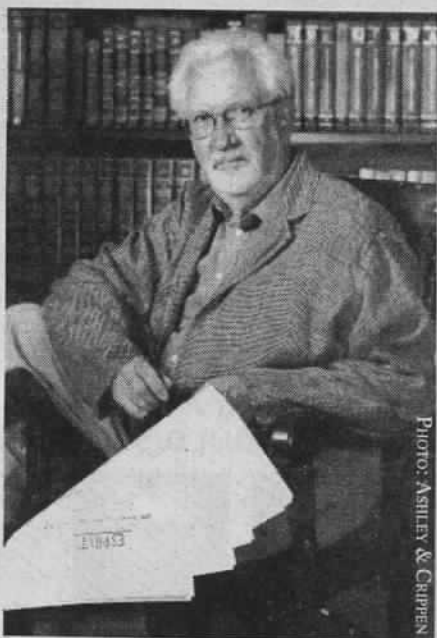
Editor's Corner by David Olds

This month we try to catch up with the mountain of discs that have arrived since the onset of the Christmas season. To accommodate the plethora of material we have supplemented our stable of reviewers and it is with great pleasure that I welcome John Lehr, Colin Savage, Robert Tomas and the enigmatic "ARB" to our team. This month I also note the welcome return of distinguished Canadian music scholar John Beckwith with his contribution on one of this country's seminal composers, Rodolphe Mathieu.

Speaking of distinguished Canadian composers, we lost one in the early days of 2004 with the death of Lothar Klein. I have marked his passing with repeated listenings to the 1977 cello concerto *España* as performed by Gisela Depkat, and the other selections on the independent CD release "España and other Orchestral Works" (RD RCD 5174, distributed by the Canadian Music Centre, www.musiccentre.ca).

This release is a welcome monument to Klein's parody compositions, and I mean parody simply in the musical sense of "in the style of" without the implication of ridicule or caricature.

I find *España* to be a significant contribution to the Romantic cello repertoire, and a worthy continuation of the tradition of tributes to the music of Spain by non-Spaniards such as Bizet and Ravel. For another aspect of Klein's eclectic offerings I would encourage you to revisit Daniel Foley's review of his vocal music "The Philosopher in the Kitchen" (RD RCD 7780) reviewed in the July/August 2003 issue of *WholeNote*, available at www.thewholenote.com

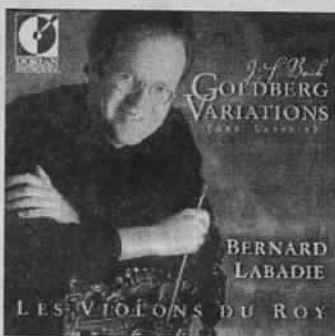


Lothar Klein

PHOTO: ASHLEY & CUMPHEN

There are several other discs that I would like to bring to your attention this month. The first is the "New Goldberg Variations", which marks the culmination of a project instigated by the late American arts patron Robert Goldberg and his wife. It began as a celebration of life, but in mid-stream became a memorial to the commissioner, who was diagnosed with cancer shortly after the project began. The Goldbergs' vision was for a set of works that would take as their point of

departure Bach's original keyboard variations. Their friendship with Yo-Yo Ma led to the condition that the works would include cello, and their circle of friends included some of America's most distinguished composers: Kenneth Frazelle, Christopher Rouse, Peter Lieber-son, John Corigliano, Peter Schick- ele and Richard Danielpour. I'm not sure why Yo-Yo Ma has not yet recorded these intriguing works, but thankfully they have been adopted by Edmonton cellist Tanya Proch- hazka and pianist Jacques Després who are featured on this excellent world premiere recording (Arktos 200368).

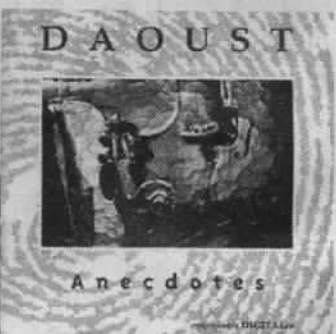


While listening to "The New Goldberg Variations" I was pleasantly reminded of other "new Goldbergs" that have appeared in recent years: transcriptions of Bach's keyboard original ranging from string trio and brass quintet to a version for full chamber orchestra by Les Violons du Roy director Bernard Labadie (Dorian xCD-90281). This latter recording, made in the marvelous acoustic of the François-Bernier Concert Hall at the Domaine Forget in rural Quebec, is a masterwork – a worthy addition to Bach's orchestral repertoire. Labadie changes textures from variation to variation, with an ever-changing continuo using combinations of theorbo, cello, harpsichord and bass. The melodic forces vary from duets to full string orchestra, making for a diverse but wonderfully balanced program. As so many of our reviewers are wont to say: highly recommended!

Ake Parmerud's "Jeu d'ombres" (empreintes DIGITALes IMED 0367), provided a strong reminder to me that this independent Montreal label (www.electrocd.com) is not just the most significant producer of Canadian electroacoustic recordings, but also has the most important catalogue of international electroacoustic artists. Swedish



composer Ake Parmerud has been working in the field since the 1970's and is recognized as a master of the genre. This current disc, with offerings from 1986 through 1999, provides an excellent introduction to his work. Of particular note are the mixed works: *Strings & Shadows* for harp and tape with Sofia Asuncion Claro and *Retur* with the Stockholm Saxophone Quartet. I also enjoyed comparing Parmerud's 1988 *Stringquartett*, a tape composition based on the manipulation of recorded string sounds, with Canadian Yves Daoust's earlier *Quatuor*, which uses many of the same techniques. This latter work is, of course, also available from empreintes DIGITALes, on Daoust's "Anecdotes" (IMED-9106-CD).



We welcome your feedback and invite submissions. Catalogues, review copies of CDs and comments should be sent to: The WholeNote, 503 – 720 Bathurst St. Toronto ON M5S 2R4. We also welcome your input via our website, www.thewholenote.com

David Olds
Editor, DISCOVERIES

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CD REVIEWS, PLEASE
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