

THE MUSIC OF LOU HARRISON

PACIFIKA RONDO 24:04

FOR AN ORCHESTRA OF WESTERN & ORIENTAL INSTRUMENTS

- 1 The Family of the Court 2 A Play of Dolphins 3 Lotus
 4 In Sequoia's Shade 5 Neitzahualcoyotl Builds a Pyramid
 6 A Hatred of the Filthy Bomb 7 From the Dragon Pool
 Oakland Youth Orchestra • Robert Hughes, Conductor

FOUR PIECES FOR HARP 9:05

- 8 Serenade for Frank Wigglesworth 9 Beverly's Troubador Piece
 10 From Music for Bill and Me 11 Avalokiteshvara

Beverly Bellows, Harp

TWO PIECES FOR PSALTERY 5:05

- 12 Psalter Sonata 13 The Garden at One and a Quarter Moons

Lou Harrison, Psalteries

MUSIC FOR VIOLIN WITH VARIOUS INSTRUMENTS 10:46
 EUROPEAN, ASIAN AND AFRICAN

- 14 Allegro Vigoroso 15 Largo 16 Allegro Moderato

William Bouton, Violin

Additional Soloists: Richard Dee, Cheng William Colvig, Sheng and Fang-Hsiang Lou Harrison, Piri Helen Rifas, Harp

Phoenix



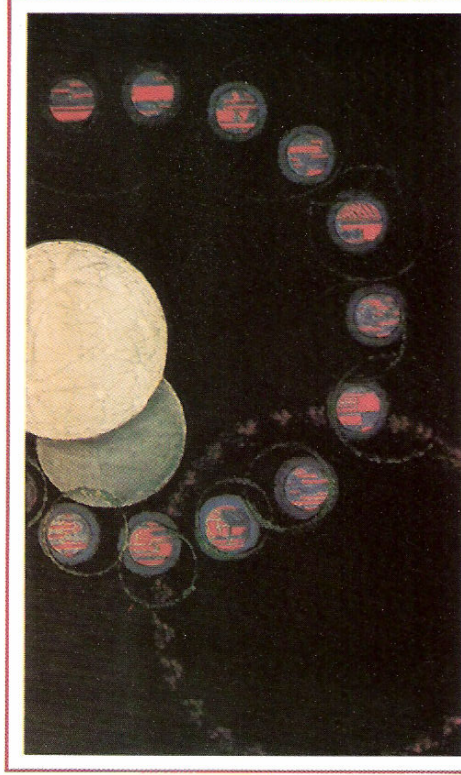
Produced for CD by Jeffrey Kautman
 CD Preparation: New York Digital Recording
 Recorded at the Civic Auditorium, Oakland, CA
 Recording Engineers: R. Beggs & G. Craig
 Originally released on Desto 6478 (1977)



Graphic Design: Donald J. Munz

Cover: Franz Kupka "The First Step"

THE MUSIC OF Lou Harrison



PACIFIKA RONDO • FOUR PIECES FOR HARP
 TWO PIECES FOR PSALTERY • MUSIC FOR VIOLIN

PACIFIKA RONDO: (Pacifc Round)

Pacifika Rondo was written for the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii and received its premiere there in May 1963. Each movement refers to a section of the Pacific Basin except for the sixth, which is a protest against the bomb and its contamination and destruction of Pacific life.

"The Family of the Court" largely refers to Korea and its court life; "Play of the Dolphins" is in a sense mid-ocean music and the sound of the psalteries suggests the movement of waves and the dancing of dolphins.

"Lotus" is a tribute to Buddhism, a 'temple' piece; "In Sequoia's Shade" refers to California, particularly to its colonial days. The fifth movement (an 'Homage to Carlos Chavez') looks to Mexico and Netzahualcoyotl, the Aztec emperor, a king of great wisdom and goodness. "From the Dragon Pool" refers to the Sinitic Area and particularly China in which the dragon is considered benevolent.

I have been told to try several of the ways in which I think classic Asian musics might of themselves, and together, evolve in the future, and have combined instruments of several ethnics directly for musical expression.

In composing Pacifika Rondo I have thought, with love, around the circle of the Pacific.
—LOU HARRISON

Peter Yates in his book *Twentieth Century Music* sums up his accolade of *Pacifika Rondo* referring to it as "a dangerous daring, a fresh exploration in the total field of sound..."

Stylistically movements 1, 3 and 7 reflect the music of the great 8th century Chinese Tang Dynasty court orchestras with their noble wind sounds, ornamental flute line, chiming bells and percussion punctuation. It is a broad and monumental music yet, as is the case of *Lotus* (3rd mv.), it can be tender and mystical, reminiscent of that "floating world." The *Play of Dolphins* is inspired by Chinese classical chamber music whereas *In Sequoia's Shade* is a different sort of chamber music with its lovely quiet ostinato and lilting melody. *Netzahualcoyotl* is a most unique piece combining as it does elements of Mexico, the Orient, an occasional dissonant bass drone and the intertwining murmurings of wood-flutes. All the above mentioned music is in just-intonation and much of it is basically pentatonic, i.e. in the tuning and scale of the great oriental tradition. The protest piece — *A Hatred of the filthy bomb* — is, however, in the "12 tone technique," a contemporary European musical style. All the original titles are in Esperanto, the international language in which Mr. Harrison is fluent.

1. La Familio de la Regha Korto (*The Family of the Court*)
2. Ludado de L'Delfinoj (*A Play of Dolphins*)
3. Lotuso (*Lotus*)
4. En Sekvoj-Ombro (*In Sequoia's Shade*)
5. Netzahualcoyotl fabrikas Piramidon (*Netzahualcoyotl builds a Pyramid*)
6. Malamo pri la malpuregaj bomboj (*A Hatred of the filthy bomb*)
7. El la Draka Lago (*From the Dragon Pool*)

FOUR PIECES FOR HARP

These are occasional works. The Serenade was written in a letter to Frank Wigglesworth, for him, when he was learning guitar in Rome, and it was originally for that instrument. BEVERLY'S TROUBADOUR PIECE was first composed at a party in which Bob Hughes, Jerry Neff and I wrote little pieces for Beverly Bellows to play (at once) on my now troubadour model harp. Again, the harp solo from MUSIC FOR BILL AND ME is from a group of pieces for my friend William Colvig and me to play. AVALOKITESHVARA is from a larger work celebrating the Amitabha trinity — in it the Bodhisattva is heard as it were in a "numbus" of bells.

TWO PIECES FOR PSALTERY

I composed my PSALTER SONATA (my first piece for psaltery) after studying the instrument with Liang Tsai Ping, the great Chinese chong-master, to whom the piece is dedicated. One actually could see "one and a quarter moons" in the sky of Mars, and this piece was written to entertain Robert Hughes.

MUSIC FOR VIOLIN WITH VARIOUS INSTRUMENTS *European, Asian & African*

Composed for Gary Beswick, who gave its first performance at San Jose State College in 1967. *The whole round world of musics and instruments lives around us. I am interested in a 'transethnic.' — a planetary music.*

(signed) A motto: cherish, conserve, consider, create —
—LOU HARRISON, July 2513 B.E.

REED ORGAN, heard in Pacifica Rondo and Music For Violin. This is a G.I. (Estey) Chappin's organ tuned at my request by John Greyson under the supervision of Harry Patch to a "cycle of fifths" — the Pythagorean "Ditone Diatonic." Ideal for drones.

SHENG (pronounced shuhng) is the Chinese free-beating reed mouth organ heard in Pacifica Rondo, 2nd movement.

PSALTERIES, two are used in my solos and in the Rondo and Music for Violin. They were constructed in western materials to my own design, based on the model of the Chinese "cheng" (pronounced chuhng).

FANG HSIANG, our instrument is one made of steel tubing and tuned in just intonation to the required modes. It resembles the ancient Chinese metalphone of iron slabs. Used here in "In Sequoia's Shade" and in "Avalokitesvara."

MIGUK PIRI, American "auloa" named by the Koreans who had themselves made their own Hyang Piri from the Tang dynasty Chinese model, and who understood at once that an American would make his own kind! A Korean reed is used. It is heard in Pacifica Rondo tuned at A220 v.p.s.

MBIRAS, the African "thumb-piano" is essentially a small wooden box upon which metal tongues vibrate. A quartet of Mbiras is heard in the last movement of Music For Violin. They were made for me, to my specifications, by Daniel Munyi in Kenya in 1966.

PERCUSSION: PAK — Six slabs of heavy hardwood slammed together fanwise — a classic Chinese and Korean instrument played only by the conductor. Heard at the beginning and endings of movements in the Rondo.

CHANGO — A Korean "hour-glass" drum, two-headed and large.

DAIKO — A large, flat, two-headed drum from Japan.

Small vertical flutes from India are heard in the Rondo, 5th movement.

LOU HARRISON

Composer and performer, painter and calligrapher, poet and polemicist, teacher and ethnomusicologist, Lou Harrison is one of the most imaginative, original and creative minds in the contemporary American arts. A native of Portland, Oregon, he now lives in Aptos, California, and teaches at San Jose State College. His earliest musical interest was centered around the works of Ives, Ruggles, Cowell and Riegger. He studied with Cowell and Schoenberg. A Rockefeller Foundation grant made it possible for Mr. Harrison to study Asian music in Korea in 1961-62. His compositions range from religious to secular, with overtones of Asia and the avant-garde.

OAKLAND YOUTH ORCHESTRA

The Personnel is composed exclusively of instrumentalists from the high schools of Oakland, California. They rehearse and perform regularly and on tour throughout the season. The orchestra is an important activity sponsored by the senior Oakland Symphony Orchestra. Under the musical direction of its conductor, Robert Hughes, the orchestra has commissioned many contemporary works.