

Kalvos and Damian's New Music Bazaar

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David Gunn

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Kalvos & Damian's New Music Bazaar
is a project of the
Vermont Contemporary Music Ensemble
a 501(c)3 corporation

Report to Contributors

Kalvos and Damian's New Music Bazaar completes its 200th show on March 21, 1999, and with that we present our first report to contributors.

A Brief History

Kalvos and Damian are Dennis Báthory-Kitsz and David Gunn, two composers concerned with the invisibility of other composers of 'new music', especially in the United States. To that end, we have for more than 25 years presented concerts and other activities that highlight new music.

When the offer came in 1995 to co-host a new music radio show as a summer replacement on WGDR-FM in Plainfield, Vermont, we accepted. On May 27, *Kalvos & Damian's New Music Sesquihour*—then 90 minutes—was born.

The original plan was to interview Vermont composers during the summer of 1995, and 15 composers were heard on the show, along with their music. The show was a success. Instead of being canceled, it was renewed and expanded to two hours in September and our first composers outside of Vermont (Jacques Bailhé from Los Angeles and Thomas Massella from Pittsburgh) were interviewed. We became *Kalvos & Damian's New Music Bazaar*.

On September 16, *K&D* put up its first website hosted on Goddard College's webserver. It was a small site, but it also featured something quite innovative: audio on the Internet. Now a standard of the World Wide Web, audio was new and tricky in 1995. We struggled to make interview clips and musical samples available (and listenable!) to a still very small web, using the quirky first versions of RealAudio, TrueSpeech, and MPEG2.

Our home page: <http://maltedmedia.com/kalvos/>

At the same time, we gathered together as many links to new music resources and about composers as we could find on a then-sparse World Wide Web, and built web pages for each of our guests. Our resources feature expanded quickly as did the web, and now consists of more than two thousand links.

New music resources: <http://www.goddard.edu/kalvos/musres.html>
Composer resources: <http://www.goddard.edu/kalvos/compres.html>
Record label index: <http://www.goddard.edu/kalvos/reccmps.html>

Vermont composers continued to dominate our schedule through early 1996, at which point we had made contact with dozens of musicians outside Vermont via our website. Some came to Vermont to be on the program (from Hanover, New Hampshire; New Haven; Albany; New York City), including Pauline Oliveros and Fred Ho, leading figures in contemporary music. Some we interviewed by telephone. But Vermont is hard to get to, so we went on the road.

Our guest composers: <http://www.goddard.edu/kalvos/cmpindx.html>

We were excited. David and I pooled our personal funds, and in the spring of 1996, we traveled to New York City, Amsterdam, Cologne, Paris, and Brussels for twenty recorded interviews with some of the pioneers of new music, including Laurie Spiegel, Rhys Chatham, Eliane Radigue, Peter Beyls, Kaija Saariaho, and Clarence Barlow. Though the process was tremendously exciting and valuable, we also were visited by our first funding demons: \$2,000 worth of recording equipment was stolen on our Amtrak train ride home.

Later that year, we made a trip to New York City for another 15 interviews (among them David Behrman, Eve Beglarian, and the late Peter Van Riper), and then to Toronto in the

winter of 1997 for 20 more (such as John Oswald, Sarah Peebles, Udo Kasemets, and Ann Southam). Composers generously helped us find lodging and made scheduling arrangements for us. The show was soon the talk of the new music community, especially as we began archiving our two-hour programs on AudioNet (now Broadcast.com) because the Goddard College web server had neither space nor bandwidth for ‘streaming audio’.

Growing Pains

It was in late 1996 that we realized that *K&D* was a major undertaking, and we began applying for funding. We hit walls. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting didn’t know what to make of us. Were we a music show? Talk show? Radio show? Website? Though today everyone seems to have a website, in 1996 the web was too new to interest funding organizations. Our applications to numerous organizations were turned down, including the CPB.

But we kept working. In conjunction with Vermont’s WebProject, we arranged for live, on-line interviews with composers from distant cities—New York, Paris, Amsterdam, Cologne, Miami, San Francisco, Toronto—as well as finding and tailoring software to make the project work. Students in Vermont were able to share music with some of the world’s most interesting new music composers, from electroacoustics to opera, and we gave birth to a new network of mentoring programs now organized and hosted by the WebProject and the Vermont Arts Council.

The WebProject collaboration: <http://maltedmedia.com/euromid/>

Our progress was often balanced by setbacks. AudioNet, suffering its own Internet growing pains, started paring smaller shows from its archive in order to make room for profitable ones. *K&D* lost its slot, and we began searching for another host. Seeing that *K&D* was bringing visitors to their website and recognizing the value of our work, Goddard College installed more Internet bandwidth and allocated significant server space to our site. Now more than 300 hours of archived interviews and programs are available, and our program is heard live throughout the world on the Internet.

K&D audio archives: <http://www.goddard.edu/kalvos/shows.html>

More guests joined us from a distance (including visiting composers from the U.K.), and we began presenting live performances on the air. We also brainstormed an idea with composer David Dramm: a live concert cybercast from STEIM in Amsterdam, with composer interviews conducted on both sides of the Atlantic. It would be broadcast during our regular show using an Internet connection—that would make it an Internet first. But it would also be expensive.

For the first time—and because of the short, eight-week timeframe—we approached individual donors to help cover the costs of equipment, arrangements, and expenses,

including improved phone line quality, server software, and travel. We came up short of the U.S. side of the goal by half (about \$3,000 was raised), but the show went on anyway, cybercast via Haarlem, Vermont, and San Francisco, and broadcast using an Internet feed to WGDR. History was made during a five-hour presentation. David hosted from Vermont, Dennis hosted from Amsterdam, and the concert took place at STEIM, one of Europe's leading new music studios.

The AmsterDramm Project: <http://www.goddard.edu/kalvos/dramproj.html>

The AmsterDramm Project funding page: <http://www.goddard.edu/kalvos/funding.html>

The AmsterDramm Project review: <http://www.goddard.edu/kalvos/drampix.html>

Accomplishments

During the course of four years, *K&D's* accomplishments have included:

- We have broadcast/cybercast 200 shows, including 140 interview programs with 98 composers in North America and Europe—some heard on radio for the first time—presenting new music, interviews, new releases, essays, special mixes, and collages.
- Our mentoring project brought 20 composers into live, on-line exchanges with Vermont schoolchildren to guide them in writing music, giving birth to an ongoing process in the State.
- We maintain on-line archives of historic interviews as part of our extensive web pages—3,000 documents that have been used by more than 75,000 unique guests (equivalent to nearly 7,000,000 'hits'), including an unparalleled list of new music resources.
- We made history with the first live broadcast/cybercast with an Internet stream as the main signal carrier, from STEIM in Amsterdam.
- We have presented more than a dozen composers in broadcast performances, live from the studios, on the road, and on tape. In-studio, live concerts open to the public also bring one of the great traditions of broadcast radio to the Internet.
- We have presented a full, live, three-hour, newly composed opera done in the WGDR studios with forty musicians and singers.
- We broadcast/cybercast three seven-hour specials of new music in 1998, and celebrated Electroacoustic Music Week with special programs.
- Our interview with Ann Southam was published in *Musicworks* magazine, and more interviews will appear there in the future.

We are planning to cybercast the three-day, Year 2000 Society for Electroacoustic Music in the United States festival from Denton, Texas, and have composer interview tours of Montréal, New York City, and San Francisco in the planning; the Montréal tour was originally scheduled for December 1998, but we did not have funding for it.

Funding has always been the weak spot in the *K&D* process. Our fundraising time is limited because we are literally just two people who prepare, host, and engineer the show,

maintain and know the musical contents of our new music library, and manage a 3,000-document website.

Our website includes approximately 120 composer pages, 30 composer essays, nearly 200 show introduction essays by co-host David Gunn, 50 composer and new music resource pages with 2,000 links, an index of on-line record labels, four years of show playlists, and more than 550 images, 600 music and interview clips, 140 shows, plus scores and computer programs.

Our site index: <http://www.goddard.edu/kalvos/kalvos.html#table2>

Our 'frequently asked questions' (FAQ): <http://www.goddard.edu/kalvos/faq.html>

In part because of the success of *Kalvos & Damian's New Music Bazaar*, more new music radio and cyber shows have come into existence in the past two years. Our visibility on the web is higher, but competition for surfing time is also higher. Fortunately, both the *Village Voice* and the *New York Times* have mentioned both our show and site, and we are recommended in dozens of on-line resource lists.

In sum, the original hopes of *Kalvos & Damian's New Music Bazaar* have been met with attention to living composers and their music.

Where We Are Going

Many media projects—especially those on the web—are ‘hobby’ projects or fan sites. *Kalvos & Damian* is a serious effort to create a live and archived look at composers and music composition at the end of the century. We measure our effectiveness by the volume of email we exchange, the quality of the email, honest site ‘numbers’, and valuable acknowledgments of our work.

Both the *New York Times* and the *Village Voice* have noted *K&D's* resources; the *Times* devoted a sidebar to our show on Conlon Nancarrow. We have won the site of the week award from Klassik Online and a four-star award from Luckman's Best of the Web. Our site is handicapped-accessible by W3C standards.

The *K&D* project has reached a kind of critical mass. The amount of work required to listen to arriving CDs, update the website resources, prepare the program through interviews and tours, and archive clips and shows has continued to rise to nearly the requirements of a full-time job. Our support to website visitors has risen with it, as has the number of composers waiting in line for interviews, the amount of music we need to give serious attention to, and even the ‘good part’—the wonderful relationships that have grown among our many guests, and between them and *K&D*.

At the same time, our lives as composers have begun to suffer from the demands, not only from the expense of the show (more than \$25,000 over four years in equipment, supplies, software, on-line services, and travel) but from the time required.

For this latter, we have sought help from students and composers. Some have assisted in updating our resources pages, particularly David Robert Stewart, William Harris, and Michael Manion. Composers have helped in providing us with good material for their own *K&D* web pages. Our recent request for *K&D* show IDs from guest composers has already generated a dozen wonderful announcements. Composer guest Steve Gryc spoke about his passion for geysers, and we have posted his wonderful recordings, which are now linked to the geyser enthusiasts website.

The AmsterDramm project was our first formal fundraising effort, and this letter, along with being a report and our thanks for your past contributions, presents our hopes for your continuing support.

Our upcoming project proposals for the next twelve months include:

- Composer interview tours of Montréal, New York, and San Francisco.
- Live cybercast/broadcast of SEAMUS 2000 Festival from Texas.
- Regular live broadcast concerts from the renovated WGDR performance studio.
- Live demo-concert collaborations with the Vermont Contemporary Music Ensemble.
- *A fin-de-siècle* book of interviews with composers worldwide.
- A CD/CD-ROM compilation of new music with the *K&D* take.

Ultimately, our goal is to raise awareness of new music on a larger scale, including linked cybercasts, recordings, and a dynamic web presence. Even from tiny Vermont, our show is working toward that awareness, but we realize that without substantial support, we have reached a certain limit of time and energy.

Our Time and Costs

Most of the *K&D* costs have been paid by us as the co-hosts, our on-air expenses are part of the normal broadcasting schedule of WGDR, and Goddard College hosts the web server *K&D* uses. In the early days, we considered the show to be a kind of mission, a personal project. As we reach our 200th show, we find the costs have been surprisingly high—almost ‘stealth’ costs, quietly mounting as we purchase small amounts of supplies and gear, take trips, host a guest, or fill the tank.

The production of each regular show involves listening, preparation, transportation, broadcast, recording, follow-up, and website maintenance.

Some times are difficult to clarify, especially listening, which can involve many hours a week. Specific show preparation demands two to three hours from each of us. Weekly travel (50-mile round-trip) and studio time is four hours, and we record each show on digital audio tape. There is little follow-up for a show without a guest. Shows with guests used to be forwarded copies on cassette; because of limited time, we do that rarely now, usually for those without access to the Internet archives.

Website maintenance involves two hours preparing playlists and updating about a dozen pages after each broadcast, and the conversion of the two-hour program to audio archive format, and uploading it. Excluding auditioning music, a regular show without a guest takes a total of 25 person-hours each week.

A show with a live guest includes lunch or dinner, and building a web page. A show with a recorded guest consumes an additional tape, editing time, and sometimes purchasing recordings, as well as the travel to that guest. Scheduling guests also means telephone calls, emails, faxes, letters, and follow-up support, adding another 10 or so person-hours.

Approximate costs for four years of *K&D* include:

Person-hours over four years total roughly 11,000 (26 hours per week each).

Now we want to ‘do it right’. For our upcoming projects for 1999-2000, we anticipate these needs. The items marked with an asterisk will demand time only in the first stages, and stretch for two years—see time component, below. Our minimum expenses:

Completing all these projects will also mean a burden on our own time, and in order to do them properly, we are adding a time component for ourselves for each extra project—not for the regularly weekly show—as follows:

- Tour: San Francisco \$ 2,000
- Tour: New York City \$ 1,000
- Tour: Montréal \$ 1,000
- SEAMUS 2000 \$ 2,000
- Six live concerts in-studio \$ 2,400
- Six VCME demo concerts in-studio \$ 2,400
- Interview/book compilation* \$ 5,000
- K&D CD/CD-ROM* \$ 5,000
- **Total 1999-2000 time \$20,000**

We have worked hard to make *K&D* a worthwhile artistic effort, and feel a modest budget would be in keeping with our achievements to date. Your support is welcome at any level.

March 11, 1999

Contributors

Anonymous Contributors
Argentum Fugit Farm
ASCAP
Canary Burton
Nick Didkovsky
Dean Dierschow
DoDaDaa Idea Company
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