

three



JAY ROZEN  
CHRISTOPHER MEEDER  
JOE EXLEY  
with  
ROCK SAVAGE

ITEC 2002

University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
School of Music Organ Hall  
3PM

# THREE

Jay Rozen, Christopher Meeder, Joe Exley, tubas  
with Rock Savage, percussion

Grand Entry (1+1+1=THREE)

Browning.....Elway Bevin

+1

Lizard Music.....Daniel Plonsey

cmeeder11@hotmail.com

TRIO.....Morton Feldman

joe@tubajoe.com

A Sheynem Dank Dir Im Pupik: Klezmer Romps, Dirges, and Death Wishes  
for 3 tubas and percussion.....David Snow

A Shvarts Yor

A Brokh Tzu Dayn Lebn

Zolst Ligen In Dred

A Khalerye / Sie Haut Gevayn A Courva In De Momma's Bouch

Gey Kakhen Afenyam

A Reluctant Departure (THREE-1-1-1)

Elway Bevin (1554-ca. 1639), English or Welsh composer and theorist. A pupil of Tallis, he was organist at Bristol Cathedral from 1589 and was sworn as Gentleman Extraordinary of the Chapel Royal in 1605. He composed some Anglican church music and a setting of the folk song known as 'Browning' in the *Cosyn Virginal Book*; and wrote treatises on methods of constructing canons in up to 60 parts.

Browning: the title of an English 16<sup>th</sup>-century popular tune which was sometimes used as the basis for instrumental variations. The tune consisted of a 4 bar phrase in compound duple meter, and was attractive to composers because of the possibility of using it either harmonically in the bass or melodically within a polyphonic texture.

—New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians

Composer/Performer/Author/Artist/Producer Dan Plonsey was born in 1958 in Cleveland, OH. He attended Yale University and Mills College. Dan's artistic life is so diverse I suggest you check out his website for further information. Lizard Music was inspired by the novel of the same name by Daniel Pinkwater. It can be heard in its original instrumentation of 5 alto saxophones and 1 baritone saxophone on Dan's CD *Ivory Bill* (Music & Arts CD 982). Dan currently lives in El Cerrito, CA.

Morton Feldman's Trio for flutes dates from 1982, and was composed in Berlin as a birthday piece for Sonia Botanyi. Aside from its brevity, the piece can be taken as "pure" Feldman: a kind of distant view from a mountaintop, with the fragments of an obsessive, compressed musical idea seeming to scud across the landscape like wisps of cirrus clouds. The music takes its shape almost in retrospect; we know how we got there only after we've arrived. Feldman's method in the work is a technique he frequently employed: he uses the idea of a chromatic cell, a dense complex of C-sharp, D and E-flat, which seems to build the piece simply by the harmonic clash among these notes—a kind of shimmer, an insistence not all that different from the throb of a toothache (but a lot more rewarding)—Alan Rich

David Snow was born in 1958 in Providence RI. He attended Eastman and Yale University. David has the distinction of being the only composer who has ever called me up and asked "Jay, I'm between projects right now. Would you like a piece?" His list of works is long and diverse and includes the following pieces for tuba:

Poor Mr. Cabbage (2 tubas and percussion) (1976)

Elephantes Exotiques (4 tubas) (1978)

A Baker's Tale (narrator, tuba, and piano) (1980)

Dear Rozenkavalier (tuba and piano) (1983)

Canzone D'Amour (tuba, bass and tape) (1994)

About A Sheynem Dank Dir Im Pupik, Mr. Snow writes:

The Yiddish curse is a unique species of verbal assault that can be either profligately baroque in execution ("May you inherit a hotel with one hundred rooms and be found dead in every one!") or packaged and delivered with lethal economy ("Get killed!"). By its rules, it just won't do to state the obvious: Aunt Rose doesn't merely look sick, but more tellingly, "shaynera menchen haut me gelicht in drerd" ("they've buried nicer looking people than that"). Part of the genre's charm is to be found in the warmth of the language, in the aural soulfulness of Yiddish that simultaneously sharpens the insult's bite while mitigating it with a subtext of familial connection (being the lingua franca of pre-WWII European Jews, Yiddish was a brickbat wielded mainly at one's own kind; whom else could one abuse so fearlessly?).

The titles of the suite's six movements constitute a sampling of popular Yiddish invective: 1. A Shvarts Yor ("You should have a miserable year!"); 2. A Brokh Tsu Dayn Lebn ("Your life should be a disaster!"); 3. Zolst Ligen In Drerd ("Drop dead!"); 4. A Khalerye ("A plague on you!"); 5. Sie Haut Gevain A Courva In De Momma's Bouch ("She was a whore in her mother's stomach!"), and 6, the always handy "Gai Kakhen Afeynam" ("Go shit in the ocean!"). If the friend who gave you a ride to tonight's concert won't take you home because he's busy trying to score with the ticket lady, look the rat-bastard in the eye and spit out, "a shaynem dank dir im pupik!" ("many thanks to your bellybutton!", i.e. "Thanks fer nuthin'!"). He might not understand a word of what you just said, but he'll know damn well you're really, really pissed.

Like Sting, Jay Rozen was born in the 50's. He started playing the tuba in the 60's and went to college in the 70's (BM Ithaca College), during which time he was also principal tubist with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra (1977-1980). During the 80's, he received his MM in tuba performance from Yale University and in the 80's and 90's played in many interesting groups, including the European Tuba Quartet and jazz vocalist Tina Marsh's Creative Opportunity Orchestra. He has been heard on NPR's Morning Edition and has played such diverse venues as the Bang-On-A-Can Marathon and Zappanalle Festival. A long-time champion of new music, Jay has had pieces written for him by many composers, including Virgil Thomson (JAY ROZEN: PORTRAIT AND FUGUE for tuba and piano) and David Lang (ARE YOU EXPERIENCED? For electric-tuba, narrator and chamber ensemble; CRI Records #625). His CD: KILLER TUBA SONGS, recorded with pianist/composer Vern Nelson, has received rave reviews. In 1999, Mr. Rozen moved to the New York area with his wife Michele and daughter Rita, whom he considers his Magnum Opus. He has since performed with the American Symphony Orchestra, the Manhattan Philharmonic Orchestra and Peter Kotik's SEM Ensemble. He has also played with jazz luminaries Ray Anderson, Charli Persip, Burton Greene, and Perry Robinson.

Christopher Meeder has been playing the tuba for as long as he can remember. He attended Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Ron Bishop; then he got a Master's Degree from Carnegie Mellon, where his teacher was Sumner Erickson. In his career, he has worked with artists ranging from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra to punk trio Meatbomb, and with many jazz, contemporary classical, improv and rock bands in between. WWW.allaboutjazz.com once accused him of "furious lyricism," and he seemed flattered when he read it. You probably haven't heard his album on Sachimay records with Ensemble Duchamp, but it's out there. These days he is spending most of his time and money on Christopher Meeder's Good Time Ensemble and other avant-garde and classical projects with Dan DeChellis, Daniel Carter and the inestimable Many Others.

Joe Exley has performed and recorded with groups of many styles. In addition to being recorded on TV news themes and rock albums, Joe has toured with William Russo's Chicago Jazz Ensemble, performed with the New Trad Octet with trumpeter Orbert Davis and recorded with drummer Bernard Purdie. Joe has performed with many orchestras and brass ensembles and has been an Artist-In-Residence at the Bravo! Colorado Vail Valley Music Festival and the Birch Creek Music Center. Joe holds a Master of Music Performance Degree from Northwestern University and a Bachelor of Music Performance Degree from the University of Northern Colorado. Joe has studied privately with Rex Martin, Gene Pokorny, Arnold Jacobs, Ken Singleton and Jack Robinson. He is currently music director of the Brooklyn Poetry Choir and has produced and performed on the CD: PO' JAZZ: TAKIN' IT TO THE HOLLOW.

Rock Savage has performed, recorded and toured with Barkmarket, Marc Ribot, Miracle Room, and a plethora of obscure and unloved groups too numerous to mention. His range of experience encompasses jazz, experimental, industrial noise, rock, etc. He is a firm disbeliever in the value of regular practice and asserts with some pride that he believes his lack of effort is apparent in his playing. Currently, Rock is concentrating on composing, and unbelievably, has actually had works commissioned and performed by various groups around the country. He lives in Manhattan with his wife, abstract painter Juri Moioka, and two cats, the younger of which is musically gifted. Pocky plays a Schoenhut toy piano with working black keys.

## AN INTERVIEW WITH JAY ROZEN

Q: Why **THREE**? Why not **FOUR** or **SEVENTY-SEVEN**?

A: I had played with the European Tuba Quartet for five years. This was four tubas who only played free improvisation. Then, during a solo concert I gave at Beanbenders (Berkeley, CA), I was joined by two other tubists and realized that I preferred three players. I thought it would be nice to have **THREE** players who were comfortable with both free improvisation and all styles of written music and that percussion would expand our timbral palette.

Q: How did **THREE** get started?

A: I had known Christopher Meeder's work with Ensemble Duchamp in Pittsburgh before he moved to New York. We hooked up when I moved to New York in 1999. We both met Joe Exley at a parade, so **THREE** actually had its debut marching down 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. I had known Rock Savage many years before in Austin, TX. I was happy to have the chance to work with him again.

Q: I expect repertoire is a problem.

A: Yes, there are very few published tuba trios, and only one really good one (Ludus by Vaclav Nehlybel), so we borrowed music from other instruments and also found many treasures in music written for unspecified instrumentation. By this time a few composers had written pieces for us and we were busy arranging and writing ourselves (all four of us are composers)

Q: Is **THREE** available to play concerts, give master classes etc.?

A: Yes indeed. I can be reached at 516-338-6966 or jay\_rozen@hotmail.com

**B**rowning Madams, browning Madame, so merrily wee sing  
browning Madame, The fayrest flower in garden greene, is in my lous breaft  
full comely scene, And with all others compare she can, therefore now  
let vs sing Browning Madame.

The image shows a musical score for a tuba trio. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a large, decorative initial letter 'B'. The music is written in a common time signature (C) and features a melodic line with various note values and rests. The lyrics are written below the staves, corresponding to the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.