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DAVID DEL TREDICI: CHILD ALICE

DAVID DEL TREDICI b. 1937

CHILD ALICE

COURTENAY BUDD soprano

BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT Gil Rose, conductor

CHILD ALICE (1977-1981)

DISC 1 (60:58)

PART I *In Memory of a Summer Day*

- [1] Simple Alice 23:49
- [2] Triumphant Alice 13:48
- [3] Ecstatic Alice 23:19

DISC 2 (72:51)

PART II

- [1] Quint Events 21:54
- [2] Happy Voices 16:02
- [3] All in the Golden Afternoon 34:52



Portrait of Alice Pleasance Liddell, the inspiration for the heroine of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, London, 1860. Photograph by Lewis Carroll.

By David Del Tredici

Child Alice was composed as a single continuity—an evening's entertainment in the concert hall. Its two parts mirror each other across an intermission: each part consists of two contrasting settings of the preface poem to one of Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books. Each of these dual settings is, in turn, separated by an elaborate movement for orchestra alone.

Child Alice has everything to do with *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*—and nothing. The child, of course, is Alice Pleasance Liddell, who together with her sisters Lorina Charlotte and Edith enjoyed numerous rowing expeditions up the Thames with Lewis Carroll. It was during these outings that the Rev. Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll was his pen name) first improvised his fantastical tales, some of which were later written down (mostly at the insistence of Alice Pleasance) and ultimately published as the *Alice* books we know today.

Child Alice seizes upon the two preface poems and attempts to evoke one of those glorious days. It is not just the surface scene that is suggested ("Many a day had we rowed together on that quiet stream—the three little maidens and I—and many a fairy tale had been extemporized for their benefit") but more importantly, and more appropriate to music's expressive powers, the interior landscapes of the people involved.

As the poems suggest, the feelings were complex and varied: the simple delight of the child-listeners is always touchingly counterpointed against the storyteller's bittersweet, adult sensibility.

At the same time, the fact that Carroll wrote these poems years after the actual events they record is important. The peculiarly human mechanism that causes us to recollect past joy and happiness with an idealized glow—the nostalgic impulse, one might say—is something

The first three verses of the poem are set to this music. The mood, as the song's title implies, is one of childlike innocence, the fresh unspoiled charm of youth—poetry as understood by a child. The pensive adult tinge to some of the lines is ignored. Only in the fourth verse, where Carroll's sad, almost bitter tone is most powerful, does the musical mood darken. The concluding couplet I find particularly touching, with the penultimate word "bedtime" suddenly suggesting death—or at least I have set it so:

We are but older children, dear,
Who fret to find our bedtime near.

After a long developmental section and the movement's climax, the happy, playful mood returns and Verses 1, 2, and 3 are repeated; this time, though, with much canonic imitation. The growing fervor of the music leads directly into Verse 5 (a repetition of Verse 4 is omitted), then subsides into another cadenza for soprano. The final verse 6 is hushed, distant, *dolcissimo*. A third cadenza, exhorting the listener to attend what follows ("Enough that now thou wilt not fail/ to listen to my fairy-tale"), leads without pause to *Triumphant Alice*—an elaborate, extensive *Marcia* for orchestra alone.

As a boisterous scherzo is to a courtly minuet, so might my...well...SuperMarch be to more familiar specimens of the genre. Instead of the usual military associations, the piece suggests to me the brightness of mid-day—a blazing overhead sun reflecting dazzlingly, blindingly off the water's surface.

The melodic material for the March starts as a jagged, intensely rhythmic variation of the *Simple Alice* tune. After only eight bars, however, the music, finding a more congenial path, veers off in a quite different harmonic direction. The *Marcia* proper, after some transitional music, is followed by a contrasting *Trio* based on new melodic material, which is never heard again. Abruptly the *Marcia* returns, though this time around it is in grander garb—surprising diversions, sudden interjections and prolongations, a more colorful orchestration illumine the way. With the clanging of an anvil, the listener may think he is at the sonic peak, but a



ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN TENNELL

succession of climaxes leading at length to a screaming siren (marked *Climax of Climaxes* in the score) will prove otherwise.

Surprisingly, the *Marcia* disintegrates (perhaps self-destructs is the more appropriate term), melodic fragments fall away, the rhythm falters. Little by little a tentative chord, quietly sustained in the strings, emerges, hangs in the air, then resolves into the interlude's beginning. Quiet has returned and with it the *Simple Alice* theme, with its original melodic contour, though fresh harmonic underpinnings give it now a more languid expression. The Chord of Rapture and Regret signals a recapitulation of much of the music from the Introduction, for now, in a sense, we *are* beginning again. The passion Carroll dared not express (or perhaps even feel) waking, is here given full, romantic rein, as might happen in a dream—Carroll's dream of love of Alice. Against a background of delicate intimacy (three solo cellos *tremoli*), *Ecstatic Alice* begins.

An *Aria* in the grandest sense of the word, the music opens with yet a third transformation of the *Alice* melody, though, within the space of a few measures, as happened at the start of the *Marcia*, it breaks free from this pattern and travels into new harmonic and melodic regions. The settings for Verses 1 and 2 are similar: each describes an arc of sustained, lyrical expression before descending to a tranquil, full cadence.

Beginning with Verse 3 the music begins a restless, almost cadence-less sweep through dense, chromatic, canonic configurations, spiraling higher and higher towards the passionate, almost desperate, twice-repeated climactic phrase:

The magic words shall hold thee fast:
Thou shalt not heed the raving blast.

It is as though by the very passion of his expression of these "magic words" Carroll could suddenly arrest time's inexorable progress and preserve forever his happy Alice-moments.

Passion spent, the postlude, beginning with a solo violin, treats the last strands of the *Aria* most lovingly. Then, little by little, the music intensifies. Calm returns, however, and in the tenderest possible manner, like an image coming slowly and gradually into focus, the soprano's voice from far off in the distance begins the final verse. What had earlier blazed forth so boldly and brilliantly is now scarcely audible, an echo, a remembrance.

An Intermission ("composed" into the overall structure of the piece) separates Part I from Part II—the last two notes and words of Part I are the first two notes/words of the new melody that begins Part II. The abrupt manner in which Part I comes to a halt is meant to create a feeling of suspense and anticipation. The Intermission becomes then a kind of giant *fermata* prolonging that suspense. Those two last notes left "up in the air," as it were, are brought back down to earth and placed in their proper melodic context *only* when Part II of *Child Alice* begins....



The Preface Poem to the published version of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* serves as the text for Part II of *Child Alice*:

All in the golden afternoon
Full leisurely we glide;
(See full text, page 28.)

The music of *Quint Events*, the initial song of Part II, is for the most part jaunty, even boisterous. At once we hear the new melody. It is a lilting, oscillating tritone figure sung

piano by the soprano and answered *forte* by the orchestra. A complementary phrase, more lyrical and arching, follows:

Allegretto

All in the gold-en af-ter-noon I've lei-sure-ly we glide:

Vna. p cresc.

Verse 3, characterizing each of the three Liddell sisters (“Imperious Prima,” “gentler... Secunda,” “Tertia interrupts...”), introduces rushing, whirling scales and “imperious” brass figures. An orchestral interlude carries the music to a climax that then subsides into the transitional music heard just before Intermission. This time, however, there is no interruption.

Verse 4 begins identically with Verse 1 except that the soprano’s music is unexpectedly at half-tempo while the orchestral interjections are abruptly doubletime. Soon, however, a new, steadier direction is forged. As Carroll warms to his task of storytelling, the music picks up speed, becoming increasingly grandiose—trumpets blaze, a siren wails. Verse 5, with a new theme, caps the climax.

Allegro cantabile

And ev-er, as the sto-ry drained

As the music subsides, Carroll complains anew of his fatigue: “And faintly strove that weary one/To put the subject by.” Of course, the gleeful, mesmerized children wish him to continue, for when he says “The rest next time—” they respond “It is next time!”

As the storyteller generously acquiesces to the demands of his eager child-audience, so then do I. An extensive orchestral section, developing, mixing, modulating the various themes, follows.

At length and for the third time, the music returns to the pre-Intermission transition. I have, however, reversed the order of the final two verses, with Verse 7 following next, set to the music of Verse 1. The effect is one of recapitulation, though the two verses are now mischievously played upside down. This leads through a brief vocal cadenza to Verse 6, with its strong evocation of farewell. Suddenly a ghostly recollection of the opening of Part I is heard (the Chord of Rapture and Regret). The last three lines of the verse are sung as a wistful, languorous valedictory.

But this is by no means the end, and as a kind of dramatic exhortation to continue, I append those earlier lines in which childish demands banish storytelling fatigue: “The rest next time—It is next time!/The happy voices cry.” Like the speaker, I then really have no choice! Without pause, *Happy Voices* follows:

The subject of this fugue, that Scylla of musical forms not always cherished for its joyful exuberance, is in two halves. The first—for strings—is motionless, poised; the second—for woodwinds—a slither of chromatic movement.

Allegro molto

Stings Wdwnds.

Unlike the traditional fugue, in which the opening subject is, almost without exception, a single voice, my subject invariably (and perversely) consists of two voices moving in constant rhythmic unison.

With the second statement of the subject a counter-subject is heard:

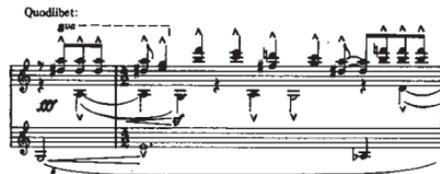


Inconsequential as it may seem, the counter-subject's emphasis of triple meter in contrast to the duple meter of the main subject is actually crucial and plays an important part throughout the piece.

Though the tempo of *Happy Voices* is consistently fast and lively, the "Jekyll and Hyde" character suggested by the theme's dissimilar halves creates a staggered momentum of sudden stops and sudden forward lurchings. A nervous, unstable, almost keyless harmony characterizes this music.

It is not until the opening, tritone theme of *Quaint Events* unexpectedly reappears as lyrical relief from this obsessive, chattering movement that the ear is appeased, reoriented. This achieved, the implacable activity hesitates, then gradually disintegrates. This is, however, only the calm before a storm: forces again quickly gather and, borne by the largest crescendo of the piece thus far, we arrive at the *Quodlibet*, presented thunderously by the whole orchestra.

Quodlibet, as defined by a musical dictionary, is "an unlikely, even surprising combination of diverse themes." In this case, not only are two of the *Happy Voices* themes combined, but the "surprise" comes with the realization that they fit, as well, above the grandly expansive theme that climaxed *Quaint Events*:



A lyrical theme appears, almost casually, as the music briefly calms:



This simple, sequential theme is the first appearance in Part II of the *Alice* melody that generated so much of Part I. A faster version of the *Quodlibet* returns, and it, in turn, grows still faster. Every possible contrapuntal device is now given full, exuberant play and, at length, with trumpets proclaiming victoriously the *Alice* melody, the climax arrives. From this point on the energy gradually subsides. Harps embroider a fragile texture, horns solemnly sound an unfamiliar melody, and mysterious winds rise. A new world seems to be shaping itself.

Abruptly, over almost "tragic" brass chords, the orchestra players count in Italian from one ("uno") to thirteen ("tredici"). (This idiosyncratic musical "signature" figures in a number of my compositions, though it is usually reserved for the end.) As the last number is whispered, several seemingly serendipitous things happen: the soprano voice, so long silent and almost forgotten, floats into the texture; a sovereign, stable tonality returns; and a new theme, a transformation of the tritone melody of *Quaint Events*, begins, tranquilly and dreamily, the second setting of the Preface Poem, *All in the Golden Afternoon*.

Carroll, it is clear, especially cherished the words "golden afternoon." That phrase seems charged with the emotional resonance of the entire scene. Correspondingly, in this setting, I use the first line of the poem (which contains these words) as a unifying, recurrent refrain, quite separated from the poetic context. Indeed, as the piece progresses, and especially at the end, the appearance of the words "All in the golden afternoon" seem always to bring forth from the orchestra its warmest response.

The opening *Aria*, then, moves forward, bearing the poem through the languorous, rapturous mood of Carroll's remembered afternoon. A long interlude, divided roughly into halves, follows the *Aria*. The first half looks backwards, repeating the "counting" chords that began

the setting, and recalling “Dawn” from the very start of Part I. The second section is a *Fantasia* for orchestra alone. Beneath a delicate, bell-filled haze, two unlikely motives combine for the first time. One, played by a muted trumpet, appears almost shyly, in a dotted rhythm disguise, but it is really the now-familiar *Alice* motive from Part I. Above this theme, the clarinet and oboe introduce a curiously varied reminiscence of the *Aria* melody, also used later as the *Lullaby* theme. After this suspended moment of serenity, the *Fantasia* begins to percolate. A kind of carnival atmosphere fills the air. The tempo continues to quicken and leads with considerable fanfare to the *Grandioso*—another *quodlibet* of themes with the *Alice* theme in the ascendancy. In terms of decibels employed and sustained, this is the sonic climax of the setting. The orchestral choirs drop away, leaving only the muted strings holding a chord *dolce*. The *Lullaby* begins, and a languorous mood is restored.



As Carroll returned again and again to the memory of that “golden afternoon,” so too do I cling to the stanzas of his haunting poem, and I have set again, as a *Lullaby*, the last two of these. The verses now receive a simple, almost strophic setting, though they are separated by an orchestral interlude of some intensity. Intensity intrudes once again at the conclusion of the final verse. The *Lullaby* mood is destroyed and what is left, I like to fancy, is the ultimate distillation of Carroll’s (and my own?) feelings: a melismatic, almost mad cadenza upon the single word “Alice!”

Since this word also begins the final verse of the poem, I have set those lines yet a third time. In this final dramatic setting, I try to paint, as vividly as possible, that inextricable mingling of the Carrollian sentiments, rapture and regret—rapture in the glowing, even gaudy orchestral color and glimmering figurations, regret in the stabbingly dissonant progression of chords that underlies it all. As well, I wanted the final line, “Plucked in a far-off land,” to be, in its last setting, especially gripping—“far-off land” seeming to me

to be childhood, as viewed from the unbridgeable (and for Lewis Carroll *heartbreakingly* unbridgeable) distance of adulthood.

As the very beginning of *Child Alice* suggests morning—sunrise—now evening and sunset are evoked. The *Alice* theme makes a final farewell appearance *con gran espressione* joined by the soprano, floating again and again the poem’s opening line—“All in the golden afternoon.” *Child Alice* ends mysteriously.

When *Child Alice* began back in 1977, I thought I was composing two short concert songs. After a number of Carroll-setting years, I had, with *Final Alice*—an hour-long dramatization of the last chapters of the first *Alice* book—come to the end of the *Wonderland* stories. Such labors, I felt, had earned me a musical respite and it occurred to me that what was left of the book—the Preface Poems—might make delightful compositional diversion. What a sensible change of pace, I thought—to compose something brief, contained, tidy, two songs that could fit snugly into any soprano’s lieder recital, or perhaps, even, be appropriate as encores. Enough of Mahlerian length, I admonished myself, and sat down to work...But it was not to be. The two Preface Poems, each with its own dual melodies, continued on their own quite independent courses and eventually I discovered, with alarm and delight, that I had actually set each of the poems twice! Embryonic, attenuated and isolated as the musical motives and ideas at first were, their peculiar simultaneity of arrival and development in tandem suggests strongly to me that the huge structure that *Child Alice* became was mysteriously present, in some form, as a unity, from the beginning.

CHILD ALICE, for amplified soprano and orchestra, sets text by Lewis Carroll from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There. Commissioned by the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Part I: In Memory of a Summer Day was premiered February 23, 1980, conducted by Leonard Slatkin with soloist Phyllis Bryn-Julson. Part II: Quaint Events, Happy Voices, and All in the Golden Afternoon received its first complete performance by the American Symphony Orchestra with conductor John Mauceri and soloists Dawn Upshaw, Victoria Livengood, and Tracy Dahl, on April 27, 1986, at Carnegie Hall.

By Robert Kirzinger

The symphonic cycle *Child Alice* was, given its scope, completed in a relatively short time, all four of its pieces being substantially written between 1977 and 1979, and the orchestrations of the individual movements over the ensuing two years. Lewis Carroll's young friend Alice Pleasance Liddell and her fantastic adventures took up much more artistic real estate for Del Tredici than those few years, however. His first work on a Carroll text was *Pop-Pourri*, a kind of hybrid work incorporating bits of Carroll with bits of sacred music, including the Bach chorale tune "Es ist genug" (twice-famous due to Berg's appropriation of the same tune). He followed this up with the large-scale *Alice Symphony*, a three-movement work that teetered on the brink of opera. Such was Del Tredici's fascination with this material that between *Alice Symphony* and the completion of the four-part *Child Alice* in 1981, he wrote exclusively *Alice in Wonderland*-oriented works, mostly for voice and orchestra. Nor did he stop there; although he began branching out into other subject matter in the 1980s, there remained still to be written *Cabbages and Kings*, the 1990s opera *Dum Dee Tweedle* (not premiered in complete form until 2013), and various offshoots and extracts of the earlier *Alice* works.

Alice hasn't been Del Tredici's only overwhelming extramusical focus; half of his works before the *Alice* series were oriented toward texts of James Joyce. In more recent years, but without a specific authorial thread, Del Tredici has assembled a body of work touching on various aspects, both positive and negative, of gay life, including the remarkable sextet *Bullycide*. He has become a somewhat prolific composer, although he started to write music late, only when he was in his twenties. Other recent large-scale works include *Paul Revere's Ride*, his setting for soprano and orchestra of Longfellow's poem (premiered by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra) and the melodrama *Rip Van Winkle*, a commission from the National Symphony Orchestra. His forty-five minute orchestral song cycle *Gay Life* was commissioned and premiered by the San Francisco Symphony.

Del Tredici was a late beginner in formal music training, starting piano lessons at age twelve. His talent was immediately evident, and he progressed so brilliantly that he made his debut with the San Francisco Symphony at age sixteen and planned to become a concertizing pianist. He attended the University of California, Berkeley, graduating in 1959. While at the Aspen Music Festival as a pianist in 1958, he took Darius Milhaud's composition seminar and wrote his first piece, the solo piano *Soliloquy*. Milhaud's approval helped trigger the shift in concentration from performing pianist to composer. In addition to Milhaud, Del Tredici worked with Andrew Imbrie and Seymour Shifrin at Berkeley, with Earl Kim and Roger Sessions in graduate school at Princeton, and with Copland at Tanglewood. As a teacher himself he has ties to the Boston area, having taught at both Harvard and Boston University. He also taught at City College, CUNY; the Juilliard School, and the Manhattan School.

Del Tredici's early works, including the various Joyce settings, are fundamentally atonal and gesturally driven, demonstrating a delight in the processes of musical construction that has remained throughout his career. As the 1960s progressed, a deeper concern for dramatic, even theatrical dimensions in music led to a highly eclectic style that developed in response to the illustration of narrative and text-setting. As he put it in a 2013 interview,

I began my life as a pianist, so I played all this hyper-romantic music, it was my first experience. And when I came to compose, atonality was big, and exciting, it was not as though I had to write atonality, but I really loved to write atonally, and explore it, but at a certain point it was a combination of text, and my own urging, with the text being Alice in Wonderland, and some of the atonal language did not fit it. There was this wit and whimsy, and charming, Victorian way—the dissonance did not go with it. So I, without really thinking about it, reached back into those early harmonies, Romantic harmonies, feeling they fit the bill much more. And so in a way I was kind of seduced by Lewis Carroll into becoming a tonal composer.

Although most of Del Tredici's works these days are tonal throughout, the early *Alice* works were tonal only when the material called for it, almost pastiche-like. His sure sense of proportion and drive ensured that the intricate compositional techniques even of more complicated materials are clear and audible. His bent toward structural games parallels his choice of text—both Joyce and Carroll, albeit in very different ways, reveled in wordplay and formal virtuosity. Aspects of 1960s experimentalism influenced his choices of genre and language as well, such as the mashup of *Pop-Pourri* and his use of folk music and rock-band “concertante” groups along with orchestra and a treatment of texts that veers between classical practice, pop, and stage drama.

A major uptick in Del Tredici's reputation, or at least his wider recognition, as a composer came with *Final Alice*, a work commissioned by the National Endowment for the Arts to celebrate the U.S. bicentennial. A slightly truncated version of *Final Alice* was premiered by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Georg Solti with soprano soloist Barbara Hendricks, and it appealed highly to audiences while causing counter-reactionary ripples within established currents of progressive music. Although Del Tredici had no polemical intent, *Final Alice* is seen as a watershed in the neo-Romantic movement in classical music beginning in the 1970s, a backlash against non-audience-friendly atonal and serial languages. But Del Tredici is no traditionalist, as the experience of *Child Alice* will attest:

his use of dramatic, expressive orchestral and harmonic effects is thoroughly modern, even if the basic foundations of his music hark back to harmonic languages rooted in the late Romantic/early modern eras. If he is a traditionalist, it's in the care and rigor with which he develops constrained melodic and harmonic elements over impressive and never static arcs of time. Comparisons—suggested not as direct models but as aesthetic and compositional precedent—might be made to Wagner, Mahler, and Richard Strauss, but the *Alice* works are both more optimistic and stranger, more madcap. Like the *Alice* books themselves, they are serious works that don't take themselves too seriously.

Child Alice is similar to *An Alice Symphony* in being made up of parts that can be performed independently; in fact, they rarely come together in performance in their large-scale glory. *An Alice Symphony* took more than twenty years to be premiered (at Tanglewood in 1991, by the TMC Orchestra under Oliver Knussen's direction). The individual pieces of *Child Alice* were commissioned and premiered separately, but the concert-length, four-part work fared a little better than *An Alice Symphony*, being premiered as a whole within a few years of its completion by the American Symphony Orchestra led by John Mauceri and featuring soprano Dawn Upshaw at Carnegie Hall in April 1986.

PART I: IN MEMORY OF A SUMMER DAY

Upon hearing *Final Alice*, conductor Leonard Slatkin immediately decided to program the piece with the Saint Louis Symphony, and also commissioned a new work from Del Tredici. The composer orchestrated *In Memory of a Summer Day* from the in-progress score for *Child Alice*; the hour-long movement was premiered by the SLSO and Slatkin with soprano Phyllis Bryn-Julson in February 1980. Slatkin's faith in Del Tredici was apparently well-founded: the composer was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music for the piece. *In Memory of a Summer Day* sets Carroll's dedicatory poem to the second *Alice* book, *Through the Looking Glass*. Del Tredici writes,

In Memory of a Summer Day has everything to do with Alice's Adventures in Wonderland—and nothing. ... The entire text for this hour-long piece is but this one Preface poem—"Child of the Unclouded Brow"—sung by the soprano in two contrasting settings. These are separated by an orchestra movement (Triumphant Alice) describing one of Carroll's stories—one that didn't get written down and incorporated into the Alice text. It is, as it were, a chapter from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland that got away. In this sense, then, the piece has nothing literally to do with the book—only with the circumstances and feelings I imagine were involved in its creation.

The piece is in several large sections. *Simple Alice* [1|1] begins with an introduction (evoking dawn) which includes a soprano cadenza. A song follows, a suitably innocent setting of the poem, and establishes the easily recognizable motif that pervades the entire piece. The innocent tone changes with the fourth verse, and an interlude separates this from the closing verses. The interlude is followed by the extended orchestral sub-movement *Triumphant Alice* [1|2] based on development of the central motif. Following another interlude, a second setting of the poem represents Carroll's adult perspective on the same text (*Ecstatic Alice* [1|3]), as though encountered in a dream. A postlude brings the piece to a close.

PART II: QUAIN T EVENTS, HAPPY VOICES, ALL IN THE GOLDEN AFTERNOON

Quain T Events [2|1] was premiered as a standalone work by soprano Lucy Shelton and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra led by Julius Rudel. It was commissioned by SUNY–Buffalo. The text for *Quain T Events* is the poem that prefaces *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, in between the verses of which Del Tredici inserts orchestral interludes to create suggestions of the stories Carroll would tell the children with whom he floated down the river:

Thus I decided upon a simple device: much as Carroll interspersed his expedition with stories (or "quain t events" as he characterizes them in Verse V), so have I interrupted a straightforward setting of the text with orchestral interludes that suggest their own symphonic story. Alternating settings of the text with orchestral interludes is the



COURTESY BUDD, DAVID DEL TREDICI, AND GIL FLORES AFTER "THE CHILD ALICE PERFORMANCE, MARCH 25, 2016. PHOTO BY KATHY WITTMAN

musical metaphor I found for the way times passed for the three children and their storyteller that golden afternoon.

The whole-tone colored opening of *Quaint Events* depicts, perhaps, the languid haze that hovers above the river on a pleasant summer's day; the boisterous, half-waltz music that accompanies the text is enlivened by the energetic personalities of the three children and the demands they make on the storyteller. Sequential statements of the basic melodic idea create harmonic tension that sustains the large-scale musical form.

Happy Voices [2|2] is the sole orchestra-only movement of *Child Alice*, and is a tour-de-force of compositional learning and skill and a challenge for any orchestra. The twenty-minute movement was commissioned by Louise Davies for the San Francisco Symphony, which gave the premiere under Edo de Waart's direction in Davies Symphony Hall in September 1980. The composer writes, "The orchestral interludes are, for me, stories told during those happy summer days that did not get written down; *Happy Voices* is one of the more elaborate. It is, one might say, a Tale that got away. The listener, of course, is free to imagine whatever story he will during the musical proceedings. The composer, however, reserves the right to keep his own scenario to himself, happily to wag, as it were, his own Tale."

The restrained bit of wordplay in Del Tredici's comment is a mere echo of that found in Carroll's writing, a virtuosity that finds its musical analog in the massive, multilayered fugal structure of *Happy Voices*. The piece is virtually a highly developed and modified continuation of the music of *Quaint Events*, employing a fugue theme that begins on a still string chord that gives way to lively, chromatically descending woodwinds. A simpler second subject, derived from a fragment of the first, complicates the rhythm by establishing a scherzo-like triple division of the beat. Presented in unstable, constantly modulating fragments (hyperbole of the sequences in *Quaint Events*), the fugue theme(s) leave the listener continually expecting, and being denied, a point of repose. An extended further hint of the *Quaint Voices* connection leads to a brief reduction in activity before the *quodlibet*—a dizzying combining of the previous themes and hints of themes built on the *Quaint Events*

melody—leads to the further addition (should you feel the music is too arid) of the *In Memory of a Summer Day* melody, from Part I.

Happy Voices leads directly into *All in the Golden Afternoon* [2|3], which begins with an aria setting the same preface poem from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* that Del Tredici had set very differently in *Quaint Events*, although the basic harmonic sonorities—whole tone scales, tritones—that tinge the entirety of *Child Alice* are much in evidence here. *All in the Golden Afternoon* was commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra, which gave the premiere with soprano Benita Valente in a performance conducted by Eugene Ormandy in May 1981. Del Tredici creates a sense of atmospheric recurrence through a new perspective on the text: "Lewis Carroll, it is clear, especially cherished the words 'golden afternoon.' That phrase seems charged with the emotional resonance of the entire scene. Correspondingly, I use the first line of the poem...as a unifying, recurrent refrain, quite separate from the poetic context. Indeed, as the piece progresses, and especially at the end, the appearance of the words 'All in the golden afternoon' seems always to bring forth from the orchestra its warmest response."

That response includes a brief motif that suggests Mahler's Ninth Symphony as well as some of the densest, most penetratingly dissonant harmonies of the entire piece; their resolution is each time like a surge of energy. An orchestral interlude, a kind of emotional summary of the preceding two hours, leads to a Lullaby setting of the poem's two final verses. At its conclusion, "a melismatic, almost mad Cadenza upon the single word 'Alice!', which the composer suggests as "the ultimate distillation of Carroll's (and my own?) feelings." The conclusion is the sunset to the dawn of Part I.

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Child Alice

Music by David Del Tredici | Texts by Lewis Carroll

DISC 1

Part I

Song: Simple Alice

Aria: Ecstatic Alice

Child of the Pure Unclouded Brow

Prefatory poem to *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There*

Child of the pure unclouded brow
And dreaming eyes of wonder!
Though time be fleet, and I and thou
Are half a life asunder,
Thy loving smile will surely hail
The love-gift of a fairy-tale.
I have not seen thy sunny face,
Nor heard thy silver laughter;
No thought of me shall find a place
In thy young life's hereafter—
Enough that now thou wilt not fail
To listen to my fairy-tale.
A tale begun in other days,
When summer suns were glowing—
A simple chime, that served to time
The rhythm of our rowing—
Whose echoes live in memory yet,
Though envious years would say "forget."

Come, hearken then, ere voice of dread,
With bitter tidings laden,
Shall summon to unwelcome bed
A melancholy maiden!
We are but older children, dear,
Who fret to find our bedtime near.
Without, the frost, the blinding snow,
The storm-wind's moody madness—
Within, the firelight's ruddy glow,
And childhood's nest of gladness.
The magic words shall hold thee fast:
Thou shalt not heed the raving blast.
And though the shadow of a sigh
May tremble through the story,
For "happy summer days" gone by,
And vanish'd summer glory—
It shall not touch with breath of bale
The pleasance of our fairy-tale.

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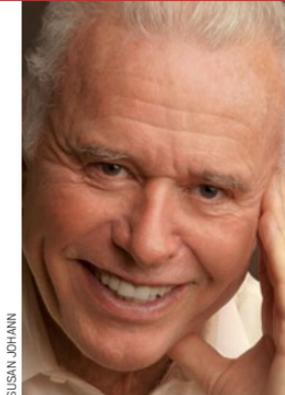
Part II

All in the Golden Afternoon

Prefatory poem to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

All in the golden afternoon
 Full leisurely we glide;
 For both our oars, with little skill,
 By little arms are plied,
 While little hands make vain pretence
 Our wanderings to guide.
 Ah, cruel Three! In such an hour,
 Beneath such dreamy weather,
 To beg a tale of breath too weak
 To stir the tiniest feather!
 Yet what can one poor voice avail
 Against three tongues together?
 Imperious Prima flashes forth
 Her edict "to begin it"—
 In gentler tone Secunda hopes
 "There will be nonsense in it!"—
 While Tertia interrupts the tale
 Not more than once a minute.
 Anon, to sudden silence won,
 In fancy they pursue
 The dream-child moving through a land
 Of wonders wild and new,

In friendly chat with bird or beast—
 And half believe it true.
 And ever, as the story drained
 The wells of fancy dry,
 And faintly strove that weary one
 To put the subject by,
 "The rest next time—" "It is next time!"
 The happy voices cry.
 Thus grew the tale of Wonderland:
 Thus slowly, one by one,
 Its quaint events were hammered out—
 And now the tale is done,
 And home we steer, a merry crew,
 Beneath the setting sun.
 Alice! a childish story take,
 And with gentle hand
 Lay it where Childhood's dreams are twined
 In Memory's mystic band,
 Like pilgrim's wither'd wreath of flowers
 Pluck'd in a far-off land.



SUSAN JOHANN

David Del Tredici With the appearance in 1976 of *Final Alice*, David Del Tredici's hour-long setting of Lewis Carroll for high soprano and large orchestra, a new movement in music, Neo-Romanticism, was born. Not only did Del Tredici forge for himself a fresh compositional path, but at the same time gave hope to a generation of young composers seeking a new way of composing.

Del Tredici's early works, in a more dissonant idiom, also focused obsessively on a single author—this time, James Joyce. The fruits of their union were many (1960–1966): *Six Songs on Texts of James Joyce*, *I Hear an Army*, *Night Conjure-Verse* and the tour de force for soprano and 16 instruments, *Szygyg*.

In Del Tredici's Post-Alice world, he has taken a startlingly different tack—to create a body of music that celebrates his own gay sexuality. Among these is *Gay Life* (poetry of Ginsberg, Monette and Gunn; commissioned by Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony), *Love Addiction* (a baritone/piano song cycle to poetry of John Kelly commissioned in honor of the composers 70th birthday), and *Wondrous the Merge* (a melodrama for baritone and string quartet to the poetry of James Broughton). The recent *Bullycide* for piano and string sextet, a composition dealing with gay teen suicide as a result of bullying, has garnered Mr. Del Tredici considerable media attention. *OUT Magazine* has twice named the composer one of its People of the Year.

Del Tredici has also been active in the intimate world of chamber music. His recent works include two string quartets (commissioned by the Da Ponte and Orion string quartets), *Magyar Madness* (a clarinet quintet for David Krakauer and the Orion string quartet), and *Grand Trio* (for the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio). Quite suddenly, too, there has been a profusion of works for solo piano reflecting Del Tredici's own musical beginnings as a piano

prodigy. These include *Mandango*, *Gotham Glory*, *Three Gymnopedies*, and *S/M Ballade*. Boosey & Hawkes has published two volumes of works for solo piano solo.

Ever extravagant, Del Tredici remains a forceful presence on the musical scene. While Composer-In-Residence with the New York Philharmonic in the 90's, Leonard Bernstein recorded his orchestral piece *Tattoo*, and Zubin Mehta recorded both *Haddocks' Eyes*, and *Steps*, a work written during his tenure at the Philharmonic. *Paul Revere's Ride* for soprano, chorus, and orchestra was commissioned by Robert Spano and the Atlanta Symphony, nominated for the 49th annual Grammy Awards as the Best New Classical Composition and issued on a Teldec CD. *Rip Van Winkle*, commissioned by Leonard Slatkin and the National Symphony Orchestra, is an adaptation of the iconic Longfellow story for narrator and orchestra, and was premiered by Broadway superstar Brian Stokes Mitchell.

Del Tredici has been on the faculties of Harvard and Boston Universities, and for more than 25 years, Distinguished Professor of Music at The City College of New York. He lives in Manhattan's West Village.



FAY FOX

Courtenay Budd Following Symphony Space's all-Del Tredici concert with the composer at the piano, *The New York Times* raved, "Ms. Budd brought gleaming sound, complete involvement and impressive stamina to both cycles, which she sang from memory. The audience gave a standing ovation to Ms. Budd and Mr. Del Tredici." Ms. Budd, "a champion of Del Tredici's work," has performed his work at the Guggenheim Museum, Bard Music Festival, Zankel Hall, 92nd Street Y, Le Poisson Rouge, and Bargemusic. Her recording of his *Field Manual* with Fireworks Ensemble and conductor Steven Mercurio is available on eOne Records.

A First Prize Winner of Young Concert Artists Auditions, Ms. Budd has been heard with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the National Symphony, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Carnegie Hall, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Kennedy Center,

the Grand Teton Festival, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She is serving a third season as Artistic Director of a celebrated yearly chamber music concert in Newnan, Georgia. The "Friends of Wadsworth" concert continues the legacy of her mentor Charles Wadsworth, with whom Ms. Budd performed extensively, most notably for seven seasons on the Spoleto USA Dock Street Chamber Music Series.

A Metropolitan Opera National Finalist, Ms. Budd's operatic performances include Ilia in *Idomeneo* at Alice Tully Hall, Baby Doe, Zerbinetta, Zerlina, Pamina, Laurie in *The Tender Land*, and Marie in *La fille du régiment*, with such companies as Central City, Opera Omaha, Atlanta Opera, Sugar Creek Festival, and the Colorado and Charleston Symphonies. She has collaborated with symphony orchestras across the United States in music ranging from Bach, Handel, Mozart, Brahms, and Poulenc to Schönberg's String Quartet #2 and the world premier of Osvaldo Golijov's *Tenebrae* with the Saint Lawrence String Quartet.

Her CD *Sleep is Behind the Door* was named "Lullaby Album of the year" by CDBaby.com, and has raised thousands in aid for victims of natural disasters. The recording was the generous collaboration of numerous artists including soprano Sylvia McNair and cellist Alisa Weilerstein. Additionally, Ms. Budd appears on the VMS recording *Korngold's Hollywood Songbook* with pianist Dalton Baldwin.

A Georgia native, Courtenay Budd was honored with the 2004 Distinguished Young Alumnus Award from the University of the South in Seawee, TN. She also holds a Master's degree from Westminster Choir College and resides in New York's Hudson Valley.



Gil Rose is a conductor helping to shape the future of classical music. His dynamic performances and many recordings have garnered international critical praise.

In 1996, Mr. Rose founded the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), the foremost professional orchestra dedicated exclusively to performing and recording symphonic music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Under his leadership, BMOP's unique programming and high performance standards have attracted critical acclaim.

As a guest conductor on both the opera and symphonic platforms, he made his Tanglewood debut in 2002 and in 2003 debuted with the Netherlands Radio Symphony at the Holland Festival. He has led the American Composers Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra of the Ukraine, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, and the National Orchestra of Porto and made his Japanese debut in 2015 substituting for Seiji Ozawa at the Matsumoto Festival conducting Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict*.

Over the past decade, Mr. Rose has also built a reputation as one of the country's most inventive and versatile opera conductors. He recently announced the formation of Odyssey Opera, an inventive company dedicated to presenting eclectic operatic repertoire in a variety of formats. The company debuted in September 2013 to critical acclaim with a 6-hour concert production of Wagner's *Rienzi*. Subsequent presentations have included concert performances of Korngold's *Die tote Stadt* and Massenet's *Le Cid*, along with two critically acclaimed Spring Festivals of staged opera. Prior to founding Odyssey Opera, he led Opera Boston as its Music Director starting in 2003, and in 2010 was appointed the company's first Artistic Director. Mr. Rose led Opera Boston in several American and New England premieres including Shostakovich's *The Nose*, Donizetti's *Maria Padilla*, Hindemith's *Cardillac*, and Peter Eötvös's *Angels in America*. In 2009, Mr. Rose led the world premiere of Zhou Long's *Madame White Snake*, which won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2011.

Mr. Rose and BMOP partnered with the American Repertory Theater, Chicago Opera Theater, and the MIT Media Lab to create the world premiere of composer Tod Machover's *Death and the Powers* (a runner-up for the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music). He conducted this seminal multimedia work at its world premiere at the Opera Garnier in Monte Carlo, Monaco, in September 2010, and also led its United States premiere in Boston and a subsequent performance at Chicago Opera Theater.

An active recording artist, Gil Rose serves as the executive producer of the BMOP/sound recording label. His extensive discography includes world premiere recordings of music by John Cage, Lukas Foss, Charles Fussell, Michael Gandolfi, Tod Machover, Steven Mackey, Evan Ziporyn, and many others on such labels as Albany, Arsis, Chandos, ECM, Naxos, New World, and BMOP/sound.

Mr. Rose has led the longstanding Monadnock Music Festival in historic Peterborough, NH, since his appointment as Artistic Director in 2012, conducting several premieres and making his opera stage directing debut in two revivals of operas by Dominick Argento, as well as conducting, directing and producing the world premier recording of Ned Rorem's opera *Our Town*.

Mr. Rose has curated the Fromm Concerts at Harvard three times and served as the first curator of the Ditson Festival of Contemporary Music at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art. As an educator, Mr. Rose served five years as Director of Orchestral Activities at Tufts University and in 2012 joined the faculty of Northeastern University as Artist-in-Residence and Professor of Practice. In 2007, Mr. Rose was awarded Columbia University's prestigious Ditson Award as well as an ASCAP Concert Music Award for his exemplary commitment to new American music. He is a four-time Grammy Award nominee.



The **Boston Modern Orchestra Project** is the premier orchestra in the United States dedicated exclusively to commissioning, performing, and recording music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. A unique institution of crucial artistic importance to today's musical world, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP) exists to disseminate exceptional orchestral music of the present and recent past via performances and recordings of the highest caliber.

Founded by Artistic Director Gil Rose in 1996, BMOP has championed composers whose careers span nine decades. Each season, Rose brings BMOP's award-winning orchestra, renowned soloists, and influential composers to the stage of New England Conservatory's historic Jordan Hall in a series that offers the most diverse orchestral programming in the city. The musicians of BMOP are consistently lauded for the energy, imagination, and passion with which they infuse the music of the present era.

BMOP's distinguished and adventurous track record includes premieres and recordings of monumental and provocative new works such as John Harbison's ballet *Ulysses*, Louis Andriessen's *Trilogy of the Last Day*, and Tod Machover's *Death and the Powers*. A perennial

winner of the ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, the orchestra has been featured at festivals including Opera Unlimited, the Ditson Festival of Contemporary Music with the ICA/Boston, Tanglewood, the Boston Cyberarts Festival, the Festival of New American Music (Sacramento, CA), Music on the Edge (Pittsburgh, PA), and the MATA Festival in New York. During its 20th anniversary season, BMOP was named Musical America's 2016 Ensemble of the Year, the first symphony orchestra in the organization's history to receive this distinction.

BMOP has actively pursued a role in music education through composer residencies, collaborations with colleges, and an ongoing relationship with the New England Conservatory, where it is Affiliate Orchestra for New Music. The musicians of BMOP are equally at home in Symphony Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, and in Cambridge's Club Oberon and Boston's Club Café, where they pursued a popular, composer-led Club Concert series from 2004 to 2012.

BMOP/sound, BMOP's independent record label, was created in 2008 to provide a platform for BMOP's extensive archive of music, as well as to provide widespread, top-quality, permanent access to both classics of the 20th century and the music of today's most innovative composers. BMOP/sound has garnered praise from the national and international press; it is the recipient of five Grammy Award nominations and its releases have appeared on the year-end "Best of" lists of *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, National Public Radio, *Time Out New York*, *American Record Guide*, *Downbeat Magazine*, WBUR, NewMusicBox, and others.

BMOP expands the horizon of a typical "night at the symphony." Admired, praised, and sought after by artists, presenters, critics, and audiophiles, BMOP and BMOP/sound are uniquely positioned to redefine the new music concert and recording experience.

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 Rachel Braude (piccolo)
 Jessica Lizak (piccolo)

OBOE

Jennifer Slowik*
 Nancy Dimock
 Laura Pardee Schaefer
 (English horn)

CLARINET

Jan Halloran*
 Amy Advocat (E-flat clarinet)
 Gary Gorczyca (bass clarinet)
 Kevin Price

BASSOON

Ronald Haroutunian*
 Adrian Morejon
 Margaret Phillips
 (contrabassoon)

HORN

Clark Matthews*
 Neil Godwin
 Hazel Davis Hackbarth
 Dana Christensen

TRUMPET

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 Eric Berlin
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TROMBONE

Hans Bohn*
 Alexei Doohovskoy

BASS TROMBONE

Chris Beaudry

TUBA

Kenneth Amis

PERCUSSION

Craig McNutt*
 Jonathan Hess
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PIANO

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 Katherine Kayaian
 Jing Li
 Stephen Marotto
 Velleda Miragias
 David Russell

BASS

Anthony D'Amico*
 Karl Doty
 Scot Fitzsimmons
 Reginald Lamb
 Robert Lynam
 Bebo Shiu

*principals

David Del Tredici
Child Alice

Producer Gil Rose
Recording and postproduction Joel Gordon
Assistant engineer and postproduction Peter Atkinson
SACD authoring Brad Michel

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NATIONAL
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FOR THE ARTS

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That *Child Alice* in all its enormity would be recorded in my lifetime was a dream I dared not have. But here it is! For this awesome feat to materialize I must thank the Copland Fund for their extreme generosity and unwavering support. I must thank as well Gil Rose and his intrepid BMOP band for making the artistic reality come so vividly to life. And of course I want to thank Courtenay Budd for inspiring us all with her vocal splendor—never fazed by my endless and extraordinary sonic demands.

—David Del Tredici

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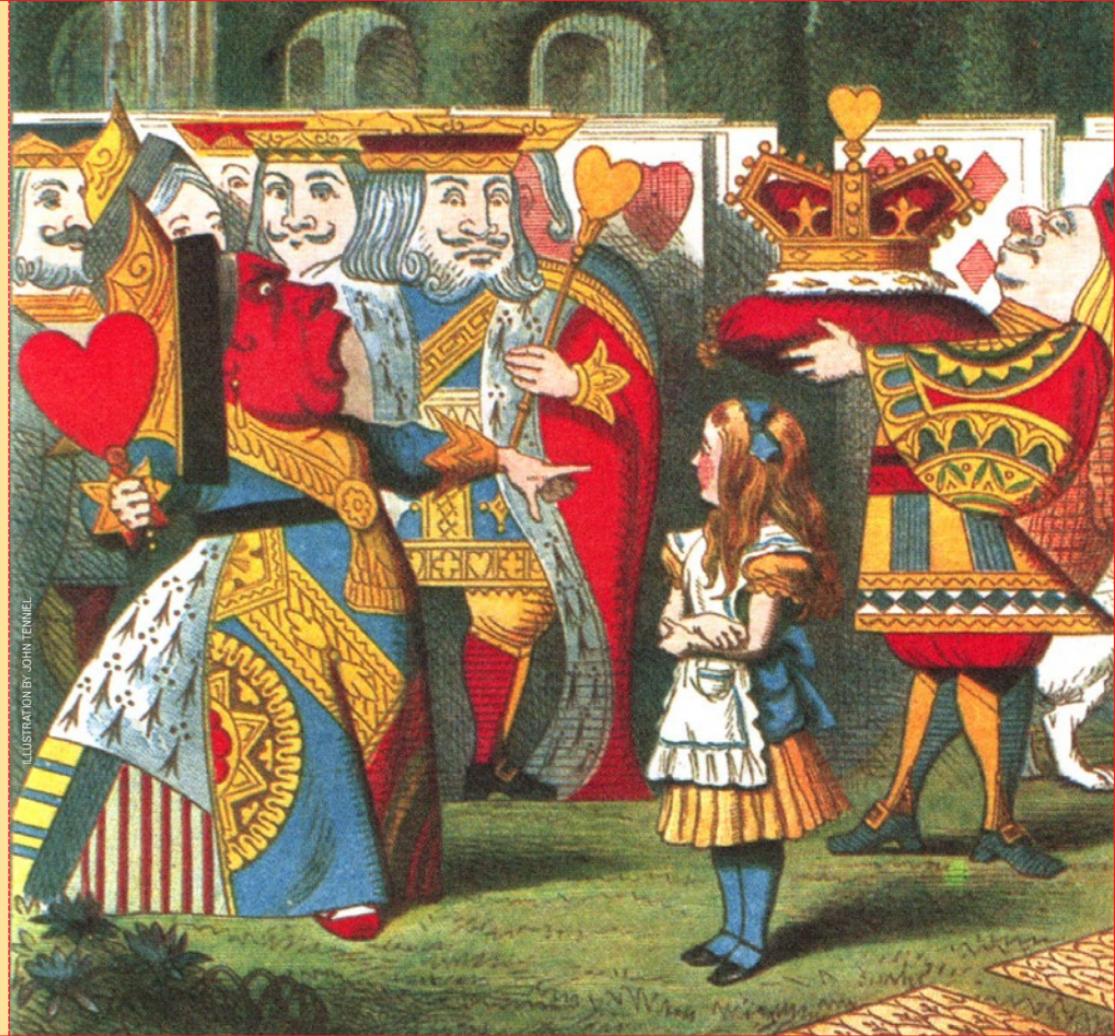


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