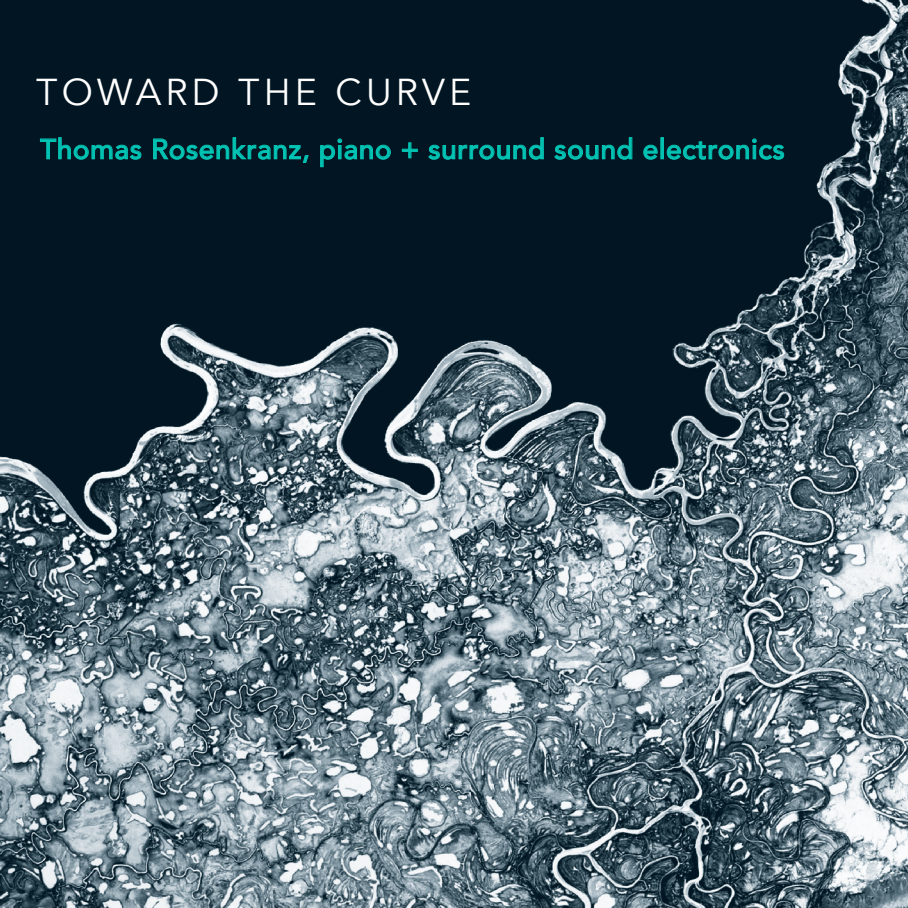
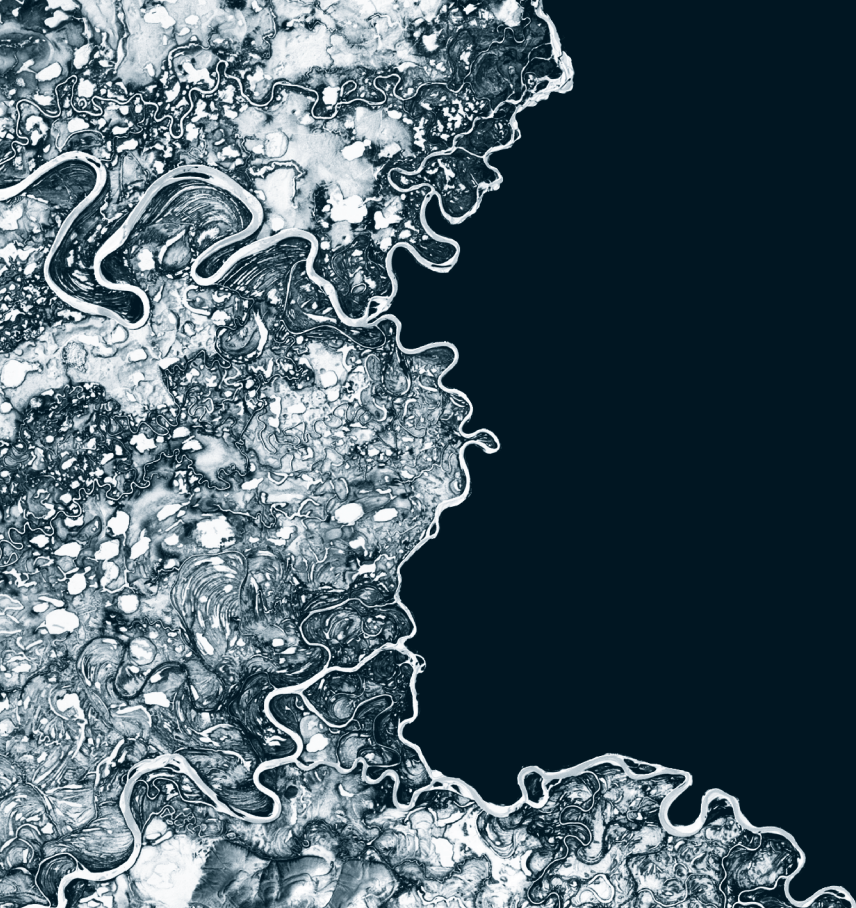


TOWARD THE CURVE

Thomas Rosenkranz, piano + surround sound electronics





1	Interlude no. 1 (2013) Thomas Rosenkranz	3:51
2	A sound does not view itself as thought (2011) Peter V. Swendsen	9:16
3	ElectroSonata: Spontaneous Combustion (2013) Peter Flint	10:14
4	Lullaby for Morning (2013) Aurie Hsu	6:52
5	Vers la courbe (2012) Michael Klingbeil	11:52
6	Timing and Collisions (1989) Pierre Jalbert	5:05
7	Interlude no. 3 (2013) Thomas Rosenkranz	6:47
8-10	Three East to West (2013) Alex Christie	
	I.	4:05
	II.	3:37
	III.	2:16
11	The Piper's Son (2010) Tom Lopez	11:03
		Total: 75:05

CD track listing above; additional Interludes by Thomas Rosenkranz appear on Blu-ray.



Hailed as “one of the best new music performers around” (*American Record Guide*), **Thomas Rosenkranz** enjoys a musical life as a soloist, chamber musician, and artist teacher. His repertoire extends from the works of J.S. Bach to premieres of works written exclusively for him, and he often includes improvisation in his performances. Since winning the Classical Fellowship Award from the American Pianists Association, he has performed in concert on four continents. A former cultural ambassador to Tunisia and Lebanon sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Rosenkranz has performed in recent years in major cities across Asia, including Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Jakarta, and Bangkok. His first trip to China began in 2005 when he was a featured soloist with the Oberlin Orchestra—a performance captured on the Oberlin Music recording *The Oberlin Orchestra in China*. Rosenkranz holds an annual summer residency at the soundSCAPE Festival in Italy, where he leads courses on new music and improvisation. He studied with Robert Shannon at the Oberlin Conservatory, Nelita True at the Eastman School of Music, and Yvonne Loriod in Paris. He is an associate professor of piano at the College of Musical Arts at Bowling Green State University.

More about Thomas Rosenkranz at www.thomasrosenkranz.net

A sound does not view itself as thought (2011)

for piano and indeterminate tape

by **Peter V. Swendsen**

Thomas Rosenkranz and I had discussed collaborating on a piece for piano and electronics for a few years when the opportunity finally presented itself in the spring and summer of 2011. Tom was embarking on some travels, during which he would have the opportunity to play the piece—but he would only be traveling with an iPad, rather than a laptop. This presented an interesting challenge in terms of retaining the spirit of interactivity we both desired.

Tom is a wonderful improviser, and I was determined to find a way to avoid locking him down to a tape part. Taking a cue (and eventually a quote for the title) from Cage and other explorers of indeterminacy, and working within the confines of the iPad, I set about making a set of 73 short (sometimes very short) sound files. These primarily originate from prepared piano recordings, but also include noise, synthesized sound, and silence. Each file has attached to it a score fragment—sometimes graphic, sometimes text, and sometimes staff-notated. These files/fragments, which total about seven minutes, are played back at random (via the iTunes “shuffle” function; the score fragments are “album covers”). Tom, who is familiar with all of the fragments but has no idea in which order they will appear, spends the piece in playful conversation with them, sometimes anticipating what might come next and sometimes responding to the cues provided. Special thanks to Tom for his enthusiasm and energy in developing this piece.

More about Peter V. Swendsen at www.swendsen.net

ElectroSonata: Spontaneous Combustion (2013)

for piano and electronics

by **Peter Flint**

A pile of oily rags slowly oxidizes, building heat, smoldering, and starting to smoke, until fire licks the edges, ultimately consuming everything around it. *ElectroSonata* originated in 2006 as *MicroConcerto*, a piano quintet for pianist Blair McMillen, which a year later morphed into *MicroSonata* for solo piano. This latest version takes the next step forward, using sections of these previous pieces and adding new material and electronics rooted in the string parts of the original quintet. The electronics are built on accordion samples, which were processed and manipulated into shapes, sounds, and musical figures that no accordion could ever make; this provides organic, breathing, yet otherworldly accompaniment to the piano. With a virtuosic piano part embedded in the electronics, *ElectroSonata* reflects the unexpected burst of energy—seemingly magically created—that is spontaneous combustion.

More about Peter Flint at www.peterflintmusic.com

Lullaby for Morning (2013)
for prepared piano and fixed media
by **Aurie Hsu**

Lullabies suspend us between waking and sleeping. They bring the possibility of a dream state, an ethereal experience that blends presence, the subconscious, illusion, and imagination. They calm worries and tension with the hope of revitalization. In *Lullaby for Morning*, the prepared and inside-piano sounds evoke this experience of being in between states. The sounds are both familiar and unfamiliar, recognizable and unrecognizable. The electronic part—processed versions of prepared piano samples—extends the timbral palette of the acoustic piano. *Lullaby for Morning* is based loosely on the progression from sorrow to silence, then to song.

More about Aurie Hsu at www.auriehsu.com

“I remember working in the studios until 4 a.m. and then walking outside into the bitter Ohio tundra. The snow in the wind was like granular synthesis, and when I got home I slept probably for only three hours and dreamt of getting tangled in a web of Max/MSP patch cables.”—Alex Christie '09

Vers la courbe (2012)
for piano and electronics
by **Michael Klingbeil**

Vers la courbe (*Toward the curve*) explores a variety of musical ideas including rhythms derived from exponential curves, curved melodic contours, asynchronous rhythm streams, looping, and spectral harmonic extension. The title also refers to Alexander Scriabin's 1914 piano piece *Vers la flamme* (*Toward the flame*). The opening sonority of the Scriabin—a voicing of the so-called “mystic chord”—serves as a point of reference in a musical excursion that is constantly bending toward or away from Scriabin, only ever reaching the referential sonority at two key moments in the piece (once near the beginning and once near the end). The detailed color palette of electronic sound (often microtonal) is a possible realization of an imagined harmonic world presaged in Scriabin's late work.

More about Michael Klingbeil at www.klingbeil.com

Timing and Collisions (1989)

for piano and live electronics

by **Pierre Jalbert**

Timing and Collisions was a collaborative project between Tom Lopez and me a number of years ago at Oberlin Conservatory. As a pianist and composer, I was interested in incorporating live electronic elements with the acoustic piano timbre. The piece makes use of what is now old and classic equipment, the Effectron and Midiverb, which can now be replaced quite easily with today's equipment.

In general, the work moves from quiet diatonicism to more forceful chromaticism and back again. The delay/echo effect is used in various timings, and at points the electronics pick up and repeat the ostinato patterns played by the pianist, over which the pianist provides another level of texture. The electronics provide the means to also play "between" the notes, and there is one section in which patterns drift between quarter tones higher and lower than the original.

The work contains some elements of improvisation, mostly apparent in the final section of the work, as the opening material fades into silence.

More about Pierre Jalbert at www.pierrejalbert.com

Three East to West (2013)

for piano and live electronics

by **Alex Christie**

Three East to West is an attempt to sonically reproduce the various textures present in three landscapes across the United States: the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah; the stretch of Interstate 80 between Chicago and Gary, Indiana; and the White Mountains of the Northeast. For three consecutive summers, I drove from California to Chicago to New Hampshire and back, and these landscapes—the salt flats in particular—left a strong impression on me. Bonneville is the closest of the three to my current home of Oakland and is therefore the first and final landscape that I encounter. It is a striking and unique one, composed of salt, earth, air, and mountains—textures that sometimes clash but also merge together.

Three East to West maintains the theme of landscape-inspired textural complexity, but also serves as an examination of the two-way translation between electronic and acoustic sound. I have attempted to reproduce the Bonneville landscape electronically and acoustically in the past, and both methods are present in this work. This piece utilized acoustic and electronic feedback that treats the piano as a resonating chamber, and live processing in Max/MSP that augments and colors the acoustic sound of the piano. The piece runs the gamut from strictly scored to open and improvised. The interaction between the piano and electronics creates complex and ever-changing textures that mirror the exchange of elegance and brutality present in the three landscapes.

More about Alex Christie at www.alexchristie.org

The Piper's Son (2010)

for piano and live electronics

by **Tom Lopez**

From the very beginning, *The Piper's Son* was a collaboration between Thomas Rosenkranz and me. We developed the piano music and live processing (Max/MSP) together and in tandem. It was premiered on July 19, 2010, in Maccagno, Italy, during the soundSCAPE Festival. Though there is a complete score for piano, the work is not precisely fixed, and each performance invites improvisation and impromptu musical dialogue.

More about Tom Lopez at www.firstwavemusic.com

Interludes (2013)

by **Thomas Rosenkranz**

These interludes came about as a kind of afterthought. I wanted to see if I could improvise something based on an emotional event that I imagined. I thought of a time when I saw my father break down in tears, or imagined the chords as timid and thought of them as gaining more confidence. These improvisations ended up being used as a kind of tissue between these sonically rich electronic landscapes.

“I recall sitting in front of the Warner Concert Hall stage, running the electronics for the premiere of Pierre Jalbert's *Timing and Collisions*. Listening to it now, wrapped in surround sound, reminds me how fortunate we all were, inexplicably drawn together by our interest in music technology.”—Tom Lopez '89

“My special thanks to Tom Lopez and Peter Swendsen, who first imagined this recording, for their inspiring creative energy. To Paul Eachus and Ryan Miller for their unbelievable expertise in the studio. To all of the composers who wrote such fascinating music for this disc and allowed me space to find my own way through it. To Robert Shannon, my piano professor at Oberlin, for his immense musical mentorship and inspiration, which I am reminded of every time I teach a lesson.”

—Thomas Rosenkranz

Developed by Munich’s msm-studios, the **Pure Audio Blu-ray** combines the Blu-ray format’s vast storage capacity and bandwidth necessary for high-resolution sound (up to 192 kHz/24bit) in surround and stereo with the straightforward handling of a CD. Pure Audio Blu-ray can be operated in two ways: by on-screen menu navigation or by remote control without a TV screen.

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EDITORIAL DIRECTORS: Cathleen Partlow Strauss and Erich Burnett

PRODUCER: Paul Eachus

All composers co-produced their own works at the recording sessions

RECORDING, EDITING, AND BALANCE ENGINEER: Ryan Miller

BLU-RAY AUTHORIZING, ENCODING, AND DESIGN: Pure Audio, msm-studios GmbH

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Denise Burt, elevator-design.dk

DEAN OF THE CONSERVATORY: Andrea Kalyn



“I still remember the first time I heard Tom perform—the energy and invention and imagination. Even then, I could tell he was questioning the piano and pushing it to do new things. It proved a great metaphor for my work with computers and other machines, a good reminder that there is always room to make these contraptions do more than they first seem capable of doing.”—Peter V. Swendsen '99

