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UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC


Contemporary Music in Canada: Alexina Louie

by

Diane Bégay

Presented to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master in Music (M.Mus.)

May 1994

 Diane Bégay, Ottawa, Canada, 1994



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D.B.

Abstract

Alexina Louie (1949-) is one of Canada's foremost composers of contemporary classical music. She was named "Composer of the Year 1986" by the Canada Music Council in the International Year of Canadian music. Her compositions have been commissioned and performed by Canada's major orchestras, ensembles, and soloists and have been played extensively throughout Canada and abroad. Due to the incessant demand for her music, Louie is among the numbered few in Canada who are able to make a living solely by composing.

The first chapter of this study outlines Louie's life from childhood until 1993. The second looks at the media's portrayal of Louie, from 1980 until 1992. The ways in which Louie composes are discussed in the third chapter, and the fourth analyses three contrasting pieces: Music for a Thousand Autumns (1983), The Eternal Earth (1986), and The Ringing Earth (1986). A list of works, recordings, and published compositions follow an extensive bibliography. A cassette containing excerpts of Louie's work accompanies the thesis.

This study reveals Louie to be an outstanding Canadian musician. She is greatly respected and admired for her compositions as well as for her promotion of contemporary music. Through her expertise, her art, her culture, and her philosophy, Louie has helped put a new face on Canadian contemporary music.

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Introduction

This biography of Canadian composer Alexina Louie (1949-) is part of a recent burst of interest and research in Canadian music, especially within the last twenty years. In the 1980s, for example, several institutions encouraging research, performance and publication of Canadian music were established, including the Canadian Musical Heritage Society/Société pour le patrimoine musical canadien (1982) and the Institute for Canadian Music (1984). In addition to several textbooks dealing with Canadian music, such as those by George Proctor (1980), Clifford Ford (1982) and Timothy McGee (1985), two editions of the invaluable Encyclopedia of Music in Canada have been published in English (1981 and 1992) and in French (1983 and 1993).

This recent research activity is encouraging, given the dearth of studies in all areas of Canadian music, including analysis, criticism, ethnography, musicology, and theory. Although the first biography of a Canadian composer was written in 1937, (see Lapierre 1937) subsequent publications on Canadian composers have been exceedingly rare. It was only in 1975, as part of the Canadian Music Centre's "Canadian Composers" series, that composer Brian Cherney wrote the first Canadian biography that included analyses of compositions (see Cherney 1975). Since that time, a handful of monographs has been published on Canada's most eminent composers, as well as

several collected biographies, such as Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre's La Création musicale des femmes au Québec (1991).

Fortunately, a number of theses have been dedicated to Canadian composers, but the majority have dealt with the composers' music, and not with their lives. Given that studies of composers' lives will inevitably shed light on their art, it is discouraging to realize that the records of many Canadian composers' lives and music are scattered amongst newspaper clippings, magazine articles, pamphlets, brochures, microfilms, non-commercial recordings and unpublished scores throughout Canada's libraries and beyond.

Although Alexina Louie is one of Canada's most respected composers of contemporary classical music, an exhaustive survey had yet to be undertaken to piece together the history of her life and music. As part of the research for this thesis, over 150 documents were found that referred to Louie, ranging from brief articles in newspapers, to films, taped lectures, television programmes and a dissertation (see Bibliography). A great deal of information was found in the Music Division of the National Library in Ottawa and at the Canadian Music Centre in Toronto. In addition, Louie accorded me interviews in June 1993 and in April 1994 and accepted to read a draft of this study.

Other researchers have begun or completed research on Alexina Louie's music. Jon Kimura Parker's doctoral dissertation (1989) and Ed Turgeon's on-going doctoral

research at Yale University explore Louie's solo piano and piano-related repertoire, respectively. From the Cleveland Institute, Mark Neumann's doctoral thesis on Canadian viola concerti will discuss Louie's Winter Music (1989) (telephone interview, April 1994). The present thesis will compliment the above studies on Louie's music by providing the first biography of the composer.

Alexina Louie deserves our attention. She was named "Composer of the Year" in 1986 by the Canadian Music Council in the International Year of Canadian Music. Her music has been commissioned and performed by Canada's major orchestras, ensembles, and soloists and has been played throughout Canada and abroad. Louie's compositions were commissioned and premiered at the opening gala of Expo '86 in Vancouver and at the Montreal International Music Competition in 1991. The Montreal Symphony Orchestra performed a piece by Louie at the United Nations General Assembly on United Nations Day in 1989, and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra played music by Louie on its tours of Europe in 1986 and of the Pacific Rim countries in 1990. Finally, a performance of Louie's music marked the opening of the Canadian Embassy in Japan in 1991, and her Star-filled Night (1987) was among a collection of Canadian music that Canadian astronaut Steve MacLean took into space in 1991 (David Mott, telephone interview, 13 April 1994).

This thesis consists of four chapters, an exhaustive bibliography and three appendices. The first chapter outlines

Louie's life from childhood until 1993. The second looks at the media's portrayal of Louie, from her return to Canada in 1980 until her visit to Ottawa in 1992. The material and ideas contained in these pages do not attempt to adopt feminist theory. However, given the nature of the subject, the first two chapters could not remain oblivious to current ideas expressed in Susan McClary's Feminine Endings (1991), Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre's La Création musicale des femmes au Québec (1991), or Susan C. Cook and Judy S. Tsou's (eds.) Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music (1994), for example. The third chapter discusses the ways in which Louie composes, and the fourth analyses three contrasting pieces: Music for a Thousand Autumns (1983), The Eternal Earth (1986), and The Ringing Earth (1986). A list of works, recordings, and published compositions (Appendices A, B, and C, respectively) follow the bibliography. A copy of a non-commercial CAPAC (Composers, Authors, and Publishers Associations Limited) cassette of Louie's music has been included with permission of the composer and the Canadian Music Centre.

To ease the reader's search for full references to quotations in the text, the bibliography has been divided into two large sections: 1. General (Asian music, Canadian music, Contemporary music, Women and Music, and so on) and 2. Alexina Louie and Her Music. Within these two sections, the various materials, such as books, articles, films, cassettes, and

lectures, have been integrated and presented in alphabetical order.

To better understand and appreciate music, it is often highly revealing to study the life and surrounding world of its creator. It is hoped that this study will not only spark interest in performing, publishing, and recording more of Louie's music, but will also initiate and aid further research on Louie and her music. By situating Louie within the contemporary music scene, this study will also serve to highlight the plight of contemporary Canadian composers: the lack of recognition, the "day jobs" that are so often needed to survive financially, and the struggle to balance a home life with the demands of an artist. Through reading this thesis, it is hoped that the reader will come to realize that Alexina Louie is a unique and fascinating phenomenon in the world of Canadian contemporary music, and that her music deserves a place of honour in the Canadian musical repertoire.

Contemporary Music in Canada: Alexina Louie

Chapter One

Biography

I never made a conscious decision to be a musician, I never made a conscious decision to be a composer. Events happened in my life and I am open to the changes that happen. It's kind of like an Eastern acceptance. If the river happens to be flowing in that direction, then I just go with it.

(Interview by Goulet 1984, 22)

1. Alexina Louie: Formative Years

Childhood

Alexina Diane Louie was born on July 30, 1949 in Vancouver, British Columbia and spent her first five years in Vancouver's Chinatown where her father owned a poultry shop. Louie declared in a television programme that, although three of her grandparents were born in China and her family remained quite traditional (Louie 1992), she was more likely to hear Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby at home than music from Asia ("Beyond the Call" 1987).¹ She explained:

¹I will refer to two television programmes in this thesis. "Beyond the Call" is the name of an episode, or featured story, in the television series W5. I will refer to the other programme, Gzowski and Co., only by the name of the series because there is no title for the particular episode in which Louie appeared.

We didn't hear oriental music in my family. The only time I heard oriental music was the same as you would: going into a Chinese restaurant to have a nice meal and at Chinese New Year. And the Lion Dance at Chinese New Year always sort of brought tears to my eyes, even from when I was a little kid. There was something about those firecrackers and the drums and the dancing that was very special. But at that time I didn't know what it was and it took a long time to discover what that was for myself.

("Beyond the Call" 1987)

This early exposure to Asian music, if somewhat limited, along with the composer's Chinese heritage, (and a general renewal of interest in eastern cultures in the 1970s) later incited Louie to seek out her roots and to discover the richness of Asian music. Her piece Devil Music (part of Sanctuary [1982]), for example, is inspired by the Chinese Lion Dance that Louie tape-recorded in Vancouver's Chinatown (Littler 1987). During a televised interview, she revealed that she still "gets misty" when she hears the music of the Lion Dance (Gzowski and Co. 1987).

Because she was an extremely shy and reserved young girl (even to the point of not wanting to be noticed), Louie began using her piano-playing as a means of communicating with people (Gzowski and Co. 1987). Louie's father could not have foreseen the far-reaching consequences of his decision to have his daughter begin piano lessons at age seven. With the guidance of her first piano teacher, Jean Lyons, Louie's piano

practice became more and more a means to express herself.

Louie confessed:

I began to speak through the voice of Mozart or Bach, for instance, when I played. I put all the torment or the joy or the love that I knew in that point in my life into a line of music.

(Gzowski and Co. 1987)

As will later be shown, this emphasis on "speaking through music" has been a most important element in her work.

University of British Columbia

After ten years of private lessons and completion of the requirements in 1966 for a diploma in piano performance (Associate of the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto [A.R.C.T.]), Louie felt prepared to pursue the study of music at the post-secondary level. During her years at the University of British Columbia (UBC), Louie was able to develop as a musician in several different settings: with her professors in the classroom, at her job "moonlighting" as a pianist in a cocktail bar, and with her classmates on campus. She confided:

You had to want to be in music to survive those days at UBC. This was when the music department was [made of] a bunch of huts, [had] terrible listening facilities, no rehearsal rooms, no heat. Still, these were very good days, a lot happened in music then. The chumminess was gone when the new music building [a four-storey music building, which opened in 1963] went up, somehow.

(Interview by Dykk 1980, B14)

Concerns hinted at in this quotation can be observed in Louie's production to date. Ideological themes from the 1960s, such as fellowship, improving world conditions, and yearning for world peace, are still a part of Louie's work. She explained that The Ringing Earth (1986) overture, for example, was composed "to express a hope that Expo [The Royal Bank/Expo 86 World Festival] might bring world peace" (interview by Lewis and Barnes 1986, A2). Concern with the environment was expressed in her works The Eternal Earth (1986), Love Songs for a Small Planet (1989, rev. 1992), and Music for Heaven and Earth (1990) (see Appendix A). In an interview, Louie remarked:

[As students] we questioned everything and decided we would make the world a better place. As a generation I don't know if we've succeeded, As a person I know I can do this through music--to leave something beautiful to the world.
(Interview by Menzies 1986, C1)

Louie entered the music programme as, in her own words, a "Beethoven Sonata type person" [sic], [that is, the usual piano student] (interview by Kaptainis 1985, E12). It is noteworthy that, in interviews, Louie rarely mentions the extensive repertoire she played, the technique she acquired, or the inspiring performances and workshops she attended at UBC. Rather, she values her university piano lessons for the opportunity they gave her to express herself. Along with courses in theory, history, and performance practices (Louie

n.d. [a]),² she pursued piano studies for four years with Barbara Custance and Frances Marr Adaskin (Cohen 1987). She claimed: "I had been a very shy, little Chinese girl until my piano teachers, wonderful teachers, taught me how to express myself through my music" (Schulman 1980, 20). Later, when she began to write music, she drew a parallel between her objectives as a pianist and as a composer: "As a pianist, I used to spend hours on a phrase until it communicated precisely the idea and the warmth I had in mind. As a composer, I do exactly the same thing" (Dawson 1986, H5).

From 1966 to 1970 Louie's need to communicate through music found another outlet in her "moonlighting" as a professional pianist at two cocktail lounges. She played three times a week at the Georgia and the Devonshire Hotels in Vancouver to help support herself during university studies (Keillor 1992, 774). Here she played, what she described as, "standard piano bar repertoire," such as "All the Things You Are" (1940), "Moon River" (1961), and "Over the Rainbow" (1939) (telephone interview, 7 April 1994).³ Louie viewed her work playing at the lounges as an opportunity to learn how to reach out to people, in a way different from what she had

² I consulted two undated documents written by Louie. Because references to these sources are parenthesized in the text, the [a] and [b] appear in square brackets.

³ "All the Things You Are": lyrics by W. Oscar Hammerstein II, music by Jerome Kern. "Moon River": lyrics by Johnny Mercer, music by Henry Mancini. "Over the Rainbow": lyrics by E. Y. Harburg, music by Harold Arlen. See Lax and Smith 1989, 183, 322, 345.

learned in her formal piano studies with Adaskin and Lyons (Dyck 1980).

2. Louie as a Composer

Louie's Early Instruction in Composition

Louie had no desire to become a composer when she entered university. Nonetheless, with no previous experience, she found herself taking a second-year composition class in order to continue studying with her "incredible" first-year theory teacher (Louie 1992). She explained:

I entered composition from the back door. It was never my burning ambition to be a composer. It was probably one of the last things that I was thinking of. I was just a pianist studying at music school. And after first year, I had ... one of those teachers that comes into your life once in your lifetime. He was my theory teacher and he gave us such a love of music that I felt I had to go and study with him some more. So, ... in second year ... the only thing that he taught was composition. So, I ended up in composition class with him even though I hadn't had any desire [to compose] at all. (Louie 1992)

Professor Cortland Hultburg, this first-year theory teacher, must be given credit for introducing Louie to twentieth century compositional techniques in acoustic and in electronic music (Louie n.d. [a]). More importantly, he must be acknowledged for musically inspiring Louie, for providing her with the basic tools of theory and composition, and for encouraging her to become a composer. Finally, it was

Hultburg who urged Louie to pursue graduate studies in composition at the University of California in San Diego (UCSD), a major North American centre for contemporary music (Louie 1992).

Hultburg--whom Louie described as "more of a teacher than a composer, but a very fine teacher" (Bond 1992, 24)--unflinchingly encouraged Louie in composition. Despite this support, Louie remained preoccupied with piano performance and considered composition only as a sideline activity. When she graduated in 1970 with a Bachelor in Music in music history, she still had no definite plans for her musical future and little confidence in herself as a composer. She applied to graduate school as a theory major, but Hultburg convinced her to change to composition. "I was very reticent to go on in composition," admitted Louie, "because I was so slow at writing music--I moved along at a tortoise pace" (interview by Elliott 1986, 4).

Louie eventually applied to six different graduate schools and was accepted at all six. Cortland advised her to go to the University of California in San Diego (UCSD), if she wanted to pursue training in contemporary composition (personal interview, 21 June 1993). She heeded his advice, and, armed with a Regent's Scholarship, left for California in 1970 to begin graduate studies leading towards a Master's in Arts in Composition degree (Keillor 1992).

California

Southern California was really a wild place.
... I had been a sheltered kid. They thought
I was from the moon.

(Interview by Snider 1986, 46)

By moving to the United States, and especially to California in the early 1970s, Louie had in fact chosen an era and a place shaken by revolutionary ideas and actions which were to have lasting repercussions on the planet. Among other pressing problems, such as the tensions of the cold war, and the humiliating defeat at the Bay of Pigs, for example, the United States was in fact amid the throes of two major conflicts at this time. Black Americans were struggling for equality, as were many minority groups throughout the world. The American "Freedom Riders," for example, fought for desegregation on interstate buses (Freeman-Grenville 1975, 629). Frequent race riots shook the country, as did the assassinations of several outspoken leaders for the rights of minorities: John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Externally, American citizens were faced with the horrors of the Vietnam war, which were broadcast nightly in living rooms across the country.

The social and political climate of the time, as well as the increased autonomy and financial independence of young people, among other things, encouraged a sector of the 1960s

generation to rebel against "the establishment" (Blaise 1986, 1094). Ideas propagated by persons such as Timothy Leary, the director of research at Harvard University, extolling meditation and psychedelic experiences afforded by eastern cultures and "illicit" drugs, were embraced by a large proportion of young Americans (Legrand 1988, 1002). In San Diego, Louie found herself not far from San Francisco which was the site of the first "love-in" in 1972 and is regarded as the birthplace of "hippyism" and "flower power" (Legrand 1988, 1009).

Worldwide, the 1960s and early 1970s had witnessed, and was experiencing, a multitude of profound changes in social infrastructure. Greatly improved methods of communications (such as world television coverage made possible by the advent, in 1962, of satellites able to broadcast television images [Blaise 1986, 1092]), and huge technological advancements in mass travel (by the creation of large commercial carriers such as the Boeing 747 in 1970, for example, and inexpensive air charter flights) provided the possibility of a hitherto unknown mixing of world cultures (Blaise 1986, 1092). In accordance with Canadian sociologist Marshall McLuhan's concept of the "global village," local conflicts suddenly were pushed onto the world area. A tragic example of this was the hostage-taking and murder of Israeli athletes by Palestine guerillas in the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich (Freeman-Grenville 1975, 640).

Perhaps because of this "brassage sans précédent des peuples et des cultures" (Blaise 1986, 1092), which inevitably engineered confrontations of conflicting value systems, it seemed as if practically every time-tested theory or rule was undergoing review. Neil Armstrong's step on the moon in 1969 meant that for the first time in history, the human race was no longer confined to the earth (Freeman-Grenville 1975, 637). Minority groups were demanding independence: decolonization and, in Canada, the rise of the Front de libération du Québec (FLQ) could be seen as a part of this worldwide trend. Women were becoming more visible: in 1963, Valentina Tereshkova from Russia was the first woman to enter space (Freeman-Grenville 1975, 629); in 1966, women in France were given legal equality with their husbands (Freeman-Grenville 1975, 632). Throughout the turmoil, conventional institutions, such as the church and the state, struggled to keep abreast of new developments and to assume a new role in society.

It was during these heady times, in the most trend-setting place in the United States, that Louie arrived from her sheltered home in Vancouver. Upon arrival, Louie discovered that, not unlike the "bunch of huts" at her music department at UBC (before the opening of the new music building in 1968), the music department at the University of California at San Diego (UCSD) was similarly housed in "four Quonset huts which had previously served as army barracks" (Elliott 1986, 5). The music department at UCSD was only a

few years old when Louie arrived, and most of the professors-- such as Roger Reynold, Kenneth Gaburo, Pauline Oliveros, and Robert Erickson--were composers (Elliott 1986, 5). Right from the outset Louie was thrown into an extraordinary world of listening and experimenting. William Littler, music critic of the Toronto Star, wrote:

During [Louie's] first day at the University of California, San Diego, she and her fellow graduate students found themselves involved in a sound and music exercise with the lights out, woofing, grunting and crawling around on the floor, led by the chairman of the department. [Louie remarked,] "I thought to myself, 'What am I doing here?'"

(Littler 1984a, G2)

From this description, and from other accounts of Louie's experiences at UCSD, it appears that the Cagian influence to deformatize the concert music setting was prevalent on campus. "Water Music," for example, a theatre piece "written" by a student, instructed a participant to climb up a ladder and throw a bucket of water into a plastic bathtub, which had been placed below. In another recital, Louie was enclosed in a room off-stage and then was wheeled out playing cocktail music on a nine-foot grand piano (telephone interview, April 1994). For the first year, at least, Louie's concept of music was drastically altered by her experiences at the department (telephone interview, April 1994).

Injury

Because she was still unsure about her future as a composer, Louie continued serious work at the piano while studying composition when she first went to California (personal interview, June 1993). In 1972 her five hours of daily practice at the piano came to a grinding halt, however, when she strained a ligament in her right wrist while playing Brahms (Anon. 1984a; Lacey 1987). Suddenly, the means of making music and the possibility of becoming a full-time professional pianist evaporated at the same time. At this point Louie became very serious about composing:

Suddenly there was this tremendous void that needed to be filled creatively, so I turned my energies to writing music.

(Anon. 1984a, 2)

Louie's Instruction in Composition

Louie's main composition teacher for three years was American Pauline Oliveros. This adventurous woman was attracted to many kinds of unconventional types of music: group improvisation, mixed media, musique concrète, and real-time tape compositions.⁴ She also was involved in other avant-garde areas of electronic music-making, such as "sound

⁴ "[C]ompositions of electronically generated sounds recorded as soon as they are produced, without being mixed with other sounds or otherwise altered through splicing the tape" (Ammer 1980, 190).

sculpture" which produces, mixes, and processes light and sound simultaneously. Oliveros was interested in the astro-bio-geo-physical possibilities of electronic music as well. Her composition Valentine (1968), for example, amplifies the heart beats of four card players as well as the sounds of the cards being placed on the table.

In the early 1970s (during the time Louie was a student) Oliveros became interested in T'ai chi, karate, dreams, mandalas, and Asian culture (Pendle 1991). Oliveros demonstrated her original musical approach and revealed her attraction to Tibetan Buddhism in her multimedia presentation Rose Moon (1977). In this composition, there is ritual chanting, the shaking and passing of a "moon rattle," the sounds of running feet, theatrical enactment of the elements (earth, water, air, and fire), and three "lunatics" wandering about to express disorder. These groups of participants are arranged in three circles around a tent-like structure sheltering a nude couple who mutter names of the moon in all known languages and make other emotionally-charged non-verbal sounds (Ammer 1980, 190-91).

Despite the apparent sense of improvisation and freedom in some of Oliveros' works, Louie's composition lessons with Oliveros were "intense, even frightening," because each work "would be subjected to the most severe scrutiny" (Elliott 1986, 5). And although Oliveros's compositions may have consisted of only a few written instructions, students had to

justify every note they had chosen in their own works (Elliott 1986). Perhaps, in this way, Oliveros helped Louie develop a high sense of responsibility as a composer. Still today, Louie acknowledges that she "care[s] about every note she write[s]" (interview by Lacey 1987, E5). She places a high priority both on technical achievement and the "honesty" of the emotional statement in the work. Louie explained:

[My] music, for the most part, is as honest music as I can write at that time. It's my emotional state at that time, or it's what I am attempting to do to the best of my ability.

(Personal Interview, June 1993)

For three years Oliveros led Louie and seven other women in what was referred to as "The ♀ [Women's] Ensemble." The group gave seminars and concerts in San Diego and Santa Cruz, California, and Eugene, Oregon (Louie n.d. [a]). Due in part to the influence of the feminist movement, perhaps, experimental "women only" groups seem to have been part of a trend at this time.⁵ For her part, Oliveros may have been attracted to the idea of creating a musical ensemble consisting solely of women musicians because she was most definitely drawn to the feminist movement (Ammer, 1980) and

⁵ In Quebec, for example, Marcelle Deschênes organized two experiments in collective music with non-musicians in 1973, including a three-day creativity session for thirty women aged eighteen to seventy-five (Daunais and Plouffe 1992, 358-59).

had expressed concern over the injustices felt by women musicians.⁶

Besides exercises in sound and movement, "The ♀ Ensemble" practised and performed compositions and exercises that Oliveros called "Sonic Meditations," or mediations through sound (Louie n.d. [a]). J. Michele Edwards described Oliveros's meditations in these terms:

Using a parallel to Jung's viewfinder archetype based on sound--sound actively made, imagined, heard at present, or remembered--Oliveros created twenty-five Sonic Meditations. [Of] [t]he three most suited to beginners, ... "Teach Yourself to Fly" is an exercise in tuned breathing; Meditation XIV, "Tumbling Song," calls for descending vocal glissandi beginning at any pitch. "Zina's Circle" (Meditation XV) is more complex and involves hand signals between the performers. All three of these Sonic Meditations call for the participants to stand or sit in circle formation; there is no separate audience.
(Edwards 1991, 229)

Oliveros's affinity with meditation and non-verbal communication (which were practised by the group) may be linked again to her interest in Tibetan Buddhism (Ammer 1980). Louie still admires the activities she undertook with Oliveros and of the experimental atmosphere of her school days. Louie was struck especially by a type of Tibetan chant that Oliveros

⁶See Oliveros's article, "And Don't Call Them 'Lady Composers'" (1970).

could perform. The chant consisted of extremely low tones with very slow frequencies, rather like pedal tones on a trombone. One of Oliveros's students was capable of "chanting" two notes at the same time, by using the bass line and its overtones to produce the melody "Silent Night." At this time, Louie explained, it was very rare for vocal experiments of this nature to be taking place (telephone interview, April 1994).

Louie still credits the work she did with Oliveros in the sonic meditation ensemble as a determining factor in her sensitivity to the less tangible aspects of music and of life (Elliott 1986). In an experiment with Oliveros, for example, Louie remembers travelling to the desert and spending two days there trying to mentally "link up" with another group of students who were meditating at Stonehenge in England. Louie was influenced by Oliveros's interest in dreams, and trained herself to remember three dreams a night, a feat which she claims has sharpened her abilities to concentrate. Louie believes that, because of her experiences with Oliveros, she learned to listen differently to music, "to think and feel deeply with a sound itself" (telephone interview, April 1994).

Louie was profoundly influenced by the experimental work she carried out with the American professor and composer, Robert Erickson, who specialized in timbre (personal interview, June 1993). Even before studying with Erickson (who had taught Oliveros in the 1950s), Louie had always been

attracted to the "sound" of music. But, as a novice in Vancouver, she had "just [been] wrestling with how to write notes" (personal interview, June 1993). Now that she felt more competent in the actual writing of music, Louie could devote more attention to the search for creative and original timbres. She attended lectures by Erickson, took his course called "New Instrumental Resources" and had private lessons with him (personal interview, June 1993).

Louie's training in California is to be noted as a rare occurrence among Canadian composers, who most frequently chose more structured programmes offered at universities in Montreal, Toronto, New York, France, or Germany. As an undergraduate at the University of British Columbia, Louie learned how to play the piano, and about the techniques of composition. In California, she did not learn much about structure, but rather explored the intuitive side of music, the colour of sound, and was introduced to the free atmosphere of experimentation in music (telephone interview, April 1994). Louie's sense of colours, especially, was influenced by the sensuous and tantalizing sounds she heard in the experiments at graduate school (telephone interview, April 1994).

Other than her timbric experiments with Erickson, Louie never studied orchestration formally. Although she eventually bought a book of orchestration to learn the basics, she did not take an orchestration class during her formal studies because she never expected to become a composer (Louie 1992).

Instead of learning the ABC's of orchestration, as Trevor Wishart suggests for today's composers, by experimenting on "polytimbral synthesizers and the computer-based sequencer" (Wishart 1992, 567), Louie proceeded by a process of trial and error with real instruments. She asked fellow-student performers to help her learn about various aspects of their instruments, including sound in different registers, technical difficulties, colour in different instrumental combinations, tempi possibilities, and so on (Louie 1992). Louie's direct, "hands on" approach in learning about instruments and orchestration may have helped her earn a fine reputation as a writer of orchestral music. Not only does her work reveal an active quest for novel sounds, striking combinations of musical colours and an array of timbres, but it also reflects a thorough knowledge of orchestral instruments and an expertise in ensemble writing.

Conservative Compositional Techniques

Louie tended to prefer traditional ways of writing music, despite her training in California. With Oliveros, especially, Louie was introduced to, what she referred to as, the "wild side of music-making" (Parker 1989, 2). Her studies and participation in student concerts, which ranged from traditional classical music to avant-garde theatre pieces, opened her ears to new music and sounds (Louie n.d.[a]). In

retrospect, she realized that, for her, UCSD was the best university she could have chosen because it focused exclusively on contemporary music (Elliott 1986). Furthermore, she confessed that had she not gone to California, she probably would not have become a composer, or at least, not a successful one (telephone interview, April 1994).

Nevertheless, she admitted that she had a "rough time at graduate school." Although she often enjoyed participating in experiments in music, she was not always interested in incorporating many of the adventurous, state-of-the-art idioms and techniques into her own composition (Kaptainis 1985, E12). Rather than the avant-garde theatrics, meditation techniques, improvisation, and chance music adopted by her professors and fellow students, Louie (like so many Canadian composers who choose not to slavishly follow international trends [Keillor 1992, 978]) decided to remain loyal to more traditional ways of writing music: "I wrote music on paper, and I wrote real notes down, [notes of fixed pitch and duration] and I didn't use chance procedures, although I knew about them" [sic] (interview by Kaptainis 1985, 12; telephone interview, April 1994).⁷ Louie explained that, when judging her music, critics were often surprised at the "tame" music being written by a student of Oliveros (telephone interview, April 1994).

⁷For more information on the conservative tradition in Canadian music, see (Keillor 1984).

Louie did not always feel comfortable working with electronics either. She had not been particularly attracted to electronic music, nor did she know much about it when she entered university as an undergraduate in Vancouver. Nevertheless, she still wished to become acquainted with this new technology of music. She confessed:

I was, at the beginning, very frightened, being in a studio with all those machines and gadgets and not knowing anything. But I was determined to learn about them because I needed to, because electronic music is a language of our time.

(Schulman 1980, 20)

However, even after studying with Hultburg, who became the director of the UBC Electronic Music Studio a year before Louie began undergraduate studies, she "left UBC," according to Lloyd Dykk of the Vancouver Sun, "with a dislike of electronic music, even a fear" (Dykk 1980, B14).

At graduate school, Louie worked in the electroacoustic medium under the guidance of Oliveros, who was a founding member of the San Francisco Tape Center (Schulman 1980, 20).³ While she was a student with Oliveros, Louie wrote several electroacoustic pieces. Louie's work for four-channel tape, Molly (1975), was a thesis piece required to complete her graduate degree. The work received international attention when it was performed in a series of concerts organized by the

³The San Francisco Tape Center was one of the first institutes of its kind in North America (Schulman 1980, 20).

Ripert International Festival of Electronic Music in 1975. Despite the apparent skill that she had in the medium, Louie still felt that she did not fully understand electronics when she graduated (Louie 1992).

Louie finally realized that she had always worked very hard--too hard--to make electronics sound less "mechanical" and more "humane." She had constantly preferred to use electronics, according to Michael Schulman, "to create colourful, impressionistic atmospheres rather than ... science-fiction sound-effects" (Schulman 1980, 20). In an interview published in 1987, she confided:

[Electronic music] is very intriguing. It really has affected the way I hear. As for getting my hands on the equipment, it's less interesting to me now than it was at that time [when she was teaching electronic music 1974-1980].

I got tired of the kind of clinical sounds that you get, because that's the way the technology works. I worked very hard, actually, at making the electronic sounds sound very human. And it took so much longer than having a flute player do it. Then I decided[,] [']I'm working against what the technology is there for.['] (Goddard 1987, 53-54)

Nevertheless, along with her participation in the sonic meditation group with Pauline Oliveros and the timbric experiments with Robert Erickson, Louie gave credit to the electronic medium for having influenced her unique treatment of instrumental colour (Beatty 1989). Most of Louie's compositions in the electroacoustic medium--Pale Delicates (1971), Molly (1975), Lotus (1977), and a piano piece with or

without tape, Dragon Bells (1978)--were written while she was living in California. After this period, the composer wrote Incantations (1980) for clarinet and tape, and finally Earth Cycles (1987) for accordion and pre-recorded tape. Her acoustic string piece O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould (1982) shows influences from the electronic medium as well (Keillor 1992).

Introduction to Asian Music

A sudden flourish of interest in foreign cultures and music was a wide spread trend in the 1960s and 1970s in the United States, as well as in Canada. In the search for new values, for different morals, and as part of the new-found openness and sensitivity to non-white cultures, people began to adopt or to seek out alternative lifestyles. Canadian musicologist George Proctor situated the interest in Asian culture of the 1960s and 1970s as part of the "romantic" spirit which traditionally drew from Asiatic sources for inspiration (Proctor 1980, 178).

Several factors could perhaps have influenced a sector of the western population to turn towards the east for inspiration in the 1960s and 1970s. Cheaper air fare and the advent of charter planes made foreign lands like India, and Indonesia much more accessible. In North America, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's conception of Canada as a Pacific as well as an Atlantic country also helped to focus attention on

Asia. Trudeau's visits to Pacific Rim countries in the early 1970s could not but speed the normalization of diplomatic relations between Canada and Asian countries (Savoie 1979, 143-147). Relations between Canada and China, for example, were officially recognized in 1970, before both that of the United Nations and of the United States (Savoie 1979, 145; Trudeau 1993, 164).

In music communities, the appearance of "UNESCO" and "Nonesuch" recordings of ethnic music in the 1970s and visiting virtuoso musicians, such as the sitarist, Ravi Shankar, could also have sparked interest in ethnic musics (Mott, telephone interview, April 1994). In addition, the prolonged 1930s stay of Canadian musician Colin McPhee in Bali attracted the attention of the North American musical community. McPhee's subsequent compositions, recordings, and books (which were influenced by Indonesian culture) as well as his professorship at the University of California, (Anon. 1992, 838-89) most probably inspired many music students, such as Robert Aitken, Harry Somers, and Elliot Weisgarber to discover the wonders of Asian and Indonesian music and culture.⁹

It is surprising to learn that Louie, who lived for five years in Vancouver's Chinatown and whose three grandparents were born in China, had to go to graduate school in California

⁹ For additional information on Canadian composers mentioned in this thesis, see articles on these composers in: Kallmann, Helmut and Potvin, Gilles, eds. 1992.

to be introduced to Asian music (Schulman 1980). Oddly enough, it was a student of Italian origin at UCSD who encouraged her to discover her musical heritage. Louie explained:

At that time I was very good friends with a young composer from Illinois named Peter Salemi. He's of Italian background himself, but he was really involved in oriental music and played the hichiriki, a Japanese double-reed instrument, and the sho, a multiple bamboo-reed instrument. I used to listen to him practice [sic] all the time, and he tried to get me interested, naturally enough, in Chinese music. And I thought, ['W]hat's Chinese music?['] I considered myself simply an avant-garde composer!

(Interview by Schulman 1980, 16)

Salemi encouraged Louie to take lessons on the seven-stringed, fretless Chinese zither, called ch'in,¹⁰ with the expert Tsun-Yuen Lui. Not only did Louie learn about the subtle nuances and ornamentation so important in ch'in music, but she was also delighted to discover the instrument's wide range of timbre:

On the instrument there are so many different colouristic devices. [It's] a very rich and wonderful instrument. ... [H]armonics on the ch'in are exquisite. They're clear; they're very bell-like. Very, very beautiful.

(Personal Interview, June 1993)

Louie was also exposed to Korean, Japanese, Indonesian, and North Indian raga music at graduate school, in part through the visits and recitals of numerous foreign artists

¹⁰Alternate spelling: "qin."

(Schulman 1980; Parker 1989). She first studied these types of music and then began to experiment with some of their components, including melody, rhythm, timbre, tonality, and ornamentation. Louie's research into Indonesian gamelan music, for instance, eventually led her to experiment with shifting accents and other minimalistic traits (Parker 1989, 39).

Twentieth-Century Music

In addition to world musics, Louie studied the works of well-known twentieth-century composers, such as Stravinsky, Bartók, Berio, Ligeti, Penderecki, Boulez, and Terry Riley. Louie was especially interested in these composers' treatment of sound (Parker 1989, 3). Moreover, the composer stated that her examination of Webern's work and "an analysis" of the compact forms used in Brahms' Klavierstücke Op. 119 and Schoenberg's Sechs Kleine Klavierstücke op. 19 later contributed to her tendency to compose short pieces and movements (Parker 1989; Dykk 1980). Louie's use of compact structures is exemplified in her composition, Pearls (1980), which consists of seven short movements lasting about two minutes each (Dykk 1980; Schulman 1980).

Early Recognition and Financial Support

Through grants, special concerts and commissions, Louie was encouraged to continue pursuing a career in composition while she was studying in the United States. In the summers of 1971 and 1972, the Canada Council awarded Louie two short-term grants for composition, followed by a full-term grant when she graduated in 1974 (Louie et al. n.d.). The Canada Council again lent Louie support by awarding her a travel grant to attend the 1976 premiere of her septet Lament for a Canadian Tragedy 1970 (1970) in Vancouver (Louie et al. n.d.). This work, which was Louie's first composition written in graduate school (in reaction to Canada's "October Crisis") was premiered in a concert of new music organized by Vancouver's New Music Society.

Recognition of Louie's talent came most clearly when her four-channel tape piece, Molly (1972), was chosen as part of a representative concert of North American electronic music in the Ripert International Festival of Electronic Music in 1975. (Ripert, whose mandate is to collect current trends in electronic music from all over the world, is a group funded by the French government.) As part of the festival, Louie's composition was performed in New York, Los Angeles, Berlin, Paris, London, and South America (Schulman 1980, Louie n.d. [a]).

3. Employment

During Graduate Studies

Louie held three different jobs during the time she was studying at graduate school. During the summer semester after her first year at graduate school, she returned to Vancouver and again played cocktail piano, this time at the "Airport Inn" (telephone interview, April 1994). From 1970 to 1973 Louie was also a professional copyist (Gaster 1977), an occupation that may have reinforced or helped to develop her skill in writing clear and impeccable scores.¹¹

Louie taught music while she was a graduate student as well. This was not her first exposure to teaching, as she began offering private piano lessons when she was only fourteen (Cohen 1987). Her position as a teaching assistant at UCSD from 1970 to 1973 focused on the freer, intangible side of music that she experienced while working with Oliveros. Louie's duties in the classroom consisted of teaching musical improvisation to students with a major other than music. The composer described this course as an exciting programme which helped "stimulate musical awareness, creativity, and understanding in students who had never before studied music" (Louie n.d.[a]). Louie was so enthusiastic about this programme that she incorporated much of its

¹¹ Only after the final version of a composition has been completely revised and painstakingly copied by Louie, is it deposited at the Canadian Music Centre (Elliott 1986).

curriculum in a "Sound Sensitivity" course she gave to school children over ten years later (Anon. 1986a).

In the classroom, as in the cocktail lounge, Louie was put in direct contact with many people who had little formal background in music. Perhaps part of Louie's ability to move people with her music as a composer could be traced back to the skills she acquired in the cocktail lounges and in the classroom as a teacher. Not only did she learn how to communicate with formally-trained musicians, but also with the "average" cocktail-goer or student.

Following Graduation

When Louie graduated in 1974 with a Master's in Arts in Composition, the only job available to her was teaching class piano on twenty acoustic pianos--something she qualified as "a horrifying job"--as well as theory and electronic music in composition at Pasadena City College (Louie 1992). She eventually taught harmony, musicianship, and electronic music during the six years she spent at Pasadena City College. She also designed the first electronic music studio there, expanded the electronic music program, and enlarged the music library's twentieth-century repertoire (Louie n.d. [b]). While she continued working at Pasadena City College, Louie began teaching piano, theory, and music electronics at Los Angeles City College from 1976 to 1980 (Keillor 1992).

4. Louie's Search for Her Roots

Louie described her life as a composer after graduate school as "No Man's Land." While she was teaching at the two colleges, Louie did not write any music for about six years because she felt that she did not have her own voice. To journalist Liam Lacey, Louie remarked, "I wasn't feeling artistic anguish[;] ... I just didn't have to write" (Lacey 1987, E5). In an interview five years later, Louie explained:

After your formal training there's a difficult period when you have to develop your own personal musical language. There's a period when you have to gather your tools, when you have to find yourself. (Bond 1992, 24)

Because of the financial security provided by her work at the colleges, Louie did not have to try to compose for a living immediately after graduation. Instead, she gave herself time to reflect on her goal as a composer. Why would someone want to play her music rather than someone else's? What had she to offer as a composer? In a lecture, she stated:

In those six years I realized [that] I'm a unique human being on this earth, as are all of us [sic]. And once we understand that and look into ourselves, [we] open a creative door and there's a voice. (Louie 1992)

Louie's search for her identity in the 1970s could be seen to fit into a broader quest for self-identity in the western world. The traditional roles of colonies and colonizers, of women, of the church, the state, the "superpowers," and so on, had been challenged and were in the process of being redefined at this time. Many sectors of the society seemed to have been seeking to develop their own identity through travel, or the adoption of foreign cultures or alternative lifestyles. Many composers, along with Louie, had a brief hiatus in their careers in the 1970s, (Ford 1982, 240) as they struggled to find "a voice" in all the commotion. European composers, such as Stockhausen and Berio, for example, turned towards more conservative techniques in the 1970s. On the other hand, the American Terry Riley began experimenting with the repetitive patterns of minimalism (Ford 1982, 240), or what could be seen to be an influence of Indonesian gamelan music.

For her part, Louie realized that her Asian heritage helped to make her unique. From 1974 she began her "immersion" into Asian culture. She listened to Asian music, read Asian philosophy, and collected Asian poetry. She also questioned her family about her heritage, and, only about that time, asked her father the meaning of the Lion Dance at Chinese New Year (Louie 1992). She studied Chinese music again with Tsun-Yuen Lui, her ch'in teacher who taught at the University of California in Los Angeles (Keillor 1992). It is

during this period in the late seventies that she heard Gagaku (Japanese court music) for the first time. Louie was attracted to the combination of the winds, strings, and percussion and still believes that this music has been highly influential in her work (Parker 1989, 7; personal interview, June 1993).

Amid all the turmoil in California in the 1970s, and the universal quest for self-identity, Louie's attraction to Asian culture may have provided her the stronghold of moral support and guidance she needed to offset the "anything goes" atmosphere she was experiencing in the United States. Far from her family and home in Canada, ancient Asian culture may have given Louie the security and direction she then needed.

When Louie emerged from her period of study and reflection in the late seventies, she had found her voice. Eastern aspects could be noticed in the titles of her compositions: Lotus (1977), Dragon Bells (1987), and Jasmine (1980). The use of Asian percussion instruments, the incorporation of Asian or Asian-like melodies and her newly-found sense of orchestration (i.e., using forte piccolos in the high register to resemble the high-pitched and piercing Chinese suona)¹² also clearly revealed Asian influences.

As previously mentioned, Asian and Indonesian music have captivated many other Canadian composers besides Louie. Colin McPhee, for example, was the first of many Canadian composers

¹²Alternate spelling: "sona."

(such as Claude Vivier) to travel to the islands of Bali and Java for musical inspiration. Influences from gamelan music are obvious in McPhee's piece, Tabuh-Tabuhan (1936) which was written during his stay from 1931-38 in Indonesia. More recently, interest in Asian music was highlighted in the Esprit Orchestra's March 1994 concert. The evening was devoted to cross-pollinating trends from East and West, including music by Canadian composers Jon Siddall, José Evangelista and R. Murray Schafer. What is unique in Louie's relationship to Asian music, however, is that her search for musical inspiration embarked her on a personal journey of self-discovery and a quest for her own cultural heritage.

First Pieces Influenced by Asia

Lotus was Louie's first work to incorporate musical characteristics from Asia. Written for five performers and tape, the piece was commissioned and premiered in 1978 by the now disbanded contemporary music ensemble of Vancouver "Days, Months and Years to Come." This first commissioned piece set off a chain reaction of concerts, broadcasts, and media attention. Lotus was performed in Vancouver, Toronto, San Diego, the Schoenberg Institute at the University of Southern California, and was selected by the American Society of University Composers for its 1979 National Conference. The work had already been broadcast twice in Canada two years after its premiere. It was also included in a 1979 and 1980

KPFK-FM Los Angeles two-hour radio presentation dedicated to Louie's music (Schulman 1980; Louie et al. n.d.).¹³ During the 1979 radio broadcast, Lotus was heard by Bill Malloch, who co-directed the annual contemporary music Ojai Festival with Lukas Foss. Subsequently, in the summer of 1979, the Ojai Festival Association contacted Louie to ask her to help organize a concert of new Canadian works as part of the 1980 festival. The Canadian External Affairs Department gave Louie and the ensemble "Days, Months and Years to Come" a grant in order to travel to California to present Lotus and other Canadian works by Alex Pauk, Serge Garant, and Gilles Tremblay (Schulman 1980; Louie n.d. [a]). One could conclude, then, that it was the attention given to Louie's Lotus that eventually led to the presentation of a full programme of new Canadian works at the prestigious new music Ojai Festival in California.

Two other early works written after Louie's orientation towards exotic music helped her gain more recognition as a composer of contemporary music. Louie's Lotus II (1978) won a second place CAPAC (Composers, Authors, and Publishers Association of Canada) award for composition in 1978 (French 1987). Louie believes that the prestige of the CAPAC award helped to have the work premiered in March 1980 by Vancouver's New Music Society (Eatock 1986; Schulman 1980). Dragon Bells,

13. In a letter dated 21 January 1993, producer Carl Stone informed me that, in 1982, a fire in the radio station archives destroyed the programme.

for two prepared pianos and/or tape, also incorporated many musical idioms of Asian origin. This piece (and Molly) was performed in a concert sponsored by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and was later broadcast on CBC radio a month later in November 1979 (Schulman 1980).

Canada Council Support

The Canada Council continued to encourage Louie in her pursuit of a career in composition. After the Lotus works and Dragon Bells, Louie received two full-term grants in 1979 and 1980, in addition to two travel grants in 1980 from the Canada Council. The 1980 full-term grant permitted the composer to take leaves of absence from Pasadena and Los Angeles Colleges to work on the three pieces Jasmine, Pearls, and Full Circle (1980) (Schulman 1980). Louie gratefully commented, "I don't know how the councils saw the potential in me in those early days, but if I hadn't had that encouragement, I might not have continued" (Anon. 1984a, 2).

5. Canada

Decision to Return to Canada

After ten years in the United States, Louie decided to come back to Canada. She admitted:

There's nothing like California. It opened my ears, introduced me to oriental music and, in doing so, helped me to find my own voice. If I hadn't gone there I probably wouldn't have become a composer.

But I always felt like a displaced Canadian, even after 10 years. So I decided to come to Toronto.

(Littler 1984a, G2)

Toronto was Louie's first choice because of "the need, in terms of contacts, for a composer to live in a large[,] important city," where "there's so much more going on" (interviews by Bond 1992, 24; Goulet 1984, 20). Toronto was, and still is, the hub of musical activity of English-speaking Canada. Many national organizations have their head offices located there, such as the Canadian League of Composers (CLC), the Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN), and the Canadian Music Centre (CMC). The Roy Thompson Hall, the home of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, was opened in 1982. Although the same cannot currently be said of Toronto's music publishing industry, the city is also an internationally acclaimed recording centre (Kallmann et al. 1992a, 1295-96).

Louie has cited many reasons for heading north after her ten-year stay in California. She was not only homesick (Littler 1984a), but also wanted to contribute something to Canada (Chatelin 1985) and be a part of youthful Canada's artistic development (Gzowski and Co. 1987). Moreover, she felt that the Canadian grant system for artists was more supportive in Canada than in the United States:

My colleagues in the U.S. were quite envious of the grants and commissions I received through the Canada Council. I chose to come back because of this healthy situation in the arts.
(Anon. 1984a, 2)

Beyond these reasons, an unpleasant situation may have pushed Louie into making the final decision when she did. Three students in California threatened the composer because she had given them failing grades (Snider 1986). William Littler, music critic for the Toronto Star, wrote: "[i]t was after [Louie's] life had been threatened three times by her students that she decided it was time to come home" (Littler 1984b).

Back in Canada

It is perhaps the Canadian contacts that Louie had maintained during her sojourn in California, along with international exposure of her work, that permitted her to establish herself rather quickly on Canadian soil. Already in the fall of 1980, she was teaching at York University in Toronto. A year later she joined the faculty at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto (RCMT) to teach theory, harmony, and composition (Louie n.d. [a]; Cohen 1987).

Besides teaching, Louie became involved in the arts community soon after her return to Canada. She was invited by the conductor/composer Alex Pauk to an Arts Awards Dinner in Toronto in 1982. Fortunately, she happened to be seated next

to an official of Suncor Inc., a large oil company. When this senior executive learned from Louie how hard it was for contemporary composers in Canada to have their works performed, he asked how he could help. Louie directed him towards her future husband, Alex Pauk, who was then a board member on the Canadian Council of the Arts. Thanks in part to Suncor's willingness to help finance Pauk's dream of an orchestra specializing in contemporary music, Esprit Contemporain (now the Esprit Orchestra) was born in 1983 (Dick 1986; Mose 1987). Since that time, Louie has been actively involved with this Toronto-based orchestra, whose mandate is to commission, perform, and promote new Canadian orchestral works (Dick 1986).

Early Performances

Special performances of Louie's work after her return to Canada in 1980 encouraged her to continue composing. She was part of a small group of delegates invited by the Union of Soviet Composers in 1982 to attend a symposium in Armenia. On this occasion, her Dragon Bells and Pearls were performed (Cohen 1987). In March 1985 the Music Gallery in Toronto presented five of Louie's chamber works as part of its series featuring Canadian composers. The compositions selected for this occasion were Molly, Dragon Bells, Pearls, Afterimages (1981), and Music for a Thousand Autumns (1983) (Anon. 1985a).

6. 1983: Louie's Career Takes Off

Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould

Louie's career accelerated in 1983 with the premiere of O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould (1982) commissioned by the McGill String Symphony. This piece, which takes its name from the beginning of a Latin Christmas text (Burkat 1986), was the first that brought Louie widespread national attention. According to music critic Arthur Kaptainis, the work "received what can safely be called, for Canadian music, unusual acclaim" (1985, E12).

In the preface notes to the score of O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould, Louie describes the special circumstances that led her to write this composition:

Brilliant electronic images of the universe served as the initial inspiration[;] however, the news of Glenn Gould's death interrupted my focus, leaving me to reflect on mortality and the meaning of being an artist. Through this time I listened to those musical works most meaningful to me and consoled myself at the piano. I also attended the memorial service where we, as a group of 3,000 people, participated in the singing of hymns and chorales, including the beautiful Nun danket Alle Gott. The effect of that mass of people sharing a common grief was overwhelming. It was during this time that the focus of my string orchestra piece began to change, and quotes of these pieces appeared in my score in a rather fantasy-like reverie, some quite clear and untampered with, others quite distorted. Throughout the fabric of this piece are woven fragments of Bach: the chorale, the Allemande from Suite française in G, the Air on a G string, as well as the Prelude and Fugue in B juxtaposed upon one another. It ends with a quote from the last movement of Mahler's Das Lied von der Erde, 'Der Abschied - the Farewell'. ... This piece is my expression of wonder at the mysteries of music, of the universe and of being an artist, as well as an expression of grief over the premature death of a great musician. (Louie 1982)

In the 1984-85 season, journalist Roxanne Snider wrote, that the piece "with its quotations of themes by Johann Sebastian Bach and its powerful expressions of pain and joy, won critical raves when it was performed by the Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver symphony orchestras" (1986, 46). According to William Littler, the work "is one of those special pieces able to cast a spell over its listeners" (1984b, F2). In the same vein, an article from the Winnipeg Free Press read: "[G]hostly fragments of almost-or-barely recognizable music drift by. It's ethereal, disturbed,

disembodied - like floating in a limitless sound space" (Anon. 1986g, 40).

Because O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould contains passages written for up to forty-four separate string parts, only four Canadian orchestras have enough strings to play the piece. Significantly, all four orchestras, including the Calgary Symphony Orchestra, have performed it (Goddard 1987). Almost ten years after its premiere, the work was played by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in September 1992 as part of the activities commemorating the tenth anniversary of Gould's death. The composition was heard on four different occasions during the Gould conference with Louie explaining the piece to the audience beforehand (personal interview, June 1993). A performance of the piece from these concerts was rebroadcast on CBC radio in October 1992. O Magnum Mysterium has recently been recorded by the British Broadcasting Corporation for their own broadcast, and Leonard Slatkin with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra will perform the work in December 1994 (telephone interview, April 1994). The interest that this piece has incited over the past ten years indicates clearly that it deserves to be published and recorded.

Songs of Paradise

The other pivotal work of Louie's career, Songs of Paradise (1983), was commissioned and premiered by the Thunder

Bay Symphony. Songs of Paradise is one of the four pieces by Louie that has been commercially recorded - along with Cadenzas (1985, rev. 1987) for clarinet and percussion, Star-filled Night (1987) for piano solo, and Love Songs for a Small Planet (1989, rev. 1992) for choir and percussion (see Appendix B). By April 1985 Songs of Paradise, with its "accessible" style and moderate level of difficulty, had been chosen ten times by Canadian orchestras as part of their programmes (Anon. 1985c). Today, this is one of Canada's most performed orchestral pieces (Keillor 1992, 979).

In 1984, a performance of Songs of Paradise further helped Louie who was, by this time, already able to live on her earnings as a composer (Goulet 1984). Songs of Paradise was played by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO) under Andrew Davis during the Joint National Conference of the Association of Canadian Orchestras and the American Symphony Orchestra League. According to music critic, Arthur Kaptainis, Songs of Paradise "turned the heads of delegates from the American Symphony Orchestra League" (1985, E12). Furthermore, Andrew Davis, the conductor of the TSO, became interested in Louie's work and commissioned a work from her. The composition she eventually wrote for the TSO, The Eternal Earth (1986), was her first piece for a major Canadian orchestra (Dawson 1986; Elliott 1986).

A String of Commissions

The success of O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould and Songs of Paradise initiated requests for other commissions: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (1984) for Canadian pianist Robert Silverman, Music for a Celebration (1985) for Orchestra London's London, (Ontario) tenth anniversary in 1986, and a commission from the Canadian government for fanfares and, in addition, an overture The Ringing Earth (1986) for the opening ceremonies of the Royal Bank Expo'86 World Festival (Elliott 1986).

The year 1986 became a highlight of Louie's career. Three of Louie's latest works were premiered that year. Music for a Celebration, written in 1985, was first performed in January 1986. Cadenzas (1985, rev. 1987), for clarinet and percussion, was premiered in March 86, and in the same month, a performance of Louie's Music for a Thousand Autumns was programmed as part of the American Society of University Composers Festival in Toronto (Anon. 1986e). Finally, the orchestral works The Ringing Earth (three fanfares and an overture for Expo '86 in Vancouver) and The Eternal Earth were premiered in Toronto and Vancouver, respectively, within twelve days of each other in May.

Composer of the Year 1986

In mid-May 1986, this abundance of musical activity, international exposure, and performances of major works for

orchestra culminated for Louie in a most prestigious award for a Canadian composer. The Canada Music Council/Conseil canadien de la musique¹⁴ named Louie "Composer of the Year 1986" in the International Year of Canadian Music. With over twenty commissioned works (see Appendix A) and at just under thirty-seven years of age, she was one of the youngest composers ever to win the award. She was named Composer of the Year "to underline an unusually creative year marked by performances given by major Canadian orchestras from coast to coast" (Anon. 1986h).

7. Louie's Career After 1986

High Profile Louie and the Esprit Orchestra

After being named Composer of the Year, Louie was more than ever in the position to promote contemporary music. She was and is still active in raising funds for the forty-piece Esprit Orchestra that she helped found in 1983 with her husband Alex Pauk (Mose 1987). Major events to raise funds included a celebrity black-tie bingo night at Toronto's pseudo-castle Casa Loma in 1990 (Flohil 1990). At yet another

¹⁴ The Canadian Music Council/Conseil canadien de la musique was a nonprofit, government-sponsored organization consisting of 25 national organizations, 60 other music organizations or societies, 25 schools of music and 275 individual members. The organization ceased operations in 1990, although it retained its charter (Anon. 1986h; Kallmann 1992, 205).

fund-raising event, guests paid sixty dollars a plate or a thousand dollars a corporate table for an exotic Chinese dinner with Canadian contralto Maureen Forrester.

A week before an Esprit Orchestra concert, coffee chats are usually held to inform and interest potential friends and investors in the up-coming concert. The sessions typically feature performers, composers, and the conductor of the concert, as well as "extras" such as films and outings. Thanks to these information sessions and to the "Toward a Living Art Education Programme" (which is geared to interesting younger audiences in contemporary music) the Esprit Orchestra, according to Louie, has managed to acquire a diversified audience (personal interview, June 1993).

Canadian Awards

Louie is one of the few Canadian composers to have received so many awards for her work. In 1987 her work Cadenzas was nominated for the best classical composition in the Juno Awards (Louie 1987a). In the same year she won the \$2,000 solo category prize for the CAPAC-sponsored Micheline Coulombe Saint-Marcoux Awards. The prize-winning work for solo harp, From the Eastern Gate (1985, rev. 1987), was commissioned by Erica Goodman through the Ontario Arts Council (Anon. 1987a). Louie also won the 1989 Juno Award for her Songs of Paradise which had been released commercially the previous year (Keillor 1992).

Louie has twice been the recipient of a SOCAN (Society of Composers, Authors, and Music Publishers of Canada) award, which has only been established since 1990. In 1991 she won the \$10,000 prize for her Thunder Gate (1991) for violin and orchestra (MacMillan 1992).¹⁵ She won the award for the second time in 1992 for being the most performed Canadian composer (Anon. 1993b). Most recently, Louie won the Jean A. Chalmers Award for Musical Composition in May 1994.

Special Events in Canada Honouring Louie

A gala event honouring Louie in April 1987 launched a string of special performances of Louie's work in Canada. This evening dedicated to Louie and her music (which also served as a benefit for the Esprit Orchestra) was held in Toronto under the honorary patronage of Adrienne Clarkson, a widely-known television personality and president of the Canadian publishing company McClelland and Stewart.

Highlights of the gala included the world premiere of the National Film Board (NFB) and Rhombus film on Louie Eternal Earth (1987), which is the first of a ten-part series dedicated to Canadian composers. After the world premiere of the film on Louie, Erica Goodman gave the second world premiere of the evening with her performance of Louie's CAPAC prize-winning composition, The Eastern Gate, for solo harp.

¹⁵ This award was shared with Denis Gougeon who was the other first place winner that year (MacMillan 1992).

Louie's Demon Music (from Sanctuary [1982]), which was inspired by the Chinese Lion Dance in Vancouver's Chinatown, was also performed by the Esprit Orchestra.

Other notable musical events in Canada for Louie included the performance of Louie's Expo '86 fanfares at the opening of the National Gallery in Ottawa in 1988 (Anon. 1988b). Louie was also honoured as the composer-in-residence at the Nova Scotia Festival in Halifax in the spring of 1992—the second composer-in-residence to be invited to the festival after Pierre Boulez. Ten of Louie's chamber works were performed on this occasion by musicians from Canada and the United States (Bond 1992). On a different note, Canadian astronaut Steve MacLean took a cassette recording of Canadian music, including Louie's "Star-filled Night" (1987), on the space flight of 20 October 1992, for his own personal listening (Mott, telephone interview, 12 April 1994).¹⁶ Finally, in January 1993, Louie's Gallery Fanfares, Arias and Interludes (1993), which involved the public and musicians of the Esprit Orchestra in two hours of music and movement, was performed at the reopening of the Art Gallery of Ontario in January 1993 (personal interview, June 1993).

¹⁶ Other Canadian music on the cassette included David Mott's "Regarding Starlight" (1981), jazz music by Phil Warren and Time Warp, as well as pieces by Patterson, Bruce Cockburn, Bare Naked Ladies, and the Rankin Family (Mott, telephone interview, 12 April, 1994).

International Tours

Highlights in Louie's career since the late 1980s include travelling with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO) on two international tours. Louie's composition, The Eternal Earth, was performed by the TSO on a European tour of eleven countries in 1986 (Kraglund 1986b). Unfortunately, the "Canadian content" of this tour became a controversial issue. The orchestra, under Andrew Davis, was apparently reluctant to perform a Canadian piece in Europe - even during the International Year of Canadian Music. Consequently, the lack of Canadian music in some concerts of the tour generated complaints from three local critics (Beckwith and Cooper 1988; Fraser 1986). Despite the controversy, the orchestra did play Louie's piece (which had been premiered by TSO several months previously), if only in five of the total seventeen concerts.

A few years later the TSO, this time under Gunther Herbig, commissioned a second work from Louie. The orchestra specifically requested a work with Asian characteristics to take on its 1990 Pacific Rim Tour of North America, Australia, Singapore, Taiwan, and Japan (Littler 1990b). Financial assistance from Floyd S. Chalmers, a patron of Canadian arts, enabled Louie to accompany the orchestra (Anon. 1990b). After the tour, she exclaimed:

You know--everyone knows!--how rare it is for contemporary composers to hear their work played even once, let alone two or three times. But to hear a piece played 11 times in a row, and in all sorts of surroundings, was a marvellous experience. Even better was having so many of the Symphony's players tell me how much they enjoyed playing the piece.

(Interview by Flohil 1990, 10)

Performances of Louie's Work in Asia

Other performances of Louie's work in Asia, besides those on the TSO Pacific Rim Tour, merit special attention. In 1988 Music for Piano (1982) was performed for the first time in Asia at a Royal Conservatory benefit recital in Hong Kong (Anon. 1988b). Later that same year, Louie's Music for a Thousand Autumns was played at the "World Music Days Festival" in Hong Kong under the auspices of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) and the Asian Composers League. Of a total of 135 entries, Louie's work and another by David Eagle were the only Canadian pieces to be heard during the festival whose theme was the East-West connection (Wyman 1988-89). Finally, the Canadian pianist Jon Kimura Parker played Louie's Scenes from a Jade Terrace (1988) in 1991 in the ceremonies to mark the opening of the new Canadian Embassy in Japan (Louie et al. n.d.).

European Performances of Louie's Work

European performances of Louie's work since the late 1980s have been numerous. Some of these performances include From the Eastern Gate at the Festival of Liège in Belgium in 1988 (Anon. 1988b). The Ringing Earth overture was played in Europe by the Montreal Symphony Orchestra (MSO) on its 1989 intercontinental tour (Louie et al. n.d.). In October 1989 Scenes From a Jade Terrace was performed by Jon Kimura Parker in Yugoslavia, England, Wales, and Hungary (Louie n.d.[a]).

Commercial Recording and Publishing

The first commercial recordings of Louie's work appeared soon after she became Composer of the Year in 1986 (see Appendix B). The compact disc Impact (1986), conceived and produced by Centrediscs, included Louie's Cadenzas along with works by Jean Piché, Gary Kulesha, and Serge Arcuri. Not only was Impact Centrediscs' first compact disc, but the recording was also produced to coincide with the International Year of Canadian Music in 1986.

In 1988, Louie's high profile encouraged the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) release of Songs of Paradise, which had been premiered five years before. Canadian pianist Christina Petrowska included Louie's Star-filled Night (1987) on a recording dedicated solely to piano music. In 1993,

Louie's composition, Love Songs for a Small Planet (1989, rev. 1992) was released on a recording of the same name by Centrediscs. That same year, Gordon V. Thompson published Louie's Music for Piano, a piece which is now listed in the Royal Conservatory of Music's (RCM) practical examination list of repertoire for Grade Nine piano. In addition, Louie's Music for Piano will soon be released on a CBC compact disk recording (Anon. 1994). Publications of Louie's Scenes from a Jade Terrace, I Leap Through the Sky with Stars (1991), and a selection of Grade Five (RCM) solo piano pieces are forthcoming (see Appendix C).

8. Louie in the 1990s

Louie's career has been on a steady rise. For over ten years she has been writing music every day, often for as much as fourteen hours a day to keep up to the demand for her work. Despite this relentless demand for commissions, Louie no longer knows if she will be able to compose as much music in the next few years because of her two young children. In June 1993, she regretfully commented:

It's very, very hard [to compose with children at home]. I mean, you have to really want to do it. ... You give up a lot to be an artist. And if you try to have a family and lead a relatively normal life, it doesn't fit very well with what you have to be in order to be a good artist.

(Personal Interview, June 1993)

Louie's predicament is perhaps linked to what Roseanne Kydd believes to be a stumbling block to women artists. She explains:

Aussi longtemps que l'ensemble du corps social considérera l'éducation des enfants et le travail ménager comme le domaine exclusif des femmes, seules les femmes célibataires ou héroïques auront assez d'énergie pour mener une vie productive sur le plan de la création artistique.

(Kydd 1987, 21)

Clearly, Louie belongs to the category of "heroic" women. For lack of time, she frequently gives telephone interviews at 11 p.m. and often copies scores in the evening until 2 a.m. (telephone interview, April 1994). How long must women lead such lives in order to survive professionally?

9. Summary

Louie was first exposed to Asian music while she was growing up with her family in Vancouver's Chinatown, although her familiarity with Asian music at this time was minimal. Her piano lessons and the relationship she had with her piano teachers helped to nurture her love of music. The guidance of Professor Cortland Hultberg at the University of British Columbia proved crucial in providing Louie with the basic tools of theory and composition, and in directing the composer

to the University of California in San Diego, a major centre for contemporary music in avant-garde composition.

Louie's ten-year stay in the United States left an indelible mark on her as a composer. An injury prohibiting intensive piano practice finally obliged Louie to turn seriously to composition. Her main composition teacher, Pauline Oliveros, imbued Louie with the sense of mysticism and the intangible aspects of music, while at the same time, holding the composer accountable for every note she wrote. Louie's other composition teacher, Robert Erickson, helped Louie develop her trademark interest in timbre and quest for novel colour combinations.

After graduate school, Louie continued to investigate many aspects of Asian culture and to seek out her roots. Grants from Canada at this time and special performances of Louie's music encouraged the composer to pursue a career as a professional composition of contemporary music.

In 1980, Louie returned to Canada and quickly established herself as a respected composer of Canadian contemporary classical music with the 1983 premieres of O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould and Songs of Paradise. In 1986 she was named Composer of the Year and took advantage of that title and media attention to continue promoting contemporary music.

This chapter has traced Louie's development as a composer and her rapid rise to success in the Canadian music scene. The next chapter will explore Louie's image as portrayed by the media.

Chapter Two

Media Images of Louie

Contemporary composers in Canada in general have not been granted much attention, and it is not unusual that information pertaining to them is scattered throughout newspapers and magazine articles. Typically, the bulk of my secondary sources on Louie and her music came largely from information provided by the media, rather than from scholarly sources supported by solid documentation (see Bibliography). In examining articles on Louie, I tried to discover which issues were given priority by the media and proposed possible reasons for this attention. I then decided to compare what I believed to be the media's construction of Louie with information I gathered personally from the composer during a public lecture and my interviews with her. My goal was to discover if any contradictions appeared between the media image of Louie and my own perception and understanding of the composer and her music.

Media attention towards Louie grew after she was named Composer of the Year in 1986. Numerous articles appeared in periodicals and newspapers, and a documentary film, Eternal Earth, was premiered at a special gala event in 1987. After becoming Composer of the Year, Louie also appeared on television for the first time. In 1987, she was featured in

a weekly episode of Gzowski and Co., a Canadian television programme which typically profiles Canadian personalities and issues. That same year, a thirteen-minute interview with Louie was broadcast on the public affairs show W5 on Canadian Television Network (CTV).

Since her return to Canada in 1980, the media view of Louie has tended to revolve around several themes. The media has frequently portrayed Louie as a composer of ethnic origin, and has challenged the traditionally severe and distant image of classical contemporary composers by highlighting certain aspects of her personality. The media has also discussed Louie's skills as a composer, her career image and her promotional activities. The themes selected by the press are used here as keys for understanding what apparently is seen by the Canadian press as issues important to discuss and acknowledge in order to understand the composer's life in music.

1. Louie as a Chinese-Canadian

The media has consistently focused on Louie's ethnic background. Without a doubt, Louie has been affected by her Chinese heritage, but the media has generally omitted to mention--except in rare articles, such as those by Schulman (1980) and Bond (1990)--that it has not only been the music of

China that has helped shape Louie as a composer and person. In fact, not only has she been heavily influenced by the music of China, but also that of Indonesia, Japan, Korea, and Africa (personal interview, June 1993). Furthermore, Louie's music is highly eclectic, embracing a wide range of styles of which the Asian or world music idiom is only a part.

In addition, scores of Canadian composers besides Louie were influenced by world musics, especially in the 1970s. Drawing on idioms from eastern sources was nothing new. In fact, it was a wide-spread trend. Robert Aitken, Harry Somers, Gilles Tremblay, R. Murray Schafer, Claude Vivier, Elliot Weisgarber, and Steven Gellman, for example, all travelled extensively in the east (Keillor 1992, 979; Ford 1992, 521). Jon Siddall wrote several works for the gamelan orchestra and was founder and member of the Evergreen Club Gamelan Ensemble (Hatch 1992, 1216). David Mott's studies into eastern music and culture introduced him to Zen Buddhism and the martial art of Tai-chi, which have both influenced his life and work (Knight 1992, 892). Weisgarber taught Asian music at university and became proficient on the shakuhachi, a traditional bamboo flute, and toured Canada with a koto player (Ford and Gooch 1992, 1394).

However, unlike many Canadian composers active in the 1970s, Louie did not travel to the east or live there. She did not give courses on world music or teach non-western instruments, nor did she found world music performing

ensembles, write specifically for world music ensembles (such as the gamelan orchestra), or tour the country performing on eastern instruments. And yet many "white" Canadian composers did just that. But has the media placed heavy emphasis on the ethnic background of all composers who took an interest in world musics? Is it solely because of her Chinese heritage that Alexina Louie received so much attention on her ethnic background?

Louie's ties to Chinese culture through her ethnic background, it is presumed, are highlighted in the documentary film Eternal Earth. The film leisurely follows Louie as she visits, and comments upon, Vancouver's Chinatown where she grew up. She is shown in the street enjoying and applauding a Chinese Lion Dance, which played a major role, we are told, in the composition of her Demon Music. The film stresses the link between the Chinese Lion dance music and Louie's piece by interspersing footage of musicians playing Louie's Demon Music with shots of traditional Chinese musicians performing the Lion Dance.

During the television programme Gzowski and Co. interviewer Peter Gzowski seems to allude to the concept of "racial memory" by questioning Louie as to whether she is drawn to certain types of music more than "other people" because, in Gzowski's words, of her genes. The composer is invited to play the traditional globular flute, perhaps to

compliment her ethnic background, or to highlight her interest in exotic instruments.

The television show "Beyond the Call" (on the programme W5) places Louie in another Chinatown, this time in Toronto. Louie's ties to Chinese culture are again underscored by interviewing her on the streets of Toronto's Chinatown and in a Chinese restaurant.

By labelling Louie a "Chinese-Canadian" composer, the media has shown the usual tendency to depict people in the most simplistic terms. Louie's complex cultural and musical heritage has been neatly swept aside to expose only the eastern aspects of her make-up. This type of "ethnic labelling," which frequently matches only a fraction of a person's background, has also been applied to "Chinese-Canadian" composers Hope Lee and Chan Ka Nin who were born in Taiwan (of mainland Chinese parents) and Hong Kong, respectively (Bazzana 1992, 739; MacMillan 1992, 246). It is all the more inappropriate to view Louie as "Chinese," because she was born a Canadian, as were her parents.

The media could be using this "Chinese-Canadian" label as a means to benefit Canada's current image as a pluralistic and non-discriminatory society that promotes multiculturalism. Musicologist Timothy McGee writes:

Canada is unique in the modern world in that the preservation of these cultures [immigrant cultures] is consciously encouraged by such diverse means as cultural centres, radio broadcasts, and celebrations of music, dance, and crafts. Both the government and individual citizens support this effort.
(McGee 1985, 105)

However, one could argue that Louie's current "Chinese-ness" is firmly hinged on the political climate of our time. For example, when considering the despicable treatment Canada reserved for people of Japanese origin during the Second World War, it is hard to imagine that the media would have publicized the Japanese origin of a Canadian composer living in Canada at that time (or the origin of a "German-Canadian" composer). It will be interesting to see how the media will treat the issue of ethnicity as the current economic crisis seems to be prompting a renewal of racial discrimination in this country.

In addition to the film and television programmes, Louie and her "Chinese connection" are presented in the more substantial articles on the composer. Writers such as Michael Schulman (1980) and Courtney Bond (1990) both trace Louie's quest for her roots, but, at the same time, take care to mention other musical influences on the composer. Liam Lacey (1987) briefly compares Louie's philosophy towards her work with that of Chinese calligraphy. In Lacey's article, Louie claims that Chinese calligraphy is "not just decorative....

It's from the soul. I find a strong connection with this and my music" (Lacey 1987, E5). But, in the same article, Louie does not limit herself to her Chinese cultural background alone. She affirms:

I'm Oriental and I'm a woman, and both of those things are part of my writing. I'm not an Oriental woman artist, though. I'm an artist who uses what she has.

(Lacey 1987, E5)

In other words, Louie feels that she is not limited to artistic elements or idioms that come from China, or even all of Asia, or those that may be attributed to women. Rather, Louie regards these two components as only a fraction of what she has to offer as a contemporary artist.

Louie considers her Chinese heritage as a very personal part of herself which she uses as an enrichment to her life and music, and not as a political tool (personal interview, 7 April 1994). She finds the attention placed on her heritage (and on the fact that she is a woman) rather than on her music, as "aggravating." Because she has been continually confronted by issues dealing with her identity, Louie has become very self-conscious about who she is. She would much rather be showered with attention for the high quality of her

music, rather than for aspects of her personal life for which she has had no control (personal interview, April 1994).

I would argue that the media has portrayed Louie in a misleading way by highlighting her Chinese heritage at the expense of her complex cultural background. The media has tended to restrict Louie's use of world musics to those of China, rather than to report on her unique way of combining and adapting characteristics from a variety of musical sources in her own music. In addition, few articles explain that Louie's interest in eastern music was part of a wide-spread trend or that she became fascinated with an array of exotic musical idioms while she was living and studying in California. The truth is, without this American experience, Louie might never have become the composer she is today. Here is a good example of how the media has constructed the composer by a very conscious selection of images that only portray her in relation to Chinese culture. Typically, this representation is partial.

2. Deconstruction of the Contemporary Composer

In Canada, one of the major forces that have shaped the arts in recent years is the decline in public funding and a heightened dependency on corporate sponsorship, which is

itself contingent upon economic growth. To outline this situation and its repercussions on the arts, Alan Lessem wrote:

One of the most important facts of today's musical life is that the production apparatus is fueled by economic power which has come to be concentrated in just a few hands far removed from an active engagement with music. This 'culture,' [symphony, opera, etc. supported by an economic power base] though somewhat protected from market forces by public funding (at least in Canada), is nevertheless too closely enmeshed with big business to be independent of the entertainment industry. The apparatus of marketed music is one that encroaches, too, on contemporary serious music, however much composers today may wish to see themselves as being free of it. The self-protective aura in which contemporary music concerts are typically wrapped does not mean that they are immune from forces operating in the world outside of them.

(Lessem in Burckhardt et al. 1989, 120)

In his statements, Lessem implies that "good" culture is one that is far removed or "protected" from commercial forces. Although I do not share this view, Lessem's statements here are important because they recognize the recent arrival of commercialism into the "realm" of "classical" music.

A most noticeable effect of commercial marketing on Adorno's concept of "official culture" has been the recent rash of younger classical performers who have abandoned the perceived bland or "stiff" image of classical music and have

"adopted" a new "look." The British violinist Nigel Kennedy, for example, is marketed as a "punk." Alluring photos of violinist Sophie Mutter and Canadian cellists Shauna Kolston and Ofra Harnoy reveal attractive and fashionable women whose images appear to be incompatible with dull intellectualism.

Because of the recent emphasis on marketing and "packaging" commodities in the arts, a new image is also being applied to contemporary composers. As composer Barry Truax points out, "whether a composer is 'commercial' or not, he or she is irrevocably affected by commercial forces within the society" (Truax in Burckhart et al. 1989, 131). In the liner notes of his compact disc Akasha (1992), jean-clad, "nice guy" Canadian contemporary composer Glenn Buhr, for example, is shown bashfully looking over his score with the conductor. And Louie has been covered in Flare magazine as one of six "Classical Beauties," (six Canadian women successful in "classical" music) accompanied by pictures and a description of wardrobe and make-up (Anon. 1987c).

The media portrayed Louie as a high profile success story "star" especially at the time she was named Composer of the Year in May 1986. Journalists Jim Lewis and Alan Barnes highlighted the gala premiere of The Ringing Earth with the Prince and Princess of Wales and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in attendance (Lewis and Barnes 1986). Roxanne Snider explained that, "Louie, whose compositions are featured in glamorous premières and galas across the country, has become

the brightest star on the Canadian contemporary music scene" (Snider 1986, 46). Liam Lacey, writing for Toronto's Globe and Mail, claimed that, "at 36, Louie is the most remarkable young composer in Canada" (Lacey 1987, E5).

Louie's celebrity status was occasionally treated as a novelty in some of these articles. Even the media seemed surprised to realize that a Canadian composer of contemporary classical music could be successfully marketed as a media star. Richard Flohil, writing for the Canadian Composer magazine, noted:

Concert music composers rarely find themselves becoming media figures. Alexina Louie [sic] juggles the demands of the publicity machine and the demand for her music with style, grace and a sense of humour.

(Flohil 1990, 10)

Louie's portrayal as a star in the media was sometimes met with surprise and wonder, especially because, one could argue, that the appearance of a successful woman of ethnic background as a contemporary classical composer was such a novel phenomenon, most particularly in Canada where media coverage of classical composers was not wide-spread.¹ In addition to the "star" image, deconstruction of Louie as a

¹ The lack of recognition is even apparent in more academic circles. Canada's first biography with analyses of musical examples was only written in 1975 at the initiative of the Canadian Music Centre. Composer Brian Cherney documented the life and music of Harry Somers, one of Canada's most eminent composers.

"serious, academic" contemporary composer has been accomplished by showing her as a natural, open person. The documentary Eternal Earth, for example, shows her in Vancouver's Chinatown gawking at huge almond cookies, chatting about her father's headless chickens, and joking about aphrodisiacs with her husband. In Gzowski and Co., she shamelessly displays a scar on her knee from an unfortunate mishap while roller skating. In this way, the Canadian media has shown Louie as a contemporary artist devoid of snobism or elitism.

The image of the "normal and nice" contemporary composer has perhaps worked in Louie's favour. She has been concerned for many years to dispel the image of contemporary classical composers as being aloof and apart from society. On the contrary, she has wanted the public to know that composers are "human beings with thoughts and feelings" (Dick 1986, 10) who are "affected by the same things you are" (Siskind 1986, C1). Fortunately, the documentary film and television programmes, especially, managed to bring Louie down from the pedestal (on which the public often isolates composers - notably dead, classical ones), and introduced her as a relaxed, fun-loving person who likes to laugh.

Louie's aura of naturalness, however, is taken one step too far, I believe, in a short article by Anne Francis. This journalist portrays Louie as a busy, committed, and talented artist, but also as a person of child-like simplicity:

Alexina Louie has a collection of wooden toys whose ingenious sounds bring giggles to her normally serious face. She brings out a carrot, ... which makes a curious sound as she "slices" through the Velcro with a knife. A duck's rubber webbed feet slap along the hardwood floor.

....

She glances toward a toy lobster whose pincers snap shut as it's pulled along the floor, and smiles. 'Well, we can't be serious all the time.'

(Francis 1990, 75)

This condescending and misleading representation of Louie is insulting. Perhaps the journalist's images (giggles, carrot, curious sound, rubber webbed feet) are used here as a sensationalist "gimmick" to attract readership. In the name of commercialism and the industrial mentality, perhaps Francis felt she had to stoop to a "Hollywood gossip" type of discourse in Toronto Life. The strategic placing of these lines at the very beginning and end of the article seems to indicate the writer's desire to give the reader a powerful first and last impression of Louie.

In her "over-deconstruction" of Louie as "cute" and non-threatening, Francis could be attempting to make the readers "feel good" by placing them in a position of superiority over Louie. Or perhaps Francis is reconstructing the "artist/genius/eccentric" persona in this portrait. Barry Truax explains that:

[t]he composer's creativity is seen as the act of genius or special talent, something unteachable and irrational, removed from everyday life and actions.... The composer is seen as slightly removed from society.
(Truax in Burckhardt et al. 1989, 130)

Whatever the motives, Francis's images unquestionably do damage to Louie's credibility as a mature, competent, and professional artist.

The treatment of Louie's character could be seen as part of a trend to focus on musicians' personalities and physical appearance, rather than on their music. This emphasis on the "packaging" and presentation of musicians is, of course, the norm in the commercial music industry. "Gossip" about Louie's private life and "flashy" photos, rather than discussions about the beauty and complexity of her music, could be perceived as a market ploy to attract the widest possible readership. In other words, this treatment is attractive to the media, because it has the potential to be grasped or understood by a large number of people (including, at times, the reporting journalist). By being depicted as a media "star" or as a "fun" composer, Louie manages to foil the unhappy stereotypes of the stodgy, tweed-coated composer of classical music or the intellectual, "music-as-nuclear-physics" composer of contemporary music (Pennycook 1992, 563). Her unusual image(s) and popularity were a boon to the media, according to popular music critic, Peter Goddard, because

stories on Louie would "sell" well. Louie was, in the jargon reserved to journalists, a "great copy" (Goddard 1987, 50).

The focus on personalities, rather than on talents, actually has an historical precedence, especially for women. In her article "Les femmes compositeurs au Canada: données sociologiques et historiques" (1987), Roseanne Kydd explains that Irish composer Augusta Holmès (who lived in Paris and was a contemporary of Saint-Saëns) was frequently judged as a woman and rarely as a musician. In an article discussing Holmès' brilliant career, music critic Rollo Myers wrote that,

sa réputation avait surtout comme fondements
l'exubérance de sa personnalité pleine de
dynamisme et, évidemment, ses charmes
physiques irrésistibles.

(Myers in Kydd 1987, 18)

More recently, but in the same vein, Canadian composer Anita Perry considers it a disadvantage that she is attractive and blond. "Some people," she admits, "can't believe a blonde, a 'dumb blonde' [sic] woman can write anything of import" (Fenner 1985, 25). She also feels that her "eccentric" personality is examined more often than her music (ibid.). Perhaps the emphasis placed on personalities rather than talent, especially as far as women are concerned, could be seen as an historical trend which has "aggravated" many successful female artists besides Louie.

Aside from focusing on Louie as a woman for her physical appearance or her "charming" personality, it could be argued that, in the search for a new persona in contemporary music, the media has constructed Louie as a warm and open person with everyday interests in order to represent the archetype of Canada's perceived innocence, naturalness and unsophistication in a "pioneer" society. At the same time, the portrayal of Louie as a "star" fits into the current commercialism and marketing of "serious" music. As journalist Victoria Fenner remarks:

'Marketing' has become one of the most frequently used buzzwords wherever 2 or 3 [sic] are gathered in the name of art. Artists of all genres are just beginning to realize that the days of abundant Canada Council grants are numbered, if not gone.

(Fenner 1985, 24)

3. The Struggling Composer and Promoter

After World War II, when Canadian composers such as John Weinzwieg, Violet Archer and Barbera Pentland began to emerge as a distinct group apart from their pre-war colleagues, the struggle to have Canadian contemporary music recognized and appreciated began in earnest. Canadian composer Anita Perry echoes the opinions of innumerable Canadian composers today when she states that "contemporary composers must not only

sell [market] their compositions, they must [also] educate the public about new music" (Fenner 1985, 24).

Accordingly, scores of contemporary composers have been involved in promotion and education. Some, such as producers David Jaeger and Gary Hayes, have become active in radio. R. Murray Schafer taught public school students in the sixties, and today the John Adaskin Project still helps to promote Canadian compositions in the classroom. Composers have participated in creating new music ensembles, such as Serge Garant and Jean-Papineau Couture's involvement in the founding of the "Société de musique contemporaine du Québec." Other composers, such as Hope Lee, have set up their own publishing companies.

Perhaps to justify the "necessity" of marketing and promotion of an art form which was previously perceived as being dissociated from commercialism, the media widely reports on Louie's struggles and hardships as a Canadian composer of contemporary classical music. The television programmes Gzowski and Co. and "Beyond the Call" on W5, as well as articles by Richard Flohil (1990) and Jacob Siskind (1986) let Louie explain how audiences generally dislike or are indifferent to contemporary music. For a composer of this type of music to survive, she explains, perpetual activities in promotion, education, and fund-raising are essential. Colleen Gould's article of 1984 allows Louie to lament the lack of acceptable performances of contemporary works due to

inadequate rehearsal time on the one hand, and to conductors and performers who are not totally dedicated to the music, on the other. Courtney Bond (1992) gives Louie room to say that composers' creativity and energy are diverted from their craft by "day jobs" needed to survive financially.

As part of the "music as industry" phenomenon, Louie is constructed as the aggressive businessperson by the announcer on the television programme "Beyond the Call" on W5:

She's also a hard-driving promoter whose drive goes beyond the call of duty.

....

So, when she's not writing the music, she's usually out selling it. She's tough, dedicated and determined to build an audience.

("Beyond the Call" 1987)

This portrait is supported by scenes of Louie "pitching" a small group of supporters for an up-coming concert, and promoting a concert of contemporary music on a radio talk show.

Louie's promotional activities can be seen as belonging to a wide spread trend in Canada. She is perhaps distinct from most other contemporary Canadian composers, however, because of her high profile. We have seen how she has been largely covered by the media, especially after becoming Composer of the Year in 1986, and her unusual image and popularity in Canada have given her high visibility. Her

international reputation and her orchestral compositions, especially, provide her with a large potential market of supporters. In Canada, although it is a luxury to have contemporary orchestral works performed by major orchestras, Louie has gained a reputation for this repertoire. The nature of the orchestral venue, with its large number of performers, audience members, managers, prestigious hall, and so on, automatically assures Louie and her work more publicity than would a solo flute piece, for example. Finally, Louie is closely linked to the Esprit Orchestra, which has the benefit of giving her another prominent vehicle to promote contemporary music.

4. The Dedicated and Talented Composer

Biographies on composers typically outline the composer's skills, training, and long years of work and dedication to emphasize and validate the high quality of their work. The television programmes Gzowski and Co. and "Beyond the Call" on W5, the film Eternal Earth, and numerous articles refer to Louie as a dedicated and gifted musician. Some articles deconstruct the "artist/genius who is out of touch with reality" portrait by emphasizing that "despite" her talent, Louie is a practical musician: "Louie is an unusual combination of intense dedication to the music she is

composing[,]" affirms Colleen Goulet, "and realistic practicality about the musicians and the circumstances for which she is writing" (Goulet 1984, 20). In another article, Peter Goddard explains that, because Louie is mindful of the particular strengths and weaknesses of the performing artists who commission her, she does various types of research into the pieces she plans to write. Subsequently, her finished works are highly suited to the commissioning bodies and are heard more often than other musicians' compositions (Goddard 1987, 52). Robin Elliott, associate editor of the 1992 edition of the Encyclopedia of Music in Canada, examines the difficulties and sacrifices involved in her being an artist. He describes her as a hard-working, talented artist who considers a composer's life a privilege, despite the hardships (Elliott 1986, 4).

Critiques of Works

The media often admire Louie's creative use of special colour effects and her range of timbre. According to Emslie Dick, "her music is noted for its romantic and shimmering loveliness" (1986, 10). Toronto music critic John Kraglund--from whom it was said that "measured enthusiasm ... was the equivalent of a panegyric from a colleague" (Cowle and Winters 1992, 697)--warmly praised the colour and zest of The Eternal Earth:

It was an effective and tensely exciting beginning But all was not sound and fury in this work. The second movement was a warmly lyrical section, with a mixture of Oriental and American musical accents. And the finale, To the Radian Universe [sic-"The Radiant Universe"], combined space-age sounds with gorgeous lyrical fragments that joined forces in a triumphantly noisy finale.

(Kraglund 1986, D3)

As in every type of judging or adjudicating, a critique of music normally includes positive as well as more critical comments. The reviewer's opinions, although highly subjective, can be very helpful in gaining a different perspective of a performance, or to suggest improvements. However, a review of Louie's Music For Heaven and Earth by music critic Robert Everett-Green deserves some comment. After lauding Louie's "special knack for building novel sonorities, and for fitting quite ordinary ones into striking arrangements[,]" he criticizes her for not challenging the audience with more complex forms or structured development.

Take one step back from this moment-to-moment brilliance, however, and Louie's thinking begins to sound less exceptional. Many of her effects bubble up and disappear without trace.

(Everett-Green 1990, C10)

Everett-Green's criticism hinges on the issue concerning the "ideal" balance between technique and "creative inspiration" in works of art. Without a doubt, Louie has made a choice not to focus extensively on traditional structural considerations in some of her compositions. But could Louie's so-called "lack of structure" be considered simply a different kind of structure, perhaps linked to women composers? In her book Gender and the Musical Canon (1993), Marcia J. Citron states that, although

there is no [musical] style that issues from inherent traits in female biology[,] ...[a]spects of socialization, subject position, ideology, and historical traditions play a major role in the connections between women and musical conventions.

(Citron 1993, 159-60)

In other words, women may write in certain styles of music because of their position and function in society. For example, Eva Rieger states that women composers tend to make the most out of a limited amount of material (such as in pieces for the salon), appear to be more flexible compositionally and seem to be more aware of performers' and others' needs vis-à-vis their music than some men composers (Rieger in Citron 1993, 160). According to Rieger, many women composers also appear not to be as concerned with newness in their music: "Originality is not fetishized, but rather subordinated to the total conception" (Rieger in Citron 1993, 160). As part of this trend, could Louie's non-traditional

manipulation of structural elements also be considered as belonging to a women's voice in music?

Whatever the origin of Louie's concept of structure, she is certainly not alone in her quest for new techniques. An abundance of contemporary composers since the 1950s have searched for novel ways of organizing sound and presenting music, such as "the group-composition or controlled-improvisation techniques of Stockhausen, and the music-as-process rather than music-as-product concepts of Boulez and Cage" (Proctor 1980, 191). Louie herself has used the sound-mass principle associated with Ligeti and Penderecki, for example, and has concentrated on the organization of "sound" rather than structure, as in her piece Changes (1971, rev. 1983) written with Marjan Mozetich. The conventional Western (German) tradition has certainly placed a high priority on traditional structures in art, but recognition must be given to those artists who strive to develop new vocabularies and novel means to interpret and express their views of the world in which they live.

5. Louie as a Woman Artist

"Women's" and "Men's" Music

Articles by Michael Schulman (1980) and Peter Goddard (1987) took interest in Louie's opinions concerning the place

of women within the "men's club" of composition. On this subject, Louie told Schulman:

It's still difficult for some people to take a woman seriously as a composer. I'm not a militant feminist, and I don't agree with flag-waving or telling performers that they should program women's pieces just because they're women's pieces. Performances are important, of course, so that people will know that women can compose, that we have something to say, but we should simply have the right to be as good or as bad as any male composer.

(Schulman 1980, 32)

Thirteen years after this interview, Louie reiterated her views on men's and women's music:

I don't try to write women's music. I just write music. So I don't know if there's a difference [between the way women and men write]. I couldn't tell you.

(Personal Interview, June 1993)

In her book Feminine Endings, Susan McClary explained that some women composers, such as Louie perhaps, have become sensitive to being labelled as "women composers" because of the negative connotations that this term implied. McClary wrote that:

they [women composers] often have internalized a strong distaste for the idea of permitting their identities as women to be apparent in their music. The category 'woman' in music is already colonized and is overcrowded with caricatures concocted by male artists.

(McClary 1991, 115)

Nevertheless, McClary, like Louie, believes that "there can be no such single thing as 'women's music,' just as there is no universal male experience or essence," (McClary 1991, 131).

But, McClary also stated:

Many superb women composers insist on making their gender identities a nonissue, precisely because there still remain so many essentialist assumptions about what music by women 'ought' to sound like. That they are determined to demonstrate that they too can write music (as opposed to 'women's music') is understandable. Moreover, it is an important political position and strategy, given the history of women's marginalization in this domain.

(McClary 1991, 19)

Clearly, Louie's desire to be recognized as an artist of talent and not to be relegated to a "ghetto" of woman composers follows the depiction of many women composers, as described above. The question is: should gender identity be viewed as a deciding factor in establishing a successful career or image? Sensitivity to gender identities is not reserved to women alone; Canadian composer Michael Hynes, for

example, signs his compositions "M.G. Hynes." He does this, in part, to avoid mispronunciations of his first name by non-English speakers, but also, as he explained, to be non-gender specific (Hynes 1994).

In another article, Peter Goddard gave Louie credit for helping make women composers more visible:

Until recently, the last bastion of male supremacy was not the board room nor the football locker room[,] but what's called serious composition. Women wrote and many wrote well, but the fix was in, it seemed[,] until the very recent arrival of more and more women composers on the scene.

Louie's appearance has served to speed up what [has been] a lengthy process. For one thing, [she has been largely covered by the media and secondly,] she's a passionate apologist for her profession and not afraid to talk about it.

(Goddard 1987, 50, 52)

Through her successful career, Louie has aided in promoting women composers, but she is certainly not to be viewed as a "flag-waving" woman artist. For example, she was a founding member of the Association of Canadian Women Composers in 1983, because she believed it was important to encourage woman composers. Once the organization was functional, however, Louie withdrew her membership. But, she remained a member of the League of Canadian Composers, which, as she explains,

serves the needs of all composers and not just a part of them (telephone interview, April 1994).

Louie and Her Male Colleagues

Kenneth Bagnell's article "Prélude nordique" (1991) presents six well-known Canadian composers: Louis Applebaum, Alex Pauk, Walter Boudreau, John Weinzweig, Harry Somers, and Alexina Louie. Perhaps because Louie is the only woman in the group, Bagnell refers to certain details that were not consistently mentioned in the sections dealing with the men composers: physical appearance ("cette jeune femme svelte, aux cheveux de jais"), relationship to the opposite sex ("[d]e retour au Canada en 1980, elle épouse le compositeur et chef d'orchestre Alex Pauk et, avant la fin de la décennie, devient célèbre"), and family life ("[d]ans la maison qu'elle habite avec son mari et leur jeune enfant dans le quartier torontois de High Park") (Bagnell 1991, 6).

Louie is praised as a dedicated and talented composer in this article, but, unlike his treatment of the men composers, Bagnell has chosen not to let Louie's professional accomplishments stand for what they are, unrelated to her family life, relationship to Pauk, and her physical appearance. Rather, he inadvertently associates Louie with traditionally subservient roles of women, such as wife, mother, and femme objet.

Choice of Terminology

A study of the terms used by journalists to describe Louie could be at times viewed as being harmful to her image as a professional. For example, the feminist movement has helped to thoroughly problematize the words "darling" or "girl" in referring to women. Unfortunately, Roxanne Snider of Maclean's Magazine undermined her own opinion of Louie's talent and high standards of professionalism by christening her "the darling of Canadian contemporary music" (Snider 1986, 46). In another article by Peter Mose, Louie (who was thirty-eight years old at the time) was referred to as "the current glamour girl of Canadian contemporary classical music" (Mose 1987, B5). The terms "glamour girl" and "darling" hardly add weight to Louie's credentials as a talented and gifted composer. Such terms to qualify Louie as a composer raise several questions: Are Mose and Snider "taking" Louie "seriously" as a professional? Would anyone raise an eyebrow, if Glenn Buhr,² for example, were referred to as the current "darling" or "glamour boy" of the contemporary music scene?

In a review of Music for Heaven and Earth, music critic Everett-Green affirms that in order to accommodate public tastes, Louie offers only

² Glenn Buhr, born in 1954, is a well-known Canadian composer of contemporary music.

pretty sounds and comfortable interior decoration. She shies away from any development that might take some effort of reflection to understand. Possibly this is a function of her own temperament; if so, she is a much less interesting composer than she once seemed.

(Everett-Green 1990, C10)

Through his choice of terms, such as "pretty sounds and comfortable interior decoration" and "a function of her temperament," could Everett-Green be alluding to the "woman composer" question? This issue received much attention in North America in the 1880s with the publication of George Upton's book Women in Music (1880) (Tick in Bowers and Tick 1987, 333). According to Upton, women were considered unable to compose high quality, large-scale, structured works such as opera and symphony because of their frail, emotional, and "irrational" temperament. Instead they were seen to be more suited either to playing the piano, for example, in the parlor as a social accomplishment, singing, or, as composers, writing short, emotional pieces and avoiding the "higher," more structured forms of composition (Tick in Bowers and Tick 1987, 333-345).

Why did Everett-Green criticize Louie's use (or non-use) of conventional structures? When it is realized that many eminent composers since the 1950s have experimented with new ways of presenting music, why did Everett-Green suggest that the lack of conventional structures in Louie's orchestral

piece could be due to her temperament? Was he justified in criticizing Louie for "pandering" to public tastes, or could Louie's "accessible" music just be seen as part of the "back to tonality" trend of the 1980s and 1990s? Finally, if her manipulation of structured elements in music was indeed a function of her temperament, why would she then have to be considered "a much less interesting composer?"

The best portrait of Louie, in my opinion, is presented by William Littler when he writes that Louie is "a romantic idealist with a solid streak of practicality, loyal to her ethnic roots[,] yet very much a modern woman" (Littler 1987, C1). With her 1960s romantic idealism, Louie hopes to "make the world a better place" but, at the same time, she competently and realistically manages the heavy demands of her professional and personal life. Louie has searched out and investigated her ancient Asian heritage and cultural traditions, but she harbours ambitions and interests that are located outside the realms traditionally reserved to women.

6. Summary

It could be argued that the industrialization of the arts has encouraged the media to deconstruct the dreary stereotypes attached to classical and contemporary music. Following this trend, Louie has been marketed as the flashy "Hollywood" star, the "open" and "friendly" Canadian, and the aggressive

business person who struggles, like innumerable Canadian composers, to make the public more aware of contemporary music. It could be argued that, in the name of simplicity or the Canadian mosaic, the majority of material dealing with Louie inevitably "pigeon-holes" her as a Chinese-Canadian. Frequently, the reader is left with the false impression that Chinese music and culture have been the only influences on Louie. Finally, a few isolated articles that have praised Louie's talent, skill, and professionalism have, at the same time, casually and momentarily associated her with some stereotypical notions of women and their roles in society. It could be suggested that, because of the negative connotations historically associated with women composers, Louie has developed a marked distaste for the "political correctness" or "politicking" inevitably inherent in today's music industry.

The first two chapters have presented a brief history of the development of Louie's career and the image created of her by the media. Now, the focus of the discussion will centre on Louie's compositional process and on her music. To do so, the next chapter will present Louie's philosophy towards the art of composition and the ways in which she puts these ideas and priorities into practice.

Chapter Three

The Art of Composition

Louie's philosophy towards the art of composition, her compositional techniques, and the mediations that play a significant role in the development of her art are closely and inextricably linked. Louie's philosophy, technique, and sources of inspiration and influence mesh together to shape and guide the development of each piece. Moreover, the apparent ease in which these key elements interlock is a determining factor in Louie's decision to accept or reject offers to write new works.

1. Composition as Communication

Composing is used by Louie as a means to communicate her individuality and her emotional states to the best of her ability at the time of composition (personal interview, June 1993). The way in which she identifies herself with her work (in many of her compositions) is symbolized by her use of the word "thunder." This word corresponds to the Chinese character that represents "Louie," meaning "rain on the field" (Louie 1992). As she explained to music journalist Michael Schulman, she uses her music as a mirror of her soul:

Ever since I started writing music, I've wanted to make my music soulful, to make it speak from my heart. I think about myself a lot when I'm writing.

(Schulman 1980, 20)

Louie's profound concern with the issue of individual expression in her art (perhaps encouraged by the free and creative atmosphere at graduate school) corresponds to Trevor Wishart's view of current Anglo-Saxon cultural production. Wishart argues that

the individualist/romanticist view of artistic production persisting in Anglo-Saxon cultures, ... focuses upon individual 'inspiration' and 'personal taste' or fashion, rather than upon artistic skill and agreed critical criteria. (Wishart 1992, 579)

Louie reflects about herself while she composes, but, at the same time, she claims that she "think[s] a lot about the responsibility [she has] to the person sitting in the audience" (Schulman 1980, 20). Louie feels she has a "responsibility" vis-à-vis the public, not only to express her inner feelings and individuality, but also, like Canadian composer Diana McIntosh (Isaacs and McMillan 1992, 832), to reach the members of her audience and communicate with them. When asked to clarify what the art of composing meant for her, Louie replied, "I want you [the listener] to respond to what I'm feeling. I want to give something" (Gzowski and Co. 1987).

After the experimentation with new music trends in the 1950s, '60s and '70s (such as twelve-tone and aleatory music), a number of Canadian composers, including Louie, rediscovered musical idioms that had traditionally been more familiar, and therefore more accessible, to a wider audience. This trend, or "[t]he 'return to tonality' espoused by younger composers in the 1980s," wrote John Beckwith, "often carried with it a return to neoclassic patterns, forms and textures [such as tonality, melody, harmony, and more conventional metre and form]" (Beckwith 1992, 939). Many Canadian composers, such as Glenn Buhr, Patrick Cardy, Clifford Ford, Gary Kulesha, Marjan Mozetich, and so on, now work frequently with musical idioms familiar to past generations.¹

2. Compositional Process

The Struggle to Compose

Expressing her true soul to the utmost of her ability makes composing a struggle for Alexina Louie. She compares her compositional process to that of Beethoven (Louie 1992), whose sketch books demonstrate his painstaking search for perfection. Louie confided: "I care about every note I write-[I] don't just fill in the parts. It's a painful and very lonely process" (interview by Lacey 1987, E5). As a result, she admits that she writes gut-wrenching, soul-searching music

¹ For information on these and other Canadian composers mentioned in this thesis, see articles on them in: Kallmann, Helmut and Potvin, Gilles, eds. 1992.

that is not always easy to play, nor to listen to (personal interview, June 1993). In a taped lecture she affirms that

music doesn't always have to be entertaining.
It doesn't have to always sound pretty. It
may just be trying to express anger or terror
or profound sadness. (Louie 1992)

It is because of this deep, introspective approach that Louie hesitates before accepting projects involving lighter music, such as The Ringing Earth (1986) for Expo '86 and Gallery Fanfares, Arias and Interludes (1993) for the reopening of the Art Gallery of Ontario. Although she at first refused these two commissions, she is now proud and very fond of these two works (personal interview, June 1993).

Discipline

Louie writes music rather like Canadian composer Harry Freedman - steadily and productively, but slowly, with frequent revisions after performance (Litwack and Beckwith 1992, 499). Louie believes that discipline and productivity are the keys to success in composing:

There's something that opens up when you write every day. When I first started composing, I would wait for inspiration and just write two pieces a year.... I learned that you can make inspiration happen if you are disciplined enough.

(Interview by Eatock 1986, 10)

For years, Louie worked intense, fourteen-hour days on composition. She did not hesitate to devote many months of effort on just one work. For instance, she spent six months on the solo piano piece, Scenes from a Jade Terrace (1988) (personal interview, June 1993). Because she has set high standards for herself and cannot write "just for money," to use her own words, she has difficulty writing quickly or writing two pieces at once (personal interview, June 1993). She often "gets stuck" in what she describes as "hard and lonely work, delving into one's soul; often difficult finding what you want to say and having the integrity to say it as honestly as you know how" (Anon. 1986k, 12).

Deadlines

Since her return to Canada, Louie is among the handful of Canadian composers who are able to make their living solely by composing music. Louie's compositional output is closely linked to the omnipresence of commission deadlines. She explained, "When the deadlines are right on top of me[,] I like to spend the entire day and the entire night working" (interview by Flohil 1990, 11). She always begins far ahead of the deadline after a long period of reflection and planning. Then, when a work is nearly completed, the pressure becomes very intense: "I'll break it by taking a nap, or reading the newspaper for half an hour Then I start

again" (interview by Flohil 1990, 11). In a 1987 television programme, she explained:

The hours are long, very, very long. And you have countless deadlines that you must keep meeting. It's not the ideal picture of the artist sitting and waiting for inspiration to come like a thunder bolt out of the sky. It doesn't happen like that. You work. You work every day. To bring something into existence that never existed before is extraordinarily difficult.

("Beyond the Call" 1987)

Tailor-Made Commissions

Louie feels that the composer has a responsibility to write a piece that will correspond, as closely as possible, to the performance abilities and tastes of the commissioning bodies. She tries to design a high-quality piece to fit the performers' needs, to show off their skills, and to avoid their weaknesses. This was her goal, for instance, when she wrote the moderately difficult Songs of Paradise (1983) for the Thunder Bay Symphony. This piece subsequently attracted the attention of, and was performed by, many Canadian orchestras including those in Toronto, Vancouver, and Winnipeg.

At the request of conductor Andrew Davis, Louie wrote a virtuosic piece, The Eternal Earth, for the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO) in 1986. Louie composed this piece to show off the whole orchestra and highlight a few soloists she knew, such as the harpist Judy Loman (Elliott 1986; Goddard 1987).

According to John Kraglund, music critic from The Globe and Mail, Louie's The Eternal Earth

was a towering success at its premiere. More important, it demonstrated last night [at a concert three months after the premiere] that it has considerable staying power and an ability to continue commanding full attention.

....

No less important than the effect of the music and its message was the performance, which took the technical challenges in stride.

(Kraglund 1986b, D3)

Louie is proud to say that she "does her investigations" before beginning to write:

I do a lot of homework before I start a piece and I actually listen to records and tapes and take a look at what kind of performer I'm writing for.

(Interview by Goddard 1987, 52)

For her trombone concerto Ricochet (1992), she did research into the instrument itself:

I read two whole trombone manuals from cover to cover to learn how the trombone physically worked because it's different than all other instruments ... And I met with two trombonists here and I spoke with a trombonist on the telephone about specific techniques.

(Personal Interview, June 1993)

Commissions

Louie is in the fortunate position of being able to choose her commissions. To accept a project, she must be

attracted to the performer's way of playing and/or she must feel that she will develop as a composer by working on the commission. She also likes to experiment with different performing groups, although she is especially drawn to full orchestra. In her concertos (Ricochet for trombone and Thunder Gate (1991) for violin, for example) she enjoys stretching the technical and musical limitations of the instrument and the performer to the utmost limit. Contrary to her attitude towards commissions for orchestra, Louie is only gradually accepting offers to write vocal music. She would first like to learn more about the idiom before embarking on any large-scale projects, such as those for opera (personal interview, June 1993).

Orchestral Writing

Louie's expertise and "great flare" in orchestral writing may be due, in part, to her close relationship with the Esprit Orchestra. The ensemble encourages composers to participate in orchestral rehearsals and to work out problems of interpretation with the instrumentalists. In an interview, Louie explained:

[N]o matter how many orchestra books we read or how much we have studied orchestration-when we get into that situation-that nitty gritty situation of dealing with some 40 to 100 players, playing our music Some things just don't work. And, you can't find that out unless you do it (with an orchestra) [sic].

(Dick 1986, 10)

Computer Software

Like Steven Gellman, and most musicians of her generation, Louie does not compose with the use of computer software. She would like to learn how to use the software, if just to alleviate the drudgery of copying, but she is currently overwhelmed by other priorities (personal interview, June 1993). She therefore hears her work only in her mind and in as many notes as she can physically play on the piano before the first full rehearsal. The timbres and registers of all the instruments must be imagined and "worked out" for the whole composition.

One wonders if this situation lends to Louie's particular flavour, or only to "mistakes" that she would have "corrected" before the performance had she used synthesizers and software programmes. Would she revise her "finished" compositions less frequently if she now had access to computers and synthesizers? Would the instant "playback" of the music she composes encourage or stifle her imagination?

Working at Home

Louie and her husband Alex Pauk, who is the conductor of the Esprit Orchestra, both compose professionally (Siskind 1986). Whereas Louie feels most comfortable working at the grand piano in the living room downstairs in their High Park home, Pauk prefers composing upstairs on the third floor on a synthesizer. Despite what one may assume, Louie and Pauk are

not influenced or bothered by the sound of each other's music when they happen to be composing at the same time. Both composers seek advice from each other if they "get stuck" or need an opinion:

I use him as a sounding board, but he also does the same thing to me. ... [W]e discuss orchestration in pieces, and articulations. ... I'll ask him because he knows it so well because he's a conductor. He's invaluable.

(Personal Interview, June 1993)

Film Scores

Louie and Pauk have written approximately twenty film scores together. Louie uses this branch of composing as a sideline activity instead of teaching, which she finds exhausting (personal interview, June 1993). As a contrast to her soul-searching, gut-wrenching contemporary compositions, she finds writing for film "fun." She can write in various styles, and, for her, the music for film is generally less "torturous" to write than most of her contemporary classical compositions. Film music is generally quickly completed, the music is played, and the film is shown (personal interview, June 1993).

3. Musical Preferences

Rhythmic Complexity

Louie revels in complex rhythmic structures. Dizzying changes of metre and swirling kaleidoscopes of rhythmic patterns (see Example 3-1) are aspects of her music that she thoroughly enjoys (personal interview, June 1993).

1

Fl 1
Fl 2
ob 1
ob 2
cl 1
cl 2
bso
cbsn

Horn 1
Horn 2
Tpt 1
Tbn 1
bass
Tbn
Tuba

Example 3-1

The Eternal Earth, first mvt., bars 6-11

The six bars shown in Example 3-1 are part of a nine-bar passage which features metre changes at every bar. Not only are there at times two, three or even seven beats per measure, but the value of the one-beat unit fluctuates from one measure to the next. For example, in bar 6, one beat equals a quarter note, in bar 7, a sixteenth note, and in bar 11, an eighth note. Louie emphasizes these complex metre changes by placing a number of accents and stresses, especially on the down-beats of each measure.

"Sound" and Structure

Like other twentieth-century composers, such as Penderecki and Ligeti, Louie is well known for her interest in "colour" and "sound" of a piece. This interest in sound, especially apparent in orchestral music, could be seen as a latent influence from Debussy, Bartók, Varèse and Asian music (Keillor 1992, 978). This emphasis on "sound" and "timbre" rather than on melody and harmony has affected the musical output of innumerable Canadian composers, such as Gilles Tremblay, Robert Bauer, Norma Beecroft, Gary Hayes, Alex Pauk, and so on. Rather than using conventional structural elements of music, Louie (like André Prévost from Quebec) generally prefers to work with various timbres and novel combinations of sounds (Rochon 1992, 1076). She then organizes these sonorities into short movements or pieces, rather than into long works with traditional structural plans or developments.

In some of her work, Louie simply prefers to juxtapose musical ideas or motives, with little additional development or restructuring. In my opinion, this type of writing--such as in Songs of Paradise and in the first 62 bars of the second movement of The Eternal Earth (preceding the harp solo)--evokes an atmosphere, rather than a journey. The succession of short themes or motives in these passages resembles the melange of sounds one might hear in the outdoors, more specifically, in Hawaii and in a tropical rainforest, to which Songs of Paradise and the second movement of The Eternal Earth respectively refer. There is a timelessness about these sections.

Perhaps Louie's decision to write in this style is what Susan McClary would identify as "getting down off the beanstalk" (McClary 1991, 112-131) - in other words, choosing to adhere to a structural framework other than tonal striving, climax, and closure (McClarey 1991, 113). Nevertheless, despite her general interest in "sound" rather than in conventional structural elements, Louie is sensitive to the issue of the balance between intellect and emotion in music, as she made abundantly clear in a 1992 interview:

Music only of the intellect is empty. Music only of the other side [music of the heart] often is weak because structurally, architecturally especially, the music has got to have form and shape in order for the language to be true. Otherwise it becomes just an amorphous mass.

(Interview by Bond 1992, 24)

"Black and White" Composition at the Piano

Louie's compositional technique is closely tied to her improvisations at the piano.² A factor of immense importance in understanding Louie's work is that, "very often" (in Louie's own words), she improvises with one hand on the black keys and the other on the white (personal interview, June 1993). This practice gave rise to, what I will refer to as, the "black and white" writing in the first movements of her chamber works, Music for a Thousand Autumns and Cadenzas, as well as in many other compositions.

Louie was not the first twentieth-century composer to oppose the white keys of the piano to the black. Other composers, such as Béla Bartók, Soulima Stravinsky, and Alberto Ginastera exploited this technique. As its title implies, Bartók's "Clashing Sounds" in Mikrokosmos Vol. 4 explored the dissonances arising from this type of writing. Other composers were drawn to the polytonality implicit in "black and white" writing, as observed in Alberto Ginastera's "Danzas Argentinas" and "O Polichinelo" in Próle do Bêbé by Heitor Villa-Lobos. However, the pieces written in this manner by twentieth-century composers were generally destined for keyboard instruments (especially the piano). Furthermore, these works were often part of a student repertoire, and comprised only a minor part of the composer's total output.

²Perhaps, like other Canadian composers active in the 1980s, Louie's lack of interest in microtones could be linked to her habit of composing at the piano (Keillor 1984, 56).

What is unique in Louie's use of this idiom is that it plays a great role in the majority of her compositions. When Louie draws upon this technique, she may be writing for keyboard instruments, orchestral instruments, or for the voice. Frequently, the individual instrumental or vocal lines will match, or be derived from, a pattern played on the piano with one hand on the black keys, and the other on the white keys. An excerpt from Music for a Thousand Autumns (see Example 3-2) demonstrates Louie's superposition of "black and white" instrumental lines.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: flute (fl.) and oboe (ob.). The score is divided into two measures, with the first measure starting at bar 21. The flute part is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The oboe part is written on a single staff with a soprano clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music consists of a series of eighth notes, with the flute part playing a higher register than the oboe part. The flute part has a 'decrasc.' marking above it in the second measure, indicating a decrescendo. The oboe part also has a 'decrasc.' marking below it in the second measure. The score is written in a style that emphasizes the superposition of 'black and white' instrumental lines.

Example 3-2

Music for a Thousand Autumns, first mvt., bars 21-22

Underlying scalic and harmonic structures, such as the octatonic scale³ or, what Jon Kimura Parker has identified as, "quartal chords" (which consist of perfect or augmented fourths) are also generated from this technique. Eventually, Louie realized that this "black and white" writing promoted the use of one specific octatonic scale. She subsequently began to transpose her writing up a semitone for variety (personal interview 1993).

Western Tradition

Louie believes that her music has a strong link with both eastern traditions (which will be discussed in the next chapter) and western ones (personal interview, June 1993). The many aspects of western influences in her writing, such as harmony, bitonality, scalic patterns, "quartal" chords of perfect fourths and tritones, "black and white" writing, minimalism, and various pacing devices, are outlined in Jon Kimura Parker's doctoral dissertation, which deals with Louie's piano music (Parker 1989).

Louie has maintained strong ties to western tradition through her playing of piano repertoire by Mozart, J.S. Bach, and Brahms. Her study of Klavierstücke Op. 119 by Brahms and Sechs Kleine Klavierstücke Op. 19 by Schoenberg, Parker

³ The eight-pitch octatonic scale consists of alternating tones and semitones, for example, the collection of pitch classes 0,1,3,4,6,7,9,10 [the pitches C, C♯, E♭, E, F♯, G, A, B♭,] (Straus 1990, 97).

remarked, has been "vital to her understanding of compact structure" (Parker 1989, 44). Moreover, before writing the piano concerto for Canadian pianist Robert Silverman, Louie undertook the study of piano concertos by Mozart (Kaptainis 1985, E12).

The composer's familiarity with symphonies of Beethoven and Mahler may have also influenced her own compositions. As in the western tradition, Louie's The Eternal Earth, The Ringing Earth, and Music for Heaven and Earth are organized into several sections of contrasting mood and tempi, and are written for a large orchestra with a traditional core of string instruments (Lacey 1987; Siskind 1986).

4. Sources of Inspiration

Adoration of the Planet Earth

Most Canadian composers since the 1970s have had a tendency to incorporate some aspect of nature into their composition, be it only the title. Usually, as in Louie's case, the use of themes from nature comprised only a small part of their total output (Ford 1982, 241). Canadian musicologist George Proctor situated the interest towards nature as a typical result of the romanticism since the 1970s, which typically drew from sources in nature for inspiration (Proctor 1980, 178).

Louie lauded nature and the beauty of planet earth in her works Love Songs for a Small Planet (1989, rev. 1992), Music for Heaven and Earth (1990) and The Eternal Earth (Bond 1992). The second movement of this last work concerns itself with the preservation of life on earth in a lullaby for the disappearing species of the equatorial rain forest. To journalist Diane Menzies, Louie confided:

I saw rain forests, jungle and a disappearing world; pollution and fear of nuclear holocaust and the end of life--and I want to say this won't happen. [sic]
(Interview with Menzies 1986, C1)

Although she is not drawn to Canadian nature in particular, Louie has been inspired by the sky, as indicated by the titles of her compositions Star-filled Night (1987) and Music from Night's Edge (1988). Like Quebec composer Clermont Pépin,⁴ she has been inspired by outer space in her creation of O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould and Music for Heaven and Earth.

Louie's concern for the environment could be seen as part of wide spread realization in the 1970s of the environmental destruction caused by human hands. R. Murray Schafer, for example, wrote the piece North/White (1973) to deplore the desecration of the Canadian north, with a "live" snowmobile to make his point (Proctor 1980, 176). The founding of the

⁴ Pépin's Quasars, Symphony No. 3 (1967) revealed his interest in space sciences (Potvin 1992, 1035)

"World Soundscape Project" in Vancouver by Schafer in the late 1960s and the "Sound Symposium" held every two years in St John's, Newfoundland (which was attended by Pauline Oliveros in 1986 and in 1994) both attempt to put humans "in touch" and "in harmony" with the environment (Kallmann et al, 1992b 1424; Miller 1992, 1241). Harry Freedman even served on an advisory board of the Pollution Probe as a musician (Litwack and Beckwith 1992, 499). All these activities touching on music and musicians can be considered as logical outgrowths of a renewed environmental awareness in the world, especially since the 1970s.

The Triumphs and Tribulations of Great Artists

The artistic attitude and achievements of great artists have had, and continue to have, a direct influence on Louie (personal interview, June 1993). Louie is encouraged to persevere in her artistic struggle by looking to the example of great artists such as Pablo Picasso, Vincent Van Gogh, and Claude Monet. She especially admires the apparent ease in which they created great works of art. Louie confessed, "To think that Picasso did what he did every single day of his life, just makes me awestruck" (personal interview, June 1993).

The self-destructing force of great artistic striving--- as in Vincent Van Gogh's case---moves Louie very deeply (personal interview, June 1993). A letter that Van Gogh wrote



Example 3-4

Outline of Louie's "Homage," Afterimages based on
Chopin excerpt shown in Example 3-3

5. Summary

In this chapter we have seen how Louie views composition as a mirror of her soul and as a reflection of her emotions. For her, writing music in this in-depth, introspective approach is a continuing struggle requiring intense effort. As a sideline activity, she enjoys writing various types of music for film (personal interview, June 1993).

Because of the steady demand for her work, Louie is able to select commissions which interest her, and from which she can develop as a composer. She attempts to write her compositions in ways that are closely suited to the performer's needs and skills. To achieve these goals, she studies recordings of the performer's interpretations and,

when necessary, tries to learn more about the performer's instrument.

Louie's music is characterized by manipulations of timbre, rather than by structural designs. The rhythmic complexity of many of her pieces is noteworthy, and the large number of commissions for orchestral works gives proof of her skill as an orchestrator (see Appendix A). Louie's music comes to life at the keyboard, usually as a result of her skills at improvisation. Her characteristic "black and white" melodic and harmonic patterns (including the octatonic scale) originate from her habit of playing with one hand on the white keys and the other on the black.

Louie relies on contemporary musical idioms of the west extensively, and her familiarity with established western composers such as J.S. Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Mahler is well documented. Social and environmental issues arising from the plight of artists, the destruction of the environment, and the desire for world peace have influenced the orientation of many of her compositions.

Louie's work embraces a wide range of human experiences and concerns. Her compositions touch on universal themes, such as world peace and the preservation of life on earth, and yet her music "coule de source" (MacMillan 1992, 1), is highly original and personal as she strives intensely to make her art a mirror of her soul.

Chapter Four

Analysis

Although Louie's compositions may at times resonate with eastern accents, it would be incorrect to identify her work solely as a product of Asian influence. She enjoys writing in a variety of styles: from rock, jazz, and Baroque in her music for film, to a melange of Asian, western avant-garde, and tonal idioms in her contemporary classical pieces (personal interview, June 1993).

This chapter is devoted to a discussion and comparison of several types of writing in Louie's work. The manifestation of Asian musical idioms will be thoroughly documented with musical examples from the first two movements of Music for a Thousand Autumns (1983) for chamber orchestra. A more homogeneous type of writing will then be examined in the first two movements of the virtuosic The Eternal Earth (1986) for full orchestra. Finally, The Ringing Earth (1986), a one-movement piece for full orchestra, will be presented and then compared to the two other works.

In choosing these particular works, I wanted to present several of Louie's styles, or types of writing. Even though I was at first attracted to the idea of analyzing Louie's music for piano, because I am familiar with this instrument, I nevertheless eliminated this option when I learned that a doctoral dissertation had been written on this particular

repertoire (Parker 1989). Therefore, I chose Music for a Thousand Autumns (scored for two flutes, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, piano, percussion, and strings) to show one of Louie's earlier pieces that drew heavily on Asian idioms. However, I eventually discovered that, in his dissertation, Parker had often referred to Music for a Thousand Autumns in order to demonstrate eastern and western idioms in Louie's writing. In the discussion here, I draw on Parker's research, but I also present many original ideas on the links between eastern music and Music for a Thousand Autumns. Furthermore, I felt compelled to discuss Music for a Thousand Autumns at length because Louie supplied me with much supplemental information on the piece and told me that she considered it as one of her strongest works (personal interview, June 1993).

I selected The Eternal Earth, written for full orchestra, to show a later "style" in Louie's writing in which she blended eastern and western elements more thoroughly. I also believe that this virtuosic work is full of colour, brilliance, verve, and excitement and definitely deserves a place in the Canadian repertoire for professional orchestras. Finally, Louie's enthusiasm for The Ringing Earth easily convinced me that I should discuss this work as well. For the purposes of this chapter, The Ringing Earth conveniently represented a totally different type of writing for Louie. The piece was commissioned for the opening gala of Expo '86 and is a marked

example of the "return to tonality" trend in the 1980s.

1. Music for a Thousand Autumns (MTA)

Many mediations have contributed to the development of Louie's various styles, but the Asian influence in Louie's music is frequently mentioned. In this chapter, traditional Asian attitudes towards programme music, instrumentation, textural structures, rhythm, timbre, tonal inflection, and other characteristics will be traced in the first movement of Music for a Thousand Autumns (hereafter abbreviated to MTA).¹ Then, an explanation of the philosophy and veneration surrounding the Chinese zither, the ch'in,² will precede an analysis of the second movement, which is based on an ancient ch'in melody.

Descriptive Titles

The Han Chinese³ have a tradition of attaching concrete associations or poetic titles to objects, people, abstract ideas, and to art (see Kuo-Huang 1978). Accordingly, Chinese doctrine on composing--like that of ancient Greece--always

¹The numbering of measures in MTA runs continuously from the beginning of the piece to the end of the third movement.

²Also spelled "qin."

³ The word, "Chinese," in this thesis will refer to the Han Chinese people.

stipulated the use of a text. Even as late as the Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1911), Chinese music was still largely based on poems (Levis 1963, 191).

Like traditional Chinese composers, Louie has attached concrete associations (on three different levels) to MTA. In the preface notes to the score, Louie explained that she was invoking her creative energies in the first movement (named "The Summoning") and that she quoted the first melody that she learned to play on the ch'in in the second movement, which is entitled "Ancient Music" (Louie 1983a). Louie named the last movement "Music for a Thousand Autumns," a title which recalls the theme of nature that is so prominent in Chinese art. This title is taken from Japanese gagaku (court) music and means "music for eternity" (personal interview, June 1993). In addition, Louie explained that each movement of MTA referred to a period in her own life (and perhaps to her artistic development). The first movement symbolized her present; the second, her past; and the third, her future (Louie 1983a).

Finally, Louie associated MTA with the memory of a composer from Québec, Claude Vivier. Louie was deeply shaken by the murder of Vivier in 1983. His sudden disappearance made Louie reflect on the role of artists and their "music for eternity." She explained:

The piece [MTA] is about the fact that he [Vivier] will exist for all time because of his music. And likewise (hopefully) my music will exist because I've written something that's permanent.
 (Personal interview, June 1993)

The repercussions of Vivier's violent death are felt in "a lot of shocking things in the first movement" (personal interview, June 1993), such as "furioso" and "frenzied" fortissimo passages, fortissimo double glissandi, and "subito" drops in volume from "fff" to "pp." As a contrast, Louie incorporated a simple and pure, bell-like motive throughout the piece. This motive, shown in Example 4-1, represents Louie's "call" to Vivier (personal interview, June 1993).



Example 4-1

Music for a Thousand Autumns, first mvt., bar 40

Instrumentation

Although Chinese music scholar, Sin-Yan Shen, divided Chinese orchestras into at least twenty different types, he

noted that most of these conventional Chinese ensembles were generally composed of plucked and bowed string instruments, winds, and percussion (Sin-Yan Shen 1991, 21). More specifically, these orchestras normally included such instruments such as the p'ip'a and ch'in (plucked strings), the banhu and erhu (bowed string instruments), the hsiao, di, and suona (winds), and a percussion section consisting of the gu, bo, xiaoluo, and daluo (drums, cymbals, and small and large gongs).

Despite the fact that Louie chose the instruments in MTA mainly to obtain a wide range of registers and timbres (personal interview, June 1993), her scoring in this work is similar to that of a traditional Chinese ensemble. Like many pieces from the Chinese orchestral repertoire, Louie's work includes bowed and plucked (pizzicato) strings, winds (including flutes, and single- and double-reed instruments). Her percussion section contains many instruments of Asian origin, such as the bender gong,⁴ and cymbals (which are left undamped at the end of the piece as in many Chinese works) from Peking Opera. Castanets, which Japanese belief connects to the invention of music (Blades 1984a, 315), share the percussion section with other instruments originally from Buddhist's rites. These instruments include gongs (Louie uses

⁴A gong whose sound "bends" upwards after being struck (Louie 1992).

water gongs⁵), temple blocks, and bells.⁶ Besides conventional bells, Louie uses other instruments to produce bell-like sounds, such as the xylophone, vibraphone, marimba, and piano in the high register.

High Register

Louie's Music for a Thousand Autumns avoids extended sections of lower-sounding pitches. This aspect of MTA is typical of Chinese orchestral music, which is characterized by a lack of lower tones (Shen 1991, 151). In the first movement of MTA, no notes below the bass clef are found in the first thirty-one bars, and from bars 14-31, bars 46-52, and from bars 62-72, all the pitches are even above middle C (Louie 1983a).

Louie's explanation for the lack of lower tones is that ornate melodies or "scrambling kinds of things," as she expressed it, can be heard more easily on higher-pitched instruments than on lower-pitched ones. However, when she realized that she was avoiding the lower register in many of her pieces--not just in MTA--she began to consider this trait "a weakness." Subsequently, she began to make a conscious

⁵The water gong is a gong which is struck and then lowered into water. It was used in Double Music (1941) by John Cage and Lou Harrison (Blades 1984c, 62).

⁶For further information on these instruments, see Kuo-huang and Mark 1980.

effort to include more lower pitches in her work (personal interview, June 1993).

Winds

Similarities between Louie's writing in MTA and North Asian practices can be observed in the wind-playing. Extended sections of rapidly-flowing scalar passages for eastern wind instruments, such as the di and suona, commonly necessitate "circular breathing," a technique requiring the performer to both inhale and exhale while playing (Shen 1991, 148). The excerpt of a six-bar passage shown in Example 4-2 from MTA similarly allows little time for the performers to take a breath. In lieu of the eastern practice of circular breathing needed for such passages, Louie has suggested that performers use "stagger breathing" (individual players take breaths at different times) to simulate a fluid, "legato" sound.

The image shows a musical score for four wind instruments: two flutes (fl), an oboe (ob.), and a clarinet in C (cl (in C)). The score is written on four staves. Above the first staff, there is a tempo and performance instruction: "2 legato simile: stagger breathing". The dynamics are marked "ff" (fortissimo). The music consists of rapid, flowing scalar passages for each instrument, with staggered breathing indicated by dotted lines and vertical markers.

Example 4-2

Music for a Thousand Autumns, first mvt., bars 21-22

Louie's trills in the winds are comparable to those played on Chinese instruments. Jon Kimura Parker writes that, as in Chinese practices, Louie's trills can be used as a colour effect, or to emphasize the principal note of the trill. When they are separated by a semitone, he adds, these trills--such as the fast trills typical of the dongxiao (Thrasher 1980, 151)--may also serve to imitate the insistent, bent-pitch ornaments typically played on ancient Japanese and Chinese instruments (Parker 1989, 12, 55).

In MTA, Louie often calls for loud, shrill playing in the winds. In this type of passage, she is generally referring to "very bright kind of Chinese music, as opposed to ch'in music, which is very introverted" (personal interview, June 1993). Louie's piercing wind passages that are coupled with a noisy, sleigh-bell accompaniment bars 17-21 in the first movement of MTA, for example, resemble northern Chinese folk music, which is characterized by the piercing and high-pitched double-reed suona⁷ with strident percussion accompaniment (Kuo-huang and Mark 1980, 19).

"Line" and "Harmony"

Louie's composition is largely conceived in terms of "line" rather than "harmony." Consequently, the instrumental timbres in MTA are kept quite separate. As in Asian ensembles, MTA generally does not feature the homogeneous,

⁷Also spelled "sona."

blended sound that is commonly found in western orchestras; rather, it tends to keep the instrumental timbres more distinct (Pian 1980, 248).

The emphasis placed on linear writing in Chinese music is reflected in the rarity of instruments that are able to produce more than one sound simultaneously. There is one Chinese instrument, however, that is capable of producing "chords." The shēng, or Chinese mouth organ, is used in solo and ensemble work to play single notes, or two or three notes together. The instrument most often produces tones in octaves, perfect fourths, or perfect fifths with the melody line (Thrasher 1984, 371). Example 4-3 shows how Louie has incorporated aspects of this eastern type of "organum" in her writing for violin, viola and double bass. The violin and viola begin each phrase in unison, and the double bass plays in perfect fourths or fifths under the melody, especially in relation to the violin part. (The cello part "colours" the other lines and reinforces the sense of unison at the beginning of phrases.)

Example 4-3

Music for a Thousand Autumns, second mvt., bars 89-92

Tonal Inflection

Along with the importance placed on timbre, Louie gave prominence to tonal inflections in MTA. Throughout the piece, Louie incorporated the Asian love of "bent tones" by scoring for the bender gong, water gong, and flexatone.⁸ In addition to many sorts of trills and glissandi, Louie included several types of vibrato in her score. Example 4-4 demonstrates three different kinds of vibrato that Louie writes for strings in

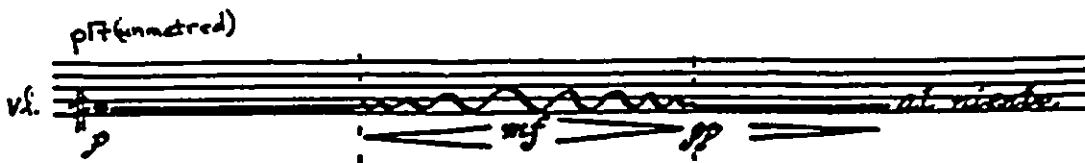
⁸ A flexatone is "an idiophone invented in the 1920s, consisting of a small flexible metal sheet suspended in a wire frame ending in a handle.... An eerie tremolo is ... produced, and the pitch altered by variable pressure on the sheet of metal. ... [I]ntroduced as an instrument to make 'jazz jazzier' (Blades 1984b, 767)

the first movement of MTA: a) slow with ritardando, b) fast, and c) fast, moving to slow, and then back to fast.



a) slow with ritardando
bar 45

b) fast
bars 1-2



c) fast, slow, fast
p. 17 (unmetred section)

Example 4-4

Music for a Thousand Autumns, first mvt.

Heterophony

The melodic line in Chinese ensemble music is frequently played by all the instruments in unison or at the octave (sometimes with the accompaniment of the shēng playing "chords" under the melody). This practice of "simultaneous variations of the same melody," along with its characteristic use of embellishment, is called heterophony (Nettle 1983, 89). Some similarities exist between the Chinese practice of heterophony and certain passages of Louie's work, including the excerpt of MTA in Example 4-5.

54

+b 5 +b 5

Example 4-5

Music for a Thousand Autumns, first mvt., bar 54

This passage corresponds to Chinese heterophonic music in which the principal notes are frequently played in rhythmic unison. However, the intervallic relationship between melodic lines in Louie's example is freer than that typically found in

Asian heterophonic music. Although Louie's instrumental lines move together in the same direction, the individual voices do not remain the same distance apart, as in traditional heterophonic playing.

Traditional heterophonic musical practices encourage creative embellishment of the melody line by the individual musicians. Although Chinese music provides few instances of "harmony," a type of polyphony may be created in this music, if each of the melodic lines is elaborately and individually ornamented. In Louie's work, numerous ornaments are sprinkled throughout the score, but they differ from those heard in heterophonic playing because they are synchronized, written-out embellishments, and are not improvised.

Rhythm

Chinese music is noted for its flexibility towards rhythm (Thrasher 1980, 121). The exact values given to notes depend entirely on the preferences of the performer who may decide to change the duration of notes between different sections or between repetitions of previous themes (Thrasher 1980, 121). In ch'in music, for example, the Chinese system of notation does not indicate the exact rhythmic values, only the pitches. In addition, the practice of free embellishment of the main melody notes in heterophonic ensemble playing has also perhaps led to a development of rhythmic flexibility.

Louie's treatment of a brief motive in the first movement typifies the rhythmic flexibility and variations of repeated motives that are found in traditional Chinese music. In three measures, a simple four-note motive is transformed from quarter notes in Example 4-6a, to dotted quarter notes and half notes in Example 4-6b, and finally to a more sophisticated melodic and rhythmic outline (which creates a supple, unmetred effect) in Example 4-6c.

53

cl.

bsn

a) quarter notes, bar 53

54

cl.

(in C)

bsn

b) dotted quarter notes and half notes, bars 54-55

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: flute (fl), clarinet (cl), violin (v), cello (c), and bass (bass). The score is labeled '56' at the beginning. The notation is complex, featuring many slurs, ties, and dynamic markings such as 'f' (forte) and 'mf' (mezzo-forte). The rhythm is irregular, with various note values and rests, illustrating an 'unmetred effect'.

c) unmetred effect, bars 56-57

Example 4-6

Music for a Thousand Autumns, first mvt.

Structure

The structure of MTA corresponds to the Chinese preference for a succession of short, independent sections. In Chinese music for orchestra, ensemble, and solo performer, each section of a piece may feature its own tempo, with ritardandos and accelerandos, helping to accentuate the break between sections (Schen 1991). Like traditional Chinese musicians, Louie also prefers to write pieces comprised of short movements, rather than long, continuous works (Parker 1989, 41). For example, each of the sections in MTA is

separated from the others by fermatas, ritardandos and accelerandos. As shown in Table 4-A, each of Louie's sections embodies a distinctive character through changes in tempo, timbre, rhythmic movement, instrumentation, and rhythmic and melodic patterns. (Please note that in Section C of the piece, Vivier's "call" consists of the pitches B, D, A, B.)

<u>Section</u>	<u>Bars</u>	<u>Tempo (J)</u>	<u>End of Section</u>	<u>Characteristics of Each Section</u>
A	1-31	ca 76-acc.	ritardando long pause	<u>YANG</u> noisy percussion, shrill winds acceleration bars 27-31
B	32-39	ca 76	fermata	feroce "black and white" cluster trills on the piano chimes and crotales
C	40-45	ca 46	perdendosi long pause	"call" to Vivier (B, D, A, B)
D	46-52	ca 60	64th notes	shrill wind passages frame a rhythmic pattern on temple blocks
E	53-58	ca 96	ritardando	heterophonic writing
F	59-67	66-72	"delicately"	rapid scalar passages trills
G	68-78	66-72	furioso glissando	heterophonic writing rapid scalar passages in wind instruments
H	p.17-19 (bar 78)	unmetred	double glissando	<u>Yin</u> manipulation of timbres "bent" tones unmetred section
I	79-84	46	held chords	"call," to Vivier, rapid scalar passages

Table 4-A

Structure of Music for a Thousand Autumns, first mvt.

Yin and Yang

The Asian concepts of yin and yang play a part in the structure of Louie's work. Yang, in Asian philosophy, is associated with such concepts as "heaven", "sun", "light", and "exuberance," and yin, with the "earth", "moon", "darkness", and "introspection." According to this philosophy, all matter in the universe is composed of yin and yang, but in varying proportions (Parker 1992, 22).

Parker believes that extreme mood contrasts in Louie's MTA map onto the polar opposites of yin and yang (Parker 1989, 45). More specifically, he states that the characters of the three movements of MTA correspond to the Chinese concepts of yang, yin, and yang, respectively. Parker draws attention to the fact that simple rhythms, such as those found in the ch'in melody in the second movement, help to distinguish the yin from the turbulent and insistent rhythms of the yang, which are exemplified in the opening thirty-one bars of the piece (Parker 1989, 41). The unmetred section at the end of the first movement actually belongs to the yin mood, according to Parker, and prepares the listener for the yin of the second movement (Parker 1989, 27).

Ideology Surrounding the Ch'in

To understand Louie's treatment of the ancient ch'in (Chinese zither) melody quoted in the second movement, it is

helpful to have a basic knowledge of the ideology surrounding this instrument. Among the Chinese, the ch'in was among the oldest and most respected instruments. Not only was it associated with "heaven", "earth", and "man" (Liang 1984, 171), but, according to legend, Confucius himself played the ch'in.

The influence of Confucian philosophy on Chinese Han culture was reflected in all Chinese music, but especially in the music of the noble and ancient ch'in. The Confucian ideals of moderation, social harmony, and collective, rather than individual, accomplishment were reflected in slow tempos (ma) and simple melodies (yi) of ch'in music, which was to be peaceful and harmonious without stress and excitement (Lai and Mok 1985). The instrument's soft tones, subtle nuances and an absence of virtuosic techniques provided the ideal model of Chinese music (Thrasher 1980, 127).

Because the strings of the ch'in were plucked with the fingers, sophisticated and subtle nuances in timbres and tonal inflections could readily be produced. Chinese music scholar, Wen-chung Chou, wrote of the complexity of ch'in notation arising from the multitude of articulations and timbric possibilities on the instrument:

Over one hundred symbols (chien tzu) are used in ch'in's finger notation for achieving the essential[,] yet elusive qualities of this music: subtle inflections in the production and control of its tones as a means of expression. They indicate the articulation and timbre of either a single tone or a series of tones. They specify the occurrence of variable microtones between fixed scale tones. And, they control the rhythmic and dynamic organization within each tonal aggregate. In fact, they even evoke a certain state of mind to the performer for the execution of each detail.

(Chou 1971, 144)

The emphasis on manipulation of single tones is not unique to ch'in music. In much of Asian music, as in MTA, timbre and the treatment of individual tones take precedence over melody and harmony (Shen 1991). However, ch'in music is especially rooted in a philosophy that places great meaning and importance on single tones:

According to the Confucianist classic, Yüeh Chi (Record of Music): Tones are the "images", or substance, of music: melody and rhythm are the "ornament", or appearance, of tones; therefore one must contemplate sound to know tones, and contemplate tones to know music.

....

In other words, the emphasis is on the single tones and their natural virtue or power by which these tones are what they are. Thus, music is sound, and sound is "living matter". This concept is particularly manifest in the music for ch'in, the Chinese zither.

(Chou 1969-70, 19-20)

The Second Movement of MTA

The second movement of MTA is based on the first ch'in melody that Louie learned to play on the ancient Chinese zither (Louie 1983a). The composer's treatment of the ancient ch'in melody, "Yearning on the River Shiang," reflects characteristics of idiomatic writing for the ch'in. In order to respect conventions surrounding ch'in music, Louie's second movement is marked "tranquillo" and the tempo is fairly slow ($J = 60$). The composer alternates simple melodies (yi) of "ancient" music in simple quarter notes in duple time with a few bars of "contemporary, western" music featuring more complicated rhythmic and melodic structures. The quoted ch'in melody is played throughout by string instruments to evoke the ancient sound of the ch'in's own strings. The opening bars (85-97) of the theme are even plucked inside the piano, a direct reference to the playing of a zither. Louie instructs the pianist to play the notes of the simple melody sul corde (on the string).⁹

Timbre

Louie places great emphasis on subtle variations in timbre throughout the second movement. She has varied the timbre of the ancient melody in two ways. First, she has the

⁹ Louie's concern with the timbre and audibility of this section is reflected in her footnote to the pianist: "use fingernail to pluck the string. The piano may need amplification in a large hall for this sul corde passage" (Louie 1983a).

theme plucked inside the piano strings in the opening, and then double bass takes over for the rest of the movement. Second, with each reoccurrence of the theme, Louie rearranges the instrumentation of the accompaniment, as outlined in Table 4-B:

- 1) Theme: plucked piano
Accompaniment: bowed vibraphone, strings
(bars 85-88)
- 2) Theme: plucked piano
Accompaniment: harmonics in strings
(bars 89-96)
- 3) Theme: solo double bass, pizz.
Accompaniment: none
(bars 100,101)
- 4) Theme: double bass
Accompaniment: vibraphone, harmonics in strings
(bars 105-106)
- 5) Theme: double bass, pizz.
Accompaniment: vibraphone
(bars 115-116)

Table 4-B

Timbric Manipulations of Chinese Melody
Music for a Thousand Autumns, second mvt.

Tonal Inflection in Second Movement

Tonal inflection takes a leading position in the second movement, especially in the double bass that assumes the role of the ch'in. A ch'in player could produce different types of glissandi by sliding a finger along the string to produce a "weeping" sound, or by increasing the tension of the string after the string was plucked (Sachs 1943, 108). Short slides up or down to a note were sometimes used in ch'in playing to emphasize the contrast between the sound of an open string and a stopped string, and to more accurately adjust the pitch of the note (Lieberman 1975, 117). Louie has varied the types of glissandi in the double bass by using arrows curving up and down to a pitch, or by using a line connected to adjacent pitches (Example 4-7). The use of an arrow indicates a "scooping" effect leading to a specific pitch. The use of a line calls for a slide (short glissando) away from a specific pitch.



Example 4-7

Music for a Thousand Autumns, second mvt., bars 100-101

The importance of tonal inflection in ch'in music was reflected in the twenty-six types of vibrato which could be produced on the instrument (Sachs 1943, 108). A drawn-out vibrato was like "the cry of the dove announcing rain"; a swinging vibrato was like "falling blossoms floating down a stream." A subtle effect was thought to be produced by pressing the finger firmly down on the string and letting the pulsing blood in the fingertip produce the vibrato (Deswoskin 1982, 123-24). Accordingly, Louie has made vibrato a prominent part of the phrases played by the double bass "ch'in" in the second movement. In fact, each of its two-bar phrases frequently ends with the fluctuating sound of vibrato.

Alterations in Repeated Sections

Subtle alterations of tonal inflection and timbre in repeated sections, so characteristic of Asian music, are apparent in Louie's score. The composer changes the timbre, glissandi, vibrato, and slides very slightly between repetitions of the same motives. This feature is especially noticeable in the double-bass "ch'in" part (see Example 4-8a, and 4-8b for its altered version).



Example 4-8a

Music for a Thousand Autumns, second mvt., bars 100-101



Example 4-8b

Music for a Thousand Autumns, first mvt., bars 115-116

Formal Structures of Ch'in Music

Traditional ch'in music was characterized by the use of extended formal structures. For example, music for the ch'in frequently consists of an introduction of notes played in

harmonics, followed by a series of well-ordered sections played in varying tempos with ritardandos and accelerando transitions, and then rounded off by a coda of notes played in harmonics (Thrasher 1980, 19, 118). Similarly, Louie places a set of harmonics near the beginning and end of the movement (see Example 4-9), and her sections are well-defined by fermatas and held notes, as well as by the alternation of double-bass passages with the orchestra.

Example 4-9
Music for a Thousand Autumns, second mvt., bars 89-92

Mode and Key Note

The mode of the ch'in composition and its "key note" are usually specified at the beginning of the piece. This is

necessary because many ch'in compositions are notated in janzi pu which indicate fingerings, but not pitches (Mitani 1981, 123). Louie's fermatas in the plucked piano part, shown in Example 4-10, can be likened to the emphasis that was given to the "key note" at the end of the first phrase of the melody in traditional ch'in music (Mitani 1981, 138)¹⁰.



Example 4-10

Music for a Thousand Autumns, second mvt., bars 85-88

We have seen how Louie has respected many general precepts of Asian philosophy concerning the art of music. In Music for a Thousand Autumns, she has assigned descriptive titles to each of the movements, given timbre and tonal inflection precedence over melody and harmony, and has arranged the work into a series of concise, well-defined sections. The most striking manifestations of Louie's use of Asian musical idioms, however, are her appropriation of exotic instruments (such as the bender gong, for example), her Asian-

¹⁰ This "key note" did not necessarily have to correspond to the first note of the mode (Mitani 1981, 138).

like instrumental writing (as in her widely-fluctuating trills in the winds), and her manipulation of textures typical of eastern music, such as heterophony and "organum."

2. The Eternal Earth (TEE)

Music for a Thousand Autumns was one of Louie's last works to focus extensively on Asian idioms. Three years later, Louie blended more thoroughly the Asian elements that were found in Music for a Thousand Autumns with contemporary colours in her three-movement work for full orchestra, The Eternal Earth (hereafter referred to as TEE). In this composition, no longer do we find a "purple patch" of exotic music dabbed onto a contemporary canvas, as in Music for a Thousand Autumns. As will be shown in the first two movements of TEE, a more uniform and homogeneous colour scheme now predominates.

Western Tradition

Even though elements of the work rely on Asian idioms at times, TEE could not be identified as an "Asian" piece. Louie has drawn heavily on the western tradition as well as Asian

music in this work. The sheer size and range of the orchestra, in addition to the inclusion of the brass section, (and the sizzle cymbal,¹¹ for example), point immediately to western influences. Moreover, the structure of TEE parallels that of a symphony. The three movements of TEE are arranged in a "fast-slow-fast" arrangement, and the first and second movements are organized into a loose ternary structure. The composer's frequent metre changes and complex rhythms, her "quartal chords" built on perfect and augmented fourths (Parker 1989, 34), as well as the framework of an octatonic scale, also find their source in the west.

Tension and Release

The relentless, forward-driving rhythm of the first movement is propelled along by an exciting inner game of tension and release. Louie uses several western devices to build up the tension in the first movement, such as dramatic crescendos on held notes for full orchestra, whirling flourishes in the strings and winds to accent punctuation points, and ominous thunderings from the timpani.

Timbric Experimentation

Louie's work in avant-garde "sound effects" and other sound experiments in California shines through in this piece,

¹¹ A suspended cymbal with rivets which continue to vibrate after the cymbal has been struck. It is a common component of the drum set (Anon 1984, 400).

as it did in Music for a Thousand Autumns. The cellos produce "seagull glissandos"¹² near the end of the second movement in bar 112. The eerie and nebulous atmosphere in the beginning of the second movement is due in part to the bowing of the vibraphone. The sound of chiming breaks through this "mist" to remind one of church bells. The sound produced by tracing a finger around the rims of crystal wine glasses (which are filled with water and tuned to a fragile F-sharp major/minor "blues" chord, which then melts into a pure F-sharp major chord) exquisitely ends the second movement, as Louie wished, "out in the universe somewhere" (Eternal Earth 1987).

Asian Influences

An Asian vein can be traced weaving in and out of this "symphonic" muscle. The inclusion of many exotic percussion instruments such as bells, tam-tams, bender gong, maracas, and Indonesian button gong,¹³ obviously indicates a desire for an eastern sound in the piece. In addition, the fluctuating trills, and winding, bending contour of Louie's melodies (such as the one shown in Example 4-11) recall a sound reminiscent of Asia.

¹² Artificial harmonic glissandos. The cellists keep the distance between their first and fourth fingers constant and do not adjust. "Resulting sound is jumping repeated harmonics creating a 'swooping' effect" (Louie 1986, 53)

¹³ A large "kempur" gong from Bali with a large, low sound. It has a raised centre; also called the "nipple gong." (telephone interview, April 1994).



Example 4-11

The Eternal Earth, second mvt., bars 9-11

A motive played by the glockenspiel and crotales (doubled by the winds) in Example 4-12 again echoes the music of the east. Besides its link to Asia by the prominence of bells, Louie's melodic motive features much narrow, stepwise motion, which is typical of traditional oriental melodies. In addition, each bar of this simple melody in eighth and sixteenth notes is immediately replayed, and repeated notes abound, as is typical of the Chinese way of developing melodies.

The image shows a musical score for two percussion parts, labeled 'perc 1' and 'perc 2'. The score is written on two staves. The first staff (perc 1) starts at bar 30 and contains several measures of music with notes and rests. The second staff (perc 2) also starts at bar 30 and contains similar rhythmic patterns. Dynamics are indicated by 'f' (forte) and 'poco' (poco). The score is handwritten and includes various musical notations such as beams, slurs, and accents.

Example 4-12

The Eternal Earth, first mvt., bars 30-34

Asian Instrumentation

To gain insight into Louie's reason for choosing certain instruments in TEE, it is helpful to understand how she "substituted" western instruments for eastern ones in her second piece for the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Music for Heaven and Earth (1990). Because the piece was to be taken on the TSO's Pacific Rim Tour, the orchestra asked Louie to avoid scoring the work for heavy or fragile instruments that would not travel well. Therefore, Louie replaced the shêng, or Chinese mouth organ, with the western string section, the nasal and piercing Asian wind instruments with flutes, piccolos, and oboes, and finally, the Japanese koto with the harp (Louie 1992).

Similarly, Louie's winding and bending melodies are frequently played by the piccolo in the second movement of TEE. In the opening of the second movement, the strings serve as a harmonic base and hold "chords", much as the shēng does in traditional Chinese music. Finally, a prominent harp solo in the middle section of the second movement recalls the sound of plucked strings on the koto, or long Japanese zither.

Yin and Yang

The overall structural plan of TEE consists of two rather fast and boisterous outer movements which frame a slower, calmer movement. In Asian terms this could be loosely translated into a yang-yin-yang structure. But, not only do the yang sections here follow the traditional moods of "bright" and "exuberant", but their high-voltage rhythms, whirling flourishes in the strings and winds, the large percussion section, and extended forte passages are able to sweep the listener into a furious vortex of power. Example 4-13 exemplifies the sense of urgency in Louie's writing in the third movement: a rhythmically driven motive in the strings, percussion, brass and winds is repeatedly propelled upwards and then, without warning, suddenly tips over in the winds and skids dizzily down into the next section.

Some features of Louie's music have sources both in the east and the west, such as the use of augmented fourths and sevenths in prominent melodic passages. The use of these intervals obviously has western precedents, but melodies with sevenths, augmented fourths, and minor thirds are also familiar in some eastern musical practices, such as those of the South Vietnamese people, for example (Shehan 1986, 14).

The themes of nature and environment in the piece bridge both eastern traditions and contemporary western thought by referring to the Japanese dragon or "earth spirit" in the first movement, and to the western preoccupation with preservation of equatorial rainforest from further destruction by human hands in the second. As in her mix of musical idioms, Louie has attached both eastern and western views of nature to this piece.

3. The Ringing Earth Overture (TRE)

The Ringing Earth is a totally different kind of piece. It's very tonal in nature. But even yet, within the confines of that kind of commission (which had to be festive, etc.) I still had to write a piece that had integrity for me. And now when I hear that piece I think, 'Gosh, that's a really good piece! I really, really like that piece!'

(Louie in Personal Interview, June 1993)

Tonality and Colour

Louie's one-movement work for full orchestra, The Ringing Earth (TRE), is firmly set in a tonal mould. Of course, primary chords, tonic and dominant pedal points, and arpeggios are what one would expect from a fanfare-like work for the opening of the '86 Olympic games, but, surprisingly, the work hardly ever modulates harmonically from its key of D-major.

What gives a twentieth-century "sound" to the writing is Louie's use of colour to bend the piece away from a totally D-majorish sound. She frequently garnishes her chords, for example, with "extra" notes, such as the "added sixth" that Ravel, for one, gleaned from jazz music. The excerpt from the brass section solo in Example 4-14 demonstrates Louie's use of extraneous notes, such as the pitches "E" or "B" in the D-major chord. The predominately tonic (I) and dominant (V) harmonies are indicated in the example.

(14)

HRN. 1 2 3 4

TPT. 1 2 3

TRB. 1, 2

BASS TRB.

TUBA

I I V I

Example 4-14

The Ringing Earth, bars 14-16

In the above example, Louie uses the $B\flat$ as a colouristic device by substituting it for the dominant, A. This technique

is apparent in bar 14 in the fourth horn and first and second trumpets. Louie's dominant substitute (in other words, writing a B^b instead of the expected A) is especially apparent throughout the piece in the timpani, which frequently marks cadential passages by playing B^b to D, instead of the conventional dominant to tonic.

Second Section: Linear Emphasis

Louie places more emphasis on linear than harmonic writing in the second section, which begins at bar 51 and ends at bar 81. After a brief transitional passage of six bars leading the listener away from the first section, the composer abandons primary chords as well as pedal points on D or A for thirteen bars. To further "slant" her writing away from D-major, Louie turns again to her pianistic "black and white" writing that was an integral part of Music for a Thousand Autumns (1983) and The Eternal Earth (1986) and creates a yearning, Copland-like melody supported by "colour" chords.

Louie does not completely desert the tonal base in the second section, however; rather, she manages to combine both the key of D-major with the "black and white" mode. The harp gives the clue to the genesis of Louie's "black and white" melody in the middle section. At bar 51 a left hand black key chord (F[♯], C[♯], F[♯]) and right hand white key chord (A, D, A), which fall naturally and easily under the hand on the piano, have been written for the harp. Happily, these notes fall

into the key of D-major and into the "black and white" configuration as well. Example 4-15 shows how the highest pitched notes of this "black and white" chordal pattern on the harp became the melody played by the clarinet.

The image shows a musical score for Example 4-15, which is a single bar of music. It consists of two staves. The top staff is for the Clarinet (Cl.) and the bottom staff is for the Harp. The Clarinet part begins with a '57' above the staff, indicating the bar number. The notes are marked with 'solo' and 'espress.' (espressivo), and the dynamic is 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The Harp part also starts with 'mp' and includes the instruction '(poco cresc.)' (poco crescendo) below the staff. The music is in 4/4 time, as indicated by the '4' in the bottom left corner of the harp staff.

Example 4-15

The Ringing Earth, bar 57

Ternary Form

Along with the great harmonic stability in TRE, especially in the outer sections, Louie chose to adhere to a more traditional Western sense of form than in many of her other works. The piece is written in ternary form, with two cheerful outer sections, a reflective middle section, and a coda of fanfares. As a corollary to this traditional, structural conception, Louie's themes here also tend to be more periodic,¹⁴ as shown in Table 4-C:

¹⁴ A period is "commonly, a musical statement terminated by a cadence or built of complementary members, each generally two to eight bars long" (Ratner 1980, 406).

<u>Section</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Total No. Bars</u>
A1	a1)	Bars 1-9	.9 (1+8)
	b)	Bars 10-22	13 (8+5)
	a2)	Bars 23-38	16 (8+8)
	c)	Bars 39-50	12 (9+3)
B	Intro.	Bars 51-56	6
	d1)	Bars 57-69	13 (9+4)
	d2)	Bars 70-81	12 (8+4)
A2	a3)	Bars 82-89	8
	c2	Bars 90-100	11 (9+2)
	c3	Bars 101-107	7
	c4	Bars 108-127	20
	c5	Bars 128-135	8
C	Coda	Bars 136-143	8

Table 4-C
Structure of The Ringing Earth

Metre Changes

Many of the themes in TRE are contrasted by way of metre change, as exemplified by the use of compound metre 6/8, 9/8 in theme "a," and by the simple metre 2/4, 3/4 in theme "b" of section "A1." However, Louie's metre changes in TRE are of a moderate nature, as compared to those in most of her other compositions. Although there are numerous changes in time signature, they are not radical: from 9/8 to 6/8 in theme "a," for example, or one beat more or less in simple time in the middle "B" section. In addition, frequent alterations in metre occur at cadential points where the composer simply desires a slowing of motion.

4. Comparison of the Three Works

In general, Music for a Thousand Autumns is characterized by its use of eastern idioms, The Eternal Earth demonstrates a blend of eastern and western elements, and The Ringing Earth overture bears musical elements largely of western origin.

Consequently, many Asian-type melodies, ornaments and tonal inflections are found in Music for a Thousand Autumns, less so in The Eternal Earth (most are located in the second movement) and fewer again in The Ringing Earth overture. Likewise, linear writing assumes a leading role in Music for a Thousand Autumns, whereas harmonic considerations take precedent in The Ringing Earth. The Eternal Earth constitutes

more of a mix, with harmonic considerations generally dominating in the outer movements, and more linear interest in the slow, middle movement. The structure of Music for a Thousand Autumns again resembles Chinese pieces by being composed of a succession of many small sections, whereas The Eternal Earth and The Ringing Earth are organized into variants of the traditional ternary forms, which are common in much western literature. Finally, both Music for a Thousand Autumns and The Eternal Earth are scored for a large percussion battery with a multitude of exotic percussion instruments, whereas The Ringing Earth overture's percussion section mainly consists of instruments commonly found in a symphonic orchestra, with a hint of the east in its inclusion of bells.

Louie has given specific extra-musical connotations and associations to all three works. For example, several meanings from both the east and west are attached at three levels to Music for a Thousand Autumns. (Each movement is given a descriptive title, represents a separate period in Louie's life, and the entire piece is a homage to Vivier.) The first movement of The Eternal Earth, entitled "Summoning the Earth Spirit", invokes the Japanese Dragon, and the second movement, "To the Ends of the Earth," speaks in western terms of the disappearing rainforest. The Ringing Earth is associated with the universal theme of world peace.

An avant-garde thirst for novel effects is also sensed in Louie's writing. There are many percussion instruments used to produce unexpected sounds, from the sleigh bells, water gong, flexatone, and amglaukens (cow bells) in Music for a Thousand Autumns to the thunder sheet, and wine glasses in The Eternal Earth. In addition, Louie's "black and white" writing is found in varying degrees in all three works. Black and white lines are kept most distinct in Music for a Thousand Autumns, whereas The Eternal Earth again exemplifies a "mixed" type of writing by combining the "black and white" lines to form variants of the octatonic scale as a foundation. The Ringing Earth is solidly placed in a tonal mode, with black and white writing "enhancing" the middle section.

5. Summary

This brief overview of Louie's music has reflected a small part of her total output and has demonstrated only a few of the many types of writing she enjoys (see Appendix A). However, the richness of Louie's music in these three works is due in part to her use of many musical elements from various sources. For example, bamboo windchimes, temple blocks from Buddhist rites and the bender gong from Peking opera share the percussion section with the flexatone, sleigh bells and sizzle cymbal in Music for a Thousand Autumns. Octatonic scales in the first movement of The Eternal Earth, developed from Louie's "black and white" improvisations, serve as a backdrop

for the lion's roar and a thunder sheet of Chinese traditions, and polarized yin/yang sections fit into a three-movement symphonic form. In The Ringing Earth, bell sounds abound, and black and white writing melts into the key of D major in the middle section. In conclusion, these three pieces reflect Louie's familiarity and intimacy with eastern and western musical cultures. It is from these two worlds that she was able to develop a wealth of innovative ideas, making her music both fascinating and compelling.

Conclusion

Alexina Louie is one of Canada's most talented and dedicated Canadian composers. The appearance of a successful woman in contemporary classical music is a novel event, and Louie's unusual profile and willingness to use the media as a vehicle to promote contemporary music give her a unique voice in the world of contemporary music.

We have seen how Louie acquired a rich and diversified musical background through her exposure to a variety of cultural milieus. She was first exposed to Chinese music in Vancouver where she was especially moved by the Chinese New Year's Lion Dance. In the city of Vancouver, her piano teachers Jean Lyons, Barbara Custance and Frances Marr Adaskin, as well as her theory teacher Cortland Hultberg, further cultivated and nurtured her love of music. In the more liberal atmosphere of California in the early 1970s, Louie came into contact with the colourful composition teacher Pauline Oliveros who introduced her to the mystical aspects of music in her women's sonic meditations group. Louie's other composition teacher, Robert Erickson, helped foster Louie's timbric imagination. A deciding factor in Louie's cultural background was her meeting and friendship with a student, Peter Salemi, who first aroused Louie's passion to seek and discover her Chinese heritage. Finally, Louie's move to Toronto in 1980 put her in contact with many major figures in

the Canadian music scene, including Alex Pauk, with whom she founded the Esprit Orchestra, a prestigious music ensemble devoted solely to contemporary music.

Louie returned to Canada after living ten years in the United States because, among other reasons, she felt like a "displaced Canadian," and perceived the Canadian system of grants and commissions as being more favourable than the American system, which relies more heavily on corporate sponsorship. Louie's steady rise in profile was crowned in 1986 with the title of Composer of the Year. She has since remained a major Canadian figure in contemporary musical circles.

The media has shown Louie as a "star," a struggling contemporary artist, a composer of talent and dedication and an open and fun-loving person. Besides these portraits, it could be argued that the media has tended to focus exclusively on the Chinese influence in Louie's music, rather than on the multitude of "foreign" and western characteristics from which she has drawn inspiration. In addition to these five prevalent media portraits, several isolated views of Louie depict her as an aggressive business person and as a woman-composer novelty. Although she has helped to make the public more aware of women composers, Louie shies away from "flag-waving" and does not wish to be viewed only as a woman composer. Perhaps Louie's reticence in this matter is due to the stigma that has sometimes been attached to women

composers, especially in regards to the production of large works (for which Louie is renowned) and to the structure of works.

Louie's compositions are brought forward from the depths of her soul with an immense sense of responsibility to produce a work of integrity for herself, for the performer and for the audience. Her works demonstrate an unceasing quest for technical and musical excellence, both from the point of view of the composer and of the performer. Because her music is tied so strongly to what she calls the "true" interpretation of her emotional states, she is often reluctant to accept offers for lighter music or "background" music. Nevertheless, she enjoys co-writing film and television music with Alex Pauk, as a "fun" venture apart from the struggle of her contemporary compositions and as an option from teaching.

From a compositional point of view, Louie's uncommon way of improvising at the piano with one hand on the black keys and the other on the white keys has given rise to a prominence of "black and white" melodic lines and a harmonic and melodic foundation based on the octatonic scale in much of her work. To demonstrate some aspects of the many types of writing used in her music, I focused on three of Louie's pieces, namely, Music for a Thousand Autumns, The Eternal Earth, and The Ringing Earth. Music for a Thousand Autumns exemplifies Louie's early work in Asian idioms. Asian instruments and bell sounds are woven into a fabric of linear motifs and

heterophonic writing. Idiosyncratic techniques of Asian instruments, such as circular breathing and widely fluctuating trills in the winds, are knowledgeably incorporated into her score. In addition, Louie draws on the extreme mood contrasts of the yin/yang, the structuring of short sections, the use of high register, and the Chinese love of extra-musical associations and descriptive titles.

The Eternal Earth shows a later "style" of Louie's writing that features a more blended version of eastern and western musics. Western influences can be noticed in Louie's use of the octatonic scale, her adaptation of the three-movement symphonic form, and skillful handling of the conventional instruments in a symphonic orchestra. The use of instruments from Indonesia and China, Asian-type melodies, and the yin/yang concept recall musical influences and philosophical principles from the east.

The Ringing Earth, written for the opening gala of Expo '86, draws on traditional western idioms. The piece is firmly rooted in the key of D major and features more harmonic, melodic and rhythmic stability than the other two works. Its emphasis centres on harmonic interest, rather than linear concepts, except for a brief excursion into "black and white" writing in the middle section.

By situating Louie in the Canadian music scene, several issues have come to light and have been addressed. One of them is the "woman composer" question. Due to a number of

reasons, the field of contemporary classical composition has lagged behind the other arts in producing successful women artists. Historically, there have been many reasons for this, such as the unavailability of extensive training for women, the lack of encouragement, and impossibility of financial autonomy. In addition, composers, unlike writers or painters, for example, had to rely on many people to help create their work. Unfortunately, it was not uncommon that performers, publishers, recording studios, managers, and audiences, for example, preferred the status quo to the risky business of encouraging a woman composer (Hall 1984, 85). As Judith Tick explains:

Society could not determine which individual would be gifted with genius, but it could determine which groups had access to the institutions that support art. No one could become a musician in an Emily Dickinson attic.
(Tick 1987, 335)

Considering the history of difficulties faced by women composers, the question of financial support still needs to be raised: should more support now be granted to women composers? Should women receive "equal opportunity" status (in commissions, for example), which is currently the case in some employment sectors? Should women composers try to find a "women's voice" in trying to write "women's" music? Does such a thing exist? Perhaps further research into the history of women composers and their current needs and wants could shed some light on these questions.

This study on Louie's career has illustrated how contemporary Canadian composers must make heroic efforts to have their works published or recorded. Since the publishing of contemporary scores in Canada was severely affected when the Canada Council stopped its grants for this purpose around 1980 (Ford 1982, 251), Louie, as mentioned previously, is just now finally having four works for solo piano published (see Appendix C). The ensuing question, then, is: should quotas be set to encourage the publishing and recording of more contemporary Canadian music, as has been done in broadcasting of Canadian music? Or should the process of marketing decisions continue to reign as the most "healthy" aspect of our free market economy? Although commendable, it must be pointed out that the initiative to broadcast a minimum of thirty percent Canadian music (Diamond 1994, 270) resulted in an increase in the Canadian recording of "pop" music, but did not greatly effect the recording of jazz or art music (Ford 1982, 251).

Should composers become more sensitive to market demands for contemporary music? Although writing for a wide public or a wide range of performers could perhaps be viewed as artistically limiting and lacking in prestige, it could be argued that works for solo instruments, as well as for school bands or choirs (especially high-quality works that are geared for students) could find a much more ready market than for a virtuoso concerto for sitar and full orchestra, for example.

The fact that Louie's Music for Piano for Grade Nine (RCM) solo piano is the most frequently borrowed score from the Canadian Music Centre in Toronto (telephone interview, April 1994), should send an unequivocal message to composers who are interested in current market demands for contemporary music. The publishing company Frederick Harris seems to have taken the lead in this area by commissioning Louie and Steven Gellman for collections of student piano pieces for solo piano.

Composers need not sneer at what they might perceive as "Gebrauchsmusik." Many outstanding composers, such as Béla Bartók and Canada's Barbara Pentland and Violet Archer, have written challenging and stimulating works for student performers. Not only could Canadian composers help build a future audience for contemporary music with their high-quality compositions for students, but their contributions to creating a greater demand for Canadian music could encourage our rare Canadian publishing companies to invest more in this venture. For years, fine artists such as Violet Archer have been encouraging Canadian composers to write more works for student performers. Perhaps the economic realities of our time will finally persuade them to do so.

Another issue that emerged from this study on Louie is the troubling lack of familiarity with Canadian music and musicians (of any genre) by the Canadian public. Perhaps, programmes such as "Toward a Living Art Education Program"

attached to the Esprit Orchestra may be the key to interesting audiences in Canada's music. Schools and universities could try to introduce more of Canada's artists to students. Textbooks, scores and recordings should become more available to the public through libraries, schools and universities? The main question however, still needs to be answered: could Canadian composers be helped in the areas of cultural dissemination, such as broadcasting, publishing and recording even within Canada? If we wish to encourage Canadian artists to produce and to be better known, we must help them in the areas of marketing, performance, publishing and recording.

In addition to exposing some aspects of the contemporary music scene in Canada, this study has revealed Alexina Louie to be an outstanding musician who is dedicated to promoting Canadian music. Due to the incessant demand for her music, Louie is among the numbered few in Canada who are able to make a living solely through composing. She is greatly respected and admired for her compositions, as well as for her promotion of contemporary music and her involvement with the highly esteemed Esprit Orchestra. Through her expertise, her art, her culture, and her philosophy, Louie has helped put a new face on Canadian contemporary music.

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Appendix A

List of Works
(square brackets indicate source)

- Three Coloured Fragments (1967)
Piano solo
[Cohen 1987, 428]
- Naked Poems (1968)
Chamber choir and electric piano
[Cohen 1987, 428]
- Energies (1970)
Orchestra
[Cohen 1981, 284]
- Lamentation for the Canadian Tragedy 1970 (1970)
Chamber orchestra
Premiere: June 1976; Vancouver; Vancouver New Music
Society. [Gaster 1977; Schulman 1980, 18; Cohen 1987,
428; Louie, Alexina, et al. n.d.]
- Pale Delicates (1971)
2-channel tape
[Cohen 1987, 428]
- Molly (1972)
4-channel tape
[Beatty 1989]
- Bringing the Tiger Down from the Mountain (1973)
Vocal
[Cohen 1981, 284]
- String Quartet (1975)
[Cohen 1987, 428]
- Piece for Nine Flutes (1975)
3 piccolos, 4 flutes and 2 alto-flutes
[Cohen 1987, 428]
- Lotus I (1977)
5 performers and tape
Commissioned by Days Months and Years to Come Ensemble
Premiere: January 29, 1978; Vancouver East Cultural
Centre; Days, Months and Years to Come Ensemble
[Beatty 1989; Schulman 1980, 16]

- Dragon Bells (1978)
 Keyboard and 2-channel tape- 2 pianos or prepared piano
 or pre-recorded piano
 [Beatty 1989; French 1987, 11; Cohen 1987]
- Lotus II (1978)
 Chamber-10 performers
 Premiere: March 10, 1980; University of British Columbia;
 Vancouver New Music Society; Alex Pauk, conductor.
 [Beatty 1989]
- Jasmine (1980)
 Orchestra
 [Cohen 1987]
- Pearls (1980)
 Chamber-flute (alto flute), oboe, piano, violoncello and
 percussion
 Commissioned by Days, Months and Years to Come Ensemble
 (written "as a gift")
 Premiere: June 15, 1980; Vancouver; Days, Months and
 Years to Come Ensemble (with Diana McIntosh, piano).
 [Beatty 1989; Schulman 1980, 20; Cohen 1987; Issacs 1992,
 832]
- Full Circle (1980)
 Chamber Chorus
 Commissioned by Chamber Singers under Cortland
 Hultberg
 [Schulman 1980, 20]
- Journal a.k.a. New York Times (1980)
 Music theatre for 10 performers-flute, clarinet, violin,
 viola, violoncello, contrabass, piano and percussion
 Commissioned by Toronto Dance Theatre for its 1980
 choreographic workshop
 Premiere: July 26, 1980; Toronto; Toronto Dance Theatre
 [Beatty 1989; Cohen 1987]
- Incantation (1980)
 Clarinet and tape
 Commissioned by Music Inter Alia
 Premiere: January 7, 1981; Winnipeg Art Gallery,
 Winnipeg, Manitoba; Theodore Oien, clarinet
 [Beatty 1989].
- Refuge (1981)
 Chamber-accordion, harp and vibraphone
 Commissioned by Joseph Macerollo
 Premiere: October 8, 1982; Toronto; Joseph Macerollo,
 accordion
 [Beatty 1989]

Shadows of Former Selves (performed in May 1981)
 Tape Collage for dance
 Co-written with Marjan Mozetich
 [Louie, Alexina, et al. n.d.]

Afterimages (1981)
 Piano Duo
 Premiere: March 2, 1983; Canadian Cultural Centre,
 Brussels, Belgium; Ralph Markham and Kenneth Broadway,
 pianists Dedicated to Markham and Broadway
 [Beatty 1989, Louie 1981]

Edges (1981, rev. 1982)
 String Quartet
 [Beatty; Cohen 1987]

Music for Piano (1982)
 Piano solo
 Commissioned by Alliance for Canadian New Music
 Projects (ACNMP) at the suggestion of its director Elaine
 Keillor
 Published by Thompson 1993
 [Beatty 1989]

Suite of Changes (1982)
 Quintet-clarinet, viola, contrabass, piano and percussion
 Commissioned by Arraymusic
 Premiere: March 12, 1982; Trinity United Church, Toronto,
 Ontario; Arraymusic
 Co-written with Marjan Mozetich
 [Cohen 1987; Eatock 1989, 170-71, 186]

Sanctuary (1982)
 Chamber- 12 performers
 Premiere: October 8, 1982; Walter Hall, University of
 Toronto Robert Aitken, flute
 [Beatty 1989]

The Distant Shore (1982)
 Piano trio
 Commissioned by Da Capo Trio
 Premiere: November 18, 1989; Regina, Saskatchewan
 [Unsigned article "Calendar of Events" September 1989, 4;
 Beatty 1989]

O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould (1982, rev. 1984)
 String orchestra (44-part) 12-10-7-10-5
 Commissioned by Festival of Contemporary Music at McGill
 University
 Premiere: January 17, 1983; Pollack Hall, Montréal;
 McGill University String Orchestra; Antoine Padilla,
 conductor [Beatty 1989; Louie 1982]

- Songs of Paradise (1983, rev. 1984)
 Orchestra - 2222/4220/timpani, 2 percussion, piano/strings
 Commissioned by Thunder Bay Symphony
 Premiere: March 11, 1983; Selkirk Auditorium, Thunder Bay, Ontario; Thunder Bay Symphony, Dwight Bennett, Conductor [Beatty 1989, Louie 1983b]
- Music for a Thousand Autumns (1983, rev. 1985)
 Chamber Orchestra-2 fl (doubling piccolos), oboe, B-flat clarinet, bassoon, piano, 2 percussion, violin, viola, violoncello, contrabass
 Commissioned by Société de musique contemporaine du Québec (SMCQ)
 Premiere: October 6, 1983; Pollack Hall, Montréal; Ensemble SMCQ; Serge Garant, conductor [Beatty 1989; Louie 1983a]
- Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (1984)
 Commissioned by Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)
 Premiere: February 12, 1985; Fort Gary Hotel, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Robert Silverman, pianist; Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, Simon Streatfeild, conductor
 [Unsigned article "Premieres/Creations: Orchestral . . ." July 1985, 16; Beatty 1989]
- Fantasia on a Theme by Bach (1985)
 Organ solo
 Commissioned by Bach 300
 Premiere: March 17, 1985; Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto; Hugh McLean, organ
 Joint composition with Alain Gagnon, Alan Heard, Allan Rae. [Beatty 1989; Unsigned article "Works for Various Combinations . . ." July 1985, 16]
- Riffs (1985, rev. 1987)
 Chamber-oboe, clarinet, bassoon
 Premiere: April 25, 1985; Church of the Redeemer; Toronto; The Chinook Reed Trio
 [Beatty 1989; Unsigned article "Works for Various . . ." Nov. 1985, 16]
- Music for a Celebration (1985, rev. 1986, rev. 1987)
 Orchestra-2222/2210/percussion (timpani)/strings
 Commissioned by Orchestra London
 Premiere: January 29, 1986; Centennial Hall, London, Ontario; Orchestra London; Alexis Hauser, conductor [Beatty 1989; Louie 1985b]

- Cadenzas (1985, rev. 1987)
 Clarinet and percussion
 Commissioned by Robert Stevenson and Beverly Johnston
 Premiere: March 22, 1986; Music Gallery, Toronto; Robert Stevenson, clarinet; Beverley Johnston, percussion
 [Beatty; Louie 1987a]
- From the Eastern Gate (1985, rev.1987)
 Harp solo-7 mvt
 Commissioned by Erica Goodman
 Premiere: April 4, 1987; St. Lawrence Centre, Toronto, Ontario; Erica Goodman, harp
 [Beatty 1989; Louie 1985a; Cohen 1987]
- 3 Fanfares from The Ringing Earth (1986, rev. 1987)
 Orchestra- Fanfare 1: 0000/43331/timpani, 2 percussion
 Fanfare 2: 0000/4331/timpani, percussion
 (optional)
 Fanfare 3: 2222/2220 (in two choirs)
 Commissioned by Royal Bank/Expo 86 World Festival
 Premiere: May 2, 1986; Vancouver, B. C.; Vancouver Symphony Orchestra; Alex Pauk, conductor
 [Beatty 1989]
- The Ringing Earth (1986, rev. 1987, corrected 1989)
 Orchestra- 3(alto flute)332/4331/timpani, 3 percussion, harp/strings
 Commissioned by Royal Bank
 Premiere: May 2, 1986; Vancouver, B.C.; Vancouver Symphony Orchestra; Mario Bernardi, conductor
 [Beatty; Louie 1986]
- The Eternal Earth (1986)
 Large Orchestra
 Commissioned by Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Andrew Davis
 Premiere: May 14, 1986; Roy Thompson Hall, Toronto; Toronto Symphony; Andrew Davis, conductor
 [Beatty 1989]
- Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (1986)
 Commissioned by Christina Petrowska
 Premiere: 1987; Christina Petrowska, piano
 [Television programme W5; Spurgeon 1986, 18]
- Songs of Enchantment (1987)
 Mezzo-soprano and string quartet
 Premiere: February 22, 1987; Presentation House Gallery, North Vancouver; Deep Cove Chamber Soloists
 [Beatty 1989]

Demon Gate (1987)

Chamber-12 performers

Commissioned by Les Evenements de Neuf

Premiere: April 9, 1987; Nouveau Théâtre d'Outremont,
Montréal; Les Evenements du Neuf

[Beatty 1989; Lacey 1987, E5]

Earth Cycles (1987)

Accordion and pre-recorded tape

Commissioned by Joseph Macerollo

Premiere: June 4, 1988; Guelph Spring Festival, Guelph,
Ont.; Joseph Macerollo, accordion[Beatty 1989; Louie 1987a; unsigned article "RCM Composer
..." 1988, 28]

Star-filled Night (1987)

Piano Solo

Commissioned by Christina Petrowska

Premiere: May 4, 1989; Merkin Hall, New York; Christina
Petrowska, piano

[Keillor 1992, 775; Louie n.d.(a); Louie 1987b]

Scenes from a Jade Terrace (1988)

Piano solo

Commissioned by Jon Kimura Parker

Premiere: March 28, 1988; Regina Saskatchewan; Jon Kimura
Parker, piano

[Beatty 1989; Louie 1988b]

Music from Night's Edge (1988)

Piano quintet

The Orford String Quartet and Angela Hewitt

Premiere: May 15, 1988; duMaurier Theatre Centre,
Toronto; The Orford String Quartet and Angela Hewitt

[Beatty 1989; Louie 1988a]

Winter Music (1989)

Viola concerto

Commissioned by Steven Dann

Premiere: March 12, 1989; Vancouver East Cultural Centre,
Vancouver, B.C.; Vancouver New Music; Owen Underhill,
Conductor; Steven Dann, viola

[Keillor 1992, 775; Louie, n.d.(a)]

Love Songs for a Small Planet (1989)

Choir

Premiere: June 16, 1989; Metropolitan United Church,
Toronto; Vancouver Chamber Choir; Jon Washburn, conductor

[Keillor 1992, 775; Louie n.d.(a)]

Music for Heaven and Earth (1990)

Orchestra

Commissioned by Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Gunther Herbig
 Premiere: April 25, 1990; Roy Thompson Hall, Toronto;
 Toronto Symphony Orchestra; Gunther Herbig, conductor

[Louie n.d. (a)]

Thunder Gate (1991)

Violin concerto

Commissioned by the Canada Council for 1991 Concours international de Montréal

Premiere: June 1991; Place des Arts, Montréal; l'Orchestre symphonique de Montréal; Franz Paul Decker, conductor (nine finalists "premiered" the work)

[Keillor 1992, 775; MacMillan 1992, insert 1, 4]

Bringing the Tiger Down from the Mountain II (1991)

Violoncello and piano

[Keillor 1992, 775]

I Leap Through the Sky with Stars (1991)

Piano Solo

[Keillor 1992, 775]

Distant Thunder (1991)

Chamber, oboe

Premiere: October 26, 1991; Philip T. Young Recital Hall, University of Victoria; Alexandra Pohran, oboe; Sal Ferreras, percussion

[Unsigned article "Premieres" Winter 92, 26]

A miniature work commissioned by Arraymusic for its twentieth anniversary

Premiere: September 29, 1992; Toronto?; Arraymusic

[Unsigned article "Arraymusic Marks . . . ," Winter 1992, 25]

Ricochet (1992)

Trombone concerto

Commissioned by Alain Trudel

Premiere: May 29, 1992; Musée d'art contemporain, Montréal; Alain Trudel, trombon; Nouvel Ensemble Moderne; Lorraine Vaillancourt, conductor

[Unsigned article "Premieres" Summer 1992, 26; Personal interview, 21 June 1993]

Love Songs for a Small Planet (rev.)

Choir and orchestra

Premiere: October 17, 1992; Jane Mallett Theatre,
 Toronto; Esprit Orchestra; Alex Pauk, conducting
 [Programme "Love Songs for a Small Planet" October 17,
 1992]

Gallery Fanfares, Arias and Interludes

Orchestra, vocal, with audience participation to
 commemorate the re-opening of the Art Gallery of Ontario
 Premiere: Art Gallery of Ontario; January 27, 1993;
 Toronto; Esprit Orchestra; Alex Pauk, conducting
 [Programme "Gallery Fanfares, Arias and
 Interludes" 27 January 1993]

Arc (1993)

Violin concerto

Commissioned by Corey Cerovsek, violinist.
 [Personal interview, 21 June 1993]

Glance (1994)

Written for Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra
 [Telephone interview, 7 April 1994]

Eight to ten short piano pieces for Grade Five (RCM)

Commissioned by Frederick Harris

In April 1994, these piece were in the process of being
 published

[Telephone interview, 13 April 1994]

Quartet (1994)

Commissioned by Borromeo String Quartet

Premiere: 24 August 1994; Vancouver Chamber Music
 Festival; Borromeo Quartet

Miscellaneous

Approximately twenty film scores ("a couple" 90-minute
 films, "a number" of documentaries, and animations)

Co-written with Alex Pauk

[Personal interview, 21 June 1993]

Television scores

[Keillor 1992, 775]

Future Projects or Commissions after April 1994
[Telephone interview, 7 April 1994]

A piece for viola and percussion
Beverly Johnston, percussionist
Expected premiere: Guelph Spring Festival 1994

Piano Reduction of arias from "Gallery Fanfares, Arias
and Interludes"
Grant from Canada Council
Gary Relyea, baritone.
Expected premiere: unknown

Commission from the Amici Trio
Expected premiere: January 1995

Appendix B

Sound Recordings

- Louie, Alexina. "Cadenzas." Impact. Compact disc. With Beverly Johnston, percussion, and James Campbell, clarinet. Centrediscs, WRC8-4951, 1986.
- . "Star-filled Night." Virtuoso Piano Music of Our Own Time. Compact disc. Christina Petrowska, pianist. JLH Laser Sound Ltd., JLH 100ZDDD. [The compact disc may be ordered from Ann Summers International, Box 188 Station A, Toronto, Ont. M5W 1B2].
- . CAPAC Musical Portrait/Portrait musical: Alexina Louie. Series VI. Audiocassette. (Exerpts: The Eternal Earth, O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould, Music for a Thousand Autumns, Music from a Night's Edge, Scenes from a Jade Terrace). CBC, AL 001 [Non-commercial recording, no longer available].
- . "Songs of Paradise." Songs of Paradise/Chants du paradis. Compact disc. Cond. Kazuhiro Koizumi. Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. CBC, SMCD5080, 1988.
- . "Love Songs for a Small Planet." Love Songs for a Small Planet. Compact disc. With Erica Goodman, harp; Salvador Ferreras, percussion; Ian Hampton, 'cello; Linda Lee Thomas, piano. Vancouver Chamber Choir; CBC Vancouver Orchestra, strings; Jon Washburn, conducting. Centrediscs, CMC-CD 4893, 1993.
- . "Music for Piano." Canadian Music for Piano. Compact disc. Pianist Louise Bissette. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) Musica Viva Label, MVCD1064, 1994.

Appendix C

List of Published Compositions

- Louie, Alexina. Music for Piano. Four solo piano pieces.
Toronto: Thompson, 1993.
- . A collection of Grade Five (according to the Royal
Conservatory of Music) solo piano pieces. Frederick
Harris. Forthcoming.
- . I Leap Through the Sky With Stars. Solo piano.
Forthcoming.
- . Scenes from a Jade Terrace. Solo piano. Forthcoming.