

# Cadence

THE REVIEW of JAZZ & BLUES: CREATIVE IMPROVISED MUSIC

Violinist **MALCOLM GOLDSTEIN** has audaciously (and fearlessly) carved out a niche in the classical avant-garde by emphasizing the opposite of traditional violin technique and tone. While his sound is impossible to ignore, it can easily inspire disdain and even hostility from those with a more "conventional" sense of violin beauty. **SOUNDING THE NEW VIOLIN** (What Next 5) is another bold and uncompromising release from new music devotee/producer Steve Peters. Of major importance is the world premier recording of Ornette Coleman's "Trinity," which was written for Goldstein. This composition effectively demonstrates that Coleman's melodic genius resides in his compositions as naturally as in his alto saxophone improvisations. Elsewhere, Goldstein's raw, primal sound is a logging camp saw with a dry, unlubricated blade on his own "Sounding The Fragility of Line" or a whistling tea kettle on Philip Corner's "[gamelan] The Gold Stone." While occasionally maddening but always intense, Goldstein's disc gives no quarter and must be approached strictly on its own terms. For its fierce independence, it is recommended. Before warned though: experimental, cutting edge music does not get any more demanding than this. (Tracks, Cage: Eight Whiskus/ Goldstein: Sounding the Fragility of Line/ Oliveros: Portrait of Malcolm/ Coleman: Trinity/ Corner: (gamelan) The Gold Stone/ Tenney: Koan - 70:41)

# Compacto

DIÁRIO DE NOTÍCIAS 2 DE MARÇO DE 1978

## O violino extensivo

**M**alcolm Goldstein é o mais consequente dos estudiosos que têm como



objecto de pesquisa as capacidades extremas do violino no

quadro da música contemporânea, explorando com as suas «técnicas extensivas» novas possibilidades no domínio tonal e harmónico.

*Sounding the New Violin*, talvez a pérola de todo o catálogo What Next/Nonsequitur, reúne composições de John Cage, Pauline Oliveros, Ornette Coleman, Philip Corner e James Tenney, escritas com vista à sua interpretação, para além de uma peça do próprio violinista em homenagem a Morton Feldman, *Sounding the Fragility of Line*, dela descolando segundo um princípio muito pessoal: «A improvisação é uma celebração do ser.»

Num só disco, Goldstein enquadra o essencial do seu universo. *Eight Whiskus*, de Cage, consiste numa fiada de miniaturas temáticas, quase

com a forma de *haikus*, interligadas entre si de modo a dar-nos a ilusão de uma continuidade apenas desestruturada. O compositor prescreveu unicamente certas indicações sobre a posição do arco e a pressão deste sobre o instrumento, bem como notas quanto aos harmónicos e o vibrato a utilizar, deixando tudo o resto à iniciativa e inventividade do músico.

materiais.

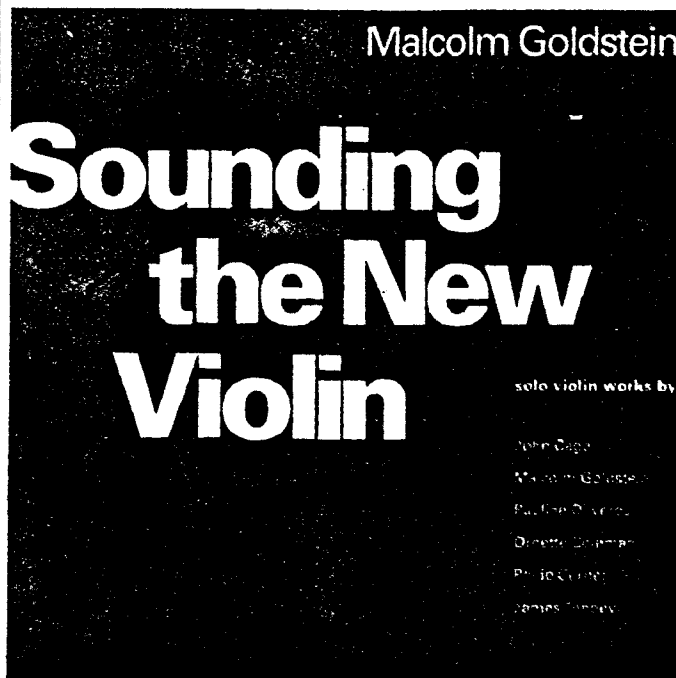
A suite *Trinity*, de Ornette Coleman, depende igualmente dos critérios escolhidos na altura da sua execução, podendo ser tocada na íntegra ou optando por algumas das suas partes em detrimento de outras. O número e a sequência destas são deixados à decisão do *performer*, sendo que cada uma é já por si a colagem de

precisão segundo conceitos de clara origem oriental, e, por último, Tenney joga em *Koan*, uma das suas *postal pieces*, assim intituladas porque compostas sobre cartões-postais, com a previsibilidade.

O ouvinte é capaz de imaginar por antecipação o que se segue, neutralizando-se na peça qualquer possibilidade de enredo. Os resultados desta situação «altamente determinista» são os mesmos de «uma completamente indeterminada, na qual os elementos sucedem-se tão rápida e imprevisivelmente que se perde qualquer noção de drama», para citar o próprio autor.

A mais-valia do disco está, portanto, em ilustrar o fenómeno de despossessão que «explica» muita da música americana contemporânea: o compositor concede algum do seu poder ao intérprete, e este prescinde do seu exclusivo papel de transformar ideias em sons para permitir que o ouvinte tenha uma participação activa no processo, mesmo que a um nível subjectivo... e virtual.

*Malcolm Goldstein.*  
*Sounding The New Violin.*  
*Ananana*



A partitura de Oliveros, *Portrait of Malcolm*, tem uma semelhante caracterização como «obra aberta», mudando título e conteúdo consoante o apelido do intérprete, sendo este quem escolhe tons e outros

fragmentos vários de melodias, preparada para estabelecer diferentes relações estruturais.

Em *The Gold Stone*, Philip Corner aplica os conceitos do gamelão balinês ao violino, fazendo coincidir liberdade e

# FORCED EXPOSURE

## **MALCOLM GOLDSTEIN:**

### ***Sounding the New Violin* CD (NONSEQUITOR/WHAT NEXT)**

... Goldstein is one of the kings of solo violin-scratching and has at least a couple of other records disappearing along w/ all other vinyl New Music in "record" stores even as you read this. This CD is the best of his work that I've heard, however, so don't feel too blue if it's the only title of his you can find. Six composers (including Pauline Oliveros, Ornette Coleman, John Cage, and Malcolm himself) get dealt w/ here and none get short shrift. Most impressive to me is the gigantic sawing action involved in playing the Ornette piece. Sounding at times like he's operating w/ burrs covering his hands and instrument, Goldstein attacks Coleman's grated warblings w/ immense fervor. And there's something about the way that Coleman organizes his violin music (so incredibly different from his composing for saxophone) that makes the instrument sound more bellicosely human than you'd think possible. Malcolm walks through this hall of shrieks like a fuckin' gladiator. Goldstein's own piece, dedicated to Morton Feldman, is great too. It's a very non-flimsy example of his ability to force seemingly continuous lines of action into broken, rubbing sheets of pure sound. This ability to contrast extensions and frictions is something necessary to develop interesting solo performances. Six different but entirely interconnected approaches are demonstrated here, and all of them should be of interest to chukes who claim to fancy the spew of maximalist new sounds. (PO Box 2638, Santa Fe, NM 87504)

—Byron

# inTune

World Classical New Release Catalogue

February, 1995

2

## ■ A Violin Speaking and Chanting

— Goldstein Plays Goldstein

[d'e Records d'e2]

Malcolm Goldstein, a distinguished composer/performer and improviser, visited Japan for "SoundCulture Japan 1993" festival where he performed John Cage's *One6* and *One10* with Mineko Grimmer's soundsculpture. He has long been associated with American experimental music, and is one of the best interpreters of Cage's music. Goldstein's another recording *Sounding the New Violin* includes Cage's *Eight Whiskus* along with works by Philip Corner and James Tenney with whom he was forming the group "Tone Roads" in the 60's.

Another memorable performance by Goldstein in the festival was that of his own work *gentle rain preceding mushrooms*, dedicated to Cage. He performed it with great concentration in an old warehouse in Kiryu City, Gunma Prefecture. It was unexpectedly raining on that day.

The piece is included in this live recording done in Bremen, Germany. Mild creaky sounds draw a quiet picture in the introduction. Then Goldstein repeatedly bounces the bow on the strings to produce mysterious resonances on the chords based on C A G E, to which he adds his own voice with his exquisite sensibility.

The album includes three other pieces by the composer. The first *Ishi "man waxati"* should be specially mentioned. 'Ishi' is the name of a native Yahi known as "the last wild Indian in the North America." The piece evolved out of the radio play in which layers of Ishi's singing are combined with layers of Goldstein's own playing and singing. The retuned violin plays its idiosyncratic tones and intonations, which sound like native people's vocalization and singing. The music is not too dramatic, but intense. Goldstein plays the violin as if it is speaking and chanting in native people's language.

TK

# The Michigan Daily

## Malcolm Goldstein *Sounding the New Violin*

What Next? Recordings

Horseshair and metal can make a pretty tumultuous couple if untied effectively. In this case, Malcolm Goldstein mediates their relationship, exploring the understatements and subtleties of their interaction. Although he usually bides his time defending the social and musical validity of free-improvisation through sound and print (see his book "Sounding the Full Circle, Sounding the New Violin" places Goldstein in more rigid contexts. He takes on six compositions for solo violin, each written from dissimilar vantage points but united by Goldstein's affinity for the obtuse. Stretching from John Cage to Ornette Coleman, this eclectic collection interweaves some of the most unconventional approaches to composition, employing new systems of notation and expanded tonal vocabularies.

Throughout each piece, Goldstein maximizes the limitless subtleties opened up by the violin's unfretted neck. In the other hand, his bowing plays with the multiple levels of overtone texture. Sure, he makes his fiddle scream like its in heat, but his controlled manipulation of these torturous shrieks creates re(de)efined lucidity and beauty.

Twice removed from its poetic source of inspiration, Cage's "Eight Whiskus" contains blurred remnants of meter and melody. The hushed harmonics fade in and out of characteristic measures of silence. Most passages are devoted solely to subtly shifting a single note's overtones by altering bow pressure. (Nifty eh?)

Goldstein's own chaotic composition is dedicated to the memory of Morton Feldman, the early twen-zen composer who inverted the structural basis of Western music by derailing linear melodic progression. Feldman disassociated each note from its neighbors, isolating each to a unique "moment."

Of all the pieces, Oliveros's "Portrait of" provides the most freedom for self-expression. Goldstein must proceed through nine stages of self-description, spinning a musical web of rumination.

Coleman's "Trinity" is the most lyrical tune. A melody progresses, subtly diverted by overtone shifts, bowing techniques and the occasional improv. Inspired by gamelan music, Corner's piece hovers and darts with an untraceable logic. Tenney's "Koon" uses repetition to focus the listener's attention on the minimal tonal changes.

Sure these compositions are enough to give your cat a nervous disorder. But luckily, your brain isn't the size of a walnut (regents excluded). Deep listening reveals levels of intricacy you never knew existed.

—Chris Wyrod

# MUSICWORKS 57

W I N T E R 1 9 9 4

## **Sounding The New Violin**

Malcolm Goldstein- *Sounding the New Violin* WN0005, What Next? Recordings, c/o Nonsequitur, PO box 2638, Santa Fe, NM, USA 87504

by Devin Hurd

Malcolm Goldstein's *Sounding The New Violin* is about listening to the solo instrument in all of its rich detail. The "New Violin" refers to Goldstein's unique playing style. The "New Violin" embraces every possible method of bowing, plucking and striking the instrument bringing extended technique to its logical conclusion. Malcolm Goldstein's playing is a highly personal style of improvising within a wide dynamic range of timbral diversity.

*Sounding the New Violin* contains six pieces that represent composition for the "New Violin." These compositions represent three basic approaches toward writing for this kind of extended technique: Melodic line writing, setting up improvisation structures geared for this individual performer, and presenting a singular aspect of the new violin in great detail — a sort of listening to the instrument through an auditory microscope.

"Eight Whiskus" by John Cage and "Trinity" by Ornette Coleman are examples of melodic line writing for the "New Violin." They are traditionally notated melodies with room left for Goldstein's interpretive skills. The John Cage piece is particularly interesting as an adaptation of a vocal composition for the "New Violin." The melodies that make up these compositions are well-crafted monophonic lines. The compositional strength of these melodies becomes even more apparent in the midst of Goldstein's timbral liberties.

"Portrait of Malcolm" by Pauline Oliveros and "The Gold Stone" by Philip Corner are examples of improvisatory

structures composed specifically for Malcolm Goldstein. The structure of Pauline Oliveros' piece is a study of the performer's personality drawing from quotations of the performer's favorite pieces and improvising along the themes of personal memory and feelings of self. Even though these two compositions are practically tailor made for Malcolm Goldstein they are the least convincing compositions in this particular collection.

"Sounding the Fragility of Line" by Malcolm Goldstein and "Koan" by James Tenney are examples of presenting a particular aspect of the "New Violin" in detail. Goldstein's piece is a study of a fixed order of a handful of pitches. It is like listening to a single melodic line slowed down to a fraction of its original speed and exploring the timbral potential within each pitch. Tenney's composition is a tremolo study that slowly opens one's ears to the relationships shared between pitches. These compositions are the most beautiful on this CD.

*Sounding The New Violin* is a revelation of the tremendous subtlety possible on the "New Violin." It quietly suggests "New Violas," "New Cellos," and even "New String Quartets," as possibilities. However, the "New Violin" is just as interesting as a solo instrument as it would be in any such ensemble.

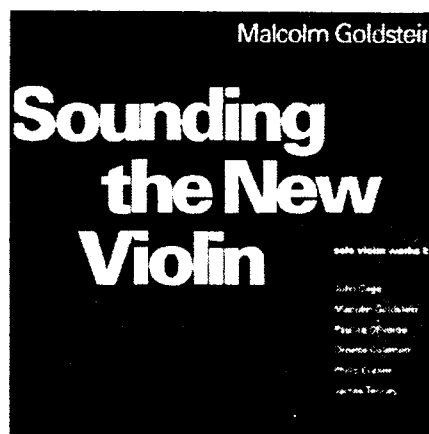
# OPTION

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● **MALCOLM GOLDSTEIN:** *Sounding the New Violin* Violinist Malcolm Goldstein has been active in the avant-garde since the 1960s. All of the solos in this collection were written for him, and all are first recordings. John Cage's "Eight Whiskus" is one of the most traditional works included: eight short melodic studies, the only experimental element being the many bowing variations. Goldstein's own "Sounding the Fragility of Line" carries the focus on bowing to extremes, transforming a simple set of pitches (spelling out Morton Feldman's last name) into a noisy orgy of bow noise. The interpretation of the verbal instructions in Pauline Oliveros's "Portrait of Malcolm" results in everything from classical quotation to noise to silence, while Ornette Coleman's "Trinity" is an extended set of melodic variations. James Tenney's 1971 "Koan" is the oldest piece here, a minimalist tremolo study. *Sounding the New Violin* presents a surprising diversity of approaches to a single acoustic violin. (Nonsequitur, Box 2638, Santa Fe, NM 87504) — Mark Sullivan

# Revue & Corrigée

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**MALCOLM GOLDSTEIN** "Sounding The New Violin" CD WN0005 (What Next Recordings, PO BOX 2638, Santa Fe NM 87504, Etats-Unis. Dist.: Metamkine)

Six pièces composées pour et en collaboration avec le violoniste américain MALCOLM GOLDSTEIN, par John Cage, Pauline Oliveros, Ornette Coleman, Philip Corner, James Tenney et GOLDSTEIN lui-même. Certaines pièces laissent une grande place à l'improvisation et d'autres sont plus spécifiquement écrites, mais toutes étudient les possibilités de l'instrument et de nouvelles formes de jeu prenant toujours le geste en considération. Du minimalisme de la pièce de Tenney (où face à une forme répétitive, on se concentre entièrement sur le son), à l'aspect clairsemé et quasi organique de celle de Cage, en passant par celle de GOLDSTEIN vraiment noisy et intense, nous sommes confrontés à des compositions où le son et le geste qui l'amène ont autant d'importance.

Jérôme NOETINGER



HLN 22/8/1992

## Goldstein

Malcolm Goldstein is een Amerikaanse vioolvirtuoos die in de jaren zestig uit het concertcircuit stapte en besloot zich helemaal toe te leggen op hedendaagse muziek voor soloviool. Voor Goldstein begint vioolspel waar zijn klassieke opleiding ophield: hij verkent de mogelijkheden van zijn instrument als geen ander. Nu legt hij zich in zijn optredens meer toe op eigen werk en improvisatie, maar in de loop der jaren hebben vele bekende componisten speciaal voor Goldstein een vioolsolo gecomponeerd. De belangrijkste daarvan staan nu op zijn nieuwste compactplaat «Sounding the New Violin». Het oudste werk, «Koan» van James Tenney, werd in 1971 geschreven, de vijf andere (van onder meer John Cage en Pauline Oliveros) komen uit de jaren tachtig. Prachtige vioolmuziek. — SGG

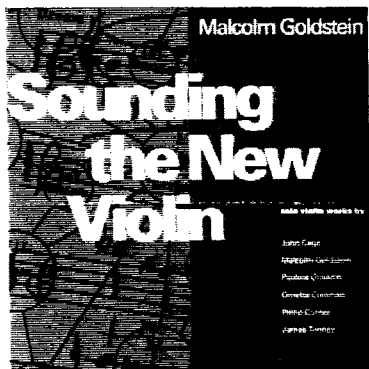
• Malcolm Goldstein: Sounding the New Violin. What Next? Recordings 0005. Distr. België: Logos 091/23.80.89.

(★★★)

HET LAATSTE NIEUWS, BELGIUM

## Musik-Körper

az. Die Violine, ein singendes Instrument par excellence, nah an der menschlichen Stimme. Der amerikanische Komponist, Violinist und Performer Malcolm Goldstein (geb. 1936) treibt dies noch weiter. Ein anderer, in sich sehr reicher, komplexer Violinklang entsteht aus einem sehr körperlichen Gestus. Die Musik bricht gleichsam aus dem menschlichen Körper und aus dem von ihm mit Hilfe des Instruments Violine erzeugten Klang hervor. Wenn Malcolm Goldstein auf der CD «Sounding the New Violin» sechs Werke, die für ihn geschrieben worden sind, spielt, lässt er uns an seinem eigenen Entdeckungsprozess der Musik teilnehmen. Es sind alles Stücke, die Goldsteins Fähigkeit, sich in jedem Augenblick mit dem reichen Innenleben des Klangs intensiv auseinanderzusetzen, integrieren und so zu einer neuen Expressivität gelangen. Und doch sind die sechs Werke total verschieden! Sie stammen von John Cage («Eight Whiskus»), Goldstein selber («Sounding the Fragility of Line»), Pauline Oliveros («Portrait of Malcolm»), Ornette Coleman («Trinity»), Philip Corner («[gamelan] The Gold Stone») und James Tenney («Koan»). Eine wunderbare Platte für entdeckungsfreudige Menschen!



Malcolm Goldstein: Sounding the New Violin (¿What Next¿ Recordings WN0005, erhältlich bei RecRec, Akkerstr.1, 8005 Zürich)

# the village VOICE

## CONSUMER GUIDE Kyle Gann

**Malcolm Goldstein: *Sounding the New Violin* (What Next?)** Goldstein's not just a violinist, he's an aesthetic by himself, and the scratchy solos he's collected from experimentalists over 50 define his peacefully sad atmosphere. He squeaks out the Thoreauvian aphorisms of John Cage's *Whiskus*, and in a Pauline Oliveros concept piece assembles his own spiky, amiable self-portrait. His *Sounding the Fragility of Line* just sustains notes, variations drawn from the tickle of each bow hair. The criss-crossing tremolos of James Tenney's *Koan* stand out as a thorny, ear-illusionary process piece, and lyricism enters in Ornette Coleman's lovely, lonely *Trinity*, composed for Goldstein and poignantly tuneful. Tenney and Coleman collectors will want these rarities, and everything Goldstein plays is honest and personal. **B PLUS**

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MALCOLM GOLDSTEIN

*Sounding The New Violin*

What Next? WN0005 CD

MALCOLM GOLDSTEIN is an improvising violinist who obtains commissions from interesting people. Not many people can issue an album with pieces written for them by both John Cage and Ornette Coleman. He does not have the discrimination of Siegfried Palm, who does similar things for the cello, but the repertoire is still worth a listen.

"Eight Whiskus" has Cage's characteristic oriental feel, the brilliantly unpredictable silences, the undeniable oddness. Goldstein's own piece, "Sounding the Fragility of Line", explores the tension created by long, caustic, under-bowed sounds. In combination with the striking CD insert – metallic pages in purple and blue – it evokes a sensation of sparkling unease. I've never heard recorded violin sound quite so like horsehair on catgut. It makes you wince but it's also highly original.

Pauline Oliveros' graphic score is realized in an irritatingly playful manner (references to Bach etc) and James Tenney's "Koan" is the obligatory minimalist nonsense: art as an endurance test (I failed). Ornette's "Trinity" maintains both his sense of tumbling chaos and his freakish feel for melody. It would probably be more fun to hear Ornette play it himself, but the cleanness of Goldstein's technique does add a new dimension. Philip Corner's "The Gold Stone", full of glissandi and pile-ups, is a joy.

Goldstein is stressing playing abrasion over notes, an emphasis more familiar in jazz and improvisation. The net effect is intriguing, scratchy, extreme – and sure to clear the house at parties.

BEN WATSON