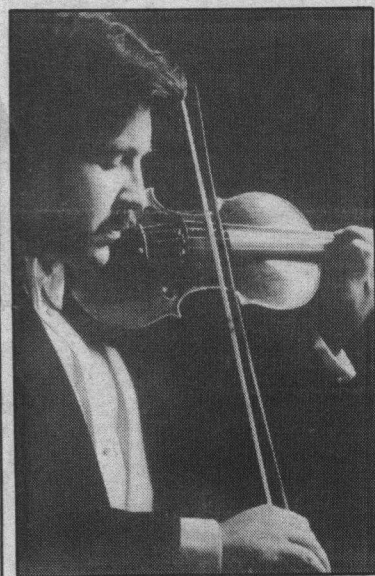


Cabrillo Music Festival

Philip Glass, Latin music this year



Tania Leon is composer-in-residence.



Andres Cardenes is a featured violinist.



Romuald Tecco is festival concertmaster.

By JEFF HUDSON
MUSIC WRITER

MONTEREY AND Santa Cruz are very different places.

To be sure, both are seaside resorts, located on the same bay in central California. But where Monterey has a State Historic Park and an aquarium, Santa Cruz relies on a beach and a boardwalk as primary attractions.

Monterey's economy is further abetted by ample numbers of affluent retirees, whereas Santa Cruz is a university town.

A few years ago, Monterey asked for, and received, a visit from the battleship U.S.S. Missouri. Santa Cruz asked for a Navy hospital ship (no guns), and the following year formally declined to invite the Navy altogether.

Even the summer classical music festivals are different. Carmel Bach is led by Maestro Sandor Salgo, and stands dedicated to mainstream presentation of Baroque and early classical works (authentic instrument purists go elsewhere).

But the Cabrillo Music Festival, which opens next week in Santa Cruz County, is led by "Dennis" (as conductor Dennis Russell Davies is generally known to audiences), and positively revels in the contemporary. The festival regularly features two, three, or four living composers-in-residence, who frequently advise the musicians and mingle with the audience at concerts.

Where Monterey audiences are likely to approach a piece like Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5 with suspicion ("I don't hear the beautiful music," in the words of a lady at a concert by the Monterey County Symphony last year), the Cabrillo Festival audience would likely greet the same piece as an old friend from the archives.

Actually, should the truth be told, the Cabrillo Fest significantly predates UC-Santa Cruz and Santa Cruz's transformation into a headquarters for progressive trends. The festival was founded 28 years ago by an ambitious set of patrons from Aptos and Watsonville, who hired conductor Gerhard Samuel of the Oakland Symphony to juxtapose classic and modern works in a late summer concert series. The dates have since been changed to July, but the founding goal has continued under music director Davies, who returns for his 17th season this year (a record of longevity



Conductor Dennis Russell Davies, above, has led the recordings and European premieres of several compositions by avant-garde composer Philip Glass, below. The two longtime associates finally will perform together at this festival dedicated to modern music.



surpassed in this area only by Salgo.)

Past Cabrillo Festival guests have included such disparate figures as Aaron Copland, John Cage, Hans Werner Henze and Isang Yun, as well as offbeat choices like jazz guitarist Ralph Towner and performance artist Laurie Anderson.

This summer's festival, which runs July 19-27, is anchored by Philip Glass, the New York-based composer whose music

has drawn praise and condemnation (as well as large audiences and additional commissions) over the past few years. Glass elicits few neutral opinions, having been described alternately as an authentic multicultural original and decried as a arpeggio-obsessed charlatan. He is currently at work on a piece commemorating the voyage of Christopher Columbus, to premiere in 1992 at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

With Cabrillo this summer, Glass will be appearing as both composer and pianist/performer, including one program whose proceeds will go to earthquake relief work.

Actually, the primary surprise concerning Glass is that he didn't arrive at the Cabrillo Festival sooner. Davies and Glass have been associated for several years, with Davies conducting the recordings or European premieres of several works by Glass.

Other guests at the Cabrillo Festival this year include Tania Leon, who draws on the African, and Latin influences in her background; and Lou Harrison, who is as much as anyone the festival's spiritual parent, combining Asian and Western musical styles in his own way.

This summer's Cabrillo Festival will also display a Latin American tilt, represented not only by composer/conductor Leon, but also by violinist Andres Cardenes, a soloist with the Monterey County Symphony in years past; the vocal and instrumental group Cantoamerica; pianist Nohema Fernandez; and a brief survey of unfamiliar works by Central and South American composers such as Sierra, Revueltas, Ginastera and Cortes.

Providing classical context will be the music of Brahms, including the Piano Concerto No. 2, played by Ursula Oppens, a powerful interpreter of both traditional and modern pieces, and the Violin Concerto.

Owing to the lack of a single large concert hall in the area, and lingering earthquake damage to Watsonville's Fox Theater and Holy Cross Church in Santa Cruz, this year's Cabrillo Festival will be popping up at churches all over the map, as well as Mission San Juan Bautista and Saratoga's Paul Masson Winery. Best to call ahead for directions if you don't know the locations.

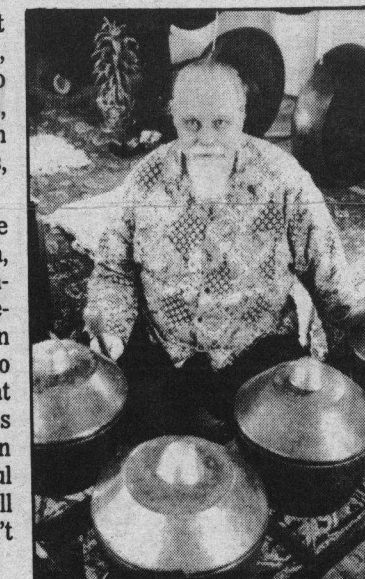
For information or tickets, call 662-2701. For detailed schedule information, see page 4.



Ursula Oppens is a featured pianist.



Carl St. Clair is a guest conductor.



Lou Harrison is composer-in-residence.