

"A Japanese folk tale, very like *Little Red Riding Hood*:

While planting beans, an old Grandfather sings, 'every bean shall yield 1000.' A nasty badger jeers at him, 'Your beans will rot.' Grandfather knocks Badger out with his hoe, ties him up and carries him home. To his wife he says, 'Grandmother, make Badger soup,' and he goes off to town. Badger wakes up and says to Grandmother, 'Let me help you pound the millet.' He convinces her to untie him, whereupon Badger hits Grandmother with the soup kettle and kills her. He puts on Grandmother's clothes and makes Grandmother soup. When the old man returns, he remarks, 'Badger soup smells a lot like Grandmother soup.' The deceitful Badger says, 'Old Badger and Grandmother soup smell the same.' The old man eats and Badger shouts, 'You're right. That was Grandmother soup!' and he escapes into the mountains. A hare coming by hears the old man crying and when Grandfather tells his story, Hare says, 'I will avenge you!'

There follow three episodes on three mountains called Katchi-Katchi, Pepper Mountain, and Pine Mountain. On the first mountain Hare manages to burn Badger's back with burning reeds; on the second he tells Badger he has a soothing salve and then enflames the Badger's back with a hot pepper salve. Finally, on Pine Mountain, he invites Badger to go fishing. They build two boats, a wood one for Hare, an earth one for Badger. They go off to catch fish. Soon the earth boat dissolves, and Badger and boat sink slowly to the bottom of the ocean. End of tale.

The history of musical composition reveals that every composer at some time has recomposed, transcribed or used previously existing musical materials; i.e., the march from Beethoven's *String Quartet, Op. 132* for his *Ninth Symphony*; the *Rosamunde* music of Schubert in his *A Minor String Quartet*. Schoenberg composed the violin part for his *Phantasy* and then later wrote the piano part.

I originally composed *Katchi-Katchi* based on a Japanese folktale for narrator, piano, and violin and was performed at the Saito-Kinen Festival in 1999. Sometime later I woke up in the middle of the night and exclaimed to my dear wife, 'Your narrative in *Katchi-Katchi* is a perfect inspiration for a clarinet role in the music.' I confess that it turned out so well that I immediately told Elsa and Walter that I had a work for the Verdehr Trio."

—Robert Mann

The world premiere of *Katchi-Katchi* was on November 23, 2002 in the Verdehr Trio 30th Anniversary Concert at Merkin Concert Hall, New York, New York.

"Robert Mann has become one of the country's most admired and deeply-loved musicians. He's handled his retirement with the same intelligence and dignity that have characterized everything else he's done. Of course, it is absurd to think of Mann as 'retiring.' He has always been an active composer and plans to write more music. He has been an inspirational teacher—Mann and the Juilliard have mentored many of the world's leading younger quartets—and he will continue to do that. He also will continue to explore and perform solo literature and presumably other chamber music." (Richard Dyer, *Boston Globe*, July 4, 1999)

Robert Mann (1920–2018), born and raised in Portland Oregon, was founder and first violinist of the Juilliard String Quartet for fifty-one years. He appeared frequently as a soloist and recorded a number of solo violin works. Throughout his career, he was active as a composer, conductor, and teacher/mentor to string soloists and ensembles.

Mann has composed more than seventy works, including an orchestral fantasy performed by Dimitri Mitropoulos, a duo premiered by violinist Itzhak Perlman and pianist Samuel Sanders at

Carnegie Hall, and a string quartet included in the repertoires of both the LaSalle and Concord Quartets. His *Concerto for Orchestra* was performed by the Juilliard Symphony at Alice Tully Hall. Other works include a *Duo for Cello and Piano* written for Joel Krosnick and Gil Kalish and *Lament* for two solo violas and orchestra. Mann has also composed more than thirty works for narrator with various instruments that he performs with his wife, the actress Lucy Rowan. Several have been recorded on the Musical Heritage label.

Mann made his public debut as a conductor with the Seattle Symphony during the 1988-1989 season and later appeared with the New York Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony. He has also conducted at Tanglewood, Naumburg in Central Park, and the Saito-Kinen Festival in Japan.

Mann was a faculty member at the Manhattan School of Music, and in later years, expanded his teaching to include violin majors at the Juilliard School. He worked intensively as a mentor to the Alexander, American, Concord, Emerson, New World, Mendelssohn, Tokyo, Brentano, Lark, St. Lawrence, and Cleveland string quartets.

Mann was founder and first Artistic Director of the Ravinia Institute for Young Artists at Chicago's Ravinia Festival. He has served as chairman of the Chamber Music Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts, as a member of the Board of Directors of the New York Philharmonic, and as President of the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation. In 1990, Mann was honored with the Chamber Music America Services Award and the annual award of the American String Teachers Association, as well as an Honorary Doctorate from Oberlin College. Previous honorary doctorates were bestowed by Michigan State University, the Manhattan School of Music, Earlham College, Jacksonville University, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. In 1996, he was named a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He received a Lifetime Achievement Grammy Award in 2011.

Mann has a daughter, Lisa, who holds a PhD in clinical psychology and a son, Nicolas, a gifted violinist and violist who often plays duo-recitals with his father and is himself a founding member of the Mendelssohn String Quartet.