

Eternal Lullaby (2001)

Ian Krouse

"The opening of *Eternal Lullaby*, a languid clarinet solo, came to me during the previous summer while watching my three small children at play in the surf at Malibu Beach. Perhaps it was the peaceful, idyllic mood and the setting that produced it that caused the melody to drift away into silence with each strophe, but whatever the cause, this gesture and the simple lullaby-like motto which set it into motion (d-f-d-c) became the basis for the entire composition. (In fact, one could view the whole piece as a single drawn out expression of the opening phrase.) I have always been drawn to simple, elegant motives of this sort, and have consciously sought after melodies that embodied a natural, folk-like quality of expression. I hardly think of these as something original, or unique to me, but as something universal, something found. In this spirit, I have returned again and again to the lullaby—the most primal and comforting of first musics—as a fundamental source for my compositions. The alternately elegiac and passionate moods of the work evolved after I was well into the piece, and the periodic lapses into ethereality and stillness are undoubtedly a harkening back to the strange pianissimo arabesques of the opening clarinet solo.

On the evening of September 10, 2001, I retired for the night, having brought the piece to a point where I felt confident that a satisfactory conclusion lay within my grasp with a fresh start in the morning. It was the next morning when, on my way home from taking my children to school, I first heard of the tragic events taking place in our land. At first I could not bring myself to compose in the face of such events, but I finally decided to try. There is no doubt that the images seared into all of our memories that horrible morning had a palpable influence on the final pages of my work, and it was in that spirit that I decided to dedicate the piece to the victims of the horrors of September 11. *Eternal Lullaby* was co-commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University."

—Ian Krouse

The world premiere of *Eternal Lullaby* was on September 15, 2002 at the 34th Festival Internacional "Encuentros 2002", Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Ian Krouse (born 1956, Olney, Maryland) holds a Bachelor of Music degree with Performer's and Composer's Certificates from Indiana University at South Bend, and a Master of Music and Doctorate of Music in composition from the University of Southern California. His principal teachers were James Hopkins, Morten Lauridsen, and Halsey Stevens at USC. Krouse was hailed in *Gramophone* as "one of the most communicative and intriguing young composers on the music scene today." *Soundboard* described his music as "absorbing, brutal, beautiful, and harsh, all at the same time."

Krouse is widely known for his pioneering efforts in the development of a new medium, the guitar quartet, though throughout his career he has written in nearly every genre including opera. He is well known to lovers of guitar music, especially those who follow the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet.

Krouse's works have been performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (whose performances of his *Concerto for Bass Clarinet* were broadcast over one thousand times on Public Radio International); the Mexico City and Pasadena Chamber Orchestras; the Ukrainian Radio and Television Orchestra; the Armenian, New Zealand, and Cairo Philharmonic Orchestras; the University of California, Los Angeles and University of Southern California Orchestras; and the American Youth Symphony. Chamber ensemble performances include those by the Aureole Trio, Dinosaur Annex, 20th-Century Consort, Remix, Debussy Trio, Pacific Serenades, Dilijan Ensemble, May Festival Choir, and the Los Angeles Chamber Singers. His works have been commercially recorded, some several times, on the Koch, Delos, Naxos, RCM, Lisaddell, GSP, and GHA labels among others.

Throughout his career, Krouse has received many awards and grants, including an AT&T American Encores Grant (for the second performance of an orchestral work), three opera development grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, two from Meet the Composer, and several from the American Composer's Forum, the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, and the Atlantic-Richfield Corporation. He has won the BMI Award and the Gaudeamus Festival Prize; he was a semi-finalist in the Kennedy Center Friedheim Awards and a finalist in both the Barlow Competition and the Big Ten Commissioning Project.

Krouse is Distinguished Professor of Music at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he serves, in addition to his teaching responsibilities, as an Associate Dean for Academics for the Herb Alpert School of Music. He resides in West Hills, California.

Additional information is available at www.iankrouse.com.