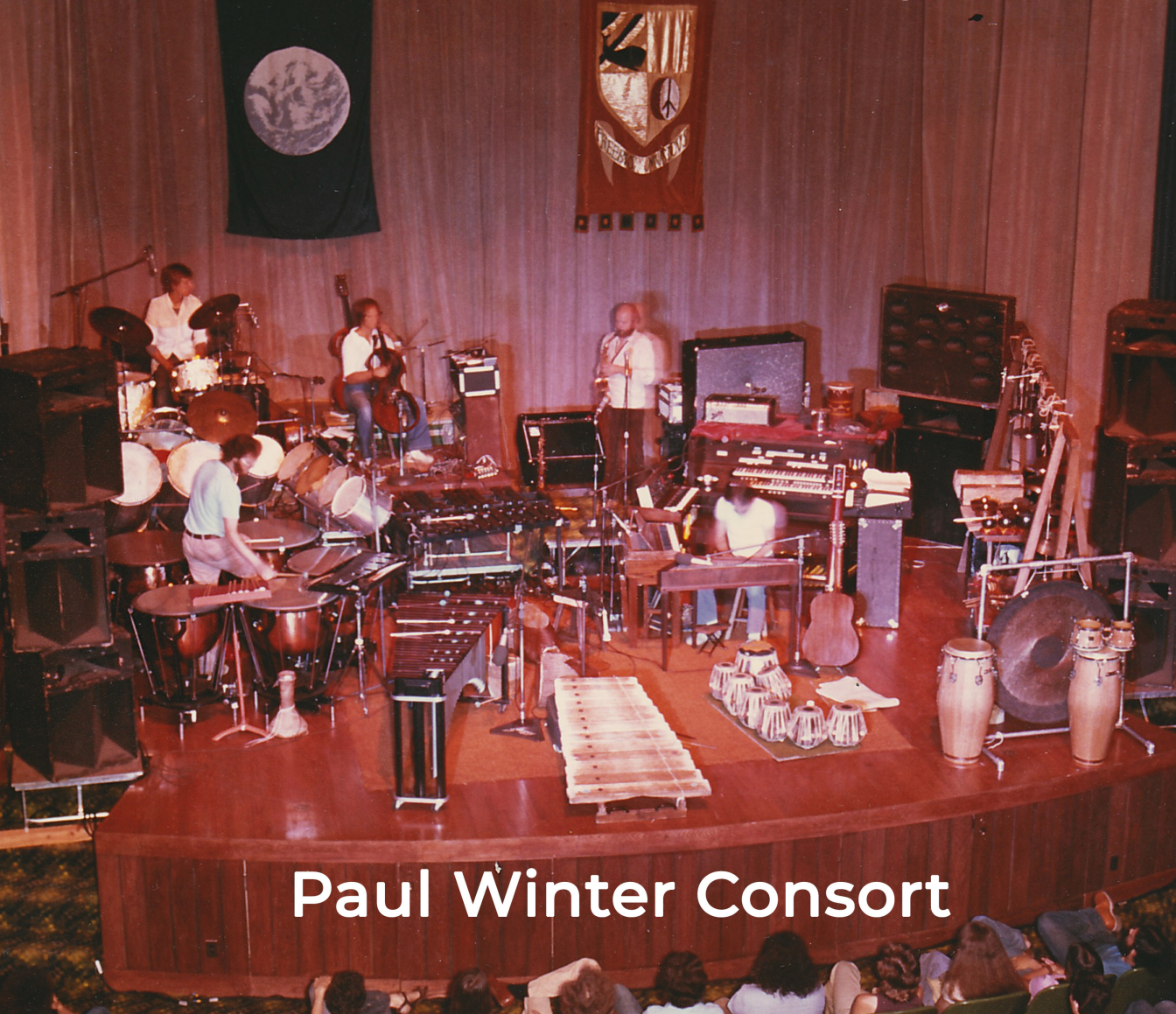


CONSORTING WITH DAVID

A Tribute to David Darling



Paul Winter Consort

*Cover Photo:
Paul Winter Consort, 1975
Somewhere in America*

*(Clockwise from left: Ben Carriel, Tigger Benford, David Darling,
Paul Winter, Robert Chappell)*

CONSORTING WITH DAVID

A Tribute to David Darling

Notes on the Music

A Message from Paul:

You might consider first listening to this musical journey before you even read the titles of the pieces, or any of these notes.

I think it could be interesting to experience how the music alone might convey the essence of David's artistry.

It would be ideal if you could find a quiet hour, and avail yourself of your favorite deep-listening mode. For me, it's flat on the floor, in total darkness.

In any case, your listening itself will be a tribute to David.

For living music,
With gratitude,
Paul

1. Icarus

Ralph Towner
(Distant Hills Music, ASCAP)

Paul Winter / alto sax
Paul McCandless / oboe
David Darling / cello
Ralph Towner / 12-string guitar
Glen Moore / bass
Collin Walcott / percussion

From the album *Road*
Produced by Phil Ramone
Recorded live on summer tour, 1970

This was our first recording of “Icarus”

2. Ode to a Fillmore Dressing Room

David Darling
(Tasker Music, ASCAP)

Paul Winter / soprano sax
Paul McCandless / English horn, contrabass sarrusophone
David Darling / cello
Herb Bushler / Fender bass
Collin Walcott / sitar

From the album *Icarus*
Produced by George Martin
Recorded at Seaweed Studio, Marblehead, Massachusetts, August, 1971

In the spring of 1971, the Consort was booked to play at the Fillmore East in New York, opening for Procol Harum. (50 years ago this April.) The dressing rooms in this old theatre were upstairs, and we were warming up our instruments there before the afternoon sound check. David was noodling some lines on his cello, and a melodic line he played caught my ear, so I grabbed my little tape recorder and asked him to play it again.

In early summer, when David and I were exploring ideas for new pieces for our upcoming album with George Martin, I played him this seed-theme and encouraged him to develop it. He had a sketch of a piece ready when we began working with George in August.

I don't remember whose idea it was to give the melody to the sitar, but I recall that George was amazed that our percussionist, Collin Walcott, was also a superb sitar player. (Collin had been Ravi Shankar's road manager during the '60s.)

The arrangement for this piece was truly born in the studio, and we had a great time doing it.

For the introduction, we wanted to have an embracing orchestral texture, one that was organ-like but didn't sound like an organ. George showed us how to get it. There was a grand piano we had rented for the sessions. Once we had laid down a basic track with sustained notes by the cello and bass, and a unison woodwind intro melody, we then overdubbed Ralph, playing large two-handed chords on the piano, bar by bar. The trick was to play each chord just before the bar line, and then the engineer would punch in exactly on beat one of the bar, so you heard only the resonance of the piano strings, but not the attack. So it didn't sound like a piano. (I've always thought of the piano as a great harp, if you just play the strings.) Then, for the sub-bottom of this orchestral texture, we overdubbed (under-dubbed?) a contrabass sarrusophone, a 19th-century double-reed brass instrument which Paul McCandless' father had loaned us.

The main “song” of the piece, then, was played by a unique string quartet of sitar, guitar, pizzicato cello, and Fender bass. I found the sound of this string quartet far more engaging than the totally homogenous blend of a classical string quartet.

The sitar and guitar then emerge from the quartet, into a dynamic duet adventure that eventually leads us back home to our “consorchestra” for the finale.

3. Sunwheel

Ralph Towner

(Distant Hills Music, ASCAP)

Paul Winter / soprano sax

Paul McCandless / oboe

David Darling / cello

Ralph Towner / 12-string guitar, regal

Herb Bushler / Fender bass

Collin Walcott / percussion

Billy Cobham / drums

From the album *Icarus*

Produced by George Martin

Recorded at Seaweed Studio, Marblehead, Massachusetts, and Electric

Ladyland, New York

August/September, 1971

“Sunwheel” features Ralph Towner’s keyboard artistry on a little double-reed Renaissance pipe organ, called a regal (which we referred to as our “keyboard duck”).

The dynamism of Herb Bushler's bass-playing sparked us to imagine having a full-tilt drum-kit player on the piece. When we scheduled our additional sessions at Electric Ladyland in New York that September, Herb recommended I call Billy Cobham.

The array of "sun-sparkles" on the tag are tiny tuned cymbals called crotales.

Billy listened to the track once through and then did this overdub in one take. (I recall him telling us about this new band he had just joined called the Mahavishnu Orchestra, with John McLaughlin. He said that in their concerts they played really loud.)

4. Ave Maris Stella / Andromeda

Ave Maris Stella

(Dufay; arr. Winter / McCandless)

Gregorian Chant

(Umpawaug Music, ASCAP)

Paul Winter / soprano sax

Paul McCandless / English horn

David Darling / cello, voice

Ralph Towner / classical guitar

Glen Moore / bass

Collin Walcott / percussion

From the album *Road*

Produced by Phil Ramone

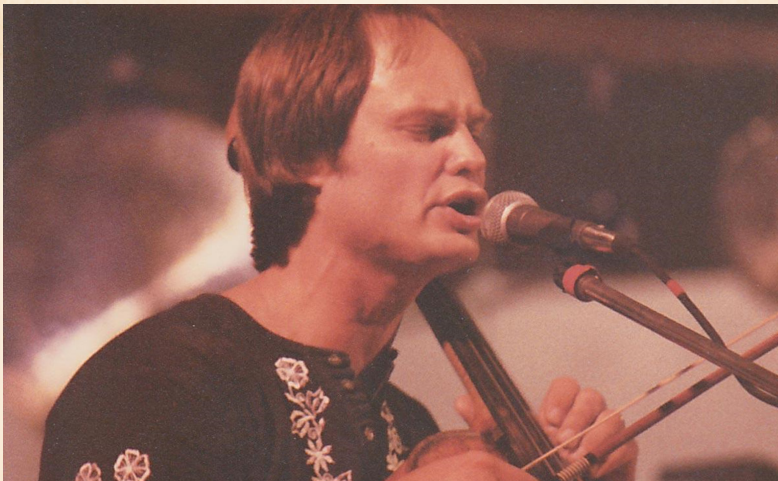
Recorded live on summer tour, 1970

“Ave Maris Stella” is a plainchant hymn from the 8th-century. It’s followed here by a rhythm-section pedal-note vamp in one of my favorite time signatures (5/8 - 7/8 - 9/8), which provides independent counterpoint for the ensemble of the horns. This is a composition by Guillaume Dufay (1397-1474), based on another verse of the plainchant, harmonized in a medieval style known as “fauxbourdon.” Our combination here of alto sax, English horn and cello has the kind of original sound I imagined for the Consort.

A duet adventure for sax and English horn emerges from this, and then the vamp returns to set up the cello solo.

The cello eventually gets free open-space, and David takes us on a wild ride.

I wanted our free-form suite to have a dynamic ensemble finale, to follow David’s unbridled solo. I wrote this little piece, inspired by the chant melody, in 7/8 time, that arrives at a fanfare ending. The word “stella” (star) in the plainchant prompted this title, “Andromeda,” the name of the next galaxy over from our Milky Way.



5. Whole Earth Chant

Paul Winter

(Umpawaug Music, ASCAP)

Paul Winter / soprano sax

Paul McCandless / oboe, contrabass sarrusophone

David Darling / cello, voice

Ralph Towner / bush organ, regal

Herb Bushler / Fender bass

Collin Walcott / timpani, surdos

Milt Holland / Ghanian percussion

Billy Cobham / drums

From the album *Icarus*

Produced by George Martin

Recorded at Seaweed Studio, Marblehead, Massachusetts, and Electric

Ladyland, New York

August/September, 1971

Jazz was my first passport to a larger world: from the welcoming spirit of the big-band music I loved as a kid; through my correspondence, during college, with jazz fans from other countries; to my tour with our Sextet through 23 countries of Latin America, in 1962.

The Whole Earth Catalogue, which first appeared in 1968, was another passport. It seemed to embrace everything, everywhere. The cover featured the historic photo by the astronauts, of the Earth from space, the first view we humans ever got of our planet home.

This was the most inspiring publication I'd ever seen. I thought then that if I had known of it when I was 17, I wouldn't have needed to go to college.

The suite, “Whole Earth Chant,” is a kind of odyssey that incorporates a number of musical elements I had come to love:

- the dynamic ensemble-percussion of Ghana, with its organic interweave of instruments, in this rolling 12/8 rhythm (my all-time favorite)
- fuzz-bass melody
- David’s funky playing (through an electric pick-up on his cello), along with Billy Cobham’s drums
- the melody of “Minuit,” a beguiling village song from Guinea which we then sang on the last track of the album
- the petulant sound of the “regal,” our double-reed mini-organ
- playing my horn over the stupendous rhythm section of percussionists Milt Holland and Collin Walcott; drummer Billy Cobham; and bassist Herb Bushler
- a large Wuhan tam-tam from China
- an amadinda xylophone, from Uganda, with three of us playing it
- David’s angelic high voice, singing this beautiful Gregorian chant
- and ending with my beloved set of surdo’s -- samba drums I brought home from Brazil in 1965

6. Barn Dance (from Washington’s Birthday)

Charles Ives

(Associated Music Publishers, Inc, BMI)

Paul Winter / alto sax

Paul McCandless / English horn

David Darling / cello

Robert Chappell / regal

Tigger Benford / percussion

Ken Singleton / tuba
Sam Singleton / flute
Ben Aldridge / trumpet
Ted Toupin / trombone
Anthony Newman / organ
West Redding Jews-Harp Sextet

Conducted by James Sinclair
Arranged by Ken Singleton and Paul Winter
Recorded live, West Redding, Connecticut
August 17, 1974

From the forthcoming album *The Charles Ives Show*
Paul Winter Consort & Friends

If you've never experienced Charles Ives' music before, you might want to hang on to your hat.

Ives liked to create musical portraits of life, of the way things happened. He evokes the ethos of these old-time barn dances, by weaving a tapestry of fragments from the old tunes of the time.

If our expanded Consort sounds here like an old country band, then I think we've done right by Charlie.

David's gorgeous cello voice emerges after the first couple minutes, playing this beautiful, yearning, "going home," finale melody that Ives composed in the old-time style. I can't imagine any cellist on the planet playing it more soulfully.

Here is Ives' description of this piece (from the program of our Charles Ives Show):

Barn Dance from Washington's Birthday

[1909: "Recollections of a Boy's Holiday in a Connecticut Country Town."]

These...holiday movements...are but attempts to make pictures in music of common events in the lives of common people (that is, of fine people), mostly of the rural communities. That's all there is to it.

Sometimes the change in tempo and mixed rhythms would be caused by a fiddler who, after playing three or four hours steadily, was getting a little sleepy -- or by another player who had been seated too near the hard cider barrel. Whatever the reason for these changing and sometimes simultaneous playing of different things, I remember distinctly catching a kind of music that was natural and interesting, and which was decidedly missed when everybody came down "blimp" on the same beat again. The allegro part of this "Washington's Birthday" aims to reflect this, as well as to depict some of the old breakdown tunes and backwoods fun and comedy and conviviality that are gradually being forgotten.

....in this piece, from a half a dozen to a hundred Jew's harps are necessary -- one would hardly be heard. In the old barn dances, about all the men would carry Jew's harps in their vest pockets or in the calf of their boots, and several would stand around on the side of the floor and play the harp more as a drum than as an instrument of tone.

- Charles Ives

7. Vita

Charles Ives
(Merion Music, Inc, BMI)

David Darling / voice
Jane Bryden / voice
Anthony Newman / organ

Recorded live, West Redding, Connecticut
August 17, 1974

From the forthcoming album *The Charles Ives Show*
Paul Winter Consort & Friends

David Darling sings in unison with Jane Bryden

[Sometime between 1911 and 1913 Ives heard a sermon in church which contrasted the philosophies of Christian faith and stoic pessimism. That same day he wrote two contrasting songs “Duty” and “Vita,” subtitled “Two Slants, or, Christian and Pagan.” The text of “Vita” is from the Roman philosopher Manlius.]

“Nascentes morimur finisque ab origine pendet.”

(“Being born, we are about to die, and our end hangs from our beginning.”)

8. Song for Michael

David Darling, Paul Winter
(Tasker Music, ASCAP; Living Earth Music, BMI)

David Darling / electric cello
Robert Chappell / organ
Ben Carriel / timpani
Paul Winter / soprano sax

Recorded in concert at Art Park, Lewiston, NY
August, 1974
Unreleased recording

You might still want to keep a hand on your hat, listening to this one. David had just received a custom-made electric cello, and this was his first performance on it. His solo here is in the last part of a long free-suite the Consort played. We dedicated it to the man who made the cello, whose first name was Michael. (I haven't been able to find his family name.)

9. Icarus

Ralph Towner
(Distant Hills Music, ASCAP)

Paul Winter / alto sax
David Darling / cello
Robert Chappell / harpsichord
Jeff Van Nostrand / bass
Tigger Benford / drums

Recorded live, Tokyo, April 10, 1977

Unreleased recording

It's interesting to hear how David's playing matured during the seven years since our first recording of "Icarus" in 1970.

10. Ballad in 7/8

Traditional Rumanian, arr. Bartok, Winter
(Umpawaug Music, ASCAP)

Paul Winter / alto sax

David Darling / cello

Robert Chappell / harmonium

Jeff Van Nostrand / bass

Tigger Benford / drums, super-set (timpani & surdos)

Recorded live, Tokyo, April 10, 1977

Unreleased recording

If the Consort repertoire has a "war horse," the "Ballad in 7/8" is it. This melody came from a piano piece by Bela Bartok. It was a Rumanian folk melody, in 7/8 time, that Bartok had collected in his ethnomusic expeditions in the Balkan Mountains.

The opening section became a great jumping-off place for free-form soloing, by various members of the Consort, often one or more of the percussionists, and most always our cellist.

The finale section, as a bookend, then comes back to the original theme. This is called a "head chart," in the lingo of jazz groups.

Over the years, this free field-of-play, in the middle of this suite has proven to be an amazing garden for unique improvising. The first flower that bloomed was our original cellist Richard Bock. Richard was a masterful classical player, who had never improvised. He used this seed-theme, and the license of this unfettered space, to explore the range of cellistic techniques from the solo literature he knew so well. Richard grew, like a sunflower, to become a virtuoso improviser, in this free-form context.

Richard's solo on "Ballad in 7/8" in our album *The Winter Consort*, blazed a trail. It became a tradition, in the cello lineage of the Consort. The torch was passed to David when he joined us in 1970, and from him to Eugene Friesen, in 1978, who has carried it now for 42 years.

In this performance in Tokyo, the first slot is given to our percussionist, Tigger Benford, playing the five tuned timpani and the seven un-tuned surdo's, of our super-set. Tigger then handed the baton over to David.

Our Japanese audience was mind-boggled by David's solo playing. They'd never heard anything like this before.

11. Air

Bach, arr. Winter
(Living Earth Music, BMI)

Paul Winter / alto sax
David Darling / cello
Robert Chappell / harmonium (bush organ)
Jeff Van Nostrand / bass

Recorded live, Tokyo, April 10, 1977

Unreleased recording

Bach's "Air for the G-string" was the first piece I ever arranged for the Consort, in 1968. It features the four "horns" of the original ensemble: alto sax, alto flute, English horn, and cello. This was the sound-texture I wanted.

At the time of this performance in Japan in 1977, we had no alto flute or English horn, but the harmonium, with its reedy voice, covered their two lines quite well.

I gave this piece a prominent place in our short set, in this concert for the whales, in keeping with my long-time resolve to include a Bach piece in every concert.

12. Trio

Paul Winter, David Darling, Paul McCandless
(Living Earth Music, BMI; Tasker Music, ASCAP; Bocal Music, ASCAP)

Paul Winter / alto sax
David Darling / cello
Paul McCandless / oboe

From the album *Common Ground*
Produced by Paul Winter and Oscar Castro-Neves
Recorded at Living Music Studio, August, 1977

Free improvisation

13. Icarus

Ralph Towner

(Distant Hills Music, ASCAP)

Paul Winter / alto sax

Paul McCandless / oboe

David Darling / cello, voice

Oscar Castro-Neves / guitar

Jim Scott / 12-string guitar

Gary King / bass

Steve Gadd / drums

Bill Cahn / steel-drums

Susan Osborn / voice

From the album *Common Ground*

Produced by Paul Winter and Oscar Castro-Neves

Recorded at Living Music Studio, August, 1977

Over the years, “Icarus” has proved itself to be a “song for all seasons.” In this iteration, seven years after our original recording of it on the *Road* album, the guitar of Oscar Castro-Neves, and the snare drum of Steve Gadd, bring it to Brazil. There is, to me, an elegance and a majesty to this laid-back version.

The tribe on this performance was part of the *Common Ground* “village” of musicians who came together at my farm that summer to make this album. You can also hear Susan Osborn’s voice, and Bill Cahn’s steel-drums, if you listen carefully.

David’s signature embellishments, throughout, are the icing on the cake.

14. River Run

Paul Winter, Glen Velez, Paul Halley, Oscar Castro-Neves, Eugene Friesen
(Living Earth Music, BMI)

Paul Winter / soprano sax
Paul McCandless / oboe
John Clark / French horn
David Darling / cello, voice
Paul Halley / harmonium
Oscar Castro-Neves / guitar
Glen Velez / frame drum
Sam West / conch shell
Canyon Wren

From the album *Canyon*

Produced by Paul Winter and Sam West

Recorded in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York

July 16, 1985

"Conch shells and canyon wren call us to river.

[Southwest Indian people have used the conch for centuries in ceremonies to bring rain.]

Run the river...new sights, new sounds around every bend...peace of slow water, exultation of rapids...rhythm never ceases, river flows on."

(from the liner notes of the *Canyon* album)

In this piece for our *Canyon* album, I wanted to revisit the experience of riding on these redoubtable rubber rafts on which we travelled for several hours each day, during the three weeks it takes to traverse the 280 miles of the Colorado as it winds through the Grand Canyon.

I aspired to evoke in this music the kind of motion the rafts make in the water, and also the kinds of exhilaration and emotion you experience going through the rapids you encounter.

We created a special rhythm section of frame-drum, pizzicato cello, and acoustic guitar, and I love the unique, bouncing groove it achieved. David's syncopated pizz lines provided the bass propulsion, and demonstrated his superb ability as a rhythm player.

I've long thought this was the most organic rhythm section of any recording the Consort ever made. (I have always welcomed the opportunity to get away from boiler-plate bass-and-drums rhythm sections.)

The themes woven into this piece came from the archive of improvisations we had, after our several river-rafting recording expeditions in the Canyon.

David's cello, consigned here to the rhythm section, is not in its usual role as one of the "horns" of the Consort. For this album, and on our fourth Canyon expedition, we actually had an official horn: French horn, played magnificently by John Clark. However, David's signature voice/cello unison is heard in the introduction, as a kind of ghost voice, beckoning us on the journey; and then heard again later in the piece.

15. Raven Dance

David Darling, Paul Winter
(Tasker Music, ASCAP; Living Earth Music, BMI)

David Darling / cello
Paul Winter / soprano sax

From the album *Canyon*

Recorded near mile 148, Grand Canyon, June 28, 1980

Free duet

“Side canyon near Inner Gorge, raven rests on ledge...calls....hops from crag to crag, sometimes graceful, sometimes with sudden trickster moves...listens, calls again...flaps past, close...flies on.”

16. Sockdolager

David Darling, Eugene Friesen
(Tasker Music, ASCAP; Onegin Music, BMI)

David Darling / cello, voice
Eugene Friesen / cello
Paul Winter / soprano sax

From the album *Canyon*

Improvisation, recorded in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, July 16, 1985

Powell wrote that the river traveler “stands in the presence of awful mysteries, profound, solemn...”

“Past confluence with Little Colorado River...canyon walls narrow...black Granite Gorge - ominous, foreboding...distant roar of rapids ahead: Unkar, Hance, Sockdolager.”

“Sockdolager” in 19th-century slang means “knockdown punch.” Cellist David Darling’s raft flipped in Sockdolager Rapid on the 1980 expedition. Sockdolager lived up to its name.

“Sockdolager” is to me a masterpiece of program music, a cameo that captures this whole scenario: the foreboding, the harrowing experience, and the deliverance.

The event took place during our first river-rafting/recording expedition through the Grand Canyon in 1980. We were 45 people, on three large rafts and one small. David and his cello were on the small one, along with a boatman and another passenger.

Each of the rapids, in this 280-mile journey on the Colorado River, has a name, and the “fabled” rapids each have a lineage of drama. The one named Sockdolager is at mile 79. The raft on which I was riding had just gone through this rapid, when our boatman looked back and yelled “David’s raft flipped!” I turned around and could see David trying to climb on top of his overturned raft, and then we saw his cello floating towards us in its waterproof bag. We were able to rescue it.

Five years later, after making three more Canyon expeditions with various colleagues, I felt it was time to finally produce the first volume of the *Canyon* album. I asked David about creating a piece that might evoke that memorable experience.

We imagined the cello both telling the story (in unison with his voice), and also conjuring the fearsome energy of those waters, with the double-stop churning that had long been part of David’s unique cellistic quiver. So we realized that we needed two cellists, and who better to collaborate with David than his successor in the Consort, Eugene Friesen, the third of the genius cellists who have graced the Consort over the years. I was thrilled with this opportunity to have these two masters improvising together.

David made a rough sketch of a musical map, and they were off, on the adventure together.

I later overdubbed my horn. I hear this high voice now as a kind of guardian angel for the journey.

17. Air

J.S. Bach; arr. Winter
(Living Earth Music, BMI)

Paul Winter / soprano sax

From the album *Canyon*

Recorded near mile 148, Grand Canyon, June 28, 1980

Solo sax elegy

“Invocation by sax...benediction by raven...river journey nears its end.”

18. Grand Canyon Sunset

Glen Velez, Paul Halley, John Clark, Paul McCandless, Paul Winter
(Living Earth Music, BMI)

Glen Velez / desert drum

Paul Halley / pipe organ

John Clark / French horn

Paul McCandless / oboe

Paul Winter / soprano sax

From the album *Canyon*

Recorded in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, May 28, 1985

“Grand Canyon Sunset” is one of the most glorious collective improves the Consort ever recorded.

“Released from Inner Gorge, raven soars to Rim...view across Canyon world, stillness...distant North Rim...sun on horizon...bright corona of fire bursts forth around dark clouds...sun goes down...raven flies away into night.”

Consort elegy

POSTLUDE

Silence of a Candle

Ralph Towner
(Distant Hills Music, ASCAP)

Ralph Towner / piano, vocal
David Darling / cello
Herb Bushler / bass

From the album *Icarus*
Produced by George Martin
Recorded at Seaweed Studio, Marblehead, Massachusetts, and Electric Ladyland, New York
August/September, 1971

Ralph wrote this for our *Icarus* album. I have always regarded it as an extraordinary song. It is a beautiful piece of music, and has, to my mind, one of the great lyrics of all time — a profound message for each of us, in the quest for our humanity.

This was the first song with lyrics Ralph ever wrote, or sang; and to my knowledge he has never written another.

I include it here as a benediction on David's journey.

*"And the voice within the candle
whispers of a timeless peace
that lies beyond."*

AFTERWORD

A Listening Experience

When I was first thinking of a sequence for the recordings in this playlist, I had in mind that “Sockdolager” would be the finale. Although I had not heard our *Canyon* album in some time, I had a deep-set memory of the emotional power of this piece; and the ending section always felt to me like a prayer of gratitude.

Also, “Sockdolager” happened to have been the last recording David ever made with us.

However, I had an unexpected journey in my listening.

One night, several days after I had learned of David’s passing, I wanted to hear “Sockdolager” again; and did so, in my listening modality of choice: lying down, in the dark.

When it ended, I didn’t want to move, or to get up and turn off the CD. The sound of the river carried me further. But then, as if in a dream, I heard my horn, a high note that sustained a long while, and led then into the first phrase of the “Air for the G-string,” of Bach. I’d forgotten I had recorded this in the *Canyon*, and that it followed “Sockdolager” on the *Canyon* album.

As this iconic melody unfurled, accompanied only by the river ambience and the distant calls of ravens, I began to hear this solo as my elegy for David, and for our long friendship.

I thought then, that the “Air” would be the most appropriate finale for this compilation.

But as my last note was fading out, the river and the ravens continued, and then from the depths, a low organ pedal emerged, followed by the haunting earthbeat of a shaman's drum. I realized we were now riding Glen Velez' frame-drum "boat," into "Grand Canyon Sunset," the final piece on the *Canyon* album. I felt comfortable on this familiar pilgrimage.

But when I heard the French horn, I was undone; my tears finally came. Engulfed by the torrent, I became a pure listening spirit, on a river of soul, transported by the magic carpet of Paul Halley's gorgeous slow-moving organ changes, as they lifted the sublime horn melodies of John Clark up to the Canyon rim, to be joined by the luminescent voice of Paul McCandless' oboe, and finally, then, my own horn, a third thread of this living polyphony, on this soaring ship of sound, this entire raft of beauty — all of us, all the world, all of life, triumphant, merging with the corona of the sunset.

...then slowly, gradually, subsiding in a grand diminuendo,
bringing us home,
in peace.

It seemed to me then, that this had been the whole Consort, saluting David, and saying to our brother: "Good-bye, and good travels."

And I understood, finally, for sure, that "Grand Canyon Sunset" would be the perfect finale for our tribute.
