

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“ESOPUS 18: SLONIMSKY’S *THESAURUS*” CD ARRIVES IN MAY

MUSICIANS AND COMPOSERS CREATE SONGS INSPIRED BY LEGENDARY BOOK

New York, NY (March 27, 2012): Lexicographer, musicologist, composer, conductor, and pianist **Nicolas Slonimsky** (1894–1995) is celebrated for his many contributions to the world of contemporary music, but perhaps none has matched the influence of his 1947 book, the *Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns*. Containing more than 1,300 scales and progressions (including “palindromic canons,” “sesquitone scales,” and “infra-ultrapositions,” many devised by Slonimsky himself), the 244-page tome has inspired musical luminaries ranging from John Coltrane to Frank Zappa; Aaron Copland once told Slonimsky, “Now if I am stuck for an idea, all I have to do is consult your book.”



For its 18th compilation CD, the nonprofit arts publication *Esopus* invited a diverse group of musicians and composers, including **Lee Ranaldo**, **Andrew Bird**, **Elliott Sharp**, **Horse Feathers**, and **Cat Martino**, to choose a scale or pattern from the *Thesaurus* to use as the basis for a brand-new song. Several of them were already serious devotees—composer **Richard Einhorn**, for example, responded to our invitation with “I looooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooove the Slonimsky book!” Those who weren’t already familiar with the *Thesaurus* were quickly captivated by its smorgasbord of offerings: Singer-songwriter **Willy Mason** wrote to tell us, “I am so grateful for this book; it has already opened many creative doors for me and I’ve only just begun to scratch the surface of it.” The CD, which also includes tracks from **Nina Violet**, **Carl Stone**, and **Mary Lorson**, proves that Slonimsky, whose life was in large part devoted to encouraging and promoting the efforts of contemporary musicians and composers, continues to influence, inspire, and provoke.

The compilation is included in the 18th issue of *Esopus*, which also reproduces a series of pages from the guest book of Slonimsky and his wife, the art critic Dorothy Adlow, featuring hand-inscribed musical tributes from luminaries such as Dmitri Shostakovich and Leonard Bernstein. Other contents in the issue include artists’ projects by Bill Burns, Bryan Nash Gill, and Mary Lum; facsimile reproductions of materials from the MoMA Archives related to its groundbreaking “Spaces” exhibition from 1969; never-before-seen early portraits by Magnum photographer Erich Hartmann; and more.

Every issue of *Esopus*, which is published twice a year, includes a themed CD. Earlier compilations have featured songs inspired by Craigslist “Missed Connections” listings (#2), spam e-mails (#8), the quatrains of Nostradamus (#13), and *Esopus* subscribers’ irrational fears (#17). Past contributors include Neko Case and Carl Newman, Sharon Van Etten, the Mountain Goats, Atlas Sound, Marnie Stern, Frightened Rabbit, Grizzly Bear, Busdriver, DJ/Rupture, Low, Stephin Merritt, Sam Amidon, the Ruby Suns, Dirty Projectors, and more than 150 other artists working in all genres of music.

For more information about Esopus, the semi-annual arts journal published by New York-based nonprofit The Esopus Foundation Ltd., visit www.esopusmag.com (where audio clips from all of our past compilation CDs are available) or contact Tod Lippy at tod@esopusmag.com or (212) 473-0919.

“ESOPUS 18: SLONIMSKY’S THESAURUS” TRACK LIST

1. WILLY MASON

“The Night Ride of the Street Sweeper”

Singer-songwriter **Willy Mason**, who lives in Martha’s Vineyard, MA, has toured with such groups as Death Cab for Cutie, Ben Kweller, and Radiohead, and he opened for Norah Jones at the 2010 Montreux Jazz Festival. Mason’s albums include *Where the Humans Eat* (2003) and *If the Ocean Gets Rough* (2007).

393 Alternating Whole Tones and Semitones



2. CARL STONE

“Label’s Table”

Hailed by *The Village Voice* as “the king of sampling,” **Carl Stone** is a pioneer of live computer music and electro-acoustic composition. Stone, who divides his time between San Francisco and Japan, where he teaches at Chukyo University’s School of Cognitive Sciences, has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Interpolation of One Note

826

827



3. NINA VIOLET

“For You I”

Classically trained violinist and string arranger **Nina Violet** hails from Martha’s Vineyard, MA, and has toured across the U.S. and Britain with musicians such as Elvis Perkins, Willy Mason, and Radiohead. Her latest album, *We’ll Be Alright*, was released in the fall of 2011.

1046 [Howard Hanson: Symphony No. 4]



4. HORSE FEATHERS

“New Monitions”

Portland, OR–based singer-songwriter Justin Ringle formed **Horse Feathers** with multi-instrumentalist Peter Broderick in 2004, and the two have been joined since by a rotating group of musicians, including Heather Broderick and Jedediah Bernards. Among the band’s releases are *House with No Home* (2008) and *Thistled Spring* (2010).

377

simile



5. CAT MARTINO

“Radial Brief”

Written, performed, and recorded by Cat Martino
© 2012 Cat Martino (ASCAP)

Cat Martino has toured across the U.S. and around the world with acts such as Rufus Wainwright, Black Rebel Motorcycle Club, Sharon Van Etten, and her frequent collaborator Sufjan Stevens. Originally from Long Island, Martino is currently based in Brooklyn. Her solo albums include *Here Now* (2004) and *The Sea Closet* (2009).

1065



6. RICHARD EINHORN
"Etude for Piano: Pentatonics"

New York-based composer **Richard Einhorn**'s work includes *Red Angels*, commissioned by the New York City Ballet, and *Voices of Light*, written to accompany Carl Theodor Dreyer's classic silent film *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. Einhorn's first opera, *The Origin*, which is based on the work of Charles Darwin, premiered in 2009 and was recently staged in Bremen,

Pentatonic Scales



7. ELLIOTT SHARP
"No Lims Sky"

Elliott Sharp has been a key figure in New York City's avant-garde music scene for over 30 years. He has released more than 85 recordings ranging from orchestral music to No Wave rock and has collaborated with musicians such as Debbie Harry and the Kronos String Quartet. The subject of Bert Shapiro's 2008 film *Doing the Don't*, Sharp was a 2010 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellow in music.



8. ANDREW BIRD
"Scale #1184"

Born and raised in Chicago, **Andrew Bird** is a classically trained violinist and former swing jazz musician. His first band, Andrew Bird's Bowl of Fire, released three critically acclaimed albums between 1997 and 2001; Bird's subsequent solo releases include *Armchair Apocrypha* (2007), *Useless Creatures* (2010), and this year's *Break It Yourself*.



9. MARY LORSON
"Joyce II (An Etude on Meditation)"

Mary Lorson was the lead singer of the group Madder Rose until it disbanded in 1999, when she formed Saint Low. Based in Ithaca, New York, Lorson is currently frontwoman for Mary Lorson and the Soubrettes, whose most recent release is *BurnBabyBurn* (2011).

Double Notes in Contrary Motion



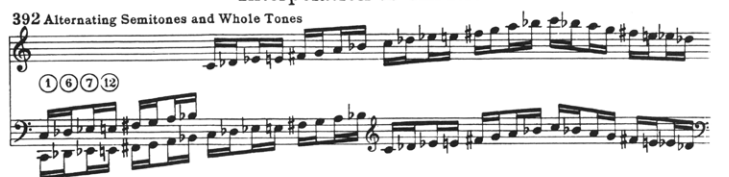
10. LEE RANALDO
"Sesquitone: One into Four"

Lee Ranaldo is a singer, guitarist, writer, producer, and artist who is best-known as a co-founder of the alternative rock band Sonic Youth. Ranaldo's solo albums include *From Here to Infinity* (1987) and this year's *Between the Times and Tides*, and his artwork has been shown in galleries and museums in Paris, Toronto, New York, Los Angeles, Vienna, and Sydney.

Equal Division of One Octave into Four Parts



Interpolation of One Note



For liner notes and links to musicians' websites, visit

www.esopusmag.com