

A photograph of a woman with her arms raised in a white, textured dress, set against a background of a sunset or sunrise over a body of water. The image is the central focus of the album cover.

DARK QUEEN MANTRA
TERRY RILEY
STEFANO SCODANIBBIO
DEL SOL STRING QUARTET GYAN RILEY

Terry Riley

Dark Queen Mantra (2015)

- 1 **I. Vizcaino** 5:44
 - 2 **II. Goya with Wings** 8:06
 - 3 **III. Dark Queen Mantra** 11:50
- With Gyan Riley, guitar*

Stefano Scodanibbio

Mas Lugares (su Madrigali di Monteverdi) (2003)

- 4 **I. Allegro** 3:53
- 5 **II. *Io mi son giovinetta*** 3:24
- 6 **III. Largo** 3:57
- 7 **IV. *Quell'augellin, che canta*** 3:25
- 8 **V. *Che se tu se' 'l cor mio*** 6:06

Terry Riley

- 9 **The Wheel & Mythic Birds Waltz (1983)** 15:59

Benjamin Kreith
violin

Rick Shinozaki
violin

Charlton Lee
viola

Kathryn Bates
cello

We meet in town. Maybe because they need to go in for groceries anyhow. Maybe because out-of-towners have a hard time finding the way. Or maybe because Terry hasn't quite decided if he wants to show us the ranch. When we follow his truck to Sri Moonshine, it winds between blackberry bushes, pines and madrones along the Yuba River.

Around the same years that Terry and Ann moved up to Moonshine Ranch, my parents were leaving the city to plant their own garden in Northern California.

Growing up, I learned that when you visit, you bring something from the garden. I have some homemade pomegranate jelly and Kathryn has roasted some coffee. It's still early season in the foothills so the tomatoes haven't ripened yet. Terry opens a mason jar of salsa from last year's peppers and tomatoes. We all love chiles and the next half-hour is devoted to discussion of ghost peppers, Carolina reapers, habaneros. Also the best taco trucks along the drive to San Francisco. Later we all go down to the root cellar for extra jars of salsa to

take home. Terry is a tall man and needs to stoop for the cellar door — "watch your heads, this door helps to keep you humble." Other visits we will pick blackberries, sample his neighbor's wine, and enjoy big breakfasts on the back deck. The back deck has an electric wire because a bear has been hanging out there. It's next to the apple tree and Terry's alright with the bear eating the apple crop but you don't want the bear too close to the house. Another animal visitor, "my student," is a wild turkey who stops by every morning just as Terry starts his day by

singing his morning raga, a practice he maintains from years as a disciple of Pandit Pran Nath. The turkey sits up the hillside to watch and listen through the studio window. The stairway to the studio has a sign "please remove your shoes" but Terry says that is no longer a strict rule. We take our shoes off anyway. The studio has a Mason & Hamlin grand piano, a mind-blowingly detailed Balinese woodcarving depicting scenes from the Ramayana, and a glistening psychedelic Ray Gingham painting of two hands holding the 1950s girlie magazine *Night*

and Day. Also scores, records and CDs — at first glance Bach, classic Jazz, and Henri Dutilleux by the stereo. We all huddle around the computer to look over the first sketches that will become the new quintet. The lean forthright Spanish-flavored opening, the delicate ornamentation of "Goya with Wings," and the gently throbbing groove of "Dark Queen Mantra" are already taking shape. Terry says that as a student he never was a great music-reader and felt more comfortable improvising. His early music education came from listening to the radio and playing by

ear. Somehow Spike Jones gets mentioned and Terry grins, aware that isn't the expected role model. Charlton asks if the story about John Cage visiting the Redding High School football team is true. "Parts of it," replies Terry.

—Benjamin Kreith

Terry Riley **Dark Queen Mantra**

Like Beethoven or Shostakovich, Terry Riley is a real "quartet composer." His collaborations with Kronos yielded string quartet music that redefined and reinvigorated the genre. Another longtime focus for Terry is guitar music — mostly created for, or with, his son, Gyan. But combining guitar with string quartet was the suggestion of Del Sol violist Charlton Lee. "I'd been wanting to find more opportunities to work with Gyan ever since we met," Charlton explains. "With Terry's 80th birthday on the

horizon, it seemed a perfect time to commission a new piece for all of us to play together."

Dark Queen Mantra begins brightly with "Vizcaino," named for the hotel in Algeciras where Terry first stayed on arrival in Spain. The distinctively Spanish opening motive plays with shifting groupings and irregular accents. Terry started writing the second movement with Francisco Goya's paintings in mind. Then the music began to take flight and grew fast and fluttery — "Goya with Wings" he called it. The final movement explores

a heavier and more insistent groove. As Terry says, "it gets dark."

Dark Queen Mantra was commissioned for the Del Sol String Quartet by the Del Sol Performing Arts Organization, with the generous support of the Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation, the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation, and the Fleishhacker Foundation.

Stefano Scodanibbio
Mas Lugares (su Madrigali di Monteverdi)

"Mas Lugares" transports Monteverdi to other lands, new places where madrigals are refracted through the lens of Stefano Scodanibbio's prodigious timbral imagination. Anyone who had the good fortune to hear Scodanibbio perform will recognize the tactile sense of virtuosity. As a bass player, this often meant exploring the upper reaches of the instrument — high harmonics that float, like a Renaissance depiction of heaven,

above the low, earthy fundamental pitches. Even the notation of these natural harmonics (hollow diamond-shaped note-heads) visually evokes an ethereal and esoteric sound-world. These hollow note-heads are like windows through Monteverdi's music to its photographic negative. "Mas Lugares" is dedicated to Luciano Berio, himself a master of orchestration, transcription and re-invention of past music.

Terry Riley
The Wheel & Mythic Birds Waltz

Mythic Birds Waltz never actually breaks into a waltz. Instead, Terry views an Indian tabla rhythm through a kaleidoscope of possibilities, gently shifting the meter to set it dancing in new ways. Sometimes the music surges forward with sweeping melodies, sometimes it lingers looping in eddies.

If there's no waltz in *Mythic Birds Waltz*, then what about the birds? Terry evaded the question until, unexpectedly, at a preconcert talk with the Del Sol

Quartet in Camptonville, California, he surprised us by explaining that the birds he imagined came from Anagorika Govinda's account of Tibetan Buddhism in *The Way of the White Clouds*. He had been reading the book and wanted to give the birds a dance to do.

The Wheel, the slow jazz ballad that opens the quartet, reappears in different guises and meters — and eventually provides a melancholy coda.

DEL SOL STRING QUARTET

Hailed by *Gramophone* as “masters of all musical things they survey” and two-time winner of the top Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, the Del Sol String Quartet shares living music with an ever-growing community of adventurous listeners.

Fascinated by the feedback loop between social change, technology, and artistic innovation, the San Francisco-based ensemble is a leading force in 21st century chamber music – whether introducing Ben

Johnston’s microtonal Americana at the Library of Congress, exploring Andean soundscapes with Gabriela Lena Frank and traditional musicians, deconstructing Ruth Crawford’s radical experimental processes with East Bay schoolchildren, or rocking Mason Bates’ techno grooves in his San Francisco club dance party.

Recognized as a “vigorous champion of living composers,” Del Sol has premiered well over 100 works through its extensive commissioning and innovative performances. The

composers represent a diverse range of contemporary voices, including Terry Riley, Mason Bates, Frederic Rzewski, Ben Johnston, Gabriela Lena Frank, Chinary Ung, Tania León, Ken Ueno, Peter Sculthorpe, Reza Vali, Mohammed Fairouz and Per Nørgård.

Many of these works are included in Del Sol’s eclectic discography – eight, critically-acclaimed, full-length albums that reflect the ensemble’s fascination with the intersection of place and culture. *The New York Times* praised Del Sol’s most recent recording,

Scrapyard Exotica (2016, DSL-92193), on the GRAMMY® Award-winning Sono Luminus label: “See if your foot can stay still once you put on this funky disc of rhythmically infectious... music played by the adventurous Del Sol String Quartet.” *BBC Music Magazine* lauded this “beautifully performed disc... featur[ing] three new works which reimagine the string quartet genre in contrasting, colourful and intriguing ways.”

Other Del Sol recordings have explored the “hypnotic sound world” of Peter Sculthorpe

(*Sculthorpe: The Complete String Quartets with Didjeridu*, DSL-92181); revealed in musical languages from Peru, Turkey, Spain, Iran and Uzbekistan (*Zia*, DSL-92164); featured composers from the Pacific Rim (*Ring of Fire*); illuminated the string quartets of George Antheil, Marc Blitzstein and Robert Erickson; and created a vibrant dialogue between 20th century masters and young composers from the Americas (*Tear*).

The Quartet has performed at prestigious venues around the world, including the Kennedy Center,

Library of Congress, Smithsonian Museum and National Gallery of Art in Washington DC; Symphony Space in New York City; Other Minds Festival of New Music in San Francisco; Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, Santa Cruz, CA; Clefworks

Festival, Montgomery, AL; Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Houston; Santa Fe Opera in NM; Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, NY; Candlelight Concerts, Columbia, MD; University of Vermont Lane Series in Burlington, VT; Davos

and Hirzenberg Music Festivals in Switzerland; and the Chengdu Festival of Contemporary Music in China.

With its deep commitment to education, Del Sol has reached thousands of K-12 students through inventive school performances,

workshops, coaching and residencies. The Quartet members also have worked closely with student composers, musicians and faculty artists at universities across the country, including Dartmouth, MIT, Brandeis, Northeastern, Georgetown, Carnegie

Mellon, University of New Mexico, University of California at Berkeley, San Diego, and Santa Cruz, Chapman, Augustana, Illinois State, the Peabody Institute, the Manhattan School of Music and San Francisco Conservatory of Music.



TERRY RILEY

Composer and performer Terry Riley is one of the founders of music's minimalist movement. His early works, notably "In C," pioneered a form in Western music based on structured interlocking repetitive patterns. The influence of Riley's hypnotic, multilayered, polymetric, brightly orchestrated Eastern-flavored improvisations and compositions is heard across the span of contemporary and popular music.

Performers who have commissioned and/or played his works include the Kronos Quartet, Rova Saxophone Quartet, ARTE Quartet, Array Music, Zeitgeist, Steven Scott's Bowed Piano Ensemble, John Zorn, pianist Sarah Cahill, California E.A.R. Unit, guitarist David Tanenbaum, electric violinist Tracy Silverman, drummer George Marsh, bassist Bill Douglass, Assad Brothers, cello octet Conjunto Ibérico, Crash Ensemble, Abel-Steinberg-Winant Trio, pianist Werner Bartschi, pianist Gloria Cheng, Calder Quartet, Arditti Quartet, Amati Quartet, Alter Ego, Paul Drescher, singer Amelia Cuni, and Bang on a Can All-Stars.

Born in Colfax, California, Riley studied at Shasta College, San Francisco State University, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music before earning a master's in composition at the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied with Seymour Shifrin and Robert Erickson. At UC Berkeley, he met La Monte Young; together they worked with dancer Anna Halprin. During a sojourn to Europe (1962–1964), he collaborated with members of the Fluxus



group, playwright Ken Dewey, and trumpeter Chet Baker. In 1965, he moved to New York and joined Young's Theatre of Eternal Music. Two years later, he gave his first all-night concert at the Philadelphia College of Art and began collaborating with visual artist Robert Benson. An influential teacher was Pandit Pran Nath, a master of Indian classical voice with whom Riley appeared in concert as *tanpura*, *tabla*, and vocal accompanist for more than 25 years. Riley continues to perform in concerts of his music and of Indian classical music, as well as conducting *raga*-singing seminars. He also appears in concerts with Indian sitarist Krishna Bhatt, saxophonist George Brooks, and guitarist Gyan Riley.

Riley joined the Mills College faculty in 1971. It was there that he met David Harrington of the Kronos Quartet. Their long association led to 13 string quartets; the concerto *The Sands* (1990); the multimedia choral work commissioned by NASA, *Sun Rings* (2003); and *The Cusp of Magic* (2004) with pipa. The Kronos recording of his epic five-quartet cycle, *Salome Dances for Peace*, was selected as the Classical Album of the Year by *USA Today* and was nominated for a GRAMMY® Award in 1989.

"The Palmian Chord Ryddle," a concerto, was premiered in May 2012 by electric violinist Tracy Silverman and the Nashville Symphony led by conductor Giancarlo Guerrero. Other recent works include "Transylvanian Horn Courtship" (2008) for string quartet doubling on Stroh instruments; "Universal Bridge" (2008) for pipe organ; the violin concerto "Zephyr" (2009); and "SwarAmant" (2012) for violin, guitar, and *tabla*.





STEFANO SCODANIBBIO

Stefano Scodanibbio was a brilliant inventor of new musical possibilities, virtuoso performer, and phenomenal improviser. He came to prominence in the 1980s, premiering solo contrabass works by Brian Ferneyhough, Iannis Xenakis, Salvatore Sciarrino, Giacinto Scelsi, Gerard Grisey and others. His bass technique was so inventive that Luigi Nono used the indication "arco mobile à la Stefano

Scodanibbio" in the score of *Prometeo*. He composed over fifty works, principally for strings. With the encouragement of Luciano Berio, Scodanibbio prepared his own version of Berio's "Sequenza" for solo cello, now known as "Sequenza XIVb" for contrabass. Scodanibbio's collaborations with Terry Riley include the recordings *A Lazy Afternoon among the Crocodiles* and *Diamond Fiddle Language*.

I was invited to an art gallery in Los Angeles to hear a solo string bass recital by Stefano. I arrived late and the concert was in progress. I was walking down a series of concrete halls to reach the gallery chamber where the music was taking place. In the distance I could hear the sounds of French horns, trombones, strings and brass all mixing in a beautiful modal ensemble and at the time I thought

that Stefano must be playing with a chamber group. I was amazed when I entered the gallery to find Stefano all alone playing his bass. It was then that I realized it would be an exhilarating experience to work together. And indeed it was!

A few years later when Stefano visited me at the Sri Moonshine Ranch, we tuned up the bass and the synthesizer and began to play without discussing a game

plan. What followed was a fresh and exciting landscape where spontaneous melodic and harmonic interplay emanated from the mutual effect our playing was having on one another.

—Terry Riley, 1997



GYAN RILEY

Gyan Riley won his first guitar in a raffle when he was 12 years old. Shortly after learning all of the songs in his cassette collection by ear, he became the first full-scholarship graduate guitar student at the San Francisco Conser-

vatory. Gyan's diverse work now focuses on his own compositions, improvisation, and contemporary classical repertoire. Gyan has been commissioned by the Kronos Quartet, New Music USA, the Carnegie Hall Corporation, the American Composers

Forum, and the New York Guitar Festival. He has performed with Zakir Hussain, Lou Reed, John Zorn, the Kronos Quartet, Iva Bittova, the Bang on a Can All-Stars, the San Francisco Symphony, the Philadelphia Chamber Orchestra, and his father, the

composer/pianist/vocalist Terry Riley. Various tours have taken him throughout Europe, Canada, Latin America and the US, both as a soloist and in various ensembles. Gyan resides in New York City and frequently performs with the

duo *Probosci*, the trio *Eviyan*, and the electric guitar quartet *Dither*. Gyan has four solo CD titles and many ensemble/collaborative recordings, most recently working with the Tzadik Records label in New York.

DEL SOL STRING QUARTET DARK QUEEN MANTRA

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