



**BMOP**  
*sound*

**ANDY VORES: GOBACK GOBACK**

FABRICATION 11: CAST | FABRICATION 13: MONSTER

BMOP/sound | Gil Rose, Executive Producer | 376 Washington Street | Malden, MA 02148 | [www.bmopsound.org](http://www.bmopsound.org)

**ANDY VORES** b. 1956

FABRICATION 11: CAST

GOBACK GOBACK

FABRICATION 13: MONSTER

**DAVID KRAVITZ** baritone

**BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT**

GIL ROSE, CONDUCTOR

**Andy Vores**

Fabrication 11: Cast

Goback Goback

Fabrication 13: Monster

Producer Gil Rose

Recording and editing Joel Gordon and David Corcoran

*Fabrication 11* and *Fabrication 13* were recorded on September 22, 2008, at Mechanics Hall (Worcester, MA). *Goback Goback* was recorded on October 28, 2009, at Distler Performance Hall (Medford, MA).

This recording was made possible in part by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Boston Conservatory, Kathryn and Edward Kravitz, Andy Vores, and Marilyn Zacharis.

I'd like to thank Paul and Catherine Buttenweiser for commissioning *Goback Goback* for David Hoose and Collage New Music; the Argosy Foundation Contemporary Music Fund and the Thomas R. McMullin and Ruth R. McMullin Fund, for commissioning *Fabrication 11: Cast* and *Fabrication 13: Monster* (as *Two Fabrications*) for the 2008 Ditson Festival of Contemporary Music; and Gil Rose, David Kravitz, and all the members of BMOP. —Andy Vores

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**FLUTE**

Sarah Brady\* [1, 2]  
Rachel Braude [1]

**OBOE**

Barbara LaFitte [1]  
Jennifer Slowik\* [1, 2]

**CLARINET**

Amy Advocat [1, 2]  
Gary Gorczyca [1]  
Michael Norsworthy\* [1]

**BASSOON**

Ronald Haroutunian\* [1]  
Adrian Jojatu [1]

**HORN**

Whitacre Hill\* [1]  
Ken Pope [1]

**TRUMPET**

Eric Berlin\* [1]  
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**TROMBONE**

Hans Bohn [1]

**PERCUSSION**

Craig McNutt\* [1, 2]  
Nick Tolle [1]

**HARP**

Franziska Huhn [2]

**PIANO**

Linda Osborn [1, 2]

**VIOLIN I**

Melanie Auclair-Fortier [1]  
Colleen Brannen [1]  
Piotr Buczek [1]  
Sasha Callahan [1]  
Gabriela Diaz [2]  
Charles Dimmick\* [1]  
Oana Lacatus [1]  
Miguel Perez-Espejo [1]  
Megumi Stohs [1]  
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Edward Wu [1]

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Beth Abbate [1]  
Julia Cash [1]  
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Adrienne Elisha [1]  
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David Feltner [1]  
Dimitar Petkov [1]  
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Holgen Gjoni\* [1]  
Katherine Kayaian [1]  
Patrick Owen [1]  
Rafael Popper-Keizer [2]  
Rebecca Thornblade [1]

**BASS**

Anthony D'Amico [2]  
Pascale Delache-Feldman\* [1]  
Scot Fitzsimmons [1]  
Elizabeth Foulser [1]  
Robert Lynam [1]

**KEY**

[1] Fabrications 11 and 13  
[2] Goback Goback

\*Principals

[1] **FABRICATION 11: CAST** (2008) 6:33

**GOBACK GOBACK** (2003)

[2] I. From The Greenock Dialogues 7:15

[3] II. O Why Am I So Bright 2:52

[4] III. The Visit 4:05

[5] IV. Imagine a Forest 8:04

[6] V. Falling into the Sea 2:07

[7] VI. Enter a Cloud 10:26

[8] VII. Dear Bryan Wynter 4:26

[9] VIII. Loch Thom 8:27

[10] **FABRICATION 13: MONSTER** (2008) 5:27

**TOTAL** 59:44



and celebratory; its five inaugural releases appeared on the “Best of 2008” lists of the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, National Public Radio, *Downbeat*, and *American Record Guide*, among others. BMOP/sound is the recipient of five Grammy Award nominations: in 2009 for *Charles Fussell: Wilde*; in 2010 for *Derek Bermel: Voices*; and three nominations in 2011 for its recording of *Steven Mackey: Dreamhouse* (including Best Classical Album). The *New York Times* proclaimed, “BMOP/sound is an example of everything done right.” Additional BMOP recordings are available from Albany, Arsis, Cantaloupe, Centaur, Chandos, ECM, Innova, Naxos, New World, and Oxingale.

In Boston, BMOP performs at Jordan Hall and Symphony Hall, and the orchestra has also performed in New York at Miller Theater, the Winter Garden, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, and The Lyceum in Brooklyn. A perennial winner of the ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming of Orchestral Music and 2006 winner of the John S. Edwards Award for Strongest Commitment to New American Music, BMOP has appeared at the Bank of America Celebrity Series (Boston, MA), Tanglewood, the Boston Cyberarts Festival, the Festival of New American Music (Sacramento, CA), and Music on the Edge (Pittsburgh, PA). In April 2008, BMOP headlined the 10th Annual MATA Festival in New York.

BMOP’s greatest strength is the artistic distinction of its musicians and performances. Each season, Gil Rose, recipient of Columbia University’s prestigious Ditson Conductor’s Award as well as an ASCAP Concert Music Award for his extraordinary contribution to new music, gathers together an outstanding orchestra of dynamic and talented young performers, and presents some of the world’s top vocal and instrumental soloists. The *Boston Globe* claims, “Gil Rose is some kind of genius; his concerts are wildly entertaining, intellectually rigorous, and meaningful.” Of BMOP performances, the *New York Times* says: “Mr. Rose and his team filled the music with rich, decisive ensemble colors and magnificent solos. These musicians were rapturous—superb instrumentalists at work and play.”



TINA TALLON

The **Boston Modern Orchestra Project** (BMOP) is widely recognized as the leading orchestra in the United States dedicated exclusively to performing new music, and its signature record label, BMOP/sound, is the nation's foremost label launched by an orchestra and solely devoted to new music recordings.

Founded in 1996 by Artistic Director Gil Rose, BMOP affirms its mission to illuminate the connections that exist naturally between contemporary music and contemporary society by reuniting composers and audiences in a shared concert experience. In its first twelve seasons, BMOP established a track record that includes more than eighty performances, over seventy world premieres (including thirty commissioned works), two Opera Unlimited festivals with Opera Boston, the inaugural Ditson Festival of Contemporary Music with the ICA/Boston, and thirty-two commercial recordings, including twelve CDs from BMOP/sound.

In March 2008, BMOP launched its signature record label, BMOP/sound, with the release of John Harbison's ballet *Ulysses*. Its composer-centric releases focus on orchestral works that are otherwise unavailable in recorded form. The response to the label was immediate

## By Andy Vores

I have always had eclectic taste in music—in pretty much everything, in fact—and my work is often fueled by the tensions between very different stylistic imperatives. Frequently this tension, as the three pieces on this recording demonstrate, is between the mechanical and the organic—that is, between music that is tightly planned, organized, controlled and then set in motion, and music that finds its direction through imagination and instinct.

I gravitate towards fractured surfaces and sudden shifts of musical temperature and direction, but I like these fractures and shifts to be fundamentally rooted in an extended tonal harmonic language.

For me, much of the creative process lies in finding—or creating—and then exploiting some friction in my material. Nothing new here; it's simply the process of resolving dissonance or formal imbalance but cast in 21st-century terms. In other words, the underlying urging of tension and resolution remains the same no matter what the language and no matter what the medium.

*Goback Goback* is an "organic" and personal work. Written when I turned 45 and had recently undergone some big changes in my life, W.S. Graham's poems about memory and mortality resounded deeply with me.

At its heart the music revolves around a few simple gestures: descending scales, ghostly clusters, and descending chords. Although W.S. Graham's poetry can seem elliptical on first acquaintance, it is in fact quite direct, and utilizes exactly the kind of jarring shifts of time and perspective so attractive to me in order to disrupt its own "surface."

To convey the meaning of such complex poetry requires careful pacing as well as an intelligent, sensitive singer of exactly the type that David Kravitz, for whom I wrote this piece, embodies.

Both single-movement *Fabrications* heard here are far more “mechanical” than *Goback Goback*, and the composition of each necessitated an array of colored charts and grids and diagrams just to keep the various moving parts in order.

These provide me with a way to plot slowly unfolding processes and to control when these events occur and change. In *Fabrication 13: Cast*, for example, there are two expanding musical gestures representing the words “blue” and “kettle” (words that, in the Caryl Churchill play that inspired this piece, gradually bury all other dialogue), the multicolored grid let me drop these on top of the skein of melody randomly, have them overwhelm the melody, yet sound irregular and spontaneous.

In the end, though, I think both of these ways of approaching composing—the organic and the mechanical—tend to verge toward a center point where both coexist and interact with each other.

My goal is always to make my music a place where the intuitive and the intellectual, the planned and the serendipitous, and the deliberate and the accidental meet and inform and illuminate each other.

Elena Ruehr’s *Toussaint Before the Spirits*, the New England premiere of Thomas Ades’s *Powder Her Face*, as well as the revival of John Harbison’s *Full Moon in March*, and the North American premiere of Peter Eötvös’s *Angels in America*.

Mr. Rose and BMOP recently partnered with the American Repertory Theater, Chicago Opera Theater, and the MIT Media Lab to create the world premiere of composer Tod Machover’s *Death and the Powers* (a runner-up for the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music). He conducted this seminal multimedia work at its world premiere at the Opera Garnier in Monte Carlo, Monaco, in September 2010, and also led its United States premiere in Boston and a subsequent performance at Chicago Opera Theater.

An active recording artist, Gil Rose serves as the executive producer of the BMOP/sound recording label. His extensive discography includes world premiere recordings of music by John Cage, Lukas Foss, Charles Fussell, Michael Gandolfi, Tod Machover, Steven Mackey, Evan Ziporyn, and many others on such labels as Albany, Arsis, Chandos, ECM, Naxos, New World, and BMOP/sound.

In 2012 he was appointed Artistic Director of the Monadnock Music Festival in historic Peterborough, NH, and led this longstanding summer festival through its 47th season conducting several premieres and making his opera stage directing debut in two revivals of operas by Dominick Argento.

As an educator Mr. Rose served five years as director of Orchestral Activities at Tufts University and in 2012 he joined the faculty of Northeastern University as Artist-in-Residence and returned to his alma mater Carnegie Mellon University to lead the Opera Studio in a revival of Copland’s *The Tender Land*. In 2007, Mr. Rose was awarded Columbia University’s prestigious Ditson Award as well as an ASCAP Concert Music Award for his exemplary commitment to new American music. He is a three-time Grammy Award nominee.



**Gil Rose** is a conductor helping to shape the future of classical music. His dynamic performances and many recordings have garnered international critical praise.

In 1996, Mr. Rose founded the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), the foremost professional orchestra dedicated exclusively to performing and recording symphonic music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Under his leadership, BMOP's unique programming and high performance standards have attracted critical acclaim and earned the orchestra fourteen ASCAP awards for adventurous programming as well as the John S. Edwards Award for Strongest Commitment to New American Music.

Mr. Rose maintains a busy schedule as a guest conductor on both the opera and symphonic platforms. He made his Tanglewood debut in 2002 and in 2003 he debuted with the Netherlands Radio Symphony at the Holland Festival. He has led the American Composers Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra of the Ukraine, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, and National Orchestra of Porto.

Over the past decade, Mr. Rose has also built a reputation as one of the country's most inventive and versatile opera conductors. He joined Opera Boston as its music director in 2003, and in 2010 was appointed the company's first artistic director. Mr. Rose led Opera Boston in several American and New England premieres including: Shostakovich's *The Nose*, Weber's *Der Freischütz*, and Hindemith's *Cardillac*. In 2009, Mr. Rose led the world premiere of Zhou Long's *Madame White Snake*, which won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2011.

Mr. Rose also served as the artistic director of Opera Unlimited, a contemporary opera festival associated with Opera Boston. With Opera Unlimited, he led the world premiere of

## NOTES

GOBACK GOBACK was commissioned by Paul and Catherine Buttenweiser for *Collage New Music* who, with baritone David Kravitz, premiered it in 2003 with David Hoose conducting.

FABRICATION 11: CAST and FABRICATION 13: MONSTER were commissioned by the American Composers Forum and premiered in 2008 by the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, led by Gil Rose, at the Ditson Festival of Contemporary Music at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston.

### By Matthew Guerrieri

I say this silence or, better, construct this space  
So that somehow something may move across  
The caught habits of language to you and me.

—W. S. Graham, "The Constructed Space" (1970)

According to the testimony of Hector MacLean, a Scottish schoolmaster, the preference among mid-1800s storytellers and listeners on the Hebridean island of Barra was for a time-space of insouciant nonlinearity. "They appear to be fondest of those tales which describe exceedingly rapid changes of place in very short portions of time," MacLean reported, "and have evidently no respect for the unities."

MacLean was collecting folktales for John Francis Campbell, who published four volumes of *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* between 1860 and 1862. Campbell was a polymath who dabbled in the natural sciences as well (he invented the Campbell-Stokes sunshine recorder, still in wide meteorological use, which uses a glass sphere to focus rays onto a

paper timeline, periods of sunlight registered via scorch marks). So he perhaps naturally noticed an avian discrepancy in his collection of stories: despite its ubiquity throughout Scotland, the grouse—"the only bird whose births, deaths, and marriages are chronicled in the newspapers," Campbell noted—figured in but one short tale, a popular interpretation of the calls of the grouse cock and hen. Campbell characterized it as "quarreling and scolding about the stock of food," but, to Scottish ears, the birds were also discoursing on the qualities that MacLean touched on, the ability—or compulsion—of the imagination to roam over time and place:

This is what the hen says—  
"Faic thusa 'n la ud 's an la ud eile."  
And the cock, with his deeper voice, replies—  
"Faic thusa 'n cnoc ud 's an cnoc ud eile."

As Campbell translated the exchange:

See thou yonder day, and yon other day.  
See thou yonder hill, and yon other hill.

Scottish poet W. S. Graham (1918–1986) used a simpler transcription of the grouse's song to punctuate the chilly nostalgia of a visit to Loch Thom, "To see the stretch of my childhood / Before me." But soon his mind is stretching across a multiplicity of eras and realizations:

My mother is dead.  
My father is dead.  
And all the trout I used to know  
Leaping from their sad rings are dead.

*Szenen aus Goethes Faust*; Elijah in Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; Apollo in Handel's *Apollo e Dafne*; and many works of J.S. Bach.

Mr. Kravitz's commitment to new music has led to his presentation of world or regional premieres of works by John Harbison, Theo Loevendie, Andy Vores, Julian Wachner, Thomas Whitman, Scott Wheeler, James Yannatos, and others. He has recorded for the Koch International Classics and New World labels. Before devoting himself full-time to a career in music, Mr. Kravitz had a distinguished career in the law that included clerkships with U.S. Supreme Court Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Stephen Breyer. He later served as Deputy Legal Counsel to the Governor of Massachusetts.

Awards and prizes include a Koussevitsky Fellowship, the Kucyna International Composition Competition, the Scottish National Orchestra Ian Whyte Award, the Tanglewood Prize for Composition, and the Omaha Symphony Guild New Music Contest.

Recent performances include *No Exit* by Chicago Opera Vanguard, *Objects and Intervals* for Brave New Works, *Leif* for Boston Musica Viva, and *Natural Selection* for the Cantata Singers.



CHRISTIAN STEINER

**David Kravitz**, baritone, is increasingly in demand on operatic and concert stages. Critics have hailed his “large, multi-layered” and “sumptuously flexible” voice, his “power and eloquence,” his “deeply considered acting,” and his “deep understanding of the text.” In recent seasons, Mr. Kravitz has performed at New York City Opera, the Salle Garnier in Monte Carlo, Glimmerglass Opera, Opera Boston, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and Boston Lyric Opera, among others. His performances include the title role in *Don Giovanni*, the title role of Leporello in *Wozzeck*, Germont in *La Traviata*, Ping in *Turandot*, Nick Shadow in *The Rake’s Progress*, Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*,

Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, and Ko-Ko in *The Mikado*.

On the concert stage, Mr. Kravitz garnered rave reviews for his “resolute power and total connection” (*Opera News*) in Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Bernard Haitink. Other recent engagements include Berlioz’s *Les Troyens* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under James Levine; Handel’s *Messiah* with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Charlotte Symphony Orchestra; and numerous concerts with Boston Baroque, Emmanuel Music, and the Cantata Singers. Mr. Kravitz’s extensive concert repertoire includes Mahler’s *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and *Kindertotenlieder*; Britten’s *War Requiem* and *Cantata misericordium*; Faust in Schumann’s

“The grouse flurry and settle,” Graham writes. “GOBACK / GOBACK GOBACK FAREWELL LOCH THOM.” See *thou yonder hill, and yon other hill*.

Eight of Graham’s poems provide the text for Andy Vores’s *Goback Goback*, a piece, in the composer’s words, “about standing at the midpoint of life and reassessing.” Vores wrote it on a commission for Collage New Music, which premiered it in 2003. The poems coalesce into a loose narrative of time and place: triptychs of uneasy childhood memories (“From The Greenock Dialogues,” “O Why Am I So Bright,” “The Visit”) and elementally categorized places (“Imagine a Forest,” “Falling into the Sea,” “Enter a Cloud”) are rounded off with intimations of mortality (“Dear Bryan Wynter,” “Loch Thom”). But Vores sets up a simultaneous weave of musical connections and echoes that smudges such clear boundaries: freewheeling mixtures of pastiche and strangeness, illustration and atmosphere, symbols and sounds. Welsh by birth, Vores nonetheless shares something of the narrative style that Hector MacLean found on the other side of the Irish Sea: the continuous intrigue of *Goback Goback* is, in large part, its insistent disrespect for the unities.

The setting of “Loch Thom,” the finale, is salted with ideas that recur throughout all eight songs: spectral clusters of close-packed pitches, churning arpeggios, a long wire of scale passed from instrument to instrument [9]. But there is an uncanny sense not just of recapitulation, but of such ideas somehow reflected back in time, back into the other poems and images. Those scalar passages, first heard interrupting the halting steps of “From The Greenock Dialogues,” [2] become a flock of grouse, an inner perturbation turned physical. The clusters, at the outset specifically yoked to images of ghosts and shadows, now wander across the landscape, to be met unexpectedly. Every musical object seems to be moving in multiple directions, forward and backward in memory, concrete and abstract in image.

Graham often acknowledged his own metaphors, self-deprecating commentary on language’s fabricated fabric. Vores, too, uses stylistic artifice to his advantage—the mock-Handelian encouragement of “O Why Am I So Bright” [3] (“you are a good boy”) poisoned

with polytonal condescension, the descending instrumental lines accompanying the drowning dream of “Falling into the Sea” [6] returning at the end as a psychological, sinking-feeling punchline. For “Dear Bryan Wynter,” Graham’s studiously casual letter to a dead colleague, Vores has the harpist and pianist knock on their instruments, the deception of a table-rapping séance in plain view [8].

But such flourishes aren’t so much inserted as insinuated into the score. *Goback Goback* weaves rich cloth from sharp glances and vivid afterimages. The paradoxical nature of Vores’s musical ideas—fleeting, jumping from song to song, but always projected with trap-focus immediacy—matches Graham’s combination of precise, sober distillation and wry misdirection. It is the volatile mixture of time and place found in the wood in “Imagine a Forest” [5]:

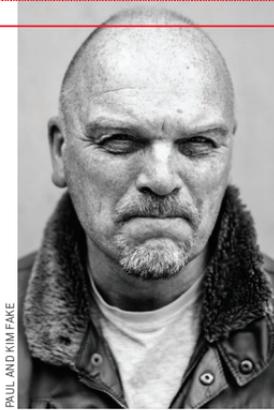
You are walking in it and it sighs  
Round you where you go in a deep  
Ballad on the border of a time  
You have seemed to walk in before.

\* \* \*

ENID Do you know yourself which it is? Is it both?  
DEREK Is it both is it neither.

—Caryl Churchill, *Blue Kettle* (1997)

Since 2008, Vores has been working on an evening-length, 32-movement set of *Fabrications*, scored for everything from solo snare drum up to a full orchestra. *Two Fabrications*, premiered by the Boston Modern Orchestra Project in 2008, are the largest of the group to date, but



PHIL AND KIM FRAKE

**Andy Vores** was born Wales and raised in England. He studied composition at Lancaster University with Edward Cowie. From 1982 he worked in London as Lecturer and Composer-in-Residence at City University. Many of his works received their premieres during this time from such performers as Sarah Walker, Irvine Arditti, Gemini, the London Sinfonietta, Lontano, the Nash Ensemble, Capricorn, and the BBC Singers. In 1986 he was a Fellow in Composition at Tanglewood, studying with Oliver Knussen, and he has lived in Boston since 1990.

From 1999 to 2001 he was Composer-in-Residence with the BankBoston Celebrity Series: Emerging Artists. *Dark Mother for Triple Helix*—his first commission for the series—was premiered in April 2000, and the Boston Trio premiered *Urban Affair* the following year. He was Composer-in-Residence at the New England Philharmonic from 2002 to 2005 during which time the orchestra premiered three new works: *G Major*, *Hex*, and *An Other I*, a violin concerto for Danielle Maddon. In 2001 he was appointed Chair of Composition, Theory, and Music History at the Boston Conservatory.

Commissions include *Return to a Place* for Sanford Sylvan and David Breitman; *Wetherby Nocturne* for Kathleen Supové (the Barlow Endowment); Quartet No. 3 for the Borromeo String Quartet (Chamber Music America); *World Wheel* for the Cantata Singers; *Umberhu Ik and Forgot* for Boston Musica Viva; and *Uncertainty Is Beautiful* for the Boston Modern Orchestra Project with soprano Kendra Colton.



share the collection's fixation on isolated processes, "conceits," as Vores calls them: "These *Fabrications* explore more mechanical approaches to generating music. Each has a subtitle; a synonym of 'fabrication' which says something about the piece itself."

The mechanisms are, on the surface, simple. *Fabrication 11: Cast* was inspired by Richard Serra's massive sculpture *Torqued Torus Inversion*: two giant, walk-through, plate-steel curves that mirror each other. Framed by sounds on the edge of music and noise, a lurking cloud of low pitches is interrupted by a burst of higher tones, then high and low switch places [1]. *Fabrication 13: Monster* works a similarly basic metamorphosis, this one prompted by Caryl Churchill's one-act play *Blue Kettle*, in which a con man attempts to fool elderly women into thinking that he is their lost, given-up-for-adoption son, while the dialogue is gradually replaced by the words "blue" and "kettle," until the sounds of those two words completely subsume the play's language. Vores echoes that linguistic infection by setting an undulating, reel-like skein of melody against a punctuating accompaniment that gradually crowds out the melodic line [10].

Beneath the schematics, though, one has the sense that Vores is also playing with music's ability to project complex, layered moods. *Fabrication 11* is brooding, even menacing, but at the same time serenely curious about its unusual sounds. *Fabrication 13* seems to replace Churchill's elusive unease with bright, animated energy, but the lens of its obsessive fabrication also focuses and burns. As in *Goback Goback*, it's the music's clarity, the immediacy of its ideas, that enables a web of more provocatively enigmatic reference. Vores constructs spaces in which the habits of musical language can reassert some of their original wonder.

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Matthew Guerrieri is the author of *The First Four Notes: Beethoven's Fifth and the Human Imagination* (Knopf, 2012). He writes frequently for the *Boston Globe* and *NewMusicBox*, and rather less frequently on his blog, *Soho the Dog*. His work has also appeared in *Vanity Fair*, *Musical America*, *Playbill*, and *Slate*. He lives in Massachusetts.

## GOBACK GOBACK

Text by W.S. Graham

### [2] From The Greenock Dialogues

O Greenock, Greenock, I never will  
 Get back to you, but here I am,  
 The boy made good into a ghost  
 Which I will send along your streets  
 Tonight as the busy nightshifts  
 Hammer and spark their welding lights.  
 I pull this skiff I made myself  
 Across the midnight firth  
 Between Greenock and Kilkreggan.  
 My blades as they feather discard  
 The bright drops and the poor word  
 Which will always drown unheard.  
 Ah the little whirlpools go  
 Curling away for a moment back  
 Into my wake. Brigit. Cousin  
 Brigit Mooney, are you still there  
 On the Old Custom House shore?  
 You need not answer that, my dear.  
 And she is there with all the wisps  
 And murmurs in their far disguise.  
 Brigit, help with the boat up  
 Up over the shingle to the high  
 Tide mark. You've hardly changed, only  
 A little through the world's eye.  
 Take my hand this new night  
 And we'll go up to Cartsburn Street

Burn's Mary sleeps fine in  
 Inverkip Street far from Afton.  
 Brigit, take me with you.  
 Come, step over  
 The gunwale. I think, it seems we're here  
 On the dirty pebbles of my home  
 Town Greenock where somewhere Burn's Mary  
 Sleeps and ghosts go  
 Still.

### [3] O Why Am I So Bright

O why am I so bright  
 Flying in the night?  
 Why am I so fair  
 Flying through the air?  
 Will you let me in  
 After all I've done?  
 We see you as you go  
 Across the fields of snow.  
 We will not let you in.  
 Never. Never. Never.

### [4] The Visit

How would you like to be killed or are  
 You in disguise the one to take  
 Me back? I don't want to go back  
 As I am now. I'm not dressed

And almost I am back again  
 Wading the heather down to the edge  
 To sit. The minnows go by in shoals  
 Like iron-filings in the shallows.  
 My mother is dead.  
 My father is dead  
 And all the trout I used to know  
 Leaping from their sad rings are dead.  
 I drop my crumbs into the shallow  
 Weed for the minnows and pinheads.

You see that I will have to rise  
 And turn round and get back where  
 My running age will slow for a moment  
 To let me on. it is a colder  
 Stretch of water than I remember.

The curlew's cry traveling still  
 Kills me fairly. In front of me  
 The grouse flurry and settle. GOBACK  
 GOBACK GOBACK FAREWELL LOCH THOM.

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Me in. I couldn't really  
Have died for you if so  
I were inclined. The carn  
Foxglove here on the wall  
Outside your first house  
Leans with me standing  
In the Zennor wind.  
Anyhow how are things?  
Are you still somewhere  
With your long legs  
And twitching smile under  
Your blue hat walking  
Across a place? Or am  
I greedy to make you up  
Again out of memory?  
Are you there at all?  
I would like to think  
You were all right  
And not unhappy or bored.  
Speaking to you and not  
Knowing if you are there  
Is not too difficult.  
Do you want anything?  
Where shall I send something?  
Rice-wine, meanders, paintings  
By your contemporaries?  
Or shall I send a kind  
Of news of no time  
Leaning against the wall  
Outside your old house.  
The house and the whole moor  
Is flying in the mist  
Bryan, I would be obliged

If you would scout things out  
For me. Although I am not  
Just ready to start out.  
I am trying to be better,  
Which will make you smile  
Under your blue hat.  
I know I make a symbol  
Of the foxglove on the wall.  
It is because it knows you.

[9] **Loch Thom**

Just for the sake of recovering  
I walked back from fifty-six  
Quick years of age wanting to see,  
And managed not to trip or stumble  
To find Loch Thom and turned round  
To see the stretch of my childhood  
Before me. Here is the loch. The same  
Long-beaked cry curls across  
The heather-edges of the water held  
Between the hills a boyhood's walk  
Up from Greenock. It is the morning.  
And I am here with my mammy's  
Bramble jam scones in my pocket.  
The Firth is miles and I have come  
Back to find Loch Thom maybe  
In this light does not recognize me.  
This is a lonely freshwater loch.  
No farms on the edge. Only  
Heather grouse-moor stretching  
Down to Greenock  
Or stretching away across  
Into the blue moors of Ayrshire.

For the sudden wind out of the West.  
Also sometimes I get lost.  
If I stay on for a bit and try  
Upside-down to speak and cry  
HELP ME, HELP ME, will anything  
Happen? Will I begin to sing?  
What a fine get-up you have on,  
Mister, if that is your entering name.  
How did you get through the window-frame  
To stand beside me? I am a simple  
Boy from Greenock who could kill  
You easily if it was not you.  
Please tell me if you come on business.  
You are too early. I have to kiss  
My dear and another dear and the natural  
Objects as well as my writing table.  
Goodnight. I will mend the window.  
Thank you for giving me time  
To kiss the lovely living game.  
So he went away  
Without having touched me.  
He looked at me with courage.  
His head was a black orange.

[5] **Imagine a Forest**

Imagine a forest  
A real forest  
You are walking in it and it sighs  
Round you where you go in a deep  
Ballad on the border of a time  
You have seemed to walk in before.  
It is nightfall and you go through  
Trying to find between the twittering

Shades the early starlight edge  
Of the open moor land you know.  
I have set you here and it is not a dream  
I put you through. Go on between  
The elephant bark of those beeches  
Into that lightening, almost glade.  
And he has taken  
My word and gone  
Through his own Ettrick darkening  
Upon himself and he's come across  
A glinted knight lying dying  
On needles under a high tree.  
Ease his visor open gently  
To reveal whatever white, encased  
Face will ask out at you who  
It is you are or if you will  
Finish him off. His eyes are open.  
Imagine he does not speak. Only  
His beard moving against the metal  
Signs that he would like to speak.  
Imagine a room  
Where you are home  
Taking your boots off from the wood  
In that deep ballad very not  
A dream and the fire noisily  
Kindling up and breaking its sticks.  
Do not imagine I put you there  
For nothing. I put you through it  
There in that holt of words between  
The bearded liveoaks and the beeches  
For you to meet a man alone  
Slipping out of whatever cause  
He thought he lay there dying for.

Hang up the ballad  
behind the door.  
You are home but you are about  
To not fight hard enough and die  
In a no less desolate dark wood  
Where a stranger shall never enter.  
Imagine a forest  
A real forest.

**[6] Falling into the Sea**

Breathing water is easy  
If you put your mind to it.  
The little difficulty  
Of the first breath  
Is soon over. You  
Will find everything right.  
Keep your eyes open  
As you go fighting down  
But try to keep it easy  
As you meet the green  
Skylight rising up  
Dying to let you through.  
Then you will seem to want  
To stand like a sea-horse  
In the new suspension.  
Don't be frightened. Breathe  
Deeply and you will go down  
Blowing your silver worlds.  
Now you go down turning  
Slowly over from fathom  
To fathom even remembering  
Unexpected small  
Corners of the dream

You have been in. Now  
What has happened to you?  
You have arrived on the sea  
Floor and a lady comes out  
From the Great Kelp Wood  
And gives you some scones and a cup  
Of tea and asks you  
If you come here often.

**[7] Enter a Cloud**

Gently disintegrate me  
Said nothing at all.  
Is there still time to say  
Said I myself lying  
In a bower of bramble  
Into which I have fallen.  
Look through my eyes up  
At blue with not anything  
We could ever have arranged  
Slowly taking place.  
Above the spires of fox  
Gloves and above the bracken  
Tops with their young heads  
Recognizing the wind,  
The armies of the empty  
Blue press me further  
Into Zennor Hill.  
If I half-close my eyes  
The spiked light leaps in  
And I am here as near  
Happy as I will get  
In the sailing afternoon.  
Enter a cloud. Between

The head of Zennor and  
Gurnard's Head the long  
Marine horizon makes  
A blue wall or is it  
A distant table-top  
Or the far-off simple sea.  
Enter a cloud. The cloud's  
Changing shape is crossing  
Slowly an inch  
Above the line of the sea.  
Now nearly equidistant  
Between Zennor and Gurnard's  
Head, an elongated  
White anvil is sailing.  
And proceeds with no idea  
Of destination along  
The sea bearing changing  
Messages. Jean in London,  
Lifting a cup, looking  
Abstractedly out through  
Her Hampstead glass will never  
Be caught by your new shape  
Above the chimneys. Jean,  
Jean, do you not see  
This cloud has been thought of  
On Zennor Hill.  
The cloud is going beyond  
What I can see or make.  
Over up-country maybe  
Albert Strick stops and waves  
Caught in the middle of teeling  
Broccoli for the winter.  
The cloud is not there yet.

From Gurnard's Head to Zennor  
Head the level line  
Crosses my eyes lying  
On buzzing Zennor Hill.  
The cloud is only a wisp  
And gone behind the Head. . .  
Thank you. And for your applause.  
It has been a pleasure.  
I have never enjoyed speaking more.  
May I also thank the real ones  
Who have made this possible.  
First, the cloud itself. And now  
Gurnard's Head and Zennor  
Head. Also recognize  
How I have been helped  
By Jean and Albert  
Strick (*He is a real man.*)  
And good words like brambles,  
Bower, spiked, fox, anvil, teeling.  
The bees you heard are from  
A hive owned by my friend  
Garfield down there below  
In the house by Zennor Church.  
The good blue sun is pressing  
Me into Zennor Hill.  
Gently disintegrate me  
Said nothing at all.

**[8] Dear Bryan Wynter**

This is only a note  
To say how sorry I am  
You died. You will realize  
What a position it puts