

OUTRAGES

&

INTERLUDES

JOHN HALLE



**JOHN HALLE**

**OUTRAGES & INTERLUDES**

**1. PPS-23**

(Le Train Bleu, Lucy Dhegrae soprano)  
3'50"

**2. Full Spectrum Dominance**

(Ensemble IOU, Corey Dargel, narrator)  
6'41"

**3. The Twist**

(Le Train Bleu, Joan Tower, narrator)  
5'35"

**4. God's Love**

(Ensemble IOU, Lucy Dhegrae, soprano)  
4'16"

**5. Mortgaging the Earth**

(Le Train Bleu, Kendra Colten, Pam Dellal, sopranos)  
7'30"

**6. Homage**

(Ensemble IOU, Kyle Gann, Corey Dargel)  
7'52"

**7. Apology (to the Next Generation)**

(Now Ensemble, Sarah Chalfy, soprano)  
10'27"

**8. Upon This Hill**

(Le Train Bleu, David Graeber, narrator)  
10'32"

---56:46---

Complete  
texts:



JOHN

HALLE



**John Halle** teaches music theory at Bard College Conservatory of Music. Formerly on the faculty at Yale, his music appears on recordings by Cygnus Ensemble, Ethel, New Millennium and the Common Sense Composers' Collective of which he is a founding member. Previously a jazz pianist, he has performed with Sonny Stitt, Eddie Henderson and Tom Harrell. His writings on politics, the arts and culture have appeared in New Politics, Jacobin, Counterpunch, Truth-Out and the New Haven Register.



JOHN

HALLE

A legendary story involves Picasso receiving a visit from the SS in his Paris studio. The officer points to a reproduction of the artist's anti-fascist masterpiece Guernica on the wall and asks "Did you do this?" Picasso's answer, "No, you did!" conveys what those engaged in art or politics intuitively know to be the case: the most powerful political and artistic statements are those which speak directly to us. Reflecting who we are, they are not imagined *ex nihilo* by the artist, but caused by forces in the world we have created.

All the pieces here were caused by the "low dishonest decade" beginning with our invasion of Iraq and continuing on to the current administration. Some of them reference environmental apocalypse, mass murder, human and civil rights outrages by now so numerous to have become routine. Others excavate the attitudes and prejudices in prior history which made what was to come inevitable.

These are not happy topics, though the patent absurdity of the apologias from official sources and their publicists has created a golden age of political satire. Citizens of Pompeii probably did — the great satirist Tom Lehrer's claim to the contrary — make plenty of jokes about lava.

And so these few laugh lines, fake fugues, a pop tune, bebop, a tango, the twist, a nod to the Carters (James, June and Elliott), are a snapshot of who we are, and who we think we are — an invitation to think and, hopefully, to act.



**PPS-23**, a declassified 1948 National Security Council document drafted by George Kennan attempts to reconcile our possession of half of the world's wealth while accounting for only six percent of its population. It can be, but only through the exercise of "straight power" and dispensing with "unreal objectives such as human rights" and "the raising of living standards" for the remaining 94%. Lucy Dhegrae is accompanied by the New York based ensemble le Train Bleu ensemble directed by Ransom Wilson.

**Full Spectrum Dominance** is a musical farce inspired by the Defense Department's agenda for securing the complete control of the world's labor and material resources during the 21st century. In five short movements, *Introduction*, *Sock Hop*, *Condeleeza's Tango*, *(Tap)ocalypse*, *Conclusion* and *Dirge*, the performance features the narration of singer/composer Corey Dargel and tap solo by flutist/dancer/actor Margaret Lancaster, whose combination of talents were an inspiration for the piece.

**The Twist** is a reworking of the lyrics of the great '50s pop classic and simultaneous meditation on the theme of rampant and routine dishonesty of our elected officials. Composer Joan Tower sneaks in for a guest appearance. Le Train Bleu performs, conducted by Ransom Wilson.

On June 11, 2001, Christian Identity movement stalwart Timothy McVeigh was executed for having engineered the deaths of 168 workers in the Alfred Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. He believed he was acting in God's name, as have the perpetrators of many similar massacres going back to human pre-history. **God's Love**, a pop gospel ballad, memorializes the event, the perpetrator, and his milieu. The vocal parts are performed by Lucy Dhegrae.

In December of 1991, then World Bank chief economist Lawrence Summers circulated a memo suggesting that "the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste on the lowest wage country is impeccable". Most reading it were appalled at this rare window onto the mind of a neo-liberal technocrat. My reaction, **Mortgaging the Earth**, began by assigning a soprano's high A to the antepenultimate syllable. The response by the Brazilian Environmental Minister Jose Lutzenburger-that Summers and others of his ilk are "logical but totally insane" is handled by Pam Dellal. Summers's role is performed here by the Kendra Colton. They are accompanied by le Train Bleu.

The names forming the text of **Homage** represent only a tiny fraction of the body count resulting from our insane and criminal invasion of Iraq in March of 2003. Neruda famously responded to the question "Why doesn't his poetry/speak of dreams and leaves/



and the great volcanoes of his native land?” by inviting us to “Come and see the blood in the Streets.” **Homage**, admittedly not an easy piece to listen to, issues the same invitation. The voices include those of Corey Dargel, Eileen Brickner, and Kyle Gann. The instrumental ensemble includes Conor Brown, Marka Gustavsson, Adam Grabois, and Amy Garapic.

The long-time editor of the alternative weekly *The Progressive Review*, Sam Smith responded to an efflorescence of baby boomer triumphalism by penning his **Apology (to the Next Generation)**, a catalogue many of the outrages which veterans of the “social movements” of the 1960s are complicit in, either through commission or omission. The work is performed by Sarah Chalfy accompanied by the Now Ensemble.

Inspired by monodramas such as Beethoven’s *Egmont* and Copland’s *Lincoln Portrait*, **Upon This Hill** is based on excerpts from the *Leveller’s Standard*, an anarcho-socialist manifesto by the 17th century British Christian mystic Gerard Winstanley. David Graeber, the noted author, anthropologist and originator of the phrase “We are the 99%”, narrates the work accompanied by le Train Bleu.



The recording and production of all tracks was overseen by Conor Brown.  
Mastered by Silas Brown at Legacy Sound  
Matt Gonzalez, collage artwork

More information about the works, performers and texts can be found at  
[www.johnhalle.com/outrages.and.interludes](http://www.johnhalle.com/outrages.and.interludes)

Innova is supported by an endowment from the McKnight Foundation.  
Philip Blackburn, director, design  
Chris Campbell, operations manager  
Steve McPherson, publicist

[www.innova.mu](http://www.innova.mu)