

Joan La Barbara, an original Feldman collaborator, sang with prerecorded tapes of herself in performing Feldman's "Three Voices" Friday night at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The event was part of the American Sublime festival, which ran June 4-12.

8 days of Morton Feldman

MUSIC from D1

goes in none of the usual directions, and often in no direction at all, as if from a parallel universe. Or an upended angel — since the music's ostinatos seem headed for heaven but never get there.

The eight-day Feldman festival titled "American Sublime" was produced by presenter Bowerbird in a succession of thoughtfully chosen venues (a synagogue, an art museum, and, for Sunday's finale, a cathedral) with authoritative performances and program notes that made the event life-changing.

Some 200 people (local composers, poets, and hipsters) attended Sunday. Most shed their shoes. Some sat upright, without so much as a bathroom break. Others sprawled on a large carpet, some sleeping, snoring, or tracing objects in the air.

As much as I've admired and enjoyed Feldman in the past, there was a lingering suspicion, even during the festival, that he was some sort of idiot genius who simply dared to doodle over great swaths of time. *String Quartet No. 2*, in particular, has been accused of being long for the sake of length. But by the end (five hours and 40 minutes), Feldman's place among the greatest American 20th-century composers was indisputable.

The Flux Quartet made all the difference. Some have said long stretches of the piece are unbearable; this performance had something close to what-will-happen-next suspense. The players displayed an astounding ear for sound that made each gradation of timbre palpable. Feldman never feels like Chinese water torture when performers show how the composer gently (and constantly) thwarts your expectations.

Structurally, the piece is built around a refrain of sorts, two close-by chords gently rocking back and forth. Between them, anything could happen. This piece was a cataloglike exploration of string quartet techniques, plus sounds that such ensembles have never previously made. Refrains always returned changed in terms of harmony and register of the pitch. Most sonorities were built on airy-sounding string harmonics. And when the players dug into their strings in more conventional ways, the effect was staggering.

Did it need six hours? It could have been cut down to five. But only with that kind of expanse could the piece permeate one's consciousness so much that, during my two breaks on the cathedral's front steps, the outside world momentarily seemed to be talking in a foreign tongue. Will that impact be maintained when these concerts are streamed on Bowerbird's website (www.bowerbird.org)? The Web is good for conveying information. But Feldman is beyond information.

Complete lack of aggression has unexpected power that's most apparent from a distance. I played hooky from Feldman for Saturday's program of chamber works by Roscoe Mitchell, a still-living jazz contemporary of Feldman who was the subject of a Composer Portrait series by Ars Nova Workshop. Though they may never have known each other, they breathed the same revolutionary air of the 1960s. Mitchell's *Improvisation 15 E* was an obsessive exploration of a few notes. Sound familiar?

One fundamental difference: Mitchell wants to make a statement. After all, he's a working saxophonist as much as a composer. Feldman's music only wants to exist. It waits to be discovered — and doesn't need the composer's presence for that to happen. When Mitchell wasn't performing (as he did in *Improvisation*), his absence was felt: Though his orchestral works (conducted by Feldman champion Petr Kotik) were full of fascinating musical activity, their inner intentions were only intermittently apparent.

Feldman's inner intentions aren't obscure, because there are few, if any. It's sound for its own sake, though exploring a narrow sliver of an idea doesn't always sit well with general audiences. Superficially, this music intends to be underwhelming. The Philadelphia Museum of Art's "Art After 5" concert Friday was one such instance: Its social, drop-in atmosphere with tables, food, and drink fared strangely with Joan La Barbara's performance of *Three Voices*, in which this original Feldman collaborator sings with prerecorded tapes of herself.

It's one of the few Feldman pieces that might be called descriptive. Though the music splinters Frank O'Hara's poem about snow, it does so with a blizzard of counterpoint. Some people, perhaps expecting a more typical jazz program, looked betrayed. Others who happened onto the performance, seemed ambushed and entranced.

Nonmusical distractions, however, aren't always a problem. Umbrella weather is ideal for Feldman. His *Patterns in a Chromatic Field* settled easily into the Italianate old-world chapel of the Fleisher Art Memorial, and not just because you weren't longing to be outside. The steady sounds of rain falling couldn't have created a better frame for the music's gradual exploration of piano/cello interaction performed by Amy Williams and Jonathan Golove. Two hours of it was too short. Forever isn't too long.

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TV Today

The Ellen DeGeneres Show (3 p.m., NBC10) — Chris Pine; Kelly Osbourne; Caitlin Burke.

Deadliest Catch (9 p.m., DISC) — With an arctic hurricane battering the fleet, the captains consider taking drastic measures.

The Nine Lives of Chloe King (9 p.m., FAM) — A teenager who discovers she has catlike powers learns that she has been targeted by assassins.

Memphis Beat (9 p.m., TNT) — As the self-appointed "keeper of Memphis," Detective Dwight Hendricks has impeccable instincts but drives his boss up a wall.

Independent Lens (10 p.m., WHYY TV12) — In 2001, Navajo youth Fred Martinez, 16, becomes one of the youngest hate crime victims in modern history.

After the Catch (10 p.m., DISC) — Mike Rowe hosts a *Deadliest Catch* spinoff in which the crab-boat captains discuss the past season.

HawthoRNe (10 p.m., TNT) — Detective Nick Renata's plan to arrest Hawthorne over a foster care issue is derailed by their mutual attraction.

Conan (11 p.m., TBS) — Jeff Garlin; Sarah Vowell; The Air-

Prime Time

(cc) Closed captioned Cable channel numbers: Garden State Cable

		6:00	6:30	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00
				BROADCAST CHANNELS				
CBS	3 3	News	Evening News	Entertainment	The Insider (N)	NCIS Two-Faced (TVPG)		NCIS: Los Ang
ABC	6 6	News	World News	Jeopardy! (N)	Wheel Fortune	Wipeout (CC) (TVPG)		Body of Proof
NBC	10 10	NBC 10 News	Nightly News	Extra (N) (CC)	Access H.	America's Got Talent (N) (TVPG)		The Voice The
PBS	12 12	PBS NewsHour (N) (CC)		Business Rpt.	World News	Bad Blood: A Cautionary Tale		Frontline The
MNT	17 4	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	MLB Baseball: Florida Marlins at Philadelphia Phillies. Citizens Bank Park				
PBS 23	52 5	NJN News	World News	NJ Eats	NJN News	Antiques Roadshow (CC) (TVG)		Burt Wolf
FOX	29 7	News	Inside Edition	TMZ (N) (TVPG)	The Simpsons	MasterChef (N) (CC) (TV14)		Raising Hope
WYBE	35 98	Democracy Now! (CC)		NHK Newsline (CC) (TVPG)		MiND Learning programs.		John Denver:
PBS	39	PBS NewsHour (N) (CC)		Favorites (TVG)				
WGTW	48 18	★5:00 Praise the Lord (CC)		The Cross	Potter's Touch	Behind Scenes	Joyce Meyer	John Hagee
WTVE	51	Richard French News Magazine		Frasier (TVPG)	Inside Edition	Operation Smile		Hour of Healing
CW	57 11	King of Queens	The Office	How I Met	Seinfeld (TVG)	One Tree Hill (CC) (TVPG)		Hellcats (CC)
ION	61 20	Without a Trace (CC) (TVPG)		Without a Trace (CC) (TVPG)		Without a Trace (CC) (TVPG)		Criminal Mind
TELE	62	Telenoticias	Noticiero Telem	Caso Cerrado: Edición Estelar		Mi Corazón Insiste (SS) (TV14)		Los Herederos
UNI	65	Noticias 65	Noticiero Univ.	Cuando Me Enamoro (N) (TV14)		Teresa (N) (SS) (TV14)		Triunfo del Am
WFMZ	69 99	News	Judge Judy (N)	Judge Judy (N)	Judge J. Brown	Family Feud (N)	Family Feud	Dr. Phil (CC)
				BUSINESS/NEWS CHANNELS				
CNBC	45	Mad Money (N)		The Kudlow Report (N)		Code Wars: America's		60 Minutes on
CNN	32	Situation Room		John King, USA (N)		In the Arena (N)		Piers Morgan
C-SP	17	★5:00 House of Representatives				Tonight From Washington		
FBN		Cavuto (N)		Lou Dobbs Tonight (N) (CC)		Freedom Watch		America's Nig
FNC	72	Special Report With Bret Baier		FOX Report With Shepard Smith		The O'Reilly Factor (N) (CC)		Hannity (N)
MSNB	44	MSNBC Live (N)		Hardball With Chris Matthews		The Last Word		The Rachel M
				MOVIE CHANNELS				
AMC	41	★5:30 ★★ Deep Blue Sea '99. (R) Thomas Jane. (CC)				★★★ The Matrix '99. Keanu Reeves. A computer		
BRV	50	Housewives/OC		Housewives/OC		Housewives/OC		Housewives/N.
ENC	150	★6:10 ★★ K-9 '89. (PG-13) James Belushi, Mel Harris. (CC)				★★ The Crazies '10. (R) Timothy Olyphant. (CC		
HBO	14	★5:45 ★★ Valentine's Day '10. (PG-13) Jessica Alba. (CC)				McEnroe/Borg: Fire & Ice (CC)		★★ Shrek Fore
HBO2	15	★5:30 ★★★ Public Enemies '09. (R) Johnny Depp. (CC)				Too Big to Fail '11. William Hurt. (CC)		
MAX	67	★5:35 ★★★ Up in the Air '09. George Clooney.				★★★ Rob Roy '95. (R) Liam Neeson. Scottish Robin Hood fight		
SHOW	64	★5:15 ★ The Back-up Plan '10.		★★ Letters to Juliet '10. (PG) Amanda Seyfried. iTV. (CC)				Nurse Jackie
STARZ	370	★5:05 ★★ John Q '02. (PG-13)		★7:05 ★★ The Sorcerer's Apprentice '10. (PG) Nicolas Cage. (CC)				★★ The Karate
TCM	71	★5:45 ★★★ Rome Adventure '62. (NR) Troy Donahue.				★★★ Trio '50. (NR) James Hayter, Nigel Patrick		
TMC	66	Frank McK.	★★ Finishing the Game '07. (NR) Roger Fan.			★★★ Disgrace '08. (R) John Malkovich, Jessi		
				SPORTS CHANNELS				
CSN	34	SportsNite	Net Impact	Ball Up Streetball		Winning Golf	Preview	DNL Primetime
ESN	24	SportsCenter (N) (CC)					NFL Live (N)	SportsNation
ESN2	42	Around/Horn	Interruption	WNBA Basketball: Tulsa Shock at Indiana Fever. (N) (CC)				Sport Science
TCN	8	Skin Secrets	Paid Program	MLS Soccer: Vancouver Whitecaps FC at Seattle Sounders FC.				State-Union
VS.		Cycling: Tour de Suisse, Stage 3.		Cycling: Tour de Suisse, Stage 4.		Heads-Up Poker		World Extreme
				VARIETY CHANNELS				
A&E	28	Family Jewels	Family Jewels	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars
BET	51	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live Top 10 Countdown (N) (CC) (TVPG)				★★ Life '99. (R) Eddie Murphy, Martin Lawr		
COM	26	★5:56 Scrubs	★6:26 Scrubs	Daily Show	Colbert Report	Gabriel Iglesias: Hot and Fluffy		Tosh.0 (TV14)
DISC	31	Cash Cab (TVG)	Cash Cab (TVG)	Deadliest Catch (CC) (TV14)		Deadliest Catch (CC) (TV14)		Deadliest Catch
DISN	136	Phineas, Ferb	Good-Charlie	Suite/Deck	Suite/Deck	Good-Charlie	Shake It Up!	Lemonade Mou
E!	48	★4:30 ★★★ Bad Boys '95. (R)		E! News (N)		Sex and-City	Sex and-City	Sex and-City
FAM	29	Pretty Little Liars (CC) (TV14)		Pretty Little Liars (CC) (TV14)		Pretty Little Liars (N) (TV14)		The Nine Lives
FOOD	54	Best Dishes	30-Minute Meal	Iron Chef America		Cupcake Wars (N)		Chopped Past
FX	56	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	★★ The Day the Earth Stood Still '08. (PG-13) K		
HALL		Little House on the Prairie (TVG)		Little House on the Prairie (TVG)		Little House on the Prairie (TVG)		Frasier (TVPG)
HIST	43	Larry the Cable Guy		Larry the Cable	Larry the Cable	Larry the Cable Guy		Larry the Cabl
LIFE	36	Unsolved Mysteries (CC) (TV14)		Pawn Stars	Pawn Stars	American Pickers (CC) (TVPG)		American Pick
MTV	35	That '70s Show	That '70s Show	Teen Wolf (TVPG)		Teen Wolf Pack Mentality (TVPG)		16 and Pregna
NICK	33	The Penguins	iCarly iDo (TVG)	iCarly (TVG)	SpongeBob	My Wife-Kids	My Wife-Kids	George Lopez
SPIKE	53	★6:14 1,000 Ways to Die (TV14)		Ways to Die	Ways to Die	Auction Hunters	Auction Hunters	★9:14 Auction
SYFY	30	Hollywd-Trsr	★★ Silent Hill '06. (R) Radha Mitchell, Laurie Holden. (CC)					★★ The Amityv
TBS	23	King of Queens	King of Queens	Seinfeld (TVPG)	Seinfeld (TVPG)	The Office	The Office	The Office
TLC	52	DC Cupcakes	DC Cupcakes	Little Couple	Little Couple	Spouse vs. House (N) (TVPG)		19 Kids-Count
TNT	25	Law & Order (CC) (TV14)		Law & Order (CC) (TV14)		Law & Order Love Eternal (TV14)		Memphis Beat
TOON	49	Wrld, Gumball	Johnny Test	Johnny Test	Scooby-Doo	Looney Tunes	Wrld, Gumball	King of the Hil
USA	40	Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		White Collar