

Musicians understand this. Pitch is not an absolute. The piano is a tempered instrument. It does not have true pitch; its pitch is, one might say, what Voltaire said of history: an agreed-upon fiction. Marion referred to Sinatra's sensitivity to the supporting chord, to everything, including the orchestration. I quoted Marion's remark to another superb arranger, Allyn Ferguson, who said, "I agree with him. And I'll add a thought of my own. For all his fame and success, Frank Sinatra remains a very under-rated singer."

That session remains as bright in my mind as if were yesterday.

Incidentally, I always thought of Claus's chart on *Change Partners* as "mine" and a couple of summers ago, when I was scheduled to do two concerts with l'Orchestre Populaire de Montréal, conducted by my friend Marc Fortier, I borrowed it from Claus and performed it. God, is that thing a work of beauty, and such a delight to sing on.

In 1974, Claus did an album with Barbra Streisand. Included was the wonderful song with a Michel Legrand melody and a lyric by Alan and Marilyn Bergman, *Pieces of Dreams*. What a chart. That same year, Claus made a second album with Bill Evans, *Symbiosis*, which can only be described as a jazz concerto. It is a remarkable work of art, and, interestingly, led to one of the friendships in Bill's life and Claus Ogerman's too. It came about this way.

Bill Evans enormously admired Glenn Gould, and since I had turned Glenn on to a number of Bill's albums, the feeling was reciprocal. When *Symbiosis* was issued, I was living in Toronto. Bill played an engagement there. He came to our apartment for dinner before the gig. Glenn called. I told him there was someone I wanted him to meet. I put Bill on the phone. They talked at least an hour and apparently talked more later. (Most of Glenn's friendships were conducted on the telephone.) Bill sent a copy of *Symbiosis*, of which he was in his quiet way quite proud, to Glenn.

"Glenn wrote me a very nice letter, which I still treasure," Claus said. As well he might. In the letter, dated June 12, 1977, Glenn wrote: "I have to tell you what a fantastic construction it is, and what a tremendous impression it has made on me. *Symbiosis* is very much my kind of music. I find your harmonic invention quite staggering, and recently, indeed, I've been listening to the work almost obsessively. As a matter of fact, I have included it in a CBC" — Canadian Broadcasting Corporation — "program which I am guest hosting this summer and which will include only works that, in one way or another, have had a particular influence upon me over the years."

Claus said, "I think Glenn Gould was one of the greatest players in the century. I once told Michael Brecker, 'Michael,

you play like Glenn Gould. It's fast but clear.' That's the art. A lot of piano players play fast, use the pedal, and you don't know what the hell they're doing.

"But Glenn Gould is remarkable. I play a lot of his records. It's very clear to me that he went totally into Bach. Romantic music, Mendelssohn, or Schumann, or Chopin, did not do anything to him. Bach is something different. I talked to great musicians in Munich about Bach. My impression, after all these years, is that if you put together a program of great composers, and you are now listening to Georges Bizet, Gretchaninov, and Johann Sebastian Bach, then Bach is wrong in that context.

"It could be that Bach wasn't even a composer. To me, he's more like Copernicus — somebody who was able in notes of music to pull down the universe. He was not a composer to impress people by composition. He put something down almost like a scientist who knows something about the universe. That's down on paper as notes. But he was not the typical so-called composer, like Puccini or Bizet or someone like that.

"Bach took what the Italians had done and did something else with it. He used it in the concertos. But at that time it was an honor if someone used another composer's theme and did something with it. There was no copyright, no money involved. But Bach is strange. He does things that others don't do. It almost makes your heart stop.

"It's the universe. He was a living man, but he was able to bring that down on paper. It's strange. I don't consider him, like, one of the great composers. You know? It's different. I think Glenn Gould realized that, and he spent all his life filing in his mind every note Bach ever wrote. He didn't have to go back to a piece of paper for anything by Bach."

I told Claus, "Glenn told me he never practiced. I said, 'Never?' He said, 'Occasionally, if I see a digital problem, I'll go to the keyboard and work it out. But otherwise, no.'"

Claus said, "At an early age he developed the technique he needed. And then from there, he had it all the time."

My late mentor and friend Robert Offergeld, one of the greatest musical scholars I ever knew, had a theory that those who build up prodigious technique at an early age retain it without effort and don't have to practice. Those who build technique in later years have a perpetual struggle to retain it.

I pointed out to Claus that Glenn's mother was a music teacher with a dream of having a son who would become a great concert artist. She started him very early. And she got her wish. I remember asking someone wise about an up-and-coming young concert violinist in New York. I said, "Does he really have it?"

He said, "Yes. He has the two requisites for a major concert artist — talent and a pushy mother."