



LONELY MOTEL

MUSIC FROM SLIDE



eight blackbird With
Steven Mackey & Rinde Eckert

CEDILLE



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LONELY MOTEL: MUSIC FROM SLIDE

Music by Steven Mackey

Lyrics by Rinde Eckert

World Premiere Recording

1 Slide of Dog (5:40)

2 Stare Prelude/Overture (3:16)

3 Depending (5:18)

4 She Walks as if... (6:53)

5 Fog (5:55)

6 Stare (6:03)

7 Addiction (3:50)

8 Processional (3:39)

9 Running Dog 2 (3:14)

10 Ghosts (4:57)

11 Lonely Motel (8:13)

Total Time: (57:09)

eighth blackbird

Tim Munro flutes

Michael J. Maccaferri clarinets

Matt Albert violin & viola

Nicholas Photinos cello & bass

Matthew Duvall percussion

Lisa Kaplan piano

Steven Mackey guitar, narrator

Rinde Eckert vocals

Sung by a lovelorn psychologist, the songs in Lonely Motel are about perception, self-delusion and ultimately about the isolation created by the attachments we develop to our own fuzzy, personal views of reality.

The music is a dish by and for musical omnivores and while the ingredients have been diced quite finely (and there is no quotation), the songs are seasoned with homages to Dowland, Mozart, Stravinsky, Piazzola, and The Beatles.

Steven Mackey

In June 2009, eighth blackbird, Steven Mackey and Rinde Eckert premiered SLIDE at the Ojai Music Festival and toured the piece throughout the United States in 2010.

LONELY MOTEL: MUSIC FROM SLIDE

Lyrics

▣ Slide of Dog

Slide, slide of, Slide of dog, Slide of dog
running, dog running. Running
Slide, slide of, Slide of dog, Slide of dog
running, dog running. Running
Ignore him.

Ignore him. Ignore the context.
Ignore the apparatus, Identify only
what is presented, pictured. Picture
only...picture only what is in focus.
Picture only what is not outside the
frame. Picture only what is pictured.
This capacity for isolating the
variable...

We ask the subjects to identify the
dog running. We ask them not to ask
what the dog is running from. We
ask them not to ask what the dog is
running to. We ask them to see only
what is pictured

Slide, Slide of, Slide of man, Slide of
man sitting,
man sitting, sitting
Ignore him. Ignore the room

We ask the subjects to ignore the
man running the experiment. Sitting
there in his jacket, in his tie,
trying to be objective, neutral, a
man simply running an experiment,
showing slides, a dog running from
nothing, for no reason

Slide, Slide of, Slide of man, Slide of dog,
Slide of, slide of house on,...
Slide, Slide, Slide, Slide,
Slide, Slide of, Slide of dog,
Slide of house on fire
Ignore him. Ignore the room
Don't be troubled

Do not attempt to understand
You're paid to watch, identify the slide
This is simple
A child could see and name the
object pictured

Slide, Slide of, Slide of house, Slide
of house fire, house fire, fire

No. Not fire. Not fire at all. The sun.
The sun reflected in the windows of
a house. I was fooled at first. Not
fire at all, the sun, glass, the window,
a trick of light, the eye tricked into
seeing fire; and yet, for a moment,
the house was burning

Slide, Slide of. Slide of blue, Slide of
blue bottle, blue bottle, bottle

How many are drinking?

It isn't important whether this is
a celebration.

A wedding

Or wake

This is a blue bottle

Nothing more

Slide, Slide of, slide of hand, Slide of
hand resting, hand resting, resting

Not a workingman's hand. Too
smooth, manicured nails, a model,
idealized, airbrushed. Nothing in this
hand. This hand is not extended in
greeting. This hand is not making a

point. It's doing its best to relax. It
doesn't intend me any harm. Not in
any need, this hand. Simply a hand,
resting. Just a picture of a hand, a
woman's hand, unhurried, poised,
content, this hand.

3 Depending

Depending on what is imagined
Our prejudice is more or less useful
Depending on what is defended
Our defense is more or less defensible
Depending on what is desired
Our desire is more or less pardonable
Depending on what?

Is this picture a bride taking off her
dress?

Depending on what is imagined
Our prejudice is more or less useful
Depending on what is defended
Our defense is more or less defensible
Depending on what is desired
Our desire is more or less pardonable
Depending on what is imagined
Our prejudice is more or less useful

4 She Walks as if...

The shape of her appears to change
as if, like a cat preparing to sleep she
cooly...

Her silence is like the silence
of a wooden bow, brim full of
pomegranates on a yellow table
cloth to the right of a tarnished silver
butter knife on a chipped white
plate on which a partly eaten crust
of bread...

The murmur of her against my skin
from across the room softly bruises,
softly bruises my skin from across
the room...

Her averted eyes...

Her arms fall from her shoulders and
her hands flow from her wrists and
life is easy at her fingertips as she
touches the pages of...

Her name is a custard in my mouth
Her voice is a light cotton accidentally
brushing my thumb as I, as I...

5 Fog

It was on a Sunday
She was dressed in pure white
We were sitting in the park
It was on a Sunday
We were sitting on a bench
She was saying something
She was taking off her ring

I can see her lips moving
I can see her lips move
I can hear her voice,

but her face is turned away,
her face is turned away
I hear her say she's sorry
Then the words are just like broken glass
Words are spilling from her mouth
like bits of broken glass

6 Stare

It was then, staring at the evidence,
that Renard knew the truth, that
one overwhelmingly clear moment,
one minor tragedy, one sad but
simple episode, that one moment of
profound loneliness...

Stare into your hands for an hour
stare into your hands
then try to raise your eyes to the sky
stare at the clouds for a whole day
for a whole day then try to get up
try to stand up

sssssstare at the suns reflection in
the window
stare at the sunlight, there in the
window of the house
in the window the sun is something
else,
something else: fire.
stare at the bottle on the side walk
then try to raise your head
lift up your head to watch her
leaving,
watch her leaving
lift your head up, lift your head up to
watch her leaving
then stare,
stare,
stare

7 Addiction

One too many photographs
One too many slides
And your eyes fall out of focus
One too many numbered
photographs
One too many recorded reactions
One more turn of the page
And you slide into addiction
One too many unchecked fantasies
One too many unchallenged
assumptions
One too many unexamined beliefs
And you slide into addiction
One too many thoughtless repetitions
One too many slogans
One too many clichés
And you slide into addiction
Slide into addiction
One too many foolish acts of bravery,
of bravery
And one too many retellings of heroic
deeds
With one too many humble poses

And you slide into addiction
Slide into addiction
One too many over simplifications
One too many half truths
One too many white lies
One, two, three, four, five, six,
One, two, three, four, five
One, two, three, four, five
And you slide into addiction, slide
into
You slide into addiction, addiction

8 Processional

Tell me what you see
Tell me what you see
Tell me what you see
Tell me what you see
A rock or dog or tree
Shadows on the wall
Shadows on the wall
Shadows on the wall
Shadows on the wall
It could be someone quite tall
If we could see clearly what the
picture is
we might be happy or maybe not.

9 Running Dog 2

Slide, slide of, slide of dog, slide of
dog
running, dog running, running
Slide, slide of, slide of dog, slide of
dog
running, dog running, running
What the subject sees depends on
what he wants to see
The subject looks but when the
pho-to-graph is finally clear
the subject sees what-ever world he
wants to see
he makes the world he makes the
world the world he wants a world
where he is not a-lone
And she takes him, takes him by,
takes him by the hand, by the
hand, the hand and,
the hand and, the hand and, and
Slide, slide of, slide of dog slide of dog
running dog running, running
Slide, slide of, slide of dog
Keep your eyes inside the frame

don't ask me what the dog is running from
or where the dog, the dog is running to
Slides of faces, slides of bottles, slides
of birds, and slides of houses,
houses full of strangers
slides of ruins
slides of my life, slides of my life

▣ Ghosts

Some things are better left unsaid
The living left to live
The dead, dead
No sense in clearing up the past
Leave the questions there unasked

The faces are all ghosts
They can't be touched or felt
In the light of day they change, they
melt

All my ghosts are living
All my ghosts are living
All my ghosts are living
Nothing's real, but everything I love
is living

Leave the ghosts
Leave the photos blurred
What you never heard her say
Is better left unheard
Leave the ghosts
Don't let them speak
Don't let them become clear
They only disappoint
They leave you wanting what you
want to hear
They leave you wanting what you
thought you had before
They leave you waiting there for
more, much more

All my ghosts are living
All my ghosts are living
All my ghosts are living
Nothing's real, but everything I love
is living

The photograph, the blur
Is measureless, her eyes can say
whatever eyes can say
There's softness in this place this
galaxy
these far off stars this nebulous array

They leave you in the light of day
They leave you with the truth
and in that truth you grieve
Given half a chance I'll take the
photograph that lies
I'll take the romance, the beauty
of her less than truthful eyes,
Where all my ghosts are still alive

All my ghosts are living
All my ghosts are living
All my ghosts are living
All my ghosts are living
All my ghosts are living

▣ Lonely Motel

It's quiet here
This motel
Uncomplicated, this simple room
Controlled, a measureable peace
I love this coffee table
Artless and cheap
This lamp, this tawdry mirror here
This stain resistant rug:
Survivor of a thousand insults
Soiled shoes of benighted strangers

Each a mystery to all the others
A thousand strangers shared this bed
These towels washed and washed
This unremarkable TV,TV
This cable of innumerable ghosts
Kaballah of all idle faiths.

I love this place
This clean motel
Its towels
Its wrapped soaps
The room is scented pine
My work is spread out on the bed
One hundred simple photographs
Not one a memory
Not one remarkable
Not one a memory
Not one remarkable
And I sleep here like a baby
Like a baby here I sleep
And I sleep here like a baby
Like a baby here I sleep
And I sleep here like a baby
Like a baby here I sleep
And I sleep here like a baby
Like a baby here I sleep
And I sleep here like a baby
Like a baby here I sleep

Steven Mackey
composer, guitarist, narrator



Photo by Jane Richey

Steven Mackey was born in 1956 to American parents stationed in Frankfurt, Germany. His first musical passion was playing the electric guitar in northern California rock bands. He later discovered concert music and

has composed for orchestras, chamber ensembles, dance, and opera. He regularly performs his own work, including two electric guitar concertos and numerous solo and chamber works. He is also active as an improvising musician and performs with his band Big Farm.

As a composer, Mackey has been honored with numerous awards and has been composer-in-residence at major music festivals including the Tanglewood, Aspen, and Holland Festivals. Among his commissions are works for the Chicago, St. Louis, New World, San Francisco, and Netherlands Radio Symphonies; Los Angeles Philharmonic, BBC Philharmonic, the Scottish and Swedish Chamber Orchestras, Kronos Quartet, Koussevitzky Music Foundation, Fromm Music Foundation, Brentano String Quartet, Borromeo String Quartet, Fred Sherry, Dawn Upshaw, and PRISM Saxophone Quartet, among many others.

As a guitarist, Mackey has performed with Kronos Quartet, Arditti Quartet, London Sinfonietta, Nexttime Ensemble (Parma), Psappha (Manchester), and Joey Baron. As a concerto soloist he has performed with conductors including David Robertson, Michael Tilson Thomas, Peter Etvos, and Dennis Russell Davies.

Mackey's monodrama, *Ravenshead*, for tenor/actor (Rinde Eckert) and electro-acoustic band/ensemble (the Paul Drescher Ensemble), has been performed nearly 100 times and is available on a MINMAX CD. In a year-end review of cultural events, *USA Today* crowned the work the "Best New Opera of 1998."

Recent CD releases include *Steven Mackey: Dreamhouse*, an hour-long oratorio for amplified vocal ensemble, electric guitar quartet, and orchestra conducted by Gil Rose (BMOP sound label, 2010) — recipi-

ent of four Grammy nominations, including Best Classical Album of 2010; and *Busted Micro Shorts*, three chamber works featuring percussionist Tim Williams and the Psappha ensemble. Other discs of his works include *Lost and Found: Mackey performing his own solo electric guitar music* (Bridge Records, 1996); *Tuck and Roll: orchestral music conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas* (BMG-RCA Red Seal, 2001); *String Theory: string quartets* (some with the addition of other instruments) played by the Brentano String Quartet (Albany Records, 2003); *Heavy Light: Mosaic playing mixed chamber music* (New World Records, 2004). *Interior Design: music for violin with Curtis Macomber* (Bride Records, 2006); and *Speak Like the People, Write Like the King: string quartets and octets for the Borromeo and Brentano Quartets* (Bridge Records, 2008).

Mackey is Professor of Music and

chair of the Department of Music at Princeton University, where he has been on faculty since 1985. He was the recipient of Princeton's first Distinguished Teaching Award in 1991.

Mackey lives in Princeton, New Jersey with his wife, composer Sarah Kirkland Snider, and their son Jasper and daughter Dylan. His music is published by Boosey & Hawkes.

For more information visit
www.stevenmackey.com

RINDE ECKERT

lyricist, tenor/actor

Rinde Eckert, the 2009 recipient of The Alpert Award in the Arts for his contributions to Theatre, and finalist for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in Drama, is a writer, composer, performer and director. His Opera/New Music Theatre productions have toured throughout America, and to major theater festivals in Europe and Asia.

Eckert's career began as a writer/performer in the 1980's, writing librettos for Paul Dresher (*Pioneer, Power Failure, Slow Fire, Ravenshead*). Recent writing credits include *Horizon* (2007–08 Drama Desk Nominations for Best Play and Best Director, Lucille Lortel Award: "Unique Theatrical Experience");



Photo by Sibila Savage

Orpheus X (Pulitzer Prize finalist); *Highway Ulysses* and *Four Songs Lost in a Wall* (The American Academy of Arts and Letters 2005 Marc Blitzstein Award); *And God Created Great Whales* (OBIE Award: Best Performance, Drama Desk Nomination: "Unique Theatrical Experience"); and the two, one-act plays *An Idiot Divine*, performed at Zankel Hall in New York City. Three of his plays — *And God Created Great Whales*, *Horizon* and *Orpheus X* — have had successful off-Broadway runs.

Eckert's work for the theater has been produced by Theatre for a New Audience, the New York Theatre Workshop, The Foundry Theatre, and Culture Project in New York; American Repertory Theatre; Center Stage in Baltimore; Dobama Theatre Company; and Berkeley Repertory Theater. Eckert has directed his own and others' plays and operas for The Asia Society, Juggernaut Theater, Opera Pic-

cola, and the Paul Dresher Ensemble. Writing and directing projects involving new music productions include *The Schick Machine* with virtuoso percussionist Steven Schick in a solo-theater work composed/produced by Paul Dresher; *Imaginary City* with So Percussion; *Sound Stage* for the ensemble Zeitgeist; and Steven Mackey's oratorio *Dream House*. Mackey and Eckert are members of Big Farm, the four-person 'prog-rock' band. Rinde Eckert's uniquely eclectic music is available on the Intuition label in Germany and through Songline/Tonefield Productions. The critically acclaimed *Sandhills Reunion* (music by Jerry Granelli, text by Eckert) was released in 2005.

Rinde Eckert began a residency at Princeton University in Spring 2009. He lives in New York with his wife, playwright and actress Ellen McLaughlin.

For more information visit
www.rindeeckert.com



Photo by Luke Ratray

eighth blackbird \ˈætt̩ ˈblak-ˌbɜrd\ slang (orig. and chiefly U.S.)

1. verb. to act with commitment and virtuosity; to zap, zip, sock.
2. adjective. having fearless (yet irreverent) qualities.
3. noun. a flock of songbirds, common in urban areas since 1996. "The blackbirds are super-musicians." (LA Times)

Tim Munro, flutes • Michael J. Maccaferri, clarinets
Matt Albert, violin & viola • Nicholas Photinos, cello & bass
Matthew Duvall, percussion* • Lisa Kaplan, piano

eighth blackbird lives dangerously. The Chicago-based, Grammy Award-winning sextet combines the finesse of a string quartet with the energy of a rock band and the riskiness of a storefront theater company. Its musical aerobatics delight, provoke, and entertain audiences around the world.

eighth blackbird plays regularly at major concert venues across the United States, and has appeared in the UK, Germany, Holland, Poland, Mexico, Korea, and Australia. The ensemble has performed Jennifer Higdon's concerto for eighth blackbird and orchestra, *On a Wire*, to

great acclaim with the Atlanta, Toronto, Cincinnati, Melbourne, and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras, as well as the Cleveland and Cabrillo Festival Orchestras. eighth blackbird has taken the role of Artistic Director with success at festivals in California (Ojai Festival), New York (Tune-in Festival), and Melbourne (the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's Metropolis Festival).

The lure of wet ink draws eighth blackbird into collaborations with a motley crew of composers, young and old, modernist and indie. The ensemble has commissioned works from Steve

Reich, Jennifer Higdon, Mark Anthony-Turnage, Bruno Mantovani, Missy Mazzoli, Brett Dean, Amy Beth Kirsten, David Lang, Michael Gordon, and Julie Wolfe.

eight blackbird holds ongoing Ensemble-in-Residence positions at the University of Richmond and University of Chicago, and has led short-term residencies at the Curtis Institute, Colburn School, University of Michigan, Oberlin College, Southern Methodist University, and Rice University. A fruitful, ongoing relationship with Chicago's Cedille Records has produced five acclaimed recordings, including *strange imaginary animals* (2006), winner of the 2007 Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music Performance. The ensemble has also recorded for Nonesuch, Naxos, and ASO Media.

eight blackbird's members hail from America's Great Lakes, Keystone,

Golden, and Bay states, and Australia's Sunshine State. There are four foodies, three beer snobs and one exercise junkie. The name "eight blackbird" derives from the eighth stanza of Wallace Stevens's evocative, aphoristic poem, *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird* (1917):

I know noble accents
And lucid, inescapable rhythms;
But I know, too,
That the blackbird is involved
In what I know.

* Matthew Duvall endorses Pearl/Adams musical instruments, and Vic Firth sticks and mallets.

www.eighthblackbird.org

Also by eighth blackbird on Cedille Records



strange imaginary animals

2007 Grammy Award Winner — Best Chamber Music Performance

Music by Jennifer Higdon, Gordon Fitzell, Steven Mackey, David M. Gordon, and Dennis DeSantis

"eighth blackbird play[s] with such breathtaking virtuosity that it's very tempting to sit back and simply gasp in admiration. This is particularly the case when, as here, the program is so interesting and intelligently designed."

—ClassicsToday.com



fred

Music of Frederic Rzewski

"20th-century music is finally being performed with the competence that comes when the interpreters have grown up with the music. This is surely the case with this vibrant ensemble, which treats Rzewski's music with an exact and necessary balance of passion and puckishness."

—BBC Music Magazine



beginnings

Daniel Kellogg: Divinium Mysterium (2000)

George Crumb: Voice of the Whale (1971)

"Here [eighth blackbird] presents . . . [works] that offer very different conceptions of the creation of the universe. But the performances have all the sparkle, energy and precision of the [ensemble's] earlier outings."

—The New York Times



thirteen ways

Music by Joan Tower, George Perle, David Schober, and Thomas Albert

"eighth blackbird may be the most vital and accomplished chamber group committed to contemporary music to emerge . . . [in] more than a quarter century. . . . Urgently recommended."

—The Absolute Sound

