

Preludes from *Images* (1989) by **Howard Skempton** (b. 1947)

Sounds & voices montage by **Nancy Zeltsman**

TRANSCRIPT OF THE SPOKEN WORDS

Prelude 7 - Vic Firth

Persistence: no matter what I did, right or wrong ...
If it was wrong, I would keep after it till I got it right.
And if it was right, I kept after it until it got *better*.

You know how many hours a day you practiced.
I used to do six to eight hours every day – nonstop.
And the day before I auditioned for the Boston Symphony, I played – nonstop – 14
hours.

If there's a stone wall and you can't get over it, you go under it, you go around it.
You can get through it somehow.
Don't just give up and say that's impossible.

There's always room at the top for quality. No matter how crowded it is, there's always
room.

Believe in yourself and do everything that justifies your beliefs – whatever that might be.

Prelude 6

Donald L. Marrs

'Got along fine – and we won the next national contest *in spite* of me being first
baritone. (Interviewer chuckles.)

Before we went to Evanston, and we were practicing the Preludes ... we probably spent a
half hour playing those first two notes! – and he was yelling, 'It still wasn't together, and
it was still too loud ...!'

On the other hand, in my teaching, I can pretty well prove that my students enjoyed me – even though I was a ‘tyrant.’

We always, at the end of their senior year, we’d have a pool party, and nobody every failed to show up to that!

Marcus Zeltsman

Interviewer (Judy Kerman): Where did you learn to play the tuba?

Marcus: Huh?

Judy: Where did you learn to play the tuba?

Marcus: It’s not a tuba; it’s a baritone. A tuba is the very big one: the bass.

Judy and Steph: Yeah.

Marcus: Very interesting ...! I started in school; we had an orchestra there [in Russia]. So, the first thing, I was playing the tuba – but it was a smaller instrument, a smaller tuba. So, yeah, I played one year as a tubist – tuba – and the second year I was changed to baritone.

Judy: Mm hmm. That was all the way back when you were in school – when you were a teenager.

Marcus: And when I came to America the first time, I used to have ... yeah, now I don’t remember how did I have it.

But in Canada, where we lived, I take a part in an orchestra. Every Sunday, we used to play out there in the park.

Judy: Oh yeah! On the bandstand?

Marcus: Yeah.

Judy: That’s nice.

Prelude 4

Joseph Zeltsman:

Happy birthday, dear daughter! Are you out with Mochi now, or what?

Happy New Year, dear girl!

Martha Zeltsman: This is Mom and Dad calling to wish you a happy Valentine's Day, and we'll talk to you later.

Joe: 'You mean, you're taping *us*?

Nancy: Mm hmm! (Joe laughs.)

Joe: Here ... these people: this man can get to be a hundred years old, and look at this picture and still ... enjoy. That's his family; he would never forget that!

Nancy: Mm hmm.

Joe: But you see the point that, [with] all these people, you can see ... you know exactly what they look like — even when (they're ...) some of the faces are turned away. If there's no reason, they're always shown in three-dimension.

It's something I didn't even *realize* until very recently. (I looked) I think I looked in the computer ... and suddenly it dawned on me: that photograph was three-dimensional!

Nancy: Hm hmm.

Joe: So ...

Prelude 2

Martha

This is Nancy Zeltsman's mother! We heard the National [Public] Radio interview about Marimolin, and I thought it was very nicely done. Love to you. Bye bye.

Lyle Mays

Nancy, this is Lyle. What a *great* letter! 'Hippest letter I've ever gotten in my life! I've got to read it a few dozen more times.

Oh! We're going to be on The Tonight Show [on] Monday night! [So] watch The Tonight Show: Jay Leno, the Pat Metheny Group ... odd as that sounds! Well, I'll talk to you... I can't say everything I want to say in a phone message, so – bye bye.

Ian Finkel

Yeah, hi! This is Ian, and I guess we'll speak later. Sorry we couldn't get together. I've been traveling all around — you know, playing — and I'll speak to you later on.

Gunther Schuller

Yeah, Nancy, it's me, Gunther. Ahh ... we haven't talked [in] a long time. I've been away a lot this summer.

Anyway, give me a ring one of these days. We can just plan a little get together. You can tell me more about the level of this commission; okay?

I think I met someone in Mexico ... he said he was a big marimba fan, and loves the big five-octave marimba, and all that. Alright. Hope all is well.

Prelude 5

Steve Mackey on Mochi

Hi Nanc! This is Steve here. Mochi and I are coming back from seeing Dr. Garuba. Mainly, we just wanted to get our nails clipped and buy some supplies.

But I asked him about how — you know, you mentioned this one time, and I've noticed it a lot, but — his back leg: he lifts up and he kind of doesn't put it down right? You know, he puts it down on his toe, instead of on the pad?

And, Dr. Garuba said that's very common among diabetic dogs ... that it's actually a neurological thing, because ... he just doesn't quite know where his feet are.

That's related to the diabetes, and there's nothing, really, we can do. The best thing we can do is keep giving him the vitamins that have a lot of B vitamins in there, and that's good for the brain: dog-brain. But that's all we can do.

Anyway, I thought I'd give you the report. Otherwise, everything's fine. He does that, you know, a little bit — especially in the snow ...

Prelude 8

Gunther Schuller

I have never written a note that I did not hear in me. And I'm not a Beethoven, and I'm not a Bach, or a Mozart or anything like that ... maybe. (He chuckles softly. Audience laughs!)

But! I have heard every note and I cannot write anything until I hear it in me. And then come all those inspirations and imaginations and what one has learned.

In my case, everything that will appear in the end in the notation: dynamics, instrumentation ... everything is there in that moment when I write that note.

If I died, and someone saw my manuscript, they would be able to make a full score from that — because every detail that's needed in the final notation — [like] slurs, everything — is there. I couldn't write it otherwise. It's also like when I was a horn player in the Metropolitan Opera and New York Philharmonic, I could not *play* the note until I knew what the dynamic was; I didn't know what to do with my lips ... or the amount of air.

Louis Andriessen

Yah, I remember the music that I've heard: my own music, and a lot of great composers we all love: whatever – you can imagine. And a lot of jazz, of course, because it is in the most 'receptable'? (is that a word?) time of your life (that you take in a lot) ...

Interviewer: 'Impressionable.'

Louis: So, we have from ten to 20 [years of age]. It's a very important period for what you start understanding. You build your character; also in music, I think.

So that is all running around all the time. And in the dreams – right?; you talked about the dreams – I have the most *crazy* dreams about the concerts! (He laughs ...) And about instruments! And about going outside, and then ... plus, see, there's only *grass*, and there's *water*, and then we have to perform there. It continues all the time! So that is part of my inner ear, I would say.

But your question is [about] precisely the way I feel ... that the idea of a piece is just ... a large object. And whatever kind of object it may be ... yah, it is *sound*. It's more than sound; it's *color*. Very evident: its *length*; its measure of ... I won't say 'aggressiveness,' but ... [Louis asks Gunther to help translate a word from Dutch or German]

Gunther: Uh ... Conviction.

Louis: *Conviction*. That's a very good word. That is also what is part of ... this large vision. I like to call them 'visions.'