

# THRENODY ENSEMBLE

Dave Cerf and Erik Hoversten have been collaborating since they were three-years-old. Over the past 25 years, the tools of this collaboration have changed from Legos and action figures to musical instruments and computers. But apart from this, little has changed.

They started Threnody Ensemble in 1997, and began collaborating with cellist Dominique Davison who had played in Erik's other band, A Minor Forest. With producer Brian Paulson, they recorded the album *Timbre Hollow* over the next several years. As a part of this process, the trio was expanded to include cellist Amy Domingues as well as other musicians playing piano, contrabass, clarinet, and percussion. *Timbre Hollow* was released by the New Albion label in 2000.

In both recorded and live incarnations, Threnody Ensemble's identity is fluid. Though the group's material was originally based around the interaction between two acoustic guitars and a cello, more recent works have eliminated this structure entirely. Today, Dave and Erik collaborate with a variety of musicians from disparate musical traditions and assemble different groups for each tour or project.

It is difficult to determine how these former rock musicians playing so-called experimental music and recording for a classical music label fit into today's music scene. Strictly speaking, Threnody Ensemble's music is neither "classical" nor "popular." It is both composed and improvised, acoustic and computer-generated. Threnody Ensemble fuses elements of non-Western musical traditions with their own contemporary compositions to create new hybrid forms. In combining musical traditions, the aims are both aesthetic and conceptual. In part, the intent is to complicate lazy notions of musical identity and authenticity.

The Ensemble's core members come from diverse musical backgrounds. Erik studied ethnomusicology and composition at the University of California, Berkeley, focusing on Javanese, Balinese, Korean, Indian, and Ghanaian traditions. He played in the noted San Francisco avant-rock band A Minor Forest from 1993-1998. He is now teaching and studying at the University of California, San Diego where he is pursuing a PhD in Music.

Dave studied West African, Indonesian, and Indian musics at California Institute for the Arts. He was a member of the Washington D.C. based group Lorelei and has played in numerous heavy metal bands. In addition to his musical activities, Dave is active in photography, film and video, and radio drama.

Amy Domingues began cello studies at 9. While classically trained, she has explored other means of sonic expression in bands such as Telegraph Melts and the All Scars. A frequent studio musician, she appeared on 6 albums in 2001 by the bands Fugazi, Ted Leo/Pharmacists, Dead Meadow, Edith Frost, Jenny Toomey, and Beauty Pill. She recently completed work in the studio for Mary Timony's forthcoming solo record and is currently collaborating with Brendan Canty (Fugazi) and Jerry Busher (Allscars) under the name Garland of Hours. She has worked with Threnody Ensemble since 1998.

Dominique has performed in orchestras since childhood. She played bass in the punk band Spitboy and later She played cello in A Minor Forest and New York's 33.3. She is an architect in New Haven, Connecticut.