Was ist doch ein Lebendiges für ein köstliches, herrliches Ding! ...wie wahr, wie seiend!

("A living creature/being is such an exquisite, magnificent thing! ... how true, how existent!")

-- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

for Maestro Gene Eiden

Kevin Ernste
Notes on Seiend

The title, *Seiend* ("Being") is a somewhat unused German participle found primarily in philosophical writings, referring to the 'true and honest self', a life lived without pretenses or embellishments. It is also an acronym for "Eidens" and is dedicated to my first music teacher, Gene Eiden, and through Gene to his wife Francis whose support made Gene’s seemingly unending generosity possible. In *Seiend*, the letters of the title and Gene’s last name are treated as musical notes—S (Es or the note E-flat), E, I (from solfege "Ti" or B-natural), and D—reordered and shifted to form the thematic and harmonic material of the music.

The staged performance also contains several symbolic references to Mr. Eiden. First, a trumpet soloist is isolated from the quintet and appears front-of-stage throughout the work. The soloist turns, at times, to play with the quartet and even sits facing them at one point, acting as their "director". In this seated section of the piece, the music echoes J.S. Bach’s *Bist du Bei Mir* ("Be Thou With Me"; original melody by Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel), a piece that I learned through Gene and one that inspired me to ask him about learning to compose music. In the final coda of *Seiend*, the soloist stands once again to face the audience, reverently performing "Taps" within a swirling fanfare of electronically generated trumpets, a humble tribute to Mr. Eiden, whose ongoing performances with bands big and small as well as for parades, funerals, and other ceremonies remind us that music making is, at its best, a supreme act of human generosity.

*Seiend*’s meaning and linguistic participle are shared (in Greek) with Iannis Xenakis’s title for *Eonta* (brass ensemble and piano). There are several connections to that piece beyond the close instrumentation, perhaps most notably a quasi-quotation, extracted from a rather fleeting but striking moment in *Eonta* that, I suspect, simply falls out of Xenakis’ complex system of organization. A re-imagination of this passage appears in *Seiend* as a trio and fanfare at Letter B.

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*Seiend* for brass quintet and electronics was premiered on May 6th of this year at Barnes Hall on the Cornell University campus in Ithaca NY. The piece was performed by Austrian brass quintet *Ensemble Paris-Lodron* of Salzburg who commissioned the work. Perhaps fittingly for Mr. Eiden, the premiere performance was given in full lederhosen!
\[ \text{A} \downarrow = \text{ca. 60} \]

turn and face the ensemble

\[ \text{Bell down} \rightarrow \text{gradually raise bell} \]

slowly turn to join pt B and the

\[ \text{Cuivre} \text{ (verbr)} \]

\[ \text{B} \downarrow = \text{ca. 66} \quad \text{With a sudden fanfare} \]

\[ \text{On mic} \]

\[ \text{On mic} \]

\[ \text{Feedback delay lines, accumulating streams} \]

* Swing bell from side to side at the moment and direction indicated by the arrow
* Improvise using these pitches and motives as well as any materials from the preceding 6 measures (Letter B).

Obey strict beats according to the conductor but without regard for any particular meter.

** Staccato, pulsing from slow to fast and back to slow.
I Slow and unduating, legato phrases; enter at will in given order

8

C Tpt.

C Tpt.

Hn.

Tbn.

Tba.

Elec.

20 x

return to selected position

begin freely

I Slow and unduating, legato phrases; enter at will in given order

Elec.

("A major" sustaining music gradually becomes tape)

\[ \frac{4}{4} \]

\( \rightarrow \)

\( \frac{4}{4} \)

\( \rightarrow \)

long

standing

(lip bend)

ca. 54

ca. 54

\( \rightarrow \)