ROGER REYNOLDS the imagE-imAge set

1	imAge/piano	6:53	7	imagE/viola		7:14
	Yuji Takahashi, piano			John Pickford Richards, viola		
2	imagE/piano	3: <mark>36</mark>	8	imAge/viola		7:01
	Eric Huebner, piano			Mark Menzies,	viola	
3	imAge/contrabass	6: <mark>50</mark>	9	imagE/flute		8:06
4	imagE/contrabass	4:40	10	imAge/flute		6:19
	Mark Dresser, contrabass			Rachel Beetz, fl	ute	
5	imAge/guitar	8:25	11	imagE/cello		4:46
6	imagE/guitar	6:40	12	imAge/cello		4:31
	Pablo Gómez, guitar	Alexis Descharmes, cello				

TOTAL TIME: 1:15:01

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ROGER REYNOLDS



SOLO WORKS FOR FLUTE, VIOLA, CELLO, CONTRABASS, PIANO, AND GUITAR



the imagE-imAge set

by Michael Boyd

Roger Reynolds has, for more than five decades, created a diverse and distinctive body of music that creatively and uniquely amalgamates aspects of American experimental, European avant-garde, and Asian music. His highly innovative approach to compositional design is realized across myriad facets of his work, including text setting, spatialization, the design of formal structures, the use of technology, and the employment of transformational procedures for various sonic parameters. Reynolds's music trends toward expansive durations, and thus, over the course of his career, he has employed a variety of formal strategies to give his music dynamic structural shapes. Indeed, his music is most typically characterized by a multilevel architecture that expresses and reflects a strong conceptual background.

The composer refers to a work's conceptual source as its *impetus*, noting that it is "the concentrated, radiant essence out of which the whole can spring and to which, once composition has begun, the evolving whole is continuously made responsive, even responsible". Reynolds's ideas are often initiated by various extramusical sources, including poetry and prose texts, visual art, and broader conceptual questions. A piece's impetus, to varying degrees, shapes that work's larger formal design as well as the details that inhabit that structure; the composer uses the terms *form*, *materials*, and *method*, to describe the interplay of a composition's macro and micro details. Reynolds describes the "bidirectional" nature of a work's impetus, writing that "[t]he impetus acts, from formal heights, to guide the coherence of the whole while simultaneously driving the integrity of the accumulating detail".²

Reynolds has gravitated to forms characterized by logarithmic proportions since 1970, primarily because change in a logarithmic series is dynamic and therefore an active, controllable element. In a work featuring logarithmic formal proportions, section lengths expand and contract by increasing and decreasing amounts, thereby

(MA, music theory and history). His music has been performed throughout the United States in a variety of large and small venues. He has published analytic essays on Reynolds's music in *Tempo* and *Notes*, as well as an article discussing his own installation work in *Perspectives of New Music*. His review essays have appeared in *Computer Music Journal, Popular Music & Society*, and *American Music*. Boyd is on the faculty at Chatham University and is co-director and trombonist for the Bay Players Experimental Music Collective.

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JACK Quartet (www.jackquartet.com), which closely works with composers such as Helmut Lachenmann, György Kurtág, and Wolfgang Rihm. The quartet has appeared at the Library of Congress, Wigmore Hall, the Venice Biennale, and the Donaueschingen Festival. Richards has performed as a soloist with the Pasadena Symphony, Armenian Philharmonic, Wordless Music Orchestra, Ossia New Music, and with the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra. He holds degrees from the Interlochen Arts Academy and the Eastman School of Music where his primary teachers were David Holland and John Graham.

A pianist with over 100 Japanese releases to his credit, Yuji Takahashi (born September 21, 1938) first attracted attention as an avant-garde composer in the early 1960s while a member of the New Directions group along with Toshi Ichiyanagi and Kenji Kobayashi. After premiering lannis Xenakis's Herma, a piano composition dedicated to him, Takahashi studied stochastic music under Xenakis between 1963 and 1966. After completing his studies, Takahashi focused his energies largely on composing, working with a variety of forms including orchestral, operatic, improvisational, and even pop music. In 1978, he returned to performing and organized the Suigyu Band to play Asian protest songs. He recorded his own work in addition to compositions by John Cage, Earle Brown, Roger Reynolds, Toru Takemitsu, and Iannis Xenakis. For the Denon label, he released a number of recordings by Bach and Satie. Takahashi has worked with a number of collaborators throughout his career. including John Zorn, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Musica Elettronica Viva, Ned Rothenberg, and Carl Stone. Despite the length and breadth of his back catalog, it took over three decades before his own music was released on an American label - Finger Light on Tzadik Records (1995).

AUTHOR OF THE LINER NOTES

Michael Boyd is a composer, scholar, and experimental improviser who holds graduate degrees from the University of Maryland (DMA, composition) and SUNY Stony Brook

making that musical parameter potentially more impactful. Though he used such configurations for more than two decades to the near exclusion of other designs, he has notably approached formal structure more flexibly since the mid-1990s. Indeed, in recent years one finds that some compositions feature rigorously determined proportions while others have a more loosely established structure.³

Following this trend toward diversity, Reynolds's *imAgE*/ Series (2007-2015) approaches the idea of broader formal structure in a compelling manner that is unique within his creative output. The series, as represented on this album, features six pairs of comparatively short, related works for several solo instruments: piano, contrabass, guitar, viola, flute, and cello. Each pair is comprised of a piece called *imagE*/ and another called *imAge*/, both composed for the same instrument. The composer notes that in this configuration "*imagE*/... is 'evocative'. Concerned with symmetry, it is more lyrical, continuous, even tender. *imAge*/... is 'articulate' and sectional, tending towards assertion, and variety". ⁴ Thus the "evocative/articulate" opposition and its formal implications drive this series of pieces conceptually.

Ideational oppositions are a type of impetus regularly used by Reynolds. In *The Palace* (1978-80, baritone and computer-generated sound), for example, the composer explored notions of active and reflective authority, drawn from his reading of the Jorge Luis Borges poem of the same title, through contrasting vocal and electroacoustic gestures, text setting and fragmentation, and formal design. *Process and Passion* (2002, violin, cello, and computer-processed sound), inspired by Aeschylus's *Orestia*, is another such work that explores ideas of process and passion through variously oppositional, yet complementary musical gestures. In these works, conceptually and musically contrasting materials help to define both clear and blurred sectional boundaries, thereby giving rise to each work's larger form.

The palpability of formal borders is indeed the core conceptual – and structural – opposition of the *imAgE/* Series. Noting that in some cases structural divisions may be important to a composer's creative process but not audibly prominent to a listener, Reynolds identifies in his writings three possible scenarios surrounding one's ability to

perceive sectional boundaries: "a section can be unambiguous, virtually self-evident; it may be suspected but remain indistinct and/or uncertain; it may function only subliminally". The composer also describes "domains," which, depending on one's perspective, might be contrasting or complimentary to his notion of sections: "a locus of characteristics that is strong at its center and gradually loses cohesive force as it radiates outwards". 8

The *imAgE*/ Series makes Reynolds's more abstract, organizational ideas about musical form concrete. The *imAge*/ ("A") pieces are characterized by discrete, largely "unambiguous" sections that contain two or more types of highly distinctive material. By contrast, the *imagE*/ ("E") pieces actively avoid perceptible internal boundaries, instead containing more continuous evolutionary trends that span the entirety of a composition. To provide a sense of the nature and dimensionality of the series, three pairs of works, those for piano, contrabass, and cello, will be discussed in detail in these notes. Each piece on this recording is remarkably performed by the individual for whom it was written; every performance is expertly executed and demonstrates an extreme sensitivity to the intricate nature of Reynolds's music.

imAge/piano is comprised of the alternation between two basic textures. The first, heard at the work's outset, is characterized by "a series of forceful, brittle chords across extreme register changes" that are articulated in an irregular rhythmic fashion. Most appearances of this texture are comprised of a few chords that are heard over the course of one or two measures. The second texture, which is heard for much longer durations, is a continuous, rhythmically lilting gesture that employs a "repeated sequence of close-position harmonies, scanned in different ways, first by chords, and in a second pass, arpeggiated". This material, which often highlights half-step dyads in a quasi-melodic manner, is externally homogenous, though internally active and mobile, and is also characterized by a more consistent set of pitch classes and a roughly three-or four-octave range. Over the course of the composition, these two broader texture-types alternate, typically between shorter soundings of the chord-based gesture and longer spans of the lilting, continuous texture. Each appearance of the latter is some-

A passionate interpreter of the music of our time, Huebner has premiered countless new works, including *imAge/piano*, *imagE/piano*, and *Piano Etudes: Book I (integral performance)*, by Roger Reynolds. Huebner has twice been a featured recitalist at the Ojai Festival in California, has performed on the Monday Evening Concerts series in Los Angeles, the Carlsbad Music Festival, and Piano Spheres. He has also appeared with numerous contemporary music ensembles, including the International Contemporary Ensemble, Talea, New York New Music Ensemble, Manhattan Sinfonietta, So Percussion, and the American Modern Ensemble. Huebner's performances have been broadcast on public and private radio stations around the world.

Residing in the United States since 1991, **Mark Menzies** (https://directory.calarts.edu/node/1780) has established an important, worldwide reputation as a violist and violinist. A *Los Angeles Times* review calls him an 'extraordinary musician' and a 'riveting violinist'. As a viola and violin virtuoso, chamber musician, and conductor, Menzies has performed in Europe, Brazil, Mexico, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and across the United States, including a series of appearances at New York's Carnegie Hall.

An advocate of contemporary music, Menzies has developed a considerable reputation as a chamber music artist; he currently performs in the Formalist Quartet, now in its ninth season. His discography includes a forthcoming release of the complete quartets by Christian Wolff. A significant number of Menzies's recordings are premiere performances: Michael Finnissy's ...above earth's shadow; Roger Reynolds's Process and Passion; and Barry Schrader's Fallen Sparrow. A Viola and violin professor at the California Institute of the Arts, Mark Menzies has designed and curated CalArts concerts at Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theatre, which is part of the Disney Hall complex.

Violist **John Pickford Richards** has earned a reputation for performing new and unusual music around the world. He is a founding member of the Alarm Will Sound ensemble. While there, he worked closely with composers such as John Adams, Meredith Monk, and Steve Reich and performed at venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and as part of the Holland Festival. Richards is currently the violist of the

Today, he regularly collaborates with IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique) and the French Embassy in Washington, DC for the Contemporary Music Series of La Maison Française. A dedicatee of some fifty contemporary works, concertante and solo alike, Alexis Descharmes's discography consists of some twenty recordings, in solo or with the aforementioned ensembles with which he has appeared at numerous festivals in some thirty countries. He joined the Orchestra of the Paris National Opera in 2006 and the NGA New Music Ensemble (Washington, DC) in 2010. Descharmes recorded a double album including the complete work for the cello by Roger Reynolds, for Mode Records in 2014.

Decidedly different and away from all conventions, **Pablo Gómez**'s (www.pablogomez.mx) repertoire includes various aesthetic tendencies: from classics of the 20th century and contemporary pieces to works written expressly for him by renowned Mexican and international composers. His repertoire includes solo guitar; electroacoustic music; duets with vocalist, percussion, and violin; and concerts with chamber ensembles and orchestras. His musical diversity has led to international concert performances in the United States, Sweden, France, London, Germany, Austria, Spain, Canada, Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, and Iceland. Gómez has shared the stage with world-class performers such as Susan Narucki, Christophe Desjardins, Steve Schick, and Magnus Andersson, soloed with several professional orchestras, and participated in various American and European ensembles. In 2001, he released his first CD *Tañendo Recio*, under the Quindecim label.

Pianist **Eric Huebner** (www.erichuebner.com) has drawn worldwide acclaim for his performances of new and traditional music since making his debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at age 17. In 2012, he was appointed pianist of the New York Philharmonic. That same year, Huebner gave the New York premiere of Elliott Carter's *Two Controversies and a Conversation* for piano, percussion, and chamber orchestra with musicians of the New York Philharmonic. He has collaborated with conductor David Robertson and was a member of Antares, a quartet that took first prize in the 2002 Concert Artists Guild International Competition.

what varied, focusing on different sets of pitch-classes and rhythmic figures. Notably, the work concludes with the longest chordal section and shortest rhythmically active section, essentially reversing the formal trend established throughout the piece.

imagE/piano is characterized by a florid, undulating texture that smoothly transitions from moments of greater and lesser density, and traverses nearly the entire range of the piano. This work is a "montage of quotes from [Reynolds's] earliest keyboard work, Epigram and Evolution (1960), and explosive figuration from the larger solo piano piece Variation (1988)". 11 Arc-shaped pitch contours comprise both localized and extended gestures. The piece begins with density fluctuations, transitions to sparser moments that are followed by an extended state of high density, and finally concludes with sweeping, expansive gestures that traverse the instrument's range multiple times. The changes that occur within the piece arise gradually and organically, making the larger form more characteristic of Reynolds's notion of "domains" rather than "sections." Particularly when compared with imAge/piano, this composition, though projecting clear global trends, does not exhibit perceptible sectionality. Changes within the piece do not occur suddenly but arise subtly and accumulate over time.

imAge/contrabass features a "forceful gesture involving rapid up and down sweeps across the instrument's open strings...[t]his gesture occurs, at first at evenly spaced intervals, initiating each new phrase, and then, towards the end of the piece, in less predictable forms". 12 Phrases are generally populated by two types of material: single tones, often harmonics, that are played on specific strings and registrally confined, oscillatory gestures that alternate between two or more pitch-classes. Glissandi are gradually introduced into both – connecting tones in the oscillatory passages and moving upward from the single tones. As the piece unfolds, glissandi are employed with less frequency, though those that are used are much more extended in duration and extended in range. Both gestures then intensify – the single tones mutate into chromatic, highly rhythmic figures while the oscillatory material becomes confined in register. Toward the composition's end, the open string sweeps heard throughout the composition as a sort of structural punctuation, are expanded. In the final moments of

the piece, this gesture incorporates new pitch-classes and glissandi, and is also heard for a longer duration. The piece's sectional boundaries are thus defined by the ways that its core gestures are treated by Reynolds and demarcated by the appearance of the open string sweeps. Initially the two primary melodic gestures are presented discretely. These gestures are then variously transformed, leading to the composition's end, which is largely comprised of an expansion of the open string material.

imagE/contrabass is comprised of a series of connected, sustained tones that emphasize half-steps and are broadly chromatic. Employing pitches that were played pizzicato in imAge/contrabass, one mostly hears "harmonically smooth, lyrical voice-leadings" bowed in the instrument's upper register. The piece features a high proportion of harmonics and a number of octave or multi-octave shifts in register. The composition begins in a relatively placid state, transitions to a period of slightly greater activity, and gradually returns to a more serene condition. This global transformation is at least in part linked with glissandi, which are introduced gradually and are more prominently featured in denser areas within the piece. As with the "E" piano work, the shift in character within this piece is organic and evolutionary rather than clearly sectional. Whereas imAge/contrabass featured three distinctive and discrete gestures that each evolve according to individual trajectories, this composition is comprised of a singular gesture that is transformed over the course of the work.

imAge/cello unfolds in two large sections, each of which divides into two subsections of roughly equal length. In the first larger section one hears two basic oppositional gestures — loud, resonant chords and dyads that span a moderate two- to three-octave range and are sometimes paired with individual sustained tones; and soft multi-note, chromatic gestures that occupy either a narrow or very wide range. The former are specifically placed rhythmically and seem demonstrative, while the latter feel somewhat freer and fleeting. These two gestures are initially discrete, but become increasingly intermixed over the course of the composition's first section. In the work's second, shorter section, both gesture-types are played loudly, and the multi-note sweeps are highly metric. Further, the chord gesture becomes more

THE PERFORMERS

Flutist Rachel Beetz (www.rachelbeetzflute.com) performs music of the last century across Europe and North America. Beetz has been featured in the XI Festival Internacional de Música Nueva in Monterrey, Mexico, the Ojai Festival in California, Los Angeles's Monday Evening Concerts, the SoundSCAPE Festival in Maccagno, Italy, and as a guest artist/lecturer at Santa Clara University. Based in southern California, she frequently performs on the wasteLAnd concerts in Los Angeles and at events sponsored by San Diego New Music. She is a member of the duo Plus/Minus with percussionist Dustin Donahue and is a co-founder of the performance art project Autoduplicity with cellist Jennifer Bewerse. Working directly with composers, such as Rick Burkardt, Chaya Czernowin, Beat Furrer, Roger Reynolds, and Stuart Saunders Smith, Beetz often premieres new works for flute.

Mark Dresser (www.mark-dresser.com), born in 1952, is a Grammy nominated bass player, improviser, composer, and interdisciplinary collaborator. He has recorded over 130 CDs including nine CDs as composer/bandleader, three solo CDs, and a DVD. From 1985 to 1994, he was a member of Anthony Braxton's Quartet, which recorded nine CDs and was the subject of Graham Locke's book, Forces in Motion (Da Capo Press, 1988). He has also performed and recorded with Ray Anderson, Jane Ira Bloom, Tim Berne, Anthony Davis, Dave Douglas, Osvaldo Golijov, Gerry Hemingway, Bob Osertag, Joe Lovano, Roger Reynolds, Henry Threadgill, Dawn Upshaw, and John Zorn. Dresser's most recent and internationally acclaimed recording for jazz quintet, Nourishments (2013, Clean Feed Records) marks his re-immersion as a bandleader. Since 2007 he has been deeply involved in music education and telematic music performance (also known as teleconcerts or Internet concerts). He is Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego.

Cellist **Alexis Descharmes** (www.descharmes.com) was born in 1977 and trained at the Paris Conservatoire (classes of Michel Strauss and Philippe Muller). He has worked with the Ensemble Intercontemporain, Ensemble Alternance, and Ensemble Court-Circuit.

an appointment in the music department at the University of California, San Diego. His leadership there established it as an internationally recognized composition program and – paralleling Stanford, IRCAM, and MIT – a state of the art facility for computer music exploration. He has addressed the Western tradition with three symphonies, and four string quartets, works that have been performed internationally as well as in North America. He won early recognition with Fulbright, Guggenheim, NEA, and National Institute of Arts and Letters awards, and in 1989, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for a string orchestra composition, *Whispers Out of Time*, an extended work responding to John Ashbery's ambitious *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror*.

Reynolds is the author of three books and numerous journal articles. Of recent note is an extended essay in two parts, "The last word is: Imagination: a study of the spatial aspects of Edgard Varèse's work" published in *Perspectives of New Music* and *Leonardo*. In 2009, he was appointed University Professor, the first artist so honored by the University of California. His work has been featured at major festivals and is the subject of a special collection at The Library of Congress established in 1998. In 2014, the Sacher Foundation in Basel also added a collection of his manuscripts to its holdings.

Reynolds's nearly 100 compositions to date are published exclusively by the C.F. Peters Corporation, and several dozen CDs and DVDs of his work have been commercially released. Performances by the Philadelphia, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, BBC, and San Diego symphonies, among others, preceded the most recent large-scale work — george WASHINGTON — written in honor of our nation's first president. This work knits together Reynolds's career-long interest in orchestra, text, extended musical forms, intermedia, and computer spatialization of sound. His work embodies an American artistic idealism reflecting the influence of Varèse and Cage, and has also been compared with that of Boulez and Scelsi. Reynolds lives with his partner of 50 years, Karen, in a home overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

repetitive — a trend anticipated toward the end of the first section. In the first half of the second section, one hears a (non-exclusive) focus on the A-C# dyad, while in the second subsection, the D-F#-F trichord is repeated multiple times. In a manner similar to that found in *imAge/contrabass*, sectional boundaries are defined by how this piece's basic gestural material is employed. In this work's first section, oppositional materials initially alternate and then are intermixed, while in the second section, having been somewhat transformed, they are completely separated into two larger subsections.

imagE/cello begins with a series of gestures that integrate sustained tones and florid, sweeping passages, both of which largely emphasize rising and descending sequences. Unlike the music within the "A" pieces in this series, these two partially contrasting types of material are not discrete and are clearly interconnected. The two components of this gesture increasingly merge toward the middle of the composition; the more rapid, flurried moments fade out as the sustained tones speed up and become more rhythmically active. This increased activity subsides for the most part, almost as though some of the busyness has been filtered out, as the piece comes to its end. A few more animated moments are found at this point – these are notably more metric and demonstrative than those found at the beginning, reflecting the work's global transformation. As with the previously discussed "E" pieces, imagE/cello features a singular trajectory and a form that might be described by trends or processes rather than the discrete individual sections that populate the "A" works.

The other three pairs of compositions, for guitar, viola, and flute, are characterized by a similar global dynamic. Reynolds's *imAgE*/ Series, thus, expresses oppositional conceptual material in a different manner than found in his larger compositions. In prior pieces, contrasting ideas are used to structure a single work and are typically associated with different sections of a composition. In addition to representing some of the shortest works written by Reynolds, this series reimagines how an oppositional conceptual impetus might be realized musically by concentrating each idea into individual shorter works. This shift creates a structure that is essentially modular – one that

the listener can navigate in multiple ways. With six pairs of works on this compact disc, one could engage with single pieces, pairs of pieces, only "A" or only "E" works, the entire series, or any other combination. On a subsequent occasion one could, of course, return to the series and engage with it from an alternative perspective. Upon listening to the entire *imAgE/* Series, one is challenged to consider the core identity of the set as well as the various ways this identity is expressed by Reynolds through each pair of pieces. Indeed, one gets a strong sense of either sectional or organic, process-based form through the "A" and "E" works respectively, though the true nature of each is not fully apparent until their contrasting and thereby complementary counterpart is encountered.

Endnotes

- 1 Roger Reynolds. Form and Method. New York: Routledge, 2002: 8.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 For a more detailed consideration of Reynolds's use of form across his career, see Michael Boyd. "The Evolution of Form in the Music of Roger Reynolds (I)". *Tempo: A Quarterly Review of Modern Music.* January 2012 (66:259): 36–48.
- 4 Roger Reynolds. imAge/contrabass. New York: C. F. Peters, 2014.
- 5 See Michael Boyd. "The Evolution of Form in the Music of Roger Reynolds (II)". Tempo: A Quarterly Review of Modern Music. April 2012 (66:260): 34–49.
- 6 See Michael Boyd. "CD Review: Roger Reynolds's all known all white and Process and Passion", Computer Music Journal, Summer 2006 (30:2): 99–102.
- 7 Reynolds, Form and Method: 12.
- 8 Reynolds, Form and Method: 10.
- 9 Conversation with the composer.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.

THE COMPOSER

Roger Reynolds, Pulitzer Prize-winning American composer, is known for his capacity to integrate diverse ideas and resources, for the seamless blending of traditional musical sounds and those newly enabled by technology. It is also the case that his output ranges over an unusually wide range of forms, media and genres. In a conversation during the early 2000s, Graham Hayter, former director of promotion at his publisher, Peters Edition in London, observed that a large proportion of Reynolds's works was devoted to what might be called "occasion pieces", music created for particular events, venues, or performers. These works were often both extended in duration and complex in production. Hayter suggested that some shorter works that would be more straightforward to program might be useful. Shortly thereafter, the astonishing young French cellist, Alexis Descharmes, wrote requesting a short cello piece for a program he had conceived to mark his 30th birthday. Reynolds took the intersection of these two prompts as the impetus to begin a series of complementary solo works, one more dynamic and one more ruminative, what he calls the "imAqE/ Series".

As is probably the case with most composers, Reynolds's work — which now spans over half a century — proceeds on the basis of opportunity and interest, not so much as a planned campaign a promoter (e.g., Hayter) might conceive. From a more general perspective, his output has responded to texts of poetic (Beckett, Borges, Kundera, Stevens, Ashbery) or mythological (Aeschylus, Euripides) origins. His reputation has also been influenced by his "wizardry in sending music flying through space: whether vocal, instrumental, or computerized". This signature feature first appeared in the notationally innovative theater piece, *The Emperor of Ice-Cream* (1961-62).

While remaining based in his California coastal home in Del Mar, Reynolds continues to work in Europe, Latin America, and Asia. After completing studies in engineering and music at the University of Michigan, Reynolds spent seven years working out of the country with his partner, Karen. They returned to the US in 1969 when he accepted