



GULF STREAM

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## **GULF STREAM – and other jazzish music**

Edward Lee writes:

This is music which was originally created in the 1960s. None of it was ever recorded, with the exception of some live performances of *Gulf Stream*. Some years ago I used the possibilities offered by modern technology to realise the music as I would really like it to have been played or what I would have wished it to become.

However, at the time I was new to music technology, so there were inevitably technical weaknesses. So more recently, as my skill has advanced, I accepted the advice of my wife Frances and son Laurence that I should return to the recordings to do them greater justice. This is the first of several albums of that music.

When I came to remix this repertoire I realised that though an attraction for a live audience was its range and variety, I have also mostly found this to be a disadvantage. I find that most people like their music to fit into categories. I therefore decided carry out the remixing process by first grouping the pieces according to their style and influences.

My first love in music was bebop, which was my passion in the late 1950s. Then in the 1960s I started to move from my strictly jazz background to explore the then rapidly opening world of meetings between cultures, fusions and interplay of ideas. The basic pattern was however still a theme leading to extended improvisation. My aim here has therefore been to create the effect of a live group, in a studio, i.e. without an audience, but live, in the manner of many jazz albums.

In 1968 Terry Mortimer and I renewed our acquaintance musically, and found that we shared this open minded and expanding interest in a wide range of influences and most notably in the world of Rock.. This led to the formation of the group CMU. The development of the group until the breakup of the original line-up in 1971 is detailed at <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/music.php>

The present set of recordings are concerned with my own music in the period from 1966 until the CMU Leeds concert (available at <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/free-downloads/the-leeds-concert.php>).

### **The recordings**

#### **1: White Heather**

This piece began as a teaching medium for finger style guitar students in Cambridge. It then developed, linking idioms – in this case contemporary folk music and a Latin feel. It is meant to be warm and lyrical. Its title was dedicated to my wife, who I had just got to know. Both her parents were Scots, and the plant was traditionally felt to bring good luck. Anyone who remembers CMU will know that this became the first part of *Three Part Work*, but the piece still stands when heard out of that context.

Versions can also be heard at <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/free-downloads/the-leeds-concert.php> and <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/free-downloads/sounds-like-at-garnett-college.php> (Track 1) Notation and mp3 files of a MIDI version are available in the booklet *Gulf Stream* on sale at <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/shop/sheet-music.php>

## **2: East Road Trot**

East Road is in the centre of Cambridge, and was the easiest point of access to the Music Department of the then Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology, where I worked. Most of the pieces in the collection reflect my constant concern at that time with exploring ways of linking and making transitions between jazz and rock. Thus the first section is bouncy and light with a strong jazz feel. It suggested to me the lightness of various early jazz dances which were called some form of “trot” – of which we now only see the Foxtrot, that favourite of Ballroom dancers – a very sedate dance by contrast. This explodes into a heavy rocking section.

## **3: There was a Man**

Originally simply called *Slow Blues*, I changed the name when it was used to framework a poem by Edwin Webb. (a live performance of this can be heard at <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/free-downloads/sounds-like-at-garnett-college.php> – Track 6). The piece is still strongly in the jazz idiom but draws from across the styles – bebop, swing – even New Orleans jazz. There is also a touch of blues there. Notation and mp3 files of a MIDI version are available in the booklet *Gross Ideas* on sale at <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/shop/sheet-music.php>

## **4: A Straight Case of a Gas**

The title comes from James Gordon, who has always liked the piece. It was his comment on his first hearing. Like *East Road Trot* it contrasts lighter and heavy sections. But in this case the inspiration of the first section is a rather jazzy form of country music. A version can also be heard at: <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/free-downloads/cmu-at-the-tech.php>

## **5: Gulf Stream**

This has always been one of my most well received pieces. I think of it as the point at which my music developed from being jazz into something else. It draws on jazz, light rock, Brazilian music and even classical music. (The breaks are not meant to have a swing effect but to be straight and *marcato*, more as they might be played by symphony musicians). I always thought the piece was very simple, but I have been surprised by how much able musicians have been challenged to get its interpretation right. The title reflects its aim and mood – the Gulf Stream is a current which begins in the warm subtropical seas of the Gulf of Mexico and makes its way to Europe, warming and changing our climate. My mother-in-law (an Ayrshire woman) said that the current made it possible (at least for the hardy!) to swim in the sea during the spring – which would be quite dangerous in the colder waters further north.

Other versions of this can be heard at: <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/free-downloads/the-leeds-concert.php> ; <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/free-downloads/cmu-at-the-tech.php> and <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/free-downloads/sounds-like-at-garnett-college.php> (Track 4) Notation and mp3 files of a MIDI version are available in the booklet *Gulf Stream* on sale at <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/shop/sheet-music.php>

## 6: Bolero Blues

This was originally written when I was doing my Music degree at the beginning of the 60s, but at the end of the decade I still found it had plenty to offer as a vehicle. In fact, I still find it has mileage and continue to play it as a solo piano piece. The title indicates the inspiration, which is the Spanish dance so well-known through Ravel's orchestral piece. I was (and remain) fascinated by the interplay between the insistent, almost strutting triplets of the Spanish original and the underlying swing patterns of jazz.

Another version can be heard at <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/free-downloads/sounds-like-at-garnett-college.php> (Track 4). Notation and mp3 files of a MIDI version are available in the booklet *Gulf Stream* and in the booklet *Gross Ideas* both on sale at <http://www.elmvillagearts.co.uk/shop/sheet-music.php>

In deference to the (presumably disappearing ) race of jazz fans who are defensive of the purity of the form, I do not claim this to be jazz, but only "jazzish". And next there will be "rockish"!.....