

**Interview of Uri Caine and Mark Helias for Jazz and the Brandenburg Concertos,  
interviewed by Dan Ouellette, July 18, 2019**

- **Dan Ouellette** - The topic of the day is the Brandenburg Concerto. Why did you do the fifth [on the Proms 2018: The Brandenburg Project]?
- **Uri Caine** - The Swedish Chamber Orchestra decided to do a project where they chose composers that had to write to the same instrumentation, and [chose the Fifth for me] because the fifth had such a famous long cadenza for keyboard--or for harpsichord [when it was composed in 1721].
- **Mark Helias** - Harpsichord.
- **Uri Caine** - They said, "You take the fifth."

And so, the way that the fifth is built, the string orchestra is the group, and then, the solo is the keyboard, flute, and violin. And so, it's sort of like a contrast between the three soloists and the five--and then, the rest of the group.

A lot of the Brandenburg Concertos have that aspect--it's like the beginnings of the idea of the concerto, where you had the individual fighting against the group, and the group sort of punctuates what the individuals play, regurgitates it in different ways, comments on it. But, the soloists are the ones that are taking the ideas from the group and moving it forward. And it also, just from a dramatic point of view, gives the soloists like they're out there in the front. And the rest of the group is supporting them.

For me, when I first started getting into Bach as a teenager, the third Brandenburg was the one that I gravitated to because I just happened to get the score for that. Just the idea of having the notes in front of you and hearing it, trying to figure it out on the piano. I think, for a lot of people, that's how they get into Bach, especially if you're keyboard players. It's just all this information at your fingertips. And you start to go into it to see what's going on there, and that's when you start learning a lot.

- **Dan Ouellette** - How long did it take you as a youngster to navigate it and figure it out?
- **Uri Caine** - I mean, I wouldn't say I totally figured it out. But, I started to see these returning themes. How does he move G to D harmonically. How does he sometimes slow down the harmonic rhythms so they seem pretty stable? And other times, he'll make these really radical shifts that all of a sudden move into another area. There's a lot to study in his harmony because it sounds like it's going along, and then, something happens and you have to go through looking for those points in music. You start to try to uncover what the architecture is. Because there's a different type of architecture when you're listening to later classical music, which is much more based on sonata form, more contemporary music, which doesn't try to do those things. He's working within the system. But, he's just so amazing at dealing with it. There's a lot to study there.

- **Dan Ouellette** - When I told [Bob Danziger] I was going to be talking with you, he wrote me that your version is the most creative and innovative version of the fifth [he's heard].
- **Uri Caine** - I don't know. But, in terms of just [Bach] being an inspiration--I think for many musicians, especially once you start playing that music with other people--because that was another thing that really changed my mind. My job when I was in school was to be the pianist for the choir, and they did Bach's Mass in B minor, and, you know, when you're sitting there playing piano with this massive group of people singing, it's very dramatic, very emotional. Whenever I would have those types of experience, I would be like, wow, what is behind that. How is he doing that? And you start to go into the music.
- **Dan Ouellette** - What about you, Mark? You were saying to me that the Brandenburg Concerto was very important to you.
- **Mark Helias** - Very foundational for me. Yeah, as a double bass player I got to play, I think, almost all of them. The first one I played was the fifth, and that was in a stripped down group of just like a chamber group - one instrument per voice. This idea that the double bass or the bass line in Bach is the second melody or in most music that you listen to, [for example] you listen to the arias in the Don Giovanni by Mozart, the soprano and the double bass are really having a duet, and then, the inner voices are just spaghetti. That's my opinion, anyway. But, it is interesting how . . . the bass parts are phenomenal because they outline in a linear fashion, harmonic direction. Plus, it's totally contrapuntal and I've always been fascinated by counterpoint, the whole idea of voice against voice.

And just as a listener, just listening--before I got the scores and sort of plotting the counterpoint and the development--and also you remember that you're coming out of the binary form period. It's developing into sonata form. And these things--they're more contrapuntal pieces. They're not necessarily a sonata form. Although there might be implications of that. But, that period was transitional in the development of the sonata form. So, it's more like the renaissance, early Baroque, Baroque classical period. So, it's a very developmental period of time in terms of composing. [Bach] happened to be like a kind of heavyweight.

- **Uri Caine** - He was. He was a heavyweight.
- **Mark Helias** - So, a lot of it had to do with my fascination with counterpoint. And like I told you, when I was hanging out with Charles McPherson in New Haven when I was going to graduate school, he mentioned that, you know, like a big part of learning bebop for him was studying Bach from the aspects of linear construction. And I never completely made that hookup personally. But, I understand what he was talking about.
- **Dan Ouellette** - Yeah, interesting. One of the interviews we did was with Christian McBride, and he connects bebop with Bach.
- **Mark Helias** - Absolutely.

- **Uri Caine** - Especially with bass lines. A lot of walking bass lines that sort of outline harmony. I would also say one thing that, I mean, I remember really strongly when I was growing up was just the Pablo Casals version of the Brandenburg's that he made at the Marlboro Music Festival [in Vermont]. And there are sort of these live gigs where you hear him grunting, making a lot of noise while he's conducting. But, he's really trying to get this real rhythmic push. He really loves the syncopation in it. And, see, once people start playing the music that way, I think it becomes more interesting for, you know, improvising musicians that, see, it's not just this cold academic. I was shocked when people--I read that people thought of Bach that way. Because the way I was hearing him being played, let's say, even the Pablo Casals vibe of trying to make it earthy, or the Glen Gould vibe of trying to make it really swing but show all the voices very transparent. It's very hard to do that if you're just playing piano to have the third voice come out and get such control over it. But, it's very dramatic when you hear people playing music that way and when you put a lot of swing into, too.
- **Mark Helias** - Yeah, the recording that got me was the Karl Richter recording from the 70s. [note - this is the version on the Golden Record on the Voyager Spacecrafts]
- **Uri Caine** - Right. I know this.
- **Mark Helias** - Munich Baroque ensemble. I mean, it's very fast. The tempos are quite quick. And they're using modern instruments pretty much, and more than one double bass. They have two which is even more difficult than three. Maybe they have three. I'm not sure. Anyway, but the point is that that recording got me. Even though the tempos are quite brisk. The way the counterpoint is expressed is so clear, and the rhythmic feel of it is quite energetic and swinging, if you will. Yeah. I never got that idea of this cold, you know, sort of four square. Bach is all over the place.
- **Dan Ouellette** - But, it's classical music so, therefore, probably a lot of jazz players probably just say, "Okay, I'm going to go to the, you know, the titans of jazz, and that's where I'm going to . . ."
- **Mark Helias** - I don't understand that attitude. I mean, music's music to me. I was always interested in all kinds of music. And I never understood this sort of sectarian violence that occurs in the music world. I think we're all informed by all kinds of music.
- **Dan Ouellette** - My guess is [because] music schools have popped up everywhere--you know, there's a certain focus. And it's just like--you're in a jazz program, you're going to be focusing on jazz as opposed to seeing a bigger world. I would hope that that would be different in a music school.
- **Mark Helias** - I think it's gotten actually worse.
- **Dan Ouellette** - Really? How so?
- **Mark Helias** - I've had bass students enrolled in jazz departments that actually were not allowed to study with the classical teacher at the same school.

- **Dan Ouellette** - Really?
- **Mark Helias** - Yes. That's a fact. Okay? And I was trying to get my brain around this and talk to this administration. "It's absurd. What's wrong with you?" And you eschew a 300 year tradition of double bass playing in the western European tradition? Why? You know, it seems like when I was in school in the 70s before all this stuff got calcified--I was at Rutgers University in Livingston College. And I was cross registering to all the different music departments at the university, the three. So, I took, you know, traditional counterpoint and harmony at one place, musicology at another place, and then, some more experimental stuff at Livingston college.

You know, and with the--and the jazz guys were there too, [like] Kenny Baron . . . I got an incredible panoply of approaches to music, a Catholic approach, if you will, in a sense, universal.

- **Uri Caine** - Waltzing (laugh)
- **Mark Helias** - Yes. And so, I do have a real sort of negative reaction to this sort of institutionalized--you know, it's like what they did with European harmony. When they teach harmony, people forget that the Bach chorales, for example, are actually florid contrapuntal vocal works. They're not a series of chords being played. And that's the mistake that occurs when people are taught that way. So, Bach is at the center of so much misrepresentation in education, in my opinion, in terms of the way they teach harmony. And I had teachers that pointed that out and said, "No, that's not the way you're supposed to perceive that stuff. It's vocal music with independent voices even though you're playing at the piano in order to learn voice reading." Interesting.
- **Dan Ouellette** - My friend Bob said--are you guys familiar with the Brandenburg Concerto, the version played by Sones de Mexico?
- **Mark Helias** - No, I don't believe so.
- **Dan Ouellette** - He's big--he's referenced that to me before.
- **Mark Helias** - It's a chamber ensemble or a chamber orchestra?
- **Dan Ouellette** - You know, I don't--.
- **Uri Caine** - --It sounds like the sounds of Mexico--.
- **Mark Helias** - Yeah.
- **Dan Ouellette** - I don't know much about it. He's the expert on it. I'm the one who kind of like grabs you guys off the street, put you down with a microphone in front of you.

- **Uri Caine** - No, but I think there's a lot of different ways people interpret Bach because that's another aspect of his music that it's--you know, you can rearrange it and--.
- **Mark Helias** - --Well, it was meant to be played on different instruments--.
- **Uri Caine** - --Yeah.
- **Mark Helias** - It wasn't necessarily prescribed for one instrument. You know, that wasn't--the interesting thing is that nobody knows what it really sounded like back then. You know, the instruments were different, the string instruments were different - gut strings, et cetera.
- **Dan Ouellette** - --And the harpsichord--.
- **Mark Helias** - --Yeah. Some of the real arguments that--the real arguments that go on in terms of interpreting stuff--they have to be taken with a grain of salt in a way because it's--.
- **Uri Caine** - --They're very fierce arguments though--.
- **Mark Helias** - --Yeah. It's a lot of fierce arguments.
- **Uri Caine** - There's a lot of emotion.
- **Dan Ouellette** - Oh really?
- **Mark Helias** - Yeah. Most musicologists--.
- **Dan Ouellette** - --Wow--.
- **Uri Caine** - --"If you play it on the piano, no, Bach would never have sanctioned that." And I don't know. When you--the stories about Bach--he was a very strong willed person. I mean, he was sanctioned for leaving his job at the church because he wanted to go check out this new organ that somebody had built. And he tried to explain it to the town council, and they were like, "No, you left your job. You're not allowed to do that." And also the fact that his music was almost forgotten after he died. Even his sons--all his sons were musicians. Johann Christian Bach [note - his music found in Mexico from written music stored since the late 1700's and are part of the influence of Sonos de Mexico] was sort of made to transition into classical music and went to simplified music. He called him like the old professor. And Mendelssohn found his manuscripts in like 100 years later. And so, that idea that somehow people--I mean, he would have been forgotten.
- **Dan Ouellette** - And some people say that this, you know--hundreds of his compositions that were lost.
- **Uri Caine** - Probably because of that.
- **Mark Helias** - Who knows?

- **Uri Caine** - But, also--I just read this really crazy book about how Bach had one job where he had to write a cantata a week. He was in charge of teaching the young kids how to sing, and then, he had to make the church music. And then, he had another phase of his life where he just did instrumental music. And the theory is that he just took all the music that he wrote in one period and he just repurposed it for the second one, that he was constantly recycling his music. And another thing that I really like when I was doing--I did a version of the Goldberg variations.
- **Dan Ouellette** - Right.
- **Uri Caine** - And in his own way, he was trying to be the international guy. He had the Siciliano. He had Italian music as one of the variations. He had a French overture, French music with this really dotted rhythm. He sort of had these parodies, not in the sense of making fun of them, but imitations out of respect. The Scarlatti because of this crazy keyboard, one hand over another, which is not in a lot of his music necessarily. All of a sudden, it's there. Then, he even has a joke at the end. He combines--counterpoint genius - so he combines two drinking songs of the day that fit over the harmony of the theme. It would be like somebody saying, "Okay, think of two standards that will fit over *"All the Things You Are,"* and make it work as a canon." So, when the people would hear that, it's like, "Oh, it's a joke. It's like a party. The music is a party. Now, we're doing the party. We're drinking." He was very clever. He--if you look at him as a guy, this old fuddy-duddy, it misses the point. He was actually a very--he was thinking, trying to integrate all these different things.
- **Mark Helias** - I heard at one point that he was considered a conservative in his town.
- **Uri Caine** - Yeah, he was. Yeah, because music was already changing. I mean, there was a yearning for a less studied, academic approach, that you have a theme, and it has to become a fugue. His son, who sort of taught Mozart, inspired Mozart said let's just have music with melodies and nice accompaniments and doesn't have to get all complicated. Let's have it so--and the people enjoyed that. So, the style changed. And then, it comes around on itself because people like Mozart obviously are studying Bach because, in the middle of like a symphony, all of a sudden it starts getting into this real contrapuntal thing, a real fugue. It goes into a weird area, then back into classical music. They all did that.
- **Mark Helias** - Beethoven.
- **Uri Caine** - Beethoven loved Bach.
- **Mark Helias** - Beethoven's fifth . . . That's all--it's Bach.

## End of Part 1

## Beginning of Part 2

- **Uri Caine** - And there's a lot, you know, if you read Robert Schumann, he said, "Every day I play from the "Well Tempered Clavier." That was this thing that Bach wrote. Every key--he established tonality in that way, the tonal system that we have. He was like, "Oh, you can play it in C. You can play it in C sharp." That was a big leap right there. Not only did he endorse it, he showed people, "Hey man, I can play in any key." A lot of jazz musicians can relate to that.
- **Mark Helias** - But, he also--the idea of complex modulation.
- **Uri Caine** - Right. He--.
- **Mark Helias** - --Constantly chromatic modulation, which--.
- **Uri Caine** - --I like to study the harmonic because, you know, when I was doing some of these pieces, I would just say, "Imagine you're a jazz musician. You have to write out the chord for somebody and just give them a chord sheet, which would be like 200 measures." Then, you start to see there are certain like more stable areas. And he's giving you the theme or when he's ending the movement, where the harmony is very repetitious. And it's basically in a key. And then, the areas where he's jumping around, like in one measure he was in D. All of a sudden, he's in F. It's like, "Ooh." Study. How did he get to that? Because it's all the idea of fooling the ear to make it sound natural. And there's tricks that you learn, and that's when you start to realize that music is a language. But, it's also something that can be manipulated psychologically. And you test it. If I do it for two bars, is it better than if I do it for four bars? Or do I have to do it eight bars and repeat it? And then, they'll know that I'm in F. And Bach has it all covered. He can do it in one measure. He can do it in two beats. And that type of control, not to mention that when he is--you know, if he took any one of the fugues but said there's four voices--separate them out to see that it's--what each voice is doing, like in a string quartet where you can actually see it, rather than what's just going on in your fingers. And all of a sudden, you're seeing like what Mark is saying. It's sort of like vocal music. He's not thinking in terms of chords. He's thinking in terms of lines that create chords--.
- **Mark Helias** - --Yeah. The idea of using counterpoint to create moving progressive harmonies is unbelievable.
- **Uri Caine** - Right. And like Mark was saying, it's taught the opposite. When you teach harmony to beginning music students, you're always talking about the block. What is happening here? Okay, what is happening there? Without any sense of context.
- **Mark Helias** - And they also separate the two choruses as a counterpoint chorus and harmony chorus.
- **Uri Caine** - Right.

- **Mark Helias** - And I'm like--.
- **Dan Ouellette** - --There's two courses--?
- **Mark Helias** - --Yeah.
- **Uri Caine** - Yeah.
- **Mark Helias** - It's strange. You study harmony and counterpoint separately.
- **Uri Caine** - That's from a long time ago.
- **Mark Helias** - Yeah. That's--I mean, it's a classic, you know, example of like the western European mentality where we're really good at separating things out for analysis. But, we're not good at reintegrating them in our minds so that we get these discrete disciplines instead of . . . The idea of writing counterpoint and producing moving harmony is really the deal. That's one of the hardest things to do.
- **Uri Caine** - And yet, that was what Bach came from because Renaissance music is all that. It's just voices moving, let's say, within modes. And the harmony that's created with--it sounds--.
- **Mark Helias** - old school.
- **Uri Caine** - --Yeah. But, it sounds old fashioned to people that are coming into music with Bach because you have these types of like--in one of the pieces that I wrote for this thing--they wanted me to write something dealing with Gesualdo, who is a very chromatic Renaissance composer. And when you actually break down his chords, it's like Coltrane. He's going from a G minor to an E major. It's like--wow. I mean, that's sort of a weird move in that world. He wasn't thinking G minor, E major necessarily. He was thinking line and then an accompaniment line that just happened to hit E minor and it hits E major.
- **Mark Helias** - Also he wasn't dealing with bar lines in the same way and eight bar phrasing.
- **Uri Caine** - Right. It was the flow. And, in a way, when you look at it that way, the music--it's very beautiful that something can create something that just--and you're like, "What was that? How do you codify that?" And then, in a way, I think you don't have to codify it. Just do it on the day to day--just like pick up any Bach and say, "Oh, he's doing that? That's a good one. I'm going to use that." You know?
- **Dan Ouellette** - Yeah.
- **Uri Caine** - Because it's so vast that it's--rather than get hung up the way a lot of classical musicians and Baroque specialists--I've seen these arguments, and it's like, "You must be

kidding. Nobody cares about whether you use this bow or I'm using hair from the horse hair because I read in a treatise that Bach"--it's amazing.

- **Dan Ouellette** - He probably didn't worry. That wasn't a concern of his, was it?
- **Uri Caine** - I mean--.
- **Mark Helias** - --As far as--we don't know--.
- **Uri Caine** - --We don't have these concerns because there's a way of doing things. It would like if you come onto a gig, and you're saying, "You know, I don't feel it. Do this." And the guys in the group are like, "That's bullshit, man." You know, [you have to do it, but] pretty soon, people are following his way. It's like why not?
- **Dan Ouellette** - Yeah.
- **Mark Helias** - I think there's a certain fetishism that results in getting so precious about this stuff. We don't really know. That's the problem.
- **Uri Caine** - No.
- **Mark Helias** - Like I've been studying the Bach Partita in D minor for solo violin. And I'm learning it on the double bass as a study. But, I've also been listening to all these interpretations, you know, from about seven or eight different violinists. And it's fascinating. Like, you know, if they--if these two are arguing about the right way to do something and I listen to seven or eight modern violinists, you know 20th Century on, and some younger ones--and all the interpretations--this is the way they approach the sound and notes, just the tempos--oh my gosh.
- **Uri Caine** - Right. Or whether or not they should use rubato . . .
- **Mark Helias** - Yeah, yeah--.
- **Uri Caine** - --You know, just to be expressive by slowing down.
- **Mark Helias** - Like an Allemande means a walking tempo. Allemande means to--you know. And some of them play that very rubato, very sort of romantic, expressive.
- **Uri Caine** - That was an older style.
- **Mark Helias** - And then, you get Hilary Han who plays it really like a walking.
- **Uri Caine** - Right.
- **Mark Helias** - And it's kind of interesting to hear the differences. And some performances actually--immediately I was--the one that I liked the least was actually Heifetz. It sounds

overwrought. It's fast and crazy sounding. So, we're not talking about the Brandenburg as much though.

- **Dan Ouellette** - No, that's okay. We're talking about Bach. It seems really interesting. And, again, I don't know--I'm giving this guy Bob Danziger, you know, your interviews and stuff. And what he's going to do is help him into integrate--he teaches a class in the fall--to integrate everything that I've been collecting and he's been collecting. You know, like he's pretty good friends with John Clayton. John Clayton had a conversation on the phone that was, you know, opened windows up for him in terms of how to teach it.
- **Mark Helias** - --So, the underlying idea is the connection between Bach somehow and improvisation in jazz musicians or what? What's the--?
- **Dan Ouellette** - --I'm not quite sure. You know, he teaches at Cal State Monterey Bay, which is kind of like a--used to be--it was built on an old Army barracks and is close to the Monterey Jazz Festival. So, there's that connection. And what they're trying to do is they're trying to develop this music program and, you know, archive interviews like this and archive classes. I don't know if this class has ever been taught there. But, Bob's kind of an expert on Brandenburg Concerto. That's his thing. So, I think it's a jumping off point. But, all the other stuff that you're saying about Bach, I think, is really--.
- **Uri Caine** - --If he's interested, I could send him--I don't know if I have them all, but all the different pieces that other composers did in response and also how they dealt with that commission--.
- **Dan Ouellette** - --Really--?
- **Uri Caine** - --Because it became sort of a discussion. There's an English composer, basically just said, "I'm just going to take the instrumentation and write my own piece." And some people said, "That's great." But, [others said] "you missed the point." Then, other people are taking certain--like they'll take part of the music and write around the music. But, I mean, the thing that I got into doing was to actually try to recreate the form but always slipping. And so, there's sort of this always interrupting. So, you sort of hear Bach. But then, you always hear it form the part as if it's trying to get to the point. And then, at the end, it gets there, which some people like because they said, "Okay, that's another way of dealing with how the direction works in his music." But, other people said, "No, it's bullshit because, you know, you just"--it's like wrong note Bach. And Stravinsky, in his neoclassical period--that was his thing because he wanted to return to a certain objectivism. So, again, people are using Bach--is this image of sobriety, you know, not crazy *Rite of Spring*, not fucking blow everything up.
- **Uri Caine** - We're going to stick to the rule. You give me the rule, and then, I'll write within the rule. So, what he got from that was the rhythmic part of Bach because it's swinging, you know, and it has all the bass lines and--and then, he'll put in like a 3/8 measure, something sort of like--flipped it over and--but, you know, maybe--my thing is more coming out of acting because I'm really attracted to the rhythmic aspect of it because you really swing once you're-

-and we've all had that experience even when you're playing Bach and you're sort of, "Man this is so good. Ooh, this part is coming up." And it's like playing.

- **Dan Ouellette** - So, is this project that you're doing--is it--was it just done for a televised thing, or was it done--is there an album of it?
- **Uri Caine** - There will be.
- **Dan Ouellette** - There will be.
- **Uri Caine** - I mean, it was recorded--we recorded it two years ago. And I don't know why it took them so long. I actually just got that recording I sent two weeks ago. But, at the same time, they were organizing these tours with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra as opposed to playing New York, but Lincoln Center then. I heard--I wasn't involved in any of it. But, it was just, you know, these guys write to us and say, "Can you do these dates?" But, we did some European tours. And this summer, we played it at the Proms, which was good because we got to stay and practice. It was really the first time we could play all the pieces and you could hear all the six new pieces and the old pieces. They played the old piece, and then, they played the new piece.
- **Dan Ouellette** - No kidding.
- **Uri Caine** - Just to show. And it was a concert that lasted all day.
- **Dan Ouellette** - Wow.
- **Uri Caine** - So, it started like at three in the afternoon and it went until nine. And it was a lot of music. But, it was one of those things like in a festival where people sort of come together, and they're like--just the guy that played the fifth. I don't know if you've ever heard of this guy. He's an Iranian American guy named Mahan Esfahani. He's a mother fucker harpsichord player. He's a young guy. But, he was messing the orchestra up because he was so rhythmic and so swinging. And he was always--
- **Mark Helias** - --He played the fifth--?
- **Uri Caine** - --He played the fifth.
- **Mark Helias** - Yeah.
- **Uri Caine** - So, he's killing it.
- **Mark Helias** - You know the cadenza? It's incredible.
- **Dan Ouellette** - No.

- **Uri Caine** - The famous thing about the fifth is that there's--right before the end, there's this really long keyboard cadenza. Usually it's improvised but Bach wrote it all out. And it goes on for like four or five minutes, long time. And it's very hard to play, and it's also--gives you an idea of what his idea for a cadenza would be, just like--because cadenza--it's another one of these things in classical music that's so strange that that was the point where the performer could be free, do his thing. But, I think, especially by the time we get to Beethoven's time--you know, he would hear other people playing and go, "You know, that's terrible improvisation. I'm going to write it out for you," even though he would improvise. He would write out a version for the lesser people coming after him to play. And then, that becomes codified. And so, now, when we tell somebody, "Hey, it's a cadenza. Why don't you make up your cadenza?" "No, no, I could never do that. It's Beethoven." You know what I mean?
- **Dan Ouellette** - Yeah, sure. Yeah.
- **Uri Caine** - It's gotten so formalized. So--.
- **Mark Helias** - --Some people would write their own cadenza, they would compose their own cadenza and then play that.
- **Uri Caine** - --I had this discussion with Mahan. I said, "You know, why don't you go up and improvise it, man? You can play your ass off"--he's like, "Oh no."
- **Mark Helias** - But, what's interesting--that particular cadenza does--sounds great improvised.
- **Uri Caine** - It does.
- **Mark Helias** - And it's got these sort of metric modulations in it and later on this like--it slows down. Then, it speeds up to the reentry of the orchestra. And I remember listening--it's about 200 and some measures long. It's really long. And it was the first piece of chamber music I ever played. You know, I was an undergraduate. And this girl played--great harpsichord player. But, I was amazed at the structure of that cadenza and then the way the band comes in with (SINGING).
- **Uri Caine** - Because it has a lot of those elements, in other words.
- **Mark Helias** - Yeah.
- **Uri Caine** - It starts out. It sort of moves to this weird area.
- **Mark Helias** - It has all these diminished chords in it.
- **Uri Caine** - Then, it get mysterious. Then, he gets virtuosic where he's going (SINGING). You're expecting--okay, that's the set up. They're going to come in. Then, no.
- **Mark Helias** - Then, he takes another diversion.

- **Uri Caine** - It's deceptive cadence (unintelligible) you think, okay, it's going to be--and then, they come in. So, there's a lot of humor if you look at it that way when he's setting up expectations and then saying, "No, you thought I was going to end on that." And so many other composers stole those ideas.
- **Mark Helias** - You know, the one that--I got like strung out on number six.
- **Dan Ouellette** - Really?
- **Uri Caine** - That's a nice one, yeah.
- **Mark Helias** - In the recording, they only use violas. [Originally it was] viola da gamba's. And it was a special orchestration for that one. So, the Munich one, they only used, I think, violas and maybe some viola da gamba. But, it's a darker color because it doesn't have the high violin sound as much. You know? And there's a couple sections where he's got these contrapuntal things in number three that sound almost like a harmonica.
- **Uri Caine** - Right.
- **Mark Helias** - It's incredible how he has the two violins. And number three is amazing as well. Three and six, I got really deep into those two, in particular, for some reason.
- **Dan Ouellette** - Cool, cool.
- **Uri Caine** - The one with the trumpet solo--that was, again--.
- **Mark Helias** - That was William F. Buckley's favorite.
- **Uri Caine** - --Yeah. That was the theme music for the [television show] *Firing Line*.
- **Mark Helias** - *Firing Line*.
- **Uri Caine** - But, this guy--his response was he wrote this piece for this trumpet player, which is so high. And he's playing this small clarino trumpet. It's very hard to play. And every night, we would see this guy go out there and blow his brains out trying to keep--it was much harder than the Bach thing. Ulf Håkan Hardenberger - he's a great trumpet player. But, you know, that idea that you're sort of writing just to test the soloist because the guy--you know, he could be an arrogant guy. And all of a sudden, it's just like no, no, no. You're just like everyone else, man. You're struggling to play. And the player has to deal with that because he could say, "Man, the composer doesn't know how to write for trumpet." No, he totally knows how to write for trumpet because he's studying what Bach did and he's expecting you to do that.

End of Interview