

Roller Skating to Carla Bley
(Top Banana) (Acoustical Reality)
(A Shuffle)

Born Lovella May Borg in the there
where there is no
there

(Oakland, California) 1938

there is Carla Bley
Birdland cigarette girl at 17 (1955)
stuffed animal seller, photo taker. She said:

“I was the one who took a picture of you and your girl friend at the
table to commemorate your being there with someone who wasn’t
your wife usually...”

making customers “wait ’til the solo’s over”

now w/ Willow, New York lawn
festooned w/ a Steve Heller chain-link
dinosaur.

George Russell was recording her compositions
when she was 20 (1960, *Bent Eagle*)
& who knew? (Jimmy Giuffre, Paul Bley at least.)

This could all be music to which you’d roller skate.

Roller skating to *Lawns*.

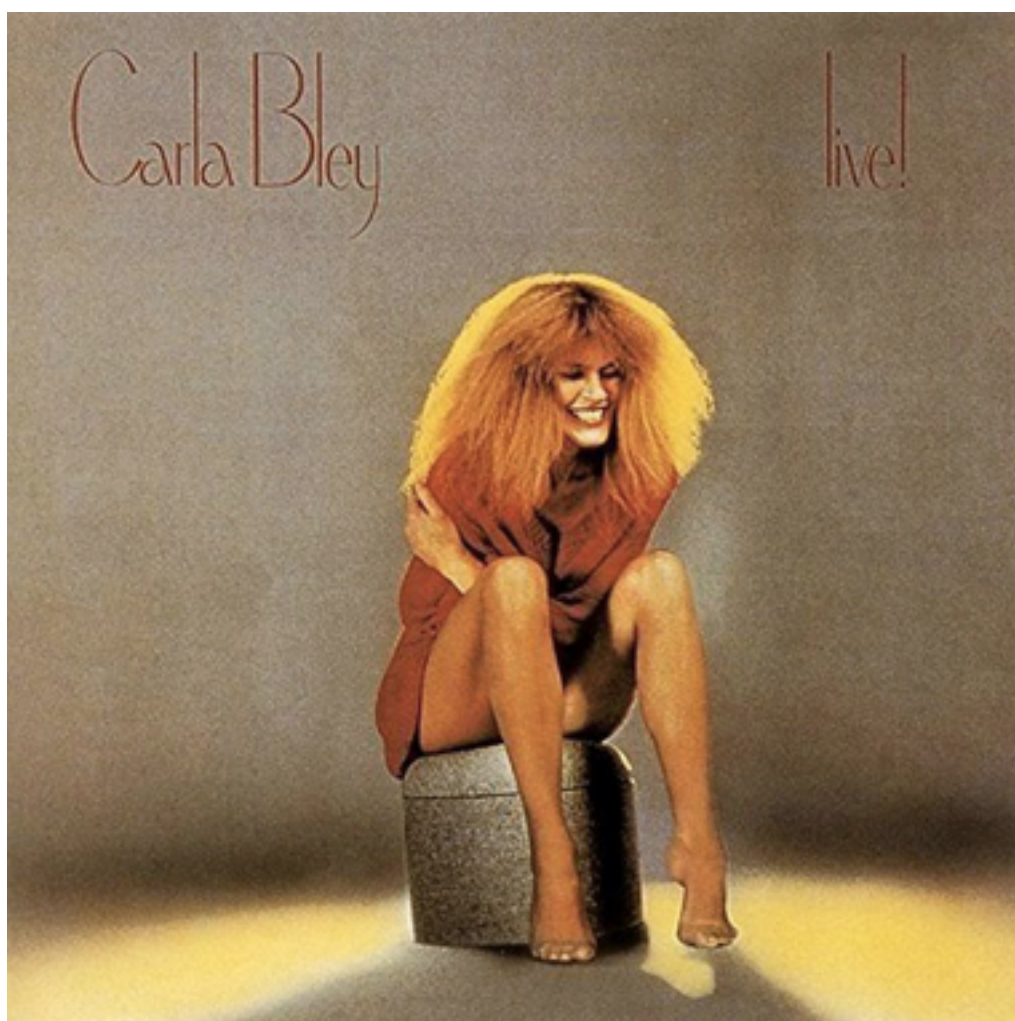
Roller skating to *Escalator Over the Hill*.

Roller skating to *A Genuine Tong Funeral. To Utviklingssang* (which
in Norwegian could be “Development Song.”)

In 1982 in Chicago, I was a 20 year old
Music Coordinator for WXFM, a brokered old FM station

licensed to Elmwood Park, a burb where I would buy Friday night liquor at age 17. A station with studios at 333 N. Michigan, right at Wacker Drive, right where the Magnificent Mile bends left & our studio view north could see green lights timed BING BING BING BING north to south & me on the graveyard playing 18 minutes & 45 seconds of *Kix* from *We Want Miles* & coming back Monday morning to report to trades on record rotations & what pops up but this provocative photo, composer seated on a hassock, smiling and mostly hair. *Carla Bley Live!* & inside find a *Blunt Object* and a Steve Slagle alto solo & an Earl McIntyre trombone solo both sound in their own way like horns crying & crying & Carla orchestrated it all nimbly adding organ accents knowing, as track II states:

The Lord Is Listenin' To Ya, Hallelujah!



On 1979's Musique Mecanique III it sounds like the record's stuck
the record's stuck
the record's stuck
the record's stuck
the record's stuck
the record's stuck
on Spotify
on Spotify
on Spotify
on Spotify.

Trombonist Roswell Rudd said:

“...she was on the crest as an orchestrator... getting to that Duke Ellington stage where she had the soloist in mind when she was writing... She was right up there with Mingus, and Ellington, and anyone who was orchestrating a soloist. The writing was kind of secondary to what they heard the soloist doing in the orchestral space. The acoustical reality of the performer came first.”

Carla Bley's acoustical reality
to which you could roller skate
as a Birdland cigarette girl
who could have invented selfies, so
she'd not miss another solo ever.

Jesús María and Other Spanish Strains for god's sake.

“I'm just a composer” she says “and I use jazz musicians because they are better. They play better, they are smarter and they can save your ass in a bad situation. If their music falls off the stands, they can make it up. A classical musician, a folk musician, or a rock & roll musician is pretty limited in what they can do to help out the leader. I need all the help I can get.”

Carla Bley is *The Lone Arranger*
playing a *Reactionary Tango*,
a right wing tango
regressive, counterrevolutionary tango,
a Joe Biden tango, die-hard, rigid, orthodox
tango that would situate our stiff
two-left-legged dance back

in the good 'old days, a Whiskey, Tango, Foxtrot
tango would put
hair on your chest.

An Oscar, Mike, Golf tango
to which one'd dance
w/ the commandant.

An Alfa, Romeo, Golf, Hotel tango
employed to prevent Zulu Zulu Zulu.

Carla Bley is that Lone Arranger
waving to the *Ladies in Mercedes*
passing by
hitting the musical breaks
while Steve Swallow stays on the top fifth
of the Douglas Fir neck

(incredibly thin, lightweight Western Cedar solidbody bass neck, tango.)

“The fifth string is a high C, and the string spacing is very close. The bass has a 36 scale but the neck is only slightly wider than a regular [4-string] Precision neck’ Steve notes. ‘This is an advantage, because I always play with a pick. A guy who plays with his fingers would find it really difficult, but I’m very comfortable with it. Hot Licks picks are made of heavy-gauge (.010) copper; notice scratch marks they’ve left on the body near the neck joint. The bass is strung with custom-made extra-long Labella stainless-steel round wound strings in soft gauge (.027, .040, .058, .080, .102)’. While Ken Parker was building Swallow’s bass, Larry Fishman of Fishman Transducers was at work on the electronics. The instrument has piezoelectronic transducers

built into the bridge saddles, and their inputs are mixed and buffed by an onboard preamp. Larry did all the work himself...”

We love Carla Bley for her love
of trombones.

Some say a trombone's
musical equivalent of
a bowel movement.

Some say that when the trombone
solo's over everyone comes back
from the bar, or flushes rather than
applauds, or applauds its end but
not The Lone Arranger. Not the
happy composer's composer.
Not she who'd roller skate her way
out of the Bay Area with a yet
unknown hankerin' for that beast
of all brass, that deepness of a tuba
but with the slide it can't manage.

Carla knew someone had to
find a proper sonic place
place in sound's cosmos
for Roswell Rudd and Earl
McIntyre to bottom out
this whole tentet stew
or nonetness

& yes it was Carla.
She of best composer hair since Beethoven.
("Bleythoven" Steve Swallow says
or "Count Bleysie.")

She of trombone solo after trombone solo

shaking the deep meat of us
over a churchified organ
an expression of the depths
of what we can no longer call "soul"
in polite company, but Whiskey Tango Foxtrot Carla's
an octogenarian saved by jazz musicians who can
find their way even without sheet music

because courage is improvisation

what's there in the gut besides desire
to have a most cunning artificer
call the shots? (The ones beside the dots Carla
pressed into paper. The string-pulling dots. The behind-the
curtain view dots. The dot matrix of the jazz mind in its holy jazz club as
church churchified self?)

Carlita, while we love Paolo Fresu
and are grateful the Lost Chords were found
and you & Steve playing *Duets* are sweet love
and commitment dotified, we'd still welcome
one last trombone trill
(if something that deep can trill)
one last trombone roll
and solo and foundation-rattling ramble
so we can roller skate away out of all our
limitations

the essence of our
Jazz attraction, no?

893. Postcards from the Pandemic (And Now, The Queen)
25 - Apr - 2020 Barbara Jean Walsh, Springfield, MA — Barbara Jean

I'm having a Carla Bley
Ramadan. (Not fasting
so much (no intoxicants
unless you count coffee
& Carla.) "Bleythoven"
Steve Swallow calls her
"but he loves her" you
might say. "And Now, The
Queen" Paul Bley might
play — "sparse impressionistic
harmony" as if she were the
lovechild of Erik Satie &
Ida Lupino.



IDA LUPINO

by Carla Bley

♩ = 112 G+

The musical score is written in G major and 4/4 time, with a tempo of 112 beats per minute. It features a variety of chords and melodic patterns across eight staves. The notation includes triplets, slurs, and a final double bar line.

Chords and notation visible in the score:

- G+
- A⁹/G
- Cmaj⁷/G
- C-(maj⁷)/G
- Gmaj⁷
- G

894. Postcards from the Pandemic (A Dark Card w/ Words)

27 - Apr - 2020 Jessie Lyle, Langley, WA — Jessie!

“A Genuine Tong Funeral”
Carla Bley called: “A
Dark Opera Without Words”
& only Carla could name
a funereal tune “Grave
Train” part of the opening
after “Shovels” and “The
Survivors.” & here is a misch-
ievous elegy for our time
recorded in 1967 by vibist
Gary Burton & Mr. Tong
somewhere near Hong Kong
didn’t know what hit him.



Sonetos De Cascadia 30-April-2020

“We have reached the stage, under the impulse of cultural populism, where we are incapable of measuring or acknowledging artistic merit except in terms of commercial success. We don’t distinguish between the committed, passionate audience and the trend-seeking yuppie audience. We just count bodies and measure sales.”

- Charles Wuorinen

Carla Bley’s Blunt Joy

“Music is a cruel master” says Carla, searching for the perfect eraser memories of Tony Williams slogging up her five flights of New York City stairs for a ballad still fresh & maybe it was Vashkar, the interviewer never asked. Carla whose Mom died when she (Carla) was 8 whose father let her “run wild” once dragging ten bales of hay into their Oakland house for a teenage party. Carla whose whole education was listening to Jazz in 50s Manhattan, Bird, Miles, Horace Silver and she says *The Atomic Mr. Basie*: “just lifts me up and makes me very happy no matter what’s going on around me. That’s happy music and I love it.” & maybe it’s “Splanky” or maybe Lockjaw’s solo on “Flight of the Foo Birds” or “Teddy the Toad.” Surely Neal Hefti’s charts had a hand in the joy this Count could deliver to Carla. And maybe 1982’s “Blunt Object” was a crack at that joy that Steve Slagle could alto his way through— the joy that accompanies light-hearted human development for which swing is but one joyous manifestation.

“My whole education was in the night clubs of New York and that’s IT!”

Tony Williams came up my five flights of stairs, asked me for a ballad. To me that wasn’t weird. It’s only weird now, talking about it.” [Vashkar.]

“My mother died when I was eight and my father let me just run wild. I could ride my bicycle all night long and I could bring ten bales of hay in the house for a party. And those are... just two of examples of everything my father let me do. So I didn’t know what the limits were.”

“Music is a cruel master.”

“Now I have a drawer of lead and a drawer of eraser refills and I can no longer think of anything I want.”

“We stopped drinking two years ago and we haven’t had a Christmas present since.”

“I like everything Horace Silver ever wrote with hardly any exceptions.”

“Those records (Atomic Basie)... that just lifts me up and makes me very happy no matter what’s going on around me. That’s happy music and I love it.”

“I love the Motown book... and the Temptations.”

“Something in me collapses and dissolves when I hear Mike Gibbs. It’s dangerous, really.”

“Steve [Swallow] doesn’t sound like anyone but Steve, but that guy can walk, he’s got perfect time, he’s got a sound that he works on constantly. His sound is more than his instrument. His sound is his amp, and his speaker and his cords, his model of bass, the fingerboard and his pick. He works on this all the time... He’s got a luthier that lives in Woodstock, which is like having a dealer, if you were a drug addict, living next door.”

Escalator over the Hill

Not an “opera” but a “chronotransduction”

“time “ + “1. n. The conversion of input energy of one form into output energy of another form...” or “n. (Genetics) the transfer by a bacteriophage of genetic material from one bacterium to another” or “n. the transfer of genetic material from one cell to another by means of a virus...”

The only chronotransduction

(after Sgt. Peppers Lonely Hearts Club band.)

The only chronotransduction in music.

Not an “opera” but Carla Bley,
(a self-described: “Leader, Mutant, Voice, Desert Woman”)
our roller skating Carla’d call it “opera” for short
but with more yodeling. First credited LP as leader.

Starting with poetry. Paul Haines, jazz lp liner note writer
sent Carla (1967-ish) “original surrealist poems” & she was off
& skating. Begging for production money from Yoko
and Pete Townshend, & other rich ’n famous.

A three LP set named after the inferior brother
of the elevator, *Escalator over the Hill*.

“A loose libretto” this poetry was in Carla’s eyes
poet/jazz buff Paul Haines who’d liken war
in a poem to “a whole outdoors of bad breath.”

& here is Carla, off ’n skating/making
up a cast of “Phantoms, Multiple Public
Members, Hotelpeople, Women, Men,
Flies, Bullfrogs, Mindsweepers, Speakers, Blindman.

If you took Raga and Mahavishnu Orchestra and the Beatles and
Ornette Coleman and Count Basie & put ‘em in a blender, or
better, into the cheese grater known as
Gato Barbieri’s tenor saxophone, then maybe

“VOTE FOR SOMETHING
WEAK
AND TO THE POINT
RIDING THE ESCALATOR
OVER THE HILL”

Paul Haines would say
(*his* all caps)

“WEAK
AND TO THE POINT.”

& here we are fifty years later
carrying out that direction.

It's the normal
got us here.

Carla Bley, Jack Bruce,
Don Cherry, Linda Ronstadt, Sheila Jordan,
Roswell Rudd, John McLaughlin,
all taking whacks at what Carla wanted
and Carla knew.

Imagine Frank Zappa's
Freak Out without the misogyny
and a substrate of Free Jazz instead of
Do Wop and Blind Lemon Jefferson.

A chronotransduction, a viral time transfer
as in Jack Bruce singing (in *Rawalpindi Blues*)

“Parrots so green they make your eyes seem blue”

or as Cecil Clark sings:

“TALENTED TEAMS OF ONIONS
INSIDE THE GOAL
OF THE MOUTH
ITSELF.”

Gato's continued "warm & gritty" tenor
breaks out at 7:45 into Hotel Overture
the opening track. This is the 60s
emotion objectified enduring

and one can only wonder
(1970/71)
this cat's after it
it's almost two minutes of
"I'll get you motherfucker
who killed Dr. King.
You'll live in hell
you who killed Bobby Kennedy.
I'd stab you myself
you demon of corporate boardrooms
& napalm Robert McNamara.

& so Leandro, from Rosario
shapes the air in this tragedy
this chronotransduction
bring a bit of tango to a makeshift
Manhattan recording studio

"Always in the tango is tragedy" (said Gato) —
"she leaves him, she kills him.
It's like an opera but it's called
tango."

This about his *Last Tango*
in Paris soundtrack
but his tenor, no doubt
is wailing in 1970 because
he was paying attention

& he had heard Charlie Parker
& grabbed a sax to be like Bird
& was running (as we all are)
out of time.

Útviklingssang

This solo can skate

Steve says Carla (blunt)

Bley
killed since yet
one tango.

One Development Song
oeuvre. A Norwegian Queen

tango. A New York
tango. A fishman knew
words help útviklingssang

another home whose arranger
's an escalator university tragedy.

Music vs. Poems.
Cigarette as Eraser
a bass neck roller girl opera.

Her chronotransduction
an Ellington funeral
a Manhattan Vashkar
a transfer of development
as atomic as Basie.

Steve says *Carla can solo*.
Jazz just like love music.
A lone tenor tango sound
graveyard

whose happy Oakland tango
's another measure
(of development.)

Blunt night
solo Jazz
what's old Roswell?

Did the foxtrot guy
kill the trombone solo?

Escalator arranger knew
octogenarian development transfer:
a longer York
a churchified Bird instrument.

Maybe human says Carla
on her
mutant bicycle.

Just like one
Carla can skate.
Rich lonely music sd
Gato. What's another blunt
no
longer American
tango?

A short, churchified
whiskey musician
arranger/escalator

who knew
chronotransduction
who knew
development
who knew
trombone solos

just like love
just like Jazz
(a better opera)
a stuck bass's
happy Spotify

·
joy dealer
song success
iBING!

Right on the soul.

1:35pm PDT
3—de—mayo, 2021

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Some poems written during the 2020 Community of Writers at Sq____Valley workshop

<https://www.wordclouds.com/>