

You Won't Find Them in the 45s Section

By ALLAN KOZINN

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In the world of commercial music, the conventional wisdom is that the full-length album is dead, that listeners want individual tracks, downloaded rather than on discs. But on Monday, when the big news elsewhere was the release of a single by Michael Jackson, a handful of new-music performers gathered at Le Pisson Rouge and, in two unrelated shows, offered glimpses of an alternative universe in which expansive, unified projects are everything.

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Rachel Grimes and Sarah Cahill performing an encore together.

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Kentucky. That may partly explain its overall serenity, as well as the ambient accompaniments (bird song, chirping insects and frogs) to several of the pieces.

Another explanation is her evident fascination with French music: Ravel and Debussy hover nearby (in the watery imagery and modal harmonies of "Bloodroot," for example), and several pieces sound as if they were woven around a slow-motion, light-textured version of Chopin's "Raindrop" Prelude or Ravel's "Gibet." The New Age meanderings of George Winston came to mind too, though Ms. Grimes's music is better structured and more harmonically varied.

Ms. Cahill opened her set with Preben Antonsen's "Dar al-Harb: House of War," an eerie meditation that develops slowly from a quietly winding, ascending melody to thick-textured counterpoint. Frederic Rzewski's bracing "Peace Dances," with its trademark blend of the folksy and the harmonically abstruse, yields a gritty comment on Ms. Cahill's theme.

Phil Kline's "Long Winter" balances pessimism and hope in separate movements: the dark, thundering "Crash" and the gently melodic "Embers." And Terry Riley's "Be Kind to One Another (Rag)," extroverted and occasionally jazzy, proved a cheerful finale, after which Ms. Grimes and Ms. Cahill gave a graceful account of Debussy's "Pour l'Égyptienne" as a joint encore.

Mr. Haimovitz performed his set as a nearly continuous stream of music, amplified and bathed in electronic reverb. He was at his most vigorous in Mr. Carter's assertive "Pigment" and Mr. Stucky's vividly drawn, harmonically vital "Dialoghi." But his best performance was of Mr. Tremblay's "Cœurs en Voile: Thrène Pour le Liban," a passionate, occasionally introspective solo score, and the only one in which Mr. Haimovitz's over-cranked reverb seemed to add something to the music.

At the early concert, Rachel Grimes, a pianist and composer who writes in a charming if lightweight Impressionistic style, played the 14 vignettes from her recent "Book of Leaves" disc on a split bill with the new-music pianist Sarah Cahill. Ms. Cahill performed selections from "A Sweeter Music," a series that brings together new works about war and peace and will no doubt become a recording.

The late show was a collaboration between the cellist Matt Haimovitz and the composer Du Yun. They played most of Mr. Haimovitz's new recording, "Pigment," a challenging collection of harmonically and rhythmically complex works by Elliott Carter, Ana Sokolovic, Lana Pearl Woolf, Steven Stucky, Gilles Tremblay and Ms. Du, linked here by quirky improvisations in which Ms. Du provided electronic sound and spoken texts.

Ms. Grimes, who is a member of several indie bands (Rachel's, and King's Daughters and Sons) in Louisville, said she recorded "Book of Leaves" at a monastery in

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