Preface

Early in 1970 Ernst Krenek took up residence as a Regents Lecturer in John Muir College at the University of California, San Diego. It was, in fact, a happy homecoming.

In recognition of his distinguished career and his contribution to this new branch of the university, he had been appointed an Honorary Fellow of the college when it opened in 1967, and to help us celebrate that brave beginning he had composed and directed the performance of a new work, "Exercises of a Late Hour." Now that he was midway through his seventieth year and once again among old friends and admirers, he used the occasion to look back across five decades of unusual productivity and achievement as composer, teacher, and writer. In four informally delivered but exceptionally rich lectures he looked over a wide landscape of arts, letters, education, politics, wars, exile, neglect, and triumph. Later these lectures were slightly revised to become the essays that form the core of this book. Taking his cue from the title of one of his recent major works (analyzed elsewhere in this volume by Will Ogdon), he calls these essays "Circling My Horizons." Within their great compass there is much to be seen.

But Ernst Krenek was more to us than returning friend and distinguished guest lecturer. He was, in truth, the intellectual and artistic forebear of what has become in but

a few years an unusually exciting and adventuresome department of music. I had known Ernst since 1948, and we had kept in touch through the years. Thus, when I was asked to come to UCSD in 1964 and take charge of establishing the arts on this new campus, I at once sought his advice. He recommended that we persuade Will Ogdon to leave Illinois Wesleyan University to become our first chairman of music, which we did. Will had studied composing with Ernst. So had the composer Robert Erickson, who was one of the first advanced students to seek him out after Ernst settled in the country. It seemed only natural when, with Ernst's enthusiastic blessing, Will and I recruited Erickson to help found a music program in which creativity of the highest order would be preminent.

So it is that Ernst's ideas and example have been part of UCSD almost from its beginning. Naturally we wanted to know more about how these ideas had been shaped, how they had been realized in works that belong among the most daring and accomplished of our time, how they still direct his own continuing creativity and through it so much of our thinking about and response to contemporary music. Of course, what he told us had significance far beyond the felicitous moment of its telling, for Ernst is truly an international figure. Thus, with pride and an awareness of our good fortune in our relationship with him that we share with his admirers everywhere, these special exercises of a late hour.

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HORIZONS CIRCLED

Reflections on My Music