

VALSE TRISTE



Manicopia by John Elkerr
8.25" x 11.25"
Ink on paper

from a five-sided podium the Maestro raises a snowflake baton and piles of dancer flesh swing about him, coalescing into one flesh: one multi-headed creature swaddled in a massive panty (lovingly donated by one of the privates). *miraculous*, some void inside him wants to say, but he is too turned on to clothe the barren with sound. so he sails the baton south and the violins, surrounding him at eye level, sound off in dotted quarters—heads drooped, cheek to cheek, shoulder to shoulder. and what power tides up from the double basses, strong as Mesopotamian bulls. how they turn the pyramid about as the score calls for pizzicato G-sharps and he feels the dark patches of all that ballsack fruit morph into the fathomless soul of music herself: *left, right, swing about . . . right, left, so pale and stout*. does the score now call for spectacle? *o say it does* and so it does. he sterns his arms forward as if to welcome the chilled vacuum of a doubled moon and out rolls the ponchoed box-standers playing blue and red wires. they surround the butt pyramid like a Greek chorus and lift their arms to jolts of quarter notes from the violas and second violins. and now for the Second Movement.

Text by Stephen Eric Berry