*Route 33* for solo piano is about 8 minutes in length and was written in 2014 for GRAMMY® Award winning pianist Gloria Cheng.

When I finished the piece, it didn’t have a title. The composition felt to me as if it were describing an imaginary road trip, interrupted by a series of unrelated dreams. But no name had presented itself to me yet. To take my mind off the problem I started doing some housekeeping – counting the number of synthetic scales that I had used within the piece was one of the tasks. The result was 33, and there I thought I had something. Route 66 .. Route 33 .. I could live with that, although it seemed entirely too cute. So I did research into where Route 33 might actually be. It turned out that this road starts at the Pacific Ocean, in the Southern California city of Ventura, and ends near Tracy, CA which is a small town East of the San Francisco Bay. And on its way North it just happens to graze the town of Ojai known for its internationally acclaimed annual Contemporary Classical Music Festival, to which – to top everything off – my dedicatee Gloria Cheng has had a long standing professional connection (she has been a featured performer there many times). Too many aligning things here to be coincidental, I thought, and settled on the title *Route 33*.

The composition itself is divided into six interconnected sub-chapters:

*1. Smooth Sailing – 2. Dream 1: Disjointed – 3. Open Road – 4. Dream 2: Gentle – 5. Dream 3: Storm – 6. Awaking Slowly.*

Chapters 1 and 3 clearly refer to the road trip, while chapter 6 is a hybrid. It slowly fades from a state of sleep into “road material” taken from the very beginning of the piece.

Gernot Wolfgang

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