<u>An Archive of the musical compositions by Herb Bielawa</u>

Composition: **Sloppy, Floppy Copy** – soprano, flute, clarinet, and piano

Date: 2006, 2013
Duration: 6:50
Recording: by Anna Carol Dudley, soprano; Richard Mathias, clarinet; Herb
    Bielawa, piano

Program Note:
Finding just the right text for a composition is related to the circumstances
surrounding its inception. I wanted to compose a piece that had a high degree of
levity, something light-hearted and rhythmically alive. I unexpectedly found what
I wanted from a poet friend who just happened to have the poem *If Dr. Seuss Did
Tech. Writing* by Gene Ziegler lying around. It's all about the foibles of
computers and its form is identical to that of The Cat in the Hat. The challenge
was to reshape its original rhythmic squareness to give a sense of a serious
endeavor without, at the same time, losing its rhythmic drive. Computer hackers
will understand every bit of it. For those who are ordinary computer users or even
luddites, the piece may still have musical qualities that will carry its humor. It
features three cadenzas, one for each player, and the soprano even settles into a
quasi-
classic recitative.

Text:
> *Sloppy Floppy Copy*
> Bits Bytes Chips Clocks
> Bits in bytes on chips in box.
> Bytes with bits and chips with clocks.
> Chips in box on ether-docks.
> Chips with bits come. Chips with bytes come.
> Chips with bits and bytes and clocks come.
> Look, sir. Look, sir. read the book, sir.
> Let's do tricks with bits and bytes, sir.
> Let's do tricks with chips and clocks, sir.
> First, I'll make a quick trick bit stack.
> Then I'll make a quick trick byte stack.
> You can make a quick trick chip stack.
> You can make a quick trick clock stack.
> And here's a new trick on the scene.
> Bits in bytes for your machine.
> Bytes in words to fill your screen.
> Now we come to ticks and tocks, sir.
> Try to say this by the clock, sir.
> Clocks on chips tick.
> Clocks on chips tock.

Eight byte bits lick.
Eight bit bytes tock.
Clocks on chips with eight bit bytes tick.
Chips with clocks and eight byte bits tock.
Here's in easy game to play.
Here's an easy thing to say....
If a packet hits a pocket on a socket on a port,
and the bus is interrupted as a very last resort,
and the address of the memory makes your floppy disk abort
then the socket packet pocket has an error to report!
if your cursor finds a menu item followed by a dash,
and the double-clicking icon puts your window in the trash,
and your data is corrupted cause the index doesn't hash,
then your situation's hopeless, and your system's gunna crash.
You can't say this? What a shame, sir!
We'll find you another game, sir.
If the label on the cable on the table at your house
says the network is connected to the button on your mouse,
but your packets want to tunnel on another protocol,
that's repeatedly rejected by the printer down the hall,
and your screen is all distorted by the side-effects of gauss,
so your icons in the window are as wavy as a souse,
then you may as well reboot and go out with a bang,
cause as sure as I'm a poet, the sucker's gunna hang!
When the copy of your floppy's getting sloppy on the disk,
and the microcode instructions cause unnecessary rise,
then you have to flash your memory
and you'll want to RAM your ROM.
quickly turn off your computer and be sure to tell your mom!

<div align="right">-Gene Ziegler</div>