



BMOP
sound

ANTHONY PAUL DE RITIS: POP CONCERTO

AMSTERDAM | RIFLESSIONI | BALLET

ANTHONY PAUL DE RITIS b. 1968

AMSTERDAM

RIFLESSIONI

BALLET

POP CONCERTO
FOR GUITAR AND ORCHESTRA

ELIOT FISK guitar

PATRICK DE RITIS bassoon

DUO X88: VICKY CHOW AND SASKIA LANKHOORN pianos

BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT

Gil Rose, conductor

[1] **AMSTERDAM** (2004) 7:13

[2] **RIFLESSIONI** (2014) 17:41

Patrick de Ritis, bassoon

[3] **BALLET** (1997/2013) 20:32

Duo X88: Vicky Chow and Saskia Lankhoorn, pianos

**POP CONCERTO
FOR GUITAR AND ORCHESTRA** (2014)

[4] I. based on "Bring It On" by Seal 6:02

[5] II. based on "You Oughta Know"
by Alanis Morissette 5:51

[6] III. based on "Beautiful Day" by U2 6:44

[7] IV. based on "The Way You Make Me Feel"
by Michael Jackson 8:59

Eliot Fisk, guitar

TOTAL 1:13:04

By Anthony Paul De Ritis

In 2004 I was asked by Maestro Jung-Ho Pak to compose a new work for the World Youth Symphony Orchestra's final performance of the season at Interlochen, the concert that combines all the large ensembles in a massive performance of Liszt's *Les Préludes*. Maestro Pak also requested that this work use an interactive technology that would allow him to control the sounds of the orchestra from the podium. I chose to work with the Buchla Lightning, a MIDI controller that consists of a wand that can be used like a baton, and a box unit that enables the conductor to manipulate sound spatially.

Of course, as luck would have it, everything did not go as planned during the premiere... And while trolling the Internet, I came across an entertaining post from an individual who was there (who goes by the moniker EuphManRob):

That concert actually had one of the funnier flukes I've seen. That was the world premiere of the piece *Amsterdam*, and one of the main features of that piece was some sort of electronic baton thingy, by which most of the time Mr. Pak could conduct normally, but by flicking a switch, he could activate some electronic doohicky that had a wireless connection to a laptop, and by sweeping it around he could distort and manipulate the sounds of the ensemble. Unfortunately, some kind of feedback/interference caused a complete blackout mid-performance, leaving the performers in almost total darkness.

Alas, such was the premiere of *Amsterdam*—needless to say, without electricity the technology didn't work so well!



PATRICK DEWITS AND ANTHONY DE RITIS RECORDING SAMPLES FOR REFLECTIONS, MARCH 2014. PHOTO BY IAN HEADLEY.

For this BMOP recording, I decided to go sans electronics. The electronics part was really just for a few moments of effect, and (obviously) not a crucial element to the work. As far as the title goes, there is little significance. I had just returned from the Netherlands with my good friend David Pereira. *Amsterdam* was the working title for the piece when I was composing, and it just stuck...

I discovered Patrick de Ritis, principal bassoonist with Wiener Symphoniker, via the Internet about 12 years ago (OK, yes, I was Googling myself). I sent an e-mail to the Symphoniker offices, letting them know that Patrick and I shared the same last name, and they contacted him for me. When Patrick and I first met in Vienna, I learned that his father was born in the Abruzzo region of Italy, just like my father—we've got to be SOME kind of relatives, no? Patrick eventually took my desire to compose a new work for bassoon, orchestra, and electronics seriously. I knew from the very beginning that I was going to use the bassoon not only for its natural qualities and Patrick's amazing virtuosity, but also to trigger real-time signal processing. *Riflessioni* was first sketched as a complete electroacoustic work based on samples performed by Patrick and passed through a series of digital effects generated via Max/MSP.

I used the title *Reflections* (*Riflessioni*, in Italian) for several reasons. I'm at a very reflective point as I enter mid-life. I'm reflecting on the music I am writing, on my father and the sacrifices he made to allow me to have a life in music, on my life as a university professor, and on the use of electronic sounds in my music. *Riflessioni* is very introspective, and I think it represents a new beginning for me.

The bassoon connoisseur may recognize two homages to the bassoon literature within the layers of *Riflessioni*: Alexandre Tansman's *Sonatine* for bassoon and piano, and *Monolog* by Isang Yun. What a dramatic and beautiful instrument the bassoon can be when in the hands of an incredible talent like Patrick de Ritis.

While an undergraduate at Bucknell University, I was the piano accompanist for the Bucknell Dance Company, playing for all jazz, ballet, and modern dance classes. Little did I know that improvising for dance would have such powerful influence on my creative work. *Ballet* was actually my dissertation at UC Berkeley, though it has undergone several iterations prior to the version presented here, including arrangements for tape, sextet, and chamber orchestra. I was seeking to write music to dance to, and I also wanted to write some happy music. All too often contemporary music sounds scary or ugly to listeners—as if writing something beautiful or pleasant is an insult to the intellect. Truth be told, in some sections of *Ballet* I see Snoopy dancing ecstatically with his nose bouncing in the air.

I owe a big thanks to Aaron Jay Kernis, whom I only met once, during the 1999 June in Buffalo festival. He made the point that, if I wanted the music to groove, just let it groove—don't let the piece get in its own way by introducing unnecessary rhythmic complexity. Kernis gave me the confidence to just let it be. And I must give great thanks to pianists Vicky Chow and Saskia Lankhoorn. Vicky and I first met in Beijing in 2009, and she made an incredible impression; she later introduced me to Saskia. I couldn't be more thrilled that they agreed to be a part of this recording.

* * *

As a young person, I studied violin and piano, and was solely focused on classical music; playing in a rock band was not something I ever considered. It wasn't until one of my UC Berkeley teachers, Richard Felciano, shared one of his many maxims—"culture is what we make together"—that I began to think seriously about popular music. In particular, I started to listen to the pop music of my youth more critically. Over time, I found myself consistently returning to the complete works of U2 and Michael Jackson, as well as Seal's self-titled album and Alanis Morissette's "Jagged Little Pill." Arranging these works are as much exercises as they are homages, an opportunity for me to both learn from and honor this music. When I listen to pop music, I don't really hear the words, instead I become fascinated with

textures, the character of the voices, vocal doublings, background vocals, mixing, special effects—the whole production of the music. I first did a rigorous transcription of each recording—there were so many colors and layers and textures and effects that stimulated my ideas for instrumental combinations. I especially listened closely to the rhythms and the tonal inflections of the voice. The guitar solos are the vocal lines re-imagined for guitar.

“Bring It On” is the first track on the album *Seal*. From the beginning sound engineer Joel Gordon and I knew that it would be difficult to maintain the nuance of Eliot Fisk’s classical guitar within the final mix—but thinning the orchestral texture in order to accommodate the guitar didn’t seem to be the right approach. “Bring It On” is denser and more layered than the other works I transcribed, and music like Seal’s gives me ideas for acoustic orchestrations that I would never have thought of before.

It was the whistling guitar effects found in the haunting background textures of Alanis Morissette’s “You Oughta Know” that drew me to this work. Special thanks to BMOP percussionist Robert Schulz for suggesting the waterphone, an inharmonic acoustic percussion instrument, to illustrate these ethereal sounds. In other places I used glissandi string harmonics and behind-the-bridge arpeggiations to suggest Dave Navarro’s psychedelically distorted guitar musings. I was very diligent in transcribing Flea’s electric bass line; it’s the timbral inflections between the notes, the slides and slaps and bends and squeaks, that give this music life. Top honors go to Eliot Fisk’s hallucinatory improvisations recalling Morissette’s emotive “Ohhs” and “Aahs” just before the bridge—no doubt Eliot and I, like millions of listeners, resonated with the vengeful wrath of music prompted by a bitter relationship.

I find the last (and mostly ignored) twenty seconds of U2’s “Beautiful Day” to be fascinating. It resembles electroacoustic art music and inspired me to come up with a combination of microtonal bends in the cello, harp harmonics, and piano strings dampened from the inside. Bono’s declamation sounds so natural, one would never guess at the shifting metric

organization in his singing. He rarely ever starts or stops a phrase on a downbeat. Pair this with shifting eighth note patterns found in the electric bass and drums, and it’s extremely difficult to find the beat. At one point, Eliot Fisk (the virtuoso guitarist for whom Luciano Berio composed his insanely difficult *Sequenza XI*) tossed his music aside—“I can’t read it! I can’t do it!” It gave us all a greater sense of the complexity of some popular music that we, as trained classical musicians, almost always take for granted as being simple and easy. Transcribing and arranging “Beautiful Day” was as good as any master class I’ve ever taken.

Transcribing Michael Jackson’s “The Way You Make Me Feel” made me feel like I was in his mind for a little while, trying to see and hear the music from his perspective. Of course, one of the most exciting challenges was to figure out how to illustrate his many vocalizations, “Hee hee!”, “Aaow!” and so on. I used sliding penny whistles, string harmonics, guitar harmonics, glissandi, and piccolo shrieks, though there is one moment where the entire orchestra chimes in with “Chika, chika, chika!” It took several takes, because the orchestra erupted in laughter. Michael Jackson was a musical genius.

Although Eliot and I had worked together for over 10 years on the Boston GuitarFest, it wasn’t until 2014 that we found the time to begin this project—I had wanted to work with him for so long! Eliot was interested in a cross-over work that might hold interest for multiple audiences, but would also show off his unbelievable virtuosity. It didn’t take long for me to realize that it would be best for Eliot to write his own cadenzas—just like in the old days, when soloists made them up on the spot. Although Eliot’s cadenzas definitely have the feel of improvisation, I can attest that he wrote down every note. Eliot Fisk, I am indebted to you!

AMSTERDAM, for orchestra with optional electronics, was written for conductor Jung-Ho Pak and premiered by Pak and the World Youth Symphony Orchestra in August 2004 at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan.

RIFLESSIONI, for solo bassoon, orchestra, and electronics, is dedicated to bassoonist Patrick de Ritis, who premiered the work with Gil Rose and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project on October 12, 2014 at Jordan Hall in Boston.

BALLET was originally composed in versions for full orchestra and sextet. Its chamber orchestra version was premiered by the June in Buffalo Chamber Orchestra with conductor Magnus Mårtensson on June 8, 1999 at the June in Buffalo Festival in New York.

POP CONCERTO is scored for solo classical guitar and orchestra. Written for guitarist Eliot Fisk, it was premiered by Fisk and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, conducted by Gil Rose, on June 28, 2014 at Jordan Hall as part of Boston GuitarFest.

By Robert Kirzinger

The title work of this collection, Anthony Paul De Ritis's *Pop Concerto*, continues a long historic line of rethinking and recomposing existing music. De Ritis is in pretty good company—Bach was a mighty borrower, working familiar hymn tunes into his church music; we have Beethoven's recomposed folk songs, Brahms's Magyar music from Vienna's bars, Copland's cowboy dreams. The juggernaut of popular music falling under the broad umbrella of rock and roll has provided plenty of fodder for a spectrum of more recent crossovers, too, from Luciano Berio's Beatles arrangements to Philip Glass's symphonic fantasies on

David Bowie. Post-1950s America could hardly have avoided rock music if it tried. Nor, for the most part, has it felt the need, many composers recognizing that the best of rock has a unique energy, expressive immediacy, and sophistication of its own.

Based on songs by Michael Jackson, U2, Alanis Morissette, and Seal, *Pop Concerto* is a celebration of pop music's irrepressible élan and of the guitarist Eliot Fisk's virtuosic artistry. The other concerto on this disc, *Riflessioni* for bassoon, electronics, and orchestra, is a more personal, introspective, and abstract piece, composed for the Italian bassoonist Patrick de Ritis—no blood relation to the composer, but the coincidence sparked an artistic relationship. In spite of their divergence of expressive effect, the two works share certain characteristics found in most of the composer's major works; both were also premiered by BMOP in 2014. The two orchestral pieces here, *Amsterdam* (2004) and *Ballet* (1995–97, rev. 2013), help fill out a picture of Anthony De Ritis's musical life that complements BMOP's earlier disc of his music, *Devolution* (BMOP/sound 1022, released in 2012).

De Ritis has established and nurtured relationships globally, resulting in diverse collaborations. He met Eliot Fisk via the guitarist's annual GuitarFest at the New England Conservatory, just down the street from De Ritis's workplace at Northeastern University in Boston. Patrick de Ritis, on the other hand, is active primarily in Vienna, and is one of many connections the composer maintains in Europe. He also travels frequently to China as a composer and lecturer. A student of Mandarin, he was a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in 2011 and maintains ties there. As a longtime member of Northeastern's music faculty (including several years as head of the department), he has had a stable base from which to further not only his compositional career, but also innovative educational, cultural, and entrepreneurial enthusiasms. To his degrees in music composition from Bucknell and Ohio universities and a doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley, he added an MBA from Northeastern, and has been a

delegate to the cross-disciplinary Entrepreneurship and Innovation Group of the university's D'Amore-McKim School of Business.

In keeping with—even a cause of—the composer's spirit of innovation is an abiding involvement with technology. Electronic music was a major part of his training, especially at UC Berkeley, where he worked closely with the legendary electronic music guru David Wessel. De Ritis frequently uses electronic technology to expand the possibilities of his music, sometimes with almost theatrical intent, as in *Devolution*, his concerto for turntablist DJ Spooky. Many of his pieces feature electronics less ostentatiously: in his *Legerdemain* for orchestra and electronics the amplification and modification of orchestral elements creates a kind of acoustic refraction; in the pipa-and-orchestra work *Plum Blossoms* the solo instruments are echoed and mirrored by electronic doubles—approaches similar to what happens in *Riflessioni*. (*Plum Blossoms* is, incidentally, one of the composer's many works for Chinese instruments.) Although electronics are only a factor in one piece in the present collection, De Ritis often maps techniques inspired by electronic music onto his acoustic pieces, such as using orchestration to expand and “hold” harmonies like a resonance filter, building chords spectrally, distributing sound and resonance in space, and even the “editing” of form, akin to splicing tape or using looping software. Another big (and related) influence is the pattern and process of classic minimalism. These techniques and ideas are melded and transformed via the composer's great sonic imagination and inviting expressiveness.

* * *

Like *Pop Concerto* and *Riflessioni*, De Ritis's *Amsterdam* [1] came about through a personal relationship, the composer's friendship with conductor Jung-Ho Pak, whom he first encountered at UC Berkeley. Jung-Ho Pak suggested writing an orchestral piece in which the conductor could have several “solo” episodes controlling electronically generated sound via hand gestures, using the Buchla Lightning MIDI controller. As in Varèse's *Déserts*, *Amsterdam* was designed so the electronics episodes can be separated out from

the orchestral music. The purely instrumental version on this disc, featuring a slightly reduced orchestration, is a seven-minute, one-movement work in essentially three sections. An energetic opening episode, simultaneously forward-moving and harmonically stable, establishes E minor with low-brass and timpani pedal tones under arpeggios in strings and woodwinds. The asymmetrical shapes and varied lengths of the arpeggio-melodies create motion and tension, and a syncopated, repeated-note idea expands the harmony like a wedge. Slow harmonic transformation enlivened by active rhythm (which De Ritis attributes in part, in this piece, to “thinking about John Adams”) is an idea the composer has explored often. This first section ends abruptly, on an “incomplete” harmony, with the quiet middle episode picking up from the final C-sharp of the rising arpeggio. The material is not so different from the opening episode, but the effect is a striking contrast, due to slower tempo and a radical change of texture to flutes with harp, colored by glockenspiel and vibraphone. The concluding episode builds up gradually via the syncopated, repeated-note idea. Small changes in harmony loom large as rhythm and orchestration drive the piece to a vivid close.

“Riflessioni,” Italian for “reflections,” touches several layers of meaning. De Ritis wrote the piece for the bassoonist Patrick de Ritis, principal bassoon of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra and conductor of the ensemble European Wind Soloists. The bassoonist's family has roots in the same region in Italy, Abruzzo, as the composer; their paths crossed first in 2005. The encounter with a musician sharing his name led Anthony De Ritis to contemplate the nature of identity and connection: “reflecting” his own musical personality off the bassoonist's, as it were.

Compositionally, *Riflessioni* [2] employs a technique Anthony De Ritis has used on a number of occasions: he recorded Patrick playing composed and improvised fragments, which he then assembled into an electronic piece, adding effects and synthesized parts. This sketch (which for all intents is a successful standalone work) was then incorporated in the orches-

tral fabric of the concerto, controlled via the interactive music software Max/MSP: thus the pre-recorded and live soloist “reflect” one another, with the orchestra adding a further level of reflection. Both sources are also subject to real-time electronic modification. An accordion—the sound always surprising in an orchestra—acts as a liaison.

The piece begins from an F-sharp, sustained but rhythmically “breathing,” from which the harmonic world (far more diverse and chromatic than the deliberately constrained one of *Amsterdam*) blossoms. After its calm opening, the bassoon solo becomes frenetic and sometimes aggressive, its quick, falling chromatic gestures verging on percussion sound. Both ideas, the unstable and the sustained, are projected—that is, reflected—into the orchestra, and the electronics echo and develop the solo. A lyrical line for the soloist comes to the foreground, harmonized in strings, while the chromatic motif becomes accompaniment in the electronic samples, percussion, and winds. Just at the point of greatest fragmentation, the F-sharp returns to usher in a passage of shimmering harmony dispersed throughout the orchestra. As though impatient with this extreme contrast, the soloist again suggests the chromatic figure before instigating a surreal, strangely distorted section, abetted by its electronic shadow. The coda briefly distills and juxtaposes the two contrasting characters.

Ballet [3] is the earliest piece on this disc, its original orchestral version having been De Ritis’s Ph.D. dissertation at Berkeley. He later made versions for sextet (first performed in 1996) and for chamber orchestra (premiered at the June in Buffalo festival in 1999). The somewhat expanded chamber orchestra version heard here has never been performed in concert. *Ballet* was conceived as a series of closely related dance episodes, not quite theme-and-variations, but sections of distinct character developing the same motivic material. De Ritis wrote it without any specific intention of having it choreographed (although he wouldn’t object to that). His important connection with dance dates to his undergraduate years as piano accompanist for Bucknell’s dance company, a position for which he was recommended by his teacher William Duckworth. *Ballet* was also influenced by the composer’s having



ELIOT FISK PERFORMS IN JORDAN HALL. PHOTO BY KETARO YOSHIOKA

performed Stravinsky's *Dumbarton Oaks* concerto and conducted Debussy's *Danses sacrée et profane*; their rhythmic vitality and timbral pungency are its clear ancestors.

Although not as harmonically austere as *Amsterdam*, *Ballet's* contrasting sections each center insistently on a particular tonality, e.g. the E Dorian of the opening. The broken arpeggios in the piano at the beginning are the motivic key to the whole, and the two pianos are the backbone of an ever-present but variable "groove." In addition to changing tempo and tonality, De Ritis varies the texture between full-ensemble passages and episodes featuring only a few instruments. Near the end, the arpeggio idea is presented in fenestrated alternation with rests and short woodwind phrases, haltingly; the ensuing slow contrapuntal section gradually rebuilds energy for the powerful close.

De Ritis, as mentioned above, wrote *Pop Concerto* for Eliot Fisk. Universally considered one of the greatest classical guitarists, Fisk commands a repertoire ranging from Renaissance classics to commissioned works by Luciano Berio and Leonardo Balada, along with his own arrangements of Bach and Scarlatti. Michael Jackson and U2, on the other hand, are novelties in his performing experience. It was De Ritis's self-imposed challenge to bridge the gap between these well-known hits and the concerto tradition. Although the composer has referenced rock music in his work before, *Pop Concerto* is his most developed engagement with this style. The four source songs, released between 1987 and 2000, were chosen primarily for their groove qualities, along with their cultural presence: the only one of the four songs that wasn't a phenomenal hit record is Seal's "Bring It On," which although never released as a single nevertheless reached a respectable level on the Billboard charts.

"Bring It On," the basis for the first movement [4] of *Pop Concerto*, is from Seal's 1994 self-titled album. The song's defining characteristics are its groove, its virtually static harmony, and Seal's own gravelly voice. To translate all this to orchestra and solo guitar required quite a bit of imaginative reconsideration of these elements. The groove remains the backbone of the song, of course, but the solo guitar expands Seal's single-line melody

into a rich succession of chords, transforming one entirely idiomatic language (pop singing) into another (classical guitar), with excellent results. The orchestra creates a halo of color, picking up on the short and sometimes subtle riffs (such as the singer's opening singing-shout of "Bring it on!", here stylized in strings) in the background of the thickly produced original. The full chords of De Ritis's setting supply Fisk with a solid foundation for his own composed cadenza, almost flamenco-like in its intensity at first, leading to warm, tender, major-key treatment of Seal's melody.

The album *Jagged Little Pill*, released in 1995, made Canadian singer-songwriter Alanis Morissette a household name in a matter of weeks. "You Oughta Know" [5] was more aggressive and angry than some of her hits, but was all the more critically acclaimed for its honesty. Like "Bring It On," the original has a terrific bass line (played by Flea of the Red Hot Chili Peppers) establishing its strong groove. Morissette's intense emotion is translated to the solo guitar here, which begins the arrangement with minimal accompaniment. Also like "Bring It On," the voice's richness becomes chordal richness, perhaps now and then taking on some of the crunchy electric guitar characteristics of the Morissette song. De Ritis pushes his otherwise fairly well-behaved orchestra into crunchy territory, too, to match the song's rock vibe. Fisk's cadenza takes off from the chorus and the harmonic progression, reinterpreting small elements of Morissette's tune.

U2's anthemic "Beautiful Day," from their 2000 album *All That You Can't Leave Behind*, is remarkable in its almost total reliance on a single brief chord progression, achieving its musical narrative via contrast within Bono's vocal delivery—so conversational at first, with an octave leap upwards with the first chorus—and accompanying changes of instrumental density and timbre. Orchestrationally, De Ritis's setting [6] is closer to the original here than was possible in the other three movements, the pulsing strings easily matching the textures of their model. The trajectory of change, essentially a big crescendo, is a strikingly effective response to the song's optimistic elation. The cadenza begins with harmonics

taken from the movement's fade-out, and uses the "tamburo" (drumming on the strings near the guitar's bridge) technique with great effect before venturing off into harmonically distant territory.

The final movement [7] is based on the truly iconic Michael Jackson hit "The Way You Make Me Feel," a No. 1 song from his 1989 *Bad* album. The leather-clad Jackson of the album's cover reflected the album's aggressive, deliberately "industrial" production values, which are echoed in De Ritis's dark orchestration, with its little musical fragments flying off like sparks from a fire. The faithfully maintained groove is a shuffle beat articulated both through the drum kit and through unusual percussion: for example, the electric guitar crunch that opens the song is mimicked here by lion's roar (a cord attached to a drum) and sizzlestrip. As with Jackson's song, the details change throughout the piece, bringing surprises along the way. De Ritis even orchestrates the singer's trademark improvised vocal interjections. The cadenza is the longest and most adventurous of the set, making especial use of the I-IV-V harmonic progression and inserting a couple of references (triggered by the triplet pulse of the shuffle rhythm) to Schubert's "Erlkönig." De Ritis reaches back to the song's opening for a brief orchestral coda.

© 2016 Robert Kirzinger

Robert Kirzinger is a composer and writer living in Boston. He is on the staff of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and since 2006 has been the primary annotator for the Boston Modern Orchestra Project.



CRAIG BAILEY

Anthony Paul De Ritis, described as a "genuinely American composer" by *Gramophone*, is Professor and former Chair of the Music Department at Northeastern University in Boston, and is jointly appointed to the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Group in Northeastern's D'Amore-McKim School of Business. His music has been called "groundbreaking," "ultra-exotic," and "really cool," and has received performances nationally and internationally, including at the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, Le Poisson Rouge, Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, Harvard's Sanders Theatre, Yale's Woolsey Hall, Taipei's Zhong Shan Hall, Beijing's Yugong Yishan, Seoul's KT Art Hall, the Italian Pavilion at the 2015 World Expo in Milan, and UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

De Ritis's CD *Devolution*, described as a "tour de force" by *Gramophone*, was released in June 2012 by the 6-time Grammy-nominated Boston Modern Orchestra Project under the baton of Gil Rose, and was the WQXR Q2 "Album of the Week" for June 11, 2012. *Devolution* features three of De Ritis's symphonic works, *Chords of Dust*, *Legerdemain*, and the work for which the CD is titled, *Devolution: a Concerto for DJ and Symphony Orchestra*, featuring Paul D. Miller aka DJ Spooky That Subliminal Kid as soloist.

In 2015, De Ritis's *Melody for Peace* was performed as part of UNESCO's 70th Anniversary celebrations by the Prague Concert Philharmonic in Paris, and his work *Amsterdam* was presented by the Hong Kong Philharmonic at the Grand Hall at the University of Hong Kong. De Ritis also works frequently with Chinese traditional instruments, including works for pipa virtuosos Min Xiao-Fen and Wu Man. In Fall 2011 De Ritis was a Fulbright Senior Research

Scholar at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China, and in November 2016 was appointed as a Special Professor of the Beijing Advanced Innovation Center at the China Conservatory of Music.

De Ritis completed his Ph.D. in Music Composition at the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied with Richard Felciano and Jorge Liderman, and served three years as a teaching assistant to David Wessel at Berkeley's Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT). He received his M.M. in Electronic Music Composition from Ohio University under Mark Phillips and his B.A. in Music with a concentration in Business Administration from Bucknell University, studying composition under William Duckworth, Jackson Hill, and Kyle Gann, and philosophy with Richard Fleming. De Ritis engaged in summer study at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France under Philippe Manoury, Tristan Murail, and Gilbert Amy; the University of Southern California, and New York University. De Ritis also holds a Masters in Business Administration with an emphasis in high-tech from Northeastern University, and in 2006 was named the Alumnus of the Year for the College of Fine Arts at Ohio University.



KATLIN JANE PHOTOGRAPHY

Vicky Chow (Duo X88), Canadian pianist, has been described as “brilliant” (*The New York Times*), “a monster pianist” (*Time Out New York*), and “new star of new music” (*Los Angeles Times*). She is the pianist for the Bang on a Can All-Stars, Grand Band, and New Music Detroit, and has collaborated with other ensembles such as the International Contemporary Ensemble. Her next solo album on New Amsterdam, titled *AORTA* and featuring six new works by American composers including Rome prize winners Andy Akiho and Christopher Cerrone, came out in the fall of 2016. An EP of a solo piano works by Bang on a Can founder Michael Gordon titled *Sonatra* was also released on limited edition LPs under the Cantaloupe label. Frequently broadcasted on WNYC’s Q2 radio, Ms. Chow’s recorded work can be found on the Nonesuch, New Amsterdam, Tzadik, Cantaloupe, Innova, Hinterzimmer, and AltaVoz

labels. Interviews and articles featuring Ms. Chow have appeared in the *Huffington Post*, *Gramophone*, *The New York Times*, *The Vancouver Sun*, and many more. Her recent recordings of Steve Reich’s *Piano Counterpoint* (Nonesuch) and Tristan Perich’s *Surface Image* (New Amsterdam Records) were included in “top albums of the year” lists of *Rolling Stone*, *Rhapsody*, and others. Her performances of Morton Feldman and John Cage were featured on BBC3’s documentary series “The Sound and The Fury,” based on Alex Ross’s book *The Rest is Noise*. Her next commissioning projects include works by composers Fjólá Evans, David Brynjar Franzson, Vincent Ho, and Nicole Lizée.

Having started her piano studies at age five, Ms. Chow was invited to perform at the age of nine at the International Gilmore Music Keyboard Festival. She made her orchestral debut at the age of ten with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and made her NYC orchestral debut at Alice Tully Hall with the Juilliard Symphony performing Bartók’s Piano Concerto No. 1. Ms. Chow resides in Brooklyn. www.vickychow.com



NESTOR PIERONI

Patrick de Ritis was born in France, grew up in Italy, and now divides his time between Vienna and Italy when not on tour. He has performed throughout Europe, the USA, Asia, and South America as a soloist and director with major orchestras and has made several CD recordings. He currently has two releases in production for the Naxos USA label.

As a bassoon soloist, de Ritis is an extraordinary artist who started his career at the early age of six and has since followed his path with inspiration, passion, dedication, and success.

He studied piano from age six and bassoon from age ten with world-renowned masters Marco Costantini, Milan Turkovic, and Klaus Thunemann. Besides being the first solo bassoonist of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, a post he has held for two decades, de Ritis pursues an extensive solo career as a bassoonist and conductor, performing around the world in premier international artistic events.

He is Artistic Director and founder of two high-caliber chamber music ensembles, Concertino Wien and European Wind Soloists. As a conductor, Patrick has studied extensively with distinguished personalities of the musical world and has established a career directing some of the great orchestras of Europe. As a teacher, Professor de Ritis has developed a sound curriculum of chamber music and bassoon instruction, a passion in its own right that started at the age of 18. He has taught for many years on a regular basis at the conservatory of music Luisa D'Annunzio in Pescara and given master classes at international music festivals and leading conservatories.



KEITARO YOSHIOKA

Eliot Fisk, guitar, is known worldwide as a charismatic performer famed for his adventurous and virtuosic repertoire. He is also celebrated for his willingness to take art music into unusual venues (schools, senior centers, and even logging camps and prisons). Eliot Fisk has performed as soloist with major orchestras across the country and worldwide, and with a dizzying array of chamber music colleagues including the Shanghai, Juilliard, Borromeo, and Miro String Quartets. He has invented numerous crossover projects with, among others, Paco Peña, flamenco guitar; Joe Pass and Bill Frisell, jazz guitar; chanteuse Ute Lemper, and Turkish music specialist Burhan Öçal. Fisk's innumerable transcriptions have transformed the repertoire of the classical guitar, and numerous new works have been dedicated to him by composers as varied as Luciano Berio, Leonardo Balada, Robert Beaser, Nicholas Maw, George Rochberg, Daniel Bernard Roumain and Kurt Schwertsik. A new quintet for guitar and strings is currently being composed for Fisk and the Arditti String Quartet by eminent German composer Wolfgang Rihm.

Eliot Fisk remains a prolific recording artist. Recent releases include Ralf Gawlick's *Kollwitz-Konnex* for soprano and guitar (Musica Omnia), a pair of CDs of new music dedicated to and transcribed by Fisk (Wildner Records), and duo discs with flamenco legend Paco Peña (on

Nimbus Records) and cellist Yehuda Hanani (Albany Records). Impending is the long-awaited release on LINN Records of Robert Beaser's monumental Guitar Concerto, dedicated to Fisk, with José Serebrier leading the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Eliot Fisk was the last direct pupil of Andrés Segovia and also studied interpretation with the legendary harpsichordist Ralph Kirkpatrick at Yale University. He is currently Professor at the Universitaet Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, where he teaches in 5 languages, and in Boston at the New England Conservatory, where in 2010 he received the Krasner Award as "Teacher of the Year." Eliot Fisk is Founder and Artistic Director of Boston GuitarFest (www.bostonguitarfest.org) an annual cross-disciplinary event co-sponsored by the New England Conservatory and Northeastern University.



ELISABETH MELCHOIR

Saskia Lankhoorn (Duo X88), versatile Dutch pianist, is an active soloist and chamber musician in the contemporary music scene. Originally from Almere, the Netherlands, she received her bachelor's and master's degrees from the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, under the guidance of Marcel Baudet and Naum Grubert, and also studied with Rudolf Jansen at the Académie de Villecroze in France as well as with Elza Kolodin in France and Freiburg. She won first prize in the National Prinses Christina Competition in 1998 and was a finalist in the Royal Concertgebouw's 58th Vriendenkrans Competition in 2007,

where her duo was honored with both the Press Prize and the Audience Award.

Saskia Lankhoorn's dedication to performing contemporary music dates from an early age; 1995 marked her first appearance on national radio, playing Arnold Schoenberg's *Sechs Kleine Klavierstücke*. Saskia performs with the Asko|Schönberg ensemble and ELECTRA, and has premiered new works with her trans-Atlantic piano duo X88 with Canadian pianist Vicky Chow. She is a co-founder of Ensemble Klang, which has performed in festivals worldwide

including the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Cultural Olympiad UK 2012, and Sonic Festival in New York City.

Her critically acclaimed solo concerts, combining new art music with a strong performance and sound concept, include "Chords & Cables" (presented in spring 2014), exploring the external sound possibilities of the piano in combination with electronic and prepared sounds. Saskia performs throughout the Netherlands in venues such as the Concertgebouw and Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ in Amsterdam, as well as Symphony Space NY in the USA. She made her solo debut at the Royal Concertgebouw in October 2016. *Dances & Canons*, her first solo CD on ECM Records, was released in October 2014. Featuring a suite of solo piano works by Kate Moore, it was nominated for the 2015 Edison Award.



LIZ LINDER

Gil Rose is a conductor helping to shape the future of classical music. His dynamic performances and many recordings have garnered international critical praise.

In 1996, Mr. Rose founded the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), the foremost professional orchestra dedicated exclusively to performing and recording symphonic music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Under his leadership, BMOP's unique programming and high performance standards have attracted critical acclaim and earned the orchestra fifteen ASCAP awards for adventurous programming as well as the John S. Edwards Award for Strongest Commitment to New American Music.

Mr. Rose maintains a busy schedule as a guest conductor on both the opera and symphonic platforms. He made his Tanglewood debut in 2002 and in 2003 debuted with the Netherlands Radio Symphony at the Holland Festival. He has led the American Composers Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra of the Ukraine, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, and the National Orchestra of Porto. In 2015, he made his Japanese debut substituting for Seiji Ozawa at the Matsumoto Festival conducting Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict*, and in March 2016 made his debut with New York City Opera at the Appel Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Over the past decade, Mr. Rose has also built a reputation as one of the country's most inventive and versatile opera conductors. He founded Odyssey Opera, a company dedicated to presenting eclectic operatic repertoire in a variety of formats, in September 2013. Prior to Odyssey Opera, Mr. Rose led Opera Boston as its Music Director starting in 2003, and in 2010 was appointed the company's first Artistic Director. He led Opera Boston in several

premieres including the world premiere of Zhou Long's *Madame White Snake*, which won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2011. With Opera Unlimited, a contemporary opera festival associated with Opera Boston, he led the world premiere of Elena Ruehr's *Toussaint Before the Spirits*, the New England premiere of Thomas Adès's *Powder Her Face*, as well as the revival of John Harbison's *Full Moon in March* and the North American premiere of Peter Eötvös's *Angels in America*.

Mr. Rose and BMOP partnered with the American Repertory Theater, Chicago Opera Theater, and the MIT Media Lab to create the world premiere of composer Tod Machover's *Death and the Powers* (a runner-up for the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music). He conducted this seminal multimedia work at its world premiere at the Opera Garnier in Monte Carlo, Monaco, in September 2010.

An active recording artist, Gil Rose serves as the executive producer of the BMOP/sound recording label. His extensive discography includes world premiere recordings of music by John Cage, Lukas Foss, Charles Fussell, Michael Gandolfi, Tod Machover, Steven Mackey, Evan Ziporyn, and many others on such labels as Albany, Arsis, Chandos, ECM, Naxos, New World, and BMOP/sound.

Mr. Rose has led the longstanding Monadnock Music Festival in historic Peterborough, NH, since his appointment as Artistic Director in 2012, conducting several premieres and making his opera stage directing debut in two revivals of operas by Dominick Argento.

Mr. Rose has curated the Fromm Concerts at Harvard three times and served as the first curator of the Ditson Festival of Contemporary Music at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art. As an educator, he served five years as Director of Orchestral Activities at Tufts University and in 2012 joined the faculty of Northeastern University as Artist-in-Residence and Professor of Practice. In 2007, Mr. Rose was awarded Columbia University's prestigious Ditson Award as well as an ASCAP Concert Music Award for his exemplary commitment to new American music. He is a four-time Grammy Award nominee.



The **Boston Modern Orchestra Project** is the premier orchestra in the United States dedicated exclusively to commissioning, performing, and recording music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. A unique institution of crucial artistic importance to today's musical world, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP) exists to disseminate exceptional orchestral music of the present and recent past via performances and recordings of the highest caliber.

Founded by Artistic Director Gil Rose in 1996, BMOP has championed composers whose careers span nine decades. Each season, Rose brings BMOP's award-winning orchestra, renowned soloists, and influential composers to the stage of New England Conservatory's historic Jordan Hall in a series that offers the most diverse orchestral programming in the city. The musicians of BMOP are consistently lauded for the energy, imagination, and passion with which they infuse the music of the present era.

BMOP's distinguished and adventurous track record includes premieres and recordings of monumental and provocative new works such as John Harbison's ballet *Ulysses*, Louis Andriessen's *Trilogy of the Last Day*, and Tod Machover's *Death and the Powers*. A perennial

winner of the ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, the orchestra has been featured at festivals including Opera Unlimited, the Ditson Festival of Contemporary Music with the ICA/Boston, Tanglewood, the Boston Cyberarts Festival, the Festival of New American Music (Sacramento, CA), Music on the Edge (Pittsburgh, PA), and the MATA Festival in New York. During its 20th anniversary season, BMOP was named Musical America's 2016 Ensemble of the Year, the first symphony orchestra in the organization's history to receive this distinction.

BMOP has actively pursued a role in music education through composer residencies, collaborations with colleges, and an ongoing relationship with the New England Conservatory, where it is Affiliate Orchestra for New Music. The musicians of BMOP are equally at home in Symphony Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, and in Cambridge's Club Oberon and Boston's Club Café, where they pursued a popular, composer-led Club Concert series from 2004 to 2012.

BMOP/sound, BMOP's independent record label, was created in 2008 to provide a platform for BMOP's extensive archive of music, as well as to provide widespread, top-quality, permanent access to both classics of the 20th century and the music of today's most innovative composers. BMOP/sound has garnered praise from the national and international press; it is the recipient of five Grammy Award nominations and its releases have appeared on the year-end "Best of" lists of *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, National Public Radio, *Time Out New York*, *American Record Guide*, *Downbeat Magazine*, WBUR, NewMusicBox, and others.

BMOP expands the horizon of a typical "night at the symphony." Admired, praised, and sought after by artists, presenters, critics, and audiophiles, BMOP and BMOP/sound are uniquely positioned to redefine the new music concert and recording experience.

FLUTE

Sarah Brady*
(piccolo, alto flute) [1-2]
Rachel Braude (piccolo) [1, 3]
Meghan Jacoby [1]
Jessica Lizak (piccolo, alto
flute, bass flute) [1-2, 4]

OBOE

Nancy Dimock [1]
Laura Pardee Schaefer
(English horn) [1]
Jennifer Slowik*
(English horn) [1-4]

CLARINET

Gary Gorczyca
(bass clarinet) [1]
Jan Halloran [1]
Michael Norsworthy* [1-4]
Kevin Price [2]

BASSOON

Sebastian Chavez* [2]
Ronald Haroutunian* [1, 3]
Adrian Morejon [1, 4]
Margaret Phillips
(contrabassoon) [1-2]

HORN

Alyssa Daly [1]
Eli Epstein [1, 3]
Neil Godwin [2]
Whitacre Hill* [1, 3]
Clark Matthews* [2]
Kevin Owen* [1, 4]
Lee Wadenpfehl [4]

TRUMPET

Eric Berlin [1]
Terry Everson* [1-3]
Richard Watson [1-2]

TROMBONE

Hans Bohn* [1-3]
Martin Wittenberg [1-2]

BASS TROMBONE

Christopher Beaudry [2]

TUBA

Takatsugu Hagiwara [1]
Angel Subero [2]

PERCUSSION

Darrell Green [4]
Jonathan Hess [3]
William Manley [2]
Craig McNutt* (timpani) [1, 3-4]
Robert Schulz* [1-2, 4]
Nicholas Tolle [1]
Aaron Trant [2]

HARP

Amanda Romano [1, 4]

PIANO

Donald Berman [3]
Linda Osborn (celesta) [2-4]

ACCORDION

Roberto Cassan [2]

VIOLIN I

Gabriel Boyers [2]
Deborah Boykan [1]
Piotr Buczek [1-4]
Colin Davis [4]
Gabriela Diaz* [2]
Charles Dimmick* [1, 3]
Tudor Dornescu [1]
Sue Faux [1]
Omar Chen Guey [3]
Alice Hallstrom* [1, 3-4]
Lilit Hartunian [1]
Oana Lacatus [1-2, 4]
Sonja Larson [1]
Megumi Stohs Lewis [3]
Shaw Pong Liu [2]
Amy Sims [1-4]
Sarita Uranovsky [1, 4]
Ethan Wood [1]

VIOLIN II

Elizabeth Abbate [2]
Melanie Auclair-Fortier [3]
Deborah Boykan [4]
Colleen Brannen* [1-3]
Heidi Braun-Hill* [3]
Sasha Callahan [1, 3-4]
Julia Cash [1]
Gabriela Diaz* [1]
Tudor Dornescu [2]
Lois Finkel [3]
Tera Gorsett [1, 4]
Abigail Karr [1]
Annegret Klaua [2]
Anna Korsunsky [2]
Aleksandra Labinska [1]
Mina Lavcheva [1-2, 4]
Megumi Stohs Lewis* [4]
Shaw Pong Liu [4]
Kay Rooney Matthews [1]
Annie Rabbat [3]
Amy Rawstron [1]

VIOLA

Mark Berger [3]
Abigail Kubert Cross [1]
Adrienne Elisha [2]
Joan Ellersick* [2-3]
Nathaniel Farny [1, 3]
David Feltner [3-4]
Noriko Futagami* [1-2, 4]
Kimberly Lehmann [1]
Dimitar Petkov [1, 4]
Emily Rideout [1, 4]
Emily Rome [1-2]
Alexander Vavilov [1]

CELLO

Brandon Brooks [1, 4]
Nicole Cariglia [2-3]
Holgen Gjoni [1, 4]
Katherine Kayaian [2]
Jing Li* [1, 3-4]
Loewi Lin [1]
Ming-Hui Lin [1]

Rafael Popper-Keizer* [2-3]
Aristides Rivas [1]

BASS

Anthony D'Amico* [1-2]
Scot Fitzsimmons [1-4]
Robert Lynam [1]
Bebo Shiu* [1, 3-4]

ELECTRONICS

Brian Dixon, keyboard sample
programmer [2]
Ian Headley, live electronics [2]

KEY:

[1] Amsterdam
[2] Riflessioni
[3] Ballet
[4] Pop

*Principals

Anthony Paul De Ritis

Amsterdam
Riflessioni
Ballet
Pop Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra

Producer: Gil Rose
Recording and postproduction: Joel Gordon
SACD authoring: Brad Michel

All works on this disc are published by the composer.

Ballet was recorded on May 31, 2013 at Distler Performance Hall (Medford, MA), *Pop Concerto* was recorded on June 29, 2014 at Jordan Hall (Boston, MA), *Amsterdam* was recorded on July 1, 2014 at Jordan Hall, and *Riflessioni* was recorded on October 14, 2014 at Jordan Hall.

This recording was made possible in part by The Mattina R. Proctor Foundation and Northeastern University.

Special thanks to Robert Schulz for his invaluable percussion advice; Ian Headley, Howie Kenty and Brian Dixon for their technological support; Apostolos Paraskevas and Bob Ward for reading through drafts of *Pop Concerto* and for introducing me to the world of guitar; Gil Rose for the vision, skill and dedication that is BMOP; Sissie Cohen and Zoe Kemmerling for their ceaseless—and wonderfully pleasant—attention to detail; to Joel Gordon, for his wizardry behind the mixing board, and Maizie for her unflagging encouragement; Jung-Ho Pak for giving me so many opportunities; Robert Kirzinger for writing—you are amazing; Darrell Green for his groove; David Herlihy for legal advice; Robert E. Davoli and Eileen McDonagh Charitable Foundation for their support of the Boston Guitar Fest; to David Wessel for unending inspirational genius; to Danna Frangione for showing me the power of dance; for the love, friendship and support of (in alphabetical order) Afshaan Alter, David Claman, Angela De Ritis, Mike Fregel, John Friar, Benoit Granier, Georg Hajdu, David Pereira, Arthur Rishi, Brian Robison, Alexandra Sherman, Maureen Ton, Will Wakeling, and Zhang Wenjun; and finally to Eliot Fisk, Patrick de Ritis, Vicky Chow, Saskia Lankhoorn, and the musicians of BMOP for their incredible talent—their artistry is what gives this CD life. Thank you!

"Bring It On" by L. Coleman, W. Melvin, H. Seal, G. Isidore, G. Rizzo, Seal Samuel. BMG Rights Management Rosetta VM PKA Virgin Music, PeerMusic III Ltd, copyright control, DCTM BLVD OBO SPZ Music Inc. | "You Oughta Know" by Alanis Morissette, Glen Ballard. Songs of Universal, Inc. OBO Vanhurst Place Music. Penny Farthing Music OBO Arloval Music. | "Beautiful Day" by Adam Clayton, Bono, Larry Mullen, Jr., The Edge Universal-Polygram Int'l OBO Universal Music Publ. B.V. | "The Way You Make Me Feel" by Michael Jackson. Sony/ATV Songs.

Cover: artwork: Guitar. Photo by Patrik Ontkovič.

© 2017 BMOP/sound 1051
Design: John Kramer
Editor: Zoe Kemmerling



