

BMOP

GIL ROSE | CONDUCTOR

SEASON 2023 - 24

TIME CHANGE FOUR COMMISSIONS & PREMIERES



OCTOBER 7, 2023 | JORDAN HALL

RECENT RELEASES



TOBIAS PICKER *Awakenings*

New from BMOP/sound, based on the eponymous 1973 bestselling book by Dr. Oliver Sacks, *Awakenings* is a touching musical journey that draws both on source material and personal experience. Set primarily in a Bronx hospital from 1966 to the end of 1969, it tells the true story of the eminent neurologist Dr. Oliver Sacks, who received worldwide acclaim for bringing new hope to survivors of the “sleeping-sickness” epidemic of the 1920s.



CORIGLIANO · ADAMO *The Lord of Cries*

New from Pentatone, *The Lord of Cries* is a breathtaking opera by John Corigliano and Mark Adamo. Telling the story of Euripides's *The Bacchae* with the characters of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, the piece explores the power of sexual desire and human's need to blame and attack others for what they can neither resist nor accept in themselves.

TIME CHANGE

FOUR COMMISSIONS & PREMIERES

OCTOBER 7, 2023 | 8:00PM

JORDAN HALL AT NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY

JOHN AYLWARD *Eternal Return* (2022)*

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| I. <i>Awakenings</i> | III. <i>Music Circles</i> |
| II. <i>Incantation</i> | IV. <i>Shadow Procession</i> |

ERIC MOE *The Sweetness of Despair, the Necessity of Hope* (2021) *

- I. *The Sweetness of Despair*
 - II. *The Necessity of Hope*
- Eric Moe, Piano*

INTERMISSION

RICHARD CORNELL *Time Rift* (2020)*

- I. *Time Rift*
- II. *Listening to the Reach*

SHELLEY WASHINGTON *Both* (2022)**

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| I. <i>Travel</i> | III. <i>Where to Next?</i> |
| II. <i>Teeny Tiny Little Things</i> | IV. <i>11:30 PM - 4:30 AM</i> |

* World Premiere

** East Coast Premiere

Concert order subject to change.



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BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT

FLUTE

Ashley Addington
Allison Parramore

OBOE

Mary Cicconetti
Laura Pardee Schaefer

CLARINET

Jan Halloran
Rane Moore

BASSOON

Jensen Ling
Adrian Morejon

HORN

Alyssa Daly
Neil Godwin

TRUMPET

Dana Oaks
Andrew Sorg

TROMBONE

Alex Knutrud
Mike Tybursky

BASS TROMBONE

Christopher Beaudry

TUBA

Ben Vasko

TIMPANI

Craig McNutt

PERCUSSION

Robert Schulz
Nick Tolle

PIANO

Yoko Hagino

HARP

Amanda Romano

VIOLIN I

Gabriela Diaz*
Piotr Buczek
Ben Carson
Tudor Dornecu
Susan Jensen
Sean Larkin
Amy Sims
Megumi Stohs

VIOLIN II

Colleen Brannen
Paola Caballero
Lilit Hartunian
Betsy Hinkle
Yumi Okada
Nicole Parks
Kay Rooney
Dave Rubin

VIOLA

Eve Boltax
Noriko Futagami
Ashleigh Gordon
Emily Rideout
Emily Rome
Alexander Vavilov

CELLO

Nicole Cariglia
Nick Johnson
Jing Li
David Russell

BASS

Michael Hartery
Julianne Russell

JOHN AYLWARD *Eternal Return* (2022)

Composer John Aylward grew up in Tucson, Arizona, along the border of Mexico surrounded by the beautifully expansive and cacti-studded Sonoran Desert. It is no wonder then that the lasting impact of this uncanny environment can be easily found in much of his music, which shifts between rhythmic restlessness and cavernous calms. Indeed, a dynamic of push-and-pull is a constant in Aylward's compositional voice, all directed and made coherent by a benevolently acerbic composed wit concerned with a balance of rhythmic vitality, rigorous formal qualities, and forthright, emotional lyricism. About his roots, Aylward explains, "My music processes the impacts of [my] earlier life, filled with a deep sense of community, rich expressions of converging cultural histories, and the otherworldly landscapes of the desert."

Further illumination comes from his mother's own extraordinary story. (See Aylward's recent work for stage, *Angelus* (2014-18), for more.) A German refugee from World War II and immigrant to the United States, Aylward's mother Monika would relate her experience escaping Europe to her young children "as fairy tales," recalls the composer. What would have been described originally as magic realism — for example, a magical truck appearing with food — would in reality be later explained to her grown-up children as lines of starving refugees, waiting hungrily outside the camp as they watched vehicles go by in hopes that some food might accidentally fall off of one of them. It is no wonder then that Aylward's compositional style has always been deeply steeped in a sense of humanism. His musical aesthetic strives to bridge the gap between the ineffable and pragmatic by means of a pithy sense of pathos and clarity, exploring topics related to landscape and culture such as ancestral concepts of time, appropriations of indigenous cultures into surrealism and impressionism, and the connections between native traditions and Greco-Roman mythology.

Aylward's awards and fellowships have included those from the John S. Guggenheim Foundation, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University, the Koussevitzky Commission from the Library of Congress, the Fulbright Foundation, the MacDowell Colony, Tanglewood, the Aspen Music School, the Atlantic Center for the Arts, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, First Prize from the International Society for Contemporary Music, and many others. Aylward received his undergraduate degree in piano from University of Arizona and both masters and doctoral degrees in composition from Brandeis University. He currently teaches at Clark University at the Department of Visual and Performing Arts.

Aylward's piece for orchestra, *Eternal Return*, is divided into four parts, all to be played seamlessly in an attacca fashion (without pause between movements). The title references common terrain for the composer, that of Greco-Roman culture. While the philosophical idea of eternal return may have originated with the Pythagoreans, Stoicism would later latch onto and further elaborate upon this idea that the universe is destroyed by cataclysm (εκπύρωσις or έκπύρωσις) only to be reborn (παλιγγενεσία or παλιγγενεσία) in an endlessly returning loop. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, this sense of death and rebirth takes on new meaning as the music community begins to reevaluate and rebuild after immense and widespread hardship.

The first movement, *Awakening*, begins abruptly, almost as if starting from a fevered dream in a frantic state or as if acclimating to an overwhelming epiphany or realization about reality. Clouds of sound from the collections of instruments, always in the act of gathering and dispersing, make up the drama of the music here. Clusters of notes and figures accumulate, growing into dense timbral thickets, sometimes suddenly leading into clearings of sparse pointillism or suspension. Marked "fast, insistent" in the score, descending scalar passages by winds and violins ride atop waves of swelling brass and low strings. Skittering and nervous, eventually militaristic-like percussion calls the rest of the orchestra to attention as brass instruments are added into the mix. Giving up their supportive role, low strings cannot help but join in on the incessant downward marching motifs as well, continuing until they are left alone to exhaust themselves as pointedly impressionistic gestures from the harp signal and foreshadow the next movement.

Incantation begins in a more solemn and mysterious way. Rising-and-falling arpeggios are passed between clarinet and harp in a conversationally antiphonal manner, making up an active foreground that dramatically juxtaposes the more static, non-vibrato swathes of sound from high winds and strings. As in the first movement, the strings are again lured into the action, adding a more brooding and nervous tone to the proceedings. They are soon followed by the winds, as well. However, the texture of the music becomes more fragile as the winds transition into more punctuated gestures of impressionistic aplomb, marked as “diaphanous, still somewhat excited.” Disjointed textures, created by a compositional technique called *hocket* where instruments intermesh in a holistic way to make up and complete more fully fleshed-out textures, slowly fade away to make room for a burgeoning unison of tutti strings as the music becomes heavier and approaches another boundary-marking stillness.

The third movement, entitled *Mystic Circles*, starts in a more wistful way, contrasting a meandering duet of clarinets with playful pointillistic percussion writing. The duet’s entwined writhing rouses other instruments to their cause, inevitably building from the music’s accretion; but the music climbs in register only to fall back down again shortly thereafter, thereby creating a music analogous to a circle where the beginning is the end is the beginning, so to speak. Such a music of circular “eternal returns” is inherently restless, slowly undulating back and forth between states. Indeed, this process also continues throughout the fourth movement, *Shadow Procession* — perhaps a reference to South African artist William Kentridge’s short film of silhouetted animation of the same name. (Both notably draw upon Plato’s *Allegory of the Cave* as inspiration, of course.) Here at the finale, Aylward crafts a music that flows and glides with *scorrevole* fluency but is never lacking in its variation while doing so. Excited and motoric textures may become more tranquil yet will show no signs of slowing, pressing forward into suddenly broader vistas of musical landscape. At last, a return to the first movement’s nervous and skittering tone is juxtaposed with a languid *legato* whose increased smoothness only seems to facilitate and lubricate the rapid-fire runs that rush the music into its final moments.

ERIC MOE *The Sweetness of Despair, the Necessity of Hope* (2021)

Eric Moe, Piano

Eric Moe is a pianist/keyboardist and composer (b. 1954), educated at the University of California at Berkeley (MA, PhD) and at Princeton University (AB). Moe's music has been described as "maximal minimalism," a portrayal that applies extremely well to *The Sweetness of Despair, the Necessity of Hope*. While a minimalist rhythmic propulsive character drives Moe's music ever onward, his writing is also highly charged with an equal sense of romanticism and deeply expressive sensitivity. Also notably, his work has been described as "Rachmaninoff in hell" and "of winning exuberance." Indeed, Moe's "disregard for stylistic orthodoxies" makes all the more sense for a composer who is also an extremely accomplished performer. His playing can be heard on the Koch, CRI, Mode, Albany, New World Records, and Innova labels in the music of John Cage, Roger Zahab, Marc-Antonio Consoli, Mathew Rosenblum, Jay Reise, Ezra Sims, David Keberle, Felix Draeseke, and many others in addition to his own. He adds that "[h]e writes music he enjoys playing, and otherwise plays music he wishes he'd written." Moe is represented by Howard Stokar Management. His musicianship has won him many awards and honors, including the Lakond Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a Guggenheim Fellowship; commissions from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Fromm Foundation, the Koussevitzky Foundation, and Meet-the-Composer USA; fellowships from the Wellesley Composer's Conference and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts; and residencies at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Bellagio, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Millay Colony, the Ragdale Foundation, the Montana Artists Refuge, and the American Dance Festival. He is currently Professor of Composition and Theory at the University of Pittsburgh, where he has taught since 1989 and directs the graduate program in composition and the department's electroacoustic music studio.

The Sweetness of Despair, the Necessity of Hope, a world premiere written for the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and piano soloist, is framed by composer Eric Moe in two movements: the first dealing with despair, and the second hope. This emphasis on emotional duality grapples with the two faces that made up the shared experience of the "COVID-19 pandemic" coin — that is, none of us could entirely escape from being impacted by both the crushing despair or the need for hope during the worldwide emergency. Indeed, our collective stories from this time are ripe not only with moments of faltering, but moments of supporting each other through the hard times as well. About the state of concert music during this period (and the nature of tonight's program), BMOP's Conductor and Artistic Director Gil Rose further elaborates:

“Orchestras and musicians all around the world stopped performing during the pandemic. Conversely, composers did not stop writing during the pandemic! We are fortunate to have a plethora of new works composed for us over the past few years just waiting for listeners to enjoy. Not surprisingly, all the pieces on this program are musical explorations of introspection, empathy, mortality (and immortality), and time — notions that resonate with most of us.”

With its concerto-like format, Moe’s work for soloist and orchestra inherently explores introspection felt during periods of isolation and quarantine (feelings that at-risk individuals are still struggling with today, lest we forget) by rhetorically positioning the solo pianist amongst larger orchestral forces. In this way, it begs the question, who is steering the musical ship at any given moment in Moe’s work: the soloist or the orchestra? Furthermore, the implied dualism of Moe’s two movements is far more complex than just depicting two contrasting emotions, as the title’s unlikely pairing of sweetness with despair implies. Is this so-called sweetness of despair found in the relinquishment of control? (Again, who is in control of the music, the soloist or orchestra?) And is the necessity of hope only fulfilled by an eventual triumph of will? While we might not get a definitive answer this evening — the power of music being perhaps its abstract quality, to which we all react differently — these questions are at the heart of Moe’s work, which explores them in myriad ways.

The first of the two movements, *The Sweetness of Despair*, opens in a somber manner, with a bell-like ringing of vibraphone supported by the string section, as if in remembrance of those we lost. The piano soon enters, reinforcing the tenderly tolling tone of the music; but if this is a sort of funeral music of sorts, it is indeed a rather odd one. First, the music is written in a highly syncopated 5/4 time signature, blurring the sense of any march-like quality. Additionally, the harmonies are of a jazzier character, urbane yet humanist — almost like that of a Ghibli Studios soundtrack. Indeed, if we persist with listening to Moe’s piece as an in memoriam music, it soon shifts into a more rambunctious mode, with skittering interplay between piano, wind, and brass whose embers are stoked by the brief bombast of a drum set — a jazz funeral, of sorts! But not all is a celebration for the survivors or in memory of those lost. While there are plenty of moments of solitude for the soloist as the movement progresses, there is also a deep loneliness felt from the orchestra as they pick up the musical responsibility left behind by the soloist — almost like they yearn achingly for the piano’s return. Luckily, they (and we) never have to wait too long for this reunion. There is plenty of raucous fun to be had here. The piano often evokes the rhythmic mischievousness of the drum set, insistently jabbing with crunchy and dissonant intervals that would be comfortably at home in a free jazz jam à la the infamous pianist Cecil Taylor. At one point, piano and percussion join forces to trill devilishly, combining the more rigid pitches of the piano with the

bending and wavering intonation of the flexitone. Indeed, moments of lightness are contrasted with heavy and ponderous pesante passages throughout, until finally the music gives way to the opening's bell-like tolling again, and the soloist leaves the orchestra to yearn and wander searchingly without them until the next movement, which is cued by a final toll of piano and vibraphone.

The second movement opens very differently, like sounds emanating from a strange machine settling into a music engaged in a *meccanico* kind of perpetual motion, often associated with 20th-century minimalism. But further back in time than that, this opening brings to mind the closing moments of Shostakovich's 15th Symphony, whose finale has been described as ending "in a hospital ward, with the percussive rattles and wheezes of those hospital machines" (Betsy Reed, *The Guardian*), a characterization that eerily reminds one of intubated patients on ventilators at the height of the pandemic. In Moe's work, the clattering assemblage of xylophone, finger cymbal, wood block, and repeated high notes on piano instill a sense of tautness and acrobatic danger. But the high-register repulsiveness eventually falls away, giving way into lower registers where rapid figures lead into a more directly dour music. Yet this gloom cannot keep the music held down, which builds from these depths into scrabbling passages that climb higher and higher in an effort to escape. This climbing achieves a fast-paced and hair-raising insistence, marked in the score with "Wer reitet so spät durch Nacht und Wind?" ("Who rides so late through night and wind?") This is, of course, a reference to the famous poem, "Erlkönig," by Goethe set to music by Franz Schubert for voice and piano, well-known for its driving rhythm and sense of urgency in the face of life and death. Moe morphs this pianistic reference to Schubert into something more akin to Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps* — a ritualistic, maddened, and ecstatic dance of impending sacrifice — by blurring a sense of regular meter by pivoting back and forth between odd time signatures (for example, 6/16, 5/16, and 7/16). The remainder of the movement is this tried-and-true recipe repeated: that is, introduce an insistently rhythmic idea (usually with the piano), then build up the orchestra around it into a climactic crash, deconstruct it, then begin the process again. All of this is very well and good, musically speaking, of course — but what of the "necessity of hope" implied by the movement's title? Perhaps the idea of hope is just that: an idea that fuels the music ever forward. The orchestra seems to repeatedly try to climb away from any sense of gloom and danger, yet the goal here may not be about achieving escape velocity from this compositional recipe. Instead, the journey itself may be the point, not the ultimate perfection of a musical destination. In the real world, while we strive to control this coronavirus, we very well know that it still exists and poses a threat even as hospital numbers and death rates dwindle. Yet, this is no reason to give up hope, which is indeed necessary for any progress.

RICHARD CORNELL *Time Rift* (2020)*

Richard Cornell is a Boston native and was trained at the Longy School of Music, the New England Conservatory (MA), and the Eastman School (PhD). A longtime Professor of Music, Composition, and Music Theory at the Boston University College of Fine Arts, School of Music, he has also served on the faculties of the Berkshire Music Center, MIT, and the Longy School. Cornell is also director of Boston University's Electroacoustic Music studios and the Boston University Tanglewood Institute's Young Artists Composition Program, and he was recently Composer in Residence with the New England Philharmonic. Cornell's work has been awarded prizes from the National Endowment for the Arts, The New England Foundation for the Arts, Meet the Composer, the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities, the University of Rochester, and the MacDowell and Yaddo artist colonies. The Fromm Music Foundation, A Far Cry, Boston Musica Viva, Collage New Music, New England Philharmonic, Muir Quartet, and Harvard Musical Association have commissioned his works. In the 1980s, he was a founding member of the Composers in Red Sneakers, an important Boston-based composers collective. Recordings of his work as composer and conductor are available on Northeastern University's Greenline Records.

Cornell works in a range of symphonic and chamber music forms, as well as sound art and installation. Cornell's collaborative installations with visual artists have been presented at the Hafnarborg Museum (Reykjavik), Taipei Biennale, Proyecto ACE (Buenos Aires), and Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art, among others. He has collaborated with a number of visual artists. Works he developed with visual artist Deborah Cornell, have been presented at Indiana University, Boston CyberArts, SuperComputing, Southern Graphics International in San Francisco, International Symposium on Electronic Art in Dubai, Vancouver, and at the Krakow Triennial, where *Reflecting Place* earned the Grand Prix.

Cornell's new work, *Time Rift*, was written for the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and was made possible by a grant from The Fromm Music Foundation. It is a quixotic work with an equally evocative title, a piece where dream-like transformations shift rapidly back and forth between music that is both amorphous and highly structured. There is a sense of constant flux, an impression that anything could happen at any given moment, which makes sense given the atemporal implications of the title. About his titles, Cornell states:

“The titles are the last thing written. I always liked Debussy's practice of appending the titles at the conclusion of his Preludes (No. 7: *Ce qu'a vu le vent d'ouest*, “What the west wind saw”) instead of on the first page. My titles describe, in some way, a state of mind or an attitude and not an agenda. The danger of such titles, of course, is that they are too often taken literally, and people look into the music for depictions ... Titles are only meant to be suggestive.”

While at risk of reading too deeply, the neologism “time rift” has a long history in the genre of science fiction and is useful to explore as a possible lens for interpretation of Cornell's work. In science fiction, a time rift is often an anomaly taking the form of a tear in the space-time continuum, characterized by temporal distortions that allow for the displacement of people or objects through space and time, even making traveling through the past, present, and future possible.

While the possibility of a “time rift” anomaly may seem dubious to us in the real world, we can still imagine and therefore understand how such a thing might work if it did exist. Perhaps the same kind of openness to the illogical also serves us when we listen to music, whose narrative function is not necessarily bound by the sort of linearity or mundane cause-and-effect we put to use every day in order to navigate our lives in the real world. Science-fiction author Samuel R. Delany has said about the use of neologisms that, “Often, in SF, the writer puts together two word roots, and the resultant term produces a new image for the reader [... therefore, t]he range of SF images is governed entirely by the sayable – rather than by any soft-edged concept like the scientifically believable or even the possible.” Music is equally adaptable to such ponderous concepts as science fiction, and, as Cornell has said about his own music in regards to another piece (notably his *New Fantasias for Boston ensemble A Far Cry*),

“An idea may recur, or yield to the next. Things may relate but not in an obvious way, and as the composer gives ideas free rein it seems anything can happen. There is a sense of free play and exploration.”

Time Rift often works in this way as the music wanders into surprising sonic avenues and corridors that your ear may not have anticipated or known were coming. The first movement, also entitled *Time Rift*, opens with staccato stabs

from marimba, piano, and pizzicato strings, which cue long sustained notes from the rest of the orchestra, coalescing to form hazy and shimmering harmonies. It is as if these jabs are rending tears in the fabric of silence, allowing for these suspended textures to escape from another sonic dimension, one previously hidden from us. These sustained textures eddy forth and swirl restlessly, crescendoing suddenly and articulating their own end points, behavior that only seems to encourage more tears in the music's space-time fabric and therefore more eddying and swirling. The resulting music is sometimes dissonant and alien, yet at the same time strangely welcoming, centered firmly around its own metalogic. The second movement, *Listening to the Reach*, has much the same musical rhetoric at play as the sonic scintillations in the first movement. Here, however, an increased emphasis is placed on instrumental techniques. For example, listen for the subtle buzzing of "fluttersong" by flutists, which opens the movement. Or listen for the changes in color caused by shifting the position of the bow upon the strings, either moving closer toward the bridge (sul ponticello) or toward the fingers (sul tasto) —indeed, sometimes the bow position will change over the course of a sustained note, for extra effect. Glissandi, a gradual shifting between notes, are also audible, often effectively employed by Cornell in tandem with artificial harmonics by the strings, creating an ethereal and otherworldly sound.

Much like the prismatic instability of a kaleidoscope, the endless psychedelic shifting of timbre and tones in Cornell's writing in *Time Rift* is pleasing in part because of its ceaseless energy and experimental innovation. We can take comfort in this kind of music in the same way we can take comfort in the old adages by ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus — the only constant is change — or by New Englanders — if you don't like the weather, just wait a minute. However, a helpful historical reference may be made. While not exactly the same, Cornell's writing can be compared in its focus to the third movement of Arnold Schoenberg's *Fünf Orchesterstücke*, Op. 16, entitled *Farben* (German for colors). In this movement, Schoenberg's focus is on the gradual timbral-shifting of his harmonies, orchestrated masterfully across many instruments that overlap and blend together, shimmering and hazy. An alternative title for the movement is *Summer Morning by a Lake: Chord-Colors*, from which one can easily imagine the gentle lapping of waves against a shore as the sun rises, catching golden and boisterous upon the water's surface. Cornell's musical language is like this, too, but instead of a placid lake at sunrise, the scene is a bit more chaotic. The music changes abruptly, like an editor is cross-cutting time-lapse footage of nature between different times of day or even season. While the resulting musical textures and gestures can be overwhelming for the uninitiated at times due to their constant chromatic roiling, there is a wonder and stark beauty to be found here amidst the musical violence.

This piece was made possible by the Fromm Music Foundation. FrommMusic
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SHELLEY WASHINGTON *Both* (2022)**

Through the Amplifying Voices program, Shelley Washington's *Both* was co-commissioned by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Aspen Music Festival and School, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and Kansas City Symphony. New Music USA's Amplifying Voices program fosters collaboration toward racial and gender equity in the creation of new orchestral music with the aims to increase the support and promotion of under-represented composers, create space for their contributions to artistic-planning at major national orchestras, and make major strides toward transforming the classical canon for future generations. This initiative has enlisted over forty-five orchestras from across the United States and beyond to premiere new works co-commissioned from nine of today's leading composers — Valerie Coleman, Juan Pablo Contreras, Vijay Iyer, Tania León, Jessie Montgomery, Brian Raphael Nabors, Nina Shekhar, Tyshawn Sorey, and Shelley Washington — each of which will be performed by a minimum of four orchestras.

Washington is a composer, performer, collaborator, and educator who writes music that draws elements from jazz, rock, American folk, and other musical spaces, often confronting themes of social injustice. Washington is also an active performer, a saxophonist and vocalist, who doubles on flute, piccolo, and clarinet. She is a founding member of the composer collective Kinds of Kings, and her music sets out to explore emotions and intentions, using intricate rhythms with grooves, melody, and harmony. Washington has degrees in music and education from Truman State University (BA and MA, respectively), and a Master of Music in composition from New York University. She is currently working on a PhD in composition at Princeton.

Washington's *Both* is a work for orchestra with far-reaching roots in concepts of diversity and inclusion. Washington's own note about her piece is deeply personal, which deserves sharing here:

"Both is inspired by the many dualities I have and carry in my life, the ones I see, and the ones I hope to someday achieve. As someone who often lives between both coasts, is attracted to both men and women, is a contributor in both classical music and D.I.Y. post-rock, is both black and white, experiences both extreme mental highs and extreme mental lows, is both a composer and performer, is both a student and a teacher, is both, is both, is both ... This piece is meant to reflect the fact that you and I both are not either/or. We both can be and possess so many seemingly opposing qualities at the same time that do not diminish any aspect of who we are, but add to its cumulative."

If Washington's biography and composer note underline her omnivorous and wide-ranging artistic influences, her score for *Both* quickly demonstrates her desire to copy more than just the style or techniques of her myriad interests. The most obvious non-traditional inclusion here is speaking as a musical act. In her score, Washington not only asks the members of the orchestra to speak throughout the piece — which she calls *Chatter*, ranging in instruction from “whisper,” “murmur,” “inside voice,” to “exclaim” — she requests that the players tell their stories in their own words. Some examples of her open-ended prompting for the speaking-instrumentalists are “favorite breakfast food,” “favorite childhood memories,” “where did you grow up?,” “celebrity crushes,” “pets you saw this week that you wanted to pet,” etc. The overall effect of Washington's mixing music and speaking together is not unlike listening to headphones while waiting at a train station or airport or some other public space. As strangers walk by and fragments of their conversations are overheard, there is still a strong sense of insulation and emotional import from the music itself, but the snippets of overheard words and phrases make the experience a decidedly shared one. At the premiere of *Both* by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Washington explained, “I hope that you are able to find a little bit of yourself somewhere in the music.” The inclusion of the stories of others, namely the players, into her own musical writing indeed guarantees that there is something for everyone in *Both*.

The first movement, *Travel*, was inspired by Washington's plane trips back and forth between coasts while working on the piece. She would record the sounds of take-off during early-morning flights, which included not only the revving of engines and such mechanical elements but the speaking of those onboard. The music begins rather technique-heavy for the instruments, common for this emerging generation of composers, who have inherited this practice of German composer Helmut Lachenmann's invented musical language built on “extended techniques.” (Lachenmann called this pioneering aesthetic “*musique concrète instrumentale*,” a style that attempted to accomplish sounds more often produced by electronics with instruments.) However, instead of the more ascetic and gravely serious approach often found in Lachenmann and his followers' previous decades of avant garde experimentation, Washington uses aeolian flurries of air, key clacks, and creaking strings in a more inclusive way to guide her expressive post-minimalist style. The overall effect of the movement is indeed like an airplane taking off in the early morning as the sun rises: there is a constant lifting and expanding of the music throughout, both dreamy yet illuminated, always grounded by the levity of members of the orchestra's laughter and relating their favorite things and memories.

The second movement, *Teeny Tiny Little Things*, is aptly named: a dry plinking of vibraphone and piano start things off jauntily, marked “curious” in the score. They are quickly joined by hocketed high winds that join the Steve Reich-like rhythmic repetition, but the expression is more in line with the sort of earnest romanticism of Philip Glass’ kind of minimalism. There are a few start-top moments for added surprise and suspense before the low winds and brass flare up briefly, and the music decays to allow the movement to end as it began. The effect is intimate and infectious, almost like a personal joke — like watching the corners of someone’s mouth turned up into a private smile.

Where to Next? is next with its piano chords (marked “unhurried”) that echo in quintuplet (five-note) patterns. The glockenspiel adds a gentle melody, slow and almost too nonchalant to coalesce into any grand statement, as the strings bring back the “curious” Reich-esque rhythmic figure from the second movement. At this point, there are several layers of activity moving at different speeds, filling out the texture into an almost Aaron Copland-like expansiveness decidedly American in tone. The *Chatter* from the first movement returns as well, allowing the brass section to take up the echo-like chords from the piano. As the speaking parts recede, the orchestra members again take up their instruments, and percussion builds a brief but loping post-rock groove to build upon into an optimistic post-minimalist chorale (again, not unlike a sunrise).

The fourth and final movement, *11:30 PM - 4:30 AM*, takes the optimism of the previous movement’s repetition of echoing chords, but turns it on its head. Here, Washington renders her previous theme more violent and insistent, like an insomniac-esque anxiety not allowing the orchestra to rest. Blasts of drum-set-like percussion eventually release bursts of controlled chaos from the rest of the orchestra, and we are treated to a post-rock-esque sequence of theme and variation. Eventually the musical heaviness coalesces from the chaos, becoming a stately procession of brass, large and imposing, but never faltering under the weight of ornamentation of a grab-bag of the motifs from the previous movements from winds and strings. Washington’s finale is indeed a cumulative music, as promised, possessing seemingly many opposing qualities at the same time that do not detract from the impact of this musical juggernaut until the final double-bar is reached.

ERIC MOE Soloist



Eric Moe, composer of what *The New York Times* has called “music of winning exuberance,” and recently described by his physician as a “pleasant male in no acute distress,” has received significant recognition for his work, including awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Guggenheim Foundation; multiple commissions from the Fromm and Koussevitzky Foundations, the Barlow Endowment, Meet-the-Composer USA, and New Music USA; fellowships and residencies from the

Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the MacDowell Colony, Montalvo Arts Center, Yaddo, Bellagio, Camargo, VCCA, UCross, the Aaron Copland House, Ragdale, Hambidge, the Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians, Avaloch Farms, and the American Dance Festival, among others. *Tri-Stan*, his one-woman opera on a text by David Foster Wallace, was hailed by *The New York Times* as “a tour de force” that “subversively inscribes classical music into pop culture.” A recording is available from Koch International Classics. One review of a recent CD, *Uncanny Affable Machines* (New Focus Recordings), finishes up with “Killer stuff that feels like thinking man’s music.” *Strange Exclaiming Music* (Naxos) was described in *Fanfare* as “wonderfully inventive, often joyful, occasionally melancholy, highly rhythmic, frequently irreverent, absolutely eclectic, and always high-octane music.” *Kick & Ride* (BMOP/sound) was a WQXR album of the week: “...it’s completely easy to succumb to the beats and rhythms that come out of Moe’s fantastical imaginarium, a headspace that ties together the free-flowing atonality of Alban Berg with the guttural rumblings of Samuel Barber’s *Medea*, adding in a healthy dose of superhuman strength.” Other portrait CDs include *Meanwhile Back At The Ranch* (New World Records), *Of Color Braided All Desire, Kicking and Screaming, Up & At ‘Em Siren Songs* (Albany Records), and *On the Tip of My Tongue* (Centaur).

As a pianist, Moe has premiered and performed works by a wide variety of composers. His playing can be heard on the Koch, CRI, Mode, Albany, New World, and Innova labels in the music of John Cage, Roger Zahab, Marc-Antonio Consoli, Mathew Rosenblum, Jay Reise, Ezra Sims, David Keberle, Felix Draeseke, and many others in addition to his own. His solo recording *The Waltz Project Revisited — New Waltzes for Piano*, a CD of waltzes for piano by two generations of American composers, was released in 2004 on Albany. *Gramophone* magazine said of the CD, “Moe’s command of the varied styles is nothing short of remarkable.” He founded and now co-directs Pittsburgh’s *Music on the Edge new music concert series*. Moe studied at Princeton University and U.C. Berkeley. He is currently the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Music at the University of Pittsburgh. Visit his website at www.EricMoe.net

GIL ROSE Artistic Director | Conductor



Gil Rose is one of today's most trailblazing conductors, praised as "amazingly versatile" (*The Boston Globe*) with "a sense of style and sophistication" (*Opera News*). Equally at home performing core repertoire, new music, and lesser-known historic symphonic and operatic works, "Gil Rose is not just a fine conductor, but a peerless curator, sniffing out—and commissioning—off-trend, unheralded, and otherwise underplayed repertoire that nevertheless holds to unfailingly high standards of quality.

In doing so, he's built an indefinable, but unmistakable, personal aesthetic" (WXQR). A global leader in American contemporary music, Rose is the founder of the performing and recording ensemble the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), who "bring an endlessly curious and almost archaeological mind to programming... with each concert, each recording, an essential step in a better direction" (*The New York Times*), as well as the founder of Odyssey Opera, praised by *The New York Times* as "bold and intriguing" and "one of the East Coast's most interesting opera companies."

Since its founding in 1996, the "unique and invaluable" (*The New York Times*) BMOP has grown to become the premier orchestra in the world for commissioning, recording, and performing music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Under Rose's leadership, BMOP has won seventeen ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming, been selected as Musical America's Ensemble of the Year in 2016, and in 2021 was awarded a *Gramophone* Magazine Special Achievement Award in recognition of its extraordinary service to American music of the modern era. Under Rose's baton, BMOP has been featured at numerous festivals including the Festival of New American Music (Sacramento, CA), Concerts at the Library of Congress (Washington, DC), and the MATA Festival in New York.

In 2013, Gil Rose expanded his musical vision with the founding of Odyssey Opera, a company dedicated to eclectic and underperformed operatic repertoire from all eras. Working with an international roster of singers and directors, Odyssey has presented more than 35 operas in Boston, with innovative, thematically linked seasons. The company has also established itself as a leader of modern opera in the United States, having given three world premieres and numerous U.S. premieres.

In addition to his role as conductor, Rose is leading the charge for the preservation and advancement of underperformed works through recordings. BMOP/sound, the independent record label Rose founded in 2008, has released over 86 recordings of contemporary music by today's most innovative composers, including world premieres by John Cage, Lukas Foss, Chen Yi, Anthony Davis, Lisa Bielawa, Steven Mackey, Eric Nathan, and many others. With Rose as executive producer, the label has secured five GRAMMY® nominations and a win in 2020 for Tobias Picker's opera *Fantastic Mr. Fox*. Odyssey Opera's in-house label has released five CDs, most recently a complete version of Camille Saint-Saëns's *Henry VIII*.

Beyond Boston, Gil Rose enjoys a busy schedule as a guest conductor and educator. Equally at home on the podium in both symphonic and operatic repertoire, Rose has led performances by the Tanglewood Opera Orchestra, the Netherlands Radio Symphony, the American Composers Orchestra, the National Symphony of Ukraine, the Matsumoto Festival of Japan, the New York City Opera, and the Juilliard Symphony among others. In addition to being former faculty at Tufts University and Northeastern University, Rose has worked with students across the U.S. at institutions such as Carnegie Mellon University, MIT, New England Conservatory, and the University of California at San Diego. He is a visionary curator of music, inaugurating the Ditson Festival of Music at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art and programming three seasons for the Fromm Concerts at Harvard series. Last season, Gil Rose led Odyssey Opera in a concert performance of three one-act operas by Rachmaninoff and brought John Corigliano and Mark Adamo's new opera *The Lord of Cries* to Boston audiences. In addition, he and BMOP traveled to Carnegie Hall for the orchestra's debut performance and culmination of their 25th season. In 2024, BMOP and Odyssey will co-produce *Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed That Line to Freedom*, the second opera in *As Told By: History, Race, and Justice on the Opera Stage*, a five-year initiative highlighting Black composers and vital figures of Black liberation and thought.



BMOP at Jordan Hall / Photo Credit Dave Jamrog

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A unique institution of crucial artistic importance to today's musical world, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP) is the premier orchestra in the United States dedicated exclusively to commissioning, performing, and recording music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. 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 city's most prestigious halls in a series that offers orchestral programming of unrivaled eclecticism. Musical America's 2016 Ensemble of the Year, BMOP was awarded the 2021 Special Achievement Award from *Gramophone* magazine as "an organization that has championed American music of the 20th and 21st century with passion and panache."



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