

The National Orchestral Institute + Festival
presents

New Lights

Thursday, June 28, 2012
Gildenhorn Recital Hall
8:00 pm

Welcome to NOI's Annual New Lights Concert.

New Lights presents an opportunity for students to explore and experiment with fresh ideas to connect audiences with classical music. This year's students have constructed a seamless program, one that has already begun (!) and will continue without break through a piece, Brandenburg Gate, by Paul Moravec. The overarching idea of the program is to frame the Moravec through various zones, some quite direct, such as the Bach Brandenburg, to those indirect.

After the completion of the Moravec, the audience is encouraged to remain for a conversation about the program with the performers.

As you will have noticed, the performance has already begun with what might be called a "flash mob" rhythmic construction that mirrors the rhythmic motives in the first movement of the Bach Brandenburg Concerto #2 (presaging the Moravec).

Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F Major, BWV 1047
Allegro Moderato

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

The first movement of the Bach will be performed in its entirety, but with a clever substitution of a vibraphone for the trumpet.

String Quartet in 4 Parts
II. Slowly Rocking

John Cage
(1912-1992)

One interesting challenge in this work for performers is that Cage specifies the players to "play without vibrato and with only minimum weight on the bow."

It is one of the last works Cage wrote that is not entirely aleatoric. Prior to beginning to work on the piece, Cage told his parents that he wanted to compose a work which would praise silence without actually using it.

The *String Quartet in Four Parts* is based partly on the Indian view of the seasons, in which the four seasons—spring, summer, autumn and winter—are associated each with a particular force—those of creation, preservation, destruction and quiescence.

- I. Quietly Flowing Along – Summer
- II. Slowly Rocking – Autumn
- III. Nearly Stationary – Winter
- IV. Quodlibet – Spring

Spiegel im Spiegel (1978)

Arvo Pärt
(b. 1935)

As the movement of the Cage Quartet ends, *Spiegel im Spiegel*, a work written in 1978 by the Estonian composer, Arvo Pärt will begin.

The work is composed in the tintinnabuli style, from the Latin word tintinnabulum, or bell, which Pärt derived from his mystical experiences with Renaissance chant music.

Spiegel im Spiegel literally translates to "Mirror in the Mirror" or "Mirrors in the Mirror". The title suggests the additive growth of the solo instrumental line within the piece which spawns from one pitch, and continually grows outwards, first with one note above and then one note below the center of the piece, A. The work ultimately encompasses complete scale sequences based off of the gravitational center of the piece, much as facing mirrors create a perpetually expanding visual image.

In our version of the work the audience is the viewer between the two facing mirrors, which we have represented by placing half of the performing musicians on stage, and the second half off stage. These musicians act as the facing mirrors that echo the solo instrumental lines between each other. The offstage piano gives the sound of bells playing in the distance, which is typical of the Tintinnabuli style.

Improvisation (2012)

NOI Performers and Audience

Spiegel im Spiegel will morph into a chance work for voices. The audience is strongly encouraged to join in. Choose any tone and sing it (vocal quality does not matter). When you run out of breath, take another and choose a tone that you think will add to the sounds already occurring. An interesting group improvisatory composition will soon emerge, and will continue for approximately 4 minutes. In the final minute, short rhythmic motives derived from the Moravec work will begin to be heard played by instruments on the stage and around the hall. On a cue the Moravec will begin.

Brandenburg Gate (2008)

Paul Moravec
(b. 1957)

- I. $J=144$
- II. Pesante, $J=60$
- III. $J=180$

The Brandenburg Concertos are among Bach's most joyous creations. As part of the "New Brandenburg" series, I wanted to project a similar quality of convivial energy. The title, Brandenburg Gate, suggests a portal through which we enter Bach's world of exuberant invention. It also refers to the actual monument in Berlin, which I personally associate primarily with the astonishing images of the opening of the Berlin Wall in November, 1989. It seemed a joyous moment indeed not only for Berliners, but for all of us watching on television around the world. Among other things, this piece evokes the spirit of that historic moment, and does not intend to describe the events literally.

There are three movements in this piece--fast-slow-fast--and they are played attacca, that is, without interruption between the movements. The name Bach, B.A.C.H., can be represented in German musical notation as B-flat-A-C-B-natural. Bach himself used this device occasionally in his own music, and various composers since then have followed his lead in tribute to the master. This piece is, among other things, a musical meditation and elaboration on the motive. As the B.A.C.H motive is a chromatic four-pitch-collection, it well suits my characteristically chromatic harmonic language. Occasionally, the motive serves as the foundation of various twelve-tone rows treated in the general context of my own particular tonality.