

Eastman Musica Nova

Brad Lubman,
music director

Luke Poeppel and Peiwen Zou,
conductors

Wednesday, November 20, 2024

Kilbourn Hall

7:30 PM

~ PROGRAM ~

Eastman Musica Nova

Brad Lubman, *music director*

Luke Poeppel & Peiwen Zou, *conductors*

Rain Coming (1982)

Toru Takemitsu

(1930-1996)

8'

Peiwen Zou, *conductor*

Chamber Symphony (2009/2018)

Louis Karchin

(b. 1951)

25'

I. Flowing

II. Andante

III. Strepitoso

Luke Poeppel, *conductor*

~ INTERMISSION ~

“...zwei Gefühle...”, Musik mit Leonardo (1992)

Helmut Lachenmann

(b. 1935)

22'

Luke Poeppel, *speaker*

Brad Lubman, *conductor*



EASTMAN
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of ROCHESTER

~ PROGRAM NOTES ~

Rain Coming

Rain Coming (1982) is one of Takemitsu's signature works, composed for the London Sinfonietta as part of his Waterscape cycle—a series inspired by the theme of water and rain. Other works in this series include *Rain Tree* (1981) and *Rain Spell* (1982), each exploring water's transformative qualities. In *Rain Coming*, Takemitsu exemplifies his distinctive use of timbre and texture to evoke a shimmering, contemplative atmosphere, suggestive of a moment before a storm.

Takemitsu's characteristic “sea of tonality” is present throughout, capturing the natural rhythm of water and the passage of time, and presenting his unique perception of nature. In a note from the 1960s, Takemitsu wrote: “When I see and listen to flowing water, it reminds me of an old Japanese word, Tao—the Path... My image of Tao is not a continuous road but many disconnected dots. Listeners will experience stillness, motion, time, and space—not as in physics, but as the rhythm of nature and time of mind.”

- Peiwen Zou

Chamber Symphony

My *Chamber Symphony*, composed in 2009, is in three movements, following a moderate-slow-fast format. In the longer first movement, the music seemed to want to rove over and explore a particularly wide spectrum of ideas and harmonic tendencies, and part of the fun was to try to create seamless connections between disparate regions. Exploring the range of color combinations possible with an ensemble of just about one of every instrument was another preoccupation. A third one was writing a movement that gradually “gathered steam” as it progressed, but in a way that the listener would not find obtrusive. The second movement is a simple song (for a reduced instrumentation), with the first violinist as soloist. In the third movement, many of the gestures of the first two movements are recast, but now in the context of a rambunctious finale.

Louis Karchin has been a prominent figure in music for over four decades, composing over 100 works, conducting extensively, and co-founding such groups as the Harvard Group for New Music, the Chamber Players of the League-ISCM, and the Orchestra of the League of Composers. His music has been praised for its “fearless eloquence” (*The New Yorker*), “bare-nerve intensity” (*NY Times*) and “coruscating beauty” (*San Francisco Chronicle*).

Karchin's works include two operas, vocal-instrumental song cycles, and numerous orchestral, chamber and solo pieces. Recordings are on Naxos, Bridge, New World, New Focus, and Albany labels, and his music is published by Wise Music-Edition Peters and the American Composers Alliance. He has received recognition for his work from the American Academy of Arts and Letters (three awards), the Guggenheim Foundation, the Koussevitzky, Barlow and Fromm Music Foundations, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Some major compositions include his *Chamber Symphony*, presented at Tanglewood in 2011, with the composer conducting, and *American Visions*, his extended vocal-instrumental song cycle, on which Karchin collaborated closely with the work's poet, Yevgeny Yevtushenko.

In 2018, the Eastman School of Music initiated an archive of Mr. Karchin's manuscripts and career; in 2022, the school honored him with a Centennial Award for lifetime achievement in music. Mr. Karchin lives in New Jersey with his wife, Julie Sirota Karchin; they have two daughters, Marisa and Lindsay.

“... zwei Gefühle ...”

Lachenmann studied composition with Luigi Nono (one of the very influential and composers from the European avant-garde). The text used in this piece is from Leonardo da Vinci, but Lachenmann has taken only portions of words and often only phonemes, and has structured his “own language” much in the same manner he has done with his music in general. Lachenmann has described this piece as a Mediterranean sound landscape at an inhospitable altitude - a “pastoral” written while pondering over what links him to the composer of “Hay que caminar” (Luigi Nono). Here is Lachenmann's program note:

A large portion of “... zwei Gefühle ...” (“... Two Feelings ...”) was written in Luigi Nono's empty house in Sardinia (he died in 1990), and there is no doubt that his memory influenced my conception of the piece at the time. My work began from the experience of “structural hearing”, which is to say the perception and observation of what resonates in an immediate manner, but also the relationships which structure it. These are tied to interior images and feelings which do not in any way distract from this process of observation, but remain indissolubly linked to it and even give it a particular intensity. This is the strange situation which we encounter when we decipher a message concerning us. The immediate job of perception, the (eventually laborious) recognition and assembly of signs on the one hand and, on the other, the power of the message as an intrinsic structure, are strongly intertwined, to the extent of determining one another and forming a complex and unitary experience. The narrator of Leonardo da Vinci's text in “... zwei Gefühle ...” are the two quasi-complementary conscious parts of an imaginary “Wanderer” and of a reader who marvels in silence. These two function in an unconscious manner akin to the two hands of a blindman working together, which might pass over the text as over a precious inscription, seizing upon its particles, one after the other, and assembling them in his memory as well as can be expected. This assemblage is both concentrated and sober, “damaged” and “struck” (in both senses of the term), since semantically it is an anxious search conducted in ignorance, in which the groping blindman recognizes himself. Whatever resonates is understood as twofold: a material deduced and transformed from the phonetic components and, at the same time, as sparse fragments of a traditional reservoir of affective gestures, arranged in a new way through the sonic relationship of acoustic fields, articulated variously from within, like different volcanoes which come to life or cool off.

~ **PERSONNEL** ~
Eastman Musica Nova

Flute

Helen Freeman
Andy Hankes

Oboe

Myles Meader
Lauren Smith

Clarinet

Barak Dosunmu
Eliza Reimold

Bassoon

Noah Eastman

Horn

Amelia Caruk
Morgan Chalmers

Trumpet

Daniel Adamczyk
Derek Gong

Trombone

Talia Berenbaum
Aidan Fuller

Tuba

Jack Whalen

Percussion

Brandon Berlanga
Sammy DeAngelis
Andrew Lauler
Michael Smith

Keyboard

Hannah Harnest
Wenbo Xing
Peiwen Zou

Harp

Sunshine Quan

Violin

Jingxuan Hu
Leona Liu
Ciara McGuire

Viola

Anna Denfeld
Sujin Kim

Violoncello

Joëlla Becker
Aaron Lieberman

Double Bass

Aidan Tallman

Guitar

Fredrik Jernberg

Piano Lid Operator

Izaiah Gonzales



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