

Friday, October 5, 2018, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall



Max Richter
with the **American Contemporary Music Ensemble**
performing *Infra* and *The Blue Notebooks*

Max Richter, composer and keyboards

American Contemporary Music Ensemble

Clarice Jensen, *cello*

Yuki Numata Resnick, *violin*

Laura Lutzke, *violin*

Caleb Burhans, *viola*

Paul Wiancko, *cello*

Special guest narrator to be announced

Chris Ekers, technical director

Dick Meredith, tour manager

The performance will last approximately 75 minutes, and will include one intermission.

Cal Performances' 2018–19 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

I*nfra* resonates with Max Richter's characteristic musical voice, minimalism combined with sweeping melodies and harmonic complexity. Originally composed for Wayne McGregor's dance work of the same name (premiered by the Royal Ballet in 2008), *Infra* is a piece about traveling and a reaction to the 7/7 bombings in London, a meditation on the political state of the city and the tragedy of those events.

The Blue Notebooks is another attempt by Richter to comment, through music, on society and to exist as an anti-violence statement. It is a subtle and peaceful protest against political, social, and personal brutality. Originally written in 2003, Richter's canon-defining work was seen as radical at the time and is one of the first works of music to combine classical and electronic elements with a post-rock sensibility.

The Blue Notebooks includes narrated texts taken from Franz Kafka's *Blue Octavo Notebooks*—whose title Richter adapted for his suite in order to "...reflect on my sense of the politics of the time. Facts were beginning to be replaced by subjective assertions in the build-up to the Iraq war, which seemed to be viewed as inevitable and justified in spite of all the evidence to the contrary. Kafka's use of the absurd to investigate power structures struck me as highly relevant. He is, of course, the patron saint of doubt, and doubt—about politics, and the way society was heading—was what I was looking to express. The texts were specifically picked because they refer to childhood, or to the passing of time, when everything around is failing."

As Richter points out, this is something buried in *The Blue Notebooks*' very architecture. " 'On The Nature Of Daylight,' the work's second movement, uses a palindromic structure, so that the present and the past coexist." It has since become the album's best-known track, due most notably to its pivotal inclusion in Martin Scorsese's *Shutter Island* and, more recently, Denis Villeneuve's award-winning film *Arrival*, whose palindromic narrative, ideas on non-linear time, and blurred visions of experience, match Richter's music perfectly.

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Hailed as one of the most influential composers of his generation, electroacoustic polymath **Max Richter** defies easy categorization: accomplished composer, but also pianist, producer, remixer, and collaborator, and beyond doubt one of the most prolific of contemporary musical artists.

Inspired equally by Bach, punk rock, and ambient electronica, Richter's sonic world combines a formal classical training (he graduated from the Royal Academy of Music and was a pupil of renowned composer Luciano Berio) with modern technology. His unique and distinctive brand of heartbroken melodicism forms a bridge between the great minimalist composers, pioneering electronics, and the contemporary digital music production multiverse. *Time Out* has remarked on the "overwhelming emotional power" of Richter's work, and the *New Statesman* has noted its "astonishing depth and beauty," while Classic FM and *Pitchfork* have called it "stunning" and the *Guardian*, "languorously transcendent."

Over the years Richter has become best known for his genre-defining and highly influential solo albums, which have given rise to—and are seen as "landmarks" (*The Independent, Pitchfork*) of—the ever-burgeoning neoclassical movement, but his monumental collaborative output also encompasses concert music, operas, ballets, art and video installations, and multiple film, theater, and television scores.

The over 50 films featuring Richter's work and his specifically written scores include Ari Folman's multiple award-winning and devastating critique of war, *Waltz with Bashir* (for which Richter was awarded the European Film Prize), Martin Scorsese's *Shutter Island*, and Damon Lindelof's first television project post-*Lost*, HBO's *The Leftovers*. Theater productions include Alan Cumming's triumphant solo version of *Macbeth* on Broadway, and the National Theatre of Scotland's internationally acclaimed *Black Watch*. Ballets include his many collaborative ventures with maverick Royal Ballet resident choreographer Wayne McGregor, with his works also being used by companies including the Joffrey Ballet, Nederlands Dans

Theater, Lucinda Childs Dance Company, New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Dutch National Ballet, Dresden Semper Oper, Ballet du Rhin, and Northern Ballet.

Art collaborations include work with photographer Darren Almond at the White Cube, with Julian Opie on McGregor's ballet *Infra*, and with visual art collective Random International on *Rain Room* at the Barbican and MoMA and *Future Self* at Lunds Konsthall in Sweden.

Signed as an exclusive artist to Deutsche Grammophon, Richter's recent projects include the albums *Sleep* (2015) and *Three Worlds: Music from "Woolf Works"* (2017), which followed his bestselling *Recomposed by Max Richter: Vivaldi—The Four Seasons* (ECHO Klassik Award, 2013). In 2015 Richter also saw the premiere of *Woolf Works*, a full-length ballet by choreographer Wayne McGregor for the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, based on the life and works of Virginia Woolf and set to Richter's score.

The **American Contemporary Music Ensemble** (ACME), led by artistic director Clarice Jensen, is dedicated to the outstanding performance of masterworks from the 20th and 21st centuries, primarily the work of American composers. The flexible ensemble presents fresh work by living composers alongside the classics of the contemporary. ACME's dedication to new music extends across genres and has earned the group a strong reputation among both classical and rock crowds. NPR calls them "contemporary music dynamos," and *Strings* reports, "ACME's absorbing playing pulsed with warm energy... Shared glances and inhaled triggered transitions in a flow so seamless it seemed learned in a Jedi temple." ACME was honored by the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) during its 10th anniversary season in 2015, for the "virtuosity, passion, and commitment with which it performs and champions American composers."

ACME's instrumentation is flexible and features some of New York's most sought-after musicians. Notable highlights from recent seasons include a performance with Meredith

Monk as part of Lincoln Center's White Light Festival and concerts presented by the Festival of New American Music at Sacramento State, Kennesaw State's Festival of New Music, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Kennedy Center.

ACME has performed at leading international venues including Carnegie Hall, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Kitchen, (Le) Poisson Rouge, St. Ann's Warehouse, Symphony Space, the Morgan Library, the Joyce Theater, Chicago's Millennium Park, the Library of Congress in Washington (DC), Melbourne Recital Hall and Sydney Opera House in Australia, and at festivals including the Sacrum Profanum Festival in Poland, All Tomorrow's Parties in England, and Big Ears in Knoxville (TN).

World premieres performed by ACME include Ingram Marshall's *Psalmbook*, Jóhann Jóhannsson's *Drone Mass*, Caroline Shaw's *Ritornello*, Phil Kline's *Out Cold*, William Brittelle's *Loving the Chambered Nautilus*, Timo Andres' *Senior* and *Thrive on Routine*, Caleb Burhans' *Jahrzeit*, and many more. In 2016 at The Kitchen, ACME premiered Clarice Jensen's transcription of Julius Eastman's *The Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc* for 10 cellos, the score of which had been lost since the premiere in 1981. Jensen transcribed a recording of the work to recreate the score. ACME has since performed *Joan* at the Met Breuer and at the Kennedy Center.

ACME's recordings appear on the Deutsche Grammophon, New World, Butterscotch, and New Amsterdam labels. The group released its first portrait album on Sono Luminus in 2017, featuring works by members Caroline Shaw, Timo Andres, and Caleb Burhans, along with music by John Luther Adams.

ACME's many collaborators have included the Richard Alston Dance Company, Wayne McGregor's Random Dance, Gibney Dance, Satellite Ballet, Jóhann Jóhannsson, actress Barbara Sukowa, filmmaker Jim Jarmusch, Blonde Redhead, Grizzly Bear, Low, Matmos, Jeff Mangum, A Winged Victory for the Sullen, Roomful of Teeth, Lionheart, and Theo Bleckmann.