

Sunday, December 13, 2009, 7pm
Hertz Hall

Kronos Quartet

David Harrington, *violin*
John Sherba, *violin*
Hank Dutt, *viola*
Jeffrey Zeigler, *cello*

Special Guest
Joan Jeanrenaud, *cello*

Laurence Neff, *Lighting Designer*
Scott Fraser, *Sound Designer*

PROGRAM

Bryce Dessner (b. 1976) Aheym (Homeward) (2009)

Missy Mazzoli (b. 1980) Harp and Altar (2009)

Vladimir Martynov (b. 1946) Schubert-Quintet (Unfinished),
in two movements (2009)
World Premiere
with Joan Jeanrenaud, cello

INTERMISSION

Terry Riley (b. 1935) Transylvanian Horn Courtship (2008)
West Coast Premiere

- I. The Weaver and the Waterwheel...or the Good W's that We Know
- II. Arangojuice
- III. Heavy Breathing in Dangerous Snowfields
- IV. Drunken Lovesong
- V. Rajastani Loops for K. M. Bhatt...That's Mr. Kool Man Krishna Mohan Pandit
- VI. Moonlight Shadows Dyno Walk
- VII. A Tender Moment in the Maze
- VIII. Ram Chander Maharaj...a Dancing Toot Sultan in Beggar's Clothes
- IX. Keep Hands Up Close to the Face Before the Knockout Punch

Played without pause.

All of the works on tonight's program were written for Kronos.

The Kronos Quartet records exclusively for Nonesuch Records.

Cal Performances' 2009–2010 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Sightlines

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Please join us for a post-concert discussion with the artists.

Bryce Dessner (b. 1976)
Aheym (2009)

Bryce Dessner is a composer/guitarist/curator based in New York City, best known as the guitarist for the rock band The National. Their albums *Alligator* (2005) and *Boxer* (2007) were named albums of the year in publications throughout the world. Mr. Dessner has received widespread acclaim as a composer and guitarist for the improvising quartet Clogs. He has performed and/or recorded with Sufjan Stevens, Antony Hegarty, Sonic Youth guitarist Lee Ranaldo, Philip Glass, Michael Gordon, the Bang on a Can All-Stars and visual artist Matthew Ritchie, among others. He will premiere and record a new work by Steve Reich in 2009.

As a composer, he is the recipient of a Jerome Grant from the American Composers Forum and the Kitchen (New York), for a full concert of his music in 2007, and a commission from Thyssen Bornemisza Art Contemporary (Vienna), to create a 40-minute spatial sound work for the *Morning Line*, an outdoor sound pavilion by Matthew Ritchie. He has also received commissions from the Rosenbach Library in Philadelphia, in honor of Abraham Lincoln's bicentennial, and BAM's Next Wave Festival, for an evening-length work with his brother, Aaron Dessner. He composed the score for *Turn the River*, a film written and directed by Chris Eigman.

Mr. Dessner is the creator and artistic director of the Music Now Festival in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the co-founder and owner of the Brassland record label. He and Aaron Dessner recently produced an AIDS charity compilation, *Dark Was the Night*, for the Red Hot Organization. Mr. Dessner serves on the board of the Kitchen, and is a graduate of Yale College and the Yale School of Music.

About *Aheym*, Mr. Dessner writes:

David Harrington asked me to write a piece for the Kronos Quartet for a performance in Prospect Park, Brooklyn. I live just two blocks from the park and spend many mornings running around it. The park for me symbolizes much of what I love about New York, especially the stunning diversity of Brooklyn with its myriad

cultures and communities. My father's family, Jewish immigrants from Poland and Russia, also lived near the park for many years in the 1940s and 1950s before moving to Queens. In discussing the new piece, David proposed to perform the work in Brooklyn, and then to retrace the journey of my grandparents and perform it in Łódź, Poland, a city where my great-grandparents lived and through which my grandmother passed on her voyage to America.

"Aheym" means "homeward" in Yiddish, and this piece is written as musical evocation of the idea of flight and passage. As little boys, my brother and I used to spend hours with my grandmother, asking her about the details of how she came to America. She could only give us a smattering of details, but they all found their way into our collective imagination, eventually becoming a part of our own cultural identity and connection to the past. In her poem "Di rayze aheym," the American-Yiddish poet Irena Klepfisz, a professor at Barnard in New York and one of the few child survivors of the Warsaw Ghetto, writes: "Among strangers is her home. Here right here she must live. Her memories will become monuments."

Aheym is dedicated to my grandmother, Sarah Dessner.

Bryce Dessner's *Aheym* was written for the Kronos Quartet.

Missy Mazzoli (b. 1980)
Harp and Altar (2009)

Missy Mazzoli, born in Pennsylvania, has had her music performed all over the world by the Minnesota Orchestra, eighth blackbird, South Carolina Philharmonic, Spokane Symphony, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, NOW Ensemble and others. She has been commissioned by Kronos Quartet, eighth blackbird, the Whitney Museum, Carnegie Hall and the League of Composers/ISCM Orchestra. Ms. Mazzoli's critically acclaimed

multimedia chamber opera, *Song from the Uproar: The Lives and Deaths of Isabelle Eberhardt*, premiered in Brooklyn in 2009.

Ms. Mazzoli is a recipient of a Fulbright Grant to the Netherlands, three ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composers Awards, a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and grants from the American Music Center, the Jerome Foundation and the Greenwall Foundation. In 2006, Ms. Mazzoli was a featured composer at Merkin Hall (New York) and the Gaudeamus New Music Festival (Amsterdam), and, in 2007, she taught beginning composition at Yale University. She is Executive Director of the MATA Festival of New Music in New York, an organization founded by Philip Glass dedicated to commissioning and promoting new works by young composers.

Ms. Mazzoli is also an active pianist, and often performs with Victoire, an all-female quintet she founded in 2008, dedicated exclusively to her own compositions. Victoire has performed in venues throughout New York and recently appeared at the 2009 Bang-on-a-Can Marathon. Their debut EP is titled *A Door into the Dark*.

About *Harp and Altar*, Ms. Mazzoli writes:

Harp and Altar is a love song to the Brooklyn Bridge. The title comes from a poem by Hart Crane, in which he describes the Brooklyn Bridge as "that harp and altar of the Fury fused." The Borough of Brooklyn is impossible to describe, but the Brooklyn Bridge seems to be an apt symbol for its vastness, its strength and its history. Halfway through the work the vocalist sings fragments of these lines from Crane's poem "The Bridge":

*Through the bound cable strands, the
 arching path*

*Upward, veering with light, the
 flight of strings,*

*Taut miles of shuttling moonlight
 syncopate*

*The whispered rush, telepathy of
 wires.*

Crane lived for some time at 110 Columbia Heights in Brooklyn, in an apartment overlooking the Brooklyn Bridge. Only after completing his poem did Crane learn that one of its key builders, Washington Roebling, had once lived at the same address. Every day, I take long walks around my Brooklyn neighborhood, often ending up at the site of the house where Crane lived when he wrote these lines. In writing this piece for the Kronos Quartet I tried to imagine the Brooklyn Bridge through Crane's eyes, a new monument to technology, a symbol of optimism and faith.

Many thanks to the Kronos Quartet, Gabriel Kahane, Margaret Dorfman and the Ralph I. Dorfman Family Fund for making this work possible.

Missy Mazzoli's *Harp and Altar* was commissioned for the Kronos Quartet by Margaret Dorfman and the Ralph I. Dorfman Family Fund. Sampled vocals by Gabriel Kahane.

Vladimir Martynov (b. 1946)
Schubert-Quintet (Unfinished) (2009)
in two movements

Born in Moscow in 1946, Vladimir Martynov studied piano under M. Mezhlumov and composition under N. Sidelnikov at the Moscow Conservatory. Mr. Martynov belongs to the generation of major Soviet/Russian composers after Schnittke, Denisov and Gubaidulina.

In 1973, he began working in the electronic music studio of the Scriabin Museum, the meeting-ground of many of the leading composers of the Russian avant-garde. A rock group, the Boomerang, was formed in the studio with Mr. Martynov's active participation, and he wrote the rock opera *The Seraphic Visions of St. Francis of Assisi* (1978) for the group. At the same time, he was also exploring the possibilities of the minimalist system concurrently with Arvo Pärt and Valentin Silvestrov.

The diversity of his interests led him to study folk music, and he traveled extensively throughout Russia, the Caucasus and Tajikistan. At the end of

the 1970s, he embarked on an investigation of early Russian religious chant. During this period, he accepted a teaching post at the Theological Institute of the Trinity-Saint Sergius and his output was mainly devoted to church music. Starting in the mid-1980s, he began to produce new works that combined the experiments of his former period while continuing his involvement with minimalism (*Opus post I*, *Opus post II* for piano, *Twelve Victories of King Arthur* for seven pianos). At the same time, he was also widening his explorations of the great religious themes in works such as *Apocalypse*, *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, *Magnificat*, *Stabat Mater*, *Requiem* and *Litanies to the Virgin*.

Despite his interest in different genres, Mr. Martynov's philosophy of music and composition compels him to look for the essence or core of music. The convention that defines today's performances establishes musical elements as separate: the musician, the thing or object (the music), and the audience. Mr. Martynov's idea of composition is to make a space where there is interaction between audience, the music and the musicians. He has written, "The time comes for a new epoch, a new folklore, a new ritual. The time comes when there will no longer be a place for composers. All the texts and music have already been created... The only thing left for us is to try to explain them and extrapolate their meaning."

About *Schubert-Quintet (Unfinished)*, Mr. Martynov writes:

If, in the 19th century, Schumann could write of Schubert's "heavenly lengths," emphasizing the fact that, despite their heavenly qualities, the lengths were all the same a little long, now in the 21st century Schubert's lengths appear to be so heavenly that one cannot get enough of them. Every time I come into contact with Schubert's music, I want to prolong forever each moment of sound. I want to examine every turn, every Schubertian pause through a magnifying glass or even a microscope. The score of *Schubert-Quintet* presents a version of just this way of looking at Schubert's music. This is a 21st-century view of Schubert. If for Schumann they were simply "heavenly lengths," they appear to me

as "infinite heavenly lengths"—that is, lengths with no end. For this reason, the score carries the subtitle "Unfinished."

Vladimir Martynov's *Schubert-Quintet (Unfinished)* was commissioned for the Kronos Quartet and Joan Jeanrenaud by Cal Performances and the Kronos Performing Arts Association.

Terry Riley (b. 1935) Transylvanian Horn Courtship (2008)

Terry Riley first came to prominence in 1964 when he subverted the world of tightly organized atonal composition then in fashion. With the groundbreaking *In C*—a work built upon steady pulse throughout; short, simple repeated melodic motives; and static harmonies—Mr. Riley achieved an elegant and non-nostalgic return to tonality. In demonstrating the hypnotic allure of complex musical patterns made of basic means, he produced the seminal work of the so-called "minimalist" school.

Mr. Riley's facility for complex pattern-making is the product of his virtuosity as a keyboard improviser. He quit formal composition following *In C* in order to concentrate on improvisation, and in the late 1960s and early 1970s he became known for weaving dazzlingly intricate skeins of music from improvisations on organ and synthesizer. At this time, Riley also devoted himself to studying North Indian vocal techniques under the legendary Pandit Pran Nath, and a new element entered his music: long-limbed melody. From his work in Indian music, moreover, he became interested in the subtle distinctions of tuning that would be hard to achieve with a traditional classical ensemble.

Mr. Riley began notating music again in 1979, when both he and the Kronos Quartet were on the faculty at Mills College in Oakland. By collaborating with Kronos, he discovered that his various musical passions could be integrated, not as pastiche, but as different sides of similar musical impulses that still maintained something of the oral performing traditions of India and jazz. Mr. Riley's first quartets were inspired by his keyboard improvisations, but his knowledge of string quartets became more sophisticated through his work with

Kronos, combining rigorous compositional ideas with a more performance-oriented approach.

This three-decade-long relationship has yielded 25 works for string quartet, including a concerto for string quartet, *The Sands*, which was the Salzburg Festival's first-ever new music commission; *Sun Rings*, a multimedia piece for choir, visuals and space sounds, commissioned by NASA; and *The Cusp of Magic*, for string quartet and *pipa*. Kronos's album *Cadenza on the Night Plain*, a collection of music by Mr. Riley, was selected by both *Time* and *Newsweek* as one of the 10 Best Classical Albums of the Year in 1988. The epic five-quartet cycle, *Salome Dances for Peace*, was selected as the #1 Classical Album of the Year by *USA Today* and was nominated for a Grammy Award in 1989.

About *Transylvanian Horn Courtship*, Mr. Riley writes:

The idea came from a conversation a few years ago I was having with Kronos's leader, David Harrington. David brought to my attention the notion of the Stroh violins, which had not been on my radar up to that time, but sounded amazing. (A Stroh violin is a violin with a metal horn to amplify its sound, an invention of the late 19th century.) It seemed a perfect opportunity to employ Stroh fiddles with the sound of the strings modified by the metal horns to create a new textural sound for the string quartet.

Kronos engaged Walter Kitundu to build a complete set of Stroh instruments—two violins, viola and cello—for this new work. I requested that Walter build each instrument so that it could sound a fifth lower than its normal string counterpart. Even before starting to write the music, I felt the sound had to be deepened to give the kind of color I was envisioning. The range is more like two violas, cello and bass.

The work was written in about six weeks. I was trying to write as spontaneously as possible with as little second-guessing as was necessary. From note to note and from phrase to phrase, I bowed to Allen Ginsberg's dictum, "first idea, best idea."

The 34-minute work is written as one continuous movement with nine sections. In the work's present form, the first four sections are played on Stroh instruments, the fifth on normal instruments, the sixth and seventh again on Stroh and the last two sections on normal instruments.

In order to get a denser texture in the sections "Rajastani Loops..." and "Ram Chander..." a real-time looping device is used. In these passages, the quartet captures phrases "on the fly" and as they are played by the looping device the musicians play in tandem with the loops. These two sections are also in tribute to two dear fellow musicians from India. They have been wonderful friends and guides over the years, as I have navigated through the rich cultural strands of Hindustani Classical music.

Raised in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, MacArthur "Genius" grantee Walter Kitundu began as a visual artist who was introduced to music through the turntable. He focused his imagination on discovering the potential of the record player as a medium for sound and artistic expression. This resulted in hand-built turntables powered by the wind and rain, fire and earthquakes, birds, light and the force of ocean waves. Mr. Kitundu invented a new instrument family called Phonoharps, beautifully crafted multistringed instruments are made from record players and rely on the turntable's sensitivity to vibration. Mr. Kitundu has performed and been in residence at art centers and science museums internationally. Additionally, he composes for dance, theatre and film and teaches multidisciplinary workshops on sound, imagination and instrument-building. This is the third set of instruments that Mr. Kitundu has created for Kronos.

Terry Riley's *Transylvanian Horn Courtship* was commissioned for the Kronos Quartet by the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center at the University of Notre Dame and the Board of Directors of the Kronos Performing Arts Association, on the occasion of Kronos's 35th anniversary. Additional project support was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.



Michael Wilson

For more than 35 years, the **Kronos Quartet**—David Harrington, John Sherba (violins), Hank Dutt (viola) and Jeffrey Zeigler (cello)—has pursued a singular artistic vision, combining a spirit of fearless exploration with a commitment to expanding the range and context of the string quartet. In the process, Kronos has become one of the most celebrated and influential groups of our time, performing thousands of concerts worldwide, releasing more than 45 recordings of extraordinary breadth and creativity, collaborating with many of the world’s most eclectic composers and performers, and commissioning more than 650 works and arrangements for string quartet. Kronos’s work has also garnered numerous awards, including a Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music Performance (2004) and “Musicians of the Year” (2003) from *Musical America*.

Kronos’s adventurous approach dates back to the ensemble’s origins. In 1973, David Harrington was inspired to form Kronos after hearing George Crumb’s *Black Angels*, a highly unorthodox, Vietnam War-inspired work featuring bowed water glasses, spoken word passages, and electronic effects. Kronos then began building a compellingly

diverse repertoire for string quartet, performing and recording works by 20th-century masters (Bartók, Shostakovich, Webern), contemporary composers (Aleksandra Vrebalov, John Adams, Alfred Schnittke), jazz legends (Ornette Coleman, Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk) and artists from even farther afield (rock guitar legend Jimi Hendrix, Azeri vocalist Alim Qasimov, avant-garde saxophonist John Zorn).

Integral to Kronos’s work is a series of long-running, in-depth collaborations with many of the world’s foremost composers. One of the Quartet’s most frequent composer-collaborators is “Father of Minimalism” Terry Riley, whose work with Kronos includes the early *Sunrise of the Planetary Dream Collector*; *Cadenza on the Night Plain* and *Salome Dances for Peace*; 2002’s *Sun Rings*, a multimedia, NASA-commissioned ode to the earth and its people, featuring celestial sounds and images from space; and *The Cusp of Magic*, commissioned in honor of Riley’s 70th birthday celebrations in 2005 and recorded and released in 2008. Kronos commissioned and recorded the three string quartets of Polish composer Henryk Mikolaj Górecki, with whom the group has been working for more

than 20 years. The Quartet has also collaborated extensively with composers such as Philip Glass, recording his complete string quartets and scores to films like *Mishima* and *Dracula* (a restored edition of the Bela Lugosi classic); Azerbaijan’s Franghiz Ali-Zadeh, whose works are featured on the full-length 2005 release *Mugam Sayagi: Music of Franghiz Ali-Zadeh*; Steve Reich, whose Kronos-recorded *Different Trains* earned a Grammy; Argentina’s Osvaldo Golijov, whose work with Kronos includes both compositions and extensive arrangements for such albums as *Kronos Caravan* and *Nuevo*; and many more.

In addition to composers, Kronos counts numerous artists from around the world among its collaborators, including the Chinese *pipa* virtuoso Wu Man; legendary Bollywood “playback singer” Asha Bhosle, featured on Kronos’s Grammy-nominated CD, *You’ve Stolen My Heart: Songs from R. D. Burman’s Bollywood*; Inuit throat singer Tanya Tagaq; Mexican rockers Café Tacuba; genre-defying sound artist and instrument builder Walter Kitundu; the Romanian gypsy band Taraf de Haïdouks; renowned American soprano Dawn Upshaw; and the unbridled British cabaret trio, the Tiger Lillies. Kronos has performed live with the likes of Allen Ginsberg, Zakir Hussain, Modern Jazz Quartet, Tom Waits, David Barsamian, Howard Zinn, Betty Carter and David Bowie, and has appeared on recordings by such diverse talents as Nine Inch Nails, Amon Tobin, Dan Zanes, DJ Spooky, Dave Matthews, Nelly Furtado, Rokia Traoré, Joan Armatrading and Don Walser.

Kronos’s music has also featured prominently in other media, including film (*Requiem for a Dream*, *The Fountain*, *21 Grams*, *Heat*, *True Stories*) and dance, with such noted choreographers as Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor, Twyla Tharp and Eiko & Koma setting pieces to Kronos’s music.

The Quartet spends five months of each year on tour, appearing in concert halls, clubs and festivals around the world, including BAM Next Wave Festival, Carnegie Hall, the Barbican in London, WOMAD, UCLA’s Royce Hall, Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw, Shanghai Concert Hall and the Sydney Opera House. Kronos is equally prolific and wide-ranging on disc. The ensemble’s expansive discography on Nonesuch Records includes *Pieces*

of Africa (1992), a showcase of African-born composers, which simultaneously topped *Billboard*’s Classical and World Music lists; 2000’s *Kronos Caravan*, whose musical “travels” span North and South America, Europe, and the Middle East; 1998’s 10-disc anthology, *Kronos Quartet: 25 Years*; *Nuevo* (2002), a Grammy- and Latin Grammy-nominated celebration of Mexican culture; and the 2003 Grammy-winner, Alban Berg’s *Lyric Suite*.

Kronos’s recording and performances reveal only a fraction of the group’s commitment to new music. As a non-profit organization based in San Francisco, the Kronos Performing Arts Association has commissioned hundreds of new works and arrangements for string quartet. Music publishers Boosey & Hawkes and Kronos have released sheet music for three signature works, all commissioned for Kronos, in the first volume of the *Kronos Collection*, a performing edition edited by Kronos. The Quartet is committed to mentoring emerging professional performers, and in 2007 Kronos led its first Professional Training Workshop with four string quartets as part of the Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall. One of Kronos’s most exciting initiatives is the Kronos: Under 30 Project, a unique commissioning and composer-in-residence program for composers under 30 years old, launched in conjunction with Kronos’s own 30th birthday in 2003. By cultivating creative relationships with such emerging talents and a wealth of other artists from around the world, Kronos reaps the benefit of 30 years’ wisdom while maintaining a fresh approach to music-making inspired by a new generation of composers and performers.

Joan Jeanrenaud, cellist and composer, grew up in a small town outside Memphis, Tennessee, where she began studying the cello under Peter Spurbeck at age 11. Her commitment to music deepened during her work with Fritz Magg at Indiana University, where she obtained a Bachelor of Music degree, and her subsequent private studies with Pierre Fournier in Geneva, Switzerland.

In 1978, Ms. Jeanrenaud joined the Kronos Quartet, a position she held for 20 years. For two decades, she worked with hundreds of composers and musicians including John Cage, Frank Zappa, Morton Feldman, Philip Glass, Witold Lutosławski,



Joan Armatrading, Steve Reich, Pauline Oliveros, Astor Piazzolla, Sofia Gubadulina, Foday Muso Suso, David Byrne, Terry Riley, John Zorn and many others. She performed more than 2,000 concerts throughout the world and made over 30 recordings with Kronos, most of which were released on Nonesuch Records. Tonight's performance marks Ms. Jeanrenaud's first appearance with Kronos in more than a decade.

Upon leaving Kronos in 1999, she began her pursuit of solo and collaborative projects in composition, improvisation, electronics, video and multidisciplinary performance. Her solo CD, *Strange Toys*, featuring her performances of her own compositions, was nominated for a 2008 Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Soloist Without an Orchestra. The installation work *ARIA*, a collaboration with artist and designer Alessandro

Moruzzi, was supported by Creative Capital and premiered at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco in July 2008.

In 2000–2001, Ms. Jeanrenaud was Artist-in-Residence at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, where she created an evening-length solo work called *Metamorphosis* and the installation piece *Ice Cello*, inspired by the work of the Fluxus artist Charlotte Moorman. Eiko & Koma commissioned the collaboration *Be With* for solo cello and dance, which premiered in live performances at the Kennedy Center, Joyce Theater, and the Yerba Buena Center during the 2001–2002 season. In 2003, Ms. Jeanrenaud completed and performed her hourlong composition for the multimedia piece *In Between*, with Bay Area visual artist Tom Bonauro and featuring percussionist William Winant. In 2004, she was a featured performer and composer for San Francisco's Other Minds Festival, writing the cello and electronics piece *Hommage* for the occasion. Two thousand five marked her first collaboration with the Axis Dance Company, writing and performing the work *Terre Brune*. In 2007, Ms. Jeanrenaud composed and performed the score for *Humansville*, a performance installation for the Joe Goode Performance Group.

In addition to performing her own compositions, several composers have written new works for her, including Terry Riley, Hamza El Din, Steve Mackey, Fred Frith, Kevin Volans, Karen Tanaka, Paul Dresner, Mark Grey, Anthony Davis, Alvin Curran and Annie Gosfield. As an improviser she collaborates with Larry Ochs, Miya Masaoka, Stephen Vitiello and Fred Frith, among others. Ms. Jeanrenaud was awarded composer residencies at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program in 2007 and the Sally and Don Lucas Artists Programs at the Montalvo Arts Center in 2008.

Strange Toys was released on the Talking House label in 2008. Other solo work is available on the New Albion release of *Metamorphosis*, as well as many other recordings released in the last several years. Please refer to www.jjcello.org for a more complete listing of works and activities.

*For the Kronos Quartet/
Kronos Performing Arts Association:*

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