

Sunday, March 10, 2019, 3pm
Hertz Hall

Nicolas Hodges, *piano*
Jennifer Koh, *violin*
Anssi Karttunen, *cello*

PROGRAM

Esa-Pekka SALONEN (b. 1958) *Lachen verlernt* for solo violin

Betsy JOLAS (b. 1926) *Femme le soir* (*Woman in the evening*)
Eight lieder for cello and piano
Lulling
Songeries
Shall we...
Et toi, la bas...?
Mots de sable
Qui parle?
Sing Maria!
Bonjour

Kaija SAARIAHO (b. 1952) *Light and Matter* for violin, cello, and piano

INTERMISSION

JOLAS *Toi x 3* (*You x 3*) for solo piano

SAARIAHO *Tocar* for violin and piano

Magnus LINDBERG (b. 1958) Piano Trio
Ljud stort, ljud (Sound big, sound)
Som den stilla vi söker
(Like the tranquility we seek)
Slå, våg, slå (Crash wave, crash)

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

Esa-Pekka Salonen***Lachen verlernt* for solo violin**

The title *Lachen verlernt* (*Laughing Unlearned*) is a quotation from the ninth movement of Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, "Gebete an Pierrot" ("Prayer to Pierrot"). The narrator declares that she has unlearned the skill of laughing and begs Pierrot, the "Horse-doctor to the soul," to give it back to her.

I felt that this is a very moving metaphor of a performer: a serious clown trying to help the audience to connect with emotions they have lost, or believe they have lost.

Lachen verlernt is essentially a chaconne, which in this case means that there is a harmonic progression that repeats itself several times. The harmony remains the same throughout the whole piece; only the surface, the top layer of the music, changes.

Lachen verlernt starts with a lyrical, expressive melody (the same melody has an important role in my orchestral work *Insomnia*, which I was writing at the same time, during the summer of 2002). Gradually the music becomes faster and more frenzied until it develops an almost frantic character, as if the imaginary narrator has reached a state of utter despair.

A very short coda closes this mini-drama peacefully.

I wrote *Lachen verlernt* for Cho-Liang Lin, to whom it is also dedicated. *Lachen verlernt* was commissioned by the La Jolla Chamber Music Society's SummerFest with the generous support of Joan & Irwin Jacobs.

—Esa-Pekka Salonen

Betsy Jolas***Femme le soir* (Woman in the evening)****Eight lieder for cello and piano**

The great lied tradition entered my musical life many years ago thanks to my mother, a native of Louisville (KY), who had, among other gifts, a beautiful voice and was sent to Berlin to study singing in 1912.

I was myself still in my teens when I started accompanying her and thus discovered very early the rich lied repertoire, which has since nurtured a good part of my thoughts on vocal

music. Over the years I became interested in the way this repertoire had notably influenced instrumental music and began studying its favorite form: the cycle. I have thus written, so far, several such sets, featuring various solo instruments with orchestra or piano.

Following the tradition, my own cycles often have a general title and I have recently started to indicate subtitles as well, for their power of suggestion in the absence of a sung text.

Composed in 2017–18, *Femme le soir* was premiered at the Reid Hall in Paris on the December 3, 2018 by Anssi Karttunen and Nicolas Hodges, to whom the piece is dedicated.

—Betsy Jolas

Kaija Saariaho***Light and Matter* for violin, cello, and piano**

I have written many trios for different combinations, but have been hesitant to compose for a traditional piano trio, maybe because of its long and weighty tradition.

When I finally decided to approach this instrumentation, my first musical ideas were of light and rapid nature, and I started to imagine a one-movement perpetual-motion piece. During the composition, I developed the form into three continuous sections, including more varied tempi and textures.

The starting point for the music is light kinetic energy, which is then developed into more dramatic gestures and rapid exchanges among the three instruments.

The piece advances in spinning motion, moving from the original luminous fabric into more thematic patterns or towards the inertia of slow choral textures, before returning into the original weightlessness and starting a new flickering spin.

As a result, we hear three musical elements—kinetic texture, thematic motives, and slowly moving choral material—in constantly changing combinations and orchestrations.

I wrote this piece in New York, while watching from my window the changing light and colors of Morningside Park. Besides providing me with the name for the piece, perhaps that continuous transformation of light on the glint-

ing leaves and the immobile trunks of the solid trees became the inspiration for the musical materials in this piece.

Light and Matter was commissioned by the Aeolian Chamber Players, Library of Congress, Britten Sinfonia, and Norrbotten NEO.

—*Kaija Saariaho*

Betsy Jolas

Toi x 3 (You x 3) for solo piano

This little tryptic, composed during the summer of 2018, may be regarded as the portrait of a mysterious character named Toi (“you”) presented under three aspects and in three different situations. I have called him a character rather than a theme because these are not variations on a theme but, perhaps more richly, the evocation from three different angles of an ensemble of multiple yet related elements.

Toi x 3 was written for and is dedicated to Nicolas Hodges, who gave its premiere performance at the Reid Hall in Paris on the December 3, 2018.

—*Betsy Jolas*

Kaija Saariaho

Tocar for violin and piano

One of my first ideas for *Tocar*, about the encounter of two instruments as different as the violin and piano, was a question: How could they touch each other?

Whilst composing music, I always imagine the instrumentalist’s fingers and their sensitivity. The violin sounds are created by the collaboration between the left hand and the bow, which is controlled by the right hand. On the piano, the pianist should be extremely precise, in order to control the moment when the fingers touch the keys; afterwards the sounds can be colored only by the pedals. In spite of such different mechanisms, both instruments also have some purely musical things in common—noticeably, they share some of the same register.

In *Tocar* both instruments move forward independently, but they also keep an eye on each other. I imagine a magnetism becoming stronger and stronger—the piano part becomes more mobile—which draws the violin texture

towards the piano writing, culminating in an encounter in unison. After this short moment of symbiosis, the violin line is released from the measured piano motion, and continues its own life outside the laws of gravity.

The title, in Spanish, can be translated as “to touch, to play.”

Tocar was commissioned by the International Jean Sibelius Violin Competition. The work was premiered by the 20 semi-finalists in Helsinki on November 26–28, 2010.

—*Kaija Saariaho*

Magnus Lindberg

Piano Trio

The titles of the movements of this trio are taken from the futurist Finnish-Swedish poet Gunnar Björling. Magnus Lindberg has always avoided using titles that could be interpreted in any literal way and prefers those that can be seen to mean multiple things. This was probably the reason he felt drawn to Björling, whose texts are known to be abstract and impossible to explain. At the same time, the words of the titles of each movement can be seen to contain hints to the musical textures. The first movement clearly deals with the idea of sound and how it can grow. The second movement wants to be a slow movement, but never quite succeeds. And the last movement can be analysed in many ways, but crashing waves are certainly somewhere among the possible interpretations.

The Piano Trio started its life as a Clarinet Trio. Lindberg soon imagined that he could create a second version (like Brahms), with viola replacing the clarinet, but he soon realized that, in his case, the piece could only work with violin. While working on the second version he also saw that it couldn’t be a simple transcription; he had to adapt both the cello and violin parts, making this, in fact, a separate piece.

The first performance of the Piano Trio was given by Magnus Lindberg on piano, Jennifer Koh on violin, and Anssi Karttunen on cello at the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York on May 10, 2011.

—*Anssi Karttunen*



Eric Richmond



Nicolas Hodges (*piano*) commands an active repertoire that encompasses such composers as Beethoven, Berg, Brahms, Debussy, Schubert, and Stravinsky, all of whom reinforce his special prowess in contemporary music.

Born in London and now based in Germany, where he is a professor at the Musikhochschule Stuttgart, Hodges approaches the works of Classical, Romantic, 20th-century, and contemporary composers with the same questing spirit.

Cooperating closely with major—and very different—contemporary composers including John Adams and Helmut Lachenmann has played a central role in Hodges' work. Many of these composers have dedicated works to Hodges, including Thomas Adès, George Aperghis, Gerald Barry, Harrison Birtwistle, Elliott Carter, James Clarke, Francisco Coll, Hugues Dufourt, Pascal Dusapin, Luca Francesconi, Brice Pauset, Rolf Riehm, Salvatore Sciarrino, and Miroslav Srnka.

The 2018–19 season will see Hodges perform recitals at Wigmore Hall in London, the Lucerne Festival, and Reid Hall in Paris with Anssi Karttunen. He will perform as a soloist with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Thomas Dausgaard, with the Basel Sinfonietta, and with the Bayerische Rundfunk

Symphony Orchestra. Hodges will also perform in the Festival Présences.

In chamber music Hodges collaborates regularly with the Arditti Quartet, Adrian Brendel, Colin Currie, Ilya Gringolts, Anssi Karttunen, Michael Wendeborg, and Carolin Widmann, and as a member of the Trio Accanto.

Recognized for intense, commanding performances, delivered with dazzling virtuosity and technical assurance, violinist **Jennifer Koh** is dedicated to exploring a broad and eclectic repertoire, while promoting diversity and inclusivity in classical music. She has expanded the contemporary violin repertoire through a wide range of commissioning projects, and has premiered more than 70 works written specially for her. Her quest for the new and unusual, sense of endless curiosity, and ability to lead and inspire a host of multidisciplinary collaborators, truly set her apart.

During the 2018–19 season, Koh continues critically acclaimed series from past seasons, including the New American Concerto, Limitless, Bach and Beyond, Shared Madness, and Bridge to Beethoven. The New American Concerto is an ongoing, multi-season commissioning project that explores the form of the violin con-



Irmeil Jung

certo and its potential for artistic engagement with contemporary societal concerns and issues through commissions from a diverse collective of composers. Koh also performs music through *Limitless*, a commissioning project that engages leading composer-performers to write duo compositions exploring the artistic relationship between composer and performer. *Bach and Beyond* is a recital series that traces the history of the solo violin repertoire from Bach's Six Sonatas and Partitas to 20th- and 21st-century composers, at the Music Institute of Chicago; and *Shared Madness* comprises short works for solo violin exploring virtuosity in the 21st century, written for the project by more than 30 of today's most celebrated composers, as part of the Music on Main Festival in Vancouver. Koh and her frequent recital partner Shai Wosner also continue *Bridge to Beethoven*, which pairs Beethoven's violin sonatas with new and recent works inspired by them to explore the composer's significance and impact on a diverse group of musicians, with performances in Baltimore and Aspen, among others.

Koh has been heard with leading orchestras around the world including the Los Angeles and New York philharmonics; the Cleveland, Mariinsky Theatre, Philadelphia, and Philhar-

monia (London) orchestras; and the Atlanta, BBC, Chicago, Houston, Montreal, National, NHK (Tokyo), Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Seattle, and Singapore symphony orchestras, among others. She has worked with such conductors as John Adams, Marin Alsop, James Conlon, Gustavo Dudamel, Christoph Eschenbach, Giancarlo Guerrero, Louis Langrée, Carlos Kalmar, Lorin Maazel, Sakari Oramo, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Juraj Valcuha, Osmo Vänskä, Alexander Vedernikov, and Edo de Waart.

Anssi Karttunen is one of the most innovative cellists on today's international music scene. In his repertoire, he takes a fresh look at the well-known masterpieces and brings forgotten works to the public ear, as well as making his own original transcriptions. He plays on modern, classical, and Baroque cellos, as well as violoncello piccolo and electric cello.

Anssi Karttunen is a passionate advocate of contemporary music. He has performed over 170 world premieres, collaborating with such composers as Magnus Lindberg, Kaija Saariaho, Pascal Dusapin, Luca Francesconi, and Tan Dun. An astounding 29 concertos have been written for him. Karttunen has worked with renowned orchestras such as the Philadelphia Orchestra, the BBC Symphony, and the Munich Philharmonic. He also performs regularly as a soloist and chamber musician at Europe's most important music festivals, including Edinburgh, Salzburg, and Helsinki. His Zebra Trio, with violinist Ernst Kovacic and violist Steven Dann, performs concerts on both sides of the Atlantic. Karttunen also enjoys close collaborations with pianist Nicolas Hodges, choreographer Diana Theoharidis, and the producer, composer, and multi-instrumentalist John Paul Jones.

Karttunen's recordings traverse a broad musical spectrum, including Beethoven's complete works for cello and piano on period instruments and 20th-century solo pieces.

Born in 1960, Anssi Karttunen studied with Erkki Rautio, William Pleeth, Jacqueline du Pré, and Tibor de Machula, among others. In the autumn of 2014, he started teaching at the École Normale de Musique in Paris. He plays on a Francesco Ruggeri cello.