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8p FRI **AUG 11**
con brio

SANTA CRUZ CIVIC AUDITORIUM

Cabrillo Festival Orchestra
conducted by **CRISTIAN MĂCELARU**

▶ **Symphony No. 9** (2012)

William Bolcom (b. 1938)

[West Coast Premiere]

This evening's West Coast premiere performance
was made possible in part by the BMI Foundation's
Jeffrey Cotton Fund.

▶ **Piano Concerto** (2012)

Gerald Barry (b. 1952)

Jason Hardink, *piano*

[U.S. Premiere]

INTERMISSION

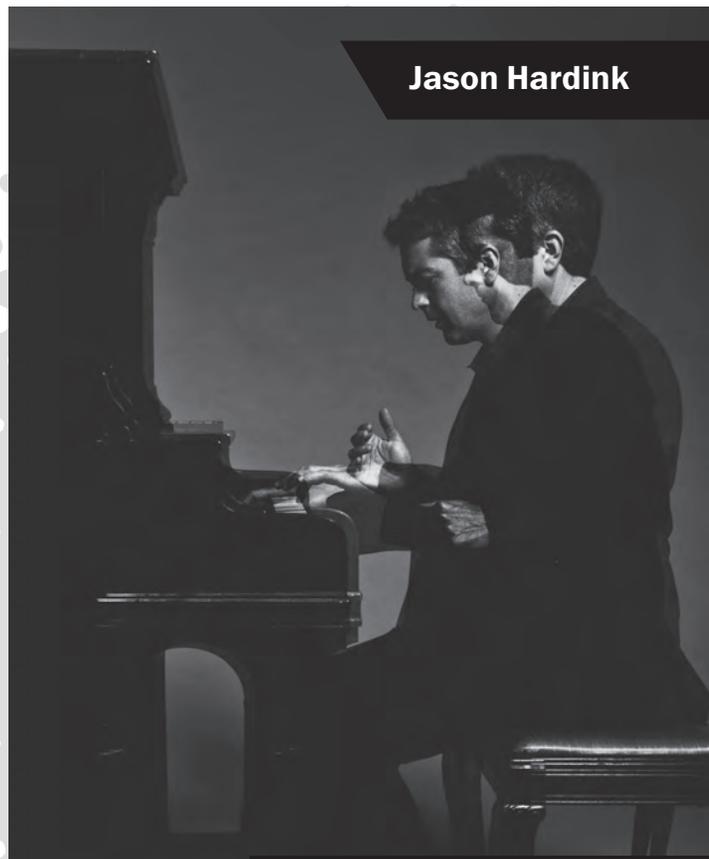
▶ **Con Brio** (2008)

Jörg Widmann (b. 1973)

▶ **Symphony No. 1:
Ballet for Orchestra** (2002)

Cindy McTee (b. 1953)

- I. Introduction: On with the Dance
- II. Adagio: Till a Silence Fell
- III. Waltz: Light Fantastic
- IV. Finale: Where Time Plays the Fiddle



Jason Hardink



Gerald Barry

Cindy McTee

Media Sponsor:

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This concert will be broadcast on Sunday,
September 10, 8pm on KALW 91.7
San Francisco, and webcast on KALW.org

Symphony No. 9 (2012)

William Bolcom (b. 1938)

[West Coast Premiere]

The Ninth Symphony is intentionally short. Following my much-larger Eighth Symphony, I wanted a pithy one-movement piece for what will be my final statement in the symphonic form. Both the Ninth and my Second symphonies have for example Sibelius's Seventh—for me his best symphony, for its concision and drama.

Our current world situation is the most stressful I can remember in our country or elsewhere since my childhood, but it was brewing full force already when I wrote the Ninth Symphony. The recent disastrous elections here and in the U.K. are only part of the fallout of what I already felt—an elemental war between two bitterly opposing forces.

There is ample reason for despair, but I still believe in the "still, small voice." The formal shape of this one-movement Ninth Symphony generates from the opposing forces in battle, both ranked against that voice. My hope is in the voice's quiet recurring statement: may it prevail.

—William Bolcom

The Ninth Symphony was commissioned by Rice University in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the university. It was premiered in Houston, Texas, on October 11, 2012, by the Shepherd School Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Larry Rachleff.

Not recorded

Piano Concerto (2012)

Gerald Barry (b. 1952)

Jason Hardink, *piano*

[U.S. Premiere]

Writing his first large-scale work in a standard genre, Gerald Barry approaches the great tradition of piano concerti as a lover from afar, greeting it in exuberant and sometimes strange ways. Nevertheless, the piece is most decidedly a piano concerto, and it vigorously embraces the idea of confrontation, not only between piano and orchestra, but also among smaller groupings within the orchestra, which is almost continuously changing in texture and posture. This is also music with Beethovenian qualities of humor, rigor, and rage.

Allotted to the piano, to some vociferous group or family of instruments, or occasionally to

the whole orchestra is a host of interacting ideas: elemental or elementary, evoking the symphonic literature or children's songs, putting forward tonalities that are always marred or wrong-footed, arriving not just to state something—usually with great power and authority—but also to un-state something else. One might have the impression of a giant pinball machine in which the music bounces excitedly in a zigzag progress. There are junctures to which it returns, only to spin off in a new direction each time. And there are places where it falls through a hole, only to spring back with the same physical energy as before. The game is almost tireless, and bright.

On the level of form, it has very little to do with the piano concerto as it used to be played. Most notably, there is no slow movement. After an orchestral opening, emphatic and abrupt, the piano comes in at high speed to be interrupted by horns and trumpets, not altogether pertinently, but with ideas that—as many ideas here do—resonate on through the piece. The idea of conflict, too, is here to stay. Soon a piano is discovered within the orchestra, prompting nonchalance from the soloist, who goes on to introduce the notion of hammering on repeated notes. A first true *tutti* is marked "Very aggressive."

The piece continues with its poetry of retort, impersonation, display, memory, wit and the odd rare moment of quiet, up to a solo cadenza with interruptions. Two bassoons, alone, then play with scales for a short time before turmoil continues with new gambits of deception and outrage. Eventually, an immense, short *tutti* engages two of the percussionists on instruments that may be unexpected in a concerto. Next comes another short, quiet passage, marked "Hushed," after which the piano rollicks with strings before going off on another cadenza. From here to the end, in the last four or five minutes, the piece relives some of its previous experience around episodes that stand out, including a designated "storm" section for almost everyone, and a giddy rush of fast notes, twice repeated, followed by the first of two final piano solos in close clusters. Not to be missed, just before the fast notes and perhaps igniting them, is the single note performed by the patient timpanist.

The end of the end is pronounced by a solo trumpet answered by soft octaves from the soloist up and down the keyboard. The work starts to wind down, the last turn of the wheels being with the soloist. The show is over. The parade has passed by.

—Paul Griffiths

The Piano Concerto was premiered at the Herkulessaal in Munich on November 15, 2013, by the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Peter Rundel.

Not recorded

Con Brio (2008)

Jörg Widmann (b. 1973)

It was at the suggestion of the conductor of the world premiere, Mariss Jansons, that Jörg Widmann refer to musical characteristics of Beethoven's Seventh and Eighth symphonies in his *Con Brio*. Primarily, his starting points are specific fast types of movement in the Beethoven works which he translates into his own tonal language. Widmann has chosen the same instrumentation as the Beethoven symphonies and takes up the task of creating a similar fury and rhythmic insistence with these economical means.

—Note provided by Schott Music

Con Brio was premiered at Gasteig Philharmonie in Munich on September 25, 2008, by the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Mariss Jansons.

Recommended Recording: "Beethoven Symphonies Nos. 7 & 8; Widmann: *Con Brio*." Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, conducted by Mariss Jansons. BR-Klassik.

Symphony No. 1: Ballet for Orchestra (2008)

Cindy McTee (b. 1953)

Music is said to have come from dance—from the rhythmic impulses of men and women. Perhaps this explains my recent awareness of the inherent relationships between thought, feelings, and action—that the impulse to compose often begins as a rhythmical stirring and leads to a physical response—tensing muscles, gesturing with hands and arms, or quite literally, dancing.

In "Music and the Mind," Anthony Storr observes that "the designation 'movement' for a section of a symphony, concerto, or sonata attests the indissoluble link between music and motion in our minds..." There is also much pleasure to be gained from observing the gestures of a conductor, or from seeing the coordinated bowing of the string sections within an orchestra.

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Composer Roger Sessions writes eloquently on the subject as well in *The Musical Experience of Composer, Performer, Listener*:

“The basic ingredient of music is not so much sound as movement...I would even go a step farther, and say that music is significant for us as human beings principally because it embodies movement of a specifically human type that goes to the roots of our being and takes shape in the inner gestures which embody our deepest and most intimate responses.”

My *Ballet for Orchestra* emerged out of a similar kinesthetic/emotional awareness and a renewed interest in dance music.

I first explored this approach to composition in an orchestral work entitled *Circuits* (1990) which reviewer Charles Ward described as follows: “*Circuits*...was a charging, churning celebration of the musical and cultural energy of modern-day America. From repetitive ideas reminiscent of Steve Reich to walking bass lines straight from jazz, *Circuits* refracted important American musical styles of this century. Similarly, the kaleidoscope of melodies, musical ‘licks,’ and fragmented form aptly illustrated the electric, almost convulsive nature of American society near the start of the 21st century.”

Although I have never made a conscious attempt to “be” American, I would agree that my musical style generally does reflect my American roots more than my European-based training.

European writers, however, continue to shape my thinking, especially the Swiss psychologist, Carl G. Jung, who felt that creative energy sprang from the tension between the oppositions of conscious and unconscious, of thought and feeling, of objectivity and subjectivity, and of mind and body. So too have the integration and reconciliation of opposing elements become important aspects of my work. The frequent use of circular patterns, or *ostinatos*, offers both the possibility of suspended time and the opportunity for continuous forward movement. Carefully controlled pitch systems and thematic manipulations provide a measure of objectivity and reason, while kinetic rhythmic structures inspire bodily motion. Discipline yields to improvisation, and perhaps most importantly, humor takes its place comfortably alongside the grave and earnest. To quote Lord Byron: “On with the dance! Let joy be unconfined...”

Cast in four movements, the work’s macro-structure is modeled after the classical symphonies of Haydn and Mozart.

I. Introduction: On with the Dance

On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and
Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet.
—Lord Byron, *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*

Inspired by the opening theme of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5, a three-note motif outlining the interval of a minor third is developed and expanded to also include the interval of a major third. Following an excursion into a musical world informed by jazz rhythms and sounds, the movement concludes with a recapitulation of the opening material.

II. Adagio: Till a Silence Fell

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirr’d
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.
—Alfred Lord Tennyson, *Maud, and Other Poems*

The second movement begins without pause, silencing all but the strings to provide a more intimate mood. Adapted from my *Agnus Dei* for organ in the wake of events following the horror of September 11, 2001, this movement gradually exposes a hauntingly beautiful melody from Krzysztof Penderecki’s *Polish Requiem*. A falling half-step and subsequent whole-step continue to emphasize the interval of the minor third. With occasional references to Samuel Barber’s *Adagio for Strings*, the work’s harmonic language reflects my interest in using both atonal and tonal materials within the same piece of music.

III. Waltz: Light Fantastic

Come & trip it as ye go
On the light fantastic toe.
—John Milton, *L’Allegro*

Following the classical symphonic model, the third movement is a dance—in this case a quick waltz inspired by a memorable hearing of Ravel’s *La Valse* in 2000 by the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Larry Rachleff. A rising half-step motif in the basses lightens the effect of the falling half-step motif heard in the previous movement.

IV. Finale: Where Time Plays the Fiddle

O, Love’s but a dance,
Where Time plays the fiddle!
See the couples advance,
O, Love’s but a dance!
A whisper, a glance,
“Shall we twirl down the middle?”
O, Love’s but a dance,
Where Time plays the fiddle!
—Henry Austin Dobson, *Cupid’s Alley*

Motifs consisting of minor and major thirds as well as jazz elements continue to permeate the textures of the final movement. References to Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring* can be heard at several other points along the way. Material from the beginning of the piece returns, and a final statement of the opening motif provides closure.

—Cindy McTee

Made possible by the John and June Hechinger Commissioning Fund for New Orchestral Works, Cindy McTee’s *Symphony No. 1: Ballet for Orchestra* was commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra and Leonard Slatkin. It was premiered at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., on October 24, 2002, by the NSO and Slatkin.

Recommended Recording: “McTee: *Symphony No. 1, Circuits, Einstein’s Dream, Double Play*.” Detroit Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leonard Slatkin. Naxos, American Classics.