

Dinnerstein Premieres Glass

Philip Glass (b. 1937)

Symphony No. 3

Movement I

Movement II

Movement III

Movement IV

J.S. Bach (1685–1750)

***Concerto for Keyboard and Strings in G minor,
BWV 1058***

Allegro

Andante

Allegro assai

INTERMISSION

J. S. Bach

Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, BWV 1048

Allegro

Adagio

Allegro

Philip Glass

Piano Concerto No. 3

World Premiere

Movement I

Movement II

Movement III (for Arvo Pärt)

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Karen Ouzounian
Michael Unterman
Rafael Popper-Keizer

BASS

Erik Higgins
Karl Doty

**Guest Crier*

+*Crier Emeritus*

In its 10 years, the Grammy-nominated string orchestra A FAR CRY has taken an omnivorous approach to its music-making. Known for high energy, according to the New York Times, A Far Cry “brims with personality or, better, personalities, many and varied.” A Far Cry was founded in 2007 by a tightly-knit collective of young professional musicians, and since the beginning has fostered those personalities. The self-conducted orchestra has developed an innovative process where decisions are made collectively and leadership rotates among the Criers. This democratic structure has helped generate consistently thoughtful, innovative, and unpredictable programming leading to collaborations with artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Jake Shimabukuro, Gabriel Kahane, and Urbanity Dance. Whether playing a new commission from composers such as Ted Hearne, Caroline Shaw, or Andrew Norman, or a work by Mozart, Haydn, or Piazzolla—A Far Cry takes audiences on a unique ride.

The 18 Criers are proud to call Boston home, rehearsing at their storefront music center in Jamaica Plain and presenting a nine-concert series, with performances at both New England Conservatory’s Jordan Hall and St. John’s Episcopal Church in Jamaica Plain. A Far Cry has also been Chamber Orchestra in Residence at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum since 2011. A Far Cry’s innovative hometown programming has garnered the group a national reputation. An insightful perspective, along with a propensity for engaging collaboration, are the group’s hallmarks.

In 2014, A Far Cry launched its in-house label, Crier Records, with the album, which met with critical acclaim and a Grammy nomination. The second release, *Law of Mosaics*, was included on many 2014 Top-10 lists, notably from New Yorker music critic Alex Ross and WQXR’s Q2 Music, which named A Far Cry as one of the “Imagination-Grabbing, Trailblazing Artists of 2014.”

In 2016-17, A Far Cry celebrated its tenth anniversary by, as the Boston Globe says, “moving ever forward.” Energetic and insightful programs were on display in the group’s ambitious subscription series in Boston, residency concerts at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and increased tour activity (with concerts at the National Gallery of Art, University of Michigan’s University Musical Society, and the Celebrity Series of Boston). The season also featured an impressive list of collaborators, including the adventurous vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth, the Silk Road Ensemble, jazz pianist and composer Vijay Iyer, and clarinetist David Krakauer.



American pianist SIMONE DINNERSTEIN is a searching and inventive artist who is motivated by a desire to find the musical core of every work she approaches. The New York-based pianist gained an international following with the remarkable success of her recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations, which she independently raised the funds to record. Released in 2007 on Telarc, it ranked No. 1 on the U.S. Billboard Classical Chart in its first week of sales and was named to many "Best of 2007" lists including those of The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, and The New Yorker.

Dinnerstein's performance schedule has taken her around the world since her acclaimed New York recital debut at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall in 2005, to venues including the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Vienna Konzerthaus, Berlin Philharmonie, Sydney Opera House, Seoul Arts Center, and London's Wigmore Hall; festivals

that include the Lincoln Center Mostly Mozart Festival, the Aspen, Verbier, and Ravinia festivals; and performances with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Dresden Philharmonic, Staatskapelle Berlin, RAI National Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Czech Philharmonic, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Orquestra Sinfônica Brasileira, and the Tokyo Symphony.

Dinnerstein has played concerts throughout the U.S. for the Piatigorsky Foundation, an organization dedicated to bringing classical music to non-traditional venues. She gave the first classical music performance in the Louisiana state prison system at the Avoyelles Correctional Center, and performed at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women in a concert organized by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Dedicated to her community, in 2009 Dinnerstein founded Neighborhood Classics, a concert series open to the public hosted by New York public schools which raises funds for their music education programs.

Dinnerstein is a graduate of The Juilliard School where she was a student of Peter Serkin. She also studied with Solomon Mikowsky at the Manhattan School of Music and in London with Maria Curcio. She is on the faculty of the Mannes School of Music and is a Sony Classical artist. She is managed by Andrea Troolin at Ekonomisk Mgmt with booking representation through Helen Henson at Blu Ocean Arts.

Program Notes

PHILIP GLASS (B.1937) SYMPHONY NO. 3

Classical and Romantic era symphonies relied on the momentum of key change—the harmonic propulsion that comes from the tension and release of dissonance to consonance. What one finds in the Symphony No. 3 of Philip Glass, a chamber work written originally for the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, is more of a reliance on variations of rhythm and pace. As with many works in the “minimalist” vein, there are many bars where specific patterns are repeated numerous times. The ear of the listener becomes accustomed to the pattern (ideally to the point of being lost within it) so that even a slight change can play a significant role.

In a brilliant gesture of tying this idea to the past, Glass employs the ancient repetitive chaconne structure in the third movement of the symphony; in the chaconne, a harmonic sequence and/or bass line is recast over and over again, creating a foundation for a series of variations built “on top.” The composer elaborates a bit on this and the surrounding three movements in a previous set of liner notes from a recording of the work:

“The opening movement, a quiet, moderately paced piece, functions as a prelude to movements two and three, which are the main body of the symphony. The second movement mode of fast-moving compound meters explores the textures from unison to multi-harmonic writing for the whole ensemble. It ends when it moves without transition to a new closing theme, mixing a melody and pizzicato [plucked strings as opposed to being bowed] writing. The third movement is in the form of a chaconne, a repeated harmony sequence. It begins with all three celli and four violas, and with each repetition new voices are added until, in the final variation, all the players have been woven into the music. The fourth movement, a short finale, returns to the closing theme of the second movement, which quickly re-integrates the compound meters from earlier in that movement. A new closing theme is introduced to bring the Symphony to its conclusion.”

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750) CONCERTO FOR KEYBOARD AND STRINGS, BWV 1058

When was the “birth” of the solo keyboard concerto? In short, no one really knows, exactly. But many point to Bach’s Brandenburg No. 5 as a key moment in the composer’s own progression toward penning the collection of seven keyboard concertos. Why? That Brandenburg not only features a harpsichord as part of the group of soloists, but contains an extended solo keyboard cadenza. Considering that the harpsichord was typically used as a supporting instrument in an ensemble context (essentially functioning as the rhythm section), keeping the bass line and tempo, it was quite a moment when the instrument moved toward the spotlight.

In 1723 Bach moved his family to Leipzig for a new job as Thomaskantor, or cantor of the St. Thomas church, which included overseeing the music for four of the churches in town. Several years after the move, Bach also took over responsibilities as director of the Collegium Musicum, a music society associated with the University. In the nascent days of public concerts (recalling that most organized concerts previously were the private affairs of royals and nobility), members of the society (many of them students) could gather at Café Zimmerman coffee house to hear new compositions—including Bach’s new solo keyboard concertos.

Bach aficionados might notice that BWV 1058 sounds familiar. The keyboard concerto in G minor is a reworking by the composer of his BWV 1041: the violin concerto in A minor.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 3, BWV 1048

The six Concerts avec plusieurs instruments (Concertos with several instruments), or “Brandenburg Concertos,” derive their nickname from the Margrave Christian Ludwig of Brandenburg. Presumably, Bach met the Margrave in Berlin while he was in town checking on a new harpsichord for Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen, for whom he served as Capellmeister. It’s also assumed the Margrave commissioned some music from Bach. It would have been inappropriate for Bach to accept a commission for new music from the Margrave while serving as an employee of Prince Leopold, which suggests the concertos might have originated in earlier compositions. Also, Bach sent them three years after the initial meeting, leading to the hypothesis that the concertos were sent as a kind of résumé. During those three years devastating change swept through Bach’s household: out of town on duty with musicians and the Prince, Bach returned in July of 1720 to find his wife had died several days before and was already buried. Not only was he heartbroken, he was left to care for their children alone. Perhaps he remembered meeting the Margrave and saw him as a ticket out of town. Whatever his motivation, they were sent and met with silence. No reply. The Margrave never had them performed.

In the Brandenburg Concertos Bach riffed on a structure made popular by the Italians, the “concerto grosso,” where a smaller group (“concertino”) functions as soloist in conversation with the whole (“ripieno”). The astounding variation of form in Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 is that the concertino of nine instruments, with separate solo lines, combine in various unisons to form the typical ripieno parts throughout the piece, attesting to Bach’s endless innovations that brilliantly transcended the limits of traditional structure.

—Kathryn J Allwine Bacasmot

Kathryn J Allwine Bacasmot is a pianist/harpsichordist, musicologist, music and cultural critic, and freelance writer. A graduate of New England Conservatory, she writes program annotations for ensembles nationwide.

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We're overjoyed to introduce the newest member of A Far Cry, Rafael Popper-Keizer!

Rafi's incredibly generous and thoughtful playing has been a source of inspiration for us during A Far Cry's entire existence. Anyone who's heard him - and if you live in Boston, you probably have - understands exactly why.

Every time we've gotten to make music together has been a joy, and now we get to do it a whole lot.

Welcome, Rafi, we're so glad to have you on board for this adventure!

ABOUT RAFAEL POPPER-KEIZER

Hailed by *The New York Times* as "imaginative and eloquent" and dubbed "a local hero" by *The Boston Globe*, cellist Rafael Popper-Keizer maintains a vibrant and diverse career as one of Boston's most sought-after artists. He is principal cellist of the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as a member artist of Emmanuel Music, Chameleon Arts Ensemble, Winsor Music, and Monadnock Music. Praised by *The Boston Globe* for his "melodic phrasing of melting tenderness" and "dazzling dispatch of every bravura challenge," Mr. Popper-Keizer has appeared as a soloist throughout the United States, including recitals in New England

Conservatory's Jordan Hall and the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. In recent seasons he has performed the Saint-Saëns Concerto in A minor, with the Boston Philharmonic; the Beethoven Triple Concerto, with Emmanuel Music; and the Dvorak Concerto, with the University of Santa Cruz Orchestra.

In April of 2009, Mr. Popper-Keizer was the subject of an in-depth profile in *The Boston Globe* in which he was recognized as one of the area's busiest and most versatile musicians, his career routinely encompassing everything from continuo in 17th-century motets to solo recitals to avant-garde improvisation to indie rock. He has collaborated with members of the Borromeo and Muir String Quartets, the Museum of Fine Arts Trio, violinist Curtis Macomber, and flutist Eugenia Zukerman, and has toured extensively with the CORE Ensemble, a nationally acclaimed percussion trio with over twenty commissions to its name, through which he was invited to appear as both soloist and chamber musician in the contemporary music festival "Contrasts" in Lviv, Ukraine. Mr. Popper-Keizer has made guest appearances with innumerable ensembles throughout New England, including the Fromm Chamber Players, Boston Musica Viva, the Boston Trio, the Rockport Chamber Music Festival, Walden Chamber Players, Firebird Ensemble, and John Harbison's Token Creek Festival, among others.

Mr. Popper-Keizer has been featured on over a dozen recordings, with five new releases in 2010 alone. They include the premiere of Robert Erickson's *Fantasy for Cello and Orchestra* with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project on New World Records, Ralf Gawlick's *Piano Trio and Piano Quartet*, on Musica Omnia; Lisa Bielawa's *Why Did You Lie To Me?* for unaccompanied cello, on BMOP/Sound; and, on three separate Albany Records releases, Martin Boykan's *Song Lines and Motet*, Malcolm Peyton's *unaccompanied Cello Piece*, and Gunther Schuller's *Piano Trio and Yehudi Wyner's De Novo* for cello and small ensemble with Ibis Camerata.

Rafael Popper-Keizer is an alumnus of the New England Conservatory, where he studied intensively with master pedagogue and Piatigorsky protégé Laurence Lesser, and of the Tanglewood Music Center, where he served as Yo-Yo Ma's understudy for Richard Strauss' *Don Quixote* under the direction of Seiji Ozawa. He also studied with Stephen Harrison, at Stanford University, and Karen Andrie, at the University of California at Santa Cruz.



Community Partnerships and Education with A Far Cry

One of our goals at A Far Cry is to teach young musicians how to imagine and develop different ways of performing and functioning as an entrepreneurial ensemble. We intend to empower the next generation of musicians to think critically and listen to each other “in the music.” With these ends in mind, we foster many relationships with community partners and educational institutions across the United States. We are pleased to highlight three of our ongoing educational initiatives based in Boston.

PROJECT STEP

We are incredibly lucky to be participating in a second year of residency with Project STEP, a comprehensive string training program for children from underrepresented communities. This residency includes weekly coachings and mentoring sessions from Criers, plus concert previews and masterclasses for the entire Project STEP community.

Criers will be coaching the Project STEP Honors Quartet this season, and this ensemble will present a pre-concert performance at Jordan Hall before one of our concerts this spring.



NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY ENTREPRENEURIAL MUSICIANSHIP FELLOWSHIP

Open exclusively to NEC string students, this fellowship offers the opportunity to gain a 360 degree view of the A Far Cry chamber orchestra, including all aspects of administration, rehearsal and performance. The AFC Fellows not only have the opportunity to rehearse and perform one subscription concert with the ensemble, they also attend meetings, work directly with A Far Cry’s Executive Director, and participate in one or more of the organization’s musician-run committees. Through an intensive interaction with the group, the AFC Fellow will learn all aspects of managing and performing in a collaboratively-empowered ensemble, and contribute positively to the growth of A Far Cry.

NEC PREP/A FAR CRY COLLABORATIVE COMPETITION

Our competition at NEC Prep offers registered students ages 13-20 the opportunity to collaborate with A Far Cry on one chosen piece per season. The competition seeks to recognize talented young chamber musicians and inspire deeper communication through musicianship. The winner is invited to rehearse and perform with A Far Cry as a member of the ensemble, experiencing first-hand the sensitivity and discipline necessary to work effectively as a self-conducted group.

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