

Saturday Evening, November 23, 2019, at 7:30

The Juilliard School

presents

AXIOM

Jeffrey Milarsky, *Music Director and Conductor*

Adam Phan, *Harp*

Jaeden Izik-Dzurko, *Piano*

ELLIOTT CARTER (1908–2012) ***Mosaic* (2004)**

ADAM PHAN, *Harp*

GEORGE LEWIS (b. 1952) ***Ikons* (2011)**

Intermission

MORTON FELDMAN (1926–87) ***Madame Press Died Last Week at Ninety* (1970)**

PHILIP GLASS (b. 1937) ***The Hours—A Suite in Three Movements* (2002)**

(arr. Michael Riesman)

The Poet Acts, Morning Passages, Why Does Someone Have to Die?, Dead Things
An Unwelcome Friend, Something She Has to Do, I Going to Make a Cake, The Kiss
The Hours

JAEDEN IZIK-DZURKO, *Piano*

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes, including an intermission

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not permitted in this auditorium.

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Alice Tully Hall

*Please make certain that all electronic devices
are turned off during the performance.*

Notes on the Program

by Matthew Mendez

Mosaic

ELLIOTT CARTER

Born: December 11, 1908, in New York City

Died: November 5, 2012, in New York City

In 1971, when Aaron Copland hailed Elliott Carter (faculty 1966–1984) as “one of America’s most distinguished creative artists in any field,” little could he have imagined that the subject of his tribute would still be going strong a full four decades later, in one of the most remarkable feats of longevity in the annals of this nation’s musical history. Heir to the visionary Yankee mantle of his early mentor Charles Ives, Carter was relatively slow to find his compositional *métier*, and even his formidably multilayered works of the 1960s—though hailed as masterpieces by no less a figure than Igor Stravinsky—were the products of lengthy, agonizing contemplation. It was only after his 75th birthday that Carter began to compose with greater ease, and during the last two decades of his life he grew so prolific as to put the advanced-age harvests of Verdi and Strauss totally in the shade. By the time of his death at age 103, Carter’s tenacity and continued delight in the act of creation had made admirers of even those who had once opposed his aesthetic credos. There was, for instance, composer John Tavener, whose music was worlds away from Carter’s, but who nevertheless said that the key accomplishment of the American elder statesman was “to rid modernism of all its angst, creating sparkling edifices of joy and beauty.”

A kind of pocket concertino for harp and mixed septet, *Mosaic* is one such sparkling edifice. It represents Carter’s most sustained homage to Carlos Salzedo, the French-born harpist and member of the Ives-affiliated “ultramodernist” circle of U.S. composers of the 1920s and early ’30s. Even today, Salzedo’s achievements as an inventor and

formalizer of new techniques and sonorities for his instrument remain without parallel. Yet as Carter lamented in his later years, few composers during the second half of the century paid much heed to his old friend’s innovations. By way of compensation, it seems, he came to feature them extensively in his harp writing, and nowhere was that more true than in *Mosaic*. In Carter’s hands, Salzedo’s trademark sonorities (rumbling glissando textures, delicate percussive effects, and all manner of alternative plucking sounds) help defamiliarize the harp, transforming it into something altogether more changeable and multifaceted than the usual impressionist stereotype would imply. Perhaps this is one way of understanding *Mosaic*’s title—though it more obviously refers to the score’s construction, a characteristic Carterian collage of varied musical episodes, or “strophes,” to use a term by Carter expert David Schiff (D.M.A. ’79, composition). Most of the strophes include the harp in some guise, but they all aspire, as Carter put it, to “make one coordinated impression.”

Ikons

GEORGE LEWIS

Born: July 14, 1952, in Chicago

Composer, trombonist, creative improviser, computer musician, installation artist, scholar, historian, curator, teacher, musical conscience writ large: Though George Lewis is all of these things and more, to emphasize any of them at the expense of the others would do a disservice to one of the most voracious, forward-thinking musicians of our time. A longtime member of the experimental collective known as the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians and the recipient of a MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship, Lewis has spent his career questioning and subverting the exclusionary belief systems that help structure the musical field—for example, that composition and improvisation are necessarily at odds, or the

unstated assumption that African-American musical expression and avant-garde, experimental creativity are mutually exclusive. Not only that, Lewis has long been a trailblazer in the field of interactive computer music, particularly via his watershed “composition” *Voyager*, a digital software agent that he programs to improvise in real time with human performers. As the sociologist Herman Gray aptly puts it, Lewis wants to shake up “the deeply embedded terms in which race, in this case whiteness, organizes new digital information technologies despite their being presented as neutral, unmarked, and beyond cultural politics.”

Commissioned by the 2010 Vancouver Cultural Olympiad, what Lewis designates as *Ikons* has two discrete “modes,” to use his noun: the fully notated octet we will be hearing this evening and an interactive sculpture-installation created in conjunction with the Canadian multimedia artist Eric Metcalfe whose sonic component (its “virtual orchestra,” as Lewis puts it) consists of recorded extracts of the composed score. It is not just the octet that informed the sculpture, though: There was a feedback loop of influence in both directions, since Lewis’ discussions with Metcalfe also inspired the score itself. Taking First Nations iconography as its loose point of departure, Metcalfe’s installation revolved around a set of colorfully decorative, pyramid-like “ikons,” whose shapes evoked British Columbia’s boreal mountains and forests. As far as the score-based iteration of *Ikons* went, this translated into an almost pictorial impulse, according to Lewis:

In an odd way, I connect the opening gesture in the work to climbing mountain ranges; if you look at Eric’s “ikons,” you see the connection, and in the music, there is a persistently articulated “climbing” motion—like what people call “memes” today, or auditory “ikons.”

Lewis goes on to characterize these weighty repeated gestures as “earcons,” which is the term for the sonic cues that punctuate the experience of using computers and other digital interfaces. Musically, he associates these earcons with the work of psychoacoustician Stephen McAdams and composer Roger Reynolds, both of whom he met in Paris during the 1980s, while he was in residence at IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique).

Nor is this *Ikons*’ only link with that period in Lewis’ life, during which time he came to know some of the leading exponents of the French spectralist movement. Aptly, then, Lewis generated the “mountainous” earcons by instrumentally resynthesizing (i.e. transcribing) sounds subjected to classic spectralist digital manipulations (frequency modulation and stretching). In a similar vein, a few of *Ikons*’ violent breakdowns, which Lewis refers to as “ikon-smashing scenes,” pay homage to his former Columbia University colleague Tristan Murail. But here we might want to ask: is the ikon-smashing a critique of our moment of ubiquitous computing, or rather, a self-critique of the score’s First Nations inspiration? Perhaps both, since Lewis, pointing to the specific context in which the commission arose, reminds us that Vancouver is “unceded Coast Salish territory,” and as such, muses that “perhaps people should be thinking about that aboriginal history when they listen to the music.” This is utterly characteristic Lewis, whose creative practice unflinchingly confronts our ostensibly “high-tech,” digitally dematerialized present, highlighting the ways in which it remains haunted by the sins and exclusions of our violent settler-colonial pasts.

Madame Press Died Last Week at Ninety

MORTON FELDMAN

Born: January 12, 1926, in Brooklyn

Died: September 3, 1987, in Buffalo

A man of contradictions, if ever there were one: that has long been the conventional wisdom on Morton Feldman, an individual whose compositional practice so often seemed to sit at the furthest possible remove from his public persona. Critic John Rockwell put the essential paradox well in his obituary for the composer, writing how “despite the ethereal quality of his music, in person Mr. Feldman was an almost Rabelaisian figure, with a pungent Brooklyn accent and an undisguised appetite for sensuous pleasure.” Rockwell gestures at Feldman’s reputation as an imposing, chain-smoking bear of a man, a true raconteur who so often reveled in crudity and shock value. And yet his almost impossibly hypersensitive music, with its painterly attentiveness to infinitely small sonic nuances, might well have seemed the very antithesis of all that. Similarly, thanks in part to the abstract expressionist artists who so marked his worldview as a young man, Feldman long harbored “heroic,” masculinist ideas about what it meant to be a creative practitioner (with problematic sexual behavior to match). But by the same token, Feldman can often be heard desperately struggling to “disappear into” his music, via a kind of heightened egotism so intensive that it often shaded into its very opposite, pure egolessness. In short, the “Feldman case” remains a valuable object lesson as it pertains to the drawing of connections between biography, creative persona, and musical end product.

First performed by the Juilliard Ensemble in 1970, the brief *Madame Press Died Last Week at Ninety* was composed in memory of one of Feldman’s musical role models, Vera Maurina-Press. A Russian émigré and one-time member of the circle of Aleksandr Scriabin, Press became Feldman’s piano teacher in 1938, the year she resettled in the

U.S. It was through Maurina-Press, Feldman later said, that he “was instilled with a sort of vibrant musicality,” which he contrasted with merely rote “musicianship.” In particular, he recalled being entranced by her keyboard touch, a sensitivity it is not hard to relate to his mature fascination with the luminous “aura” of individual sound events: “The way she would put her finger down, in the Russian way, just the finger, the lightness of the finger, and produce a B-flat ... you wanted to faint!”

Like a handful of other contemporaneous Feldman pieces, which partook of what he described as “the illusion of feeling,” *Madame Press* can be heard as a kind of composed-out mourning ritual, centered upon an insistently repeated descending figure, harmonized and “shaded” variously with each iteration. This figure, which some have likened to the sound of a cuckoo clock, sounds 90 times, to match what Feldman thought was the age to which Maurina-Press lived. (The quotidian title apparently originated in words Feldman’s mother said to him after reading an obituary for the pianist—though she must have gotten it wrong, for Maurina-Press’s real age at the time of her death was 93.) Though the brass and bell-heavy instrumentation gives the music an aptly “Russian,” solemnly Stravinskian tint, what is perhaps most striking is its almost obsessive tenderness. It is in this sense that *Madame Press* may strike the listener as analogous to a grief ritual, its heartfelt “cuckoos” a mourning object to which the music obsessively clings. Feldman also brackets *Madame Press* with a celesta arpeggio on either end, like a quizzical disappearance.

The Hours—A Suite in Three Movements

PHILIP GLASS

Born: January 31, 1937, in Baltimore

One of the highest-profile composers of his generation, Philip Glass (Diploma ‘60, M.S. ‘62, composition) has been exerting

a decisive influence on the contemporary soundscape for nearly half a century. Glass first made his bones as an uncompromising minimalist, helping to refocus attention on pulse, tonal centrality, and perceptible process—musical dimensions that had been subject to longstanding neglect in the experimental scene within which he initially came of age. In this, he was deeply marked by the minimalist and postminimalist painters and sculptors of late 1960s downtown New York, who taught him some of the virtues of iterative, modular forms of artmaking. A naturally open-eared musician, Glass also recognized that his stylistic interests echoed those of some of the foremost practitioners of popular and so-called “world” music, something that would later lead to collaborative-style projects with the likes of David Bowie and Ravi Shankar. Nor did Glass’ idiom stand still: By the mid-1980s, he had shifted away from the audaciously neon-lit patterns he trademarked in his early triumphs *Music in Twelve Parts* and *Einstein on the Beach*, his approach having become at once more flexible, equable, and—for lack of a better word—“classical.” Today, through his ecumenical stance toward his craft, Glass remains a role model for an entire generation of “post-genre” composers, who are, as is he, equally at home writing choral symphonies and scoring Hollywood soundtracks.

It is indeed via his extensive body of film work that Glass has reached his broadest listenership. By the time he was asked to score English director Stephen Daldry’s 2002 drama *The Hours*, Glass was an old soundtrack hand, having been the winner of a 1998 Golden Globe for his work on *The Truman Show*. Though he long preferred to get involved with film projects at a much earlier stage than is customary for most soundtrack composers, in the case of *The Hours*, an adaptation of author Michael Cunningham’s novel of the same name, Glass’ services were requested because of

the unique nature of the finished footage. A complex, multilayered narrative centering on both the person of Virginia Woolf and on the impact her novel *Mrs. Dalloway* has on two subsequent generations of female characters, *The Hours* seemed virtually to resist musical underscoring, as its producers later remarked. At once nostalgic and yet purposefully detached, Glass’ score thus proved the film’s all-important binding agent, not so much punctuating each of its interwoven narrative strands as providing a blank canvas against which viewers could project their own associative resonances. This has long been a key tenet of Glass’ film scoring philosophy, of composing so that it “allows for a distance to exist between the spectator-listener and the image,” thereby giving the viewer the freedom to “make the image her own.” To this end, Glass also chose not to delineate *The Hours*’ three timelines (set in 1923, 1951, and 2001) by means of divergent styles or period touches. Instead, the score highlights the piano (accompanied by an orchestra of mostly strings), with Glass taking advantage of the instrument’s almost neutral character in such a way that it would act as a kind of conduit that “could cross periods very easily.”

Arranged by Glass’ longtime associate Michael Riesman, the suite from *The Hours* faithfully adapts a number of the original soundtrack cues, but recasts them in the form of a kind of mellow, meditative piano concerto.

Matthew Mendez is a New Haven-based critic and musicologist with a focus on 20th- and 21st-century repertoire. A graduate of Harvard University and a Ph.D. student at Yale, Mendez was the recipient of a 2016 ASCAP Foundation Deems Taylor/Virgil Thomson Award for outstanding music journalism.

Meet the Artists



PETER KONERKO

Jeffrey Milarsky

American conductor Jeffrey Milarsky (B.M. '88, M.M. '90, percussion) is music director of Juilliard's AXIOM ensemble and senior lecturer in music at Columbia University, where he is music director and conductor of the Columbia University Orchestra. While studying at Juilliard, he was awarded the Peter Mennin Prize for outstanding leadership and achievement in the arts. In recent seasons, he has worked with ensembles including the New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Milwaukee Symphony, American Composers Orchestra, MET Chamber Ensemble, Bergen Philharmonic, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, New World Symphony, and Tanglewood Festival Orchestra. In the U.S. and abroad, he has premiered and recorded works by many groundbreaking contemporary composers in Carnegie Hall, Zankel Hall, Davies Symphony Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, and Boston's Symphony Hall, and at IRCAM in Paris, among others. Milarsky has a long history of premiering, recording, and performing American composers and throughout his career has collaborated with John Adams, Milton Babbitt, John Cage, Elliott Carter, John Corigliano, George Crumb, Mario Davidovsky, Jacob Druckman, Michael Gordon, David Lang, Steven Mackey, Christopher Rouse, Ralph Shapey, Morton Subotnick, Charles Wuorinen, and an entire generation of young and developing composers. In 2013 he was

awarded the Ditson Conductor's Award for his commitment to the performance of American music. Milarsky has been the principal timpanist for the Santa Fe Opera since 2005. He has performed and recorded with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Pittsburgh Symphony and has recorded extensively for Angel, Bridge, Teldec, Telarc, New World, CRI, MusicMasters, EMI, Koch, and London records.



CLAIRE CHEN

Jaeden Izik-Dzurko

Born in Salmon Arm, British Columbia, Jaeden Izik-Dzurko was the grand prize-winner at the Federation of Canadian Music Festivals' national competition. Most recently, he won third prize and the Peter Takács Classical Sonata award at the Hilton Head International Piano Competition. Now completing his bachelor's degree at Juilliard, where he studies with Yoheved Kaplinsky, he has performed as a soloist with the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra, Kamloops Symphony, Lions Gate Sinfonia, and Okanagan Symphony Orchestra. He was a winner of the 2019 Gina Bachauer Piano Competition, which included a concert at Weill Recital Hall that was broadcast on WQXR. A passionate advocate for Canadian music, he has been recognized at several competitions for his insightful interpretations of Canadian compositions. *Harold and Helene Schonberg Scholarship, Gina Bachauer Scholarship, Adele Marcus Scholarship*



Adam Phan

Harpist Adam Phan is completing his bachelor's degree at Juilliard, where he is studying with Nancy Allen, who's also principal harp of the New York Philharmonic.

He has participated in master classes with renowned harpists Judy Loman, Gretchen Van Hoesen, Alice Giles, and Gillian Benet Sella. Phan has spent summers as a member of the National Youth Orchestra touring both China and Europe with conductors Valery Gergiev and Charles Dutoit. He has participated in the Aspen Music Festival with Anneleen Lenaerts and Nancy Allen and is a Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist.

Kovner Fellowship

AXIOM

AXIOM is dedicated to performing the masterworks of the 20th- and 21st-century repertoire. Since its debut in 2006, the group has established itself as a leading ensemble in New York City's contemporary music scene with performances throughout Lincoln Center, in addition to frequent appearances at Columbia University's Miller Theatre and Le Poisson Rouge in Greenwich Village. AXIOM is led by music director Jeffrey Milarsky and is grounded in Juilliard's curriculum. Students receive a credit in chamber music for performing in the ensemble, and during any four-year period, AXIOM members will have the opportunity to perform works by John Adams, Harrison Birtwistle, Magnus Lindberg, and Arnold Schoenberg, among other composers. Guest conductors of AXIOM have included Alan Gilbert,

Susanna Mälkki, and David Robertson. For its final concert this season on February 27, 2020, AXIOM will perform the music of Toru Takemitsu, Juilliard faculty member Melinda Wagner, Pierre Boulez, and Thomas Adès. AXIOM opened the 2018–19 season with a concert that was part of the New York Philharmonic's The Art of Andriessen festival, followed by a performance celebrating both John Corigliano's 80th birthday and Nico Muhly on the occasion of the Metropolitan Opera's production of his opera Marnie and a season-closing concert of music by Iannis Xenakis, Caroline Shaw, and Steve Reich. The 2017–18 season comprised programs featuring the music of former Juilliard faculty members Jacob Druckman and Luciano Berio as well as Hans Abrahamsen's complete *Schnee*.

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CARTER

Mosaic

ADAM PHAN, *Harp*

Flute/Piccolo/Alto Flute

Mei Stone

Oboe/English Horn

Rachel Ahn

Clarinet/Bass Clarinet

Sunho Song

Violin

Sophia Szokolay

Viola

Joseph Donald
Peterson

Cello

Elena Ariza

Bass

Zachary Marzulli

LEWIS

Ikons

Flute/Alto Flute

Chris Wong

Clarinet

Sunho Song

Bassoon/ Contrabassoon

Joey Lavarias

Trombone

Yaoji Giuseppe Fu

Percussion

Mizuki Morimoto

Violin

Tal First

Cello

Issei Herr

Bass

Jacob Kolodny

FELDMAN

Madame Press Died Last Week at Ninety

Flute 1

Mei Stone

Flute 2

Chris Wong

French Horn

Jessica Elder

Trumpet

William Leathers

Trombone

Yaoji Giuseppe Fu

Tuba

Joshua Williams

Percussion

Mizuki Morimoto

Celesta

Marina Iwao

Cello 1

Issei Herr

Cello 2

Joseph Staten

Bass 1

Jacob Kolodny

Bass 2

Zachary Marzulli

GLASS

The Hours: A Suite in Three Movements

JAEDEN IZIK-DZURKO,
Piano

Celesta

Marina Iwao

Harp

Deanna Cirielli

Violin 1

Tal First
Phoenix Avalon
Lauren Conroy
Nikayla Kim
Sahana Shravan
Anna Wei

Violin 2

Sophia Szokolay
Gabrielle Despres
Jaewon Wee
Rabia Brooke
Jin Wen Sheu
Anastasiia Mazurok

Viola

Lydia Grimes
Kayla Cabrera
Kayla Williams
Zitian Lyu

Cello

Issei Herr
Elena Ariza
Joseph Staten

Bass

Zachary Marzulli
Jacob Kolodny

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