



SONOS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

ERIK E. OCHSNER, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Sunday Oct 14, 2007, 3pm

Good Shepherd Church 608 Isham St., New York

Monday, Oct 15, 2007, 8 pm

New World Stages 340 W. 50th St., New York

Our seventh season brings SONOS to a new level for many reasons. Last year we performed the United States Premiere of the Karl Jenkins Requiem – as a special “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” concert which benefited the organ at the Good Shepherd Church. This year we present our concert twice: first in my home neighborhood of Upper Manhattan/ Washington Heights/ Inwood, and our second performance takes us for the first time to the New World Stages, an off-Broadway theater in midtown Manhattan. In addition, we have a new Chairman of the Board of Directors, and have the honor of having several world-class, internationally famous musicians on our Advisory Board.

This year we honor the fifty year legacy of famed Finnish composer Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) by performing three of his suites for string orchestra. Rakastava is the most often performed of the three, but when put it in the context of a triple-bill, I find it very hard to pick “a favorite!” Each of these nine movements captures a unique emotion, suggests a landscape, a mindset of the Finnish people. I am incredibly moved by the music of Sibelius, and it fills my heart to be able to perform these pieces. A special and unique energy seems to emerge while performing them.

When I thought of programming three highly romantic string pieces on the first half of the program, I immediately knew I needed to insert “a sorbet course.” Philip Glass, who has long been one of my admired composers, celebrates his 70th birthday this year, and so we will perform his Company for string orchestra. The Finno-Ugric language family includes Finnish, Estonian and Hungarian. So immediately I also thought of Arvo

Pärt, and here we will perform the New York premiere of his Mein Weg, which is German for “My Way.” This sort of summarizes my approach to classical music programming, “I’ll do it my way!” Who else but SONOS Chamber Orchestra programs 7 pieces on the same program? (8 if you count the encore.)

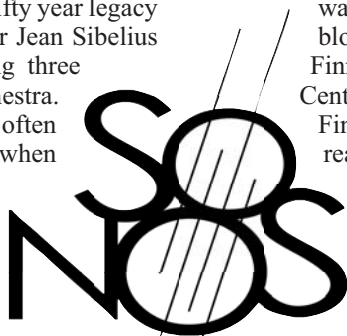
The second half of the program opens with the Hungarian composer Ernst von Dohnanyi’s Serenade, which was originally written as a virtuoso showpiece for string trio. Here we present it as a virtuoso piece arranged for string orchestra. Hold on to your seats –the third movement will take you for a ride!

The final piece on the program, Einar Englund’s Symphony No. 4, was actually the building block for this program. The Finnish Music Information Center actively promotes Finnish music, and I actively read their literature! As soon as I heard a recording of the piece, I fell in love with it. I thought to myself, “This is something SONOS must do.” These concerts

mark only the second time it has been performed in the United States. We continue to make history with our method of programming value pieces of music which are often not-heard or merely neglected.

I really am proud to bring you yet another SONOS program. Audiences and players alike have continually asked me, where do you find this music? And I can only respond, that’s part of my job! I encourage you to sit back, relax, (hopefully enjoy!) and open yourself to some music that you may have never heard before. It can entertain us, it can move us, and it can make a difference!

–Erik Eino Ochsner, Music Director



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Sunday, October 14, 2007, 3:00 pm

Good Shepherd Church

Monday, October 15, 2007, 8:00 pm

New World Stages

Erik E. Ochsner, *Conductor*

Jean Sibelius Suite champêtre, op. 98b (1922)
(1865-1957)
i. Pièce caractéristique
ii. Mélodie élégiaque
iii. Danse

Arvo Pärt Mein Weg for strings and percussion (1989)
(1935-) - *New York Premiere*

Jean Sibelius Rakastava (“The Lover”), op. 14 (1911)
(1865-1957)
i. Rakastava (The Lover)
ii. Rakastetun tie (The Path of the Beloved)
iii. Hyvää iltaa- jää hyvästi (Good Night- Farewell)

Philip Glass Company for string orchestra (1983)
(1937-)
i.
ii.
iii.
iv.

Jean Sibelius Suite caractéristique, op. 100 (1923)
(1865-1957)
i. Vivo
ii. Lento
iii. Commodo

- Intermission -

Ernst von Dohnanyi Serenade, op. 10 (1902)
(1877-1960)
i. Marcia. Allegro
ii. Romanza. Adagio Non Troppo Quasi Andante
iii. Scherzo. Vivace
iv. Tema Con Variazioni. Andante Con Moto
v. Rondo (Finale). Allegro Vivace

Einar Englund Symphony no. 4 “Nostalgic” for strings and
(1916-1999) percussion (1976) - *New York Premiere*
i. Prelude
ii. Tempus fugit
iii. Nostalgia
iv. Intermezzo + Epilogue

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

A few words on the program...

By Brian Wise

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Suite champêtre, op. 98b (1922)



Jean Sibelius, who died fifty years ago this year, stands for Finland better than Verdi stands for Italy or Dvorak represents the Czech people. The composer (1865-1957) still dominates Finland's musical infrastructure, its legends and atmosphere, and his music remains its biggest artistic export. He is best known for his sprawling, enigmatic symphonies, a masterful Violin Concerto, as well as nationalistic tone poems like *Finlandia* and *Valse Triste*. But Sibelius was also a master of brevity, as evidenced by his suites, dances and character pieces for various ensembles. Indeed, after

finishing his Seventh Symphony in 1924 and the tone poem *Tapiola* in 1926, he composed no large-scale works for the remaining thirty years of his life. But even earlier, he was writing short pieces including a trio of suites for string orchestra.

Among them is the 1921 *Suite champêtre*, comprised of three short sections, each with a charming, innocent appeal that shows off Sibelius' lyrical gifts. The first movement, "Pièce caractéristique," contains echoes of Sibelius' boyhood idol, Tchaikovsky, and is cast in D minor. The second movement, "Mélodie élégiaque," is flowing and warmly melancholic while "Danse" recalls something of the fairytale atmosphere of some of the composer's incidental music

Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)

Mein Weg for strings and percussion (1989)



Walk through the streets of Tallinn, Estonia's capital city, and you'll likely encounter the sound of bells emerging from the city's numerous church spires. This has become the inspiration for *tintinnabuli*, a word that Arvo Pärt, Estonia's most celebrated composer, uses to describe the style of his plangent music. *Tintinnabuli*, from the Latin word for "bells," refers specifically to music in which the sound materials are in constant flux while the overall image

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is one of stasis; some say it resembles the carillon of a grand cathedral. Part, a composer of deep religious convictions who grew up under the Soviet regime, uses the "tintinnabular" method in *Mein*, a work that is both ancient sounding and contemporary. With its pulsating rhythms and simple melodies in endless permutations it also is indebted to the minimalist scores of Philip Glass and Steve Reich.

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Rakastava ("The Lover"), op. 14 (1911)



In case the title didn't give it away, Sibelius's *Rakastava* ("The Lover") suggests the fleetness of an intense relationship. The piece is a string orchestra arrangement of an early a cappella choral work based on a collection of 19th-century folk verse. There's an uncommon tenderness and intimacy throughout its three movements as well as many charming touches. Like his *Suite champêtre*, *Rakastava* is largely in the minor mode. The opening section, "The Beloved," recalls a genre sometimes called "Scandinavian elegiac" (Grieg was a prime advocate) and yet transcends

the genre by avoiding harmonic clichés. The brisk, brief middle movement "The Way (or Path) of the Lover," features pulsating triplets and ends almost as soon as it has begun. The finale, "Good Night, My Beloved -- Farewell" harkens back to the opening section though tinged with the sweet sorrow of parting. Sibelius himself had high regard for *Rakastava*, describing it as "a work with a vein of black earth running through it. Earth and a piece of Finland."

Philip Glass (b. 1937)

Company for string orchestra (1983)



As Philip Glass turns 70 this year, he can hold claim to arguably the most widely recognizable musical style of any modern-day composer. While many audiences are familiar with such major scores as *Koyaanisqatsi* or *Einstein on the Beach*, less recognizable are the works he wrote for Mabou Mines, an avant-garde theater company that he co-founded in 1970. *Company* for string orchestra was written to accompany the Mabou Mines production of Samuel Beckett's work of the same name at the Public Theater in

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1982. Like Sibelius's previously heard miniatures, this piece, consisting of four short sections, features elegant passages of brooding arpeggios and quiet, repetitive motifs that burble away incessantly.

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Suite caractéristique, op. 100 for harp and strings (1923)



In the early 1920's, with five symphonies in his catalogue, Sibelius went through a symphony drought for a few years. During that time, he composed several smaller pieces for chamber orchestra, including his *Suite caractéristique*. As with the *Suite champêtre* publishers were reluctant to take up this piece, but despite its unpromising beginning, it proved to be a confident statement belonging firmly in the world of salon music. In this piece Sibelius seems to be harkening back to the sound of street cafes and balls of his student days in Vienna, some thirty years earlier. The opening *Vivo* movement in particular suggests the dazzling whirl of the *Wienerwaltz*.

Ernst von Dohnanyi (1877-1960)

Serenade for string trio, op. 10, arr. for string orchestra (1902)



Ernst von Dohnanyi's *Serenade in C* took shape during the first year of the twentieth century and reflects its composer's citizenship in both his native Hungary and the international music world. The piece was originally written as a string trio and this arrangement by Lucas Drew serves to amplify its boisterous, hearty moods. Seductive Hungarian rhythms turn up in several of the five movements starting with the opening *Allegro*, with its brilliant march rhythms and dance-like section. The slow movements are particularly lovely; in the *Romanza*,

the lyrical subject matter is equally shared amongst the ensemble. The central movement is a *Scherzo* imposing strenuous demands on the players. And as both Beethoven and Mozart (in his *Divertimento in E flat* (K. 563)) demonstrated, no serenade is complete without a variation movement and this one is particularly elegant. The *Serenade* ends with a *Rondo* movement, the last in several nods throughout the piece to the Classical serenade form.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Einar Englund (1916-1999)

Symphony no. 4 "Nostalgic" for strings and percussion (1976)



Finnish music, of course, did not begin and end with Jean Sibelius. Composer, pianist, teacher and music critic Einar Englund (1916-1999) rose to prominence in Helsinki during the decade prior to World War II. Thanks to a recommendation from Sibelius himself, Englund went to study with Aaron Copland at Tanglewood until the war. Englund fought and was wounded in World War II, an experience that inspired at least some of his earlier works. Among Englund's numerous symphonies, concertos and chamber works was the *Symphony No. 4*, a 1976 work that

the Pulitzer Prize-winning music critic Tim Page calls "a bright, brittle neo-classical exercise that still retains a distinctly Nordic quality."

Scored for strings and percussion only, the work is characterized by an elegiac nostalgia – along with some truly curious sounds and textures. The first movement is traditional in scope, dominated by rich lamentoso motifs in the strings. Things take a more unusual turn in the second and third movements: percussion is highlighted in the second movement, imitating the ticking and chiming of clocks, while in the slow third movement, the glockenspiel and other percussion recall the ringing tones of a music box. The fourth movement contains distinct echoes of Shostakovich, who had just died and to whom the symphony is dedicated. Indeed, one of its key motifs is Shostakovich's 'signature motif' consisting of D, E flat, C and B natural (D–Es–C–H).

(And... an encore)

Leevi Madetoja (1887-1947)

Elegy from Symphonic Suite, op.4, no 1 (1910)



Leevi Madetoja (1887-1947) was Sibelius's star pupil and his first composition for string orchestra, *Elegy* (1910), was an immediate hit among Helsinki audiences. Madetoja was the most significant of the Finnish post-Sibelian Romantic composers and in this short piece one hears how he blended the quiet melancholy associated with the Finns with the refinement of French composers.

MEET THE ARTISTS



SONOS Music Director Erik Eino Ochsner has recently returned from Cincinnati, which marked his twenty-second city along the tour of Academy Award winning composer Howard Shore's *Lord of the Rings* Symphony. In May 2007, Ochsner conducted the Chinese premiere of Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire*, as part of the Beijing Modern Music Festival, and immediately received an invitation for a return engagement in 2008. In October 2006, Erik lead the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra in Albuquerque along with 250 performers in *Lord of the Rings* *Symphony*. In May 2006, he conducted the West Saxony Symphony Orchestra in two concerts: all-Gershwin, and all-Mozart. The Leipziger Volkszeitung hailed his Gershwin concert as being "exact and rhythmic," and his Mozart as being "straightforward and dramatic." In April 2006, Ochsner traveled to Shanghai, where he was Assistant Conductor and Chorus Master for the workshop recording sessions of *The First Emperor*, Tan Dun's latest opera which was commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera. Also in April of 2006, at the Good Shepherd Church in Inwood, New York, Erik conducted the SONOS Chamber Orchestra, chorus and soloists in the United States premiere of Karl Jenkin's *Requiem*.

This November 2007, as part of Stockholm's two-week Tan Dun festival, Ochsner will conduct Tan Dun's *Secret Land* and *Concerto for Six*, and continue as Rehearsal/ Assistant Conductor for *Tea: A Mirror of Soul*. He will prepare and assist concerts and a DVD recording of Tan Dun's *Water Concerto* and *Paper Concerto*.

Erik's association with the Academy and Grammy Award winning composer Tan Dun. (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *Hero*) began in 2002, when Erik was the rehearsal conductor for the World Premiere of *Tea* in Tokyo (2002). Subsequent performances of *Tea* have taken him to Amsterdam, Tokyo, Lyon, and Wellington. Erik served as Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the world premiere of Tan Dun's *The Map* (2003), a multi media cello concerto, featuring cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Erik has also toured as Production Manager, Stage Manager and Assistant Conductor of Tan Dun's *Water Passion* (Macau, Korea, Denver, New York and Perth, Australia). In 2003, Erik assisted in the DVD and CD recording project of Tan Dun's *Orchestral Theater Cycle* in Leuven, Belgium.

Formerly the Assistant Conductor of the Brooklyn Philharmonic under Grammy Award winning conductor Robert Spano, Erik was assistant conductor for Jonathan Miller's *Così fan tutte* at BAM. He emceed and conducted

MEET THE ARTISTS

education concerts of *Così fan tutte*, for 4,000 Brooklyn School children, as well as covered Robert Spano during subscription concerts in a large variety of modern orchestral and opera repertoire, as well some classics.

Erik was the recipient of the 2003 American Scandinavian Society's Scandinavian Culture Advocacy Award. Erik and SONOS have performed six U.S. premieres of classical Finnish repertoire. As a dual Finnish – American citizen, Erik strives to promote Scandinavian music to audiences around the globe. In March 2005, SONOS performed the world premiere arrangement of Sibelius' Incidental Music to *The Tempest*, arranged by Erik for the Schoenberg "salon-size orchestra" of 13 players. This consisted of 25 minutes of music, from the 66 complete minutes Sibelius composed, and contained 5 arias for Ariel. Erik also proudly serves on the Board of the Sibelius Society U.S.A.

Erik was an apprentice conductor with the Los Angeles Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, and the Houston Grand Opera. He was an Assistant Conductor of the Bayreuth International Youth Festival in Germany. He studied with Charles Bruck at the Pierre Monteux School for five years, as well as with Gustav Meier, Helmut Rilling, Christopher Hogwood, Erich Kunzel, Marin Alsop, Efrain Guigui, and Roderick Brydon. Born in Würzburg, Germany, to a Finnish mother and American/Swiss-German father, Erik attended Interlochen, Boston University Tanglewood Institute and Round Top summer festivals, and is a graduate Park Tudor School and Dartmouth College. He resides in New York City.

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Your generous contribution allows SONOS to expand its education programming, as well as nurture exciting future projects.

Tickets only cover approximately 20% of our expenses.

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A NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



It is quite a pleasure and a privilege for me to assume the position of Chairman of the Board for the SONOS Chamber Orchestra. It promises to be a whole new era for one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world.

In August 2007, the groundwork was laid for a comprehensive Strategic Plan. We took stock of our present position, as well as our aspirations for the future. We pledge to continue to set the standard for musical excellence in our region and to pursue inspired programs that expand community engagement.

As part of our long-range planning efforts, we have reaffirmed that a rich set of artistic and educational offerings make a positive contribution to our overall financial position. We will continue to invest in industry-leading audience development initiatives and superior education and community programs.

As we look to the future, we see a truly exciting time for music lovers in New York City. We have built key relationships, most notably with internationally-acclaimed concert artists such as Alicia de Larrocha, Ivry Gitlis, Tan Dun, Robert Spano, and Erich Kunzel all who serve on our Advisory Board as our artistic partners and will take us to the next level.

The achievements of SONOS Chamber Orchestra are made possible through the generosity of many supporters nationwide. We extend our most sincere thanks to our musicians, Board, donors, staff, volunteers, audience and community partners for their outstanding dedication to our institution. We are grateful for your confidence in our ability to positively impact the quality of life in New York City and the international world of arts and culture.

Cordially,
Edward D. Song



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For contributions dated from January 1, 2006 through October 9, 2007

ABOUT SONOS

SONOS Chamber Orchestra strives to be a vibrant alternative in the New York City cultural landscape. In a city that is internationally recognized for its active arts scene, SONOS seeks to discover adventurous works that offer artistic strength and potential beyond common acceptance and to expose audiences to the value of these compositions. At the same time, SONOS seeks to discover new venues and performance spaces, particularly in underserved neighborhoods of the city.

Under the direction of its founders: Music Director and Conductor Erik Ochsner, and musicians Allen Alexander and Pamela Ajango French, SONOS began its work by focusing and exploring artistic opportunities in the diverse and unique neighborhoods throughout Upper Manhattan, including Washington Heights, Inwood, and the Upper East Side.

SONOS currently is a flexible and versatile group of young professional musicians devoted to the promotion and performance of under-appreciated works from the traditional repertoire, along with innovative new works showcasing the talents of dedicated contemporary composers.

The SONOS Chamber Orchestra and Members of SONOS Chamber Orchestra are comprised of a diverse group of musicians drawn from local Manhattan resources, mostly graduates of the three main conservatories, Juilliard, Manhattan and Mannes, and are actively pursuing the rich music opportunities that New York City has to offer.

SONOS has performed in a wide variety of venues, including community concerts, established music series, charitable gala events, collaborative choral concerts, national celebrations, and even outdoor garden parties.

SONOS recently presented an educational workshop sponsored by the Flushing Art Council entitled *Beat in Music*.

SONOS also feels a responsibility to promote artistic development in a music education setting and to provide community outreach services.

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www.sonoschamberorch.org

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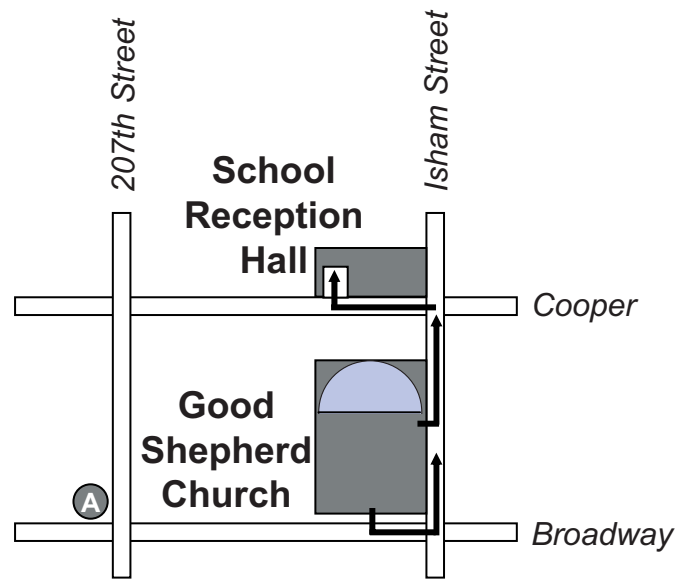
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