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Guest Artist Concert: Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra

Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra

Dennis Russell Davies

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*“It is
my plan
to build
a school
of music
second
to none.”*

—William
Grant Egbert
(1867–1928)
Founder,
Ithaca
Conservatory
of Music

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STUTTGART CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Dennis Russell Davies, chief conductor

Aria: "O Mensch beweine deine Sünde gross"

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)
transcribed by Max Reger

Rondo for Violin and Strings in A Major, D. 438

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Benjamin Hudson, violin
In commemoration of the Schubert Bicentennial

Grosse Fuge in B-flat Major, op. 133

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Overtura: Allegro—Allegro—Fuga

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 3 (1994)

Philip Glass
(b. 1937)

(in four movements)

*(Commissioned by the Stiftung Württemberg Corporation in honor of the
Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra's 50th Anniversary)*

Ford Hall Auditorium
Tuesday, April 22, 1997
8:15 p.m.

Columbia Artists Management Inc.
Sheldon/Connealy Division
R. Douglas Sheldon

The Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra records for ECM, Orfeo, Discover and Mediaphon.
Dennis Russell Davies records for Argo, BMG, ECM, Musicmasters, Discover and
Point Records.

STUTTGART CHAMBER ORCHESTRA Dennis Russell Davies, chief conductor

In the Spring of 1997, the internationally celebrated Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra returns for its twelfth North American tour since its acclaimed debut on this continent in 1950. This is the first time that the orchestra appears in the United States with Dennis Russell Davies as its Chief Conductor. Having led the orchestra on a North American tour in its 50th anniversary year, Mr. Davies subsequently was named Chief Conductor of the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra in August 1995.

This world-renowned orchestra has received tremendous critical acclaim during its tours of North America, Europe and the Far East and the success of the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra is reflected by invitations to perform throughout the major music capitals of the world as well as in such prestigious festivals as those of Salzburg, Edinburgh, Colmar, and Prades.

Founded in 1945 by Karl Münchinger a few short months after the end of World War II, Münchinger and the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra created a major sensation when they made their Paris debut in 1949, the first German orchestra to perform there since the war. Following this first major international success, the orchestra was adopted as musical ambassador of good will, making post-war pioneering visits to many countries, including the first visit to the People's Republic of China by a German orchestra in 1977.

In January 1987, after holding the post for 42 years, Karl Münchinger relinquished the artistic directorship of the orchestra. Since that time, the orchestra has worked with internationally respected conductors such as Trevor Pinnock, Helmuth Rilling, Iona Brown, Leon Fleisher, Vaclav Neumann, and Stanislaw Skrowaczewski. Particularly notable were the orchestra's performances of 22 symphonies by Joseph Haydn in eight concerts during the European Musical Festival Stuttgart in August 1988, conducted by Ferdinand Leitner, and a series of nine concerts devoted to the early orchestral works of Mozart at the same festival in 1991, under the direction of Dennis Russell Davies.

The Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra has made recordings on numerous labels in recent years and, under Davies, has developed a close relationship with the recording label ECM New Series, for whom the orchestra has recorded two newly released albums: *Caris Mere* and *Dolorosa*. The former features works by Giya Kancheli with soloists Jan Garbarek (soprano saxophone), Kim Kashkashian (viola), Eduard Brunner (clarinet), and Maacha Deubner (voice); and the latter features Shostakovich's *Chamber Symphony* (an arrangement by Rudolph Barshai of the String Quartet No. 8), Alfred Schnittke's *Trio Sonata* (arranged by Yuri Bashmet), and Peteris Vasks's *Musica Dolorosa*. Released in 1996, ECM's recording of Mozart piano concerti, with Keith Jarrett as soloist,

has received much critical interest. On the same label, in December 1995, the CD *Abii ne viderem*, works by Giya Kancheli, received several international awards. The Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra is also recognized for the wealth of recordings it has made on the London/Decca label. A large part of the chamber orchestra repertoire is available, including its recording of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, which was awarded the prestigious Grand Prix du Disque.

Dennis Russell Davies, conductor

One of the most innovative and adventurous conductors in the classical music world, Dennis Russell Davies has succeeded in challenging and inspiring audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. Davies has ventured into operatic, orchestral, and popular forms of music, as both conductor and pianist, to express his eclectic and versatile musical agenda. Since 1980, he has lived in Germany but has maintained an active presence on the North American scene as a regular guest conductor with the major orchestras and opera houses of New York, Chicago, and Boston, and as Music Director of the American Composers Orchestra at Carnegie Hall with which he has been closely associated since 1975. In September 1996, Davies assumed the position of Chief Conductor of the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, and continues as Chief Conductor of the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra.

Highlights of Dennis Russell Davies's 1996-97 season include his first concerts at the Salzburg Festival as Chief Conductor of the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, three subscription concerts at Carnegie Hall with his American Composers Orchestra, the critically acclaimed American premiere of Luciano Berio's *Un Re In Ascolto* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, a five-week North American tour in April with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, and concerts with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, of which he was Music Director from 1972 to 1980.

March 1996 marked Dennis Russell Davies's Metropolitan Opera debut in performances of Philip Glass's commissioned opera, *The Voyage*, and performances of the Houston Grand Opera's new production of Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts*, which also traveled to the Lincoln Center Festival in August 1996. In recent seasons, Davies has also conducted *The Rake's Progress* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Hans Werner Henze's *Der Junge Lord* at the Bayerische Staatsoper, *Fidelio* and *Otello* at the Bonn Opera, and a world premiere of Kurt Schwertsik's new operetta *Der ewige Frieden* also at the Bonn Opera and at the Vienna Festival. This diverse range of new works is testimony to Dennis Russell Davies's commitment to the artistic growth and development of not only each organization he has led, but also to the living composers with whom he has collaborated such as Luciano Berio, William Bolcom, John Cage, Philip Glass, Lou Harrison, Hans Werner Henze and Francis Thorne (with whom he formed the American Composers Orchestra). Extensive collaborations

throughout his career include those with Laurie Anderson, Keith Jarrett, Cab Calloway, and Jan Garbarek.

The recording *Abii ne viderem*, on the ECM label, released in conjunction with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra's 50th anniversary North American tour, was awarded the 1995 Japan Record Academy Award in the Modern Music category. The recording *Heroes* by Philip Glass, based on original music by David Bowie and Brian Eno, will be released by Point Records during the 1996-97 season. In progress and soon to be released are Mediaphon's recordings of piano sextets with the Stuttgart Wind Quintet featuring composers Curtis-Smith, Bolcom, Jacobs, and Martinu; and the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra performing Bizet's *Carmen Suite* (in the version by Rodion Shchedrin) together with Satie's *Trois Gymnopédies*. Orfeo has recorded chamber works by Pavel Haas with Davies as piano soloist and in chamber music, and RCA Victor Red Seal in Europe released a world premiere recording of film music by Paul Hindemith entitled *In Sturm und Eis* with Davies conducting the Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin.

Davies's tenure as Generalmusikdirektor of the Stuttgart Opera, from 1980 to 1987, is regarded as one of the most significant periods in that theater's distinguished history. In addition to conducting highly regarded and sometimes controversial productions of the standard repertory by Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Wagner, Verdi, and Puccini, Davies solidified the Stuttgart Opera's reputation for adventurous programming by introducing several premieres on that stage. Such works include Hans Werner Henze's *The English Cat*, Philip Glass's *Akhmaten*, and William Bolcom's *Songs of Innocence, Songs of Experience*. From 1978 to 1980, he conducted Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* at Bayreuth, the second American after Thomas Schippers was invited to conduct at the Wagner Festival. Recently, Davies concluded successful tenures as both the General Music Director of the City of Bonn, Germany (which included being Music Director of the Beethovenhalle Orchestra and the Bonn Opera), and Principal Conductor of the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra. In addition to his North American orchestral guest conducting appearances, Davies has guest conducted some of the most prestigious orchestras in Europe including the Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, Gewandhaus Orchestra, and the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande.

Benjamin Hudson, violinist

Benjamin Hudson is an important artist on the international scene today. He is a well-known soloist, concertmaster, and chamber music player. Mr. Hudson has made his career in New York City since 1976 as concertmaster of the Brooklyn Philharmonic, solo violinist with Speculum Musicae (New York's leading contemporary music chamber ensemble), and as first violinist of the Columbia String Quartet.

Mr. Hudson has also had an active solo career performing with such conductors as Dennis Russell Davies, James Levine, Pierre Boulez, and Nicolas McGegan. He has recorded classical and modern solo and chamber music for such record labels as BMG, Columbia, Sony, EMI, Hyperion, and Nimbus.

Mr. Hudson is also well-known for his performances and recordings of repertoire ranging from baroque through romantic on original instruments. He has recorded for Nimbus Records a highly-acclaimed version of the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto on a violin typical of Mendelssohn's period, and his recordings of the complete Beethoven violin sonatas, performed on classical period violin and piano, will be released in 1997.

Benjamin Hudson also leads two of the most important period instrument orchestras in Europe today; The Hanover Band in London and the Drottningholm Court Theatre Orchestra in Stockholm, Sweden. As of September 1995, he was appointed concertmaster of the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, the oldest of European chamber orchestras.

PROGRAM NOTES

Aria: O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde gross, BWV 622

Johann Sebastian Bach
Born March 21, 1685 in Eisenach
Died July 28, 1750 in Leipzig

Max Reger (arranger)
Born March 19, 1873 in Brand, Upper Palatinate, Bavaria
Died May 11, 1916 in Leipzig

Perhaps no other name in music is as revered as that of Johann Sebastian Bach. This may be explained by the sheer amount of music that issued from his hand, not to mention the quality and craftsmanship of his work. In his own lifetime he was hailed as a great virtuoso on the organ and harpsichord, acquiring a legendary fame, and his unique talents as a composer have earned him a position at the apex of the pantheon of all-time geniuses. His great talent was as a synthesist; he composed in every genre of his day (except the opera), and transformed every one beyond what one would have thought possible. He left examples of the chorale prelude, fugue, cantata, suite, concerto that have never been surpassed for either integrity of material or expressive power.

Although he died in his early forties, Max Reger was one of the most prolific composers since Bach and Mozart. In a working life of only 26 years he produced a prodigious output unparalleled among his contemporaries - not unlike

Bach, covering all genres except opera. His enormous catalog of organ works makes Reger the most important organ composer after Bach. A self-proclaimed “fervent admirer of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms,” he strove “to develop their style.” Although his music exhibits a strong influence from Wagner, Debussy and Strauss, Reger was a firm advocate of “absolute” music (defined as instrumental music that has no external reference, program or meaning). His predilection for counterpoint was derived from his early studies of Bach’s music and Renaissance polyphony, and quickly earned him the sobriquet “the second Bach.”

Among Reger’s numerous works can be found a number of transcriptions and arrangements of the music of the old masters. Reger’s transcription for string orchestra of Bach’s organ chorale-prelude *O Mensch, beweine dein Sünde gross*, BWV 622 (“O man, bemoan thy grievous sins”) was written in 1915 during his tenure as professor of composition at the Leipzig Conservatory.

Edgar Colón-Hernández

Rondo in A major for Violin and Strings, D. 438

Franz Schubert

Born in Vienna, January 31, 1797

Died in Vienna, November 19, 1828

Unlike Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, of all the so-called “Viennese masters,” only Schubert was actually born and raised in that city. His aptitude for music was exhibited very early in his life. At the age of nine, he was under the tutelage of Michael Holzer, from whom he received instruction in violin, piano, singing and theory, as well as organ. Of these early years in Schubert’s life, Holzer once said: “If I wished to instruct him in anything fresh, he already knew it. Consequently, I gave him no actual tuition but merely conversed with him and watched him with silent astonishment.” Schubert would go on to become one of the most prolific composers of all time; his catalogue of works includes six hundred songs, nine symphonies, and numerous choral and chamber works. Indeed, during the year 1813 alone, at the age of sixteen, Franz Schubert produced more music than most composers today produce in a lifetime. That year alone the composer created his first symphony, twenty-five choral works, twelve songs, five piano pieces, and twelve chamber works, including a wind octet, a wind nonet and five string quartets.

While he wrote works in most genres, the concerto form seems to have held little appeal to the composer. During his regrettably short career Schubert only penned two concertante works: a single-movement *Konzertstück in D major, for Violin and Orchestra* (D. 345) and the *Rondo in A major for Violin and Strings* heard in this performance; both of these short works were written in 1816 at age nineteen. Curiously, the Rondo was originally written for a solo

violin accompanied by a string quartet; however, it is generally agreed that orchestral strings provide a much better support for the soloist. The work was published posthumously in 1897 in honor of the first centenary of his birth.

The Rondo begins with an extended, elegant *Adagio* introduction which recalls an episode from Mozart's *Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major*, K. 219; however, in all other respects, particularly given its harmonic structure, this introduction looks forward rather than to the past. The carefree main section—the Rondo proper—is full of typical Schubertian melodies. As the soloist rarely takes a pause to take a breath, the proceedings take on the character of a *moto perpetuo* (“perpetual motion”), foreshadowing the works of such virtuoso composers as Niccolò Paganini, whose first violin concerto would not appear in print for another year.

Edgar Colón-Hernández

Grosse Fuge, op. 133

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born December 16 or 17, 1770 in Bonn

Died March 26, 1827 in Vienna

The music of Bach had gone out of style by the early eighteenth century, nevertheless, Beethoven was familiar with the work of the Baroque master. He, as well as Haydn and Mozart, wrote fugues, either as a compositional exercise or, in Beethoven's case, as an expression of music drama.

The *Grosse Fuge*, op. 133 was originally written as the finale to the *Quartet in B-flat major*, op. 130, however, shortly before his death, Beethoven wrote a new finale and assigned the *Grosse Fuge* a separate opus number. The Quartet was premiered on March 21, 1826 in Vienna by the Schuppanzigh Quartet. The reaction to the *Grosse Fuge* can be best described by a contemporary review:

. . . the reviewer cannot venture to explain the meaning of the fugal finale; to him it was as incomprehensible as Chinese. When instruments have to struggle against monstrous difficulties in the regions of the South and North poles, when each part has different figures crossing each other *per transitum irregularem* amid a welter of discords, when the players, unsure of themselves, probably do not play all the notes cleanly, then the confusion of Babel is complete . . . Possibly much of this would not have been written had the master been able to hear his own creations. However, we do not want to judge too hastily; perhaps the time will come when what appeared to us at first to be obscure and confused will be recognized as being clear and well-constructed. (*Leipzig Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, May 10, 1826)

The reviewer's disclaimer at the end proved to be prophetic; the late quartets of Beethoven are now acknowledged as brilliant precursors to the Romantic era.

The *Grosse Fuge* begins with an "Overtura" to introduce the motto briefly in the four guises it will assume during the course of the work. They are in reverse order, so that the last returns immediately as the secondary subject in a double fugue, which is introduced by a statement of the theme in octaves.

The second fugue is marked *Meno mosso e moderato*, and is in the key of G-flat. The motto is set against flowing sixteenth notes.

The third fugue is in E-flat with a meter marking of 6/8. The tempo is *Allegro molto e con brio*. It possesses a more cheerful feeling than the previous fugue, and the rhythm is retained in the fourth fugue, in which the motto is presented by the 'cello in an augmented form. It ends with the trill that began the *Overtura*. The second subject is an inversion of that presented in the *Overtura*, so that the interval of a sixth, which is so prominent in the *Grosse Fuge*, moves down rather than up.

Before the final bars of the piece, Beethoven recalls the permutations that have taken place. There is an allusion to the first fugal subjects, the *Meno mosso* subjects, the augmented motto, the *con brio* section and the trill figure which concludes it.

Courtesy of Columbia Artists Management Inc.

Symphony No. 3 (1994)

Philip Glass

Born January 31, 1937 in Baltimore

In the past two decades, Philip Glass has become a leading figure in the international music world as his unique, creative vision is increasingly appreciated by a diverse and ever-growing audience. In 1985, *Musical America* named him "Musician of the Year," an honor which, in its 34-year history, the prestigious publication was awarded only three other composers—Stravinsky, Britten and Menotti. In the accompanying article, Robert T. Jones writes that "few composers have achieved the sweeping popularity or influenced the musical *sound* of their times as much as Philip Glass. The heady, euphoric quality of his music, its originality, driving beat, sense of drama, aura of mysticism, and its sheer magnitude have permeated not only the world of "serious" music but rock and pop as well."

After studies at the University of Chicago and the Juilliard School of Music, as well as in Paris with Nadia Boulanger, and following a period of research in North Africa, India and the Himalayas, Glass reconsidered his (until then thoroughly Western) compositional techniques. He then proceeded to apply Eastern techniques to his own works while helping to forge a new style of composition, now commonly known as Minimalism, along with Steve Reich, John Adams and Terry Riley among the most famous composers associated with the movement.

Glass's music is characterized by the repetition of melodic ideas and rhythmic motifs, within a mostly tonal harmonic framework, often demanding great virtuosity on the part of the performers. Thus, through these repeating patterns, musical structures grow by minute gradations and the subtle alterations of the minimal, rudimentary material at hand. Glass arrived at his own particular style when he "rebelled" in the 1960s against the serial music that was in vogue with the "academic" composers of the day. Glass explains that "it was all very monolithic and hierarchical, with [Pierre] Boulez kind of laying down the law about what new music should be, so a rejection set in. I always found serialism ugly and didactic, and so did many others. We rejected the idea of non-tonal music, of aleatoric music, of the entire idea that music had to be an intellectual enterprise."

Glass is perhaps best known for his operas, among others, *Einstein on the Beach* (1975-76), *Satyagraha* (1980), *Akhnaton* (1983), and *The Voyage* (1992) - the latter commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera in commemoration of the American Quincentenary. It should be noted, however, that he has written for a multitude of other media as well, including dance, film and theater, as well as the concert hall.

Glass's symphonic output for the concert stage is relatively recent and includes: *The Light* (1987); the *Violin Concerto* (1987); *The Canyon* (1988); *Itaipú: A Symphonic Portrait for Chorus and Orchestra* (1989); and the *Concerto Grosso* (1992), also known as *Concerto for Three Ensembles*. While the single-movement *The Light* and his *Concerto Grosso* have been described as symphonies in all but name, Glass did not use the term specifically until 1992, when he wrote his "Low" *Symphony*—a work he based on themes from the 1977 recording by David Bowie and Brian Eno, *Low*. This was followed in the Spring of 1994 with the *Symphony No. 2* (which received its premiere performance in October of that year, with Dennis Russell Davies conducting the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra), and the work heard in this performance: *Symphony No. 3* written during the following summer and fall and completed in January of 1995. Since then, Glass has composed one more symphony based on David Bowie and Brian Eno material, the "Heroes" *Symphony*, written in 1996.

Regarding his eventual arrival at writing symphonies, Glass explains: “There are two main reasons I came to the symphonic form, even if somewhat late. For one, I have spent most of my time writing music for opera, theater and dance, with little time or thought left for anything else. However, my association with Dennis Russell Davies changed that. We first got to know each other musically and personally in Stuttgart in the early 1980s when we were preparing *Satyagraha* and *Akhnaten* for the Stuttgart Opera. Later he encouraged me to write, and helped to commission the symphonies. He told me that he wanted to be sure I had a body of symphonic music as well as theater music (something that many opera composers have failed to do in the past).”

The composer has also provided the following commentary on this symphony: “Being composed specifically for the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, the *Symphony No. 3* has several distinctive features, besides being a symphony for strings only. I thought of trying to combine features of large-scale composition with chamber music. The music ranges from unison writing for all the players, to places where they are treated as nineteen separate parts. This provided great opportunities to contrast the whole ensemble with some of the smaller groupings of instruments that were available sometimes, almost, in the style of a concerto grosso.”

“The work fell naturally into a four-movement form 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 textures from unison to multi-harmonic writing for the whole ensemble. It ends when it moves, without transition, to a new closing theme, mixing melody and *pizzicato* writing. The third movement is in the form of a chaconne, a repeated harmony sequence. It begins with three celli and four violas, and with each repetition new voices are added until, in the final movement, all 19 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.” The four movements are performed without a pause.

Glass’s *Symphony No. 3* was commissioned for the 50th anniversary of the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra by Stiftung Würth, a German company (which at the time was also celebrating its 50th anniversary) based in the city of Künzelsau, where the work received its premiere performance on February 5, 1995.

STUTTGART CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Dennis Russell Davies, Chief Conductor

Violin I

Benjamin Hudson, concertmaster
Wolfgang R. Kussmaul
Midori Tanaka
Adriana M. Ringler
Manfred Wetzler
Julie Neander

Violin II

Hans-Henning Trübsbach
Attila Demus
Iain MacPhail
Onur A. Kestel

Viola

Tetsuya Hayashi
Hans-Joachim Dann
Stanislas Bogucz
Emanuel Wieck

Cello

György Bognar
Reinhard Werner
Sébastien B. Faraut

Bass

Konrad P. A. Neander
Laszlo Pege

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