

PHAROS QUARTET



Jennifer Bill Amy McGlothlin
Emily Cox Zach Schwartz

Special Guest

Kenneth Radnofsky

2:00 p.m.
February 25, 2023
Marsh Chapel
Boston, MA

Pharos Quartet

Songs for Tony
I.

Michael Nyman (b. 1944)

Quartet Satz (2017)

Philip Glass (b. 1937)
trans. Amy McGlothlin

Sechs Bagatellen

I. Allegro con spirito
II. Rubato, Lamentoso
III. Allegro grazioso
IV. Presto ruvido
V. Adagio, Mesto
VI. Molto vivace. Capriccioso

György Ligeti (1923-2006)

PAUSE

Pharos Quartet with Kenneth Radnofsky

Concerto No.4 in f minor, RV 297, "WINTER"
Allegro non molto
Largo
Allegro

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)
arr. Nicolas Prost/J. Bill

Kenneth Radnofsky, solo soprano saxophone

Ascendo ad Patrem

G.P. da Palestrina (c.1525-1594)
arr. J. Bill

Over the Rainbow

Harold Arlen (1905-1986)
arr. Don Ashton

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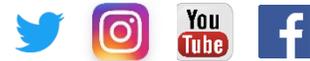


Based in Boston, the **Pharos Quartet** is a stirring musical collaborative formed by four New England saxophonists. Emerging from their unique combination of ideas, styles, and expressions – Pharos brings the sound of the saxophone quartet to a new apex. With a vivid repertoire, balanced between notable pioneers as well as visionaries of tomorrow, Pharos maintains a steady appetite for today's most demanding saxophone quartet literature. Its members bring together their own international performance experience and fuse it into a distinct chamber music event.

Pharos, the great lighthouse of antiquity and often considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World was built by the Ptolemaics in c.280 BC in the port city of Alexandria on the coast of Egypt. This great beacon of light that stood for around 1,000 years inspires the quartet to be a guiding light in chamber music performance of the 21st century.



Please visit www.pharosquartet.com and follow us on social media



Kenneth Radnofsky has appeared as soloist with leading orchestras including the Leipzig Gewandhaus, New York Philharmonic under Kurt Masur, Jerusalem Symphony with Gisele Ben-Dor and Boston Pops with John Williams.

Radnofsky premiered Gunther Schuller's Concerto with the Pittsburgh Symphony (composer conducting), and David Amram's Concerto with the Portland Symphony, under Bruce Hagen. The 100 plus solo works he has commissioned also include Netzer, Trester, Colgrass, Harbison, Martino, Gandolfi, Olivero, Horvit, Fatas, Yannatos, Perker, Jakoulov, Schwartz, Yang, and

Bell, to name a few. He teaches world-wide and helped establish saxophone programs in Taiwan with Shyen Lee, and in Venezuela with Claudio Dioguardi.

He is Professor of Saxophone and Chamber Music at New England Conservatory, Lecturer at Boston University, President of the Boston Woodwind Society, Founder of World-Wide Concurrent Premieres and Commissioning Fund, a founding board member of Gunther Schuller Society with John Heiss and Charles Peltz, co-founded the Amram Ensemble, and is a Selmer Artist.

Learn more at KenRadnofsky.com

PROGRAM NOTES

Songs for Tony

"I began writing a saxophone quartet on New Year's Eve 1992. In the early afternoon of 5th January 1993, I was informed that my friend and business manager, Tony Simmons, had died after a long and heroic fight against cancer. I immediately sat down and wrote the music which became the fourth song, in what became a 'memorial' quartet. The previously composed music was scrapped as I decided to give each player, in turn, an 'aria' of [their] own.

The first song is a transcription of an actual song - 'Mozart on Mortality' - which I wrote for the Composers Ensemble in the spring of 1992. The text, by Mozart himself, is all too appropriate: 'I may not see another day'. The second song is adapted from the music for the scene in Jane Campion's film *The Piano*, where the mute Ada (Holly Hunter) pushes her chief means of communication, her piano, overboard. This film was the last major deal that Tony negotiated on my behalf. The third song, a soprano sax solo, is based on a tune I composed some years ago, but was saving for a special occasion."

-Michael Nyman - April 1993

Michael Nyman is undoubtedly one of the UK's most innovative and celebrated composers. His reputation is built upon a substantial body of work written for a wide variety of ensembles, not only for his own band, but also for symphony orchestra, choir and string quartet. In addition to his prolific output as a composer, Nyman is also a conductor, pianist, writer, musicologist, photographer and film-maker- his restless creativity and multi-faceted career making him one of the most dynamic and influential figures in contemporary culture.

Quartet Satz

Serving as both muse and vehicle for Philip Glass' music, Kronos Quartet has played an essential role in the composer's creative realm for decades. But "Quartet Satz," Glass' contribution to Kronos' *Fifty for the Future* initiative, isn't just a dazzling addition to a body of work that constitutes one of new music's definitive relationships. Solemn, measured, and inexorable as the tides, the sweeping piece distills the rhythmic and emotional currents that have woven Glass's music into our consciousness.

Glass has written several major pieces specifically for Kronos, starting with 1991's "String Quartet No. 5" (featured on the 1995 Nonesuch album *Kronos Quartet Performs Philip Glass*). All of those experiences came to play in writing "Satz Quartet," as Glass had the ensemble in mind as he was composing. "I automatically visualize them playing the music and know how they sound," he says. "I'm thinking, 'This will be a good part for Hank. He will like this part.' I think it's likely I'll never have this kind of a relationship with another quartet." Glass' history with Kronos isn't the piece's only subtext. Some of the ideas in "Satz Quartet" first appeared in a piece he wrote for Robert Hurwitz marking the end of his spectacularly productive tenure running Nonesuch. But the title also unambiguously references Schubert's famously incomplete "Quartettsatz," a move that Glass acknowledges with a chuckle as "a form of self-aggrandizement. Schubert was my father's favorite composer. I grew up with him, and we actually share a birthday, January 31st. I know the Schubert landscape like the back of my hand."

Philip Glass

Through his operas, his symphonies, his compositions for his own ensemble, and his wide-ranging collaborations with artists ranging from Twyla Tharp to Allen Ginsberg, Leonard Cohen to David Bowie, Philip Glass has had an extraordinary and unprecedented impact upon the musical and intellectual life of his times.

The operas – "Einstein on the Beach," "Satyagraha," "Akhnaten," and "The Voyage," among many others – play throughout the world's leading houses, and rarely to an empty seat. Glass has written music for experimental theater and for Academy Award-winning motion pictures such as "The Hours" and Martin Scorsese's "Kundun," while "Koyaanisqatsi," his initial filmic landscape with Godfrey Reggio and the Philip Glass Ensemble, maybe the most radical and influential mating of sound and vision since "Fantasia." His associations, personal and professional, with leading rock, pop and world music artists date back to the 1960s, including the beginning of his collaborative relationship with artist Robert Wilson. Indeed, Glass is the first

composer to win a wide, multi-generational audience in the opera house, the concert hall, the dance world, in film, and in popular music – simultaneously.

He was born in 1937 and grew up in Baltimore. He studied at the University of Chicago, the Juilliard School, and in Aspen with Darius Milhaud. Finding himself dissatisfied with much of what then passed for modern music, he moved to Europe, where he studied with the legendary pedagogue Nadia Boulanger (who also taught Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, and Quincy Jones) and worked closely with the sitar virtuoso and composer Ravi Shankar. He returned to New York in 1967 and formed the Philip Glass Ensemble – seven musicians playing keyboards and a variety of woodwinds, amplified and fed through a mixer.

The new musical style that Glass was evolving was eventually dubbed “minimalism.” Glass himself never liked the term and preferred to speak of himself as a composer of “music with repetitive structures.” Much of his early work was based on the extended reiteration of brief, elegant melodic fragments that wove in and out of an aural tapestry. Or, to put it another way, it immersed a listener in a sort of sonic weather that twists, turns, surrounds, develops.

There has been nothing “minimalist” about his output. Glass has composed more than twenty-five operas, large and small; fourteen symphonies, thirteen concertos; soundtracks to films ranging from new scores for the stylized classics of Jean Cocteau to Errol Morris’s documentary about former defense secretary Robert McNamara; nine string quartets; a growing body of work for solo piano and organ. He has collaborated with Paul Simon, Linda Ronstadt, Yo-Yo Ma, and Doris Lessing, among many others.

-philipglass.com

Sechs Bagatellen

The word, *bagatelle*, translates as “a trifle, or something of little importance.” In music, the bagatelle refers to a piece which is brief, light, and unpretentious. Some of the most famous examples spring from the keyboard works of Couperin and Beethoven.

Between 1951 and 1953, the Hungarian-Austrian composer, György Ligeti, composed a set of 11 bagatelles for piano, titled *Musica ricercata*. Each intricately constructed miniature centers around a specific pitch class (or limited set of pitches). The first piece involves only two notes of the chromatic scale. With each successive piece, a pitch is added, culminating, in the final bagatelle, with all twelve pitches of the equal tempered scale. The impetus for *Musica ricercata* came after the Hungarian Communist regime censored much of Ligeti’s music. The composer explained, “I began to experiment with very simple structures of rhythms and sonorities—as if to build up a ‘new music’ from nothing.” *Musica ricercata* is a celebration of the adage that great things often emerge out of limitation and discipline.

Ligeti transcribed excerpts from the collection to create the colorfully whimsical Six Bagatelles for Wind Quintet. Each of the movements evokes a distinct atmosphere. Throughout the work, we hear echoes of Hungarian folk music.

The first bagatelle (*Allegro con spirito*) is an action-packed musical adventure based on four pitches. The more somber movement which follows (*Rubato. Lamentoso*) is based on six pitches. Its dreamy, flowing lines are punctuated by icy dissonances. Using eight pitches, the third bagatelle (*Allegro grazioso*) begins with a beautifully expansive melody in the flute. A witty staccato ostinato is traded between the bassoon and clarinet. Soon, the melody rises as a plaintive canonic instrumental conversation. The fourth bagatelle (*Presto ruvido*) uses nine pitches. It erupts as a wild, off-balance Hungarian peasant dance. Using ten pitches, the fifth bagatelle (*Adagio. Mesto*) is dedicated to memory of Béla Bartók. It begins as a haunting folksong. At moments, the music seems to pay homage to the nocturnal hum of nature that we hear in Bartók’s *Night music*. The boisterous and frolicking finale (*Molto vivace. Capriccioso*) makes use of eleven pitches. It is a jubilant excursion into bitonality (the simultaneous use of two keys) and alternating meters (2/4 and 3/8).

-Timothy Judd, August 2022

György Ligeti

György Sándor Ligeti (b. 1923–d. 2006) is arguably the most influential composer of the late 20th century. Over the course of six decades, he produced solo chamber works, choral compositions, Fluxus experiments, analog electronic pieces, orchestral compositions, and works of music theatre.

Ligeti was born in Transylvania of Hungarian-Jewish parents, where he first studied music at the Kolozsvár Conservatory. Although he lost his father and brother to the wartime concentration camps, Ligeti escaped a Nazi work camp and entered the Liszt Academy in 1945. He joined the Academy faculty on graduation, just as Communist dictates began to affect Budapest's cultural and political life. Under the constraints of socialist realism, Ligeti embarked on a compositional career divided between acceptable works and more dissonant compositions "for the desk drawer."

During the 1956 Hungarian revolution Ligeti escaped to Vienna, and in 1957 worked at the electronic studio of West German radio in Cologne. His early orchestral works *Apparitions* (1958–1959) and *Atmosphères* (1961) cemented Ligeti's reputation with the European avant-garde. Rejecting the dogmatism of the Darmstadt school, Ligeti embraced influences from early music, art, literature, science, and folk music, producing complex but often remarkably accessible works known for their eccentric humor and dark wit. In the 1970s Ligeti continued to refine and expand his style, producing everything from intimate solo works for harpsichord to the suitably grand opera *Le Grand Macabre* (1974–1977, revised in 1996). His music from the 1980s onward incorporated influences from African and other non-Western music, the canonic music of Conlon Nancarrow, and fractal geometry, but remained rooted in his native language and conservatory training. The championing of his music by leading performers, and numerous awards that followed his 70th birthday in 1993 contributed to the growing influence of Ligeti's music in the last decades of the 20th century, by which time his students had established careers on several continents. Ligeti's music is widely lauded for uniting intellectual sophistication with a respect for the sensual attributes of his materials, a perception supported by interviews and theoretical writings that span his career.

-Amy Bauer, February 2020

"Winter" from *The Four Seasons*

Antonio Vivaldi was phenomenally prolific, even considering the formidable productivity of other Baroque masters such as Bach, Handel, and Telemann. He composed in all genres, including dozens of operas, but is most remembered for his more than 500 concertos. Among this wealth of music, four of Vivaldi's violin concertos stand out as his signature compositions: the collection published in 1725 as *The Four Seasons*.

The idea of depicting the seasons through music did not originate with Antonio Vivaldi. Spring's sensuous languor and winter's icy chill had been favorite topics of the Renaissance madrigalists centuries earlier. But the notion reached one of its most eloquent expressions in the four concertos that constitute what Vivaldi called *The Four Seasons*. Since 1725, when these works first appeared in print in Amsterdam, dozens of composers have followed suit, not only in works intended to depict all four seasons (an oratorio by Haydn, a piano suite by Tchaikovsky, a ballet by Glazunov), but also in compositions that characterize the mood or activities of a single season (Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'été*, Schumann's "Spring" Symphony, Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, Grieg's *In Autumn Overture*). Vivaldi's set of four concertos remains among the most popular of these—indeed, among the most celebrated programmatic music of all time

For the publication of *The Four Seasons*, Vivaldi appended a poem for each of the concertos; though the verses are not signed, many scholars have assumed that they are from Vivaldi's own pen, largely because of the meticulous detail with which the programmatic elements of the poetry follow the musical events of the concertos.

"Winter"

To shiver icily in the freezing dark
in the teeth of a cruel wind,
to stamp your feet continually,

so chilled that your teeth chatter.

To remain in quiet contentment by the fireside
while outside the rain soaks people by the hundreds.

To walk on the ice, with slow steps
in fear of falling, advance with care.
Then to step forth strongly, fall to the ground,
and again run boldly on the ice until it cracks and breaks;
to listen as from the iron portals
winds rush from south and north,
and all the winds in contest;
such is winter, such the joys it brings.

Vivaldi a prolific composer

Yet these concertos form but a tiny part of a vast oeuvre. Few composers can begin to match the sheer volume of Vivaldi's output, much less its peerless consistency. In addition to 50 operas, 150 vocal works, and more than 100 solo sonatas, the Venetian cleric and composer known as the Red Priest (because of his hair) wrote more than 500 concertos, for all manner of solo instruments. The variety of this concerto output is fascinating enough: In addition to 250 concertos for solo violin, there are works for oboe, bassoon, flute, recorder, cello, viola d'amore, mandolin, lute, and sundry other instruments. There are also some 80 ensemble concertos for two or more soloists, cast in various combinations. Considering the lightning speed at which they must have been written, it is amazing that so many are absolutely first-rate pieces. Despite the fact that even during his lifetime Vivaldi was criticized for assembly-line-style composition (the same trait that has given rise, more recently, to the quip that he "wrote the same concerto 500 times"), a large number of these works have durably withstood the test of time. Like his younger contemporary Handel, Vivaldi was born with an extraordinary facility: He could compose a piece faster than others could copy it.

—Paul J. Horsley

Ascendo ad Patrem

A motet for Ascension Day. This joyful 5 part motet, from Palestrina's *Second Book of Motets* (1572), falls into two parts, the second (beginning at the words 'Ego rogabo Patrem') being more tranquil in character. Both parts end with a vivid refrain to the words 'et gaudebit cor vestrum, alleluia'.

English Translation of the Latin Text

I ascend unto my Father and your Father, alleluia.

To my God and your God, alleluia.

And when I am taken up I will send to you
the Spirit of truth, and your heart will rejoice, alleluia.

I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete,
the Spirit of truth, and your heart will rejoice, alleluia.

Palestrina

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina was one of the most important composers of vocal music in sixteenth-century Italy. His name was synonymous with the Roman polyphonic style of composition that came to embody the musical goals and aesthetic ideals of the Counter-Reformation and the Council of Trent. The Palestrina style (*stile del Palestrina*) is characterized by a perfect sense of balance and equilibrium, a seamless marriage between intelligible text settings, and rich vocal sonorities. Stress and accent follow the natural rhythms of the words, melodic motion, and dissonance are carefully controlled, and his harmonic language is one of the finest expressions of the so-called old church modal system that would soon be superseded by modern tonality. Palestrina's music is often cited as the *locus classicus* of *stile antica*, and the reference point for pure, sacred, and beautiful music.

Over The Rainbow

When Judy Garland went over the rainbow as Dorothy Gale in the classic 1939 musical *The Wizard of Oz*, she almost left without singing what was to become her signature number. For an advance screening, MGM executives had removed “Over the Rainbow” because they felt it slowed down the film.

Associate producer Arthur Freed stepped in, telling studio head Louis B. Mayer, “The song stays—or I go,” to which Mayer replied: “Let the boys have the damn song. Put it back in the picture. It can’t hurt.” More than 75 years later, the film and the song by composer Harold Arlen and lyricist Yip Harburg are cultural touchstones. In 2001, “Over the Rainbow” was voted the greatest song of the 20th century in a joint survey by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Recording Industry Association of America.

“It might not seem obvious that a song performed by a young girl at the beginning of a fantasy movie would take on a life of its own,” said Walter Frisch, a professor of music at Columbia University. One factor of the song’s appeal that Frisch cites is the universality of a childhood desire to get away or escape. “The song’s mix of hope and anxiety has allowed people to read into it their own concerns,” he said, noting that the lyrics are general enough that one would not know the singer was standing in a farmyard with her dog.

-Gary Shapiro

Somewhere over the rainbow, way up high
There's a land that I've heard of once in a lullaby.
Somewhere over the rainbow, skies are blue
And the dreams that you dare to dream,
Really do come true.

Someday I'll wish upon a star
And wake up where the clouds are far behind me.
Where troubles melt like lemon drops,
High above the chimney tops,
That's where you'll find me.

Somewhere over the rainbow, blue birds fly
Birds fly over the rainbow
Why then, oh why can't I?
If happy little bluebirds fly beyond the rainbow
Why, oh why can't I?