

NEW

CENTURY

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



Mark Adamo photo credit: J Henry Fair



Jeffrey Zeigler photo credit: Jill Steinberg

Adamo Premiere with Jeffrey Zeigler
November 4-7, 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



We are thrilled to finally welcome Jeffrey Zeigler to New Century! Many of you may know Jeffrey through his former role as cellist in the Kronos Quartet, and his solo career in the intervening years has been no less daring. Fittingly, we have two world premieres that touch contemporary themes tonight, starting with the New

Century commission Last Year, a cello concerto by Mark Adamo. In Last Year, Adamo poses the question of what Vivaldi's Four Seasons might have sounded like if it had been written in the modern era, through the lens of our global climate crisis. Following this timely work is a collaboration between Paola Prestini and Inuk artist Tanya Tagaq from her album *Tongues*, which comments on the colonial erasure of indigenous culture. Two wonderfully atmospheric works, by William Grant Still and Andy Akiho, use all the available textures for strings to complete the program.

New music often benefits from a second (or third) listen to be fully absorbed, which is why New Century is happy to continue offering a complimentary audio stream of all programs this season to all ticket holders. You'll receive access information via email approximately one week following our concerts. We hope you'll enjoy deepening your relationship with this season's artists and repertoire!

Daniel Hope returns to lead *Appalachian Spring* for our next set in January, 2022, in its original chamber orchestra scoring for 13 instruments. Soprano Leah Hawkins will join us to perform selections by influential voices of the Harlem Renaissance, including a song cycle by William Grant Still, songs by Florence Price set to poetry from Langston Hughes, and even a bit of Duke Ellington. Daniel, Leah and our musicians will also be on tap to celebrate our annual gala on January 24 in the spacious galleria of the San Francisco Design Center. We hope many of you will join us for an evening of gourmet dining, fabulous prizes, and musical surprises!

There is much to look forward to, and we are so grateful that you've joined us this season!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard C. Lonsdorf".

Richard Lonsdorf, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Salkind".

Mark Salkind, President of the Board of Directors

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 7:30 PM
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, BERKELEY

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 7:30 PM
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, PALO ALTO

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 7:30 PM
HERBST THEATRE, SAN FRANCISCO

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 3:00 PM
OSHER MARIN JCC, SAN RAFAEL

**ADAMO PREMIERE
WITH JEFFREY ZEIGLER**

Jeffrey Zeigler, Guest Leader & Cello

WILLIAM GRANT STILL (1895-1978) "Phantom Chapel" from *Bells* 6'

MARK ADAMO (B. 1962) *Last Year*, Concerto for Solo Violoncello 25'
with Harp, Piano, String Orchestra and Percussion
I. Autumn: Dismissing Eunice
II. Winter: La Triangle Noir
III. Spring: Zephaniah 1:14-15
IV. Summer: For Julia, born 2045
II, III and IV are played without pause

(World Premiere. New Century co-commission,
with American Composers Orchestra, River Oaks
Chamber Orchestra and Manitoba Chamber Orchestra.)

INTERMISSION

PAOLA PRESTINI (B. 1975) "In Me" for Solo Violoncello and String Orchestra 5'
(World Premiere)

TANYA TAGAQ
(B. 1975)

ANDY AKIHO (B. 1979) *Oscillate* 17'

*This evening's premiere of Mark Adamo's Last Year is made possible
by the generous support of Michèle and Laurence Corash.*

New Century's 2021-22 Season is made possible by the generous ongoing support of Gordon P. Getty.

THE ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Iris Stone,
Concertmaster
Michael Yokas
Dawn Harms
Robin Mayforth
Hrabba Atladottir

VIOLIN II

Deborah Tien Price,
Principal
Stephanie Bibbo
Nicole Sauder
Kayo Miki
Julie Kim

VIOLA

Elizabeth Prior,
Principal
Cassandra Lynne Richburg
Ivo Bokulic
Caroline Lee

CELLO

Jeffrey Zeigler,
Guest Leader & Soloist
Robin Bonnell,
Co-Principal
Michelle Djokic
Eric Gaenslen

BASS

Bill Everett,
Principal
Jon Keigwin

HARP

Sarah Voynow

PIANO

Brenda Vahur

PERCUSSION

Divesh Karamchandani
Elizabeth Hall
Mika Nakamura

“PHANTOM CHAPEL” FROM BELLS (1943)

BY WILLIAM GRANT STILL
(Woodville, MS, 1895 –
Los Angeles, CA, 1978)

“So simple, so sincere, so colorful. So dramatic, in its texture of tone.” Thus wrote critic Harry R. Burke in the *St. Louis Globe Democrat* after the 1946 premiere of William Grant Still’s *Bells*, capturing the work’s essence as well as anyone could ever hope to do. Originally written for piano and subsequently orchestrated, *Bells* is in two movements, “Phantom Chapel” and “Fairy Knoll.” The composer retained the piano even in the orchestral version, using the keyboard in a some brief, “bell-like” motifs complementing an expressive string melody. “Phantom Chapel” could be placed alongside Copland’s “Quiet City” as an impressionistic evocation of nocturnal calm. Like Copland, Still occasionally allows the volume to rise to *fortissimo*, but never for very long: the music soon returns to its initial dreamlike state, where it remains to the end.

Peter Laki

LAST YEAR (2019)

BY MARK ADAMO
(b. Philadelphia, 1962)

In 2018, for reasons that don’t really matter now, I’d listened—really listened—to a new-to-me recording of Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons*. And I marveled: not only at the score’s vigor and clarity, but at its innocence, too—as it portrayed each season offering its own delights and terrors while still yielding, safely, to the next. The recording finished: I turned to the news, and learned that—due to the latest in our series of

once-in-a-lifetime-except-now-every-year storms—a hurricane had left the city of Houston nearly drowned.

Vivaldi couldn’t write those scores today, I thought. But—if he were alive now, and knew what we know—what would he write?

Last Year is my answer. While *Four Seasons* is a cycle of four concerti for violin and strings, mine is a single concerto in four movements (the last three played without pause) for the deeper-voiced cello; I also add to the string ensemble a choir of piano, harp, timpani, and ringing percussion. A majfare that shifts, uneasily, between the major and minor modes precedes *Autumn: Dismissing Eunice*. The title remembers Eunice Foote, the American scientist who was the first person—in 1856!—to describe and theorize what we now call the greenhouse effect. This music weaves a single melodic thread from Vivaldi’s *Autumn* concerto into a polymetric scherzo of nervous and glittering character; it’s interrupted, twice, by a tolling procession of chords in the percussion choir—too slow and separated in register, just now, to comprise a recognizable theme. Ignoring those interruptions, the scherzo barrels headlong to an ambiguous conclusion.

In January of 1998, a once-in-a-lifetime ice storm struck North America, causing so much havoc that Canada had to deploy more military personnel than the country had sent during the Korean War to address the damage. Because the available images of that storm remain stunningly beautiful—the Canadian terrain seems rendered an eerily silent ice-sculpture of itself—one could forget that the area south of Montreal was without power for so many weeks that English media nicknamed it “The triangle of Darkness.” Remembering this, my second

movement, *Winter: Le Triangle Noir*, introduces an original theme of hushed, awed character as more rumours of Vivaldi murmur in the background: when the percussion choir interrupts again as it had before, its material accelerates and condenses until we can identify it as one of our oldest musical tropes of warning.

The text which gives that trope its name can be read in the title of the next movement. Two solo cadenzas—one stunned, one vehement—frame *Spring: Zephaniah 1:14-15*, in which the motto from Vivaldi's *Spring* alternately outruns itself at breakneck speed or slows to a crawl in the lowest registers of both cello and orchestra: spurred by the racing soloist, the ensemble attempts a final time to retrieve the feeling, the faith of that baroque theme. It cannot: and the orchestra refracts into, almost literally, a thundercloud of sound—a cluster which begins in noise, little by little acquires pitch, and just as gradually loses pitch, evanescing until only the soloist, serenely maintaining a low B-natural, can be heard.

Now begins, without pause, the finale: *Summer: To Julia, born 2045*, in which the cello, in a harmonic landscape emptied of everything but sustained bass tones and the cries of seagulls, attempts to speak a promise into the future. But—even as the orchestra takes up and develops, harmonically, that determined theme—the solo cello cannot help, for a moment, but lose itself in recrimination. Memories of chaos, and that opening premonition, return to haunt the final moments: but the cello maintains the last word.

* * *

It's hard to claim that I *enjoyed* composing this piece: to try to give voice to the fears and hopes we experience during this moment of crisis pushed me both emotionally and technically in ways I've never experienced before. But I was, and am, humbled to have been offered the privilege to attempt it. I thank, generally, the consortium of four ensembles—American Composers Orchestra in New York, New Century Chamber Orchestra in San Francisco, ROCO in Houston, and Manitoba Chamber Orchestra—who committed to the work of a composer who, after all, is scarcely known for his work outside the opera house; and, specifically, the woman who has done as much as, if not more than, anyone else of her generation to support the institutions, composers, and performers who host and make and play the music that tries to sing the way we live now. This piece—but not only this piece—would not exist without her. With all warmth, gratitude, and admiration, I dedicate *Last Year* to Susan W. Rose.

Mark Adamo

“IN ME” (2021)

BY PAOLA PRESTINI

(b. Trento, Italy, 1975)

AND TANYA TAGAQ

(b. Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, Canada, 1975)

The present work is a “reimagination” (as the score calls it) of a song by Tanya Tagaq, from the acclaimed Inuk singer's newest album, *Tongues*. Building on the ancient throat-singing tradition of her native Arctic, Tagaq has developed a powerful new artform, incorporating elements of punk and electronica, and celebrating the strength

and independent spirit of the Inuit people. Working in collaboration with Tagaq, Paola Prestini—another major innovator on the contemporary music scene—has entrusted the solo cello with the task of impersonating the singer.

Prestini, her husband, cellist Jeffrey Zeigler, and Tagaq are long-time collaborators. In this latest result of their creative partnership, the solo cello “channels” the singer by rapid alternations of high and low notes, wide glissandos and tremolos, while the string orchestra adds its own evocative sounds, inspired by the electronic effects on Tagaq’s recordings. Towards the end, there is a moment marked “Freak Out,” where the orchestra members improvise over drawings of entangled lines inscribed into their parts. The line patterns suggest a gradual decrescendo that lasts until the end of the piece, interrupted only by a single, sudden outburst.

Peter Laki

OSCILLATE (2012)

BY ANDY AKIHO

(b. Columbia, SC, 1979)

Before devoting himself to composition full time, Andy Akiho performed widely as a virtuoso percussionist, and percussion still plays a central role in his musical thinking. His most recent release, *Seven Pillars*, is a collaboration with Sandbox Percussion, a four-member ensemble based in Brooklyn. Akiho’s work *Oscillate*, commissioned and premiered by the New York Philharmonic in 2012, also centers around a large percussion battery, which largely defines the sound world of a composition the composer has

described as “autobiographical.” Even the strings and the piano are often used as percussion instruments. The strings occasionally have to play what the composer calls “scratch tones”: “Apply hard pressure to the bow near or behind the bridge to produce a loud and unpitched grating sound.” They are also asked to “percussively slap open strings against fingerboard with hand, imitating the timbre of a snare drum.” The pianist sometimes has to use a credit card to strike the strings, or to scrape the tuning pins in a sideways motion.

The seventeen-minute piece is divided into three musical “days,” each based on a set of rhythmic patterns repeated multiple times, sometimes in identical form, and sometimes with surprising alterations, generating high levels of energy. After the whirlwind activity of “Day 1,” “Day 2” begins with a section where the rhythms are less repetitive and most of the sounds are unpitched, before the vibraphone enters with some new material. The piano and the strings then establish a new repetitive pattern that becomes more and more frenetic, until “Day 3” dawns with an insistent, soft single note on the piano. Drawing ever-wider circles around that single note, the piano is eventually joined by the violins and then by the rest of the orchestra. Soon the rhythmic activity becomes more intense again. An enormous crescendo leads to the concluding section, where a broad string melody, developed polyphonically, cuts through all the frenzy and finally takes over completely. The frantic rhythms come to a standstill, and the piece ends quietly and peacefully.

Peter Laki



JEFFREY ZEIGLER

CELLO

Jeffrey Zeigler is one of the most innovative and versatile cellists of our time. He has been described by *The New York Times* as “fiery” and a player who performs “with unforced simplicity and beauty of tone.” Acclaimed for his independent streak, Zeigler has commissioned dozens of works, and is admired as a potent collaborator and unique improviser. As a member of the Kronos Quartet he is the recipient of the Avery Fisher Prize, the Polar Music Prize, the President’s Merit Award from the Recording Academy (Grammys), the Chamber Music America National Service Award and The Asia Society’s Cultural Achievement Award.

Following his eight-year tenure as the cellist of the Kronos Quartet, his multifaceted career has led to collaborations with a wide array of artists from Philip Glass and Tanya Tagaq to Yo-Yo Ma and Foday Musa Suso, from Laurie Anderson and John Corigliano to Hauschka and the Pulitzer Prize winning scientist Siddhartha Mukherjee. He has also performed as a soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Toronto Symphony, the

Royal Danish Radio Symphony and the Ulster Orchestra under the batons of Peter Oundjian, JoAnn Falletta, Dennis Russell Davies and Dmitry Sitkovetsky.

This fall, Zeigler released his latest album, *Houses of Zodiac: Poems for Cello* by Paola Prestini, a multimedia experience that combines spoken word, movement, music, and imagery into a unified exploration of love, loss, trauma, and healing. Upcoming highlights include being featured in a new cello opera entitled *The Old Man and the Sea* directed by Karmina Silec with music by Paola Prestini and libretto by Royce Vavrek.

Mr. Zeigler has released dozens of recordings for Nonesuch Records, Deutsche Grammophon, Cantaloupe, Smithsonian Folkways and National Sawdust Tracks and has appeared with Norah Jones on her album *Not Too Late* on Blue Note Records. Zeigler can be heard on the film soundtrack for Paolo Sorrentino’s Academy Award winning film, *La Grande Bellezza*, as well as Clint Mansell’s Golden Globe nominated soundtrack to the Darren Aronofsky film, *The Fountain*. Zeigler can also be seen making an on-screen cameo performing the music of Paola Prestini in Season 4 of the Amazon Prime’s Golden Globe Award winning series *Mozart in the Jungle*.

Zeigler is Director of Mannes Prep Division at The New School, a member of the Board of Directors of Chamber Music America and the Violoncello Society of New York, and is on the Honorary Committee of the Sphinx Organization.

Zeigler is also the Label Director of National Sawdust Tracks, the non-profit, in-house record label of National Sawdust, an artist-led, multidisciplinary new music venue in the heart of Williamsburg, Brooklyn.



MARK ADAMO
COMPOSER

“A brilliant theater composer,” (*The New Yorker*) composer-librettist Mark Adamo’s newest opera is *The Lord of Cries* (libretto, after Euripides and Bram Stoker, for a score by John Corigliano) commissioned and introduced by Santa Fe Opera in July 2021. *The Lord of Cries* follows four operas for which Adamo wrote both score and libretti. *Becoming Santa Claus*, commissioned and introduced by The Dallas Opera in December 2015, was released on DVD/Blu-Ray in December 2017, and given its most recent new production by Chicago Opera Theater in December 2021. The *Gospel of Mary Magdalene* was commissioned and introduced by San Francisco Opera

in June 2013; it followed *Lysistrata*, after Aristophanes, co-commissioned by Houston Grand Opera and New York City Opera in 2005-2006 and produced by Washington National Opera in 2008 and Fort Worth Opera in 2012. Its first filmed version is scheduled for release in 2022. *Little Women*, commissioned and introduced by Houston Grand Opera in 1998, had, before COVID, been staged multiple times every year since its premiere (130+ productions;) recorded for audio in 2002 and released on film in 2010, its UK premiere is scheduled for summer 2022. Other commissions include *Aristotle*, for Thomas Hampson and the Jupiter String Quartet, by Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center; *Four Angels: Concerto for Harp and Orchestra*, for the National Symphony Orchestra (also Utah Symphony, 2011;); *The Racer’s Widow*, for New York Festival of Song; and the cantata *Late Victorians*, for Eclipse Chamber Orchestra, which recorded it on its all-Adamo recording for Naxos, alongside *Alcott Music*, (a suite from *Little Women*) and the *Overture to Lysistrata*. His choral work has been commissioned and performed by Chanticleer, Conspirare, The Esoterics, The Gregg Smith Singers, Choral Arts Society in Washington, Young People’s Chorus of New York City, and The New York Virtuoso Singers. His music is published exclusively by G. Schirmer. www.markadamo.com.



DANIEL HOPE
MUSIC DIRECTOR

British violinist Daniel Hope has enjoyed a thriving international solo career for more than 30 years. Celebrated for his musical versatility and dedication to humanitarian causes, he has been recognized with the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany and the European Culture Prize for Music. An award-winning Deutsche Grammophon artist and popular radio and television host, he serves as Artistic Director of Dresden's Frauenkirche Cathedral, President of the Beethoven-Haus Bonn, and Music Director of both the Zurich and New Century Chamber Orchestras.

Having first drawn notice as the youngest member of the Beaux Arts Trio, today Hope is a familiar face at venues and festivals from New York's Carnegie Hall to Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and from Aspen and Tanglewood to Salzburg, Schleswig-Holstein and London's BBC Proms. He works with the world's foremost ensembles, including the symphony orchestras of Berlin, Boston, Chicago,

London, Los Angeles, Paris and Tokyo, and has commissioned more than 30 new works from composers including Birtwistle, Gubaidulina, Kurtág, Richter, Turnage and the late Maxwell-Davies, Penderecki, Takemitsu and Schnittke. One of today's most prolific classical recording artists, Hope has more than 30 albums to his name. Recognized with awards including the Deutsche Schallplattenpreis, the Diapason d'Or of the Year, the Edison Classical Award and the Prix Caecilia, his discography features recordings of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto and Octet, named one of the best of the year by the *New York Times*; Berg's Violin Concerto, voted the "top choice of all available recordings" by *Gramophone* magazine; *Spheres*, comprising the world premiere recordings of four works written for the violinist; and Richter's *Vivaldi Recomposed*, which topped the charts in 22 countries and remains one of the bestselling classical releases of recent times. Hope uses his platform to engage in many spheres. The author of four bestselling books, he also contributes regularly to the *Wall Street Journal*, presents a weekly radio show for Germany's WDR3 Channel, curates and hosts *Hope@9pm* at the Berlin Konzerthaus and, during the pandemic, created and hosted *Hope@Home*, a daily livestreamed series for the German/French ARTE TV network. Featuring more than 400 musicians in 150 episodes that were streamed almost eleven million times, the show raised thousands of Euros for artists in need.

Daniel Hope studied violin with Zakhar Bron, Itzhak Rashkovsky and Felix Andrievsky, working closely with his mentor Yehudi Menuhin. Now living with his family in Berlin, he plays the 1742 "ex-Lipínski" Guarneri del Gesù.

NEW CENTURY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



One of only a handful of conductorless chamber ensembles in the world, New Century Chamber Orchestra was founded in 1992 and includes 19 string players from the San Francisco Bay Area as well throughout the United States. Musical decisions are made collaboratively, resulting in an enhanced level of commitment from the musicians and concerts of remarkable precision, passion, and power. In the 2017-2018 season, British violinist Daniel Hope served as the ensemble's Artistic Partner and concertmaster and was appointed beginning in the 2018-2019 season as the ensemble's Music Director, bringing a new era of vibrancy and leadership. Previous music directors of the ensemble include Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg (2008-2017), Krista Bennion Feeney (1999-2006) and Stuart Canin (1992-1999).

In addition to performing beloved masterworks from the chamber orchestra repertoire, New Century commissions important new works, breathes new life into rarely heard jewels of the past and frequently performs world premieres. Through its Featured Composer program, composers are commissioned to write new works for the orchestra, with the goals of expanding the repertoire and providing audiences with a deeper understanding and appreciation of today's living composers.

Beyond regular season concerts in the San Francisco Bay Area, New Century has toured nationally including 2011 performances in the

Midwest, East Coast, and Southern California and a 2013 eight-state national tour. In June 2019, the orchestra embarked on its first European Tour, the largest and most ambitious artistic undertaking in the organization's history, with appearances across Germany and Poland including the acclaimed Leonard Bernstein-founded Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival and Philharmonie Essen. Critically acclaimed recordings include *From A to Z: 21st Century Concertos* (May 2014), *LIVE: Barber, Strauss, Mahler* (November 2010) and *Together* (August 2009).

The orchestra has released seven compact discs. The most recent, *From A to Z: 21st Century Concertos*, is a compilation of four of New Century's live world premiere performances of its newly commissioned works by William Bolcom, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, Clarice Assad and Michael Daugherty. The recording was released in May 2014 on the NSS Music label.

Two additional albums were released on the NSS Music label, *LIVE: Barber, Strauss, Mahler*, released in November 2010, and *Together*, released in August 2009. The Orchestra's first concert DVD, *On Our Way*, was released in May 2012, and weaves together documentary footage and a live tour concert from a February 2011 performance at the Broad Stage in Santa Monica. The DVD was filmed by Paola di Florio, director of the 1999 Academy Award-nominated film *Speaking in Strings*.