



BMOP
sound

JOHN ADAMS: CHAMBER SYMPHONY

COMMON TONES IN SIMPLE TIME | SON OF CHAMBER SYMPHONY

JOHN ADAMS b. 1947

CHAMBER SYMPHONY (1992)

COMMON TONES IN SIMPLE TIME (1979)

SON OF CHAMBER SYMPHONY (2007)

BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT

Gil Rose, conductor

CHAMBER SYMPHONY (1992)

- [1] I. Mongrel Airs 7:40
- [2] II. Aria with Walking Bass 8:05
- [3] III. Roadrunner 5:55

[4] **COMMON TONES IN
SIMPLE TIME** (1979) 21:21

SON OF CHAMBER SYMPHONY (2007)

- [5] I. 8:36
- [6] II. 7:20
- [7] III. 7:36

TOTAL 66:35



PAUL STODAN, APRIL 2015, GODDARD HOUSE WILDWOOD LODGE, WYDIE BASIN MANAGEMENT PLAN, © 2015 DAVID HANCOCK-FISHER

By John Adams

What is a “chamber symphony,” anyway? Judging from the two that Arnold Schoenberg composed, it is a piece of symphonic scale written for a large group of (often hectically overworked) soloists. As ensemble in live performance the “chamber symphony” provides all sorts of challenges, not only to the performer, but also to the listener. Balances are always in danger of going seriously out of whack. Individual string instruments can easily be buried by an overly loud clarinet or, in my case, an enthusiastic drummer. But when acoustical issues have been sorted out, the sound of a dozen or more skilled soloists can afford a musical experience that combines the intimacy of chamber music with the breadth and scale of a full orchestra.

What drew me to the Austrian composer’s eponymous Op. 9 Chamber Symphony of 1906 was its explosive energy and the staggering, acrobatic virtuosity of its instrumental writing. Schoenberg’s bounding, fast-moving themes weren’t so much “stated” as they were launched like some daredevil circus performer shot out of a canon. The hyper-lyricism of its melodies sounded as if all of *Tristan* had been compressed into a tiny plutonium sphere, just one neutron short of going super-critical. Well, OK, perhaps my metaphors need to be reeled in, but there is no mistaking the attraction of this format to a composer like me who normally operates on the large canvas of orchestral and operatic forms.

With Chamber Symphony, I originally set out to write a children’s piece, and my intentions were to sample the voices of children and work them into a fabric of acoustic and electronic instruments. But before I began that project, I had another one of those strange

interludes that often lead to a new piece. I was sitting in my studio, studying the score to Schoenberg's and as I was doing so, I became aware that my seven-year-old son Sam was in the adjacent room watching cartoons (good cartoons, old ones from the '50s). The hyperactive, insistently aggressive and acrobatic scores for the cartoons mixed in my head with the Schoenberg music, itself hyperactive, acrobatic and not a little aggressive, and I realized suddenly how much these two traditions had in common.

Common Tones in Simple Time was my first orchestral work, written in 1979, after the premiere of *Shaker Loops*. As the title suggests, the compositional and affective concerns were decidedly Minimalist. The "common tones" of the title refer to the signal moments of harmonic modulation in the piece, changes of key or mode similar to the "gates" of the two-piano pieces from 1977: *Phrygian Gates* and *China Gates*. In this case the "gates" all share a common pitch—they avoid what Schoenberg called "superstrong progression"—and thus create a slow and almost effortless feeling of harmonic evolution. The resulting effect, at least in my mind, gives the feeling of moving over "terrain" or "landscapes," as if one were viewing the surface of a continent from the window of a jet plane.

The two pianos are essential elements in *Common Tones in Simple Time*, contributing a light, resonant stream of regular pulsation throughout. With its long "camera pans" and hints of aerial photography the music is very much influenced by film techniques. In no other work of mine is the dramatic impulse kept so consistently reined in in favor of a natural progression of form and materials. *Common Tones in Simple Time* could justifiably be called "a pastoral with pulse."

Son of Chamber Symphony, composed in 2007, bears an unmistakable family resemblance to its predecessor, the 1992 Chamber Symphony. Both are written for an ensemble of solo instruments (roughly fifteen instruments); both are cast in a three-movement fast-slow-fast form; and both share a highly animated, in-your-face kind of cheeky buoyancy. This

might strike one as surprising, given the lineage of the "chamber symphony" as a musical form, the begetter of which was Schoenberg, considered by some the most fearsomely serious party pooper of all time.

"Chamber music," with its inherently polyphonic and democratic sharing of roles, was always difficult for me to compose. But the Schoenberg symphony provided a key to unlock that door, and it did so by suggesting a format in which the weight and mass of a symphonic work could be married to the transparency and mobility of a chamber work. The tradition of American cartoon music—and I freely acknowledge that I am only one of a host of people scrambling to jump on that particular bandwagon—also suggested a further model for a music that was at once flamboyantly virtuosic and polyphonic.

CHAMBER SYMPHONY is scored for flute (doubling piccolo) oboe, *E♭* clarinet (doubling clarinet), bass clarinet (doubling clarinet), bassoon, contrabassoon (doubling bassoon), horn, trumpet, trombone, synthesizer, percussion, and solo strings. It was premiered on January 17, 1993, conducted by the composer, at Dr. Anton Philipszaal, in the Hague, Netherlands.

COMMON TONES IN SIMPLE TIME, scored for three flutes, two oboes, three clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, harp, two pianos, two percussion, and strings, received its premiere on January 30, 1980, conducted by the composer, at Hellman Hall, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, in San Francisco, CA.

SON OF CHAMBER SYMPHONY, is scored for flute (doubling piccolo), oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, two percussion, piano (doubling celesta), and string quintet. It was premiered on November 30, 2007, conducted by Alan Pierson, at the Dinkelspiel Auditorium in Stanford, CA.

By Frank J. Oteri

Unlike most releases in the BMOP/sound discography, this first Boston Modern Orchestra Project CD devoted to the music of John Adams does not contain any first recordings. In fact, the opening work, Adams's 1992 Chamber Symphony has been recorded numerous times and is arguably contemporary music standard repertoire. But this is a rare time that work has been paired on disc with its sequel, *Son of Chamber Symphony* from 2007, offering listeners an opportunity to compare these two similarly fashioned works. Perhaps even more striking, in the current program, these two chamber symphonies serve as bookends for Adams's first orchestral work, *Common Tones in Simple Time*, composed in 1979–80. By positioning that serene and unapologetically minimalist early effort in between those two frenetic, densely contrapuntal and often anti-minimalist compositions, which in this

context it's tempting to describe as "Uncommon Tones in Complex Time," Gil Rose and BMOP encourage us to listen to these pieces at the opposite ends of Adams's stylistic proclivities in new ways.

Now that Adams's Chamber Symphony has been around for nearly thirty years and has become one of Adams's most popular works, it's difficult to recapture how shocking this piece initially was to listeners familiar with his earlier work when it first appeared. In the early 1990s, even some of Adams's staunchest fans would have failed to guess its composer on a first encounter with it. Adams first gained notoriety as a second-generation minimalist whose music's developmental inclinations and sometimes seeming restlessness never sat completely comfortably within gradually unfolding structural processes. As he established himself as a composer for the orchestra and of operas, Adams's post-minimalist music grew more and more expansive as well as extremely adept at conveying sudden mood changes. Yet throughout the 1980s and into the early 1990s, his music's lush orchestrations and shimmering tonal harmonies were always instantly identifiable. This is perhaps why the ever-shifting counterpoint as well as often dissonant and frequently tonally unstable chromaticism of this three-movement symphony scored for 15 virtuoso musicians, which is almost devoid of repetition, once seemed so unsettling and completely out of character.

Yet a careful listen to Adams's output leading up to Chamber Symphony reveals a steady progression further and further away from the clear surfaces of minimalism with each successive work. He just took this progression to its logical conclusion—a maximalist, constantly-changing musical dialectic that still retains a propulsive rhythmic drive. In his 2008 autobiography *Hallelujah Junction*, Adams describes this music as being at "the edge of comprehensibility and clarity." He also explains that this music grew out of a deep study of the pre-tonal 1906 Chamber Symphony in E Major, opus 9, by Arnold Schoenberg, a composer whose aesthetics might seem completely antithetical to Adams, but who has actually been a significant compositional influence. (E.g., Adams's earliest compositional

success, *Shaker Loops*, like Schoenberg's early *Verklärte Nacht*, is a hefty symphonic essay for string ensemble. Adams's earliest multi-movement orchestral work, *Harmonielehre*, is named after Schoenberg's 1911 treatise on harmony. And, of course, Adams studied at Harvard with Leon Kirchner, one of Schoenberg's students.)

It is intriguing to compare Adams's initial chamber symphony and Schoenberg's opus 9. While Schoenberg parsed his material into a single continuous arc, albeit one that is divisible into five conjoined sections, and Adams's music is in three clearly differentiated movements, both are roughly 22 minutes and are scored for an ensemble of 15 musicians. However, here again, there are some noticeable instrumentation differences. Schoenberg's work employs 8 winds, 2 French horns, and 5 strings. Adams uses just 6 winds, 4 strings (only 1 violin), and a single horn, but adds a trumpet and a trombone, plus—since, after all, it was composed in the final decade of the 20th century—a synthesizer and a drum set. In fact, the very first sound in Adams's piece is a thwack on a cowbell which precedes what is perhaps the most jarring dissonance Adams had ever composed up to that point, at least in works that he still acknowledges. The cowbell maintains a relentless, steady pulse for the first 49 measures of the first movement, "Mongrel Airs," [1] a title that perhaps bespeaks Adams's most significant divergence from Schoenberg. Whereas opus 9 is almost exclusively a by-product of the Central European classical tradition, Adams's music is also indebted to a broad range of popular American styles, particularly jazz and perhaps most significantly cartoon music. As Adams recounts in his note, the inspiration for Chamber Symphony came while studying Schoenberg's score and hearing cartoon music from the next room. Their hyperactive soundtracks grabbed Adams's attention, since he detected a sonic kinship in them with Schoenberg's edge-of-tonality explorations, a kinship that ultimately served as a road map for his own harmonic and metrical excursions.

Whereas in that first movement all of the musicians seem to be jockeying for center stage, the opening of the second movement, "Aria with Walking Bass," [2] opens with just three of

the lowest voices—bassoon, trombone, and contrabass—and the trombone is clearly foregrounded with a scalar melody. That tune continues on in the trumpet, then the oboe, then piccolo, against a steady stream of eighth notes, first in unison in bassoon and contrabass, then cello and contrabass, then contrabassoon, etc. This creates a true "walking bass" as in jazz, which gives listeners something to latch onto that the explosive first movement somehow always manages to subvert. While the regular flow is occasionally disrupted with a few faster passages, its return proves to be sonically reassuring. Finally, the last movement, "Roadrunner," [3] contains the fastest, most high energy music in the entire score. Like the first movement, this music is mostly a constant interplay of the entire ensemble, although toward the end there's an extraordinary daredevil passage for solo violin. Like the cartoon character after which it is named, its journey is unremitting, leaving listeners, like Road Runner's nemesis, the ever-unsuccessful Wile E. Coyote, completely breathless.

After this non-stop roller coaster, *Common Tones in Simple Time* [4] offers an extended respite. It is a slowly-unfolding single movement consisting of long, sustained tones that combine to form diatonic harmonies and it almost exclusively has four beats per measure throughout. The earliest orchestral work that Adams still acknowledges, it was composed in San Francisco between February 1979 and January 1980 and revised in 1986. It is dedicated to Leon Kirchner, although it is musically light years away from anything that Kirchner would ever have written. In *Hallelujah Junction*, Adams describes this composition as a "mild and tranquil tapestry of sound that was the epitome of non-teleological form," the hallmark of strict musical minimalism, and acknowledged that it was his "adieu to the chaste, scaled-down aesthetics of that particular style." If Chamber Symphony was the furthest that Adams has ever moved away from minimalism, *Common Tones in Simple Time* is the closest he's ever embraced it. But that is not to imply that this music is completely uneventful. Due to the pared down nature of the musical material, when a new element comes to the fore it is an extremely significant sonic event. For example, though

the music is diatonic, it modulates to neighboring keys so when new pitches make their first appearance it is extremely noticeable. Perhaps even more significantly, for about the first half of the piece, all of the instruments are in mid to high range (even the cellos and basses are restricted to the top of their ranges); so when the first low bass note finally appears, it is sonically stunning. Toward the end, the shackles of common time and simple diatonicism erode as well. Triplets are introduced, which add an additional temporal layer of complexity to the steady duple rhythm. Then various members of the orchestra repeat short modules heedless of the heretofore strict meter. Finally, non-diatonic overtones, such as pure harmonic sevenths, ring out from harmonics in the strings, enriching the harmonies beyond what would be possible in 12-tone equal temperament, a Pandora's box that Adams would not return to for more than 20 years, until his 2003 electric violin concerto *The Dharma at Big Sur*.

After Chamber Symphony and *Common Tones in Simple Time*, *Son of Chamber Symphony*, from 2007, comes across as something of a rapprochement of the extremes of Adams's musical peregrinations. While his second foray into writing a three-movement symphony for chamber ensemble shares the rhythmic energy, teeming polyphony, and virtuosity of its predecessor, it is far less chromatic—certainly it is never tonally ambiguous—and it does not eschew repetition, although it is also a far cry from Adams's earliest minimalist pieces. It's worth noting here that Schoenberg also composed a more clearly tonal second chamber symphony. He began it shortly after completing opus 9 but then abandoned it, not returning to the material until the late 1930s by which point he was an exile in the United States and was predominantly composing 12-tone music.

As with Schoenberg, the instrumentation for Adams's second chamber symphony is also somewhat different from that of his first. This time around there are a total of 16 musicians. Adams drops the contrabassoon and adds a second violin, giving reinforcement to the string section. He also replaces the synthesizer with a piano, whose player doubles on

celesta, and divides the percussion responsibilities between two players; one of them also plays a sampling keyboard which emulates a prepared piano in the opening movement and, in the final movement, a high thunder sheet. This time around Adams did not give names to the individual movements, leaving fewer clues about his possible intentions, although his program notes offer a few possible ciphers.

Adams describes the principal motive of the first movement [5] as a "dropping octave dactyl rhythm (long-short-short)," a reference to the famous motive in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and a device he would explore again in his String Quartet composed the following year. He claims that this opening movement shares more affinities with that of its predecessor than the subsequent movements of the latter work, and indeed it is also a dense sonic matrix in which every player contributes to the texture. There are even a few surface similarities (e.g., a clave ostinato at the onset is somewhat reminiscent of the incessant cowbell). But despite the dropping octaves and the jagged rhythms, it comes across as far less angular and far more tonally grounded.

The second movement [6] opens unabashedly in A minor with a unison melody shared by the flute and clarinet. Formally it is not completely dissimilar from the "Aria with Walking Bass" of its forebear, but instead of walking, the accompaniment here—pizzicato strings and celesta—simply marches in place, maintaining a steady tempo as the melody soars on top of it. The material eventually grows more complex both harmonically and rhythmically, but never veers far afield from its rhapsodic core.

Adams admits that he considered titling the last movement "Can Can," [7] but ultimately, he decided not to. It contains perhaps the most overtly dance-like music of the entire piece. (Before composing *Son of Chamber Symphony*, Adams knew that his score would be used for the ballet *Joyride* by Mark Morris.) It is also the most unabashedly "minimalist sounding" music herein—it even includes overt references to some of Adams's most

identifiably minimalist pieces, the “News” aria from his first opera *Nixon in China* as well as the opening of his *Harmonielehre*.

Whereas Chamber Symphony and *Common Tones in Simple Time* are fascinating examples of a composer mining terrain at opposite ends of his aesthetic spectrum, *Son of Chamber Symphony* is a work by a composer assured of his vocabulary and an over-the-top display of his mastery of it. It is an extremely gratifying end to a mesmerizing sonic voyage until perchance he composes a third chamber symphony!

© 2021 Frank J. Oteri

Composer and music journalist Frank J. Oteri is the editor of NewMusicBox, the web magazine from New Music USA, and the Vice President of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM).
www.fjoteri.com



CHRISTINE ALCINO

John Adams—composer, conductor, and creative thinker—occupies a unique position in the world of American music. His works, both operatic and symphonic, stand out among contemporary classical compositions for their depth of expression, brilliance of sound, and the profoundly humanist nature of their themes. Over the past 30 years, Adams’s music has played a decisive role in turning the tide of contemporary musical aesthetics away from academic modernism and toward a more expansive, expressive language, entirely characteristic of his New World surroundings.

Born and raised in New England, Adams learned the clarinet from his father and played in marching bands and community orchestras during his formative years. He began composing at age ten and heard his first orchestral pieces performed while still a teenager. The intellectual and artistic traditions of New England, including his studies at Harvard University and attendance at Boston Symphony Orchestra concerts, helped shape him as an artist and thinker. After earning two degrees from Harvard, he moved to Northern California in 1971 and has since lived in the San Francisco Bay area.

Adams taught at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music for ten years before becoming composer-in-residence of the San Francisco Symphony (1982–85), and creator of the orchestra’s highly successful and controversial “New and Unusual Music” series. Many of Adams’s landmark orchestral works were written for and premiered by the San Francisco Symphony, including *Harmonium* (1981), *Grand Pianola Music* (1982), *Harmonielehre* (1985), and *Absolute Jest* (2012).

In 1985, Adams began a collaboration with stage director Peter Sellars that has resulted in three decades of groundbreaking operas and oratorios: *Nixon in China* (1987) and *The Death of Klinghoffer* (1991), both to libretti by Alice Goodman, *El Niño* (2000), *Doctor Atomic*

(2005), *A Flowering Tree* (2006), *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* (2012), and *Girls of the Golden West* (2017). Of his first opera, *The New Yorker Magazine* said, "Not since *Porgy and Bess* has an American opera won such universal acclaim as *Nixon in China*."

Adams has received numerous Grammy awards, many of them for his over thirty releases on Nonesuch Records. In 2017 the Berliner Philharmoniker released *The John Adams Edition*, a multi-CD and DVD compilation of his music in performances conducted by Rattle, Dudamel, Petrenko, Gilbert, and Adams himself.

A new recording of the complete opera *Doctor Atomic*, with Adams conducting the BBC Symphony and featuring baritone Gerald Finley and soprano Julia Bullock was released in July 2018, timed to the new Sellars production at the Santa Fe Opera.

Both Harvard and Yale universities have conferred honorary doctorates on Adams, as have Northwestern University, the Juilliard School, and Cambridge University in England. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger of California honored him with the Governor's Award for his distinguished service to the arts in his adopted home state. His Violin Concerto won the 1993 Grawemeyer Award, and *On the Transmigration of Souls*, commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to commemorate the first anniversary of 9/11, received the 2003 Pulitzer Prize in Music.

Adams's work for two-pianos, *Hallelujah Junction*, serves as the opening music in Lucca Guadagnino's Academy Award-nominated film *Call Me by Your Name*.

John Adams is a much sought-after conductor, appearing with the world's major orchestras, including the London Symphony Orchestra, the Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Berliner Philharmoniker, the Chicago Symphony, and the Metropolitan Opera. His programming combines his own works with a wide variety of repertoire ranging from Beethoven, Mozart, and Wagner, to Ives, Stravinsky, Carter, Zappa, and Ellington.

Since 2009 Adams has held the position of Creative Chair with the Los Angeles Philharmonic where he has been instrumental in the success of that orchestra's highly creative Green Umbrella new music series.

Through his conducting and commissioning of new works, Adams has become a significant mentor of the younger generation of American composers. The Pacific Harmony Foundation, created with his wife, the photographer Deborah O'Grady, supports commissions and performances of new works and musical education initiatives throughout the country. Adams's educational activities reach from the local (the John Adams Young Composers program in his hometown of Berkeley, California) to the national and international (the Juilliard School, the Royal Academy of Music, the New World Symphony, and the Berliner Philharmoniker Akademie).

John Adams is also a highly esteemed and provocative writer. He is a frequent contributor to *The New York Times Book Review* and has written for *The New Yorker* and the *London Times*. *Hallelujah Junction*, Adams's much praised volume of memoirs and commentary on American musical life, won the Northern California Book Award for Creative Nonfiction and was named one of the "most notable books of the year" by *The New York Times*. The official John Adams website is www.earbox.com.



Gil Rose is a musician helping to shape the future of classical music. Acknowledged for his “sense of style and sophistication” by *Opera News*, noted as “an amazingly versatile conductor” by *The Boston Globe*, and praised for conducting with “admiral command” by *The New York Times*, over the past two decades Mr. Rose has built a reputation as one of the country’s most inventive and versatile conductors. His dynamic performances on both the symphonic and operatic stages as well as over 75 recordings have garnered international critical praise.

In 1996, Mr. Rose founded the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), the foremost professional orchestra dedicated exclusively to performing and recording symphonic music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Under his leadership, BMOP has won fourteen ASCAP awards for adventurous programming and was selected as Musical America’s 2016 Ensemble of the Year, the first symphony orchestra to receive this distinction. Mr. Rose serves as the executive producer of the GRAMMY® Award–winning BMOP/sound recording label. His extensive discography includes world premiere recordings of music by John Cage, Lukas Foss, Charles Fussell, Michael Gandolfi, Tod Machover, Steven Mackey, Evan Ziporyn, and many others on such labels as Albany, Arsis, Chandos, Cantaloupe, ECM, Naxos, New World, and BMOP/sound.

In September 2013, he introduced a new company to the Boston opera scene, Odyssey Opera, dedicated to eclectic and underperformed operatic repertoire. Since the company’s inaugural performance of Wagner’s *Rienzi*, which took the Boston scene by storm, Odyssey Opera has continued to receive universal acclaim for its annual festivals with compelling themes and unique programs, presenting fully staged operatic works and concert performances of overlooked grand opera masterpieces. In its first five years, Mr. Rose has brought 22 operas to Boston, and introduced the city to some important new artists. In 2016 Mr. Rose founded Odyssey Opera’s in-house recording label with its first release, Pietro Mascagni’s

Zanetto, followed by a double disc of one-act operas by notable American composer Dominick Argento in 2018 and the world premiere recording of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 2020.

From 2012 to 2019, he was the Artistic Director of the longstanding Monadnock Music Festival in historic Peterborough, New Hampshire. Mr. Rose conducted several premieres as well as cycles of the symphonies of Beethoven and Mendelssohn. He made his opera stage directing debut in two revivals of operas by Dominick Argento as well as conducting, directing, and producing a production and world premiere recording of Ned Rorem’s opera *Our Town* in the historic Peterborough Townhouse.

Mr. Rose maintains a busy schedule as a guest conductor on both the opera and symphonic platforms. He made his Tanglewood debut in 2002 and in 2003 he debuted with the Netherlands Radio Symphony at the Holland Festival. He has led the American Composers Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra of the Ukraine, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, and National Orchestra of Porto. In 2015, he made his Japanese debut substituting for Seiji Ozawa at the Matsumoto Festival conducting Berlioz’s *Béatrice et Bénédict*, and in March 2016 made his debut with New York City Opera at the Appel Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center. He has since returned to City Opera in 2017 (as Conductor and Director) in Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall and 2018 conducting a double bill of Rameau’s & Donizetti’s settings of *Pigmalione*. In 2019, he made his debut conducting the Juilliard Symphony in works of Ligeti and Tippett.

As an educator, he has served on the faculty of Tufts University and Northeastern University, and has worked with students at a wide range of colleges such as Harvard, MIT, New England Conservatory, Carnegie Mellon University, and the University of California at San Diego, among others.



TINA TALLOW

The **Boston Modern Orchestra Project** is the premier orchestra in the United States dedicated exclusively to commissioning, performing, and recording music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Described by *The New York Times* as “one of the most artistically valuable” orchestras in the country, BMOP is a unique institution in today’s musical world, disseminating exceptional orchestral music “new or so woefully neglected that it might as well be” via performances and recordings of the highest caliber.

Founded by Artistic Director Gil Rose in 1996, BMOP has championed composers whose careers span over a century. Each season, Rose brings BMOP’s award-winning orchestra, renowned soloists, and influential composers to the stage of New England Conservatory’s historic Jordan Hall, with programming that is “a safe haven for, and champion of, virtually every *ism*, and every genre- and era-mixing hybrid that composers’ imaginations have wrought” (*Wall Street Journal*). The musicians of BMOP are consistently lauded for the energy, imagination, and passion with which they infuse the music of the present era.

BMOP’s distinguished and adventurous track record includes premieres and recordings of monumental and provocative new works such as John Harbison’s ballet *Ulysses*, Charles Wuorinen’s *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, and Lei Liang’s *A Thousand Mountains, A Million*

Streams. The composers performed and commissioned by BMOP contain Pulitzer and Rome Prize winners, Grawemeyer Award recipients, and MacArthur grant fellows.

From 1997 to 2013 the orchestra won thirteen ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming. BMOP has been featured at festivals including Opera Unlimited, the Ditson Festival of Contemporary Music with the ICA/Boston, Tanglewood, the Boston Cyberarts Festival, Concerts at the Library of Congress (Washington, DC), the Festival of New American Music (Sacramento, CA), Music on the Edge (Pittsburgh, PA), and the MATA Festival in New York. During its 20th anniversary season, BMOP was named Musical America’s 2016 Ensemble of the Year, the first symphony orchestra in the organization’s history to receive this distinction.

BMOP has actively pursued a role in music education through composer residencies, collaborations with colleges, and an ongoing relationship with the New England Conservatory, where it is Affiliate Orchestra for New Music. The musicians of BMOP are equally at home in Symphony Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, and in Cambridge’s Club Oberon and Boston’s Club Café, where they pursued a popular, composer-led Club Concert series from 2004 to 2012.

BMOP/sound, BMOP’s independent record label, was created in 2008 to provide a platform for BMOP’s extensive archive of music, as well as to provide widespread, top-quality, permanent access to both classics of the 20th century and the music of today’s most innovative composers. BMOP/sound has released over 75 CDs on the label, bringing BMOP’s discography to 100 titles. BMOP/sound has garnered praise from the national and international press; it is the recipient of a 2020 GRAMMY® Award for *Tobias Picker: Fantastic Mr. Fox*, nine GRAMMY® Award nominations, and its releases have appeared on the year-end “Best of” lists of *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, National Public Radio, *Time Out New York*, *American Record Guide*, *Downbeat Magazine*, WBUR, NewMusicBox, and others.

BMOP expands the horizon of a typical “night at the symphony.” Admired, praised, and sought after by artists, presenters, critics, and audiophiles, BMOP and BMOP/sound are uniquely positioned to redefine the new music concert and recording experience.

FLUTE

Sarah Brady* (piccolo) [1-3]
 Rachel Braude (piccolo) [2]
 Jessi Rosinski (piccolo) [2]

OBOE

Nancy Dimock [2]
 Jennifer Slowik* [1-3]

CLARINET

Amy Advocat (bass clarinet)
 [1-3]
 Gary Gorczyca [2]
 Jan Halloran* [2]
 Michael Norsworthy* (Eb
 clarinet) [1, 3]

BASSOON

Ronald Haroutunian* [1-3]
 Gregory Newton [2]
 Margaret Phillips
 (contrabassoon) [1]

HORN

Whitacre Hill* [1-3]
 Kevin Owen [2]

TRUMPET

Eric Berlin [2]
 Terry Everson* [1-3]

TROMBONE

Hans Bohn [1, 3]

PERCUSSION

Craig McNutt [2-3]
 Robert Schulz* [1-3]

HARP

Ina Zdorovetchi [2]

PIANO

Donald Berman [2]
 Linda Osborn* (celesta,
 synthesizer) [1-3]

VIOLIN I

Colin Davis [2]
 Charles Dimmick* [1-3]
 Lilit Hartunian [2]
 Shaw Pong Liu [2]
 Kay Rooney Matthews [2]
 Ethan Wood [2]

VIOLIN II

Piotr Buczek [2]
 Julia Cash [2]
 Gabriela Diaz [3]
 Annegret Klaua [2]
 Sean Larkin [2]
 Mina Lavcheva [2]
 Katherine Winterstein* [2]

VIOLA

Mark Berger [1, 3]
 Joan Ellersick [2]
 Noriko Futagami [2]
 Dimitar Petkov [2]
 Emily Rideout [2]

CELLO

Jing Li [2]
 Rafael Popper-Keizer* [1-3]
 David Russell [2]

BASS

Anthony D'Amico* [1-3]
 Bebo Shiu [2]

KEY

[1] Chamber Symphony
 [2] Common Tones in Simple Time
 [3] Son of Chamber Symphony

*Principals

John Adams

Chamber Symphony
 Common Tones in Simple Time
 Son of Chamber Symphony

Producer: Gil Rose
 Recording and postproduction engineer: Joel Gordon
 Assistant engineer: Peter Atkinson
 SACD authoring: Brad Michel

Chamber Symphony and *Son of Chamber Symphony* are published by Associated Music Publishers Inc.
Common Tones in Simple Time is published by Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.

Chamber Symphony and *Son of Chamber Symphony* were recorded August 15, 2014, in Fraser Hall at WGBH studios, Boston, MA. *Common Tones in Simple Time* was recorded March 10, 2015, at Mechanics Hall, Worcester, MA.

This recording was made possible in part by the generosity of an anonymous donor.



Cover image: *Greater Roadrunner*, photograph © 2017 Nancy Christensen.

© 2021 BMOP/sound 1078

Design: John Kramer
 Editor: Chuck Furlong

