



**BMOP**  
*sound*

**VIJAY IYER: TROUBLE**  
ASUNDER | CRISIS MODES

**VIJAY IYER** b.1971

ASUNDER

TROUBLE

CRISIS MODES

**JENNIFER KOH** violin

**BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT**

Gil Rose, conductor

**ASUNDER** (2017)

- [1] I. Agitated 5:06
- [2] II. Patient & mysterious 4:19
- [3] III. Calm & precise 4:35
- [4] IV. Lush 6:21

**TROUBLE** FOR VIOLIN  
AND CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (2017)

- [5] 1. Prelude: Erasure 1:48
- [6] 2. Normale 6:04
- [7] 3. For Vincent Chin 3:29
- [8] 4. Cozening 4:50
- [9] 5. Interlude: Accretion 2:30
- [10] 6. Assembly 12:49

Jennifer Koh, violin

**CRISIS MODES** FOR PERCUSSION  
AND STRINGS (2018)

- [11] 1. Appeals 5:32
- [12] 2. Denial 5:22
- [13] 3. Agonism 9:35

**TOTAL** 72:21



VIJAY IYER, THE VILLAGE VANGUARD, NEW YORK CITY. PHOTO BY STACK KIMBALL

## By Vijay Iyer

I'm honored that BMOP has chosen to produce this recording of my orchestral music. The three pieces presented here are very much of their moment (2017–2019). It's not that they are overtly "political" works exactly, but they were born during a period marked by the explicit unraveling of public discourse, the return of overt white supremacy in American politics, and the undoing of any remaining shred of U.S. credibility in the world. As an "American composer" I found myself affected by all of it, as these works' titles make plain.

*Asunder* was originally written for Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, who famously perform in the classical style—without a conductor. That means that the momentum and drive had to come from *within* the ensemble. So I organized this piece as four dances, with plenty of formal repetition, in order to tap into the same sensibilities that they could employ for Mozart, Beethoven, or anyone else in their wheelhouse. I decided that the work should feel playful, its musicality within reach. Rather than the formal material being its own end, it's meant for the ensemble to collectively embody, in order to deliver the feeling of unity that so many of us craved at the time; ideally the piece should contradict its own title.

*Trouble* was commissioned by the wonderful soloist Jennifer Koh. I'd never written a concerto, and it felt like an ungainly enterprise; I couldn't fathom putting a soloist on a pedestal in the typical way. But Ms. Koh helped me imagine a quite different form that could speak to what mattered to us as artists of color in the U.S. It's not intended as programmatic or

didactic, but it alludes to a few historical moments and develops some sentiments about individual and collective agency, including moments of joy, anxiety, mourning, peril, and even sarcasm. Nearly a year in the making, *Trouble* remains, for me, one of my most layered, ambitious, and emotionally intense works.

*Crisis Modes* took a couple of tries to get right. I was bent on unpacking the peculiar harmonic movements that lived within my piano playing, so the central movement became an orchestration of one of my intuitive solo *impromptus*—but then the original first and third movements felt spiritless in comparison. After a dissatisfying LA premiere I rewrote about 40% of the piece, retooling the outer movements to conjure, in the absence of wind instruments, more of a sense of air. In the process the piece became more heartfelt, and less of an exercise, and the revised version debuted, more richly, in New York in fall 2019.

Situating myself as an “American composer” has allowed me to embrace artistic priorities and aesthetics that decenter European music and whiteness in general, and that are as indebted to Afrodiasporic practices and nonwestern musical methods as they might be to so-called “western classical music.” But as liberating as this framing has been, it still adheres to a notion of “Americanness,” which is itself inextricable from ghastly histories of invasion, genocide, enslavement, torture, and plunder, all concealed beneath gaslit narratives of freedom and equality. After all, only those histories can explain the sheer presence of nonwhite people in the U.S.; mainstream accounts of “diversity, inclusion, and belonging” tend to gloss over such inconvenient truths.

With all that has unfolded since I wrote these pieces, as an artist today I would not so readily embrace *nation* as an anchor of identity as I did then. I can no longer subscribe to the American project, nor to that of any other nation that perpetuates suffering and calls it justice. Instead I would choose to privilege less formal ways of gathering, moving, and relating that favor community, compassion, and mutual care.

Music is the space where such forms of relation can be put into practice. I don’t imagine that these three pieces will challenge the primacy of nations, orchestras, or any other prevailing systems of order—but I do hope, at least, to trouble the waters just a little bit.

Thank you for listening.

*New York City, June 13, 2023*

ASUNDER is scored for double winds, two horns, two trumpets, percussion, and strings, and was premiered by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra on October 12, 2017, at Lied Center for the Performing Arts in Lincoln, NE.

TROUBLE for violin and chamber orchestra received its premiere by International Contemporary Ensemble, Steven Schick, conductor, on June 8, 2017, as part of the Ojai Music Festival, at the Libbey Bowl in Ojai, CA.

CRISIS MODES for percussion and strings was premiered by the LA Phil New Music Group, conducted by Paolo Bortolameolli, on January 15, 2018, at Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, CA.

### By Lara Pellegrinelli

Vijay Iyer is best known as a jazz pianist who performs his own music. Since his 1995 recording debut as a leader, *Memorophilia* (Asian Improv), he has released more than twenty albums and blazed trails with his early triomates bassist Stephan Crump and drummer Marcus Gilmore. Iyer has won the *Down Beat* Jazz Critics poll numerous times, a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, and the Herb Alpert Award in the Arts. *Uneasy* (ECM), his 2021 trio recording with Linda May Han Oh and Tyshawn Sorey was named one of the best albums of 2021 by *Pitchfork* and *The New Yorker*.

Few jazz musicians who have recently completed their fifth decade are quite so celebrated, with no signs of critical interest waning. A MacArthur Fellowship and a professorship at

Harvard University complete Iyer's bona fides. But his reach has long extended beyond jazz, what he and many musicians feel is a fraught and potentially limiting category.

Iyer's interdisciplinary collaborations with poets, filmmakers, and choreographers are well known, and he has been making chamber and orchestral compositions for over a decade; although he is a self-taught pianist, he studied the violin for many years as a child. Numerous ensembles prominent in the new music scene have commissioned him, including the American Composers Orchestra, International Contemporary Ensemble, A Far Cry, Bang on a Can All-Stars, the Silk Road Ensemble, Imani Winds, and So Percussion. In 2017, Iyer was an unusual and groundbreaking choice to serve as the Music Director for the 2017 Ojai Music Festival in Southern California, which has presented adventurous fare for more than 70 years. In 2019–20 he was the Composer-in-Residence at London's Wigmore Hall, where he had previously held their jazz residency.

As an improvising musician and an Asian American, Iyer is circumspect about his inclusion among composers. "When someone uses the words 'classical music,'" he says, "what it seems they're doing is asserting a continuity with a certain fantasy of Europe. You can always point to exceptions, but I would say that the machinery of classical music is one that supports whiteness as an idea. And so what does it mean for me to be caught up in it?"

In popular and scholarly discourse, classical music is associated with great, universal works of art by European masters and their descendants, nearly all of them white and male. Partisans position the form as the pinnacle of musical sophistication, an ethnocentric viewpoint.

Iyer rightly points out that channels supporting the authorship of new works remain separate based on stylistic affiliation, imposing a kind of de facto segregation. Classical music's system of patronage is arguably set up to support white male artists, who are carrying on a tradition descended from modernism. It depends on grant makers, concert programmers,

publishers, and producers—whose choices may hinge on who they feel most comfortable promoting. Academic institutions play a similar role by acting as cultural arbiters through their curriculum and in their hiring of faculty, offering tenured artists a platform for life. Some might point to Iyer's successes as evidence of increasing equity overall, but those claims are roughly analogous to the use of Barack Obama's presidency as proof that we live in a colorblind society.

Iyer has noticed patterns in the kinds of classical compositions that he is asked to create. Many of them respond to existing works in the repertoire: "I'll be asked, 'Can you write a piece to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*?' " he says, referencing *Radhe Rade: Rites of Holi*, his soundtrack for the experimental documentary by Prashant Bhargava. "'Can you respond to an unfinished fragment by Mozart?' which I did for the Brentano Quartet. 'Can you write a companion piece to Beethoven's *Kreutzer* Sonata?' which I did for Jennifer Koh. 'Can you write an overture to the Bach C Major Cello Suite?' which I did for Matt Haimovitz."

It's a strategy that justifies new works being placed side-by-side on a program with the treasures of a golden past. (In live performance, they may even be sequenced *preceding* old chestnuts, to prevent audiences from walking out the door early—what I think of as new music's walking ovation.) Requests like these have also allowed Iyer to stake out a position vis-à-vis the tradition, drawing his relationship to history. But he suspects that he is also invited into these settings as someone who checks the boxes of racial and stylistic diversity, or as "the jazz novelty on the roster. Not always, but often. I am not someone who hates classical music—I grew up playing it—but I don't feel that I constantly need to validate that tradition either. There's plenty of that, so I find ways to work around it, or under it."

Working around it might look like playing in duo settings with his frequent collaborator, pianist Craig Taborn, or in his current trio with bassist Linda May Han Oh and drummer Tyshawn Sorey. "Playing spontaneous music challenges the category of composer," says Iyer, "because the music doesn't continue to exist anywhere. There's nowhere to point, which is fundamental to the Western economy of how music works."

Working under it could take the form of the companion piece to Beethoven's *Kreutzer* Sonata that Iyer wrote for violinist Jennifer Koh. Titled the *Bridgetower Fantasy*, it excavates a forgotten past. "He brought in this amazing perspective from a voice that has gone unheard, George Bridgetower," says Koh. "He was someone who had been completely written out of history."

Bridgetower was a famous 19th Century concert violinist—and a person of mixed race. He and Beethoven performed the now-famous "*Kreutzer*" Sonata together, Bridgewater spontaneously contributing some embellishments with the composer's approval. The original inscription for the work read, "Sonata Mulattica composed for the mulatto Brischdauer, big wild mulatto composer." But after a disagreement about a female acquaintance, Beethoven revoked the original dedication and replaced it with one to Rodolphe Kreutzer, who disliked the piece and never played it. Iyer's composition is a "collection of imaginings about George Bridgetower," a liminal figure who won acclaim, only to fall from grace.

Iyer's subversion of expectations intersects with his ideas about community, shaping his conceptions of audience. He explains that he makes music *with* and *among* others, *for* others, that he feels a responsibility to use his position as an artist for the betterment of society. His work in jazz—"the music of a people whose humanity was revoked"—has directed his thinking about what music can do for both performers and gatherings of people. He explains:

When we look at the history of music that goes under the name “jazz,” we’re looking at a history of African Americans addressing the world, and particularly addressing the West, in a context where they’re treated as exemplars of difference to be put on display. That’s the governing logic of that whole system—not the music, but the jazz *business*.

How, then, did people choose to face it as artists? How did Duke Ellington face it? How did Miles? How did Coltrane? How does Wadada Leo Smith face it today? Even though love radiates from the musicians, the metaphor that I hear time and again from the elders is that performing is like “going into combat.” That’s because in many of these settings you’re not seen as a human being; you’re stepping out on stage and have to start from scratch to prove your humanity. I have studied what it means to be defiantly present in spaces like that, because it is part and parcel of this music.

So I find myself inspired to face it in a different way. The question is not just what is going to be in this piece, but what is going to happen in this space? I sculpt pieces the way I sculpt a set—to do something to everybody in the room, which is more than trying to prove that I can wield the techniques of orchestration, or that I belong in some pantheon of composers. What I want to do is shake the air in a way that will hit somebody, so that they’ll have to carry that feeling out into the world.

The compositions on *Vijay Iyer: Trouble* do ably demonstrate how Iyer wields those compositional techniques. Gil Rose, conductor and artistic director of the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, calls them “knockouts”:

In a sense, they are traditional concert pieces with multiple contrasting movements in familiar symphonic forms. At the same time, they are progressive, with materials woven from all of Vijay’s musical influences. Every piece is virtuosic. If you listen at

a visceral level, you’ll enjoy and appreciate them. But, if you listen more deeply, there are all sorts of things to discover. To me, that’s the best kind of music.

At the same time, the repertoire found in the space of this recording has also been sculpted to shake the air, traveling through speakers and headphones to move its audience. Not only do all three of the works—*Trouble* (2017), *Asunder* (2018), and *Crisis Modes* (2019–20)—help us to challenge and reframe our understanding of what classical music is materially speaking, they are socially responsive, meeting Iyer’s self-imposed commitment as an artist to be defiantly present and to help his communities of listeners do the work of the imagination that enables us to envision a better future.

Each composition begins from a place of instability and uncertainty, tracing a dramatic arc that coalesces in a surging, unified conclusion. “In an unstable moment, these pieces reach for something,” Iyer reflects. “They move from ambivalence to—do I even dare to say hope?”

## ASUNDER

Commissioned by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Iyer began composing a work [1-4] that reflected what he felt as an American in the cultural moment preceding the pandemic: “pulled apart, broken, anxious, untethered.”

But the idea shifted as he began to work with Orpheus, a conductor-less ensemble that would be responsible for the Carnegie Hall premiere. All of the group’s decisions are made collaboratively; Iyer likens their rehearsals to being on the floor of Congress, an intensive process by which they arrive at musical consensus. Instead of replicating the fragmentation he felt personally, Iyer instead turned towards finding resonances and unity, at the same time addressing the practical need to compose a piece that the ensemble could perform without the visual enforcement of time by a leader.

The resulting work draws on diverse musical languages in four short movements that can be thought of as dances. Influenced by Hindustani musical traditions, linear melodies progress in rhythmic cycles, perhaps most notably in the third movement where *lehra*, a melodic accompaniment to a drum solo, evolves organically and thunderously in its orchestration. These cyclic structures hold the forms together. The quality of motion rarely stays settled for long, relying on rhythms that “came from within, that the ensemble could carry together. Iyer recalls:

Because the piece premiered at Carnegie, I felt like I was trying to formulate an answer to the question, “What are you doing here?” I was almost apologetic, like *Sorry I’m on this program with Mozart and Beethoven*. I knew whatever I did was going to sound strange in comparison. But at this point, I’m here. I’m doing this. It’s not some one-off novelty. I can’t explain it anymore. In a way, this album is expressing that as clearly as anything I’ve ever done.

## TROUBLE

“I got in trouble. It was *good* trouble. It was *necessary* trouble.”

— Congressman John Lewis, speaking on the Montgomery Bus Boycott

Co-commissioned by the Ojai Music Festival, Cal Performances in Berkeley, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra as part of violinist Jennifer Koh’s New American Concerto project, *Trouble* [5-10] explores the immigrant experience and issues of discrimination. The third of its six movements—what Koh refers to as the “heartbeat of the piece”—is dedicated to Vincent Chin, a Chinese American man, who was beaten to death by unemployed autoworkers in Detroit in 1982 because they mistakenly thought he was Japanese. At the time, United States car manufacturers were facing stiff competition from Japan. The



JENNIFER KOH: PICK-STÄUBER CONCERT HALL PHOTO: CHRISTINA WALKER



event, largely forgotten today, galvanized the Asian American community to fight back against racial injustice.

Koh, who grew up in a farm town outside of Chicago, the daughter of a North Korean refugee, explains:

It was incomprehensible to my parents. They hadn't yet realized that people only saw us by the color of our skin. I was five, but I remember how scary it was because of the kind of hatred it represented.

*Trouble* defiantly contests that sense of precarity, channeling both the past and our present political moment. As a musical form, the concerto is defined by instrumentation that features a soloist with orchestra, but, writes Iyer:

I didn't want to rehash the typical narrative positioning of a heroic individual over or against a multitude. Ms. Koh told me that the soloist could instead be viewed as someone willing to be vulnerable, to publicly venture where most people won't, to accept a role that no one else will accept, to bear the unbearable. In other words, the soloist can embody the relationship of an artist to her community: not so much a leader or hero, but something more like a shaman, a conduit for the forces in motion around us.

The violin emerges slowly over multiple movements as a lonely, elegiac voice. Yet it will lead the call for a multitude to assemble, solo in an impassioned cadenza, and ultimately become part of the collective.

## CRISIS MODES

Iyer has often been asked to make distinctions between improvisation and composition, the former being oriented toward communing with others in the present and the latter towards "sending a piece of music downstream, to be heard in the future." Of *Crisis Modes*, [11-13] which was premiered by the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group through the orchestra's Green Umbrellas program curated by Herbie Hancock, Iyer says

I chose to approach this piece of music-for-tomorrow like a time capsule. There's no denying it: we live in a time of struggle, with humanitarian and environmental crises gripping us every day. So what might I try to tell future audiences besides S.O.S. from this scarred planet at the dawn of 2019? *Crisis Modes* offers a version of the present in which we call each other to action, push through a haze of denial, and organize ourselves as a coherent, constructive oppositional force. I don't exactly know what that sounds like, but I can at least imagine how it feels, so this piece is my attempt to trace that affective landscape.

Written for percussion plus strings, the composition grew from a piano improvisation that Iyer orchestrated and now occupies the second of three movements ("Denial") [12]. "I've been making my own choices on the piano since I was three," he explains. "Eventually something like an aesthetic guides you as you draw from everything you know, but the details of why you make each choice from one sound to the next sound are elusive. It somehow flows of its own accord."

This slow, expansive second movement does flow, creating a bridge between outer movements dense with rhythm. In the first movement, lines of ascending quarter-tones teeter atop clockwork percussion. It is a false start. Led by the viola, a melody accumulates from spiky intervals, the kind that would be at home in a John Coltrane composition, and eventually gives way to a dance. The third movement likewise settles into its own groove, which

progresses with insistent polyrhythms that layer tension and release. They push within and against the underlying form to become a coherent, constructive oppositional force.

Says Rose:

Performing Vijay's music involves bifurcating your brain to allow yourself to hear two seemingly disparate things at once. For the orchestra to play these pieces, they have to walk a fine line between counting like crazy and not counting at all because the music is inherently organic in a rhythmic sense, but it's very specific in that way. It has to be both exact and just loose enough to groove, with the musicians listening to each other the way jazz musicians do. It's a pocket to get into.

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Lara Pellegrinelli is a freelance journalist and scholar with bylines in *The New York Times* and *the Village Voice*. She has been the commissioned writer for *Columbia University's Miller Theatre* and its *Composer Portrait* series since 2018.



EBRU YILBIZ

**Vijay Iyer**, described by *The New York Times* as a “social conscience, multimedia collaborator, system builder, rhapsodist, historical thinker and multicultural gateway,” has carved out a unique path as an influential, prolific, shape-shifting presence in twenty-first-century music. A composer and pianist active and revered across multiple musical communities, Iyer has created a consistently innovative, emotionally

resonant body of work over the last twenty-five years, earning him a place as one of the leading music-makers of his generation.

He received a MacArthur Fellowship, a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, a United States Artist Fellowship, three Grammy nominations, the Alpert Award in the Arts, the Greenfield Prize, and two German “Echo” awards, and was voted *DownBeat* Magazine’s Jazz Artist of the Year four times in the last decade. He has been praised by *Pitchfork* as “one of the best in the world at what he does,” by the *Los Angeles Weekly* as “a boundless and deeply important young star,” and by Minnesota Public Radio as “an American treasure.”

Iyer’s musical language is indebted to the great composer-pianists from Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk to Alice Coltrane and Geri Allen, the rhythmic traditions of South Asia and West Africa, and the African American creative music movement of the 60s and 70s. February 2024 brings the release of *Compassion* (ECM Records), the second recording by Iyer’s much-admired trio with drummer Tyshawn Sorey and bassist Linda May Han Oh. *The New York Times* writes, “It’s as if this band wants to both seduce you and discomfit you, stripping you of everything but the ability to think and see for yourself.” Other recent releases include *Love In Exile* (Verve, 2023), a Grammy-nominated collaboration with vocalist Arooj Aftab and bassist Shahzad Ismaily; *Uneasy* (ECM Records, 2021), the acclaimed first trio session with Sorey and Oh; *Far From Over* (ECM, 2017) with the award-winning Vijay Iyer

Sextet; and *A Cosmic Rhythm with Each Stroke* (ECM, 2016) a suite of duets with visionary composer-trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith.

Iyer is an active composer for classical ensembles and soloists, with works premiered by Brentano Quartet, Imani Winds, Parker Quartet, Bang on a Can All-Stars, The Silk Road Ensemble, Sō Percussion, International Contemporary Ensemble, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, East Coast Chamber Orchestra, London Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Oregon Symphony, American Composers Orchestra, and virtuosos Matt Haimowitz, Mishka Rushdie Momen, Claire Chase, Inbal Segev, Sarah Rothenberg, Shai Wosner, and Jennifer Koh. He recently served as composer-in-residence at London's Wigmore Hall, music director of the Ojai Music Festival, and artist-in-residence at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art.

A tireless collaborator, he has written big-band music for Arturo O'Farrill and Darcy James Argue, remixed classic recordings of Talvin Singh and Meredith Monk, joined forces with legendary musicians Henry Threadgill, Reggie Workman, Zakir Hussain, and L. Subramanian, and developed interdisciplinary work with Teju Cole, Carrie Mae Weems, Mike Ladd, Julie Mehretu, and Prashant Bhargava. Iyer is a tenured professor at Harvard University, with a joint appointment in the Department of Music and the Department of African and African American Studies. He lives in New York City. He is a Steinway artist.



**Jennifer Koh**, a GRAMMY® Award-winning violinist, is recognized for her intense, commanding performances, delivered with dazzling virtuosity and technical assurance. A forward-thinking artist, she is dedicated to exploring a broad and eclectic repertoire, while promoting equity and inclusivity in classical music. She has expanded the contemporary violin repertoire through a wide range of commissioning projects, and has premiered more than 100 works written especially for her.

Koh's critically acclaimed series include *Alone Together*, a commissioning project, performance, and recording series in support of composers during the coronavirus crisis; *Bach and Beyond* a solo recital series, which traces the history of the solo violin repertoire from Bach's sonatas and partitas to works by 20th- and 21st-century composers; and *New American Concerto*, which invites a diverse collective of composers to examine socio-cultural topics relevant to American life today through the form of the violin concerto. *New American Concerto* commissions include Vijay Iyer's *Trouble*, Lisa Bielawa's *Sanctuary*, Courtney Bryan's *Szyzgy*, Christopher Cerrone's *Breaks and Breaks*, Missy Mazzoli's *Procession*, and Tyshawn Sorey's *For Marcos Balter*.

Koh is also the co-creator of *Everything Rises*, a multimedia staged work created with bass-baritone Davóne Tines, that reflects upon issues of race and identity in the arts, and shares the inspiration the creators have found in their family histories—from Koh's mother's experiences as a Korean War refugee to Tines's grandmother's memories of anti-Black discrimination and violence.

Koh has appeared with orchestras worldwide, among them the New York, Los Angeles, and Helsinki Philharmonics; Cleveland, Mariinsky, Minnesota, and Philharmonia (London) Orchestras; and Atlanta, Baltimore, BBC, Chicago, Cincinnati, National, New World, NHK, RAI (Torino), and Singapore Symphonies. Named *Musical America's* 2016 Instrumentalist of the Year, she has won the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, Concert Artists Guild Competition, and an Avery Fisher Career Grant. She has a BA in English literature from Oberlin College and studied at the Curtis Institute, where she worked extensively with Jaime Laredo and Felix Galimir. She is also an active lecturer, teacher, and recording artist for Cedille Records. Koh is the newly named Artistic Director of the Kennedy Center's Fortas Chamber Music Concerts and Artistic Director and Founder of the non-profit ARCO Collaborative.



**Gil Rose** is one of today's most trailblazing conductors, praised as "amazingly versatile" (*The Boston Globe*) with "a sense of style and sophistication" (*Opera News*). Equally at home performing core repertoire, new music, and lesser-known historic symphonic and operatic works, "Gil Rose is not just a fine conductor, but a peerless curator, sniffing out—and commissioning—off-trend, unheralded, and otherwise underplayed repertoire that nevertheless holds to unfailingly high standards of quality. In doing so, he's built an indefinable, but unmistakable, personal aesthetic" (WXQR).

A global leader in American contemporary music, Rose is the founder of the performing and recording ensemble the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), who "bring an endlessly curious and almost archaeological mind to programming... with each concert, each recording, an essential step in a better direction" (*The New York Times*), as well as the founder of Odyssey Opera, praised by *The New York Times* as "bold and intriguing" and "one of the East Coast's most interesting opera companies."

Since its founding in 1996, the "unique and invaluable" (*The New York Times*) BMOP has grown to become the premier orchestra in the world for commissioning, recording, and performing music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Under Rose's leadership, BMOP has won seventeen ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming, been selected as *Musical America's* Ensemble of the Year in 2016, and in 2021 was awarded a *Gramophone* Magazine Special Achievement Award in recognition of its extraordinary service to American music of the modern era. Under Rose's baton, BMOP has been featured at numerous festivals including the Festival of New American Music (Sacramento, CA), Concerts at the Library of Congress (Washington, DC), and the MATA Festival in New York.

In 2013, Gil Rose expanded his musical vision with the founding of Odyssey Opera, a company dedicated to eclectic and underperformed operatic repertoire from all eras. Working with an international roster of singers and directors, Odyssey has presented more than 35 operas in Boston, with innovative, thematically linked seasons. The company has also established

itself as a leader of modern opera in the United States, having given three world premieres and numerous U.S. premieres.

In addition to his role as conductor, Rose is leading the charge for the preservation and advancement of underperformed works through recordings. BMOP/sound, the independent record label Rose founded in 2008, has released over 90 recordings of contemporary music by today's most innovative composers, including world premieres by John Cage, Lukas Foss, Chen Yi, Anthony Davis, Lisa Bielawa, Steven Mackey, Eric Nathan, and many others. With Rose as executive producer, the label has secured eight GRAMMY® nominations and a win in 2020 for Tobias Picker's opera *Fantastic Mr. Fox*. Odyssey Opera's in-house label has released five CDs, most recently a complete version of Camille Saint-Saëns's *Henry VIII*.

Beyond Boston, Gil Rose enjoys a busy schedule as a guest conductor and educator. Equally at home on the podium in both symphonic and operatic repertoire, Rose has led performances by the Tanglewood Opera Orchestra, the Netherlands Radio Symphony, the American Composers Orchestra, the National Symphony of Ukraine, the Matsumoto Festival of Japan, the New York City Opera, and the Juilliard Symphony among others. In addition to being former faculty at Tufts University and Northeastern University, Rose has worked with students across the U.S. at institutions such as Carnegie Mellon University, MIT, New England Conservatory, and the University of California at San Diego. He is a visionary curator of music, inaugurating the Ditson Festival of Music at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art and programming three seasons for the Fromm Concerts at Harvard series.

In recent seasons, Gil Rose led Odyssey Opera in a concert performance of three one-act operas by Rachmaninoff and brought John Corigliano and Mark Adamo's new opera *The Lord of Cries* to Boston audiences. In addition, he and BMOP traveled to Carnegie Hall in April 2023 for the orchestra's debut performance and culmination of their 25th season. Future seasons include a BMOP and Odyssey co-production of *Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed That Line to Freedom*, the second opera in *AS TOLD BY: History, Race, and Justice on the Opera Stage*, a five-year initiative highlighting Black composers and vital figures of Black liberation and thought.



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 90 CDs on the label, bringing BMOP’s discography to over 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*, eight 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\*  
 (alto flute, piccolo) [1-2]  
 Rachel Braude [1]

**OBOE**

Jennifer Slowik\*  
 (English horn) [1-2]  
 Catherine Weinfeld [1]

**CLARINET**

Amy Adovcat [1]  
 Gary Gorczyca\* [1]  
 Michael Norsworthy\*  
 (bass clarinet) [2]

**BASSOON**

Ronald Haroutunian [2]  
 Jensen Ling\* [1]  
 Gregory Newton [1]

**HORN**

Neil Godwin [1]  
 Kevin Owen\* [1-2]

**TRUMPET**

Terry Everson\* [1-2]  
 Andrew Kozar [1]

**TROMBONE**

Hans Bohn [2]

**TUBA**

Taka Hagiwara [2]

**PERCUSSION**

Craig McNutt (timpani) [1-3]  
 Robert Schulz\* [1-3]  
 Nicholas Tolle [2-3]

**PIANO**

Linda Osborn [2]

**VIOLIN I**

MaeLynn Arnold [2]  
 Gabriel Boyers [2]  
 Heidi Braun-Hill\* [3]  
 Piotr Buczek [1-3]  
 Colin Davis [3]  
 Sonia Deng [2]  
 Gabriela Díaz\* [1-2]  
 Tudor Dornescu [1,3]  
 Omar Guey [1]

Lilit Hartunian [3]  
 Susan Jensen [1-3]  
 Aleksandra Labinska [3]  
 Yumi Okada [2]  
 Amy Sims [1]  
 Klaudia Szlachta [2]

**VIOLIN II**

Colleen Brannen\* [1-3]  
 Paola Cabbalero [1,3]  
 Julia Cash [2]  
 Lilit Hartunian [1,2]  
 Annegret Klaua [2,3]  
 Judith Lee [2]  
 Yumi Okada [1,3]

Kay Rooney-Matthews [2-3]  
 Nivedita Sarnath [2-3]  
 Sarita Uranovsky [3]  
 Katherine Winterstein\* [1-2]  
 Mark Berger [1,3]

**VIOLA**

Mark Berger [1,3]  
 Abigail Cross [2]  
 Joan Ellersick\* [2]  
 Nathaniel Farny [2]  
 Noriko Futagami [1-3]  
 Dimiter Petkov [2]  
 Emily Rideout [1]  
 Emily Rome [2]  
 Peter Sulski\* [1,3]  
 Alexander Vavilov [3]

**CELLO**

Nicole Cariglia [1]  
 Darry Dolezal [1,3]  
 Jing Li [3]  
 Stephen Marotto [2]  
 Rafael Popper-Keizer\* [1]  
 David Russell [1; \*2-3]  
 Amy Wensink [2]  
 Aron Zolkowicz [2]

**BASS**

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

**KEY**

[1] Asunder  
 [2] Trouble  
 [3] Crisis Modes

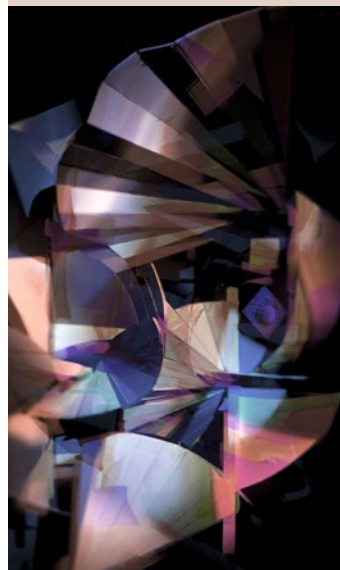
\*principals

**Vijay Iyer**

Asunder  
 Trouble  
 Crisis Modes

All works on this disc are published by Schott Music.

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



*Trouble* was recorded on December 4, 2018, at Fraser studios at WGBH in Boston, MA. *Crisis Modes* was recorded on June 16, 2021, and *Asunder* was recorded on September 9, 2021, both at Mechanics Hall in Worcester, MA.

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