

74TH SEASON OF CONCERTS

APRIL 23, 2016 • NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART



PROGRAM

2:00 • West Building, West Garden Court

A performance dialogue between dance and architecture

Jen Shyu, multi-instrumentalist

Petr Zuska, dancer

Prague-New York Effects

The Performers

Petr Zuska is a renowned dancer, artistic director, and choreographer of the Czech National Ballet. Following his career as a classical ballet dancer, he now explores new ways of performing and researching physical language in a more intimate scale of the performing arts.

From 1992 to 1998, Zuska was a soloist of the Czech National Ballet. In 1998, he worked for the Munich Ballet and in 1999 joined the ballet company of the Augsburg Theatre. In 2000, he was named a soloist of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal. Since 1990, Zuska has created choreographies for more than fifty productions for both foreign and Czech companies, including the Hamburg Ballet, Ballet Augsburg, Mariinsky Theatre, the Royal Danish Ballet, the Finnish National Ballet, Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo, and the Boston Ballet. He has received numerous awards for his performances and choreographies, including the Thalia Prize (1993 and 1997), the Prix Dom Perignon (1999), the Original Choreography Prize within the Modern Dance Competition, the Choreography of the Year Award, and the Czech Literary Fund and Opera Plus prizes.

Jen Shyu is an experimental jazz vocalist, composer, multi-instrumentalist, dancer, producer, Fulbright scholar, and 2014 Doris Duke Impact Award recipient. She has produced five albums as a bandleader, and is the first female artist and vocalist as bandleader on the Pi Recordings label with the widely praised album *Synastry*, with legendary bassist Mark Dresser. Shyu became the vocalist of saxophonist Steve Coleman's Five Elements from 2003 to 2011 and has presented her own music at the Lincoln Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Bimhuis (Netherlands), Salihara Theater (Indonesia), and the National Gugak Center and National Theater of Korea. Shyu currently leads her band Jade Tongue and is touring her solo opera called *Solo Rites: Seven Breaths*, directed by renowned Indonesian filmmaker-director Garin Nugroho and inspired by Shyu's travels and fieldwork over the past decade. Larry Blumenfeld of the *Wall Street Journal* writes, "Shyu is among New York's most invigorating vocal presences . . . and perhaps the most enigmatic."

Program Notes

A performance dialogue between dance and architecture

This is a site-specific contemporary dance performance where the dancer and musician have direct dialogue with the external space.

The audience witnesses how two elements of the space (acoustic and spatial) influence dance choreography and music composition. The performance is partly conceptually structured and partly interactive as the performers adapt to the new environment. The piece explores different perspectives and ways of looking at the spatial architecture through the lens of musical resonance and physical accents. We view the performers as objects articulating the space and see their response to how sound bounces off the surfaces of ceiling and walls, affecting their creations. We see how the performers create resonance and dissonance within the space, with a highly articulated body resembling detailed sculptures and a unique composition that inhabits every corner of the space. Dynamic, abrupt changes occur as the body of the dancer flies through the space, leading the spectators' focus to different corners, angles, columns, and cornices. We experience many layers of sound produced by original string instruments, overwhelming colors of vocal dexterity that change from angel-like soprano to Asian ritualistic mumbling. We see how the body transforms unexpectedly from the pedestrian to highest classical aesthetic.

Prague-New York Effects

Through this international exchange project, Czech and American artists collaborate to develop new works. Each original piece features one dancer and one musician from the Czech Republic and the United States. The goal of the project is to create a cross-cultural exchange of artists coming from different social, cultural, ethnic, and contextual environments and through the art process to produce a performative language based on common learning and mutual understanding.

Developed by the Czech Center in New York and coproduced by Art Frame Akropolis Palace s.r.o., the project is held under the auspices of the Czech ambassador to the United States, Petr Gandalovič, and United States ambassador to the Czech Republic, Andrew Schapiro. Partners include the Fulbright Commission, the New York Philharmonic, the European Union National Institutes for Culture, and others.

Upcoming Events of the Seventy-Fourth Season of The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin Concerts

Inscape

Music by John Harbison, Chen Yi, Asha Srinivasan, and Toru Takemitsu

April 24, Sunday, 3:30

West Building, West Garden Court

PostClassical Ensemble

Music by Daniel Schnyder and Min Xiao-Fen. Presented in honor of Asian Heritage Month

May 1, Sunday, 3:30

West Building, West Garden Court

Oran Etkin, clarinet

“Reimagining Benny Goodman”

Presented in honor of *In Celebration of Paul Mellon*

May 8, Sunday, 3:00, 4:15

West Building, West Garden Court

Ariel Quartet, with Alon Goldstein, piano

Music by Brahms and Mozart. Made possible by the Gottesman Fund in memory of Milton M. Gottesman

May 15, Sunday, 3:30

West Building, West Garden Court

Aphrodite Mitsopoulou, pianist

Music by Chopin, Liszt, Konstantinidis, and Skalkottas. Cosponsored by the Embassy of Greece for the European Month of Culture

May 19, Thursday, 12:30

West Building, West Garden Court

General Information

Admission to the National Gallery of Art and all of its programs is free of charge, except as noted.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

Please be sure that all portable electronic devices are turned off.

Concerts are made possible in part through the generosity of donors to the National Gallery of Art through The Circle. Reserved seating is available in recognition of their support. Please contact the development office at (202) 842-6450 or circle@nga.gov for more information.

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