

PROGRAM NOTE

Twilight Music for Horn, Piano, and Violin

Twilight Music was written directly after my first String Quartet: both pieces move toward an abstract and compact way of working, in reaction to the large orchestral works that precede them. The quartet shows obviously, being outwardly tense and without illusions. The present piece shelters abstract structure origins beneath a warmer exterior.

The horn and the violin have little in common. Any merging must be trompe-l'oreille, and they share material mainly to show how differently they project it. In this piece, the two meet casually at the beginning, and part rather formally at the end. In between they follow the piano into a Presto, which dissolves into the twilight half-tones that named the piece. The third section, an Antiphon, is the crux—the origin of the piece's intervallic character. It is the kind of music I am drawn to, where the surface seems simplest and most familiar, where the piece seems to make no effort, but some purposeful, independent musical argument is at work.

The final section's image of separation grows directly out of the nature of the instruments. This piece was commissioned by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center for performance by David Jolley, James Buswell, and Richard Goode. Such virtuosity as possessed by these artists allowed me to write with reckless subtlety for instruments, which I heard meeting best under cover of dusk.

Program note by the composer, John Harbison

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.

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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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Cover Matta, *Genesis* (detail), 1942, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Burton Tremaine

77TH SEASON OF

CONCERTS

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART | FEBRUARY 3, 2019



PROGRAM

Trio Valtorna

David Jolley, French horn

Ida Kavafian, violin

Gilles Vonsattel, piano

February 3, 2019 | 3:30

West Building, West Garden Court

John Harbison (b. 1938)

Twilight Music for Horn, Piano, and Violin

Con moto, flessibile

Presto

Antiphon: Tempo giusto

Adagio, cantabile

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

Violin Sonata no. 2 in G Major

Allegretto (sol majeur)

Blues. Moderato (la bémol majeur)

Perpetuum mobile. Allegro (sol majeur)

Intermission

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

Horn Trio in E-flat Major, op. 40

Andante

Scherzo (Allegro)

Adagio mesto

Allegro con brio

THE ENSEMBLE

Bringing together the gifts of three internationally recognized artists, Trio Valtorna formed in 2011. After performing together at the Music from Angel Fire festival, renowned violinist Ida Kavafian and French horn player extraordinaire David Jolley decided to continue in collaboration, adding the young pianist Gilles Vonsattel to complete the ensemble. Fred Kirshnit, writing in the *New York Sun*, called Kavafian’s artistry “meaningful and affecting,” while the *New Yorker* praised Jolley’s “richly melancholy horn solos,” and David Weininger in the *Boston Globe* observed the “clarity and light touch” of Gilles Vonsattel. The ensemble offers chamber music par excellence to audiences across the United States. Trio Valtorna’s recent concert highlights include performances with Chamber on the Mountain in Ojai, California, and the Auburn Chamber Music Society.