

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

For the convenience of concertgoers, the Garden Café remains open for light refreshments until 6:00 pm on Sundays.

Music Department
National Gallery of Art
Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC

www.nga.gov

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.

COVER: Jean-Jacques Feuchère, *Dante Meditating on the "Divine Comedy,"* 1843, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of the Christian Humann Foundation



The Seventy-second Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,989th Concert

Great Noise Ensemble

**Armando Bayolo, artistic director and conductor
with**

Cristina Zavalloni, voice; Lindsay Kesselman, voice

Andrew Sauvageau, voice; Jacob Perry Jr., voice

Third Practice, Brian Bartoldus, artistic director

Children's Chorus of Washington, Joan Gregoryk, artistic director

April 6, 2014
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Presented in connection with Andriessen 75, a city-wide celebration of the seventy-fifth birthday of composer Louis Andriessen. More information about the celebration is available at www.andriessen75.com.

Louis Andriessen (b. 1939)

La Commedia (2004–2008)

- I. The City of Dis, or The Ship of Fools
- II. Racconto dall' inferno (Story from Hell)
- III. Lucifer
- IV. The Garden of Earthly Delights
- V. Luce eterna (Eternal Light)

The National Gallery of Art and Great Noise Ensemble extend their thanks to the Atlas Theater and the University of Maryland School of Music for providing rehearsal space for this concert.

The Musicians

GREAT NOISE ENSEMBLE

Formed in 2005 by composer and conductor Armando Bayolo, Great Noise Ensemble performs new works and promotes local talent in contemporary music from the greater Washington, DC area. The ensemble last appeared at the National Gallery in 2010, performing the Washington premiere of Louis Andriessen's *De Materie*. In addition to Andriessen, Great Noise has collaborated with composers John Luther Adams, Joshua Bornfield, Ryan Brown, Carlos Carillo, Andrew Earle Simpson, and Mark Sylvester, among others. The ensemble gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the District of Columbia Commission on the Arts and Humanities in support of its participation in this concert.

ARMANDO BAYOLO

Born in 1973 to Cuban parents in Santurce, Puerto Rico, composer Armando Bayolo began musical studies at age twelve. At sixteen he attended the Interlochen Arts Academy, where he first began the serious study of composition. He holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Yale University, and the University of Michigan. Encompassing a wide variety of genres, including music for solo instruments, voices, chamber orchestra, and full orchestra, his work has been hailed by the *Washington Post* as "radiant and ethereal, full of lush ideas and a kind of fierce grandeur." He has received commissions from the Aspen Music Festival, the Euclid and Degas Quartets, the South Jutland Symphony Orchestra, the Syracuse Society for New Music, and the Western Piedmont Symphony Orchestra.

CRISTINA ZAVALLONI

A native of Bologna, Italy, where she studied at the Conservatorio di Musica Giovan Battista Martini, soprano Cristina Zavalloni has performed as soloist with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, l'Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI (Torino), Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Schoenberg Ensemble. With a repertoire that ranges from Monteverdi to Berio and includes contemporary Italian composers Carlo Boccadoro, Emanuele Casale, Fabrizio Cassol, Paolo Castaldi, and Luca Mosca, she has performed at the Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome, Beijing Concert Hall, Carnegie Hall, Concertgebouw, Lincoln Center, Palau de la Música Catalana, Teatro alla Scala, and Walt Disney Concert Hall, as well as the jazz festivals of Antwerp, London, Montreux, and Umbria. Since their collaboration began in 1993, Louis Andriessen has written five works for Zavalloni: *Passeggiata in tram in America e ritorno*; *La Passione*; *Inanna*; *Letter from Cathy*; and *Racconto dall' inferno*.

With an artistic background that includes modern dance, jazz, and composition as well as bel canto vocal training, Zavalloni is active as a jazz bandleader and creator of programs that involve all of the arts she has studied. Currently under contract with the Italian recording label EGEEA, she has a number of groundbreaking CDs to her credit, including *IDEA* (2006), *Solidago* (2009), and *La donna di cristallo* with Radar Band. She maintains a website at www.cristinazavalloni.it.

LINDSAY KESSELMAN

Hailed by *Fanfare* magazine as having a voice that is “simply gorgeous . . . with a fully loaded palette of tone color,” soprano Lindsay Kesselman is known for her soulful singing and exemplary musicianship. A passionate advocate of contemporary music, she actively collaborates with a diverse array of composers to create and perform unique and dramatic works for the voice. In addition to this project with Louis Andriessen, Kesselman has worked with John Corigliano, Abbie Betinis, Philip Glass, Amy Beth Kirsten, David Lang, Hannah Lash, and Steve Reich. Kesselman’s debut album of

American contemporary music, *If this world could stop*, is due for imminent release on the Bad Wolf Music label. She recently completed an international tour with the Philip Glass Ensemble of Glass’ groundbreaking opera *Einstein on the Beach*, and serves as the resident soprano with the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, with which she sang the premiere of *Falling* by Mathew Rosenblum. Other contemporary ensembles with which she has worked include eighth blackbird, HAVEN, Prometheus Modern, and Third Coast Percussion. A resident of Ann Arbor, Michigan, Kesselman holds degrees in voice performance from Rice and Michigan State universities. She maintains a website at www.lindsaykesselman.com.

ANDREW SAUVAGEAU

Hailed by the *Baltimore Sun* for the shining color in his singing and spoken lines and the spark and nuance of his acting, baritone and actor Andrew Sauvageau enjoys a diverse musical career, embracing song, oratorio, opera and other genres. In addition to his work with Great Noise Ensemble, he has appeared with the Baltimore Vocal Arts Foundation, Bel Cantanti, Chandos Orchestra, New York City Opera, and Saint Petersburg Opera in venues that include the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Kennedy Center, Library of Congress, Lincoln Center, National Gallery of Art, and Washington National Cathedral. His affinity for baroque and twentieth-century vocal music has led to unique collaborations, including Bach oratorios and passions with Helmuth Rilling, baroque opera with Ryan Brown and Opera Lafayette, and twentieth-century American song with several emerging American composers. He served as stage director for the world premiere of Jake Runestad’s one-act opera *The Toll* and is cofounder of hexaCollective, an ensemble that embraces diversity and adaptability in its programming and performers. He maintains a website at www.andrewsauvageau.com.

JACOB PERRY JR.

Singing with Third Practice for the first time in this concert, Jacob Perry Jr. has performed as both a soloist and an ensemble singer with the Countertop Ensemble, Handel Choir of Baltimore, and hexaCollective. A member of the early music vocal ensemble Chantry, he is a tenor soloist at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

THIRD PRACTICE

Named after the musicological term for the late style of composer Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643), Third Practice is a Washington, DC-based chamber vocal ensemble that explores the close connections between today's music and the music of the past. This is the fourth and final concert of the season for the ensemble, having earlier presented programs of twentieth- and twenty-first-century sacred music and love songs by Brahms, Monteverdi, and other composers. In addition to being the assistant conductor of the City Choir of Washington, artistic director Brian Bartoldus is music director at Frederick, Maryland, Presbyterian Church, where in his first year, he founded a new festival choir and instrumental ensemble, began a new performance series benefitting the local homeless shelter, and introduced masterworks for chorus and orchestra as a part of worship.

CHILDREN'S CHORUS OF WASHINGTON

Founded in 1996 by Joan Gregoryk, the Children's Chorus of Washington performs frequently with leading musical organizations in Washington, DC, including the Choral Arts Society, National Symphony Orchestra, and Washington Chorus. In addition to providing exceptional training through its five performing ensembles, the Children's Chorus also has open access programs—PREP CLASS and SING DC—designed to support first-time singers and underserved students in the community. Involving more than 160 young singers between ages nine and eighteen, and representing over ninety public and private schools in the greater DC area, the ensemble has

toured internationally in Italy, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, and China. Acclaimed by professional colleagues throughout the country for her teaching at Chevy Chase Elementary School, Joan Gregoryk has created many exciting performance opportunities for young singers. In addition to preparing the Chevy Chase Elementary School Chorus for performances under conductors Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Erich Kunzel, Erich Leinsdorf, and James Paul, she coached the Chevy Chase Chorus as it prepared for a recording of Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* with Mstislav Rostropovich and the National Symphony Orchestra. The disc was subsequently nominated for a Grammy Award.

Program Notes

A central figure in the international new music scene and widely regarded as the leading composer working in The Netherlands today, Louis Andriessen studied in his native Utrecht with his father, composer Hendrik Andriessen (1892–1981), before continuing his studies with Kees van Baaren (1906–1970) at the Conservatory of The Hague and Luciano Berio (1925–2003) in Milan and Berlin. With a background in jazz and avant-garde music, he takes inspiration from such varied sources as the music of Charles Ives (1874–1954), the art of Piet Mondrian (1872–1944), medieval poetic visions, writings on shipbuilding, and atomic theory. He has tackled complex creative issues, exploring the relationship between music and politics in *De Staat* (The State); the nature of time and velocity in *De Tijd* (Time) and *De Snelheid* (Velocity); and questions of mortality in *Trilogy of the Last Day*. His major work of the mid-1980s, *De Materie* (Matter), received its Washington premiere in 2010 at the National Gallery, when Great Noise performed it under the direction of Armando Bayolo. Other prominent ensembles and musicians who have been drawn to Andriessen's work include Bang on a Can All Stars, Ensemble Modern, and Ensemble InterContemporain, as well as the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Kronos Quartet, London Sinfonietta, Netherlands Chamber Choir, and San Francisco Symphony Orchestra. Louis Andriessen's compositions are published by Boosey & Hawkes.

Various threads of Andriessen's lifelong musical interests are woven together in his *La Commedia*, inspired by Dante's ironic, religio-political epic poem *Commedia*, better known by the name given to it by Boccaccio, *La divina commedia*. Originally conceived as a film opera in collaboration with the American director Hal Hartley, *La Commedia* is less linear than the film operas that the composer created with Peter Greenaway—*Rosa* (1994) and *Writing to Vermeer* (1998). Its stylistic cousin is rather *De Materie* (1984–88), particularly in the non-narrative melding of operatic conventions with symphonic form. Although there is a clear narrative line that runs through

La Commedia, it is not so much a straightforward retelling of Dante's masterpiece as a distilled rumination of its central themes through the lens of the early twenty-first century and Andriessen's own sensibilities.

Part I, *The City of Dis, or The Ship of Fools*, opens with texts taken from the fifteenth-century satirical collection *Das Narrenschiff* (The Ship of Fools) by the German theologian Sebastian Brant (1457–1521), and from the sixteenth-century recruitment text for the Guild of the Blue Barge. During carnival season, that guild, known for its preference for ironic self-expression, would invite citizens from all walks of life to join, provided they lived appropriately sinful lifestyles. The voyage of the Ship of Fools is interrupted by the appearance of Beatrice, Dante's idealized beloved and guide, who, in Canto 2 of Dante's *Inferno*, entreats the poet, Virgil, to guide Dante on his way through the underworld and up to heaven. In Andriessen's narrative, Beatrice's appeals give way to descriptions of Dante's journey with Virgil across the river Styx, and the Ship of Fools is implied to be Charon's barge. As the voyagers approach the shores of hell, the iron walls of the City of Dis come into view, surrounded by eternal flames. Dante comes to the conclusion that Beatrice must have been sent from heaven.

In Part II, *Racconto dall' inferno* (Story from Hell), Dante—whose identity throughout Andriessen's *La Commedia* is flexible and is now played by a woman—continues his/her journey through the underworld. Beginning with an incredibly powerful depiction of the descent into the Malebolge of the eighth circle of hell, this part of the story concerns itself with several infamous comic passages in Cantos 21 and 22 of *Inferno*, in which Dante and Virgil are guided by ten demons, led by the untrustworthy Malacoda. Dante indulges in some scatology in these passages, and Andriessen sets them to music of particularly humorous implications.

In Part III, *Lucifer*, Dante, and Virgil arrive in the ninth circle of hell and confront the horrifying figure of Lucifer himself, who is given voice through a text from the writings of the seventeenth-century Dutch playwright Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679). Van den Vondel's Lucifer is a Miltonian figure, jealous of God's love for humanity and desirous of revenge for being consigned to the depths of hell.

In Part IV, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, Dante and Virgil emerge, at last, from hell to see once more the stars on the shores of purgatory. Here, the music takes a much lighter tone, full of jazz inflections and quotations from Debussy and others. At the shore, Dante meets his friend, the poet Cassella, who, in the second canto of *Purgatorio*, is described as the composer of a musical setting of verses from Dante's *Convivio*. Andriessen sets this strikingly musical passage of *La divina commedia* with exquisite tenderness and simple beauty, as Dante (once again a man) briefly joins Casella in a duet as he recognizes his long-deceased friend. His reverie is abruptly interrupted by two angels chasing a snake—perhaps the snake that tempted Eve—through the garden of purgatory.

For the staged version of *La Commedia*, Andriessen and Hartley developed a story that would take place on film, in tandem with the epic tale depicted on stage. In the film, after the incident with the two angels and the snake, Dante is hit by a car and dies, thus gaining entry to Paradise. It is here, at Dante's death, that all irony falls from *La Commedia*. The chorus enters, singing verses from the *Song of Songs*—alluded to in Canto 30 of *Purgatorio*—in some of the most heartfelt, beautiful music Andriessen has ever written. These passages are especially touching in light of his dedication of *La Commedia* to his first wife, Jeannette Yanikian, who died in 2008, the year of the completion and premiere of the work.

In Part V, *Luce eterna*, a light that takes the form of music from an imperceptible source welcomes Dante into Paradise. A children's chorus sings a brief Requiem and reintroduces the angelic Beatrice, who sings of the eternal light of love. Dante, in her feminine voice, enters with her own ecstatic meditation of the music of the spheres, only to be rudely interrupted by the cranky crusader knight Cacciaguida (one of the ancestors whom Dante meets in cantos 15-17 of *Paradiso*). Cacciaguida complains of the decadence of the contemporary Florentines, accompanied by a grungy jazz ensemble. His cantankerous contemplation does not last long, however, and

the scene is once more engulfed in the beautiful music of the spheres. The sweet everlasting light—*Luce eterna*—that conquers every sorrow surrounds Dante and Beatrice, and bathes them in the ecstasy of eternal love...

... until the impudent children return with an admonition: if you do not get these notes on life and death, then you won't get the last judgment—never, ever. Andriessen leaves it to children to deliver the final admonition to take ourselves and our meditations seriously, particularly those on life and death.

Program notes by Armando Bayolo

Biography of Louis Andriessen provided by Boosey & Hawkes. Used by permission