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**The Metropolis Ensemble Presents its Spring Concert**  
**THERE AND BACK AGAIN**

*Featuring the US Premiere of Avner Dorman's "Mandolin Concerto"*

New York, NY--- The Metropolis Ensemble, New York's premier professional chamber orchestra dedicated to emerging a new generation of composers and performers, hosts its second annual Spring concert Thursday, May 24<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30pm at the Lower East Side's Angel Orensanz Center for the Arts (172 Norfolk Street). With the support of the Smithsonian Magazine, *There and Back Again* honors and acknowledges music inspired by composers' respective memories of past experiences and musical journeys. The Metropolis Ensemble, along with special guest artists Avi Avital (mandolin) and Tibi Cziger (clarinet), will perform a range of musical styles including the U.S. premiere of Avner Dorman's *Mandolin Concerto*, Bartok's *Rumanian Folk Dances*, arranged for mandolin and string ensemble, Osvaldo Golijov's mystical quintet *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*, and Shostakovich's *Chamber Symphony op. 110a*.

Andrew Cyr, founding Artistic Director and Conductor of The Metropolis Ensemble, says, "These four distinct composers demonstrate, through the musical evocation of memory and place, journeys to other times, experiences, and cultures. The cyclical structures found in most of the program's works illustrate departure, experience, and the final return home. That combined with the opportunity to work with Avner Dorman, an important new voice, on his extraordinary piece *Mandolin Concerto*, makes this program a personal highlight of our season." In addition to special guest artists Avi Avital and Tibi Cziger, The Metropolis Ensemble is made up of "some of the world's top leading young musicians" including Lily Francis (violin), Michal Korman (cello), Eric Nowlin (viola), and Arnaud Sussmann (violin).

Israeli composer Avner Dorman presents the U.S. premiere of his *Mandolin Concerto* for mandolinist Avi Avital and string ensemble. As part of the 2006 Nessiah Festival, it premiered with the Rostav State Theater Orchestra to much praise. According to Dorman, the diverse sonic and expressive possibilities of the mandolin influenced the overall concerto.



“The concerto’s main conflicts are between sounds and silence. Similarly, the mandolin’s tremolo- the rapid repetition of notes- embodies both motion and stasis.”

Considered one of the greatest composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Béla Bartok is one of the founders of the field of ethnomusicology, the study and ethnography of folk music. After World War I, he was particularly drawn to the Rumanian folk traditions and the variety and colors of instruments used in Rumanian music. *Rumanian Folk Dances*, a set of six Rumanian dances, was written in 1915, arranged for violin and piano the next year, and for salon orchestra in 1917. In a new arrangement by Avi Avital, the mandolin will provide the solo voices with a string orchestra accompaniment.

Also on the program are two works influenced by the Jewish people; *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* and *Chamber Symphony op. 100a*. Fittingly, the Angel Orensanz Foundation Center for the Arts was designed as a synagogue in 1894- a hauntingly ideal atmosphere that amplifies the lyricism of these pieces. Osvaldo Golijov’s *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* for string quartet and clarinets serves as an homage to Isaac the Blind, the great kabbalist rabbi of Provence. The three movements sound as if written in three of the different languages spoken by the Jewish people throughout their history. “I hear the prelude and first movement, the most ancient, in Arameic; the second movement is in Yiddish, the rich and fragile language of a long exile; the third movement and postlude are in sacred Hebrew,” explains Golijov. Dmitri Shostakovich’s *Chamber Symphony op. 100a*, is a musical and autobiographical suicide note. (However deep his despair, Shostakovich did not commit suicide- he died fifteen years later of natural causes.) In addition to featuring quotes from many of his earlier works and a Jewish melody and a folk song, ‘Languishing in Prison’, whose significance needs no explanation, Shostakovich included five uninterrupted emotional movements resulting from his learning of the complete devastation of the city of Dresden, Germany in 1945; this work is at the very least an extremely personal outcry against war.



**The Metropolis Ensemble** is dedicated to building artistic connections between composer, performer, and audiences in settings that will inspire a new generation of music lovers. Founded in 2005 by Artistic Director/Conductor Andrew Cyr, The Metropolis Ensemble is a nonprofit professional chamber orchestra bringing together the talents of an emerging generation of performers who have already begun to reshape the sound and feel of music making in New York. [www.metropolisensemble.org](http://www.metropolisensemble.org)

**Avi Avital**, a 27-year old Israeli mandolinist, was recently awarded the precious "Doris and Mori Arkin Prize for Mandolin, the Aviv Competitions 2007". He has played as a soloist with orchestras and Baroque ensembles, including the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, the Israeli Chamber Orchestra in Tel Aviv, The Orchestra Cantelli di Milano, the Baroque Ensembles Arion and Fantazyas (Italy), the New Israeli Opera, the Israel Camerata Jerusalem, Orchestra "I Pomeriggi Musicali" (Italy), the Beer-Sheva Symphonietta, and the Chamber Orchestra of the Jerusalem Music Academy. Avital is a member of traditional and contemporary chamber ensembles with whom he recorded many albums. Those include the Kerman Mandolin Quartet, *Three Plucked Strings* (mandolin, guitar and harpsichord), Kaprizma Ensemble (Israel), Dissonanzen Ensemble (Italy) and David Orlovsky's Klezmerim Quartet (Germany). [www.aviavital.com](http://www.aviavital.com)

**Tibi Cziger**, cited by the Peninsula Review as "an artist of the highest order," was born in Israel in 1981. In 2006-7 he became the first clarinetist to ever be admitted to the prestigious Artist Diploma program at The Juilliard School. In May 2007 Mr. Cziger will make his European solo debut with the Tivoli Festival Orchestra in Copenhagen, Denmark. Past solo appearances include the Israel Chamber Orchestra and The Israel Young Philharmonic. He is the founder of the Gropius ensemble and has collaborated with Kaprizma, SEM, Link and Argento Ensembles among others.

**Ticket Information:**

Tickets \$20. For tickets, call the Metropolis Ensemble at 1.800.838.3006 or visit [www.metropolisensemble.org](http://www.metropolisensemble.org).

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