

Metropolis Ensemble

PRESENTS

GROANBOX

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28 *at* 7:30PM

↳ POISSON ROUGE, NEW YORK CITY

ANDREW CYR

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

-Evening Program-

Groanbox

Kicking Up Dust* (World Premiere)

Michael Ward-Bergeman

For Freedom Boot and Chamber Orchestra
Featuring Paul Clifford on Freedom Boot and
the Metropolis Ensemble

Gnarly Buttons

John Adams

For Clarinet and Small Orchestra
Featuring Tibi Cziger on Clarinet and
the Metropolis Ensemble

- 1. *The Perilous Shore***
- 2. *Hoedown (Mad Cow)***
- 3. *Put Your Loving Arms Around Me***

- *Intermission* -

Groanbox* (World Premiere)

David Bruce

For Accordion, Roots Band, and Chamber Orchestra
Featuring Michael Ward-Bergeman on Accordion,
The Groanbox Boys, and the Metropolis Ensemble

- 1. *Goat Train***
- 2. *Cajun Races***
- 3. *Satie's Scooter***
- 4. *Redhook Revival Rival***

Selections from Gran Bwa

worldwide cd release

Performance of The Groanbox Boys newest album,
Featuring Paul Clifford, Cory Seznec, and Michael Ward-Bergeman

**Groanbox and Kicking Up Dust are commissions from the Metropolis Ensemble. This concert is made possible by major support from the Argosy Foundation's Contemporary Music Fund. Smithsonian Magazine is a proud supporter of Metropolis Ensemble.*

WELCOME

Notes from Metropolis Ensemble's Artistic Director, Andrew Cyr

This concert evolved from our collaboration with London-based composer David Bruce, when he orchestrated a piece by Erik Satie for one of our concerts last spring. It was amply evident how masterful an orchestrator he was. We definitely wanted to work together again and spent months throwing ideas about a new commission, narrowing it down to a concerto of some kind. I really wanted the concerto to be for a unique instrument, not one usually found in concert halls. Then, independently of our work together, David met Michael Ward-Bergeman, the accordionist for the Groanbox Boys, and in addition to finding our solo instrument (the accordion!) we had the intriguing idea of inviting his band to play on the same program.

The accordion concerto, though, quickly evolved to something other than just a concert for accordion. Since the John Adams piece I wanted to perform, *Gnarly Buttons*, included banjo, and since there was a banjo player in the band, Cory Seznec, why not use banjo in the concerto? A similar logic operated when Michael began writing a piece for Paul Clifford, the band's percussionist – why not employ his talents in the concerto, too? We quickly realized that the concerto was really turning into a piece for chamber orchestra and “roots” trio. We decided to place this new piece on the heels of the Adams work with the intention to stylistically create a bridge between this piece, inspired by American folk traditions, and a solo set by the Groanbox Boys.

A few words about the Adams: *Gnarly Buttons* is surely one of his most popular works and, in many ways, the most populist. Highly folk derived, it seemed the ideal counterpoint for both the band and David's new creation. And Adams is surely having his moment at present. His latest opera, *Doctor Atomic*, recently received its New York premiere at the Metropolitan Opera, and his works are being played all around town in a sort of mini festival. Our performance of *Gnarly Buttons* is our little contribution to the celebration of the man who is considered one of American's foremost living composers.

The setting of *Le Poisson Rouge* is the perfect backdrop for this heavily folk-influenced music, a venue small enough to experience the visceral sound of music-making and the intimacy that is such an important aspect of the relationship between performer and audience. And one so far removed from the traditional concert hall that the experience will only be heightened by the sound of tapping feet or clinking glasses. So I invite you to relax, have a drink, and enjoy the music. Stay after and celebrate this exciting evening with the Metropolis Ensemble and the Groanbox Boys.

PROGRAM NOTES

by David Bruce, Composer

We all love to pigeon-hole; we are defined and often define ourselves as a “classical composer” or a “folk musician.” But the truth is, as Alban Berg told a certain young American popular composer, when the latter hesitated to perform his songs in front of the great Austrian, “Mr. Gershwin, music is music,” and in reality the vast majority of musicians cross back and forth over these artificial dividing lines of style several times a day. No one more so than Michael Ward-Bergeman, accordionist with the Groanbox Boys, who last year went literally overnight from foot-stomping with the Boys in a Southern English pub, to joining Yo-Yo Ma onstage for a new concerto with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. The great thing about Michael is he is one of the hardest people to pigeon-hole I know.

I first met Michael on the Dawn Upshaw/Osvaldo Golijov workshops for composers and singers at Carnegie Hall. He was horrified to see me, as nobody had told him we were to share a hotel room during the residency. I barged in and caught him watching a corny old Western film. Pizza boxes and large quantities of accordion equipment were scattered on the floor. Despite, or perhaps

because of being flung together at such close quarters, we hit it off, and discussion soon led on to a number of mutual musical interests. Michael introduced me to his self-built instrument, the lagerphone, a percussion instrument made from a large wooden pole, fixed with beer bottle tops (hence the 'lager') along its length and a boot to stomp with at the base. This instrument forms the centre-piece of the Groanbox Boys performance, and his description of it inspired me to build my own, which I then incorporated into the piece I wrote for the workshops, *Piosenki*.

Shortly before this I had come across a program the Metropolis Ensemble were putting together, featuring a piece of Osvaldo Golijov's (my mentor on the Carnegie program), together with a new piece for one of my favourite instruments, the mandolin. The colorful program caught my eye and I fired off an invite to Andrew Cyr, Metropolis Ensemble's artistic director and conductor, inviting him to the premiere of *Piosenki*. Andrew came and a second musical and personal friendship was soon flourishing - it was a good first trip to NYC! For the Ensemble's April 2008 concert, I made an arrangement of Satie's *Sports et Divertissements* for the group. I was stunned and thrilled by the quality of the musicianship the ensemble brought to my little arrangement.

In the intervening year or so, Groanbox Boys concerts had become a regular feature of my life. For me, what makes them special, apart from their high-energy, riotous stage presence, is the sheer quality of their musicianship. Cory has to be one of the finest banjo, guitar and harmonica players I've ever heard and Michael somehow combines bass line, chords, foot-stomping percussion, and an earthy soulful voice, all in perfect synchrony. More recently Paul Clifford has added his own perfectly eccentric and eclectic selection of percussion into the mix, and it now seems hard to imagine them without him.

So a voice entered my head: what would happen if we mixed the Groanbox Boys with the amazing players from the Metropolis Ensemble? I mentioned the thought to Andrew and he jumped at the idea. We would create a program inspired by American folk music, which, in that terrible phrase, cross over the boundaries between the classical world and the folk world.

It seemed a great idea to ask Michael, who is also a composer (you see what I mean about the pigeon-holes), to write a piece for lagerphone and ensemble, a "lagerphone concerto" if you will. That is the piece that literally kicks off tonight's concert, the evocatively-titled *Kicking up Dust*. I am certain Michael's piece will, like a good opera overture, provide a sense of the scale for the evening ahead, and also hints of what is to come. Michael tells me the piece he has written was inspired by the African-American Fife and Drum tradition.

Next comes John Adams's *Gnarly Buttons*. Adams is of course one of America's leading composers, and one of the most performed, but in this piece he draws particularly heavily on American folk music, even featuring a part for banjo. It is an intricate and unusual work that ranges from wild, dance-like figures through to tranquil serenity at the end. Its three movements are, Adams says "based on a 'forgery' or imagined musical model:

The Perilous Shore - A trope on a Protestant shape-note hymn found in a 19th century volume, *The Footsteps of Jesus*. The melodic line is twisted and embellished from the start, appearing first in monody and eventually providing both micro and macro material for the ensuing musical structures,

Hoe-down (Mad Cow) - Normally associated with horses this version of the traditional Western hoe-down takes the perspective of the other animal.

Put Your Loving Arms around Me - A simple song, quiet and tender up front, "gnarled and crabbed at the end."

Andrew Cyr then asked me to write the piece that would 'bridge the gap' between the Adams piece and The Groanbox Boys performance, a piece which would plunge itself even more thoroughly in the folk tradition than the Adams piece. In truth, of course, the gap is quite small already. Adams

famously said that, "Whenever serious art loses track of its roots in the vernacular, then it begins to atrophy," and he, more than most contemporary classical composers, has led the fight to embrace that vernacular within his music. On the other side of the pigeon-holing, a Groanbox Boys track itself is very much a 'composed' work of art. For all the improvisation and free spirit, it is immediately apparent from the sophisticated orchestration and the range of influence their music incorporates that this is music that has a lot of thought behind it.

As a composer whose music has long incorporated folk elements, it has been an incredibly exciting challenge to write a piece for these two groups of outstanding musicians. I titled my piece simply *Groanbox*, (itself an old American term for the accordion), and wrote a piece which is not at all like a traditional 'concerto', but rather a piece in which the two groups merge as one, along with the two styles of music. I suppose it's a sort of imaginary folk-music I'm writing, played by the largest and most virtuoso village band you've ever seen.

The four movements of my piece are as follows:

Goat Train - I recently heard musicians from the Polish Theatre company Piesn KozBa ("The Song of the Goat" which interestingly is apparently is the origin of the word 'tragedy') play a bagpipe-like instrument which was literally shaped like a goat. This movement mixes bagpipe-like melodies with a banjo-driven, energetic train-ride groove. *Goat Train* just seemed to make sense as a title.

Cajun Races - The accordion features prominently in most Cajun music and for this comically over-exuberant movement I found myself stuck with the surreal image of wheelbarrow race that careers to the brink of collapse.

Satie's Scooter - Another slightly surreal influence, the quirky, clunky, 'broken machine' movement of this piece was inspired by a character called Po from the BBC children's television program Teletubbies, who pushes around a somewhat mournful sounding scooter, squeaking and clanking as it goes. The accordion line that emerged made me think of the French composer scooting sadly along. At the center of the piece however, a radiant violin line unexpectedly blooms, before dying back once again.

Redhook Revival Rival - *Redhook Revival* is a song by the Groanbox Boys which has a quite modern sounding funk-groove. I took it as my mission in this movement to out-funk them. I am sure I won't succeed, but I felt it was important to try.

The concert will end with a performance from the Groanbox Boys, playing selections from their new album, *Gran Bwa*, alongside some of their best earlier work including, I hope, *Redhook Revival* itself - please compare and contrast at leisure.

We all hope you have a great evening, and that the concert will confirm to you the simple truth that there are no barriers to break down, there is no dividing line. There is just music.

NOTES ON KICKING UP DUST

by Michael Ward-Bergeman, Composer

Kicking up Dust is a concerto for Freedom Boot and ensemble. The word concerto comes from the root verb *concertare* and implies both "to dispute" (Latin) and "to agree" (Italian). Opposing forces were at work on many levels while composing this piece. The fife and drum music that has inspired this concerto has been a tool of warfare for centuries, to rally soldiers to action and send signals to them while they were at camp and on the battlefield. How many soldiers have been killed with the sound of the fife and drum ringing in their ears? Yet, fife and drum music has also been used to entertain, communicate, inspire, and celebrate life at picnics, barbecues and front porch parties. We kick up dust on our porch boards, and on the battlefield. The American fife and

drum tradition can be traced back through the slave trade to West Africa. It is believed to have entered the United States through Georgia and on to Mississippi, where Otha Turner, one of the last great masters of the fife and drum blues tradition, lived until his death in 2003. It also leads back to the rise of the modern army in 16th century Europe, and further back still to the 14th century origins of the Janissary Army of the Turkish Empire. Instruments similar to the Freedom Boot have been used to lead conquering armies through captured territories to further terrorize the defeated, and for division and unit heraldry in parades. The instrument has its roots in the Central Asian shaman's staff and as a time keeper in folk musics from around the world.

The idea for the Groanbox Freedom Boot was inspired by a percussionist accompanying a small group of English Morris Dancers that I saw in the fall of 2005. She was stomping a small broom handle with a few bottle tops nailed into it and a baby's boot on the bottom. Groanbox built a larger version utilizing a wooden dowel, 420 Freedom Organic Lager bottle tops, an old boot, ghungroo and an ever accumulating pile of mojo. The Freedom Boot is adorned with gifts and mementos from our extensive travels. It is our time keeper, both musically and spiritually.

GRAN BWA

A New Album from The Groanbox Boys

The Groanbox Boys are the UK-based trio, Cory Seznec, Michael Ward-Bergeman, and Paul Clifford. The Groanbox sound is a unique blend of roots music from around the world performed on accordion, acoustic guitar, banjo, harmonica, and myriad pieces of percussion, including a calabash (African gourd), yew tree log, and the home-made Freedom Boot.



Their newest album, *Gran Bwa*, is named after the Haitian Vodou loa (spirit) of the woods. Creole for great wood (from the French grand bois), Gran Bwa is the great spirit who resides deep in the woods and is associated with the gateway between the spirit world and the living world, the management of time, and medicinal healing.

All of these themes make appearances in this current album, which was recorded by Groanbox sound designer Yann Seznec on one late May night in Edinburgh at the tail end of an intense, soul-searching tour of the UK. Both the music and the vocals were inspired by the plethora of beautiful and bizarre moments experienced on the road. The oldest yew tree in the world, a giant dam with large echo chambers, a mythical elm tree in a forest of pines, the making of a talisman, deer bones, rabbit skulls, caravans, chicken feet, gourds, broken down vans, a Senegalese drum master, lochs and bens, cowboy coffee, a Scottish fiddler, and the dozens of different Groanbox alter-egos are just some of the seeds that helped give life to this album.

groanboxboys.com

MEET THE PERFORMERS

Paul Clifford, Percussion

Paul is a skilled drummer and multi-instrumentalist with a gift for improvisation. A one-time recording and touring drummer for the Canadiana band (Blue Horse, Chinatown), he is equally at home composing a song on the spot for a cheering audience as he is on a festival's main stage. Paul has played professionally in jazz, folk, blues, country, rock and latin bands; worked as a percussionist, composer and actor and travelled widely to keep his music fresh. Though formally beginning percussion studies in Malsapina Jazz College (Vancouver Island), he continued with Bata Folkloric in Havana, Cuba and during pilgrimages to



New Orleans. With added study at the Banff centre for the Arts, participating in AfroCubanismo 1997.

Following intensive touring, Paul switched gears and rented an old house in the middle of the Canadian prairies to record a collection of song-stories. Rootballs showcases wonderfully strange sounds and has caused certain radio presenters to declare him totally original, and mad.

For the past while Paul has divided his time between Europe and Canada, busking the streets from Switzerland to England with a tiny custom drum kit, recording with Blue Rodeo's Bob Egan, driving a taxi (car no.22) through Christmas blizzards and performing with many "talented and pleasantly twisted souls" in southeast England. Mr Mark Hewins, Mel Wallace, Open Harp Surgery, Bob Hamm, just to name a few... Jack Pound... and now in the The Groanbox Boys.

During that period, tracks from Rootballs have been featured on CBC national radio (*Richardson's Roundup*), and was featured and interviewed on Simon Evans' show on BBC Kent. *Winter Molestos* was recently aired on BBC Southern Counties with great reviews. Spirit FM from Brighton has aired some of Paul's music on "The Roots Around The World" show, with Mark Ringwood, and local Canadian radio; The Peak FM in Ontario. You can also hear his music being streamed on Rootsmusiccanada.com, and newmusiccanada.com (CBC3), both CBC internet radio stations. He has also completed *Eachend*, a new CD unfolding some of human and mother natures' obscurities. Guests include chickens, sheep and tractors; more of a sound-scape of rural England and beyond.

Paul now lives in Kent and can be heard giving the groove to gritty blues ensembles or sneaking African rhythms into English folk dances and forever 4tracking. He is also busy forming a long-awaited theatrical tinged band. Swampy tuba player wanted!

Cory Seznec, Acoustic Guitar, Banjo, Harmonica

Corentin "Cory" Seznec is a Franco-American musician born in France and raised both in Connecticut and on a family farm in Annapolis, Maryland. As a teenager, he discovered Mississippi John Hurt, Big Bill Broonzy, and Doc Watson records among his parents' dusty collection in the attic of their house, and it was then that a passion for pre-war blues, jazz, string and jug band music was born.



Meanwhile, a multicultural household, extensive travels and musical encounters, and a passion for history exposed Cory to sounds from around the world, helping him to develop his own distinct style that reflects his broad interests. Some of his most memorable experiences in music include performing on Mississippi John Hurt's front porch in Mississippi and in a 13th century monastery in France.

Cory received a masters degree in history from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and has a BA in history from John Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. In February 2007, Cory was selected to be the recipient of a 2007 Maryland State Arts Council Award for Music Composition.

Michael Ward-Bergeman, Accordion

Michael Ward-Bergeman is a passionate performer, songwriter and composer. His sensitive and creative approach to music making has led to performances and collaborations with world-class musicians and composers from across a wide range of genres.

Michael aims to remain faithful to the spirit that unites many of the world's



richest music traditions while continuing to develop his own unique voice. On the accordion, he has created innovative performance techniques that work in harmony with his inspired use of 21st century music technology. His vision has reached its culmination in the hyper-accordion, an acoustic accordion with extended range and expressive capabilities. Michael has enjoyed a close friendship and working relationship with composer Osvaldo Golijov over the past decade. His work with the hyper-accordion has been featured in many of Golijov's compositions, including the Grammy nominated *Ayre* written for soprano Dawn Upshaw, *Tekyah* written for BBC 2's *Holocaust - A Music Memorial Film from Auschwitz*, *Azul*, a cello concerto written for Yo-Yo Ma, and on the soundtrack to Francis Ford Coppola's *Youth Without Youth*.

In April 2007, Michael premiered his composition *Three Roads*, featuring vocalist Christina Courtin, at Carnegie Hall. He is a founding member of the American Roots music trio Groanbox Boys. They have released three recordings and toured extensively throughout the UK, to much critical acclaim. In January 2009, the group will collaborate with composer David Bruce and New York City's Metropolis Ensemble on a program to include an accordion concerto written by Bruce for Ward-Bergeman, a new work for Freedom Boot and ensemble written by Ward-Bergeman and a full set of original music by Groanbox Boys. Michael is committed to sharing his music making with as wide an audience as possible. To this end, he has performed in pubs, bars, hospitals, nursing homes, schools, metro stations, village halls, churches, festivals, concert venues, and on street corners throughout the world. He is a graduate of Berklee College of Music and currently resides in London, UK.

Tibi Cziger, Clarinet

"Cziger's playing this evening was truly magical and hypnotic. It was the kind of playing that was so involving it seemed to cause time to stand still" (Peninsula Reviews). "Cziger gave a beautifully paced and colorful performance..." (Washington Post). In 2006 Clarinetist Tibi Cziger became the first clarinetist ever admitted to the prestigious Artist Diploma program at The Juilliard School. He is also the artistic director and founder of the Israeli Chamber Project, an initiative bringing young outstanding Israeli musicians together for chamber music projects in Israel and the United States. Mr. Cziger is a frequent recitalist and soloist and enjoys exploring new repertoire for the clarinet, including his own arrangements to works originally not for the clarinet. Solo appearances include concerti with the Tivoli Symphony Orchestra in Copenhagen, the Israel Chamber Orchestra, and The Israel young Philharmonic, where he was the principal clarinetist 2000-2002. Mr. Cziger has performed as guest principal clarinetist with the Bergen Philharmonic (Norway), as substitute clarinetist with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and has collaborated with the Eden and iPalpiti chamber ensembles, and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra in New York.



METROPOLIS ENSEMBLE MEMBERS IN GROANBOX

Arnaud Sussmann, Violin/Concertmaster

Violinist Arnaud Sussmann, a multi-faceted and compelling artist, has won high praise from both critics and audiences. This season he leads the Suedama Ensemble at the 92nd Street Y, performs with the Metropolis Ensemble at the Le Poisson Rouge and returns to the Metropolitan Museum for a chamber music concert with Itzhak Perlman.



He has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, American Symphony Orchestra, the Cannes Orchestra, Nice Orchestra, Monaco Chamber Orchestra, the Orchestre des Pays de la Loire, and the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, and has given recitals in New York, Memphis, Chicago, Panama City, San Salvador, Paris, and St. Petersburg. Last season he

appeared with the New York Philharmonic and Hudson Valley Orchestra, performed at the Metropolitan and Isabella Stewart Gardner museums, and played recitals in Sarasota and New York. He is the winner of several international competitions, including the Italian Andrea Postacchini Competition, the French Vatelot/Rampal International Competition, and a New York Virtuosi concert series grant that resulted in a live broadcast on WQXR's Young Artists Showcase. He has recently recorded works of Beethoven and Dvořák with CMS artistic directors David Finckel and Wu Han, and Schubert Trout Quintet with Menahem Pressler and Gary Hoffman. Mr. Sussmann's past festival appearances include Music@Menlo, Strings in the Mountains, Giverny Music Festival, San Miguel de Allende (Mexico), Caramoor Rising Stars, Ravinia, Tanglewood, and the Perlman Music Program. He holds a bachelor's and master's degree from The Juilliard School, where he studied with Itzhak Perlman. Mr. Sussmann is a member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center Two program.

Frank Huang, Violin

Since winning the first prize of the 2003 Walter W. Naumburg Foundation's Violin Competition and the 2000 Hannover International Violin Competition, Frank Huang has developed a major career as a violin virtuoso. At the age of eleven, he performed with the Houston Symphony Orchestra in a nationally broadcast concert and has since performed with orchestras throughout the world, including the Cleveland Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony, NDR-Radio Philharmonic Orchestra of Hannover, Amadeus Chamber Orchestra and the Genoa Orchestra.



He has performed on NPR's *Performance Today*, *Good Morning America* and CNN's *American Morning* with Paula Zahn. Mr. Huang's first commercial recording, comprised of Fantasies by Schubert, Ernst, Schoenberg and Waxman, was released to critical acclaim on Naxos in the fall of 2003.

Maurycy Banaszek, Viola

Maurycy Banaszek was born in Warsaw, Poland. He has performed at the Marlboro, Seattle, Santa Fe, Aldeburgh, Moritzburg, Mozart, Kingston, Martha's Vineyard, Warsaw Autumn festivals. He regularly tours with the Musicians from Marlboro and appears at the Barge Music in New York.



As a founding member of The Elsner String Quartet he has played in such prestigious venues as the Carnegie Hall in New York, Wigmore Hall in London, Gewandhaus in Leipzig, among others. In August 1998 he was invited by the members of the legendary Amadeus String Quartet to perform at the Amadeus Quartet 50th Anniversary Gala Concert in London.

Dane Johansen, Cello

As the winner of The Juilliard School's Concerto Competition, Dane Johansen recently appeared as a soloist under James Levine at Lincoln Center, performing Elliott Carter's Cello Concerto. Other recent engagements include solo appearances with the Houston Symphony following his prize-winning performance in the 2007 Ima Hogg Competition.



He has appeared as orchestral soloist and in recital throughout the United States and Europe, notably in Benaroya Hall in Seattle, and at The Sibelius Academy in Finland. Dane has been invited to prestigious festivals internationally, including The Marlboro Music Festival, The Steans Institute for Young Artists at Ravinia, Musique de Chambre à Giverny and the Seattle Chamber Music Festival, where he was featured as an Emerging Artist.

At the age of 16, Dane was invited to the Young Artist Program at the Cleveland Institute of Music as a student of Richard Aaron.

While in Cleveland, Dane won first prizes in the CIM Concerto Competition, and the Cleveland Cello Society Competition. He continued his studies at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris with Michel Strauss and is currently a student of Joel Krosnick and Darrett Adkins at The Juilliard School. Dane is also privileged to study privately with legendary cellist, Bernard Greenhouse. He was recently invited to perform at the 2007 Kronberg Cello Festival in memory of Mstislav Rostropovich.

Kris Saebo, Bass

Bassist Kris Saebo is a soloist, bass guitarist, chamber musician, and teaching artist. He most recently finished a two year residency playing chamber music and teaching with The Academy—a program of Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, and The Weill Music Institute.



Kris performs regularly with The Chris Norman Ensemble, Ensemble ACJW, SONYC, and Grammy Award-Winner Paul Halley. As a member of I Palpiti, the chamber orchestra of Young Artists International, he toured Europe, North America and the Middle East. He has also performed contemporary music with such groups as Alarm Will Sound, Argento Chamber Ensemble, Ikarus Chamber Players, and Anechoic Chamber Ensemble.

Kristoffer is in Weill Music Institute's Teaching Artist Collaborative program. He also teaches bass in Manhattan at Louis Brandeis High School. Mr. Saebo received his Master and Bachelor of Music Degrees from the Juilliard School: in 2006 as a student of Orin O'Brien and in 2004 as a student of Homer Mensch.

Satoshi Okamoto, Bass

Satoshi Okamoto is a double bassist of the New York Philharmonic since 2003. Prior to that he was a member of New York City Ballet Orchestra and an assistant principal double bassist in San Antonio Symphony.



He received his master's degree from the Juilliard School and bachelor's degree from Tokyo University of Fine Arts.

Lance Suzuki, Flute

Lance Suzuki has been described as “an unusually passionate flutist who captivates an audience” by the *New York Concert Review*. The *Los Angeles Times* has called his playing “musically poised” and “cool in sound” and the *New York Times* has deemed his collaborations “the evening's most compelling offerings.” Recent highlights include chamber music performances in Weill and Merkin Halls, at the 92nd StY, The Stone, live on National Public Radio's Performance Today, and at the Marlboro Music Festival.



Mr. Suzuki has collaborated with many leading artists including flutists Paula Robison and Marina Piccinini, pianists Gilbert Kalish and Lang Lang, cellist David Soyer, and principal wind players from many major US orchestras.

He has also premiered new works by Japanese composer Ayaka Nishina, and through Carnegie Hall Professional Training Workshops led by Dawn Upshaw, Osvaldo Golijov, and John Harbison.

James Austin Smith, Oboe/English Horn

An active chamber musician, new music proponent and orchestral oboist, James Austin Smith is a member of New York-based Sospiro Winds and a busy performer in and around New York.



As a chamber musician, Mr. Smith enjoys a busy concert schedule around the United States with Sospiro Winds. Silver Medal winners at the 2007 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, the wind quintet will make its Carnegie Hall debut this season and has been invited to travel to Osaka, Japan to compete in the Osaka Chamber Music Competition. Mr. Smith performs frequently as a chamber musician at Yale and will attend the Marlboro Music Festival this summer.

Adrian Morejon, Bassoon

Originally from Miami, Florida, Adrian Morejon completed his studies at the Yale School of Music, receiving both a Master in Music and an Artist Diploma while studying with Frank Morelli. Prior to this, he was a student of bassoonist Bernard Garfield and harpsichordist Lionel Party at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he received his Bachelor of Music in Bassoon and a Diploma in Harpsichord. Adrian has been coprincipal bassoonist of the IRIS Chamber Orchestra since 2002. Since 2004, Adrian has been a founding member of Sospiro Winds, an award-winning wind quintet who recently won the Silver Prize at Fischhoff.



Since moving to New York in 2006, he has joined the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, the Second Instrumental Unit, the Matrix Music Collaborators, and the Eupraxia Music and Arts Collective. Adrian has performed with such orchestras as the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, the Haddonfield Symphony and the Taipei Symphony Orchestra

Alana Vegter, French Horn

A native of Chicago, Horn Player Alana Vegter is a recent graduate of The Juilliard School in New York where she currently resides and actively performs. Alana is a member of The Carnegie Hall Academy, and recently made the Carnegie Hall Premiere of the Ligeti Horn Trio. While pursuing her undergraduate degree at DePaul University, she was a member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, training orchestra of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.



Alana has concertized in music halls across the United States, Europe, and Asia. She has performed in both orchestral and chamber music settings with the Spoleto Festival USA, Pacific Music Festival (Japan), The Verbier Festival Orchestra, The Juilliard Orchestra, and the Aspen Music Festival under the baton of conductors including Daniel Barenboim, Valery Gergiev, James Conlon, Pierre Boulez, Michael Tilson -Thomas, and Herbert Blomstedt.

Tibi Cziger, Clarinet

In 2006 Clarinetist Tibi Cziger became the first clarinetist ever admitted to the prestigious Artist Diploma program at The Juilliard School. He is also the artistic director and founder of the Israeli Chamber Project, an initiative bringing young outstanding Israeli musicians together for chamber music projects in Israel and the United States (see pg. 9 for full bio).



Gareth Flowers, Trumpet

Originally from Arlington, Virginia, Gareth Flowers is a composer/performer currently residing in New York. He plays trumpet with the Seoul Philharmonic and with the current production of South Pacific at Lincoln Center. Although he has performed with the San Francisco Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra and the IRIS Orchestra, he greatly enjoys making music on a more intimate scale, and performs with the International Contemporary Ensemble, Camerata Pacifica, the Manhattan Sinfonietta, and the Knights of the Many-Sided Table.



As a composer, he has performed his unique and eccentric Compositions for Trumpet and Laptop at Yamaha Artist Services, Makor Cafe, and the Clark Studio Theater. Of a more popular nature, Gareth has performed with the band The National, and can be heard on Gabe Kahane's recent self-titled album from 2008. He also performed in Comedy Central's Night of Too Many Stars 2008.

Jack Chou, Trombone

Jack Tzu-Yang Chou was born in Taipei, Taiwan. He received his master and professional study degree in Orchestral Trombone Performance at Manhattan school of Music where he studied with Stephen Norrell, and a B.M. from University of Southern California, (USC) where he studied with Terry Cravens. He has won competitions including twice Taiwan National Trombone Competition, the Concerto Competition at USC and Pasadena Show Case instrumental competition in California.



He has performed at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Kennedy Center, Disney Hall, Alive Tully Hall, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion at Los Angeles, Royce Hall at UCLA, Taiwan National Hall, Singapore National Hall, and many other major concert halls all around the Pacific Rim countries. Currently, Mr. Chou is the Principal trombone at Asian Artist Concert, (AAC) Symphony Orchestra in New York City, and a forth year Doctoral student in Trombone Performance at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

Matthew Slotkin, Guitar

Slotkin has appeared in concert venues throughout North America and Europe, including the Alexandria Guitar Festival, the UNC-Greensboro New Music Festival for Guitar and Saxophone, the Bowdoin Summer Music Festival, the Hartwick College Summer Music Festival, the Chautauqua Institution, and the DuMaurier Jazz Festival in Toronto, Ontario. Centaur Records released his solo CD, Twentieth Century Music for Guitar, in late 2003. American Record Guide praised Slotkin for his "musical sensitivity and technical control," and for giving "strong readings of this appealing music."

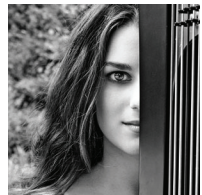


Recent performances include a series of concerts in Athens, Greece in November 2006, a tour of the United Kingdom in November 2007, and a tour of the Midwestern U.S. in March and October of 2008. Upcoming performances in 2009 include tours of New Zealand and Australia with the Duo Montagnard, a premiere performance of a guitar-saxophone duo by John Anthony Lennon in Bangkok, Thailand, chamber music performances in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and North Carolina, and a performance of Manuel Ponce's Concierto del Sur with the Bloomsburg Chamber Orchestra.

He received the Doctor of Musical Arts, Master of Music, and Bachelor of Music degrees from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied guitar with Nicholas Goluses and historical performance practice with Paul O'Dette.

Bridget Kibbey, Harp

Harpist Bridget Kibbey is a winner of the 2007 Concert Artists Guild International Competition and recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant. The New York Times recently declared: “Bridget Kibbey made it seem as though her instrument had been waiting all its life to explode with the gorgeous colors and energetic figures she was getting from it.”



2007-08 highlights include a US tour with eighth blackbird and Dawn Upshaw (Golijov's *Ayre*), concerto appearances with the Westmoreland Symphony and Vermont Mozart Festival Orchestra and the American premiere of Elliot Carter's harp concertino *Mosaic* at Carnegie's Zankel Hall. Ms. Kibbey makes chamber music appearances at Atlanta's "Fringe" Chamber Music Series and ICE-Fest of Chicago, and she is in residence at the University of Oregon with America's Dream Chamber Artists.

Ms. Kibbey has been featured as soloist with the Juilliard Symphony, Israel Youth Philharmonic, Haddonfield Symphony, Eastern Philharmonic Orchestra, America's Dream Chamber Artists and the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra. She has performed in recital at Philadelphia's Kimmel Center and New York's Merkin Concert Hall. As an orchestral harpist she has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Orchestra of St. Luke's and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. She has also performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and she was one of a hand-selected group of emerging artists to perform in the Zankel Band at in the first concert in Carnegie's Zankel Hall, under the direction of John Adams.

Steve Beck, Piano

“...one of the city's most admired young pianists...” -the New Yorker, Nov. 28th, 2005.

American pianist Steven Beck was born in 1978. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School, where his teachers were Seymour Lipkin, Peter Serkin and Bruce Brubaker.



Mr. Beck made his debut with the National Symphony Orchestra, and has toured Japan as soloist with the New York Symphonic Ensemble. Other orchestras with which he has appeared include the New Juilliard Ensemble (under David Robertson), Sequitur, the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, and the Virginia Symphony.

Mr. Beck has performed as soloist and chamber musician at the Kennedy Center, Alice Tully Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, Miller Theater, Steinway Hall, and Tonic, as well as on WNYC; summer appearances have been at the Aspen Music Festival, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, the Greenwich Music Festival, the Woodstock Mozart Festival, and the Wellesley Composers' Conference. He is an Artist Presenter and regular performer at Bargemusic, and performs frequently as a musician with the Mark Morris Dance Group.

Eric Huebner, Keyboard

Pianist Eric Huebner has drawn world-wide acclaim for his performances of new and traditional music since making his debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at age 17. His playing has been described as “full of grace and light” by critic Paul Griffiths and “masterfully precise” by Village Voice critic Kyle Gann. He was recently referred to as “the new superstar” of the 2008 Ojai Festival by critic Alan Rich where he performed the solo music of Carter and Ligeti. Mr. Huebner has worked with a number of the world's



leading conductors including Lorin Maazel, David Robertson, Alan Gilbert and Oliver Knussen and has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Brooklyn Philharmonic, Riverside Symphony, Redlands Symphony and the Juilliard Orchestra.

At Carnegie Hall, Mr. Huebner recently performed Gyorgy Ligeti's Piano Concerto with David Robertson conducting and was subsequently invited to perform Olivier Messiaen's *Oiseaux Exotiques* as part of a Live from Lincoln Center gala broadcast on PBS. Since 2001, Huebner has been a member of the award winning ensemble Antares, appearing at such venues as the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater, the Krannert Center in Champagne-Urbana, University of Iowa's Hancher Auditorium and at numerous other universities and venues throughout the United States.

Britton Matthews, Percussion

Britton Matthews is an active performer in the New York City orchestral percussion scene. Currently residing in Astoria, NY, Britton appears regularly as the principal percussionist for the Astoria Music Society's Symphony Orchestra and the Lost Dog New Music Ensemble. She is a founding member of the Broadway Reading Orchestra and a featured guest performer with Exit 9 Percussion Group of New Jersey.

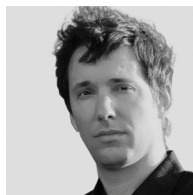


A recent graduate of the Master of Music program at Rutgers University, Britton has performed alongside internationally renowned performers such as Bob Becker, She-e Wu, and Rolando Morales-Matos. She appeared with the legendary Ms. Wu in a showcase concert at the 2005 Percussive Arts Society International Convention (Columbus, Ohio), and made her European debut in 2006 in the 4th Annual Paris Marimba Competition

Andrew Cyr, Artistic Director/Conductor

"Andrew Cyr and his virtuosic Metropolis Ensemble are the future of what we know as classical music." -- John Corigliano, Pulitzer Prize Winning Composer

Conductor and organist Andrew Cyr is an innovative leader of the rapidly growing urban contemporary classical music scene. Mr. Cyr's enthusiasm for connecting emerging musicians, composers, and the music of this new generation to broader audiences inspired him to found Metropolis Ensemble in 2006, which comprises some of the finest chamber musicians and soloists in New York City.



In their most recent appearance, Mr. Cyr and the Metropolis Ensemble were presented by Celebrate Brooklyn! and The Wordless Music Series alongside indie rock sensation Deerhoof, performing to an audience of over 10,000 in a groundbreaking outdoor concert in Prospect Park. This concert was featured in a live web-cast on National Public Radio, in addition to a local primetime broadcast on WNYC. His debut as recording artist will feature the chamber orchestra concerti of Avner Dorman (b.1975) and was recently made in collaboration with the Grammy-winner "Classical Producer of the Year" David Frost (2005). The album is set for international release on NAXOS in 2009.

Mr. Cyr is a multi-faceted musician, holding degrees in conducting, organ performance, and trumpet from Bates College, Westminster Choir College, and the French National Conservatory (Etudes supérieures) and his musical mentors include organists Pierre Grandmaison, Marion Anderson, Harvey Burgett, and Stefan Engels, and conductors Kenneth Kiesler, Joseph Flummerfelt, and Kynan Johns. His work as conductor has been described by composer and conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra as "...precise, rhythmically incisive and fluid. He made complex new pieces sound natural and organic. What a pleasure it is to hear new music played with the same kind of panache and bravura we usually experience only in performances of standard repertoire." Mr. Cyr is a native of Fort Kent, Maine, and currently resides in New York City.

METROPOLIS ENSEMBLE MEMBERS IN GROANBOX

| | |
|---|--|
| Arnaud Sussmann, violin/concertmaster | Frank Huang, violin |
| Maurycy Banaszek, viola | Dane Johansen, cello |
| Kris Saebo, bass (Groanbox/Kicking Up Dust) | Satoshi Okamoto, bass (Gnarly Buttons) |
| Lance Suzuki, flute | Tibi Cziger, clarinet |
| James Austin Smith, oboe/english horn | Adrian Morejon, bassoon |
| Alana Vegter, horn | Gareth Flowers, trumpet |
| Jack Chou, trombone | Matthew Slotkin, guitar |
| Bridget Kibbey, harp | Steve Beck, piano/keyboard |
| Eric Huebner, keyboard | Britton Matthews, percussion |
| Andrew Cyr, conductor | |

ABOUT METROPOLIS ENSEMBLE

The Metropolis Ensemble is a nonprofit professional chamber orchestra that has quickly established a reputation for presenting “new music played with the same kind of panache and bravura we usually experience only in performances of standard repertoire” (Esa-Pekka Salonen). Metropolis Ensemble concerts feature major new commissions from the freshest voices in composition today, programmed alongside imaginative and unorthodox masterpieces of the 20th Century that illustrate and embrace the fluid state of contemporary music. The Metropolis Ensemble enables young composers to engage their artistry with a top-notch flexible musical ensemble composed of musicians of their generation.

Paramount to the Metropolis Ensemble’s mission is fostering the next generation of composers. WET INK is a unique two-year composer residency and teaching fellowship program. In the first year, the composer selected leads our YOUTH WORKS program at PS 11 and in the second, Metropolis Ensemble will commission a major new work. This season’s residents are composers Cristina Spinei and Ray Lustig.

YOUTH WORKS is a program of the Metropolis Ensemble that brings the imagination and joy of music into public school. Led by our resident composers, members of the Metropolis Ensemble teach young children the basics of music and encourage their compositional efforts. We currently have a partnership with P.S. 11, where children participate in our weekly after-school program during the 40-week academic year, with a final concert presentation featuring the works of the student composers.

We are extremely grateful for your support! For more information about the Metropolis Ensemble and our various programs, please visit our website: metropolisensemble.org.

MEET THE COMPOSERS

John Adams, Composer, born 1947

One of America's most admired and respected composers, John Adams is a musician of enormous range and technical command. His many operatic and symphonic works stand out among contemporary classical compositions for their depth of expression, their sonic brilliance, and the profoundly humanist nature of their themes.



Born and raised in New England and educated at Harvard, Adams moved in 1971 to California, where he taught for ten years at the San Francisco Conservatory and was composer-in-residence at the San Francisco Symphony.

Adams's operatic works are among the most successful of our time. *Nixon in China*, *The Death of Klinghoffer*, and *Doctor Atomic*, all created in collaboration with stage director Peter Sellars, draw their subjects from archetypal themes in contemporary history. *Doctor Atomic* has its New York premiere at the Metropolitan Opera in October 2008 under conductor Alan Gilbert, in a new production by Penny Woolcock.

On the Transmigration of Souls, written for the New York Philharmonic to mark the first anniversary of the World Trade Center attacks, received the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Music, and won a rare "triple crown" of Grammy awards: "Best Classical Recording", "Best Orchestral Performance", and "Best Classical Contemporary Composition".

In 2003, a film version of *The Death of Klinghoffer*, directed by Penny Woolcock and with the composer conducting the London Symphony Orchestra, was released in theaters, on television, and on DVD. *Wonders Are Many*, a documentary by Jon Else on the making of *Doctor Atomic*, premiered at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival and was a New York Times Critics' Pick.

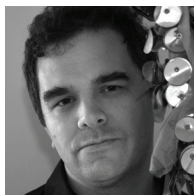
Adams has been awarded honorary degrees and proclamations by Cambridge University, Harvard University, Yale School of Music, Phi Beta Kappa, the governor of California, the French Legion of Honor, and Northwestern University, where he was awarded an honorary doctorate and the first Michael Ludwig Nemmers Prize in Music Composition.

Nonesuch Records released Adams's *Harmonielehre* in 1985, and all of his works since then have appeared first on that label. A ten-CD set, "The John Adams Earbox", documents his recorded music through 2000. A new 2-cd set of Adams's most recent opera, *A Flowering Tree*, featuring the composer conducting the London Symphony Orchestra, is Nonesuch's latest release. Hallelujah Junction, Adams's already much praised autobiography will arrive in stores in October 2008, published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux in the U.S. and by Faber & Faber in the U.K. In its August 25th issue The New Yorker Magazine published "Sonic Youth," an excerpt from these memoirs covering Adams's early years in San Francisco. The John Adams Reader: Essential Writings on an American Composer (Amadeus Press, 2006), edited by Thomas May, is the first in-depth anthology of texts dealing with more than 30 years of Adams's creative life. John Adams is active as a conductor, appearing with the world's greatest orchestras. A regular guest at the BBC Proms, he has appeared in recent seasons with such orchestras as the London Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and New York Philharmonic, and with orchestras in Atlanta, Stockholm, San Francisco, and Detroit. From 2003 to 2007 he was composer-in-residence at Carnegie Hall and conducted the first public concert in Carnegie's new space, Zankel Hall.

The music of John Adams is published by Boosey & Hawkes and by Associated Music Publishers. Science, and has a BA in history from John Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. In February 2007, Cory was selected to be the recipient of a 2007 Maryland State Arts Council Award for Music Composition.

David Bruce, Composer, born 1970

David Bruce is developing a growing international reputation as a composer, particularly in the field of opera and vocal music. His work has attracted the attention of some of the world's leading musicians, including Dawn Upshaw, who has performed his *Piosenki* on a number of occasions (including at Carnegie's Zankel Hall and with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra) and for whom he is currently writing a new song-cycle with ensemble (Chamber Music Society of the Lincoln Center commission). Other supporters of Bruce's work include Osvaldo Golijov, who nominated him for the Lili Boulanger Memorial Prize (awarded 2008); as well as clarinetist Todd Palmer and the St Lawrence String Quartet who performed his Carnegie Hall commission *Gumboots* in October 2008. Other current commissions include a solo harp piece for Bridget Kibbey's Carnegie Hall recital debut (April 2009); and a development commission from the Royal Opera House's ROH2 for a new chamber opera.



Bruce's work in opera has attracted considerable attention. His chamber opera *Push!* was commissioned by the Genesis Foundation and premiered by Tête à Tête in London and on tour in the UK in 2006. *Push!* was Critic's Choice for 2006 in both *The Telegraph* and *Classical Music Magazine* and received universal critical acclaim. His hour-long chamber opera *A Bird in Your Ear* (2008) was commissioned by Bard College, NY for Dawn Upshaw's students on the Graduate Vocal Program, and has gone on to be selected for both the finals of the National Opera Association's Chamber Opera competition 2008, and New York City Opera's VOX 2009 project. Both competitions result in presentation performances of the opera in 2009. His song-cycle for baritone, soprano and ensemble *Piosenki*, described as "masterful" by *Albany Times Union*, was commissioned by Carnegie Hall and has since had numerous performances in the US, including three performances at Carnegie Hall itself in just its first 18 months.

Other previous commissions include an acclaimed series of mini-operas: *Out of the Ordinary*, for The Opera Group, *Has it Happened Yet?* (2002) for ENO Studios and *Tête à Tête*; *Seven Tons of Dung* for Tête à Tête (1999); incidental music to the Trestle Theatre Company's show *The Smallest Person* (2004); and instrumental pieces for the London Sinfonietta, BBC Symphony Orchestra, and the Presteigne and Lake District Summer Music Festivals. As well as the Lili Boulanger Memorial Award (2008), other prizes include the Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Competition in 1994, the Adam Prize (Kings College) and the Herberts Howells Prize (RCM).

David Bruce was born in Connecticut, USA to English & Welsh parents (he holds both UK and US citizenships). He began his undergraduate studies in music in 1988 at Nottingham University (composition tutors included Jim Fulkerson and Nicholas Sackman), before moving on to the Royal College of Music (1991–93) where he obtained a Masters Degree in Composition, studying with Tim Salter and George Benjamin; and a PhD in Composition at King's College, London (1995–99), under the supervision of Sir Harrison Birtwistle.

Complementing his work as a composer, Bruce runs the music and technology company Red Balloon Technology Ltd whose sites include the popular sheet music site 8notes.com, the melody search engine Tunespotting.com and the composers' site CompositionToday.

Michael Ward-Bergeman, Composer, born 1970

Michael Ward-Bergeman is a passionate performer, songwriter and composer. His sensitive and creative approach to music making has led to performances and collaborations with world-class musicians and composers from across a wide range of genres. Michael aims to remain faithful to the spirit that unites many of the world's richest music traditions while continuing to develop his own unique voice. His work *Treny* had its World Premiere this past November by Dawn Upshaw and Ensemble ACJW at Carnegie's Zankel Hall (see page 8 for full bio).



Metropolis Ensemble would like to thank our cultural partners, Smithsonian Magazine, the Columbia Alumni Arts League, and the NYU Visiting Scholar Program.

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