

From E.B. White's *Here is New York*, 1949

Another hot night I stop off at the band concert in the Mall in Central Park. The people seated on the benches fanned out in front of the band shell are attentive, appreciative. In the trees the night wind sings, bringing leaves to life, endowing them with speech; the electric lights illuminate the green branches from the under side, translating them into a new language. On a bench directly in front of me, a boy sits with his arm around his girl; they are proud of each other and are swathed in music. The cornetist steps forward for a solo, begins, "Drink to me only with thine eyes. . ." In the wide, warm night the horn is startlingly pure and magical. Then from the North River another horn solo begins—the

"Queen Mary" announcing her intentions. She is not on key; she is a half tone off. The trumpeter in the bandstand never flinches. The horns quarrel savagely, but no one minds having the intimation of travel injected into the pledge of love. "I leave," sobs Mary. "And I will pledge with mine," sighs the trumpeter. Along the asphalt paths strollers pass to and fro; they behave considerately, respecting the musical atmosphere. Popsicles are moving well. In the warm grass beyond the fence, forms wriggle in the shadows, and the skirts of girls approaching on the Mall are ballooned by the breeze, and their bare shoulders catch the lamplight. "Drink to me only with thine eyes." It is a magical occasion, and it's all free.

Have you ever been to a free concert at The Naumburg Bandshell in Central Park? If you haven't, you should plan to go before the summer is over. It's one of most unique experiences New York has to offer.

The Naumburg Bandshell is one of New York City's great cultural icons. It has entertained generations of New Yorkers with an incredible variety of performances. Duke Ellington, Irving Berlin and The Grateful Dead have all performed on the stage. Martin Luther King once stood there and John Lennon was eulogized from that very spot.

The bandshell was donated by philanthropist--and classical music lover extraordinaire - Elkan Naumburg. In 1905, Mr. Naumburg had begun a series of free, classical concerts in Central Park known as the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts. When it was completed in 1923, the bandshell became the series' new home. Thanks to the generosity, dedication and hard work of Elkan Naumburg's descendants, all of whom have also been unbelievably committed to classical music, the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts series is celebrating its 105th anniversary this year. And, yes, the performances take place in the bandshell. Though the bandshell continues to feature other kinds of performances, the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts are the centerpiece of the season.

As has been the case with many of New York's iconic structures--Carnegie Hall and Grand Central Station to name two--there was a time when the bandshell was facing the wrecking ball. Fortunately, the tide turned and the bandshell was saved. But, concern continues about its future.

-from a piece by Midge Woolsey written in 2010. Originally published along with her interview of Christopher London on WQXR.org

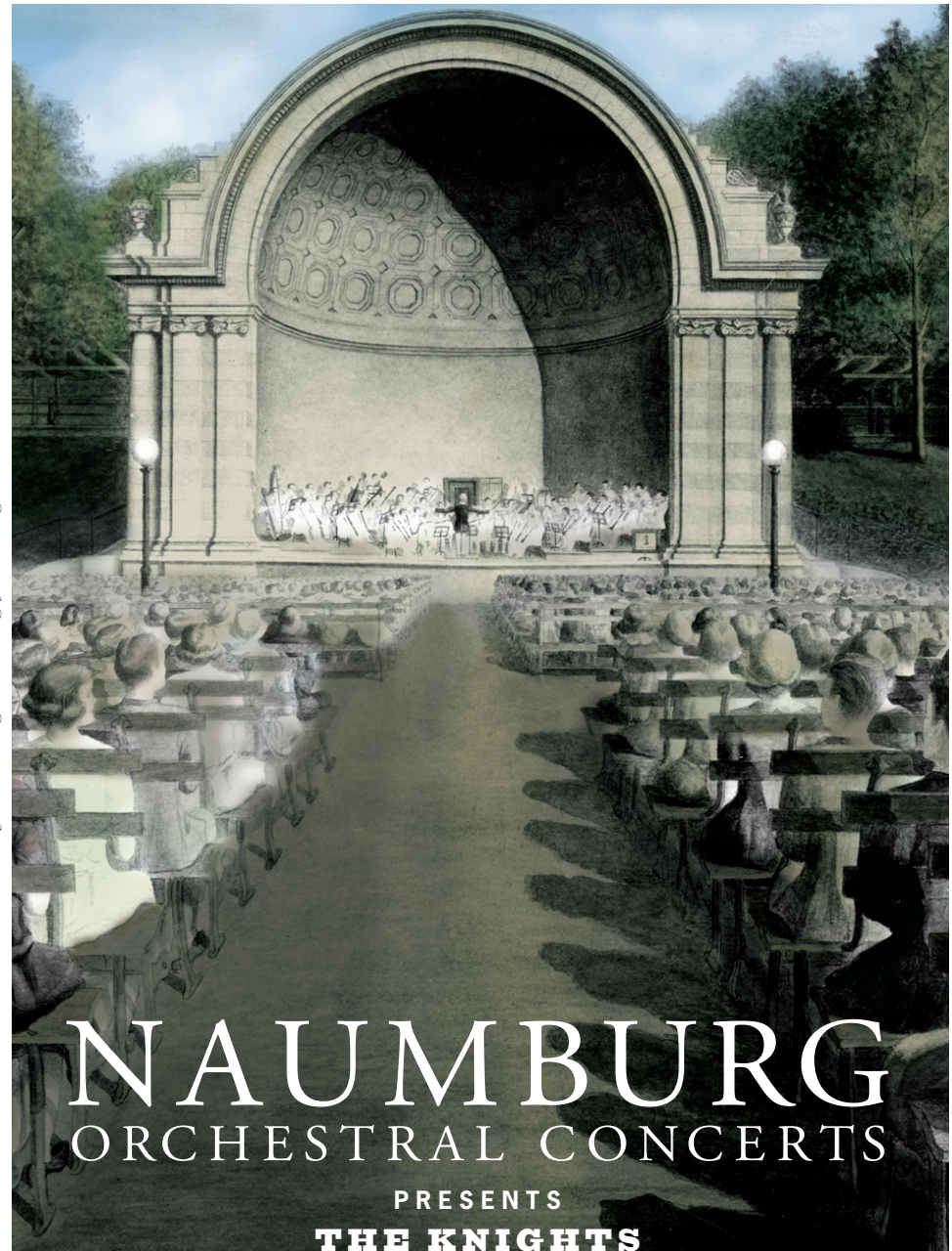
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Anonymous, 1930's gouache drawing of Naumburg Orchestral Concert



NAUMBURG ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

PRESENTS
THE KNIGHTS

7:30 PM TUESDAY JULY 10, 2012

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CELLO

Richard Wagner (1813-83)

SIEGFRIED IDYLL - (1870)

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

CELLO CONCERTO IN A MINOR, OP 129, (1850)

Nicht zu schnell (A minor)

Langsam (F major)

Sehr lebhaft (A minor – A major)

I N T E R M I S S I O N

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

PRELUDE TO THE AFTERNOON OF A FAUN (1894)

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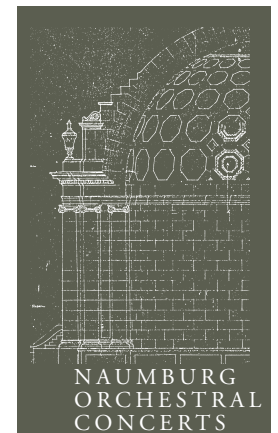
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The Mall, Central Park

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1874

The double rows of American Elms, planted fourteen years earlier, create a green tunnel. Sunlight filters through the canopy of new leaves and throws dappled patterns of light and shade on the gravel walk. It is a beautiful day, the Mall is crowded: ladies in voluminous skirts and colorful hats; Irish nurses in bonnets and white aprons, pushing baby carriages; gentlemen in frock coats and top hats; a few young clerks in stylish broadcloth suits; the children in a variety of dress, miniature versions of their parents. It is a decorous crowd; tomorrow—Sunday—is when working people have a holiday and attendance will be even larger.

At the north end of the Mall, on the west side, is the bandstand. Mould has pulled out all the stops for this design. The raised platform is covered by a Moorish-style cupola, dark blue and covered with gilt stars. It is topped by a sculpture of a lyre. The roof is supported by crimson cast-iron columns. The bandstand is unoccupied—the Saturday—afternoon concerts start next month. The annual summer series is so popular—up to forty-five thousand people attend—that the park board has provided extra seating and has taken the unprecedented step of allowing listeners to sit on the grass. Not everyone admires these free concerts. “The barriers and hedges of society for the time being are let down,” sniffs the *Times*, “unfortunately also a few of its decencies are forgotten.”

The barriers of society are not altogether absent. Across the Mall from the bandstand is a broad concourse where the wealthy park their carriages and, separated from the lower orders by a long wisteria arbor, listen to the music in comfortable isolation. Beside the concourse stands a large one-story building with a swooping tiled roof and deep overhanging eaves. Originally the Ladies Refreshment Stand, it has recently been converted into a restaurant called the Casino.

{ An excerpt from Witold Rybczynski—*A Clearing in the Distance*, pp.317-18 in which a letter of Frederick Law Olmsted—a principal designer of Central Park is quoted. }

The Future of the Bandshell and its Concerts

A 1993 court decision guaranteed that the bandshell would remain. What it did not do was insure the maintenance and improvement of the facility. The Parks Department completed repairing the roof of the Naumburg Bandshell in 2005. No other restoration of the building is planned at present.

The structure lacks two graceful pairs of decorative urns at either side of the half-domed structure and a suspended cast bronze light within its ceiling. It also needs the paint removed from the coffered ceiling, its stonework repaired, the losses replaced, the doors restored, the gilded donor inscription returned and the backstage renovated and fitted with working bathrooms once again. Naumburg Orchestral Concerts hopes the Central Park Conservancy and the Parks Department will restore the Naumburg Bandshell and with it the Concert Ground's role, dating to the 19th century, as a place of great beauty and tranquility in which to enjoy musical concerts in Central Park.

But given the many demands on funds in NYC it may be too much to hope for. And there is little doubt that it could benefit from lighting, sound, and electrical improvements. To that end we are considering a large capital campaign to repair the Bandshell and enlarge the endowment of Naumburg Orchestral Concerts so we can improve and expand our concert schedule. We would like your opinions, help, contributions, and suggestions. Please see one of us at a concert or write NAUMBURG ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS c/o C.W. LONDON 300 CENTRAL PARK WEST, 18 H NEWYORK, N.Y. 10024-1513

The Knights

Violin

Colin Jacobsen
Johnny Gandelsman
Pico Alt
Cece Belcher
Christina Courtin
Jennifer Curtis
Nanae Iwata
Ariana Kim
Yon Joo Lee
Yaira Matyakubova
Guillaume Pirard
Viola
Kyle Armbrust
Nick Cords

Max Mandel

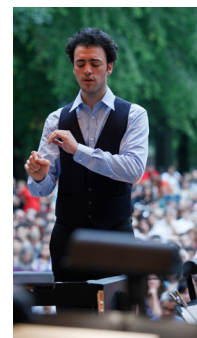
Cello
Jane Cords-O'Hara
Alex Greenbaum
Julia MacLaine
Caitlin Sullivan
Bass
Jeff Beecher
Zach Cohen
Flute
Chris Johnson
Andrew Rehrig
Alex Sopp
Oboe
Gus Highstein

Michelle Farah

James Roe
Clarinet
Romie de Guise-
Langlois
Jo-Ann Sternberg
Bassoon
Adrian Morejon
Damian Primis
French Horn
Mike Atkinson
David Byrd-Marrow
Theodore Primis
Chad Yarbrough
Trumpet

Michael Gurfield

Jeffrey Missal
Timpani and Percussion
Michael Caterisano
Joseph Gramley
Harp
Megan Levin
Artistic Directors
Colin Jacobsen
Eric Jacobsen
Managing Director
Liz Mahler



The Knights are an orchestra of friends from a broad spectrum of the New York music world who cultivate collaborative music making and creatively engage audiences in the shared joy of musical performance. Led by an open-minded spirit of camaraderie and exploration, they expand the orchestral concert experience with programs that encompass their roots in the Classical tradition and their passion for musical discovery. Members of The Knights are active as soloists, orchestral players, and chamber musicians as well as composers, arrangers, singer-songwriters, and improvisers who bring a range of cultural influences to the group. “On a fast track to the top of the chamber orchestra ladder (*Cleveland Classical*),” The Knights launched WQXR's Ensemble-In-Residence program this year, engaging millions of listeners online, on-air, and in concert. The orchestra performed in New York venues from the 92nd Street Y to The Stone, presented tours throughout Germany and the US, and released an acclaimed new album, *A Second of Silence* (Ancalagon). This fall, The Knights look forward to the release of a third album on SONY Classical, and a return to the Ravinia Festival featuring a series of historic collaborations with Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, and Dawn Upshaw. To learn more, please visit www.theknightnyc.com

Canadian cellist [Julia MacLaine](http://www.juliamaclaine.com) performs worldwide as a recitalist and chamber musician in music ranging from classical to contemporary and from ‘world’ to her own compositions. She has been praised by *The New York Times* for her “rich tone”, “sweet, throbbing vibrato”, and “superb playing.” As well as being co-founder and director of The Ikarus Chamber Players, Julia is an Artistic Director of The Declassified (comprised exclusively of alumni of Ensemble ACJW), and a member the Orchestra of Saint Luke's and The Knights, with whom she has recorded two albums for SONY Classical. She has performed as a guest of many other New York-based ensembles, including Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE). For more information, please visit www.juliamaclaine.com

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Midge Woolsey has proudly served the tristate community as a broadcaster for over 30 years. Since joining WQXR in 1993, she has been the Weekend Music host and more recently the Weekday Evening host. As a host on public television's flagship station Thirteen/WNET she has introduced such specials as Andrea Bocelli's Emmy nominated Statue of Liberty Concert, The Three Tenors with James Levine live from Paris, and the landmark twenty-four hour event, PBS Millennium 2000. She has also hosted numerous fundraising events, including Josh Groban in Concert and Pavarotti in Central Park.

Behind the scenes, Woolsey worked with Jac Venza on Great Performances, the award-winning PBS series of international music, dance and drama programs. She also served as production executive for award-winning producer David Grubin, working with him on several acclaimed historical documentaries for the PBS series American Experience and on the poetry series The Language of Life with Bill Moyers. Woolsey has degrees in theater and music, and has served as a director, performer and choreographer in more than 100 productions with various regional opera and musical theater companies.



We hope you enjoy tonight's musical performance presented by Naumburg Orchestral Concerts. We need your support in order to help fund these concerts. Please either stop at the desk or visit our website www.naumburgconcerts.org to learn how you can help us.

Thoughts on The Program by James Roe

The incredible alchemy of an orchestra concert can be characterized by its array of collaborative elements. Composers endeavor to represent the musical sounds in their imaginations through written notation. Performers, in turn, use the decidedly physical act of playing musical instruments, to reach through the printed notation in search of the composer's voice.

Richard Wagner (1813-1883) SIEGFRIED IDYLL (1870) Never intended for public performance, *Siegfried Idyll* was written as a birthday gift for his wife, Cosima. On the morning after her 33rd birthday, December 25, 1870, Wagner assembled a chamber orchestra on the stairs leading to her bedroom. She awoke to the premiere of a work written for her alone, built on musical themes important to the couple. The *Idyll* opens with a gentle, arching melody in the strings that Wagner originally conceived for a string quartet dedicated to Cosima. The strings play alone for a full two minutes before the woodwinds enter, and the appearance of the fresh orchestral color is magic. One can imagine Wagner painting a musical picture of Cosima's first stirrings on the morning of the premiere. The score was eventually sold for publication to help raise needed funds, and so this most private of Wagner's musical creations has become his most performed instrumental work.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) CELLO CONCERTO IN A MINOR, OP. 129 (1850) Schumann once wrote, "I cannot write a concerto for the virtuosos. I must try for something else." With the Cello Concerto, he achieves this by deftly wedding virtuosity to musical substance. His wife, Clara wrote, "Robert composed a concerto for the violoncello that pleased me very much. The romantic quality, the flight, the freshness and the humor, and also the highly interesting interweaving of cello and orchestra are, indeed, wholly ravishing!" The Cello Concerto only received its premiere four years after Schumann's death, just shy of what would have been Schumann's 50th birthday. As it happens, this evening's performance is two days after the 202nd anniversary of the composer's birth.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) PRÉLUDE À L'APRÈS-MIDI D'UN FAUNE (1894) Languid, sensual, exotic, and seemingly improvisatory, Claude Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* was his first major masterpiece. The work opens with an unaccompanied flute sounding a sustained c-sharp, a note played with all the fingers raised. Debussy, the musical colorist, knew the gauzy diffuseness the flute could produce on this note and used it to great effect, subtly blending the beginning of the piece with the silence preceding it. Then, just moments after the music begins, Debussy writes a long measure of six slow beats of silence. In Debussy's music, the relationship of sound to silence is imbued with new possibilities.

Thomas Adès (b. 1971) THREE STUDIES FROM COUPERIN FOR CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (2006) *Les Amusemens, Les Tours de Passe-passe, L'Âme-en-peine* "My ideal day would be staying at home and playing the harpsichord works of Couperin—new inspiration on every page." The Couperin to which Adès refers is François (1668-1733), known as "le grand" for his impressive keyboard prowess. One of the most important French musicians of his day, Couperin was chosen by Louis XIV to be organist at the royal chapel. Couperin composed over 200 works, most of them with charmingly descriptive titles. These titles could be enigmatic, even to Couperin's sophisticated court audiences. He took some delight in this as he explained in the preface to his 1713 collection, "In composing these pieces, I have always had an object in view, furnished by various occasions. Thus the titles reflect my ideas; I may be forgiven for not explaining them all."

Colin Jacobsen (b. 1978), Siamak Aghaei (b. 1973) ASCENDING BIRD: INTRODUCTION AND DANCE FOR ORCHESTRA (2010), Tonight's program closes with *Ascending Bird*, written by Colin Jacobsen and Iranian musician, Siamak Aghaei. The piece is based on a Persian folk song that tells the story of a bird attempting to fly to the sun. Twice the bird fails, but on the third flight the creature takes leave of its physical body, embracing the sun in state of spiritual transcendence. Colin first encountered this folk song in 2004 while he and violist Nicholas Cords visited Siamak Aghaei in Tehran. One afternoon, Siamak played a recording of the folk song that would become *Ascending Bird*. Colin and Nick were captivated by the sound of the unusual instrument playing the melody. When Siamak explained to them that it was constructed of fused bird bones only a few inches in length, it was as if myth took physical form through the act of music making. The transcendent bird had no use for its skeleton; yet in the hands of the musician, the bones told the bird's story. The story has profound resonance for musicians who daily face the page of printed notes left to us by composers. This notation is not itself music, rather it leads us, through the physical act of playing our instruments, into imagination of another human being. The result is music. In the finest performances, the tools become secondary, like the bones of the mythical bird. Each concert is another opportunity to fly into the sun.

Music Pavilion



From a Tiffany & Co. card © 1995

In 1859 Jacob Wrey Mould, an amateur musician and the architect who designed many of the original structures in Central Park, persuaded his wealthy friends to pay for free band concerts at a temporary bandstand in the Ramble, and he arranged their musical programs. The first concert, on July 13, included the Festival March from *Tannhäuser*, Mendelssohn's song, "I would that my Love," selections from *La Traviata* and Strauss's *Sorgenbrecher Waltz*. In the summer of 1860 concerts were transferred to the Mall, and *The New York Herald* reported that the September 22 concert attracted "at least five thousand persons gathered around the performers, while outside of these were stationed an immense number of carriages... filled with the beauty and fashion of New York." The overwhelming popularity of the concerts prompted Central Park's board to finance them and to build a permanent Music Pavilion on the west side of the Mall near the Terrace. Mould designed the elaborately painted and brightly gilded Moorish-style wooden and cast-iron structure, completed in 1862. The Parks Department razed the Music Pavilion in 1923.

The Naumburg Bandshell, a gift of Elkan Naumburg to 'the City of New York and its Music Lovers', replaced in purpose the former structure. Though the Naumburg Bandshell opened on September 29th 1923, the Art Commission of New York had approved of the change in 1912 and the design of the Bandshell in 1916. 'On the Mall', composed by Edwin F. Goldman in 1923, to honor Elkan Naumburg, was premiered that September afternoon, conducted by Franz Kaltenborn. Astonishingly, during that summer, 959 concerts were presented on the Concert Ground, over 400 of which were underwritten by the Parks Department. It was a popular place, providing a well-liked activity.

The Naumburg Bandshell design has historic precedents for its shape in the Pantheon of Rome, or even more closely, in the Imperial Russian pleasure park's pavilion at Gatchina Palace by Vincenzo Brenna—his 'Eagle Pavilion' of the 1790's, and also in the later work of the architect F.G.P. Poccianti, particularly his 'Cisternone' at Livorno of 1829-42. It has historic precedents for its function in the outdoor theatres and pavilions of Versailles, for example, or the temples and 'eye-catchers' found in the park-like gardens of British country houses such as Stourhead and Stowe. The use of European park architecture as a model for what to insert in Central Park was in keeping with Olmsted's design sources and methods of nearly 60 years earlier. The Naumburg Bandshell was set into the Manhattan schist hillside, which nestles it, to prevent views being blocked across the Mall and Concert Ground which caused an earlier proposal of Carrère & Hastings to be found wanting by city and park officials. Thoughtfully, the design also stands centered between the two projecting pergola viewing points and it admirably reflects the architect William G. Tachau's own Ecole des Beaux-Arts classicist and historicist training. The result was Central Park's only Neo-Classical building.