

OUR 111TH SEASON OF FREE CLASSICAL MUSIC
CONCERTS FOR THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK



NAUMBURG
ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

PRESENTS

ENSEMBLE LPR

TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2016 • 7:30PM

*The Historic Naumburg Bandshell on the Concert Ground of Central Park.
Please visit NAUMBURGCONCERTS.ORG for more information on our series.*

TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2016 ▪ 7:30PM

In celebration of 111 years of Free Concerts for the people of
New York City - The oldest continuous free outdoor western classical music
concert series in the world.

*Tonight's concert is being broadcast live on classical WQXR - 105.9 FM - and via live
stream at www.wqxr.org with WQXR host Jeff Spurgeon.*

The Naumburg Orchestral Concerts Production Stage Manager is Pati Dynes.

Naumburg Orchestral Concerts Presents
ENSEMBLE LPR
Vasko Dukovski, clarinet

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958)

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis (1910)

AARON COPLAND (1900-90)

Concerto for Clarinet, Strings and Harp (1947-49)

I. Slowly and expressively - Cadenza

II. Rather fast

Vasko Dukovski, clarinet

Intermission

JULIA WOLFE (1958-)

Cruel Sister (2004)

CHARLES IVES (1874-1954)

The Unanswered Question (Revised Version ca. 1934)

*The performance of Ensemble LPR has been made possible by a generous grant
from the MacDonald Peterson Foundation.*

The piano for this evening's performance has been provided by Yamaha.

MUSICAL NOTES

ENSEMBLE LPR

Named after and headquartered at the acclaimed New York City venue Le Poisson Rouge, Ensemble LPR, under the leadership of Founding Artistic Director David Handler, performs an eclectic spectrum of music—from works by living composers to compelling interpretations of the standard repertoire—and collaborates with distinguished artists from classical and non-classical backgrounds: Timo Andres, Simone Dinnerstein, San Fermin, Daniel Hope, Taka Kigawa, Jennifer Koh, Mica Levi, David Longstreth (of Dirty Projectors), John Lurie, Ursula Oppens, Max Richter, André de Ridder, Christopher Rountree and Fred Sherry, to name a few. In January of last year Ensemble LPR made its Deutsche Grammophon debut with Follow, Poet, featuring the music of Mohammed Fairouz and the words of Seamus Heaney and John F. Kennedy. This is Ensemble LPR's second performance at the Naumburg Bandshell.

For more info see: ensemblelpr.com. For more information on Vasko Dukovski see: dukovski.com.

For more information on Julia Wolfe, the composer of *Cruel Sister* [2004], who won the 2015 Pulitzer Prize in music, see either the Pulitzer Prize or the Composer's own website: juliawolfemusic.com

Violin

Conrad Harris, CM
Elizabeth Derham
Anna Elashvili
Molly Germer
David Handler
Pauline Kim Harris *
Nicole Jeong
Christiana Liberis
Yuri Namkung
Marc Szammer
Henry Wang

Viola

Kallie Ciechomski
Eva Gerard
William Hakim*
Katarzyna Bryla-Weiss

Cello

Justin Abrams
Seth Parker Woods*
Amanda Gookin
Justin Kantor
Sofia Nowik
Christine Kim

Double Bass

Patrick Duff*
Carlos Barriento

Trumpet

Jean Laurenz

Flute

Catherine Gregory
Beonjae Kim

Oboe

Arthur Sato

Clarinet

Vasko Dukovski

Piano

Julia Den Boer

Harp

Jane Yoon



Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis is based on a hymn by Tallis published in 1567 in the Metrical Psalter. The melody sets the text, “Why fumeth in sight: the Gentiles spite, in fury raging stout?” and is written in the Phrygian mode (the scale you hear if you play the white keys on the piano starting on the note “E”). Three and a half centuries later, when asked to write a new piece for the Three Choirs Festival at Gloucester Cathedral, Vaughan Williams took this theme for inspiration. Opening with five of what Vaughan Williams called “magic chords” the theme is introduced in its entirety shortly thereafter in the lower strings. The score calls for three groups - a large string orchestra, a smaller and separate string orchestra and a solo string quartet - that perform together and separately as they echo and respond to one another. The open voicing (spacing of the notes harmonically) characteristic of English music, as well as the antiphonal writing are inherently suited to expansive spaces – once the Gloucester Cathedral, now the Naumburg Bandshell.

In 1947, renowned jazz clarinetist Benny Goodman commissioned Aaron Copland to compose a work for him. “I made no demands on what Copland should write. He had completely free rein, except that I should have a two-year exclusivity on playing the work”, said Goodman. The result was Copland’s *Clarinet Concerto*, a two-movement work connected by a through-composed cadenza. The first movement is considered one of the composer’s most lyrical and melodious creations; the second is noticeably inspired by North American jazz and Brazilian popular styles, punctuated by a glissando or jazz “smear” at the end.

Cruel Sister is a stirring and fantastic Old English ballad. The tale is of two sisters — one bright as the sun, and the other cold and dark. One day, so that she can have the love of a young man who has come courting, the dark sister pushes the bright sister into the sea. Two minstrels find the dead sister washed up on the shore and shape her breastbone into a fine harp strung with her yellow hair. They come to play at the cold dark sister’s wedding. As the sound of the harp reaches the bride’s ears, the ballad concludes “and surely now her tears will flow.” While my

piece references no words and quotes no music from the original tune, it does follow the dramatic arc of the ballad — the music reflecting an argument that builds, a body floating on the sea, the mad harp. — *Julia Wolfe*

Charles Ives' *The Unanswered Question*, despite its brevity, is one of the most remarkable and progressive works of the twentieth century. It deals with the metaphysical through what the composer called a "cosmic landscape", consisting (like the Vaughan Williams) of three instrument groups. Above the "silence of the druids" - represented by an ethereal, barely audible suspension of strings (unaffected, unheeded) - the solo trumpet asks seven times "the perennial question of existence", responded to by the wind quartet only six times, each with greater agitation. The question left unanswered is of course a question unto itself. While there is a precedent for the use of off-stage music, experimentation with spatial parameters, even the assignment of characters or dialogue to instruments, doing so in an un-staged concert work in order to express an abstract concept such as this makes the piece, in some ways, the first philosophical music. *Program Notes by David Handler*

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JEFF SPURGEON has been the morning host of WQXR since 2006. He joined WQXR in 1997. In his nearly 40 years as a broadcaster, Jeff has been an announcer, reporter, newscaster, interviewer and producer. He also taught, for a short time, at Townsend Harris High School in Queens, where his wife is an English teacher. They live in Brooklyn.



We hope you enjoy tonight's musical performance presented by the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts. We need your support in order to help fund these concerts. Please either stop at the reception desk on the Concert Ground to donate or join our mailing list, or visit our website to learn how to donate online or join our email list:

naumburgconcerts.org

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The Naumburg Orchestral Concerts is a non-profit corporation. To obtain a copy of its most recent financial report, please write to: New York State Department of Law, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10271.



MUSIC PAVILION

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-like activity.

The design of the Bandshell has historic precedents in the Pantheon of Rome, or more closely, the Imperial Russian pleasure park's pavilion at Gatchina Palace, by Vincenzo Brenna, his 'Eagle Pavilion' of the 1790's, and the later work of the architect F.G.P. Poccianti, 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 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 (nephew of Elkan Naumburg) own Ecole des Beaux-Arts classicist and historicist training. The result was Central Park's only Neo-Classical building.

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 NAUMBURG BANDSHELL AND MUSICAL CONCERTS AT THIS SITE

Central Park has hosted outdoor concerts on the Concert Ground since the park opened in the mid-nineteenth century. The site's design offers great natural beauty and tranquility for those who attend its live musical performances.

This free musical series was established by Elkan Naumburg, a philanthropist and ardent supporter of classical music, for the purpose of encouraging and stimulating the public's interest in symphonic and semi-classical music. Our outdoor summer performances, begun in 1905, are the oldest, continuous, free, western classical music series of its type in the world. The events now feature promising new classical music talent, with many performers being young and often New York based. The concerts also promote the professional development of young composers and conductors, featuring newly commissioned music, and new arrangements.

We welcome your support, contributions and suggestions. We would also like to enlarge our endowment so that we can both improve and expand our own concert schedule. So, please feel free to speak to one of us at a concert, or write to the [Contacts] on the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts website, naumburgconcerts.org.

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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 is one of the 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 Naumburg Bandshell was donated by philanthropist – and classical music lover extraordinaire – Elkan Naumburg. In 1905, Mr. Naumburg began a series of free, classical music concerts in Central Park now known as the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts. When the Naumburg Bandshell was completed and opened, in 1923, it 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 W. London on WQXR.org

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