

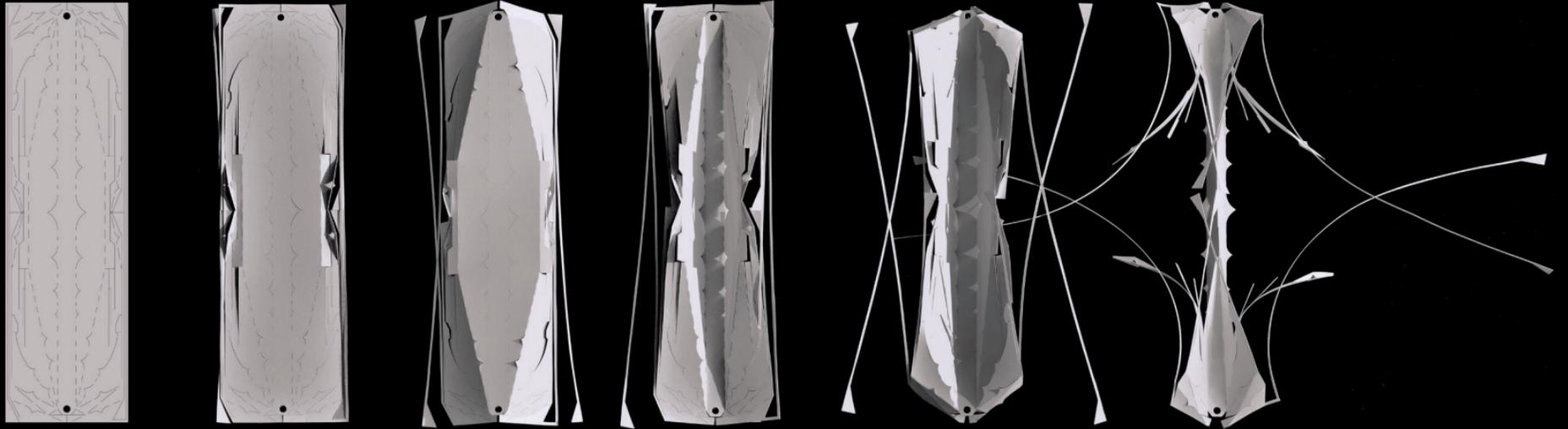


eighth blackbird

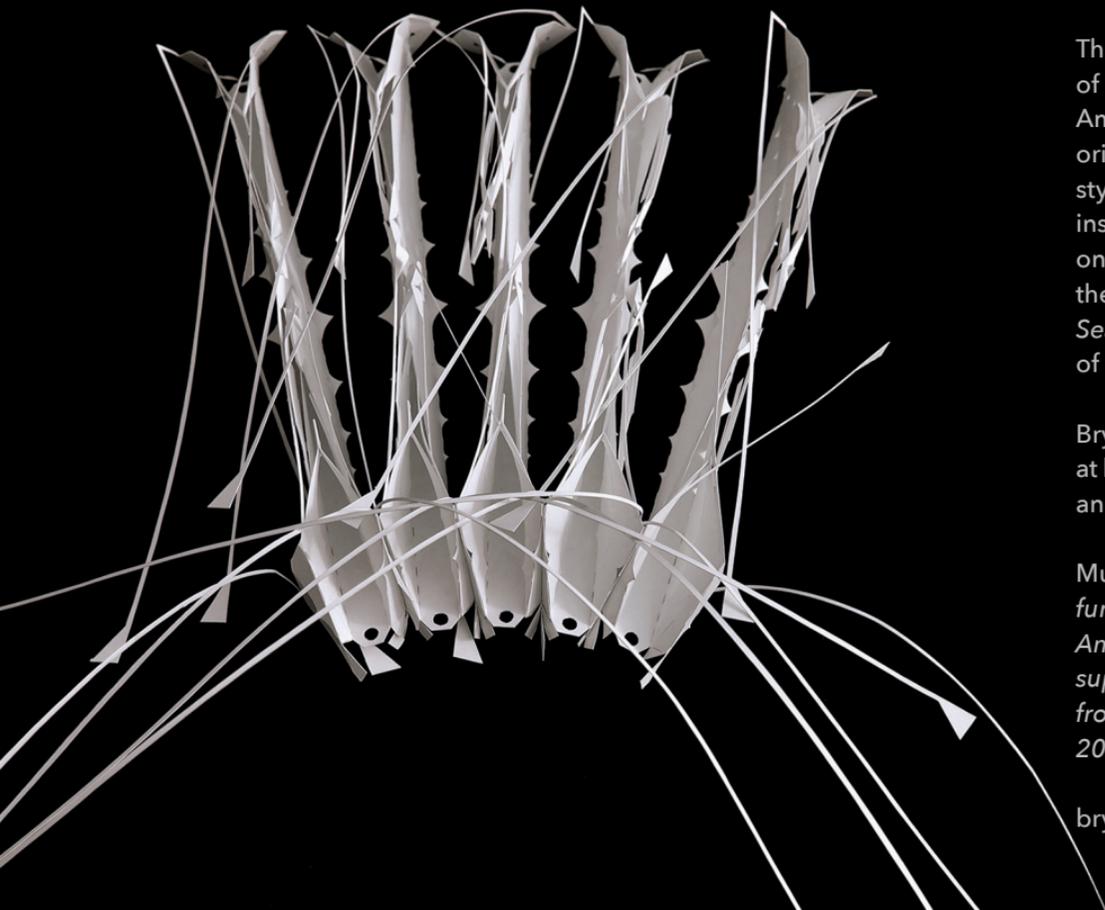
FILAMENT

eighth blackbird **FILAMENT**

A strong, charged filament connects the composers and performers on this album. All are friends and collaborators, and all have in various ways influenced one another's work. Philip Glass is the album's benevolent grandfather, without whose cultural omnivorousness none of this music would exist, so it's fitting that Nico Muhly, Bryce Dessner, and the members of eighth blackbird should join forces for a performance of Glass's epochal work, *Two Pages*.



Bryce Dessner **Murder Ballades**



*Oh, listen to my story, I'll tell you no lies,  
How John Lewis did murder poor little Omie Wise.*

The murder ballad has its roots in a European tradition, in which grisly details of bloody homicides are recounted through song. When this tradition came to America, it developed its own vernacular. In *Murder Ballades*, Dessner crafts original music inspired by the seductive strains, violent stories, and playing styles of these ballads. His *Omie Wise*, *Young Emily*, and *Pretty Polly* are loosely inspired by classic tunes, while *Dark Holler* is Dessner's own melody, and draws on the sound of the clawhammer banjo style often heard in performances of these songs. *Brushy Fork* is a Civil War-era murder ballad/fiddle tune. *Wave the Sea* and *Tears for Sister Polly* are original compositions woven out of the depths of this strange corner of American music.

Bryce Dessner (born 1976) is a composer, electric guitarist, and artistic director, at home in many musical worlds. His compositions draw on elements of Baroque and folk music, late Romanticism and modernism, minimalism, and the blues.

*Murder Ballades* was commissioned by eighth blackbird and Lunapark and funded by The Doelen Concert Hall, Rotterdam, Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ, Amsterdam, and Muziekgebouw Frits Philips, Eindhoven, with the financial support of The Van Beinum Foundation, The Netherlands, with additional support from Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and also by LA Dance Project, 2013 for the work of the same name choreographed by Justin Peck.

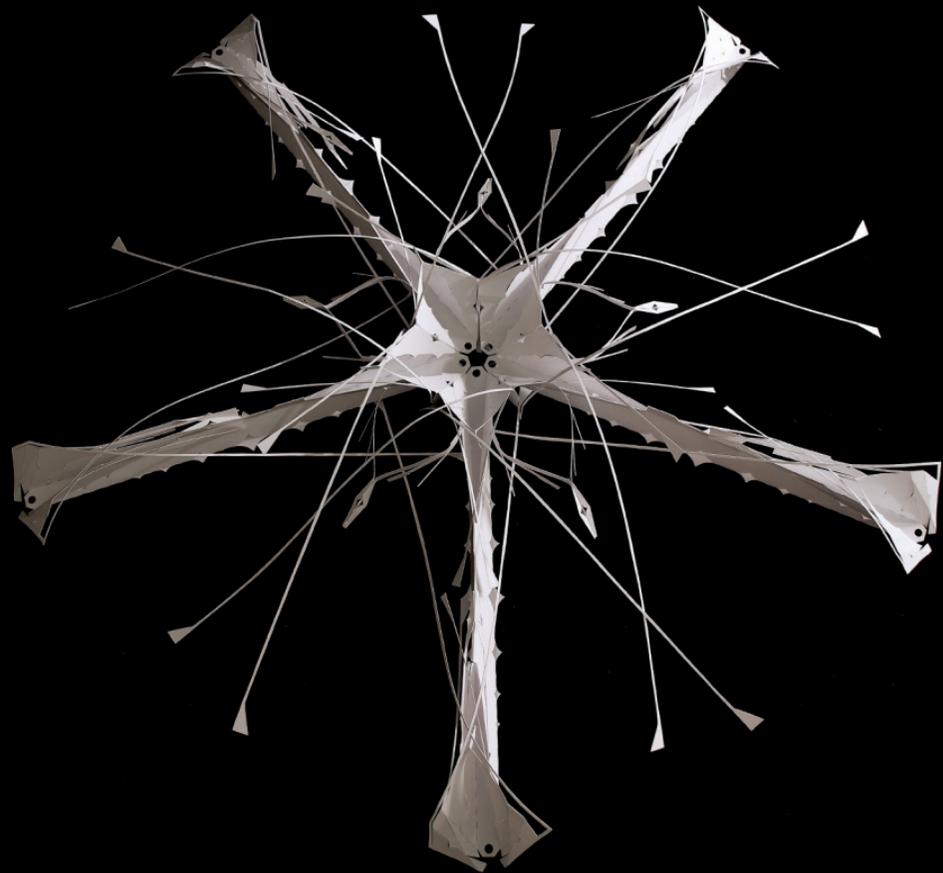
[brycedessner.com](http://brycedessner.com)

Nico Muhly **Doublespeak**

*Doublespeak* was written for eighth blackbird for Bryce Dessner's Music Now festival in Cincinnati, in honor of Philip Glass's 75th birthday. This piece harks back to a time in the 1970s when, according to Muhly, "classical music perfected obsessive repetition." In *Doublespeak*, fast music is offset by slow music reminiscent of that era ("Aren't those the intervals from Reich's *Violin Phase*?" "Was that a bit of Riley's *In C*?"). An excerpt from Glass's *Music in Twelve Parts* gradually becomes more and more dominant, overtaking the busy material. The piece ends in a stylized dream-state.

Nico Muhly (born 1981) is a composer living and working in New York City.

[nicomuhly.com](http://nicomuhly.com)





## Son Lux **To Love** and **This is my Line**

Son Lux's *To Love* and *This is my Line* are remixes, stringing together the delicate musical filament of this album. These pieces employ only sounds gathered from the rest of the album, with the exception of the voice of Shara Worden. Worden, known as My Brightest Diamond, took part in the concerts that gave birth to *FILAMENT* and her song *This is my Hand* (referenced in both remixes) was written in response to the performance of Philip Glass's *Two Pages* that is included on this record.

Son Lux (Ryan Lott, born 1979) is a recording artist and composer based in New York City. He's worked with a diverse array of artists, including Sufjan Stevens, Lorde, Caroline Shaw, Richard Parry (Arcade Fire), and rappers Busdriver and Serengeti.

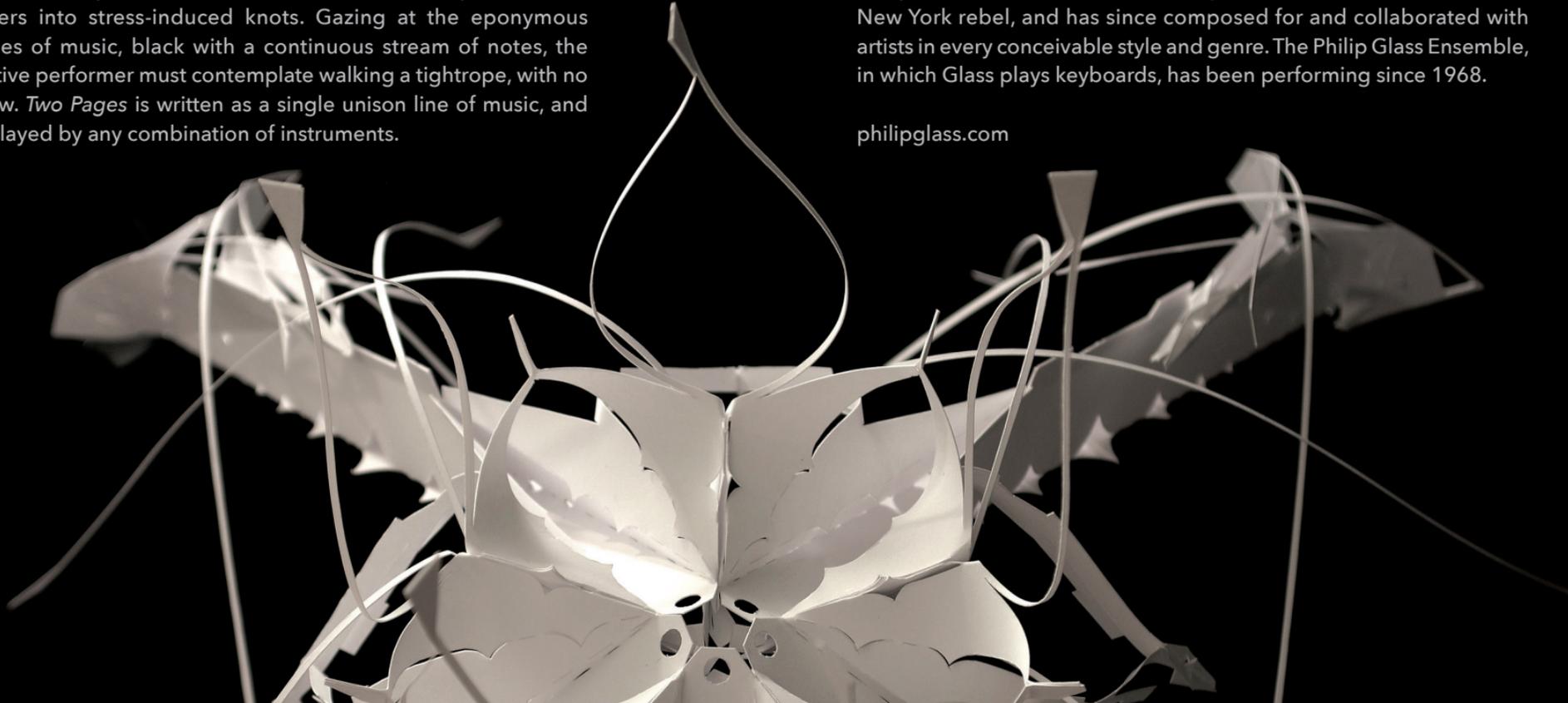
[music.sonluxmusic.com](http://music.sonluxmusic.com)

## Philip Glass **Two Pages**

There is an irony at the heart of *Two Pages*. This music, which to many listeners is calm, peaceful, even meditative, has the power to tie performers into stress-induced knots. Gazing at the eponymous two pages of music, black with a continuous stream of notes, the prospective performer must contemplate walking a tightrope, with no net below. *Two Pages* is written as a single unison line of music, and can be played by any combination of instruments.

Philip Glass (born 1937) is one of America's most influential living composers. The Baltimore native began as an iconoclastic downtown New York rebel, and has since composed for and collaborated with artists in every conceivable style and genre. The Philip Glass Ensemble, in which Glass plays keyboards, has been performing since 1968.

[philipglass.com](http://philipglass.com)





Tim Munro flutes  
Yvonne Lam violin  
Matthew Duvall percussion

Michael J. Maccaferri clarinets  
Nicholas Photinos cello  
Lisa Kaplan piano

### **eighth blackbird**

eighth blackbird \`ätth `blak- bərd\ slang (orig. and chiefly U.S.).

1. verb. to act with commitment and virtuosity; to zap, zip, sock

2. adjective. having fearless (yet irreverent) qualities.

3. noun. a flock of songbirds, common in urban areas since 1996.

eighth blackbird combines the finesse of a string quartet, the energy of a rock band and the audacity of a storefront theater company. The Chicago-based, three-time Grammy-winning "super-musicians" (*LA Times*) entertain and provoke audiences across the country and around the world. The name "eighth blackbird" derives from the eighth stanza of Wallace Stevens's evocative, aphoristic poem, *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird* (1917).

[eighthblackbird.org](http://eighthblackbird.org)

Matthew Duvall is very proud to record using Pearl Drums, Adams Musical Instruments, Vic Firth Sticks and Mallets, Zildjian Cymbals, and Black Swamp Percussion Accessories. Michael J. Maccaferri is a D'Addario Woodwinds Artist. Lisa Kaplan is a Steinway Artist.

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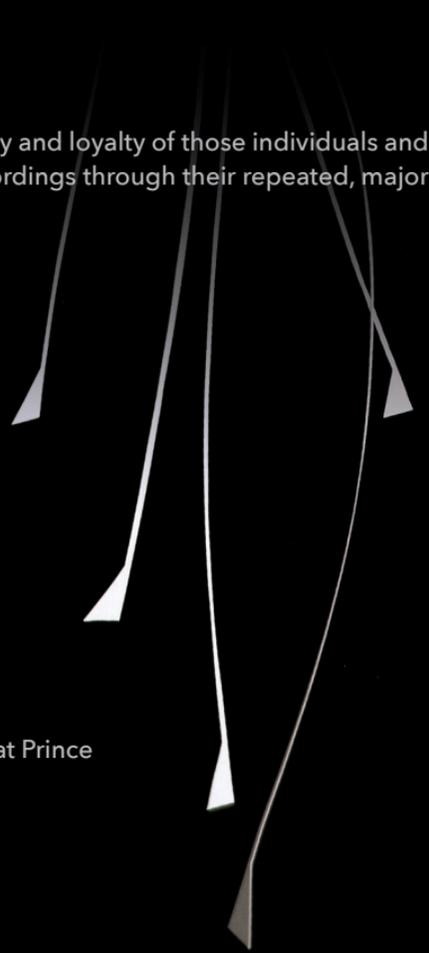
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**Bryce Dessner** Murder Ballades (18:48)

1. Omie Wise (3:15)
2. Young Emily (3:50)
3. Dark Holler (2:23)
4. Wave The Sea (1:59)
5. Brushy Fork (1:45)
6. Pretty Polly (2:39)
7. Tears For Sister Polly (2:54)

**Nico Muhly**

8. Doublespeak (9:03)

**Son Lux**

9. To Love (2:02)

**Philip Glass**

10. Two Pages (16:16)\*

**Son Lux**

11. This is my Line (3:01)

\*Live performance - [Bryce Dessner, guitar, Nico Muhly, organ]

Producer: Bryce Dessner

Recording Engineer: Jonathan Low (Dessner and Muhly), Ryan Ingebritsen (Glass)

Mixing Engineer: Jonathan Low

Mastering Engineer: Joe Lambert

Recorded: May 1-2, 2013 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL

Original artwork, photography, and design: Karl Jensen © karljensen.net

Liner Notes: Tim Munro

Publishers: *Two Pages* by Philip Glass © 1968 Dunvagen Music (ASCAP)

*Doublespeak* by Nico Muhly © 2012 St. Rose Music Publishing/Chester Music Ltd (ASCAP)

*Murder Ballades* by Bryce Dessner © 2013 Chester Music Ltd (ASCAP)

*To Love* and *This is my Line* by Son Lux © 2015 Ryan Lott (ASCAP)

*This Is My Hand* written by Shara Worden My Brightest Diamond © 2014 Blue Sword Music (ASCAP). *This Is My Hand* appears on Asthmatic Kitty #103 [asthmatickitty.com](http://asthmatickitty.com)

eighth blackbird thanks Bryce Dessner, Karl Jensen, Ryan Lott, Nico Muhly, Peter Taub and the MCA, and Shara Worden.