

ÇEDILLE



eighth blackbird **meanwhile**

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PUBLISHERS

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Adès *Catch* ©1991 Faber Music

Mazzoli *Still Life With Avalanche* ©2008 Missy Mazzoli Music (ASCAP)

Hartke *Meanwhile: Incidental music to imaginary puppet plays* ©2007 Stephen Hartke

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...**meanwhile**, an unexpected phone call gives a jolt, changing things unalterably.

...**meanwhile**, a vulnerable child is taunted by three schoolyard bullies.

...**meanwhile**, a soft-spoken trio processes mysteriously to the measured pace of an insistent, tolling bell.

...**meanwhile**, a renowned hypnotist practices his art with great skill.

...**meanwhile**, a couple sits quietly, facing their demons.

...**meanwhile**...

On this recording, eighth blackbird wanders through an unfamiliar house. With each track a new door is opened, releasing unexpected sounds and dramas. Some are sweet, touching. Others have hilarious quirks. A few possess a disturbing strangeness.

eighth blackbird **meanwhile**

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MISSY MAZZOLI (b. 1980)
Still Life with Avalanche (2008)

"I wrote this piece while in residence at Blue Mountain Center, a beautiful artist colony in upstate New York. Halfway through my stay I received a phone call telling me my cousin had passed away very suddenly." This shock worked its way through the joyful, exuberant skin of Mazzoli's music. Where rhythms grooved before, harmonicas now drone and strings buzz, sketching out a strange sonic landscape. Missy writes, "*Still Life with Avalanche* is a search for beauty in chaos, and vice versa. It is dedicated to the memory (the joyful, the exuberant and the shocking) of Andrew Rose."

Still Life with Avalanche was commissioned by eighth blackbird through the generous support of Frederica and James R. Rosenfield, Kathleen Johnson and Paul Browning, Kirk Johnson, and William Johnson.

The young, Brooklyn-based musician Missy Mazzoli has worn many professional hats: composer, performer, administrator, and artistic assistant. She is a successful, published composer, but is also the force behind the all-female indie band Victoire. Her music speaks with a voice that is lyrical and colorful, but a darkness lies humming just beneath the surface.

missymazzoli.com

PHILIPPE HUREL (b.1955)
...à mesure (1996) for sextet

...à mesure explodes with the force of a car crash. The title alludes to the French expression "au fur et à mesure," which means "progressively" or "little by little"; and indeed this piece is in constant, gradual change. Melodies disintegrate or decay, speed up, slow down, settle into machine-like loops. Sometimes the ensemble ticks like a clock, sometimes it swims slowly through musical molasses, as if caught in slow-mo. This mutable, unstable kaleidoscope stretches eighth blackbird to its virtuosic limit.

"Philippe will tell you he likes systems, but observe the warmly exuberant voice, the zany vocabulary and the sparkling looks that shine from him while he's juggling with theories, and you'll learn a lot more about the bubbling excitement from which each of his composing projects draws its vigour. The speck of madness breathes unpredictable life into his most skillfully configured combinations." (Sylviane Falcinelli, French music critic)

philippe-hurel.fr

ROSHANNE ETEZADY (b. 1973)

from *Damaged Goods* (2000)

About Time
Eleventh Hour

“Isn’t it about time?”

“Is this the eleventh hour?”

Perhaps a man is hurt by psychological trauma. Or a package is crushed in transit. Or maybe, a love-scarred partner carries troubling emotional baggage. The title of this work will mean different things to different listeners. *Damaged Goods* is a four-movement work, and was written for eighth blackbird as part of a collaborative project with the Minimum Security Composers Collective.

A Pennsylvania native now living in Chicago, Roshanne Etezady finds inspiration in many musical worlds, from the musicals of Steven Sondheim to 1980s power ballads and the Europop of her teenage years. One fateful evening in 1986, she saw Philip Glass and his ensemble perform as the musical guests on *Saturday Night Live*, an experience that set her on a path to become a composer.

roshanne.com

STEPHEN HARTKE (b. 1952)

Meanwhile: Incidental music to imaginary puppet plays (2007)

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|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| I. Procession | III. Narration | V. Cradle-songs |
| II. Fanfares | IV. Spikefiddlers | VI. Celebration |

Stephen Hartke is fascinated by Asian puppet theater, from the large, elegant puppets of Japanese Bunraku to the long-limbed, finely-decorated, highly stylized shadow puppets of Java. In *Meanwhile*, he has invented his own imaginary work of Asian theatrical drama. Hartke has re-tooled eighth blackbird’s sound: the piano is prepared with large soft mutes, mimicking the sound of the Vietnamese hammered dulcimer; the viola is tuned a half-step lower, giving it a throatier sound; three flexatones mimic the sound of small Javanese gongs; at one point the bass clarinet narrates a “story” across the whole range of the instrument in the extravagant style of Japanese Bunraku. *Meanwhile* is played as a single movement with six distinct sections, and was commissioned for eighth blackbird by the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University.

Hartke is a polymath. Conversing with him can be like clicking on the “random article” link on Wikipedia, and his enthusiasm for every topic is contagious. Likewise, his music springs from a passionate love for a millennium of styles and sounds: from the dissonance of *Ars Subtilior* and the glow of renaissance polyphony to the rawness of non-Western and jazz traditions. But, like Stravinsky, Hartke swallows and digests these borrowings into his own complex, subtle language. Although born on the east coast of the US, the composer, with his ever-present bright, floral shirts, is a proud, adopted SoCal “native.”

stephenhartke.com

PHILIP GLASS (b. 1937)

Music in Similar Motion (1969)

Music in Similar Motion could last all night, into tomorrow, perhaps forever. This early work is fast, stark, repetitive, hypnotic. Glass has reduced the elements of music to their simplest forms; a radical move inspired by the static, meditative language of Indian classical music. His music of this time is also a rejection of the complex, dissonant music written by his contemporaries. *Music in Similar Motion* can be played by any combination of instruments.

Philip Glass is America's most influential living composer. 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.

dunvagen.com

THOMAS ADÈS (b. 1971)

Catch (1991) for clarinet, violin, cello, and piano

Catch, *Keep Away*, *Monkey in the Middle*, *Pickle in a Dish*, *Reverse Dodgeball*. No matter where you are or what you call it, the idea is the same: a ball is kept away from an outsider who is lured, mocked, rejected, then lured anew. In *Catch*, Adès's outsider is the clarinet, an instrument alien to the group he so desperately wants to be a part of: the piano trio. Frenzied and phenomenally difficult parts for all four instruments evoke the childish chaos and exuberance of the game. Styles and sounds are frantically tossed around: waltzes, a passacaglia, a child's taunt. Adès has devised an elaborate choreography for the clarinetist, who in performance dashes across the stage, dances around the piano, keens from afar and, rejected for the last time, sits in his onstage chair for the very first time just as the final notes are played...

Adès's music is fiddly, frustrating, complex, and sometimes almost unplayable. Yet, after dozens of rehearsal hours, with bow hair frayed and nerves jangling, the music's complex fog clears to reveal a uniquely miraculous musical landscape. The composer's works have diverse origins: the seven days of creation, the notion of a musical "ark," an alternative history of America, the refuge and pain of asylums, a Duchess's path from riches to ruin. Adès is also a busy pianist, conductor, and festival curator.

thomasades.com



Photo by Luke Ratray

eighth blackbird

Tim Munro, flutes • Michael J. Maccaferri, clarinets*
Matt Albert, violin & viola • Nicholas Photinos, cello
Matthew Duvall, percussion† • Lisa Kaplan, piano**

eighth blackbird combines the finesse of a string quartet with the energy and audacity of a storefront theater company. The Chicago-based, two-time Grammy Award-winning sextet performs more than 50 concerts each season at major venues across the United States and abroad, and in recent seasons has performed with the Cleveland, Atlanta, Toronto, and Melbourne Symphony orchestras. More than 150 works have been written for eighth blackbird, from composers including Steve Reich, Jennifer Higdon, John Corigliano, Steve Mackey, Nico Muhly and Brett Dean. eighth blackbird holds Ensemble in Residence positions at the University of Richmond, the University of Chicago and, from 2012–2016, the Curtis Institute of Music. A fruitful relationship with Chicago's Cedille Records has produced six acclaimed recordings. eighth blackbird's members hail from America's Great Lakes, Keystone, Golden, and Bay states, and Australia's Sunshine State. There are four foodies, three beer snobs, and one exercise junkie. The name "eighth blackbird" derives from the eighth stanza of Wallace Stevens's evocative, aphoristic poem, *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird* (1917).

*Michael J. Maccaferri is a Rico Performing Artist and Clinician.

†Matthew Duvall endorses Pearl/Adams musical instruments, and Vic Firth sticks and mallets.

**Lisa Kaplan is a Steinway Artist.

eighthblackbird.org

eighth blackbird on Cedille Records



Lonely Motel: Music from Slide

with guitarist/composer Steven Mackey and vocalist/lyricist Rinde Eckert

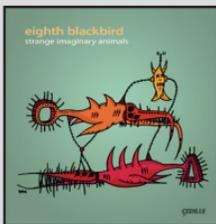
**2011 Grammy Award Winner:
Best Small Ensemble Performance**

“The more of Steve Mackey’s music I hear, the more I appreciate it. For those who have never heard his work before, I think that *Lonely Motel* is a very rewarding place to start. Check in and stay awhile.”

— *Audiophile Audition*

“This work... shows an extremely talented composer in high form . . . eighth blackbird quite simply rocks.”

— *Fanfare*



strange imaginary animals

Works by Jennifer Higdon, Gordon Fitzell, Steven Mackey, David M. Gordon, and Dennis DeSantis

**2007 Grammy Award Winner:
Best Chamber Music Performance**

“eighth blackbird has released its fourth great disc in four years. . . . All the music is fresh, vibrant, exciting and slightly addictive.”

— *American Record Guide*

“This collection is one of those rare programmes where the pieces come together into something larger than its parts.”

— *Gramophone*



fred: Music of Frederic Rzewski

“Frederic Rzewski’s compositions and young new-music ensemble eighth blackbird are perfectly matched.”

— *San Francisco Chronicle*

“Frederic Rzewski gives eighth blackbird the freedom to fly . . . the six-member group rises to the challenge and creates a series of cadenzas that fit the American composer’s edgy style.”

— *Cleveland Plain Dealer*

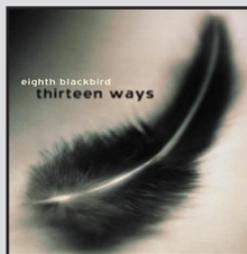


beginnings

Works by Daniel Kellogg and George Crumb

“eighth blackbird, a Chicago new-music band, established its vibrant, bright-hued sonic signature as well as a taste for the whimsical on its first two CD’s. . . . Here it presents . . . [works] that offer very different conceptions of the creation of the universe. But the performances have all the sparkle, energy and precision of the earlier outings.”

— *The New York Times*



thirteen ways

Music by Joan Tower, George Perle, David Schober & Thomas Albert

“The repertoire . . . is exuberantly beautiful, and the performances sparkle with zest and precision.”

— *San Francisco Chronicle*

“The most vital and accomplished chamber group committed to contemporary music to emerge . . . [in] more than a quarter century. . . . Urgently recommended.”

— *The Absolute Sound*