



# Programme

**Massey Hall | Thursday, April 14, 2016**

**Massey Hall and Soundstreams Present**

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## **Steve Reich at 80**



Presented in partnership with



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# STEVE REICH AT 80

## PROGRAMME

Steve Reich (b. 1936, USA)

*Clapping Music* (1972)

*Tehillim* (1981)

## INTERMISSION

*Music for 18 Musicians* (1976)

## FEATURED ARTISTS

Leslie Dala, conductor (*Tehillim*)

Lesley Bouza, voice

Michelle DeBoer, voice

Carla Huhtanen, voice

Laura Pudwell, voice

Lori Freedman, clarinet/bass clarinet

Anthony Thompson, clarinet/bass clarinet

Tristan Durie, piccolo (*Tehillim*)

Leslie Newman, flute (*Tehillim*)

Graham Mackenzie, oboe (*Tehillim*)

Lief Mosbaugh, English horn (*Tehillim*)

Jesse Zubot, violin (*Music for 18 Musicians*)

Erika Raum, violin (*Tehillim*)

Andréa Tyniec, violin (*Tehillim*)

Douglas Perry, viola (*Tehillim*)

David Hetherington, cello

Doug Ohashi, bass (*Tehillim*)

Simon Docking, piano

Gregory Oh, piano

Tania Gill, piano (*Music for 18 Musicians*)

Stephanie Chua, piano (*Music for 18 Musicians*)

Steve Reich, percussion (*Clapping Music*)

Ryan Scott, percussion

Russell Hartenberger, percussion

Garry Kvistad, percussion

Bob Becker, percussion

Michelle Colton, percussion

Haruka Fujii, percussion

# STEVE REICH AT 80

## PROGRAMME NOTES by Steve Reich

### *Clapping Music*

Late in 1971, I composed *Clapping Music* out of a desire to create a piece of music that would need no instruments at all beyond the human body. At first, I thought it would be a phase piece, but this turned out to be rather inappropriate since it introduces a difficulty in musical process (phasing) that is out of place with such a simple way of producing sound. The solution was to have one performer remain fixed, repeating the same basic pattern throughout, while the second moves abruptly, after a number of repeats, from unison to one beat ahead, and so on, until he is back in unison with the first performer. The basic difference between these sudden changes and the gradual changes of phase in other pieces is that when phasing, one can hear the same pattern moving away from itself with the downbeats of both parts separating further and further apart, while the sudden changes here create the sensation of a series of variations of two different patterns with their downbeats coinciding. In *Clapping Music*, it can be difficult to hear that the second performer is in fact always playing the same original pattern as the first performer, though starting in different places.

*Clapping Music* marks the end of my use of the gradual phase shifting process.

(Excerpted from *Writings about Music - 1972*)

### *Tehillim*

*Tehillim* (pronounced "the-hill-leem") is the original Hebrew word for "Psalms". Literally translated it means "praises", and it derives from the three letter Hebrew root 'hey, lamed, lamed' (hll) which is also the root of halleluyah. *Tehillim* is a setting of Psalms 19:2-5 (19:1-4 in Christian translations), 34:13-15 (34:12-14 in Christian translations), 18:26-27 (18:25-26 in Christian translations) and 150:4-6.

The chamber version is scored for four women's voices (one high soprano, two lyric sopranos, and one alto), piccolo, flute, oboe, cor anglais, 2 clarinets, six percussion (playing small tuned tambourines with no jingles, clapping, maracas, marimba, vibraphone and crotales), two electric organs, two violins, viola, cello and bass. The voices, winds and strings are amplified in performance. In orchestral version there are full strings and winds with amplification for the voices only.

The first text begins as a solo with drum and clapping accompaniment only. It is repeated with clarinet doubling the voice and with a second drum and clap in canon with the first. It then appears in two voice canon and at last the strings enter with long held harmonies. At this point all four voices, supported by a single maraca, doubled by two electric organs and harmonised by the strings sing 4 four-part canons on each of the four verses of the first text. When these are completed the solo voice restates the original complete melody with all drums and full string harmonisation. The second text begins immediately after a short drum transition. Here the three verses of text are presented in two or three voice harmony in a homophonic texture. Sometimes the voices are replaced by the cor anglais and clarinet or by the drums and clapping. Soon the melodic lines begin augmenting (or lengthening) and then adding melismas. The effect is of a melodic line growing longer and more ornate. After a pause the third text begins in a slower tempo and with the percussion changed to a marimba and vibraphone. The text is presented as a duet first between two and then all four voices. This third text is not only the first slow movement I have composed since my student days, but also the most chromatic

# STEVE REICH AT 80

## PROGRAMME NOTES *cont*

music I have ever composed (with the possible exception of *Variations for Winds, Strings and Keyboards* of 1979). The fourth and final text resumes the original tempo and key signature and combines techniques used in the preceding three movements. It is, in effect, a recapitulation of the entire piece which then, in a coda based solely on the word “Halleluyah”, extends the music to its largest instrumental forces and its harmonic conclusion.

This last movement affirms the key of D major as the basic tonal centre of the work after considerable harmonic ambiguity.

The tambourines without jingles are perhaps similar to the small drum called “tof” in Hebrew in Psalm 150 and several other places in the Biblical text. Hand clapping as well as rattles were also commonly used throughout the Middle East in the Biblical period as were small pitched cymbals. Beyond this there is no musicological content to *Tehillim*. No Jewish themes were used for any of the melodic materials. One of the reasons I chose to set Psalms as opposed to parts of the Torah or Prophets is that the oral tradition among Jews in the West for singing Psalms has been lost. (It has been maintained by Yemenite Jews.) This meant that I was free to compose the melodies for *Tehillim* without a living oral tradition to either imitate or ignore.

In contrast to most of my earlier work, *Tehillim* is not composed of short repeating patterns. Though an entire melody may be repeated either as the subject of a canon or variation this is actually closer to what one finds throughout the history of Western music. While the four-part canons in the first and last movements may well remind some listeners of my early tape pieces *It's Gonna Rain* and *Come Out*, which are composed of short spoken phrases repeated over and over again in close canon, *Tehillim* will probably strike most listeners as quite different from my earlier works. There is no fixed meter or metric pattern in *Tehillim* as there is in my earlier music. The rhythm, of the music here comes directly from the rhythm of the Hebrew text and is consequently in flexible changing meters. This is the first time I have set a text to music since my student days and the result is a piece based on melody in the basic sense of that word. The use of extended melodies, imitative counterpoint functional harmony and full orchestration may well suggest renewed interest in Classical or, more accurately, Baroque and earlier Western musical practice. The non-vibrato, non-operatic vocal production will also remind listeners of Western music prior to 1750. However, the overall sound of *Tehillim* and in particular the intricately interlocking percussion writing which, together with the text, forms the basis of the entire work, marks this music as unique by introducing a basic musical element that one does not find in earlier Western practice including the music of this century. *Tehillim* may thus be heard as traditional and new at the same time. (1981)

### LESLIE DALA, conductor (*Tehillim*)

Conductor Leslie Dala's multifaced career spans opera, symphonic music, choral and contemporary works. On the podium, he is known for his passionate, dynamic and charismatic approach, appearing with Pacific Opera Victoria, Goh Ballet, Thirteen Strings and Edmonton Opera. Dala is Music Director of Vancouver Bach Choir, this season conducting Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, and is Associate Conductor at Vancouver Opera. A frequent guest with Soundstreams, he conducted the North American premiere of Philippe Boesmans' opera *Julie*, produced in association with Canadian Stage, and George Crumb's *Ancient Voices of Children* with soprano Adrienne Pieczonka in *Beyond the Aria*.

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## *Tehillim*

A setting of Psalms 19:2-5 (19:1-4 in Christian translations), 34:13-15 (34:12-14), 18:26-27 (18:25-26) and 150:4-6.

19:2-5

Ha-sha-my-im meh-sa-peh-rím ka-vóhd Káil,  
U-mah-ah-sáy ya-díve mah-gíd ha-ra-kí-ah.  
Yóm-le-yóm ya-bée-ah óh-mer,  
Va-ly-la le-ly-la ya-chah-véy dá-aht.  
Ain-óh-mer va-áin deh-va-rím,  
Beh-lí nish-máh ko-láhm.  
Beh-kawl-ha-áh-retz ya-tzáh ka-váhm,  
U-vik-tzáy tay-váil me-lay-hém.

34:13-15

Mi-ha-ísh hey-chah-fáytz chah-yím,  
Oh-háyv yah-mím li-róte tov?  
Neh-tzór le-shon-cháh may-ráh,  
Uus-fah-táy-chah mi-dah-báyr mir-máh.  
Súr may-ráh va-ah-say-tóv,  
Ba-káysh sha-lóm va-rad-fáy-hu.

19:2-5

The heavens declare the glory of G-d,  
the sky tells of His handiwork.  
Day to day pours forth speech,  
night to night reveals knowledge.  
Without speech and without words,  
Nevertheless their voice is heard.  
Their sound goes out through  
all the earth, and their words to the  
ends of the world.

34:13-15

Who is the man that desires life,  
and loves days to see good?  
Guard your tongue from evil,  
and your lips from speaking deceit.  
Turn from evil, and do good,  
Seek peace and pursue it.

(PAUSE)

18:26-27

Im-chah-síd, tit-chah-sáhd,  
Im-ga-vár ta-mím, ti-ta-máhm.  
Im-na-vár, tit-bah-rár,  
Va-im-ee-káysh, tit-pah-tál.

150:4-6

Hal-le-lú-hu ba-tóf u-ma-chól,  
Hal-le-lú-hu ba-mi-ním va-u-gáv.  
Hal-le-lú-hu ba-tzil-tz-láy sha-máh,  
Hal-le-lú-hu ba-tzil-tz-láy ta-ru-áh.  
Kol han-sha-má ta-ha-láil Yah,  
Ha-le-yu-yáh.

18:26-27

With the merciful You are merciful,  
with the upright You are upright.  
With the pure You are pure,  
and with the perverse You are subtle.

150:4-6

Praise Him with drum and dance,  
praise Him with strings and winds.  
Praise Him with sounding cymbals,  
praise Him with clanging cymbals.  
Let all that breathes praise the Eternal  
Hallelujah.

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## PROGRAMME NOTES *cont*

### *Music for 18 Musicians*

*Music for 18 Musicians* is approximately 55 minutes long. The first sketches were made for it in May 1974 and it was completed in March 1976. Although its steady pulse and rhythmic energy relate to many of my earlier works, its instrumentation, structure and harmony are new.

As to instrumentation, *Music for 18 Musicians* is new in the number and distribution of instruments: violin, cello, 2 clarinets doubling bass clarinet, 4 women's voices, 4 pianos, 3 marimbas, 2 xylophones and metallophone (vibraphone with no motor). All instruments are acoustical. The use of electronics is limited to microphones for voices and some of the instruments.

There is more harmonic movement in the first 5 minutes of *Music for 18 Musicians* than in any other complete work of mine to date. Though the movement from chord to chord is often just a re-voicing, inversion or relative minor or major of a previous chord, usually staying within the key signature of three shapes at all times, nevertheless, within these limits harmonic movement plays a more important role in this piece than in any other I have written.

Rhythmically, there are two basically different kinds of time occurring simultaneously in *Music for 18 Musicians*. The first is that of a regular rhythmic pulse in the pianos and mallet instruments that continues throughout the piece. The second is the rhythm of the human breath in the voices and wind instruments. The entire opening and closing sections plus part of all sections in between contain pulses by the voice and winds. They take a full breath and sing or play pulses of particular notes for as long as their breath will comfortably sustain them. The breath is the measure of the duration of their pulsing. This combination of one breath after another gradually washing up like waves against the constant rhythm of the pianos and mallet instruments is something I have not heard before and would like to investigate further.

The structure of *Music for 18 Musicians* is based on a cycle of eleven chords played at the very beginning of the piece and repeated at the end. All the instruments and voices play or sing the pulsating notes with each chord. Instruments like the strings which do not have to breathe nevertheless follow the rise and fall of the breath by following the breathing patterns of the bass clarinet. Each chord is held for the duration of two breaths, and the next chord is gradually introduced, and so on, until all eleven are played and the ensemble returns to the first chord. The first pulsing chord is then maintained by two pianos and two marimbas. While this pulsing chord is held for about five minutes a small piece is constructed on it. When this piece is completed there is a sudden change to the second chord, and a second small piece or section is constructed. This means that each chord that might have taken fifteen or twenty seconds to play in the opening section is then stretched out as the basic pulsing melody for a five minute piece very much as a single note in a cantus firmus, or chant melody of a 12th century Organum by Perotin might be stretched out for several minutes as the harmonic centre for a section of the Organum. The opening eleven chord cycle of *Music for 18 Musicians* is a kind of pulsing cantus for the entire piece.

On each pulsing chord one or, on the third chord, two small pieces are built. These pieces or sections are basically either in form of an arch (ABCDCBA), or in the form of a musical process, like that of substituting beats for rests, working itself out from beginning to end. Elements appearing in one section will appear in another but surrounded by different harmony and instrumentation. For instance the pulse in pianos and marimbas in sections 1 and 2 changes to marimbas and xylophones in section 3A, and to xylophones and maracas in sections 6 and 7. The low piano pulsing harmonies of section 3A reappear in section 6 supporting a different melody played by different instruments. The process of building up a canon, or phase relation, between two xylophones and two pianos which first occurs in section 2, occurs again in section 9 but building up to another overall pattern in a different harmonic

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## PROGRAMME NOTES *cont*

context. The relationship between the different sections is thus best understood in terms of resemblances between members of a family. Certain characteristics will be shared, but others will be unique.

Changes from one section to the next, as well as changes within each section are cued by the metallophone (vibraphone with no motor) whose patterns are played once only to call for movements to the next bar, much as in Balinese Gamelan a drummer will audibly call for changes of pattern in West African Music. This is in contrast to the visual nods of the head used in earlier pieces of mine to call for changes and in contrast also to the general Western practice of having a non-performing conductor for large ensembles. Audible cues become part of the music and allow the musicians to keep listening. (1972)



### STEVE REICH, *composer*

Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Steve Reich has been called “America’s greatest living composer” (the *Village Voice*), “...the most original musical thinker of our time” (*The New Yorker*), and “...among the great composers of the century” (*The New York Times*).

An influence to composers and musicians all over the world, he is a leading pioneer of Minimalism, having in his youth broken away from the “establishment” that was serialism. His music is known for steady pulse, repetition and a fascination with canons, combining rigorous structures with propulsive rhythms and seductive instrumental color. It also embraces non-Western and American vernacular music, and he has studied Gamelan, African drumming, traditional forms of chanting the Hebrew scriptures and more.

*Different Trains* and *Music for 18 Musicians* have each earned him Grammy Awards, and he won a Pulitzer Prize for *Double Sextet* (2007). His “documentary video opera” works — *The Cave* and *Three Tales*, done in collaboration with video artist Beryl Korot — have pushed the boundaries of the operatic medium.

Reich’s music has been performed by major orchestras and ensembles around the world, including the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics; London, San Francisco, Boston and BBC symphony orchestras; London Sinfonietta; Kronos Quartet; Ensemble Modern; Ensemble Intercontemporain; Bang on a Can All-Stars; and eighth blackbird. Several noted choreographers have created dances to his music. Reich is published by Boosey & Hawkes.



# STEVE REICH AT 80

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## DEDICATION AND SPECIAL THANKS

Soundstreams dedicates tonight's concert to our board member, Jim Doherty, who passed away on February 18, 2016. Jim served tirelessly from 2005-2016, most of those years as Treasurer. Steve Reich's first Soundstreams appearance in 2005 inspired Jim to join us, so tonight is our heartfelt gift to his memory. His generosity of spirit and keen sense of community responsibility will be greatly missed.

Soundstreams is indebted to Russell Hartenberger for his unfailing advice and guidance in realizing this concert.

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# STEVE REICH AT 80

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# STEVE REICH AT 80

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### Helping young people experience the world through music

*Share the Music*, a Roy Thomson Hall and Massey Hall arts and education outreach program, has provided over 200 tickets to young people (ages 10 to 18) to attend the celebration of **Steve Reich at 80** featuring a range of special guests paying tribute to the legendary composer.

The young guests also participated in a pre-concert workshop on Reich's music, in which they prepared and performed Reich's popular *Clapping Music*. The workshop was hosted by **Kyle Brenders**, a composer, leader of the newly-formed Massey Hall Band, Artistic Associate of Soundstreams Toronto and President of the Canadian New Music Network and featured percussionists/composers **Jamie Drake** and **Daniel Morphy**, members of the acclaimed ensemble TorQ Percussion Quartet.

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A student conducts the Massey Hall Band in an improvisational activity.  
*Photo by Malcolm Cook.*

# STEVE REICH AT 80

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*As of January 20, 2016*