

La Jolla Symphony & Chorus

2017-2018 Season



May 5-6, 2018
Mandeville Auditorium

Steven Schick
Molli & Arthur Wagner
Music Director

Celebrating 50 Years at UC San Diego

1967-2017

"The La Jolla Symphony & Chorus is a stage upon which our music faculty explore and our students are educated in the field."

— Cecil Lytle, UCSD Professor of Music/Provost Emeritus

Supporting UCSD's Educational Mission

Having begun independently, the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus became an affiliate of UC San Diego's Music Department in 1967. Since that time, it has played a significant and continuous role in supporting the educational missions of the Department and the University. Faculty careers have been enhanced by the opportunity the LJS&C presents as a venue for large-scale compositions; likewise, the quality of education of graduate students has been greatly enhanced by this collaboration with LJS&C. As an adjunct to the Music Department, the LJS&C has matured to become an impressive regional ensemble and, simultaneously, remained a major local community asset.

Did you know?

- 15%-20% of the orchestra and chorus are undergraduate and graduate students. UCSD students can audition into the ensemble and take it for class credit or as a co-curricular activity.
- LJS&C offers student performers and composers exposure on each season. For the 2017-18 season alone, 11 student and 4 faculty performers and composers are featured.
- LJS&C provides student work scholarships each season.
- Thomas Nee Commissions have been awarded by LJS&C to 21 student composers to date.



Paul Hembree at premiere of his 2013 Nee Commission, David Chase conducting



Cecil Lytle and graduate student composer/performer Asher Tobin Chodos in *Concerto for Two Pianos*



Alumni composer Mark Applebaum at premiere of *Concerto for Flautist & Orchestra*



Students can make music an integral and impactful part of their lives on campus, and many continue in LJS&C as alumni

Steven Schick
Molli & Arthur Wagner Music Director



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Facing-off Across Sunset Boulevard

Saturday, May 5, 2018, 7:30pm / Sunday, May 6, 2018, 2:00pm
Mandeville Auditorium, UCSD

Sameer Patel conducting

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG

Five Pieces for Orchestra, Opus 16

Premonitions
Yesteryears
Colors
Peripetia
The Obligatory Recitative

OLIVIER MESSIAEN

Un sourire

HANNAH LASH

Eating Flowers

INTERMISSION

TORU TAKEMITSU

A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Symphony in Three Movements

Quarter note = 160
Andante
Interlude: L'istesso tempo; Con moto

Cover illustration of Steven Schick by Jay Wolf Schlossberg-Cohen

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No texting or cell phone use of any kind allowed.*

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Steve & Janet Shields

Sameer Patel

conductor

Internationally recognized for his versatile musicianship and passionate communication, Sameer Patel is one of America's most exciting young conductors. A recipient of 2016 and 2017 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Awards, Patel

is currently in his third season as the Associate Conductor of the San Diego Symphony. He is also the Associate Conductor of the Sun Valley Summer Symphony, whose distinguished musicians come from many of North America's finest orchestras.

Patel's work as a conductor has taken him across North America, South America, and Europe. In the 2017-2018 season, he makes his highly anticipated subscription debut conducting two programs with the San Diego Symphony. He also leads operatic works with the Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera, conducts modern masterpieces of the 20th and 21st centuries with the La Jolla Symphony and Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, shares the podium with legendary film composer John Williams, and closes Symphony New Hampshire's season with Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*. Devoted to the music of living composers, in the current season he also conducts works by Adam Schoenberg, Ellen Reid, Hannah Lash, Derrick Spiva Jr., George Walker, Tan Dun, Derek Bermel, and Mason Bates.

A graduate of the University of Michigan, Patel furthered his training with some of the greatest conductors of our time, including Gianandrea Noseda, Daniele Gatti, the late Kurt Masur, Bernard Haitink, David Zinman, and Neeme and Paavo Järvi. He is an enthusiastic advocate for music education and enjoys teaching and learning from the many students he works with at summer music festivals, school music programs, and youth orchestras across the country. Born and raised in Michigan, Sameer makes his home in San Diego with his wife, Shannon, and their infant son, Devan.



From the Conductor

"So, Sameer, what do you want to conduct?"

This is how my conversation with Steve Schick began over coffee back in December 2016. I took a deep breath, summoning the courage to say the two words that have sent marketing executives, orchestra managers, and audiences into a fit of anxiety for the past 100 years:

"Arnold Schoenberg."

He didn't flinch. So I took it a step further.

"And I'd really love to perform some of the composers I've always admired but have never had the opportunity to conduct... Messiaen, Takemitsu..."

"Well, that sounds great," Steve said.

This is one of the many reasons why I love Steve. Not only is he an incredible artist, but he's also a generous colleague who has taught me so much. And there was indeed an underlying lesson in that simple affirmation, one I've heard from him on countless occasions: that you should never underestimate your audience. This sense of imagination and courage is something I've enjoyed whenever I've attended a La Jolla Symphony and Chorus performance, and it's why I knew disclosing my aspirations wouldn't fall on deaf ears.

Over the next several weeks Steve and I shot several emails back and forth, carefully crafting the program you're experiencing today. It's bookended with the music of two mavericks, Arnold Schoenberg and Igor Stravinsky, who set the music world ablaze with their distinct musical language. While Schoenberg's music from fin-de-siècle Vienna calls forth the expressivity and angst of Europe before the outbreak of World War One, Stravinsky's music from the 1940s has a distinctly cosmopolitan flavor, with a melting pot of influences from jazz and rumba to Hollywood and the horrors of the world at war around him.

Schoenberg and Stravinsky's influence continued deep into the future, with the other three composers on this program continuing this exploration of sonority and movement. In Olivier Messiaen's final orchestral work, *Un Sourire*, he melds classical form with birdsong and humor. The Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu considered Messiaen his spiritual mentor, and in his *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* we fall into a dreamlike world that melds east and west. And we have a work by a living composer, Hannah Lash, whose piece *Eating Flowers* was inspired by the great symphonic colorists that came before her and naturally propels the conversation of sonic exploration into our own time.

In closing, I want to thank Steve, Diane Salisbury, and the curious and passionate musicians of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus for the opportunity to delve into this music together. ■

Program Notes by Eric Bromberger

Five Pieces for Orchestra, Opus 16

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG
Born September 13, 1974, Vienna
Died July 13, 1951, Los Angeles



In the first decade of the twentieth century, Schoenberg moved away from traditional tonality and toward a new harmonic language based on what he called "the emancipation of dissonance," in which no single note (or key) would be granted more importance than another. His *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, composed in the summer of 1909, is his first atonal work for orchestra: the five movements have no key signatures, nor any implied

"home" keys. These five brief movements may be thought of as "mood" pieces—each generates a particular atmosphere, which Schoenberg suggests with slightly coy titles for the movements. Throughout, the emphasis is on instrumental color; melodies tend to be fragmentary, with the line leaping from section to section and acquiring different colors as it proceeds. Taking note of the fragmented melodic line, the importance of individual voices, and the changing colors of this music, one critic has suggested that they require "an orchestra of soloists."

The evocative (but somewhat cryptic) titles for the movements may be taken as suggestions only—Schoenberg did not intend this as program music. The violent *Premonitions* contrasts two brief motifs: a quick figure for lower strings heard immediately and a swirling clarinet figure. These two theme-fragments are manipulated in many different ways over a powerful ostinato

from the strings. By contrast, *Yesteryears* seems gentle, even nostalgic. It is based on the solo cello's opening figure, which is then transformed as it passes through the orchestra. Schoenberg called the third movement *Colors* and told his students that this almost static music depicts the concentric rings made by tossing stones into a still lake. This movement, which he later retitled *Summer Morning by a Lake*, consists of one chord that repeats constantly, changing colors and taking on a continually-evolving character as it proceeds. In the score, Schoenberg directs the conductor: "The change of chords in this piece has to be executed with the greatest subtlety, avoiding accentuation of entering instruments, so that only the difference in color becomes noticeable." This movement is one of the earliest examples of *Klangfarbenmelodie* ("tone color melody"), in which shifting instrumental color becomes as important as shifting pitch; it is a concept that Schoenberg's student Anton Webern would explore much more fully in his music. Schoenberg marked the fourth movement *Peripetia*, a term from Greek drama suggesting a sudden reversal of fortune, and this movement, the briefest of the five, is based on sharp contrasts. Schoenberg called the last movement *The Obligatory Recitative*, but no one has the slightest idea what that means. It is in a three-beat meter that seems to evoke the rhythms of Viennese dances, but the music—and its manipulation of thematic fragments—swirls violently around that waltz-rhythm.

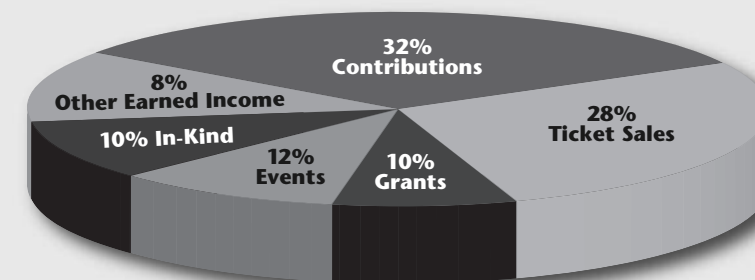
The *Five Pieces for Orchestra* exists in several versions: Schoenberg's original version of 1909 for huge orchestra, his re-scoring for chamber orchestra made in 1919 for a performance at his Society for Private Performances in Vienna, and a revision of the original version for normal-sized symphony orchestra, made in 1949 while he was living in Los Angeles. At these concerts, Schoenberg's original version of 1909 is performed. ■

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Mission Statement

Rooted in San Diego for over 60 years, the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus enriches our lives through affordable concerts of ground-breaking, traditional and contemporary classical music.

Un sourire OLIVIER MESSIAEN December 10, 1908, Avignon Died April 28, 1992, Paris



In the fall of 1989 conductor Marek Janowski asked Olivier Messiaen to compose a short work that would be performed

on the two-hundredth anniversary of Mozart's death, still two years in the future. Messiaen was attracted to the idea and set to work immediately. He first came up with the title *Un sourire* ("A Smile"), then had the entire work in draft by the end of October 1989. Janowski led the premiere of *Un sourire* on the bicentennial of Mozart's death, December 5, 1991.

Shortly after that premiere, Messiaen outlined his intentions in *Un sourire*: "I love and admire Mozart. I didn't try, in my homage to him, to imitate his style, which would have been idiotic. I said to myself: Mozart always had many enemies. He was hungry, cold, almost all his children died, his wife was ill, he knew only tragedy... And he always smiled. In his music and in his life. So I too tried to smile, and I composed *Un sourire*, a little piece lasting

nine minutes, without pretentiousness, which I hope...smiles!"

Messiaen may overstate the bleakness of Mozart's life, but he was quite correct to sense that Mozart's music was not a reflection of his emotional life. Mozart would have agreed completely with T.S. Eliot's observation that "[Art] is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality." Messiaen understood this as well, and his tribute to Mozart is not dramatic, nor is it brooding and dark. Instead, *Un sourire* does in fact "smile"—this gentle music honors Mozart by reflecting that aspect of his music.

Un sourire alternates two different kinds of music: the luminous beginning, scored for muted strings (often with a solo wind instrument), and a more raucous, energetic music that reflects Messiaen's lifelong love of birdsong (Messiaen would have been delighted to know that Mozart loved birds and often kept them as pets). The birdsong sections of *Un sourire* are full of glittering sounds accentuated by the four percussion instruments: tubular bells, suspended cymbal, xylophone, and xylorimba (a xylophone with an extended range). *Un sourire* moves smoothly between these quite different modes of expression and finally fades peacefully away. ■

Eating Flowers HANNAH LASH Born November 22, 1981, Alfred, New York



Born in upstate New York, Hannah Lash studied music as a child (she is a harpist) and then went on to distinguished academic training: she received her bachelor's degree from the Eastman School of Music, a

degree in performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music, a doctorate from Harvard, and an artist's diploma from the Yale School of Music. Lash currently teaches composition at the Yale University School of Music. She has received commissions from the Boston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, Chamber Music Northwest, and many others. She has composed for orchestra, chamber groups, voice and vocal ensembles, and for keyboard, and she has developed a reputation for her subtle

instrumental colors and textures. Her chamber opera *Beowulf* was premiered in Boston in 2016, and Lash herself was soloist in her *Concerto for Harp and Chamber Orchestra* when it was premiered at Carnegie Hall in 2015.

In that same year the Pacific Harmony Foundation, acting on a recommendation from John Adams, commissioned a work from Lash for the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. The result was *Eating Flowers*, scored for large orchestra and premiered on August 15, 2015, by the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra under the direction of Marin Alsop.

The composer has prepared a program note for this work:

When I sat down to write *Eating Flowers* I felt in many ways that I was responding to the energies of orchestral music whose colors I find irresistible: music of Ravel, Rimsky-Korsakov, Debussy, and Messiaen particularly. My piece does not quote or even explicitly refer to this older music, but the energy and the color was certainly an influence. I titled my piece *Eating Flowers* to capture the sense of having tasted the delicious and delicate colors of my favorite orchestral music, which nourished my own creative spirit after having been digested. ■

A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden TORU TAKEMITSU Born October 8, 1930, Tokyo Died February 20, 1996, Tokyo



In 1977 Toru Takemitsu received a commission from the San Francisco Symphony for a new work. At age 47, Takemitsu had not written for orchestra since his *Green* of 1967, and the piece he composed for San Francisco reflects the growing complexity of his music over the intervening ten years. *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* grew—as did so many of Takemitsu's works—out of his dreams, in this case two quite different dreams.

Both dreams were visual. In the first, Takemitsu had a vision of a flock of white birds, led by a single black bird, descending and alighting in a five-sided garden. The second dream was inspired by the composer's having seen a photo of Marcel Duchamps, taken by Man Ray in 1919, that showed a star-shaped patch shaved out of the back of the artist's head. From these two very different dreams, both shaped by the number five, *A Flock* began to emerge.

There were a number of further influences. One of them was Takemitsu's deep response to Japanese gardens: "I love gardens. They do not reject people. There one can walk freely, pause to view the entire garden, or gaze at a single tree, plant, rock, and sand snow: changes, constant changes." Beyond this, the number five is felt in many ways in *A Flock*: a five-sided garden was part of the original inspiration for this music, it is constructed in five brief sections, and it is built on five-note themes based on the pentatonic scale. One more influence was John Cage, whose indeterminate music—in which passages are left to chance or to the freedom of the performers—exerted a strong appeal for Takemitsu.

An important distinction has been made between the formal English garden and the ornamental Japanese garden. The English garden is designed precisely on straight lines: one enters and follows a designated path. But the Japanese garden is not so rigorous: there is not a set path, and one is free—in Takemitsu's words—to "walk freely" and to choose an individual path. It is not too much to say that this distinction might also differentiate Western from Asian music. Western music is often "goal-oriented": sonata form drives toward a resolution of its harmonic and thematic tensions—it is always in motion toward something. Much Japanese music, however, is free of the need to progress and resolve, and its conception of time and motion can be completely different. It is no surprise that many Asian composers have felt more drawn to Debussy than to Beethoven.

It may be most useful to begin with two of Takemitsu's own statements about *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*. He described it first as a "shifting panorama of scenes in which the main motif—introduced by the oboe and representing the so-called 'Flock'—descends into the harmonious tone-field called the 'Pentagonal Garden,' created mainly on the strings." And he said of its structure: "You view a Japanese garden this way, circulating through it. It's not a linear experience at all. It is circular...one always comes back. I write music by placing objects in my musical garden, just the way objects are placed in a

Japanese garden...from gardens I've learnt the Japanese sense of timing and color."

Takemitsu scores *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* for a very large orchestra and then uses that orchestra with great economy. At moments, only a few instruments are playing, while at others he employs all his forces in music that can rise to a surprising level of dissonance, given the "topic" of the piece. Throughout, the tempo is quite slow, as if one is wandering through a Japanese garden and sometimes stopping to explore—there are silences here that can go on for some moments, and at one point Takemitsu writes "Senza tempo": this music exists outside set meter and time. At several places, individual musicians within sections are given the freedom to repeat certain passages on their own and at their own tempos. This music does not go anywhere, and musical "progress" in the Western sense was not Takemitsu's intention. *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* wanders, it explores, it pauses, it contemplates, and finally it dissolves into silence. ■

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**Another
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As the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus celebrates 50 years as an affiliate with UC San Diego, we recognize another 50-year benchmark. Cellist Uli Burgin joined the orchestra in spring 1968 after taking a UCSD extension class in chamber music from Thomas Nee.

"Needless to say, the La Jolla Symphony has been a big part of my life all these years, and it has been a most rewarding experience to see it grow from just a regular amateur-student orchestra to what it is today."

Uli officially retired from the cello section at the beginning of 2018 to take a seat in the audience.

Thank you, Uli, for 50 seasons of dedication!

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Symphony in Three Movements

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Born June 17, 1882, Oranienbaum
Died April 6, 1971, New York City



We expect a symphony written near the end of a major war to make a statement about the time from which it springs, and there were a large number of symphonies composed

around the end of World War II that registered some reaction to that tumultuous time. Prokofiev's *Fifth Symphony* and Copland's *Third* were hailed because they captured the spirit of that moment so successfully (at least for the victors); Shostakovich's *Ninth* got into trouble precisely because it did not. The relation of Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements* to World War II is more complicated. He began work on the first music that would become part of the symphony in 1942, shortly after America's entry into the war, and composed music that would eventually find its way into the symphony across the span of the war. He finished the *Symphony in Three Movements* as the war came shuddering to its conclusion (Stravinsky actually completed the score on August 7, 1945, between the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki) and led the premiere with the New York Philharmonic on January 24, 1946.

Stravinsky was normally adamant that there was no connection between his music and extra-musical events, but in his program note for the premiere he was willing to soften this usually severe stance: "This Symphony has no program, nor is it a specific expression of any given occasion; it would be futile to seek these in my work. But during the process of creation in this, our arduous time of sharp and shifting events, of despair and hope, of continual torments, of tension and, at last, cessation and relief, it may be that all those repercussions have left traces in this Symphony. It is not I to judge."

Yet eighteen years later, in 1963, Stravinsky was quite ready to judge. Now he drew direct connections between moments in the symphony and events from the war, particularly as they had appeared in newsreel footage. The opening of the first movement, he said, was composed in reaction to a newsreel about "scorched-earth tactics in

China," while its second theme-group was inspired by scenes of "the Chinese people scratching and digging in their fields." The fugue in the third movement had an even sharper topical reference, said Stravinsky: "The immobility at the beginning of this fugue is comic, I think—and so, to me, was the overturned arrogance of the Germans when their [war] machine failed. The exposition of the fugue and the end of the Symphony are associated in my plot with the rise of the Allies, and the final, rather too commercial, D-flat sixth chord—instead of the expected C—in some way tokens my extra exuberance in the Allied triumph." This discussion of the inspiration of specific moments—and of an underlying "plot"—would seem to make the *Symphony in Three Movements* program music, but at this point Stravinsky drew back, saying coolly that this music "does and does not 'express my feelings' [about the war]" and finally insisting: "the Symphony is not programmatic. Composers combine notes. That is all."

Certainly the symphony did not take shape in one unified arc, and—in retrospect—its composition seems somewhat haphazard. The earliest section to be composed had been at first planned as an orchestral movement with an important concertante part for piano; Stravinsky set this aside, but it would later reappear in the first movement of the symphony. The following year, novelist Franz Werfel invited Stravinsky to compose music for a movie based on that writer's *Song of Bernadette*. Stravinsky abandoned that project as well, but music he sketched for the "Apparition of the Virgin" sequence in the movie—music with an important solo part for harp—would reappear in the second movement of the symphony. Stravinsky returned to these movements in the spring of 1945—as the Allies triumphed in Europe—and composed the finale of what had now become a symphony, trying in the process to fuse the solo parts for piano and harp in the finale. Some have questioned whether the resulting work is a symphony at all, suggesting that it lacks the organic relation of parts and the harmonic evolution that characterize true symphonic writing. Stravinsky himself was aware of this, conceding that "perhaps Three Symphonic Movements would be a more exact title."

A brief survey of that symphonic landscape: the *Symphony in Three Movements* comes to life with a violent rip up the scale of an augmented octave, and this slashing opening introduces the swaggering march that constitutes the first theme. This music is very fast—though Stravinsky gives the movement no Italian tempo marking, this opening is set at quarter-note=160. The second theme-group

(at half the opening speed) arrives in strings and solo piano above murmuring horns, and the active development reaches its climax on great wrenching chords. The furious scales from the very beginning return at the coda, but now that opening fury feels spent—the music collapses, and finally the bass clarinet murmurs its way to the movement's subdued close on a quiet string chord.

The *Andante* is in ternary form, and the *concertante* role given to the piano in the opening movement is here assumed by the harp. The poised opening, announced by second violins and violas, gives way to a slightly-faster central episode of more somber character as solo flute dances gravely above harp accompaniment. An abbreviated return of the opening leads to a seven-measure *Interlude* that takes us directly into the concluding movement.

Marked simply *Con moto*, the finale opens with another march, the one Stravinsky felt had been inspired by newsreels of strutting Nazis (such marching automatons seemed to be a feature of the symphonic imagination at this moment: another symphony composed at precisely this same time, Arthur Honegger's *Third*, also has a finale that begins with the ominous

march of dehumanized robots). Soon comes a buoyant, dancing figure in the high winds that Stravinsky linked with the motion of "war machines," and at the center of the movement is the fugue—laid out at first only by trombone, piano, and harp—that the composer associated with the defeat of the Nazis. The symphony then powers its way to the close on great blocks of rhythm and sound. Shortly before writing this movement, Stravinsky had revised the *Sacrificial Dance of The Rite of Spring*, and some have heard the savage sounds of that music in this symphony's closing moments. At the end, the Nazis have been crushed, the Allies are triumphant, and the symphony pounds its way to the "extra exuberance" of that final chord.

In this sense, Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements* is driven by some of the same shining spirit that blazes through two other exuberant symphonies written as World War II swept to its close: the *Fourth Symphonies* of Bohuslav Martinu and David Diamond. The *Symphony in Three Movements* may not—as some have charged—be a true symphony, and it may not—as its composer believed—be program music, but it is a worthy participant in the distinguished symphonic discourse that registered the monumental events of 1945. ■

Vectors

2017-2018

La Jolla Symphony & Chorus

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A Line Broken

Saturday, June 9 at 7:30 pm
Sunday, June 10 at 2 pm
Mandeville Auditorium, UCSD

STEVEN SCHICK conducting

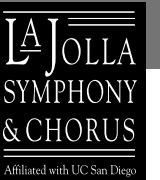
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Trumpeter & Orchestra

COURTNEY BRYAN
Yet Unheard

ORNETTE COLEMAN
Lonely Woman (arr. Asher T. Chodos)

GARBIEL FAURÉ
REQUIEM

GUEST ARTISTS: Helga Davis (pictured), soprano
Priti Gandhi, soprano / Peter Evans, trumpet / Kyle Motl, contrabass



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